



chrysalis seed trust



Peter Rae Galleries, Dunedin

## The waning power of galleries

*Faithless*, a contemporary UK DJ band sing, "God is DJ/This is my church/This is where I heal my hurt/It's in the world I become/Content in the hum/Between voice and drum/It's in change/The poetic justice of cause and effect/Respect, love and compassion/This is my church." While *Faithless* are creating a new music mix in a postmodern world, it serves to reveal that 'the more things change, the more they stay the same;' that people everywhere still express spirituality through creativity and, while all the big social picture stuff dilutes away, core human needs remain unchanged.

Our age is change. Previewing *Japonism* in December, I sat discussing with two older women the changes between the old Robert McDougall and our new cathedral of art Te Puna o Waiwhetu. Their conclusion, as seasoned Christchurch connoisseurs of art, that Te Puna is an altogether different experience, more austere and removed, and perhaps not as much fun. In the same way that the traditional experience of church has morphed for many (I recently attended an informal Auckland church service in the middle of a Sunday afternoon, the notices were a well-constructed rap set) so too has the gallery experience for practising artists.

While we effused about what Te Papa was or wasn't, the nature of galleries around us was changing. Gone are the days when a gallery could make or break an art career. The kind of awesome power wielded by someone like art dealer Ambroise Vollard at the turn of the nineteenth century is long gone. Artists need to empower their own careers with a combination of exhibiting, media coverage, publicity, well-targeted promotion, prolific output, and other tricks. I know of two well-known Canterbury artists who no longer exhibit. "In many respects it can be counterproductive," one told me. "I might work a month

on several works for a gallery exhibition. If nothing sells it is a minor disaster to my year's income. Galleries simply don't do enough today to make the risk of that kind of investment in time and materials worth the possible payoff." A prominent gallery director told me, "It's simply not enough to rely on people walking in the door. We now travel the South Island attempting to make sales, building connections, following up possibilities."

Emerging artists still obviously need to exhibit, but it appears mid-career artists may be looking for other ways to be. The recent, "Sculpture in the Garden" is an example, selling a high number of works for artists and drawing a fresh audience to art. Long gone are the days when a few key galleries were the agoras of art. Now, a veritable wave of quality work is spread across a broad beach of galleries, cafés exhibiting art, and 'art shops,' diluting the power of galleries as the arbiters of the New Zealand art scene. More artists can 'be seen' but in many ways they are more anonymous, diluted amid a cacophony of presentation.

At last count there were 62 galleries or pseudo galleries operating publicly in Christchurch and near-surround. There is 'more' - but it is perhaps 'less.' The power of galleries in the 1970s has waned, and they remain, at best, merely one shaft in a quiver artists draw upon. Emergent artists and students are still motivated to exhibit, but the payoffs are less, and a number of artists I've spoken to in both Australia and New Zealand, have walked away disillusioned, with sizeable post-exhibition debts. They are 'Faithless,' "Content in the hum/Between voice and drum," but have found their 'church' "in change."

**John Stringer**

1. With acknowledgment to Steve Taylor, BCNZ colleague, senior minister Opawa Baptist church, and the website "emerging thinking in a postmodern future" at [www.graceway.org.nz](http://www.graceway.org.nz)

**CS NEWS**  
**ARTS**  
**QUARTERLY**

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# CS NEWS

## Who we are

Founded in 1998 the Chrysalis Seed charitable trust serves a growing number of contemporary artists. Our mission is to 'help resource the arts community from a Christian perspective.' We meet regularly to encourage each other and participate in a range of activities designed to support artists and their profession. We operate a resource centre in the heart of the Arts Centre, where all are welcome to explore, read and relax, or try creative therapy by appointment.

### CS News

Our main publication, which goes to artists, galleries, poets and supporters around New Zealand and overseas. Designed for the wider arts community, it engages with current art issues, events and artists.

We have a number of groups and collectives with regular events. The two main artists collectives are for visual artists (Seven Plus) and contemporary poets (CS Poets). See back page of *CS News Notices* insert for details.

### Room with a view

Creative therapy studio  
Glenda Deed Dip Hrt Dip Couns Cert I.D.T.  
ph +64 3 377 0232  
deeds@free.net.nz

### Chrysalis Seed Trust

2nd Floor, above Southern Ballet,  
The Arts Centre  
PO Box 629, Christchurch 8015,  
New Zealand  
ph +64 3 374 5721  
fax +64 3 379 3762  
cstrust@xtra.co.nz  
www.crseed.com

### Hours

Monday-Friday 12:30-5:30pm

### After hours

+64 3 366 2848

### Founding Directors

Peter and Jessica Crothall

### CS News Editor

Peter Crothall  
cstrust@xtra.co.nz

### Contributing Writer

John Stringer  
Ph/fax +64 3 354 5514

### Design

Snow, ph +64 3 332 2092  
www.snowsite.co.nz

### Photography this edition

Peter Rae galleries  
John Stringer

### Poets in this edition

John O'Connor

### Reviews in this edition

Dr Mark Stocker (Otago University)  
John Weir  
Wayne Lorimer (Left Bank gallery)  
David Limbaugh

### Trust Board

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Peter Crothall (poet)

## Kia ora!



The core of this issue's focus is on the Majendie's installation being planned for March. They will aim to present the temptations of Christ at the beginning of his public ministry. Jesus was tempted to misuse his power.

Our lead article looks at the power of galleries. The image reproduced here from the Pre-Raphaelite exhibition in Dunedin shows Jesus' answer to that temptation. We have the first of a series of gallery interviews, and a review of the significant showing of Pre-Raphaelite art, by Dr. Mark Stocker. The poetry includes a review by John Weir of the recently published book *Working Voices* by John O'Connor and Eric Mould.

We also include interviews with Claire Beynon (exhibition coming up at the Peter Rae gallery in March) and Glenda Deed. Part of the positive power in art is for healing. Glenda Deed is exploring this in her counselling practice which has started up in our art and faith centre over the last few months. Although operating as an independent business, we see her art therapy as an integral part of the vision of Chrysalis Seed, and are encouraged to be able to work with her in this way.

Recently Jessica and I had the chance to visit artists and galleries in the North Island, as well as Dunedin and Oamaru. It was exciting to

discover several artists who were waiting for the chance to be part of a network which could affirm them in what they are doing as contemporary Christian artists. Possibilities for CS group exhibitions in Dunedin, Hamilton, Auckland and Nelson are being explored.

We're seeking to strengthen a loose network of like-minded artists and supporters beyond Christchurch. As we continue to expand the circulation of CS News beyond Canterbury we will be always looking for opportunities for stories, news and issues reflecting new contacts. We remain committed to maintaining CS News as giving priority to local 7+ artists and events.

We have decided to produce four 12 page editions for 2004, so that we can cover more in each issue, even if less often. As well as this will be the four page insert to allow more room for more news from various parts of the country.

We're planning to continue a range of small groups for artists and poets in 2004, so check the insert for details. A group of artists has just restarted meeting in Wellington. Contact Anne Marie Verbeek for details, ph (04) 476 8246 hm or (04) 939 1056 wk.

Rosemary Baird (p.6) and Alesandre van Ammers (p.8) feature in this edition with images. Both are recent graduates from secondary schools, having done art at senior levels.

**Peter Crothall**



*Nativity*, Anne Marie Verbeek, 2002, Acrylic on canvas. Anne Marie works from her studio in Lyall Bay and has launched a group of Christian artists in Wellington together with Chrissy Tetley, called *Artway*.

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The  
gallery/artist  
relationship  
is dynamic  
and evolves  
as work  
unfolds and  
changes

## Interview: Peter Rae Galleries, Dunedin

Galleries still play a critical role in the careers of artists. Peter Rae operates two galleries in Dunedin, one at Highgate, Roslyn, the other in Upper Stuart Street, representing a variety of contemporary New Zealand artists. His main stable includes:

Claire Beynon (see interview p.7), Gary McMillan, Ruth Cleland, David Shennan, Inge Doesburg, Dorothy Helyer, Michael Greaves but he also carries work by Jeffery Harris, Jo Ogier, Mary Horn, Olav Neilson, Simon Kann, Irene Ferguson among others.

Peter Rae got involved in the art scene over 25 years ago, as a specialist framer with Govett Brewster in New Plymouth. He worked as a conservation framer for over 15 years before being offered a position in Dunedin. In 1998 he opened an exhibition and framing space in Roslyn. The duality worked, but this growth necessitated the opening of a dedicated exhibition space in Upper Stuart Street where Peter Rae exhibits an established stable of artists as well as emerging talent.

Recent shows included *new drawings and paintings* by Inge Doesburg and the critically acclaimed *Music and Brail*, graphite and paint on board works by Irene Ferguson and Dorothy Helyer. Part of Peter's commercial approach is to move with the times and be open to new things, tangents and exploration by exhibiting artists. "The Gallery relationship with artists is a mixed bag. Each connection is unique and new," Peter says. "Some understand the commercial imperatives of an exhibition space, particularly those who have been practising for a while. Emerging artists grow into it."

**JS: Have you noticed any changes in the art/gallery/artist scene in Dunedin over recent years?**

"There is a prolific emergence of really good young artists, much more than before. More gallery spaces are opening, of a varied kind. Some are just temporary spaces for the duration of a show. It's all good, really. Dunedin has a high awareness of the arts and a high percentage of the community want to experience what is going on in the fine arts scene. That goes for the other arts disciplines as well: music, theatre, literature..."

**What role do you feel galleries fulfil today?**

"Galleries have a much better profile today than they have had for sometime. Some people still view them as 'dinosaurs' - particularly the dealer galleries - in terms of the widespread change in communication techniques these days (use of the internet, etc). However, I think there is still a lot of life left in the old 'dinosaur' yet. People still like to go and see work. Galleries play more of an educational role now, hand-in-hand with their business side. There is more competition, but I find that enhancing. In cases there is a benefit to us all working together."

**Do you have any comments about the power galleries have? Is it like it used to be, in terms of making/breaking arts careers?**

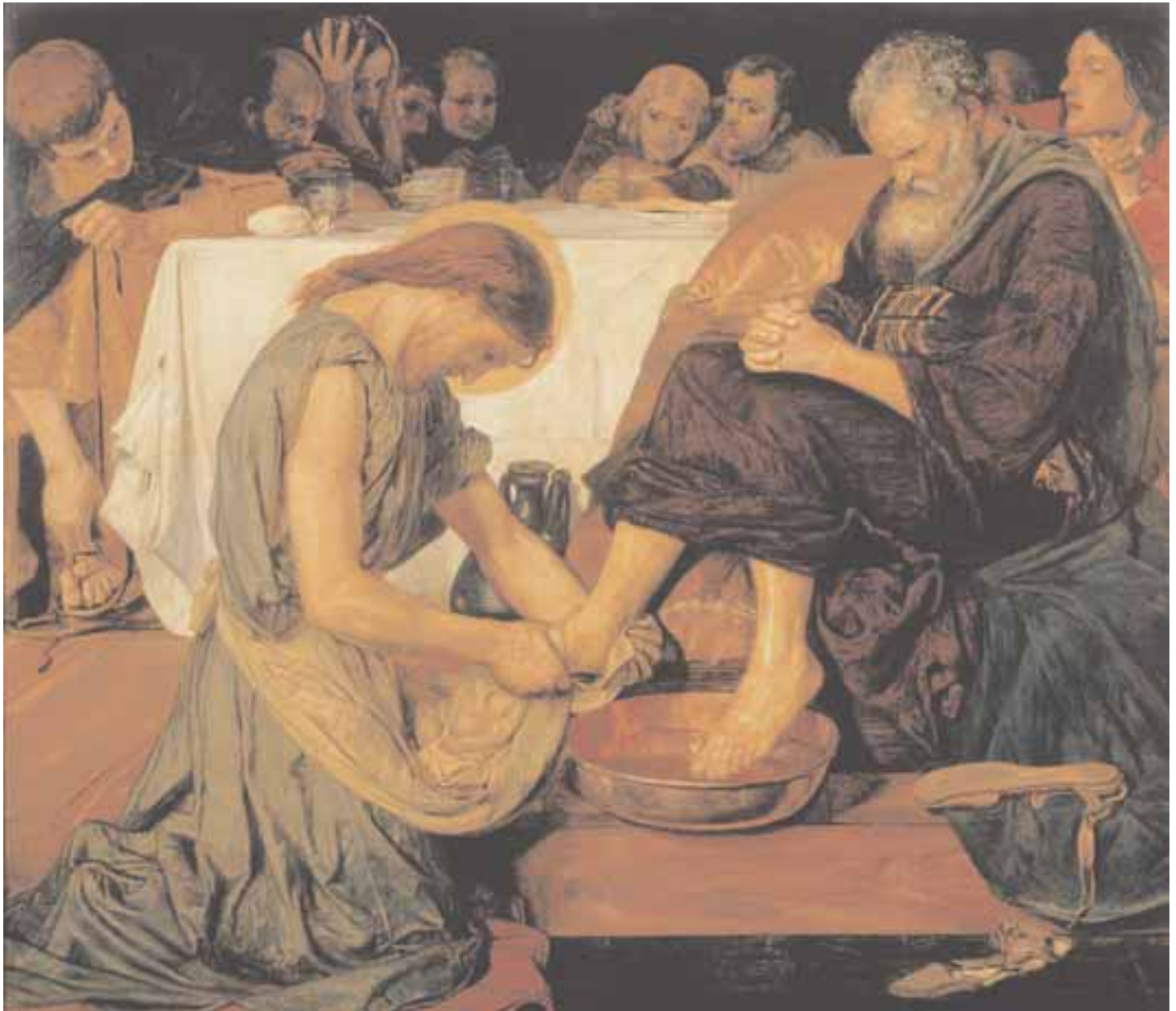
"The relationship of power is changing. In terms of making and breaking arts careers, commercial imperatives have to be ascendant if a business is to remain viable and therefore offer the opportunities artists seek. Personally, I really want to support artists' work, support change, and growth, as work and techniques alter. I never say, 'No, we can't do that!' I like to follow what an artist is feeling and support what their creativity is saying."

**J.S.**



Recently opened, Peter Rae Gallery on Stuart Street is just a stones throw from the Dunedin Octagon.





*Jesus washing Peter's Feet*, Ford Madox Brown, 1852-6, oil on canvas, 116.8 x 133.3mm; (Collection of Tate Britain, used with permission, Dunedin Public Art Gallery).

## ***'Selecting nothing, rejecting nothing, scorning nothing':***

### ***The Pre-Raphaelite Dream at Dunedin Public Art Gallery***

**Reviewed by Dr Mark Stocker, Senior Lecturer, Art History and Theory, University of Otago**

Don't get me wrong, I am not making a craven attempt to curry favour with the Dunedin art museum world following my recent arrival here, but I do find it genuinely difficult to say anything bad about this exhibition. It looks terrific; the exhibits are admirably installed and captioned, the latter by Dunedin's Linda Tyler; several of them are indisputable greats in the canon of western art; and Robert Upstone's catalogue is excellently written, illustrated and good value for money. Moreover, the exhibition is a generous one with 70 works on show, and some are genuinely significant. In this respect, 'The Pre-Raphaelite Dream' easily surpasses the attractive but quantitatively very limited Royal Collection treasures shown at MONZ (as it was then called) some ten years ago. And I reckon that there are more 'first division' works than we

saw at the Dunedin Public Art Gallery's inaugural blockbuster of treasures from the Guggenheim in 1997.

While the Christchurch Art Gallery is currently hosting the beautiful *Japonisme* exhibition, it wouldn't surprise me if our nouveau northern neighbours weren't just a tad envious of the DPAG getting sole New Zealand rights to host these Pre-Raphaelite treasures, sourced from Tate Britain. No such exhibition has been held in this country before, and it may be years before we will see another such again. Many people who saw *Love and Death*, the impressive exhibition of Victorian works at Auckland Art Gallery in 2002 will probably be saying 'oh yeah, tell me about it' but let me assure you that the Pre-Raphaelites are different. Their work is often technically clumsier than those of the later Victorian Neo-classicists dominant in Auckland, but it more than compensates by its sheer sincerity and feeling. 'Go to nature with all singleness of heart, selecting nothing, rejecting nothing and scorning nothing' urged critic John

Ruskin, and the early Pre-Raphaelites took his advice to heart. Their youthful idealism, innocence and high seriousness radiates from this exhibition. If only our 'twenty-something' art students could produce anything like it today!

Everyone will have their favourites at this exhibition. In my view, it is hard to beat the early J. E. Millais: his Mariana is a colouristically gorgeous take on a lovelorn heroine. It acts essentially as a vehicle for Millais's love of

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the sort of painting  
Titian might have  
done if he had  
mixed his chianti  
with opium

nature, of women, of texture and yes, of 'art for art's sake', though he wouldn't have endorsed the label. It is a recent and hugely important, acquisition by Tate Britain. In its way equally powerful is *The Awakening Conscience* by Holman Hunt, where a prostitute suddenly realises the error of her ways. This work shows the social conscience but also, underlying it, the throbbing and sublimated sexual passions of Holman Hunt. These passions throb somewhat differently in Dante Gabriel Rossetti, whose paintings of women, women and more women over the last 15-20 years of his life reflect his obsession with that strange species, the Pre-Raphaelite 'Stunner' or femme fatale. Here the voluptuous *Monna Vanna*, the sort of

painting Titian might have done if he had mixed his chianti with opium, and the sinister *Prosperine* stand out. Personally I prefer Rossetti's earlier, exquisite small-scale watercolours of Arthurian themes, influenced by late medieval illuminations.

There are inevitably discoveries in this exhibition: for some people it is lesser-known drawings such as the exquisite *Desiderium* by Edward Burne-Jones, which captures the essence of his often vast paintings on a small sheet of paper. I am relieved, however, that Lizzie Siddal, the tragic partner of Rossetti, is not more prominently represented. Sorry, any of you feminists wishing to reclaim Pre-Raphaelite women artists from obscurity, but she simply isn't up to it (Evelyn de Morgan, not represented here, is superior but she came to prominence rather later). As an art historian with a particular interest in sculpture, I would have liked to have seen works by Thomas Woolner and Alexander Munro; as it is, there is only one such piece, a finely observed relief of Tennyson by Woolner. Needless to say, Tate Britain couldn't lend its core masterpieces like Millais's *Christ in the House of His Parents* (though we have a quirkily primitive drawing) and the flower-power favourite, *Ophelia*. But after seeing the Dunedin works, people will surely make a pilgrimage to see them on their next visit to London.

Hot on the heels of the Pre-Raphaelites, the DPAG is showcasing Stanley Spencer. What next? Here are a few suggestions (and I can envisage a director, shaking her head and saying thank you Mark but what about the insurance?): Norman Rockwell, Lucian Freud, M. C. Escher, James Tissot... I could go on and no doubt readers will have their own list of favourites. Well, that's my post 'Pre-Raphaelite Dream'!

**Mark Stocker**

*White Water*, Jessica Crothall, 2003, acrylic on canvas, exhibited at the Dobson Bashford gallery, May 2003.



## White Water

you could find anything  
almost between the white water's  
edge & the hanging darkness. pounamu  
in the foreground's no indication.  
or what it signifies as obscure  
as the shroud behind it: gold  
or steel / shank & silver.  
or just the mothly coat of an old  
buck long-time gone, a blast  
from the highway suggests it  
doesn't really matter —  
at least to the driver impatient to  
get to the next crossing —  
to the dusk perhaps just falling

**John O'Connor**

After the painting by Jessica Crothall.





Peter Majendie (left) and Craufurd Murray.

# Open for temptation

## **Colossal art installation, 14-17 March**

Installation artists Peter and Joyce Majendie are again partnering with the parish of St Marys Merivale to create a colossal art installation for Lent (40 days around March) following the hugely successful *A Load of Rubbish* installation at Passiontide last April.

The installation *Open For Temptation: The Eyes (i's) Have It* will focus on the three temptations of Christ in the desert, as recorded in the Gospels, and will be an interactive all senses experience. Eyes as well as forms of entrapment will be explored: cobwebs, cages, traps, snakes to slide down and ladders to climb, a large barbed wire installation, a desert space will be created, large fish nets will create broken areas in a heavily curated space that will facilitate people meeting God. There may also be an opportunity to purchase jute bags made by women in India as an enterprise to release them from the entrapment of enforced prostitution.

"The Devil's suggestion to Jesus, 'turn these stones into bread' as a temptation to self satisfaction will be a sub-text with stone shapes morphing into different expressions of temptation as well as food items," artist and curator Peter Majendie says.

Palm and cabbage trees (lending a distinctly New Zealand flavour) will be present, made of air conditioning conducting and flax. In addition, the

Majendies are planning to construct the world's smallest church - out of beer bottles. Visitors will be invited to create works building into an oasis amid the desert, as an expression of hope amid a negative theme. The floor will be quite textured with the option of touring barefoot to add to the sensory experience.

Vicar Craufurd Murray says the collaboration is an attempt to move away from the Passiontide and Easter conflict and bring the event back to reclaim Lent (the forty days of Jesus' temptation). "We want to explore creatively, through art, what Jesus was experiencing in the desert as he sorted out his ministry while resisting the standard fare of humanity. The Temptation put him on our field, subject to our forces and the glamour of our wrong choices. The human temptations we experience are in some way represented in the three trials he endured, which were universal [see inset]. Somewhere within all our brokenness and failure is a connection with Christ. As we draw closer to Christ we are dealing with raw human stuff and there exists a huge spiritual component which enables us to get a handle on dealing with the issues of life."

The installation is not designed by the church or the minister, Craufurd says. "Peter and Joyce have total creative control, a free reign. I just hold my breath, say a few prayers, and sit back and watch something wonderfully artistic emerge."

The roaming installation will have a special parish opening at 11.30am on Sun. 14 March and will run until Sat. 27 March. Admission is free. St Marys is on Papanui Road, Christchurch.

**J.S.**

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subject to  
our forces  
and the  
glamour of  
our wrong  
choices



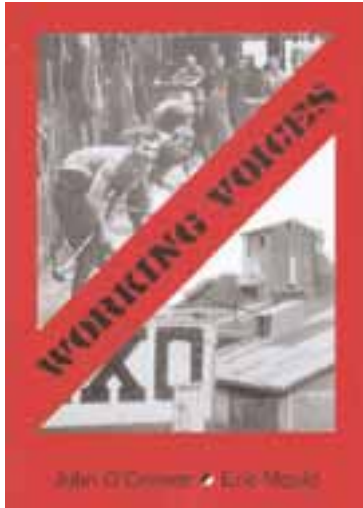
*Fruit of Choice* (detail), 1 of 16,  
Rosemary Baird, 2001,  
woodcut, 21 x 30 cm.

## **THE THREE TEMPTATIONS OF CHRIST**

Matthew 4: 1-11;

Mark 1:12,13; Luke 4:1-13

- 1** "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."
- 2** "If you are the Son of God...throw yourself down [from the Temple height]... (for angels will uphold you)... so that you will not strike your foot."
- 3** "If you will bow down and worship me (I will give you all the kingdoms of the earth)".



## Spare the Rod

Michael Kelly  
did not get along  
with the brothers.

particularly with Brother  
Sebastian — grey haired  
& a long way from

venerable — who was  
known as Noddy &  
should in all charity

have been retired  
a year or two back. 'Kelly!'  
he'd yell &

all hell would  
break out in the  
choirs of Heaven

& in the third  
form one afternoon  
when Michael was

caned on the hands  
arms, legs &  
neck — breaking

the assault only  
by running away, sobbing.  
otherwise it was a fine day

**John O'Connor**

*Working Voices*, J. O'Connor / E. Mould,  
Hallard Press, Auckland

## Review

### *Working Voices*

Eric Mould and John O'Connor

Eric Mould's opening poem, *Thirteen savs* was chosen to flag the chief theme of this collection - that many of the poems in it are responses in the lives of working people.

The fact that his experiences often have a country setting give his poems a perceptible New Zealand flavour. Combine this with a Kiwi idiom and the result is a good New Zealand poem:

*It's Dog Trials day.*

This is good, balanced writing, suitably low key, not over reaching. The poet does not overplay his hand. Yet other poems of the genre such as *String*, have an interior complexity which lends them a more intricate dimension.

The second poem *Kotuku* (in *CS News* October 2003) introduces the kind of poem in which an observer brushes against a subject in the natural world. In this case whimsy, delicacy and occasional elegance generate delight. Other such poems have a calligraphic quality.

Two or three of the poems (e.g. *Burying a sheep*) are litanies of details or episodes in country settings which don't go anywhere. But most of this genre are successful, especially when a long memory transforms events.

Among poems partly independent of the book's central theme as those which present relationships such as *Surface effect*, the understated *It's written down somewhere* and *Whyte & Mackay* in which a remembering voice builds up pressure behind the narrative.

Others (*Touching & tasting*, and the remarkable *Axiom of the third power*) break free from local axioms and constraints. These would be very good poems in any place of language.



John O'Connor is represented by three clusters of poems. *The mechanical piano* comprises 14 thumbnail sketches of school days; *Six sketches, I M* depicts a set of humble characters; the third group of poems, *Public bar*, presents monologues of conversations.

The school day poems are memorable. they are fine capsular flirtations with memories of another time and place, recalled with precision, tinged with irony, and firmly underpinned by physical detail -

the poplars moving  
in chorus & Sister's dark habit

quietly rustling —  
the particular smell of the cloth

These are backward-looking poems, glimpses through memories keyhole. The situations were those of the children: the musing, ironic, narrative voice is that of the adult who survived to tell the tale.

*Six Portraits* contrasts the declining situations of its characters with the not always expressed dreams which once lit their way. They didn't hope for much, but, as Bev's neighbour said

'there's more to  
life than chips an' housie.'

*Pensioner* is the most complete of these unpretentious parables of those who were trampled or cheated by life.

The monologues of *Public bar* have the immediacy, accuracy, dryness and funny-sad tone of language gracefully reported.

Personally, I prefer the other groups of poems: the first where the poet memorably records his school day experiences, and the second where, with restrained compassion, he entered the inner world of some people who measured the successes of their lives by the teaspoonful.

**John Weir**

Former lecturer in English at University of Canterbury. Edited *Collected Poems*, James K. Baxter (Oxford University Press 1979). Currently compiling *Baxter's complete prose works*.

## Interview

### *Drawing on Claire Benyon, Dunedin artist*

It's a long way from the baking heat of the high veld to the enclosed snowy hills of Dunedin, yet Claire Benyon's cloud, sea and sky-scape pastel works touch anyone with an eye for the brooding emotion and subtlety of light and landscape. Her evocative works are known to Christchurch arts patrons through the Arthouse on Montreal Street. Claire was born in Johannesburg, South Africa and emigrated with her husband (a locum at Dunedin hospital) and three children in November 1994. She was a finalist in the Cranleigh Barton drawing awards in 1999 and 2003 and runner up in 2001. As well as her art, Claire loves literature and combines poetic and visual images to a high level of professionalism in both media. Her poem "The Mystery Sonatas"

won the 2002 NZ Poetry Society international competition and she was a guest poet at the Christchurch WEA poetry reading in September.

Drawing remained a primary focus for Claire following earlier MA studies in printmaking at the Chelsea School of Art (London), suspended after the sudden death of her brother. After London, and marriage, there was no access to printmaking materials, so the artist threw all her energy into drawing. *"There's something quite primary about drawing. With printmaking there's a lot of process involved. The exhilaration is in the immediacy. I approach drawing fast, unconsciously, spontaneously, I have a passion for it. Drawing has the same possibility as painting, but remains the 'poor cousin' and I'm on something of a mission to elevate it alongside the other grand media such as sculpture and painting."*

This desire is well represented in recent exhibitions (pastel and charcoal drawings *Altered Ground*, Ashburton Art Gallery May/June; *In Conversation*, Arthouse, November 2002) where large framed pastel works exude a subtlety of colour and atmospheric luminescence equivalent to any oil or water colour exhibition.

**JS: Is there a conscious link between poetry and visual image for you?**

*"My notebooks are equal parts writing and imagery. The two are inseparable parts of me, expressing different aspects of me. Writing is very visual and there exists an Expressionistic link."*

**It seems to me you use land as a vehicle for the spiritual...**

*"While working in South Africa, the land was ever present but not that familiar. Coming to New Zealand, the land stood out. It was a new environment. In putting new roots down in*

*Dunedin, a new discovery came into my art as I familiarised myself with the landscape around me in a way I had not done back home. The spiritual sacredness of the land is largely overlooked today in art. We're so high tech., fast-paced, so busy we don't see. The land is so powerful and it's linked with the drama of weather and atmosphere which are deeply emotive aspects. Weather can be a metaphor for the psyche, for temperament, erosion a metaphor for life. I believe God's Spirit resides in the land. I'm interested in the emotive aspects of land.*

*McCahon is often a reference people make to my work, but it's not one I make. I sense a kindredness with him, regarding ideas and a search for essence, but there is no visual connection."*

**What about art and faith for you?**

*"Art and faith are parallel searches for me, a journey synonymous with the other. I grew up in a traditional Anglican background and did the Scripture Union, World Vision thing as a teenager. I lost a brother through violence and that challenged everything. It dismantled everything I'd known and I'm rebuilding and reassembling. Several of my works are about that ongoing search, a spirituality without meaninglessness, removing constructs that make us safe so we arrive at the raw essence of what is real."*

**Are you saying art should be narrative?**

*"It must communicate, otherwise it has no purpose, if it's not clear. It's essential in my view that work can be revisited. Art needs an access point so viewers can find their own space."*

Claire Benyon is currently showing in the Waitaki River Group show, Peter Rae gallery, Dunedin.

**John Stringer**

*O Te Waitaki wild and free. Ake Ake Ake, Mary Horn, 2003, oil on canvas, 98 x 126cm, Artists Against Aqua exhibition, Temple Gallery, Dunedin, December 2003.*



*Seven - a Meditation for the Waitaki River, Claire Benyon, 2003, slate tiles, 520 x 2390mm, Artists Against Aqua exhibition, Temple Gallery, Dunedin, December 2003.*



*Untitled, Alisaundre van Ammers, 2003, acrylic on gessoed board, 450 x 700mm, CoCa exhibition, November 2003.*



# MEL GIBSON'S passion for THE PASSION



Simon of Cyrene, Arthur Amon, 2003, Garden Stations of the Cross, Cityside Church, Auckland, Easter 2003.

How ironic that when a movie producer takes artistic license with historical events, he is lionised as artistic, creative and brilliant, but when another takes special care to be true to the real-life story, he is vilified.

Actor-producer Mel Gibson is discovering these truths the hard way as he is having difficulty finding a United States studio or distributor for his upcoming film, *The Passion of The Christ*, which depicts the last 12 hours of the life of Jesus Christ.

Gibson co-wrote the script and financed, directed and produced the movie. For the script, he and his co-author relied on the New Testament Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, as well as the diaries of St. Anne Catherine Emmerich (1774-1824) and Mary of Agreda's *The City of God*.

Gibson doesn't want this to be like other sterilised religious epics. "I'm trying to access the story on a very personal level and trying to be very real about it."

So committed to realistically portraying what many would consider the most important half-day in the history of the universe, Gibson even shot the film in the Aramaic language of the period.

In response to objections that viewers will not be able to understand that language, Gibson said, "Hopefully, I'll be able to transcend the language barriers with my visual storytelling; if I fail, I fail, but at least it'll be a monumental failure."

To further insure the accuracy of the work, Gibson has enlisted the counsel of pastors and theologians, and has received rave reviews.

Don Hodel, president of Focus on the Family, said, "I was very impressed. The movie is historically and theologically accurate." Ted Haggard, Pastor of New Life Church in Colorado Springs, CO, and President of the National Evangelical Association, glowed: "It conveys, more accurately than any other film, who Jesus was."

During the filming, Gibson, a devout Catholic, attended Mass every morning because "we had to be squeaky clean just working on this."

From Gibson's perspective, this movie is not about Mel Gibson. It's bigger than he is. "I'm not a preacher, and I'm not a pastor," he said. "But I really feel my career was leading me to make this. The Holy Ghost was working through me on this film, and I was just directing traffic. I hope the film has the power to evangelise."

Even before the release of the movie, scheduled for March 2004, Gibson is getting his wish. "Everyone who worked on this movie was changed. There were agnostics and Muslims on set converting to Christianity...[and] people being healed of diseases."

Gibson wants people to understand through the movie, if they don't already, the incalculable influence Christ has had on the world. And he grasps that Christ is controversial precisely because of WHO HE IS – GOD incarnate.

"And that's the point of my film really, to show all that turmoil around him politically and with religious leaders and the people, all because He is Who He is."

Gibson is beginning to experience first hand just how controversial Christ is. Critics have not only speciously challenged the movie's authenticity, but have charged that it is disparaging to Jews, which Gibson vehemently denies.

"This is not a Christian vs. Jewish thing. '[Jesus] came into the world, and it knew him not.' Looking at Christ's crucifixion, I look first at my own culpability in that."

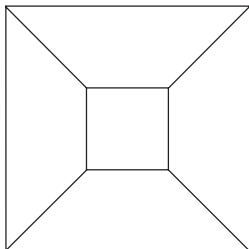
Jesuit Father William J. Fulco, who translated the script into Aramaic and Latin, said he saw no hint of anti-Semitism in the movie. Fulco added, "I would be aghast at any suggestion that Mel Gibson is anti-Semitic."

Nevertheless, certain groups and some in the mainstream press have been very critical of Gibson's "Passion." The New York Post's Andrea Peyser chided him: "There is still time, Mel, to tell the truth." Boston Globe columnist James Carroll denounced Gibson's literal reading of the biblical accounts. "Even a faithful repetition of the Gospel stories of the death of Jesus can do damage exactly because those sacred texts themselves carry the virus of Jew hatred," wrote Carroll.

A group of Jewish and Christian academics has issued an 18-page report slamming all aspects of the film, including its undue emphasis on Christ's passion rather than "a broader vision." The report disapproves of the movie's treatment of Christ's passion as historical fact. The moral is that if you want the popular culture to laud your work on Christ, make sure it either depicts Him as a homosexual or as an everyday sinner with no particular redeeming value (literally). In our anti-Christian culture, the blasphemous *The Last Temptation of Christ* is celebrated, and *The Passion* is condemned. But if this movie continues to affect people the way it is now, no amount of cultural opposition will suppress its force and its positive impact on lives everywhere. Mel Gibson is a model of faith and courage.

## David Limbaugh

New Zealand will be the first country in the world to screen *The Passion of The Christ* – cinema release here is 25 Feb 2004.



## Room with a view

creative therapy studio

# Drawing within: art as therapy

### ***Interview: Glenda Deed, creative therapist***

Glenda Deed offers a professional creative approach to therapy that allows people the freedom to explore personal issues in ways other than talking. Clients participate by drawing or creating small sculptural artworks. The most common media are crayons; chalk or pastel and her shelves are lined with a variety of interesting and colourful objects. "It is important to the work that the tools are simple and it helps if they're easily transportable," she says.

"Clients come with diverse motivation, it might be the age old questions of purpose and meaning, while others seek to expand creatively or progress in a specific area of functioning. Utilising a structured model that includes both talking and drawing, different things will emerge. I use a triangle of words; images and feelings. This allows clients to look more closely at key themes, refining as they go. They might be keen to draw something specific or, I'll give them a drawing cue based on what they are experiencing. Once there is starting point the client seems to become energised and the process seems to spontaneously evolve"

Most sessions involve work with colour, which in itself is healing. People intuitively choose their own objects, symbols and colours".

"I strongly believe we all have an elements of wisdom and strength, which when given an environment of support respect and encouragement, healing and resolution will naturally occur."

"Colour and images contain powerful metaphors

and at a subconscious level creative therapy allows acknowledgement and practice of those innate abilities. With this enlarged realm of reference the clients' art becomes tangible and deeply symbolic of their personal discoveries."

Glenda's motivation stems from always having worked with people. "I have always been involved in pastoral care in my church, and through my own art making have found keys that work for people across the board. Artistic flair is not a prerequisite for this kind of work".

Her process is mostly person centered. I'm only working with what people want to bring, confidentiality and respect are essential." My tools for creative therapy stem from Interactive Drawing Therapy, Jungian psychology and Gestalt methods. All of these explore both the "dark and the light sides, seeking to integrate all the parts that make us who we are. Sometimes in Christian contexts we want to cut off the darkness."

"Creativity in a therapeutic model is very useful for younger people who often instinctively pick up the crayons as they talk, something we tend to lose in adulthood. This approach can also benefit people who have difficulty verbalising or for those facing relationship breakdowns – where talking can be just more of the same. In creative therapy people can't 'do it wrong' because it is experiential, and everything is valid."

A great variety of people have come to enjoy the approach. Issues such as: creative blocks, life direction and greater spontaneity, to relationship difficulties, grief and loss, depression. "The kinds of life themes that affect us all, no-one is exempt but taking steps to work through these require courage and strength and I am often in awe of people's experience and commitment." In one client's words, 'This course has lifted the fear of performance and allowed me to enjoy the thrill of creation.'

Glenda completed a two-year degree-level diploma of counselling at Integrity College where she focused on relationship centered and experiential modalities. She has undergone further training in art and spirituality since then. Her research paper was entitled "Using Art In Therapy." Glenda's sessions are run from a welcoming room above Southern Ballet in the Arts Centre ... which she shares with the CS Library, just opposite their office.

**Based on an interview by John Stringer**

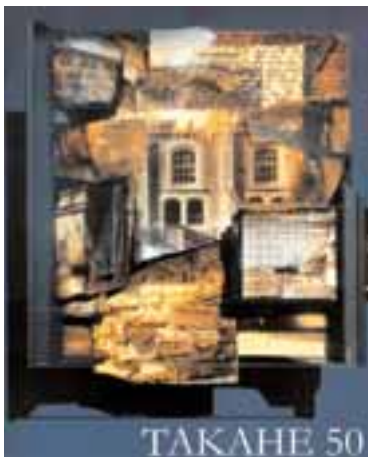






*Glass Wall* – Christchurch Art Gallery (detail), Jessica Crothall, 2003, acrylic on canvas.

A selection of some of the periodicals available from the Chrysalis Seed Resource Centre located at The Arts Centre, Christchurch.



## Review

### *Jessica Crothall - Under the Knife*

**Left Bank Art Gallery, Greymouth, September 2003**

Jessica Crothall's aptly named new series of works *Under the Knife*, explores the use of the palette knife as the primary tool for layering paint upon the surface of a canvas.

This is a development that extends from her previous *Pancake Rocks* series that used a ruler, charged with paint, to create the layered pancake effect that is so instantly identifiable with the West Coast and Punakaiki. These works were not only visually appealing, but also technically interesting and highly popular, so it's not surprising to see Crothall exploring other ways of mark making to invigorate her images.

Thematically speaking, a large proportion of the new works will surprise many people who know Crothall's previous work – although there are subtle connections. Images of sport play a large part in the *Under the Knife Series* (which itself has tenuous connections with *Run Lola, Run*), although they are to be taken metaphorically as a comment on our everyday struggles, highs and lows, wins and losses – and not literally as mere illustrative folly.

Working large has given Crothall the ability to

make sweeping gestural marks with the knife across the surface, and this has worked well when used to convey the intensity of action that we associate with many sporting activities. *She Claims Possession* was inspired by the New Zealand Netball Teams World Cup winning performance, and cleverly expresses the frenzied movement on court – as does the cricket series and *Catching the Wind* where the spray of water from a yacht makes an ideal subject for the palette knife technique.

Less successful, perhaps due to its more sedate subject matter, is *Out of the Hole*, a golfing image that would suit Crothall's brush technique far more readily.

But once again, the most impressive images belong to her landscapes – particularly those from the West Coast. *Red West Coast Swamp* echoes the Punakaiki works, as does *Glass Wall* – Christchurch Art Gallery where the horizontal layering of colour creates an undulating surface that is at once pleasing and also evocative.

As a challenge to further technique and style, *Under the Knife* goes a long way towards achieving Crothall's goals. A more judicious choice of subject matter will certainly see the paintings develop and improve, and I certainly look forward to seeing the new fruits of Crothall's labour.

**Wayne Lorimer** (director of Left Bank gallery)



## From the resource centre

Did you know that at the CS Centre we have a library with materials which now includes **148 titles which relate art to Christian faith?**

They range from practical books to the more academic and theological.

There is also a good range of recent poetry by Canterbury poets including those reviewed in this edition of CS News. A limited range of art historical and contemporary NZ art practice volumes are also available here.

**We subscribe to a range of magazines and periodicals:**

**Art/Faith:** Publications by the Arts Centre Group





**The Journal of New Zealand Art History** is now available through the Hocken library, University of Otago. Editors: Mark Stocker, Anna Petersen, and Stuart Strachan. A \$10.00 discount is available if subscribing through the Hocken, \$39.95 (incl GST). Details for ordering please contact [anna.petersen@library.otago.ac.nz](mailto:anna.petersen@library.otago.ac.nz) Fax (03) 479 5078.

## CS LIBRARY

A floor above Southern Ballet in the Christchurch Arts Centre

**12.30 – 5.30pm**

**Monday – Friday**

(or by appointment)

(UK), *Christians in the Visual Arts* (USA), *Image* (USA), *Art and Christian Enquiry* (UK).

**Visual Art:** A series of journals reflecting current issues and trends in NZ art including *Art NZ*, *The Journal of NZ Art History*, *Art News*, *NZ Journal of Photography*, a couple of local publications: the Bulletin of the *Christchurch Art Gallery* and *CoCA's magazine*, and a few dealing with international art such as *Art AsiaPacific*, *Image: Christ and Art in Asia*.

**Poetry:** *Landfall*, *Poetry NZ*, *Takahe*, *Kokako* as well as a professionally arranged publication by Christian writers in Australia called 'Studio' edited by Paul Grover.

### The Library: present and future

Currently this is reference only with photocopying facilities. If there is greater demand then we will make the commitment of time and budget to gear it up as a borrowing library. In the long term the collection may be shifted to a totally different setting where it would be less available to the general public. Artists, poets, and others if you want to use this facility there for your benefit do let us know with your feet!! A floor above Southern Ballet in the Christchurch Arts Centre, we are open every afternoon between 12.30 – 5.30pm Monday – Friday or at other times by appointment. Any enquiries call Peter on 374 5721 or 366 2848.

The vision of Chrysalis Seed is to help resource the arts community from a Christian perspective. These resources are part of our attempt to help

artists both be more aware of what's going on in the contemporary visual arts and poetry world as well as providing some tools to engage and relate Christian faith to current arts practice. If they're not really needed then they'll go where they'll be more used. Canterbury readers, the decision is really up to you!! Come and enjoy a quiet coffee up here in this secluded corner of the Arts Centre while you're at it.

### New Publications:

The complete works of the famous Dutch art historian **Hans Rookmaker** are now available in English. All six volumes are in the CS library. They are: (**Vol 1**) *Art, Artists and Gauguin* (**Vol 2**) *New Orleans Jazz, Mahalia Jackson and the Philosophy of Art* (**Vol 3**) *The Creative Gift, Durer, Dada and Desolation Row* (**Vol 4**) *Western Art and the meanderings of a Culture* (**Vol 5**) *Modern Art and the Death of a Culture* (**Vol 6**) *Our Calling and God's Hand in History*

### Some articles worth checking out:

**Alan Wright:** *Milan Mrkusich and the Sublime* p.21 *NZ Journal of Art History* Vol. 23. 2002

**Mike Riddell:** *True and False Prophets* (on James K. Baxter) *Tui Motu* Nov. 2003.

**Albert Moore:** *Christmas With The Pre-Raphaelites* (Dunedin) *Tui Motu* December 2003.

**Damien Skinner:** *I Believe. Colin McCahon's A Question of Faith* p. 78 *Art New Zealand* 107 Winter 2003.

**Four Perspectives of the Christchurch Art Gallery**, *NZ Journal of Art History* Vol. 24. 2003

## Tribute to Ngaire Hewson

**Christchurch, Monday 15 December 2003**



This is a tribute of thanksgiving and gratitude for the life and achievements of Ngaire Hewson.

I remember her Retrospective Exhibition held in the rooms of the

Canterbury College School of Art as if it were yesterday. I remarked at the time how the paintings, prints and drawings were an extension of herself and how they communicated a great generosity of spirit - her goodness and compassion - her nurturing of fellow artists and anyone in need. I now remember the many times she sheltered those in distress, she never allowed personal inconvenience or the disruption of her plans to deflect her from giving hospitality to artists, and their relatives and friends. Ngaire was one of a circle of artists meeting privately to advance their drawing skills; among them from time to time were Olivia Spencer Bower and Doris Lusk, but often it was Ngaire who organised the meeting place and sitter, not to mention the coffee and freshly baked scones.

She and George established 'Several Arts', an Artists Gallery and Shop in Colombo Street. Considering the smallness of the premises it

became an Alladin's Cave, overflowing with paintings, prints, drawings, weaving, tapestry, pottery, sculpture and so on. Behind this magnificent profusion lay Ngaire's kindness and understanding support. She was not a dealer so much as a mentor. We need to remind ourselves how very different things were; then there were very limited opportunities for artists to show their works to prospective buyers. 'Fishers' and the CSA were the main places where artists could exhibit. At 'Several Arts' Ngaire with the constant unwavering support of George, gave many young artists a beginning. It was there that those who over the years would become their faithful buyers made their first purchase of a Fomison drawing or a Clairmont print.

I was very tempted to bring and show you one of Ngaire's paintings - it is called "A Sweetheart Bouquet" dated 1991. It is a colourful, sprightly engagingly fresh watercolour, full of life and joy. Better, far better than my words, it would have brought her gifts, values and achievements to us and made them manifest. Ngaire's goodness, her spirit, her generosity will live on. Along with the achievements of poets, painters, musicians and all who discover and explain to us the world in which we live, Ngaire's life work will enrich the lives of those as yet unborn.

This is my tribute of thanksgiving.

**John Simpson**

Former Head of Dept. of Fine Arts at University of Canterbury