**Histories of Melbourne fashion and textile businesses compiled from research undertaken by the RDA are available.** Publications include *eclarté* (1939–1962), *Gloweave* (est 1954), *Moylan Woollens Company* (1950–1980), *Prestige Fabrics Design Studio* (1945–1978), *Prue Acton* (1963–1991) exhibition catalogue and *Robert Maltus* (1959–1968). They are available as a set for a nominal feel plus a charge to cover the cost of postage and handling. For details email: *rmitdesignarchives@rmit.edu.au*
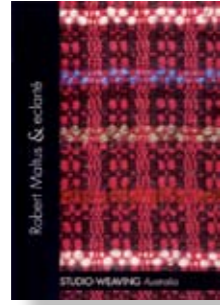
eclarté & Robert Maltus studio-weaving Australia

The eclarté Collection includes media clippings, and information files compiled by the RDA.
Publication:
20.5 x 29.5 cm, 24 pages

The Robert Maltus Collection includes media clippings and slides donated by Adrianus Janssens, and information files compiled by the RDA. Publication: 20.5 x 29.5 cm, 24 pages

Gloweave

The Gloweave Collection includes media clippings, photographs, film and promotional material donated by Saul Same AM, and information files compiled by the RDA.
Publication: 33 x 24cm, 104 pages.

Moylans Woollens Company

The Moylan Woollens Collection includes swatchbooks, media clippings, photographs and promotional material donated by Fred Moylan AM, and information files compiled by the RDA.
Publication:
20.5 x 29.5 cm, 20 pages.

Prestige Fabrics Design Studio

The Prestige Collection includes media clippings, drawings, photographs and correspondence donated by Gerhard Herbst, and information files compiled by the RDA.
Publication:
20.5 x 29.5 cm, 16 pages.

Prue Acton

The Prue Acton Collection includes media clippings, drawings, photographs, correspondence, toiles, business records, and promotional material donated by Prue Acton OBE, and information files compiled by the RDA.
Publication:
Exhibition catalogue *'Prue Acton: Racing Ahead. Melbourne Cup Outfits 1979-1991)*, 21 x 21cm, 12 pages.

RMIT DESIGN ARCHIVES
SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN
UPDATE 0109

'There is a growing self-consciousness about the fact that all scholarship is implicitly a negotiation with, an interpretation of, and a contribution to the archive'.

Marlene Manoff
2004

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As the RMIT Design Archives lays down the infrastructure, systems, processes and collections that will enable future growth and productive research, we also acknowledge that in this early phase of development there is the opportunity to reflect on the nature of the archive itself.

As Marlene Manoff has recently observed, the last decade or so has seen 'a striking growth of interest in the concept of the archive outside of the library and archival communities' as 'historians, literary critics, philosophers, sociologists, anthropologists, geographers, political scientists, and others' all interrogate its meaning and its political and social dimensions.

She quotes Irving Velody who noted that all our appeals to 'ultimate truth, adequacy and plausibility' in research 'rest on archival presuppositions.' The implications of the archive in the political process are also profound as Derrida has argued, there being 'no political power without control of the archive, if not memory. Effective democratization can always be measured by this essential criterion: the participation in and access to the archive, its constitution and its interpretation.'

We only have to think about the 'archiving' function of our software, to ponder our exponentially expanding galleries of staff and student work to understand the ramifications of the archive on our practice as academics, designers and theorists. There is, indeed, a great deal at stake in the contemporary archive, and the RDA sees that one of its roles in the School and wider community is to facilitate discussion and debate about the archive in all its formations.

Professor Harriet Edquist, DIRECTOR

Marlene Manoff, '*Theories of the Archive from Across the Disciplines*', Portal: Libraries and the Academy vol. 4, no.1, 2004, pp.9-25; quoting Irving Velody, '*The Archive and the Human Sciences: Notes towards a Theory of the Archive*, History of the Human Sciences vol. 11 no. 4, November 1998 and Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans Eric Prenowitz, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1995.

Cover
Simone LeAmon
Lepidoptera,
chair, 2009 (detail)
Photo: Sean Kelly

STILL – Products designed by Victorian industrial designers still in production.

Ian Wong

In Victoria it is possible to know who played back pocket for Collingwood in Round 3 in 1949. It is a little harder to find out who designed the Safe n Sound baby capsule, a local innovative product that has seen millions of babies safely home from hospital.

Since returning to lecture in Industrial Design at RMIT University I have commenced a research project which aims to document the work of industrial designers in Victoria. Since November 2008 research has included interviews, factory visits, alumni records, examining archives and publications at the State Library of Victoria and collation of product images, mostly from online auction sites like eBay. An important collection of products designed and made in Melbourne is also being assembled.

In July as part of State of Design Festival at the Royal Exhibition Building the first of a series of exhibitions of this work will be staged. STILL09 showcases products designed by Victorian industrial designers that are still in production, some of them 50 years after their first appearance. What is it about these products that sees them still in production today? A visual timeline will document the work in progress with approximately 100 products identified from over 80 designers.

The exhibition will feature many RMIT Industrial Design alumni, displaying examples of their work that has endured. Alumni include: Lionel Suttie (Lecturer 1975-1980, 1987-1989), Edward Kayser 1958, Richard Carlson 1959, Robert Pataki 1972, Gerrard Mussett 1978, Phillip Slattery 1979, and Alphons van Mahen 1984.

The first concept designs for the baby capsule by the way were by Robert Pataki and Phillip Slattery in 1982 based on a working in-principle concept and prototype provided by the client. Robert had started Robert Pataki & Associates in 1977 after leaving a senior position at Philips CID in Clayton. The baby capsule was developed by PA Design (Robert Pataki Design) and Safe n Sound, and won the Prince Philip Design Award in 1985.

STATE of DESIGN
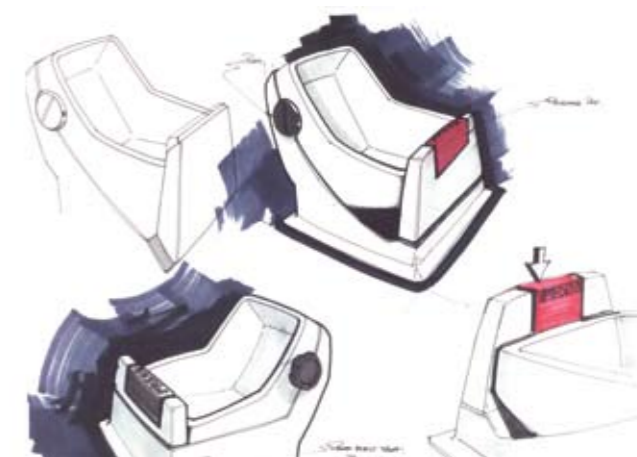
Above
Gerrard Mussett, Phillip Slattery and Alphons van Maanen, Oates All Australian mop bucket, 1985

Richard Carlson, Decor BYO wine cooler, 1975

Edward Kayser, Nylex Six Pack Esky, 1984

Robert Pataki and Phillip Slattery (concept sketches by Phillip Slattery), Britax Safe n Sound Baby Capsule, 1985

The Michael O'Connell Project

Harriet Edquist

In 2008 the RMIT Design Archives acquired by donation from Christopher Wood (UpDate08) a textile featuring the work of Anglo-Australian textile designer and artist, Michael O'Connell.

Initial research was undertaken to provide a context for the textile design. In the intervening months the project has expanded as material has come to light in public and private collections in Australia and England and the extent and significance of O'Connell's career have become clearer.

The research to date has followed several avenues including research trips to public collections that hold his work – the National Gallery of Australia, the National Gallery of Victoria, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Museum of English Rural Life Reading, UK. Private collections in Melbourne and London have also revealed examples of work, and we are fortunate in having the support of O'Connell's son, Seamus, in our research. An equally valuable resource has been the memories and knowledge of those who knew or worked with O'Connell; this oral history has provided a useful counterweight to the published accounts of his life and work and is particularly relevant in reconstructing the English career.

In addition scholars and curators in Australia and England who have worked on O'Connell material or the history of twentieth-century textile design have been generous with their insights and information, suggesting contacts and leads. O'Connell family archives have revealed examples of O'Connell's work as a watercolour artist in Melbourne in the 1920s, rare documentation of his house in Beaumaris, his extensive circle of friends among members of the Arts and Crafts Society of Victoria, and images of early production long gone. From these sources we have been able to identify the full repeat designs represented in different fragments held in the RDA. Family archives have also revealed the extent of O'Connell's work as a designer of cement garden furniture in the late 1920s. This surprisingly successful and important aspect of his career can now be well documented through extant examples, photographic records and articles. Furthermore, O'Connell continued to produce this type of work at The Chase, his house at Perry Green, Hertfordshire, UK, for private use and sale.

The RMIT Design Archives is compiling a catalogue of published resources which, particularly those covering O'Connell's Australian years, indicate how well-known and influential he was as a modernist designer. His impact as a teacher in this institution in the early 1930s is also slowly being revealed. Importantly, the project is beginning to elucidate the vexed and as yet unresolved question about Ella O'Connell's contribution to the production of Michael O'Connell's works.

In 2011 Harriet Edquist and curator Tansy Curtin will curate a retrospective exhibition of O'Connell's work at the Bendigo Art Gallery.

Clockwise from left:

Michael O'Connell in workshop at 'Barbizon' Beaumaris, c1931. Photo: Courtesy Seamus O'Connell.

Michael O'Connell wall hanging, fragment, c1931. RDA Collection. Photo: RDA. (c) Michael O'Connell. All rights reserved, Viscopy/ DACS 2009

Michael and Seamus O'Connell with Melbourne sculptor Ola Cohn at The Chase, Perry Green, c1950. Photo: Courtesy Seamus O'Connell

Sunday at The Hoops, Perry Green, Much Hadham, Hertfordshire, c1950s. *Left to right:* Ella O'Connell, Bay Daintree, Henry Moore, Irina Moore, Major Daintree, Cynthia Thompson with son, John Thompson, Michael O'Connell. **Photo: Courtesy Seamus O'Connell**

'*Well you ask me 'bout the clothes I wear...*' Dress and Identity in Australian pop and rock 1970–2010

Sue Ryan

Focused on Australian pop and rock music from 1970 this thesis explores how musicians use dress to create and develop a public image, and uncovers the Australian designers who assisted them.

The history of Australian music includes many iconic garments that became synonymous with a musician, a band, or an era. Australian popular musicians have demonstrated the ability of dress to project a particular attitude, to play with gender, or mythologise nationalist sentiments. They have drawn on the talents of local designers and some have themselves been designers, and also been open to influence by overseas dress and music trends. While many musicians adopted a specific style that became a virtual trademark, some Australian musicians with longer careers demonstrated an evolution of style similar to the metamorphoses of international artists such as David Bowie and Madonna.

Research for this thesis has drawn on a variety of sources including music and fashion publications, audio and video, costumes, and interviews with musicians, designers, and key media people. Collection sources have included the Performing Arts Collection (Melbourne) and Powerhouse Museum (Sydney). As well, the RMIT Design Archives has Australian issues of *Vogue, Harper's Bazaar, MODE, Elle,* and less widely published magazines such as *Australian Style* and *Stiletto,* both rich sources of images and interviews with musicians. Photographs of musicians dressed by designers have been located in the Prue Acton Collection and the Fashion Design Council (FDC) Collection. These include a very early example (c1960s) of the synergy between fashion and music – a photograph of a model wearing a Prue Acton design, posed with two members of Australian band *The Flies.*

The photography is from the Melbourne studio of Helmut Newton and Henry Talbot. Newton went on to fame as a fashion / celebrity photographer whose later music portraits would include Michael Hutchence of *INXS.* The FDC Collection also includes street magazines which feature musicians and credit the designers of the garments they are wearing, which is invaluable as the designers were not often credited in mainstream magazines. Designers featured include Martin Grant, worn by Kate Ceberano, and Ian McMaugh, worn by Martin Plaza of *Mental As Anything.* Grant went on to establish an atelier in Paris and international recognition, and McMaugh's designs were also favoured by Kylie Minogue.

Above: Australian band Daddy Cool, Sunbury 1974. Photo: Rennie Ellis. Courtesy © Rennie Ellis Photographic Archive

Simone LeAmon (b.1971)

Simone LeAmon is a designer and contemporary artist, and winner of the National Gallery of Victoria's 2009 Cicely & Colin Rigg Contemporary Design Award, this year for seat furniture. The RMIT Design Archives welcomes LeAmon's initial donation of digital image files which will be supplemented with physical artefacts from her personal archive which dates to her formative training at Victorian College of the Arts (VCA).

LeAmon studied sculpture at the VCA which was followed by time at Workshop 3000 working for Australian design luminary Susan Cohn. In the years to follow LeAmon was a founding partner in *n+1 equals* inter-disciplinary design studio in Melbourne. In 2004 she received a Master of Design in Industrial Design from RMIT University's School of Architecture + Design, through whose Graduate Research Conferences she 'consumed conversations about design like you consume food'. LeAmon cites designer and architect, Michael Trudgeon; jeweller and tableware designer, Susan Cohn; and industrial designer, Kjell Grant, as practitioners whose design work and approach have been influential.

LeAmon has developed product designs and concepts for lighting, furniture, interior accessories, graphics, motorcycle apparel, fashion and jewellery. The range of media practised by LeAmon includes drawing, painting, sculpture, performance and digital media. Her long fascination with the machismo of moto culture, the transference of desire and passion for products that tell a story through process and material, have been central to LeAmon's practice.

LeAmon intends that her design pieces, including the award winning chair, Lepidoptera, engender novel experiences within the user. In the case of Lepidoptera, which embodies references to a butterfly's wing and the automotive interior, as well as issues of climate change, technology, structure and aesthetics, LeAmon was interested to watch a woman visitor to the Cicely Rigg exhibition hug herself and say that she could imagine grabbing Lepidoptera's arms and pulling them around and encasing herself. This episode encompassed the elements of a philosophy that LeAmon espouses; that one might engage with her designs in a way that moves beyond a typical response.

LeAmon's art and design work have featured in publications and exhibitions in Australia and internationally since 1995. Exhibitions include: *Cicely and Colin Rigg Contemporary Design Award*, National Gallery of Victoria 2009; *Australia Indesign*, Design Tide Tokyo 2008; *Freestyle: New Australian design for living*, Milan Triennale 2008; *Bombay Sapphire Design Discovery Award*, Object: Australian Centre for Craft and Design 2008; *Design in the Fast Lane FORMULA 1™ ING* Australian Grand Prix 2007; *Anytime Soon. Australia*, 1000 Eventi Milan, Salon de Mobile 2006, *Quiet Collision*, Association Viafarini Milan 2005 and *MotoShowroom* Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces, Melbourne 2003.

LeAmon is an active advocate for design in the community. She is the founding director of O.S INITIATIVE, a company that delivers design and creative strategies for clients in manufacturing, design, publishing and events. She is the inaugural creative director for Planex, Australia's leading manufacturer of storage and accessories, and is the Australasian ambassador for Oluce, a major Italian lighting designer and manufacturer. LeAmon was identified in the 2007 publication *& Fork* by Phaidon Press, UK, as one of the world's most exciting up-and-coming designers.
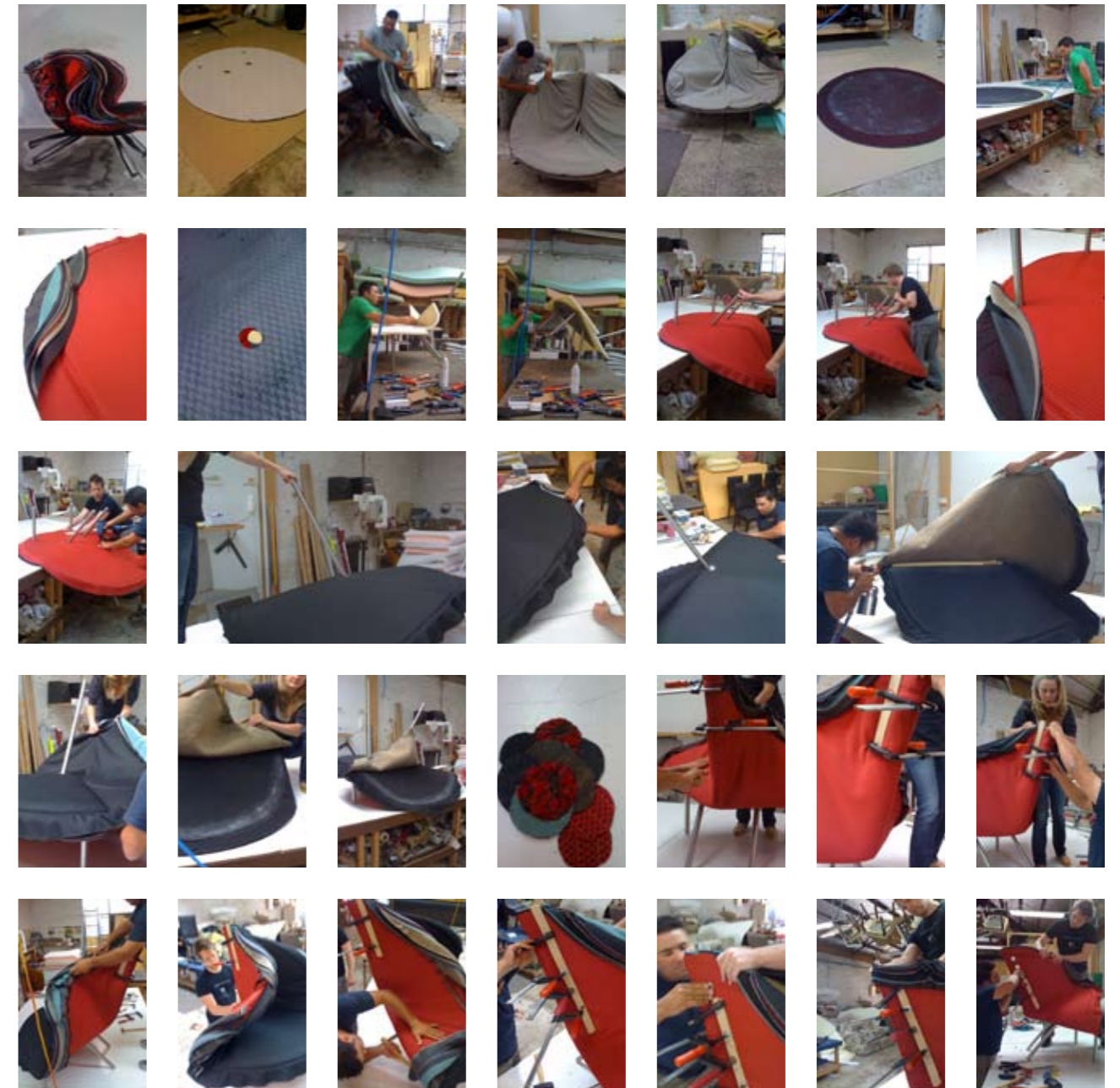
Simone LeAmon at Award presentation. Photo: Sean Kelly

Above: Simone LeAmon, *Lepidoptera*, drawings, 2008. Photos: Simone LeAmon
Opposite (top): Simone LeAmon, *Lepidoptera*, chair, 2009. Photo: Sean Kelly
Opposite: Award winning *Lepidoptera* chair under construction at the workshop of upholsterer Frederic Bizouard. Photos: Simone LeAmon and Chris Buerckner

The RMIT Design Archives has embarked on a long-term project, *Mapping Melbourne Design*, through which it will build research and collections around specific streets and precincts that are recognised as design hubs. The collections to date comprise archives donated by individuals and organisations, as well as files about the life and works of designers and design practices compiled by the Archives.

Collins Street Collection

Two recent acquisitions focus attention on the thriving life of the 'Top End' of Collins Street, well-known in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as the capital of Melbourne retail and fashion.

Laurie Carew's archive documents his thirty-year career as a visual merchandiser at Georges while the archives of Diane Masters lends a fascinating insight into her years as a fashion 'mannequin' in the 1950s and 1960s modelling at department stores and boutiques like Georges and Le Louvre and in the prestigious Australian Gown of the Year competition.

This archive, which includes photographs by Athol Shmith, Helmut Newton and Bruno Benini, provides a rare personal viewpoint from which to examine the more familiar public history of fashion in the post-war years of Melbourne and Australia. The RDA holds the archive of couturier Hall Ludlow (*Update8*) to which Diane Masters has recently added material.

Above:
Laurie Carew, Georges window, resort fashion c1970s.
Photo: Irvine Green Pty Ltd

Opposite (left, upper): Laurie Carew (Fred Asmussen, Display Manager), Myer window - gowns and lamps, Spring 1950. Photo: Ritter-Jeppesen Studios. **(left, lower)** Laurie Carew, Georges window, Spring fashion 1969. Photo: Edwin G Adamson Pty Ltd - Irvine Green
Opposite (right, upper): Diane Masters modelling Hall Ludlow 'Flame Petal' gown at Ludlow's Collins Street salon, 1958. Photo: Athol Shmith. Reproduced with permission **(right, inset):** Diane Masters modelling wool 'sac' dress at salon parade. Photo: camera centre, Collins Street

Laurie Carew Archive

Gift of Laurie Carew

5 Lever Arch files of printed material, photographs, slides, ephemera and media clippings relating to Myer and Georges

This gift comprises documentation of Laurie Carew's career as a visual merchandiser for Myer from 1950 to 1954 and Georges from 1954 until 1983. Carew was born in Deniliquin in 1926 on the family property, Selbourne. His early career at Alex Miller in Deniliquin was interrupted by the war and then, in 1948, by the lure of Sydney and the challenge of putting his talents to the test in the large prestigious city department store, David Jones. By 1950 Carew relocated to Melbourne where he came under the influence of the legendary Frederick Asmussen at Myer with whom he worked for four years before moving to Georges at 162 Collins Street. The archive is rich in photographs, including many of Carew's window displays for Myer and Georges, fashion parades, and rare installation shots of exhibitions held at Georges Gallery which was a significant player in the promotion of modern art and design. In addition there is a collection of Georges ephemera including copies of the *Georges Gazette*, invitations, wrapping paper, boxes and carry bags. Carew's memoir *Behind Glass* was published by the School of Architecture & Design, RMIT, in 2003.

Diane Masters Archive

Gift of Diane Masters

6 Lever Arch files of media clippings and photographs

This gift comprises material documenting the career of Diane Masters as a fashion model in the 1950s and 1960s and fashion illustrator, exhibition curator, journalist and fashion advocate from the1960s to the present. Masters began modelling for Georges in 1949 having returned from three years in England working in the film industry and as a fashion artist and journalist. The gift is strong in documentation of her modelling work for Georges, Le Louvre, and other fashion houses and couturiers including Sir Norman Hartnell and Hall Ludlow. Less well known, but documented in these albums, is Masters' roles, when living in Newcastle from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s, as President of the Golden Light Committee of the Royal New South Wales Institution for Deaf and Blind Children, as a fashion columnist for the Age in the 1970s and as President of the Friends of the Victorian College for the Arts in the 1980s and '90s. This donation, which documents Masters' own life and career, together with the archives of Hall Ludlow and architect Frederick Romberg, gifted in 2008, and, Masters' seminal work in transferring the legacy, in 1994, of textile designer Frances Burke, is testimony to the donor's personal commitment to careful and thorough documentation of Melbourne's design history.

Frances Burke MBE (1907–1994)

The RMIT Design Archives has acquired six textile works by Frances Burke from visual artist and curator, Anna Sande, and discussions are underway for the donation of a number of other works by Burke which have been on long term loan.
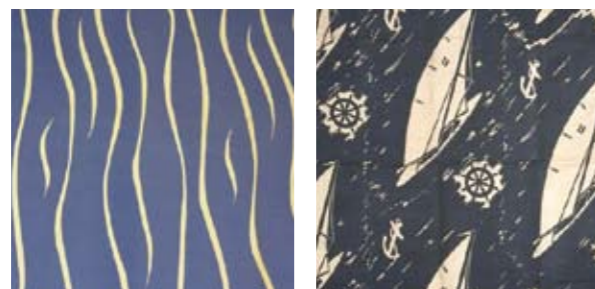
Together with donations by Burke; her lifelong partner, Fabie Chamberlin, and other donors, the RDA is in receipt of robust documentation of Burke's practice. This includes textile designs, written works, correspondence, certificates and awards, personal papers and family photographs.

Frances Burke studied art at Melbourne Technical College (now RMIT University) and the National Gallery School. In 1937 Burke and Morris Holloway established Burway Prints, Australia's first registered screen printery and in 1942 the business became Frances Burke Fabrics. In 1948 Burke opened a retail outlet Good Design (later New Design) in Hardware Lane, Melbourne.

Burke's strongly-patterned modernist fabric designs were commissioned by many local and interstate architects and designers for domestic and institutional interiors, including universities, libraries and theatres. Burke was an active promoter of modern Australian design. In 1947 she was a founding member of the Society of Designers for Industry together with Grant Featherston, Frederick Ward, R Haughton James and Selwyn Coffey and in 1958 a founding member of the Industrial Design Institute of Australia (now the Design Institute of Australia). She was a member of the Council of the Museum of Modern Art and Design from 1958–1966. In 1970 Burke was awarded an MBE for services to design and in 1987 became the recipient of RMIT University's first award of an honorary degree of Doctor of Arts.

Sande met Burke in the late 1970s and, concerned that Burke's status as a design visionary may eventually be lost to history, gained permission from the designer to photograph the collection. Burke also gave Sande a selection of works. These, including well-known designs from the 1940s and 50s such as *Birdflight* (c1937), *Bal* (1945) and *Canna Leaf* (1951) form part of the recent acquistion.

Above (top to bottom):
Frances Burke, *Bal*, fabric length, 1945
Frances Burke, *Canna Leaf*, fabric length, 1951
Frances Burke, *starfish motif*, fabric length, c1947
Frances Burke, *Tiger Stripe*, fabric length, c1939
Frances Burke, *Yacht*, fabric length, c1939
Frances Burke, *Birdflight*, fabric length, c1937
Photos RDA

Left: This donation comprises two sets of curtains.
A gift of the Estate of Lorraine Emden-Snook (2009)

Above: Alfredo Bouret, 'Mexican' drawings, mid 1950s.
Photo: RMIT University - Alumni & Development.

ABC TV

Brigid Donovan, a producer of *Australian Story*, ABC TV, visited the RMIT Design Archives to research Australian fashion designer, Jenny Bannister, for the series. The RDA holds the archives of the Fashion Design Council (FDC) of which Bannister was a member in the 1980s.

Donovan was particularly interested in viewing the videos of Fashion Design Council parades, which include backstage footage of the designers as well as showing their work on the catwalk.

HERITAGE VICTORIA

Heritage Victoria interviewed RMIT Design Archives Director, Harriet Edquist, about designers of the 1950s and 1960s, for its website '*What House is That*'.
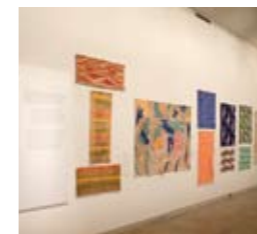
The interview is accompanied by six images of Frances Burke designs reproduced with permission from the RDA: *Angel Fish* (1951), *Waramu* (1945), *Menu* (c 1950-1960), *The Hunt* (1942), *Willy* (1945), and *Shields* (1965).

A RARE GIFT OF GLAMOUR

Alfredo Bouret cultural gift
The gift of original drawings by Mexican-born fashion illustrator Alfredo Bouret which are now housed at the RMIT Design Archives (*Update08*) has been highlighted in the RMIT publication *Supporting the Vision: Philanthropic Gifts 2008*. The donated collection is the most significant and comprehensive survey of Bouret's work in the world, with only a few drawings held at Sydney's Powerhouse Museum and in private collections. The works had remained with the donor in Australia for several decades, only occasionally being accessed for exhibition purposes. For copies of the publication contact RMIT University Alumni and Development: *giving@rmit.edu.au*

CORRECTIONS

We apologise to photographer, David Pidgeon, and Heide Museum of Modern Art, for omitting the following credit line from the article about the 'Savage Luxury' exhibition featured in the section, In The Community in *Update08*.
Savage Luxury: Modernist Design in Melbourne 1930 –1939
Heide Museum of Modern Art 14 July – 4 November 2007 (Installation view)
Photographer: David Pidgeon 2007 © Heide Museum of Modern Art and David Pidgeon

We apologise to Geoffrey Woodfall, and photographer, Bill Wright, for the incorrect birthdate and credit line published in the article about the Woodfall Collection featured in the section, Recent Acquisitions – Architecture Archive in *Update08*.
Correct details are:
Geoffrey Woodfall (b1931)
Above: Geoffrey Woodfall, Woolnorth Homestead, Tasmania, dining room, c1969.
Photo: Bill Wright