

Early in April 1958 Norman sent a print of *Death's Mask* to John Hetherington and his first wife Olive, whose son had recently died. In his accompanying letter Norman explained the symbolism of the etching:

*It is just a simple enough symbolism of my concept of death, placed in a setting of life's carnival, where death arrives as a figure of dread. Some dancers shrink with horror from it, others dance on ignoring it, and a couple refuse to be scared by its mask. In a general hazy atmosphere about death, the mass try to keep their distance from it in a state of uneasiness. My death, you'll note, is very much alive behind her mask. I've made her the only concrete reality, because I accept what is called reality to be a shadow play of the present moment passing on into non existence with every tick of the clock. To me, the indestructible content of reality is all that can be stored in the mind of knowledge, self knowledge, and emotional sensitivity garnered by a full experience of living; of being and becoming. That alone we can carry with us over the border line of a fresh adventure in living ...*