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**Title:**

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OPENING OF AN EXHIBITION OF STUDIO GLASS BY SAMUEL J. HERMAN  
BY THE PREMIER, HON. D.A. DUNSTAN, 31/10/75.

Dr. Hackett, Sam Herman, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am very pleased tonight to be able to open this exhibition of Sam Herman glassware.

As most of you would know, Sam is one of the South Australian Craft Authority's Master Craftsmen, and we are very fortunate to have him working here in South Australia.

He has a world-wide reputation for the quality of his glass, and through his teaching at the Royal College of Art in London he has had a considerable influence on the development of modern glass design. The skills and the vision which brought him into prominence in Europe are now here and able to influence Australian glass makers.

But aside from this exhibition as such, there is another reason why I am pleased this evening to be here.

The South Australian Craft Authority is tonight, in effect, two years old. Of course, the idea for it is far older than that. The possibility of Government support for South Australian craft industries was first advanced by me in 1967, in the nine or so months leading up to the 1968 election.

I remember that at that time, the Leader of the Opposition, now Senator Seele Hall, was cynical and ironic in his comments. In fact, the notion of cottage workshops - of a viable craft industry - was so foreign to him, and so completely outside the State's 'conscious' industrial frame of reference, that he could only see the suggestion in terms of old ladies in thatched cottages sitting around spinning wheels or embroidering doilies. He was, like so many people, quite unaware of continuing craft traditions in our community.

But the fact is that following a period of eclipse, traditional crafts in industrialised societies had emerged to claim a proper and high place in industrial and creative achievement. And I believed that this was a course that we needed to encourage here, in Australia, and especially in South Australia.

Further, I did not (and do not) see craft work as solely pots, lamps, hangings and nick-nacks produced for Sunday drivers and tourist buses. Rather, it was a range of activities that, on the one hand, existed in their own right to produce satisfying and culturally important objects, and on the other to influence in a central way the artifacts of mass production and consumption.

For the fact was that in the 50's and 60's especially, Australian domestic commodities simply did not compete with similar domestic commodities produced in, for instance, Northern Europe and Scandinavia. In respect of high quality textiles, furniture, crockery, glassware, cutlery, silverware the countries which were then setting the standards and playing the international export field were the Scandinavian countries, in particular. And they still are.

This was, and is, an important thing for us to learn, for Australia was and is, like Scandinavia, a small trading nation with an intensive mass-production economy. And much of the Scandinavian domestic commodity export success was clearly related to their understanding of industrial design and the way it could be influenced, or changed by, craftsmen and crafts-designers.

If Scandinavian industry could gain from an alliance of craftsmen and mass-production, then why not Australian industry? Such observations and considerations, made in a State such as South Australia, which clearly needed industrial diversification, led to the South Australian Craft Authority being established. The Scandinavian success could happen here! Accordingly, in 1971, on being informed that Dick Richards, the Curator of Fine Arts at the Art Gallery (and now a Member of the Craft Authority) was going overseas on an extended study tour, I asked him to prepare a report on the methods used in the United Kingdom and Ireland to foster craft and design enterprises. Dick also visited Denmark and Sweden, and other important craft industry areas, and one of his main contacts was one, Samuel J. Herman. It was that meeting, in May 1971, which led to this Exhibition tonight. Following the receipt of Dick's report a Craft Industry Steering Committee was established which subsequently produced a plan that led to the establishment of the South Australian Craft Authority two years ago.

In that short time the Authority has obtained these excellent premises and now has with Sam Herman as a Master Craftsman, four apprentices in glass work. In addition, there are two Master Craftsmen in jewellery, namely, Vahn Hemmingsen and Frank Bauer, and together these men have seven apprentices. The fourth Master Craftsman is Prue Medlin, who has two apprentices in weaving.

There is this gallery for the display of the work of Master Craftsmen and other people associated with the Authority and the Jam Factory, and there are ongoing plans for the appointment of a Master Craftsman in pottery and in leather, together with an expanded apprenticeship scheme.

The Chief Executive Officer is Simon Blackall, and he, his staff, and the Board, have all contributed to what is a magnificent achievement for two short years. Everybody involved should be properly congratulated.

Tonight also signifies the passing of the old Board and the coming in of a new Board. The new Board will be somewhat smaller than that which was instrumental in bringing together all of the talents and advice needed for the initial establishment of the Authority. It will also have on it several persons very widely experienced in merchandising and retail selling. Eventually, it will also include a representative of the craft people working with, or associated with, the Jam Factory. And I expect that the next two years with this Board will see further exciting developments in the Authority's programs. So tonight, I would like to take this opportunity, quite specifically, of thanking those retiring Board members who have done such a sterling job, and who have been so important to the Authority's present success.

They have contributed to a situation in which design skills such as those illustrated by Sam Herman can influence South Australian mass-production glass manufacturers; just as those of Vahn Hemmingsen and Frank Bauer can influence commercial jewellery in this city, and those of Prue Medlin can influence wool and cotton textile manufacturing.

Such skills and such influences are important to civilised society, and hence the Government's support of the Authority. Tonight's Exhibition is an indication of the standard of excellence the Authority wishes to support. (It is the first hand blown glass to be made in Adelaide since the old torpedo beer bottles; and it comes from recycled glass).

It is therefore for these many and varied reasons that I have great pleasure in declaring this Exhibition open.

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