

A bi-monthly publication containing news, views, and reviews of activities at the Robert McDougall Art Gallery.

Number 30

November/December 1983

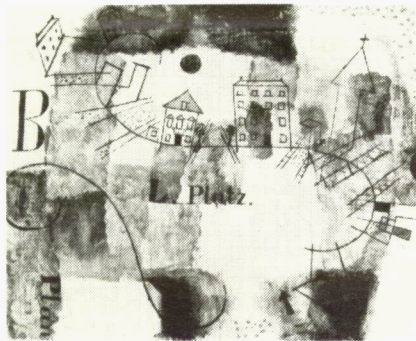
ISSN 0111-1426

Paul Klee
Major International Touring
Exhibition November 30–January 22

When we study the works of Paul Klee we enter another world, magical and mystical, colourful and profound. As a poet, a philosopher, a musician, and above all an artist he bestowed upon his art an imaginative vision of the variety and complexity of this world.

It has been said that Klee's most distinguishing physical characteristics were his big, soft brown eyes. Klee's vision went far deeper than the outward appearance of reality. He was aware of the world in relation to the cosmos and he saw all forms of life in terms of biological evolution. As he himself states, "I cannot be understood in this world. I am just as much at home with the unborn as with the dead, a little nearer the heart of creation than is usual".

Paul Klee was born at Munchenbuch See in Switzerland, in 1879. Both his parents were musical and it is not surprising that Klee was encouraged to learn the violin at an early age. He also took an early interest in art, in 1898 studying at Knirr's school of art in Munich. After a successful period of training he joined Franz Stuck's studio at the Munich Academy. Here he received a solid grounding in the traditional techniques of drawing and painting and he also studied etching



The L Square under construction.

and art history. When Klee left the Academy to travel in Italy, however, he was unsure of what career to pursue. In 1902 on returning from Italy to his home in Bern he accepted a position as a violinist in the municipal orchestra. For the next four years he divided his time between

music, reading and experimenting in art.

In 1906 Klee married the Munich pianist, Lily Stumpf. In that same year some of his works were exhibited in the Munich Sezession. In 1907 their only son, Felix, was born.

In 1911 Klee met Kandinsky, Marc and Macke and became involved with the Blaue Reiter, his contact with this group having an important influence on his art. At this time he was noted by the other artists for his talent as a musician rather than an artist.

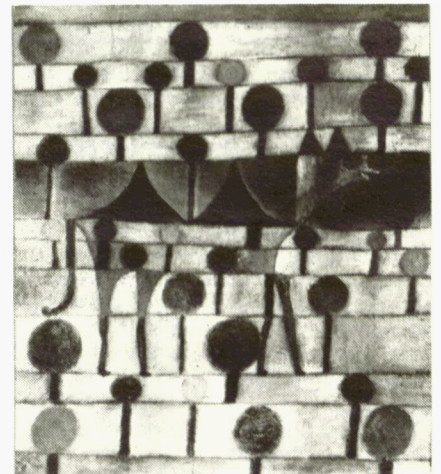
During the following two years a series of events changed this view of Klee. In 1912 he spent a fortnight in Paris and discovered Cubism and the colour theories of Delaunay. He also learned about Futurism. In these movements he discovered a practical approach to pictorial depiction that was in accord with his own ideas. Kandinsky also published his treatise, "Concerning the Spiritual in Art" this year and it effected Klee's view on content in art. One other event was a trip to Africa in 1914. It was in Tunisia that Klee became aware of the significance of colour in nature. He was excited by the brilliance and abundance of colour in the streets, the flowers, and the architecture. Up until this time drawing had predominated his art but after this experience Klee became a painter.

In 1916 Klee was mobilized. By 1921 when Klee was offered a teaching position at the Bauhaus he had established a reputation as an important modern artist. In 1920 two monographs had been written about him and in 1924 an exhibition of his work was held in New York.

Klee spent ten years as a Master of Forms in glass, weaving and painting at the Bauhaus. During this time he worked with some of the most inventive artists of the century. Kandinsky, Feininger, Breuer and Maholy-Nagy all taught with Walter Gropius at this revolutionary school of architecture and applied arts. A valuable result of Klee's teachings at the Bauhaus were the treatises he published, "Ways of Studying Nature" 1919–1923 and his lecture

"On Modern Art" 1924 as well as his Pedagogical Sketchbook" 1925.

In 1931 Klee accepted a chair at the Dusseldorf Academy. This position only extended for two years as Klee's illustrations of the political situation in Germany brought him into friction with the Nazis. In 1933 he was forced



Camel in a Rhythmic landscape with trees.

to flee to Berne. Two years later in 1935 the first symptoms of his illness sclerodermia appeared.

During the last five years of his life Klee who had worked on small-scale, intimate paintings and drawings, tackled some large paintings which dealt with experiences ranging over his entire life. Many of these included images of death.

In 1937 seventeen of Klee's works were shown in an exhibition of "degenerate art" organised by the Nazis. The following year he was represented in an exhibition of Bauhaus art in New York and Paris. In June 1940 Paul Klee died.

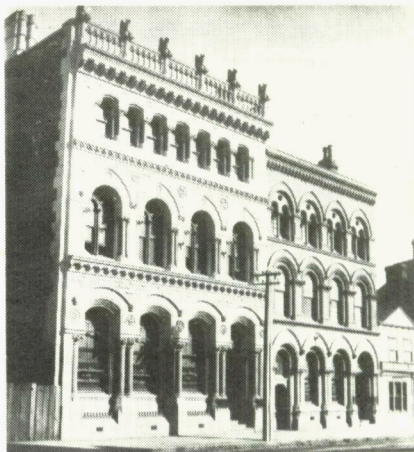
'Let art sound like a fairy tale and be at home everywhere And to men let it be a holiday, a change of atmosphere and point of view, a transfer to another world which presents a diverting spectacle so that they may return to everyday life with renewed vitality'.

Klee 1920.

**W.B. Armson: A Colonial Architect
Rediscovered**
December 6–January 31

William Barnett Armson was one of those comparatively rare architects: a designer of handsome buildings and a highly accomplished draughtsman. When he died on February 22, 1883, he was described as one of New Zealand's leading architects, but one hundred years later his contribution has been almost forgotten. Time has dealt cruelly with Armson's buildings; of the dozen commercial premises he designed for Hereford Street, only Fisher's Building remains. While many of the buildings have gone, his drawings for them survive, preserved in the office of Collins, Hunt and Loveridge, the architectural firm Armson founded in 1871.

To mark the centenary of Armson's death an exhibition of his drawings and photographs of the buildings has been organised by the Department of Art History at the University of Canterbury for exhibition at the McDougall Art Gallery. The exhibition



Loan & Mercantile 1881 and Victorian Insurance Buildings 1877.

is curated by five M.A. students as part of their contribution to the New Zealand Architecture course taught by Dr Ian Lochhead and Mr Jonathan Mane. Valuable financial assistance

has been provided by the Canterbury Regional Committee of the Historic Places Trust, by the Canterbury Branch of the New Zealand Institute of Architects, and by the Christchurch Civic Trust.

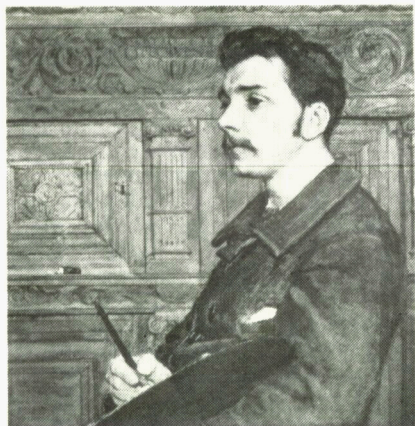
The exhibition will present a survey of Armson's career, beginning with early designs executed in Australia, continuing with his work in Dunedin and Hokitika in the 1860s, and concluding with the final and most productive phase of his career in Christchurch between 1871 and 1883. Drawings for a wide range of buildings, from humble cottages, to schools, churches and banks will be exhibited, including a significant group for Armson's masterpiece, the Bank of New Zealand in Dunedin.

An illustrated catalogue, containing much new information on Armson's life and career, will be published to accompany the exhibition.

Bramley Works on Loan

The gallery has been fortunate in receiving on indefinite loan from Mr and Mrs Cameron of Geraldine several fine works by the British artist Frank Bramley. After Stanhope Forbes, Bramley was the most celebrated member of the Newlyn School. Perhaps his best known work is *Hopeless Dawn* painted in 1888 and now in the Tate Gallery collection, London.

The loan collection includes two large works exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1908 and 1911 respectively.



Portrait of Bramley by William John Wainwright. Also on loan.

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

Lottery Board Subsidy

The Director was recently delighted to receive advice from the Lottery Board of a further grant of \$31,000 for the current financial year towards the cost of the new Gallery extensions. With a grant of \$20,000 made available last year, this brings the Lottery Board's assistance in providing the new additions to a total of \$51,000. The Gallery staff are as happy with the new facilities as city ratepayers will be with the support from the Lotteries Board.

Canterbury School, An Aspect
December 23–February 12, 1984

This exhibition drawn principally from the permanent collection will be concerned with those artists who belong to what has been popularly termed the 'Canterbury School'.

Works to be shown will span the past nine decades. Margaret Stoddart, Sydney Thompson, A. F. Nicoll, Rata Lovell Smith, William A. Sutton, Olivia Spencer Bower, Russell Clark, Philip Trusttum and Barry Cleavin are among some of the more notable artists to be included.

Acquisitions

The following works have been recently purchased.

Donald Driver,
Drum Process,
Mixed media.

Ralph Hotere,
Untitled (Stainless Steel Series),
Stainless steel.

Grant Banbury,
Thread Work I,
Acrylic/Thread.

Tony Kuepfer,
Violetta,
Glass.

John Hurrell,
Untitled,
Soup Noodles/Acrylic Varnish.

Brent Wong,
Saga,
Acrylic on Board.

Robert Taylor,
Panel Portal,
Acrylic on Canvas.

Shona Cowan,
Portrait of Murray Grimsdale 1962,
Etching.

These gifts have also been received into the collection.

Edith Wall,
Woman at a Table,
Watercolour,
Presented by Mr Frank McDonald of Sydney.

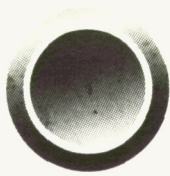
Barry Cleavin,
Apparent Indiscretion 1967,
Screenprint,
Presented by Mr W.A. Sutton.

Patrick Hanly,
Colour Panel,
Enamel on Board,
Presented by Mr W.A. Sutton.

The following items have been deposited with the gallery's Artist's Archive Unit.

Douglas J. McLeod Papers,
Scrapbooks, catalogues, books,
memorabilia items,
Gifted by Miss D.M. McLeod.
No restriction of access.

Letters, Diaries, Notebooks,
Newspapers, Catalogues and
Memorabilia items,
Olivia Spencer Bower papers,
Placed on indefinite loan by the
Spencer Bower family,
No restriction of access.



Friends of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery Inc

Past Coffee Mornings

In August Jenny de Lange most successfully communicated to a large gathering of friends her enthusiasm for glass. In the first part of her talk, she very amusingly described her experiences in England as a 'mature' student learning the technique of working with hot glass and then she showed us slides of her family's very enviable collection of glassware.

In September Don Peebles talked about his stay in New York when he was on study leave last year. He didn't discuss the major galleries such as the Museum of Modern Art or the Guggenheim; he concentrated, instead, on work he saw in dealer galleries and his meetings with individual artists. His enjoyment of and enthusiasm for the city itself and the work being produced there conveyed itself to a very appreciative audience, and was reinforced by a splendid series of slides.

Future Coffee Morning

The last Coffee Morning for the year at 10.30 a.m. on November 16th will have Barry Cleavin talking to us on his experiences of Print Making in the U.S.A. while on study leave there this year.

The first Coffee Morning for 1984 will be on the third Wednesday in February.

Greeting Cards

The four greeting cards announced in our last Newsletter are now on sale at The McDougall, 75 cents to the general public and at the Special Discount Price to Friends of The McDougall of only 50 cents!

When you see the quality of the cards, (Mr Low at Pegasus Press has really done us and the Gallery proud), you will be amazed at the bargain price so be quick and do not forget to bring your membership card with you to obtain the discount.

Choosing the four paintings to be reproduced, obtaining permission, and the time-consuming process of seeing the project through the printing process has meant many hours of extra work for the originators and organisers, Julie King and Pat Unger. Now, however, we can share with them the pleasure of their achievement and congratulate them and Mr Low on their joint success.

Seminar for Friends' Organisations

The Friends of the Dowse Art Museum, Lower Hutt, organised a seminar for representatives of Gallery Friends' Organisations over the weekend of 23-25 September, and Robert Erwin and Gerrit van der Lingen attended as representatives of Friends of the McDougall. Everyone met at the Museum on the Friday evening at the opening of a superbly mounted and comprehensive exhibition, "The search for style", devoted to the decorative and applied arts from 1870 to 1930. The Museum was splendidly decorated for the occasion — as were many of the guests, since the theme for the evening was that of a floral masque — and delegates were easily identifiable in the crowd since they were all presented with red carnations. The seminar proper began on the Saturday morning; there were representatives from the Auckland City Gallery Associates, from the Waikato Art Museum, the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, the Hawke's Bay Art Gallery and Museum, the Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui, the Manawatu Art Gallery, the National Art Gallery, the Wellington City Gallery, the Dowse and the McDougall; about forty people altogether. The President of the Dowse Art Museum Friends, Hilary Bertinshaw (who had instigated the idea of such a gathering) welcomed everyone who was able to attend, and then Robert Erwin took the chair for the first session, which was devoted to a discussion of the aims of friends' organisations. There followed a session on the relationship between friends' groups and their parent organisations, and in the afternoon the topics for consideration were successful friends' activities (chaired by Gerrit van der Lingen) and ways of enlisting support from the private and public sector. The Wellington City Gallery held a reception for the opening of two exhibitions and to celebrate their third birthday in the evening. The seminar concluded on the Sunday morning with discussions on ways of encouraging membership of friends' organisations, mutual membership, privileges and the desirability of joining the International Friends Organisation.

Representatives of friends' groups had not met in this way before and the three days were both enjoyable and successful. Everyone present benefited from the exchange of views and ideas; everyone shared the ambitions and the problems which are common to both large and small societies and, although it was felt

that there was no need to establish a formal federation of friends' organisations, it was agreed that every group would exchange newsletters and bulletins. But perhaps the greatest benefit from the weekend was the common realisation of the growing role that our Societies are playing in assisting their galleries, in providing activities for their members, and enlisting public support for their parent institutions. Should you be visiting any of the Galleries whose friends' organisations attended the seminar, please make yourself known; you can be sure of the warmest of welcomes.

Christmas Party

Because of a very fortunate circumstance there will not be a Christmas Party, as such, this year!

The fortunate circumstance is the Klee exhibition coming to the McDougall.

However, we ask our members to consider the Opening of the Paul Klee Exhibition on November 30th as our Christmas Celebration.

On behalf of my Executive I should like to extend the warmest greetings for Christmas and the New Year to all.

Robert Erwin
President

New Members

J.M. Allison
Mr & Mrs J.B. Smith
Charles Heaney
Katherine Howard
Hamish Wilson
Catherine Lees
Mr & Mrs D.J. Hargreaves
Julia Morison
Helen Hallifax
Diane Swain
Elizabeth Everiss
Helen Pickelina
Mrs A.T. Wilkie
D. Chapman
J.M.D. Hall
Dr & Mrs J.T. Musgrove
Mr & Mrs J.S.P. Palmer

P.O. Box 237, Christchurch
Botanic Gardens, Rolleston Ave.,
President — Robert Erwin, 558-675
Secretary — Pat Unger, 487-482
Treasurer — Anne Crighton,



Coming Events

The Robert McDougall Art Gallery

November/December

- November**
- 1 **Rita Angus Exhibition** until 20 November.
Paul Cullen until 21 November.
- 5 **Monster Book Bring and Buy** 10.00 a.m. — 4.30 p.m.
- 10 **Half Day Seminar for Museum Administration and interested members of the public.** Dr Charles Eldredge, Director of the National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institute, Washington, will discuss collection management and the role of curators 1.00 — 4.00 p.m. Please arrange a booking with the Gallery if you wish to attend.
- Public Lecture** by Dr Eldredge on Current Developments in Contemporary American painting 7.30 p.m. Please use Night Entrance.
- 16 **Friends' Coffee Morning**, Barry Cleavin will speak on his experience of Printmaking in the U.S.A. while on study leave. 10.30 am.
- 29 **Gala Opening for Paul Klee Exhibition**, 8 pm. Exhibition to be opened by Professor J. Simpson. Special opening for Friends and Invited guests. Admission by invitation only.
- 30 **Paul Klee Exhibition** opens until January 22.
Adults \$3.00
Tertiary Students and Senior Citizens \$1.50
Children \$1.00
Family Ticket \$6.00
- December**
- 1 **Paul Klee Exhibition** until January 22.
- 4 **Gallery Concert**, Ilam Wind Ensemble, music from the time of Paul Klee, 3.00 p.m.
- 23 **The Canterbury School An Aspect** until February 12.



**Friends of the Robert McDougall Art
Gallery Inc.**