

Christchurch City Council



The Robert McDougall Art Gallery

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Robert McDougall Art Gallery
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Henri Cartier-Bresson. *Henri Matisse, Vence, France, 1944*. Black and white photograph. 23-5/8 x 30-3/8 x 1-3/8 in. ©Henri Cartier-Bresson/Magnum Photos Inc./Courtesy AFA.

In Our Time: The World As Seen By Magnum Photographers—a touring exhibition brought to New Zealand by Kodak New Zealand Limited.

The first co-operative agency for photographers, Magnum Photos Inc., continues to count among its members the ranking contributors in the reporting and documenting of world events. This landmark exhibition traces Magnum's history with three hundred and ten photographs that together provide a powerful and poignant survey of our time in picture format.

Made by sixty-four photographers working as members of Magnum, the photographs, which are in colour and black and white, comprise both established masterworks and previously unexhibited images. Among those members whose work is included are Magnum's founders—photo journalists Robert Capa, Henri Cartier-Bresson, David Seymour, "Chim" and George Rodger—as well as such noted photographers as Eve Arnold, Werner Bischof, Rene Burri, Bruce Davidson, Raymond Depardon, Elliott Erwitt, Ernst Haas, Josef Koudelka and Sebastio Salgado to name a few.

Organised by the American Federation of Arts for simultaneous North American and European tours, the exhibition opened in late 1989 at the International Centre for Photography in New York and the Palais de Tokyo in Paris. It will continue

to tour to major American and European galleries throughout 1990-1992. Amongst the prominent galleries it is to be exhibited in are Hayward Gallery, London; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Kunsthalle, Zurich; Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minnesota.

The curatorial work on the project was carried out by Robert Delpire, Director of the Centre National de la Photographie in Paris, and Fred Ritchin, curator, author and former picture editor for The New York Times.

Accompanying the exhibition is a fully illustrated book published by W. W. Norton with essays by William Manchester, Jean Lacoutre, and Fred Ritchin. Manchester's essay deals with an overall history of events of the period, the Lacoutre essay is a kind of group portrait of the individual photographers that make up the agency with a particular emphasis on the founders, and the essay by Ritchin will put Magnum into the context of the evolution of photojournalism and reportage. The publication will include a chronology of Magnum, a bibliography of Magnum and individual biographies and bibliographies of the full members.

Admission: \$5.00 (concessions).

Magnum

The Gorse King

In 1984 after considering some of the space restrictions which the gallery presented for sculpture it was decided that periodically a site specific work would be commissioned.

The following year Canterbury sculptor Bing Dawe was invited to make a work for the aerial space of the gallery's centre court.

This resulted in a sculpture titled:

Still Keeping his balance he used the umbrella as a safety net—image of a man with missile, being completed in 1985.

In 1988 a similar invitation was extended to Auckland artist Denis O'Connor. However due to other commitments he was unable to undertake the commission until 1989.

Since the beginning of 1987 Denis O'Connor had been making preparatory drawings for a large carved limestone narrative which was autobiographic.

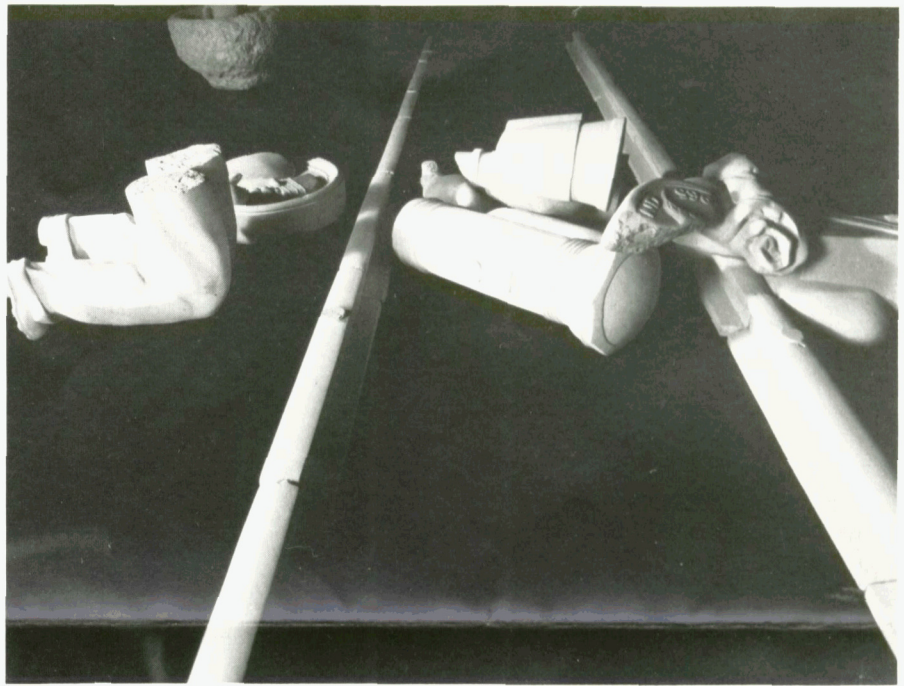
This work which he titled **Gorse King** was intended to be executed as a trilogy. Its thematic concerns O'Connor considered would "explore the formative worlds to which would be added a more visionary dimension". Following his acceptance of the commission Denis O'Connor visited the Gallery in October 1989 and selected the site for his work. He proposed **The Gorse King** which was to be part two of the trilogy. Part one was to be ten carved wall sculptures entitled **Theatre of Dust** (The Father) and part three **A History of Stone** (The Holy Ghost) would comprise photographs and poetic texts.

After a long period of gestation from the sketches of 1987 O'Connor assembled stone shipped up to his Waiheke Island studio in February 1991. Over the following months he worked the pieces beginning with four metres of carved railway track.

The Gorse King carved in South Island limestone rescued from the now demolished Caversham gasworks in Dunedin is designed as a floor sculpture for the gallery's centre court. In conceiving the work O'Connor used many of the architectural details which decorate this space as a source of ideas and these were combined with those from vernacular and industrial traditions. These were, in turn heightened by what O'Connor has described as "the layered themes that explore the formative worlds of boyhood and dream extending to the wider contexts of national identity and our relationship to the landscape and the on-going dialogue with contemporary art and practice of art history". The imagery in **The Gorse King** has varied associations and allusions, however each is correlated and is part of a central dominant theme.

The essential carved elements of the sculpture include railway track, a bowl and jug, beehives and a kneeling figure.

Exhibition of **The Gorse King** installation will continue until May 13, 1992.



Denis O'Connor, *The Gorse King*.

A Loss of Innocence

This exhibition captures the impact of the Great War 1914–1918 on New Zealand society and how it seared the hearts of those who fought as well as those who were left behind in New Zealand.

It shows all sides of the story and includes paintings, photographs, letters, and other documentary material from the National Archives Collection, Wellington. Artists represented include: George Butler, Horace Moore-Jones, John Weeks, Nugent Welch, and Elizabeth Kelly. This exhibition runs to June 14.

Threadworks

June 24–July 26

Threadworks is a modern stitched multi-media exhibition presented in conjunction with the Association of New Zealand Embroiders Guilds Inc. as part of their biennial conference activities. Both international and local fibre artists will exhibit their work in a variety of medias. The works selected for exhibition have been chosen for both their quality of design and content.

Coates Patons NZ Ltd have kindly sponsored **Threadworks**.

Coming Events

A Loss of Innocence continues throughout the month.

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| May | 2 | Saturday Club 10.30am |
| | 6 | Artwatch 12.00 noon or 5.00pm. "Sharing the Dream" Main Gallery. No Charge |
| | 6 | Wednesday Club 10.30am |
| | 9 | Continuing Club 10.30am |
| | 13 | Recent Acquisitions closes |
| | 13 | The Gorse King closes |
| | 13 | Fifty Works from the Collection closes |
| | 20 | Speaker of the Month: Margariet Windhausen 10.30am and 5.00pm at the Annex |
| | 21 | Kilmarnock Club 10.30am |
| | 23 | Magnum opens to the public |
| | 26 | Slide Show: An Installation by Julian Dashper closes at the Annex |
| June | 3 | Wednesday Club 10.30am |
| | 3 | Artwatch 12.00 noon or 5.00pm "Fibre Art and Quiltmaking" Main Gallery No Charge |
| | 4 | Anne Noble: In the Presence of Angels photographic exhibition opens to the public at the Annex. |
| | 6 | Saturday Club 10.30am |
| | 13 | Continuing Club 10.30am |
| | 14 | A Loss of Innocence closes |
| | 17 | Speaker of the Month: Valerie Heinz 10.30am at the Annex |
| | 18 | Kilmarnock Club 10.30am |
| | 24 | Threadworks opens to the public |

Anne Noble: In the Presence of Angels

June 8–July 1 1992

In June, the Annex will exhibit **In the Presence of Angels**, photographs of the *Contemplative Life* by Anne Noble.

Anne Noble is a major figure in contemporary New Zealand photography. **In the Presence of Angels** is a significant body of work produced over three years, which provides a valuable insight into the life of a contemplative monastery.

From 1985 until 1988, Noble lived in London. During this time she visited Tyburn Convent, an order of Benedictine Contemplatives, with a view to taking photographs for a magazine article.

However, the body of the work grew into a longer, more reflective documentary essay suitable for exhibition and publication in a book form.

Noble's images centre on the three most important elements of monastic life: prayer, *lectio divina*, and work. *Lectio divina* is the art of meditation in the Benedictine way of life.

Noble says that it was curiosity that took her through the door one day to sit for an hour in the sanctuary and wonder about this life of prayer. "It was quiet, despite the city busying by outside, and the distant, intermittent belly roar of the London Underground. Not the whispering kind of quiet of a library or the dead quiet of the night, but a deep listening silence that echoed stillness and carried within it all the sounds of the monastery."

In the Presence of Angels documents this "outward aspect of inward, hidden spiritual activity", without disturbing the contemplative nature of the order, or breaking into this silent, starkly beautiful realm.

The exhibition has been prepared by the Sarjeant Gallery in Wanganui, where Anne Noble was Artist in Residence during 1989–90, and the national tour has been organised by Exhibitour.

Peter Robinson

The Gallery extends its congratulations to Christchurch sculptor Peter Robinson, (Kai Tahu) who has been selected for inclusion in ARX-3, the Australia and Regions Artists Exchange Event, in Perth, Australia.

Peter Robinson is one of seven artists and speakers representing New Zealand at the event.



Anne Noble *The Ceremony of Final Profession: a sister lies in front of the altar while the community and congregation say a litany or prayer of intercession.*

Black and white photograph

Collection: Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui

Julian Dashper

Slide Show

From April 23 until May 26, the McDougall Art Annex will exhibit **Slide Show**, an installation by Julian Dashper.

Slide Show represents a continuation of ideas which Dashper has explored in his work over the past year. The installation, comprised of approximately 1200 "slide works", will be divided into two sections. The first brings together the slides previously exhibited in the North Island, while the second documents and surveys Dashper's work of the last decade, through the medium of slides.

Dashper began to use slides in his work as a response to the way in which international art tends to be experienced in New Zealand—through reproduction, in slides or in publications. Dashper's works comment on that experience, reproducing it for a national or international context by producing artworks already in the form of slides.

Julian Dashper was born in Auckland in 1960 and graduated from the Elam School of Fine Arts, University of Auckland. He had his first solo exhibition in 1980, and has exhibited extensively throughout New Zealand. In 1991, he was awarded a Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council Visual Arts Programme Fellowship in recognition of his achievement.

The Preview of **Slide Show** will be held at 5.30pm on Wednesday April 22. Friends of the Gallery are warmly invited to meet Julian Dashper and view this challenging and thought provoking installation by one of New Zealand's leading conceptual artists.

Lisa Reihana

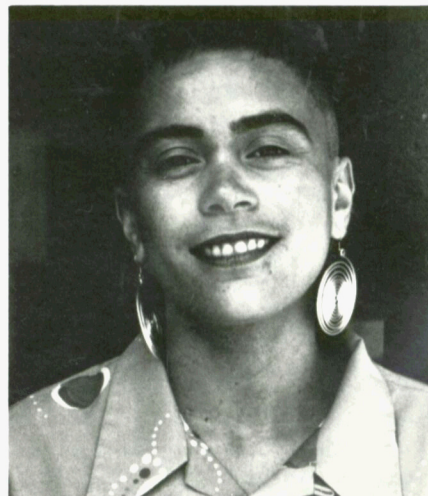
New Artist in Residence

In early March, Lisa Reihana arrived in Christchurch to begin nine months as the Trust Bank Canterbury/Arts Council Artist in Residence for 1992.

Known primarily for her work in film and video, Lisa plans to extend the animation techniques she developed in **Wog Features**, an eight minute video made in 1990 which has been screened in New Zealand, Australia, and Italy. Lisa will base her new work on Maori stories of creation and mythology which relate to Te Wai Pounamu/the South Island.

Lisa will spend 1992 living and working within the Christchurch Arts Centre, and will be invited to exhibit her work at the McDougall Art Annex in early 1993.

Christchurch's Artist in Residence Award is supported by Trust Bank Canterbury, the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand, and the Arts Centre of Christchurch Trust, with input from the School of Fine Arts, University of Canterbury, and the Robert McDougall Art Gallery.



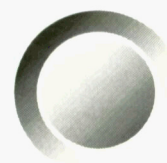
Friends of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery Inc.

President—Hilary Langer 348-3982

Treasurer—Chris Brocket 355-7133

Secretary—John Small 792-185

Membership Secretary—Marie Lockey 388-5075



Speaker of the Month

February

Belle Melzer, an American artist from the Christchurch Artists' Collective outlined the reasons for its formation and the difficulties it has overcome.

In 1984 increasing unemployment and Governmental abandonment of paid community work forced newly-graduated artists to use their skills innovatively. Concurrently, no gallery wished to exhibit works of lesser known artists when, despite ever-increasing prices, the affluent purchased only works of established artists.

Increasing frustration led to the establishment of the informal Collective by four artists late in 1985. Exhibiting free from "certain to sell" pre-judgment was their main objective. Joined by a few established but not-in-demand artists they circulated a newsletter. Artist members of all levels were encouraged to work and exhibit in a low-cost workspace. Experimental creativity and liaison with other groups implied a challenge to the traditional art object. Mainly women artists comprise the present Collective. Late in 1990 they held the first public gallery exhibition outside Christchurch. The record number attending the "Messages" show heard each artist explain her controversial theme. Further exhibitions have been in Auckland and at public venues in Christchurch. The last "Statements" show of large experimental and controversial works, shown in a large space, seemed to return to initial ideas of the Collective.

May

On May 20, Margariet Windhausen, sculptor, who lives near Timaru, will talk about how a bronze sculpture is made; about her previous work and her present work on the Kate Sheppard memorial. Coffee and tea will be served at the Art Annex at 10.30am. \$1.50 members, \$2.50 non-members.

At 5.00pm on the same day, 20 May, Margariet Windhausen will repeat her presentation. This 5.00pm session will be held in the Art Annex.

June

On June 17, Valerie Heinz an exhibiting painter and retired Head of Art Department of Christchurch Girls' High School, will talk on "The Canterbury College School of Art in the 1940s against the background of the art world of Canterbury at that time".

Coffee and tea will be served at the Art Annex at 10.30am. \$1.50 members, \$2.50 non-members.

Trip to Arthur's Pass

It was an excellent idea, first put forward by Penelope Jackson, to follow in the footsteps of notable landscape painters by making a trip across the plains to the mountains. A party of 46 Friends of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery set out on Saturday, March 28 and greatly enjoyed the changing scenery as we motored through the foothills of Arthur's Pass. The theme of our trip became abundantly clear as we listened to a most excellent exposition of landscape painting in this region, given by Julie King in the lecture room of the Arthur's Pass Visitor's Centre. With the aid of well chosen illustrations she traced the historical sequence from the middle of last century to the present, starting with Nicholas Chevalier who emphasised picturesque aspects and human elements and continuing with John Gibb who created dramatic effects and atmosphere but also included human and narrative aspects. It was Petrus van der Velden who caught the true physical character of the landscape in his incomparable pictures of Otira Gorge, painted with such freedom and force that the viewer experiences the scene in a very realistic way. Others followed in this tradition but after the mid 1920s painters gave greater attention to the dry areas east of the divide, emphasising the brown and ochre of the tussocks, the pattern of braided rivers and the darkness and sharp outline of the mountains, thus creating a tradition of Canterbury landscape painting.

Later in the day we visited some of the sites that had inspired the artists, and it was most exciting to identify the exact position of well-known paintings, ranging from the Otira Gorge to the bridge over the Bruce stream and the railway station at Cass, and to compare reality with artistic interpretation. Even the weather played its part, for we travelled from dark and threatening scenery at Otira (Gibb and Van der Velden) to bright blue skies and clear outlines as painted by Rita Angus, and we saw examples of typical W. A. Sutton skies along the Waimakariri. Altogether a fascinating day for which our thanks are due to Julie King and Hilary Langer who led the outing. Only the old stage coaches were missing, but the bus driver provided enough local colour to make up for their absence.

Friends Queries

The Friends now have their own telephone and answer phone installed. If you have any queries relating to Friends activities please telephone 794-055.

Help

The Friends of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery need the services of a competent person willing to do secretarial work at the Gallery for two half days a week in return for an Honorarium.

If you are interested, please telephone 348-3982 day or evening for further details.

Artwatch

May 6

Sharing the Dream

American photographer, Brian Lanker, spent two years photographing and meeting with black American women who changed America.

June 3

Fibre Art and Quiltmaking

Individual fibre artists and quiltmakers talk about their passion for crafts on video.

AGM

The AGM of the Friends was held in the Art Annex on Friday March 20, 1992 at 7.00pm. Hilary Langer presided over an attendance of some 40 members. The total membership is now around 800.

President's Report

Functions arranged for members were usually very well patronised. The regular Speaker of the Month functions held at the Gallery on the third Wednesday still proved popular with many people, and the committee also organised two or three openings each year in the Gallery. Trips away were well patronised, as those to Timaru and to Akaroa had indicated. The number of replies for the trip to Arthur's Pass and Otira also quickly exceeded the places available. The annual Christmas party was so well attended—250 people—as to stretch the space and facilities of the Gallery and the resources of the committee to the utmost. Hilary then commented on three other notable achievements. The appeal for the restoration of the stained glass window. Funds were set aside for a scholarship in fine arts at the University of Canterbury, which is expected to become operational next year. The Friends also helped to establish the Civic Art Gallery Trust as a vehicle for the acquisition of works of art. The president of the Friends is an ex-officio member of the Trust, and the committee donated \$25,000 as an initial grant. Besides improving administration by upgrading computing facilities, the committee also donated a modern sound system to the Gallery. (After the meeting and just before Denis Dutton's talk *Masks of the Sepik River*, Lara Strongman accepted the new system on behalf of the Gallery.)