

# Bulletin

THE ROBERT McDOUGALL ART GALLERY

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## Nicholas Chevalier—An artist's journey through Canterbury in 1866

November 7 1992–January 17 1993

On January 23 1866 the Canterbury Provincial Council voted £200.00 to assist the Russian born artist Nicholas Chevalier (1828–1902) in his sketching tour of Canterbury.

At that time Chevalier was still part way through a similar journey in Otago and Southland. When he arrived at Lyttelton on April 27 1866 Chevalier already had a distinguished career as a painter behind him in both England and Australia and an even more distinguished one ahead, which included the patronage of Queen Victoria and the Royal family.

Once in Canterbury he embarked on a journey which took him around Banks Peninsula, across Canterbury Plains over the Hurunui Saddle (Harpers Pass) and down the Taramakau valley into Westland. After a week in Hokitika he returned back to Christchurch over Arthurs Pass via the newly opened coach road.

A few weeks later he travelled south as far as Lake Wanaka, visiting Lakes Tekapo, Pukaki, and Ohau, making sketches as he went. When he returned to Christchurch he held an exhibition of some 200 studies and watercolours.

N. Chevalier. *Akaroa Harbour from Barry's Bay*. Canterbury Museum Collection.

In 1907, five years after Nicholas Chevalier's death, his widow gifted to New Zealand over three hundred of his sketches and watercolours. Of these more than one-third were concerned with the Canterbury province, being mostly studies made between late March and early June 1866. It is largely a selection of these works, now held in the collection of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, which comprise much of this exhibition. Many have never been shown publicly in Christchurch before, whilst others were last seen in Chevalier's Christchurch exhibition held 126 years ago.

This current exhibition will diary the artist's movements, taking the visitor on an historical journey as seen through his eyes.

It is acknowledged that without the generous support of Trust Bank Canterbury and the willingness on the part of public and private owners to lend works this exhibition would not have been possible.

Director: John Coley, Senior Curator: Neil Roberts, Administration: Zena Cooper, Jenny Barber, Art Annex Supervisor: Martin Young, Assistant Curator: Lara Strongman, Conservator: Lynn Campbell, Education: Penelope Jackson, Judith Hault, Exhibitions: Hubert Klaassens, Simon Mulligan, Information & Shop: Merilynne Evans, Alexandra Ott, Photographer: Robin Neate, Registrar: Anna Crighton, Security & Maintenance: Harry Ipenburg, Denise Paulger, Technician: Les Fibbens, Weekend Custodians: Gordon Ducker, Merilynne Evans, Susan Leckie, John Mottram, Anton Parsons, Tony Webster

Christchurch City Council



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## Prospect Canterbury '92

November 12 1992–January 27 1993

**Prospect Canterbury '92** is a survey of contemporary art in Canterbury. It will be installed at both the main gallery and the Annex over the summer, at the same time as the **Nicholas Chevalier—An artist's journey through Canterbury in 1866** exhibition.

**Prospect Canterbury '92** is an exhibition of artworks produced during 1992 by artists resident in Canterbury. It aims to identify and discuss particular themes and directions in contemporary art-making in the region. The exhibition comprises works by more than fifty artists, and includes painting, sculpture, photography, and printmaking.

The show is related in concept to the Gallery's popular major exhibition of 1990, **A Canterbury Perspective**. While the earlier exhibition looked to the past, tracing the chronology of Canterbury's art history, **Prospect Canterbury '92** looks to the future, including works by a new generation of artists as well as those more established local figures.

The exhibition will provide an exciting opportunity to gauge the range and diversity of art-making in Canterbury today.



## Seasons Greetings

The staff would like to thank all those Friends, donors, sponsors, suppliers, teachers, artists, council colleagues and visitors who have helped make the Robert McDougall Art Gallery's 60th year such a successful one. It is a great encouragement to know we have the support of the community.

To all visitors, friends and Bulletin readers

A VERY MERRY  
CHRISTMAS AND  
A HAPPY NEW YEAR

John Coley and the McDougall staff.



## New Look Bulletin

We thought it time that we gave the *Bulletin* a fresh face and invited Saskia von Stockum, who designed our past *Bulletin* layout, to makeover our publication.

Changing the size and format too greatly creates problems of recognition and storage for those who keep files of the *Bulletin*, and so Saskia has maintained a familiar resemblance to past Bulletins. Otherwise, we have freshened up our popular journal. We hope you like the new look.

## Frances Hodgkins Drawing

The gallery has recently added to his historical works on paper collection a pencil drawing by Frances Hodgkins titled *Boy in the Wood*. This work dates from around 1929, and was probably made during the summer of that year when Frances Hodgkins escaped London and rented a cottage in the Sussex countryside with her friend Dorothy Selby.

The drawing was first exhibited with other works at the Bloomsbury Gallery, London, during November 1929, and subsequently at the Lefevre Gallery, London, in April 1940. Until recently it has been in a private collection.

*Boy in a Wood* is only the second drawing by Frances Hodgkins to be acquired by the gallery. The first, *Sabrina's Garden*, also in pencil, was purchased in 1981.



## Acquisitions

The following works have been acquired by the Gallery:

**Olivia Spencer-Bower**

*On Stage—Othello*  
Watercolour

**Wilhelm Ruifrok**

*Madonna*, 1990

Oil on canvas mounted on board

**Pat Hanly**

*Vacation Swimmers*, 1988

Pencil on Paper

**Tom J. Taylor**

*W. A. Sutton*, C.B.E.

Bronze

**Bing Dawe**

*Grotesque/figure pulling a face*, 1992

Bronze

**J. M. Madden**

*Untitled Lake Scene*, 1904

Oil on canvas

**Maurice Askew**

*Black Country Museum*

Pair of Watercolours

**Tom Phillips**

*A Humument*, 1970

Screenprint

**Philippa Blair**

*Anasazi*, 1991

Lithograph

**Jenny Dolezel**

*Personal Values*, 1992

Lithograph

**Ralph Hotere**

*Window in Spain*, 1992

**John Reynolds**

*Prometheus Unbound* 1992

Lithograph

**Dick Frizzell**

*South side Dansey's Pass*, 1992

Lithograph

Limited Edition Portfolio No. 26/50

**Euan McLeod**

*Wattamolla Figure Going Up*

Oil on Canvas

**Margaret Hudson-Ware**

*Let me see the paralysed man walk*

Oil on canvas

**Sue Cooke**

*Paribaubau IV*, 1991

Etching 7/20

*Here Weka II*, 1991

Etching 5/20

**Frances Hodgkins**

*Boy in a Wood*

Pencil on Paper

## Good Year for Gallery

The twelve months July 91–June 92, the Christchurch City Council planning period, were among the best in the gallery's history. Some statistics: Total attendances, 219,946 (207,205 the previous year), third highest recorded in the gallery's 60 years. Thirty-one exhibitions were presented, 21 at the McDougall, ten at the Art Annex. Trust Bank Canterbury's Images of Home and Garden attracted 61,134 visits. The Art Annex exhibitions drew 43,402 visits. One hundred and seven works on paper and ten oils were conserved, 291 volumes were acquired for the library, 67 works of art were acquired of which 53 were purchased, three were bequested, ten were gifted and one commissioned. Forty-six events were arranged comprising of 14 lectures, 18 openings, 14 corporate evenings and one performance. 21,502 telephone calls were recorded weekdays only, there were 546 curatorial enquires and 547 conservation consultations. 1196 education group visits were achieved, with a total of 9917 persons visiting. Five *Bulletins* and ten catalogues were published.



# Friends of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery Inc.

President—Hilary Langer 348-3982

Treasurer—Chris Brocket 355-7133

Secretary—Anne Watt 379-4055



## Reflections on Activities

The popularity of some of the activities organised by the Friends is sometimes embarrassing. For example, the tour of churches to be led by Ian Lochhead was over-subscribed so quickly that a number of people could hardly believe that they had missed the cut-off point. Earlier this year a large number were disappointed also at missing the Arthurs Pass trip. LocArt is proving popular too, but it is possible that people may not be making the best use of the answerphone. Keep trying. Remember the number 379-4055. Artwatch continues to attract forty to fifty each month, and of course the well established Speaker of the Month feature shows no sign of a diminishing interest, either. Perhaps this suggests that the committee has to put on more and more functions—or bigger and bigger ones. That would be difficult, because organising and staffing each of these happenings does take time and energy, and there aren't all that many of us. If you really enjoy some type of function and attend fairly regularly, perhaps you might volunteer to help with it in some way. In particular, Rosemary Craven who organises all Speaker of the Month functions would greatly appreciate a few more people to be her regular assistants. Make your offer to her in person, or ring her at home 352-8420.

## Lisa Reihana

Dynamic and challenging film and video animation formed the basis of Lisa Reihana's presentation at the Annex on September 16. Currently Trust Bank Canterbury Artist in Residence, Lisa trained in Inter Media at Elam, and at 27 has produced a successful body of work. The representation of Maori culture, women and South Pacific imagery are major motivators for Lisa. She describes animation as a magical medium, giving a personal perspective to the many processes involved in its compilation and the different layers of meaning within each work. Believing that public funding requires public exposure Lisa gives presentations of her work regularly, particularly in schools, encouraging an understanding and appreciation of her medium. The vibrant soundtracks and huge variety in visual presentation added a fascinating and intriguing dimension to our understanding of contemporary art.

## Arts Scholarship

### Established by the Friends

The University of Canterbury has just announced that beginning in 1992 it will make an annual award known as the Friends of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery Scholarship. In alternate years it will go to a student of Art History or Fine Arts who is eligible to enrol in either the Degree of Bachelor of Arts (Hons) or the final year of study for the Degree of Fine Arts. The current value of the scholarship is \$1000.00 per annum—not a large sum for a student these days, but, it is hoped, of some assistance. From the point of view of the Friends, it is a practical expression of our commitment to the fostering of the arts in Christchurch. The regulations provide for the University Council to make the award on the recommendation of a five-person selection committee: the Vice-Chancellor of the University, or nominee; the Head of the School of Fine Arts and the Subject Co-ordinator of Art History, or nominees; and two persons nominated by the Executive Committee of the Friends of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery.

## Do you read *Art New Zealand*?

Whether you were lucky enough to get on the trip with Julie King or not, you might be interested to read Pat Unger's report of it in the Spring 1992 number of *Art New Zealand*. Although only part of her regular feature on the Christchurch scene, it is an extremely thought-provoking piece. Reflect on it from one point of view, and your future travel to Otira may well be with an entirely different perception of the landscape on the way. Reflect on it in another way, and you may gain a different, more complex appreciation of the paintings of the area that you thought you understood so well. Quite apart from the educative effect of Pat's interpretations, it is pleasing to see the wide publicity given to this notable function organised by the Friends.

## New Members

Susan Best  
Susan Chaytor  
Michael & Rosemarie Hughes  
Dave Margetts  
J. C. Millward  
Mr & Mrs J. P. Shutte  
R. J. & D. L. Sweeney  
Chee Shin Yee

## Speaker of the Month August

**New Zealand Contemporary Art**  
Contemporary in art means about a thirty-year span, said Neil Roberts, Speaker of the Month in August, in explaining that until the 1950s most New Zealand art was Victorian in character. The controversy over McCahon symbolised a change in criteria resulting in an absence of the external reference points, more interest in basic design, and an acceptance of the validity of artists' emotional states. Given that introduction, the audience was then taken through twelve slides exemplifying contemporary New Zealand art. The first four—Russell Clark, Rudolf Gopas, Alan Pearson and Philip Clairmont—were free interpretations of reality, but they were much closer to reality than the abstractions, designs and geometrical treatments that were features of the remainder, some of which, like Don Peebles's *Circular Motif II*, also boldly broke the strong convention of stretched canvas in a circular frame. Following the slide presentation we were invited to view each of the twelve works as an original among the current display in the Gallery. There is plenty of contemporary art to be seen these days, but seldom are there opportunities to hear an expert such as Neil Roberts commenting on a range of high quality works and then to view a whole display with it all fresh in one's mind. The audience felt that they had had a rare treat.

## Speaker of the Month

### November

The meeting on November 18 is based on the exhibition "Prospect Canterbury '92". Four contemporary Christchurch artists—a painter, a photographer, a sculptor, and a print-maker will talk about their work in the exhibition and give some of their thoughts on the future.

Meet in the Main Gallery, Centre Court 10.30am: Coffee and tea will be served, \$1.50 for members, \$2.50 non-members.

### December and January

### No Speaker of the Month

Meetings resume in February 1993



## Rubens and the Italian Renaissance

### The McDougall's second trans-Tasman escorted tour.

The opportunity to view an extensive exhibition of Renaissance painting, at an Australian gallery, provided the catalyst for the second McDougall guided tour, during August.

The **Rubens and the Italian Renaissance** tour, escorted by the gallery's Education Officer, Penelope Jackson, travelled to Melbourne and followed a similar model to that established by Penny in Sydney last December—comprehensive, educational, varied and totally engrossing ... with just enough time to see the shops.

The group's first engagement was a tour of the permanent collection at the National Gallery of Victoria, host to the **Rubens and the Renaissance** exhibition. The Victorian gallery was absorbing for many reasons, but particularly because of its collection's unique focus. Gold money from northern Victoria during the nineteenth century meant the gallery was able to purchase expensive European works from a very early date. French impressionist and "Old Master" European paintings, sculpture, fine international china, an extensive glass collection and silver works, made from nineteenth century local silver deposits, are some of the treasures which make up this collection.

By contrast, the gallery made a relatively late concerted effort to build the works in its Australian collection, which in some ways makes it almost undeserving of the numerous marvellous canvases it owns of the "Australian Impressionist" paintings. These works from the Heidelberg school, were amongst the highlights of this guided tour.

The next day we returned from our group tour of the **Rubens and the Italian Renaissance** exhibition. What was supposed to be a select talk to our little group of twenty, quickly swelled to approximately eighty. The popularity of the exhibition could not be denied, the concept of which was to survey the painting career of Peter Paul Rubens, amongst the works of other Renaissance painters from whom Rubens drew inspiration and personal challenge. The exhibition included paintings by Michelangelo, Titian and Correggio. It was a concept which worked extremely well.

We were escorted by a very knowledgeable guide, who not only coped admirably under the conditions, but made maximum use of all the illustrative aids included in the exhibition. I think it would be accurate to say that everyone learnt something about the Renaissance that day.

On our final day in Melbourne, we enjoyed visits to two dealer galleries



Members of the tour at the Gabrielle Pizzi Gallery, Melbourne.

and a contemporary exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria. Both dealer galleries had specially opened for us on the Monday, and amongst the more interesting of the works we saw that morning, were contemporary Aboriginal paintings which were the product of a recently established literary centre at an outback centre in northern Victoria. The final group visit was to the Victorian Tapestry workshops in South Melbourne. These were fascinating. As the largest tapestry workshops in the southern hemisphere and the third largest in

the world, the workshop produces tapestries on quite a magnificent scale. They have completed commissions for the Aotea Centre, as well for a large number of companies and public buildings throughout Australia.

For most of the group, the other major attraction of the tour was the opportunity to see *Phantom of the Opera*. We were fortunate enough to enjoy first class seats. Once again our gratitude goes to Penny, whose thorough organisation meant the tour was a huge success. —Kirsten Fergusson

## Events to Look Forward To

### Nicholas Chevalier Floortalks

To coincide with the exhibition—

**Nicholas Chevalier—An artist's journey through Canterbury in 1866**, Neil Roberts, Curator of this exhibition will give a floortalk at 2.00pm on November 8.

If you can't make it, the floortalk will be repeated at 2.00pm on December 6.

### Musical Items

On November 29 at 2.30pm the well-

known **Hagley Community Choir** will perform in the Centre Court.

On December 13 at 2.00pm, local Baroque group, **Orpheus** will give a concert in the Centre Court.

On December 20 at 3.00pm, local jazz band, **Musica Viva**, will give a Christmas concert. Weather permitting in front of the main entrance.

All concerts are free of charge.

## Coming Events

### November

- 4 Artwatch 12 noon and 5.00pm.
- 4 Wednesday club 10.30am.
- 7 **Nicholas Chevalier—An artist's journey through Canterbury in 1866** opens to the public at the Gallery and the Annex
- 7 Saturday Club 10.30am
- 8 **Nicholas Chevalier** floortalk 2.00pm
- 12 **Prospect Canterbury '92** opens to the public
- 14 Continuing Club 10.30am.
- 18 Speaker of the Month: Main Gallery 10.30am—Four Canterbury artists will speak about their work in **Prospect Canterbury '92** exhibition.
- 19 Kilmarnock Club 10.30am.

### December

- Nicholas Chevalier and Prospect Canterbury '92** continue all month
- Gallery clubs not to meet in December or January
- 6 **Nicholas Chevalier** floortalk 2.00pm
- 13 **Orpheus** Christmas Concert 2.00pm
- 20 **Musica Viva** Christmas Concert 3.00pm

### January

- 17 **Nicholas Chevalier—An artist's journey through Canterbury in 1866** closes
- 27 **Prospect Canterbury '92** closes
- 28 **Permanent Installation** opens to the public