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# **Queen Victoria's Children and Sculpture (c.1860-1900): Collectors, Makers, Patrons**

Two Volumes: Volume 1

## **Désirée de Chair**

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Doctor of Philosophy

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## **Declaration**

I declare that this thesis is my own work and that it has not been submitted for a degree at another university.

## **Abstract**

This thesis examines the roles of Queen Victoria's children as collectors, makers and patrons of sculpture from around 1860 to 1900. To date, the royal children's engagement with sculpture has received hardly any scholarly attention. The conventional narrative is that after Prince Albert's death in 1861 royal patronage stagnated and lost its previous significance in the art world. However, based on major archival research and object-focused analysis, this thesis demonstrates that the royal children represented a new and distinct group of royal patrons whose artistic engagement was at the heart of Victorian sculpture.

By focusing on the careers of three of Victoria and Albert's nine children as case studies, it becomes clear that royal patronage of sculpture was highly diverse and complex. The first chapter assesses the role of Bertie, the Prince of Wales, as a collector of sculpture and highlights the ambiguousness of his encounters with the medium. The prince was a well-informed and zealous collector of sculpture; but he considered the medium to be principally for decorative purposes and personal enjoyment. The second chapter looks at Princess Louise as a maker of sculpture who had to negotiate her status as a princess and female amateur with her ambition to work like a professional sculptor in the public sphere. The third chapter focuses on Vicky, the Princess Royal and later German Empress, as a patron of sculpture in an Anglo-German context. As eldest and favourite daughter of Prince Albert, Vicky tried to continue her father's artistic legacy by engaging with sculpture in multifarious ways and realising his vision of an exemplary patron. Yet, her fraught political position as a British liberal at the imperial court in Germany complicated her efficacy in the sphere of contemporary sculpture and resulted in her focus on the Renaissance.

This thesis contributes to a revaluation of royal patronage in Victorian sculpture studies and also indicates the relevance of Queen Victoria's children to scholarly discourses including Aestheticism, female sculptors and Anglo-German artistic relations.

## INTRODUCTION

“Bravo, Loo!” cries the Prince of Wales, sitting astride a chair, and glancing at the bust before him with an intensely critical expression; “it is capital. If you go on like this, Susan Durant will have to look to her laurels, and I shouldn’t wonder if the House of Commons didn’t offer you a contract for some of the public buildings. They might get something worth having if they did.”<sup>1</sup>

The humorous scene suggested here, of Albert Edward, the Prince of Wales commenting on the sculptural work of his sister Princess Louise, forms part of an imagined conversation among Victoria’s children, published in 1868 in the satirical magazine *The Mask*.<sup>2</sup> Inspired by the then current summer exhibition at the Royal Academy, where Louise was exhibiting for the first time in that year, the article invites the reader on a stroll around the royal palaces to have a peek into Louise’s sculpture studio where her royal siblings have gathered to inspect her latest work. Accompanying the article is a cartoon of the scene entitled ‘The Royal Studio: The Princess Louise at Home’ [fig. 1]. As the only known, albeit fanciful and exaggerated, depiction of Louise in her studio surrounded by her siblings, the illustration serves as a poignant introduction to the royal children and their engagement with sculpture as collectors, makers and patrons.

In the illustration, Louise is standing at her modelling stand armed with a hammer and chisel, putting final touches to an enormous bust of her mother, Queen Victoria, while looking over to her brother, familiarly known as Bertie,

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<sup>1</sup> Anon., ‘The Royal Studio—the Princess Louise at Home’, *The Mask* (July 1868), pp. 161-64, here p. 162.

<sup>2</sup> The satirical monthly, edited by the librettist Alfred Thompson and the dramatist Leopold Lewis, failed after eleven issues from February until December 1868.



seated to her left. A cigar in his mouth, he is shown with the scrutinising expression of a connoisseur analysing the result of his sister's artistic efforts. Behind him, his wife Alexandra, holding their eldest son on Bertie's shoulders, stares listlessly over to Vicky, the Princess Royal and Crown Princess of Prussia, who is depicted on the right. Vicky is standing with a portfolio of sketches under her arm and looks at her little daughter reaching for the Prussian toy soldier she is holding up. In the left foreground, seated on the floor with his dog, is Prince Arthur watching his siblings' conversation, while the royal children's aunt and uncle, the Prince and Princess of Teck, are entering the room in the background. Conspicuously present, overlooking the royal children from behind, is Prince Albert in form of a marble bust placed on a high pedestal. Yet, even larger than his bust is that of Victoria, Louise's masterwork and the reason for the royal gathering. Through the colossal size of her head, Victoria dominates the scene despite her physical absence.

The zigzag composition across the page, between the figures with their cartooned heads, underlines the humorous implications of the scene and clearly betrays its imagined content. And yet, the condensed characterisation of each figure could not be more deliberate a portrayal of the royal children's aspirations and challenges as patrons of sculpture, whether seriously intended or subtly ridiculed. With the focus on Bertie, Louise and Vicky as the three main characters of the studio scene, the illustration underscores their significance in representing a new generation of royal patrons of sculpture after Prince Albert's death in 1861. By sculpting a portrait of the Queen, although working with unrealistically small tools, Louise is characterised as an ambitious sculptor. Bertie's ludicrously expert gaze and far-fetched comment that Louise would outpace the professional sculptor

Susan Durant seem to trivialise his critical judgement of sculpture. But his naivety suggests also his open-mindedness towards questions of gender and amateurism, and his interest in novel ideas. Vicky's portrayal with a large portfolio of sketches, inscribed in German, marks her out as an intellectual patron with an international dimension. At the same time, her dual Anglo-German identity is presented as a potentially fraught issue due to Prussia's increasing militarization alluded to in the figure of the toy soldier. Victoria and Albert, although not actively participating in the royal children's conversation, are clearly pertinent to their artistic engagement.

Up to the moment of Albert's death, Victoria and Albert had been distinguished patrons of sculpture who gathered a prolific and wide-ranging collection of contemporary works at the royal palaces.<sup>3</sup> In addition, Albert's continuing efforts in promoting British art and innovation had been central to the development of public projects such as the sculpture programme for the New Houses of Parliament and the organisation of the Great Exhibition of 1851.<sup>4</sup> However, with the tragic loss of her husband, Victoria retreated into mourning for nearly a decade and initially focused her artistic interest on perpetuating Albert's memory through public and private monuments dedicated to him.<sup>5</sup> During the time of her public seclusion, Victoria felt the loss of her husband's support deeply

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<sup>3</sup> For more on Victoria and Albert's private collection of sculpture, see Benedict Read, *Victorian Sculpture* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1982), pp. 132-39; Benedict Read, 'Berlin Sculpture of the 19th Century and Britain', in *Ethos und Pathos: Die Berliner Bildhauerschule 1786-1914. Beiträge*, eds Peter Bloch, Sibylle Einholz and Jutta von Simson (Berlin: Gebrüder Mann, Staatliche Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz, 1990), pp. 91-108, here pp. 91-93; Delia Millar, 'Royal Patronage and Influence', in *The Victorian Vision: Inventing New Britain*, ed. John M. Mackenzie (London: V&A Publications, 2001), pp. 26-49; *Victoria & Albert: Art & Love* (exhibition catalogue, Queen's Gallery, London, 19 March – 5 December 2010), ed. Jonathan Marsden (London: Royal Collection 2010), pp. 12-53 and especially cat nos. 80-95 on pp. 146-65; Philip Ward-Jackson, 'Public and Private Aspects of a Royal Sculpture Collection', in '*Victoria & Albert: Art & Love: Symposium*' published online, Essays from a symposium held at the National Gallery, London, 5 and 6 June 2010, ed. Susanna Avery-Quash, <http://www.royalcollection.org.uk/exhibitions/victoria-and-albert-art-and-love/contents> [accessed: 14 Dec. 2014].

<sup>4</sup> See John Steegman, *Consort of Taste 1830-1870* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1950); Winslow Ames, *Prince Albert and Victorian Taste* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1967).

<sup>5</sup> See for example Elisabeth Darby, *Statues of Queen Victoria and of Prince Albert. A Study in Commemorative and Portrait Statuary, 1837-1924*, Ph.D. thesis (The Courtauld Institute of Art 1983); Elisabeth Darby & Nicola Smith, *The Cult of the Prince Consort* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1981); Christopher Brooks (ed.), *The Albert Memorial: The Prince Consort National Memorial: Its History, Context and Conservation* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000); Margaret Homans, *Royal Representations: Queen Victoria and British Culture, 1837-1867* (Chicago & London: Chicago University Press, 1998).

and often reminded her children of the importance of following their father's example in all matters of life, and of art in particular. As reiterated by Vicky, Albert was 'the most perfect model of all that was pure, good, virtuous and great – so was his judgement in all things concerning art – unerring.'<sup>6</sup> The royal children's continuity of his artistic legacy did not, however, materialize as simply as one might conclude from Vicky's praise. And yet, during the remaining four decades of the Victorian period – the focus of this thesis – the royal children emerged as a new generation of royal patrons of sculpture, through their engagement as private collectors, active practitioners and mediators, seriously involved with the medium in multiple ways.

As a period of significant transformation in contemporary sculpture, from mid-century neoclassicism to the vanguard ideas of Aestheticism and the 'New Sculpture', the decades from around 1860 to 1900 offered the royal children unprecedented opportunities to engage with progressive artistic networks, explore new techniques and styles, and incorporate in their sculptural projects the experience of aesthetic and imperial encounters. The time frame here laid out coincides roughly with the death of Albert, in 1861, and Victoria in 1901 respectively, but admits into the narrative the inclusion of other, proximate events that were relevant to the royal children. Some of the royal children lived well into the twentieth century, but their engagement with sculpture was concentrated in the Victorian period when they formed their taste and artistic networks. In the early 1900s, they did not engage with the rise of sculptural Modernism which rejected traditional values and was often driven by social and political agendas that questioned the foundations of an elitist society. As late as 1923, the royal children

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<sup>6</sup> Vicky to Victoria, 21 Dec. 1861, quoted in Roger Fulford, *Dearest Mama. Private Correspondence of Queen Victoria and the Crown Princess of Prussia* (London: Evans Brothers, 1981, first published 1968), p. 25.

affirmed their allegiance to the Victorian artistic tradition based on ‘divine inspiration’ and ‘creative beauty’ in contrast to the ‘hurry-scurry of modern life’.<sup>7</sup>

So far, the royal children have not been considered as a distinct group of collectors, makers and patrons of sculpture who carved out versatile careers under the umbrella term of royal patronage. While scholars of Victorian sculpture of the past three decades have intermittently recognised Victoria and Albert as leading patrons and collectors of sculpture – most recently, in an extensive study by Eoin Martin<sup>8</sup> – the contribution of their children as royal perpetuators and innovators at the heart of Victorian sculpture has remained overlooked. Until now, royal patronage of sculpture after Albert’s death has typically been seen as solely confined to Victoria. Her focus on preserving Albert’s memory through sculptural commemoration was thus considered as the central interest of royal patronage after the 1860s and was then interpreted as a drawback to ideas of progress and innovation in sculpture.<sup>9</sup>

In this thesis, I seek to rectify the fragmented view of royal Victorian patronage of sculpture after Albert’s death by uncovering the proficiency and significance of the royal children’s roles as collectors, makers and patrons of sculpture. I examine the different approaches of their engagement with sculpture; the types of sculpture they preferred; the sculptors and artistic trends they supported; and the creative networks and cultural contexts in which they were involved. In so doing, I show that royal patronage of sculpture went beyond the limited scope of commissioning family portraits for the sake of commemoration,

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<sup>7</sup> Quoted after Princess Louise in Hilary Hunt-Lewis, ‘The Art of Princes Louise’, in David Duff, *The Life Story of H.R.H. Princess Louise Duchess of Argyll* (London: Stanley Paul, 1940), pp. 337-44, here p. 344.

<sup>8</sup> Eoin Martin, *Queen Victoria, Prince Albert and the Patronage of Contemporary Sculpture in Victorian Britain, 1837-1901*, Ph.D. thesis (University of Warwick 2013).

<sup>9</sup> Martin argued that especially art critics who advocated the ‘New Sculpture’ presented Queen Victoria and her sculpture collection as conservative, outdated or irrelevant to contemporary sculpture in order to highlight the innovativeness of the ‘New Sculpture’ movement. See Martin (2013), pp. 45, 315.

and that the royal children contributed significantly to its diversification and complexity.

Not all of Victoria and Albert's nine children had an active interest in sculpture. Princess Alice, Princess Helena and Princess Beatrice, the second, third and fifth daughters, dedicated much of their time to being their mother's companions during her early widowhood, and later found fulfilment in family life and charitable causes. Of the younger princes, Alfred and Arthur followed traditional careers in the royal army and navy, while Leopold, physically restricted by haemophilia, was much engaged in education and politics.<sup>10</sup> The fact that their focus was on matters other than artistic ones does not mean that these royal children had no interest in sculpture, but their engagement with the medium was less conspicuous and determined than that of the remaining siblings.

The focus of this thesis is, therefore, on the three royal children introduced above in the cartoon of *The Royal Studio*. These are Bertie, the Prince of Wales (1841–1910), Louise, the fourth royal daughter (1848–1939), and Vicky, the Princess Royal and Crown Princess of Prussia (later Crown Princess of Germany and German Empress) (1840–1910). Sculpture, for them, was of particular importance to articulate their personal taste, demonstrate their public aspiration, and reflect the tensions of their engagement with politically fraught issues. The individual characters of Bertie, Louise and Vicky invite clear categorisation of the different ways in which they engaged with sculpture. Though interrelated and

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<sup>10</sup> For more on Princess Alice, see Gerard Noel, *Princess Alice: Queen Victoria's forgotten Daughter* (London: Constable, 1974); for more on Princess Helena, see John Van der Kiste, 'Helena, Princess [Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein] (1846–1923)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan. 2008, [accessed: 27 Dec. 2014]; for more on Princess Beatrice, see Matthew Dennison, *The Last Princess: the Devoted Life of Queen Victoria's Youngest Daughter* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2007); for more on Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, see John Van der Kiste, 'Alfred, Prince, duke of Edinburgh (1844–1900)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn., Jan. 2009, [accessed: 27 Dec. 2014]; for more on Prince Arthur, see Noble Frankland, *Witness of a Century: the Life and Times of Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught* (London: Shephard-Walwyn, 1993); for more on Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, see J. M. Rigg, 'Leopold, Prince, first duke of Albany (1853–1884)', rev. K. D. Reynolds, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn., n.d., Oct 2006, [accessed: 27 Dec. 2014].

sometimes overlapping, their artistic roles reveal three distinct aspects of royal patronage and practice. During his time as Prince of Wales, Bertie, reputed as a bon vivant and playboy prince, was a conspicuous private collector of contemporary sculpture. Fluctuating between convention and vanguardism, his collection was richly varied in material, scale, subject and style and reflected his personal lifestyle. Louise, popularly known as the royal ‘least bound by convention and etiquette’,<sup>11</sup> learned to sculpt at the age of fifteen and continued to be an active practitioner throughout the Victorian period. As a female amateur and princess, she had to negotiate her public career as a sculptor by skilfully balancing the privileges and disadvantages of her royal status. Vicky, the cleverest of the royal children, married to the Prussian Crown Prince who became briefly German Emperor, engaged with sculpture in multiple ways as a maker, advisor, patron and collector. Affected in her scope through the political tensions of her dual Anglo-German identity, Vicky moved between different spheres, trying to phase the incongruity of her private taste with public obligation; a case study returning to centre stage a crucial Anglo-German axis to Victorian sculpture largely ignored across the twentieth century.<sup>12</sup>

This thesis emerges out of the AHRC-funded research project *Displaying Victorian Sculpture*, an academic project that ran from 2010 to 2013 at the universities of Warwick and York, in partnership with the Yale Center for British Art, as well as the Kelvingrove Art Gallery, National Museum of Wales, and the National Museums on Merseyside. The aim of the project was to return sculpture to centre stage in discussions about Victorian culture by exploring the diverse ways in which sculpture was made, displayed and encountered in the context of

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<sup>11</sup> Anon., ‘Obituary: Princess Louise, Fourth Daughter of Queen Victoria’, *The Times* (4 Dec. 1939), p. 9.

<sup>12</sup> For a recent analysis of Anglo-German currents in Victorian painting, see Matthew Potter, *The Inspirational Genius of Germany: British Art and Germanism, 1850-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013).

nineteenth-century Britain and its empire. What emerged from the project discussions and found expression in individual scholarship and in the synoptic exhibition *Sculpture Victorious: Art in an Age of Invention, 1837–1901*, is that Victorian sculpture was ubiquitous, diverse and highly inventive.<sup>13</sup> This proliferation was related to new opportunities for sculptors, new forms of patronage, new methods of display and new audiences. Yet, while sculpture in the Victorian period was marked by a shift away from the traditional elitist context of aristocratic patronage and privileged displays towards public commissions and diverse audiences, royal patronage, as a special form of patronage, continued to be significant for Victorian sculpture. While referring to Victoria and Albert as patrons, the catalogue continues to neglect the royal children and does not mention their patronage in relation to Gilbert's *Clarence Tomb*.<sup>14</sup> After Prince Albert's death, the royal children took on their parents' role as prestigious and active patrons of sculpture. However, instead of emulating their approaches and achievements, they engaged with emerging trends and adapted their sculptural strategies to the concerns of their generation. This meant that the implication of royal patronage included Victoria's children who represented royalty in public, especially during their mother's seclusion from public life. Through the royal children, royalty became closely involved with the Aesthetic Movement and the 'New Sculpture'; the royal children's personal friendships with prominent sculptors, as well as their own sculptural practice, made royalty a conspicuous part of the active sculpture scene. In addition, the royal children's privileged status and international connections enabled them to move between public and private spheres and to engage with artistic circles across national borders.

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<sup>13</sup> See Michael Hatt and Jason Edwards, 'Introduction: Displaying Victorian Sculpture', *Sculpture Journal* 23:2 (2014), pp. 127-30; Martina Droth, Jason Edwards and Michael Hatt (eds), *Sculpture Victorious. Art in an Age of Invention, 1837–1901* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014), pp. 15-55.

<sup>14</sup> See *Ibid.*, cat. 137 on pp. 374-77.

## Historiography

As suggested above, scholars of art history, and sculpture in particular, have largely neglected the royal children as a distinct group of patrons and makers of sculpture. Any focus on royal patronage in the Victorian period, so far, has been on Victoria and Albert, often with the assumption that the following generation had little impact in a changing world where art patronage seemed to shift towards a developing class of nouveau riche collectors. Such an inattentive view has repeatedly been suggested by in-house scholars at the Royal Collection. For example, according to the former surveyor of the Queen's pictures, Sir Oliver Millar, '[Queen Victoria and Prince Albert's] is the last moderately heroic chapter in the history of royal patronage and taste in this country.'<sup>15</sup> A similar prospect was conveyed in the 2010 exhibition catalogue *Victoria & Albert: Art & Love*: 'There is a strong sense, however, that by 1861 the artistic life of the English court, like the royal family, had entered a new phase.'<sup>16</sup> While this 'new phase' was meant here to imply the royal family's loss of zest for art patronage after Albert's death, as we will see, this 'new phase' brought significant changes in royal patronage by shifting towards the royal children and becoming more closely and personally involved with contemporary artistic life.

Whilst there have been numerous scholarly overviews on the patronage and practice of the royal children's predecessors, including their engagement with sculpture, Queen Victoria's children have been largely overlooked as a generation of royal patrons of art, and of sculpture in particular.<sup>17</sup> This neglect is evident in

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<sup>15</sup> Quoted after Sir Oliver Millar in Christopher Lloyd (ed.), *The Quest for Albion: Monarchy and Patronage of British Painting* (London: Royal Collection Enterprises, 1998), p. 28.

<sup>16</sup> *Victoria & Albert: Art & Love* (2010), p. 50.

<sup>17</sup> For publications on the patronage of the royal children's predecessors, see, for example, Jane Roberts (ed.), *George III and Queen Charlotte: Patronage, Collecting and Court Taste* (London: Royal Collection, 2004); Jonathan Marsden, 'The International Taste for French Bronzes', in *Cast in Bronze: French Sculpture from Renaissance to Revolution* (exhibition catalogue, Musée du Louvre, Paris, 22 October 2008 – 19 January 2009, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 24 February – 24 May 2009, J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, 30 June – 27 September 2009), eds Geneviève Bresc-



sculpture-related discourses including Aestheticism, the New Sculpture, Victorian female artists and Anglo-German artistic relations.<sup>18</sup> If at all, the royal children have featured individually in scholarly accounts on particular aspects of patronage and practice, but not as a group and in relation to each other. This partial and fragmented view resonated in the abundance of individual biographies on the royal children in which their artistic environments, friendships and sometimes artworks were mentioned as matter of fact, but not scrutinised in a way that would have illuminated or revalued established stereotypes about their artistic roles. By considering the scholarship relevant to the royal children's individual engagement with sculpture, but also to their absence from current art historical discourses, I provide an overview of the art-historiography on the royal children and sculpture to date.

### **Bertie**

Bertie's interest in art, let alone his engagement with sculpture, has received hardly any scholarly attention. In 1910, shortly after his death, *The Burlington Magazine's* obituary admitted that 'in matters relating to the fine arts King Edward VII took a keener interest and played a more important part than may have been expected by the majority of his subjects'.<sup>19</sup> Two decades later, however, Bertie's artistic reputation was reduced to a quotation reiterated in Sir Lionel Cust's *Reminiscences* according to which the King once declared 'I do not know much about Art, but I know something about Arr-r-angement.'<sup>20</sup> While Bertie's preference for artful display over scholarship did not per se invite a

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Bautier et. al. (Paris: Musee du Louvre and Somagy Art Publisher, 2009), pp. 18-27; *Victoria & Albert: Art & Love* (2010); Ward-Jackson (2010); Desmond Shawe-Taylor, ed., *The First Georgians: Art and Monarchy 1714-1760: Art & Monarchy 1714-1760* (London: Royal Collection Trust, 2014).

<sup>18</sup> For examples of this, see the references in the individual historiographical overviews here below.

<sup>19</sup> Anon., Editorial Article: King Edward VII', *The Burlington Magazine* (June 1910), p. 135.

<sup>20</sup> Lionel Cust, *King Edward VII and His Court. Some Reminiscences* (London: John Murray, 1930), pp. 34-35.

disparaging view of his artistic sense, Cust's imitation, in this quotation, of the King's strong accent with rolling 'r's cemented the taunting view of subsequent scholars regarding his artistic inclinations. A particularly strong opinion in this direction was coined by Millar in 1977 who characterised Bertie as having suffered from an 'inborn philistinism'.<sup>21</sup> This view coincided, perhaps not surprisingly, with the publication of an increasing number of popular biographies focusing on the prince's playboy lifestyle which removed his reputation further from any serious scholarly opinion.<sup>22</sup> For example, Millar's characterisation was reiterated in an official account published by the Royal Collection in 2008, according to which Bertie's 'jovial philistinism' found expression in the 'aesthetically deficient' artistic displays at his residences.<sup>23</sup> A slightly more involved impression of the prince's taste was articulated by Delia Millar in her introduction to the Royal Collection catalogue of *Victorian Watercolours and Drawings* which explains that '[t]he Prince of Wales did not share his father's passion for art.'<sup>24</sup> By giving a summary account of Bertie's reluctance to focus on intellectual studies and his preference, instead, for travel and excitement, Millar tries to grasp the versatile range of Bertie's collection of watercolours but blandly concludes that it was largely conservative in character. What the prince enjoyed most, Millar points out, was visiting artists' studios, a passion which 'seem[s] to have stemmed from an interest in studio life rather than in the works of art produced there.'<sup>25</sup> Without, however, linking Bertie's taste for studio life with his fascination with people and theatricality, this intriguing clue remains unexplored

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<sup>21</sup> Millar quoted by Tom Corby, 'Sir Oliver Millar', *The Guardian* (17 May 2007),

<http://www.theguardian.com/news/2007/may/17/guardianobituaries.artsobituaries> [accessed: 12 Jan. 2012].

<sup>22</sup> See for example, Allen Andrews, *The Follies of King Edward VII* (London: Lexington, 1975); James Brough, *The Prince and the Lily* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1975); Theo Aronson, *The King in Love: Edward VII's Mistresses* (London: John Murray, 1988).

<sup>23</sup> Jane Roberts (ed.), *Treasures. The Royal Collection* (London: Royal Collection Publications and Scala Publishers, 2008), p. 18.

<sup>24</sup> Delia Millar, *The Victorian Watercolours and Drawings in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen*, vol. I (London: Philip Wilson, 1995), pp. 16-19.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

and gets choked by the unexplained statement that Bertie did not buy any of the ‘interesting and exciting works of art [that were] produced at the end of the century in Paris’;<sup>26</sup> as if the only exciting late nineteenth-century art were French. The only scholarly enquiry into Bertie as an art collector formed part of the exhibition *Princes as Patrons*, which looked at the art collections of the Princes of Wales in history. Here, the tone is set once more by Millar’s uncompromising judgement of Bertie’s relationship with the arts laid out in the catalogue introduction: ‘It is regrettable that, after the death of the Prince Consort in 1861, Albert Edward lacked any informed advice on artistic matters.’<sup>27</sup> In the catalogue part, however, Bertie’s engagement with the arts receives a more considered assessment. As part of the conspicuously international and contemporary character of his art collection on the whole, his collection of sculptures, in particular, is presented as versatile and imaginative. Illustrated by examples in the neoclassical tradition as well as works of the ‘New Sculpture’, the overview concludes with the allusive remark that ‘it was the Prince of Wales who in 1892 ordered from Gilbert what is for many the greatest ensemble of late nineteenth-century British sculpture, the tomb of the heir presumptive, the Duke of Clarence and Avondale, in the Albert Memorial Chapel in Windsor.’<sup>28</sup>

Picking up from this last notice, this thesis traces Bertie’s relationship with sculpture as a collector and seeks to reassess the biased scholarly opinion of his taste in relation to sculpture by putting his commission of the *Clarence Tomb* in a contextual perspective.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> *Princes as Patrons: The Art Collections of the Princes of Wales from the Renaissance to the Present Day: An Exhibition from the Royal Collection* (exhibition catalogue, National Museums & Galleries of Wales, Cardiff, 25 July – 8 November 1998), ed. Mark Evans (London: Merrell Holberton, 1998), p. 19

<sup>28</sup> *Princes as Patrons* (1998), p. 124.

## Louise

Louise's activity as a sculptor has been largely overlooked in the scholarship due to her gender and status as a royal amateur. Whilst included in Marion Harry Spielmann's early overview of *British Sculpture and Sculptors of To-Day*, where Louise formed part of the separate category of so-called 'lady sculptors', her gender resulted subsequently in her exclusion from seminal accounts of Victorian sculpture, such as the foundational surveys *Victorian Sculpture*, by Benedict Read, and *The New Sculpture*, by Susan Beattie. In Mark Stocker's 1988 monograph, *Royalist and Realist: The Life and Work of Sir Joseph Edgar Boehm*, Louise is mentioned as Boehm's sculpture student.<sup>29</sup> Yet, instead of examining their work relationship, Stocker focuses on the rumours about a love affair between Louise and Boehm, which allegedly led to Boehm's death in 1890. In so doing, Stocker presents a stereotypical, gender-biased relationship of male master and female student which constrains a more positive understanding of Louise as a significant sculptor in her own right. Indeed, the only account, to date, of Louise's sculptural practice forms part of Jane Roberts's survey of *Royal Artists: From Mary Queen of Scots to the Present Day*.<sup>30</sup> Based on research in the Royal Archives, Roberts provides a general, though sketchy, overview of Louise's artistic career. By presenting the princess in a linear narrative of royal artists, instead of situating her in the socio-cultural context of her environment, this study contributed to a rather distinct view of Louise's sculptural practice confined to the court circle. In this light, Louise's exclusion, largely, from the feminist scholarship on Victorian women artists has to be seen in relation to her special status as a royal amateur. Feminist scholars over the past three decades have

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<sup>29</sup> Mark Stocker, *Royalist and Realist: The Life and Work of Sir Joseph Edgar Boehm* (London & New York: Garland Publishing, 1988), pp. 41-44.

<sup>30</sup> Jane Roberts, *Royal Artists. From Mary Queen of Scots to the Present Day* (London: Grafton Books, 1987), pp. 146-62.

tended to focus on professional middle-class female sculptors as their careers were thought to make a stronger case for the promotion of female art than amateurs, who were considered as privileged because of their upper-class status, and therefore less engaged. In this context, Pamela Gerrish Nunn, in her influential work on *Victorian Women Artists*, declares that

[s]omewhat bizarre, or at least unexpected, in this light, is the promotion of aristocratic women as amateur sculptors towards the end of the century. Princess Louise (one of Queen Victoria's daughters), the Duchess of Colonna, and Sarah Bernhardt were among those who fell into this category.<sup>31</sup>

Beyond this mere mention, Gerrish Nunn does not include Louise in her survey. Neither does the princess fare better in Delia Gaze's substantial *Dictionary of Women Artists*. Although Lisa Heer's introductory essay on nineteenth-century female amateurs makes an attempt to redress the biased focus of feminist scholars on women who worked professionally, Louise does not appear in the dictionary's list of women artists.<sup>32</sup> More recently, amateur sculptor of the Victorian period, such as the above-mentioned Bernhardt and Duchess of Colonna, have received increased scholarly attention in PhD dissertations and a small number of museum exhibitions which indicate a shift in the feminist sculpture scholarship towards an inclusion of amateurs.<sup>33</sup> However, they do not yet form part of a mainstream

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<sup>31</sup> Pamela Gerrish Nunn, *Victorian Women Artists* (London: Women's Press, 1987), pp. 217-18.

<sup>32</sup> Lisa Heer, 'Amateur Artists: Amateur art as a social skill and a female preserve: 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries', in *Dictionary of Women Artists* vol. 1, ed. Delia Gaze (London and Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers: 1997), pp. 70-80, here p. 70.

<sup>33</sup> For Sarah Bernhardt, see Miranda Mason, *Making Love/ Making Work: The Sculpture Practice of Sarah Bernhardt*, Ph.D. thesis (University of Leeds 2007); For the Duchess of Colonna, see Caterina Pierre, *Genius has no Sex: The Sculpture of Marcello (1836-1879)* (Geneva: Editions de Penthes / Infolio, 2010); see also *Marie d'Orléans: Princesse et artiste romantique 1813-1839*, (exhibition catalogue, Musée du Louvre, Paris, 18 April – 21 July 2008 and Musée Condé, Chantilly, 9 April – 21 July 2008), eds Anne Dion-Tenenbaum, Leo Ewals and Marie-Bénédicte Diethelm (Paris: Musée du Louvre, 2008); *Félicie de Fauveau : L'Amazone de la Sculpture* (exhibition catalogue, Historial de Vendée, Les Lucs-sur-Boulogne, 15 February – 19 May 2013 and Musée d'Orsay, Paris, 11 June – 15 September 2013), eds Sylvain Bellenger and Jacques de Caso (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 2013).

historiography, and royal amateurism in particular, because of the special privileges involved, has remained largely overlooked.

A Victorian sculpture-related field, where both Louise and Bertie have occasionally appeared in the scholarship, is the Aesthetic Movement. Although more general surveys of the subject, such as Stephen Calloway's recent exhibition catalogue *The Cult of Beauty: The Aesthetic Movement 1860-1900*,<sup>34</sup> have continued to ignore the importance of royal patronage, more focused studies of particular thematic aspects have begun to acknowledge the role the royal children played as key figures within the Aesthetic Movement. Thus, in her study of *The Holland Park Circle: Artists and Victorian Society*, Caroline Dakers acknowledges the royal family as patrons of the artistic Holland Park circle.<sup>35</sup> On several occasions, Dakers mentions both Bertie and Louise but does not evaluate their precise artistic connections and motivation for supporting the aesthetic circle around Frederic Leighton. In Colleen Denney's study entitled *At the Temple of Art: The Grosvenor Gallery 1877-1890*, both Bertie and Louise are introduced as forming part of the gallery's elitist social cachet and inner circle.<sup>36</sup> While Bertie is mentioned as a frequent gallery visitor,<sup>37</sup> Louise features as an exhibiting artist.<sup>38</sup> Denney refers to the complications of Louise's status as a female amateur for her critical reception but does not address the remit of her role as a female aesthete.<sup>39</sup> This point, on the other hand, is discussed in Louise Campbell's essay 'Questions of Identity: Women, Architecture and the Aesthetic Movement'. Campbell argues

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<sup>34</sup> *The Cult of Beauty: The Aesthetic Movement 1860-1900* (exhibition catalogue, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, 2 April – 17 July 2011, Musée d'Orsay, Paris, 12 September 2011 – 15 January 2012 and de Young Museum, San Francisco, 18 February – 17 June 2012), eds Stephen Calloway and Lynn Federle Orr (London: V&A Publishing, 2011).

<sup>35</sup> Caroline Dakers, *The Holland Park Circle: Artists and Victorian Society* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999).

<sup>36</sup> Colleen Denney, *At the Temple of Art: The Grosvenor Gallery, 1877-1890* (Madison, Teaneck: Farleigh Dickinson University Press; London: Associated University Presses, 2000).

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 58-59, 154.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 135-38.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 144; In addition, Louise is not mentioned in Talia Schaffer's significant study on female Aestheticism. See Talia Schaffer, *The Forgotten Female Aesthetes: Literary Culture in Late-Victorian England* (Virginia: The University Press of Virginia, 2000).

that Louise represents the elitist aspect of the Aesthetic Movement in that she used aesthetic architecture to devise for herself a distinctive artistic identity amidst the inner circle of the Movement.<sup>40</sup>

In this thesis, I bring together different discursive approaches relevant to a contextual understanding of Louise's sculptural practice and restore the princess to her rightful place as a valuable figure not only in the history of Victorian woman sculptors, but of Victorian sculpture more broadly.

## **Vicky**

Vicky's multifarious engagements with sculpture as a practitioner, advisor and patron has received some marginal scholarly attention on specific aspects of her artistic role but has never been discussed synoptically. In the British scholarship, Jane Roberts's overview of Vicky's artistic practice in her survey *Royal Artists* includes references to some of the sculptures which the princess modelled and mentions her creative influence on monument designs to commemorate Prince Albert.<sup>41</sup> Vicky's role as an artistic advisor to her mother is also briefly mentioned in Elisabeth Darby and Nicola Smith's monograph *The Cult of the Prince Consort* which assesses some of the important memorials dedicated to Albert, yet without elucidating Vicky's involvement in detail.<sup>42</sup> Beyond the limited interest in Vicky's artistic role amongst British scholars, in Germany and France scholars have paid noteworthy attention to the subject over the past two decades. In Germany, this was related to increased enthusiasm for Prussian art history following German Reunification in 1989, where Vicky, with her Anglo-German background, is considered a positive figure of the late-nineteenth century. In

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<sup>40</sup> Louise Campbell, 'Questions of Identity: Women, Architecture and the Aesthetic Movement', in eds Brenda Martin and Penny Sparke, *Women's Places: Architecture and Design 1860-1900* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), pp. 1-21.

<sup>41</sup> Roberts (1982), pp. 121-38.

<sup>42</sup> Darby and Smith (1983), pp. 21-57.

1997, the German Historical Museum in Berlin staged the exhibition *Victoria & Albert, Vicky & The Kaiser* which provided a general overview of Vicky as an art patron and collector.<sup>43</sup> Four years later, at the centenary of Vicky's death, three further exhibitions dedicated to different aspects of her artistic involvement were staged at different venues. Karoline Müller and Friedrich Rothe's catalogue *Victoria von Preußen 1840 - 1901 in Berlin*, which accompanied an exhibition at the Society of Women Artists, included some of Vicky's sculptures and gave an overview of her artistic circle in Berlin.<sup>44</sup> Meanwhile, a display at Schloss Babelsberg, one of the former royal summer residences outside Berlin, focused on Vicky's patronage at Potsdam and included a summary of the funerary monuments to the imperial German family for which Vicky was responsible.<sup>45</sup> Finally, the museum at Schloss Fasanerie near Fulda, the seat of the Hessen family foundation, organised an exhibition with a focus on Vicky's art collection during her widowhood at Schloss Friedrichshof. All of these exhibitions looked at a wide range of objects and provided biographical overviews of Vicky's artistic life but did not explore her relationship to wider trends in sculpture. So far, the only suggestion in the scholarship of Vicky's significance as a cosmopolitan mediator of sculpture was made in the French exhibition catalogue *Henry de Triqueti: Le Sculpteur des Princes*. Here, Richard Dagonne and Nerina Santorius point out the multifarious and international character of Vicky's engagement with sculpture, 'oscillating between the position of art student, patron, advisor and collector [...] in a field of cultural interaction between British Sculpture (William Theed, 1804–1891), French romanticism (Triqueti; Carlo Marochetti, 1805–

<sup>43</sup> *Victoria & Albert, Vicky & The Kaiser* (exhibition catalogue, Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin, 10 January – 25 March 1997), ed. Wilfried Rogasch (Gerd Hatje: Ostfildern-Ruit, 1997), pp. 119-43.

<sup>44</sup> Karoline Müller and Friedrich Rothe (eds), *Victoria von Preußen 1840 - 1901 in Berlin 2001* (Berlin: Verein der Berliner Künstlerinnen 1867 e.V., 2001).

<sup>45</sup> *Auf den Spuren von Kronprinzessin Victoria Kaiserin Friedrich (1840-1901)* (exhibition catalogue, Potsdam, Schloss Babelsberg, 5 August – 28 October 2001) ed. Generaldirektion der Stiftung Preußische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg (Potsdam: Stiftung Preussische Schloesser und Gaerten, 2001).



1967), and the Berlin School of Sculpture (Albert Wolff; Reinhold Begas, 1831–1911).<sup>46</sup> However, by focusing on Vicky’s artistic relationship with the French sculptor Triqueti, the authors leave their fascinating statement as a signpost for future exploration.

This thesis examines the different strands of Vicky’s engagement with sculpture in the context of her dual cultural identity by taking different national scholarships into account, and reconciling them.

### **Methodology and Sources**

My examination of Queen Victoria’s children and their engagement with sculpture provides a synthetic overview of selected instances of royal patronage of sculpture from different perspectives. By selecting three of the royal children as case studies, I present three self-contained chapters which are, at the same time, linked through thematic overlaps and form part of the overall picture of royal engagement with sculpture. My methodological approach is based on close reading of selected objects in conjunction with historical and biographical analyses as they relate to the royal children’s specific engagement with sculpture. By interweaving object-focused and contextual perspectives, I present the objects as indicators of the royal children’s significance as patrons of sculpture. I also take an enlarged view of the royal patronage of sculpture which goes beyond the activity of commissioning and collecting sculpture from specific artists. I understand royal patronage of sculpture as comprising the royal children’s active engagement with the medium by forging artistic friendships, attending public

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<sup>46</sup> Author’s translation of the original quote: ‘Oscillant entre les positions d’élève, de commanditaire ou de conseillère et de collectionneuse, son activité s’inscrit dans un champ d’interférence culturelle entre l’art sculptural anglais (William Theed, 1804–1891), le romantisme français (Triqueti; Carlo Marochetti, 1805–1967), et l’école des sculpteurs berlinois (Albert Wolff; Reinhold Begas, 1831–1911).’ Richard Dagherne and Nerina Santorius, ‘A la cour de Prusse’, in *Henry de Triqueti 1803-1874 Le Sculpteur des princes* (exhibition catalogue, Musée des Beaux-Arts d’Orléans, Orléans, 3 October 2007 – 6 January 2008 and Musée Girodet, Montargis, 3 October 2007 – 6 January 2008) (Paris: Editions Hazan, 2007), pp. 167-75, here p. 169.

events and immersing themselves in artistic circles and sculptural projects. These activities also include their particular roles as makers and advisors of sculpture. The royal children's special status as members of the royal family blurs traditional dichotomies, such as between public and private, master and pupil, personal taste and official expectation, and renders the different strands of their engagement with sculpture an expression of royal endorsement. Using archival sources, original photographs and contemporary publications, I evaluate the objects in the contexts of their commissioning, conception and display and explain the royal children's involvement in particular aspects of the contemporary art world. By taking into account scholarly discourses on Victorian sculpture, Aestheticism, imperialism, women artists, and Anglo-German artistic relations, I extrapolate intersections between these themes and my enquiry into royal engagement with sculpture. In so doing, I suggest a revised view of the royal patronage of sculpture in the period of around 1860 to 1900, which is linked to different art historical perspectives in the sculpture scholarship.

The thesis is built on extensive archival research in Britain, Germany and France. In Britain, the principal sources for my research were the Royal Archives and the Royal Photograph Collection at Windsor Castle, and the Royal Collection at St James's Palace. In relation to the Prince of Wales, the Royal Archives hold the Prince's diary of his Rome trip in 1859, as well as his engagement diaries: I was permitted to view the entries for 1877, the year when the Grosvenor Gallery opened, transforming the art scene in London. Regarding Louise, there are invoices, receipts and letters related to her early art training. In addition, a number of letters from artists from the 1870s onwards help to illuminate Louise's role in the Aesthetic circle. The Royal Archives also hold significant correspondence

between the royal children, and between them and Queen Victoria, which mention some of the royal children's sculpture projects and artistic relationships. This information is often complemented by short entries in the Queen's private daily journals, edited and transcribed by her daughter Princess Beatrice after the Queen's death.<sup>47</sup> The Royal Photograph Collection houses several photograph albums of the Prince of Wales's residences and their interiors at particular moments in time which help to reconstruct the display of sculptures within them. For my research on specific works, I also had access to object files at the Royal Collection where notes and unpublished photographs of sculptures helped me to identify particular works.

For supplementary information on Bertie's sculpture patronage, I consulted the John Gibson files at the Royal Academy and the files of royal correspondence at Leighton House Museum. For further information on Louise's engagement with sculpture, I conducted research at different archives related to her artistic networks and site-specific works. These included the archives at St Paul's Cathedral and St Mary Abbots in London, the National Archives, the Victoria & Albert Museum, the Heinz Archive of the National Portrait Gallery, the British Library Manuscript Collection and the family archives at Inverary Castle in Scotland. For additional information on Vicky, I undertook archival research in Germany and France. At Schloss Fasanerie near Fulda, the archive of the Hessen family foundation, where parts of Vicky's private correspondence are kept, I had access to private letters to Vicky's husband and to autographs from artists which were related to Vicky's role as a patron of sculpture. At the Musée Girodet in Montargis, I had permission to view digital copies of letter from Vicky

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<sup>47</sup> To mark Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee in 2012, Queen Victoria's journals have been published in their entirety in an online database and are searchable by keyword. <http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org> [last accessed: 3 Jan. 2015].

to Triqueti and Durant, the originals of which are kept in a private collection in France. These letters contributed significantly to an understanding of the political tensions Vicky had to negotiate in her role as a mediator of sculpture across national borders.

To complement my archival research, I conducted numerous field trips to view the sculptural works related to the royal children's patronage and to immerse myself in the original spaces where the sculptures were displayed. In addition, I consulted published contemporary sources available in online databases such as *British Periodicals*, *The Times Digital Archive* and *DigiZeitschriften*. These databases provided accurate search possibilities to locate contemporary articles about specific objects and their contemporary reception and helped gather numerous information to reconstruct the biographical and historical context of the royal children's engagement with sculpture.

### **Thesis Outline**

The thesis is divided into three chapters which examine the particular engagement with sculpture of Bertie, Louise and Vicky, the three case studies demonstrating the continuity and variety of royal patronage from around 1860 to 1900.

Chapter 1 looks at the Prince of Wales as a collector of sculpture. Challenging the prince's popular reputation as a "philistine", the chapter examines to what extent his private sculpture collection presents a comprehensible context for his enterprising patronage of Gilbert's *Clarence Tomb*. The chapter is divided into five parts which trace the influences on the prince's personal taste in sculpture and the development of his sculpture collection and display. In the first part, I outline Bertie's educational trip to Rome in 1859 and examine the effect of

this experience on his first sculptural acquisition. In the second part, I analyse the character of the prince's sculpture collection according to the only known inventory of the collection, dating from 1877. I reveal the development, scale and scope of the collection and highlight conspicuous themes and stylistic trends. The third part presents the wider cultural context of Bertie's artistic engagement in about 1877 by discussing significant art-related events that influenced his sculptural choices. In the fourth part, I bring together the object-based and contextual focus of the previous parts and analyse selected instances of sculptural arrangements at the Prince of Wales's two residences. I argue that the prince's cultural experiences found expression in the content and display of his collection. In the fifth part, which serves as an epilogue to the initially outlined question of Bertie's vanguardism, I reveal how the prince's sculpture collection puts his Gilbert patronage in perspective.

Chapter 2 examines Louise's career as an amateur sculptor. The princess took sculpture lessons from the age of fifteen and continued to be an ambitious practitioner throughout the Victorian period. Yet, as a female amateur and princess, the degree of her sculptural professionalism was constrained and compelled her to negotiate her career, like any royal artist, by balancing the privileges and disadvantages of her royal status in public. The chapter is divided into three parts, which consider three stages of her career: her early training, the diversification of her public engagement and her expansion into the field of public sculpture. The first part examines Louise's relationship with her first sculpture teacher, Mary Thornycroft, and considers her public reception when she exhibited for the first time at the Royal Academy. The second part traces the development of Louise's artistic ambition under her new sculpture teacher Joseph Edgar

Boehm. This part also considers Louise's engagement with the Aesthetic Movement and investigates her role at the Grosvenor Gallery. The third part provides an analysis of Louise's public sculpture projects, inspired by New Sculpture influences, and reveals the political implications of her role by making statues of Queen Victoria and a war memorial in an imperial context.

Chapter 3, divided in five parts, focuses on the diverse strands of Vicky's patronage of sculpture, of making, advising, commissioning and collecting under the premise of continuing Prince Albert's legacy as a patron. By pointing out the tensions that affected Vicky's engagement with the medium, this chapter complicates the understanding of royal patronage of sculpture in an Anglo-German context. The first part, considered as a prologue, provides an overview of the distinct context of sculpture in Berlin around the time when Vicky moved to Germany in 1858. The second part examines Vicky's own sculptural practice motivated by Albert's outlook on this approach. The third part looks at Vicky's agency as an artistic advisor to Victoria after Albert's death and explores how Vicky tried to realise her father's artistic vision in the seminal project of the Albert Memorial Chapel at Windsor. In the fourth part, I consider Vicky as a patron of sculpture in the context of imperial Germany. By analysing her patronage of memorial projects for her family, I reveal the tensions of Vicky's personal taste and public duty to commission officially approved artists. I argue that Vicky's resort out of this fraught situation was her increased focus on collecting Renaissance sculpture which developed as a new fashion in sculptural engagement across borders. The fifth part, and epilogue to this chapter, links Vicky back to current trends in British sculpture and highlights her endorsement of Gilbert which manifests her similar outlook on sculpture as her royal siblings.

The conclusion draws the three chapters together by extrapolating their main arguments and responding to the thesis set out in the introduction that the royal children were at the heart of Victorian sculpture.

## Chapter 1

### Bertie as a Collector of Sculpture

Shortly after the sudden death of their eldest son and heir apparent, the Duke of Clarence, on 14 January 1892, the Prince and Princess of Wales invited the sculptor Alfred Gilbert (1854–1934) to their country seat at Sandringham to discuss the execution of a monumental tomb to memorialise their lamented firstborn [fig. 1.1]. By then, Gilbert was known for his resolute ambition to shift the boundaries of traditional sculpture and it was predicatable that his design for the *Clarence Tomb* would be unprecedented and cutting edge.<sup>48</sup> In 1898, the almost complete tomb was prominently erected in the Albert Memorial Chapel in Windsor where it caused a sensation when it was publicly reviewed for the first time.<sup>49</sup> Art critics described the monument as a work of ‘genius’ with the most outstanding characteristics, being ‘original’ ‘noble’, ‘beautiful’, ‘splendid’, ‘rich’, ‘colourful’, ‘sparkling’ and ‘decorative.’<sup>50</sup>

Still today, of all late Victorian sculptures, Gilbert’s *Clarence Tomb*, with its complex iconography, technical virtuosity and fateful genesis remains one of the most discussed works in the sculpture scholarship.<sup>51</sup> The highly aesthetic and emblematic tomb represented the paradigm of a new sculptural language in Britain. Since the 1960s, it has been hailed, if not as ‘the finest single example’,<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Gilbert’s previous public commissions included the elaborate *Queen Victoria* (1887) statue for Winchester and the highly symbolic *Shaftsbury Fountain* in Piccadilly, London (1886–93), which were both as innovative as they were controversial at the time. For more on the development of Gilbert’s career, see Richard Dorment, *Alfred Gilbert* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985).

<sup>49</sup> When the sketch-model of the *Clarence Tomb* was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1894, the press had already discussed its preliminary design and individual parts. After having seen the sketch model in the exhibition, the critic Claude Phillips predicted that ‘among the things which will be most variously appreciated are [...] the extremely ornate design by Mr. Alfred Gilbert for the tomb of the Duke of Clarence!’ Claude Phillips, ‘The Royal Academy’, *The Academy* (12 May 1894), p. 399.

<sup>50</sup> Anon., ‘The Monument to the Duke of Clarence’, *The Times*, 4 August 1898, p. 7.

<sup>51</sup> See for example, Jason Edwards, *Alfred Gilbert’s Aestheticism: Gilbert amongst Whistler, Wilde, Leighton, Pater and Burne Jones* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 159–200.

<sup>52</sup> Mark Roskill, ‘Alfred Gilbert’s Monument to the Duke of Clarence: A Study in the Sources of Later Victorian Sculpture’, *The Burlington Magazine* 110, no. 789 (1968), pp. 699–704, here p. 699.



at least as a seminal work of late-Victorian sculpture.<sup>53</sup> In view of Gilbert's outstanding reputation as an innovator and moderniser at a time so crucial for the regeneration of British sculpture, it appears extraordinary that the Prince of Wales, the "philistine" who is described in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* as with an 'old-fashioned' taste in art,<sup>54</sup> undertook such an audacious commission as to ask Gilbert to work for him. Both contemporary art critics and later scholars usually dismissed the prince's patronage as a 'happy inspiration'<sup>55</sup> or opportunistic decision rather than a deliberate and considered choice. Instead of inquiring about his background as a collector and patron of sculpture and about how Gilbert could fit into the prince's aesthetic and artistic spectrum, scholars have offered only a partial and prejudiced explanation. According to Richard Dormont, the simple fact that Gilbert was a former pupil of the recently deceased court sculptor Joseph Edgar Boehm would have been reason enough for the prince to commission this most significant monument from him.<sup>56</sup> By failing to grant the prince any more inspiration and originality than taking the path of least resistance, Dormont's argument chimes with the general scholarly perception that Bertie's artistic taste had no relevance in the promotion of Gilbert. And yet, had the prince not been attracted and actively convinced by Gilbert's vanguard style, he could have comfortably opted for one of the more conservative sculptors regularly employed by Queen Victoria. Established courtiers like Robert Glassby (1835–1892) – like Gilbert a former assistant of Boehm's – or Francis John Williamson (1833–1920) would have skilfully catered for a more conventional and anodyne

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<sup>53</sup> Susan Beattie, for example, described the *Clarence Tomb* admirably as 'pure fantasy, the stuff of dreams' and credited Gilbert with having played a 'central part in overthrowing the stylistic conventions of late neo-classicism' Beattie (1983), p. 6; For Dormont, the Clarence Tomb was a '*tour de force*, a miracle of bronze casting and marble carving.' Dormont (1985), p. 155, Edwards considers the Clarence Tomb as a prime example of Gilbert's Aestheticism. See Edwards (2006), pp. 159-99.

<sup>54</sup> H. C. G. Matthew, 'Edward VII (1841–1910)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, online edn., Sept 2013, <http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/view/article/32975>, [accessed: 2 Jan. 2015].

<sup>55</sup> Anon., 'The Monument to the Duke of Clarence', *The British Architect* (5 August 1898), pp. 93-103, here p. 94.

<sup>56</sup> Dormont (1985), pp. 107, 147.

tomb design based on touching likeness and intricate marble costume.<sup>57</sup> The evident discrepancy between what Gilbert stood for, as a sculptor, and the prince's reputation, as a philistine, therefore raises considerable questions about Bertie's actual relationship with sculpture in light of the dramatically changing trends and daring innovations which marked the medium in the second half of the nineteenth century.

In fact, over the period of four decades as Prince of Wales, from around 1860 to 1900, Bertie accumulated a considerable collection of sculptural works at his two residences, Sandringham and Marlborough House, which have previously been neglected by scholars of Victorian sculpture. The collection varies greatly in form and subject matter, ranging from large marble groups by eminent neoclassicists to small, grotesque bronze statuettes by cosmopolitan amateur sculptors. In contrast to his father, Prince Albert, who considered collecting sculpture as an expression of learned connoisseurship and a way of promoting British art and taste,<sup>58</sup> for the Prince of Wales, collecting sculpture was primarily about furnishing his residences. Nonetheless, the prince was an informed and sophisticated collector. His sculptures were the focus of the spaces he created for himself and where he received friends and official guests. They formed the backdrop to his entertainment of the political and aristocratic elite, and of celebrities from the stage, professional sports and his notorious mistresses. By analysing the Prince of Wales's sculpture collection and assessing his relationship with particular artists, I aim to provide a context to explain and assess Bertie's

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<sup>57</sup> While Williamson had been one of Victoria's favoured sculptors from the 1870s, Glassby worked on several royal commissions up until his sudden death on 3 August 1892. For Victoria's patronage of Williamson, see Martin (2013), pp. 282-99; For more on Glassby, see 'Robert Glassby Snr', Mapping the Practice and Profession of Sculpture in Britain and Ireland 1851-1951, University of Glasgow History of Art and HATI, online database 2011, [http://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/person.php?id=msib4\\_1240827318](http://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/person.php?id=msib4_1240827318), [accessed: 1 July 2014].

<sup>58</sup> For more on Prince Albert and the promotion of taste in Britain, see Ames (1968).

‘vanguard’ and ‘aesthetic’ taste as demonstrated in his supposedly astonishing patronage of Gilbert.

This chapter is divided into four parts. In the first part, I focus on Bertie’s first independent encounter with sculpture during an educational trip to Rome in 1859. Under the guidance of the eminent sculptor John Gibson, the prince was meant to acquire an artistic education in line with Victoria and Albert’s expectations of what constituted royal taste in sculpture. By tracing his visits to celebrated museums and the studios of contemporary artists in Rome, I investigate the ways in which Bertie responded to Gibson’s lessons and the extent to which he developed his own taste in sculpture. In the second part, I focus on Bertie’s private collection. I do so firstly by establishing the characteristics of the prince’s sculpture collection on the basis of an inventory of 1877. By dividing the collection according to type and form and looking more closely at selected works in each category, I establish Bertie’s artistic preferences in style and subject matter at a period marked by significant stylistic changes. In the third part of the chapter I discuss particularly significant cultural events in the years around 1877 which reflected and shaped the Prince of Wales’s taste in collecting sculpture. By assessing the prince’s involvement with the fashionable Grosvenor Gallery, his staging of an opulent costume party and his interest in “Eastern” travel and the British Empire, I highlight particular artistic, aesthetic and political trends which become significant in the sculptural display at the princely residences. In the fourth part, I examine the particular modes of sculptural display at Sandringham and Marlborough House according to several series of photographs of the houses’ interiors from between 1870 and 1890. I focus here on both reception rooms and

more private spaces and show to what extent Bertie's taste in sculpture can be credited as fashionable and vanguard in order to better explain his choice of Gilbert as the sculptor of the *Clarence Tomb*.

### **1.1. The Prince of Wales's artistic education in Rome in 1859**

On 10 January 1859, the Prince of Wales, aged seventeen, was sent on a five-month-long educational trip to Italy, a short version of the traditional Grand Tour. The plan was that he would spend the first few months visiting the ancient and modern sites of Rome and then proceed on to Florence and Northern Italy before returning to England in the summer. However, the outbreak of civil war in Tuscany at the end of April 1859 caused a premature end to the prince's trip when he was forced to return home much earlier than planned.<sup>59</sup> Nevertheless, the surviving records of his three-month stay in Rome offer a revealing insight into his artistic experience of the city. In his hand-written *Diary*,<sup>60</sup> Bertie wrote short accounts of his daily activities in Rome, which include brief notes on the artworks he saw and admired. In addition, there are several albums with letters from Bertie's tutors to Albert, and correspondence between Bertie and his father. These documents together allow us to draw useful conclusions about the development of the young prince's artistic taste in that they indicate his future career as a collector of sculpture.

Since the eighteenth century, the Grand Tour had been understood as an essential part of a young British nobleman's education, and Rome, the seat of Europe's ancient classical heritage, was the main travel destination. There,

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<sup>59</sup> The seriousness of the civil war situation felt by English tourists in Rome was expressed by John Charles Robinson, Superintendent of the South Kensington Museum, who wrote from Rome on 4 May 1859, comparing the local riots to the recent Indian Mutiny: 'One might suppose Rome to be a second Lucknow, and the Campagna outside, hot and dusty and lovely as it is, to be swarming with brigades and sepoy ready to cut the throats of every living soul.' Quoted from Anna Somers Cocks, *The Victoria and Albert Museum: The Making of the Collection* (Leicester: Windward, 1980), p. 63.

<sup>60</sup> RA/The *Diary of Edward Prince of Wales 1859*.

exposed to famous historical sites and original artworks, Grand Tourists were expected to develop their knowledge and hone their taste in art.<sup>61</sup> At the beginning of the nineteenth century, travelling to Italy had been nearly impossible due to the Napoleonic Wars, but from the 1820s onwards, Rome became more popular than ever. No longer the exclusive preserve of young British aristocrats, the city attracted an international audience from a wider social circle. Regularly updated guide books, such as Murray's popular *Handbook of Rome*,<sup>62</sup> the fifth edition of which was published just before Bertie's travels in 1858, provided English tourists with a background on key attractions and useful information on travel, food, entertainment and shopping.

Like Bertie, Prince Albert had travelled to Italy as a young man. In the winter of 1838/39, Albert spent almost three months in Florence where he explored the Grand Ducal art collections, before travelling on to Rome to see the major antiquities and contemporary artists' studios.<sup>63</sup> Yet, at the time, Albert had preferred Florence, where the art of the Renaissance made him feel 'intoxicated with delight', while Rome did not exert any particular charm on him.<sup>64</sup> However, two decades later, when Bertie was repeating the Italian encounter, Albert opted for Rome as the primary destination for his son. In fact, the educational advantages of Rome over Florence were widely accepted. As expressed in the account of a young middle-class tourist in 1848, the benefits of Rome were such:

Florence perhaps has most charms for me, but Rome gains daily in interest, and the beauty of the Campagna quite enchants me. Then Rome has this advantage over Florence; it is filled with artists at

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<sup>61</sup> For more on the Grand Tour, see, for example, Jeremy Black, *The British and the Grand Tour* (London: Croom Helm, 1985); Jeremy Black, *The British Abroad. The Grand Tour in the Eighteenth Century* (Stroud: Sutton, 2003).

<sup>62</sup> *A Handbook of Rome and its environs; forming part II. of the Handbook for Travellers in Central Italy* (London: John Murray, 1858).

<sup>63</sup> Charles Grey, *Biography of H.R.H. The Prince Consort. Compiled from Letters and Memoranda* (London: printed for private circulation by Smith, Elder and Co., 1866), pp.199-200.

<sup>64</sup> Letter from Prince Albert to his father, 17 March 1839, in Grey (1866), p. 200.

work, several of whose studios I have visited, and to see new thoughts embodied in painting and sculpture round me, to see works of living genius, seems to give fresh ardour and stimulus to all my studies, and to enable me to appreciate more fully the works of those who are gone.<sup>65</sup>

Although Bertie's Rome trip formed part of a tradition of royal educational tours, the special reason for its occasion was, in fact, more particular and profound. Since his early childhood, Bertie had fared ill in his learning and ability to concentrate, and, at the time of his coming of age, in 1859, Victoria and Albert were alarmed by their son's limited intellectual progress.<sup>66</sup> According to Bertie's personal tutor, Robert Bruce,

[h]is thoughts are [concentrated] on matters of ceremony, on physical qualities, manners, social standing and class and these are the destinations which command his esteem and arouse his exaltation. It follows that in his own ease he attaches but little value to the acquisition of knowledge and that the proposition of it does not weigh much with him in forming his estimate of others.<sup>67</sup>

In order to eliminate these 'obnoxious and dangerous elements' from his mind and focus his 'intellectual powers' in the right direction, Bruce suggested that the prince be exposed to 'steady learning' and 'superior genius'<sup>68</sup> to encourage him to become 'the first gentleman of his country'.<sup>69</sup> Travelling to Italy was, therefore,

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<sup>65</sup> Susan Horner was a well-educated English middle class tourist who visited Rome in 1848 and later became a successful writer on Italian subjects. Susan Horner, *Journal of a tour in France and Italy, 1847-1848, extracted from my letters home, and notebooks*, Manuscript Journal, entry for 10 April 1848, p.100, <http://0-www.grandtour.amdigital.co.uk.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/Contents/DocumentDetails.aspx?documentid=67803&prevPos=67803&vpath=contents> [accessed: 16 Jan. 2012].

<sup>66</sup> Magnus (1964), pp. 7-11, see also Charlotte Pangels, *Dr. Becker in geheimer Mission am Queen Victoria's Hof 1850 bis 1861* (Hamburg: Jahn & Ernst Verlag, 1996), pp. 69-70.

<sup>67</sup> RA/Z/444/77, Colonel Bruce to Prince Albert, 26 March 1859.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> In a confidential memorandum Prince Albert discusses the outstanding manners and deportment which a 'gentleman' should have. See Magnus (1864), pp. 24-25.

seen as a possible cure to Bertie's un-princely inclinations and Bruce agreed with Albert that Rome was the place where 'triumph of genius and learning are everywhere apparent'.<sup>70</sup>

In the daily royal column of *The Times*, the Court Circular, the Prince of Wales's tour was officially announced as the typical continental journey of a young English gentleman at his coming of age, 'to enable him to study the antiquarian and objects of classical and artistic interest.'<sup>71</sup> The travel time was well-thought-out to coincide with "the season", when many foreign visitors came to the city to follow the sumptuous celebrations during the Roman carnival and Easter week from the end of February to April. During this time, the young prince was likely to meet other members of the European aristocracy and celebrated persons of culture who flocked to Rome for a few weeks of sightseeing and festivities. Apart from his tutor, Bertie's permanent travel party consisted also of his history teacher, Albert's private secretary, an equerry and a royal medic, while further Englishmen associated with the court joined occasionally for day trips and dinners. Instead of lodging at the most fashionable hotel in the city, on the central Piazza d'Espagna, the royal party stayed at the Hotel des Isles Britanniques, on the Piazza del Popolo, nearer to the city gate where it was safer and quieter since the prince was officially travelling incognito.<sup>72</sup> This location was convenient for planning excursions into the countryside and a useful starting point for visits to artists' studios, many of which were located along the three main avenues leading off the Piazza del Popolo [fig. 1.2].<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> RA/Z/444/77, Colonel Bruce to Prince Albert, 26 March 1859.

<sup>71</sup> RA/Z/444/29, newspaper cutting from the *Court Circular*, 5 January 1859.

<sup>72</sup> RA/Z/444/49, newspaper cutting from *Giornale di Roma*, 7 February 1859.

<sup>73</sup> See *The Artistical Directory; or Guide to the Studios of the Foreign Painters and Sculptors resident in Rome, to which are added the principal mosaicists and shell-engravers, with much supplementary information useful to the visitor of the "eternal city."* (Rome: Tipografia Legale, 1856). Favourite streets where artists lived in the 1850s were the Via del Babuino, Via Margutta, the parallel streets between Via del Babuino and Via del Corso, as well as the small streets around Piazza Barberini.

Bertie's daily timetable was carefully planned with hours of lessons and letter writing, interspersed with more pleasurable activities like horse riding and guided sightseeing tours. For the latter, Bruce had arranged for well-known experts from the English community to be the prince's guides. While the Rome connoisseur Joseph Pentland (1797–1873) was asked to serve as cicerone to the antiquarian sites, the eminent Welsh sculptor John Gibson (1790–1866) was engaged as a guide to the local art collections and artists' studios.<sup>74</sup> After a few days in Rome, Bruce proudly reported to Albert of his success in winning these two authorities:

Mr Pentland and Mr Gibson have hitherto been our guides. The former is zealous and well informed, [...] very pleasant and Protestant and an old servant of the Crown and moreover on good terms with both natives and foreigners. He is not perhaps very [...] antiquarian but he is sufficiently erudite for the purpose. [...] He has drawn up a very clear programme of operations and already accompanied us several times on our antiquarian expedition. Of Mr. Gibson I need say nothing – His pre-eminent quality as artist is universally acknowledged and he has agreed to accompany H.R.H. to the studios, Vatican &c.<sup>75</sup>

Most importantly, both guides were highly respected personalities, with excellent connections in Rome, who could be trusted to devise an exemplary sightseeing programme for the young prince. Gibson was the leading British artist in Rome and most esteemed by Victoria and Albert, for whom he had frequently worked as

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<sup>74</sup> Pentland was a naturalist and traveller who had studied the geography of South America before settling in Rome in 1845, where he became so acquainted with the local antiquities that he was employed by the publisher John Murray to edit his popular travel guides to Italy. See *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 43, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) pp. 621–22.

For Bruce trying to engage Gibson, see RA/Z/444/47, Colonel Bruce to Prince Albert, 6 February 1859.

<sup>75</sup> RA/Z/444/54, Colonel Bruce to Prince Albert, 17 February 1859.



a sculptor and artistic advisor since the 1840s.<sup>76</sup> Trained in the studios of Canova and Thorvaldsen, he was one the most respected sculptors of his generation who followed in the tradition of the first modern art historian Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–1768) and his reconstruction of the Greek ideal.<sup>77</sup> Inspired by the principles of classical aesthetics based on ‘noble simplicity and calm grandeur’,<sup>78</sup> Gibson considered Greek sculpture as the most appropriate model for emulation in contemporary sculpture. By entrusting Bertie to Gibson’s tutorship, Victoria and Albert evidently hoped that their son would acquire the knowledge of an established classical repertoire and sharpen his taste accordingly. Yet a comparison between Gibson’s view of the classical canon of sculpture with what caught the Prince of Wales’s eye during his Rome sojourn, indicates the deviation of Bertie’s taste from the expectations of a classical art education.

### **Antiques in the Vatican and Capitoline collections**

On 16 March 1859, six weeks after he arrived in Rome, Bruce proudly informed Albert about the Prince of Wales’s sightseeing progress: ‘H.R.H. has now however entered the region of art and during the present week several mornings will be devoted to the Vatican.’<sup>79</sup> Rated as the ‘most magnificent museum of ancient sculpture in the world’,<sup>80</sup> the Vatican collections were an essential part on the prince’s visiting schedule. For Bertie to derive the greatest benefit from it,

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<sup>76</sup> By 1859, the royal collection contained the following sculptures by John Gibson: two full-size marble sculptures of *Queen Victoria* (1844–47), a marble bust of *Grazia* (1842), a marble relief of *Cupid and Psyche* (1845) and a portrait bust of *Queen Victoria* (1851). See ‘Appendix II: Royal Gifts’, in *Victoria & Albert: Art & Love* (2010), pp. 456–62; see also Elisabeth Darby, ‘John Gibson, Queen Victoria, and the Idea of Sculptural Polychromy,’ *Art History* 4, 1 (March 1981), pp. 1–20; Regarding Gibson’s role as artistic adviser to Victoria and Albert, the Royal Archives contain several letters from 1847 to 1851 between Gibson and the Queen’s Household, in which Gibson acts as correspondent for several Roman-based artists. RA/VIC/ADDL/MSS/C/4; See also *Victoria & Albert: Art & Love* (2010), p. 44.

<sup>77</sup> For more on Winckelmann’s Greek ideal in art and its posthumous reputation, see Alex Potts, *Flesh and the Ideal: Winckelmann and the Origins of Art History* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994), pp. 18, 21, 33, 222–56.

<sup>78</sup> Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1972).

<sup>79</sup> RA/Z/444/73, Colonel Bruce to Prince Albert, 16 March 1859.

<sup>80</sup> *A Handbook of Rome* (1858), p. 184.

Gibson, in charge of the Vatican tours, planned the time of his visits carefully, suggesting to wait until mid-March, when it was getting warmer so that the impression would be more enjoyable and profitable. In addition, his strategy was to select only a few highlights which would inform his royal student of the principal ideas of classical sculpture. According to Lady Eastlake's biography of the sculptor, Gibson was convinced that 'the greater number of visitors who go to the Vatican collection spend too much of their time in dwelling upon inferior works – stiff, hard repetitions'.<sup>81</sup> It is therefore likely that he suggested Bertie should concentrate on selected antiques of the highest quality rather than wasting valuable time with the multitude of Roman copies which populated the museum corridors and were considered as inferior to ideal Greek art.<sup>82</sup> Guiding the royal party through the sculpture galleries, Gibson would then have pointed out original Greek works and the most accomplished Roman copies, all of which would have suitably been described with the adjectives he frequently used in his descriptions of sculptures, such as 'beautiful', 'chaste', 'pure', 'majestic', 'sublime', 'true to nature', 'graceful', 'noble', and 'dignified'.<sup>83</sup>

As the highlight of their visit, Gibson would have showed his group the heart of the Vatican Museums, the celebrated Belvedere courtyard, known as the first sculpture museum in Europe.<sup>84</sup> Here, displayed in individual top-lit niches, visitors could admire the masterpieces such as the *Apollo Belvedere* [figs. 1.3], which Gibson described as 'the finest of all the Greek specimens of ideal art

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<sup>81</sup> Gibson quoted in Lady Elizabeth Eastlake, *Life of John Gibson, R.A. Sculptor* (London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1870), p. 172.

<sup>82</sup> During the 1770s, intended as a major political statement about the papacy's link with classical antiquity, the Vatican was acquiring numerous newly excavated antiques which were put on display in the expanded sculpture halls of the Museum. See Jeffrey Collins, 'The Gods' Abode: Pius VI and the Invention of the Vatican Museum', in *The Impact of Italy. The Grand Tour and Beyond*, ed. Clare Hornsby (London: The British School at Rome, 2000), pp. 173-94.

<sup>83</sup> While describing the antique sculptures at the Vatican and Capitol collections, Gibson used these adjectives repeatedly. See Eastlake (1870), pp. 172-91.

<sup>84</sup> On the development of the sculpture collection at the Belvedere Court, see Francis Haskell & Nicholas Penny, *Taste and the Antique: the Lure of Classical Sculpture, 1500-1900* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1981), pp. 7-15.

which have been preserved to us.<sup>85</sup> While some argued that the statue was a Roman copy,<sup>86</sup> Gibson adhered to Winckelmann's theory<sup>87</sup> that it was not only an original Greek sculpture, but its most elegant example:

The swelling of the nostrils and the disdain on the lip are so delicately expressed that the beauty of the divine countenance is undisturbed. What judgement is required! and what a specimen it gives us of Greek refinement. No description in prose or poetry can impress the mind with an image of sublimity as this statue does. The form is refined to the highest degree of beauty, even celestial beauty.<sup>88</sup>

Here, Gibson admired the concurrence of the delicate facial expression and the body's posture, pervaded by elegant restraint and widely considered as a mark of the utmost quality of Greek sculpture. Apart from the *Apollo*, Gibson was also enthralled by the celebrated group of *Laocoon* and his two sons attacked by serpents, which was considered as embodying the climax of human suffering [fig. 1.4]. Traditionally praised for its dignified expression of agony,<sup>89</sup> Gibson described this work as 'worthy of the great schools of Grecian art'.<sup>90</sup> He agreed with Winckelmann's interpretation that Laocoon's expression was emblematic of Greek sculpture's 'noble simplicity and quiet grandeur'.<sup>91</sup>

Although Bertie would have certainly also learned about numerous other antiques in the Vatican which formed part of Gibson's canon, only the *Apollo Belvedere* and *Laocoon* left a marked impression that we know of upon the prince. In his *Diary*, he wrote: 'We went over the statues which I admired very

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<sup>85</sup> Eastlake (1870), p. 177.

<sup>86</sup> See Haskell & Penny (1981), p. 150.

<sup>87</sup> For Winckelmann's theory about the *Apollo Belvedere*, see Carlo Fea (ed.), *Storia delle arti del disegno presso gli antichi di Giovanni Winkelmann* (Roma: Pagliarini, 1783), vol. 2, p. 355.

<sup>88</sup> Gibson quoted in Eastlake (1870), p. 177-78.

<sup>89</sup> Haskell & Penny (1981), p. 244.

<sup>90</sup> Gibson quoted after Eastlake (1870), p. 178. However, according to modern scholarship the original Greek provenance of the *Laocoon* has not been clarified. See Haskell & Penny (1981), p. 246.

<sup>91</sup> For more on the eighteenth-century dispute about Winckelmann's interpretation of *Laocoon*, see Victor Anthony Rudowski, 'Lessing contra Winckelmann', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 44, no. 3 (Spring 1986), pp. 235-43.

much, the Apollo Belvedere & Laocoon where [sic] the two I liked best – It was a great pull having Gibson with us as he showed us the best statues.<sup>92</sup> Despite being taciturn in his record of the visit, Bertie’s reason for emphasising in particular these two statues becomes more evident in a letter to his father: ‘I admired the Apollo and Laocoon very much, having seen copies of these celebrated statues so often, I was very happy to have the opportunity of seeing the originals.’<sup>93</sup> Through his admiration of the famed Vatican antiques, Bertie tried to impress his father who was a known collector of bronze reductions after famous antiques, including the *Apollo Belvedere* and *Laocoon*, both of which were on display in the statue corridors at Osborne.<sup>94</sup> Bertie’s familiarity, therefore, with copies of some of the most famous Vatican statues inspired him to admire the originals and to appreciate the formal differences between them and the replicas at home. While the copies were modern reproductions with marked differences in scale, material and colour, the originals incorporated the idea of their antique conception and preserved an aura of their original place.<sup>95</sup>

Gibson also guided the royal party around the Capitoline Museum to admire its famous collection of antiquities. After his first visit, Bertie recorded: ‘I liked the dying Gladiator & the boy pulling out the thorn best. I saw the two centaurs & the wolf, which are celebrated.’<sup>96</sup> The statue of the ‘Gladiator’, today known as the *Dying Gaul*, was one of the museum’s highlights [fig. 1.5]. Depicting the figure of a dying Gallic warrior, the statue struck through its bold ethnographic features with high cheekbones, a short, flat nose and moustache,

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<sup>92</sup> RA/Diary of Edward Prince of Wales 1859, 22 March 1859.

<sup>93</sup> RA/Z/461/95, Prince of Wales to Prince Albert, 25 March 1859.

<sup>94</sup> Albert’s foremost admiration of the *Apollo Belvedere*, of which he gave a bronze reduction to Victoria for her birthday in 1847, can also be retraced in a photograph of the original statue, which he had collected in a private Calotype album in the early 1850s, including admired works of art. Royal Photograph Collection, *Calotypes II*, 1850-1854. *Catalogue of the Principal Paintings, Sculptures and Other Works of Art at Osborne*, Vol. I (London: Harrison & Sons, 1876).

<sup>95</sup> For a discussion of the concept of the *genius loci*, or ‘spirit of place’, in the wider context of the phenomenology of architecture, see Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci* (New York: Rizzoli, 1980).

<sup>96</sup> RA/Diary of Edward Prince of Wales 1859, 23 March 1859.

which characterised it as the archetypal barbarian. As he did in his published comment on the statue, it is likely that Gibson pointed out to Bertie the *Dying Gaul's* 'common nature [...] admirably modelled'<sup>97</sup>. He would have also emphasized the deeply affecting expression of the dying body:

It tells its own tale and affects you at once. As you gaze upon him sympathy creeps over your senses, He bleeds – his life flows slowly away – silent and calm – he is sinking – will faint and die! I have heard some persons say that Greek art wants expression. They want perception. The natural and expressive touches the heart – keeps you upon earth – it is the ideal only that can elevate the soul.<sup>98</sup>

Gibson's passionate comment probably made a strong impression on the young prince. Bertie was also highly impressed by the antique bronze figure of the *Spinario* [fig. 1.6], which he described as 'the boy pulling out the thorn', as well as the *She-Wolf* [fig. 1.7] and the *Centaur*s from Hadrian's Villa [figs 1.8, 1.9]. His selection clearly signified his own artistic judgement, as neither of the works formed part of Gibson's canon. The *Spinario* had been well known since the early Renaissance, yet its popularity, especially during the nineteenth century, did not derive from its artistic superiority but the endearing story that it represented: the shepherd boy Martius who delivered an important message to Rome, only stopping to remove a thorn from his foot.<sup>99</sup> Similarly, the *She-Wolf* was not appreciated for its sculptural aesthetics but its archaeological value as a reminder of Rome's founding myth. As for the two *Centaur*s, which Bertie remembered as celebrated artworks, Gibson offered no words on them in his accounts on

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<sup>97</sup> Eastlake (1870), p. 189.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Haskell and Penny (1981), p. 308.

sculpture and Winckelmann dismissed them as late Roman copies.<sup>100</sup> Their highly developed, dramatic musculature contrasted sharply with the ideal of ‘never-ending continuity’ of the classical body as ‘uninterrupted by any indecorous eruption of the inner body.’<sup>101</sup> In addition, half-human, half-horse forms were associated with lustful excess and did not conform with the expectations of the perfect male body that constituted the antique canon.<sup>102</sup>

By highlighting the antique sculptures which left an impression upon Bertie, it becomes evident that his taste allowed for an open-minded application of neoclassical aesthetics. Bertie’s artistic preferences were conditioned by his previous knowledge of particular well known works but also by emotional and narrative subject matter, rather than more traditional intellectual considerations.

### **Renaissance and Baroque sculpture**

During Bertie’s visit to Rome no great attention was paid to Renaissance or Baroque sculpture, although he visited many sites where he would have encountered major works in marble by Michelangelo and Bernini. His sole record of a sculpture by Michelangelo is when he visited the church of S. Pietro in Vincoli where the only impression that the statue of Moses left on him was its scale.<sup>103</sup> While admiring the frescoes by Raphael and Michelangelo at the Vatican,<sup>104</sup> and expressing a strong liking of Baroque painting of the Bolognese School,<sup>105</sup> Bertie ignored sculpture from the same period.

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid., pp. 178-79.

<sup>101</sup> Chloe Chard, ‘Nakedness and Tourism: Classical Sculpture and the Imaginative Geography of the Grand Tour’, *Oxford Art Journal* 18, 1 (1995), pp. 14-28, here pp. 18-19.

<sup>102</sup> See Potts (1994).

<sup>103</sup> RA/*Diary of Edward Prince of Wales 1859*, 22 February 1859.

<sup>104</sup> RA/*Diary of Edward Prince of Wales 1859*, 13 March 1859.

<sup>105</sup> Bertie’s favourite pictures at the Borghese collection were Raphael’s *Entombment* and Domenichino’s *Sybil*; at Palazzo Corsini the painting he remembered best was Guido’s *Ecce Homo*; at Villa Ludovisi it was Guerchino’s fresco that left an impression on him; at Palazzo Rospigliosi Bertie admired Guido’s *Aurora* ‘excessively’; at Palazzo Barberini it is the *Head of St. Urban* and the famous portrait of *Beatrice Cenci* by Guido that he admired most; and again at the picture gallery of

At the Villa Borghese Bertie considered the main attractions to be the ‘well arranged grounds’, the military exercises of the French troops and the flowers and cattle.<sup>106</sup> However, the villa with its museum of statuary including Bernini’s famous *Apollo and Daphne* and *David in the Act of Slaying Goliath* were missed out.<sup>107</sup> The explanation lies in Gibson’s influence. While allowing his royal pupil to admire Baroque painting, he disparaged three-dimensional works of the period. He thought that Baroque sculpture was corrupt and represented artistic decline as it was far removed from the classical ideal.<sup>108</sup> However, as Michelangelo and Bernini were two of the greatest sculptors of the modern past he admitted to recognise ‘cleverness’ in their works.<sup>109</sup>

Despite the fact that the British royal collection had a considerable number of Baroque sculptures, inherited notably from George IV,<sup>110</sup> and despite Albert’s own appreciation of works after François Duquesnoy and by Clodion,<sup>111</sup> no particular importance was assigned for Bertie to view examples of Baroque sculpture in Rome. It was left up to Gibson to select the works for the young prince to see. Perhaps, it is conceivable that Albert deliberately decided that Bertie should not develop a taste for Baroque art because this could be associated with his royal predecessors, in particular George III and George IV, who had become known for their low morals and indulgent lifestyle.<sup>112</sup> As Victoria and Albert were worried that Bertie might turn out like one of his ancestors, whose ‘errors’ seemed to be the result of a deficient education, Bertie was exposed to a demanding and

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Palazzo Doria Pamphili one of Guido’s pictures was his ‘favourite of all’. See RA/*Diary of Edward Prince of Wales 1859*, 21 February, 2 March, 3 March, 16 April.

<sup>106</sup> RA/*Diary of Edward Prince of Wales 1859*, 6 February, 6 March, 26 April 1859.

<sup>107</sup> *A Handbook of Rome* (1858), p. 298.

<sup>108</sup> See Potts (1994), p. 21.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 86-89

<sup>110</sup> See Jane Roberts (ed.), *Royal Treasures. A Golden Jubilee Celebration* (London: Royal Collection, 2002), pp. 129-138; Marsden (2009), p. 24; Hugh Roberts, *For the Kings Pleasure: The furnishings and decoration of George IV’s apartment at Windsor Castle* (London: Royal Collection, 2001).

<sup>111</sup> Several photographs of Baroque sculptures after Duquesnoy and by Clodion appear in a private picture album assembled by Prince Albert. Calotype Album III, 1853–54, Royal Photograph Collection.

<sup>112</sup> Philip Magnus, *King Edward the Seventh* (London: John Murray, 1964), p. 15.

carefully regulated educational regime.<sup>113</sup> In this context, ignoring the art which seemed to embody excess could have been a conscious attempt to avoid any possible corruption of royal taste.

### **Artists' studios**

Over the first half of the nineteenth century, increasing demand for contemporary sculpture attracted numerous artists to Rome who sought to train in the famous studios of Canova and Thorvaldsen before setting up their own workshops.<sup>114</sup> By the mid-1850s, tourist guide books listed up to three hundred artists in Rome, amongst which over sixty were sculptors.<sup>115</sup> Visiting their studios had become such a routine that the British press began to ridicule English tourists as 'know-nothings' obediently performing the prescribed task of walking through artists' studios.<sup>116</sup> According to Murray's *Handbook*, a visit to an artist's studio could afford 'the highest interest to the intellectual visitor.'<sup>117</sup> It was especially recommended to make the personal acquaintance of artists, 'as some of our countrymen are amongst the most eminent artists of the eternal city.'<sup>118</sup> Considering the great number of studios and their general popularity with tourists, it is understandable that the Prince of Wales's studio visits were carefully curated by an experienced and respected guide like Gibson.

On twelve half-days over the course of his stay in Rome, Bertie visited the studios of altogether twenty-one painters and twenty-six sculptors.<sup>119</sup> Despite the

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>114</sup> For more on the Roman studio practice and the importance of employing assistants, see Hugh Honour, 'Canova's Studio Practice-II: 1792-1822', *Burlington Magazine* 114, no. 829 (April 1972), pp. 214, 216-29, specifically pp. 219-22; Martina Droth, 'The Ethics of Making: Craft and English Sculptural Aesthetics c. 1851-1900', *Journal of Design History* 17, 3 (2004), pp. 221-235, specifically pp. 223-25.

<sup>115</sup> See *The Artistical Directory* (1856).

<sup>116</sup> Anon., 'Foreign Correspondence', *Athenaeum* (21 May 1859), p. 679.

<sup>117</sup> *A Handbook of Rome* (1858), p. 267.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> The sculptors whose studios Bertie visited were: John Gibson (1790-1866), Pietro Tenerani (1789-1869), Lawrence Macdonald (1799-1878), Joseph Gott (1785-1860), Emil Wolff (1802-79), Benjamin Spence (1823-66), Alfred Gatley (1816-63), Giovanni Benzoni (1809-73), Harriet Hosmer (1830-1908), William Wetmore Story (1819-95), Adamo Tadolini (1788-1868), Joseph Moziers (1812-70), Randolph Rogers (1825-92), Antonio Rossetti (1819-70), Chauncey Bradley Ives (1810-94), Holme Cardwell (1815-unknown), Auguste Clesinger (1814-83), Shakespere Wood (1827-86),



majority of artists in Rome being painters, Gibson introduced the prince to more sculptors than painters, as sculpture was his expertise which he was keen to promote with the royal family. Keeping a record of his studio visits in his *Diary*, Bertie usually noted the name and nationality of an artist, which he sometimes accompanied with a small note on an artwork that had caught his eye. Although brief, these comments reveal an insightful picture of the prince's personal artistic interests and preferences.

Of the twenty-six sculptors' studios which Bertie visited, thirteen are recorded in his *Diary* accompanied with some further description, either about the artist or a particular work. As it would be speculative to guess what Bertie referred to when merely writing that an artist had some 'beautiful things' on display in the studio, I focus here on those works which he singled out of those available to view on his visits. Their number amounts to twelve sculptures by a mix of English, American, German and Italian artists. Between them, it is possible to distinguish two thematic categories. The first consists of five highly pathetic group statues, usually with two figures representing the theme of love or affection, while the second category consists of seven statues of attractive, young female figures.

Amongst the group sculptures, Bertie admired in particular Gibson's *Venus and Cupid* (1859), recording in his *Diary* that 'Venus & Cupid are the best things'<sup>120</sup> [fig. 1.10]. Based on an everyday Roman scene of 'a girl of about fourteen throwing up a child and kissing it',<sup>121</sup> this was one of Gibson's more easily appealing neoclassical works, catering for a popular taste for sentimental

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Eduard Mayer (1812–81), Rinaldo Rinaldi (1793–1873), Antonio Bisetti (dates unknown), Josef Engel (1815–1902), Carl Steinhäuser (1813–79), Julius Troschel (1806–63), Wilhelm Achtermann (1799–1884), and Heinrich Imhof (1795–1869).

<sup>120</sup> RA/*Diary of Edward Prince of Wales* 1859, 12 Feb. 1859.

<sup>121</sup> Matthews (1911), p. 224.

subject-matter.<sup>122</sup> What might have added to the statue's attraction, is that it was lightly tinted, as recorded a few years later.<sup>123</sup> Although not mentioning this fact in his *Diary*, to his father Bertie wrote that Gibson's 'hobby is that of painting statues, which he says he is persuaded the ancients did, & does not like at all if people differ with him on that subject.'<sup>124</sup> The practice of sculptural polychromy was a fraught issue amongst scholars and sculptors during the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>125</sup> Yet for Bertie's unbiased trustfulness, Gibson's personal advocacy seems to have been enough to accept sculptural polychromy as a viable contemporary practice without scrutinising the actual discourse. While Gibson's formal repertoire was aspiring to the ideals of neoclassicism, his experimentation with polychromy was highly innovative at the time and fascinated the young prince, as it added to the visual attraction of Gibson's marbles.

Another highly emphatic group which Bertie liked was *Hero and Leander* (1847) by the German Carl Steinhäuser, depicting the tragic Ovidian lovers as nudes seated in close embrace [fig. 1.11].<sup>126</sup> The subject matter for the *Prodigal Son* (1857/8) by the American Joseph Mozier was borrowed from the well-known biblical parable and depicted, with great pathos, the reunion between the father and his returning son [fig. 1.12].<sup>127</sup> Also inspired by the Old Testament was Heinrich Imhof's group of *Hagar and Ishmael in the Desert* (1842), showing the

<sup>122</sup> The fact that the group of *Venus and Cupid* was neither exhibited at the Royal Academy nor at the International Exhibition of 1862, indicates that Gibson conceived it rather as a more marketable work, less aloof and idealised than many other of his mythological sculptures. At least three versions of *Venus and Cupid* were ordered by private collectors. These were John Malcolm of Poltalloch, W. R. Sandbach of London, and the Prince of Wales at Marlborough House. See Eastlake (1870), p. 249.

<sup>123</sup> In 1862, Bertie purchased a 'tinted and gilt' version of Gibson's *Venus and Cupid*. See p. 82-83.

<sup>124</sup> RA/VIC/MAIN/Z/461/89, The Prince of Wales to Prince Albert, 20 February 1859.

<sup>125</sup> For more on the mid-century tensions around sculptural polychromy see Désirée de Chair, 'Chryselephantine and Polychrome: Richard Cockle Lucas and the Effect of Coloured Ivories in Mid-Victorian Britain', *Sculpture Journal* 23, 2 (2014), pp. 159-70.

<sup>126</sup> For more on Steinhäuser, see Ursula Heiderich (ed.), *Katalog der Skulpturen in der Kunsthalle Bremen* (Bremen: H. M. Hauschild, 1993), pp. 452-66.

<sup>127</sup> The *Art Journal's* comment on the *Prodigal Son* reflects the contemporary perception of hierarchy in subject matter. On the one hand, the statue was appreciated for its 'naturalism' and feeling of pathos, on the other, it was criticised for its 'inelegantly flowing lines' and little grace due to the 'un-poetic' figure-type of an 'aged Eastern man' and a 'youth', who both did not fit into the canon of ideal Greek sculpture. See Anon., 'The Prodigal Son', *Art Journal* (April 1959), p. 124, illustration inserted between pp. 124 and 125.

tragic scene of the despairing mother with her son dying of thirst [fig. 1.13]. Another group by the Swiss sculptor, today not identifiable, represented *Mercury and Cupid* as two children wrestling.<sup>128</sup>

The second group of sculptures which Bertie liked in particular consisted of statues of young female figures. Amongst these was Mozier's statue of *Pocahontas* (1854), based on the popular story of the American Indian princess which depicted the young girl dressed in a native feather robe and with a pet deer besides her [fig. 1.14]. Meditating upon a small crucifix as an expression of her conflict between her native tradition and new Christian faith, the statue appealed through its restrained eroticism combined with the idea of moral innocence. An even more sensual conception was Antonio Rossetti's *The Nubian Slave* (c.1858) which Bertie simply highlighted as 'slave his best'<sup>129</sup> [fig. 1.15]. It depicted the seated nude Nubian slave girl lowering her head in resignation, while being exposed to the gaze of the viewer. Highly popular in mid-nineteenth century sculpture, the motif of the female slave was praised, on the one hand, for its moral implications and 'picturesque'<sup>130</sup> style, while also appealing to Victorian masculine fantasies of oriental violence and female repression.<sup>131</sup> Julius Troschel's *La Filatrice Addormentata* (1840–42), the sleeping spinning girl, described by Bertie as 'Slave sleeping',<sup>132</sup> provided a similar, though more restrained, visual attraction as the previous figures [fig. 1.16]. Characterised by the accessories of a spindle and wool ball, the semi-draped nude was depicted resting asleep on a chair, head sunken on her shoulder with her bare chest turned

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<sup>128</sup> For more on Imhof, see G. Prosch, 'Heinrich Max Imhof', *Neujahrsblatt der Künstlergesellschaft in Zürich*, vol. xxx (1870), pp. 1-11; Karl Iten, *Heinrich Max Imhof, 1795-1869: Ein Urner Bildhauer in Rom* (Altdorf: Gisler, 2005).

<sup>129</sup> RA/Diary of Edward Prince of Wales 1859, 14 March 1859.

<sup>130</sup> Anna Jameson, *A Hand-book to the Courts of Modern Sculpture* (London: Crystal Palace Library & Bradbury & Evans, 1854), p. 58.

<sup>131</sup> See Deborah Cherry, *Beyond the Frame. Feminism and Visual Culture, Britain 1850-1900* (London and New York, Routledge, 2000), p. 131; Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock, *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology* (London and New York: Routledge, 1981), pp. 103-04; J. S. Kasson, *Marble Queens and Captives: Women in Nineteenth-Century American Sculpture* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990), pp. 46-72.

<sup>132</sup> RA/Diary of Edward Prince of Wales 1859, 26 April 1859.

towards the viewer. Ennobled through its compositional reference to the celebrated Vatican statue of *Sleeping Ariadne*, the *Filatrice* was viewed as an elegant and discreetly sensual salon piece and a version of it, purchased by Prince Albert in 1849, was located in the royal family's drawing room at Osborne.<sup>133</sup> In the context of the fashion for female slave figures, however, Bertie's designation of the statue as 'slave sleeping' and not as *Filatrice*, attests to the young prince's perception of its erotic connotation as a passive, sensual nude rather than its formal aesthetics. Bertie also recorded his interest in a statue of *Andromeda* by Troschel, a depiction of *Judith* by Imhof, a *Nymph* by Eduard Mayer and a statue of *Jeanne d'Arc* by Antonio Bisetti.

These tragic heroines and mythological beauties show that Bertie's artistic preferences lay with sentimental and eroticised subject matter. The touching emotions conveyed by the statues clearly appealed to the prince, but so too did their lithe female forms.<sup>134</sup> Furthermore, these sculpted female forms embodied a geographically and culturally wide-ranging array of subjects pertinent to the political concerns of the the British royal family.<sup>135</sup> This mix of pathos, politics and sex points to the kind of cosmopolitan and eclectic collector of sculpture that Bertie was to become.

At the beginning of his Rome trip, out of fear that artists and dealers would consider the young prince as fair game for manipulation, Bertie was not given a budget to buy art and souvenirs.<sup>136</sup> However, by the time he visited more than two

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<sup>133</sup> See Ames (1967), illustration 5; *Victoria & Albert, Art & Love* (2010), p. 36.

<sup>134</sup> See Lynda Nead, *The Female Nude. Art, Obscenity and Sexuality* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), pp. 5-33; For the increasing popularity of the female nude amongst the middle classes, but also the royal family during the mid-Victorian period, see Alison Smith, *The Victorian Nude. Sexuality, Morality and Art* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1996), pp. 68-97.

<sup>135</sup> The subject of slavery was an important political matter to the royal family who supported the anti-slavery movement since the early nineteenth century. Prince Albert had made his first public appearance as chairman of a meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society in 1840 and Bertie continued the cause later on in his life. See the Prince of Wales' speech before the Anti-Slavery Society in Guildhall on 1 August 1884, in James Macauley, *Speeches and Addresses of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales: 1863-1888* (London: John Murray, 1889), p. 253.

<sup>136</sup> RA/VIC/MAIN/Z/172/9, Colonel Bruce to Colonel Phipps, 17 February 1859.

dozen artists' studios, Bertie's tutor realized that 'the departure of the Prince of Wales without bestowing any patronage on the artists here will be the occasion of much hostile criticism. Ever more comments of that stamp are to be heard in the society at Rome.'<sup>137</sup> To save face, Bruce came up with a twofold strategy, which would satisfy local artists but avoid major spending on artworks not sanctioned by Prince Albert:

It seems to me that were H.R.H. patronage bestowed in the shape of orders instead of actual purchases the affections might in some measure be met. I suppose that a year at least would elapse before any of the leading artists could execute them[,] moreover they would of course be made contingent on the approval of Your Royal Highness after the inspection of the designs. In addition to these[,] if H.R.H. were authorised under competent advice to make purchases here of smaller works of art to the value of a few hundred pounds, I think the public expectation on this [end] would be satisfied, and although his selection will excite jealousy and criticism it appears to me that the discontent will be much greater and more general if his patronage is altogether withheld.<sup>138</sup>

This suggests that buying art was in itself considered a valuable educational experience, through which Bertie could apply his own artistic judgement and demonstrate his responsibility and taste.<sup>139</sup>

On 16 April 1859, Bruce reported to Albert that the Prince of Wales 'has been a good deal occupied in the examination of works of art with the view

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<sup>137</sup> RA/VIC/MAIN/Z/444/73, Colonel Bruce to Prince Albert, 16 March 1859.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> RA/VIC/MAIN/Z/444/79, Colonel Bruce to Prince Albert, 2 April 1859.

(although not ostensibly) of making purchases.’<sup>140</sup> Considering that a life-size marble statue could easily cost several hundred pounds, Bertie had to choose his souvenirs carefully as he hoped to buy a number of different objects, including sculpture. When eventually, at the end of April, Bertie was forced to leave Rome, due to the outbreak of civil war, he came up with his purchases, spending altogether £300.<sup>141</sup> Apart from choosing two small landscapes by a French painter and the aesthetic portrait head of *La Pavonia* by the young Frederic Leighton,<sup>142</sup> Bertie also bought his first sculpture: *Puck on the Toadstool* (1855) [fig. 1.17] by the American sculptor Harriet Hosmer (1830–1908). Gibson later recorded that ‘[The Prince] was not allowed to order anything, but he broke through that prohibition when he saw my pupil Miss Hosmer, and on the morning of his departure ordered her little statue of Puck. Colonel Bruce, his equerry, told me it was altogether his own act.’<sup>143</sup>

Hosmer built her reputation with statues of celebrated heroines but *Puck* was her least serious and scholarly work and did not reflect Gibson’s ideal canon. Inspired by the naughty sprite from Shakespeare’s *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, the small statue of less than one metre high depicted a chubby, bat-winged, infant boy, sitting cross-legged on a giant toadstool, with a mischievous expression. Leaning forward, *Puck* was shown at the moment when he is about to throw a beetle held up in his right hand, while clutching a small lizard with his left. Underneath his toadstool seat, clusters of mushrooms and a large achantus leaf added to the sculpture’s textual variety. Developed in 1855, the idea for *Puck* was born out of a situation of financial struggle when Hosmer was desperate for a

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<sup>140</sup> RA/VIC/MAIN/Z/444/82, Colonel Bruce to Prince Albert, 16 April 1859.

<sup>141</sup> RA/VIC/MAIN/Z/172/11, Colonel Bruce to Colonel Phipps, 2 May 1859.

<sup>142</sup> Anon., ‘Foreign Correspondence’, *The Athenaeum* (21 May 1959), p. 680. For more on *Pavonia* see Richard Dormant, ‘A Roman Lady by Frederic Leighton’, *Philadelphia Museum of Art Bulletin* 73 (June 1977), pp. 2-11.

<sup>143</sup> Matthews (1911), p. 224.

quick commercial success. Not only was the well-known subject matter cleverly chosen, but the statue's small size and its lively and charming composition made it a highly appealing 'fancy piece' which attracted numerous buyers who probably came to Rome, like Bertie, as young tourists to develop their taste in art.<sup>144</sup> For Bertie, the affordability of *Puck*, at a cost of probably around £160,<sup>145</sup> would have been one reason for its purchase but, more importantly, according to Hosmer, the prince was smitten with the subject matter when he first saw it: 'The whole party came to my studio and the Prince was quite taken with Puck, and nothing would do but he must buy it.'<sup>146</sup>

When Bertie's visit to Hosmer's studio was illustrated in a cartoon in the popular American magazine *Harper's Weekly* on 7 May 1859,<sup>147</sup> the statue on which the royal party was focusing was not *Puck* but Hosmer's monumental statue of *Zenobia* (1859), the heroic queen of Palmyra [fig. 1.18]. While Hosmer is shown standing upright next to her towering statue, Gibson is explaining his pupil's work to the Prince of Wales and his suite. Further statues of ideal female figures line the background of the studio, yet *Puck* is nowhere to be seen. In recent Hosmer scholarship, the *Harper's Weekly* cartoon has been used to illustrate Hosmer's status as a female sculptor as well as the contemporary reception of *Zenobia*.<sup>148</sup> However, the meaning of the deliberate juxtaposition of the Prince of Wales with *Zenobia*, instead of *Puck*, has not previously been

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<sup>144</sup> The first marble statue was commissioned in autumn 1855, shortly after the completion of the model. See Kate Culkin, *Harriet Hosmer: A cultural Biography* (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2010), p. 43; The number of thirty sold copies of *Puck* is usually given in the scholarship. See Patricia Cronin, *Harriet Hosmer: Lost and Found: A Catalogue Raisonné* (Milan, New York: Charta, 2009), p. 38.

<sup>145</sup> According to Dolly Sherwood, Hosmer's initial asking price for *Puck* was \$500, which she raised to \$800 at Gibson's recommendation. It is possible that the statue subsequently commanded more. Dolly Sherwood, *Harriet Hosmer: American Sculptor 1830–1908* (Columbia, London: University of Missouri Press, 1991), p. 119; According to the database [www.measuringworth.com](http://www.measuringworth.com), in the year 1859, \$800 was equivalent to £163. [accessed: 19 March 2012].

<sup>146</sup> Hosmer writes that when Bertie bought *Puck* he was accompanied by his equerry Colonel Ellis, his elder sister Vicky and her husband. Here, Hosmer retrospectively mingles the facts of two different meetings with Bertie, confusing both the year of the purchase of *Puck* and the party in 1862 in which Bertie was travelling. It is correct that when Bertie bought *Puck* he had to pay the statue with his own pocket money, however, the accompanying party, which Hosmer describes, visited her studio when Bertie was in Rome for the second time in 1862.

<sup>147</sup> Anon., 'The Prince of Wales at Miss Hosmer's Studio', *Harper's Weekly*, no. 3 (7 May 1859), p. 293.

<sup>148</sup> See for example Kasson (1991), pp. 119–22; Culkin (2010), p. 62, fig. 15.

emphasized. As a ‘fancy piece’, *Puck* featured lower in the hierarchy of sculptural subject matter. It was light and entertaining and could not compete with the earnest conception of a historical figure. Therefore, a serious ideal sculpture associated with virtue, strength and pride, such as *Zenobia*, was considered more appropriate as the subject of the Prince of Wales’s educational study than a light-hearted conceit. Although Bruce praised Bertie’s travel purchases as evidence of his ‘much judgement of taste’,<sup>149</sup> the little statue of Hosmer’s sprite did not represent the aesthetic ideals which Gibson had articulated on his guided tours to the collections of classic antiques. According to contemporary comments, *Puck* was a ‘laugh in marble’,<sup>150</sup> ‘a pretty toy’,<sup>151</sup> ‘charming and spirited’.<sup>152</sup> It was a strong testament to Bertie’s own taste in sculpture.

Here again, as with the two statue groups discussed above, Bertie’s preference for accessible, emotive subject matter is evident. While the Shakespearean reference made *Puck* an acceptable subject, it is likely that the statue’s charming and witty composition appealed to Bertie personally as he identified, like probably other young collectors, with the characterisation of *Puck* as a fun-loving, mischievous boy. For the student reluctant to study, who was himself seen as a rebellious adolescent, *Puck* was a very personal choice and an important step for the fledging collector. During his studies at Oxford, Bertie had *Puck* on display at his residence and proudly informed Hosmer of this when he met her at a ball in Boston in 1860.<sup>153</sup> Later on, during the 1860s, *Puck* would constitute a main attraction at Bertie’s country residence at Sandringham.

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<sup>149</sup> RA/VIC/MAIN/Z/172/11, Colonel Bruce to Colonel Phipps, 2 May 1859.

<sup>150</sup> Quoted after Sherwood (1991), p. 119.

<sup>151</sup> Quoted after Culkin (2010), p. 44.

<sup>152</sup> James Jackson Jarves, ‘Harriet Hosmer’, *Cosmopolitan Art Journal* 3, 5 (Dec. 1859), pp. 214-17, specifically p. 216.

<sup>153</sup> Culkin (2010), p. 88.



The preferences Bertie exhibited and the purchases he made in Rome in 1859 show that his perception of sculpture differed from that championed by Gibson. While Gibson adopted a refined scholarly approach to sculpture, Bertie's approach was emotive and personal and much less concerned with historical context and aesthetic ideals. This is an early indication of Bertie's taste for a more expansive understanding of sculpture than that which formed his parents' collection and which was later expressed in the variety of material, quantity of non-European subject matter, and preponderance of amusing and light-hearted statues, which characterised the Prince of Wales's collection.

## **1.2. The Prince of Wales's sculpture collection in 1877**

The Prince of Wales's sculpture collection was divided between his two residences Marlborough House in London and Sandringham in Norfolk. It began to take shape in the context of the houses' furnishings and decorations on the occasion of the prince's marriage to Alexandra of Denmark in March 1863. Marlborough House on Pall Mall, an early eighteenth-century mansion built by Christopher Wren, was their official seat. It was a dower residence for Queen Adelaide until 1849 and was thereafter the temporary home of the Museum of Ornamental Art before being renovated for the prince in 1861–62.<sup>154</sup> Sandringham, on the other hand, was the prince's private property, bought in 1862 as an easily accessible shooting estate.<sup>155</sup> The house that came with the estate was initially refurbished for the occupation of the newly married couple. However, by the mid-1860s, it no longer met the requirements of the prince's growing family and was replaced by a large, new brick house in the fashionable Jacobean style,

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<sup>154</sup> See Geoffrey Tyack, *Sir James Pennethorne and the Making of Victorian London* (Cambridge: University Press, 1992), pp. 232-41.

<sup>155</sup> For the development of Sandringham, see Rachel Jones, *Sandringham, Past and Present* (London: Jarrold & Sons, 1888).

inaugurated at the end of 1870. The new house's art collection, together with that at Marlborough House, was first inventoried in 1877 in the privately published *Catalogue of the Works of Art at Marlborough House London and at Sandringham Norfolk*, compiled by Alan Summerly Cole, son of South Kensington Museum director Henry Cole.<sup>156</sup> The reason behind this inventory is unknown, but might have been motivated by the wish for a general appraisal of all works of art following the Prince of Wales's return from a tour to India in 1875/76, from which he brought back a considerable collection of Indian arts and armour.

Containing over 1000 objects,<sup>157</sup> the *Catalogue* of 1877 is divided by material, following a rational classification system which Cole would have known from the South Kensington Museum. The categories are 'Pottery', 'Sculpture and Mosaics', 'Paintings', 'Metal Works', 'Wood Work' and 'Glass'. Within each of them are listed, firstly, all objects at Marlborough House, followed by those at Sandringham, without providing their location within the residences. The information usually provided for each object concerns its type, subject matter, artist, country of origin, year, provenance and height. Although the sculptures are mixed up within the sections of 'Sculpture and Mosaics', 'Metalwork' and 'Woodwork', it is possible to extrapolate them, based on their identification by title, artist and type as 'group', 'statue', 'bust', or 'figure'. With the exclusion of decorative objects and ceramics, both almost impossible to identify on the basis of the inventory, the total number of sculptures amounts to nearly ninety, mostly contemporary works of European fine art, and thirty figures of Egyptian and Asian origin. While attesting to Bertie's international outlook, the non-European

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<sup>156</sup> Alan Cole, *A Catalogue of the Works of Art at Marlborough House London and at Sandringham Norfolk belonging to their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales*, (London: privately published, 1877).

<sup>157</sup> The object numbers range from 1 to 2609. However, the number sequences which were probably marking furniture and other objects are left out. The total number of works of art listed in this catalogue is 1057.

works were received differently from European sculptures. Often undated and not clearly identified, they were appreciated as curious souvenirs and trophies rather than art objects.<sup>158</sup> In addition, they were, for the most part, displayed in a separate context at the Prince of Wales's residences. Therefore, the following assessment of Bertie's sculpture collection focuses on works of European sculpture.

Divided into the two genres of portraiture and ideal works,<sup>159</sup> the sculpture collection contained around sixty portraits of the royal family and other famous personalities, as well as nearly thirty ideal works drawn from mythology, literature and genre subject matter. Both categories were typical features of a private Victorian sculpture collection.<sup>160</sup> While the central purpose of portraiture was to commemorate family members and friends or to express political affiliations, ideal sculpture indicated a collector's personal taste for specific themes and artistic styles. Looking closely at the most prominent works helps us to understand the scope and scale of Bertie's patronage and the particular characteristics of his taste.

### **Portraits of the royal family**

Busts and statuettes of the British and Danish royal families formed the majority of portrait sculptures in the Prince of Wales's collection, with twenty-six in total. Amongst them were twelve portraits of Victoria and Albert, which were reduced versions in bronze or inexpensive plaster of originals in Victoria and Albert's own collection made by their favourite sculptors such as Carlo Marochetti (1805–67),

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<sup>158</sup> For the contemporary perception of non-European artworks as 'souvenirs,' see Arthur H. Beavan, *Marlborough House and Its Occupants Present and Past* (London: F. V. White & Co, 1896), p. 20.

<sup>159</sup> In this context, the term 'ideal' sculpture is defined as meaning invented works inspired by mythology, religion, literature or everyday life, in contrast to portraiture and ecclesiastical monuments. This broad and not very differentiated definition was similarly applied by Victorian art critics. See Martin Greenwood, *Victorian Ideal Sculpture, 1830-1880*, Ph.D. thesis (Courtauld Institute of Art 1998), pp. 21-35.

<sup>160</sup> For more on private collections of Victorian sculpture, see Read (1982), pp. 128-46.

William Theed (1804–91) and Thomas Thornycroft (1815–85). This in itself represented a certain continuity of patronage, but Bertie’s own individuality as a patron becomes far more apparent in his commissions of portraits of his wife and children. For instance, he commissioned three different portraits of his wife Alexandra, made by three different sculptors between 1863 and 1870. The three examples clearly show the diverse modes in portraiture favoured by the prince during a decade that witnessed a shift from a neoclassical approach to a more sensual, contemporary and detailed representation of the sitter.

For the first sculptural portrait of Alexandra, Bertie returned to Gibson whom he had met again during a trip to Rome in November 1862. Bertie even persuaded the sculptor to come to England in the following year to model his new wife for a bust in marble.<sup>161</sup> As he had previously worked for the royal family on numerous occasions, Gibson was a safe choice. His simple, neo-classical style had proved to be appropriate, serious and timeless. Although Gibson disliked leaving Rome, in the summer of 1863 he followed his royal patron’s invitation to London. Given the importance of the commission, the sculptor recorded his encounter with the Prince of Wales at Marlborough House:

“Well, here you are; you have fulfilled your promise,” said the Prince, giving me his hand on my first appearance. “I will go and bring the Princess to you.” He brought his bride. I bowed low – rose my head, She smiled sweetly. At once I saw what a pretty subject she was for a bust. I said so, the Prince smiled.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> T. Matthews, *The Biography of John Gibson, R. A. Sculptor Rome* (London: William Heinemann, 1911), p. 231.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.* p. 232.

The bust of Alexandra takes the form of a bare herm bust with straight cut sides forming a simple, square base on which her Christian name is inscribed [fig. 1.19]. The princess stares ahead, without any sign of movement, while her symmetrical hairstyle with a sharp middle parting is reflected in the regularity of her calm and smooth features. Her only adornments are two roses and a string of pearls holding the wavy hair at the back. Instead of emphasising the liveliness and youth of the sitter, Gibson, applied a restrained and timeless classicising formula, possibly in deliberate contrast to Francis Chantrey's earlier bust of *Queen Victoria* (1841) which depicted the young queen at a similar age in a far more animated and sensual pose.<sup>163</sup> By choosing to render the bust of Alexandra with the utmost simplicity, Gibson accentuated the princess's nobility, chasteness and natural beauty. As if to underline Alexandra's entitlement to these characteristics, the form of the herm, despite being unusual in Victorian female portraiture, aligned the young princess with the antique tradition of depicting philosophers and emperors.

According to Gibson, the Prince of Wales was 'very much pleased' with the bust.<sup>164</sup> The press, however, did not share the same enthusiasm when the work was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1864. The *Saturday Review* criticised its restrained character with only a 'certain echo of style', and called it no exception to the recent works by other sculptors who 'served [the royal family] to so little purpose.'<sup>165</sup> By this time, the severe style of Gibson appeared increasingly old-fashioned and was rivaled by sculptors trained in Paris who followed a more

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<sup>163</sup> For Chantrey's bust of Queen Victoria, see Droth, *Sculpture Victorious* (2014), cat. no. 2, pp. 62-64; *Victoria & Albert, Art & Love* (2010), cat. no. 5, pp. 58-59. For more on Chantrey's style and aesthetic, see Alex Potts, *Sir Francis Chantrey 1781-1841, Sculptor of the Great* (exhibition catalogue, National Portrait Gallery, London, 16 January to 15 March 1981 and Mappin Art Gallery, Sheffield, 4 April to 17 May 1981) (London: National Portrait Gallery, 1980).

<sup>164</sup> Matthews (1911), p. 232.

<sup>165</sup> Anon., 'The Royal Academy', *Art Journal* (1 June 1864), pp. 157-68, p. 168; Anon., 'The Royal Academy of Arts, Portraits and Sculpture', *The Saturday Review* (11 June 1864), pp. 721-23, p. 721.

innovative approach to modelling and contemporary costume.<sup>166</sup> Bertie liked being fashionable and when he next commissioned a bust of his wife, in 1866, he followed the latest trend, repudiating the aesthetic associated with Gibson, who died that year. Made by the Anglo-French sculptor Prosper d'Épinay (1836–1914), this bust depicts the princess in a particularly feminine and sensual attitude [fig. 1.20].<sup>167</sup> Set onto a round socle, Alexandra is shown wearing a light, almost translucent antique-style dress and turning her head slightly to the right. Her features appear clear and contemplative while her undulating lockets give her a sensuous appeal which is further emphasised by the left sleeve slipping off her shoulder and revealing her skin.

Born into a noble French family on the British-dominated island of Mauritius, d'Épinay did not follow a conventional academic course.<sup>168</sup> After some initial training in Paris, he set up his own studio in Rome in 1864 and embarked in the following summer on his first Royal Academy exhibition in London. By the clever initiative of modelling a portrait bust of Alexandra, d'Épinay sought to impress in particular the Prince of Wales as he was the leader of London's 'smart set' and proud of his wife's celebrity for exceptional beauty. D'Épinay clearly knew how to flatter Bertie by helping him to boast that Alexandra's beauty made men fall in love with her at first sight. As Bertie explained in a letter to his sister Louise, '[d'Épinay] only once saw Alix at a Ball last year – did it entirely from recollection - & I think it is one of the best I ever saw.'<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> The *Saturday Review*, for example, mentions works by the Paris-trained sculptors Carlo Marochetti and Joseph Edgar Boehm amongst the exceptional cases of success in sculpture in 1864. Anon., 'The Royal Academy of Arts, Portraits and Sculpture', *The Saturday Review* (11 June 1864), pp. 721–23, p. 722.

<sup>167</sup> It is possible that d'Épinay deliberately tried to rival Gibson's bust of Alexandra, which he could have seen in Rome when it was carved, as he, too, lived in the city during the 1860s.

<sup>168</sup> For more on d'Épinay's life and work see Patricia Roux Foujols, *Un Mauricien à la Cour des Princes (Mauritius: l'Amicale Ile Maurice-France, 1998)*.

<sup>169</sup> RA/VIC/ADDA17/233, Prince of Wales to Princess Louise, 23 December 1867.

It is possible that d'Épinay saw Alexandra only once in person and memorised her traits, but in order to model a successful likeness he would have also relied on other visual sources, such as *carte-de-visite* photographs. The story, relayed by Bertie, that d'Épinay made the bust 'entirely from recollection' can be considered as a strategy of self-promotion, in keeping with the fact that the sculptor first showcased his clay model of the bust to the Prince and Princess of Wales at a party organised by the prince's close friend Lord Charles Carrington, where the sculpture was prominently placed on the dinner table and received immediate approval by the royal guests.<sup>170</sup> The outcome was that Bertie commissioned one version of it in marble for Marlborough House and another copy for the Queen as a Christmas present.<sup>171</sup>

The third portrait of Alexandra, dating from 1870, differed from both previous examples in that it was made of bronze and depicted the princess in the form of a small statuette, dressed according to the current fashion of the time [fig. 1.21]. The artist was Bertie's cousin Count Victor Gleichen (1833–91) who had, like d'Épinay, no formal academic training and relied primarily on his society contacts. In addition, Gleichen had an intimate knowledge of current fashions, which he deployed with skill in his portraits. His statuette of Alexandra shows her otter hunting. Standing on a simple round pedestal, she is depicted holding on to a long hunting stick while turning her head and ascertaining the state of the hunt. Dressed in a minutely rendered hunting costume with a ruffled skirt and tight uniform jacket, she looks attractive and fashionable. Otter hunting was a fashionable sport, considered challenging and exciting and even women were allowed to participate. Accordingly, Alexandra is represented as a fun-loving

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<sup>170</sup>Roux Foujols (1998), p. 15.

<sup>171</sup> RA/VIC/ADDA17/233, Prince of Wales to Princess Louise, 23 December 1867; In her journal, Queen Victoria writes: 'I received some very nice [presents] including a very pretty bust of Alix'. QVJ, 24 December 1867, [www.queenvictoriasjournals.org](http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org) [accessed: 19 Oct. 2012].

society lady, sharing her husband's passion for outdoor country sports. Comissioned together with a statuette of the prince himself in shooting costume, the little bronze figure of Alexandra reflected Bertie's taste for contemporary portraiture with a focus on detailed decoration.<sup>172</sup> In marked contrast to Gibson's and d'Epina's portrait busts, the purpose of Gleichen's statuette was not to create a lasting and timeless image but to capture a fleeting moment of amusement.

### **Portraits of famous personalities**

Apart from the royal family, the Prince of Wales's collection also featured portraits of eminent personalities – poets, statesmen and religious figures – of the sort that populated the 'Portrait Gallery' of the Crystal Palace at Sydenham, opened in 1854. The idea behind such a pantheon was that eminent personalities were useful models for the public as 'biography teaches how they traveled the difficult and thorny road'.<sup>173</sup> However, in contrast to the Sydenham collection, Bertie's assemblage reflected his personal interests and affiliations, without any pretence of moral improvement. The prince owned modern portrait medallions of Roman emperors and portraits of antique and modern poets, including Homer, Virgil and Shakespeare, but his preference was clearly for figures of notoriety. These included Marie Antoinette, Napoleon Bonaparte and the leader of the Italian nationalist movement Giuseppe Garibaldi, all of whom were admired for their righteousness, authority and dignity.

The plaster bust of *Marie Antoinette* [fig. 1.22] represents the young queen as a prisoner before her execution, proudly 'looking', according to the *Art Journal*, 'with pitiful contempt on the wretched rabble surrounding the tumbrel or

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<sup>172</sup> The price paid for the pair was £210. RA/ADDA5/507/7, Cheques 1871, p. 62, no. 700.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.; For more on the intended instructive value of the Sydenham sculpture collection, see Anon., 'Museum of Sculpture at the New Crystal Palace', *Art Journal* (1 September 1853), pp. 209-11.



cart which conveyed her to the place of execution.’<sup>174</sup> The bust was a study for a full-length figure of Marie Antoinette made in 1875 by the amateur sculptor Lord Ronald Gower, a close friend of the royal family.<sup>175</sup> By the 1860s, instead of considering her as a symbol of absolutism, the French queen was celebrated as a victim of revolution, a tragic martyr who evoked sympathy through her alleged ‘courage’, ‘accomplishment’, ‘beauty’, ‘kind-heartedness’ and ‘heroic fortitude.’<sup>176</sup> In contrast to the original unadorned and callously observed pen and ink sketch of *Marie Antoinette on Her Way to Execution* (16 October 1793) by Jacques-Louis David,<sup>177</sup> which served Gower as a source, he depicted her with elongated, smooth features, wearing a large halo-like bonnet and an elegantly draped shawl around her shoulders to emphasise her ‘noble qualities’.<sup>178</sup> At the same time, the fine and realistic modelling of details and textures, which Gower picked up in the Paris studio of Albert-Ernest Carrier-Belleuse, where he was modelling the work, made the figure appear more authentic and appealed to the visual sensitivity of a collector like Bertie.

The assemblage in Bertie’s collection of three statuettes of Napoleonic soldiers, as well as a statuette and two busts of Napoleon himself, points to the popular veneration of the French emperor in Britain following his defeat and exile. Despite having been the nation’s arch-enemy, Napoleon came to be admired as a hero, not only for his military achievements and political power but for his dignity and strength of character after his ‘tragic’ turn of fate.<sup>179</sup> Numerous

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<sup>174</sup> Anon., ‘Marie Antoinette on her Way to the Place of Execution’, *Art Journal* (September 1878), p. 184. For more on this depiction of Marie Antoinette, see Philip Ward-Jackson, ‘Lord Ronald Gower, Gustave Doré and the Genesis of the Shakespeare Memorial at Stratford-on-Avon’, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 50 (1987), pp. 160-70, here p. 162-63.

<sup>175</sup> For more on Gower’s career as an amateur sculptor, see Ward-Jackson (1987).

<sup>176</sup> Anon., ‘Marie Antoinette on her Way to the Place of Execution’, *Art Journal* (September 1878), p. 184.

<sup>177</sup> Jaques Louise David, *Marie Antoinette on her Way to Execution*, 16 October 1793, pen and ink on paper, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

<sup>178</sup> Anon., ‘Marie Antoinette on her Way to the Place of Execution’, *Art Journal* (Sept. 1878), p. 184.

<sup>179</sup> For an evaluation of Napoleon’s political and cultural significance in Britain during the nineteenth century, see Stuart Semmel, *Napoleon and the British* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004), pp. 221-39.

histories of Napoleon were written from the 1820s on and published or translated in Britain. Statues of Napoleon as Roman emperor were famously collected by the Duke of Wellington and other British collectors.<sup>180</sup> The marble bust of *Napoleon* in Bertie's collection was probably made after a model by Antoine-Denis Chaudet (1763–1810) [fig. 1.23].<sup>181</sup> Characterised by the accentuation of pronounced individual features, together with an emphasis on a general, antique-style expression with a direct gaze, short haircut and clean-shaven face, Napoleon possessed a highly recognizable iconography in line with the Roman imperial tradition.<sup>182</sup> From the distance of Bertie's time, the possession of a Napoleon bust with its imperial implications could have served as a moral reminder of Napoleon's megalomania. However, in conjunction with the other, now lost, bust and statuettes of Napoleon and his soldiers, it appears that Bertie considered the French emperor as a heroic, charismatic figure.

Another important celebrity in Bertie's portrait collection was a bronze statuette of General Garibaldi (untraced), which had been made as a commercial reproduction by the firm of Elkington & Co in commemoration of Garibaldi's visit to England in April 1864. This visit was a mass spectacle which the *Times* critic compared to the cheering crowds when the Princess of Wales first entered the city in the previous year to be married.<sup>183</sup> Not only was Garibaldi admired by the working classes as an idol of the 'working men',<sup>184</sup> the liberal-minded aristocracy saw in him the symbol of a united Italy and were charmed by his alleged charisma and good looks. While Bertie was equally fascinated by the

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<sup>180</sup> Richard Heath, 'The Portraits of Napoleon the First', *The Magazine of Art* (Jan. 1888), pp. 176-80, p. 179; S. C. Hall and Llewellynn Jewett, 'The Stately Homes of England', *Art Journal* (Dec. 1876), pp. 359-60.

<sup>181</sup> For comparison, see a copy of a Napoleon bust in form of a herm by Chaudet at the Victoria & Albert Museum, inv. no. A.17-1948. For more on Chaudet's Napoleon portraits, their reproduction and influence on the work of other Napoleon portraitists, see Gerard Hubert and Guy Ledoux-Lebard, *Napoleon: Portraits contemporains, Bustes et Statues* (Paris: Arthena, 1999), pp. 79-87, 94-129.

<sup>182</sup> For more on Napoleon's strategy of self-representation as a Roman Emperor see Annie Jourdan, *Napoléon, Héros, Empereur, Mécène* (Paris, Aubier, 1998), pp. 177-84.

<sup>183</sup> Anon., 'The welcome of General Garibaldi to London', *The Times* (12 April 1864), p. 12.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*

Italian hero's reputation and went so far as to arrange a private but widely reported meeting with him, Victoria considered Garibaldi a dangerous revolutionary and intentionally ignored his visit. In deliberate opposition to his mother, Bertie described Garibaldi, in a letter to her, as 'dignified', 'noble' and 'uncharlatanlike', and he defended his meeting with him as having been 'hailed with joy through the country'.<sup>185</sup> Bertie's possession of a figure of Garibaldi signified his admiration of charismatic celebrities. In addition, it implied a challenge to his mother's authority and his attempt at self-determination as Prince of Wales.

### **Ideal sculpture**

As in portraiture, Bertie's taste for ideal sculpture was highly eclectic and determined by his personal predilection for particular thematic strands. Listed in the *Catalogue* of 1877 are 28 ideal sculptures of various mythological, religious, literary and genre subjects, of which eleven works represented large neoclassical statues in life-size or half-life-size, while the others were small reliefs or statuettes in a variety of materials. Dating mostly from the 1860s and early 1870s, the large marbles were acquired during a period that was framed by two further trips to Rome which the Prince of Wales undertook in 1862 and 1872. Following his first sculpture purchase of Hosmer's *Puck* in 1859, three years later, this time in company of his older sister Vicky, the prince added more sculptures to his collection. One of the highlights recorded by Vicky, was their return visit to Gibson's studio where Bertie made his next purchases. These were a slightly smaller than life-size, and possibly tinted, version of Gibson's famous *Tinted Venus* [fig. 1.24], known through its controversial public reception at the

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<sup>185</sup> Quoted after Magnus (1964), p. 84.

International Exhibition in the summer of 1862,<sup>186</sup> and a tinted version of the sculptor's *Venus and Cupid* (1859 or later) [fig. 1.10], which Bertie had already praised in 1859 but could not afford at the time.<sup>187</sup> Bertie's interest, then, in Gibson's unusual 'hobby [...] of painting statues'<sup>188</sup> was now encouraged by Vicky who was herself an ardent advocate of sculptural polychromy and probably assured her brother in his choice to buy tinted variants.<sup>189</sup>

Although Vicky regretted not having seen a coloured version of Gibson's *Venus* during their visit to the artist's studio,<sup>190</sup> in his biography of Gibson, Matthews recalls that '[she] greatly admired the effect of colouring the statues; that of the 'Girl and Cupid' for the Prince of Wales [...] was coloured, as was a small copy of the tinted Venus.'<sup>191</sup> Similar to the *Tinted Venus* (c.1851-56) from the Great Exhibition in 1862,<sup>192</sup> it is likely that Gibson tinted the Prince of Wales's statues with a subtle hint of red lips, blue eyes and blond hair, gilded the borders of the drapery and accentuated the skin with a warm ivory-coloured wash, just strong enough to evoke charm and delight, and adequately subtle to fit into a collection of otherwise white marbles. While the *Catalogue* of 1877 does not mention any colour on the *Venus*, it is likely that the statue was tinted when it was bought in 1862. Through his purchase of tinted statues Bertie proved himself to be open to innovative ideas in sculpture. His interest in colour, though, was probably less motivated by its reference to the ancient Greek tradition of sculptural polychromy but because tinting rendered the marble statues more sensually

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<sup>186</sup> For the contemporary reception of the *Tinted Venus*, see Michael Hatt, 'Transparent forms: tinting, whiteness and John Gibson's *Venus*', *Sculpture Journal* 23.2 (2014), pp. 185-96; *The Colour of Sculpture 1840-1910* (exhibition catalogue, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam, 26 July – 17 November 1996 and Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, 13 December 1996 – 6 April 1997) eds Andreas Blühm et. al. (Zwolle: Waanders, 1996), pp. 65-66, cat. no. 7 on pp. 122-23.

<sup>187</sup> The 'girl and child' was still the favoured work after Bertie's return to England when Gibson had forwarded photographs of his sculptures to be inspected for purchase. Royal Academy/GI/1/44, Colonel Bruce to John Gibson, 13 August 1859.

<sup>188</sup> RA/VIC/MAIN/Z/461/89, The Prince of Wales to Prince Albert, 20 February 1859.

<sup>189</sup> For Vicky's interest in sculptural polychromy, see Chapter 3, pp. 251-55.

<sup>190</sup> 'Gibson's *Venus* is quite exquisite – I did not see a coloured one – wh. I am very sorry for.' RA/VIC/MAIN/Z/14/13, Vicky to Queen Victoria, 15 November 1862.

<sup>191</sup> Matthews (1911), p. 230.

<sup>192</sup> John Gibson, *Tinted Venus*, c.1851-56, 175 cm high, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

attractive and palpable.<sup>193</sup> The latter reason might also explain why the figure of *Venus* would have lost its tinting by 1877, being rubbed off by the human temptation of the touch.

Bertie also bought the statues of *Bacchante* (1862) [fig. 1.25] by Lawrence Macdonald, and *Musidora*<sup>194</sup> (1866) [fig. 1.26] by William Theed, both of whom had worked for his parents. While it is likely that Bertie purchased the former in Rome in 1862, three years later, presumably to form a pair with *Bacchante*, he commissioned Theed to make a statue of the nymph *Musidora*, a popular subject inspired by James Thomson's poem 'Summer' from *The Seasons* (1730).<sup>195</sup> While the *Bacchante* is leaning casually against a tree trunk with her legs intersected, arranging her hair and exposing her beautiful figure to the viewer, *Musidora* is shown preparing herself for a bath by holding her drapery up and watching out as she advances forward. Despite the gracefulness of their postures and drapery, the composition of their bodies does not belie the figures' underlying eroticism. Embodying an ideal of perfection and depicted in a moment of assumed privateness, both statues clearly suggest a voyeuristic interest in the female form.

Two marble groups, dated 1868, by the Danish sculptor and former pupil of Thorvaldsen, Jens Adolf Jerichau (1816–83), are listed in the *Catalogue of 1877* as wedding presents to the Princess of Wales. In *Bathing Women* [fig. 1.27], two female nudes, a younger one seated and an older one slightly raised, are depicted embracing each other protectively while looking fearfully out and holding a draped cloth up between them to cover their bodies. The group of *Adam and Eve* [fig. 1.28] represents the biblical progenitors as ideal nude figures before

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<sup>193</sup> See Jason Edwards, 'By Abstraction Springs forth ideal Beauty? The 'real Academy' and John Gibson's Anglo-Roman modernity', in *Living with the Royal Academy: Artistic Ideals and Experiences in England, 1768–1848*, eds Sarah Monks, John Barrell and Mark Hallett (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2013), pp. 195–220, here especially pp. 197, 205.

<sup>194</sup> *Catalogue* (1877), no. 702, untraced in the Royal Collection.

<sup>195</sup> See Anon., 'Art Notes', *The Reader* (25 March 1865), p. 351.

the Fall. Placed on an oval pedestal sprinkled with leafy vegetation to signify the abundance of paradise, Adam, depicted with an ideal muscular body, is reclining on the ground, while Eve, raising up, is looking at him with a questioning gaze as a presentiment of their sin.

Both groups were clearly supposed to captivate viewers through their sensuousness, without departing from the severity of the Greek tradition. As a connoisseur and collector of ancient Greek art, Jerichau often based his designs on celebrated antiques.<sup>196</sup> In these two examples, Adam's pose and muscle structure is clearly inspired by the *Torso of Heracles* in Jerichau's collection, a variant of the famous *Belvedere Torso* from the Vatican, while the older women in *Bathing Women* was developed from the classical type of the *Crouching Venus*.<sup>197</sup> As the two groups were wedding presents it cannot be assumed that they necessarily represented Bertie's taste in sculpture. Yet their prominent display, as will be discussed in part 1.4, suggests that the prince found them aesthetically and perhaps intellectually appealing.

Probably also dating from the 1860s is the unsigned and undated group *Two Children Kissing* [fig. 1.29], which was possibly made by Mary Thornycroft, who was often engaged by the royal family for portraits of their children. The statue depicts a little boy and girl kneeling opposite each other while exchanging a subtle kiss. Between them lies a rose indicating their youthful affection. The subject matter was probably inspired by the popular French novel *Paul et Virginie* (1787) about two children of unequal background who grew up together and fell in love but had to part, due to their social differences. In 1851

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<sup>196</sup> For more on Jerichau's collection of antiquities, see Thomas Davidson, 'Private Collections of Ancient Sculpture in Rome', *The American Art Review* 2, 1 (1. Nov. 1880), pp. 7-12; Thomas Davidson, 'Private Collections of Ancient Sculpture in Rome – The Jerichau Collection', *American Art Review* 2, 2 (1 Dec. 1880), pp. 53-57.

<sup>197</sup> Since the second half of the eighteenth century, the Vatican Museum had a version of the *Crouching Venus* which was engraved by Francesco Piranesi and was probably known to Jerichau. See Haskell and Penny (1981), pp. 321-23.

Prince Albert had bought a group of *Paul et Virginie* (1851) by Guillaume Geefs, which depicted the children sleeping next to each other.<sup>198</sup> In Bertie's version, however, the subject is rendered with greater vividness and more amorous tenderness by showing them awake and kissing. In contrast with the innocence of sleep is the sensuousness of the alert and erect figures of the children.

In 1872, Bertie returned to Rome for two weeks, this time with Alexandra. Anxious for her to understand the beauty of Rome, he wrote to his sister Louise that 'a fortnight was very short, but we saw a good deal & Alix will at any rate form some slight idea of the treasures there.'<sup>199</sup> He also reported some recent purchases: 'I have ordered three statues there. From young Macdonald, Miss Hosmer, & d'Epina y & I hope that you will like them when they arrive in England.'<sup>200</sup> While the unidentified work by d'Epina y was probably another bust of Alexandra, the other two statues were a smaller than life-size version of Hosmer's *Sleeping Faun* (c.1872) [fig. 1.30] and Alexander Macdonald's *Venus and Cupid*<sup>201</sup> (1873) [fig. 1.31].

Hosmer's *Sleeping Faun* was first exhibited at the Dublin International Exhibition in 1865, opened by the Prince of Wales, who likely saw it on display. Being immediately sold to the brewer and philanthropist Benjamin Guinness, the statue became the most celebrated sculpture at the exhibition.<sup>202</sup> It depicts a perfectly proportioned adolescent faun dozing languorously against a tree stump while a satyr ties him to the stump with the ends of the faun's tiger skin. Carefully carved accessories, such as the faun's panpipe, his staff and a bunch of grapes, lie

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<sup>198</sup> See *Victoria & Albert: Art and Love* (2010), cat. no. 90, p. 159.

<sup>199</sup> RA/VIC/ADDA17/534, Prince of Wales to Princess Louise, 14 April 1872.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>201</sup> *Catalogue* (1877), no. 707, (untraced in the Royal Collection, a replica of the group has appeared in the art market, see image).

<sup>202</sup> For a discussion of the *Sleeping Faun* and its purchase by Benjamin Guinness, see Kathryn Greenthal, Paula M. Kozol and Jan Seidler Ramirez (eds), *American figurative sculpture in the Museum of Fine Arts Boston* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1986), pp. 163-67.

around and accentuate the contrast of textures. The group's playful mood and accomplished technique tied in with Hosmer's earlier *Puck* and evidently appealed to Bertie. Both works can be seen as visualising practical jokes, which Bertie loved to deploy.<sup>203</sup>

The prince was one of the first patrons who commissioned 'young Macdonald', the son of Lawrence Macdonald, with an ideal statue. Until 1872, Murray's *Handbook* praised him as a 'rising young artist who has already produced some good busts'.<sup>204</sup> The *Handbook* of 1875 informed the reader that 'Alexander Macdonald has already executed a fine classic group of 'Venus and Cupid,' for the Prince of Wales.'<sup>205</sup> The *Venus and Cupid* depicts the standing figure of *Venus* teaching her son *Cupid* to use his bow and arrow. While removing the quiver from his back, she takes away Cupid's bow, which he clings to. The figure of *Venus* evokes the *Venus de Milo* but the motif of motherly care might have seemed appropriate for a work which Bertie commissioned on a tour with his wife who was dedicated to her children.<sup>206</sup>

Produced by artists who lived or were trained in Rome, the above-mentioned statues followed the established stylistic canon of neoclassicism. Yet, within the seemingly uniform sculptural mode, Bertie's preference for particular formal and thematic tendencies reveals the distinctiveness of his taste. Although the majority of Gibson's statues were made of pure white marble, Bertie favoured the sculptor's experimental tinted versions, as these were more extravagant and exciting. Furthermore, like Albert, Bertie preferred reduced versions of works that

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<sup>203</sup> For references to practical jokes see Magnus (1964), p. 78, 107, 132-33; Jane Ridley, *Bertie: A Life of Edward VII* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2012), p. 41, 117, 128, 175.

<sup>204</sup> *A Handbook of Rome* (1868), p. xliii; *A Handbook of Rome* (1872), p. xlv.

<sup>205</sup> *A Handbook of Rome* (1875), p. 50.

<sup>206</sup> For more on Alexandra's preoccupation with family matters, see A. W. Purdue, 'Alexandra (1844-1925)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn., Jan 2008, <http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/view/article/30375> [accessed: 10 Sept. 2014].



were originally conceived in life-size, even if his motivation was more of a practical nature so that statues could easily be moved.

Finally, the most striking feature of Bertie's neoclassical marble statues, despite their varied sources, was the dominance of the nude body. The figures of *Bacchante* and *Musidora*, with their rounded hips, firm breasts and smooth skin, appear particularly sensual while the statues of Adam and the Faun represent ideal masculine bodies with a focus on musculature and balanced proportions. The hair of the female figures is carved in great detail with antique-style braids and long curls, and forms an attractive counterpart to the polished surface of their skin. It is possible that eroticism in the disguise of mythological and religious figures was here sanctioned by parallels with Victoria and Albert's collection, which, as noted by Alison Smith, contained a large quantity of 'mild erotica'.<sup>207</sup> Yet while Bertie's parents were considered as serious and informed connoisseurs, it seems likely that, for Bertie, these marble nudes were objects of pleasure rather than scholarly purpose. This subtle but important difference in attitude was particularly emphasised in Hosmer's *Puck* and *Sleeping Faun* which clearly evince Bertie's predilection for titillating entertainment. In this context, the amusing phallic shape of the acanthus stem on the back of *Puck's* toadstool is particularly telling [fig. 1.32].

According to the *Catalogue* of 1877, the Prince of Wales's collection also contained 17 small scale ideal sculptures, most of which are no longer in the Royal Collection. Inspired by romantic literary and genre-inspired sources and made by artists with a discernable French background, these works attest to the eclecticism of Bertie's collection of sculpture and his vanguard patronage in the 1870s. The earliest example is the dark bronze statuette *Wilhelm and Lenore*

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<sup>207</sup> Smith (1996), pp. 71-74. See also *Victoria & Albert: Art & Love* (2010), p. 34.

(1871) by Boehm, the only known ideal work by the artist in the Royal Collection [fig. 1.33].<sup>208</sup> The subject was inspired by the German eighteenth-century ballad ‘Lenore’ by Gottfried Bürger, about a girl whose deceased fiancé reappears from the Seven Years’ War as a ghost on horseback, dragging her away into the realm of the dead. By representing the groom as a listless soldier and showing the couple’s reunion on the back of a desheveled horse skeleton raging into a graveyard which forms the base of the statuette, Boehm created an eerie scene with a set of Gothic tropes popular in the Victorian period. Scattered on the base are an unhinged gate, a bevelled gravestone, a skull and a lizard amongst creeping foliage as symbols of death and decay. The vigorous modelling and vivid reflections of the polished surface effectively capture the dramatic and frightful mood of the scene. While the uncanny subject was based on a Germanic source, the statuette’s lively composition and texture were influenced by contemporary French bronzes, to create a distinctive new look attuned to a contemporary taste for Gothic fiction. Cast in bronze after a terracotta model shown at the Royal Academy in 1867, this is the only known version of *Wilhelm and Lenore* and attests to Bertie’s taste for sculpture that was far removed in style and subject matter from the marbles he bought in Rome.<sup>209</sup>

Another work thematically and stylistically related to *Wilhem and Lenore* is a terracotta relief entitled *Ecole des Filles* (School of Girls) (1871) (untraced) [fig. 1.34] by the French sculptor Emile Hébert, which is described in the 1877 *Catalogue* as ‘Cupid nailed to a door’.<sup>210</sup> Its composition, which survives today in bronze casts on the art market, depicts a creepy male figure peaking through the entrance door of the ‘School of Girls’, while a winged putto, fixed to the front of

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<sup>208</sup> See Stocker (1986), pp. 280-82.

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 310.

<sup>210</sup> *Catalogue* (1877), no. 791, (untraced in the Royal Collection, a replica in bronze appeared in the art market, see image).

the door, is crying in despair.<sup>211</sup> An inscription in French, at the bottom of the door, underlines the moral message: ‘Ainsi seront traité les Rodeurs Téméraires’ (This is the way in which foolhardy prowlers are treated). With Cupid ‘nailed to the door’, according to the reading of the *Catalogue*, the scene exposes Cupid’s punishment for not looking after his love tools. Having fallen into the wrong hands, his matchmaking arrows have allowed innocent schoolgirls to fall prey to an unknown stalker. While the title pointed to a girls’ convent as the setting, it also alluded to a seventeenth-century French erotic book of the same title, in which two girls discuss ‘forbidden’ sexual matters.<sup>212</sup> Modelled in terracotta, the detailing of different textures, such as the wooden door, metal hinges and the figures’ bodies, further emphasises the dark and lurid narrative.

Thematically different, but stylistically just as intricate, the small group *Mother and Child* (1874) [fig. 1.35] by the French sculptor Jules Dalou (1838–1902) depicts a young mother sitting in a rocking chair and smiling lovingly at her baby on her lap. Modelling in terracotta allowed for the finely observed representation of the mother’s simple but refined day dress with a frilled collar, her fashionable chignon hairstyle and the affectionate expression, which emphasises the happiness of the figures. Not only could the idea of motherly care be regarded as a new concept of womanhood during the 1870s, but the material, subject matter and realism were considered new and inventive when the terracotta was exhibited at the Academy in 1874. While the *Times* described the work as the expression of ‘charm and unaffected grace and tenderness’, which represented a

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<sup>211</sup> According to the auction website [www.artnet.com](http://www.artnet.com), a bronze version of *Ecole des Filles* was sold in a past auction, <http://www.artnet.com/artists/pierre-eugene-emile-hebert/ecole-de-filles-NcFhDxRmo264XZsfk09bqQ2> [accessed: 5 Sept. 2014].

<sup>212</sup> [Michel Millot], *L’Ecole des Filles ou La Philosophie des Dames* (Strasbourg, Les Presses de la Société des Bibliophiles Cosmopolites, 1871).

‘new future for the plastic artist’,<sup>213</sup> F.T. Palgrave, writing for *The Academy*, found Dalou’s way of expression threatening to established artistic norms. His appreciation of another of work of Dalou’s statuettes, the *French Peasant Woman*, shown in 1873, as having a ‘sense of rustic charm’ characterised by ‘peasant grace’, was inverted towards the sculptor’s *Mother and Child* which he accused of ‘insipidity’, ‘crude naturalism’ and ‘want of *style*’.<sup>214</sup>

While the scene of the peasant woman nursing her child was considered as picturesque, Dalou’s representation of bourgeois maternity was perceived as an infringement of convention and class. As a French revolutionary exiled after his participation in the Paris Commune, it is not surprising that Dalou’s political outlook also informed the seemingly unpolitical works he focused on in England.<sup>215</sup> Primarily, however, his intimate female subjects taken from daily life, such as maternity, served to introduce a new style of realism which did not aim at evoking a sentimental response but a psychological closeness. Showing both the peasant woman and the bourgeois mother in an intimate relationship with their babies implied equality transcending social class.<sup>216</sup> For Bertie, however, such political implications do not seem to have mattered when he purchased the work.<sup>217</sup> As Dalou had been a protégé of Boehm, it is possible that the latter recommended the French sculptor’s works to the Prince of Wales and emphasised the novelty of his sculptural realism. More importantly, it is likely that Bertie’s patronage of Dalou was influenced by the sculptor’s popularity amongst

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<sup>213</sup> Anon., ‘Royal Academy’, *The Times* (1 July 1874), p. 5.

<sup>214</sup> Palgrave, F. T., ‘Fine Art’, *The Academy* (13 June 1874), pp. 670-72, here p. 672.

<sup>215</sup> *Dalou in England: Portraits of Womanhood, 1871-1879* (exhibition leaflet, Yale Center for British Art, New Haven, 11 June – 23 August 2009), ed. Cassandra Albinson (New Haven: Yale Center for British Art, 2009).

<sup>216</sup> See *ibid.*, pp. 12, 14.

<sup>217</sup> Bertie’s indifference towards a political reading of his Dalou works becomes particularly evident in the display of *Mother and Child* alongside Dalou’s *French Peasant Woman* as later documented in the display of Bertie’s collection, see p. 120-21.

fashionable upper-class collectors like the Duke of Westminster and the Countess of Carlise.<sup>218</sup>

What becomes clear just from looking at these examples of small ideal works is that they represented a broadening of the traditional scope of sculpture, both stylistically and thematically. While the first two works denoted an interest in romantic narrative with a focus on decorative detail, Dalou's *Mother and Child* suggests a taste for realism that was distinct from sentimental mid-Victorian sculpture. These trends were underscored by a preference for bronze and terracotta as material through which more delicate and visually attractive qualities could be expressed.

The range of European sculptures in the 1877 *Catalogue* clearly indicates the eclecticism of the collection and the contours of Bertie's patronage. The works examined above attest to the prince's taste for both established and more progressive modes in sculpture. The collection was dominated by contemporary works, mostly with personally meaningful subject matter. The prince did neither favour one specific sculptor, nor did he demonstrate any particular loyalty towards British artists. Instead, he commissioned and bought works from sculptors with an interesting cosmopolitan mix of backgrounds. What mattered to him was that a work expressed his personal preferences, whether it be for the female form, touching human emotion, or bawdy humour and wit.

Unlike his father, Bertie was not necessarily interested in collecting sculpture that conformed to a scholarly discourse. While his initial purchases were influenced by his schooling in Rome, by the 1870s Bertie had become

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<sup>218</sup> For the Duke of Westminster's patronage of Dalou, see Edward Morris, 'The Sculpture Collections at Eaton Hall, Cheshire, 1820-1914', *Sculpture Journal* 19, 1 (2010), pp. 62-78, here p. 73; For the Countess of Carlisle's patronage, see *Dalou in England* (2009).

increasingly aware of new sculptural modes. The progressiveness of his taste, however, depended on the purpose and size of a sculpture. Bertie continued to add large, neoclassical marble statues to his collection but it was with small scale works that he articulated his interest in the latest developments in sculpture. In Gleichen's small bronze statuette of Alexandra in otter hunting costume, just as in the small ideal works by Boehm and Dalou, Bertie showed a preference for vigorous modelling and the new possibilities inspired by contemporary French sculpture. At the same time, his collecting of portraits of celebrities was determined by a good story as much as by stylistic attributes.

### **1.3. Aesthetic, “Eastern” and cosmopolitan influences around 1877**

Many scholars have attested that the 1870s generated new impulses and trends that dramatically widened the scope of sculpture in Britain. During this time, the Aesthetic Movement, which emphasised the visual and sensual qualities of art over moral or narrative considerations, began to flourish and fostered new fashionable exhibition platforms other than the Royal Academy. At the same time, imperial expansion and the growth of transport links and trade routes meant that travelling to “the East” became safer and easier, with the result that “Eastern” souvenirs and imagery altered the artistic repertoire in Britain.<sup>219</sup> This tendency was fuelled by the proliferation of international exhibitions in European cities which showcased artworks and manufactures from Egypt, India and beyond to a largely European audience. Tracking significant events in the Prince of Wales's social life around 1877, as revealed by his *Engagement Diary* and other sources,

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<sup>219</sup> The geographically unspecific term of “the East” was used by the Prince of Wales and his contemporaries to designate the cultural region of Northern Africa, the Middle East and Asia in its cultural otherness from the Western culture of Europe.

demonstrates the wider socio-historical implications of the princely sculpture collection.

Like Bertie's *Diary* of 1859, the *Engagement Diary of the Prince of Wales* of 1877, written in the prince's own hand, is limited to short notes of people, places and events without much commentary. However, it clearly reveals the contours of the prince's social calendar, organised around events such as the shooting season, from September to January, racing days in Newmarket, Ascot and Goodwood in June and July, and a few yachting weeks on the Isle of Wight in August. Short trips to the continent – to Paris, the French Riviera and Italy – provided some diversion from the Season at home and could include occasional jaunts to current exhibitions, such as the 'magnificent "loan collection"' of the Esposizione Nazionale di Belle Arti in Naples and an 'Exhibition of Pictures' at the Palais de l'Industrie in Paris.

When in London, the prince attended meetings of current projects in which he held offices, such as the meetings of the Royal Committee of the British Section of the Paris International Exhibition 1878, of which he served as president. For lunch Bertie often met with fashionable society friends, including the Rothschilds, the Duke and Duchess of Westminster, and the art collector Richard Wallace; in the evening he dined at home or at his gentlemen's club, the Marlborough Club, and thereafter visited a theatre or opera performance in the West End. In between this packed schedule of social engagements, Bertie occasionally made time to pursue his interests as an art patron by sitting for portraits, inaugurating monuments and visiting artists' studios, galleries and exhibitions.

In June and July 1877, the prince gave several portrait sittings to the Viennese painter Heinrich von Angeli and to the sculptor John Adams-Acton; on 14 July, he inaugurated a monumental marble statue of *King Alfred* at Wantage, Oxfordshire, sculpted by his cousin Count Gleichen; he visited the studios of Boehm (22 March), d'Epinau (24 July) and George Frederick Watts (30 July); on 11 May, he visited the fashionable London dealer Agnew's to see watercolours from Japan by the artist Frank Dillon, followed by a visit to the King Street Gallery to see John Everett Millais' latest painting *Effie Deans*; on 5 August, he joined a private view of the Royal Academy Exhibition. The artistic highlight of 1877 was the opening of the Grosvenor Gallery, which Bertie visited four times during that year.<sup>220</sup>

The Grosvenor Gallery [fig. 1.36], founded by the aristocratic art lover and painter Sir Coutts Lindsay and his wife Blanche, was an exclusive private exhibition gallery that provided contemporary artists and fashionable audiences with an alternative and more innovative exhibition opportunity than the Royal Academy.<sup>221</sup> Newly built with an opulent Renaissance entrance to stand out within the exclusive shopping area of New Bond Street, the gallery sought to emulate a private aristocratic palace with extravagant interiors. The top-lit rooms were decorated with damask wall hangings, stuccoed ceilings, gilt and upholstered Italianate furniture, Persian rugs on parquet floors, and exotic flowers, which together provided a harmonious and tasteful setting for the carefully selected paintings and sculptures on show. Apart from three exhibition

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<sup>220</sup> The Prince of Wales' *Engagement Diary* of 1877 records visits to the Grosvenor Gallery on 9th May ('Sir Coutts and Lady Lindsay's Dinner'), Sunday 13th May ('with the boys'), Sunday 24th June, Sunday 16th December.

<sup>221</sup> For more on Sir Coutts Lindsay's biography and a description of the Grosvenor Gallery see Anon., 'The Grosvenor Gallery', *The Times* (12 March 1877), p. 4; Denney (2000), pp. 15-30, 57-62.



galleries, the building also provided visitors with a restaurant, a smoking and a billiard room.

With the aim to establish the Grosvenor Gallery as a leading art temple and meeting place, Lindsay tried to ennoble his venue by inviting not only high dignitaries and fashionable artists to the opening dinner but also royalty. Initially, he planned to hold a lavish banquet on 28 March 1877, but when it turned out that the Prince of Wales was prevented from attending, he rescheduled the event to the 9 May to ensure the presence of his foremost guest of honour.<sup>222</sup> This strategy turned out successfully and was rewarded with media publicity of the prince's enthusiastic speech in which he congratulated his host on the success of the Grosvenor Gallery as a new exhibition space.<sup>223</sup> Furthermore, having enjoyed the exclusive atmosphere of the opening banquet, Bertie returned two more times over the summer and even brought his teenage sons to get to know this latest artistic space in London. While he had himself grown up being obliged to learn about art and antiquities as part of a draconian educational scheme, for his sons, he considered the pleasurable atmosphere of the Grosvenor Gallery a more worthwhile educational experience to learn about art. Although some critics bemoaned that the lavish decoration of the gallery interiors distracted from seeing the individual art works, to the prince, as much as to major exponents of the Aesthetic Movement, like Oscar Wilde and James McNeill Whistler, the gallery's opulence and effect set a new aesthetic standard for the appreciation of art.<sup>224</sup>

Another aesthetic landmark which appeared in London during this period was Frederick Leighton's Arab Hall, built between 1877 and 1881 as an annexe to the artist's earlier studio-house of 1866 in Holland Park. Beyond serving as a

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<sup>222</sup> The prince travelled on the Continent from 12 April until 6 May 1877.

<sup>223</sup> Anon., 'Banquets. Grosvenor Gallery', *The Times* (10 May 1877), p. 6.

<sup>224</sup> For more on the Grosvenor Gallery artists and aesthetic audiences during the first few years of the gallery's existence, see Denney (2000), pp. 67-126.

place of artistic production, the studio-house was a glamorous and exciting space for the entertainment of clients and artist friends, to which the Arab Hall added a further dimension [fig. 1.37].<sup>225</sup> Decorated with Persian tiles, coloured glass, gilt carvings and a babbling fountain in the middle, the domed hall became one of the most celebrated sites of Victorian ‘exoticism’.<sup>226</sup> Here, historico-geographic influences from Antiquity to the Renaissance, and from Rome to Egypt and beyond, created a decorative ensemble that provided a luxurious and highly aesthetic atmosphere for the display of selected works of fine and decorative art, including the bronze cast of a Pompeian statuette of *Narcissus*, and later an exquisite bronze statuette of *Icarus* (1884) by Alfred Gilbert.<sup>227</sup> Of course, Bertie did not miss out on being one of the first guests to admire the new Arab Hall when it was almost finished in 1880.<sup>228</sup> For him, visiting Leighton’s studio-house constituted, as much as the Grosvenor Gallery, a highly valuable aesthetic experience. In fact, since his purchase of Leighton’s aesthetic painting of *Pavonia* in 1859, Bertie had developed a friendship with Leighton and became a keen supporter of his career and aesthetic ideas. Not only had he visited Leighton’s studio several times during the 1860s,<sup>229</sup> but he purchased further works, with *Bianca* (1862), depicting a pale, red-haired girl with a white Venetian dress, forming an aesthetic counterpart to the dark-haired beauty of *Pavonia*.<sup>230</sup> The

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<sup>225</sup> For more on the architecture and double function of Leighton’s studio-house, see Deborah Cherry, *Painting Women* (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 87; Louise Campbell, ‘Decoration, Display, Disguise: Leighton House Reconsidered’, in Tim Barringer and Elizabeth Prettejohn, *Frederic Leighton: Antiquity, Renaissance, Modernity* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999), pp. 267-93.

<sup>226</sup> Calloway and Federle Orr (2011), p. 94.

<sup>227</sup> For more on the role of Leighton House as an expression of Leighton’s Aestheticism, see Campbell (1999), pp. 267-93; see especially Edwards who considers the Leighton House interior scheme as expressing particular aesthetic strands, such as Arts and Crafts Philosophy, Whistlerian and Queer Aestheticism. Jason Edwards, ‘The Lessons of Leighton House: Aesthetics, Politics, Erotics’, in Jason Edwards and Imogen Hart, *Rethinking the Interior c. 1867-1896, Aestheticism and Arts and Crafts* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 85-110.

<sup>228</sup> Anon., ‘Court Circular – Marlborough House, March 20’, *The Times* (22 March 1880), p. 9; Anon., ‘Court Circular’, *The Times* (12 July 1881), p. 10.

<sup>229</sup> The Prince of Wales’s visit of Leighton’s old studio at Orme Square and after 1866 at Leighton House was reported in *The Times*’s ‘Court Circular’, (27 May 1863), p. 8; *ibid.*, (18 March 1864), p. 12; *ibid.*, (25 February 1865), p. 9; *ibid.*, (23 March 1868), p. 9; *ibid.*, (22 March 1880), p. 9.

<sup>230</sup> For more on *Pavonia* and *Bianca*, see Leonee and Richard Ormond, *Lord Leighton* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1975), pp. 60, 61, 153-4, no. 78; Millar, Oliver (ed.), *The Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty the*

prince's personal appreciation of Leighton was also reflected in his support of the artist's endeavour to explore the Nile in 1868 by recommending him to the Viceroy of Egypt as 'a personal friend' so that Leighton could travel in splendid comfort.<sup>231</sup>

As a great admirer of Leighton's aesthetic sense for 'the East',<sup>232</sup> and his sophisticated colour compositions, Bertie invited Leighton in 1874 to design the programme for a large fancy dress ball at Marlborough House which came to be celebrated for its outstanding 'magnificence', 'splendour', 'art' and 'taste'.<sup>233</sup> Mentioned in an article in *The Times*, Leighton's exact contribution to the event is not revealed, but, as a painter of historical and aesthetic subject matter, he probably suggested the historical quadrille with 'Venetian' and 'Vandyke' costumes inspired by famous paintings. Moreover, he would have been in charge of the decorative schemes of the two garden marquees. While the dinner tent was decorated with figures of men in armour and rich wall tapestries, the smaller buffet tent was an aesthetic highlight. Everything was decorated in a monochrome scheme of scarlet red. The walls were hung with scarlet velvet Indian carpets that were embroidered with gold and precious stones. Scarlet geraniums adorned the tables and hung from the roof, and even the servants wore scarlet liveries. Apart from his involvement in the preparations for the ball, Leighton was also invited to the evening itself, wearing a 'beautiful dress of brown velvet and satin'.<sup>234</sup>

Although the fancy dress ball was a special event and the unusual juxtaposition of historical costumes and the monochrome decorative scheme would not have been realised in a permanent design of the royal residences, this

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*Queen, The Victorian Pictures*, pp. 164-6; Lloyd (1998), no. 38, pp. 106-7. A more recent Royal Collection catalogue entry for *Bianca* 'assumes' that the pairing of *Bianca* and *Pavonia* was intentional.

<http://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/404569/bianca> [accessed: 22 Jan. 2013].

<sup>231</sup> Letter from Frederick Leighton to his father, dated October 1868. Leighton House Archive, AccNumber 2000/24/5.

<sup>232</sup> For Leighton's use of the period term 'the East' see letter *ibid*.

<sup>233</sup> Anon., 'Ball at Marlborough House', *The Times* (23 July 1874), p. 10.

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid*.

example shows that Bertie was supportive of innovative artistic experiments at a time when Whistler's monochrome 'arrangements' of 'tonal harmonies' were just beginning to be recognised as aesthetically avantgarde.<sup>235</sup> In fact, Whistler's own aesthetic colour scheme for his celebrated solo exhibition 'Arrangement in White and Yellow' of 1883, which he described as comprising 'white walls—of different whites', 'yellow velvet curtains – pale yellow matting', 'yellow pot and Tiger lilly!', 'and finally servants in yellow livery (!)',<sup>236</sup> clearly echoed the Leightonesque scheme for the Marlborough House ball of nearly a decade earlier. However, while Whistler's scheme is today praised as 'a clear harbinger of twentieth-century performance and installation art',<sup>237</sup> Leighton's earlier aesthetic designs have not been recognised as equally innovative, and certainly not in connection with the Prince of Wales.

In fact, Bertie went so far as to support Leighton's election as President of the Royal Academy in 1878 which encouraged changes at the traditional art institution towards a more aesthetic and innovative approach in British art. In a letter to the Queen with regards to Leighton's candidature, Bertie described Leighton as 'really the only man in this country who has a thorough knowledge & appreciation of art, & would do more to ameliorate & cause it to prosper which it is really much in need of.' What particularly impressed the prince was Leighton's cosmopolitanism expressed through his versatile musical and language skills: 'He is devoted to music - & speaks French, German and Italian like he does English.'

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<sup>235</sup> In painting, Whistler debuted with his aesthetic colour compositions around the same time as Leighton. See, for instance, *At the Piano* (1858-9), *Harmony in Green and Rose: The Music Room* (ca. 1860-61), and *The Woman in White*, later entitled *Symphony in White* (1862). For more on these paintings and their reception, see Richard Dorment and Margaret MacDonald (eds), *James McNeill Whistler*, exhibition catalogue (London: Tate Gallery Publications, 1994); for *At the Piano* see cat. 11, pp. 71-73; for *Symphony in White, No. 1: The White Girl*, see cat. no. 14, pp. 76-77; See also David Park Curry, *James McNeill Whistler: Uneasy Pieces* (New York: Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Foundation and Quantuck Lane Press, 2004), pp. 68-113.

<sup>236</sup> Letter Whistler to Waldo Story, 5 February 1883, Pierpont Morgan Library, Heinemann Collection, MS 244, reprinted in Nigel Thorp (ed.), *Whistler on Art: Selected Letters and Writings of James McNeill Whistler* (Manchester: Carcanet Press, 2004), pp. 74-76.

<sup>237</sup> Park Curry (2004), p. 318.

Through Leighton's unusual talents and skills, Bertie recognised that 'there may be some members of the Academy who are no doubt jealous of him, but they are no real artists & it is deplorable to see their daubs year after year adorning // the walls of the Academy.' He went on emphasising that 'Mr. Leighton is the man, who with time may produce a more favorable change,' and considered his election as the Academy's President 'as a matter of the highest importance.'<sup>238</sup> This fervid statement clearly provides evidence that Bertie supported both Leighton's efforts at reforming the Royal Academy's educational system to produce better art and that he greatly appreciated Leighton's aestheticist style and taste.<sup>239</sup>

Since the beginning of his career, Leighton fostered his success and the acceptance of his art through his ability at genteel presentation amongst the upper classes.<sup>240</sup> His personal introduction to the Prince of Wales in 1859 was the beginning of a lifelong close relationship with royalty which helped in promoting his artistic career and in finally institutionalising his aesthetic beliefs within the Royal Academy.<sup>241</sup> Therefore, the importance of Leighton's relationship with the Prince of Wales for his career calls for an expansion of the multifarious dimension of Leighton's Aestheticism as established by the Leighton scholarship. While Elizabeth Prettejohn coined the term "Academic Aestheticism" with regards to Leighton's fine art,<sup>242</sup> Jason Edwards, more recently, addressed different aesthetic strands at Leighton House by distinguishing between Whistlerian Aestheticism, based on colour schemes, erotically sensitised Queer Aestheticism, and the

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<sup>238</sup> RA/B59/5/7, Prince of Wales to Queen Victoria, October 1878.

<sup>239</sup> For more on Leighton's efforts at educational reform at the Royal Academy and on his philanthropic activities to promote general art education, see Rafael Cardoso Denis, 'From Burlington House to the Peckham Road: Leighton and the Polarities of Victorian Art and Design Education', in Barringer and Prettejohn (1999), 247-63.

<sup>240</sup> With regards to Leighton's time in Rome during the early 1850s, Staley describes that 'Leighton early showed his aristocratic breeding and his preference for high-class society, for, although his great natural courtesy made him an affable companion for all and sundry, he found most *In Society* pleasure in the friendship of well-educated and official people.' Edcumbe Staley, *Lord Leighton of Stretton, P.R.A.* (London: The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., 1906), p. 35.

<sup>241</sup> Leighton House Archive preserves several letters from various members of the extended royal family to Leighton that underline their mutual appreciation. See also Dakers (1999), p. 3, 253.

<sup>242</sup> See Elizabeth Prettejohn, 'Leighton: the Aesthete as Academic', in Rafael Cardoso Denis (ed.), *Art and the Academy in the Nineteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), pp. 33-52; Elizabeth Prettejohn, *Art of Art's Sake: Aestheticism in Victorian Painting* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007), pp. 128-61.

democratic values of Ruskinian aesthetics, informed by the Arts and Crafts critique of commodity capitalism.<sup>243</sup> Leighton's close relationship with the Prince of Wales suggests that, while he may have sympathised with democratising values and the philanthropic activities of Missionary Aestheticism, he was first and foremost an artist of the elite, known for his 'aristocratic breeding'.<sup>244</sup>

With his genteel manners, learned cosmopolitanism and refined taste, Leighton sought the society of other privileged aesthetes who appreciated his 'princely life'.<sup>245</sup> Despite the occasional opening of his studio-house to the public and its publicity in the press, the magnificent and luxurious interiors were, as Edwards admits, 'privileged' <sup>246</sup> spaces. They were privately owned and frequented by a select circle of friends, patrons and guests, amongst whom royalty was particularly welcome.<sup>247</sup> The charming atmosphere of "the East," as created in the Arab Hall with its eclectic *mélange* of genuine imports or Eastern artefacts and British-made ornament, was a theme which fascinated artist aesthetes and members of the social elite alike.

### **Journeys to "the East"**

The Prince of Wales's interest in "Eastern" art and culture had been fostered by several trips to Egypt, the Middle East and India. His first tour, in 1862, planned by Prince Albert before his death, included Egypt and the Holy Land. This was an

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<sup>243</sup> Edwards (2010), pp. 85-110.

<sup>244</sup> Staley (1906), p. 35. For more on the social position of Leighton's family background and his privileged, cosmopolitan upbringing, see Staley (1906), p. 1-12. For more on Leighton's 'noble' and 'outstanding' character, see Staley (1906), pp. 174-205.

<sup>245</sup> Dakers (1999), p. 64.

<sup>246</sup> Edwards (2010), p. 106.

<sup>247</sup> Several letters in a series of royal correspondence at Leighton House Archives relate to the arrangement of special studio visits for members of the royal family and their relatives during and after the building of Leighton's Arab Hall. See letter from Princess Mary Adelaide, Duchess of Teck, to Frederic Leighton, 20 March 1879. Leighton House Archive AccNumber 2000/23/11; Letter from Arthur, Duke of Connaught, to Frederic Leighton, 11 February 1880. Leighton House Archive, AccNumber: 2000/23/11; Letter from Prince Francis, Duke of Teck, to Frederic Leighton, not dated. Leighton House Archive, AccNumber 2000/23/36; Letter from Prince George to Frederic Leighton, 3 March 1894. Leighton House Archive, AccNumber: 2000/23/32.

educational trip comparable to the tour to Rome in 1859.<sup>248</sup> In 1869, however, Bertie's second tour to Egypt was of a different sort and included a luxurious Nile cruise in the company of Alexandra and a group of society friends.<sup>249</sup> For Western tourists in the second half of the nineteenth century, the principal allure of travelling to "the East," consisted of discovering cultural "otherness" and of stimulation through new aesthetic and adventurous encounters. They enjoyed a privileged perspective, limited to carefully selected cultural highlights, which provided the desired sense of "Eastern" enchantment.

In a letter to the Queen, shortly after arriving in Cairo, Bertie described, with a patronising tone, that Alexandra was 'amazed and delighted with all she sees - as the whole country, people, dress &c is so utterly different fr. anything she has ever seen before'.<sup>250</sup> He, on the other hand, saw the apparent contrast of "Eastern" thriftless spending and the backwardness of local infrastructure: 'Easterns always [spend] their money on their houses in useless extravagance instead of looking to real comfort. Cairo is however very much improved since I was here, now nearly 7 years ago – new houses have been built - & streets widened &c.'<sup>251</sup> From a post-colonial perspective today, Bertie's criticism of "Eastern" lifestyle appears contradictory, especially in view of his own extravagance, manifested, for example, at his sumptuous fancy dress ball of 1874. Yet, the prince's way of thinking was clearly founded on the typical contemporary

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<sup>248</sup> For a short description of Bertie's trip to Egypt and the Holy Land in 1862 see Sir Sidney Lee, *King Edward VII: A Biography* (London: Macmillan, 1925-27), pp. 130-37; Magnus (1964), pp. 101-104; Bertie's trip to Egypt in 1862 featured in the 2013 exhibition 'Cairo to Constantinople: Early Photographs of the Middle East' at the Queen's Gallery Palace of Holyrood House. See *Cairo to Constantinople: Early Photographs of the Middle East* (exhibition catalogue, The Queen's Gallery, Palace of Holyrood House, Edinburgh, 8 March – 21 July 2013), ed. Sophie Gordon (London: Royal Collection Trust, 2013).

<sup>249</sup> Apart from his usual travel party of equerries, a physician and a priest, Bertie had also invited a number of professionals, including a journalist, a specialist from the British Museum and an engineer, and his personal friends Lord Charles Carington, Sir Samuel Baker and the Duke of Sutherland.

<sup>250</sup> RA/VIC/ADDA3/124, Prince of Wales to Queen Victoria from Cairo, 4 February 1869.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*

Orientalist rationale that “Eastern” culture was different from anything European and therefore required the application of different norms and standards.<sup>252</sup>

A published travel account *A Diary in the East* (1869), written by Bertie’s friend, the journalist William Howard Russell, describes the royal party’s encounters with Egyptian society often with a condescending undertone and feeling of cultural superiority.<sup>253</sup> For example, having been received by Isma’il Pasha, the Viceroy of Egypt, the opulent interiors of his palaces, with furniture ‘poured into the place’, as well as his clothing and entertainment style, are repeatedly described with adjectives that carried both a sense of awe and derision.<sup>254</sup> The cultural and social excitements of the royal party’s Egypt tour included visits to the mosques and pyramids in Cairo, luxurious dinner parties, visits to the antiquities in Luxor, an archaeological excavation at Thebes and nightly illuminations at the temples of Karnak. In addition, the men went on adventurous hunting expeditions after crocodiles, while Alexandra was entertained in a women’s harem and sketched picturesque views of the Nile valley.<sup>255</sup>

The “souvenirs” brought back to England were typical signifiers of “the East”, including twenty mummy cases and other ancient artefacts, a menagerie of exotic animals and a fourteen-year old black Abyssinian boy called Selim.<sup>256</sup> The

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<sup>252</sup> The general perception of the existence of a eurocentric prejudice against Arabo-Islamic peoples and their culture, and of specific cultural representations of them, especially during the colonial period, constitutes the basis of postcolonial criticism as represented by scholars of Orientalism since Edward Said’s authoritative publication on the subject. See Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978). For more recent scholarship on British Orientalism, especially in art, see *The Lure of the East: British Orientalist Painting* (exhibition catalogue, Yale Center for British Art, New Haven, 7 Feb. - 27 Apr. 2008, Tate Britain, London, 4 June - 31 Aug. 2008, the Suna and İnan Kırac Foundation Pera Museum, Istanbul, 23 Sept. 2008 - 4 Jan. 2009, and the Sharjah Art Museum, Feb. - Apr. 2009), ed. Nicholas Tromans (London: Tate Publications, 2008).

<sup>253</sup> William Howard Russell, *A Diary in the East during the Tour of the Prince and Princess of Wales* (London: privately published, 1869).

<sup>254</sup> See Russell (1869); for a description of the palace which was newly furnished to accommodate the Prince and Princess of Wales in Cairo, see *ibid.*, pp. 101-102; for a description of the steamer provided by the Viceroy for the Prince and Princess of Wales’s Nile cruise, see *ibid.*, p. 107-108; for the Viceroy’s Esbekiah Palace, see *ibid.*, pp. 113-14; for the Viceroy’s New Palace, see *ibid.*, p. 134.

<sup>255</sup> RA/VIC/ADDA3/124, Prince of Wales to Queen Victoria from Cairo, 4 February 1869.

<sup>256</sup> For the mummy cases, see RA/VIC/ADDA3/129, Prince of Wales to Queen Victoria, 18 March 1869. See also Russell (1869), vol. II, p. 402; For the menagerie of exotic animals of a parrot, two flamingoes, a monkey, a tortoise and two goats,



mummies, having been examined by a British Museum specialist, were dispersed amongst different public museums in Britain and the private collections of Bertie's friends, while the smaller objects were kept in the prince's own collection.<sup>257</sup> Selim, moreover, was made a page boy at Sandringham where he was baptised, dressed in Moorish costume and served to entertain guests with his exotic looks.<sup>258</sup>

Despite Bertie's affirmation, in public, of being an ardent defender of the anti-slavery movement in Egypt, in private, bringing back a black boy from Egypt did not appear as a contradiction to his political convictions.<sup>259</sup> From his Eurocentric viewpoint, Bertie considered his action as an act of philanthropy by offering the boy a "better" life in England.<sup>260</sup> However, it cannot be denied that he also perceived Selim as an aesthetic souvenir appreciated for his exotic decorativeness within the royal household.<sup>261</sup> This was further articulated in the small bronze statuette of *Selim and Tom*, made by Boehm for the Prince of Wales in 1870 [fig. 1.38]. Here, Selim is depicted in his Moorish costume trying to fend off a big poodle who has jumped up to him. In contrast to traditional portraits of the royal family with their dogs, Boehm did not depict a hierarchical man-dog relationship but showed them with equal backbone. This interpretation was clearly

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see Theresa Grey, *Journal of a Visit to Egypt, Constantinople, the Crimea, Greece, &c. in the suite of the Prince and Princess of Wales* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1869), p. 106; For the Black boy, see Russell (1869), pp. 395, 447-50, 512; Grey (1869), pp. 89-90, 106, 138.

<sup>257</sup> For more on the mummies and where they were distributed in Britain, see C. V. Anthony Adams, 'An investigation into the mummies presented to H.R.H. The Prince of Wales in 1869', *Discussions in Egyptology* 18 (1990), pp. 5-19, in particular p. 13. Before the mummies and cases were dispersed, they were studied by Samuel Birch of the British Museum. The discoveries were published in Samuel Birch, *The Account of the Coffins and Mummies discovered in Egypt on the Occasion of the Visit of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales in 1868-9*, *Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature*, X (London, n.d. [1870]).

<sup>258</sup> Millar (1995), cat. no. 484, p. 132. For Selim's appearance perceived as "exotic" entertainment, see RA/VIC/ADDU224/1, Louise Carolina Buxton to her sister, 3 December 1873; see also Millar (1995), cat. no. 6027, p. 949.

<sup>259</sup> For example, on 24 May 1869, just after returning from his Egypt trip, the Prince of Wales gave a speech at the Royal Geographic Society, in which he positioned himself against slavery in Egypt. See Macauley (1889), p. 70, also p. 254.

<sup>260</sup> I refer here to Diana Maltz's understanding of philanthropy as part of Missionary Aestheticism, a practice of allegedly "improving" underprivileged people's life through their exposure to privileged cultural surroundings. See Diana Maltz, *British Aestheticism and the Urban Working Classes, 1870-1900: Beauty for the People* (Houndsmill, Basingstoke, Hampshire and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 2, 3, 217;

<sup>261</sup> I refer here to Maltz's understanding of Aestheticism's 'Moorish strand' marked by 'exotic props' from the East. See Diana Maltz, 'Baffling Arrangements': Vernon Lee and John Singer Sargent', in Edwards and Hart (2010), pp. 185-210.

underlined in the work's title at the Royal Academy exhibition 1870, *The Abyssinian Selim with Tom, a favourite Poodle*.<sup>262</sup> While Selim was described as exotic through his Abyssinian origin, the poodle's status was all the more elevated by its personal name and as being called 'favourite'. It becomes thus clear that the statuette's purpose was not to depict a realistic portrait of Selim but to serve as an amusing genre piece which reflected Bertie's perception of Eastern "otherness."

While the Egypt tour was mostly dedicated to personal amusement, a greater demonstration of the British monarchy's colonial power and influence was achieved with Bertie's semi-diplomatic tour to India in 1875–76, which resulted in his active promotion of Indian art at home. On his five-month tour from Goa round to Calcutta via Ceylon and across to Delhi, Bertie visited the courts of the princely states and was offered numerous lavish gifts of Indian art ranging from gold- and silverware, jewellery and enamels to arms, furniture and textiles. These were not only appraised for their political value as a proof of the Indian sovereign families' loyalty, but considered as representative of Indian art manufacture of the princely states.<sup>263</sup> Before being installed at the prince's own residences in 1881, the precious collection toured several public museums and institutions around Britain and was even shown at the Universel Exhibition in Paris in 1878 where it constituted one of the great highlights.<sup>264</sup> Displayed in a copper-domed and red-painted Indian-style pavilion, the Prince of Wales's Indian collection assumed the post of honour amongst the foreign departments in the Champ de Mars Palace [fig. 1.39]. In front of the pavilion, on a high pedestal, towered a monumental

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<sup>262</sup> Under this title, Boehm exhibited a terracotta version of this statuette at the 1870 Royal Academy, no. 1078.

<sup>263</sup> Anon., 'The Prince's Indian Collection', *The Times* (22 June 1976), p. 10; George Birdwood, 'The Collections of Indian Art at Marlborough House and at Sandringham Hall', *Journal of Indian Art* (January 1892), pp. 25–31, p. 26.

<sup>264</sup> In 1876, the collection first went on loan to the India Museum at South Kensington, followed by a display at the Bethnal Green Museum in 1877, Paris in 1878, then Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen and finally York in 1881. George Birdwood, *Catalogue of the Collection of Indian Arms and Objects of Art presented by the Princes and Nobles of India to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales on the Occasion of his visit to India in 1875–1876 now in the Indian Room at Marlborough House* (London: n.n., 1898).

replica of Boehm's *Equestrian Statue of the Prince of Wales* (c.1876) for the city of Bombay to commemorate his India visit.<sup>265</sup> Here, however, the prince on horseback seems to pull the Indian pavilion like an enormous carriage. In fact, the Indian exhibition brought Bertie, who was also President of the British Section, great popularity as a promoter of the British empire's arts and industry, as the collection was meant to inspire British manufacturers with new ideas for designs and to increase the demand for Indian handicraft ware.<sup>266</sup> In the accompanying *Handbook to the Indian Court*, George Birdwood, an India Office servant and ardent admirer of Indian craft, presents the Indian collection in terms of its diversity of design and as an example of how beauty and quality were achieved through the unity of design and artisanal production, as supposed to machine production.<sup>267</sup> By contextualising the exhibition objects within their historical, economic and cultural environment, he linked Indian art production with the core ideals of the Arts and Crafts Movement.<sup>268</sup> Birdwood emphasised that traditional Indian art production was conditioned by the functioning system of local 'democratic' village communities, informed by religion and the adherence to customs that were practiced by generations. His goal was to preserve and protect Indian craft by not interfering through the introduction of modern machinery, which he considered the reason for 'social and moral evils.'<sup>269</sup> As Abigail McGowan pointed out, with his idealisation of Indian artisanal life, Birdwood influenced the scholarly perception and understanding of Indian craft in terms of the important correlation between craft and culture, but his conclusion that the

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<sup>265</sup> For more on the history and iconography of the statue, see Stocker (1988), pp. 102-103.

<sup>266</sup> As President of the British Section, Bertie was actively involved in the general planning and organisation of Britain's representation at the Paris exhibition. He appointed committee members, was involved in the financial planning, the allocation of exhibition spaces, inspected the stalls before the opening and was in charge of the distribution of prizes and honours.

<sup>267</sup> George Birdwood, *Paris Universal Exhibition of 1878: Handbook to the British Indian Section* (London, Paris: Offices of the Royal Commission, 1878).

<sup>268</sup> For more on Birdwood and his application of Arts and Crafts ideals to Indian craft production, see Abigail McGowan, *Crafting the Nation in Colonial India* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 46-49.

<sup>269</sup> Birdwood (1878), pp. 51-52.

protection of Indian crafts required colonial rule also contributed to the preservation of a political status quo in which Indian art was perceived as ‘timeless’ and ‘ornamental’.<sup>270</sup>

The Western colonial perception of the contrast between European ‘Fine Art’ and Indian art, which was considered as decorative craft, despite its high artistic quality, was articulated in the architectural conception of the Indian Pavilion, as illustrated in the above-mentioned engraving. Here, the Prince of Wales’s ‘Fine Art’ statue, made by an eminent European sculptor, was clearly positioned in front of the pavilion that housed the numerous objects of decorative art, made by anonymous craftsmen. In the *Handbook to the Indian Court*, Birdwood gives the following explanation:

It is impossible to rank the decorative art of India, which is a crystallised tradition, although perfect in form, with the ever living, progressive arts of Europe, wherein the inventive and creative genius of the true poet, acting on his own spontaneous inspirations, asserts itself, and which constitute the Fine Arts, as they are called.<sup>271</sup>

By positioning a dichotomy between Indian and European art, between lasting tradition and active progression, Birdwood followed the official hierarchal distinction between decorative arts and fine arts as formulated within the Department of Science and Art. According to this classification, the Indian artist was considered as an ‘ornamentist’, caught within a tradition of copying and particularising nature, while the European ‘artist’ understood and translated nature as a whole, inducing it with his intellectual creativity.<sup>272</sup> In this way, even the group of ten brass figurines from Vishakhapatnam, South India (late 18th century)

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<sup>270</sup> McGowan (2009), pp. 95-96.

<sup>271</sup> Birdwood (1878), p. 49.

<sup>272</sup> See Vidya Dehejia, *Delight in Design: Indian Silver for the Raj* (India: Mapin, 2008), pp. 11-12; Dutta Arindam, *The Bureaucracy of Beauty: Design in the Age of its Global Reproducibility* (New York, London: Routledge, 2006), p. 104.

which formed part of the Prince of Wales's Indian collection, were classified as decorative or industrial arts [fig. 1.40].<sup>273</sup> They originally came from a large set of toy soldiers, possibly commissioned by Timma Jagapati IV, Raja of Peddapar, and depicted the local army of infantry, cavalry and artillery soldiers.<sup>274</sup> In his comment about them, Birdwood admired their 'skilful modelling' and 'finish', yet, in order to convince his readers of their decorativeness, rather than inventive creativity, he described them as 'amusing little figures' with 'a certain irresistible grotesqueness of expression.'<sup>275</sup>

Not only does the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1878 reveal Bertie's attitude towards non-European art, it also provides a further insight into his particular taste for French sculpture. While visiting the stands of Britain's neighbours, the prince noticed especially the efforts made by the French: 'The exhibition as a whole (that is as far as I can judge) is very fine - & quite immense excess what one has to see. The money that has been spent is something incredible and shows what a rich country this is.'<sup>276</sup> Although France was considered Britain's major economic and artistic rival, as a private collector, Bertie had a predilection for French sculpture. At a stand in the Industrial Department he particularly admired the monumental terracotta relief of *La Danse* (c.1868) by Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux (1827–75), which had originally been designed for the Opera Garnier in Paris [fig. 1.41]. Depicting a group of ecstatically dancing female nudes in vigorously modelled detail, the exuberant subject matter was perfectly adapted to the prince's taste in sculpture. Furthermore, having been exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1874, where Bertie could have seen it previously, *La Danse*

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<sup>273</sup> Birdwood (1898), p. 27.

<sup>274</sup> For more on Vishakhapatnam toy soldiers, see James Coffin Harle and Andrew Topsfield, *Indian Art in the Ashmolean Museum*, (Oxford: Ashmolean Museum: 1987), cat. no. 74, pp. 65-67.

<sup>275</sup> Birdwood (1892), p. 27.

<sup>276</sup> RA/Z/452/C.F.P./170, Prince of Wales to Queen Victoria, Paris, 3 May 1878.

was known as a highly controversial work, criticised for its unorthodox composition and vulgar expression, which certainly added to its attraction.<sup>277</sup> However, the price that Bertie offered for it was, according to Carpeaux's daughter, so low that Amélie Carpeaux, the artist's widow, who was running the exhibition stand, refused to sell the masterpiece to the prince.<sup>278</sup> Considering Bertie's Rome experience of 1859, of keeping to a budget in his art purchases, it stands to reason that he was trying to hunt for a bargain. Yet, the fact that *La Danse* was not sold until after Mme Carpeaux's death suggests rather that the sculpture was not actually for sale and was exhibited primarily to promote the artist's public legacy.<sup>279</sup> Bertie demonstrated his enduring eagerness for the work when he visited, a few years later, Carpeaux's widow and showed her a miniature cameo of *La Danse* (today untraceable) which he wore as a tie pin.<sup>280</sup> Appropriating the celebrated work in form of a miniature and wearing it as a personal decoration, suggests a kind of revenge for the failed purchase of the original. As a prince, Bertie was not used to be rebuffed and sought a clever means of coming out on top after this incidence. By dramatically reducing the scale of the famous sculpture and translating it into an exquisite jewel Bertie turned the tables on Mme Carpeaux while also demonstrating his genuine interest in *La Danse*. Cameos were a great fashion, especially during the mid-nineteenth century, and Victoria and Albert were important patrons of the medium.<sup>281</sup> Yet in contrast to his parents' interest in antiquarianism and miniature portraiture, Bertie's cameo represented the masterly skill of reducing a highly complex contemporary

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<sup>277</sup> Anon., 'The Royal Academy. Concluding Note', *Art Journal* (Aug. 1874), pp. 225-26.

<sup>278</sup> 'C'est là qu'Edouard VII, alors prince de Galles, découvrit le chef-d'oeuvre, et désira l'acquérir dans des conditions si minimes que ma mère dût s'y refuser,' Louise Clément Carpeaux, *La vérité sur l'oeuvre et la vie de J.-B. Carpeaux (1827-1875)* (Paris: Dousset et Bigerelle, 1934-35), vol. II, p. 261. I owe this reference to Dr. Philip Ward-Jackson.

<sup>279</sup> See Clément Carpeaux (1934-35), vol. II, p. 261.

<sup>280</sup> 'Quelques années plus tard, le prince venait lui rendre visite à Auteuil, très fier de lui montrer un beau camée finement travaillé, représentant *La Danse* en miniature, et qu'il portait *en épingle de cravate (sic)*.' Ibid., pp. 261-62.

<sup>281</sup> Droth, *Sculpture Victorious* (2014), cat. nos. 8,9, pp. 77-78, cat. no. 22 pp. 92-93; cat. 57, pp. 192-93; cat. nos. 72-73, pp. 212-18.

sculpture that was originally intended as a monumental public work. Far removed from the kind of reproductions that were displayed in his parents' homes, this tie pin sculpture is a striking example of Bertie's personality as a collector – determined and well-informed on the one hand, playful and flashy on the other. This mix of collector and dandy informed the way in which the prince's collection was displayed at Sandringham and Marlborough House.

#### **1.4. Displaying Sculpture at Sandringham and Marlborough House**

The Prince of Wales's sculpture collection was divided, more or less equally, between Sandringham and Marlborough House.<sup>282</sup> Unlike the royal residences of his parents, neither of Bertie's houses had a sculpture gallery or purpose-built corridor where statues were displayed according to a considered plan to impress and convey royal authority. Instead, sculptures formed part of the furnishings of the prince's main and private apartments.<sup>283</sup> In terms of the sculptures' display, there was no clear differentiation between official and private space, as at Victoria and Albert's palaces, with Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle, on the one hand, and Osborne House, on the other.<sup>284</sup> At both Bertie's London residence and his shooting estate, the principal reception rooms were of domestic, rather than palatial, scale and furnished comfortably to welcome friends and official visitors alike. In line with current fashion, the room arrangements appeared informal and relaxed despite being carefully orchestrated.<sup>285</sup> No documents refer explicitly to Bertie as the author of their decorative interior schemes, but it is likely that he was responsible for most questions of their artistic arrangements. In his library, for

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<sup>282</sup> This estimate is based on the inventory of 1877 where Marlborough House was listed with around 68 sculptures, while Sandringham had 51 works.

<sup>283</sup> See Martin (2013), pp. 152-71.

<sup>284</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 126-92.

<sup>285</sup> Beavan (1896), p. 55.

example, the prince kept a copy of Jakob von Falke's *Art in the House* (1879), a seminal household art manual on the history and theories of interior decoration.<sup>286</sup> It is also known that he paid close interest to the conditions of lighting of objects in his collection.<sup>287</sup> Furthermore, when the royal couple acceded to the throne in 1901 and took up residence at Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle, Bertie personally supervised the rearrangements of the interiors and art collections of the State Rooms, while Alexandra did not get involved and limited her interest to the decoration of her own private apartments.<sup>288</sup>

Thanks to the royal family's pioneering interest in and usage of photography as a new pictorial medium from the mid-nineteenth century,<sup>289</sup> Sandringham and Marlborough House are relatively well documented which helps to partly reconstruct their interiors and the display of sculpture within them at particular moments. The interiors at Sandringham were photographed in three series, firstly in 1871, by an anonymous photographer, shortly after the newly built house was finished; secondly in 1882, by the photographer George Glanville; and thirdly in 1889, when the fashionable firm of Bedford Lemaire & Co was commissioned with an updated series of photographs, even if the general interior schemes had not much changed since the previous photos were taken. Marlborough House is documented in an unattributed photo album from around 1890.<sup>290</sup> In several photographs in all these series, sculptures serve as focal points within the pictorial composition and therein document their anthropocentric importance within the interiors. While it is not possible to track in these

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<sup>286</sup> Jacob von Falke, *Art in the House: Historical, critical and aesthetical studies on the decoration and furnishing of the dwelling*, edited with notes by Charles C. Perkins (Boston: Prang, 1879).

<sup>287</sup> For example, for the display of the Indian art collection at Marlborough House, Bertie devised cabinets with electric lighting in order to highlight specific works. See Beavan (1896), p. 32; At Sandringham, Bertie suggested mirror-backed shelves for the display of china in the drawing room to emphasize the all-around visibility of objects. See *The Private Life of the King* (1901), p. 79.

<sup>288</sup> See Cust (1930), pp. 31, 33-35.

<sup>289</sup> For more on the royal family's relationship with photography from the 1840s see Frances Dimond and Roger Taylor, *Crown & Camera: the Royal Family and Photography 1842-1910* (London: Viking 1987).

<sup>290</sup> See Royal Photograph Collection, Windsor Castle.



photographs all major sculptures listed in the inventory of 1877, they document for the first time other sculptures that were added to the collection after the inventory. By analysing the display of sculptures firstly at Sandringham, followed by Marlborough House, based on the above-mentioned photographic evidence in addition to contemporary published descriptions of the interiors, I assess selected features of the display and meaning of sculpture at Bertie's residences in relation to the prince's engagement with contemporary artistic trends.

### **Sandringham**

The red-brick architecture and not overly grand size of Sandringham, newly built in 1870, make it evident that the house was primarily imagined as a home, rather than a palace, to provide comfort for the family, as well as enough space to accommodate guests, since large entertainment, especially during the shooting season, was a regular feature of the country house [fig. 1.42]. The main rooms on the ground floor were laid out in the practical disposition of Saloon and Waiting Room in the east along a wide corridor, and opposite, a sequence of Dining Room, Drawing Rooms and Breakfast Room towards the garden side. Annexed to the south were guest apartments and the Service Wing, as well as a large Ballroom, later added in 1885. In addition, for the recreation of male guests, there was an enfilade of billiard, smoking and bowling facilities, decorated during the 1880s in the fashionable oriental style, with a "Turkish" niche in the ante-room and chinoiserie-style wall decorations along the Bowling Alley.<sup>291</sup>

None of the rooms were particularly large, but architectural features, such as high ceilings, asymmetrical room shapes and large bay windows provided

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<sup>291</sup> For illustrations of the Billiard Room and Bowling Alley, see Sandringham album by Bedford Lemaire, 1889, Royal Photograph Collection. The "Turkish" niche is illustrated in John Martin Robinson, 'Sandringham – The Norfolk Home of HM The Queen', *Country Life* (29 May 2008), pp. 102-109, here p. 107.

interesting variations and a relaxed atmosphere. Nevertheless, the interiors were luxurious and highly fashionable, despite attempts in contemporary articles on the lifestyle at Sandringham to emphasise, instead, the ‘quiet simplicity’ of princely homelife, characterised as without ‘the slightest attempt at display’ and ‘any ostentation.’<sup>292</sup> At Sandringham, Bertie fashioned himself as a country gentleman whose time was mostly spent shooting and looking after his farming estate. Therefore, Sandringham had to express certain values defined in contemporary advice literature as ‘quiet comfort’, ‘convenience’ and ‘elegance and importance without ostentation.’<sup>293</sup> Such imagery also diffused Bertie’s association with extravagant society of the ‘Fast Set’ and made him appear more appealing to a largely middle-class readership. The representation of a rather mundane domestic lifestyle gave a more reassuring image of the heir to the throne and suggested continuity in line with Victoria’s earlier imagery of happy domesticity.<sup>294</sup>

In 1871, the main Drawing Room was characterised by high, stuccoed ceilings, walls with ornamental wood panelling and large mirrors, and by carefully composed informal groups of upholstered furniture filling the room [fig. 1.43]. A large wall break divided the room into two irregular parts, and at the centre of the southern part, Hosmer’s *Puck* was the main attraction. As Bertie’s first sculpture purchase it was displayed on a high wooden pedestal and dominated the view above the array of different furniture. In addition, the pedestal was surrounded by leafy plants which emphasised the rustic character of *Puck* and invited viewers to approach and encircle the statue and view its sculptural details close up.

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<sup>292</sup> Anon., ‘The Prince and Princess of Wales at Home’, *London Journal* (29 Oct. 1892), p. 277-8.

<sup>293</sup> Robert Kerr, *The Gentleman’s House*. Introduction by J. Mordaunt Crook (New York, London: Johnson Reprint Company, 1972, reprint of 1871), p. 66.

<sup>294</sup> As Margaret Homans pointed out, especially during the 1840s, the Queen and royal family presented themselves as domesticated and middle-class, as a strategy to increase their popularity and reassure the position of the monarchy. See Homans (1998), pp. 17-33.

A decade later, the scheme of having a sculpture in this prominent location had proved successful and was even more emphasised when *Puck* was put in a niche by the window and replaced by Federico Gaetano Villa's (1837–1907) more conspicuous group *La Benda d'Amore* (Cupid's blindfold) (c.1880) [fig. 1.44].<sup>295</sup> The Italian marble had been on show at the Esposizione Nazionale in Naples in 1877<sup>296</sup> and again at the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1878.<sup>297</sup> Having attended both events, it is likely that Bertie ordered the Sandringham version at one of these occasions.<sup>298</sup> *La Benda d'Amore* depicts, on a round plinth, the figure of Amor as a little winged putto stretching his toes to reach and blindfold a young nude girl sitting on a rock. With a little smile on her face and embracing the back of Amor's head with her left hand, but also indicating slight resistance by tensing her right fingers, the girl is depicted in a state between enjoyment and reluctance towards her blindfolding. The marble group thus shared with *Puck* its witty and amusing character and alluded to the idea of practical jokes and popular parlour games at country house parties, such as 'Blind Man's Bluff' where one person is blindfolded and has to grope around to find the other players. As a popular and amusing group game it is imaginable that this was played at Sandringham, where practical entertainment was usually preferred to highbrow conversation. Also similar to *Puck*, *La Benda d'Amore* is characterised by the exciting emphasis of distinct textures such as the girl's intricately carved hair, Amor's wings and the

<sup>295</sup> Although not depicted in a photograph, in 1902 *Puck* was still displayed in the drawing room. See Anon., 'Country Homes: Sandringham, The Country Home of H.M. King Edward VII', *Country Life* (7 June 1902), vol XI, no. 263, pp. 722-35, p. 734.

<sup>296</sup> According to the main reference publication on Italian nineteenth-century sculpture by Alfonso Panzetta, Villa exhibited 'La Benda d'Amore' in Naples in 1877. See Alfonso Panzetta, *Scultori Italiani dell'Ottocento e del Primo Novecento*, vol. 1 (Umberto Allemandi & C.: 1990), p. 280. This must refer to the Esposizione Nazionale, as it was the main event exhibiting contemporary art in 1877 in Naples.

<sup>297</sup> Although the official exhibition catalogue of the International Exhibition in Paris in 1878 misspells the sculptor's name by calling him with the wrong initials 'Villa (J.-L.), né à Milan,' the work mentioned under no. 166, as 'Le bandeau de l'amour – groupe marbre', can only refer to Federico Gaetano Villa's *La Benda d'Amore*. See *Exposition Universelle Internationale de 1878 à Paris. Catalogue Officiel publié par le commissariat general*, (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1878), p. 330.

<sup>298</sup> During a trip to France and Italy in 1877 Bertie visited the 'Exposition dei belli arti' on 25 and 27 May, which probably referred to the Esposizione Nazionale. See RA/VIC/MAIN/EVIIPWD/1877, Engagement Diary of the Prince of Wales.

rock base dotted with rustic leaves, which contrasted with the figures' smooth and polished skin surface. With the girl's slender nude figure, alluring expression and contemporary hairstyle, the main attraction of *La Benda d'Amore*, however, was its erotic connotation, which had become a key interest in the Prince of Wales's playboy life since the 1870s and an everyday reality in his marital relationship.<sup>299</sup>

Depicted in situ in a photograph of 1882 [fig. 1.45], *La Benda d'Amore* not only replaced *Puck* in its central position in the Drawing Room. Being shown on a high pedestal, with an inbuilt turning mechanism,<sup>300</sup> it could also be rotated according to the viewers' standpoint and formed an essential part of the room's furnishing. Surrounded by miniature palm trees and broad-leafed plants, the statue appeared like the goddess of love on a paradisaical island, described in a contemporary article as a 'beautiful piece of rockwork in the centre of the large drawing-room, which is redolent of roses in bloom, and graceful with the collection of ferns and a marble Venus rising out of the centre.'<sup>301</sup>

By 1882, the room had increased both in sumptuousness and theatricality. Heavy swags of floral curtains accentuated the wall break between the two parts of the room and made the southern part appear like a stage on which *La Benda d'Amore* performed the main act. The theatricality was further emphasised by the statue's reflection in the mirror behind it, the half drawn embroidered curtain covering the false door in the left background, and by further giant potted palm trees which provided a lush and exotic atmosphere. Also embedded in this setting was the group of *Two Children Kissing (Paul and Virginie)* [fig. 1.29], visible in the left foreground of the photograph. Surrounded by palm branches and tucked

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<sup>299</sup> After the widely reported Mordaunt scandal in 1869, the prince's flirtations with beautiful women became frequently known, turning either into accepted love affairs or scandal, as in the Aylesford scandal of 1876. See Ridley (2012), pp. 183-99. The actress and professional beauty Lilly Langtry, for example, despite having been Bertie's mistress from 1877 to 1878, was accepted and even invited to dinner parties at Marlborough House. See Ridley (2012), pp. 220, 223.

<sup>300</sup> At its plinth the statue shows two small holes into which a tool could be inserted to move a fitted turntable.

<sup>301</sup> Mary Spencer Warren, 'Sunday with the Prince and Princess of Wales', *The Quiver* (Jan. 1897), pp. 291-98, here p. 296.

on a raised support behind a couch, the display of the marble children appears to allude to the setting of their story on the tropical island of Mauritius where Paul and Virginie met and fell in love. With the themes of “first love” and “erotic flirtation”, both white marble groups enlivened the Drawing Room “stage” with their narrative and provided entertainment and erotic encouragement to its inhabitants and guests.

In a similar way as the Drawing Room, the main attraction of the Conservatory, annexed to it, was a large marble group. According to a royal biographer of 1901, the room was ‘relieved from the commonplace by a charming group of “Girls Bathing”.’<sup>302</sup> Referring clearly to Jerichau’s group of *Bathing Women* (1868) [fig. 1.27], it is imaginable that the group, surrounded by light wicker chairs and palm trees, served to underline the conservatory’s semi-outdoor atmosphere with natural light and the view of the garden and nearby lake.

From the choice of subject matter and strategy of display, it appears that the large marble sculptures’ main function was not to be contemplated as examples of learnedness, triggering erudite conversation about aesthetics, but to serve as easy and uncomplicated eye-catchers within their elegant surrounding, and to provide light-hearted entertainment to the family or when the house was opened to invited guests. As an example of this, a female guest at a winter ball at Sandringham in 1873 described the Drawing Room atmosphere with its statues as follows: ‘I went into the Drawing rooms which were exceedingly pretty – beautifully furnished & full of comfortable arm chairs & sofas. [...] In one of the drawing rooms there were 2 exquisite groups in marble – so there was plenty to be amused with besides lots of friends.’<sup>303</sup> This comment confirms that the aesthetic

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<sup>302</sup> *The Private Life of the King* (1901), p. 79.

<sup>303</sup> RA/VIC/ADDU224/1, Louise Caroline Buxton to her sister, 3 December 1873.

appeal of the marble statues could be shared by both men and women and that visitors of either gender would have approached, surrounded, perhaps even rotated them, depending on their sentimental, narrative or sensual interests.

As much as the Drawing Room had increased in opulence during the 1880s, the Dining Room, Ball Room, corridors, and especially the Saloon represented increasingly the Prince of Wales's imperial experiences. When the Indian collection was installed in 1881, weaponry was arranged like triumphal trophies on the walls in several rooms.<sup>304</sup> For example, in the heavy oak-panelled Dining Room, a magnificent display of Indian arms and armour became the room's visual focus, set in a large ornamental frame above the chimneypiece [fig. 1.46]. The arrangement of shield, cuirass, arm-guards and helmet, surrounded by further weaponry, resembled the traditional armoury displays at old British castles, evoking ancestry, military success and family power. At Sandringham, the emphasis of the trophies was on their imperial significance, as an expression of the Indian princes' loyalty to the Prince of Wales as future Emperor of India.<sup>305</sup>

In the Saloon, Britain's empire was manifested as early as 1871 [fig. 1.47]. Then, the rather austere appearance of the oak-wainscoted hall with its monumental chimneypiece and large stag heads above family portraits and history paintings was enlivened by several animal skins laid out on the floor and a pair of taxidermied exotic birds flanking the fireplace, which were resonant of the prince's passion for game hunting during his trips to Egypt in the 1860s. In 1882, this scheme was enriched by more oriental rugs and a larger number of trophies of the chase. Yet the visual focus, as visible in a contemporary photograph, was the

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<sup>304</sup> For a detailed description of the collection of arms and armour at Sandringham see *Arms and Armour at Sandringham* (London: W. Griggs, 1910).

<sup>305</sup> For more on the perception of non-European artefacts as imperial trophies, see Kirsty Breedon, 'Herbert Ward: Sculpture in the Circum-Atlantic World', *Visual Culture* 11:2 (2010), pp. 265-83, here pp. 271-75.

theatrical staging of the large gangway towards the Drawing Room [fig. 1.48]. Crowned by a triumphant display of European armour and flanked by two large “blackamoor”<sup>306</sup> sculptures of black Africans, the visitor was invited to step over the tiger skin on the floor, cross the small corridor underneath a Middle-Eastern brass lamp and enter the light-drenched Drawing Room, to be welcomed by another statue of a black African with a serving tray, before approaching, at the centre, the sculptural highlight of *La Benda d’Amore*.

The conspicuous visual contrast between the dark bronze of the African figures and the white marble group, and the means of their display, clearly hinted at the perception of a racial hierarchy between black Africans and white Europeans, especially since the white female body represented, for the Victorians, the pinnacle of aesthetic beauty, while the sculptural representation of the figures of dark-skinned Africans chimed with the standard European ideology of race.<sup>307</sup> The bronze pair in the Saloon, probably manufactured in France, and purchased before 1874, represents a male and female black nude, standing in contrapposto and holding a large cornucopia which could be filled, as seen in the photograph, with large bouquets of greenery.<sup>308</sup> The figures’ ideal pose and their stoic upward gaze make them appear at ease in their roles as vase bearers. The only indication of their ethnicity is the colour of bronze to represent black skin, and their stereotypical physiognomy with big lips, wide eyes and Afro-textured hair. In a similar, seemingly effortless, way the statue of the black boy at the entrance of the

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<sup>306</sup> In the established terminology of the decorative arts, ‘blackamoor’ refers to the traditional representation of black Africans in European sculpture and decorative arts. However, in the context of post-colonial scholarship the term carries a potential connotation of racial ideology and should be used with consideration.

<sup>307</sup> See Charmaine Nelson, ‘Race, Beauty and African-ness’, in *Black People in British Art, 1800-1900* (exhibition catalogue, Manchester Art Gallery, Manchester, 1 Oct. 2005 – 6 Jan. 2006 and Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham, 28 Jan. – 2 April 2006) (Manchester Art Gallery and Birmingham Museums in association with Aldershot: Lund Humphries, 2005), pp. 46-56, here p. 53.

<sup>308</sup> Although not recorded in the *Catalogue* of 1877, the female black figure is depicted in place in a watercolour by the Hungarian painter Mihaly von Zichy (1827–1906), dated November 1874. See Millar (1995), vol. II, p. 951, cat. no. 6042.

Drawing Room is represented as obediently fulfilling his role of holding a tray, performing the same role as Selim, the real black boy from Egypt.

Although Bertie had travelled to Egypt and India where he encountered the diversity of non-European cultures, his taste for Orientalist sculpture was here based entirely on traditional, imagined imagery, clearly distinguished from the more ethnographic studies of non-European people made by the French Orientalist sculptor Charles Cordier.<sup>309</sup> In addition, the relegation of statues of black Africans into ‘decorative’ sculptures as vase and tray bearers, also reflects the division made between Fine Art and Decorative Art along cultural lines, as represented in the treatment of the Prince of Wales’s Indian art collection.

The Breakfast Room at Sandringham, located to the East of the Drawing Room, with view of the garden, was known, in 1902, as ‘the King’s sanctum, in which he breakfasts, usually alone, [...] an intimate room [...] of infinite charm.’<sup>310</sup> Since 1882, when the room was first depicted in a photograph [fig. 1.49], it appears to have kept its ‘intimate’ atmosphere of a ‘sanctum,’ and represents, most evidently, Bertie’s taste for a refined display of sculpture in line with the decorative parameters of Aestheticism. Contrasted against a scheme of dark patterned wallpaper above an oak wainscoat fitted with watercolours of sporting scenes, the first attraction of the comfortably furnished room was a large collection of blue-and-white Chinese porcelain displayed on a plate rail, on wall brackets and in plate cabinets.<sup>311</sup> Promoted by key protagonists of the Aesthetic movement like Whistler and Rossetti, collecting blue-and-white china became a

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<sup>309</sup> See *Facing the Other: Charles Cordier (1827–1905): Ethnographic Sculptor* (exhibition catalogue Musée d’Orsay, Paris, 2 Feb. – 2 May 2004, Musée National des Beaux-Arts du Québec, Québec, 10 June – 6 Sept. 2004 and Dahesh Museum of Art, New York, 12 Oct. 2004 – 9 Jan. 2005), eds Laure de Margerie and Edouard Papet (New York: Abrams, 2004), p. 28.

<sup>310</sup> See Anon., ‘Country Homes: Sandringham, The Country Home of H.M. King Edward VII’, *Country Life* (7 June 1902), vol XI, no. 263, pp. 722-35, p. 735.

<sup>311</sup> The *Catalogue* of 1877 records over seventy pieces of blue-and-white Chinese porcelain in the collection at Sandringham, which were mostly displayed in the Breakfast Room.



fashionable craze during the 1870s and was considered a signifier of a refined taste for beauty.

Although the provenance of Bertie's blue-and-white porcelain collection is not clear, it is unlikely that it came from the royal collection, which had contained precious Chinese porcelain since the late seventeenth century. More plausibly, Bertie could have assembled his collection through the agency of his friend Sir Henry Keppel or his brother Alfred, the Duke of Edinburgh, who both had travelled to China and the Far East.<sup>312</sup> He could have also made purchases through the art dealer Murray Marks who also supplied blue-and-white china for Whistler's famous *Peacock Room* and counted, amongst his clients, the collector Sir Henry Thompson, who featured his porcelain collection at exclusive dinner parties to which he also invited the Prince of Wales.<sup>313</sup> Owning a copy of the limited edition catalogue of an exhibition of Thompson's blue-and-white Nankin porcelain organised by Marks in 1878, Bertie was certainly aware of the aesthetic fashion of collecting and displaying precious china. This deluxe publication, bound in an aesthetic gold leather album and illustrated by Whistler, was an exquisite collector's item for porcelain connoisseurs and possibly served as an inspiration for Bertie's collection [fig. 1.50].<sup>314</sup> However, in contrast to the unified aesthetic schemes curated by Whistler and Marks, the overall decoration of the Breakfast Room was more diverse and included Dalou's intimate mother and child terracotta statuettes. As visible in the photograph of 1882, the group *Mother and Child* (1874) [fig. 1.35] was placed on a low cabinet to the left of the chimneypiece, while to its right was placed the group *French Peasant Woman*

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<sup>312</sup> In 1870 Sir Henry Keppel sent a large seventeenth-century gilt bronze statue of a seated Buddha (*Catalogue* 1877, no. 1895) as a present to the Prince of Wales from Peking to Sandringham, where it was displayed in the garden.

<sup>313</sup> For more on the Peacock Room, including its decorative scheme and contemporary reception see Linda Merrill, *The Peacock Room: A Cultural Biography* (Washington: Freer Gallery of Art and London: Yale University Press, 1998).

<sup>314</sup> Murray Marks, *A Catalogue of blue-and-white Nankin porcelain: forming the collection of Sir Henry Thompson* (London: Ellis and White, 1878). For more on Marks's catalogue, see Merrill (1998), pp. 172-77.

(c.1873) [fig. 1.51], probably purchased after 1877 to make a pair with the former.<sup>315</sup> As an “aesthetic sanctum” decorated with precious porcelain and fashionable terracotta sculptures, the private Breakfast Room allows a valuable insight into the prince’s temperament as a patron.

### **Marlborough House**

At Bertie’s London residence, Marlborough House, the general interior schemes and decorative strategies of the display of sculpture, as documented in a photo album of circa 1890, were comparable to those at Sandringham. The main reception rooms of Saloon, Drawing and Dining Room appeared in an overall similar size and sequence [fig. 1.52]. However, as Marlborough House was the prince’s official residence, the approach to the royal reception rooms was more formal and less immediate. Here, the Saloon was preceded by an Entrance Hall, flanked by official Waiting Rooms for the ladies and gentlemen of the household. Although the entrance scheme is not depicted in the Marlborough House photo album, a contemporary article records Jerichau’s life-size marble group *Adam and Eve* (1868) [fig. 1.28] as its main feature.<sup>316</sup> Possibly placed on a knee-high pedestal and surrounded by greenery, similar to the the display of *La Benda d’Amore* at Sandringham, the masterly executed group with its religious subject matter constituted a major focal point and first impression of the interiors at Marlborough House. The decision to display it prominently in the Entrance Hall implies that its neoclassical composition and moral theme were considered appropriate for the official purpose of the entrance to the royal residence. Perhaps,

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<sup>315</sup> While the group *Mother and Child* is easily visible on the photograph of 1882, the group *French Peasant Woman* becomes clearer when the photograph is magnified. It is also identifiable in photographs of the Breakfast Room from the Bedford Lemaire album of 1889 and in a photograph illustrated in *Country Life* in 1902.

<sup>316</sup> Arthur H. Beavan, *Marlborough House and Its Occupants, Present and Past* (London: F.V. White & Co, 1896), p. 38. In this article the author wrongly attributes the group *Adam and Eve* to Bertel Thorvaldsen, who was Jerichau’s teacher.

the depiction of Adam and Eve in Paradise before the Fall became all the more personally significant to the Prince of Wales's official image as his marriage was, in reality, compromised by his notorious infidelity.

In the subsequent narrow corridor, the neoclassical prelude was further continued with the display of Lawrence Macdonald's *Bacchante* (1862) [fig. 1.25] and Theed's *Musidora* (1866) [fig. 1.26]. Placed in niches on either side of the doorway leading to the Saloon, the female nudes with their polished marble figures announced the theme of the reception rooms where neoclassical ideal sculpture served as main decorative attraction and visual entertainment. In the two-storey high top-lit Saloon [fig. 1.53], Gibson's *Venus* (n.d.) and Alexander Macdonald's *Venus and Cupid* (1873) formed the visual highlights. Both were placed freestanding on high pedestals within a colourful and eclectic decorative scheme of wall tapestries, dark velvet portieres, comfortably upholstered chairs and potted palm trees. Their sensual features subtly embodied the themes of love and sensuality and provided the room with a sense of mild eroticism that was particularly emphasised through selected signifiers of "the East," such as a Gobelins tapestry depicting the ferocious scene of *The Massacre of the Mamelukes* (1844), as well as tiger skins on the floor and African or Indian side tables, which all contributed to a luxurious atmosphere.

Juxtaposed with this arrangement and distributed throughout the room were several portraits of the royal family. Flanking the *Mamelukes* tapestry and placed in eyesight on high socles were marble busts of Alexandra's parents, *King Christian IX* and *Queen Luise of Denmark* (1863), made by an unidentified Danish sculptor.<sup>317</sup> They reflected the princely couple's European outlook and served as a reminder of their loyalty towards the Danish royal family at a time

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<sup>317</sup> *Catalogue* (1877), nos. 704, 705, today untraced in the Royal Collection.

when Denmark struggled to defend its political position through strategic dynastic relationships within the royal houses of Europe. More informally, Gleichen's bronze statuettes of the Prince and Princess of Wales hunting were placed on top of the wall cabinet behind the figure of *Venus*.

In the Drawing Room [fig.1.54], in the same 'Eastern' fashion already encountered at Sandringham, two, probably French made, bronze torchère figures of black Africans with flower bouquets in their hands flanked the doorway. Further to this, large ideal statuary in white marble, such as a copy of Antonio Rossetti's intricately carved *Amor Segreto* (n.d.), discernible in the left background, provided the room with visual entertainment and light and amusing subject matter, similar to the Drawing Room sculptures at Sandringham.

From 1881, the former Library, in the southwest corner of Marlborough House, hosted the most precious objects of the Prince of Wales's Indian collection and became known as the India Room [fig. 1.55].<sup>318</sup> Here, similar to its public exhibition at the Paris Universal Exhibition in 1878, the Indian collection was displayed in a separate space, which marked the objects' importance as diplomatic gifts but also reinforced notions of empire and artistic hierarchy. Prominently showcased in large purpose-built pollard oak cases along the walls, the startling array of Indian objects was arranged in symmetrical patterns, deliberately juxtaposing different types of objects of different provenances. For example, the middle case of the cabinet, seen in the photograph, contained a crown from the Maharaja of Jeypore, flanked by small sculptures of brass soldiers from Vizagapatam, and surmounted by different daggers and sabres fixed around a

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<sup>318</sup> See Birdwood (1898).

shield.<sup>319</sup> Seen above the display cases, further objects and carved elephants' tusks, resonant of big game hunting, were symmetrically arranged and reflected the decorative pattern of the room's fashionable maroon velvet wallpaper.<sup>320</sup> Through familiar decorative tropes such as the fine cabinets and aesthetic wall decoration, the India Room alluded to the Prince of Wales's imperial adventuring and reinforced his credentials as heir to the imperial throne of India. Yet, while portraying India as powerful, prosperous and exciting, the Indian collection, separated in the India Room, was placed, perhaps symbolically, on the colonial periphery, whereas European high art was prominently shown in the main reception rooms.<sup>321</sup>

Meanwhile, Bertie's personal taste in sculpture was most clearly manifested at his private apartments on the upper floor of Marlborough House. His Study was described in contemporary articles as the Prince of Wales's 'sanctuarium', a highly treasured space into which only a select audience was allowed [fig. 1.56].<sup>322</sup> Here, as in the Breakfast Room at Sandringham, the prince displayed artworks that were most important to him. The heavy and masculine décor of the room, with dark oak panelling and solid, leather-upholstered furniture in the typical late Victorian fashion for a man's study, was personalised with a selection of small artworks which showcased Bertie's eclectic taste for Aestheticism, "Eastern" influences and eroticism.<sup>323</sup> While the paintings included family portraits, a picture of an Indian girl, entitled *The Nautch Girl* (1878) by the aesthete Val Prinsep (1838–1904), further signified Bertie's interest in exotic

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<sup>319</sup> See *Catalogue of the Collection of Indian Arms and Objects of Art* (1898), pp. 2-4, illustration 'Case B' between pp. 2 and 4.

<sup>320</sup> Beavan (1896), p. 30.

<sup>321</sup> For more on colonial modes of displaying non-European artefacts, see Breedon (2010), pp. 271-77.

<sup>322</sup> Beavan (1896), p. 93; Anon., *The Private Life of the King* (1901), p. 184.

<sup>323</sup> See, for example, Jacob von Falke, *Art in the House* (Boston: L. Prang & Co, 1878), pp. 272-73.

objects;<sup>324</sup> as did the tiger skins on the floor and a stuffed brown bear in the far corner. Amongst the numerous smaller objects, all carefully displayed on a heavy wooden side cabinet and on high wall shelves around the room, several sculptures signified Bertie's vanguard taste in and his passion for female beauty. For example, clearly discernible on the left side cabinet in front of a small statuette of *Venus Callipyge* (undated) is the bronze inkwell *Self-Portrait as a Sphinx* (1880) by the actor-sculptor Sarah Bernhardt (1845–1923). Further back, placed in the middle of the wall shelf, stands a white marble portrait bust of *Sarah Bernhardt* (c.1881) by d'Épinay and, visible on a side table in the background on the right, is Boehm's earlier statuette *Wilhelm and Lenore*. Furthermore, though not depicted in the photograph, the prince's Study probably housed the erotic portrait statue of Bertie's mistress Catherine Walters, known as "Skittles", in disguise of a *Nymph* (1878), which was made by Boehm.

The careful selection of these works in Bertie's 'sanctuarium' attests to the highly personal aspect of the prince's sculpture collection, his preference for particular subject matter and his close relationship with certain artists. In addition, these most personal works also serve to indicate his taste for particular stylistic aspects that foreshadow the avant-garde ideas of Gilbert's *Clarence Tomb*.

While Bertie's choice to display Boehm's romantic and Gothic-style statuette of *Wilhem and Lenore* in his Study attests to his early appreciation of French-inspired sculpture, his commissioning of Boehm with the statue of his mistress was a testament to the trusted relationship between the prince and the sculptor [fig. 1.57]. The half-sized marble figure of the *Nymph* depicts the nude mistress standing in an erotic pose with both arms raised behind her head and leaning backwards to reveal her sensual physique. Alluding, as Stocker has

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<sup>324</sup> For more on Prinsep, see Dakers (1999), pp. 4, 50, 206-209.

argued, both to erotic works of the French-Swiss sculptor James Pradier and to the classical *Venus de Milo*, the *Nymph* was a highly voyeuristic and risqué sculpture and can be considered as representing the culmination of Bertie's taste for sensual subject matter.<sup>325</sup> Yet unlike the 'mild erotica' nude statues on display in the main reception rooms, the *Nymph* was kept apart in the prince's private rooms. There, he revealed its secret only to a close circle of confidants, such as Ronald Gower, the royal family's friend and author of the bust of *Marie Antoinette*, who recorded in his diary having been shown the *Nymph* by Bertie: 'He showed me placed in a kind of shrine at the angle of a bookcase a marble statuette of a half draped nymph, her arm flung over her head, he told me it was by Boehm, "and who do you think stood for this figure-, of course I could not guess, [...] "Skittles" said H.R.H., with delight.'<sup>326</sup> Known for his homosexuality after a recent court libel case, Gower was admonished by Bertie to 'be prudent about the friends I make etc'.<sup>327</sup> In this context it is possible that the prince, who considered homosexuality a taboo while having a mistress was acceptable, thought that the *Nymph* would display to Gower the erotic allure of the female nude. Placed 'in a kind of shrine' the *Nymph*'s display in Bertie's 'sanctuarium' and the pleasure of the open secret of the statue's identity certainly added to the work's sensual appeal and attests to the uninhibited scope of Bertie's engagement with sculpture.

The two works which depict Sarah Bernhardt, one made by herself, the other by d'Épinay, serve as further examples of the prince's more vanguard taste in sculpture and indicate his fascination with fashion and celebrity. In the summer of 1879, the 'Divine Sarah', as the French actress was often called, performed for

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<sup>325</sup> Stocker (1986), pp. 283-84.

<sup>326</sup> Gower Diary Manuscript, 4 May 1879.

<sup>327</sup> Gower Diary Manuscript, 3 May 1879. For more on Gower's homosexuality, see Whitney Davis, 'Lord Ronald Gower and 'the offending Adam'', in David Getsy (ed.), *Sculpture and the Pursuit of a Modern Ideal in Britain, c. 1880-1930* (London: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 63-104, here: pp. 65-66.

the first time in London and immediately became renowned, not only for her passionate and dramatic performances as “Phèdre”, “Hernani” and “Le Sphinx” but also for staging herself as an eccentric celebrity and as an ambitious amateur artist in painting and sculpture.<sup>328</sup> With her frizzy red hair, porcelain skin and highly aesthetic costumes, Bernhardt was considered an eccentric beauty to which her Jewish descent added an exotic flair and charmed especially her male audience, with the Prince of Wales being one of her great admirers.<sup>329</sup> Coinciding with her stage performance, Bernhardt organised, together with her girlfriend, the painter Louise Abbema, an exhibition of their works at a showroom in Piccadilly to which she invited political and artistic celebrities and members of the aristocracy.<sup>330</sup> While Abbema seems to have been ignored by the audience, for Bernhardt, the exhibition was an important success.<sup>331</sup> Both the Prince and Princess of Wales attended the event and supported Bernhardt through the purchase of a self-portrait entitled *La Dormeuse* (The Sleeping Woman) (n.d.) and the commission of a further painting and a sculpture.<sup>332</sup> While the press criticised Bernhardt’s works as ‘clever’ but ‘amateurish’ and of ‘modest calibre’, Bertie’s visit was widely reported and added even more to Bernhardt’s celebrity.<sup>333</sup> On another occasion, when Bernhardt participated at a French charity bazaar at the

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<sup>328</sup> ‘Mme. Bernhardt, having in singular completeness that mental constitution which is called by the French *tempérament*, expresses her intention by her gesture, her dress, her eyes, the dramatic charm of her drawing-room, her paintings, her sculpture, and the noble fervour of her tragedy.’ Alice Meynell, ‘Madame Sarah Bernhardt’, *The Art Journal*, (May 1888), pp. 134-39, p. 135.

<sup>329</sup> See Carol Ockman and Kenneth E. Silver (eds), *Sarah Bernhardt, The Art of High Drama* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), pp. 135-36. The Prince of Wales saw Bernhardt performing in ‘Phèdre’ (5 July 1879), ‘Hernani’ (9 July 1879) and ‘Le Sphinx’ (10 July 1879), and possibly on 19 June 1879.

<sup>330</sup> See Anon., ‘Mdlle. Sarah Bernhardt’, *The Examiner* (21 June 1879), p. 802; Anon., ‘The Memoirs of Sarah Bernhardt’, *The Strand Magazine*, (September 1904), pp. 257-263, here pp. 260-61.

<sup>331</sup> Mason (2007), p. 396, footnote 276.

<sup>332</sup> Neither the painting *La Dormeuse* nor the other mentioned commissions from Bernhardt are today traceable in the Royal Collection.

<sup>333</sup> See for example, Anon., ‘Mdlle. Sarah Bernhardt’ *The Times* (9 July 1879), p. 9; Anon., ‘Notes on Current Events’, *The British Architect* (11 July 1879), p. 14; Anon., ‘Sarah Bernhardt’, *The Musical World* (12 July 1879), p. 437.



Albert Hall, her stall was honoured by an extended visit from the royal couple and became one of the highlights.<sup>334</sup>

As a clever act of self-promotion, in 1880, Bernhardt modeled the inkwell *Self-Portrait as a Sphinx* [fig. 1.58] and gave bronze replicas of it to the Prince of Wales and other of her most important patrons.<sup>335</sup> The unusual grotesque object, possibly inspired by a similar sixteenth-century bronze inkwell which featured in a London exhibition in the previous year, depicts Bernhardt as a mythical creature with her own head arising from the body of a griffin.<sup>336</sup> It has stretched-out bat wings and a fishtail while its fore-claws hold an inkwell decorated with a horned skull. A closed book is placed between the inkwell and Bernhardt's breast and her shoulder epaulettes are trimmed with the masks of Comedy and Tragedy, indicating her profession. The self-representation as a Sphinx, as in her dramatic role in the play of the same title, clearly suggested Bernhardt's hybrid nature and transformative power, both on stage and between her different identities as actress, artist and mysterious, possibly bi-sexual woman who did not reveal any fixed sexual identity.<sup>337</sup> By combining her self-portrait with a seemingly functional object, Bernhardt created a work that, beyond its decorative character, also suggested usefulness. Although it probably never served as an inkwell, the *Self-Portrait* might have appeared like an unobtrusive and practical gift to her

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<sup>334</sup> Anon., 'Sarah Bernhardt', *The Musical World* (12 July 1879), p. 437.

<sup>335</sup> Owners of inkwells cast by the foundry Thiebaut Frère in 1880 were The Prince of Wales, Mrs Patrick Campbell, Laura Bathurst, and Anne de Lagre. See Mason (2007), p. 480, Appendix 4: Ownership and Sales of Bernhardt's Work in Sculpture, 1875 – June 1923.

<sup>336</sup> In 1879, the Burlington Fine Arts Club exhibited historical bronzes and the description of one object in their catalogue fits perfectly with Bernhardt's inkwell: 'Inkstand (?).-Bronze. Griffin or winged monster, with the head and trunk of a woman; fore-feet having eagle's claws, and hind quarters like a lion. The left hand has apparently been removed, and is replaced by a univalve shell forming an ink receptable; in the griffin's right hand a hole has been bored to fix a nozzle. 15<sup>th</sup> or early 16<sup>th</sup> century. Italian. (H. 10 inches); Lent by Mr. Falcke.' *Burlington Fine Arts Club, Catalogue of Bronzes and Ivories of European Origin* London: Burlington Fine Arts Club, exhibited in 1879 (London: Metchim & Son, 1879), p. 54, cat. no. 324.

<sup>337</sup> As a sign of her bisexuality Bernhardt liked dressing in both male and female costumes on stage. In addition, she had a secret love affair with her artist girlfriend Louise Abbema, as well as with various men, the Prince of Wales possibly amongst them. See Mason (2007).

patrons, and yet, it clearly promoted Bernhardt's multifaceted self, on which she based the success and reputation of her career.

With Bertie, this strategy certainly succeeded. By placing it in his study behind a small sensual statuette of the *Venus Callipyge*, literally meaning Venus of the beautiful buttocks, the prince marked the Bernhardt inkwell as an object of artistic admiration and perhaps also as a signifier of his alleged affair with the sphinx-like actor/sculptor.<sup>338</sup> As a further proof of Bertie's recognition of Bernhardt's eccentric personality and of her grotesque artistic style, in 1881, the prince acquired from d'Epinaÿ a small portrait bust in marble of the actress [fig. 1.59].<sup>339</sup> While the elegant inclination of the head and feminine neckline of Bernhardt's dress clearly referred to d'Epinaÿ's earlier portrait success with the bust of the *Princess of Wales* (1866), the bizarre composition of Bernhardt's socle seemed to magnify some of the attributes from Bernhardt's inkwell self-portrait. It included an intricately carved skull surrounded by finely carved roses, a mask of Comedy, a scythe, a rosary with a cross, musical instruments and an owl. While the skull and roses were signs of beauty and vanity, the mask and instruments symbolised Bernhardt's profession as an actress. This was further specified by the symbols of the scythe, rosary and owl alluding to the dark, unpredictable implications of changing roles in acting. Through the juxtaposition of appealing, sensualised femininity in the face, with the symbols of death, ambivalence and infatuation in the socle part, d'Epinaÿ sought to capture Bernhardt's personality which made her so appealing and irresistible to her admirers.

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<sup>338</sup> Ridley (2012), p. 220.

<sup>339</sup> On 12 March 1881, d'Epinaÿ recorded in his studio diary, 'Le Prince de Galles est venu hier et m'a pris le buste de Sarah Bernhardt'. Quoted after Roux Foujols (1997), p. 91.

### **1.5. Epilogue: Sarah Bernhardt as a harbinger of Gilbert's *Clarence Tomb***

In the context of the Prince of Wales's sculpture collection, both sculptural portraits of *Sarah Bernhardt*, with their Gothic-grotesque features, appear eccentric and unorthodox. They can be considered as distinct signifiers of a familiarisation of Bertie's taste with the innovatory and avant-garde style of Gilbert. Sharing several conspicuous visual analogies with earlier works in the princely collection probably added to Bertie's appreciation of them. For example, the bat wings and the overall amusing grotesqueness of Bernhardt's *Self-Portrait* are features which appear earlier in Hosmer's *Puck*, while the motif of the skull, as a symbol of death, is also apparent in Boehm's statuette of *Wilhelm and Lenore*. In addition, with Boehm's work, as well as with Hébert's *Ecole des Filles*, Bernhardt's *Self-Portrait* shared not only its Gothic appearance but its spontaneous and vivid modelling.

Further to the occasional resemblances with earlier works in Bertie's collection, some details in the two Bernhardt portraits represented significant features which later occurred in Gilbert's sculptural oeuvre. It is conceivable that these analogies indirectly paved the way for Bertie's commissioning of Gilbert with the *Clarence Tomb* in 1892. For example, the masks of Comedy and Tragedy depicted in Bernhardt's inkwell, reappear in Gilbert's statuette *Comedy and Tragedy: 'Sic Vita'* (1891–92), while the idea of death, expressed by Bernhardt's representation of a skull, featured in Gilbert's bronze roundel *Post Equitem Sedet Altra Cura* (1883–87). Furthermore, the motif of bat wings as a sign of transcendence and agency between different spheres constituted a key feature in

the statuette of *St Michael* for the *Clarence Tomb*, whose ‘bat-like armour’ and large silver-coloured wings made the saint appear like a ‘vespertilionine giant’.<sup>340</sup>

Another motif from the Bernhardt portraits reappearing in Gilbert’s work is to be found in the finely carved roses from d’Epinay’s portrait socle. While accentuating, in the Bernhardt portrait, the allure of femininity, in Gilbert’s *Clarence Tomb* statuettes of the *Virgin* and of *St Elizabeth of Hungary*, the roses constitute a major aesthetic attraction.<sup>341</sup> Finally, the contrast between the smooth, idealised features of the face and the detailed rendering of the attributes in d’Epinay’s bust, reoccurs in Gilbert’s marble effigy of the Duke of Clarence, the haziness of which contrasts with the prince’s minutely articulated bronze uniform.<sup>342</sup> As Gilbert spent three days at Sandringham in January 1892 when he was called to discuss his commission of the *Clarence Tomb* it is possible that he saw the portraits of Bernhardt there and took inspiration from their composition.<sup>343</sup>

Just as the Bernhardt portraits combined different symbols and stylistic references in order to reflect the actress’s multifaceted personality, the *Clarence Tomb* amalgamated neoclassical, Gothic and aesthetic elements with the aim to represent the multi-layered identity of the deceased Duke of Clarence. These parallels seem to foreground the aesthetic and stylistic transition of Bertie’s taste towards Gilbert’s style of sculpture. Through the recognition and careful understanding of Bertie’s sculpture collection it becomes possible to coherently position Gilbert within a particular practice of royal collecting. This shows that the Prince of Wales’s patronage of Gilbert was neither opportunistic nor a ‘happy

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<sup>340</sup> Dorment 1985, p. 175

<sup>341</sup> See Dorment 1985, pp. 170, 175.

<sup>342</sup> See Edwards (2006), pp. 170-71.

<sup>343</sup> *Alfred Gilbert. Sculptor and Goldsmith* (exhibition catalogue, Royal Academy of Arts, 21 March - 29 June 1986), ed. Richard Dorment (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1986), p. 159.

inspiration' but an expression of his own knowledge of and passion for particular modes of sculpture.

In Sandringham House, on a shelf in a private corridor, there are today several bronze statuettes by Gilbert and other representatives of the New Sculpture who worked in the late Victorian period.<sup>344</sup> They include a version of *Icarus* (after 1884) by Gilbert, *La Vérité Méconnue* (Truth Denied) (after 1894) by Dalou, *Salome* (c.1895) by Bertram Mackennal and *Perseus* (1898) by Frederick Pomeroy.<sup>345</sup> Of these, only *La Vérité Méconnue* and *Salome* have been attributed to Bertie as their acquirer.<sup>346</sup> However, it seems likely that he, rather than later members of the royal family, also bought the figures of *Icarus* and *Perseus* as fashionable additions to his collection.<sup>347</sup> As a friend of Leighton, for whom Gilbert made the statuette of *Icarus* in the first place in 1884, it would not be surprising if Bertie saw *Icarus* in Leighton's Arab Hall, where it was displayed, and wished a copy of it for his own collection. As a long-term collector of Dalou's work and a known friend of the Jewish upper class in Britain, it is possible that the prince was interested in the French sculptor's *Vérité Méconnue* as a political statement against anti-Semitism. He could have first noticed Mackennal through his admiration of Bernhardt who had previously been portrayed by the artist and who was also the inspiration for the motif of *Salome*.<sup>348</sup> Pomeroy's figure of *Perseus*, closely related in composition to Gilbert's *Icarus*, was acclaimed when shown at the Royal Academy in 1898, where Bertie could

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<sup>344</sup> These statues were seen by the author on a visit to Sandringham in October 2012.

<sup>345</sup> While Dalou's *La Vérité Méconnue* and Mackennal's *Salome* were included in the exhibition *Princes as Patrons* in 1998, Gilbert's *Icarus* and Pomeroy's *Perseus* have never previously been published. See *Princes and Patrons* (1998), cat. nos. 144 and 145 on pp. 140 and 141 respectively.

<sup>346</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>347</sup> It is not known that Bertie's successors King George or his consort Queen Mary were patrons or collectors of Gilbert and Pomeroy.

<sup>348</sup> For more on *Salome*, see Deborah Edwards (ed.), *Bertram Mackennal* (Sydney: Art Gallery New South Wales, 2007), pp. 114-15, 148.

have seen it.<sup>349</sup> With their emphasis on sensitive modelling, vibrant bronze surfaces and the expression of emotion and sensuality, the Sandringham statuettes clearly reflect the Prince of Wales's taste in sculptural style, material and subject matter. In addition, in 1902, versions of Pomeroy's *Perseus* and Mackennal's *Salome* featured amongst a prominent exhibition of contemporary statuettes at the London Fine Art Society. Entitled 'Sculpture for the Home,' this exhibition was meant to encourage the purchase of high quality statuettes for display in a domestic context.<sup>350</sup> The inclusion of similar New Sculpture examples in the Sandringham collection strongly suggests that the Prince of Wales was, at times, trendsetting in his collecting of contemporary sculpture at the end of the nineteenth century.

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<sup>349</sup> See Anon., 'Royal Academy Banquet', *The Times* (2 May 1998), p. 9.

<sup>350</sup> Beattie (1983), p. 199.

## Chapter 2

### Louise as a Maker of Sculpture

‘I strongly advise you to continue taking lessons with Mrs Thornycroft, as you have great talent in modelling, & may perhaps become some day an eminent sculptoress [sic].’<sup>351</sup> This slightly naive but sympathetic quotation from a letter of November 1863, written by the Prince of Wales to his younger sister Louise, who had just begun her modelling training with the sculptor Mary Thornycroft (1814–95), indicates not only the novelty of feminising the profession of the sculptor, but the royal family’s appreciation of female artists in a field that was dominated by male professionals and usually considered unfitting for amateurs, especially if they were women. By encouraging Louise with the prospect of becoming an ‘eminent sculptoress’, possibly like Thornycroft, the prince did not realise that it would be unfeasible for his sister to practice sculpture in a similar way as a professional artist. What the term ‘sculptress’, here by Bertie misspelt as ‘sculptoress’, also manifests is that despite the prince’s appreciation of female practitioners, women were generally considered apart from their male peers. Commonly used in the art press of the second half of the nineteenth century the term contributed to a gendered perception of the practice of sculpture which usually affected, as we will see in Louise’s case, the reception of a female sculptor’s work.<sup>352</sup> Nevertheless, Bertie’s positive attitude and the royal family’s patronage of professional female sculptors paved the way for Louise to achieve unprecedented success as a royal practitioner. Over the following four decades, she became an active sculptor within a progressive artistic circle in London. This

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<sup>351</sup> RA/VIC/ADDL/MSS/A/17/88, Prince of Wales to Princess Louise, 10 November 1863.

<sup>352</sup> See, for example, H.W., ‘Lady-Artists in Rome’, *Art Journal* (June 1866), p. 177-78; F.G. Stephens, ‘The Late Mrs. Mary Thornycroft’, *Magazine of Art* (Jan. 1895), pp. 305-307; ‘The Royal Academy’, *New Sporting Magazine* (June 1869), p. 462.

was reflected in her considerable work output. Influenced by shifting trends in sculpture and the improved possibilities in female art training, Louise's work ranged from mid-Victorian neoclassicism to the New Sculpture. While her early works focused on the representation of family members and friends in portrait busts, by the 1870s she executed an equestrian sculpture in bronze and a large relief in terracotta. She went on to embrace the challenges of full-size public statues and church memorials, which culminated in the monumental *Boer War Memorial* of 1904 at St Paul's Cathedral.

As pointed out in the introduction, Victorian female sculptors, and amateurs in particular, have been largely overlooked in the sculpture scholarship with the result that Louise has received hardly any attention. As a female amateur she has usually been dismissed as part of the tradition of aristocratic dilettantism, where art was made for pleasure and entertainment rather than for a more serious purpose. Certainly, in view of her rank and the range of social duties she had to fulfil as a senior member of the royal family, Louise's personal experience as a sculptor differed from that of a professional, middle-class practitioner. However, despite not being allowed to earn money with her works, in many respects Louise faced similar challenges as her female professional peers in carving out a successful career as a sculptor, professional or not. In the gendered structure of Victorian society, Louise had to rely on the support of her family to allow her to engage with the practice of sculpture making. Her training depended on private tuition and on the offer of institutional training accessible for women artists, such as the National Art Training School at South Kensington. In order to accommodate her sculpture practice with her domestic and official duties, she had to establish a studio within her home. Like her professional peers, Louise



exhibited at major public venues where her works were exposed to the scrutiny of art critics, though considered under special parameters. Furthermore, beyond the production of small-scale, domestic works, the field in which female sculptors were most likely accepted, Louise's public monuments aligned her with eminent male and female sculptors of her time, including Mary Thornycroft. For the realisation of her large-scale public projects, Louise collaborated, like any professional sculptor, with assistants and professional firms, both in terms of design and in the making process.

Due to its pejorative connotation, the label of 'royal amateur' is problematic but makes Louise an interesting case study in the field of feminist sculpture studies. In order to evaluate her oeuvre and her position as a female sculptor at the apex of British society, I focus in this chapter on the analysis of selected sculptural works which trace Louise's art training and collaborations with teachers, advisers and friends, and locate her within the context of artistic and social trends from the early 1860s to the early twentieth century.

The first part of my three-part chapter situates the motivation for Louise's sculpture training within the context of aristocratic sculpture practice and considers the relationship between Louise, as a royal student, and her professional teacher Mary Thornycroft. The second part discusses the influence of Joseph Edgar Boehm on Louise's work, and the social significance of her public training at the National Art Training School. In addition, this section looks at Louise's involvement with the Aesthetic Movement from the mid-1870s onwards, and the way in which the princess negotiated her representation at the fashionable Grosvenor Gallery. The third part focuses on Louise's public sculptures and

examines their political and imperial dimensions within the royal family's role as representatives of the sovereignty and unity of the British empire.

### **2.1. Louise and Mary Thornycroft, c.1863–69**

The first mention of Louise taking modelling lessons with Thornycroft appears in a letter from Bertie to Louise in August 1863 in which the prince asks his sister: 'How are you getting on with Mrs Thornycroft? Do you find modelling very difficult?'<sup>353</sup> By enquiring about the nature of the student-master relationship and Louise's personal experience of the modelling process, it seems that Louise had then only recently started her sculpture training. Yet, before exploring Bertie's question further and examining selected works which Louise made during her tutelage with Thornycroft, I explore possible reasons why Louise would have been allowed to take sculpture lessons, given that this did not form part of the typical art training for royal amateurs. Apart from looking at the personal circumstances of Louise's family life around this time, I consider precedents of royal practitioners who might have influenced the decision for Louise to take up sculpture. I also present possible reasons for the choice of Mary Thornycroft as Louise's first sculpture teacher by indicating her particular artistic relationship with the royal family.

In the summer of 1863, Louise was a fifteen year-old adolescent, often considered by her family as a difficult, moody and sensitive character.<sup>354</sup> In letters to her eldest daughter Vicky, the Queen frequently referred to Louise as 'poor Louise', with a sense of regret and pity for her alleged deficiencies. On 24 November

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<sup>353</sup> RA/VIC/ADDL/MSS/ A/17/80, Prince of Wales to Princess Louise, 30 August 1863.

<sup>354</sup> See Jehanne Wake, *Princess Louise. Queen Victoria's Unconventional Daughter* (London: Collins, 1988), p. 41.

1858, she called her ‘very naughty and backward, though improved and very pretty, and affectionate’.<sup>355</sup> A few months later she wrote that, in contrast to Vicky, ‘[p]oor dear Louise, [...] was never well managed, overfatigued and excited. How different to your education!’<sup>356</sup> On 8 November 1862, Victoria reported about some improvement that, ‘Louise behaves as well as possible since our return [to Osborne] and keeps quietly, and without grumbling, in her own place’.<sup>357</sup> In the following year, on Louise’s birthday, the Queen regretted: ‘Today is poor Louise’s 15<sup>th</sup> birthday. These days are so sad now, and yet I wish so much that they should not be so for the children – as Papa was very anxious about that.’<sup>358</sup>

The cause for the apparent cheerlessness in Louise’s family life was the abiding mourning culture imposed by Victoria on her children since the tragic death of Albert on 14 December 1861.<sup>359</sup> Over the following years, Louise and her sisters had to adhere to a strict mourning routine, wearing dark clothes, accompanying their mother on regular visits to Albert’s mausoleum and numerous memorial sites, and incorporating his memory in every aspect of their lives.<sup>360</sup> A glimpse of Louise’s melancholy during these initial years of mourning is revealed in her letters to her childhood friend Lady Louisa Bowater. They describe the days approaching the anniversary of Albert’s death as ‘misery’,<sup>361</sup> ‘a sad time’,<sup>362</sup> when Louise felt ‘a loss [...] that nothing can efface.’<sup>363</sup> The impact of the death of her father and the sadness of her family life become also apparent in several of

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<sup>355</sup> Roger Fulford (ed.), *Dearest Child. Private Correspondence of Queen Victoria and the Crown Princess of Prussia 1858-1861* (London: Evans, 1964), p. 146.

<sup>356</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 175.

<sup>357</sup> Roger Fulford (ed.), *Dearest Mama. Private Correspondence of Queen Victoria and the Crown Princess of Prussia* (London: Evans Brothers, 1981, first published 1968), p. 127.

<sup>358</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 182.

<sup>359</sup> Wake (1988), pp. 46-48.

<sup>360</sup> For the incorporation of memorial sculptures of Albert as indispensable components in the royal family’s life during the first years after Albert’s death, see Martin (2013), pp. 198-211.

<sup>361</sup> British Library, Knightley Manuscripts, MS 46 361, Princess Louise to Lady Louisa Bowater, 22 May 1862.

<sup>362</sup> British Library, Knightley Manuscripts, MS 46 361, Princess Louise to Lady Louisa Bowater, 30 November 1862.

<sup>363</sup> British Library, Knightley Manuscripts, MS 46 361, Princess Louise to Lady Louisa Bowater, not dated [13 Dec. 1862].

Louise's drawings from the early 1860s, which deal with her longing for an end to the enduring atmosphere of sorrow. For example, a coloured pencil drawing from shortly after Albert's death shows a girl, probably Louise herself, asleep in her bed and dreaming of the happy reunion of her parents who appear in an illuminated cloud above, embracing each other [fig. 2.1]. In another drawing, made on the occasion of her parents' wedding anniversary in 1863, Louise depicts her father as an Arthurian knight in line with the wider visual culture at court of idealising Albert's chivalrous qualities.<sup>364</sup> Albert, as a young knight clad in armour, is shown by a necromancer the vision of his beloved one who appears in the bright shine of a flaming vessel, sleeping peacefully in her moonlit chamber [fig. 2.2]. The strong symbolism and yearning imagination in these two examples indicate that Louise used her art either as a creative medium to express her feelings and overcome the grief of her family's reality, or, as a means of gaining acceptance of her artistic practice in disguise of the emotional expression of a mourning daughter. Dedicated to her mother, the drawings appeared to mediate between the real and the imaginative in order to help find spiritual consolation over Albert's loss.

Louise was not the first female royal practitioner of sculpture. A few years before her, her eldest sister Vicky, married in 1858 to the Prince of Prussia, began taking modelling lessons in Berlin, which she continued for some years as an inspired pastime with the purpose to improve her practical knowledge as a patron.<sup>365</sup> In this, Vicky received great support from Albert, who occasionally used his own modelling skills to communicate more clearly his ideas of a

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<sup>364</sup> See Mark Girouard, *The Return to Camelot. Chivalry and the English Gentleman* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1981), pp. 112-26.

<sup>365</sup> See Chapter 3, part 3.1.

sculpture commission.<sup>366</sup> The pursuit of modelling with the objective of becoming a leading patron, however, was different from the ambition to sculpt for its own sake. Beyond Vicky, it is conceivable that the French princess Marie d'Orléans (1813–39), daughter of King Louis-Philippe, served as a role model of a sculpting princess for Louise. Despite her early death at the age of twenty-three, the French princess had been known in Britain for her talent as a female amateur sculptor. Yet, here, as subsequently in Louise's case, the princess's artistic interest was linked to her mental disposition, rather than being accepted as a genuine talent. An article in the *Quarterly Review* of 1860, published on the occasion of the death of the painter Ary Scheffer (1795–1858), who had been the princess's art teacher, praised Marie as 'a lady whose virtues and genius are not unfamiliar to the English people, and for whose premature death they have not ceased to mourn.'<sup>367</sup> It further quoted from an earlier account by Scheffer of his pupil's artistic career, explaining the circumstances which made Marie turn to sculpture, which appeared remarkably similar to Louise's. The account suggests that Marie had been a rather 'madcap' and 'impertinent' child who had little respect for her teachers and no serious interest in art. However, after her adored only sister got married and left her, Marie suddenly turned 'melancholic' and 'inwards', and dedicated herself 'with a sudden and unexpected devotion' to art. As a more exciting distraction than drawing, Scheffer eventually suggested to his royal pupil to learn modelling. In line with the Victorian perception that women's pursuits were linked to their emotional disposition, sculpture, then, was described as providing mental relief for the princess after a trying experience and gave her purpose and happiness for

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<sup>366</sup> See, for example, a letter by Thomas Thornycroft of 16 November 1853 in which he describes that Prince Albert amended the model of an equestrian statue of the Queen, which was commissioned from Thomas Thornycroft. Letter quoted in Elfrida Manning, *Marble and Bronze: The Art & Life of Hans Thornycroft* (London: Trefoil, 1982), pp. 33-34.

<sup>367</sup> Anon., 'Art V – Memoir of the Life of the Late Ary Scheffer', *The Quarterly Review* (July 1860), pp. 162-200, here pp. 177-78.

the rest of her life. Apart from such public acclaim in the British press, Marie's unusual artistic talent was also appreciated by Queen Victoria, who had known the French princess as a young woman. Marie's untimely death in 1839 deeply affected the young queen who recalled her reminiscences of her as 'sweet, clever, amiable, highly gifted and accomplished, loved by all who knew her.'<sup>368</sup> As a sign of her remembrance of Marie, Victoria commissioned in 1841 a miniature portrait of the French princess [fig. 2.3], which was based on an earlier full-size portrait by Scheffer of *Marie d'Orléans* at work in her sculpture studio.<sup>369</sup>

Considering the general positive attitude of the royal family towards the practice of sculpture as a royal pursuit, and the fact that Marie d'Orléans was known as a model of a royal sculptor, it is unlikely that Victoria had reservations about her daughter taking modelling lessons, and thus endorsed her endeavour as a useful distraction from, what she called, Louise's 'grumbling'.<sup>370</sup> Although it was unusual for a princess to model in clay, this was accepted as an artistic pursuit next to learning to draw and do handicrafts such as flower arrangements and shell pictures.<sup>371</sup> Also, the dedication and imaginativeness evident in Louise's drawings might have supported the idea of allowing her a further creative challenge by working in three dimensions.

As part of the royal children's carefully planned educational programme, Louise had already gained significant art historical and visual knowledge of sculpture. Under the tutelage of the royal drawing master Edward Henry Corbould

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<sup>368</sup> QVJ, 11 April 1839, [www.queenvictoriasjournals.org](http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org) [accessed: 10 May 2013].

<sup>369</sup> Scheffer painted several versions of his portrait of *Marie d'Orléans*, which were disseminated amongst relatives of the French royal family. See *Marie d'Orléans* (2008), pp. 82-85.

<sup>370</sup> Fulford (1968), *Dearest Mama*, p. 127.

<sup>371</sup> Apart from the existence of numerous albums of drawings by the royal children at the Royal Print Room in Windsor, the collection at the Swiss Cottage at Osborne, where the royal children spent much of their childhood, includes, still today, original shell pictures and botanical arrangements with flowers and algae which represent the typical pursuits of amateur artists. For more on the royal children's artistic pursuits at the Swiss Cottage, see HRH The Duchess of York with Nenita Stoney, *Victoria and Albert: Life at Osborne House* (London: BCA, 1991), pp. 106-15; For artistic pursuits of Victorian female amateurs in general, see Talia Schaffer, *Victorian Domestic Handicraft and Nineteenth-Century Fiction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

she had learned, like her siblings, to copy artists' drawings after antiques and studies from life. These afforded her a basic understanding of human anatomy, proportions and the importance of space and light for the depiction of a three-dimensional body.<sup>372</sup> For example, in a pencil drawing of 1860 of the bust of a *Vestal Virgin* in profile [fig. 2.4], possibly after an earlier drawing from the royal collection,<sup>373</sup> Louise manifests her ability to discern different materialities through the assured depiction of contour, smooth skin and drapery. By copying the ideal proportions of the Vestal's head she also familiarised herself with the standards of neoclassical beauty in sculpture.

Further to her drawing practice, from an early age, Louise had gained first-hand experience with the process of casting and modelling during her sittings for Mary Thornycroft who, from the mid-1840s, was regularly employed by Victoria and Albert to make portraits of the royal children.<sup>374</sup> As part of a family of sculptors where her father, John Francis (1780–1861), and her husband, Thomas Thornycroft (1815–85), were also working for the royal family, Mary Thornycroft became the royal couple's preferred sculptor of portraits of their children. Thus in 1848, when Louise was three months old, Thornycroft took a plaster cast of the little princess's arm which she then translated in marble as part of a group of similar mementos of the royal children's infancy.<sup>375</sup> Furthermore, in 1850, Louise, then aged two, sat for a bust in marble; six years later, Thornycroft portrayed her in a full-size allegorical statue entitled *Princess Louise as Plenty* (1856), depicted in a long, neoclassical gown and holding a cornucopia [fig. 2.5]. Through the experience of sitting for her portraits, Louise learned about the practical concerns

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<sup>372</sup> For more on Corbould as the royal children's drawing master, see Roberts (1987), pp. 121-28, here p. 146.

<sup>373</sup> Louise's drawing is pasted on a cartoon annotated probably by an early librarian with the note 'Copy'.

<sup>374</sup> See Fiona Darling-Glinski, 'The Privilege of Patronage: Mary Thornycroft and the Sculptural Aesthetic', *Sculpture Journal*, vol. XI (2004), pp. 55-68, here pp. 56-59.

<sup>375</sup> For more on the marble limbs of the royal children, see *Victoria & Albert. Art & Love* (2010), p. 76-77.

of a portrait sculptor. She would have learned about measuring proportions, staging an ideal pose and balancing the incidence of light to create an overall harmonious composition. For each portrait, the process of being modelled in clay would have taken several sittings during which Thornycroft and Louise had the opportunity of getting to know each other. In fact, from several anecdotes remembered by the sculptor's granddaughter, it appears that Thornycroft had the ability to gain the royal children's trust and making them feel at ease in her presence. On one occasion, Thornycroft was modelling a portrait of Louise's sister Vicky who was chatting away during the sitting and told the sculptor: 'Oh, Mrs. Thornycroft I will build you a cottage, covered with roses.' While a lady-in-waiting admonished the little princess not to talk 'such nonsense,' Thornycroft, instead, thought it a pity to tell Vicky off, as she much preferred her talking and being relaxed so that she could get on with her work.<sup>376</sup>

As pointed out by Shannon Hunter Hurtado in her evaluation of Thornycroft's career, it was a combination of the sculptor's artistic style and practical skills, together with her social ability, which secured her the continuous patronage from the royal family over more than two decades.<sup>377</sup> Artistically, Thornycroft's portraits of the royal children were so much appreciated by Prince Albert that he organised their publication in the *Art Journal* as a popular 'taste-making device' during the 1850s and promoted their reproduction and dissemination in Parian ware.<sup>378</sup> In addition, from a business point of view, Thornycroft appeared to her royal patrons as a reliable and trustworthy professional. She met her deadlines even if they were given at short notice,<sup>379</sup> her

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<sup>376</sup> RA/VIC/ADDJ/1732, Recollections of Mrs Marion Gain.

<sup>377</sup> Shannon Hunter Hurtado, *Genteel Mavericks: Women Sculptors in Victorian Britain*, Ph.D thesis (University of Manitoba 2002), pp. 119-20, 123-24, 175.

<sup>378</sup> Manning (1982), p. 27; Darling-Glinski (2004), p. 60; Martin (2013), pp. 178-82.

<sup>379</sup> Darling-Glinski (2004), p. 60.



invoices were correct and professional,<sup>380</sup> and her fees were relatively moderate,<sup>381</sup> the same as those exacted from other non-royal patrons.<sup>382</sup> Beyond these professional skills, Thornycroft managed to excel in her public appearance as a respectable woman, wife and mother in accordance with royal expectations. Although her career was probably more successful than that of her husband,<sup>383</sup> her support and admiration of his work indicated the artist couple's mutual respect and collaboration, and perhaps reflected Victoria and Albert's own relationship in which the wife's position and success outshined that of her husband while she endorsed his role as the family patriarch according to mid-Victorian gender norms.<sup>384</sup> Like Victoria, Thornycroft managed to pursue her professional career while maintaining a public image of respectability.<sup>385</sup>

In fact, the conformity of Thornycroft's appearance with genteel expectations can be illustrated through the comparison of two carte-de-visite photographs of Louise [figs. 2.6] and Thornycroft [fig. 2.7] from 1864, in which both adhere to similar social and gendered standards for female portraiture. Although Thornycroft did not usually wear the restricting crinoline at work,<sup>386</sup> here, both women are dressed in a wide crinoline silk frock and wear their hair neatly tied back according to the mid-Victorian fashion. Depicted with composed posture and with their gaze decently turned away from the viewer, they are

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<sup>380</sup> Hunter Hurtado (2012), p. 85.

<sup>381</sup> Penny McCracken, 'Sculptor Mary Thornycroft and Her Artist Children', *Women's Art Journal* (Fall 1996 / Winter 1997), pp. 3-8, here p. 5.

<sup>382</sup> After a conversation with Mary Thornycroft, Alfred Domett, who was a family friend, noted on 21 March 1877 in his diary that Thornycroft, 'makes precisely the same charge to the Queen she would make for similar work to any other person of whatever rank.' Published in E. A. Horsman, *The Diary of Alfred Domett 1872-1885* (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), p. 184.

<sup>383</sup> In the seventh edition of the popular dictionary *Men of the Time*, only Mary, not Thomas Thornycroft, is mentioned as an example of a successful sculptor. See *Men of the Time. A Dictionary of Contemporaries, containing Biographical Notices of Eminent Characters of both Sexes*, 7th ed. (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1868), p. 781; See also Manning (1982), p. 29.

<sup>384</sup> See Darling-Glinski (2004), pp. 60-62.

<sup>385</sup> While Victoria considered radical feminists as 'unsexing,' she and Albert patronised professional female artists who appeared un-political and 'respectable' in public. See Melanie Renee Ulrich, *Victoria's Feminist Legacy: How Nineteenth-Century Women Imagined the Queen*, Ph.D. thesis (University of Texas at Austin, 2005).

<sup>386</sup> According to the transcribed manuscript of Thornycroft's granddaughter, today at the Royal Archives, 'Thornycroft & her daughters never wore crinolines & the street boys used to call after them "There go the girls that don't wear crinolines!"' RA/VIC/ADDJ/1732, Recollections of Mrs Marion Gain.

surrounded by elegant studio props, which clearly suggest their association with an upper-class lifestyle. While Louise's photo does not give any indication of her personal artistic interests, the reduced bust of the *Apollo Belvedere* on a side table next to Thornycroft provides a hint of her relationship with sculpture. Yet, rather than suggesting that she was a professional practitioner, the replica of the famous antique indicates no more than a connoisseurial interest and refined taste in art.

While Louise and Thornycroft's similar fashionable appearance and adherence to social norms facilitated Thornycroft's position as a royal teacher, the artistic relationship between her and Louise was further complicated in two ways: on the one hand, by their difference in social status, between royalty and middle class; and, on the other, by their difference according to a traditional professional hierarchy, between master and student. As a princess, Louise was not comparable to a normal sculpture student who learned in the master's studio, starting with basic, laborious tasks until being good enough to provide the master with more creative assistance. Therefore, as a teacher of royalty, Thornycroft had to carefully plan her lessons, concentrate on her student and respect her superior status. In fact, teaching an amateur was not necessarily a desirable position for a professional artist as it could take up large amounts of time and effort, while the tutor's own work, through which public recognition was gained, had to suffer. Thornycroft's motivation for teaching Louise is not documented. Despite the side effect of some extra earnings, it is possible that she felt obliged to teach the princess in order to secure future royal commissions for sculpture. On the other hand, it is also feasible that she considered it an honour to pass her knowledge on to the next generation of the royal family and thereby help to promote sculpture, which she and her husband considered 'not sufficiently "patronised" in England'

since the death of Prince Albert.<sup>387</sup> Furthermore, it is likely that Thornycroft thought a sculpting princess a useful example for the wider recognition of female sculptors, especially since her own daughters were also endeavouring to pursue artistic careers.<sup>388</sup>

After Louise began modelling in the summer of 1863, making a 'little statuette' as a birthday present for her brother Bertie,<sup>389</sup> her first surviving work is the marble bust of *Princess Beatrice* (1864), which depicts Louise's youngest sibling at the age of nearly seven. The portrayal of family members was often the most accessible way for female amateurs to find a life model, but in this case it is also likely that the bust of Beatrice was considered a desirable subject as it filled a gap in the series of busts of the royal children which had been started by Thornycroft in the late 1840s. As there was, so far, only a full-size statue of Beatrice,<sup>390</sup> it is likely that Victoria, who suggested the motif, asked Louise to model her little sister in her next sculpture project. Following Thornycroft's instructions, Louise probably started with a pencil drawing of her sister's profile and took her measurements, which served as the basic outline for the bust. A similar preparatory procedure for a bust of Princess Alice is documented in an undated pencil drawing by Thornycroft, which shows, on the recto, an outline of Alice's profile, and, on the verso, the accompanying measurements of the head [fig. 2.8].

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<sup>387</sup> On 18 April 1873 the poet and family friend of the Thornycrofts Alfred Domett records in his diary that Thomas Thornycroft feared that Prince Albert's attempt 'to instill a love of sculpture into the British Public [...] had been all in vain.' Published in Horsman (1953), p. 81; On 21 March 1877 Domett notes that 'Mrs. T., perhaps of course, thought Sculpture not sufficiently 'patronised' in England.' Ibid., p. 185.

<sup>388</sup> For more on the artistic careers of Mary Thornycroft's daughters, see McCracken (1996/7), pp. 5-7; Manning (1982), p. 47.

<sup>389</sup> From the Prince of Wales's letter on 10 November 1863 it appears that Louise had modelled a small statuette for her brother as a birthday present. 'I must also thank you very much for the very pretty carpet you have worked for me, wh. Does your workmanship the greatest credit. The little statuette is really admirably modelled, & I strongly advise you to continue taking lessons with Mrs Thornycroft, as you have great talent in modelling, & may perhaps become some day an eminent sculptoress.' RA/VIC/ADDL/MSS/A/17/88, Prince of Wales to Princess Louise, 10 November 1863.

<sup>390</sup> This is Mary Thornycroft's marble statue *Princess Beatrice in the Nautilus Shell* (1858).

Louise's finished clay model was considered by the Queen as 'a lovely & very like bust'<sup>391</sup> and resulted in her commissioning Thornycroft with two sets of plaster casts and a version in marble.<sup>392</sup> The surviving marble bust depicts Beatrice with long curly hair, held together by a ribbon, and wearing a contemporary dress with a simple neckline [fig. 2.9]. Set on a simple turned socle, Beatrice's head is tilted slightly to the right and gently animated by the contrasting textures of the hair and the smooth features, not unlike Thornycroft's earlier bust of Louise's eldest sister Vicky (1846) [fig. 2.10]. In fact, as Louise's work was modelled under Thornycroft's guidance and subsequently carved by Thornycroft or her assistants in marble, it is difficult to distinguish Louise's hand from that of her teacher. The evident identification of the princess's authorship derives from the proud inscription of her name in capital letters on the reverse of the bust as 'HRH PSS LOUISE SC 1864 [crown]'. However, the ambiguity of not being able to clearly distinguish between the input of Louise and Thornycroft indicates that between the two the traditional roles of pupil and master were loosened and more collaborate, rather than hierarchical. According to the usual practice at a sculptor's studio, the master would produce the clay model to be passed on to an assistant or student who would produce a plaster cast or carve the work in marble. This would be done in accordance with the studio style of the master under whose name the final work would appear. Indeed, Thornycroft's own studio practice was to model a portrait in clay and pass it on to assistants or, sometimes, to a member of her artist family to execute it in plaster or marble.<sup>393</sup> In the royal context, however, Louise, as the pupil, produced the model under her

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<sup>391</sup> 'I send you the Photograph of a lovely & very like bust Louise has done of dear Baby.' RA/VIC/ADDU32, Queen Victoria to Vicky, 26 May 1864.

<sup>392</sup> See invoice from Thornycroft to the Keeper of Her Majesty's Privy Purse, dated 8 December 1864: RA/PPTO/PP/QV/PP2/88/7924.

<sup>393</sup> See McCracken (1996/7), p. 4; Manning (1982), pp. 30, 47

master's supervision, while Thornycroft was the agent for executing it in plaster and marble. Clearly, in this arrangement, the difference in social status took precedence over the professional hierarchy. For both, however, the joint challenge would have been to please the Queen who paid for Louise's sculpture training and could decide whether the result was successful and to be executed in marble. Therefore, the fact that Louise's marble bust of Beatrice fitted stylistically into Thornycroft's series of portraits of the royal children served as a guarantor of royal approval and secured Thornycroft the continuous patronage as a teacher and sculptor to the royal family. Although it might have appeared beneath Thornycroft's standard as a professional sculptor to be asked to carve her student's work in marble and to sign it with Louise's name, at least from a financial point of view, the royal commission for a copy in marble would have been comparatively lucrative. While the production of a plaster cast earned Thornycroft three pounds and three shillings, she received fifty pounds for the execution in marble, which would have left her with a larger profit than making some plaster casts, despite the high cost of marble and elaborate work process of carving.<sup>394</sup>

Another example, more appropriate to assess Louise's own modelling ability as a sculpture student during her early career, is a half-life-size plaster statuette, entitled *Resignation*, which Louise gave to her mother as a Christmas present in 1865 [fig. 2.11].<sup>395</sup> The statuette depicts a veiled female figure standing calmly in a classical pose and clasping her hands under a bunch of drapery. The general figure composition was clearly inspired by Thornycroft's statue, mentioned earlier, of *Princess Louise as Plenty* (1856) [fig. 2.5]. Being closely

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<sup>394</sup> RA/PPTO/PP/QV/PP2/88/7924, 8 December 1864, paid invoice from Mary Thornycroft to the Keeper of Her Majesty's Privy Purse.

<sup>395</sup> *Catalogue of the Principal Paintings, Sculptures* (1876), p. 115, no. 308.

familiar with Thornycroft's model, Louise seems to have tried to learn from her teacher's example by deriving particular details in her statuette from the composition of *Princess Louise as Plenty*. For example, the dress folds in *Resignation*, although less animated in detail, seem to render the naturally flowing folds of Thornycroft's example. [figs. 2.12, 2.13]. Also, in the rendering of the dress's left strap gliding off the shoulder, despite the rather crude modelling, Louise clearly tried to emulate the loose and natural appearance of Thornycroft's work [figs. 2.14, 2.15]. Although the slightly inaccurate proportions of Louise's figure reveal a lack of experience in anatomical studies, its artistic conception clearly attests to Louise's ambition to tackle ideal full-size statuary. In addition, the cheerless allegorical theme of *Resignation* seems to reflect Louise's personal feelings towards the persisting mourning culture at court during in the mid-1860s. In a similar way to her suggestive drawings from shortly after Albert's death, the veiled statuette with her clasped hands suggests a strong feeling of melancholy. This time, however, there is no sign of hope for reconciliation as in the spiritual visions of the earlier drawings. Instead, *Resignation* appears like Louise's statement of accepting the status quo of her family situation while retreating into her sculptural career. By seemingly linking the figure's subject matter to her private mental disposition it appears that Louise deliberately made her work appear autobiographical, possibly in the hope to render it more acceptable with her family. However, the Queen's diary entry for Christmas Eve of 1865 does not mention her daughter's purposeful present but conveys indirectly its sad message of the painful nostalgia for past Christmases when Albert was still alive: 'The dear Children had again done, worked, & given me many pretty things, but heavy, sad

& dull was my poor heart, when I thought of my beloved one, his gifts, & all the blessed happiness of former days, never to return!’<sup>396</sup>

### **Learning to carve**

Beyond the figure of *Resignation*, Louise made two further portrait busts under Thornycroft’s tutelage, both of which were commissioned in marble and exhibited at the Royal Academy. These were the bust of *Prince Arthur* (modelled 1867, carved 1868) [fig. 2.16], depicting Louise’s younger brother in uniform of a cadet of the Royal Military Academy Woolwich, and an untraced bust of *Queen Victoria* (modelled 1868, carved 1869). The surviving documents relating to both works allow us to gain an insight into the practice of Louise’s sculpture training and the way in which this led to her participation at the prestigious Royal Academy in 1868 and 1869, respectively.

Several invoices from Thornycroft to the Queen’s Privy Purse between May 1867 and May 1869 are revealing in terms of the process of the busts’ development and indicate Thornycroft’s aim of providing Louise with substantial training in portraiture despite her considerable effort of making the lessons possible. Depending on the royal family’s respective residency, Louise’s lessons took place sporadically and required significant organisation. For example, in April 1868, Thornycroft made ‘eight journeys to Windsor’ to give Louise lessons.<sup>397</sup> On another occasion, she organised work material and tools to be sent

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<sup>396</sup> ‘The tables were arranged as the 3 preceding years. The dear Children had again done, worked, & given me many pretty things, but heavy, sad & dull was my poor heart, when I thought of my beloved one, his gifts, & all the blessed happiness of former days, never to return! I gave the Children, jewellery, ornaments, books, dresses, furs, &c & they seemed much pleased with their things. Remained downstairs an hour, & then went back sadly up to my room.’ QVJ, 24 December 1865. [www.queenvictoriasjournals.org](http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org) [accessed: 10 May 2013].

<sup>397</sup> In July 1868, Thornycroft charged for ‘travelling expenses & time’ for ‘eight journeys to Windsor in April’ when the Queen was sitting for her portrait bust modelled by Louise at the time. RA/PPTO/PP/QV/PP2/123/14451.

to Louise at Osborne,<sup>398</sup> and had the princess's finished clay models later fetched, to be moulded, cast and carved in London.<sup>399</sup> Thornycroft's effort in enabling Louise's training was, however, also reciprocated by Louise who, in order to progress with her training, came 'often on foot to her [Thornycroft's] studio from Marlborough House for her 'lessons.'<sup>400</sup> The variable training appointments, either at the royal residences or at Thornycroft's studio at Wilton Place, located near Marlborough House, the home of Louise's brother Bertie, suggests that the location of Louise's lessons was contingent on the work stage of her respective project. While portrait sittings with family members would have certainly taken place at the royal palaces, it is likely that tutorials beyond the modelling process took place at Thornycroft's studio. Although Louise had her own rooms at Osborne and Windsor, where she could draw, paint and work at a clay model,<sup>401</sup> for the more laborious work processes, such as making plaster casts and carving marble, it was necessary to have a large professional studio with specialised mechanical tools.

Having organised, according to an invoice by Thornycroft of July 1868, precisely 'carving tools & hammer for H.R.H. Princess Louise',<sup>402</sup> it appears that Thornycroft endeavoured to teach her student the carving process for which these

<sup>398</sup> In May 1867, Thornycroft invoiced for a 'box of clay sent to Osborne for H.R.H. Princess Louise' who was then modelling the bust of *Prince Arthur*. RA/PPTO/PP/QV/PP2/111/12350.

In January 1868, Thornycroft sent 'modelling clay, tools etc.' to Louise. RA/PPTO/PP/QV/PP2/121/14071.

In July 1868, Thornycroft charged for 'carving tools & hammer for H.R.H. Princess Louise.' She also organised 'kilts [?] for H.R.H. Princess Louise', possibly referring to working clothes, and sent two further boxes of clay to Osborne. RA/PPTO/PP/QV/PP2/123/14451.

<sup>399</sup> In May 1867, Thornycroft invoiced for a 'man's journey to Osborne travelling expenses & time for fetching clay model of bust of Prince Arthur by H.R.H. Princess Louise. The following invoice listing was for 'casting & moulding [the] bust of H.R.H. Prince Arthur' and for '3 casts of [the] bust of H.R.H. Prince Arthur' RA/PPTO/PP/QV/PP2/111/12350.

In July 1868, Thornycroft invoiced for a 'man's time travelling expenses, in moulding the bust of H.R.H. The Queen by H.R.H. Princess Louise,' and for '1 cast of [the] bust of HM the Queen sent to Osborne.' RA/PPTO/PP/QV/PP2/123/14451.

<sup>400</sup> Alfred Domett's diary, 8 May 1874, quoted after Horsman (1953), p. 124.

<sup>401</sup> Louise's own studio at Osborne is recorded in around 1864. According to Louise's biographer Jehanne Wake, 'it was here that [...] Princess Louise showed them [some acquaintances] who had expressed an interest in seeing her studio: 'begging us to excuse a room in a mess', Princess Louise showed them her bust of Princess Beatrice 'life size and not only a perfect likeness but very graceful and pretty in expression', recorded one of the party. Over the mantelpiece in her studio, Princess Louise had a copy of her favourite picture, Leonardo's 'Last Supper', as well as photographs of other Italian masterpieces.' Wake (1988), p. 91. As a source Wake refers to *Catherine Paget's diary*, 23 January 1858 [this date, however, cannot be correct as the bust of Princess Beatrice was made in 1864].

<sup>402</sup> RA/PPTO/PP/QV/PP2/123/14451.



tools were necessary. While the transfer of the exact measurements of the plaster model onto the rough marble block was usually undertaken by a mechanical pointing machine with ‘as many as eight points in every square inch’,<sup>403</sup> the remaining struts between the drill-holes, after the mechanical groundwork of pointing, had to be cut away with the hammer and chisel before the marble was polished and finished, also done by hand. Although Thornycroft told a family friend that she considered it ‘affectation in a sculptor, working at or ‘touching’ the marble himself’,<sup>404</sup> the meticulous execution of her sculptural work suggests that she was a skilled carver who paid close attention to the finish of marble surfaces.<sup>405</sup> Her pretended resentment of working the marble herself can be seen as a trope, which she emphasised to others in order to appear part of an established sculptural practice exemplified by celebrated predecessors such as Canova and Flaxman, who relegated the carving of their statues to assistants and only applied the finishing touches.<sup>406</sup>

In this context it seems all the more surprising that Thornycroft taught Louise how to carve in marble despite her student’s social rank which would oppose the practice of strenuous labour. By defying the traditional convention according to which carving was not deemed appropriate for a sculptor of renown, and by underscoring, instead, the importance of learning in practice how to manufacture a perfect marble finish, Thornycroft exhibited an earnest appreciation of her royal student as a serious sculptor for whom it was worth training beyond the initial stage of clay modelling. Regardless of whether Louise would later work

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<sup>403</sup> Diary note of Alfred Domett after a conversation with Thornycroft on 21 March 1877, published in Horsman (1953), p. 185.

<sup>404</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>405</sup> See Manning (1982), p. 37; Darling-Glinski (2004), pp. 65-66.

<sup>406</sup> For more on Canova’s studio practice and a discussion of his actual involvement in the sculptural process, see Hugh Honour, ‘Canova’s Studio Practice-I: The early Years’, *Burlington Magazine* 114, no. 828 (March 1972), pp. 146-59; For Flaxman, see Ingrid Roscoe, Emma Hardy and M. G. Sullivan, *A Biographical Dictionary of Sculptors in Britain 1660-1851* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), p. 444.

with assistants, through her practical training she learned to understand the full process of marble carving which gave her the experience of a professional.

Although Thornycroft fully charged the Queen's Privy Purse for the execution of both busts of *Prince Arthur* and *Queen Victoria*,<sup>407</sup> it is likely that Louise at least contributed to the carving of her mother's bust, which was described by the President of the Royal Academy as having been 'executed, and as I understand chiselled, by her [Louise's] own hand.'<sup>408</sup> However, Thornycroft would have certainly supervised and helped with the process of carving and finishing in order to meet the deadline for submission to the Royal Academy's summer exhibition. While Louise had still been busy with alterations to the clay model on 2 April 1869,<sup>409</sup> the marble had to be finished by the end of the month in order to meet the deadline for the Academy's opening on 1 May 1869.

### **Public exhibition and reception at the Royal Academy**

Louise's first exhibition at the Royal Academy in 1868, when she showed her bust of *Prince Arthur*, famously coincided with the institution's hundredth anniversary and was probably deemed an appropriate occasion for her exhibition debut as a royal. Also in the following year, the event of Louise's second exhibition was no less significant. This time, the Academy celebrated its inaugural exhibition at its new location at Burlington House,<sup>410</sup> which Louise marked appropriately with her bust of the Queen.

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<sup>407</sup> While the marble bust of *Prince Arthur* cost forty-seven pounds and fifty shillings, Thornycroft charged for the *Queen Victoria* bust seventy-five pounds. The higher price of the Queen's bust suggests that it was more challenging and elaborate than the bust of *Prince Arthur*. The price of the bust of *Prince Arthur* is documented in an invoice of 6 May 1868: RA/PPTO/PP/QV/PP2/121/14071; the price of the bust of *Queen Victoria* is documented in invoice of 14 May 1869: RA/PPTO/PP/QV/PP2/130/15870.

<sup>408</sup> Anon., 'Banquet at the Royal Academy', *The Times* (3 May 1869), p. 7.

<sup>409</sup> On 2 April 1869, Queen Victoria recorded in her diary having 'sat to Louise for her bust.' QVJ, 2 April 1869, [www.queenvictoriasjournals.org](http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org) [accessed: 10 May 2013].

<sup>410</sup> For more on the Royal Academy's move from Trafalgar Square to Burlington House, see James Fenton, *School of Genius, A History of the Royal Academy of Arts* (London: Royal Academy Publications, 2006), pp. 189-211.

Since the Royal Academy's foundation in 1768 by King George III, the relationship between the famous art institution and the Monarchy was supposed to benefit both establishments. Royal endorsement provided the Academy with prestige and lucrative social capital while the royal family derived confirmation of their position as cultural leaders in society.<sup>411</sup> Louise's participation at the Academy's annual exhibition in the year of its hundredth anniversary added a new dimension of royal involvement. Apart from affirming the royal family's ties with the Academy, Louise's exhibition focused public attention on the medium of sculpture and on female practitioners in particular. Considering that Thornycroft, as Louise's teacher, had a marked interest in promoting the public recognition of female sculptors,<sup>412</sup> it is likely that she encouraged her royal student to exhibit at the Academy in order to gain professional experience and become a prominent example for the presence of female practitioners at the male-dominated institution.<sup>413</sup>

In both 1868 and 1869 Louise's busts were displayed in the Sculpture Gallery of the Royal Academy, alongside other portraits of the royal family by professional artists.<sup>414</sup> Yet, due to her royal status, Louise was nonetheless treated under different standards than her fellow exhibitors. Listed in the exhibition catalogue under her first name and before all other artists, Louise gained disproportionate publicity and praise for a young artist. For example, the President of the Royal Academy, Sir Francis Grant (1803–78), praised her bust of *Prince*

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<sup>411</sup> Holger Hoock, *The King's Artists: The Royal Academy of Arts and the Politics of British Culture 1760-1840* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003), pp. 136-37.

<sup>412</sup> Thornycroft's daughters Alyce and Helen, for example, exhibited frequently sculptures and paintings at the Royal Academy since 1864. See Algernon Graves, *The Royal Academy of Arts*, vol. 4 (S. R. Publishers and Kingsmead Reprints: 1970), p. 383; Both girls were also the first female students joining the Royal Academy's School of Sculpture in May 1863 and January 1868, respectively. See Charlotte Yeldham, *Women Artists in Nineteenth-Century France and England*, vol. I (New York and London: Garland, 1984), p. 125.

<sup>413</sup> In 1868, for example, the number of female sculptors exhibiting at the Royal Academy was twelve in comparison to around hundred-fifteen male sculptors. See *The Exhibition of the Royal Academy of Arts* (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1868), pp. 43-54.

<sup>414</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 931 on pp. 43, 60; *The Exhibition of the Royal Academy of Arts* (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1869), no. 1142 on pp. 53, 68.

*Arthur* as ‘a work of infinite talent, an admirable likeness, and a production full of refinement and taste.’<sup>415</sup> Moreover, in his published speech at the Academy’s opening banquet in 1869, he went so far as to make an obviously cajoling accolade on Louise’s bust of *Queen Victoria*:

Her Majesty has ever manifested a warm interest in the prosperity of the Arts, of which she has on this occasion given a substantial proof by permitting her accomplished daughter, her Royal Highness Princess Louise, to send to the Exhibition a marble bust (cheers), executed, and as I understand chiselled, by her own hand (cheers), a faithful likeness of her royal mother. It is a work full of truth and genius. (Cheers) Art without truth, or truth without art, is of small value, but the Princess has produced a likeness of our beloved Queen in which truth is happily combined with art and taste (cheers) [...].<sup>416</sup>

By exaggerating his praise of the bust of the Queen as a work of ‘truth and genius’, Grant clearly revealed his strategically biased view of Louise as an artist. His description of her as an ‘accomplished daughter’ who was ‘permitted’ by the Queen to take part in the Academy’s exhibition emphasised Louise’s special status as a female royal amateur in contrast to artists with a professional background.

The biased stance towards Louise as a public sculptor was also reflected in press reviews of the Royal Academy exhibitions in 1868 and 1869, where Louise’s royal status formed the main focus before any actual remarks about her work. For example, the *Athenaeum* begins its exhibition review of 1868 by mentioning that, ‘a royal artist heads the list, Princess Louise, who sends a

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<sup>415</sup> Quoted in Anon., ‘Royal Patronage of the Fine Arts’, *The Times* (11 May 1868), p. 10.

<sup>416</sup> Anon. ‘Banquet at the Royal Academy’, *The Times* (3 May 1869), p. 7.

sculptured portrait of Prince Arthur.’<sup>417</sup> Similarly, the *Art Journal*, before mentioning any other sculptural work, praises Louise’s bust of Arthur as ‘a work of merit and much good promise’, concluding that ‘it is gratifying to find the young princess among the artists.’<sup>418</sup> In 1869, the *Art Journal* again, chimes with Grant’s flattery by calling Louise’s bust of the Queen ‘an excellent and agreeable likeness’.<sup>419</sup> Less specialised popular periodicals only increased the exaggerated tone of royal courtesy. The *New Sporting Magazine* calls Louise ‘a sculptress of the noblest birth, a Princess of the blood Royal’,<sup>420</sup> and describes her work as ‘from the graceful hand of the daughter of England.’<sup>421</sup> Louise’s status as a royal amateur was also pronounced in *The Saturday Review*, stating that ‘Royalty claims the first word. It would be an easy task to salute the bust of her Majesty with a few phrases of general politeness or flattering epithet. But we shall not pay H.R.H. Princess Louise the poor compliment of treating her *en amateur* [...]’.<sup>422</sup> However, precisely by insisting that Louise should not be considered ‘*en amateur*’, the comment emphasised just that, thus positioning her apart from artists with professional status.

The distinct treatment of Louise as a sculptor was not overlooked by the public and provoked sneering commentary in private. For example, the two sisters, Ellen and Emily Hall, who visited the Royal Academy exhibition in 1869, recorded in their diary:

Her Royal Highness should have sent it in the name of one of the people, as the poor Princess Marie of Orleans did her works to the French Exhibition; then the real truth would have been known [...] at

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<sup>417</sup> Anon., ‘Fine Arts: Royal Academy’, *Athenaeum* (2 May 1868), p. 631.

<sup>418</sup> Anon., ‘Royal Academy: Sculpture’, *Art Journal* (June 1868), pp. 109-10.

<sup>419</sup> Anon., ‘The Royal Academy’, *Art Journal* (July 1869), p. 204.

<sup>420</sup> Anon., ‘The Royal Academy’, *New Sporting Magazine* (June 1869), p. 462.

<sup>421</sup> Anon., ‘The Art Season of 1869’, *The British Quarterly Review* (July 1869), p. 256.

<sup>422</sup> Anon., ‘Sculpture in the Royal Academy’, *The Saturday Review* (29 May 1869), p. 709.

present the work is judged of as the Princess's and the President of the R.A. can talk such rubbish and flunkeyism as to say 'Art has been honoured by her Royal Highness's work'.<sup>423</sup>

To the two commentators it was clear that Louise was unduly favoured due to her social status. As they suggest, it is very likely that the public reception of Louise's work, if exhibited anonymously rather than under her royal name, would have turned out more realistically. The fact, however, that Louise hazarded both public flattery and private taunts suggests that, for her, the main objective of participating at the Royal Academy exhibition was less to gain sincere criticism than to promote the royal family's public reputation as advocates of female sculptors in patronage and practice.

This idea seems further confirmed as the busts of *Prince Arthur* and *Queen Victoria* were both gifted to public institutions to be permanently exhibited. Prince Arthur's bust was given to the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich to commemorate the prince's recently concluded training there as a gentleman cadet.<sup>424</sup> The bust of the Queen, meanwhile, was made a gift to the Royal Academy, possibly as a visual complement to a marble bust of *George III* (1773), the founder of the Royal Academy and the only other monarch represented at the Academy in form of a bust.<sup>425</sup> After the summer exhibition of 1869, it was reported that 'the Queen has graciously presented to the Royal Academy the bust of herself, executed by Her Royal Highness the Princess Louise'.<sup>426</sup> In addition, the press highlighted:

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<sup>423</sup> A. R. Mills, *Two Victorian Ladies: More Pages from the Journals of Emily and Ellen Hall* (London: Frederick Muller, 1969), p. 200.

<sup>424</sup> The bust is today on display at the National Army Museum in London (NAM. 1951-01-1-1).

<sup>425</sup> Agosto Carlini, RA, *Bust of George III, 1773*, marble, 81 x 60 x 38 cm, Royal Academy of Arts.

<sup>426</sup> Anon., 'Minor Topics of the Month', *Art Journal* (Sept. 1869), p. 289.

The Queen's autograph letter, by which she intimated her intention to present to the Royal Academy her bust, the work of her daughter, the Princess Louise, has, by her Majesty's permission, been deposited in the archives of the Academy. The bust will be placed, we believe, in the chief exhibition room.<sup>427</sup>

Both the act of presenting Louise's bust to the Academy and the preservation of the Queen's written permission for this symbolically reaffirmed the historic ties between the Academy and royalty.<sup>428</sup> Placed, in fact, not in the 'chief exhibition room', but in the entrance hall, the so-called 'Court of Honour', where the bust was recorded in 1872,<sup>429</sup> the portrait of the Queen suggested immanent royal presence upon entering the Academy. At the same time, its visual prominence highlighted Louise's role as the bust's author and as an agent between the two worlds of the monarchy and the Academy. As a testimony of how important Louise considered this association, in 1877 she decided to exchange her earlier bust of the Queen for a new and improved marble portrait of her mother, 'which she believed to be better as a work of art'<sup>430</sup> [fig. 2.17]. A close look at this updated version reveals that, in comparison to her earlier neoclassical works during the 1860s, Louise had developed a more realistic approach to modelling which reflected current trends in British sculpture during the 1870s. The Queen is depicted wearing a contemporary dress and a jewelled tiara from which a fine veil falls over the shoulders and is loosely tied under the left side of the prominent torso. The head is sharply turned to the right and the Queen looks

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<sup>427</sup> Anon., 'Our weekly Gossip', *Athenaeum* (18 Sept. 1869), p. 373.

<sup>428</sup> Queen Victoria's autograph note of 15 July 1869 is preserved at the Royal Academy Archive: RAA/SEC/3/11/1.

<sup>429</sup> Anon., 'The Royal Academy: Sculpture', *Art Journal* (August 1872), p. 202.

<sup>430</sup> 'A short time previous to the opening of the Summer Exhibition a communication was received by the President from H.R.H. The Princess Louise, saying that she desired to replace the bust of The Queen, given by Her Majesty to the Royal Academy in 1869, by another bust of Her Majesty which she had recently completed, and which she believed to be better as a work of art...' *Annual Report from the Council of The Royal Academy to the General Assembly of Academicians for the Year 1877* (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1878), p. 7.

serenely upwards. Her features are finely accentuated with soft shadows and delicate modulation of the flesh. The elaborate lace ruffles around the straight neckline are intricately carved with deep drills suggesting the lightness of the material. Placed on a tapering square socle, overlapped by the ends of the veil, the bust articulates sovereignty and solidity, enlivened through the precise rendering of contemporary adornment. For example, the serrated tiara with geometrically shaped jewels was based on the sapphire and diamond tiara designed by Albert in 1842, which Victoria continued to wear on important occasions even after Albert's death.<sup>431</sup> The fact that Louise depicted her mother with this tiara, rather than her signature small diamond crown of 1870, which the Queen is wearing in many other portraits of the time, might have been a deliberate homage to Albert's interest in the promotion of the arts. Along with Victoria's conspicuous upward gaze, the iconography indicates the royal family's intent to remember and continue Albert's legacy.

The realist approach apparent in Louise's bust of *Queen Victoria* of 1877 was owed to the influence of Boehm who succeeded Thornycroft as Louise's sculpture teacher in 1869. Having studied under Thornycroft for nearly six years, it is conceivable that Louise wished to reinvigorate her work by continuing with a new tutor. Already in January 1866 she had seized the opportunity of additional modelling lessons with the sculptor Susan Durant who was then working on a series of family portraits for the Albert Memorial Chapel. As an admirer of Durant's ability in modelling attractive portrait medallions,<sup>432</sup> Louise used the

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<sup>431</sup> This tiara, referred to by Victoria as a 'coronet,' was small enough to be comfortably worn on state occasions before the commissioning of the famous small diamond crown of 1870. After Albert's death, Victoria wore the sapphire and diamond tiara at the opening of parliament on 6 February 1866. It is also depicted in a portrait of the Queen of 1874, painted by Henry Richard Graves. See Geoffrey Munn, *Tiaras: Past and Present* (London: V&A Publications, 2002), cat. nos. 33, 34, pp. 48-49.

<sup>432</sup> According to Durant's friend Emma Wallis, who accompanied her on her royal commission at Osborne, Louise and her sisters paid great compliments to Durant by telling her, "you make us look like ladies, while our photographs are common indeed." Furthermore, Wallis records that the princesses 'are charmed with S.D.'s [Susan Durant's] profusion of beautiful



opportunity of the sculptor's stay at Osborne to develop her own expertise in relief sculpture and modelled, under her supervision, a portrait (untraced today) of the Queen's lady-in-waiting, Jane Churchill.<sup>433</sup> It is likely that Louise's ambitions in exploring different sculptural avenues were also endorsed by Thornycroft, with whom the princess maintained a close relationship even beyond her training.<sup>434</sup> Of Boehm, Thornycroft seemed to approve, as she recognised his 'realistic' approach as a sculptor.<sup>435</sup> Besides, as an indicator of both artists' mutual appreciation, Boehm owned a plaster cast of Thornycroft's hand, which he kept at his studio.<sup>436</sup>

## 2.2. Sculptural diversity and public ambition during the 1870s

Louise's practice of, and engagement with, sculpture during the 1870s was characterised by the increasing diversity, inventiveness and public exposure of her art and her persona as a royal sculptor. During this period, Louise's artistic development was informed by her involvement with a progressive art scene which she encountered through private and public sculpture projects, extended social networks and particular exhibition strategies. An important event in Louise's life was her marriage to the Marquis of Lorne, eldest son of the Duke of Argyll, on 21 March 1871. Yet, marriage did not restrict her artistic freedom, as was often the

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hair, & admire her simple arrangement of it. She tells them how to wear theirs, & expresses her disapproval of their wearing nets!' RA/VIC/ADD/MSS/X/2/211, Journal of Susan E.B. Wallis, 28 Dec. 1865.

<sup>433</sup> In her diary, Durant's friend Emma Wallis, who accompanied Durant to Osborne, recorded that Louise took sculpture lessons with Durant. '[...] the Princess Louise who has a very nice appreciation of art & draws & models, is to do something under Miss Durant's attention by the Queen's wish. She wishes to do her sister Helena – but next day she sent in the opposite time to say the Queen wished her to take Lady Churchill - & she announced (now a week ago / & has done a very nice model of her indeed. She had one of Susan's rooms arranged with Easel & sitting Chair, & as I saw the [progress?] & also saw her & Lady Churchill driving or riding together I saw the likeness was very perfect - & the modelling very good.' RA/VIC/ADD/MSS/X/2/211, Journal of Susan E.B. Wallis, 11 January 1866.

<sup>434</sup> For example, Louise invited Thornycroft to her wedding in 1871. See McCracken (1996/7), p. 6.

<sup>435</sup> Diary record of Alfred Domett on 21 March 1877, in Horsman (1953), p. 184.

<sup>436</sup> The cast of Thornycroft's hand forms part of a collection of twenty-four plaster casts of hands acquired by the Victoria and Albert Museum from the estate of Boehm's studio in 1892. See Diane Bilbey with Marjorie Trusted, *British Sculpture 1470 to 2000. A Concise Catalogue of the Collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London: V & A Publications, 2002), pp. 218-19, cat. no. 331.

case for female artists.<sup>437</sup> Instead, it increased her independence as she became released from some of her previous court duties and was not constrained by the duties of a mother since she had no children.<sup>438</sup> Lorne, as Louise called her husband, was well-travelled, interested in art and literature, and had grown up at his London residence at Holland Park within an artistic circle of friends associated with Aestheticism.<sup>439</sup> During the first decade of their marriage, Louise and Lorne shared numerous social and cultural interests. However, from the 1880s onwards, increasingly they grew apart, probably due to Lorne's alleged homosexuality, which caused them to live separate lives, yet in mutual respect, without getting divorced.<sup>440</sup>

In this section, I firstly consider the artistic and social impact of Louise's sculpture training during the early 1870s. I look at Louise's private sculpture training with Boehm. In the Boehm scholarship and Louise's biographies their artistic relationship has so far been overshadowed by their alleged affair which is said to have continued until, even produced, Boehm's death in 1890.<sup>441</sup> However, instead of repeating the details of their private relationship, I examine Boehm's artistic influence on Louise's sculptural work. From the early 1870s he introduced her to new materials and a more realist and versatile approach to sculpture which, in turn, was reflected in a widened repertoire of Louise's oeuvre. I exemplify this influence by analysing three different works by Louise made when Boehm was her teacher. Apart from her private training, from 1875 onwards, Louise also took lessons at the renowned National Art Training School in South Kensington where

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<sup>437</sup> Shannon Hunter Hurtado, *Genteel Mavericks: Professional Women Sculptors in Victorian Britain* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2012), pp. 94-113.

<sup>438</sup> Wake (1988), p. 167.

<sup>439</sup> For the London residence of Lorne's family and their social circle, see Dakers (1999), pp. 77-78.

<sup>440</sup> See Wake (1988), pp. 268, 271-73, 287, 321.

<sup>441</sup> For more on Louise's affair with Boehm and the rumours around his death while being with Louise, see Stocker (1986), pp. 27-28, 41-44; Wake (1988), pp. 294-96; Elizabeth Longford, *Darling Loosy: Letters to Princess Louise 1856-1939* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1991), pp. 60-61; Lucinda Hawksley, *The Mystery of Princess Louise: Queen Victoria's Rebellious Daughter* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2013), pp. 237-48.

she gained the opportunity to meet with fellow female artists. By looking at Louise's artistic relationships with other students, I consider the social significance of being at a public art school for her artistic self-confidence and networks. In addition to her public training, from the mid-1870s onwards Louise became an important female figure within the progressive artistic milieu of the Aesthetic Movement. This was particularly apparent at the Grosvenor Gallery where Louise exhibited from 1878. Through the examination of her exhibition works I assess how Louise negotiated her artistic identity as a royal with high social responsibility, and as a female amateur sculptor eager to be recognised as a serious artist.

### **Private training with Boehm**

The idea for Louise to take sculpture lessons with Boehm was prompted by the success of Boehm's first royal commission in early 1869. Originally from Vienna and trained in Paris, Boehm settled in London in 1862 and developed a reputation for his ability in modelling attractive equestrian portrait statuettes.<sup>442</sup> By January 1869, the fashion for Boehm's statuettes had come to the attention of the Queen who summoned the sculptor to Osborne to demonstrate his skills and model, amongst others, a statuette of Louise on horseback.<sup>443</sup> Certainly impressed by Boehm's particular charm, which the Queen described as 'gentlemanlike, clever & excessively modest',<sup>444</sup> it is likely that Louise convinced her mother to ask Boehm if he could give her sculpture lessons in order to further her skills and knowledge of the medium. Boehm's reply to this enquiry was that he felt to

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<sup>442</sup> See Stocker (1988), pp. 15, 79.

<sup>443</sup> QVJ lists twelve entries for Boehm's stay at Osborne between 21 Jan. and 15 Feb. 1869, see <http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org> [accessed: 5 July 2013]; For Victoria's commission of an equestrian statuette of Louise, see QVJ, 21 January 1869, <http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org> [accessed: 5 July 2013].

<sup>444</sup> RA/VIC/ADDU32, Queen Victoria to Vicky, 10 March 1869.

accept Louise as his pupil would ‘not only be an honour for him but a real pleasure’.<sup>445</sup> Pointing out, though, that he had no teaching experience in London and no intention in this direction, Boehm claimed that his change of mind was prompted by his recognition of Louise’s ‘unquestionable talent for sculpting’.<sup>446</sup> While such emphatic appraisal of Louise’s talent certainly contained a touch of flattery intended to give her admission the air of exclusiveness, it is likely that Boehm also counted on further royal commissions from his teaching engagement, just like Thornycroft before him.

Louise’s first lessons with Boehm commenced during the sculptor’s second royal appointment, in the autumn of 1869, when he accompanied the royal family to their Scottish seat at Balmoral to model some statuettes of the Highland Games.<sup>447</sup> After at least two weeks with the royal family,<sup>448</sup> the outcome of Boehm’s lessons to Louise were two half-life-size busts in plaster of Louise’s younger brother *Prince Leopold* [fig. 2.18] and of her German cousin *Amélie of Saxe-Coburg* [fig. 2.19], both of whom were staying at Balmoral at the time.<sup>449</sup>

While the bust of Leopold, depicting the prince in contemporary costume and with a calm and timeless expression, appears stylistically still in line with the neoclassical approach of Louise’s earlier portrait of *Prince Arthur* (1867), the rendering of Amélie’s bust was clearly influenced by Boehm’s recent portrait style with subtle feminine allure. With an evocative baroque hairstyle and a frilled neckline accentuating her bosom with a rose flower, *Amélie* resembled a recent

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<sup>445</sup> ‘[...] nicht nur eine Ehre, sondern auch ein wahres Vergnügen sein.’ Letter from the royal librarian Hermann Sahl, who corresponded with Boehm on the Queen’s behalf, reporting back to Queen Victoria, RA/VIC/ADDT/104, 10 February 1869.

<sup>446</sup> ‘[...] unzweifelhaftes Talent für Sculptur’ See, *ibid.*

<sup>447</sup> On 10 March 1869, the Queen informed Vicky that Boehm ‘is going to come to Balmoral in the Autumn, to do what dear Papa always wished – Statuettes of the Highland Games for me, - wh. I think will be vy. pretty.’ RA/VIC/ADDU32, Queen Victoria to Vicky, 10 March 1869.

<sup>448</sup> Boehm’s stay at Balmoral is recorded in QVJ, 17 September, 2 October 1869, <http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org> [accessed: 5 July 2013].

<sup>449</sup> The visit of Amélie of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha at Balmoral is recorded in QVJ between 2 and 18 October 1869, <http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org> [accessed: 5 July 2013].

bust by Boehm of the *Countess of Cardigan* (1868–69) [fig. 2.20].<sup>450</sup> Yet while Boehm's composition was even more flattering and vigorously modelled, showing the sitter with a sensual upward gaze and deeper décolletage,<sup>451</sup> Louise moderated her portrait of Amélie by representing her with the head turned aside for a more contemplative and respectable expression. As first proofs of her new direction in sculpture, Louise gave both busts from Balmoral to her mother as a Christmas present in 1869. Although not commissioning their translation into marble, Victoria confirmed her appreciation of the gifts by placing them as a pair in one of the most venerated rooms at Osborne, Albert's Dressing and Writing Room, where they were close to, and adorned by, Louise's dead father.<sup>452</sup>

Through her continuous artistic relationship with Boehm, Louise explored new ways of sculptural representation, experimented with new materials and broadened her public exposure in the art world, while also choosing sculptural themes with highly personal relevance. The discussion of three different projects – an equestrian statue in bronze (1871), a self-portrait in terracotta (early 1870s), and a funerary monument in marble (c.1871) – serve to show the variety and ambitions of Louise's work during the early 1870s.

### **The equestrian statue of *Edward, The Black Prince***

The first major work which attests to Boehm's invigorating influence on Louise's work and to her increased confidence as a sculptor is the half-life-size equestrian statue of *Edward, The Black Prince*, exhibited in plaster at the London International Exhibition in 1871.<sup>453</sup> The so-called Black Prince, eldest son of King

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<sup>450</sup> Stocker (1988), pp. 64, 69.

<sup>451</sup> See *Ibid.*, pp. 63-64, images 46-48.

<sup>452</sup> *Catalogue* (1876), nos. 271, 272, on p. 97.

<sup>453</sup> *London International Exhibition of 1871: Official Catalogue: Fine Arts Department*, third revision (London: J. M. Johnson & Sons, 1871), no. 2474, on p. 118; Anon., 'International Exhibition: Sculpture', *Art Journal* (Nov. 1871), p. 267.

Edward III, was a popular chivalric subject in mid-Victorian art and literature. Celebrated in post-Napoleonic historical accounts as a symbol of England's victorious battles against France during the fourteenth century, the Black Prince embodied the Victorian notion of chivalry 'with all the good qualities of a knight', summoned as 'brave yet gentle, skilful yet modest, an affectionate and unvarying friend, a master easily served, a generous adversary, a prince at once dignified and gracious'.<sup>454</sup> As an English royal forbear and alleged male role model, the Black Prince was not only a national symbol, but in Louise's case, a select artistic subject during the time of her search for a husband with ideal masculine qualities comparable to those ascribed to the Black Prince.<sup>455</sup> In fact, while Louise gave the original plaster model of the *Black Prince* to her mother as a birthday present,<sup>456</sup> a subsequent version in bronze went to Inverary, the Scottish family seat of Louise's husband, where it was prominently displayed, then and today, in the entrance hall of the castle as a symbol of the supposedly ideal union between Louise and Lorne [fig. 2.21].<sup>457</sup> In line with the Victorian tale of the Black Prince, the statue depicts the prince in full armour, sitting triumphantly on a charger, ready to draw his sword. Through several royal and heraldic symbols he is quickly identifiable. Over his helmet and fall, he wears a coronet, his tabard is emblazoned with his coat of arms, and the horse's flank trappings are decorated with the ostrich feathers, denoting the prince's title as Prince of Wales. In

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<sup>454</sup> George Payne Rainsford James, *A History of the Life of Edward the Black Prince*, vol. 1 (London: Longman, 1836), p. 494. For more on the importance of chivalry during the Victorian era, see Girouard (1981).

<sup>455</sup> During the selection process of an appropriate husband, Louise made it clear that she had distinct ideas of the masculine qualities her future husband should possess. For example, she pointed out that she found the aesthete Ronald Gower too 'effeminate' to be considered by her. See extract from the *Diary of the Marquess of Lorne*, 16 August 1870, Archive Inverary, Bundle 1066.

<sup>456</sup> On 21 May 1871, Louise explained to her mother-in-law, the Duchess of Argyll that '[i]t is quite true I did make a model of a horse & man wh. is in the exhibitions, it was kept secret as it was for Mama's birthday.' Archive Inverary, Bundle 719.

<sup>457</sup> An engraving in the *Illustrated London News* of 1877 shows the *Black Prince* in situ on the chimneypiece in the Hall of Inverary Castle. See Anon., 'The Fire at Inverary Castle', *Illustrated London News* (27 Oct. 1877), pp. 397-98; After having been placed outdoors during the twentieth century, the statue of the *Black Prince* is today reinstalled at its original site in the Entrance Hall of the castle.

addition, the front trappings bear the mottoes 'Houmout' and 'Ich Dien', as signifiers of the prince's chivalrous virtues of 'valour' and 'modesty'.<sup>458</sup>

For a female amateur sculptor, the heroic, masculine figure of the *Black Prince* was a highly unusual subject, especially since equestrian statuary was traditionally considered to be the domain of male professionals. In preparation for her work, it is likely that Louise studied popular literary descriptions of the Black Prince and would have seen either the original tomb effigy at Canterbury Cathedral or its plaster replica at the Crystal Palace at Sydenham. Her most evident source, however, was a small equestrian bronze replica of *Edward, The Black Prince* (c.1861) designed by Carlo Marochetti (1805–67), which Victoria had bought for the royal collection in 1868 [fig. 2.22].<sup>459</sup> There are several points of comparison between the two works to suggest that Louise had Marochetti's interpretation in mind when she devised her own composition. The similar solemn pose of the prince and the horse and the detailed rendering of the knight's armour all suggest Marochetti's work as a model for Louise. Yet, while imitating some aspects, Louise was also including deliberate differences in her interpretation. Apart from reversing the direction of the prince's gaze to the left rather than to the right, she altered the action of the prince's right arm, here ready to draw the sword, whereas in Marochetti's work he holds the sword aloft. As was often the practice for any sculptors who modelled a well-known subject, Louise was reflecting on and reconsidering, rather than copying, the composition of her model in mind, probably with the purpose of improving on or rivalling it. In fact, the original purpose of Marochetti's design suggests an identification of Louise's interest in this model. Originally conceived in 1848, Marochetti's statue design

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<sup>458</sup> The exact meaning and origin of the word 'Houmout' were, however, subject to speculation during the mid-Victorian period. See George Payne Rainsford James, *A History of the Life of Edward the Black Prince*, vol. 2 (London: Longman, 1836), p. 491.

<sup>459</sup> See <http://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/2121/edward-the-black-prince> [accessed: 13 March 2013].

formed part of a sculptural programme envisaged by Prince Albert for the outside of the new Houses of Parliament where the *Black Prince* was to form a pendant to a similar equestrian statue of *Richard Coeur de Lion* (1856), also by Marochetti. However, while the latter was executed and installed in 1860, the commission for the *Black Prince* failed to materialise after Albert's death in the following year.<sup>460</sup> It is therefore not impossible that Louise intended her statue of the *Black Prince* not only as a reference to her father's unachieved project, but sought to revive the idea of a pendant equestrian monument for the Houses of Parliament, possibly with herself as the sculptor. The scale of her half-life-size statue suggests that Louise considered her work not as a decorative statue for private use but instead as a serious sculpture model which suggested, in its preliminary state, the effect of a life-size monument. Although there are no official documents to suggest a royal initiative regarding the revival of Albert's original sculpture programme, Louise evidently pursued public recognition for her *Black Prince*. Shown, as mentioned above, at the London International Exhibition in 1871, the statue received compliments in the *Art Journal* for its accuracy in historical costume and successful conception as 'beautiful in character and in execution worthy of all praise.'<sup>461</sup>

### **Self-portrait bust in terracotta**

The second work which attests to Louise's increasing artistic confidence during the early 1870s is a self-portrait bust in terracotta, an intimate reflection of her artistic personality [fig. 2.23]. Set on a simple wooden plinth, the bust depicts Louise wearing an open-neck dress with fur-lined drapery around her shoulders

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<sup>460</sup> For more on the background of the failure of Prince Albert's project see John Harrison, 'The Prince, the Baron and the 'Black Prince'', *The British Art Journal* V, no. 2 (autumn 2004), pp. 62-68.

<sup>461</sup> Anon., 'International Exhibition: Sculpture', *Art Journal* (Nov. 1871), p. 267.



and looking out to the left with a serene but contemplative expression. Her straight posture and the fine detail of her dress provide a sense of formality, indicating Louise's royal status. Yet, the overall simplicity of the composition without any further jewellery accessories focuses the attention on the delicate expression of her face. The long neck and smooth features give Louise a sense of pride and dignity, whereas the closed lips and pierced eyes suggest a high degree of sensitivity, inspired with an air of melancholy. While the bust appears, on the one hand, timeless and regal, its subtle, realistic modelling provides it with an engaging immediacy, which seems to hint at the tensions of Louise's personal situation, being caught between the expectation of royal appearance and her wish for individual self-determination. The underlying sense of fragility is also imbued in the choice of terracotta as material for the bust. While portraits, especially of royalty, were usually carved in marble as a sign of the sitter's constancy and timelessness, the delicate material of terracotta was more common in France and Italy.<sup>462</sup> It is therefore likely that Boehm, who occasionally worked in terracotta, recommended to Louise to try to keep her bust in its original material rather than transferring it in plaster and marble. Not only was terracotta inexpensive but it allowed for great realism. The differentiation of textures appeared much less dull than in plaster. In fact, to increase the lively effect even more, Louise decorated her bust with slip, a mixture of fresh clay and water, which was loosely dabbed with a brush all over the surface. The subtle effect of light brown brush marks applied onto the pink tone of the fired clay give the surface a warm-coloured and flesh-like appearance. Although the careful colouring process suggests that Louise intended her bust for some kind of presentation, the work appears to have never

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<sup>462</sup> As an exception, in the second half of the eighteenth century, terracotta models by John Michael Rysbrack (1694–1770) were sometimes used for the display of busts in private library interiors. See Malcolm Baker, 'Public Images for Private Spaces? The Place of Sculpture in the Georgian Domestic Interior', *Journal of Design History* 20, no. 4 (Winter 2007), pp. 309-23, here pp. 319-20.

been publicly exhibited and was later photographed in Louise's private studio after her death.<sup>463</sup> As an unsigned work with a pensive expression, the bust was intended for Louise's personal use, possibly in the semi-private context of her studio where it was seen only by assistants and close friends.

### **A funerary monument for Sybil St Albans**

Despite the advantage of her social position, Louise also encountered doubt towards her ambition as a female amateur sculptor, which is exemplified in the project for a tomb effigy to her friend Sybil St Albans who died in childbirth in 1871. As the daughter of the Queen's private secretary, Sybil had been introduced to Louise in 1863 as a 'female companion'<sup>464</sup> and became one of her closest friends. Louise felt as a tragic loss Sybil's sudden death at the age of twenty-two and she wished to express the importance of her friendship by offering, to Sybil's family, to design a tomb for her friend.<sup>465</sup> Thus, after the funeral she wrote to Sybil's mother asking 'if you and the Duke [Sybil's husband] would let me try to do a recumbent statue of darling Sybil? I have an idea in my head as to how I should like to represent her. It might be carried out in marble but only if quite, quite suited to your Tastes, and the Duke's idea of what he wanted.'<sup>466</sup> A recumbent figure was usually the most costly and distinguished form for a funerary monument. Often serving to commemorate influential aristocratic families or high-ranked churchmen, a commission for such a project was considered as very prestigious. Louise's idea of making a 'recumbent statue' in marble clearly shows her ambition and increased artistic confidence since working

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<sup>463</sup> See photograph of Louise's studio at Kensington Palace, in Wake (1988), inserted between p. 302 and p. 303.

<sup>464</sup> Quoted after Wake (1988), p. 72.

<sup>465</sup> After Sybil's death Victoria wrote to Louise: 'I saw by your letter what distress you were in about dear Sybil! It is an awful tragedy.' Royal Archives, Queen Victoria to Princess Louise, 11 September 1871, quoted after Longford (1991), p. 152.

<sup>466</sup> Princess Louise to Mrs Grey, n.d., [October 1871], Maria Grey Mss, Department of Paleography and Diplomatic, The College, Durham, quoted after Wake (1988), p. 160.

with Boehm, who, from the late 1860s, was one of the foremost sculptors of church monuments.<sup>467</sup> Louise's suggestion for Sybil's effigy was certainly inspired by Boehm's sought-after recumbent monuments to women, such as the tomb for *Juliana, Countess of Leicester* (1870) who had died, like Sybil, in childbirth [fig. 2.24]. This example shows the statue lying calmly, as if sleeping, on a gothic-style tomb-chest and wearing a simple, shroud-like cloak. By focusing on a harmonious balance between the realistic features and idealised drapery, the monument skilfully conveys the transience of human life and the idea of eternity through death and resurrection.

The idea, as in Boehm's Juliana statue, of providing spiritual consolation through the refined depiction of the deceased certainly appealed to Louise. It is likely that she intended a similar concept for Sybil's tomb. Motivated by her friendship with Sybil, Louise expected her funerary project to be her first opportunity to work as a professional artist on a large-scale monument. Her consideration towards Sybil's mother, by expressing her concern for the family's artistic taste and preferences, shows her professional attitude towards the importance of a truthful working relationship between artist and patron. Rather than playing on her royal status or asking the Queen for a personal recommendation, Louise tried to negotiate her artistic ideas independently in order to gain serious recognition. Yet by taking the initiative of approaching Sybil's family, instead of waiting to receive a commission, Louise reversed the traditional process of patronage. As a princess, she could not be asked to provide an artistic service like a professional sculptor. In addition to this predicament, her position was further complicated by her status as a female amateur.

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<sup>467</sup> See Stocker (1988), pp. 169-71.

What Louise probably did not expect was the strong opposition from Sybil's brother Albert Grey, then head of the family, who interfered with Louise's proposition and persuaded his family to drop her idea because, as he claimed, everybody agreed that 'a more fearful thing was never executed.'<sup>468</sup> Instead of Louise, he suggested that Boehm should be asked to make a monument to Sybil. Grey's male prejudice and lack of trust in her artistic ability as an amateur were certainly a strong setback for Louise. Until then, her family and commentators had received her sculptural work positively and encouraged her to pursue her practice. By doubting her artistic competence and proposing Boehm instead, Grey placed Louise and Boehm in direct opposition and exposed the disadvantage of Louise's gender and amateur status over that of a male professional. Nevertheless, despite this clear rejection, two years later, Louise successfully converted her initial idea for a large monument into a small and "less fearful" project. Probably in private accord with Sybil's mother, her only supporter in this matter,<sup>469</sup> Louise made a memorial plaque in marble with a portrait relief of Sybil, which was placed in the St Albans's family church at Bestwood Park [fig. 2.25]. The plaque depicts the young woman in a simple, draped tunic and turned three-quarters to the left with her head in profile. Her even features, the long, elegant neck and beautiful hairstyle, with a thick braid fixed on top of the head, indicate her youthfulness. Rather than choosing the form of a round medallion, which was the more common shape for a relief portrait, Louise opted to depict Sybil's head in an unusual, mandorla-shaped brown alabaster frame, similar to the aureole surrounding the figure of Christ in traditional Christian art, as a sign of the transcendence of time and space. With this particular religious connotation,

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<sup>468</sup> Albert Grey to Victoria Grey, 7 October 1871, Grey Mss., Department of Paleography and Diplomatic, The College, Durham, quoted after Wake (1988), p. 160.

<sup>469</sup> Wake (1988), pp. 160-61.

Louise emphasised the monument's meaning, not only as a memorial of Sybil's likeness but to provide spiritual consolation over her early death. The idea of eternity and timelessness was also conveyed in an adjacent marble plaque inscribed in Latin with an identification of the dedicatee and Louise as the memorial's author: IN CARAM MEMORIAM/ SYBILLAE/ DUCHESSAE DE ST ALBANS/ LOUISE SCULPSIT/ MDCCCLXXIII (In dear memory of Sybil, Duchess of St. Albans / sculpted by Louise / 1873). Although the final monument to Sybil was more humble and economical than the originally intended full-size tomb sculpture, Louise managed to find an adequate form for expressing both her affection for Sybil and her skilled and thoughtful proficiency as a sculptor.

### **Public training at South Kensington Art Training School**

Apart from her private sculpture training with Boehm, from early 1875 Louise also took lessons at the National Art Training School at South Kensington. Although the royal family had previously been patrons of several art schools,<sup>470</sup> the change in role from being a royal patron to becoming a student at a public art school was a progressive move for a royal artist.

Derived from the Government School of Design set up in 1837, the National Art Training School transformed its educational scope over the years. Its original objective had been to train male and female art teachers and designers and to support them with special studentships. Yet, from the mid-1860s, in order to increase the school's revenue, private fee-paying students, who were more interested in fine art than in art manufacture, were also admitted to the day

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<sup>470</sup> For example, in 1871 Louise presided over the prize distribution at the South Kensington Schools of Art. See Anon., 'South Kensington Museum: Schools of Art', *Art Journal* (Aug. 1871), p. 205; In 1872 both the Queen and the Princess of Wales were sponsors of a special scholarship at the Female Schools of Art in Bloomsbury. Anon., 'Schools of Art,' *Art Journal* (Dec. 1872), p. 302.

classes.<sup>471</sup> This change in policy increased the School's popularity, especially with female artists from a middle-class background who were not allowed to join the Royal Academy Schools because of their gender. The National Art Training School was divided into male and female classes and its versatile range of subjects included Mechanical Drawing, Geometry and Perspective, Modelling, Painting and Drawing of Ornament, the Figure and Anatomy, Ornamental Design and Etching.<sup>472</sup> What made the School particularly attractive to students who wished to train in the fine arts was the appointment in 1875 of the Paris-trained Royal Academician Edward Poynter as new director and principal. Poynter placed a strong emphasis on an academic curriculum inspired by French art education and tried to reform the outlook of the School's practical training by giving teaching posts to innovative French artists including Jules Dalou, Alphonse Legros and Edouard Lantéri.<sup>473</sup>

While most biographers of Louise have suggested that the princess enrolled at the National Art Training School as early as 1868, no archival sources have been brought forward to prove this assertion.<sup>474</sup> Especially the suggestion by Robert M. Stamp that Boehm was Louise's instructor at the School bears no evidence.<sup>475</sup> There are no documents to suggest that Boehm ever taught at South Kensington.<sup>476</sup> What is more likely is that Louise began taking public sculpture

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<sup>471</sup> Christopher Frayling, *100 years at the Royal College of Art: Art and Design* (London: Collins & Brown, 1999), p. 13.

<sup>472</sup> See South Kensington Museum, 'A Guide to Art Collections in the South Kensington Museum: Illustrated with Plans and Wood Engravings,' in *Earl Grey Pamphlets Collection (1868)*, Durham University Library, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/60226562> [accessed: 10 April 2013].

<sup>473</sup> For the list of teachers from the 1860s to 1880s, see *Departmental Committee on the Royal College of Art. Report of the Departmental Committee on the Royal College of Art with Appendices*, (London: n.p., 1911), p. 60.

<sup>474</sup> None of Louise's biographers provide a source for the year 1868 as the time of Louise's enrolment at the National Art Training School. See Wake (1988), pp. 91-92; Roberts (1987), p. 158; Longford (1991), pp. 15-17; Mark Stocker, 'Louise, Princess, duchess of Argyll (1848-1939)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn., Jan. 2008, [accessed: 30 Aug. 2013].

According to Jill Kelsey, Registrar of the Royal Archives, no archival documents at the Royal Archives relate to Louise's training at the National Art Training School. Email communication 4 June 2013.

<sup>475</sup> See Robert M. Stamp, *Royal Rebels: Princess Louise & the Marquis of Lorne* (Toronto & Oxford: Dundurn Press, 1988), pp. 69-70.

<sup>476</sup> Boehm is not listed amongst the School's teachers during the 1860s and 1870s and his biographer, Mark Stocker, makes no reference to him having taught at the National Art Training School. See *Departmental Committee on the Royal College of Art* (1911), p. 60; Stocker (1988).

lessons after her sister Vicky encouraged her to do so in November 1874, in order to improve her technical art skills. Writing in a letter, Vicky suggested: ‘Why do you not attend a class in the Kensington School of Art when you are in London, I do so at Berlin at our little Gewerbemuseum and I think one gets on best by following a very systematical course, because it is the technical part in which all amateurs are so difficult.’<sup>477</sup> Since Vicky regularly exchanged news with her mother about all family matters, it is likely that she would have referred to any previous public training of Louise’s, had this been the case. Yet, by presenting her idea as a novelty, it appears that Louise first enrolled at the National Art Training School after the date of this letter. In addition to Vicky’s advice, it is possible that Boehm encouraged Louise to take some extra public lessons at the School, especially in view of the appointment of Poynter in the following year. Like Poynter, Boehm was a champion of French influences in British art and promoted life drawing and modelling as an important part of an artist’s curriculum.<sup>478</sup> Boehm may have considered the training at a professional art school a useful experience for a young, aspiring royal sculptor. Although Louise probably had the opportunity of getting to know other young male sculptors at Boehm’s studio – both Gilbert and Lantéri had been working at the master’s studio since 1872<sup>479</sup> – the meeting with female students allowed her to exchange ideas with like-minded students who shared the concerns of her gender. Furthermore, the reference of an official art school could help to increase an amateur’s public reputation since art

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<sup>477</sup> Vicky to Louise, 21 Nov. 1874, quoted after Longford (1991), pp. 186-87.

<sup>478</sup> Contrary to the British academic tradition, Boehm was convinced that students should first learn to study from life before copying the models of famous antiques. See Stocker (1988), p. 430; Boehm shared this concept with Poynter whose teaching philosophy promoted the establishment of life drawing classes. See Alison Inglis, ‘Poynter, Sir Edward John, first baronet (1836–1919)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn., May 2010, [accessed: 3 Sept. 2013]; For more on Poynter’s reform of the British life class, see Caroline Arscott, ‘Poynter and the Arts’, in *After the Pre-Raphaelites*, ed. Elizabeth Prettejohn (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp. 135-51, here pp. 138-41.

<sup>479</sup> Gilbert worked for Boehm from 1872 until 1875. See Richard Dorment, ‘Gilbert, Sir Alfred (1854–1934)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/view/article/33398 [accessed: 16 Nov 2014]; Lantéri worked in Boehm’s studio in 1872, see Mark Stocker, ‘Lantéri, Edward (1848–1917)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, online edn. n. d., [accessed: 16 Nov. 2014].

critics tended to expect amateurs to produce works that showed less efficient training than professional artists.<sup>480</sup> Due to the lack of archival records about the practice of Louise's training at the National Art Training School, it is unclear how often Louise attended classes and what her experience was. Yet, her close friendship with Henrietta Montalba (1856–93), one of the fellow female students at the school, attests to the importance of Louise's enrolment at South Kensington for her social network.

Born, like Louise, into an artistic family, Montalba grew up as the fourth daughter of a Swedish-born painter and possibly joined the National Art Training School, aged twelve, in 1868.<sup>481</sup> After focussing initially on decorative painting including fan-design, Montalba went on to specialise in sculpture and debuted in 1875 at the Royal Academy with a portrait bust.<sup>482</sup> Although Louise was married and eight years older than Montalba, the women's similar family constellation as the fourth daughter of a large family probably attracted them to become friends.

In May 1875, presumably not long after they first met, Louise invited Montalba to her country house in Dornden, Tunbridge Wells, where Louise's younger brother Arthur met Louise's new friend and was particularly impressed by her: 'What a nice girl that Miss Montalbert (I don't know if that is the right way to spell it) is, she is so clever and so pleasant in every way; you must take me to the South Kensington school one day. I should like to see what she is doing.'<sup>483</sup> Apart from their sympathy for each other, Louise and Montalba shared the experience of being female artists in the public, male-dominated art scene. In

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<sup>480</sup> See Gerrish Nunn (1987), pp. 43-45.

<sup>481</sup> This date has been suggested by Pamela Gerrish Nunn although there is no clear evidence for this in the sources. See Pamela Gerrish Nunn, 'Montalba, Henrietta Skerrett (1856–1893)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19039> [accessed: 3 Sept. 2013]; See also M. Hepworth-Dixon, 'Henrietta Montalba – A Reminiscence', *Art Journal* (Jul 1894), pp. 215-17.

<sup>482</sup> For more on Henrietta Montalba, see M. Hepworth-Dixon, 'Henrietta Montalba – A Reminiscence', *Art Journal* (Jul 1894), pp. 215-17.

<sup>483</sup> Prince Arthur to Princess Louise, 17 May 1875, quoted after Longford (1991), p. 193.



addition, it is conceivable that Montalba valued Louise's longer artistic experience, for example in exhibiting at the Royal Academy. In addition, she was probably also aware of her friend's royal connection as an advantage to improve her artistic reputation in society. For Louise, on the other hand, it was important to widen her social network towards non-aristocratic artists who were not her teachers, in order to be recognised as a serious artist within the professional art world. In this way, Montalba could be considered as taking on the role of Thornycroft who had been Louise's teacher, mentor and friend during the 1860s. In contrast to Thornycroft, however, Montalba was younger than Louise, unmarried and not dependent on the royal family, which facilitated their friendship and made it less restricted by social conventions. Indeed, when Louise moved to Canada in 1878, where Lorne was appointed as Governor-General, she did not wait long to invite her artist friend to visit her at her Ottawa residence. In 1879, Montalba spent three months with Louise in Canada and the two artists each produced an artwork which reflected their friendship and artistic confidence. While Louise painted a large, highly aesthetic portrait of her friend,<sup>484</sup> Montalba modelled a vigorous and animated bust of Lorne.<sup>485</sup> Both works featured subsequently at the fashionable Grosvenor Gallery, where Louise had gained a reputation as a patron and exhibitor after the gallery's opening in 1877.

### **Louise's engagement with Aestheticism**

During her private sculpture training with Boehm, as we have seen, Louise had the opportunity to become acquainted with French influences in sculpture and with future exponents of the New Sculpture. Reputed for his cosmopolitan

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<sup>484</sup> Princess Louise, *Henrietta Skerett Montalba*, 1882, oil on canvas, 108.5 x 87.4 cm, National Gallery of Canada, no. 144.

<sup>485</sup> Henrietta Montalba, *The Marquis of Lorne*, c. 1880, bronze, dimensions unknown, Inverary Castle.

connections and successful commissions, Boehm was a central figure in the contemporary London art scene and counted artists of the aesthetic avant-garde, including Dalou and Whistler, amongst his friends.<sup>486</sup> Yet, apart from benefitting from Boehm's artistic connections, Louise also developed new social contacts through the family of her husband. With their residence in the artistic area of Holland Park they formed part of the wider social cachet of the Aesthetic Movement.<sup>487</sup> In particular Lorne's cousin, the amateur artist and patron George Howard and his wife Rosalind, who also lived nearby, were known as patrons of Edward Burne-Jones and William Morris.<sup>488</sup> Moreover, in Chelsea, Lorne's brother Archie Campbell, together with his wife, the eccentric social beauty Janey Callander, lived in an aesthetically decorated house at 14 Beaufort Gardens.<sup>489</sup> The Campbells became prominent, especially during the 1880s, as patrons of Whistler and the designer Edward William Godwin.<sup>490</sup> Furthermore, one of Lorne's closest friends from childhood was the homosexual aesthete and amateur sculptor Lord Ronald Gower.<sup>491</sup> Gower's diary entries from 1875 to 1879 reveal that he formed part of the fashionable artist set in London, meeting with Whistler, Boehm, Dalou, Leighton, d'Épinay, Millais, Gustave Doré, Frank Miles, Luca

<sup>486</sup> For example, in 1872 Boehm sculpted Whistler's portrait bust in terracotta (National Portrait Gallery, London, NPG.65.74). Boehm also supported Whistler financially when he was short of money. See letter from Whistler to Boehm, 19 October 1878, <http://www.whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk/correspondence/recno/display/?cid=00499> [accessed: 24 Sept. 2013].

<sup>487</sup> Amongst the Argylls' aristocratic family friends in Holland Park were Percy and Madeleine Wyndham, David and Blanche Airlie, and George and Rosalind Howard. See Dakers (1999), pp. 77-88.

<sup>488</sup> Howard's significance as an artist and patron was the focus of the exhibition *George Howard, 9th Earl of Carlisle: Artist and Patron* at Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery where it was on display from 20 July 2013 to 13 October 2013; See also Christopher Ridgway, 'Howard, George James, ninth earl of Carlisle (1843-1911)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, online edn. n. d., [accessed: 25 Sept. 2013].

<sup>489</sup> In her memoirs, the diarist and close friend of Queen Victoria, Walburga Paget, remembered a dinner party at the Campbells' London house in late 1877 which was attended by Louise and Lorne and set up by the hosts like an aesthetic performance. See Lady Walburga Paget, *The Linings of Life*, vol. I (London: Hurst & Blackett, 1921), p. 264.

<sup>490</sup> While Whistler made several portraits of Janey Campbell during the 1880s, amongst which was his controversial *Arrangement in Black: La Dame au brodequin jaune* (1882-83), Godwin designed the stages and costumes for pastoral plays in the open air at the Campbells' country house Coombe Woods in Surrey, where celebrated professional actresses performed alongside amateurs, including Janey Campbell. For more on Janey Campbell and her portraits, see [http://www.whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk/correspondence/people/biog/?bid=Camp\\_JS&initial=C](http://www.whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk/correspondence/people/biog/?bid=Camp_JS&initial=C) [accessed: 23 Sept. 2013]; For more on Godwin's designs for the pastoral plays at Coombe Woods, see Lionel Lambourne, 'Edward William Godwin (1833-1886) Aesthetic Polymath', in *E. W. Godwin, Aesthetic Movement, Architect and Designer*, ed. Susan Weber Soros (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999), pp. 19-43, here pp. 35-7; See also Wake (1988), p. 206.

<sup>491</sup> For more on the background of Lorne and Gower's friendship, see Stamp (1988), pp. 34, 35, 37, 39, 44, 55-57.

Madrassi, Oscar Wilde and the Parisian artists Albert-Ernest Carrier-Belleuse.<sup>492</sup>

Louise had refused Gower as a matrimonial candidate, having considered him too 'effeminate',<sup>493</sup> yet after her marriage to Lorne, he became one of her closest male friends with whom she shared her aesthetic interests in art and beauty.<sup>494</sup>

Considering these personal and family connections, it is not surprising to find in the Royal Archives and in the Argyll family archive at Inverary Castle a series of artist letters to Louise and Lorne which attest to the couple's continuous engagement with progressive artists between the mid-1870s and the early twentieth century. The authors of these letters are a cross section of the fashionable Victorian art world, from Alma-Tadema to Whistler.<sup>495</sup> Some of them deal with royal commissions and enquiries regarding Louise and Lorne's official function as royal representatives, others concern the couple's commissions and visits to artists' studios. In addition, there are letters which attest to their sincere friendship with artists, beyond the formal artist-patron relationship. For example, in 1882, Alma-Tadema thanked Louise for the present of some 'beautiful specimens of shells of the deep water fishing' and expressed his regret to hear about a recent accident she had.<sup>496</sup> A series of unsigned letters from Burne-Jones attests to his friendship with Louise and Lorne, dealing with their visit to Burne-

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<sup>492</sup> Ronald Gower Diary, Stafford Public Records Office. I would like to thank Philip Ward-Jackson for showing me his transcript of the original document.

<sup>493</sup> In his diary of 16 August 1870, Lorne recalls an interview between Queen Victoria and the Duke of Argyll about possible husband candidates for Louise. At the duke's question whether Gower would be a suitable candidate for Louise the answer was 'No, said the Queen, the Princess thinks him effeminate.' *Extract of Diary of Marquess of Lorne (9<sup>th</sup> Duke)*, Archive Inverary, Bundle 1066.

<sup>494</sup> About twenty letters from Louise to Ronald Gower, written between December 1870 and the end of the century, attest to their friendship and mutual artistic interests. See Archive Inverary, Bundle 949.

<sup>495</sup> The artists included in the correspondence with Louise and Lorne are Lawrence Alma-Tadema, Edward Burne-Jones, Edward Onslow Ford, Alfred Gilbert, William Holman Hunt, Frederic Leighton, John Everett Millais, Edward Poynter, William Michael Rossetti, John Singer Sargent, Hamo Thornycroft, George Frederic Watts and James McNeill Whistler. See Archive Inverary, Bundles 300, 421, 464, 697, 764.

<sup>496</sup> 'Allow me to express my delight in the possession of the beautiful specimens of shells of the deep water fishing Your Royal Highness is kind enough to send me. If that world below is as rich in shade of every colour as it proves to be of pink it must be indeed a beautiful World. My pleasure was however greatly diminished by hearing of the accident which deprived me of the honour of Your Royal Highness's presence yesterday & of which I hope sincerely all unpleasant effects have passed away by now.' RA/AADA/17/2005, Lawrence Alma-Tadema to Princess Louise, 5 January 1882.

Jones's studio-house in London,<sup>497</sup> Burne-Jones's painting of a 'little golden head' for Louise,<sup>498</sup> his health problems,<sup>499</sup> and with a present from Louise to Burne-Jones's grandchild.<sup>500</sup>

Louise's artistic relationship with Whistler, although less personal than the examples above, was highly profitable on both sides and attests to the relevance of the connection between royalty and the avant-garde. While Whistler benefited commercially from Louise's endorsement of his innovative ideas, Louise used the company of cutting-edge artists like him to position herself as an Aesthete. For example, in 1876 Whistler invited Louise for a preview of his *Peacock Room* at 49 Princess Gate, which he was decorating for the collector Frederick Leyland.<sup>501</sup> Conceived with an intrepid decorative scheme in gold and blue to accommodate the owner's rare collection of blue-and-white porcelain, the *Peacock Room* became known as an aesthetic sensation even before it was finished. After Louise's visit in early September 1876, Whistler proudly informed his mother about its success, emphasising the princess's 'delight in the "gorgeous loveliness" of the work.'<sup>502</sup> Although revealing privately that he valued aristocrats primarily for the celebrity they could bring to the *Peacock Room*, Whistler admitted to appreciating their charm and 'real delight' in his work.<sup>503</sup> Thus, in the hope of extending his publicity, two months after Louise's previous visit, he repeated his

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<sup>497</sup> RA/ ADDA/17/1981, Edward Burne-Jones to Lorne, n. d.

<sup>498</sup> RA/ADDA/17/1982, Edward Burne-Jones to Princess Louise, n. d.

<sup>499</sup> RA/ADDA/17/1983B, Edward Burne-Jones to Lorne, n. d.

<sup>500</sup> RA/ADDA/17/1984, Edward Burne-Jones to Princess Louise, Sunday, n. d.

<sup>501</sup> For more on the Peacock Room, see Linda Merrill, *The Peacock Room: A Cultural Biography* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998).

<sup>502</sup> James McNeill Whistler to Anna Matilda Whistler, n. d. [2 September 1876?], Charles Land Freer Papers, Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C., Gift of the Estate of Charles Lang Freer, call number FGA Whistler 175; www. whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk [accessed: 10 Sept. 2013].

<sup>503</sup> 'The mere visits of Princes & Dukes, we all know, is no voucher for the quality of a work of Art, for they are simply curious people. generally better mannered than others about them, but able to look with the same satisfaction upon a bad thing, as a good one. Still they are charming people. & shew real delight in this beautiful room. Keep up the buzz of publicity most pleasantly in London Society, & this is well, & I hope good may result.' James McNeill Whistler to Anna Matilda Whistler, n. d. [2 September 1876], Charles Land Freer Papers, Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C., Gift of the Estate of Charles Lang Freer, call number FGA Whistler 175; www. whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk [accessed: 10 Sept. 2013].

invitation to her to receive another royal licence for his completed work.<sup>504</sup> By following Whistler's invitations, Louise clearly demonstrated her sustained interest in Whistler's avant-gardism. In 1877 she even went so far to help him gain official approval for the unconventional façade design of his new studio-house in Tite Street, Chelsea, the so-called 'White House', which was designed by Godwin.<sup>505</sup> As a sign of his gratitude for Louise's facilitation, Whistler offered her an unidentified painting of his depicting the river Thames covered in fog,<sup>506</sup> as well as an engraving of his *Portrait of Thomas Carlyle*, which he sent to Louise as a farewell gift before her departure to Canada in November 1878.<sup>507</sup>

Louise's taste for Aestheticism was also articulated in the decoration of her London residence at Kensington Palace where she moved in early 1875, from a previously rented townhouse in Upper Mayfair.<sup>508</sup> As pointed out by Louise Campbell, through the architectural decoration of her residence, Louise articulated her taste for Aestheticism and distinguished herself as a progressive member of the royal family.<sup>509</sup> In contrast to the prevailing neoclassicism and luxurious formality of the royal palaces of Victoria and Albert, at Kensington Palace Louise commissioned in 1874 the innovative architect George Aitchison (1825-1910) to redecorate her new apartment in the latest aesthetic fashion. Aitchison had previously designed Leighton's studio-house in Holland Road through which he

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<sup>504</sup> 'Madam, I have never forgotten the flattering visit to Chelsea, and the indulgent sympathy evinced by Your Royal Highness in my work, – and so venture to beg that you would come and see the decorations I am now completing at No. 49 Princess Gate, where I should be ready to receive your Royal Highness tomorrow at any our, or on any other day you would kindly appoint.' RA/ADDA/17/1996, James McNeill Whistler to Princess Louise, 8 November 1876.

<sup>505</sup> See Campbell (2003), pp. 5-6; Wake (1988), p. 210.

<sup>506</sup> RA/ADDA/17/1993 James McNeill Whistler to Princess Louise, n. d. [8 Nov. 1878?]; See also Longford (1991), pp. 214-15.

<sup>507</sup> Three letters from Whistler to Louise attest to Whistler's presents: firstly, in a letter of [10/14 November 1878?] Whistler mentions the proof of an engraving of his *Arrangement in Grey and Black, No. 2: Portrait of Thomas Carlyle*, which he wishes to send to Louise for approval. See <http://www.whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk/correspondence/recno/display/?cid=03589>; secondly, on [7/14 November 1878?] Whistler mentions that 'the little sketch' is meant as a 'reminder of loyal Chelsea' when Louise is in America. See <http://www.whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk/correspondence/recno/display/?cid=03572>; thirdly, on 15 November 1878, Louise acknowledges the receipt of the 'charming little picture' to Whistler. See <http://www.whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk/correspondence/recno/display/?cid=00510> [all accessed: 26 Sept. 2013].

<sup>508</sup> See Wake (1988), pp. 164, 184; In September 1873, the Queen offered them to take up Apartment 1 at Kensington Palace where the couple moved eighteen months later. See Wake (1988), pp. 190-91.

<sup>509</sup> Campbell (2003), pp. 1-21.

gained great popularity amongst elite patrons during the early 1870s.<sup>510</sup> In order to meet the royal budget and fit in with the existing architecture, the decorative scheme for the Kensington apartment was carefully chosen but limited to an aesthetic colour palette, including green, red, brown and golden painted woodworks and walls.<sup>511</sup> No inventories or photographs of Kensington Palace during Louise's occupation seem to exist to reveal the interior scheme and display of furniture and artworks within. Yet, some rare Renaissance and later furniture, which Louise later gave to the Victoria & Albert Museum, indicate her heightened sense for beautiful objects.<sup>512</sup>

Apart from the decoration of her apartment, a further architectural project, which attests to Louise's Aestheticism, was the building, in 1878, of a studio at Kensington Palace. Inspired by Whistler's White House, but also facilitated by Boehm's artistic connections, Louise chose the progressive Godwin as her architect.<sup>513</sup> The studio was located near Louise's apartment in a corner of the private garden at Kensington Palace. Using two existing garden walls, the design was adapted to the surrounding architecture, built of red brick and with a mansard roof. Inside, it consisted of an anteroom, a changing room and a large central room with overhead windows. Although Godwin proposed elaborate interior features including a panelled alcove and mantle piece in the fashionable aesthetic style, Louise was concerned about her budget and focused here on practicality

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<sup>510</sup> Aitchison's popularity amongst fashionable society is described in a contemporary article. See Anon., 'The Presentation of the R.I.B.A. Gold Medal', *The British Architect* (24 July 1898), pp. 431-33, here p. 432.

<sup>511</sup> See Dakers (1999), p. 127; Campbell (2003), p. 6.

<sup>512</sup> The furniture from Princess Louise at the Victoria & Albert Museum are a fifteenth-century Sieneese painted *cassone* by Francesco di Giorgio Martini (V&A, W.68-1925), a thirteenth-century German bone casket mounted in nineteenth-century brass (V&A, M4-1934), a sixteenth-century German oak chest (V&A, M3-1934), a pair of early eighteenth-century cane chairs (V&A, W16-1926, W16A-1926), and an eighteenth-century continental gilt stool with needlework upholstery (V&A, W58-1914).

<sup>513</sup> Between 1868 and 1875 Godwin lived with the actress Ellen Terry. His progressive attitude included his interest in Japanese art and his approval of women in the architectural profession. See Lionel Lambourne, 'Edward William Godwin (1833-1886) Aesthetic Polymath', in Weber Soros (1999), pp. 19-43.

over appearance.<sup>514</sup> Unlike the studios of professional artists like Boehm or Leighton, Louise's studio was not built to show off her work or to receive the public. Instead, it was located within the restricted royal estate and functioned as a private space to which Louise could withdraw in order to work or relax without being disturbed.<sup>515</sup> Yet, although no depictions exist which show Louise in her studio, and the only photographs of the main room's interior date from c.1940,<sup>516</sup> the news of the royal commission to Godwin was reported in the press. In 1880, the *British Architect* published an embellished illustration of the studio with a large pavilion nestled in the surroundings of the royal park [fig. 2.26]. While the choice of Godwin as the architect was probably more avant-garde than the actual building, the fact that Louise had a professional studio built for herself was a clear sign of her artistic identity and ambition in the late 1870s.<sup>517</sup>

### **Louise at the Grosvenor Gallery**

With the opening of the Grosvenor Gallery in 1877, aesthetes and women artists gained a prestigious and highly visible venue to show their works and receive public attention. Through the supportive influence of the artistic and cosmopolitan Blanche Lindsay, hostess and co-director of the Grosvenor Gallery until 1882, female professional and amateur artists were encouraged to partake as

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<sup>514</sup> For more on the design and decoration of Louise's studio and her concern about costs, see Aileen Reid, 'The Architectural Career of E. W. Godwin', in Susan Weber Soros (1999), pp. 127-83, here pp. 168, 170 figs. 6-59 and 6-60; Susan Weber Soros, 'E. W. Godwin and Interior Design', in Weber Soros (1999), pp. 185-223, here pp. 213-14; Campbell (2003), pp. 6-8.

<sup>515</sup> Campbell alludes to the possibility of the studio as a space for the reversal of gender-specific, traditional roles, where Louise and Lorne could pursue their personal interests of sculpting and reading poetry respectively. See Campbell (2003), p. 7.

<sup>516</sup> Illustrated in Wake (1988), 'The studio at Kensington Palace,' between p. 302 and 303, and in Weber Soros (1999), p. 214, fig. 7.41.

<sup>517</sup> Campbell's emphasis on aesthetic architecture as an expression of female identity has been re-emphasised in a wider context by Lynne Walker who looks at women artists' spatial and material relationship with their home and studio. Lynne Walker, 'Women patron-builders in Britain: Identity, Difference and Memory, in spatial and material Culture', in *Local / Global: Women Artists in the Nineteenth Century*, eds Deborah Cherry and Janice Helland (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 121-36, here pp. 121-23.

exhibitors.<sup>518</sup> The gallery, with its women-friendly amenities, including a restaurant, reading room and Ladies' Room, provided a comfortable social platform for female artists to meet and form relationships with patrons, fellow artists and their audience.<sup>519</sup> The atmosphere was particularly accommodating for women of the upper class, as they did not have to step outside the boundaries of class expectation and female respectability.<sup>520</sup> The combination of distinguished femininity and feminism was crucial to the gallery's success. Used by female visitors as a site to display their personal style in dress, behaviour and appearance,<sup>521</sup> the presence of female artists made the gallery a socially recognised place for the transformation of gender relationships.<sup>522</sup> However, as pointed out by Coleen Denney, despite the gallery's encouragement of women, the critical reception of female artists, especially amateurs, was informed by traditional gender- and class politics of the Victorian period. In addition, as a royal, Louise was considered in her own, separate category, similar to her previous reception at the Royal Academy.<sup>523</sup> Yet beyond the gender and royal-biased comments on her work, it is revealing to assess how Louise used the women-friendly context of the Grosvenor Gallery to negotiate her identity as a royal amateur.

Having seen the general success of women artists at the first Grosvenor exhibition in 1877, where a small group women, including Louise Jopling, the Countess of Warwick and Blanche Lindsay, showed their works,<sup>524</sup> Louise felt

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<sup>518</sup> For women at the Grosvenor Gallery, see Paula Gillett, 'Art Audiences at the Grosvenor Gallery,' in Susan P. Casteras and Colleen Denney (eds), *The Grosvenor Gallery: A Palace of Art in Victorian England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996) pp. 39-58, here pp. 55-57; Denney (2000), pp. 127-60.

<sup>519</sup> Denney (2000), p. 150-51.

<sup>520</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 154.

<sup>521</sup> Cherry (1993) p. 89; Denney (2000), p. 149.

<sup>522</sup> Denney (2000), p. 151.

<sup>523</sup> Denney (2000), pp. 138-45.

<sup>524</sup> See 'List of Exhibitors in 1877', in Henry Blackburn, *Grosvenor Notes 1878. An illustrated Catalogue of the Summer Exhibition*, Henry Blackburn (London: Chatto and Windus, 1878), p. 58.



confident to participate the following year.<sup>525</sup> Through her friendship with Blanche Lindsay, she was part of the inner circle of the Grosvenor set and could be assured that her work would be carefully displayed.<sup>526</sup> By looking closely at a portrait of Louise by Lindsay (1878), and by examining three of Louise's own works which were exhibited between 1878 and 1882, it becomes clear that the platform of the Grosvenor Gallery signified for Louise more than getting public exposure. The works in question attest to Louise's refined sensibility for the meaning of female identity and articulate her sympathy with the feminist cause aiming for an expansion of women's public scope.

The small watercolour portrait of Louise by Lindsay, herself a praised amateur painter,<sup>527</sup> was no society portrait with the typical attributes of status. Instead, as a small and intimate study of the princess's head, it focused on her identity as a progressive woman [fig. 2.27]. Wearing a large bow over an aesthetic silver necklace designed by the pioneering revivalist jeweller Carlo Giuliano,<sup>528</sup> Louise looks at the viewer with confidence and appears elegant and serious. The proximity and finely painted detail emphasise her sense of sincerity and presence. Despite its unpretentious format, the portrait was displayed, not in the gallery's designated room for watercolour paintings, but prominently at the entrance of the East Gallery,<sup>529</sup> surrounded by large canvases of recognised male professionals like Burne-Jones, Walter Crane and Albert Moore. This prominent juxtaposition clearly reflected Lindsay's, as much as Louise's, self-confidence and ambition amongst male professional artists.

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<sup>525</sup> Between 1878 and 1889 Louise exhibited six works at the Grosvenor Gallery. (1878, 1879, 1882, 1883, 1885: *Shore, Hamilton, Bermuda*, 13x18 in., no. 376 on p. 62; 1889).

<sup>526</sup> Since the summer of 1876 Louise was often entertained by the Lindsays. See Virginia Surtees, *Coutts Lindsay, 1824-1913* (Norwich: Michael Russell, 1993), pp. 143, 155, 159, 182.

<sup>527</sup> Despite their application of separate criticism towards male and female artists, art critics often appreciated the works of Blanche Lindsay. See Denney (2000), pp. 142-43.

<sup>528</sup> See Abraham Kenneth Snowman (ed.), *The Master Jewelers* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1990), p. 26.

<sup>529</sup> See the hanging plan of the East Gallery as illustrated in Blackburn, *Grosvenor Notes* (1878), p. 31.

Louise's own first contribution to the Grosvenor in 1878 was a large, now lost terracotta relief with a scene inspired by Tennyson's Arthurian poem 'Geraint and Enid'. Illustrated in a facsimile sketch in the *Grosvenor Notes*, the gallery's exhibition catalogue, the composition depicts the romantic heroine Enid trying to drive six agitated horses while her husband, Geraint, watches her struggle from a distance [fig. 2.28]. The catalogue illustration is accompanied by the verses of the poem:

Their three gay suits of armour, each on each  
And bound them on their horses, each on each,  
And tied the bridle-rein of all the three together,  
And said to her, 'Drive them on  
Before you through the wood.'  
He follow'd.<sup>530</sup>

As a recent addition to Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, the theme of *Geraint and Enid* was well known by the contemporary audience. In the narrative, Geraint, accused of the loss of his chivalric prowess, is determined to prove his masculinity while also testing his wife's fidelity. Commanding her to maintain silence, he takes her on a journey where they encounter numerous challenges. While Geraint is unaware of any danger, Enid, full of female presentiment, warns him despite his command. This helps them to withstand each menace, yet Geraint punishes Enid for disobeying his instruction and forces her to drive a herd of raving horses. Proving her bravery through all hardship, Enid is finally cleared and the couple is reconciled. Although the poem's moral propagates a traditional gender concept based on chivalry and female faithfulness, by singling out the contentious scene with Enid's endurance against Geraint's chauvinism, Louise

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<sup>530</sup> Blackburn, *Grosvenor Notes* (1878), p. 56, no. 233, illustrated on p. 3.

articulated her criticism of Victorian gender norms, in the guise of romantic Medievalism.

On a personal level, it is possible that Louise felt disillusioned by her marriage with Lorne, who turned out to be neither like the *Black Prince* nor the chivalric knight of her earlier dream visions.<sup>531</sup> Despite their shared interest in the arts, the lack of a family,<sup>532</sup> Lorne's financial dependency on royal favour,<sup>533</sup> in addition to his alleged homosexuality,<sup>534</sup> made Louise lead an increasingly independent life, focusing on her own career. Yet beyond any autobiographical reference, *Geraint and Enid* also reflected Louise's general stance on the dichotomy between women's intellectual prowess and the hindrances they encountered in society. For example, in 1869, Louise was interested in supporting the work of the suffragist Josephine Butler and the female surgeon Elizabeth Garrett. Yet, as both women were considered controversial by the conservative milieu of the court, Louise could not publicly support their causes.<sup>535</sup> The Grosvenor Gallery, however, provided a safe haven for women like Louise to meet with other women who shared their feminist concerns.<sup>536</sup> While Blanche Lindsay represented new a new artistic code for women in terms of her general confidence,<sup>537</sup> her close friend Louise Jopling was politically engaged as a supporter of female suffrage.<sup>538</sup> Although Louise had to be careful not to associate herself openly with progressive feminists, she was dedicated to the advancement of women's education and economic independence. As such, in 1871, she became

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<sup>531</sup> Before her marriage, in 1870, Louise described Lorne as a an 'Arthurian Knight.' See Wake (1988), p. 134.

<sup>532</sup> According to Wake, the fact that Louise and Lorne had no children affected their relationship. Wake (1988), pp. 195-96.

<sup>533</sup> See Wake (1988), pp. 272, 287.

<sup>534</sup> Based on Lorne's friendship with known homosexuals like Ronald Gower, several biographers have speculated about Lorne's sexual orientation. See Wake (1988), pp. 377-78; Stamp (1988), pp. 40-41, 110, 111, 184.

<sup>535</sup> See Wake (1988), pp. 95-98, 168-96.

<sup>536</sup> See Denney (2000), pp. 127-60.

<sup>537</sup> See *ibid.*, pp. 158-59.

<sup>538</sup> See *ibid.*, pp. 157-58

the founding president of the Women's Educational Union<sup>539</sup> and served as head of the Ladies Work Society to help women obtain commissions for needlework.<sup>540</sup> In view of her belief in women's independence and judgement, it is likely that she intended the relief of *Geraint and Enid* to point out the strength of women like Enid who struggle under the dominance of a patriarchal society.

As the relief represented a subject close to her heart, Louise was highly concerned to get it ready in time for the opening of the Grosvenor on 29 April 1878.<sup>541</sup> Prevented, however, through an official engagement, from supervising the baking process of the terracotta, she had to entrust Boehm and his studio with the final preparations.<sup>542</sup> A letter from Boehm to Louise, dating from a few days before the Grosvenor opening, indicates not only Louise's independence as a sculptor but that her artistic relationship with Boehm had changed from him being her teacher to becoming her advisor. In the letter, he assures her that he made all alterations to the work according to Louise's instructions and remarks that he would have given her the advice to choose a square, rather than a rectangular, format for her work to prevent any cracks. In addition, he promises that great care was taken in the firing process and that he was organising the work's illustration for the Grosvenor exhibition catalogue.<sup>543</sup>

As the work of a royal artist, but also through its prominent size of 60 x 120 centimetres, the relief attracted much critical attention when it was exhibited.

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<sup>539</sup> See Stocker (2004).

<sup>540</sup> Anon., 'Art Needlework – II', *Magazine of Art* (Jan. 1880), pp. 178-82, here p. 180.

<sup>541</sup> Anon., 'The Grosvenor Gallery', *The Times* (2 May 1878), p. 7.

<sup>542</sup> See Wake (1988), pp. 206-207.

<sup>543</sup> 'Enclosed I beg to send Your Royal Highness the letter by Messenger of the Grosvenor Gallery, The Relievo will go to the Kiln to be baked tomorrow. It is only just sufficiently dry to be safe – and I regret to say that a large crack has come across it which can however be perfectly well stopped and restored when it comes home on Monday morning. I have made the alteration which Your Royal Highness wishes in the letter of the 20<sup>th</sup> [?] The restoration in the vent across the Relievo will necessitate it being painted but that will be done so very carefully that it can not be detected. Every possible care has been taken during the drying before a slow fire which is kept up day & night but [...] these little misfortunes can not be prevented particularly if the pannell is so large & not a square, which [...] process is always the safest & which I should have advocated if there had been time. I could not get it photographed as the time was too short & the risk of taking it from the fire too great but have made a small drawing for the catalogue & also sent the verses to the Secretary. Hoping that everything will be to the satisfaction of Your Royal Highness in the end.' RA/QV/ADDA/17/1772.6, Boehm to Princess Louise, 22 April 1878.

In his review of the Grosvenor of 1878, the Pre-Raphaelite critic William Michael Rossetti commented on Louise's contribution:

In sculpture[,] the work which excites most attention is the *Geraint and Enid* of Princess Louise. There are seven horses close together here, and an eighth in the distance: of course, anything but an easy matter for even a skilful hand to manage. The movement is consentaneous, not however particularly vigorous; but the work of a lady and a princess is assessed from a point of view rather different from that which applies to a professional sculptor.<sup>544</sup>

By classifying Louise as a 'lady' and 'princess' in a category of her own, while highlighting the ambition of her composition, Rossetti cleverly damned Louise with faint praise. He certainly recognised that the technical challenge of depicting overlapping horses in relief resonated with the tradition of the cavalcade in the celebrated Parthenon frieze,<sup>545</sup> and therefore conceded that this was difficult for 'even a skilful hand to manage.' Beyond the fact that Louise's work excited 'most attention' because of her persona, the publicity suggests that *Geraint and Enid* was significant as a work to raise public perception of women artists at the Grosvenor Gallery. Of fourteen sculptures, Louise's work was the only one by a female practitioner. It was also the only sculpture illustrated in the catalogue apart from a marble bust by Boehm<sup>546</sup> and a bronze relief by the young, progressive Edwin Roscoe Mullins<sup>547</sup> and thus situated Louise between celebrity and innovation in contemporary sculpture.

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<sup>544</sup> William Michael Rossetti, 'The Grosvenor Gallery (Second Notice)', *The Academy* (1 June 1878), p. 495.

<sup>545</sup> During the nineteenth century the Parthenon sculptures were considered as an exemplary model for relief sculpture. See Edwin Roscoe Mullins, *Primer of Sculpture* (London, New York: Cassell, 1889), pp. 39, 42.

<sup>546</sup> Blackburn, *Grosvenor Notes* (1878), p. 56, no. 231, illustrated on p. 56.

<sup>547</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56, no. 232, illustrated on p. 57.

For more on Roscoe Mullins, see Walter Armstrong, 'E. Roscoe Mullins', *The Portfolio* (Jan. 1889), pp. 141-43; S. E. Fryer, 'Mullins, Edwin Roscoe (1848-1907)', rev. Emma Hardy, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford

Two further works by Louise, the today untraced terracotta statuette of *Violet Lindsay*,<sup>548</sup> exhibited in 1879 [fig. 2.29], and the oil portrait of *Henrietta Montalba*,<sup>549</sup> exhibited in 1882 [fig. 2.30], attest to the princess's identification with artistic and independent women, while also paying tribute to her aesthetic sensitivity in art. Like Montalba, Violet Lindsay, later known as the Duchess of Rutland, was a close friend of Louise. Being the daughter of the Queen's Groom-in-Waiting, Lindsay was introduced to Louise through her royal connection.<sup>550</sup> However, she was also well known in the aesthetic circle in London and admired for her beauty and as a talented amateur painter.<sup>551</sup> Reproduced in the *Grosvenor Notes*, Louise's statuette of Lindsay shows her dressed in a simple, high-collared gown and seated upright on a high stool, looking out and holding a small basket on her lap. Through the refined realism of Boehm and Dalou, small statuettes, especially of female domestic scenes, were highly fashionable during the 1870s. Yet Louise's figure does not depict a woman enclosed in her domestic world as, for example, in Dalou's statuettes in the collection of Louise's brother Bertie. Instead, it represents a highly confident woman who is relaxed but also aware of her environment. The composition of the statuette seems, in fact, to portray Lindsay as an artist. Her simple dress could be her work frock, the high stool could be her painting chair and the basket could form part of Lindsay's flower still lifes, which she frequently exhibited at the Grosvenor.<sup>552</sup> In addition, her

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University Press, 2004, <http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.pugwash.lib.warwick.ac.uk/view/article/35146> [accessed: 21 Oct. 2013].

<sup>548</sup> Henry Blackburn, *Grosvenor Notes 1879. An illustrated Catalogue of the Summer Exhibition* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1879), p. 58, no. 296, illustrated on p. 50.

<sup>549</sup> Henry Blackburn, *Grosvenor Notes 1882. An illustrated Catalogue of the Summer Exhibition at the Grosvenor Gallery* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1882), p. 27, no. 73, illustrated on p. 27.

<sup>550</sup> In her diary of 1877, Queen Victoria records Violet Lindsay's visits to Windsor, on 1 July, and to Balmoral, on 1 October, 3 October, 7 October and 12 October. See QVJ, [www.queenvictoriasjournals.com](http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.com) [accessed: 24 Sept. 2013].

<sup>551</sup> See Paget (1921), p. 278; K. D. Reynolds, 'Manners, (Marion Margaret) Violet, duchess of Rutland (1856–1937)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn., Oct.2005 [accessed: 24 Sept. 2013].

<sup>552</sup> Between 1880 and 1890 Violet Lindsay exhibited twenty works at the Grosvenor Gallery of which the majority were flower still lifes.

attentive gaze seems to imply the process of thought before turning the artistic idea into practice.

Another portrayal of female confidence is apparent in the portrait of *Henrietta Montalba*, which Louise began during her friend's visit to Canada in 1879. Montalba is seated on an elegant sofa with an open book in her lap and looking up in contemplation. Her right arm is leaning poised on a velvet cushion propped against the armrest. Behind her, a vase with pink azaleas complements the arrangement. The opulent decoration and the contrast between Montalba's black dress and hair with the yellow wall panelling of the background, suggest the aesthetic refinement of her thoughts. The description of Montalba's portrait in the exhibition catalogue with the subtitle 'Dark hair, black dress, velvet cushion and azaleas',<sup>553</sup> clearly emphasises Louise's concern with sensual colour effects and luxurious textures and situated her work within the context of contemporary aesthetic trends. The use of loose brushwork, colour planes, and the relative flatness of the surface suggest Louise's awareness of the innovative painting techniques of the French modernising painter Edouard Manet, whose work was frequently reviewed in the British press.<sup>554</sup> In addition, the rhythmic composition and aesthetic azalea flowers allude to the characteristic linear and chromatic arrangements of Albert Moore's aestheticism, exemplified by his key work *Azaleas* (1868) and subsequent depictions of beautiful women in aesthetic settings, which he showed at the Grosvenor Gallery.<sup>555</sup> Yet, in contrast to Moore, Louise did not combine formal aestheticism with the representation of the female

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<sup>553</sup> Blackburn, *Grosvenor Notes* (1882), p. 27.

<sup>554</sup> See, for example, Philip Burty's comment about Manet's painting *The Railway* in the Salon of 1874: 'Critics are impressed by the freshness of colouring, the truth of the drawing, the simplicity of the general effect.' Philip Burty, 'The Salon of 1874 (Second Notice)', *The Academy* (16 May 1874), p. 555; In 1876, the critic E. F.S. Pattison reviewed Manet's portrait of *M. Desboutin* and emphasised Manet's 'directness' and 'frankness' of depicting the sitter, the composition in blocks of broken tones, and the conspicuous use of black colour. See E.F.S. Pattison, 'Fine Art: The Salon of 1876 (First Notice)', *The Academy* (13 May 1876), pp. 463-64.

<sup>555</sup> See Robyn Asleson, *Albert Moore* (London, Phaidon, 2000), p. 166; Prettejohn (2007), pp. 101-27.

as timeless, sensual and passive. By placing her sitter in an aesthetic setting, Louise represents her as being aware of her environment. Rather than being merged in her aesthetic surrounding, Montalba seems to use it as inspiration and foil for her artistic identity.

By depicting both Montalba and Lindsay as attractive and poised within an aesthetic context, Louise articulates the potential of women as being both feminine and feminist. As Talia Schaffer and Kathy Alexis have pointed out in their essay compilation on *Women and British Aestheticism* (1999), women aesthetes, especially writers, were significant, sophisticated and socially engaged, rather than being the object of male desire or consumers of aesthetic commodities.<sup>556</sup> Aestheticism offered women aesthetes an appropriate vocabulary through which they could engage with important issues such as gender, sexuality and class. As we have seen with Louise, Aestheticism also enabled women sculptors and painters to engage with female issues. The women-friendly environment of the Grosvenor Gallery's social circle allowed Louise and her peers to preserve her aristocratic respectability while actively engaging in female sociability, which formed an important aspect of Aestheticism.<sup>557</sup>

As an artist engaging with aesthetic concerns, but also as a patron and friend of recognised aesthetes, Louise can be considered as representing elite women's engagement with Aestheticism. From her interest in Whistler's *Peacock Room* to her application of female Aestheticism in her own works, she used her aesthetic engagement as a means of distinguishing herself from royal norms and traditional gender expectations and of creating her independent artistic identity. Aided by her superior social status, Aestheticism empowered Louise to articulate

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<sup>556</sup> Talia Schaffer and Kathy Alexis (eds), *Women and British Aestheticism* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999).

<sup>557</sup> For more the importance of female sociability in Aestheticism, see Denney (2000), pp. 157-58; Similarly, for the importance of male sociability within Aestheticism, see Edwards (2006).



her views on femininity and feminism without appearing unladylike and audacious. Her artistic network provided a privileged alternative space beyond the art establishment, in which the Grosvenor Gallery served both as recognised social platform and springboard for elitist female emancipation.

### **2.3. Public statuary and its politics**

Louise's sculptural practice in the late Victorian period was characterised by her increased appearance as a maker of public statues and monuments. After having temporarily given up sculpture during her stay in Canada, where her husband served as Governor General, on returning to Britain in 1882, Louise was fuelled with new enthusiasm for the medium. While she and Lorne were increasingly growing apart, she began focusing more on her public identity as a sculptor and her political significance as a member of the royal family. Beyond her participation at the Grosvenor Gallery, as discussed in the previous section, Louise became eager to demonstrate her ability in the male-dominated domain of public portraiture and memorials. During the last two decades of the century she made two outdoor statues of Queen Victoria for the decoration of two churches. One was for the façade of Lichfield Cathedral (1885),<sup>558</sup> the other for Manchester Cathedral (c.1898-1902), forming part of a new porch built to commemorate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.<sup>559</sup> Since both works are comparable in their purpose as neo-gothic niche statues, I focus here on the example from Lichfield. This statue preceded the freestanding marble statue of *Queen Victoria* at Kensington Gardens, commissioned in 1887 in honour of the Queen's Golden Jubilee that year. While the iconography reflected standard royal portraiture, the statue's genesis is

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<sup>558</sup> George T. Noszlopy and Fiona Waterhouse, *Public Sculpture of Staffordshire and the Black Country* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2005), pp. 218-19.

<sup>559</sup> Terry Wyke with Harry Cocks, *Public Sculpture of Greater Manchester* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2004), pp. 60-61.

revealing in terms of its symbolic references and political ramifications. In addition, Gilbert's involvement with the statue as artistic advisor to Louise after Boehm's death in 1890 indicates the significance of his impact on Louise's subsequent work, which culminated, in 1904, in the monumental *Boer War Memorial* at St Paul's Cathedral.

As pointed out by Marjan Sterckx, the percentage of public sculptures made by women is extremely limited compared to those made by male artists.<sup>560</sup> Based on Victorian gender norms, female sculptors were usually disadvantaged in gaining public commissions. Their works were located at the margins of the public sphere, in the socially accepted and 'sheltered' 'borderland' between the public and private realm.<sup>561</sup> Thus, public sculpture by women artists was rarely found in the open public space of the city centre,<sup>562</sup> but tucked away in niches on church façades or cultural institutions, considered as more accommodating environments for women.<sup>563</sup> While this assessment may be appropriate in some cases, by examining Louise's public sculptures it does not appear, however, that Victorian gender politics had an adverse effect on the realisation of her works. What rather mattered for Louise in securing public commissions were personal connections and the implications of her royal status.

By looking at the commissioning process and iconography of two statues of Queen Victoria at Lichfield Cathedral and at Kensington Gardens, as well as at Louise's *Boer War Memorial* at St Paul's, mentioned above, I assess Louise's

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<sup>560</sup> Sterckx has counted at least 230 sculptures commissioned from women artists in public spaces in Paris, London and Brussels between 1789 and 1814 which represents less than three percent of the number of public sculptures by male artists. See Marjan Sterckx, 'The invisible "Sculpteuse": Sculptures by Women in the Nineteenth-century Urban Public Space – London, Paris, Brussels', *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* 7, issue 2, (Autumn 2008): <http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/index.php/autumn08/90-the-invisible-sculpteuse-sculptures-by-women-in-the-nineteenth-century-urban-public-spacelondon-paris-brussels> [accessed: 18 April 2012], pp. 2-3.

<sup>561</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>562</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>563</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 18-20.

status as a female sculptor of public statuary in the context of her identity as a royal amateur engaging with the implications of monarchy and empire.

### ***Queen Victoria at Lichfield Cathedral (1885)***

At Lichfield Cathedral, Louise's statue of the Queen formed part of a vast restoration project from 1877 onwards, to re-complete the niches of the cathedral's thirteenth-century west front which had lost most of its over a hundred medieval statues since the Civil War [fig. 2.31]. The programme, devised by the leading neo-gothic architect George Gilbert Scott (1811–78), stipulated historically accurate sandstone figures of kings, saints, and local churchmen representing the history of Christianity in England up to the present.<sup>564</sup> As part of this scheme, the statue of *Queen Victoria* was highly significant. It represented not only the current monarch but the Queen's function as Supreme Governor of the Church of England, which resonated in the statue's prominent position on the northern tower of the cathedral's façade. There, Victoria was surrounded by figures of saints legitimising her role. While most of the sculptural works were commissioned from the local firm of Bridgeman, for the more significant statues, the Dean and Chapter accepted suggestions from private sponsors for external sculptors, though reserving for themselves the right to approve of them.<sup>565</sup> This policy avoided the lengthy process of an open competition and offered an opportunity to less established sculptors with effective private connections. Apart from Louise, the selected external sculptors were the little-known G. W. Seale, of Brixton,<sup>566</sup> W. R. Ingram, of Ecclestone Street,<sup>567</sup> as well as Mary Grant, a

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<sup>564</sup> Noszlopy and Waterhouse (2005), pp. 218-19.

<sup>565</sup> Read (1982), p. 269.

<sup>566</sup> G.W. Seale refers probably to the stone carver and architectural sculptor John Wesley Seale (1826–85). See 'John Wesley Seale', *Mapping the Practice and Profession of Sculpture in Britain and Ireland 1851-1951*, University of Glasgow

professional female sculptor who was related to Sir Francis Grant, director of the Royal Academy.<sup>568</sup> As the only other female working on the project, Mary Grant (1830–1908) was responsible for around twenty statues, including some of the most important religious figures.<sup>569</sup> In a similar way as Grant probably resorted to her family connections for securing her commission, Louise appears to have negotiated her appointment through her own personal connections. Of the influential local dignitaries in Lichfield, she was acquainted with the Bishop of Lichfield, William Dalrymple Maclagan, who had previously been vicar at Louise's parish church at Kensington. In addition, she knew the Dean of Lichfield, Edward Bickersteth, from a visit to Lichfield in 1877.<sup>570</sup> Although it cannot be verified who suggested Louise as the author of the *Queen Victoria* statue, Louise's status and private connections suggest that her candidature was accepted without question. Not only could her public prominence provide the cathedral with publicity, her royal influence was potentially of advantage for the promotion of church offices.<sup>571</sup> Furthermore, what underpinned Louise's commission from an artistic perspective was her previous experience in portraying the Queen. Usually, public statues of the Queen were commissioned from professional male sculptors, but this opportunity offered Louise a chance to enter the domain of public statuary.<sup>572</sup>

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History of Art and HATIL, online database 2011, [http://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/person.php?id=ann\\_1290870995](http://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/person.php?id=ann_1290870995) [accessed: 1 Nov. 2013].

<sup>567</sup> Referring to the London-based sculptor William Rowlands Ingram (active 1880–1900). 'William Rowlands Ingram', *Mapping the Practice and Profession of Sculpture in Britain and Ireland 1851-1951*, University of Glasgow History of Art and HATIL, online database 2011, [http://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/person.php?id=msib5\\_1205774977](http://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/person.php?id=msib5_1205774977), [accessed: 1 Nov. 2013].

<sup>568</sup> Anon., 'Lichfield Cathedral. No. 9 Monuments and Relics', *The Mercury* (12 June 1891), p. 7.

<sup>569</sup> Communication with Staffordshire Stoke on Trent Archive Service, 10 October 2000. I would like to thank Shannon Hunter Hurtado for this information.

<sup>570</sup> Anon., 'Public Notices', *Derbyshire Times* (11 April 1877), p. 3.

<sup>571</sup> When Maclagan was put down as new Archbishop of York in 1891, Queen Victoria was highly supportive of this suggestion. See QVJ, 5 May 1891, <http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org> [accessed: 1 Nov. 2013].

<sup>572</sup> For a list of the professional sculptors who made full-size statue of Queen Victoria, see Elisabeth Darby, 'Appendix: Catalogue of Statues of Queen Victoria and of Prince Albert', in Darby (1983), vol. II.

In line with the sculptural scheme laid out by the architect, the life-size statue of *Queen Victoria* is standing motionless on an octagonal plinth under a small Gothic canopy [fig. 2.32]. Dressed in medieval costume with heavy vertical folds, she carries her regal attributes. Her head is adorned with an open crown and in her hands she holds the orb and sceptre. The rigid iconography follows the standard formula for neo-gothic statues of Queen Victoria, visible on many façades around the country. One of the best-known examples is John Thomas's statue of *Queen Victoria* (1845) above the Sovereign's Entrance to the Victoria Tower at the Houses of Parliament.<sup>573</sup> Yet, while Thomas depicted the Queen with youthful, idealised traits to emphasise the perpetual bond between the monarchy and parliament, Louise portrayed Victoria with her realistic matronly features to single her out amongst the line of more imperceptible historic and religious figures. Victoria is clearly recognisable through her widow's veil over the typical parted hairline, the bulging eyes, thin lips and weak chin. Though her expression is calm and regal, the individuality of her features emphasises her authority and presence as a contemporary person.

Thus, in December 1885, shortly after the statue had been installed, the *Lichfield Diocesan Magazine* reported that it was 'an excellent likeness of Her Majesty' and further, that it 'was executed at the request of the Dean of Lichfield, and with the Queen's permission, by Her Royal Highness the Princess Louise.'<sup>574</sup> Although the news of the work was not widely reported in the national press, Louise made sure that her authorship was easily identifiable to visitors of the Lichfield façade. While most statues on the Lichfield west front are not visibly attributed, Louise signed and dated her work with the carved inscription on the

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<sup>573</sup> See Martin (2013), pp. 92-96.

<sup>574</sup> Quoted after Richard Prentis, *Lichfield Friends Report* (March 2007), p. 45.

plinth 'LOUISE 1885' [fig. 2.33]. The typical royal signature of the first name, which Louise used even after adopting a surname through her marriage, distinguishes Louise's authorship, as only members of the royal family could sign in this way. By contrast, professional middle-class sculptors would generally sign with their surname, or, remained unknown, like most of the sculptors at the Lichfield façade.<sup>575</sup> Louise's conspicuous signature and the fact that she limited her involvement at Lichfield to the statue of *Queen Victoria*, suggests that she reached her boundaries as a royal in the public sphere and did not wish to rival the other professional sculptors involved. While her position as Victoria's daughter legitimised her commission for the *Queen Victoria* statue, Louise's amateur status did not give grounds for any unrelated work.

### ***Queen Victoria* at Kensington Gardens (1893)**

While the provincial location of the *Queen Victoria* statue at Lichfield might be considered as public 'borderland' according to Sterckx's definition of the peripheral visibility of Victorian female sculptors in the public sphere,<sup>576</sup> Louise's *Queen Victoria* statue at Kensington Gardens clearly positioned her at the centre of public statuary [fig. 2.34]. Commemorating the Queen's Golden Jubilee in 1887, the Kensington statue was a single, freestanding monument located at the heart of the capital. The idea for a Jubilee statue at Kensington came from the local Women's Jubilee Committee who appointed Louise as the sculptor of their commission. As local resident of honour, it is unlikely that Louise had to compete with any other candidates. In addition, being on home ground made it even more acceptable for her to prominently manifest her sculptural practice in public. Thus,

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<sup>575</sup> While neither the statues by the Bridgeman stonemasons nor those by Mary Grant appear to be signed, Ingram, one of the other external sculptors signed his statue of *Saint Stephen* as 'W. R. Ingram / S'.

<sup>576</sup> See Sterckx (2008).

in December 1888, she presented a scheme for a seated marble statue of the young Queen at her coronation. The idea was accepted and the eastern front of Kensington Palace was decided as the statue's site.<sup>577</sup> Over the following two years, enthusiastic donors subscribed to the project and raised the large sum of three thousand pounds estimated for the work's completion.<sup>578</sup> In comparison to the cost of other public marble statues of the Queen, Louise's estimate was at the upper end of the price range for similar public statues.<sup>579</sup> Although seated statues were usually more elaborate than standing figures, the Kensington statue was conspicuously expensive, considering that Louise was not out to make a profit. Yet, as the statue was based on a direct, rather than competitive, commission, Louise was not obliged to minimise costs for the material and production. Instead, she accounted for the best quality marble – pure white Carrara – which was often used for public statues but also particularly expensive. Another reason, which might have driven up the price for the statue, is that Louise had to build a temporary studio adjacent to her old one by Godwin, to accommodate the large-sized statue. Drawn up in a plan from the Office of Works, the temporary studio with a removable iron frame comprised of a large room with a higher roof than the old studio, and with large roof sash windows facing three directions for equal lighting [fig. 2.35].<sup>580</sup> No documents survive regarding the new studio's cost or payment, but it is likely that the expense for it formed part of the total cost of the statue. The fact that Louise built a new studio for the purpose on her property, rather than relying, for example, on Boehm's studio, or hiring an external space, indicates that she had not previously expected to work on a large-scale sculpture when she commissioned her studio from Godwin in 1878. Her efforts a decade

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<sup>577</sup> Anon. 'Statues, Memorials, &c', *Building News* (21 Dec. 1888), p. 834.

<sup>578</sup> Anon., 'Notes of the Month', *St Mary Abbots Parish Magazine* (Aug. 1890), p. 194.

<sup>579</sup> For the prices of marble statues of Queen Victoria see Darby (1983), vol. II.

<sup>580</sup> See London, National Archives, Works 34/734.

later clearly suggest that she considered this project as highly significant for her career.

In recognition of the parish of Kensington as the Queen's home until her accession to the throne, Louise's choice of representing her mother at her coronation to emphasise the celebration of her Golden Jubilee was carefully considered. The chosen iconography was a reminder of Victoria's local connection and implied that her time in Kensington prepared her suitably for her role as sovereign. Yet, rather than conceiving a new composition, Louise based her statue on the well-known state portrait of *Queen Victoria* by Sir George Hayter (1838) [fig. 2.36].<sup>581</sup> While this choice of subject matter would have facilitated the composition process, it ensured that the statue was explicit and recognizable, and manifested Louise's ability to translate a two-dimensional image into three-dimensional sculpture. In addition, Louise may have hoped to flatter her mother who admired Hayter's portrait of her coronation in particular.<sup>582</sup> Further to this, as Hayter's portrait showed Victoria seated on her homage chair, and not on the coronation throne, the implication of Victoria receiving homage was an appropriate idea for a jubilee statue that was instigated by the wish of local citizens to pay tribute to their sovereign.

Despite the availability of a compositional source, the translation from the medium of painting into sculpture and the retrospective over fifty years of Victoria's reign necessitated some changes and adaptations to the statue. While the medium of painting offered the advantage of differentiating different materials

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<sup>581</sup> For George Hayter's portrait of *Queen Victoria* (1838) and its copies in oil and print, see Oliver Millar, *The Pictures in the Collection of her Majesty the Queen: The Victorian Pictures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), cat. nos. 307-309, text on pp. 103-106.

<sup>582</sup> In her diary entry of 18 August 1838 Victoria records the completion of Hayter's second version of her portrait: 'The small one he has done for me, of myself in the Dalmatic Robes, is finished; it is excessively like, and beautifully painted.' QVJ, 18 Aug. 1838, <http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org> [accessed: 30 Oct. 2013]; In contrast to Hayter's portrait, another official portrait of the Queen standing in coronation robes by David Wilkie was not only disliked by the queen but vehemently criticized in the press. See 'Queen Victoria: By Sir David Wilkie', <http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/picture-of-month/displaypicture.aspx?id=273> [accessed: 30 Oct. 2013].



through colour and of adding a context through the painted surrounding, an outdoor statue in marble had to negotiate materiality and effect through differentiated modelling and take different viewing points into account. Through an original plaster model of Louise's statue, today at the Victoria & Albert Museum, this translation process can be traced in two stages [fig. 2.37].<sup>583</sup>

The plaster model shows Victoria largely in the same pose as in the painting, seated in her coronation robes and holding the sceptre in her right hand while the left leans calmly over the armrest. Yet, the robes and accessories are simplified in their elaboration to adapt to the medium of sculpture. Beyond this, further details such as the hairstyle and turning of the head are modified to evoke a slightly different expression. In Hayter's portrait, the young Victoria wears her hair looped under the ears and turns her head sharply to the left, gazing up towards a ray of light that signifies heavenly inspiration. In the painting, this trope helps to mediate between Victoria's inexperience and her royal entitlement to the throne. In an outdoor sculpture, however, the similar effect of lighting from above was not feasible. Meanwhile, the Jubilee statue did not need any sign of righteousness for the Queen's position. In 1887, Victoria had been on the throne for fifty years and Louise adapted her interpretation of the young Queen accordingly. Hence, in the plaster, the head is only slightly turned to the left to animate the countenance whereas the gaze appears straightforward and firm. Correspondingly, the hairstyle does not follow the maidenly look with looped braids but shows a rejuvenated version of Victoria's matron look as with a sharp middle parting. The adaption of further tropes worked in the same direction. While the painting shows Victoria holding the sceptre loosely with her index

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<sup>583</sup> In 1835 Louise presented the plaster sketch model to the Victoria & Albert Museum in honour of King George V's Silver Jubilee. Anon., 'Princess Louise's Offer', *Aberdeen Journal* (10 April 1935), p. 6; See also Bilbey with Trusted (2002), cat. no. 255, pp. 179-80.

slightly raised as an indication of her immaturity, in the plaster, her hand clasps the sceptre boldly to articulate her certitude. Victoria's left foot – resting in the painting on a large footstool – is in the plaster statue placed on a small cushion and assertively pushed forward. Louise added a further alteration in her design of the homage chair. In the painting, Hayter adapts the original homage chair, only by exchanging the actual sphinx motif of the armrest's handhold for a large lion head.<sup>584</sup> In her plaster model Louise also depicts a lion head as a more established symbol of royalty than the ambiguous Sphinx, the symbol of female mystery. Yet, rather than copying the exact lion head motif from Hayter, Louise's version is more understated and complemented by the motif of small laurel wreaths along the seat rail [fig. 2.38]. In short, Louise's idea was to update her portrait of the young Queen by imbuing it with an air of royal command and self-assurance. Despite its derivative connotations, the statue design incorporates a deliberate representation of the present time.

The plaster model is painted all-over in a, probably original, dark brown colour to give clear definition to the effect of light and shadow, which suggests that it was Louise's official presentation model. It is possible that this is the model which Louise's husband Lorne describes in a letter to his brother in July 1890 as 'a fine thing now, and admired by all who have seen it, including the Queen.'<sup>585</sup> To arrive at this 'fine thing', Louise could refer to Boehm for technical and artistic advice, as this was her first public statue of this kind. According to Louise's lady-in-waiting, Boehm 'criticized and advised of course, but the

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<sup>584</sup> See Roberts (2002), cat. no. 89, pp. 163-64.

<sup>585</sup> Letter from Lorne to Lord Archie Campbell, 13 July 1890, Archive Inverary, quoted after Wake (1988), p. 303.

Princess was so determined to do the whole thing herself that she would not allow him so much as to lay a finger upon it.<sup>586</sup>

Considering now the final marble at Kensington Gardens [fig. 2.34], it is surprising to detect again several small, but significant, differences from the earlier plaster model. Certain details, such as the Queen's more graceful holding of the sceptre, the addition of tassels to the foot cushion, and the more flowing appearance of the drapery served to improve the formal balance of the composition. Yet, there are further compositional changes which affected the significance of the statue. In order to add more gravitas to the idea of royal authority, the marble statue shows Victoria holding a scroll in her left hand, rather than just leaning on the armrest. Her crown, depicted with high arches resembles the traditional St Edward's Crown rather than the Imperial State Crown of Victoria's coronation.<sup>587</sup> Further to this, Louise replaced the lion and wreaths decoration of the homage chair with the conspicuous motif of entwined and flowing dolphins on the handfold and seat rails to allude to the British marine empire [fig. 2.39].

A likely explanation for these artistic changes is that after Boehm's death in December 1890, Louise found a new adviser in Alfred Gilbert, Boehm's studio neighbour and former assistant, who was taking over many of Boehm's unfinished commissions. It was known that 'Gilbert the Sculptor is Louise's great friend',<sup>588</sup> and Gilbert had helped Louise in hushing up her visit to Boehm's

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<sup>586</sup> [Caroline Holland], *The Notebooks of a Spinster Lady 1878-1903* (London: Cassell and Company, 1919), p. 131.

<sup>587</sup> The crown, which is today worn by the statue, is a modern, simplified replacement of the crown originally carved for the statue. A photograph of 1893, however, shows Queen Victoria wearing a crown with high arches similar to the St. Edward's Crown, which was made for the coronation of Charles II in 1661 in reminiscence of the medieval crown thought to date from the 11<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>588</sup> RA/QV/ADDU/32/ 679, Queen Victoria to Vicky, 27 January 1892, quoted after Dormant (1985), p. 107.

studio on the day when he died.<sup>589</sup> In view of this close relationship it is likely that Louise consulted with Gilbert over her Kensington statue. His involvement is documented in April 1893 when he was supervising the statue's erection and gave advice on its foundations on site.<sup>590</sup> Yet, prior to organising this practical aspect, Gilbert had probably also an influence on Louise's artistic decisions.<sup>591</sup> In particular, the dolphin motif on the statue's chair and the curvilinear design of the base are suggestive of Gilbert's artistic repertoire. For example, in his *Shaftesbury Memorial Fountain* (1886-93) Gilbert used a basin of similarly serpentine-curved shape, which is decorated with ornamental dolphins prefiguring Louise's dolphin motif. Beyond the aesthetic significance of Gilbert's innovative ornamental elements, what also characterised his compositions was their deep, symbolic meaning.<sup>592</sup> By adapting the motif of ornamental dolphins to replace the lion heads and wreaths, Louise chose more imaginary and meaningful emblems to allude to the Queen's empire overseas and thereby update the repertoire of royal iconography.<sup>593</sup>

Considering especially the statue's positioning in front of Kensington Palace and facing eastwards, the sea-related symbolism enhanced the idea of the British Empire, of which the 'Eastern' colonies were especially prosperous. The imperial iconography was recognised by the contemporary audience. As the local parish magazine put it, the Queen is 'looking towards the great city, eastwards

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<sup>589</sup> On 21 January 1891 Gilbert visited Louise at Kensington Palace and had 'a long talk' with her about matters after Boehm's death. Cecil Gilbert, *The Studio Diary of Alfred Gilbert between 1890 and 1894*, vol. I (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cecil Gilbert, 1992), p. 33; see also Dormant (1985), pp. 105-108.

<sup>590</sup> London, National Archives, WORKS /20 /77, 2080/1.

<sup>591</sup> Darby (1983), vol. I, p. 332.

<sup>592</sup> See Martina Droth, 'Ornament as Sculpture: The Sam Wilson Chimney-piece in Leeds City Art Gallery', *Henry Moore Institute Essays on Sculpture* 30 (Leeds: Henry Moore Institute, 2000), pp. 6-7.

<sup>593</sup> For more on the symbolic importance of the dolphin as emblem of the British Empire, see Charles Avery, *A School of Dolphins* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2009), pp. 167-71.

toward the great empire over which our beloved Queen has reigned beneficently for 52 years.’<sup>594</sup>

On 28 June 1893, the Jubilee statue was unveiled in a festive act attended by the Queen, the Prince of Wales and around two thousand invited guests. It was a spectacular event, which brought Louise much publicity. Special stands with seats for the spectators were put up around the statue. After the reading of an official address, the Queen pulled the Union Flag off the statue and children with flowers paid homage to her while a band played the national anthem [fig. 2.40].<sup>595</sup>

Despite the success of the ceremony, commentary on Louise’s work was inflected by an inescapable awareness of her royal status. Some private voices, off the record, mistrusted Louise’s authorship, taunting that ‘her master, the sculptor Boehm, had the chief hand in it.’<sup>596</sup> Others, close to the court, felt awe-inspired by the royal aura of the ceremony and they overwhelmed Louise with congratulations, describing her statue as ‘the work of a true artist helped by the love of a daughter’<sup>597</sup>, and as ‘full of that highest form of beauty’.<sup>598</sup> Published criticism was likewise considerate of Louise’s royal and amateur status. Comments ranged from flattering reviews in the general press, praising the statue as an ‘excellent presentation of her Majesty’,<sup>599</sup> to more critical responses in the specialised press, describing the statue as ‘notable though less important as an artistic creation.’<sup>600</sup> What provoked special comment, however, was the statue’s authenticity as an original work by Louise. Thus, the *London Journal* did not hold back about the practical efforts behind the statue’s realisation in marble:

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<sup>594</sup> Anon., ‘Notes of the Month’, *St Mary Abbots Paris Magazine* (Aug. 1890), p. 194.

<sup>595</sup> For a description of the full event, see Anon., ‘The Queen at Kensington’, *The Times* (29 June 1893), p. 6.

<sup>596</sup> Holland (1919), p. 131.

<sup>597</sup> Isabella Taylor to Princess Louise, 28 Nov. 1893, Archive Inverary, Bundle 423.

<sup>598</sup> Albert Grey to Princess Louise, 29 June 1893, Archive Inverary, Bundle 423.

<sup>599</sup> Anon., ‘The Queen in Kensington’, *Morning Post* (29 June 1893), no page, newspaper cutting in London, National Archives, WORKS/20/77.

<sup>600</sup> Marion Harry Spielmann (ed.), ‘Our illustrated Note-Book’, *Magazine of Art*, p. 394.

The Princess has for some time [...] given up her little atelier, in the corner of Kensington Palace to the work which is now completed. When the huge block of marble from which it is carved arrived some two years or so since, one wall of the studio had to be removed to admit the unhewn mass, which, after being duly reduced by the usual assistants, has been finished from the original model by the Princess.<sup>601</sup>

Documents in the National Archives reveal that the statue was pointed by the London firm of Angelo Castioni, some time between 1891 and 1893.<sup>602</sup> According to the usual practice in any professional studio, Louise then would have applied the finishing touches to the statue herself. To highlight the authenticity of her work, as previously in the Lichfield statue, she inscribed the plinth at the rear with her first name [fig. 2.41]. Yet this time, she imitated her hand-written signature, a feature she may have copied from Gilbert who signed many of his bronzes in this way. In addition to critics' focus on the work's authenticity, Louise was praised as 'the first woman who has executed a statue for erection in the metropolis.'<sup>603</sup> Although recent scholarship has credited Anne Seymour Damer in the late eighteenth century to be the first female author of a public statue in London,<sup>604</sup> when Louise's statue was unveiled in 1893, this heritage was probably forgotten or ignored and Louise gained the reputation as a pioneer female sculptor.

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<sup>601</sup> Anon., 'People of Interest: Princess Louise', *London Journal* (15 July 1893), p. 31.

<sup>602</sup> Documents in the National Archive confirm that the firm of Angelo Castioni pointed the marble statue and that an assistant called G. Somaini helped with the carving. See letter from Somaini to Office of Works, 3 June 1898 and letter from Arthur Collins to Mr. Brett (Office of Works), dated 22 June 1898. London, National Archives, WORKS/20/77; According to the *Mapping Sculpture* website, Somaini came to Castioni in 1891. 'G. Somajni', *Mapping the Practice and Profession of Sculpture in Britain and Ireland 1851-1951*, University of Glasgow History of Art and HATII, online database 2011, [http://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/person.php?id=msib3\\_1215444975](http://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/person.php?id=msib3_1215444975), [accessed: 5 Nov. 2013].

<sup>603</sup> Anon., 'The Queen at Kensington', *The Times* (29 June 1893), p. 6.

<sup>604</sup> This was a colossal statue of *Apollo* (c.1794) for the top of Drury Lane Theatre. See Alison Yarrington, 'The Female Pygmalion: Anne Seymour Damer, Allan Cunningham and the writing of a woman sculptor's life', in *Sculpture Journal* 1 (1997), pp. 32-44, here p. 39, FN 58; Sterckx (2008), p. 11.

To make the Queen's Golden Jubilee statue for the Borough of Kensington was certainly an opportunistic chance as Louise could utilise her family connection and local prominence to secure the commission. Clearly aware of her privilege, she pulled all strings to make the work a success. The iconography was consciously chosen to evoke the Queen's reign over a vast empire; Louise took inspiration from the innovative ideas of Gilbert; and she positioned herself to be recognised as a female pioneer in public sculpture. Culminating in a widely reported unveiling ceremony, the statue not only helped to establish Louise as a serious female amateur sculptor, it was also a careful political manifestation to promote patriotism and the monarchy.

The political significance of the statue was also showcased through the official measures taken to secure the statue from vandalism. Despite the Queen's general popularity around the time of her Golden Jubilee, the constant risk of vandalism to public statues meant that the honour of the monarchy was potentially at stake if the statue was damaged. Although an iron fence had been put up around the statue for protection, a local park inspector urged the Board of Works to also provide for a round-the-clock watchman, as 'the mere fact of the statue being surrounded by an unclimbable fence is not in itself sufficient for its protection, because it could be seriously injured by a missile thrown by a mischievous person at a distance of fifty yards.'<sup>605</sup>

A different kind of political import was achieved with the statue's reproduction and dissemination, both locally and globally. Several examples of reduced bronzes are today found in local public and private collections throughout

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<sup>605</sup> Report from Inspector John Hogan to the superintendent of the Board of Works, dated 8 August 1893, London, National Archives, WORKS /20/77.

Britain.<sup>606</sup> At Gilbert's recommendation, Louise used the newly established London foundry of Broad & Son for the reproduction of her work.<sup>607</sup> Thus in 1897, she exhibited a bronze replica at the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists<sup>608</sup> and offered several versions as personal diplomatic gifts during official visits to local towns and continued to do so even after Victoria's death in 1901.<sup>609</sup> As early as 1894 Louise was employing her statue as a signifier of colonial loyalty to the British Empire when she planned the reproduction of her statue for Canada.<sup>610</sup> Since her time in Canada in the early 1880s, the princess had developed a strong interest for the imperial cause in the colonial dominion and became acquainted, through Lorne, with the Canadian financier and philanthropist Donald Smith, the later Lord Strathcona.<sup>611</sup> Strathcona was not only a driving force behind British imperialist politics in Canada but sponsored numerous educational institutions, including the building of Royal Victoria College for female students at McGill University in Montreal [fig. 2.42].<sup>612</sup> As this was a project close to Louise's heart, she agreed to make a life-size replica of her *Queen Victoria* statue for the front decoration of the new college building, which was unveiled in 1900.<sup>613</sup> As a conspicuous symbol of the colonial relationship between

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<sup>606</sup> A bronze replica, today in the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery Museum, Bournemouth (SC36), is recorded in an inventory made after the death of Sir Merton Russell-Cotes in 1921; Another bronze version is today in the collection of the Leeds City Art Gallery. See Penelope Curtis and Terry Friedman (eds), *Leeds' Sculpture Collections Illustrated Concise Catalogue* (Leeds: Leeds Museum & Galleries and The Centre for the Study of Sculpture, 1996), p. 14; Two bronze replicas are in possession of Her Majesty the Queen. One version, cast by Broad and Son, at Sandringham (RCIN 7272) and another at Balmoral (RCIN 13104); According to Duncan Walker, curator of the Russell-Cotes Museum, another replica is in a private collection. Email conversation, 12 Nov. 2010.

<sup>607</sup> For Gilbert's use of the foundry, see Jacob Simon, 'Bronze sculpture founders: a short history: Section 4. Specialist sculpture founders 1870-1920', National Portrait Gallery Research programmes, 3 March 2011, <http://www.npg.org.uk/research/programmes/bronze-sculpture-founders-history.php> [accessed: 9 Nov. 2013].

<sup>608</sup> Anon., 'Royal Birmingham Society of Artists', *Art Journal* (Nov. 1897), pp. 348-49, 349.

<sup>609</sup> The bronze replica which is today at Leeds City Art Gallery had been presented by Louise to Edward Wood of Temple Newsam House on the occasion of Louise's visit to Leeds on 29 September 1909, to open the High School in Headingley. See Curtis and Friedman (1996), p. 14.

<sup>610</sup> Cecil Gilbert, *The Studio Diaries of Alfred Gilbert between 1890 and 1899*, vol. 1 (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cecil Gilbert, 1992), entry for 2 February 1894.

<sup>611</sup> For Lorne's friendship with Strathcona see Wake (1988), p. 253.

<sup>612</sup> For more on Lord Strathcona and his imperialist context, see Alexandria Pierce, 'Imperialist Intent – Colonial Response: The Art Collection and Cultural Milieu of Lord Strathcona in Nineteenth-Century Montreal', Ph.D. thesis (McGill University, Montreal 2002).

<sup>613</sup> Anon., 'Princess Louise as a Sculptor. Statue of the Queen for Montreal', *Sheffield Independent* (2 Nov. 1900), p. 5.



Britain and Canada, and the Queen's role as shared sovereign, the statue clearly demonstrated Louise's support of British imperial politics.

### Memorial sculpture

Throughout her career as a sculptor, memorials formed an important aspect of Louise's oeuvre and were generally motivated by her wish to commemorate family members and persons whom she held dear. As we have seen earlier, Louise made a portrait medallion as a monument to her friend Sybil St Albans (1873). Over the following three decades, she made several more funerary monuments dedicated to close friends, family members, and the royal household. The designs of these memorials were influenced by Louise's relationship with the deceased, by established norms for monuments, and by Louise's ambition to adapt new stylistic trends. They include symbolic designs with allegories and angels, and an effigy, attributed to Louise, which stylistically resembled Boehm's funerary monuments.<sup>614</sup> Yet while these monuments play more with established Victorian conventions for funerary monuments,<sup>615</sup> the most innovative and complex example of Louise's memorial sculptures is the *Battenberg Memorial* (c.1896-98), a bronze group with the Crucifixion and the Angel of Resurrection [fig. 2.43]. This statue was initially conceived as a memorial to Louise's brother-in-law, Henry of Battenberg (1858-96), at his mortuary chapel at Whippingham Church on the Isle of Wight. The design was subsequently adapted for the *Boer War*

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<sup>614</sup> In 1871, Louise made a tombstone with the relief of an angel for the Queen's former governess, Louise Lehzen for Jetenburg cemetery in Bückeberg, Germany (1871). See RA/PPTO/PP/QV/MAIN/1870/7629, Hermann Sahl to Mr Harrison, 2 April 1871; Another tombstone, with an allegory of Charity, dated c.1898, was for the royal children's former nurse Mary Ann Thurston at Kensal Rise Cemetery. See Anon., 'Memorial to the late Mrs. Thurston', *St Mary Abbots Parish Magazine*, vol. XVII (1898), p. 112; Louise also made a near copy of a kneeling mourning angel by Boehm, which she dedicated to her deceased brothers Prince Leopold and Prince Alfred, at Louise's local parish church St Mary Abbots in Kensington. For more, see Stocker (1988), pp. 200-201, image 226; Louise was possibly the author of an unsigned and undated effigy of Millicent Wemyss (1831-95) at Wemyss Castle in Fife. Wemyss was an amateur writer who published short biographies about women, which could have made Louise interested in her, yet no sources clearly attest to a close connection between the women.

<sup>615</sup> For an overview of Victorian funerary monuments, see Read (1982), pp. 186-98.

*Memorial* at St Paul's Cathedral (1904) [fig. 2.44]. By analysing the historical circumstances and artistic sources, and the transformation from a small-scale, private statue into a large, public monument, I assess the memorial's artistic and political significance for Louise's career as a royal and female sculptor. Furthermore, I locate Louise's artistic identity within the vanguard taste of the New Sculpture and within imperial politics. As these two areas –the New Sculpture and Imperialism – have largely been treated separately in the scholarship, it is highly revealing to consider their implication when they are seen together.<sup>616</sup>

### **The Battenberg Memorial (1898)**

Louise's idea to make a memorial to Battenberg, the husband of her younger sister Princess Beatrice, was personally motivated, but gained a political and ambitious artistic connotation when seen in the context of the circumstances surrounding his death. Battenberg, whom Louise admired for his 'dash, good looks, his interest in everything new and progressive,'<sup>617</sup> had been a close confidant of Louise.<sup>618</sup> His death from malaria on 20 January 1896 came suddenly and unexpectedly, only a few weeks after he joined the British troops in the brief Fourth Ashanti War in the winter of 1895 to 1896 on the former Gold Coast, present-day Ghana. Britain's decision to attack the Ashanti Empire and depose its king was primarily motivated by economic interests in securing control over local trade and the lucrative Ashanti goldfields.<sup>619</sup> Yet, what also motivated an assault

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<sup>616</sup> For a recent scholarly consideration of the New Sculpture in the service of the Empire, see Jason Edwards, 'War and Peace: Harry Bates's Lord Roberts Memorial in Calcutta, London and Glasgow, 1898-1924', in *Transculturation in British Art, 1770-1930*, ed. Julie Codell (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2012), pp. 199-220; Droth, *Sculpture Victorious* (2014), pp. 102-43.

<sup>617</sup> Edward Henry Cookridge, *From Battenberg to Mountbatten* (London: Arthur Barker, 1966), p. 115.

<sup>618</sup> While Jehanne Wake describes Battenberg as Louise's 'kindred spirit', who took the place of her brother Leopold after the latter's death in 1884, Lucinda Hawksley suggests a possible love affair between Louise and Battenberg. See Wake (1988), p. 315; Hawksley (2012), pp. 267-69.

<sup>619</sup> Anon., 'The Ashanti Question', *The Times* (17 Oct. 1895), p. 7.

on the country was the notion of colonial superiority under the pretext of bringing an end to alleged ‘savage practices’, such as ‘human sacrifices’ and ‘raids for the capture of slaves’.<sup>620</sup> Like many young men of the upper and middle classes,<sup>621</sup> Battenberg was motivated by an imperialist attitude coupled with a romanticised thirst for masculine adventure at the colonial frontier and volunteered to join the Ashanti War. Bored by the veneered and stifling life at court, he wanted to prove his manliness in active service in a “serious” conflict. Thus he explained to Louise: ‘You know I want to show on this occasion that I am fit to be thought of for something in the future should the occasion arise.’<sup>622</sup> As officials expected little resistance from the Ashanti side, it was deemed safe to allow Battenberg to accompany the British military expedition, where he was quickly promoted as secretary to the commander. While the necessity of Britain’s militaristic intervention in Ashanti – rather than a diplomatic solution – was questioned by liberal voices in Britain,<sup>623</sup> Battenberg’s tragic death from malaria was certainly not a heroic demise. For the royal family, of course, it was a devastating loss. Louise, for whom Battenberg was ‘almost the greatest friend I have’,<sup>624</sup> tried to console herself by emphasising his courage and fearlessness, exclaiming: ‘How soon his efforts to prove himself useful were ended & he was brave up to the last fighting the fever!’<sup>625</sup>

For Battenberg’s commemoration it was decided to convert a side chapel of the royal family’s parish church at Whippingham near Osborne on the Isle of

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<sup>620</sup> Anon., no title, *The Times* (13 Nov. 1895), p. 9.

<sup>621</sup> For more about the correlation between masculinity, empire and adventure, see John Tosh, ‘Manliness, Masculinities and The New Imperialism 1880-1900’ in *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain. Essays on Gender, Family and Empire*, ed. John Tosh (Harlow: Pearson, 2005), pp. 199-200.

<sup>622</sup> Princess Louise to the 4th Earl of Minto, 26 June 1896, National Library of Scotland, Minto Manuscripts, no. 12389, f. 109, quoted by Wake (1988), p. 314.

<sup>623</sup> See, for example, H. R. Fox Bourne (Aborigines’ Protection Society), ‘The Ashanti Question. To the Editor of the Times’, *The Times* (21 Oct. 1895), p. 10; Anon., ‘Mr. Chamberlain’s Jingoism’, *The Speaker* (25 Jan. 1896), p. 88.

<sup>624</sup> Princess Louise to Lady Minto, 26 January 1896, Minto Papers, National Library of Scotland. Quoted after Wake (1988), p. 315.

<sup>625</sup> Princess Louise to Mary Gladstone, 1 February 1896, British Library Mary Drew Papers, quoted by Wake (1988), pp. 314-15.

Wight into a mortuary chapel. Gilbert, then working on the *Clarence Tomb* at Windsor, was commissioned to design a decorative scheme for the project and suggested a marble sarcophagus surmounted by an iron sword and an elaborate iron screen to separate the chapel from the chancel [fig. 2.45].<sup>626</sup> As part of this scheme, Louise fashioned a special portable bronze monument which captured the tragedy of Battenberg's death and provided spiritual consolation for the royal family. In Christmas 1896, when Gilbert's screen had just been put in place, Louise brought an early model of her memorial statue to try out its effect in the Battenberg Chapel, which Lorne described to a personal friend:

The Princess' sculpture of the Crucifixion with the draped Angel holding the arms of the Christ, as leaning over him from above, looks effective in the little rich chapel where poor Prince Henry rests. I do not know whether you will like the way in which the Angel's wings are treated, for it is more medieval German than anything else. The general idea in regard to ascension is the cross springing into boughs and living growth.<sup>627</sup>

Although the wings in the final bronze group are too bulky and feathery to be comparable to medieval German sculpture, it is possible that Lorne made this bold comparison to emphasise their non-classical and expressive nature, perhaps inspired by the representation of angels' wings in well-known works by Albrecht Dürer, which were in the royal collection.<sup>628</sup> In contrast to Lorne's description, however, the cross in Louise's final bronze model does not sprout into 'boughs and living growth'. This composition, which was probably inspired by Gilbert's

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<sup>626</sup> For more on Gilbert and the Battenberg Chapel at Whippingham Church, see Dorment (1985), pp. 183-86.

<sup>627</sup> Lorne to William Boyd Carpenter, from Osborne, 25 Dec. 1896: British Library, Boyd Carpenter Papers, vol. V, MSS 46721, Folio 145.

<sup>628</sup> See, for example, Albrecht Dürer, *The Four Horsemen*, 1498, woodcut, 39.7 x 28.5 cm, Royal Collection Windsor Castle. <http://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/800135/the-apocalypse-the-four-horsemen> [accessed: 23 Jan. 2014].

design of a Tree of Jesse for the grille of the *Clarence Tomb*,<sup>629</sup> seems to have been subsequently dropped by Louise to focus entirely on her two-figure composition. Over a year later, the reworked model was still not finished when Louise's friend Ronald Gower visited the princess at her studio: 'On the 6<sup>th</sup> [January 1898], at Kensington Palace, Princess Louise showed me a monument she is working at for Prince Henry's tomb at Osborne—a Crucifixion, with the Angel of the Resurrection supporting the head of the Saviour – an ambitious work, and a very original idea.'<sup>630</sup> The fact that Gower, the aesthete, described Louise's work as 'ambitious' and 'original' shows that it reflected the current taste of the late 1890s, even if its aesthetic inspiration can be situated within the visual repertoire of Louise's artistic circle of the late 1870s. The symbolic dimension of the two-figure composition with one active figure holding the other passive figure in front, and the inclusion of large wings and billowing drapery featured in several key works of vanguard artists of that period. For example, Louise owned a pen-and-ink drawing by Gustave Doré (1832–83) of his sculpted group *Atropos and Love* (1877) [fig. 2.46], which clearly foreshadowed the effective contrast of the hooded and the nude figure in Louise's sculpture.<sup>631</sup> Other comparable compositions featured in William Blake Richmond's monumental painting *Sarpedon* (c.1876), [fig. 2.47],<sup>632</sup> and in Gilbert's marble group *The Kiss of Victory* (1878–82) [fig. 2.48]. While Richmond's painting depicts the fatally injured body of *Sarpedon*, the son of Zeus, being carried by the twin brothers Sleep and Death, Gilbert's composition shows a winged allegory of Victory embracing the nude figure of a young dying warrior. When the two works

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<sup>629</sup> Dormont (1985), p. 164.

<sup>630</sup> Gower (1902), entry for 13 January 1898, p. 322.

<sup>631</sup> The drawing of *Atropos and Love* by Doré is kept in Louise's autograph album RA/WRA/Add/A17/1785/77. See Millar (1995), cat. no. 1589, p. 280.

<sup>632</sup> Blackburn (1879), no. 22, pp. 12-13, illustrated on p. 12.

were exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery in 1879 and at the Royal Academy in 1882, respectively, they were praised as markers of a new development in British art. Aesthetes considered the painting as a ‘noble picture of the very highest order of artistic excellence’,<sup>633</sup> and the press suggested that the composition ‘might be translated into sculpture with, we think, excellent effect.’<sup>634</sup> Likewise, Gilbert’s *Kiss of Victory* was praised as ‘most notable’ and ‘very carefully finished’.<sup>635</sup>

Louise was certainly aware of Richmond’s painting and its sculptural effect, as she was a fellow exhibitor at the Grosvenor in 1879. As a friend of Gilbert, she would have also known of his *Kiss of Victory* and its significance as a seminal work signalling Gilbert’s career as one of the most influential sculptors in late-Victorian Britain.<sup>636</sup> Both works evince many similarities with Louise’s *Battenberg Memorial*. It appears indeed as if Louise mapped the fate of her deceased brother-in-law onto those of Richmond’s and Gilbert’s aesthetic warriors, and rendered this association visually as the fate of Christ. Just as Richmond and Gilbert made their warriors’ deaths look heroic and beautiful, Louise made Battenberg’s death from disease appear honourable and worthy by relating it to Christ’s virtuous sacrifice.<sup>637</sup>

Finally, inspiration for the spiritual meaning of the figure of the angel could have come from Lorne who had imagined a statue with an ‘Angel of Resurrection’ for his family’s mausoleum at Kilmun, Scotland. In a manuscript of 1892 he devised a renovation scheme for the mausoleum which he accompanied by a little sketch [fig. 2.49]:

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<sup>633</sup> Oscar Wilde, ‘The Grosvenor Gallery 1879 (*Saunders’ Irish Daily News*, 5 May 1879)’, in Robert Ross (ed.), *Miscellanies, by Oscar Wilde* (London: Methuen & Co., 1908), <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/14062/14062-h/14062-h.htm> [accessed: 18 Dec. 2013].

<sup>634</sup> Anon., ‘The Grosvenor Gallery—Our Annotated Catalogue’, *British Architect* (16 May 1879), pp. 201-202.

<sup>635</sup> Anon., ‘Sculpture in 1882’, *Saturday Review* (10 June 1882), p. 731.

<sup>636</sup> See Edmund Gosse, ‘The New Sculpture: Second Article’, *Art Journal* (July 1894), pp. 199-203, here p. 202.

<sup>637</sup> For more on the aesthetic reading of warriors’ death, see James Anderson Winn, *The Poetry of War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 63.

A figure over life-size – with face looking downward and back blown waving hair, and great upward raised wings that shall seem as though still raised from flight – a figure that has just alit upon the arch, with one arm aloft, the palm of the hand towards the tomb, the forefinger pointing heavenward, and the other arm should be lowered and slightly retired and in its hand, as though putting them half away from him, the angel should hold a martyr's palm and wreaths of laurel, meaning that these although well won by the dwellers in the tombs, are as nothing to the hope of the Resurrection.<sup>638</sup>

If Lorne provided inspiration for the 'Angel of Resurrection', Louise, though, exchanged his overtly mundane symbolism for the more suggestive group with the body of Christ, which made her interpretation more spiritual, emotive and aesthetic.

For the modelling of the figures, especially the body of Christ, it is likely that Louise could count on Gilbert's advice and study his sculptural repertoire of male nudes from the *Kiss of Victory* to his fine bronzes of *Perseus Arming* (1881-3) and *Icarus* (1882-4), a copy of which was probably owned by Louise's brother Bertie at Sandringham.<sup>639</sup> Although female artists had few opportunities to study the male nude figure from life until the last years of the nineteenth century,<sup>640</sup> the articulate anatomy not only of Christ's haggard face but the fine musculature of his chest and limbs suggest that Louise had studied closely the appearance and functioning of the male body, beyond the usual literature on anatomy available to

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<sup>638</sup> Manuscript text by John Campbell, 9<sup>th</sup> Duke of Argyll, known as Lorne, dated 1892, Archive Inverary, Bundle 948.

<sup>639</sup> See Chapter 1, pp. 129-30.

<sup>640</sup> For example, at the Royal Academy it took until 1893 for female students to be allowed to study the nude male body covered by a loincloth. See Charlotte Yeldham, *Women Artists in Nineteenth-Century France and England*, vol. I (New York and London: Garland, 1984), p. 31.

artists or the sources of ideal statues and drawings in the Royal Collection.<sup>641</sup> In fact, through several press interviews, which the artists' model Antonio Corsi gave to American newspapers in the first years of the twentieth century, we know that Louise regularly used Corsi as her model for the figure of the Crucifixion.<sup>642</sup> Although Corsi claims that he posed for Louise's statue at St Paul's Cathedral, his recollection of having met Queen Victoria on several occasions when he was working for Louise, makes clear that the statue Louise was working on then could have only been the *Battenberg Memorial*, as Victoria was already dead by the time Louise was busy with the *Boer War Memorial*. Corsi (c.1868–1924), the son of Italian vagrant musicians came to London in around 1880 and became subsequently a sought-after male model working for the most celebrated artists of the time, including Burne-Jones, Leighton, Millais, Poynter, Alma-Tadema, Sargent and Richmond, one of which would have certainly also introduced Corsi to Louise.<sup>643</sup> The model's physique, with a long, slender body, hollow-cheeked face, and long nose, visible in a later photograph of him while posing nude [fig. 2.50], corresponded with the traditional iconography of Christ and explains why Louise chose Corsi to pose for her. His traits clearly reappear in her Crucifixion, in the emaciated face and the long and raw-boned structure of the body [fig. 2.51]. Yet, in addition to having modelled from life, it is possible that Louise also used the plaster cast of Thomas Banks's *Anatomical Crucifixion*, which she is documented to have owned in 1917.<sup>644</sup> Made by the sculptor in 1801, it depicts the *écorché* of a male corpse that had been nailed on a cross, with the naturally

<sup>641</sup> See for example John Marshall, *Anatomy for Artists* (London: Smith Elder, 1878).

<sup>642</sup> Anon., 'The Greatest Model in the World', *Sunday Morning* (14 February 1904), p. 3, <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn90059523/1904-02-14/ed-1/seq-3.pdf> [accessed: 25 Nov 2013]; Pendennis, 'Famous Painters As a Noted Model Knew Them', *New York Times* (17 Dec. 1905), p. 33, <http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=9B02E4DB153AE733A25754C1A9649D946497D6CF> [accessed: 25 Nov 2013].

<sup>643</sup> Pendennis (1905).

<sup>644</sup> *The Artist's Model. Its Role in British Art from Lely to Ety* (exhibition catalogue, University Art Gallery, Nottingham 30 April – 31 May 1991 and The Iveagh Bequest, Kenwood, 19 June – 31 August 1991), eds Ilaria Bignamini and Martin Postle (Nottingham: Nottingham University Art Gallery, 1991), pp. 96-97.



suspended position of a crucified body [fig. 2.52]. The stretched chest and legs of Louise's figure of Christ suggest that she owned the *Anatomical Crucifixion* already when she worked on the *Battenberg Memorial* and used it as an anatomical reference for particular body parts. In contrast to the *écorché*, however, Louise's Christ is not shown in the state of death, but of resurrection, with his arms not drooping stiffly but relaxed, and his head up, signalling his return from the state of lifelessness at the moment of the angel's gentle capture of his hands. While the plaster surface of the *écorché* appears matt and dreary and the muscles look constrained and moribund, the body of Christ shows a much softer muscle tone and is more animated through the effect of the shiny bronze surface. The in-between state of Christ is further emphasised by the angel's dynamic spread-out wings and billowing drapery, enrobing his body and lifting his soles from the plinth to carry him away, like the winged twin figures in Richmond's *Sarpedon*. Louise's two-figure group is a highly suggestive work playing with the notions of life, death and the effect of the spiritual. As a mediator between sorrow and hope, it served to succour the sensitive emotions of the mourning audience who lamented the tragic death of Henry of Battenberg.

The use of a live male model and *écorché* reveals Louise's serious interest in her profession and in this particular memorial project. By employing one of the most popular male models of her time, Louise deliberately aligned herself with her male professional peers. The artist-model relationship between Louise and Corsi indicates further that, by the end of the nineteenth century, the concept of the Bohemian artist life, fashionable and unconventional, had become socially accepted as an alternative to the traditional gender definition of a male artist

working with a female model.<sup>645</sup> Although Louise may have been exceptional because of her royal status and privileged connections, her example became known through the American press. Louise's relaxed and unconventional relationship with Corsi, lighting his cigarettes and sharing tea with him during their work breaks,<sup>646</sup> indicates that, when in the safe enclosure of her studio, Louise cast royal conventions aside and acted as a professional artist, not influenced by class and gender boundaries but determined to create an artistic work of significant impact.

Described as 'an important piece of sculpture'<sup>647</sup> in the magazine *The Sculptor* in March 1898, and subsequently cast in dark, polished bronze, the sculpture of the *Battenberg Memorial* was placed in the Battenberg Chapel as an effective figurative complement to Gilbert's marble tomb chest and decorative bronze grille. Meanwhile, the statue's intrinsic but transcendental meaning, which did not represent a specific person but a universal, spiritual idea, made it adaptable to different contexts. In 1906 Louise placed a reproduction of similar size, but with a green patina, in the Argyll family mausoleum, probably to commemorate her father-in-law, the 8<sup>th</sup> Duke of Argyll, who had died in 1900.<sup>648</sup> The most conspicuous adaption of the statue, however, was for St Paul's Cathedral, as a monument to the colonial soldiers who died in the second Boer War of 1899 to 1902.

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<sup>645</sup> For a discussion of the increased social acceptance of the concept of Bohemia as a male artist / female model relationship, see Frances Borzello, *The Artist's Model* (London: Junction Books, 1982), pp. 86-98.

<sup>646</sup> Pendennis (1905); Eve M. Kahn, 'Rooms with a View of British History', *New York Times* (2 May 2013), [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/03/arts/design/rooms-with-a-view-of-british-history.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/03/arts/design/rooms-with-a-view-of-british-history.html?_r=0) [accessed: 26 Nov. 2013].

<sup>647</sup> 'Princess Louise has nearly completed an important piece of sculpture. It is the figure of an angel in statuary marble, designed to find a place upon the altar of the Battenberg Memorial Chapel which the Queen and her widowed daughter are erecting in Whippingham Church.' Anon., *The Sculptor* (March 1898), p. 16. Although the material seems to be wrongly described as 'statuary marble', the statue meant in this article can only refer to the bronze *Crucifixion and Angel of Resurrection* as it is not documented that Louise worked on another statue of an angel in marble for the Battenberg Chapel.

<sup>648</sup> See <http://www.argyllmausoleum.org/index.asp?pageid=347039> [accessed: 27 Nov. 2013].

### **The Boer War Memorial (1904)**

The *Boer War Memorial*,<sup>649</sup> made of dark-patinated bronze, is located in the South Transept of St Paul's Cathedral, mounted three metres high against a pier of the outer wall [fig. 2.44]. Of similar figural composition as the *Battenberg Memorial*, it is placed on an architectural wall bracket and connected through a wreath with an upright bronze tablet at eye level underneath. Consisting of a concentrated and carefully composed block, the inscription lists the five colonies of the colonial troops' origin, marked by a separate, moulded frame, and specifies, underneath, the dedication of the monument.

AUSTRALIA CA / NADA CEYLON / NEW ZEALAND / SOUTH  
AFRICA // TO THE GLORY OF / GOD AND TO THE UN / DYING  
HONOUR OF / THOSE 4300 SONS / OF BRITAIN BEYOND / THE  
SEAS WHO GA / VE THEIR LIVES / FOR LOVE OF THE /  
MOTHER LAND IN / THE SOUTH AFRIC / AN WAR 1899-1902

The careful selection of the wording with its religious and militaristic dedication to 'glory' and 'honour', the denotation of the colonies as 'Britain beyond the seas', and the description of their soldiers as 'sons' who died for their 'love of the motherland', designate the inscription as a highly effective representation of imperial patriotism. In reality, however, the Boer War was anything but glorious. Like the Ashanti War a few years earlier, the Boer War was primarily based on a conflict about control over trade and natural resources. Motivated by the discovery of diamonds and gold in the 1870s, especially in the self-governed Boer states under control of Dutch-speaking settlers, the British imperialist interest was to bring the South African territory under British control in order to exploit its

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<sup>649</sup> The planned full height for the memorial was 9ft 9in., see Arthur Birch to Somers Clarke, 1 July 1903, London, St Paul's Cathedral Archive. Today, no records exist of the exact measurements of the memorial.

resources. While the conquest of the Ashanti Empire had been a walkover for the British troops, the Boers strongly resisted, which turned the initial conflict into a brutal three-year war between different white colonists.<sup>650</sup> In order to fight the Boers, justified on the British side by the Boers' alleged 'sinister' intention of Republican expansion,<sup>651</sup> the government appealed to the white Dominions to mobilise and send large contingents of volunteer troops to fight for the British Empire in South Africa. Despite Canada and Australia's initial reluctance to join the war,<sup>652</sup> the royal family had no doubt as to the justice of the cause and advocated a strong anti-Boer stance. To Victoria, writing in her diary, the Boers were 'stubborn'<sup>653</sup> and many were 'great brutes'.<sup>654</sup> In a letter to Louise, Vicky described the Boers as 'horrid',<sup>655</sup> and Lorne expressed his strong opinion against the Boers in the American press.<sup>656</sup> As Walter Arnstein has pointed out, for the Crown, a strong connection between the Monarchy and the Military was very important and served to strengthen the Empire's unity and loyalty to Britain.<sup>657</sup> Even if the Boer War happened far away overseas, the action of the war was covered daily in the British press and meant to create wide public support for the imperial soldiers engaged in South Africa.<sup>658</sup> Although there was also some fierce resistance, the war was highly popular and it was generally considered honourable for a young man to volunteer as a soldier and to die for 'King and Country'.<sup>659</sup>

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<sup>650</sup> The leader of the British and Boers both believed that the Boer War should be a 'white man's war'. In reality, however, both sides employed several thousands of black people, initially in non-combatant roles, but towards the end of the war also as soldiers. See Fransjohan Pretorius, 'The Boer Wars', [http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/victorians/boer\\_wars\\_01.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/victorians/boer_wars_01.shtml), [accessed: 10 Jan. 2013].

<sup>651</sup> Douglas Story, 'The Boer Ambition', *The New Century Review* (Nov. 1899), pp. 393-407.

<sup>652</sup> See Denis Judd and Keith Surridge, *The Boer War: A History* (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2013), pp. 76-80.

<sup>653</sup> *Queen Victoria's Journal*, 13 March 1900, <http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org> [accessed: 27 Nov. 2013].

<sup>654</sup> *Queen Victoria's Journal*, 30 April 1900, <http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org> [accessed: 27 Nov. 2013].

<sup>655</sup> Longford (1991), p. 252.

<sup>656</sup> Marquis of Lorne, 'Realities of the South African War', *North American Review* 170, no. 520 (March 1900), pp. 306-11.

<sup>657</sup> Walter L. Arnstein, 'The Warrior Queen: Reflections on Victoria and Her World', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal concerned with British Studies* 30, no. 1 (Spring 1998), pp. 1-28, here p. 27.

<sup>658</sup> See Kelley S. Kent, 'Propaganda, Public Opinion and the Second South African Boer War', in *Student Pulse The International Student Journal* 5, no. 10 (2013), <http://www.studentpulse.com/articles/781/propaganda-public-opinion-and-the-second-south-african-boer-war> [accessed: 22 Jan. 2014].

<sup>659</sup> Stephen M. Miller, 'In Support of the "Imperial Mission"? Volunteering for the South African War, 1899-1902', in *The Journal of Military History* 69, no. 3 (July 2005), pp. 691-711, here pp. 694-95.

Thus, not surprisingly, Louise, like many British aristocratic ladies, was strongly engaged in supporting the military through war relief charities for returning wounded soldiers and for soldiers' families.<sup>660</sup> In particular, her personal connection with Canada and Lorne's encouragement of Canadian volunteers for the Boer War<sup>661</sup> seem to explain her commitment to commemorate the colonial troops with a public memorial at St Paul's Cathedral.

Since the Crimean War in the mid-nineteenth century, the commemoration, not just of individuals of the military elite, but of simple soldiers, through the erection of regimental monuments, became increasingly widespread and was a popular practice during the Boer War, which claimed the lives of over 20,000 soldiers.<sup>662</sup> Apart from simple tablets, memorial windows and architectural monuments, figurative sculptures were a prevalent form for open-air public spaces and churches.<sup>663</sup>

Since the late eighteenth century, St Paul's Cathedral was Britain's most important site for the national commemoration of naval and military heroes and civilian worthies, which emphasised its role as a centre of national identity and reflected the global scale of the British Empire.<sup>664</sup> As much as the cathedral counted as a pantheon of great men, it was also an inventory of the foremost sculptors of Britain. By 1900, the interior was filled with large monuments in neoclassical marble and late Victorian bronze, made by some of the most eminent

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<sup>660</sup> Louise was involved in fund-raising for an American women's hospital ship, she became President of the County of London branch of the Soldiers and Sailors' Family Association, and helped organising hospital homes for returning wounded soldiers, one of which was installed near her Scottish home at Roseneath. See Wake (1988), pp. 333-35.

<sup>661</sup> Stamp (1988), p. 250. In view of Louise's connection with Lord Strathcona who paid for her statue of Queen Victoria in Montreal and was a supporter of the Colonial Troops Club, which paid for the Boer War Memorial, it is likely that Louise supported his cause for raising and financing Canadian volunteer troops. For Strathcona's involvement as a financier of the Canadian contingents for the Boer War, see Donna McDonald, *Lord Strathcona: A Biography of Donald Alexander Smith* (Toronto, Oxford: Dundurn, 1996), pp. 432-37.

<sup>662</sup> James Gildea, *For Remembrance and in Honour of those who lost their Lives in the South African War 1899-1902* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1911), p. v.

<sup>663</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>664</sup> For more on St Paul's Cathedral as a site for the commemoration of British military heroes, see Holger Hoock, 'The British military Pantheon in St Paul's Cathedral: the State, cultural Patriotism, and the Politics of national Monuments, c. 1790-1820', in *Pantheons: Transformations of a Monumental Idea*, eds Richard Wrigley and Matthew Craske (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 81-105.

sculptors of the century, from John Flaxman to Alfred Gilbert.<sup>665</sup> For Louise, the prospect of forming part of this eligible group, coupled with her imperial endeavour and artistic experience, were considerable factors, which helped her in the realisation of her memorial. Yet the memorial's unusual subject matter, still today considered by the scholarship as 'one of the most curious monuments in all St Paul's',<sup>666</sup> raises the question about Louise's motivation to elaborate her earlier *Battenberg Memorial* and deviate from more common forms for public imperial monuments, in particular the ubiquitous choice of contemporary soldiers in uniform.<sup>667</sup> By analysing archival sources from the St Paul's Cathedral Archive, as well as contemporary press material, I trace the genesis of the *Boer War Memorial* and assess Louise's motivation behind her "curious" conception.

The earliest evidence of Louise's *Boer War Memorial* scheme dates from July 1901, when the princess had made contact with the Chapter of St Paul's to show them a photograph of her Battenberg statue as a potential model for a monument to the colonial soldiers.<sup>668</sup> Louise's work was then perceived as a 'decidedly poetic conception',<sup>669</sup> yet it took two further years before an official application was made. As long as the Boer War continued, the question of funding caused a considerable delay to Louise's project. But in addition, the Cathedral Chapter was initially sceptical about a monument made by a royal artist. On 19 June 1903, Canon Newbolt of the Chapter explained to Somers Clarke, the Cathedral's

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<sup>665</sup> Roger Bowdler and Ann Saunders, 'The Post-Reformation Monuments', in *St Paul's: The Cathedral Church of London 604-2004*, eds Derek Keene, Arthur Burns and Andre Saint (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004), pp. 269-92.

<sup>666</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 291.

<sup>667</sup> For the extent of Boer War Memorials, see Gildea (1911); For databases about Boer War Memorials in Britain, see <http://www.roll-of-honour.com/Boer/> [accessed: 12 Dec. 2013], <http://www.casus-belli.co.uk/abwmp/> [accessed: 12 Dec. 2013].

<sup>668</sup> In July 1903, Somers Clarke, architect of St Paul's Cathedral, informed Arthur Birch, representative of the Boer War Memorial Committee, that 'a model avowedly not completed, was seen in July 1901'. London, St Paul's Cathedral Archive, Somers Clarke to Arthur Birch, 4 July 1903.

<sup>669</sup> *Ibid.*

Surveyor of the Fabric: '[...] it makes it worse that Royalty should have initiated it [the monument], as people will think that we are prepared to sacrifice our souls to a Princess.'<sup>670</sup> Neither a woman artist nor a member of the royal family had previously been involved in an important permanent artistic project at St Paul's, which made the Chapter feel uneasy and dubious of conceding to an instigation from outside their established channels. Louise's persistence and enthusiasm for the project, however, eventually brought her the financial support of the patriotic Colonial Troops Club, an institution which was opened in the summer of 1902 with the intent to sponsor overseas white colonials from Canada, Australia, and New Zealand to take part in the imperial ceremonials in London on occasion of Edward VII's coronation. The Club was supported by high-ranked colonialists, from Lord Strathcona, the sponsor of Louise's *Queen Victoria* statue for Canada, to the conservative politician Joseph Chamberlain, one of the key decision makers of the Boer War, who described the Club as 'a proof of the brotherhood and sympathy which was animating the whole race'.<sup>671</sup> Not surprisingly, the Club represented the logical institution to back-up Louise's plan for the *Boer War Memorial*. Probably engineered by Louise herself, in February 1903 it was announced that the Club's balance was dedicated 'to the erection of a public memorial – probably in St. Paul's Cathedral—to the colonial soldiers who fell in the Boer war'.<sup>672</sup> A few months later, Louise was announced as the artist by the press and it was revealed that the money from the Club would go to 'the erection of the bronze war memorial designed by the Princess Louise (the Duchess of Argyll) and entitled "The Triumph of Sacrifice"'.<sup>673</sup> In the meantime, through the support of the Club's newly founded Memorial Committee, led by the former

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<sup>670</sup> London, St Paul's Cathedral Archive, Canon Newbolt to Somers Clarke, 19 June 1903.

<sup>671</sup> Anon., 'The Colonial Troops Club', *The Sydney Morning Herald* (9 June 1902), p. 4.

<sup>672</sup> Anon., 'The Colonial Troops Club', *The Advertiser* (24 Feb. 1903), p. 4.

<sup>673</sup> Anon., 'War Memorial: Princess Louise's Design', *The Sydney Morning Herald* (10 Nov. 1903), p. 5.

high-ranked colonial administrator Sir Arthur Birch, an official application for Louise's statue was made to the Chapter. Whilst accepting the proposed monument, the Chapter was anxious for it to suit the site of the cathedral, pointing out that

[t]he height at which the monument shall be placed above the floor, the degree of finish, the detail, the colour of the bronze, the material, colour & design of the pedestal, the size & character of the lettering & the decorative quality of the inscription, all these things have to be considered in relation to the memorial itself & the nature of the surroundings.<sup>674</sup>

Suspicious of the potential expectations of a royal artist to be granted privileged conditions, Clarke, the Cathedral's Surveyor, indicated, in a draft letter, that Louise's work would be treated on equal terms to those by other sculptors:

I venture to believe that H.R.H. does not wish to be placed outside the conditions under which other sculptors are requested to place themselves. [...] When I had the honour of seeing the model I was much impressed by the way in which H.R.H. does not attempt to hold herself aloof as a privileged person but entered into the arena of the arts and permitted me to express myself of fully on the matter in hand.<sup>675</sup>

In his specifications of the practical considerations for a monument at St Paul's, Clarke informed Louise about previous bad experiences in terms of a monument's size with regards to its surroundings, and asked her to submit a full-size model of

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<sup>674</sup> London, St Paul's Cathedral Archive, draft letter from Somers Clarke to Arthur Birch, 4 July 1903.

<sup>675</sup> Ibid.



her work for preliminary inspection.<sup>676</sup> Following the precedent of Alfred Stevens' design for the *Wellington Monument* (c.1857) which was deftly synchronised with its surrounding space,<sup>677</sup> Louise prepared a life-size cartoon of her work to be hung in place at the cathedral.<sup>678</sup> Incited by the expectations put to her, Louise invested significant effort in the modelling of her monumental figure-group, and by July 1903 had altered the angel's wings so they were 'quite different from the design of which the photo was taken'.<sup>679</sup> While the wings of the *Battenberg Memorial* consisted of more abstract, rounded feathers, the *Boer War Memorial* showed more pointed and sharply modelled feathers, which made them appear more prodigious and articulated the monument's visibility from below. At the same time, Louise contacted some of her artist friends about new life models to stand for the two figures of her *Boer War Memorial*. Thus, as a replacement for Corsi, who had emigrated to America after a scandalous petty crime affair,<sup>680</sup> the painter Edwin Abbey recommended a 'tall and thin' model with 'good' hands of the name of Arthur Dickinson,<sup>681</sup> while William Blake Richmond, then working on St Paul's dome decoration, suggested Mary Lloyd,<sup>682</sup> who had been a favourite model of Millais and Leighton and was known for her 'splendid head' and 'beautiful arms'.<sup>683</sup> With the memorial placed relatively high in the cathedral it is difficult to discern with the naked eye the fine differentiations in the modelling of

<sup>676</sup> 'A thing which looked quite imposing in the studio, looks altogether insignificant in the vast cathedral. The Gordon & Leighton monuments are conspicuous examples of failure in these respects. [...] To avoid a recurrence of these evils the Chapter has now made a rule that the model full size of sufficient parts of it to ensure a grasp of the whole shall be set up in the Cath. before the permanent work in bronze or marble is [used?] in hand.' Ibid.

<sup>677</sup> See Droth, *Sculpture Victorious* (2014), cat. no. 126, p. 353.

<sup>678</sup> London, St Paul's Cathedral Archive, Colonel William Probert to Somers Clarke, 26 October 1903.

<sup>679</sup> London, St Paul's Cathedral Archive, Colonel William Probert to Somers Clarke, 25 July 1903.

<sup>680</sup> In January 1901, Corsi lost his reputation after a court case in which he was accused of having stolen a lady's jewellery in one of the studios in which he was posing as a model. He then allegedly used his royal connection with Louise to sell the jewellery to a pawnbroker. Following the publication of these events, it is unlikely that Corsi went back to model for Louise. See Anon., 'Royal Artist's Model', *The Evening Post* (17 Jan. 1901), p. 3; Anon., 'Artist's Model Again', *The Evening Post* (28 Jan. 1901), p. 4.

<sup>681</sup> 'I add the address of a tall, thin model – a restless person, to whom repose, unfortunately, means sleep. In a pose you require, however, Madam, this failing may not be a drawback. His hand is rather good, too. His name is Arthur Dickinson, Wenlock, Thornhill Road, Thames Ditton.' Letter from Edwin Abbey to Louise, 11 July 1903, quoted after Longford (1991), p. 265.

<sup>682</sup> '[Mrs. Lloyd] has a splendid head, beautiful arms and is quite nice. No H's, but really refined.' William Blake Richmond to Princess Louise, n.d., Beville's Mss. (private), quoted after Wake (1988), p. 362.

<sup>683</sup> Jill Berk Jiminez, *Dictionary of Artists' Models* (London, Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2001), pp. 326-28.

the figures. Yet, by zooming in to a photograph of the monument, it becomes obvious that Louise refined and articulated drapery, the face and arms of the angel and the body and hands of Christ [fig. 2.53]. To grant Christ more pathos, she also leaned his head further back and added the Crown of Thorns and the deep Lance Wound to his right breast.

From February 1904, Louise had been ‘hard at work in the studio’,<sup>684</sup> aiming to finish the different parts of the model to be sent off to the bronze founders H. Young & Co. by the end of August 1904.<sup>685</sup> Her correspondence with the Cathedral, conducted through her equerry Colonel William Probert, reveals that Louise was eager to model as many components of the monument herself, so that Clarke felt inclined to advise her to have at least the architectural parts done by a professional modelling firm.<sup>686</sup> Apart from doing most of the modelling, Louise also decided the colour of the bronze patination<sup>687</sup> and personally supervised the finishing of the bronze. On one occasion, she stayed ‘at the Foundry an hour and worked at the crown on Christ’s head’.<sup>688</sup> Yet the intense engagement with the project took its toll on Louise as she often had to accommodate external engagements and was not used to the regular physical work of a professional sculptor. Throughout the laborious process, from the statue’s conception to the finished work, the princess was often affected by ill health and moments of exhaustion. To a friend she complained: ‘My arm is

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<sup>684</sup> London, St Paul’s Cathedral Archive. Captain Will Probert to Somers Clarke, 4 February 1904.

<sup>685</sup> On 21 May 1904 Probert reported to Somers Clarke that the ‘Statue is in the hands of the Bronze Founders.’ On 16 August 1904 he informed Somers Clarke that the ‘last of the Princess’s work went on to the founders.’ London, St Paul’s Cathedral Archive.

<sup>686</sup> ‘Her Royal Highness said she should like to model the wreath, I have therefore, on drawing A, done no more than indicate its size & the fullness which I venture to think will be [eventiae?] to give it any effect in so large a building as S. Pauls. [...]The curved volutes at the top of the tablet should, I venture to urge, be modeled by a man accustomed to architectural work. Being as they are a purely architectural feature, Her Royal Highness would not waste her time on them [tget?] can very easily be done wrong. London, St Paul’s Cathedral Archive, draft letter from Somers Clarke to Colonel William Probert, 18 Jan. 1904.

<sup>687</sup> Her Royal Highness was of opinion that the tablet & group above should be cast by the same founders to ensure as she very rightly pointed out that all the bronze should be of the same colour & quality.’ London, St Paul’s Cathedral Archive, draft letter from Somers Clarke to Colonel William Probert, 18 Jan. 1904.

<sup>688</sup> Ethel Badcock’s Diary, 3 May 1905: Probert Papers, private collection, quoted after Wake (1988), p. 368.

terribly bad from working at the statue so much'.<sup>689</sup> The decision, however, to go through the effort of re-modelling the composition of the statue, rather than simply enlarging the Battenberg group with the help of assistants, clearly suggests that Louise did not opt for an easy solution. Considering the effort made, she could have likewise created a new, straightforward subject matter for her memorial, which was more in line with the current visual language for public war memorials. In fact, as Louise was aware that her unusual figure group did not constitute the most easily accessible monument to commemorate the Boer War, her original plan had been to accompany the sculpture by a Shakespearian quotation to underline the overall message. The idea was, however, rejected on the basis of the Cathedral's practice 'that the inscription of public monuments at St. Paul's should be as simple & forcible as possible'.<sup>690</sup> With respect to the specification that the monument should be largely self-explanatory, Birch, the representative of the Boer War Memorial Committee, expressed his concern about the intelligibility of Louise's design: 'Had it been a soldier or a gun as the memorial I shd. agree that no question was necessary'.<sup>691</sup>

While the motif of a gun was a rather unusual memorial design in the Boer War, monuments with soldiers in contemporary uniform were erected throughout Britain and the empire.<sup>692</sup> Common to most such monuments was the similarity of ideal physiognomic features and a perfectly symmetrical body as an expression of strength and confidence.<sup>693</sup> Erected by public subscription, they often served to commemorate the individual dead of local regiments and communicated a clear political message of imperial identity. The image of the uniform itself implied the

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<sup>689</sup> Princess Louise to Ethel Badcock, 13 May 1904: *ibid.*, p. 362.

<sup>690</sup> London, St Paul's Cathedral Archive, copy of letter [C.G. Stapney?] to Arthur Birch, 28 Jan. 1904.

<sup>691</sup> London, St Paul's Cathedral Archive, Arthur Birch to Somers Clarke, 24 January 1904.

<sup>692</sup> Gildea's catalogue of Boer War Memorials illustrates over fifty statues of soldiers. See Gildea (1911).

<sup>693</sup> More on the representation of soldiers on war monuments, see Gill Abousnougou and David Machin, *The Language of War Monuments* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), pp. 111-12.

notion of power and opposition towards the enemy, thus reinforcing the contemporary viewer's sense of affiliation. Showing a soldier in an energetic, lively pose, ready to fight or defend his cause, or, a soldier in a solid pose, reflecting, observing, or commemorating his comrades, implied the ideals of late Victorian masculine identity. Based on physical strength, stoicism, and religious certainty, typically represented by the popular "muscular Christianity" movement,<sup>694</sup> moral and physical qualities were linked and formed a model path for young men to reach manliness.<sup>695</sup> In this context, the traditional visual representation of Christ constituted a problematic issue, difficult to reconcile with the Victorian construction of manliness.<sup>696</sup> Therefore, contemporary publications on the manliness of Christ avoided an explanation of his frail physique in favour of an analysis of his 'courage as the foundation of manliness',<sup>697</sup> which was intended to complement young men's physical prowess with Christian morality.

In contrast to the Victorian ideal of masculinity, Louise's monument did not show the young, muscular, virile hero, neither glorified, nor with the potential message to political "(re)mobilisation,"<sup>698</sup> but the fragile, nude body of Christ, accepting his painful fate in the knowledge of resurrection. Unlike the ideal heroic body of the soldier monument, the representation of Christ altered the bold correlation of empire and physical masculinity, and reflected a more considered idea of the meaning of war.

While the idea for the monument derived primarily from the *Battenberg Memorial* and engaged with Louise's personal experience of the vulnerability of

<sup>694</sup> See Donald E. Hall (ed.), *Muscular Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 7.

<sup>695</sup> See for example, John Springhall, 'Building character in the British boy: the attempt to extend Christian manliness to working-class adolescents, 1880-1914', in *Manliness and Morality. Middle-class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800-1940*, eds J.A. Mangan and James Walvin (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), pp. 52-74.

<sup>696</sup> See Herbert Sussman, *Victorian Masculinities. Manhood and Masculine Poetics in Early Victorian Literature and Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 120.

<sup>697</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>698</sup> In recent scholarship, war memorials have often been interpreted as sites of political (re)mobilization. See Stefan Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory: War, Remembrance and Medievalism in Britain and Germany, 1914-1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 2.

the human body through war, the choice to represent a softer version of masculinity could be seen as a response to the emergence of hooliganism during the Boer period, which was perceived as a highly dangerous form of masculinity. For example, the experience of riots during the imperial celebrations after the Relief of Mafeking, on 17 May 1900, had caused a feeling of unease amongst the British middle and upper classes, towards young working-class men who became increasingly associated with jingoism and mob violence. The fear of returning working-class soldiers being tempted into uncontrollable, disorderly behaviour may have further affirmed Louise's choice to fashion a form of masculinity that was not defined by virile physical appearance but moral values instead.<sup>699</sup>

Furthermore, by depicting a male and a female figure, based on actual human bodies, Louise included into the monument the notion of harmoniously gendered bodies without constituting a threat to the commemoration of imperial masculinity. At a period when the ideals of masculinity were largely under pressure, in particular through the import of women's emancipation and the culture of Aestheticism, masculinity was in the process of being newly defined, and the empire served as its conspicuous projection. As pointed out by John Tosh, the late Victorian Empire was generally perceived as a man's business, based on the popular imagination of positive male attributes.<sup>700</sup> However, Louise's own engagement at the Boer War's "Home Front", together with her role as a progressive, actively engaged female sculptor, challenged in itself an all-masculine dimension of her *Boer War Memorial* and explains the visible inclusion of a female perspective in the composition. Rather than depicting the angel as a

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<sup>699</sup> For the association of returning Boer War soldiers with alcoholism in the aftermath of the Mafeking riots, see Anon., 'National Enthusiasm and Alcohol', *The British Medical Journal* (30 June 1900), p. 1604; For more about the change in public perception of working-class boys as 'degenerate' hooligans, see Seth Koven, 'From Rough Lads to Hooligans: Boy Life, National Culture and Social Reform', in *Nationalisms and Sexualities*, eds Andrew Parker et al., (London: Routledge, 1992), 365-91.

<sup>700</sup> Tosh (2005), p. 193.

passive witness of the resurrection of Christ, as in many traditional representations of the Crucifixion,<sup>701</sup> here, the act of the resurrection depends on the involvement of the female figure of the angel, who is shown softly lifting the frail hands of Christ, thus enabling a sensitive, reciprocal connection between them. The smooth, strong arms of the angel, formed after Mary Lloyd's 'beautiful arms', contrasted with the thin, but softened muscle tone of Christ. Although both bodies were of similar size, the angel's pose, leaning down from behind the Crucifixion, makes the angel appear large and dominating. Yet, while the angel's dramatically unfurled wings represent the active part and reinforce the horizontal direction of the composition, the visual focus remains on Christ and the surface of his smooth body.

Not only did Louise's monument differ decidedly from contemporary Boer War memorials, but also from its display context at the cathedral. Placed in the South Transept within a collection of free-standing, neoclassical marble groups commemorating Napoleonic war heroes, as depicted in the background of the unveiling ceremony of the *Boer War Memorial* on 24 May 1905 [fig. 2.54], Louise's memorial appeared at odds with its immediate sculptural surrounding. Apart from its material and colour in dark bronze, its relative position, being mounted high up, contrasted with the down-to-earth level of the earlier marble monuments of Britain's national heroes. Both competing and contrasting with the neoclassical depictions of heroic worthies, Louise offered an alternative approach to the commemoration of men who dedicated their lives to the British Empire. While her choice to commemorate the colonial soldiers stands for an uncompromising ideal of empire, the abstraction and aestheticisation of their commemoration into the realm of Christian spirituality removed the horror of war

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<sup>701</sup> Laura Ward and Will Steeds, *Angels: A Glorious Celebration of Angels in Art* (London: Carlton Books, 2005), p. 183.

and rendered the monument timeless and widely intelligible, with the figure of Christ as a common identity.

In its elaborate, aesthetic form and refined subject matter, located at the most prominent site for British imperial identity, Louise's *Boer War Memorial* was highly ambitious and effective as an alternative representation of masculinity. It functioned as an imperial monument, both challenging and confirming Louise's role and social position as a sculptor and princess of the British Empire.

## Chapter 3

### Vicky as a Patron of Sculpture

#### 3.1. Prologue: Vicky in the context of Berlin sculpture

From the numerous biographies about Vicky's life it is well known that her intellectual interests and liberal attitude brought her into conflict with the expectations of a princess at the Prussian Court in Berlin. Throughout her life, Vicky was in the position of not being fully accepted due to her British background. Whilst becoming isolated on political grounds, art constituted one of the few areas through which she expressed herself and gained some cultural influence.<sup>702</sup> Beyond the tensions, which her dual nationality entailed, Vicky was often confronted with public expectations that opposed her private taste and artistic allegiances. This personal dilemma is somewhat reflected, as we will see, in Vicky's multifaceted and international engagement with the medium of sculpture. However, before I assess Vicky's artistic relations and the tensions at stake, it is useful to register briefly the context of sculpture in Berlin during the four decades of my investigation, from around 1860 to 1900.

At the time of Vicky's move to Berlin after her marriage to Prince Frederick William of Prussia, familiarly called Fritz, on 25 January 1858, Berlin sculpture was dominated by the continuous influence of late neoclassicism, embodied by the eminent sculptor Christian Daniel Rauch (1777–1857) who had died only a few weeks before the royal wedding. Throughout the previous decades, the Berlin School of Sculpture, co-founded by Rauch in the 1820s, had retained strong links with Rome, the epicentre for neoclassical art, through which

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<sup>702</sup> For a short biographical overview of Vicky's life, see Agatha Ramm, 'Victoria, princess royal (1840–1901)', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn., May 2006, [accessed: 5 Feb. 2014].



Berlin sculptors had achieved an international reputation.<sup>703</sup> What contemporary critics perceived as the marked characteristics of Berlin neoclassicism was the combination of the ‘handsome ideality of the antique’ with ‘the modern principle of an art seeking after the characteristic, and pronounced.’<sup>704</sup> The clearer sense for liveliness and reality distinguished the Rauch School from the earlier rigid idealism of the Canova and Thorvaldsen tradition, and contributed to Berlin’s high popularity towards the mid-nineteenth century. While Prince Albert and other private collectors from England counted works from the Berlin School amongst their often highly cosmopolitan sculpture collections,<sup>705</sup> at the Sydenham Crystal Palace, Berlin sculpture featured prominently at the Modern Courts of Sculpture. Installed in 1854 with the purpose of promoting public taste,<sup>706</sup> the Sydenham Company purchased expensive casts of internationally celebrated sculptures, such as Rauch’s *Monument to Frederick the Great* (1851),<sup>707</sup> several versions of his *Victory* (c.1841),<sup>708</sup> as well as numerous works by his former students and other members of the Berlin School.<sup>709</sup> In the accompanying *Hand-Book to the Courts of Modern Sculpture*, Anna Jameson comments that, ‘The Berlin school, at the head of which is Rauch, has taken a direction towards natural and individual character, excelling in busts, portrait-statues, and what I have called the monumental and historical style, though not confined to these.’<sup>710</sup>

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<sup>703</sup> For more on the link between the Berlin School of Sculpture and Rome, see Peter Springer, ‘Berliner Bildhauer des 19. Jahrhunderts in Rom’, in *Ethos und Pathos* (1990), pp. 49-70.

<sup>704</sup> Anon., ‘Art and Artists in Berlin (translated and abridged from Deutsches Museum’, *Art Journal*, pp. 238-39, here p. 239.

<sup>705</sup> See Reid (1990), pp. 91-95.

<sup>706</sup> In her introduction to the *Hand-Book to the Court of Modern Sculpture* Anna Jameson states that ‘it was the request of the Directors that this Catalogue should serve as a guide in some respect to the public taste. [...] Let those who wish to learn, come here: such materials for comparison and delightful contemplation were never before brought together to educate the mind and the eye of the public.’ Jameson (1854), p. 13.

<sup>707</sup> Jameson (1854), nos. 195, 195\*, 195\*\* on pp. 66-68.

<sup>708</sup> Jameson (1854), nos. 184-189, on pp. 64-65.

<sup>709</sup> These included Gustav Blaeser (nos. 162, 163, p. 59), Friedrich Drake (nos. 168-170, on p. 61), Ernest Rietschel (nos. 196-200 on pp. 68-9), Christian Friedrich Tieck (nos. 253-260, on p. 81), Emil Wolff (nos. 266-271, pp. 82-3), Müller of Berlin (no. 178, on p. 63), Herman Wittich (no. 262-263, on p. 82).

<sup>710</sup> Jameson (1854), pp. 12-13.

Having been introduced to Berlin sculpture through visits to the Crystal Palace,<sup>711</sup> and especially through the works by the Berlin School in the royal collection at Buckingham Palace and Osborne House,<sup>712</sup> on her arrival in Berlin, the eminence of the Berlin School was further showcased to Vicky in the form of a decorative programme at her newly refurbished town residence, the Crown Prince's Palace, centrally located along the major avenue Unter den Linden [fig. 3.1]. Redesigned on the occasion of the royal wedding by the court architect Johann Heinrich Strack (1805–80), the seventeenth-century building was overhauled with a neoclassical façade with a portico entrance, Corinthian pilasters and an Eastern annexe with an Italianate pergola. Inside, the palatial exterior was matched with a series of representative rooms culminating in the so-called Commemorative Hall, an octagonal domed salon with arched walls, which served to celebrate the Anglo-Prussian union between Vicky and Fritz and which introduced the English princess to the pantheon of Prussian cultural heroes and artists.<sup>713</sup> While five of the eight arches depicted paintings of Anglo-Prussian historical events and views of Windsor Castle and Babelsberg Castle, as alleged counterparts,<sup>714</sup> in the triangular fields between the arches hung eight marble portrait medallions of local worthies whose cultural achievements were characterised by allegorical figures painted on the ceiling in the innovative

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<sup>711</sup> Vicky visited the Sydenham Crystal Palace while it was still under construction on 12 March 1853. See QVJ, 12 March 1853; as the eldest child, it is also likely that Vicky accompanied her parents on their visit of the Modern Courts of Sculpture under construction on 6 June 1853 and 1 November 1853. See QVJ, 6 June 1853, and 1 Nov. 1853; On 10 June 1854, Vicky accompanied her parents at the opening ceremony of the Crystal Palace. Together, they 'walked round the whole building'. See QVJ, 10 June 1854, pp. 263-65. <http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org> [accessed: 17 Feb. 2014].

<sup>712</sup> For more on Victoria and Albert's taste for Berlin sculpture, see Read (1990), pp. 92-93; *Victoria & Albert: Art & Love* (2010), pp. 34-36, cat. no. 85 on p. 154; see especially Martin (2013), pp. 126-92.

<sup>713</sup> For a description of the Memorial Hall, see Anon., 'Kunst=Chronik. Berlin', *Die Dioskuren* (1 April 1859), p. 57; Anon., no title, *Reichardt's Berliner Illustrierte Blätter*, 1 (1859), pp. 241-45; For a general introduction to the interior scheme of the Crown Prince's Palace, see Jörg Meiner, *Möbel des Spätbiedermeier und des Historismus. Die Regierungszeiten der Preussischen Könige Friedrich Wilhelm IV. (1840-1861) und Wilhelm I. (1861-1888)* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2008), pp. 149-53; and especially Frauke Tietze, *Die Innendekorationen Johann Heinrich Stracks (1805-1880)*, Ph.D. thesis, (Technical University Berlin 2001), pp. 117-26.

<sup>714</sup> The historical paintings were the *Meeting of Wellington and Blücher at Belle-Alliance* by Adolf Menzel, the *Visit of King Frederick William III in England* in 1815 by Julius Schrader, and the *Baptism of the Prince of Wales*, of which the painter was not identified. Of the landscapes, the view of the Castle at Babelsberg was by Carl Graeb, and the view of *Windsor Castle* was executed by Johann Wilhelm Schirmer. See Anon., *Kunst=Chronik. Berlin* (1859), p. 57.

technique of stereochromy, a process of mural painting using pigment mixed with water glass.<sup>715</sup> Although no illustrations of the original scheme of the Commemorative Hall have survived, the names of the sculptors involved in the project were recorded.<sup>716</sup> Thus, the young Reinhold Begas (1831–1911) sculpted the portrait of the explorer Alexander von Humboldt (1769–1859); Albert Wolff (1814–92) made the medallion of the Protestant theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834); August Wredow (1804–91) was commissioned to portray the poet and critic Ludwig Tieck (1773–1853); Hermann Schievelbein (1817–67) depicted the celebrated pianist and composer Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (1809–47); Hugo Hagen (1818–71) made the portrait of the famous Rauch, who had been his teacher; Gustav Bläser (1813–74) portrayed the architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1781–1841); Hermann Heidel (1811–65) received the commission for the Prussian reformer Christian Peter Wilhelm Beuth (1781–1853); and Wilhelm Stürmer (1812–85) was in charge of the portrait of August Borsig (1804–54), the successful Berlin locomotive builder. While the subjects of the medallions symbolised an open-minded and progressive society in Berlin, the sculptors commissioned to make them represented the pantheon of Berlin sculpture. Yet, as much as the selected artists reflected the establishment of the Berlin School, their similarities as artists also revealed the limits of the sculptural milieu in Berlin. All of them were male professionals, born or established in Berlin, and, as former students of Rauch or his predecessor Gottfried Schadow (1794–1850), had gone through similar training associated with academic neoclassicism. The official acclaim of Bläser, Schievelbein, Wolff and Wredow had been sealed by their sculptural contributions to the decorative programme of

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<sup>715</sup> For more on the technique of stereochromy, see Jürgen Pursche, 'Betrachtungen zur Malerei mit Alkalisilikaten. Geschichte, Maltechnik und Restaurierung', in *Mineralfarben. Beiträge zur Geschichte und Restaurierung von Fassadenmalereien und Anstrichen*, ed. Marion Wohlleben (Zurich: vdf Hochschulverlag AG, 1998), pp. 53-61.

<sup>716</sup> See Anon., *Kunst=Chronik. Berlin* (1859), p. 57.

the prominent Berlin Schlossbrücke, finished in 1857,<sup>717</sup> whereas Hagen, Heidel and Stürmer displayed their neoclassical style in other public ideal works.<sup>718</sup> Even the young Begas, later known for his neo-Baroque style, was still then considered as following in the neoclassical footsteps of his mentor Emil Wolff (1802–79) at whose studio in Rome he was working at the time.<sup>719</sup>

Although the Berlin School was recognised internationally, the city was neither attractive to international practitioners nor was its cultural atmosphere accommodating for female or amateur sculptors. Unlike in Britain, where foreign sculptors such as the Italian Marochetti, the French Triqueti and the Austro-Hungarian Boehm were successful as harbingers of new trends in sculpture, despite their controversial reception due to their foreign origin,<sup>720</sup> Berlin provided no incentive to international practitioners to settle there and stimulate fresh ideas. Similarly, for female practitioners the city offered very limited opportunities in training and patronage. Women were not allowed to study at the Berlin Royal Academy until the twentieth century, and on the rare occasion of being admitted to a private studio, they were usually advised by male masters to specialise in less recognised areas, such as modelling portrait busts and cameo carving. According to Brigitte Hüfler's survey of female practitioners of the Berlin School, of twelve women who could be identified as female sculptors in Berlin over the course of the nineteenth century, the only one who gained wider recognition as a portraitist at the time when Vicky came to Berlin was Elisabeth Ney (1833–1907).<sup>721</sup> The

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<sup>717</sup> For more, see the database of Berlin monuments of the Berlin city council (Denkmaldatenbank der Berliner Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung und Umwelt) [http://www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/cgi-bin/hidaweb/getdoc.pl?DOK\\_TPL=lda\\_doc.tpl&KEY=obj%2009030067](http://www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/cgi-bin/hidaweb/getdoc.pl?DOK_TPL=lda_doc.tpl&KEY=obj%2009030067) [accessed: 10 Feb. 2014].

<sup>718</sup> For an overview of the contemporary perception of Berlin sculpture including the above mentioned sculptors, see W. Lübke: 'Die moderne Berliner Plastik', *Westermanns Monatshefte*, 4 (1858), pp. 188-97, 300-309.

<sup>719</sup> See Gisela Moeller, 'Am Anfang war Italien. Reinhold Begas und seine Künstlerfreunde in Rom', in *Begas. Monumente für das Kaiserreich* (exhibition catalogue, Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin, 25 November 2010 – 6 March 2011), ed. Esther Sophia Sünderhauf (Berlin: Sandstein Verlag, 2010) pp. 49-59, here p. 49.

<sup>720</sup> See Read (1982) pp. 84, 90, 133, 297-98.

<sup>721</sup> Brigitte Hüfler, 'Zwölf Bildhauerinnen des 19. Jahrhunderts – Ein Nachtrag zur Berliner Bildhauerschule', *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Vereins für Kunstwissenschaft*, 43 (1989), pp. 64-79; for more on Elisabeth Ney's career in Europe and

Prussian court was not generally adverse towards female sculptors,<sup>722</sup> but there was no patronage on the scale of the British court where the Queen employed Mary Thornycroft and Susan Durant, and Bertie collected works from Harriet Hosmer and Sarah Bernhardt, as we have seen. As shown by Bernhard Maaz, the Berlin art scene around the mid-nineteenth century did not tolerate daring artistic individuality as in the case of the sculptor Theodor Erdmann Kalide (1801–63) whose experimentation with new formal treatment and political challenges of social norms were publicly criticised and rejected.<sup>723</sup>

While a change in sculptural style away from neoclassicism towards greater realism and more neo-Baroque tendencies happened gradually over the course of the second half of the nineteenth century, with Begas's artistic rise from the 1860s onwards to the position of pre-eminent sculptor to Emperor William II, the focus on public monuments in celebration of Berlin's new role as capital of Germany after 1871 increased the international resentment of Berlin sculpture, especially in Britain. Thus, Friedrich Drake's *Victory Monument* (1873) at Tiergarten, which celebrated Prussia's triumph in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870/71, was considered by the British press an obvious sign of militaristic pretension.<sup>724</sup> As pointed out by Reid, from that moment on, the language of Berlin sculpture became increasingly marked by pomp, ostentation and militaristic display, culminating, towards the end of the nineteenth century, with Begas's colossal monument to *Emperor Wilhelm I* (1897) in front of the Berlin Castle and his commission of the so-called *Victory Avenue* (c.1896–1901) with a

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America, see *Herrin ihrer Kunst: Elisabeth Ney. Bildhauerin in Europa und Amerika* (exhibition catalogue, Stadtmuseum Münster, Münster, 27 January -25 May 2008, ed. Barbara Rommé (Cologne: Wienand, 2008).

<sup>722</sup> In 1866, King Wilhelm I commissioned Ney with a bust of Chancellor Bismarck. See Hüfler (1989), p. 70; In addition, at the Orangerie Palace in Potsdam, there is still today a marble statuette by the French sculptor Félicie de Fauveau, entitled *Self-Portrait with Dog* (1846). It has not yet been established when and how this work came to Potsdam where it is for the first time recorded in 1860. Email communication with sculpture curator Saskia Hünecke of Staatliche Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz, June 2014.

<sup>723</sup> See Bernhard Maaz, *Sinnlichkeit und Kunst. Der Wertewandel des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Munich and Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2004).

<sup>724</sup> Reid (1990), pp. 102-103.

monotonous sequence of thirty-two extensive groups of historic Prussian rulers along the main axis of the centre of Berlin. Depicting the ancestry of Wilhelm II, the Victory Alley was to demonstrate Prussia's political power and to position the Hohenzollern dynasty at the forefront of Europe's ruling families.<sup>725</sup> At the same time when Begas forged his eminent career in Berlin, the Florence-, and later Munich-based sculptor Adolf von Hildebrand (1847–1921) pioneered his approach towards a new classicism in German sculpture which stood in marked contrast to Begas's style. Based on a profound interest in Renaissance art and culture, from the mid-1870s onwards, Hildebrand developed a restrained formal simplicity in sculpture, which he described in his influential treatise *Das Problem der Form in der Bildenden Kunst* (1893).<sup>726</sup> By considering all sculptures optically from a single viewing point as if they were reliefs, Hildebrand suggested an alternative to the prevalent realism and baroque twist in contemporary sculpture and emphasised idealised forms with clear contours, compressed depth and continuous surfaces.<sup>727</sup>

In the following four parts, I trace Vicky's multifarious engagement with sculpture and assess her role as a mediator of the medium in the context of her British upbringing and the fraught situation of Berlin sculpture, oscillating between the late neoclassicism of the late 1850s, the politicised language of Wilhelminian opulence from the 1870s onwards, and the new classicist approach towards the end of the century. The different strands of Vicky's engagement of making, advising, patronising and collecting sculpture are bound together by her

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<sup>725</sup> Ibid.; For more on Begas's commissions see *Begas: Monumente für das Kaiserreich* (2010), esp. pp. 89-101, 111-119, 254-258.

<sup>726</sup> Adolf Hildebrand, *Das Problem der Form in der Bildenden Kunst* (Strassburg: J. H. Ed. Heitz, 1893).

<sup>727</sup> For an overview of the main aspects of Hildebrand's treatise, see Lene Østermark-Johansen, *Walter Pater and the Language of Sculpture* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011), pp. 101-11.

deep interest in the medium which encouraged her to face the drastic tensions between her dual national alliances and her personal taste in contrast to her public duty. The first part looks at Vicky's activity as a sculptor in the first years after her marriage and asks why she practiced sculpture and what her preferences were. In the second part, I consider Vicky's role as an artistic advisor to Queen Victoria after Albert's death, in a period in which Vicky was thought to have inherited Albert's taste, advising Victoria on several memorial projects for Albert and recommending artists to her mother. As an example, I examine Vicky's involvement in the decorative programme of the Albert Memorial Chapel. This was the most extensive project in which Vicky got involved as an artistic advisor and I assess her contribution in relation to Albert as her role model. In the third part, I explore Vicky's private and official patronage of sculpture in Germany by looking at her artistic relationships with foreign and local sculptors and the way in which her decisions were influenced by the conflict between personal taste and public obligation. By also considering Vicky's increased interest in Renaissance sculpture from the 1870s onwards, reflected in the collection of Renaissance sculpture at her later widow seat Friedrichshof near Frankfurt, I indicate the alternative means by which she continued to engage with sculptural concerns at a time when her patronage of contemporary sculpture became increasingly a fraught issue. I am drawing Vicky's multifarious engagement with sculpture together by considering her interest in the New Sculpture in Britain and how her concerns came together in the Albert Chapel.

### 3.2. Vicky as a sculptor

In contrast to Vicky's lifelong activity as an amateur painter, her sculptural practice was limited to the first two decades after her marriage. Around fifteen works dating from 1859 to 1879 have been documented, the majority of which were made before 1863, when Vicky became more absorbed by social duties such as family life, charitable commitments and her engagement for the promotion of the Berlin museums.<sup>728</sup>

From an artistic point of view, the few surviving sculptural examples made by Vicky are not particularly remarkable. They show a focus on portrait busts of family members and reflect an interest in romantic literary and historical subject matter popular during the period. While their genre and subject appear generic, they represent Vicky's personal response to her particular family situation and intellectual interests as a princess. Unlike the sculptural career of her sister Louise, there is little evidence that Vicky practiced sculpture beyond the stage of modelling small domestic works in plaster. She did not aim at developing her technical skills by learning to carve in marble or making full-size statues. Neither did she attempt to promote her work at public exhibitions. In contrast to her painterly practice, which was publicly known and reported in the press, her sculpting was kept private.<sup>729</sup> Vicky had no ambition to become a publicly recognised sculptor. Instead, she considered herself as an amateur, in line with Albert's conception of the role of artistic practice for a member of the royal family.

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<sup>728</sup> For more about Vicky's charitable engagement, see Wiltrud-Irene Krakau, 'Kaiserin Friedrich, ein Leben im Widerstreit zwischen politischen Idealen und preußisch-deutscher Realität', in Müller and Rothe (2001), pp. 94-211, here pp. 164-182; For more about Vicky's engagement for the Berlin Museums, see Arnulf Siebeneicker, "'Ein herrliches und harmonisches Ganzes' Victoria und die Entwicklung der Berliner Museumslandschaft', in *Victoria von Preußen 1840-1901* (2001), pp. 486-523.

<sup>729</sup> For press reports about Vicky's practice in painting, see for example Anon., *Illustrated London News* (7 April 1855), p. 336; Anon., 'Painting and Sculpture. The Princess Royal as an Artist', *British Architect* (29 Oct. 1875), p. 240.



Being a royal amateur did not, however, necessarily imply a lack of commitment or want in talent. As Lisa Heer explains in her overview of female amateur artists in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it is important to distinguish, on the one hand, between members of the upper classes who were passionate about art and learned to practice it insofar as it advanced their knowledge and understanding of a medium, and, on the other hand, those who would have wanted to be professional but were prevented from it due to their gender, social circumstances and lack of training opportunities.<sup>730</sup>

By considering Vicky's engagement with sculpture as a practitioner and the advice she received in particular from Albert, it becomes clear that she belonged to the category of "voluntary" amateurs. A close look at some of her works, which are representative of the two strands of her oeuvre, portrait busts and small ideal works respectively, is furthermore revealing in terms of her personal taste and the influence of Berlin sculpture in contrast to the artistic trends she had grown up with in Britain. The assessment of Vicky's artistic preferences in her sculptural practice will, in turn, contribute to our understanding of her engagement with sculpture in her other roles, as an adviser, patron and collector.

### **Royal amateur**

Vicky's motivation to turn her interest to sculpture may have developed as a reaction against the idleness and easy delights of social life as she saw it at the Berlin court. Having grown up in Britain under a regular educational curriculum with a strong emphasis on artistic practice, at the Berlin court the usual female leisure occupation appeared to Vicky hardly sophisticated, with its focus on

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<sup>730</sup> Heer (1997), pp. 70-80.

‘many little trifling things’ and ‘gossip’.<sup>731</sup> Shortly after her arrival in Berlin, Vicky wrote to her father ‘I confess I could not live as the rest do here, in busy idleness, without rest, without work, doing no good, and at the end of the day – knocked up and tired – the next morning a headache!’<sup>732</sup> Even the typical amateur occupations of drawing and painting in watercolours had little appeal in Berlin so that Vicky explained, ‘I dare not talk of painting[,] it brings back to me a thousand recollections of pleasant hours, of which now nothing but the recollection remains’.<sup>733</sup> Following Albert’s advice ‘by pursuing regular occupations’,<sup>734</sup> she tried to structure her everyday life by picking up the artistic practices she had known from home. Not long after the birth of her first child Prince Wilhelm, she expanded her interests to the field of sculpture and wrote to her father on 9 April:

I like my modelling Lessons so much, Professor Hagen is considered the best sculptor ever, he was Rauch’s pupil, and he has his ‘Atelier’.  
[...] I am now making a bust of Countess Perponcher,<sup>735</sup> she is very easy to do, and it is the most fascinating occupation in the world.<sup>736</sup>

In his response to Vicky’s exuberant enthusiasm for her modelling lessons, Albert congratulated his daughter, but tried to direct her euphoria towards a more considered understanding of her practice by illuminating her with his aesthetic appraisal of sculpture:

That you take delight in modelling does not surprise me. As an art it is even more attractive than painting, because in it the thought is actually *incorporated*; it also derives higher value and interest from the fact that in it we have to deal with the three dimensions, and not

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<sup>731</sup> Vicky to Prince Albert, 5 March 1858, quoted after Fulford (1964), p. 75.

<sup>732</sup> Ibid., p. 74.

<sup>733</sup> RA/Z/5/16, 12 February 1858, Vicky to Queen Victoria, quoted after Robert (1987), p. 125.

<sup>734</sup> Vicky to Prince Albert, 5 March 1858, quoted after Fulford (1964), p. 74.

<sup>735</sup> In the function of Oberhofmeisterin to Augusta von Preussen, Countess Antoinette von Perponcher (1824–1899) formed part of the royal court and was an easily available subject for Vicky’s first attempts in life modelling.

<sup>736</sup> RA/Z/2/15, Vicky to Prince Albert, 9 April 1859.

with surface merely, and are not called upon to resort to the illusion of perspective. As the artist combines material with thought without the intervention of any other medium, his creation would be perfect, if life could also be breathed into his work; and I quite understand and feel with the sculptor in the fable, who implored the Gods to let his work descend from its platform.<sup>737</sup>

Albert's instructive tone, which cites many of the most familiar tropes from the period, suggests that Vicky was indeed a beginner in modelling without any serious previous experience.<sup>738</sup> Albert encouraged his daughter in pursuing her sculptural practice, which he rated as 'even more attractive than painting'. Victoria, likewise, approved of Vicky's choice of leisure occupation. Three days after her husband she wrote:

I hear you model & even paint in oils; this last I am sorry for; you remember what Papa always told you on the subject: amateurs never can paint in oils like Artists & what can one do with all one's productions, whereas Water Colours always are nice & pleasant to keep in books or Portfolios. I hope dear you will not take the one & neglect the other!<sup>739</sup>

In contrast to the clichéd conviction of some royal biographers that Victoria was opposed to modelling as a royal practice and considered it 'unfeminine'<sup>740</sup>, 'heavy and unnatural'<sup>741</sup>, she did not dislike the idea of learning to model. What she rather disapproved of was if amateurs aspired to be 'like Artists' by moving beyond the accepted artistic pursuits for them. As an example for such artistic

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<sup>737</sup> Kurt Jagow, (ed.), *Letters of the Prince Consort 1831-1861* (London: Murray, 1938), p. 239.

<sup>738</sup> This point underscores the mistake of previous scholars in assuming, without the proof of documentary material, that Vicky had sculpture lessons with the French Henry de Triqueti before her marriage. See Roberts (1987), p. 135; Dagorne and Santorius '(2007), pp. 167-75, here p. 168.

<sup>739</sup> RA/VIC/ADDU32, Queen Victoria to Vicky, from Buckingham Palace, 16 Apr 1859.

<sup>740</sup> Hawksley (2013), p. 64

<sup>741</sup> Wake (1988), p. 90.

presumption she referred to the practice of oil painting, in difference to painting in watercolours, which she considered as too ambitious for an amateur to achieve a presentable quality. Although modelling in clay was no less challenging and elaborate than oil painting Victoria exempted the former from her criticism, possibly because Albert had endorsed it earlier. For Albert, modelling represented the superior attraction of being a direct translation of intellectual thought into tactile three-dimensionality. Whilst approving of Vicky's sculptural practice, he made clear that sculpture was not meant as an exclusive occupation but as forming part of a royal amateur's multifaceted engagement with the arts. In the same letter in which he praised Vicky's modelling lessons, he went on to compare the practice of sculpture to gardening, thus situating it within a wider spectrum of royal artistic practice.

We have an art, however, in which even this third element of creation – inward force and growth- is present, and which has, therefore, had extraordinary attractions for me of late years, indeed I may say from earliest childhood, viz. the art of gardening. In this the artist who lays out the work, and devises a garment for a piece of ground has the delight of seeing his work live and grow hour by hour; and, while it is growing, he is able to polish, to cut and carve, to fill up here and there, to hope, and to love.<sup>742</sup>

Articulating here less of a clichéd description as in his comment on sculpture, Albert made it clear that in gardening, as in sculpting, his priority was on the design process of 'lay[ing] out the work, and devis[ing] a garment'. Ignoring the every-day reality of gardening, namely the practical, laborious execution of a scheme and its maintenance, he emphasised that the role of a royal gardener was

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<sup>742</sup> Jagow (1938), p. 239.

confined to the supervision and occasional practical intervention such as ‘to polish, to cut and carve,’ all pleasurable activities which could inspire feelings of ‘hope’ and ‘love’. A year later, after having received photographs of some of Vicky’s sculptural works, Albert reiterated his idea of the role of royal amateurship by making recommendations with regards to the correlation of sculpture in relation to architecture:

After a time it will become a necessity for you to master architecture, as the complementary and third, if not highest, art. Still, I hope it may be some time yet before you enter upon this study, inasmuch as it cannot be carried into practice without a very serious expenditure, and you (if you should have the means) would have many purposes to apply them to, more useful to your country.<sup>743</sup>

Albert’s statement makes it clear that he applied to the amateur a different standard from that of a professional. From a royal perspective, learning ‘to master’ an artistic medium meant to acquire a thorough command of practical knowledge in order to complement the role as art patron. As Albert explained to a friend, ‘I consider that persons in our position of life can never be distinguished artists. It takes a whole life to become that, and we have too many other duties to perform.’<sup>744</sup> In her own understanding of sculpture as a useful accomplishment, Vicky thus followed Albert’s conception, which was expressed, a few years later, in her comment on Louise’s sculptural practice as ‘something abstractive but having this fine occupation is rather fortunate as she is not to marry so soon, and as a young lively creature must have something to fill her head and heart’.<sup>745</sup>

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<sup>743</sup> Albert to Vicky, Buckingham Palace, 26 June 1860, quoted after Jagow (1938), p. 348.

<sup>744</sup> Albert to Lady Bloomfield, 20 December 1860, quoted after Theodore Martin, *The Life of His Royal Highness the Prince Consort*, vol. IV, (New York: Appleton & Co, 1875), p. 16.

<sup>745</sup> RA/VIC/MAIN/Y/45/43, Vicky to Victoria, 22 February 1870. Quoted after manuscript notes in *Royal Artists* file by Jane Roberts, Print Room, Windsor Castle.

## Between German neoclassicism and British romanticism

After Vicky's first attempt in modelling a bust of Countess Perponcher, the first surviving result of her sculpture lessons is a bust of *Augusta of Prussia*, Vicky's mother-in-law, inscribed and dated on the back as 'V. Pss F. W. v. Preussen / Pss R. v. G. Britannien / u. Irland Fecit / Berlin. April u. Mai 1859' [fig. 3.2, 3.3]. Of the two similar plaster versions which exist of this bust, one is today at the National Gallery in Berlin, the other is kept in storage at Osborne House, where it was probably brought over by Vicky on the occasion of a visit in May 1859.<sup>746</sup> The composition shows Augusta with simple, antique-style drapery around her shoulders and turning her head slightly to the left. The absence of any jewellery concentrates the view on the face and contemporary hairstyle with a middle parting and large loops over the ears, turning into a chignon at the back. The smooth surface of the skin alongside the lightly pierced pupils and tight, small lips give the sitter a severe and timeless expression. The bust's trapezium-shaped truncation and its neoclassical socle, inserted with a large scrolled tablet, clearly indicate the influence of Hugo Hagen who was to help Vicky also on her subsequent busts, finishing off those parts she was not confident enough to do herself.<sup>747</sup> Having been assistant to the eminent Rauch, in whose studio he worked from 1842 until the master's death in 1857, Hagen was praised by Vicky as 'the best sculptor ever',<sup>748</sup> which may have enticed him to give the Princess of Prussia some sculpture tuition as a welcome opportunity to further his career.<sup>749</sup>

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<sup>746</sup> On 21 May 1859, Vicky arrived at Osborne, where she spent four days before going to London on 25 May. She left London to return to Germany on 2 June 1859. See QVJ, [www.queenvictoriasjournals.org](http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org) [accessed: 26 Feb. 2014].

<sup>747</sup> For example, on 9 March 1860, with the help of Hagen, Vicky began modelling the head of her lady-in-waiting Marie Lynar. See Heinrich Otto Meisner (ed.), *Kaiser Friedrich III. Tagebücher von 1848-1866* (Leipzig: K. F. Koehler, 1929), p. 62.

<sup>748</sup> RA/Z/2/15, Vicky to Albert, 9 April 1859; With reference to her bust of Albert, on 24 March 1863 Vicky wrote to Victoria, 'He [Hagen] is a very clever artist—and finishes all that I cannot do about it.' Quoted after Fulford (1968), p. 185.

<sup>749</sup> A few years later, in 1865, Hagen became director of the Rauch Museum, which had been set up in 1859. For more on Hagen, see Bloch, Einholz and von Simson (1990), p. 115 and cat. 91; For Hagen's works at the National Gallery Berlin, see Bernhard Maaz (ed.), *Nationalgalerie Berlin. Das XIX. Jahrhundert. Bestandskatalog der Skulpturen*, vol. 1 (Berlin: E. A. Seemann, 2006), cat. nos. 342-355, on pp. 260-66.

The striking simplicity of Augusta's bust, without any sign of her distinct status, rather untypical for female royal portraiture at the time, suggests that this work had a private function and possibly served as a study object. The lack of detail and technical complication facilitated the modelling process and allowed Vicky to focus on facial features and the structure of the hair and drapery. It is not known what the sitter thought of the result. Yet the fact that, in early 1861, Vicky modelled another, now lost, bust of Augusta, for which she received some additional advice from the fashionable court painter Franz Xaver Winterhalter, suggests that the sitter was not pleased with the first version and that Vicky tried to improve it, perhaps with a more flattering and aristocratic depiction.<sup>750</sup>

As a more elaborate bust than that of Augusta, in November and December 1860 Vicky modelled a posthumous bust of *Alexandra Feodorovna*, the Dowager Empress of Russia [fig. 3.4].<sup>751</sup> She was the sister of Vicky's father-in-law, then Prince Regent, who commissioned Vicky to model the bust as a monument to his beloved sister who had died at the beginning of November 1860. Vicky knew that 'the Prince Regent loves no one as he loved his sister—and he was saying yesterday that [...], she had been his friend, his companion, almost a mother to him although she was not much older and to know her gone is a severe shock to him.'<sup>752</sup> Having shown much sympathy to the grief of her father-in-

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<sup>750</sup> On 30 January 1861, Fritz recorded in his diary, 'Vicky modelliert jetzt Mama's Büste.' [Vicky is now modelling Mama's bust]. Meisner (1929), p. 80; on 6 February 1861, his diary reads 'Papa und Mama in Vickys Atelier gefunden, wo Vicky Mamas Büste modelliert'. [...found Papa and Mama in Vicky's studio where Vicky is modelling Mama's bust'. Quoted after *ibid.*, p. 81; on 7 February 1861, Fritz recorded, 'Mama bei Vicky zum Modellieren' [Mama for modelling at Vicky's], quoted after *ibid.*, p. 81.

For Winterhalter's advice on the bust of Augusta of Prussia, see RA/Z/4/22, Vicky to Albert, 14 June 1861.

<sup>751</sup> Three plaster versions exist of this bust, of which one is at Potsdam Sanssouci, belonging to the Prussian Castles foundation SPSP Berlin-Brandenburg (Skulpturensammlung, Inv.-Nr. 1002, GiK II 645), while the two others are at the National Gallery Berlin (Inv.-Nr. B II 179, Inv.-Nr. B II 180). These works have been wrongly ascribed to the sculptor Albert Wolff, see Maaz (2006), vol. 2, cat. nos. 1417, 1418, p. 893; for more on the busts, see also Silke Kiesant, '„Am Hofe der Medici“ – Victoria als Förderin der Künste und als Künstlerin', in *Auf den Spuren von Kronprinzessin Victoria Kaiserin Friedrich (1840-1901)* (2001), pp. 42-49, here fig. 33, p. 44, Hildegard Reinhardt, 'Victoria von Preußen – Principessa Pittrice in Berlin: Skulpturen, Gemälde, Aquarelle, Zeichnungen und Lithografien', in *Victoria von Preußen 1840-1901* (2001), pp. 232-327, here p. 272, fn 190;

<sup>752</sup> Vicky to Victoria, 2 November 1860, quoted after Fulford, *Dearest Child* (1981), p. 277.

law,<sup>753</sup> it is likely that Vicky suggested to him that she could model a bust of his sister as a personal monument. This commission certainly demonstrates the Prince Regent's trust in Vicky's ability to achieve a representative likeness as he placed it in his study in his Berlin palace.<sup>754</sup> A few weeks later, on 11 December, Vicky proudly informed her father about the finished result and its accomplished challenges, having had to model the bust 'from recollection, with only 2 little photographs and a Lithograph of Winterhalter's Picture for the Guides, - it was not easy I can assure you but it is finished, and I think has succeeded pretty well.'<sup>755</sup> The Dowager Empress is depicted looking out straight towards the viewer and wearing the typical Russian court dress, with a large diadem-shaped tiara known as *Kokoshnik*, a veil falling down the back, and an ermine coat over the shoulders fixed in front by a gem brooch. The bust's severe frontality probably derived from photographic sources. Yet the sitter's unmarked pupils, the serious expression with closed lips, and the conspicuous adornment of the costume keep the viewer at a distance and give the bust the official character of a state portrait. In contrast to the bust of Augusta, this composition clearly conveys the sitter's superior status by focusing on the prerogatives of court representation.

With the exception of two marble versions of her sons *Prince Wilhelm* (1860) [fig. 3.5] and *Prince Waldemar* (c.1879) [fig. 3.6], both carved by professional sculptors, Theed and probably Begas<sup>756</sup> respectively, no other examples of Vicky's portrait busts appear to have survived today. Yet, a close look at the correspondence with her mother about the posthumous bust of *Prince*

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<sup>753</sup> 'I am sure it would have quite touched you to have seen how he felt your kind sympathy expressed in your telegram to Fritz last night which I translated for him, he had a feeling heart you know and any mark of friendship at such a time he values much' Vicky to Queen Victoria, 2 November 1860, quoted after Fulford, *Dearest Child* (1964), p. 277.

<sup>754</sup> Jutta von Simson, *Der Bildhauer Albert Wolff: 1814-1892* (Berlin: Mann, 1992), fig. 112 on p. 128. Von Simson wrongly ascribes the bust to Albert Wolff, see *ibid.* pp. 127-8.

<sup>755</sup> RA/Z/10/23, Vicky to Albert, 11 December 1860.

<sup>756</sup> Jutta von Simson, 'Werkverzeichnis der Bildhauerischen Arbeiten', in *Begas* (2010), pp. 179-286, here work no. 124, p. 246.



*Albert* (1863) reveals more clearly Vicky's motivation for learning to model in relation to sculptural works of close family members. Based on Victoria's two favourite busts of Albert, one by Marochetti (1849) [fig. 3.7], the other a posthumous version by Theed (1862) [fig. 3.8], Vicky's version was meant as a combination of the best parts of these two works, in order to convey her personal perception of her father.<sup>757</sup> While Marochetti's bust with classical drapery focused on Albert's aristocratic appearance by contrasting his smooth features with the finely nuanced hairstyle, Theed's bare-chested version, fashioned shortly after Albert's death, was modelled with close attention to capturing precise facial details, thus serving as a surrogate for the prince's physical absence.<sup>758</sup> Owning copies of both works,<sup>759</sup> Vicky compared the two and found out that neither was satisfying: 'It is too strange how they contradict each other though both are full of valuable truths; Marochetti's is the better work of art but the other is much more like.'<sup>760</sup> She therefore decided to model her own version as an improved synthesis of the two and announced to her mother that her work 'completely engrosse[d]' her but made her feel at the same time 'very nervous' and 'sanguine'.<sup>761</sup> On Victoria's criticism of her interpretation,<sup>762</sup> Vicky defended her composition and tried to justify, with slight annoyance, the precise details she had adhered to:

The nose is no thicker than Mr. Theed's; it measures exactly the same in breadth and the mouth is the very same as his with the only difference of the moustache being cut off straight instead of being a

<sup>757</sup> For Vicky's bust of Albert, see Darby and Smith (1983), pp. 15-17; for Theed's bust, see *ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>758</sup> For the use of both busts of Albert as part of Victoria's mourning strategies, see *ibid.*, pp. 10-11, see also Martin (2013), pp. 204-11.

<sup>759</sup> In January 1862, Queen Victoria sent a bronze cast of Prince Albert's bust by Marochetti to Vicky for her son William. See Fulford, *Dearest Mama* (1964), p. 45.

<sup>760</sup> Vicky to Victoria, 24 March 1863, quoted after *ibid.*, p. 185.

<sup>761</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>762</sup> 'Your bust pleases us all very much. I like your eyes better than Theed's but the nose, mouth and chin I like best in Theed's; your nose is too thick. But I like it extremely, and wish only I could show you all I mean. I have made a few marks on the bad impression as I think you would like to know exactly what I think'. Victoria to Vicky, 1 April 1863, quoted after *ibid.*, p. 189.

little turned in, which throws a different shadow in the lip of course.

Theed's measurements have all been so carefully kept to, except in the eyes which never pleased me on his, and the cheeks which seemed a trifle too round.<sup>763</sup>

Admitting, however, that 'I cannot take the whole credit to myself as Professor Hagen did a great deal to the chief part of the work, but not having ever seen dear Papa of course he could not judge what it should be like and did not do a stroke without my direction',<sup>764</sup> it is evident that Vicky's motivation to model the bust was not to be recognised for her practice as a sculptor. Instead, motivated by the love for her father, she wished to have direct command over the outcome of her work, even in defiance of Victoria's personal preferences. Whilst paying close attention to the proportions in the existing models, in small details, such as the shape of the moustache, the effect of the eyes and the form of the cheeks, Vicky rendered her bust according to her memory of Albert's likeness. Having learned the process of modelling and gained an understanding of artistic intricacies, she was able to determine the outcome of her work and instruct Hagen to manipulate her work in a specific way to achieve the desired effect. Proud of the finished version, Vicky wished her bust to be carved in marble as her personal monument to her father and she begged Victoria to 'give it to Fritz and me for both our birthdays and Christmas in marble'.<sup>765</sup> Victoria, however, was reluctant to grant her daughter's wish. Her suggestion, over a year later, to 'have it made in Marble, with the slight alterations',<sup>766</sup> indicates the sense of subtle competition between the two women around remembering Albert's likeness. The commission did not, however, materialise and, in Christmas 1864, demonstrating her retaliation, Vicky

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<sup>763</sup> Vicky to Victoria, 4 April 1863, quoted after *ibid.*, p. 190.

<sup>764</sup> Vicky to Victoria, 28 March 1863, quoted after *ibid.*, p. 188.

<sup>765</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>766</sup> RA/VIC/ADDU32, Victoria to Vicky, 26 May 1864.

had turned the tables and presented her mother instead with her Albert bust in marble. Although Vicky considered her work superior, it never supplanted the Queen's favoured busts by Theed, and, as if signifying the mother-daughter contention, its whereabouts remain untraced.

Apart from portraiture, the second strand in Vicky's sculptural practice focused on small ideal works after romantic literary and historical subjects which reflected her continuous interest in British romantic art. A series of three plaster bas-reliefs, made in April and May 1860, forms part of this work group, of which two have survived in the form of plaster casts at the Musée Girodet in France; the third is documented in a contemporary photograph at the Royal Print Room in Windsor. All three works show tragic figures from British royal history of the Tudor period. Popular in Britain throughout the Victorian period, they catered especially for the romantic, sentimental taste of the mid-nineteenth century. Depicted are *Mary Queen of Scots* [fig. 3.9], *Lady Jane Grey* [fig. 3.10] and the *Princes in the Tower* [fig. 3.11]. All three were royal martyrs, killed either by their political enemies for their faith and religion, or because they were considered a potential threat by their usurpers. Being a Catholic, Mary Queen of Scots was killed by order of Queen Elizabeth I.; Lady Jane Grey, in turn, was beheaded because of her Protestant faith; and the Princes in the Tower, the two only sons of Edward V, were allegedly murdered by their uncle Richard III. Yet, instead of depicting brutal death scenes, Vicky focused on episodes from her protagonists' lives, which attest to their virtues and innocence. Set in a gothic arched frame, *Mary Queen of Scots* is shown kneeling at prayer in front of an altar and piously looking up from her bible reading; *Lady Jane Grey*, confined in her Tudor study, is depicted at her

desk and meditating over her study; the *Princes in the Tower*, captured in a prison cell, sit huddled together on a bench, fearfully awaiting their destiny.

The general composition of the *Princes in the Tower* was clearly derived from a print source of Paul Delaroche's well-known painting of the same title of 1831 [fig. 3.12]. However, by situating the princes in a prison cell rather than a comfortable bedchamber, as in Delaroche's composition, Vicky altered the setting and tried to render her picture source less obvious. She reversed the brothers' position and depicted the older one laying his arm around his little brother's shoulders, instead of holding a bible. Rather than implying the murderers' approach from behind the door, her version focuses on the boys' innocence and brotherly affection. It is likely that the theme was inspired by the performance, of two of Vicky's brothers, of the *Princes in the Tower* in a recent tableau vivant for their parents' wedding anniversary on 10 February 1860.<sup>767</sup> Such tableaux vivants were a popular leisure occupation of the royal children from the 1840s. Often devised by the court painter and royal drawing teacher Edward Henry Corbould (1815–1905), their theatrical poses and costumes were then documented in photographs and occasionally inspired Victoria to paint them.<sup>768</sup> As Vicky offered her relief of the *Princes in the Tower* to her mother as a birthday present on 24 May 1860, it is likely that she tried to impress her parents by choosing a subject that proved her pride in English history and reminded of her fond childhood memories.<sup>769</sup>

For the two compositions of *Mary Queen of Scots* and *Lady Jane Grey*, Vicky could have referred to popular romantic print sources of similar scenes with

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<sup>767</sup> In her diary on 10 February 1860, Queen Victoria notes '3<sup>rd</sup> Tableau Hymn by De la Roche Les Enfants d'Edouard P<sup>ce</sup> Arthur & P<sup>ce</sup> Leopold', QVJ, [www.queenvictoriasjournals.org](http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org) [accessed: 27 Feb. 2014].

<sup>768</sup> For Corbould devising the royal children's tableaux, see Millar (1995), vol. I, p. 229. For the influence of the tableaux vivants on Victoria's painting, see Roberts (1983), pp. 111-12. A watercolour of the royal children in eighteenth-century costume by Winterhalter (1850) is also illustrated in *Victoria & Albert: Art & Love* (2010), cat. no. 156 on p. 232.

<sup>769</sup> QVJ, 24 May 1860, [www.queenvictoriasjournals.org](http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org) [accessed: 27 Feb. 2014].

Tudor ladies, especially since her watercolours of the late 1850s clearly demonstrate her interest in the two heroines. For example, in 1857, she composed a scene with Mary Queen of Scots taking leave of her courtiers before her execution [fig. 3.13], whereas, in 1859, she depicted a Tudor lady in her study [fig. 3.14].

In all three panels, the romantic, medievalist style of the figures, costumes and accessories clearly reflects the tradition of Vicky's instruction in watercolour drawing under the tutelage of Corbould before she came to Berlin.<sup>770</sup> Many of the themes treated then were chosen from Arthurian romances and Shakespearian dramas, and were strongly influenced by the ideals of chivalry.<sup>771</sup> Corbould's training encouraged compositions with a highly prosaic iconography, filled with brightly coloured figures and a focus on costume and detail for a clear, narrative effect.<sup>772</sup> Beyond print sources and Vicky's drawing practice, a further source for Vicky's reliefs is mentioned in Albert's comment on receiving the remaining two works on 4 July 1860: 'Your plastic efforts have arrived, and they have been duly admired. The attitude of the Jane Grey is especially natural and happy. Gretchen in Retzsch's *Faust* must have hovered before you in producing it, as Lady Lichfield did in the *Mary Stuart*. They are a complete success.'<sup>773</sup> The mentioning of Lady Lichfield in relation to *Mary Queen of Scots* may have alluded to a tableau vivant performed by her, while Retzsch's *Faust* referred to a series of outline illustrations to Goethe's *Faust* by the engraver Moritz Retzsch, first published in Germany in 1820. Characterised by their clear design and easy comprehensibility, the illustrations gained continuous popularity and influence.

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<sup>770</sup> Roberts (1987), pp. 121-25.

<sup>771</sup> For the influence of chivalry in Corbould's work, see Girouard (1981), p. 124.

<sup>772</sup> For more on Corbould, see Millar (1995), pp. 225-35.

<sup>773</sup> Prince Albert to Vicky, Buckingham Palace, 4 July 1860. Quoted after Kurt Jagow (ed.), *Letters of the Prince Consort, 1831-61* (London: John Murray, 1938), p. 349.

This was the case especially in Britain, where Retzsch's first British edition of 1846 explained that '[t]he pleasure is always fresh upon our feelings, and it is so, because all the expressions are true to those feelings. Fancy, fiction, sentiment, passion, beautifully spread before the eye [...]'.<sup>774</sup> Considering Vicky's preference for historical narrative and its intelligible representation, it is comprehensible that she used Retzsch's illustrations as compositional cribs for her reliefs, even if she exchanged the subject matter from German drama to British history. In fact, by doing so, she re-enacted the import and transformation of German art into British culture, which had, earlier in the 1840s, been promoted by Albert's determination, as a German, to take a position at the centre of English cultural life.<sup>775</sup> As suggested by Albert, *Faust's* female protagonist, 'Gretchen', could have served as a source for Jane Grey. The comparison, for example, of *Margaret Disconsolate at her Spinning Wheel* [fig. 3.15], with Vicky's *Jane Grey* shows clear similarities. Both women are depicted in profile, wearing historical dress, and perching slightly forward with their head leaning on their hand. Other illustrations of *Faust* include particular accessories that reoccur in Vicky's reliefs. For example, from the illustration *Faust Enters the Prison where Margaret is* [fig. 3.16], Vicky adopted the curved prison ceiling and the motif of the metal chain for her relief of the *Princes in the Tower*.

While Retzsch's *Faust* partly inspired the composition of Vicky's designs, the idea to turn them into a series of small sculptural panels may have been motivated by a series of bronze bas-reliefs by Theed for the Houses of Parliament, made in the mid-1850s. Illustrating popular scenes from Tudor history, Theed's panels were certainly known to Vicky. Not only had Albert been president of the

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<sup>774</sup> *Illustrations of Goethe's Faust by Moritz Retzsch. Engraved by Henry Moses* (London: Tilt and Bogue, 1843).

<sup>775</sup> William Vaughan, *German Romanticism and English Art* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1979), esp. pp. 12-15.

Fine Arts Commission, which decided on the decorative scheme for the Houses of Parliament, but Theed was, as we have already seen, one of Victoria and Albert's favourite court sculptors.<sup>776</sup> In this context, his depiction of *Lady Jane Grey with her Tutor* (1855) [fig. 3.17] is especially noteworthy, since it depicts the sitter similarly in profile in her study, with the only difference that she turns her head towards her tutor. As to the modelling of Vicky's reliefs, it is not documented that Hagen assisted his royal pupil on this occasion. The panels' highly pictorial and detailed composition, with shallow outline incisions, suggests, instead, that the princess made them independently, based on preparatory drawings and her previous modelling experience.

Having examined the iconography and sources of the reliefs, it is clear that they represented Vicky's identification with the British historical past. While Vicky resorted to the neoclassical style of the Rauch School for the modelling of family portraits, for her personal, historical genre works, she reverted to her earlier artistic education with a preference for romantic, British motifs in a highly pictorial style. This represented a continuity of her artistic taste from her upbringing in England and indicated her reluctance to fully embrace the German tradition. Vicky familiarised herself with German source material, as in Retzsch's illustrations, but adapted it to her interpretation of British themes, arguably to simulate the Anglo-German aesthetics that mirrored her parents' Anglo-German marriage, yet here with focus on a British appearance. In view of Vicky's difficulties to integrate at the Berlin court, her inspiration by British, rather than German, subject matter appears understandable as it reflected her self-definition as a British princess. Vicky possibly related to the subjects' fate as young and

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<sup>776</sup> For Albert's role as president of the Fine Arts Commission, see Janet McLean, 'Prince Albert and the Fine Arts Commission', in David Cannadine et al, *The Houses of Parliament: History, Art, Architecture* (London: Merrell, 2000), pp. 213-23; For a list of Theed's works, including his works for the Royal Collection, see Roscoe et. al. (2009), pp. 1238-43.

innocent martyrs. The choice of depicting Jane Grey at her studies and not in a more dramatic setting, as in Delaroche's well-known painting, seems to reflect Vicky's perception of herself as an intellectual woman who felt little understood in her environment in Berlin. The making of the reliefs, with their reference to English heroines, could thus have served as a remedy for her difficult position in Berlin society and provided her with a sense of reassurance. Furthermore, by offering the works as gifts to her parents, they proved her loyalty to her family and home country.

### **Sculptural polychromy**

Assured by Victoria and Albert's approval for her small reliefs, these works continued to occupy Vicky in the following year when she reused them for an experiment in sculptural polychromy, applying oil paint and gold to them. Knowing that her parents had themselves been receptive to the intervention of polychromy in several of their earlier sculpture commissions, Vicky found herself on safe ground in confiding her thoughts about the subject to them. In a letter to Victoria of 19 February 1860, she explained her motivation behind this study:

I have painted the 3 bas reliefs I modelled in oils, wh. have caused me a good deal of time & trouble, & send them [now?] for dear Papa and you. The gold I did not put on myself[,] it was done by a man of the name of "Röhlich". I hope dear Papa will place them in a good light to look at them as so much depends upon that. I know there is a great prejudice against painted sculpture and an objection usually raised is that it is a corruption of taste. I owe I cannot share this opinion. I think nature shows that this is a mistake & that form &



colour ought to go together, the ancients thought so too. Our eye has got so accustomed to see sculpture always white that it seems to shock one when one sees it coloured. [Yet?] perhaps large statues may be ugly, but still I think little figures are pretty when well done and have a peculiar charm. These are only plaster of Paris wh. I covered white [“vize”?] before colouring!<sup>777</sup>

Since the painted versions of Vicky’s three reliefs are today lost, it can only be guessed from their description that they were brightly and opaquely painted, probably all-over, not unlike Vicky’s earlier watercolour paintings. Berlin sculpture, at the time, generally adhered to the neoclassical precept of monochrome purity, while polychromy became only more fashionable towards the end of the century, notably in the innovative artistic circles around Hildebrand and Max Klinger.<sup>778</sup> Nonetheless, Bernhard Maaz recently referred to sporadic interests in polychromy amongst representatives of the Berlin School during the first half of the nineteenth century, according to which also Rauch had been concerned with archaeological polychromy, yet without applying it to his own sculptures.<sup>779</sup> Whether Hagen, as Rauch’s long-time assistant and Vicky’s teacher, took an interest in the subject cannot be verified. His work, though understudied, shows no evidence in this direction and Vicky did not mention Hagen in her polychromy project. Meanwhile, her opinion that ‘form and colour ought to go together’, and her justification that ‘the ancients thought so too’, clearly demonstrates that she was well informed about the international polychromy debate of the mid-nineteenth century and sought to make use of this. Apart from the Gothic Revival, which led to a reappraisal of painted medieval sculpture in

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<sup>777</sup> RA/VIC/MAIN/Z/58, Vicky to Victoria, 19 February 186[1]. The year on the letter is dated 1860. However, as the reliefs were modelled in April-May 1860, the year given appears to have been misspelt.

<sup>778</sup> See Maatz (2010), vol. II, pp. 500-509.

<sup>779</sup> Ibid, pp. 498-99.

Britain, archeological research on ancient Greek sculpture revealed that polychromy had been a practice in ancient sculpture.<sup>780</sup> While the former justified the restoration of medieval church monuments, the evidence of ancient polychromy seriously affected the question whether polychromy was a relevant tactic for contemporary sculpture. Although Vicky's reliefs were stylistically more reminiscent of her English national heritage, by arguing for their colouring in line with the tradition of 'the ancients' she clearly sought approval for them on the basis of their classicism.

Especially in Britain, the polychromy controversy triggered a series of sculptural experiments with colour, for which the royal family appeared as pioneering patrons. In 1846, for example, Gibson tinted a statue of *Queen Victoria*, which found the approval of Victoria and Albert.<sup>781</sup> Likewise, in 1856, Thornycroft's statues of *Princess Helena as Peace* and *Princess Louise as Plenty*, both for Osborne, were delicately tinted around the drapery borders and accessories.<sup>782</sup> However, while the colour application in these works was so restrained to only lightly enhance the statues' effect, Vicky's painting strategy in using oil colour was more in line with the colour experiments of another court sculptor, Carlo Marochetti. In 1855, Marochetti was commissioned by the Queen to make a marble bust of the Indian noblewoman *Princess Gouramma of Coorg*, which he painted all-over in bright watercolours and gilded it [fig. 3.18].<sup>783</sup> Although his motivation to fully paint his work was to highlight the sitter's ethnographic features, it appears that Victoria was not convinced by this intervention. When Marochetti produced, in the following year, a similarly painted male bust as a counterpart, she judged the result as 'entirely spoilt, by being

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<sup>780</sup> See de Chair (2014), pp. 159-70; Droth, *Sculpture Victorious* (2014), cat. no. 45, pp.162-64, nos. 54,55, pp. 185-87.

<sup>781</sup> Darby (1981), pp. 37-53, here pp. 39, 42.

<sup>782</sup> *Ibid.* p. 44.

<sup>783</sup> *Victoria & Albert: Art & Love* (2010), cat. no. 93 on p. 162.

coloured,<sup>784</sup> and ordered an uncoloured version of it in marble.<sup>785</sup> In anticipation of her mother's potential scepticism, Vicky pointed out the acceptability of her small painted reliefs in contrast to 'vulgar' full-sized, coloured statues. Victoria's reaction towards Vicky's painted reliefs is not known. Yet the fact that the works do not appear in any inventory, suggests that the Queen did not grant them a special place in her collection. Albert, on the other hand, understood Vicky's conceptual approach in line with Marochetti's colour tactics. In fact, he showed her reliefs to Marochetti, possibly at her request, at which the sculptor formulated a detailed memorandum for Vicky's attention. In this, he explained his thoughts on polychromy and advised the princess on how to improve her modelling and colouring techniques.<sup>786</sup> As an advocate of polychromy he was inspired by the 'charming bas-reliefs' and recommended that Vicky used matt tempera rather than oil paint, to avoid a shiny effect and achieve, instead, the 'charm of a fresco'. Also preferable to brilliant gold leaf, as in her reliefs, he suggested the use of gold and silver paint, as in watercolour painting. Moreover, he recommended for Vicky to try out the colouring of marble, 'for its delightful effect'.<sup>787</sup> Marochetti clearly saw Albert's consultation of his opinion as an opportunity to promote the practice of sculptural polychromy and praised Vicky's practical initiative exceedingly:

The success of what I have seen is complete and it suffices to place white plaster next to the coloured bas-reliefs to convince oneself of the superiority of polychrome sculpture. It gives Her Royal Highness full honour! [...] Her Royal Highness opens a new career to sculpture in our days and returns it to its real aims, which are decoration,

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<sup>784</sup> QVJ, 26 Aug. 1856, [www.queenvictoriasjournals.org](http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org) [accessed: 12 April 2014].

<sup>785</sup> *Victoria & Albert: Art & Love* (2010), cat. no. 94, p. 163.

<sup>786</sup> Autograph Collection, Archive Kulturstiftung des Hauses Hessen, Marochetti to Prince Albert, 12 May 1861.

<sup>787</sup> *Ibid.*

imitation and expression, and for which colour is as important as form.<sup>788</sup>

Although there is no evidence of Vicky applying Marochetti's recommendations subsequently in her own works, her experimentation with polychromy, together with Albert and Marochetti's encouragement, showed her that her cutting-edge idea of painting sculpture was appreciated at home.

As pointed out at the beginning of this section, Vicky's motivation to sculpt was not to become a recognised practitioner but rather to expand her knowledge and experience with an artistic medium in order to support her general expertise. While modelling certainly served as a useful leisure occupation, it complemented her future role as a royal patron. Despite being an amateur Vicky took sculpture very seriously. Albert's approval of her artistic activities was highly important to her. Together, they had serious conversations about art, and through him, she developed excellent artistic contacts. With Albert's endorsement, Vicky ventured in different directions, from neoclassical portraiture inspired by the Berlin School to small ideal works that reflected her British identity. She was keen to experiment with cutting-edge sculptural methods and kept abreast of the newest discussions. Even if she admitted to her mother, with regards to the painting of sculpture, that 'perhaps large statues may be ugly',<sup>789</sup> Vicky's role as sculptural adviser shows, as we shall see, that she became an advocate of the combination of colour and sculpture on a grand scale. This, she exemplified by bringing the French sculptor Henry de Triqueti (1803–74) to the project of decorating the Albert Memorial Chapel.

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<sup>788</sup> My translation of, 'Le succès de ce que j'ai vu est complet et il suffit de placer les plâtres blancs près des bas-reliefs colorés pour pour [sic] se convaincre de la supériorité de la sculpture polychrome. Son Altesse Royale en a tout l'honneur! [...] Son Altesse Royale ouvre une nouvelle carrière à la sculpture de nos jours et la ramène à ses véritables buts, qui sont, la décoration, l'imitation et l'expression, pour lesquels la couleur est aussi importante que la forme.' Ibid.

<sup>789</sup> RA/VIC/MAIN/Z/58, Vicky to Victoria, 19 February 186[1].

### 3.3. Vicky as artistic advisor to the Queen

During the first few years following Albert's unexpected death on 14 December 1861, Vicky took on the role of artistic advisor to her mother on a number of memorial projects dedicated to the Prince Consort. As Victoria was determined to commission a series of befitting memorials commemorate Albert, but felt overwhelmed by the responsibility of taking so many important artistic decisions on her own, she implored her eldest daughter to assist and support her: 'I shall need your taste to help me in carrying out works to His memory wh. I shall want His aid to render at all worthy of Him! You know his taste. You have inherited it.'<sup>790</sup> As seen in the previous part, Vicky's artistic engagement was highly influenced by Albert, which was the reason for her mother's respect for her artistic erudition. For Vicky, her father was her role model. Writing to Victoria in May 1862 she confessed:

[D]arling Papa was the centre of all my thoughts – how I never enjoyed anything I saw or heard – without thinking – wd he like it – and according as I imagined wd please him, the thing had value in my eyes, - in fact as his taste, judgement and feelings were so unerring – to love the perfect in all and everything, was to have the same taste as he.<sup>791</sup>

Hence, as Albert's favourite daughter, Vicky appeared to her mother as the most appropriate personal advisor in achieving memorials 'at all worthy of Him'.<sup>792</sup> Though resorting substantially to the help and expertise of court artists and professional advisors, Victoria informed Vicky about every step in her artistic undertakings, followed her ideas on particular designs, and relied on her

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<sup>790</sup> RA/VIC/ADDU/32, Victoria to Vicky, 18 December 1861.

<sup>791</sup> RA/VIC/MAIN/Z/13/16, Vicky to Victoria, 17 May 1862.

<sup>792</sup> RA/VIC/ADDU/32, Victoria to Vicky, 18 December 1861.

judgement before committing to a plan. Not only did Vicky make recommendations on smaller projects, such as the wall memorial to Albert at Whippingham Church, near Osborne,<sup>793</sup> and the romantic-medievalist marble group of *Victoria and Albert in Anglo-Saxon Dress* (1867),<sup>794</sup> both by Theed; she was also involved in the three most significant commemorative projects; Vicky provided Ludwig Gruner, the designer of the Royal Mausoleum, with sketches for the decorative programme of the building's High Renaissance-inspired interior.<sup>795</sup> She also corrected Marochetti's design for the tomb effigy of Albert at the Mausoleum.<sup>796</sup> Secondly, her opinion mattered in the selection of George Gilbert Scott's design for the National Memorial at Kensington Gardens, today known as the Albert Memorial.<sup>797</sup> Finally, it was also due to Vicky's initiative that the Wolsey Chapel at Windsor Castle was converted into the Albert Memorial Chapel,<sup>798</sup> a project in which she played a leading role in formulating the decorative scheme.

Since the Queen was the main instigator and recipient of the mourning cult around the Prince Consort, the patronage of the above-mentioned memorial projects has evidently been attributed to her. However, as Vicky's name appears frequently in archival documents relating to many of these projects her involvement as artistic advisor has occasionally been acknowledged in the scholarship, notably by Elisabeth Darby and Nicola Smith in their closely

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<sup>793</sup> RA/VIC/MAIN/Z/69/38, Vicky to Victoria, 26 July 1862.

<sup>794</sup> QVJ, 17 March 1862. [www.queenvictoriasjournals.org](http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org) [accessed: 28 Feb. 2014].

<sup>795</sup> Fulford (1968), *Dearest Mama*, p. 32; Darby and Smith (1983), p. 23.

<sup>796</sup> 'Marochetti hat einen abscheulichen Entwurf für den Sarcophag im Mausoleum. Ich habe auch eine Idee aufgezeichnet, die adaptiert werden soll.' (Marochetti has made an awful design for the sarcophagus in the Mausoleum. I have also drawn up an idea which must be adapted.) Vicky to Crown Prince Friedrich, 15 February 1862, Archive KHH; See also QVJ, 20 February 1862. [www.queenvictoriasjournals.org](http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org) [accessed: 28 Feb. 2014].

<sup>797</sup> Vicky consulted with Sir Charles Eastlake about the memorial scheme. See QVJ, 28 March 1862.

[www.queenvictoriasjournals.org](http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org) [accessed: 28 Feb. 2014]; Vicky advocated the rejection of a design scheme involving an obelisk. See RA/VIC/ADDU/32, 2 April and 5 April 1862; Vicky's idea was to have a memorial including a large hall with a statue. See RA/VIC/MAIN/Z/13/23, Vicky to Victoria, 3 June 1862; Vicky was consulted by the Committee of the National Memorial before the final scheme by George Gilbert Scott was decided. See QVJ, 14 February 1863.

[www.queenvictoriasjournals.org](http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org) [accessed: 28 Feb. 2014]; for more on the Albert Memorial in general, see Darby and Smith (1983), pp. 41-57.

<sup>798</sup> RA/VIC/R/40/1, Dean of Windsor to General Grey, 9 February 1862.

documented account of different monuments to the Prince Consort.<sup>799</sup> Yet, the importance of Vicky's role and motivation for getting involved on these conspicuously British monuments, despite living in Germany, has rarely been questioned beyond the succinct explanation that she 'also derived consolation from assisting her mother with ideas for memorial schemes'.<sup>800</sup> Only Richard Dagorne and Nerina Santorius, in their essay for the French exhibition catalogue *Henry de Triqueti, 1803-1874*, mention Vicky's active part in the decorative programme of the Albert Memorial Chapel as a means of continuing Albert's legacy,<sup>801</sup> which, however, requires some reassessment under consideration of how Vicky's artistic involvement reflected in practice her vision of Albert as a royal role model.

Thus, in order to exemplify the significance of Vicky's role as sculptural advisor to her mother, I examine her involvement in the case of the Albert Memorial Chapel, which represented one of the most complex and costly commemorative enterprises, carried out between 1862 and 1874. In this project, Vicky manifested a most conspicuous influence, not least by introducing Triqueti to it because of his innovative technique for sculptural wall decoration with incised and coloured marble, so-called 'tarsia'. After a brief recapitulation of the general decorative scheme of the Albert Memorial Chapel, I address the initial purpose for its dedication and suggest Vicky's motivation for getting involved on this project. Following this, I examine how and why Vicky suggested Triqueti as the designer for some of the most prominent elements of the decorative scheme. However, as the chapel's development and iconography have been subject of

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<sup>799</sup> Darby and Smith (1983), pp. 21-57.

<sup>800</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>801</sup> Dagorne and Santorius (2007), pp. 167-75, here pp. 172-75.

sustained scholarly attention,<sup>802</sup> I focus in particular on the formal characteristics of Triqueti's tarsias as an innovative sculptural technique and consider Triqueti's decorative scheme as far as it translated Vicky's vision of Albert as a royal model figure.

### **The Albert Memorial Chapel**

Upon its completion in 1874, the overall interior decoration of the Albert Memorial Chapel, as it still appears largely today, despite the addition of two further monuments along the central axis,<sup>803</sup> was compared to a 'casket of gems'<sup>804</sup> and a 'veritable treasure-house',<sup>805</sup> which surrounded Albert's free-standing cenotaph [fig. 3.19]. Yet, as a most conspicuous trait, the decorative scheme was divided into two stylistically contrasting horizontal parts. While the upper part was characterised by neo-gothic gold and enamel mosaic decoration and bright stained glass windows devised by the project architect Scott, the lower part, Triqueti's work, was decorated allover in coloured marble and precious stones. Here, in eye level along the hard belt of the lower wall, the viewer's attention was on a series of large, rectangular sculpted marble tarsia panels, surrounded by richly inlaid borders with Florentine mosaic and white marble bas-reliefs. Above an elaborate tomb chest, Albert's effigy depicted the prince as a recumbent medieval knight, carved in white marble [fig. 3.20]. While the decoration of the upper wall scheme celebrated Albert's ancestry through the depiction of angels with coats of arms, as well as royal and ecclesiastical figures, Triqueti's tarsia panels represented Albert's virtues and achievements through a

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<sup>802</sup> For the closely documented account of the evolution of the Albert Memorial Chapel, see Darby and Smith (1893), pp. 30-40; For a detailed assessment of Triqueti's decorative programme, see Syliva Allen and Richard Dagherne, 'Le décor de la chapelle du prince Albert', in *Henry de Triqueti, 1803-1874: Le Sculpteur des Princes* (2007), pp. 113-44.

<sup>803</sup> The two additional monuments are a marble tomb of Prince Leopold by Boehm, and Gilbert's elaborate *Clarence Tomb*.

<sup>804</sup> Anon., *Hour*, (23 June 1873), P. 5, quoted after Darby and Smith (1983), p. 40.

<sup>805</sup> Anon., *Morning Post*, (2 Dec. 1875), pp. 5-6, quoted after *ibid*.



sequence of Biblical episodes from the Old Testament. In addition, above the ten tarsia panels on the north, south and west walls were the portrait medallions of the royal children and the Princess of Wales, executed by Triqueti's former pupil Susan Durant, whose delicate designs gave the royal children a conspicuous presence in the overall scheme of the Chapel.<sup>806</sup>

The idea to convert the then remnant Wolsey Chapel into a public memorial chapel dedicated to Albert was based on Vicky's initiative once it became clear that the building was not going to be used as Albert's mausoleum.<sup>807</sup> According to Allen and Dagorne, in February 1862, Vicky suggested that the chapel be transformed into an 'official place of pilgrimage'<sup>808</sup> where the public could pay their respect to the Prince Consort. During the first year after Albert's death, the chapel had served provisionally as his tomb house but the final mausoleum was to be located separately in the private surroundings of Frogmore Garden. Neither was the chapel to become the National Memorial, which, from a royal perspective, had to be easily accessible in central London and 'could not consist of the execution of certain works in the Queen's Palace'.<sup>809</sup> In contrast to the clear purpose of the Royal Mausoleum and the National Memorial as a private royal, and public national memorial respectively, the exact motivation for the Albert Memorial Chapel as an additional royal memorial has not been clearly explained in the scholarship. Enclosed in the Lower Ward of Windsor Castle, the chapel could not attain the same status of openness and publicity as the National

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<sup>806</sup> For detailed photographs of each of the royal children's portrait medallions, see Jane and Margaret Davison, *The Triqueti Marbles in the Albert Memorial Chapel, Windsor: A Series of Photographs executed by the Misses Davison* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1876), plates XLVIII and XLIX.

<sup>807</sup> RA/VIC/R/40/1, Gerald Wellesley to Charles Grey, 9 February 1862. This letter refers to an earlier letter from Vicky to Wellesley in which Vicky proposed 'her plan for the decoration of the Wolsey Chapel' which Wellesley described as 'beautiful ideas'.

<sup>808</sup> Allen and Richard (2007), p. 114, see also Darby and Smith (1983), p. 30.

<sup>809</sup> RA/VIC/R/40/8, Charles Phipps to Lord Palmerston, 16 April 1862.

Memorial in the public surroundings of Kensington Gardens. Nevertheless, it was accessible to the royal court as well as to public visitors on restricted days. Although known as Victoria's memorial to her husband, 'restored and beautified / by Her Majesty The Queen / In memory / of The lamented Prince Consort',<sup>810</sup> as stated in the marble tablet above the private entrance in the north of the chapel, the royal children's presence, through their portraits along the walls, suggests a more inclusive familial dimension of the purpose of the Albert Memorial Chapel. In fact, a number of press articles from 1863 and 1864 note that, during the first years while the project was developing, the purpose of the chapel was to serve 'as a memorial from the Royal children to the memory of their parent.'<sup>811</sup> Regarding the costs, the *Court Circular* remarked, in February 1863, that '[i]t is intended, we believe, as a memorial chapel to the late Prince Consort, and the expense of its restoration, [...], is entirely defrayed by the Royal children.'<sup>812</sup> This point was reasserted at the end of 1864 on occasion of the royal family's inspection of the designs for the Chapel, 'which is being very beautifully and artistically decorated at the expense of the royal children, as a memorial chapel in memory of the late Prince Consort'.<sup>813</sup> As the question to whether public resources could finance the overall estimated cost of £15,000 to £20,000<sup>814</sup> had been a fraught issue over the first few months after Albert's death, the Queen eventually resolved the discussion by deciding, in May 1862, to pay for it by herself and have the Albert Chapel gradually restored.<sup>815</sup> Considering Vicky's role as initiator of the chapel project, it is likely that she suggested to her siblings to offer their own

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<sup>810</sup> The marble tablet was installed in 1870 but to be engraved when the chapel decoration was finished. See Anon. 'The Albert Memorial Chapel, Windsor', *The Times* (21 April 1870), p. 10.

<sup>811</sup> Anon., 'Court Circular', *The Times* (25 Feb. 1863), p. 5.

<sup>812</sup> Anon., 'Court Circular', *The Times* (3 Feb. 1863), p. 9.

<sup>813</sup> Anon., 'Her Majesty, &c. from the Court Circular', *The Morning Post* (24 Nov. 1864), p. 5.

<sup>814</sup> RA/VIC/R/40/9, Lord Palmerston to the Queen, 14 April 1862.

<sup>815</sup> 'There have been hitches, troubles & difficulties, so that I have decided to have the decoration of the Wolsey Chapel done gradually & to pay for it myself out of various savings, which will involve no personal expenses'. QVJ, 26 May 1862, [www.queenvictoriasjournals.org](http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.org) [accessed: 28 Feb. 2014].

contribution to the royal budget for the decorative scheme, as a gesture of their unanimity as a family and to facilitate the process of transforming the chapel. Whether the royal children actually paid for some parts of the decorations is not clear. In 1868, a press article stated that Vicky, her sister Alice and sister-in-law Alix contributed the tarsia pictures allocated to their respective portrait medallion.<sup>816</sup> Yet, on the chapel's completion in 1874, the Keeper of the Privy Purse informed the Queen that the Albert Chapel was 'entirely paid for by the Privy Purse'.<sup>817</sup> Whether this was the case or it was omitted that the royal children had contributed to the budget, by the time when the chapel was finished and dedicated, Victoria had regained much of her strength as an active patron and seems to have failed to acknowledge the royal children's involvement in it.<sup>818</sup> In view of this, it appears that the shared experience of Albert's death initially motivated the royal children to follow in Albert's footsteps and promote the image of collective royal patronage, an idea which was subsequently abandoned in order to stipulate Victoria's pre-emptive role as royal patron and devotee to the Albert cult.

By considering the earlier purpose of the chapel as a personal tribute of the royal children to their father, it is comprehensible that Vicky developed a particularly personal interest in its decoration. As both artistic advisor to her mother and advocate of the royal children, she formulated the transformation of the chapel into an allegorical representation of Albert. As already indicated, her most significant contribution was the recommendation of Triqueti as designer of the lower part of the interior scheme, which led to the contrasting two-part

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<sup>816</sup> According to an article in the *Times* the marble panels below the medallions of Vicky, Alice and Alexandra were offered by each of them. Thus, Vicky would have contributed the tarsia 'Jacob blessing his children', Alice would have presented the work 'Joseph receiving from the Pharaoh the insignia of government' and Alix would have donated 'Jehosaphat causing the people to be taught'. Anon., 'The Albert Memorial Chapel in Windsor', *The Times* (26 Nov. 1868), p. 7.

<sup>817</sup> RA/VIC/R/40/77, Sir Thomas Biddulph to the Queen, 15 December 1874.

<sup>818</sup> Victoria's regained confidence as a patron is manifested in her patronage of Joseph Edgar Boehm from the late 1860s onwards. See Stocker (1988).

decoration mentioned above. Initially, Vicky had been in favour of the neo-gothic programme proposed by Scott in March 1862 and showed her mother ‘a beautiful design of Mr Scott’s, the Architect, for the decorations of the Wolsey Chapel, as a memorial to [...] Albert’.<sup>819</sup> However, by the end of summer 1862, Vicky suggested Triqueti as an alternative designer in decorating the newly restored vault ceiling.<sup>820</sup> In contrast to Scott’s original idea of decorating the ceiling ‘by painting with angels &c’,<sup>821</sup> Vicky’s proposal of Triqueti’s ‘species of mosaic-work’<sup>822</sup> was highly creative and innovative. Inspired by Renaissance designs from Siena Cathedral, the Italianate technique, which Triqueti called ‘Marble Tarsia’<sup>823</sup>, consisted of flat, coloured marble slabs, set together like a picture in wood marquetry, and incised and filled with coloured cement to gain an overall painterly quality.<sup>824</sup> Although Triqueti was already known in Britain for his statues in marble and ivory, of which Victoria and Albert had purchased two examples during the 1850s,<sup>825</sup> his tarsia work, which he developed in the 1840s, remained largely unknown until some of his samples were included in the International Exhibition of 1862.<sup>826</sup> However, according to Triqueti’s biographer Baron de Girardot, already in 1858, on the occasion of delivering a marble statue to the royal couple, Triqueti seized the opportunity to present his new tarsia technique to Albert and promptly received the prince’s ‘most precious

<sup>819</sup> QVJ, 29 March 1862, www.queenvictoriasjournals.org [accessed: 28 Feb. 2014].

<sup>820</sup> RA/PPTO/PP/WC/MAIN/OS/469, George Gilbert Scott to the Dean of Windsor, 12 September 1862.

<sup>821</sup> Ibid.

<sup>822</sup> Ibid.

<sup>823</sup> RA/VIC/MAIN/R/40/31, Triqueti to a member of the Royal Household, 21 May 1864.

<sup>824</sup> For a detailed description of Triqueti’s marble technique see Davison (1876), pp. i-iv. See also Baron de Girardot, ‘Catalogue de l’ Œuvre du Baron Henri de Triqueti, précédé d’une Notice sur ce Sculpteur par M. le Baron De Girardot, séance des 1er mai et 17 juillet 1874, in *Mémoires de la Société d’Agriculture, Sciences, Belles-Lettres et Arts d’Orléans*, vol. 16 (Orléans: Imprimerie de Puget, 1874), pp. 129-161, here: p. 156-157.

<sup>825</sup> These were Triqueti’s ivory statuette *Sappho and Cupid* (1848), purchased by Victoria in 1852 through the agency of Hermann Winterhalter (*Victoria & Albert: Art & Love* (2010), cat. 89, p. 158), and the marble statue *Edward VI* (1856), bought by the royal couple in 1858, after it had been brought to the Queen’s attention by Lady Olivia Cowley, the wife of the British Ambassador in Paris, who was responsible for engineering the sale on Triqueti’s behalf. See Sylvain Bellenger, ‘Henri de Triqueti et l’Angleterre’, in Alvar González-Palacios (ed.), *La Scultura: Studi in Onore di Andrew S. Ciechanowiecki. Antologia di Belle Arti*, vol. II (Turin: Allemandi, 1996), pp. 183-200, here pp. 186-87.

<sup>826</sup> See Bellenger (1996), p. 190; For Triqueti’s first private commission of tarsia panels in England in 1863, see Elisabeth Darby, ‘A French Sculptor in Wiltshire: Henri de Triqueti’s Panel in the Church of St. Michael & All Angels, Teffont Evias’, in *The Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine*, vol. 95 (2002), pp. 34-45.

encouragements'.<sup>827</sup> Considering Vicky's close relationship with her father, it is likely that, at the time, she had heard from him about Triqueti's tarsias and was reminded of it when they were shown at the International Exhibition in 1862.<sup>828</sup> It is unlikely that Vicky saw the tarsias installed when she visited the exhibition site a month before its opening.<sup>829</sup> As a late submission to the exhibition, the tarsia panels were not even included in the official catalogue.<sup>830</sup> However, Vicky might have become aware of them when Triqueti sought royal permission to include in the exhibition his statue of *Edward VI* (1856), which he previously sold to the royal couple.<sup>831</sup> Or, she could have heard about them through her husband Fritz who came to England for the exhibition opening on 1 May and conducted lengthy visits of all departments of the exhibition.<sup>832</sup> Another, yet improbable, explanation why Vicky put forward Triqueti's name for the decoration of the Albert Chapel was suggested by Dagorne and Santorius who speculated that Vicky had received modelling lessons from Triqueti before her marriage in 1858. In their assumption of this relationship, the scholars refer to two undated museum labels on the two plaster versions of her earlier bas-reliefs of *Jane Grey* and *Mary Queen of Scots*, which Vicky gave Triqueti as a present and which are today at the Musée Girodet in France. These labels denote Vicky as 'élève du baron de Triqueti'.<sup>833</sup> While this probably referred to Vicky's deep artistic admiration of Triqueti rather than her actual role as a 'student', it is moreover unlikely, as previously articulated by Philip Ward-Jackson, that Triqueti had met Victoria and Albert in person before

<sup>827</sup> According to Girardot, at the time when Triqueti presented his statue of *Edward VI* to the royal couple, which happened in June 1858 (Anon., 'Court Circular', *The Times*, (26 June 1858), p. 9.), he also brought his early experiments in marble tarsia along. De Girardot (1874), p. 159.

<sup>828</sup> Anon., 'The Albert Memorial Chapel', *Art Journal* (Dec. 1874), p. 368.

<sup>829</sup> QVJ, 27 March 1862, www.queenvictoriasjournals.com [accessed: 24 Feb. 2014].

<sup>830</sup> See Darby (2002), p. 36.

<sup>831</sup> In fact, an official carte-de-visite photograph of the statue at the International Exhibition 1862 has the subtitle 'Prince Albert's favourite statue', for which Triqueti presumably needed royal permission. William England (attributed), *Edward VI, by Baron di [sic!] Triqueti (Prince Albert's favourite statue)*, *International Exhibition 1862*, albumen carte-de-visite, 85x58cm, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam. <http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.258825> [accessed: 2 March 2014].

<sup>832</sup> For the Crown Prince of Prussia's visit of the Great Exhibition in 1862 see Meisner (1929), pp. 136-37.

<sup>833</sup> The label reads 'moulage d'un bas-relief exécuté par la princesse royale de Prusse, née princesse royale d'Angleterre, élève du baron de Triqueti'. Quoted after Dagorne and Santorius (2007), p. 168.

1858. The reason for this is that any previous sales of his works to the royal couple were not conducted by himself, but on his behalf.<sup>834</sup> Assuming, therefore, that Triqueti had not been introduced at court before Vicky got married, which is backed by the lack of any archival evidence for Triqueti's role as royal teacher, Dagonne and Santorius's hypothesis has to be dismissed.<sup>835</sup> It is more plausible to situate Vicky's interest in Triqueti's tarsias within the context of the International Exhibition 1862.

The overall advantage of the tarsia technique over painting was its durability and preservation of colour while painting was prone to decay and fading. However, not having seen Triqueti's marble tarsias in person may explain why Vicky suggested them for the chapel's ceiling decoration although the large tarsia panels were, from an architectural point of view, inapt for the high and vaulted surface.<sup>836</sup> As a counter suggestion and improvement of his initial idea of painting the chapel ceiling, Scott proposed, in September 1862, the enamel mosaic method recently developed by the Venetian firm of Salviati. As Europe's leading mosaicists, their technique was equally innovative and durable as Triqueti's marbles but possessed the advantage, due to the mosaic stones' small size, of being adaptable to various surface shapes.<sup>837</sup> Praised for their 'suitableness to this situation' and their 'striking and noble effect for arched ceilings', the Salviati mosaics were thus commissioned and constituted, together with the stained glass windows, a brightly coloured and luminous scheme for the upper wall of the chapel, in the Gothic revival style.<sup>838</sup>

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<sup>834</sup> Philip Ward-Jackson, 'The French Background of Royal Monuments at Windsor and Frogmore', *Church Monuments*, vol. VIII (1993), pp. 63-83, here pp. 69, 70.

<sup>835</sup> See also Bellenger (1996), p. 184.

<sup>836</sup> RA/PPTO/PP/WC/MAIN/OS/469, Scott to the Dean of Windsor, 12 September 1862.

<sup>837</sup> RA/PPTO/PP/WC/MAIN/OS/469, Scott to the Dean of Windsor, 12 September 1862.

<sup>838</sup> Darby and Smith (1983), pp. 32-3.

Meanwhile, the decorative scheme for the lower chapel walls remained undecided during 1863. Here, Scott's plan had been 'that the walls below the windows should be covered with frescoes by Mr. Herbert'.<sup>839</sup> Contrary to Allen and Dagorne's identification of 'Mr. Herbert' as the ceramicist Herbert Minton,<sup>840</sup> who never worked in fresco, Scott's intention was to employ the painter John Rogers Herbert (1810–90), who had previously been involved on the Palace of Westminster frescoes. As Albert had not only been an instigator of the revival of fresco painting in Britain but was particularly supportive of Herbert's work in fresco, Scott's proposal appears as an homage to the Prince Consort's investment in art and science.<sup>841</sup> For its quality in luminousness, clarity and colour brilliance, the fresco technique would have been stylistically suited for the Albert Memorial Chapel and would have represented a formal and stylistic continuity of Scott's earlier scheme. However, during the early 1860s, severe criticism had already emerged around the fresco technique in general which was considered as merely experimental.<sup>842</sup> It was known that Herbert's fresco work for the Houses of Parliament, painted only some ten years earlier, was rapidly declining in freshness and required repeated restoration.<sup>843</sup> In view of the lack of knowledge of how to improve the fresco technique and make it last in the British climate, it is understandable that Vicky dismissed Scott's proposition for the wall decoration of the Albert Chapel.<sup>844</sup> Instead, she preferred, here again, Triqueti's artistic approach. Two months after having been invited to design a scheme for the

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<sup>839</sup> G. Gilbert Scott (ed.), *Personal and Professional Recollections by the late Sir George Gilbert Scott, R.A.* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, 1879), p. 272.

<sup>840</sup> Allen and Dagorne (2007), p. 135, FN 60 (on p. 180).

<sup>841</sup> For Herbert's royal connection, see Nancy Langham, "*The Splendour and Beauty of Truth*": John Rogers Herbert, R.A. (1810-1890), Ph.D. thesis (Oxford Brookes University 2012), no page numbers.

For more on Albert's engagement for the revival of fresco painting, see Emma Winter, 'Prince Albert, Fresco Painting, and the new Houses of Parliament, 1841-51', in Franz Bosbach and John R. Davis eds, *Prince Albert: Ein Wettiner in Großbritannien. Prince Albert: A Wettin in Britain* (Munich: K. G. Saur, 2004), pp. 149-60.

<sup>842</sup> Anon., 'The Progress of Fine Art in the Houses of Parliament', *The Art Journal* (1 Feb. 1862), pp. 53-55, here p. 55.

<sup>843</sup> Nancy Langham, 'John Rogers Herbert (1810–90) and the New Palace of Westminster', *British Art Journal*, vol. XI, no. 3, pp. 48-56, here p. 55.

<sup>844</sup> Scott (1879), pp. 272-73.

memorial chapel's wall decoration and cenotaph in February 1864,<sup>845</sup> Triqueti went to Berlin to discuss his plans with Vicky before submitting them to the Queen for approval. Thus, on 23 April, Vicky informed her then absent husband about her foreign visitor:

M. H. de Triqueti the French painter and sculptor of whom you have often heard me speaking is here – with the designs for the walls of the Wolsey Chapel which I still have to see before they are presented to Mama. He is a very kind erudite man & I am very glad that he is here.<sup>846</sup>

Having often spoken about Triqueti, it appears that Vicky had been engaged for some considerable time in trying to involve him in the decoration of the chapel. It is possible that she met Triqueti in February or March 1863 while staying at Windsor, where the sculptor was for some short time engaged on a cataloguing project at the Royal Library.<sup>847</sup> Vicky could have seized that opportunity to revive her earlier plan of including Triqueti's tarsias in the Albert Chapel decoration. In fact, shortly before her visit to England, Vicky had been in Rome where she was much impressed by the polychrome marble decorations of Saint Peter's Tomb at St Peter's Basilica: 'The whole of the vault is filled with interesting monuments – the ceiling wh. is very low – painted all over – the walls and the floor inlaid with

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<sup>845</sup> According to de Girardot, on 13 February 1864, the Dean of Windsor wrote to Triqueti, at the Queen's request, inviting him to design a scheme for the chapel's wall decoration as well as the cenotaph. See de Girardot (1874), pp. 129-61, here: p. 155; However, as De Girardot ignored Vicky's artistic relationship with Triqueti throughout his account of the sculptor's work for the Albert Chapel, and ascribed all royal decisions to the Queen, it is probable that the Dean of Windsor's letter was, in fact, sent on Vicky's behalf since he also acted as her mediator with artists on other occasions related to the chapel. For example, a drawing of the west window was sent to the Dean in order to be forwarded to Vicky so that she could develop a decorative scheme for it. RA/VIC/R/40/34, Arthur Thompson (on Scott's behalf) to Hermann Sahl, 5 July 1864; RA/VIC/R/40/35, Thompson (on Scott's behalf) to Sahl, 11 July 1864.

<sup>846</sup> My translation from 'Mr. H. de Triqueti der französische Maler und Bildhauer von dem du mich oft hast sprechen hören ist hier – mit den Entwürfen für die Wände der Wolsey Chapel die ich noch sehen soll ehe sie der Mama vorgelegt werden. Er ist ein sehr liebenswürdiger gebildeter Mann u. ich bin sehr froh, dass er hier ist.' Vicky to Crown Prince of Prussia, 23 April 1864, Archive Kulturstiftung des Hauses Hessen, Schloss Fasanerie.

<sup>847</sup> Vicky stayed at Windsor from 23 February to 13 March 1863. On 2 March 1863 Vicky went with her mother to the Print Room to look 'through 2 portfolios of dearest Albert's favorite Raphaels.' QVJ, 2 March 1863, [www.queenvictoriasjournals.com](http://www.queenvictoriasjournals.com) [accessed: 24 Feb. 2014].



beautiful mosaic<sup>848</sup> [fig. 3.21]. Considering Vicky's impression of the effect of marble as a strong, precious and colourful material for wall decoration, Triqueti's own advertisement of his tarsia work, as in 1865 when he told Baron Girardot about the qualities of his recently finished tarsia picture *Marmor Homericum* for University College London,<sup>849</sup> would have sounded similarly convincing to her:

This is neither sculpture, nor painting, nor pigmentation, it is marble.

It is the result of twenty-four years of research, without encouragement, yet not due to failure on my behalf. I have reached my goal, I made a work that is unalterable by time. Someone more adroit might have done better, without doubt, but all in it is by me; the invention of the process and the subject, the execution, all is new.

To explain to you what it is, is difficult. You believe to see a Greek painting, a large fresco, but [it is] a polished marble fresco which will brave the elements.<sup>850</sup>

By highlighting the superior qualities of the tarsia's permanence and resistance, adapted to 'brave the elements', as well as its ability to combine the impression of sculpture and painting, and to resemble 'polished marble fresco', Triqueti clearly positioned his work in relation to the then fraught artistic controversies about the revival of fresco painting and sculptural polychromy in Britain, both of which had been advocated by Albert. While promising a comparable visual effect to 'large fresco', with his tarsia technique Triqueti could readily exceed his competitor's offer for the Albert Memorial Chapel. Furthermore, the combination of colour and

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<sup>848</sup> RA/VIC/MAIN/Z/14/13, Vicky to Victoria, 15 November 1862.

<sup>849</sup> For more on Triqueti's *Marmor Homericum*, see Bellenger (1996), pp. 196-97; Darby (2002), pp. 39-40.

<sup>850</sup> The author's translation of 'Ce n'est ni sculpture, ni peinture, ni teinture, et c'est en marbre. C'est le résultat de vingt-quatre ans de recherches, sans encouragement, et cependant sans défaillance de ma part. J'en suis venu à mes fins, j'ai fait une œuvre inaltérable au temps. Un plus habile eût mieux fait, sans doute, mais tout y est de moi; invention du procédé comme du sujet, exécution, tout est nouveau. Vous expliquer ce que c'est est difficile. Vous croiriez voir une peinture grecque, une grande fresque, mais une fresque en marbre poli qui bravera le temps.' Quoted after de Girardot (1874), p. 135.

sculpture in his tarsias and bas-reliefs was in line with Vicky's personal taste in sculpture when she experimented with sculptural polychromy, as we have seen. In fact, the polished surface of Triqueti's tarsias accorded even more with Vicky's own experience with glossy oil paint on sculpture than with the matt appearance of fresco. Apart from conveying preciousness, the shiny effect attracted the viewer to engage with the subject of what was represented. Based on extensive research and expertise, Triqueti's innovative marble tarisa technique could be considered as the continuity, even improvement, of Albert's efforts in promoting scientific and artistic progress in Britain and was, understandably, a method done to Vicky's heart.

Beyond the technical aspects of Triqueti's artistic method and material, the iconography of his decorative programme paid ample tribute to Albert and was influenced by Vicky in several aspects.<sup>851</sup> According to Triqueti's manuscript notes on his decorative scheme for the chapel, Vicky devised the motifs of the mosaic borders around the tarsia pictures in accordance with Albert's taste for particular plants and animals.<sup>852</sup> She also suggested the two statues of angels for the niches flanking the main entrance,<sup>853</sup> and determined in particular the appearance of the cenotaph.<sup>854</sup> For the latter, Vicky imagined a Gothic-style recumbent statue of Albert asleep and made of bronze, 'clad in medieval armour, enriched, with greatest care, of ornaments executed in gold and silver, in a way

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<sup>851</sup> Dagorne and Santorius (2007), p. 167.

<sup>852</sup> 'Suivant une precieuse indication que je dois à S.A.R. Madame la Princesse Royale de Prusse, je cherche à rappeler dans ces bordures les gouts du Prince Consort pour les plantes, les arbres, les animaux ainsi la porte supérieure est ornée, d'oiseaux et de branches de chêne. RA/VIC/R/40/43, Manuscript plan by Triqueti of the decorative programme of the chapel's wall decoration.

<sup>853</sup> 'Suivant encore les indications de Son Altesse Royale, j'ai pensé qu'à droite et à gauche de la porte les niches pourraient contenir deux statues représentant les anges, du Deuil, et de la Résurrection.' RA/VIC/R/40/42, manuscript note by Henry de Triqueti, undated.

<sup>854</sup> 'Lorsque j'eue de voir S.A.R. Madame la Princess Royal de Prusse à Berlin, elle eût la bonté de m'engager à étudier un projet de Cénotaphe don't elle m'indiqua ell-même toutes les conditions.' Ibid.

similar to the best works known of the 15<sup>th</sup> century'.<sup>855</sup> Although Triqueti considered the representation of Albert in medieval armour a stylistic anachronism, Vicky's choice for this historicist iconography reflected the royal family's conspicuous taste for medievalism and chivalry. As pointed out by Mark Girouard, from the 1840s the concept of chivalry with its ideals of honour, service and self-sacrifice had been an important strand in Victoria and Albert's lives and served to propagate an exemplary code of conduct for modern society.<sup>856</sup> To Vicky, as much as to her mother, Albert was the personification of the ideals of chivalry. In fact, it appears that Vicky based her idea for the cenotaph on a series of earlier depictions of Albert in armour, notably Corbould's then recently finished *Memorial Portrait to the Prince Consort* (1864) which showed Albert as a knight sheathing his sword and set into a fictive triptych frame with biblical scenes [fig. 3.22].<sup>857</sup> As suggested by Darby and Smith, this portrait also appears to have served as a source for Triqueti to resolve the anachronism of Albert's costume.<sup>858</sup> In a similar way as Corbould, Triqueti turned this representation of Albert into a 'Christian allegory'<sup>859</sup> by incorporating in it the biblical text from 2. Tim. 4:7 'I fought the good fight. I have finished my course.'<sup>860</sup> Another similarity was that the cenotaph, like Corbould's painted portrait, was surrounded by pictures with biblical scenes. Yet, while the latter incorporated scenes with Moses and Christ as representations of Christian deeds in general, the biblical scenes in Triqueti's tarsia panels manifested very concrete allusions to Albert. As explained in the preface to a large illustrated book of Triqueti's finished work of

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<sup>855</sup> 'une statue couchée du Prince Consort, la statue devait être de Bronze, revetue d'une armure du moyen age, enrichie avec le plus grand soin d'ornements exécutés en [damarquines?] d'or et d'argent, de manière à égales, s'il était profitable les plus beaux travaux connus du 15<sup>me</sup> Siècle.' Ibid.

<sup>856</sup> Girouard (1981), pp. 112-26.

<sup>857</sup> Ibid., p. 124.

<sup>858</sup> Darby and Smith (1983), p. 37.

<sup>859</sup> 'J'ai vue que dès lors l'armure du Prince [...] serait une allégorie Chrétienne aussi belle poétique, que juste, que digne du Prince Consort.' RA/VIC/R/40/42, manuscript note by Henry de Triqueti, undated.

<sup>860</sup> RA/VIC/R/40/42, manuscript note by Henry de Triqueti, undated.

1874, ‘the leading thought of the whole work—that of a tribute to the many high qualities of the Prince Consort—is carried out in the subjects of the Old Testament, each typifying some grace or virtue with which the Prince was gifted’.<sup>861</sup> While the majority of the tarsia panels celebrated Albert’s virtues, including Love, Purity, Duty, and Steadfastness, some reminded very concretely of Albert’s achievements, as for example *Solomon receiving Gifts from the Kings of the Earth* [fig. 3.23]. This panel alluded to Albert’s leading role in the Great Exhibition 1851 and his interest in the progress of British arts and manufacture.<sup>862</sup>

By devising an iconography of Albert as a chivalric knight surrounded by images of his qualities and achievements in contemporary civilian life it appears that Vicky aimed at achieving an all-encompassing portrait of her father. Her purpose in this was to establish a legacy through the royal children and to encourage the public in honouring the chapel as a ‘public place of pilgrimage’. Vicky’s early involvement in the chapel project clearly demonstrates her ambitions as artistic advisor to her mother and as advocate of the royal children in doing justice to their father’s lifetime achievements in the arts. By choosing Triqueti’s tarsias over Herbert’s frescoes for the adornment of the Albert Chapel walls, Vicky articulated her profound understanding of innovative decorative techniques with a preference for sculptural polychromy.

When the Albert Memorial Chapel opened to the public on 1 December 1875 there was neither the desired publicity, nor was Vicky recognized for her investment in the project.<sup>863</sup> Nonetheless, as we will see in the following part, the artistic relationship which Vicky forged with Triqueti during these years had a strong influence on her own sculptural patronage in Berlin.

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<sup>861</sup> Davison (1874), p. iv.

<sup>862</sup> Ibid.

<sup>863</sup> See Allen and Dagorne (2007), p. 143.

### 3.4. Vicky as a patron of sculpture

While Vicky's role as a patron of painting and the decorative arts, notably through her support of the Berlin Museums and her patronage of court painters such as Anton von Werner and Heinrich von Angeli, was known during her lifetime and has received repeated scholarly attention,<sup>864</sup> her significance as a patron of sculpture has been overlooked. As Crown Princess and later as Dowager Empress, Vicky had little opportunity to appear as a principal royal patron for major public projects. In addition, she was careful to keep her private patronage quiet due to the unpopularity of her preferred sculptors as foreigners. The evidence of Vicky's sculpture patronage can however be tracked in Vicky's private correspondence and in a number of surviving works. The analysis of the available material reveals that, as a patron of sculpture, Vicky confronted similar artistic concerns as in her previous engagement with sculpture as a practitioner and adviser, focusing especially on portraiture and funerary monuments. Following from her personal preference for anglophile references in sculpture, what becomes particularly clear in her patronage is that Vicky's choice of artists was distinctly marked by her dual national allegiance as being both British and Prussian/German. On the one hand, Vicky was obliged to commission local artists from the Berlin School of sculpture to demonstrate her loyalty to Prussia. On the other, she felt personally more attracted to cosmopolitan and liberal-minded artists whose style and taste embraced a more wide-ranging engagement with art history, and reminded her of Prince Albert's artistic interests. In line with Albert's policy to subordinate his

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<sup>864</sup> For Vicky's patronage of the Berlin Museums, see, for example, Susanne Netzer, 'Die Mediceer des deutschen Kunstgewerbes – Kronprinz Friedrich Wilhelm und Kronprinzessin Victoria', in *Victoria & Albert, Vicky & the Kaiser* (1997), pp. 199-27; Arnulf Siebeneicker, "'Ein herrliches und harmonisches Ganzes" Victoria und die Entwicklung der Berliner Museumslandschaft', in *Victoria von Preussen 1840-1901* (2001), pp. 486-523. For Vicky's patronage of particular painters, see Dorothee Arden, 'Kronprinzessin Victoria Kaiserin Friedrich (1840-1901). Eine Frau fördert Kunst und Frauenbildung im 19. Jahrhundert', M.A. thesis (Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main, 2000), <http://www.kaiserinfriedrich.de/arden.html>, here part 4.3. 'Mäzenatentum im Bereich der Bildenden Kunst' [accessed: 7 June 2014].

German allegiances to the interests of British art after he became Prince Consort in Britain, Vicky continued her father's preference for anglophile ideas, which marked her cosmopolitanism as distinctly British. By considering in detail three particular instances of Vicky's artistic relationship with foreign and local sculptors in the context of selected commissions and display environments from the mid-1860s onwards, I explore the scope and limits of her role as a patron of the medium of sculpture. I show how Vicky mediated between her divided national allegiance when she commissioned privately the non-Prussian sculptors of her personal choice but employed local artists for more official works.

Firstly, I assess Vicky's patronage of the anglophile sculptors Susan Durant and Triqueti, who Vicky knew through their involvement in the Albert Chapel at Windsor. I consider Vicky's artistic collaboration with both artists as a sign of her preference for sculpture she associated with her home country, as well as her wish to continue Albert's legacy. This becomes particularly evident in Vicky's plans for a small, but exquisite, funerary chapel for her son Sigismund who died in 1866. Secondly, I show that, in 1888, after the death of her husband, who was by then Emperor of Germany, Vicky resorted to collaborating with the Berlin sculptor Reinhold Begas for the project of an official imperial family mausoleum, despite their rather unsympathetic artistic relationship. While Begas was the most eminent sculptor in Berlin, Vicky took a critical stance towards the neo-Baroque and patriotic appearance of his works. Thirdly, I suggest that Vicky felt personally more connected to Begas's opponent, the sculptor and theorist Adolf Hildebrand and his classically and Florentine inspired style in sculpture. By outlining Vicky's enthusiasm for the Renaissance from the 1870s onwards, I furthermore situate her preference for Hildebrand over Begas in the wider context

of an important cultural trend in sculpture. I indicate how Vicky's preferences in sculpture became visible in the quality and display of her art collection at Friedrichshof, her widow seat near Frankfurt where she moved in 1894. Finally, as an epilogue to this section, resorting from Vicky's sculptural patronage in Germany, I suggest her relationship with contemporary sculpture in Britain by considering specifically her endorsement of Alfred Gilbert as the sculptor of the *Clarence Tomb* in the Albert Chapel in the 1890s.

### **Susan Durant**

Originating from Durant's commission of the portrait medallions for the Albert Chapel in 1865, Vicky developed a close artistic relationship with the British sculptor who had been Triqueti's pupil and secret lover.<sup>865</sup> Vicky's relationship with Durant was based on the women's shared nationality and gender. Unlike Louise, who had a female ally and mentor in Thornycroft from when she started her sculptural practice, the Prussian court did not, as we have seen, patronise female artists on a scale that allowed Vicky to find a female ally with whom she could share her artistic interests. With Durant, Vicky could deal on a much more personal level than with Hagen who, as a male artist, had no opportunity to engage with the princess on an informal level. It is, therefore, understandable that Vicky was enthusiastic about Durant's visit to Potsdam in September 1865, when the latter came to model her portrait medallion for the Albert Chapel. As pointed out by Shannon Hunter Hurtado, Durant possessed valuable personal qualities, which facilitated the building of profitable relationships with aristocratic patrons like Vicky.<sup>866</sup> Not only did she appear as charming and well educated, Durant

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<sup>865</sup> Allen and Dagorne (2007), pp. 128-29.

<sup>866</sup> Hunter Hurtado (2002), pp. 226-33.

shared with Vicky a liberal political stance and possessed ‘an intellectual depth that enabled her to entertain her portrait sitters with lively discussions’.<sup>867</sup> While Durant was keen to establish a good working relationship with her royal patron by ‘securing [her] a valuable friend in the Princess’,<sup>868</sup> reciprocally, Vicky received the sculptor amicably, made sure that she was well looked after and invited her to join the royal family for dinners and family parties. On 11 September 1865, Durant reported to her father, ‘I am getting quite at home with royalty – our little dinners in the Princess’s apartments are particularly pleasant.’<sup>869</sup> Beyond hosting Durant at the royal palace, Vicky cared for the sculptor’s professional benefit from her stay in Germany by organising for her visits of the local collections and by introducing her to Gustav Friedrich Waagen, the director of the Berlin Museum.<sup>870</sup> She also engaged Durant to give her modelling lessons for a, today untraceable, small medallion<sup>871</sup> and suggested entertainingly that the two women should ‘set up a joint Studio!’<sup>872</sup> Vicky even forged plans to employ her new female ally as her travel companion to Italy and when she would come to London.<sup>873</sup> Although the relationship between Vicky and Durant was unequal due to the women’s social differences, Durant admitted that she was ‘enjoying [herself] extremely’<sup>874</sup> and thought that ‘there are some things [...] better than money & that money will not buy.’<sup>875</sup> Despite having had to cover the expenses for her trip, Durant was confident that the prestige gained from her royal connection would benefit her career. On the other hand, for Vicky, the exceptionally informal

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<sup>867</sup> Ibid., p. 232.

<sup>868</sup> RA/VIC/ADDL/MSS/X/2/18, Durant to her father, George Durant, [begin of September 1865].

<sup>869</sup> RA/VIC/ADDL/MSS/X/2/30, Durant to George Durant, 5 October 1865.

<sup>870</sup> RA/VIC/ADDL/MSS/X/2/27; Durant to George Durant, 16 September 1865, Emma Wallis’ Journal RA/VIC/ADD/MSS/X/2/211, *ibid.*, 1 January 1866.

<sup>871</sup> RA/VIC/ADDL/MSS/X/2/30, Durant to George Durant, 5 October 1865.

<sup>872</sup> RA/VIC/ADDL/MSS/X/2/31, Durant to George Durant, 9 October 1865.

<sup>873</sup> RA/VIC/ADDL/MSS/X/2/26, Durant to George Durant, 14 September 1865; RA/VIC/ADDL/MSS/X/2/30, Durant to George Durant, 5 October 1865.

<sup>874</sup> RA/VIC/ADDL/MSS/X/2/22, Durant to George Durant, 9 September 1865.

<sup>875</sup> RA/VIC/ADDL/MSS/X/2/30, Durant to George Durant, 5 October 1865.



relationship with Durant appears to have been deliberately contrived to set her apart from the more rigid protocol practiced at Victoria's court with regards to royal dealings with artists. In view of Vicky's artistic rivalry with her mother, as suggested in the previous section, it is highly conspicuous that when Durant stayed at Osborne a few months later in December 1865, to continue working on her commission for the Albert Chapel, the Queen made an unusual concession towards the sculptor by inviting her to lunch with the Master of the Household.<sup>876</sup> This unexpected treatment caused Durant to believe 'I am the first artist in whose favour such an exception has been made'.<sup>877</sup> Considering Durant's relaxed feeling as if 'quite at home' while she stayed with Vicky at Potsdam, the Queen's exceptional gesture towards the artist could be seen as a reaction to her daughter's natural poise as a favoured royal patron.

Apart from Vicky and Durant's friendly social engagement, a crucial factor for their good artist-patron relationship was the success of Durant's work. Writing to her father, Durant proudly exclaimed, 'I am succeeding triumphantly with the Princess's likeness – every one is charmed with it & Countess Hohenthal [Vicky's lady-in-waiting] told her here today the German artists would be very much astonished when they saw my portrait so superior to anything that has yet been done of her.'<sup>878</sup> Durant's medallion portrait showed Vicky's head in high profile turned to the left with her hair loosely tied back and adorned with a small crown and jewellery [fig. 3.24]. No comparable medallion portrait by a local Berlin sculptor seems to have survived today to show the 'superior' quality of Durant's portrait to 'anything that has yet been done'. Yet, it is likely that Durant's realistic depiction of Vicky's full and feminine features, together with

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<sup>876</sup> RA/VIC/ADDL/MSS/X/2/47, Durant to George Durant, 30 December 1865.

<sup>877</sup> Ibid.

<sup>878</sup> RA/VIC/ADDL/MSS/X/2/24, Durant to George Durant, 11 September 1865.

the finely modelled contemporary accessories set this portrait apart from the idealising neoclassical tradition of Berlin portraiture. While male portraiture of around the mid-nineteenth century focused more on the depiction of realistic details and contemporary dress, female portraiture, also much smaller in number, often continued the tradition of combining softly nuanced individuality of the features with very restrained accessories and timeless antique-style drapery.<sup>879</sup> Against this, Durant's stylistic approach must have seemed more fashionable and contemporary. In fact, it was so appealing to Vicky that she ordered a reduction of Durant's portrait for reproduction as a medal. The reason behind this commission was, according to Durant, that '[t]hose that have hitherto been done are hideous[,] as she [Vicky] often wants medals to give as presents.'<sup>880</sup> Although Durant's visit to Vicky was not officially publicised, the news of her portrait of the Crown Princess was talked about. On finishing her work, Durant informed her father that '[p]eople in Berlin are very curious about this new likeness of H.R.H.'<sup>881</sup> Rather than being perceived as a rival work which competed with royal portraits by local artists, the fact that Durant's medallion was a foreign commission, and, besides, made by a female artist, was reason enough for the news of Durant's 'new likeness' to provoke public interest. What was probably less anticipated and would have hardly raised sympathy, not least by local artists, is that Durant's portrait remained the Crown Prince's favourite work for many years. According to Durant, 'the Prince declares that mine is the only good portrait of his wife & it always hangs in his own room at Berlin.'<sup>882</sup>

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<sup>879</sup> This estimate is based on the nineteenth-century portrait sculptures in the collection of the Nationalgalerie Berlin. See Bernhard Maaz (ed.), *Nationalgalerie Berlin: Das XIX. Jahrhundert. Bestandskatalog der Skulpturen*, 2 vols. (Berlin: E. A. Seemann, 2006).

<sup>880</sup> RA/VIC/ADDL/MSS/X/2/26, Durant to George Durant, 14 September 1865.

<sup>881</sup> RA/VIC/ADDL/MSS/X/2/31, Durant to George Durant, 9 October 1865.

<sup>882</sup> RA/VIC/ADD/MSS/X/2/211, manuscript transcript by Emma Wallis of Durant's letter to George Durant, 29 April 1869.

Apart from a today untraced recumbent bust of Vicky's infant son *Prince Sigismund* (1865), which was made in terracotta and probably tinted,<sup>883</sup> Vicky commissioned Durant in 1869 with a further medallion portrait of herself, this time 'quite flat & [...] to be mounted in a frame of coloured inlaid marble!'<sup>884</sup> Having also not survived, it is nevertheless likely that Vicky's idea for the frame in 'coloured inlaid marble' was inspired by Triqueti's marble technique for the Albert Chapel. Similar to the decorative borders surrounding Triqueti's celebrated tarsia panels, a frame of coloured and polished marble ornament would have emphasised Vicky's white marble portrait and rendered it more attractive and magnificent. By commissioning such a polychrome frame for her portrait, Vicky showed that she considered the Albert Chapel as an inspiration for wider artistic practice, even beyond the geographic confines of Britain. In fact, a closer look at her patronage of Triqueti with regards to the decoration of the Sigismund Chapel at Potsdam demonstrates her wish to promote the artistic impact of the Albert Chapel on a wider scale.

### **Henry de Triqueti at Potsdam**

From a series of surviving letters in the estate of Triqueti's descendants in France, written by Vicky to Triqueti following the sudden death of Vicky's infant son Sigismund in June 1866, it becomes evident that Vicky had ambitious plans to employ Triqueti with the decorative transformation of a side chapel at Friedenskirche Potsdam (Church of Peace) into a splendid little mausoleum for her son.<sup>885</sup> However, as previously indicated by Dagorne and Santorius, Vicky's

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<sup>883</sup> For the commission of the bust of Prince Sigismund, see RA/VIC/ADDL/MSS/X/2/37, Susan Durant's Diary, 11 and 15 November 1865; RA/VIC/ADD/MSS/X/2/211, Journal of Emma Wallis, undated entry.

<sup>884</sup> RA/VIC/ADDL/MSS/X/2/197, Durant to Emma Wallis, 30 October 1869.

<sup>885</sup> Copies and transcripts of these letters are at Musée Girodet at Montargis and have been consulted by the author with the owner's permission.

artistic relationship with Triqueti in Germany was complicated and dissimulated due to Triqueti's foreign origin.<sup>886</sup> While uncovering this noteworthy commission, Dagorne and Santorius's brief overview of the Sigismund Chapel's development does not, however, present the full scale of its decorative scheme, which was inspired by the Albert Chapel. Based on a new assessment of the above-mentioned letters, the Sigismund Chapel project deserves reconsideration in relation to Vicky's role as a patron and mediator of sculpture beyond national boundaries.

In August 1866, two months after Sigismund's death, while his bare coffin still lay exposed in the side chapel at Friedenskirche, Vicky approached Triqueti on the subject of a permanent chapel decoration, explaining 'if it wasn't you, I would not know who to approach, knowing your feelings for us and your sympathy for my deep grief.'<sup>887</sup> While her previous collaboration with the sculptor on the Albert Chapel determined her choice to involve him again, Vicky also knew that Triqueti shared with her the experience of having tragically lost a son and could therefore trust that he comprehended the importance of this project for her.<sup>888</sup> Her plan for the Sigismund Chapel was to convert it into a mausoleum by changing the provisional set-up to a 'really simple small monument'.<sup>889</sup> The monument was to be adapted to the winter climate when Vicky's hitherto memorial practice of providing daily flower arrangements had to be superseded with a lasting decorative scheme. Although Vicky found that '[n]othing recalls this little being like flowers!',<sup>890</sup> her intention was to replace the wooden altar,

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<sup>886</sup> Dagorne and Santorius (2007), pp. 170-71.

<sup>887</sup> 'si ce n'était à vous je ne saurais à qui m'adresser connaissant vos sentiments pour nous, - et la part que vous prenez à ma profonde douleur.' Vicky to Triqueti, 26 August 1866, private archive, France.

<sup>888</sup> Aged twenty-one, Triqueti's son was tragically killed by a carriage horse he tried to stop from running away. See Anon., 'Music, Art, Science and Literature', *The Bath Chronicle* (12 Sept. 1861), p. 7.

<sup>889</sup> 'tout simple petit monument' Vicky to Triqueti, 26 August 1866, private archive, France.

<sup>890</sup> 'Il n'y a rien que rapelle ce doux petit être comme les fleurs!' Vicky to Triqueti, 26 August 1866, private archive, France.

which was then at the chapel, with one in stone or marble, in which the coffin could be encased. On it, she wished to place ‘the bust of my little one after the one which your pupil Miss Durant has made’, flanked by vases and candelabra. For the decorative details and the overall approval of her plan Vicky sought Triqueti’s advice and reaffirmed with ardour that ‘[n]obody like you understands exactly what I need to satisfy both my heart and my taste to reunite the serenity of the antique style with the perfect freedom of composition and the Christian element.’<sup>891</sup> Berlin had, of course, its own tradition in funerary art, which also combined the ‘antique style’ and the ‘Christian element’, not least in Rauch’s celebrated monument to Queen Louise of Prussia (1811–14). Yet, it does not appear that Vicky entertained a similarly trusted relationship with any of the Berlin sculptors than with Triqueti. Vicky felt that artistic creativity in Berlin was less open-minded than in Britain and that local artists did not think outside their rigid aesthetic protocol. Playing down, for example, the quality of locally produced preliminary drawings of her scheme, ‘which illustrate, I have to say, very badly my idea’,<sup>892</sup> Vicky encouraged Triqueti to indicate appropriate corrections to the sketches she sent him. Yet while commissioning him with detailed designs for the chapel, Vicky also planned that ‘the works will be made here under my eyes’.<sup>893</sup> Despite implying that this twofold strategy allowed her to supervise directly the designs’ execution, her choice to commission all works locally was, in fact, motivated by her concern not to offend Berlin artists by employing a foreigner. Due to her known antagonism with the national conservative stance of Prussia’s policy, Vicky had gained the reputation of

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<sup>891</sup> ‘Personne comme vous ne comprends exactement ce qu’il me faut pour satisfaire à la fois, mon coeur et mon goût et pour réunir la sérénité du style antique avec la parfaite liberté de composition et l’élément chrétien.’ Vicky to Triqueti, 26 August 1866, private archive, France.

<sup>892</sup> ‘qui rendent, je l’avoue, assez mal mon idée’ Vicky to Triqueti, 26 August 1866, private archive, France.

<sup>893</sup> ‘Les travaux seront tous faits ici sous mes yeux’ Vicky to Triqueti, 26 August 1866, private archive, France.

favouring anything foreign over Prussia and of being disloyal to her adopted country.<sup>894</sup> The impact of this dilemma is furthermore evident in a subsequent letter to Triqueti, of 10 September 1866, after having received his revised design for the chapel: ‘I have already copied myself your design by adding a bit of colour to it. The artist in question will only see this in order not to offend him, as you say.’<sup>895</sup> While Triqueti’s considerate advice to hide his artistic authorship was certainly a sign of his empathy with his patron, the renunciation of a lucrative reference contrasted with his usual strategy of publicising prestigious commissions.<sup>896</sup> As the least benefit from the Sigismund Chapel project, Triqueti assumed that his collaborator, Susan Durant, would gain the commission to execute the planned bust of the little prince Sigismund in marble.<sup>897</sup> Yet even on this issue, Vicky had to disappoint him: ‘Regarding the bust, I blame myself for not having explained myself more clearly in my first letter. It is not exactly the one by your pupil which I want to employ [...]’.<sup>898</sup> Vicky went on explaining that it was because Sigismund had grown since Durant’s earlier bust of 1865, that she had decided to commission Hagen with an updated version of Durant’s work.<sup>899</sup> Her portrait would serve as guidance, but Hagen’s version was to show the young prince without arms and with a differently inclined head, as evident in Hagen’s surviving marble [fig. 3.25].<sup>900</sup> By emphasising the constricted nature of Hagen’s commission, as having to be made under Vicky’s strict supervision, Vicky tried to

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<sup>894</sup> See, for example, Hannah Pakula, *An Uncommon Woman: The Empress Frederick* (London: Phoenix Press, 2002, originally published in New York by Simon & Schuster, 1995), pp. 180-81, 193, 201, 217-8, 433-34.

<sup>895</sup> ‘J’ai déjà recopié moi-même votre dessin en rajoutant un peu de couleur – l’artiste en question ne verra que cela – afin de ne pas l’offenser comme vous dites.’ Vicky to Triqueti, 10 September 1866, private archive, France.

<sup>896</sup> Bellenger (1996), p. 187.

<sup>897</sup> See RA/VIC/ADDL/MSS/X/2/80, Durant to Emma Wallis, 5 September 1866.

<sup>898</sup> ‘Quant au buste je me fais des reproches de ne pas m’être expliquée plus clairement dans ma première lettre. Ce n’est pas exactement celui de votre élève don’t je vais me servir’. Vicky to Triqueti, 10 September 1866, private archive, France.

<sup>899</sup> ‘Mais mon cher enfant avait tellement grandi et changé depuis ce temps là, et la manière don’t il portait les cheveux était toute autre.’ Ibid.

<sup>900</sup> ‘La terre cuite si ravissante de Miss Durant, me guide naturellement aussi, mais le nouveau buste sera sans bras, et l’inclination de la tête sera différente.’ Ibid.

make the loss for Durant appear less significant.<sup>901</sup> All the more interesting is it that, when Durant revisited Vicky at Potsdam in April 1869, she claimed the bust by Hagen as her own work, telling her father to have seen ‘the tomb of poor little Pce Sigismund with my bust of him on the marble altar.’<sup>902</sup> Beyond her appropriation of the work’s authorship, Durant’s testimony confirms that Vicky’s decorative scheme for the chapel had, so far, been carried out. In fact, an undated drawing of the chapel interior decorated with festive garlands, seems to celebrate the completed first stage of the chapel transformation [fig. 3.26]. The drawing shows the marble altar in form of a ‘simple small monument’, as Vicky had wished, with the bust of *Sigismund* placed atop and vases and candelabra as she had discussed them with Triqueti.<sup>903</sup> Furthermore, above the wall panelling, the apse was decorated with medallions with angels painted by Vicky.<sup>904</sup> This is also how the chapel appears today after restorations in 2001.<sup>905</sup>

Yet, what was never executed is a more elaborate wall scheme, inspired by the Albert Chapel. This was to follow up from the above-described stage and had been envisaged by Vicky when she reinvited Triqueti and Durant to Potsdam in April 1869. Receiving the sculptors, and secret lovers, with greatest hospitality,<sup>906</sup> Vicky intended to re-engage them for her plans to pursue with the Sigismund Chapel, transforming it into a ‘monument of love’ where, as Vicky told Triqueti, ‘we hope ourselves to repose one day’.<sup>907</sup> As recorded by Durant, on the morning after their arrival, Vicky organised a visit to the chapel to talk about its further

<sup>901</sup> ‘Je l’ai fait peindre de mémoire après sa mort, j’ai surveillé, et même aidé à faire ce portrait, et j’ai commandé au Professeur Hagen à Berlin un buste exactement d’après ce tableau, il est chargé de le modeler en ce moment, et doit venir l’achever sous mes yeux à Potsdam.’ Ibid.

<sup>902</sup> RA/VIC/ADDL/MSS/X/2/193, Durant to George Durant, 27 April 1869.

<sup>903</sup> ‘[...] les vases et les flambeau qui seront posés sur ce que vous appelez “l’autel” [C]es deux derniers objects je commanderais alors en onyx.’ Vicky to Triqueti, 10 September 1866, private archive, France.

<sup>904</sup> See Andreas Kitschke, *Die Friedenskirche zu Potsdam-Sanssouci*, 2nd revised edition (Potsdam-Sanssouci: Evangelische Friedenskirchengemeinde Potsdam, 2011), p. 24.

<sup>905</sup> A recent photograph of the Sigismund Chapel interior is published in *ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>906</sup> RA/VIC/ADDL/MSS/X/2/192, Durant to Georges Durant, 27 April 1869.

<sup>907</sup> Vicky to Triqueti, 15 June 1869, private archive, France.

development: ‘At some future time they want to improve and alter the Chapel and are very glad of Mons. de Triqueti’s advice, and one of these days when Wolsey’s finished, hope to have some of his works as well as mine in the Chapel.’<sup>908</sup> The continuation of the Sigismund Chapel was such an important concern for Vicky, that Triqueti provided her within two weeks with a number of drawings for wall designs, presumably to replace the plain oak panelling along the lower walls of the chapel, which is still in place.<sup>909</sup> While the sculptor’s designs have not survived, Vicky’s reaction to them reveals that the planned scheme consisted of wall panels with colourful marble mosaics of plants and flowers:

Now I am quite impatient to know what you think with regards to the wall opposite [...]. The large flowers in marble mosaic would be wonderful. You wish that I give you a few more [:] dog rose (Eglantines), amaryllis (grandiflora), water lily, palm branches, fern, foxglove, passion flowers (passiflore), ivy, orange blossom branches with their beautiful leaves and their amazing buttons, are all flowers which I admire extremely and which are probably well suited for the panels which you have not yet drawn - as it goes without saying that those which you have drawn, and which I find charming, will stay as they are.<sup>910</sup>

Considering that Vicky thought about Sigismund that ‘[n]othing recalls this little being like flowers!’, it is comprehensible that a permanent decorative scheme with

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<sup>908</sup> RA/VIC/ADDL/MSS/X/2/192, Durant to Georges Durant, 27 April 1869.

<sup>909</sup> The wood panelling, as recognizable in a photograph of 1861, formed part of the decorative scheme executed under Friedrich Wilhelm IV. See *Auf den Spuren von Kronprinzessin Victoria* (2001), p. 60.

<sup>910</sup> ‘Maintenant je serais assez impassiente de savoir ce que vous penseriez qu sujet du mus opposé – et quell texte vous choisiriez et, surtout que faire pour l’abside, cette partie là m’inquiète particulièrement. Les grands fleurs en mosaïque de marbre – seront ravissantes. Vous désirez que je vous en nomme encore quelques unes. – Les roses des bois (Eglantines) Les amaryllis (grandiflora) Les Lys d’Eau des branches de palmier, des grandes fougères, des digitalis Les fleurs de la passion (passion flowers passiflore), du Lierre, des branches, de fleurs d’orangers avec leur beau feuillage et leurs ravissants boutons sont toutes des fleurs que j’aime extrêmement et qui peut être se prêteraient aux [panneaux] que vous n’avez pas encore esquissés – car il va sans dire que ceux que vous avez dessinés et que je trouve charmants resterons tells qu’ils sont.’ Vicky to Triqueti, 15 June 1869, private archive, France.



flowers represented for Vicky the ideal commemoration of her infant son. According to the Language of Flowers, which was highly regarded during the Victorian period, the flowers listed here were all associated with positive meanings that would have comforted Vicky in her grief for her child.<sup>911</sup> Already for the Albert Chapel, she had, as we have seen, devised the motifs of the mosaic borders around the tarsia panels with particular plants and animals in reminiscences of Albert. Therefore, at the Sigismund Chapel, the marble mosaics were probably intended to turn out similarly, with differently coloured marbles and semi-precious stones, as, for example, in the panel with thistles, roses and shamrock [fig. 3.27]. Yet, while the mosaic panels at the Albert Chapel were complementary to the tarsia pictures enclosed by them, at Potsdam, they would have become the main focus of the wall decoration, with the purpose to enliven the chapel to a ‘monument of love’, able to ‘touch and elevate the soul’.<sup>912</sup> What seems to have refrained Vicky from advancing with the commission beyond the design stage was her concern, expressed in a letter to Triqueti, that local craftsmen in Berlin were not able to carry out Triqueti’s designs accurately without precise instructions of how to translate them:

I would be completely of your opinion to grant a certain degree of freedom for the execution in order to avoid monotony and perpetual repetition, if I had enough confidence in what the people who will execute the tiles can do. I only fear they would imbue them with their

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<sup>911</sup> See Robert Tyas, *The language of Flowers, or Floral Emblems of Thoughts, Feelings, and Sentiments* (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1869); John Henry Ingram, *Flora Symbolica or The Language and Sentiment of Flowers* (London: F. W. Warne and Co, 1869)

<sup>912</sup> ‘Presque prétentieux mais je puis dire avec vérité ce que je sens clairement, que votre visée est la plus rapprochée que je connaisse de l’idéal que je me fais de l’art parqu’elle réuni la beauté avec la pureté et avec tout ce qui peut toucher et élever l’âme, en meme temps que le fini et la délicatesse de l’exécution servent à exprimer des idées don’t la fantaisie est riche et variée.’ Vicky to Triqueti, 15 June 1869, private archive, France.

own taste – instead of mine – and all would be spoilt. It seems wiser to me to only let them copy without asking for the slightest invention.<sup>913</sup>

Comparing, for example, the above-mentioned floral panel from the Albert Chapel with its original design drawing by Triqueti [fig. 3.28], it is evident that the colour scheme of the rose was inverted and that for the thistle beneath it, a darker tone was chosen than in the drawing. While Triqueti appears to have allowed his craftsmen a certain degree of creativity, Vicky wished every detail to be accurately determined. Due to this difference, no further progress appears to have been made on the project for over a year, until Vicky's lady-in-waiting replied in April 1871 to a request by Triqueti to execute the works himself:

You can be assured that the idea to entrust the works for the little chapel of Prince Sigismund to your hands makes the Princess very happy as nobody understands her feelings [like you] with regards to this subject – and I am sure that as soon as the circumstances allow it, Her Imperial Highness will ask you to begin with the works. Please do not think, dear Baron, that she would have ever hesitated to accept your offer because you are French – no there are friendships which are beyond all nationalities.<sup>914</sup>

At this point, however, Prussia and France were entangled in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870/71, during which it was practically impossible to pursue artistic collaborations with French artists, even on a private scale. Although Vicky affirmed that Triqueti's nationality would have no influence on her patronage, in a

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<sup>913</sup> 'Je serais parfaitement de votre avis de laisser une certaine liberté pour l'exécution pour éviter la monotonie d'une répétition perpétuelle, si j'avais assez de confiance en ce que peuvent faire les gens qui evornt executer les tuiles[.] [J]e crais bien qu'ils-y mettraient leur propre goût – au lieu de mien – et tout serait gate[.] [Il me semble plus prudent de leur faire copier seulement sans leur demander ma moindre invention.' Vicky to Triqueti, 2 September 1869, private archive, France.

<sup>914</sup> 'Vous pouvez bien croire que l'idée de pouvoir confier en vos mains les travaux pour la petite chapelle du Prince Sigismund rend la Princesse fort heureuse, car personne n'a su autant que entrer dans ses sentiments, à ce sujet-là, - et je suis sure que, dès que les circonstance le lui permettront Son Altesse Impéiale vous priera de vous mettre a l'oeuvre. Ne croyez-pas, cher Baron, que jamais elle aurait pu hesiter d'accepter votre offre parceque vous etes français; - non il y a des amitiés qui sont au-dessus de toute nationalites'. Countess Brühl to Triqueti, 4 April 1871, private archive, France.

previous letter to Durant, she described his foreignness as a reason for limiting her direct correspondence with Triqueti, ‘because I could hardly reconcile it with the prudence I must observe and the duty I owe as a German’.<sup>915</sup> Even if it is conceivable that it had been Vicky’s honest intention that Triqueti ‘would carry out the plans he had made for the chapel and mausoleum’<sup>916</sup>, as she told Triqueti’s daughter later, after the sculptor’s sudden death in 1874, current national-patriotic politics prevented the chapel project from happening. Despite Vicky’s keenness ‘to possess whatever plans, sketches and notes he had made for our little Chapel’,<sup>917</sup> she made no further attempt in completing the chapel without Triqueti. It appears, rather, that she faced his death with resignation. Since the end of the war with France in 1871, Prussia had become the leader of the unified German Empire and official politics called for artistic statements that reflected the new status of the Prussian royal family as imperial highnesses. Perhaps, Triqueti’s death settled a fraught and complicated project. One which had been based on Vicky’s ideal to commission a funerary monument that not only reflected the innovative artistic ideas she associated with Albert, but was independent of nationalistic preconceptions. As we will see in the next part, the new mausoleum, which was eventually commissioned in 1888, turned out very differently from Vicky’s original plans to convert the Sigismund Chapel into an intimate ‘monument of love’ with beautiful flowers in marble mosaic.

### **Reinhold Begas**

On 15 June 1888, after only ninety-nine days in power, Vicky’s husband, then Emperor Friedrich III, died of thyroid cancer. His commemoration was considered

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<sup>915</sup> Vicky to Susan Durant, 2 February 1871, private archive, France.

<sup>916</sup> Vicky to Blanche Lee Childe, 1 June 1874, private archive, France.

<sup>917</sup> Vicky to Blanche Lee Childe, 17 June 1874, private archive, France.

a state affair and called for a representative funerary monument that conveyed the recent status of the Prussian family as emperors of Germany. As a result, the intimate character of the Sigismund Chapel shifted away from its emphasis on Vicky's personal memory of her child towards a dynastic scheme with a focus on the emperor. This aim was met with the commission of a new family mausoleum adjoined to Friedenskirche at Potsdam. The building was based on the rotunda design of the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre at Innichen, Tyrol, which Vicky and her husband had previously visited. Although Vicky's eldest son, Wilhelm II, the new emperor, and not Vicky herself, was the official patron of the mausoleum project, Vicky was involved in the overall artistic scheme. The Berlin architect Julius Carl Raschdorff (1823–1914) was appointed, while Begas, who had previously succeeded with an official bust of *Friedrich III* (1883), was put in charge of the tomb sculpture.<sup>918</sup>

Built of plain, local Silesian sandstone in order to adapt to the surrounding landscape, the mausoleum revealed an impressive and solemn interior, as seen in a contemporary engraving from the art magazine *Kunstchronik* [fig. 3.29]. Consisting of two tiers of revolving arcades supported by black Syenite columns and decorated, on the ceiling, with golden mosaics by the Venice workshop of Antonio Salviati, who had already worked on the Alber Chapel, the otherwise grey marble interior provided a restrained and dignified setting, meant to convey an imperial heritage rooted in the Carolingian tradition of the Holy Roman Empire.<sup>919</sup> Here, unlike the Albert Memorial Chapel, the visitor was not overwhelmed by dazzling imagery celebrating the achievements and virtues of the

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<sup>918</sup> For detailed accounts of the history and iconography of the mausoleum and its sculptural programme, see Klaus Dorst, 'Das Mausoleum Friedrichs III.', in *Potsdamer Schlösser und Gärten: Bau- und Gartenkunst vom 17. bis 20. Jahrhundert* (exhibition catalogue, Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam-Sanssouci, 26 June – 22 August 1993, ed. Michael Hassels (Potsdam: Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam-Sanssouci, 1993), pp. 254-60; Katrin Gummels, 'Die Grabmäler von Reinhold Begas', M.A. thesis (Technische Universität Berlin, 1997); exh. cat. Begas (2010), work nos. 123-25, on pp. 245-47.

<sup>919</sup> See Dorst (1993), pp. 256-57.

deceased, but with a sober architectural setting that invited quiet contemplation and focused the attention on the funerary monuments. In the middle of the rotunda was the reclining statue of Friedrich III, whereas an adjacent altar niche displayed the tombs of his sons Sigismund and Waldemar. While the design of the princes' tombs developed around previously existing works, notably Hagen's marble bust of Sigismund (1866) and a marble version of Vicky's posthumous bust of Waldemar (c.1878), Begas' monument to Friedrich III was made specifically for the site and serves as an appropriate example to indicate Vicky's ambivalent status as a patron of contemporary Berlin sculpture.

In the centre of the rotunda, perpendicular to the entrance, the recumbent effigy of Friedrich III lay on a large tomb chest and was represented with his head turned slightly to the right, towards the entering visitor.<sup>920</sup> Clad in his uniform, wearing a cuirass and wrapped in his military cloak, the emperor was shown as if resting asleep. His hands were loosely folded over his sword and his face appeared calm and relaxed, revealing none of the suffering during his illness [fig. 3.30].<sup>921</sup> While the depiction of restful sleep was meant to convey a soothing effect on the bereaved, it was unusual, by the second half of the nineteenth century in Berlin sculpture, to depict the deceased in such way. Rather than providing the consoling illusion of a sustained presence of the dead through the depiction at sleep, it had become a local trend to represent the deceased visibly as dead in order to emphasise the expectation of the afterlife.<sup>922</sup> Begas, especially, excelled in conveying, for example in his funerary monument to *Arthur Strousberg* (1874), the vehement impression of death without renouncing a high degree of personal

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<sup>920</sup> As pointed out by Katrin Gummels, technically the effigy was a cenotaph as the tomb was empty and the body of the deceased was buried in a vault underneath the tomb chest. Gummels (1997), p. 5, FN 11.

<sup>921</sup> The original tomb sculpture, here shown, was transferred in 1904 to the newly built burial vault at the Cathedral of Berlin whereas a marble reproduction, also by Begas, was installed at the mausoleum. See exh. cat. *Begas* (2010), work no. 123 on p. 245-46.

<sup>922</sup> See Gummels (1997), pp. 5-10, 30-38.

expression.<sup>923</sup> Yet, in the example of Emperor Friedrich's effigy, he returned to the earlier neoclassical tradition of depicting the deceased calmly asleep. While this choice certainly recalled Rauch's lifelike effigy of *Queen Louise* (1811–13), it referred at the same time to the tradition of funerary statues in Britain. Considering Vicky's personal experience of the impact of Prince Albert's death and how his funerary monuments, especially Triqueti's cenotaph, were intended to both console and create an image that suggested continuity, it is understandable that Vicky stressed the importance of depicting her husband as living and intact.

Yet, in contrast to the peaceful expression of Friedrich's face and hands, his opulent fur, draped in loose folds over the lower part of his body, added a dramatic counterweight to the reclining body and emphasised the representative character of the monument. While the depiction of contemporary dress was in line with current trends in funerary portraiture, as, for example, in the finely carved effigies by Boehm,<sup>924</sup> the Renaissance-inspired tomb chest was more unusual. Here, Begas followed Vicky's instruction to adhere to the composition of the sixteenth-century tomb of Cardinal Tavera at Toledo (1554–61), which Friedrich had seen on a diplomatic trip to Spain in 1883 and wished as a source for his own tomb [fig. 3.31].<sup>925</sup> Designed by the Spanish Alfonso Berruguete, whose work was influenced by Michelangelo, the Tavera tomb was renowned, in the late nineteenth century, as one of the masterpieces of Spanish Renaissance sculpture.<sup>926</sup> As Vicky had a thorough interest in Renaissance art, sustained by frequent visits to Italy, it is not surprising that she encouraged the incorporation of

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<sup>923</sup> See Jörg Kuhn, 'Grabmäler von Reinhold Begas', in exh. cat. *Begas* (2010), pp. 139–51.

<sup>924</sup> For more on especially Boehm's royal commissions for such funerary effigies, see Stocker (1988), p. 89–99.

<sup>925</sup> See Gummels (1996), p. 30; exh. cat. *Begas* (2010), work no. 123 on pp. 245–46.

<sup>926</sup> Thus, on 1 September 1881, the former curator of the South Kensington Museum, John Charles Robinson, wrote to Wilhelm von Bode in Berlin, suggesting to collaborate in commissioning plaster casts of Cardinal Tavera's tomb in Toledo. See Jeremy Warren, 'Bode and the British', *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen*, 38, supplement 'Kenntenschaft. Kolloquium zum 150sten Geburtstag von Wilhelm von Bode' (1996), p. 132, FN 94.

this Renaissance reference in her husband's tomb.<sup>927</sup> Similar to the Tavera tomb, Begas designed the sides of the emperor's tomb with figurative reliefs that alluded to the virtues and qualities of the deceased, following the compositional structure with a *tondo* relief in the middle, flanked by further scenes on either side.<sup>928</sup> Furthermore, inspired by the Renaissance example, Begas placed at each head corner the figure of an eagle, traditionally the symbol of immortality and power, and here also the heraldic animal of Prussia. Yet, in contrast to the Tavera design, Begas executed the reliefs on the Friedrich tomb in low-relief and depicted the eagles with closed, rather than raised, wings, which gave the royal tomb a more restrained appearance, adjusted to the measured sublimity of the mausoleum interior. While the connection between the two works certainly elevated the artistic prestige of Emperor Friedrich's tomb, Vicky's instruction of Begas to follow the famous Renaissance example may also have served as a framework to contain his usual neo-Baroque flamboyance. Although his commission for the tomb was underpinned by an established artistic relationship with the royal couple since 1883, when Begas made two official portrait busts of them,<sup>929</sup> it appears nonetheless that Vicky was apprehensive of the theatricality of his work. On 25 June 1890, after the plaster model of the Friedrich monument had been sent to Carrara in Italy, where it was executed in marble, Vicky replied to a remark by her mother about its overall design:

What you say about the Statue, I quite understand. The eagles could not have outspread wings – because first of all – it has become so very hackneyed here – one sees them everywhere; then they would interfere with the “Bas reliefs! –which are allegorical. The Cloak is the very

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<sup>927</sup> For aspect of Vicky's personal interest in the Italian Renaissance, see, for example, Netzer (1997), pp. 199-227; Kiesant (2001), pp. 44-45; Reinhardt (2001), pp. 238, 255, 261, 263, 284.

<sup>928</sup> For a detailed description of the reliefs in both tombs, see Gummels (1996), pp. 27-32.

<sup>929</sup> For the portrait busts of Vicky and her husband by Begas, see exh. cat. *Begas* (2010), nos. 106-107, pp. 236-37.

next part of the monument & the folds are extremely good & well managed in wh. Begas does not usually excel[,] his draperies are never much “soigné”. I also objected to the part between the waist and the cloak - & thought that the form of the leg ought to be recognisable between the folds! Begas says he can perhaps make a slight change in this direction in the marble! I was rather shocked at the Photos being false - without asking me - & before I had seen the finished “Plaster Cast”. – The Mausoleum is getting on, & the roof is on. I will send you Photos as soon as they can be made.<sup>930</sup>

Vicky’s comment shows her deep understanding of sculpture as a connoisseur. Through her own experience as a sculptor she knew how to closely examine sculptural details and their technical and aesthetic implication. Yet apart from that, her reaction also reveals that she was, in fact, not consulted as she had wished, possibly because she had no longer the same power as a patron since the death of her husband. Furthermore, by explaining to her mother the reason for the unusual depiction of the eagles with closed, rather than open, wings, she also revealed her critical stance towards the overused political iconography of the Prussian eagle. For the official purpose of the monument it was certainly inevitable to include established symbols of Prussian royalty. Yet, by advocating the modification of the eagles’ pose, Vicky articulated her preference for a moderation of their clichéd appearance. Finally, while agreeing with Begas’s treatment of the materials’ folds, she was vexed that he had provided her with inaccurate photographs of his model and did not consult her opinion on the finished plaster cast. From Begas’s seemingly negligent inclusion of Vicky in his work’s process, it appears that the Berlin sculptor did not appreciate his female

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<sup>930</sup> RA/VIC/MAIN/Z/47/23, Vicky to Victoria, 25 June 1890.



patron's advice as much as Triqueti had done before him. It stands to reason that this had to do with Begas's pride and position as the most eminent and patriarchal sculptor in Berlin and his allegiance with the politically charged ideals of Emperor Wilhelm II.<sup>931</sup>

While it is not known whether Vicky made her consternation about the Friedrich tomb known to Begas, her main concern was that the mausoleum represented an appropriate burial place for her husband, in line with his personal wishes. On the day before the building's inauguration, on 17 October 1890, Vicky wrote to her mother, 'The Mausoleum[,] though it has many a defect in the execution of the details, which annoy me, & wh could have been prevented if I had been here; looks well – on the whole, and I think dear Fritz would have liked it!'<sup>932</sup> Although the mausoleum had been intended as a private place, already during its construction, Vicky agreed to appeals to open it to the public for inspection after its completion.<sup>933</sup> Her concession was probably motivated by her original plan for the Albert Chapel, which had been intended as a 'public place of pilgrimage'. Yet unlike the former, where the expected public effect had not happened, the Emperor Friedrich Mausoleum was greeted with overwhelming public attention. In June 1892, only three months after it was opened for visitors, Vicky proudly informed her mother that 'more than 26,000 persons have been to visit the Mausoleum at Potsdam since March!! Most people express themselves pleased with the building and the Statues.'<sup>934</sup>

Admittedly, Vicky appears to have endorsed Begas's portrait style when she commissioned, in 1892, Begas's former pupil, Joseph Uphues (1850-1911), with a bronze reproduction of his master's official bust of *Emperor Friedrich III*

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<sup>931</sup> For the development of Begas's career as preferred sculptor of Wilhelm II, see exh. cat. *Begas* (2010).

<sup>932</sup> RA/VIC/MAIN/Z/49/20, Vicky to Victoria, 17 Oct. 1890.

<sup>933</sup> See Anon., 'Germany', *The Times*, (20 Oct. 1890), p. 5.

<sup>934</sup> RA/VIC/MAIN/Z/53/5, Vicky to Victoria, 16 June 1892.

(1883) for her new widow seat at Kronberg [fig. 3.32].<sup>935</sup> As Begas's version was the most eminent portrait bust made of the deceased emperor, this was perhaps a pragmatic decision and spared Vicky the effort of commissioning a new posthumous bust while being busy with the development of her new residence. It is, moreover, conspicuous that Vicky asked Uphues for this commission and not Begas personally. Her decision may have been due to financial reasons but it is also likely that Vicky preferred to collaborate with Uphues rather than his former master.<sup>936</sup>

The fact that Vicky was not entirely convinced by the current movement in Berlin sculpture, with Begas at its helm, becomes further evident in her opinion of the sculptor's *National Monument to Emperor Wilhelm I* (1892–97) [fig. 3.33]. The monument, which celebrated the founder of the German Empire and was prominently located in front of the royal castle in Berlin, was one of the most pompous and costly sculptural projects executed at the time.<sup>937</sup> In front of a long circular double arcade with two quadriga groups on its ends, the bronze equestrian statue of Wilhelm I towered on a high pedestal surrounded by figures of *Victories*, reclining lions, allegories of *War* and *Peace*, and numerous sculpted trophies. Characterised by an overwhelming complexity of neo-baroque extravagance, the monument represented Germany's new sense of patriotism and the image of a powerful and prosperous empire. Having attended its inaugural celebrations on 22 March 1897, Vicky confided her impression of the public spectacle to her daughter Sophie:

The fêtes were very brilliant, with great noise and bustle, the streets filled with flags and decorations, but there was much that jarred my

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<sup>935</sup> For more on Uphues, see *Begas* (2010), pp. 115, 170–71.

<sup>936</sup> For more on Vicky's commission of Uphues, see *Im Schatten der Krone* 2001, cat. no. I/2, p. 18, illustrated on p. 19.

<sup>937</sup> See Jürgen Klebs, 'Das Nationaldenkmal für Kaiser Wilhelm I.', in *Begas* 2010, pp. 88–101, and *Begas* 2010, work no. 142 on pp. 254–6.

feelings. Not once was dear Papa's name mentioned, neither in the speeches nor in the many articles which were published. The monument to Grandpapa is undoubtedly fine, but there is much that I do not quite like. When the eye has once known Greek beauty and purity of line and perfection of proportion, then one does not quite take to a style something between rococo and naturalism, and heavy and over-ornamented.<sup>938</sup>

By emphasising her distress at the omission of Friedrich III's memory during the celebrations, Vicky situated Begas's monument in a political context of which she was apprehensive. In her description, the atmosphere of the patriotic event with its 'noise and bustle' and 'flags and decorations' reflected the opulent grandeur of Begas's monument, which embodied, for Vicky, the opposite of the principles of Greek art. While Greek art stood for simplicity and elegance, Begas's monument was characterised by an absence of compositional clarity. Indeed, it appears as if its stylistic ambiguity 'between rococo and naturalism' had the effect to perplex its viewers in a similar way as the celebrations diffused the public's perception of the right imperial lineage.

### **Adolf Hildebrand**

Vicky's preference for the qualities of Greek art at this point situated her sculptural taste in the context of the innovative circle around the Munich-based sculptor Hildebrand, far beyond the established taste at the Berlin court. Hildebrand reinvigorated late-nineteenth century German sculpture through a reductive simplicity inspired by a new classicism. Although Vicky did not refer

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<sup>938</sup> Arthur Gould Lee (ed.) *The Empress Frederick writes to Sophie Her Daughter, Crown Princess and later Queen of the Hellenes* (London: Faber and Faber, n.d. [1955]), p. 246.

directly to him, her above-mentioned opinion of the Begas monument seems to echo Hildebrand's own uncompromising judgement of it, which he confided in a personal letter to his wife: 'The sculpture is throughout nonsense, the entire base full of figures like never before. It depresses me to have to compete with such stuff. [...] Begas has made a terrible model.'<sup>939</sup> As it were, the nationwide competition in the running up to the commission for the *National Monument* in the late 1880s had pitted Begas and Hildebrand against each other. While Hildebrand had originally won the first round of the competition, Begas emerged as the winner, due to the intervention of Wilhelm II, who favoured the Berlin sculptor.<sup>940</sup> In contrast to Begas, Hildebrand's concern in sculpture was not on the viewer's perception of narrative subject matter but on the formal artistic objective itself. As set out in his influential 1893 treatise *Das Problem der Form*, Hildebrand considered sculptural form as a visualisation of an artistic idea and emphasised the modelling of clear contours and surfaces.<sup>941</sup> Based upon this conception, his work was stripped of superfluous attributes and appeared simple and pure, imbued with references to Greek antiquity and the Florentine Renaissance. While such classicism was little compatible with Wilhelm II's stilted ambition for grandiose representation in the form of Begas's detailed, protruding sculptures, Vicky, however, had developed an appreciation for it.

From the 1870s onwards, she nourished a keen interest in Italian Renaissance art, which she amplified on frequent trips to Italy until the end of her life. As a patron of the Berlin museums and a collector of Renaissance and later

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<sup>939</sup> 'Die Plastik ist durchgängig Blödsinn. Der ganze Sockel voller Figuren wie noch nie.—Es hat mich ganz deprimiert mit solchem Zeug concurrieren zu müssen. [...] Begas hat ein scheußliches Modell gemacht.' Letter from Hildebrand to an unnamed person, September 1889, quoted after Bernhard Sattler (ed.) *Adolf von Hildebrand und seine Welt. Briefe und Erinnerungen* (Munich: Georg D.W. Callwy, 1962), p. 331.

<sup>940</sup> For more on Hildebrand's contribution to the competition for the *National Monument*, see Peter Pinnau, *Gruft Mausoleum, Grabkapelle. Studien zur Sepulkralarchitektur des 19. und des 20. Jahrhunderts mit besonderer Hinsicht auf Adolf von Hildebrand* (München: Mäander Verlag, 1992), pp. 296-306; Sigrid Esche-Braunfels, *Adolf von Hildebrand (1847-1921)* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag für Kunstwissenschaft, 1993), pp. 467-73.

<sup>941</sup> Hildebrand (1893); See also Bernhard Maaz, *Skulptur in Deutschland. Zwischen Französischer Revolution und Erstem Weltkrieg*, vol. I (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2010), p. 56.

art, Vicky was particularly keen on travelling in company of artists and connoisseurs and meeting with interesting resident artists. Hence, while visiting Florence in 1875, she made the acquaintance of Hildebrand who lived in the city at the time. Introduced to him by the celebrated essayist Karl Hillebrand (1829–84), whom she had befriended on an earlier trip to Italy, Vicky became inspired by Hildebrand’s classicising style and the clarity of his ideas.<sup>942</sup> As an innovative thinker, even more than her siblings Louise and Bertie, Vicky was receptive to new ideas and Hildebrand’s radical vanguardism made a great impression on her. According to a German friend of the sculptor, who was introduced to Vicky in 1876, she ‘talks slight nonsense but became very excited when I began to talk of Adolf Hildebrand whom she considers the first living artist, what obviously Hillebrand had drummed into her’.<sup>943</sup> The derisive tone in this quotation suggests that Vicky’s enjoyment of the company of the local German intellectual circle in Florence may not have been entirely reciprocal.<sup>944</sup> Yet, her royal status was certainly considered as a means to forge lucrative career options. In fact, in 1876/77 Hildebrand sculpted a today lost marble bust of Vicky’s youngest brother *Prince Leopold* while he was on an educational tour in Italy. It is very likely that Hildebrand’s acquaintance with Vicky helped, if not enabled, this commission.<sup>945</sup> A surviving plaster version of the bust depicts the prince, aged twenty-three, looking out straight and with a marked focus on his protuberant eyes and receding chin [fig. 3.34]. Set on a bare, truncated bust, in this portrait Hildebrand renounced depicting any signs of royalty and focused attention on the precise rendering of the facial features.

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<sup>942</sup> For Vicky’s friendship with Hillebrand, see Sattler (1962), pp. 788-89.

<sup>943</sup> ‘[...] sie schwatzt etwas Blech, aber gerieht in Begeisterung, als ich von Adolf Hildebrand began, den sie für den ersten lebenden Künstler erklärte, was ihr offenbar Hillebrand eingepaukt hat’. Anton Dohrn to Charles Grand, 15 October 1876, quoted after Sattler (1962), p. 238.

<sup>944</sup> See also, for example, the slightly mocking letter from Hildebrand’s close friend Conrad Fiedler to Hildebrand on 25 February 1878 about a portrait which Vicky was painting of Fiedler’s wife, printed in Sattler (1962), p. 248.

<sup>945</sup> See Angela Hass, *Adolf von Hildebrand: Das plastische Portrait* (München: Prestel, 1984), p. 72, cat. no. 20.

Another example of a bust by Hildebrand, possibly made at Vicky's instigation, is a portrait of *Karl Hillebrand*, modelled in 1882–83, of which Vicky bought a copy in bronze and was probably given a version in terracotta version by the artist.<sup>946</sup> Neither version is today traceable but other bronze copies of the bust, such as one in the Kunsthalle in Bremen, betray, more than the bust of *Prince Leopold*, the particular attraction of Hildebrand's classicising style in portraiture [fig. 3.35]. The most striking characteristic of the bust of *Hillebrand* is its combination of a plain Greek-style truncation with the realistic description of the face, emphasising the neatly trimmed beard and minute detail of the wisps of hair and tear sacs. Furthermore, by articulating the typical tropes of the Greek philosopher head with a pronounced forehead, blank eyes and an angular neck, Hildebrand imbued his bust of Hillebrand with an aura of timelessness and inner character whilst keeping it individual and current. As in the juxtaposition of Vicky's comment about Begas's *National Monument*, the refined simplicity of Hildebrand's work embodied the opposite of the theatrical posing of Uphues's portrait of *Friedrich III* after Begas. And yet, both show facets of Vicky's patronage of contemporary sculpture. While the flamboyant neo-Baroque style of Begas represented a requisite rhetoric in line with official royal patronage, the restrained classicism of Hildebrand reflected Vicky's personal taste. This antagonistic juxtaposition becomes no more evident than in the two major monuments which commemorated Vicky after her death in 1901. Her official tomb at the Mausoleum in Potsdam was executed by Begas to match the earlier tomb of Friedrich III.<sup>947</sup> In contrast, at her widow seat in Kronberg, local residents commissioned from Hildebrand a wall monument with a large Renaissance-

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<sup>946</sup> See Hess (1984), p. 90 cat. no. 45; Heiderich (1993), pp. 241-42.

<sup>947</sup> For Begas's tomb of Vicky, see *Begas* (2010), work no. 166 on p. 272-74.

inspired stone relief with the *Deposition of Christ* (1902–3), suggestive of Vicky's personal artistic identification with Begas's opponent.<sup>948</sup>

### **The Renaissance as an alternative to contemporary sculpture**

As suggested above, Vicky's interest in Hildebrand's new classicist style derived from her enthusiasm for the Italian Renaissance, which, in turn, formed part of a wider popular fashion amongst art collectors in Berlin and Europe from the 1870s onwards.<sup>949</sup> Influenced by recent accounts of Italian cultural history, notably Jakob Burckhardt's celebrated publication *Die Kultur der Renaissance* of 1869, the Florentine Renaissance of the Medici came to be celebrated as a period with an exemplary civil society whose economic and artistic success was based on the perception of the self-conscious individual. According to the eminent Renaissance expert and museum professional Wilhelm von Bode, the sculptural production since medieval times culminated in the sculpture of Renaissance Florence, just as antique sculpture had done in that of classical Athens.<sup>950</sup> While this affirmative concept appealed in particular to the thriving middle classes of the late-nineteenth century, who identified with the positive vision of Florence as a republican-liberal city, Vicky's own enthusiasm for the Renaissance demonstrated that a sustained interest in this period was not an exclusively bourgeois domain.<sup>951</sup> From the 1870s onwards, Vicky immersed herself in studying and admiring the Renaissance, especially on her travels to Italy. Writing to her mother from Florence in April 1875, she tried to justify her sustained engagement with Italian art:

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<sup>948</sup> For Hildebrand's relief *The Deposition of Christ*, see Esche-Braunfels (1993), pp. 189-92, 325-28.

<sup>949</sup> For the increasing interest amongst European art collectors in the Italian Renaissance, see Sven Kuhrau, *Der Kunstsammler im Kaiserreich. Kunst und Repräsentation in der Berliner Privatsammlerkultur* (Kiel: Ludwig, 2005), pp. 162-81.

<sup>950</sup> Wilhelm von Bode, *Florentiner Bildhauer der Renaissance* (Berlin: Bruno Cassirer, 1911), p. 174.

<sup>951</sup> Kuhrau (2005), pp. 178-81.

As you say, so it is. Art cannot be our chief object in life—in a position such as ours. But it may be, and I think ought to be, its chief recreation. Living as we do in a place and a country singularly devoid of artistic collections one enjoys it doubly when one sees so much before one! And I own that it is only as one grows older and more thoughtful that one can really value the treasures Italy contains! I say nothing of museums, galleries, churches, pictures and statues—because I know it bores you and my enthusiasm would weary you, but for those who love these things and see them so rarely, it is a perfect paradise.<sup>952</sup>

In contrast to Victoria, Vicky derived great fulfilment in spending time with the study of art and its contextual meaning. As a ‘perfect paradise’ and escape from her increasingly difficult circumstances in Berlin, Italy and her art treasures signified for Vicky an alternative, if largely imagined, model of a harmonious society with an inspiring artistic heritage. Advised by Bode and other experts, she accumulated a considerable collection of old art, which she purposefully arranged at her newly built widow seat Friedrichshof, near Frankfurt in the early 1890s.<sup>953</sup> In the display of her artworks she followed an aesthetic concept according to period styles for which Bode later became reknown in his museum displays, setting him apart from the tradition of more rigid classification as practiced at the South Kensington Museum at the time.<sup>954</sup> Having her collection catalogued by Bode and published in 1896 in an illustrated leather-bound private edition, Vicky

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<sup>952</sup> Vicky to Victoria, 24 April 1875, quoted after Fulford (1976), *Darling Child*, p. 178.

<sup>953</sup> For an overview of Vicky’s art collection at Friedrichshof, see Meinolf Siemer, ‘Kaiserin Friedrich als Bauherrin, Kunstsammlerin und Mäzenin— »Das schönste Ziel ware wohl ein ganz neues Gebäude... «’, in *Victoria & Albert, Vicky & the Kaiser* (1997), pp. 129-43, here pp. 134-43; *Im Schatten der Krone* (2001), pp. 107-14.

<sup>954</sup> Malcom Baker, ‘Bode and Museum Display: The Arrangement of the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum and the South Kensington Response’, *Jahrbuch der Berlin Museen* 38, supplement “Kennerschaft” (1996), pp. 143-53.



ensured that her sustained interest for Renaissance art was particularly emphasised.<sup>955</sup> In his introductory text, Bode situated Vicky's activity as a collector reverently within a long line of international aristocratic collectors, emanating from the Medici family in fifteenth-century Florence.<sup>956</sup> Furthermore, he pointed out that the selection and display of Vicky's collection revealed her personal taste and reflected a sense for a 'naïve naturalism as it distinguishes especially the art of the fifteenth century'.<sup>957</sup> Although small in number, Renaissance sculptures, especially portraits, were accorded particular importance in the overall arrangement of the collection. For example, at the *Rother Salon*, where a significant part of the sculpture collection was displayed, a white marble 'character head'<sup>958</sup> of the Genovese banker *Acellino Salvago* (c.1500) [fig. 3.36] by Antonio Tamagnini (active c. 1491–1504) was prominently juxtaposed with an ethnographic black marble bust of a tattooed man [fig. 3.37], of probably Italian Renaissance origin, whose naturalistic treatment heightened, according to Bode, the 'piquant effect' of this work.<sup>959</sup> Both works were deliberately paired in order to invite artistic and aesthetic comparisons between these early sculptural masterpieces.

Yet, despite the focus on the Renaissance, Vicky's collection also comprised numerous works of later periods. As pointed out by Bode, 'sculptures of the Baroque time, as different as they are from the Quattrocento, have, however, not entirely been scorned by the high collector [Vicky], in that they are particularly appropriate for room decoration due to their picturesque and

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<sup>955</sup> Wilhelm Bode, *Die Kunstsammlungen Ihrer Majestät der Kaiserin und Königin Friedrich in Schloss Friedrichshof* (Berlin: Reichsdruckerei, 1896).

<sup>956</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1-14.

<sup>957</sup> '[...] naiven Naturalismus, welcher vor Allem der Kunst des XV. Jahrhunderts eigen ist'. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>958</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>959</sup> Bode (1896), p. 21. This work was not dated by Bode and has never been researched.

decorative effect'.<sup>960</sup> As such, for example, the seventeenth-century Neapolitan bust of a *Maltese Knight*, 'in the character of Bernini',<sup>961</sup> formed the centrepiece of the table display in the middle of the *Rother Salon* where it could be admired for its Baroque artifice [fig. 3.38].

While Bode's catalogue focused exclusively on the collection of old art at Friedrichshof, Vicky's patronage of contemporary sculpture suggests certain subtle parallels with the connotations of her collection of historic sculpture. Considering, for example, the restrained naturalism of Hildebrand's portrait of *Hillebrand* in relation to the above-mentioned bust of *Acellino Salvago*, both works display a focus on personal character through the close attention on individual features. Their classicising appearance holds the composition together and conveys a sense of the sitters' professional values.<sup>962</sup> While it is not documented how Vicky displayed the bust of *Hillebrand*, it is likely that, beyond its function as a personal memory, she appreciated it for its classicising values and as a work by the eminent Hildebrand. Perhaps, due to its personal and artistic significance she kept it in her private rooms of which no photographs exist.<sup>963</sup>

With regards to the relative position of Uphues's neo-Baroque bust of *Friedrich III* in Vicky's collection, this work was displayed as part of the decorative scheme of the dining room. Crowning a prominent neo-Renaissance mantle piece, the flamboyant bronze bust came here to great 'picturesque and decorative effect' and granted the memory of the deceased emperor a prominent presence in the life of his widow's new home [fig. 3.39].

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<sup>960</sup> 'Bildwerke der Barockzeit, so verschieden sie von denen des Quattrocento sind, hat die Hohe Sammlerin dennoch nicht ganz verschmäht; sind sie doch durch ihre malerische und decorative Wirkung ganz besonders geeignet zum Zimmerschmuck' Bode (1896), pp. 20-21.

<sup>961</sup> *Ibid.* p. 21.

<sup>962</sup> For more on the importance of early Florentine portraiture in Hildebrand's work, see Hass (1984), in particular pp. 24-31.

<sup>963</sup> Vicky's private rooms are the only rooms that did not feature in a contemporary presentation album of the interiors at Friedrichshof, which was made in 1895 by the photographer Hermann Rückwardt. Copies of the album are today at the Kulturstiftung des Hauses Hessen at Schloss Fasenerie and at the Royal Photograph Collection at Windsor Castle.

The brief outline of Vicky's wide-ranging collecting interests, with a focus on the Renaissance, and how this was staged in her private collection at Friedrichshof, indicates that stylistically opposed works could exist concurrently without excluding each other. Allocated with separate functions, they were encountered in different ways that justified their parallel existence. The excitement was that differences in sculptural style could invite distinct meanings as much as their display could subtly accentuate or restrain particular political and personal emphases. As much as Vicky appreciated Baroque works for their decorative and representative effect, she evidently admired Renaissance and artworks for their intrinsic, aesthetic and art-historical values. In her taste and scholarly interest for the classicising ideals of the Florentine Renaissance, Vicky was innovative and trendsetting, and articulated this outlook throughout the display of her sculpture collection, old and new.

### **Epilogue: Vicky and the New Sculpture in Britain**

As demonstrated by her carefully orchestrated relationship with Durant and Triqueti, Vicky could not openly patronise foreign sculptors without compromising public expectations of her role as a member of the German royal family. And yet, her taste for Renaissance sculpture and Hildebrand's new classical style aligned her with contemporary trends in British sculpture in the late nineteenth century. As in Hildebrand's work, where the simplification and clarity of form reflected the fashion for Florentine sculpture in Germany, the new generation of British sculptors around Gilbert, coined as the New Sculpture,<sup>964</sup> derived inspiration from the sculptural language of especially the Italian Renaissance. In search of new artistic expression to reconfigure and transcend the

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<sup>964</sup> Beattie (1983), p. 3.

mid-Victorian figurative and literal repertoire, Hildebrand, like Gilbert and his British contemporaries sought new approaches in themes, forms, processes and materiality, for which Renaissance sculptures often served as catalysts.<sup>965</sup> Having either lived or travelled in Italy, and studied the sculptural masterpieces of the Florentine Renaissance, the sculptors articulated these influences in many of their works, especially at the beginning of their careers in the early 1880s. For example, Gilbert's *Perseus Arming* (1882) and *Icarus* (1884), both made in Italy, showed clear references to the material qualities of the sculptures of Donatello, while Hildebrand's work was influenced throughout by his Florentine environment.<sup>966</sup>

Although, by the 1890s, the New Sculptors in Britain were increasingly attracted by the visual richness of the decorative arts and of material qualities that ran counter to the aesthetics of Hildebrand's simplified new classical language,<sup>967</sup> art critics continued to see conceptual parallels between Hildebrand and the New Sculpture. As pointed out by Claude Phillips in the *Art Journal* in 1903, in portrait sculpture, Hildebrand 'has succeeded in adapting the Greek ideal to modern needs and modern feeling'. This was an achievement, which Phillips considered to have been matched in Britain by Gilbert, amongst others, whose artistic inspiration resulted from the 'Florentine Art of the Quattrocento'.<sup>968</sup>

In this context, it is plausible that Vicky became an ardent admirer of Gilbert and supported her brother's choice of him as the sculptor of the *Clarence Tomb* in 1892. As she had done in earlier years after Albert's death, Vicky

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<sup>965</sup> For more on similarities and differences of Hildebrand's approach to sculpture in relation to the contemporary British mode in sculpture around the 1880s, see David J. Getsy, 'Encountering the male nude at the origins of modern sculpture: Rodin, Leighton, Hildebrand, and the negotiation of physicality and temporality', in *The Enduring Instant: Time and the Spectator in the Visual Arts*, eds Antoinette Roseler-Friedenthal and Johannes Nathan (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 2003), pp. 296-313.

<sup>966</sup> For the influence of Donatello on Gilbert, see Adrian Bury, *Shadow of Eros. A Biographical and Critical Study of the Life and Works of Sir Alfred Gilbert, R.A., M.V.O., D.C.L.* (London: Macdonald & Evans, 1954), pp. 9, 40-41; Dorment 1985, p. 34, 38, 44-5, 49; For antique and Renaissance sources in Hildebrand's work as perceived by contemporary critics in Britain, see Helen Zimmer, 'Adolf Hildebrand', *Magazine of Art* (Jan. 1894), pp. 53-58.

<sup>967</sup> For the influence of the decorative arts on the New Sculpture, see Droth (2004), pp. 221-35.

<sup>968</sup> Claude Phillips, 'Great Portrait-Sculpture through the Ages.—III.', *Art Journal* (Dec. 1903), pp. 353-61, here pp. 360,361.

encouraged her mother also in this instance, about the suitability of Gilbert as the artist for the tomb: 'I am very glad the decision has been come to - to make beloved Eddy's lasting resting place - in the beautiful Wolsey Chapel - between dear Leopold's tomb - and dear Papa's Cenotaph; and that Gilbert is going to do the monument. It is indeed the best decision that could have been come to [...]'.<sup>969</sup> The certitude of her opinion expressed in this quotation suggests that Vicky was well informed about Gilbert's career and work. She clearly trusted in his ability to succeed with the challenges of an additional royal monument in the Albert Chapel, complementing both Triqueti's decorative scheme, for which she had been responsible three decades earlier, and an additional marble tomb by Boehm for *Prince Leopold* (1884). Considering Gilbert's recent projects, such as his elaborate bronze statue of *Queen Victoria* for Winchester (1888) and his innovative and highly symbolic *Shaftesbury Fountain* (1886–93), it was to be expected that his design for the *Clarence Tomb* would not be subordinate to the overwhelming magnificence of the existing decoration of the Albert Chapel, but accord or vie with its richness in colours, forms and materials. In fact, in view of the widespread public condemnation of the *Shaftesbury Fountain* as inappropriate to its environment in the early 1890s,<sup>970</sup> Vicky's support of Gilbert appears both like a cutting-edge challenge of Gilbert's talent, and as a test of public taste. What Vicky expected of Gilbert was the ability to consider the significance, historical past and existing context of the environment to his commission. Her subsequent comment in March 1893, by which time the *Clarence Tomb* design had developed

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<sup>969</sup> RA/ADDU32/679, Vicky to Victoria, 3 February 1892, transcript, quoted after Roskill (1968), pp. 699-704, here p. 699.

<sup>970</sup> For more on the public squabbling over the Shaftesbury Fountain, see 'The Shaftesbury Memorial Fountain', *Survey of London: volumes 31 and 32: St James Westminster, Part 2* (1963), pp. 101-110. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=41457> [accessed: 21 July 2014]; Alex Potts, 'Eros in Piccadilly Circus: monument and anti-monument', in David Getsy (ed.), *Sculpture and the Pursuit of a Modern Ideal in Britain, c. 1880–1930* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 105-40.

into a complex scheme with diverse art historical references,<sup>971</sup> is highly revealing in terms of the concerns of Vicky's taste. In a letter to her daughter Margaret, Vicky elucidated that 'Mr Gilbert – is one of the best artists living[,] so full of *taste* – refined feeling & *such a knowledge* of art! It is *his* work!'<sup>972</sup> Her personal approval of Gilbert's work based on his 'taste', 'feeling' and in particular his 'knowledge' suggests that what impressed Vicky were Gilbert's understanding of the overall context and his clever, tasteful approach in sculpture. Although, by 1898, when the intricate and dominating grille was installed around the *Clarence Tomb*, Bertie bemoaned its overall size, which 'unfortunately [...] dwarfs the other fine monuments & is large for the chapel', he was nevertheless sure that his connoisseurial sister would admire it.<sup>973</sup> Indeed, he was so pleased with Vicky's continuous endorsement of Gilbert's work that he told her he would let Gilbert know 'how much you appreciated his great work on which he has spent some years of thought & labour'.<sup>974</sup> As much as the *Clarence Tomb* differed stylistically from Vicky's personal preferences for the simplified naturalism of Renaissance sculpture, what mattered most was her respect for Gilbert's knowledge and expertise as an artist who engaged with complex art historical sources and experimented with innovative ideas to create a new sculptural language. Although many contemporary and later critics have indicated the stylistic contrast, even rivalry, between Triqueti's decorative scheme and Gilbert's *Clarence Tomb*,<sup>975</sup> it appears that, for Vicky, Gilbert's work signified a continuity of the artistic parameters that defined Triqueti's earlier scheme at the Albert Chapel. In Gilbert's work, many of the concerns, which also characterised Vicky's versatile

<sup>971</sup> For the state of Gilbert's working model for the *Clarence Tomb* in 1893, see *Alfred Gilbert. Sculptor and Goldsmith* (1986), pp. 159-60; For the range of sources in the *Clarence Tomb*, see, for example, Roskill (1968).

<sup>972</sup> Vicky to her daughter Margaret, 2 March 1893, Kronberg Archives, quoted after Dormont (1985), p. 150, FN 19.

<sup>973</sup> RA/ADDA/4/58, Bertie to Vicky, 11 May 1898, quoted after Dormont (1985), p. 166, FN 35.

<sup>974</sup> RA/ADDA/4/86, Bertie to Vicky, 20 Nov. 1898, quoted after *ibid*, FN 36.

<sup>975</sup> See, for example, Anon., 'The Monument to the Duke of Clarence', *The British Architect* (5 August 1898), pp. 93-103, here p. 94; *Alfred Gilbert* (1986), p. 154.

engagement with sculpture, including colour, materiality, art-historical sources and aesthetic considerations, came together and forged a synthesis which seemed to correspond with the setting of the Albert Chapel. In this sense it was perhaps not just one of Gilbert's fancies when he told his biographer Isabelle McAllister that Vicky once had asked him to undertake the decorations of her German residence at Friedrichshof – even if this was never realised.<sup>976</sup>

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<sup>976</sup> See Isabel McAllister, *Alfred Gilbert* (London: A&C Black, 1929), p. 141.

## **Conclusion**

### **At the Heart of Victorian Sculpture**

While being distinct in their roles as collectors, practitioners and mediators of sculpture, Queen Victoria's children were united through their family connections as significant agents of royalty at the heart of Victorian sculpture from around 1860 to 1900. They actively engaged with sculpture in all stages from conception to display, on a private and public, as well as international level. The diversity of their engagement clearly demonstrates that royal patronage neither stopped with the death of Prince Albert in 1861, nor was it old-fashioned and limited to Albert's commemoration. Instead, the royal children were involved in the reconfiguration of established sculptural practices, both in formal-aesthetic and socio-political terms. The importance of sculpture in their lives was played out in their multifarious engagement with current trends and discourses on imperial politics, national belonging and female professionalism. Their patronage was highly complex and distinct from that of Victoria and Albert, but gives, at the same time, an impression of prevalent concerns of the material culture of sculpture. Through their travels, public appearances and private recreation, the royal children moved in and out of private and public spheres and engaged with diverse artistic networks and audiences. Their royal privileges allowed them to live above established norms of class, gender and nationality, but also entailed social expectations and limits to their careers within the world of sculpture. Despite the often intermittent and various nature of their engagement with the medium over the course of four decades, the royal children had a strong interest in new formal and stylistic options in sculpture, which they explored through daring purchases, commissions and personal practice. This trendsetting enquiry was,



however, counterbalanced by their respect for traditional ideas, especially in association with the artistic politics of Prince Albert. Depending on the context and purpose of a sculptural project, the royal children's taste oscillated between established norms and innovative experiments. This flexibility contributed to the diversification of royal engagement with sculpture, at once geographically, aesthetically and socially. Sculpture formed part of the royal children's everyday life, opened the sphere of royalty to vanguard trends in the medium and helped make the profession of sculptor acceptable and fashionable amongst elite society in Victorian Britain. The impact of the royal children's engagement with sculpture resonated in aristocratic amateurs like Gower and Gleichen turning to sculpture as a serious pursuit, and showed that it was acceptable to socialise with and develop close personal friendships with professional artists.

Bertie's role as a collector of sculpture was reflected in the eclectic, wide-ranging and personal character of his private sculpture collection, which he assembled at his two residences, Sandringham and Marlborough House. Large marble nudes and sentimental genre pieces existed side by side with fashionable portraits and vanguard statuettes. As much as the prince patronised established court sculptors, he was interested in emerging artists with attractive artistic ideas and cosmopolitan charm. Already during his educational trip to Rome in 1859, it became apparent that Bertie preferred easily legible and emotive subject matter to highly cerebral works in the tradition of the classical canon. Diligently introduced, by the eminent Gibson, to masterpieces like the *Apollo Belvedere*, Bertie's personal taste in sculpture was reflected in the purchase of Hosmer's fancy piece, *Puck*. Nevertheless, the prince's art-historical training underpinned the original

core of his sculpture collection, based on neoclassical, albeit light-hearted and sensual marble statues. During the 1870s, he also collected and commissioned works of a progressive style, made in bronze and terracotta and influenced by French modelling techniques. Characterised by a mixture of the standard and the new, Bertie's sculpture collection represented a compelling juxtaposition of the traditional and the experimental. As the survey of his "Eastern" travels and glamorous social engagements has revealed, the cultural and artistic climate of the 1870s afforded him a range of stylistic tendencies to choose from in the sculptural displays at his residences. The prince's experience of Egypt and India and his fascination with cutting-edge aesthetic venues in London converged in his staging of imperial domestic spaces with a focus on aesthetic sculptural effects. The eclectic anatomy of his sculpture collection, based on idiosyncratic references instead of formal coherence, is what set him apart from Victoria and Albert as collectors of sculpture. By no means old-fashioned, yet distinct through its divergent progressiveness, Bertie's sculpture collection reflected his status and personal taste at the heart of Britain's cosmopolitan elite.

Louise's engagement with sculpture from 1863 to the early 1900s is characterised by the princess's ambition to carve out a career as a royal amateur sculptor in the professional art world. By adopting new sculptural trends and exhibiting publicly, Louise enlarged her artistic repertoire and network, which enabled her to make public statuary with distinct aesthetic and political ramifications. Her royal status, albeit complicating her artistic career, made her a renowned example of the royal family's presence and vanguardism in the world of sculpture. While her early training with Mary Thornycroft was originally intended as a pastime distraction,

Louise gradually upgraded her artistic challenges. Reaching beyond the usual amateur's efforts, Louise learned to carve in marble and exhibited at the Royal Academy. Her public reception, however, was biased by her royal status. By focusing on her royal title rather than her actual work, critics assigned the princess to a category of her own beyond the traditional professional-amateur and male-female dichotomy. During the 1870s, Louise gained new practical impulses through her sculpture training with Boehm. She also became a key female figure within the aesthetic avant-garde of refined aristocrats and eminent artists. Together with her brother Bertie, she represented the social cachet of the fashionable Grosvenor Gallery. Yet while Bertie enjoyed the Grosvenor as a magnificent place for artistic entertainment, Louise used its stimulating atmosphere of female sociability to position herself as a progressive amateur artist. Her engagement with Aestheticism clearly attests to her open-mindedness towards artistic trends beyond the milieu of the royal court. At the same time, however, her reliance on favourable conditions did not belie that, as a royal, she worked under alternative parameters. Though improving her professional opportunities by building a trendsetting studio for herself, Louise asserted her exclusiveness by keeping the space closed to the public eye. From the 1880s onwards, her advantageous connections helped her to advance in the domain of public statuary by focusing on statues of *Queen Victoria* and the imperial *Boer War Memorial* at St Paul's. Inspired by Alfred Gilbert's vanguardism, Louise updated her artistic repertoire and invigorated the public appearance of royal engagement with sculpture.

Vicky's engagement with sculpture was highly versatile and the most intellectually immersed out of all royal children. Committed to continuing Albert's legacy as a deeply engaged patron of the arts, Vicky learned about the different facets of sculpture by gaining practical experience as a maker, advisor and collector. Like Albert, she was interested in cutting-edge artistic trends and discourses and promoted their application in practice as a means of advancing knowledge and artistic innovation. However, through her dual national allegiance and involvement in two different systems of royal patronage, in Britain and Germany, she was forced to play out significant tensions between different sculptural practices. Her engagement with sculpture was therefore marked by the constant effort of negotiating official expectations and royal duty in contrast to private taste and personal preferences.

When Vicky arrived in Berlin in 1858 she was eager to get involved in the local scene of contemporary sculpture and took modelling lessons with the former Rauch student Hugo Hagen. Unlike Louise, she had no ambition to advance in a professional direction but was keen to understand the perspective of the practicing artist. Her own practice allowed her to engage with personal themes and sculptural trends that were current in Britain but considered with reservation in Berlin. Vicky bridged such variances between the artistic centres by applying current fraught issues like sculptural polychromy in practice. Another strand to Vicky's engagement with sculpture was her cross-national advisory role to her mother after Albert's death. Through her understanding of her father's taste, her own artistic experience and excellent contacts, Vicky helped Victoria in taking important decisions for memorial projects to the Prince Consort. Her chief project as an advisor was the development of the Albert Memorial Chapel at Windsor

Castle into a large public monument. By choosing the technically innovative French sculptor Triqueti as the designer of the magnificent chapel interior, Vicky tried to realise Albert's artistic vision of a polychrome wall decoration adapted to the British climate. Hoping to also apply her experience to sculptural projects in Germany, Vicky quickly reached the boundaries of her autonomy as an art patron. The tension between her private patronage and her obligation to comply with the official demands in German public sculpture became evident at the death of Vicky's husband in 1888. Although her original idea had been to create an intimate memorial chapel for her family, the official dimension of a state monument to the then Emperor of Germany called for an imperial representation of her husband's tomb. Vicky supervised the Berlin sculptor Begas who executed a flamboyant tomb design to celebrate the Prussian dynasty. Privately, however, she was apprehensive of Prussia's imperial extravagance and preferred the restrained aesthetics of Adolf Hildebrand. As an alternative to the stylistic and political disparities, which Vicky encountered in contemporary sculpture, she turned her focus as a collector of sculpture to the Italian Renaissance and became one of the earliest aristocratic collectors of historic sculpture in the second half of the nineteenth century. Vicky's sustained interest in Hildebrand and in Renaissance sculpture were important strands that reconnected her with current trends in British sculpture. Like Bertie and Louise, Vicky considered Gilbert to be one of the most commendable sculptors of the time and endorsed his prestigious commission for the *Clarence Tomb*. The combination of his qualities in terms of 'taste', 'feeling' and 'knowledge' seems to explain why, for all three royal children, Gilbert represented the epitome of creative achievement in sculpture. He united the characteristics which Albert had encouraged his children to pursue as

patrons and practitioners. The royal children's unanimous endorsement of Gilbert clearly affirmed their position as a new generation of royals, both distinct from, but also respectful of, their parents' heritage. As collectors, makers and patrons of sculpture, Bertie, Louise and Vicky formed a conspicuous generation of royals who deserve their place in the history of Victorian sculpture.

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# **Queen Victoria's Children and Sculpture (c.1860-1900): Collectors, Makers, Patrons**

Two Volumes: Volume 2 (Images)

## **Désirée de Chair**

A thesis submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

University of Warwick, Department of History of Art  
February 2015

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**Fig. 2.3** William Plant, *Marie d’Orléans* after Ary Scheffer, 1841, enamel on gold, 3.9 x 2.4 cm (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 2.4** Princess Louise, Copy of a Study of a Vestal Virgin, 24 December 1860, inscribed 'Copy', charcoal on paper, dimensions unknown (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 2.5** Mary Thornycroft, *Princess Louise as Plenty*, 1856, marble, 132 x 31 x 41 cm, (Photograph: Désirée de Chair) (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 2.6** Maull & Co, *Mary Thornycroft*, 29 December 1864, albumen carte-de-visite, 8.9 x 6 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.

**Fig. 2.7** Hills and Saunders, *Princess Louise*, 2 April 1864, albumen carte-de-visite, 9.5 x 5.7 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.

**Fig. 2.8** Mary Thornycroft, Measurements of Princess Alice's head for a bust, verso, not dated, graphite on paper, dimensions unknown (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 2.9** Princess Louise, *Princess Beatrice*, 1864, marble, 55 x 29 x 23 cm (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 2.10** Mary Thornycroft, *Victoria, the Princess Royal*, 1846, marble, 44 x 33 x 22 cm (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 2.11** Princess Louise, *Resignation*, 1865, plaster, dimensions unknown (Photograph: Désirée de Chair) (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 2.12** Princess Louise, *Resignation*, detail of the lower drapery, 1865, plaster, dimensions unknown (Photograph: Désirée de Chair) (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).



**Fig. 2.13** Mary Thornycroft, *Princess Louise as Plenty*, detail of the lower drapery, 1856, marble, 132 x 31 x 41 cm, (Photograph: Désirée de Chair) (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 2.14** Princess Louise, *Resignation*, detail of the shoulder drapery, 1865, plaster, dimensions unknown (Photograph: Désirée de Chair) (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 2.15** Mary Thornycroft, *Princess Louise as Plenty*, detail of the shoulder drapery, 1856, marble, 132 x 31 x 41 cm, (Photograph: Désirée de Chair) (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 2.16** Princess Louise, *Prince Arthur*, 1868, marble, 61.5 x 33 x 26 cm, National Army Museum, London.

**Fig. 2.17** Princess Louise, *Queen Victoria*, 1876, marble, 83.8 x 58.5 x 36 cm, Royal Academy, London.

**Fig. 2.18** Princess Louise, *Prince Leopold*, 1869, plaster, 43.4 x 29 x 19 cm (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 2.19** Princess Louise, *Princess Amélie of Saxe-Coburg*, 1869, plaster, 46 x 30.5 x 21 cm (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 2.20** Joseph Edgar Boehm, *Countess of Cardigan*, 1869, marble, dimensions unknown, Deene Park, Northamptonshire, illustrated in Stocker (1988), no. 46.

**Fig. 2.21** Princess Louise, *Edward, The Black Prince*, c.1871, bronze, dimensions unknown (Photograph: Désirée de Chair) Inverary Castle, Argyll Estates.

**Fig. 2.22** Carlo Marochetti, *Edward, The Black Prince*, c.1861, bronze, h. 45 cm (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 2.23** Princess Louise, *Self-Portrait*, terracotta, h. 63.5 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.

**Fig. 2.24** Joseph Edgar Boehm, *Monument to Juliana, Countess of Leicester*, 1870, marble, dimensions unknown, St. Withburga's Church, Holkham.

**Fig. 2.25** Princess Louise, *Monument to Sybil St Albans*, marble, dimensions unknown, Emmanuel Church, Bestwood, Nottinghamshire.

**Fig. 2.26** Raffles Davison, Princess Louise's Studio at Kensington Gardens by E.W. Godwin, in *British Architect* (1880).

**Fig. 2.27** Blanche Lindsay, *Princess Louise*, 1978, watercolour, dimensions unknown, Christopher and Jenny Newall Collection.

**Fig. 2.28** Joseph Edgar Boehm, Princess Louise's terracotta relief *Geraint and Enid*, engraving, in Henry Blackburn, *Grosvenor Notes 1878* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1878), p. 3.

**Fig. 2.29** Unknown, Princess Louise's terracotta statuette *Miss Violet Lindsay*, in Henry Blackburn, *Grosvenor Notes 1879* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1879), p. 58, no. 296, illustrated on p. 50.

**Fig. 2.30** Princess Louise, *Henrietta Montalba*, 1882, oil on canvas, 108.5 x 87.4 cm, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

**Fig. 2.31** West Front of Lichfield Cathedral, Lichfield (Photograph: Désirée de Chair).

**Fig. 2.32** Princess Louise, *Queen Victoria*, 1885, sandstone, Lichfield Cathedral (Photograph: Désirée de Chair).

**Fig. 2.33** Princess Louise's signature of her *Queen Victoria* statue at Lichfield Cathedral (Photograph: Désirée de Chair).

**Fig. 2.34** Princess Louise, *Queen Victoria*, 1893, marble, dimensions unknown, London, Kensington Gardens (Photograph: Désirée de Chair).

**Fig. 2.35** Princess Louise, *Queen Victoria*, 1893, marble, dimensions unknown, London, Kensington Gardens (Photograph: Désirée de Chair).

**Fig. 2.36** Sir George Hayter, *Queen Victoria*, 1838, oil on canvas, 270.7 x 185.8 cm (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 2.37** Princess Louise, *Queen Victoria*, c.1890, painted plaster, 105.5 x 77 cm, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

**Fig. 2.38** Detail of fig. 2.37 showing the seat rail with wreaths decoration (Photograph: Désirée de Chair), Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

**Fig. 2.39** Princess Louise, *Queen Victoria* seen in profile with the decoration of entwined dolphins on the chair's side rail and handfold (Photograph: Désirée de Chair).

**Fig. 2.40** The Unveiling of the Statue of *Queen Victoria* at Kensington Gardens, *Illustrated London News* (8 July 1893), p. 28.

**Fig. 2.41** Princess Louise's signature on the plinth of the *Queen Victoria* statue at Kensington Gardens (Photograph: Désirée de Chair).

**Fig. 2.42** Princess Louise's statue of *Queen Victoria*, 1895, bronze, dimensions unknown, Strathcona Music Building, McGill University, Montreal.

**Fig. 2.43** Princess Louise, *Battenberg Memorial*, bronze, 1896-98, Whippingham Church, Isle of Wight (Photograph: Désirée de Chair 2013).

**Fig. 2.44** Princess Louise, *Boer War Memorial*, 1904, bronze, dimensions unknown, St Paul's Cathedral, London (Photograph: Courtauld Institute of Art).

**Fig. 2.45** View of the Battenberg Chapel with Alfred Gilbert's bronze screen at Whippingham Church, Isle of Wight (Photograph: Désirée de Chair).

**Fig. 2.46** Gustave Doré, Illustration of Doré's sculpted group *Atropos and Love*, in Princess Louise's Autograph Book, 1877, pen and ink over pencil, 25 x 19 cm (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 2.47** William Blake Richmond, *Sleep and Death carrying the Body of Sarpedon into Lycia*, 1875-76, oil on canvas, 244.5 x 92.4 cm, private collection.

**Fig. 2.48** Alfred Gilbert, *The Kiss of Victory*, 1878-81, marble, h. 227.3 cm, Minneapolis Institute of Art, The John R. Van Derlip Fund.

**Fig. 2.49** Marquiss of Lorne, Sketch of the Angel of Resurrection for a monument at the Argyll Mausoleum, Kilmun, Scotland, 1892, Inverary Archive, Argyll Estates.

**Fig. 2.50** Anon., Photograph of Antonio Corsi as artist model, 1909, private collection.

**Fig. 2.51** Detail of the *Battenberg Memorial* with the Crucifixion, Whippingham Church, Isle of Wight (Photograph: Désirée de Chair).

**Fig. 2.52** Thomas Banks, *Anatomical Crucifixion*, 1801, plaster cast, 231 x 141 cm, Royal Academy, London.

**Fig. 2.53** Detail of Princess Louise's *Boer War Memorial*, St Paul's Cathedral, London (Photograph: Courtauld Institute of Art).

**Fig. 2.54** Unidentified newspaper cutting with illustration of the unveiling of Princess Louise's *Boer War Memorial* at St Paul's Cathedral on 24 May 1905, Newbolt Scrapbook V, p. 36, St Paul's Cathedral Library Collection, London.

**Fig. 3.1** Lucien Levy, *Crown Prince's Palace Berlin*, c.1900, photograph, AKG-Images.

**Fig. 3.2** Princess Victoria, *Augusta of Prussia*, 1859, plaster, dimensions unknown (Photograph: Désirée de Chair) (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 3.3** Princess Victoria, *Augusta of Prussia*, verso, 1859, plaster, dimensions unknown (Photograph: Désirée de Chair) (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 3.4** Princess Victoria, *Alexandra Feodorovna*, 1860, plaster, 66.5 x 43 x 27 cm, Stiftung Preußische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg.

**Fig. 3.5** Princess Victoria, *Prince Wilhelm of Prussia*, carved by William Theed, marble, 38 x 25 cm (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 3.6** Princess Victoria, *Prince Waldemar of Prussia*, possibly carved by Begas's workshop, c.1878 or later, marble, 53 x 37.5 x 26 cm, Kulturstiftung des Hauses Hessen.

**Fig. 3.7** Carlo Marochetti, *Prince Albert*, 1849, marble, 74.5 x 49 x 29.3 cm (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 3.8** William Theed's bust of *Prince Albert*, detail of William Corden the Younger, *Windsor Castle, the Blue Room*, c.1864, 26.7 x 32.9 cm (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 3.9** Princess Victoria, *Mary Queen of Scots*, 1860, plaster, 40 x 40 cm, private collection, France.

**Fig. 3.10** Princess Victoria, *Lady Jane Grey*, 1860, plaster, 40 x 40.5 cm, private collection, France.

**Fig. 3.11** Photograph of Princess Victoria's plaster bas-relief of *The Princes in the Tower*, 1860, dimensions unknown (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 3.12** Hippolyte Prud'homme after Delaroche, *Les Enfants d'Edouard*, after 1831, engraving, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris.

**Fig. 3.13** Princess Victoria, *Mary Queen of Scots*, 1857, watercolour, dimensions unknown (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 3.14** Princess Victoria, *Tudor Lady in her Study*, 1859, watercolour, 23 x 17 cm, Stiftung Preußische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg.

**Fig. 3.15** Henry Moses, *Margaret Disconsolate at her Spinning Wheel*, c.1843, engraving, dimensions unknown.

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**Fig. 3.17** William Theed, *Lady Jane Grey with her Tutor*, 1855, bronze, dimensions unknown, Houses of Parliament, London.

**Fig. 3.18** Carlo Marochetti, *Princess Gouramma of Coorg*, c.1852-56, marble, painted in watercolour and gilded, 68 x 38 x 24 cm (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 3.19** The interior of the Albert Memorial Chapel, St. George's Chapel, Windsor (Photograph: Désirée de Chair 2013).

**Fig. 3.20** The Cenotaph of the Prince Consort, in Jane and Margaret Davison, *The Triqueti Marbles in the Albert Memorial Chapel, Windsor: A Series of Photographs executed by the Misses Davison* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1876), plate VII.

**Fig. 3.21** View of Saint Peter's Tomb at St Peter's Basilica, Rome.

**Fig. 3.22** Edward Henry Corbould, *Memorial Portrait to the Prince Consort*, 1863, watercolour and mixed media, 75.7 x 61 cm (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 3.23** Triqueti's tarsia panel of *Solomon* with decorative border (Photograph: Désirée de Chair 2013) (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 3.24** Photograph of Susan Durant's medallion of *Victoria of Prussia* of 1865, in Davison (1874), plate XLVIII, 5.

**Fig. 3.25** Hugo Hagen, *Prince Sigismund of Prussia*, based on Susan Durant's model of 1865, c.1866, marble, dimensions unknown, Stiftung Preußische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg.

**Fig. 3.26** G.S. [unidentified], View of the Sigismund Chapel, undated, watercolour, 18.4 x 14.1 cm, Schloss Fasanerie, Kulturstiftung des Hauses Hessen.

**Fig. 3.27** Detail of the marble mosaic border around the tarsia panel of *Daniel*, Albert Memorial Chapel, Windsor Castle (Photograph: Désirée de Chair 2013) (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).

**Fig. 3.28** Henry de Triqueti, Design for the border around the tarsia panel of *David*, 1866, ink and watercolour on paper, 63.7 x 30 cm, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris.

**Fig. 3.29** The interior of the Mausoleum of Emperor Friedrich III with the monument of the emperor and a view of the adjacent altar niche, engraving after a photograph, in *Kunstchronik* 21 (14 April 1892), p. 357-58.

**Fig. 3.30** Reinhold Begas, *Tomb of Emperor Friedrich III*, 1888-92, marble, 160 x 280 x 150 cm, formerly at the Mausoleum of Friedrich III, today at Berlin Cathedral.

**Fig. 3.31** Alfonso Berrugente, *Tomb of Cardinal Tavera*, 1554-61, marble, dimensions unknown, Hospital de Afuera, Toledo.

**Fig. 3.32** Joseph Uphues, after Begas, *Emperor Friedrich III*, 1893, bronze, 77 x 61 cm, Kulturstiftung des Hauses Hessen.

**Fig. 3.33** Reinhold Begas, *National Monument to Emperor Wilhelm I*, 1892-97, bronze sculptures and architecture, destroyed.

**Fig. 3.34** Adolf Hildebrand, *Prince Leopold*, 1876/77, plaster, dimensions unknown, private collection, Florence.

**Fig. 3.35** Adold Hildebrand, *Karl Hillebrand*, 1885, bronze, 36 x 21 x 22.5 cm, Kunsthalle Bremen.

**Fig. 3.36** Antonio Tammagini, *Acellino Salvago*, c.1500, marble, dimensions unknown, formerly at Friedrichshof, location unknown.

**Fig. 3.37** Anon., *Tattooed Man*, undated, black marble, dimensions unknown, Schloss Fasanerie, Kulturstiftung des Hauses Hessen.

**Fig. 3.38** Herrmann Rückwardt, *View of the Rother Salon at Friedrichshof*, 1895, photograph, dimensions unknown, in Wilhelm Bode, *Die Kunstsammlungen Ihrer Majestät der Kaiserin und Königin Friedrich in Schloss Friedrichshof* (Berlin: Reichsdruckerei, 1896), p. 67.

**Fig. 3.39** Herrmann Rückwardt, *View of the Dining Room with the bust of Emperor Friedrich III by Josphe Uphues on the mantle piece*, 1895, photograph, dimensions unknown, Royal Photography Collection (Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015).