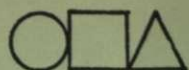
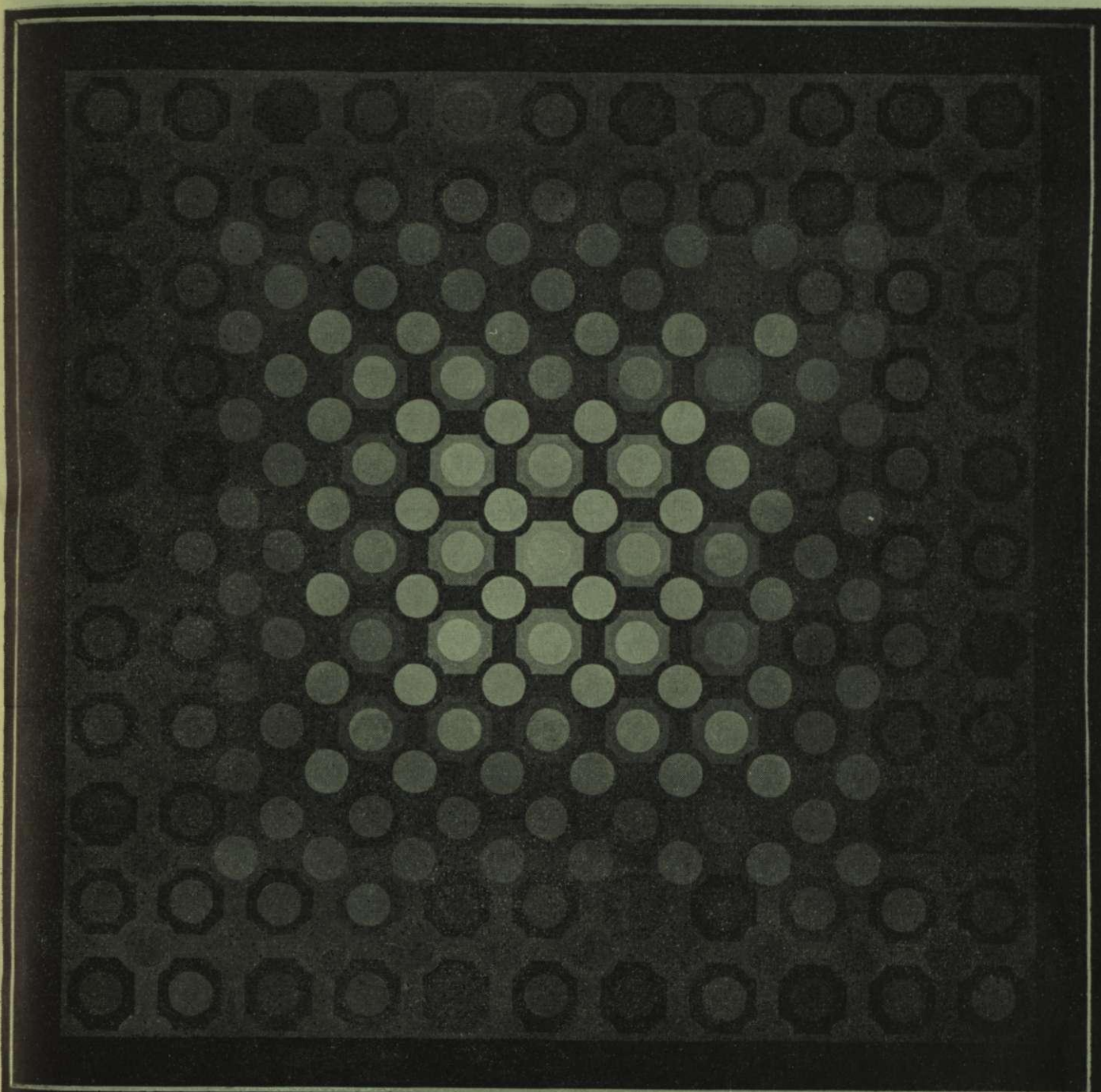


news



THE JOURNAL OF
THE CANTERBURY SOCIETY OF ARTS
CNR DURHAM AND ARMAGH STREETS
P.O. BOX 772
CHRISTCHURCH
TELEPHONE 67-261

NUMBER FOURTEEN, JULY 1967



"Abacus V" by one of the society's working members, John Coley, which has been bought for the society's permanent collection by the new buyer, Mr Ron O'Reilly, Canterbury Public Librarian. Mr Coley held a one-man show earlier this year in which several of his "Abacus" studies were included.

—Orly

IN THE GALLERY

July 8: Combined Artists opening at 8 p.m. to 23rd July.

Those exhibiting are: L. J. Bary, Olive Beken, Olga Cox, Ernst Kalnins, Norman Lemon, W. F. Moore, Ron Panckhurst, Joy Simmons, Ngaire Tilley, Roma Tracey.

Showing at the same time, a selection from the Permanent Collection or a drawing exhibition from Palmerston North if available.

July 14: 8 p.m.: Czechoslovakian Children's Art with two short films. Education Department Arts and Crafts Branch.

August 2 to 19: "Christchurch Star" Secondary Schools Exhibition.

September 16: Associate Members' Exhibition (Receiving Day, September 6).

October 7-22: Combined Artists Exhibition.

October 25-November 12: Group Show.

November 25-December 17: Summer Show (Receiving Day, November 15).

EXHIBITIONS AND COMPETITIONS

N.Z. Academy of Fine Arts Sculpture, Pottery and Graphic Art (Receiving Day, July 18).

Crown Lynn Design Competition. Entries and entry forms July 31.

James Smith Competition (closing August 16).

Tokoroa Festival Society Competition (entry forms receiving day, September 1).

N.Z. Academy of Fine Arts Annual Exhibition (Receiving Day, October 3).

Invercargill Art Gallery Society exhibition. Receiving date, September 21.

VINDICATED

Our move to secure the exhibition of thirty modern European artists from Melbourne's National Gallery has, we are delighted to report, been fully vindicated.

Public attendances have been very encouraging. Figures are high. Obviously members and the general public will support our efforts to secure worthwhile exhibitions from overseas.

The prospect becomes more important in relation to our new Gloucester Street Gallery, building at present.

Our endeavours must always be to make it as alive an art centre as possible, and a factor we need to be mindful of is the handiness of Australia in these times of rapid air travel, and the diversity and quantity of work which is always showing in the many minor as well as major galleries of Sydney and Melbourne.

Some very worthwhile exhibitions could well follow this pioneering venture.

Certainly we were assisted this time by N.A.C. and Qantas, and since we are not a wealthy society we will continue to depend on assistance of this kind.

The Melbourne show's opening, by the then-Australian Government representative in Christchurch, Mr Michael Coultas, and Mrs E. M. McNicol, wife of the Australian High Commissioner to New Zealand, was very well attended, and nicely graced by the Victorian dry wines Mr Coultas's office provided.

The selection from our own collection, hung in the small gallery, was also a very worthwhile touch, and complementary to the Europeans.

In general public viewing, we are many years behind advanced work in Europe and America.

There was much in the Melbourne collection which seemed strange, perhaps, to the average, non-expert member of the public.

Indeed, in general art appreciation we might be an entire generation behind Parisians and New Yorkers.

But, to-day, we are likely to catch up. Telecasts using satellites from all parts of the world, colour television—all these lie in our very close future and it might be that we just will not be allowed to proceed at our own pace.

Outside influences, thrust at us, will determine the pace.

Perhaps in as little as five years the work of a contemporary, advanced European painter will seem as unalarming in our general public view as, say, a Van Gogh or Cezanne is to us to-day.

With this in definite prospect it certainly behoves us as a society, alone or in some concert with similar societies, to keep abreast of developments as much as possible in our visiting exhibitions.

The Melbourne show provided, happily, a stimulating focal point for the Christchurch Jaycee, assisting us in our membership drive.

Jaycee held a luncheon gathering centred upon the exhibition, at which the lunch was served in the more gastronomically congenial Horticultural Hall and the gathering addressed in humorous vein by Bernard Smyth, CHTV3 Town and Around host.

The effectiveness of the function can best be judged from the extended list of new members in this issue—for this we are indebted to Jaycee—but familiarity with the aims and work of our society will have been spread much more widely than these names indicate.

In the context of modern art, it is worth noting that the noted Marcel Duchamp show, valued at more than 1,000,000 American dollars, will come to the Robert McDougall Gallery this month.

In Wellington it was hung in the National Gallery at the same time as the Kelliher prize paintings.

No greater divergency, one suspects, has ever been demonstrated in art.

The "Evening Post" critic commented that the Duchamp show would be regarded by many viewers as

"the crudest," and in his opinion it was "the rudest," show ever in that Gallery.

We can only leave to our imaginations the likely comments of visitors for the Kelliher show who found themselves in the wrong part of the gallery!—G.W.S.

IT STARTED IN THE THIRTIES

This is the second of three articles by Mr P. A. Tomory.

They first appeared in the "Listener" in 1964, and we are indebted both to the Editor of the "Listener" (Mr M. H. Holcroft) and to Mr Tomory for permission to use them.

Mr Tomory, former Director of the Auckland City Art Gallery and now senior lecturer in art history at the Elam School of Art, is latest recipient of the Society's Silver Medal for his lively and vigorous services to art in New Zealand.

Modern painting in New Zealand is young in comparison with the painting of most other countries. You could say it started in the 1930s. There were movements before that, which were broken by World War I. We have just held an exhibition in Auckland of James Nairn, of Wellington, and Edward Fristrom, of Auckland, who were painting before 1914 in the idiom of Europe at that time. It is astonishing to look at the dates of their pictures. Nairn was painting good late-Impressionist and post-Impressionist paintings at the same time the French were. But of course he wasn't appreciated. Neither was Fristrom.

A great number of artists left New Zealand before World War I, spurred on by people like Nairn and Van der Velden. Frances Hodgkins, Raymond McIntyre, Sydney Thompson and others had all gone abroad before the war, and many did not come back.

After the war a lot of servicemen took up their studies again in Europe, and many of these also did not come back so there was a great dearth of progressive artists from 1918 till about 1930. It then started picking up again, and about 1935 there was the beginning of modern movement. People like Rita Angus and Toss Woollaston were among the first consistently serious painters, concerned essentially with the contemporary attitude. This is not necessarily to dismiss other artists who were more illustrative.

World War II again interrupted. McCahon first exhibited about 1939 or 1940, but not much was appearing and it was not till about 1950-51 that things began to jell, with more than half a dozen artists.

I have used the names of Woollaston and McCahon because by and large they are the most mature. Woollaston is 54 or thereabouts; McCahon is 45; and I should include Rita Angus as well. The three of them are much of a painting age because they were all working in the '30s. They are interesting because neither Woollaston nor McCahon has spent any length of time out of New Zealand. We had a retrospective exhibition of both of them in Auckland about two years ago, showing paintings from 1935 up to 1962. There are no other artists, except Rita Angus, you can do this with.

There are others coming up of course. We have what might be called expatriate artists in New Zealand: Rudy Gopas in Christchurch and Bob Ellis in Auckland. Ellis is from England and arrived in 1957; Gopas, from Lithuania, has been here for 12 or 14 years. Their work does not really exhibit any New Zealand characteristics at all, yet they are important artists working within the country. Something must be rubbing off on them—the light or something of the kind.

Of course, the whole geography of art has changed. Painting in New Zealand really started in

Dunedin and moved from there to Christchurch and to Wellington. And now it's Auckland. I think a large town draws artists in to a community where there are other artists. I'd like to think the gallery had something to do with it, but the human element is more important.

Auckland also has dealer galleries which don't exist elsewhere to any large extent, and serious contemporary artists are selling very well. Three of the last four exhibitions have been virtual sell-outs. This is a phenomenon of the last 18 months and a matter for some jubilation. The popular artist can always earn his living; the serious contemporary artist can't. It may be some time before New Zealand, with a small population and a small buying audience, can fully support contemporary artists, but these encouraging sell-outs in Auckland mean that an artist can stay in New Zealand, which is the important thing at the moment.

The sculptors also are stronger in Auckland than elsewhere. Many are women—Molly Macalister, Alison Duff, Ann Severs, who came from England after training in Italy. One of the most exciting discoveries recently is the young sculptor Greer Twiss, who is casting his own bronze. This has meant a new dimension in sculpture because we have lacked this capacity for eight or nine years. Twiss has been producing excellent figures of athletes in the last stages of exhaustion and high jumpers and subjects like that.

One rejoices in this. An artist working directly from a common image—the runner—is a sign of the breaking down of a too self-conscious attitude among artists in New Zealand. They have had a feeling of being outside the herd and have sometimes chosen rather arty subjects. I am not preaching that the artists should come nearer to the common man, but there are so many significant things artists could seize on.

Think for instance of the Australian painter Sidney Nolan, with his Ned Kelly series. Here was the invention of an Australian myth. Care is needed with this sort of thing because it can turn into pure illustration, but there are similar instances in New Zealand's history, just waiting for an artist to pick them up. I think of people like Von Tempsky, for instance, and some of the social outcasts, men of our own society.

great colour and vitality. They are among us in This all requires a maturity which I think is coming now: Some young painters know what paint is and are using it not only intelligently, but with sensitivity and feeling. At the first New Zealand exhibition I saw nine years ago I was shocked by the complete lack of interest in the surface. I have always referred to it as boiled lino, the kind of work where the paint has been poured on as though through a stencil, without any emotional expression and consequently no emotional impact. Now this is quite changed. We are now getting artists around the age of 25, with decades ahead of them, who are showing a feeling for the paint itself. They require only a growing maturity and accuracy of direction to become really fine painters.

This is where a public art gallery can have an immense influence. I am not merely considering Auckland here, but Australia for example. It is the support of the Australian public galleries that has given the Australian artist such authority. It is not an accolade or anything like that, but whether you go to Perth, Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide or Brisbane you find good, contemporary Australian painting represented.

This is not happening in New Zealand. The odd gallery does buy the odd contemporary artist, but it is not on a big enough or wide enough scale and the choice is too parochial.

Go back in time and you find that this has always happened. As a result, the National Gallery has 12 or 14 Nairns while we in Auckland have two

—both bought within the past four years. On the other hand we have about 12 Fristroms; the National Gallery has none at all. If you want to see a certain painter you have to go to a particular gallery because he was a local artist. Public galleries should not buy on a regional basis like this. They should be buying on a national and international basis.

Even when they do buy in this way, mixed galleries, like those of Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin, tend to be a little behind the times. The private buyer can risk his money, but the public gallery wants to be assured that an artist is mature and that his work means something within the terms of the national art. I remember this being the case in England—Paul Nash, for instance, when he had an established reputation as far as the private buyer was concerned. It was five or six years later before the public gallery would pick him up. On the other hand, of course, the private buyer eventually will be the benefactor of the public gallery.

There are no masterpieces of European art in New Zealand but there are some very good pictures here, of all sorts of periods. There are, for example, three good Gainsborough portraits and three Turners. But I believe that galleries should buy good painting or good sculpture; they should not worry about whether they are buying big names or not. Even the masters slip from time to time, or there can be an uneasy attribution. It is much better to have a very good second-rung artist.

I think too that with a little courage more ordinary people could buy pictures. Their cost is not very considerable in terms of the average New Zealand income. This is already happening in Auckland. People are buying and they're not people one happens to know, which is a very encouraging sign.

Also encouraging is the youth of the buyers, many of whom are in their 20s and not overburdened with money. I know of university students who have virtually starved themselves for a month in order to buy a picture. And artists are buying other artists' pictures because they happen to admire them. This too is a sign of maturity; there is no longer the fighting and jealousy once common between one artist and another.

(A third and final article by Peter Tomory will appear in the next issue.)

DONATION

It is with pleasure indeed that we acknowledge the first substantial donation towards the cost of our new gallery, a gift from Mr and Mrs D. L. Rutherford, of Leslie Hills.

We are confident many of the people from city and province, kindly disposed towards our efforts, will follow this lead.



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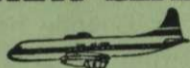
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MODERN EUROPEAN PAINTING

'And I stood in my shoes and I wondered', at the exhibition of 'Modern European Painting' from the National Gallery of Victoria. The range seemed as wide, the scale seemed as great, the subject matter was as varied, the styles were as diverse, the vision was as acute, the thought was as deep, the techniques were as skilful, as in the best contemporary painting of New Zealand.

Yet there is some subtle difference between the Europeans and ourselves. Some property is contributed by each painting as a part to the exhibition as a whole. This property can be sensed but cannot be specified by visual reference to techniques or subject matter. I felt that it was a feeling of confidence and authority that each painter experienced as he worked. Such a glow of confidence was radiated even when the paintings were less than their best, as in Riopelle and Appel, or derivative as in Lesieur, or superficial as in Balthus, facile as in Buffet, or acid as in Andrews, or slight as in Metzinger, or expressive as in Saura, or simple as in Souza, or sensitive as in Marquet, or painstaking as in Craxton, or subtle as in Lundquist, or challenging as in Tapiés.

We New Zealanders can cover the same range in the same way but hesitantly look back over our shoulders at society, waiting for the blow of censure to fall because of our idleness in a pioneering community. Inwardly, each as a painter is convinced of the meaning and value of what he is doing. Outwardly there is little confidence to convince authoritatively others or even to believe that others can be convinced.

The sense of hierarchy and territory which European painters know is missing. Hierarchy in the sense that painters possess status and respect in their society, territory in the sense that there are areas of human intellectual and aesthetic activity which only painters are capable of exploring and revealing.

Even the fundamental right of any painter to choose what he shall paint and how he shall paint it, is questioned—even, I hear, in some art schools. The dignity of according an artist the privilege of working honestly to the farthest limit of what he knows to be the truth, is often denied him. But one can see that to the European painter such a situation is no problem. He takes as his right the discipline he imposes upon himself and working from this point gains the confidence and authority that pervades his work—even the less successful works.

One of the most interesting general reactions to this exhibition was that it did not surprise us in content or method. One can only wonder at all the fuss made about modern New Zealand painting.

David Graham.

REWARDING DISCOVERIES AT ROYAL ACADEMY'S SUMMER EXHIBITION

(By Christopher Brandon, printed by courtesy of the U.K. High Commission in New Zealand)

Visitors to the Summer Exhibition of Britain's Royal Academy of Arts at Burlington House, London, face an almost daunting assortment of paintings, sculptures and drawings, immensely varied in style, subject matter and accomplishment.

This year's exhibition, which remains open until July 30, is the 199th since the series was launched in 1769. It is, however, the first to be held under the presidency of Mr W. T. Monnington.

Every year, as decreed by the Academy's laws, a body of professional artists serves as a hanging committee. And of approximately 9000 works offered for selection, 1456 gained the committee's acceptance and now stand on view for every man's judgment.

More Abstract Work

Possibly because the president himself is an abstract artist, more space this year has been allotted to abstract art than in the past. Monnington reveals his own quality by two works entitled "Square Design" and "Design on Diagonal of a Square"; both studies strike one as geometrical arrangements based on adroit interplay of squares and rectangles.

As an additional innovation for 1967, for the first time in its long history, the Royal Academy admitted women to its annual banquet held on the eve of the Summer Exhibition's opening.

Because of this, one's attention focussed at the outset on the works of two senior women academicians, Dame Laura Knight and Mrs Dod Procter, the first of whom, elected an R.A. in 1936, is still painting vigorously in her ninetieth year. Dame Laura's paintings, in their traditional heyday, derived inspiration from circus, ballet and gipsy scenes; she seldom strays from early loves. Her studies shown this season cover such themes as "A Last Load", "Derby Day" and "The Cruel Sea".

Mrs Procter, who lives at Penzance, Cornwall, is exhibiting oils small in size but of a fresh, delicate colouring called "Tropical Flowers" and "Roses". I liked even more the sensitive treatment shown by her "West Indian Girl Among Flowers" and "Jamaican Child".

Among relative newcomers, compared with these doyens of the art world, Sheila Fell deserves praise for her "Cows on Brayton Road" and "The Pier, Maryport"—works distinguished by a natural talent free of mannerisms. And Mrs John Bratby, exhibiting under her maiden name of Jean Cooke, contributes a self-portrait called "Blast Boadicea" which has a quiet strength pleasingly at variance with its strident title.

Massive Floral Studies

Her husband, as obsessed with yellows as ever, contributes massive and eye-catching floral studies, mainly depicting sunflowers and irises, but melons, whole or in sections, pips and all, also attract his brush. Can he never break free, though, from his addiction to flaming yellows and oranges? His flamboyance seems to forsake him as soon as he attempts, for example, to paint a pink jug.

Few problem or controversial pictures appear. True, Professor Carel Weight reacts eagerly and skilfully to situations posing the human predicament—man's appallingly brief tenure of life. This emerges characteristically from his treatment of "Thoughts of the Girls", one of whom, in the prime of her beauty, stands by a doorway and is confronted a step or two behind by a skeletal figure and a grinning old man's face. "A Child's Wonderment" and "The Garden of Eden", by the same artist, portray also enigmatic and futuristic undertones.

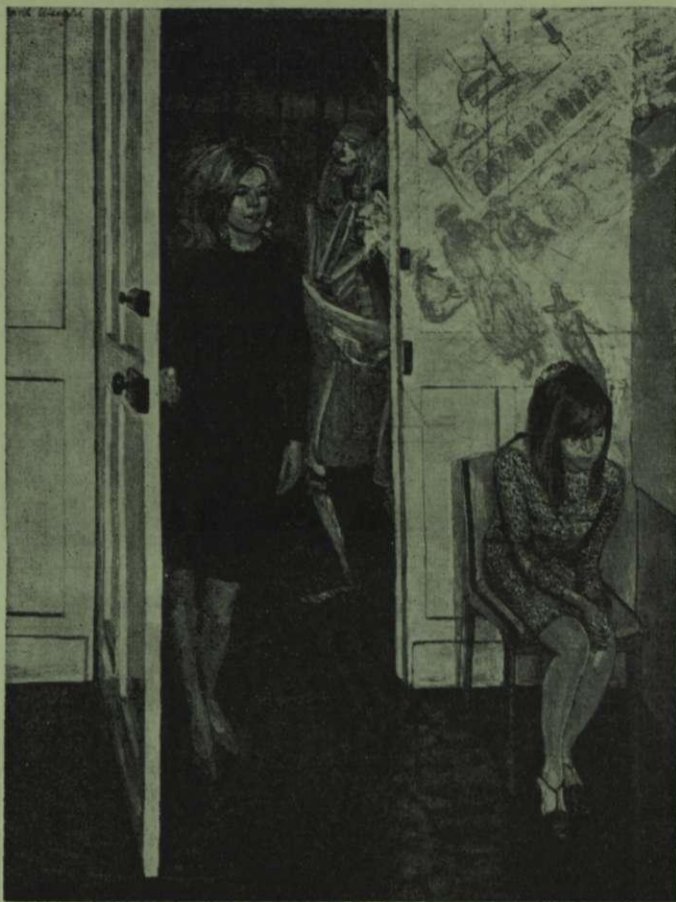
Challenging Altarpiece

The most challenging work in the Exhibition is probably Robin Philipson's altarpiece "Golgotha", an attempt to interpret the centuries-revered Christian theme in modern terms. His study of Christ, lashed to the cross, presents that world-familiar symbol from a refreshingly original viewpoint.

Admirers of Britain's foremost painter of the industrial scene, L. S. Lowry, will find satisfaction, if not a sense of keen appreciation, in his study of "A Lady on a Crossing", an embodiment of his idiosyncratic quality, linking caricature to compassion and isolation.

C. F. Tunnicliffe, an exacting painter of wild life, has one study called "Gull v. Hoodies", an avaricious tussle between greedy birds, but a good example of a naturalist-painter's lifelong devotions.

There is a peculiarly attractive power about the stylised paintings of William Roberts. His "Combat", an allegorical representation of the battle of the sexes, reveals men at grips with girls, the figures half classical and half space fiction, with the powerful



"Thoughts of the Girls", painted by Professor Carel Weight, R.A., and shown in the Summer Exhibition of Britain's Royal Academy of Arts which is showing at present.

females avoiding capture and abduction by brandishing cudgels and cracking a male skull or two.

To the relief of critics and many observers, there are fewer portraits than usual of board room meetings and civic dignitaries in flowing robes or emblazoned by medals, ribbons or glittering chains of office.

Forceful Personality

Sir Gerald Kelly, a past president of the Royal Academy, presents "Lord Reith", first director-general of the British Broadcasting Corporation, in a manner that emphasises that forceful personality's bristling authority. Henry Carr has caught Sir Donald Wolfitt, the actor, in pensive mood. And a full length study by Gerard de Rose of Julie Christie, the film actress, thrusts aside workaday realities, and by presenting her hair, face, hands, legs and skirt in olive-green tones, offset by a pink blouse and scarf, relates this film heroine successfully, I think, to a synthetic kingdom.

Yachtsmen, if no others, have their interests riveted by one massive work, a group study by A. R. Thomson, commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Royal Yacht Squadron, 1965, with flag officers and members, including the Duke of Edinburgh, grouped together with each individual recognisable to his friends, and a muster of ladies on the lawn behind the quayside.

Though some critics rail against the Royal Academy's loyalty to traditional themes and styles, this summer's exhibition is undoubtedly more varied, richer in colouring and also in accomplishment than many of its predecessors.

The range is magnificently wide, extending from colleges, oils, water-colours and lithographs to architectural models and drawings, and sculptures in terracotta, aluminium, fibreglass, Portland stone and other materials.

Even the most sophisticated or fastidious critic can hardly fail to make rewarding discoveries among so vast a collection of contemporary British art, much of it amateur in spirit, but some of it of high professional brilliance.

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Miss Janet Turnbull
Mr G. M. Walker
Mrs P. Wall
Mrs M. H. Ward
Mrs J. F. Wilson
Mr John M. Wilson
Mrs N. R. Withell

SEEKING SHOW

The society is seeking, to show here, an important exhibition of drawings by Don Peebles, Pat Hanly, David Graham, W. R. Allen, Michael Illingworth, Toss Woolleston, Don Binney, Gretchen Albrecht, Ralph Hotere, Milan Mrkusich, Gordon Brown, Shay Docking, Greer Triss, and Irene O'Neill.

The exhibition was originally compiled by the Palmerston North Art Gallery, and it has been showing in the Barry Lett Gallery in Auckland.

CONGRATULATIONS

The society congratulates a Working Member and Council member, Doris Lusk, on winning first prize in the water colour section of the competition conducted by the National Bank.

Mentions were earned by Graham Barton, a Working Member and Council member, and by Audrey Durant, a Working Member.

Congratulations to Working Members, Messrs W. F. Moore, A. A. Deans and Peter Mardon on gaining Merit Awards in the 1967 Kelliher competition.

LABELLED

Visitors to the McDougall Gallery will have noticed the new and excellent small signs now alongside many paintings. Introduced by the Director, Mr W. S. Baverstock, they are about 4 x 2 inches, engraved white lettering on a black plastic background. Each shows the name of the painter and the title of the work and when applicable the name of the donor. We are very pleased that the name of the Canterbury Society of Arts is quite frequently on the signs. In past years the society regularly gave paintings to the McDougall Gallery to help build up its increasing valuable and interesting collection.

THE GENTLE ART OF ART COLLECTING

Mrs Douglas Carnegie of Holbrook, N.S.W. has in 37 years acquired a collection of about 400 paintings — all Australian. Among the well known artists whose work is represented in her collection are Drysdale, Nolan, Boyd, French, Passmore, Streeton, Pugh, Lymburner.

Recently Mrs Carnegie took part in a panel discussion on Art Collecting for the Art Gallery of N.S.W. in Sydney. Some of her comments will interest C.S.A. Art lovers who find themselves slowly getting together the nucleus of a collection (almost, sometimes, without deliberate intent) or who are tempted to begin a collection while so many good New Zealand artists' work can be bought for very reasonable prices.

Mrs Carnegie says—"You certainly don't have to be a millionaire; it's just that if you're mad enough about a painting you will get it. I always bought paintings by unknowns and most of them are famous artists today. I am a compulsive buyer but I am trying to break the habit. You see, most people won't buy paintings by 'new names'—only by famous artists. It's not snobbery—just lack of confidence, but they have to pay far more. The best idea is to buy on the rising market and if your tastes change later, sell. Just remember that no one has to have a lot of money to buy well—and you can always sell a couple of your less good paintings to pay for a better one. I know because that's really how I have acquired my collection."

A CRITICAL RETROSPECT OF NEW ZEALAND PAINTING

A Critical Retrospect of N.Z. Painting

With limited exception New Zealand suffers from a surfeit of derivative Abstraction, which accords the author a privilege to indulge in written or spoken justification of his works to those in sympathy with his cause. If the sympathizer argues, this is excellent and may immediately result in intellectual ping-pong, which allows the artist further respite from the works that he appears to be called upon by nature and intuition to produce.

The most vulgar faction of New Zealand Exhibitions involves Mundanity, which is in no manner akin to Primitivism. The Primitive is visual Poet and Musician, the Mundane allows a silt of Mental and Technical incompetence to cloud our cerebrum—a perception which is generally enhanced on observing a majority of the "Opening Nights" gluttonous entourage, invited for patronage and seldom according even this.

Occasionally the New Zealander juggles with Extremism. Any attempt at this Exhibitionism, or Contemporaneity for the sake of either is doomed to failure from the onset as nothing is to be gained by excessive novelty, and such attempts, although admirable in communicative media, do nothing to improve relationships with the intelligent public, who are left as a result, although humoured, a trifle bewildered, suspicious of, and unreceptive to future serious attempts at visual communication. New Zealand "Pop", was like a costume party, enjoyed by the participants while the guests arrived, and drinks were served, but leaving each donor with a dreadful hangover, and the realization that a slight commitment had been made, to the now pregnant cause, which could only result in one or two persons clutching two scores baby.

The search for the absolute with regard for self affirmation numbers as one of the primary undertakings of man, and in particular creative man. The convincing "Theories and Dogmas" of Art have in fact been confuted, to be replaced by the individuals experience, and depth of percept.

If the Artist is asked the meaning of his creative activity a very certain answer may occasionally be resultant, and the Questioner assured that "Something

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Barry Cleavin

AS IT WAS

Johannes C. Andersen, in his book "Old Christchurch" writes of the old Gallery, soon to be vacated:-- "The Art Gallery, home of the Society of Arts, founded on July 8, 1880 with H. J. Tancred as president. The gallery was built facing Armagh Street in 1890, an addition, with the principal entrance in Durham Street being made in 1895. The first annual meeting of the new gallery was held on 13 January, 1891. The addition was made to the Main gallery and here pictures of the year are hung at the annual exhibitions. For revenue producing purposes a dancing floor on springs was put down and this was long one of the best dance halls in Christchurch, partly because of the easy floor, but more because of the beautiful surroundings.

"I had been three years in the land office, opposite the site when the gallery was built. I remember the Society wanted a strip of land added to the site and, as the section adjoining was owned by the Government (being occupied by the old cottage afterwards used by the immigration department) the Government was approached through the Commissioner of Crown Lands and presented the strip. Part of the immigration building had to be cut away and the rain got at boxes of papers which were ruined and the records they contained were lost.

"Then some trouble occurred which I cannot remember but the Society claimed compensation. The Commissioner, Mr John H. Baker, was very indignant with the secretary of the Society, energetic Captain Garcia and when the Commissioner became indignant he became rather inarticulate, which made him more indignant. 'The idea,' he said, 'we give you the land and then you come and claim compensation for something we are not responsible for.'"



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