

## emaj special issue 9.1: Cosmopolitan Moments

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Katrina Grant

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Cosmopolitan Moments: Instances of Exchange in the Long Eighteenth Century

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#### INTRODUCTION to the Special Issue

Cosmopolitan Moments | JENNIFER MILAM

The history of visual material is continually renewed by scholars from other disciplines working in what were once considered to be the margins of art history. Historians of dress, gardens, travel and diplomacy bring into focus the impact of visual experiences that moved Europeans beyond the traditions of their local cultures. In this special issue, four emerging scholars take up 'cosmopolitan moments' of cultural exchange as seen in the visual evidence of history. The papers were initially presented as part of an interdisciplinary postgraduate workshop and symposium on Enlightenment Cosmopolitanisms, convened by the Sydney Intellectual History Network at the University of Sydney in 2014.

#### ARTICLES

"The Embassy of Soliman Aga to Louis XIV: Diplomacy, Dress, and Diamonds" | GARRITT VAN DYK

Prolonged contact with exoticism during the Embassy of Soliman Aga to Louis XIV has been cited by scholars as the cultural influence responsible for acceptance of coffee by Parisian nobles and the inspiration for Molière's *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme*. Diplomatic historians have either documented the encounter as a cautionary tale about the importance of protocol, or focused on the trade negotiations between the Ottoman Empire and France as a point of contention. In this article, I examine how dress was used by different participants in the diplomatic encounter, not to track the genealogy of Turkish dress or the development of *Turquerie* in France, but to consider dress as a cultural source providing additional context through which to evaluate the embassy.

"Performing Travel: Lady Holland's Grand Tour Souvenirs and the House of All Europe" | EMMA GLEADHILL

This article examines Lady Elizabeth Holland's (1771-1845) deliberate use of the material cache of having travelled in Italy and Spain to re-establish her social standing following a scandalous divorce and so challenges the archetype of the male Grand Tourist collector. After marrying her second husband, Henry Richard Fox (the third Baron Holland), Lady Holland became the formidable hostess of London's most famous political salon, Holland House. Lady Holland's display of artworks and antiquities in the dining room of Holland House, in distinguished company, allowed her to integrate herself into Britain's Classical heritage whilst maintaining the genteel female role of the hostess and social facilitator. Her acquisition of natural specimens whilst travelling also opened up scholarly connections, which allowed her to pursue her own scientific interests. Lady Holland's travel journals, personal correspondence and catalogues of Holland House's contents provide unusually rich and detailed records of her collecting. This article adds to the growing scholarship on women's travel writing and also contributes the emerging area of research which looks at the gendering of material culture.

"Sowing the Seeds for Strong Relations: Seeds and Plants as Diplomatic Gifts for the Russian Empress Maria Fedorovna" | EKATERINA HEATH

The article examines the role of botany in diplomatic relationships between Britain and Russia around the turn of the nineteenth century by looking at three gifts of exotic seeds and plants sent by different British diplomats and officials to the Russian Empress Maria Fedorovna, wife of Tsar Paul I. Gifts of live plants were a new category of diplomatic presents fuelled by the rapidly growing popularity of botany across Europe. These gifts represented British imperial ambitions and desire to build a self-sufficient economy. They also indicated an element of Britain's anxiety about its navy's dependence on Russian natural resources and later on about Russia's successes in the exploration of the Antarctic regions. Empress Maria Fedorovna displayed these plants in a prominent part of her garden at Pavlovsk, next to the plants from North America that she had procured independently. This was a deliberate strategy that worked to boost her prestige at court by showcasing her international relationships.

"Anna King's Dress: Trade and Society in Early Colonial Sydney" | LAURA JOCIC

A dress which belonged to Anna King, the wife of Philip Gidley King, the third governor of New South Wales, is one of the earliest surviving items of clothing with Australian provenance. Made from embroidered Indian muslin, the evening dress, dated to c.1805, is a significant item of colonial Australian material culture. Anna King's dress has regularly been cited as an example of the early trade between India and Australia. In providing updated research into the dress, including new insights from Anna King's diary, written on her voyage to Australia in 1799-1800, I move beyond the general recognition, made by James Broadbent and Marion Fletcher, that the fabric is of Indian origin, and challenge the assumption that it was imported into Australia directly from India. By tracing the origins of the fabric and investigating who may have made the dress this article illuminates the social life of an early colonial society making the transition from a penal colony to one which also provided opportunities for emancipated convicts and free settlers. A close study of this particular garment provides insights into the social mores of a small but developing settlement, the establishment of businesses, and the complex networks of trade that were devel-

oping between India and the colony. This article also argues that the dress – both in terms of its form, fabric, and manner of procurement – is evidence that genteel styles of dress from Britain were already arriving in the penal colony in the first decade of the nineteenth century.

## EXHIBITION REVIEW

"A Collection Worthy of a European Empress" | JENNIFER MILAM

Masterpieces from the Hermitage: The Legacy of Catherine the Great, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 31 July – 8 November

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