

BULLETIN
OF THE
NATIONAL ART ASSOCIATION
OF NEW ZEALAND

A RECORD OF INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS

Wellington, April, May and June, 1925



A Flower Study
by Harley Griffiths

Broadly seen and
simply stated;
establishing a complete unity.

EXHIBITIONS PAST.

The exhibition held at Whangarei by the Arts and Literary Society proved to be the best yet held in the North Auckland art centre. Over 300 pictures were placed on exhibition in the Council Chamber, which proved inadequate to accommodate satisfactorily the large number sent in. The President, Mr. J. E. Holmes, in his opening address, referred to the generous contribution sent forward by the National Art Association, by whose members the majority of the pictures were produced. Sales were larger this year than heretofore, and the financial result so encouraging that a picture was purchased for the Whangarei Art Gallery that is to be.

Mr. J. A. Murdoch, M.P., the Mayor, Mr. D. A. McLean, Mr. D. W. Jack, and others spoke in high praise of the work of the Society's Secretary, Mr. Geo. E. Woolley, and the enthusiasm and energy of Mrs. A. M. Younghusband, and referred to the need of an Art Gallery. The hope was expressed that this would soon be in existence at Whangarei.

The New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts Exhibition has come and gone. Never before has so much good work been submitted for exhibition, and never before have the walls of the Art Gallery held so many paintings. Sales were, on the whole, satisfactory, although not quite up to the record. A fine water-colour by N. Welch, President of the Association, was bought by the Academy for its permanent collection and will, in due course, be placed in the Art Gallery.

Mrs. Maud W. Sherwood, formerly an art student at the Technical College, under the late J. M. Nairn, and later in Continental studios and under Australian skies, returned to Wellington recently and held a "one-woman" show at the Art Gallery, Whitmore Street. Her paintings found ready buyers, and

the large water-colour "On The Beach, Dee Why, Sydney," was secured by the Academy of Fine Arts for the gallery collection. A reproduction in colour of this frank and directly-stated work is issued in this number, and our thanks are due to the artist for the generous loan of the three-colour blocks, and to the Academy of Fine Arts for the privilege of publication.

The splendid canvas, "The Dome, Southern Alps," by Cecil F. Kelly, and the finely-wrought water-colour, "A Canterbury Pastoral," by W. Menzies Gibb, both of which were purchased by the Canterbury Society of Arts for the Art Gallery, Christchurch, are reproduced in this issue, as are also several of the portraits shown at the recent Exhibition. We have to thank the Society for the generous loan of the blocks, and the Society and the artists for the privilege of publication.

NEWS AND NOTES.

At a recent sale at Christie's, London, a "first state" print of Rembrandt's "Arnoldus Tholinx" was sold to Messrs. Colnaghi for £3,780. This is the highest price on record for a single etching. At the Holford sale, some years ago, a Rembrandt print was sold for £2,000.

The New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts has purchased for the Public Art Gallery a large water-colour, by Mr. N. Welch, exhibited at the recent Sketch Exhibition. By courtesy of the Academy Council, we hope to present to members a reproduction in colour of this remarkably fine work. If satisfactorily completed it will be included as a supplement in the July number of the "Bulletin."

At the recent Academy Sketch Exhibition, Mr. Charles Wilson, the genial art critic, exhibited a number of water colours secured by him during a recent visit to Australia.



On the Beach,
Dee Why, Sydney.
By Maud W. Sherwood.

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The most Reverend
Churchill Julius,
Archbishop of New
Zealand.

By Archibald F.
Nicoll.

(36 x 28)

WORDS OF WISDOM.

IN concluding his critique in the "Press" (Christchurch) on the works shown at the recent successful Annual Exhibition of the Canterbury Society of Arts, Dr. G. M. L. Lester offers some very excellent counsel which we have much pleasure in passing on to our artist members to consider and profit by.

"After having seen many hundreds of water-colours in the past twenty years I am struck, firstly, by the excellence of the work of a few of the painters who have already made their place in the art world, and, secondly, by the futility of hundreds of pictures which, every year, are included in our exhibitions. These pictures, for the most part, show signs of considerable talent and great earnestness, and a good proportion of them a sound training in the craftsmanship of pictorial art. Yet from the art

point of view they are almost valueless, in spite of the fact that they may sell, and may, moreover, give pleasure to many people. The reason for this appears to me to be threefold. In the first place there are many who, aiming only at a pleasing picture, are unwilling or unable to throw off the Victorian tradition of timidity both in colour and in handling. In the second place, year by year I see many pictures full of good work and not wanting in quality, which fail to be good art because they represent a formula—a formula which may be quite easily repeated. A happy effect, discovered by the artist, or a stereotyped mannerism adopted from some master, becomes almost a habit of expression, so that in time the artist never sees Nature as it is, but always through the refracting medium of a formula.

The third reason for the failure of many of our small pictures



Mrs. Bernard Wood.

By A. Elizabeth Kelly.

(40 x 30)

seems to be the lack of good drawing. Until sound drawing and an educated feeling for form have become part of an artist's subconscious self he cannot do the best that is in him. If one looks at the finished work of Van der Velden and then at the contents of many portfolios which were put on the market after his death, one realises how much of the power of his important works depends on the countless studies he made of every sort of detail which could be useful to him.

Mr. Sydney Thompson, whose drawing is practically faultless, could show a series of studies in pen and ink continued right up to the week before last. No proficiency in draughtsmanship can eliminate the necessity for constant studies of form both in mass and detail. For the artist who wishes to do the best work there is no discharge from this warfare."

To this sound advice we may be permitted to add "also everlastingly consider tone relationship."

Rhythm is symmetry in movement.

THE SAWTELL ART SCHOLARSHIP.

In our last issue mention was made of the travelling art scholarship instituted at Christchurch by the Society for Imperial Culture. This is to be known as the Sawtell Travelling Art Scholarship, in honour to the artist secretary Mrs. Rosa E. Sawtell, to whose energy, enthusiasm and generous personal contribution the two years' scholarship of the value of £150 per annum, including a free return passage to Europe, has been successfully established.

The regulations and conditions governing this scholarship have been decided by a sub-committee and are as follows:—

1. The name of the scholarship shall be "The Sawtell Scholarship for 1925."

2. The scholarship shall be open for competition to persons who have attended the School of Art under the jurisdiction of the Canterbury College, and may be awarded by the council of the society to any such person showing



Mary.

By M. E. R. Tripe.

(26 x 20)

proficiency or promise in pure art.

3. No person shall be eligible for the scholarship unless such person has been a student at the said School of Art for a period of at least two academic years prior to the date of entry for the scholarship.

4. No person shall be eligible to compete unless such person is under thirty years of age on June 30, 1925.

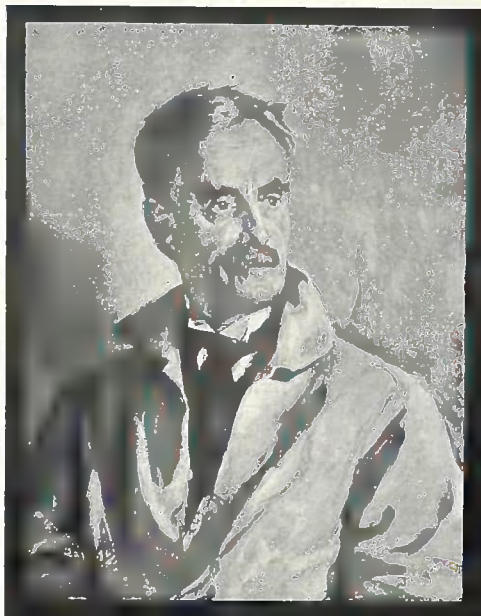
5. Entries for the scholarship shall be in writing and on a form provided, and shall be forwarded to the honorary secretary on or before June 30, 1925.

6. The scholarship shall be a travelling scholarship to the value of one hundred and fifty pounds per annum, tenable for two years, and shall be awarded to the candidate whom the council may determine to be most worthy after consideration of:—(a) The pecuniary needs of the candidates. (b) The following evidence supplied by the candidate as to their progress and promise in pure art:—(1) Six

studies executed in class; (2) six original studies; (3) three original works, one of which shall be at least ten feet in total external measurement. (c) The results of a competitive test consisting of the following:—(1) Drawing from the nude (six hours); (2) memory drawing, based on the above (one hour); (3) head from life, life size (12½ hours); (4) landscape, size 18in by 14in. (12½)hours). Provided that no award shall be made unless the council deems the work submitted to be of sufficient merit.

7. During the tenure of the scholarship the holder shall, for the purpose of study, reside mainly in some art centre in Europe to be approved by the council, and shall forward a half-yearly report to the honorary secretary from the principal or head of the institution where the holder is studying.

8. During the period of two years following the payment of the first instalment of the scholarship money, the holder of the scholarship shall paint and present to the



A. H. O'Keeffe, Esq.

By Mabel Hill.

(21 x 17)



A Canterbury
Pastoral.

By W. Menzies Gibb.
(28 x 20)

Both of these pictures were
purchased by the
Canterbury Society of Arts.

society and deliver to the honorary treasurer two original paintings, and £50 of the scholarship money shall not be payable to the holder unless such paintings have been so delivered and approved by the council.

The artist is what he is by effort, not by status; if he relies on status he becomes a bore or a charlatan, which is true of all human beings.

The general level of artistic activity is always influenced by the spirit of the age.

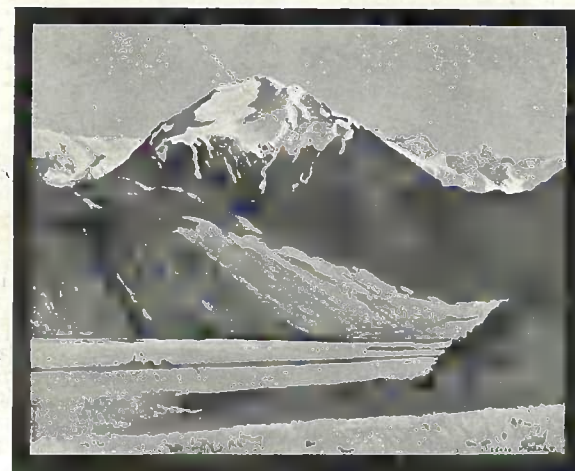
The business of seeing is really very difficult; we are simply haunted by what we imagine we see. Where the art critic, who has never painted, or is a failure at painting, fails and fails badly, is when he ventures into technical analysis of which he can know little or nothing.

Beauty implies outlook.

NATIONALITY IN ART.

IN these days of strenuous art endeavour, jazz productions, and critics with little consideration for originality arising from environment, it is refreshing to hear a voice from out of the wilderness calling for the closer study of one's own country and the things therein by which art is produced. The thoughtful paper printed below is from the pen of the Australian writer, Louis Esson, and was culled from the Red Page of the Sydney "Bulletin," some time in 1922. The date is immaterial; the thought alone the thing for the consideration of New Zealand artists and the critics who look to other lands for the art by which we shall move and have our being.

"A visiting artist lately told a Melbourne interviewer that Australian art tended to become too narrow and provincial, but that a better state of affairs might be brought about if more of



The Dome,
Southern Alps.
By Cecil F. Kelly.
(30 x 25)

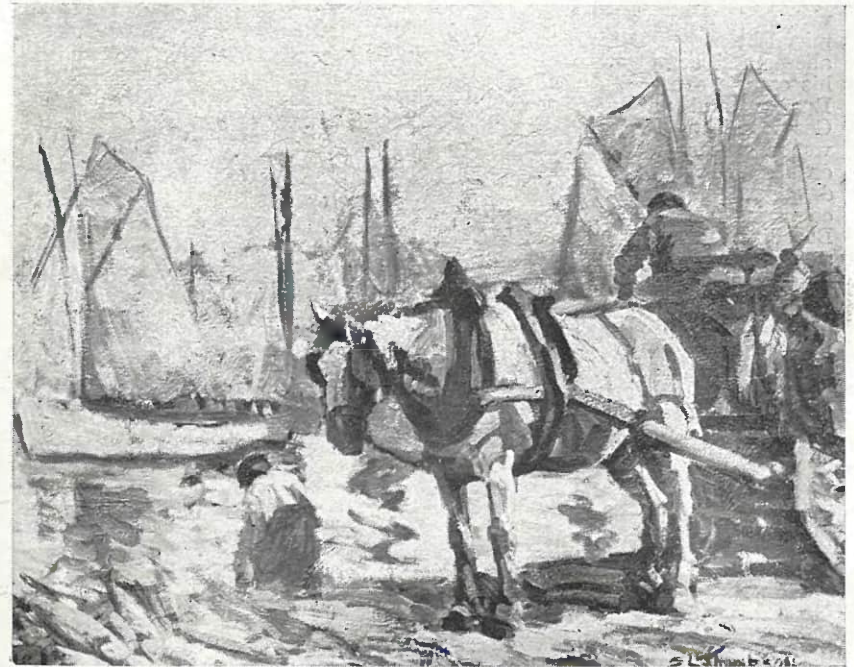
the younger men could get away to the art centres of Europe. This advice, if followed, would soon deprive the country of any artistic talent it might have; the future Australian art would be produced in Chelsea or Fulham, for there would be no artists left in Australia except those who were too poor or stupid to get away. But in any case our visitor's views on this matter are heretical. They would be true only if Australia were some outlying barbaric province without any intellectual life, without art, or even the prospect of it, a territory meant simply for the production of wheat and wool, and not a real country with a definite character of its own.

I would not suggest that it is necessarily harmful for a young artist to spend some time in Chelsea or the Boul' Michi to study the masterpieces in the Louvre and the National Gallery, and to become acquainted with the latest phases, even the most eccentric experiments, of European art. Just in the same way it may be useful for a young writer to go to the University and learn something of the classics and philosophy. But, at best, this is merely a matter of scholarship which belongs to the student period. Many of the Old Masters whom we are urged to emulate were content to remain in the country where they were born. Bach did very well in a small German town. Rembrandt managed to produce masterpieces without spending his youth in Italy. It certainly seems a paradoxical position that if Australia is ever to have any art, it is going to come from some other country.

I remember the first time I met the Irish dramatist J. M. Synge, who was interested in the problem of art and nationality. I had lived for some months in the Latin Quartier, near the big studio of Meldrum and Alston, where an astonishing variety of students used often to meet. I loved Paris—the cafes, the cabarets, the theatres and restaurants, the violent argu-

ments, the brilliant scenes, the late walks down the hill from Montmartre. Australia appeared to be a far-off land, sometimes alluring, but rather vague and empty. How was it possible to make any literature about people who knew nothing except how to drive cattle and shear sheep? Lawson was writing short stories about them, but I didn't think much of Lawson then. He hadn't enough style for my taste. Art was something more refined than that, an elegant, fantastic thing, like a Conder fan, or an Oscar Wilde play about cultivated people who spoke in epigrams. Synge had lived for many years in Paris and spoke the language like a Frenchman. He always liked Paris and French life; but when I expected him to sympathise with my unfortunate position of being an outer barbarian, an Australian, he gave me a little advice which was the last thing I wanted to hear at that time. "You must get away from Paris," he said. "The young men who want to do anything are all trying to get away from Paris. He despised anything abstract and cosmopolitan, and thought every country had its own material for literature. He was interested in the little I could tell him of the life of the bush, and said that it was better to write about that than about ballet girls. W. B. Yeats, who was gathering his forces together to build up a real Irish literature and drama, said the same thing. "Keep within your own borders!" were his exact words. "The Greeks, the only perfect artists we know, always kept within their own borders." The Irish writers, who belonged to a small country themselves, were more sympathetic with Australian aspirations than the English, who were politely sceptical about anything more important than frozen mutton ever coming out of one of their own colonies.

Art, unlike science, is national, not cosmopolitan. Physics and chemistry may be the same every-



The White Horse,
Concarneau.

By Sydney L. Thompson.

where, but music and painting are not, for they are the expression of the personality of a race and country. Havelock Ellis said long ago that only what was national in art ever became international; and recently, in reference to the latest developments of the Russian ballet, which seemed to be losing something of its true national character. Middleton Murray remarked that, in becoming more cosmopolitan, it had become less universal. The history of the Russian opera affords a good example of the different points of view. Glinka, who is considered the founder of modern Russian music, was at the opera house in Milan one night, listening to its clever but superficial melodies. A young man of the world, rich, cultured, gifted, he was idling

among the cities of Europe, when suddenly the thought came to him that this was not life, that there was no future here. The music bored him, for he felt that Russia had something truer and better to say. He returned home and began his original work that helped to clear the way for his successors. The later school of composers, such as Borodin, Moussorgsky, and Rimsky-Korsakoff, succeeded in producing an opera which was genuinely national in spirit, and neither Wagnerian nor Italian. For many years they were regarded as unimportant, even in Russia, and were quite unknown abroad. The imported Italian opera was the fashion, and the Russian works were played only in drawing-rooms. Rubenstein, the famous

virtuoso, thought perhaps there might be something in this nationalism, and composed an opera of his own, a composite affair, partly Russian and partly German and Cosmopolitan. I forget whether it was a success or not; but, in any case, nobody wants to hear it nowadays or any similar works, while all countries are still interested in Borodin's "Prince Igor" and Moussorgsky's "Boris Godounov." What is meant by cosmopolitanism or universalism is sometimes nothing but provincialism in disguise. It is provincial to have no standards, no taste, no ideas, but to accept without thought whatever comes from abroad. For years Australia accepted any conventional Royal Academy picture as the last word in painting. Such pot-boiling stood above criticism and was regarded as beyond the reach of any Australian till Streeton and Lambert were hung in the Salon and Academy. In all matters of art, France is the most national, and least provincial, of countries. It accepts no outside standards, and is always more concerned with what it can do itself than with what other people are doing.

Haddon Chambers and Bertram Mackennal, who left Australia to better themselves, can hardly be held up as models unless we accept the doctrine that Australian artists, unlike all others, must live away from their own country. Mackennal is a conventional sculptor, with a reputation confined to official circles. His mission seems to be to do all the dull jobs that are well paid, but that nobody takes the faintest interest in. Haddon Chambers was of the same type. He wrote a well-made play, just a shade inferior to Pinero, and with the same attitude to life. It should be possible to do as well as Mackennal or Haddon Chambers without having to live in Mayfair or Bloomsbury.

Facts which are not proved by the eye have no connection with painting.

EXHIBITIONS COMING.

The next Exhibition to which members are requested to contribute will be opened at the Suter Art Gallery, Nelson, on the 19th June. Work returned from the Exhibition at Whangarei, and in hand from the Academy Sketch Exhibition, as well as those sent forward for inclusion in Travelling Exhibitions are being forwarded to Nelson on or about the 13th June.

An exhibition to follow after Nelson will be held by the Association at Blenheim, in the New Zealand Farmers' Co-op. Association Building. Mrs. H. R. deCastro, who will act as local Secretary, and other resident members of the National Association, will introduce the works of members to residents of the town and district, and start the interest and enthusiasm that eventually leads to the building of an Art Gallery. Marlborough province is rich in historic associations, and its chief town is worthy of a building in which can be preserved the art treasures and relics of early colonial days which may yet be in the homes of many of the early settlers. A Gallery, too, is wanted in which may be shown the art work of the younger generation.

Members are requested to bear in mind the Exhibition of New Zealand art, to be made at Dunedin in connection with the New Zealand and South Seas Exhibition, opening there in November next. The American collection is being organised by the National Academy of Design, Washington, U.S.A., and the French collection by the Salon D'Hiver, Paris. A visit to Dunedin to see these collections should be arranged for by every member of the National Art Association.

In painting figure subjects it is wise to study the men actually on the job so as to get the necessary psychological punch into your work and thus make the figures mean what they really are.

PALETTE SCRAPINGS.

A painter's individuality embraces many things, e.g., the state of his liver, the state of his eyesight, and the state of the weather. It also includes, especially if the artist be a portrait painter, the strength of his like or dislike for the sitter.

The visit to New Zealand during 1924 of the special service squadron H.M.S. Hood and Co., cost the taxpayer over £10,000. His contribution to the Public Art Galleries during the same period was nil. Nil desperandum.

If what enters the mouth to nourish the body or the nostrils to poison it are things for examination and control, why not the depressing and inartistic things that affect our vision? The soul's nourishment through the visual organs is as important if not more important than that of the body. Pure foods, hygienic surroundings and unpolluted atmosphere are insisted upon for bodily health, but the things harmful through vision would appear not to be greatly concerned about. If they were we should soon have beautiful buildings with fine interior decorations, and good streets with beautiful vistas to refresh our souls.

If you don't let the grass grow under your feet there will not be so much for painting in the foreground when the sun shines.

Artists who cease in the effort to paint what they see, usually end by painting what nobody wants to see.

Homo faber. Man is born to make. His business is to construct; to plan; to carry out the plan; to fit together, and produce a finished thing.—Hillaire Belloc.

The work of the artists of any age is the essence they have distilled from their surroundings, and this is as good for the souls of men as the sunshine, the sea-breezes, and the aromatic scent of the bush.

The deepest intuitions of the race are deposited in its art.

The impressions we get from Nature are at once more complete and more vivid than those we get from artificial sources and, as a rule, are less troublesome to record.

The essential things of life are near at hand, and happiness is his who but opens his eyes to the beauty which lies before him.

The art of the East delights in suggesting the inner spirit of things rather than in reproducing their mere external forms.

The taste of a nation does not rest in the hands of its artists, but in the commonsense of its people.

MEMBERSHIP.

Satisfactory progress continues in the enrolment of new members. Since the publication of the previous list the following names have been added to our roll:—

Austin, Stewart.	Hadfield, Miss Hilda.	Newton, Miss Jessie.
Bridson, Miss M. A.	Honour, W. B.	Newton, Miss Polly.
Cohen, Louis.	Hubbard, Mrs. A. T. P.	Phillipotts, Mrs. Ernest.
Darling, Mrs. A. M.	Isaac, Nelson, A.R.C.A.	Richardson,
Dawson, Miss Amy B.	Jackson, Mrs. J. H.	Miss Gwyneth.
Desborough, H.	Johnson, Miss Pauline.	Savage, Cedric.
Edwards, W. J.	Kelly, Cecil F.	Sommerville, Professor
Eise, Miss.	Kelly, Mrs. A.	Stoddart, Miss M. O.
Friberg, Mrs. E. Baird.	Lewens, Geo. E.	Tomlinson, Miss Julie.
Gawith, Mrs.	Maunsell, Mrs. R. E.	Tripe, J. D.
Gully, Eric.	McLean, Miss A. C.	Tylee, Miss Marion.
		Watson, Mrs. Ferrier.

BULLETIN OF THE NATIONAL ART ASSOCIATION.

Art should be one of our main sources of happiness.

The art critic is often intimidated by social prestige.

It is only during great experimental periods when the mind of the worker is teeming with new ideas and trying them out that standards of taste are evolved which later become of permanent value to humanity.

Beauty of colour is entirely dependent upon tonal relationship.

Pure depictive art requires no explanation other than that given by the eye.

PERSONAL.

During the absence of Messrs. R. Wallworth, A.R.C.A., and A. E. Baxter, who are visiting the Old Country, Messrs. W. Menzies Gibb, and Ronald McKenzie are acting as the Association's Vice-presidents for Canterbury.

THE NATIONAL ART ASSOCIATION OF N.Z.

WELLINGTON

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Studio, Boulcott Street, Wellington

Hon. Secretary:

J. McDONALD

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Otago—A. H. O'KEEFFE, MISS MABEL HILL.

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The Secretary should be notified by members as early as possible of any change of address. All communications should be addressed to Box 1414, C.P.O., Wellington.

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