



Bulletin

The Robert McDougall Art Gallery

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

Number 33

May/June 1984

ISSN 0111-1426



Hyde Park Corner 1981 by Di Livey

Fabric and Form May 16 – June 10

Fabric and Form is one of the most exciting and innovative craft exhibitions to come to New Zealand in recent years.

The exhibition was planned and selected by Michael Brennand-Wood who studied fabric work and embroidery at Bolton College of Art, Manchester Polytechnic and Birmingham Polytechnic and now makes work that defies the borderline which has been arbitrarily created between painting and crafts. His current work is based on wooden grids, stained and painted with

acrylics to which are applied cotton stitchery and collage of paper, fabrics and other materials. Three of Brennand-Wood's own works are included in this exhibition.

Work from a further eleven artists has been selected by him for this show, demonstrating circumstances in which artists and craftspeople have chosen to use thread or fabric as the medium for their work. All the work selected is abstract and the only exhibits which could be said to have any 'practical' application are the two knitted scarves by Barbara Brown.

The methods by which the fabric is used or worked are determined by the visual result required and it is interesting to note where a traditional textile technique has been found appropriate, for example, in Ingunn Skogholt's wool and linen tapestries or Mary Restieaux's obscure but traditional dyeing techniques. Sometimes a decision has been made to create a new technique, such as Stephanie Berman's adaptation of patchwork, where she makes work which is both a textile object and a painting out of dyed, cut and stitched cloth, or Diana Harrison's stitched hangings which have departed completely from the original function of quilting.

There are also examples of work where the nature of the fabric has been changed completely, as in Brennand-Wood's own work where the fabric is shredded and torn, or transformed by tearing and burning as in the work of Katherine Virgils.

The show as a whole provides a concise and revealing examination of the many approaches to the use of fabric and thread in the work of some contemporary British artists and craftspeople, and will raise debate about the present position of the boundary lines between fine art and craft.

A significant feature of this exhibition is that, firstly, the works are "one-offs", and secondly, the selection of works has been based on content rather than technique. This shift in emphasis reflects the change that has taken place in the terms of reference in which contemporary textiles are produced. In recent years it has been the study of painting and sculpture that has exerted the greatest influence on the textile artist. The study of technique has become of lesser importance. This new freedom from the constraints of the process has broken down the lines by which textile art is defined, in much the same way as the distinctions between painting and sculpture are today increasingly blurred.

The artists represented are: Stephanie Bergman, Tablek Beutlich, Michael Brennand-Wood, Barbara Brown, Diana Hamson, Danielle Kennen, Di Livey, Michael Moon, Mary Restieaux, Ingunn Skogholt, Richard Smith and Katherine Virgils.

This is a British Council Crafts Council exhibition and is toured by the New Zealand Art Gallery Directors' Council.

Waahine Toa – Women in Maori Myth May 3 – June 3

Waahine Toa is an exhibition of 8 large paintings with accompanying drawings and like engravings by the Wellington artist, Robyn Kahukiwa.

Robyn Kahukiwa can be classified as a naive painter. As Neil Rowe describes in his introduction to the exhibition "Her approach is instinctive rather than academic. Naive art of one kind or another has found exponents at all historical

periods although it exists outside the mainstream of art history and owes little to schools or the current "style". Great Naive artists have included "Le Douanier" Rousseau, the American, Grandma Moses and Marc Chagall. Characteristic of much Naive art is its link with Folk Art and tradition. Waahine Toa has affinities with a narrative folk style of meeting house decoration prevalent on the East Coast depicting myths and

genealogies and similarly includes elements and motifs from traditional Maori art. Although Robyn's antecedents are on the East Coast her background is bi-cultural and it is the expression of this which gives her art its particular strength and relevance to Maori and Pakeha alike

The creation myths of the Maori are profoundly beautiful. They speak to us directly about birth and death and

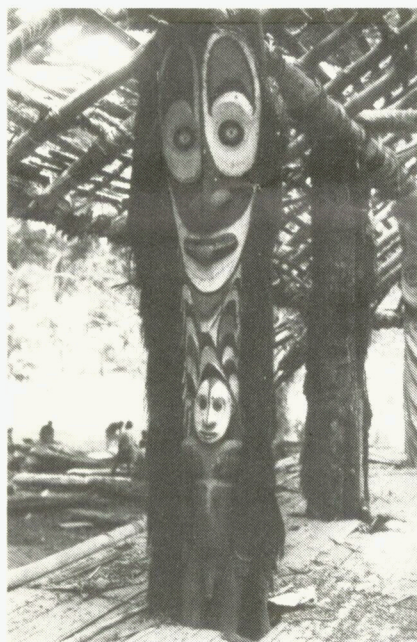
about love – between man and woman, mother and child. In this remarkable body of work depicting the eight principal female protagonists in the myths – from Te Po, the darkness before the work and all being, to Hinenuitepo, the goddess of death who claimed Maui as she claims the least daring of men – Robyn Kahukiwa has given us a brilliantly realised visual narrative in oil paintings and pencil drawings. The world of myth that she translates is the heritage of all New Zealanders. It is unique to this place. It is the story of these islands and their beginnings. The mystery and the beauty belong to

the myths; it is Robyn's achievement that she has so aptly interpreted them and so vividly brought them to life."

Waahine Toa is toured by the Wairarapa Arts Centre with the assistance of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand and the New Zealand Art Gallery Directors' Council.



Taranga by Robyn Kahukiwa



*Centre Posts Angoram Haus
Taubaran Constudia*

Tribal Art of Papua New Guinea – Art of the Gulf and Sepik June 13 – July 24

Papua New Guinea is reputed to have over 700 different dialects within a landmass of similar area to New Zealand. It is recognised as one of the most significant art areas in the South Pacific region and we have chosen two of the more prolific regions (Gulf and Sepik) to highlight the superb examples of Primitive Art produced in Papua New Guinea today.

Traditionally most of the works in this exhibition would have been produced for specific religious or social ceremonies. In recent years they are produced mainly for their commercial potential. This does not necessarily detract from the intrinsic beauty of the objects and the exhibition displays fifty pieces which will give the viewer an insight into the design and decorative aspects of Papua New Guinea Tribal Art as practised today.

The exhibition is curated by the Robert McDougall Art Gallery and will tour nine other galleries over the next two years. We wish to acknowledge Mrs Helen Dennett of Port Moresby for her curatorial assistance and also Cathay Pacific for their sponsorship of this exhibition.

The exhibition will be opened by the Papua New Guinean High Commissioner to New Zealand, Sir Kuamala Kalo MBE, on June 13th at 7.45 p.m.

Public and Private, Douglas J. McLeod 1906 – 1983

June 18–August 11

Art has always existed in public places.

In the years between the two wars the display of advertising through public hoardings reached an unprecedented peak throughout New Zealand. Imagery became as familiar as that in television advertising today. Most of the creators of this imagery were anonymous artists employed by advertising companies. Many were commercial hacks whilst others were artists of merit.

Through this exhibition we recognise one such artist, D.J. McLeod. McLeod was more than just an advertising artist – he was also a fine painter and draughtsman in his own right as his work reveals.

The present exhibition includes private works by D.J. McLeod dating from circa 1925 through to 1946. These are works of painting, drawing

and printmaking. Unfortunately, no public works have survived but photographs of some have, and a selection of these will be included in the installation.

Douglas J. McLeod was born in Oamaru in 1906, the youngest son of a family of ten. In 1907 the family moved to Coalgate where Mr McLeod senior was stationed as a policeman. Shortly after, he was appointed to the Kingsland Police Station, Richmond, Christchurch, and it was in this district that young McLeod gained his formative education. In 1920, at the age of 14, he was enrolled in classes at the Canterbury College of Art and was awarded Chandler & Company's student prize. The following year he joined Chandler & Company as a junior advertising artist, attending day and evening classes at the Canterbury College of Art until 1926. Notable among his contemporaries were James & Alfred Cook, Rhona Haszard and Russell Clark. At the school he was guided by tutors Archibald Nicoll, Richard Wallwork and Ronald McKenzie. The latter was a watercolourist who instilled in his students the belief that commercial



Self Portrait by D.J. McLeod c 1934

art can also retain its validity as an art form. Although in the late 1920s his commitments to commercial art were dominant, he continued to paint as a serious artist in his spare hours. In 1933 he joined the Canterbury Society of Arts as a Working Member and exhibited regularly during the 1930s.

The outbreak of war had its effect on artists' activity as it did on others and for McLeod there was no exception. In 1941 he joined the armed forces for service in the Pacific.

On returning to New Zealand in 1944 he continued to paint, but did not exhibit again publicly until 1946 when five works were shown at the Canterbury Society of Arts Annual Exhibition. The following year found him painting less but he did exhibit a work at the Academy of Fine Arts, Wellington. However, with the

exception of showing a painting in the 1950 Canterbury Centennial 'Living Artists' exhibition, Douglas McLeod ceased to exhibit. In fact, the present exhibition is the first public showing of his work for almost 34 years. His activity as a public artist ceased in 1941 after twenty years as advertising artist for Chandler and Company.

During that time he had gained some distinction as a billboard designer, particularly during the 1930s when his work appeared in public places

throughout New Zealand. Often his advertising imagery was more than just impersonal commercial exercises and frequently he used members of his family as models as in the 'Creamota' billboard of 1939/40 which depicts the artist's father leaning on a farm gate.

Today this public work no longer survives but that which McLeod painted in private, has and from this we can measure this now almost forgotten painter.

Research on William A. Sutton

I am undertaking some research on the painter William Sutton for my M.A. thesis in Art History. I would welcome hearing from anyone who may own works by this artist, and students who attended the Canterbury College of Art in the 1930s and others who were taught by William Sutton. All replies may be addressed to:
Sarah Rennie, (Miss)
School of Fine Arts,
University of Canterbury,
CHRISTCHURCH, 1.

Cleavin Drawings Presented by Friends

The Gallery acknowledges with gratitude the generous gift of two Barry Cleavin drawings by Friends of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery. The presentation of the untitled works in the Alcatraz series which derive from the artist's 1983 visit to the U.S.A., was made at the Friends' Annual General Meeting by the President, Mr Robert Erwin. In accepting the drawings into the collection, the Director, John Coley,

expressed the Gallery's real appreciation of the Friends' support not only in the acquisition of works for the collection, but for the many successful activities organised by the Friends.

Acquisitions

The following works have been recently purchased:

Barry Cleavin

Alcatraz
Pen/Ink
Altarpiece
Etching/Aquatint
Designed to Drive Me Up The Wall
Lithograph

George Baloghy

Capricorn Motors 1983

Henri de Toulouse Lautrec

The Little Errand Girl
Lithograph

Maria Kuczynska

Standing Figure
Porcelain with glaze and lustre

Bruce Foster

Gun Emplacement Lyttelton Harbour
- from the series Sea View III, 1982
Colour Photograph

The following works have been presented:

Alan Watts

Dunes
Burnished blackfired earthenware with lustre. Presented by the Canterbury Potters' Association.

Barry Cleavin

Drawing No.6 - Alcatraz Series
Pen/Ink

Presented by the Friends of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery Society

Barry Cleavin

Drawing No.11 - Alcatraz Series
Pen/Ink

Presented by the Friends of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery Society



The Little Errand Girl by Henri de Toulouse Lautrec



Dunes by Alan Watts



Standing Figure by Maria Kuczynska

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

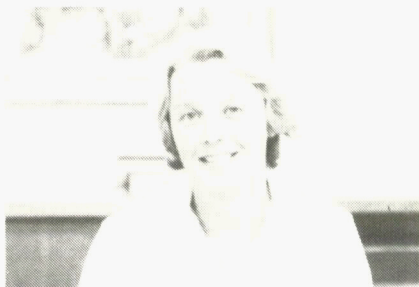
Catalogue to the Gallery's Collection

The Gallery has published the catalogue to the collections, the first to date to be a complete registration of all accessioned items since the Gallery's inception in 1932. With more than 2,700 entries, the volume is a valuable resource for curators, historians and students and an important addition to library New Zealand visual arts reference sections.

The text is divided into ten sections, a history and description of the Gallery with listings of paintings, watercolours, drawings, prints, sculpture, ceramics, textiles, photography and miniatures. A special feature is the ringbinding which allows for the addition of sheets updating accessions. These will be mailed to catalogue purchasers periodically, ensuring that the volume will contain current information as the collections grow.

The volume is now available from the Gallery reception desk at the price of \$38.00. Orders may be forwarded to The Curator, The Robert McDougall Art Gallery, P.O. Box 237, Christchurch.

Typist



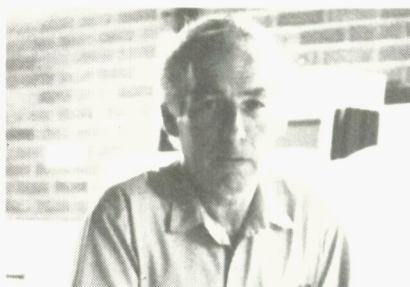
Jenny Barber

While we were sad to say good-bye to Biddy Canard who left us in March for a position at Hagley High School, we now have the pleasure of welcoming and introducing Jenny Barber who has joined us as a part-time typist. We hope she has an enjoyable and happy time with us.

People in the Gallery for Paperchase exhibition Photographs by David Cook member of 'The Art Club'

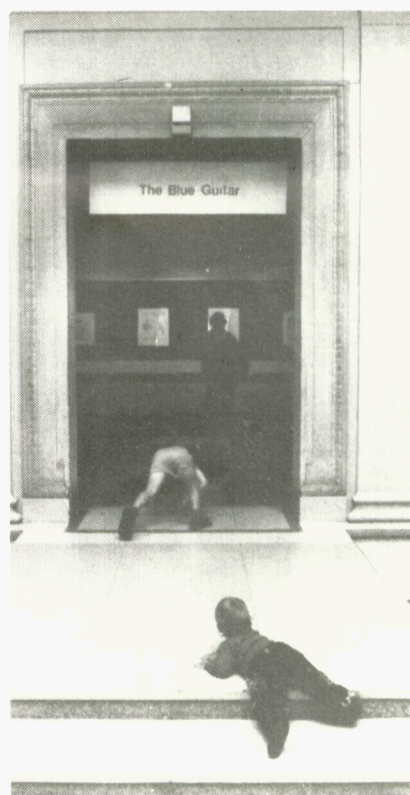


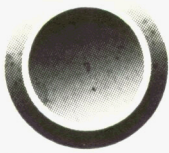
New Technician



Leslie Fibbens

The Gallery is pleased to welcome Leslie Fibbens the new Technician who comes to us from the Traffic Engineering Division, Christchurch City Council where he worked for nearly 15 years. Les is a very active member of the cycling fraternity, an interest he combines with a long-standing interest in the arts.





Friends of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery Inc

The Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 15 March was attended by about fifty members. The Officers for 1984 are as follows: Lady Hay and Bill Sutton (patrons), Robert Erwin (president), Pat Unger (secretary), Anne Crighton (treasurer); Margaret Best, Dr Rob Jackaman, Julie King, Mary McAlpine, Vivienne Mountfort, Dr Peter Simpson and Dr Gerrit van der Lingen (executive committee); John Drummond (honorary auditor). The two new committee members, Dr Jackaman and Dr Simpson, elected to fill the places of Jim Hay and Barry Wilkie who were not standing for re-election, are both members of the English Department at the University of Canterbury and are keenly interested in New Zealand painting; we know that they will make valuable contributions to the work of the Friends.

The business part of the meeting was brief – and pleasant. The success of the first set of greeting cards has been such that it has been decided to proceed with a further set of four reproductions of works from the Gallery's collections. On your behalf Robert Erwin presented to the Director, John Coley, two drawings by Barry Cleavin from his "Alcatraz" series. We also took the opportunity to make Bill Sutton, one of our patrons, an honorary life member. In announcing this Robert Erwin said, "The Friends of the McDougall, John Coley and his staff, and the Cultural Committee of the Christchurch City Council, are all well aware of the support you have given to the Gallery over many years, both materially in donating works to the collection and in your unfailing interest in the Gallery's activities. . . . We want to recognise this . . . and we should like you to become our first honorary life member. Thank you for your generosity: both to ourselves, the Friends of the McDougall, and to the member of our society will share our pleasure in so honouring Mr Sutton. Following the formal part of the meeting Mrs Regina Hagg, Lecturer in Art History at the University of Canterbury, spoke to us. Her topic was "Women's lives: an intimate introduction to classical art" and her discussion of some Greek grave stelae vividly evoked the simplicity and dignity of women in ancient Greece. Then David Vine presented a

short harpsichord recital; the acoustics of the centre court proved ideal for the gravity and brilliance of the pieces he chose. We are most grateful to him; his performance fittingly concluded another happy evening among Friends.

Coffee Mornings: Past and Future

There could hardly have been a sharper contrast between the February coffee morning when Ida Lough spoke to us about the history of tapestry and our meeting in March when we visited Noel Gregg in his smithy at the Artists' Quarter. (But those Friends who saw his recent exhibition at the Brooke-Gifford Gallery instantly recognised how well his strong art complemented the splendid sewn wall-hangings of Robyn Royds.) When we arrived Noel was working on one of his gates; the pattern was meticulously drawn in chalk on the floor and we watched the iron taking shape on the anvil. All of us were fascinated by the assured confidence with which he worked his material and the elegance and originality of his fluent designs. We now have a Presidential "wand of office" – a beautifully made ram's head, which is guaranteed to bring the most recalcitrant member to order!

The May coffee morning will be held on the 17th at 10.30 a.m. Most of you will know Ann Betts, the Gallery's Education Officer, by sight, and you may have wondered just what her busy activities involve: she will tell us! We have not yet positively persuaded our speaker on the 20th of June to address us, but we can assure everyone who joins us then that they won't regret their attendance.

— And Coffee Evenings?

Many people have expressed disappointment that, because of their daytime commitments, they can never come to the coffee mornings. So we have asked Thelma Strongman to repeat her talk on the development of Victorian landscape gardening and the way it was adapted in New Zealand, on Wednesday, 23 May, at 8pm. This is an important experiment and we do hope you will support it. The charge will be \$1.50, as for the coffee mornings; please use the night entrance.

New Members

Mrs T.J. Ballin
Sonia Bell
Sonia Belt
Mrs M.S. Berrow
I.V. Bertaud
Miss K.C. Boston
Mr & Mrs P.L. Bush
Mrs S.R. Carswell
Mrs B. Caulfield
Mr & Mrs I.S. Cocks
Jillian Coulter
Mrs Josephine Coulter
Mrs C. Crawford
Mrs R. Driver
Jeni & Howard Fearnley
Jeff Field
Katherine J. Furniss
Georgina Garforth
Ms F.E. George
Mrs S. Giddens
June Goldstein
Mrs Ngaire Howard
H.A. & K.A. Livingston
Jane McCarthur
Grant Mangin
Marian Maxwell
Franz Nieuwdorp
Mrs Anne Perkins
Anna Petersen
Lynda Pinkney-Atkinson
Mrs Sara Ragon
Yvonne O. Reeve
Alison Ryde
C.D. Seagar
Sara Shackleton
Marjery Steel
Gwen Stringer
S.B. Waymouth

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

May/June

- May 1** **New Zealand Horizons** — landscape works from the permanent collection.
Two Societies — Woodblock prints from Bryan James and Robin White.
Colin Wheeler — *until May 27*
- 3** **Artists Project** — Fibre art installation by Margaret Finnerty *until June 5*
- 4** **Waahine Toa** Women in Maori Myth – works by Robyn Kahukiwa *until June 3*.
- 6** **Gallery Concert** Strings Attached Puppet Theatre presents Rumpelstiltskin 3 p.m.
- 8** **Art Forum** — Anne Kirker Curator at the National Gallery Wellington will speak on *Rita Angus and her place in the development of New Zealand painting* 8 p.m. Please use Night Entrance.
- 16** **Fabric and Form** New Textile Art from Britain exhibition opening 7.45pm. Exhibition closes *June 10*.
- 17** **Friends Coffee Morning.** Introducing Ann Betts the Gallery's Education Officer 10.30am.
- 23** **Friends Coffee Evening** Thelma Strongman will repeat her talk on the development of Victorian landscape gardening, 7.45pm. Please use Night Entrance.
- 26** **Gallery Concert** Poetry reading by Richard Whyte, a young poet reads new works 3 p.m.
- June 1** **Fabric and Form** *until June 10*.
Margaret Finnerty *until June 20*
Waahine Toa *until June 3*
- 6** **Peter Collingwood** weavings *until June 24*.
- 8** **Art Forum** Peter Collingwood a visiting British weaver will speak on The Craft of Peter Collingwood 7.45 p.m. Admission \$1.50.
- 13** **Tribal Art of Papua New Guinea** Opening function 7.45pm *Exhibition closes July 24*
- 14** **The Art Group** Art club for young people 10am – 12 noon.
- 18** **Public and Private** — Douglas J. McLeod Exhibition preview 5pm *Exhibition closes August 11*.
- 20** **Friends Coffee Morning** Speaker to be announced 10.30am.
- 26** **Art Forum** John Hurrell will speak on works seen at the recent Sydney Biennale 7.45 p.m. Please use the Night Entrance.

Exhibition dates could vary slightly.