THE FORMATION OF AN ABSTRACT LANGUAGE IN THE EARLY PAINTING
OF ROGER KEMP.

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SYNOPSIS.

The development of an abstract language in Roger Kemp's early painting reflects the manner in which Kemp assimilated elements of the two main currents of European abstraction. The more intellectual, structural current stemming from Cézanne was strongly developed through his initial training in design. It was strengthened through his experience of George Bell's teaching of Significant Form, and his contact with designers from the Melbourne Technical College. His knowledge of Mondrian's theory of dynamic equilibrium and of Russian Rayonism reinforced his structural edge.

Parallel to this line of development ran a more expressive awareness of colour and form. Academic training under Bernard Hall in the Aesthetic tonal tradition, and experience of Symbolist theories of synaesthesia through the art of Rupert Bunny disciplined Kemp's intuitive approach. Ambrose Hallen's Fauvist style and the decorative folk element in Vassilieff's art also influenced Kemp's expressive power.

These two currents, by no means distinct in themselves, intermingled in Kemp's own development. His early work shows the complex interaction of temperament and training through which he expressed his personal vision of dynamic equilibrium.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Synopsis</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter I</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Approaches</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Training: Design and High Art.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Melbourne Technical College and the George Bell School.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter II</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Theoretical Basis of Kemp's abstraction.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The example of Rupert Bunny and the Russian Ballet.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter III</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kemp's interpretation in terms of Cubo-Futurism.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix I</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief Chronology.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix II</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catalogues of Roger Kemp's first three exhibitions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INTRODUCTION.

This study establishes Roger Kemp as one of the earliest artists to evolve an abstract language from within the Melbourne figurative tradition. The art of Roger Kemp raises particular problems relating to the nature of the formal pictorial achievement as a vehicle for the artist's inner vision. These problems need to be addressed because Kemp's metaphysical view of universal order is articulated pictorially only with immense difficulty. Allied to this abstractionist dilemma has been the corollary of Kemp's apparent artistic isolation in Melbourne during his early period in the 1930's and 1940's. This supposed isolation was thought to account for the inconsistency of his oeuvre when compared to the more even development of Sydney artists pursuing abstract aims, notably Frank Hinder, Godfrey Miller and Ralph Balson. The following chapters will show that although Kemp's temperament shunned society, and was itself an element in his inconsistency, he was not cut off from sources of inspiration. He knew a group of artists and designers whose aims were related to his in terms of using colour and form as vehicles of meaning. Interpretations of Kemp's art since the early 1960's have been impeded by a lack of knowledge of his early development but they still serve as an appropriate beginning to an exploration of the artist's formative work.

Critical comment has addressed itself to three broad areas. The first concerns the Melbourne-figurative-versus-Sydney-abstractionist theme, in which Kemp is seen as a Melbourne abstractionist
exception. James Gleeson noted that 'broadly speaking, the Melbourne painters use a more figurative approach than their Sydney counterparts. Few of them (Kemp being one) have found it necessary to adopt the international idiom of abstract art.' It will be shown that although Kemp looked to international models he did not abandon the figurative tradition to which he was heir. His early training under Bernard Hall, and the art of Rupert Bunny, led him to a lifelong use of the human figure as the inspiration for his art. Although Gleeson discounted Kemp's figurative side, he did see similarities between Kemp and his Melbourne contemporaries in their mutual lack of concern with 'elegancies of finish', and their strong element of Primitivism. In spite of their enormous differences, Gleeson allied Kemp in this regard with Nolan, Tucker, Pugh, Arthur and David Boyd, John Perceval, Charles Blackman and John Brack. Gleeson's yoking of otherwise disparate artists with Kemp points up the complexity of identifying specific influences even at a regional level, as well as the fact that a 'spirit of the age' was common to all.

The second broad area of critical comment concerns Kemp's cosmic themes and vision. Ronald Millar considers Kemp's painting to be a 'pictorial search for the key rhythms of life,' and according to the artist himself, Millar comes closest to interpreting his aims. Likened in some ways to his Sydney near-contemporaries, Godfrey Millar and Ralph Balson, Kemp is seen to treat the surface of the picture as a metaphor for the endless possibilities of life itself. This area of comment throws light on Kemp's philosophic and spiritual concerns, but calls into
question the problem of basing an assessment on non-pictorial criteria. It will be shown that Kemp developed a sound basis for his abstract language through his early training in design and his interest in the applied arts.

Patrick McCaughey, writing on styles of Melbourne painting during the 1950's, noted a group of artists whose work tended to the symbolic rather than the realistic, to the iconic rather than the figurative image. The painters included Roger Kemp, Leonard French and Jan Senbergs, with Vincas Jomantas a related figure in sculpture and Leonard Crawford and George Johnson on the sympathetic periphery. It is noteworthy that these 'Symbolic Abstractionists' had not sprung, Hydra-like, into the Melbourne of the 1950's, and that their concern for the metaphysical and the spiritual reveals a second stream of more abstract artistic consciousness flowing in Melbourne, counter-balancing the image-making style of the so-called Antipodeans. The following chapters trace the stream back to its well-spring in the Melbourne of the 1930's and establish Roger Kemp as one of the earliest artists to evolve an abstract language from within the Melbourne tradition.

Patrick McCaughey, being aware of the danger of dealing only with Kemp's vision, later sought to concentrate on the third broad area, that of Kemp's essential pictorial undertaking, and his achievement in assuming 'like every serious twentieth century painter, the responsibility for the continuing quality of painting.' McCaughey
purposely chooses to separate technique and vision in a self-confessed strategy to redress the balance which until that point had concentrated on Kemp's vision. He sought to draw attention to Kemp's pictorial qualities, endeavouring to show that Kemp's work is 'both profound and moving as painting' (emphasis supplied). McCaughey's study goes further than any other critic's in placing Kemp in the great tradition of the early abstractionists, Kandinsky and Malevich, but discounts their direct influence on Kemp. He sees Kemp as being heir to that tradition through his own beliefs and intuitions, but lacking a living experience of Picasso's Cubism and Matisse's expressive space. It will be shown that Kemp may justly be compared to Kandinsky and Malevich, in his attitude to the role of art in modern society, a role seen to have an almost religious function in opposing materialism. However, in relation to Kemp's developing ideas, it was the later theories of Mondrian concerning 'dynamic equilibrium' that more strongly influenced Kemp, and, contrary to what has been presumed up until now, Kemp had considerable knowledge of the Fauvist painters.

Recent comparisons and insights have nevertheless thrown some light on long-standing enigmatic areas of Kemp's art. Alwynne Mackie extended McCaughey's approach to the surface further, by pointing out that, in relation to such artists as Kemp, Mondrian and Kenneth Noland, the pictorial dynamics in a painting cannot stand simply on their own, but demand to be resolved in interpretive terms, relative to the orchestrated aims of the artist. Once again the
problem of form and meaning is confronted. Mackie sees Kemp's aims in general terms as providing a visual metaphor for creation itself, an interpretation similar to Millar's.

The critical emphases discussed above broadly cover the areas of significance of Kemp's early development; that is, the regional Melbourne-Sydney context (although this was the least significant); the European pictorial tradition, of which the Symbolist and Post-Impressionist stream was dominant; and the visionary, relating to Kemp's deeply mystical temperament. A further area, previously unexplored, and yet possibly the most significant is Kemp's awareness of form, line and colour in design as well as in 'high art'. The synthesis Kemp sought, and which only fully emerged in its most glowing and profound form in his later work, took his early paintings through a series of metamorphoses, in which he experimented with colour, line and form with the hand of the draughtsman and designer, and the mind and spirit of a visionary.

The following chapters investigate the relationship between the visionary language of form and colour and the rich vein of influences, pictorial, literary, musical, philosophic and spiritual that sought expression through his painting. Specific periods are difficult to define, as Kemp did not date his early work at the time of painting, and furthermore, worked in sequences, returning to a theme and developing a style in a similar manner at a later period. However, the overall direction of his work can be reasonably well
established from the internal evidence of the paintings, together with the artist's own statements. This direction was always towards harnessing his strengths in colour and line to a personal resolution of cosmic ideas.

Chapter One discusses the significance of Kemp's early training in applied art at the Working Man's College, and the academic training of the National Gallery Art School in the early 1930's. The tradition of Aestheticism had survived there under Bernard Halls' teaching into the first years of Kemp's training, and provided him with a sound base for his aims. The earliest studies in rhythmic effects, seen in *Figures in Rhythm* (c. 1935-40) (Figs. 1, 2, 3) state the themes that he was to develop throughout his career. These were concerned with dynamic equilibrium, energy and rhythm, and the great primordial opposites of positive and negative forces. The influence of George Bell's Cézannism in relation to expressing form, and of Ian Fairweather's linear patterning will be shown to have influenced Kemp's development of a personal pictorial vocabulary.

Chapter Two examines the theoretical background of abstraction in relation to the temperament of the artist and the mystical element characteristic of early twentieth century abstract art. The work of Rupert Bunny, with its Symbolist overtones of colour and line, and its 'primitivising' of form, its associations of music and ballet will be shown to have deeply influenced Kemp's approach. The designs of the Ballet Russe, especially those of Larionov and Goncharova offered decorative and Futurist solutions to the problem of investing form and colour with symbolic meaning.
Chapter Three examines Kemp's landscapes during the early 1940's, at the time he began using enamel paint instead of oils, and his palette darkened. Experimentation with structure reflected both the Expressionist pre-occupations of the time, and his assimilation of Mondrian's theories of Plastic Art and Pure Plastic Art. Kemp's Dramatic Climax (c1940-45) (Fig.18) a work of extreme tension, sought to combine elements of international Surrealism with an emerging Futurist style. The significance of Kemp's link with the art of early twentieth century Paris and Moscow emerges strongly in the Cubo-Futurist works of the later 1940's, when Kemp began to use a grid structure which had affinities with Rayonism. The connection with the artist Ambrose Hallen, who had known Larionov and Goncharova during the Paris years of the Diaghilev Ballet was significant in the style of Doves of War (c1945-50). (Fig.22) The leit-motif running through Kemp's early development was the powerful pull towards the decorative tradition through which he translated colour and line and form into a personal language of abstraction.
CHAPTER I.

KEMP'S EARLY TRAINING: DESIGN AND HIGH ART

It has generally been assumed that Roger Kemp was cut off from the mainstream of modernism during the 1930's and 1940's, and that he 'inherited none of the Europeans' formal background in art'. It will be shown that, far from developing in an artistic vacuum, Kemp's early training, and later contact with George Bell and other artists, gave him a broadly-based knowledge of both design and painting, and an awareness of modern English and European ideas.

Kemp knew artists who had experienced European art both before and after the First World War including Rupert Bunny, Ian Fairweather, George Bell, William Frater, Lina Bryans, Ambrose Hallen, and Danila Vassilieff.

A common thread runs through the attitude of these painters, as it did through his training at the Working Men's College, and the National Gallery School, and that was the primacy given to formal values. These values were expressed differently by each artist. Tom Levick at the Working Men's College stressed the 'fundamental principles of design', Bernard Hall at the National Gallery School taught Whistlerian values of aesthetic wholeness, whereas Rupert Bunny showed Kemp how form and colour could be used in the great decorative tradition of Gauguin and the Fauves. Bunny, Vassilieff and Hallen were particularly influenced by the exotic designs of
Diaghilev's Russian Ballet, which also influenced Kemp. George Bell introduced him to Cézannism and the principle of significant form. A belief in the formal values of colour and line also distinguishes the work of Lina Bryans and Ian Fairweather.

Kemp knew many designers who had trained at the Melbourne Technical College, including Loudon Sainthill, the theatrical designer, Frances Burke, pioneer in Australian textile design, Anne Montgomery, Sybil Craig and Jessie Montgomery. Their work will be discussed below, in the context of the development of the strong awareness of design and form among young Melbourne artists in the 1930's and 1940's. There was no Arts and Craft Movement, nor Omega Workshop in Melbourne, but the flow of students in the 1930's between the George Bell School and the Melbourne Technical College reflected the increasing emphasis placed on formal qualities, and the merging of design and 'high art'. Roger Kemp's position was singular among his contemporaries in Melbourne, in his commitment to transcend the formal qualities of colour and line, to express his personal vision through an abstract language.

Kemp's vision was one aspect of the great tension and emotional excitement manifested in different ways by both painters and designers. Most Melbourne painters, including Russell Drysdale, Sidney Nolan and Albert Tucker, stayed within the figurative tradition. Although Kemp, too, claims that he has never completely abandoned the human figure as the inspiration for his painting, he combined the more formal elements of both his technical training in
design and colour at the Working Men's College, and his academic training at the National Gallery School to create his abstract language.

Kemp's formal training began in 1929 when he entered the Working Men's College in the School of Applied Art. Design classes were conducted by Tom Levick, who had been trained at the Royal College of Art, South Kensington. He taught his students the 'fundamental principles of design, which he believed were balance and unity, rhythm and continuity, symmetry and repetition'. These principles formed the foundation of Kemp's artistic development. The curriculum embraced drawing, design, modelling and painting, with classes in Perspective, Geometry, Anatomy, Manuscript Writing and Illuminating, and other subjects. The course was directed towards craftsmen and artisans. Kemp's training was conducted in a cut-and-dried style with the emphasis on systematic work rather than spontaneity, rule rather than instinct, and objective standards of excellence. The course followed in the tradition of the Royal College of Art at the end of the nineteenth century, before Walter Crane revolutionized the system of instruction. Kemp left the College after four terms, at the end of Term I, 1930, in order to enter the National Gallery School.

In spite of the rigidity of the curriculum, his time at the Working Men's College gave Kemp a grounding in design, which he built on later in the 1930's when he became acquainted with Merle McCrohan and other members of the Melbourne Technical College.
This was the new name given to the Working Men's College in 1934. (8) Under the revised constitution, external teachers were appointed to supplement the Education Department staff, and a new approach entered the College when Mervyn Timmings became teacher of modern design. He encouraged experimentation and originality through varying his approach according to the individual student, and insisting on maintaining the personal integrity of each designer's style.

During the second half of the 1930's, the Melbourne Technical College produced some outstanding designers, including Merle McCrohan, who took over Timmings position as modern design teacher. Kemp developed a close professional and personal friendship with her, which was to have a profound influence on his art. Their marriage in 1943 provided a centre of inspiration and equilibrium without which his intensely personal art could not have been nurtured.

The new style of teaching at the Melbourne Technical College in the mid 1930's produced the creative designs of Sybil Craig and Jessie Mackintosh, who worked in lino-cuts, (9) and Anne Montgomery whose training in mural painting under Napier Waller led to her designing the murals for the Cafe Florentino. (10) Loudon Saint-hill, a Timmings student later in the 1930's went on to become a theatrical designer, and he created the set for the Kirsova Ballet Russe in 1941. (11)
A designer who closely approximated Kemp's feeling for form, line and colour, was Frances Burke. Following her training at the National Gallery School and at the Melbourne Technical College, she attended George Bell's School between 1936 and 1938. The guiding principle in her work was to reduce forms to structural design, and it was a feeling for the essence of the motif that drew her to Aboriginal schema. There was a mutual respect between Burke and Kemp. He admiring her reductive use of line, as shown in American Sailor (c.1942), a portrait whose mask-like face could be compared to Kemp's Concentration, (c.1940-45), Kemp's portrait was more a study in formalizing emotion through reducing the individual features to their most elementary lines, than a portrait in the normal sense. Portrait Conception (c.1935-40) shows similar aims. Just as Kemp was drawn to Burke's work, so Burke appreciated Kemp's search for a painterly language beyond the fundamentals of design, and she was one of the early buyers of his work.

Kemp sought a less technical approach than that offered at the Working Men's College in 1929-30. He entered the National Gallery School in Term II, 1930. His training at both the Working Men's College and the Gallery School was deeply imbued with a belief in formal values, although it was manifested in different ways. The rigid application of design principles taught by Tom Levick was translated into the context of Bernard Hall's Aestheticsicism. Hall had held the position of Director of the National Gallery since 1892, and, like Levick, had studied at the Central Art
Training School although in a different department. He had also studied at the Munich and Antwerp Academies.

Hall's Portrait Sketch (c.1885) (Fig. 4) shows his commitment to Whistlerian values which prompted him to become a foundation member of the New English Art Club in 1886. Hall belonged to that generation of English painters who placed increasing emphasis on purely formal qualities. In Portrait Sketch, the verticals and horizontals of the column and the couch, and the picture in its frame, have an air of perfect balance which was characteristic of Whistler's Arrangements. A rich, textual subtlety is lent to the velvet and taffeta of couch and costume through the tonal use of greens and yellows. Colours are carefully harmonized to dispose light and dark tones across the overall design. Portrait Sketch, even to the peacock feather embellishing the picture frame, recalls Whistler's description of his Nocturnes:

My work... is an arrangement of line, form and colours first, and I make use of any incident... which shall bring about a symmetrical [harmonious] result. (17)

For Hall, the formal integrity of a painting remained of paramount importance, just as the 'basic principles of design' had been a vital part of Kemp's training at the Working Men's College. Hall said of his teaching:

It is a matter of design, construction, characterization and treatment of the ensemble - to proceed from the
general to particular truths, but always to see them in their order of importance (emphasis supplied); that is to draw things as you naturally observe them. It is all based on drawing – every stroke proves this. We work in charcoal – as a better leading up to paint work and the massing of tones, as well as drawing of contours. (18)

Like his contemporary Sir Henry Tonks, Slade Professor from 1918 to 1930, (19) Hall's sympathies with the Post-Impressionists were limited, and he was unable to identify with their pre-occupations with structure and design, which in principle were akin to his. It was left to Kemp to assimilate the English interpretation of 'significant form' from George Bell, as will be shown below. However, from the teaching of Bernard Hall, the young Kemp forged a link between the formal values of Whistler which encompassed Symbolist theories of the 'total' work of art, fusing music and poetry with painting, and the new pictorial language of Cézanne and Gauguin. Kemp was one of the first painters in Melbourne to take only the most elemental aspects of Levick's and Hall's teaching and challenge form, colour and line to bear his own message.

His early Figures in Rhythm (Fig.1, 2, 3) and Green Bridge and Figures, (Fig. 5, 6) both dated between 1935 and 1940 show the highly individual manner in which Kemp interpreted his training, both in the arrangement of the composition, and in his rejection of Hall's tonal method for one of high-keyed reds and oranges, blues and greens.
Kemp's early figure studies, and his continued use of the human figure, if only as a vestigial motif in his later work, reflect his rigorous Gallery School training. Students were required to complete the Drawing School course before proceeding to the Painting School. The curriculum consisted of drawing from the cast the hand, foot, and head, the anatomical figure, and the antique full figure. Students could not be promoted to the Painting School until they had reached the required standard. (20)

Kemp's Drawing teacher from 1930 to 1932 was Charles Wheeler, who held the position of assistant Instructor in the Drawing School from 1927 to 1934, and was subsequently Drawing Master until 1939. He had exhibited at the Royal Academy, London, and the Paris Salon after the First World War. (21) The Bathers (c.1920) (Fig.7) reveals Wheeler in the naturalistic tradition of Velasquez.

Kemp entered the Painting School in 1933, the last year of Hall's teaching. W.B. McInnes became Head of the Gallery School in 1934 and was Kemp's painting teacher in his senior year. He was a landscape painter whose work had a poetic sensitivity, with some awareness of Impressionist techniques. Since the opening of the Bell-Shore School in 1932, the Gallery students had begun to talk of Cézanne, van Gogh and Picasso, and students such as Cliff Bayliss influenced others to draw like the Old Masters, more in the style of Leonardo and less in the tonal method, with pen and pencil, not charcoal. (22)
Kemp experimented with Bayliss in composing his canvas according to the Golden Section, and in the use of the principles of Dynamic Symmetry. Another student was Sam Atyeo, who, like Kemp, had attended the Working Men's College in the late 1920's. He was both designer and painter. Significantly, through his training in Levick's 'basic principles of design', he followed an abstract style. His Organized Line to Yellow (1934) was said to have been the first abstract painting exhibited by a Gallery student in Melbourne. Levick's phrases echoed through a lecture Atyeo gave on abstraction in 1932:

Forms (shapes, areas, colour, lines) thrown together haphazardly on a canvas, cannot have or usually do not have a unity. Some sort of control, some sort of repetition must take place. As in everything, repetition is the end of the hazard and the beginning of design.

Kemp spent hours working in pencil on cardboard, attacking the surface with a grid of bare branched forms in intermingling tree-like shapes, similar to Mondrian's tree series when he was moving into abstraction. Kemp's early landscapes are extensions of his striving to reduce pictorial structures to their basic forms, as in Landscape (c.1935-40). Kemp balances severe bare branches on the left of the canvas against a brooding series of solid trees on the right. The eye is drawn up the canvas from the foreground structure of a vivid orange bridge, along a curving path to the bulky trees in the centre of the picture plane. Beyond
the thinly painted sketchy forms lies a careful control of composition, learnt from Levick and Hall and an awareness of form, both for its own sake, and as a bearer of a sense of timeless desolation in the total arrangement. An increasing eeriness entered his work in the early 1940's showing the influence of both Expressionism and the tension of the war years, as can be seen in Structure in Landscape (c.1940-45), (Fig.9) to be discussed in Chapter III.

After completing his Gallery School training, Kemp worked in a variety of manual and clerical jobs, and attended a studio frequented by students from the George Bell School. (26) Kemp was interested in George Bell's ideas about significant form, the term invented by Clive Bell to describe the element common to all works of art, yet never found in nature. (27) George Bell had seen the 1910 exhibition, 'Manet and the Post-Impressionists', organised by Roger Fry at the Grafton Galleries which included twenty one Cézannes and thirty six Gauguins. Although the term 'significant form' was invented by Clive Bell, the doctrine had been expounded originally by Roger Fry. (28) George Bell also saw the 1912 exhibition Fry organised, with the emphasis on Cézanne, the Fauves and the Cubists. Together with his experience of the Italian masters, especially Piero della Francesca, Bell became committed to the doctrine of significant form. The Chef (1934) (Fig.10) was Bell's first successful work in the style of Cézanne, with its sense of mass, and colour, translating Roger Fry's ideas that Cézanne's 'conception of colour is not as an adjunct to form, as something imposed upon it, but is itself the direct exponent of form'. (29)
Such an interpretation was in keeping with Kemp's own beliefs and earlier training in design at the Working Men's College. Kemp freely expressed these ideas in the lyrical early series, *Figures in Rhythm* (c.1935-40). (Fig.1, 2, 3) The high-keyed combinations of red and orange, blue and green, and red and purple are discussed in detail in Chapter II in relation to the influence of the Russian Ballet. However, in their form, colour and spatial relationships, they show Kemp learning the lesson of Cézanne, as to how volumes can be accommodated to the flat surface and yet retain their mass.

Simplified forms were symbols for Kemp of the absolute in geometric and stereometric form. The closer he drew to approximating abstract elementary forms, the more his artistic representation was removed to the higher domain of inanimate orderliness, in a primitivizing sense. His series on the theme *Portrait Conception* (c.1935-40) (Fig.11) can be read as an exercise in a primitivizing reduction of form. In one sense *Portrait Conception* is not so different from Frances Burke's *American Sailor* (c.1942) in its reductive patterning, and yet it is more than just a design. The concern of the artist can be perceived in the loose brush-strokes, the staring eyes, and the crudely drawn features expressive of inner states of feeling. The brick-red, green and brown reflect a more anxious, less lyrical approach than the *Figures in Rhythm*, and one with which George Bell was not in sympathy.

George Bell, like Roger Fry, had his roots in the Quaker heritage, and had an antipathy to Expressionist and Futurist art.
Bell was limited in his understanding of anti-classical trends towards non-objective art that became significant in Melbourne in the early 1940's. George Bell supported the idea of Clive Bell that 'the organization of forms into a significant whole is called Design'\(^{(30)}\) in the sense recognized in classical art. Within limits George Bell agreed that:

> Till the artist has had his moment of emotional vision, there can be no very considerable work of art: but, the vision seen and felt, it still remains uncertain whether he has the force to hold and the skill to translate it'. \(^{(31)}\)

For George Bell, the vision remained tied to classical ideas of 'significant form', objective and emotional in a controlled way. Kemp went beyond George Bell's ideas of significant form in a non-figurative direction, at the archetypal level of rhythm and balance, but still using a vocabulary of form and colour through basic principles in design, through Aesthetic principles and through Post-Impressionist principles.

In spite of the different aims of the two artists, Kemp's debt to Bell should not be under-estimated. Following Bell's return from his second visit overseas in November 1935, he showed a work entitled _Abstraction_ (c.1936) \(^{(32)}\) at the Group Twelve exhibition in June 1936, in which forms were reduced to their essentials. Bell used his abstract exercises as a discipline in creating a formal design, a paring down to significant form, as in his portrait _Argentina_ (1937) \(^{(33)}\) in the style of Modigliani. To Bell, the
linking of abstraction to a personal mysticism or to spirituality
was anaethema. He did not believe the artist's role was related to
problems of society, religion or politics, and although he introd-
uced Post-Impressionism to Melbourne in the 1930's with Frater,
Shore and Lawlor, he was not a leader of the avant garde of comm-
itted artists in the 1940's, as were Tucker, Nolan and Perceval.
However, like Bunny, he provided Kemp with the vehicle of form and
a way of handling it following his initial training in design.
There was a continuing bond between Kemp and Bell in the 1940's, based
on respect rather than a common approach. Kemp exhibited with Bell's
Melbourne Contemporary Artists between 1947 and 1950. Other artists
who showed with the group in the 1940's included Russell Drysdale,
Peter Purves Smith, Rupert Bunny, Frances Burke, Constance Stokes,
Alan Sumner and Alan Warren. Kemp was invited to join the group
because they wished to represent 'the quintessence of modern art
at the time.' Whereas Bell provided Kemp with a way of handling
form, Ian Fairweather's art provided an example of line. Fairweather
had studied the style of the great Chinese calligraphers during his
sojourns in China in the 1930's, achieving a linear pattern and
rhythm to which Kemp was drawn. The stylization of such a work as
Near Hangchow (1938) was partly the result of its being a
meditation upon past experience, and partly its interweaving of
dream-like rhythmical arabesques.

Kemp experimented with structure in landscape in his Green
Bridge and Figures (c.1935-40) series. Besides simplifying
and condensing the landscape to give a sense of rhythmic interaction
between man and nature, he began to sketch both white and dark meandering lines which give the same hallucinatory quality to the scene as Fairweather's line. The element of structure which enters the landscapes here anticipated the more massive forms of the pre-cubist works on the same theme, *Figures and Bridge*, (c.1940-45). (Fig.15) Both Fairweather and Kemp approached the motif with an interest which was pictorial rather than representational, but whereas Fairweather's line increasingly approximated the labyrinthine interlace of his ancient Celtic background, (38) Kemp's acquired a more massive structure, denoting forces of equilibrium. Both artists convey a sense of the mystical, and both worked in comparative seclusion. In his search for spiritual values within the Eastern philosophy of Zen Buddhism, Fairweather was to Kemp an artistic guru. Kemp himself was to turn to Zen in his maturity after studying Theosophy.
CHAPTER II.

THE THEORETICAL BASIS OF KEMP'S ABSTRACTION

The problem for Kemp lay in finding a means by which to develop an abstract language of colour and form to express not merely the surface aspect of nature, but an underlying sense of equilibrium and mathematical, universal order. It is significant that Kemp does not consider his work to be abstract in the sense of expressing purely non-figurative elements. For him, the natural world and an abstract vocabulary of shapes and colour are both materials for art, and therefore he remains heir to the Melbourne figurative tradition to the extent that he continues to use the human figure as his inspiration. As was shown in Chapter I, he is also grounded in the Melbourne tradition through his disciplined training in colour values, composition and form. The fact that abstract shapes and colours evoke qualities and relationships capable of sustaining great depth of meaning in his art points up the fundamental role of temperament in non-figurative art.\(^1\) It was Kemp's particular temperament and obsessive feelings about life, the universe and the need for cosmic equilibrium that sought to express itself on canvas. He was not interested in following the realistic tradition which represented objects in order to convey thoughts and feelings and moods. He wishes to express the mood itself, with only slight reference to representation, and the problem he faced in developing an abstract vocabulary may be compared to that of the early abstractionists, Kandinsky, Malevich...
and Mondrian. His dissatisfaction with his first training in applied art (2) reflected the statement of Kandinsky:

'If we begin at once to break the bonds which bind us to nature, and devote ourselves purely to combination of pure colour and abstract form, we shall produce works which are mere decoration, which are suited to neckties or carpets. Beauty of Form and Colour is no sufficient aim by itself...' (3)

Kemp's quest in the 1930's and 1940's to find a form for his meaning, paralleled, to a large extent, the earlier searches of the pioneer abstractionists. Like them he sought in mystical ideas and in music, a significance that could be applied to the shapes and colours of his painting. It is apparent that Kemp was compelled by the same notion of 'inner necessity' which had been expressed by Kandinsky, (4) from his reading of Rudolf Steiner's theosophical interpretation of Goethe. (5) Goethe connected the idea of 'necessity' with 'divinity', asserting that there were laws common to nature and art. Steiner linked Goethe's ideas to the theosophical belief that art, religion and true science were inseparable, all moving towards the same goal. In relation to art, the patterns of colours were seen as 'thought forms' which reproduced the inner life of the person observed by a spiritually-minded individual. Red represented sensuality and blue spirituality. These theories also encompassed the phenomenon of synaesthesia, which credited colours, forms and musical sounds with physic power which enrich the soul through psychic vibrations.
Kandinsky's discussion of colours in Concerning the Spiritual in Art was not in detail influenced by theosophical colour theory. It was rather an extension of the tradition stemming directly from Goethe, Delacroix and the Neo-Impressionists. He drew from the theosophists the broader meaning that the affinity of colour, sound and feeling reveals a unity of cosmic dimensions, thus legitimising his abstract theories through occult channels.

Mondrian too, moved towards abstraction through a spiritual path, and was also inspired by the Theosophical movement. He was a member of the Dutch branch of the Theosophical Society. At the time Mondrian's 'Plastic Art and Pure Plastic Art' became available in Melbourne, Kemp also became interested in exploring spiritual values in relation to art. He wished to establish a background of contemporary ideas which related to his purpose. Kemp attended Adult Education lectures in the late 1930's, in Philosophy and Comparative Religion, Music and Psychology.

Although Kemp did not come upon the writings of Kandinsky until the late 1940's he was aware of ideas of expressive equivalents through the later art of Rupert Bunny. Kemp himself has said that Bunny represented 'one of the few artists in Melbourne in the early 1930's who was drawing on the same sources of inspiration as myself'. Kemp saw this inspiration in terms of music and its rhythms but it was also to do with the reduction of forms.
Kemp saw Bunny's work when it was exhibited, by invitation, with the Twenty Melbourne Painters group from 1927 onwards, and from 1934 to 1937 with the Contemporary Art Group, which had been formed by George Bell in 1932, and included Adrian Lawlor, William Frater, Eric Thake, and Isabel Tweddle. In 1945 Bunny joined George Bell in the Melbourne Contemporary Artists, the group Kemp was invited to join in 1947.

Kemp's affinity with Bunny had its roots in the art of Gauguin. Bunny's late indebtedness to Gauguin, the Nabis and the Fauves in his 1920's and 1930's work can be established by tracing the gradual development of his style, and from certain of his statements. Bunny arrived in Paris in 1886, the year Seurat's *La Grande Jatte* was exhibited at the last Impressionist Exhibition. As a young artist in Paris in 1890 it is possible that he may have read Maurice Denis' *Théorie du Néo-Traditionisme*, and he could have been referring to Denis among others when he said in 1911, when visiting Australia, 'There, (i.e. in Paris), only, one is in touch with a thousand theories and theorists, with all kinds of movements, some profound, some merely eccentric, that make up the history of modern art'. An increasing influence of Symbolism appears in Bunny's work later in his life, but even in the 1890's an awareness of progressive art can be seen in the Art Nouveau sinuosity of Bunny's monotype *Siren* (c.1898) In 1903 he exhibited at the Salon d'Automne, and he became a 'sociétaire' of that
Salon in 1905, the year of the famous Fauvist debut. He would have seen Gauguin's Retrospective exhibition which was held there the same year. The previous year, the Salon d'Automne had held a major Retrospective of Puvis de Chavannes. While in Australia in 1911 he also stated:

The post-impressionist movement, ridiculous as a great deal of it is, has this merit, that it throws aside many of the bad conventions. . . . Gauguin had much that is good, but he should have worked in tapestry. (16)

It is possible that the Australian art scene caused him to question his own approach and see the need for greater originality. On Bunny's return from Australia in 1911, the influence of Gauguin becomes evident in Echo and Narcissus (c.1914-1919), (Fig.12) in the overall flatness of the painting, and rhythmic flow of line, and the rich, decorative purple, orange, and pink, the simplified figure forms, (characteristic of Gauguin, as in Where Do we Come From? . . . (1897). (Fig.13) Kemp was drawn to the style of Bunny's works, in the 1920's mythologies which went further still in the direction of simplification and decoration. Although Bunny's paintings were representational, their lusciously expressive colour and rhythmic forms created pictorial correspondences with moods and emotions. A work such as Rape of Persephone (17) (c.1925) offered Kemp the opportunity of resolving the problem of conveying deeper meaning through form and colour beyond the realm of design. Bunny presented that Art Nouveau and Symbolist link to Kemp just at the time when such models were rare in Melbourne, except in
ecclesiastical stained glass. (18) The European abstractionists had had a rich tradition of folk art through which they could approach the formal aspects of abstract line and colour, (19) but Kemp needed the example of Bunny to bridge the gap between his academic training in form and colour, and a more symbolic content in his art. George Bell's Cézannism, based on the notion of significant form had the same aim of returning to the essence of things.

Kemp has said that it was Bunny's musical aims, to express rhythmical equivalents to music which drew him to Bunny. Equally it was the primitivising urge to express elemental, solid forms. Gauguin's seminal importance for both Bunny and Kemp lay partly in his use of form as a means of expression, and partly in his attitude towards it. Gauguin has been seen as 'the translator, the conduit of personal invention, through which the long tradition of primitivist thought is first projected into a modern attitude about the making of art'. (20)

Bunny himself may not have spoken of primitivism or of Denis' theory which related to finding the elemental in art, of 'the subjective necessity of emotion and objective necessity of the laws of colour and line which results in that expressive synthesis which is the work of art'. (21) However, his life-long use of sources in Greek mythology reflects his search for a return to the primal springs of creation in a Golden Age. (22) He responded increasingly throughout his life, and especially in the 1920's,
to the general mode of visualisation expressed in the art of Gauguin. Modern primitivism has been described as 'an attitude productive of art', \(^{(23)}\) and it was this attitude that Kemp extracted from the work of Rupert Bunny. It is a paradox that, although the styles of his early training were so visually different from Bunny's art, there was a vital link between the two. It was the quality of the 'essence', expressed by Levick, as the 'fundamental principles of design', by Hall in 'the treatment of the ensemble' and by George Bell most succinctly of all, in his approach to Cézanne's significant form through the teachings of Roger Fry and Clive Bell. Bunny's love of music and ballet, (which were also shared by Kemp), had drawn him to Diaghilev's Ballet Russe, which stunned Paris between 1909 and 1929 when Bunny lived in France. The exotic decorations further influenced his mythological works. \(^{(24)}\) Led by Colonel de Basil after Diaghilev's death, the Ballet Russe toured Australia first in 1934. \(^{(25)}\) In 1939 David Lichine wrote:

> Beginning with Aurora's Wedding, one of Diaghileff's first creations . . . and finishing with Protée and Cendrillon, all the scenery was done by the best theatrical painters of this century, (except for Les Sylphides, which was copied from Corot by Benois). \(^{(26)}\)

The artists who designed scenery and costumes used during the Australian and New Zealand tours of 1936-37 and 1938-39 included Andre Derain for La Boutique Fantasque, Alexandre Benois for Petrouchka, Mikhail Larionov for Soleil de Nuit (Midnight Sun),
Contes Russes, Cendrillon, and Port Said, Natalia Gontcharova for L'Oiseau de Feu, Monstre and L'Amour Sorcier (The Sorcerer). (27) Others whose designs were used included Joan Miro, Vladimir Polunin and Georges Rouault.

Through the work of Larionov and Gontcharova in particular, Kemp was drawn to two important aspects of Russian art, the folkloric decorative aspect, and the Cubo-Futurist element. Both of these were evident in their sets in Melbourne.

Kemp's early works Green Bridge and Figures I and II (c.1935-40) (Figs.5,6) show a concern for rhythm and balance in the placing of the figures in static poses reminiscent of a ballet set. The schematised line of the figures suggests a dance-like movement frozen at a point of equilibrium. Composition is reduced to basic form, and figures, trees and bridge through their being stripped to essential lines, become bearers of hidden meaning. Kemp here sees colour as a metaphor for emotional energy, and in Green Bridge and Figures I (Fig.5,6) places the high-keyed orange and yellow figures close to the picture plane to give a single essential effect of movement. Kemp learnt through the Ballet Russe to control movement through pattern.

Gontcharova's motif for L'Oiseau de Feu interwove a schematized bird pattern within an abstract curvilinear design whose green and yellow tones produced a mesmerizing effect. (28) In spite of the strict geometry, a sense of mystery surrounded the
forms akin to Kemp's primitivising forms in *Figures in Rhythm*. Larionov's *Soleil de Nuit* set (Fig. 15) explored the theme of space with Futurist overtones, in an elliptical pattern of brilliant orange hieratic suns bursting against a purple sky. A green canopy of huge serrated-leaf trees overhung the demonic peasants dancing below to propitiate the Sun God. The ancient Russian theme of the Midnight Sun had origins deep in Slavic pre-history, of man versus the Sun, and Larionov's backdrops related in this respect to Malevich's sets for the Suprematist *Victory Over the Sun* of 1913. The deep space created behind Larionov's suns approximated the Futurist desire to depict infinitude in a similar, but less geometric manner than Malevich's.

Kemp was in contact with the Ballet Russe in the late 1930's because he was acquainted with Melbourne designers who were themselves closely involved with their productions. He knew Loudon Sainthill, who had attended the Melbourne Technical College in the mid 1930's, and who was a close friend of Harry Tatlock Miller, (also known to Kemp). Sainthill sat in on rehearsals to sketch the dancers, costumes and decor. He discussed with Kemp the extraordinary power of the sets to complement with their semi-abstract designs the energy and flowing rhythms of the dancers. Kemp's friend Ambrose Hallen was also involved with members of the Ballet Russe, through his earlier Paris connections with Lado Goudiachvili, and Hallen also knew Danila Vassilieff well. Vassilieff acknowledged the influence of Vladimir Polunin on his own art. There is no doubt that the Ballet Russe provided Kemp, and the whole Melbourne art world with first-hand experience of modern European styles.
Kemp was significantly affected by this experience because of his particular concerns with the very concepts central to ballet, namely rhythm, balance and equilibrium. It is not known whether Kemp's Figures in Rhythm (Fig.1,2,3) series was painted before or after discovering the Russian Ballet, but the paintings show Kemp building on his early training in form, colour and spatial relationships a new approach related to the idea of expressing movement. These early paintings were done on card, in an abbreviated figure style. He explores the fact of the picture plane through placing the motif both close to it, (as in Figure 1), and beyond it in a more remote space, (as in Figure 3). The combinations of different colours, through blue and green, to red and orange, reflect the training in colour values he had received from Bernard Hall, but here applied to different ends. Instead of the tonal harmonies and formal patterns so consciously achieved in Hall's work (see his Portrait Sketch c.1885) (Fig.4) Kemp turned the same precepts concerning the colour 'values' which had evolved to a lifeless academicism in the 1930's, to fresh purpose. Colour is no longer put to the service of illusionism but speaks its own language. No attempt is made by Kemp to create naturalistic effects, but the combinations of lines and colours speak of another aspect of influence on Kemp, that of 'significant form'. The way Kemp received ideas on significant form were discussed in Chapter I. Figures in Rhythm show Kemp's assimilation of his early design training in the compositional patterning of the figures across the canvas. They also show his awareness of Cézannism, and beyond that,
they show his own temperament asserting itself in the thrusting lines of force which can be read as abstract tree forms, but which are also extensions into space of the energised figures.

In the choice of subject, and his relation to it, Kemp shows himself in *Figures in Rhythm* to be nearer the Primitivism of the Fauves than the paintings of Cézanne. They are more reductions than constructions. Everything is expelled that does not contribute to the ideas of energy, rhythm and balance. What is left is the poses of the schematised figures, the balance of the colours, the rhythm of the lines of force. The figures do not relate to each other, but are compelled solely by their own interior mood.

It is the sense of mood, of immediacy and remoteness suggestive of symbolic qualities which lie beyond the actual scene depicted, which places Kemp also in the tradition of the Symbolists, Gauguin, and the Fauves. There is the same feeling of the figures not merely being set in the landscape, but becoming part of it, as in Derain's Fauvist painting *Bathers* (1907) (Fig.14). Whereas in Derain's painting one figure is partly submerged beneath the water, and another hidden behind a tree, in Kemp's *Figures in Rhythm* the figures' inner energy is symbolically extended into the surrounding unformed space through lines of force.

Kemp saw the Herald Exhibition of French and British Contemporary Art in October 1939, which included seven Cézannes, eight Gauguins, eight Van Goghs, three Derains, eight Matisses, and three Vlamincks. (33) He also saw Picasso, Braque and Gris, Dali and de Chirico, as well as
the English artists Duncan Grant, Spencer Gore, Frances Hodkins, Paul Nash and Ben Nicholson. The vast diversity of modern styles encompassed by the exhibition strengthened his aim to direct his art towards seeking a style of 'dynamic equilibrium'. His *Figures in Rhythm* series shows him influenced by characteristics stemming from Gauguin, following on his initial training in the values of the Aesthetic Movement, and from Cézannism. The influence of Rupert Bunny was still before him too, as Kemp had seen his one-man exhibitions at Hogan's Art Gallery in 1936, 1937 and 1938, (34) and at the Contemporary Art Society's 1939 inaugural exhibition, where *Laocoon*, a mythological decorative work, was shown. (35)
CHAPTER III

PRINCIPLES OF DYNAMIC EQUILIBRIUM — MONDRIAN, AND KEMP'S INTERPRETATION IN TERMS OF CUBO-FUTURISM

At the end of the 1930's Kemp moved rapidly through a series of styles, from the Expressionist Rhythm and Flowers (c.1935-40) (Fig.17) towards an interpretation of Russian Cubo-Futurism, which culminated in Doves of War in about 1950. (Fig.22) This latter work represents the assimilation of Mondrian's theories in the context of Kemp's personal concerns with order and equilibrium, and his contact with the Paris-Moscow styles of the Russian Ballet, Ambrose Hallen and Danila Vassilieff. The tradition of decorative folk art, and modern Russian experiments which combined Cubism, Orphism and Futurism, gave Kemp two vital leads into abstraction. They strengthened the formal and conceptual base of his work following his knowledge of Cézanne and Post-Impressionism.

In 1937 Mondrian's theory 'Plastic Art and pure Plastic Art' (Figurative Art and Nonfigurative Art') was published, and available in Melbourne for Kemp to read. (1) Kemp responded to Mondrian's theories which combined artistic and religious ideas with the mystical purity of Theosophy. Mondrian believed 'the only problem in art is to achieve a balance between the subjective (aesthetic expression of oneself) and the objective (the direct creation of universal beauty)'.
There is considerable correlation between the views of Mondrian and Kemp's artistic beliefs. Kemp has observed that 'the conscious and unconscious balance operating in the process of creation is equal to the subjective and objective principles at work in the universal order'.

Kemp speaks of the need for 'dynamic equilibrium', like Mondrian. Whereas Mondrian translated his theories into an art of pure plastic relationships of verticals and horizontals in a state of a-symmetrical yet exquisite equilibrium representing a symbolic geometry, Kemp interpreted the theory of dynamic equilibrium in terms of a contrapuntal rhythmic pattern in his later art.

However, during the 1940's Kemp was still searching for a vehicle to express his concept. He was led to the Rayonist principles of Larionov and Goncharova, through their sets for the de Basil Ballet Russe, through contact with the Russian Danila Vassilieff and through his friendship with Ambrose Hallen. He would also have seen Larionov's work in reproduction.

The incipient Cubist style of Figures and Bridge (c.1940-45) reveals Kemp's quest to find a visual resolution of his inner vision of flux and dynamic equilibrium. The bridge motif was also symbolic of Kemp's search for a 'bridge' between decoration and abstraction, a synthesis of artistic, philosophic and design elements. Kemp's compositional strength is seen in the use of the horizontal plane of the bridge's structure which holds in balance the highly schematized tilting figures. An obsessiona
search for balance shows in the angled equipoise of the eerie figures, and points to the significance of the artist's personal concerns in the development of style.

Just as Constable sought to re-interpret the English landscape through the light and water and willows of his childhood, so Kemp sought symbolically to hold in eternal balance the huge rods of the mine stamper mills whose pistons dominated the Bendigo horizon of his earliest memories.

However, the move to a highly personal form of Cubo-Futurism was not achieved through a consistent stylistic progression during the 1940's. It was accompanied by an intermittent, but parallel, Expressionist stream of paintings, using both landscape and figure subjects, including Rhythm and Flowers (c.1935-40). In this work a spontaneous Expressionist approach to the canvas blurs the threshold between the world of man and nature, as flower forms are metaphorically extended into figures. The lyrical pastel pinks and blues of the late 1930's changed to a darker tonality during the anxious years of the Second World War. In 1943, at the time of his marriage, Kemp began using enamels instead of oil paint, to liberate his brush and allow a swifter application of paint to canvas. A freer approach to the surface is seen in Structure in Landscape (c.1940-45), although the black lines signifying trees suggest a surreal tension. Kemp saw this work as a turning point in his art towards a more highly structured style, bringing
into play his strengths in deploying surface pattern. Forms become schematized to near-geometric simplicity.

Dramatic Climax (c.1940-45) (Fig.18) shows the culmination of Kemp's Expressionist style with intimations of the Cubo-Futurism he was struggling to formulate. There is a Futurist sense of movement, force and the passage of time in the pattern of swirling figures propelled through a dream-like atmosphere of weightlessness. The lurid red, azure and white of figures and space are further heightened by the acid yellow, implying an exploding Apocalypse. The vehemence of colour, and the rhythmic pattern of the composition, recall both Expressionist and Russian art, and may be seen in the context of Danila Vassilieff's work in the early 1940's.

Vassilieff first arrived in Melbourne in 1935, before going to Sydney where he worked in Ambrose Hallen's studio off George Street during that year. His early Australian landscapes show a structural awareness of the bush, and a Fauvist use of red and green, as well as black and white, new to Australian art. His Landscape (1937) (Fig.19) was one of a series he painted around Woronora. Although Kemp may not have seen these landscapes, he saw Vassilieff's work when he came to Melbourne in 1937, and Kemp responded to the Russian artist's strengths in pictorial design. Vassilieff renewed his acquaintance with Ambrose Hallen in Melbourne, and moved in the circle of the Darebin House painters, who
included Lina Bryans, William Frater, Ada Plante and Ian Fairweather, artists who were all known to Kemp. Vassilieff's friendship with Hallen is evidenced in the painting *Ambrose, Helen, Bert and Joy* (1941).\(^{(9)}\) The frontality of the sitters, and the structured diagonals and verticals of their limbs hint at both the iconic and design heritage of Russian art. These elements are reinforced in Vassilieff's *Woman with Many Faces But No Sense* (1944).\(^{(10)}\) An Oriental horror vacui in the overall patterning, and the primitivistic approach to form are characteristic of Vassilieff's concentration on the specific painterly elements of colour and line. Although Kemp's concerns were related, his aim was to accelerate the process of reducing forms to their essentials to carry his meaning, and by the later 1940's had reached a Cubo-Futuristic language, which went beyond the more figurative styles of the Darebin House group.

Kemp's knowledge of the Russian Cubo-Futurists was broadened through his friendship with Ambrose Hallen, the little-known artist who moved to Melbourne in about 1938.\(^{(11)}\) Hallen knew Lina Bryans, who painted portraits of both Hallen\(^{(12)}\) and Kemp\(^{(13)}\) in the studio at No.9, Queen Street, which she shared with William Frater. Hallen accompanied Kemp to the sittings when Bryans was painting Kemp's portrait, and he would have discussed contemporary European art with Kemp. Hallen described Lina Bryans painting as the most French looking he had seen since returning to Australia.\(^{(14)}\)
Hallen had lived in France for almost thirty years, and been closely connected with the avant garde French and Russian artists, through his friendship with the Georgian Lado Goudiachvili. Goudiachvili had arrived in Paris shortly after the Russian Revolution and moved in the circle of the theatre designer Ilia Zdanevich, Tristan Tzara, Robert and Sonia Delaunay and Mikhail Larionov and Natalia Goncharova. Larionov and Goncharova had come to Paris as designers for Diaghilev's Russian Ballet and had held an exhibition of Rayonist works there in 1914.

Hallen himself painted in a style reflecting the influence of both Matisse and the Russian Neo-Primitivism of Larionov and Goncharova, as well as that of his early teacher Frances Hodgkins. His Portrait of Laurie Thomas (Fig.20) is startling in its Fauvist slashes of red and green down the right cheek and neck, recalling Matisse's Woman with Hat (1905), where the method of juxtaposing opposite colours asserts the fact of the surface of the canvas. The tilted frontality of the pose is emphasised by the massive black line defining the shape of face and neck, and recalls the Venus (1912) of Larionov in its hieratic outlines. A hint of Chagall is carried in the rainbow effect of the golden glow suffusing the sitter's space, and the flattened forms. There is a subtle interplay between the sensuousness of colour, and the geometry of the horizontal of chair and eyes, the vertical linearity of neck and collar, and the triangle of the sitter's head and shoulders. The same principles of design which apply to Hallen's work can be applied to Bernard Hall's Portrait Sketch of c.1885, (Fig.4)
and Kemp responded to each in turn in his search for a way of combining formal elements with deeper meaning to create his abstract language.

Kemp's post-1945 move towards a personal Cubo-Futurist style can be related to his harnessing Mondrian-inspired ideas of dynamic equilibrium to the Rayonist ideas of Larinov and Goncharova. Kemp had observed their decorative work for the de Basil Ballet Russe in the late 1930's, and had assimilated their ideas from Ambrose Hallen. He had a similar interest in the art of puppetry as Larionov, where form and colour also had a double meaning, first as pure design, and secondly, as a means of evoking suggestions of remoter time and space.

However, it was the Rayonists' utopian views of art's regenerative powers and their belief in light and colour reflecting higher planes of reality that caused Kemp to identify with their art. Kemp's later 1940's paintings, including Doves of War (c.1945-50) bear a striking structural resemblance to Larionov's Rayonism, (see Brown Yellow Rayonism) In Larionov's work, forms were depicted in space representing the intersection of light rays emitted by different objects. In his Rayonist Manifesto, Larionov stated aims similar to Kemp's pictorial aims,

The essence of painting is to assess better the combination of colours, and their relationship to each other . . . The picture gives the impression of being beyond time and space; it evokes sensations of the fourth dimension . . . As for these sensations,
they are, of a different order. In this perspective painting becomes equal to music, while retaining its particular character'.

Kemp's Doves of War can be read as a study in images of flight, of bird forms and symbols of jets which increasingly interested Kemp in the later 1940's. The dazzling white and blue planes can also be read as faceted light rays, reflecting the higher reality of the Rayonists. Between the splintered prisms, highly schematized human forms are suspended, lending a man-centred dimension to an abstract environment. This work encompasses all Kemp's concerns up to 1950, which focussed on creating a language of colour, line and form to express intimations of a higher reality, without relinquishing the motif of the human form.

These concerns are reflected in the titles of paintings shown in his first one-man exhibition, held in the Velasquez Gallery from June 5 to 16, 1945. Titles included Subjective Objectivity, Static Motion, Subjective Orchestration, Music Idea, and Force Under Aesthetic Influence. The Age reviewer was critical of the titles but the Herald critic concentrated on the paintings, noting that 'Mr Kemp's concern is with harmonies of line, colour and form', with allusions to Picasso and Matisse.

Kemp's second one-man exhibition was held in Kozminsky's Gallery, from July 29 to August 19, 1947. The Sun critic noted 'an original mind experimenting with colour and testing its potential to the full', and went on to say:
The effort is such that the few examples of representation seem almost banal in comparison, so great is the dynamic force suggested in the more interesting abstract treatment in design of forms and intense colour. (26)

Similar strengths were observed by the Sun critic reviewing Kemp's third one-man exhibition, held at the Stanley Coe Gallery, from March 13 to 24, 1950. 'Whether Mr Kemp is creating in flat pattern or in depth, it is evident that he is a daring experimenter, and a designer of no mean ability'. (27)

The critics generally recognised Kemp's quest to express through the language of form and colour the inner significance of his personal vision.
CONCLUSION:

The line of Kemp's development followed a complex path, and was by no means consistent, but a concern for formal and human values was always present. A key to his art lay in his personality, which was in sympathy with a belief in the primacy of the creative process, and the regenerative power of art in society. Although unhampered by technical considerations of finish, his early training in design heightened his knowledge of line and colour, and his decorative sense. He sought a synthesis of philosophic and musical elements with decoration.

The international movement of abstract art has proved to be both comprehensive and long-prepared, and closely related to formal values of decoration. Kemp reflected several aspects of it from within his Melbourne background. His earliest training at the Working Men's College was in the basic principles of design, and his academic experience was grounded in the Aestheticism of Bernard Hall's teaching at the National Gallery School. The mature work of Rupert Bunny formed a link with the Symbolist style of Gauguin. Kemp's sense of colour values and composition, strengthened by George Bell's teaching in Cézannism and significant form, is revealed in his early series *Figures in Rhythm* (1935-40) (Fig. 1, 2, 3.)

Although Kemp was reclusive, he knew designers from the Melbourne Technical College, including Loudon Sainthill and Frances Burke, who had trained in modern design. He was acquainted with artists who were associated with the Darebin House group, especially
Lina Bryans, Danila Vassilieff and Ambrose Hallen, whose work reflected European experiments in modern art. He combined both an intellectual and intuitive approach through his wide reading in modern art, philosophy and psychology, and his experience of music. He combined a knowledge of both the expressive and structural streams of abstract art, to create his own interpretation of dynamic equilibrium. Elements of Mondrian's theory were translated into a desire to represent movement and energised lines of force at a moment of equipoise. Increasingly throughout the 1940's he experimented with Cubo-Futurist ideas of freeing force, energy and rhythm within the painting itself. The haunting forms of Dramatic Climax (1940-45) (Fig.18) reflect his awareness of the Futurist work of Larionov and Gontcharova.

Kemp relentlessly pursued his vision of investing form and colour with regenerative meaning. In Doves of War (c1945-50) (Fig.22) he had gone far towards achieving his aim. Roger Kemp was one of the pioneer abstractionists to emerge from the Melbourne figurative tradition, developing a formal abstract language while retaining a post-Renaissance humanistic awareness.
## APPENDIX I

### BRIEF CHRONOLOGY:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>Roger Kemp born in Bendigo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.1916</td>
<td>His family left Bendigo after his father, who worked on the Bendigo Mine, was killed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929-30</td>
<td>Kemp studied at the Working Men's College, Melbourne, in the School of Applied Art, Terms 1-3 of 1929, and Term 1 of 1930.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930-32</td>
<td>Enrolled at the National Gallery School, Term II, 1930 in the Drawing Class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933-35</td>
<td>Enrolled at the National Gallery School in the Painting Class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>Ian Fairweather in Melbourne briefly. Met Frater, Kemp probably met Fairweather.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.1935</td>
<td>Kemp met Merle McCrohan, who became the modern design teacher at the Melbourne Technical College following Mervyn Timmings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Kemp attended Frater's studio informally exchanging ideas, when Lina Bryans started to paint, under the guidance of Frater. Ambrose Hallen returned from approximately thirty years in France.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.1939</td>
<td>Fairweather exhibited at Riddell Galleries, also Vassilieff. Frater and Bryans shared a studio at No.9 Queen Street, Melbourne, where Bryans painted Hallen's and Kemp's portraits. About this time he began his Heidelberg landscapes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>Hallen exhibited at Riddell Galleries. He began renting Darebin House.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BRIEF CHRONOLOGY:  (2)

1940          Bryans rented a room at Darebin House from Ada Plante.

1942          Bryans bought Darebin house.

1943          Hallen died.

1943          Kemp married Merle McCrohan. He began working in enamel
              instead of oils, freeing his approach to the surface.

1945          Kemp's first one-man show, Velasquez Gallery,
              Melbourne, June 5 - 16.

1947          Kemp's second one-man show, Kosminsky's Gallery,
              July 29 - August 9.

1947          Melbourne Contemporary Artists (led by George Bell)
              invited Kemp to exhibit at their show,
              September 30 - October 11. Reviewed in the Sun
              30/9/47 as 'interesting'.

1948          Melbourne Contemporary Artists exhibition showed
              Kemp's Ballerina's Dream.

1949          Melbourne Contemporary Artists showed two of Kemp's
              works, Oblique and Design.

1950          "20 Painters Show", at Stanley Coe Gallery showed
              Kemp's work.

1950          Melbourne Contemporary Artists showed three of Kemp's
              works, Quality Street, Disturbance, and Flowers.

1950          Kemp's third one-man show at the Stanley Coe Gallery,
APPENDIX II

Velasquez Gallery, Melbourne. Paintings by F. Roger Kemp.
June 5th to 16th 1945.

1. Subjective Objectivity
2. Portrait Conception
3. Construction in Space
4. Classical Portrait
5. Landscape Construction
6. Landscape
7. Static Motion
8. Aesthetic Colour
9. Expression in Aesthetic Form
10. Portrait Madonna
11. Theatre in Nature
12. Metaphysical Disturbance
13. Group Psychology
14. Modern Hostilities in Mind Form
15. Objectivity of Modernity
16. Metaphysical Revolution
17. Music in Nature
18. Force under Aesthetic Influence
19. Decorative Idea
20. Decorative Form
21. Psychological Landscape
22. Formal Conception in Colour
23. Subjective Orchestration
Velasquez Gallery, Melbourne. Paintings by F. Roger Kemp,

June 5th to 16th 1945.

24. Spirit Forms
25. A Subject in Mind Form
26. Musical Climax
27. Village Poem
28. Mass Psychology
29. Lyrical Dramatic Force
30. Reorganization of Form
31. The Modern World
32. Structural Development Subject Picture
33. World Psychology in Orchestration
34. Ballet
35. The Rise of Modernity
36. Personality
37. Development of Rotundity in Orchestration
APPENDIX II (2)

Kosminsky's Gallery, Melbourne. Paintings by F. Roger Kemp,
July 29th - Aug. 9th 1947.

CATALOGUE:

1. Quality in Fantasy
2. Landscape
3. Colourscope
4. Three Flowers
5. Metaphysical Impression
6. Flowers
7. Morning with Flowers
8. Unity
9. Abstract Sequence
10. Picture Portrait
11. Volume in Colour
12. Mind Form Philosophy
13. From Flat to Round
14. Modern World Valuation
15. Metaphysical Dawn
16. Idyll
APPENDIX II (3)

Stanley Coe Gallery, Melbourne. Paintings by F. Roger Kemp,

1. Impression
2. Flowers
3. Dramatic Incident
4. Houses
5. Church Buildings
6. Encounter
7. Storm Approaching
8. Decorative Panel
9. Bridge
10. Landscape
11. Impression of Flowers
12. Organized Movement
13. Red Flowers
14. Fantasy
15. Quality in Paint
16. Orchestration
17. Sketch
18. Construction on Volume
19. Tapestry
20. Younger Generations
21. Sketch
22. Music Idea
23. A Painting
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE OF CONTENTS</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>End Notes - Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter II</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter III</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Illustrations</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrations</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select Bibliography</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION - ENDNOTES:

1. Apart from newspaper reviews of his exhibitions, and a brief entry (less than one page) by A. McCulloch in Meanjin, vol. 10, no.1, 1951, p.48, the first assessment of Kemp in terms of modern Australian art was made by James Gleeson, 'Painting in Australia since 1945', Art and Australia, vol. 1, no.1, May 1963, p.9.


3. Ibid.


5. Interview with the artist, February 20, 1985.


7. Ibid. The term was coined by Brian Finemore, and was considered by McCaughey to be 'both general enough and accurate enough to be quite utilitarian'.


9. Patrick McCaughey, (ibid.) comments in a footnote that 'I have been careful to use statements by Kandinsky and Malevich which Kemp could neither have seen or used as models when making his own about abstraction'. Evidence suggests that Kemp's source for certain of his ideas lay in Mondrian's 'Plastic Art and Pure Plastic Art', published in The Circle, International Survey.
INTRODUCTION - ENDNOTES: (Cont.)

of Constructive Art, ed. by J.L. Martin, Ben Nicholson and Naum Gabo, Faber, London, 1937. For further discussion of Kemp's interpretation of Mondrian see Chapter III.


11. Kemp's work was dated in approximate decades and half-decades by McCaughey in preparation for the artist's seventieth birthday retrospective exhibition in 1978. See Roger Kemp, Cycles and Directions, 1935-1975, ed. by P. McCaughey. Published with the assistance of the Australian Gallery Directors Council, Melbourne, 1975.
CHAPTER I - ENDNOTES:


2. Other sources which Kemp studied were the reproductions of modern paintings in Gino Nibbi's Leonardo Bookshop, and the wide range of books and periodicals on contemporary art available in the State Library Art Room. See Elizabeth Hanks, comp. *Australian Art and Artists to 1950: a bibliography based on the holdings of the State Library of Victoria*. Library Council of Victoria, Melbourne, 1982.

The Accession Books of the State Library between 1932 and 1940 (covering nos. 392073 - 498876) record such volumes as Alfred Barr's *Cubism and Abstract Art*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1936, (Acc. no. 432137) and *The Circle, International Survey of Constructive Art*, ed. J.L. Martin, Ben Nicholson, and Naum Gabo, 1937, (Acc. no. 441072). Books on contemporary art were available in the State Library a few months after their publication overseas. (I am indebted to Derek Whitehead of the State Library for permission to consult the archives).

Kemp was also a friend of H. Tatlock Miller, editor of the avant garde periodical *Manuscripts* published Geelong and Melbourne, 1931-35.

3. The application of Post-Impressionist style to the decorative arts is described in Isabelle Anscombe, *Omega and After: Bloomsbury and the Decorative Arts*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1981. It shows the acute relationship between decorative and abstract art, and the difficulty of finding a demarcation line between the two.

4. Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. Faculty of Art. Archives (I am indebted to Pat Taylor, Faculty of Art, for this information).

5. Interview with former student, and later teacher, at the College, Noel Brying, September 5, 1985.
CHAPTER I - ENDNOTES: (Contd.)

6. The technical nature of the course is reflected in a publication of the Working Men's College, *An Alphabet; being a Book of Designs and Rhymes* by students of the Applied Art School, 1932.


8. In 1934, the Working Men's College, established in 1882, changed its name to the Melbourne Technical College. In 1954, it became the Royal Melbourne Technical College, and in 1960 it became the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (R.M.I.T. Archives).


14. Roger Kemp, *Concentration* (c.1940-45) reproduced in the Sun-News Pictorial, June 6, 1945, in a brief article about his first one-man show at the Velasquez Gallery.


CHAPTER I - ENDNOTES: (Contd.)


26. Joan Yonge, a student at the George Bell School, in the mid 1930's remembered Kemp at the Kew Studio, drawing from a dancer. M. Eagle and J. Minchin, op.cit., p.175.

27. See Clive Bell, Art, Chatto and Windus, London, 1949. The work was originally published in 1914.


30. C. Bell, op.cit., p.229.

31. Ibid.

32. George Bell, Abstraction (c.1934), noted in Arnold Shore's review of the Group Twelve exhibition, June 1936, Sun-News Pictorial, June 17, 1936.
CHAPTER I - ENDNOTES: (Contd.)

'The fourth work, Abstraction, means abstraction of the elements of design from a simple still life subject, so that the curves and angles of forms accent, echo, or oppose each other. All is conveyed in a colour scheme mainly blue and pink, and the title and the departure from realism may be readily enjoyed'. E.J. Helmer, op.cit, p.230, note 12.

33. George Bell, Argentina (1937), E.J. Helmer, op.cit., illus. 80.


35. E.J. Helmer, op.cit., p.151. The quotation is by Alan Sumner, who was expressing the aims of the Melbourne Contemporary Artists.


37. Ian Fairweather, Near Hangchow (1938) oil and enamel on paper. M. Bail, op.cit., pl. 25. Fairweather met Frater and Bell in Melbourne in 1934. In the late 1930's and also in the 1940's, Frater was his intermediary with art dealers and Lina Bryans his most sympathetic collector. (Ibid., p.61).

CHAPTER II - ENDNOTES:


2. Kemp spent four terms at the Working Men's College studying applied art before enrolling at the National Gallery School. (See Chapter 1).

3. Wassily Kandinsky, Concerning the Spiritual in Art, Dover, New York, 1977, p.47. (The work was originally published in 1911).

4. Kandinsky considered that the inner necessity is built up of 'three mystical elements: ... the element of personality, ... the element of style, ... and the element of pure artistry'. op.cit., pp.34-35.


6. Ibid., p.401.


8. Murray Griffin remembers Kemp's interest in theosophical ideas. Griffin was a teacher at the Melbourne Technical College in the late 1930's, and himself a member of the Anthroposophic Society, which Rudolph Steiner founded in 1913, after a conflict with Annie Besant (See S. Ringbom, op.cit, p.394). He said Kemp 'held a conviction
that his work expressed something to do with the spiritual world through its shapes, forms, and colours', and that Kemp's interest lay more in the direction of Eastern philosophy and Zen, than in Steiner's later theories.  (Interview, February 14, 1985).

9. Information on the lectures was obtained from the Council of Adult Education Archives. Until c.1945 Adult Education courses were under the control of the University of Melbourne Extension Board. In 1938, when Kemp would have attended, Professor J.A. Gunn lectured on Philosophy and Comparative Religion, a course which included 'Hinduism and the Revolt of Buddha, and the other modern religions, Christian Science, Spiritualism and Theosophy'. Dr. P.M. Bachelard lectured in Modern Problems of Psychology, including Myths, Religion, Mysticism and Freudian Psychology. The degree of the general awareness of modernism is suggested by the Appreciation of Art lectures, conducted by Norman McGeorge, and covering the topics Classical to Modern, Cézanne and the New Era in Painting, What was Cubism and Why?, Form and Colour in Art, and Picasso, Matisse, Van Gogh and other 'moderns'. (See University of Melbourne, Extension Board Syllabus, 1938).

10. Interview with the artist, January 30, 1985. Kemp visited Bunny's South Yarra studio in the early 1940's.


12. I am indebted to Alan Sumner for this information from his Scrapbook, which contained catalogues of the Melbourne Contemporary Artists Exhibitions from their first exhibition in 1941 (when Bell and his students broke away from the Contemporary Art Society) until 1950.


15. Rupert Bunny, Siren (c.1898) monotype, 34 x 25 cm, D. Thomas, op.cit. illus. 8.


18. Several Melbourne artists known to Kemp worked in stained glass including William Frater, Alan Sumner, and Napier Waller. Arnold Shore had begun his career as a stained glass designer with Brooks Robinson, working there from 1909 until the late 1920's. (see Jenny Zimmer, Stained Glass in Australia, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1984, p.104). Anne Montgomery, a designer who was both pupil and teacher at the Melbourne Technical College in the 1930's, was the daughter of William Montgomery, the artist in stained glass whose work adorned churches all over Australia. Anne Montgomery knew Merle McCrohan, a fellow teacher at the Melbourne Technical College. On the whole, artists tended to give less emphasis to their stained glass work than their painting, but applied expressive values of form and colour to both.


22. He painted mythological works as early as 1890, for example The Tritons (c.1890) oil on canvas, 31½ x 59½ cm., Art Gallery of New South Wales, D. Thomas, op.cit., pl.1. The style of this work was influenced by his training in academic painting in the studio of Jean Paul Laurens. The later mythological paintings in the decorative style were first painted after his return from Australia in 1912.

CHAPTER II - ENDNOTES: (Contd.)

24. During 1942, Bunny collaborated with Colette Reddin in creating several ballets, the first of which was 'Genghis Khan', based on the exotic tradition of the Russian Ballet. D. Thomas, op.cit., p.101. Kemp found inspiration in music, and attended organ recitals by Dr. Floyd and William McKay in the Town Hall during the 1930's. Kemp likened his own painting to the contrapuntal development of a Bach fugue. John Sinclair, a National Gallery student just after Kemp attended the School, recalled McKay's interpretation of Bach. (Interview March 8, 1985). McKay later became organist at Westminster Abbey.


29. For an analysis of 'Victory Over the Sun', see Charlotte Douglas, Swans of Other Worlds: Kazimir Malevich and the origins of abstraction in Russia, UMI Research Press, Ann Arbor, 1976, Chapter 3.

30. Interview with Merle Kemp, July 17, 1985. Mrs. Kemp (then Merle McCrohan) was a friend of Loudon Sainthill.

31. For information on Goudiachvili see Chapter III.

32. Felicity St John Moore, Vassilieff and his Art, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1982, p.23. Polunin had been head of Decorative and Stage Painting Departments at the Slade School of Fine Art, and had collaborated with Bakst, Benois, Derain, Matisse, Picasso and Braque on Diaghilev's Ballet Russe designs.

CHAPTER II - ENDNOTES: (Contd.)

34. D. Thomas, *op.cit.*, p[116].

35. George Bell in his review 'Vital Contemporary Art Show Opens Today', *Sun-News Pictorial*, June 6, 1939, p.28, described Bunny's *Laocoon* (no.90) as 'a large classic design strongly handled'.
CHAPTER III - ENDNOTES:


2. Piet Mondrian, op.cit., p.41


6. In Bendigo, in the early years of the twentieth century the stamper mills crushed the rock from which the gold was extracted, using huge pistons to drive the rods. They were raised in sequence, a point of equilibrium being reached fleetingly during each cycle.


11. Alan McCulloch, op.cit., p.543, records that Hallen exhibited at the Riddell Galleries (November 4, 1938), and while in Melbourne, rented the old hotel at Darebin. He died in 1943.

12. According to Mary Eagle, Hallen was the subject of her first portrait. (See her 'Lina Bryans', Art and Australia, vol.21, no.2, p.236). There is a photograph of the portrait in Lina Bryans Papers, inscribed on the back, 'Ambrose Hallen, painted in Melbourne Chambers, 1939?'
CHAPTER III - ENDNOTES: (Contd.)

(question mark supplied) bought by him and given to me by his daughter later. Lina Bryans' (Lina Bryans Papers, MS 9420, La Trobe Collection) See also Jennifer Phipps, Lina Bryans. National Gallery of Victoria, Baylye, 1963, p.3.

13. The portrait of Kemp was destroyed by the artist. (Interview with Lina Bryans, July 1985).


15. Lado Goudiachvili was born in Tiflis in 1896. He was given a scholarship to study in Paris shortly after the Revolution. His paintings of Georgian peasants reflected both the folk tradition and the tradition of Russian icons and frescoes. Paris-Moscou, 1900-1930. Exhibition Catalogue, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, 1979, p.33.

16. Ilia Zdanevich was also a Georgian, who had arrived in Paris in 1921. He founded the group 'Tcherez', a forum for Russian artists and writers. Goudiachvili was a member. Larionov and Goncharova were also friends of Zdanevich. Paris-Moscou, op.cit.,p.440.


18. I am indebted to Jennifer Phipps for permission to photograph the painting, and for her notes on its acquisition by the National Gallery of Victoria in 1982.


20. Roger Kemp attended a talk on Russian puppets given by Frieda Schnookel at an Australian Broadcasting reception in the late 1930's, when Ambrose Hallen was also present. (Interview with Frieda Schnookel, June, 1985). For a discussion of Larionov's puppet designs see Roger Fry, 'Larionov and the Russian Ballet' Burlington Magazine, vol.34, 1919, p.117.

CHAPTER III - ENDNOTES: (Contd.)

22. For the full list of the titles of Kemp's first three exhibitions see Appendix II. The dimensions and present locations of the paintings have not been traced.

23. The Age, June 6, 1945


26. Ibid.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

All measurements are in centimetres, height before width.

Fig. 1 Roger Kemp, *Figures in Rhythm I* (c.1935-40)
oil on cardboard, 52 x 86 cm
Collection: The artist

Fig. 2 Roger Kemp, *Figures in Rhythm II* (c.1935-40)
oil on cardboard, 59 x 83 cm
Collection: The artist

Fig. 3 Roger Kemp, *Figures in Rhythm III* (c.1935-40)
oil on cardboard, 53 x 79 cm
Collection: The artist

Fig. 4 Bernard Hall, *Portrait Sketch* (c.1885)
oil on cardboard, 33 x 23.5 cm
Australian National Gallery, Canberra.

Fig. 5 Roger Kemp, *Green Bridge and Figures I* (c.1935-40)
oil on cardboard, 85 x 37 cm
Collection: The artist

Fig. 6 Roger Kemp, *Green Bridge and Figures II* (c.1935-40)
oil on cardboard, 54 x 86.5 cm
Collection: The artist

Fig. 7 Charles Wheeler, *The Bathers*, (c.1920)
oil on canvas, 61 x 47 cm

Fig. 8 Roger Kemp, *Landscape* (c.1935-40)
oil on cardboard, 56 x 86 cm
Collection: The artist

Fig. 9 Roger Kemp, *Structure in Landscape* (c.1940-45)
enamel on cardboard, 86 x 112 cm
Collection: The artist
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS. (Contd)

Fig. 10 George Bell, *The Chef* (1934)
oil on canvas, 75.5 x 61.5 cm
Collection: A. Niven.

Fig. 11 Roger Kemp, *Portrait Conception* (c.1935-40)
oil on cardboard, 52 x 83 cm
Collection: The artist

Fig. 12 Rupert Bunny, *Echo and Narcissus*, (c.1914-1919)
oil on canvas, 121.5 x 101.5 cm
Queensland Art Gallery

Fig. 13 Paul Gauguin, *Where Do we Come From...?* (1897)
oil on canvas, 139 x 3746 cm
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Fig. 14 André Derain, *Bathers* (1907)
oil on canvas, 52 x 76.25 cm

Fig. 15 Mikhail Larionov, *Soleil de Nuit set design* (1937)

Fig. 16 Roger Kemp, *Figures and Bridge* (c.1940-45)
enamel on cardboard, 86 x 112 cm
Collection: The artist

Fig. 17 Roger Kemp, *Rhythm and Flowers* (1935-40)
oil on cardboard, 89 x 111 cm
Collection: The artist

Fig. 18 Roger Kemp, *Dramatic Climax* (c.1940-45)
enamel on cardboard, 86 x 112 cm
National Gallery of Victoria
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS. (Contd.)

Fig. 19  Danila Vassilieff, Landscape (1937)
oil on canvas, 54 x 58.5 cm
Collection: Mrs. F. Storch

Fig. 20  Ambrose Hallen, Portrait of Laurie Thomas (1939)
oil on canvas, 65.5 x 54 cm
National Gallery of Victoria

Fig. 21  Mikhail Larionov, Brown-Yellow Rayonism (1912)
oil on canvas, 49 x 61 cm
Private Collection, Paris.

Fig. 22  Roger Kemp, Doves of War (c.1945-50)
enamel on board, 123 x 183 cm
National Gallery of Victoria.
Fig. 1
Roger Kemp

Figures in Rhythm I (c.1935-40)
oil on cardboard, 52 x 86 cm.

Collection: The artist
Fig. 2
Roger Kemp
*Figures in Rhythm II* (c.1935-40)

oil on cardboard, 59 x 83 cm
Collection: The artist
Fig. 3
Roger Kemp

Figures in Rhythm III (c.1935-40)
oil on cardboard, 53 x 79 cm
Collection: The artist
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Bernard Hall, *Portrait Sketch* (c.1885)
oil on board, 33 x 23.5 cm.
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Roger Kemp.
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oil on cardboard, 85 x 37 cm.
Collection: The artist
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Roger Kemp.
*Green Bridge and Figures II* (c. 1935-40)
oil on cardboard, 54 x 86.5 cm

Collection: The artist
Fig. 7.

Charles Wheeler, *The Bathers* (c.1920)

oil on canvas, 61 x 47 cm.

Fig. 8.
Roger Kemp, Landscape (c.1935–40)
oil on cardboard, 56 x 86 cm.
Collection: The artist
Fig. 9.
Roger Kemp, *Structure in Landscape*, (c.1940-45) enamel on cardboard, 86 x 112 cm.
Collection: The artist
Fig. 10. George Bell, *The Chef*, (1934)
oil on canvas, 75.5 x 61.5 cm.
Collection: A. Niven
Fig. 11.
Roger Kemp, *Portrait Conception* (c.1935-40)
oil on cardboard, 52 x 83 cm
Collection: The artist
Fig. 12. Rupert Bunny, *Echo and Narcissus*, (c.1914-1919) oil on canvas, 121.5 x 101.5 cm.

Queensland Art Gallery.
Fig. 13. Paul Gauguin, Where Do We Come From? Who Are We? Where Are We Going? (1897)
oil on canvas, 139 x 3746 cm.
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
Fig. 14 André Derain, *Bathers* (1907)
oil on canvas, 52 x 76.25 cm.
Fig. 15 Mikhail Larionov, Set design for
Soleil de Nuit
Colonel de Basil's Australia-New Zealand
Season 1936-37. Souvenir Programme.
Performing Arts Museum of Victoria Archives.
Fig. 16

Roger Kemp, Figures and Bridge, (c.1940-45)
enamel on cardboard, 86 x 112 cm.
Collection: The artist
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Roger Kemp, *Rhythm and Flowers* (c.1935-40)
oil on cardboard, 89 x 111 cm
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Roger Kemp, **Dramatic Climax** (c.1940-45)
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oil on canvas, 65.7 x 54 cm.

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Fig. 21. Mikhail Larionov, Brown-Yellow Rayonism (1912)

oil on canvas, 49 x 61 cm.

Private Collection, Paris.
Fig. 22. Roger Kemp

Doves of War, (c. 1945-50)
enamel on board, 123 x 183 cm.
National Gallery of Victoria.
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PERIODICALS AND ARTICLES

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BOOKS


BOOKS


BOOKS


EXHIBITION CATALOGUES


EXHIBITION CATALOGUES.


NEWSPAPER ARTICLES.

The Age, June 6, 1945 (review of Kemp's first exhibition) July 7, 1982 (review of Hallen's Portrait of Laurie Thomas)

The Herald, October 16, 1939 (review of French and British Contemporary Art) June 4, 1945 (review of Kemp's first exhibition)

INTERVIEWS

With Roger Kemp, 4/12 84, 20/2/85
With Merle Kemp, 23/7/85
With Lina Bryans, 20/8/85
With Frances Burke, 10/9/85
With Charles Bush, 14/3/85
With Murray Griffin, 14/2/85
With Frieda Papanya (Schnookel) 1/5/85
With John Sinclair, 8/3/85
With Alan Sumner, 21/2/85
Author/s: Forwood, Gillian Frances

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