



Christchurch City Council

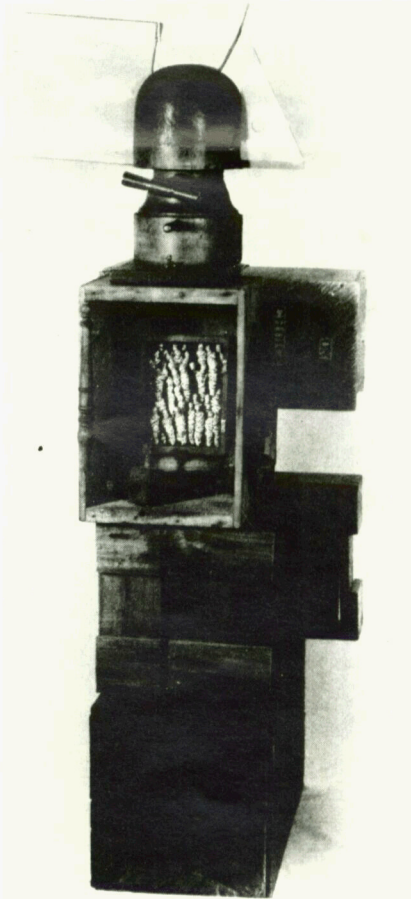


The Robert McDougall Art Gallery

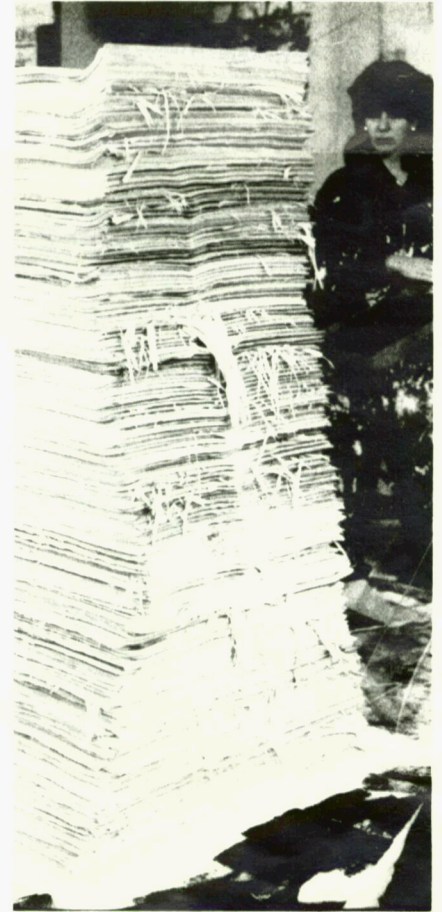
Number 41 September/October 1985 Robert McDougall Art Gallery
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ISSN 0111-1426

Art
ists
and
the
found
object



Ann Verdcourt, *Untitled*



Di Fjrench, *The Opinion (detail)*

Spare Parts 26 September — 3 November

Objects now classified as sculpture are frequently neither modelled nor carved, but are glued, nailed, or even welded into a sculptural unit from odds and ends of material picked up here and there — junk proving to be the most popular.

The 'found object' has its art-historical ancestor in the 'ready mades' of Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968), who, by violating and mocking traditional art values, helped to clear our eyes of habitual ways of seeing and our responses from habitual ways of feeling. Duchamp's purpose, however, was not to increase our interest in ordinary objects, but to deflate the pretensions of nineteenth century 'experts'. His 'Fountain' — a urinal — illustrated this point well!

"Dada", an anti-art movement during the débâcle of World War 1, promoted the idea that any object could become art in its own right. From this period arose the expression *objet trouvé*, meaning

'found object'. By using 'real' or 'found' objects in an assemblage, taking items from their usual environment and placing them out of context, the artist transposes them into a work of art.

This is what the Spare Parts exhibition is all about. Curated by the Robert McDougall Art Gallery it is an invitation exhibition displaying works by twenty four artists from throughout New Zealand — the *objet trouvé* in contemporary New Zealand art. The works are varied in concept and in composition. Inanimate objects which have suffered their own form of social rejection, are resurrected to have new life and new meaning as components of art works.

The work of Ann Verdcourt, for example, is a painted and stained wood assemblage with small amounts of metal and ceramic, containing the following components — 1 tangelo box, 2½ beer crates, 2 nail boxes, 1 cigar box, 1 tea box, 1 machine tool box, 2 instrument boxes, 1 hat block with expanding screw, 1 bread board, 1 set square, 1 rule, 1 folding rule, 2 chair

dowels, 1 table leg dowel, 1 white wash brush, 2 wooden bowls, 2 yarn spools, 1 marker, 4 wooden spoons, 12 labels and string, 1 chair back (cut up), some spare ceramic figures, and some plastic mummy figures. Di Ffrench's **'The Opinion'** on the other hand, is a multi media installation using film, soundtrack, mechanical devices, and assemblages, to illustrate **'The Opinion'** of the Self, the ego, the critic. The paper stack (illustrated) represents layers of opinion eroded and spat out by the mechanical mouth — erosion of power support.

The late Edward Bullmore, Don Driver, Jane Zusters, Bill Hammond, and Sam Mahon are other artists exhibiting. All pieces possess a distinctly personal style and represent a survey of the state of assemblage art in New Zealand.

To complement the theme of Spare Parts, the *Incidentals* will be playing at the opening of this exhibition on 26 September. The *Incidentals* is a performance ensemble consisting of three artists: Paul Sutherland, Paul Cook, and Gail Wright. Each have individual skills intersecting in the incidentals. For them, composition and performance are a simultaneous and live procedure. They desire to attempt a new music, a new art out of nothing, free from the associations of the past — an investigation of this place, at this time, using these things.

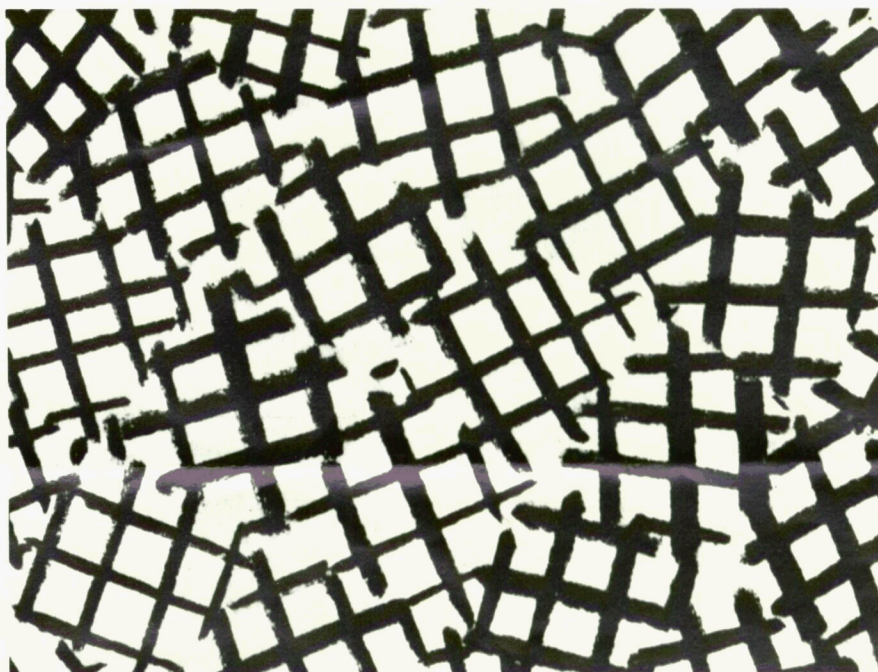
Contemporary British Drawings

6 September — 29 September

This exhibition is about contemporary British art and it is about drawings. The last ten to fifteen years have seen rapid and varied developments in British art. Exhibitions tend to highlight aspects, usually by showing the work of one or two individuals, sometimes by picking on one trend or movement. Thus they give little or no impression of the context in which specific things are done, and they leave a distorted impression not only of the whole national picture, but also of individual achievement.

Yet it is impossible to offer a truly representative display of what is going on, even one limited to the best examples of work in the many different directions that are currently being pursued. What one can do is to assemble works numerous and strong enough to show both the nature of the individual activities and shared concerns representing some of the dominant issues of the time. To do this in the relatively small format of drawings has advantages of a practical sort. It also brings other benefits, not least that of showing twenty two artists in their most comparable form. The drawing is the least theatrical art form, the most intimate, the least rhetorical and thus the one that often reveals most about the artist and his ideals.

The broadest possible licence has been taken with the term 'drawing'. It embraces



Jeremy Moon, Drawing 73/3 1971

fully fledged paintings on paper, developed studies towards specific works in another medium and on another scale, initial graphic investigations as part of a programme of research that may or may not culminate in a related work, sketches and elaborately worked drawings done for their own sakes, and also drawings that are in some measure records, in some measure variations and extensions of other works. To show all these side by side reveals a great deal about the function of the drawing in modern art generally and reminds us of its continuing importance.

Acquisitions

The following works have been recently purchased

James Cook
St Pere Gerona 1934
Watercolour

Tony Fomison
Portfolio of 12 lithographs

W. A. Sutton
Threshold IV
Oil on Canvas

Philippa Blair
South Island Mountain Cloak
Acrylic on Canvas

Simon Ogden
Russian Cross
Construction/wood

Morgan Jones
Natural Selection Marquette
Wood

Morgan Jones
Natural Selection Drawing I
Charcoal

Morgan Jones
Natural Selection Drawing II
Pen / Ink

Morgan Jones
Natural Selection Drawing III

Grant Banbury
Untitled 1985
Acrylic / thread on canvas

Bing Dawe
May Dance — Design for a Funerary Vase
Wood block on cotton canvas

Robert Ellis
Rakaumangamanga g Mai 1985
Mixed media

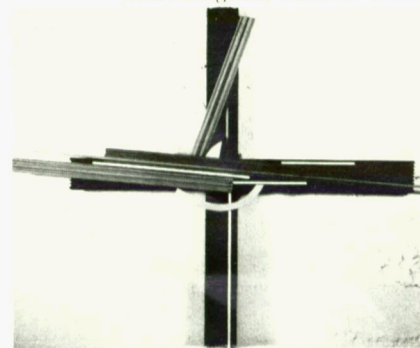
Zenji Urugami
Bottle (Bizenware)
Woodfired stoneware Natural ash glaze

Olivia Spencer Bower
Time Study — Woman Bending c.1968
Charcoal
Kaikoura Coastline c.1966
Pencil
Woman Reading c.1958
Pencil

The following work has been presented to the gallery by Miss N. Buckland, Akaroa from the Julia Scarvell Estate.

Michael Smither
Taranaki Coastal Landscape 1986
Oil on Hardboard

Simon Ogden, Russian Cross



Welcome to a New Group of Gallery Guides.

It is with special pride that the Gallery would like to introduce a new intake of volunteers to its extremely active Gallery Guide programme. Two courses were taken for new Guides this year and from them we have great pleasure in welcoming to the team Mesdames Stephanie Brice, Joan Edgar, Estelle Empson, Monique Ettema, Gloria Neale, Cathy Neare, Janet Rodden, Helen Seeker, Stephanie Banks, Hazel Cameron, Madeline Gordon, Elizabeth Hawes, Adair Marris, June Procter, Sue Sennitt, Renee Stockwell, Dorothy Srathdee, Joy Swafford, Lesley Weston, Doris Wood and Messrs Leon Aldridge and Pat Condon.

We hope they will enjoy their time working with us on the Gallery staff and with the ever changing exhibitions programme we operate.

Rising Attendances

Gallery attendances have taken a leap upward from last year's record-breaking figures. The 132,259 visits recorded in 1984 were the highest in the Gallery's history, breaking the previous high of 128,000 established in the first twelve months the Gallery was open in 1932.

On Friday August 9, the 1984 total was passed and the prospect of a remarkably high visitor attendance level for 1985 is in view with four months of the current year still to run. Total attendances at August 14 were 139,580.

Art Works: A Closer Acquaintance

As an experiment to test community interest in structured art awareness the team of volunteer Gallery Guides organised a number of special courses for adults entitled 'Art Works: A Closer Acquaintance'. The response to this short four week course has been tremendous with fifty adults going through the programme in July and a large number waiting for a similar opportunity when the courses resume again in September. We would like to thank those still on the waiting list for their patience and publicly thank the team of Guides who made these such interesting and stimulating occasions.

As so many of the course participants felt they didn't want to end the programme after the fourth session we have, in conjunction, with the Friends of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery, organised monthly groups where the 'Closer Acquaintance' can be maintained. Called The Wednesday Friday or Saturday 'Group' these continuing sessions will generally keep abreast with changing exhibitions. Guides will discuss new material with members of the Friends and make these a friendly and informative addition to the busy Gallery programme.

The Hand Printed Image — A Weekend Course with tutor and print-maker Denise Copland 14-15 September 1985.

An interest in the holdings of the Gallery's collection of printworks and stimulated by last summer's Artfull exhibition has encouraged us to organise a very special weekend workshop on artists' print works. For this we are very privileged to have Denise Copland as tutor. Many of you will know Denise from her work as tutor at the School of Fine Arts Print studios and as a fine print-maker in her own right.

Run from 10am to 3pm on Saturday and Sunday September 14 and 15 the two-day workshop will provide an overview

of print making — looking at the prints and the processes, their development and expansion with reference to print history and the original works in the Gallery's collection. The second day will principally involve special demonstrations and visits to see studio work at the School of Fine Arts, University of Canterbury and at the Workshop run by Barry Cleavin and Denise Copland at Stewarts Gully.

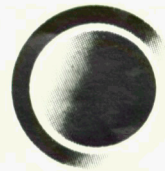
Because of space limitations unfortunately only 20 students can be accepted to the course with a fee of \$30 for the two days. Bookings will be taken at the Gallery and those Friends interested are advised to let us know of your interest as soon as possible.



Packed Centre Court viewing Stuffed Stuff

Coming Events

- September 6** Contemporary British Drawings until 29 September
- 7** The Saturday Group, Guided session & Discussion for adults on the new exhibitions in the Gallery 10.30am — 12.30pm
- 11** The Wednesday Group Guided session and discussion for adults on the new exhibitions in the Gallery 2pm — 4pm.
- 14-15** The Hand Printed Image — a special two day workshop on artists prints conducted by Denise Copland, previously tutor in printmaking Ilam School of Art and leading N.Z. printmaker Fee \$30 Bookings at the Gallery
- 15** Gallery Concert Performance — in conjunction with the exhibition 'Tripping U.S.A.' The Axemen will present a sound and light show. 8pm Admission \$2
- 18** Friends Coffee Morning 10.30am Robert Erwin will talk about art and architecture in the time of Bach, Handel and Scarlatti.
- 19** The Art Club — for disabled visitors 10.30am
- 20** The Friday Group, Guided session and discussion for adults on the new exhibitions in the Gallery 1pm — 3pm
- 22** Gallery Concert — Programme of English music of 20th century music, Amici Orchestra conducted by John Pattinson 3pm
- 26** Spare Parts — the *objet trouve* in contemporary N.Z. art — until 3 November. Opening 7.45pm
- October 3** Max Hailstone Typographic Prints to 13 October
- 5** The Saturday Group, Guided session and discussion for adults on the new exhibitions in the Gallery 10.30am — 12.30pm
- 9** The Wednesday Group, Guided session and discussion for adults on the new exhibitions in the Gallery 2pm — 4pm
- 12** Gallery Concert — Rebecca Steel (flute) accompanied by guitar. 3pm
- 14** Barry Cleavin A selection of etchings from 'Bitter Suites' to 28 November
- 16** Friends Coffee Morning 10.30am Pam Maling will talk about her work for the Court Theatre.
- 17** The Art Club for disabled visitors 10.30am
- 18** The Friday Group, Guided session and discussion for adults on new exhibitions in the Gallery 1pm — 3pm.



Leo Bensemenn, Hills Near Takaka

Hills Near Takaka by Leo Bensemenn

'Hills Near Takaka', a fine example of Leo Bensemenn's mature style in landscape painting, was purchased by the Friends for presentation to the gallery.

Born in Takaka in 1912, an area which has provided subjects for many of his paintings (including this one), Bensemenn has lived in Christchurch since the early 1930s, actively contributing to many aspects of the visual arts in the city for more than half a century. He first became known for his graphic art, such as the drawings published as *'Fantastica'* by the Caxton Press in 1937, and later for his portraits (both drawings in pencil and paintings in oils). Much of his work was first exhibited in the annual shows of the Christchurch Group until it disbanded in 1977. Subsequently he has held several one-person shows in Christchurch and Wellington.

Prior to the 1960s Bensemenn only infrequently painted landscapes, but since then they have become his dominant (though not exclusive) mode of expression. **Hills Near Takaka** probably dates from the 1970s, and perfectly illustrates Bill Sutton's description of Bensemenn's 'vibrant green landscapes so curiously resolved and complete'. Both colour and form are radically simplified in the interest of boldness and coherence. Landforms characteristic of the Takaka region, such as precipitous gorges and craggy limestone bluffs, are integrated into a forceful design communicating an effect of aboriginal grandeur. It is a work that is utterly distinctive, while at the

same time bearing a certain family resemblance to the work of other artists of his generation, such as Angus, Lusk, McCahon and Sutton, beside whom both in character and stature Bensemenn stands.

New Members

Tania Fairhall, Mrs G. P. Clark, Miss N. D. Gilling, Ruth Marra, Helen Cooper, Verschuren family, Ann Barrett, M. A. Hadley, Mr & Mrs G. C. Weston, E. W. Armstrong, Mrs M. Carlsen, Mark Morel, Mr H. Kurschner, Zorma Margarrett, John G. Cougdan, B. A. Coup, C. C. H. Knight, G. Churchill, Mrs Lynne Ayson, Kate Kunac, Gregory Churchill, Leon Aldridge, Mr & Mrs Deny Lee, Mrs Judy Denton, Miss M. D. Hartridge, Rebecca McCall, Ian Munro, Mrs Vera N. McKillop, Mrs L. C. Gardiner, Patricia M. Connor, Dr & Mrs J. E. Pettit, Several Arts Co-Op., Mrs M. Apperley, Mr & Mrs J. Espie, Miss Joan Carter, Marjolein Demmer, Mr & Mrs Umberto Vittore.

A sticker on your envelope indicates non-payment of subscriptions for 1985. No reimbursement will be taken as a resignation from the Society.

The World of the Greeks

In preparation for the major exhibition of Greek pottery from the Logie Collection of the University of Canterbury which opens in the Gallery in early November, the Extension Studies Department of the University has arranged a series of four lectures, entitled "The world of the ancient Greeks". The lectures, which are to be held on the evenings of 10, 17, 24 and 31 October, will be given by Ms A. P. Holcroft and Professor K. H. Lee, both of the Department of Classics. The enrolment fee is \$10.80; telephone the Department of Extension Studies, 482-009, extension 8913, for more information. Enrolments close on Wednesday, 2 October.

Coffee Mornings

The Friends were introduced at the June coffee morning to Peter Bannan, a Photographer whose recent project involved the interviewing and photographing of a number of practising artists.

In July Mrs Pam Wilson spoke to us on her work with the New Zealand Historic Places Trust in the classification of buildings in the Canterbury area.

Three centuries ago this year, Bach, Handel and Scarlatti were born. In September, Robert Erwin will talk about the art and architecture of their time, relating music and images.

On 17 October Pam Maling will talk about her work for the Court Theatre. Many of you will recall her stunning costumes for the recent production of "King Lear". How much do the clothes she makes relate to the characters who wear them? Where does she find the fabrics? How does she physically construct the garments? It promises to be a fascinating morning.

P.O. Box 2626, Christchurch
Rolleston Avenue

President — Robert Erwin 558-675

Secretary — Pat Unger 518-506

Treasurer — Margaret Glass

MONSTER BRING AND BUY

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Saturday 12 October 11 a.m. — 4 p.m.
