



---

**Artists in Focus**

---

June 1984

---

**The Robert McDougall Art Gallery**

---

**Public & Private**

**Douglas J. McLeod 1906–1983**



During the first two decades of this century hundreds of students passed through the classes of Canterbury College School of Art, many became artists of note, others embarked on promising careers but could not sustain this and are now all but forgotten. Douglas McLeod was one of the latter. The fact that he ceased

to paint after 1947 however was a personal decision and no reflection on his powers as an artist. The works which have survived are due testimony to this.

Schooled in the traditions of the Canterbury School of Art during the 1920s D.J. McLeod had considerable

success as a student and his ability was quickly recognised by many of his contemporaries among them James Cook who was a close friend and used McLeod as a model on occasions as in 'En Route' Cat 15. Stylistically there is close resemblance in draughting technique in both artists' work.

That McLeod painted largely from his immediate environment is evidenced by the works in this exhibition. The places he knew in and around Christchurch, his friends and family, dominated. Only occasionally did he paint the Canterbury region as in 'Ruru' Cat. 6, the West Coast sawmill which he painted while visiting a relative in 1934.

These paintings were very much his private work, but aside from this McLeod was during the 1930s, one of New Zealand's most accomplished advertising artists. During these years his work for Chandler and Company Ltd, Christchurch found its way into hundreds of public places. Thousands of people daily throughout Canterbury were confronted by billboard designs and commercial slogans. Many of these in the 1930s were the work of D.J. McLeod. Often he worked long hours into the night preparing ideas and creating captions and slogans to be worked up in the studio the following day. Frequently members of his family were used as models. An example is the 'Creamota' advertisement which first appeared in 1939. This design perhaps more than any other, became known nationwide and is still remembered today even although the artist was renamed unknown.

Although his activity in public and private was brief his ability is unquestioned.

Through this exhibition we hope to acknowledge some of the work of D.J. McLeod who died in 1983.

We are indebted to Miss D.M. McLeod for making many of the works in this exhibition available for display.



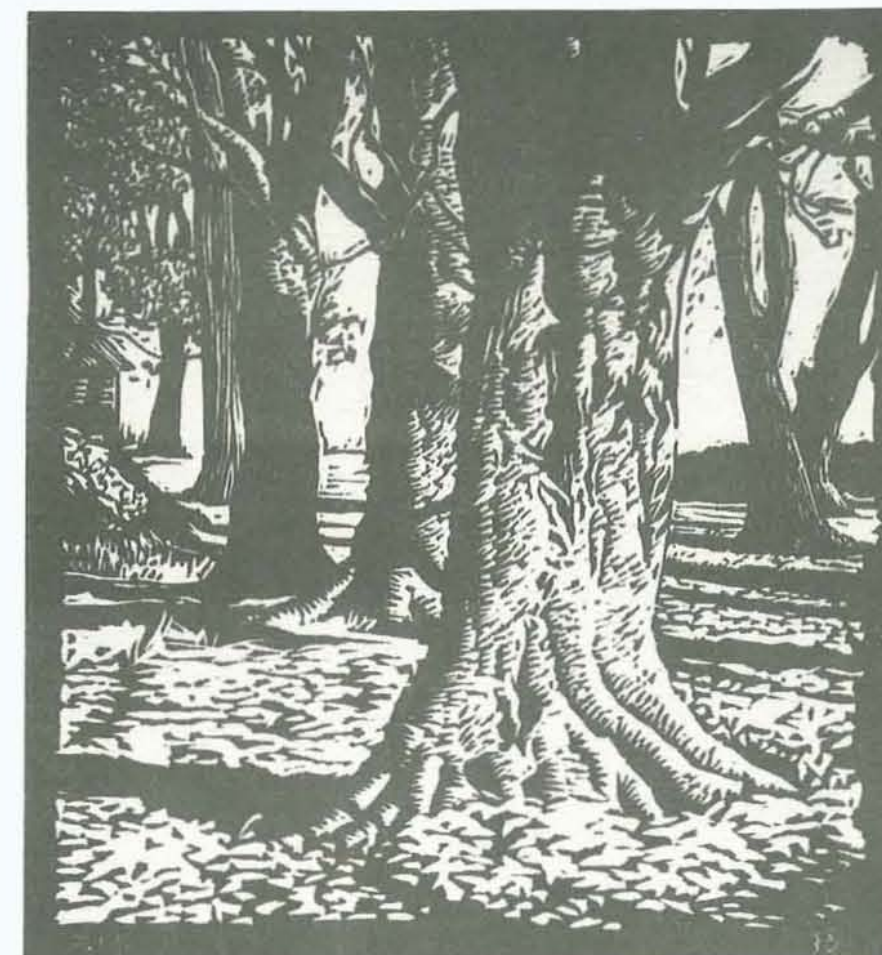
Billboard Design Standard Cars 1934.



Portrait of the Artist's Wife 1947.

#### D.J. McLeod 1906-1983

- 1906 Born Oamaru
- 1907 Moved with his family to Coalgate
- 1912 Family moves to Christchurch — attending Richmond School
- 1920 Enrolled at Canterbury College School of Art
- 1921 Apprenticed to Chandler and Company Christchurch
- 1922 Enrolled at evening classes at Canterbury College School of Art
- 1923 Awarded first prize for evening class Drawing
- 1924 Awarded Mrs Lonsdale's prize for Life and Head from Life
- 1925 Awarded the Evening Life Scholarship prize and Chandler and Company's second prize for Poster Design, also the Evening Life prize and the prize for Life and Memory from the Figure.
- 1926 Awarded the Senior Evening Life prize Completed studies at Canterbury College School of Art
- 1927 Full-time activity as an advertising artist for Chandler and Company Ltd
- 1933 Joined the Canterbury Society of Arts as a working member commenced exhibiting
- 1934 Exhibited works at the Canterbury Society of Arts annual exhibition
- 1935 ditto
- 1936 ditto
- 1939 Designed the 'Creamota' billboard which became known nationwide
- 1941 Entered active service in the Pacific
- 1944 Returned home to New Zealand
- 1947 Death of the artist's wife. Exhibited at the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts Annual exhibition. Ceased painting.
- 1950 Represented in the Canterbury Centennial 'Living Artists' exhibition
- 1951-82 Living in Christchurch
- 1983 The artist died



Trees 1938.



Hillside Brick Kiln 1936.

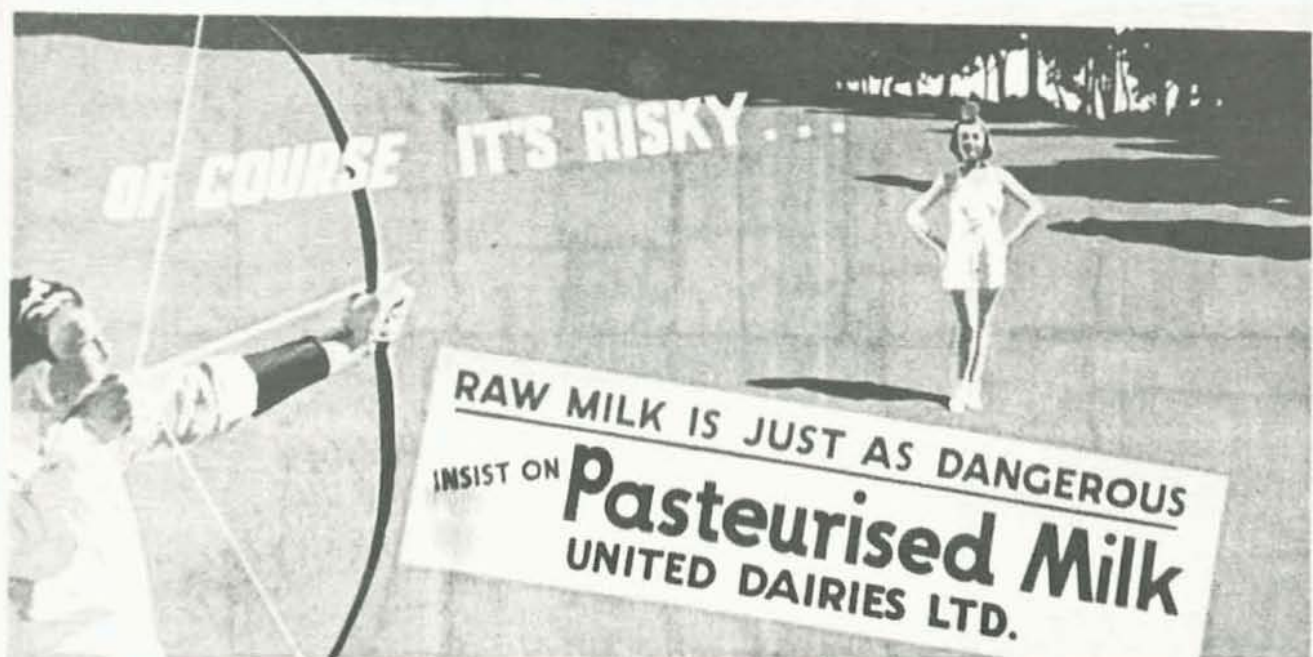
#### Note:

This exhibition is the first in a series planned to give recognition to certain Canterbury artists whose activity has been obscured by time.

The Robert McDougall Art Gallery  
P.O. Box 237 Christchurch,  
Botanic Gardens, Rolleston Avenue,  
Christchurch 1.  
791-660 Extension 695

## Catalogue

- |    |   |    |   |
|----|---|----|---|
| 1  | <b>Cabbage Tree</b><br>Pencil<br>370 x 260mm  | 11 | <b>Hillside Brick Kiln 1936</b><br>Oil on canvas<br>800 x 600mm<br>Exhibited at the CSA Annual Exhibition 1936                              |
| 2  | <b>Artist at his Easel</b><br>Canterbury College School of Art c1925<br>James Cook 1904–1960<br>Oil on canvas<br>430 x 300mm                  | 12 | <b>Hillside Brick Kiln 1936</b><br>Watercolour<br>290 x 380mm<br>Exhibited at the CSA Annual Exhibition 1936                                |
| 3  | <b>Hillside Pathway c1925</b><br>Oil on canvas/board<br>Collection of Mr J. Grigor<br>300 x 400mm   | 13 | <b>Self Portrait c1946</b><br>Oil on canvas/board<br>290 x 390mm  |
| 4  | <b>Life Study 1925</b><br>Oil on canvas/board<br>840 x 440mm<br>Awarded First Prize for Evening Life Class                                    | 14 | <b>Youth 1946</b><br>Oil on canvas/board<br>430 x 530mm   |
| 5  | <b>En Route (The artist as a model) 1932</b><br>James Cook 1904–1960<br>Pencil<br>240 x 410mm<br>Exhibited at the CSA Annual Exhibition 1932  | 15 | <b>Still Life with Cactus 1946</b><br>Oil on canvas/board<br>300 x 330mm  |
| 6  | <b>Ruru c1934</b><br>Oil on canvas/board<br>430 x 530mm<br>Christchurch Polytechnic Collection<br>Exhibited at the CSA Annual Exhibition 1934 | 16 | <b>Self Portrait 1947</b><br>Oil on canvas/board<br>640 x 590mm   |
| 7  | <b>Awaiting Spring 1934</b><br>Oil on canvas/board<br>500 x 400mm<br>Exhibited at the Canterbury Society of Arts 1934                         | 17 | <b>Portrait of the Artist's Wife 1947</b><br>Oil on canvas/board<br>280 x 390mm<br>Exhibited at the CSA Annual Exhibition 1947              |
| 8  | <b>April 1934</b><br>Oil on canvas<br>250 x 330mm<br>Exhibited at the CSA Annual Exhibition 1934  | 18 | <b>Study of A Head c1947</b><br>Oil on canvas/board<br>330 x 390mm<br>Exhibited at the Canterbury Society of Arts<br>Annual Exhibition 1947 |
| 9  | <b>Self Portrait at the Easel c1935</b><br>Oil on canvas<br>400 x 300mm   | 19 | <b>Portrait c1947</b><br>Pencil<br>200 x 160mm  |
| 10 | <b>Over the Fence 1935</b><br>Watercolour<br>300 x 230mm<br>Exhibited at the CSA Annual Exhibition 1935                                       | 20 | <b>Life Study c1934</b><br>Lino Block<br>165 x 100mm  |
|    |   | 21 | <b>Landscape in Snow 1934</b><br>Lino Block<br>165 x 235mm  |
|    |   | 22 | <b>Trees 1938</b><br>Lino Block<br>140 x 100mm  |



Billboard Design Pasteurised Milk c1935.