



FRANZ PHILIPP

FRANZ ADOLF PHILIPP

A pupil of Julius von Schlosser, Franz Philipp brought to Australia the wide humanist outlook and analytical rigor of the Viennese school of art history. His research on the Mannerist portrait in North Italy was interrupted by the Second World War and by his labours in building up a Department of Art History ancillary to the Herald Chair of Fine Arts in the University of Melbourne, but he always intended that his studies in this field should be his major contribution to scholarship. At the time of his death, on 30 May 1970, he was best known for his work on Poussin and a number of articles on works in the National Gallery of Victoria, to which he brought his vast knowledge of Renaissance art. He believed strongly that the art historian should involve himself with the art of his own time, and although he never intended his substantial monograph on Arthur Boyd to be a *magnum opus* it was the result of some years of intensive preparation and collaboration with the artist. It set a new standard in the critical study and scholarly cataloguing of a major Australian artist and is, perhaps, the work by which the quality of his scholarship will be known to a wide audience.

At the time of his tragic death, he had just completed the first fruits of his Mannerist studies—an account of El Greco's *Funeral of the Count of Orgaz*, in which the masterpiece is related to medieval and renaissance traditions of the funeral monument, an ideal theme for a scholar whose knowledge was always governed by his profound responses to individual masterpieces. His former collaborator, Miss June Stewart, will edit his text.

Franz Philipp will be greatly missed not only by the small but growing circle of art historians in Australia, but by a large number of distinguished scholars who were his friends in related disciplines, especially History. In particular, he maintained close contact with his former colleagues in the Department of History at the University of Melbourne. Among the causes which he had supported was the establishment of medieval studies on a firmer basis in Australia, and one of the reasons why he valued so highly his election as a Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities was his hope to support his fellow medievalists in their efforts to secure recognition for their subject.

Despite the high quality of what he himself would probably assess as fragments and instalments of what he hoped to publish, Franz Philipp was first and foremost a great teacher, making a profound impression on the gifted students he attracted and trained for distinguished university and art gallery posts, particularly overseas. He always regarded teaching as the highest of all academic priorities, and much of his learning was acquired as a preparation for his seminars and especially his lectures, which he once described as his 'treasure'. It

is very much hoped that a selection of his lectures will be edited and published as a fitting memorial.

Scholars of his wide humanist outlook and conviction are rare indeed, and those who have come under his influence will always feel an obligation to perpetuate the values of which he was so remarkable and inspiring an example.

Joseph Burke