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GANYMED BERLIN / GANYMED LONDON

Both Ganymed Berlin and Ganymed London were born in the aftermath of war, the Berlin firm in 1920, the London one in 1948. It is perhaps not surprising that the misery, destructiveness and greyness of the war years fostered the urge to have a new growing point for creating civilised values through a unique workshop printing for the arts.

The seed of Ganymed Berlin was in fact sown in a Droschke trundling along the Potsdamer Strasse in 1920. Its passengers were Julius Meier-Graefe, the writer, and Bruno Deja, the printer. Meier-Graefe, a man who never held an official position, had a profound influence on the taste of the educated German public in the first third of this century. He had been a co-founder and editor of 'Pan', the advanced periodical devoted to art and literature. In his books he embraced the cause of the Impressionists and their followers and established them as the valid successors of the painters of the past. Besides his books on the great figures of modern art, he wrote a monumental work on Hans von Marées, arguably the greatest German painter of the 19th century, whose work he rescued from obscurity by his researches and whose greatness he revealed in his writings. His advocacy culminated in the great exhibition he arranged in Munich in 1923.

Meier Graefe had volunteered as an ambulance driver in 1914, was captured by the Russians and exchanged in 1916. After his return to Germany he approached Reinhold Piper, the Munich publisher, with the suggestion of founding a Society for the publication of portfolios of facsimile reproductions of the highest quality, as well as original graphic work.

Reinhold Piper received this suggestion with enthusiasm. They agreed at this early

stage that facsimile work of the standard they aimed at could only be achieved by the collotype process. The new firm which they founded was named the Marées-Gesellschaft in honour of the artist to whose work Meier-Graefe had devoted so much of his life's endeavour. As a symbol for the new firm he chose a design based on Marées last work, Ganymed carried by the eagle.

Considering the circumstances of the time, one can only look with wonder at the list of publications which appeared between 1917 and 1920. Among others in 1917/18 were the Cézanne portfolio with ten facsimiles of watercolours, the Shakespeare Visionen, original graphic work by Corinth, Kokoschka, Kubin to name a few, a portfolio of seventy sketches by French artists from Manet to Seurat; this last had been printed by André Marty's firm in Paris before 1914 but had remained unpublished and was taken over by the Marées Gesellschaft. In the year of the German collapse and revolution a Marées portfolio appeared with facsimiles of thirty drawings, a suite of etchings by Beckmann, facsimiles of drawings by Delacroix and Daumier, a portfolio of drawings and watercolours by Van Gogh. Spring 1920 saw the publication of Dürer's ten landscape watercolours from the museum in Bremen, a publication which acquired special significance from the fact that the originals were lost during the second world war. The winter of 1920 brought the publication of drawings by the Venetian masters of the 18th century and of the Renoir portfolio which perhaps more than any other established the fame of the Marées-Gesellschaft outside Germany.

One of the difficulties besetting the production was the scarcity of sources for collotype printing on the level required for fac-

KOKOSCHKA

Saul and David



שאול ודוד

Oskar Kokoschka: Saul und David, 1969. Titelseite. Eine Folge von 41 Lithographien, 425 × 325 mm. Die Lithographien wurden von J.E. Wolfensberger, Zürich, gedruckt. Standardauflage 60 Exemplare, Edition de tête 6 Exemplare. Jede Lithographie ist in einem Faltbogen enthalten mit dem betreffenden Text aus dem Alten Testament. Der Text wurde von der Curwen Press, London, in Baskerville gesetzt und gedruckt. Die Kassette in Ganzleder wurde von F. & J. Randall, London, hergestellt.

simile work. Although the process was more widely established in Germany than anywhere else—after all it had been perfected there for practical use—only very few firms were capable of meeting the stringent demands of Meier-Graefe. The two collotype firms he mostly used were Albert Frisch of Berlin and Hanfstaengl of Munich. Both became more and more reluctant to spend the greater part of their capacity on this exacting work. To raise the level of quality from an acceptable commercial result to a facsimile requires an additional effort in skill and time which makes the work less economical.

We must now return to the Droschke and to the memoir that Bruno Deja, then the manager of the collotype department of Albert Frisch, left of this fateful journey, which I would like to quote:

‘While I travelled with Meier-Graefe in a Droschke to take proofs to a museum for comparison, we discussed the difficulties of obtaining the level of quality required from the existing collotype plants, and that it would be preferable to have a workshop entirely devoted to this type of work which could supply all the needs of the Marées-Gesellschaft. On hearing this Meier-Graefe threw himself back with a jolt, which startled both the cabby and his horse, and exclaimed, assuming a broad Berlin accent «Mensch, das machen wir».’

He set to work at once with his compulsive energy and enthusiasm and persuaded Reinhold Piper to found a limited company which was later joined by Bruno Deja who had by then left Albert Frisch.

The new firm was established in Berlin on the premises of a much run-down collotype workshop which the new partnership acquired. Meier-Graefe named the new firm Ganymed which linked it with the symbol of the Marées-Gesellschaft. Under the technical direction of Bruno Deja, the inspired artistic guidance of Meier-Graefe and the publishing acumen of Piper, the firm soon flourished and achieved the high quality

the founders had aimed at. From 1921 onwards Ganymed printed most of the facsimile work for the Marées-Gesellschaft in limited editions of three hundred to four hundred copies. After completion of each edition the negatives were destroyed in order to guarantee the limitation of the editions. The firm soon had ten presses working and employed fifty people, a very large number for a collotype firm. Ganymed acquired a reputation beyond Germany and

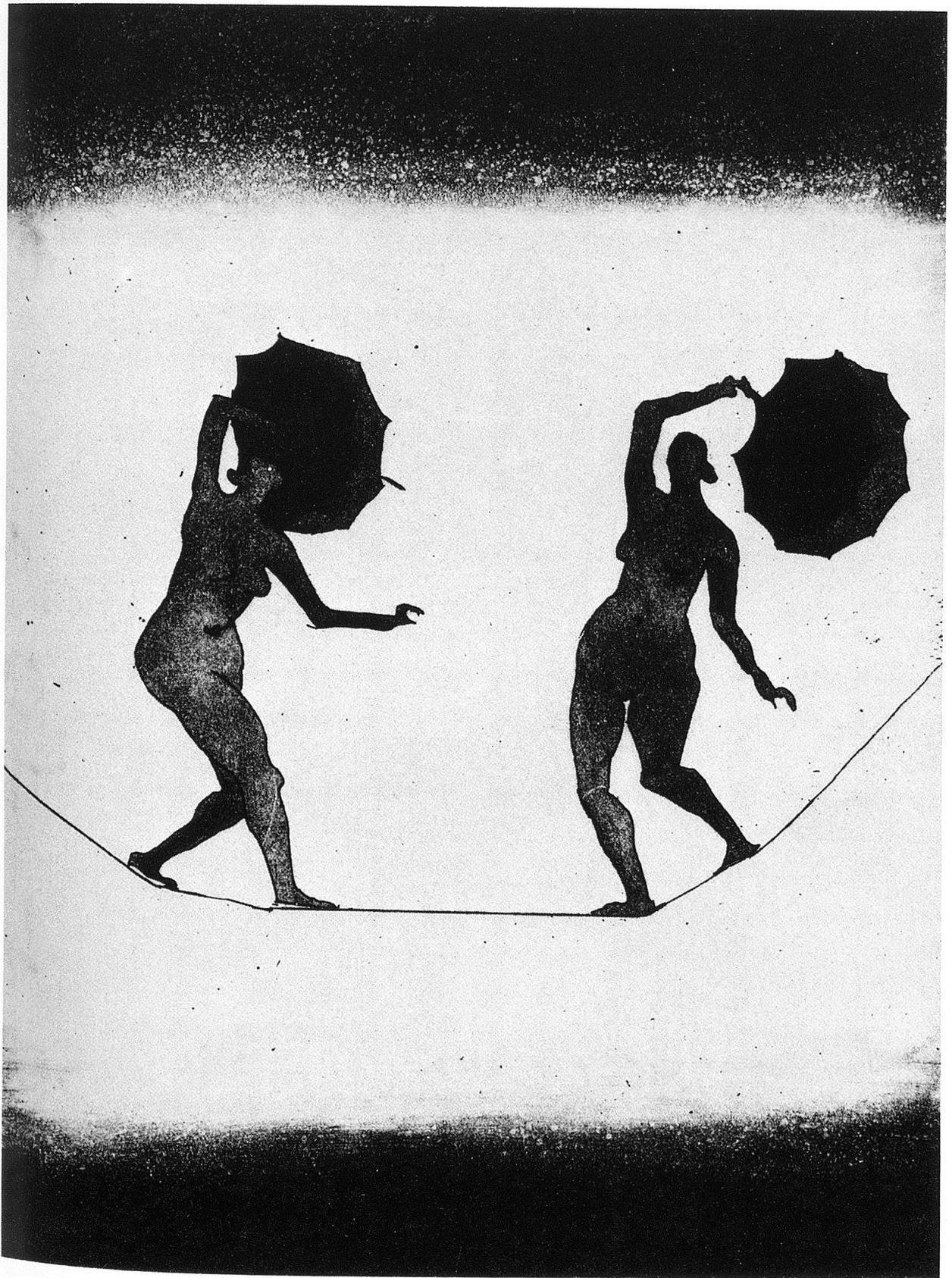
LEGENDEN ZU DEN FOLGENDEN VIER ABBILDUNGEN

1 Henry Moore: *High Wire Walkers*. Radierung und Aquatinta, 250 × 190 mm. Der Künstler schuf diese Radierung für die Edition de tête der Faksimile-Ausgabe des «Sketchbook 1926». Die Radierung wurde in einer Auflage von 75 Exemplaren von M. Basis, London, auf seiner Handpresse gedruckt. «Sketchbook 1926» wurde im Jahre 1976 von Ganymed Original Editions in Verbindung mit Fischer Fine Art veröffentlicht.

2 Oskar Kokoschka: *King Lear*. 1963. Eine limitierte Auflage von 275 Exemplaren von Shakespeares «King Lear», Format 455 × 355 mm. Alle Exemplare von Kokoschka signiert und nummeriert. Das Werk enthält 16 Lithographien von Kokoschka, die von J.E. Wolfensberger, Zürich, gedruckt wurden. Der Text wurde von Hand in der Fell-Type gesetzt und auf handgeschöpftem Bütten von der University Press, Oxford, gedruckt. Das Papier wurde speziell für diese Auflage von Barcham Green, Maidstone, Kent, hergestellt. Der Einband in Ganzpergament wurde von der Wigmore Bindery, London, besorgt. Verlegt von Ganymed Original Editions Ltd.

3 Oskar Kokoschka: *Die Odyssee*. 1965. Eine Folge von 44 Lithographien, 570 × 395 mm. Gedruckt von J.E. Wolfensberger, Zürich. Auflage: Standard 50 Exemplare, Edition de tête 9 Exemplare. Jede Lithographie liegt in einem Faltbogen mit Text, in der deutschen Übersetzung von Voss oder der englischen Übersetzung von Robert Fitzgerald. Der Text wurde von Hand in der Fell-Type gesetzt und von der University Press, Oxford, gedruckt. Die Kasette in Ganzleder wurde von F. & J. Randall, London, hergestellt. Verlegt von Ganymed Original Editions in Verbindung mit Marlborough Fine Art (London) Ltd. Frontispiz: Lithographie mit Titel in Griechisch, gesetzt in der Fell-Type.

4 Sidney Nolan: *The Leda Suite*. Nr. 2. Eine Folge von 8 Lithographien, 405 × 575 mm. Veröffentlicht 1961 in einer Auflage von 125 Exemplaren von Ganymed Press London Ltd.



ACT V SCENE III

Your servant Kent. Where is your servant Caius?

Lear. He's a good fellow, I can tell you that; He'll strike, and quickly too. He's dead and rotten.

Kent. No, my good lord; I am the very man—

Lear. I'll see that straight.

Kent. That from your first of difference and decay Have followed your sad steps—

Lear. You are welcome hither. *Kent.* Nor no man else. All's cheerless, dark, and deadly. Your eldest daughters have fordone themselves, And desperately are dead.

Lear. Ay, so I think.

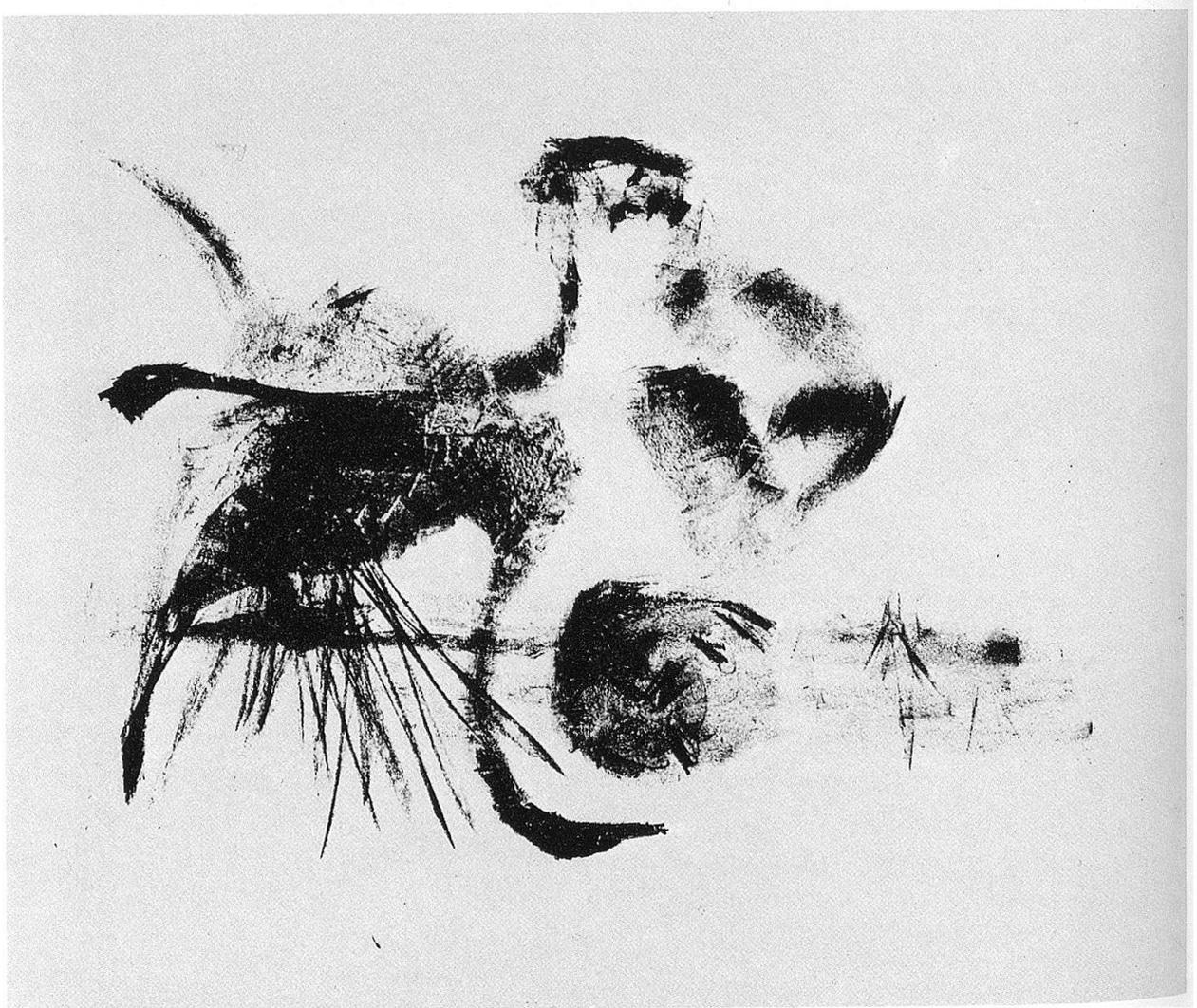
Albany. He knows not what he says, and vain is it That we present us to him.

Edgar. Very bootless.



ΟΔΥΣΣΕΙΑ





soon could establish connections in England, France and America.

The *Marées-Gesellschaft* published a Year book, of which five numbers appeared: in 1919, 1920, 1921, 1922 and 1925. In these issues it is possible to chart the progress of their publications. The contributions to the Year books ranged widely and beyond the field of the visual arts. Alfred Einstein wrote on Heinrich Schütz, Heinrich Mann on Flaubert, Hugo von Hofmannsthal on drawings, Musil on the cultural state of Europe. Meier-Graefe as chief editor contributed to every number. By the end of 1923 the *Marées-Gesellschaft* had published forty-two titles. Then the flood became a trickle. The end of the inflation cast a shadow on art publishing as the public suddenly realised how they had been impoverished. There were still a few outstanding publications to follow at long intervals: Gauguin's *Noa Noa* (1926) reproduced from the original manuscript lent by the Louvre, and a second Renoir portfolio (1929). While this paucity of new publications indicated a change of climate, the Ganymed printing firm did not suffer. Reinhold Piper had opened a new avenue. He had had a bitter argument with Meier-Graefe about the reproduction of oil paintings, Meier-Graefe insisting that only work on paper could be perfectly reproduced. Piper on the other hand maintained that adequate renderings could be achieved which would—like a good translation—convey the content of a painted original. He started publishing under his own imprint calling the prints Piper-Drucke, a series which still continues though under different ownership.

The association of Meier-Graefe and Piper came to an end in 1928. The last publication of the *Marées-Gesellschaft* appeared in 1929. So ended a glorious decade of brilliant and creative publishing, which had excelled in the field of facsimile portfolios from Dürer to the *Mappe der Gegenwart*. They had been equally enterprising in commissioning original graphic work from the greatest contemporary artists in Germany,

Corinth and Kokoschka, Beckmann and Klee, Kubin and Hofer.

We are now approaching the thirties. Meier-Graefe retired to the south of France and died in 1935. It would have been unthinkable for this civilised European to survive in Germany under the Hitler regime. This was the end of an era.

Bruno Deja was the remaining founder-member of the printing press which kept going and which received a prize at the Paris World Exhibition in 1937. In spite of the outbreak of war in 1939 the firm managed to retain a nucleus of craftsmen and could continue, though on a much reduced scale. Even some slight damage from air raids could be repaired. Then on 1st February 1945 catastrophe struck and the plant was completely destroyed. Deja, shattered in his health, accepted the invitation of a friend in Austria where he remained for a year. He came back to a Berlin now occupied by the Allies and looked at his old premises and found the presses buried under the rubble. Searching through the ruins with an engineer he was encouraged by the expert's opinion that something could be saved from the debris. The first step he had to take was to apply for a licence from the Allied Control Commission to restart his firm. He had found new premises in the British Sector, in fact in the same building in which his former employer, Albert Frisch, had survived. Deja took a selection of Ganymed samples with him to the interview and found a more sympathetic hearing than he could have hoped for. The young English officer, who saw him, had worked in the printing trade, was fascinated by the samples Deja showed him and said, 'This is just the kind of printing we would like to see in London. Would you be interested in some sort of co-operation?' Deja, surprised and delighted, grasped at the chance and so the seed of Ganymed London was sown.

The sequence of this encounter was that the young officer, who had met Bruno Deja, talked to a friend connected with the book

publishing side of *The New Statesman*. The manager of *The New Statesman*, impressed by the samples shown to him, approached the directors of Lund Humphries, a firm of printers and publishers, distinguished in both fields. The directors, Eric Humphries on the printing side was a supporter of modern typography, keen on technical innovation and above all on perfection. Peter Gregory, the publisher was most aware of the rising generation of new highly talented artists, Henry Moore, Ben Nicholson, Barbara Hepworth. He was also a close friend of the main protagonist of modern art, Herbert Read. When the idea of establishing a collotype plant was suggested to them, it at once struck a sympathetic chord. They went to Berlin to meet Bruno Deja and discussed with him the founding of a plant similar to his own in England. They proposed to assist him in excavating and restoring his presses and to buy four of them which he said he could spare. They would also rely on his technical advice for starting the new plant in England. The proposal was warmly welcomed by Deja as it helped him in his present plight and showed a future for his ideas in England. The new connection also helped him to clear the way through the thicket of restrictions imposed by the military authorities. He was most deeply touched by the sympathetic treatment from members of a former enemy nation, who so thoroughly appreciated his life's work. As a sign of recognition he offered the use of the name of Ganymed for the new enterprise.

Ganymed London was started after a war which had lasted longer and had been infinitely more destructive than the previous one. Large areas of London were in ruins, new building had ceased for six years, stores of materials were exhausted, power stations damaged or neglected. In spite of these difficulties, premises were found on the outskirts of London. The presses from Berlin were newly erected there, three specialist workers from Deja's plant were brought to

England, and others engaged on the spot and by 1949 a number of subjects had been photographed, retouched and proved.

The establishment of a firm in England which could supply facsimile printing of a quality formerly only available on the Continent, attracted the attention of museums and of The British Council. The Tate Gallery lent a number of drawings from their collection for reproduction, works by Blake, Turner, Samuel Palmer, Cézanne, Degas, van Gogh, Moore and Picasso. The British Council supported the publication of a series of works by British artists, Cotman, Cozens, Girtin, Steer and again Moore. The first intention was to concentrate on printing as the main business of the new firm but it soon became quite clear that the market was too restricted and that Ganymed would have to publish in order to keep the printing plant going. In 1950 appeared the first reproduction of an oil painting as a Ganymed Print. On the strength of the quality of the printing, the firm was again helped by museums and private collectors lending their valuable originals for reproduction, for example modern paintings from The Tate Gallery, Impressionists from the Courtauld Gallery and from private collections among them works by Matisse, Braque, Picasso and de Staël. The National Gallery gave special facilities for photography and retouching on their premises. The most precious of these loans was the self portrait by Rembrandt from Kenwood, one of the greatest of his last years.

Ganymed built up a list of about a hundred titles, of which most were printed on their own presses. In addition to printing for Ganymed's own publishing, there were interesting printing commissions: paintings by American primitives sent over from the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Museum in Williamsburg, illustrations for R. Marshall's monograph on Worcester Porcelain, and, most exciting of all, the reproduction of forty originals by Rabindranath Tagore. This came about through the initiative of Nehru

who wished to see Tagore recognised as an artist as well as a poet. These facsimile prints were widely exhibited for the celebration of Tagore's centenary.

Ganymed entered a different field with the publication of original graphic work. The first steps were taken when Henry Moore, intrigued by the quality of the reproductions of his drawings, wished to use collotype as a medium for original graphic work. After some experimenting he drew a number of subjects on the matt side of a plastic film, making separate drawings for each colour to be printed, placing register marks outside the image area and giving instructions as to the colour in which each constituent part should be printed. The print was then realised by the superimposition on the press as in a colour lithograph. What attracted the artist was that the washes in his drawing retained their natural flow and that the finest detail was faithfully rendered, which would not have been possible in a lithograph. Three of these prints were published in 1951 in signed editions of seventy five copies under the name Collographs. They have now become highly valued rarities in the art market.

In 1962 The Tate Gallery held a great exhibition of the work of Oskar Kokoschka. Although he had spent the war years in England, there had been no major exhibition of his work, in fact since his paintings had been banned in Germany and removed from the public collections, little of his work had been seen anywhere. The large exhibition at The Tate was therefore a revelation. I was deeply moved by it and knowing that Kokoschka had not undertaken a major graphic work since 'Der gefesselte Columbus' (1913) and the Bach Kantate (1914) I approached him to ask whether he would be interested in creating lithographs for Shakespeare's 'King Lear'. If so, the publication would coincide with the celebration of the quatercentenary of Shakespeare's birth in 1964. When I visited Kokoschka in Villeneuve in January 1963 he responded

to my suggestion with the words, 'König Lear, das regt mich sehr auf' (King Lear, that thrills me). He created sixteen lithographs in quick succession. His own enthusiasm inspired all connected with the production of the book: the printers of the lithographs, J.E.Wolfensberger of Zurich, Barcham Green, the makers of the hand made paper, the Oxford University Press, who set the text by hand in the type which Peter de Walpergen had cut for Dr. Fell between 1672-1702 and which is owned exclusively by the Press, they also printed in the traditional manner on dampened sheets. Ten months after the first meeting I could present the artist with a copy bound in full vellum by Wigmore Bindery.

As I knew of Kokoschka's love of Hellas and of Greek antiquity I suggested 'The Return of Odysseus' as a theme for a graphic suite. He loved the idea, but after he had covered the subject he had become so involved with the figure of Odysseus, that he decided to illustrate the whole of the Odyssey. He remarked in a letter to me:

'Im Odysseus ist ja der Vierbeiner (sic) zur Gestalt zur Persönlichkeit geworden, hat durch viele Jahrhunderte durch die dunklen Nächte der Menschheit wie ein Leuchtturm gewirkt' and again after completing the work 'Aber der Odysseus ist ein Mensch geworden mit vielen Abenteuern und doch auch inneren Wandlungen, die man einer Figur, die bloss gezeichnet ist, nicht zutraut. Er lebt und ist fortgegangen und läßt etwas wie Abschiedsschmerz bei mir zurück.'

The Odyssey was published in association with Marlborough Fine Art in 1965. Each lithograph was contained in a folder with the text of the relevant passage in the inspired translation by Robert Fitzgerald. The text again printed by the Oxford University Press in handset Fell type. The Solander boxes were made by F. & J. Randall with a device designed by Kokoschka.

After completion of 'The Odyssey' I suggested to Kokoschka three biblical subjects

out of which he chose the story of Saul and David, which he called a Shakespearean theme. As in his drawings for 'King Lear' and 'The Odyssey', Kokoschka was not primarily concerned with an outline of place and situation. He went straight to the inner drama and tensions of the event, the living moment and what transcends it. He appears as the witness of an immediate experience.

'Saul and David' was the last of Kokoschka's great suites that Ganymed published (1969).

As already mentioned the earliest publication of original graphic work were the three Collographs by Henry Moore. In 1970 having been deeply impressed by Moore's etchings of the Elephant Skull suite, I wrote to him:

'May we suggest a successor to the theme of the Elephant Skull suite, based on a work of man but very ancient in terms of history. What we have in mind is a suite on Stonehenge. This is the most monumental relic of the Stone Age in Europe and with its use of the most ancient material, the bones of the earth so to speak, the work of man transmuted by sun, water and wind, a witness to eternity like the skull of the primeval animal.'

While I had felt that something of the spirit of Stonehenge pervaded many of Moore's drawings, I was still surprised by what he told me when I saw him to discuss the suite: that Stonehenge had fascinated him since his boyhood when he had seen illustrations of it. When he came to London on a scholarship to The Royal College in 1921, his first outing was to Salisbury, and without waiting for the next morning, he went straight out to Stonehenge and saw it in the light of the moon. Since then he had visited Stonehenge twenty or thirty times. What interested him was not so much the history of Stonehenge, but what it is now, the size, the working of the stone, the effect of the weather, the sculptural grandeur. In the suite of fifteen lithographs (and a further lithograph and two etchings for the édition

de tête) Moore revealed a profound sympathy, a compelling affinity between the primeval monument and his own world of forms.

The lithographs move from the near topographical into the mysterious realm of Moore's sculptural imagination. Stephen Spender, an old friend of the artist, wrote an introduction which incorporates Moore's response to the subject as well as Spender's reflections on the lithographs. The lithographs were again printed by Wolfensberger, the binding was by Randall in full vellum, lettering designed by the artist, the text printed by Ian Mortimer from handset Caslon type.

As we wished to publish a graphic work of Moore's on the occasion of his eightieth birthday, we suggested a suite based on the most essential theme of his sculptural oeuvre, the reclining figure. Moore created a suite of eight etchings with aquatint and gave the figures a landscape background, using coloured aquatint in several of the plates. They were printed by Lacourière et Frélaud of Paris on Richard de Bas paper, the oldest surviving paper maker on the Continent. Stephen Spender again introduced the suite, this time in the form of a poem 'Homage to Henry Moore'.

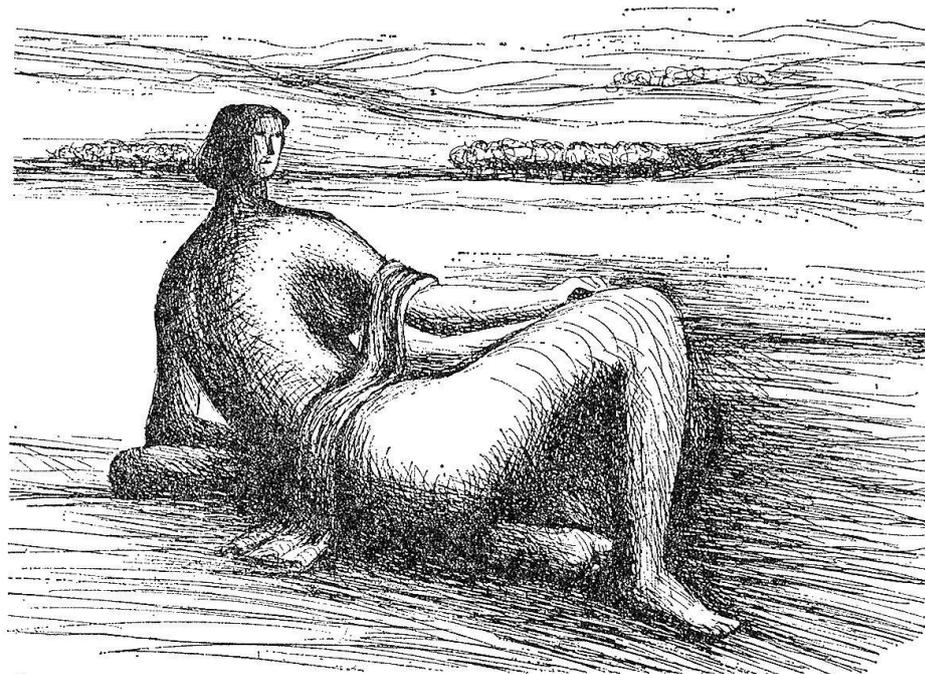
Ben Nicholson was approached by Ganymed with a suggestion for a suite of etchings related to his architectural drawings. This suite of ten etchings, called Architectural Suite, was published in 1967. Herbert Read wrote in the Introduction:

'It was inevitable that an artist so devoted to line should be drawn sooner or later to etching and that artist being Ben Nicholson, it was inevitable that he should make something personal of the art.'

This suite was followed by one called 'Greek and Turkish Forms' which took its main inspiration from travels in those countries. A third suite followed in 1971, an anthology of work both abstract and architectural under the title 'Ben Nicholson 3'. An artist of a very different nature, whom we persuaded

HENRY MOORE

the reclining figure



GANYMED

Henry Moore: *The Reclining Figure*. Titelseite, 515 × 446 mm. Eine Folge von 8 Radierungen und 1 Radierung auf der Titelseite, gedruckt von Lacourière & Frélaud, Paris, in einer Auflage von 65 Exemplaren. Der Text und das Gedicht von Stephen Spender, «Sculptor and Statues», wurde von Ian Mortimer in der Caslon Old Face von Hand gesetzt und auf seiner Handpresse gedruckt. Veröffentlicht von Ganymed Original Editions Ltd.

to try his hand at graphic work, was L. S. Lowry. Ganymed Press had been the first to publish a reproduction of one of his paintings in 1955. Other reproductions followed and this contact led Lowry to visit Ganymed whenever he came to London. This strange and lonely man, who felt himself to be in foreign parts on the rare occasions when he came south, established a close relationship with us. His provincial seclusion was part of his artistic strength. He had discovered the hidden poetry in the grey streets in the grey towns of the industrial north. When he spoke of Francis Terrace in Salford one felt it had been a numinous experience to him. During the years 1966 to 1972 he drew for Ganymed sixteen lithographs which constitute all his original graphic work. They range from his vision of northern towns to the grotesque figures which expressed his view of common humanity.

In the fifties several large exhibitions of work by Australian artists had made a great impression in London. Through the isolation of the war years Australia had developed a native school of art quite independent of England and stimulated to a certain extent by the influence of Central European artists, who had taken refuge there. The Australian artists presented their strange environment with a new original vision in images which moved and surprised by their vigour and strangeness.

Sidney Nolan had shown a series of paintings on the theme of Leda and the Swan, dreamlike compositions. We suggested to him a graphic suite of variations on this theme. It was his first venture into lithography, and after a few trials he drew directly on the stone in quick succession some fifteen lithographs greatly varied in treatment, of which he selected eight for publication (1961). It was an immediate success which encouraged us to form a separate company Ganymed Original Editions.

Arthur Boyd had shown his gift for dramatic composition in his designs for the Electra ballet at Covent Garden and in

etchings which evolved from these designs. These led us to suggest to him a dramatic theme, a suite based on Aristophanes' 'Lysistrata'. After discussing a scenario and format and technique—etching and aquatint—he went to work on the subject which obviously inspired him. Two months later he had a display of forty proofs on the wall of his studio, a staggering exhibition of dramatic invention and brilliant technique, completely original and at an antipodean distance from such famous predecessors as Beardsley and Picasso.

The youngest of the Australian artists published by Ganymed was Brett Whiteley, who had a successful one-man show in London when he was only twenty-two years old. He had just left abstraction behind him and never returned to it. We suggested he might try his hand at graphic work and he pro-

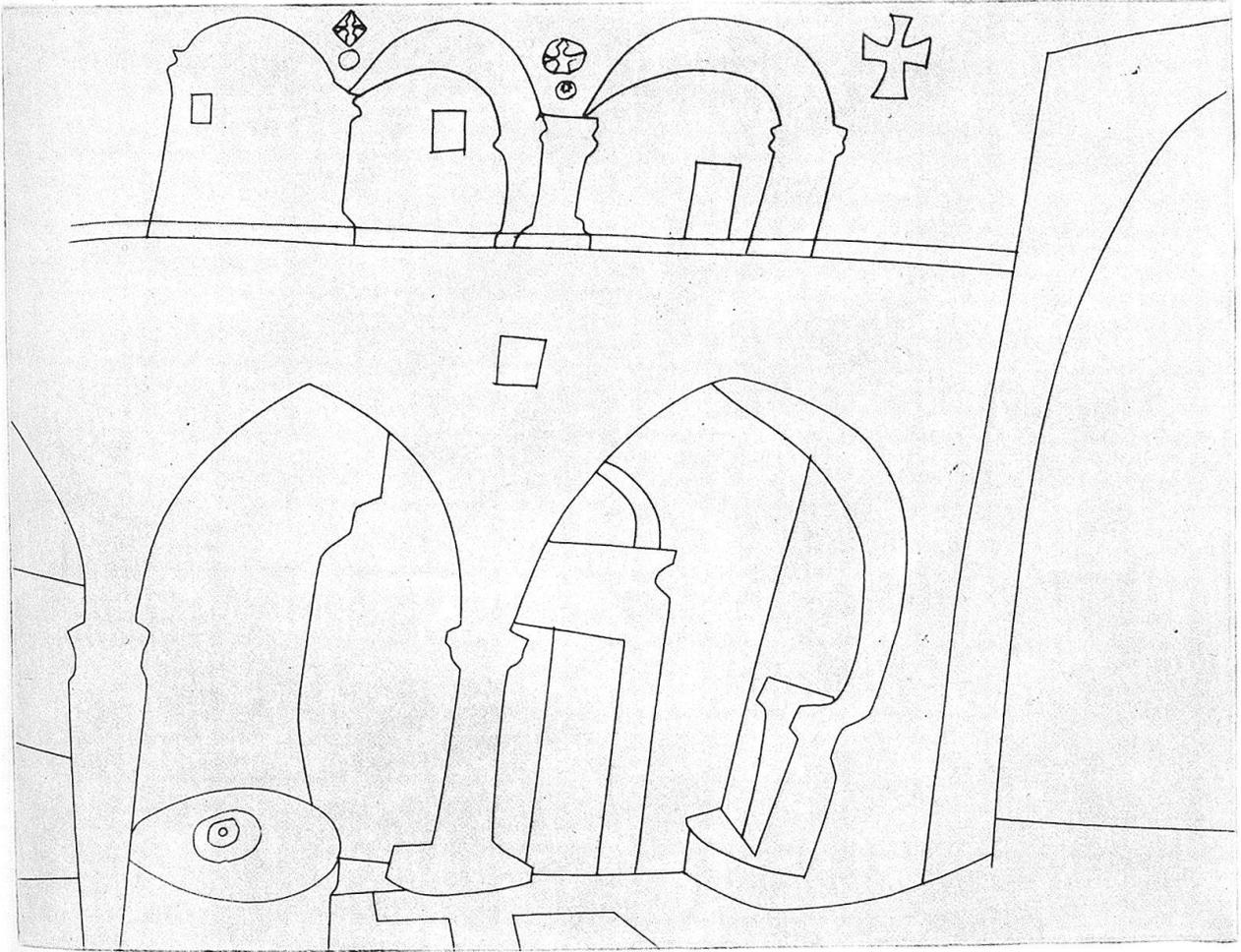
LEGENDEN ZU DEN FOLGENDEN VIER ABBILDUNGEN

5 Ben Nicholson: *Greek and Turkish Forms. Nr. 10, Patmos Monastery, 345 × 450 mm. Eine Folge von 10 Radierungen in einer Auflage von 50 Exemplaren von F. Lafranca in Locarno gedruckt. Veröffentlicht 1968 von Ganymed Original Editions Ltd in Verbindung mit Marlborough Fine Art (London) Ltd.*

6 Henry Moore: *Stonehenge. Nr. 4, Inside the Circle, 290 × 437 mm. Die Stonehenge-Suite besteht aus 15 Lithographien in der Standardausgabe und einer zusätzlichen Lithographie und zwei Radierungen in der Edition de tête. Die Lithographien der Standardausgabe wurden von J. E. Wolfensberger, Zürich, gedruckt, die Radierungen der Edition de tête von Lacourière & Frélaud in Paris. Die Kasette in Ganzpergament wurde von F. & J. Randall in London hergestellt. Die Einleitung von Stephen Spender wurde von Ian Mortimer in der Caslon Old Face von Hand gesetzt und auf seiner Handpresse gedruckt. Veröffentlicht 1973 von Ganymed Original Editions Ltd.*

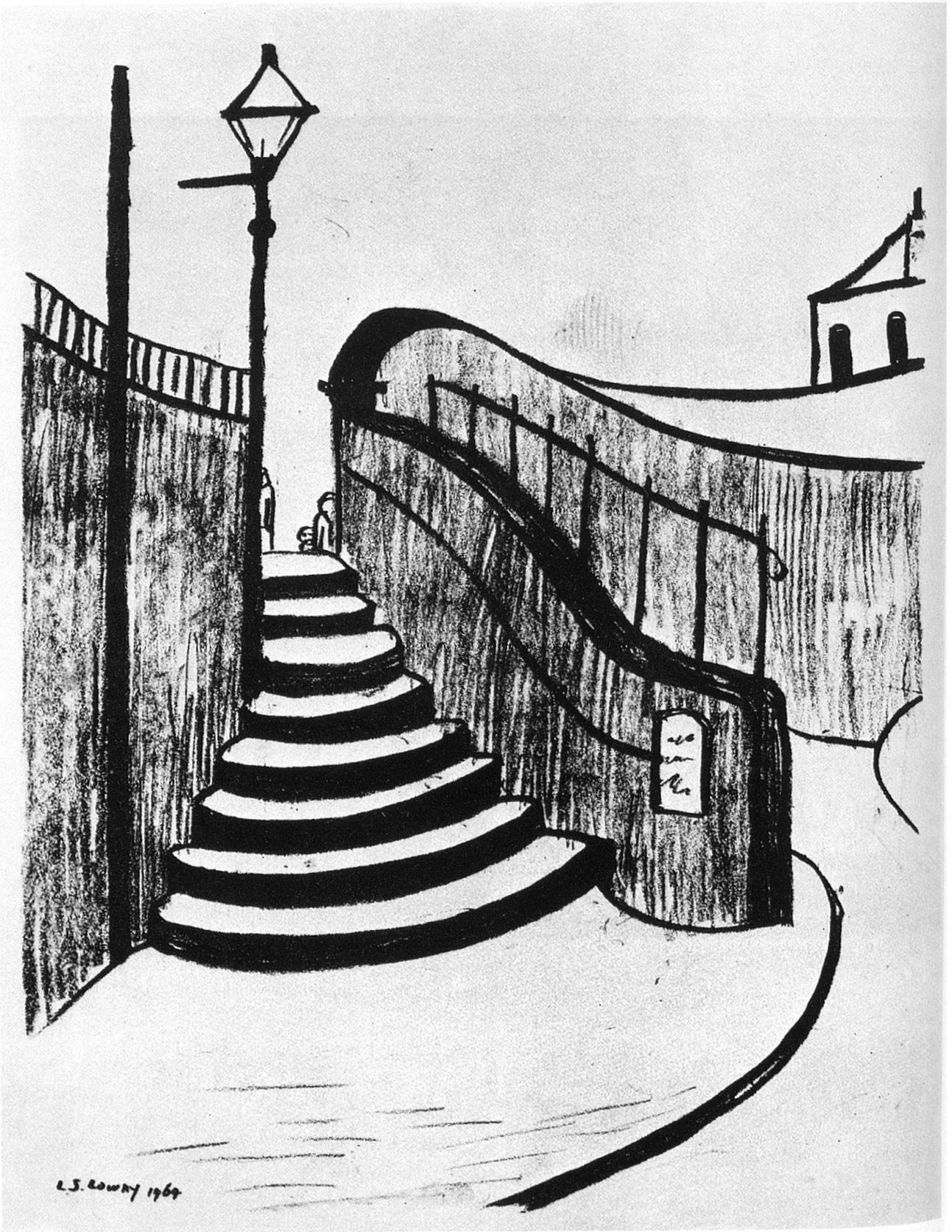
7 Arthur Boyd: *Lysistrata. Nr. 20, Kopf des Dyonisos, 350 × 400 mm. Eine Folge von 30 Radierungen mit Aquatinta, inspiriert von Aristophanes' Komödie. Radierungen gedruckt von Thomas Ross, London. Standardauflage 50 Exemplare, Edition de tête 12 Exemplare. Veröffentlicht 1970 von Ganymed Original Editions Ltd.*

8 L. S. Lowry: *Old Steps, Stockport. Lithographie, 620 × 480 mm. Gedruckt bei J. E. Wolfensberger, Zürich. Auflage 75 Exemplare. Veröffentlicht 1972 von Ganymed Original Editions.*









duced two prints in the manner in which he then painted. This was in 1962. Fifteen years later, when he came to London to prepare an exhibition, we suggested a suite expressing his urge to do sculpture. He made eight large lithographic drawings in different techniques of the female nude, which were published under the title 'Towards Sculpture'.

It can be seen from the foregoing that original graphic work had become the main concern of Ganymed during the last eighteen years of its existence. Ganymed's own collotype printing came to an end in 1963 and the process is disappearing fast all over Europe. It will be asked what caused the decline after so many wonderful achievements.

The collotype process was a typical invention of the last century with its combination of photographic chemistry (i.e. the light sensitive emulsion on the printing plate), machine power for the presses and the skill of the operators. Poitevin invented the basic process in 1855, Joseph Albert made it a practical one in 1868. Before this invention had been perfected all printed illustrations had to be drawn on the litho stone or engraved in metal or wood. Collotype made it possible to translate photographs into print. As it is a planographic process, lithographic printers could take it up with only minor adaptations to their existing presses. The inherent limitation of quantity—the plate can only produce about a thousand copies—was no impediment at the time. Collotype fulfilled an existing demand for the printing of illustrations in catalogues and books and for the printing of postcards. The process spread quickly all over the Continent to produce work for these mundane purposes. However it soon rose to a higher level when the State printing works in Vienna, Berlin and Rome took it up, followed by more ambitious private firms. Before the end of the century the process was used for monochrome illustrations of art books. Botticelli's drawings for the

Divina Commedia were reproduced by the Reichsdruckerei in 1896, edited by the director of the printroom in Berlin. Early in the new century Jaffé of Vienna achieved outstanding results in colour reproduction which encouraged the then director of the Albertina, Joseph Meder, to commission facsimile reproductions of the drawings in the collection for the purpose of exhibition and dissemination. The work was started in 1905, continued for about 30 years, and the unsurpassed results can still be seen in the entrance room of the Albertina with an acknowledgment to the printer. The work of Ganymed Berlin in the twenties, mostly for the Marées-Gesellschaft, was of equal excellence, and the facsimile work of Ganymed London was on the same level. In 1980 the London firm was honoured with an exhibition at the Victoria & Albert Museum, showing examples of printing and an anthology from the publications of original graphic work.

In spite of these achievements the use of collotype has declined rapidly over the last twenty years. Ganymed Berlin closed down in 1970, there is now hardly any collotype left in Germany and none in England. Jaffé in Vienna survives to this day on a much reduced scale. What brought about this decline was first of all that collotype has lost its basis in ordinary work which has been taken over by offset. As a consequence many small firms which supplied these needs have gone. There is only one level left, that of the highest quality, to justify collotype printing. While the ordinary collotype firm did not produce any outstanding work, it trained people in the basic techniques of the process who could then graduate to more demanding work if they had the ability. That training ground has now gone. Another consequence was that the supply industries had no interest in catering for so few customers, so that the developments of the last twenty years by-passed collotype. Even the repair of the old fashioned presses created difficulties, there were no spare parts available

and the engineers, trained to attend to modern machines, did not understand how to deal with them. But the greatest obstacle to collotype's survival lies in the nature of the process. In order to succeed on the highest level, collotype requires the most devoted craftsmanship which takes years to acquire



Ganymed-Signet auf dem Einband des «Jahrbuchs für die Kunst» der Marées-Gesellschaft, München, Band 3, 1921.

and has to be sustained through all the stages of process work and printing. The first important step is photography from the original, making colour separation negatives directly to the size of the image required. Colour transparencies cannot be used for the finest work as they cannot render the full range of shades and by their very nature cannot replace the reflecting image of the original. Contact with the original is therefore a precondition for a facsimile rendering. A colour transparency is suitable for standard commercial printing as it reduces the range of colours to a combination of the three primary colours. In modern commercial printing the transparency would be put into an electronic scanner for colour correction and very little further retouching would be required to reach the printing plate. For the collotype process it would be necessary to work on the separation negatives by adjusting the densities and working on the de-

tails by hand. The collotype printing plates have to be coated and baked on the premises and after printing down have to be developed on the press, a lengthy process, and once they reach the desired state, have to be watched all the time the printing is in progress so that the right degree of acceptance of ink is maintained. The sensitivity of the plate makes it possible to obtain the finest gradation, but this same quality makes it unstable. While slight variations do not matter on commercial subjects, they would be fatal in facsimiles of works of art. The slowness inherent in the collotype process and the degree of craftsmanship required, set it apart from all branches of modern printing. Nothing has been invented yet which could replace it, as it is still the only process which gives a continuous tone without the interference of a screen. Modern economic conditions also militate against it, i. e. high overheads, short working hours and high wages. There is also a psychological barrier: the reluctance by people to exert themselves while others working in similar fields are aided by modern instruments and machines. There is no future for collotype as a cottage industry, where hand-weaving, pottery or the marbling of paper can stay alive in the late 20th century. Collotype with its elaborate stages from camera to printing press does not allow this.

One can only hope for the arrival of a new screenless printing process which could be practised under the umbrella of a larger unit by a few dedicated people. The need for the perfect facsimile remains for study, for instruction and for what Meier-Graefe called The Retiro of the art-loving man.

ZUR FOLGENDEN TEXTBEILAGE

Auf den nachfolgenden acht Seiten ist der offensichtlich von Julius Meier-Graefe stammende Text «Faksimile-Drucke» aus dem ersten Band der Marées-Gesellschaft, München 1919, in Faksimile wiedergegeben: Ein Beitrag aus dem Jahr 1919 zu einem aktuell geblienen Thema.