

Guided Tours

The McDougall voluntary Gallery Guides are now operating in the Gallery every Saturday and Sunday afternoon at 2.30 p.m., and receiving a warm response from the visiting public. They provide general background material on the works exhibited, or the artists involved, and they not only help the Gallery visitors unfamiliar with art, but can heighten considerably the general pleasure of a Gallery visit. As the community awareness of this service grows we anticipate an increase in the demand, and we would appreciate more volunteers. We plan a general instruction course for all our Gallery Assistants which will help them to gain a deeper familiarity with the Gallery and its collection so if you feel you could help, please contact Ann Betts, Education Officer, Telephone 791-660, Extension 695.

Architectural Walking Tour. October 6

Mr Jonathan Mané's popular tours for members of the Friends' Society around the historical architectural sites of Christchurch; continue on Saturday October 6, with a selection of buildings illustrating the *Domestic Revival Architecture* of the city.

This tour will take the form of a walking expedition along Park Terrace, Bealey Avenue and Colombo Street, finishing in Cathedral Square around mid-day. Would members of the Friends' Society interested in joining this tour, please assemble at 10 a.m. outside Noah's Hotel.

Our Space. September 21-29

To celebrate the International Year of the Child, the Robert McDougall Art Gallery has designed a series of exhibitions to encourage children's involvement. A kite flying day is planned, weather permitting, for September 22 at North Hagley Park, and a hot air balloon day on September 29. Then, in the Gallery itself an exhibition of model figures and a display of puppets and puppet theatre will be shown, along with an exhibition of crafts for children, organised by local craft people for installation in the Gallery.

With an enthusiastic response from the young this will be an exciting and stimulating week.



Out Reach

Out Reach, the community extension programme which aims to take Gallery activities into wider areas of community life, is now well under way. A fine series of In Gallery concerts, organised by C. C. Brown and based on contemporary electronic music are presented on the first Sunday in each month. They have attracted an ever increasing audience, keen to hear what is happening in this exciting new musical field. The programmes are then going out into the local secondary schools for lunch-hour concerts.

Out Reach is also moving into the commercial world and the work place. A Cello Installation piece, which goes to the BNZ building in August, and to the N.A.C. staff canteens and the Christchurch Building Centre in September, has been planned. Anyone interested in more information on the scope and contents of the *Out Reach* programme is invited to contact the Gallery as we are always interested to learn of new venues, or new groups, interested in the programme.

In the Collection

They Call This Art. How often we have heard this comment made when the Gallery has exhibited or perhaps acquired a new work by a progressive contemporary artist. This same remark also headed a letter to the Editor of the Lyttelton Times on 29 March 1928. It was just one of many which appeared in the local papers protesting against the purchase by the Canterbury Society of Arts, of a work which is now in our collection.

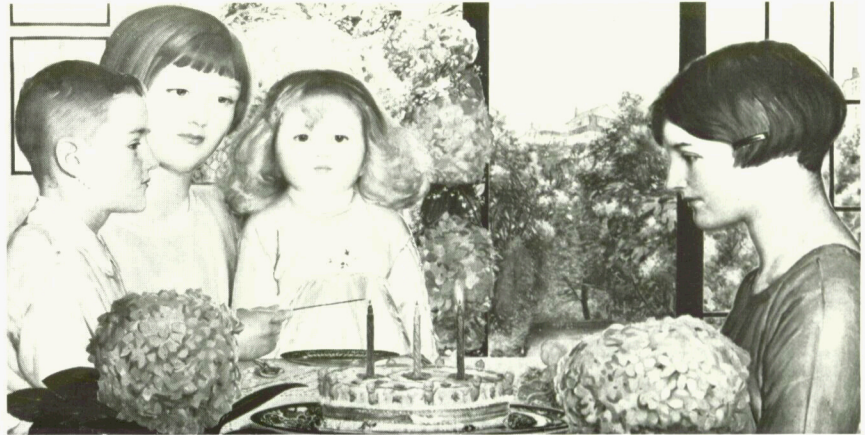
The painting which caused the controversy was none other than 'Cynthia's Birthday' by H. Linley Richardson R.B.A. and one wonders today after more than half a century how such a work could incite so many citizens to put pen to paper. The Lyttelton Times letter began as follows:

Sir—I do not know who buys the pictures for our Art Gallery but I should judge him to be some crank who calls himself an art critic. He ought not to be let loose with 'money to burn' for he has selected 'Cynthia's Birthday' by H. Linley Richardson—a group of pudding faced expressionless children all staring at a birthday cake, a greedy lot who find it difficult to keep away from the cake, prime dairy food no doubt as depicted—

The writer went on to criticise the work still further and its selectors, labelling the painting as 'rubbish'.

Four days later on April 2 in the correspondence column of the Christchurch Press another reader wrote the following—

Sir—This picture irresistibly reminds one of the final scene in the immortal drama of Punch and Judy—you know, the one in which the full strength of the wooden company is assembled to see Punch hanged. Its purchase has profoundly discredited the committee of the Art Society and of anyone fool enough to admit it to our art gallery to be. Christchurch will be made ridiculous—



As with the writer of the earlier letter to the Lyttelton Times this correspondent went on to express further displeasure at the selection of the work and its selectors. A few days later 'Disgusted Ratepayer' expressed the following:

Sir—May I crave a little of your valuable space to register my protest in the first place as a lover of all that is artistic, against this year's choice for our permanent collection, and in the second place as a ratepayer against the squandering of our money on such a piece of work. The fact that this acquisition may hang in the City's future art gallery so generously given by Mr McDougall makes the committee's actions all the more unfortunate.

The writer continued his lengthy letter by pointing out, in his opinion, the innumerable mistakes and bad drawing in the composition and called into question the competence of the artist involved.

The above remarks were typical of the tenor of correspondence from many citizens over the weeks that followed. However just as there were many letters in protest there were equally as many in

support of the picture. Foremost were the art reviewers Dr Lester and Professor James Shelley. The latter in his 'Press' review of the 1928 Art Society Annual Show devoted considerable space to 'Cynthia's Birthday' congratulating the Gallery on the acquisition of a work which he considered to be the finest in the Exhibition, beyond criticism.

One prominent element in the criticism by many was the cost of the work. What was not widely known was that the Art Society through negotiation with the artist managed to reduce the original purchase price of £150 down to £90 of which only £50 was from the City Council grant, the remainder completely from the Art Society coffers!

Today the whole trivial incident of 'Cynthia's Birthday' can be viewed in its correct perspective, as no doubt we will be able to view the criticisms levelled at our own contemporary artists in years to come.

Weaving in New Zealand

Although there always seem to have been a few isolated handweavers in New Zealand, the great upsurge of interest and participation in the crafts of weaving and spinning which is seen throughout the country today, had its beginnings in the Auckland district in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Since then the interest has filtered to almost every corner of the country and most districts have groups which meet regularly to further their interests in these crafts.

In 1969 the New Zealand Spinning Weaving and Woolcrafts Society was formed, its primary aim then, being to co-ordinate and standardise rules for spinning contests which were being held annually in various parts of the country. However, in quite a short time it grew and expanded to become the co-ordinating body for all woolcrafts in New Zealand, and now has sub-committees dealing with education, projects such as festivals and exhibitions, and quality and standards of craftsmanship. Through these committees the New Zealand Spinning Weaving and Woolcrafts Society has done a great deal



to improve standards in all branches of woolcraft. A Woolcrafts Festival is held annually by the Society, the venue alternating between the North and South Island, and this gives spinners and weavers the opportunity to come together in large numbers, to see each other's work

and to take part in seminars, displays and competitions.

It is hard to find any aspect of weaving which is characteristic of New Zealand unless it is the widespread use of wool, both handspun and millspun. The majority of weavers are also spinners and many

spin and dye a lot of the yarns they use. These include linen, silk and cotton. To be able to produce exactly the type of yarn to be used in a project gives the weaver much greater freedom and, particularly in the field of fabric weaving, the opportunity to create fabrics which are truly individual and exclusive. With so many opportunities for travel and rapid communication, and with the large numbers of books being published about all aspects of weaving, New Zealand weavers are influenced by world trends particularly in hangings, three dimensional and off-loom weaving. Individual weavers are emerging but their numbers are comparatively small. However, with more and more opportunities to exhibit work both at the national and local level, and with weaving competitions being sponsored by large business organisations, there are new names appearing each year. As well as this, woven hangings are being bought by Galleries and Embassies as well as by private collectors, and are being commissioned for hanging in public buildings, so with opportunities and challenges like this, the future for weaving in New Zealand would appear to be an interesting and stimulating one.

Weaving Exhibition. October 14–November 8

Opening on October 14 is an exhibition of contemporary weaving assembled by the McDougall Art Gallery from the work of Canterbury weavers. Exhibited will be a selection of woven pieces employing natural fibres in a variety of loom work, spinning and lace making techniques. Two floor looms will also be installed in the Gallery adding to the understanding of the techniques and making interesting exhibits in themselves. Also demonstrations of loom work, spinning and lace making will be given in the Gallery and these, with an audio visual supporting programme, will add to a full and fascinating exhibition.

For those who enjoy participating, a *Weave-in* will be held during Labour weekend October 20–22nd in the Gallery centre court, where Gallery visitors can add their individual touch to collective works,

Honours Printmakers and Painters October 23–November 7

Michèle Beaufoy Painting.
Jean Dickinson Engraving.
Peter Ransom Engraving.

An exhibition of works being submissions for Honours in engraving and painting. It is anticipated that the print works shown will have a supplementary educational function to assist the public in a further understanding of printmaking methods, as woodblocks and various states in the print process will be on display.



Forthcoming Exhibitions

German Theatre Posters

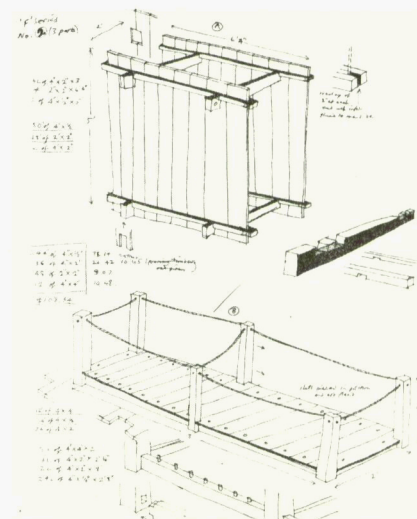


The credibility of the art of the Theatre Poster, was well established by the gifted French artist, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864–1901) and Aubrey Beardsley (1872–1898). They learned from Japanese prints, how much more striking a picture could become if modelling and other detail were sacrificed to bold simplifications. Artists such as Picasso, Matisse, and Braque collaborated with the Ballet Russes, impresario Sergei Diaghilev, and Stravinsky, to produce dynamic posters which were as controversial and acclaimed as the productions they advertised. Since them, many artists have been commissioned to create posters which have in time become acknowledged works of art in their own right, and widely collected. This exciting tradition of Theatre Poster—which today has developed into sophisticated record jacket design—is the subject of an exhibition in the Gallery 'German Theatre Posters' on view October 3–30. The fifty

posters cover a variety of Opera, Ballet, Play and Children's Theatre production from German Theatre in recent years, and presents exciting visual interpretations of productions familiar to many. 'Don Giovanni', 'Antigone', 'Coppelia' and 'Happy Days' to name but a few.

Matt Pine

Although Matt Pine has a well-established reputation as a sculptor in the North Island, his work is not widely known in the South of his homeland. To correct this neglect Matt has been invited to exhibit in this Gallery, September 10 to 29—works completed during his year as holder of the distinguished 'Frances Hodgkins Fellowship' at the University of Otago. Not only will this exhibition be his first major show in the South Island but will also mark the first exhibit of sculptural works in the Botanic Gardens, adjacent to the Gallery. Four works will be constructed on the Archery Lawn, one at the entrance to the Gallery, and a sixth on the rise of ground to the left of the entrance to the Archery Lawn. The location of these works will present a challenging contrast to the six installed in the Gallery complete with an audio-visual



display of earlier works and sources relating to the actual exhibits.

Sculpture, possibly more than any other art form, has in recent years, undergone radical changes. Traditional materials of bronze and stone, shaped into objects for display on plinths, have been laid aside in favour of a wide range of mass produced materials—plastics, aluminium, and electronic equipment, which realise intentions and realities of the artist's environment also.

The sculpture of Matt Pine is consistent with these developments and presents us with challenging means by which to further understand our world, the artist, and ourselves.

Having completed studies at the Universities of Canterbury and Auckland, Matt Pine studied and exhibited widely in London. He has travelled and worked widely in Europe, Eastern Europe, USSR, Africa, North America and the Far East.

New Canterbury Contemporaries

Continuing our policy of bringing you new developments in contemporary art established by the exhibitions of Neil Dawson, Don Peebles, Ralph Hotere, and Barry Cleavin; fifteen young 'New Canterbury Contemporaries' will exhibit from September 14 to October 10. When selecting the artists, it became evident that to achieve a cohesive exhibition we would have to make a selection based not only on quality but also on the type of work. For this latter reason, certain people have been excluded because of the focus of the exhibition. Our show will not represent all that is happening; instead it will bring together the work of certain artists whose concerns seem to contain a mutual empathy.

The exhibition will cover painting, sculpture, printmaking, photography and drawing by: John Hurrell, Pauline Trengrove, Bruce Robinson, Peter Wolden, Graham Snowden, Bing Dawe, Neil Dawson, Simon Allison, Harvey Taylor, Michael Reed, Glenn Jowitt, Paul Johns, Murray Hedwig, Michael Ebel, and the late Mark de la Mare.

Barry Cleavin. Drawings and Three Prints. October 6–31

Barry Cleavin, born in Dunedin in 1939, is a printmaker and Senior Lecturer in Engraving at the University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts. Of his exhibition the artist says:

"Drawing exists in many categories. This exhibition represents three approaches, each approach with its own purpose and the manner linear. Some of the works have not been extended and exist as records of time spent drawing. Some may transcend this category and exist as drawings alone, without considering any extension: complete in themselves. Finally there are drawings to be later expanded into print form, usually etching and aquatint. Three prints support this conclusion. "Drawing is a way of reasoning on paper"—Saul Steinberg.

Acquisitions and Gifts

The following works have been acquired since the publication of Bulletin 4.

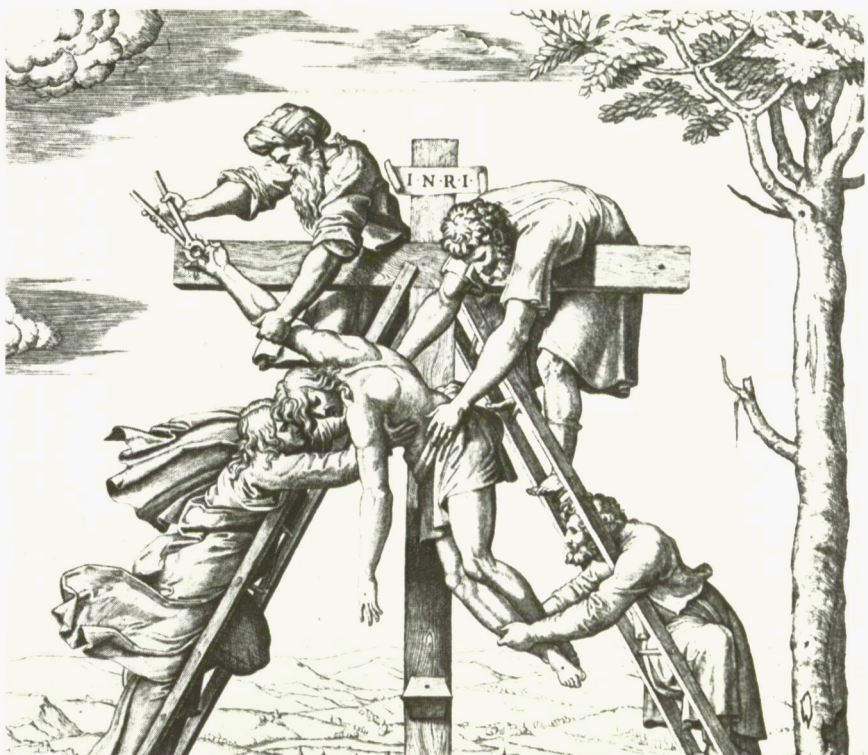
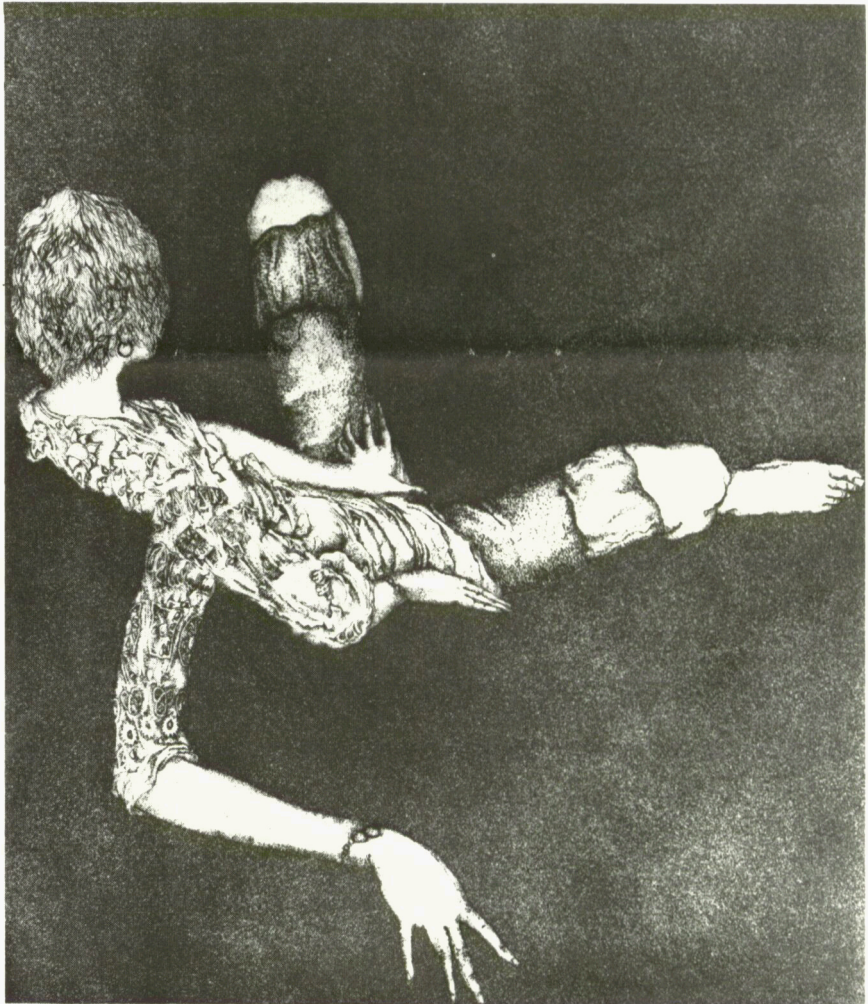
- 1**
Alan Pearson 1. *Portrait of Ann Oliver, Auckland*. Winning entry in the 1979 National Bank Portrait Award. 2. *Crucifixion*.

The following gifts have recently been received.

- 2**
Don Peebles—*Drawings 1977*. Five Untitled drawings/Charcoal on paper. Two Untitled drawings/Acrylic on paper. All drawings were exhibited in the recent Peebles Exhibition.

The following works have been placed on loan.

- 3**
Barry Cleavin 1. *Adriaen Van Ostade / Peasants Drinking*—etching. 2. *Marco Antonio Raimondi / Descente de Croix*—engraving. 3. *Claude Lorrain / Attack by Bandits in a River Landscape setting*—etching.



Marco Antonio Raimonde / *Descente de Croix*