



chrysalis seed trust



Sculpting an identity

CS ARTS

JULY 2006 - ISSUE 24

www.ccs.org.nz

The place of sculpture and public art

In 2002 Slovenian artist Matej Vogrincic transformed one of the raised grass polygons outside the Scott Block in the Christchurch Arts Centre into a pond with paper boats floating upon it. It was an act of public art. The grass has not returned and the pond, dyed blue, is now established as an 'endearing piece of public art' at the Arts Centre. But one has to ask: did Vogrincic's piece capture the hearts and minds of the public because it was art, or because it was a pond?

The definitions around art have always been blurred, and that is part of the engaging dialogue. As Picasso is quoted as saying, 'art is a lie that makes us realise the truth'. Talk about art is sometimes the substance (the Henry Moore 'Sheep' sculpture for the Port Hills, the Parekowhai 'Bunnies'; Andrew Drummond's *Millennium Bridge*). The weird and wonderful edifices, sculptures, architecture, paintings and contrivances of artists, try-hards, and provocateurs are simply visual grist to the art mill.

Deborah McCormack's comment (*Art & Industry Biennial*)

continued on p.4

Who we are

Founded in 1998 the Chrysalis Seed charitable trust serves a growing number of contemporary artists. We aim 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.

CS Arts

This is our main publication, which goes to artists, galleries, libraries and supporters around New Zealand and overseas. Designed for the wider arts community, it engages with contemporary artists, art issues and events. We have a number of groups and collectives. The main collective is for contemporary visual artists.

Room with a view

Creative therapy studio
Glenda Deed, Dip Couns. Cert I.D.T. N.Z.A.C member
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
info@cs.org.nz
www.cs.org.nz

Hours

Monday-Friday 1-4pm

After hours

+64 3 366 2848

Founding Directors

Peter and Jessica Crothall

Manager and CS Arts Editor

Peter Crothall
director@cs.org.nz

CS Arts Producer

Gloria Heazlewood
gloria@cs.org.nz

Design

Andrew Clarkson
Snow, ph 027 648 6771
www.snowsite.co.nz

Photography

Andrew Clarkson
Chris Lea
John Newcombe
Joanna Osborne
John Stringer

Proof Readers

Jane Hole
Juliana Venning

Contributors

Jonathan Baker
Don Binney
Janet Joyce
Sarah Newton
Joanna Osborne
Mike Palmers
Peb Simmons
John Stringer
Juliana Venning

Printing

Spectrum Print

Trust Board

Peter Phillips (Anthony Harper lawyers)
Derek Craze (Kendons Scott McDonald)
Don Kempt (Spreydon Baptist community)
Jessica Crothall (artist)
Peter Crothall

Note: The views contained here, including the poems, are not necessarily the personal views of the editor.
© No images or text here can be reproduced without written permission.

Contents

3 EDITORIAL

ARTICLES

- 1 *Sculpting an identity: The place of sculpture and public art*

INTERVIEWS

- 6 Jim Instone The welding of Yorkshire and Christchurch
8 Paul Deans *LoTR* artist and sculpture mentor,
Deans Art Investments, Heathcote
10 Anna Korver Of mentoring, foiled and fragmented women
11 Janet Chambers Sculptor
13 Llew Summers Getting plastered with Llew Summers
15 Peb Simmons Author of *No Ordinary Woman*
(Ria Bancroft – Sculptor, 1907-1993)
18 Graham Bennett *Reasons for Voyaging*
19 Neil Dawson Regarding *Chalice*
20 **SOUTHERN DIARY** Don Binney

REVIEWS

- 21 Galina Kim and Sue Spigel *Merging Traditions*, Christchurch Cathedral,
2 March – 11 April 06
23 Katie Thomas *Casting Purls*, Campbell Grant Galleries, Christchurch,
7 – 25 March 2006
24 *Alchemy of Daily Life* Christchurch Art Gallery, 18 November 2005 – 26 February 2006
25 *The Land Has Eyes* (Pacific Arts Festival) A Film made by Te Maka Productions
25 *Vikings of the Sunrise* (Pacific Arts Festival), Salamander Gallery, Christchurch
31 January – 12 February 2006
26 *Oranga Whenua/The Gondwana Waka* (Pacific Arts Festival), Jo Tito/Sheyne Tuffery,
Our City-O-Tautahi, Christchurch, 16 January – 9 February 2006
26 Leafa/Janice Wilson (Pacific Arts Festival) *Ich Heisse Olga Hedwig Krause: Deutsche Künstlerin. My Name is Olga Hedwig Krause: German Artist*,
SOFA Gallery Christchurch, 25 January – 5 February 2006
27 *Chinese Hubei Calligraphy and Painting* CoCA, Christchurch, 16 February – 5 March 2006
27 Lucian Bernhard *Advertising and Design Enter the 20th Century*, CoCA,
Christchurch, 15 February – 18 March 2006

FROM OUR LIBRARY

- 28 *Footprints on a Gravel Road* Barry Southam
29 *Film Review: Breath of Peace – Tau Te Mauri* Directed by Kathleen Gallagher

POETRY

- 28 Ron Riddell *Raukura*
29 Ron Riddell *The Night of the Assassins*
30 Ron Riddell *Elegy for Oscar Tamayo*
30 Ron Riddell *Dressing You*

31 EVENTS AND NOTICES

Chalice (detail),
Neil Dawson, 2000, Steel, aluminium, black granite.
18m high, 1.2m diameter at ground, 8.5m diameter at top.
Located at Christchurch Cathedral Square.
Photo: Andrew Clarkson.



Kia ora!

In our last issue, Jonathan Mane-Wheoki called us to see that New Zealand art is being 're-centred' in our own country and in the Pacific. He refers not only to the growing contribution

of Maori to the contemporary arts scene here, but also to artists of other cultures. As well as coverage of the Christchurch Pacific Arts Festival, exhibitions of Korean art and Chinese calligraphy are noted here. Both are rooted in their indigenous cultures, yet are also responding to modern movements in art. The ancient art of Chinese calligraphy finds resonance in Aotearoa with the tradition of word and image, pioneered by Colin McCahon.

Our next issue will continue looking at the nation's art. Jonathan Mane-Wheoki (through Damian Skinner) will be conveying more specifics on 'Toi Te Papa 2'. The show is now due to open in October this year, having been shoved aside by more commercial interests and *Lord of the Rings*. *Merging Traditions* by Russian (Galina Kim) and American (Sue Spigel) New Zealanders, are symbolic of this reality. Their close collaboration in this exhibition appropriately touches on themes around the environment, migration, and the Creator. Kathleen Gallagher's award-winning film *Breath of Peace* is reviewed. The peace theme is reinforced by the passionate poetry of Wellington poet, Ron Riddell.

Canterbury sculpture

Having wandered further afield in our last issue, here we return firmly to Canterbury soil and its

sculptors/public art, as the core focus. The sculptors interviewed include a cross section of age, gender and experience. Peb Simmons is interviewed, giving a window into the previous generation through the pioneering work of her mother, Ria Bancroft. Others interviewed include Anna Korver and Janet Chambers (recent graduates), Jim Instone (WW2 graduate), Paul Deans, Llew Summers, Graham Bennett (*Reasons For Voyaging*) and Neil Dawson (*Chalice*). The line between the various media in art today is often blurred. Architecture and sculpture have much in common, both impacting the public environment. One of the most remarkable aspects of the design and vision of Te Puna o Waiwhetu is the close collaboration between sculptor Graham Bennett and the architect. The glass frontage along Montreal Street has a distinctly sculptural and abstract quality strongly impacting all who pass, day or night. In his article John Stringer challenges our perceptions of public art and sculpture, drawing on some recent visits to the USA and observations there.

The resignation of Tony Preston as Director of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu is undoubtedly a loss to the whole community. His contribution was not only to our arts community, but also to Christchurch as a city and its place and image in the nation. The gallery has become an icon of our region in a way the McDougall was not. While it was an entire community that made the vision of the new gallery possible, this support would not have been galvanised into the achievement you see on our cover without the visionary and enthusiastic leadership and advocacy of Tony Preston.

Peter Crothall



Chalice (detail), Neil Dawson, 2000, Steel, aluminium, black granite. 18m high, 1.2m diameter at ground, 8.5m diameter at top. Located at Christchurch Cathedral Square. Photo: Andrew Clarkson.



Port, Matej Andraz Vogrincic, 2002, Pond: Water coloured blue with vegetable dye, 16,400 x 13,000 mm with angled side of 16,000 mm. Boats: Coated paper, pink, blue, silver, orange and green spray paint, nylon line, ball bearings – various sizes, numbered 212. Thanks to Arts Centre of Christchurch, Hornby and Hammersley Park Primary Schools and Simon Mulligan. Photo: Chris Lea.

Below: *Joy of Eternal Spring*, Llew Summers, Concrete, 2m high x 3m wide. Located on Ensors Road, Opawa, Christchurch. Photo: Andrew Clarkson.

Sculpting an identity (continued from p.1)

Trust: SCAPE that 'public art is a celebratory thread that draws the community together' might draw too long a bow, but there is no doubt public art, particularly sculpture, builds a gracious urbanity and visualises a collective arts identity. Art equals 'culture' in most minds, a city with public art everywhere LOOKS like a cultural place; one without, does not.

Think of Paris. The Eiffel Tower immediately springs to mind as an architectural flagpole of cultural positioning. London has Big Ben. 'Liberty' thrusts her French beacon into the New York skyline and under ground over 125 artworks are strewn throughout the labyrinthine subway system. Cleveland has its Detroit-Superior Bridge, Philadelphia its 1978 *Indiana Love* sculpture in JFK Plaza, now affectionately known as 'Love Plaza', a case of an artwork renaming a public space. Examples in New Zealand include: Para Matchitt's *Bridge Sculpture*, 1993; Te Papa's meeting house/whareniui *Te Hono ki Hawaiki*, 1998, and Neil Dawson's *Ferns*, 1998 (above Civic Square) in Wellington; at the Octagon in Dunedin there's Robert Burns, 1884-87; and in Auckland there are Selywn Muru's *Te Waharoa O Aotea*, 1990, and the Sky Tower.

Neil Dawson's *Chalice*, 2000, adds vibrancy and dynamism to Cathedral Square alongside a neo-Gothic Anglican cathedral. The juxtaposition of style and materials works well: old and new, tradition and innovation. A controversial opera house design has done that for Sydney.

Along such a journey there are always works that don't quite make it. In Christchurch there is, in my subjective view: Graham Bennett's *Tribute to Firefighters*, 2002, celebrating fire-fighters; David Marshall's *Corgis on High* (Street), 2003, a quaint outdated 'sycophancy' to notions of royalty and colonialism; Terry Stringer's 'confused' *The Risen*

Christ, 2000, beside the cathedral; Peter Roche's *Circuit* (originally *Coral*) 2004, outside The Arts Centre clock tower, 'exciting and interactive, a halo of white light entwined with moving orange neon that becomes agitated when viewers step on to its beautiful glass surface'. A-huh. Looks like a man-hole cover to me. And why did Neil Dawson, one of our most talented Canterbury-based sculptors, have to have major works grace several European capitals, including the entrance-way to the 2000 Olympics, before his home town accepted a stunning work in its public square?

Like the plodding – some would say cautious - civic spirit of Canterbury, public contemporary art came late to New Zealand.

In 1978 Connecticut established a state law (Connecticut's Art in Public Spaces programme) requiring a percentage of not less than 1% of the cost of construction or renovation of publicly accessible state buildings to be used for artworks for that building. It was the first state in the USA to do so. Since then, similar programmes have followed in 27 other states and 154 public municipalities. Connecticut has over 280 art works at 54 sites in 28 cities and towns. The idea works as a partnership between the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism's Arts and the Department of Public Works.

Cleveland, interested in introducing new ideas, created a public arts group to raise the aesthetic goals of that city. Cambridge City in Massachusetts has well over 100 artworks achieved through the Cambridge Public Art Ordinance (1979). Grant Banbury, of Campbell Grant Galleries in Christchurch, once described public sculpture¹ as a way of breaking down arts boundaries and building connections with non-arts audiences. Cambridge does that directly.

In 1982 the City of New York enacted its version of the Connecticut model. The Department of Cultural Affairs Percent for Art Program was enacted in law to set aside 1% of public funding of building projects to be spent on artworks². Since then more than 180 projects have been completed involving accumulated commissions of over \$26 million. The programme has transformed New York plazas, parks, community centres, schools, transportation terminals, police stations, fire brigade buildings and courthouses throughout five boroughs.

In Canterbury the Art & Industry Urban Arts Biennial presents the public with a huge range of art works across different genres in our public spaces. A few remain in public, thereby building a collection of sculptural works that help qualify the collective visual identity we project of the city.

Intriguingly, Michael Dunn's index listing for Christchurch in *New Zealand Sculpture: A History*³ lists eight buildings (mainly cathedrals), two war memorials, a public square, a shopping centre and three 19th century colonial plinth sculptures. It says a lot about other people's limited perceptions of this city's artistic and cultural identity.

In the same way that bad town planning, slums, and hideous buildings contribute to the identity of a

1 2004, April, CS Arts' interview.

2 www.nyc.gov/html.dcd/

3 2002, Auckland University Press.



place (think 'Soviet block' vs. 'Scandinavian wood construction' vs. 'Oamaru stone crib' vs. 'Las Vegas kitsch') so well appointed public artworks generate a sense of cultural sophistication. They appeal to abstract and aesthetic notions of art, beauty and culture in utilitarian spaces. As we walk to the bus stop en route to an office job in a tower block, if we pass a Speers (Worcester Boulevard) or a Summers (Aldwins Road) the experience enriches our daily life. The works nourish notions of identity, pride or embarrassment (Oakune's carrot, Te Puke's kiwifruit). As messengers of sentiments, public art plays a vital role in the visual marking of our environments, like carved gateway (waharoa) at a Maori pa site, a thrusting dragon's head (or other mystic creature) on the prow of a Viking ship, or *Christ the Redeemer*, arms outstretched, atop a Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Corcovado Mountain-top. A new apartment development in Christchurch's Cultural Precinct is bylined by it's marketing as, 'One should either be a work of art or live in one.'

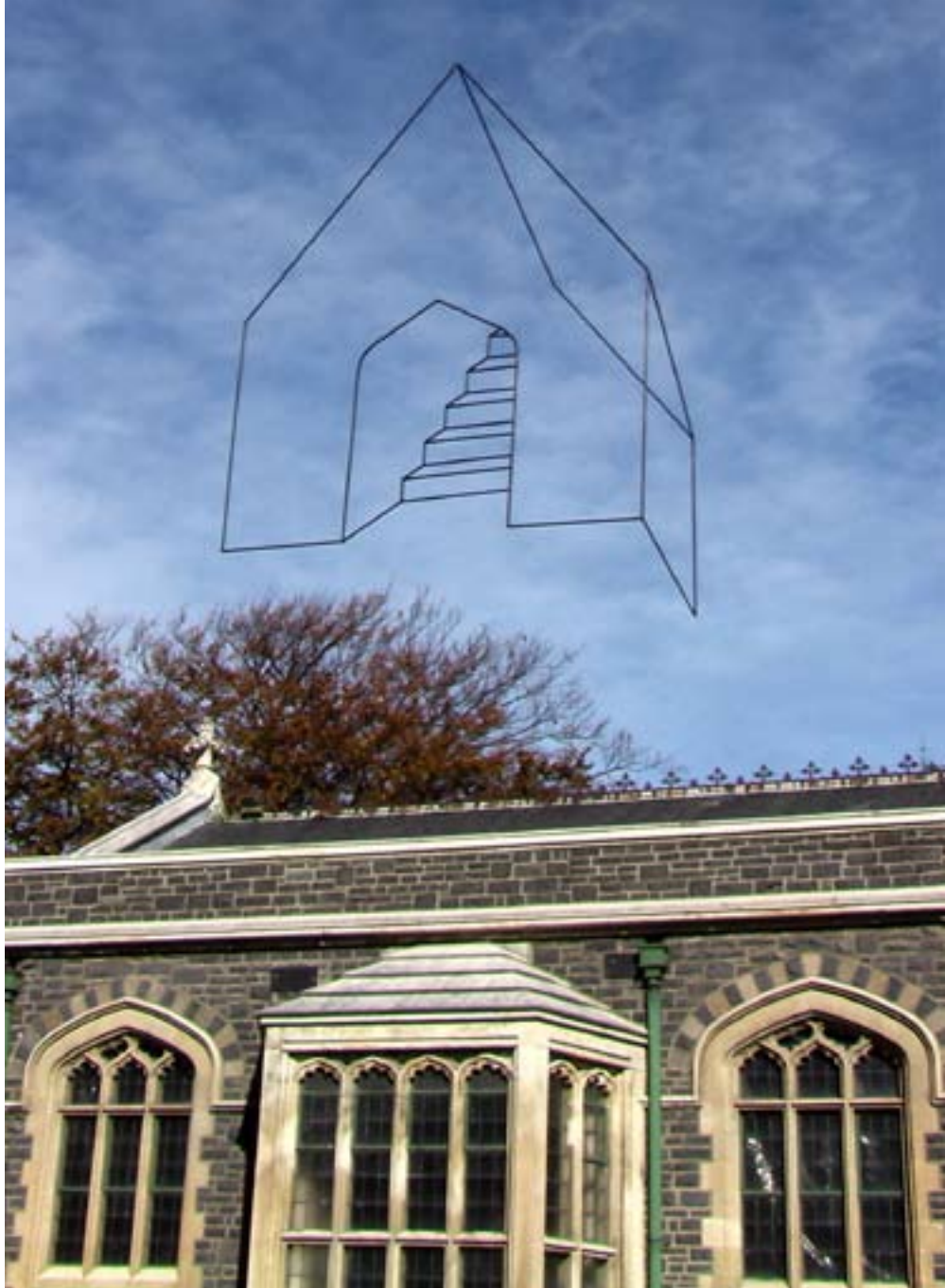
Public art contributes to collective identity, like local crime, language, food, custom, geography, and weather. After three years, the glass fronted structure in Montreal Street has become an iconic part of Canterbury identity and sense of place. This is despite the controversy that raged over both the release of council funds and the final choice of design for the Christchurch gallery. Indeed, it is arguably one of the reasons for the disquiet over falling door numbers.



Perhaps this 'paradigm shift' is about drawing more of Christchurch inside an already loved part of its life and community fibre.

John Stringer
Arts Advocate

Right: *Echo*, 1981 (installed permanently 1991), Neil Dawson, Carbon fibre tubes and stainless steel wires. It is suspended 8 metres above the North Quad of The Arts Centre, and measures approx 2m x 2m x 2.5 metres. Photo: Andrew Clarkson.



Blue, 2000, Bill Culbert, 100 m glass tubing pumped with argon gas/mercury vapour mix. Supported in place by stainless steel rods. Located at the Christchurch Convention Centre, Kilmore Street. This landmark work received damage in a snow storm and is due for repair later in 2006.



//

*as the Luftwaffe
passed over our town
it looked like it had
already been bombed,
so they never bothered*



The welding of Yorkshire and Christchurch

An interview with sculptor Jim Instone

With a name like Instone you'd expect Jim to be a sculptor. He is. He's also a bit of a magpie, hunting through Christchurch scrap yards for enamelled doors, desiccated car parts, weathered pieces of warped and bent metal which he crafts into beautiful sculptures – mainly fauna (salmon, herons, New Zealand falcons, magpies, eels). A glorious kotuku rises from his back lawn with outstretched wings and perfect trailing legs. You expect it to disappear over the fence, until you notice the eye is made from a bike cog. With a masterful sense of form and an accurate rendering of limb, wing and claw from an unforgiving medium, Jim Instone quietly manufactures highly creative pieces at his Linwood property. He is in complete control of his medium, which is perhaps one of the hardest to master and manipulate. A skilled draughtsman, he also paints. Again, the theme is magpies. I spy an accomplished work on a wall as we roam through his home studio discussing art, literature and his experiences in life.

Instone is from North Yorkshire. Born there in 1937 he grew up during the war (lost his mother at age four in a blackout car crash) but remembers that period as an exciting time shielded somewhat from the tragedies and sufferings of many. His town was set in a bend of the river, a landmark that stood out like a sore thumb to marauding German bombers. 'But the joke was,' says Instone, 'that as the Luftwaffe passed over our town it looked like it had already been bombed, so they never bothered,' which statement terminates in his generous Yorkshire laugh.

He was good at drawing at school and was one of two finalists for a scholarship to art school. Coming from a working-class family where, after the war, the securities of a trade were valued over personal preference, his father (who had survived the Depression) discouraged such whimsy and steered

the young Yorkshire lad toward engineering. He also served the obligatory National Service.

Instone became a boilermaker but his interest in sculpture and art remained, fuelled by an avant garde movement in modernist sculpture in his home country at that time. The artist is largely self-taught, through evening classes and working with artists he admired, such as Jeff Thomson. A Thomson corrugated chicken grazes his back lawn, swapped for one of his own. After boiler making and shipbuilding, he obtained a teaching certificate and became a metal work craft teacher in England. He emigrated from Yorkshire to Christchurch in 1974 with his wife Frances, a potter, for a two-year engineering contract and stayed for 30. He was a teacher for over 25 years including seven or eight years teaching metal work at Linwood Intermediate School and living for a while on the West Coast.

JS: How did your teaching and arts practice interrelate?

'I came into New Zealand as a heavy-seam boilermaker but also had a secondary school teaching certificate. It was an excellent experience. The programme at Linwood was quite evenly weighted. It was not just a boys' activity; educationalists were getting away from gender-specific approaches. But we had separate classes, not mixed, so boys weren't showing off all the time. I found that a delightful atmosphere to work in.

'I didn't make girlie things. We started on garden implements, which might sound a bit boring, but it involved welding, riveting and brazing, and we used stainless steel. They designed the handle, so it involved a design feature, not just repeating what the teacher applied. I taught at a Polytechnic in North Notts, Nottingham, I was also in North Lindsey,

Above and Right: Jim Instone at work.
Photos: John Stringer



Scunthorpe, another engineering town, teaching technical drawing, welding and calculations with young boilermakers. I also taught in an art foundation course, at the metal sculpture end of the programme. It was a nice balance; I was able to use my artistic side and had a wonderful engineering workshop to use as well.

'I was the classic young man who wanted to be an artist but had a father who said no. I could engineer during the day and do whatever I liked at night. I was angry with my father at the time, but it maintained a hunger I think. Because I couldn't have it, I wanted it even more. In the fifties we had the Festival of Britain and it really was a celebration of sculpture, particularly metal. It was a great stimulation. Artists like Butler, Chadwick and Armitage were active.'

Did the wartime period have any impact on your art?

'Not really. I was eight when it ended. I did lose my mother during the war, and was raised by a grandmother, which I recommend. I was an evacuee child. I lived in a steel town, so was moved out to the Yorkshire Dales. It was quite a fascinating time and I was removed from the horrors. I found myself on a farm amid loads of Italian prisoners of war and all sorts of strange things. It wasn't traumatic. I was fortunate to be raised by a strong extended family. There were shortages of everything, but by the time the sixties came along, I thought I was in heaven.'

Could you talk about the duality of your work; your modernist geometric work and 'folk' welded art? How do those two interact for you?

'I'm always fascinated by what we call "modern" sculpture. I find the animalistic stuff easier and can extend them to a form of abstraction in a way, with elongation. Making pure sculptural form I find quite difficult and am still working on that. I was in a Christchurch scrap yard this morning. There are mountains of the stuff, but the sheer form is there. However, when you extract it from its environment it's very difficult to put it together to maintain the fascination and elegance. In the scrap yard the steel or the bar or tube has been fashioned already, or been abused, something has run over it. Collecting those elements is fine, but it's very difficult to work that into something and control it. You need the tools. So I tend to work with sheet metal. I find objects absolutely fascinating - sculptures in their own right, without me doing much to them [Instone does a lot with his found pieces]. I feel a bit of a fraud presenting them.'

Do you think we have a strong sculptural context in Christchurch?

'I like to celebrate public sculpture. Some pieces exist quietly; they work in their space, like the works at the law courts. They sit so well in the environment they don't attract attention.'

If you had to pick a sculptor that you admired, who would that be?

'The one I follow the most, because I used to go to his evening classes, is Neil Dawson, from his early *Echo*, which still looks good in the Arts Centre, still working after 25 years. His stupendous works he makes abroad now are quite amazing.'

Jim Instone exhibits a little but mainly works on commissions. He was short-listed to make a maquette, for a Christchurch City Council commission, to go on the land near the old gas works, on the corner of Moorhouse Avenue and Waltham Road. The brief is to embrace the industrial culture of the area, which should suit the engineering boilermaker from North Yorkshire, where steel runs in the blood.

John Stringer

Above: *Astrolabe*, Jim Instone, 2005, Steel, 2m high.

Interview

Paul Deans

LoTR artist and sculpture mentor,
Deans Art Investments, Heathcote

Paul Deans is an established Canterbury sculptor who shares a well-appointed studio with up-and-coming sculptor Anna Korver. It's something of an informal mentor/apprentice duality. Deans has always worked in teams; he's in business with his artist father, the landscape painter Austen Deans. We rambled across mentoring, the church, *Lord of the Rings*, spirituality and art, and the state of public sculpture in Canterbury.

Peel Forest, South Canterbury. A natural affinity for trees and wood led him to sculpture. He completed his first work at 16. His father had a few old blunt chisels and he got stuck in following shapes, understanding grain and exploring the medium. His father, Austen Deans, 90, is still a full-time painter of landscapes. Austen had done some sculpture at art school in Christchurch, but opted for *plein-air* easel painting because he didn't want to be confined to a studio.

Paul Deans didn't follow his father, finding art school too theory-focussed. He just wanted to paint and sculpt - 'do the hands-on stuff'.

'My girlfriend got pregnant, which changed things. We got married and had two more children, settled in Christchurch and joined the New Life Church, in



Paul Deans at work.
All photography: Joanna Osborne.

JS: What are you working on at the moment?

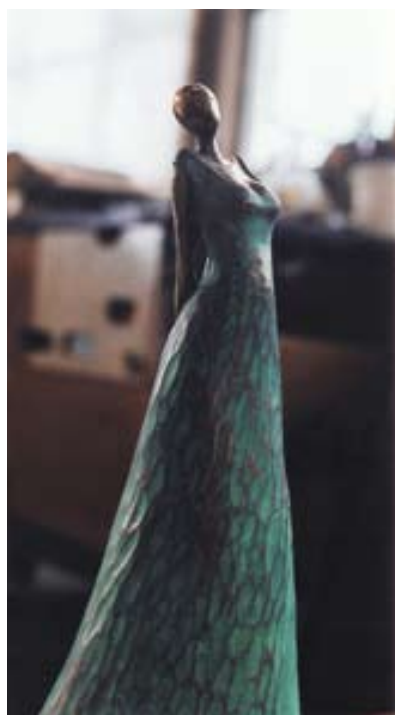
'I've got some outside exhibitions coming up later in the year (2005) and some commissions. I entered a lime wood piece in the 2005 CoCA Art Awards. It's a large mask, called *Mask of the Peacemaker: Exposing the Great Lie*; the great lie that says we're all different or separate, which allows us to create war, when really we're the same. We're all one. How can we work that out?' (*Mask* has recently sold – March 2006.)

Deans was born in 1953 and grew up in the bush at

Manchester Street. I had some spiritual experiences there. But part of it was that I felt I was compromising between God and art, and so gave up art altogether.

'I struggled with the notion of change in the Church. When I asked for clarification, God showed me a picture of a foundation upon which was built an ornate building - the church. And he just knocked it all down and said "this is all you need, the foundation". The rest is all man-made. On leaving the church my understanding of God got so much bigger.

'When I first joined the church, it was great, people



Moonlight Sonata, Paul Deans, 2004 (original wood), 2006 (bronze: 1 of 9), 370mm tall.



When I first joined the church, it was great, people enjoyed life, enjoyed God; it was alive. But I've watched so many people come in with that burst of life and freedom and then religion seeks to box it somehow

enjoyed life, enjoyed God; it was alive. But I've watched so many people come in with that burst of life and freedom and then religion seeks to box it somehow. Jesus came to free us; one of the key things was to free us from religion, a great dichotomy.'

Was art conflicting with your perception of your spirituality?

'Yes. At that stage (the early eighties) I was working as a wood carver for the Hampton Studios. I felt that if doing my art was a problem, well God had to find me another job. I found a great job that suited me very well, in the wholesale cut-flower business; it was a huge weight off my shoulders, and I let all the art stuff go. But after a few years I felt trapped, and the creative side wasn't being expressed. I also



felt unqualified for any other job. I eventually started doing portraits in The Arts Centre.'

What was the transition for you; did you feel you'd reconciled your faith and your art somehow?

'It was like a release, a gradual starting back in again. I loved it, and wanted to make a living out of it. I did a small business course, realised "I can't do this; it's not realistic". My father came in and we made a partnership [Deans Art Investments]. He was painting professionally, landscapes, commission work and works to sell, and still is, based in Peel Forest. He was thinking about retiring. This enabled him to keep his oar in; I did all the business stuff, the GST etc, it gave him more motivation, a tax break; him offering a partnership made the difference and we pooled incomes. I panicked a bit at first, felt I shouldn't be leaning on him, but I learned to deal with that, just relaxed. It's worked well.'

Deans met Geoff and Mary Korver through the Guild of Woodworkers. Anna Korver was still at school, she came along and did some carving and a mentor/apprentice type relationship was born. Anna had to battle through art school wanting to do figurative

work, which wasn't the trend. She had to fight to hold her vision. It was a natural partnership. Korver did the business courses, got on a government scheme (the PACE programme) so she knew she had the income, and moved in to share Deans' well-appointed Heathcote studio.

How do you find working with other artists, first with your father, now Anna Korver?

'I find it very motivating. I don't know about Anna, also because I've been away so much, but I'm sure she finds it a good duality.'

Do you think it's important for emerging talent to be actively mentored? Or is it better just to leave them to their own devices; if they're talented, they'll come through?

'It's hard to know. When starting out I was very much on my own. I look at the government schemes now and think I would have benefited from some of that. For a long time I felt condemned because I hadn't been through art school. I really had to nut things out myself, with no one to bounce things off. It's great doing things like sculpture symposiums with other nutters who, like me, just like bashing away at stone.

'All the theory and conceptual stuff loses me very quickly. I find that, working with wood, either the log itself gives me a sense of what's inside, or an idea will pop into my head, I'll draw it up and then find the right piece of wood to make it work. I'm very visual, the image comes first and then the feelings follow. Afterward, I catch up with what was going on and learn the story of the work.'

So, is that a spiritual thing for you?

'As much as anything is spiritual. I'll sit with a piece of wood, meditate, hold it; feelings and images will come, and it works its message out.'

So you see the work inside the material and you have to go in there and discover it, or do you manipulate the material into what you want?

'A bit of both. Starting with an idea, finding the right piece of wood, I've still got to work with the wood, to make it work. For example, *Fire Dance*, working with it, as I got into the middle it was rotten, which created the negative space inside the heads. It was a natural response to what was there.'

What's your view about public sculpture in Canterbury?

'It's getting better and better. When I started, people knew what to do with paintings – "hang 'em on the wall!" but sculpture was a bit weird. Galleries tended to be the same; they didn't know what to do with us. Sculpture needs its own space and good lighting. The Arthouse was the one that really encouraged sculptors.'

John Stringer

Of mentoring, foiled and fragmented women

An interview with sculptor Anna Korver

Fragmented women and the tones of autumn is what emerging fulltime sculptor Anna Korver of Christchurch is hammering out. This New Zealand representative sabre and foil fencer is chipping away at male-centric preoccupations; literally carving out an exciting niche for herself in the contemporary New Zealand art scene. And people are starting to take notice. She shares an art studio with fellow wood sculptor Paul Deans, in the Heathcote Valley of Christchurch.

JS: How do you find sharing a studio with an older artist? Is that inspirational?

'It's really good working with someone in the same medium. You have knowledge you can share, and you feed off each other. There's good energy and it's a great space.'

How many sculptural symposiums are you involved with now?

'I did eight last year, Auckland to Southland. Stone mainly, there was a wood one in Auckland [Takapuna's *Wood Sculpture Live*]. So far this year I have been involved in three and I have been invited to one in Costa Rica in April (2006). This will involve working on a 6 foot piece of marble and creating a sculpture for the town of Puntarenas, which is a tourist resort in Costa Rica, so it should be very challenging but lots of fun.'

With the symposiums, do you find a strong mentor element present at those; are you drawing from the other artists?

'I do. I wouldn't go as far as "mentoring" – it's sharing really, experiences and knowledge of tools and techniques. It's such a change from working in the more solitary space of the studio. You need to get out and get refreshed, explore new ideas, learn about new tools, it's really necessary for a sculptor.'

What sort of new things have you picked up?

'(Especially at the wood ones) the way people use wood and the effects they create, like colouring it. People have such different styles, and do things I would never have thought of.'

Originally from Nelson, graduating from Ilam School of Fine Art in 2003, Korver's first solo show at Creation, Cathedral Square, followed a year as a dedicated professional artist with a growing list of commissions and group shows. She was first exhibiting as a student artist when I noticed this new talent. That led to a guest appearance in the Chrysalis Seed Trust group exhibition at CoCA, Easter 2003, and an invitation to appear in the 2004 Nelson Arts Festival outdoor *Mac's Sculpture Symposium* with eleven other national sculptors.

Korver's sweeping, sensuous nude forms in wood, metal and mixed media demonstrate a mature control of materials and a vibrant creative talent unafraid to express itself. Her works are edgy, confronting, dynamic, and yet peaceful and in complete harmony with the flow, texture and imperfections of her materials. Her art declares a minimalist beauty and sophistication that goes well beyond the crass provocation of so much modern student art. Korver conjures up an ironic paradox of a sensuous femininity

born of hammer and chisel, forged metal, muscle and brute force that redefines traditional notions of women in art/sculpting.

People love to touch her work. Rails Mackey owns *Fragment 3*, 'a beautifully shaped bottom in my foyer. As people come in they surreptitiously wipe along each side of the bottom. It's tactile and sensual artwork. I wish I had a bottom like that.'

The wood in both *Fitted Skin* and *Autumn* is slightly mottled, there are cracks and bumps, and the toning is not perfect ...just like human skin or rotting autumn leaves, which the artist exploits. Korver is able to delicately force a piece of wood to fall like fabric, drawing near to Michelangelo's ability to create the illusion of body warmth in cold marble.

Her *Fitted Skin* exhibition was about New Zealand women not fitting into traditional roles. She is exploring personally where her generation fits. 'It's partly about being uncomfortable, the whole traditional thing not being accepted by modern society,' she says. 'Female roles don't have a place, because there's no monetary value on them.'

How do you use your forms to explore the concept of women being valued less?

'By using fragmentation a lot. I've been distorting images over the last four years. The rabbit skin work *Skin Dress* (rabbit skin, glass, electric lighting) is tied to childhood, the opposite to mine. I was never into dolls; it's about how we're expected to grow up, the skin we're expected to fill. Rabbit skin is close to a person's skin, another mammal. The work is also about wildness. It was created from road kill, which is about women being tossed aside, run over, crushed, destroyed.'

'Wood is my favourite medium. I work it maybe nine months of the year, get a bit sick of it, and try something else. I do stone at symposiums, a bit of metal, some resin. I'm trying to merge some of that into mixed media.'

What got you into wood originally?

'My Dad carves as a hobby. He taught me from four years old and is in the Wood Workers' Guild (where he met Paul Deans). At university they weren't teaching a lot of technique, so I had to call on things I already knew.'

You use a lot of power tools to cut the form...

'I use a chisel if I want a chisel finish, but I've got to the point now, time-wise, where I use power tools a lot. Constraints mean I have to work quickly.'

You do a lot of work in lime wood. What are the main woods you select?

'You can always get macrocarpa. It's a really under-rated wood, it's nice, but splits sometimes. The harder woods are not as easy to come by. I'm going to get some willow. When I was up north I saw artists using kauri and I was given some. It was great; I'd love to work more with kauri and other native timbers.'

John Stringer

Anna Korver in her studio. Photo: Joanna Osborne



Female roles don't have a place because there's no monetary value on them



Receptacle for Memories, Janet Chambers, 2005, Dust, PVA wood glue, white oak, muslin dyed with acrylic paint, 2125 mm high x 750 mm wide x 500 mm deep. Photo: Joanna Osborne.

//

As an architect, I would work logically through a process and it would be defensible rationally at every stage. There would be a logical process when you developed the plans...

Interview

Janet Chambers

Sculptor

Janet Chambers is a recent graduate in sculpture from Canterbury University School of Fine Arts. Chambers has a background in architecture, which she studied in Sheffield, Yorkshire, before working in London and the USA. She came to New Zealand in 1987 and returned to study at art school in 2001. Chambers talks with Peter Crothall about sculptural practice and how her faith, life experience and architectural background feed into her work.

PC: So would you like to describe the continuity and the difference between architecture and sculpture?

'The constant interest in the visual is in common. I think an interest in three-dimensional space, and the movement of people through space – that's something I've dealt with in my work – I planned to get people moving through the work and I like working on a fairly large scale most of the time, manipulating space and circulation in the space. But on the other hand I do think there are really major differences in how you work as an architect from how you work as a sculptor. There's an incredible freedom in being an artist actually, you can do what you like. You won't necessarily get paid for it, but there are a lot of constraints in working in the building industry, working

to a brief and with a client. It's art and science that are different; with the sculpture you need to try to set free your imagination much more. There are a lot of architects who would like to be as imaginative as they can, but the people are constantly getting you back in line.

Response to global events

'With the subject I felt I was increasingly dealing with Christianity. In the first half of my 4th year I was doing work that stemmed from my feelings about what I was reading in the newspapers, particularly social issues. My work in the psychology area called *World News* was about my feelings as I saw pictures in the papers of people who have been damaged by situations in the world. My collection of newspaper cuttings was partly chosen for their gestural quality and the feeling of helpless outrage I have when I see children in dreadful situations of extreme need. The lack of respect for the value of the lives of brown skinned people is something I feel deeply about.'

PC: So how does this relate back to your faith?

'I know that Christians might come to different conclusions on social issues and worldviews, but as Christians we are often sensitised. You can't cocoon yourself away from feeling about things. I got more personal in the second half of my 4th year and went back to my relationship with my mother... in the style of Trevor Moffit – except it being fairly rough and gestural perhaps; thinking about the relationship with a parent. It was a similar subject about memories and things.

//

At the School of Fine Arts ... spirituality is almost becoming an interesting, dangerous sort of subject and is fresh to people who have no background. There is a shortage of subject matter. Once you have explored yourself, where do you go?

Janet Chambers. Photo: Joanna Osborne.

'The sculpture came first and I wrote the poem *Receptacle for Memories* afterwards. It is based on a puppet theatre – a western style puppet theatre – and it's empty because that's headspace for you. It's a ragged puppet theatre with a head on top of it. It's an anthropomorphic work, which both of these works are – it looks like a person except it has long skinny legs, the other has little skinny legs. I started also with ideas about the experience of clearing out a house for an elderly person.

Memory and Dream

'I thought the experience of being at art school gave me an opportunity to reflect on my life as a whole. I was using it in a different way to the people who were leaving high school preparing for life. I feel work like that also resonates more with people of my generation. When I was an architect, you would work



logically through a process and it would be defensible rationally at every stage. There would be a logical process when you developed the plans. Now with this, it came out of a dream-like image; quite different.'

PC: So what did you discover about your own voice?

'To backtrack slightly, the sculpture of the sheepfold in its first installation was in a more shady place; it was revealed by blowing away the leaves. That had formal qualities, so people could accept and enjoy it on a formal level. It's like drawing in the air, three-dimensionally, and it's the New Zealand landscape in that Canterbury tradition. As well as a formal quality, it had Christian meaning. I was even using symbolism to decide how many rods, how long - that sort of thing.

'I might think "How many rods? I might do twelve for the twelve apostles and I'll put the spikes on it. I think this one's Judas." No one looking at the work necessarily knows any of that. But in my own mind I've woven these things in.

'It's a bit like the decision-making I was doing round

my own body, which is quite a common thing in sculpture. Deciding the weight I could carry, my length when I lay on the ground, my own footstep as I walked round in a circle, that sort of thing. You have to make decisions about how long, how many, how big you make it so it looks right. I suppose the basic thing is – does it look good to me? It is also good to have some grist to the mill to make decisions. I think that adds a certain depth.'

PC: Would you recommend art school for other people coming back at your age?

'If you can hack it, it's tremendous, yes. You are in a slightly awkward position as a mature student because you're the odd one out. But over four years I got more fellow feeling with the group I was coming through with. At first I was sort of invisible, or semi-invisible. But it's quite interesting being a fly on the wall, watching.

'I was also catching up with the history of art, I felt I brought myself through the 20th century to catch up with the present moment, to become more aware of where we are in general philosophy. I did philosophy of art; it gives you a little bit of a lead-in to philosophy generally.

Art school and following Jesus.

'The students are often a blank sheet to any Christian concepts; they're not anti, they're not for – they're just pleasantly neutral. One thing I found at the art school was the freedom to discuss things about spirituality, so long as people didn't feel you were propagandising. In an average office people don't necessarily want any talk about spirituality. At the School of Fine Arts nothing was off limits. All the big questions – life, death, and sex – could be discussed. Spirituality is almost becoming an interesting, dangerous sort of subject and is fresh to people who have no background. There is a shortage of subject matter. Once you have explored yourself, where do you go? I think spirituality is lurking round in the background as suitable subject matter.

'People have a smorgasbord concept of religion. They think something is a nice idea and collect it along with another idea they have got from, say, Confucianism. They are not going to buy into "this is the way".'

As well as her time at art school, Janet Chambers is also quietly enthusiastic about her future plans. She's just completed an Easter installation for her church based on the idea of the curtain ripping in the Temple when Jesus died. In between being a mother to her two sons and wife to husband and doctor, Stephen, she is helping out at church while the pastor is away on sabbatical. Chambers is full of ideas, flushed with the invigorating experience of art theory/studio practice, glimpses of community and end of year exhibition; looking forward to exploring how to build on those years between the busyness of life and family.

Peter Crothall

Getting plastered with Llew Summers

An interview with the McCormack's Bay sculptor

//

Balthus was cornered once and asked why he painted old men with young women.

To paraphrase his words, "in the thirties I was struggling to get a review, eventually I painted an old man with a young woman, maybe I took it too far"

Llew Summers at home. Photo: John Stringer.

Llewelyn Summers provides alliterative relief among the sculptural fraternity dominated by the three D's: Drummond, Dibble and Dawson. His works are prominently public and a recent controversy about his Stations of the Cross series for the Catholic Cathedral in Barbadoes Street gained him national attention. Over several red wines, grace (a Summers' idiosyncrasy) and a wild venison dinner one recent evening, I dug a little deeper to find out what makes this artist sculpt Christ naked. I discovered a refreshingly candid, honest and spiritual baby-boomer, a shared Methodism, and a shared Linwood Street.

JS: What are you working on at the moment Llew?

'I'm working in plaster, which is new for me. My clay work now feels too compromised. The concrete work is all compromised; it was all modelled in clay. It contradicts what sculpture is about for me. Plaster has a hard surface so you get a better work from it. You can work it back or add to it. Talking to Sam Mahon, that's how he tends to work.'

So the integrity of material is what you're looking for, not hybrid amalgams?

'The problem is, you can't take a plaster mould off

a plaster sculpture. With clay you can easily take a plaster cast off. So with clay sculpture I often take the clay out of the plaster. It's important to start with a better material and plaster is a better material. It's also got texture in it, which you don't tend to get with clay. All my big works are too smooth and they were made too fast. They are made before I have time to step back and study them. You can't hit them; you can't rasp them, so there is never the tension in them that there should be. Clay is like trying to model toothpaste. It goes slop, slop, slop. Plaster is a much better base material.'

You're not going to abandon clay?

'No, it depends. Clay is so fast by comparison, but it's compromised. I've made nearly 800 sculptures and I've only been commissioned five times in my life. All the big works that you see have been made speculatively. If you put six months into a speculative work and it doesn't sell, you're finished. You've got to survive.'

Llew Summers was born in 1947 in Christchurch at the height of the baby boom. More children were born his year than ever before, or after. He did a four-year farm cadet apprenticeship. He'd lived in the same street (Tancred Street) and attended the same school





I had always had these nightmares, for years, and I prayed to God that they would go away. And they did, for 40 years. That gave me a belief in God

Any artist worth his salt has to have a measure of the provocateur within. I'm on about nudity big time; if any one in Christchurch doesn't know that by now, there's something wrong

(Linwood High School) as Tony Fomison and my father. Fomison did sculpture at Ilam and when he came back from Europe on an arts grant-funded trip in 1967, the same year Summers quit farming, he started carving Oamaru stone. Summers had done a small carving when he was working on the farm, for something to do. He took it across to Fomison who showed him what to do with it. At that time Fomison was exhibitions officer at the CSA and organised Summers' first exhibition under Rusty Laidlaw (1971). It was part of an important era: Summers was downstairs and Neil Dawson was upstairs, having his first exhibition out of Ilam School of Fine Arts.

In the mid-seventies, Summers was a solo father with two young babies. He went on the DPB, his wife having moved to Australia. That's when his work really began to take off. By 1977 he had decided to live off his work. Prior to that he had never considered that as an option. 'The DPB allowed me to make big work. Not much of it was very good, but it was into scale. I had always wanted to be a big carver. That was my dream. The trouble is it's very slow, it has to be commissioned. I could spend three to six months on a carving and it can just sit there. Well, there are still bills to be paid. It's a lot of time to have sitting there.

'I'm not interested in Oamaru stone. It's a good thing to learn on, but basically it's crap. The problem in New Zealand is you can't go anywhere and see someone carving marble. We don't have the history here. It's all new really. People do it with machines; I'm not that way inclined. I like the notion of finding the sculpture in there. Finding tools is hard too. I got a grant in the late eighties to buy some pneumatic tools. I've used those for all my small marble works, but not the big ones I've dreamed of.

'I've taught people who are much more skilled than I am. I look at Michelangelo and I'm completely blown away that he could achieve the level of detail he did, and how he was able to carve into those marble blocks.'

You're obviously a very spiritual man, and your latest work was for the Catholic Church, the Stations of the Cross. Did you have some kind of

epiphany regarding spirituality and faith?

'When I was young I went to church. The Methodist church was an incredibly boring place, I have to say – those bloody raspberry drinks up the front, weren't they shocking? I had always had these nightmares, for years, and I prayed to God that they would go away. And they did, for 40 years. That gave me a belief in God. I'm not really interested in debating religion; I just have a faith that there is more to life than this. There has to be a reason. It's simple like that.'

How did you resolve your spirituality, as an inner repository of ideas?

'It makes me want to do good. Without it I would be rather lost actually. All my work is life-affirming. I'm interested in the symbolists and visionaries: Gustave Moreau, Odilon Redon - he is perhaps the best of all - Tony Fomison, Helm Ruifrock is a visionary; but I'm not sure it has a lot to do with my sculpture. I'm not interested in pretty pictures. I'm more interested in something beyond, like those artists.'

In the context of the recent controversy that you've been caught up with, should sculpture be didactic, is there a place for it to be provocative?

'Any artist worth his salt has to have a measure of the provocateur within. I'm on about nudity big time; if any one in Christchurch doesn't know that by now, there's something wrong.'

I can see the headline now:

'Summers Into Nudity Big Time'.

'But that is a major issue for me. 99 percent of my work is about the nude, about creating and presenting the nude to Canterbury, the public, helping it become established in the local arts context.'

What do you mean it's a big issue for you?

'Well, there's a denial of the body in society. My work is about the beautification of the body. Simplification. It's about celebrating what we've been given by God. I don't think about it in the context of being provocative. All good art has to have some kind of issue in it, some sense of confrontation. It's got to challenge in some way. It must do one of those things. If you do nothing as an artist, you get no response. So, that's an essential thing. Balthus¹ was cornered once and asked why he painted old men with young women. To paraphrase his words, "in the thirties I was struggling to get a review, eventually I painted an old man with a young woman, maybe I took it too far". I love the simplicity of that. For him it's not deep and meaningful at all. Sex is a real force. If the sex is completely removed from something, what is it? It's nothing.

'You take someone like Freud or Stanley Spencer. They worked for forty years ignoring every kind of -ism. I hate all those -isms, they're all just fashion-driven rubbish. People like to think they're individuals all doing their own thing, but really, look at dribbling paint. How many people paint now using dribbling paint because it's the "in" thing?'

John Stringer

Above: *Play*, Llew Summers, 1978, Cast concrete, 2.5 x 1.2m. Located outside Linwood High School, Christchurch. Photo: Andrew Clarkson.

1 'Balthus', 1908-2001, Balthazar Klossowski de Rola.



Fisherfolk, 1965, Ria Bancroft, Plastic steel/iron,
400mm x 300mm, Private collection.
Photo: Aldren Simmons.

Interview

Peb Simmons

Author of *No Ordinary Woman*
(Ria Bancroft – Sculptor, 1907-1993)



Peb Simmons

Peb Simmons is a published writer in her own right over many years. This includes poetry, children's books, devotional literature and other non-fiction material. The most well known of these in recent times is the biography of her mother, sculptor Ria Bancroft, *No Ordinary Woman*, which

was published to coincide with the retrospective exhibition of the sculptor at the McDougall gallery in 1998. One aspect of the book in its early section is the suggestion of the close relationship Peb enjoyed with her mother, in unusual circumstances. Ria Bancroft was a prolific and influential sculptor, active in Christchurch over three decades after her arrival in New Zealand in the early sixties and on into the

1980s. The most well known of her works is, arguably, her bronze relief for the Tabernacle Screen doors in the Catholic Cathedral in Barbadoes Street. Her work is positioned in a range of public spaces around Christchurch as well as being part of public gallery collections around the country.

JS: Why did you decide to write your mother's biography?

'Several times before her death, Mother said to me: "You write the story, only you know the truth". And I did know her private truth: the austere Edwardian childhood, the harsh elementary schooling, busking with her mother around country fairs, the Music Hall life, a brutal first marriage. At twelve years of age she scrabbled for clay in the local riverbank driven by an inner urgency to create "form" - a longing she never outgrew, rather it became a burning passion. When I was a toddler, to care for me, Mother left the stage. But, there were no siblings, or close family. Father travelled: he too was as an entertainer, even when he joined the Air Force. During the years, Ria spoke about dreadful events she had experienced, and the grief. I grew to feel deep sorrow for her tragic life, but also admired her courageously honest spirit. When she died, I understood I was left with this great commission.'

What were some of your experiences writing *No Ordinary Woman*?

'Ria was protective of her work, particularly in the early stages of a new sculpture, as if exposing burgeoning inspiration might destroy ideas in their infancy. Her studio was sacrosanct, I was never allowed to clean there. But after her death, I could at last carefully empty that room, undisturbed for thirty years. It revealed the woman I had known, intimately, and the artist, I only perceived. Sorting through and packing unfinished works, drawings, tools and materials, was like touching an inner life. As the biography developed, the distant and the recent past was translated into a living life. I could feel and hear her, conjure up that studio and imagine her quietly, resolutely, creating.

'In 1994 I travelled to Rome and Florence, staying in the houses where Ria had lived, meeting and talking

materials. And there was no foundry expert in *Cire perdue* (Lost Wax casting), which is why the relief sculpture *Dormitian of the Virgin* (1968) is only two dimensional, to allow for "cold casting". The bronze relief *Tabernacle Screen Doors* with almost three-dimensional under-cutting, were sent to England for the Lost Wax process; such delicate casting could not be achieved in New Zealand. The Tabernacle Doors, entitled *Christ has Died-Christ is Risen* (1975-77) have been compared to the Gothic artists Andrea Pisano and Lorenzo Ghiberti.

'Materials and casting problems caused Ria to invent other methods for working in her preferred medium – metal. For example, *Rocking Horse Ride* (1963) has a braised metal armature, moulded with plastic steel, then finely patinated; it is one of many sculptures made by this method. But she also worked in terracotta, wood, lead, slate, stone, mosaic, ceramic,



Rocking Horse Ride, 1963, Ria Bancroft, Resin/steel/iron, 4650 x 1550mm, The Suter Gallery collection, Nelson, Photo: The Suter Gallery.

with her Italian friends. Then on to Bath, where she was born, to discover her earliest environment, walking in the streets she knew as a child, and to Bristol where she lived as a young adult. I visited London and Toronto, confirming Ria's associations with those two cities.'

What is your view about Ria's place in the story of New Zealand art and sculpture?

'In a nutshell, her arrival in New Zealand was opportune. At the time, Russell Clark (1905-1966) was the only true New Zealand sculptor, and he died four years after Ria settled in Christchurch. Ria filled the hiatus caused by his death; it was as though people were hungry for sculpture.

'In 1963 Ria exhibited the two Italian bronzes *Woman by the Sea* (1961) and *Eclipse* (1962) at *The Group Show*, 1964, Durham Street Art Gallery, CSA. Later, she was invited to join and remained an active member until it was disbanded in 1977.

'It was almost impossible to obtain specialist art

in fact any medium that inspired her.

'Ria shared generously the knowledge attained through years as a working artist in England and Canada, and her training at the Academy of Fine Arts in Florence. Through this experience, she brought to New Zealand a Renaissance spirit, evident in her sculpture, and as art teacher (1970-74) at Xavier College (now Cathedral College) also in lectures and photographic slide-shows given in response to many group requests. She gave advice to any aspiring artist. Because of her own passion and struggle, she understood people who had dreams. In her capacity as Assessor for the Fine Arts Department at Ilam, University of Canterbury (mid-1960s) her artistic skill and maturity were available to young students.

'During that time the Ministry of Works commissioned artists to enhance new buildings. When Ilam University was under construction Ria, in collaboration with wood carver Pat Mulcahy, was commissioned to create the 9m mural *Forms* (1964-65) for the foyer of the Science Lecture Hall. This work was so successful

the sculptors were soon commissioned to create the panels *Mudpools-Trout-Radiata Pine* (1966) for the New Zealand Broadcasting Studios in Rotorua. Also in 1965, in response to a commission for the Christchurch Airport, Ria made - in silver resin - one of her best loved sculptures, *Horizon*. Manning Intermediate School is still graced by Ria's *City in Space No 1* (1969), a work generations of children have enjoyed.

'In tandem with Government work, Ria received both private and public commissions for religious sculpture, among others, *Angel of St Matthew* (1967) for the new St Matthew's Church, Bryndwr. Due to building expenses, this fine work remains as a maquette; it is exhibited in the church. Cathedral College commissioned *Xavier Madonna* (1968) and *Dormitian of the Virgin* (1968). Four copies of *Dormitian* are privately owned. Sacred Heart College, Auckland, commissioned the unique *Cosmo Genesis* (1970).

consider creating the Kate Sheppard Memorial but she declined due to worsening ill health.

'Thus, in countless ways during three work-filled creative decades, Ria contributed to the New Zealand art scene. In 1976 the New Zealand National Film Unit produced a 15 minute film clip for worldwide distribution. *Three Women* is a visual tribute to the work of three New Zealand artists: Alison Duff, Yvonne Rust and Ria Bancroft. In 1977 the *Tabernacle Screen Doors* were installed in the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament. Ria had become a recognised New Zealand artist.

'In 1998 the Robert McDougall Art Gallery mounted the retrospective exhibition *Three Decades of Sculpture*, a sensitive and fine display of Ria's three decades plus of sculpture.

'At this present time the Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, holds many of her sculptures, most notably the bronze *Eclipse* (1962), *The Crowd* (1967) [originally purchased by the New Zealand Government for their embassy in Geneva] and three of her fine portrait heads. The small, exquisite bronze nude *Woman by the Sea* (1961, also entitled *Seated Nude*) is on permanent exhibition.

'Ria's extraordinary life experiences enabled her to produce work of broad conception and humanity. An artist creates from the inner spirit. Ria's sculptures reach out to touch the viewer, engaging the heart as well as the mind. This gift is evident in almost every work, whether realist or abstract.'

You have an obvious passion and love for public sculpture.

'Yes, this was something I did not appreciate until after Ria's death. Now when I see a sculpture I must discover it physically. I remember her hand as she lovingly explored a work, with intense observation. But then, too, I owe her knowledge. Frequently

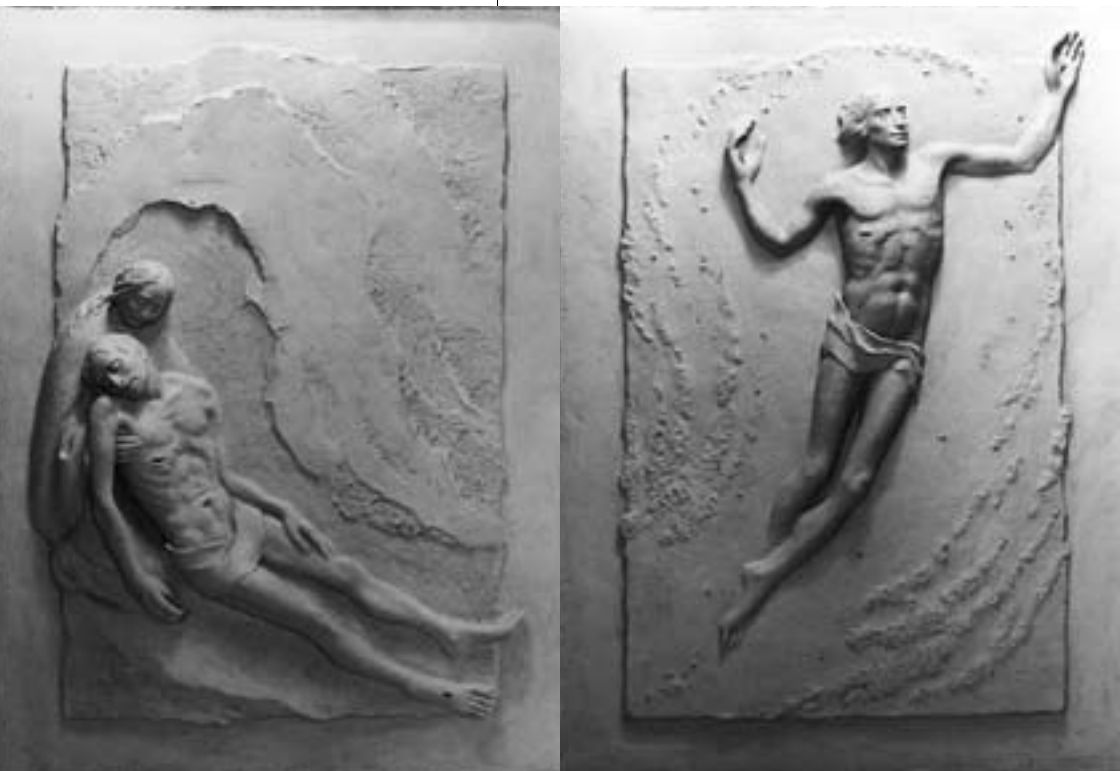
she placed me, a four-year-old, before large art books (to keep me quiet by looking at "pretty pictures"). That was the genesis for all my future interest and knowledge. Sometimes life teaches us unawares, and writing the biography, then lecturing on Ria's work, caused me to open a treasure chest I did not know I possessed.

'Ria taught her students that art is not simply paintings hanging in a gallery, or large statues in public places; but the buildings we live and work in, each cup we use, every chair on which we sit, everything made has some relationship with a creative mind. She inspired people to really *look* at the world, to be excited about it, to relish the beauty; all this, and so much more, is her legacy to New Zealand.

'To be Ria's daughter was a privilege, for which I remain profoundly grateful.'

Peb Simmons moved to New Zealand in 1962. She is married to Aldren and has lived in Christchurch most of her life, which she considers to be her true spiritual home.

John Stringer



Christ had Died-Christ is Risen, 1975-77, Ria Bancroft, Tabernacle Screen Doors (left and right), Original clay masters for lost wax casting, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu collection, Photo: Aldren Simmons.

The World Council of Churches invited Ria to contribute to the 1979 Melbourne Conference. The resulting sculpture *Thy Kingdom Come*, a combined basalt rock, stone and brass work, was eventually donated to the new Holy Cross Chapel in Chancery Lane, Christchurch. Ria refused any payment for the deeply spiritual work.

'In 1982 Ria and the sculptor Bing Dawe were commissioned to undertake the complete re-ordering of the interior of St Mary's Catholic Church in New Brighton. Inspired by the medieval 7th century old English runic poem *Dream of the Rood*, she designed the Altar, Lectern and Baptismal Font. Bing Dawe brought Ria's designs to sculptural life. But she wanted to gift a sculpture to the new interior. The life-sized *Mary, Mother of Jesus* (1983-84) in Oamaru stone became a work of love.

'A commission from All Saints Anglican Church in Dunedin for a metre high *Christus Rex* (1989-90) was to be her last public work.

'Toward the end of her life Ria was approached to



Graham Bennett - *Reasons for Voyaging*

Reasons for Voyaging, Graham Bennett, 2003, Stainless Steel, Totara, Height:19m; Width:16m; Depth:38metres, Located outside Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, Axis SW-NE. Photo courtesy of Graham Bennett.

Reasons for Voyaging makes its mark on the horizon, paints a picture in the varying colours and hues of skylines behind, seen through its vanes, and the whole amazes with its elegant permutations of possibilities.

The concept takes one outside of the here and now, involves both technology and an approach which is meticulous, considered and inspired by Graham Bennett's years of journey-taking, journeys in his art and alongside other artists, both locally and overseas. There is an implicit reference to all the voyaging that occurred to settle our remote landmass and to all the myriad stories that must inevitably be evoked.

He is also responsible for taking on the acceptance of creating (alongside a wide-ranging team of people) the *Tribute To Firefighters*. As this public sculpture was to be constructed from twisted steel from the World Trade Centre site, it had to literally lift spirits and reflect the dedication of firefighters to their fellows. Bennett thought deeply about why he would do the work if he did undertake the commission - and what it would mean. In the event, as they stood in his studio, the visiting New York firefighters were in tears, emotional at how all had positively come together.

Reasons for Voyaging likewise makes its mark upon one's emotions. Its heart is of totara, (milled from logs brought from the forest, blessed by Ngai Tahu in appropriate ritual); its outside is polished, lasting, stainless steel. The whole is intended to reach into the future, but also to reflect back into the past. The tilted axes and tapered shafts are an overlay, a matrix of charts, maps, hints of forms - of canoes, of colonial ships. He reflected upon the arc of the stars in the night sky, the further arc of the horizon and the zenith above the voyager. Navigators from Polynesian islands and others, such as those of the 'Brigantine' (on which his ancestors voyaged here in 1868), would

thus plot their courses; he drew on octants, sextants and other navigational devices observed and sketched at the Museum, as well as considering the Globe and the seven of the eighteen segments which make up our part of the Pacific as integral to the triangulated design.

Making a meaning that is of *Te Moananui a Kiwa*, the Pacific Ocean, is a unique component of the whole. The setting is in a city, alongside an art gallery, with a need to fit with the architectural planning. Yet, Bennett's work, able to be interpreted anywhere, holds a message that has universality. In the past he has travelled widely and made his mark internationally for his use of natural materials in distinctively skilful settings.

A particularly relevant collaboration was with Japanese printmaker, Masao Ohba. Literal and alliterative themes around bridging cultures were raised; the setting was Japan, and from an actual drawing he sketched of a lacquered bridge, resulted a multi-layered 15 colour print run of 100. So too there are many layerings of interpretation in his *Reasons for Voyaging* as it reaches up to the heavens and turns with expert, up-to-date technology, informed by human understanding, craft and knowledge learned in observation and expressed with integrity. The currents, cycles of the moon and the impacts upon our land, our being - our identity - are forever mutable and individuals' interpretations should likewise be free and varied, pondering *Reasons for Voyaging*.

Juliana Venning



Chalice, Neil Dawson, 2000, Steel, aluminium, black granite. 18m high, 1.2m diameter at ground, 8.5m diameter at top. Located at Christchurch Cathedral Square. Photo: Andrew Clarkson.

Interview

Neil Dawson

Regarding *Chalice*

The actual form of this sculpture came into being over a period of decades. After hanging *Echo* in 1981¹ in the North Quad space at the Arts Centre in Christchurch (the first contemporary hanging, public artwork out and up in our city) Neil reflected on concepts, created other major works internationally, and continually urged the Christchurch City Council to adopt more public, accessible art. Others joined him in this plea, for example Garry Arthur, John Coley, Sam Mahon and Llew Summers (the latter exhibiting works in public at his own expense).

Neil says of his site-specific, hanging works '...one gets to know each in glances' and 'when people describe my work, they describe the day – they think of the whole experience...not just the object'. The sculptor's work takes on meaning from the changing aspect of weather and people's own experiences in relation to each piece, which relates to his concept of community. He references his 'art in life' philosophy to growing up in areas where marae visits were the most

powerful experience of original art (Wairarapa and Hawkes Bay). He was impressed by *whakairo*/carving and Maori concepts of art as integral to living.

He is also keen to work outside the gallery's 'sanctified space' in a shared environment. His concept – inspiration for the structure that would become *Chalice*, was primeval nature alongside the wind – our local 'nor'wester blowing leaves into a vortex'.

The brief he was given from *Turning Point 2000* required him: 'To create a major lasting work to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of Canterbury and celebrate the Millennium, while complementing the Square structures.

Dawson's theme fitted the brief '...complementing natural and cultural history'. He was to construct (with up to 100 others working on the project over three years) a controversial, worthy, '...zingy presence of the modern.²'

The artist says, 'The leaf patterns represent the natural environment ... the historic eco-system ... the conical shape denotes expansion, growth; makes reference to aquifers spurting forth under the Plains'. He feels it was confirmed in its place by people naturally using it as a memorial after 9/11 – a space to stop, think, look up, be in touch with life. It is a secular space but with a reflexive, inverse echo of the Cathedral's spire. The tile patterns (hexagonal) of the Cathedral are incorporated in the underpinning framework of the 48 leaves, other attributions recall Victorian silverware and architecture. 'The name *Chalice* followed the concept.' Linking his fingers and then steeping and raising his hands to extend them, he expansively remarks that he thinks of it '...as a vessel having myriad associations and possibilities opening out...' (he pauses and reflects) '...there are Maori legends that relate to this reaching for the sky and I've been told by Maori that what they love about my work is the suspension between Rangī and Papa. The *Chalice* operates within that linking space...a stairway to Heaven as in *tukutuku* panels...'

Certainly it makes one look up at the sheer genius of the concept and construction. It reaches up 5 stories or 18 metres in height. When the *Chalice* was lit up for the first time on the evening of 7 September 2001, Neil thanked his mother (who was there) and commented: 'It was a surreal moment seeing the realization of my crazy idea'. His other works that reference connections between earth and sky are the many sculptures both here and in Australia where the feather features, e.g. Takahanga Marae's *Kahu*. Dawson refers to bird feathers as '...exquisite fragments of the original inhabitants'. Each of his sculptures draws its being from the site, the ideas he has, and his intention to work with the community to bring each person into a knowledge of art and to react.

Juliana Venning

1 1991 reinstalled permanently.

2 Christchurch Press editorial 10 September 2001.

SOUTHERN DIARY

By Don Binney



Don Binney

Bluff, 11th March 2005

Clean, tube-lit, prefab, the Stewart Island Experience waiting room smells of carpet adhesive. A compact, crew-cut worker makes his way between repairs and a stepladder out in the street. He has a worn work-apron and those old Reckitt's Blue regulation overalls. This prompts an awareness of having seen not a single hazard-orange jerkin since leaving Auckland. Also in deep azure are the two youngish women behind the ticket counter. Outside the air is moist; the mood within, one of phlegmatic expectation – without (joy!) piped music. The padded stacking-chairs, too, run to that same bluebag colour.

'Where' (presumably, in New Zealand) 'are you from?' seems to be a question one receives more frequently in Southland. Doubtless well meant; often coupled with an assumption of a first-time to Stewart Island. Ah, well: the very first (early 1964) Binney painting of Rakiura has hung, all this summer past, in the *Representation and Reaction* curated show at Auckland Art Gallery. Had I settled at Half Moon Bay just after that work was completed, I'd be almost accepted as a local by now.

Half Moon Bay, pm.

Hull-crackingly choppy swell calmed with the Mutton Bird Island and big clusters of just those birds, on water or shearing it: darting, satin-sooty. Then a sunless, but clear, passage to portside Oban – only in forty years I've never heard anyone call it that. The first kereru are visible before we disembark; in the hour following I'd have lost count, even if I'd intended it. And with no other guests at the Lodge just now, its verandah becomes jumped-over by several kaka. Armchair ornithology, this.

Rakiura, 12th March.

Stewart Island locals indeed, are Ron and Elspeth. He, a former ranger and a rich source of Island natural history and heritage lore; she, once based in the old Turnbull Library in Bowen Street, owns a gallery/craft shop in Half Moon Bay. The 300-odd population here needs as many such folk as it can retain. Yet at tea-and-biscuits after the first Island Fest '05 function, I'm left with the idea of their possible shift. Recent, unobtrusive, challenges to local ways, especially in the area of tourist initiatives – not to mention escalating property prices crossing even Foveaux Strait – can leave the sturdiest feeling unrest.

13th March

The still, moist day doesn't promise too much but Michael and Jane arrive on time and we say good morning to Mill Creek. Then, through Horseshoe Bay to evidence of recent, relentless bulldozer-widening of Lee Bay Road, to the Rakiura National Park entrance. Tree-fern, native fuchsia, scuttled: the sort of undertakings many city-dwellers come here to get away from. We go back to Mill Creek and I begin a new, small, study. The mid-afternoon return ferry crossing is still, achromatic. Back at Bluff, the Maori shuttle driver says 'What country are you from, Sir?' I rapid-reply 'Auckland' and we both have a good laugh.

14th March, Southland Museum

A display of Greer Twiss albatross maquettes, Craig

Potton mollymawk photographs and Binney Rakiura 2000 drawings marks this museum's hosting *Dancing Star Island Fest 2005*. This environmental/wildlife foundation, Los Angeles-based, has secured a predator-proofed block on Rakiura alongside the Lee Bay Road, where the trust's founder Michael took me yesterday. Three of this year's speakers have just made their address on the Island – which they'll re-run here; while Greer and I get repeat slots today, tomorrow. Greer opens this Invercargill round, discussing his substantial albatross-based metal works. Next up is Department of Conservation's Kevin O'Connor. His presentation – location-shots, scrolled-up titles and bullet-points – is strong on the substance of subantarctic recovery though short on his own adventures, observations and insights, of which he must have many. By contrast Michael Stedman in this evening's slot is unabashedly first-person. NZTV's production energy behind 'Wild South' is all there: critical, politically uncowed, yet ultimately hopeful. Between these two, I'm scheduled for later afternoon. My abstract:

Conservation, spirituality and art usually conjoin in societies living indigenous to natural habitat. Such oneness, however, becomes superseded by international interference on a global scale. The role of any artist – in the fullest definition – can aid other specialist initiatives in habitat recovery, not just as a recorder but also as a celebrant. Manual and intellectual work can conjoin with mediative social ritual. Bringing creativity to the world's stewardship, the artist might find a renewed role, beyond today's comodifications and hyper-theorising. As Emile Nolde's *God, the Great Gardener* proposes, we should all become 'gardeners' of a kind.

15th March

After an early, convivially-cramped, lunch it's good to walk out into the Queen's Gardens alongside the Museum. These are beautifully-planted, spacious and varied (a bellbird, somewhere) though, the vast lawns sometimes give way to boggy sinkholes within the grass, revealing one-time swamp origins of the site. I avail myself of a fully automated unisex loo: in a Jacques Tati-ish way re-pressing the green button to retrieve my walking stick. But, sobering are the suggested associations with McCahon's short stop in the Sydney Botanic Gardens in 1984 – not to rejoin his company and, somehow, end the day wandering and confused in quite another part of the city...never to fully recover. I am the same age now as Colin was, then.

...forgotten like a dead man, out of mind:

I am as useless as a broken pot

(Psalm 31:12)

But the show must go on and it does. My second address is better attended and proceeds more easily than yesterday's. Attendance throughout Island Fest '05 has been steady: not huge but engaged. I conclude, as I did the day before, with the plea: 'We need workshops – many, many more of them...' Conservation, like the arts, permits a holistic view, a making-anew. These few days have been an opportunity. They've made a difference.



Mill Creek, Rakiura, Don Binney, 2005, Pencil on paper, 14.8 x 21 cm.

Merging Traditions, Aotearoa

Sue Spigel and Galina Kim ChristChurch Cathedral, 2 March – 11 April 2006



1 *Gates of Prayer: The New Union Prayer Book.*
Accompanying text to *Journeying Cloak for Gaia*
and Archangel Gabriel.

Top: *In the beginning*, Sue Spigel and Galina Kim,
2005, Oil on canvas and tapestry, 130 x 170 cm.

Bottom: *Tangata Whenua*, Sue Spigel and Galina Kim,
2005, Oil on canvas and tapestry, 130 x 135 cm.

Review by Joanna Osborne

A peacefully still atmosphere found me as I entered ChristChurch Cathedral, the organ played and people gathered with hushed voices. A wooden framework lined an aisle on the far right, on which eight art works hung back-to-back: painter Galina Kim from the Ukraine and Sue Spigel from America merging tradition and enriching Christchurch with a celebration, in paint and textile, of Aotearoa.

The Cathedral as a setting for the exhibition was a good fit for their work, which carried the tradition of religious art.

The two friends work in different media. Kim works with palette knife to patch and grid the under-surface of delicately painted flows of gold script, cathedral window, land, sea, sailboat, and the face of Christ. Spigel works fascinating detail and texture through machine-stitched quilting, and hand-dyed fabric. The painting and textile works flow seamlessly together, merging hints of a majestic iconography and a tradition of quilting, a unified collaboration that eloquently reflects their faith, in a way that is loaded with their own heritage and an understanding about creation and the history of New Zealand. The eight consecutive works build up to a prayer for love and wisdom towards our world and environment.

'And we, clay touched by God, will reach out for holiness, and exclaim in wonder;

How filled with awe is this place, and we did not know it!'¹

Each work is composed in a type of crescent hemispherical form of the universe, reflecting in a sense the bigger picture of life, however patched and fragmented it is from our perspective.

At first the exhibition was a little difficult to locate in the grand space of the Cathedral, and the works read awkwardly, from right to left then back around.

Yet the exhibition as a whole unfurled to strike me with profound delight and a new sense of patriotism inspired by two visionaries in the world of art.

Joanna Osborne

Review by Mike Plamers

Why have art exhibitions in a cathedral? This is a legitimate question. It enables us to journey into exploring spirituality and geography. Consequently there were a number of things that excited me about this exhibition. In particular the art works explore the ideas of sense of place and community within a narrative located in place and time. The images are explicitly of Aotearoa. The artists, in collaboration, created their own intimate community. The larger narrative is grounded within Aotearoa history.

Kim and Spigel use the energy of community to explore their migrant journeys across Gaia. They tell the story from creation, colonisation, and potential co-habitation with Gaia. The Cathedral, divorced from creation, does not fit the indigenous culture nor relate to the other species that co-exist with humanity as identified in the earlier panel.

They do not stop where much of Christendom has



stalled; they move forward, the challenge of re-engagement with Gaia was created. The image of a half circle with the words 'loved world' caused me to reflect that God would have loved the world even if it was only a half of what it is.

Like the stained glass windows of earlier cathedrals that told the gospel story in pictures, so these works tell the more inclusive gospel story of God's intimate acquaintance with the entire cosmos to redeem it. For me this was an excellent exemplar of 'understanding God (theology) through art'.

I was enriched and encouraged through the dialogue of these two artists. The Cathedral was the right place for this exhibition. To remind the Christian community that we do have something to say about the care for the environment, to learn to co-habit with all species, to see the beauty of Gaia's cloak.

Mike Palmers



From top to bottom:

Land Before People,
Sue Spigel and Galina Kim, 2005, Oil on canvas and
tapestry, 130 x 170 cm.

The Coming of the English,
Sue Spigel and Galina Kim, 2005, Oil on canvas and
tapestry, 130 x 135 cm.

The Meeting House,
Sue Spigel and Galina Kim, 2005, Oil on canvas and
tapestry, 130 x 170 cm.



Review

Casting Purls

Katie Thomas

Campbell Grant Galleries, Christchurch,

7 – 25 March 2006

After receiving the invitation and glimpsing what was to be expected, it was with much anticipation that I awaited the opening. I wasn't disappointed. Coupled with Thomas's characteristic seductive resin surfaces, was an introduced weaving geometric pattern that visually dominated the exhibition. Borrowed from a knitting stitch, Katie Thomas successfully incorporated the knitted design into her artwork as both a visual and metaphoric device.

Upon viewing Thomas's recent endeavours I was reminded of the patterned surfaces typically adorning Islamic architecture, seeing the 'knitted' pattern, like Islamic art, as an intermediary between the material and spiritual world. Its abstract nature guaranteed it free from any worldly associations, while its ordered symmetry and structured design quietly suggested

the unseen realm by reflecting monotheistic concepts. Nevertheless, there was nothing dogmatic about its suggestion. Its meaning was contextual; my own particular impression being formed from what I knew of the artist.

It was because of the work's openness to interpretation that the presence of inherent meanings was not at the visual expense of the art, as could be seen in the stronger works that made refined use of the rhythmic and symmetrical knitted designs. The beautiful melding of intensely coloured motifs, warmly glazed and receding into murky depths, were 'housed' by the structured knitted weave. Its superimposed structure trained the eye and constrained it from restlessly roaming over the pictorial surface. Some works went even further to extend the pattern to the external shape of the artwork. Those that did had their surfaces bound, not in the conventional square or circle, but rather in the pattern itself. This purling being one of the developments in this show that adds to the complexity and achievement of Katie Thomas's art practice.

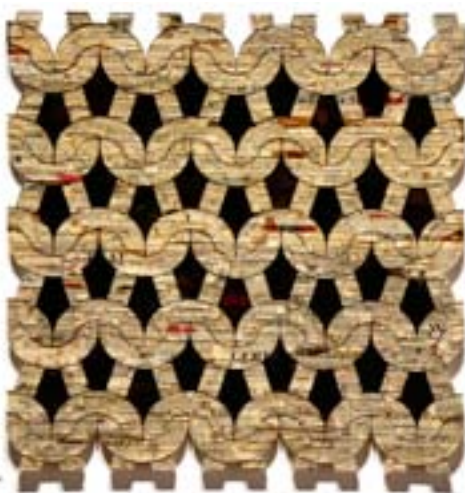
Jonathan Baker



Above: *Lifeline*, Katie Thomas, 2006, Resin, 850 x 1690mm. Private Collection Auckland.

Right: *Testimony*, Katie Thomas, 2006, Resin, 804 x 802mm. Private Collection.

Far Right: *Secret Place*, Katie Thomas, 2006, Resin, 996mm diameter. Collection: Campbell Grant Galleries. Photos: John Newcombe.





Review

Alchemy of daily life

Christchurch Art Gallery,

18 November 2005 – 26 February 2006

Imaginative, playful, an almost childlike escapism; *Alchemy of Daily Life* was a fantastic show where my only regret was in failing to obtain a copy of the printed catalogue. The easily approachable exhibition and its appeal lay in the sculptures being constructed from familiar everyday objects. Viewers could reconcile the familiar with the less-than-ordinary.

Yun-mo Ahn's toy cars were transformed, by the addition of plastic butterfly wings, to become strange new creatures. Multitudes of these creatures were hung from the ceiling, filling an entire corner. The sculpture's presence would not uncommonly secure a quiet smile from the passers by. Its delightful nature lay in the ability of its creatures to belong to both daily life and art. It seemed paradoxical, but even though the once familiar objects took an unworldly and nonsensical form, their presence had a convincing realism. Through imaginative forces they had been freed from their worldly constraints to become something new. The delight was in seeing both possibilities exist together.

The remaining large group of sculptures in the exhibition existed in the same spirit.

Byoing-wang Cho constructed an alternate and alien view of reality. His chosen objects consisting of boxes, ladders, tables, etc were edged with 'glow in the dark' paint, and placed under fluorescent lights. Walking into his exhibit was similar to becoming a cartoon, as I felt as if I was interacting with a two dimensional space. Hong-joo Kim's arrangement of cheap mass-produced pink plastic baskets into a beautiful, delicate wall hanging, and Dong-wook Lee's bizarre metamorphosis of humans into edible tinned food are a sample of what could be seen at the exhibition.

Complementary to my many favourites in the art show was the manner in which they were curated. Well thought-out and structured, the exhibition was punctuated by categories that informed the viewer of the approach the artists had taken to make their work. The categories weren't stifling or intrusive but provided points of contrast between the differing sculptures. On the other hand, the show also emphasized the cohesion between the group as it formed a collection representing one of the central concerns in contemporary Korean art: art's appropriation of the object. By incorporating objects that were particular to Korea or alluding to aspects of Korean society, the 21 Korean artists had claimed, what Western art initiated, as their own. They had refreshed and reinvented the everyday object's use in art from their own unique perspective.

Jonathan Baker



Top of page: *Flying*, Yun-mo Ahn, 2004, Courtesy of the artist and the National Museum of Contemporary Arts, Korea.

Above: *Netizen*, Jung-hyun Choi, 2004, Courtesy of the artist and the National Museum of Contemporary Arts, Korea.

ONO PACIFIC ARTS FESTIVAL

Christchurch, New Zealand 1–4 February 2006

Review

The Land Has Eyes (Film)

Pear ta ma 'on maf (in the Rotuman, Polynesian dialect), with English subtitles, where necessary, but spoken dialogue is also mainly in English.

Made by Te Maka Productions, distributed in New Zealand by Ronin Films and screening at Hoyts.

Sapeta Taito, (as Viki) is the focus of this film. She embodies integrity and is an appropriate and engaging conduit for the director's eloquent unfolding of a family's and an island's story (Vilsoni Hereniko, director, also wrote the screenplay). Sapeta is now in real life an Honours student in Fiji, who grew up like

Vilsoni, on Rotuma.

Rena Owen (our four times award-winning actress from Aotearoa) personifies the 'warrior woman'. She gives an example of strength for Viki, who is instructed on her determination by Hapati, her father (played by native Rotuman, Voi Fesaitu). Hapati is a role played with quiet conviction and dignity.

Rotuman elder Elizabeth Inia (and one time teacher of the director, Vilsoni) plays Mata. This character adds both humour and traditional knowledge to what is an outstanding story of courage, unified by great cinematography from Paul Atkins.

Merata Mita was an executive producer for this film.

Juliana Venning



Above : *Within the Immensity of Space*, Teina Ellia, 2006, mixed media on canvas.

Right : *Polynesian Voyaging Chapters 1–8*, Felolini Maria Ifopo, 2006, Acrylic, PVA on board.



Review

Vikings of The Sunrise

Salamander Gallery, Christchurch

31 January – 12 February 2006

Vikings of the Sunrise, in terms of its title was explained by curator and artist Felolini Maria Ifopo, as the term for Polynesian navigators that she found when she was researching Sir Peter Buck's works. This neatly encapsulates the range of works and references in the exhibition. Ifopo's own *Polynesian Voyaging Chapters 1–8* shows grids taken from European water depth readings and references Kupe's voyaging from Tahiti. It is a keeping consistent with the stories. Ifopo's use of silver paint presages the future and the deep blue echoes the immediacy of waters in Oceania and her liking for Arts Centre pool reflections. The work is acrylic and PVA on separated board panels and very effective. On opening night Felolini was constantly being asked to talk with aficionados about her dynamics.

Felolini paid tribute to Fatu Feu'u as 'one of the fathers of Pacific Art tradition, which he's established'. Stephanie Oberg, MA, Member of the Pacific Arts Committee Creative New Zealand, was acknowledged as quality control and also Dr Karen Stevenson, Senior Lecturer in Fine Arts, Ilam School of Fine Arts,

University of Canterbury.

Another work that caught one's notice especially was Karen Schwabe's kite *Tutu maiea Tawhirimatea Whakaterere ana Poupaka*, going forth with the force of the wind and painted with control and vigour. Handmade printed paper and feathers were mixed in with slim wooden struts (wood that could have been *toi toi*) onto this. Karen's whakapapa - Te Whanau-a-Apanui and Ngati Porou.

Teina Ellis' (Rarotongan) sophisticated painting with printed design (and tacks inserted) red and gold is triumphal and entitled *Within the Immensity of Space*. Imprinted are the words 'Tangaroa I te TiTi...' The sea is indeed the focus and the foe to be considered and conquered, here in these island-inspired works.

Of the Pacific Arts Festival as a whole, Stephanie Oberg had this comment: 'For me the whole festival has gone from strength to strength every year. In the past Pacific Island Visual Arts have not had a high profile. But in the last five years, especially with Macmillan Brown residencies and art being generated locally, the focus has changed. Also Pacific Underground has brought Pacific culture to the fore and the whole is reinforcing Pacific stories and growing audiences' understanding'.

Juliana Venning



ONO PACIFIC ARTS FESTIVAL

Christchurch, New Zealand 1–4 February 2006

Review

Oranga Whenua

Jo Tito

The Gondwana Waka

Sheyne Tuffery

Our City-O-Tautahi, Christchurch

16 January – 9 February 2006

Jo Tito's *Tetekura* series makes you step in closely to fully realize the detail of her fern and appreciate too the bird images (Tiwakawaka, fantail unfurled). All of these photographs are set with consummate skill and sensitivity onto Jo's hand-made flax paper, in collaboration with a printer. The camera is an SLR and the silhouetted *Tiwakawaka* is against the light, clear in its delicate definition.

Her technique has a range too, from sharp imagery to dissolving colourful background, that impels a response feeling the strength and softness of the fern frond and its significance as a motif for both whenua and tangata.

Sheyne Tuffery's video *Manukau – Place of Wading Birds* has an unsettling and amusing quality, unsettling in its serious message, amusing in its reading of the character and personalities that come through in the bird images. Sheyne lives on the Manukau inlet and observes the variety of wading and introduced birds closely and with veracity.

Stark, manipulated still images of threatened species become fast-paced, flocking, manipulated *manu*!

His point, as he introduces dog silhouettes and cars onto the montages of live birds videotaped, is annihilation of our native species by European territory-taking.

Samoa he tells us (in the notes) has a meaning - sacred bird....

In his woodcuts he has regal penguins; *Nocturnal II* features centrally a kiwi looking out at the viewer in challenge, white on black. His *Robin Noir* is being shut-in by patterning that could denote western architecture.

Both exhibitions are vital and significant, both in their execution and their messages.

Juliana Venning

Pictured at left from top to bottom:

Tetekura 4, Jo Tito, 2005, From the *Tetekura* Series of eight photographic prints on handmade flax paper.

The Waka Gatherers, Sheyne Tuffery, 2005, Woodcut.

Video still from *Ich Heisse Olga Hedwig Krause: Deutsche Künstlerin. My Name is Olga Hedwig Krause: German Artist.* An installation by Leafa/Janice Wilson.

Printed work from *Ich Heisse Olga Hedwig Krause: Deutsche Künstlerin. My Name is Olga Hedwig Krause: German Artist.* An installation by Leafa/Janice Wilson.

Review

Ich Heisse Olga Hedwig Krause:

Deutsche Künstlerin. My Name is Olga

Hedwig Krause: German Artist.

An installation by Leafa/Janice Wilson

SOFA Gallery Christchurch,

25 January – 5 February 2006

Branding the left wall of SOFA gallery within red blocked capitals the German language spells out the above name... Identifying, a claim seen above, it is both a challenge and a justification immediately made. This exhibition meant taking time within it, and reflecting on it to come to the artist's intent.

Ms Wilson's exhibition then, makes it necessary to be seated, to contemplate and to be attentively conscious of her still, black and white photographs flicked up on a screen against the back wall; these are of her family members and herself. Paying attention to them, one gradually finds her face, mute, but mobile - a videotaped restless, animated woman's face, superimposed on this collection of other female faces, with just one male face appearing, her grandfather's.

A Kraftwerk 1977 throbbing track, 'The Hall of Mirrors', reinforces that she is asking for us literally to see her reflected in her siblings, her otherness against the family and to recognize that her exhibition is about identity/otherness/inclusiveness.

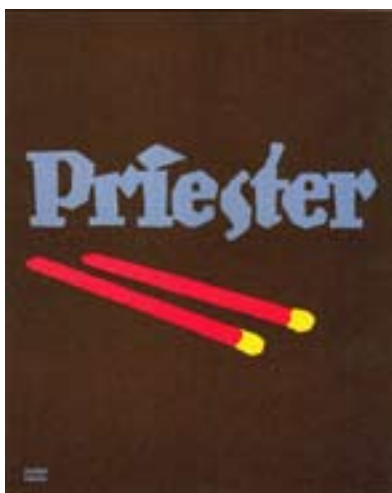
She quotes Jean Paul Sartre's reflection on what IS – the present. From *Being and Nothingness* (originally published 1949 - her edition is the fourth, 1969) p 160:

'Thus everything is present: the body, the present perception and the past as a present impression of the body – all is actuality; ... if the memory is reborn it is in the present process.'

This quote is a puzzle clue set against the other clues, the German Bible, the Western Samoan Manumea flag... One wonders at her choice of a nihilist and existentialist philosopher's musings, then realizes that German philosopher Hegel's ideal NOTHING is a realization that the self is FREE – especially in relation to that German Bible on an 'altar' podium. Is she alluding (in these counterpoised images) to a consecration by colonial missionaries of the Samoan people? Certainly there's a duality printed deliberately in the images of grandfather and self, that one finally views as static prints on the wall to the right. They are her certificates of her birth names, the German names of her parents' place of residence and the Maori name of her birthplace, Tokoroa. So far from Samoa and the original connections that nevertheless make this artist a product of the present, here in Aotearoa, but with a conscious grip on her whole Pacific/European German/Samoan heritage.

Leafa/Janice Wilson is currently Curator of Contemporary Art at the Waikato Museum of Art & History, Hamilton, New Zealand

Juliana Venning



Review

Chinese Hubei Calligraphy and Painting

COCA, Christchurch,

16 February – 5 March 2006

The universal language of painting

On viewing the calligraphy works by You Zhonghui and Zeng Shimin I was emotionally moved and somewhat surprised at the personal expression visible within the calligraphy works. Recognizing a similar intent in the artists' work to that of my own painting with text in an abstract expressionist style, I felt joy at meeting kindred spirits.

The exhibition included traditional Chinese paintings of landscapes and portraiture along with varied script calligraphy. The works depict heart-felt ideas, religious beliefs and treasured poems through the painting of words, characters, landscape or portraiture; all work aesthetically and symbolically. In Chinese painting and calligraphy realism is not sought; a more holistic approach to depicting an image that also expresses a story and/or experience is looked for. As in *Dao Yuam*, (*Early Plum Blossom*), by You Zhonghui, ink on paper, 2005, approx .80 x 1.2m, a poem from the 16th century Ming Dynasty describes the majestic beauty of the plum blossom against the background of the winter snow, the four verse poem ends... 'The shadow of the plum flower can be found in the country-man's courtyard.' With brush and ink a personal expression is obvious beyond the meaning of the characters themselves, subjugating the need for reading or interpretation of the written language; and exemplifying the personal and universal language of painting. Gesture, varied pressure, intensity of line, from thick sharp edges to scratchy brush marks bleeding into the absorbent paper and carefully considered compositions communicate the artist's expression to the viewer. *Buddha* by Zeng Shimin (undated) ink on paper, approx 800mm x 1200mm visually contrasts the multiple character works with its one large, bold character, executed in one masterful continuous stroke. The gesture within the calligraphy is alive; defying their monochromatic tone the characters appear to hold the energy of emotion. Some seem angry, sullen or nervous while others express a flamboyant and confident nature. The beauty of the ink characters and their varied and flurried application is heightened with the contrast of the crispness and delicate preparation of the paper they sit upon.

The characters, their history and the art of their application have a complexity that can be seen as a referent to the complexity of human nature, and particularly representative of the artist's personality. This idea of a person's personality being readable within their handwriting is an ancient Chinese tradition. I think the personality or flavour of a writer is present in any text, but is more evident in painted text. I therefore agree with the artists that the works are full of self-expression. The brush and ink in the hands of these two master calligraphers speak volumes without any need for an interpretation of the language.

Janet Joyce

Review

Advertising and Design Enter the 20th Century

Lucian Bernhard

CoCA, Christchurch,

15 February – 18 March 2006

This is the first retrospective exhibition detailing the work of Lucian Bernhard (1883–1972), a German commercial artist who began his practice in Berlin during the early twentieth century. The show displays a remarkable range of advertising, including posters, signage and packaging for manufacturers of cigarettes, matches, coffee, shoes, cars and pharmaceuticals, as well as books, typefaces and corporate paraphernalia.

Bernhard's work is historically significant for two reasons. At a time when posters were the primary means of advertising new products, he developed a striking approach to poster design that revolutionised advertising. His *Sachplakat*, or 'object poster', with its impressive, unembellished representation of the product, was a radical departure from the figurative advertisements popular in France, Britain and the USA at the time, and made Germany the focus of international poster design from the turn of the century up until the beginning of the first world war. The other significant aspect of Bernhard's practice was his integrated approach to advertising - the beginning of corporate identity design as we think of it today.

It is clear that an immense amount of time and effort has gone into putting this exhibition and the accompanying catalogue together. It is indeed an impressive show. The difficulty comes with ascertaining the significance of what is on display. Although the majority of what is on offer is in German, one has to accept that some of the import of foreign works will inevitably be 'lost in translation'. With precious little in the way of helpful mediation in the exhibition itself, it is difficult to appreciate the relevance of the body of work before you.

Even so, the exhibition remains an excellent tribute to pioneering graphic design.

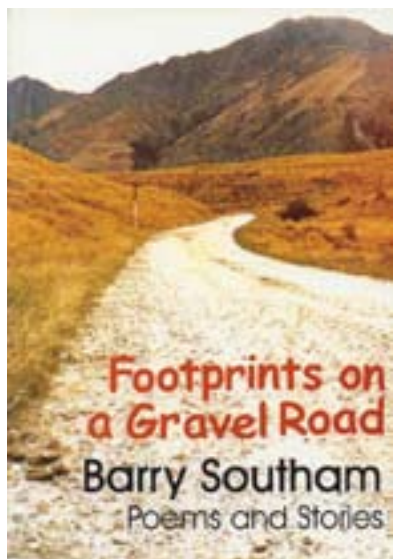
Sarah Newton

Pictured at left from top to bottom:

Tiger, Zeng Shimin, Calligraphy.

Franck, Lucian Bernhard, 1910, Torpedo Enamel, Frankfurt Enamel Works, Neu-Isenburg. Folded edges, Stencilled enamel, 490x320mm.

Priester, Lucian Bernhard, 1915, Hollerbaum & Schmidt, Berlin N 65. 1990 x 160mm, sig. b.: BERN HARD. Photos courtesy of Centre of Contemporary Art Christchurch.



FROM OUR LIBRARY

The three resources reviewed here can all be found in our library on the 2nd floor of the Scott Block at the Christchurch Arts Centre. The hours are Monday to Friday, 1 to 4pm. Phone 03 374-5721 for an appointment outside these times. Follow the butterflies up the stairs.

This library has been set up for artists and poets; unfortunately very few have taken advantage of this opportunity. Currently the library is primarily reading only, with a limited lending policy. We would change this to a full lending facility if there was more demand. Subject to funding, we hope to get the catalogue on to our website. The core of our collection is the section on art/faith books, journals and magazines. We also subscribe to the following magazines: *Art New Zealand*, *Art News*, *Art Asia Pacific*, *The Bulletin (Te Puna o Waiwhetu)*, *Art Zone*, *Artists Alliance*, plus a range of poetry publications: *Takahe*, *Spin*, *Landfall*, *NZ Poetry Society*, *Jaam*, *Poetry NZ*, *Studio*, *Freelance Writers*. Complimentary copies of the UK publication *Artisans* will be available soon.

Resources reviewed here are not always 'just released or published' because we want to profile a cross-section of the contents of our library.

Poetry Review

Footprints on a Gravel Road

Poems and Stories

By Barry Southam

Square One Press, Dunedin 2005

The quotation on the first page of Barry Southam's new book, '...no ship exists to take you from yourself' [Cavafy (1863-1933)] is a forecast of things the reader will discover in this collection of nineteen poems and nineteen stories. Observant and lean writing reveals that many people suffer from the difficulty of living with themselves, as well as with those whom they encounter in everyday life.

Some stories are interludes, a quick contact with characters and events, simply to express an idea. Other tales, through finely-controlled description, convey unresolved menace, or unnamed horror, reminiscent of an old-fashioned thriller. Occasionally the natural, fast-moving dialogue conveys wry humour. The narrator, a constant, male Kiwi voice, portrays his

characters and their deeds with conviction, in real-life behaviour. Southam has travelled, and been employed in many different occupations. These experiences are the backbone of his plots, which even though imagined, tell living truth.

The poems are written in the same pared-down style as the prose, almost telegraph language, devoid of unnecessary clutter, which sometimes verges on obscurity. Although there are few memorable phrases, still the frequent poignant message gives life to poems, which stay in the mind long after they have been read. The writing speaks of a quite humane observer, who does not judge his fellow humans.

This is the third book of poetry for Barry Southam. He is the author of a collection of short stories, 'Mixed Singles' and several radio and stage plays, produced in New Zealand and internationally. A member of the Writer in Schools programme, a stage and film actor, he is currently working on a novel. This is one creative New Zealand writer to watch!

Peb Simmons

Raukura

i.m. Te Whiti o Rongomai & Tohu Kakahi

On the steps of the kainga
beneath the white mountain
women and children
are holding white feathers

no muskets, no meres
no swords, no taiaha
only raukura from
an albatross wing

only an emblem of peace
of hapu, mana
rangitiratanga:
to what avail against the guns?

to what avail against
blind south winds which
storm the pataka
and wreck the pa?

O raukura, raukura
cradled in their hands
white feather, white feather
sacred gift of the land

Ron Riddell

Unpublished. Used by permission.

The Night of the Assassins

I wait in the night.
I wait for the assassins.

I wait in the house of dreams –
the house of familiar rooms –
where dead friends dwell
where the light is blue.

I wait with my friends.
I wait for the assassins

but the assassins are already here;
their eyes, in familiar faces.

I wait in the festival of silence
for the assassins of innocence.

Ron Riddell

Reproduced from *Spirit Songs*
Casa Nueva, Medellín, 2004
(in association with Steele Roberts
Ltd, Wellington.) Used by permission.



Film Review

Breath of Peace - Tau Te Mauri

**Written Produced & Directed by
Kathleen Gallagher, 2005**

A Feature Documentary – WickCandle Films

Like a blank canvas, *Breath of Peace* opens to an empty screen, on which Kathleen Gallagher paints the story of the New Zealand Peace Movement.

Indistinct sounds introduce the heaving, clear blue Pacific Ocean. Albatross and seagulls soar on thermals, while singing whales and dolphins cavort in the deep. Unexpectedly, the scene moves to Jack Rogers quietly recounting a conscientious objector's prison camp life. His story initiates the thought: 'peace is not an absence of conflict, but an attitude of mind and spirit'.

The history of the Peace Movement is documented through black and white newsreel flashbacks, old newspaper pictures, and personal reminiscences. Peace People faced rigid police control, obtained meetings with establishment officials, and wrote articles for disinterested newspapers. To see their self-sacrifice and determination stirred in me feelings of wonder and gratitude.

The Peace Squadron of little boats, harassing and hindering the progress of a giant U.S. warship attempting to enter Auckland Harbour, is exhilarating cinema; the action never seen in its entirety. Vicariously, I felt part of that bold group confronting such mighty power.

Verbal and visual stories, at times almost unbearable, explained the continuing nuclear health misery for the peoples of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the barely acknowledged suffering of the Marshal Islands inhabitants, past, present and unborn.

I felt indignant at the gross indifference of governments that small nations once believed they

could trust. The haunting camera shot of that noble ship, *The Rainbow Warrior*, half sunk while at anchor, bombed by a 'friendly nation', still caused my blood to boil at the death of the photographer.

The film gathered momentum, reaching its climax when the multi-national Peace Delegation presented the World Court with a question: '*Is the use of Nuclear weapons legal, for any purpose?*' The final judgement: '*Yes, Nuclear weapons are generally illegal. All states have a commitment to eliminate them*' caused audible approval to ripple through the audience. A moment of exaltation, then I reflected: wars continue, far away in other lands, yet Peace work must prevail.

It is a sad indictment on the current society that, despite many invitations, no media persons were present at the Premiere of this inspiring film. The dedicated cast and production team who brought it to life, deserved better.

Unusual and evocative photography created an artistic yet visually strong statement, holding the eye captive, as sensitive, original music emphasized the magnificent Pacific, cradle of the Peace Movement. The embracing Waiata remained in the memory long after the film concluded.

Because *Breath of Peace* records recent history, it will become an historic production. Heroic events have been captured permanently, before public memory forgets the intelligent, concerned few, who persistently educated fellow citizens and governments to the lasting dangers of nuclear warfare.

Kathleen Gallagher conceived the vision to undertake this memorable work, which deserved to be honoured with the 2004 Sonja Davies Peace Award. This film should be widely distributed, and its message proclaimed: 'Peace, hand in hand with justice'.

Peb Simmons

Elegy for Oscar Tamayo

On Friday, at four a bullet
was mislaid in Robledo.

It was found by a student
who sat with his books
in the shade of a mango tree.

There were white clouds in the sky
birds were singing nearby
but when that bullet was lost

the birds lost their song
the flowers lost their petals
the trees lost their leaves
the clouds fell from the sky
the rivers drained away
and the wind fell still.

We kept a vigil through the night
and when a new day dawned
the flowers bloomed once more
the trees found their leaves
the clouds resumed their seats
and the river recalled its song.

And the young man who found the bullet
took it to his father's house

to show him what was lost
and his father took him in at once

into a room of endless light
and let him hear the endless song

of heaven and of earth
and let him know what he had found
and forgive what he had lost.

Ron Riddell

Reproduced from *Spirit Songs*
Casa Nueva, Medellín, 2004
(in association with Steele Roberts
Ltd, Wellington.) Used by permission.

Dressing you

for Saray

I would dress you in flowers
I would dress you in kisses

I would dress you in kindness
I would dress you in dreams

I would cover you from head to toe
in cream-white linen

scented by sea-salt, river stones
from the Caribbean

I would dress you in rainbows
feather-down and shells

I would have a hundred butterflies
bring you sacred spells

I would have a hundred larks
come sing at your door

I would undress you, to address you
and never want for more

Ron Riddell

Reproduced from *Leaves of Light*
Caza de Poesia, Los Angeles, 2005.
Used by permission.

EVENTS



'AKONA KI NGA REKEREKE'

(LEARNING FROM THE KNEE)

24 Feb–29 Apr 2006, Burringa, Dandenong Ranges, Community Cultural Centre, Victoria, Australia.

Moana Tipa writes: Fourteen contemporary, established visual artists of Ngai Tahu descent (from South Island of NZ) presented work in this exhibition.

The works presented were mostly existing ones that reflected the notion of learning passed down within whakapapa (DNA or genealogy) and/or knowledge re-learned or reconciled as a result of generations of colonisation. Borrowed from European tradition, the term 'learning from the knee' suggests learning passed on or handed down from elders to youth and parents to children.

In any culture, passing on knowledge and skills for living sits at the heart of family. In indigenous tradition, the imparting of knowledge and skills to generations following was a matter of survival.

The exhibition is a reciprocal exchange between several groups; the municipalities of Christchurch and the Shire of Yarra Ranges, Victoria, also Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu and the Wurundjeri Aborigines of the Yarra Valley, Victoria, with the participation of the Burringa Gallery and Professional Arts Services of Christchurch.

The exhibition was curated by participating artist, Simon Kaan of Otago.



Top: *Poutini*, Fayne Robinson (Ngai Tahu ki Tai Poutini), Bronze, 600 x 240 x 200 mm, Collection of the artist.

Right: *Untitled*, Simon Kaan (Kati Irakehu ki Ngai Tahu), 2006, Oil on board, 500 x 80mm, Collection of the artist.

ART AND RECONCILIATION CONFERENCE

22-26 Feb, Art and Reconciliation conference, New York City hosted by *I Am* (International Arts Movement) led by Mark Fujimura. Go to <http://www.iamny.org/> for the details. **Alexis Wilson** writes: 'I want to share a few quotes with you that I gleaned. If you are interested in any of these lectures you can get them through I-tunes by going to www.iamny.org/.

'Dan Gioia, who works with the National Endowment of the Arts, interwove his poetry with his lecture, while exhorting us that we are not creating the right conversations about the right things. As artists we can bring about change by doing work that is notable and modelling it.

'Ian Cron spoke on what it means to be instruments of peace, through an exploration of the artistic vision of St. Francis of Assisi and how it might fund our own vision for being agents of reconciliation and peace in the contemporary world.

'Miroslav Volf, a theologian from Croatia who is a divinity professor at Yale, spoke about what it might mean for art and artists to function as instruments of reconciliation in a broken world. One artist had taken his violin and played in the rubble of the streets of Bosnia just after the destruction of his town. Then another artist took shrapnel and created a sculpture of the violinist.

'Betty Spackman (someone you would want to hang out with) has authored a great book called 'Profound Weakness'. It can be purchased from www.piquanteditions.com. [Ed: This will be reviewed in *CS Arts* November. Available at CS Library] Check out www.iamny.org/ for these inspirational lectures and the books you can order.

A CHRISTMAS JOURNEY 2005

Peter Majendie in Christchurch writes, 'After producing Christmas and Easter Journeys at Opawa Baptist Church for the previous four years, my vision was to present the Christmas story to a much larger audience in a more public and easily accessible space – Cathedral Square. A series of contemporary art installations, housed in shipping containers, depicted the Christmas story and allowed people space to reflect in the midst of their busy Christmas preparations. Using distinctive Kiwi materials such as corrugated iron, barbed wire, fence posts and pongas as well as multi-media audiovisuals, poetry and music created a multi-sensory, interactive experience for all ages.

It was open between 10am–10pm for the two weeks leading up to Christmas. During that time over 6,800 people from all over Christchurch and the world came through. We had many positive and encouraging comments from the tourists who spent time in the *Christmas Journey*, some commenting that it was the

Gifts, Peter Majendie, 2005.
Floor, walls, cardboard boxes and plinths covered with Christmas advertising. Three TV's/monitors with a loop of Christmas quotes/comments. Frankincense and myrrh essential oils. Container interior: 6 x 2.4 x 2.4 metres. Part of the *Christmas Journey* installation erected for two weeks preceding Christmas 2005, at Christchurch Cathedral Square.



Census, Peter Majendie, 2005.
Thinline and customboard fashioned into giant open books, covered with phonebook pages. Walls and floor covered with phone book pages - crate of sand containing driftwood people - maps of Christchurch, Canterbury, North & South Islands (of NZ), Europe and the world into which people stuck map pins denoting their home. Container interior: 6 x 2.4 x 2.4 metres. Part of the *Christmas Journey* installation erected for the two weeks preceding Christmas 2005, at Christchurch Cathedral Square. Photos courtesy of Peter and Joyce Majendie.



highlight of their travels. The installations depicting suffering of the innocent and the plight of refugees seemed to connect with a large number of people.' 1,400 people also passed through their *Easter Journey* 2006 installation.

ADAM ART GALLERY TE PATAKA TOI

held an exhibition and free opening weekend of events. In conjunction with the New Zealand International Festival of Arts, Adam Art Gallery presented *Islanded: Contemporary Art from New Zealand, Singapore and Taiwan*. This major exhibition featured work by 12 internationally renowned and emerging contemporary artists from New Zealand, Singapore and Taiwan - many of whom created new work for this exhibition held 24 Feb-14 May.

This unique collaboration between the Adam Art Gallery, The Substation (Singapore) and the Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore (ICAS), focuses on the shared histories and geographies of these post-colonial island nations. *Islanded* included work in a variety of media ranging from painting to video, sound installation to sculpture, all of which responded to the idea of how 'island-ness' and being 'on the edge' play a role in these island-countries' imaginings and re-inventions of themselves. The exhibition will tour

Singapore and Taiwan in 2006 and 2007.

In April the gallery held their 2006 *Lectures in Art History and Visual Culture* series in which **Lee Weng Choy** explored the intersection between text and tourism in his lecture *Biennale Time and the Spectres of Exhibition*. Then **Choy**, together with **Alan Cruickshank**, Editor of Broadsheet and Director of the Contemporary Art Centre South Australia, launched the latest issue of Broadsheet.

The lectures were followed by a forum on Wednesday exploring these themes and included panelists **Richard Killeen**, **Lee Weng Choy** and **Alex Calder**.

On Thursday a selection of recent short films from Singapore was shown and included works by **KC Teo**, **Frankie Tze Wei**, **Arul Dass**, **Vince Wong**, **Yee Chang Kang** and **Kan Lume** - the first time these films were shown in New Zealand having been compiled as part of 'The Substation' in Singapore's *Moving Images* film programme, and were first screened in conjunction with the 5th Asian Film Symposium in 2005.

CANA BALI CONFERENCE

October 2005

CANA's International Arts Conference was held on the Island of Bali in October 2005, in spite of the terrorist bombing that took place there just three weeks before the conference was due to start.

Goals for the conference were: to provide a reflective and encouraging environment for participating artists; to be, in some small way, a blessing to the local economy; to give participants a chance to share their work - both with one another and with a local audience; and to learn from and be a source of encouragement to a local church.

Artists from India, Bangladesh, Bulgaria, different parts of Indonesia, Thailand, Nigeria and Japan displayed visual art, song, poetry and dance as part of

Nyoman Darsane performing shadowplay during the Cana Bali Conference. Photo: Steve Scott.



the conference programme.

A good relationship was built up with a local church in the Ubud area (that had been given an arts mandate by the local Hindu authorities). To justify its continued existence, the church had to find opportunities to use the building in ways friendly to the arts and the community. To this end, the church was happy to host several meals for conference events, and allowed the building to be used for performances, a seminar, and a week-long exhibition featuring both international and local artists. Not only were these events successful in terms of the conference, but they encouraged the pastor and local artists to consider building on the interest created by mounting another exhibition there in future.

SCAPE 2006

30 September -12th November

In a few months New Zealand's only international contemporary public art biennial will be launched with a new name: *SCAPE 2006 Biennial of Art in Public Space*. Unique for the fourth SCAPE Biennial is the pairing of a national and international curator. New Zealander Natasha Conland and German Susanne Jaschko have devised an entirely new theme and direction for the biennial.

Their title, *don't misbehave!*, playfully alerts audiences to how art might alter the behaviour and experience of public space while implying an ironic opposition in the face of a voice of authority.

The exhibition, which runs in Christchurch over a 6-week period from 30 September – 12 November 2006 will position contemporary artworks within the cityscape which contend with the idea of 'the public' in a range of unexpected and stimulating ways. Conveniently located within Christchurch's Cultural Precinct, this easily accessible public space will work as an interface between artists and audiences, creating a highly active environment and festival-like atmosphere within the central city.

CS NOTICES

RECENT EXHIBITIONS

January – June 2006

DUNEDIN

Large ART, Feb-4 Mar, Cleveland Living Art Centre, First Floor Dunedin Railway Station. Artists among many included **David Teata, Claire Beynon, Mary Horn & Wallace Crossman**.

Summer Pickings, Peter Rae Gallery, 31 Jan-22 Mar. Artists included **Claire Beynon, Don Binney & Stephen Mulqueen**.

Chosen, Until 18 May, Milford Galleries Dunedin. Artists among many included **Garry Currin, Graham Bennett & Neil Dawson**.

QUEENSTOWN

Masterworks, Until 1 May, Milford Gallery. Artists included **Neil Dawson**.

Sea Narratives, **Garry Currin**, 9 Mar-4 Apr, Milford Gallery.

CHRISTCHURCH

A Building of Light, photographic works by **Guy McCracken** and **Jeremy Vargo**, supported by **Tania Kurbatoff** and **Dan Cooper**, SPACE Gallery, 9-11 Dec 2005. The images exhibited ranged from photographic collages, night photography, long exposure photography to an installation.

Nina Brown, *Because your love is better than life*, 4 Apr-4 May, Quattro Café.

Paul Deans was involved in the Mt Somers Minerals to Art Sculpture Symposium 24 Feb-5 Mar.

Fatu Feu'u exhibited works created over the last ten years *Alapika* (the Ancient Way), at the Fine Arts Gallery, University of Canterbury in association with the Macmillan Brown Centre For Pacific Studies.

Llew Summers & Peter Carson, Selwyn Gallery, Darfield, 11-30 Mar.

Galina Kim & Sue Spigel, *Merging Traditions* (See review by Joanna Osborne) marking the 125th Anniversary of ChristChurch Cathedral, 3 Mar-11 Apr.

Mark Lander along with **Alison Erickson & Sam Mahon**, 8 Apr-3 May, Little River Gallery.

Jill Perrott, Little River Gallery in June.

Casting Purls (See review by Jonathan Baker), **Katie Thomas**, Campbell Grant Galleries, 7-25 Mar 2006.

Kees Bruin, *Allusion & Illusion*, 10 Feb-10 May, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu. A full review by John Stringer will be published in CS Arts Nov. Kees gave a lecture on his art at the Philip Carter Auditorium (Te Puna o Waiwhetu) on 15 March to a full house, followed by a forum.

Gallery Pacifica: **Averil Safanov & Steph McEwin** in Lyttelton. Oct 2005-Feb 2006. Noticing the lack of local places for artists to show their work in the town they rented the ex-Pacifica Shipping offices and turned them into the Pacifica Gallery – a vibrant concrete-floored commercial space with great light, suitable for large contemporary work, installations and sculpture. Both emerging and established artists were involved and included **James Robinson, Nigel Brown, Bon Suter & Nita Henry**.

Mary Mulholland, Canaday Gallery, Centre of Contemporary Art, 12-30 Apr.

NELSON

New Emerging Art Featuring **Nic Foster** along with **Jane Blackmore & Anna Leary**, 2 May-3 Jun, Catchment Gallery.

WELLINGTON

Sally can See, New works on and with paper, **Sally Hughes**, 6-15 Apr, ROAR Gallery. Sally has significant visual impairment and artistic gifting. The challenges of her view give another dimension to Sally's works, especially with colours.

HAMILTON

The first show, a group show which included artist **Gareth Williams**, 4-25 Feb, Gallery East.

Waikato Museum of Art & History featured works reflective of the Lenten period within the Liturgical calendar. Artists featured included **Jeffrey Harris, Nigel Brown, Judy Darragh & Kura Te Waru**



From top to bottom:

Averil Safanov and Stephanie McEwin, exhibiting at Pacifica Gallery, Lyttelton, Christchurch.

The late Deirdre Airey at work.

And they laid Him in the tomb, Deirdre Airey, Woodfired Terracotta, Courtesy of Waikato Museum and the Friends of Deirdre Airey.

Illustrator, Lisa Williams with *Earthworm Yoga*.

Rewiri,

In April, in conjunction with the Friends of Deirdre Airey, some of the late **Deirdre Airey's** clay works – all based on New Testament stories – were exhibited. Deirdre's work influenced the likes of Michael King and Francis Pound. Fr Frank Eggleton gave 2 floor talks in conjunction with the exhibition about how to possibly understand or view these works and how Deirdre's faith informed the perspective from which each tile is viewed.

AUCKLAND

Right On, included Illustrator **Lisa Williams**, amongst others, Dec 2005-24 Feb 2006, Marco Gallery, Eden Terrace. Lisa is a graphic artist and illustrator sharing an office with another designer in a new arts centre called Marco House. It is primarily an Arts Therapy Centre but there is also a gallery attached.

Making meaning x2, **Carole Prentice & Sheryl O'Gorman**, 1-14 April, Letham Gallery, Ponsonby. www.lethamgallery.co.nz

Small Dog Gallery: The Depot, Devonport, 15-27 Apr, *De Noche 2*, **Raewyn Whaley**. An interest in medieval mysticism attracted Raewyn to the poetry of Fray San Juan de la Cruz, a 16thC Spanish Discalced Carmelite mystic. One of his lyrical poems *The Dark Night* (La Noche oscura) composed around 1578, was partly in response to a love song, heard through prison walls when the Calced Carmelites had imprisoned him! The subject of the *The Dark Night* describes the quest of the soul for meaning. Its allegorical nature paints mystical imagery to represent the idea of the soul's journey towards union with God. Raewyn's response has been to create *De Noche*, a series of artworks representing the emotional journey of 'the contemplative' in the poem.

Kristin Herman, *Mandalas of the two Worlds*, 7 Apr-3 May, Marco Gallery, Eden Terrace.

Daystar Art Competition. At the invitation of the Auckland Baptist Tabernacle an exhibition was held in conjunction with their Christmas Xtravaganza. An estimated 1,000 people viewed the exhibition over three days. The standard varied, but there were some outstanding efforts, making the work of the judges difficult. The work that caught the attention of most viewers was one by **Natalie de Wet**.

Allie Eagle, Sun 5 Mar-1 Apr, *Postmodern wetlands: (we never owned the view...)* drawings, water colours and waxes. Signal Gallery, Waitakere City. Also, an entertaining and informative talk by **Liz Howie** on 'Wild Wetlands – living lines' was held in the gallery.

20 Years Muka: Vintage works – Included **Don Binney** among others. Muka Gallery, Ponsonby, 2-29 Mar.

Art of Easter (now in its third year), 12-15 Apr, Rawene Centre, Birkenhead. A book *The Art of Easter* was launched to coincide with the exhibition.

Deborah Scales, *Secret Place*, 11-28 Apr, Reef Gallery.

Jill Perrott *The Manukau* 28 Mar – 9 Apr, Parnell Gallery, Parnell.

Wetware: a mutable water, new lens work on the body, 26 Apr-11 May, Artstation Gallery, Ponsonby. The artists among others included **Jane Zusters**.

CURRENT/FUTURE EXHIBITIONS

July 06 – October 06

DUNEDIN

Claire Beynon (Dunedin) writes: 'I will be having my first post-Antarctica exhibition at The Arthouse, Christchurch - opening on Tues 25 Jul, and running for three weeks. The working title for this body of work is *Not Empty Not Silent Not White*. In Aug/Sep, I will be contributing a sequence of new work to a group exhibition at the Irma Stern Museum, Cape Town, South Africa. Four visual artists (two from SA, one from NZ and one from Germany), a dancer, an instrumentalist and an ethnomusicologist/composer will be taking part in this exhibition. After collaborating and brainstorming together at a workshop in January, we then parted with the understanding that we would continue working independently and with minimal verbal exchange about the processes each of us is involved in until such time as the work is complete and we reconvene in Aug to hang the show. The theme of this exhibition is *Sound*.'

Chrysalis Seed Group Exhibition, Peter Rae Gallery, 15-27 Sep, featuring **Claire Beynon, Mary Horn, Shelly Johnson, Maria Kemp & Joanna Osborne**.

OAMARU

Three generations, Forrester Gallery Oamaru.

Sheila Leonard (works on paper), **Mary Horn** (painting), **Sarah Horn** (Photography), **Rosie Horn** (Photography), **Stephen Horn** (sculpture), 16 Jun-16 Jul.

CHRISTCHURCH

Sue Cooke, Selwyn Gallery, Darfield, 14 Jul-3 Aug.

Gallery Pasifika holds free art / cultural talks every Monday and Tuesday. These talks are open to primary, intermediate, secondary & tertiary levels, plus art classes & groups. Please contact Gallery Pasifika to arrange an appointment. Gallery Pasifika, 108 Seaview Rd, New Brighton. Email pulemau@xtra.co.nz, ph (03) 382 1853.

WELLINGTON

Poppy & Ann Moore, *Postcards from Home*, Jun-Jul. Poppy's paintings complemented by her mother's knitted art works. ROAR Gallery.

Anne Marie Verbeek, new work on paper with oil stick, Jul-Aug. ROAR Gallery.

WANGANUI

Sue Cooke (www.suecooke.co.nz) *New Works from 2005 and 2006*. Recently completed landscape paintings and prints, 26 Apr-30 Jun at Sue Cooke – Artist Gallery.

HAMILTON

AUKAHA 40 Years On, Waikato Museum of Art & History, 'til 9 July, celebrates the 40th anniversary of the first large group exhibition of Maori artists. The original exhibition was timed to coincide with the Coronation of the first Maori Queen - Te Ariki Te Atairangikahu in 1966.



Corona 2, Kristin Herman, 2006, Found tarpaulin, curtain material, wax crayon, acrylic paint, 430 x 430 mm.



Post modern wetlands flyer, Allie Eagle exhibition in March 2006.

Right: *Reasons to Return* (detail during construction), Graham Bennett, 2006, Painted steel, stainless steel, 9 metres high, Wind responsive top elements. Commissioned work for Connells Bay Sculpture Park, Waiheke Island. Photo courtesy of Graham Bennett.



Kristin Herman in front of *Dawn Mandala*.

AUCKLAND

Sex, Politics, And Religion, **Arthur Amon, Kristin Herman, & Alister Kitchen**.

A group exhibition of painting, cartoon, mixed media, found object, and sculpture. 1-20 Jul, opening 30 Jun 5.30-7.30pm, EA Gallery, 3a/47 High Street Auckland Central (above Canterbury Arcade). www.eagallery.co.nz.

Sculpture on the Gulf 2007, This event to be held on Waiheke Island early next year. Information available at www.sculptureonthegulf.co.nz. This includes new work by Graham Bennett (see Arts page Christchurch Press 26/4/06).

Mark Lander is having an exhibition of new work at the Remuera Gallery in Jul/Aug.

POETRY

Easter Poetry Festival, Cityside, Mt Eden, known for its Easter Art installations based on Stations of the Cross, did something different this year and had a poetry-themed Easter Sunday service followed by a poetry festival in the afternoon. The highlight of the service was decorating a large wooden cross with

flowers, to represent the flowering of the 'Tree of Life' and prayers for situations and people needing to 'flower'.

Andrew Killick has new items on his blog site <http://andrewkillick.blogspot.com/>

Rosemary Riddell has been appointed to the bench, and was made a Family Court judge in Hamilton District Court in February. **Mike Riddell** will continue his screenwriting career in their new setting in Cambridge, near Hamilton.

World Words, a collection of diverse and vibrant multicultural writings was published in February. Produced by Wellington writers' group 'Writers International New Zealand', the first multi-ethnic writers group in NZ. Contributors include new and established international poets and fiction writers, including **Ron Riddell**. Editor: T M Schaefer, Asst Editors: Kevin Cudly & Catherine Boyle.

Autumn Readings at Madras Café Bookshop, in May. Poets included: **James Norcliffe, David Howard, Ciaran Fox, John O'Connor & Barry Southam**.

A new book was launched (at Madras Café Bookshop) in late April on **Llew Summers'** Stations of the Cross accompanied by **Bernadette Hall's** poetry, written in response to the sculptures installed in 2005 in the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament. 'The Way of the Cross', designed by Professor John Simpson and published by the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament Charitable Trust is available at the Café. (www.madrascafebooks.co.nz).

Like Love Poems, a major selection of poems by the late painter/poet **Joanna Margaret Paul**, edited by **Bernadette Hall** was published by Victoria University Press earlier this year. Hall has been appointed the 2006 Victoria University Writer in Residence at the International Institute of Modern Letters.

MISCELLANEOUS

Film-maker **Shane Farrow** from Wellington landed a role as a boom operator on the TV series 'Gormsby'





From top to bottom:
Juliana Venning, Rob d'Auvergne, Glenda Deed.

throughout Nov-Dec 2005 and has been working on a feature film, 'When Night Falls' as sound recordist, until late January.

'Focus on Art-Otautahi' continues the series on Canterbury artists – interviews and comments – with **Juliana Venning**. Jun/Jul will concentrate on established women artists, including **Tiffany Thornley, Mary Mulholland** and **Akky van der Velden** on Plains 96.9FM, alternate Saturdays, 2.30pm.

Damian Skinner has recently started work in a new role at the National Library Gallery, Wellington.

Sarah Newton, of Nelson, was temporarily lecturing for five months in design at the University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts.

Sam Harrison received a scholarship through the Friends of the Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu.

MISCELLANEOUS

The following artists are among the finalists in the CoCA Anthony Harper Art Awards: **Tim Brown, Nina Brown, Janet Joyce, Anne Fountain, Jonathan Baker, Bruce Stuart**. The works were exhibited at the Centre of Contemporary Art, Christchurch 24 May-8 June 2006.

OPPORTUNITIES

Banks Peninsula Anthology of prose and poetry (working title only) is being compiled by David Gregory and Coral Atkinson.

Xsite Christchurch Public Artist Register. For details visit www.ccc.govt.nz/artistregister

The dates for the next **FUSE Art Business Initiative** (Christchurch) course are 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 20 Sep 2006.

Glenda Deed of 'Room With a View' is planning a spring workshop for anyone interested in creative journey work. This will be a half-day of drawing and creativity that has been a powerful group process for participants of all backgrounds. Phone (03) 377 0232. Email: deeds@free.net.nz

INTERNATIONAL

International/ Future opportunities

Alexis Wilson writes: 'It's been a long time since most of you have heard from me. Rod and I have been living in South Dakota for 2 years now and adjusting to all kinds of extremes in climate. Effective doors of ministry with and to Natives of North America are now being opened. We have turned part of our home into an art gallery (Red Feather Art Gallery). The proceeds go to Native American ministry. My art has taken on a Native motif and has been a bridge to new friends and a greater understanding of the vast diversities in Native cultures. For more information see my website in the Indigenous Gallery, www.Alexis-Art.com

CHINA 2006 - This first major event is in Sep 2006 in Shenyang where we have been invited to do an arts festival in their 11,000 seat stadium. This event is for visual and performing artists, people who can do live art, teach art, bring their work and set up exhibitions. More info contact Julie Spence at Julie@Spence.ms

Southern California, USA. The Grove Centre for the Arts has designed the 'Creative Edge Artist Network' to give you the opportunity to meet and network with artists from all artistic disciplines. At Creative Edge, you will receive prayer, encouragement, inspiration; network with other artists and ministry leaders; share your art, life and artistic ministry with others. Web: www.thegrovecenter.org

Ron Riddell has recently participated in two international poetry festivals in May/June 2006. One was in El Salvador (Central America), the other, in Costa Rica, coinciding with the publishing of his latest collection of poetry called 'Raukura', including references to Parihaka.

Anna Korver has just returned from a sculpture symposium in Puerto Rico.

Rob d' Auvergne (Canterbury Sculptor) has been doing some work as an art consultant as part of his UK working experience.

CIVA Summer Workshops in the visual arts presented by 'Christians in the Visual Arts.' At Gordon College, Wenham MA, 9-15 Jul 2006.

- 1 ☐ Please **put me on your CS Arts mailing list** to receive: ☐ hardcopy ☐ electronic
I am professionally involved in contemporary visual arts, as an: ☐ artist ☐ other
I am professionally involved in contemporary poetry as a: ☐ poet ☐ other
- 2 ☐ Please **delete** my name from the *CS Arts* mailing list.
- 3 ☐ Please note my address / email has **changed** (write new address details below).
- 4 ☐ Enclosed is a donation of \$ to help cover *CS Arts* running costs.
- 5 ☐ (For Organisations only) Please send me more/less copies of *CS Arts*. A total of: copies.
- 6 ☐ I am not professionally involved in contemporary art/poetry but would like to subscribe to *CS Arts*. Enclosed is my \$25 annual subscription. (Please fill in your contact details below).

Name..... Phone/s

Email Street / PO Box

City Postal Zone Country

Thank you for filling out this form! Please post it to:

Freepost # 154 215, CS Arts, PO Box 629, Christchurch 8015, New Zealand.

(You might like to save us money by omitting our Freepost number and use a stamp!)