



Christchurch City Council



# The Robert McDougall Art Gallery

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Robert McDougall Art Gallery  
P.O. Box 2626 Christchurch  
Botanic Gardens  
Christchurch 1 Telephone 650-915



*Van der Velden, Dutch Funeral Barge Marken.*

## Death and Life

### Van der Velden's Holland March 20-May 14

This exhibition is the first of several for 1989 which are based on works selected from the Gallery's collections, augmented by loans from other public and private sources.

It takes as its prime focus, paintings and drawings made by Van der Velden between 1870 and 1889. Both years were crucial in his career as an artist, particularly 1889. It was the events of that year which precipitated his decision to leave his homeland for Australasia. During April 1890 he sailed on board SS Orizaba from Holland never to return. Behind him he left three decades as a professional artist and a hard won status among his contemporaries in the milieu of Romantic Realists of the Hague School. Ahead was a bitter sorrowful future and struggle for recognition in a harsh uncultivated land.

Petrus van der Velden did not start painting until the late 1860's. Up until that time his concern was as a graphic artist. His decision to gain independence and work as a painter was a luxury that he often paid for dearly, being reduced at times to near poverty. His earliest works in paint were marinescapes and, by 1870, he was well established and recognised as a marine artist. In that year he applied for a King's pension to enable him to continue working and was successful, however one of the conditions was that he worked as an artist on the island of Marken in the Zuider Zee.

The following year he began visiting the island and over the next two years explored the simple life of this peasant fishing

community. He also became aware of the ever present forces and fragile balance of life and death. Death continually cast its shadow.

The sea claimed its share of fishermen, almost it would seem, in exchange for the fish they caught. Deaths from drowning were common and the drama of such events provided many nineteenth century artists with imagery.

In Holland, the celebrated Romantic Realist leader of the Hague School was Josef Israels. He was Van der Velden's mentor in some respects and had also gained some of his most profound inspiration from a small fishing village. In 1855 he recuperated after an illness at Zandvoort. He lived with a carpenter and studied, as Van der Velden was to do years later, the simple life of the people around him, their daily work routine both indoors and out on the dune or sea. He noted in his sketch pad unpretentious objects, a cupboard, a clock, and kitchen utensils. He also gathered motifs which were later turned into paintings. Among his favoured motifs were many that Van der Velden also adopted, such as girls knitting, children playing, motherhood, old age and death.

The funeral narrative, one of the most poignant in Van der Velden's work, was initiated by Israels. Israels' first major work on the motif of death was the 'Shipwrecked Mariner' exhibited in Paris in 1861 and London the following year. He also exhibited in Rotterdam in 1862 'The Day before the Funeral'. The impact of such works on the younger Van der Velden cannot be ignored. In 1872 he also took up the theme of the drowned fisherman which he explored through numerous paintings and drawings.

Van der Velden took up the narrative where Israels left off. The events unfold from the point where the coffin is borne to the church, and continued with the service, the transporting by either barge or sledge to the place of burial, the burial itself and finally the dispersal of the mourners.

The funeral series of works which symbolised and celebrated the triumph of death over life reached a remarkable level with the painting of the 'Dutch Funeral Marken' in 1872. This painting now in the Gallery's collection is thought to be the same work which Van der Velden, guided

by Israel's encouragement, exhibited at his first exhibition in the Hague. So impressed was Israels that he lauded the work and awarded Van der Velden with his personal medallion.

Peasant life in Van der Velden's Holland may have been closer to the shadow of death but there were also the ever present forces of life, and peasant life did have its rollicking lighter side recognised by generations from Pieter Bruegel the elder forward. It could be rousing and boisterous filled with the simple pleasures, music, playing games and drinking. These Van der Velden rendered with equal gusto.

He had an obvious empathy with his Marken subjects and studies in his sketchbook continued to provide him with a source of imagery long after he had settled in New Zealand. Even though he opted for a self-imposed exile, the links were never broken.

Apart from his paintings of the Otira landscape Van der Velden's most important work as an artist was achieved in Holland. What followed merely echoed the successes of works created in the 1870's and 1880's.

## Early New Zealand in Print

March 20-May 14

The New Zealand environment, its people, flora and fauna served as a source of imagery for a number of artists in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries especially those who sailed on voyages of exploration in the years prior to settlement. This exhibition comprises 25 published prints selected from the collections of the Gallery and the Canterbury Museum.

Most, with the exception of 5 plates, were not published by the artists concerned. Included are prints made after artists who travelled on voyages of exploration under either James Cook or Dumont D'Urville, or who were in New Zealand at the beginning of European settlement.

The artists on Cook's voyages, Sydney Parkinson, William Hodges and John Webber are all represented. Accounts of Cook's voyages followed each expedition, and these were copiously illustrated with plates engraved after works by the official artists. In the late eighteenth century many distinguished engravers were engaged to make these plates among them Richard Bernard Godfrey, James Basire and James Pouncy.

The prints published after the voyages of the corvette 'L'Astrolobe' under the command of Dumont D'Urville were made at a time when lithography in France was at its zenith. D'Urville made two voyages of exploration in the southern hemisphere. The first sailed from France in April 1826. On board were Barthelemy Lauvergne who recorded biological specimens and Louis Auguste de Sainson the expedition's official artist. The expedition spent more than two months studying and exploring the New Zealand coast which both Lauvergne and de Sainson recorded assiduously.

A second voyage followed in 1837 this time two vessels 'L'Astrolobe' and 'La Zelée' set out with a mission to explore down to the southern polar waters of the Pacific. During March, April and May of 1840, before returning to France, they visited New Zealand sailing up from the south and laying anchor for a time at the Auckland Islands. The artist on this voyage was Louis Le Breton.



*L le Breton, Ilot Basattique dans la Baie Sarah's Bosom.*

The Voyages of D'Urville were published in two volumes following the explorer's return to France, but a third remained incomplete when he died with his family in a rail disaster in 1842. However the volume 'Voyage to the South Pole' was completed by the expedition's geographer.

Within this early period of New Zealand history, Charles Meryon emerges as the only artist to have made prints directly as a response to the New Zealand environs. The five Meryon prints included in this exhibition, though not issued until 1866, are unique images and have a special place in New Zealand's print history. Meryon was a cadet on the corvette 'L'Rhine' stationed in New Zealand from 1843 until 1845. During 1845 he spent several months at Akaroa where, in his spare time, he sketched the flora and natural land features of this part of Banks Peninsula.

Some six years earlier Charles Heaphy had worked in New Zealand for the first time as a draughtsman and three of his early watercolours were translated into lithographs by Thomas Allom for the New Zealand Company in England. These images are now perhaps amongst the better known of early New Zealand and have also been included in this exhibition.

## Russell Clark Illustrations

March 21-May 25

Russell Clark was one of the Canterbury's most versatile artists, but as an illustrator in New Zealand he was without peer for more than two decades. A whole generation of New Zealanders grew up with his distinctive drawings in the radio weekly 'The New Zealand Listener' and the Education Department's 'School Journal'.

The 'New Zealand Listener' has a wide circulation, and it is now fifty years since the magazine was founded and Russell Clark began as its official artist. During the initial years of issue he was responsible for all aspects of its design including covers and headings as well as illustrations, but in later years he was concerned just with illustrating.

He continued as a contributor to the 'New Zealand Listener' for twenty-three years often making the drawings in the evenings or at the weekends. John Coley recalls Russell Clark telling him that, "Often 'Listener' copy for illustration would be received in the mail on a Friday, worked on Saturday and despatched on Sunday".

By the early 1940's he was also making drawings for school publications and, as unofficial editor, co-ordinated contributions from other artists among

them E. Mervyn Taylor who with Russell Clark became synonymous with illustrating the 'School Journal' in the 1940's and 50's. In 1949 Russell Clark received a commission from the education department to illustrate a primary school bulletin on Ruatahuna a small Maori village in the Urewera country.

The outcome of this project was some of the most sensitive drawings in his career as an illustrator. In the late 1940's the people of Ruatahuna were, because of the relative isolation, a time capsule of maoridom. As a community they had retained their links and understanding of the true traditions of their culture. It was this strength of culture of the Urewera people that impressed Russell Clark on the many visits he made to the region. His illustrations were respectful and recognised the uniqueness of Ruatahuna.

This exhibition is a selection of 20 drawings from the Gallery's collection. It comprises mostly line illustrations of the 1950's and early 1960's for 'The New Zealand Listener', the 'School Journal' and the bulletin 'Ruatahuna'.

## Death at the fireside



Russell Clark, *Death at the Fireside*.

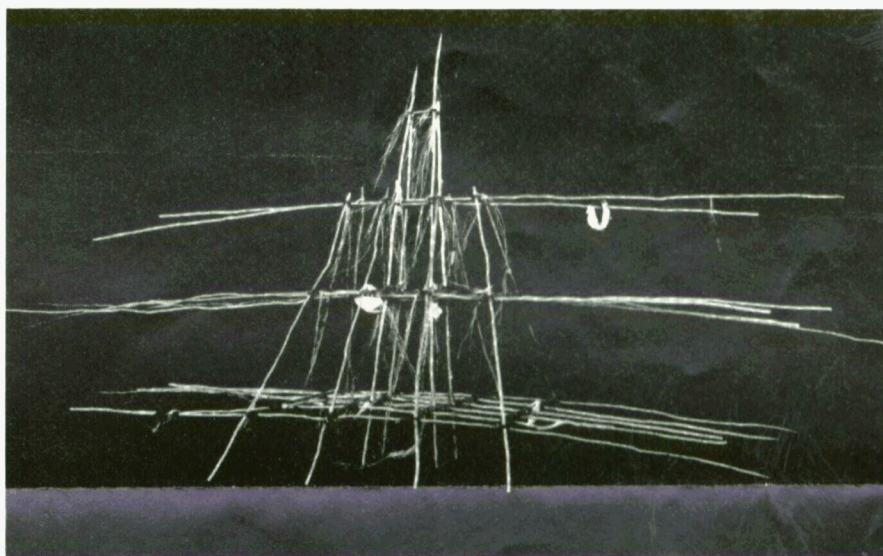
## Chris Booth Installation

April 22-June 18

Chris Booth was born in Kawakawa in 1948 and studied at Ilam in 1967. The following year he worked in Italy and England where Barbara Hepworth noted his sculpture and was instrumental in having an early Booth piece purchased for the Cornwall Public collection at Truro. In 1970 he returned to New Zealand where he set up a workshop and bronze foundry at Kerikeri in the Bay of Islands.

Since then Chris Booth has been the Francis Hodgkins Fellow at the University of Otago and with Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council Grants has visited Australia and Italy. Last year along with Pauline Rhodes and Philippa Blair, Chris Booth was specially invited to exhibit at the Nadia Bassanese Studio D'Arte in Trieste, Italy.

Because his subject matter has always focused on the natural environment Booth has been called one of 'New Zealand's most integrated artists'. His works have used sanded and sharpened kanuka logs, bronze tracers, bindings and basalt boulders combined into lyrical and evocative sculptural statements. Often they express his concern with the way the development of European society has altered the surfaces and spirituality of Aotearoa and how we continue to annihilate and alienate our natural environment.



Chris Booth, *Hei Hakari Mo Aramoana*.

His work sets up statements which elicit questions and suggest answers. He tends (as Cartwright says in a recent Listener article) to "explore the fertile strip of land between abstraction and figuration". His works are also very 'site-specific' and it is this element which is central to the large boulder sculpture in this McDougall Artist's Project installation. Two tons of South Island boulders, gathered during a summer visit, were taken to Kerikeri and then returned to the south in this installation. A stunning show.

There will be a function and an opportunity to meet the artist at the McDougall on April 21, at 5.30 p.m.

## Seven Canterbury Photographers

April 28-May 28

Canterbury photographers for almost two decades have been developing their imagery, and approach to their subjects.

This exhibition of 20 photographs by seven contemporary photographers selected from the collection, attempts to reveal something of the diversity of approach that has been current in the region during the 1980's.

The photographers represented are: Gail Wright, Margaret Dawson, Glenn Busch, Murray Hedwig, David Cook, Stuart Page, and Paul Johns.

## Bequest Received

The gallery was fortunate in receiving a bequest of \$3,000 recently from a local estate. It will be used to purchase works for the collection. The source of the bequest, is by request, to remain anonymous.

## Acquisitions

The following works have been purchased:

### Rick Rudd

*Raku No 915, 1986*

Raku fired ceramic

### Peter Ransom

*Under the Piano*

Lithograph 20/20

View

Etching 3/40

### Michael Eaton

*Rocks, Craigieburn*

Watercolour

### Richard Wallwork

*The Coast Road, Kaikoura*

Drypoint etching 2/25

*The Bushman's Whare*

Etching 9/50



Trevor Moffitt, *Southland Series II No 1.*

### Trevor Moffitt

*Southland Series II No 1*

Oil on Hardboard

### Jeffrey Harris

*Untitled, 1988*

Set of 12 aquatints

Edition 9/18



## New Education Staff at the McDougall

We are very pleased to welcome Judith Hoult who joins our Education section as the part-time Education Officer Schools. Judith comes with an extensive and wide-ranging teaching background and is one of the first of a new group of Art Gallery employees. With these appointments the Department of Education has commenced a new and innovative scheme by directly funding part-time teaching positions in New Zealand Art Galleries. With only 5 positions available in New Zealand, the McDougall is delighted to be given this opportunity to employ an Education Officer exclusively for our services to the schools in our region, and we most warmly welcome Judith to our staff.

This response to the growing number of school groups using the Gallery education programmes is a most timely and valuable contribution.

## Coming Events

- March**
- 1 **Real People** Life Like Sculptures by Duane Hanson, until March 19. Admission: Adults \$6, Friends, Senior Citizens and Students \$4, Children \$2.
  - 4 **Novel Works** until March 12.
  - 4 **Saturday Club** 10.30 a.m. Art Appreciation Club for adults.
  - 11 **Continuing Club** 10.30 a.m. Art Appreciation Club for adults.
  - 22 ~~18~~ **Friends Speaker of the Month** 10.30 a.m. Julie King will speak on "Van der Velden in context: from the Hague School towards the Canterbury School". Coffee served \$1.50. Please use Night Entrance door.
  - 16 **Kilmarnock Club** 10.30 a.m. Gallery club for physically disabled visitors. All welcome.
  - 19 **Early New Zealand in Print** until May 14.
  - 20 **Death and Life** in Van der Velden's Holland, until May 15.
  - 21 **Jeffrey Harris**, until May 21.
  - 23 ~~22~~ **Russell Clark Illustrations**, until May 25.
  - 23 **The Invisible Cinema** A programme of recent independent films made by avant-garde filmmakers in Canada and U.S.A. Admission \$2. 7.30 p.m.
  - 28 **Seven New Zealand Photographers**, until May 28.
  - 30 **Contemporary N.Z. Painting** from the Collection, until July 9.
  - New Zealand portraits 1900-1980**, until May 28.
  - 31 **Volunteers Morning 10.30 a.m.** A social morning and guided tour for the Gallery's volunteer assistants.
- April**
- 1 **Death and Life** in Van der Velden's Holland, until May 14.
  - Early New Zealand in Print**, until May 14.
  - Jeffrey Harris**, until May 21.
  - Russell Clark Illustrations**, until May 25.
  - Seven N.Z. Photographers**, until May 28.
  - New Zealand portraits 1900-1980**, until May 28.
  - 1 **10.30 a.m. Saturday Club** Art Appreciation Club for adults.
  - 8 **10.30 a.m. Continuing Club** Art Appreciation Club for adults.
  - 9 **Slide Lecture** Murray Hedwig photographer and lecturer in Graphic Design will discuss 'The photography of Richard Misrach', 3 p.m.
  - 19 **Friends Speaker of the Month** 10.30 a.m. Rena Jarosewitsch will speak on 'The Challenge of Architectural stained glass'. Coffee served \$1.50.
  - 20 **Kilmarnock Club** 10.30 a.m. Gallery club for physically disabled visitors. All welcome.
  - 21 **Special function** to meet the artist Chris Booth, 5.30 p.m.
  - Chris Booth installation**, Artists project, until June 18.
  - 26 **Wednesday Club** 1.30 p.m. Art Appreciation Club for adults. All welcome.
  - 28 **Volunteers morning** 10.30 a.m. Social morning and guided tour for the Gallery's volunteer assistants.
- Exhibition dates could vary slightly.**

# McDOUGALL ART ANNEX

Arts Centre, Worcester Street  
P.O. Box 2626 Christchurch  
Telephone 650-915

Hours 10 a.m.-1.00 p.m. 1.30 p.m.-4.30 p.m. daily

## Chain Reaction

March 2-April 2

'Chain Reaction' introduces a novel idea in exhibition curation. The first artist in the exhibition was approached by the McDougall Art Gallery and from there the chain progressed with each artist being asked to invite another to participate; the first artist inviting a second, the second inviting a third and so on until a total of five artists was reached.

Each artist was free to ask the artist of their choice; the only restriction being that the artist must be living in the Canterbury region. Artists working in a variety of different media were thus able to take part.

Through placing the development of 'Chain Reaction' in the artist's hands, as opposed to the curator's, this group show has progressed freely, with various similarities and disparities consequential of this 'Chain Reaction'.

The five participating artists are Gail Wright, Bronwyn Taylor, Cathryn Shine, Nigel Buxton and Sally Hope.

The preview for Chain Reaction will be held on March 1 at 5 p.m.

## Photographs Wayne Barrar & Miles Hargest

April 11-May 21

Photographs by Miles Hargest and Wayne Barrar will open at the McDougall Art Annex on April 11. While both artists have their roots in the South Island, they are now based in the North Island, where Hargest works as a photo-journalist in Auckland and Barrar teaches in Wanganui. They are both showing approximately 25 works, taken over a period of 8 years.

Miles Hargest's work provides a commentary on the social climate of Aotearoa/New Zealand now. "I have been working with photography in response to a natural sense of inquiry and am committed to the medium and its unique qualities of communication. For me photography is an intellectual as well as an emotional endeavour. Making photographs is a thinking process dealing with inter-relationships. My concerns are with social explorations and the capacity of making public literature."

Wayne Barrar's work deals with 'The Landscape of Change'. "Our landscape is constantly being modified in order to meet the changing demands of 'development'.

Some of these modifications will have a long term effect (for example, the establishment of human made lakes to provide sources for hydro-electric power); others are transitory, disappearing as natural changes (storms, plant growth, etc) obliterate them. Some make an immediate and dramatic difference to the appearance of the landscape, whereas others have a more subtle and less obviously discernible effect.

Photography can act as a record of the impact of human modification of the landscape, as well as drawing attention to the visual richness which it can sometimes generate."

A preview for this exhibition will be held at 5 p.m. on April 10, 1989.

## Volunteer Security Staff Needed at the Annex

If you could spare up to 2 hours during a weekday, and are willing to assist at the Annex with minding the desk, answering the phone and seeing to general public enquiries, please contact the Gallery and leave your name and telephone number with Martin, Lawrence or Ann.



A large crowd enjoying the Duane Hanson Opening on February 2.



Janice Gray acting the part of a Duane Hanson sculpture.

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## Friends of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery Inc.

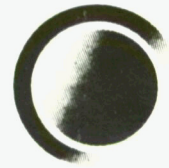
President – Ian Miles 519-955

Vice President – Grant Banbury 798-578

Treasurer – Chris Brocket 557-133

Secretary – Gwen Wilton 663-675

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### Friends National Conference

On October 14, 15, 16 the Friends of the Robert McDougall are to host the biennial National Friends Conference while the touring Colin McCahon exhibition is on.

This major event is obviously at the planning stages and we will keep you informed with progress reports.

### Duane Hanson Opening

Those members of The Friends who attended the Duane Hanson opening on February 2nd were provided with a fun occasion. A group of cheerleaders welcomed the guests, many of whom were sporting various aspects of their working attire.

In a corner Janice Gray posed unmoving for 30 minutes appearing most convincingly as yet another Hansen character, but during the speech making she suddenly burst into life and leapt up from her frozen position to demand a drink.

Stu Buchanan and friend created a pleasant musical background as those present wandered around the various exhibits marvelling at their lifelike realism.

This lively event made a good start to 1989 which promises to be a stimulating year for all our members. Our programme is one where every one of you will find events in which you will be pleased to participate. Our resolution is to present exciting events for you and your new member friends to attend and enjoy throughout the year.



*A Cheerleaders group with 'Cheerleader'. The real and the unreal.*

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### Friends A.G.M.

Thursday March 30, 7.30 p.m.

Gallery Curator, Neil Roberts will speak on the Gallery Collections, and this will also be an opportunity to see the new show from the collection 'Some Directions in the 1980's – Contemporary New Zealand Painting'. Wine and cheese will be served.

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### New Members

Beatrice Morey-Taylor

Thelma Conray

Denise Hunter

Mrs N. Kaa

J. M. James

Nicholas Johnston

Mrs J. McDowell

Joan Van Roogen

Michael Smith

Kate Woodall

Mr and Mrs Gerald Rickerby



*Friends arriving at the Gallery door in costume for the Hanson Opening.*