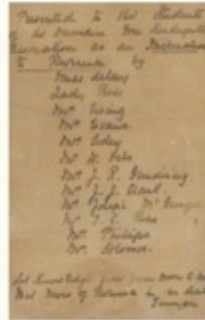




South Seas International
Exhibition , Dunedin 1925-6

'Madonna of the Factories'
Lithograph by Gerald Spenser Pryse,
1925



The DFKA purchased
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an excerpt from
Alfred Tennyson's *In
Memoriam H* poem.

1975: Accompanied students to
Dunedin Teacher's College
2007: Hung outside Dean's office,
University of Otago College of
Education

[Extract from Helen May (2014) *People, places and play in the 'child gardens' of Dunedin, Dunedin Kindergartens - Mana Manaaki Puawai O Otepoti - 125 years old*, Dunedin Kindergartens, pp. 64-5

Madonna of the Factories

In 1925-26 Dunedin hosted the New Zealand South Seas International Exhibition celebrating New Zealand as 'the Brighter Britain of the South' being both 'progressive and prosperous.'ⁱ This is a story told by Kerry Bethell.ⁱⁱ There was a model kindergarten within the Education Court at the Exhibition, with demonstration classes on Froebel's teaching run by the DFKA, and displays of kindergarten materials from the four kindergarten associations, including a model Māori village and dolls of different nationalities from Dunedin. Kindergarten materials were sent from as far away as the Columbia University Kindergarten in New York and the London County Council Schools. Miss Dutton from the DFKA co-ordinated the display including the demonstration classes. In the International Exhibition of the Fine Arts there was a large lithograph entitled 'Madonna of the Factories' by British artist Gerald Spenser Pryse. This had previously been exhibited at the 1924 British Empire Exhibition and the same figure used as a Labour Party

poster in the British general election of 1924.ⁱⁱⁱ Pryse's work was illustrative of the tensions between family wellbeing and the needs of a capitalist society. Interestingly, the DFKA purchased the work and presented it to their kindergarten students 'as an inspiration to reverence,' quoting an excerpt from Alfred Tennyson's *In Memoriam H* poem, 'Let knowledge come from more to more. More of Reverence in us dwell.' Attached to the back of the lithograph is a missive on reverence by Lavinia Kelsey and the work of the kindergarten. Listed too are the names of the Association's executive members, including Miss Kelsey and [Lady] Helena Sidey. Kelsey had taken a leading role in establishing a Federation of Kindergartens before the First World War. In 1926 Sidey became the foundation president of the New Zealand Free Kindergarten Union (NZFKU). In 1975, when kindergarten training was shifted into teachers' colleges, the lithograph accompanied the Principal, Phyllis Varcoe, to the Dunedin Teachers College and in 2007 became part of the University of Otago College of Education (UOCE) art collection. While I was the Dean at UOCE between 2006-2011 the lithograph was rescued and hung outside my office. A previous administration had banned it from the Principal's suite due to its socialist overtones.

ⁱ L.S Fanning, (ed). *The Pictorial History N.Z. and South Seas Exhibition Dunedin 1925-26*, (Coulls Somerville Wilkie, Dunedin, 1926), cited in Kerry Bethell, 'Childhood on Display.

ⁱⁱ Kerry Bethell, 'Childhood on Display: Kindergarten Models and Social Agendas at New Zealand International Exhibitions 1889, 1925-6, 1940' (paper presented at SHCY Conference, Teachers' College, Columbia University, New York, June 23-25, 2011)

ⁱⁱⁱ Kerry Bethell '“Madonna of the factories”: A work of art given multiple meanings, 1923-2013,' (paper presented at the conference on Colonial Objects, Centre for Research on Colonial Culture, University of Otago, Dunedin, February 11-13, 2013).