

Bulletin

THE ROBERT McDOUGALL ART GALLERY

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Chihuly, Deep Cobalt Macchia with Yellow Wrap, 1992

Chihuly: Contemporary American Glass

22 September - 6 November

Described with a string of amazing superlatives and widely acknowledged as a breathtaking show, this exhibition by the famous American artist Dale Chihuly is a major cultural event on this year's exhibition calendar.

Chihuly has been working in the vanguard of contemporary glass art since the 1960's and is today one of the international leaders in this field. He is one of the three living artists given solo exhibitions at the Louvre and is also the first artist designated an American 'living cultural treasure.'

This exhibition of 17 large glasses and related paintings, comes to Christchurch following the recent International Festival of the Arts in Wellington. It includes works from 8 series dating from 1974 - 91 and shows among others, works from the *Basket* series where the glass simulates the woven forms sagging under their own weight, the *Sea Forms* where the thin glass walls reflect the subtle colours and markings of sea creatures, the *Persian* series of 1986, the *Venetians* of the following year, and the *Ikebana* works of 1990.

Large in size and brilliant in colour, these works bring together the amazing skills and techniques of the traditional

glassmaker. In 1968 Chihuly won a Fulbright Scholarship and became the first American to be apprenticed to the centuries old Venini glass factories of Murano in Venice. It was there that he picked up his skill and facility with the traditional Venetian techniques. With these he has forged into his glass works, the rigour of form and colour expected in contemporary painting and sculpture.

Since a disastrous automobile accident in 1976, which cost the artist his left eye, Dale Chihuly has worked in Seattle with a team of twelve or so master craftspeople. Under the watchful eye of the master and with the white hot forms of molten glass passing rapidly from furnace to shaping table and blower's torch, Chihuly's team performs marvels.

Chihuly: Contemporary American Glass was developed by the Dale Chihuly Studio, New York and is brought to New Zealand by Exhibitour New Zealand in partnership with the Dowse Art Museum. The exhibition is supported by the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council and presented at six New Zealand venues.

The spectacular and exciting **Chihuly: Contemporary American Glass** will be opening at the McDougall on 22 September, with an admission charge of \$3. It is certainly one of the important international art events for this year and a spectacular show not to be missed.

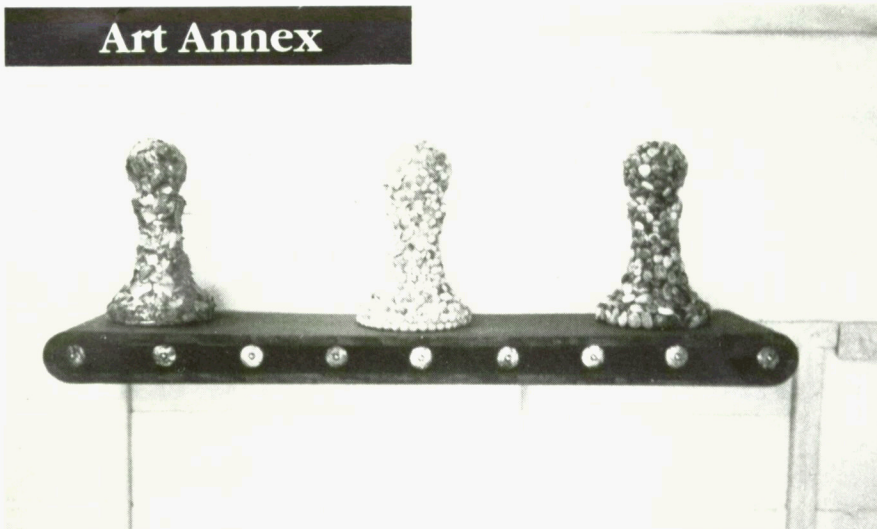
Director: John Coley, Senior Curator: Neil Roberts, Administration: Zena Cooper, Jenny Barber, Pamela Jarman, Art Annex Curator: Elizabeth Caldwell, Art Annex Supervisor: Simon Mulligan, Conservator: Lynn Campbell, Custodian: Harry Ipenberg, Education: Ann Betts, Judith Hoult, Exhibitions: Spencer Pullon, Gary Collins, Information and Shop: Merilynne Evans, Alexandra Ott, Maintenance: Denise Paulger, Registrar: Anna Crighton, Technician: Martin Young, Weekend Custodians: Merilynne Evans, Susan Leckie, Justine McLisky, John Mottram, Tony Webster and Dominic Feuchs.

Christchurch City Council



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Art Annex



Grant Takle, *Untitled*

4 by 2: A Solid Equation

11 August - 5 October

4 by 2: A Solid Equation is a rapid change sculpture show which spotlights four emergent South Island sculptors, each of whom will have a solo spot of two weeks within the overall show. The exhibition is an opportunity to present a range of sculptors who utilise strikingly different media and explore an array of themes, but who remain loosely object-based in their approach to sculpture. That is, they make sculptural pieces that can exist independently from other works, although they may be related by a common theme,

concept or style, without losing their coherency or impact. In order to balance this exhibition the Annex plans to explore the less solid realm of installation-based sculpture early next year.

4 by 2: A Solid Equation opens in August with the sly wit of Simon Endres. Having graduated from the Ilam School of Fine Arts in 1991, Simon has forged a reputation for his slick plastic sculptures which draw upon and parody popular culture, consumerism and mass-production.

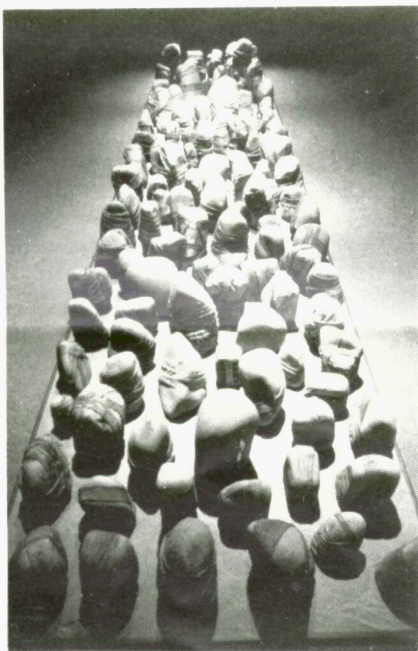
The magical, whimsical and seemingly delicate metal constructions of Philippa

Wilson will occupy the second slot. Philippa trained at the Otago Polytechnic School of Art and has recently moved to Christchurch. Describing her latest work as Picassoesque, her profile cut metal works will focus on domestic settings.

Philippa will be followed by another Otago sculptor, Martin Sullivan who employs a variety of media, ranging from found natural objects such as sticks and animal remains, to metal rods, discarded consumer objects and carved forms. Highly fetishistic, his well crafted works are both repellent and alluring.

Christchurch painter and sculptor Grant Takle will close the exhibition with a tactile display of covered objects. Interested in hierarchies and communication within our society, Grant has been working with forms associated with order and levels of authority. Adapting their size and covering them with found objects - drawing pins, scrabble letters, nails, marbles, paua - Grant's sculptures are both humorous and thought provoking.

The dates for **4 by 2: A Solid Equation** are: Simon Endres 11 - 24 August, Philippa Wilson 25 August - 7 September, Martin Sullivan 8 - 21 September, Grant Takle 22 September - 5 October. As the exhibition is made up of four solo spots there will be four openings. They will be held at 5.30 on 11 August, 25 August, 8 September and the 22 September at the McDougall Art Annex.



Judy Wilson, *Tall Poppies*, 1994

Tall Poppies

22 September - 6 November

This is an installation by the well known Canterbury artist Judy Wilson.

Speaking about the work she says: "Tall Poppies grew from my love of the land; of Canterbury and the evolution of the plains.

It also grew from my wry observations of the essentially New Zealand pre-occupation with those who stand tall in our society - our "tall poppies". Through these elements I have explored questions of restriction, freedom and change. Anomaly and paradox are at the heart of this installation.'

In it she uses simple materials from the Canterbury environment. The boulders each with its own form, subtle colour and seaming come from the Ashley and Waimakariri rivers. The strips of elm bark, are from managed cuttings. With their bindings the boulders are deliberately placed like an army marching forward each with its own character, its own systems of imposed controls, and each with its own reactions to these constraints.

Judy graduated in sculpture from the University of Canterbury in 1958 and since the 1970's has been active with regular exhibitions in New Zealand and abroad. She is also the recipient of a number of important overseas commissions and her works are held in New Zealand Government collections in Brussels, Bahrain, Canberra, New York, London, Tokyo and Vienna.

When this exhibition opens in September Judy will have just returned from Denmark. She has been invited as one of six artists from around the world to exhibit during 1994 at a large outdoor sculpture park at Krakamarken. This is great

international recognition for an important and unassuming New Zealand sculptor, as we welcome this exhibition of her recent work to the McDougall.

Recent Acquisitions

The following works have been purchased for the collection:

Euan Sarginson

Tunnel Beach
coloured photograph

Frances Hodgkins

Still Life with Red Jar
watercolour
Girls Paddling
watercolour



Frances Hodgkins, *Girls Paddling*



John Coley, *The Antique Fair - Arezzo, 1994*



Artists' Tour of Italy

Before I left to accompany the Artists' Tour of Italy, it was commented to me that more things had happened per square metre in Italy than in any other country. Absolutely. Our journey took eleven of us from Rome to Venice, through Tuscany, into the towns and villages of Perugia, Arezzo, Monterchi, Casciano, Sansepolcro, Siena, Florence, Fiesole, Pisa, Padua and to Venice, where we attempted to absorb as much as we could of the sights, sounds, cuisine, art and political history of this densely layered culture.

The weather in the Italian spring was sunny and warm. With the highly developed sense of the visual that all Italy seems to possess, even the fields seemed designer orchestrated with a sprinkling of vivid red poppies amongst unbelievably green pastures. Dark pencil cypresses, terracotta villas and the rolling Tuscan countryside arranged themselves into a series of Morandi landscapes.

I can report that the recent restoration of Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel fresco is

brehtaking. Eighteen years ago when I first saw the mural its sombre tonalities seemed in keeping with the profound spirituality of the imagery, but the cleaning reveals the artists true intentions which, no less profound, are expressed in full bodied colour. The modelling of form is revealed to be more delicate and subtle than could be seen under its treacle like coverings, small rectangles of which have been left untouched to show the contrast with the cleaned surfaces. Although one or two critics have deplored the unfamiliar brightness of the cleaned fresco, the success of the undertaking is convincingly obvious.

We arose early to draw in the places we visited. Pressured for time, we scribbled to capture our impressions. To draw a subject is to own it in some respect. Certainly the intense scrutiny required to sketch impresses the detail of a subject on the mind in a way which the camera cannot.

The list of painters and architects with whose works we made first hand contact

is too long to list here but included Giotto, Mantegna, Piero della Francesca, Tintoretto, Bramante, Palladio, Botticelli and Raphael. No small town was without its museum honouring the art of a native son who had gained fame and fortune.

And a lesson which Italy holds for all those who consider the arts to be elitist affectations and a waste of community time and resources is that the arts are as economically enriching as they are spiritually.

Cultural tourism is the fuel in Italy's economic engine, a huge industry which embraces everything from the tiny village to which travellers flock for its specialised ceramics, to the cities of Florence and Venice, drawing in tens of thousands of visitors each day. New Zealand may not have the vast wealth of cultural experiences that Italy offers but it nevertheless has a vigorous, productive cultural life ready and able to contribute to the growing tourism industry here.

John Coley.



MONTANA WINES LIMITED
New Zealand's Leading Winemaker

Montana Wines sponsorship:

The Robert McDougall Art Gallery and the McDougall Art Annex wish to welcome Montana Wines Ltd in their recently agreed sponsorship, providing their fine wines for our exhibition openings.

For many years now Montana have established themselves as world leaders in the wine industry, maintaining a respected image for New Zealand at functions and on dining tables around the world. We are very pleased to have Montana Wines Ltd as a supporter of the Robert McDougall, and as I am sure you'll agree, Montana Wines Ltd will become a valued supporter of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery for the future.

Welcome Back Ann Betts

Our new Education Officer is an old friend, Ann Betts who, after a sojourn away from the Gallery, is returning to the position she pioneered in 1979. Ann brings a breadth of experience and some recently acquired skills to add to her accomplishments as a teacher, writer, administrator. Ann's enthusiasm is undiminished and carries forward what has become a lively tradition of energetic Education Officers. Welcome back Ann.

Coming Events

August

- 3 Wednesday Club 10.30am
- 5 Friday Club 10.30am
- 6 Saturday Club 10.30am
- 11 **4 by 2: A Solid Equation** - Simon Endres - opens at the Annex 5.30pm
- 13 Saturday Club 2 10.30am
- 13 **Floortalk:** Lara Strongman Curator at the Waikato Museum of Art & History will speak on **Fomison. What Shall We Tell Them?** 2pm

- 17 Friends Speaker of the Month - John Coley 'An Artist's Tour: Rome to Venice' 10.30am

- 18 Kilmarnock Club 10.30am

- 25 **4 by 2: A Solid Equation** - Philippa Wilson - opens at the Annex 5.30pm

September

- 2 Friday Club 10.30am

- 3 Saturday Club 10.30am

- 7 Wednesday Club 10.30am

- 8 **4 by 2: A Solid Equation** - Martin Sullivan - opens at the Annex 5.30

- 10 Saturday Club 2 10.30am

- 11 **Fomison. What Shall We Tell Them?** closes

- 11 **C N Worsley** closes

- 12 **Infidels of the Hindu Kush** closes

- 21 Friends Speaker of the Month - Peter Shaw 'The Fletcher Challenge Collection' 10.30am

- 22 **4 by 2: A Solid Equation** - Grant Takle - opens at the Annex 5.30pm

- 22 Kilmarnock Club 10.30am

- 22 **Chihuly: Contemporary American Glass** opens. \$3 admission charge. Until 6 November

All wine at the openings generously sponsored by Montana Wines Limited

Friends of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery

President—Chris Brocket 355 7133
Vice President—Mark Stöcker 365 3895
Treasurer—Robin Hogg 365 4646
Secretary—Anne Watt 379 4055



Speaker of the Month

These functions take place on the third Wednesday of each month, commencing at 10.30am with the serving of tea and coffee. The charge is \$1.50 for members, \$2.50 for non-members.

August: On 17 August John Coley, Director of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery, will give an illustrated talk entitled: 'An Artist's Tour: Rome to Venice.' Main Gallery.

September: On 21 September Peter Shaw, *Metro's* 'Lively Arts' critic and author of *New Zealand Architecture*, will give an illustrated talk entitled 'The Fletcher-Challenge Collection'. Main Gallery. Friends may also wish to attend his lecture the same day on 'Clarice Cliff' at the University of Canterbury, School of Fine Arts, Room 203 at 1pm.

Speaker of the Month:

Cath Brown

Enthusiastic applause was given at the conclusion of Cath Brown's talk as May 'Speaker of the Month'. Presenting 'a personal statement from a Maori woman's perspective', the Ngai Tahu artist discussed her childhood and subsequent career with infectious humour. From a teaching role, Cath was appointed to an advisory role, implementing the teaching of Maori art and culture into schools throughout New Zealand. She recently retired as Head of Art at Christchurch College of Education. An influential exponent of Raranga, Maori weaving using traditionally-prepared fibres, she demonstrated to the Friends, first stripping flax with a mussel shell, and then rolling the fibres on her leg to form strings. Fine examples of finished weaving were shown, including some of the artist's own work which incorporates ceramics with fibre.

Speaker of the Month:

Max Hailstone

Max Hailstone gave a typically professional talk as June 'Speaker of the Month.' His theme, 'What's so funny about typography?' addressed several of the issues central to his specialist role in teaching graphic design at the School of Fine Arts. Initially, most people see typography as an exacting, indeed humourless, discipline but, as he explained, it is fun - and can be funny - once you get beyond the first hurdles. Typography has had a long and varied history. There are political, social, economic and religious implications in the messages it carries. Frequently (and especially in more recent times with pornography) it has been subjected to censorship and other forms of political interference. Typography can have an impact on a simple, amateur level or it can have real sophistication. Max provided the Friends with a 'graphic' insight into this fascinating world.



Mrs Kay Buchan and Toss Wollaston's portrait of her with her daughters (LocArt visit, 9.3.94)

LocArt Coming Events

There are still a few vacancies available for the **LocArt** visit to Alison Ryde's studio on Saturday 17 September. Please meet June Goldstein at 1.50pm outside 20 Helmores Lane, Fendalton. To book (or cancel), ring the answerphone on 379-4055.

ArtWatch

The next **ArtWatch** is on 'Capability Brown' and should be of special interest to Friends who enjoyed Tom Stoppard's 'Arcadia'. Sunday 21 August 11am.

New Members

A L Bartkus
Gayle Forster
Trisha Geange
Sarah Priday
Gillian Rossiter & family

New Recruits Needed for Gallery Guides

The voluntary Gallery Guides are busy with monthly clubs, daily rosters, art appreciation courses and now with the visiting schools making it necessary to extend the team.

Only 15 new guides are needed but if you have a background in art, or have a long-time interest in the arts, are energetic and well-motivated, and have a reasonable amount of time to spare each month, then you may be just the sort of person we need.

Ann Betts, the Education Officer, is taking new enrolments now and will be training a new set of Guides in September. If you would like to be involved in this capacity, please phone her at the Gallery to discuss the programme with you and to arrange an interview. She will be very pleased to hear from you.

The Art Annex was host to close to 450 people on the 21st of June for the opening of 'Aoraki/Hikurangi', a contemporary Maori art exhibition.

'Aoraki/Hikurangi' opened during the centenary celebrations of Sir Apirana Ngata's graduation from Canterbury College.



Crowds at the Annex enjoying the recent opening of Aoraki/Hikurangi