



EDE HORTON: SOFT POWER

Span Galleries

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HERO

(Oxford Dictionary)

"A name given to men of superhuman strength, courage or piety, favoured by the gods"

"One who does brave or noble deeds".

"A man who exhibits extraordinary bravery, firmness, or greatness of soul, in conjunction with any pursuit, work or enterprise... admired and venerated for his achievements and noble qualities. " .

LEADER

"One who leads"

LEAD

"to conduct a person to a place"

"To precede, be foremost"

"To have the first place in"

"To direct by example"

EDE'S PHILOSOPHY

Ede Horton, in common with most thinking people, is very distressed about our global situation - the many wars throughout the world, the fear of terrorism, the distrust of other peoples and cultures, violence, hatred and destruction.

But Ede is an optimist and, in her own way, an activist. She is seeking a solution.

Simply, Ede believes that people must work together to strive for peace and she sees that we need new enlightened leaders to generate peace in the world.

Ede promulgates what she calls "soft power" i.e. leadership by example, by encouragement and cooperation so that conflict is resolved through mediation and not by brute force. She says *"I believe that people, working together, have the power to make positive change to a better future through awareness, understanding and action."*

This exhibition is about leadership and about the characteristics she believes distinguish a good leader. She defines a leader thus:

"A leader is someone who inspires followers to attain the happiness of a cherished dream. A leader not only speaks to immediate wants but also elevates people by vesting in them a sense of possibility; a belief that change can be made and that people can make them."

Ede has incorporated the qualities of leadership as symbols within the feet of eight impressive gifting plates. They are:

- (a) the skill of listening - ears
- (b) to bond - hands
- (c) to nurture - breast
- (d) to have a brave heart - heart
- (e) to be inspiring - a spiral from four points
- (f) to encourage change - wings
- (g) to be adaptable and acknowledge cycles and stages - shell (h) to be aware of the environment - flower

These gifting plates are based on a wide, shallow bowl or 'tazza', which was sometimes on a stem but more often with a spreading foot supporting the bowl directly. Tazze originated in Renaissance Italy, and 16thC -17th C Germany and Britain and were possibly intended for holding fruits or sweetmeats as a table centre.

Ede's gifting plates are made of cast glass and are technically complex involving many processes to achieve the final piece. Each platter is cast. The model for the symbol is sculptured and eventually moulded into the foot of the plate and when each plate and its foot have been fired in the kiln, they need to be attached.

Their texture is also important to Ede - the lined and worked surface of the plate, the silver like glitter of the emblem. The cast glass is heavy and hard, but fragile, breakable, the glass process is malleable and manipulable. All the characteristics of the medium reflect Ede's message. A leader is forged through hard and careful experience, adaptable but strong, charismatic but solid, transparent and honest, bringing together diverse elements into a single impressive whole.

Complimenting the eight gifting plates are 100 plaster plates incised with the word HERO. Within each is a black and white glass murrine piece with the peace symbol encased therein. For Ede this represents "that venerable inner core within us all. The intention of this work is laden with symbolic meaning. Ede's desire is that we all find a little peace and contentment in our lives, we connect with hero within overcoming our fears and anxiety to meet the challenges within.

Ede believes that every person in the world has the capacity to be a hero for the sake of peace - to show firmness of purpose and bravery of spirit.

The material and medium of these hero plates are much simpler more formative than that of the leader plates.

Heroes, according to Ede are accountable to themselves, leaders to the public at large.

Ede looks to men and women to find the best in themselves, in order that they together and with good leadership strive for a better, more peaceful and more just a world.

Ede is an optimist. As a craft worker, a creator, a maker, she has to be. Every time she tackles a more complex technical challenge in her glass making, every time she tentatively place a piece in the kiln, she has to believe that her efforts will bear fruit and that she will create an object of art, realize in physical form her artistic inspiration. She asks "How do I as an artist express myself as a pacifist who wants to be pro active within society?"

With optimism Ede has applied her creative energy to seeking, in her own way, to make a difference to the world in which we live. She personally leads by example in striving for peace, with firmness, diligence and bravery she heroically applies her technical expertise to this end. And hopefully she leads and inspires by example.

She deserves to be congratulated and I am privileged to declare this exhibition open.

Dr Helen Light
Director
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