



Under the Big Top

**A special free display now showing at the
ART GALLERY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

Under the Big Top is a new free display at the Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, featuring a fascinating selection of objects which reflect on the broad themes of the circus and popular entertainment. Curated by Robert Reason, the Gallery's Curator of European and Australian Decorative Arts, *Under the Big Top* looks at artists who have been inspired directly and indirectly by the distinctive performances and transgressive personalities that make up the rich flavour of circus life.

A highlight of the display is the Gallery's marvellous *Circus dinner set* (pictured) designed by British artist Laura Knight for *Bizarre*, by Clarice Cliff, in 1934. Decorated with clowns, acrobats and performing animals, this fifty-eight-piece setting even includes a lamp complete with a circus-tent silk shade.

Laura Knight, designer, Britain 1877–1970, *Bizarre* by Clarice Cliff, Britain 1928–1936, Arthur J. Wilkinson (LTD), Royal Staffordshire Pottery, Burslem, Staffordshire, manufacturer, Britain, established 1885, *Circus dinner set* (detail), 1934, Staffordshire earthenware. Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide. Gift of Marizles M. Wirth (Rillie) in memory of the Wirth Circus family 1998.

Other objects include *Brigitte the bearded lady* (1977), one of several humorous and colourful studio ceramics by Lorraine Jenyns. A perennial favourite, Burt Flugelman's *Tattooed lady* (1974) has also found a new home in the circus. Flugelman used the rich tradition of the inked skin as the site from which to titillate and shock the viewing audience; this lady was being 'tattooed' with Japanese couples engaged in sexual activity!

Funky and erotic shoes make an appearance, and those with a penchant for the exotic might enjoy the Elephant footstool by American Funk Art Movement artist David Gilhooly.

So why not have a little fun this Summer – runaway to the Art Gallery of South Australia and experience art *Under the Big Top!*

On View: Gallery 19a, Art Gallery of South Australia, North Terrace Adelaide
Hours: 10am to 5pm daily until end March 2007
Admission: Free
Public Info: 08 8207 7000 or www.artgallery.sa.gov.au

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