

**NEW ZEALAND
MAORI CULTURE
AND THE
CONTEMPORARY
SCENE
1966**

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**AN EXHIBITION OF
PAINTING AND SCULPTURE
DERIVED FROM
MAORI CULTURE**





FOREWORD

This exhibition is the result of an idea which was conceived in our minds some time ago and come to fruition only now. The works here represent contemporary painting and sculpture derived from an indigenous culture—that of the Maori. Consideration has been given to only those artists who have been working in New Zealand since we felt that the overseas public would be more interested in indigenous art rather than that of expatriates working in England or elsewhere. The search for a national identity is important in a young country, and of very real concern to the creative artist, for he is both artistically and socially implicated. From the end of World War II many of our artists of note, unsympathetically received by those in responsible artistic positions, escaped the doctrinaires. This modern movement in Maori expression is barely five years old and subject to many changes in direction. Patterns derived from two cultures are being created here in great diversity by these artists. This exhibition permits only a glimpse of the new idioms and motifs which have emerged during the last five years. These rapidly ramifying and diverse patterns contrast sharply with the relatively slow evolution of older styles, European and Maori.

BADEN PERE, M.A., B.Sc.

BUCK NIN.

Art— The Reflection of A Society

The artist was always regarded as a vital and necessary part of the Maori community. Art was not separated from daily life and Maori art flourished. The coming of the European brought new art forms and new techniques such as oil and water-colour paints but the Maori artist remained unaffected. There could have been interesting developments in his art. There were not, and with the accent on European culture the role of the Maori artist diminished. A vital part of cultural life was arrested.

The need for artists in the community became more apparent. There are now more practising artists than at any other time in our history. New Zealand artists to-day have the benefit of two distinct traditions from which they may draw. Despite the healthy state of the arts in New Zealand many people feel that the New Zealand artist has yet to evolve distinctive idioms. When the works of local artists have been exhibited overseas the press reactions have been as under:

"NO MARKED CHARACTERISTICS"

There is evidently no lack of technical competence among New Zealand artists yet little in this exhibition stands out either because of its imaginative qualities or on the basis of really remarkable painting.—T. Haly. ("The Times," February, 1965.)

"Very interesting but you would not know these paintings had come from New Zealand unless you had a catalogue.—F. H. Coventry. (The "Press," March 1.)

"N.Z. ART EXAMPLE LAMENTABLE"

In past years the vitality of Australian art has been savoured in Britain while New Zealand has been practically unheard of in the art world.

This exhibition therefore is very welcome. Whether it presents a fair picture I do not know. But if so, it is lamentable. What this exhibition emphasises is that to-day distance is no barrier where artistic influences are concerned. These New Zealanders ape with apparent sophistication many of the gambits that have been modish in New York, Paris and London in recent years.

As far as can be seen at this distance there is nothing distinctly national about their work. Nor does a polished ability to imitate fashionable clichés leave much room for individuality.—Terence Mullaly. ("Daily Telegraph," November, 1964.)

An intangible yet characteristic New Zealand spirit should pervade our art. This is a spirit that should emerge in the same manner that children unconsciously develop a New Zealand accent in speech. We have not yet achieved a New Zealand accent in our art. This exhibition demonstrates how two cultures may be assimilated to produce new art forms.

Maori motifs are here represented in the forms of to-day. We hope that this exhibition will, when travelling overseas, eradicate the impression spread widely by travel posters that the Maoris are a people who roam the bush clad in grass skirts and twirling the poi.

The works displayed indicate beyond any doubt that Maoris are in the forefront of New Zealand contemporary art. If a true New Zealand school of art emerges the rich inheritance of the Maori people, here interpreted in modern forms, may well provide a major source of inspiration for the future.

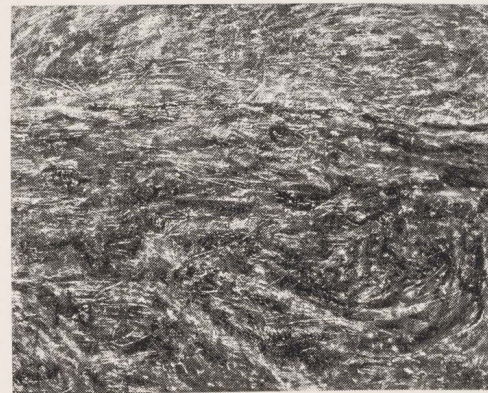


Buck Nin

Born Auckland 1942. Studied Northland College, Kaikohe, 1956-60. Elam School of Art 1961-62, Ilam School of Art 1965. One-man exhibitions Auckland 1963, Wellington 1965, Canterbury Society of Arts 1965-66, Academy of Fine Arts 1966.

Represented: Private collections.

Lives in Christchurch.

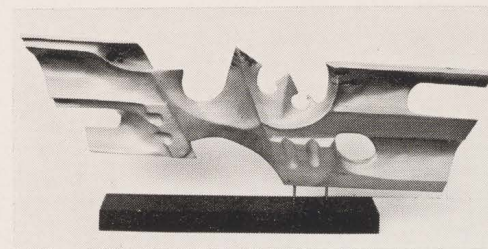


Selwyn Muru

Born 1940, Te Hapua, Northland. One-man exhibitions throughout N.Z.

Private Collections: Ottawa University, London University, National Art Gallery, Palmerston North Art Gallery, American Embassy—Wellington, Von Kohorn, Lew Gyson.

Commissioned by Wellington Harbour Board, Overseas Terminal. Lives in Wellington.



Frederick Graham

Born 1928. Educated Ardmore and Dunedin Training College. Art Specialist, Rotorua, Kaitia, Dargaville High School. Lecturer in art, Palmerston North Training College 1957-62. Tauranga Boys' College, Papakura High School 1966.

Represented: Private collections in New Zealand.



Norman Lemon

Born 1932, Taheke, Northland. Educated Northcote Intermediate School. No formal training in Art. Exhibited Canterbury Society of Arts 1965, 1966. Combined Artists' Exhibition 1966.

Represented: Private Collections throughout New Zealand. Lives in Christchurch.



Katarina Mataira

Born 1932. Author of "Tamariki", a pictorial study of child development. Free lance writer and illustrator. Written and illustrated two booklets of Maori poems and plays. Teacher in art and Maori arts and crafts.

Represented: Private collections in New Zealand.



Arnold Wilson

Born 1931, Ruatoki North, Bay of Plenty. Educated: Ruatoki Primary, Elam School of Fine Arts, Auckland Training College. Exhibited Northland, Hamilton, Auckland and other main centres in North Island, Brisbane, Australia. Represented: U.S.A., Japan and Holland.

Commissioned work: Air N.Z. Terminal, Brisbane, Australia, Dr Maharia Winiata Memorial.

Teaches art, Mount Albert Grammar School, Auckland.

MAHANGA

*My child speaks,
yet language lacks
To bridge the ages
now to then.*

*Son of tribe
and craftsman's heir.
He learns in a century
of different men.*

*He touches age-old
weathered wood.
Brown fingers tracing
curve of carver's tool.*

*And in his dark
and curious eyes,
I see my own disquieted,
searching soul.*

V.W.P.

1. CHILDREN OF THE MAHUTA Oil Katerina Mataira
2. TANE MAHUTA - Creation " "
3. TEKOKO TEKOKO 1 Oil Selwyn Muru
4. TEKOKO TEKOKO 2 " "
5. TEKOKO TEKOKO 3 " "
6. TANGATA KOHATU Mixed Media " "
7. KOHATU Paper collage Jonathon Mane
8. WHIRO F.V.A. Pauline Yearbury
9. HATU FATU AND THE BIRDMAN F.V.A. " "
10. TANE MAHUTA F.V.A. " "
11. RATA AND THE BIRDS Catherine Brown
12. MODERN TEKOKO TEKOKO " "
13. BLUE RAINBOW MYTH Mixed media Buck Nin
14. TANE'S LAND No. 2 " "
15. BLUE STREAK No. 5 " "
16. CASSIUS Pear wood Norman Lemon
17. MANAIA (Birdman) Fred Graham
18. TEKOKO TEKOKO Jarrah Norman Lemon
19. WOMAN Totara Arnold Wilson
20. TANE MAHUTA Tawa Arnold Wilson
21. TANE'S FOREST HOME Mixed media Buck Nin
(Kindly lent by W.A. Sutton)
22. BLUE SYMPHONY Mixed media " "
(Kindly lent by Canty. Scy. of Arts)
23. SACRED HEAD Kauri Arnold Wilson
24. WHITI TE RA Crayon and Varnish Fred Graham
25. WATERFALL Oil Jonathon Mane
26. UNRESOLVED LANDSCAPE Mixed media J. Mane
27. KOHATU Oil Selwyn Muru (Kindly lent by
National Art Gallery)
28. TE HAPUA LANDSCAPE Oil Selwyn Muru
(Kindly lent by Palmerston North Art
Gallery)

29. MURU Rimu Norman Lemon
30. MOTHER AND CHILD Pine Arnold Wilson
31. MANU Rimu Fred Graham
32. WARRIOR Oregon Norman Lemon
33. TAMATI Cement fondu Arnold Wilson
34. INORGANIC WOOD Totara Arnold Wilson
35. "HAPU" Kauri Norman Lemon
36. MONA Totara Norman Lemon
37. CHRIST IN AGONY Norman Lemon
38. GOTHIC PLUS Puriri Arnold Wilson
39. MAORI Cement fondu Arnold Wilson
40. KAWERAU Wood Assemblage Fred Graham
41. MANAIA Oregon Norman Lemon
42. MAKIRI " " "

I would like to express the thanks of all the artists represented in this exhibition to Mr. R. Waghorn for coming down from Wellington to open the exhibition; to the Canterbury Museum Trust Board, the Association of Friends of the Canterbury Museum and to Dr. Duff and the staff for making this exhibition possible and to National Airways Corporation for providing air transport which enabled the exhibits to be gathered from all over New Zealand. I would also like to explain that the names of some of the artists exhibiting do not appear in the printed catalogue but this will be remedied in the next edition.

Buck Nin.

