

Vincas JOMANTAS 1922–2001

Lithuania; Germany 1944–48; Australia from 1948

Poet 1961

milled, carved and laminated Oregon wood sealed with turpentine and linseed oil, and copper

Collection of Don Gore, Melbourne

Jomantas admired Lithuanian folk carving from a young age, his father Vilius having served on the Lithuanian Art Society's special commission for collecting and preserving folk art shortly after World War One. The vertical assemblage and totemic form of *Poet* is testament to Jomantas's respect for both Baltic pagan shrines and French modern sculpture, particularly the work of Constantin Brâncuși and Henri Laurens, which he saw firsthand in Munich in 1948.

When *Poet* was exhibited at the first Mildura Sculpture Prize exhibition in 1961, critic Alan McCulloch wrote that it deserved to win the major £400 Mildura Prize for monumental sculpture. The prize instead went to Norma Redpath for her plaster *Dawn Figure*, 1961, which was later lost in a studio fire.

Vincas JOMANTAS 1922–2001

Lithuania; Germany 1944–48; Australia from 1948

Guardant 1963

bronze

Mildura Arts Centre

Gift of Mildura City Council

Mildura Prize for Sculpture, 1964

A242

Despite its abstract formal language, *Guardant* retains a figurative association through its vertical composition and its slotted and curved upper form that reads as a metaphoric face. The title, too, suggests one who is masked or restrained. However, the work also recalls the vertical format of Lithuanian *stogastulpis* (roofed, pole-top shrines, originating from the pagan period of pantheistic belief and adapted to Christian worship), with their associated symbolism of sunrays and crescent moons. Jomantas was well acquainted with such roadside shrines during his youth.

Guardant was awarded the acquisitive Mildura Prize for Sculpture at the second Mildura exhibition, in 1964.

Vincas JOMANTAS 1922–2001

Lithuania; Germany 1944–48; Australia from 1948

***Awakening of Giants I* 1967**

New Zealand Kauri wood, epoxy resin filler pigmented in three colours, carved and waxed

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
Purchased 1973

73.196

Awakening of Giants I signalled a new development for Jomantas, moving away from static totemic forms towards work that required the viewer to walk around it, exploring all sides to appreciate its strange inner life. The four 'arms' were made from the core of logs that had been stripped of their outer layers. Bands were then cut into the logs and filled with pink polyester, giving the appearance of joints and unifying the upper half with the pigmented polyester base.

The work can be seen in Tim Burstall's film *Sculpture Australia 69* (screened in the next gallery), rotating on a stand in a grassed clearing, its writhing arms echoing the surrounding stands of twisted tea tree trunks—underscoring the organic basis of the otherwise abstract forms.

Vincas JOMANTAS 1922–2001

Lithuania; Germany 1944–48; Australia from 1948

***Maquette for Marland House Competition* 1971**

carved and turned wood, finished with plaster of Paris and silver pigmented paint

Geelong Art Gallery

Gift of Mrs Laima Jomantas, 2004

2004.16

In 1971 a competition was held for a sculpture to occupy the street-front forecourt of Marland House at 562–574 Bourke Street.

Designed by Danish émigrés Erik and Grethe Kolle & Associates, Marland House was built in the International Style with a severe concrete grid façade. When unveiled in 1972 it was briefly the tallest building in Melbourne at 32 storeys high.

Jomantas, King and Parr all submitted maquettes to the competition; Jomantas intending his entry, which belongs to the *Awakening of Giants* series, to be cast in aluminium—its rounded polished forms contrasting with the building's rigid geometry. Ken Reinhard ultimately won with a design of five large stainless steel and reinforced glass cubes. In 1994, following substantial remodelling that saw the building's forecourt enclosed, the new owners, National Mutual, donated Reinhard's work to McClelland where it is now installed outside in the sculpture park.

Vincas JOMANTAS 1922–2001

Lithuania; Germany 1944–48; Australia from 1948

Landing Object II 1971

fabricated polyester resin and fibreglass

McClelland

Purchased with the assistance of the Bank of Melbourne and the Victorian Art Foundation, 1990

1990.17

With its aeronautical suggestions of a satellite or spacecraft, *Landing Object II* was made barely two years after the Apollo 11 mission first landed humans on the moon. It belongs to a brave new era of space exploration.

Yet the formal assemblage of a cone diagonally transecting the apex of a pyramid, offset by horizontal wings and fins, also points to the work's much longer lineage stemming from Russian Constructivism. Like Vladimir Tatlin's *Corner Counter-Relief*, 1915, which straddled the corner of a Petrograd gallery, *Landing Object II* possesses a dynamism arising from the combination of intersecting volumetric and spatial forms. An enlarged bronze cast, commissioned by the Elisabeth Murdoch Sculpture Foundation in 1992 and now in McClelland's grounds, retains this dynamism and remains remarkably contemporary in feeling.

Vincas JOMANTAS 1922–2001

Lithuania; Germany 1944–48; Australia from 1948

not titled (study for *Poet*) 1961

charcoal and red conté crayon on paper

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Purchased 1976

76.32

Vincas JOMANTAS 1922–2001

Lithuania; Germany 1944–48; Australia from 1948

not titled (study for *Pursuit of Scientific Knowledge*)

1962

pen, ink, black pencil on paper

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Purchased 1976

76.31

Pursuit of Scientific Knowledge is a cast bronze fountain commissioned by Eggleston Macdonald Secomb architects for the western courtyard of the Physics Building at the Australian National University, Canberra. The finished work, which can be seen in a photograph in the next gallery, is largely faithful to the preparatory drawing. The fountain is one of the few Centre Five public commissioned works that remains in situ.

Julius KANE 1921–1962

Hungary; Austria 1939–40; Poland 1940–45; The Netherlands 1945; Germany 1946–49; Australia from 1949; Canada 1960–61

Equestrienne 1952

bronze cast, edition of two

McClelland

Gift of the family of David Wynn AO 1915–1995 in his memory. Patricia, Adam and Eva Wynn and Claudia Harper, 1996

1996.35

This Amazonian *Equestrienne*, seated sideways on her massive stocky steed, is the antithesis of the sorts of modern neoclassical figurative sculpture that flourished in Germany under the Third Reich.

Carl Jung interpreted the horse as an archetype representing instinctive primal drives. The unabashed nakedness of *Equestrienne* does not shy away from such drives, but instead embraces the seeming contradiction between passion and power. Kane frequently mined mythological sources in the belief that they connected us with society's collective unconscious with all its paradoxical contradictions. "Art is life", he wrote, "irrational and contradictory in all its extremes".

Julius KANE 1921–1962

Hungary; Austria 1939–40; Poland 1940–45; The Netherlands 1945; Germany 1946–49; Australia from 1949; Canada 1960–61

Seated abstract 1953

bronze

McClelland

Gift of the family of David Wynn AO 1915–1995 in his memory. Patricia, Adam and Eva Wynn and Claudia Harper, 1996

1996.36

Seated abstract was originally one of a pair of plaster figures, its partner being a male torso—similarly hollow—and legs. They were exhibited together, simply titled *Group*, seated on a wall at the first Herald Outdoor Art Exhibition in 1953. There they inspired Harry Reuben Mitchell's cartoon *Scared to Crow*, depicting a man who, on seeing Kane's work, substitutes his ineffective scarecrow with a hollowed-out figure that successfully frightens the birds from his vegetable plot. The comic strip encapsulates the reactionary climate that prevailed in Melbourne at the time, while also recalling the lines of T.S. Eliot's poem *The Hollow Men*:

We are the hollow men
We are the stuffed men
Leaning together
Headpiece filled with straw. Alas!

Julius KANE 1921–1962

Hungary; Austria 1939–40; Poland 1940–45; The Netherlands 1945; Germany 1946–49; Australia from 1949; Canada 1960–61

Adam and Eve 1954

bronze, edition of three

McClelland

Gift of the family of David Wynn AO 1915–1995 in his memory. Patricia, Adam and Eva Wynn and Claudia Harper, 1996

1996.37

Julius Kane studied under Professor Anton Hiller at the Munich Academy of Fine Arts, 1946–49. Hiller was then one of the leading Munich modernists whose archaised figurative work harkened back to the sorts of pre-Classical Etruscan and Romanesque art that would soon inspire Marino Marini in Italy and Alberto Giacometti in France. Under Hiller, Kane began modelling deliberately heavy, gauche figures that represented a rejection of modern neoclassical figurative sculpture, which had been co-opted by Fascist governments during the war and was by the post-war period thoroughly discredited.

Arriving in Melbourne in late 1949, as Julius Kohn, Kane initially exhibited under the surname of Kuhn until anglicising his name in 1955. *Adam and Eve* demonstrates Kane's continued dialogue with Munich post-war sculpture during his early years in Australia.

Julius KANE 1921–1962

Hungary; Austria 1939–40; Poland 1940–45; The Netherlands 1945; Germany 1946–49; Australia from 1949; Canada 1960–61

Abstract carving 1957

wood

McClelland

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Kate Hodgkinson in memory of her mother Van Hodgkinson in 2009

2009.17

Julius KANE 1921–1962

Hungary; Austria 1939–40; Poland 1940–45; The Netherlands 1945; Germany 1946–49; Australia from 1949; Canada 1960–61

Organic Forms 1962

Douglas-fir (Pseudotsuga sp.)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased 1963

567-D5

Organic Forms was Kane's final major work—made shortly after returning to Melbourne from Toronto, where a Canada Council Fellowship had enabled him to work at the Ontario College of the Arts. Carved from a hollowed-out log, both this and another related work, *Group Organism* (since lost), proved influential on younger Melbourne sculptors such as John Davis and represent a high point in organic abstraction, which dominated Australian sculpture in the early 1960s. Soon after completing this work, Kane took his own life. Recently uncovered details of Kane's wartime experiences, entailing incarceration in a number of concentration camps in Poland including Auschwitz, may shed some light on his tragic decision.

During a tour of the state galleries as part of the *Recent Australian Sculpture* exhibition of 1964–65, *Organic Forms* was badly damaged. Clifford Last restored it for the National Gallery of Victoria, in the process removing the red and yellow patina and giving it a much smoother and more refined finish.

Julius KANE 1921–1962

Hungary; Austria 1939–40; Poland 1940–45; The Netherlands 1945; Germany 1946–49; Australia from 1949; Canada 1960–61

***Peace be on Earth* [Christmas card] c.1955–61**

woodcut print, black ink on paper

Norma Redpath papers, Manuscripts Collection, State Library Victoria

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Mark Rubbo OAM, 2015

MS 15607

Julius KANE 1921–1962

Hungary; Austria 1939–40; Poland 1940–45; The Netherlands 1945; Germany 1946–49; Australia from 1949; Canada 1960–61

not titled [Three sculptures in room] c. 1958–61

linocut, printed in olive green ink, from one block, on paper

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Purchased 2010

2010.640

Inge KING 1915–2016

Germany; Britain 1939–49, 1950–51; France and United States 1949–50;
Australia from 1951

Flight Arrested 1964

painted steel

McClelland

Purchased with the assistance of the Visual Arts Board, Australia Council, 1976

1976.5

Inge KING 1915–2016

***Tenement* 1964**

bronzed steel

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented through The Art Foundation of Victoria by Inge King, Fellow, 1997

1997.234

Inge King began thinking in terms of welded steel assemblage in 1949–50, during a six month stay in New York, and produced a series of steel mobiles and assemblages in the early 1950s. However, only in 1960 did she acquire her first arc welder, sparking a brief series of steel-framed biomorphic abstract constructions. Soon afterwards she moved on to oxy-acetylene welding—the stronger flame enabling easier cutting of heavy sheet metal and better control of the molten drips that she allowed to congeal along the edges, applied in a manner akin to abstract expressionist drip painting. Surfaces were then sandblasted, sprayed with liquid bronze, and later overpainted black, giving works such as *Tenement* and *Flight Arrested* (the first of King's works to enter McClelland's collection and permanently sited outdoors) their characteristic appearance.

Tenement and *Flight Arrested*, both made in 1964, were envisaged enlarged on a monumental scale and are essentially formal investigations of flat sheets enclosing space. When *Tenement* was included in the 1965 Centre Five exhibition at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Elwyn Lynn described it as 'a concertina of upended coffins' with a 'prevailing funereal sobriety and ... enclosed, almost asphyxiated space'. The following year King acknowledged in conversation with architect David Saunders that *Tenement* 'revives in me memories of certain buildings in Prague'. King visited relatives in Prague in 1938, shortly before the disastrous signing of the Munich Accord that enabled Germany to annex the Sudetenland in west Czechoslovakia. She later recalled the sense of oppressiveness in Prague and what she perceived as Kafkaesque qualities to the city.

Inge KING 1915–2016

Germany; Britain 1939–49, 1950–51; France and United States 1949–50;
Australia from 1951

***Wall Sculpture I* 1968**

ground steel and synthetic polymer paint with polyurethane lacquer

McClelland

Gift of the artist, 1996

1996.04

Wall Sculpture I marked a new phase of King's work where she abandoned the textured seams of her earlier steel sculptures and instead ground the steel to a smooth and highly polished surface. The reflective surfaces seemingly shimmer with light and contrast with the red-painted sides and central core, animating the otherwise stationary work. In this sense they are quite different from North American minimalist sculpture such as that of Donald Judd's whose untitled stacks of identical rectangular cuboid units in galvanised iron or Perspex, which he began cantilevering off the wall in 1965, were designed to eliminate all variation or sense of movement. In contrast, King's wall sculpture invites—indeed requires—the viewer to pass back and forth in front of the work to animate its forms.

Inge KING 1915–2016

Germany; Britain 1939–49, 1950–51; France and United States 1949–50;
Australia from 1951

***Eisenwald (Steel forest), maquette* 1969**

ground steel with polyurethane lacquer

Private collection, Melbourne

King envisaged *Eisenwald* enlarged on a 1:12 scale, at over three metres high, and located in an urban plaza where people could walk amongst its vertical forms. The title suggests a group of iron trees, yet the vertical forms arguably have more in common with prehistoric standing stones. Also known as menhirs, these inspired many European modernists including Barbara Hepworth who included photographs of Stonehenge taken by the Swiss art historian Carola Giedion-Welcker and Bauhaus founder Walter Gropius alongside her essay on sculpture in the art journal *Circle* in 1937. In addition to her own familiarity with such sites in Britain, King would have known Henry Moore's watercolour *Stones in a Landscape* (1936), which hung at the Abbey Art Centre where she lived in the late 1940s. Between 1967 and 1971 King produced a series of works titled *Boulders* that grouped clusters of large cuboid forms. *Eisenwald* is closely related to this series.

Inge KING 1915–2016

Germany; Britain 1939–49, 1950–51; France and United States 1949–50;
Australia from 1951

Forward Surge, maquette 1972

painted steel

Art Collection, Arts Centre, Melbourne
Gift of the artist, 2006

VAC2006–006.001

Forward Surge was envisaged at a 1:12 scale for an ‘open air environment’. Sir Roy Grounds, architect of the National Gallery of Victoria and Melbourne Arts Centre on St Kilda Road, visited King’s 1973 exhibition at South Yarra and on seeing *Forward Surge* reportedly said: ‘I want this one’. Through the William Angliss Art Fund the work was subsequently enlarged and installed on the Arts Centre lawn, visually linking the Theatres Building with Hamer Hall. The work defies any simple gestalt understanding; the viewer must instead move about it to appreciate the variety of its huge vanes. This accords with King’s desire for people to physically engage with her work. She later reflected: ‘Public sculpture should be used in some way. It didn’t even worry me when the kids used to run their skateboards up it. This sculpture is strong and I know it can withstand any ill treatment so why not be part of the community?’

Inge KING 1915–2016

Germany; Britain 1939–49, 1950–51; France and United States 1949–50;
Australia from 1951

Red Rings 1972

painted steel

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by the artist, 2012

2012.816.A-C

Red Rings and *Forward Surge* and were among the eleven 'maquettes for monumental sculptures' that King exhibited at the Chapman Powell Street Gallery in South Yarra in 1973. Each maquette was a designated with an envisaged scale and an ideal site: a city plaza, an office foyer, or simply 'outdoors'. *Red Rings* was envisaged at a 1:6 scale and described as a 'walk through sculpture'. In 2008 it was enlarged on commission from ConnectEast and installed on the Eastlink Trail at Scoresby, close to the Ferntree Gully Road and Eastlink Freeway intersection.

Inge KING 1915–2016

Germany; Britain 1939–49, 1950–51; France and United States 1949–50;
Australia from 1951

***Three Figures: Drawing for Sculpture* 1959**

gouache, ink, pastel and pencil on paper

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased 1959

387-5

***Study for Animal* 1959**

pencil, pen and brush and ink, wash and coloured chalk on paper

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Gift of Ethel and Ray Hobbs, 1994

P96-1994

Both *Study for Animal* and *Three Figures: Drawing for Sculpture* relate to King's exhibits for *Six Sculptors* at the National Gallery of Victoria in 1959. This was the first time the gallery had mounted an exhibition of contemporary sculpture and coincided with the new broom of incoming director Eric Westbrook, who believed the gallery should support contemporary artists and educate the public on recent developments in art. *Six Sculptors* represented all the Centre Five group except Lenton Parr, who had exhibited only sporadically since returning from England in December 1956. King's exhibits were transitional works, cast in concrete or metal with vestigial animal and human references and exploring the interconnection of interlocking forms.

Clifford LAST 1918–1991

England; Egypt, Tunisia, Palestine, 1942–44; Italy, 1944–45; England, 1945–47, 1951–52, 1967, 1981; Australia from 1947

Maquette I (Architectural maquette) 1973

limed wood

McClelland

Purchased 1974

Maquette II (Architectural maquette) 1973

Limed wood

McClelland

Purchased 1974

Clifford LAST 1918–1991

England; Egypt, Tunisia, Palestine, 1942–44; Italy, 1944–45; England, 1945–47, 1951–52, 1967, 1981; Australia from 1947

Wall Sculpture 1963

Tasmanian oak (*Eucalyptus* sp.)

McClelland

Purchased 1996, Elisabeth Murdoch Sculpture Foundation

1996.12

While many of Clifford Last's works retained figurative references, he occasionally adopted an entirely abstract idiom. *Wall Sculpture* is one of several wall reliefs he carved that mainly found their way into corporate collections. Its balance of vertical and horizontal struts represent a broken grid and reflect his interest in Constructivism, particularly the work of Robert Adams who he befriended in London in 1951 and reconnected with on a return visit in 1967. When it was exhibited at the second Mildura Prize for Sculpture, in 1964, Elwyn Lynn found it 'rather like a sophisticated shadow-box', deeming Last 'a gentle formalist'.

Clifford LAST

Left to right:

***Group Invocation* 1964**

Tasmanian oak (*Eucalyptus* sp.), slate

McClelland

Gift of the Estate of Mr David Wynn, 1996

1996.34

Preliminary sketch showing the development of sculptural forms (study for *Group Invocation*) c. 1964

pencil, watercolour, ball point pen and marker pen on paper

Picture Collection, State Library Victoria

Gift, Estate of Clifford Last, 1992

H92.282/339

Preliminary sketch showing the development of sculptural forms (study for *Lucis*) c.1964–65

pen and black ink with wash on buff coloured wove paper

Picture Collection, State Library Victoria, Melbourne

Gift, Estate of Clifford Last, 1992

H92.282/300

Family groups were a recurrent theme of Last's work. As he explained in 1959 in connection to another work on this theme: 'Rather than present in wood the family as it appeared to me visually, my intention was to suggest qualities like unity, sympathy, protection, and dependence in terms of assembled shapes'. In the same text he elaborated on his working method: 'The carving in wood is done with curved chisels or gouges, and a wooden mallet, and smoothed with rasps and sandpaper. In places I have left the chisel marks as a contrasting texture'.

Group Invocation was first exhibited at the second Mildura Prize for Sculpture, in 1964, before being sent to Sydney for Centre Five's Hungry Horse Gallery exhibition the same year. It was also included in the Centre Five survey at Heide Museum of Modern Art in 1984.

Clifford LAST 1918–1991

England; Egypt, Tunisia, Palestine, 1942–44; Italy, 1944–45; England, 1945–47, 1951–52, 1967, 1981; Australia from 1947

Cruciforms 1965

bleached jarrah (*Eucalyptus marginata*), stone

Art Gallery of Ballarat

Gift of Dr Joseph Brown AO OBE, 2005

2005.63

The tautly interlocking uprights of *Cruciforms*, pierced by shorter horizontal bars, recall the ‘father and son’ groups of Last’s work from the 1950s. Yet the work’s origins in organic forms, particularly bones, are also evident. Last agreed with this observation: ‘yes, bones everywhere ... there’s something coming out in the open, isn’t there!’ As such, *Cruciforms* shares much in common with the work of Henry Moore, who was similarly inspired by the ‘limitless variety of shapes and rhythms’ found in natural objects such as pebbles, shells, driftwood and bones, which he kept in the studio as a veritable library of natural forms. *Cruciforms* was a highlight of the Centre Five exhibition at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in 1965 and highly praised by critics at the time.

Clifford LAST 1918–1991

England; Egypt, Tunisia, Palestine, 1942–44; Italy, 1944–45; England, 1945–47, 1951–52, 1967, 1981; Australia from 1947

Lucis II 1965

jarrah (*Eucalyptus marginata*), slate

Art Gallery of Ballarat

Winner of the George Crouch Memorial Prize, 1965

1965.13

In 1961 Last embarked on a course of esoteric study, immersing himself in the writings of Alice A. Bailey and the Lucis Trust—a non-sectarian offshoot of theosophy that advocated meditation and vegetarianism, blending aspects of Eastern and Western philosophies. His mother Nella Last was similarly interested in theosophy and reincarnation. The impact of these studies was first revealed in a series of four works made between 1964 and 1966, which each took the title of *Lucis*, meaning ‘light’. In 1967, on a return visit to England, Last visited the headquarters of the Lucis Trust in London where he participated in group meditation sessions and designed the layout of one of their publications. Back in Melbourne he arranged monthly meetings at his home for friends interested in New Age philosophies. Last remained a devotee of the Lucis Trust, bequeathing them the residuary of his estate in 1991.

Clifford LAST 1918–1991

England; Egypt, Tunisia, Palestine, 1942–44; Italy, 1944–45; England, 1945–47, 1951–52, 1967, 1981; Australia from 1947

Lucis III 1965–66

jarrah (*Eucalyptus marginata*)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased 1966

1451-D5

Clifford LAST 1918–1991

England; Egypt, Tunisia, Palestine, 1942–44; Italy, 1944–45; England, 1945–47, 1951–52, 1967, 1981; Australia from 1947

Custodians 1968

bronze, edition of three

McClelland

Gift of Dr Joseph Brown AO OBE, 2005

2005.01

Like *Cruciforms* nearby, *Custodians* essentially comprises two vertical forms in dialogue with one another. Noel Hutchison categorised both works as ‘ossicular symbolism’, referring to their evident origins in the study of bones. The title recalls the *Guardants*, *Oracles* and *Sentinels* that Jomantas, King and Redpath likewise produced in the 1960s, ‘70s and ‘80s and reinforces the work’s origins in figuration.

The National Gallery in Canberra purchased another cast of this work in 1970. Forty years later the gallery’s inaugural director James Mollison recalled in interview Last’s reluctance to part with *Custodians* as he considered it his major work up to that point in his career.

Clifford LAST 1918–1991

England; Egypt, Tunisia, Palestine, 1942–44; Italy, 1944–45; England, 1945–47, 1951–52, 1967, 1981; Australia from 1947

Left to right:

Preliminary sketch showing the development of sculptural forms (study for *Group Invocation*) c. 1964

pencil, watercolour, ball point pen and marker pen on paper

Picture Collection, State Library Victoria
Gift, Estate of Clifford Last, 1992

H92.282/339

Preliminary sketch showing the development of sculptural forms (study for *Lucis*) c.1964–65

pen and black ink with wash on buff coloured wove paper

Picture Collection, State Library Victoria, Melbourne
Gift, Estate of Clifford Last, 1992

H92.282/300

Lenton PARR 1924–2004

Australia; Canada, 1943–45; New Guinea and Japan, 1945–46; England 1955–56; Australia from 1957

Small Orion 1961

welded mild steel painted black

McClelland

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by the artist, 2003

2003.06

Parr began working with steel in 1955 while working for Henry Moore, primarily as a means of avoiding Moore's influence (steel being the one medium Moore did not use). For the next ten years Parr's work was closely allied with the so-called 'geometry of fear' sculptors who represented Britain at the 1952 Venice Biennale. The label was coined by Herbert Read, who borrowed from T.S. Eliot, to describe the sculptors' imagery 'of flight, of ragged claws "scuttling across the floors of silent seas", of excoriated flesh, frustrated sex, the geometry of fear'. It was more broadly applied to 1950s steel sculpture that responded to the Cold War climate of fear, including Parr's biomorphic hybrids that seemed part insect, part crustacean, and part plant.

Parr made *Small Orion* specifically for the second Exposition Internationale de Sculpture Contemporaine at the Musée Rodin in Paris in 1961. It is a slightly scaled down version of *Orion* (1959, National Gallery of Victoria collection). In interview, Parr told James Gleeson that the disposition of the forms suggested to him the forms of the constellation Orion, which in turn was named after the Greek mythological hunter. Given the 'somewhat predatory look' to the work, he felt this 'was a fairly happy association of ideas.' Parr chose *Small Orion* to represent him in the Centre Five survey exhibition at Heide in 1984 and retained it in his possession until the year before his death.

Lenton PARR 1924–2004

Australia; Canada, 1943–45; New Guinea and Japan, 1945–46; England 1955–56; Australia from 1957

Sagittarius 1964

steel painted black

McClelland

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by the artist, 2003

2003.07

Sagittarius was among Parr's exhibits at the 1965 Centre Five exhibition at the Art Gallery of New South. It was deliberately displayed low to the ground, raised only on a single layer of concrete blocks topped with plywood, eschewing a traditional pedestal. Parr told Bill Hannan at the time: 'Sculptures which grow out of a base always seem incomplete to me'.

Reviewing the exhibition, James Gleeson described Parr's work as having 'the cruel, waiting predatory look of carnivorous plants' while Elwyn Lynn went further, dubbing them 'ministers of death—black, welded steel insectoid pieces, like ocean mines with anchor legs, which probe rather than enclose and enliven space'. Parr's primary concern, however, was to create work that possessed an inner vitality and the presence of a living creature.

Lenton PARR 1924–2004

Australia; Canada, 1943–45; New Guinea and Japan, 1945–46; England 1955–56; Australia from 1957

Daedalus 1965

steel, enamel paint

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Gift of Sue Walker AM through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2010

2010.136

In 1965 Parr rid his work of any vestiges of textured surfaces, finding he could achieve the forms he sought through simpler means. Henceforth smooth straps and rods of steel predominated, sometimes painted black or in monochrome primary colours.

Daedalus was included in the Centre Five exhibition at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, where critics responded to its menacing 'trap-like' imagery. However, when read in terms of Parr's concern for vitality and presence, *Daedalus* can also be read in terms of a reclining figure with as much independent life and identity as the earlier biomorphic forms. In Greek mythology Daedalus was an architect and craftsman, father of Icarus and creator of the minotaur's labyrinth.

Lenton PARR 1924–2004

Australia; Canada, 1943–45; New Guinea and Japan, 1945–46; England 1955–56; Australia from 1957

Astrojet Sculpture (maquette for Astra) 1969

welded steel painted black

McClelland

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Sue Walker AM, 2005

2005.28

This is the original maquette for *Astra* (1970), which was commissioned for the front entrance of the Astrojet Space and Science Centre at Melbourne's Tullamarine Airport. Parr's monumental landmark represented the aspirations of flight and travel, conceived in a Constructivist formal language.

The brutalist Astrojet building at Tullamarine heralded a brave new era of jet travel in Australia and was a popular destination even for those Melburnians not flying but wishing instead to visit its cinemas, restaurants and bars. When the Astrojet building was decommissioned, *Astra* was donated to McClelland and is now permanently located outside along the gallery's northern wall.

Lenton PARR 1924–2004

Australia; Canada, 1943–45; New Guinea and Japan, 1945–46; England 1955–56;
Australia from 1957

Tycho 1971

black painted steel

McClelland

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Sue Walker AM, 2012

2012.04

Lenton PARR 1924–2004

Australia; Canada, 1943–45; New Guinea and Japan, 1945–46; England 1955–56;
Australia from 1957

Drawing for sculpture 1961

pen and ink on white wove paper

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented through The Art Foundation of Victoria by Lenton Parr, 1985

P51-1985

Drawing for sculpture 1961

pen and ink on white wove paper

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented through The Art Foundation of Victoria by Lenton Parr, 1985

P53-1985

Throughout the latter 1960s Redpath worked on a series of major public commissions, some of which are now in the grounds of McClelland and documented in the next room. With these commissions she became increasingly interested in the 'genius loci', or spirit of place, and in sculpture's relationship to architecture. Fragments of classical architecture, particularly broken arches, became a recurrent theme. Redpath believed that when these forms were introduced into an urban space, they could help orient and reintegrate the alienated viewing subject with their surroundings. As she wrote in 1968: 'Man sights an object in space for visual equilibrium and physical balance to help him establish his identity in scale with his surroundings'.

One of the two Australian-born members of Centre Five, Norma Redpath spent the majority of her career commuting between Melbourne and Milan. In Italy, at the Fonderia Battaglia, she realised numerous major commissions in bronze as well as a series of twelve *bronzetto* (small bronzes) for her acclaimed first solo exhibition, held at Melbourne's Gallery A in 1963.

Piccola Città (or *Small City*), one of this initial series, was conceived as a monumental walk-through sculpture. A decade later, during a Creative Fellowship at the Australian National University, Redpath developed the idea as a proposal for the university's Union Court. Two further editions of maquettes were cast: one in silver, in 1976, and a slightly larger version in bronze, in 1978, but due to the high projected costs the project was never realised at full scale. The present bronze remained in the artist's possession at the time of her death.

Norma REDPATH 1928–2013

Australia; Italy 1956–57; Australia and Italy 1962–85; Australia from 1985

Wall of Time (bronzetto) 1962

bronze

Private collection, Tasmania

Norma REDPATH 1928–2013

Australia; Italy 1956–57; Australia and Italy 1962–85; Australia from 1985

Dawn Sentinel 1962

bronze

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1964

1294-D5

Dawn Sentinel was one of the first two works Redpath realised on a large scale in bronze, the other being the more transitional *Horse, Bird and Sun no. 1* (1962) in the Art Gallery of New South Wales collection. The maquettes for both were developed in Australia and brought to Milan in 1962 to be enlarged and cast at the Fonderia Battaglia. During this intense and pivotal year, Redpath was enrolled at the Brera Academy but ‘practically lived at the foundry’, learning from the skilled artisans and renting a room overlooking the foundry’s courtyard.

Both works were included in her celebrated first solo exhibition at Gallery A in 1963 and *Dawn Sentinel* subsequently sent to the second Mildura Prize exhibition, where it won the £400 prize for monumental sculpture.

Dawn Sentinel marks the emergence of Redpath’s personal form language, which she derived largely from the Australian landscape: ‘the sun and dead trees, space and light, the rock forms, desert, the lonely shipping markers, dead animals, and even abandoned decaying manmade things’.

She later reflected that *Dawn Sentinel* ‘was the confirmative work of my development to that date’.

Norma REDPATH 1928–2013

Australia; Italy 1956–57; Australia and Italy 1962–85; Australia from 1985

Horse, Bird and Sun (bronzetto) 1963

bronze

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

The Joseph Brown Collection. Presented through the NGV Foundation by Dr Joseph Brown AO OBE,
Honorary Life Benefactor, 2004

2004.244.a-b

Norma REDPATH 1928–2013

Australia; Italy 1956–57; Australia and Italy 1962–85; Australia from 1985

Uccello Rapace 1963

bronze cast, green patina

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Purchased 1970

70.116

Uccello Rapace, which translates as *Bird of Prey*, is a powerful thrusting form seemingly poised for flight. The sense of movement and monumentality is shared with Inge King's *Flight Arrested* in the grounds outside.

Redpath was interested at this time in creating '... a form growing from an inner core, echoing itself in space beyond the limits of its physical outline, forming and reforming itself in space, then disintegrating into space but leaving the imprint of a completed movement in space'. The horizontal 'wings' of *Uccello Rapace* counterbalance the diagonal slant of the central core and extend into space in a manner similar to the broken arches that began to preoccupy the artist around this time.

Norma REDPATH 1928–2013

Australia; Italy 1956–57; Australia and Italy 1962–85; Australia from 1985

Flying Capital 1966

bronze, artist's proof

Private collection, Melbourne

Norma REDPATH 1928–2013

Australia; Italy 1956–57; Australia and Italy 1962–85; Australia from 1985

Left to right, top to bottom:

Study of arches 1969

ink and gouache on paper

McClelland

Purchased 1997, The Fornari Bequest

1997.45

Piccola Città c. 1962–63

pen and ink and fibre-tipped pen on Fabriano paper

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased 1963

1324-5

Extending Arch (bronzetto) 1967

bronze, artist's proof

McClelland

Gift of Mr Douglas Brass, 1991

1991.01

Piccola Città (bronzetto) 1962

bronze, artist's proof

Private collection, Tasmania

Teisutis ZIKARAS 1922–1991

Lithuania; Germany 1944–49; Australia from 1949

The Swimmer 1955, cast 2009

bronze

McClelland

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Roderick Macdonald, 2011
2011.51

The son of a renowned Lithuanian nationalist sculptor, Teisutis Zikaras studied in Kaunas during the Second World War before fleeing west ahead of the returning Soviet army. In Freiburg, in the French occupied zone of Germany, Zikaras taught at the École des Arts et Métiers and visited significant touring exhibitions of modern French art, including the work of Lipchitz, Picasso and Rouault, which deeply impressed him.

The Swimmer was an unrealised proposal for the University of Melbourne's Beaurepaire Centre, designed by Eggleston, Macdonald & Secomb. Instead, the firm commissioned his balustrade panels for Union House, photographs of which appear in the McClelland room.

Teisutis ZIKARAS 1922–1991

Lithuania; Germany 1944–49; Australia from 1949

Mother and child c. 1955–59

cast cement

McClelland

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Richard and Florence Crichton, 2008

2008.09

Mother and Child demonstrates Zikaras's engagement with Cubist sculpture, which conceived of sculpture as 'object' rather than representation. In particular it shows his interest in the sculpture of fellow Lithuanian émigré Jacques Lipchitz, which Zikaras encountered in Freiburg in 1948.

Zikaras's work presents an amalgam of views, with the sharply chiselled spines of the mother and child morphing one into the other. The sculpture's static monumental quality and the flattened semi-spherical heads, reminiscent of caryatids, suggests it was conceived in relation to architecture. It represented Zikaras at the Centre Five survey at Heide in 1984 under the title of *Female Figure*.

Teisutis ZIKARAS 1922–1991

Lithuania; Germany 1944–49; Australia from 1949

Horseman 1958, cast 1959

aluminium

McClelland

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Frank and Yvonne Nicholls, 2008

2008.10

In Lithuania the image of a mounted knight holding a sword and shield is called the Vytis. Zikaras's father, Juozas Zikaras, depicted the galloping Vytis on the Lithuanian 10 litas silver coin as a symbol of the advancing state in 1936.

Zikaras's horseman is conversely static and schematic. In notes he prepared in 1959 for the *Six Sculptors* exhibition, in which this work featured, he wrote: 'Material dictates form and, in so doing, it dictates movement ... Aluminium [is] a cool material requiring a strong definite form. ... The significance lies in the relationship of the forms, which produces a certain order. ... For example, in the aluminium sculpture the rider has no arms because they are unimportant in the order of the whole form'.

Teisutis ZIKARAS 1922–1991

Lithuania; Germany 1944–49; Australia from 1949

Figure 1959

aluminium, cast and polished

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Purchased 1972

72.40

Figure demonstrates Zikaras's concern for material dictating form, reducing the body to a sleek, armless shaft with the slotted ribcage lending a strong tactile quality.

The work was first exhibited in *Six Sculptors* in 1959 at the National Gallery of Victoria, which brought together six of the seven future members of Centre Five. It was then included in the Victorian Sculptors Society touring exhibition, *Sculpture Today*, in 1960, and the first *Mildara Prize for Sculpture* at Mildura Art Gallery in 1961 before being sent to Paris a few months later for the prestigious *Second Exposition Internationale de Sculpture Contemporaine* at the Musée Rodin. Works such as this placed Zikaras at the avant-garde of Australian sculpture in the late 1950s.

Teisutis ZIKARAS 1922–1991

Lithuania; Germany 1944–49; Australia from 1949

The Bride 1965, cast 2008

bronze, unique edition

McClelland

Commissioned by the Elisabeth Murdoch Sculpture Foundation, 2008

2008.15

In the 1960s Zikaras embraced the new medium of ciment fondu, which he variously cast in a mould or built up over a steel frame, before spraying with molten metal, in a process known as metallising, to produce an impermeable bronze or copper exterior. His surfaces of this period were more textured and turbulent than previously; he referred to them as ‘more emotional’.

A metallised ciment fondu cast of *The Bride* was first exhibited at the Centre Five exhibition of 1965 at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, where critic Elwyn Lynn equated its gouged and lacerated surface with fetishes or fertility objects. It was again shown in the Centre Five surveys at Geelong Gallery and McClelland in 1973 and at Heide in 1984.

Teisutis ZIKARAS 1922–1991

Lithuania; Germany 1944–49; Australia from 1949

Not titled (four elongated women) c. 1955

linocut printed in black ink from one block

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Gift of Lyn and Fred Williams, celebrating the National Gallery of Australia's 25th Anniversary, 2009
2009.855

Teisutis ZIKARAS 1922–1991

Lithuania; Germany 1944–49; Australia from 1949

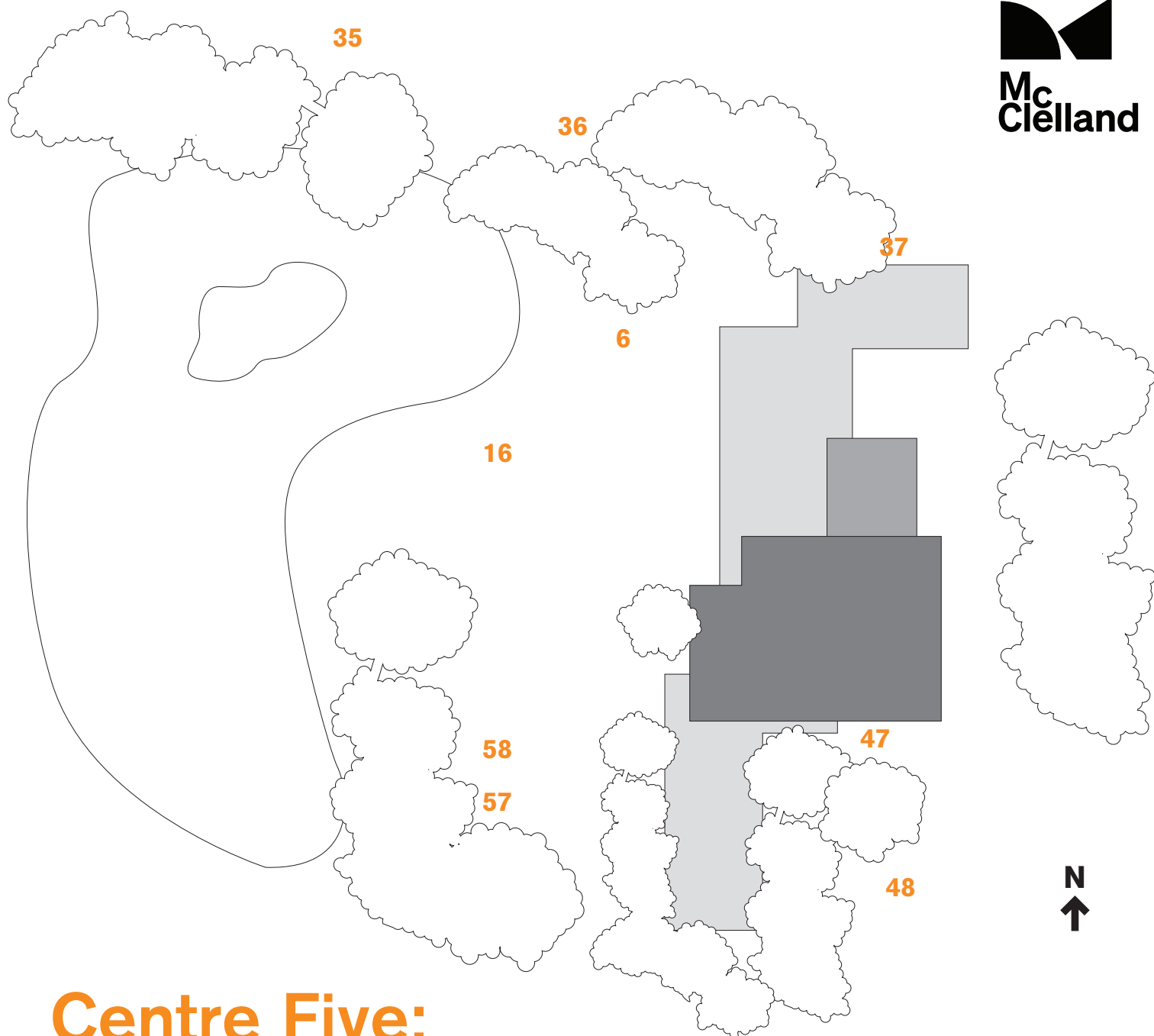
Not titled (figure with arms raised) 1958

drawing in conte crayon with ink wash

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Purchased 1974

74.413



Centre Five: bridging the gap

57
Teisutis ZIKARAS
ETA fountain 1961/2009

58
Teisutis ZIKARAS
GPO fountain 1964

16
Inge KING
Flight Arrested 1964

35
Lenton PARR
Customs House Screen 1966

36
Lenton PARR
Draco 1969

6
Vincas JOMANTAS
Landing Object III 1971/1992

37
Lenton PARR
Astra 1970

47
Norma REDPATH
Theatre Lobby Relief 1964

48
Norma REDPATH
Desert Arch 1964/1968