

A bi-monthly publication containing news, views, and reviews of activities at the Robert McDougall Art Gallery.

Number 28

July/August 1983

ISSN 0111-1426

### **Killeen Installation and the Opening of the Gallery Extensions**

Just over one hundred and fifty people attended a function at the Gallery on the evening of June 14 which combined the installation of Auckland artist Richard Killeen's "Chance and Inevitability" work with the opportunity to view the Gallery's new administration additions.

His Worship the Mayor of Christchurch Sir Hamish Hay placed the first of 85 elements which comprised the Killeen installation. Friends of the Gallery with Councillors and Council staff who had been involved in the provisions of the new additions took part in assembling the work as the artist looked on. The work took its form in the centre south gallery as other guests chose elements and arranged them with those already in place.

The Chairman of the Cultural Committee, Cr Louisa Crawley, in acknowledging Richard Killeen's presence, paid a tribute to the qualities in his work which allowed people to share in the creation of the work. In her remarks she also stressed the necessity for the new additions, thanked those involved with provision of the block on behalf of the staff and complimented the City Architect's office on the ingenuity and unobtrusiveness of its design.



*Installing the Killeen work Chance and Inevitability.*

Sir Hamish remarked upon the increased activity in the last decade of the Gallery's fifty-one year history which resulted in additional staffing housed in a building originally designed not to have more than two people. Recently, staff had been carrying out a very active programme in difficult working conditions and the Council had moved to remedy the space shortcomings. The Molly Canaday Bequest of \$19,000 with an Internal Affairs grant of \$20,000 had

contributed towards the costs of the building which at \$188,000 including equipment, furniture and security systems was the most substantial sum spent on the Gallery since its original cost of £31,000 provided by the donor Robert McDougall.

The new wing would release space in the basement area for exhibition preparation and picture storage. The Mayor then invited guests to view the new additions.

### **Christine Hellyar — An Artist's Project July 9–August 21**

Christine Hellyar is regarded as one of the country's foremost sculptors. Since 1973 she has exhibited widely both in New Zealand and Australia. Born in New Plymouth she graduated with a Dip F.A. (Hons) from the University of Auckland in 1969. She also spent some time in Christchurch attending the Christchurch Teachers College. Since 1982 she has lectured at Elam School of Fine Arts in Auckland.

For the installation of the McDougall, Christine has constructed four of paired cupboards containing a range of paired objects representing "opposite" and "equal" concepts. There are, for example, objects

representing western and eastern cultures, active and passive concepts, containers and contained, processed and unprocessed, smooth and rough textures. In totality her installation will ask the observer to examine the variety of forms and ideas displayed in her cupboards from the viewpoint of their essential functions and qualities thereby extending our understanding of form, concept and function beyond the superficial.

### **Chris Mathews July 1–August 14**

From 1 July the Gallery will be exhibiting a suite of photographs by this young New Zealand photographer. The works are a pictorial essay of a well known

Christchurch establishment — "The Doghouse" in the Square and were taken during 1978 when the photographer was a resident of Christchurch. As a form of social commentary the photograph can be a powerful medium and the public should find these works not only relatively easy to relate to, but also an interesting comment on one aspect of our city.

### **C.O.B.R.A. August 18–September 7**

Gerritt van der Lingen has brought together an exhibition of works by artists of the Netherlands-based C.O.B.R.A. group. The group existed only from 1948 to 1951 but included some of Europe's most original artists, among them Karel Appel and

Anton Rooskens. C.O.B.R.A. had loose affiliations with other European groups making it difficult to make a definite list of the group's membership. The small exhibition presented in the Print Room will consist of works on paper borrowed from other institutions, private collections and will include a work by Anton Rooskens presented by Mr Julian Boers, a Dutch art teacher, following a visit to New Zealand.

**Rudolph Gopas**  
**August 4-September 18**

Rudolph Gopas must be considered one of the founding fathers of expressionism in contemporary New Zealand painting.

This retrospective exhibition demonstrates Gopas' powerful influence upon a generation of painters which includes Fomison, Clairmont, Trusttum, and Harris. The exhibition acknowledges Gopas' importance as a post-war New Zealand painter and has already secured for him a richly deserved respect from wider and younger New Zealand public.

Staff of New Plymouth's Govett-Brewster Gallery spent two years researching and bringing together this comprehensive view of Gopas' achievements, which is toured with the assistance of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council and the New Zealand Art Gallery Directors Council.

From the time of his arrival in New Zealand in 1949 Rudolph Gopas immersed himself in the task of interpreting the new country in which he had sought refuge from the upheavals he had experienced in Europe. His expressionist style, formed during his time on the Baltic coast was applied to harbour scenes from Lyttelton to Kaikoura, although

other European influences are evident. He supported himself and his New Zealand wife Crinee by working as a photographic retoucher and painting watercolour portraits. His home became a regular gathering place for a young generation of artists as Gopas brought a European enthusiasm for strong coffee and equally strong intellectual arguments to the Christchurch art world.

Appointed as a lecturer in painting at the Canterbury University School of Art, Rudolph Gopas was revered by a circle of young followers and feared by some for his uncompromising standards. His views were often expressed with an acid directness crushing to less sturdy souls.

He encouraged the talented and

championed the inclusion of younger artists in the prestigious annual group exhibitions. Two of the many artists who benefitted from his teaching are Philip Trusttum and Philip Clairmont. They in turn have conveyed his painterly expressionism to a new generation.

Towards his retirement in 1976, his lifelong passion for astronomy emerged as the basis for his "Galactic Series" and the "Living Sun" works. Then Gopas turned from his potential of paint to express his ideas, developing a unique mixture of illustrated poetry and astronomy in hand coloured xerox prints. These, because of their visionary intensity and compelling visual style, are reminiscent of Blake's illustrated poems.



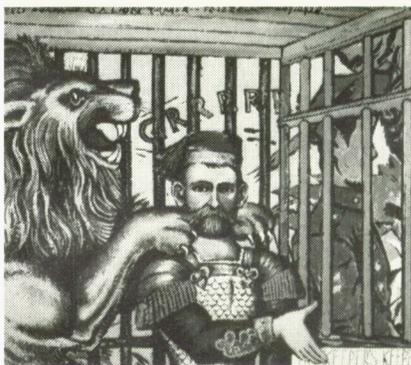
*Boats at Kaikoura 1960, Rudolph Gopas.*

**Aspects of Recent N.Z. Arts**  
**— The New Image**  
**August 12-September 11**

The New Image is one of a series of exhibitions prepared by the Auckland City Art Gallery dealing with contemporary developments in New Zealand painting. The exhibitions are designed to bring to the fore works that face similar issues, rather than being a major survey of New Zealand art.

In his foreword to the catalogue, Dr Rodney Wilson describes the New Image exhibition as being one that concerns itself with a group of figurative painters, or painters who evoke memories of, or associations with objects. They are linked by these qualities, by certain shared concerns, by a similar language and by choice of colour, paint quality and surface. They are a diverse group for all the similarity sharing a mix of attitudes and formal vocabulary rather than any pursuit of a common goal of adherence to common roads! The

artists represented are Wang Sing Tai, Denys Watkins, Richard Killeen, Paul Hartigan, Dick Frizzell, Gavin Chilcott and George Balogh.



*Self Portrait as a Lion Tamer 1978, Dick Frizzell.*

The Robert McDougall Art Gallery  
P.O. Box 237 Christchurch.  
Botanic Gardens, Rolleston Avenue,  
Christchurch 1.  
791-660 Extension 484

**Acquisitions**

**Llewelyn Summers**

*Wrestless*  
*Mahogany*

**William J. Reed**

*'The River' Waimakarua*  
Watercolour

**John Weeks**

*Figures with Goats*  
Pencil/Wash

**John Weeks**

*Victoria Square 1921*  
Oil on Canvas

**John Weeks**

*Worcester Street, towards Cathedral Square*

Oil on Line

**Gordon Crook**

*Allegory 3*  
Screenprint

**Gavin Chilcott**

*Modern Martyrdom*  
Acrylic on Canvas

**Gita Berzins**

*Sculptured Pot*  
Stoneware

**Past Coffee Mornings**

The April coffee mornings had a record sixty-five members along to hear Doris Lusk talk about her European journey — places and galleries. Again we were delighted with a fine collection of slides illustrating an artist's experiences. There is no doubt that what an artist records on film, as well as in paint and the reasons for the choice are fascinating and illuminating. Doris' collection of watercolour sketches of one small rural locality which drew her back several times to record its seasonal changes was also very much appreciated by her large audience.

It was a very wet and windy morning on 18 May when David Brokenshire talked on porcelain, but well over thirty people braved the weather and were amply rewarded. David talked to the group about the history of porcelain and explained its unique and contradictory qualities, its apparent fragility and its extraordinary durability. He showed us the malleable clay, demonstrated its brittle nature when fired to the biscuit stage — all of us felt qualms of guilt as we broke a Brokenshire bowl between our fingers — and revealed the secret of its ultimate lustrous and transparent brilliance. He had assembled about twenty examples, both of his own work and of that of other New Zealand potters working in the same medium, and talked of the imaginative skills which are needed to produce things of such delicacy and substance, with such variety of texture and colour. His enthusiasm was infectious; there were lots of questions. Those who were there went away reassessing their own "fine bone china" and it was noticeable how many stayed on to study the examples of porcelain in the Contemporary Australian Ceramics exhibition, seeing them with warmer appreciation and newly-awakened insight.

These coffee mornings offer a rare opportunity to talk with artists about their work, to gain an understanding of their technique and to widen one's horizons generally. Your Executive is considering a rather similar series to be held in the Gallery in the evenings and we wonder what the response may be. Please let us have your comments.

**Future Coffee Mornings**

On Wednesday, 20 July at 10.30 a.m. Neil Dawson will talk about and show slides of the development of a

commission for the Govett Brewster Gallery in New Plymouth, an *Installation in Taranaki*. How such a proposal for a large outdoor work on a hillside is conceived and developed, promises to be a very interesting discussion for our members.

Then on Wednesday, 17 August Jenny de Lange talks about her passion for glass and how this enthusiasm led her in London in 1980 to give up her normal career as a ceramic artist to work with hot glass. As well as showing slides of her own Jenny de Lange will illustrate the development of glass and aspects of its appreciation.

---

**Reciprocal Privileges for Friends**

Your Executive is exploring the possibility of reciprocal privileges among the gallery friends' organisations within New Zealand and Australia. We hope that, very soon, Friends of the McDougall who may be visiting Canberra will be warmly welcomed at the Australian National Gallery, and there is every possibility that similar arrangements can be made with other Australian galleries. We are sure that established galleries throughout New Zealand will also be ready to welcome our members. You will hear from us about this as soon as we have replies from the people we have written to.

---

**Coming Events**

Your Society will be acting as hosts for the Gallery at the openings of the two remaining major exhibitions of the year, the Rudolph Gopas Exhibition on 4 August and the Rita Angus opening on 8 December. We look forward to seeing you on these special occasions. Those of you who enjoyed our Christmas 'gathering' last year will also be pleased to learn we are planning another this year.

---

**C.O.B.R.A. Group**

Members may recall that in the September/October 1982 Newsletter we recorded the gift by Mr Julian Boers to the Gallery through the Friends of the McDougall, of a screen-print *Printemps* by the C.O.B.R.A. painter, Anton Rooskens, Mr Boers' father-in-law.

This work will be part of a small exhibition "C.O.B.R.A. Group — Works on Paper" a display in the Gallery from August 18 to September 7.

**New Members**

Mr B. and Mrs C. Field  
Margaret Batt  
M. McCullough  
Frank and Sally Collins  
Ms K. Jacobs  
Miss K. and Mrs C. J. Turner  
Mrs A. J. Toulson  
Te Awhina R. Arahanga  
Miss J. Pryor  
Mr and Mrs W. A. Young  
Karina Thorpe  
Mr and Mrs H. Boots  
Mrs O. Minty  
Sue Mercer  
Lady McCombs  
Marie Lenihan  
Ms P. W. Woodlock  
Elizabeth Hawker  
Craig MacDonald  
Mr and Mrs B. A. Nepia  
Judy Wilson  
Mrs M. Hollander  
J. P. Schutte  
Clair and Brian Jones  
Fiona MacMillan  
F. M. Warren  
Kristen Anderson  
Jim and Dorothy Last  
Mrs M. L. Griffin  
A. V. Gordon  
J. D. and M. O. Last  
Robyn Stewart  
Miss Rosemary Everett  
Mrs M. H. Conway  
Jonathan Mane

---

P.O. Box 237, Christchurch  
Botanic Gardens, Rolleston Ave.,  
President — Robert Erwin, 558-675  
Secretary — Pat Unger, 487-482  
Treasurer — Anne Crighton,

---



---

**Coming Events****The Robert McDougall Art Gallery**

---

---

**July/August**

---

- July**
- 1 **Richard Killeen, Chance and Inevitability**, until 23 July.
  - 18th Century British and Italian Prints**, until 7 August.
  - Chris Matthews, The Doghouse photographs**, until 14 August.
  - 3 **Hot Air Balloon Launching**, Hagley Park near Armagh Street Bridge, 9.00 a.m.
  - 3 **Gallery Concert, Early Music Society**, 3.00 p.m.
  - 8 **Morning at the McDougall**, guided tour, art talk, tea. 10.15 a.m. Groups please book. Individuals welcome.
  - 9 **Christine Hellyar, An Artist's Project**, until 21 August.
  - 9 **Art Talk**, Slide Lecture by Christine Hellyar, 3.00 p.m.
  - 20 **Friends Coffee Morning**, Neil Dawson, sculptor, will speak on the Govett Brewster Gallery's project for an Installation in Taranaki, 10.30 a.m.
  - 22 **Morning at the McDougall**, as on July 8.
  - 24 **Art Talk**, Barry McCallion will speak on recent developments in USA art with assistance of Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council and the U.S.I.A., 2.30 p.m.
- August**
- 1 **Chris Matthews**, until 14 August.
  - 18th Century British and Italian Prints**, until 7 August.
  - Christine Hellyar**, until 21 August.
  - 4 **Opening of Rudolph Gopas — Retrospective Exhibition**, 7.45 p.m. Exhibition closes on 18 September.
  - 7 **Gallery Concert, Ilam Wind Ensemble**, 3.00 p.m.
  - 11 **Pippa Davies**, will speak and demonstrate current work on Judy Chicago's new project, 'The Birth Project', 10.00 a.m.
  - 12 **New Image Aspects of New Zealand Art**, until 11 September.
  - 12 **Morning at the McDougall**, guided tour, art talk, tea. 10.15 a.m. Groups please book. Individuals welcome.
  - 14 **Art Film**. Showing of Judy Chicago's film, 'Right Out of History', on the Dinner Party Exhibition, 3.00 p.m.
  - 17 **Friends Coffee Morning**, Jenny de Lange will speak on glass, its development and aspects of its appreciation.
  - 18 **C.O.B.R.A.** exhibition opens until September 7.
  - 21 **Art Talk**. Panel discussion by a group of well-known artists on experiences shared with Rudi Gopas, 3.00 p.m.
  - 26 **Morning at the McDougall**, as on August 12.
  - 28 **Art Talk**. Gerrit van der Lingen will show a film and speak on the C.O.B.R.A. artists, 3.00 p.m.
- 

**Friends of the Robert McDougall Art  
Gallery Inc.**