

The Art of Hall Thorpe

Hall Thorpe (1874-1947), the expatriate who lived most of his life in England, determined his woodcuts should be "wholesome in subject, cheerful in colour and decorative in design". His masterpiece, "the Country Bunch", c.1922, is the largest print of his career. Reputed to have taken Thorpe a year to make and using 15 blocks to separate its colours, it is the keystone work of this exhibition. Similarly, "Triptych: Kookaburra, Kangaroo, Koalas", 1940, anchors the works on exhibition by Ethleen Palmer (1906-1958). Palmer, whose childhood in the Far East influenced her aesthetic to such an extent that she was described in 1939 as "...an Australian Hokusai", made Australian flora and fauna her special project. In a generation of astounding Australian women printmakers- think Preston, Spowers, Proctor and Teague, Ethleen Palmer was the undisputed virtuoso of the linocut. Using as many as 12 blocks to complete one print she was unstinting in her efforts to make prints of exceptional vibrancy, depth of colour and decorative appeal.