OUT OF MY WINDOW



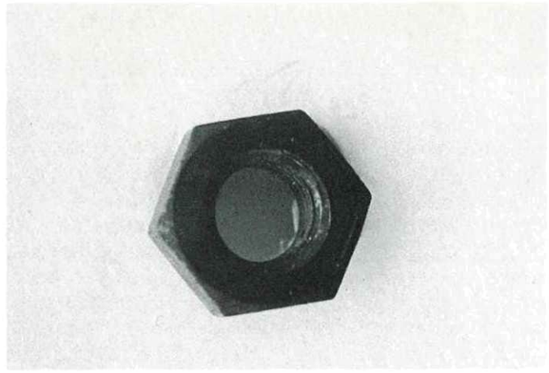
Laughter. What would we do without this basic fear response which brings us so much joy faced with others' misfortunes and mistakes? Recently it has come to our attention that while mistakes and misfortunes are abundant in today's economic climate specific acts are rarely pointed out and applauded. Given the lack of smiles seen around town as grim faced hordes wear grey masks to match the economic and weather forecasts we have decided to reward those rare individuals who, while remaining ashen-faced themselves can send the rest of us into spasms of mirth.

Yes, ladies, gentlemen and significant others we have decided to instate an award for serious silliness to be awarded each newsletter to a suitably deserving person in the art world.

The distinguished ASS. (award for serious silliness) will, of course be accompanied by a prize in the form of a nut, not the vulgar name given to those (relatively sane) persons in mental institutions nor those little seed-like things monkeys enjoy, but an iron nut significantly bland.

This week's ASS goes to a certain Mr X (we refuse to grant any free publicity to this ASS awardee) for his comments in a recent "article" (provided by Mr X's business) about "art as INVESTMENT" in the "New Zealand Doctor". And I quote "Choosing between prints or reproductions and original artwork is like choosing between a Rolls Royce and a cardboard cutout of the car. `Certainly some prints do appreciate in value, but most do not,' he said.

Raymond Ching prints including `Charley-Barley', `The Thrush' and



THE ASS PRIZE

`The Swallow' are among the exceptions, increasing in value up to 10 fold. However, there are sound reasons for their success.

`Only 850 were produced worldwide and less than half offered in New Zealand. That immediately ensured that the law of supply and demand impacted their value ".

Correction one: prints are original artwork as *long* as *they* are not *reproductions* like the Raymond Ching ones.

Correction two: some prints (like monoprints and some artists' proofs) are even one offs. An edition of 850 makes us and other fine print makers quake with laughter (most Muka editions, with the exception of Youth Prints number around thirty).

Correction three: all original works of art will appreciate in value -if they are good.

Correction four: what does it really matter if you enjoy the work.

Hence our ASS.

Nominations and suggestions for the next ASS award are welcomed, please contact us at Muka.

Dominiek

ARTEX

Muka Studio Gallery will be closed from July 4-7, during this time we will be exhibiting at ARTEX, Art and Interior Expo 1991 held at the Overseas Terminal, Princess Wharf, Auckland, all welcome.

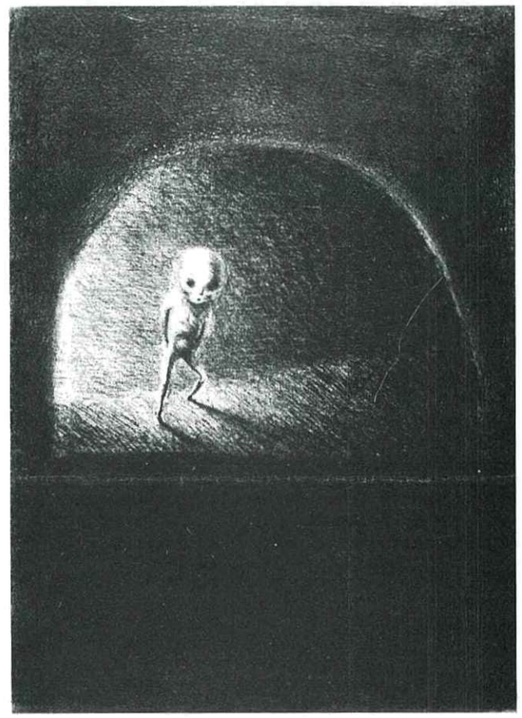
MUKA STUDIO NEWSLETTER

MUKA STUDIO 17 CHAMBERLAIN STREET GREY LYNN PH.765 323

THE FLOATING TOURIST

LITHOGRAPHS AND MONOPRINTS

BY **MARGARET FEENEY**



Also

MONOPRINTS

BY **JOHN REYNOLDS**

PREVIEW SATURDAY JUNE 22, 4 - 6 pm

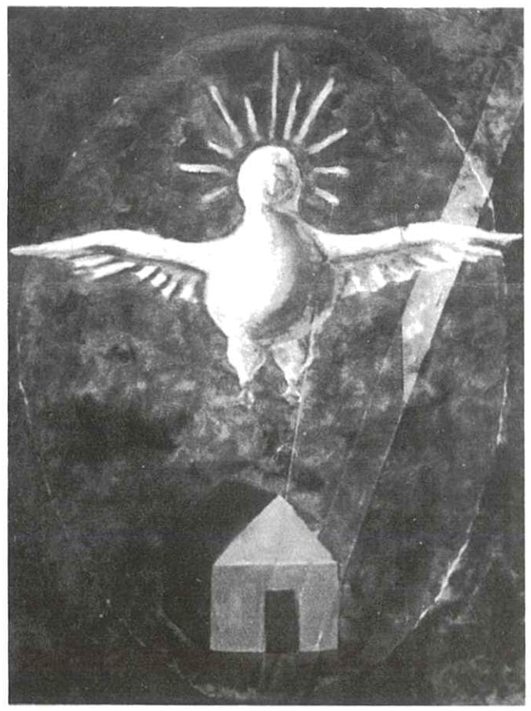
Hours Monday - Friday 11 am - 6 pm
Saturdays by appointment

THE ADVENTURES OF A TOURIST

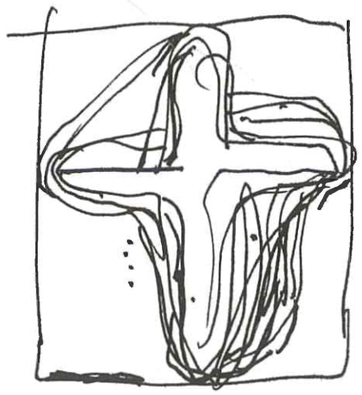


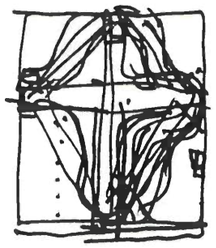
I'd only been away for six months, but sitting in the plane on the way home I felt I'd been abducted by aliens 10 years ago and miraculously only six Earthling months had passed.
This illusion disintegrated as soon as I re-entered Muka Studio and proceeded to work like a demon, driven by a demon (yes the bearded one himself), and felt that I had never left. Except for the nature of the work. This time, somehow, the ideas eluded my ruinous critical faculties, which normally surgically remove anything risky or indigestible on the way out.
This dangerous process of images emerging unsanatised was, of course, gleefully, encouraged by Frans and further provoked by the most terrifying of mediums: the monoprint.
This is fear.
One to three hours of hair-raising toil -no methodical layering of colours -no twenty minute breaks with a cup of coffee and a fag to luxuriate over the progress. Just into it, then WHACK through the press. Ruthless. The image will work or it won't and three minutes will tell you if you've wasted your morning. Six weeks passed in intensive collusion with Frans over ideas and techniques and I staggered home at the end of it with a large wobbly head a lot fuller.
Two months prior to the Muka session I had undergone a similarly demanding experience at the Frans Masereel centre in Belgium. Frans and Magda suggested I apply for an artist's residency there and supported my application. So armed with Muka Studio technical know-how I entered the world of lithography in the heart of Europe.
The set-up was amazing, Belgium spoils its artists rotten. Groovy little apartments with easel, drawing board and cable television (which gave us a blow by blow account of the Gulf War with `censored' Iraqi clips and `edited' American ones) and a workshop set-up from printers' heaven. One thing that was a bit of a drag was the horrendous tummy bug Quentin and I'd picked up in our travels that supplied us with delirious nights and feeble days which was no state to be in for tackling Flemish-speaking technicians and heavy lithographic stones...
Our major night out was with the lovely Magda Van Gils family. This was serious partying with the infamous Duvel beer 15 % (as the night wore on we heard tales of Frans's friendship with this all-to-real mythological beer) and sweet food of incredible gorgeousness.
After a night of great hospitality and a lot of gesticulating we tottered back to Masereel not sure whether we were Belgian, Kiwis or Duvels.
At the end of our month at Masereel, with the prints all trimmed, signed and franked we set off to look at the rest of the world as we thought we knew it. The next few months were a surreal jigsaw of places and paintings I knew they'd copied from books and postcards.
Famous monuments weighing countless tonnes looked suspiciously flimsy, like giant blow-ups of the real thing that lives in books at home. Bizarre. The whole of Europe felt like a deadly serious toytown.
As opposed to California which we glimpsed, to our horror, on the way home. America as my (by now) goggling distorted eyes saw it, was more along the lines of a jovial nightmare - my crusade of the floating tourist as a passionate bigot continues - but the most amazing thing with L.A. is how quickly you get into it. After a month we were wearing Levis and Mickey Mouse T-shirts, eating at Diners for breakfast and drinking Coors Light.
The life-style seems brilliant until you make the connection with its flipside. This is the thousands of homeless sleeping in parks, carparks, streets and on beaches. The right corners to pickup your cheap Mexican labour for the day and the most serious armed police force I've ever seen. Charming stuff.
New Zealand was looking pretty good. My eyes have since returned to their normal size but I'm not sure where N.Z. fits into all this -although with this government it looks like a bit part in a B-grade horror movie. But I returned after my wee trip feeling incredibly positive, we're still comparatively unpolluted, still small enough to affect change quickly (good changes for God's sake) and we've still got so much room.

Margaret Feeney



Margaret Feeney,
"Heart is where the home is"





ROMANCING THE STONE...



"The alchemists have a saying, `Tertium non datur': the third is not given. That is the transformation from one element to another, from base matter into best gold, is a process that cannot be documented. It is fully mysterious."
Jeanette Winterson
"Sexing the Cherry"

This transubstantiation, this flight into meaning, seems to be specially celebrated in printmaking with the monoprint.
Stone, ink and paper collide with a heightened sense of spontaneity and unpredictability.
For me this challenge invites a greater instinctual play and simultaneously a demand for brevity. A sort of elevated shorthand against the chemistry of ink and paper. Akin of course to the very essence of drawing. Where gesture and meaning coalesce.

John Reynolds

'Before me floats an image,
man or shade,
Shade more than man,
more image than a shade.'
Yeats.