CRAFT

New Zealand

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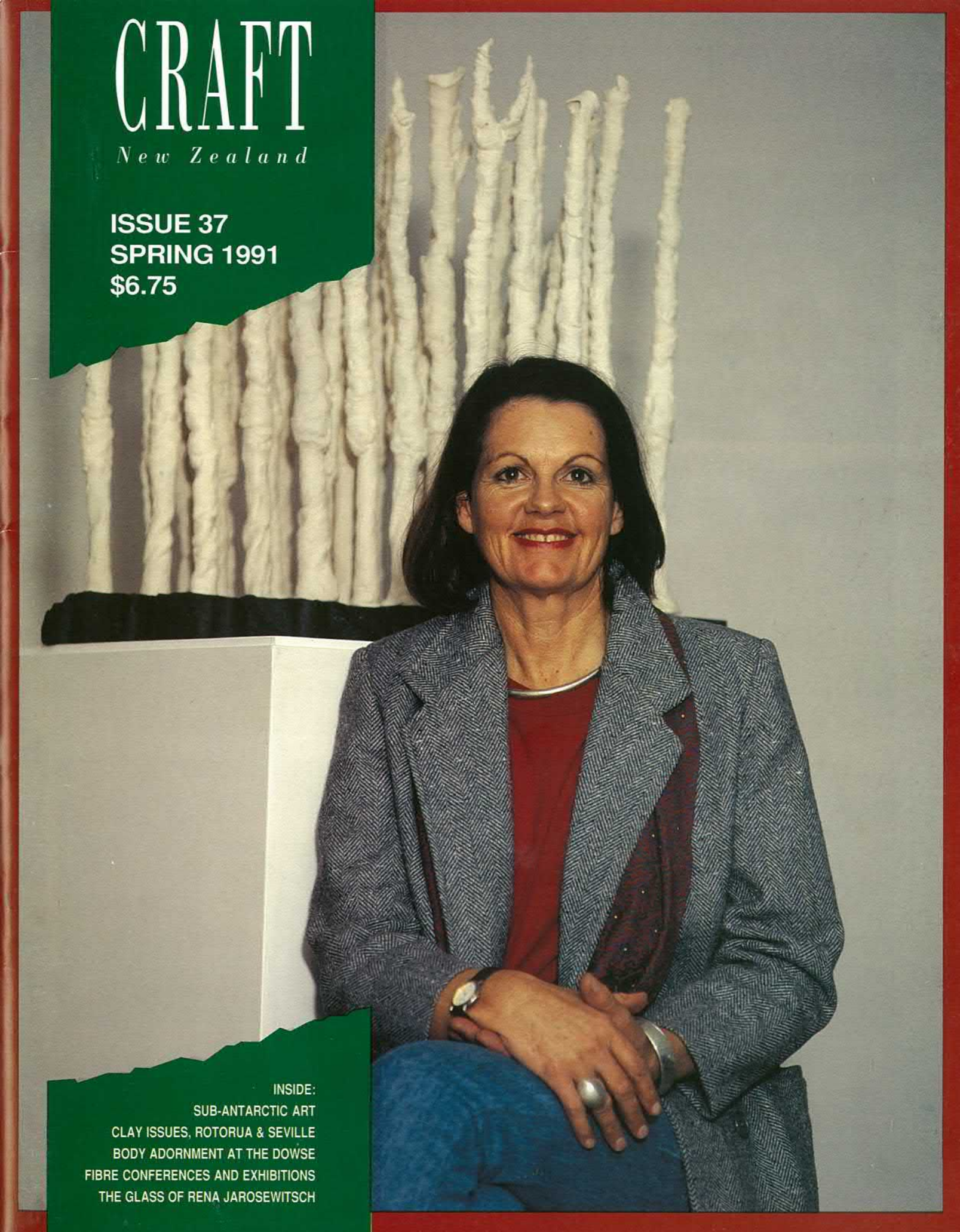
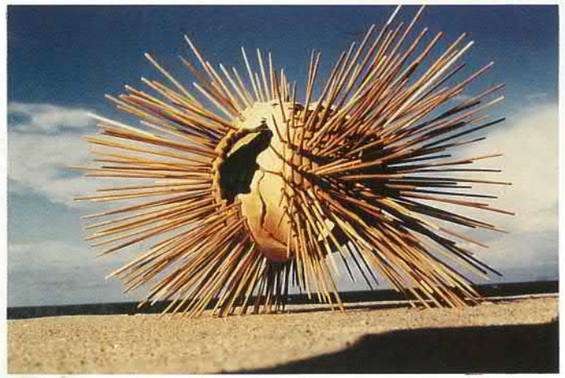


INSIDE:
SUB-ANTARCTIC ART
CLAY ISSUES, ROTORUA & SEVILLE
BODY ADORNMENT AT THE DOWSE
FIBRE CONFERENCES AND EXHIBITIONS
THE GLASS OF RENA JAROSEWITSCH

RECENT WORK



Recently treceived slides from the Crafts Council Resource Centre. Clockwise from top left: Gloria Young; "Fish Plate". Peter Battensby; "Black Maire Stacked Bowl", 250mm x 200mm. Anita Berman; "Images of the Pacific", 400mm x 300mm. Penelope Read; "Don't Pillage the Pacific", Wall Skirt, 750mm x 600mm. Marie Potter; detail "Paua II, leather thonging and paua, 500mm x 225mm x 725mm. Roly Munro; "Sea Urchin".

Slides are available for hire to groups and individuals. A full catalogue of slide sets is available from the Crafts Council of New Zealand, PO Box 498, Wellington.

Galleries and individuals are invited to submit slides to the Resouce Centre. These will be considered for "Recent Works" in future issues.

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LETTERS

STUDENTS' EXHIBITION

I am disappointed with the coverage of the *1990 Craft Design Graduates Exhibition*.

I read Louise Guerin's article with interest but when I had finished I was quite angry that this was all that the exhibition was worth.

When one writes about an exhibition one should cover all aspects or at least cover a cross section so the reader can get a good idea what the exhibition was like.

I found Louise's coverage of eight students/exhibitors out of 21 a little too narrow. Louise chose a weak excuse for not including the others by saying: "If I haven't commented on something it's because it and I have failed to form a relationship...Better not to pass judgement in the meantime."

How can one "...form a relationship..." with a Craft Work? Was it Louise's job "...to pass judgement..."!?

For such an important exhibition as this perhaps it would be wise to have someone more competent to write a good coverage of the subject in hand.

Andrew Maule, Auckland.

I read with some interest the article published in your latest magazine *Messages from the Spirit* by Louise Guerin. It was interesting and descriptive but I must disagree with her comments on Frances Jackson's work. I viewed these pieces at the end of year exhibition 1990 Carrington Polytechnic.

I think Frances Jackson has some way to go before her hats are the masterpieces Louise Guerin writes of. On the whole the hats lacked line and style and the "impeccable finish" was not apparent. As pieces of wearable art, well perhaps! As well made millinery they certainly are not. The comment "The head is the alternative to the bird in the cage" etc is contradictory. The hat is either a bird or a cage, it can't be both.

You may ask my credentials to pass comment; 26 years of model millinery, costume design, bridal design and craftwork.

Yvonne Stewart (Mrs), Auckland.

GLASS SURVEY

It was with great disappointment that I read the glass article/survey in the last issue of Craft NZ (written by Helen Schamroth) and found no mention of Avalon Glass, its members or the subsequent glass businesses set up since its demise two years ago.

I received no correspondence inviting me to offer my opinion, recount our colourful, self-taught history, or offer thoughts for the future, and even more sadly, no-one else in SAG seems to have bothered to mention our existence to the writer. Is this because we live "out here" on the West Coast, a land so far removed from mainline New Zealand, that we are not considered relevant, or that the mailing list was printed in 1984?

As one half of Te Miko glass, an actively producing operation, creating not only blown glass, but also a leading range of fused glass jewellery, I am disappointed that my name and work, opinion etc was not included in this national survey. Do I exist? Yes, and so also does my glassblowing colleague Robert Reedy. We blow recycled glass by the powerful Tasman Sea. It is glass that is undeniably made in Aotearoa. Maybe this is a little too down for Auckland, where focus is on the Northern Hemisphere designs and colours, but eventually it will be the way.

Maybe someone should do an article solely on us, we're so different we were on the first series of "That's Fairly Interesting". We made our own power. We made our own gas. We taught Tim Shadbolt how to blow glass. We are some of the coolest people I know. So hey, all you people, we exist, we create, and we are not going away.

Greg Smith, Punakaiki.

I, too, am disappointed that Avalon Glass and Te Miko glass were not included in the survey of the glass scene. Leaving someone out was always a risk, although I did get a current mailing list and advice re those working in the field from some Auckland members of SAG. Thank you for bringing me up to date, and my apologies for the omission. I am delighted to hear that there is glass being produced on the West Coast. Where, short of visiting you, can I see some of your work?

Helen Schamroth, Auckland.

MORE PLAGIARISM

Before the combatants in the quilting world continue with their discussion, perhaps it would be wise to look up a dictionary and sort out a few words. I've used a Macquaries.

Plagiarism - the appropriation or imitation of another's ideas and manner of expressing them, as in art, literature etc, to be passed off as one's own.

Derivative - not original or primitive, secondary. Something derived or derivative.

Copy - a transcript, reproduction, or imitation of an original. That which is to be transcribed reproduced or imitated.

Reading through the letters then looking up these words it is quickly settled what has happened. The quilt in question was manufactured in imitation of another's ideas and in the manner of the original. But passing it off as their own was not intended by its creators. Therefore plagiarism is too strong a word to use in this instance.

The quilt was not original in design but it is not derived nor derivative of the original. So derivative is a word which cannot be used. This leaves us with the word *copy*. The quilt at the centre of the correspondence is simply a copy of a work by an American quilter.

The history of artifacts and art works being copied has been around since the human race began creating objects. Its roots are so ancient that it hardly rates a merit in being discussed.

What I find of concern is how readily the names of those who commissioned this work have been used to add weight to a reply. Surely some integrity of spirit should be extended to them? They happened to see a work, like it and commissioned a copy. Perhaps using it to advertise an exhibition was a little unwise, but not silly enough to merit such controversy.

Many of the large art collections in the world have works labelled "After So and So", meaning a copy or in the style of a certain artist. Perhaps the quilt in question should have a simple label "After Pasquini" and be left at that.

Malcolm Harrison, Auckland.

EDITORIAL

I recently had it suggested to me that we need to nurture and promote art that not many people understand. We were talking about artists who break new ground, the innovative leaders, those who are misunderstood now, but in the future will prove to have opened new ground for those who follow.

I don't have too much problem with that. But sometimes we are fooled into not recognising the emperor's clothes. That is, we are so flummoxed at seeing something different from our normal expectations that we don't recognise it for the load of garbage it undoubtedly is. Normally though, as we learn more about any art form we find ourselves appreciating a wider range of work - and the door should always be open to new modes of expression and appreciation.

In the same conversation I had my bluff called when it was suggested that critical writing should be treated in the same way. That is; there are those inventing new modes of expression, breaking new ground in critical writing. In short, writers that almost nobody understands. The proposition was that these people should be promoted and assisted because sometime in the future people will start to understand and appreciate what they were getting at.

I had to go away and think about that. Is it the job of this magazine to lead the way with critical writing? Certainly it is. We have to offer the best possible opinions and ideas about craft and the ideas surrounding it.

Writing is an art form. Writers can say clever things, esoteric things; they can illuminate our lives by clarifying concepts we'd never previously understood, but that is the crux of it; they must be understood. Top writing must be well crafted art. How many times have you grazed through an expensive glossy magazine, looking at the pictures, but not pausing to read because the words were so much unintelligible gobbledegook? I'm right behind intelligent writing. I'm all for promoting our best writers. I'm all for bringing other perspectives before the readers. But let's remember who the readers are, not a minority intelligentsia, but a wide, interested and educated group of people with an interest in craft.

Peter Gibbs, Editor.

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THE STATE OF CLAY

By Peter Gibbs.

The perception of New Zealand pottery is changing. Once, enthusiasm, a few basic skills, a wheel and some bricks were the basic requirements for a career as a potter. Potters made pots and sold them to live. They also kept a few special pieces aside and exhibited them. Sometimes these exhibition pieces were non-functional, although this was not the norm. Pottery was strictly a craft and few efforts were made to argue with this.

Inevitably things changed. As those who work with clay began to express themselves without the limitations of function, the whole marketing and survival strategy began to be more flexible. The word *potter* carried restrictive connotations. *Ceramist* or *ceramic artist* fits better, although most shy away from the implied pretension of such a title.

One of the most important changes in perception of those who work in clay comes from galleries and the art and corporate world in general. Clay is no longer seen as a slightly rustic folk-art. Exhibitions of the work of individual artists is being seen in the more prestigious private and public galleries, where once just annual group shows got a condescending look in. Corporate purchases are becoming an important marketing aspect.

Below; *The Place Where Water Has Gone* by Kyoko Hori of Japan. Purchased by the Auckland Museum from the 1991 Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award. Photo; Haru Sameshima.

There is a growing internationalism in outlook, fostered by the *Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award* and projects such as the *Seville Expo* collection. This issue of *Craft NZ* reviews the Fletcher show and discusses events surrounding the *33rd National Exhibition* of the NZ Society of Potters. Individual exhibitions of two of our most important clay artists, John Crawford and Christine Boswijk are also reviewed.

The most important ceramics project ever, in terms of funding and international exposure, is the New Zealand presence at Expo next year. It has caused remarkable dissension within the ranks of New Zealand potters.

One of the world's most important venues for ceramic art is the annual exhibition at Faenza in Italy. In 1986, then New Zealand Society of Potters' president John Crawford took the initiative in putting New Zealand's case to be country in focus. The Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council came to play a central role in planning, but NZSP always had a key involvement. Eventually, the project foundered because a sponsor could not be found.

The Seville proposal arose independently as a cooperation between QEII, the National Museum and Expo 92 Ltd. Because potters saw it as an offshoot of Faenza, many were angry that there was no consultation with NZSP, or that individual potters had no chance to apply to be part of the project. Potters are used to a democratic approach. They are also accustomed to a conventional gallery display of pots; which Expo will certainly not be. The concept, developed by James Mack in consultation with Expo Commissioner/General Ian Fraser, is to use ceramics as an example of excellence. Ian Fraser; "...an unusual, arresting, challenging display of New Zealand ceramics was a very good way of using an art form to add to all the other propositions that the pavilion was making. This time the art form is locked into the hard sell that we are doing in the New Zealand pavilion in terms of branding New Zealand with the mark of excellence".

Mack and Fraser were anxious not to take to Spain an art form which might be already done better in Europe. At the same time they wanted concepts which were readily understood and identified with by Europeans.

Ceramics was therefore chosen because both men believe it to be an art form in which New Zealand is a world leader. The various themes were chosen so they would be readily identifiable to the Expo audience. Neither believe that wider consultation was necessary. Ian Fraser; "I've been making those sorts of selections for years, and at the end of the day you've got to be true to yourself and to your concept because that's what you've been put there to do, not to go out and take a vote". At the same time, he recognises the responsibilities inherent in taking on that role; "The privilege or the right which you take to yourself to make selections, to make statements, to develop concepts, carries with it an obligation to enter into a dialogue with those people who don't get selected. The dialogue will go on because there has to be a vigorous defence of the concept and the selection criteria and all that process."

THE EXPO 92 PROJECT

By Louise Guerin

November is the deadline for the fifteen people producing work for the featured ceramics and glass exhibition in New Zealand's pavilion at Expo 92 in Seville, Spain, which opens in April next year. The theme for Expo is *Voyage in the Age of Discovery* and this country's contribution will reflect that very much from a Pacific perspective. This exhibition will be the first showing of New Zealand ceramics and glass in such an international arena.

Spain and New Zealand are antipodes of each other - the old hole right through the earth until you come out the other side theory - so there will obviously be references to that major theme in the work. Another key feature will be aspects of voyaging. Christopher Columbus will naturally have an extremely high profile throughout all the Expo 92 celebrations, but as the New Zealand ceramics contribution's curator and designer James Mack puts it, "whether you like it or not, 1500 years at least before Christopher Columbus did what Christopher Columbus did, there were great ocean voyages happening in the South Pacific.

Left; Expo Commissioner/ General Ian Fraser.

"The second thing to tell is that the evidence of these voyages was ceramic - the Lapita culture."

The name Lapita comes from a type of pottery found in the oldest sites of human settlement from Santa Cruz to Tonga and Samoa. The sites date from between 3,400 and 2,000 years ago. The actual pots and pieces thereof are very distinctive as they are decorated with bands of very small, fine geometric decoration, impressed with a tooth-comb like stamp.

Another major ceramic link comes from the recent history of the one extant building on the Expo site. It was built in the twelfth or thirteenth century as a Cartusian monastry, and within its very walls Mr Columbus planned his great sailing against the wind. He was also first buried there, before being twice more moved until left in his final resting place.

In the late 1830s, lean times hit and the building was sold to an Englishman by the name of Pickman, who turned it into an encaustic (hot wax process) tile making factory, which it remained for another century or so. Five large beehive kilns are still there.

So all the New Zealand participants have been asked to consider elements of these various themes from a Southern Hemishere perspective within the work they ultimately produce themselves.

"The other thing is that without poking 'em in the ear hole or being tough or mean or anything, you're then able to remind the Spaniards, old as they are, of things like the age of our continent in relation to the age of theirs. So we're also talking the Gondwanaland tectonic plate thing as well, when we were a land of great birds and great trees", says Mack.

It is estimated that the exhibition will be seen by up to 50,000 people a day - high flying guesses say 100,000 a day - which makes a potential audience of somewhere around six million during the course of Expo. The show may later tour to the Netherlands before returning to New Zealand as part of the permanent collection of the National Museum.

Below; The Expo 92 site. Expo 92 is being built on the island of Cartuja. The site of 2.15 million square metre is so big that the Brisbane World Expo would fit into a single corner.

Above; Plate, 1934 by Elizabeth Lissaman. Photo; Haru Sameshina

CLAY EVENTS

By Julie Warren
Clayazart

ClayAzart made a return visit to New Zealand in June. Organised by the University of Flagstaff, Arizona, these annual conventions rotate around countries doing significant work in ceramics including Finland, Japan, Australia, England, and New Zealand. The 1985 visit to Rotorua was such a success that local organisers, Mark and Ailsa Chadwick, arranged a repeat performance.

In 1985 Peter Voulkos, Jim Leedy and Bruce Howdle came; this time Jim Leedy was joined by Don Reitz and Don Bendel.

Held at the Soundshell on the edge of scenic Lake Rotorua, the convention was a huge success. The city of Rotorua hosted a warm welcome in their impressive Civic Administration Building. Opened in 1986 the building is a showpiece for the collection of commissioned New Zealand artworks.

The Americans were a close group, a well groomed roadshow, travelling and working together frequently. Local input was provided by Kaipara Harbour's Chester Nealie.

Don Reitz is a familiar and popular visitor to New Zealand. He first attended the N.Z. Society of Potters convention held at Palmerston North in 1981, and returned to judge the Fletcher Brownbuilt Award in 1984. This visit he travelled with his wife Paula Rice, also a highly regarded ceramic artist.

Jim Leedy had proved to be a controversial visitor in 1985, but this time he was in top form. Greatly influenced by his experiences as an artist and photographer in the Korean War, his work has developed in many directions, including prints, drawings, ceramic and sculptural works, and "sky art".

Head of the ceramics department at the University of Flagstaff, Don Bendel is known for his invention and production of the highly successful gas "Bendel Burner". He has developed unique clay bodies and decorating techniques in his works, and brought to New Zealand a huge collection of slides.

Over the two day period, Reitz, Leedy, Bendel and Nealie produced some spectacular pieces. But much of the Americans' work challenged our aesthetic sensibilities. Gouged, irregular, unrecognisable forms appeared. What were we to make of them? The slides shown of American work gave rise to more discussion. Exhibitions in major United States galleries showed monumental pieces, but on what could we base our assessment of them?

Jim Leedy, a man as used to expressing himself in words as through his art, explained that he was influenced by the action painting of Pollock. In the 1940s and 50s such painters revolutionized art; pigment was thrown, dripped and splashed giving work the appearance of being created at random. Leedy has two sides - one pretty and decorative - the other deals with disaster and death in a humorous way. He couldn't walk away from the atrocities he had seen in Korea and dealt with it through his art.

Conventions are often as memorable for the talking and socialising as for the work produced. This weekend was no exception. Reitz and Leedy were particularly articulate, presenting us with a wealth of experience and philosophy. Bendel later shared his expertise with the Craft Design course at Carrington showing slides, many of student works.

Elizabeth Lissaman 33rd National Exhibition of the New Zealand Society of Potters at The Bath-House, Rotorua's Art and History Museum.

Held to co-incide with ClayAzart, the exhibition was notable for the display of work by Elizabeth Lissaman, one of New Zealand's pioneers of studio ceramics. This collection represents the beginning of the Society's efforts to preserve and document the history of studio pottery in New Zealand.

The Lissaman exhibition was comprehensive, from the first pot made in 1920 to work completed in 1990, the year before her death.

Elizabeth Lissaman was a true pioneer, collecting her own materials, making her own equipment, and for many years working without the support and stimulation of other craftspeople. Her pots were unashamedly a vehicle for her first love, decoration.

In today's competitive environment, we expect more. We expect well made, well resolved forms; most of the pots in the NZSP exhibition were. We look for finish, function, and are obsessed with new directions. Potters are constantly confronted with new materials, equipment, ideas and expectations.

The work of Elizabeth Lissaman will not be subjected to the same criticism as contemporary work. But after a pottery career of 50 years, her techniques can be seen as truly innovative. Reflecting on her work made me wonder - how will future generations judge the work of today?

Right; "Herb Garden", reversible long cardigan by Marion Valentine. Photo; Judy Wilson.

Far right; Garment by Barbara Wilson. Winner of the Glenora Craft Award. Photo; Barbara Wilson.

Below; "Feather Tunics", derived from Peruvian textiles, by Joanna Staniszkis. Photo; David Cook, courtesy Waikato Museum.

WOOLCRAFT MAGIC

JUDY WILSON

Above; Marbling work with Maxine Lovegrove Photo; Judy Wilson.

The National Woolcraft Festival was hosted by the New Zealand Spinning, Weaving and Woolcrafts Society during May at the University of Waikato. Woolcrafts have evolved as a female dominated arena and for most spinning, weaving and knitting remain a recreational hobby - a means of keeping sane and of using the joy of crafting and creating in a productive way. At the same time, these crafts have been taken to a high professional level.

During the festival, registrants can attend workshops and lectures, survey a range of exhibitions, take part in competitions and visit the trade halls. The premiere event is usually the fashion parade. This professionally staged affair was coordinated by Barbara Wilson. Her quest was for excellence in concept, design and creation of garments. It is to be expected that the award winners achieve that, and this year was no exception. In fact, it was the outfit designed by Barbara Wilson herself which the judges chose for the major award. Her outfit of pants, jacket and hooded blouse, woven in fine cream merino wool and bouclé, was stunning - fashionable and sophisticated. Equally innovative fashion design was evident in the superb hand knitted garments by Marion Valentine. Outstanding work included a knitted outfit by Nuki Snodgrass and a dress and an award wining jacket by Jan McConochie. There were still garments which were outdated in style, dead in colour and used surface decoration inappropriately. Exhibitors, organisers and the viewing public are all well aware of the need for improvement, but they must also glory in the rising standard of the top work.

Exhibitions on campus covered a wide spectrum; the festival is no place to rest. A small area featuring tutors work was interesting. A display of dyed silk fabrics by Maxine Lovegrove and a selection of knitting by Ailie Snow were vastly in contrast to the appalling standard of a suitcase exhibition of craft from the USA. A New Zealand show of memorabilia from private collections featured historical knitting equipment and garments and was shown in a delightful area entitled *Look Back in Stitches*. My favourite was a man's jumper knitted on bicycle spokes in 1939 - the ultimate in Kiwi ingenuity.

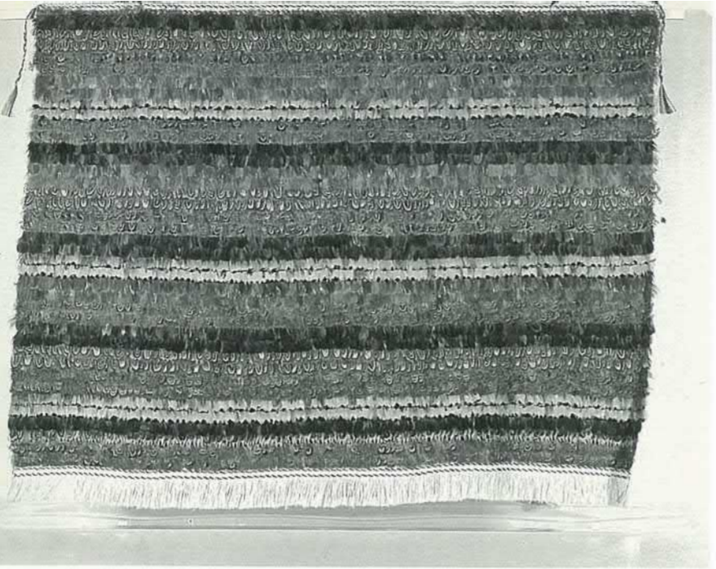
Then of course there was the *Festival Exhibition*, an amazing feat to mount such a large display for just four days. With the help of display artist Norman Smythe, 208 pieces were on show; floor rugs, wall hangings, tapestries, linen work, knitted garments, felted articles, woven fabrics and more - a glorious, joyous celebration of woolcraft by people who love what they do. Excellence is always the aim, the work was of a high standard, and there was a restful lack of political statements. While this was certainly not a display of leading edge craft/art, it was nevertheless as valid as any other form of self expression that I have seen at a major craft exhibition.

Another unique display was the *Colour Extravaganza* by the Waikato area. A bulk amount of wool was dyed by Akatere wools into just a few colours - turquoise, sky blue, aqua and grape. Individuals chose from this yarn, then wove, knitted and crocheted it into fabric, knee rugs, cushions, bags, garments, hats and toys. Displayed on a grapevine structure, the effect was wonderful - colour coordinated and joyous.

Then there were the workshops, lectures and seminars covering a vast range of subjects from creative knitting to taniko weaving; from photography to business studies; from spinning cotton and flax to felting and paper marbling. People go to workshops for many reasons. Some just want to have fun, others go to relax, but most go to learn a specific technique. In many cases women come to learn a specific skill they can take home to enrich the lives of others - part of the nurturing role women assume. This is what the festival is all about - the caring and expertise of motivated teachers is later used to enrich the lives of handicapped people, home economics students, senior students and primary school children - in places where craft skills can enrich lives. At the same time, the scope was so wide that it enabled professional and innovative fibre artists to learn the skills they need to reach high levels of achievement.

As well as inviting New Zealanders, the NZSWWS also hosted overseas tutors. Joanna Staniszkis was featured in the five star *Material World* event at the Waikato Museum of Art and History. What a celebration of fibre - 2000 people crossed the threshold on the Saturday of the festival, 1800 on the Sunday. These fibre events were supported with fervour and enthusiasm and the prospect of *Art in Wool*, *Creative Dyeing III*, *The Globe Tapestries*, *Joanna Staniszkis* and *Rangimarie Hetet* was an extravaganza few could resist.

Joanna Staniszkis was born and educated in Poland and is now one of Canada's best known textile artists. Her recent works have their roots in her long experience with textiles from other times and other cultures. Of her work she says, "I am offering textiles which echo tradition - my own translation of tradition into a form which is contemporary. My own version of the qualities which attracted me to the traditional textiles in the first place; colour, texture and pattern." As an experienced and innovative artist, she interprets the forms and motifs of these textiles in dramatic new ways.



Korowai by Rangimarie Hetet. Photo; Ralph Cook, courtesy Waikato Museum.

Staniszkis determines structure in three ways, building on fish net or wire mesh, perforated sheets of plexiglass and double sheets of plexiglass with hollow channels. For her pieces inspired by Peruvian tunics she dyed silk ribbons (from discarded cargo parachutes), and attached them in short strips over fish net or wire mesh grid. The result abstracts the pattern of the complex original motif. I liked their clear simplicity and brilliance of colour.

The technique using plexiglass sheets with parallel hollow channels cut into robe shapes was fascinating. These channels were filled with silk, wool and synthetic fibres of varying translucence. As in ikat patterned robes, the edges of the motifs were softened by the blending of the colours. These works were boldly contemporary statements but reminiscent of other times and places.

If Staniszkis' work is a translation of tradition, the celebration of the weaving mastery of Rangimarie Hetet is a breathtaking overview of her skills as a traditional weaver. The cloaks, kete and wall hangings made by Rangimarie over her long life cover a range of techniques. The korowai and kakahu cloaks glow with a life of their own, each faultless in execution and design with close attention to detail. Her taniko weaving is perfect, rhythmical and warm, and her kete are simply beautiful. I find it hard to put my reactions to her work into words - I can only respond with reverence.

I'd like to quote something Rangimarie said when interviewed in 1987:

"When I was a child, there were many kuia who were weavers, many around at that time doing the work I do now...

"My knowledge of weaving came from that time...I watched them weaving and now I am old and I am still weaving.

"There was one thing though. This kuia, Kahutopu (who was from Ngati Rereahu) would watch me weaving taniko. She told me something special. She said 'The very first row you weave, that row is the Aho tapu - the sacred row. Once you have done the Aho tapu, think about it. Then you will keep going, and you will do well...' I understood after that...

"Of course I married and had children and raised them... Then I came home and started weaving again. The Maori Women's Welfare League began and one of their members, Rumatiki, said to me 'Will you teach the women in our group to make piupiu?'... I agreed... So the call went out, from many groups, to do this work...since then lots of people have asked to learn about whariki, kete and cloak weaving...

"My daughter has it now, the weaver's skill, and I know that it will not die out, the weaving of our ancestors...

"...My hope is that you will all carry it on, and be strong and very determined... Hold on to this work. It will not be lost if you hold on to it..."

There's something I'd like to say to sum up the work that the NZSWWS is doing; to echo Rangimarie's last statement .

Carry on, be determined and hold on to what you are doing. But always aim for the best at whatever level.

He toi whaikaro

He mana tangata

Where there is artistic excellence

There is dignity.

AILIE SNOW

By Judy Wilson

When people think of handknitting, the mental images it conjures up vary widely, but I always like to picture the beautiful, subtle garments created by Ailie Snow. As one of the invited tutors to the National Woolcraft Festival, Ailie's theme was Knitwear Design, and to attend a class with her had the potential to blow away all preconceived ideas about knitting.

A typical novice like me, might suddenly find it's OK to start knitting half way up the back, if that's how the design is best developed. To find that you can add the bands afterwards once it's clear what the garment needs, shows how far knitting has developed into a medium for creative expression, how free a form it is, and with these skills (especially if added to the ability to spin yarn and dye it) it means that there are no limits - and that's what Ailie's teaching and her own work is about.

Her own garments are very much an emotional response to what she sees, influenced particularly by the sea and its imagery, music and its themes. The designs seem to grow and develop with the knitting and ideas unfold along the way. That's not to say her work isn't structured - it certainly is, and she pays great attention to a technique which produces a work which feels good, wears well and has appeal.

An intuitive and natural teacher Ailie shares the technical knowledge of process, then helps people interpret this for their own needs, to probe more deeply into their responses to colour, form and texture. The gentle art of knitting moves from being a domestic ritual to a very creative response - add the satisfaction of the making to the joy of wearing the result, and this is within the reach of everyone.

Above; Jackets by Ailie Snow. Photo; Anne Nicholas.

While Ailie tutors a lot and is willing to travel anywhere to teach, she also avidly attends all workshops by visiting tutors featuring knitting and also design. Her present methods are quite simple, but she's always ready to find a better way to do things - till she does she uses those she's happy with and this confidence within her work shows.

IN BRIEF

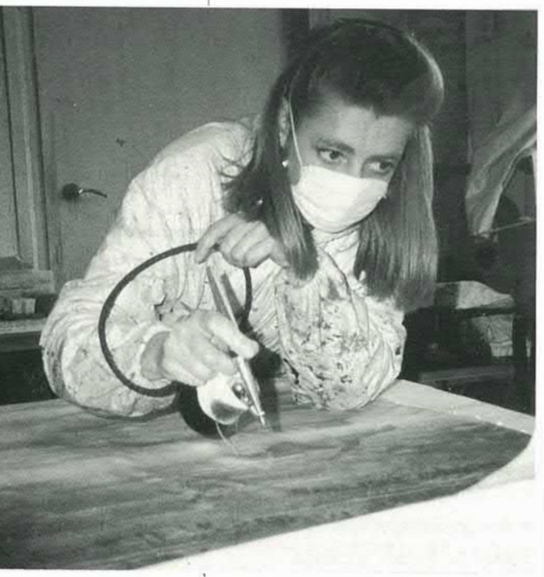
QUILT SYMPOSIUM '91

By Désireé D. Simpson

Right; Recent work by Michelle Dales and Linda Williams.

The fourth New Zealand Quilting Symposium took place in Dunedin from the 13th - 18th May, 1991. According to the convenors, Rosanne Anderson and Shirley Wright it was a wonderful success on many levels.

The symposium included major exhibitions and competitions for miniature quilts, suitcase sized quilts (which are currently touring New Zealand), quilted clothing, wall hangings and of course, bed quilts. These exhibitions attracted thousands of viewers, including a number of school parties who followed up later with colour and cloth exercises in the classroom.



Above; Australian tutor Jan Irvine demonstrates airbrush techniques. Photo; Shari Cole.

A week of workshops covered all aspects of the quilting craft. American, German, Australian, English and New Zealand tutors taught design using colour and cloth, dying and painting of fabric, contemporary and traditional methods and related crafts such as rag rugs and heirloom samplers. These workshops attracted seasoned symposium-goers, notable for the number of quilting badges they wore, the trolleys they used to carry their sewing machines, their travelling ironing boards, designer pieced sweatshirts and their large circles of acquaintances. They also attracted newcomers at their first symposium - mostly modest women, eager to learn, who by the end of the week were discovering new found talents and new friends.

This symposium was notable for the support and sponsorship it received from businesses, both local and national. Companies such as Elna, Needlecraft Distributors, Beatrice Products and Warnaars made it possible for top overseas tutors to share their knowledge. Many other firms were generous of both time and money. It is encouraging to see the growing feeling in New Zealand of quilting and patchwork as a serious art-form worthy of major sponsorship.

Conventions are a great boost for local businesses and Symposium '91 was no exception. Over six hundred people attended Symposium in Dunedin and businesses responded with special displays aimed at quilters and with a tempting array of goods at Merchants' Mall. The local art gallery mounted a major exhibition of antique quilts - the collection of Susan Cave, and the Early Settlers' Museum displayed their quilts from the Otago region.

All who attended Symposium '91 judged it a great success. But perhaps the most satisfaction comes from the people who are still coming to the quilting shops saying they saw the exhibitions or the work someone did in a workshop, were impressed, and want to try something for themselves. It is these people and the school pupils who will become our future fabric artists.

HARAKEKE EXHIBITION

By Cheryl Brown

Michelle Dales and Linda Williams turned a shop in Wellington into an exhibition space during May. With a grant of $3,000 from the QEII Arts Council Special Arts Projects scheme the two women rented the space on the corner of Marjoribank Street to mount their craft exhibition of 26 paintings, 40 weavings and 7 appliqué wall hangings.

Both women share a passion for harakeke (New Zealand flax, phorium tenax). Michelle is a weaver who started plaiting harakeke about five years ago with Erenora Puketapu-Hetet. Now using synthetic dyes she makes kete using her own patterns and designs. Amongst the kete whakairo on display were tartan kete made up of repeated colour sets and containing at least 250 pieces of fibre. The idea for *Black Watch* came to Michelle when she was told that kuia in the 1940s and 1950s used to wear and carry Black Watch tartan rugs at hui. Another colourful piece was Rasta Tartan, using the well known rasta colours.

Linda's appliqué work also depicts harakeke. Linda has been doing appliqué work for 8 years and won the Golden Bay Art award last year with her wall hanging "Dream Flying", a symbolic white lily, harakeke frond and flying angel.

The exhibition attracted many people including children from Clyde Quay School who visited every day to learn plaiting. Posters told the story of harakeke, an interesting and delightful way for the women to share their knowledge and passion.

BRIERLEY GLASS COMMISSION

By Adrienne Rewi

When Wairarapa glass artist Heather Busch was commissioned to design and make a large glass panel for Brierley Investments Ltd head office in Wellington, she set out to create a "solid, reliable structure" in keeping with the energy of a business environment.

"I wanted to give a fairly formal sense of solidity and yet retain a creative movement. I felt it was important to create a design that would communicate a feeling of security for both the occupants of the building and visitors to the premises."

Above; Brierley comissioned panel by Heather Busch and Martin O'Connor of Glitzorarty. Photo; John Casey.

To portray that Busch and her partner, Martin O'Connor of Glitzorarty used a series of vertical forms incorporating geological effects, "like plates of earth, and a creative, weaving flow through the structure from left to right to break the formal pattern."

The Glitzorarty design was selected from five others submitted to Brierley Investments through the Merilyn Savill Gallery in Thorndon and it is located in the main reception area on the sixth floor of the building.

Keith Wilson Architects had been commissioned to revamp the interior and Busch's brief was to design a panel that would block out an unsightly view of the rear of surrounding buildings. Measuring 3.12 metres in length and 860mm high, the panel can be lit either internally, or by exterior light, and it is executed in muted pink, blues and pearly grey glass with "a touch of ochre to co-ordinate with surrounding rimu joinery." The panel was created in three main pieces using traditional lead came.

The use of pearly, irridised and opaque glasses means the panel can be appreciated on different levels. If the light is strong behind the glass you get one effect, and if it is dull, the internal lighting creates a completely different mood. Outside lights are also being installed to add extra exterior light, which will allow more control over lighting effects.

WAIWHETU WORKS

Last September a group of carvers, weavers and painters associated with the Waiwhetu Marae exhibited their recent works as part of the 1990 celebrations. All but three of the exhibitors were under thirty. It was a very popularexhibition with more than 3000 people going to see it.

The Hutt City Council, through the Dowse Art Museum, commissioned Julia Brooke-White to photograph 18 of these contemporary works so that a photograph album may be retained by the Waiwhetu Marae as a record of the exhibition.

Below; Poi, woven by Erenora Puketapu-Hetet (Te Ati Awa). Photo; Julia Brooke-White.

Above; "Littoral Icons" by Gavin Hitchings. Part of "From the Sea to the Sky". Photo; Gavin Hitchings.

Top Right; Kath des Forges, Dawn Sanders, Sandy Heffernan, Pip Steel; key contributors to the Globe tapestry. Photo; Julia Brooke-White.

FROM THE SEA TO THE SKY

Each year, the city of Memphis selects a foreign nation during a month-long festival of arts, culture and commercial exchange. This year's honoured country was New Zealand. The National Ornamental Museum in Memphis, with support from the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand, presented the work of twelve of New Zealand's foremost jewellery designers. The exhibition was curated by Laurence Hall of Christchurch as part of the Memphis in May International Festival.

In his curator's statement, Laurence Hall points out that materials which are precious in monetary terms do not feature in the show. Rather, spirtual values are emphasised. "If jewellery in New Zealand is not about wealth, it is about art. It is a statement of beauty and aesthetics, and about the society we live in and the land we inhabit... If there is a theme connecting the objects in the exhibition, it is the environmental and social consciousness of the artists, visualised throught the medium of metal."

GLOBE THEATRE HANGINGS

By Judy Wilson

By the end of 1993 when they have finished their tour of New Zealand, the Globe Theatre hangings will be familiar to almost everyone interested in craft, Shakespeare and theatre in New Zealand. Already they have had good television exposure and many feature articles written about them. We're familiar with the parts some people played - Sam Wanamaker who investigated the project to reconstruct the Globe Theatre, Raymond Boyce who designed the curtains and Kath des Forges who was the Creative Director.

The story of their creation reads as a masterpiece of kiwi motivation, co-operation and dedication.

However, anyone who has worked closely on a collaborative effort like this, knows there is also a story of unsung heros (usually heroines) who largely go unacknowledged and that there are a number of contradicting ideals to be resolved.

When the original curtains were made in the Elizabethan era, there was a strong tradition of embroidery, and labour, time and cost were not a problem. There were many professional embroiderers amongst the court ladies and quite a large home industry. At other stages in history, costs could have pointed to the option of painted curtains, so why not this time? After all, stage hangings have to be used, they wear out and huge inputs of labour must seem a waste. However, the Academic Committee in London decided they should be embroidered. In fact, embroiderers in New Zealand were initially quite diffident about the project and the eight who were eventually persuaded to take a major part in the project could well see why. Sandy Heffernan, Pip Steele, Beverly Forbes, Liz Lowry, Toni Gernert, Joan Clauston, Barbara Hercus and Diana Parkes are all top semi-professional creative textile embroiderers. For 15 months they were to do almost no work of their own. This prospect, together with the need to work on a project with no creative design input of their own, did call for some persuasion.

In many large textiles worked from translation of a cartoon form to the cloth, there is room for interpretation by the craftsperson. For example; with tapestry weaving. This was not so with the Globe project. The translation had to be exact in scale, colour and texture. It also had to be durable to withstand handling in use and atmospheric exposure. So the actual technique was the embroiderers' only choice. It is here that the glory of these hangings lies - this choice of stitch and different treatment of designs by each embroiderer makes it unique, and despite the rigid guidelines individual creativity shows.

Kath des Forges was in charge of the creative designs, also the quality control. To adhere to the exact translation, all pieces had to be visually right and while the eight chosen embroiderers worked on the major figures, groups from all around New Zealand worked on smaller pieces. Every stitch or technique had to be sampled and presented for approval to the designer before being worked - a process which caused much delay and frustration, but which proved in the end to be valuable and rewarding. Even after this, if the resulting piece wasn't quite suitable it was unpicked and the material or stitch technique was changed. It is hard to measure the skill and time put into choosing fabrics of the right colour and texture; to cutting, bonding, embroidering and then machine stitching all the edges. In Elizabethan days the listings (borders) were replaced due to wear and tear, so these hangings have extra appliqué on the borders. That may not seem a problem but it meant getting a special braiding foot for the machine to do these borders. Therein lies another rather unacknowledged part of the story - the great support from sponsors, especially Bernina. They provided the use of sewing machines, overlockers, special feet for the machine, the latest commercial iron with a fierce jet of steam which helped so much with the bonding process, and a specially set-up industrial machine. Not to mention the thousands of reels of thread all with "no strings attached". This kind of support did much for keeping stress levels down and enthusiasm up, so important in such a demanding project.

These theatre hangings are a glorious celebration of stitch for which we should pay tribute to many. Special acknowledgement should be made to the eight women who gave of their time at weekends and nights, at the expense of their own creative development, to achieve such an amazing collaborative work.

Above; "Vase Form", by Duncan Ross, England. Photo; Haru Sameshima.

Right; Earrings by Frances Allison.

REVIEWS

FLETCHER CHALLENGE CERAMICS AWARD, 1991

Reviewed by Peter Gibbs

Tim Currey of New Zealand won the premiere award of $10 000 at the 1991 Fletcher Challenge Ceramics award. "Rock Column" was a sculpted piece which could as easily have been made from stone as clay, its rough hewn sides supporting the round boulders which are a feature of the beaches surrounding Currey's Port Charles, Coromandel home. That is - his former home. Following a successful exhibition at Masterworks Gallery in Auckland, Currey left for Australia. Will he pass into the folk-lore of New Zealand ceramics, or will he be back?

Judge Ron Nagle did a good job. Resisting the temptation of previous judges to hand out awards with both hands, Nagle kept it tight. With the opportunity to give five $1000 awards, he chose instead to give Minnesota potter Jeff Oestreich a double award of $2000 for a sober, dignified temmoku glazed teapot. A reassuring reaffirmation of functionally sourced ceramics as a valid art form.

As I write, long after the event of the exhibition itself, the hype, the excitement, the voices of other people begin to recede and it is possible to get a more objective view of my own (subjective) feelings for the the individual pieces.

English potter Beverly Bloxham's *Cubist Classical Vase* took an old idea, but expressed it with a freshness and vitality.

Greg Daly's *Lustred Platter* was a virtuoso technical performance on a grand scale (790mm), but it was panache rather than technique that gave it an unforgettable vigour.

Current visitor to New Zealand from England, Siddig El'Nigoumi's *Sudanese Ibreeq* demonstrated the delicacy and perfection of his work, hinting at an African aesthetic to do with carrying water and survival, but doing so with a more international sophistication.

The Monument of Peace, by Kaku Hayashi, combined large scale (800mm) and simplicity in a powerful gesture. *Creuset/Crucible* by Frenchman Jacques Kaufmann did the same. Both were arresting pieces. They made me reflect on the New Zealand tall poppy syndrome, which often dismisses large pieces as egotistical exercises in machismo. American Don Reitz, in his 1981 visit to this country put it into better perspective when he said that he made large pieces because he could relate more directly to them - they were on his scale. It is a sad statement on the New Zealand psyche that we more often see the success of others as a negation of our own achievements.

Yozo Kizaki's *Flower Vases and Planter Covers (7 pieces)* were an interesting exercise in simplicity. Simple cylinders, from which scallops of clay had been removed, revealing layers of pastel colour beneath the surface, colours so soft they could have been made from plastic. In factory mass-production these pieces could have been sickening, like too much rich food. Taken in moderation they were rich and luxurious.

Lawson Oyekan's merit award winning *Passage with Palm Print* had to be looked at several times. In the standard visitor's tour of the show, I may have dismissed it as a judge's aberration. On each return, I found more and more to ponder. Above all, I found it a gesture of supreme confidence. In dismissing so out-of-hand most of the conventions of form, structure and technique, this English potter cleared the way for us to accept it as a statement of his own values.

In sharp contrast to this boldness, the *Vase Form* of Duncan Ross rose so tenuously from its base, so delicately around its shoulder, in other potters it may have demonstrated a lack of confidence. However, this delicacy, combined with the almost translucent quality of the surface, made this piece one of the most perfect, beautiful forms I have seen.

The excitement of the Fletcher exhibition has passed for another year, and with that passing comes the realisation that things will never be the same again. The show may be still fresh in our minds, but already potters will need to be well advanced in their work towards the 1992 Fletcher.

So successful was the preparatory work by Moyra Elliott, that for the first time, overseas entries outnumbered those from New Zealand - 233 to 220. Because of the increasing logistical problems of unpacking, storage and freight, the long cherished tradition of selecting from the works themselves has had to be stopped. In its place will come slide selection, long accepted overseas but not a system which New Zealanders have ever shown a liking for. To accommodate the sending of slides to the overseas judge, notification to successful entrants, then freighting of the works from all over the world in time for the selection of prizewinners and other preparation, the deadline for entries is December 13 1991.

FRANCES ALLISON

Exhibition at Cave Rock Gallery, Christchurch

Reviewed by David Brokenshire

Frances Allison, jeweller, silversmith, worker in metal, is another New Zealander who has established an international reputation overseas.

Frances, born, bred and schooled in Christchurch had two years at Canterbury School of Arts then at 20 left for England where she undertook an intensive training in her craft. After 3 years study she graduated B.A. Honours in Jewellery and Silversmithing from Middlesex Polytechnic. Then she spent three months in Israel at the Bezalel Academy of Arts in Jerusalem and finally graduated M.A. from the Royal College of Art - London in 1984. Over the last seven years she has set up her own studio in London, taught at summer schools, lectured part-time in jewellery in England and Australia and has exhibited widely in Britain, on the Continent, in the U.S.A., Australia and New Zealand.

Her New Zealand upbringing has served her well. Although the pioneering spirit in all of us must be well diluted now, nevertheless the willingness to try materials and ways of handling them, even if unconventional have sometimes borne her exciting results. Although she did not complete her degree at Canterbury her studies in sculpture have had a subtle influence on her work. The objects are not obviously tactile but the sculptural background has directed her choice of shape, texture, colour and form. Another positive influence has been the vast jump from New Zealand with 1,000 years of Maori life and 200 years of European occupation to Europe with roots extending back into prehistory. Discovering, seeing, tasting, feeling everything with fresh eyes in Europe has had a liberating effect on her work.

In April this year she exhibited her jewellery at Salamander Gallery in the Arts Centre in Christchurch with Rena Jarosewitsch, glass worker. It was a happy combination. The jewellery, very severe in black monel metal and semi-matt finish silver contrasted splendidly with the restrained use of colour in the glass. Although the colour in the jewellery was so severe the forms were joyous and full of life. Earrings, lapel badges, brooches, hatpins, tea strainers and a tea caddy comprised the exhibition.

The tea caddy - such a humble object - although only 12.5cm high, was an object of monumental proportions and scale. Surely it could only be used for "High Tea" serving the most exotic brew!! The lapel badges, perhaps more than the other pieces, showed an "Art Deco" influence but this was combined with a sense of movement as well as actual movement of some small parts.

Many of the earrings were large in physical size yet they were intricately worked with the combination of silver and monel metal. The hat pins were very decorative but also had an air of fantasy. The brooches also shared this particular quality yet they all had great vitality and expressed a joyous freedom.

In general it was an exciting exhibition and a wonderful opportunity to appreciate how much this talented New Zealander has achieved.

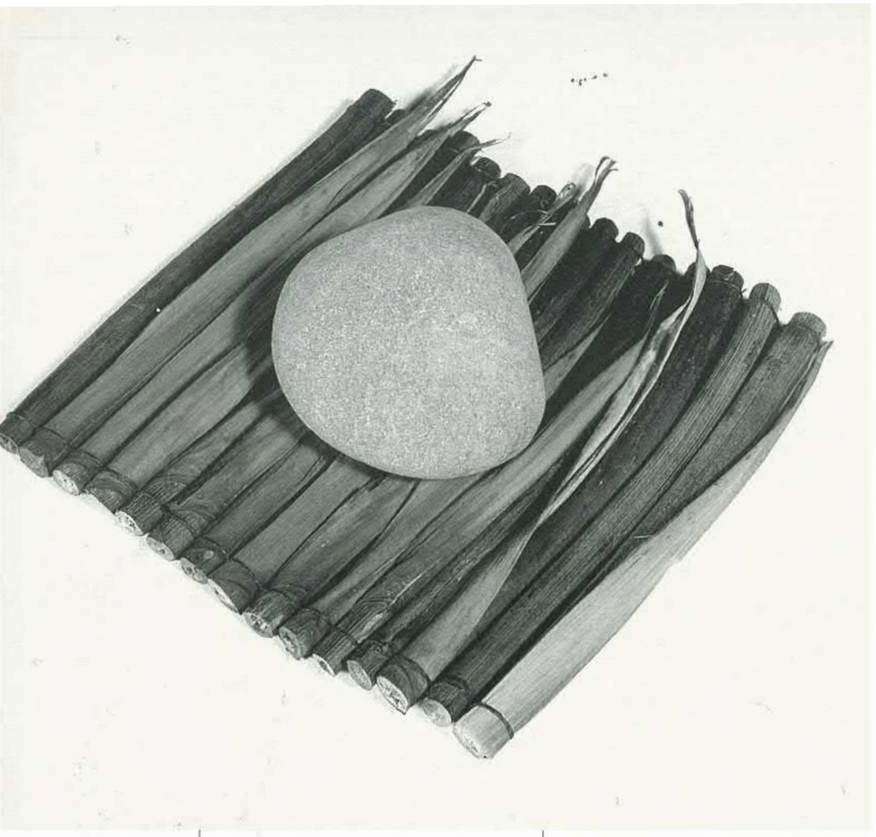
COMPLETING CIRCLES

The Pacific Fibre Symposium Exhibition

Sarjeant Art Gallery, May 15 - July 7 1991

Reviewed by Malcolm Harrison.

Time of participating in the Symposium was drawing to a close. The strains and elations of the past days had taken their toll. Now there was the trek around the working places of the participants to hear them talk of what they had achieved during our time together.



Above; "Symposium 1991", (Stone, flax, bark, willow, cotton, shells, feathers, tapa), by Judy Wilson. Photo; Richard Watton, courtesy, Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui.

Representing Maori, Pacific Island, and European New Zealanders, fourteen fibreworkers had been invited. But slowly an extended family evolved. Jacky's two children, Henry and Agnes Bennett, Ngareta the camera woman, Paul from the Sarjeant Gallery, and many others became caught up in the momentum. There was no thought of artists alone. We had become a large family and part of the life forces around us.

Finally we arrived at the room which had been used to welcome us, and there we sat to hear the last of our colleagues candidly discuss their work. And Eddie asked Agnes Bennett if she would sing. Agnes thought for a moment then in a clear strong voice, edged with emotion, she sang a song of moving simplicity. Translated it told that the love we share today is the love of our ancestors. A circle had been completed.

In mid-May I returned to Wanganui to see the Symposium's exhibition at the Sarjeant Gallery. Noticeable was that evolving and spinoffs from the Symposium had begun. All but three of the participants had created new works.

Ruth Castle's basket was so light and delicate that a puff of wind could have sent it floating away. Unknowingly, Jacqueline Fraser had created a floor piece which echoed the colours and symmetry of Pani Hemaloto's tivaevae hanging close by.

Rose Griffin had broken the scale of her work to present three stunning, yet quiet, large works, while Erenora Puketapu-Hetet must have had fun creating two witty woven collapsing containers.

Mark Lander's thoughts of creating an installation had evolved to a framed triptych of an impressive fountain and two yapping dogs. And Toi Te Rito Maihi showed mastery in her newfound skill of papermaking. Two beautiful canoes floated in the air while beside them a necklace and earrings of paper and silver wire waited for a mist princess to claim.

Eddie Maxwell wove three kete, one of which brought a smile to the face and a chuckle to the belly.

Tina Wirihana broke through a traditional barrier and showed strength in creating works which were to be viewed both sides. And where the unfinished is just as important as the finished.

Luseane Koloi, Anne Pluck and Jim Vivieaere were represented by the works they had done during the Symposium.

I had continued questioning the barriers, and submitted three paintings which continued the heart and crosses theme carved during Symposium days.

Of all the pieces in this small exhibition, for me the most moving was the installation created by Judy Wilson. Circled on the floor were fourteen river stones, each one representing a member of the Pacific Fibre Symposium. All but one had a base which clearly revealed the fibre interest of each artist.

The piece representing Toi had no mat to sit on. Eight white shells sat in two rows top and bottom of the stone. As she is a collector and conveyancer of knowledge this tribute is very perceptive.

A number of times I returned to view this exhibition, and always I would find myself drawn to Judy's installation and remember the time we fourteen had been together. The heat and frustrations. Crazy time and times when one wanted to be alone. Cultural interactions, sometimes not always smooth. The getting to know not names but people, and what was important to them. And always there was that song sung by Agnes. This work had completed another circle.

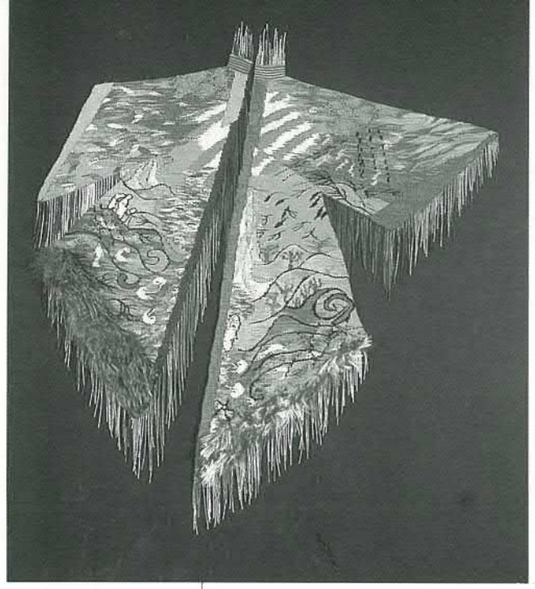
On Friday 24 May Agnes Bennett died. A greater circle had been completed.

ART IN WOOL

Reviewed by Judy Wilson

The partnership between the Crafts Council of New Zealand, the New Zealand Spinning Weaving and Woolcraft Society and the Wool Board has become well established through the awards set up to promote and recognise excellence in works crafted in wool. The award is presented in alternate years for Design in Fashion and Art in Wool. The selectors look for originality of design, creative use of colour, suitability of materials, technique, construction, professional finish and the highest degree of excellence in the use of wool in textile art. From time to time, controversy has surrounded the awards, notably the year it wasn't awarded because the standard wasn't high enough. As a result there has been a great expectation of merit in subsequent exhibitions and it was with this anticipation that I approached the show.

From the 50 or so entries, only 19 were accepted and shown in a fairly small space. I must admit to an initial feeling of disappointment, yet many of the works were successful and had integrity. There seemed to be a compelling need amongst many exhibitors to express a strong environmental or personal statement. This barrage of messages using different imagery made me wonder why so many fibre artists supply an explanation to accompany the piece. The work should stand alone, and our best craftspeople must believe in their own techniques and integrity. The title Art in Wool doesn't imply that superb crafting is not enough and that the work must promote debate.



Above; A Coat For "Mother Earth", by Anita Berman. Photo; David Cook, courtesy Waikato Museum.

There were many pieces I enjoyed. Adrienne Carthew's work embodied a theme which is very strong amongst fibre artists - that of using the cloak as a form for their work. Cloaks enfold, nurture, protect and are our outer statement of prestige and ceremony - no wonder they are created in innumerable forms. Adrienne's ceremonial cloak with its seaweed and fish imagery was a well conceived and resolved piece.

The theme of cloaks and a strong environmental statement about drift net fishing and the destruction of what is precious in our world was ably demonstrated in Anita Berman's *Coat for Mother Earth*. This vibrant miniature tapestry woven cloak used wool, lurex and silk and was the most successful of her works which have developed over recent years. My only problem was in seeing this spirited piece trapped in a severe heavy black frame.

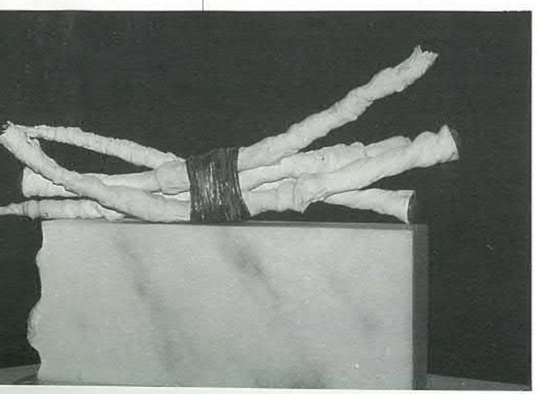
Lianne Cowell's award winning piece *Feasting my Spirit* was an interesting teepee shape in felt, sympathetically using blended colours. It was interesting that she used an American Indian form. The Middle Eastern tradition is to use felt in constructing yurts. Though the work was innovative and subtle in colour, I did find this choice for winner surprising given the expectation of excellence in design being the main criteria for selection.

Is it all right to be feminine? by Suzie Crooks presented a satirical statement about women's sexuality. The combination of a woven background and overlaid embroidery was lavishly embellished. The excessiveness of the theme, adornment, poses of the women and their voluptuousness left me feeling Suzie knew exactly where she stood in relation to her query. It was an interesting piece, but lacked the mastery of her knitted works.

There were also some fine rugs, mainly created using machine hooking onto canvas by Elly van Wijdeven, Dilana Rugs Ltd and Mary Nive Niumata. Powerful, dramatic designs, they created a strong approach to the concept of *Art in Wool* in comparison to delicate experimental pieces like Helen Schamroth's *Pacific Memories III* and Cathy Kenkel's felted *Protection Vessel with Pods*.

A varied exhibition, it showed a high degree of competence amongst our leading fibre artists, but I'd still like to leave such a prestige show feeling more excited.

Below; "Bound Signals", by Christine Boswijk. Photo; Peter Gibbs.



XENOLITHS 1991

Reviewed by John Crawford.

(Xenolith - A fragment of rock embedded in a rock of a different type)

In that great sea of New Zealand ceramics, it is a relief to find an atoll of personal commitment in the form of *Xenoliths,* Christine Boswijk's solo exhibition at the Bishop Suter Art Gallery, Nelson.

Acknowledgement of Boswijk's talent and creative ability has built slowly. She is probably one of the least applauded ceramic artists currently working in New Zealand. Her work is the product of an obsession, constant in its return to the female experience, located in the body, sensed from within.

Boswijk's work statement for Xenoliths highlights her major concerns. (I have taken the liberty of quoting just two paragraphs)

"I intend to explore through manipulation of material and process - the relationship between Form, Scale and Space - to express the concept of fragility as opposed to strength, forms that appear nebulous yet possess a definite dynamic - surfaces which speak of growth yet at the same time suggest decay - colour to be more evocative than decorative.

"A vessel is the enduring symbol which is expressed as the vehicle for carrying all life and thought.

"I want each piece to trigger memories and ideas, to initiate some inner voyage of thought through the emotional response to the work."

Heady stuff indeed! In short a very tall order and one that would crush a lesser artist.

Christine Boswijk's work is the result of a searching mind and therefore not without an experimental nature. Her technique of producing a clay body enriched with prefired grogs and glazes allows a stone on stone composite building of surface from within - totally stripped of all decorative statement, reminiscent of nature - sensitive, textured and finely tuned to form.

Christine has limited her construction process to that of working with torn threads of clay, which she binds into forms. This has given her the freedom to explore a dialogue of inner space and the relationships of repetitive forms. She works intuitively, one work suggesting another. A body of work grows in series, changes come in response to the work process and her emotive involvement with it.

On entering the gallery the six dominating (two and half metre high) Xenoliths draw you. They evoke a protective presence; you hesitate to invade the space they occupy. However, once inside their space you are immersed in a "canvas" so eloquently understated that it allows the energy held within the column-like forms to be set free. Their grey/blue sugar white textures suggest worn terrazzo or composite rock. These works impress.

Boswijk has shown she can deal with scale on her own terms. The truly memorable works in this exhibition are of medium scale (half a metre plus), especially those totem-like pieces that cluster together sociably in crowds. Tall, elongated and bound - containing space, singular but part of the crowd, again protecting space.

Many works are set on slabs of black or white marble. *Forest of Signals* is such a work, consisting of white unglazed and textured porcelain forms. They press to be read as abstract figures, effigies of the human condition, a crowd of watchers absorbed in the ritual of relating to one another. The same format is used and manipulated to evoke a catalogue of different responses such as *Bound Signals*. They are accentuated with copper blue egyptian paste, then bound with copper wire treated with copper nitrate. This work becomes concerned with surface without becoming superficial, it speaks of bound relationships and interwoven fears.

Xenolith Four - a group of life force effigies wave a single frond from the top. A sugar white glaze tinged faintly with copper green, accentuates the forms. They remind you of something left to grow in the dark, transparent for all the world to see, without being apparent.

The duplicity in Boswijk's work is its strength, she is at her best when using the imagery of encounter to render concrete an almost inescapable sense of inwardness and vulnerability.

Has Boswijk in her personal search discovered forms that depict femaleness from inside? She comes close at times, allowing you to rummage between the layers of her psyche. Such an exhibition uplifts with its honesty and commitment. The New Zealand ceramic scene is a great deal richer for her return.

Welcome home Christine, we look forward to your next exhibiton.

NATIONAL QUILT EXHIBITION

Reviewed by Shari Cole

Trends or Individual Directions?

Since Symposium I in Auckland, 1984, several quiltmaking trends have appeared. Early emphasis, both in the exhibition and in workshops, lay almost entirely on traditional work. The few designs in New Zealand subject matter employed American and British Isles techniques.

By Symposium II, 1987, some sought individual directions, but really innovative work came from overseas tutors and guest exhibitor Malcolm Harrison. Drafting and advanced skill classes were in demand.

1989, however, saw faultless traditionals alongside constructions only partly fitting the "fabric sandwich" quilt definition. Notably absent was the prickly argument over the relative validity of art quilt vs. functional bedding and baby wrapping. Most admired the skills of others regardless of their personal tastes. Workshops in shibori, fabric manipulation, and embellishment reflected this blurring of boundaries between media, and exhibitors had used unusual means to solve design problems - painting, fabric sculpture, free machine embroidery, and elements escaping from the frame. Traditional quilts showed more understanding of tone, colour, and perspective.

This year in Dunedin we might have expected these trends to accelerate. However, the 100 quilts selected for general exhibition held few surprises. Perhaps the fact of selection combined with separate venues for smaller "Suitcase" and "Silent Auction" quilts combined to reduce viewers' impressions of novelty. Traditionals predominated, with fantastically high standards of design and workmanship.

While some of these were whole-cloth and classic floral appliqué clearly intended to enhance period rooms, others blurred the craft/art interface - original design within the conventions of tradition. This time New Zealand subjects took a back seat to geometry and to styles from America and Great Britain. In contrast with the 1989 Hastings show, Maori and Polynesian influence was almost totally lacking. Perhaps three quilts featured Japanese fabric or technique - Robyn Van Reenen's sheer overlay fog in *Fishing Fleet at Dawn* an example. Approximately four addressed political, social, or environmental issues.

This is not a negative criticism. Quilts are extensions of their makers; part of life, not art for art's sake. They serve a variety of needs - beauty in the home, outlet for the human urge to make and create, scope for artistic exploration, focus for social contact, and statements of identity without recourse to words. By and large, quilters don't do what wins or what sells, but do instead what satisfies them. In so doing they express and define themselves.

That said, certain quilts showed notable differences. Machine quilting, common in the last century, is again respectable. At least 17 used this technique, among them Sue Spigel in *The Last Kaleidoscope*. Already a masterpiece of colour and light, this quilt profited from meander quilting flattening some elements of the pattern, throwing the rest into relief. Sheila Emsley's *A Border of Flowers* departed subtly from traditional floral appliqué and quilting with more geometric flowers outlined in machine satin stitch, areas of grid interspersed with echo quilting, and coloured streaks resembling Malcolm Harrison's Oceanic symbols.

Eleven or more entries contained hand-dyed fabric. Janet Ryan and Peggy Yates set the painted houses of "Rusty Roovz" in a black background, and pieced strips of this rusty fabric for the reverse side. Janet Chisnall pieced tie-dye by Anna McLeod into *Sorry, I'm Tied Up Today,* with graphic effect.

Black appears more, possibly due to the striking (and winning) work of Gwen Wani-

Above; detail from "The Gulf", by Pat Hewitt. Photo; Shari Cole.

gasekera last year for the ENZED competition, as a foil to bright colour. Alison Naylor's strong *Mordred's Web* reverses to reveal delicate spider-web quilting in light grey on black. Megan Griffiths embroiders by machine 12 subway maps *From Foggy Bottom to Gorky Park* on black with bright thread and buttons. Pat Hewitt sets abstract strip piecing of varied textures against black in *The Gulf*.

Coming from opposite directions, Clare Plug and Marge Hurst chose three-dimensional approaches to beach scenes. Plug's *Leave Only Footprints* depicts a fringed beach towel and sand festooned with found objects like shells and sunglasses. Hurst breaks up her signature log cabin technique with inserts of tucking, ruching, frayed edges, and machine embroidery for the third quilt in her *Pukerua Rock Pools* series.

Quilters have a puzzling custom - the vote for "viewers' choice". Most take this to mean, "which one of all these would you like to take home?" My answer would have to be, "Most of them."

PACIFIC MIRROR

An exhibition by John Crawford at galerie b15, Munich

Reviewed by Klaus Schultze

(Translated by Rena Jarosewitsch)

Upon entering the beautiful rooms of Renate Wunderle's gallery in Munich we are immediately transported into a fairyland. Effortlessly we recognize pictures from childhood that in this case take on plastic form. These are colourful and upon closer inspection one theme keeps resurfacing: 'the horse'.

The ceramist John Crawford, born in New Zealand in 1951, where he grew up, remembers being carried on his father's back

Above; "Pacific Mirror", by John Crawford.

as a child. In one of the works the figure sits on a big, black horse, retrained in colour and form, evoking images of archaic discoveries. In another, the rider becomes one with the animal.

Once again we relive the artist's childhood. Crawford's father might have walked on all fours, with his son anxiously looking for security, almost wanting to become one with the father.

The same exciting forms of expression have previously interested Marino Marini, but in a much more dramatic form. Crawford's works are naive with an endearing quality.

This pursuit and exploration of early memories also demonstrates a joy in playing with objets trouves, such as the glazed and painted porcelain pebbles, which he painstakingly weaves into a sumptuous carpet. These are further surrounded by a frieze of weathered, dangerously green, wooden pieces, white on one end, which at the same time evoke both the playfulness and a more serious character.

Here western and indigenous cultures meet. Perhaps the Maori unrolled similar magic carpets or used natural wooden and shell pieces to please their gods. For a German viewer an unknown world opens up through the artist's transformation of his experience and impressions of a New Zealand which glows with its own magic.

"In Quest of Universal Mysteries, Universal Truths", by Jeanette Gilbert. Winner Wales and McKinley Silk Award.. Photo; Anne Nicholas.

Certainly ceramics has a big advantage over "art" because it developed more naturally without being fixated with history. Each country, each people can be individual, while in "art" they are vulnerable to random, international trends which do not relate to them.

The lack of self-consciousness with which the artist employs graffiti like motifs, rendered with his hand-made instruments, and his freely decorated plates, scattered with spots, could point a new direction for many German ceramic artists. In the latter, the interplay between white areas and colour is particularly refreshing. It is like a breath of fresh air.

With the horse, the plate, the carpet of pebbles the artist is confident, a master. It is even possible to be well disposed to accept some almost too richly coloured pieces which reveal an appetite for life, originality and playfulness. One can almost see Crawford happily kneeling over the carpet, adding pebble to pebble - dreamily revealing an elementary, symbolic family of clay to the students of Munich. Suddenly he is child again - in touch with the source and inspiration of all creativity.

CREATIVE DYEING III

Reviewed by Judy Wilson

Over the decade of its existence, the Craft Dyers Guild has remained as a network where a motivated group of fibre artists use a wide range of techniques and approaches to textile creations. This diversity may account for a lack of distinct identity, but it does provide a forum where craftspeople working in media such as leather and flax can exhibit beside weavers and embroiderers. As well, the scope for conceptual pieces and wearable art is not limited. Maybe it does provide an exhibition with a lack of focus, but despite this, many of the selected pieces in *Creative Dyeing III* had a joy and richness in their composition and showed an increasing degree of competence among our dyers.

When choosing people to judge and select such a body of work, an assumption that their personal philosophies will influence their decisions must be accepted. Tori de Mestre doesn't adhere to traditional textile techniques. She considers the qualities of materials themselves as well as kinships between people and landscapes, so her choice for the major award was not surprising. The winning piece by Jeanette Gilbert, *In Quest of Universal Mysteries, Universal Truths* was a clear, bold, yet peaceful piece bringing together many elements - silk, painting, paper moulding, fibre construction and found objects. The clear hues on dyed silk create the seductive glow dyers love to control and combined well with the skills of reverse appliqué and stitchery. A moulded paper bowl bearing treasures was an integral part of the assemblage which retained an independent beauty.

In stark contrast to the allure of silk was the brave work by Jude Graveson, *Forensic Scrtach II.* This emotional and intellectual statement was inspired by the scratched graffiti on the walls of the exercise yard of Carrington's ex-psychiatric wards (now the craft design school where she is a final year student). Using an African dye technique and her own paste resist made of tapioca, rice and flour, these are a well conceived and bold set of banners. I felt quite in awe of Jude's concept and ability to put it together.

Susan Flight showed a return to her skills as a graphic artist. The two works shown were a dream-like fantasy of paths to freedom. I found the graphic part very satisfying, with skilful use of dye on silk. However, their mounting on frames, as in her previous work, unnecessarily caged them and I look forward to this development breaking quite free.

Kristin Hollis' silk banners in deep blues and reds hung so that the effect was a double layer with two surfaces interacting. The clarity of colours on silk is superb and the depth and movement she achieved created drifting images, capitalising on the seductive allure of this medium.

There were a number of pieces framed and mounted like pictures and I particularly liked Beryl Denton's immaculate miniature tapestry of Devonport wharf. I also admired Penny Read's treatment of her frame which was padded in brilliant turquoise cloth. This, together with a bright blue outer surround, set off the central theme of the islands, giving clear Pacific imagery and colours.

On view also were some lovely clothes, especially jackets, which provide such a wonderful opportunity for craftspeople to show off their skills of design, colour and crafting. Dyed by fabric painting, Betty Wilson's kimono style coat successfully used patchwork techniques to combine fibre reactive dyes and indigo dyed shibori pieces. Debz Ruffell also took the idea of a kimono shape with a huge outlandish jacket called *Skysong.* Using a simple dyed cloth and extending this to a multimedia approach with padding and stichery, it won her an award for the best piece by a first time exhibitor.

Vanessa O'Neil and Suzanne Haggard joined forces to produce a very well conceived outfit which glowed. It had a joy of extravagance with headband, earrings, necklace (which was superb), waistcoat, culottes, bag and purse.

Marie Potter received a merit award for her innovative and well constructed three-dimensional work in mixed media. She used leather and basketry techniques to make a strong statement about our role in the nurturing of our Pacific environment.

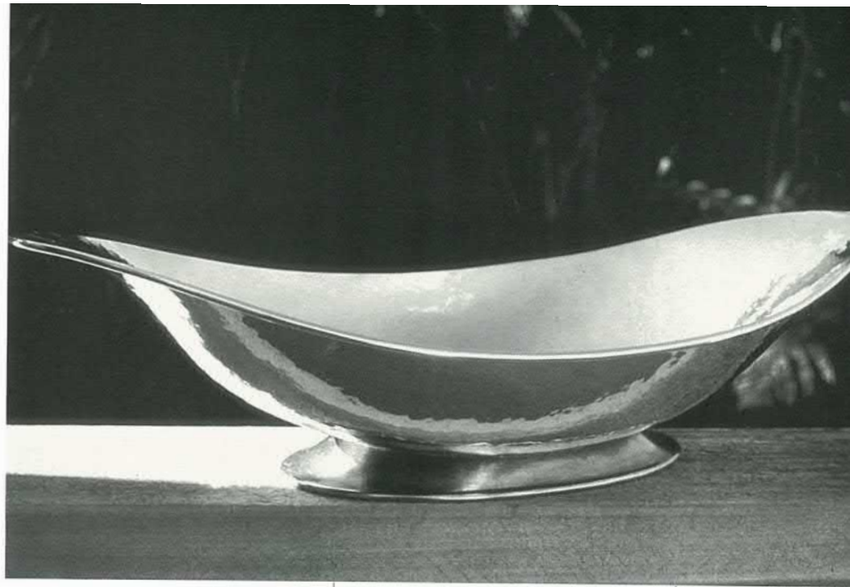
I found it proof of commitment that a small dedicated group like the Craft Dyers can coordinate such an effective show. It was a breakthrough to combine it with the woolcraft events and help create the *Material World* at the Waikato Museum.

PETER WOODS

Reviewed by Ann Packer

One of the most satisfying compliments any artisan can be paid is for another artist working in the same medium to admit they can't see how it's been done, when the piece has been so skilfully fashioned that its working cannot be fathomed. Sculptor Tanya Ashken was baffled by Peter Woods' copper and silver jugs, the apparently seamless blending of the two metals refusing to disclose their technical secrets.

The jugs were part of silversmith Peter Woods' recent exhibition at Merilyn Savill Gallery in Wellington. For those intimidated by the term "executive gift" there's still much to covet in Peter Woods' work. Much of the work is in an alluring mix of silver and copper, with burnished effects which vary from golden to burgundy. This display demonstrated the wide range of Woods' abilities, which puts him among our leading silversmiths. The elegant Polynesian-influenced serving dish, the mokume gane bowl with its thin gold and silver-threaded edge, and the wonderful burnished copper and silverplate jugs are superb examples of holloware wrought from ingots rather than sheet metal. Perfect, well-balanced ladles, serving spoons and pickle forks are more affordable. The simple medallion beaker and bowl are appropiate presentation pieces, a reminder of Woods' 1990 commission, the batons for the Commonwealth Games. And the silver pocket flask has to be the perfect alternative to those ubiquitous imported pewter jobs, a lovely silver wedding gift.



Above; Serving dish, copper and electroplate silver, 575mm x 275mm, by Peter Woods. Photo; Peter Woods.

BODY ADORNMENT

BY SALLY HUNTER

Photographs courtesy Dowse Art Museum.

The "Body Adornment Series" continues the Dowse Art Museum tradition of displaying work that explores the ways in which we adorn the human body. Running from June 1990 through mid 1992 the series features the work of thirty contemporary New Zealand adornment artists. To date twelve exhibitions have been on display. Curator of the series, Neil Anderson, says;

"...The series features the work of early-career, mid-career and mature New Zealand artists working in a variety of media. Its primary intent is to educate on the development of contemporary New Zealand adornment for the 1990s."

Above; "Neptune" by Gina Samitz. From *Hats and Headresses*. Photo; Ralph Cook.

We can divide the exhibitions into two groups, work that adorns or protects the body, and work that discusses the role adornment plays in society, commenting on such things as politics, social identity and status, the creation of portable wealth and investment, the stimulation of sexual and sensual desire, and as a mediation with the spiritual. The two groupings however are not easily separated - the same piece can be first looked at simply as decoration and then, within its own context, as a comment on society. David Selkirk has observed that:

"Forms intended as jewellery/adornment, to be worn or carried about one's person have a dual existence; that of three dimensional objects and that of objects interacting with the body."

The second aspect of this "dual existence" has proved difficult to achieve in the context of a public art museum. While all the artists in the series have produced work that reveals a sensitivity to the personal and intimate nature of the body, the work, although beautifully displayed, is divorced from its intended exhibition space - the human body - and so loses some of its impact.

This has been particularly apparent in the exhibitions featuring clothing artists. So far there have been three exhibitions of contemporary clothing, "Boats Against the Current" by Sally Campbell, "Hats and Headdresses" by Gina Samitz and "Bitter and Twisted" by Ron Te Kawa. Sally Campbell updated clothes of Victorian New Zealand for wearing in the 90s. Each garment was accompanied by an historical photograph showing the original source of inspiration.

Gina Samitz sees herself opposing many dictates of the fashion industry, particularly its reinforcement of stereotyped gender roles and concepts of formality. Using traditional millinery techniques, she incorporates materials such as three bladed fish-hooks, paua and two cent coins. The hat is by definition, a means of protection for the body, but Samitz takes this idea further creating head wear inspired by military helmets or such aggressive works as *Neptune* featuring fish-hooks as ornamentation.

Ron Te Kawa produced a small exhibition of clothes discussing a variety of personal concerns, including camp sensibility, cultural appropriation and environmental concerns. The *Wall of Death* frock is a typical example of his work, discussing "drift-netting", using a simple material to produce an overpowering net-like garment.

Environmental issues were one of the main themes of two of New Zealands leading contemporary jewellery artists.

Warwick Freeman's retrospective exhibition "Share of Sky - Emblems" included *Grandfather's Jewellery (1985)*, and *Emblems Aotearoa*. These emblems are based on the idea of medals being awarded for services rendered. The *Service (1985)* emblem is balanced by *Aotearoa - Biting the Hand (1985)*, which refers to human mistreatment of the environment. Freeman's more recent works, such as Star/Heart and Green Star, continue this theme using emblems such as the four pointed star (the Pacific star) a heart motif, and elements from traditional Maori design.

Alan Preston uses his jewellery to draw attention to New Zealand's place in the Pacific. He describes his exhibition, "Oceans Apart";

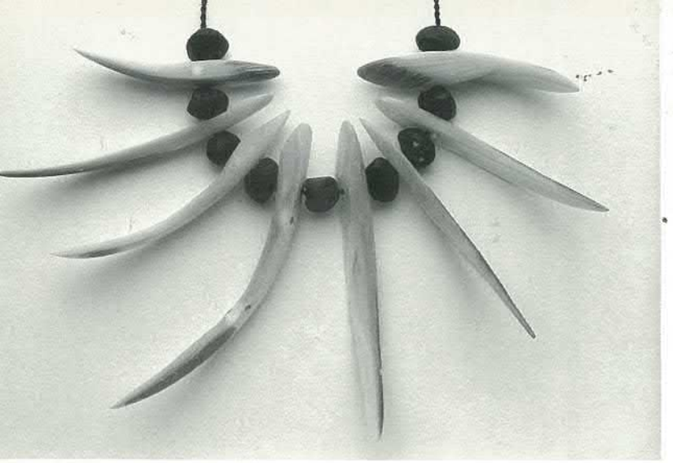
"This exhibition continues to explore ideas about Pacific adornment. It draws directly from ancient and contemporary sources. I'm paying tribute to old taonga and their makers combining their traditions with my own. These pieces are talking about what might have happened if materials and forms had been appropriated in different ways."

Using materials from the Pacific, oyster shell, vau, banana seeds and coconut shell, and forms which reflect the art of the region, Preston creates pieces of jewellery which are extremely wearable and of great elegance.

The design skills and technical expertise young artists are achieving through the Craft Design Courses, is

Above; "Pink Triangle Brooch", by Kim Brice. *From Resections and Recordings*. Photo, Ralph Cook.

Right; "Rosary Beads", by Andrea Daly. From *Scarecrows/Scarecrones - Womyn and the Church*. Photo; Ralph Cook.



Above; "David, 1987", by Neil Trublovich. From *The Body in Static Imagery.*

Top left; "Pacific Rim Necklace, 1990", gold lipped oyster shell, vau, banana seed, silver, by Alan Preston. From *Oceans Apart* exhibition. Photo by Haru Sameshima.

Top right; "Fern Brooch, 1990", coin bronze, jade, silver, stainless steel, by Richard Tarrant. From *Kowhai, Silver Fern, The Seaside and The Queen exhibition.*

evident in the work of three jewellery artists represented in the series, Tania Patterson, Barbara Blewman and Kim Brice.

Tania Patterson, in her exhibition "Iron In The Soul" used stone, wood, bone, titanium, silver and photoetching to look at political and personal traps and prisons. Many of the pieces were influenced by her environment at Carrington Polytechnic where the design department is house in the old maximum security psychiatric ward of Carrington Hospital.

Barbara Blewman uses symbols, many from ancient times, to record personal statements. She has translated these symbols into her own set of personal marks, working them in copper and silver, enamelled and etched, into pieces of jewellery of beauty and simplicity.

Blewman's co-worker Kim Brice, uses his work to discuss political and social issues, especially those concerned with sexual orientation in society. Beautifully crafted using a variety of media and techniques the messages portrayed become an intrinsic part of the design.

Two exhibitions which discussed the role of body adornment in society, were "The Body in Static Imagery" and "Genuine Synthetics" by Lauren Lethal.

"The Body in Static Imagery" was the first exhibition to look at body adornment as a means to arouse sexual and sensual desire. The exhibition compares some of the ways in which men and women have been portrayed in static imagery throughout history. Margaret Walters in her book "The Male Nude" comments,

"*...It is as if male fantasy constantly reshapes the woman's body to better fit his shifting desire, at the same time being careful to preserve the integrity of his own male self.*"

Photographs by Neil Trublovich however aimed to celebrate the beauty of the male body and to work against the idea that only women can be beautiful. The exhibition discussed protection of the body in the advertising section, which raised such issues as heterosexual pornography, and in the posters and cartoon section which focussed on Safe Sex and H.I.V.

Lauren Lethal uses her art to discuss social and political issues from a feminist viewpoint. While her works often have a serious message, there is always a strong element of humour. *Rapunzel's Bikini Line* discusses the acceptance, or non acceptance of body hair, on women. The work is a comment on the way women are seen in society today, especially in advertising.

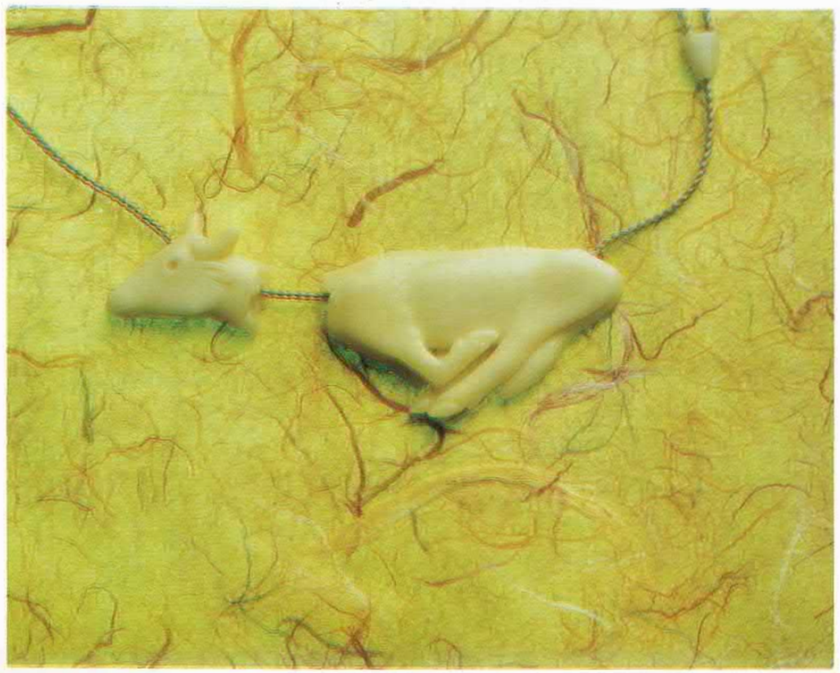
Running concurrently with "Genuine Synthetics" was an exhibition of jewellery and miniature sculpture by another woman artist, Andrea Daly, entitled "Scarecrows/Scarecrones - Womyn and the Church". The exhibition looked at the role of women in religion and their unequal position in society, both in the past and the present. Daly sees religion offering women very limited life models, the Madonna and mother or the virginal nun, in both roles being protected by males, either husband or God. These ideas have been translated into images of women on crosses and female faces and symbols on rosary beads, jewellery forms traditionally used as a means of mediation with the spiritual.

The role of body adornment as portable wealth and investment was one of many themes in "Kowhai, Silver Fern, The Seaside and The Queen" by Richard Tarrant. Tarrant used the now defunct New Zealand one and two cent coins as the predominant media. His exquisitely worked bracelets, brooches and necklaces commemorate the loss of these denominations. These works along with the *Plastic Money Brooches* (encapsulated bank notes), represent both a humorous aesthetic achievement and subtle social commentary.

Body Adornment is an art which is within the personal experience of all viewers. The series has given the Wellington public the chance to view a wide range of contemporary body adornment, by a variety of New Zealand artists. Each exhibition has provided a different perspective on the subject and the artists have demonstrated an interest in establishing an active dialogue with society by exploring new production methods and a variety of materials. Artists' tours, slide shows, demonstrations and panel discussions supporting the exhibition programme have made this series one of the most accessible and popular in the history of the Dowse. Sixteen more exhibitions, featuring body adornment from eyewear to footwear, are scheduled through to mid 1992. The quality and range of the work exhibited so far gives us an idea of the exciting developments taking place in contemporary adornment, and I eagerly look forward to seeing the rest of the exhibitions in the series.

Above; "The Naked Hulk", by Chester Nealie.

Right, "Cow with a Broken Neck", by Hamish Campbell.



SUB-ANTARCTIC ART

BY LESLEIGH SALINGER

Photos by Helen Mitchell

Imagine being taken from the relative comfort of mainland New Zealand to its most isolated southerly outpost, the sub-Antarctic islands, and there left to wander, observe and explore and in due course come up with a body of work from this experience. This was the challenge to some eleven artists invited to participate in *Art in the Sub-Antarctic*.

It was planned that the exhibition should include a wide representation of visual arts media with performance and literary arts such as poetry and music. The artists should all be established with a proven track record in their chosen field. As it transpired most artists were from the visual arts.

The DOC's intention is to heighten awareness of environmental issues and what better place than these islands of seeming impossible remoteness. That an artist and his or her environment is inextricably linked is stating the obvious, so the decision to remove the artists from their usual milieu and expose them to an unfamiliar environment was consciously done with a brief to each to respond artistically to their experiences. Accompanied by the evocative music of Rudy Hueting the overall effect of the exhibition is unexpectedly moving, although there is considerable variation in the quality of the work.

Significant moral dilemmas arise in regard to the islands - to intervene or not to intervene? Concerns of this kind have informed the work of the two craftspeople who participated.

Hamish Campbell

Five bone carvings comprise Hamish's submission and are entitled *Hunted Hunter*. He states: "this relationship in its many forms is one of life's most fundamental, and is harshly apparent on the Aucklands." A concern for the wildlife of the region, its impact and its survival are central to his work.

The results are flattish minimally carved pieces of creamy beef bone which rely on a sense of continuous line drawing to tell the story. The carver believes the material should be self revealing and consequently his carving marks are fine and feathery. The simplicity and seeming fragility of his work seems to mirror the tenuous nature of life on the islands. As Campbell states: "Lines of life and death are blurred. One instant an animal is alive and warm, seconds later it is ripped apart to feed another."

A storyline is followed through the five pieces including:

1. *A sealion, a shark.*
2. *A sealion's flipper, a shark's head baring teeth.*
3. *A sealion's flipper with a bite missing, shark's teeth.*
4. *Four seals' heads, top half of a man's body with club.*
5. *A cow with a broken neck.*

Hamish draws an analogy between the shark inflicted wounds and scars seen on the sealions and those inflicted by humans on the islands. No.4 represents the decimation of the furseal population by the sealers, whilst No.5 anticipates the elimination of introduced, now wild, cattle on Enderby Island as a necessary corrective to ensure the destruction of its vegetation and bird life is halted.

Yet these works are too thin to convey the intensity of the story to be told. The delicacy and inherent decorative nature of carving seem just too insufficient to convey the larger themes of isolation, desolation, destruction and rebirth which are common threads in the responses of the other participants. The works are descriptive and leave the viewer curiously detached from the drama of the stories. Campbell may be yet to assimilate the impact of this trip and reflect its power in his work. At present one is left looking at curios.

Chester Nealie

Chester Nealie has been profoundly affected by his experiences on this trip. Long concerned about the effects of human intervention on the environment he has returned deeply disturbed by what he has seen and this informs all his works.

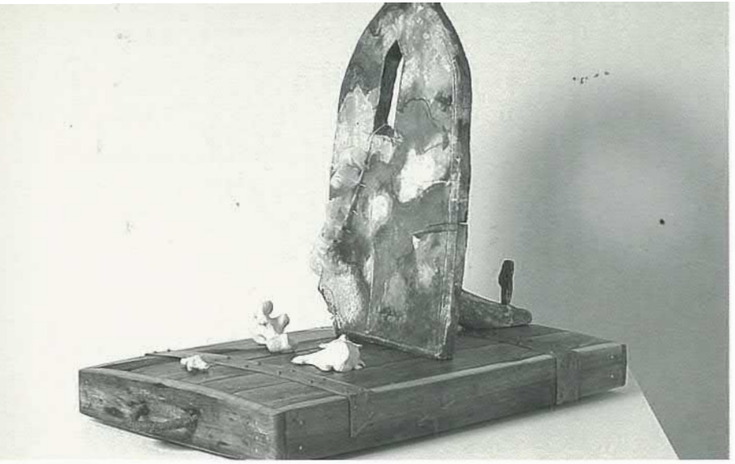
"This is the most major individual statement I have made" says Nealie. After a full year's work he has produced what is indeed a *chef d'oeuvre;* five major pieces forming the installation. They are entitled: *The Naked Hulk, Cry of Silence, Heartstone, Fallen Beacon, Dead Man's Eye*

Nealie has drawn on many sources. He has an interesting familial link with the region as his grandfather, Sigvard Dannefaerd was a naturalist who worked for Lord Rothchilds. In 1886 he sailed to the islands and Nealie found himself following his grandfather's ghost, reliving his experience.

He also turned to Coleridge's *the Rime of the Ancient Mariner* for poetic imagery to complement and inform his work, combining the poetic and the tactile in his built forms. Coleridge had used detail researched from a trip to this area around 1790. Nealie has associated intensely with the records of shipwrecks and the stories of survival. As an artist he has responded emotionally to the colours and landforms.

Like Campbell he was much affected by the plight of indigenous animals and the damage done by other introduced species, he is also extremely worried by human intervention. In a statement accompanying the exhibition he speaks of "the varying effects of man's presence on nature" challenging his heart. It is these effects which are woven into his work and give to it a haunting, mournful quality. The relics of human existence which are our imprint on time and place.

The works have been criticised as forming more of a museum tableaux than a sculptural installation but this criticism pleases Nealie. "I have spent most of my life in



Above; "Heartstone", by Chester Nealie.

museums - I love the places. I get a huge amount of inspiration out of the artifacts and the quality of time worn objects", he says.

The Naked Hulk

the souls did from their bodies fly
they fled to bliss or woe
and every soul, it passed me by
like the whizz of my cross bow

Central to the work is the recreated skeleton of a barque. A foundation structure of cruciform beams, from which we are to imagine the lining planks fallen away dashed on rocks and left to rot washed up on some barren shore. It is made from old church beams and symbolises a whale's skeleton and a cross (the cross bow!) and represents the ten shipwrecks with some 170 lives lost. Huddled between the crossbeams are ceramic crocks each carrying the name of a wrecked ship and the number of lives lost. History is written into functional items stamped with signs of ownership and purpose.

Each pot tells a story. *The Derry Castle* (an iron barque wrecked on 20 March, 1887) is marked with an axehead representing one the survivers found which enabled them to build a punt. The pot is bullet shaped referring to the one bullet found in a sailor's pocket from which they were able to strike fire. Another pot made in a French style signifies the wrecked *Anjou*. The Disappointment Island pot has a sailcloth message around its neck referring to messages hung around the necks of albatrosses to carry news of the *Dundonald* wreck of 1907.

Dead Man's Eye

an orphan's curse would drag to hell
a spirit from on high
but oh! more horrible than that
is the curse of the dead man's eye

This piece is a "weathered" ceramic chest bound by a simulated metal strap. It signifies the stores of food left for the wreck survivors but often broken into by poachers. Inscribed on the chest is a curse (against the illegal raiders). The whole is a metaphor for the islands which have been broken into and raided, and holes in the work are the eyes - eyes of the beholder of knowledge; of eye sockets plucked clean by skua gulls and a curse offered by the "seeing" artist as protection for the islands.

Cry of Silence

until my ghastly tale is told this heart within me burns

A large ceramic cauldron supported on three bricks is dedicated to the Enderby seals. Much affected by the cries of sealion pups abandoned by their mothers as part of the evolutionary cycle, Nealie was horrified to learn that what had been a huge seal population in 1806 was extinct by 1826. The cries reminiscent of seals being clubbed to death moved him to create this bitter memorial. The pieces of ceramic bone (cast from bone fragments from the island) are made with porcelain clays and ochres suggesting congealed fat. Some sealers' names are there; Yankee, Henry, Pachel Cohen, Samuel Sally.

Heartstone

instead of the cross, the Albatross about my neck was hung

The symbolic albatross around the collector's neck - if you take from the islands this will be your fate. The beautiful matai collector's box which forms the base of this work is clasped with copper bands and described as *not wanted on voyage*. As a container of dead creatures it is a piece which relates in particular to Nealie's grandfather and his role as a collector. In this the artist is in a dichotomous position, on the one hand searching for his forbear "a typical wanderer collector..." and yet wishing himself to "tread lightly on the land" and resist the desire to take and collect. "Most of the work is against this notion".

The heartstone of the piece echoes the headstone of a grave. A gothicised form, it mirrors the heaven reaching quality of a mountain whilst sorrowfully reminding us of a grave.

Fallen Beacon

and now this spell was snapt
once more I viewed the ocean green
and looked far north, yet little saw
of what had else been seen

A beacon from the past which points to the future! Another symbol of the sacrifice of the islands and the artist's angry protest. This work represents the *Blanche Triangle* placed on Auckland Island in 1870 (and still there). The beacon post lies broken with a triangular form resting against it bisected by a cross. At its apex are 10 holes (10 shipwrecks) and along the base 5 holes (the Southern Cross). Tiny skull remnants litter the surface where the words *Destroy*, *Survive*, *Replenish* are etched.

The concept for this exhibition was particularly appropriate for 1990 as the year in which New Zealanders were asked to pause and appraise. As two craftspeople working with very different materials the carver and the ceramicist have nevertheless conveyed to the viewer the strong belief that these bleak and trespassed islands are suffering the sins of plunder and thoughtless intervention. Their works are our *memento mori*.

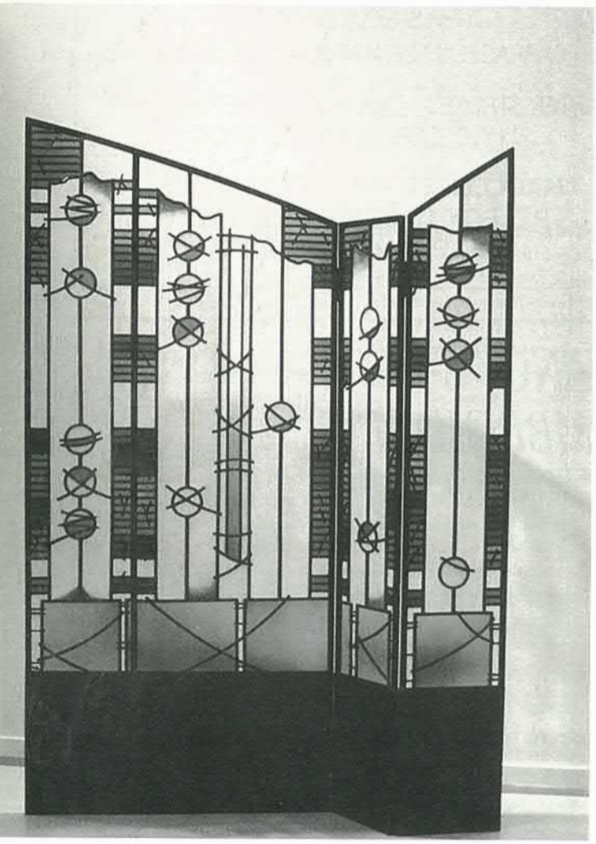
THE GLASS LANGUAGE OF RENA JAROSEWITSCH

JOHN FREEMAN-MOIR

Modernity is the transient, the fleeting, the contingent; it is the one half of art, the other being the eternal and immutable.

Charles Baudelaire, 1863

Rena Jarosewitsch's glasswork is a consistent search for a symbolism with which to express the interplay of space, time and emotion in human lives. She has set out to explore the transient and immutable, decisions and their consequences, the anxiety of a self with others, how what is solid melts into air, how things fall apart and centres do not hold.



Above; *As We Make Our Choices/Crossing the Circle*. 3 panel stained glass folding screen, 1790x1340mm.

In *As We Make Our Choices/ Crossing the Circle* the glass forms are layed out with syntactic precision. The central motif is the circle, here the symbol of wholeness, intensity and energy. As Jarosewitsch puts it, "I am...interested in the fragmented and fractured possibilities inherent in the journey the circle makes...about the process we go through in making these decisions. Some 'choices' seem clear-cut, others take us through...uncertainty and doubt ...sometimes we accept compromises, and the bi-coloured circles demonstrate that the choices we opt for and the decisions we make comprise a complex process of feeling and intellect." The strong rectangles of red glass at the bottom of the screen indicate the emotional conflicts which form the basis of our journeys, but emotions which for all of that are measured and controlled. The irregular top edge to the screen gives us a sense that the quest for certainty, solidity and security in modern society is a very uncertain quest indeed.[1]

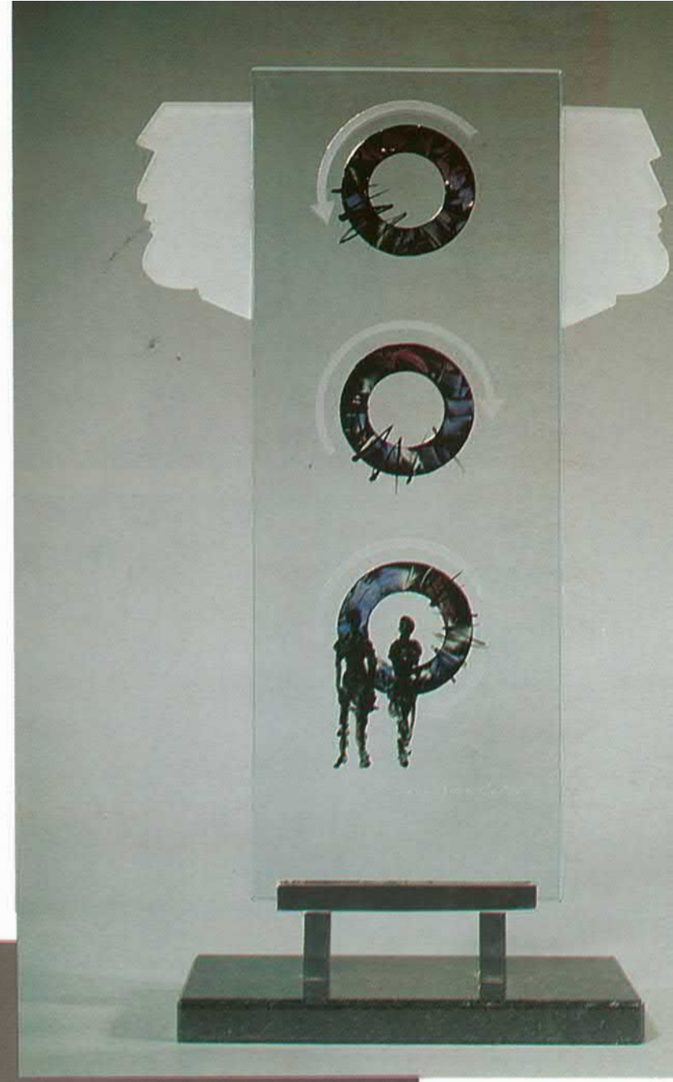
A series of small layered glass sculptures capture emotion within an architectural frame of reference. Each prism is formed by interspacing squares of polished plate-glass with glass discs located at the centre of each plane. This column of discs creates a solid core serving both as a system for structural support and the point around which the symbolism of light and colour is organised. In *Set of 3 prisms, amber/black* the elements are either 5, 8 or 12 planes high with a circle in black and amber painted around the centre of each plane. The interplay between the amber/black circles and the transparent squares of glass heighten the architectural quality of the work. The play of light through the glass structure, the empty space between the glass planes, the darkened green light of the polished edges and the parallel lines of shadow cast by the structure as a whole combine to give the prisms a feeling of insubstantiality. As the viewer changes position relative to each prism a sense of movement, flux and uncertainty comes to dominate. But against this the sombre amber/black circle is expressive of what is solid, structured and certain. At times the solid core seems, paradoxically, to hover as if unsupported and just for a moment one has the sense of an abyss beneath the daily surface of life. In a similar work the central circle, painted in aurora, has a more explosive and dynamic edge; expressive perhaps of emotions pent up in structures which are too well defined, too repeatable, too dominating over people. The abstract security of the amber/black circle is replaced by an emotional intensity that living in close proximity seems often to foster.

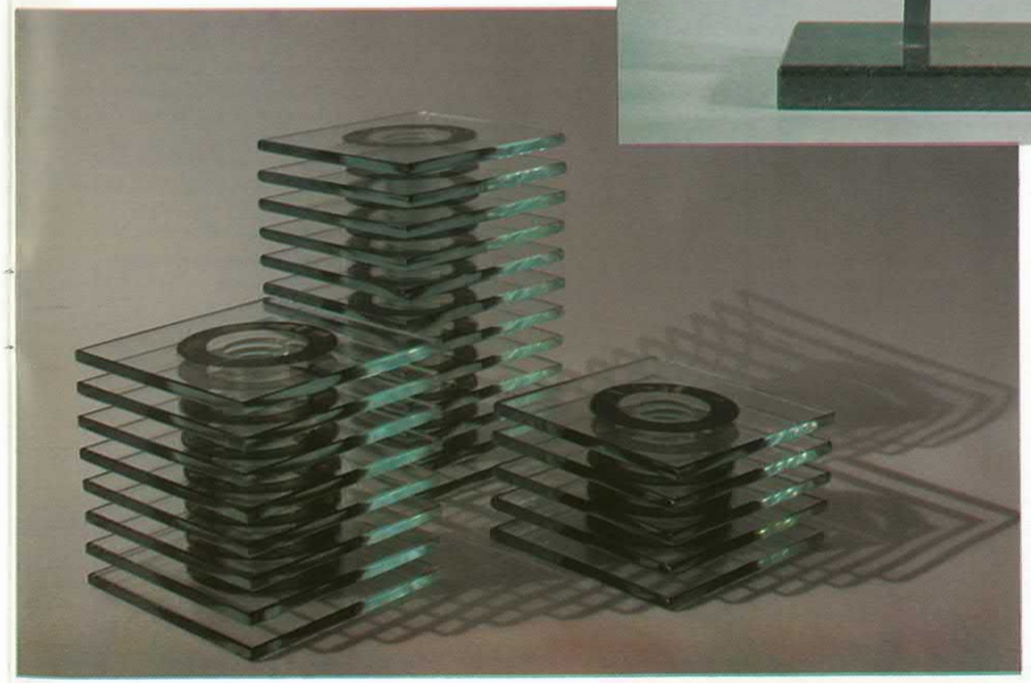
In other prisms the central area of colour is square and contained within an irregularly etched border as if symbolising the wish to escape from the regularised patterns of everyday life. In these cases the colour area are partially broken up by a pattern of etched shapes. This sense of the accidental in life is further reinforced by the device of angling some of the prisms onto their side, thus effectively breaking their symmetry. In all these works the interplay between the painted surfaces and the three-dimensionality of stacking confronts the viewer with the interaction between surface and depth in both our architectural spaces and our emotions.

While the *Layered Glass Sculptures* explore the immediate physical boundaries of life the *Relationship Series* focus more on the social psychological aspects of modern life. Each work consists of a glass panel on which a set of symbols have been etched, painted and sandblasted; circles, squares, arrows, lines, crosses, broken circles, human figures and spontaneous marks. On the upper vertical edges of some of these panels laminated glass profiles of heads face in opposite directions. The symbols in these works suggest a distinctively modern anxiety about the self and social relations.

Worlds Apart shows three black squares containing circles painted in an abstract pattern of red, black and blue. Below the squares there are three sets of etched horizontal lines. At the top of the panel on each side is a head in profile. Each world is separate and apparantly self-sufficient. In these works the square refers to what is solid, less flexible, and more rigid, to containment, formality and predictability; the circle on the other hand connotes a softer reality, of cycles, progressions and growth. Everything about relationships seems settled in this piece but it is an equilibrium of isolation and loneliness. On the other hand, the internal circular patterns in the squares show that the emotional structure of different lives can be remarkably similar. This is the tragedy and farce of the person who feels deserted and apart even in the midst of the crowd. While the relationship series does not pose any answers to the insecurities of modernity the intent of this work is firmly opposed to the flimsy posturing of decorative postmodernism.

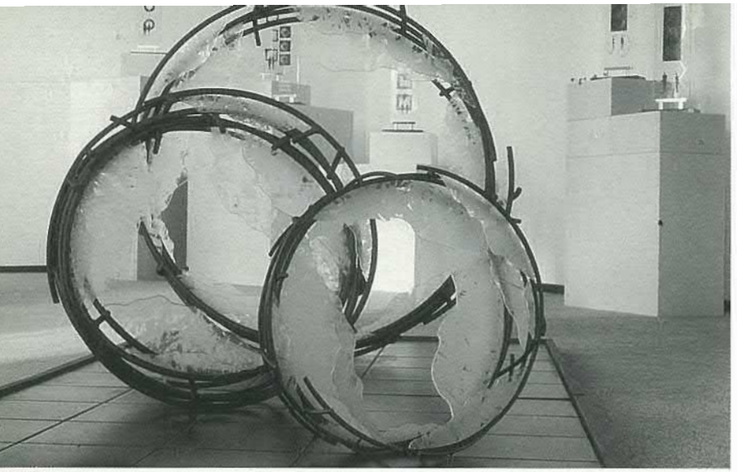
Other works explore relationships in a more dynamic way. In *Choices* three circles are arranged vertically within a single rectangle and in each case the circle is negated by a cross. Etched arrows also run vertically on the glass plane towards two people standing at the bottom. This complex of symbols is highly suggestive; of a continuity between the past and the present, of the permanent intrusion of the past into human affairs, of the identity and unity of two people in decisions taken, of the fact that relationships are loaded with consequences

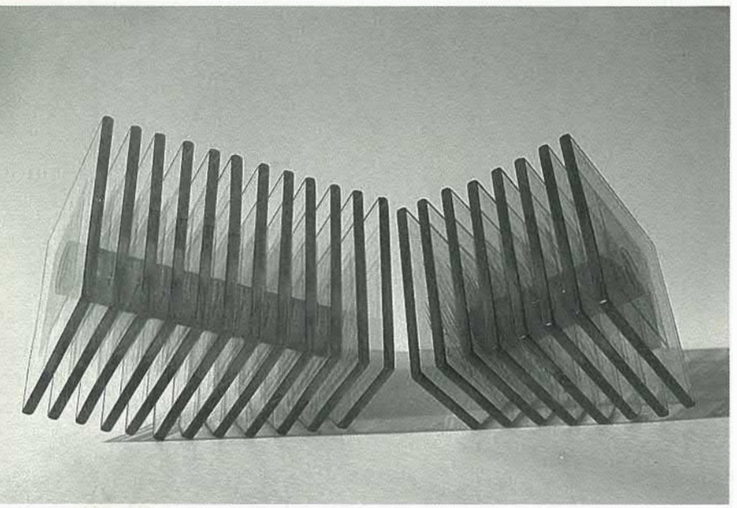




Above; *Cycles of Change*. Photo; Julia Brooke-White.

Left; Set of 3 prisms. Photo; Rena Jarosewitsch.





Top; *Nest-Trap*. Photo; Julia Brooke-White.

Bottom; set of two prisms. Photo; Rena Jarosewitsch.

even before choices are made, of the tendency for relationships to be negated by later decisions, finally of the frequent separation of those who hope for intimacy and trust. *Cycles of Change* makes further comment by observing the way in which individuals, coming together from different cycles of life, may or may not effect a unity in difference. The three vertical circles in this piece are hollow rings crossed by the irruptions of highly dynamic black brush marks. Each cycle of change is threatened by this irruption though the serenity of the muted colours (black, blue, purplish red) suggests the successful if permanently tentative attempt by people to hold conflict within certain bounds. In yet other works like *Fragments of Yesterday* use is made of the broken circle to symbolise the fragments of past decisions superimposed on the present and the fragments of the present which people struggle to unify in a world which constantly pulls them and their communities apart. Taken together the subtle and cleverly combined symbols of the relationships series confronts the viewer with the vagaries of emotional conflict and its often tenuous resolution.

For Jarosewitsch the circle is not an unambiguous symbol as the *Nest-Trap* sculpture shows. The play here is between the enclosed safety of the nest and the trap which might be imposed on the person who lives within it. The nest of steel is hard, unforgiving and partially echoes the imagery of developmental lines and blocks to life first used in the *Mt Erebus Commission*.[2]

The shards of etched glass (veils, feathers?) which form the interior of the nest may be a source of comfort though just as easily, perhaps, they might cut, wound and limit those who attempt to find security within. Once again the artist is pointing to experience which is fragmented, ephemeral and permanently subject to chaos. The nest is hollowed out, cold and uninviting, yet the only home offered amidst the anarchy of the market which capitalism has loosed on the world. One finds an echo here of Freud's "common unhappiness", Marx's "sigh of the oppressed creature" and Weber's "sensualists without heart"; perhaps the three most chilling portraits of modern human nature.

Jarosewitsch's most experimental work to date is a series of images built up by layering sheets of glass together, each with an image painted on the surface. The aim is to create a sense of illusionary space, movement, and the convolutions of imagery and logic that we are all familiar with from our dreams. In *Dream Spirals*, for example, fragments of butterfly wings and ladybird beetles are scattered around a violent spiral, an ink-blot monster and a multiple-winged bat or bird. In one of the images the wings of the butterfly are echoed in a set of serated glass wings. Whether or not these images are the monsters produced by the sleep of reason is difficult to say though it is apparent that the dream elements drift in and out of the fog-like atmosphere created by the layering and etching of the glass surfaces.

Taken as a whole the images of Jarosewitsch restate, in the language of glass, the sense of an uncertain world, of choices made and unmade, decisions taken and not taken and the hope that only through time will time itself be conquered.

Notes

1. Much of Jarosewitsch's work has been in the form of architectural commissions. A grant from the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council in 1990 allowed for three months creative development which led to the work discussed above. Between the earlier commissioned work and the experimental work,however, there is a continuity of design and symbolic elements.

2. This commission is a set of three stained glass windows in St Matthew's in-the-City, Auckland, 1989; 2 of 1730mm x 390mm and 1 of 383mm in diameter.

NANCY CROW

By Shari Cole

Quilters in Dunedin for Symposium '91 last May had the long-awaited chance to attend workshops and lecture with Nancy Crow, one of the world's foremost quilt artists and teachers. Her influence in New Zealand dates from the 1984 visit by quilters from here to the East Bay Heritage Conference in San Francisco. Nancy Crow transparent rulers (for use with rotary cutters) and her strong non-traditional designs quickly permeated our fledgling quilting sorority.

Nancy's practice of working up designs in actual fabric, on the wall, is now used around the world. Also her idea, was Quilt National, the prestigious bi-annual competition and exhibition for art quilts.

In Nancy's Dunedin lecture, New Zealanders found much to relate to. Coming from a university major in pottery - positive/negative decoration her graduate thesis - she discovered through tapestry weaving her need to use colour. Moving seriously into quiltmaking sixteen years ago she began, as most of us did, with traditional styles. Of her period of making "perfect quilts like everyone else", she says, "Once you know you can do it, who wants to do it?" She credits her second love, photography, with fine-tuning her eye for composition, and frequently abstracts designs from photographed nature.

Asked for her impressions of quilts seen on this visit, Nancy feels we are behind Americans in reaching beyond traditional design and technique. But, she adds, we show much more diversity than some European countries also relatively new to the quilt revival. As tutor and exhibitor for Expo Europa last year she saw a large body of representative work.

She suspects that our limited choice of fabrics holds us back. "Fabric is enlightening," she remarks, citing "painterly" fabrics being hand-dyed for the use of quilters by small American studios. Her Dunedin workshops, "Understanding the Concept of Positive/Negative" and "How to Make Traditional Blocks Look Contemporary" required closely gradated solid neutrals, plus other fabrics. A phone call from organisers alerted her to the difficulty of this, but students managed to acquire a sufficient range.

For them Nancy has only praise. "The biggest thing I look for (in students) is whether they are cynical. These are fresh and eager." She rates them top-notch, good at technique, tied to tradition but reaching out. Everyone was serious, catching on quickly to ever more sophisticated concepts as she introduced them. Not surprisingly, the class included some of our best, like ENZED winners Marge Hurst and Hazel Collinson.

International teaching, Nancy admits, holds both positive and negative consequences. Time-demands slow her own creative output. "I couldn't do it," she says of people who support themselves by teaching. Conversely, she finds teaching enriching. "And," she adds, "my fabric collection wouldn't be what it is if I hadn't travelled."

Through the annual Quilt Surface Design Symposium in Columbus, Ohio, Nancy and partner Linda Fowler are deeply involved with a university-level fine arts programme in quiltmaking. They bring together tutors of all aspects of surface design, suppliers of special fabrics, and serious students. These range from professional quiltmakers, through public school art teachers, to older women who don't need to make money from quilting but "want to do great work before they die". "It's about a whole way of life...a forum for talking about various aspects of quiltmaking," she says of the increasingly international symposium.

Though she herself sees as yet no direction in which her own work might be influenced by this short visit to New Zealand, we can be sure that Nancy's presence here will be reflected in future work by those who have looked, listened, and learned.

ANN ROBINSON

By Louise Guerin

"The world is so full of meaningless knick-knackery, I don't want to add to it. If I'm going to make things I want them to be so stunningly beautiful that people just stop in their tracks and it feeds them", says glass worker Ann Robinson.

She is one of the 15 craftspeople who are currently pitting themselves against a November deadline to produce the work which will form the focus of the New Zealand pavilion at Expo 92 in Seville, Spain, next year.

Mid-year, when spoken to for this article, she was in the process of moving into a beautiful new workshop she helped build, set deep in the bush, high above Auckland's rugged West coast. (The finish on the paintwork and construction details is just as impeccable as the finish on her glass creations, by the way.)

Ideas were still up in the air at that stage, but made wonderful story telling, weaving in and out of Nikau palms, frigate birds and eels. Robinson: "I dreamt about these two big eels, really big, long ones, like 12 foot long, that were in the mud and they were wonderful things. I know exactly what they look like - they were flat and had rippling fins going down either side - god knows what they meant! I now want to do them very beautifully.

"I think the success in pulling off an idea is if it's executed exquisitely, so I have to do something that I've never done before, like carve two intertwining things, and then cast them into wax and then they will go into the bowl. Probably on the underneath because these bowls are going to be seen as people go up the stairs, so I have to relate to decorating on the outside, under, surface, which isn't really the very natural place to put it. I'd prefer to be putting it on the inside, but nobody would see it there. So, for this purpose, those eels will be on the outside."

Top; Nancy Crow. Photo; Shari Cole.

Lower; Ann Robinson. Photo; Louise Guerin.

Her vision encompasses a "very large blue bowl that is suggestive of the world sphere. So it's like a big blue pool and for me that's the pool of the world and there are these mysterious things in the depths. I see them as guardians of the pool, but they're the things that are under the water and maybe it's our subconscious there. I think the subconscious is extremely important", she says. Then adds, laughing, "I'm not the first one to think that! But I realise that being in touch with the subconscious is incredibly important. I actually think the world is doomed because too many people have lost touch with that. I can't see how we're going to be able to turn around what's happening in the world and stop it. There are too many people in the world who have yet to go through the stage of extreme consumerism we in the Western world might actually just be coming out of."

Another angle: "It's a mystery. It's as good as I can do at the moment in exploring a mystery. It's that mystery of the things underneath the surface.

"It's interesting for me to have stumbled upon this image, as a vessel maker, which is so pragmatic. You know - you make a vessel. It's a bowl. And then to begin thinking, hey, but a bowl actually is a symbol of containing and a symbol of the womb. A bowl is a very emotional symbol for me and I'm sure for a lot of people - for women certainly."

And then, a bit later, another twist emerges: "For me, my bowls hold fresh water. Like I've always stuck my seconds all around the place outside. I have drinks of fresh rainwater from them. That is the thing that makes this planet special - fresh rainwater. I will never curse the rain - ever.

"I'll splash my face or take a drink of that pure rainwater that collects in those bowls. Lately I've begun realizing what important things they are. They are containers of water, and that's a nurturer of life. I think a bowl of water somewhere in your environment is a really lovely thing to do because it reminds you of the earth.

"The water actually reflects all elements. Like you can have a bowl of water and it's a still day and suddenly a breeze comes across it and you get the little waves and it's like a miniature of the whole ocean there.

"And the way the water reflects the moon! It seems like the bowl holds the water which holds the moon. So, basically, they're reminders to us of the elements and of the world.

"I'm not setting out to do that, but when it happens I'm moved and I'm really pleased."

Above; Pâté de Verre Vases by Ann Robinson. Photo; Louise Guerin.

Right, "Earth's Treasures" by Gwen Wanigasekera.

GWEN WANIGASEKERA

By Sue Curnow

My introduction to Gwen Wanigasekera's work was through the stunning *Putanga O te Rau* (Birth of the Sun), winner of Enzed Sewing Co.'s Best-of-Show award in 1990. It was unmissable, blazing away as if alive, under bright lights, at the end of the exhibition hall. Dazzling - but no flash in the pan, as I discovered upon closer examination. This was a work formed by the application of a great deal of skill and planning, and bearing the unmistakable mark of a person in love with textiles, and aware of the power and properties of colour. Its maker, I was informed, lives in Hamilton, and is well-known to Waikato guild members and those who have attended her classes in continuing education. (Another quilt *Autumn Lilies*, won a Merit Award in the same show).

Later, in December 1990, when asked to review her solo show at Gallery on One in Waiwera, I was curious and a little apprehensive as to what the main body of her work was like. Could it meet the high expectations raised by that other piece? In a word - yes. Although more modest in scale and colour, most of these quilts and wallhangings showed a high degree of skill, confident use of colour, and the same almost reverent attitude to precious cloth. Meeting her that same day, I was struck by her seriousness and lack of pretense.

While quiltmaking is generally perceived as an American folk art, it is rooted deeply in Europe - particularly the British Isles - as well as in other, even older, societies. Gwen, a West Coast-born New Zealander, was excited by the old quilts and precious textiles, as well as other fine and decorative arts she saw in museums in England when she lived there in the early 1970s. Her first tentative and exploratory forays into quiltmaking - a kitset skirt, an unfinished quilt of hexagons in Laura Ashley scraps - were made in London. Needlework, though, was "in the blood" - both grandmothers were fine needleworkers (a fragile patchwork cushion made by one is now her own treasured possession) - and Gwen had an early interest in fabrics. Her mother still has a patchwork apron she made at age nine.

Returning to New Zealand with a collection of fabrics, she began to make quilts on commission, but increasingly felt frustrated and limited by the pressure to produce work, and decided to wait until she had more time to work in a more satisfying way. After the very busy years while her three children were small, she began to take art classes to learn about the disciplines of colour and design. As well, she studied dyeing techniques - particularly those of batik and shibori - with various craftworkers, most notably and influentially Susan Flight, who also taught the importance of planning, finishing and professionally presenting work. Instruction in hand-quilting with Kaye Bowie at the local polytech gave her the confidence she had previously lacked to make full use of this essential skill. Her delight in its potential was expressed in a work which was selected for the Wardenburgs wall-hanging exhibition in 1987, (*Tama tu, Tama Ora, Tama Moe, Tama Mate*, based on drawings by Cliff Whiting). However, she sees merit in both hand and machine quilting, having different effects for different requirements. "As a result of all this, when I did start again, I feel I started, this time, from a much firmer and better-informed base."

Appreciation and enjoyment of textiles is the basis of her motivation; it finds expression in the making of quilts - as bed coverings, wallhangings, and "offerings" - smaller objects with which she acknowledges the symbolic role which cloth has played in other times and places. The design of the work follows from this sensual and visual pleasure in the materials; its impact relies more upon tactile qualities and colour than on graphic effects. Three-dimensional illusion is not - so far - part of her intention; the surface is the thing. Accordingly, to see it in black and white reproduction only is to miss its essence, which has to do with lustre, shine, richness, the reflection and absorption of light, and contrasts of hue. Diversity of scale, too, adds to the visual complexity. Future work may well contain visual ambiguities, illusions of depth or movement created by line and tonal manipulation; she is particularly keen to explore the effects colours have on one another - "In my work I feel constantly challenged to explore colour, pattern, and texture in cloth, and see the results as a blend of all these elements".

Gwen uses the ancient method of strip piecing, in its many "log cabin" variations, in a highly skilled and controlled manner. Working with precious, fragile fabrics, often on a very small scale, she maintains accuracy and avoids handling difficulties by stitching onto a base of non-woven fabric, on which the outline of the proposed patch has been drawn. This backing is cut away if the piece is to be hand-quilted, but in the minutely-scaled wallhangings it is left in to add body to the work.

Above ; Gwen Wanigasekera

Above; Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award judge Ron Nagle (left) pictured with award winner Tim Currey and his winning piece "Rock Column". Photo courtesy Fletcher Challenge.

Top right; Colin Reid, recent artist in residence at Carrington Polytech.

Her collection of fabrics - gathered over 20 years of more - contains a wide variety of all types of cotton, silk (she inherited her grandfather's extensive array of silk ties), brocade, satin, velvet, and wool, plain and patterned. She supplements this impressive selection with hand-dyed fabrics if necessary; for example, for *Birth of the Sun*, a meticulously planned quilt requiring many subtle shifts of colour and tone, several specially dyed silks and cottons were required. Fabrics are sought and acquired on travels and at home in regular and specialist fabric stores (not from the cutting table - Gwen is not a home-sewer of clothing).

But her interest in textiles extends not only to acquiring fabric for her own use; she also has a growing and fascinating collection of old, precious items - fragments of antique patchwork, embroidery, and quilts, and two wonderful early twentieth century whole-cloth quilts from Wales. These were purchased earlier this year, while Gwen was visiting the U.K., with the aid of a QEII Arts Council study grant. The five week trip has reinforced her desire to be involved with textiles, and particularly with making quilts. "Quiltmaking seems to satisfy the need to work with fabric and pattern. I also get satisfaction from being able to use, and create new life for something which is otherwise discarded...not only from a material point of view, but also in terms of...a way of living. I like to think that we can be creative in using the best of the old to build the new."

An enjoyment of and interest in working with dyes will continue to have a role in this involvement - particularly resist techniques, such as the as yet untried Katazome, or rice-paste resist. Gwen Wanigasekera has an exiciting contribution to make to the development of quiltmaking and textile appreciation in New Zealand.

TIM CURREY

In 1979, Tim Currey bought a pottery wheel. At first he made clay, fired with wood, and did the things that potters do, but he never felt that these things were his own tradition. He always tried to decorate and this became more naturalistic. Five years ago, he followed his decorative instincts and started making sculptural objects, feeling more comfortable about what he was doing. Working from the relative obscurity of Port Charles in Coromandel, it came as a surprise to the pottery world when he won the $10,000 prize in this year's Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award.

At the tip of Coromandel, Port Charles looks out over Great Barrier Island. Currey shares a communal farm with professional people, musicians, doctors. The environment was what brought them together, the thing they all share. It is this environment which has been the inspiration for Currey's work. He has been making kitset reservoirs, a job which occupies 40-50 days a year and which takes him travelling in New Zealand and overseas. The remainder of his time he divides between home, family and his work.

Following his Fletcher success and an exhibition at Masterworks Gallery in Auckland, he has gone to Australia to live for a time. He has a lot of drawings from over the years, unexplored ideas, a backlog of designs to work from. He says that he has learned a lot about how he works best - not to rush, but to let ideas settle until he knows exactly what he is going to do with them. Although he has looked forward to the new experiences Australia will provide and the chance for his children to go to school rather than being educated by correspondence, he knows that he's a New Zealander, his influence is bound up with this country and he plans to return.

COLIN REID

One of the most successful recent Polytech artist-in-residencies was that of English glass artist Colin Reid. Reid came to New Zealand with his family and two children and worked at Carrington in Auckland for one year.

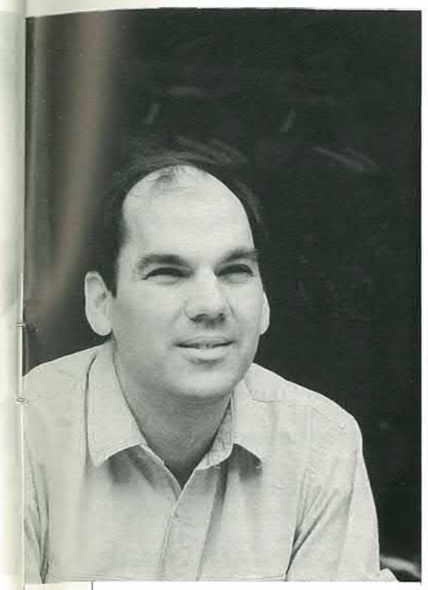
Reid studied Fine Arts in England in 1970-71, but dropped out. In1975, he saw a notice about scientific glass blowing in the local labour exchange. He did the course and made a living blowing glass, but a growing awareness of the vibrancy of the whole area of glass led him to establish his own studio in London making small bottles and other functional items.

A realisation that he needed more knowledge took him to the leading course in glass in Britain - at Stourbridge. He became interested in casting, rather than blowing glass early on and completed his degree in 1981. He says that being a mature student gave him definite advantage of a clear direction.

At Carrington he found most of the students young, but he believes that it's more important to gain life experience before becoming involved in further education.

Response to Reid's residency has been exceptionally positive, with benefits spreading to students from a variety of disciplines and from other centres, as well as to artists from outside the polytech community. Glassworkers such as Peter Raos and Peter Viesnik were quick to pick up techniques and to adapt them and Reid is positive that such exchanges were among the most valuable aspects of his residency.

An exhibition of Colin Reid's work will tour the country in 1992 under the auspices of the Museum Director's Federation.



JEFF OESTREICH

Starting a career as a potter in rural Minnesota wasn't easy for the young Jeff Oestreich, merit award winner in this year's Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award. In 1971, after four years at the University of Minnesota and two at the St Ives, England workshop of Bernard Leach, Oestreich had a clear idea of the philosophy which he intended would mould the direction of his life. He planned to make production ware, with some one-off pieces. Armed with samples, he went selling, but had no success at all. He tried tiles, but nobody was interested. Craft fairs were marginally better, but he just covered expenses. The one thing which sustained him financially was studio sales following firings. Educating people through personal contact was to become his greatest sales tool.

Oestreich has worked through most of the lifestyle trends, woodfired kilns, salt glaze, brown rice, a stubbornness to retain independence from institutions.

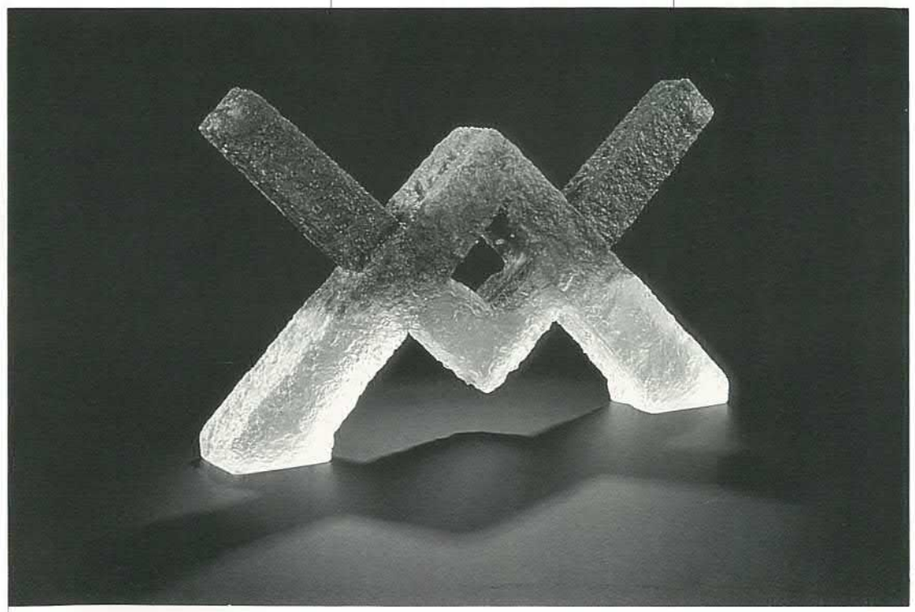
For ten years he lived in isolation, working only from his rural studio. Then he was ready for outside stimulation. Teaching opportunites began to appear. At the Leach pottery, the feeling was that you should be a potter, not a teacher. He still had conflict with those expectations of himself when he began teaching, but soon found that the stimulus of teaching balanced the solitary demands of being a studio potter. His past year teaching at Alfred University has given him an intensity of experience matched only by his time at St Ives.

Oestreich is now well estblished as one of America's leading potters. His devotion to functional ware has not prevented him from joining the stable of the Garth Clark Gallery. His teapots and assembled forms now go only to galleries, but his real love is still in production - filling boards with pots.

Jeff Oestreich came to New Zealand for the opening of the Fletcher exhibition in June. He will return for workshops and teaching with polytechs and pottery groups in October 1992.

Top left; Jeff Oestreich, winner of the $2000 merit award in the 1991 Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award.

Top right, Oestreich's prize wining teapot. Photo; Haru Sameshima, courtesy Fletcher Challenge.



Below; cast glass by Colin Reid, Height 330mm, width 540mm. Photo Marcus Williams.

COMMENT - THE SYMPOSIUM BLUES

ANN PACKER

Why do I keep going to quilt symposia? This was my fifth, and each time I cry "that's it!" But I'm drawn again to part with a substantial sum of money in fares and fabric. But NOT classes…heresy, yes, but it's time to stand up and be counted. I think I'm possibly the only quiltmaker in the country who's dared to mention the unmentionable. I do not "do workshops", not any more, and much relief it has brought me. I'm no longer stressed out carting all that equipment with me, and dashing off to class straight after a second-rate lunch. (This time I discovered the delights of the alternative boatshed lifestyle on the Otago Peninsula…but that's another story.)

My aversion to classes (workshops somehow doesn't seem an entirely accurate description) started at my first symposium. Overcome by the tempting descriptions of exciting processes and pretty products, I enrolled for four workshops. Even then you were allocated classes which had little to do with your real choices, so were disadvantaged from the start. There followed an elaborate game of pick and mix. No-one in those days had the courage to say "I want this class, nothing else". (This practice was still being followed at Dunedin.)

I scored one out of four at that first symposium. A simple half-day introduction to minatures had me away on a path I'm still pursuing. As for the rest, the catalogue descriptions were inaccurate, I had the wrong gear, I bought fabric I haven't touched since, and the teaching standards were abysmal…But that was early days, you cry, be fair.

My next excursion was to the States. For Vermont we'd registered so late I had no chance to join the classes I'd have chosen, but found both tutors, Jean Ray Laury and Nancy Halpern, more than willing to have an observer. (My mother got into Mary Ellen Hopkins class, and was a nervous wreck, but assures me it was worth it.)

In Washington we paid our dues and did no work at all but absorbed the aura of greatness in Ruth McDowell's class. It seemed a pity to go all that way and not "do a class" even though the cost in $NZ was a big chunk of our daily allowance.

By the time I went to Hawkes Bay for the '89 symposium I'd made my choice. It was a difficult one to stick to. I missed the camaraderie of the group, the sharing…but I didn't miss the pressure to compete, to produce, to measure up, do it better, faster, and with more flair.

The pressure to conform is strong in this country. It isn't done to disagree, to say you don't like what's offered, that the teaching standards are not good enough, that tutors are plagiarising ideas, copying techniques, incapable of original thought. (The tutors' exhibition of Symposium '91 was shocking in its revelation of this situation. There was scarcely any original work from the New Zealand tutors, a significant number of pieces were recognisably copies, and some work was very shoddy.)

I feel cheated when I've paid hard-saved money for a class that doesn't live up to its description, in which other students rapidly capture the class's and the teacher's efforts on camera for their own teaching purposes, or in which my limited knowledge quickly matches the teacher's efforts. Most women quiltmakers are spending the very dregs of what's left of the household disposable income on their craft, and feeling mighty guilty about it too. So that money needs to be invested with great care.

If you find yourself in a class you can't stand, why not just pack up and not come back after lunch? Or better still: why not just excuse yourself and leave? You can be as honest or apologetic as you choose, because you paid your money and you have a choice. You may just start a trend!

Oh - why DO I keep going to symposia? Well, the lectures at all the NZ gatherings I've been to have been outstanding. The star speakers and many others have been inspiring in the broadest sense, especially Ginny Beyer and Nancy Crow, artists in the true sense who can communicate their vision to you. (Did my ears deceive me when I heard a woman at Dunedin say "it was just a whole lot of slides of doorways and windows"? What doorways and windows!…doorways into the future and windows on other worlds.)

And I love meeting the other people who skip classes - the ones who have boatsheds out on the peninsula…

Ann Packer is a Wellington quilt maker and community arts advisor. She organised summer schools for the Wellington Community Arts Council from 1986-90.

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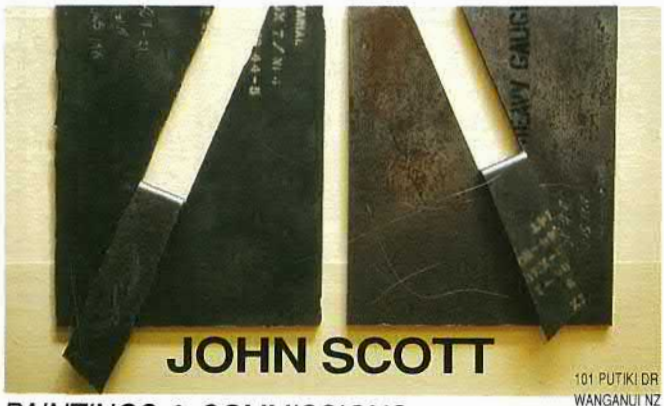

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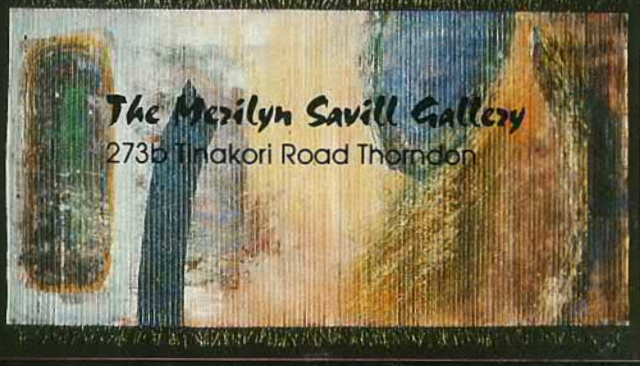

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