



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

News Release

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Kenny Hunter sculpture celebrates College's most benevolent donor

A commissioned artwork commemorating Edinburgh College of Art's most significant benefactor has been unveiled.

The work, *Portrait of Andrew Grant*, has been created by Kenny Hunter, one of Scotland's leading artists and Programme Director of Sculpture at the College.

The work is cast in bronze but is designed to look like a clay bust set on a handmade wooden plinth.

Mr Hunter said: "I tried to make an artwork that reflects Andrew Grant's legacy and his effect on the College. It is not just a likeness of him but more about what goes on in the studios here: the creativity, the passage of time, the materiality. The most tangible thing about him for me is the longstanding creative support that he has given to young artists."

Grant (1830-1924) provided a third of the funds for the construction of ECA's Main Building on Lauriston Place in 1907. He also left £350,000 to the College in his will, the equivalent of £15-18 million today.

His donation established the Andrew Grant Bequest, which since 1930 has provided travel scholarships for ECA students. Scottish artists such as John Bellamy and Elizabeth Blackadder benefited from the bequest, which continues to help students to this day.

Grant was born on 13 June 1830 in Cassell's Place, Leith Walk. He was educated at Leith High School and studied law at the University of Edinburgh.

Upon graduation he travelled to China and then moved to India. In Bombay he joined a well-established law firm Messrs Campbell, Mitchell & Co., where he quickly became chairman. In 1857, along with other professionals and merchants, he established the Royal Bank of India and became its first chairman.

Grant returned to Britain in 1866, establishing a business in Liverpool. He retired from business in 1873 aged 42, having married Elizabeth Ann Townsend from Glasgow the previous year.

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He was invited to stand as Liberal candidate for Leith Burghs in the 1878 Westminster elections, which he won comfortably. He was MP for the area until his retirement in 1884. His successor in the seat was William Gladstone.

In 1901 he and Elizabeth moved to the large, elegant Pitcorthie House in Fife. They became legal guardians of a local orphan.

Grant died on 23 October 1924 and is buried in Warriston Cemetery, Edinburgh.

For further information please contact:

Edd McCracken, Press and PR Office, tel 0131 651 4400; email edd.mccracken@ed.ac.uk



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