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William Strang: Prints and Drawings

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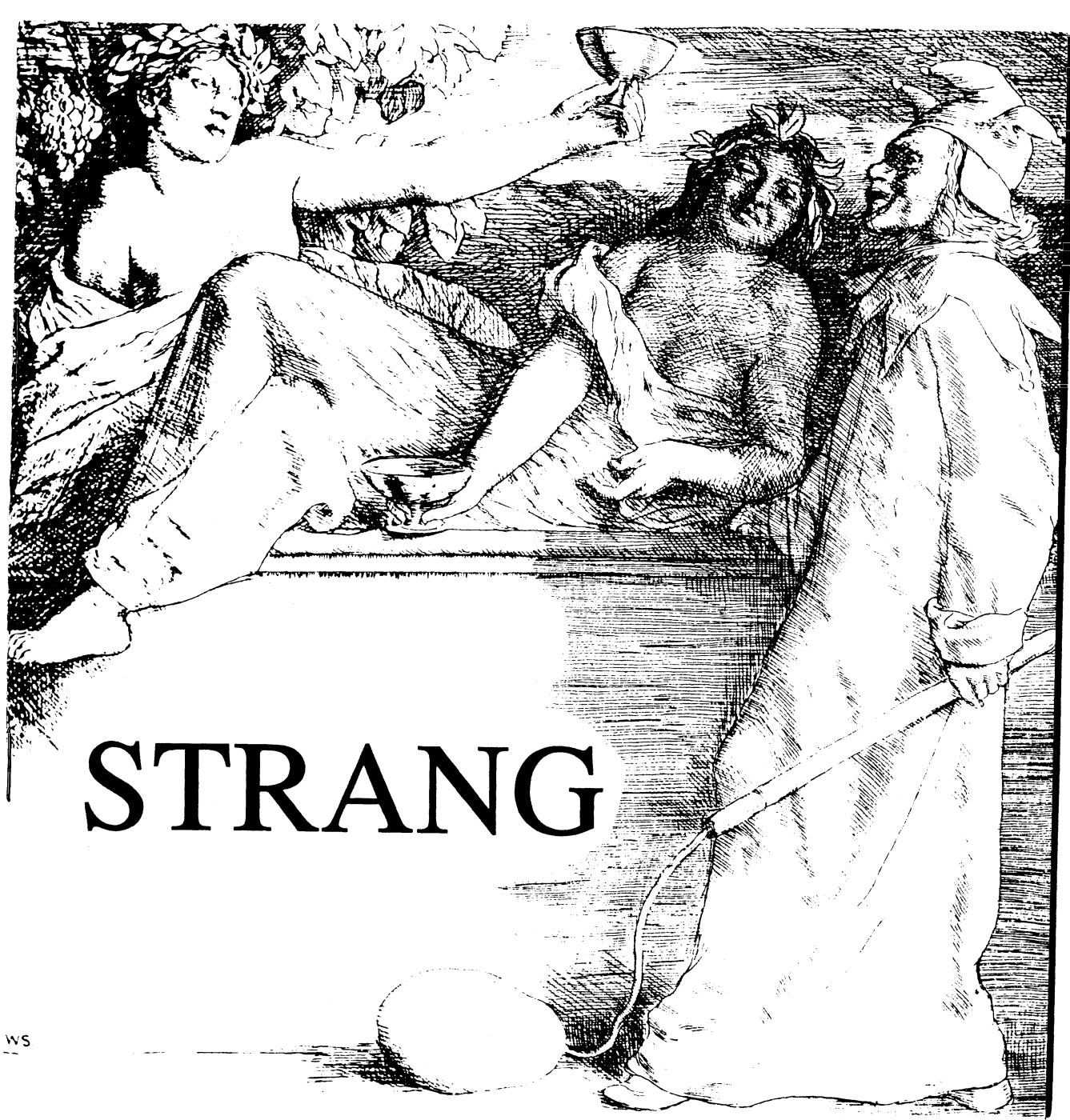
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STRANG



WILLIAM STRANG

Prints and Drawings



La Salle University Museum

March 17 - May 15, 1992

William Strang (1859-1921)

William Strang was born in Dumbarton, Scotland, in 1859. His mother's family were connected with the shipbuilding trade in Clydeside, and, after graduating from the local school, Strang was apprenticed as a clerk in the family business. However, he early demonstrated his artistic ability and at seventeen was allowed to enter the Slade School of Art in London. There his major teacher came to be the French artist Alphonse Legros, who influenced his choice of media as well as his realistic treatment of social themes.

After his training, Strang taught at the Slade and, while he later took up painting with some success, achieved most of his fame in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century revival of etching.

In addition to his social realism, Strang had an interest in the mysterious, even at times in the macabre; Jacob's "Monkey's Paw" is said to have been his favorite short story. His accomplished draughtsmanship served these interests exceedingly well, as also his foray into book illustration in the 1880's and 90's. In the last effort, he was briefly influenced by Aubrey Beardsley, with whom he collaborated on *Lucien's True History* (1894). But by this time his own reputation was well established, and, while there are echoes of several earlier and contemporary artists in it, his art was never less than honest, direct, and convincingly his own. Over the years, too, his varied experiments continued, especially in drypoint and etched mezzotint.

In a life work of over seven hundred etchings, the portrait prints are particularly compelling. The present small exhibition, drawn from La Salle's own collection, has a number of his portraits of literary figures--Shaw, Hardy, Bridges, Kipling, the last, a close

friend. There are also some of his moving depictions of poor country and city folk, samples of his book illustrations, others of religious themes. In most of these examples, there is evident his gifted but severe style. There is also a compassionate view of humanity in its daily struggles that puts him clearly in the tradition of Rembrandt and Daumier. If Strang refused to adopt the newest styles of his period, French Impressionism especially, he produced work that is distinctive and impressive. It deserves to be remembered and honored, as it has been in several exhibitions recently in London and now here.

Daniel Burke, F.S.C.

Director

CHECK LIST

1. *Anarchy* c. 1894

Engraving

Printed by David Strang

Purchased with funds donated by the Art Angels

2. *George Bernard Shaw* 1907

Final state

Drypoint and etching

3. *Rudyard Kipling* 1898

Final state

Drypoint

As an artist, Strang felt a close affinity to his contemporary novelist-friends, Rudyard Kipling and Thomas Hardy. Strang provided etching and aquatint illustrations for Kipling's *Thirty Short Stories* (1901).

4. *Thomas Hardy, O.M.* 1910

Drypoint

5. *Robert Bridges* 1898

Etching

Printed by David Strang

6. *Farm on the Forth* 1900

Final state

Etching

Printed by David Strang

7. *Mealtime* 1883

Etching

8. *The Resurrection* 1887

Etching



9. *Taking the Oath* 1889

Drypoint

Purchased with funds donated by
David and Joan Souser



10. *Tinkers* 1882

Etching

11. *The Prodigal Son* 1882

Etching

12. Twelve illustrations for John Bunyan's, *Pilgrim's Progress*
(London: John C. Nimmo, 1895)

Etching

13. *The Soup Kitchen* 1889

Etching

Printed by David Strang

14. *The Marriage at Cana* 1889

Etching

Printed by David Strang

15. *Descent from the Cross* 1897

vii/vii Final state

Etching

16. *Sir Henry Layard*

i/iii

Mezzotint

Printed by David Strang



17. *John Masefield* 1912

Final state

Etching

Printed by David Strang

18. Title page to "*The Christ Upon the Hill--A Ballad*,"
by Cosmo Monkhouse 1895

Etching

19. *The Wine Drinkers*

Etching

Purchased with funds donated by the Art Angels

20. *Drowned* 1890

Illustration for a short story

Etching

21. *J. B. Clark*

Pen and ink

In 1933 Clark illustrated, with his great friend Strang,

The Surprising Adventures of Baron Munchausen.

22. *Death and the Peasant* 1888

Pencil

Death and the Mother 1888

Pen and ink

Preliminary sketches for the etched illustrations for

Death and the Ploughman's Wife, a ballad composed and illustrated by Strang (London: Lawrence and Buller, 1894).

23. *Isaak Walton* 1902

Illustration for *The Compleat Angler*

Etching

24. *In Praise of Folly*

Done into English by Sir Thomas Challoner, 1549

(London: Essex House Press, 1901)

Woodcut illustrations by William Strang

Lent by The Robin Collection of Donglomur

25. *The Surprising Adventures of Baron Munchausen*

Illustrated by William Strang and J. B. Clark,
with an introduction by Thomas Seccombe

(London: Lawrence and Bull, 1895)

Lent by St. Joseph's University Library



26. *The New Testament*
with sixteen etchings by William Strang

(London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1934)

Lent by Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary Library,
Wake Forest, North Carolina

27. *Etchings of William Strang, ARA*
by Frank Newbolt

(London and New York: George Newnes Limited and
Charles Scribner's Sons)

