THE $20. PRINT.

AN INSIDE VIEW



Climbing over the couch which had been placed in our bedroom to get to the window was not easy, but the view was worth it.
Our helpers had told us there was a crowd outside and even though we could not go out through the front door I had not expected this! And still 20 minutes to go before we opened!
I panicked, what if the careful planning went wrong, what if we didn't have enough fruit juice (in the end we had enough fruit juice, but not enough time to pour it, what if ...? I gulped some air counted to ten, rushed over the couch to have a much needed glass of orange juice and manned my 'battle station (by this time having expelled the air). As it turned out, apart from that dreadful illness 'butterflies in my stomach' the exhibition was okay, it was a sellout, and it was fascinating to watch children, or young people of around five dragging their parents round the exhibition and jabbing decisive fingers at chosen prints (from which they later on refused to be separated).

So that was it, the graining of the stones, the hours of drawing by the artists,the printing, mama's careful planning, the organizing, selling, paper cutting, wrapping, fruit juice pouring and the dishes done by our many helpers...
Thanks mama for having this great idea, thanks both my parents for the printing, to all of the artists many and multiple thanks for their time and creativity, thanks to all the people helping us and saving us from a stampede, and last but not least
"thank you" to all the youngsters and parents who came to the show...

Dominiek Baetens-Van Gils.

THREE NEW LITHOGRAPHS BY FATU FEU'U AND... THEIR TITLES.

FIA LAUI'A

Fia Laui'a is not a red fish as it is affectionately known.The essence of 'Fia Laui'a' is derived from a Samoan proverbial saying, referring to a young person endeavouring to become an adult, in his/her social behaviour towards parents or guardians. Thus the word 'Laui'a' means a big fish fit for presentation to a high chief, and 'Fia' means 'wanting to act as somebody...

ULAVAO

The 'Ulavao'print is based on an old Polynesian colour observation chart of the North, South,East and West.The frangipani shape is symbolic of the birth or creation of events. This feeling of birth or creation is pointed out also by the feminine beauty of the 'malu' a tattoo pattern of a female person called 'punialo' (sacred sphere).

PILI'OPO

Pili'opo was an old hero of Samoa ,well known for his exploits as a taro planter and also a lover of 'taupou' The composition of this print is based on 'siapo'(tapa). The mask like gaze extracted from the 'Lapita'form is concentrating on a 'miti'(dream)

Fatu Feu'u

MUKA STUDIO NEWSLETTER

MUKA STUDIO 17 CHAMBERLAIN STREET GREY LYNN PH.765 323

MUKA STUDIO PRESENTS NEW LITHOGRAPHS BY

PHILIPPA BLAIR
DANIEL B.CLASBY
BOB ELLIS
FATU FEU'U
RODNEY FUMPSTON
PATRICK HANLY
ALEXIS HUNTER
PARATENE MATCHITT

APRIL 16 ~ MAY 20

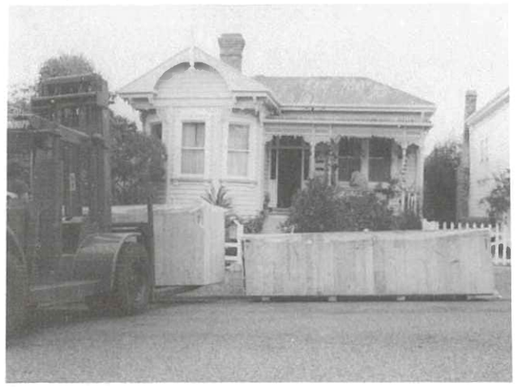
PREVIEW SATURDAY APRIL 16,4~6 pm

Hours Monday ~ Friday 11 am ~6 pm

Saturday by appointment.

A NEIGHBOUR'S VIEW...

Since the arrival of Frans, Magda, Dominiek and Saskia at 17 Chamberlain Street we, their near neighbours and others, have felt a part of their enterprise, and this was their obvious intention, as even the name of their workshop and gallery implies. "MUKA" is a Maori word that can mean different things In Maori spirituality it signifies the way a spirit, a ghost, an idea or even a technique, can come to the people. The fibre processed from New Zealand flax is also called "muka" and "muka" means everything that unifies people. Muka Gallery and workshop embodies all these things. Even some of the paper used at Muka Gallery comes from "muka" flax. The artists work there they can, if they like, eat or sleep there. When the work is done people gather to view it, perhaps to purchase, but always they come away affected by what they have seen. "Muka" is a meeting place...



The start,arrival of the crates.

We found the unique blend of Baetens-Van Gils irresistible. Their Old World charm and knowledge, their rare expertise and marvellous gift of communication, stimulated in us, and in everyone who came in contact with them, a wave of interest and enthusiasm. So it is not surprising that the gallery has prospered, and as the workload became heavier the two small presses operated by Frans and Magda proved inadequate for the task.But now serendipity took a hand.

In November Frans left for his native Belgium to see his mother and to visit a few Art Galleries and workshops along the way. After visiting the renewed "Les Ateliers Clot" in Paris, where famous artists, including Picasso, had worked in the past, and admiring the antique J.Voirin Press there, he went on the next day to the Belgian Centre of Graphic Arts. The director of the Centre not only offered to show some New Zealand prints-this will be happening in June-but also told him of a Voirin



Pierre...

press for sale in Liege.So, the following day found Frans in Liege, and yes, it was another Voirin press. But the beast weighed 7.5 tons and measured 4.5 metres long and 2 metres wide. A quick telephone call to Magda in New Zealand: " Can we afford it? Can we accommodate it?" They decided: "Yes". Frans was due to leave in just a week. He found a technician (Pierre) and in three days the press was dismantled, crated and on the docks. Frans left a few days later, the crates arrived in Auckland in February and Pierre followed shortly afterwards.

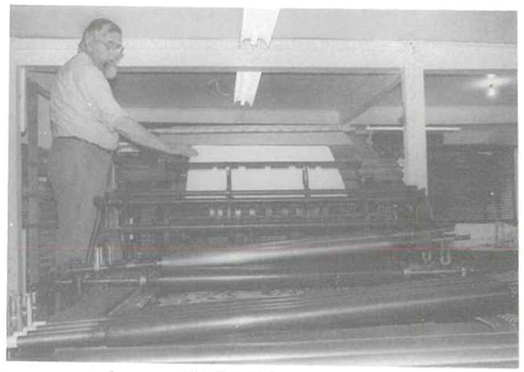
While the crates were on the water, room had to be made under the house for the press. I don't know how many Jumbo bins Frans and Magda helped the builder, Bob Schmidt, fill from the excavations under the house. This was the first indication most of their neighbours had that something big was happening at Muka. A concrete floor was laid and a north wall knocked out to admit the monster and settle it on its new foundations.
Pierre who had never travelled further than Guernsey Island and who could not speak a word of English, flew out to New Zealand to overhaul and assemble the huge machine. Pierre was a neat, intent but friendly man who worked-and smoked-diligently. He was rewarding to watch -a study in concentration-, relaxed, absorbed, unselfconscious. When he smiled there were no language barriers...The other member of the team was Aucklander Keith Baimbridge an engineer and artist who had built the power press in current use at Muka.

During one weekend each huge piece of machinery was brought in from the road and fitted together in the studio. We, unskilled neighbours, held ropes or steadied machinery. Keith manoeuvred these weighty sections down the path with his fork-lift. Frans sweated with the lifting blocks trying to look calm, and while Pierre without a word of English, guided each piece into its place, Magda's camera was



The new "Baimbridge press".

going clickey-click, clickety-click, recording Pierre measuring and praying over his charge, the Voirin press, and Keith positioning and supervising the ingenious array of cradles, blocks and tackles designed to ease the way of the antique press from the outside path, down to a lower level onto the concrete bed, its final destination.



The antique VOIRIN press.

The assembled press was huge. Formidable. We were all captivated by its sheer size and solidity. And yet just a touch of the hand on the fly wheel sent it gliding effortlessly to and fro. There was beauty in the perfect precision of its massive moving parts. As we stood around entranced, paying homage, Keith repaired, cleaned, painted and polished his precious press till it shone.With its name "J.Voirin Paris" standing out in gold lettering, how proud it looked !

But it took five separate teams from the A.E.P.B. five days to bring power to the press's electric motor, only ten hours before Pierre was due to leave the country!

With the power came the climax of the enterprise and we all gathered and applauded as the great press smoothly produced its first New Zealand prints. The Voirin press delivers bigger prints and offers a greater range of techniques. Some techniques too are easier on both the artist and the operator.

So, we have in Auckland now the best equipped lithographic studio in the Southern Hemisphere.

C.M.Feeney.