



# E.O. Hoppé

## Photography:

**A Year in the Life  
of Australia**

Collectors' List No. 148, 2011

### **Josef Lebovic Gallery**

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## COLLECTORS' LIST No. 148, 2011

### E.O. Hoppé Photography

Compiled by Josef & Jeanne Lebovic, Lenka Miklos,  
Mariela Brozky, Takeaki Totsuka

On exhibition from Wed., 9 March to Sat., 9 April 2011, and on our  
website from Saturday, 19 March.

Prices are in Australian dollars and include GST.

Exch. rates as at time of printing: AUD \$1.00 = USD \$1.00; UK £0.62p

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### Come see our new premises

We are now open from Wednesday to Friday, 1-6pm and Saturday, 12-5pm. Otherwise we are available by appointment. You are most welcome to phone if you need any directions to find us at the corner of Anzac Parade and Duke Street, Kensington. NB: We are only 10 minutes from Paddington and down the road on the same side as Peter's of Kensington.

## A Year in the Life of Australia



From 1926 to 1929 renowned German-born British photographer Emil Otto Hoppé (1878-1972) authored several large format photographically illustrated books in the Orbis Terrarium series for German publisher Ernst Wasmuth. These beautifully gravure-printed armchair travel art books allowed the reader to travel to foreign countries through photographs of cities,

landscapes, and people. With three 300-plate titles describing the United States, Great Britain and Germany already under his belt, Hoppé was about to embark on his next epic book – “The Fifth Continent” – in Australia.

In 1929 as he prepared to come to our country he was advised by some in London apparently knowledgeable on the subject that he would deplete the subject in six weeks. But Hoppé would soon discover just how wrong was this typical British perception of Australia.

December 1929 was a defining moment for an outsider to visit Australia. With the fall of the global stock markets and the resulting worldwide economic turmoil (not so dissimilar to recent world events) Australia's droughts were followed by floods making Australian economic hardship and Hoppé's

travels all the more challenging. But as he crisscrossed the continent Hoppé discovered that these hardships proved only to bring out the best in the Australians he met. In an unprecedented record of Australia and Australians throughout 1930, Hoppé worked for the best part of a year creating an epic documentation that defined what it was to be Australian. The singular importance and modern quality of this body of work clearly rivals the now famous photographs of depression-era America made by Walker Evans for the United States Farm Security Administration (FSA) just a few years later. As Evans' FSA work stands as one of the most important bodies of artistic documentary photographs for the United States and in the history of photography, so too does Hoppé's epic documentation of depression-era Australia.

Even though Hoppé became a British citizen in 1912, like Bill Brandt who followed him, he was still something of an outsider in his adopted home. Perhaps this enabled Hoppé to see Australia more for what it really was. Clearly he didn't adopt the view of Australia held by his more skeptical British advisors. Hoppé energetically travelled throughout the entire continent from Cape York to Tasmania, Sydney to Perth, Coober Pedy to the flooded Finke River creating the first transcontinental photobook portrait of Australia.

The importance of this epic document is described by Gael Newton, Senior Curator of Photography at the National Gallery of Australia, who cites Hoppé's achievement as one that "shows great sensitivity and insight into Australia's people at a defining moment in the country's history. Perhaps more than any other earlier travelling photographer of the period, Hoppé was genuinely taken by Australia and its people.

He showed a young Australia, distinct in its national character and strong in its identification with the land, be they European or Asian settlers, or its native peoples. As a German-born citizen of the UK, Hoppé had great enthusiasm for the open and democratic life in Australia, where to many Europeans the average person still seemed to have a chance to "make good." Hoppé captured the country's inclusiveness, intimately expressed in his photographs of people—Coober Pedy opal miners, wool packers, Aboriginal tribes, rural farmers, and city workers—in their native environs. The collection of images is one of the most comprehensive collective portraits of Australia during these years."<sup>1</sup>



Gael Newton goes on to explain, "Hoppé's views of Australia combined the topographic and social documentary paradigm with a profoundly modernist vision, which became the major photographic ideology in the 1930s. Where now-renowned figures such as the American photographer Walker Evans contended with the gap between rich and poor in the U.S., Hoppé embraced a nation that seemed free of such a disparity."

By Graham Howe

1 Correspondence to Graham Howe, dated 13th April, 2006



1. **Fixing Greasecaps On The Cableheads Of The Sydney Harbour Bridge**, 1930. Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated in ink by Hoppé or his assistant with several stamps including photographer's copyright and Dorien Leigh Ltd agency stamps verso, 24.7 x 18cm. *Minor chips to edges.*

**\$11,000**

Annotation reads "Tightening cables of suspension bridge." Copyright stamp includes Hoppé's home and studio address of 'Millais House' 7

Cromwell Place, South Kensington, London which was previously the home of Sir John Everett Millais and later Francis Bacon. In 1937 Hoppé used his archive of photographs to establish the Dorien Leigh photographic agency.



2. **Steel Arches, Sydney Harbour Bridge**, 1930. Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated in ink by Hoppé or his assistant with several stamps including photographer's copyright and Dorien Leigh Ltd agency stamps verso, 24.9 x 17.9cm. *Chips to edges.*

**\$16,500**

Annotation reads "Sydney Bridge."



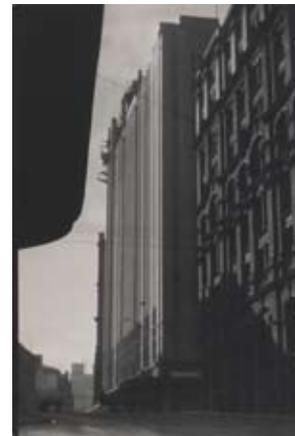
4. **Argyle Cut, Sydney**, 1930. Vintage silver gelatin photograph, titled and dated in ink by Hoppé or his assistant with several stamps including photographer's copyright and Dorien Leigh Ltd agency stamps verso, 18.4 x 24.2cm. *Minor crease lower right.*

**\$11,500**

3. **Sydney Skyscraper, [Grace Hotel & Broughton House]**, 1930. Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated and dated in pencil by Hoppé or his assistant with several stamps including photographer's copyright and Dorien Leigh Ltd agency stamps verso, 24.6 x 16cm. *Chips to edges.*

**\$14,500**

Annotation includes "Modern architecture (Australia). One of Sydney's latest buildings. March 1930." Illustrated in Howe and Esau, *E.O. Hoppé's Australia*, 2007, p70. Shows Grace Hotel at 77 York St., Sydney, as viewed from King St.



5. **"The Death Ray", Royal Agricultural Show, Sydney**, 1930. Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated and dated in ink by Hoppé or his assistant with several stamps including Mansell Collection, and Dorien Leigh Ltd agency stamps verso, 15.8 x 19cm.

**\$13,500**

Annotation includes "Bank Holiday. Sydney." Mansell Collection stamp includes "42 Linden Gardens, London. W2." Illustrated in Howe and Esau, *E.O. Hoppé's Australia*, 2007, p77.





6. **Boxing And Wrestling, Royal Agricultural Show, Sydney, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated in ink by Hoppé or his assistant with several stamps including photographer's copyright, Mansell Collection and Dorien Leigh Ltd agency stamps verso, 12.8 x 15.9cm.

**\$13,500**

Annotation reads "Boxing and Wrestling."



7. **Joining Of The Two Arcs, The Sydney Harbour Bridge, From The Domain, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated in ink by Hoppé or his assistant with several stamps including photographer's copyright, Dorien Leigh Ltd agency and Empire Literary Service stamps verso, 18.2 x 24.1cm. *Minor chips to edges.*

**\$14,500**

Annotation reads "Sydney." Empire stamp includes "69 Fleet Street London. E.O. 4." Illustrated in Howe and Esau, *E.O. Hoppé's Australia*, 2007, p31.



8. **Elizabeth Bay House, Sydney, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, titled and dated in ink by Hoppé or his assistant with several stamps including photographer's copyright, Mansell Collection and Dorien Leigh Ltd agency stamps verso, 18 x 24.9cm.

**\$12,500**

Illustrated in Howe and Esau, *E.O. Hoppé's Australia*, 2007, p72.



9. **Wentworth Ave And Railway Station, Sydney, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated in ink by Hoppé or his assistant verso, 7.2 x 9.9cm.

**\$9,900**

Annotation includes "Street and R.W. [railway] Station, Sydney, Australia."



10. **Woolloomooloo With St. Mary's Cathedral In Background, Sydney, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated and dated in ink by Hoppé or his assistant with several stamps including photographer's copyright, Mansell Collection and Dorien Leigh Ltd agency stamps verso, 18.5 x 25cm. *Minor chips to edges.*

**\$12,500**

Annotation includes "Sydney, The Cathedral, Australia."



11. **William Lane, Woolloomooloo, Sydney, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated in ink by Hoppé or his assistant verso, 7.1 x 10cm.

**\$11,500**

Annotation includes "Sydney, Woolloomooloo [sic]. Australia."



12. **Woolloomooloo, Sydney With St. Mary's Cathedral In The Distance, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated and dated in pencil by Hoppé or his assistant with Dorien Leigh Ltd agency stamp verso, 24.5 x 18.5cm.

**\$12,500**

Annotation includes "Sydney, Woolloomooloo." Illustrated in Howe and Esau, *E.O. Hoppé's Australia*, 2007, p62.



14. **Flinders Street Crossing, Melbourne, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated in pencil by Hoppé or his assistant with several stamps including photographer's copyright stamp verso, 17.3 x 24.5cm.

**\$13,500**

Annotation includes "Victoria, Australia, Business Crowd. Flinders Street, Melbourne."



13. **Rooftops, Boomerang House, Sydney, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated in pencil by Hoppé or his assistant with several stamps including photographer's copyright and Dorien Leigh Ltd agency stamps verso, 22.7 x 18.8cm.

**\$13,500**

Annotation includes "Sydney, not New York, but Sydney."

The Albert family, known for their music business, owned Boomerang House situated in King Street. The building got its name from the mouth organ label they retailed.

15. **Collins Street, Melbourne, Old Fleet And Rialto Buildings, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated in ink by Hoppé or his assistant verso, 9.6 x 7cm.

**\$9,900**

Annotation includes "Gothic. Melbourne." Variant image illustrated in Howe and Esau, *E.O. Hoppé's Australia*, 2007, p106.



16. **Torrens Park, Adelaide, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, captioned and dated in ink by Hoppé or his assistant with several stamps including photographer's copyright, Mansell Collection, and Dorien Leigh Ltd agency stamps verso, 18.2 x 24.4cm.

**\$11,500**

Caption includes "A government experiment in Adelaide, South Australia. A colony of houses has been erected for the poorer classes who by paying a small rental, eventually become the owners of their houses."



17. **"The Old Smithy", Gretna Green, Tasmania, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated and dated in pencil by Hoppé or his assistant with several stamps including photographer's copyright and Dorien Leigh Ltd agency stamps verso, 15.1 x 20.9cm.

**\$9,900**

Annotation includes "Gretna Green' Smithy in Australia."



18. **Mr. Fulton, Sheep Farmer, Tasmania, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated in ink by Hoppé or his assistant with photographer's copyright and Mansell Collection stamps verso, 24.6 x 18.4cm. *Stain lower left, minor chips to edges.*

**\$8,800**

Annotation includes "A typical gentleman wool farmer." Illustrated in Howe and Esau, *E.O. Hoppé's Australia*, 2007, p24.



19. **Ben Leslie, Mayor Of Kalgoorlie, Western Australia, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated and dated in pencil by Hoppé or his assistant verso, 23.3 x 17.6cm. *Creases and minor tears to edges.*

**\$8,800**

Annotation includes "Kalgoorlie, Western Australia, 1930. Return to E.O Hoppé, Wildhern, Andover." Variant image illustrated in Howe and Esau, *E.O. Hoppé's Australia*, 2007, p26.



20. **Nun With School Girls, New Norcia Mission, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated in ink by Hoppé or his assistant verso, 16.4 x 11cm.

**\$8,800**

Annotations include "One of the nuns at the New Norcia Convent with two of her pupils. Return to E.O. Hoppé, Wildhern Andover." Illustrated in Howe and Esau, *E.O. Hoppé's Australia*, 2007, p169. Image printed on M. Crown photographic paper.



21. **Early Morning In Karri Forest**, 1930. Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated in pencil by Hoppé or his assistant with several stamps including Dorien Leigh Ltd agency stamp verso, 24.7 x 17.5cm. *Minor crease lower left.*

**\$11,500**

Annotation includes "Wood in Pemberton, Australia."



22. **Mrs. Annie Brown, Sheep Farmer, Tasmania**, 1930. Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated in ink by Hoppé or his assistant with several stamps including photographer's copyright, Mansell Collection, and Dorien Leigh Ltd agency stamps verso, 16.8 x 14.2cm. *Minor chips to edges.*

**\$8,800**

Annotation reads "Australia." Illustrated in Howe and Esau, *E.O. Hoppé's Australia*, 2007, p156.



24. **Australian Settler**, 1930. Vintage silver gelatin photograph, photographer's copyright and Dorien Leigh Ltd agency stamps verso, 19.9 x 15.4cm.

**\$8,800**



25. **Young Axeman In Kauri [Karri] Forest, Western Australia**, 1930. Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated in ink by Hoppé or his assistant verso, 15.9 x 11.5cm.

**\$9,900**

Annotation reads "A young axman [sic]. Return to E. O. Hoppé, Wildhern Andover." Illustrated in Howe and Esau, *E.O. Hoppé's Australia*, 2007, p157.

23. **Australian Sheep Farmer On Horseback, Tasmania**, 1930. Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated in ink by Hoppé or his assistant with several stamps including Dorien Leigh Ltd agency stamps verso, 20.2 x 14.8cm.

**\$8,800**

Annotation reads "Sheep farmer, Australia."



26. **The Bank At Coober Pedy Opal Fields, South Australian Outback, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated and dated in ink by Hoppé or his assistant verso, 11.8 x 15.9cm.

**\$11,500**

Annotation includes "The Underground Post Office at the Coober Pedy Opal Fields, Australia. Return to E.O. Hoppé, Wildhearn [sic], near Andover." Variant image illustrated in Howe and Esau, *E.O. Hoppé's Australia*, 2007, p138.



27. **Telegraph Operator, Mr. Allchurch, Central Australia, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated in ink by Hoppé or his assistant verso, 16.4 x 11.8cm. *Minor chips to edges.*

**\$8,800**

Annotation includes "Types from the capital of Central Australia. A 'station' owner (cattle or sheep ranch). Some of the 'stations' in these vast open places own from 100,000 to 200,000 heads!"



28. **Aboriginal Women Looking At European Film Poster, Hermannsburg Lutheran Mission Station, Central Australia, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated in ink and pencil by Hoppé or his assistant verso, 18.9 x 13.9cm.

**\$12,500**

Annotation reads "Queensland. The Aborigine [sic] wear practically no clothes and are obliged to be dressed in the vicinity of white settlements. Hollywood in Australia's Far Northern territory. Return to E.O. Hoppé." Illustrated in Howe and Esau, *E.O. Hoppé's Australia*, 2007, p167.



29. **Young Aboriginal Man With Fishing Spear, Albatross Bay, Queensland, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, photographer's copyright, Mansell Collection, and Dorien Leigh Ltd agency stamps verso, 24.3 x 18.1cm. *Slight crease to upper left corner.*

**\$12,500**

Illustrated in Howe and Esau, *E.O. Hoppé's Australia*, 2007, p181.



30. **Headquarters Of The Chinese National Party, Kuo Min Tang, Darwin, Northern Territory, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated in ink by Hoppé or his assistant verso, 7.4 x 9.9cm.

**\$9,900**

Annotation reads "Australia. At the Headquarters of the Chinese National Party, Kuo Min Tang. Three bows to the flag. Darwin, Northern Territory." Illustrated in Howe and Esau, *E.O. Hoppé's Australia*, 2007, p29.



31. **Townsville, Queensland, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated and dated in pencil by Hoppé or his assistant with Mansell Collection stamp verso, 15.5 x 21.8cm.

**\$11,500**

Annotation includes "Tattersalls. Townsville, Queensland. Australia," Illustrated in Howe and Esau, *E.O. Hoppé's Australia*, 2007, p189.



32. **Innisfail, Queensland, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, titled and dated in pencil by Hoppé or his assistant with several stamps including Dorien Leigh Ltd agency stamp verso, 15 x 20.5cm.

**\$11,500**



33. **Incident In Play, Aboriginal War Dance, Palm Island, Queensland, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, signed "E.O. Hoppé" and annotated in ink by Hoppé or his assistant verso, 10.7 x 17cm.

**\$12,500**

Annotation reads "Australian Aborigines." Illustrated in Howe and Esau, *E.O. Hoppé's Australia*, 2007, p201.



34. **Pearling Look-Out Man, Thursday Island, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated in ink by Hoppé or his assistant verso, 11.5 x 14cm.

**\$8,800**

Annotation includes "The look-out man. Pearl Diving. E. O. Hoppé, Wildhem, Andover." Illustrated in Howe and Esau, *E.O. Hoppé's Australia*, 2007, p196.



35. **Test Match [Latest] Scores, Old Car, Coober Pedy, South Australian Outback, 1930.** Vintage silver gelatin photograph, signed "E.O. Hoppé" and annotated in German in pencil by Hoppé or his assistant verso, 18 x 13.9cm.

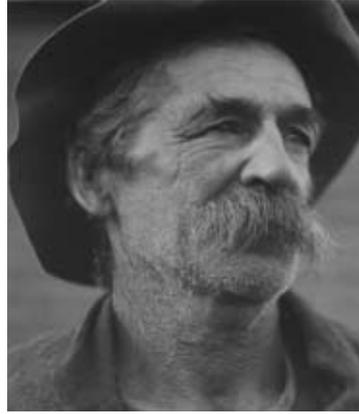
**\$11,500**

German annotation includes in English "Cricket Match" and "Ford [car]." Test match scores in image read "Woodfull 54, Ponsford 110, and Bradman 232." Illustrated in Howe and Esau, *E.O. Hoppé's Australia*, 2007, p144.



36. **Team Of Horses Transporting Wheat**, 1930. Vintage silver gelatin photograph, annotated in ink in an unknown hand with several stamps including Mansell Collection and Dorien Leigh Ltd agency stamps verso, 18.4 x 25.2cm. *Minor chips to edges.*  
**\$11,500**

Annotation includes "Wheat, Australia."



37. **The Man from Outback**, 1930. Vintage silver gelatin photograph, 20 x 16.9cm. *Slight wear to corners.*

**\$8,800**

Illustrated in Hoppé, *The Fifth Continent*, 1931, p14.



38. **Bondi Beach, Sydney**, 1930. Vintage silver gelatin photograph, titled in pencil in an unknown hand and photographer's and Dorien Leigh copyright stamps verso, 17.2 x 23cm. *Minor scuff marks to surface of image, paper and glue remnants and minor soiling verso.*

**\$11,500**



39. **Girls Applying Sunburn Creme, Australia, [Bondi Beach]**, 1930. Vintage silver gelatin photograph, titled in pencil in an unknown hand and photographer's and Dorien Leigh copyright stamps verso, 17.9 x 24.1cm. *Retouched scuff mark to image upper centre, minor crinkle to image lower centre.*

**\$11,500**

Variant image illustrated in Howe and Esau, *E.O. Hoppé's Australia*, 2007, p89.



40. **Girls On Sydney Beach [Bondi]**, 1930. Vintage silver gelatin photograph, titled in pencil in an unknown hand and Leihweise and Dorien Leigh copyright stamps verso, 25.3 x 20.4cm. *Tear to upper left edge of image, worn corners with creases.*

**\$11,500**

## E.O. Hoppé: A Biographical Profile

Emil Otto Hoppé (1878-1972) was one of the most important art and documentary photographers of the modern era whose artistic success rivalled those of his peers, Alfred Stieglitz (1864-1946), Edward Steichen (1879-1973) and Walker Evans (1903-1975). In 1983 the late photo-historian Bill Jay described Hoppé as “the most famous photographer in the world in 1920.” In 2006 Britain’s leading photo-curator, Mark Haworth-Booth, wrote that Hoppé was “The missing link in British photography between Frederick Evans and those contrasting moderns, Bill Brandt and Cecil Beaton.” In 1945 Cecil Beaton (1904-1980) described Hoppé simply as, “The Master” and in 1921 even Alfred Stieglitz in a letter to Alvin Langdon Coburn (1882-1966) begrudgingly acknowledged Hoppé’s preeminence in the field when he wrote “Of course I knew [about] Hoppé’s photographs for years.”

Hoppé was one of the most renowned portrait photographers of his day, as well as a brilliant landscape and travel photographer. His strikingly modernist portraits describe a virtual Who’s Who of important personalities in the arts, literature, and politics in Great Britain and the US between the wars. Among the hundreds of well-known figures he photographed were George Bernard Shaw, H.G. Wells, A.A. Milne, T.S. Eliot, G.K. Chesterton, Leon Bakst, Vaslav Nijinsky and the dancers of the Ballets Russes, and Queen Mary, King George, and members of the Royal Family.

Beginning art photography in 1903 Hoppé was admitted as a member of the Royal Photographic Society where, over the next four years, he regularly exhibited his amateur photographic works. In this same year Hoppé was also associated with The Linked Ring Brotherhood and fellow members Alvin Langdon Coburn, Henry Peach Robinson (1830-1901), and George Davidson (1854-1930), who played an important role in international art photography, maintaining close ties with continental and American groups including the Vienna Camera Club and the Photo Secession, New York. How is it that such a major figure in photography can today be less well known than those who acknowledge his giant stature in photographic art? The answer lies in a simple misstep of fate. In 1954, well before most of the photographic histories were written, Hoppé was nearing the end of his long and illustrious career.

At age 76 he decided to sell five decades of his photographic work to a London picture library. Here, after being filed by subject in with millions of other “stock” pictures the Hoppé photographs were no longer accessible by author. Most all of Hoppé’s photographic work—that which gained him the reputation as Britain’s most influential international photographer between 1907 and 1939—was literally entombed. In the intervening decades a few photo-cognoscenti came in search of Hoppé but all they could find were but a few needles in the photographic haystack. Hoppé had accidentally obscured his work from photo-historians and therefore photo-history itself.

In the mid-1990’s the Hoppé Collection was extracted from the London picture library by the Pasadena, California-based museum services company, Curatorial Assistance, Inc., where it underwent over a decade of organizing, cataloguing, conservation and digitizing so as to fully assess the measure of its contents. The discoveries that have come from this epic reconstruction of the photographer’s archive have been nothing less than extraordinary. Consensus among the international team of curators and photo-historians who have examined and worked on the archive materials have proven the historical claims correct: Hoppé is indeed the missing link in early photo-modernism that connects the better known American innovators to the lesser known photo-pioneers of Britain and Europe where Hoppé was the leading figure.

In 2007 an international exhibition and publication program was initiated to weave Hoppé back into photo-history. A significant part of this program for Australia was in 2007 when the “*E.O. Hoppé’s Australia*” exhibition opened at Customs House, Sydney, as part of the launch of an important book of the same title publishing works from Hoppé’s year-long documentation of Australia in 1930. Other major Hoppé exhibitions have been seen in New York and Berlin, and in February 2011 London’s National Portrait Gallery opened a major new exhibition titled “Hoppé Portraits: Society, Studio and Street” with curators Phillip Prodger and Terence Pepper. The London exhibition shows the extent of Hoppé’s primarily British portrait work, much of it for the first time ever.

By Graham Howe

Graham Howe is the CEO of museum services organization Curatorial Assistance, Inc. in Pasadena, California. He lives in Pasadena and Sydney.