



Christchurch City Council



## The Robert McDougall Art Gallery

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Robert McDougall Art Gallery  
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Sir Toss Will Woollaston. *The Pond*, 1961. Watercolour. Collection: Canterbury Public Library.

### Toss Woollaston: A Retrospective September 18–November 1

**Toss Woollaston: A Retrospective** is the first major survey of Woollaston's career since the smaller retrospective exhibition organised by the Manawatu Art Gallery in 1973.

This large exhibition assembles a significant number of the majestic late works which will be shown publicly for the first time.

The exhibition surveys Woollaston's sixty year career as a painter and charts the key periods of his development.

Sir Toss Will Woollaston has been painting for sixty years and is regarded as one of the founders of modern art in New Zealand, and part of the 1930s generation of artists and writers who strove to emancipate their culture from its paternalistic dependence on Britain.

Woollaston has taken an independent path throughout his career and remained largely indifferent to the stylistic vagaries

of late twentieth century painting. Through his paintings, Woollaston celebrates the physical nature of the world as he finds it. The disfigured, the eroded, even the "ugly" are never discounted in favour of the picturesque. Our experience of familiar natural and human landscapes is transfigured by Woollaston's art.

As well as being historically important in the development of New Zealand art, Woollaston is among this country's best known contemporary painters. His works are included in the permanent collections of every major art museum in New Zealand and found amongst major corporate collections such as the Bank of New Zealand, Fletcher Challenge and Electricorp. He is the only person in this country to have been honoured with a Knighthood for services to painting.

**Toss Woollaston: A Retrospective** is being toured by the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and the Bank of New Zealand.

### Coming Soon . . .

*"The Journey—Nicholas Chevalier in Canterbury"*  
7 November–17 January  
with support from Trust Bank Canterbury

Art  
Review

## The Urban Bonsai September 12–October 26

Each year the College Women's Association of Japan (CWAJ) holds an Open Print Show in which hundreds of artists participate. The exhibition provides an opportunity to explore the diversity and innovation of contemporary printmaking in Japan. **The Urban Bonsai** is a special selection of prints by 75 CWAJ artists.

In 1985 the CWAJ organised its first travelling exhibition of contemporary Japanese prints. Entitled "Symbols of a Society in Transition", the exhibition travelled to America, Canada and England where it was presented to the British Museum. Similarly, this second exhibition will tour Australia and New Zealand and then become part of the permanent collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

The theme of the exhibition was chosen to evince the response of artists to the urban metropolis. As the world approaches the twenty-first century, Tokyo, perhaps more than any other city, typifies our expectations of the technologically sophisticated urban centre vibrant with competing images, dominated by the artificial and the temporary.

The bonsai epitomises a centuries-old Japanese response to the environment: it is a distillation of nature, miniaturised and cultivated to comply with certain aesthetic canons. The urban bonsai

## The Art of the Goldsmith— Robert Baines September 17–November 1

GOLD, SILVER AND TITANIUM are just some of the materials used by Australian goldsmith, Robert Baines, to make his very special jewellery pieces. **The Art of the Goldsmith** is an exhibition of Baines's jewellery and larger works, such as a silver teapot and coffee pot.

Baines, an Australian master goldsmith with an international reputation, prefers to be known by the ancient term, artificer, or one who creates mystical and religious objects by serving the community. This title is inspired by his interest in ancient civilizations and underlies the spiritual approach he takes to his work.

Gold pendants, brooches and earrings all have minute silver and gold components joined together by the process of granulation. This ancient technique allows objects to be made through successive firings rather than using solder to adhere one layer to another. By using this method Baines retains the ancient significance of this process in which the surface is not regarded as a superficial decoration, but an integral part and a direct expression of the whole structure.

The works combine various metals contrasting texture and finish to produce exquisitely crafted pieces which are at the same time contemporary and archaic. A

serves as a metaphor for the simulated and manipulated imagery that constitutes the visual reality of modern urban culture.

Common to the work of all is an outstanding virtuosity and diversity of technique. Whatever the medium—whether the once ubiquitous woodblock, traditional intaglio methods, or new processes involving photography and computer-generated images—the techniques are exemplary. Related to the mastery of technique is a refined sensitivity to surface, texture and tonal colours. The tonal qualities of greys and blacks are sensuously realised by many of the artists, perhaps as part of the unconscious legacy of an indigenous empathy with the centuries-old tradition of ink painting. An extension of the muted tones and sensitivity of surface that seems so inherent to a national Japanese aesthetic is the modern overlay of metallic connotations, in prints that are elegant testaments to the savouring of new artificial materials.

Concerns with creating new time-space continuums are a dominant theme among artists in the show with some of the artists demonstrating this by creating fantasy worlds replete with surreal, ambiguous spaces.

The prints in this exhibition are testaments to the vitality, innovation and imagination of Japanese printmakers in the late twentieth century.

box of bones that Baines found in his studio while he was artist in residence at Waikato Polytechnic inspired the Waikato pieces. These works introduce bone used with alloyed gold and silver enhancing the quality of the metals and acting as catalyst for form and content.

In the art of Robert Baines, there is not a particular message to be read but there is a devotion to establishing a continuity between past, present and becoming. Don't miss the opportunity to see the work of this fascinating artist/artificer and experience the creative possibilities of the goldsmith.

This exhibition has been organised and is being toured nationwide by Exhibitour MDF New Zealand.

### Acquisitions

The following works have been acquired by the Gallery:

**William Dunning**  
"No 5" from "Branching Out"  
Pencil and Wash

**Gil Hanly**  
"Stuart Watson's 1930's Garden"  
Photograph

**Royce McGlashen**  
"The New Land"  
Clay/Wood/String

**Gavin Chilcott**  
"Lapita" 1990  
Ceramic Pot

**Caroline Williams**  
"New Zealand Scene" 1989  
Oil on Canvas

Presented to the Gallery:  
**Ando Tokitaro Hiroshige**  
"Untitled" Print  
Joan Mahar Bequest

**David E. Hutton**  
"Diamond Harbour"  
Oil on Board  
Miss K. Hutton Bequest

**Alfred W. Walsh**  
"Untitled" Seascape, 1903  
Watercolour  
Presented by Mrs Isobel R. Prosser

**Unknown**  
"Old Ro-Ro"  
Watercolour  
Presented by Mrs Isobel R. Prosser

## Hearty and Respectable People

Dear Sirs  
Thank you very much!  
I have received my money that was lost at Christchurch on April 3, 1992  
Thank you again for your heartiness and kind help.  
You are really respectable people!  
Again I thank you with all my heart.  
Yours faithfully  
Alice Wang  
Taiwan

Behind this letter recently received at the Gallery is a story of persistent detective work.

A visitor to the Gallery left her wallet containing a considerable amount of money but no identification save a signature on a travellers cheque (in Chinese characters).

After unsuccessfully trying to find the woman among the tourists in the park, gallery staff tried tracing the owner by firstly contacting the Bank of New Zealand. The bank's enquiries stretched to New York and eventually the gallery gained the name of the bank in Taiwan which had issued the traveller's cheques. The gallery wrote to the bank which contacted its client Alice Wang, who was, in time, reunited with her wallet.

Alice was quick to express her appreciation for the qualities of the front of house staff, Marilynne, Alexandra and Harry, long known for their heartiness and respectability.

# Friends of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery Inc.

President—Hilary Langer 348-3982

Treasurer—Chris Brocket 355-7133

Secretary—John Small 379-2185



## Introducing Anne Watt

On most Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10.00am till noon Anne, our new assistant, will be on duty in the Gallery. The Friends' membership and organisation has become so large that some administrative expertise was necessary. She is rapidly acquainting herself with the scope of our activities and welcomes the chance to meet members.

## Valerie Looks Back

In a well organised talk on June 14, Valerie Heinz used excellent slides of teachers and paintings to describe her training and some significant development in art in Christchurch that she had witnessed. In the 1940s students could enter the School of Art at a much younger age than is possible now. Some commercial art was taught and there followed considerable formal work: copying plaster casts and studying black and white slides. She recalled strong influences—the 1947 Group Show, Louise Henderson's cubism, Cecil Kelly's Impressionism, the various portraitists, and the shock that Colin McCahon's work gave to the conventions of the day.

## Robin White in Kiribati

Over ten years ago Robin and her family went to live in an environment that contrasted heavily with the western art and culture that she knew. On July 15 she talked about the development of her art and explained her various responses to the challenges she faced in Kiribati, such as learning the language and developing illustrated teaching materials. Throughout her illustrated presentation she showed how the beliefs in peace and harmony she learned in her family influenced her painting and her lifestyle. The many questions that followed Robin's talk showed that the audience were most impressed by the way she integrated her philosophy of life and her art.

## Speaker of the Month September

Our speaker on September 16 will be Lisa Reihana, film-maker and 1992 Artist in Residence at the Arts Centre. She will show two videos and talk about her work. Coffee and tea will be served at the Art Annex at 10.30am: \$1.50 for members, \$2.50 for non-members.

## October

On October 21 we will hear from John Coley, the Director of our Gallery. He will give an illustrated talk entitled *New Trends in Museums and Art Galleries*. Coffee and tea will be served at the Art Annex at 10.30am: \$1.50 for members, \$2.50 for non-members.

## LocArt in July

The second function in this new enterprise, which is planned by June Goldstein, took place on Sunday July 19 with a visit to the homes and studios of two local artists, Belle Melzer and Tiffany Thornley. On the walls of her living areas Belle had displayed 25 of her paintings, all but one of which she had completed since her arrival from USA five years ago. Her works, expressionistic and colourful, explore the relationship between the internal and external self. In her garage studio current work for an exhibition portrays changes she has experienced in moving to another culture. Tiffany Thornley gave a fascinating insight into facets of her art. First of all she showed her print work—etchings, aquatints, lithographs, linoprints and monoprints—revealing interesting progressions in experiment and development. She also showed pottery decoration, fabric-based experimental paintings, and water-colours with bold colours and brush work. The twenty people who attended the two sessions—ten fewer than could have been accommodated—were most appreciative of the opportunity to see artists at work.

## LocArt to Come

June has arranged two more visits for this year. Both of these have limits on their numbers. Please book by answerphone 379-4055, and if your plans change do cancel as soon as possible so that others may get on the list.

## Polytechnic, Tuesday October 6

Two sessions, 10.00am and 1.30pm, each for a maximum of 20 people. Meet June at the Art and Design reception foyer on the Ground Floor of D Block in Madras Street, opposite the Big Fresh car park. Bing Dawe will talk about craft and Rob Lovelock will discuss design, and you will be shown over both departments.

## Buss/Trusttum Family Home, Monday November 2

Two sessions, 10.30am and 1.30pm, each for a maximum of 15 people. Meet June at 18 Peterborough Street. Martin Trusttum will give a short talk, and then he, Philip, and Lee Trusttum, will each present works. Members may bring examples of Buss textiles to show.

## Artwatch

This activity continues to attract good audiences: more than sixty people attended the July showing. *A Day in the Country*, which featured Impressionism. Each showing is linked in some way with an event or exhibition in the Gallery, and you can be assured that it starts on time—noon and repeated at 5.00pm—and runs for no more than 60 minutes. For the 5.00pm session, use the back entrance. Mark your calendar now for the remainder of the year: September 2, Art from Australia; October 7, Printmaking in New Zealand; and November 4 (the last one), The New Zealand Landscape, including Toss Woollaston.

## Sixtieth Birthday

Barry Cleavin designed the striking invitation which brought a large gathering, including two of our patrons, Lady Hay and Lady Isaac, to celebrate the Gallery's sixtieth birthday. Hilary Langer welcomed them and Charles Manning, chairman of the Cultural Affairs Committee of the City Council, proposed the toast to the Gallery, to which John Coley replied. Sixty candles would have melted the icing on the huge cake—kindly donated by a well-wisher—so they were set on a large cut-out of "60" before being blown out by a well co-ordinated puff from the staff of the Gallery. Then came six reminiscences, one for each decade. First came Tim Seay, a grandson of Robert McDougall, who lifted the veil on the founder's character, describing how he cut through debate about the Gallery by promising money in the form of an ultimatum. There followed contributions by two former Mayors of Christchurch, Sir Hamish Hay and Sir Ronald Guthrey, each well known for their support for the arts in the city. Ann Betts, a former Education Officer, and Neil Roberts, the present Curator, then gave us the views of two insiders. Finally John Coley spoke on behalf of W. A. Sutton, the eminent artist and the other patron of the Friends of the Gallery, who unfortunately was too ill to attend in person.

## Art Annex

### Nature Morte

September 24–November 1

**Nature Morte** is an exhibition of 105 photographs, taken between 1971 and 1989 by New Zealand photographer Laurence Aberhart.

The exhibition surveys particular aspects of Aberhart's work over almost two decades, rather than presenting a simple chronology of it or a sequence based on his well-known series such as war memorials, Masonic lodges and Northland churches.

This Museum of New Zealand exhibition focuses on the essentially symbolic nature of Aberhart's photographs. The sequence relates to five aspects of the work, discussed in detail in the exhibition's catalogue—the photograph as still life; the relationship of memory/memorial; nature as artefact; the photographic archive; and camera colonialism.

**Nature Morte** has been curated by Peter Ireland, and toured nationally by Exhibitour.



### Coming Events

- September**
- 2 Wednesday Club 10.30am
  - 2 **Artwatch:** 12 noon and 5.00pm Art from Australia.
  - 5 Saturday Club 10.30am
  - 9 **Collection** exhibition closes.
  - 12 **The Urban Bonsai** exhibition opens to the public.
  - 12 Continuing club 10.30am.
  - 16 Speaker of the Month: **Lisa Reihana** 10.30am Art Annex.
  - 17 Kilmarnock Club 10.30am
  - 17 **Robert Baines Jewellery** exhibition opens to the public.
  - 18 **Woollaston: A Retrospective** Exhibition opens to the public.
  - 20 **Vanitas** closes at the Annex.
  - 24 Laurence Aberhart's **Nature Morte** opens to the public at the Annex.
- October**
- 3 Saturday Club 10.30am.
  - 7 Wednesday Club 10.30am
  - 7 **Artwatch:** 12 noon and 5.00pm Printmaking from New Zealand.
  - 10 Continuing Club 10.30am
  - 21 Speaker of the Month: **John Coley** 10.30am Art Annex.
  - 22 Kilmarnock Club 10.30am
  - 26 **The Urban Bonsai** exhibition closes.
- November**
- 1 Laurence Aberhart's **Nature Morte** closes at the Annex.

### New Members

E. M. Bos  
S. I. Caddick  
Annabel J. Elworthy (life)  
Mrs J. McAllum  
Felicity Richards  
E. L. Tohill  
Rosalind Watson  
Anne & Jack Watt  
Linden Wilkie

### Volunteers Needed

Voluntary receptionists required for the McDougall Art Annex. If you are able to assist please contact Lara Strongman, telephone 365-0915 ext. 824.

Valerie Nielsen, *Untitled (Spoon)* 1992, oil and tin plate on canvas. Courtesy the Artist.

Christchurch artist Valerie Nielsen's painting is among those included in *Vanitas*, a group exhibition at the Annex which looks at aspects of the still life genre in the works of a selection of contemporary artists. *Vanitas* closes on Sunday September 20.