

AUSTRALASIAN SKETCHER WITH PEN AND PENCIL

A monthly journal published between 1873 and 1889, each edition of *Australasian Sketcher* featured a number of black and white illustrations and engravings to accompany some of the articles. These often included scenes from current theatrical productions or prominent performers. Each edition also included a section devoted to the theatre. A number of well-known artists and political cartoonists contributed illustrations to the journal during the 16 years it was published.

Published between 1873 and 1889 by the proprietors of the *Argus* and *Australasian* newspapers, the *Australasian Sketcher with Pen and Pencil* was conceived as an illustrative journal which aimed to capture "the picturesque phases of our public and social life of notable objects and events in Australia and New Zealand" (4). There was, however, a strong focus on events and issues relating to Victoria and South Australia, including theatrical productions (both serious and popular), sporting events and political activity. It also included some material on Fiji, New Guinea and the Pacific Islands. The journal's prospectus, published some three weeks prior to the release of the first issue, clearly states the purpose which its proprietors and editorial team intended:

The name of the new journal indicates its character and its objects. It will contain sketches from the pen and the pencil. Leaving in a great measure the publication and discussion of political and parliamentary news, and legal, commercial and industrial intelligence, to the daily and weekly press, the new paper will deal with the picturesque phases of our public and social life in the aspects in which they are capable of pictorial illustration. Prominent and striking events, public ceremonials and amusements, great gatherings, new buildings, works of art, the fashions, interesting features of natural scenery or of animal or vegetable life, will form the subject of illustrative views and descriptive letterpress. The elements of the picturesque are by no means wanting in our Australian life, and it will be the aim of the new journal to afford these faithful and artistic representation (4)



The first issue was published on 15 April 1873 under the title *Australasian Sketcher with Pen and Pencil*. The name remained until the last edition of 1880 (18 Dec.), after which time the title was shortened to simply the *Australasian Sketcher*. This period also saw it briefly move to a fortnightly cycle (1880-1882). The publishers made the decision to return the journal to its original title in March 1883. It continued to be published under this name until the last edition in December 1889, at which time the *Sketcher* was absorbed into the *Australasian*.

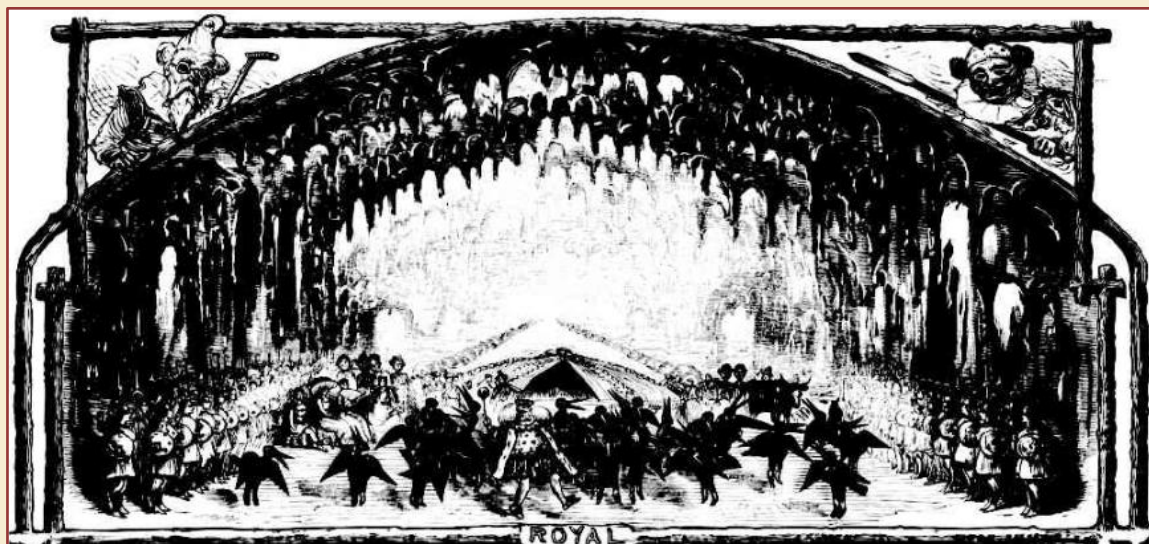
In addition to its illustrations, and current news items the *Sketcher* included literary serialisations, poetry and regular columns, notably "Theatre Etc," "Music," "Chronicle of the Month," "Facts and Scraps," "A Lady's Letter From London," and a German language column titled "Der Arbeits-Markt."



Among the most prominent artists to contribute sketches to the journal were political cartoonist Tom Carrington, illustrator Julian Ashton, Arthur Streeton, whose first black and white work was published in the 24 January 1889 edition. Literary contributors included Marcus Clarke, Thomas Carrington, Louis Buvelot and John Gully.

HISTORICAL NOTES AND CORRECTIONS

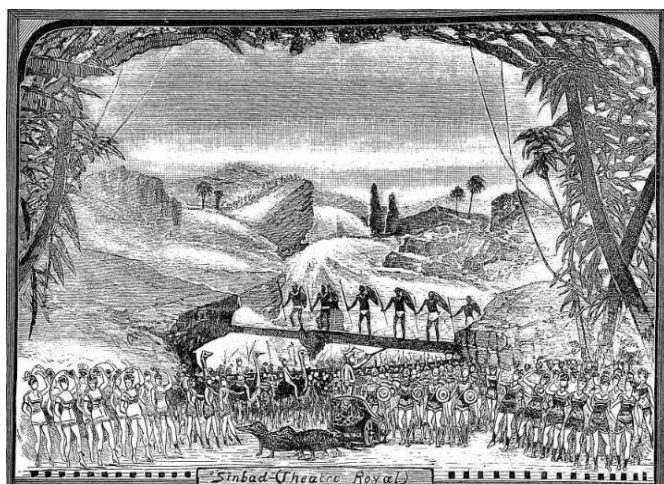
1. The National Library of Australia (including Trove) incorrectly names H. George as the *Sketcher's* only publisher, while making no mention of the proprietors and publishers of the *Argus* and *Australasian* (Edward Wilson and Lauchlan Mackinnon). Interestingly, they used three Melbourne printeries to print and publish the *Sketcher*, these being Hugh George (1873-1878), who is also known to have been an editor at the *Argus*; Alfred May and Alfred and Alfred Martin Ebsworth (1878-1882); and Alfred Martin Ebsworth (1882-1889).
2. Two interstate editions were also published at various times. The South Australian edition, which incorporated the *Illustrated Adelaide Post*, was published between 1874 and 1885. The proprietors were initially, W.A. Cawthorne, and later, G.N. and W.H. Birks. The other edition was published in Queensland between ca. 1877 and 1882 by Gordon and Gotch.



Hey Diddle Diddle the Cat and the Fiddle, The Cow Jumped Over the Moon
(Theatre Royal, Melbourne)
20 Jan. 1877, 165

FURTHER REFERENCE

- "*Australasian Sketcher with Pen and Pencil.*" *AustLit: The Australian Literature Resource* (2004), online [sighted 28/09/2012]
- "*Australasian Sketcher with Pen and Pencil.*" *Trove: Digitised Newspapers and More.* National Library of Australia, online [sighted 28/09/2012]
- "Prospectus of a New Illustrated Monthly Journal." *Argus* (Melbourne) 24 Mar. 1873, 4.



Sinbad the Sailor
1 Jan. 1881, 8.



Gulliver; Or, Harlequin King Lilliput
14 Jan. 1882, 9.

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