

# NEWS

The journal of the Canterbury Society of Arts  
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# CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

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## CHRISTMAS 1986

The Council and staff wish members and their families a very happy Christmas and a New Year filled with joy and peace.

## NEW DIRECTOR

The Council is pleased to announce the appointment of Mr Chris Taylor, Dip, FA Dip. Tchg as the new Director of the Gallery.

He will be in charge from the time of Mrs Nola Barron's retirement on 23 December 1986.

Chris Taylor will be known to many members, since he replaced Evan Webb as part-time exhibitions officer, from June.

In 1976-77 he travelled extensively in Europe, where his major interest was in the art of the Mediterranean.

Since graduating from the University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts in 1981 with Dip FA with Honours in Photography and having completed a Dip Tchg, he taught Art and Art History for three and a half years in the Art Department of Shirley Boys High School.

Throughout this time he continued to do his own work, both in Photography and Painting and exhibited in both solo and group shows in Christchurch and Auckland.

## XMAS HOURS CSA GALLERY

The gallery closes at 4.30 p.m. on 23 Dec. and re-opens on 7 Jan. from 2 p.m.-4.30 p.m.

Normal Hours resume on 20 Jan. 1987.

Cover design by  
Grant Banbury

## WAIKATO TECHNICAL INSTITUTE WAIKATO SOCIETY OF POTTERS

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Jerry Rothman will give a public slide lecture in the C18 lecture theatre, W.T.I. on Saturday 10 January, at 7.30 p.m. Charge \$2.00.

**Waikato Technical Institute, Hamilton**  
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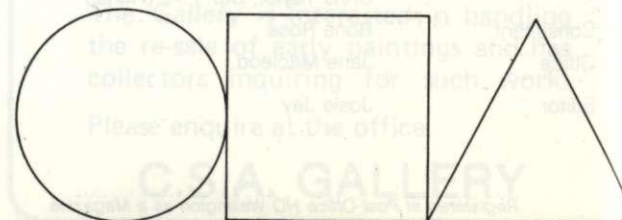
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Applications close 16 December.



# exhibitions

## THE NEW ZEALAND ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS LOOKING AT THE LAND

### CALTEX ART AWARD 1987

An exhibition of painting, drawing, sculpture, prints and photography which show wilderness and rural scenes, life and activities in New Zealand.

Receiving day — Tuesday 27 January.

Season — Sunday 22 February-Sunday 15 March.

Entry forms available from:

The Director,  
N.Z. Academy of Fine Arts,  
Private Bag,  
Wellington.

## THE NEW ZEALAND ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS FOR POTTERY, SCULPTURE, PRINTS

### BNZ ART AWARD 1987

Receiving days — Monday 16 March; Tuesday 17 March.

Season — Sunday 12 April-Sunday 26 April.

Entry forms available from:

The Director,  
N.Z. Academy of Fine Arts,  
Private Bag,  
Wellington.



## ART AWARD

**Painting Award**

**\$1000**

**Pottery Award**

**\$1000**

**Wool and  
Fibre Award**

**\$1000**

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March 20, 1987

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**LETTERS TO MEMBERS**

Dear Nola,

They say the only time a captain leaves his ship while on the high seas and under full sail is when he's forced into a long-boat by mutineers or is plucked off the poop deck by an albatross. I can't imagine Rona Rose or Grant Banbury as conspirators to mutiny, so I guess it's the albatross.

I remember the first time I met you. You were hanging a couple of MacCahons in the Mair gallery on nails which you had hammered into the concrete with your bare fists whilst balancing the entire Halswell Pottery Group's exhibition on your head and puffing thoughtfully on one of Olivia Spencer Bower's cigars. My eyes bulged like those of a beached groper and I attempted to conceal my awe by way of a glib remark: "My goodness, Mrs Barron, that must be difficult". You replied, "Not really. The trick, of course, is not to inhale".

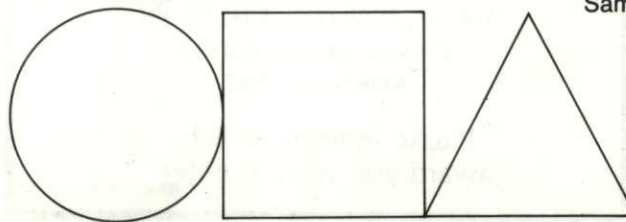
Your hair was a rich auburn in those days and every strand of it in place like a Van Eyke painting. But last week, when I called in to pay the GST on my subscription, I caught sight of you in the distance drifting along like a small cumulo nimbus about to precipitate and your hair, now grey, was like the rigging of a stricken ship.

Ah, the cost of your directorship. Ten years of buffering the shunted carriages of egoism in the railway sidings of Art. So perhaps you are right. Perhaps it is time to set a new course and fade from the scene like a water-colour painting in a sunporch. After all, there is a wider community that could be served by your unique qualifications . . . public relations officer to Reagan, for instance. And your business acumen; who could match that? You have found a home for every little sketch or urchinous maquette that came through your door, no matter how unworthy, and put bread in the mouths and hope in the hearts of neophyte artists and dragged them from the abyss of despair and teachers training college. And for myself? Why, the walls of every institute for the nearsighted or blind throughout the country groan with my works. . .

But now the agonised features of Greer Twiss's bronze athlete, which has discreetly witnessed the comings and goings through your office of so many diverse personalities, has crossed the finishing line at last.

I'm off to hunt albatrosses.

Best wishes,  
Sam



**NOLA BARRON**

I would like to express my gratitude to Nola Barron for the superb way she has handled all the complexities involved in the directorship of the C.S.A., and for the encouragement she has given me over the years of exhibiting there. Her quiet manner and reliability have inspired confidence in those starting out as somewhat diffident new exhibitors. Her openmindedness to all work, from student submissions to established art, and her involvement with the wide range of activities of the gallery has been something which we have all found so helpful.

Pauline Rhodes

Dear Members,

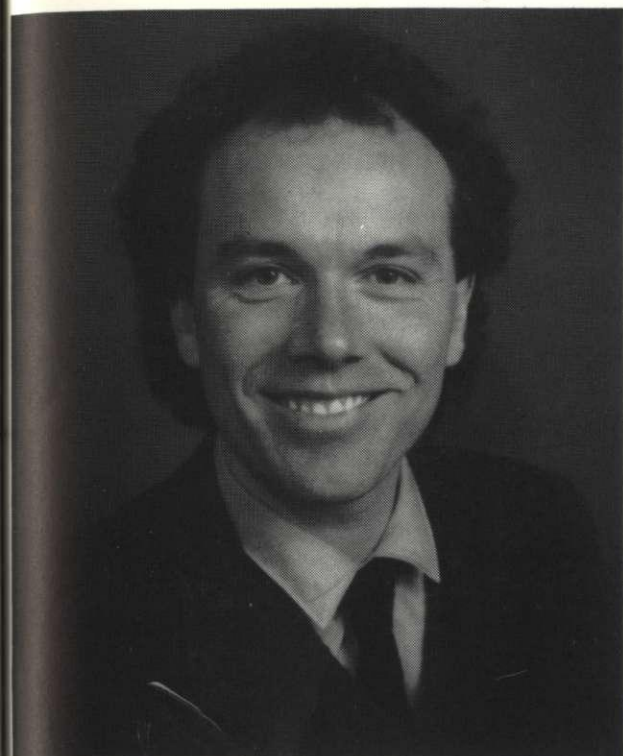
Over the past 6 months that I have been working at the C.S.A. my awareness of the gallery's influence, and of the professionalism of the staff, has grown tremendously. The diversity and number of exhibitions makes the gallery unique, not only in Christchurch but also New Zealand. The C.S.A. Gallery provides a superb physical environment in its building for art exhibitions. Also a sympathetic environment through its members who support the gallery and its functions.

I come to the Directorship with a background as an art educator and practising artist. As I see it these occupations are both forms of communication and a means of expression. I feel and hope this background gives me an empathy for the deeply felt aspirations of an artist in creating a work of art, as well as an ability to communicate and direct the aims and objectives of the C.S.A.

Art is not created in a vacuum. Artists can grow and enrich our lives in a community that values its artists and their works. The C.S.A. is a community that does just that through your membership. Take the opportunity to visit your gallery as much as possible and get involved in the society. I look forward to meeting you in the near future.

Heartfelt thanks to the President, council and staff for the warm welcome that has been extended to me. In particular I want to express my appreciation for the outstanding contribution that Nola Barron has made as Director of the C.S.A. to the visual arts in New Zealand. Best wishes for the future Nola.

I wish you all a happy Christmas, and all the best for 1987.  
Chris Taylor



Chris Taylor.

## Artists on Art

"Painting is not made to decorate apartments. It is a weapon of attack and defence against the enemy" (1945). "Of course you can paint pictures by assembling parts that will be perfectly matched, but such paintings will exclude any kind of drama" (1945). "What matters is not what the artist does, but what he is. Cézanne would not have interested me in the least if he had lived and thought like Jacques Emile Blanche, even had the apples he painted been ten times as beautiful. What is of interest to us is Cézanne's restless striving — that is what he teaches us; what is of interest to us in Van Gogh is his emotion and his torment — there you have the human drama!" (1935).

Pablo Picasso

## Views and Reviews

### SUMMER EXHIBITION REVIEW

By Catherine Brough

"Truth and reality in art begin at the point where the artist ceases to understand what he is doing and is capable of doing" ... are the words of twentieth century painter Matisse, whose point of departure remained his subject — and his subjects were indeed the subjects of many of the artists in this 1987 summer exhibition: portraits, flowers, landscapes, interiors. This method however, has been described as "watching his reaction and his reaction to the subject and so on until the cumulative process gathered a momentum of its own and became irresistible." He is referring to that mysterious fusion of subject matter, technique and idea where the painting takes on a life of its own. Perhaps a twentieth century concept but that is where we are. Even Matisse's impressionistic starting point could be regarded as reactionary today.

Almost all the works without exception in this exhibition begin with the artists' relationship to the environment or specific subject matter but the method of working varies from literal description to a more adventuresome transformation of the subject matter, to almost total abstraction; from a laboured battle with the paint to a seemingly spontaneous fusion of form and media where the battle scars are practically non-existent.

Paintings demonstrating a confidence and freedom in handling the media, where the artist as it were "takes off" are Alison Ryde's *Blue Bathroom I and II* where structure, colour and water colour technique come together enticingly. The sense of delight and experimentation in using media characterises *First Meeting Paradise* by Robyn McIntosh — with its Gauguin overtones, *Cherry Trees* by Kay Jamieson, *Sails* and *Proteas* by Jan Chaffey and *Girl on a Stool* by Josie Jay. However the engaging surface effects in these paintings do not conceal some insecurity in drawing and structure. This inability to find a satisfactory structure lessened the impact of the many flower studies, although the fluid handling of media was appealing. One of the more successful of these studies is *Burmese Vase* by Rosemary Roake whose *Portrait* likewise combines restrained and accurate delineation of form with intuitive use of media.

W. A. Sutton's *Study of Grant* is a strong compelling image. One is tempted to ask why it is called a study. A similar strength characterises Heather Day's *The Straw Hat* and *Papanui Railway Station* in which contemporary cityscape is painted competently in an impressionist style. Pictorial structures predominate here as in Paul Spicer's "untitled" triptych in egg tempera.



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Animation and gestural use of paint characterises *Vicky* by E. van-Haandel, *Banks Peninsula* by Barbara Eaton and the expressionist abstracts of Adrienne Grkovic which despite their harsh colour and unresolved nature are more gallery oriented than many works. Edwin Stephen's enamel on board are courageous if unobtrusive celebrations of media. The assured technique of A. A. Deans panoramic mountain scape impresses as do the vividly coloured impressionist oils by Owen R. Lee. Fluency comes to mind before R. Madden's free impressionist rendering of Corsair Bay and the gouaches by Olga Cox. Competence and painstaking draughtsmanship are evident in E. E. Deans harmoniously coloured paintings of rhododendrons, M. Abrahamson's *Lucy* which contains some pleasing textural passages and the watercolours of Don McAra which are like narratives that are to be read detail by detail. All these well controlled paintings attain a craftlike expertise which conceals in part the artist's feelings towards the work.

More intimate works are Ernest Kalnin's cubist *City I and II* and Barbara Fowler's *Edge of the Tides I and II* with their very individual use of watercolour. The minimal statements *Kapiti Is* and *Dark Landscape* by D. R. Breach are evocative. Two works with presence are Donald McKinstry's *Pumpkin* and *Richmond Hills* which are about form and mass. But the strongest statement about mass and volume are the jarrah and kauri sculptures by Llew Summers, where the form appears to evolve and be dictated by the material. The appropriateness of the materials to the form applies to Roger McArthur's sinister and aggressive forms, the steel bird forms of James Instone and Sam Mahon's whimsical and precariously suspended *High Diver* who appears to be leaping off the edge in a way many of the painters in this exhibition have not dared.

A statement made by the English painter Francis Bacon takes up Matisse's idea: "*Real painting is a mysterious and continuous struggle with chance*". This summer exhibition contains many paintings where the artist understands what he is doing and is capable of doing. Perhaps in the 1980s even more is expected; many of the paintings are predictable; the element of experimentation and risk taking which is the hallmark of much twentieth century art is largely absent.

### from: 'Abstract Painting' by Pohribny Incomprehensibility

And then it happens: we visit a museum and face an abstract painting with the best of intentions to grasp some of its meaning. One feels a certain alienation, one tries to overcome the distance between oneself and the 'unknown' one faces. Here is one of these very colourful, lyrical compositions full of movements . . . what do we see?

Chaos – that is the first impression – a deliberate chaos, in which none of the dancing specs of colour offers us a clue. The

### What are friends for?

*It is sad to say, but you have changed.  
When I first met you,  
you were the epitome of femininity,  
but now only of despair and futility.*

*I saw your "friend" with you, you know the one.  
I said "Why do you wish  
to drag others down to your abyss?"  
But he just laughed,  
that twisted laugh of his.*

*It is sad to see, but you are ugly,  
desirability gone.  
You, who placed all value on beauty.  
Now that your spirit's gone you're utterly empty.*

*Your "friend" laughs with you, and at you.  
He implied what you had done,  
was "fashionable", made you chic,  
but it doesn't, it was your defeat  
and our misery.*

*It is sad to know, but you have died  
in a twisted hell.  
You sought the high and it bought you low,  
You wished for love and paid for woe.*

*Your "friend" knew he had won, and said  
"Why don't you try it, you might like it!"  
And you agreed, encouraged me,  
and evil spoke through vanity,  
and victory.*

Shane Murphy

painting appears undecipherable, superfluous, indeed horrible. Other visitors comment that it is a barbaric concoction, an unnatural provocation, something insulting to the natural dignity of man.

On the other wall one of those 'cool' geometrical works appeals to us. Here someone offers the opinion that it may be the design for a pocket diary or the pattern of a house painted not in any case real art. For 'what does it portray?'

When one asks for pictorial representation, one thinks immediately about a scene with figures, a landscape in the background, about a mass of delightful details to please one

eyes, and to these we like to turn again and again. But before us now we find nothing resembling our preconceptions. We remain disappointed and confused. One step remains to be taken to move from our unfulfilled expectations towards suspicion: perhaps the artist meant to provoke us wickedly, to pull us down into the ugly . . . what are we to do with it? Should we be annoyed or laugh? In any case one could not possibly take this strange fellow seriously.

Yet, despite this dismissal, doubts remain – there has to be something, otherwise these paintings would not be exhibited in a gallery. Perhaps we have missed something important? What did we fail to see?

Sooner or later we realise that our expectations were inappropriate and our standards wrong. An expert would say that our behaviour has been 'unsporting'. How? It would be unfair to accuse a painter of still lifes of deception because he does not paint human figures. And it is precisely this accusation which we have made in the case of the abstract paintings. Can we accuse somebody of incomprehensibility, wickedness, etc. just because he does not depict the generally popular motifs, or at least the well-known symbols of nature? Should we not be interested at least in the motivation of the author? The abstract painters abstained from factual content and the imitation of nature as part of their programme, because they meant to reveal to us completely different non-factual areas of experience – pure feeling or 'musical' colour harmonies for example. And by the way: should one demand that the silent movements of a pantomime be explained by words?



## exhibitions

### Christchurch Youth Council's YOUTH ART EXHIBITION 22 January-8 February

On 21 January 1987, an exhibition by the youth of Canterbury will open at the C.S.A. "Change Towards Peace and Equality" is the theme of the works put forward by a number of young artists.

You are cordially invited to the opening on 21 January at 8 p.m. The exhibition will run through until 8 February. We welcome you to the beginning of New Zealand's art future.

### IAN SCOTT Works On Paper 16 December-18 January

Classical proportions, a sense of order, a feeling of light. Symmetry of balanced masses. Contemplation, repose. Black blackness weighing down a golden yellow that teeters on the edge of an abyss of white space. Allusions to distant shores and times glimpsed between these fundamental masses. A violent red attempts to escape from the embracing rectangle that contains its energy. It remains a beacon amongst this cool world of silence, reflection.

### CHRISTMAS SHOW 22 December-18 January

This year's Christmas Show includes a fascinating range of contemporary art drawn from artists around New Zealand. Included are works by well known Auckland artist Ian Scott, whose minimalist abstract works are elegant and eloquent. Doris Lusk, Michael Smither, Grant Banbury, Phillip Truettum and Rudi Gopas will be familiar to collectors and gallery visitors. Work by these artists has a national profile through its consistency of quality and vision. Interesting and individual paintings by Alison Ryde, Jean-Joyes, Sally Powell, Emily Jackson and Annie Baird are becoming sought after by art lovers. The C.S.A. is pleased to offer more work for sale by these outstanding artists. Of particular interest will be paintings by Dragan Stojanovich, an artist whose work is accomplished and original.

### QUILTS PLUS Mair Gallery 10-22 February



EXHIBITION OF QUILTS AND PATCHWORKS held in conjunction with the Second National Quilt Symposium Ngaio Marsh Centre, University of Canterbury, 13-17 February.

**Malcolm Harrison, Auckland quiltmaker, has kindly consented to be the guest exhibitor in this exhibition, organised by the Canterbury Combined Patchwork and Quilting groups.**

This form of fabric craft is becoming increasingly popular, allowing quilters to work with traditional patterns, to experiment, and create original designs. Selected items from all over New Zealand and from Australia will be on display, including quilts, clothing, wall hangings and smaller pieces.



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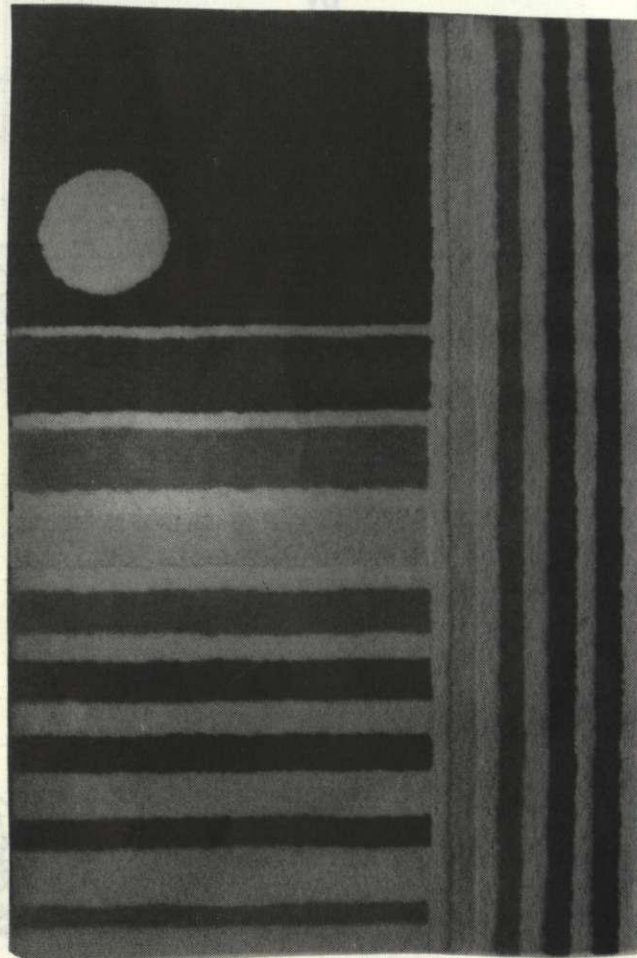
## THE AMAZING MAGIC CARPET SHOW

Original works by Dana Tatom  
Assisted by Paul O'Brien 24 Feb-8 March

This astounding display is being unveiled to floor you from wall to wall and hang you from ceiling to floor. Revealing to you the limitless bounds of tufted rugs in a profusion of colour, design and texture.

Float in on my flying carpet but be prepared, as Aladdin, you will be tempted by the treasures which lie within. Cut and loop pile combined with style, colour and warmth. Produced in modern, contemporary and traditional designs for use as wall hangings or floor coverings.

Don't miss this display, you will be entertained, amused and astounded by the beauty of "The Amazing Magic Carpet Show".



## PREVIEWS

No preview sheet is sent in December.

21 January 1987

### YOUTH COUNCIL EXHIBITION

27 January at 8 p.m.

BRIAN MORRIS

24 February at 8 p.m.

SALLY HOPE

DANA TATOM

SARAH ANDERSON

and others



## ARTS CALENDAR December/January/February

Chris and Sue Gullery		
Waikato	Stitched Fabric	8 Dec-18 Jan
Ian Scott Auckland	Works on Paper	16 Dec-18 Jan
New Zealand Institute of Architects		16-21 Dec
Persian/Iranian Rugs		16-21 Dec
Grace Butler	Memorial Ex.	10 Dec-18 Jan
Work From Stock		22 Dec-18 Jan
Youth Council	Exhibition	22 Jan-8 Feb
Brian Morris	Painting	28 Jan-8 Feb
Graham Collins	Printmaking	10-22 Feb
Quilt Symposium	Exhibition	10-22 Feb
Czechoslovakian Tapestries		10-22 Feb
Richard Whyte	Poetry Readings	9, 11, 13 Feb
Sally Hope	Painting	24 Feb-8 Mar
Dana Tatom	Rugs	24 Feb-8 Mar
Sarah Anderson	Sculpture	24 Feb-8 Mar

## NEW MEMBERS

Beverley R. Forrester, Ken and Marie-Gabrielle Hudson, M. V. M. Flanagan, Mrs H. Kay Blair, Iain L. Harvey, Michael Hawkins, Mr D. A. and Mrs A. M. C. Bowron, Kay White, Philip King, Mrs Joan Cartwright, Mrs Shirley Casey, Mr and Mrs P. J. Brown, Alan Robert Pearson, R. P. and H. P. Corballis, Mr Roger and Mrs Judith Thompson, Dr Geoffrey Welsh, E. J. Anderson, Graham and Jenny Walker, R. MacKenzie, Mrs Lynne Gibbons, Mr and Mrs J. Wynne Lewis, Mrs Jill Parker, Mrs Rosemary Page, Jennie and Warrick Lawson, Mahala and Denis Thomson, Barry and Anne Allom, Joanne Sutherland, David Beckingham, M. Anthony Peet, Kees Bruin, Mrs P. M. Williams, Janc Meharry, Prof. Alan and Mrs Jane Clarke, L. Franken, Mr and Mrs C. J. Parfitt, Daphne Erasmus, Betti Corbett, Edwin Stephen, Jan Ward.

