NEW ZEALAND

crafts

Issue 35 Autumn 1991 $6.75 incl GST

In this Issue:

Pacific Fibre Symposium

Iron Sculpture in Christchurch's Square

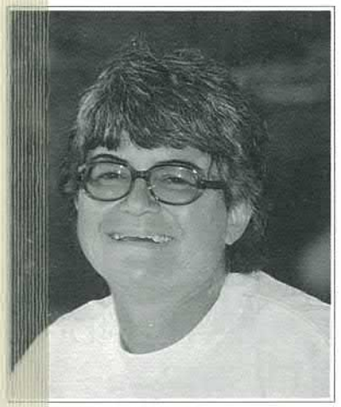
Kobi Bosshard

Commission in Glass

FROM THE EDITOR

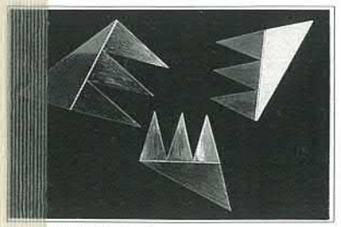
Our cover features Toi Maihi, mother, artist, teacher and administrator. I first met Toi twenty years ago, when I lived in Auckland. We haven't met since then. I became a potter and went to Nelson, Toi became an influential artist and is now a member of the Arts Council's craft panel.

In January, my wife Julie Warren and I left Nelson for a week to be part of the Wanganui Summer School of the Arts at Wanganui Regional Community Polytech. Julie enrolled in the Graphic Design and Layout course and sat glued to a computer screen. I had the privilege to be an observer at the Pacific Fibre Symposium.



Toi Maihi at the Pacific Fibre Symposium. Cover story, page 4.

And that's where I met up with Toi Maihi once more. The symposium features as our cover story in this issue (page 4). Associated with the symposium was the brilliant exhibition Te Moemoea No Iotefa (The Dream of Joseph), reviewed by Rotorua's Shari Cole on page 15.

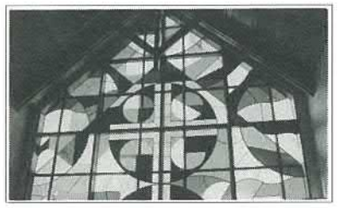


Brooches by Kobi Bosshard. Story page 20.

While I was at Wanganui I met Kobi Bosshard, who was teaching jewellery at summer school. He has a powerful reputation as a teacher and designer. Graham Price profiles Kobi on page 20. Graham says, "I had much joy in writing this". The photos by Jane Dawber illustrate the development of Kobi's work.

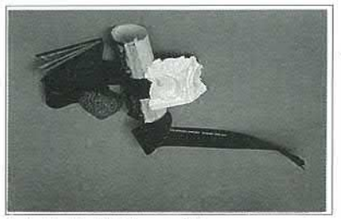
Controversial Christchurch sculpture. Story page 8.

Bing Dawe and Noel Gregg created a controversial sculpture for the Christchurch Square. When it was nearly finished, there was doubt that it would ever be erected in the Square. It was, but then the criticism started. Colin Slade discusses the project on page 8.



A major architectural commission in Wellington. Story page 24.

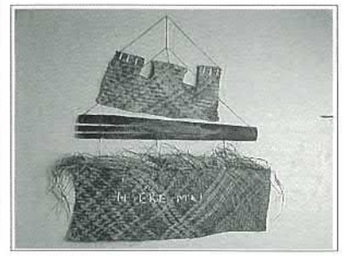
John Drawbridge has featured before in the pages of NZ Crafts. In this issue (page 24), Lesleigh Salinger looks at a major commission John undertook, designing windows and panels for the Sisters of Compassion Chapel in Wellington.



Book art by Lilian Bell. Story page 28.

In our other major story (page 28), Adrienne Rewi discusses the book as art, based on an interview with American artist Lilian Bell. As well, we have the usual briefs on people, events, commissions and news about craft from all around the country.

For our next issue, Helen Schamroth has carried out an extensive survey of the state of glass in New Zealand. What are the design influences? How are glass artists surviving in these tough times? Heather Nicholson gives us a historical look at knitting and Christine Thacker profiles Waiheke Island woodworker Kazu Nakagawa.



Polytech student work Feature and review next issue. (Photo, Sandy Connon)

Craft/Design courses have had time to find their feet. In issue 36 we'll look at how they're doing and we'll review the exhibition of 1990 graduates work at the Crafts Council Gallery.

NZ Crafts is changing. We have a new layout format, designed by Lexicon Design Communications in Wellington. Production of the magazine has shifted to Nelson. Layout to Lexicon's basic design is done on the Crafts Council's old Mac Plus computer, now installed in what used to be part of our pottery showroom. Printing has been done by Anchor Press in Nelson. Let us know how you like the changes. NZ Crafts welcomes news and photographs about any significant craft event. If you have a good story, drop us a line.

On behalf of the editorial team and the staff at the Crafts Council office and gallery, 22 The Terrace in Wellington, I hope you enjoy this issue.

Peter Gibbs, Editor.

CONTENTS

FEATURES

COLUMNS

Cover; Toi Maihi, see page 4 for the full Pacific Fibre Symposium story.

Photo; Deborah Smith

NEW ZEALAND crafts

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PACIFIC FIBRE SYMPOSIUM

BY PETER GIBBS

In a scattered group of old buildings on the campus of the Wanganui Regional Community Polytech, the various threads of the Pacific Fibre Symposium were assembled early in January. As the course unfolded over twelve days, the threads intertwined, relationships formed, ideas crossed over and merged. Strangely, the more the participants gained and learned from each other, the more their work spaces took on the individual characters of the people working in them.

The spirit of the Pacific Islands filled the classroom where Luseane Koloi and Pani Hemaloto worked. Tapa cloth covered the walls and all day the beating of the mulberry plant, source of Luseane's tapa, filled the building with its hypnotic rhythm. Pani worked on her large tivaevae until it came time to spread it on the floor to lay out and pin the various parts in place. She then moved to a new room, which became a haven of quiet, where visitors were always welcome to sit and talk.

The room shared by Rose Griffin and Jim Vivieaere was also a haven, but a highly ordered one. Although the casual visit was not unwelcomed, there was a sense that here there was an intellectual flow, a search for meaning on which to base the work which was the purpose of the symposium. Quiet and serious too was the old house used by Ruth Castle, Erenora Puketapu-Hetet and Jacqueline Fraser.

Laughter was the sound most heard in the small room shared by Toi Maihi, Eddie Maxwell and Tina Wirihana, but their intentions were no less serious than the others.

Outside, Mark Lander caught the passing foot traffic as he prepared for his installation by making huge pieces of paper from flax. Always ready to talk and to share, many of the participants became caught up in his process, wading in the pond, making paper for their own projects.

Adjacent to the machinery of the paper making plant, Anne Pluck, Malcolm Harrison and Judy Wilson worked more independently, each intent on their own projects, yet staying attuned to the work and ideas unfolding all around them.

As stated in the funding application to the QEII Arts Council, the aim the symposium was to "...involve participants in an exchange of ideas and skills and to enable them to develop and explore new directions in their work." While the participants may have been seen from the outside as a "who's who" of New Zealand fibre artists, this was not necessarily the case. Many prominent names were left out in an effort to give a balance to the group. "The group includes Maori, Pacific Island and Pakeha artists; key national figures working with fibre and lesser known artists who have been commended by their community; artists who are working cross-culturally and exploring ideas with the media."

The symposium was hardly an isolated event. Its timing coincided with the Wanganui Summer School of the Arts. Many of the participants were also involved in Te Moemoea No Iotefa (The Dream of Joseph), an exhibition at the Sarjeant Gallery of Pacific Islands Art (see review by Shari Cole - page 15). As well, an exhibition of the work of those at the symposium will take place later in the year to show the development of ideas since then.

The pre-symposium aims of the participants varied. Best known as a quilt maker, Aucklander Malcolm Harrison aimed to make a statement about the definition of fibre by working in wood, the most densely fibrous material of all (by coincidence the 1990 symposium at Wanganui was based on wood).

Judy Wilson sees herself as a sculptor who just happens to have worked in wool for the past few years. She brought just her tools from her rural Canterbury home "...I thought it was the perfect opportunity to work in different materials and with more depth into the culture of New Zealand. I spent my first two days at the beach and the bush, gathering up materials with no real idea of what to do with them...I imagined I'd go on doing similar things to what I was doing at home, but with the different materials. It didn't quite happen like that, there was such a Maori and Polynesian atmosphere here that that tended to influence my work.

Toi Maihi expressed her aims in her final summation. "I just love rhythms, and birds write these patterns in the sky, they sing visual songs and to me they symbolise freedom...I have hungered to get near to Mark (Lander) ever since I first saw his paper. I always wanted to fly things, kites. I made some based on the old Maori shapes but with pakeha materials, but I hated it and I wanted to do the thing totally with harakeke (flax)...Over there is my very, very first sheet of paper."

Mark Lander's paper eventually formed an installation filling a complete room. His inspiration was to come from the Wanganui environment of river and hills, rather than from the other participants. "The first day we came, the first thing I wanted to do was to get into my van and disappear up the river to see what was happening. I drove to the top of the Gentle Annie. I was amazed at the landscape, it was so steep. When I took some clay from the bank I understood that the river has had an easy job carving the land, the hills are very vertical and the valleys are very sharp. I'm used to Canterbury where the hills are quite rounded and rolling, but here they're very triangular. My first response was to use triangles. When we went up on the river boat I expected to see bush on the sides, but I saw none, just willows, so I thought the land must have succumbed to settlement and the hills must have been burnt, the bush cleared. So I've put willow litter on the floor to symbolise that. For the first time, I've actually cut into my paper and I've painted it black with paint made from ground charcoal."

Erenora Puketapu-Hetet intended from the start to explore new directions. She has made a huge contribution to the Maori people and their art, but now feels that the time has come to begin to express herself in whatever

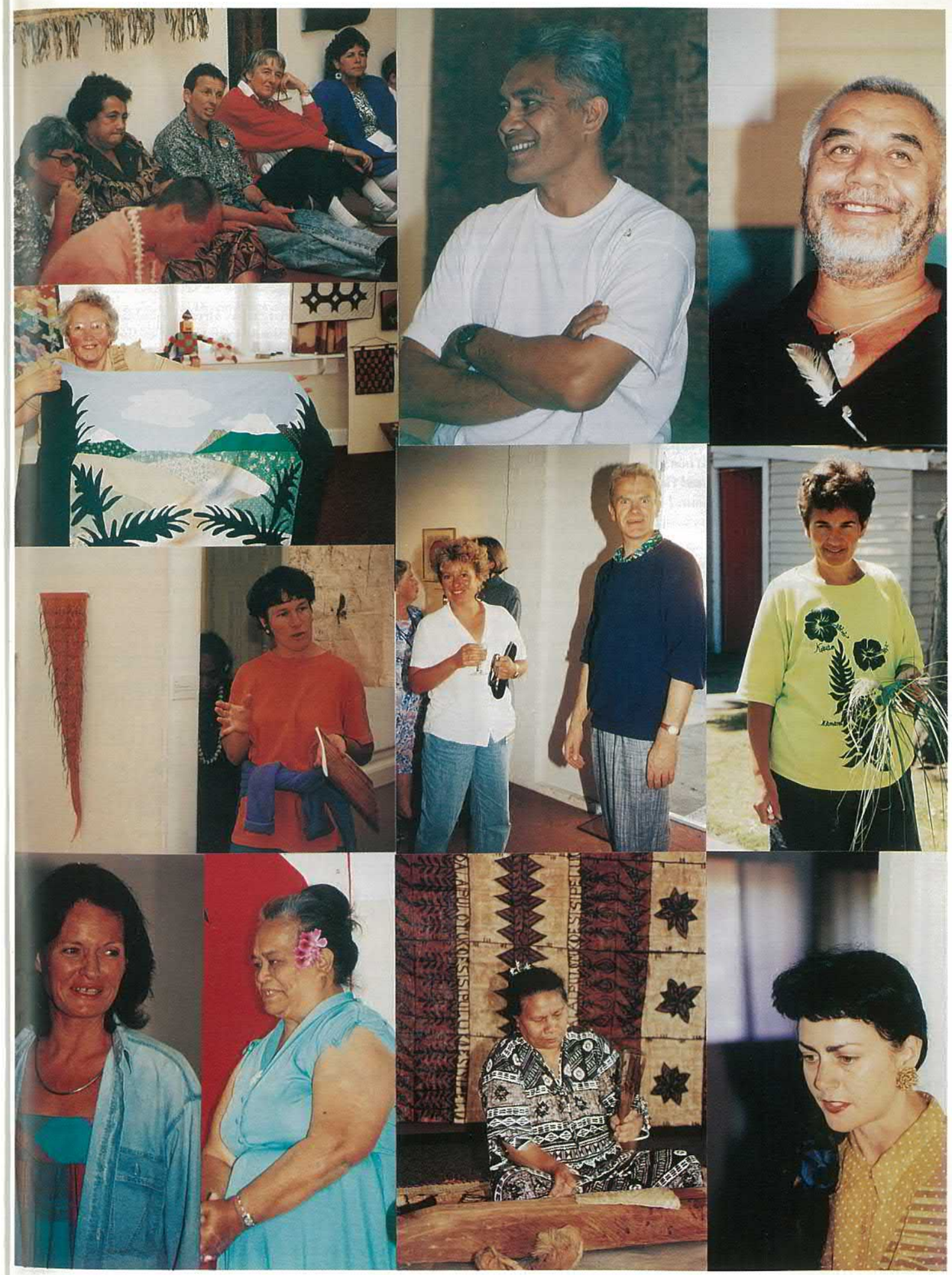


Photo opposite, clockwise from top left; Paul Rayner (Sarjeant Gallery) , Toi Maihi, Luseane Koloi, Mark Lander, Ruth Castle, Erenora Puketapu-Hetet, Jim Vivieaere, Eddie M axwell, Tina Wirihana, Jacqueline Fraser, assistant, Pani Hemaloto, Judy Wilson, Rose Griffin, Anne Pluck. Centre; Lorraine Webb (Facilitator), Malcolm Harrison.

way is appropriate. She chose to work with Ruth Castle. "I want my grandchildren to grow up in a country where they're not having to think, 'well that's Maori art and that's Pakeha art.' I want them to grow up in a country where they're looking at New Zealand art, a blend of the two. It's going to develop if people take a little bit from each other's culture, not just Maori to non-Maori but both ways."

Dealing with stumbling blocks in their work, learning from the others how to get around them, was common to many of the artists. Rose Griffin of Nelson found that even before the symposium she was forced to deal with different problems. When commissioning her work for Te Moemoea No Iotefa, the curator Rangihiroa Panoho had suggested to her that she work outside of her normal black and white, exploring colours which might give it more of a Pacific context. During the symposium, Jim Vivieaere suggested further ways to extend and expand her work. She found these suggestions positive in steering her into areas which broadened the scope of her work.

During the symposium, each participant was required to give a presentation to the group, as well as to the general public. In the group "show and tells", the constant themes were firstly a resolution of the art/craft discussion and secondly a desire to work towards the type of New Zealand identity expressed by Erenora Puketapu-Hetet.

For those working in more traditional areas, the restraints were much greater. Both Luseane Koloi and Pani Hemaloto were adamant that they worked as craftspeople. Art and creativity did not enter into it; they were working with ideas and techniques which were part of their culture, change was not an option. Although Pani came to Wanganui from the Cook Islands in 1948, when she was sixteen, she still used the Tiare Oravaru flower (The 'Eight o'clock' flower, which blooms at dusk) as a constant motif. I asked her if she had considered using New Zealand flowers or Maori motifs and designs instead and she replied, "I'd like to, but I don't really feel I have a right to."

The constraint about cross-cultural borrowing was widely acknowledged by the participants, although all agreed that such barriers needed to be broken down for a New Zealand identity to be established. The hesitancy about actually doing it seemed to stem from a fear of making cultural errors, of inadvertantly stepping on toes by using techniques or influences in a way which upset those who may be seen to have prior claim. In spite of such misgivings, the symposium provided just the supportive environment in which such exchanges could take place.

The art/craft problem seemed to stem both from a lack of confidence ("I'm just a craftsperson, I should stick to what I know and leave the real innovation to the 'artists'.") and, in the case of the more traditional craftspeople, from the same feelings that stopped them using other cultural material ("...there is a traditional way to do things, for me to alter that would be arrogant or a breach of etiquette...").

For those participants already established as artists, these problems did not seem to exist to the same extent. They considered themselves as artists, took what they needed from whatever source seemed most appropriate, and got on with the work.

And so it went, each one of the participants taking and giving according to what they needed or what they had to offer. As with last year's Wanganui wood symposium and the earlier ceramics symposium in Dunedin, the benefits to those attending and to the wider craft community may be slow to emerge. The first indications will come later this year, with the show of participants' work at the Sarjeant. Most are involved in passing on their knowledge in Polytechs, on marae and in other formal or informal teaching situations, so the benefits and knowledge will spread.

EDITORIAL

BY JOHN SCOTT

At a time when the world is involved in an horrendous indulgence of technological violence, commenting on the "state of craft" seems incongruous and almost irreverent.

At the World Crafts Council Conference in Sydney a couple of years ago, countries such as Iran and Iraq were used as examples of where technological developments were crippling the craft economy and how crafts ceased to be significant in themselves once alternatives were readily available.

Ironically these perceptions reinforce the roles craft plays in our own culture. Without entering into the debate which substantiates craft and art as being one and the same, our Society is in danger of diminishing the significance of craft by erroneously accepting this very premise.

Craft, as an example of humanity's control over resources and through encouraging and reinforcing the sensitive use of human skills, provides opportunities to live a life style which rewards individuality.

Recently, a rift occurred in Great Britain with Crafts Council and Arts Council having to deal with those who felt the Crafts Council had lost direction. Craft, it was argued, was about making and about preserving and valuing skills and workmanship. The tendency towards valuing only craft which was "arty", or which was at the "cutting edge" of newness and was innovative in design was seen as diminishing the very essence of craft; the fine and highly refined skills of "craftsmanship".

That same debate is alive and well in New Zealand. Recent reviews in this magazine have for example heralded the accumulated sublime skills of Japanese human treasures in contrasting and questioning the relevance of "expressive ceramics". Other reviewers have at times dismissed finely crafted objects as lacking innovation, relegating such craft to obscurity while encouraging the art content regardless of "craftsmanship" or technique.

Such emphatic statements of position I would suggest are trying to impose a perception that a correct and definitive posture is possible. Craftsmanship and technique must be preserved and must be demonstrated for it to be real craft. Or conversely content design, intention and innovation are more important than how it is made. Once you assume one of these positions the alternative is decidely unattractive particularly if there is little indication of compromise.

Energy in preserving one extreme or the other of this debate is derisive and detrimental to one of the greatest attributes of craft - its capacity to recognise and embrace all aspects of human creativity; craftsmanship, dexterity, design, concept and artistic expression.

Let's hope our new craft panel avoids the traps of defining craft indirectly by regarding and recognising only art crafts as good crafts!

REINTRODUCING THE FABULOUS RACES

BY COLIN SLADE

Barrier with Cynocephalus. Photo, Colin Slade.

"It's obscene!" cried one critic. "It's a unique and important contribution to contemporary art," came the response. "Grotesque!" insisted others. "Imaginative and lively. A classy piece of work!" said another. The debate raged through the Christchurch City Council chambers, the newspapers and the radio talk-back shows. They were all talking about "The Reintroduction Of The Fabulous Races", a sculpture for children by Christchurch artists Bing Dawe and Noel Gregg.

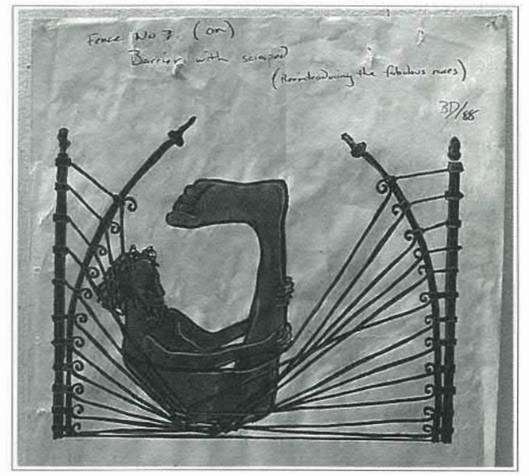
The work had been commissioned by the Christchurch City Council for Cathedral Square, the central city plaza which is slowly and haphazardly being reclaimed as an open space of importance to the city; one worth visiting for reasons other than to worship or to catch a bus. The council had originally called for submissions from artists for a "children's play sculpture" to go in the play area in one corner of the Square. Knowing that such structures tended to be rather shapeless plastic masses which certainly get played on but hardly ever looked at and thought about, Bing Dawe had other ideas. He wanted to make something out of metal, and having worked with Noel Gregg before, first approached Noel to gauge his interest. Then he set to work on his concept and produced a series of drawings depicting what he presented to the council's Inner City Working Group as a "sculpture for children", a small but significant change of emphasis to the brief. The working group took to the idea and gave Bing the commission.

The concept had developed from a strong belief of Bing's that today's society, in its obsession with analysis and scientific explanation, has lost the ability to believe in magic or myth. Yet we are born with unlimited imagination. Bing cites the unquestioning belief of young children in the ability of Father Christmas to get down even the smallest wood-burner chimney. They might be momentarily puzzled by the logistics but quickly return to the preferable myth, which for them is actuality. (Louis Johnson wrote a lovely poem on this subject, called "Vision".)

As another example, Bing describes his own long held wonder at the ability of the Fiji Fire-Walkers to conjure up amazing power over their bodies to endure their ordeal. When he learned there was a scientific explanation he felt cheated. "Of course there is the human need to discover," he says, "but there is also the wish to remain mystified."

It is these positive and negative tugs on the human spirit which currently engage Bing Dawe's attention. The opposing fields of spiritual and material, of fear and attraction, and of the transition from child state to adult state and back again - by finding passageways through the sculpture - are the influences that Bing wanted to bring into play in the work. He delved into history for his subject matter, becoming fascinated by the mythical "fabulous races" that for centuries up to and even beyond the Renaissance were believed by Europeans to inhabit the East - the country beyond the edge of the world. These amazing creatures included men-beasts (Cynocephalus), humans with their feet pointing backwards (Antipod), humans with just one oversize leg and foot (Sciapod) and many other deformed, hideous but enthralling beings. It is accepted that the believed existence of these fabulous races was a strong motive for early explorers to travel beyond known frontiers.

Bing's drawings described seven gates or barriers, each reflecting or echoing one of the figures, and arranged in a seven-sided enclosure. The figures adopt attitudes appropriate to each barrier's theme. The Antipod, whose flowing hair entwines her barrier, pulls aside her steely strands to let children *through*. The Woman with Large Ears stoops and lifts her fence so that children can get *under*. The Man with Face in His Chest kneels to allow adventurous types to clamber *over* his shoulder. The formidable barrier of Cynocephalus is exactly that. His message is *out*. The Sciapod sits *on* his fence while the Woman with Six Arms allows children to wriggle *around* hers. Lastly, the Barrier with Trees, Sun and Moon suggests an attractive yet forbidden garden *within*, reiterating the positive/negative message.



Cartoon; Barrier with Sciapod. Photo, Colin Slade.

The design was drawn around Bing's familiarity with Noel Gregg's abilities and techniques. So when they were given approval to produce a trial panel, there was little further consultation necessary and in May 1989 work began on the Barrier with Antipod. After the pieces were cut out, it took twelve days and nights of almost continual work to assemble it. "We did that first one in a hurry," says Noel, "but I think it is the best of the lot." It got the thumbs up too from the test panel of children and others that the Inner City Working Group assembled, and the much greater task then became a reality.

It required the purchase of expensive machinery as well as materials. Noel hadn't worked with steel plate to such a great extent before, and a plasma cutter was high on the list. So too was a continuous feed wire welder,

Annabel climbing over Man with Face in Chest. Photo, Colin Slade.

necessary to avoid holes in the work at each weld. A massive steel table was required to lay out and work on the 2 metre square panels. It became clear that the cost of the work would far exceed the $40,000 budget.

Over the next year the pair worked steadily on the project. They translated in turn each of Bing's cartoons into chalk outlines on the steel table and Noel would begin the long and demanding process of cutting, forging, bending and welding the many components into place. The large figures were first cut out by an industrial profile cutter. Noel would then cut or add material to "get them right". At night Bing would arrive at the forge and spend long hours grinding off all the rough edges. He found it an enjoyable task after his day spent supervising the Christchurch Polytech Craft Design Course. These times also provided for any alterations to be decided on. There was always a close collaboration between the two artists. Such a huge project can jeopardise friendships but Noel described the process as completely harmonious. "And we're still friends!" he says with a grin.But if all was harmony in the Lowe Street forge, the hammers of discord rang in the Council Chamber. In October 1989 a new economy-conscious council had been elected and all sub-committees including the Inner City Working Group, had been disbanded. The sculpture's future appeared to be in jeopardy. "We didn't stop though," says Noel resolutely. "Once we start something, we finish it!"

Far right: Barrier with Antipod. Photo, Colin Slade.

"In any case," adds Bing, "I had a buyer for it had the council defaulted. But they had already paid over a significant amount in progress payments, so they were committed really."

Having earlier taken part in an international collaboration on an imposing set of iron gates for the American Ornamental Metal Museum in Memphis, (see N.Z. Crafts 29), Noel was keen to initiate a little overseas involvement in this equally prominent Christchurch sculpture. The Christchurch firm of Stewart Steel agreed to sponsor the director of the museum at Memphis to come out and assist on the last panel. Jim Wallace is a blacksmith in his own right and a Fine Arts graduate from the appropriately named University of Carbondale, the training ground of many internationally famous artists in metal. He was highly enthusiastic and his participation drew further public interest to the project.

By July 1990, construction was completed and the panels were removed to Bing's studio for the surface painting in surrealistic golds, greens and reds. With the sculpture ready for installation, the council argument began again, this time over where to put it, for the original site was not now available. Gleefully the newspapers reported the councillors' opinions of the work, and their sometimes linked preferences for sites, one councillor going so far as to suggest the sewage treatment plant as a suitable place. This was too much for Noel Gregg, who from the front page of the following day's "Press" admonished the councillors to "get down on their knees" before the work. "They should see it before criticising it," he said, "and preferably from a child's height." And so they, and their children, did. Carole Evans of the sewage plant suggestion, was forced by her seven year old grand-daughter to retract. "She climbed in and out and said she loved it," the embarrassed Cr. Evans admitted.

Eventually the sculpture was installed in the Square - on the opposite corner to the children's area - and the public was then admitted to the debate. This enlivening debate continued through the newspaper correspondence columns and the radio talk-back shows for weeks, and though controversy was certainly not its purpose,

Dawe thinks the sculpture has already justified itself with the contemplation and discussion it has provoked. Noel Gregg expects the work to go on justifying itself for a long time yet. "My job was to interpret the drawings and turn them into metal according to my style," he says, "always remembering that my work is within a discipline. I cannot work in the loose fashion that some artists do today, just adding pieces of steel to pieces of steel without any idea of workmanship. This piece will be judged by future generations and by my international peers. It had to look right and it's got to last."

Bing Dawe believes that a rich public presence of such art signifies to tourists and citizens alike, a city's maturity and confidence in itself. Those who share his belief will be grateful that the craftsmanship that both artists have put into its design and making will ensure that "The Reintroduction Of The Fabulous Races" will endure as a unique and important contribution to the city's heritage.

LETTERS

ACADEMY REVIEW

I am writing regarding the observations made by your reviewer, Jenny Pattrick, of The New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts 1990 Craft Exhibition, Mahi-a-Ringa, and her comments about the state of the Academy generally.

Firstly, I agree with some of her comments regarding the standard of the craft exhibition. Although there were some fine works on show, a number of exhibits were below the Academy's usual standard and these detracted from the exhibition.

However, Jenny Pattrick's review of the exhibition was in reality a questioning of the Academy's direction and indeed, its relevance in the national art/craft scene. As some of her remarks and the quoted press release could be misconstrued, it is vital that any misinformation and false rumours concerning the Academy's present situation and its future are challenged.

It is important that every organisation takes stock of its situation and its objectives from time to time. This is a natural and healthy process of any institution that wants to continue to be successful and relevant. Recently the Academy reassessed its service to its members, to artists and craftspeople, to sponsors, and the public and has chosen to follow a path that I am confident will shortly lead to improved exhibitions and related activities.

Communication between the Academy and these various groups is essential and I am of the opinion that it was largely a lack of communication that was responsible for the absence of some of New Zealand's leading artist/craftspeople and consequent lower standard of the 1990 Craft Exhibition.

In the early to mid-1980s some of the Academy's exhibitions achieved their zenith. Under the fine directorship of Guy Ngan the Academy presented well-funded innovative exhibitions (along with the more traditional) often giving some art forms their first and only opportunity for national exposure. However, in this period more galleries and exhibitions sprang up to meet the considerable demands of artists and craftspeople. Often venues and events had to "compete" for work by exhibitors who were "in demand".

The Academy is a non profit making private institution whose objective is to achieve high artistic standards at Academy exhibitions and throughout New Zealand. It does so without the benefit of the considerable financial government assistance to which some arts bodies have access.

Jenny Pattrick states that as there are now many dealer galleries, the need for a national exhibiting institution like the Academy is diminished. Yet it is no secret that many of the private galleries throughout the country have been hit severely by the economic downturn and have approached the QEII Arts Council for assistance to enable them to literally survive.

Most would agree this is a lamentable state of affairs and indeed nor has the Academy escaped the present recession. Nonetheless, exhibition sales have been reasonable because, as Jenny Pattrick mentions, many "art lovers, art buyers and well-heeled business people" are attracted to, and buy at, Academy exhibitions.

The Academy offers all exhibitors, including merging artists, the opportunity to exhibit their work in one of the finest exhibition spaces in the country as well as considerable public exposure for these works. The Academy makes no demands on exhibitors preventing them exhibiting elsewhere and it charges a commission less than most galleries. These circumstances and a favourable opportunity to sell work makes the Academy a very attractive venue in which to exhibit for artists and craftspeople. Many of these become prominent and successful and fortunately retain a loyalty and gratitude to the Academy by continuing to exhibit there.

1990 saw the departure of some of the Academy's sponsors and so, in a responsible manner, the Academy provided more modest openings and catalogues. It is natural that sponsors will from time to time decide to put their funding elsewhere. However, the Academy is delighted to have maintained most of its long-term sponsors and there are some very positive indications of new sponsorship in 1991/92.

As a footnote Jenny Pattrick quotes a press release that stated the Academy could "...no longer support the cost of professional staff..." and "... will continue on a voluntary basis". *(Editor's note; the quote from the Academy's press release was added by the editor shortly before publication of issue 34.)* It should be clearly understood that the term "professional" refers to the financial remuneration of certain positions and not necessarily to the knowledge, experience or ability that may be associated with such a term. In the same light, "volunteer" refers to the unpaid activities of the Academy Council, a body of artist/craftspeople and individuals with considerable business and organisational acumen who are fully confident of running the Academy in a highly competent manner.

The Council has formulated the 1991 exhibition programme which should prove to be exciting, stimulating and profitable for artists, craftspeople, members, sponsors and the public.

The Academy will continue to be an organisation deserving of recognition and support for providing a service that is unique in New Zealand.

Kingsley Baird,
Artist Member and Council Member,
The New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts.

PLAGIARISM

With reference to Sue Curnow's article "A Landmark for Quilting", Spring 1990, page 29, it is no wonder Libby Shalward and Judy Hewin's quilt made as a commission for the Enzed Sewing Co. Ltd was displayed in a relatively obscure place. The book *Mandala* by Katie Pasquini, Sudz Publishing, Eureka, California, 1983, contains a colour plate No.1b, Nova, that is virtually identical with their commission.

If I, living in isolation, can find this plagiarism, why has the matter of copying work not been addressed?

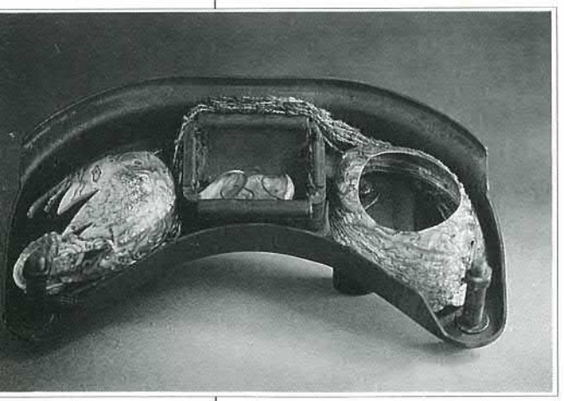
Helen Bissland, Stewart Island.

IN BRIEF

BONE STONE & SHELL - ON THE ROAD

The Crafts Council exhibition Bone, Stone and Shell is still on the road. The November 8 opening of its one month season in Singapore created quite a stir. The opening at the Singapore National Art gallery was attended by about 200 guests, twice the average attendance for an exhibition of this size.The ceremony featured a dance opening choreographed by Jamie Bull and performed by New Zealand dancer Liz McManus and five dancers from the People's Association Dance Company.

The show has since moved to Japan, where the January opening in Kyoto was attended by jewellers Warwick Freeman and John Edgar. After Kyoto the exhibition will open in Nagoya, and on approximately April 4 the New Zealand Embassy in Tokyo will host the exhibition with a dance opening, again choreographed by Jamie Bull. Jeweller and QEII Arts Council head Jenny Pattrick will attend this opening.



Elena Gee
Photo Julia Brooke-White

NZ CERAMICS FOR EXPO 92

Hard on the heels of the aborted show of New Zealand ceramics at Faenza, Italy, comes the announcement of a $532,000 collaboration between the Arts Council, New Zealand Expo Ltd and the National Art Gallery and Museum to take an exhibition to Seville, Spain for Expo 92. "Unquestionably the most important exhibition of New Zealand ceramics ever," according to Arts Council chair Jenny Pattrick.

Curator for the show will be National Art Gallery & Museum Exhibition Development Consultant James Mack. At Seville, the show will form an integral part of the pavilion's

Steve Fullmer, on the road to Spain.
Photo, Lynne Griffith.

overall structure. Afterwards, the works will come home to form part of the permanent collection of the still unbuilt Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa.

The selected artists are: Barry Brickell, Christine Boswijk, Len Castle, Steve Fullmer, Brian Gartside, Christine Hellyar, Chester Nealie, Richard Parker, Darryl Robertson, Robyn Stewart, Julia Van Helden, Ann Verdcourt, and glass artist Ann Robinson.

Expo 92 expects over 40 million visitors and a television audience of hundreds of millions around the world. "We can expect more people to be introduced to New Zealand ceramics in the six months of Expo than have seen it in the past half century," Jenny Pattrick says.

The New Zealand pavilion will occupy a site near the main entrance of the 215 hectare site, right next to the American and British pavilions. The designer will be Logan Brewer, who planned the Brisbane Expo 88 Pavilion and the XIVth Commonwealth Games opening and closing ceremonies.

HONOUR FOR DOREEN BLUMHARDT

Victoria University has conferred an honorary Doctor of Literature degree on Wellington potter and educator Doreen Blumhardt for her work as a potter and her promotion of New Zealand craft.

Doreen Blumhardt's first job in art education was at Central School in Nelson in 1940. It was just the following year that she became relieving art and craft lecturer at Christchurch Teachers College. Her talent and enthusiasm was noticed by the Director of Education Dr C.E.Beeby, who asked her to go to Wellington to develop art and craft activities suitable for introduction into primary schools.

During the forties she travelled extensively, training specialists in arts and crafts, who passed their skills on to teachers. Because of her work, she was asked to represent New Zealand at the 1949/50 UNESCO conference on Art and Craft education. In 1951 she was appointed head of the Art Department at Wellington Teachers Training College, a position which she held until 1972.

During the 1950s, her interest in pottery was able to develop further and she began exhibiting in 1955. She was involved in the creation of the magazine "NZ Potter" in 1958 and remained a member of its editorial committee for twelve years. In 1975 she was invited by A.H. and A.W. Reed to write a book on New Zealand potters, illustrated by Brian Brake. Published in 1976, the book was entitled "NZ Potters, their Works and Words". In 1982, she was co-winner with Brian Brake of the Wattie Book of the Year Award for "Craft New Zealand" .

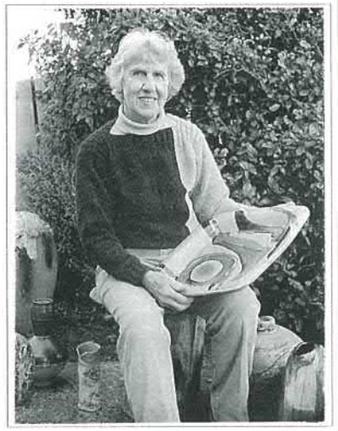


Photo Greig Royle

She has been active as an executive member of the NZ Society of Potters (President 1969), Crafts Council of New Zealand and Academy of Fine Arts (Vice President from 1976 until 1989) and is a life member of all those bodies, as well as of the Wellington Potters Association.

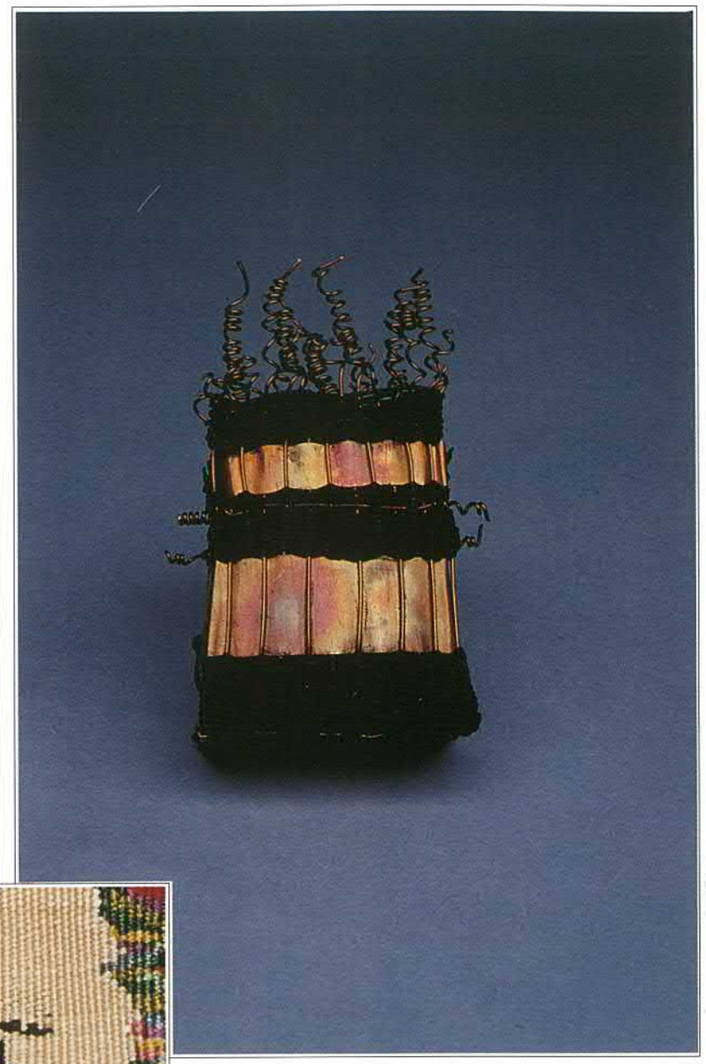
MINIATURE ART

Two Auckland artists were represented at the Fifth Annual International Exhibition of Miniature Art held in Toronto last year. The exhibition was open to all visual artists in a variety of categories. Marie Potter had two pieces accepted. Pictured below is her "Miniature Basket", 90mm in height, made from copper wire, waxed thread, leather and copper sheeting.

Anita Berman, also exhibited two pieces, miniature handwoven tatestries, each 5cm x 7cm, called "View from the Studio Window, I & II". Berman will also feature in a book published by Lark Books, North Carolina USA entitled Fiberarts Design Book IV. Two of her three pictured works deal with the theme of driftnet fishing (most of her current work is on environmental themes). Applications for inclusion in the book, due for release in October 1991, came from 4000 artists worldwide, with 525 being accepted. The book will be available through Books Unlimited, Broadway, Newmarket, Auckland.

Below: Anita Berman, View from the Studio Window I

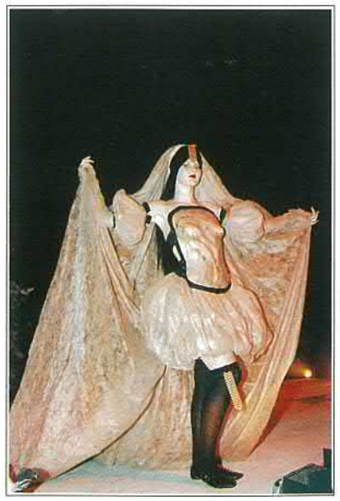
RIght:"Miniature Basket", by Marie Potter



Last year's winner; Bacon Bitties, by Lynda Duncan. Photo: Hamish Stewart.

WEARABLE ART RETURNS TO NELSON

From a marquee in the pouring rain, where the small audience had to lift their feet to stop the water from flowing into their shoes, to a gala spectacular in a packed stadium seating 2500. It's taken four short years for Nelson's Chez Eelco Wearable Art Awards. Now it gets prime TV and media coverage . The organisers of "Memphis in May", that city's annual arts festival, are keen to have the show travel there next year. Planning and organising the show is almost a full time job for local sculptor and event administrator Sue Naylor.



The origins of the show go back a few years to when a group of craftspeople from around the Wakefield area, south of Nelson, decided they needed a craft cooperative in a nice venue. Forestry company Baigents owned a derelict cob cottage on the main road and agreed to give them the use of the building and to assist with materials to restore it.

The William Higgins Gallery, named after an early settler in the area, needed publicity, so Naylor decided to go out and seek sponsorship for award exhibitions. The Baigents sculpture award was the first, but a casual discussion with Eelco Boswijk, owner of Nelson's Chez Eelco coffee house sparked off the idea of a wearable art show.

Wakefield kindergarten teacher Christine Hatton soon entered the picture as choreographer for the first show. A primitive theme was decided on and dance routines evolved which allowed each entry to be modelled as part of a live dance show.

The formula was an instant success. The themes, the stage sets, the venue, have grown every year. In 1990, Nelson's Trafalgar Centre seated an audience of 2500, each with a pre-packed meal of local delicacies and wine.

In 1991, prize money has grown to $13,600. The show opens for two nights on September 6. Entries are due by July 13. Forms can be obtained from 210 St Vincent St, Nelson.

HANDCRAFT IS MY LIFE

By Seniloli Sovea

My interest in handicraft goes way back to my childhood days when my dear mother in her quiet sure way could and would make almost anything beautiful out of voivoi - pandanus leaves and coconut palm leaves. I vividly remember when she used to make a carrying basket (ketekete out of coconut leaves) for me as I joined my brothers on their visits to the plantation. She would tell me to carry back vegetables and fruit for the evening meals. She would also make fishing baskets - noke, also made from coconut leaves to take for those shell fishing trips or prawn fishing. The beautiful and intricately woven sleeping mats I took to the boarding school were admired by teachers and parents alike. I dedicated my appreciation to her for this early exposure to crafts. Mine is contemporary while hers is traditional.

Training in the art of making any form of craft by using local materials continued during my schooling and entry into the work force. I travelled widely within Fiji and was fortunate to do likewise overseas.

Seniloli Sovea. Photo: Samabula Photo Studio

There are four important factors which contributed tremendously to my present knowledge, expertise and happy way of life.

1. As a government servant in the Women's Interest Office I was exposed to rural work pertaining to women's interests - namely cooking, sewing, health and handicraft. I brought to them the more economical, nutritious and advantageous aspects in exchange for the traditional aspects.

2. As the vocational training and home industries staff member with the YWCA, I was involved in providing the young members with a useful form of livelihood.

3. With Fiji Visitors' Bureaus we tried to promote traditional and saleable crafts to those women who wish to make money from tourists. The aim is to offer attractive, original Fijian gifts.

4. Currently my livelihood is largely supplying a leading Pacific fashion shop, Tiki Togs with jewellery.

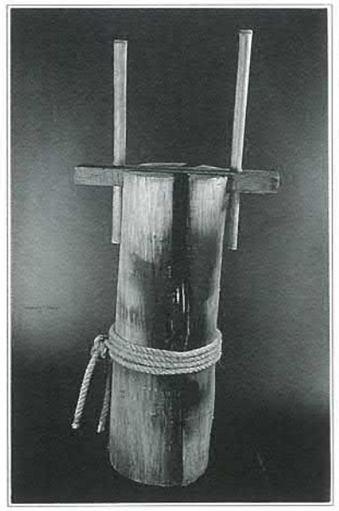
I was fortunate indeed to be at the Craft Council of New Zealand's annual conference held at Upper Hutt last year. The designs and work have given me new perspectives and incentives. As a result I am excited indeed to include new lines in my work. I have also recommended to the National Craft Committee of the Fiji Arts Council a similar programme for our Annual Craft Fair.

ROB LEVIN

By John Scott

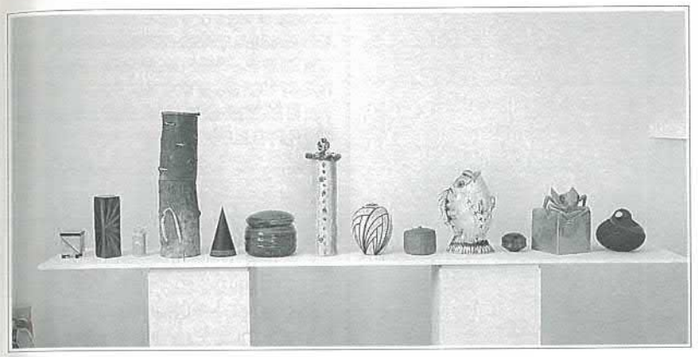
A year has passed since American glassworker Rob Levin was in New Zealand sharing his skills and perceptions at the Wanganui Summer School (see N.Z. Crafts Issue 32, Winter 1990). His visit to Wanganui coincided with the National Wood Symposium held at the Polytechnic. While it was inevitable that Levin would become involved with many of the leading New Zealand artists and craftspeople working in wood, the integration of wooden elements into blown glass was a less obvious outcome.

Rob has since written and thanked N.Z. Crafts for his "first front cover" ever, reflecting on the time in New Zealand. "It is clear that wood plays a major part in the New Zealand aesthetic." He was impressed by the range of approaches and the commitment to using wood in a sensitive manner. While already working with wood as a component of some work prior to coming to New Zealand, slides of recent work reflect his interaction with the wood symposium.



"Untitled, wood, glass, rope and bamboo, 1100mm; by Rob Levin.

REVIEWS



Rick Rudd's boxes - an unusual private collection

OUT OF THE BOX

Reviewed by Evelyn Kelly

The Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui, recently staged a showing of an unusual private collection - that of Rick Rudd's ceramic boxes.

Rick sees the box as an ideal item on which to base an encompassing survey of claywork in New Zealand. It is a wide-ranging collection, and covers the entire time in which studio pottery bas been in existence in this country. The early studio potters are there, with work by Olive Jones, Briar Gardner, Oswald Stephen, and a piece from our very earliest studio potter, Elizabeth Lissaman made especially for the collection in 1990 - 70 years after she started potting!

The history and development of New Zealand studio pottery in all its stages can be traced in this collection: the early do-it-yourself days of oil drip feed and vacuum cleaner blower; the increasing outside influences as the world appeared to become smaller; the advances of technology including the space-age kiln fibre lining; and accessibility of new materials - stains, lustres, etc.

It is an exciting collection to view, and for the potter (and others) can provide an education, a voyage of discovery and a series of puzzles and surprises.

Rick admits that his recognition of what constitutes a "box" has widened and now extends to anything that the maker (or the collector) considers to be a box. There is the slumped box of Stephen Banks; Barry Brickell's "Boxodoggic", Scott Hockenhull's insect-pedestal(a lustred cube), and Julie Warren's 2-D wall piece. Sizes vary from Rosemary Perry's carved celadon ring-box, 40mm diameter, to Don Thornley's 1m long piece bought after Don's untimely death in 1990.

The collection began about 1979. Many pieces have been bought at exhibitions, some direct from the maker, occasionally from shop or dealer gallery, at least once at auction, and sometimes Rick commissions work. A couple of very early pieces were given to him by other potters who were aware of "gaps" in the collection and generously parted with...an Yvonne Rust and a James Greig! These are especially prized, not only for the maker but the giver.

There are 151 boxes in the collection at last count but it is still growing as more gaps are filled and new potters appear. There are few by Maori potters (claywork was not part of the early Maori culture) but as the students emerge from the Craft Design Courses, all sorts of boundaries are being broken, including this one. The next showing of the collection could be even more interesting.

A well illustrated catalogue is available from the Sarjeant Gallery, $5 including packing and postage.

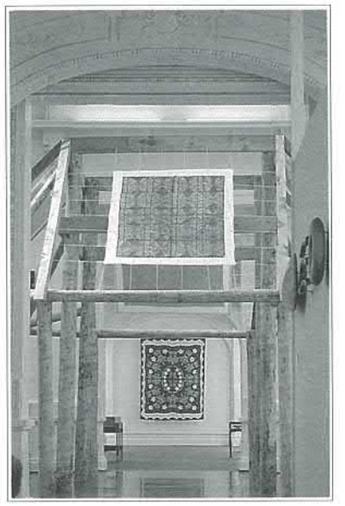
TE MOEMOEA NO IOTEFA (THE DREAM OF JOSEPH)

Reviewed by Shari Cole

With the avowed purpose, "To examine and explore the visual side of (South Pacific) context and the ways in which artists in this country are exploring it," this exhibition drew from four strands of art activity, locating items over the previous year. Curator Rangihiroa Panoho and staff pursued a web of connections to obtain old taonga - tapa cloth, weavings, carvings, tivaevae, and historical photographs which supply the traditional base to which the later art relates.

Related to these, but extending into new materials and forms in the New Zealand setting, is a second body of work by Pacific Island craftspeople living in New Zealand. Art by palagi (non-Polynesians) drawing upon Pacific Islands subjects brings a third strand. Twined throughout are threads from contemporary Pacific Islands artists in New Zealand, each coming from and going to a different destination - all well grounded in "a Western aesthetic" and use of traditional European art materials.

You enter, scrutinised by Iosefa Leo's seated but powerful Samoan family chief, under sheer suspensions of Mark Lander's harakeke paper, loosely painted with tapa-like motifs. The line of vision leads through the fale fono structure, the meeting point in the central gallery, to reveal precious old tapa suspended beyond.



View through fale structure to the theme tivaevae - Te Moemoea No Iotefa. Photo Donald Cole

In the left gallery hang Cook Islands tivaevae bedcovers, as if for a community celebration. Bouquets of their flower themes accompany them. To the right, mats with coloured yarn edgings and Niuean neck garlands in manipulated plastics contrast with a sober horizontal weave mat from Kiribati and Tina Wirihana's traditional kete. A willow wrapped stone by Judy Wilson veers away from the functional. This careful juxtaposition of subtle/bright, ancient/modern, deeply-rooted/transplanted borrowings and loanings demonstrates artists living and dead interlacing from many directions.

This is an exhibition for returning to often. It marries history with the evolution of living arts; also work by those who experienced only their own tradition, with art by people trying to rediscover those traditions. The collection ranges from paintings, drawings,

Fatu Feu'u - Fa-ada Mo Taeao. Photo: Donald Cole

and sculpture; to objects put together from "lowly" materials, for purely decorative purposes, amid laughter and talk. Te Moemoea No Iotefa illustrates that Pacific culture draws no line between art and life.

Handbags plaited traditionally, but with plastic strapping, have as much in common visually with the pieced tivaevae taorei bedcovers as they have with conventional pandanus handbags. Fatu Feu'u's paintings use some conventional tapa imagery, but stretch those conventions in colour and introduction of other Pacific images. Indeed the "fine art" end of the spectrum ranges from slash-and-splash spontaneity to the precise draftsmanship of Michel Tuffery's allusions to Samoan men's body tattoo.

To me the heart of the exhibition is the room scene - "typical but not stereotypical" of the way people live now, here and often in the islands. With furniture from several decades ago, the stereo, the video, the guests' bed in this one multipurpose room, families draw around them a warm blanket of memories of those absent. Neck garlands honour photographs of relatives. Gift mats, tapa, hats are more than decoration. They represent giving, and a whole way of life. They say that we change, but part of us stays the same. They say that we are not alone.

NELSON POTS, NELSON CRAFTS

Reviewed by Peter Gibbs

It hasn't been been an easy few months for the Suter Gallery. In September, the Suter Trust Board announced that it was terminating the position of director. Austin Davies would leave the gallery at the end of the month and the new position of business manager would be advertised. Mr Davies, of course, would be free to apply. The good citizens of Nelson were not about to take this lying down and neither was Austin Davies. Threats of legal action, acrimony all round, an incredible amount of local media coverage and the final result, annnounced just before Christmas that the former director would be back behind his desk at the beginning of February.

During the hiatus, Nelson potters got on with organisation for their summer show. The overloaded Suter staff were unable to sustain plans for a selected craft show in the adjacent room, so instead got on with a curated craft exhibition, inviting just a few of the top people in media other than clay.

In the pottery exhibition it was obviously business as usual for most of the exhibitors. Polished, quality work, good craft, even good art, but not much that was new. The common reaction was that it was the same old stuff. We expect good craftsmanship in functional work, and in this show we got it. We also got clever, innovative, non-functional work. Yet people didn't think an awful lot of it simply because they'd seen it, or something similar, before.

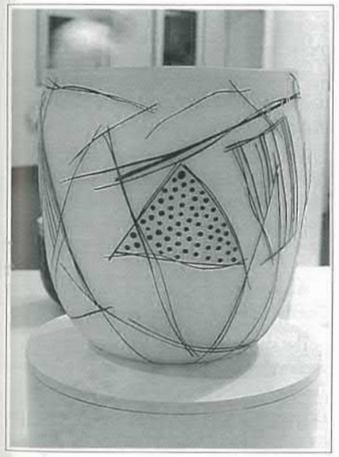
The modern world of media hype leads us to expect a constantly changing feast of experience. How can any craftsperson compete with that? The problem lies with the viewer; we've forgotten how to look at work and we're easily bored.

But just stating the problem won't make it go away. A potter, or any craftsperson can't just ignore the public. Like it or not, we've become a media show too. Good craft is still good craft, but not so many people are now prepared to accept that as a good reason for putting their hand into their pocket.

Following the national trend, prizes were plentiful. Alan Ballard took the main award with a large temmoku/chun platter. Alan is one of many Nelson potters who do not participate in national shows, making unpretentious pots for a living. This piece said nothing of creativity or imagination, it was simply an imposing form with a beautifully lush glaze. It also illustrated amply the main strength of the show; strong pots, almost unaffected by fashion. The other major award, for functional work, went to Darryl Frost, for his bamboo and clay steamer. As well numerous merit awards were handed out.

Alan Ballard, winning platter. Photo Vic Evans

In the next room, Willa Rogers' baskets and sculptural forms made from pine needles, bark, vines, leaves, branches, and seed pods conjured up images of coracle-like boats and homes for little burrowing creatures.



Bowl, Ola & Marie Hoglund. Photo, Vic Evans

Ola and Marie Hoglund's glass was cool and elegant, their European training apparent. The silver jewellery of Jens Hansen also conveyed this uncluttered simplicity. On the other hand, the gold and silver patinated brooches by Gavin Hitchings had an introverted richness. John Hearn's wooden chest used a variety of woods to give a strong, rugged appearance, contrasting with the clean lines of John Shaw's elegant tables.

The highlight for me were the pieces by Jenny Barraud, which spoke of life and death, of children and growing old. "My commitment to an art that shows my personal content means that my work is simply the diary of my life. The genesis of a new work is often traumatic, the making of it often theraputic and the exhibiting of it often uncomfortable."

MAU MAHARA

Reviewed by Louise Guerin

When I was a teenager my mother, Lorna, would beckon me into the kitchen, open the bottom cupboard, and reveal therein to my totally unappreciative eye, growing serried ranks of bottled fruit. Golden Queen peaches were most prized. They were all evenly sliced and beautifully arranged against the glass.

I thought she was mad, but fortunately, had enough nous to quietly appreciate her sense of satisfaction. A hot, end of summer task, well done.

I now bottle tomatoes myself - and often forget, over the winter, to eat them. That's not why I do them. I'm after that same tangible sense of reward for hanging about for a couple of hours with steam and fruit skins.

Simple, irreplaceable treasures in an Agee jar. This was the first craft story I thought of when approaching Mau Mahara: Our Stories in Craft, but somehow Alison Holst's designer kiwifruit, which are part of it, didn't hold the same magic.

There are lots of other treasures in the show, however, which do. A mad, minature spiral staircase impeccably constructed in 1876; korotete (eel holding pots) from the Wanganui River; rag rugs; coronation mugs; and a group of shell dolls. On and on it goes. A tremendous curatorial challenge drawn from collections all over the country.

Jean Harton's boy doll Stephen, has received a good deal of publicity and he is worth it all. Very endearing to meet Jean and her grandmother, caught by a 1950's street photographer and then to see Jean now, with her daughter Felicity, and *her* toys. Similarly the sight of Mr A.L. Williams in his Curvesse chair greatly adds to its dimensions.

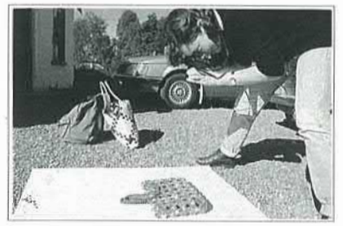
The 1916 photograph of the shy W.B. James A. (call me Jimmy) Johnston adds great weight to the wonderful paua gavels and blocks he made for the Kaikoura Lodge No. 60 and was later given back to him in 1947. My guess is Jimmy didn't often wear the pristine white gloves he is carefully holding in the picture.

Further delights are offered, such as the rinsing, ringing sounding of a child's metal hoop being bowled along a road. It prompts questions about the sounds made by other exhibits when in working order. What were the smells?

A central success is the book Mau Mahara: Our Stories in Craft, to go with the show. It gives many objects the liveliness of a context which they are distinctly lacking in their actual presentation. Deborah Smith's fine photographs bring about a large part of this effect, introducing us to many makers and collectors in their own settings. I'm surprised more of these pictures were not used in the exhibition as they inject such life. Many people could not afford to buy the book and so missed this human aspect of the show.

The exhibition itself is a little sterile by comparison. It's a bit of a puzzle. It is so full of wonderful pieces and quirky delights it should be a fail-safe success and yet somehow it doesn't quite come off. It lacks focus. I found it hard to work out quite what the collection was getting at, above simply being a glorious show-and-tell.

As Crafts Council of N.Z. President John Scott outlines, Mau Mahara developed from a broad idea of illustrating how Maori and Pakeha have used and developed their crafts and how both cultures became influenced by each other. This is not immediately obvious, though there are few pieces which demonstrate this. Many of the Maori objects remain firmly within an established, unselfconscious tradition. They certainly illustrate virtuosity, another strand of the Mau Mahara agenda, but not biculturalism, of themselves. They sit alongside folk art components of purely personal and eccentric inspiration which in turn don't fit totally comfortably with contemporary craftwork. Creative impetuses have come from a rag bag: from accepted ways of doing things; from necessity; or from a simple need to dream away time. Their intensities are mismatched.



Deborah Smith photographing Alice Hill's basket made from cigarette packets.

The venue doesn't help. Shed 11 as a setting for so many small and unrelated pieces is rather hollow and overwhelming. No doubt there were budget constraints but the size and domestic nature of so many of the pieces call out for a cosier display backdrop.

Apparently a decision was taken somewhere along the line to favour few labels for the show, to encourage free interpretation by the visitor. Great principle, but there are degrees of freedom. The lack of signposts

Model kauri staircase (1876) by James Pooley. Photo: Deborah Smith

has resulted in a bit of a one-sided conversation, with lots of questions from the viewers. "Why this with this?" can easily become "what's the point of that?" The overall feeling is one of the objects vying with one another, rather than fruitfully interacting with themselves and the public.

Objects, of course, do tell their stories, and eagerly so if they feel enough attention is being paid. But some of the items in this exhibition have been on museum shelves too long to feel like speaking up any more. They have lost touch. And anyway, there's nothing quite like being attracted to an object somehow and then meeting the maker or owner and liking him or her and then having time to hear their story. It's more than a process of production that is then outlined. If the listener's lucky, it is the dreams, longings and legacies left that come out, along with the material dimensions.

The sad fact is that most of our stories in craft have been lost. The tales of home knitters, cake decorators, candle makers, bespoke tailors and monumental masons. For generations. So ordinary they have simply disappeared. I had hoped somehow that Mau Mahara might have incorporated something like very short oral histories or some other means of actually telling their lives. Those people had great jokes and cons and scandals to relate as well as recipes and raw material references. *Those* stories. Pertinent paragraphs do accompany most objects - I wanted more. They just whetted my appetite!

Renwick's Rex Woolley eloquently expresses this sense of regret over lost arts: "Well, I never plaited a whip myself. The only plaiting I ever learned was flat plaiting. I had a fair idea how it was done and I only wish that I'd learnt. Things like that get forgotten. I guess now I'll never get to do one."

Videos are part of Mau Mahara but they are unfortunately not specific enough in format. Their rambling form does justice neither to the people we see in them nor to the exhibition visitor. They do contain valuable visuals but it's a really dedicated person who is prepared to stand patiently in front of a very small screen while unedited sequences slowly slip by. Darkened viewing area; short, sharp segments; and chairs would greatly have enhanced the video presentations.

Mau Mahara does provide a fascinating opportunity to compare the differences in original energy sources - between things made in urgent extremes and objects which appear in a trance-like state and those that are sweated over as the result of an intellectual exercise.

The show includes a wondrous, 5.3 metre loose-link kauri chain carved in one piece from a verandah pole. All those whiled away evenings! As Arthur Wilson, a retired road worker from Dunedin puts it "...you might be sitting at night with time on your hands and you want to do something. I've seen that sort of thing where a fella will kick off putting one thing on top of another thing or cut into a bit of wood with a pen knife and, before you know it, you've got a piece of furniture or a model boat inside a bottle."

Contrast this with the "waste not want not" school of resource management. Alice Hill, woven cigarette packet basket maker: "There isn't a thing in the house that you can't use if you sit down and work it out and there's always a use for something that doesn't cost a lot of money. It was a case of having a family of smokers. So, oh, I sat for a long time with those cigarette packets and the first thing I made was a dog."Contemporary craftsperson Warwick Freeman talks about his early self education and his self awareness now: "This early Pacific work has an unsettling effect on me. When handling it I am forced to confront my own cleverness. Its realness up against the perceived superficiality of being a jewellery maker now."

Rug maker Beatrice Cross, on her own admission, tortures herself with her craft endeavours and the search for originality: "Quite frankly anyone can hook rugs. Yet I was only thinking last week that I was amazed at the mental distress that my rugs cause me now!...The making is easy but I make it difficult as I go along."

Mau Mahara also provides a time to celebrate hoarders and collectors. Rosemary McLeod: "I collect these things because of the tradition in my own family in which women have always made craft of one kind or another and prided themselves on their expertise.

"I've kept specimens of handcrafts from my own family as well as rummaging in junk shops because even in my own lifetime women have lost those skills and I don't think we'll ever acquire them again. One thing I've learnt is not to get rid of anything. I'm interested in the marginal area between what we call crafts and admire and put in art galleries, and popularly practised crafts which we tend to look down on which are usually made by women.

"We might only have a short history but that's all the more reason for it to be better documented."

Mau Mahara is a great landscape of objects of social and cultural significance. Very worthwhile taking a stroll through.

Justine Olsen comments on Louise Guerin's review of Mau Mahara.

The concept of Mau Mahara, that of revealing the social and cultural context of New Zealand craft through the mechanism of the story was a relatively unexplored area in the history of New Zealand exhibitions. The task of selecting a representative range of craft which was well provenanced presented a challenge for the curatorial team of John Parker, Cliff Whiting and myself. The selection of craft was based on various themes which were prevalent in New Zealand craft. These consisted of the handing on of skills, virtuousity and the joy of making, the design and function of craft and lastly community meanings. The themes were intended to be conveyed through the stories provided with each work.

It is intended that the exhibition design at Auckland Museum may provide clearer understanding of the intentions behind the exhibition. Objects will be grouped around the themes when spaces permit. The interaction of objects will also be more strongly considered. An introductory text panel at the entrance and thematic labels placed through the display will also assist in enlarging the audiences' understanding of the concepts behind it.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE TAPESTRY HANDBOOK - BY CAROL K. RUSSELL

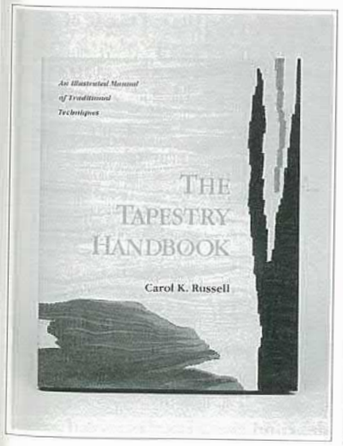
Reviewed by Pat Wilkinson

"The time is right for contemporary weavers to reaffirm our commitment to the simple structures of ancient textiles" - so says Carol K. Russell in the introduction to her book "The Tapestry Handbook". This is a good weaving philosophy and provides a focus for our attention at all stages of weaving.

This excellent book leads you step by step through tapestry techniques and provides all you need to know, from preparing the warp to finishing and mounting the completed tapestry. Each chapter deals with a particular technique: making a butterfly; choosing yarns; pick and pick; weft relays; vertical lines; shading; eccentric wefts; non-woven techniques (soumak, twining etc); outlining; blocking, finishing, mounting; handling a cartoon; and elements of design - line, colour texture, shape and direction. These are documented in tremendous detail with clear illustrations including tips, advice and pitfalls (so good to have these pointed out) at the end of each chapter. All of which confirms that Carol Russell is an experienced tapestry weaver; she really has done the things she is talking about.

The layout is good. The technique illustrations are right next to the written descriptions which makes referral easy. There are numerous colour photographs of tapestries from all over the world. This book is much, much more than a work book, because as well as illustrating the specific techniques, it is aesthetically pleasing and will inspire you to try tapestry weaving.

Although you would need to have some weaving knowledge before tackling the project suggested, the instructions are very clear and what a sense of achievement to complete it!



If you would like to learn how to do tapestry weaving you could not do better than to acquire this book. Although putting forward the idea of "simple structures" the photographs shown and Carol Russell's enthusiasm for her work, prove that versatile and innovative work can be achieved within the boundaries of "tabby" weaving.

Published by Lark Books, 50 College St, Asheville, N.Carolina 28801, U.S.A. US$26.95 (hardback). Available from the publisher.

BASKETRY: THE NANTUCKET TRADITION - BY JOHN MCGUIRE

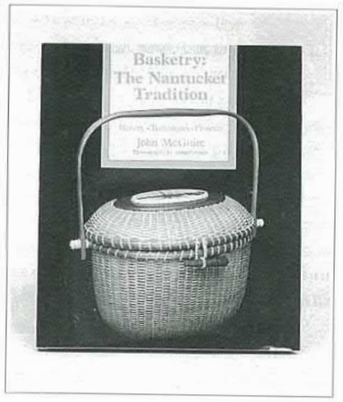
Reviewed by Willa Rogers

Nantucket is a rugged, bleak, fog-shrouded island off the coast of New England on the western shore of the United States. Among the shoals and reefs which abound in that area, lightships were stationed last century to guide the many trading ships through the tortuous channels to the safety of the port of Nantucket - an important trading centre, especially for whaling vessels. From this unlikely setting sprang the craft of the Nantucket lightship basket, a distinctive and unique design characterised by sets of nesting baskets with wooden bases, cane weavers and swinging bail handles.

Traditional basketmaking has usually evolved where there is an abundance of local materials and it was women who carried on the tradition. In contrast Nantucket baskets were crafted from imported materials - wood from New Hampshire and cane from the Pacific, and were designed and made by the men who manned the lonely lightships, often for months at a time.

John McGuire is a renowned basketmaker of traditional New England baskets, a widely acclaimed teacher at craft schools and museums in the United States and, as this book testifies, a social historian who researches his subject thoroughly. He is also the author of "Basketry: The Shaker Tradition", and "New England Splint Basketry".

In the first two chapters the author traces the history of the region and the evolution of lightship baskets. Included are many illustrations and colour photographs, both of the island and its old historic buildings and of antique baskets. For the collector the text



helps the reader differentiate between a quality basket and an inferior one.

The major portion of the book is devoted to step by step instructions on the crafting of these baskets. Over 200 close-up photographs and detailed lists of tools and materials required guide the reader through the various stages of creating these elegant baskets. There are chapters covering woodworking fundamentals, the splitting and shaping of staves from oak trees, placing the rims, making the lids, hinges and handles, and the finishing and care of the basket.

The book concludes with a comprehensive glossary and bibliography.

"Basketry: The Nantucket Tradition" is an important and exciting addition to the growing number of basketry publications and will be valued highly by collectors and basketmakers alike.

Published by Lark Books, 50 College Street, Asheville, North Carolina 28801, U.S.A. Price US$24.95 (hardback) . Available from the publisher.

KOBI BOSSHARD

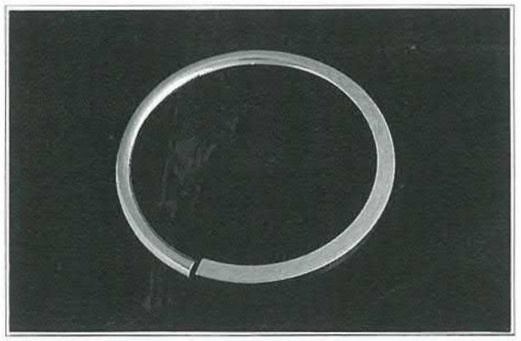
BY GRAHAM PRICE

Photos: Jane Dawber

Kobi Bosshard
Photo: Peter Gibbs

A self-conscious exploration for Pacific identity has led New Zealand jewellery into a new heirarchy of material, that of the "natural", bone stone and shell. This has left much of the contribution of "eurocentric" metallurgy to some 1960's fascination with Scandinavian modernism. Craftsmen such as Kobi Bosshard and Jens Hansen stand out as individuals who established themselves in a climate that was only just beginning to discover yoghurt, salami and European chique. They are still upholding and developing a tradition of working in silver with an integrity founded on thirty years experience.

Crouched like an enthusiastic street seller Kobi Bosshard carefully removes drawers full of formed silver and spreads out his life as a maker before me. In the privilege of a private retrospective, and building on my interest in his work for the past 20 years, strands of exploration braid across the floor. Always present is assurance in the working of silver. For three decades Kobi Bosshard has worked with a precision and quiet pride of mastery with his chosen material. Within this there have always been restraints. Tight adherence to self-imposed limits of working processes, geometrical order, functional constraints and design concepts, could long ago have reduced a less exploratory maker to a repertoire of self-parody and dull repetition. What I am offered instead is a taut series of themes which restate themselves singly and in combination, each offering new insights. As Kobi expresses it, "to me, my work represents me growing up. I think my work represents me at a deeper level than I can communicate in other ways."



Bangle (1976)

The interest in geometry arose from a childhood delight. "I find geometrical laws amazing and fantastic still. I had a very good maths teacher. We didn't learn rote formulas, we had to be able to prove why it is so." Given that ground it was perhaps inevitable that minimalist sculpture should have struck such a chord with him. "My attitude became that any work should be completely self-referring. No outside references was my early ideal." Evident in the much admired bangles that date from his earliest years in Dunedin (1976) is this self contained subtle world. The movement from square to circle as the bangle travels the wrist is carried as a delicious secret. Known intimately to the wearer as a quiet shift from round to square the bangle is abruptly terminated in tense confrontation of opposing profiles across a narrow gap. Continuing to produce this design is one of the pleasurable repetitive acts of making for Kobi. "The works stay alive because each time I approach them I have to work out how to do it. I actually have a bad memory! I may set out to do the same but there is always the possibility of change within each work."

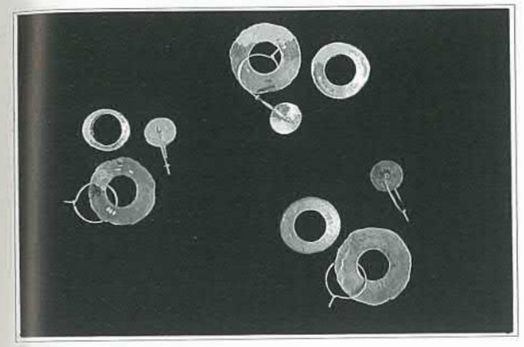
The pleasure taken in abrupt shifts within a flowing continuum is a stylistic feature of Kobi's working process, apparent as well in the resultant forms. The shift expresses itself as contrasts within a form, particularly where there is an abrupt change of process - forging, piercing, shearing, or as sudden directional changes or the play of figure and ground. Even when this contrast is rarely expressed as textural shifts, as in the forged bangles (1987), the resultant surface is not a carefully manipulated decorative feature but an integral result of the process of making. "Formation marks are not always 'nice' marks. The temptation to add decorative marks needs to be resisted. However, it is just as mannered to become purist and decide never to remove marks."

This integrity of process allows his work to speak both directly and eloquently of how it has been made. As such he provides work that communicates deeply to those who know the tools and processes of the jeweller's craft. To describe any part of the life cycle of a single work in silver is to touch upon the genesis point of several series explored in the last twenty years.

THE MELT

Silver shot in granule form rather like small baroque pearls is weighed, poured into the crucible and melted. The memory of an animated Kobi sharing this process with me 10 years ago, as he has continued with Otago Polytechnic craft students since 1986, still has a vibrant freshness. There is a focus of mind and flame on the still point of glistening metal as it puddles into a shining milk white lake. With the play of flame, the domed pool radiates and reflects its own light. The shared magic of this moment is dimly echoed in later processes when a trickle of solder will leap into a waiting join or when in its cool state, silver can begin to take on the high sheen which breaks reflected light into dramatic contrasts across a slowly curving surface. The melt however, takes a sudden plunge into frozen ingot form, like spirit descending into matter, awaiting a more forcefully induced fluidity.

The sets of 1989, with rich associations, record that process. Equal amounts of copper, silver and gold are used to produce ingots which are pierced to produce a ring, a small stud and a larger forged anullus, all taken from the same melt with minimal deformation and loss of material. The manner in which those sets have been used and shared by their owners indicates a willingness by Kobi to move away from the self-contained world of minimalism. He accepts and encourages personal meaning being transferred to objects simple enough to carry a multitude of responses.

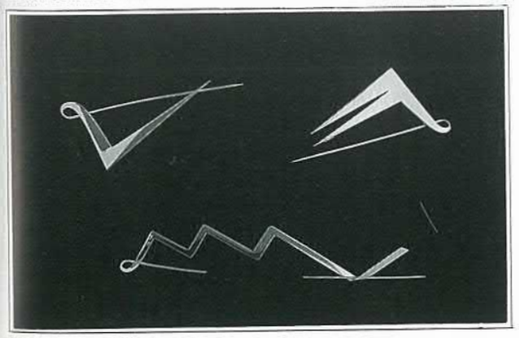


Sets in copper, silver and gold (1989)

This move echoes two of the major themes of contemporary literary theory; the insistence on multiplicity in art and the emphasis on the role of viewer response as interactive. This is no academic projection. Kobi has in this context consciously striven to expand his theoretical base by reference to a world outside the limits of jewellery and feeds richly from art, literature and music. His more recent work sets out to stimulate the private world of the viewer so that some deeper response from within mirrors the subtler resonances in the work. "I want to leave room for people to tell their own story rather than overload the work with my personality. I want to provide a vessel for people to carry their own meanings."

THE FORGE

The hammering of metal in different directions produces the slow moving wedge that characteristically emerges with this process. The seduction of these forms comes from a gradual waxing and waning in three dimensions. The 1986 "tick" forms, 1987 "sun" bangles and 1977 pendant all explore this quality, while reasserting the sudden directional change and edge quality that Kobi aspires to as giving "bite" to his design. Worn boldly, these pieces do provide a sharp lift to the energy profile of the wearer but I am left with an uncomfortable barbed quality when I consider the context of this brooch when worn.



Tick forms (1986)

THE ROLLING MILL

A kind of rolling pin produces, "like the pastry chef", a flat tabloid of silver from the ingot. As with dough, as the form is flattened the edges take up the strain of expansion in the form of visible cracking. Left, as one would the deckle on hand made paper, these textures are not a decorative indulgence but trace the piece's making. We can re-enter this temporal sequence and participate in the act of making, in such pieces as 1977 pendant and 1982 triangle motif brooches.

THE METAL SHEAR

Usually considered an efficient, no loss method of cutting sheet, Kobi takes an expedient preparation tool and explores the forms generated by it in his 1977 pendant series. This economy of gesture and material, where nothing is lost while the form is gained expresses the minimalist canon of "less is more" while avoiding self-conscious mannerism. The scale of these works belong sto a period of grandiloquence which Kobi eschews now but also raises an uncomfortable recurrent question of Kobi's career. Sculpture or Jewellery? Not really a question of scale. There are works such as this which are sculptural explorations of form which incidentally can also be worn. This does not deny those pieces clearly generated as adornment.

There was in the past a tension in being accepted as an artist, with the attendant status, while attempting to hold onto an authentic craftsman's traditional role. Status, prestige and the habitual use of the traditional metal heirachies, silver and gold, seem less ingrained now. With his retrospective of 1985 a maturity and earned sense of place has taken some of the edge out of these issues and opened new areas for exploration. That Kobi's work stimulates and sustains aesthetic contemplation as well as functioning as wearable jewellery is not a contradiction.

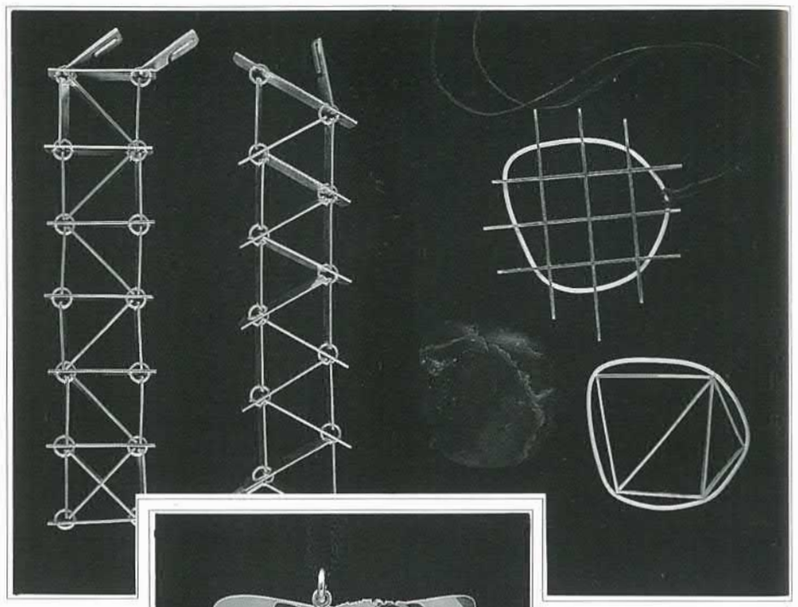
While the above discussion has emphasised Kobi's "truth to process" as a design tool, there have been other strong currents in his work. Less exploratory and more apparently hampered by the self-selected limits of geometry are the works produced from 1978 - 1982, where the triangle motif is consistently explored. Here the immutable laws of three sides and angles generate structures of predictable repetition. It is in the wearing of these geometries that their life becomes - a quality unable to be caught by a static image or in a showcase. Seemingly cold and contained these apparently immobile triangulations, both bracelets and neckpieces - dance, softly melding to the body and concealing their edge only to leap from it in snatches of pattern as a geometric flag takes on life in a breeze.

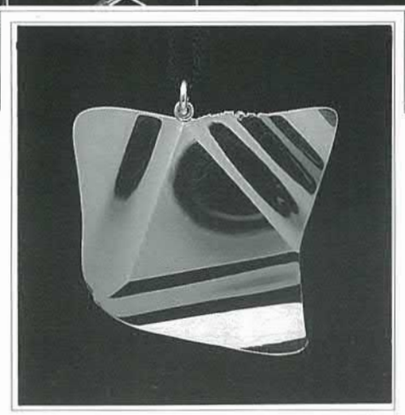
In 1982 these two streams, the geometrically precise and the "randomly" deformed plate, meet in uneasy union. Pushed to its limits, process derived form generates random blobs that one must accept merely because the process authentically produced them. As a means of discovering new and unfamiliar form this has merit, particularly where one's sense of form has been conditioned to

Triangle motif broo
(1982)

Shear pendant (19

accept only a proscribed aesthetic canon. With its inherent stability there is a temptation to use geometry to produce order from this chaos. In the triangle explorations of 1982 the result is of simultaneous presentation where neither motif swamps the other and both design processes have their fullness and remain in unresolved tension. The careful placement and relative proportions keep this discomfort alive. They retain their capacity to jar and disturb.





Top Left: Bracelets, triangle motif. (1978 - 1982)

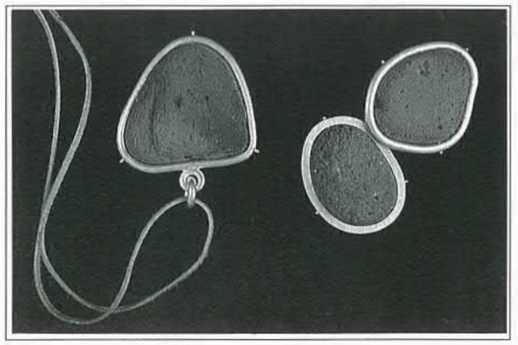
Top Right: Pebbles and maps (1988)

Left: Triangle explorations (1982)

The map as an encoded geometry of the mountain terrain he explored in his native Switzerland and in New Zealand since 1961 also underlies much of his work. "I have always had a strong interest in geometry and map-making and in Man's insistence on measuring and imposing his geometry on nature." However by 1989 this statement of four years previous seems to have taken on a self-defining hollowness. The sense of loss these works gave me was not explained until the sharing of the story of their generation.

Teachers profit from their students in unpredictable and often unacknowledged ways. 1986 was Kobi's acceptance of a rekindled teaching role that encompassed Polytechnics and summer schools. This was a different role from the exchanged apprentices with Jens Hansen in 1968-1973. A student's gift of a greenstone pebble laid down a challenge concerning his voiced prejudice of found object jewellery. "I find a shell a fantastic form in what it is. I can leave it where it is or take it home in my pocket but I can't make jewellery with it." Two years later a Wellington show with a theme of landscape called up this pebble conjoined with his mapping predilections. "Because it was a gift and I didn't want to part with the stone I offered a description of it...triangulations of its area, catching the inside and outside form so it can't escape and imposing a grid on its surface, scribing its profile onto a plate and then reforming them." The stone is nigh incidental to these rationalisations. We are left with a series of abstract processes which could apply to any object. The emotional content has been withheld and we are offered its intellectual shade not in an effort to tantalise or connect but as an act of restraint. He mused with Alan Preston as to how other makers would respond to the same object and my interest re-emerges with the idea of a gift passed on.

His most recent work for me completes a most exciting transition. A simple pair of water worn brick pebbles from a Dunedin beach are set with a round and square silver rim held in place by four pins drilled into the surface. There is a fifth hole left filled with the broken drill bit that was also part of its history. "For me shells have no history, stones have no history but the brick has a human history. It has been a building..." The potential layers of meaning are simply stated in a very humble material formed by natural and human processes in a reclaiming cycle. The brick is not withheld, its origins secret to be obliquely and cleverly wrapped, but given in an opening unpretentious sharing. Kobi's dialogue with the "non precious" recalls a beginning as an alpine guide setting hand polished pebbles for Mt Cook tourists. It has re-emerged as a strong statement of human presence in this place, a relief from the self-conscious Pacific rim identity adopted by many contemporaries.



Wrapped brick - recent work.

Lest the conceptual ground of Kobi's work appears to dominate I wish to reassert the jeweller through a letter Kobi had modestly discarded from a client.

"Everything you make is deceptively simple - they only really work completely when they are worn because they set up a lovely physical relationship with the wearer. Take the earrings, e.g.: When you wear earrings you can't see them - so you have to rely on other senses to get pleasure from them - they are a lovely weight, so they swing nicely. Then they have lovely surface to touch - so I find myself feeling them often. Again when I knock them they chime like bells. The bracelet is like that too: very classical, but a beautiful weight - it always feels substantial. It moves constantly, showing its constantly changing surfaces to me..."

Such approval deserves the last word.

Graham Price is head of Art Education at Dunedin Teachers College and lectures in art education at Otago Polytech. He is a jeweller who has previously written for NZ Crafts.

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All quotations from interviews with the author.

A CHALLENGING COMMISSION

BY LESLEIGH SALINGER

Photos: Lesleigh Salinger

The Sisters of Compassion are a Catholic nursing order formed by Suzanne Aubert, a lay missionary who came to New Zealand with Bishop Pompellier. They had commissioned Structon Group Architects to completely rebuild the Island Bay Home of Compassion which was condemned as an earthquake risk. After much debate as to the timing of building a chapel within the hospital (they had previously used a spare room) the Sisters decided that bequests especially designated for that purpose allowed them to extend the brief to architect Ross Brown.

The Sisters wished to have stained glass windows and also the story of the 14 Stations of the Cross represented. Although the story is not mandatory for a chapel (it is for a church) it has particular significance for this order, based as it is on the example of Mary, the woman of compassion who stood at the base of the Cross.

Although the Sisters had no particular preference for the form of representation, they knew they did not want traditional forms, rather "something more modern".

It was at this paint that artist John Drawbridge was commissioned. Ross Brown had already positioned the windows in his plans and had done some preliminary drawings. The idea for the Stations being interpreted as windows had come to him in an inspired moment. He had ideas as to the colour choices which would most suitably reflect the movement of the sun, but soon realised that the special nature of the windows required an artist's creativity. At a colleague's suggestion - and recalling an earlier collaboration with the artist - Drawbridge was engaged.

The Windows

For many the visual imagery common in Catholic churches appears as highly sentimentalised romantic or neo-baroque representations of the stories of the Bible. John Drawbridge's work stands in sharp contrast in its simplicity and fine execution.

Station of the Cross No. XI

The commission included a series of 14 windows each one portraying a Station of the Cross; an entry window; tower windows; altar windows and one facing south to the sea. The architect had designed the particular spaces for the Stations as windows and specified the groupings, for example the first four Stations form one group along the northern wall between the altar and the entrance. The remaining ten are lined along the eastern wall.

To the artist the importance of the story of the Stations was paramount. He believed that representations were important for telling the story and his designs are figurative with a very strong sense of line drawing. The other windows were not interpreted as stories; here the design emphasis was the use of symbols from Catholicism and nature. They are abstract in form, relying more particularly on blocks of colour.

The religious symbolism central to the significance of all the windows is strongly but subtly stated.

Entry Window: Reminiscent of the great rose windows of European cathedrals, its form - a cross within a circle within a triangle. The cross (Christ's sacrifice, death), the circle (the perfect shape, a Renaissance concept of God, the host within the mass, eternity), the triangle (the holy Trinity). The artist has chosen compelling primary colours - blue, red and yellow in varying shades, relieved by blocks of white. Occasional touches of green, pink and orange are there to "surprise" the eye.

Tower Windows: Sited in the tower above the entry window, they are a range of lighter more varied colours - pinks, pale yellows, greens, blues and reds. Their purpose, to let plenty of light down into the body of the chapel. The play of light is central to all church and chapel architecture because of its significance in Christianity - the Christ figure signifying "the light of the world".

Altar Windows: The altar is placed on the western side of the chapel. Beyond it are a series of long panel windows forming a slight arc. These windows afford a view out onto bush and gorse-clad Wellington hills, and although this is a high, exposed part of Island Bay, often buffeted by strong winds, it nevertheless offers an opportunity for contemplation for the worshipper or visitor. The window is bisected at its centre by a simple cross made from glass blocks and above this, inset into the wall, are two coloured glass windows; the lower, circular, the higher, triangular. Warm hued colours are again chosen - orange and red together with mauve and varying blues.

South Window: In this window the artist turned to natural forms to eludicate the beauty of the interaction of colour and light. It was important therefore that as this window faces south to the sea of Cook Strait, the glass should have a special quality. The colours chosen are all shades of blue and link to the rhythms of sea and sky. An added aspect is that blue is the attribute of Mary (the colour of her cloak). This window is different in other respects, it is rectangular in shape (formed by two rectangular areas) with a grid pattern repeating the motif of the cross, the whole bisected by one of the *"faux"* columns with its gilt capital which are an architectural feature of the chapel.

Whilst colour and form is of major significance in these windows, texture cannot be overlooked. All the glass has been carefully chosen for its particular qualities, its finish and opacity and whether it suitably complements or contrasts with its neighbour.

The Making

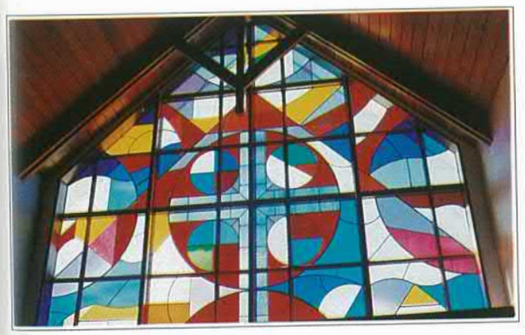
The construction of the chapel windows followed two divergent methods.

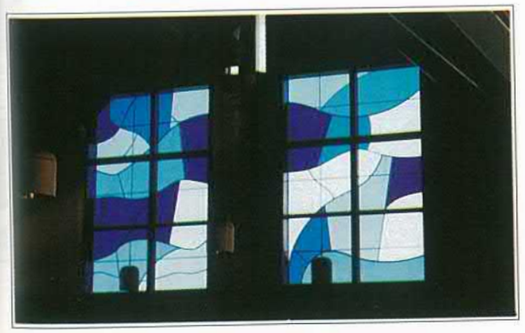
The Stained Glass Windows: Traditional Crafting.

The making of these windows followed a traditional method. Initial sketches allowed the artist to shape his ideas: from these came specific coloured drawings which in turn were the basis from which patterns were made by the glassmaker. At this stage the artist made photocopied enlargements in colour on to transparent film, the purpose being to simulate stained glass in order to observe how light is affected by colour. Glass worker Peter Kirby hired a school hall for space in which to scale up the drawings into full-size cartoons. Patterns were then cut in brown paper and re-scaled in accordance with the joiner's measurements for the wooden window frames. Lead casings seal the pieces of glass together. They are the "drawing" of the windows, the lines of varying thickness which work to hold the windows together both rhythmically and technically. Prosaically, windows must function properly.

The Station Windows: Computer and Laser Technology

The making of these windows is altogether different, involving a range of skills from traditional drawing, through photocopying to laser cutting. They are a series of black steel cut-outs, behind which are positioned panes of coloured textured glass. Their story is central to Catholic worship and ranges from Jesus being condemned to death until being laid in the Sepulchre.





The artist's first step was to make black and white descriptive drawings. He then simplified the images to silhouettes, i.e. to highlight clear positive/negative contrasts. The silhouettes were made into photocopied enlargements from which the artist took very fine line tracings, the enlarged size allowing for accuracy and precision. The tracings were programmed on to a computer and the programme used to control the laser light beam which cut the 3mm steel stencils. The images were painted black. The coloured glass windows were then set into place with the steel stencils positioned in front in the interior of the chapel.

Coloured Glass

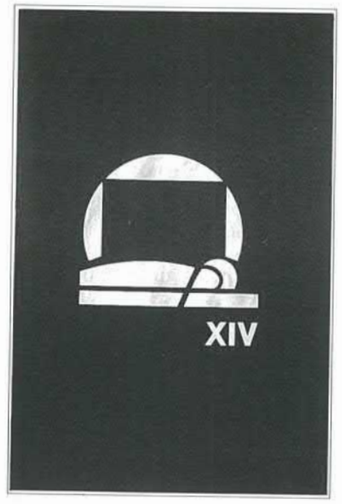
Hundreds of samples of glass of differing texture, patterning and colour were imported from America and the process of choosing began. Large windows in the artist's home give onto Island Bay and provide an excellent "laboratory" for testing the effects of light through the samples which were lined along the window edges.

In choosing the most appropriate colour for each Station the artist relied completely on his feeling for the emotional significance of colour. Each choice "had to feel right" for each part of the story and Drawbridge tested his feeling for the colour in relation to the meaning of each section. Through a process of elimination of re-

Home of Compassio Chapel:
Top; View to Altar (west)

Bottom Left; Entry window

Left; South window



Stations of Cross Nos IX & XIV

jecting the "wrong" colours he found the "right" ones stood out. Although he emphasises the personal nature of this response to colour it is interesting how often his choices draw a sympathetic response from the viewer. They ofter correlate to traditional associations - the artist was unaware that blue signified Mary's cloak and yet in Station 4, *Jesus meets his Mother*, he chose blue signifying for him sadness, and again for Station10, *Jesus is stripped of his garments*.

Red of course carrying as it does associations of blood, anger and death, was his logical choice for Station 1, *Jesus is condemned to death* and Station 11, *Jesus is nailed to the Cross*, whilst Station 13, *Jesus is taken down from the Cross*, is a delicate cloudy range of subtle mauve through light blue/white and the final Station, *Jesus is laid in the Sepulchre*, is white signifying a state of acceptance, purity and tranquility.

The visual continuity of colour was important too and much thought went into balancing the tremendous variation in the qualities of the glass from its surface texture, its marbling and its opacity. Bright yellow was chosen for Station 9, *Jesus falls a third time*, which is the central panel on the east wall (Stations 5-14). Finally the choices were "tested" out on the Architect and the Sisters whose responses matched those of the artist.

The Candleholder

Tanya Ashken received her commission directly from the Sisters for a candleholder to stand alone on the altar.Her concept was based on mirroring the natural forms expressed in the glass and nature as viewed beyond the altar windows. The flowing birdlike shape of the finished piece embodies these ideas in its rhythmic silver holder floating on a silver rod embedded in a carved New Zealand silver beech base.

Conclusion

Although the tradition of artist and artisan working together to create a building is centuries old, in recent years the more common experience for most artists is that they are invited in once the building is designed and built, to place their works "in situ" with a greater or lesser degree of success.

For the artist to be in at the inception of a project is not usual, so it is to be hoped that examples such as Our Lady Chapel will act as a catalyst for more co-operative design efforts in future. The tremendous success of the brilliant planning and development of the new Houses of Parliament in Canberra, with its design teams of artists, architects and craftworkers, stands as an Australasian role model for what can be achieved when all parties are involved in the conceptualisation and design process.

The windows are aesthetically beautiful; the importance of their meanings is sensitvely expressed and clearly read. They work properly in functional terms and are successfully designed to capture the sun's light from its altering position in the sky as the seasons change. Unique patterns of colour caress the interior as light filters through at ever-changing angles, creating an harmonious and contemplative space.

Far right: Candleholder by Tanya Ashken. Photo, Julia Brooke - White

The commission has allowed industry to be involved in truly creative work and led to further commission and technological developments. It has involved the creative interaction of all with each contributor's work being vital to the successful outcome of the whole.

It is to be hoped that Our Lady Chapel becomes an example for many more such projects.

Commission Details:

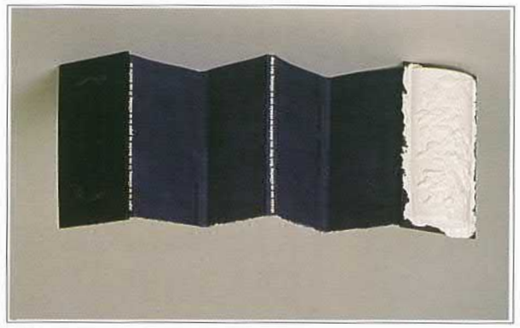
Client: The Sisters of Compassion
Architect: Ross Brown, Structon Group Architects
Artist, Stained Glass Windows: John Drawbridge
Glass Worker: Peter Kirby
Lasercutting: Brian Eadie, R.H. Freeman Ltd
Sacramental Candleholder: Tanya Ashken, sculptor and silversmith

Copies of the steel stencils for the Stations are now made in coloured lacquered perspex cut by laser. They are available in two sizes from the Brooker Gallery, Wellington. (Ph: (04) 758-798)

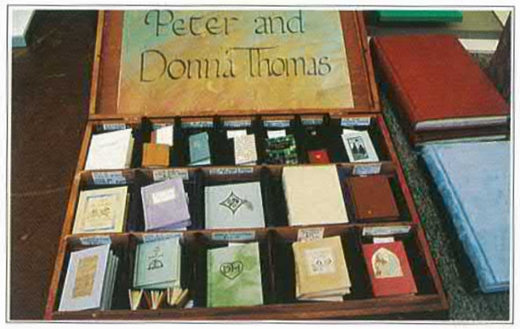
Lesleigh Salinger is an arts administrator and consultant and is a former director of the Academy of Fine Arts. She has a degree in art history from the University of Sydney where she developed a particular interest in architectural history. She lectures in art and architectural history and has written a number of articles and essays.

BOOKS REVISITED

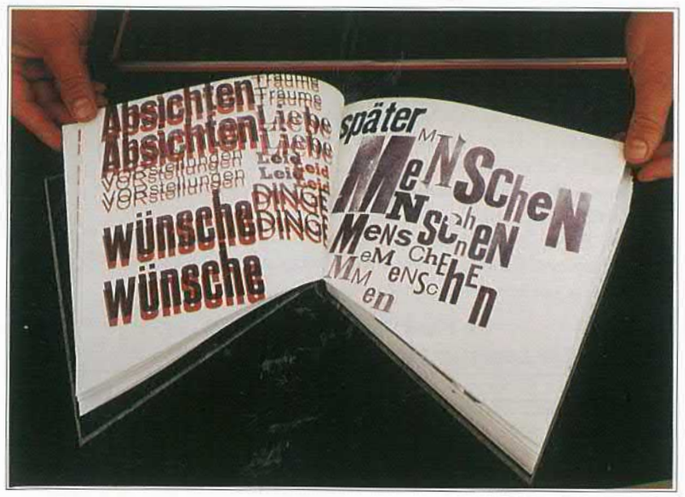
BY ADRIENNE REWI



"Rituals are so alluring/paper is so alluring, that they can deceive us." Lilian Bell, USA, 1970. Cast paper, (200mm x 520mm)



Miniature, leather bound, limited edition books in a designed carry-case. Peter Thomas, The Good Book Press, USA.



A limited edition work by Reinhold Nasshan of Einhand Press, illustrating the creative potential of typography and book design.

The world of contemporary book arts is full of surprises. It is never safe to assume that a given book object can be ope-ned and read, or that it even has pages.

On the other hand it may be permanently opened, revealing a pictorial display, or a text that breaks all traditional typographical "rules". Or it may completely abandon the belief that a book and words are synonymous and may impart a personal expression through the medium alone.

This is the genre known as "artists" book, or "book objects".

"The book has always been a magical object, both revered and feared for its ability to communicate knowledge", yet at the same time a modern culture has taught us to read at the expense of really seeing books and it has only been the necessity of comfortable reading that has kept the book in our hands instead of on a computer screen.

In an attempt to return an emphasis to the "visible book", designer bookbinders and artists around the world have consciously chosen the book as an important means of personal expression and communication and for at least 30 years they have been challenging our perception of what a book is, or can be.

Post-modernist artist Lilian Bell of the USA is well known internationally as one of the few masters in Japanese papermaking in and out of the United States, her sculptures and book objects are exhibited internationally and her two books on papermaking are known to many.

According to Lilian, book arts in the United States and Europe include a complete range of bookmaking practices from the truly fine, handbound book with meticulously sewn fine papers, traditional leather bindings and gold tooling; to traditional books, often limited edition productions containing painting, fine typography, printing and poetry; to the pure "non-useable" sculptural books, adapted oriental forms and pop-up books.

At the "book object" end of the scale, many sculptural book constructions barely pay lip service to the book format and it is obvious many artists are simply using the book as a point of departure for three-dimensional objects.

"Many artists are interested in the idea of the book as a non-useable object - an idea that was inspired by the surrealists and the emergence of conceptual art in the 1960s", Lilian said.

"In Latin America and several European countries inspiration also came from concrete and visual poetry that was associated with the Brazilian avante-garde."

For artists there has been a history of re-evaluating objects by refusing their usual cultural interpretations and creating others in their place. The book, with its long history as an important vehicle of human expression is an obvious arena for the discussion and investigation of functions and applications.

If the role of a book is to contain and relate text, must we rigidly adhere to the traditional codex format of bound sections? Does a book need to be bound within covers at all? What are the possible extensions of loose-leaf formats, folders, concertinas and pop-up designs? If a cover is designed to protect the book there must be many alternatives and creative possibilities. If a book's function is as the vehicle for personal expression, do we need to use words and is paper the only acceptable material for the work?

These are just a few of the questions being explored by contemporary book artists everywhere and it is not surprising that the traditional notion of a book has been thoroughly teased and tested."North American artists have concentrated to some degree on autobiographical and sequential approaches and implied narratives, suggesting an invisible word," Lilian said.

"Kathryn Lipke of Canada creates books with "silent pages" that are forever open or closed. She feels that her book objects reflect a struggle to observe and analyse roles and relationships. On the other hand, Kathy Karbo of the USA feels the book is a vessel for the human spirit. She examines the architectural and structural possibilities of its covers and pages, focusing on sculpted spines.

"In Europe they have a more conceptual approach with less emphasis on the narrative and the decoration. People tend to be more into pure form and books tend to be more sculptural. They also tend to be more inspired by other peoples' texts and philosophies. The late Beatrice de Caritat of Belgium for instance, created book objects that were inspired by other writers' texts and she searched for the spaces and gaps between the pages...an emptiness crying out to be filled she felt.

"The conceptual artist J.H. Kocman of Czechoslovakia works with book objects and concepts that have no text or illustration, books of potential or induced contents, books as materials themselves," Lilian said.

"He wants to communicate sensibility, not just ideas and states that because paper is made for the hands, all these viewpoints are too intimate to speak too much about. He has concentrated on the characteristics of paper as the physical bearer of the message, focusing on the essential aspects of the book, such as turning over the pages and the implied succession of sentences. His aim is not the craft: he wants to subsume it into a broader creative conception by taking the traditional shape of the book and creating a new semantic aesthetic unity. He wants to enliven traditional ways of hand papermaking, aiming for a new fusion and exchange after his deliberate destruction of the printed paper torn out of the original text.

"One example of his work paraphrases the metamorphosis of a poem based on "The Raven" by Edgar Allan Poe, into a book sculpture. The cover is reminiscent of birds' wings, 18 grey/black sheets of handmade paper are equal to the 18 stanzas and each stanza ends with the refrain "Nothingmore, Evermore, or Nevermore."

Whatever the inspiration or motivation for contemporary book arts, Lilian says the attraction also lies in the simple fact that, for many artists, book sculptures are affordable accessible art, easy to transport and easy to exhibit.

"They are just small, handheld, portable sculptures, which internationally have a very great appeal. There is something special and intimate, almost secret about book objects."

For many book artists there is also a close tie to paper, either in the use of paper as a sculptural medium, or a more traditional link through the ancient crafts of papermaking and bookbinding.

Some artists continue to use paper in its traditional role as the carrier of text, or images, while others have developed the paper itself as the "expressive text", making use of the myriad of shades and textural subtleties that paper can exhibit.

Beatrice de Caritat again provides a fine example with her handmade papers bound to create imaginative sequences of pages - each sheet with a different tactile and visual quality, from the coarse to extremely delicate. In some of her books she also incorporates words into the pages so that the writing becomes "a drawing".

In summation, director of the Leopold-Hoesch Museum in Duren, West Germany, Dr Dorothea Eimert says:

"The book object casts doubt on writing as a medium of thought - something we have been aware of ever since the Greek philosophers. Even more than the readable book, the book object conveys the autonomy of the mind. The book object turns against language-distorted reality; in the silence of the script it creates a haven for language."

Whatever style, or technique the book artist adopts, there is little doubt that there is a tremendous variety of expression being practised throughout the entire range of the book arts and little doubt also that we are being challenged to reconsider our traditional perceptions of what a book is, or can be!

A grant from the QEII Arts Council enabled paper artist Adrienne Rewi to attend the 1990 International Association of Paper Artists' Congress in Duren, West Germany. While there she interviewed Lilian Bell on the subject of contemporary book arts.Adrienne Rewi is an artist and journalist formerly of Masterton, now living in Christchurch.

HAVE LECTURES, WILL TRAVEL

HELEN SCHAMROTH

It all started with one of those wonderfully serious yet flippant conversations one has at a Crafts Council conference that started with...why don't we come down to Invercargill to do workshops.

Why not, indeed. Well, the trip grew somewhat, primarily to make it viable, and also because when I undertake a project with my partner Michael Smythe, Executive Director of the Society of Designers, I have to be prepared to be pushed to my limits.

We ended up offering a joint lecture called *Creating the Collective Culture* to regional galleries and a "menu" of workshops and lectures each to polytechnics around the country.

Preparing the joint lecture, which we delivered in Dunedin, Timaru, Christchurch and Wanganui was the greatest challenge as we were starting from scratch, whereas the other workshops and seminars we were offering have been evolving for some time and came from our respective areas of expertise.

An approach to artists, craftspeople, designers and architects, the Auckland Museum, the National Museum, the Arts Council, the Fisher Gallery, Muka Studio, Auckland Studio Potters and Fingers netted us over 1,000 slides suitable for use. Selection was an exhilarating, humbling experience and we were able to amply illustrate all the points that evolved as we studied the slides, although we acknowledge our collection is by no means complete. It is the beginning of a wonderful project that we plan to develop further.

What we were looking at was a summary of early work in New Zealand, both Maori and that of European origin, and what has evolved in more recent times. We did a broad sweep of art, craft, architecture, product design, interior design, graphic design and fashion design today, looking to see what identifies work as being of New Zealand.

We looked at biculturalism showing how it is enriching to both Maori and Pakeha cultural growth, as well as acknowledging the uniqueness, and the internationalism of some work, and our place in the Pacific. For Pakeha, not having a long history and tradition makes us the lucky ones as we get to create our culture.

We bombarded our audience for two hours with slides, commentary, and challenges to be involved in the process of expressing and creating a New Zealand identity beyond the self-conscious. We appreciated the thoughtful responses and the ready acknowledgement of the work we showed.

The other lectures and workshops that I offered related more to my work as a fibre artist and critic. *Evaluation* , both self evaluation and from the point of view of the critic, was a major part of what I offered. It was taken up in various forms by Southland Polytechnic, Otago Polytechnic, Aoraki Polytechnic, and Wanganui Polytechnic on this trip. I have also done work on this issue at Waikato Polytechnic, Carrington Polytechnic and Hawkes Bay Polytechnic at separate times, so the subject is getting a good airing.

Issuing challenges to go beyond the subjective emotional response to a work, and to examine intentions and evaluating work in relation to the intention uncovered recurring stumbling blocks with students, and I dare say many practitioners.

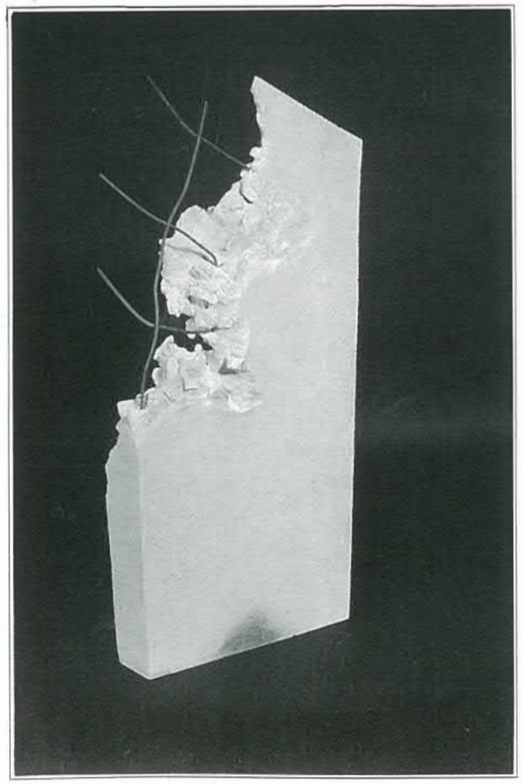
The rewards were in seeing students sharpening up perceptions as well as challenging me in my role as a reviewer. With only a few of us regularly publishing reviews it is important that we are questioned and extended, and that there be dialogue and education in this important area.

The other workshops I conducted at Southland Polytechnic and Aoraki Polytechnic related to my work as a fibre artist, looking at developing personal subject matter verbally and visually, my approach to design process and some hands-on working in a variety of fibre techniques as well as a personal philosophy regarding fibre finishing techniques.

The question remains, what is the value of such a whistle stop tour? The response I got was that our visit stimulated, provoked, bombarded and challenged students. Reframing issues raised by tutors, and giving students ideas to debate and develop for themselves, as well as providing fresh practical assistance and feedback about work in progress was welcomed.

And the value to me was an insight into the work being produced at Craft Design courses as well as meeting the dedicated staff and students. I am looking forward to having the privilege of reviewing work by many of these students - it looks promising.

Financial assistance from QEII Arts Council was gratefully received and contributed to my travel and expenses.



Creating the Collective Culture. Work by Rick Rudd (left) and Dave Russell, (right),

CHAD ALICE HAGEN

American felt artist Chad Alice Hagen, was sitting in the warm Wanganui sun, shoes off and trousers rolled up, pushing a wet, rolled up bamboo blind back and forth with her feet.

Inside the blind was a fleece, liberally dosed with detergent and water. The breaking up of the fibre would turn it to felt, the first step in the creation of one of her brightly coloured felt wall hangings (although she doesn't like the term).

In 1986 the QEII Arts Council sent out letters to a number of American universities seeking leading craftspeople who may be able to make a contribution to this country. Hagen was at Cranbrook Art School in Detroit the following year when the department head brought the letter to her attention saying, "New Zealand has a lot of sheep, you should reply." The interest from polytechs here was immediate; her trip had to be extended by four months to fit them all in.

"I left home in August and went to an international felt symposium in Amsterdam. Then on to New Zealand, I've been working my butt off ever since. My trip was initially funded by Fulbright, with QEII's Waewae Tapu scheme funding the extension of time."

When the felt has dried, it is dyed. "I try to get as poorly dyed pieces as possible, using tie dyed and shibori techniques." The felt is then cut up and laboriously stitched together. Unfelted wool is later criss-crossed on the back and the whole piece refelted.

MARK LANDER

"I went to Ilam Art School straight from secondary school. I didn't seem to click on to a lot of what they were saying there. About four years after I left art school I had my first big show at the CSA (Christchurch) with lots of colour work...I did huge big canvasses, I didn't sell a single thing, I'd spent thousands of dollars. I thought...well I just can't carry on like this. For a while I experimented with cheap hessian and fluorescent paint, that occupied about two years. Then I got a job in the Port Hills drawing...I discovered an immense wealth of material just within 10km of home. I started to weave flax into canvasses and glue the sticks as frames. I left behind all that European influence, it was like being a caveman again. But I never felt comfortable weaving with flax, being of European descent. I felt I was stealing something that wasn't part of me. Then I discovered paper making using the same materials, flax and clay. I was just overjoyed, because here was something at last using indigenous materials, which was in my interest, but also marrying it with a European technology which is what I feel that I am as a New Zealander. I found thirty distinctly different clays and used willow sticks from the Waimakariri River."

Mark used the techniques he learned to make huge sheets of paper, using a local swimming pool during the winter. As well as more conventionally scaled paintings, his larger sheets, up to 10 metres in length are used in installations and stage sets. He uses the clays to make paint, mixing them with a watery PVA mixture. He maintains a prolific output from his suburban Christchurch home.

"I keep myself to myself, I don't go down to the pub and talk to all my artist friends. I'm a family man and I like to be at home with my family."

From a series of talks and interviews at the Pacific Fibre Symposium, January 2-13.

A critical article on the work of Mark Lander, written by Kate Coolahan, appeared in NZ Crafts 29, Spring 1989.

TERESA PLA

Spanish textile artist Teresa Pla Belio saw an advertisement for a workshop on Taniko weaving in a Barcelona newspaper. She did the course, but had trouble finding out much more about the subject. A woman at a World Crafts Council conference in Vienna supplied the next piece of the jigsaw with a book about the Maori, putting the technique into its context. She also obtained some contact addresses in New Zealand. Letters followed; to the then Minister of Maori Affairs, Koro Wetere, the Crafts Council and to 24 Museums and Art Galleries throughout the country, obtaining valuable contacts.

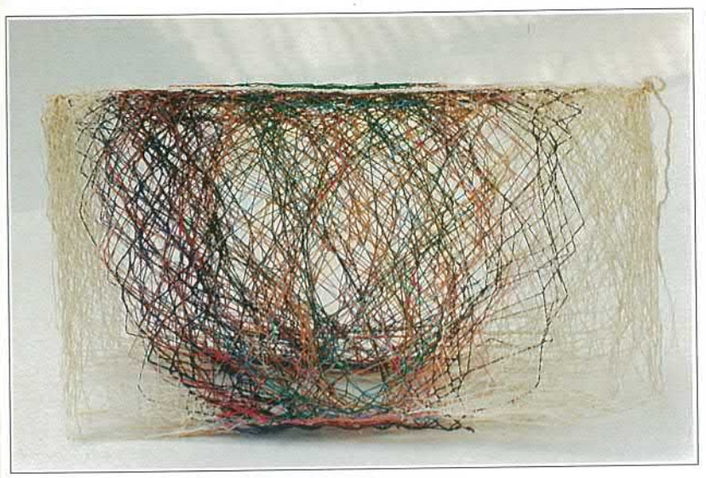
She arrived in Auckland on January 1st for two months. Her aim - to gain knowledge and information about Taniko and Maori culture.

Two days later she was at Wanganui Regional Community Polytech, observing the Pacific Fibre Symposium. Next stop; fifteen days at the Rotorua Maori Arts and Crafts Institute.

She works in a variety of other areas, including the sprang technique (pictured right).

DAVID SWIFT & LYNNE CURRAN

David Swift's wooden objects are not so much toys for two year olds as catalysts for fantasies, objects by which to tell a story. He works intuitively, drawing on his training at an Edinburgh art school and a year at mime school in Paris where he learned "the language of figures".



Sprang technique by Teresa Pla. Photo; Peter Gibbs.

"Joguars", Handfelted wool by Chad Alice Hagen. Photo; Chad Hagen.

David Swift at work, Waikato Polytech.

Swift was a recent visitor to New Zealand, as artist-in-residence at Waikato Polytech.

"The process of tapestry is much slower than normal weaving, but allows any image to be woven", says Lynne Curran, in New Zealand as artist-in-residence at Waikato Polytech in 1990. "If you have a message to put across, then you will find a way to make it possible to translate it into tapestry."

She prefers to work in miniature, adding fine detail and texture to her pieces. Her tapestries are very personal and reflect life situations and the soft pleasures that surround her. Cats, hens, her "out of studio" pursuits, ballroom dancing, the love of flowers and medieval choral music, each brought to life and illustrated with wit and symbolism.

KIM BRICE, BARBARA BLEWMAN AND DARRYL FROST

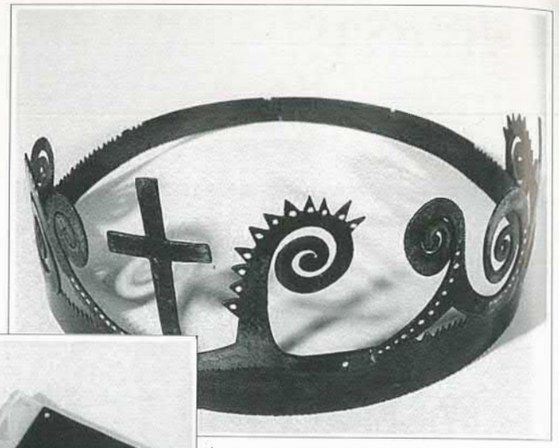
Three recent graduates of Nelson Polytech's Craft Design course were given grants by the QEII Arts Council. Jewellers Kim Brice and Barbara Blewman opened a joint workshop in the central shopping area of Nelson late in November last year. Former tutor Malcolm Harrison came to perform the official opening. From January 19, the pair exhibited their new work in a show at the Dowse Gallery, Lower Hutt, entitled "Resections and Recordings".

Kim Bryce's work reflects recent experiences which have stimulated his need to make a statement using a wide range of materials. With the use of collage, layering and encasing, Brice hopes to integrate fact and fiction.

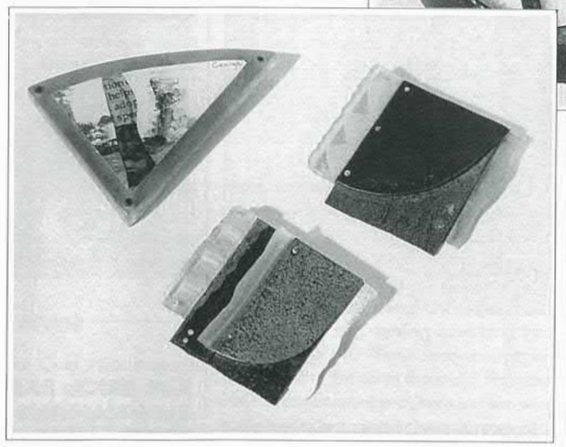
Barbara Blewman's work is evolving with the exploration and discovery of her own cultural identity. From drawings and paintings, elements are translated into copper and silver, etched and enamelled.

Potter Darryl Frost is using his grant to acquire equipment. Winner of the award for functional work at the Nelson Potters Association annual exhibition in January, with a steamer in bamboo and clay, he is developing that range of work. At the same time, he is continuing with more sculptural work .

Darryl Frost.
Photo, Marion van Dijk



Barbara Blewman; Crown, 1990; copper - etched, enamelled. Photo, courtesy Dowse Art Museum



Kim Brice, Brooches, 1990. From top left, "Pink Triangle, copper, resin;"Love Lies Bleeding", silver, copper, polyresin; "Sexuality", silver, copper, polyresin.
Photo, courtesy Dowse Art Museum.

ANDREA DALY

Medusa haired and crucified women, hairy armed *Raunchy Angels* and snake rosaries featured in an exhibition of Andrea Daly's new work at the Dowse Art Museum from December 1 to January 27. The exhibition, entitled "Scarecrows/Scarecrones - Womyn and the Church", deals with women's bodies - their use and abuse, through the medium of jewellery and miniature sculpture.

Daly comments, "Religion offers women very limited life models. Woman is seen positively as the Madonna and Mother who chooses to reproduce yet remains virginal or as the chaste nun. In both of these roles she is still protected by males either as human husbands or in marriage to the male God. The alternative to these roles is that of the Evil Woman, the Jezebel, the Witch."

Daly is a graduate from Sydney's College of the Arts who now lives in Auckland. Her exhibition is part of the Dowse's Body Adornment series and ran concurrently with Lauren Lethal's "Genuine Synthetics" exhibition.

Andrea Daly, Raunchy Angel, 1990. Photo courtesy Dowse Art Museum

COMMISSIONS

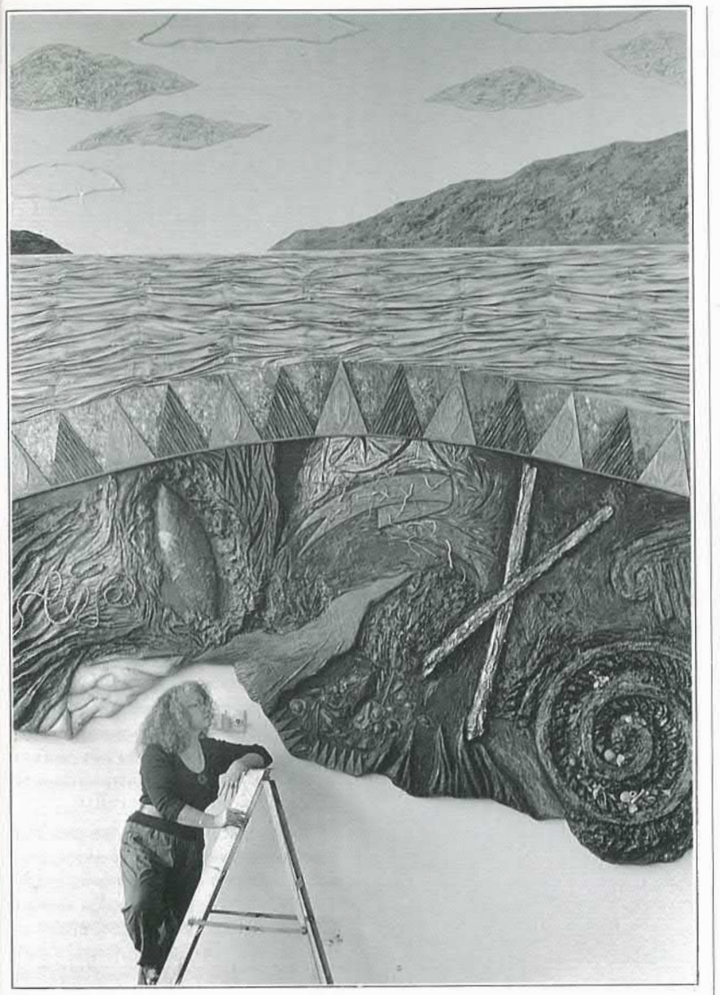


Photo courtesy NZ Herald

PACIFIC SONGLINES

By Carole Shepheard.

This work, commissioned by BMW NZ Ltd, is an extension of ideas I have had for some time about the recognition of the past as a starting point for understanding the present and preparing for the future. This aspect of Time has always been crucial to my work...whether in the references to early mythology, to the placing of myself in a more supportive historical period or the more recent involvement with archeology and the interpretations of objects found and documented.

When beginning this work I wanted to explore the physical aspect of this country but with that which lies beneath the earth being "exposed" and interpreted according to the place we hold in the Pacific. I wanted to explore aspects of New Zealand as it sits in Polynesia without dividing the cultures or appropriating symbols or motifs. To do this I chose symbols of universal recognition...the spiral, the cross, the column, the oval, the rope. My interpretation is not finite. And it is this very oscillation over many cultures that has fascinated me for some time. I like the Australian Aborigine's "reading" of their land. They believe that all was sung into existence and I have attempted to show this quite beautiful belief in the way I have used paint and movement in the work.

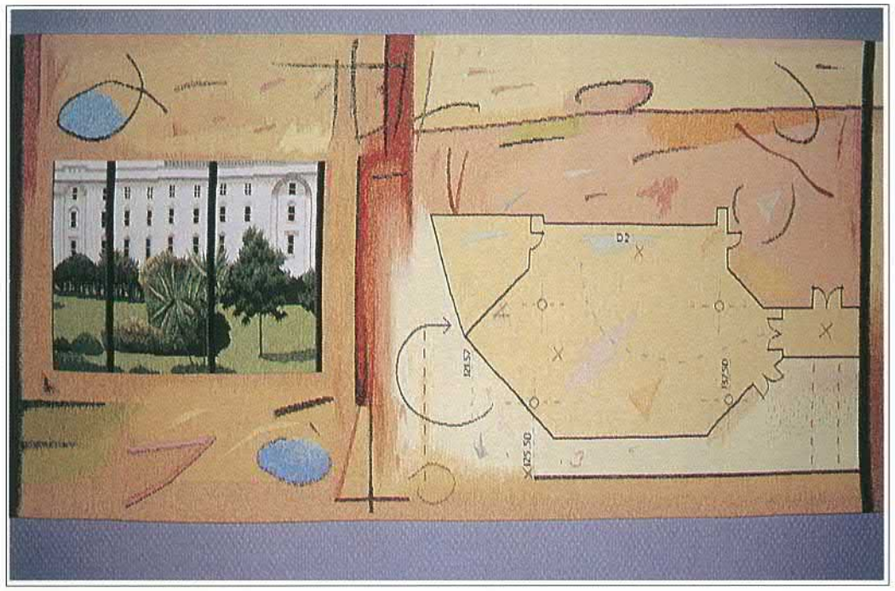
The work is broken up into readable sections. The lower, more sculptural element represents the beginning of the land but also holds information about a past culture and the fragile ecology of this. Ideas about fire, lava, water formations, dwellings, life in a radically different world were all considerations. Above this piece lies the sea. Life force. Source of nourishment and sustenence. But dividing and uniting these two elements is a structure...a bridge...a span...a pathway...a linking device. This piece is made mostly from copper reflecting the wealth of the land and the minerals formed by the earth's life. The bridge also speaks of uniting people. Of the merging of cultures. Of the opportunities to discover ourselves. It also speaks of the risks that have to be taken to succeed.

Sitting on the horizon line are two land forms...not anywhere in particular but possibly with reference to the South Auckland heads...two landforms that act as guardians, as protectors. The clouds were introduced to site this piece in Mt Wellington, at the BMW Building, as the first visit I had there was on a clear day with the sky and clouds catching my peripheral vision as I contemplated the wall! They seemed to me at the time to be of importance to the piece and that element which extended the artwork off the wall and into the external world. I have always believed that a good painting doesn't stop at the frame but continues to be visible on the "outside".

Pacific Songlines tells of the stories that surround a country...a land...and a culture. Whatever decisions we make are almost always based on research or experience and in the making of this work I searched for a personal link between the place the work was to go, the company that was commissioning the piece, that physical location and my own direction and ideas.

The work took approximately six months from concept to realisation. It was executed in a warehouse in Western Springs and was at times overwhelming. The progress however was careful and deliberate with much attention being given to the final assembly of found and specially made objects. Because of the scale of the work - 4m x 5.5m - it was very importantthat the human element wasn't lost. After all...people have to work in and around the piece and should feel a connection to it, no matter how big it is.

This was a very important work for me. It has led to some new large paintings that will be my direction for some time to come.



"Point of View, by Kate Wells. Photo, Anne Nicholas.

"The Paradox of Mechanical Intention", by John Scott. Phtoto, John Scott.

POINT OF VIEW

By Judy Wilson

It is more than three years since Kate Wells started planning her tapestry for the Goodman Fielder Wattie Room at the Aotea Centre, and the resulting work is proof that she rates well amongst the world's best tapestry weavers. It also is a testimony to years of disciplined, meticulous work.

Over the last few years Kate has successfully made the transition from creating a picture using tapestry techniques, to designing works which stand on their own because of good design and the glory of tapestry technique.

Given that the brief was to enhance the room with an Auckland regional theme, this tapestry called "Point of View", will surely encourage people to have their own opinions on where they stand in regard to an overview of Auckland and its environs, the importance of the Aotea Centre and the relevance of tapestry as art. It provides interest to the viewer but doesn't demand attention. It is decorative but in no way insignificant.

The design concept revolves around the themes of location and elevation, including an actual floor plan of the room, an Auckland regional map and Rangitoto as seen from the air. In addition, there are two sections depicting views seen through the windows as one looks towards the Town Hall.

The Aotea Centre should be proud to house such a delightful tapestry and my only sadness is that it isn't available for public viewing at all times. To arrange viewing times, contact Tara Werner (09)392677.

THE PARADOX OF MECHANICAL INTENTION

"The Paradox of Mechanical Intention" is the title of John Scott's commission for the foyer of Price-Waterhouse headquarters in Auckland.

Commissioned through REAL Art, by the beleagured Chase Corporation there was some delay in its installation. However the opening of the building went ahead with the work being unveiled from behind a purpose built draw string curtain assembly.

The building was designed by the architectural company Jasmax, winners of the design for the new Museum of New Zealand. They were also involved in selecting the design for the commission.

The foyer is in pink and grey marble; highly polished, spacious and imposing. Scott's commission set out to develop a work which reflected the formal structure while at the same time breaking up the vertical and horizontal geometry of the architecture.

The work is a reflection of contemporary industrial construction (large steel elements) but humanises the material by drawing ihe viewer to question its reality.It was constructed on 15 ply stretcher with 12 ounce cotton duck canvas. The 4.1 metre high by 6.2 metre work was assembled from four separate canvasses in situ and although light in weight, took five people to lift into position. The surface is acrylic paint. Up to 30 layers are applied to ihree layers of gesso.

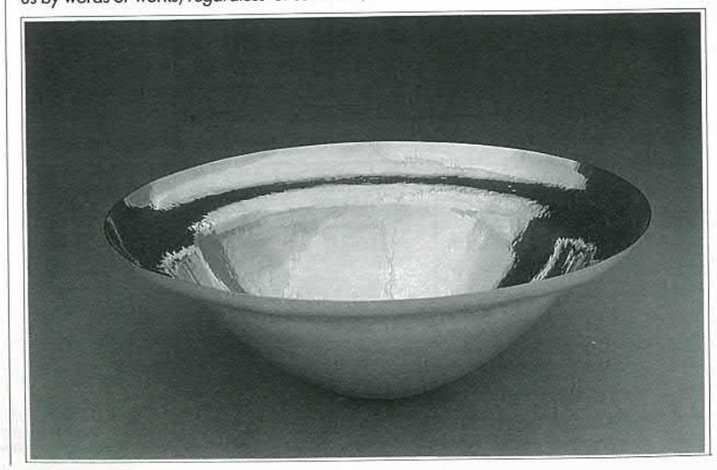
The paradox is that something so apparently heavy, hard, impersonal and unyielding is in reality soft, light, personal and human.

BAPTISMAL FONT

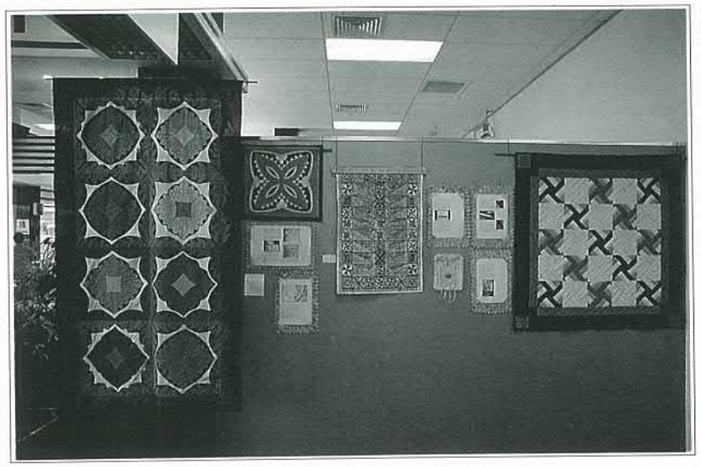
By Tanya Ashken

I was commissioned to make a silver baptismal font bowl by architect Bill Alington, to go into the refurbished Presbyterian Church at Matawhero, Gisborne. The bowl was raised from a flat circle of silver and is 310mm in diameter and 105mm deep. It fits into a wooden font made by Ouva Steidinger of Otaki. It was daunting to start with such a large circle of silver, 333mm, but I quickly gained control of the raising and the enjoyment grew. Just beating a shape with no soldering or added parts is an unusual experience, although I had made an alms dish 460mm in diameter a few years ago, for St Mary's Church, Timaru. I planished the font bowl quite heavily, so the water in it would sparkle and reflect as much as possible.

I enjoy making church silver and 1990 gave me two such commissions. The other was the altar candle holder for the new Home of Compassion chapel at Island Bay, designed by Ross Brown of Structon Group (see story, page 24) . The concept for that was much more sculptural and it is really a piece of sculpture made of silver and wood, playing the part of a candle holder. The crozier for Peter Sutton, Bishop of Nelson, many years ago was a challenging and exciting piece to make. I've made three altar crosses, two way back in time and in England, and the other for Kings School Chapel, Auckland, where I also made the altar candle holders and snuffer.



Baptismal Font Bowl by Tanya Ashken. Photo, Julia Brooke-White



Arrivals and Departures, by Shari Cole. Photo, Donald Cole.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

By Shari Cole

Rotorua's Festivart '90 in November drew together diverse participants - its avowed purpose to bring art to the people instead of people to the art. Organisation, performances, and exhibitions in city centre public spaces were by volunteers, excepting full-time co-ordinator Bridget Thornton. Asked to exhibit my quilt and fabric work, I followed the people's art theme by showing tapa cloth and plaiting from several Polynesian cultures beside fabric pieces directly related to them. This suited the Festivart opening day of canoe demonstrations, music, and dance by island communities.

The National Bank of New Zealand provided foyer space designed for art display. My premise stated that everyone who touches us by words or works, *regardless* of cultural differences, becomes part of our journey through developmental way-stations - Arrivals and Departures. As text, I mounted proof sheets from *Pacific Patchworks, New Approaches to Quilt Design* beside each quilt/tapa or quilt/mat set, demonstrating their relationships. Since book illustrations came from my collection of Pacific women's art, both tapa, and fabric pieces made as post-publication extensions of techniques and themes, were available. Relationships were traced from simple conversion of a painted design to fabric, to use of tapa/mat conventions for original quilts using non-Polynesian symbolism. In this way I hoped to inspire this diverse audience to explore these ideas - and fabric art - in their own directions.

COMMENT

TEMPESTS OVER TEXTILES

By Shari Cole

All is not harmony between traditional and contemporary quilters in England. The top award at the National Patchwork Championships, one quilter informed me, had gone to a beginner for a contemporary quilt of atrocious workmanship.

Someone who found the acrimony amazing regardless of the quilt in question, was Inger Milburn, twice winner of the Best Overall Workmanship award at Expo Europa. (Her style combines elements of tradition with original design.) I met her at Quilt Expo Europa in May 1990 and we had an interesting discussion on the train afterward; she later gave me cuttings from *The Quilter*, Autumn 1989, (No. 40) which shed more light and heat.

Editor Vivien Finch chose a range of letters to excerpt (some language, she said, was unacceptable). Some contained suggestions for improving the category and award system; some sought to reconcile; others spoke of insult, no-confidence, and voting with their feet. Two upheld the judges' freedom to choose unhampered. (Someone had asked a judge if she was drunk.)

In her exhibition review, guild trustee Margaret Tucker attempted to analyse the controversy and reunify all sides. Judges' decisions, she found, were unanimous though independent. They agreed that "...stitching and construction added to the character," and that subtle (earthy) colour deserved recognition amid the prevalence of "modern, garish colours". Opposition, Tucker concluded, stemmed from quilters' tendency to take refuge from their unsureness in design by perfection of workmanship, and this was put first in competition. Designers, she said, look more for originality, atmosphere, and colour.

And the storm centre? "Where Are You?" resembles a surrealist's waggawagga. Artist Dinny Turner made it as an extension of a painting for a rug commission, incorporating fabrics from the rug. This "beginner" graduated with distinction from Chelsea School of Art and has five years of fabric commissions behind her. While she admires quilters' technical ability, she says, "Textile artists are discouraged because of the traditional rigidity and technicality of much of patchwork design."

All this brought home the restraint and good grace of New Zealand quilters and embroiderers in respecting styles and tastes they do not share. I remembered comments when Suzy Pennington's "Blue Surface 1986" won the Wardenburg wall hanging award. "Too simple", "dull colours", "not much work in it compared to what others put in," were said privately, without great emotion. They showed little experience with right-brain hard slog and interpretations left to the viewer, but no anger.

Last June, comments on "She", Don Driver's Coats Semco Merit Award winner at Pacesetters (ANZEG) were less restrained. The October Threads quotes a range from "rubbish" to "I like it". Writes one, "...a valid contribution - it gets people thinking, even if it only makes them cross". Cross is a long way from livid. While on exhibition duty I heard more suppressed laughter than annoyance. People took it as a joke - a brinkmanship attempt to barely meet, with functional machine straight stitching, the "considerable element of stitchery" requirement.

Perhaps the many small awards, so that a majority favourite ("Andante, Andante" - Jeanette Gilbert) also received one, helped. I hesitate to say that New Zealand embroiderers lead more satisfying lives than their British counterparts, but we do tolerate differences well. Certainly original design and innovation are encouraged and common. Though most quilters and embroiderers made "traditional" (loosely interpreted) objects for their homes, the same people often produce "contemporary" exhibition work. We are richer for our diversity.

Over the past 25 years Shari Cole has worked with crafts including jewellery, basketry, clothing, and patchwork and quilting - both producing and teaching. She and photographer husband Don spent 3 months in Niue in 1990. They supplied craft features to Tusitala Magazine, Quilter's Newsletter, Pacific Quilts, Quilting Today and a how-to book "Pacific Patchworks, New Approaches to Quilt Design". Mostly they recorded cultural crafts for governments in Tokulau and Niue.

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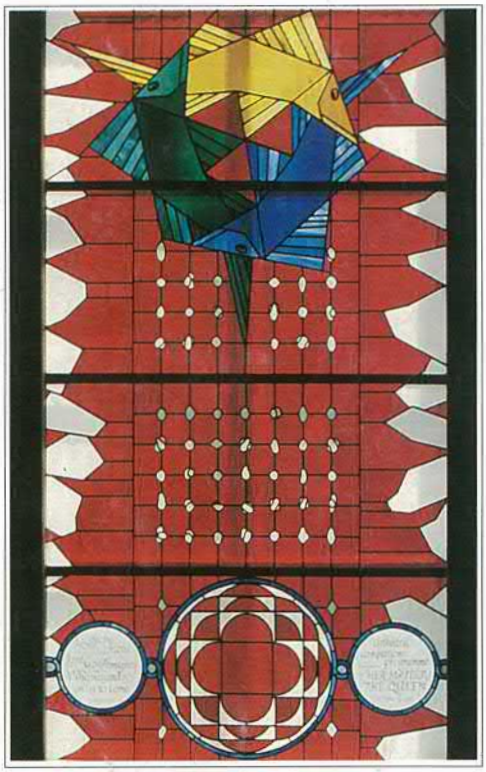
RECENT WORK



Recently received slides from the Crafts Council Resource Centre. Clockwise from top left: John Abramczyk (4m x 2m); Phil Newbury, "221 Queens Drive", 1m x 740mm; Paul Laird, "Atlantis Submerged ", 500mm x 300mm, Penelope Read, "Gedi", 1m x 800mm. A full catalogue of available slide sets is available from Crafts Council of New Zealand, PO Box 498, Wellington.