

## **‘The museum eye must be abandoned’: figureheads as popular art**

*Georgina*, also known as *The Spanish Lady*, was found at Deptford. A figurehead, she belonged to a British merchant ship of the early nineteenth century, but apart from that not much is known about her origins. At certain times her beauty has attracted considerable attention, although she has also experienced periods of neglect. As Figure 1 reveals, she is currently restored to a high standard. Displayed in a controlled environment, her days at sea, exposed to the elements and crashing through surf, are long gone.

*Georgina* appears several times throughout this article and her story is central to this exploration of the figurehead when removed from its original context of display on a ship. There, it served a precise purpose in identification, denoting the ship’s name and representing the ship’s owner and the community that was her crew. Detached from her parent vessel when it was either broken up, scuttled or wrecked, *Georgina* went on to become part of a group of figureheads that were collected by a very particular individual. Though each had traversed different environments and had different meanings attached at different times, these figureheads, each separated by varying degrees from their original place and purpose, were united in their shared state of severance and by the attention paid them by their collector. Beginning with a consideration of the way these figureheads came together, and the way they were displayed as a collection, this article moves on to discuss their subsequent redisplay and re-presentation.

During their working lives, figureheads, positioned on the bowsprit, often sustained damage from rough seas and exposure. Some had removable parts, such as arms or other protruding features, which could be ‘unshipped’ before long voyages and stowed until arrival at port. Figureheads were repainted regularly and cared for by the ship’s crew, but once detached after the demise of the parent vessel, the figurehead would lead a very different existence. The collection we will consider here also has an interesting history, with dramatic peaks and troughs in terms of its visibility and significance to different audiences at particular moments. This article brings one, hitherto forgotten but highly significant, moment of display to the fore.

The merchant marine enthusiast Sydney Cumbers was born in 1875. While a boy he lost one eye in an accident and was fitted with a glass replacement. After the First World War, the presence of so many disabled and disfigured ex-servicemen made him feel less conspicuous, and the need to disguise his own injury diminished. He threw away the prosthetic eye and replaced it with an eye-patch. As he recounted, ‘I received several nicknames – such



1. *Georgina (The Spanish Lady)*, nineteenth century, wood, 102 x 77 x 64 cm. Photographed in 2013 at *Cutty Sark* (photo: author, courtesy of the Cutty Sark Trust)

as “Captain Cook” and “Nelson”, but “Long John Silver” seemed to be the favourite among my friends, so I adopted it as my nom-de-mer...”<sup>1</sup> A Londoner, Cumbers was director of a successful printing ink business located in the East End, but he kept his working life and his personal interests apart. In 1932 he acquired a house at Gravesend, named *The Look Out*, on the bank of the River Thames. Here he intended to display the collection of maritime objects that he had amassed since childhood.

Rather than keeping his collection locked away or in a separate place, Cumbers surrounded himself with it (fig. 2). He spent three years organizing its display and in 1935 he held a party to celebrate the realization of his project, inviting guests to participate in the spectacle he had created. The different parts of *The Look Out* were arranged like a ship, with rooms named ‘the quarter deck’, ‘the hurricane deck’ and ‘the foc’s’le’, with the collection providing the props for a performance that blurred the boundaries of life on land and at sea, and in which Cumbers

– or rather Captain Long John Silver as he was known when in residence – played a central role. Indulged by his wife, known as ‘Mate’, he dressed and also spoke in character.<sup>2</sup> As one visitor recorded, ‘the passage of time is not marked by an ordinary clock but by a ship’s bell, which records the watches. It looks like a ship, it sounds like a ship and it feels like a ship.’<sup>3</sup> Photographs of the interior also reveal a curious blend of the trappings of a museum, with display cases and sequenced arrangements, but in a setting on a scale that is clearly domestic. Cumbers’ figureheads were displayed throughout *The Look Out*, high up on the walls or ranked against them, overseeing the life of their owner and placed in relation to models of ships and a variety of maritime objects: whaling harpoons, scrimshaw, hurricane lamps and lifebelts. The arrangements reveal a deliberate symmetry, and certainly sensitivity to the spatial and formal relationship between things. A central room was named ‘Valhalla’ and here the shrine-like placing of its contents gave the whole a devotional charge (fig. 3). While many of these objects were once mobile and part of working environments, sailors and seafarers created others as souvenirs or as a demonstration of a particular skill. Yet some elements of the displays were devised simply to enhance the nautical effect, such as the tanks of fish placed behind portholes to suggest the experience of being at sea.

Photographs of the interior of *The Look Out* reveal how, in this enclosed environment, the figureheads faced inwards, contrary to their intended outward-facing thrusting position on a bowsprit. In some instances, smaller figureheads were tilted by means of a wire connected to the wall behind,

yet they remained confined and in close proximity, assuming a strange relationship to each other. Strikingly, the scale of each figure differed and this as much as anything provoked a disjuncture signalling their different ordinary contexts. So too, did the quality of craftsmanship exhibited by each. As one visitor noted:

sometimes it was the Foreman Carpenter of the ship-yard who carved and chiselled [*sic*] them, sometimes rather roughly it is true, but always with a love for their work. But, alas, love of work does not replace the talent born into the sculptor. This is a conclusion to which one is inevitably driven. There is no doubt whatsoever that the Lady with the Rose is not the work of a Foreman Carpenter, unless some great sculptor worked at one time in that capacity. In many of these works there are very evident traces of the creative genius of the artist.<sup>4</sup>

Captain Long John Silver enjoyed visitors and sharing his collection with others. He sought neither to promote nor conceal his enthusiasm. He was known about, as collectors often are, particularly by other collectors, and he had a network of contacts built up over a lifetime. Some of his figureheads were found in and around ports and woodyards where the parts of wrecked or broken-up ships ended up, some were sourced through antique dealers, and some were spotted in gardens or pubs. One figurehead in his collection was found propping up a chicken shed. The Silver Collection grew to include 101 figureheads, and around the same number of ship models, as well as miscellanea.<sup>5</sup> As he described it:

Relics and souvenirs and pictures such as ships' wheels, parts of ships wrecked, side and mast head lights, anchor's light, lead lines, log lines, lifebuoys, pictures, documents, etc. are all from ships that were well known in their day and have been used at sea. Each one has a personal



2. Sydney Cumbers at The Look Out, Gravesend, c.1940  
(photo: Hunter Figurehead Archives)



3. The room named 'Valhalla' at The Look Out c.1940. The figurehead on the far wall is the *Lady of the Rose*, the figure in the foreground to the left, *Arabella* (photo: Hunter Figurehead Archives)

touch and a romantic halo which above all appeals to the collector.<sup>6</sup>

Deeply committed to the history of the British merchant marine, Cumbers was particularly moved, during the Second World War, by the role of the merchant fleet at Dunkirk. After the war, he installed a memorial board dedicating his collection to the seamen who had participated in the evacuation of 1940. Embedding it among his treasures, Cumbers carefully arranged objects around the memorial, crossed oars above and symmetrically aligned cased models and 'ships in bottles' below, with figureheads flanked in a guard of honour. In this way, the figureheads, originally

crafted with specific commemorative and representational intent – be it of national heroes, royalty, mythological figures or shipowners' daughters – became, in accumulation, an 'unintentional monument'. This term, devised by the art historian Alois Riegl at the turn of the twentieth century, which we might usefully borrow, describes objects that come to assume a monumental status over and above their original purpose. As Riegl explained, 'In the case of the intentional monument, its commemorative value has been determined by the makers, while we have defined the value of the unintentional ones.'<sup>7</sup> This helps us to understand the way Cumbers' group of figureheads acquired a unifying commemorative function, one for which they had not been purposefully designed, and which overlay – but did not obscure or overwrite – their original representational intent.

It is also important to bear in mind that the original signification of a figurehead could be modified. Some figureheads assumed a new name when that of the ship to which they were attached changed – often as part of a transfer of ownership – and so the ways and contexts in which they were understood, rather like the layers of paint (often of differing colours) that changed their appearance over the years, was one of accrual. Mobile, on a vessel, as were the groups of seamen who worked with or encountered it, the figurehead was a loyal yet gregarious object, familiar to those in home and much-frequented ports, novel to those in new ones. Cumbers was fully aware of the complexity and the many elisions that comprised the biographies of his figureheads. Susan M. Pearce has described how, on being selected to join a collection, each object remains part of the 'metonymic matrix' from which it derives – in this case, Britain's maritime past – but that it also acquires a new metaphorical function: 'It becomes an image of what the whole is meant to be, and although it remains an intrinsic part of the whole, it is no longer merely a detached fragment because it has become imbued with meaning of its own.'<sup>8</sup>

Interested in the past, of course, Cumbers was also a man of the present, and with the meaning of his collection now updated and the objects put to work with a new commemorative remit, Cumbers, now in his seventies, started to make plans for its future. In 1951, while discussions got underway,

Cumbers was contacted by the artist, writer and designer Barbara Jones. Jones wanted to include some of his collection in an exhibition she was organizing and so she visited him at The Look Out. The exhibition in question was to take place at the Whitechapel Art Gallery. Its topic was English traditional and popular art, and its sub-title, but the title by which it is best known, was taken from a poem of 1813 by the Irish songwriter and entertainer Thomas Moore:

*A Persian's heaven is easily made,  
'Tis but – black eyes and lemonade.*

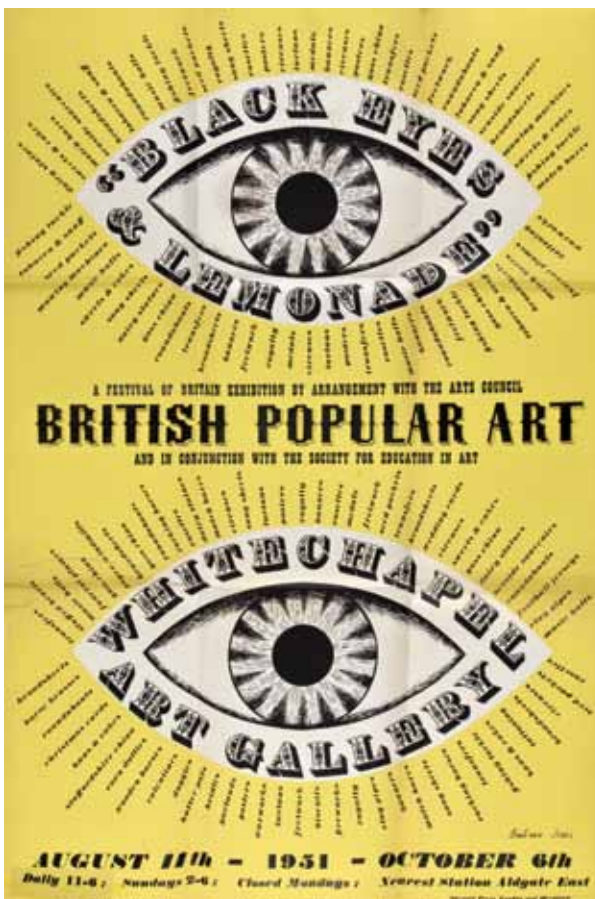
Jones felt that ‘black eyes & lemonade’ expressed, as she put it, ‘the vigour, sparkle and colour of popular art rather better than the words “popular art”’.<sup>9</sup> Perhaps one of the most enticing exhibition titles ever adopted, it made an impact both verbally and visually – for Jones also designed the accompanying poster – attracting huge audiences to the Whitechapel (fig. 4).<sup>10</sup> The exhibition’s title was also indicative of Jones’s approach to the project as a whole, which was provocative and slightly tongue-in-cheek, and which prioritized the gallery-visitor’s visual experience and the inclusion of works from many different makers, manufacturers and collectors.

The idea of the exhibition originated with the Society for Education in Art (SEA), an organization established under the chairmanship of Herbert Read in 1940, and which Henry Moore and Eric Gill both supported. Their aim was to display traditional art with its roots in pre-industrial ways of life

to evidence the social value of art education and the significance of skill development through craft practices.<sup>11</sup> The Director of Art at the Arts Council of Great Britain, Philip James, as co-funder of the project and an advisor to the SEA, had recommended Jones as exhibition organizer. Having made several broadcasts she was a compelling advocate and a recognized authority. During 1949 she had spoken on canal boats and architectural follies, and in 1950 she broadcast on souvenirs. During the late 1940s, her beautifully laid-out illustrated features for the *Architectural Review*, on topics which included automata, roundabouts and the seaside, had attracted notice.<sup>12</sup>

While Jones valued the traditional and the handmade – the exhibition included broadsheets, quilts and corn dollies – she alone among the exhibition’s organizers and supporters celebrated the energy and vibrancy of contemporary and mass-market equivalents. It was this inclusive understanding of popular art that became an issue. The SEA objected to Jones’s interpretation of their theme, for in proposing to include mass-produced objects she challenged their values and upset their

4. Barbara Jones, *Black Eyes & Lemonade* exhibition poster, 1951, Whitechapel Gallery (photo: Courtesy Whitechapel Gallery, Whitechapel Gallery Archive)



intent. Hugh Scrutton, Director of the Whitechapel Art Gallery, defended Jones's point of view, yet while supporting her, his ultimate priority was to reach a workable compromise for the gallery. After much to-ing and fro-ing it was agreed that if Jones arranged things so that the balance between the handmade and the machine-made would be about 50/50, the SEA would leave her to get on with the exhibition uninterrupted.<sup>13</sup>

Papers relating to the planning of the exhibition reveal the evolution of the various themed sections it was to comprise. Initially, the word 'figurehead' appears in a list of potential exhibits associated with 'Work', and there is no indication that Jones had a particular example or collection in mind.<sup>14</sup> Certainly figureheads as exhibits were not in the least contentious, having assumed almost iconic status as objects of popular art. Noel Carrington and Clarke Hutton included an illustration of a figurehead in their book *Popular Art in Britain* (1945) as did Enid Marx and Margaret Lambert in their *English Popular and Traditional Art* (1946), and *English Popular Art* (1951) (fig. 5). Marx and Lambert also owned a figurehead, a turbaned male whom they named the 'Christian Turk'. It formed part of the collection of popular art they built up over the years and which is now held at Compton Verney.<sup>15</sup>

Like Marx and Lambert, Jones was a collector. She acquired items during her travels, from bazaars, secondhand shops and directly from makers, and so a good percentage of the exhibits in *Black Eyes & Lemonade* belonged to her. As the reviewer from the *Evening News* was to quip after the exhibition opened, 'Miss Jones must be finding it wonderful to be able to move freely about the house just now.'<sup>16</sup> Other exhibits, as the loan correspondence reveals, were borrowed from manufacturers, museums and a wide range of organizations including the Bethnal Green branch of the National Union of Railwaymen, the Birmingham Racecourse Company Ltd, and the Arsenal Football Supporters' Club.<sup>17</sup> Jones's collaborators, Tom Ingram and Douglas Newton, and other friends contributed items, as did an interesting list of collectors including Dr John Kirk with his collection of 'bygones' in York, and Arthur Elton, the distinguished documentary film-maker, who loaned objects from the railways, a collection that, on Elton's death, moved to Ironbridge Gorge. It is within the surviving loan correspondence that a sequence of communications with Sydney Cumbers appears.

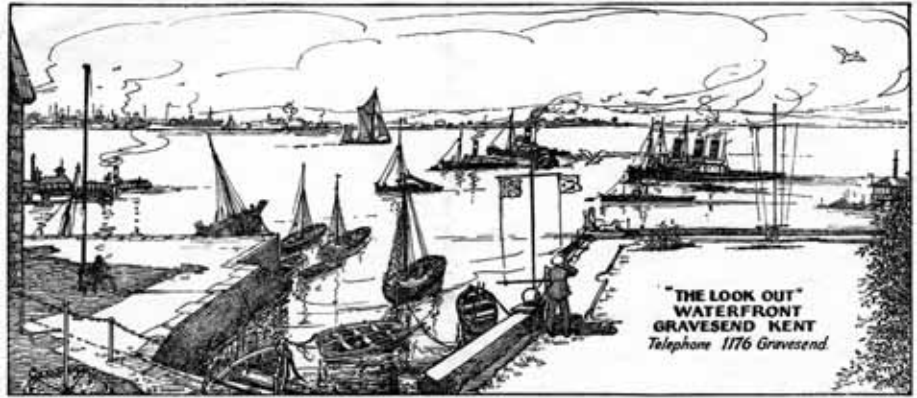
Jones visited Cumbers on Saturday 7 July 1951, just one month before the opening of the exhibition. On 8 July Cumbers wrote to Jones on his distinctive headed notepaper, sending her a

5. Illustration in Noel Carrington and Clarke Hutton, *Popular Art in Britain*, London, Penguin, 1945. The figurehead of HMS *London* forms part of the collections of the National Maritime Museum (photo: University of Brighton Design Archives, courtesy of the estate of Clarke Hutton)



Plate 9 — Figure Head from H.M.S. London

6. Letter from Capt. Long John Silver to Barbara Jones, 8 July 1951 (detail of letterhead). Barbara Jones Archive, University of Brighton Design Archive (photo: University of Brighton Design Archives)



preliminary list of the 'loot' she had selected during her visit to The Look Out, and promising to send her further details of the figureheads she had requested (fig. 6). This was followed by another letter on 16 July, in which Cumbers explained how he had mislaid his book 'with every particular in – gathered over many years and from many sources'. To compensate he had compiled, as he describes it, 'a few brief notes', presumably from memory, with the hope that 'these details will be eno' for the occasion'.<sup>18</sup> They list seven figureheads and, on the subsequent pages, various other items including parts of figureheads, paintings, an old rum bottle, a ship in a bottle, models, various kinds of garland, and scrimshaw work on a sperm whale's tooth. This information duly informed the catalogue entries.

At some point before the exhibition opened, perhaps after the visit to Cumbers, the decision was made to include the figureheads in the section pertaining to 'Transport'. A description of this section and its exhibits appears at the front of the 47-page handlist to the exhibition which was prepared by the poet Douglas Newton, who later went on to join the Museum of Primitive Art in New York and established a reputation as an innovator in the display of non-Western art.<sup>19</sup> Subdivided by the headings 'Ships', 'Canals' and 'The Horse', 19 of the 22 exhibits listed under 'Ships' were credited as loaned by 'Capt L. John Silver'. Newton himself loaned a 'Naval issue bedspread: 20<sup>th</sup> century', and Mrs P. Barker-Mill loaned a lifeboat and paddleboat in beadwork of 1875.<sup>20</sup>

Within the gallery, the figureheads were arranged on a platform (fig. 7). In the centre was placed the full-length figure named *Beda*. Ten feet high, she was originally named Bertha Marion after the daughter of a Liverpool shipowner and adorned a barque dating from 1864. She was renamed *Aralura* in 1879 by the ship's subsequent owners and in 1890, when the ship was sold to a Norwegian, she was renamed *Beda*.<sup>21</sup> At her feet were placed two smaller pieces, a head of *Robbie Burns* dating from 1868, and a head of a woman 'origin unknown', as Cumbers noted on his list. To the left of these was placed *Anne of Cleves*, c.1860, and to the right *Georgina*. Next to her, at the end of the platform, was placed the *Marquis of Lorne* of 1863, and on the other side, *General Havelock* of 1858.<sup>22</sup>

As Figure 7 shows, rather than displaying the figureheads in isolation on separate plinths, Jones created a tableau. Flags representing Wales, England

and Scotland, together with the Union Jack, were arranged behind them and used to cover the low platform on which the figureheads stood. Cumbers' paintings of the SS *Moravian* and the SS *Southern Cross* were placed on the wall, either side of *Beda*, as were two isolated forearms from figureheads: one grasping a money-bag which came from the brig *Pluto* 'wrecked on the estate of the Marquis of Ailsa'; the other, 'origin unknown', holding roses.<sup>23</sup> This ensemble was possibly influenced by the massing of items Jones had encountered during her visit to The Look Out. It achieved a patriotic, if uncanny, effect, emphasized by the visual disjunction created by the mixing of scales and of characters both mythic and historical. This effect was compounded by the divergent upward gazes of the figures, for each was placed in a vertical position, like a figurative sculpture, rather than tilted forward at a steep angle, looking directly ahead in line with the bowsprit, as the carver intended. Indeed, right across the exhibition, shifts in scale were employed to achieve lively visual and spatial relationships. In this respect, the figureheads – along with a milk float, a pony cart and other larger exhibits – fulfilled an important role, since they offset many of the smaller objects and flat items arranged on walls or in cases, such as decorated pins, paper doilies, love spoons and seed packets. Crucially, their acceptability as examples of popular art enabled visitors to be 'eased into' the ideas behind the exhibition before they encountered more challenging exhibits.<sup>24</sup> The

7. Figureheads from the collection of 'Capt. L. John Silver' on display at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, 1951  
(photo: Courtesy Whitechapel Gallery, Whitechapel Gallery Archive)





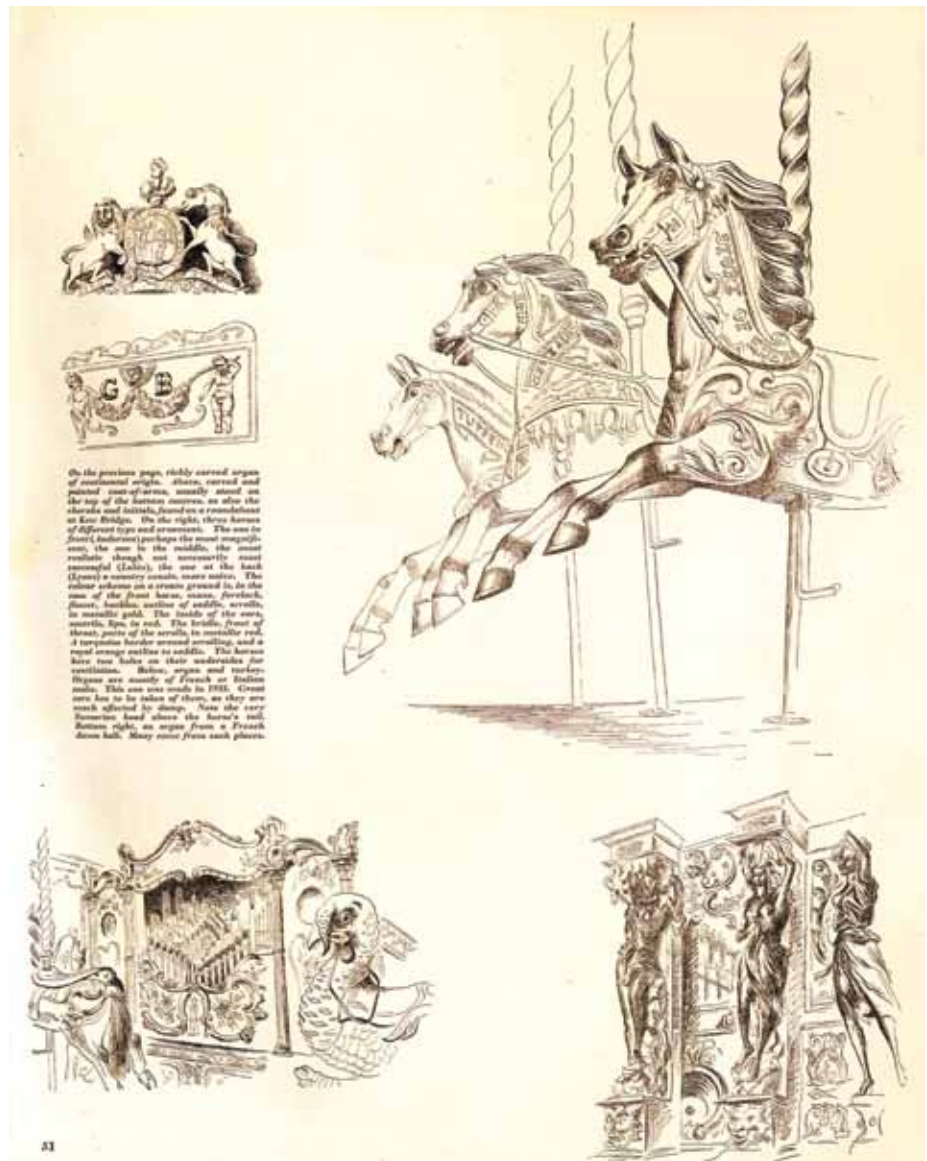
8. Barbara Jones, dust jacket of *The Unsophisticated Arts*, 1951 (photo: Simon Costin)



figureheads also complemented Jones's interest in waxworks, dummies and puppets, a selection of which were arranged in a section of the exhibition entitled 'Man's Own Image'. Here, wax effigies of Queen Caroline and Dr Herz, the late Chief Rabbi, both from Madame Tussaud's, rubbed shoulders with a nineteenth-century phrenologist's bust loaned by the architectural photographer Edwin Smith, two contemporary female hairdressers' busts with wigs, and a ventriloquist's doll.<sup>25</sup> Jones had written about this topic in an article 'Automata and simulacra' published in the *Architectural Review* in 1949, and in turn incorporated in her book *The Unsophisticated Arts*, an anthology of extracts from previous articles and new writing that was published by the Architectural Press just before the opening of *Black Eyes & Lemonade* in the summer of 1951.<sup>26</sup>

*The Unsophisticated Arts* has an extraordinary dust jacket. Having designed many book covers for other authors, Jones was skilled at making a powerful first impression (fig. 8). The front depicts a sailor-like figure with an articulated jaw, perhaps a ventriloquist's puppet, with the book's title tattooed on its chest and the author's name on its arms. As the exhibition poster exemplifies with its text-formed eyelashes, this book jacket also reveals the play between image, object and text that Jones enjoyed. Tattooing was an important aspect of this, and she regarded it as a popular art in its own right.<sup>27</sup> However, of particular interest to this discussion of figureheads is the back cover, where the reader is confronted by the large teeth and flared nostrils of three carousel horses bearing down, the red and white page articulated by Jones's fluent use of negative space and the energy of her lines. In the February 1945 number of the *Architectural Review* there appeared an article by Jones entitled 'Roundabouts: demountable baroque'.<sup>28</sup> Perhaps the most deeply researched of her writings, it included a detailed analysis of fairground carving. Her own powerful drawings and photographs by co-author Eric Brown were essential elements of both the inquiry and its presentation. In their layout, Jones's drawings resembled ethnographic studies, comprising amalgamations of selected views often with annotations (fig. 9).

9. Barbara Jones, drawings as they appeared in the article 'Roundabouts: demountable baroque', *Architectural Review*, XCVII, 578 (1945), pp. 49–60 (photo: Architectural Review)



In 1942 Jones painted a watercolour of a scene at Savage's Yard, the King's Lynn agricultural engineers who produced roundabouts, as part of her work for the Recording Britain project to which she was a significant contributor. (fig. 10)<sup>29</sup> It depicts a fairground horse and two automata, and the music for a fairground organ. A Savage's catalogue and price list was included among the exhibits selected for *Black Eyes & Lemonade*, and there is, in fact, a direct link between Jones's enthusiasm for fairground decoration and figureheads, since figurehead carvers – particularly when demand from the shipbuilding community waned – also carved fairground horses. One of these was the Bristol ship carver John Robert Anderson who, in the 1890s, turned his hand from figureheads to fairground horses, and whose son continued after him.<sup>30</sup> In the late 1940s Jones made a lithograph for the School Print series intended to introduce contemporary art to schoolchildren, entitled *Fairground*. Indeed, Jones was not alone in celebrating this popular baroque. In a special issue of

*Athene* (the journal of the Society for Education in Art) published to coincide with *Black Eyes & Lemonade*, the critic Lawrence Alloway contributed a short essay on figureheads and made reference to Jones's fairground investigations. Entitled 'Marine totems', the article muses on the forms and grand manner of late eighteenth-century figureheads.<sup>31</sup> Alloway writes:

The figurehead must be emblematic and magical: usually monstrous. The great figures lunge forward, as if inciting or dragging their ship forward, yet their movement is perversely arrested by the great sweep of the bows in the opposite direction. These enormous tilted caryatids are carved with dashing monumentality, coarse but strong, carrying well especially in conjunction with the original brilliant polychrome – picking out flashing whites and sensual crimson lips. The cliché-plasticity of the Baroque is evident in the ample forms and curling hair, as well as the diagonal axis; it is at the service of the popular imagination, erecting monsters, guardians, monarchs, furies.

The Whitechapel exhibition certainly captured the popular imagination, and the arresting exuberance of the figureheads, which Alloway captures so well, played no small part in this. During its eight-week run the number of visitors reached a total of 30,754, making *Black Eyes & Lemonade*, fittingly, the gallery's most popular exhibition of the 1950s (the Henry Moore exhibition of 1960 was the first to come close, attracting almost 28,000). While the exhibition was allied to the main programme of the Festival of

Britain, it was developed and produced outside the formal bureaucracy of the Festival of Britain Office. As such, Jones, Ingram and Newton, supported by Hugh Scrutton, enjoyed considerable independence. However, during 1950 and 1951 Jones also worked on elements of the main Festival programme, and as a result she was fully aware of the ways in which the popular was incorporated in the displays at the South Bank and at other Festival locations, including the Pleasure Gardens upstream at Battersea. Jones, as a graduate of the Royal College of Art, was invited to create a lion and unicorn for the eponymous pavilion that was, as many have argued, an idiosyncratic element of the Festival. Jones's three-dimensional lion and unicorn are decorated in the manner of fairground animals and clearly show her knowledge of this vernacular.<sup>32</sup> At the South Bank, however, the overriding theme was one of scientific progress through discovery. A clear narrative and contemporary forms – particularly in the architecture of the pavilions themselves – were arranged in a way to ensure that 'one continuous story' dominated.<sup>33</sup>

10. Barbara Jones, *Savage's Yard, King's Lynn, 1942*, watercolour. Victoria and Albert Museum, London  
(photo: © Victoria and Albert Museum)





11. *Georgina* on display at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, 1951. One of a sequence of press photographs which included this young visitor with her skipping rope  
(photo: Courtesy Whitechapel Gallery, Whitechapel Gallery Archive)

Jones also worked on the Seaside Pavilion that dipped a cautious toe into notions of the British at play, but this was dwarfed by the much more substantial Sea and Ships Pavilion. Designed by Basil Spence and Partners in collaboration with James Holland, this told the story of nautical discovery, of the shipbuilding industry, and developments in maritime technology. Opening the display, elements of the emotional rather than the scientific history of seafaring emerged in a 'brief look-back at the past'.<sup>34</sup> Few photographs of the South Bank reveal the actual exhibits inside the pavilions, since emphasis tended to be placed on the structures, spaces and contemporary art placed alongside them.<sup>35</sup> Establishing what was actually exhibited requires, in fact, close scrutiny of the catalogue, and in the opening 'historic' section we find listed flags, ensigns, models and, among them, figureheads loaned by one Capt. John Silver. In fact, these are the two finest in his collection: the *Lady of the Rose* – possibly from a French nitrate ship – and *Lalla Rookh* of 1856, wrecked

off Prawle Point, Devon in 1873, with her turban and pearl necklace.<sup>36</sup>

It seems likely, then, that Jones came to know of Cumbers through colleagues at the Festival. In fact, several of these colleagues would go on to lend items from their own collections to *Black Eyes & Lemonade*, such as Anthony Hippisley Coxe, the Council of Industrial Design representative on the Festival Presentation Panel, and theme convener of the Seaside Pavilion, but also a collector of circus ephemera. He had wanted elements of the Seaside Pavilion, as he later explained, 'to be "vulgar" in its true sense of "belonging to the crowd"'.<sup>37</sup> At the Whitechapel, then, Barbara Jones was in a position to orchestrate her own event, placing popular art centre stage, and emphasizing ideas about collective making and consumption that would not have aligned with the narrative of the Festival. Her understanding of figureheads centred on the visceral encounter with the past that they provoked and the aura of the 'romantic halo' that Cumbers identified, whereas at the Festival they represented an historical moment that had been overtaken by technological development and a formal rationalism. Indeed, an understanding of the ship in this respect underpins a contemporaneous publication that appeared in the Penguin series *The Things We See*. Entitled *Ships*, and written by the industrial designer David Pye, it makes passing reference to ship decoration and pays most attention to the admirably synthesized properties of ships' structures, particularly the sculptural qualities of the hull.<sup>38</sup> This kind of approach, beloved of the design reform lobby, was exactly what Jones, at the Whitechapel, did her utmost to avoid.<sup>39</sup>

Press interest in *Black Eyes & Lemonade* was considerable and the exhibition featured in national, regional and specialist publications (fig. 11). Throughout the coverage the exhibition received, the figureheads feature significantly in discussion and in reproduction. The journal *Shipbuilding*, perhaps inevitably, selected a photograph of the figureheads grouped together. The *Daily Worker* opted for one of *Georgina*. Its reviewer drew attention to the distinction between handcrafted objects and those produced by manufacturers ‘not on the basis of beauty or purpose but of cheapness and profit’, which he felt ‘cannot be called truly popular. There is a strong case, in fact, for it being called anti-popular.’<sup>40</sup> A similar point was made by a 24-year-old John Berger, whose review for the *New Statesman* had appeared the previous week.<sup>41</sup> One exceptional instance of press interest took a more appropriating line, engaging actively with the exhibits for a particular purpose. A fashion feature entitled ‘Sophisticated and unsophisticated’ appeared in *The Ambassador* – the British export magazine for fashion and textiles – in October 1951 (fig. 12). Located within the *Black Eyes & Lemonade* installation, models in outfits by leading British ready-to-wear companies were positioned alongside the exhibits, playing out the antithetical tension of Jones’s book title and the uncertainty that simulacra and automata set up between the alive and the inert, an ambiguity that Jones employed as a curatorial strategy. Compressed in the photographic image, this confusion – between the model and the figureheads – is compounded. Photographed by Elsbeth Juda, the audacity and commercialism of this performance is extremely interesting. Recent writing on *The Ambassador* by Lisa Tickner has highlighted the magazine’s role in ‘selling Britain’ through its representation of contemporary culture during the 1960s.<sup>42</sup> Interestingly, the *Black Eyes & Lemonade* feature of 1951 heralds this period since it articulates the same apparatus: the national flags, the allusions to seafaring greatness and the distinctive elegiac qualities of British popular culture.

While the figureheads spent eight weeks during the summer of 1951 in a new configuration, viewed by a new audience, a long-term location for their display and interpretation had become a pressing issue. The lease on The Look Out was due to expire in 1953 and Cumbers began discussions with Gravesend Town Council. These came to nothing, and he decided to donate his collection to the Cutty Sark Preservation Society.<sup>43</sup> Built on the Clyde, this famous tea clipper undertook its maiden voyage in 1870. By the end of the decade, steam ships had taken over the transport route from China, and *Cutty Sark*’s cargoes diversified, most successfully into the Australian wool trade. Later the ship was sold to a Portuguese company, and in 1922 she was bought by the retired sea captain Wilfred Dowman, who brought her to Falmouth where she was restored and opened to the public.<sup>44</sup> On Dowman’s death his widow gave the ship to the Thames Nautical Training College at Greenhithe. The voyage from Falmouth to Greenhithe took place in 1938 and, in its final stages, *Cutty Sark* sailed past The Look Out. Fittingly, Cumbers held a celebration to mark the occasion.<sup>45</sup> It is tempting to wonder if, at this time, he envisaged his collection being associated with the ship.

In 1952, fourteen years and a world war later, the Cutty Sark Preservation Society was established, largely due to the energy and commitment of the Director of the National Maritime Museum, Frank Carr. It was Carr who had argued that the ship should be moored off Deptford as part of the Festival of Britain. In this way, her appeal as an attraction could be assessed, evidence that supported the development of a campaign to place her in a permanent dry dock at Greenwich.<sup>46</sup> The ship was formally transferred to the Society in May 1953 and, in July of that year, a party was held to mark the gift of the Silver Collection. A visit was made to The Look Out one last time, before the contents were packed, ready to be sent to the stores of the National Maritime Museum until *Cutty Sark* was installed, repaired and opened to the public.<sup>47</sup> The Duke of Edinburgh, as patron of the Society, played an important role in these negotiations and in 1954 he laid the foundation stone of the dry dock.<sup>48</sup> The ceremony also marked the designation of *Cutty Sark* as a permanent memorial to the Merchant Navy whose service ‘HELPED TO ENLARGE / THE LIVELIHOOD OF / BRITAIN AND PROTECT / THE FREEDOM OF THE / BRITISH COMMONWEALTH / OF NATIONS’. This inscription, and another explaining that the preservation of the ship was to ‘commemorate an era’, a tribute to the men and the ships of ‘the days of sail’, were placed either side of a large wreath designed by the sculptor Maurice Lambert and cast in concrete.<sup>49</sup> As part of this process, a selection of about thirty of Cumbers’ figureheads had undergone repairs; they were placed inside the ship, in the lower hold.<sup>50</sup> In 1957 Queen Elizabeth opened the ship. Thereafter, the figureheads gradually became a backdrop, relics of Britain’s seafaring past gazed on by thousands of children on school trips. Confined to quarters, over the decades their vibrancy faded and they became part of the ship’s furniture. By the 1980s the figureheads in storage were in need of repair, and consignments were sent periodically to a restorer, Jack Whitehead, on the Isle of Wight, and were displayed on their return.<sup>51</sup> The ship in which they were placed was also by that time in need of urgent attention.

In 2012 Cumbers’ figureheads were back in the limelight. They formed an important element of a major redevelopment programme that saw the ship lifted, conserved and repositioned so that visitors could inspect it from below. The figureheads had been assessed and documented in 2003–04. Having sustained a few casualties over the years, largely from deterioration, they now formed a group of 81. They were joined by *Cutty Sark*’s own famous figurehead, *Nannie*, bare-breasted, scowling and grasping a mare’s tail in her outstretched hand, and were central to the design of the new exhibition space. Rather than being located within the ship they were positioned outside it but under the glass canopy that now bisects the ship, massed in a tiered semi-circle and facing its freshly clad gleaming hull. Any residue of limpets, erosion and sea salt that a major fire of 2007 might have left behind was obliterated as the extraordinary beauty of the ship’s keel was revealed (figs. 13 and 14).<sup>52</sup> Arranged as a spectacle, the figureheads look like a crowd in the distance as one enters the subterranean space. Positioned to provoke curiosity, visitors observe as they draw closer that these are carved painted effigies, either attached by short posts to a low platform or suspended to tilt forwards by means of

12. ‘Sophisticated and unsophisticated’, *The Ambassador*, 10, October 1951, p. 155 (photo: © Victoria and Albert Museum, London)

# SOPHISTICATED AND UNSOPHISTICATED

Fashion against a background of English vernacular art. (Pages 156 to 161.)



brackets from the wall behind. The uppermost figures project forwards in a way that anticipates movement but is permanently arrested and frustrated, creating a similar tension to that identified by Alloway in his article of 1951 in the relationship between the figurehead and the countersweep of the bow. Visitors are encouraged to walk up steps to view the display from above and, with their means of support exposed, the figureheads seem even further removed from the structures for which they were designed. Screwed to their brackets, they are going nowhere.

The *Cutty Sark* display of figureheads is full of pathos, for these objects – though now well cared for and secure – were originally intended to be part of a ship and its community. Here they achieve an unsettling spectacle, as we know they were not meant to be together like this, or seen in this way. Writing in the late 1940s, Margaret Lambert described how ‘we can no longer see figureheads placed as their carvers meant’.<sup>53</sup> Now, we can no longer see these works as their mid-twentieth-century champions meant either. The other items in the Silver Collection have been disposed of – the lanyards and the models, the scrimshaw and the lifebelts – and the context of *The Look Out* is long gone. Monitors attached to the handrail enable visitors to identify each figurehead, but instead of Cumbers or Jones interpreting their ‘heroic energy’, they are embedded in a tourist attraction that, opened by the Queen in 2012, complemented the Jubilee and the Olympics that took place the same year. The colourful medley of imperial characters presented for home and overseas visitors includes Florence Nightingale, William Pitt, Sir Lancelot and General Gordon alongside *Georgina*, *Beda* and the others exhibited at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in 1951, and the *Lady of the Rose* and *Lalla Rookh* who were on show on the South Bank. It is, in fact, an intriguing, motley crew with



13. The brass-plated hull of *Cutty Sark* from below with Cumbers' figureheads at the far end of the installation, 2013  
(photo: author, courtesy of the Cutty Sark Trust)



14. The Silver Collection figureheads on display at *Cutty Sark*, 2013. *Beda* in the foreground, the *Lady of the Rose* behind, and *Nannie* holding mare's tail, above (photo: author, courtesy of the Cutty Sark Trust)



many different nationalities, beliefs and political persuasions represented: from Garibaldi and Hiawatha to Omar Pasha and Elizabeth Fry. Several figureheads remain anonymous and, as Eric Kentley suggests, it is this sense of the unknowable aspects of the seagoing past and those whose lives were bound up in it that enhances the emblematic role the figureheads play in representing, collectively, the merchant marine.

Although the memorial board that Cumbers installed is no longer on view, he himself is identified as the progenitor of the collection, and the melding of his commemorative ambitions with those invested in *Cutty Sark* is, as we know, something to which he aspired. Yet one wonders what he would make of the new installation, for the restoration project as a whole, through the

lifting of the ship and the encasing of its lower half, attracted criticism from the Victorian Society which objected to the way the 'glass bubble' – in creating a space for corporate events – obscured the ship's magnificent outline.<sup>54</sup> As a whole, it speaks of the complexity of the 'unintentional' monument and, as Riegl understood so well, the tensions between conservation activity, the maintenance of 'historical value' and the emotional and mass appeal of 'age-value'.<sup>55</sup> Cumbers' designation of his collection and of the *Cutty Sark* itself as a memorial to the merchant marine were part of a wider interest in how the persistence of things of the past acquired 'unintentional' commemorative significance. During the Second World War, Barbara Jones was a supporter of the campaign to retain the ruins of churches damaged through enemy action as war memorials. Here, the visibility of the destruction was fundamental to the historical and commemorative associations of these structures. She designed the cover of the book *Bombed Churches as War Memorials*, a publication by Hugh Casson, Jacques Groag and Brenda Colvin published by the Architectural Press in 1945.<sup>56</sup>

In the introduction to the 1951 catalogue entries describing the figureheads on display at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, Jones asserted:

In spite of the fact that nearly all ships had figureheads symbolizing their names, few made before 1815 have survived. Many of later dates owe their existence to the West Country practice of erecting figureheads from wrecks as memorials to their lost sailors.<sup>57</sup>

A similar claim was made by Lambert and Marx in their earlier book. However, pasted into one of Cumbers' scrapbooks is a cutting of this text from the catalogue, to which the word 'well?!' has been added.<sup>58</sup> In all likelihood, Cumbers felt that this was simplifying a much more complex situation, for figureheads were preserved in all sorts of contexts by a range of individuals. Indeed, Cumbers himself, in building one of the largest collections in the world, had done much to ensure their survival.

As John Elsner and Roger Cardinal observed, collecting can challenge norms and 'cock a snook at the accepted patterns of knowledge into whose regulative frame the interests and energies of the world have been corralled'.<sup>59</sup> In 2015 the figureheads collected by Cumbers, and the ship that survived due to the insistent efforts of the Cutty Sark Preservation Society, were accessioned formally by the National Maritime Museum. From being outside the fold, both the collection of figureheads and the ship will now be placed in a 'regulative frame'.<sup>60</sup> Cumbers was always sensitive to the 'age-value' of his beloved objects and anticipated the shift in their perceived significance over time. In 1953 he wrote, 'practically everything in the Collection has reached the antique stage'.<sup>61</sup> And Jones observed presciently in 1951 that popular art moves through a cycle of acceptability from 'quaint' to 'charming', then 'good'.<sup>62</sup> Both Jones and Cumbers were, then, not only remarkable as collectors, but in portending the future appreciation of what they held dear. In 1951 Jones asserted that in order to understand popular art 'the museum eye should be abandoned'.<sup>63</sup> Now, more than half a century on, it is the museum which is ultimately to

assume custodial responsibility. The dynamic of collecting is arrested, like the figureheads who now, as well as representing individual ships and their crews, represent Britain's maritime past generally and the merchant marine particularly and, of course, their collector.

This article originated as a paper presented as part of the 'Sculpture and the Sea' session of the Association of Art Historians' Annual Conference, University of Reading, April 2013. The research was undertaken during preparations for the exhibition *Black Eyes & Lemonade: Curating Popular Art*, Whitechapel Gallery, 9 March–1 September 2013, curated by Simon Costin, Catherine Moriarty and Nayia Yiakoumaki, and it develops elements of the essay published to accompany it: C. Moriarty, *Drawing, Writing and Curating: Barbara Jones and the Art of Arrangement*, London, Whitechapel Gallery, 2013. I would like to thank Jessica Lewis, curator, *Cutty Sark*, for facilitating access to papers relating to the Silver Collection and for generously sharing her knowledge of the ship and its history.

1. S. F. Bailey, *Cutty Sark Figureheads. The Long John Silver Collection*, Shepperton, Ian Allan Publishing, 1992, p. 25. This remains the most informative account of Sydney Cumbers' life and the history of his collection.

2. Bailey, as at note 1, p. 20.

3. Typescript and translation of an article by Maurice Pauwaert that appeared in the periodical *La Revue Maritime Belge*, 'Wandelaer et Sur l'eau' (January 1950), pp. 2–3 (grey notebook in series A9), Cumbers Archive, *Cutty Sark Trust*. The original cutting appears in Cumbers' album dated 1950/1951. In 1951 a short film was released by British Pathé featuring Cumbers at The Look Out and offering a partial view of the interior and some of the figureheads, <http://www.britishpathe.com/video/the-lookout> (accessed 1 April 2015).

4. Pauwaert as at note 3, p. 10.

5. Bailey, as at note 1, p. 19.

6. S. Cumbers, *The Silver Collection* (1953), typescript of Cumbers' notes prepared by Ethel Christian from recollections made in Cumbers' own hand and entered in a series of red 'Century' notebooks (A9/12-A9/20). Narratives of collecting have been discussed by Mike Bal who argues that their beginning cannot be recognized until the very process of collecting gathers momentum. She writes, 'Stories of collecting begin by initial blindness – by visual lack.' In Cumbers' case, this observation has literal poignancy. See M. Bal, 'Telling

objects: a narrative perspective on collecting', in J. Elsner and R. Cardinal, *The Cultures of Collecting*, London, Reaktion, 1997, pp. 97–115 (102).

7. A. Riegl, *Der moderne Denkmalkultus. Sein Wesen und seine Entstehung*, Vienna, 1903. English translation: 'The modern cult of monuments: its character and origin', trans. K. W. Forster and D. Ghirardo, *Oppositions*, 25 (1982), pp. 21–51. Reprinted in K. M. Hays, *Oppositions Reader: Selected Readings from a Journal for Ideas and Criticism in Architecture, 1973–1984*, New York, Princeton Architectural Press, 1988, pp. 621–51 (623).

8. S. M. Pearce, *Museums, Objects and Collections: A Cultural Study*, Washington DC, Smithsonian Institution Press, p. 38.

9. Moore's *Intercepted Letters, or Two-penny Post-Bag* was published in 1813. The quotation Jones selected appears in Letter 6. Jones explained her choice of title in the introduction to the exhibition catalogue: see *Black Eyes and Lemonade: A Festival of Britain exhibition of British popular and traditional art arranged in association with the Society for Education in Art and the Arts Council organized by Barbara Jones & Tom Ingram catalogued by Douglas Newton* (exh. cat.), Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, 1951, p. 5. The exhibition was held between 11 August and 6 October 1951.

10. The Director of the Whitechapel Art Gallery, Hugh Scrutton, wrote to Barbara Jones after the exhibition had closed telling her that it had broken all attendance records, with visitors reaching a total of 30,574. Hugh Scrutton to Barbara Jones, 17 October 1951. Whitechapel Gallery Archive, WAG/EXH/2/17/4.

11. The Society was an amalgamation of the Art Teachers Guild and the New Society for Art Teachers. In 1984 it merged with the National Society of Art Masters to become the National Society for Education in Art and Design. The NSAE launched the *Journal of Art & Design Education* (now the *International Journal of Art & Design Education*) in 1982 with Henry Moore as its founding patron. <http://www.nsead.org/about/about04.aspx> [accessed 24 May 2015].

12. For a comprehensive list of

broadcasts and publications see the indispensable 'Provisional checklist of the published works of Barbara Jones', in B. C. Bloomfield, 'The life and work of Barbara Jones (1912–1978)', *Private Library*, 5th Series, 2, 3, (1999). This was reprinted as an appendix in Ruth Artmsky, *A Snapper-up of Unconsidered Trifles: A Tribute to Barbara Jones*, London, Artmsky Arts, 2008, pp. 138–42.

13. The papers recounting this dispute can be found in the Whitechapel Gallery Archive, WAG/EXH/2/17/4.

14. Note by Barbara Jones as part of exhibition planning, 1951. Barbara Jones Archives, University of Brighton Design Archives, BJO/1/1/2.

15. S. Parissien and P. Sexton, *Gallery Guide: Marx-Lambert Collection, Compton Verney*, p. 54, [http://issuu.com/comptonverney/docs/cv\\_ml\\_catalogue4-11b-single](http://issuu.com/comptonverney/docs/cv_ml_catalogue4-11b-single) (accessed 26 April 2015). For an astute account of 'folk art' as an element of cultural production in twentieth-century England, see M. Myrone, 'Instituting English folk art' *Visual Culture in Britain*, 10, 1 (2009), pp. 27–52, and J. McMillan, M. Myrone and R. Kenny, *British Folk Art*, London, Tate Gallery, 2014. The Tate exhibition displayed a fine selection of figureheads, 'the exemplary form of folk art', including examples from the National Museum of the Royal Navy, Plymouth and Chatham Historic Dockyard. As Myrone points out, their very survival 'depended on an act of trans-valuation' (p. 92).

16. Cumbers Archive, *Cutty Sark Trust, scrapbook (1950/51)*. *Daily News* cutting dated 8 September 1951.

17. The correspondence held in the Barbara Jones Archive, University of Brighton Design Archives, numbers 248 items, and 83 separate lenders. BJO/1/1/3.

18. BJO/1/1/3/46. Cumbers to Jones, 8 July 1951 and 16 July 1951.

19. Newton eventually became curator emeritus of the Department of the Arts of Africa, Oceania and the Americas at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. See H. Cotter, 'Douglas Newton, curator emeritus at the Metropolitan, dead at 80', *The New York Times*, [online] 22 September, 2001, <http://www.nytimes.com/2001/09/22/arts/douglas-newton-80-curator-emeritus-at-the-metropolitan.html> (accessed 9 January 2013).

20. *Black Eyes and Lemonade*, as at note 9, p. 9.

21. Bailey, as at note 1, p. 32.

22. The figure Cumbers believed represented General Havelock actually belonged to the ship *Lord Clyde*. It depicts a major in a Scottish regiment. I am grateful to Richard Hunter, who made the identification, for drawing my attention to this; <http://figureheads.ukmcs.org.uk/?p=232> (accessed 15 September 2015).

23. Cumbers to Jones, 16 July 1951, p. 2.

24. B. Jones 'Popular arts', in M. Banham and B. Hillier (eds), *A Tonic to the Nation*, London, Thames & Hudson, 1976, pp. 129–32 (131). Quoted in Myrone, as at note 15, p. 39.

25. *Black Eyes and Lemonade*, as at note 9, pp. 39–40.

26. B. Jones 'Automata and simulacra', *Architectural Review*, CV, 630 (1949), pp. 291–94, and B. Jones, *The Unsophisticated Arts*, London, Architectural Press, 1951.

27. The exhibition included items from the shop of the famous tattooist George Burchett, whose premises at 72 Waterloo Road Jones had recorded before its demolition to make way for the South Bank site of the Festival of Britain. This painting was reproduced in *The Unsophisticated Arts*.

28. E. Brown and B. Jones, 'Roundabouts: demountable baroque', *Architectural Review*, XCVII, 578 (1945), pp. 49–60. Barbara Jones also designed the cover for this issue, a terrifying tiger with its jaws wide open revealing a protruding tongue on which a fairground ride spirals.

29. The Recording Britain scheme was established in 1940 and ran until 1943. Funded by the Pilgrim Trust, it was directed by Kenneth Clark. Barbara Jones was one of 97 artists involved and she contributed watercolours reproduced in each of the four volumes published. The entire collection of artworks was given to the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1949. See Gill Saunders, *Recording Britain*, London, V&A Publishing, 2011.

30. S. Tombs, 'The art of the fairground', in A. Durr and H. Martin (eds), *A Common Tradition: Popular Art of Britain and America*, Brighton, Brighton Polytechnic Gallery, 1991, pp. 24–27.

31. L. Alloway, 'Marine totems',

*Athene: Journal of the Society for Education in Art*, 5, 3, 1951, p. 64.

Jones also contributed an essay entitled 'Popular art' to this issue. For a discussion of the influence of *Black Eyes & Lemonade* and of the fairground vernacular on British Pop Art, and the selective nature of Alloway's subsequent historiography, see the forthcoming chapter by C. Moriarty, 'Popular art, Pop Art, and "the boys who turn out the fine arts"', in A. Massey and A. Seago (eds), *Pop Design*, London, Bloomsbury, 2016.

32. H. Goodden, *The Lion and the Unicorn: Symbolic Architecture for the Festival of Britain, 1951*, London, Unicorn Press, 2011. Gillian Whiteley argues, convincingly, that the entire Festival was full of kitsch; see her essay 'Kitsch as cultural capital: *Black Eyes and Lemonade* and populist aesthetics in fifties' Britain', in M. Kjellman-Chapin (ed.), *Kitsch: History, Theory, Practice*, Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholars Press, 2013.

33. Jones's own account of her work on the Festival of Britain was published as 'Popular arts', as at note 24. See also B. Curtis, 'One long continuous story', *Block*, 11, winter 1985–86, pp. 48–52, and H. Atkinson, *The Festival of Britain: A Land and Its People*, London, I.B. Tauris, 2012.

34. Festival of Britain, *Catalogue of Exhibits, South Bank Exhibition*, London, HM Stationery Office, 1951, p. 65.

35. The works commissioned for display outside the Sea and Ships pavilion included sculptures by Keith Goodwin, Maurice Lambert and Siegfried Charoux, and a 'hydraulic fountain' by Richard Huws. See S. F. Brades, J. Bernstein and R. Burstow, *Symbols for '51: The Royal Festival Hall, Skylon and Sculptures on the South Bank for the Festival of Britain*, London, Hayward Gallery, 1996.

36. *Catalogue of Exhibits*, as at note 34, p. 66. Other loans from Cumbers included the figurehead *Amphitrite* which was positioned on a reconstructed bow of a clipper ship, a copy of Samuel Plimsoll's *Our Seamen – An Appeal of 1873*, and a 'seaman-made' model of a frigate. For descriptions of the figureheads

see the entries on <http://figureheads.ukmcs.org.uk/> (accessed 1 June 2015).

37. Antony Hipsley Cox, 'I enjoyed it more than anything in my life', in Banham and Hillier, as at note 24, pp. 88–91.

38. D. Pye, *Ships*, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1950. The cover depicts an eye with a photograph of a ship at its centre, another instance of the way the eye was represented to denote thoughtful looking. For further discussion on this, and Jones's use of the eye in particular, see C. Moriarty, *Drawing, Writing and Curating: Barbara Jones and the Art of Arrangement*, London, Whitechapel Gallery, 2013.

39. Jones had produced design education projects for the Council of Industrial Design, notably murals for the travelling exhibition *Design Fair* (1948) with James Gardner and on the publication *This or That* for the Scottish Committee of the Council of Industrial Design, 1947.

40. J. Dudley, 'Tale of two dogs', *Daily Worker*, 12 September 1951, Whitechapel Archive.

41. J. Berger, 'Black Eyes & Lemonade at the Whitechapel Art Gallery', *New Statesman and Nation*, 1 September 1951, Whitechapel Archive. The Whitechapel Gallery cuttings were sourced by Durrant's, those in the Barbara Jones Archive by Romeike and Curtice Ltd.

42. L. Tickner, "'Export Britain': Pop Art, mass culture and the export drive', *Art History*, 35, 2, 2012, pp. 394–419.

43. Correspondence between Cumbers and Gravesend Town Council dating from June 1951 can be found in the scrapbook A3/3 (1950/51), Sydney Cumbers Archive, Cutty Sark Trust.

44. E. Kentley, *Cutty Sark: Last of the Tea Clippers*, London, Conway Publishing, 2014.

45. I am grateful to Jessica Lewis for sharing this information with me.

46. Kentley, as at note 44, p. 138. The London County Council had agreed the use of the site at Greenwich as a dry dock for HMS *Implacable* but when this ship, due to its advanced state of deterioration, was scuttled, Carr suggested the site as a permanent home for *Cutty Sark*.

47. Bailey, as at note 1, pp. 27–28

48. The dock was, as Eric Kentley describes it, 'essentially a concrete box'; Kentley, as at note 44, p. 138.

49. At this time Maurice Lambert was master of the Royal Academy Sculpture School. He had undertaken several commissions of a nautical kind notably for liners, a series of friezes for the *Queen Mary* and a bronze, *Oceanides*, for the *Queen Elizabeth*. In 1936 a gilded sculpture entitled *Lost Figurehead* was exhibited at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery. See 'Maurice Lambert RA', *Mapping the Practice and Profession of Sculpture in Britain and Ireland 1851–1951*, University of Glasgow History of Art and HATII, online database 2011, [http://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/person.php?id=msib2\\_1217329333](http://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/person.php?id=msib2_1217329333) (accessed 3 May 2015); V. Nicholson, *The Sculpture of Maurice Lambert*, Much Hadham, Henry Moore Foundation in association with Lund Humphries, 2002.

50. I am grateful to Jessica Lewis for this information. The other figureheads remained in storage.

51. Jack Whitehead (1913–2002) was a fitter of aircraft frames before and during the Second World War. After an injury, he turned to wood carving. He founded a travelling puppet show for which he carved the puppets, and performed 'in the early days of BBC Television on such programmes as Muffin the Mule'. He also made scenery and sets, and worked on special effects. In 1953 he moved to the Isle of Wight, where he lived on a houseboat; see <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/1389042/jack-whitehead.html>. Interestingly, Barbara Jones included Muffin the Mule in a list of possible exhibits for *Black Eyes & Lemonade*, to feature in a group of pet-related items. She would go on have televised puppet concerns of her own, as deviser and designer of *The Woodentops*. Before the figureheads on which Whitehead worked were returned to London, some pieces from the collection were displayed at the Sir Max Aitken Museum, Cowes, which occupies a former sail-making loft known as The Prospect. The collection and the building establish a certain parallel

with The Look Out, although the individuals behind them led very different lives. In 1983 a selection of figureheads restored by Whitehead on the Isle of Wight was included in an exhibition at the John Hansard Gallery, Southampton. Photographs of the Silver Collection figureheads as they appeared inside the *Cutty Sark* can be seen on the website <http://figureheads.ukmcs.org.uk/>

52. Prior to the official opening, *The Telegraph* published an online gallery of the figurehead display in preparation, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/culturepicturegalleries/9186044/Figureheads-go-on-show-under-the-restored-Cutty-Sark-in-Greenwich.html> (accessed 22 June 2015).

53. M. Lambert and E. Marx, 'English and traditional art', in B. Honey (ed.), *British Craftsmanship*, London, Collins, 1948, p. 287.

54. For an account of the restoration see Kentley, as at note 44.

55. See Riegl, as at note 7, p. 633.

For a useful account of these debates, see T. Arrhenius, *The Fragile Monument, on Conservation and Modernity*, London: Artifice Books, 2012.

56. *Bombed Churches As War Memorials*, Cheam, Architectural Press, 1945. The publication articulated and visualized an idea put forward in a letter to *The Times* in 1944.

57. Jones, as at note 9, p. 9.

58. Cumbers Archive, Cutty Sark Trust, scrapbook (1950/51). This clipping appears on a page with a cutting from *Everybody's Weekly*, 29 September, 1951.

59. Elsner and Cardinal, as at note 6, p. 3.

60. On the transfer of objects from 'formally private to formally public', see Pearce, as at note 8, p. 37, and John Elsner's discussion of collecting as 'the living act the museum embalms', in J. Elsner, 'A collector's model of desire: the house and museum of Sir John Soane' in Elsner and Cardinal as at note 6, pp. 155–76 (155).

61. Cumbers, as at note 6, p. 17.

62. Jones, as at note 9, p. 6.

63. Jones, as at note 9, p. 5.