



Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Christchurch, 1993

White Camellias



A Century of
Women's Artmaking
in Canterbury



Roses (Anna Olliver)

undated

Margaret Stoddart (1865-1934)

watercolour

395 x 545mm

collection: Robert McDougall Art Gallery

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White Camellias



A Century of
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in Canterbury



Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Published on the occasion of the exhibition *White Camellias* to
celebrate one hundred years of Women's Suffrage in New Zealand.

Published by the Robert McDougall Art Gallery with
support from Trust Bank Canterbury and
Women's Suffrage Whakatu Wahine.



WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE
WHAKATŪ WĀHINE
NOTERARO • NEW ZEALAND
1893-1993



Front Cover: Daisy Osborn (1888–1957) *From my Garden, White Camellias*
c.1951 oil on canvas 331 x 368 mm

Collection: Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Presented by the Artist, 1953

ISBN 09-08874-14-6

White Camellias



A Century of
Women's Artmaking
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Director's Foreword



Despite the victories of the suffragist movement, the social mores of our society until quite recently proclaimed that women should remain in the home, accept roles subordinate to men, and display their talents with decorous modesty.

The areas where superior gifts were readily apparent were in the visual arts, literature and music.

The history of the visual arts in Canterbury has an abundance of outstanding women artists. Co-ordinated by Education Officer Penelope Jackson and Curator Lara Strongman, *White Camellias* is an exhibition celebrating the achievements of these artists, the gallery's prime contribution to the Suffragist Centennial commemoration.

The Robert McDougall Art Gallery wishes to express its appreciation of the major contribution Trust Bank Canterbury has made to this project. The Gallery also acknowledges the support of the 1993 Suffrage Centennial Trust Whakatu Wahine. The Christchurch City Council has encouraged the development of many suffrage projects, of which this is one. We also acknowledge the involvement of the Art History Department of the University of Canterbury in the preparation of the *White Camellias* catalogue. Many individuals and institutions have loaned works for the exhibition and we thank them for their willing co-operation. The resource of the McDougall's own collection is rich in the images which constitute this exhibition.

John Coley
Director

Introduction



Nineteen ninety three is a landmark in New Zealand's history. The date marks one hundred years of women's emancipation in this country, which is an anniversary as yet unreached by other British colonies, and indeed, Great Britain itself: New Zealand was the first country to grant its female citizens the right to vote.

Enfranchisement enabled women to take part in the public affairs of their country, affording them an opportunity to govern as well as to be governed. The right of women to vote (and subsequently to be voted for, as Members of Parliament) involved a major revision of society's traditional structures, which divided men into active roles and women into passive pursuits. The gaining of votes for women in 1893 signals New Zealand society's affirmation of the rights of women to actively participate in their own destinies. While equality between men and women lagged behind in many other fields, women's enfranchisement in 1893 can be seen as a positive symbol of women's changing status and power in our society. This significant centenary year provides a focus through which many aspects of women's lives in New Zealand can be both challenged and celebrated.

To acknowledge the significance of women's suffrage as a vital factor in the shaping of our society, the Robert McDougall Art Gallery has developed a major exhibition which surveys women's art in Canterbury over the last century. *White Camellias* marks the progress and development of women artists in the Canterbury region who are represented in the Gallery's permanent collection.

While *White Camellias* is historically-based, covering the period 1893 to 1993, it does not purport to represent *the* history of women's artmaking in Canterbury over this time. Instead it indicates the direction of *a* history, one particular story among many possible stories. As much as it is a history of the various themes, directions and social issues which have contextualised the practice of Canterbury's women artists, it recounts the story of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery's collections, built over a similar period to that covered by the exhibition. While some loan works have been added in the historical section of the exhibition, the majority of its works are drawn from the Gallery's own collections.

Thus *White Camellias* is very much a 'European' exhibition. It makes no mention of Maori women artists who have worked in the region. There is a strong tradition of fine weaving among Ngai Tahu women, yet the works of art produced by these weavers have historically not been collected by the Gallery. This is due perhaps in part to an earlier perception of Maori artworks as ethnological artefacts, belonging within the context of a museum of social history rather than that of an art gallery. This perceived cultural imbalance has begun in recent years to be addressed by a series of multi-cultural exhibitions presented by the Gallery.

White Camellias includes painting, sculpture, printmaking and photography, but does not address the works of the many highly talented women working in the field of decorative arts in the region. Likewise, the achievements of artists working in the realms of performance, film, video, and other post object arts in recent years are not addressed by this exhibition. These areas deserve a great deal of further research, and the specific attention of future exhibitions devoted entirely to these aspects of artistic practice.

As our society moves gradually but inexorably towards equalising opportunities for men and women, questions may arise concerning the value of presenting exhibitions which deal with issues of 'separateness' and 'otherness'. *White Camellias* makes no apologies for its presentation of the history of Canterbury's women artists as a separate and unique story. Equality of artistic practice in the works of male and female artists has not always led to equivalence of perception by their audience. While many of the artists whose works are included in *White Camellias* did, or do, not identify themselves directly as 'women artists', the social factors implicit in their gender coloured in various ways their careers, their subject matter, and public perception of their contributions to artistic practice. While many of the artists in the exhibition formed an essential part of the 'mainstream' of Canterbury's art history, others did not: these artists were forced to choose, or in some cases chose willingly, a more divergent path, and made little public impact during their lifetimes. It is such artists who are all too frequently passed over in the presentation of more 'mainstream' historical exhibitions, and whose contribution is perceived as being less 'significant.'

centenary of women's suffrage and the graphic symbol of this exhibition. The camellia is a long-standing symbol of public achievement by New Zealand women. In 1893 when the Bill for women's enfranchisement was being debated in Parliament, its supporters were given bouquets of white camellias. Early female graduates of the University of New Zealand were also presented with camellias as symbols of their achievement. The Robert McDougall Art Gallery is fortunate to have in its collection a painting by Daisy Osborn entitled *From my Garden, White Camellias* (c.1951), which has been selected as the key image of the exhibition. Although Osborn was a fine painter of flowers and was a competent portraitist, very little is known about her today and her work has received almost no exposure. An overriding aim of the *White Camellias* exhibition is to bring the works of artists such as Daisy Osborn to public attention.

To give a sense of unity to the exhibition, three major themes have provided a criteria for selection among the wealth of works made over the last century by Canterbury women artists. These themes encompass a range of practices and approaches to artmaking, and have appeared of particular significance in the artistic practice of Canterbury's women. The first is the portrait genre, including, where possible, self-portraits. The second theme is landscape, and in particular representation of images of the Canterbury region, which has long been central to the practice of the province's artists. The final thematic variation has included images which can loosely be described as the artist's response to nature, including the still life and floral subjects. This last category is of particular importance to a historical study of women's artmaking; such 'genteel' and 'modest' subject matter has for a variety of social reasons traditionally been the province of women artists. Dr Pamela Gerrish Nunn, Julie King, and Jillian Cassidy from the University of Canterbury's Art History Department have each written for the exhibition around these frames of reference. They are gratefully acknowledged for their scholarly contributions to the *White Camellias* catalogue.

There are many people to thank for their help, support and guidance in the presentation of *White Camellias*. The exhibition's principal sponsor Trust Bank Canterbury, and the 1993 Suffrage Centennial Trust Whakatu Wahine have been extremely generous in their financial support of the *White Camellias* project, allowing the exhibition and its accompanying publication to be of a scale which does justice to the rich history of Canterbury's women artists. The many members of the public who have made their own works available for exhibition are also gratefully recognised by the Gallery, as are the artists and their families who have supplied their support and useful background material to assist the project. The Gallery also acknowledges the support of the other cultural institutions who have made their works available for loan. These include the Alexander Turnbull Library, the Auckland City Art Gallery, the Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa, the Waikato Museum of Art and History, Christchurch Girls' High School, the Canterbury Society of Arts,

the Christchurch Polytechnic, and the University of Canterbury. Finally, the staff of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery must be thanked for their commitment to the project; foremost among these has been the extremely positive contribution of the Gallery Director, John Coley.

The aim of *White Camellias* is to educate and delight the public about the contribution and legacy of Canterbury's many able and distinguished women artists to the vibrant cultural life of the region.

Penelope Jackson and Lara Strongman
Curators, *White Camellias*
Robert McDougall Art Gallery, 1993.

Of Ladies, Women and Artists



Pamela Gerrish Nunn



In the one hundred years contemplated by this exhibition, two races and their habits, expectations and prejudices formed this country's culture. While this exhibition will be dominated by the pakeha contribution, that of the Maori is of course equally relevant to a full consideration of this last century of women's creativity. The presence and resonance of Maori women's work in the story of women's art in Canterbury should not be underestimated, even though the numbers of Maori in Canterbury were small relative to the pakeha population and even though the two populations held themselves aloof from each other in many ways. For the majority of the last hundred years women's creative place in Maori society has been more stable, less equivocal, than in pakeha society, and the constant negotiations in this period between pakeha men and women on the nature, value and function of women's artistic ambitions and capabilities attract the historian as a mark of the brittle, restive and uncertain nature of white New Zealand society in transition from the Victorian age to the modern day. Women's role was a matter for debate in many white societies at the turn of the century, of course, as the calendar of the suffrage question itself clearly indicates.

Despite the long history of women's and men's creative activity within Maori society, there was in the late Victorian

who comes out, the more he (sic) will suffer; the more painful will be the terrible roughness of Colonial life to such a soul, and the more sadly will such a one pine for home and the genial companionships of other days. Those who love the highly cultivated scenes of their native land, to ramble through leafy lanes, and to gather the sweet primrose and violet— those who love to gaze upon the stately mansion, the charming homestead, the rustic cottage or the ruins of antiquity, should not come here! Those who love to hear the chiming bells of some well loved church, ringing sweetly over pleasant fields and walks, on a summer's evening, should not come here! In a word, to all those who delight in music, poetry, art, nature, all those who worship the beautiful, we would say, pray don't come to the Colonies!¹

Perhaps the writer was unaware that Auckland had had a Society of Artists since 1869, Dunedin the Otago Art Society since 1875, Christchurch the Canterbury Society of Arts since 1880, and Wellington its Art Society since 1882. Census figures, too, suggest that the immigrant society was steadily establishing its own cultural habit. In 1881, 338 artists (painters and art students) were recorded nationally, of whom 18 (15 men and three women) were in Canterbury. In addition two sculptors were recorded nationally (neither of whom lived in Canterbury). In the same year art engravers and printmakers numbered 58 nationally, and photographers 182. Canterbury recorded its share of these latter, with 29 men and two women identifying themselves as photographers or photographic assistants. Of a further eleven people recorded nationally as involved in other aspects of art, one man and one woman resided in Canterbury. While women formed a decided minority of this official artistic population of 1881, many more would have declined, because of etiquette, to identify themselves for the census as holding any occupation, regardless of the importance to them of the painting, drawing or other artistic activities they pursued for pleasure or charity but not for remuneration. Here, indeed, lay the principal factor affecting creative women in the country generally, and, it could be said, Canterbury in particular. This is the force of respectability, social expectations, notions of propriety— in short, that bundle of habits, rules and fears that are implied by the concept of femininity.

This is evidenced in *The Canterbury Times*' Ladies' Page, which ran from 1894.² Employed to write it was Dolce Cabot, allegedly thereby the first woman appointed to the staff of any New Zealand newspaper. In some of the articles Cabot enjoined her readers to traditional activities, preoccupations and aims, but in others urged them against the restrictions of the domestic round. "The Queen's Christmas" (January 1899), "A Mother's Farewell" (January 1901), and "The Ideal Husband" (December 1901) might presume the average woman to be conservative, sentimental and romantic, but that traditional frame of mind was

also challenged, and strikingly often through material relating to art. A long account of the famous eighteenth-century painter Angelika Kauffmann appeared alongside “The Ideal Husband”, while an item called “Women Royal Academicians” had introduced her to readers in July 1898. In January 1899, Cabot related the inequities suffered by the English battle painter Elizabeth, Lady Butler, and then in June lamented vividly the death of the French painter Rosa Bonheur. “The world of art is the poorer for its loss”, wrote Cabot, “the world of women is more empty. Yet she leaves behind an enduring example of noble endeavour— of pure devotion to the art she served— such as must be helpful and uplifting to all who can catch a glimpse of the quiet grandeur of this splendidly purposeful life”. Five years on, encouraging her readers in this same direction, Cabot reported that “Colonial women writers, artists and decorative designers who have been at a loss how to find a market for their work are now offered excellent facilities by the Lyceum Club, which opened a few months ago in London ... In return for the guinea fee of membership, manuscripts and canvases forwarded by aspirants after fame— and money— will be criticised by a competent committee and forwarded to the proper quarters. The writings will be sent to those publications which are most likely to accept them, and the pictures submitted to the Committees of the Royal Academy, the New Gallery and other important exhibitions...” (November 1904).

The temptation for pakeha women to look to the countries from which their families originated, for opportunity as well as recognition, was based on an emotional matrix endemic to immigrant societies, and was not confined to the turn of the century. Esther Hope (née Barker), Eleanor Hughes (née Weymouth), Annie Elizabeth Kelly (née Abbott) and Mary Tripe (née Richardson) were by no means the last Canterbury women to join their more famous South Island colleague Frances Hodgkins in the art schools and colonies of western Europe. It was not clear to an aspiring woman artist of the late nineteenth or early twentieth century whether New Zealand was a congenial or a hostile environment for her ambitions. Helen Simpson, considering the history of women in New Zealand in 1940, contended that “the art of painting ... has found among New Zealand women many competent professors who have deserved better than they have very generally received.”³ In Canterbury, it is notable that, though female students were welcome from the start at Canterbury College, the staff of its School of Art has included only a small percentage of women over the years. Equally, while the Canterbury Society of Arts was a mixed-sex organisation within which Margaret Stoddart and others made their names known, its council was preponderantly male until well into the twentieth century, its first female president (Olivia Spencer Bower) occurring only in 1980. It cannot be coincidental that women were prominent in the breakaway groups The Palette Club, established in 1889, and The Group, established in 1927. When Canterbury artists participated in the

photographers were practising locally. (Examples include Mrs A. Robottom in Ashburton, and Jessie Buckland at Taieri Lake and Akaroa). Even at the founding of the Christchurch Photographic Society in 1940, the membership was still overwhelmingly male.

In other aspects of a community's life—paid work, education, sport—the last decades of the nineteenth century saw the gradually increasing possibility of Canterbury women both Maori and pakeha, establishing themselves as multi-faceted beings with ambitions in the public as well as the private sphere of the life shared by the two races. If they wished to make inroads into the fine art field—as distinct from the domain of design, handiwork or crafts—women could take the acquiescent route of the 'lady artist', symbolised by small scale, flower study and low prices, or they could attempt to equal men on their unlimited ground, pursuing figure-painting, landscape made in the face of nature, portraiture of public figures, sculpture and so on. It is not surprising to see women banding together in pursuit of the latter alternative which, in late Victorian and Edwardian years, social habit made difficult and intellectual prejudice made threatening.

Thus Bessie Acland (later Dunn) followed her mother Emily Harper into painting. Olivia Spencer-Bower worked with the example of her mother Rosa Dixon, and *her* mother Eliza Wood Dixon, before her. Sisters Rachel and Jessie Buckland shared their enthusiasm for art, one adopting painting and the other turning to photography; the former had a long working association with Fanny Wimperis, with whom she painted in Otago as a young woman and by whom she was encouraged to continue after marriage in 1901. Nora and Mima Gardner, both signatories of the Canterbury Society of Arts constitution in 1881, kept each other company over the years in their sketching travels. Beatrix Dobie (later Vernon) and Esther Hope, Margaret Stoddart and Cora Wilding would accompany each other on sketching trips into rural Canterbury. The poet Ursula Bethell and her companion Effie lent their support to young women aspiring to be artists. Margaret Stoddart was sought out by many women as their first teacher. Seven women joined up, with two men, to form The Group, provoking this response from critic James Shelley at its inaugural exhibition in 1929: "There was a time when critics could write—as I think George Moore did—that women were incapable from their very nature, of creative work in the arts; such a dictum would be a dangerous one to make in these days with an artist like Laura Knight dominating the walls of the RA at Home, and with our own 1929 Group demanding our attention here..."⁴

The 'twenties, indeed, offered a more promising climate for Canterbury women to get recognition in fine art practice, than at any time before the World War. As Anne Kirker has noted in reference to Rhona Haszard, "[She] had the good fortune to be starting her career at a time when there was something approaching a real balance, in terms of public acceptance, between male and female contemporary artists. That she could emerge in the 1920s as a young ambitious painter and

lead a challenging and unorthodox life, was not an isolated phenomenon. Opportunities for women to participate in a wider sphere of activity than that associated with the home were gaining ground.”⁵ It was not just that society was more tolerant but that women themselves were more assertive. As Margaret Lewis writes of Ngaio Marsh’s expectations during the twenties, “In [her] artistic set in Christchurch very few women married early: they longed for travel, experience and independence, not for domesticity”.⁶ Conventions may have modified to a post-war reality noticeably different from Canterbury’s early-twentieth-century Victorianism, but a woman still needed a strong dose of the individuality for which Marsh, Hodgkins and Rita Angus are particularly recognised, firstly to conceive of herself as an artist and secondly to sustain herself as one. It is not irrelevant that Haszard’s sister Geraldine recalled: “She was an original and thought nothing of sitting in the middle of Cathedral Square with traffic surging past if she wanted to sketch.”⁷

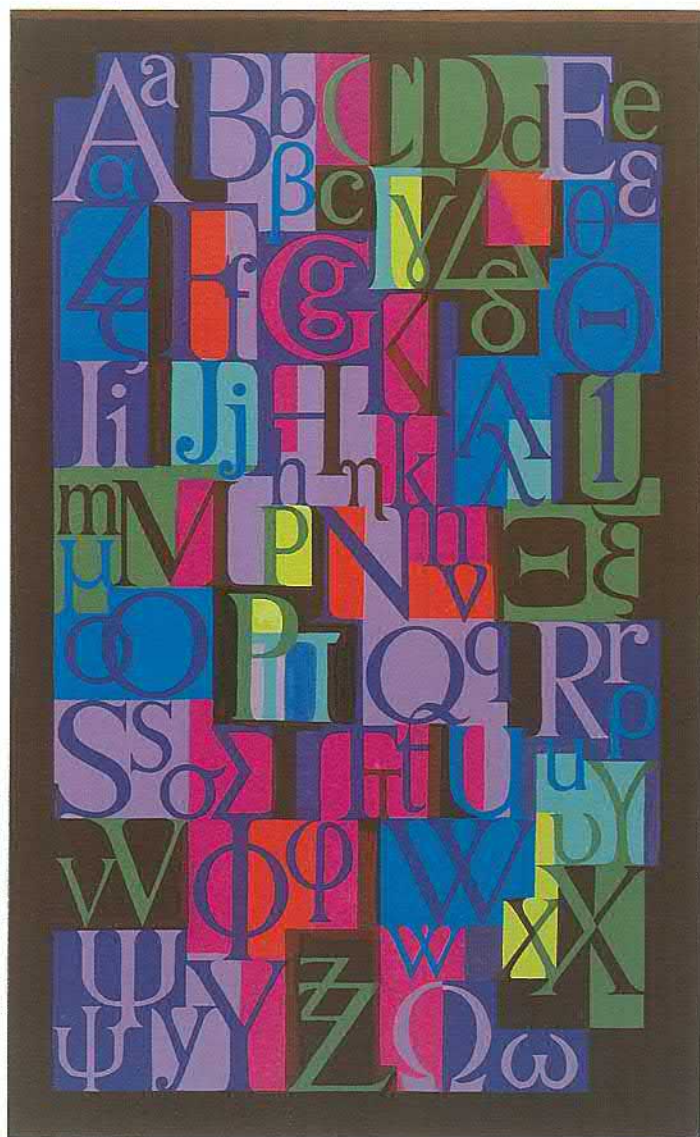
Female individuality was a tricky condition to maintain, as the example of Rita Angus most vividly demonstrates. Marriage and motherhood had to be reconsidered for their hidden costs as well as their much-vaunted benefits. Angus had a go, at least at the first of them, but quickly rejected woman’s conventional state. Rata Bird, once she was Rata Lovell-Smith, found the status of wife had very obvious drawbacks to the professional female artist. Many more twentieth-century female artists remained single, still more childless, and Kirker characterises Haszard’s marriage as very unusual in the lack of inhibition it imposed on her career. Though historians and descendants have been habitually coy on the question of lesbianism, it is implicit in the high proportion of unmarried women artists that many preferred to secure the support of empathetic women than the approval of conventional society. This was risky, not only in terms of personal happiness but also in terms of professional success. For, while the realm of art and the modern image of the artist might appear to license and, indeed, nurture unconventionality, traditional prejudices regarding women were still in play and survive to a degree in the present day. As Sydney Thompson and James Shelley unwittingly revealed in their obituarial appreciation of Margaret Stoddart for *Art in New Zealand*, the independent woman was still in 1935 for many Cantabrians a contradiction in terms: they wrote of “her strong, healthy outlook that amounted almost to masculinity”.⁸ The tone is sincerely complimentary but betrays the belief that certain habits and characteristics are still proper to men, even if modern women have borrowed them.

Indeed, for a female artist, the work is never the only determinant of reputation. Her person, it seems, is always also on trial. Artists as diverse as Frances Hodgkins, Olivia Spencer-Bower, Rita Angus, Ivy Fife and Eileen Mayo experienced this oppressive connection made— only, it seems, in *women* artists’ case— between artistic standing and social expectations. While some, like Evelyn Page, would deny the significance of gender in

the earlier predominance of watercolour painting in pakeha women's artwork has given way to a post-modern multiplicity of media, an awareness of and, further, a resistance to the straitjacket of society's expectations unites the diverse work made by Allie Eagle, Tiffany Thornley, Linda James, Margaret Dawson and Séraphine Pick in the past two decades. While not all female artists currently working in Canterbury, whether Maori or pakeha, would call themselves feminist, it is due to the gradual emancipation of women in New Zealand society, which we are honouring this year but which is not yet of course complete(!), that women's art in Canterbury is presently so rich in diversity. This can be seen as a positive consequence of the sombre truth of women's position that Rita Angus expressed so forcibly: "We have to recognise as the most vital anthropological evidence from the last 50 years, that with the female half of the population emotionally frustrated, religiously 'unsublimated', disappointed in her liberty, weaned of(f) her employment, there is present a restlessness and a resentment (all the more massive because repressed)".⁹

Notes

1. 'HOPEFUL', *Taken In— a sketch of New Zealand Life*, 1887 (reprint 1974), p.176.
2. I am indebted to Helen Debenham (and Robyn Chandler) of the English department, University of Canterbury, for sharing their knowledge of *Dolce Cabor* and the Ladies' Page with me.
3. Helen Simpson, *The Women of New Zealand*, 1940, p.163–5.
4. *Christchurch Times*, September 10, 1929.
5. Anne Kirker, *New Zealand Women Artists*, 1986, p.66.
6. Margaret Lewis, *Ngaio Marsh: a life*, 1991, p.33.
7. Kirker, p.66
8. *Art in New Zealand*, December 1935, p.99.
9. Rita Angus papers 1399, quoted in Kirker, p.96.



Alphabets

1982

Eileen Mayo (b. 1906)

screenprint

600 x 365mm

collection: Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Canterbury Women Printmakers



Jillian Cassidy



Canterbury women printmakers have been few in number but the contribution they have made to the development of printmaking in the region has been significant. The absence of a tradition of printmaking in Canterbury, let alone a women's perspective on it, is not surprising considering that a serious specialisation in the medium was not available at the University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts until 1964. The inferior status of etching and engraving as an art form in comparison to painting and sculpture has a long history and one that was intrinsically related to the foundation of the School of Art. When the Canterbury College (New Zealand) School of Art opened in 1882 its objects stated:

The work carried on in the school has for its object the systematic study of practical Art and the knowledge of its scientific principles, with a view to developing the application of Art to the common uses of life, and to the requirements of Trade and Manufacturers.

The instruction includes the following subjects:

Lithographic drawing (on stone)

Drawing on wood (for engraving)¹

These objectives make it quite clear that at the outset printmaking was industrially interpreted; it was taught solely as

painting. However, the British bias as to what constitutes a fine art was clearly reflected in the curriculum during the 1920s. Painting and sculpture were considered the dominant disciplines (as they still are), the most appropriate and the most suitable activity of the stereotypical artist, whereas printmaking was regarded as a minor art. But a minor art can be as major as people wish to make it and the history of the development of printmaking in the School of Art was closely aligned to fluctuations in the popularity of the print in Britain. This is not surprising given the fact that to begin with all the lecturers were British, most of the textbooks and manuals available to them were published in Britain, and all examining of work in the School after 1897 was conducted by the South Kensington Science and Art Department. Until the early twentieth century British printmaking, especially engraving, was “dogged by commercial pressures, introspection and rebellious experimentation.”² Consequently printmaking has always been the butt of fine art prejudices and perhaps this accounts in some measure for the seemingly negative attitude the Canterbury College School of Art displayed towards printmaking and the length of time it took to introduce it into the curriculum as a subject in its own right.

It was the intellectual status of Modernism that eventually brought about a change in attitude towards the original print in Britain and a subsequent resurgence of interest in it. The art critic Herbert Furst in his book *The Modern Woodcut* (1924), stated that modern printmaking was not dependent on craftsmanship as such; he insisted that it was only a means of expressing the design and intention of the artist in the same way that brush and paint expressed the intention of the painter.³ Furst urged engravers in particular to stop regarding themselves as imitators or reproducers of original works and to recognise themselves as creative artists.⁴ The more positive attitude towards the original print in Britain in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries coincided with the appointment of Richard Wallwork ARCA (London) in 1911 as a lecturer at the Canterbury College School of Art. He had studied etching under Sir Frank Short and his strong interest in book illustration had led him to experiment widely with the medium as an original graphic technique. His expertise in this area was recognised by the School of Art (perhaps even sought after given the change in public taste and the rising popularity of the print in Britain) and he was appointed to teach figure composition, anatomy and etching. Courses in etching began in 1913. It would indeed be gratifying to record that Wallwork’s teaching of etching produced a network of able and talented women printmakers in Canterbury, but this was not so. Joan Edgar (a former student of the Canterbury College School of Art) recalls that in 1937, she, Juliet Peter, and others experimented with various printmaking techniques, but never seriously.⁵ To the students it was just another craft activity. (In later years Juliet Peter and Roy Cowan made innovative headway with lithography in New Zealand.)

The years following Richard Wallwork's appointment in 1928 as Head of the Canterbury College School of Art were lean ones in the history of printmaking in Canterbury. However, an interest in the medium was kept alive by Francis Shurrock, who lectured in sculpture at the School of Art from 1924 to 1945. Shurrock had a comprehensive knowledge of Japanese woodcuts and made woodcuts himself. But perhaps his greatest contribution to the future development of the print at the School was the enthusiasm he inspired for printmaking in his disciple, John (Jack) Knight. Appointed to the School in 1946 to lecture in painting, Knight gradually edged his way towards the full-time teaching of printmaking. By 1959 printmaking was available to students as a major or minor craft within Design⁶ but in 1964, under Maurice Askew (appointed Head of Design in 1962), Engraving was offered as one of three major subjects in that department.

It was the appointment of Don Peebles in 1965 as lecturer in Basic Design that gave John Knight the break he had been waiting for; this appointment freed him from his design commitments and enabled him to teach printmaking full time. In 1967 Engraving, as taught under the umbrella of Design, folded, and Printmaking became a department in its own right.⁷

Despite these developments, Painting and Sculpture remained the dominant departments in what had now become the University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts. The 1960s saw some of New Zealand's leading painters and sculptors, among them Doris Lusk, Don Peebles, and Tom Taylor, appointed to teaching positions in those areas. Until Barry Cleavin was appointed Head of Printmaking in 1978, the medium could boast no artist of comparable standing.

Very few printmakers have ever made a comfortable living from their art, so not least among the achievements of Canterbury women printmakers have been their efforts to set up the original print as a viable financial proposition. This was pioneered in Christchurch in the late 'sixties by the British-born artist, Eileen Mayo. An artist of international status, a regular exhibitor in print shows at the Redfern Gallery, London, and later a member of the Australian Print Council, this *grande dame* of printmaking in New Zealand was well equipped with the professionalism required to re-present the original print to the small buying public of Canterbury. This she did in 1968, in collaboration with Ngaire Hewson, the then owner of Several Arts, a small craft-shop/gallery at 809 Colombo Street. This was at a time when there were only two other independent galleries in Christchurch. Gallery 91, above Whitcombe and Tombs, was the first commercial art gallery in the city, but for all its apparent scope, very few women exhibited there. It appears to have catered more for the big names in painting (Colin McCahon and Russell Clarke were frequent exhibitors there). The Woodward Gallery in Victoria Street was more of a craft shop selling hand-knitted garments, woodware and pottery but it also held one man and one woman shows at a time when the Art Societies and The

with location

Ngairé Hewson, under the guidance and direction of Eileen Mayo, provided a much needed venue for exhibitions by professional printmakers, particularly the work of women printmakers. Juliet Peter, Eileen Mayo, and Alison Pickmere were the first professional women printmakers to exhibit there, followed by Penny Omerod, Gwen Morris, and Bonnie Quirk. The liveliness and graphic skills apparent in these shows at Several Arts promoted a big trade in original prints in Canterbury and this in turn contributed significantly to the development of the print in the region by setting the highest of standards. For her own part Eileen Mayo insisted that the gallery owner was responsible for the calibre of work shown; that artists who exhibited at Several Arts should be professionals in their field; and that prints shown to the public be of the highest quality both artistically and technically.

Eileen Mayo's insistence on the uncompromising excellence of the quality of the original print and her promotion of it through Several Arts was developed and maintained in the late 1970s and early 'eighties by Jule Einhorn. Her earliest experience of printmaking was in New York where in 1966 she had rented space in a public workshop. After her subsequent training as a printmaker at the University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts she was attracted by the idea of promoting the original print through the establishment of a communal facility where artists could make prints. This she did through a pilot scheme run from and partially sponsored by the Robert McDougall Art Gallery in a space above what was Spratt's Restaurant (now Vesuvio International Café, Bar & Grill) at 182 Oxford Terrace. This was the first example of patronage that the print had received in Christchurch from a major institution. The idea was that people would come in the lunch hour to watch eight professional printmakers, among them Denise Copland, Kate Coolahan, Jule Einhorn, Tiffany Thornley, and Jane Zusters, make and produce editions of prints. This one-off, ambitious and enterprising project was enthusiastically received by the general public and the original print experienced a further upswing in popularity in the city. In 1984, four years after opening Gingko Workshop and Gallery for Works on Paper in the Arts Centre, Christchurch, Jule Einhorn went to the Tamarind Institute of Lithography in New Mexico, that Mecca of all would-be professional printers, to perfect her printing skills. In its pursuit of excellence, Tamarind, an internationally acclaimed printing workshop, has spent the last twenty years promoting research on the modern printing industry in order to develop and improve the quality of lithography and the lithographic press. By dealing with the medium as a science, Tamarind has made a difficult printing process more controllable.

Gingko Workshop and Gallery for Works on Paper was never commercially-orientated. Its establishment was funded by a grant of \$5000 from the Arts Council and the idea was that it should break even. As gallery director and printer, Jule Einhorn strove to nurture the development of the original print in

New Zealand, and to set standards of printing and to establish a national information centre for professional printmakers. It was also her intention to provide a facility in Canterbury where an artist who was not a printmaker by training could use her expertise to work in another medium in order to make their work available to the public through multiples of prints. Indeed it is the craft element and the unique aspect of the multiplicity of the print that attracts Jule Einhorn, even on behalf of another artist. With the advent of “user pays” and the “if it doesn’t pay it shouldn’t be there” philosophy, Gingko Print Workshop and Gallery for Works on Paper was no longer regarded as a viable financial option. The unit price of a print and a small buying public were simply not enough to sustain the workshop and gallery.

In the early 1980s, lithography experienced a surge of popularity amongst artists and collectors. In Auckland, between 1983 and 1985, just prior to the advent of the Muka Print/Workshop, Graham Cornwall and Cathryn Shine were working at the Autographic Printing Workshop and printing for fifteen to twenty artists, Don Binney, Pat Hanly, and Tony Fomison among them. In 1984, as an Honours student at the University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts, Marian Maguire collaborated with Ralph Hotere to produce a suite of lithographic prints. A year later, equipped with a lithographic press built by Stephen Gleeson, she worked with Philippa Blair, Graham Bennett and Peter Ransom to make limited edition prints for them.

In 1987 Marian Maguire and Stephen Gleeson opened The Limeworks, a studio and print workshop, in Christchurch. This new facility was a clear signal to artists and public alike of the proprietors’ faith in the continuing importance of the original print as a major art form in New Zealand. At The Limeworks, printing is a collaborative process in which the artist’s idea is always of paramount importance. Marian Maguire, who also spent some time attending the Professional Printer Training programme at Tamarind, has adapted many of the Institute’s printing techniques to suit her own objectives; she often dispenses with the more traditional approaches to printing and takes technical risks in order to get an artist’s idea across. Accordingly, the two traditional types of registration, the key-block method and the reduction process, are hardly ever used at The Limeworks. Instead the printing process is fitted around artists’ perceptions; they are encouraged to think in layers, in terms of collage and to treat the lithographic stone or woodblock as tools. The partnership between artist and printer remains to the end, with decisions still being made by both right up to and during the period of trial proofing. The final result is a “painting” with ink rather than a pre-planned image printed in separate layers of colour. The liberation of the print achieved by the innovative initiatives of Marian Maguire has increased its popularity in Canterbury (and indeed, in New Zealand) in two significant ways: the original print is now an attractive and popular alternative medium for many well-known New Zealand artists

made by Canterbury women printmakers to popularise the print through gallery, studio and workshop, the seven women represented in this exhibition have also been responsible for other remarkable creative developments in the history of printmaking in this country, which, until recently, have been all but overlooked by New Zealand art institutions and the media alike.

Denise Copland's formidable graphic skills are matched by her equally challenging and original imagination. While never ignoring the traditional base of printmaking she consciously seeks ways of "liberating the print from the shackles of reproducibility."⁸ To this end her printed editions are always small in number and her eventual aim is to produce one-off prints. Dissatisfied with the growing practice in New Zealand to sell the print in an entrapment of glass (which obscures, or at least partially distorts the image) she advocates the use of the solander box and encourages the intimate interplay between print and viewer that this particular presentation promotes. In the *Indigenous Suite* from the *Implantations* series, Denise Copland demonstrates her preoccupation with creating authenticity of atmosphere. Working from the actual source, she used aspects of the tree itself, pieces of fallen bark and twigs, to draw into the ground covering the metal plates. In this way the actual material of the images was instrumental in giving form to the visual representations. Her priority was to create a monumental and sculptural suite of narrative prints which would activate the gallery space by the sheer size of the images and the powerful conservationist message.

In working out her own mature style, Sue Cooke's prints have become increasingly skilled and impressive. The massive scale of her landscape etchings printed on banners and the framed canvasses of the *Mount Cook Series* has expanded the boundaries of printmaking. Tiffany Thornley's work grew out of the Women's Movement in the seventies and her prints embrace the broader aspects of feminism. *Kate through the Looking Glass* is the first in a series of etchings she made using women friends as models and was drawn directly on to the prepared plate. Sandra Thomson's prints, although not strictly feminist in concept, always stress the female point of view. Her most recent works explore the theme of body decoration by tattoo as a means of body enhancement. Another of her themes is society's manipulation of the female form to create its own ideal of a woman's body by altering or disguising it by the use of corsets, foot-bindings and other restricting devices. *The Ridgeway Flyers* is one of a series of prints in which she comments on social situations. She draws attention to the loneliness of the individual despite the crowds at the fair-ground, the jostle of the jumble sale, and the glamour and glitz of the entertainment world. Jane Zusters is an artist who moves easily among several media. In some of her paintings she pastes fragments of photographs over a painted surface to create a collage. Because the collage technique requires an artist to think in layers, the technique is particularly print orientated. *A Brush with a Frame*, one of Jane Zusters's

more recent prints, shows how the image has been built up by the layering of colours, an approach not dissimilar to the one she employs when working with paint and photographs. Vivienne Bishop's *Serendipity* is a further example of a painter extending her artistic repertoire into printmaking.

Certainly not least among printmakers from the University of Canterbury's School of Fine Arts is the group of Canterbury women who are trail-blazing through the print in education. This, of course, raises the question, "Is making more important than nurturing?" Certainly many of these women, Kathryn Anderson, Helen Cooper, Gayle Forster and indeed Denise Copland, to name but a few in the Canterbury region, have also exhibited widely.

These women, and others teaching outside of the Canterbury region, including Jean Dickinson, Jenny Murray, and Juliet Collins, have had a profound effect on the development of quality printmaking in polytechnics and schools. Other Canterbury women working in galleries throughout New Zealand have worked untiringly to give the print a public face. Jill McIntosh introduced and edited *Contemporary New Zealand Prints*, 1989. Karen Mason was responsible for the education material in *Face to Face: A Survey of Artist's Prints*, 1986. These women have made valuable and substantial contributions to the advancement of the cause of the print.

What this potted history of the fluctuating fortunes of the print highlights is the comparative recentness of printmaking in the story of women's art in Canterbury. It also allows us to indicate the shallowness of the soil from which the impressive creative achievements of the women printmakers of the region has grown. What the technical virtuosity, innovation and imagination evident in the work of Canterbury women printmakers clearly demonstrates is that creative printmaking is as valid a form of artistic expression as either painting or sculpture, while, through its ability to produce works in multiple editions, it has a democratic divergence unavailable to those more highly regarded media.

Notes

1. Canterbury College (New Zealand) School of Art, Courses of Study, Lectures, 1882, p.5.
2. Rodney Engen, "British Wood Engraving", *Watercolours, Drawings and Prints*, vol.7, no.1, January, 1992, p.13.
3. *ibid.*, p.16.
4. Furst is referring here to the commercialism which had dominated engraving circles. Wood-engraving was one of the subjects taught at the Canterbury College of Art as a Trade requirement.
5. The author in conversation with Joan Edgar, 20 February, 1993.
6. Whether Printmaking was taken as a major craft or a minor craft within Design, was determined by the selection of courses made by a student.



Untitled (Mountain Biological Station, Cass)

1936

Rita Angus (1908-1970)

watercolour

230 x 290mm

collection: University of Canterbury, Christchurch

Finding a Place:
Women Artists and the
Canterbury Landscape



Julie King



One of the striking developments in Canterbury during the late 1920s and 1930s was the emergence of a significant group of women artists whose work, whilst expressing varied responses to the region, shared a concern with the inter-relationship of people and place: a perception of Canterbury as a lived-in (however sparsely) land.

Living and painting in the region at some time during this period were older artists such as Margaret Stoddart, Grace Butler and Esther Hope, along with Evelyn Page, Olivia Spencer Bower and Rata Lovell-Smith. They were joined by Louise Henderson in 1925 and Rita Angus in 1927.¹ A perspective of difference brings into view their major contribution to a central tradition of landscape art— highlighting a period which constituted a breakthrough for women artists.

That women up until this time had played a less-acknowledged part in landscape painting, has to do with the development of notions of professionalism and with the relation between gender and genre in art. Margaret Stoddart's beginnings in colonial Christchurch were at a time when women's participation in art was seen predominantly as an accomplishment, as well as differentiated in terms of genre. Voicing a Victorian ideology of difference, which restricted women artists and trivialized their work, a contemporary critic

Initially developing her career in the genteel area of flower painting, Margaret Stoddart progressed towards professional practice discreetly. It was only after leaving for Europe in 1897, from her base at St Ives in Cornwall, a centre for English Impressionism, that Stoddart became a landscapist. When she arrived back in New Zealand in 1906, with her artistic interests broadened, landscape clearly emerged as a principal theme in her work. Critical acceptance within this prestigious area, however, took longer to come by, and Stoddart's early acknowledgement as Canterbury's most popular flower painter contrasts with how she was granted only gradually due recognition as one of the region's leading landscapists.³

Situating women artists in the social contexts which shaped their work brings into question how Stoddart's practice as a flower painter had a special bearing on her approach to landscape painting. Whether collecting plants with her sisters near their home on the Peninsula, or on expeditions to the Alps for native species, viewing the landscape with an eye for what grew on the land, meant that she learned as a young woman to perceive the links between plants and places. Describing the diversity of the Canterbury landscape, Stoddart became the first artist to show up its range of varied vegetation. From cultivated gardens in full bloom, spring blossom and autumnal change along the Avon, to yellow lupins growing wild on coastal wastes; from the native bush in the west at Otira to images of dry tussock and shingle in the wide Mackenzie Basin, Stoddart's flexible watercolour technique realized her vision of the vividness and variety of nature in a changing landscape.

Her painting, spanning nearly fifty years of landscape art, records her life-time's responses to living in the region, and constitutes a cultural discourse through which she and European settlers of her generation found a place in Canterbury.

In common with many women artists of her time, whose work also reflected the circumstances of their lives, Stoddart painted her immediate surroundings. Like Olivia Spencer Bower and Evelyn Page some years later, she took subjects from what was close to her. *Godley House, Diamond Harbour* (c.1912) (Robert McDougall Art Gallery) depicted the garden and verandah of the family home where she lived as a young woman, and where she returned to join her elderly mother and sisters after working in Europe; painted about the same time, *Old Homestead, Diamond Harbour* (1913) (Robert McDougall Art Gallery) was a nostalgic view of the cottage where she was born in 1865.

Setting out in the 1890s, Margaret Stoddart was the first in a line of women artists in Canterbury who pursued watercolour painting with professional purpose, and during her life she worked with a group of painters, including Rosa Dixon, Esther Hope, Cora Wilding, and Olivia Spencer Bower. The practice of watercolour painting, in which women were prominent, forms a distinctive, although marginalized, aspect of the history of landscape art in Canterbury.

The diminished prestige of watercolours within the landscape tradition, however, goes back to the late nineteenth century when they were displayed next to large scale oils by newly-arrived professionals. Until the arrival of Petrus van der Velden, James McLachlan Nairn and Girolamo Nerli, landscape art in New Zealand was firmly founded on the English watercolour tradition carried by W.M.Hodgkins, John Gully and J.C.R.Richmond. Towards the end of the century, landscapes in oil by John Gibb or William Menzies Gibb, James Peele or Van der Velden, increasingly took critical acclaim at Art Society exhibitions, thus diminishing the importance of a lively tradition of watercolour painting which began at this time. As early as 1887, Alfred Walsh at the Canterbury College School of Art began taking classes (made up largely of women) to work out-of-doors along the banks of the Avon. Only two years later, Walsh was one of a group of artists who formed the Palette Club, an association committed to professionalism and to working from nature.⁴ Remarkable for its high proportion of women members (including Margaret Stoddart, Rosa Budden and Dora Meeson) whose presence was evidence of their growing ambitions, The Palette Club worked to advance both the women's cause as well as the practice of *plein-air* sketching in watercolours.

The first woman landscapist who achieved recognition from her contemporaries for painting in the prestigious oil medium was Grace Butler. Acknowledgement came when two of her landscapes, *On the Beach, New Brighton* (1916) and *Evening Glow* (1920) were acquired for the Canterbury Society of Arts Collection, although not without the kind of controversy which besets women artists breaking into new areas.⁵ *On the Beach, New Brighton* was the Society's first purchase of a landscape in oils by a woman artist, and the acquisition of *Evening Glow* only four years later raised the innuendo that the 'half-fledged' artist had been tempted beyond her capacity, along with bitter complaints that the work had failed "to reach a permanent gallery standard".⁶

Grace Butler had shown her independence and artistic ambition when she left Napier as a young woman in 1910, and travelled south to study painting at the Canterbury College School of Art. She went on to paint professionally for almost all her life in the Canterbury region, winning her place within a landscape tradition which traced its line from Archibald Nicoll and Cecil Kelly back to Van der Velden.⁷ Working for many years in the Otira region, where she stayed for long periods of time with her husband and family, Butler's mountain landscapes were particularly admired in the 1920s. In 1926 James Shelley went so far as to say that, "for years Mrs Butler has got deeper and deeper into the spirit of the mountains, and now it seems safe to say that no artist in New Zealand has quite the same sympathy with our alpine scenery."⁸

Her contemporary success was remarkable given the fact that like most women in the 1920s, she never held an influential position in Canterbury at the School of Art or in the Art Society.

primarily women artists, many of them former students at the School of Art, who were influential in defining the new direction taken by landscapists in Canterbury. Olivia Spencer Bower, Louise Henderson, and Rita Angus joined Rata Lovell-Smith and Margaret Stoddart in constructing notions of what constituted the essential character of the Canterbury region.

In a frequently quoted passage from 1934, A.R.D. Fairburn had defined the characteristic New Zealand landscape as marked by “the natural bleakness of our man-made scenery— buildings, bridges, railway stations and cuttings, telegraph poles.” Rejecting both romantic and impressionist conventions, he argued for a change of technique to express new content: in order to define “the bones, the sheer form, of hills, trees, stones and scrub,” artists “must draw rather than paint.”¹⁰

Margaret Stoddart and Rata Lovell-Smith had found already in the Mackenzie Country and the Canterbury Alps Fairburn’s conception of the essential character of the New Zealand landscape. Painted in the late 1920s, works such as *Rough Creek, Arthur’s Pass* (whereabouts unknown), reveals how, towards the end of her career, Stoddart introduced new themes into her landscape work, which were taken up subsequently by later artists.

Rata Lovell-Smith, in *Back Country, Lake Selfe Area* (1929) (Robert McDougall Art Gallery) rejected picturesque features to isolate, instead, the slips and patterns of erosion which seared the hillsides in the high country. When she painted in the Mt Cook region, she bluntly rejected nineteenth century romantic traditions. In *Mt Cook Road* (1933), the painting’s bold structure and foreground motif of a characteristic single-lane bridge, subverted earlier conventions picturing the landscape as the scenic “other”. Rata Lovell-Smith took the lead at this time in establishing the typicality of Canterbury landscape themes. In *Hawkins* (1933) (Robert McDougall Art Gallery), she featured, in the words of Ngaio Marsh, “one of those little stations that interrupt the perspective of railway lines across the Canterbury Plains in New Zealand.”¹¹ Known for a “simple and direct treatment of the landscape”, her colloquial inflections led to critical recognition as being “practically the pioneer in this way of seeing and representing the Canterbury countryside.”¹²

Moving away from well-established scenic views, artists shifted their painting sites. In 1936 Rita Angus and Louise Henderson made their now-legendary journey to stay at the field station in the small settlement of Cass, from where they explored the tussock country east of the divide. Looking for new ways of representing the landscape, Rita Angus and Louise Henderson were amongst the most advanced artists of their time. From this trip, made by two young women at the outset of their careers, came Rita Angus’s *Cass* (c.1936) (Robert McDougall Art Gallery)— which although scarcely noticed at the Canterbury Society of Arts exhibition in 1937, has become one of the country’s cultural icons.

Although since the 1920s the numbers of New Zealanders living in towns exceeded those in the rural areas, (one third of the population lived in the four main centres), Evelyn Page was exceptional in selecting themes which represented urban life. By painting her surroundings at Lyttelton Harbour and in Christchurch, Evelyn Page recorded what were the familiar sights to the majority of people in this region in the 1940s. It was, however, the relation of people to the rural environment—the back country—which constituted the principal theme in landscape painting in Canterbury, and this was shaped by a matrix of cultural factors which marked New Zealand's history during the 1930s and 1940s.

The construction of a distinctive New Zealand cultural tradition in Canterbury took place within the context of the strength of English traditions, which were embedded in the province's foundations, governed many of its institutions, and which had even transformed the physical landscape of its main city. Recalling a childhood memory of her surroundings, a view of Hagley Park, with its lake, sheep and playing fields—the whole scene graced by the spire of Christchurch Cathedral—Ngaio Marsh reflected "I might have been an English child looking across a small provincial city except that when I turned to the north, there, on a clear day, forty miles across the plains, shone a great mountain range."¹³ Co-existing in the Canterbury landscape were cultural signs: the city gardens and a Cathedral spire which spoke of Home, and far beyond—a country of plains and mountains called New Zealand. Doris Lusk's panoramic *Canterbury Plains from the Cashmere Hills* (1952) (Robert McDougall Art Gallery) took in a view which emerged rich in cultural resonances, in the poetry of Ursula Bethell and the painting of Margaret Stoddart. From about the 1920s, the two women were neighbours on the Cashmere hills, and not far from the garden at Westenra Terrace, where Bethell "very earnestly digging", raised her head to look at the mountains and discovered New Zealand¹⁴—Margaret Stoddart painted her distant views North and East from the folds of these brown hills.

One of the striking aspects of the history of art in Canterbury during the late 1920s and 1930s was the emergence of a group of women artists who had an impact on the central tradition of landscape art. For the first time in New Zealand a group of women played a principal part and took a visible role in shaping new directions in painting in the region. Benefitting from the achievements of their predecessors, women showed an increased awareness of themselves as artists and, it has been argued, by this time they "had achieved a sense of their own professional status and identity in the art world."¹⁵

This was evident in a variety of ways. Canterbury women artists had shown their commitment to art as students, with a number of them, like Rita Angus, even shifting to Christchurch to attend the Canterbury College School of Art, which had a leading reputation at this time. Their participation in advanced directions in art was seen in their involvement in The Group, an

World War II effectively brought to a close a significant period for the establishment of women artists in Canterbury. This happened in a number of ways. There were some departures: Louise Henderson left the region in 1941 and was followed by Evelyn Page in 1947. The 'forties were restless years for Rita Angus—full of comings and goings around the country—until, in 1954, she finally left her cottage at Clifton and went north.

However, even more crucial for the progress of women artists throughout New Zealand was a change in outlook which cut back on many of the gains which had been made. The economic and social conditions of the 'forties resulted in a cultural climate which returned women to the home and to domestic life.¹⁷ During these years Evelyn Page and Doris Lusk were both confronted with negotiating their lives as painters whilst caring for families.

In a context which was less sympathetic to the work of women artists, it seems more than coincidental that a number of artists in Canterbury moved away from the central concerns in landscape painting, and dealt with themes drawn specifically from women's experience. Juliet Peter was one artist who went her own way, and developed an independent direction. During the war she was based on a farm in Canterbury, where she made a unique series of watercolours of women working on the land. By recording her own experiences there she also commemorated those of thousands of New Zealand women, who worked in the rural areas as land girls at this time.¹⁸

Olivia Spencer Bower was another artist who never identified single-mindedly as a landscape painter, and one long-standing aim was to make works in which she related people to their surroundings.¹⁹ From the 'forties on, figurative painting dealing with aspects of women's lives became a major part of her work; this direction culminated in the *Spinners*, a major series comprising about 35 works painted over a twenty-year period from 1959. Drawing on her experience, the series showed up how women—through the occupation of spinning—were linked to each other, to their past, and to the Canterbury region. Spinning first emerged as a subject in Canterbury women's art in Esther Hope's *Spinning in the Sunporch*, illustrated in the *Arts in New Zealand Yearbook* in 1946, and although an unusual subject at this time, it was a familiar enough activity for many rural women during the war.²⁰

In the 'forties, Rita Angus also moved away from an earlier tradition which she had helped to shape, by looking instead for new ways of relating to nature and the landscape. She was an admirer of Margaret Stoddart's work, and about this time she painted a number of watercolour studies of flowers and plant growth.²¹ These small, vivid works were an intense realization of Angus's heightened sense of the powers of growth and renewal found in the natural world. Less concerned with references to specific places, she developed a range of landscape imagery, which

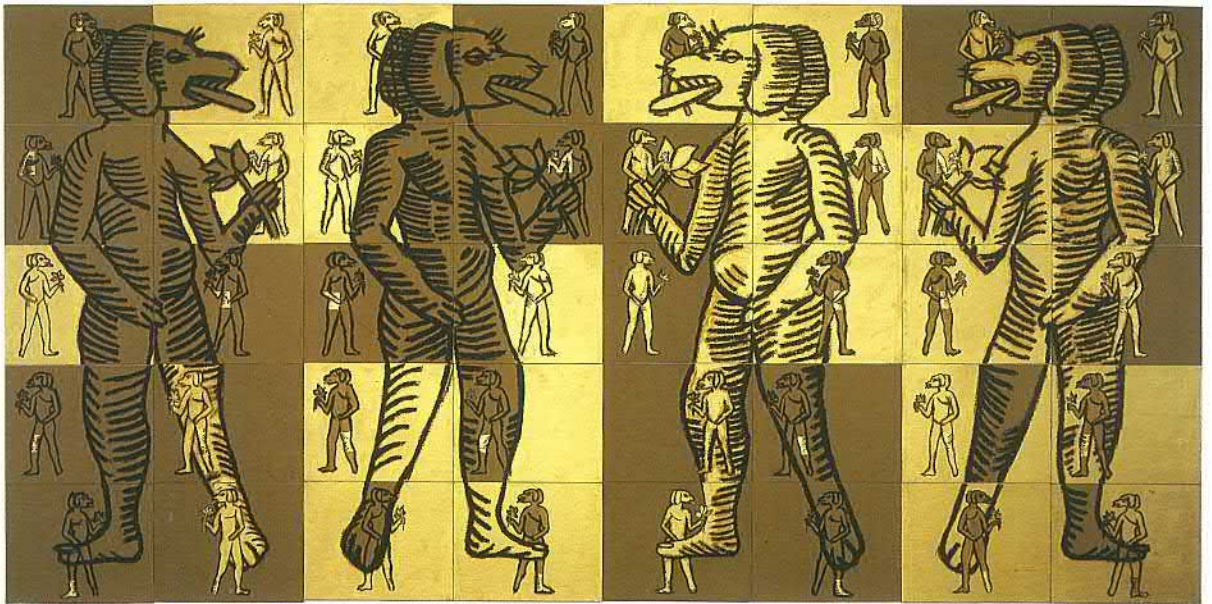
carried a spiritual content and meaning. Turning away from central concerns in landscape painting, she pointed the way in her series of *Goddess* paintings, to the possibility that women experience nature differently from men. Remarkable at this period for voicing her awareness of the question of difference, in 1947 she stated “as a woman painter, I work to represent love of humanity and faith in mankind in a world, which is to me, richly variable and infinitely beautiful.”²² After taking a significant role in the construction of a central tradition of landscape art, Rita Angus in the 1940s raised the possibility of a female vision of nature, anticipating future developments in landscape art which took place in Canterbury in the 1970s with the formation of the Women’s Art Movement.

It has been argued here that the leading part which women artists played in the construction of a central tradition of landscape art in the late 1920s and 1930s was closely related to their increased awareness of themselves as artists. They also related differently to the social structures through which art was organized. For the most part these women did not hold established positions within the institutional world, and working on the margins, they explored new directions in landscape art. They also inherited different traditions of art practice. Free from association with earlier traditions of gendered landscape representation, in which man surveyed what he was destined to subdue, women artists were accustomed to working on a small scale in watercolours or oils, and they came into their own in the ’twenties and ’thirties in Canterbury, in their construction of a vernacular which linked people to place in terms of belonging.

Notes

1. Christina Barton, *Louise Henderson: the Cubist Years 1946–1958*, Auckland City Art Gallery, Auckland, 1991, p.8; and Elizabeth Grierson, “The Art of Louise Henderson 1925–1990”, unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Auckland, 1990; National Art Gallery, *Rita Angus*, Wellington, 1982, p.196. Doris Lusk arrived in Christchurch some years later in 1942. Lisa Beaven, “Doris Lusk: Attitudes to the Land 1934–1984”, unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Canterbury 1988, p.88.
2. *Lyttelton Times*, 17 November 1890, p.5.
3. For example, Margaret Stoddart was not included in the Auckland City Art Gallery’s exhibition, “Two Centuries of New Zealand Landscape Art”, held in 1990.
4. *Lyttelton Times*, 29 August 1892, p.5.
5. Julie King, “Art Collecting by the Canterbury Society of Arts: The First Fifty Years”, *Bulletin of New Zealand Art History*, vol.11, 1990, pp.41–50.
6. *The Sun*, 22 March 1920, p.6, quoted by Annie Yee, “The Reappraisal of Grace Butler, a Canterbury Landscape Painter”, unpublished B.A. (Hons) Research Paper, School of Fine Arts, University of Canterbury, 1990.
7. Archibald Nicoll, a student of Sydney Thompson, who had trained with Van der Velden, declared in the first issue of *Art in New Zealand*, “In the

11. Ngaio Marsh, *Black Beech and Honeydew*, Auckland, 1981, p.11.
12. *The Press*, 9 October 1935, quoted by Ann Elias, "Rata Lovell-Smith", unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Auckland, 1979.
13. Ngaio Marsh, *Black Beech and Honeydew*, Auckland, 1981, p.12.
14. This claim was made by Ursula Bethell's friend, D'Arcy Cresswell. See: *Collected Poems Ursula Bethell*, ed. Vincent O'Sullivan, Auckland, 1985, p.xi.
15. Anne Kirker, *New Zealand Women Artists*, Auckland, 1993, pp.90–91.
16. In the 'forties they were joined by Barc, Helen Brown, Rona Fleming, Doris Lusk, Molly Macalister, Dorothy Manning, Juliet Peter, Helen Stewart, Ceridwen Thornton.
"Index of Group Show Exhibitors 1927–1977" in Julie Catchpole, "The Group", unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Canterbury, 1984, pp. 153–164.
17. Anne Kirker, *New Zealand Women Artists*, Auckland, 1993, p.91.
18. Rona Fleming, "The Work of Juliet Peter", *The Arts in New Zealand*, vol.17 no.5, September–October 1945, pp. 20–25.
19. Alison Mitchell, *Olivia Spencer Bower Retrospective*, Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Christchurch, 1977.
20. See: "The Spinners Series" in Judith Hamilton, "Olivia Spencer Bower: the Figurative Works", unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Canterbury, 1988, pp.68–106.
21. National Art Gallery, *Rita Angus*, Wellington, 1982, p.15.
22. *Year Book of the Arts in New Zealand*, no.3, 1947, p.68.



Hermes

1985

Julia Morison (b. 1952)

mixed media

2030 x 4065mm

collection: Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Selected Catalogue Notes



Penelope Jackson

Lara Strongman

Margaret Olrog Stoddart
1865–1934
New Zealand

Untitled (Yellow Roses)
undated
watercolour
365 x 525 mm

Private Collection



Edith Emma Strutton
1867–1939
New Zealand/India

Not Sleeping Yet
1913
watercolour
340 x 274 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Margaret Olrog Stoddart

Professional History

Born in Canterbury in 1865, Margaret Stoddart was educated locally and at Edinburgh Ladies' College. She also studied at the Canterbury College School of Art. In 1885 she was elected to the Canterbury Arts Society Council and in 1889 she became a member of the Christchurch Palette Club. Stoddart travelled to Australia in 1894 and exhibited in Melbourne. From 1897–1906 she travelled to the United Kingdom and to Europe and worked in Cornwall with other expatriate women artists. Stoddart's works were exhibited in London at the Royal Academy and the Royal Institute, at the Paris Salon and the Society of Aquarellists in Rome. Margaret Stoddart died in Canterbury in 1934.

Notes on Work

Margaret Stoddart had a consuming passion for painting plants, both for botanical purposes and as an art form. Her numerous renditions of the still-life show her ability as a painter. *Untitled (Yellow Roses)* reveals Stoddart's sophisticated and delicate treatment of natural forms. The painted roses appear freshly gathered. Stoddart was a prolific painter who enjoyed success in her own time and was respected for her professionalism. Like many of her contemporaries, Stoddart's subjects reflect the times and confines of the artist's immediate environment in the first decades of this century.

Other Collections

Auckland City Art Gallery, Dunedin Public Art Gallery,
Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa, Sarjeant Gallery,
Waikato Museum of Art and History

Edith Emma Strutton (née Munnings)

Professional History

Edith Strutton (née Munnings) was born in Christchurch in 1867. She studied at the Canterbury College School of Art from 1887–1892, and in 1892 was awarded a prize for 'head in colour' at the Annual Students Exhibition. She was subsequently promoted to student assistant. Gaining the Art Class Teacher's Certificate in 1892, Edith Munnings taught at the Canterbury College School of Art from 1892–1897, where she was highly regarded as a teacher.

Notes on Work

Edith Strutton was born to parents who had a strong pioneering spirit and had become entrepreneurs by making jam. As young women, Edith and her sister were encouraged to train as artists. Strutton continued to paint throughout her life.

The artist married the Reverend H.H. Strutton in 1900 and they spent most of their married life based in India, working as missionaries. Strutton returned to Christchurch on a regular basis to holiday with her parents and whilst doing so took the opportunity to exhibit and sell work, the proceeds of which went back to the mission. There are still examples of these works in existence, mainly small watercolour portrait studies and street scenes. Edith Strutton died in Lonvala, India in 1939.

Not Sleeping Yet is a sentimental portrait of an unknown young child. It is styled in the British academic tradition, and was possibly made on one of her return visits to New Zealand. Delicately rendered, this work shows Strutton's strength as a portrait painter, a subject for which she had won prizes at the Canterbury College School of Art in the 1890s. Her other subjects include landscapes and flower studies.

Zealand between 1889–1895, Meeson became a member of the Christchurch Palette Club and exhibited with the Canterbury Society of Arts between 1889–1907. Her works were also exhibited at the Paris Old Salon. In 1919 Meeson became the first Australian woman member of the Royal Institute of Painters.

Notes on Work

While Dora Meeson's contribution to Canterbury's art is relatively minor, it should not be forgotten. Meeson was resident in Christchurch during a particularly active artistic period. The 1890s not only saw social, economic, and political changes in New Zealand, including women's franchise, but also saw the rise of the first-born generation of artists. Meeson's contemporaries in Canterbury at that time included Margaret Stoddart and S.L.Thompson.

This portrait of Ngaio Marsh's mother, Rose Elizabeth Marsh (née Seager), was painted when the sitter was thirty years of age. A formal and restrained portrait, it demonstrates Meeson's traditional training. The work also reflects the taste of many Canterbury patrons at the time.

Dora Meeson, who married George Coates in 1903, remained childless and continued with her artistic pursuits as well as being a very strong supporter of the Suffragette Movement in Britain. In June 1908, both Coates and Meeson marched together in the Great Suffrage March in London. Dora Meeson died in England in 1955.

Other Collections

Ballarat Fine Art Gallery; Castlemaine Art Gallery and Historical Museum, Brisbane; Queensland National Gallery, National Gallery of Victoria, Art Gallery of New South Wales, National War Museum, Canberra

Mary Elizabeth Richardson Tripe (née Richardson)

Professional History

Mary Tripe was born in Christchurch in 1870. She attended the Canterbury College School of Art and the Wellington School of Design before qualifying as a teacher. In 1937 Tripe was awarded a Coronation Medal. Her works were exhibited in London at the Royal Academy, the Royal Society of Portrait Painters and the Royal Society of Women Artists, and at the Paris Salon. Tripe died in Wellington in 1939.

Notes on Work

Mary Tripe, like her contemporary Elizabeth Kelly, was well-known for her society portraits of which 1928 is a classic example. This work, which was exhibited at the Canterbury Society of Arts in 1929, is perhaps more successful than some of her earlier works from the 1920s in that she here demonstrates great skill in painting textures. The knee of the unknown sitter is viewed through the shimmering and deliciously thin dress fabric.

Other Collections

Auckland City Art Gallery, Bishop Suter Art Gallery, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa, Victoria University, Alexander Turnbull Library, Hocken Library, Robert McDougall Art Gallery

1894
oil on canvas
810 x 635 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery
Private Commission, part of a Family Collection
until 1987 when the painting was given to the
Robert McDougall Art Gallery by
Mrs A. H. Seager



Mary Elizabeth Richardson Tripe
1870–1939
New Zealand

1928
c.1928
oil on canvas
1000 x 750 mm

Private Collection

Annie Elizabeth Kelly
1877–1946
New Zealand

Portrait of Miss Millicent Jennings
c.1915
oil on canvas board
495 x 393 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery
Presented to the Robert McDougall Art Gallery
by Miss Millicent Jennings in 1974



Annie Elizabeth Kelly (née Abbott)

Professional History

Elizabeth Kelly was born in Christchurch in 1877. She received formal training at Canterbury College School of Art from 1893–1901. She first exhibited as a student working member at the Canterbury Society of Arts in 1899, where she won a bronze medal for modelling a bust. In 1901 she gained a Canterbury Society of Arts silver medal for the still-life and bronze medal for study of the human head, and the following year won a Canterbury Society of Arts silver medal for study of the human head. She began to exhibit with the Royal Academy, London in 1931. In 1932 two works by Kelly were exhibited at the Paris Salon. She was awarded the Silver Medal from the Society of French Artists at the Paris Salon in 1934. In 1938 Kelly was awarded the honour of Commander of the most Excellent Order of the British Empire. Kelly's international solo exhibitions include Lincoln Public Art Gallery and Walker's Galleries, London. She died in Christchurch in 1946.

Notes on Work

A.E.Kelly is one of the finest portrait painters that New Zealand has produced. She won national and international acclaim for her portraits. Equally well-executed are her landscape studies. The subject of this work, Millicent Jennings, was a Christchurch radio personality who prided herself on being a 'fruitarian'. A keen gardener, Jennings opened the first commercial herb garden in New Zealand, in Linwood Avenue in Christchurch. For reasons unknown to the gallery, this work has been cut down and re-shaped into an oval. This portrait even though now a bust, is a classic example of A.E.Kelly's formal portraiture. It was first exhibited at the Canterbury Society of Arts in 1916.

Other Collections

Canterbury Society of Arts, Dunedin Public Art Gallery,
Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa, Waikato Museum of Art and
History, Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh

Elizabeth Wallwork (née Donaldson)

Professional History

Elizabeth Wallwork was born in England in 1883. She studied at the Manchester Municipal School of Art, and the Slade School of Art in London, exhibiting miniatures at the Paris Salon in 1909. She came to New Zealand in 1911 with her husband, fellow artist Richard Wallwork. Elizabeth Wallwork's awards include the Lady Whitworth Scholarship and the National Silver Medal, which she gained from the Manchester School of Art. She died in Christchurch in 1969.

Notes on Work

English born and trained, Elizabeth Wallwork came to New Zealand with professional artist status. Her works soon became very much in demand, especially her romanticised renditions of children in pastel.

During the 1920s Elizabeth Wallwork received many commissions from local 'society' people. Her work from this period is arguably her most successful. *Fortune* is both a strong and engaging portrait which has a sense of 'snapshot' immediacy to it. The sitter for the painting was Kitty Luther, the studies being made in the early 1920s. *Fortune* was exhibited in 1929 at the Canterbury Society of Arts.

Other Collections

Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa



Elizabeth Wallwork
1883–1969
British/New Zealand

Fortune
1928
oil on canvas
608 x 505 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Grace Ellen Butler (née Cumming)

Professional History

Grace Butler was born in Invercargill in 1887, and attended Napier Art School from 1903–1907. Between 1910–1914 Butler attended the Canterbury College School of Art, where she received a Still-Life Scholarship. She exhibited regularly at the Canterbury Society of Arts between 1915–1960. Grace Butler died in Wellington in 1962.

Notes on Work

Grace Butler is perhaps best known for her landscape paintings made in the Canterbury region. Early works reflect the 'Van der Velden' tradition. After her marriage in 1911 she and her husband, Guy Raphael Butler, settled in New Brighton, as did other artists of this generation. Brighton Beach became, as would Arthur's Pass, a constant source of her painting subjects.

This work has been treated in an impressionistic manner which suits the subject of a balmy Canterbury summer's day. While this style was favoured by Butler, it often left her open to criticism because it was out-dated.

Grace Butler continued to paint throughout her long life and was totally committed to the depiction of the Canterbury landscape. Her prolific output and dedication must be commended in the light of having the continuing responsibility for the welfare of her family.

Other Collections

Auckland City Art Gallery, Canterbury Society of Arts,
Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa,
Sarjeant Gallery, Waikato Museum of Art and History

Daisy Frances Christina Osborn

Professional History

Daisy Osborn was born in Christchurch in 1888. In 1909 she was awarded the Canterbury Society of Arts Silver Medal for study of the human head and the bronze medal for Painting from the Still-Life. She worked as an illustrator in her early years, and taught for six years at the Canterbury College School of Art. Osborn exhibited regularly at the Canterbury Society of Arts between 1913 and 1956, and at the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts in Wellington between 1909 and 1953. She died in Christchurch in 1957.

Notes on Work

Daisy Osborn was a skilled Canterbury-based portrait and still-life painter. Like so many of her single contemporaries she taught art professionally. *From my Garden, White Camellias* has been chosen as the exhibition's motif. The title and subject of this work reveals Osborn's practice of working at home with subjects obtained from her immediate environment.

Grace Ellen Butler

1887–1962

New Zealand

On the Beach— New Brighton

1916

oil on canvas

608 x 760 mm

Canterbury Society of Arts Collection



Daisy Frances Christina Osborn

1888–1957

New Zealand

From my Garden, White Camellias

c.1951

oil on canvas

331 x 368 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Presented by the Artist, 1953

Cora Hilda Wilding
1888–1982
New Zealand

Taormina, Sicily
c.1922
oil on canvas board

414 x 552 mm
Robert McDougall Art Gallery
Presented by Mr E.A.F. Wilding, 1951



Rata Lovell-Smith
1894–1969
New Zealand

Back Country, Lake Selfe area
1929
oil on canvas
348 x 445 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery
Presented by F.A.Shurrock, 1969

Cora Hilda Wilding

Professional History

Cora Wilding was born in Christchurch in 1888. She enrolled at the Canterbury College School of Art in 1907. Wilding travelled to Britain and in 1911 studied at Bushey with Lucy Kemp Welch and worked with the Newlyn Group. In 1912 Wilding studied under Frances Hodgkins in Paris and exhibited for the first time with the Canterbury Society of Arts. She held a solo exhibition at the Graham Gallery, London, in 1924. In 1927 she became a member of The Group in Christchurch. Two works by Wilding were exhibited at the Paris Salon in 1928. The Canterbury Society of Arts presented a retrospective exhibition of Wilding's work in 1971. Wilding gave up professional painting in the 1920s and devoted her energies to community groups. She died in Kaikoura in 1982.

Notes on Work

Cora Wilding was well-travelled and made many painting excursions both in Canterbury and overseas. This work was painted either during or shortly after her 1922 visit to Sicily.

The influence of her friend and one time teacher, S.L.Thompson, is very recognisable in Wilding's work, especially in her application of thick paint. The sun-bleached quality and heat rising from the peasant's clay house is reminiscent of Thompson's works.

Taormina, Sicily was first exhibited at the Canterbury Society of Arts Annual Exhibition in 1923.

Other Collections

Canterbury Museum, Sarjeant Gallery

Rata Lovell-Smith

Professional History

Rata Lovell-Smith was born in Christchurch in 1894. Between 1912 and 1917–21 she attended classes at Canterbury College School of Art whilst training to be a teacher. Lovell-Smith exhibited at the Canterbury Society of Arts from 1924–1966. She taught at the Canterbury College School of Art between 1928 and 1945. She began to exhibit regularly with The Group in 1935. In 1939 Lovell-Smith won the Bledisloe Medal for Landscape. Her work was included in the Centennial Exhibition of New Zealand Art in 1940. She made her first trip to Britain and Europe in 1949–50, and in 1951 was represented in the Festival of Britain Exhibition, England. Rata Lovell-Smith died in Christchurch in 1969.

Notes on Work

Rata Lovell-Smith's clear-cut style crystallised the focus and direction of Canterbury's painting during the 1930s. Lovell-Smith painted the Canterbury landscape out-of-doors. She moved away from the academic British traditions of her training towards a new fresh style.

As in *Back Country, Lake Selfe area*, Lovell-Smith was able to portray in her work the dryness of the landscape with its vast open spaces, which show little sign of life. Though Lovell-Smith excelled as an landscape painter there are many fine examples of her floral pieces in existence.

Other Collections

Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa, Sarjeant Gallery

Ivy Margaret Copeland
1895–1961
New Zealand

Ivy Margaret Copeland

Professional History

Ivy Copeland was born in 1895, and received formal training from the Elam School of Fine Arts. In 1930 she won an Education Department scholarship to travel to Europe. Copeland taught at the Canterbury College School of Art from 1933–1936, and at the Dunedin Teachers College from 1936–1940. In 1940 her works featured in two exhibitions, *The Centennial Exhibition* and *A Century of Art in Otago*. In 1946 she won the Bledisloe Landscape Medal.

Notes on Work

Though only in Christchurch for approximately three years, Copeland was a committed teacher and is still remembered by many.

The Market Garden is an interesting work in that it draws on a New Zealand subject but has a French quality in the treatment of the composition. Copeland has used strong colour in this work which can be likened to the Tahitian works of Paul Gauguin. The composition was probably appropriated from Jean François Millet's *The Gleaners* (1857). All this combines to make the work exciting and challenging art-historically.

Other Collections

Auckland City Art Gallery

The Market Garden (also known as Maori Women

Gathering Kumera)

1950

oil on canvas
320 x 335 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery
Purchased in 1978



Dame Edith Ngaio Marsh

Professional History

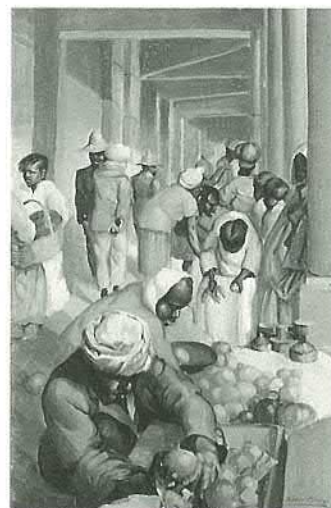
Dame Ngaio Marsh was born in Christchurch in 1895. Between 1913 and 1919 Marsh studied at the Canterbury College School of Art, where she was awarded prizes and scholarships. She became a member of The Group in 1927. Marsh exhibited with the Canterbury Society of Arts from 1920. In 1942 she illustrated a small volume of *The British Commonwealth Pictures*. Marsh died in Christchurch in 1982.

Notes on Work

Ngaio Marsh is now remembered more as a writer of crime fiction and for her contribution to the dramatic arts. However, she initially trained and practised as an artist.

Ngaio Marsh was an original member of The Group when it was initiated in 1927. Like many of her New Zealand-born and trained contemporaries, Marsh found the need to travel abroad to explore and enjoy European culture.

She left New Zealand for Europe in 1928. One of her ports of call was Durban, South Africa, her first taste of a foreign land. This exotic place enthralled Marsh and this everyday scene was to become the subject of this work, *Native Market, Durban*. The preliminary sketch was made on the reverse of an envelope, and the painting was first exhibited at the Canterbury Society of Arts in 1933.



Dame Edith Ngaio Marsh

1895–1982

New Zealand

Native Market, Durban

c.1933

oil on canvas
496 x 340 mm

Memorial Hall Collection,
Christchurch Polytechnic

Evelyn Margaret Page
1899–1988
New Zealand

Flowers, Fruit and Honesty
1982
oil on canvas
420 x 420 mm

Private Collection



Louise Henderson
b.1902
French/New Zealand

Grapes and Lillies
1955
oil on canvas
620 x 755 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery
Gifted by a group of subscribers in 1956

Evelyn Margaret Page
Professional History

Evelyn Page was born in Christchurch in 1899. She commenced studies at the Canterbury College School of Art in 1915, and in 1922 began exhibiting at the Canterbury Society of Arts, the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts, the Auckland Society of Arts, and the Otago Art Society. In 1928 she exhibited with The Group. She joined the part-time staff at the Canterbury College School of Art in 1930. Her first solo exhibition was held at the Durham Street Gallery in 1936 and in 1940 her work was included in the New Zealand Centennial Exhibition. In 1983 she received the Governor General's Art award. She died in Christchurch in 1988. A major retrospective exhibition of her work, *Evelyn Page—Seven Decades*, took place at the Robert McDougall Art Gallery in 1986.

Notes on Work

Evelyn Page was a very versatile artist and was one of few women artists who used the female nude frequently as subject matter. She painted continuously for the majority of this century, her work becoming more exuberant with time. Page's treatment of the still-life genre was particularly popular with the public and many have tried to emulate her free, yet cleverly controlled handling of luscious colours and brushwork. Her concern for light was perhaps a delayed response to post-impressionism.

Other Collections

Auckland City Art Gallery, Dunedin Public Art Gallery,
Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa, Sarjeant Gallery,
Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Louise Henderson
Professional History

Born in France in 1902, Henderson trained at the School of Industrial Arts in Paris from 1920-21. She received an Honorary Diploma in Fine Arts from the University of New Zealand in 1931. Henderson first exhibited with The Group in 1935. Between 1944 and 1950, she lectured at Wellington Teachers College. In 1963 Henderson received a large commission for the Hilton Hotel, Hong Kong, and between 1965 and 1966 exhibited her work in Brussels, Paris, and London. A major retrospective exhibition, *Louise Henderson The Cubist Years 1946-1958*, was mounted by the Auckland City Art Gallery in 1991.

Notes on Work

Louise Henderson is perhaps best known for her paintings styled in a Cubist form made in the 1940s and early 1950s. This work, prominently dated January 1955, demonstrates Henderson's ability both in using a monochromatic palette and multi-faceted objects within a traditional still-life composition. *Grapes and Lillies* shows a strong influence from the early twentieth century Cubist movement. In the late 1950s Henderson's work became more abstracted.

Other Collections

Victoria University, Auckland City Art Gallery, Hocken Library, Waikato
Museum of Art and History, Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa,
Canterbury Public Library

Ivy Grace Fife
1905–1976
New Zealand

The Queen's Visit
1954
oil on canvas
482 x 580 mm

Canterbury Society of Arts Collection

Ivy Grace Fife

Professional History

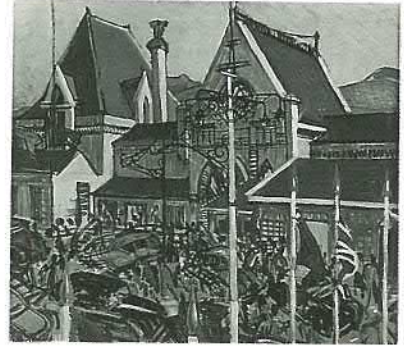
Ivy Fife was born in Christchurch in 1905. In 1920 she commenced studies at the Canterbury College School of Art where she became a full-time tutor between 1934 and 1959. A retrospective exhibition was presented at the Robert McDougall Art Gallery in 1977. Fife exhibited regularly with the Canterbury Society of Arts and the Otago Art Society. She died in Christchurch in 1976.

Notes on Work

Ivy Fife has a reputation for flower paintings. In this example however, Fife records Queen Elizabeth II's visit to Christchurch in January 1954. The Queen arrived by train to be met by a big crowd at the former railway station. The excitement of the occasion is expressed by the quick yet calculated brushstrokes. Fife has managed to depict the fluttering flags, speed of the cars and the buoyancy of the crowd. *The Queen's Visit* was first exhibited at the Canterbury Society of Arts in 1954 and in the exhibition *New Zealand Art to Russia, 1956-61*.

Other Collections

Auckland City Art Gallery, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Hocken Library, Aigantighe Art Gallery



Olivia Spencer Bower

Professional History

Olivia Spencer Bower was born in Great Britain in 1905. In 1900 she commenced part time study at the Canterbury College School of Art, and between 1929 and 1930 studied at the Slade School of Art, London. She also made trips to Europe. In 1936 Spencer Bower began to exhibit with The Group. She studied at the Elam School of Fine Arts, Auckland, in 1943. During the early 1960s Spencer-Bower travelled in the Pacific and to Europe. Two retrospective exhibitions of her work were held at the Canterbury Society of Arts in 1968, and at the Robert McDougall Art Gallery in 1977. Olivia Spencer Bower died in Christchurch in 1982.

Notes on Work

Olivia Spencer Bower is perhaps better known for her loosely-handled watercolours. This portrait of Mrs Armstrong (née Carter) is an oil and has a rather more serious note. The sitter was the wife of department store owner, Mr Armstrong. Mrs Armstrong, also an artist, was well-known for being one of the first women in Christchurch to own a motorcar. Olivia Spencer Bower was her friend and neighbour.

Portrait of Mrs Gladys Armstrong is painted with the dappled effect similar to that of Spencer Bower's *Self-Portrait* (c.1948), which contrasts with her more sweeping strokes in the watercolour medium. This work, which shows the influence of A.J.C. Fisher's teaching at the Elam School of Fine Art in Auckland, was exhibited at The Group Show in 1950.

Other Collections

Auckland City Art Gallery, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa, Sarjeant Gallery, Waikato Museum of Art and History



Olivia Spencer Bower
1905–1982
New Zealand

Portrait of Mrs Gladys Armstrong
c.1950
oil on canvas
725 x 687 mm

Private Collection

Eileen Mayo

b. 1906

Great Britain/New Zealand

Mother and Son

c.1947

wood engraving

171 x 123 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Purchased 1972



Mother and Son, 27/50

Eileen Mayo

Eileen Mayo

Professional History

Eileen Mayo was born in Norwich, England, in 1906. She studied at the Slade School of Art, London from 1923, using the natural history and applied arts collections of museums as resources for her work. In 1925 she enrolled in the Central School of Art and Crafts where she studied engraving, drawing, and calligraphy, continuing at the Chelsea Polytechnic under tutors who included Henry Moore. In the years that followed her career as a graphic artist blossomed. In 1944 she published her first major commercial project, *The Story of Living Things and their Evolution*, a book containing over 1000 exquisite zoological illustrations. In the late 1940s Mayo became interested in tapestry, and travelled to France where she studied under the tapestry-maker Jean Lurçat and the artist Fernand Léger. In 1950, her work featured in a major exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum, and was included in the Museum's permanent collection. Moving to Australia in 1953, she received highly prestigious commissions for her graphic work including the design for the Australian decimal coinage. She also taught illustration and design at the National Art School in Sydney. Mayo moved to New Zealand in 1962, where she continued to teach and received many public commissions for her graphic work, including the design of postage stamps. Eileen Mayo is highly respected both nationally and internationally for her work as an artist, designer, and teacher.

Notes on Work

Mother and Son is a characteristic work by Mayo from the 1940s, which shows her interest in the depiction of animals and natural forms. Mayo's strong graphic sensibility is evident in the interplay of light and dark forms, and sinuous curves of line.

Other Collections

Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa,

Victoria and Albert Museum, Tate Gallery, Manawatu Art Gallery

Ria Bancroft

Professional History

Ria Bancroft was born in Bath, England in 1907. Although her artistic talent was recognised early, the financial circumstances of her family did not enable her to pursue further training. Following her marriage, she moved to Canada where she worked as a display artist in a large Toronto department store and as a designer for television. In the early 1960s she moved to Florence, studying sculpture for two years under Professor Antonio Berti. She joined her family in Christchurch in 1962, and was invited to exhibit with The Group at the Canterbury Society of Arts the following year, which she continued to do until their exhibitions ceased in 1977. In 1963 she also exhibited at the National Art Gallery. Though many of her sculptural works have been commissioned for particular sites, her works are also to be found in private collections throughout the country. In 1976 Bancroft produced what could be regarded as her most significant work, the Tabernacle Screen Doors at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, Christchurch. As a devout Roman Catholic, the creation of religious sculpture was an important part of Ria Bancroft's practice.

Notes on Work

This work is one of the plaster models from which the bronze Tabernacle Screen Doors were cast. It shows Christ being resurrected from the dead. The simplified and elongated forms of the figure are typical of Bancroft's style of relief sculpture.



Ria Bancroft

1907–1993

Great Britain/New Zealand

Foundry Plaster for Ascension—Tabernacle Screen

Doors

1976

plaster

560 x 425 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery

The Group. Her first solo exhibition was held at the Centre Gallery, Wellington, in 1957. In 1958 Angus was granted an Association of New Zealand Art Societies' Fellowship, and attended the Chelsea School of Art, London. In 1965 her work was included in 'Contemporary New Zealand Painting' at the Commonwealth Institute in London. Rita Angus died in Wellington in 1970. A major touring retrospective exhibition of her work was mounted by the National Art Gallery in 1982.

Notes on Work

Rita Angus is one of New Zealand's best-loved artists. Unfortunately, she lived a harsh existence with little support for her painting. She spent the 1930s, 1940s, and the early 1950s living in Christchurch. Angus made a trip to Arthur's Pass with Louise Henderson in October 1936 when this work was made. The area became a popular motif in Angus's work; perhaps the best-known being the 1936 painting *Cass* (collection Robert McDougall Art Gallery).

In this example Angus gives emphasis to the steam train, at that time an important key to existence beyond the city. Her distinctive treatment, like that of Rata Lovell-Smith, helped create not only a Canterbury style but changed the course of New Zealand painting away from styles derived from European models.

Untitled (Mountain Biological Station, Cass) is signed Rita Cook, Angus's married name (she was married from 1930-1934) which she continued to use until 1946.

Other Collections

Auckland City Art Gallery, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa, Sarjeant Gallery, Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Doris Lusk (also known as Holland)

Professional History

Born in Dunedin in 1916, Doris Lusk studied at the Dunedin School of Art from 1934-1938. She exhibited with The Group from 1943-1977. Lusk lectured at the School of Fine Arts, University of Canterbury, between 1967 and 1981. She was awarded the Hay's Prize in 1966, and the National Bank Award in 1968. A retrospective exhibition of Lusk's work was exhibited at the Dowse Art Museum in 1973. Lusk was the second woman president of the Canterbury Society of Arts. In 1990 Doris Lusk received a Governor-General's Art Award, posthumously.

Notes on Work

Doris Lusk's *Canterbury Plains from the Cashmere Hills* is a typical example of Lusk's strength in painting the countryside she knew so well. Working directly from nature, Lusk was one of many artists who in the 'forties and 'fifties looked to the land for their subject matter, interpreting its forms in a simplified manner which imbued it with a monumental presence.

Canterbury Plains from the Cashmere Hills has been linked to Colin McCahon's *Takaka: night and day* of 1948. McCahon's painting pre-empted Lusk's, with its clearly defined forms and lack of human habitation in the landscape. Lusk knew McCahon's painting intimately; it was painted at her home while McCahon was staying with Lusk and her family.

In this image, Lusk has successfully combined her interest in topography with a personal response to the Canterbury landscape.

Other Collections

Auckland City Art Gallery, Hocken Library, University of Canterbury, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Sarjeant Gallery, Waikato Museum of Art and History, Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa

Rita Angus
1908-1970
New Zealand

Untitled (Mountain Biological Station, Cass)
1936
watercolour
230 x 290 mm

Collection University of Canterbury,
Christchurch



Doris Lusk
1916-1990
New Zealand

Canterbury Plains from the Cashmere Hills
1952
oil on panel
588 x 1205 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery
Purchased 1974

Juliet Peter
b.1916
New Zealand

North Canterbury Pastoral
1945
oil on canvas
625 x 815 mm

Collection of the Artist



Valerie Olga Heinz
b.1928
New Zealand

School Girls
1962
oil on board
1300 x 900 mm

Juliet Peter

Professional History

Juliet Peter was born in Canterbury in 1916. She received a Diploma in Fine Arts from the Canterbury College School of Art in 1940, and was awarded a Gold Medal for her work in 1939. Following World War II, Peter travelled and studied in London. She now lives and works in Wellington.

Notes on Work

The subject for this work is one that Juliet Peter has explored several times during the 1940s. The figure on horseback is a 'landgirl'. During World War II, with depleting numbers of men to work on farms, the New Zealand Women's Land Service was established. The service placed women on farms and by October 1944 there were a record 2088 members. For many this was a favoured alternative to factory work. The pay was better and the provision of a uniform and working clothes was an added incentive.

While Juliet Peter was not a member of the service, she did similar work and used her talents as an artist to record the rural lifestyle endured by many. Animals have been a favourite subject for Peter, in her painting, printmaking, and ceramic work.

Other Collections

Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa,
Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Valerie Olga Heinz

Professional History

Valerie Heinz was born in Greymouth in 1928. She attended the Canterbury College School of Art from 1942–48, gaining the Louise Lonsdale Award for Junior Life in 1945. Between 1954–56 Heinz attended the Regent Street Polytechnic, London. In 1962 she gained the Hay Competition award. Heinz exhibited her works at art societies in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin, and Invercargill from 1950–1969. She taught at Christchurch Girls' High School between 1957–1985. Valerie Heinz lives in Christchurch.

Notes on Work

This work was painted at the beginning of 1962, a year in which Valerie Heinz took leave from teaching to paint full-time. At the end of 1961, with leave impending, the artist became more perceptive about the school environment. Heinz has continually had a concern for humanity in her painting. During the early 1960s Heinz was interested in form and pattern. These elements are combined in *School Girls*, which depicts pupils of Christchurch Girls' High School where the artist taught for nearly three decades.

Other Collections

Anderson Park Gallery, Invercargill; Canterbury Society of Arts,
Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Religion; Sport
1991
acrylic on paper
700 x 503 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery
Purchased 1991

Maureen Patricia (Pat) Unger

Professional History

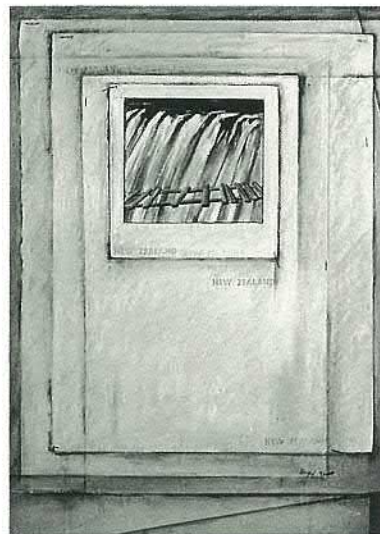
Pat Unger completed a Certificate of Graphic Art at the Christchurch Polytechnic in the mid-seventies, graduating with a Diploma in Fine Arts in painting in 1979 from the University of Canterbury. Since the early 'eighties Unger has travelled and exhibited widely. She is well known as an art critic as well as for her work as an artist.

Notes on Work

Unger's images characteristically comment upon her perception of our uncertain and constantly changing social environment. This work is from a recent series entitled *New Zealand Profiles; Distinguishing Features and Characteristics*. Of these paintings, Unger has stated: "Images of land, church and state are represented as the facades or symbols of New Zealand society, constantly subject to the floods of change and revision."

Other Collections

Aigantighe Art Gallery



Margaret Hudson-Ware

Professional History

Margaret Hudson-Ware was born in 1938. She graduated from the University of Canterbury with a Diploma in Fine Arts with Honours in painting in the late 1950s. Completing a Diploma of Teaching in 1975, she has held a number of positions in Canterbury secondary school art departments. In 1980 Hudson-Ware travelled to Australia as the recipient of the Canterbury Society of Arts/ Guthrey Art Travel Award. She has exhibited regularly in solo and group shows since the 1970s.

Notes on Work

Let me see the paralysed man walk is a major work from Hudson-Ware's recent series entitled *Signs on the Beach*. In this painting, Hudson-Ware has constructed a complex, intense, and deeply personal narrative which she describes as a 'map'. She comments that viewers "must interpret this visual work according to their own 'maps' and find their own meaning."

Other Collections

Aigantighe Art Gallery



Margaret Hudson-Ware
b. 1938
New Zealand

Let me see the paralysed man walk
1991
oil on canvas
1980 x 2810 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery
Purchased 1992

Tiffany Thornley
b. 1940
New Zealand

Kate Through the Looking Glass
1979
etching
327 x 244 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery
Presented by the Print Gallery Workshop in 1979



Rosemary Campbell
b. 1941
New Zealand

Untitled
1972
watercolour
425 x 560

Tiffany Thornley
Professional History

Tiffany Thornley was born in 1940 and grew up in Wellington. She studied printmaking at the the University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts from 1975 to 1977. She has exhibited regularly since the late 1970s and has facilitated the work of many other women artists. She has received several grants from the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council. Thornley credits the successful development of her work to the support she received from the women's art movement. Thornley has stated: 'If it wasn't for the early feminists in Christchurch in the seventies—Allie Eagle, Heather McPherson, Jane Zusters and so on—I would not have been taken seriously, and therefore would not have taken myself seriously which is something every artist needs.' She has continued to work closely with other women artists and to use images which relate to women's experiences. She does so with the goal of fostering understanding among women of their shared situations and experiences.

Notes on Work

Kate Through the Looking Glass is an early work by Thornley, from a series of printed images which look at the lives of various of her female friends. She states: "I continued 'doing women' until well into the 1980s. Since then my work—subject and techniques—have evolved and broadened. I still have a domestic theme, even in the abstract works. I also have environmental concerns. My latest theme has been protection."

Other Collections

Bank of New Zealand

Rosemary Campbell
Professional History

Rosemary Campbell was born in Timaru in 1941. She graduated from the University of Canterbury with a Diploma of Fine Arts with Honours in 1965, and has pursued a career as an artist and an art educator in South Canterbury. Campbell also studied music at the University of Canterbury, which has remained an inspiration for her painting. Campbell works in an intuitive and spontaneous manner, describing her paintings as 'evocations'.

Notes on Work

This early abstract watercolour by Campbell demonstrates her instinctive approach to mark-making, where a picture begins with a line of colour and develops in an almost automatic fashion. Although Campbell's images do not tend to refer to anything beyond their own internal logic, music and the landscape remain a background to her practice as a visual artist.

Other Collections

Hocken Library, Aoraki Polytechnic, Canterbury Society of Arts,
Department of Internal Affairs, Fletcher Challenge Corporation

Rosemary Johnson
1942–1984
New Zealand

Rosemary Johnson
Professional History

Rosemary Johnson studied sculpture at the University of Canterbury's School of Fine Arts and graduated with Honours in 1965. She attended a graduate course in metal-casting at the Central School of Art and Design in London, returning to New Zealand in 1969. She was the recipient of a Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council Award in 1975. While later in her life she began to move towards making site-specific installations, her early career as a sculptor is typified by the production of discrete sculptural objects which often refer to landscape-derived forms. In 1979 she was commissioned to complete a sculpture for the Christchurch Teachers' College. The resulting installation occupied an entire courtyard and strikingly evoked the Canterbury landscape. Her installation was praised at the time as being a very progressive sculptural work. Rosemary Johnson died in 1984.

Notes on Work

Shadows 4 is one of a series of bronze sculptures which Johnson produced during the 1970s. She conceived these works around a broad environmental theme, referring to the 'shadows' cast by human destruction of the natural environment.

Vivien Bishop
Professional History

Vivien Bishop studied painting at the University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts and graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree with Honours in 1968. She has exhibited paintings throughout the country and her work has featured in several overseas exhibitions. Her work is represented in private and public collections in Japan, Australia, the U.S.A., and in New Zealand. From 1969 until 1980 Bishop lectured in the secondary art department at Christchurch Teachers' College and is presently employed as a secondary school art teacher. She has travelled extensively, spending time in Japan between 1968 and 1969. At the time, this experience had a strong influence on Bishop's work.

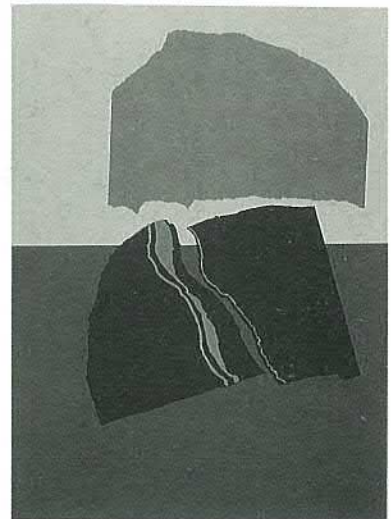
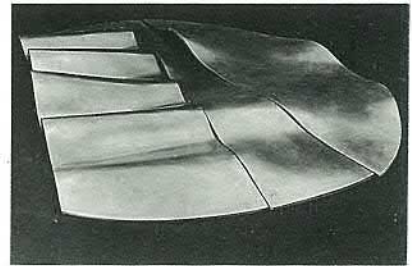
Notes on Work

Vivien Bishop describes her abstract imagery as "spatial, illusionistic, lyrical, and mirage-like". It is executed on a large canvas using layer upon layer of subtle colour. She does not consider *Serendipity*, an early silkscreen print produced for the 20/20 Vision group, to be typical of her work. However, she recounts that she enjoyed the challenge presented by the medium in that much discipline was required to simplify the subtleties and ambiguities she had been used to exploring more freely in paint.

Shadows 4
c.1975
bronze
3 Pieces

- (i) 105 x 1140 x 355 mm
- (ii) 43 x 1134 x 247 mm
- (iii) 52 x 1100 x 338 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery
Purchased 1975



Vivien Bishop
b. 1945
New Zealand

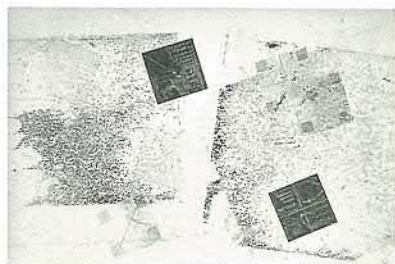
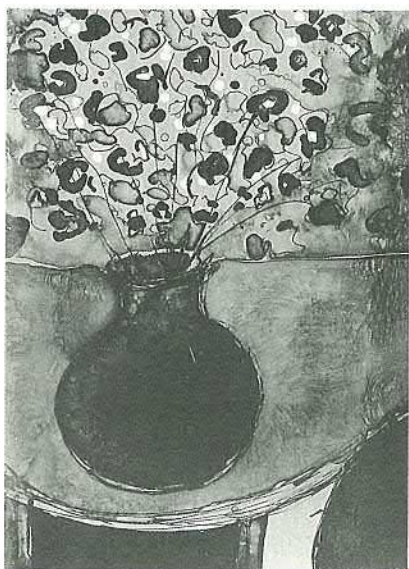
Serendipity
1968
silkscreen print
800 x 560 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery
Presented by John Coley in 1988

Jule Einhorn
b. 1945
New Zealand

Interior with Vase
1984
lithograph
500 x 380 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery
Purchased 1989



Pauline Rhodes
b. 1945
New Zealand

Untitled (Towards Two Squares)
1981
collage
390 x 565 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery
Purchased 1981

Jule Einhorn

Professional History

Jule Einhorn was born in Wellington in 1945. Between 1963 and 1965 she studied Architecture and Industrial Design at Victoria University and Wellington Polytechnic. In 1966 she attended the School of Photography in New York and also studied printmaking and drawing at the Arts' Students League, New York. She began studies at the University of Canterbury in 1976, graduating with a Diploma in Fine Arts with Honours in printmaking. During 1984 she carried out postgraduate study in lithography at the Tamarind Institute, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque. From 1980 to 1990 Einhorn was director of the nationally recognised Ginkgo Workshop and Gallery. Since 1990 she has held visiting lecturer positions at the University of Canterbury and Lincoln University. Einhorn has exhibited widely since 1970.

Notes on Work

Interior with Vase is one of two editions which Einhorn completed at the Tamarind Institute. Of this image, Einhorn states: "I was concerned with the unique qualities and richness that lithography affords in image-making. The image reflects my pleasure in mark-making and my endeavours to maintain spontaneity and movement, even in the static situation of the still-life ... My visual concerns were connected with my personal environment and experiences. Thus I used the things around me important to me as a woman—interiors, views to exterior, and my children."

Other Collections

Waikato Museum of Art And History,
Department of External Relations and Trade

Pauline Rhodes

Professional History

Pauline Rhodes was born in Christchurch in 1945 and began making pottery and terracotta sculptures in Westport in the early 1960s. She travelled to Nigeria in 1965 and studied terracotta sculpture at Mbari Ibada, pottery at the Jos Museum and traditional brass-casting with a Nigerian master sculptor. She then travelled to Europe and settled temporarily in England where she began to sculpt in wood and stone. On her return to New Zealand, she began to sculpt in bronze and also began study at the University of Canterbury's School of Fine Arts. In the mid-seventies she started to plan and build outdoor sculptural projects. She has exhibited her work regularly throughout New Zealand since 1977, and internationally on several occasions since the early 1980s. In recent years, her attentions have been focussed on installational works and works such as *Intensums/Extensums*, which Rhodes terms 'projects in the landscape'.

Notes on Work

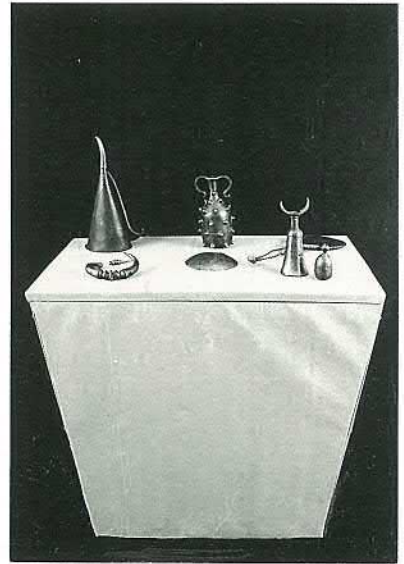
Rhodes's *Intensum/Extensum* works are temporary installations which interact with the spatial environment in which they are placed. Portable and flexible in structure, the components of one installation are recycled into the next. Characteristically Rhodes works with plywood, cloth, metal and plastic rods, and paper. Although she is known as an installation artist, she has produced works on paper which are sometimes conceived as drawings towards future sculptural projects, and use the chance processes of stained rust imprints.

Other Collections

Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa, Hocken Library

1989
bronze
860 x 915 x 560 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery
Purchased in 1989



Bronwyn Taylor

Professional History

Bronwyn Taylor graduated from the University of Canterbury with a Diploma of Fine Arts in sculpture in 1967. She has exhibited work in solo and group shows regularly since 1970. Since this time she has also worked as an art educator, and is currently employed as Head of the Art Department at the Christchurch College of Education. In 1991 she was visiting lecturer in sculpture at the University of Canterbury. Taylor is particularly highly regarded for her innovative bronze casting.

Notes on Work

Of this work, Bronwyn Taylor states: "The sources of the work are from the ritual and domestic object of Celtic and Mediterranean cultures. The mother figures represent the triple goddess— virgin, mother, and crone."

Other Collections

University of Canterbury, College House

Allie Eagle

Professional History

Born in Wellington, Allie Eagle (formerly Alison Mitchell) graduated with a Diploma in Fine Arts from the University of Canterbury in 1968. Eagle was a highly influential figure within the Women's Art Movement in Christchurch in the 1970s. She facilitated numerous important exhibitions of work by women in Canterbury, finding with her peers new ways of art-making that were suited to them rather than continuing to work within the boundaries set by the mainstream art world. While no longer resident in Canterbury, Eagle has continued to make and exhibit her artworks, and to work as an art educator.

Notes on Work

Facing Ourselves is a recent work by Eagle, produced after she left the Canterbury region. The delicate watercolour treatment and depiction of female forms in an architectural space is characteristic of her later work.



Allie Eagle
b.1948
New Zealand

Facing Ourselves
1990
watercolour
555 x 740 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery
Purchased 1990

Helen Rockel
b. 1949
New Zealand

Embrace
1975
oil on hardboard
1216 x 1216 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery



Margaret Dawson
b. 1950
New Zealand

Woman at the Catholic Cathedral, Christchurch
1985
ectacolour photograph
1035 x 760 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Helen Rockel
Professional History

Helen Rockel was born in Wanganui in 1949. She graduated from the University of Canterbury in 1971 with a Diploma of Fine Arts with Honours in painting, and has worked as an art educator since 1975. Rockel has exhibited her work regularly since 1969.

Notes on Work

Rockel's work has always had a strongly figurative element. She comments that: "As a woman, I have usually chosen to express thoughts and ideas through the use of female forms and faces, tracing events in my own life as well as presenting the experience of others." *Embrace* is an early work by Rockel, part of a series which was concerned with intimacy. Rockel describes her motivations for producing this image thus: "I was aware that many artworks approached the subject of sexuality from the point of the voyeur. I wanted to place it within the context of a broader intimacy. My choice of subject matter then, as always, was figurative. The treatment of flesh involved building up a sense of density using textural application of different colours."

Other collections

Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa, Aigantighe Art Gallery

Margaret Dawson
Professional History

Margaret Dawson graduated from the University of Canterbury with a Diploma of Fine Arts in 1978, and has exhibited widely throughout New Zealand since 1979. Dawson's work has been the subject of much critical acclaim. She has been awarded several Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council grants and her works have been included in a number of important national touring exhibitions.

Notes on Work

Through her photography, Dawson questions women's roles in our society, exploring the personae women have adopted through what she terms "cultural coercion". In *Woman at the Catholic Cathedral, Christchurch*, Dawson has presented herself as a conservative church-goer to create the image. Dawson describes her art-making process thus: "I set the scene, obtain the costume, decide on the role, 'act' the part, and push the cable release. This is visible in the cathedral image." The resulting tableaux are rich narratives on the subject of the societal experiences of women.

Other Collections

Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa,
Waikato Museum of Art and History, Dunedin Public Art Gallery,
Bank of New Zealand

Linda James

b. 1951

Great Britain / New Zealand

Linda James

Professional History

Linda James was born in Birmingham, England, in 1951 and emigrated to New Zealand with her family at two years of age. She completed a Diploma in Fine Arts with Honours in painting at the University of Canterbury in 1983. James has exhibited her work nationally on a regular basis since 1980. She received the Olivia Spencer-Bower Award in 1989. In addition to her work as a painter, she has been involved in art teaching and has worked with a number of support groups.

Notes on Work

The Awakening is one of a series of paintings which James produced during the late 1980s which were concerned with the theme of sleep. The works began as drawings of sleepers, and became meditations on the nature of sleep as a real and metaphorical process. James has stated: "I was interested in the vulnerability of the state of sleep, of dreams and the subconscious. I have used people from paintings because they are real in the painted framework within which I work." The figure in *The Awakening* is sourced from Gustave Courbet's *The Awakening of Venus and Psyche*.

Jane Zusters

Professional History

Jane Zusters was born in 1951 and grew up in Canterbury. She attended the University of Canterbury's School of Fine Arts, where she studied painting from 1972 to 1975. She has received support for her work through the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council, and was awarded first prize in the Montana Art Award in 1984. This allowed her to live and work in Italy for six months. In 1991 Zusters visited Berlin on a Goethe Institute scholarship. Although Zusters has been absent from the Canterbury region since the late 1970s, she continues to exhibit in Christchurch regularly, and is warmly remembered for her major contribution to the Women's Art Movement in Christchurch in the 'seventies.

Notes on Work

In Zusters's own words, "I became an artist because I was a feminist first. It was my feminism that gave me courage to step outside my social conditioning." She has worked in a variety of media, receiving a high level of recognition for her work as a photographer in particular. *Heart's Landscape in the South Island* was made the year after she went to live in Auckland. She states of this image: "Wherever I am, my connection with Canterbury and the South Island is part of my psyche. For the last fifteen years, a couple of times a year I fly over the checkerboard of the Canterbury province on my way home to visit my family."

Other Collections

Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa, Victoria University, Waikato Museum of Art and History, Bishop Suter Art Gallery, Manawatu Art Gallery, University of Auckland

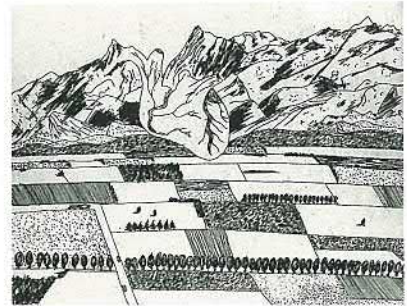
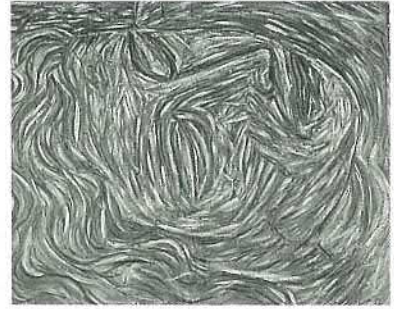
The Awakening

1989

oil and pastel on loose canvas
2250 x 1835 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Purchased 1989



Jane Zusters

b. 1951

New Zealand

Heart's Landscape in the South Island

1979

dry point etching
309 x 246 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Presented by the Print Gallery Workshop in 1979

Denise Copland

b. 1952

New Zealand

A Union Between the Earth and the Sun no. 4

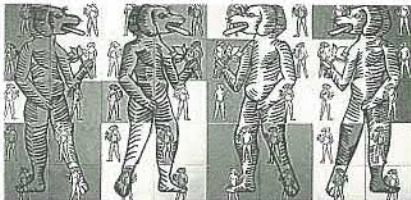
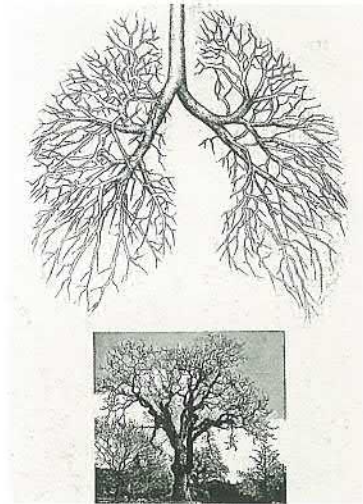
1989

etching

335 x 230 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Purchased 1990



Julia Morison

b. 1952

New Zealand

Hermes

1985

mixed media

2030 x 4065 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Purchased in 1990

Denise Copland

Professional History

Denise Copland was born in Timaru in 1952. She began her formal studies at the Christchurch Polytechnic, receiving a certificate in Graphic Design in 1971. She went on to graduate from the University of Canterbury with a Diploma in Fine Arts with Honours in engraving. Since her graduation she has exhibited widely in both group and solo shows in New Zealand. Copland has also been the recipient of several art awards including the 1985 Artist in Residence at the Otago Polytechnic School of Art and the 1992 Guthrey/Canterbury Society of Arts Travel Award. From 1982–1984 she was visiting lecturer in drawing and printmaking at the University of Canterbury's School of Fine Arts. Copland is still actively involved in art education in addition to her work as one of New Zealand's leading printmakers.

Notes on Work

The tree is a recurring motif in Denise Copland's work, finding particular strength in her recent *Implantations* series. Copland is interested in the relationship between people and trees, which she depicts as being simultaneously positive and negative, one of protection and support as well as destruction. *A Union Between the Earth and the Sun no. 4* depicts the tree as a vital part of the natural environment, visually linking its root and branch forms with those of blood vessels or lungs.

Other Collections

Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa, Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hocken Library, Bank of New Zealand, NZI Corporation, Christchurch Polytechnic Library, University of Canterbury, Alexander Turnbull Library, Otago Polytechnic

Julia Morison

Professional History

Julia Morison was born in Pahiatua in 1952. She completed a Diploma of Graphic Art at the Wellington Polytechnic in 1972, and a Diploma of Fine Arts with Honours at the University of Canterbury in 1975. She has been the recipient of a number of major art awards including the Frances Hodgkins Fellowship in 1988, and the prestigious Møet and Chandon Fellowship in 1989. She has exhibited widely in New Zealand and also in France, Spain, Australia and Japan. She has now settled permanently in France, but continues to maintain a strong presence in the visual arts in New Zealand. Julia Morison is one of New Zealand's most important contemporary artists.

Notes on Work

From an initial interest in geometric abstraction, Julia Morison has developed a complex vocabulary of signs relating to hermeticism and the Jewish Kaballah. She draws further symbols from art history, history, science and the mystical quasi-sciences. Layers of meaning are built up through a complex association of these symbols and through a variety of media.

Other Collections

Museum of New Zealand/Papa Tongarewa, Auckland City Art Gallery

The Ridgeway Flyers

1981

drypoint etching

320 x 250 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Purchased 1986

Sandra Thomson

Professional History

Sandra Thomson was born in Oamaru in 1953. She completed a Diploma in Fine Arts with Honours in printmaking at the University of Canterbury in 1981. Since then she has exhibited her work throughout New Zealand and in several international exhibitions. Thomson has been employed as a Printmaking and Drawing tutor at the Christchurch Polytechnic and remains involved in art teaching.

Notes on Work

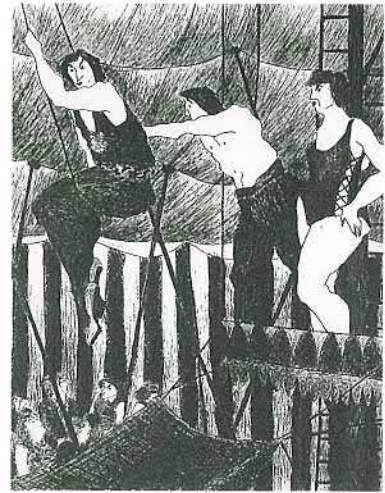
Of this work, Thomson states: "I spent 1981 searching out activities or social situations which ranged from the commonplace to the ridiculous. *The Ridgeway Flyers* was one of three prints resulting from a visit to the circus. My concern was with the bleakness, drabness and loneliness of the situation; rather than the poor attempts to create glamour and glitz."

The Ridgeway Flyers is an early work by Thomson. Like her better-known later prints, this image depicts powerful female forms moving through states of transition.

Other Collections

Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa,

Museum of Modern Art, Rijeka, Yugoslavia



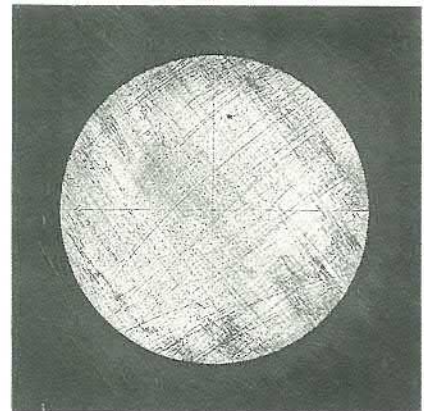
Gail Wright

Professional History

Gail Wright was born in 1957. She received a Certificate in Graphic Design from Christchurch Polytechnic in 1979. Wright has exhibited her photographs and paintings throughout New Zealand since 1978.

Notes on Work

Gail Wright's *Moon Paintings* from the *Month of May* series were first exhibited in 1989. Constructed from found wood, paint, and reflective tape, the surfaces of these works are carefully treated by Wright to create a variety of textures. The images depict various phases of the moon. Simple in concept yet richly associative in their possibilities of interpretation, the images suggest a reading which connects the waxing and waning of the moon with changing states in human biology and psychology.



Gail Wright

b.1957

New Zealand

Full Moon, from the Month of May series

1989

mixed media

395 x 395 mm

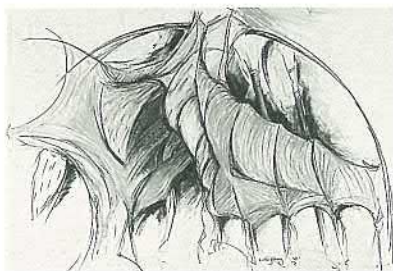
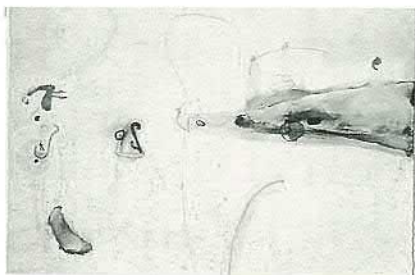
Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Purchased 1989

Kim Pieters
b. 1959
New Zealand

the Neutral city
1991
mixed media
600 x 900 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery
Purchased 1991



Bianca van Rangelrooy
b. 1959
New Zealand

Phoenix II (1988)
1988
pastel
710 x 1035 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery
Purchased 1988

Kim Pieters

Professional History

Kim Pieters is a self-taught artist. She began to paint seriously in 1980, but did not exhibit her work until the late 1980s when she quickly achieved success and recognition for her idiosyncratic images. Since then she has continued to exhibit throughout New Zealand. Although Pieters is now based in Otago, she made an important contribution to the cultural life of the region during her time in Canterbury, as it was at this time that her mature style developed.

Notes on Work

Kim Pieters acknowledges that being an artist and a woman places her in a particular context that has a fundamental relationship to her work. She describes her painting as “informal abstraction.” The automatic yet associative quality of her mark-making leaves her work very much open to the viewer’s personal and changing interpretation. Pieters regards this as a “feminist attitude” which is of “central importance” to her work.

Bianca van Rangelrooy

Professional History

Bianca van Rangelrooy attended the School of Fine Arts at the University of Canterbury between 1978 and 1982, gaining a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in painting and print-making. Since then, she has also worked as an art teacher and is currently lecturing in Sculptural Architecture at Lincoln University’s Department of Landscape Architecture. Since the early 1980s, Van Rangelrooy has had many solo exhibitions and her work has featured in group shows throughout the country. In recent years Van Rangelrooy has received a number of sizeable public commissions for her work.

Notes on Work

Bianca van Rangelrooy states: “*Phoenix II* belongs to a series of works that explores copper as a material and possible medium for my ideas. The draped and knotted skeletal works emerged in the form of drawings and constructions. *Phoenix II*, with its draped, billowing planes and strong vertical shifts reads like an avarian, mechanised creature, ready to spring into flight.”

Other Collections

Hawkes Bay Art Gallery, Dowse Art Gallery, Manawatu Art Gallery, Bank of New Zealand, Canterbury Public Hospital, New Zealand Treasury

Sue Cooke

Professional History

Sue Cooke studied at the University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts under Barry Cleavin and Denise Copland, graduating with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree with Honours in printmaking. Since then she has worked full-time as a printmaker. However, her growing interest in the grand scale caused technical problems. To overcome these, in 1987 she turned to painting with acrylics and oils. Her large scale landscapes have been of particular interest to the corporate sector from which she has received a number of large commissions. In 1990 she was artist in residence at the Sarjeant Art Gallery. She has remained living and working in Wanganui and has become an active member of the local arts community, though she continues to exhibit her work in the Canterbury region.

Notes on Work

In 1987 Sue Cooke installed a 25 metre long printed canvas work entitled *Panorama* at the Robert McDougall Art Gallery. This major work was Cooke's interpretation of the landscape at Lake Ohau in the MacKenzie Country, an area in which she spent time making a detailed visual study of its landscape forms. *Ohau I* is an engraving which Cooke developed among this body of work. Here the landscape forms are reduced to rapid and expressive marks.

Other Collections

Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Sarjeant Gallery, Parkroyal Hotel, Christchurch

Tracy Wilson

Professional History

Born in Nelson in 1961, Tracy Wilson graduated from the University of Canterbury's School of Fine Arts in 1984. She has exhibited her work widely since 1985. Wilson now lives in the Waikato region.

Notes on Work

This large painting depicts the heat and atmosphere of a sunny day at Taylors Mistake, a popular beach near Christchurch. In this work, broad areas of colour appear to shift optically, creating a tension between foreground and background. Personally expressive and rapidly executed marks describe figures set against a field of colour.

Other Collections

Bishop Suter Art Gallery, Forsythe Collection

Sue Cooke

b. 1960

Australia/New Zealand

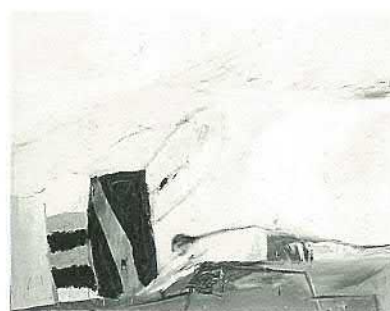
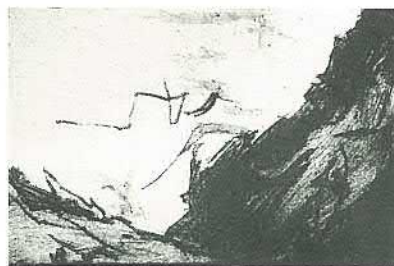
Ohau I

1987

cardboard engraving

310 x 470 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery
Presented by the Friends of the
Robert McDougall Art Gallery in 1987



Tracy Wilson

b. 1961

New Zealand

Untitled (Taylors Mistake Beach painting)

1987

oil on cotton duck

1400 x 1720 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery
Purchased 1987

Joanna Braithwaite
b. 1962
Great Britain / New Zealand

Horse III
1989
charcoal
1570 x 1265 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery
Purchased 1989



Joanna Braithwaite
Professional History

Joanna Braithwaite was born in Halifax, England, in 1962. She studied painting at the University of Canterbury and graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 1985. Since 1984 she has exhibited in group and solo shows throughout the country. In 1990 Braithwaite received the Olivia Spencer Bower Award.

Notes on Work

Joanna Braithwaite's paintings and drawings have frequently depicted animals. Characteristically, she renders her forms on a large scale with a raw and gestural quality to her painting. Many of her subjects evoke New Zealand's rural foundation but they are by no means pastoral works. Rather, her images represent the life-cycles of animated beings and are often unsettling to the viewer. Braithwaite's works can be seen as monumental contemplation pieces, meditations on the transience of corporeal existence.

Other Collections

Aigantighe Art Gallery, Canterbury Society of Arts, Lincoln College,
Canterbury Hospital Board, College House, University of Canterbury



Marianna Bullmore
b. 1962
Great Britain/New Zealand

Totem
1983
acrylic on wood

Marianna Bullmore
Professional History

Marianna Bullmore was born in 1962 in England. Her family returned to New Zealand in 1969. Bullmore studied painting at the University of Canterbury between 1981 and 1983, and received an Arts Council award in 1990. She now lives in Australia.

Notes on Work

Marianna Bullmore has frequently employed 'found' materials as the structural basis for her works, applying carefully rendered surface decoration to the rough surfaces of weathered wood. She produces austere, iconic images which both invite and deny interpretation. Her painted constructions suggest mystical material which has been removed from its cultural context. She states: "My aim is to create a unity of forms so that the separate elements become essential parts of a new entity. An interest in African art has been the main source of influence in my work ... I find that unconscious impulses are sometimes the factors which guide my decisions while working; however, this intuition is accompanied by a sense of purpose in which form, line and colour are of great importance to the unity of the finished work."

Other Collections

Manawatu Art Gallery, Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa,
Sarjeant Gallery, Waikato Museum of Art and History,
National Library of New Zealand

Boadicca
1990
lithograph
750 x 480 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery
Purchased in 1990

Marian Maguire

Professional History

Marian Maguire was born in Christchurch in 1962. In 1984 she completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in printmaking at the University of Canterbury. In 1986 she studied at the Tamarind Institute of Lithography in Albuquerque, USA, and the following year established the Limeworks Studio in Christchurch, which has quickly gained an enviable reputation for the excellence of its lithographic printing. Maguire has exhibited in group and solo shows throughout New Zealand since 1985. In 1991 she was the artist in residence at the Otago Polytechnic. Maguire has taught lithography in Christchurch, Wellington, and Dunedin.

Notes on Work

Maguire's imagery is characteristically concerned with the depiction of the female form, which she renders with a sense of power and mass.

Other Collections

Dunedin Public Art Gallery, National Library of New Zealand



S raphine Pick

Professional History

S raphine Pick was born in Kawakawa in the Bay of Islands in 1964. She completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in painting at the University of Canterbury in 1987. Since then she has exhibited in group and solo shows throughout New Zealand. Pick currently works as an art educator in Christchurch.

Notes on Work

S raphine Pick's work is concerned primarily with society's depiction of women. Her works examine women's roles, status, and aspirations in contemporary society. Pick often creates allegories in her works based on borrowings from art historical representations of the female form. She creates contemporary icons which refer to the details of women's lives. In *Homemaker*, domestic paraphernalia is elevated to a tongue-in-cheek quasi-mythological significance. Pick states of her work: "I am interested in assemblage as an extension of the tradition of painting on canvas. I use contrasting, suggestive materials as the ground I paint figures upon. With the use of fabric, metals, photocopies and wood I hope to evoke a sense of the domestic rituals necessary for the individual to function in everyday life." *Homemaker* is a visual essay on the simultaneous trivialization and glorification of women's work and women's lives.

Other Collections

Gisborne Museum, Bank of New Zealand, Christ's College,
Christchurch College of Education



S raphine Pick
b.1964
New Zealand

Homemaker
1991
mixed media
1310 x 720 mm

Robert McDougall Art Gallery
Purchased in 1991



ISBN 09-08874-14-6