

STEFANO DELLA BELLA

[1610-1664 Italian]

Europa Leading the Bull

etching

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery.

Given 1982 by Mary, Dora and Esmond de Beer
through the National Art Collections Fund, London.

Zeus was the King of the Gods, the weather, fate, law and order and who ruled Olympia. In spite of all his principles as a leader of Gods and men, Zeus had a fatal weakness for falling madly in love over and over again with a litany of divine consorts. In *Metamorphoses*, the poet Ovid wrote the following depiction of one of his seductions, Europa:

And gradually she lost her fear, and he
Offered his breast for her virgin caresses,
His horns for her to wind with chains of flowers
Until the princess dared to mount his back
Her pet bull's back, unwitting whom she rode.
Then—slowly, slowly down the broad, dry beach—
First in the shallow waves the great god set
His spurious hooves, then sauntered further out
'til in the open sea he bore his prize
Fear filled her heart as, gazing back, she saw
The fast receding sands. Her right hand grasped
A horn, the other lent upon his back
Her fluttering tunic floated in the breeze.

UNKNOWN

Tantalus

engraving

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery.

Purchased 1967 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society.

As Odysseus recounts on his visit to the Hades, in the *Odyssey*:

I saw Tantalus, suffering pains hard to bear,
standing in a lake with water up to his chin.
Thirsty he was, but unable to quench his thirst,
for every time the old man stooped, longing to drink,
the water drained away and vanished, and black earth
showed at his feet where the god dried it up.
Above his head, fruit cascaded from towering trees,
pears and pomegranates and shining apples,
and sweet figs and ripened olives, but whenever
the old man reached for them with his hands, a wind
tossed them away towards the shadowing clouds.

WILLIAM MARSHALL CRAIG

[1760-1838 Scottish]

Apollo's Destruction of the Greeks

watercolour

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery.

Given in the 1950s by Archdeacon F H D Smythe.

The wrath of Apollo, the god of prophecy and divination, the 'Lord of the silver bow', was swift and merciless as is captured in the beginning of the *Iliad*:

Angered in his heart he strode from the peaks of Olympus, carrying on his shoulders his bow and covered quiver, and the shafts clashed on the shoulders of the angry god, moving in fury. He came as night comes down.

Settling far from the ships he let fly an arrow, and terrible was the clash that rose from his silver bow.

First he killed the mules and the running dogs, then he shot his piercing arrows against the men, and the funeral pyres burned thick and kept on burning.

For nine days the shafts of the god fell on the army

ARTHUR BOYD

[1920-1999 Australian]

Narcissus in a Storm

lithograph on paper

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery.

Purchased 1979 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society.

Arthur Boyd's interest in a cast of fallen and tragic figures from history and mythology was a constant element in his oeuvre. But it was the figure of Narcissus who had a special place in this artist's despotic collection. He returned to this subject on a number of occasions and worked closely with the poet Peter Porter on *Narcissus*, a book of images and texts dedicated to this character. In *The Making of a Monster*, Porter powerfully captures the unfortunate demise of this god:

I waited and followed
my shadow in the bush
until I found this pool.
The water is a cylinder
leading down to death
and I am tired of faces
hiding in myself.
Dear surface, I open
my eyes above you
and let a carnage
loose upon the earth -
Dear Sir Face, you
are tomorrow's monster,
your looks are a walking-
away from blood, and
your name is Nothing.

SIDNEY NOLAN

[1917-1992 Australian]

Leda and the Swan

lithograph

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery.

Bequeathed 1973 by Dr Charles Brasch.

Leda and the Swan

lithograph

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery.

Given 1968 by Charlton Edgar.

Greek mythology is full of stories in which gods become shape shifters, as a way to capture or deceive their unknowing victims. This subterfuge was often used for sexual conquests, and none was more famous than when Zeus transformed into a Swan and in this form seduced the young goddess Leda. The rape of Leda is powerfully captured in the Edmund Spenser's epic poem *The Faerier Queene*:

Whiles the proud Bird, ruffling his feathers wyde
And brushing his faire brest, did her invade,

She slept: yet twixt her eyelids closely spyde
How towards her he rush, and smiled at his pryde.

LUIGI PELLEGRINO SCARAMUCCIA

[engraver 1610-1664 Italian]

after ANNIBALE CARRACCI

[painter 1560-1609 Italian]

Venus and Adonis

engraving

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery.

This depiction of the love story between Venus and Adonis by Luigi Pelligrino Scaramuccia (after Annibale Carracci), seems to pay homage to the famous verse penned by William Shakespeare. The bard introduced a twist to the story, as told in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, by having the young Adonis refusing to succumb to the flirtatious approaches of the beautiful goddess of love.

STEFANO DELLA BELLA

[1610-1664 Italian]

The Death of Dido 1660

etching

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery.

Purchased 1984 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society.

MASTER OF THE DIE

[engraver active 1525-1560 Italian]

after SANZIO RAPHAEL

[painter 1483-1520 Italian]

Apollo and Marsyas c.1530

engraving

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Given 1982 by Mary, Dora and Esmond de Beer through the National Art Collections Fund, London.

FRANCIS ENGLEHEART

[engraver 1775-1849 English]

after HENRY HOWARD

[painter 1769-1847 English]

Hero and Leander 1829

steel engraving

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery.

Purchased 1967 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society.

WILLIAM ROFFE

[engraver 1817-c.1889 British]

F R ROFFE

[draughtsman active 1850-1866 British]

after JOHN FOLEY

[sculptor 1818-1874 Irish]

Ino and Bacchus 1829

engraving

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery.

CORNELIS BLOEMAERT II

[engraver 1603-1692 Dutch]

after SANZIO RAPHAEL

[painter 1483-1520 Italian]

Aeneas and Anchises

engraving

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery.

AGOSTINO CARRACCI

[engraver 1557-1602 Italian]

after JACOPO TINTORETTO

[painter 1519-1594 Italian]

Mars dismissed by Minerva

engraving

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery.

Given 1982 by Mary, Dora and Esmond de Beer

through the National Art Collections Fund, London.

ANNIBALE CARRACCI

[1560-1609 Italian]

Romulus and Remus

etching

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery.

Purchased 1969 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society.

GIORGIO GHISI

[1520-1582 Italian]

Cephalus Mourning the Death of Procris

engraving

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Given 1982 by Mary, Dora and Esmond de Beer through the National Art Collections Fund, London.

JEAN LE PAUTRE

[1618-1682 French]

The Birth of Adonis

etching

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery.

Purchased 1988 with funds from the Dunedin Public
Art Gallery Society.
