

BULLETIN OF THE ROBERT MCDOUGALL ART GALLERY winter june 2001 - august 2001





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Cover: Graham Bennett Photography by Johannes van Kan.

Please Note: The opinions put forward in this magazine are not necessarily supported by the Robert McDougall Art Gallery.

# Introduction



Welcome to this Winter issue of the Bulletin! A major feature is an interview with Graham Bennett – the artist who has created the monumental, evocative sculpture *Reasons for Voyaging* for the new Christchurch Art Gallery, in collaboration with the winning

Buchan Group architect, David Cole.

The second of our series of Collections-based articles focuses on the Gallery's Painting Collection. In addition to highlighting our holdings, and significant milestones along the way, it also introduces some significant recent contemporary acquisitions. Another feature, 'Art/Speak ', has been penned for this issue by 'The Press' columnist, Joe Bennett, and provides a refreshingly irreverent perspective on these Collections! A description of *Beneath Our Feet*, an innovative project by 'the clinic' that considers the hidden histories of Canterbury, is also included.

'From Legal to Regal' provides a special opportunity to hear our Governor General, Dame Silvia Cartwright, speak at a luncheon hosted by the Christchurch Casino on 8 June.

I would also like to encourage you to participate in other fundraising ventures, such as 'Art on Campus' at the University of Canterbury Staff Club on Saturday 30 June. There will be an illustrated talk as well as a tour of the highly regarded College House art collection.

I join with Warren Feeney, Director of CoCA, in calling for quality works for the next Art Auction – last year's event netted nearly \$40,000 for the new Christchurch Art Gallery project. The auction will take place at CoCA on Thursday 13 September, 2001 and will again be supported and hosted by auctioneer Peter Webb.

Another creative fundraising initiative is the Artists' Plates project, a chance for collectors to purchase a set of 29cm x 29cm sushi plates, each one hand-decorated by a different New Zealand artist. Plates will be available in complete sets, which include a plate by every artist involved in the project, or in sets of four plates. A unique (and affordable!) opportunity to bring the works of major artists such as Philip Trusttum, Gavin Chilcott, Judy Darragh, Nicola Jackson, Tony Lane, Robert McLeod, Julia Morison, Simon Ogden, Andrew Drummond and Bronwyn Taylor into your home. Further details on this project will be available soon.

Again, we have every reason to record our gratitude to the Major Gifts and Community Gifts Fundraising Committees for their remarkable work in continuing to raise funds for the new Gallery.

Jonif ()

P. ANTHONY PRESTON DIRECTOR

# My Favourite



Africa, 1997 Terry Urbahn, Collection of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery. Photography by Brendan Lee.



What began as a short biographical research trip to the public library after seeing Terry Urbahn's work *Africa* (1997) was enough to propel me into the complex web of relationships and references that inform this work. This complexity, the interest in language and the parallel between my concept of the archeological

Portrait of the writer as a young artist in front of portrait by Jessica Johnstone.

ex perience (solving mysteries of nature) and the position I found myself in of unravelling mysteries of this work (culture) were very exciting and motivated me to write about *Africa*.

The name of the series this work comes from is the Urban Museum Reality Service, a twist on the National Museum Education Service that produced the original display cases that Urbahn's works from the series both recycled and critiqued. Most of the original display cases used in the series were made to educate people about 'primitive' people and their associated lifestyles. That the portrayal of cultures and histories 'in-a-box' inevitably resulted in sweeping generalisations and superficial and simplistic misrepresentations of these societies was obviously a source of interest for Urbahn.

In the publication that accompanied Urbahn's show Alien Space (1995, Govett Brewster Art Gallery) a text reads "Even the most perfect reproduction of art is lacking one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be..." This recognition of the inherent impossibility of accurately reproducing an artwork (and the consequence that an attempt at reproducing a work will necessarily result in the production of something else,) is interesting to note when considering *Africa*. The work nods to Duchamp's *Box in a Valise/Boite en valise* (1938-42). However, where Duchamp had *Paris Air* (a glass ampoule of air) and *Fountain/Fontaine* (1917), Urbahn has an empty beer crate and a basin.

The centrepiece is a maquette of Urbahn's 1992 installation Vocal PA, which can be read as a primitive totemic figurative sculpture with lights for arms and speaker boxes making up the head and body. Placed in the centre of the box, the maquette reads as the god icon, and indeed Urbahn's other persona as a rock musician must be aware that the vocalist is god. Texts adorn the fold-in doors of the case, the words borrowed from Warwick Brown's text on Urbahn featured in Another 100 New Zealand Artists (Godwit, Auckland, 1996). The phrases are taken out of context and reformed into sentences that deceptively feel like they make sense. On the left door 'da er da' seems to support the Duchamp reference and suggests that the dada style cut-up technique for writing that William S. Burroughs made famous was utilised in creating the texts out of Brown's phrases. In Africa, Urbahn misrepresents Brown as Brown may have misrepresented Urbahn, and the National Museum Education service misrepresented Africa. And perhaps as I have here misrepresented Urbahn...

Lee devenish Artist & Writer, Christchurch The Paintings Collection is the second largest of the Gallery's collections with 1466 works out of 5505, but it is by far the oldest, with its foundations laid 120 years ago by the Canterbury Society of Arts, the prime contributor to the Gallery when it opened its doors on 16 June, 1932. Of the 138 works in the Gallery

# THE PAINTING COLLECTION

# FOCUSING on new zealand

Above: Teresina, c.1875 Frederick, Lord Leighton, Presented by the Canterbury Society of Arts, 1982. The initial focus of the Canterbury Society of Arts collection had been painting by both British and New Zealand living artists acquired for educational purposes. The Society did not set out to form a museum-type painting collection, although it was conscious of the need to improve the standard of the work represented.

By the 1900s, the Paintings Collection had grown considerably through works acquired by purchase, gift and bequest. It was not until 1906, when the New Zealand International Exhibition was held in Christchurch, that an opportunity arose to purchase contemporary British works of a higher standard. Among the acquisitions were works by Solomon J. Solomon, Henrietta Rae, Charles D. Leslie and Richard Anning Bell, most of which are still represented in the Collection. Perhaps the most important painting purchased at that time was Teresina by Frederick, Lord Leighton. This small study of an Italian girl, painted around 1875 and exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1876, remains one of the Gallery's treasures of Victorian painting. Many years after its acquisition, a curious misunderstanding regarding the identity of the painting's subject occurred, which was to continue for generations within a local family.

The peculiar tale began in 1936, when an elderly woman visited the McDougall Art Gallery and told the Custodian, Horace Cowell, that she was the model for Leighton's painting. It seemed initially plausible as her name had been Teresa Toffineri, but it was later revealed that she was born nine years before Leighton painted Teresina and therefore could not possibly have been the model. How had the confusion arisen? It seems that an engraving after Leighton's Teresina had been reproduced in an English art journal. Around 1883 Teresa, who was then an 18 year old shop assistant at Beath and Company and also modelled part-time for a Canterbury College life class, posed at one session wearing traditional Italian costume. Inspired by the engraving, the students adopted Leighton's composition and produced several variants of the painting. Naturally, when many years later the model saw Leighton's work on her visit to the Gallery, she was

convinced she was looking at a portrait of herself made by one of the life class students. Until a decade ago, Teresa's descendants were still requesting to see the portrait of their grandmother. Finally, they reluctantly had to accept that Lord Leighton and Teresa Toffineri had never met. It seems a strange coincidence that a work so greatly admired in reproduction in New Zealand in 1883 should have been brought to New Zealand for exhibition 22 years later, to eventually become an important part of the public Paintings Collection.

In 1911, other British contemporary paintings were acquired with the assistance of a Government grant and between 1912 and 1928 a large number of contemporary New Zealand paintings were added with assistance from a Christchurch City Council grant. The Gallery also received many other works as gifts, including the well-known Dutch Funeral (1872) by Petrus van der Velden and La Lecture de la Bible (1857) by Henriette Browne. In its inaugural year, the Gallery received 27 paintings from the former James Jamieson collection. Whilst this was a boost to the Collection, most of the works were still post-1850, with just four from previous centuries. The prospect of the Collection developing in a more international direction was further frustrated in the mid 1930s as there were no funds to acquire paintings and insufficient staff to manage this aspect of the Gallery's operation.

The May Schlesinger Bequest of 1938, with the assistance of Sydney Thompson, enabled four paintings by well-known early 20th Century French artists to be purchased. Whilst these paintings complemented the existing Collection, they were still relatively conservative, with one exception: In the Woods by Othon Friesz. The 1940s saw major gifts of both British and New Zealand paintings. Among them was Summer Morn (1929), an important painting by Evelyn Page, bequeathed by the artist Rosa Sawtell. Its freshness and liveliness of colour made it a significant acquisition, but unfortunately its exhibition life was cut short when the painting's model objected to the work's display, leading to its official removal from the Gallery's walls. Threatened with legal action,



this is, 1958 Colin McCahon. Presented by a Group of Subscribers 1962. Reproduced courtesy of the Colin McCahon Research and Publication Trust.



Summer Morn, 1929 Evelyn Page E. Rosa Sawtell Bequest, 1940. Collection of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery.



Factory at Widnes, 1956 L.S. Lowry. Collection of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery. Reproduced by kind permission of Miss Carol A. Lowry, copyright holder.

the Christchurch City Council decreed that the painting could not be shown publicly during the model's life, meaning it was not exhibited for over 30 years.

When the Christchurch City Council first allocated 'Picture Purchase' funds to the Gallery in 1948, the collection was still small, totalling only 247 works, of which 136 were oil paintings. The lack of contemporary New Zealand and British painting drew considerable criticism from the Christchurch arts community. In an attempt to help rectify this, architect and art connoisseur Heathcote Helmore visited the Lefevre Gallery while in London in 1956 and was impressed by recent paintings by L. S. Lowry. With Lowry's approval, two of these paintings were sent out for the Canterbury Society of Arts 1957 autumn exhibition, where they were available at £180 each. As a result, *Factory at Widnes* (1956) was purchased for the Collection,



Tena I Ruia, 1987 Robyn Kahukiwa. Collection of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery. Reproduced courtesy of the artist.

> A large unstretched canvas from the Contemporary Painting Collection.

and now stands as the most important purchase of the late 1950s with one exception, *Tomorrow will be the same but not as this is* (1958-9) by Colin McCahon, a painting which had a much more stormy passage into the Collection.

In 1959, criticism of the Gallery's collecting policy came to a head when an exhibition of recent work by Colin McCahon was held and several local artists opened a subscription to purchase a work for the Collection. Tomorrow will be the same but not as this is was chosen, but a positive response to the acquisition was not immediate. During debate at a City Council meeting, one City Councillor described the work as "a figurative monstrosity which should not be permitted to hang in our beautiful gallery". Despite this criticism, it was eventually accepted and became the first truly progressive work acquired for the Contemporary New Zealand Paintings Collection. Whilst works by contemporary living artists had been acquired before this date, the McCahon purchase signalled a way forward into the future.

During the 1960s, a number of notable bequests contributed several important British and European works, including the oldest and most valuable painting in the International Collection, *The Physician* (17th C.), by Gerard Dou. As magnificent as this acquisition was, it was increasing unlikely that a significant European Old Master collection would be formed. In 1969, in a report made on the Gallery for the City Council, Dr Eric Westbrook suggested that it was: "...good policy to concentrate on New Zealand art as it helps local people establish a national identity and visitors national achievement." Despite this, Westbrook did not rule out the purchase of further international works. This report became the basis of the Gallery's collecting policy in the 1970s and in 1974 the Christchurch City Council voted to contribute \$10,000 for the purchase of European Master art, an impossible task from such a meagre resource. Remarkably, a few good early paintings were purchased, but many inferior works, particularly in English portraiture, were acquired. In contrast, many of the contemporary New Zealand paintings acquired in that decade were of excellent quality, revealing foresight for which we remain grateful today.

At the beginning of the 1980s, the collection policy was changed to reflect the resources available for Gallery's Painting Collection and a decision was made to cease attempts to purchase British and European paintings and to concentrate primarily on works by Canterbury and New Zealand artists. This decision involved remedying gaps in the New Zealand historical collection as well as maintaining a steady growth of works by contemporary artists, a focus that has remained up to the present day.

# NEIL ROBERTS

# **Recent Contemporary Painting Acquisitions**

Seven Days (2000), by James Cousins, consists of a grid of fifteen landscape views, in which each image is translated from a 1950s postcard and subtly altered by the artist to create an idyllic but strangely uneasy panorama. Ascension (2000), a large painting by Joanna Braithwaite, depicts a horizontal figure held within a cloud of multi-coloured birds; an enforced levitation that is simultaneously appealing and disturbing. In Spectator: Double the Life (2000), Heather Straka works between realism and minimalism to elevate a prosaic subject (a urinal) to the status of high art, challenging assumptions about a comfortable separation of the sacred and the profane.

FELICITY MILBURN

# Art/Speak

A series of articles by invited writers considering current issues in art theory and practice.



I know the McDougall because I smoke. I used to work at Christ's College and I spent my free periods in the Botanic Gardens smoking. In summer that was fine and dandy. I could lie on the Archery Lawn admiring the sunbathers and frisbee players and tempting the plump. comical ducks with cigarette ash. In winter it was less fine and not dandy at all. I would hunch round a fast cigarette and then go to the McDougall for shelter.

# Coming in from the outside While there I looked at the paintings. When I think back on them now, only three sit brightly in my mind - a painting of Cass railway station, one of

Bruce Creek and one of a funeral in Dutch snow. The two New Zealand paintings caught something that I had seen in the heart of this island. They did it in a way that

could not be done by a photograph - perhaps because part of the truth of them lay in the colours, and the only photographs worth looking at are black and white.

Cass and Bruce (Dry September) are both paintings of emptiness, of human insignificance, of silence and of bleak heat. I can't tell you who painted them but those painters did me a service. They netted for me something that I had seen and felt. And each painting acted like a breakwater against the incessant waves of time, offered me a harbour where I could anchor for a while. Each was a tiny part of the whirling world held still and made sense of, frozen and clarified in paint.

They didn't make me think or feel anything much about the artist. They made me think and feel stuff about me and about all of us, about a place and about all places.

In The Dutch Funeral the mourners are dragging the corpse through snow on a sledge. They seem the essence of northern Protestantism - self-mortifying, restrained, dutiful, struggling, decent. A part of them likes the cruel penance of the funeral.

The painting depressed me a bit. Like the other two it put mankind firmly in the world, and told of his place in it, his suffering in it, his defiance of it and the rigmaroles he used to defy it. I knew the gravediggers' chapped hands. I knew the thin tea they would drink after the funeral. I knew the warmth of their small houses and the wind outside screaming unimpeded over the flat shallow land of Holland.

I don't know when it was painted. I think the painter was the son of another painter. If so, I like that. He would have learned his art as a craft. Craft is indispensable. For me all worthwhile art, be it literary, visual, musical or whatever, has craft at its core.



"They didn't make me think or feel anything much about the artist. They made me think and feel stuff about me and about all of us, about a place and about all places".

The Christ's College art department at the time comprised Peter Robinson, the artist, Gavin Bishop, the children's author and illustrator, and Robyn Ussher the Press art reviewer. I loved and love them all. I used to tell them what I liked at the McDougall and they would scoff. I said, for example, that Picasso was crap and they scoffed. They knew about Picasso and I didn't. I'd just seen a few of his paintings and they did not move me or make me think. If I thought about anything I thought about what a pity it was that Picasso could draw like an angel but chose to paint like a circus act.

Of course I could have attended Robyn's art history classes and learned things to say about Picasso's methods. We always tend to like things we can say stuff about. Kids who did attend those classes often used to tell me things about the sort of art I didn't like. They liked doing it. But I don't think it made it good art.

Shakespeare's audiences knew nothing of iambic pentameters. You don't have to know about dovetail joints to admire a piece of furniture, nor about structural theory and unreliable first-person narrators to relish a novel, nor about symphonic structure to wallow in a bit of Beethoven. Knowledge can enhance your pleasure but if the stuff doesn't seize you in the first place no quantity of knowledge will redeem it.

I particularly despise conceptual art and political art. Think of the fuss over the virgin in a condom. The little darling who made it wanted merely to say that she disapproved of the Catholic church's teachings on sex. She is free to say that. But if she imagines that by using a couple of visual symbols to say it she has done something original or worthwhile, or has indeed made anything other than a simplistic political statement, then she is a deluded little darling. Any painting, drawing or sculpture that can be boiled down to a statement would be better as a statement. Paintings aren't about anything that can be said in words, which is why much art criticism is bilge.

With a few exceptions I like painters who are representational and modest, modest in the sense that the artist is so much in the painting that you don't notice him. He does not shout 'look at me'. And while I'm waving my prejudices about, I might as well add that I oppose government sponsorship of individual artists, be they painters, sculptors, writers or musos. Most soi-disant artists are just deeply in love with themselves and know nothing of craft. Let time and poverty sift the worthwhile from the self-obsessed.

As is probably evident, the visual arts don't matter much to me and I don't know much about them. I liked few of the paintings in the McDougall as much as I liked the iridescent sheen on the backs of the plump and comical ducks.

BY JOE BENNETT

Above Left: The Dutch Funeral, 1872 Petrus Van der Velden. Collection of the Robert McDougail Art Gallery. Giffed by Henry Charles Drury van Asch, 1928.

Above Middle: Dry September, 1949 William Sutton. Collection of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery.

Above Right: Cass, c.1936 Rita Angus, Collection of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Reproduced courtesy of the Angus Estate.

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# REAS ONS BUDY AGENS

LOCAL ARTIST GRAHAM BENNETT TALKS TO THE BULLETIN'S FELICITY MILBURN ABOUT HIS LIFE, HIS INSPIRATION AND THE BACKGROUND TO 'REASONS FOR VOYAGING' WHICH WILL GRACE THE ENTRANCE TO THE NEW CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY.

### Your work often seems to reflect its Pacific location, and you have indicated an interest in nautical, coastal and geographical contexts. Where do these interests come from?

In part, perhaps. My childhood, spent living in Nelson, reinforced our coastal existence. We had a corrugated iron bach on an extension of the boulder bank at Cable Bay and the waves used to actually wash up to the door in a storm. I spent a lot of time on the sea and wandering around on the shoreline collecting and sorting. My family's home was on the hill overlooking the harbour. We observed the trading boats, my father recording their movements for Lloyds of London, commercial and cultural comings and goings. In travelling I am always conscious of the distance from the sea.

# With its references to maps and latitude lines, your work considers where New Zealand is placed on the globe. Are you interested in New Zealand being part of the Pacific as well as the physical realities of living on an island?

I possibly didn't think much about the impact of our Pacific location until I left New Zealand for four years in the late 1970s. I am interested in how various peoples reference their environment, their symbols for a sense of place. I'm curious about how our particular environment and location could connect our thinking. Even the linear trajectory of our islands could have an impact on our vision of ourselves. For years I've been experimenting with proposals for installations building on the linear extension of New Zealand and its/our orientation in the Pacific, exploring aspects of migration, colonisation, trade and identity. Looking forward, looking back, looking up. I have incorporated these physical elements and measured space into all my large scale works to date.

# You have said that *Reasons for Voyaging* (Bennett's gateway sculpture for the new Christchurch Art Gallery) is, in part, about a sense of belonging – does this include the sense of identity you get from a place?

My thoughts in planning this work over the last year or so have included notions of departure and return, convergence and divergence, conjunctions of identity. Recently, I've been reading the diary of one of my ancestors, written in 1864, about making the long sailing trip after leaving Scotland from Newfoundland to here. The writer, travelling with her family of six on a small brigantine, speculates about a new life in New Zealand, what she might find here and some of her reasons for leaving. It is interesting to also read and compare the speculations and theories on Polynesian migrations and the circumstances, social structures, skills, desires and spirit that surround these. I've had interesting conversations with people in Japan curious about migration and colonial issues and comparing it with their own history: 'how does it feel when you don't have a long past, do you feel as though you belong?'. I recall a



Reasons for Voyaging, 2000 Graham Bennett.

statement someone made recently that, as a New Zealander, you get a feeling that you can still write on a fresh page and make a difference. You can do something and make a difference and you can do it in a fresh way. I'm sure there is something in this.

## You've described drawing as an important part of your art practice. Do you see the sculptures as direct extensions of your drawings – or are they more formal explorations?

The big environmental installations were extended drawings. They started out as pencil and paint studies and developed into plans to place reduced architectural statements into the natural environment. But an equally important part was to then stand back from it and make extensive studies of the experimental spaces around and within the temporary installations. The preliminary drawings and research help decide on materials, scale, alignments etc. The visual recordings documented interventions from, and relationships with, natural forces; the rising and setting sun, the moon and the tides.

# Obviously a work like *Reasons for Voyaging* involves extensive technical design and construction, do you see that part of it as a foil to the more expressive part of your work?

Reasons for Voyaging is slightly different to some of the others because while the other works were specific to site, it's different responding to something that is also being constructed (the new Christchurch Art Gallery) and which isn't there yet. There is an element of chance and risk in this and although I have planned it very carefully, in models and drawings, there are many decisions still to be made, which are technical and practical, but also aesthetic. I continue to do drawings, revisiting my starting points and nutting through problems: I suppose it is a foil, one to the other.

Some of the first works I saw of yours were a mixture of very small sculptures and slide images of the large scale environmental projects, so I am interested in how those things collide, if one is an extension of the other or whether a different aesthetic applies to each?

It's an interesting question - difficult to answer succinctly. I know many artists are quite focussed in these matters. In Japan, particularly, some artists seem bewildered that I would shift scales to the extent that I do, and surprised that I do so much drawing, or that I would even consider doing printmaking as well. I am sure I heard the Japanese equivalent of "Jack of all trades...". I enjoy immensely making small things and thinking of them as big, sticking a camera in amongst them, or making drawings and thereby reducing them to two dimensions where they could be any scale, just as I enjoy doing drawings for, during and after making a sculpture and rethinking the scale. After Demarcation, the work I made on the Nelson Boulder Bank in 1996, I made numerous structures using a single stone support - a piece of the land form? An island? Our part of the Pacific? Our part of the globe? Making small things and thinking big, making big things and thinking small; both are part of my process. The model making part of a larger commission is something I enjoy, although it is time consuming it is an important part of coming to terms with the shapes, spaces and dynamics of the site.

To some artists, the idea of collaborating with an architect in the way that you have with *Reasons for Voyaging* would be something they wouldn't want to do, whereas I get the sense it is something you have really enjoyed.

Yes, I have. The interesting challenge is to try and construct in the mind shapes and spaces that exist only as plans, elevations and computer walk-throughs. Discussions with the architect, David Cole, in the early stages were important. Ideas and philosophies were shared and, following my resolution of the concept, involvement in resource consent planning and maintaining an awareness of and involvement in the overall project have all played a part. I have found this demanding but there are considerable advantages in integrating a sculptural object into the planning part of a building – it requires different approaches than those responding to a given or completed space.

### What about the future? How close is what you have done, and what you are doing at the moment, to what you would like to achieve?

The horizon is always shifting – if you think you have got near perhaps you have stopped! The individual works have less importance than the pathway, or the overall trajectory, and I'm interested in where this project, or the next project, or the one before, sits in all of that. I like to be open and to allow enough time/space in my process that I can deviate down side streets. I don't have a plan as to where I am going, or what I want to do next, it evolves. Commissioned works, where there is a response to a certain brief or situation, can open up new ideas and new ways of working that are often a surprise.

As to what I want to do in the future, all I'm really looking to do is to continue to make things that are honest, reduced and personal. There's a constant refinement, but I'd like to think the works of the future will maintain some sense of urgency, of spontaneity, of risk taking. They need to be a scaffolding for meaning and seeing, narratives of the land, this land. Markers and thresholds; not necessarily permanent, not necessarily important, not necessarily large. Threatened by, or coexisting with, nature, a sense of standing on the surface, standing on the edge of the Pacific. Creating an edge...

Graham Bennett is currently on leave from his position of Senior Lecturer at the Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology's School of Art and Design while he completes Reasons for Voyaging.

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Photography of Graham Bennett by Johannes van Kan.

"I POSSIBLY DION'T THINK MUCH ABOUT THE IMPACT OF OUR PACIFIC LOCATION UNTIL I LEFT NEW ZEALAND FOR FOUR YEARS IN THE LATE **1970**S".



Times Tables (a Pacific Dialogue) (detail), 1997 Graham Bennett. Steel, wood, silkscreen printed canvas. 2800 x 2000 x 2350mm. Collection of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery.

"I RECALL A STATEMENT SOMEONE MADE RECENTLY THAT, AS A NEW ZEALANDER. YOU GET A FEELING THAT YOU CAN STILL WRITE ON A FRESH PAGE AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE. YOU CAN DO SOMETHING AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE AND YOU CAN DO IT IN A FRESH WAY. I'M SURE THERE IS SOMETHING IN THIS."









Beneath Our Feet exists to examine the relationship between our bodies and the land we inhabit. Six generations of the Chalk family have lived in this house, all of them cartographers. Their stories lie within. Questions torment the current family occupant; does a map truly serve to reveal the land Beneath Our Feet? Or does a map actually conceal the land, leaving us disconnected from our habitat? Beneath Our Feet is presented as a performance installation inside a fabrication of the Chalk family's Victorian house staged within the Great Hall of The Arts Centre of Christchurch from July 21st – July 30th as part of the Christchurch Arts Festival.

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the clinic

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Chere is an infinite depth of history th

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'the clinic' is an award winning Christchurch based performance collective operating the mechanisms of live performance through an interlacing of different media, texts, styles, working methods and performance spaces.

Based in Christchurch and with a commitment to working locally as well as touring nationally and internationally, the clinic works in a collaborative manner from a core of artists that is Veronica Barton, Anastasia Dailianis, Julieanne Eason, Adam Hayward, Lucette Hindin and Haydn Kerr for Beneath Our Feet they are joined by set designer Mark McEntyre, visual artist Heather Straka, sound artist Tim Brott and multi media artist Phillip Purves.

Based in Christchurch, we have a commitment to working locally, as well as touring Christchurch-made performance nationally and internationally. Through exploring and expressing our identity, and fostering an artistic community in Christchurch, we look to contribute to the development of our cultural character.

> 9 can not help but break into a when 9 remember Captain Th myself on the voyage from Net plains enthusiastically listing n streets of Canterbury... (Thomas



# New Christchurch Art Gallery:

The faces behind the fundraising campaign



# Major Gifts Fundraising Committee

There is great enthusiasm in Christchurch and Canterbury for the new Art Gallery and many generous individuals have been prepared to give substantial support to see it become a reality. It is very encouraging and exciting to work for something with such tangible support.

Ros Burdon







# Community Gifts Fundraising Committee

The skills required for successful fundraising – flair, imagination, persistence and hard work – were all displayed by the Community Gifts Fundraising Committee. Supportive partners contributed skills as well, especially helping to host fundraising events. We thank them all.

HILARY LANGER

# We acknowledge with great gratitude the generosity of the following new supporters:

In the category of Gold Foundation Donor The Stout Trust Milburn New Zealand Limited General Cable New Zealand Ltd PDL Industries Mrs Gendy Brown Mr David Seay

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Kate Hartnell Anne Watt (Support) Sara Newman (absent) Alex Davis (absent)



# **Recent Acquisitions:**



St. Rosa, 2000 Sandra Thomson. Woodcut. Collection of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery. Reproduced courtesy of the artist.

St. Rosa (2000), a wood cut in three pieces, was recently acquired from Sandra Thomson's Saintly Behaviour exhibition at the Centre of Contemporary Art and continues Thomson's ongoing interest in the roles and behaviours adopted by, and forced upon, women throughout history.

The works in the exhibition resulted from Thomson's research into the obsessive and often bizarre practices of certain women saints, during which she discovered that many female saints adopted excessive and masochistic activities as a reaction against the conventional beliefs associating women with the flesh, and therefore temptation.

The subject of this work, St. Rosa, lived in the 16th century and became the patron saint of Peru, embroiderers and gardening. Known for her great beauty, she discouraged her admirers and the potential for her own vanity with an intensive programme of selfabuse. This included rubbing pepper onto her face, whipping herself with chains, wearing nettles inside her gloves and donning a crown of roses. The crown, depicted in this detail from the three piece woodcut, contained 69 spikes which pierced the saint's forehead.

Sandra Thomson is a Christchurch-based artist who graduated from the University of Canterbury's School of Fine Arts in 1981 with a Diploma of Fine Arts (Honours) in Printmaking. She currently teaches printmaking at the Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology. Prior to this acquisition, Thomson was represented in the Gallery's Collection by *The Ridgeway Flyers*, a drypoint etching purchased in 1987.

FELICITY MILBURN

# Other recent acquisitions to the Collections:

Bradley Brothers, Commemorative Window to ANZACS, Stained glass, 1920

Joanna Braithwaite, Ascension, Oil on canvas, 2000 Geoff Dixon, Three Lands, Lithograph, 2001. Gifted by the Artist Jeffrey Harris, Self Portrait, etching, 1982 Lloyd Godman, Bill Hammond, Auckland Islands, 1989

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Photograph, 1989

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# ROBERT MCDOUGALL ART GALLERY

# **Coming Events**

8.00pm	1	<b>Contemporary Music Concert</b> – 'Digital Research' a celebration of possibilities and experiments in digital sound synthesis and manipulation, featuring The Intrapsychic Railway, Simplex & Comple, Organism, Cord Remote and A-Version.
10.30am	1	Friday Club - Art appreciation club meeting.
10.30am	2	Saturday 1 Club - Art appreciation club meeting.
3.00pm	3	Montana Sunday Event – Painters. Video programme 'Lowry. A Private View'. A dramatisation of the life and background of L S Lowry whose painting <i>Factory at Widnes</i> , 1956 is on exhibition in the Gallery.
10.30am	4	Monday Club – Art appreciation club meeting.
10.30am	5	Tuesday Club - Art appreciation club meeting.
10.30am	6	Wednesday 1 Club – Art appreciation club meeting.
1.00pm	6	Wednesday 2 Club - Art appreciation club meeting.
10.30am	7	Mac Club – Art appreciation club for disabled visitors. New members welcome.
12.00 - 2.00pm	8	Lunch with the Governor General – Dame Silvia Cartwright, the new Governor General, will be the guest speaker at this lunch hosted by the Christchurch Casino. Proceeds from the event will go towards the new Christchurch Art Gallery. Tickets \$75. Available from Robyn Walker on tel/fax 355 8398.
10.30am	9	Saturday 2 Club – Art appreciation club meeting.
3.00pm	10	Montana Sunday Event – Concert – Youth Songs . A programme from the Avonside Girls' High School choirs.
10.30am	16	Saturday 3 Club - Art appreciation club meeting.
3.00pm	17	Montana Sunday Event - Painters. Jonathan Mane-Wheoki discusses
		contemporary paintings. Speaker of the Month – Mark Lander – 'How to become World Famous
10.30am	20	in your own backyard.' \$2.00 Friends, \$5.00 public.
3.00pm	24	Montana Sunday Event – Concert. 'Contemporary Love Songs' a choral music programme including jazz, Scottish songs and Beatles' works presented by Barry Brinson, Kirsty Grant, Jim Lovell Smith and Susan Smith.
	27	LocArt Visit – to the studio of Keith Morant. Meet Rebecca Garside outside 375 Hereford Street at 9.50am. To book (or cancel) please phone 379 4055 and leave a message.
6.00pm	27	After Dark – Talk About Art – 'Art Jargon' a light-hearted talk by Ronnie Kelly about the language of art. Entry by a \$5 donation, which includes wine and cheeses. Please use the Night Entrance from Rolleston Avenue.
10.00 – 4.00pm	30	Art on Campus – An exciting opportunity to view art collections at the University of Canterbury. Proceeds from the event will go towards the new Christchurch Art Gallery. Tickets \$35. Registration forms enclosed.
3.00pm	1	Montana Sunday Event – Painters. John Rooney of Brush 'n Palette will speak on 'Artists' Materials'.
10.30am	2	Monday Club – Art appreciation club meeting.
	2	Children's Holiday Programmes start – 'Darkness & Light' a free search discovery quiz. Available daily between 11am and 3pm. Continues to 15 July.
10.30am	3	Tuesday Club – Art appreciation club meeting.
10.30am	4	Wednesday 1 Club - Art appreciation club meeting.
1.00pm	4	Wednesday 2 Club – Art appreciation club meeting.
10.30am	5	Mac Club – Art appreciation club for disabled visitors. New members welcome.
10.30am	6	Friday Club – Art appreciation club meeting.
8.00pm	6	Contemporary Music Concert – Nick Hodgson presents a programme of new compositions beginning with 'String Quartet'. Tickets \$5. Door sales only. Please use the Night Entrance from Rolleston Avenue.
10.30am	7	Saturday 1 Club – Art Appreciation club meeting.
3.00pm	8	Montana Sunday Event – Landmarks. Anna Crighton will give a slide lecture on 'A Heritage Trip Down Memory Lane' focusing on some of the old buildings now lost from the city scene.





	9 – 11	Children's Holiday Programme – 'Working Together' – A free three day family art activity programme, available between 10.30am – 12 noon, in conjunction with the ongoing Darkness & Light holiday quiz. No bookings required.
	12	<b>Children's Art Workshop</b> – 10.30am – 12 noon. Practical art classes for children aged 8 – 11 years. Fee \$8. Class size limited and bookings essential for this one. Phone 372 2973.
loam	14	Saturday 2 Club – Art appreciation club meeting.
)pm	15	Montana Sunday Event – Concert. 'Sacred and Secular' motets, madrigals and polyphony from Four Voices, featuring Helen Acheson, Chris Adams, James Armitage and Craig Knowles.
) )pm	15	<b>Friends' Mid-Winter Party</b> – A social function with wine, music and entertainment from Elric Hooper. (Invitations posted to members of the Friends.)
l0am	18	Speaker of the Month – Jenna Graham and Nicky Calder speak on 'Art in the School Environment', \$2.00 Friends, \$5.00 public.
loam	21	Saturday 3 Club - Art Appreciation club meeting.
)pm	22	Montana Sunday Event – Painters. Grant Banbury speaks on 'Observations on contemporary art practice in the dealer gallery context'.
)pm	29	Montana Sunday Event – Concert – Youth Songs – Featuring the Christchurch Boys High School choirs, orchestras, bands and soloists.
Boam	1	Wednesday 1 Club – Art appreciation club meeting.
)pm	1	Wednesday 2 Club - Art appreciation club meeting.
30am	2	Mac Club - Art appreciation club for disabled visitors. New members welcome.
30am	3	Friday Club – Art appreciation club meeting.
)pm	3	Contemporary Music Concert – New works by John Cousins, School of Music, University of Canterbury, Tickets \$5. Door sales only. Please use the Night Entrance from Rolleston Avenue.
30am	4	Saturday 1 Club - Art Appreciation club meeting.
)pm	5	Montana Sunday Event – Landmarks. Archaeologist, Chris Jacomb speaks on 'Rescue Archaeology in Christchurch'.
30am	6	Monday Club - Art appreciation club meeting.
30am	7	Tuesday Club - Art appreciation club meeting.
0am	11	Saturday 2 Club – Art appreciation club meeting.
)pm	12	Montana Sunday Event – Lecture – The Contemporary Scene – Deborah McCormack of Art & Industry will speak on 'The Art & Industry programme in Christchurch'.
30am	15	Speaker of the Month – June Goldstein will speak on 'Ancient Persia, a Personal View', \$2.00 Friends, \$5.00 public.
10am	18	Saturday 3 Club - Art Appreciation club meeting.
)pm	19	Montana Sunday Event – Landmarks. Pam Wilson of the Historic Places Trust will speak on 'City Landmarks'.
	22	LocArt Visit – to the studio of Graham Bennett, who is working on the sculpture 'Reasons for Voyaging' for the new Christchurch Art Gallery. Meet at 31 Southwark Street at 9.50am. To book (or cancel) please phone 379 4055 and leave a message.
)pm	26	Montana Sunday Event – Lecture – The Contemporary Scene – Edward Osborne, a multimedia artist from the USA, who is currently working on a project involving materials from Antarctica for the 2002 Biennale, speaks on his works.
)pm	29	After Dark – Talk About Art – Felicity Milburn speaks on 'The Development Exhibition – A Special Research Project for the New Art Gallery'. Entry by a \$5 donation, which includes wine and cheeses. Please use the Night Entrance from Rolleston Avenue.

ROBERT MCDOUGALL ART GALLERY

**Coming Events** 

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All venues, unless otherwise stated, are at the Robert McDougall Art Gallery. Programmes may alter slightly - please check beforehand.

# Friends of the Gallery



Elric Hooper

# LocArt Visit Keith Morant

# LocArt Visit Graham Bennett



Scale model entrance sculpture, Montreal/Worcester Street Corner New Christchurch Art Gallery, 2000 Graham Bennett, 320 x 900 x 600mm.

One of the rewarding aspects of being President of the Friends is to see the enormous pleasure that our support gives to other sectors of the community. At the AGM we presented our two scholarship winners with their cheques for \$1,500 each. The School of Fine Arts at the University of Canterbury and Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology both nominate a student as recipients of these scholarships. This year Catherine Simpson, a sculpture student at Ilam, and Florence Lim a drawing student at CPIT both collected their rewards and to quote Catherine "the scholarship has lifted a huge weight off my shoulders, relieving the stress and restrictions that inhibit making artwork. The scholarship has also given me the feeling that I must be heading in the right direction, which is really positive feedback".

The Friends mid-winter party will be held on Sunday 15 July at 6.00pm in the Centre Court at the Gallery. This social function will be a good opportunity to catch up with Friends in lieu of any exhibition openings. There will be wine, a string quartet, festive food and Elric Hooper (left) will provide entertainment during the evening. This event is free to all Friends and an invitation is enclosed with this Bulletin.

MARIANNE HARGREAVES



# Wednesday 27 June 10.00am

Throughout his long career, abstract painter Keith Morant has exhibited widely overseas and around New Zealand. However it is the Internet that currently provides the greatest exposure to his works. He was 'Artist of the Month' in April this year on www.globalartbrokers.com and with a selection of his works constantly accessible on that site, as well as locally on www.artists.co.nz/morant, Keith attracts an international audience.

Having lived in New Zealand for nearly thirty years, apart from time out exhibiting in London and New York, English born Morant adamantly calls Christchurch 'home'. Keith Morant invites a group of Friends to visit him at his studio to view and discuss some of his works. Limit of 10 people. Please meet Rebecca Garside outside 375 Hereford Street at 9.50am on the day.

# Wednesday 22 August 10.00am

Currently working in collaboration with architect David Cole, Graham Bennett has designed, and is working on, the dramatic entrance sculpture for the new Christchurch Art Gallery titled *Reasons for Voyaging*.

As a sculptor Graham has crafted works of both small and very large proportions since the 1980's, one of his better known projects being his large temporary installation work *Sea Sky Stone* on the Boulder Bank in Nelson. Graham has also worked in the media of painting, drawing, printmaking and photography and is a Senior Lecturer at Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology. Graham invites 20 Friends to his city workshop to view aspects of his 'work in progress'. Please meet Val Wisely at 31 Southwark Street at 9.50am.

To book for LocArt visits (or cancel your booking) please phone the Friends' office on 379 4055. Acceptance is automatic upon hearing your message, unless you are contacted to the contrary.

# Friends of the Gallery

# **Speaker of the Month**

Wednesday 20 June 10.30am

How to become World Famous in your own back yard

At 10.30 am every third Wednesday of the month at the new venue – The Robert McDougall Art Gallery in the Education Room off Centre Court. Join us for tea or coffee first at 10.15 am. Friends: \$2.00, public: \$5.00

Mark Lander, paper artist will speak about his work. Some friends were privileged to visit Mark's studio in Oxford last year and we look forward to another stimulating and lively talk. Mark has been invited to go to Boston later this year as guest of the Crane Paper works where the US currency is made. Under Mark's supervision he says"a cast of thousands" will make the largest sheet of handmade paper in the world.

# Speaker of the Month Mark Lander

# Speaker of the Month Jenna Graham & Nicky Calder

# Wednesday 18 July at 10.30 am

Art in the School Environment

Jenna Graham and Nicky Calder are sixth form students at Rangi Ruru Girls' School. Last year these talented students each scored 100 % in School Certificate Art. They will show their art folios and talk about art at school. It will be fascinating to hear Jenna and Nicky speak about the way art is taught today and to see their work.



School Certificate Art Panel Jenna Graham. Rangi Ruru Girl's School

# Speaker of the Month June Goldstein

# New members.

# Life members

Wednesday 15 August at 10.30 am Ancient Persia, a Personal View

June Goldstein, art historian, teacher and former member of the Friends' Executive Committee enjoyed a tour of Ancient Persia led by Professor Lloyd Geering last year. She will entertain and enlighten us with a slide-illustrated talk about this tour, with emphasis on contemporary Persian art and architecture.

Ms C. Ascroft Kate Clarkson Gina Haines Dominique Leeming Michael de Vere Moore E.J. Parker Kay Renwick Gwen Sanders Mrs J.C. Smith Derrick Unwin Rosemary & Nigel Walkington

Joy Prebble Sue Stubenvoll Edith Tripp M.A. Caswell A.M. Ellis Baljit Kant Allison MacKenzie N.E. & E.M. Nisbet Betty & Richard Pears Robin Ryburn Sinéadh Scannell Alison Talbot J. Van Ankeren

# McDougall After Dark

After Dark continues to present 'Talk About Art' throughout the year. The next three months offer two informative lectures and tours on current exhibitions and topics. For all those who enjoy a more personal and informative visit in the quiet but sociable atmosphere of the Robert McDougall after dark.

# Talk About Art Art Jargon

# falk About Ar

The Development Exhibition A Special Research Project for the New Art Gallery

# Art Auctio



Man from the Volcanic Land (undated self portrait) Tony Fomison. Oil on board. This early work by Fomison will be offered for sale in the 2001 Art Auction.

# 6.00 pm, Wednesday, 27 June

Ronnie Kelly presents a light hearted talk about the language of art. Over a glass of wine or two, this lecture promises to explain all the 'arty' terms, phrases and words that you want to brush up on, or have never understood!

Entry by a \$5 donation, which includes wine and nibbles. Please use the Night Entrance from Rolleston Avenue (at the end of the lane between the Museum and Christ's College).

# 6.00 pm, Wednesday, 29 August

Felicity Milburn will explain the current Collection based Parts exhibition, which will be used to evaluate a variety of levels and types of interpretative material (i.e., multi-media and interpretive material) for a system to be developed for the new gallery that is accessible and valuable for all visitors.

Entry by a \$5 donation, which includes wine and nibbles. Please use the Night Entrance from Rolleston Avenue (at the end of the lane between the Museum and Christ's College).

Quality Fine Art requested for an art auction at the Centre of Contemporary Art 13 September, 2001 at 6.30pm.

In 2000 CoCA and the Community Gifts Fundraising Committee for the new Christchurch Art Gallery held an art auction that established record New Zealand prices for works by W. A. Sutton and Colin Wheeler.

This successful event was supported by Peter Webb Galleries Limited with Peter Webb acting as auctioneer.

More than 700 people attended the sale of over 150 art works with more than 80% of the items offered for auction being sold.

The Centre of Contemporary Art and the Community Gifts Fundraising Committee are once more seeking quality historical and contemporary fine art by recognised New Zealand artists for an art auction to be held on September 13, 2001. The commission from the sale of work will contribute to the new Christchurch Art Gallery and to the Centre of Contemporary Art. Both organisations look forward to another successful event assisted, again in 2001, by the generous support of Peter Webb.

Established commission fees apply unless the work is contributed as a donation.

To offer works for resale auction please contact the centre of contemporary art: Warren Feeney (Director) or Esther Venning (Art Consultant) Centre of Contemporary Art, PO Box 772, Phone: 03 366 7261, Fax: 03 366 7167 Email: director@coca.org.nz



After Dark organised an enjoyable and stimulating tour for 45 people in March to home of artist. Sam Mahon, and then on for drinks at Buffy and Michael Eaton's Mountford Vineyard.

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# Adam Hayward

to the body dissected, dead.

to have made words which failed because reading ignored intention. to mark existence, a calligraphic grapheme on his body 'beginner's mind'. to have existed as a body in/through/of space

to (dis)(re)(de)(un)...

to have denied the gaze, looked with the body to have taken two steps back for one step forward artist in residence – the clinic

Photography – Johannes van Kan



# The Way it Was

The McDougall Contemporary Art Annex

# IA

**Collection of images** and memories of the McDougall **Contemporary Art** Annex 1988 - 2001.

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MICH BY DENISE COPLAND WEX, ARTS CENTRE, CHRISTCHURCH, 7 NOVEMBER - 3 DECEMBER 1991

Looking Back

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Sculptor Graham Bennett considers part of a maquette for Reasons for Voyaging 2001. Photography Brendan Lee.



# ROBERT MCDOUGALL ART GALLERY

Botanic Gardens, Rolleston Avenue, PO Box 2626, Christchurch, New Zealand. Phone (+64 3) 365 0915, Fax (+64 3) 365 3942

# GALLERY HOURS

10am until 5.30pm – Summer (from Labour Weekend to Easter inclusive)

10am until 4.30pm – Winter Admission by donation. Free guided tours available.

www.mcdougall.org.nz