

Bulletin



THE ROBERT McDOUGALL ART GALLERY

ISSN 0111-1426

Number 94 February/March 1995



Post Office Cathedral Square, Evelyn Page.

About Town

9 February-19 March

For almost 145 years the Christchurch townscape has provided artists with a source of inspiration. This exhibition, which comprises historical works on loan from Canterbury Museum, the Hocken Library and Christchurch Cathedral as well as from the Gallery's collection, and new works by contemporary artists, aims to show something of the changing face of the city.

The earliest works dating from the 1850s to 1880s are largely by amateur artists, and include several paintings by James Edward Fitzgerald, George Turner and others. Their vision was focussed on recording the infant townscape, its shanty buildings often dwarfed by the dominant natural feature, the Avon River. By the 1890s however, Christchurch and its environs had matured and from its rough origins the town had blossomed into a flourishing city in which artists painted streetscapes expressing permanence and progress.

One of the favoured subjects during the first few decades of this century was Cathedral Square not only because it was the hub of daily activity and transport but also because it was in buildings around the square that many artists had studios. William Menzies Gibb, Walter Bowring

and Charles N Worsley were all attracted by The Square as a subject at this time.

Later in the 1920s, 30s and 40s John Weeks, Rhona Haszard, Cecil Kelly, Archibald Nicoll, James Fitzgerald, Ivy Fife, M O Stoddart, Evelyn Page and W A Sutton, also found imagery in the inner city. James Fitzgerald in particular made numerous watercolours and etchings of Christchurch buildings and streetscapes for almost 20 years.

In more recent decades artists as diverse as Olivia Spencer Bower, Doris Lusk, Peter Mardon and Owen Lee have found the city a source of interest for their work. Owen Lee continues to paint city subjects.

Among the other contemporary artists in this exhibition are John Brasell, Robert McDowell, Sally Powell, Chris Hadlee, John Coley, Graham Kirk, Kees Bruin and Gillian Hay. Several have painted works especially for this exhibition.

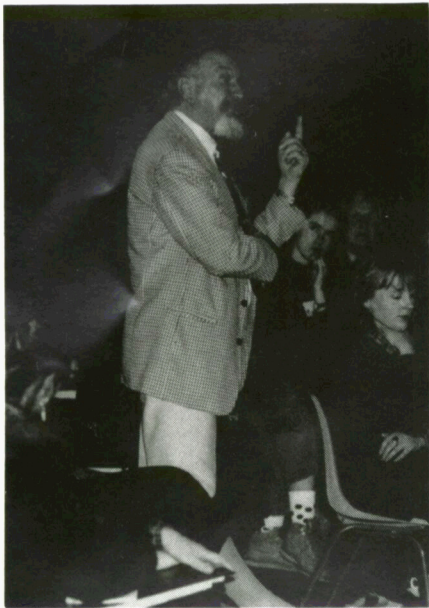
An important feature of About Town is that it has been prepared to coincide with an official visit from representatives of our sister city Christchurch in Dorset, England. It is hoped that they will also gain the benefit of seeing something of the ever changing face of the city through the eyes of some of Canterbury's most accomplished artists.

Director: John Coley, Senior Curator: Neil Roberts, Administration: Zena Cooper, Jenny Barber, Pamela Jarman, Art Annex Curator: Elizabeth Caldwell, Art Annex Supervisor: Simon Mulligan, Conservator: Lynn Campbell, Custodian: Harry Ipenburg, Education: Ann Betts, Judith Hoult, Exhibitions: Spencer Pullon, Gary Collins, Information and Shop: Merilynne Evans, Alexandra Ott, Maintenance: Denise Paulger, Registrar: Anna Crighton, Technician: Martin Young, Weekend Custodians: Merilynne Evans, Susan Leckie, Justine McLisky, John Moutram, Tony Webster, Gregory Cornelius and Gwen Searle.

Christchurch City Council



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John Coley speaking from the floor at the Museum & Art Gallery Association of NZ Conference in September.

John Coley to Retire

Sadly in this issue we must farewell John Coley, our gallery Director since 1981. John has become an extremely well known figure around the city and, in many minds, has become almost synonymous with the McDougall itself. His friendly manner, enthusiasm for all the arts and his ability to relate to all, from the artist or art expert to the typical non gallery visitor, has made John's thirteen years leading the gallery team an extremely friendly and fruitful one.

John leaves us now to take up an active retirement. With his wife Fay he plans to revisit Italy and other great spots in Europe, to devote more time to his own painting and to prepare for his next exhibition. We are confident John will enjoy the extra time retirement provides and with it, no doubt, will become even more involved with the arts. Although we will all miss him, we wish John and Fay a supremely happy retirement.

1st International Gnome Convention

18-19 March

The Robert McDougall Art Gallery and the Arts Centre are hosting here in the city, the First International Gnome Convention. For two days garden gnomes and their guardians will be meeting in the city to "challenge the edges of culture, join the environmental vanguard, gain strength from numbers, to revel in unconventionality and to have fun".

Although the gnomes convention sessions will be closed to mortals and will occur in the dead of night, gallery visitors will be able to see the gnome convention members at the gallery during this weekend.

For more information, or to register your gnome for this first ever international event you can contact Jernome the gnome convenor or Sonia the human conference organiser at 366 5955.

It is hoped that the oldest known garden gnome in the world will be honouring the city with his presence and a number of special events will be organised around this magical weekend sponsored by Air New Zealand. Don't miss it.

A New Series of Eye Spy

A new series of the popular Eye Spy introductory art appreciation courses will start in the gallery soon. As before, these courses will be conducted by the Guides and will focus on the works on display in the gallery or from storage.

The idea behind Eye Spy is to help you learn more about the works on display, how to recognise main features and some background on the artists.

It will be suitable for the absolute beginner and for those who have already enjoyed an Eye Spy programme with us. Courses will run on a Tuesday or Thursday morning, and on a Saturday afternoon for those who are not free during the week.

Eye Spy will run for 5 sessions and the fees this year will be \$25. However we are certain all our participants will see this as excellent value for a really stimulating and enjoyable programme. To enrol, or for more information, please contact the Education staff at 365 0915.

Werner Bischof 1916-1954: Swiss Photojournalist

2 February-19 March

The body of Werner Bischof was found in 1954 at the bottom of a remote Andean gorge, ending the highly significant and illustrious career of a major Magnum photojournalist of the post war era. Werner Bischof's work following the second world war set new benchmarks in the standards of photojournalism.

His career began in 1936 as a studio photographer, but his work became widely acknowledged from 1945 with a series of images from war torn France, Germany and Holland. He also accompanied Swiss relief missions to Italy, Greece, Southern Europe and captured photographic images in Hungary, Romania, and Poland, Sweden and Finland. On the strength of this work Bischof was, in 1949, invited to join the prestigious Magnum group.

Magnum was founded in 1947 by Robert Capa, Henri Cartier-Bresson, George Rodger and David Seymour as a business and co-operative venture. It provided an independent base and collegial solidarity

for the creation, definition and enlargement of the photo medium. Their works appeared in the new magazines such as *Life*. There, as outlined in Henry Luce's prospectus we were able to "see life; to see the world; to eye witness great events; to watch the faces of the poor and gestures of the proud; to see strange things - machines, armies, multitudes, shadows in the jungle or on the moon . . . to see and to take pleasure in seeing; to see and be amazed; to see and be instructed."

Without doubt Bischof contributed to the way photography became a vibrant and often entertaining way of becoming informed. It became a close equivalent to sight and to many a virtual substitute for the real experience. In the 150 images in this major show we see life itself reflected in the highly skilled photojournalist's sensitive and compassionate work.

This touring exhibition has been organised by his son Marco who will give a lecture at the gallery on 7 February. The exhibition is supported by Pro Helvetia Arts Council of Switzerland, and by Kodak New Zealand. It is toured by the New Zealand Centre for Photography and represents important

landmarks in Werner Bischof's work. In it we will see for ourselves the successive stages in his career from studio photographer to committed and highly talented photojournalist.



On the way to Cuzco, Peru 1954, Werner Bischof.

Inside the Solid

20 January-2 April

Inside the Solid is a series of sculptural installations aimed at complementing last year's *4x2: A Solid Equation* which looked at four very different styles of object-based sculpture. *Inside the Solid* will feature five Canterbury trained sculptors who occupy a position between object-based sculpture and installation, or who work in pure space or site inspired installation. The exhibition is made up of three components, the first and last of which are solo.

Inside the Solid opened on the evening of 19 January with Maddie Leach's *Pearly Kings*, an installation inspired by the Annex's past and present, and invested with Leach's characteristic predilection for the freakish, pathetic and humorous. *Pearly Kings* runs until 5 February.

From 10 February to 12 March Eugene Hansen, Carolyn Menzies, Mark McEntyre and David Howard will share the Annex space. Both the collaborative work of Mark McEntyre and writer David Howard, and the installation by Menzies examine the role technology plays in peoples lives. Using televisions, video and text McEntyre and Howard explore the way television has infiltrated our homes and changed the way we think and view. Combining the organic and the technological, Menzies looks at the life saving and enhancing 'miracles' of contemporary surgical practices, such as the transplantation of organs and manufacture of new body parts. Interested in New Zealand's identity as an island nation and the importance of water in our lives, Menzies has fabricated components of the human body from ocean debris. Hansen draws on both his Maori and European heritage with his architectural metaphors for the body. In his work modernist line and form meet personal history. In this component of *Inside the Solid* the Annex will simultaneously become a house, a medical laboratory, and a modernist whare.

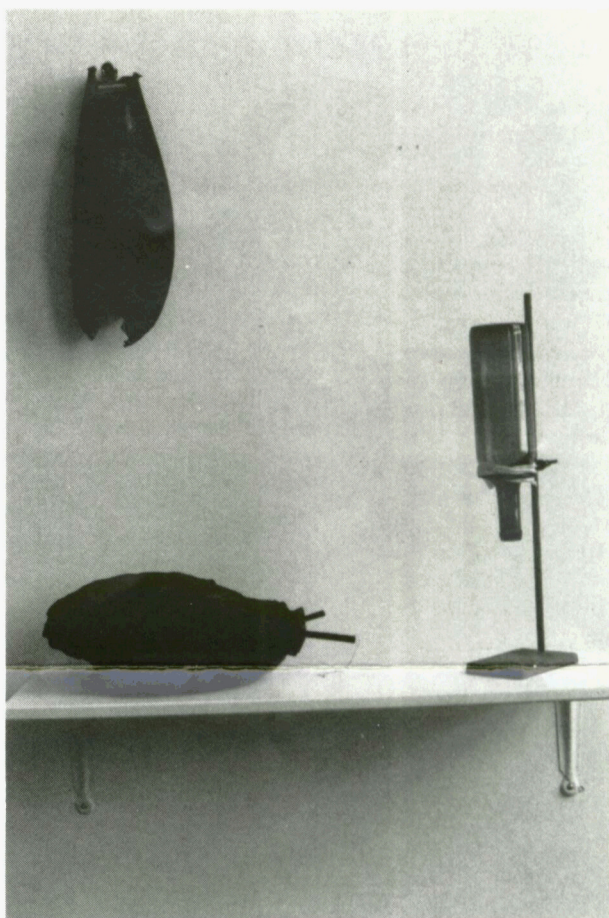
Andrea Gerbic will bring *Inside the Solid* to a dramatic close with an environment created from light and UV responsive materials. Through her magical use of light Gerbic aims to reveal the formal properties and compositional elements of the space in which she is working.

There will be two more openings for *Inside the Solid*.

The preview for Eugene Hansen, Carolyn Menzies, Mark McEntyre & David Howard is at 5.30 pm on 9 February.

The preview for Andrea Gerbic is at 5.30 pm on 16 March.

Everyone is welcome.



Untitled, 1993/4,
Carolyn Menzies.

Coming Events

February

- 1 **Inside the Solid** Maddie Leach continues at the Annex - *until 2 April*. Wednesday Club 10.30 am. An art appreciation club. New members welcome.
- 2 Opening of **Werner Bischof 1916-1954: Swiss Photojournalist**. 6pm By invitation Please use main door.
- 3 Friday Club 10.30 am New members welcome.
- 4 Saturday Club I 10.30am. New members welcome.
- 7 **Lecture from Marco Bischof** on the works of his father Werner Bischof: Swiss Photojournalist. At the McDougall at 1.30 pm.
- 9 **About Town - until 19 March**. Preview **Inside the Solid** Eugene Hansen, Carolyn Menzies, Mark McEntyre and David Howard at the Annex 5.30 pm.
- 11 Saturday Club II 10.30am. New members welcome.
- 15 **Friends Speaker of the Month** - Jonathan Elsom, on his lifelong involvement with the arts.
- 16 Kilmarnock Club 10.30 am
- 24 **Historical Works** from the Collection - *until 19 March*.
- 28 **Eye Spy 2**. A new series of art appreciation classes starts today. Enrolments essential.

March

- 1 **Werner Bischof 1916 - 1954: Swiss Photojournalist** - *until 19 March*
About Town - *until 19 March*.
Historical works from the collection - *until 19 March*.
Inside the Solid Eugene Hansen, Carolyn Menzies, Mark McEntyre and David Howard at the Annex - *until 2 April*.
Wednesday Club 10.30 am.
- 2 **Eye Spy 2**. A new series of art appreciation classes start today. Enrolments essential.
- 3 Friday Club 10.30 am.
- 4 Saturday Club I. 10.30 am.
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- 11 Saturday Club II. 10.30 am.
- 15 **Friends Speaker of the Month** - Peter Harper on "An Illustrated Tour of Turkey and Greece."
- 16 Kilmarnock Club 10.30am.
Preview **Inside the Solid** Andrea Gerbic. At the Annex 5.30 pm.
- 17-19 **1st International Gnome Convention**.
- 22 **Locart visit** to Lady Isaac's gallery at Clifton. Bookings on answerphone 379 4055.
- 30 Opening **Kiwiana** at the McDougall at 5.30 pm. Please use main door.

Friends of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery

President - Chris Brocket 355 7133
Vice-President - Mark Stocker 365 3895
Acting Treasurer - Russell Skinner 379 8150
Secretary - Ann Watt 379 4055



A Friend Indeed

All of us will have heard of the impending retirement of John Coley, Director of the McDougall since 1981. Over the years, he and the McDougall have become one and the same in the public mind. Indeed, to thousands of people throughout Christchurch and Canterbury John is "Mr. Art". He has played a key role in making the McDougall a welcoming place where art educates and delights but never intimidates. Moreover, he has helped to raise everyone's consciousness about the need for new facilities worthy of "the City that Shines." In turn, the Friends hope that the future will shine on John and wish him - and Fay - a most happy retirement.

Speaker of the Month

These functions take place on the third Wednesday of each month, commencing at 10.30 am with the serving of tea and coffee. The charge is \$1.50 for members, \$2.50 for non-members.

On 15 March the Speaker of the Month will be the photographer Peter Harper of the Department of Continuing Education, University of Canterbury, who will lecture on "An Illustrated Tour of Turkey and Greece."

On 19 April Dr. Gerrit van der Lingen, formerly of the Geology Department, University of Canterbury, will lecture on "Museums in Holland", and will show video footage of his recent visit there.

Speaker of the Month

Neil Roberts

The Senior Curator of the McDougall, Neil Roberts, talked to Friends in November about the exhibition "Good Works." He explained the reasons for holding it - a way of acknowledging the almost two thousand works donated and bequested to the Gallery, many of which are of very fine quality but are rarely able to be put on display. The core of Neil's lecture was a history of the circumstances behind "Good Works", ranging from the James Jamieson collection, donated when the McDougall was brand new, to Maureen Raymond's often inspired offerings (some of which, such as a set of Whistler etchings, were amazingly refused!) and to the Ballantyne Bequest which helped purchase an excellent representation of John Weeks. Neil's knowledge of and love for the McDougall's collection is unrivalled, and it was infectiously conveyed to the audience in his talk.

Friends' Spring Trip

"It couldn't have been better" was the consensus about the Friends' Spring Trip to North Canterbury on 5 November. Five artists' studios were visited: Graham Stewart, who has done fine work in restoring historic stained-glass from the Barbadoes Street Chapel (a Friends' sponsored project); then to Judy McIntosh Wilson's studio where we had an opportunity to see her working methods and the environment that had made her recent exhibition "Tall Poppies" possible; John Coley entertained us all with his vivacious and witty European sketchbooks; lunch was held at Michael Eaton's vineyard at Glenmark, an idyllic location; and finally we visited Mark Lander's studio at Oxford, where he demonstrated his "total" approach to art, paper-making, clay grinding - and total enthusiasm! The weather was sunny and warm and the mood just right.

LocArt Visit to the University of Canterbury

The final outing for 1994 was a tour of selected works from the University's collection. Jonathan Mane-Wheoki gave the group a Maori welcome and an introduction. The tour extended over several departments as the collection is widely dispersed throughout the University. Many of the artists were either from Canterbury or had associations with the School of Fine Arts.

The works we looked at ranged from a multi-media work by a third year painting student, Evelyn Hewitt, to more conventional pieces by Doris Lusk and Robyn Kahukiwa. The latter's "Whare Tangata" shows the body as a house for the unborn and is one of many works that reflect the University's commitment to Maori and Pacific cultures. Recent trends in "appropriation" were noted in the work

LocArt Visit in March

Lady Isaac, the well-known collector and "Good Works" benefactor will show her gallery at Clifton to Friends at 2 pm on Wednesday 22 March 1995. Please meet June Goldstein at 1.50 pm outside Clifton, McArthurs Road, Harewood. A maximum of 30 visitors can be accommodated.

To book (or cancel) please ring the answerphone on 379 4055.

Annual General Meeting

The Friends' Annual General Meeting will be held at the Gallery at 7.30 pm on Friday 10 March. The guest speaker will be Nancy Tichbourne, who will discuss her life, art and ethics. It promises to be an interesting insight into one of New Zealand's most popular and successful artists. All are welcome.

of the feminist artist Linda James and in Max Hailstone's prints based on Maori "signatures" (often calligraphic marks) from the Treaty of Waitangi. Pippa Davies' embroidery "Hatching the Universal Egg" was admired for its craftsmanship; and other works noted were by Richard Reddaway, Simon Ogden, Euan Macleod and the evergreen Bill Sutton.

Listening to Jonathan made us aware that we were not only seeing good art, but also getting a succinct review of art trends and movements - an update of Art History. At the conclusion, Jonathan said that Friends were welcome to make a return visit as there are many more works to see. I would recommend anyone to join the next tour and indeed, any LocArt trip. It is a privilege to be guided around venues not normally accessible to public view and especially in this case to have such a knowledgeable guide.



LocArt outing in November. Jonathan Mane-Wheoki, Dulcier Barrer and Margaretann Tan with the Francesco Somaini sculpture at the university campus.