

## Wenceslaus Hollar - The Habits of English Women

Etchings by Wenceslaus Hollar

From Saturday 4 April - Sunday 9 August 2009

### New Eyes on an old Century

Are you tired of difficult contemporary art, sick of recession and looking for a little in-depth perspective? Then escape into the luxurious possibilities of the Seventeenth century with the latest exhibition at Hawke's Bay Museum & Art Gallery, Napier.

Amongst the long hidden treasures of the Hawke's Bay Museum & Art Gallery, is the only New Zealand held copy of *Ornatus Muliebris Anglicanus*, the masterpiece of the Seventeenth century etcher Wenceslaus Hollar.

Although there are over 500 examples of Hollar's works in Te Papa, Auckland Art Gallery and Christchurch Art Gallery only Hawke's Bay holds *Ornatus Muliebris Anglicanus: The Severall Habits of English Women, from the Nobilitie to the Contry Woman, as they are in these times, 1640.*

A gift of estate of Miss Agnes Elizabeth Atkins, the series of 26 etchings arrived at the museum in 1936. The charming series depicts women's costume from the 1640s, largely concentrating on the ornate possibilities offered to the nobility but reserving one etching plate for the depiction of a servant girl – where the others carry flowers she carries carrots.

Prague-born, Wenceslaus Hollar (1607– 677) was famous for his documentation of a wide variety of subjects from everyday life. These etchings represent works from the artists' best period, when he worked under the patronage of English art collector Lord Arundel.

To accompany the etchings Hawke's Bay Museum & Art Gallery, is also exhibiting works of Seventeenth century furniture from its collection.

Museum & Art Gallery Director Douglas Lloyd Jenkins says:

*This is an excellent opportunity to bring some of our rarer treasures into the light. The exhibition provides a timely reminder to most New Zealanders that their arts and design heritage stretches back into English culture as does the museums treasures. That sense of a complex history is in itself is something to revel in – at least every now and then.*

Designed by the award winning team behind *Black Dress White Vase*, this intimate exhibition *Wenceslaus Hollar: The Habits of English Women* is sure to entrance visitors.

Ask about the conservation project currently in place to preserve the Wenceslaus Hollar collection for later generations.

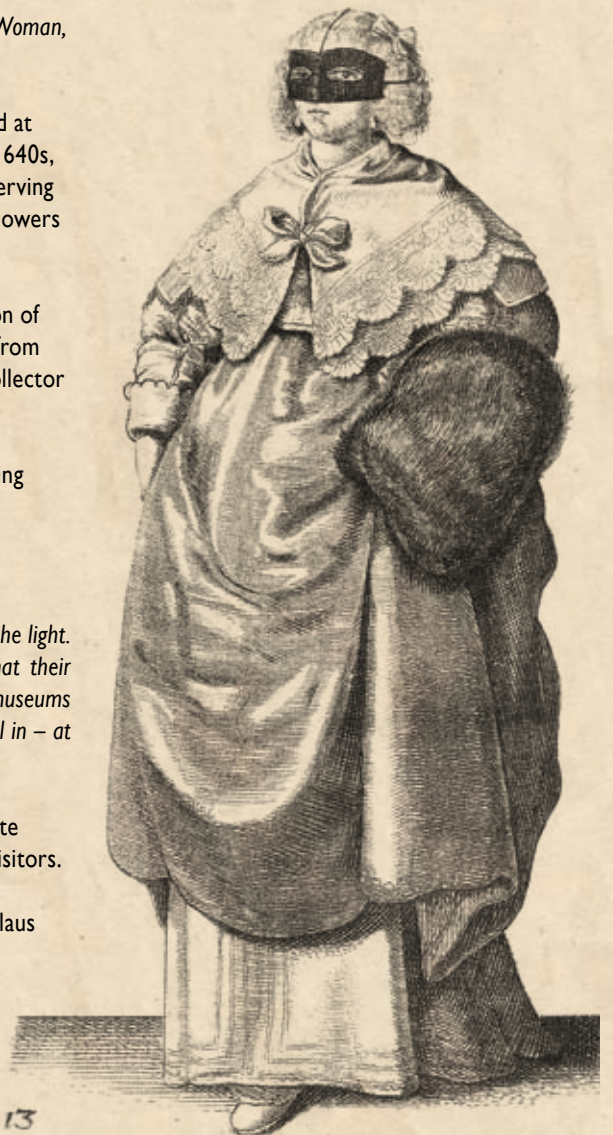
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