

REBECCA COATES

The Origins of Kaldor Public Art Projects

ABSTRACT

Christo and Jeanne-Claude's *Wrapped Coast – One Million Square Feet, Little Bay, Sydney, Australia* (1968–69) remains one of Kaldor Public Art Projects' (KPAP) most significant projects, both artistically and in its impact on the local and international art scene. A private not-for-profit foundation, Kaldor Public Art Projects has presented site-specific temporary art projects by leading international contemporary artists in Australia for over forty years. Some of these projects, such as Christo and Jeanne-Claude's, were important milestones in the development of contemporary art in Australia. Not-for-profit foundations now play an increasingly important and visible role in the contemporary art world. This essay considers the circumstances that surrounded the inception of one of the earliest of these foundations, Kaldor Public Art Projects. It considers the factors that led to its creation. These include John Kaldor's upbringing and experience as an émigré in Australia; his mentors, Sir Nicholas Sekers and Claudio Alcorso; and the influences on and of his collecting interests. The essay argues that gallerists such as Ileana Sonnabend played a pivotal role in the development of Kaldor's collection and artistic interests. Kaldor's collecting interests also played a key role in the development of the Art Projects. The role of the collector and patron are inextricably linked.

Introduction

In 1969, John Kaldor presented what was to be the first Kaldor Public Art Project.¹ Christo and Jeanne-Claude's *Wrapped Coast – One Million Square Feet, Little Bay, Sydney, Australia* (1969, Fig. 1) was the first site-specific, temporary contemporary art project presented in Australia by a private foundation. Not-for-profit foundations now play a visible and significant role in the contemporary art world. The relationship between public art institutions and private foundations has become increasingly intertwined.² In 2001, in *American Foundations: An Investigative History*, Mark Dowie suggested that organised philanthropy was on the verge of an evolutionary shift that would transform America's nearly 50,000 foundations from covert arbiters of knowledge and culture to overt mediators of public policy and aggressive creators of a new orthodoxy.³ In March 2013, American academic Rob Reich expounded on the role of the modern charitable foundation in a lead article in the *Boston Review*, 'What Are Foundations For?'.⁴ Reich noted that the last decade of the twentieth century witnessed the creation of an unprecedented number of both large and small foundations. Reich posed a familiar question that is yet to be widely debated: What is the role of private foundations in society, and do they always work for the public good?

¹ The foundation has undergone a number of name changes. It is now known as Kaldor Public Art Projects. From the first project in 1969 to 2004, it was known as John Kaldor Art Projects. In 2004, the Foundation changed its name to Kaldor Public Art Projects. This reflected a shift in legal status as the not-for-profit organisation was added to the Commonwealth's Register of Cultural Organisations, entitling it to receive tax deductible donations, both from Kaldor and the public. For details of the Commonwealth's Register of Cultural Organisations, see Register of Cultural Organisations, 1991: <http://www.arts.gov.au/roco>; accessed 6 April 2012.

² See Coates, 2014.

³ Dowie, 2001.

⁴ Reich, 2013.

This essay considers the circumstances that led to John Kaldor setting up one of the earliest contemporary art operational, as opposed to gift-giving, foundations in the world.⁵ It explores the influences that led him to adopt this model. While it has been canonised within the history of contemporary art in Australia, a detailed scholarly analysis of Kaldor Public Art Projects' role and history is overdue.⁶ Its evolution and longevity as part of a global art world makes it an important case study for understanding the changing role of not-for-profit operational foundations in supporting site-specific temporary installations.

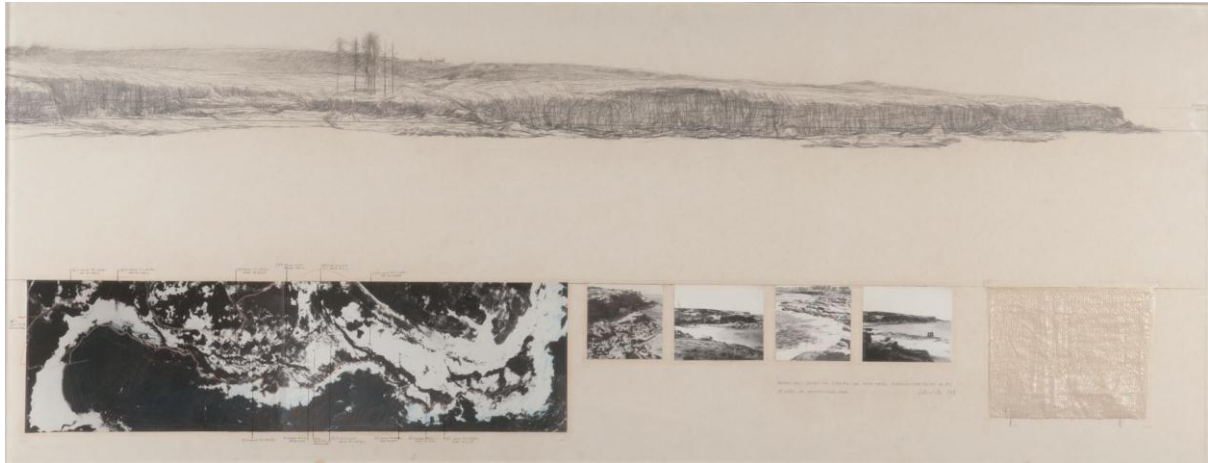


Fig. 1. Christo, *Packed Coast*, 1969. Pencil, black & white photograph, cut polypropylene, Gift of Chandler Coventry 1981, Armidale, New South Wales, The Chandler Coventry Collection, New England Regional Art Museum. (New England Regional Art Museum.)

Since Christo and Jeanne-Claude's first Art Project in 1969, Kaldor has continued to invite leading international artists to present temporary projects in Australia. Kaldor Public Art Projects at times played a key role in the evolution of the artistic landscape in Australia. Subsequent projects included the curator Harald Szeemann (1971), living sculptures Gilbert & George (1973), Sol LeWitt, Richard Long, Jeff Koons (1995), Vanessa Beecroft (1999), and most recently '13 Rooms' (2013), a group exhibition of 'living sculpture', or performance, presented within thirteen purpose-built rooms on Sydney's Pier 2/3. While these ensuing projects are not within the scope of this essay, they do reveal Kaldor's continued interest in a number of specific areas of contemporary art practice. Performance, Minimalism, Post-Minimalism, and Conceptual Art have remained consistent themes of Kaldor's Art Projects and collecting.

The Art Projects offered an innovative model of support for contemporary artists in its early years. However, the proliferation of other not-for-profit foundations and organisations, and the worldwide explosion of biennale and triennale exhibitions since the 1990s have radically changed the context in which KPAP's projects were presented. For this reason a reappraisal of the circumstances that surrounded the setting up of the foundation and its first project is timely.

⁵ While there is extensive literature on gift-giving foundations, little has been written on operational foundations. See for example Anheier and Daly, 2004; Anheier and Leat, 2002; Anheier and Leat, 2006; Bishop, 2006; Cook, 2006; Frumkin, 2006; Shuster, 1998.

⁶ See Coates, 2013.

My research draws on primary material in the form of exhibitions, art projects, writings, archival material, and other published documents. I was fortunate to be able to work extensively on the Kaldor Archive in 2007. The research was informed by numerous informal discussions, interviews and conversations with artists, curators, academics and critics, and collectors of contemporary art who have been directly involved in, or influenced by the areas of my research. Early discussions with John Kaldor about the projects and their impact were useful. However, interviews were not the primary mode of research. Kaldor has given numerous public interviews and lectures about the history of the Art Projects and these are readily available online.⁷ Several of those who were involved with Kaldor Public Art Projects over the years have also written and spoken extensively on the subject.⁸ Many of these first-person accounts repeat stories and anecdotes, and perpetuate cultural myths. Further interviews were unlikely to add new insights to the existing record. Instead, my approach aims to provide a more objective view of the artistic and cultural importance of the Art Projects by analysing the influence of the local and international contexts on the projects, and the influences that led to the creation of the first Kaldor Public Art Project with Christo and Jeanne-Claude.

Kaldor's Education and Training

John Kaldor's early history as an expatriate and immigrant shaped his subsequent philanthropic and collecting decisions. Born in Budapest, Hungary, in 1936, a city ravaged by widespread destruction during World War II and subsequent communist rule by the Soviets, Kaldor fled the country with his parents and younger brother in 1948.⁹ The family's arrival in Paris, and Kaldor's experience of visiting great museums and galleries in the city have been well documented by Baume and Thomas.¹⁰ Kaldor noted the museums and galleries' impression on him as a twelve-year-old. In retrospect, he viewed the experience as one of the great forms of art education available worldwide.¹¹ It gave him an early appreciation of art, showed him the value of art museums and galleries as writers of history and teaching tools, as well as the significance of individuals through donations and bequests.

On arrival in Sydney, Australia, Kaldor was sent to a prestigious private Catholic boys' school.¹² One of his contemporaries was the future art critic and famed Australian expatriate, Robert Hughes, but it does not appear that this early association with one of Australia's globally acknowledged writers on art played any role.¹³ Kaldor studied painting on weekends while still at school, tutored by fellow Hungarian expatriate, the painter Desiderius Orban.¹⁴

⁷ See for example Bond, 2006; Capon and Kaldor, 2011; Marr, 2009.

⁸ Baume, 1989; Baume, 1990a; Baume, 1990b; Baume, 1990c; Baume, 1995; Baume, 1998; Baume, 2009; Bond, 1999; Bond 2009a; Bond, 2009b; Bond, 2009c; Day, 2011; Free, 2009; Thomas, 1967; Thomas, 1969a; Thomas, 1969b; Thomas, 1969c; Thomas, 1971; Thomas, 1971a; Thomas, 1973; Thomas, 1974; Thomas, 1976; Thomas, 1977; Thomas, 1984; Thomas, 2009.

⁹ Baume, 2009, p. 44. For details of Hungary post World War II, see Thomson, 1982.

¹⁰ Baume, 1995, p. 10; Thomas, 1971 and Thomas, 1984.

¹¹ Baume, 1995, p. 10.

¹² Kaldor attended St Ignatius College, Riverview, as both a dayboy and boarder. Baume, 2009, p. 45.

¹³ For Hughes's contribution to art criticism and history, see Jones, 2012; Kennedy, 2012.

¹⁴ Baume, 1995, p. 10. Desiderius Orban (1884–1986) was a Hungarian artist, educator, and author. Following a visit to Paris in 1906, Orban's approach to painting was influenced by the work of Matisse, Van Gogh, and Cézanne. In 1939, he migrated to Australia in order to escape Nazism, settling in Sydney with his family. On his release from the Australian Army in 1942, he worked as a textile designer-printmaker for a Sydney factory (unnamed). He showed regularly with the Contemporary Art Society of Australia and the Society of Artists, and joined the Sydney Group in 1948. In 1943, he established a school of art, and was noted for his influence as a

The link strengthened ties with others in the Hungarian expatriate community, whilst continuing to develop Kaldor's interest in making art. Orban's style of painting was neither avant-garde, nor radical. His *Landscape* (1952), later purchased by the Art Gallery of New South Wales, owed much to the cubist paintings of artists such as Paul Cézanne. It can also be compared to the landscape paintings of other Australian artists with extensive European experience, such as John Passmore, who taught at the Julian Ashton School and the National Art School, and was much admired by young Sydney artists in the 1950s, and Godfrey Miller, a teacher at the East Sydney Technical College from the 1940s whose figurative, landscape, and still-life paintings revealed his pursuit of a radical distillation of form, developed through small lattice-like divisions and a restricted colour palette.¹⁵ Kaldor's early art classes solidified his interest in art and art making, which he largely developed through painting still-lives.

On completing secondary school, Kaldor was sent back to England and Switzerland to undertake training in preparation for entering his parents' textile business. In England, Kaldor studied under Sir Nicholas Sekers, a pioneer of the British fashion textiles industry after World War II.¹⁶ He was Kaldor's godfather and a business partner of his parents.¹⁷ Kaldor's studies took the form of a professional internship or work placement with Sekers. Sekers had left Hungary earlier than Kaldor's family, arriving in Britain in 1937. He had trained in textile technology in Krefeld, Germany, and had experience of textile manufacture in the family silk mills in Budapest. After setting up in Britain, he sold his designs to leading French couture houses including Christian Dior (whose firm used them for the first time in 1947), Pierre Cardin, and Givenchy.¹⁸ Sekers was a highly successful Hungarian émigré whose professional career reflected a passion for art and design, which enabled him to develop an increasingly public philanthropic role offering support for many aspects of the arts. As a philanthropist, Sekers was a valuable role model, though Kaldor subsequently focused his philanthropy on visual art. Sekers's approach was more heterogeneous, and stretched to theatre, opera, music, and art. He set up the Rosehill Arts Trust and built the intimate Rosehill theatre in the garden of his large house in Cumbria. He was a trustee of Glyndebourne, chairman of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, a member of Council of the Shakespeare Theatre Trust and of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.¹⁹

After time in England, in 1955, at the age of nineteen, Kaldor moved to Switzerland. He continued his training for the family textile and fabric-making business, studying colour and design with Bauhaus designer and teacher, Professor Johannes Itten at the Textile College of Zürich.²⁰ The experience of studying with Itten gave Kaldor first-hand contact with the

gifted and inspired teacher. Alumni included Australian painters Judy Cassab and John Olsen. See Chanin, 2012.

¹⁵ John Passmore (1904–1984); Godfrey Miller (1893–1964). See for example works of a similar date, Passmore's *The Argument* (1953), and Miller's *Building and Trees* (1951–53), both in the collection of the AGNSW. The three works were included in the exhibition 'Australian Contemporary Painting', (1955) which toured to State galleries.

¹⁶ Baume, 1995, p. 10.

¹⁷ Baume, 1995, p. 10. See also Momentum, n.d.

¹⁸ Sekers Fabrics, n. d.: <http://www.sekersfabrics.co.uk/about-sekers/sir-nicholas-sekers/>; accessed 11 August 2011.

¹⁹ Sekers Fabrics, n. d.: <http://www.sekersfabrics.co.uk/about-sekers/sir-nicholas-sekers/>; accessed 11 August 2011.

²⁰ Thomas, 1984, p. 13; Baume, 2009, p. 45. Swiss-born Johannes Itten (b. 11 November 1899, d. 27 May 1967) taught at the Bauhaus school from 1919 to 1922 under the directorship of Walter Gropius. A painter, designer, teacher, writer, and theorist, Itten developed his universal doctrine of design during this time, which he taught as the Bauhaus preliminary course in the Weimar. From 1943 to 1969, he was Director of the *Textilfachschule*

Bauhaus modernist principles that had influenced Sekers's approach to both art and design, and had also begun to alter distant Sydney.²¹ Kaldor's study with Itten at a technical school, in place of university study in art history and aesthetics, reflected his desire to understand theory through practice, and his wish to be involved with creators and artists rather than with academia, scholarship or theoretical research. The experience wove together his personal interest in art-making and design, within his professional training in the textile and fabric-making industry.

Kaldor's Eastern European roots, his experience as an émigré coming to a new and comparatively unsophisticated country, and his early training in Europe at the intersection of art and commerce, influenced the development of his personal art collection and Art Projects. It played a significant role in his decision to focus on bringing international artists to Australia to present works of art.

Kaldor shared his European background, education, and philanthropic role models with other educated European immigrants who, like Kaldor, were 'New Australians', however, as Baume noted, Kaldor's formal and informal European art education set him apart from many others in Australia.²² Kaldor's childhood in Hungary, the months spent visiting art collections in Paris, and his first-hand familiarity with the work of advanced, avant-garde European artists and the involvement of philanthropists in high culture, were experiences that many Australians would then only have been aware of through books.

Kaldor's international awareness was combined with an innate understanding of the role that art acquisition and philanthropy can play in the development of a sense of place and identity. In his essay for *An Australian Accent* (1984), Thomas noted that Kaldor was 'the pioneer, the first to realise that the new 1960s global village existed in terms of transport and could be operated for Australia's benefit.'²³ While Australian artists had often spent extended periods living, studying, and working in Great Britain and Europe, Kaldor reversed this trend by inviting artists and curators to make the opposite journey to Australia. Individual travel, though expensive, was still cheaper than freighting exhibitions or artworks to Australia. The reversed trajectory could potentially benefit a wider audience; it not only introduced international artists to an Australian context and community of artists and supporters of contemporary art, but no doubt it was hoped that invited artists would be international ambassadors after their Australian sojourn, courtesy of John Kaldor.

Kaldor's Early Relationships and Mentors

In Kaldor's adopted city, Sydney, other émigré architects and designers, including Harry Seidler, influenced Kaldor's interest in modernist design and art as well as contemporary art.²⁴ Born in Austria, Seidler had studied in the United States with Bauhaus exponents

(Textile College) in Zürich, with which he affiliated his work as Director of the *Kunstgewerbeschule* (School of Art and Textile Design), 1938–1954.

²¹ See Stephen, Goad, and McNamara, 2008; Whitehouse, 1999, for example.

²² Baume, 2009, p. 45. For a discussion of the role of émigrés in the development of an Australian cultural landscape, see Butler, 1997.

²³ Thomas, 1984, p. 13.

²⁴ For a history of émigré artists in Australia between 1930 and 1960 see Butler, 1997; Dysart, 1993, pp. 477–480.

Walter Gropius and Marcel Breuer, who had fled Nazi Germany.²⁵ Seidler arrived in Australia in 1948. As Whitehouse has noted, his efforts to change the face of Australian architecture included lectures on Bauhaus theory, and a NSW Contemporary Art Society exhibition of Josef Albers's *Basic Design Forms* in 1951, which found a receptive audience in both Sydney's expanding European population and the increasing number of modernist designers.²⁶ His designs for his mother's house at Turramurra, the Rose Seidler House (1948–50), had an enormous impact on contemporary art and design.²⁷ Seidler's radical architectural forms presented a new form of modernist architecture. As part of the strong expatriate Hungarian community in Sydney, Kaldor was necessarily aware of Seidler's influence as an architect and champion of this new school of art and design. This may well have indirectly contributed to the decision to send Kaldor to England at the end of his secondary schooling, and his subsequent choice to study with Itten in Zürich in 1955.

Later during Kaldor's first Art Project with Christo and Jeanne-Claude in 1969, Seidler was to be a staunch public supporter. He advocated Kaldor's initiative and the work itself in a film made by ABC Television to commemorate the event.²⁸ On the film, Seidler said that for the last twenty years, Australia had lagged behind developments overseas. Christo and Jeanne-Claude's project not only closed the gap, but also heralded a change in the country's attitudes. Those who criticized it, Seidler said, reflected a parochial vision.²⁹

The Seidlers and Kaldor had more than a passing relationship. Apart from Harry Seidler's advocacy of new forms of art, his wife, Penelope Seidler, was actively involved in the organisation of the *Wrapped Coast* project (1969). When Kaldor travelled for work to New York during August and September 1969, Penelope Seidler was left in charge of the project in Sydney. She received detailed letters from Kaldor while he met regularly with Christo and Jeanne-Claude.³⁰ Penelope Seidler recalled in 2009, 'Harry and I were both enthusiastic about the concept ... I recall getting badges manufactured which all the assistants wore while working on the rocks.'³¹ As so often happens with women supporting prominent men, Penelope Seidler's role remained part of the oral, rather than written history of Kaldor's first project, and her importance, until recently, unacknowledged.³²

²⁵ Harry Seidler, (b. Vienna, 25 June 1923, d. 2006). Seidler is one of Australia's best-known immigrant architects. He arrived in Australia in 1948 after studying at the Harvard School of Design, US, under two of the twentieth century's iconic modernist masters — Walter Gropius, founder of the Bauhaus school and movement, and Marcel Breuer. He had also studied under Joseph Albers at Black Mountain College, North Carolina. Australian Institute of Architects, n.d.: <http://www.architecture.com.au/i-cms?page=6364>; accessed 7 August 2011.

²⁶ Frampton and Drew, 1992, p. 19. Also quoted in Whitehouse, 1999, p. 79.

²⁷ Seidler's first, and best-known, residential house, the Rose Seidler House at Turramurra on Sydney's North Shore (1948), was commissioned by his mother. Glass walled, elevated, and cubiform with a flat roof, the house was revolutionary, and introduced the Bauhaus principles of Gropius and Breuer to Australia. Seidler's public buildings were similarly innovative: Australia Square (1961–1967) was one of the first modern international-styled office towers in Australia. It established new principles in design and construction through its distinctive circular form and the creation of a large public open space at ground level. At the time it was built, it was the world's tallest lightweight concrete building. Public areas included Le Corbusier tapestries, and Alexander Calder sculpture, commissioned as part of the original building. Australian Institute of Architects, n.d.: <http://www.architecture.com.au/i-cms?page=6364>; accessed 7 August 2011. For Seidler's significance in the development of Australian architecture, see Blake, 1973; Frampton and Drew, 1992.

²⁸ ABC, 2011: <http://www.abc.net.au/arts/stories/s3108455.htm>; accessed 7 August 2011.

²⁹ ABC, 2011: <http://www.abc.net.au/arts/stories/s3108455.htm>; accessed 7 August 2011.

³⁰ Kaldor Public Art Projects Archive, Sydney and also noted in Forbat, 2009, p. 64.

³¹ Seidler in conversation with Forbat. Forbat, 2009, p. 64.

³² It was arguably for this reason that Jeanne-Claude was only retrospectively acknowledged as a collaborator with Christo.

Kaldor's professional experience in the textile industry brought him into contact with other 'New Australians', whose support for artists and example as patrons clearly influenced him. On his return to Australia in 1957, Kaldor began his first job as a designer at Silk and Textile Printers Ltd., Hobart, under the guidance of the well-known textile entrepreneur and arts patron, Claudio Alcorso.³³ Alcorso had emigrated to Sydney from Rome in 1938, escaping Fascist Italy, to make a new life for his family. He gradually expanded their business interests.³⁴ They established Silk and Textile Printers in Rushcutter's Bay, Sydney. After internment in 1940 following the outbreak of World War II, he transferred his company and factory to Derwent Park, Tasmania in 1947.³⁵ As a keen supporter of the arts, Alcorso was involved in setting up and supporting fledgling Australian arts organisations such as the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust and the Australian Ballet. He also directly supported Australian artists through commissions for designs created by his company. His eclectic support of the arts followed a well-established philanthropic model, whereas Kaldor's philanthropy was to be more intensely and narrowly focused.

Alcorso's commissioning of designs for his textile business from a younger generation of Australian visual artists was a model that Kaldor later adopted in his own business. Coinciding with the shift of Alcorso's business from Sydney to Tasmania, Alcorso organised an exhibition of 'Modernage' fabrics commissioned and fabricated by his company and shown at Melbourne's Australia Hotel. Opened on 1 September 1947, the society event was launched by British composer, conductor, and celebrity Eugene Goossens, who had recently emigrated to Australia.³⁶ This glamorous Melbourne event was notable enough to feature in Sydney's major local newspaper, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, with a society feature article that married design with Australia's latest fashion.³⁷ The exhibition featured designs by thirty-six 'well-known Australian artists', and was accompanied by a publication, *A New Approach to Textile Design*.³⁸ Its cover imagery (Fig. 2) incorporated modernist principles of design and text, and it featured essays by some of the country's leading art history academics, gallery directors, and those involved in textiles and design.³⁹ These included Professor Joseph

³³ Claudio Alcorso (b. Rome 1913, d. 2000) emigrated to Sydney in 1938. He was interned as an 'enemy alien' during World War II. Known as a pioneer in the Tasmanian winemaking industry, Alcorso planted ninety Riesling vines on his property Moorilla, outside Hobart. He championed the arts through his involvement with the Australian Ballet, Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust, Tasmanian Arts Advisory Council, and as chairman of Opera Australia. Rimón, n.d. Alcorso commissioned Melbourne modernist architect, Roy Grounds, to build a number of properties: the Circular House at Moorilla (1955); a workers' village at Glenorchy, Tasmania, for Alcorso's Silk and Textile Printers company (1957–58); and a second house for his family on the Moorilla estate, Hobart (1965). Moorilla was subsequently purchased by art collector David Walsh, who created a new museum on the site, the Museum of Old and New Art (MONA), incorporating the original Grounds buildings alongside new gallery spaces designed by Nonda Katsalides, which opened in January 2011.

³⁴ For a discussion of Alcorso's role in the development of Australian textiles alongside other European artists Hanna Lemberg and Maecella Hempel, see McPhee, 1997, pp. 73–84.

³⁵ Alcorso was interned from 1940–43 and production resumed in 1946. See McPhee, 1997, p. 78.

³⁶ Eugene Aynsley Goossens (1893–1962) was a charismatic British conductor and composer who returned to Australia in July 1947 to take up positions as both the first permanent conductor of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and Director of the New South Wales Conservatorium of Music. He introduced sweeping changes to music in Australia: introducing audiences to works that had previously been ignored or considered too challenging; championing local composition; and programming many world premieres, all of which were broadcast widely on ABC Radio. See Salter, n.d.; Buzacott, 2013.

³⁷ Sydney Morning Herald, 1947.

³⁸ Smith, 1947.

³⁹ Essays included 'A hundred years of industrial design' by Joseph Burke; 'Australian character in design' by Hal Missingham; 'Vision and confidence in art for textiles' by Sydney Ure Smith; 'Art in a textile printing factory' by C. M. Foley; 'How it happened' by Desiderius Orban; 'The social functions of fashion' by E. Hearnshaw. Smith, 1947.

Burke, the inaugural Herald Professor of Fine Arts at The University of Melbourne, Mr Hal Missingham, Director of the National Art Gallery of New South Wales (now the Art Gallery of New South Wales), Sydney Ure Smith, President of the Society of Artists, Sydney, and teacher and designer Desiderius Orban.⁴⁰ Colour, as well as black and white images of the artists' designs and printed fabrics were accompanied by designer-artists' statements about the commission.

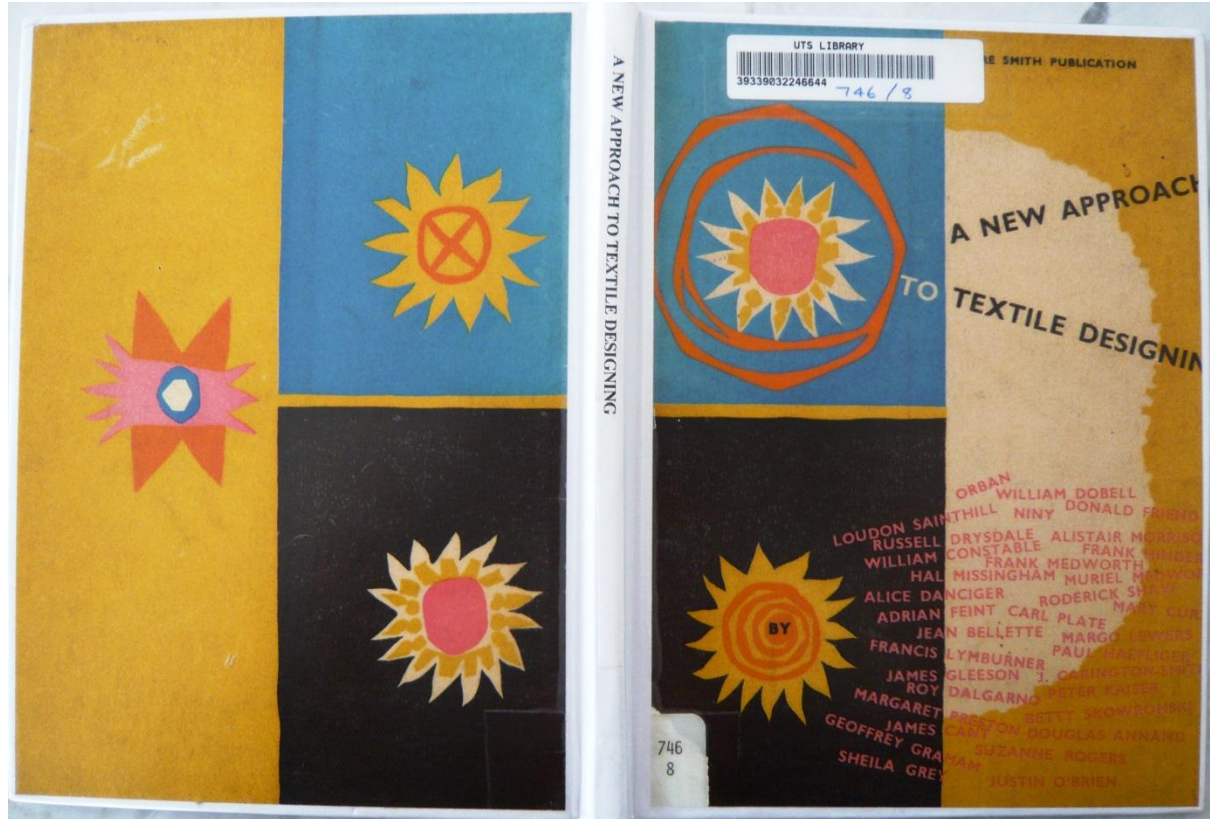


Fig. 2. Ure Smith [with a foreword by Claudio Alcorso], *A New Approach to Textile Designing: by a group of Australian Artists* (ex. cat.), Ure Smith production, Sydney, 1947.

The featured Australian artists, all of whom had designed textiles for the occasion, included William Dobell, Russell Drysdale, Donald Friend, Margaret Preston, Hal Missingham, Justin O'Brien, and James Gleeson.⁴¹ Of the thirty-six designs, ten were women — a large proportion — although their designs were no more domestic or 'feminine' in subject or style.⁴² All designs featured a strong use of line. Several designs were derived from landscape and natural motifs, such as Russell Drysdale's *Tree Forms* (1947), made from drawings taken from a sketchbook and arranged informally across the fabric. Justin O'Brien's *The Three Kings* (1946–47) was the only religiously inspired design, based on a stylised Biblical theme and featuring a palette of musky pinks, oranges and yellow.⁴³ Other subjects were influenced by Surrealism, Aboriginal motifs, and mythological patterns. The more abstract patterns were based on Cubistic or scientifically derived motifs.

⁴⁰ Burke was appointed the Herald Chair of Fine Arts in 1946 in the first Department of Art History at an Australian university. The position was instigated by Daryl Lindsay, Director of the National Gallery of Victoria, Sir Keith Murdoch, editor of the *Herald & Weekly Times* and patron of the arts, who funded the position, with support from John Medley, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Melbourne.

⁴¹ Sydney Morning Herald, 1947, p. 13.

⁴² For a discussion on the range and focus of topics, see McPhee, 1997.

⁴³ An example forms part of the AGNSW collection, gifted by Claudio Alcorso, 1971. AGNSW, n.d.: <http://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/collection/works/107.1971/>; accessed 11 August 2011.

As the *Sydney Morning Herald* article noted, the commission was based on a similar initiative of the Czech textile manufacturer Ziká Ascher. Together with his wife Lida, he had founded the Ascher studio in London after having escaped Nazi Europe in the early 1940s.⁴⁴ Contemporaneously with Alcorso in Australia in the 1940s and 1950s, the London-based House of Ascher commissioned successful British and international Modernist artists to create a highly successful scarf series, which became known as the Ascher Squares.⁴⁵ As Straub noted, the Ascher Squares reflected a 'yearning for optimism and a new start for life and for fashion' following World War II.⁴⁶ British artists who designed fabrics for him included Henry Moore, Cecil Beaton, and Graham Sutherland, whilst the international artists commissioned included Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, André Derain, Alexander Calder, and Salvador Dalí.⁴⁷ Moore's design for a Square was *Family Group* (1947), a repeating pattern of clusters of people against a black background. The theme reflected the strength of the family unit in wartime England, in a style reminiscent of his wartime bunker series.⁴⁸ In May 1945, James Laver, the 'dandified historian of dress, playwright and Keeper of the Department of Prints and Drawings' (as he was described by similarly flamboyant Roy Strong, Director of the Victoria & Albert Museum, in his foreword to the exhibition catalogue for the 1987 Ascher exhibition at the V & A),⁴⁹ opened the Ascher Collection at the Dorchester Hotel in London.⁵⁰ The following year, fifty of the Ascher fabrics were shown in an exhibition at the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, entitled 'Britain Can Make It' (1946).⁵¹ The Squares were also widely shown internationally, including in New York and other cities in America, Montevideo, Sydney, and Cape Town.⁵² Squares were acquired for museum and art gallery collections, including the acquisition of Henry Moore's *Family Group* (1947) by the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, in 1948.⁵³ As well as promoting British art and textiles with newfound optimism, the designs also highlighted Ascher's place as a leading producer of innovative, international fabric designs. A collaboration between contemporary fine art and fashion, art and industry, the designs were supposed to create a broader appeal for their art through mass production and popular consumption.

Alcorso noted that the designs by Australian artists reflected not only 'a new approach to textile designing', but also a 'desire to introduce creative thought and beauty into the everyday things of life'.⁵⁴ In this, Alcorso's ambitions were in keeping with principles of international Modernist design, and industry's use of these principles to develop opportunities for living artists. The exhibition reflected a desire to champion modern design principles, and the whole initiative showed Australia's increasing prosperity, which went

⁴⁴ Mendes, 1987; *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1947, p. 13.

⁴⁵ Feldman, 2010; Kavanagh, 1987, pp. 331; Straub, 2010, pp. 62–65.

⁴⁶ Straub, 2010, p. 62.

⁴⁷ See *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1947, for a list of other international artists; and Straub, 2010, who noted Moore, Matisse and Calder. Henri Matisse's *Océanie, le ciel* (*Oceania, the sky*) (1946), made as part of the Ascher wall panels, forms part of the NGA Collection, Canberra. For details of Moore's designs, see MacCarthy, 2008.

⁴⁸ See illustrations in Mendes, 1987. See also Moore, 2010; Henry Moore Foundation website. For example, Henry Moore, *Study for 'Tube Shelter Perspective: The Liverpool Street Extension'* 1940–41 (HMF 1649), pencil, wax crayon, coloured crayon, watercolour, wash, pen and ink.

⁴⁹ Strong in Mendes, 1987, p. 11.

⁵⁰ Strong in Mendes, 1987, p. 11.

⁵¹ Straub, 2010.

⁵² Mendes, 1987, p. 33.

⁵³ Mendes, 1987, p. 34. Henry Moore, *Family Group* (1947), purchased 1948. For details, see NGV, n.d.: <http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/col/work/51236>; accessed 9 June 2012.

⁵⁴ Quoted in Smith, 1947, p. 3.

with the growth of corporate and commercial patronage.⁵⁵ Whilst the project and exhibition offered Australian artists a rare opportunity to develop their art through commercial avenues, 'it was not sufficiently popular to continue the experiment', as McPhee noted.⁵⁶ Claudio Alcorso remembered that 'The post war enthusiasms quickly faded away, [and] in order to survive we returned to ... a diet of boiled potatoes'.⁵⁷

Alcorso was ahead of his time in postwar Australia, but in Britain, this was clearly not the case. The example of Ascher was taken up by Sekers in London in 1959. His interests in art and design came together in 1959 in an exhibition in which he asked artists including Cecil Beaton, Oliver Messel, and Graham Sutherland to create paintings and drawings for fabric designs. The company now recognised the need for new showrooms to reflect the times as well as the changes in fabric designs, and in 1964, it moved to glittering new glass showrooms on Sloane Square, the centre of Swinging London and the Kings Road.⁵⁸ Kaldor was to imitate his mentors, commissioning designs for fabrics by Australian artists and developing glamorous new showrooms for John Kaldor Fabrics in 1973.⁵⁹

On his return to Sydney in 1960, Kaldor joined Sekers Silk, the Australian arm of Sir Nicholas Sekers's business. This franchise was owned and run by John Kaldor's parents Andrew and Vera Kaldor.⁶⁰ In 1962, John Kaldor commissioned artists, much in the manner of Claudio Alcorso's 1959 'Modernage' exhibition. In 1965, Sekers Silk and several other companies, including Alcorso's, merged to form Universal Textiles of Australia.⁶¹ In the following year, Kaldor became Marketing Manager of the new organisation. In this position, he initiated the Alcorso Sekers Scholarship, to be discussed below.

Kaldor's Early Collecting

Alongside a growing awareness of the role that contemporary artists could play in promoting commercial interests, Kaldor began his personal collection in 1954. Kaldor often described his collection and the Art Projects as separate activities, reflecting the private and public aspects of his interest in contemporary art.⁶² Nevertheless, it can be argued that the motives for Kaldor's own art collecting played a significant role in the direction and development of the Public Art Projects.

Kaldor's early collecting did not reflect his subsequent focus solely on contemporary international art. According to Thomas, the twenty-year-old Kaldor was also collecting classical and Egyptian antiquities, and medieval objects.⁶³ His early purchases reflected his aspirations towards connoisseurship. Thomas suggested that Kaldor favoured these areas of

⁵⁵ See Whitehouse, 1999, Chapter 2 for further examples.

⁵⁶ McPhee, 1997, p. 82.

⁵⁷ Quoted in McPhee, 1997, p. 82.

⁵⁸ For a history of Swinging London, see Breward, Gilbert, and Lister, 2006; Rycroft, 2011.

⁵⁹ Kaldor commissioned Australian artist Mike Kitching in Surry Hills, Sydney, in 1973. For its launch, he invited Antoni Miralda to create a coloured feast of coloured breads. See Baume, 1995, p. 23. Miralda also presented a coloured bread project at the Art Gallery of New South Wales from 21 September to 4 October 1973. This was not originally considered by Kaldor as one of his Art Projects. For Forbat, the project was reassigned Art Project status. See Forbat, 2009, p. 168.

⁶⁰ Momentum, n. d.: <http://www.momentumsydney.com/speakers/john-kaldor-2>; accessed 8 August 2011.

⁶¹ Baume, 1995, p. 12. Baume referred to the business as Alcorso Fabrics, whilst in Baume, 2009, Kaldor referred to the company as Universal Textiles.

⁶² For a discussion of the relationship between Kaldor's collecting and Art Projects, see Coates, 2013, p. 298.

⁶³ Thomas, 1984, p. 13.

collecting 'less as objects than for their connection with history and past civilisation.'⁶⁴ However, his broad focus on objects that signified European history and its civilisation did not differentiate Kaldor from many other European and American collectors in either subject matter or motivation.⁶⁵

Kaldor's appreciation of art was based on a strong personal aesthetic response to the object rather than scholarship or research.⁶⁶ In 2009, Kaldor stated that 'we talk about contemporary art, but I love art of all periods, whether it's Egyptian, Byzantine, Renaissance, baroque, impressionist or modern. To me, periods don't really matter; there is great art and bad art, and what you call it is very arbitrary.'⁶⁷ This was the rationale for Kaldor's early collecting decisions, which included antiquities and historical art in contrast to the contemporary focus of subsequent collecting and projects.⁶⁸ In later years, conversations with artists with whom he had built up friendships — Jeff Koons, for instance — enabled him to see the relationships between earlier periods and contemporary art.⁶⁹

Like many collectors, John Kaldor started collecting contemporary art early in life. This became his focus. His collecting of contemporary art rapidly took him beyond tradition. In a 2009 interview, he noted that art 'should reflect what is going on today and point the way to the future.'⁷⁰ His first art purchase was a semi-abstract painting bought for £10 in London in 1954.⁷¹ Specific details of the purchase remain unknown. The acquisition is significant for two reasons, Kaldor's relative youth (he was aged eighteen), and in heralding his interest in avant-garde forms of modern art. The material value of the work was also significant for the collector: in subsequent histories Kaldor referred to its cost, but neither the name of the artist nor the work's title. Kaldor's focus on the financial value of the work, still remembered some forty years later, presaged his deployment of art as a positional good in years to come.⁷²

On his return to Australia in 1957, Kaldor focused briefly on the work of his Australian contemporaries. He began collecting paintings by Sydney artists, including works by James Gleeson, Michael Kitching, Colin Lanceley, John Olsen, Ian van Wieringen, and Dick Watkins.⁷³ Whilst Gleeson's work had featured in 'Modernage's' textile designs from 1947, other artists were of a younger generation. Acquisition, however, did not actively involve Kaldor with the artists. Based on the Ascher (1942 and 1955), Alcorso (1947), and Sekers (1959) projects, Kaldor commissioned furnishing fabrics by leading Australian painters and sculptors for the launch of a new furnishing division of his parents' company in 1962. Titled 'Artists' Originals', the commissions featured John Coburn, Russell Drysdale, Donald Friend, James Gleeson, Clement Meadmore, and John Olsen. The results were subsequently

⁶⁴ Thomas, 1971, p. 313.

⁶⁵ For an overview of the culture of collecting, see Elsner and Cardinal, 1997; Pearce, 1992. Notable British collectors include Lisa and Robert Sainsbury, significant role models for Charles Saatchi. See Hatton and Walker, 2000, p. 16. In the US, examples include the De Menil family, see Van Dyke, 2007, pp. 36–49.

⁶⁶ See Kaldor's comments in Moore, 2011, p. 30.

⁶⁷ Baume, 2009, p. 47.

⁶⁸ For an analysis of the motivations of collectors, see Belk, 1988, pp. 548–53.

⁶⁹ Kaldor noted that Koons enabled him to develop a love of the Baroque through his own interest in this area explored through his work. Moore, 2011.

⁷⁰ Young, 2009, p. 77.

⁷¹ Baume, 1995, p. 10.

⁷² The collection of art can be seen as the quintessential 'positional good' where its value is a result of the social position it confers. See *The Economist*, 2007.

⁷³ Baume, 1995, p. 10. Kaldor also mentioned his interest in the work of John Olsen and Fred Williams. See Tunnicliffe, 2011, p. 19.

exhibited in 1963 in Sydney and Melbourne.⁷⁴ In Melbourne, they were shown at John Reed's Museum of Modern Art and Design of Australia.⁷⁵ Kaldor's 'Originals' enabled him to work directly with a younger generation of Australian artists, following a well-established tradition of commercial patronage.

Kaldor's attention was refocused on international contemporary art by an article in *Time* on Pop Art in May 1963.⁷⁶ The article impressed him. He saw an 'extraordinary nature' in reproductions of works by Jasper Johns, Roy Lichtenstein, Claes Oldenburg, Robert Rauschenberg, Andy Warhol, and Tom Wesselmann.⁷⁷ For Kaldor, Pop Art was not only 'revolutionary', but embodied the 'energy and creativity of the new world', which could easily encompass Australia.⁷⁸ Baume notes that this article marked an important moment in the development of Kaldor's taste.⁷⁹ It shifted his interest decisively from the local to the international. The sensational tone played a part: 'Pop-Art: Cult of the Commonplace', was resoundingly dismissive. Whether positive or negative in tone about the newer developments in American art, the art writer wielded increasing power. Francis O'Connor's 1972 *Artforum* article 'Notes on Patronage: the 1960s' observed that patronage divided into three separate activities: promotion, acquisition, and subvention, in order of importance, and that the art writer — whether critic, curator or art historian — had become the principal tastemaker and canoniser of art and artists of the 1960s.⁸⁰ He argued that those who acquired art, such as collectors, dealers, and museums, depended on the art writer's judgments to certify their investments.⁸¹

The development of Kaldor's interest in American artists of the 1960s, beginning with his acquisition of Pop Art, appeared to be part of a well-established international trend. By 1963, a key group of American Pop artists were already well established, and Pop Art had attracted a considerable following. Pop Art collector architect Philip Johnson was quoted in the same *Time* article saying that it was 'the most important art movement in the world today.'⁸² If a collector wanted to be associated with the latest developments in international contemporary art, then this was it. Whilst the work of these artists may have been revelatory for Kaldor, altering the focus of his collecting interests, they were already much collected by American museums and private collectors. The art world of that time, made up of galleries, collectors, and those interested and involved in related aspects of the arts may have been smaller, however, key artists and artistic trends were still able to capture the popular imagination, as they continue to do today.⁸³ Featured in popular American magazines such as *Time* and *Life*,

⁷⁴ Baume, 1995, p. 10. Artists whose work was included in the range were Judy Cassab, John Coburn, Russell Drysdale, Cedric Flower, Donald Friend, James Gleeson, Elaine Haxton, Clement Meadmore, John Olsen, and Ian van Wieringen. The work was exhibited at the Dominion Art Galleries on Castlereagh Street, Sydney.

⁷⁵ Baume, 1995, p. 10.

⁷⁶ *Time*, 1963.

⁷⁷ Noted by Baume, 1995, p. 10. *Time*, 1963, p. 73.

⁷⁸ Kaldor in Forbat, 2009, p. 20.

⁷⁹ Baume, 1995, p. 10.

⁸⁰ O'Connor, 1972, pp. 52–56.

⁸¹ O'Connor, 1972, p. 53.

⁸² *Time*, 1963.

⁸³ Iconic works, such as Damien Hirst's formaldehyde-embalmed shark, *The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living* (1991), reflect the ability of certain works to attract critical and popular interest. The work featured on the cover of Smith, 2009. It was also used by BBC News online and Bloomberg Businessweek Markets & Finance online, accompanying articles about Hirst's 2012 retrospective at the Tate Modern, and about his marketability, or lack thereof, in 2012 respectively. See BBC News, 2012: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-19623072>; accessed 19 September 2012; Rice, 2012. Other artists with both critical and popular appeal include Jeff Koons, Maurizio Cattelan, Takashi Murakami, and Yayoi Kusama.

American Pop Art was not only the latest thing in the development of contemporary art, demonstrated by the interest of galleries and private collectors, but it had also attracted the interest of a wider public, even if opinion reflected the usual hostility towards new forms of art, as did Dorothy Seiberling's article for *Life* magazine in 1964.⁸⁴

A number of gallerists and advisors played a key role in this early phase of Kaldor's collecting, particularly Romanian-born collector and gallerist Ileana Sonnabend.⁸⁵ Sonnabend and her husband, Leo Castelli, opened their first gallery in New York in 1957, discovering the work of the emerging generation of American artists that included Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg. Returning to Paris, she opened Galerie Sonnabend in 1962 with her second husband, Michael Sonnabend, with an exhibition of work by Jasper Johns.⁸⁶ Later exhibitions showcased the same generation of young American artists as championed by Leo Castelli Gallery in New York, alongside emerging European work.⁸⁷

In 1963, Kaldor purchased Roy Lichtenstein's painting *Peanut Butter Cup* (1962) from the first solo exhibition of the American artist held in June 1963 at the Paris gallery (Figs 3–5).⁸⁸ Kaldor chose a less important work from the exhibition, his choice primarily driven more by financial considerations than the significance of the work.⁸⁹ He saw the acquisition as his 'first real purchase of contemporary international art', reflected by his later gift of the work to his wife Naomi Milgrom Kaldor.⁹⁰ It was the first of a number of acquisitions of American Pop Art.⁹¹ Kaldor credited his meeting with Sonnabend in Paris at that date as shifting his focus towards more cutting edge art. Sophy Burnham, writing in 1973, noted that the introduction of sophisticated marketing techniques by dealers such as Leo Castelli and others had helped to create 'the vogue for Pop Art'.⁹²

⁸⁴ Seiberling, 1964, pp. 79–83.

⁸⁵ Ileana Sonnabend was born in Bucharest, Romania in 1914. She married Leo Krausz (later Leo Castelli) in 1933. In 1935, they moved to Paris and opened an art gallery before emigrating to New York in 1941. In the 1940s and 1950s, the Castellis started an art collection that included works by Piet Mondrian and Jackson Pollock. They began showing new art, beginning with Neo-Dada and Pop Art (Roy Lichtenstein, Andy Warhol, Claes Oldenburg, and James Rosenquist). Sonnabend Gallery, n. d.: <http://www.sonnabendgallery.com/index.php?v=exhibition&id=13&press=1>; accessed 8 August 2011.

⁸⁶ Sonnabend Gallery, n. d.: <http://www.sonnabendgallery.com/index.php?v=exhibition&id=13&press=1>; accessed 8 August 2011.

⁸⁷ The Galerie Sonnabend exhibited the work of American artists and young Italian artists including Mario Schifano (1963) and Michelangelo Pistoletto (1964), Mario Merz and Giovanni Anselmo (1969), and Jannis Kounellis (1972). In 1970, Ileana Sonnabend opened a gallery in New York. In 1971, together with the Castelli Gallery, she moved to the SoHo district, opening her SoHo gallery with a now-celebrated performance by Gilbert & George. Sonnabend was known for the 'international' focus of her gallery, presenting new art from both the European and the New York scenes: Minimalism, Arte Povera, Conceptual Art, Transavanguardia, Neo-Expressionism, Neo-Geo. See Sonnabend Gallery, n.d. Sonnabend's role as a gallerist and collector of late twentieth century contemporary art was celebrated in an exhibition presented at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, 'Ileana Sonnabend. An Italian Portrait', 29 May to 2 October 2011, coinciding with the opening of the fifty-fourth Venice Biennale.

⁸⁸ 'Roy Lichtenstein', Galerie Ileana Sonnabend, Paris, 5 to 30 June 1963.

⁸⁹ Kaldor noted that works ranged from \$150 to \$250 US, though he only had \$50 to spend. Tunnicliffe, 2011, p. 19. Personal Communication, John Kaldor, Woolwich, Sydney, 22 June 2008.

⁹⁰ Also featured on the first page of Tunnicliffe's interview with Kaldor. Tunnicliffe, 2011, p. 19.

⁹¹ Baume, 1995, p. 8; Thomas, 1971, p. 320; Tunnicliffe, 2011, p. 19.

⁹² For a discussion of the techniques of pricing, placing, and restricting supply of work by a dealer, see Burnham, 1973, p. 43. For a broader analysis of the role and influence of art critics, collectors, dealers, and museum professionals in the development of 'vanguard' art and the New York art world from the 1950s through to the 1970s, see Naifeh, 1976.



Fig. 3. Roy Lichtenstein, Galerie Ileana Sonnabend, Paris (installation view), 5 – 30 June 1963. (Courtesy of Sonnabend Gallery, New York.)

The relationship between art dealer and collector was also significant as part of a complex network of art markets for the more experimental forms of contemporary art. Economic sociologist Olav Velthuis has written extensively on the development of the contemporary art markets, and the relationship between collectors and dealers in network terms.⁹³ While market exchange is invariably embedded in social networks, in *Talking Prices: Symbolic Meanings of Prices on the Market for Contemporary Art* (2007), Velthuis outlined a further approach: the consideration of markets as cultural constellations. He proposed that, like other forms of social interaction, market exchange is highly ritualised, involving a wider variety of symbols that transfer rich meanings between people who exchange goods with each other.⁹⁴ People participating in these exchanges are connected through ties of different sorts, involving complex social processes. As a result, intimate, long-term relationships between artists, collectors, and their intermediaries develop. Art and commerce are kept distinct through dealers' advice on the acquisition of the 'right' and 'wrong' work.⁹⁵ Dealers also have a vested interest in managing the biography of key works, by ensuring that they are positioned with suitable collectors to prevent them coming into contact with money again too soon through circulation on the secondary market. Curators and artists also played an important role. The curator gained increasing prominence with notable collectors of contemporary art, often replacing the dealer as a source for advice. As the role of the intermediaries such as gallerists decreased, the role of artists also evolved. As Isabelle Graw reflected in 2012, artists in turn became more a kind of "critic-curator-consultant-gallerist".⁹⁶ They had to work as sophisticated participants in a complex art world. The relationships that

⁹³ Velthuis, 2007. See also Lind and Velthuis, 2012.

⁹⁴ Velthuis, 2007, p. 3. For a discussion of the social fabric of the market, see Velthuis, 2007, chapter 2.

⁹⁵ Velthuis, 2007, p. 5.

⁹⁶ Graw, 2007, p. 195.

Kaldor developed with key dealers, critics, curators, and artists over time forms part of what Velthuis defined as the social networks and cultural constellations of the contemporary art world and market.



Fig. 4. Roy Lichtenstein, Galerie Ileana Sonnabend, Paris (installation view), 5 – 30 June 1963. (Courtesy of Sonnabend Gallery, New York.)

Other acquisitions reflected Sonnabend's continued influence on Kaldor's developing taste. As Velthuis noted, 'pre-existing social ties with the dealer are critical in order to purchase an artwork.'⁹⁷ His new interest in European Conceptual Art was reflected by his acquisition of work by Dutch artist Jan Dibbets, while Robert Rauschenberg's *Dylaby* (1962, Fig. 6), purchased from Sonnabend in 1966, bookended his developing collection.⁹⁸ Its significance, and that of Ileana Sonnabend, was underscored when an installation photograph of Rauschenberg's *Dylaby* (1962, Fig. 6) in Sonnabend Gallery's February 1963 exhibition was included in Baume's review of Kaldor's collection and projects published in 1995.⁹⁹

Dylaby (1962, Fig. 6) was first shown as part of the exhibition 'Dynamic Labyrinth' at Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum in 1962, for which Director Willem Sandberg had invited six artists to take over seven rooms and create 'environments'.¹⁰⁰ Kaldor had seen neither the installations at the Stedelijk nor the subsequent exhibition at Sonnabend's Paris gallery in 1963 in which *Dylaby* (1962, Fig. 6) was also included.¹⁰¹ However, Rauschenberg's

⁹⁷ Velthuis, 2007, p. 71.

⁹⁸ Thomas, 1984, p. 13. Robert Rauschenberg, *Dylaby* (1962), gifted to the AGNSW as part of the John Kaldor Family Collection, 2011.

⁹⁹ Baume, 1995, p. 11.

¹⁰⁰ Baume, 1995, p. 11. Sonnabend assisted Rauschenberg with the installation of the work.

¹⁰¹ 'Rauschenberg: première exposition (oeuvres 1954-61)', Galerie Ileana Sonnabend, Paris, 1 to 16 February, 1963. Noted in Baume, 1995, p. 11; Tunnicliffe, 2011, p. 47.

significant exhibition history, and Sonnabend's close involvement with his Stedelijk show certified the reputation of this relatively unknown artist for Kaldor. The history of Kaldor's purchase of the work would become part of the mythologising of the early development of his collection.¹⁰² The work's association with a major international gallery, with a history of presenting avant-garde and experimental work, enabled Kaldor to begin an international collection with works that had international clout. Kaldor noted the social openness of the art world in the early 1960s, likening it to 'a small but non-exclusive club as anybody who wanted to could join in.'¹⁰³ Kaldor's approach to collecting is not unusual when compared to the development of other contemporary collections.¹⁰⁴ Its international focus and contemporaneity were, however, aspects that differentiated it from others collecting in Australia at that time.

Kaldor also admitted that low cost was a motivation for collecting American Pop Art rather than Australian artists at that time.¹⁰⁵ In 2009, Kaldor recalled that artists such as Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, Andy Warhol, and Roy Lichtenstein were only beginning to gain attention in 1963. This made their works relatively affordable.¹⁰⁶ However, by 1962, Lichtenstein's paintings had already been included in a number of key articles and art museum exhibitions. Max Kozloff's article in that year, "'Pop" Culture, Metaphysical Disgust, and the New Vulgarians' in *Art International*, might have been profoundly unsympathetic to the emergent art movement, but it linked the artists together as a cohesive group. Gene R. Swenson's article in *ARTnews* in September of the same year called Pop Art 'impudent', 'single-minded', and so 'obvious as to be unexpected'.¹⁰⁷ Even populist articles followed, such as *Life* magazine's feature on Pop Art in June 1962.¹⁰⁸ Lichtenstein's paintings began to appear in art museum exhibitions. In 1962, his *Head (Red and Yellow)* (1962) was acquired by the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, New York. The following year, the Guggenheim Museum, New York, presented 'Six Painters and the Object', an exhibition featuring works by Dine, Johns, Lichtenstein, Rauschenberg, Rosenquist, and Warhol, which travelled throughout the US.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰² See Tunnicliffe, 2011, p. 20.

¹⁰³ Tunnicliffe, 2011, p. 19.

¹⁰⁴ Count Giuseppe Panza describes purchasing his first important paintings by Antonio Tapies from an exhibition made by the Parisian gallery Stadler in 1956. Soon after, Panza acquired his first painting by Franz Kline from the Sidney Janis Gallery, and selected from photographs. He too remembers the price, noting that it was about US\$550, and that he asked Sidney Janis to reduce it to \$500 to which the dealer agreed. The work now forms part of the Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles collection. See Archives of American Art, n.d., oral history interview with Giuseppe Panza, 2 – 4 April 1985.

¹⁰⁵ Personal communication, John Kaldor, 22 June 2008, Woolwich, Sydney. Also noted by Kaldor in Forbat, 2009, p. 20; Capon and Kaldor, 2011.

¹⁰⁶ Kaldor in Forbat, 2009, p. 20.

¹⁰⁷ Kozloff, 1962; Swenson, 1962, pp. 44–47; reproduced in Madoff, 1997, pp. 34–38.

¹⁰⁸ *Life*, 1962, pp. 115–116, 119–120.

¹⁰⁹ For biographical details, see Lichtenstein Foundation, n.d.:

<http://www.lichtensteinfoundation.org/lfchron1.htm>; accessed February 19 2012. 'Six Painters and the Object', Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 14 March – 2 June 1963. See Alloway, 1963.



Fig. 5. Roy Lichtenstein, Galerie Ileana Sonnabend, Paris (installation view), 5 – 30 June 1963. (Courtesy of Sonnabend Gallery, New York.)

In 1995, Kaldor remembered that the Lichtenstein painting purchased in 1963 cost US \$50 whilst the work of a recognised Australian artist would have been priced at least double.¹¹⁰ He was later to acknowledge that the work was less expensive than others in the Paris exhibition, which ranged between \$150 and \$250.¹¹¹ If Kaldor's memory about prices in the French exhibition was correct, then the French exhibition reflected very good value for money, priced significantly below American exhibitions of the time. Records from the Leo Castelli Gallery show that in 1962, prices ranged between US \$350 to \$1200 for Lichtenstein's first show at the New York gallery, and featured signature paintings such as *The Kiss* (1962), *Engagement Ring* (1961), and *Turkey* (1961).¹¹² All works were sold prior to the exhibition.¹¹³ Prices for Lichtenstein's second solo exhibition with Leo Castelli Gallery in September 1963 ranged from US\$1,200 to \$3,500, whilst his exhibition in 1964 of larger oil on canvas works made in that year ranged from US\$12,000 to \$15,000.¹¹⁴ Kaldor's anecdote about the low price of the work reflected not only its relative scale, date, and importance, but also the fact that Sonnabend may well have priced the works significantly

¹¹⁰ Baume, 1995, p. 11. This fact has been widely repeated. Huda noted that prices for William Dobell's paintings in the early 1960s were 'incongruous', especially for a living artist. They 'bore no relation to the general market value of paintings either in Australia and Europe.' See Huda, 2008, p. 63.

¹¹¹ Tunncliffe, 2011, p. 19.

¹¹² *The Kiss* (1962), oil on canvas, 203.2 x 172.7 cm, priced at \$1200 and sold for \$1000; *Engagement Ring* (1961), oil on canvas, 172.1 x 201.9 cm, priced at \$1200; *Turkey* (1961), oil on canvas, priced at US\$350, sold \$300. Archives of American Art, Leo Castelli Gallery Records, Box Number 38, Folder 10, price list for Roy Lichtenstein, 10 February to 3 March 1962.

¹¹³ Lichtenstein Foundation n.d.: <http://www.lichtensteinfoundation.org/lfchron1.htm>; accessed 19 February 2012.

¹¹⁴ Archives of American Art, Leo Castelli Gallery Records, Box Number 38, Folder 10, price list for Roy Lichtenstein, 20 September 1963.

lower for a European market. Kaldor remembers her saying to him that since he appeared honest, she was willing for him to take a larger work and pay the balance later.¹¹⁵ While Kaldor purchased the smaller, and less significant work, Sonnabend's trust was repaid by Kaldor's respect for her advice and his ongoing support for the artists her gallery represented through the acquisition of works of art.

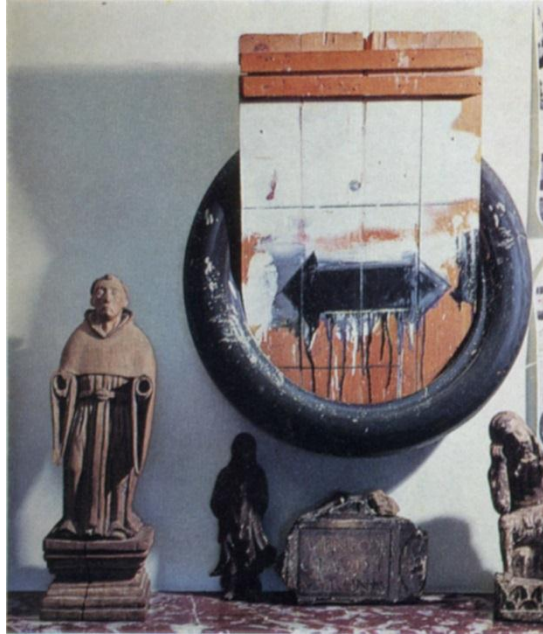


Fig. 6. Robert Rauschenberg, *Dylaby*, 1962. Rubber tyre, oil on packing-case timbers, 63.5 x 55.9 cm. (Image courtesy Art & Australia.)

A personal relationship with the artist also appeared to have played a significant role in other early acquisitions by Kaldor. In 1964, Kaldor acquired a number of works by Scottish sculptor Eduardo Paolozzi during a visit to the artist's studio in London. They had been made during the artist's earlier residency in Paris.¹¹⁶ His *Paris Bird* (c. 1948–9, Fig. 7) and *Figure* (1958, fig. 6) were used to illustrate Daniel Thomas's feature on Kaldor's collection for *Art & Australia* in 1971. The transitional, lumpen cast-bronze *Figure* (1958, Fig. 8) showed the impact of Surrealism and Paris-based contemporaries Brancusi and Giacometti, as well as the *l'art brut* sculptures of Jean Dubuffet.¹¹⁷ By contrast, *Paris Bird* (1948–9, fig. 7), with its incorporation of machine parts and found objects, presaged Paolozzi's later participation in the development of Pop Art in Britain.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵ Tunnicliffe, 2011, p. 19.

¹¹⁶ Baume, 1995, p. 11; Thomas, 1971, p. 320; Tunnicliffe, 2011, p. 19, although Kaldor noted that the date was 1963. Images in Thomas, 1971, p. 321, included Eduardo Paolozzi, *Paris Bird* (c. 1948–9); Eduardo Paolozzi, *Figure* (1958); and Roy Lichtenstein, *Peanut Butter Cup* (1962).

¹¹⁷ See The Independent Group website for full details of Paolozzi in Paris in 1947–9, the influence of French artists on him, Paolozzi's subsequent participation in the Independent Group in the 1950s, and their influence on Pop Art in Britain. The Independent Group, n.d.:

<http://www.independentgroup.org.uk/contributors/paolozzi/index.html>; accessed 24 August 2011. Whitehouse also noted the influence of the French Art Brut group of artists on the NSW Contemporary Art Society's abstract expressionists. See Whitehouse, 1999, p. 112.

¹¹⁸ For a discussion of Richard Hamilton, Paolozzi, and English Pop Art, see Crow, 1996, pp. 39–47.

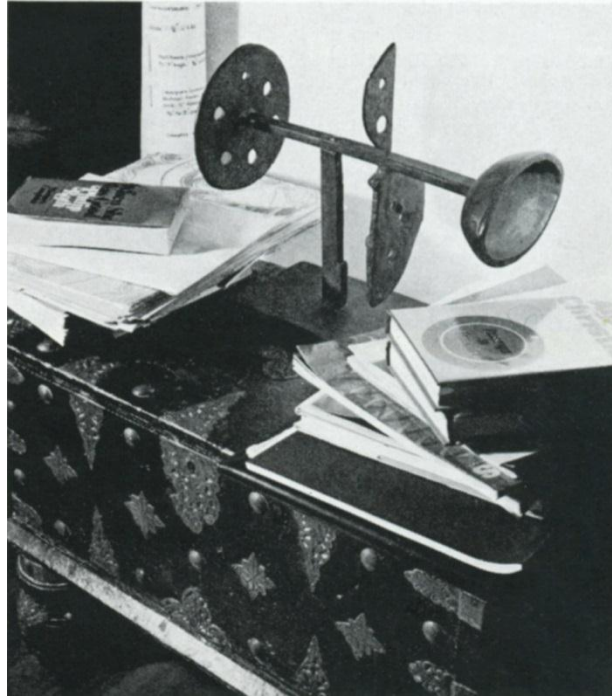


Fig. 7. Eduardo Paolozzi, *Paris bird*, c. 1948–49. Bronze, number 5 in an edition of 6, 36.8 x 36.8 x 15.2 cm. (Image courtesy Art & Australia.)

Purchasing work directly from the artist enabled Kaldor to develop a closer, and often more personal, engagement than if the contact were mediated by a gallerist. In some cases, direct negotiations may also have financial advantages for the collector. Establishment of personal contact was characteristic of Kaldor's subsequent relationships with artists, and one that he particularly valued. The acquisition of these sculptures marked the awakening of Kaldor's interest in art forms beyond painting. From this point on, sculpture — and increasingly post-sculptural practice, drawings, installations, assemblages, photographs, conceptual works and artists' books — became the focus of his collecting.¹¹⁹

Thomas has suggested that at this point Kaldor became 'less an art collector than an art patron'.¹²⁰ In this, Thomas alludes to the different relationships that collectors and art patrons have with artists. Art patrons have a closer relationship with the artists whose work they often commission, whereas collectors usually acquire works of art from galleries or auction houses, and may never encounter the artists whose work they acquire. Kaldor's collecting in the mid-1960s was more international, and focused on sculpture, installation, and assemblages, rather than painting. This differentiated him from other collectors in Australia. However, Kaldor's developing relationship with the galleries directly involved with Pop Art was not markedly different from other international collectors at that time. Naifeh noted that the number of collectors who spent more than US\$10,000 annually on vanguard art rose to about 200 by 1970.¹²¹ Collectors were not solely based in New York. They also came from smaller American cities such as Detroit, Houston, and Atlanta. European collectors, predominantly from Italy and Germany, began to outbid Americans in the market for contemporary art. The number of modest collectors also rose and by 1973, there were approximately 50,000 collectors of vanguard art from around the globe.¹²²

¹¹⁹ Baume, 1995, p. 9.

¹²⁰ Thomas, 1984, p. 13.

¹²¹ See Naifeh, 1976, pp. 105–6.

¹²² See Naifeh, 1976, pp. 105–6.



Fig. 8. Eduardo Paolozzi, *Figure*, 1958. Bronze, 53.3 cm height. (Image courtesy Art & Australia.)

On the other hand, Kaldor had been more closely associated with artists both through his commissioning of the Kaldor ‘Originals’ fabric designs, and his visit to Paolozzi’s studio. The close association put him in a smaller category of highly engaged collectors of contemporary art. He clearly valued direct personal relationships with artists. His next acquisition followed an introduction to an artist that began a relationship that would continue for decades.

The Alcorso-Sekers Sculpture Prize

The threads of Kaldor’s early association with contemporary artists producing fabric commissions, and his increasingly international collection came together in the creation of the Alcorso-Sekers Sculpture Prize. Known as the Alcorso-Sekers Travelling Scholarship, Kaldor acknowledged the financial and philanthropic examples of his two mentors, Sekers and Alcorso, by naming a fledgling sculpture prize after them. In 1966, as Marketing Manager of Universal Textiles, Kaldor convinced the company to start the Alcorso-Sekers Travelling Scholarship for young Australian sculptors, a prize that supported travel and professional development for an Australian artist overseas.¹²³ Its stated intention was ‘to encourage the development and appreciation of sculpture in Australia.’¹²⁴ State gallery

¹²³ Baume, 2009, p. 44.

¹²⁴ Three Alcorso-Sekers Travelling Scholarships and exhibitions were held from 1966 to 1968. The first exhibition was held at the Art Gallery of New South Wales from 27 July to 28 August 1966, and was won by George Baldessin. Judges for the 1966 prize were Claudio Alcorso, Sydney Archer, John Kaldor, J.A. Tuckson, and Eric Westbrook. The 1967 prize was judged by Lyndon Daldswell, Hal Missingham, and John Kaldor, and

directors were to select the entrants, and a \$2,000 travel grant was to be awarded to the winner. An exhibition of work by the entrants was to be shown in alternate years in Sydney and Melbourne state galleries. Modelled loosely on the existing Helena Rubinstein scholarship for oil painting, the Alcorso-Sekers scholarship was created specifically to support sculpture since Kaldor believed there was no equivalent prize for that medium.¹²⁵ For state galleries, involvement with prizes of this nature enabled them to present an exhibition of contemporary work by Australian artists for whom they might not have otherwise had the exhibition budget. Support by companies such as Helena Rubenstein or Universal Textiles enabled state galleries to receive much-needed funds. For Kaldor, it enabled him to develop important contacts with key public galleries in Sydney and Melbourne.

The international focus of the Alcorso-Sekers scholarship — which saw an Australian artist dispatched overseas — reflected Kaldor's European roots and a belief that the most interesting work was being produced overseas. It reflected the resolutely international focus that he developed in both business and art.

A proliferation of prizes, and an increased discord about the nature of these awards, may also have prompted Kaldor to propose a different model for the 1969 Alcorso-Sekers scholarship.¹²⁶ The medium of sculpture was gaining greater attention. In 1966, the same year that the Alcorso-Sekers scholarship was inaugurated, the Transfield Prize was altered. Created by fellow immigrant, Italian-born Franco Belgiorno-Nettis, the Transfield Prize had long been the richest art prize in Australia.¹²⁷ Within a year, the number of prizes specifically for sculpture had doubled, and the Alcorso-Sekers Travelling Scholarship was one amongst many.¹²⁸ At the same time, there was growing criticism from curators and critics about the selection processes and criteria of prizes.¹²⁹ James Gleeson noted on ABC Radio that rather

was won by Michael Kitching for his perspex, aluminium, and neon sculpture *Nerada* (1967). (Kitching was later to design Kaldor's new showrooms for John Kaldor Fabrics in Surry Hills, Sydney, in 1973.) The final 1968 exhibition was judged by John Kaldor, Eric Westbrook, and Robin Boyd, and was held at the NGV. A society event, it was opened by Dame Zara Holt D.B.E., fashion designer and co-owner of the successful Magg boutique (with Betty Grounds), and widow of the Liberal Prime Minister Harold Holt. Artists were listed by state for the first two prize exhibitions in 1966 and 1967, while the 1968 exhibition catalogue did away with this categorisation, and prices for each artwork appeared for the first time. Alcorso-Sekers Travelling Scholarship Award for Sculpture, Exhibition Catalogue, 1966. Alcorso-Sekers Travelling Scholarship Award for Sculpture: Australian Gallery File, n.d.

¹²⁵ Baume, 1995, p. 12. The Helena Rubinstein Travelling Art Scholarship was established in Australia in 1957, and focussed on painting. The first scholarship was awarded in 1958, and an exhibition of the contestants was held at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. Charles Blackman won the third scholarship in 1960, and received a prize of £1000. The final prize was awarded in 1966. See Helena Rubinstein Travelling Scholarship, Australian Gallery File, State Library of Victoria.

¹²⁶ For a discussion of other art prizes, the Mildura Sculpture Triennial, and their context, see Sanders, 2009, pp. 128–230.

¹²⁷ Scarlett, 2004. However, by 1968, this appeared to have evolved again to include painting as a painting by Melbourne artist Robert Hunter was exhibited in the Transfield Art Prize, shown at the Bonython Art Gallery, Sydney, in November 1968. See Duncan, 1987, p. 8.

¹²⁸ For a discussion of the history of sculpture prizes in Australia, see Scarlett, 2004. Apart from the shift in the Transfield Prize, the Flotta Lauro Shipping Company set up a travelling prize for sculpture and painting in 1967. The Comalco Invitation Award for Sculpture in Aluminium was launched on 23 September, 1968, and lasted from 1968 until 1971. The Helena Rubinstein Prize encouraged international travel. The Mildura Sculpture Prize was held in 1961, 1964, and 1967. Its aim was to focus on contemporary Australian sculpture. It subsequently became the Mildura Sculpture Triennial. See Sanders, 2009, chapters 2 and 3.

¹²⁹ Some of these issues were addressed by Lynn, 1969, pp. 314–18; Sanders, 2009, particularly chapter 3, which traced the relationship of early sculpture prizes to the development of the Mildura Sculpture Triennial.

than rewarding the artist, prizes such as these were ‘commissioning’ works, and shaping the nature of the work produced.¹³⁰

These concerns prompted Kaldor in 1968 to suggest the Alcorso-Sekers Scholarship be amended to bring an international artist to Australia rather than sending an Australian artist overseas.¹³¹ Kaldor proposed an international artist ‘who represent[ed] important trends in contemporary art practice and to help realise major projects of their work’.¹³² His recommendation differentiated his ‘prize’ from the others and more importantly, it would introduce emerging trends to Australian artists and the wider local audience. The shift also meant that identifying ‘important trends’ in contemporary international art would be Kaldor’s personal responsibility, as would the selection of the artists to visit Australia.

In his essay for *An Australian Accent* (1984), Thomas noted that Kaldor was ‘the pioneer, the first to realise that the new 1960s global village existed in terms of transport and could be operated for Australia’s benefit’.¹³³ Baume credited Kaldor as being the first private patron in Australia, ‘possibly even the world’, to realise it was ‘becoming more simple to transport people than work’.¹³⁴ An international awareness, combined with an understanding of the role that acquisitions and philanthropy could play resulted in Kaldor’s focus on bringing contemporary artists to Australia.

Under the amended Alcorso-Sekers scheme, in 1969 Kaldor invited New York-based artists Christo Javacheff and his partner Jeanne-Claude de Guillebon to Australia: Christo would ‘perhaps give a couple of lectures in each of the cities [Sydney and Melbourne] and arrange an exhibition’.¹³⁵ Christo in turn proposed giving ‘open meetings’ (as his English was not good), but said his real interest lay in the realisation of his project *Packed Coast*.¹³⁶ Christo had already made his first drawings for a wrapped coastline in 1967, initially planned for California.¹³⁷ Both Christo and Kaldor immediately envisaged the project as a major artistic achievement. Kaldor’s shift from the private collection of Pop Art to a highly public engagement with a less widely known ephemeral form of art-making offered him the chance to engage with an art form that was able to attract widespread interest, controversy, images,

¹³⁰ Gleeson as reported by Lynn in *NSW Broadsheet* December 1957. Cited in Whitehouse, 1999, p. 223.

¹³¹ Baume, 2009, p. 44.

¹³² John William Kaldor, biography, <http://www.kaldorartprojects.org.au/biography-jk.asp>, viewed 10 November 2006, cited in Sanders, 2009, p. 129. No longer available on Kaldor Art Projects site, as at 11 August 2011.

¹³³ Thomas, 1984, p. 13.

¹³⁴ Baume, 1995, p. 26.

¹³⁵ John Kaldor letter to Christo, Sydney 12 February 1969 cited in Baume, 1995, p. 14. Christo and Jeanne-Claude had been based in New York since 1964, after leaving Communist Bulgaria. Jeanne-Claude was born in Morocco to a French military family.

¹³⁶ Christo letter to John Kaldor, New York, 7 March 1969 cited in Baume, 1995, p. 14. *Wrapped Coast* was originally credited solely to Christo, but in the 1970s, the environmental works were retrospectively credited to both Christo and Jeanne-Claude. See Green, 2001, p. 128. Letters from Christo to John Kaldor regarding the 1969 Australian project were in fact all written by Jeanne-Claude, reflecting their close working relationship. See letters reprinted in Baume, 1995, p. 78.

¹³⁷ Baume noted that Christo’s first project to make direct use of landscape forms was his unrealised *Packed Hills — Project for Wrapping 30 Hectares Area* (1968), which he hoped to undertake in the United States. Later in the same year he made his first studies for what was then called *Packed Coast — Somewhere on the West Coast of the USA, between Los Angeles and San Francisco* (1968), though he was unable to obtain permission for the work. In his letter to Kaldor in early 1969, he wrote ‘... what I am really interested in is the realization of my projects, most of all “Packed Coast”’. Christo letter to John Kaldor, 7 March 1969 cited in Baume, 1990, p. 37. For a history of these early projects, see also Bourdon, 1972.

and debate. The work would attain worldwide coverage and ‘underwrite the image of Sydney as one of the most progressive cities of the world.’¹³⁸

Whilst Kaldor was clearly interested in the new forms of art-making that Christo was exploring, he was also interested in Christo’s personal history. Like Kaldor, Christo saw his art as emerging from his own biography.¹³⁹ Christo grew up in Bulgaria under a communist regime, the son of Marxist intellectuals. Kaldor and Christo shared the early experience of repressive Eastern European political regimes and social unrest that contributed to the Kaldor family’s decision to emigrate, and Christo’s to defect.¹⁴⁰ Like the Kaldor family, Christo had fled to Paris. Like Kaldor, Christo’s experience of Paris was pivotal. So too was Christo’s subsequent decision to settle in New York in 1964, though his experience of American Pop Art in the 1960s was a far cry from the experience of living in Sydney in the 1940s. Kaldor was attracted to Christo because they shared a similar history, tenacity, and determination, and a desire to challenge perceived expectations of modernist art.

However, a site for *Packed Coast* was difficult to secure, and following adverse publicity about the project and mounting financial concerns, the Alcorso-Sekers company eventually withdrew its support.¹⁴¹ John Kaldor, by then Managing Director of Universal Textiles, decided to continue without their support. Strangely, no one appears to have made the link between the Alcorso-Sekers’ line of business — fabrics — and Christo’s extensive use of a woven fabric to wrap the Australian coast.¹⁴²

The first project was auspiced by ‘John Kaldor Art Projects’, and in 1969, a foundation was created with this name. This was the first in a series of temporary art projects presented by the not-for-profit foundation John Kaldor Art Projects, which later became Kaldor Public Art Projects. The initial naming of the foundation and its activities may well have been a straightforward link between instigator and organiser. However, by naming the foundation after the individual, the organisation’s activities were inextricably linked to its creator’s persona. For Kaldor, the association with this first project identified him with new and exciting, risk-taking developments in international contemporary art. These qualities were both the aspirations of an art collector and patron, and were much admired in the business world. Kaldor’s activities as patron and collector of contemporary art were intertwined with his identification as an initiator and presenter of ambitious, contemporary projects, and marked him out from other collectors in a similar field.

The transformation of the Alcorso-Sekers Scholarship into an internationally focused event that took place in Australia was mirrored by the evolution of the aforementioned major art prize, the Transfield Prize. It was awarded for the last time in 1971 and then transformed into

¹³⁸ Letter from Kaldor to Peter Coleman, Member of State Parliament, Sydney, 14 April 1969 cited in Baume, 1995, p. 14.

¹³⁹ Referred to by Thomas in Baume, 1990, p. 28.

¹⁴⁰ For biographical details, see Bourdon, 1972. Thomas noted that Christo’s parents were Marxist intellectuals, and the family owned numerous books on Russian avant-garde art and theatre. These disappeared from the Javacheff family home when Bulgaria was occupied by Hitler’s German soldiers prior to it becoming a communist republic in 1944. Thomas in Baume, 1990, p. 29. Following World War I, Hungary also suffered political, social, and economic upheaval, which no doubt contributed to many Hungarians, including the Kaldors, deciding to emigrate.

¹⁴¹ The Reverend Roger Bush railed against the project on Radio 2GB, implying that the products of the company or companies that sponsor this project should be boycotted. Baume, 1995, p. 16.

¹⁴² The sponsorship would have seemed a better ‘fit’ than the sponsorship of Harald Szeemann’s ‘Live in your Head’ exhibition by tobacco company Philip Morris. See Coates, 2013, p. 151.

the first Biennale of Sydney in 1973 with the support of the Belgiorno-Nettis family.¹⁴³ The Biennale presaged a new model of exhibition in Sydney and Australia: it was designed to be a showcase for international contemporary art.¹⁴⁴

Other models of support for the kind of post-sculptural, environmental work that Christo and Jeanne-Claude produced were evolving elsewhere in the 1960s.¹⁴⁵ In the US, philanthropists such as Heiner Friedrich and Philippa de Menil were actively supporting a contemporary generation of American artists, many of whom were producing large-scale, site-specific installations.¹⁴⁶ In their desire to work directly with artists, Friedrich and de Menil's aspirations were echoed by Kaldor's. Kaldor was visiting the US regularly for business and acquiring works of art by international artists. He was also reading about contemporary art, exhibitions, and new means of support in popular magazines such as *Life* and *The New York Times*. Fred Sandback, one of the artists supported by Friedrich, noted in 1981 that: 'This was a new paradigm for patronage, and I myself am ungodly lucky to have had such support and freedom in my life.'¹⁴⁷

Thus, Kaldor's model of philanthropic support and involvement in the artistic process coincided with more widespread efforts to find more creative means of supporting artistic practice in a rapidly changing world. An article by Barbara Rose published in *Art in America* in 1967 addressed some of the issues associated with arts funding and patronage, and what would be most useful for artists' individual needs.¹⁴⁸ Drawing on interviews with American sculptors, including Donald Judd, Dan Flavin, Sol LeWitt, John McCracken, Roy Lichtenstein, and Robert Morris, she argued the need for new forms of philanthropy better able to respond to the requirements of artists and a more avant-garde art. Boards of private foundations and museums, she noted, often reflected conservative taste, whilst art dealers often took on the role of 'de facto patrons financing the production of work', as Dwan Gallery had done. She observed that artists' only needs were 'money, materials, places to store and exhibit their work.'¹⁴⁹ Kaldor's Art Projects appeared to offer the artist just that: a place in which to show their work and the means and resources to do so.

Conclusion

John Kaldor's early experiences as an immigrant shaped his subsequent philanthropic and collecting decisions. Early relationships and mentors including Sir Nicholas Sekers and Claudio Alcorso introduced Kaldor to philanthropic models for supporting the arts through industry. Kaldor's early collecting introduced him to new and exciting directions in contemporary art, including British and American Pop Art. He began to develop strong connections with a number of key gallery directors, including Ileana Sonnabend and Leo

¹⁴³ See Transfield, n.d.: <http://www.transfield.com.au/arts/biennale.htm>; accessed 11 January 2012.

¹⁴⁴ For a history of the early Biennale of Sydney, see Fenner, 2010, pp. 45- 50; Green, 1995; Paroissien, 2003, p. 60-69.

¹⁴⁵ For a more extensive discussion of other non-commercial models that evolved in the 1960s in the US to support artists making art then described as 'post-sculptural', or Land or Environmental Art, see Coates, 2013, pp. 43-44.

¹⁴⁶ See Coates, 2013, pp. 44-46.

¹⁴⁷ Quoted in Kimmelman, 2003.

¹⁴⁸ Rose, 1967, p. 35.

¹⁴⁹ Rose, 1967. Artists noted in Rose's survey included Dan Flavin, Charles Frazier, Donald Judd, Sol LeWitt, Roy Lichtenstein, John McCracken, and Robert Morris.

Castelli, who proved important advisors in the subsequent direction of Kaldor's collecting and Art Projects. For Kaldor, the experience of engaging directly with artists was key.

Christo and Jeanne-Claude's project in 1969 developed out of a pre-existing model of philanthropic support for the visual arts in the form of a travelling scholarship and art prize. As Marketing Manager of Universal Textiles, Kaldor had initiated the Alcorso-Sekers Sculpture Prize. The prize offered an Australian artist the chance to travel overseas, with an exhibition of the finalists' works presented in a state gallery. Christo and Jeanne-Claude's Australian project offered an innovation on this model, with the artists travelling to Australia to make a new work. Both Christo and Kaldor realised the significance of this project as a major artistic achievement. Differences with Universal Textiles, sponsors of the Alcorso Sekers Prize, meant that this project was ultimately presented as the first Kaldor Public Art Project.

Kaldor's innovation was to evolve a philanthropic model through which to invite leading contemporary international artists to Australia to present an artwork. Elsewhere, similar creative approaches were also being explored in order to support new and experimental art practice in a rapidly changing world. Kaldor's international focus, combined with an understanding of the role that acquisitions and philanthropy could play, resulted in his focus on bringing contemporary artists to Australia. For Australia in the 1960s, Kaldor's presentation of Christo and Jeanne-Claude's first Art Project catapulted the periphery into the centre of a rapidly changing contemporary art world, attracting international attention and acclaim. Kaldor was the first Australian individual free of direct commercial interests to support contemporary art on this scale and in this way.

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Fig. 3. Roy Lichtenstein, Galerie Ileana Sonnabend, Paris (installation view), 5 – 30 June 1963. (Courtesy of Sonnabend Gallery, New York.)

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Fig. 6. Robert Rauschenberg, *Dylaby*, 1962. Rubber tyre, oil on packing-case timbers, 63.5 x 55.9cm. Image courtesy *Art & Australia*. First published in Daniel Thomas, 'The art collectors 10: John Kaldor', *Art & Australia*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (Autumn 1971), pp. 312–23.

Fig. 7. Eduardo Paolozzi, *Paris bird*, c. 1948–49. Bronze, number 5 in an edition of 6, 36.8 x 36.8 x 15.2 cm. Image courtesy *Art & Australia*. First published in Daniel Thomas, 'The art collectors 10: John Kaldor', *Art & Australia*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (Autumn 1971), pp. 312–23.

Fig. 8. Eduardo Paolozzi, *Figure*, 1958. Bronze, 53.3cm height. Image courtesy *Art & Australia*. First published in Daniel Thomas, 'The art collectors 10: John Kaldor', *Art & Australia*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (Autumn 1971), pp. 312–23.