

Margaret
Hudson-
Ware

R o b e r t
M c D o u g a l l

art gallery

A n n e x



759.
993
HUD

Canterbury Painting in the 1990s

Margaret Hudson-Ware

Acknowledgements

This Resource Kit was produced by the Education Department of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery.
Concept, development and editing by Judith Hoult and Kirsten Rennie

The newspaper review has been reprinted with permission of The Press and the author.

2000
ISBN 0 - 908874 - 72 - 6

Robert McDougall Art Gallery
and Contemporary Art Annex



Rolleston Ave. Christchurch
Phone 03 365 0915 Fax 03 365 3942

Making Art: Margaret Hudson-Ware, A Painter's Practice



Margaret Hudson Ware *Let me see the paralysed man walk* 1991
oil on canvas Collection of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Biography

Margaret Hudson-Ware was born in Christchurch in 1938. She graduated from the University of Canterbury with a Diploma of Fine Arts (Honours) in 1959. Since completing a Diploma of Teaching in 1975, she has held a number of positions in secondary school art departments throughout Canterbury. In 1980, Hudson-Ware travelled to Australia as the recipient of the Canterbury Society of Arts/Guthrey Art Travel Award and in 1996, she was the inaugural winner of the CoCA Annual Art Award. She has exhibited regularly in solo and group shows throughout New Zealand since the 1970s. She lives in Christchurch.



Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Subject

This allegorical work is based on the **biblical parable/narrative** of the simple faith of the paralysed man and his friends who ask Christ for a miracle cure. Christ, in proving his authority to forgive sin and cure the sick, raised moral and leadership issues that challenged the religious authorities of his time.

Margaret Hudson-Ware brings the miracle into the present by including herself as the observer on the ladder, and as the detached artist recording the ills of contemporary society. These problems are greed, political power struggles, failed relationships and oppression whether of groups, eg the street children, or individuals, women. She challenges us to recognise our myriad problems and take action for the benefit of all humanity.

Sources of Motivation

- Personal experience, and her response to issues raised by Feminism.
- Contemporary social and political issues and how they impact on ordinary lives.
- Her own Christian conviction that requires her to act positively.
- Early 20th century German Expressionism and its concern for exposing society's problems and failures.
- The strong drawing skills and emotional integrity of the artist, Max Beckmann.

A Contemporary Practice

Idea starts with written records and small sketches in her diary. The ideas are further developed from life drawings and photographs. Larger drawings are gridded up and transferred to the canvas to anchor other groups within the composition. She prepares the canvas with rabbit skin glue and then paints an oil-based Resene brick red on as the base colour. The main groups eg Christ curing the paralysed man and the pig's head are placed, then the other figure groups are placed in relation to these groups. She uses a black oil wash to add tone before adding her characteristic spiky black broken lines to define the figures. Expressive colour is then layered in short strokes to fill out the figures. Extra detail is often added using black oil crayon.

Formal Elements

Colour

- Predominantly reds, orange and cream are built up in short strokes.
- Colour is used expressively to create meaning, blue-greys for the depressed/oppressed, yellow greens for the oppressors, warmer colours for the more positive figures and incidents.

Composition

- Crowded and complex groupings of figures filling the whole picture plane. Each group has its own scale, size and message. The whole is overcrowded, stifling and airless.
- The foreground ladder, with Margaret as the observer of the miracle, leads the viewer into the painting. We can then move left or right and around to read the other incidents taking place on the tilted stage which adds the sense of anxiety, turmoil and insecurity that she depicts.

Space

- Shallow, and, because of the colour, moves out towards the viewer. Figures and objects within this space float, tip or are grounded as the narrative demands.

Brushstroke

- Short, jagged, angular: these visible agitated strokes build detail and increase the sense of psychological unease.

Purpose

The message in this expressionist work is that social justice, moral and spiritual truth are as important today as in anytime in the past and that we still need miracles.

Making Art: Margaret Hudson-Ware, Content and Context



Margaret Hudson Ware **Let me see the paralysed man walk 1991**
oil on canvas Collection of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Biography

Margaret Hudson-Ware was born in Christchurch in 1938. She graduated from the University of Canterbury with a Diploma of Fine Arts (Honours) in 1959. Since completing a Diploma of Teaching in 1975, she has held a number of positions in secondary school art departments throughout Canterbury. In 1980, Hudson-Ware travelled to Australia as the recipient of the Canterbury Society of Arts/Guthrey Art Travel Award and in 1996, she was the inaugural winner of the CoCA Annual Art Award. She has exhibited regularly in solo and group shows throughout New Zealand since the 1970s. She lives in Christchurch.

Knowing about Art: Content

This work is based on the **biblical parable/narrative** of the simple faith of the paralysed man and his friends who ask Christ for a miracle cure. Christ, in proving his authority to forgive sin and cure the sick, raised moral and leadership issues that challenged the religious authorities of his time.

Margaret Hudson-Ware, is the viewer/participant on the ladder, and appears a second time at her easel as recorder.

This crowded, clamouring scene combines images from the Bible and the present to challenge us to look at the actions that cause the violence, doubt and anxiety that is part of contemporary life. These problems include greed, political power struggles, failed relationships and oppression whether of groups, eg the street children or individuals, women. Much of this concern is expressed through the human figure as a vehicle for expression and social comment. By using classical themes and symbolism, the artist constructs a complex narrative.



Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Artist Statement:

"This is a continuing idea about the timeless issue of human experience and all human interaction with the forces of good and evil vying for possession and power."

Art Historical Context

- This work fits comfortably into Option 12. Modern New Zealand Art. Topic 2: Expressionism and Abstraction in relation to international movements.
- A contemporary Neo-Expressionist work where figures, line and colour are used to carry a strong personal message and commentary on society.
- The Neo-Expressionist art movement developed in Germany and Italy in the late 1970s and early 1980s as a reaction to the modernist rejection of image and conceptual art's emphasis on documenting ideas

Influences

- Feminism - as a personal means of raising issues that affect the weak and powerless, particularly women and children.
- Her own Christian conviction that requires her to act positively, and recognition that its traditional teaching role still has a place in contemporary artmaking.
- Early 20th century German Expressionism and its concern for exposing society's problems and failures
- The strong drawing skills and emotional integrity of the artist, Max Beckmann.

Style

Allegorical narrative

- Mixture of biblical and contemporary events, each of which carries its own message (see artist's explanatory notes)

Composition

- Crowded and complex groupings of figures filling the whole picture plane. Each group has its own scale, size and message. The whole is overcrowded, stifling and airless
- The foreground ladder, with Margaret as the observer of the miracle, leads the viewer into the painting. We can then move left or right and around to read the other incidents taking place on the tilted stage which adds to the sense of anxiety, turmoil and insecurity that she depicts.

Space

- Shallow, and, because of the colour, moves out towards the viewer.
- The artist on the ladder is the observer in the viewer's space; behind, the figure groups occupy a tilted stage that increases the sense of uncertainty and anxiety because of its implied instability.
- Figures and objects within this space float, tip or are grounded as the narrative demands.

Form/figures

- Built up using a black oil wash to add tone before adding her characteristic spiky black broken lines to define the figures.
- Expressive colour is then layered in short strokes to fill out the figures. Extra detail is often added using black oil crayon

Colour

- Predominantly reds, orange and cream are built up in short strokes.
- Colour is used expressively to create meaning, blue-greys and red-browns for the depressed/oppressed, warmer clearer colours for the more positive figures and incidents.

Some suggested uses for the resource

Making Art: A Painter's Practice Margaret Hudson-Ware

1. Using the commentary provided by the artist, choose and name an image that relates to **one** of the first three of Margaret Hudson-Ware's **Sources of Motivation**. Then follow her stages, step by step, as set out in **A Contemporary Practice**, starting with a written outline of the chosen incident. Record this in your visual diary.
2. Research the concepts of personal identity
contemporary social and political issues
 - (a) by collecting newspaper clippings and photographs,
 - (b) investigating one other artist or art movement that has expressed similar concerns, keep a diary of your findings.
3. Starting from an observational figure drawing and using a variety of drawing media , progressively simplify and reduce the figure to an expressive linear treatment of form. Finally use Hudson-Ware's colours and line to make a finished work.

Some suggested uses for the resource

Knowing about Art: Content and Context

Margaret Hudson-Ware

1. Using the commentary provided by the artist choose and name three images that refer to the following themes.
 - (a) roles imposed on women by other's expectations
 - (b) social issues
 - (c) the traditional teaching role of Christianity.

Explain how your chosen image illustrates the theme.

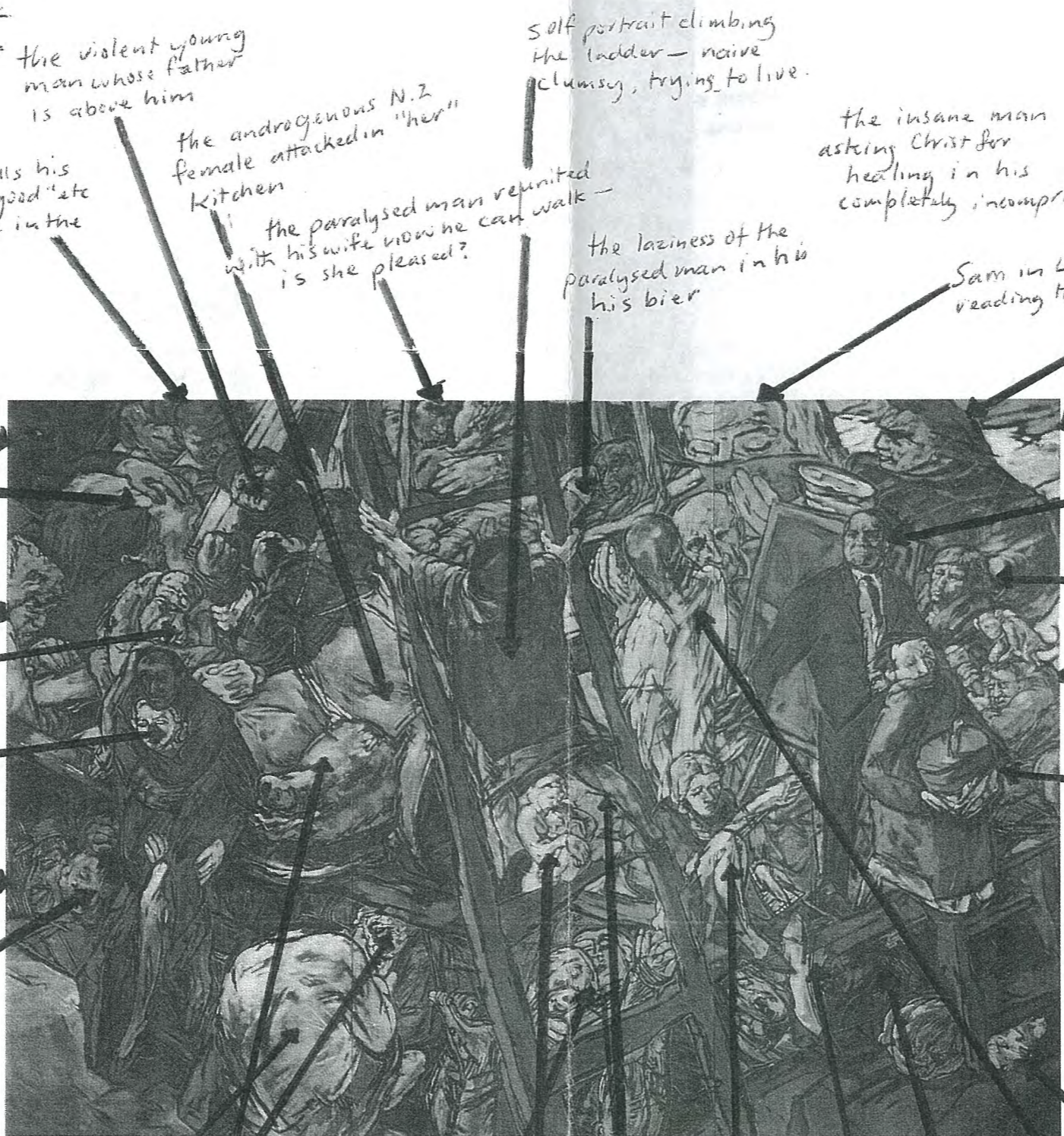
2. Research: Making connections: explain how the above themes connect with other artists, other art movements, include dates. (Clues can be found in Influences.)

Theme	Art movement	Artist	Name a work
Role of women			
Social Issues			
Christian Teaching			

3. Define the following terms

Allegory	
Shallow space	
Linear Forms	
Gestural brushstrokes	
Expressive colour	

LET ME SEE THE PARALYSED MAN WALK
 M. Anderson-Warne (M Tyndal) 1991.



the violent young man whose father is above him

the father who tells his son "you are no good" etc becoming a voice in the boy's head.

The female face of war - envy

the androgenous N.2 female attacked in "her" kitchen

the paralysed man reunited with his wife now he can walk - is she pleased?

Self portrait climbing the ladder - naive clumsily, trying to live.

the insane man asking Christ for healing in his completely incomprehensible way

Sam in London reading the "Press"

the Spirit of Sacrifice holding the chalice without which (sacrifices) no progress can be made.

N.2. coastline with shining white sea

Joseph taking Christ down from the cross

Mary Magdalene - the loving person who is grieving over the hand of Christ.

the rescuing person who helps



Max Beckman, my artistic guide standing in front of my canvas - a powerful, cultured, thoughtful figure

self portrait at the easel.

a "worker" an "action-man" whose self pity is the monkey on his back

the girl who carries her unresolved relationship with her father into all her other male relationships

the personality-disordered chauvinistic lover of war



the middle-aged N.2. female whose sexuality and ego have been driven out of sight, she holds a lovely birthday cake with an unlit candle, she is gagged and on her knees by male brutality

the ladder - many rungs removed by men who stoop to eliminate competition

the "stage" setting has legal activities onstage and illegal activities underneath.

the street children of Brazil who are being killed in the streets

the ubiquitous photographer

the nature's little mother

the extremely tormented victims of other's ideas

the pool where the miracle takes place.

Sophie, our dog asleep under the step

Christ blessing the paralysed man and healing him of his sins etc.

It would be a lesser thing for viewers to have this clumsy interpretation given to them because it is just one of my "maps" to speak - everyone must interpret this visual work according to their own "maps" and find their own meanings.

the misery of the violent thief and his victim

the enforced confession by a smug immoral facilitator

the pig symbolizes the aspects of Saddam Hussein and the Gulf war especially the primitive greed

the tormented touched by Christ's robe

the radical theoretical feminist who is still ego and id intact

the greed of the bully whose hand is grasping the globe and terrorizing a victim, he uses legal and illegal means to increase possessions.

Margaret Hudson-Ware



Solo Exhibitions

- 1977 Canterbury Society of Art Gallery, (CoCA) Christchurch
- 1978 Canterbury Society of Art Gallery, Christchurch
- 1979 Canterbury Society of Art Gallery, Christchurch
Brooke-Gifford Gallery, Christchurch
- 1980 Canterbury Society of Art Gallery, Christchurch
- 1985 New Vision Gallery, Auckland
- 1986 James Paul Gallery, Christchurch
- 1991 *Signs on the Beach*, Canterbury Society of Art Gallery, Christchurch
- 1995 *Onstage/Offstage* Salamander Gallery, Christchurch
- 1998 *About Face*, Salamander Gallery, Christchurch

Group Exhibitions

- 1990 Hudson-Ware, Rockel and Unger, Suter Gallery, Nelson
- 1991 Hudson-Ware, Rockel and Unger, Aigantighe Art Gallery, Timaru
- 1992 Hudson-Ware, Rockel and Unger, Gallery Akaroa, Akaroa
- 1993 *White Camellias*, Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Christchurch
Women by Women, New Zealand Portrait Gallery, Wellington
Women's Lives, McDougall Art annex, Christchurch
Herself, Salamander Gallery, Christchurch
Image and Issue, Canterbury Society of Art Gallery, Christchurch
Hudson-Ware, Rockel and Unger, Ritchies Gallery, Christchurch
- 1994 Hudson-Ware, Rockel and Unger, Aigantighe Art Gallery, Timaru
Stimulus to Style Canterbury Society of Art Gallery, Christchurch
Hudson-Ware, Rockel and Unger, Suter Gallery, Nelson
- 1995 *Figuring Narrative*, Centre of Contemporary Art, (CSA), Christchurch
- 1996 Waimakariri Trust Exhibition, Chamber Gallery, Rangiora

Selected Bibliography

- Penny Orme, *Three Christchurch Artists*, Art NZ 63 pp 64-67
Justin Paton, *Margaret Hudson-Ware*, Art NZ 69 pp 30-31
Cassandra Fusco, *Stimulus to Style at the CSA*, Art NZ 73 pp 38-41
Margaret Hudson-Ware, *Signs on the Beach*, CSA catalogue 1991
Penny Orme, *Signs on the Beach*, Art Review, The Press, 28.11.91
Justin Paton *Purgatory by the Park* Art Review, The Press 15.11.95
Robyn Ussher, *About Face*, Art Review, The Press 11.11.98

Artist statement

My paintings spring from my experiences, which are of settled and unsettled domestic worlds, teaching, child rearing and the world of books, art feminism, nature and the value system of Christ.

I paint to validate my existence.

I am concerned in my painting to reveal the spirit and substance beneath and through the surface of the motifs used, whether figures, objects, space or nature. The concepts come from reality - distilled, re-organised and intensified. The works transcend boundaries of time and space in a broad sense. I am re-stating timeless concepts into a contemporary idiom which inevitably has specific local motifs.

Some paintings are like warning signs on the beach.

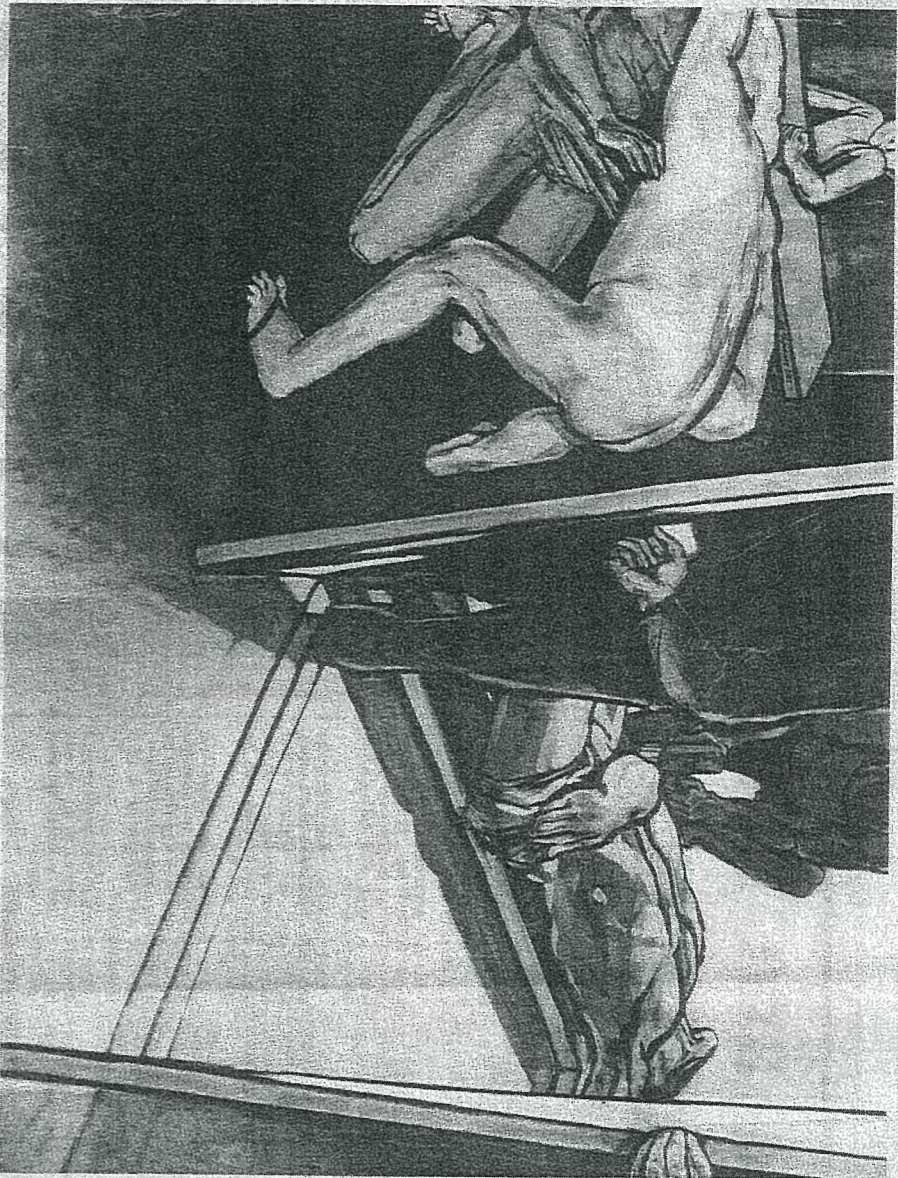
Paradox is in all works in many aspects. Space is the stage on and through which essences are poured. This space is paradoxically deep and shallow: figures and objects float, tip or are grounded as necessity requires. Light plays a major part in the arrangement of the composition and in the discernment of the object itself.

I would like my paintings to look like battered bank notes with figures that have evocative power and a certain monumentality and line that speaks with the harsh penetration of the disc jockey's voice.

I am concerned that my work is accessible to all viewers at some level.

Human beings have become psychologically isolated from each other in the modern city. The last arena for human contact, as of right, is in the family home. What happens there spans heaven and hell.

The story of Christ is set in relationship to parallels in daily life as I understand it, to reflect one upon the other, in a sort of contemporary metaphor.



"Driving in the Nails", which is included in an exhibition of paintings by Margaret Hudson-Ware, "Signs on the Beach", at the CSA Gallery.

Art reviews 28. 11. 91

Hudson-Ware and Unger at CSA

"Signs on the Beach", paintings by Margaret Hudson-Ware, "Near and Far", paintings by Pat Unger, at the CSA Gallery until November 30. Reviewed by Penny Orme.

Hudson-Ware presents a variety of work ranging from small individual portraits to the large triptych.

These works convey a passion that is rare in New Zealand painting for she is unsparing in her depictions of the ignoble human characteristics and the qualities of love, joy and compassion appear constantly overwhelmed by expressions of fear and actions of anger and violence.

This undoubtedly reflects the spirit of our times and the artist's particular experience as a woman. The madonna is always anxious and threatened, the child the victim and the male is presented as either brutalised (with TV depicted as the socialising agency) or as the still-wearing, power-wielding oppressor.

The artist also conveys a sense monumentally by relating the content to biblical themes.

Compositional strategies are used to support these powerful statements. The canvases are crowded with metaphorical figures but the artist conveys a sense of unreality by distorting the space and scale.

The drama is heightened by the frequent use of the oblique viewpoint, strong diagonal emphasis and sense of movement. Colour also intensifies the mood as does the use of strong broken dark contours and energetic brushmarks.

These artworks, representing the culmination of the artist's development over the last five years, must surely be regarded as impressive. Although there may be a tendency to overdramatise, the general ability to present and control such major concepts both in scale and execution must be acknowledged.

Unger's tendency to select rather jarring, high-key complementary oranges and blues has tended to overwhelm the considered statements and the artist's obvious painterly facility. These latest paintings present some interesting new directions.

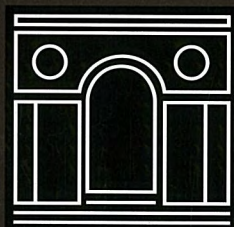
She has selected images of imperialist public architecture to convey ideas of timelessness and continuum. These manifest themselves as surreal emblems becoming submerged or with water flowing through, around or gushing out of the facades.

This group of works possess a fine rather haunting, luminous quality, and the thin translucent application of the pigment is fresh and effective.

CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL



C01391586



R O B E R T
M c D O U G A L L
A R T G A L L E R Y
A N D A N N E X