

Bulletin

THE ROBERT McDOUGALL ART GALLERY

ISSN 0111-1426

Number 102 June/July 1996



Grace Butler, On the Beach New Brighton 1916.

Director: Tony Preston, Senior Curator: Neil Roberts, Administration: Margaret Grijns, Jenny Barber, Pamela Jarman, Art Annex Curator: Elizabeth Caldwell, Art Annex Supervisor: Simon Mulligan, Conservator: Lynn Campbell, Custodians: Harry Ipenburg, Tiresa Ah-Wong, Education: Ann Betts, Judith Hault, Exhibitions: Spencer Pullon, Gary Collins, Information and Shop: Merilynne Evans, Alexandra Ott, Maintenance: Denise Paulger, Registration: Anna Crighton, Martyn Johns, Technician: Martin Young, Promotions: Amanda Gregan, Weekend Custodians: Merilynne Evans, Dominic Feuchs, Rebecca Jellie, Susan Leckie, John Mottram, Tony Webster, and Gwen Searle.

Christchurch City Council



The Robert McDougall Art Gallery
P.O. Box 2626 Christchurch
Fax (03)365-3942
Telephone (03)365-0915
Botanic Gardens Christchurch

Purchase of the CSA Heritage Collection

Recently the gallery was fortunate in being able to purchase a collection of historical paintings of major heritage significance for Canterbury from the Canterbury Society of Arts (CSA).

Most of these works had been acquired by purchase, gift and bequest for the CSA collection between 1881 and 1950 and a selection from them had already been made in 1932 with the opening of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery. Although the new gallery for Christchurch had been built, it was not until 1947 that a small amount of funding was provided for the purchase of art works. The CSA fortunately continued to acquire works and by the 1950s had a more representative collection of work by contemporary Canterbury artists than the McDougall.

In the late 1950s several CSA collection works were placed on indefinite loan to the Robert McDougall Art Gallery and others were added in the 1960s and 1970s. In the 1980s some concern was expressed as to the well-being of what had become very much a heritage collection resulting in a further 68 works being transferred to the McDougall.

However, by 1994 financial problems forced the CSA to make a more serious decision about selling older works in their collection and it was immediately realised by all that the loss of so many of these works to Canterbury would be a serious loss to the region's art heritage. As many had been gifted or bequeathed to the city it might also be seen as a loss of faith. This indicated the need for an initiative to purchase the collection for the city.

Support was immediately forthcoming from the executive of the Friends of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery Inc and the Christchurch Civic Art Gallery Trust (CCAGT). A special acknowledgement must be extended to Mr Malcolm Ott and Mr Chris Bocket of the CCAGT who took the lead in approaching Trust Bank Canterbury and Trust Bank Canterbury Community Trust for support, and who helped with the negotiations with the CSA Council.

In November 1994 a grant of \$200,000 was approved from Trust Bank Community Trust Funds and \$5,000 from Trust Bank Canterbury. Funds were also set aside from the Gallery's 1995/96 acquisitions budget, the Olive Stirrat Bequest, the Christchurch Civic Art Gallery Trust and substantial individual support from W A

Sutton, Lady Isaac and Sir Miles Warren.

With these funds, works by the following artists were purchased: Frances Hodgkins, Petrus van der Velden, Grace Joel, Raymond McIntyre, John Gibb, James Peele, Samuel Butler, Grace Butler, John Gully, Margaret Stoddart, Evelyn Page, Ivy Fife, Archibald Nicol, A Elizabeth Kelly, Richard Wallwork, Sydney L Thompson, Russell Clark, William Menzies Gibb, W A Sutton, Francis Shurrock, Lady Kathleen Scott, Cedric Savage, Ronald McKenzie and many others.

Amongst the total collection however, were

9 works especially important to Canterbury. They were *On the Beach* by Grace Butler, *Island Trader* by Russell Clark, *The Queen's Visit* by Ivy Fife, *Barn Piccardy* by Frances Hodgkins, *Lambton Quay* by Evelyn Page, *Pack Train Ocean Beach* by James Peele, *Mountain Lilies* by Margaret Stoddart, *Portrait of Joy Clark* by Sydney Thompson and *Mountain Stream Otira Gorge* by Petrus Van der Velden.

These have now been acquired with the bulk of the Trust Bank Community Trust and Trust Bank Canterbury support. They

will be known as the Trust Bank Community Trust and Trust Bank Canterbury collection. They were formally handed over to the gallery on Tuesday 19 March.

The addition of these works not only adds many not included in the 1932 gift, but greatly assists the gallery in filling gaps in the McDougall collection left in the 1930s and 1940s when no art purchases were made for the city.

The Gallery would like to express its gratitude to all those involved with these important additions to the Collection.

Shared Visions - Native American Painters and Sculptors.

21 June - 4 August

This exhibition of Native American art comes on tour from the collection of the Heard Museum, Phoenix, Arizona. Curated by a major scholar and collector Dr Rennard Strickland and Margaret Archuleta of the Heard Museum, **Shared Visions** presents a unique display of over 70 works by Native American painters and sculptors from the turn of the century to the present day.

The earliest works are by artists born in the 1880s whose paintings reflect the rapidly changing world in the Indian Territories. These were some of the first painters to consider themselves professional Indian artists. Self taught and stylistically naive, their paintings are full of the detail of traditional religious regalia and ritual. As the twentieth century progresses new influences make their mark with the paintings absorbing and reflecting the major stylistic trends of the century. The rhythmic lines and simplified, stylised shapes of art deco appears and modern movements like cubism and pop art are all present.

By the 1960s there are also signs of rebellion amongst the artists against what were appearing as rigid definitions of "Indian" subject matter and style and the native artists turn themselves, with passion and intelligence, to address contemporary issues and the creative use of non-traditional art materials. Modern issues like abortion, Indian exploitation, racial stereotypes and land alienation make their appearance.

Shared Visions is therefore, unique in its wide sweep of twentieth century Indian art. It reflects the changing world of the American Indian. It reflects too the American response to the 1992 quincentenary of Columbus' arrival on the continent as this celebration added a level of political substance and urgency to the way the Native Americans view themselves in today's world. Lucy Lippard in her recent book "Mixed Blessings; New Art in a Multicultural America" refers to these concerns. She considers the multicultural society of modern America to be more of a "rich stew" than the product of a "melting pot".

One thing **Shared Visions** will confirm is that the Native American artists of today interact in a sophisticated artistic dialogue of international scope yet retain the voice of their personal cultural experience as



Harry Fonseca, *When Coyote Leaves the Reservation* 1980.

indigenous peoples.

Two of the contemporary Native American artists, Rick Bartow and Linda Lomahaftewa, will accompany **Shared Visions** to Christchurch for a few weeks and we are planning some special talks and workshops while they are with us 20 - 27 June. It will be our delight to welcome to the McDougall the artists and the paintings and sculptures of their people.

Workshops with visiting artists.

Mask-making Workshop

Friday 21 June, 6 - 8pm

Join Rick Bartow in a painting and mask making workshop. Fee to cover the cost of the materials \$20. Christs College Art Room. Bookings essential. Phone 372 2973.

Painting and Design Workshop

Tuesday 25 June 6 - 8pm

Linda Lomahaftewa and traditional design elements in Native American art. Fee \$20. Christs College Art Room. Bookings essential. Phone 372 2973.

Floortalks on Shared Visions

Sunday 23 June, 11 am - 12noon & 1 - 2pm.

Share the special background to the works in **Shared Visions** with the visiting artists. But please be aware that, because of the safety of the art works in the exhibition spaces, this group will be limited to just 20 participants.

Please assemble in the McDougall Gallery Centre Court for the commencement of the Floortalks.

Lecture and Discussion on Native American Spirituality Sweat Lodges and other rituals with the visiting artists Rick Bartow and Linda Lomahaftewa.

Thursday 27 June 6 - 8pm.

McDougall Art Gallery. Please use the Night Entrance from Rolleston Ave. Fee \$5.

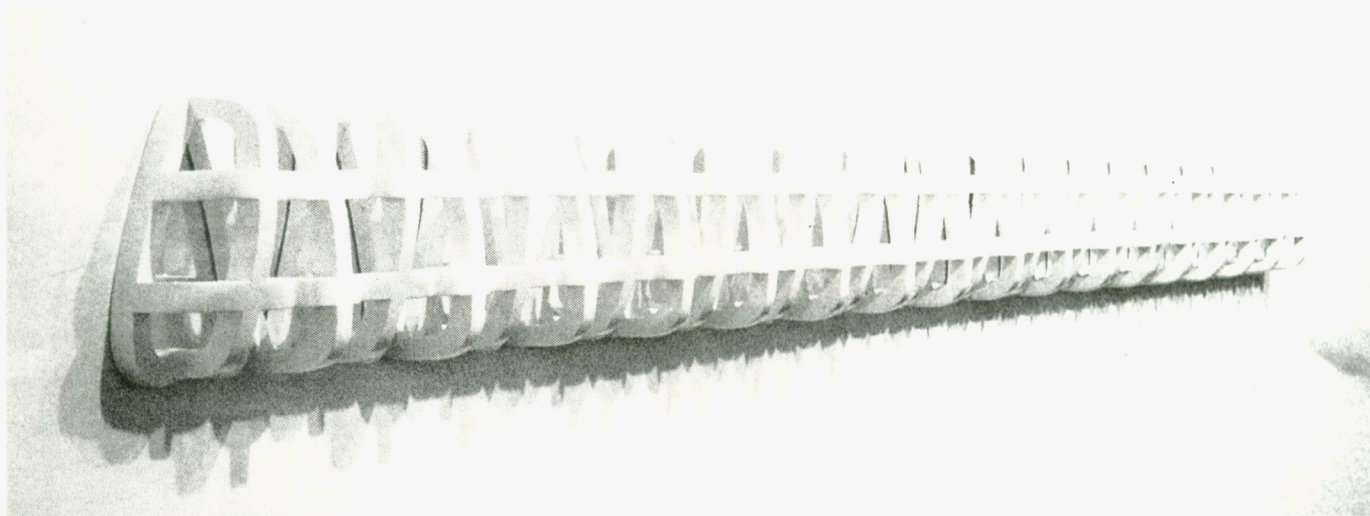
Pat Unger - Passport Issue

20 June - 4 August

This exhibition of new work by the Christchurch artist Pat Unger is focused around the idea of the 'passport' with the passport applicant being in this case New Zealand. Personal characteristics for this applicant are listed as: "first to see the light, first to see the night, having frequent cold fronts, being the home of heroes and sportsmen and exhibiting the behaviour of enthusiastically promoting the national culture." The subtle irony in these abstract works challenges many of our national and artistic assumptions and attitudes and makes for a fascinating exhibition.

On a deeper level **Passport Issue** is also about form and content. The form is provided by the rather loose logic of the passport format. The content or meaning is realised through various snippets of reality. These stand in for the passport photograph mounted onto a page or space and layered with allusions to artistic styles and fashions. She includes bad 'white art' and bad 'black' art, the gestural brush stroke, the dribbled paint contrivance, repetition and of course the ubiquitous rubber stamp, the sign of authority's ultimate approval of identity. An identity that gives the applicant, at least temporarily, the right to be recognised.

Pat Unger who lives in Christchurch graduated from the University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts in 1979 after already completing a two year graphic design course at the Christchurch Polytechnic. She has been exhibiting in solo and group shows since the 1980s and has, over the years, worked with a variety of media including acrylic on canvas or paper. In **Passport Issue** Pat Unger uses oil on paper for this new, innovative and challenging show.



Christopher Braddock, *Untitled Continuum* 1994.

Drift North

22 June - 21 July

There is a well known Christchurch phenomenon, based on empirical observation, where approximately every two years a stream of young and talented artists abandons the 'city that shines' for the seductive attractions of northern climes. It is generally believed that they go in search of big city lights and seeking greater exhibiting opportunities and the artistic exposure that is apparently unavailable in the South Island.

Drift North features five such artists: Christopher Braddock, Joyce Campbell, Simon McIntyre, Valerie Neilsen and Seraphine Pick. All are graduates of Canterbury University School of Fine Arts, who have now eschewed the southern regions for the bigger, better and brighter things available in Auckland and Wellington.

They are a group of artists who work in a variety of media including sculpture, installation and painting. There is variety also, in the length of time they have been away from Christchurch, their reasons for leaving and what they hoped to gain by moving.

Drift North explores these questions and considers what, if any, changes have taken place in their work as a result of their relocation and asks, finally, is it still possible to discern regional differences within contemporary art practice?

Aftermath

26 July - 25 August

Aftermath is an exhibition of recent work by painters A.J. Pearson and Mark Braunias and sculptor Stephen Clarke.

Excavating at the roots of anxiety these artists reach into a personal arsenal of sensory artillery to tunnel down and expose the nerve centre at the core of the late 20th century.

Stephen Clarke's sculpture hovers like a fossilised digital fragment, suspended a millisecond after the moment of implosion. The works' opalescent fragility evokes an elusive image, the shadow moment in the aftermath of destruction.

The stark photo-negative quality of Mark Braunias' paintings are blue prints for a technology in crisis. He creates his own time-zone; a jarring mis-marriage of past and future with sinister echoes of the Commando comic cult of cold warfare superimposed on an Orwellian vision of the future.

The flat graphic nature of Braunias' spiky drawing is set in terse contrast to the viscous textural paintings of A.J. Pearson. On to a desolate wasteland the artist hews out amorphic forms which take hold. Ambiguous and primal they are produced in the muted, bled colours of **Aftermath**.

As the world lurches toward the end of the millennium, **Aftermath** unravels the language of crisis and alienation.

This exhibition has been generously supported by Xerox Copiers Ltd.

Olivia Spencer Bower

Foundation 1997 Art Award.

This Foundation was set up to assist New Zealand painters and sculptors by encouraging and promoting artists with future artistic potential. It is an Award therefore for emerging, rather than established, artists. It was the intent of Olivia Spencer Bower to help those with talent so they could pursue their art for one year free from the necessity to seek outside employment. The Award of \$22,000 payable monthly in advance is not to be used for overseas travel and preference will be given to artists willing to work for the Award year in Canterbury or with Canterbury connections.

The Foundation is now calling for applications for the 1997 Award from

The Trustees
Olivia Spencer Bower Foundation
C/- NZ Guardian Trust
P.O. Box 9
Christchurch.

Applications close 31 July 1996.

Friends of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery

President—Chris Brocket 355 7133
Vice-President—Mark Stocker 365 3895
Treasurer—Helen-Mary Black 332 7290
Secretary—Ann Watt 379 4055



*Below: Elizabeth C'Aileceta and
Harriet Bailey.
Right: Louise Palmer.*



Annual General Meeting 1996

15 March saw an absolutely packed Centre South Gallery, with dozens more Friends spilling out into the Centre Court. Never has the case for a decently sized, purpose built lecture theatre been better put, a point not missed by our President when he noted with admiration the example that the splendid new Dunedin Public Art Gallery is setting Christchurch.

The new Committee was elected. Besides those listed at the top of this page, it consists of Victoria Clark, Will Cumming, Philippa Dobson, June Goldstein, Dick Lucas, Joan Moon, Robyn Ussher, John Vial and Val Wisely.

Presentations took place of our annual scholarships awarded to outstanding students at the University of Canterbury and at the Christchurch Polytechnic. Elizabeth C'Aileceta was awarded the Friends' Scholarship in Art History and Louise Palmer won the Fine Arts prize; the Farina Thompson Trust Scholarship was awarded to Harriet Bailey.

Guest speakers for the evening formed a "triple act" this year: Fay Coley, John Coley and Sir Miles Warren. Their theme was "The Grand Tour," their trip in 1995, which explored the visual and culinary splendours of Italy. The audience was treated to the swashbuckling wit of John, the dry wit of Miles and the good natured tolerance of Fay. While we were left tantalised by Fay's slides of cooking and produce markets, our visual appetites were satisfied by John's and Miles' watercolours of Italian scenes. Some were of well-known landmarks, while others were more informal and typical. To see their different stylistic emphasis as watercolourists was interesting. Subsequently John's works have been shown at the Dobson Bashford Gallery. To all three of our guest speakers we say "Bravo!"

Loc Art Visit to Marilyn Rea-Menzies

On a pleasant autumn afternoon in April, a group of Friends met at the Hereford Street Tapestry Workshop of Marilyn Rea-Menzies. A recent grant from Creative New Zealand has assisted her to set up and run this workshop.

Three large tapestries were in progress on the upright looms and we were shown the working drawings or cartoons for these. Designs come from preliminary sketches in oil pastel, photographs and collage and some of her large tapestries may take from ten to sixteen weeks to complete. One of her largest commissions, was the 'Baycourt Tapestries', for the Centennial Theatre in Tauranga.

Marilyn enjoys working in collaboration with other artists and has almost completed a tapestry designed by Christchurch artist Michael Reed. For some sections of this large work she uses a supplementary warp to give greater detail.

Although Marilyn is expressing herself in one of the earliest known mediums used since medieval times, her designs are strong, vibrant and modern. Great commitment, and amazing attention to detail is shown in Marilyn's work and we would all like to thank her for a thoroughly enjoyable visit.

LocArt Visit to Sculptor Graham Bennett.

On Friday 15 March the Friends had a most impressive visit to the sculptor Graham Bennett at his home and workshop.

On the front lawn they had their first introduction to the metal shapes, glass and stone used by Bennett. The scale of his sculpture entitled *Sea/ Sky/ Stone No 1* which was photographed on Nelson's Boulder Bank in 1990 was an impressive

2m x 2m x 10m. Graham also made reference to another work of similar scale on private land overlooking Kaipara Harbour. This form flowing down the hillside reflects the sky and the changes in the water.

Graham also spoke of his friendship and collaboration with the jeweller Gavin Hitchins and their exchanges in concepts of scale and shape, stone and metal, large and small. Graham has had several exhibitions of his works including the



Graham Bennett and Friends on LocArt visit in March.

smaller sculptural pieces in Japan where they have been received as "symbolising my own country."

Graham's workshop areas were full of exciting and impressive concept or idea drawings and experimental shapes. We were all excited as we pondered the depths of his perceptions. His home with its collection of works by other artists as well as his own was a visual treat. Our thanks to Graham for a great visit. The group left full of admiration of his talent, dexterity and his creative energy.

Speaker of the Month

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

On 19 June Robin Bond, Senior lecturer in Classics and Drama at the University of Canterbury will speak on "The Place of Theatre in 5th Century Athenian Society".

On 17 July artist Keith Wilson, author of "A New Zealand Artist's Travels" talks about 50 years of art journeys in Europe.

Recent Speakers of the Month

Penny Orme - Trevor Moffitt a painter of New Zealand.

Penny Orme is a popular speaker with the Friends of the McDougall and her talk on Trevor Moffitt was well received. As a truly dedicated artist and man of strong convictions and determination, Moffitt's character is very much reflected in his paintings.

Painting in series which included strong landscapes of Southland and Canterbury, mining and his father's life, Moffitt's works show earthy, mundane life in narrative form. Paintings on McKenzie the sheep stealer and the Stanley Graham murders bring the anti-heroes to prominence, while the freezing works series shows the brutal depiction of the life on the chain. All are part of the human experience.

Supported by well-chosen slides, Trevor Moffitt and his works were truly brought to the audience's presence by Penny Orme.

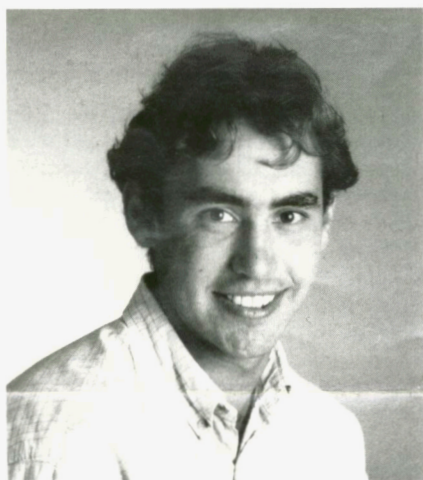
Alan Shadwell - Destination Namibia.

A Photographic tour to South Africa and Namibia undertaken by Alan last year brought a wealth of subjects to the screen for our enjoyment. From the evening sun catching the waves of Table Bay with Capetown shining in the distance, to village life and wildflower studies of Namaqualand, the photographs recorded the tour not just as a photographic record, but as an art form.

Under the expert eye of well known photographer Freeman Patterson, the 15 photographers in the group were given assignments and tutored on the finer points of photography. Usually associated with business activities, Alan soon won the admiration of the audience for his photographic prowess.

Our Thanks to the Friends who contributed to this issue: Colleen O'Connor and Shirley Alexander.

Welcome to new Staff



Martyn Johns

Martyn has joined the Gallery staff as assistant Registrar as Anna Crighton our Registrar is working part time to allow more time for her other duties as a City Councillor.

Martyn has a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Canterbury and a Post Graduate Diploma in Museum Studies from Massey University. After an initiation into art museum work at the Phoenix Art Museum in Arizona, Martyn has been working towards an art museum career and we anticipate his time at the McDougall will further his knowledge and experience in this field.



Margaret Grijns

Margaret joined us in March as the Gallery Secretary and Personal Assistant to the Director. As she has had many years experience as a secretary and personal assistant and has also worked in public relations, she brings with her a wealth of experience and expertise to this very demanding position. We welcome her to the team and wish her many happy years at the McDougall.

New members

Mrs Janet Abbott
Mrs Jean Copland
Dr Gavin Daly
Dr Doreen Dannell
Mrs Rosemary Dunlop
Mr & Mrs W Garthwaite
E M Griffin
Barbara Hicks
Hiroko Kashima (Life)
Betsie Leffelaar-Stassen
Jennifer McBride
Jean Mehrrens
Robynanne Milford
& John Boyd
Margaret & David Murchison
Andrew Ott
S D Plesovs
Conny Riis-Hansen
Mr A Shadwell
J Taylor
Julianne & Christopher
Wadeson
Cynthia Ward
F Ware
Olivia M Watson
Lyn Zanders

Coming Events

JUNE

Exhibitions

- 1 **Landmarks : The Landscape Paintings of Doris Lusk** - until 9 June
Linda James: Disegno Interno - until 16 June
Neil Frazer: Stretched to the Limit At the Annex - until 16 June
Works from the Collection - until 7 October
- 20 **Pat Unger: Passport Issue** - until 4 August
- 21 **Shared Visions - Native American art from the Heard Museum** - until 4 August
- 21 **Drift North - At the Annex** - until 21 July

Clubs & Art Appreciation programmes

- 1 **Saturday 1 Club.** 10.30 am. An art appreciation club meeting
Children's Club. 1.30pm. An art appreciation club meeting for children.
- 4 **Eye Spy 96 - Session 2** Our European Inheritance. 10.30am & 1.30pm
- 5 **Wednesday 1 Club** 10.30am. An art appreciation club meeting
Wednesday 2 Club 1.30pm. An art appreciation club meeting
- 6 **Mac Club** 10.30am. An art appreciation club for the disabled or differently abled. New members welcome
- 7 **Friday Club** - 10.30am. An art appreciation club meeting
- 8 **Saturday 2 Club.** 10.30am. An art appreciation club meeting
- 11 **Eye Spy 96 Session 3.** Early New Zealand Art. 10.30am & 1.30pm
- 18 **Eye Spy 96 Session 4.** The Canterbury Paintings 10.30am & 1.30pm
- 25 **Eye Spy 96 Session 5.** A modern view. 10.30am & 1.30pm

Lectures, Concerts & Workshops

- 4 **ENTHUSIASMS** "Wine Ancient and Modern" - Professor Don Beaven. Also a Wine Tasting Session. Sponsored by Montana Wines. 6pm. Please use the Night Entrance from Rolleston Ave. Tickets \$10 Friends, \$12 Public
- 9 **Concert.** Hagley Singers present a choral concert. 11.30am
- 11 **ENTHUSIASMS** "An Enthusiasm for TV" with Professor Ken Strongman. 6pm. Please use the Night Entrance from Rolleston Ave. Tickets \$4.50 Friends, \$6 Public
- 16 **Floortalk** Linda James will discuss her *Disegno Interno*. 11 am.
- 18 **ENTHUSIASMS** - "Confessions of a Kitsch Victim" with Dr Denis Dutton. 6pm. Please use the Night Entrance from Rolleston Ave. Tickets \$4.50 Friends, \$6 Public
- 19 **Speaker of the Month - Robin Bond,** "The Place of Theatre in 5th Century Athenian Society". 10.30 am.
- 21 **Mask - Making Workshop.** 6-8pm. Christs College Art Room. \$20. Bookings essential 372 2973
- 23 **Floortalks on Shared Visions** with visiting native American artists. 11am & 1pm
- 25 **ENTHUSIASMS** - "Glorious Gardens" with Thelma Strongman. 6pm. Please use the Night Entrance from Rolleston Ave. Tickets \$4.50 Friends, \$6 Public
- 25 **North American Painting & Design Workshop.** 6 - 8pm. Christs College Art Room. \$20. Bookings essential 372 2973.
- 27 **Lecture** Native American Spirituality with visiting native American artists. 6pm. Please use Night Entrance.

JULY

Exhibitions

- 1 **21 Shared Visions - Native American art from the Heard Museum** - until 4 August
Drift North - At the Annex - until 21 July
Pat Unger Passport Issue - until 4 August
Works from the Collection - until 7 October
- 26 **Aftermath.** At the Annex - until 25 August

Clubs & Art Appreciation Programmes

- 3 **Wednesday 1 Club** 10.30am. An art appreciation club meeting
Wednesday 2 Club 1.30pm. An art appreciation club meeting
- 4 **Mac Club** 10.30am. An art appreciation club for the disabled or differently abled. New members welcome
- 5 **Friday Club** - 10.30am. An art appreciation club meeting
- 6 **Saturday 1 Club.** 10.30 am. An art appreciation club meeting
Children's Club. 1.30pm. An art appreciation club meeting for children
- 13 **Saturday 2 Club.** 10.30am. An art appreciation club meeting

Lectures & Concerts

- 2 **ENTHUSIASMS** - Passion for Fashion with Kate Fraser. 6pm. Please use the Night Entrance from Rolleston Ave. Tickets \$4.50 Friends, \$6 Public
- 7 **Concert.** Canterbury Wind Soloists. 11 am
- 17 **Speaker of the Month** - Artist Keith Wilson talks about 50 years of art journeys in Europe. 10.30am



Friends on LocArt visit to Marilyn Rea Menzies' studio Joy and John Boyd, Joan Millward, Pauline Everist, Margaret Ann Tan, Queenie Davies and Colleen O'Connor.

Enthusiasms

The 1996 Winter Lecture Series

By the time this Bulletin reaches you, the lecture series "Enthusiasms" will be well underway. Even if you haven't made it to the early lectures (shame on you!) the later ones offer a fascinating variety of themes to warm up your winter Tuesdays from 6 - 7pm.

Fine wines (4 June), television (11 June), kitsch (18 June), gardens (25 June) and fashion (2 July).

Contact the Gallery for any further information and become an enthusiast!