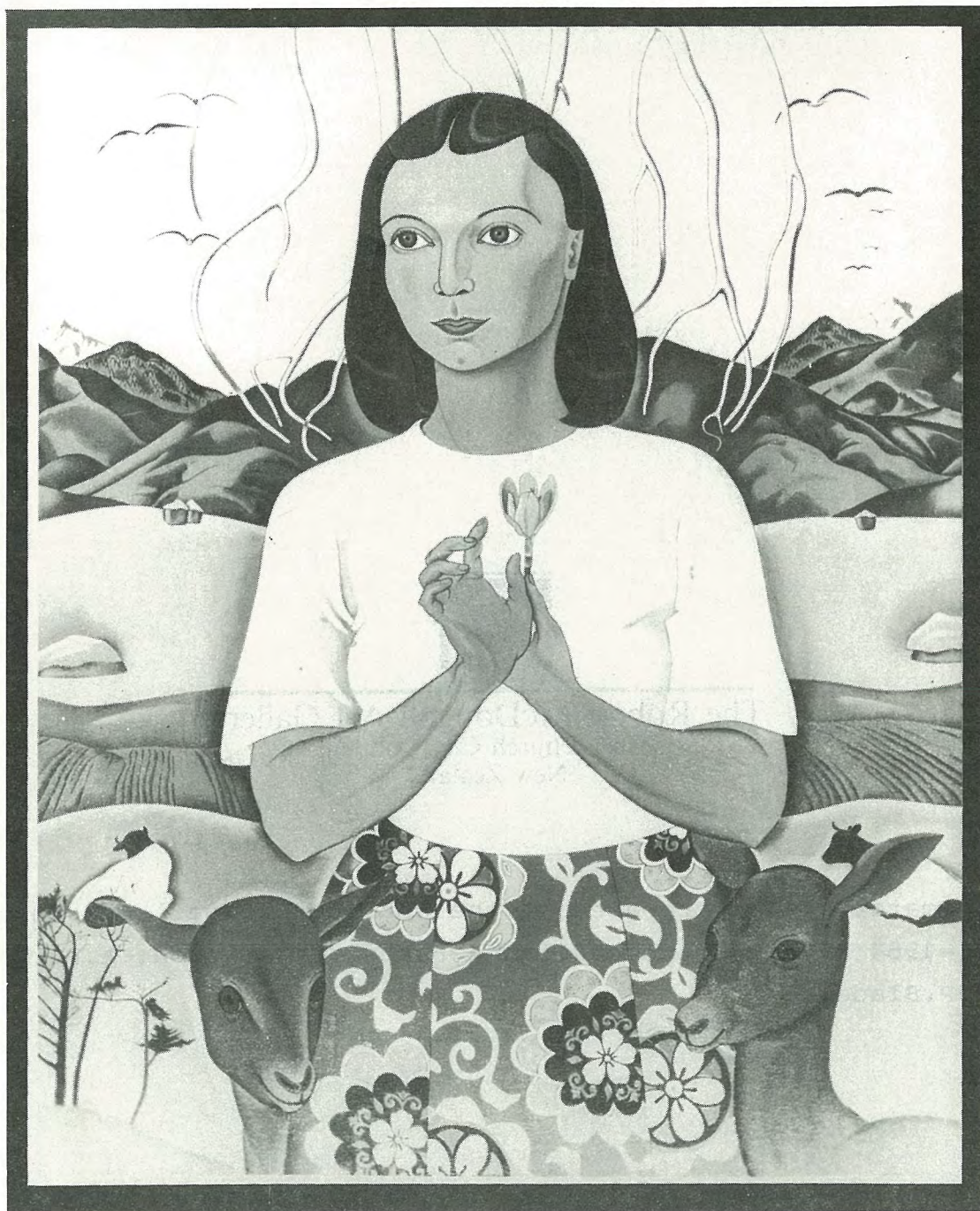

INTRODUCING OUR NEW ZEALAND ARTISTS

RITA ANGUS



RITA ANGLUS



The Robert McDougall Art Gallery
Christchurch City Council
New Zealand

This material was prepared at the Robert McDougall Art Gallery
1983-1984 by a team comprising A.Betts, C.Anderson, A.Parker
and P.Slade.



Rita Angus

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Rita Angus

RITA ANGUS 1908-70 RESOURCE KIT

NOTES FOR TEACHERS

Objectives

- 1 To develop an awareness of the life and paintings of Rita Angus, a New Zealand artist.
- 2 To teach the basic skills of art appreciation and art interpretation.
- 3 To use this study of an artist as a basis for language and social studies activities with junior forms.

Introduction

Rita Angus has been selected for this study because she is a New Zealand artist who spent much of her working life in the Canterbury area. It is perhaps appropriate for New Zealand pupils to study a local artist and to develop an early interest and an awareness of their own cultural heritage.

Material in this kit has been prepared with the special and different needs of classes from Form 1 to Form 6 in mind, leaving the class teacher to select from the material provided the information and activities they feel would be most appropriate.

The additional suggested activities are geared mainly for Form 1 and 2 classes where the form teacher can use the language and social studies activities as well.

The entire kit could then be covered over a period of approximately one week, with a visit to the local art gallery as a follow-up activity.

As we have discovered that an interrogatory approach based on questions planned to direct the pupils' gaze and attention is the most effective teaching method in the viewing and interpretation of art works, we have used that approach in this kitset.

It is suggested that teachers use a questioning technique when approaching paintings and the kit has been designed accordingly. In this way it is hoped pupils will develop the skills of art appreciation through the ability to question for themselves. Therefore, a general background statement is given for each slide followed by a series of questions and answers which are planned to help focus students' viewing and to stimulate class discussion.



Rita Angus

SLIDE LIST

1. Photograph of the artist.
2. Self Portrait 1936-37
Oil on Canvas 490 X 390mm
Dunedin Art Gallery.
3. Portrait of Betty Curnow 1942
Oil on Canvas 775 X 647mm
Auckland City Art Gallery
4. A Goddess of Mercy 1946-47
Oil on Canvas 866 X 615mm
Robert McDougall Art Gallery
5. Irises 1945
Watercolour 350 X 240mm
Private Collection, Wellington.
6. Cass 1936
Oil on Canvas 375 X 474mm
Robert McDougall Art Gallery
7. Fog, Hawkes Bay 1966 - 68
Oil on Hardboard 597 X 889mm
Auckland City Art Gallery
8. Journey, Wellington 1962-63
Oil on Hardboard 610 X 863mm
Private Collection, Wellington
9. Flight 1968-69
Oil on Hardboard 590 X 596mm
National Art Gallery, Wellington.



Religio Anglos

1902-1903

1. Photograph of the altar

2. Calligraphy 1902-03
Oil on canvas 450 X 100mm
Donor: Art Gallery

3. Portrait of Peter On 1902
Oil on canvas 450 X 100mm
Donor: Art Gallery

4. Portrait of Peter 1902-03
Oil on canvas 450 X 100mm
Donor: Art Gallery

5. Portrait 1902
Watercolor 450 X 100mm
Donor: Art Gallery

6. Portrait 1902
Oil on canvas 450 X 100mm
Donor: Art Gallery

7. Portrait 1902-03
Oil on canvas 450 X 100mm
Donor: Art Gallery

8. Portrait 1902-03
Oil on canvas 450 X 100mm
Donor: Art Gallery

9. Portrait 1902
Oil on canvas 450 X 100mm
Donor: Art Gallery



Rita Angus

RITA ANGUS - BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

- 1908 Born Hastings - 12 March.
- 1922-26 Attended Palmerston North Girls' High School.
- 1927 Student at Canterbury College School of Art. Left 1933 after many interruptions.
- 1930 Married fellow-student Alfred Cook. Attended lectures at Elam School of Art, Auckland.
- 1931 Rita and Alfred Cook teaching in Napier.
- 1934 Rita and Alfred separated.
- 1936 In October went with Louise Henderson to Arthur's Pass.
- 1939 Stayed with Allen and Betty Curnow. Sister, Edna, died.
- 1941 Refused to do war work. Went to farm at Pangatotara to pick tobacco with pacifist friends. Stayed with Betty Curnow and began her portrait.
- 1943 With help of father bought cottage at Aranoni Track, Sumner. Parents moved to Waikanae, north of Wellington.
- 1946 Growing interest in Pacific and Asian cultures. Painted A Goddess of Mercy .
- 1949 Health deteriorated - was in psychiatric hospital.
- 1950 Left hospital - went to Waikanae.
- 1954 Sold Sumner cottage. Moved to Manganui, North Auckland.
- 1955 With father's help bought cottage in Thorndon, Wellington.
- 1958 Awarded a New Zealand Art Society Fellowship for one year's study in Europe.
- 1960 Travelled between Wellington and Napier to visit parents. Made notes for painting from bus.
- 1963 Living in Wellington. Had physiotherapy for back.
- 1968 Father died. Began drawings of Bolton Street Cemetery.
- 1969 Recurrent health problems. In November entered Wellington Public Hospital for an operation.
- 1970 Died 26 January.



RINA Angus

RINA ANGUS - BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

1905 Born March 12 - La Brea

1922-28 Attended Patterson North Girls High School

1927 Student at Leland High College School of Art, Fall 1923 since
many instructions.

1930 Attended California School of Art, Oakland
Film School of Art, Oakland

1931 Rina and Alfred took teaching in La Brea
Rina and Alfred operated.

1932 An October went with Louise Henderson to Alameda Park
Rina and Alfred had their honeymoon at La Brea, Brea.

1933 Returned to La Brea, where she was employed as a
teacher in the public school system. Rina and Alfred had
their first child, Alfred Rina.

1934 Alfred Rina, teacher, worked at La Brea, Brea.
Rina and Alfred bought a house at La Brea, Brea.
Rina and Alfred moved to La Brea, Brea.

1935 Growing interest in La Brea, Brea, La Brea
La Brea, Brea, La Brea, Brea, La Brea, Brea.

1936 Health deteriorated, Rina in psychiatric hospital.
Rina and Alfred moved to La Brea, Brea.

1937 Alfred Rina, teacher, moved to La Brea, Brea.
Rina and Alfred bought a house at La Brea, Brea.

1938 Awarded a New Zealand art award following the year's study
in La Brea.

1940 Travelled to New Zealand, La Brea, Brea, La Brea, Brea.
Rina and Alfred moved to La Brea, Brea.

1941 Living in La Brea, Brea, La Brea, Brea, La Brea, Brea.
Rina and Alfred moved to La Brea, Brea.

1942 Father's health deteriorated, Rina and Alfred moved to La Brea, Brea.
Rina and Alfred moved to La Brea, Brea.

1943 Rina and Alfred moved to La Brea, Brea, La Brea, Brea.
Rina and Alfred moved to La Brea, Brea.



Rita Angus

**JUNIOR SECTION
FORMS 1-4**

File Area



JUNIOR SECTION
FORMS 1-4



Rita Angus

Suggestions on how an integrated approach could be used are outlined below, where studies arising from the art kit are related to other major areas of the curriculum. Further activities for Art, Language, Social Studies and Gallery visits are also included at the end of the Junior Section.

ART

An introduction to famous New Zealand artists. A study of a selection of paintings with attention to style, influences, meanings and visual interpretation. Practical art work arising from art interpretation and appreciation activities.

LANGUAGE

Vocabulary of art terminology.
Composition skills - (written work arising out of images).
Dramatisation - the life of an artist, video work.
Poetry by contemporary writers.



ART GALLERY

Visiting an art gallery.
Awareness of gallery collection.
School class visit for practice in looking at art works.
Study of different techniques.
Links with other painters, and comparisons.
Awareness of gallery resources.

SOCIAL STUDIES

A study of life in New Zealand during the 1930's-1960's.
Pacifism.
Comparative religious philosophies.
The role of women in New Zealand.
The great depression of the 1930's.
The effect of the 2nd World War on the people of New Zealand.

SCIENCE

Nature Study. Plant forms.
Seasonal images.
Light.
Colour.
Geometry.



Rita Angus

TEACHERS' NOTES

SLIDE 1 Photograph of Rita Angus by Marti Friedlander

Background Note:

This is a photograph of one of New Zealand's important artists. Her name is Rita Angus and in this photograph, taken in 1969 when she was about 60 years old, we see her bright and searching glance.

She said "I suggest you relax. You have been trying to make me into a legend. I am a painter and paintings are paintings - line, tone, form and colour, mass, light. You cannot make a legend out of a painting..."

Let's look at some of her paintings.

Miss Angus



TEACHERS' NOTES

Slide 1 Photograph of Miss Angus by Miss Richardson

Background Notes:

This is a photograph of one of New Zealand's important artists. Her name is Miss Angus and in this photograph, taken in 1952 when she was about 55 years old, we see her bright red sea-china glasses.

She said "I suggest you relax. You have been trying to make me into a legend. I am a painter and assistant and painter. I like tone, form and colour, mass, light. You cannot make a legend out of a painter..."
Let's look at some of her paintings.



Rita Angus

SLIDE 2 Rita Angus Self Portrait 1936-37 Oil on Canvas
490 x 390mm Dunedin Art Gallery

Background Note:

Rita Angus painted fifty-five self portraits throughout her lifetime. If all these paintings were mounted on one wall, we could see the whole working life of the artist. Each self portrait would mirror her situation because each was composed to indicate her current interests or state of mind.

This self portrait with Christchurch buildings in the background was begun in 1936 following the crisis of her separation from her husband after four years of marriage. Being a divorced woman and declaring herself to be a professional artist in a country where a woman's place was in the home was a major break from conventional behaviour for a woman of the 1930s in New Zealand. Rita was dependent on her earnings from painting and small gifts of money from her mother.

The self portrait expresses the way she saw herself as an independent woman. In a sophisticated context she places herself squarely in the centre of the painting; with arms confidently folded she stands bareheaded and smoking a cigarette. Behind her in the background of the painting we see the silhouette of city rooftops and above them the long cloud patterns characteristic of Canterbury skies.

The work is painted in oils on canvas using simplified muted colours which resemble the Canterbury landscape. The areas of colour are smooth and the edges hard. This is to become the Rita Angus style.

SLIDE 2

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Look at her clothing and the way she is standing.
What is the artist saying about herself?

She seems to be saying that she is an independent woman, that her role in life is to be a full-time artist and not a domesticated woman. She has situated herself in the outside world. It was the custom for women to wear a hat with a coat when dressed to go out. Rita's beret is casually held over her arm. She dares also to smoke a cigarette in public, standing arms folded, calmly staring back as though she will not be moved.

2. On what predominant shape has the artist based her composition?

The triangle, which creates a strong angular and powerful pose. The arm movements and coat collar boldly repeat the shape.

3. Rita Angus has said - "In portraiture I use few colours". How would you describe the colours used here?

The colours used are like those of the Canterbury landscape with the strip of light blue sky making the muted colours of the coat and background buildings appear stronger. The bright red of her lips draws attention and stands out against the dark green of the scarf.

4. How would you describe the painting technique that the artist has used?

Areas of smooth colour. Hard edges.



Rita Angus

SLIDE 3 Rita Angus Portrait of Betty Curnow 1942
Oil on Canvas 775 x 647mm Auckland City Art Gallery

Background Note:

Rita Angus had a special attitude towards the portraits she painted. There was an agreement that her portraits be sold or given only to the person for whom they were painted and then only if she was satisfied with the results. She often included symbols which had a particular meaning for her subject and for herself. Her intention was to express symbolically, through simplicity of line and colour, the sitter's personality.

The portrait of her lifelong friend Betty Curnow was painted in 1942 on her return to Christchurch during the second world war, after she and other pacifist friends had been away in Motueka tobacco picking during the time of her refusal to be manpowered into work which supported the war effort.

Staying for two months with Allen and Betty Curnow in Riccarton, Christchurch, Rita Angus began the now famous New Zealand portrait - using canvas and paints given to her as a gift. She was often in financial difficulties and was at times dependent on family and friends to provide a place for her to stay. Both women shared a deep interest in family history. Through this portrait, by looking at Betty Curnow's motherhood, the artist is drawing attention to the pioneer women of New Zealand.

The figure in the portrait is treated symbolically as a strong pioneer woman sitting in her grandmother's chair directly facing the viewer. Behind, a portrait of her father in an oval frame hangs on the wall adjacent to her head, her poet husband's books filling the shelves behind. She is pregnant with her second child; in her hands is a blue cloth. The oval designs on

SLIDE 3 Continued)

the red blouse contain patterns of children, trees and animals, contrasting with the smooth green skirt and background wall. The pose, dress, furniture, etc. are carefully selected symbols of time and place, past and present. The work is painted in oils on canvas.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Compare this portrait with the Rita Angus self portrait of the previous slide. In what way is it different?

This is a more decorative painting. Betty Curman is seated comfortably inside her house, supported by her grandmother's chair; her hands resting in her lap are holding what could be a duster. There is a set order in the arrangement of objects in the confined space which seems to push the figure forwards. Rita Angus, in her self portrait, is not confined in this way: the houses are behind her - part of the background.

2. Look at the colours - are they different?

The figure is clothed in a bright red and white patterned shirt which links with the lips and fingernails, actively contrasting with the blue and green in the painting. The oval shaped hair-do is coloured rich and deep and causes the face to appear lighter.

3. The predominating shape used in this portrait is oval. Where is it used?

The whole composition is based on an oval which is repeated in the father's portrait, shape of the head patterns on the blouse, the chair back, position of her arms, and highlighted in the fingernails.

4. Identify the objects which indicate past generations.

Her father's portrait, grandmother's chair, on the wall a Breughel painting called Summer, Harvesting the Corn.

5. Why would the artist choose an interior setting for this portrait?

Betty Curman is a wife and mother; her interests at that time were centred in her house.

3. Why would the artist choose an interior setting for this

portrait?

4. How does the artist use light and shadow to create a sense of

depth and volume?



Rita Angus

SLIDE 4 Rita Angus A Goddess of Mercy 1946-47
Oil on Canvas 866 x 615mm Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Background Note:

In 1943 Rita Angus moved into a cottage on Clifton Hill, Sumner, a cottage which she had bought with her father's help. It is said that during this stage of her life she became solitary and tended towards periods of depression. She had little money, but held strongly to her independence. World War II had just finished. Denis Glover said of her at this time - 'She became very mysterious and mystical. The laughter was gone.'

A Goddess of Mercy was the first of three "goddess" portraits painted by Rita Angus - the others were Sun Goddess (1949) and Rutu (1951). A Goddess of Mercy is said to be a memorial to her sister Edna, who died from an asthma attack in 1939. Her use of an idealised woman shown against a landscape background reveals her developing interest in Eastern philosophies, particularly Buddhism. The figure portrayed can be seen as similar to icons or Chinese Buddhist images with their contemplative pose symbolising spiritual experience. Kwan Yin is the Buddhist Goddess who hears prayers.

The idealised figure takes on the look of a goddess in a number of ways: her meditative gaze; the gesture of, and the crocus in, her hands; the Eastern style garment; the protective deer at her side. Around the figure are deliberately selected symbols of growth - the seasons, animals, birds, etc. The branches above her head perhaps symbolise a sense of spiritual uplifting. The use of symmetry in her composition seems very deliberate in the repetition and balance of shapes and images (eg the cows, the haystacks, the white mountain peaks) and in the simplified planes of the background. As compared with the self-portrait, the colours here are bright and the forms are clearly outlined.

SLIDE 4

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. This painting is called A Goddess of Mercy . Look at the figure in the portrait...look at her face... her hands...her clothing. How has the artist made the figure look like a goddess?

Contemplative/serene gaze, gesture - and crocus in her hands, Eastern style garment, protective deer at her side.

2. What are some of the symbols or signs that the artist has used?

Symbols of growth - seasons, animals, birds, etc. Branches above head - perhaps symbolising spiritual growth or uplifting.

3. Why do you think she has placed a deer, a cow, a haystack, a white mountain peak, etc. on either side of the painting?

Deliberate use of symmetry - shapes and images are repeated and balanced on either side.

4. What are the colours like? How are they different from those in the self-portrait (Slide 2)?

Bright, clear - less subdued.

5. What times of the year are suggested in this painting?

Summer - hay

Winter - branches, mountain peaks

Spring - crocus

Autumn - ploughing



Rita Angus

SLIDE 5 Rita Angus Irises 1945 Watercolour
350 x 244mm Private Collection, Wellington

Background Note:

At this time Rita Angus was living in her cottage on Clifton Hill, Sumner and spending part of the year with her parents at Waikanae.

New Zealand society had little tolerance for a woman in Rita's position - divorced, living alone and not mixing easily in social company. She was quite poor yet did not go out to work, had not supported the war effort and, worse, was an artist. However, she was fortunate in the many good friends who were supportive throughout, as were her parents.

Their home at Waikanae had a garden of some three acres which, along with the seashore, provided subjects for her work. Rita was a keen gardener herself and was aware of the mystical or historical associations of certain flowers. It was in 1947 that she wrote:

"I like to paint with the seasons and devote time to the observation of skies, country, sea and peoples."

Her precise observation and attention to detail is evident from this 35cm high watercolour. To her "the important factor in my training has been the academic". That academic emphasis on accuracy and finish is reflected in the way she approaches her subject. Look at the bud on the right hand side of the painting: note how the colours change from pale green to warm mauve, how she uses fine pen lines to mark the veins and how she paints tiny white marks on the left side of the iris to show light against dark, as a contrast to the other side. Although each of the iris heads is minutely observed, there is no loss of an overall sense of rhythm and movement. The irises are arranged to make a clear pattern across the page. The shapes are emphasised by drawing a fine line around them, e.g. the brown pen line around the leaves.

SLIDE 5

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Rita Angus loved nature and at times painted in a very realistic way. If you have seen an iris flower do you think she has painted these in a particularly real way? Can you suggest why these flowers seem to look so real in this painting?

Because the artist has included all the pieces and surfaces of the flower and been very careful about the distinctive shapes, surfaces and colours of the plant.

2. Find and give names for each part of the flower.

Petals, leaves, buds, stalk, etc.

3. Now look closely at the very fine details. How are shapes emphasised?

Outlined with brown pen lines (around the leaves, for example).

How does the artist control light and dark?

Tiny white marks on the left side of the iris show light against dark, as a contrast to the other side.

How are the veins marked?

By using fine pen lines.

4. Why do you think the artist has painted the irises in such a realistic way?

By taking such care to record the fine details, she focuses our attention on the flowers, more so than if we had been looking at the real thing. She loved nature and wanted us to be aware of and appreciate the beauty to be found there and to make a lasting image of its beauty.



Rita Angus

SLIDE 6 Rita Angus Cass 1936 Oil on Canvas
375 x 474mm Robert McDougall Art Gallery

Background Note :

In the spring of 1936, Rita Angus with an artist friend, Louise Henderson, travelled by train to Arthur's Pass on a sketching holiday. Rita returned to Christchurch having completed a number of charcoal drawings and watercolour sketches of the area.

In her slow and deliberate way, by copying and developing into another medium, she used the facts from her studies with attention to the truth to bring her studies to a finish. She was searching for ways in which her own experience and the essential nature of the area could be presented to the viewer. Cass was painted in oils on canvas from a watercolour study of the Cass railway station in 1936.

The railway station is the focal point of the composition and the place can be identified instantly. The artist has noted the shapes and colours in the landscape using line and colour, placing shapes one against another in contrast and harmony. The angle of light is a truthful record of light on an October afternoon.

In comparison with other landscapes painted at that time, the work was not at all conventional. Each area in this composition has been given equal emphasis, breaking away from the traditional manner of New Zealand landscape painting.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

- 1 Look at this painting. How can we tell that it is a New Zealand landscape and is about the Canterbury area in particular?

It expresses the remoteness of many places in New Zealand. The lone waiting figure emphasises the isolation. Because the Canterbury area was so flat, the New Zealand Railways were able to run trains into remote areas. At the end of branch lines there would be a shed or station like Cass. Look at the northwest sky - only seen like this in Canterbury. Note the tussocks and the colour of the hills - compare with the colours of the Hawkes Bay area on slide No. 7.

- 2 Can you find one shape which is repeated throughout the composition?

The triangle is repeated. Look at the block of trees behind the station, the shapes and shadows on the station and the shapes of the hills.

- 3 Although the landscape was a traditional subject in New Zealand painting, Rita Angus did not paint Cass in the traditional manner. How is her painting different?

Traditional landscapes contain three distinct types of space - the foreground which is clearly defined with colours clearly stated; the middle ground with less clarity and colour toning down and becoming darker; the background which has converging lines of composition and colours fading away. Rita Angus was not concerned with varying colours of the receding planes - she compressed the planes and flattened the areas creating "picture space" as opposed to real space. Each area is given equal emphasis in her use of line and colour.

- 4 Look at the ways trees are represented in the painting. Do these make a comment about trees in the area and does the painting imply a story?

One theme signifies growth. The stages of growth from the seedling trees on the hills, grown pine trees behind and the timber lying stacked in front of the station. Shadows on the station appear to be the shapes of three saws. The association with the milled timber is obvious.



Rita Angus

SLIDE 7 Rita Angus Fog Hawkes Bay 1966/68
Oil on Hardboard 597 x 889mm
Auckland City Art Gallery

Background Note:

Fog Hawkes Bay was painted thirty years after Cass. In 1966 Rita Angus was living in a cottage in Thorndon, Wellington, having moved from her Christchurch home in 1954. Her parents had moved to Napier, Hawkes Bay, and she made frequent journeys by bus to visit them.

In this painting Rita Angus has attempted to depict the sensation of a journey through the countryside in the fog. We are shown the different faces of each building as though we are seeing them in a series of glances from the window of a jolting bus. These broken rhythms are also seen in the fields and fog clouds. In this landscape, as in her others, Rita was searching for ways in which to express the "essence" or the essential nature of the New Zealand landscape. She loved the New Zealand countryside and here sought to typify it by interrelating the weather, the landscape and man's activities - the woolshed, the sheep truck and animals on the road, the telegraph poles, the rough road, are all examples of these typical New Zealand elements which she sought to portray. The lush vibrant colours of the New Zealand countryside contrast with the muted reds of the farm buildings.

SLIDE 7

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

- 1 What parts of this painting make it look like a typical North Island, New Zealand scene?

The buildings, woolsheds, telegraph poles, rough road, cattle and sheep-truck on road, greenness...

- 2 Look at the road...look carefully at the buildings... how has Rita Angus given the feeling of a journey through the countryside?

The centrality of the road with the destination in the distance. One sees different faces of each building as though seeing them in a series of glances from a bus window - these broken rhythms seen in fields, fog and clouds also.

- 3 What do you think the journey was like? Smooth? Jolting? How do you know?

The road is given the appearance of being rough through the use of varied colour tones.

- 4 What is happening on the road?

Obstruction/cattle - sheeptruck

- 5 What sort of colours has the artist used?

Vibrant, lush green compared with muted red of buildings.



Rita Angus

SLIDE 8

Rita Angus Journey, Wellington (1962-1963)

Oil on Hardboard 610 x 863

Private Collection, Wellington.

Background Note:

This painting is a composite, where many different scenes are deliberately assembled into one image. This enables Rita Angus to express a number of sensations and experiences associated with her daily journey to the physiotherapy department of Wellington Public Hospital for treatment of her "bad back".

These aspects include the central steering wheel of the bus, the bus itself, a camelia tree and magnolia buds from her Thorndon garden, and the view from the physiotherapist's couch while undergoing treatment.

The houses and buildings in the foreground have a Wellington character and the hills are those surrounding the city. To the left is the harbour.

The sky is treated in a similar composite way, simultaneously showing both day and night. Rita was interested in the sky and in changing cloud formations, and spent much time studying them.

In 1964 Rita Angus submitted this painting to the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts for exhibition but it was rejected, much to her disgust. She resigned her membership and would have nothing further to do with the Academy.

SLIDE 8

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. This painting is called Journey, Wellington. Look at the way it is constructed and see if you can work out why it is called Journey.

All aspects of the journey from home to Wellington Hospital for physiotherapy treatment, i.e. the steering wheel and scenes within it : bus, view at the hospital (from the physiotherapist's couch), flowers and buds from the garden, Wellington buildings and houses, hills and harbour.

2. Consider the road into the City - how would the artist have made her way through? Is there a passageway?

No.

Now look at the buildings. Is there anything unusual about them?

No windows.

Why do you think the artist has painted the buildings and road in this way?

Perhaps the city is an uncaring place, going about its business.

Perhaps she feels a bit on the outer.

The idea that there is no way to the heart or centre of the city, either through its streets or buildings.

3. Why do you think the artist has placed the bus wheel above the City?

The journey is a major part of her life at this time.

Perhaps she feels dependent on the bus and driver.

What other wheel shapes are there in this painting?

The sun and the moon.

What do you think the significance of these circle shapes could be?

The sun and moon represent the day and night sky, and the cyclic nature of time, perhaps.

The bus wheel is representative of the artist's journey, which is also cyclic.

Symbolic of the passage of time, perhaps.

SLIDE 8 Cont'd

4. Looking at the buildings of the City, how do you think you would feel about living there?

The closed surfaces of the buildings with no windows or doorways seem to suggest a sense of inhospitality or tension. Also the buildings are painted with drab and dull colours and huddle very closely together suggesting a sense of congestion, lack of air and space etc.

4. Look up at the buildings in the city, how do you think you would feel about living there?

The above survey of the buildings with no regard to design or to suggest a sense of the building as a building. The buildings are put into three groups and the buildings are very much different suggesting a sense of confusion, lack of air and space etc.



Rita Angus

SLIDE 9 Rita Angus Flight (1968-1969)
Oil on Hardboard 590 x 596 mm
National Art Gallery, Wellington.

Background Note:

In this, one of her final paintings, Rita Angus has combined several views to reflect her interest in Wellington, together with her thoughts and feelings during the last years of her life. She has brought together the rocks and boats of Island Bay, the hills around Wellington, the tombstones in the Bolton Street Cemetery, all recurring themes in her work. The tombstones in the Bolton Street Cemetery near her Thorndon home were to be removed to make way for a motorway. The Cemetery was visible from Rita's gate - she felt a strong sense of protest at their removal. She and another artist friend went to make drawings of the old tombstones before the bulldozers moved in. The large bird in the painting, a dove carrying a cotton drape, is based on one of the marble tomb sculptures.

Rita Angus said of Wellington's light: "The light is beautiful....there seems to be a fusion of the colder south and the warmth of the far north... to be found in the light and colour about Wellington". "Earth colour/ purple blue sky and ultramarine sea." Each object has its symbolic message and each part is deliberately balanced and counterbalanced within the composition. The shapes have the solid planes of colour in the sharp and distinctive outlines characteristic of this artist's work.

During this period in her life, Rita was frequently unwell, suffering from recurrent "attacks of flu". In 1969 she entered Wellington Public Hospital. She never left the hospital, dying of cancer in January 1970.

SLIDE 9

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Is this the sort of view and scene you would see with your own eyes? How is it different?

The artist is bringing together several views in one painting (a composite). In this case the rocks and boats of Island Bay, the Wellington Hills and the tombstones from the Bolton Street Cemetery.

2. There are two birds in this painting. How are they different?

One "real" seagull, real colours, size. The other, "unreal" based on one of the marble tomb sculptures - unrealistic size and colour.

3. What sort of colours has the artist used?

The sea and sky - bright, clear, contrasting with earthy, subdued colours of rocks, tombstones, hills etc.

4. How do you think the artist was feeling when she painted this?

Perhaps sad. Unhappy at the removal of tombstones from Bolton Street Cemetery. Unwell.

5. What sort of feeling do you get from seeing:

... the tombstone on the beach?

... the marble stone bird?

Personal response.

6. Do you think that Flight is a good/suitable title for this painting? Why or why not?



Rita Angus

WORKSHEETS AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

This section of the Kit contains a number of revision worksheets, games and follow-up activities planned particularly for junior classes that teachers may find helpful as they use the Rita Angus material.

Enclosed:

- (a) General Revision worksheet.

This is intended for Junior classes following a study of the slides and a discussion of the points they raise. The objective of this unit is to consolidate the key points raised by the slide set.

- (b) Landscapes.

To be used in conjunction with slides 6, 7, 8 and 9. Studying the general concept of a landscape and noting the special characteristics of Rita Angus landscape paintings.

- (c) Portraits.

To be used in conjunction with slides 1, 2, 3 and 4. Studying the general concept and the major types of portraiture.

- (d) Simple revision crossword puzzle.

- (e) Answers to worksheets a - c and to Crossword Puzzle.

- (f) Suggestions for Follow-up activities in:

art and craft
language studies
social studies
etc.

Again these have been planned with Junior classes in mind but teachers of senior classes may find some helpful material here.

- (g) General worksheets for landscape and portrait studies which may be helpful during a class visit to the Art Gallery.

These are general sheets which could help to direct the children's attention to some of the special characteristics of landscape or portrait studies.



WORKSHEETS AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

This section of the kit contains a number of worksheets, games and follow-up activities planned particularly for junior classes but teachers may find them useful as they use the Rita Angus material.

Contents:

(a) General revision worksheet.
This is intended for junior classes following a study of the slides and a discussion of the points they raise. The objective of this unit is to consolidate the key points raised by the slides.

(b) Language.
To be used in conjunction with slides 6, 7, 8 and 9. Studying the general concept of a landscape; the notion of the special characteristics of Rita Angus landscape paintings.

(c) Art and craft.
To be used in conjunction with slides 1, 2, 3 and 4. Studying the general concept of the artist's eye and the artist's palette.

(d) Simple revision crossword puzzle.
(e) Answers to worksheets a - c and the crossword puzzle.

(f) Suggestions for follow-up activities:
art and craft
language studies
social studies
etc.

Again these are suggestions planned with junior classes in mind but teachers of senior classes may find some helpful material here.

(g) General worksheets for language and artistic studies which may be helpful during a study of the artist's life.

These are general sheets which could help to direct the children's attention to some of the special characteristics of landscape or picture studies.



Rita Angus

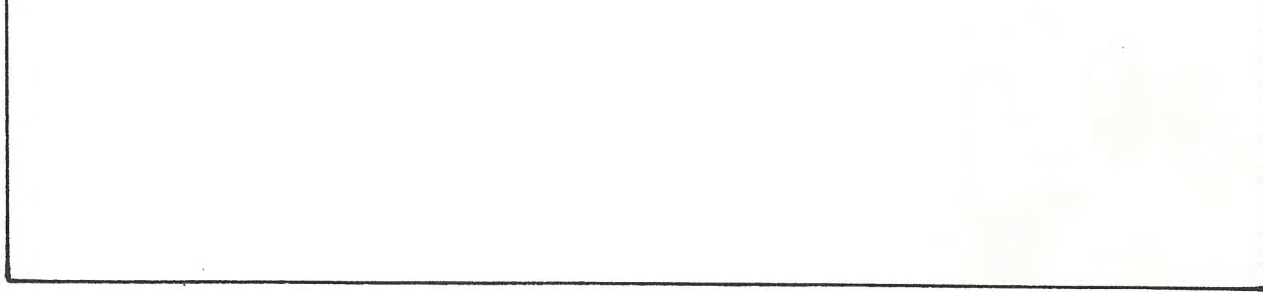
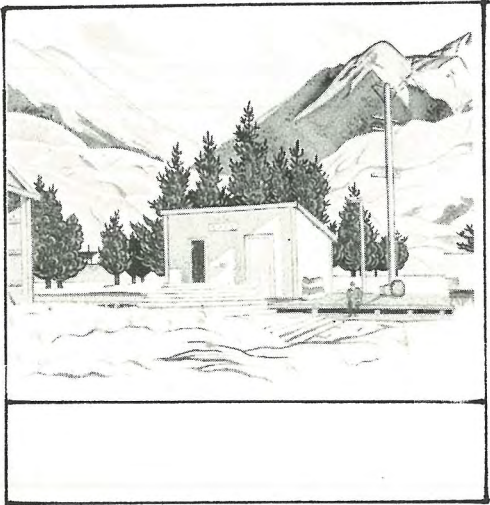
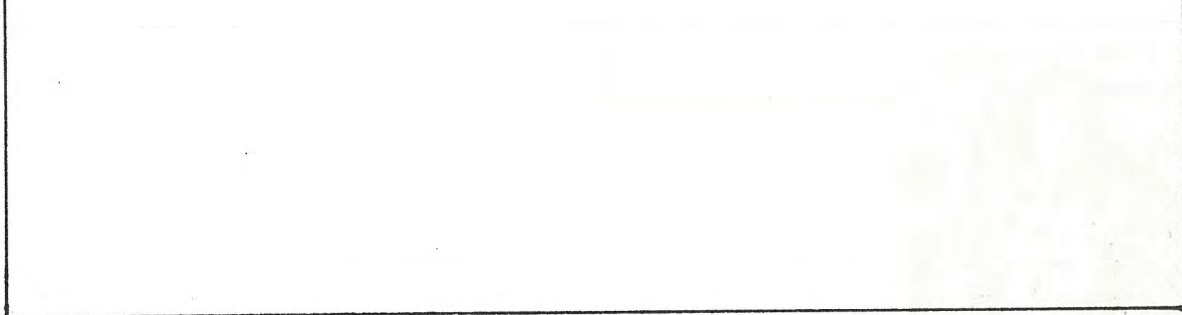
GENERAL REVISION

Fill in the box beside each painting with the label chosen.

Self Portrait
Portrait of a friend
Symbolic Painting
Landscape
Still Life

Write brief notes about each painting in the space provided







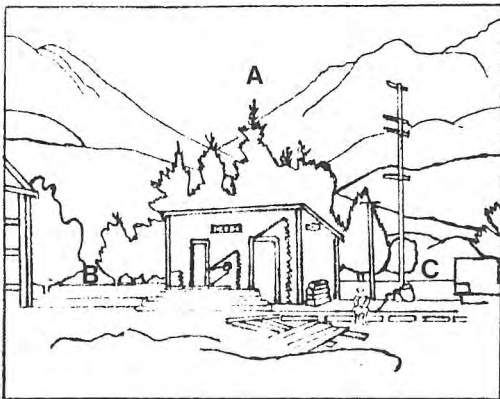
Rita Angus

LANDSCAPES

realistic, colours (x 2), landscape, Flight ,
triangle, faces, composite, Journey, Wellington .

Fill in the gaps using the words listed above:

- (1) A painting representing a piece of the country is called a
- (2) Sometimes Rita Angus brought together several views in a painting.
- (3) An example of a composite painting is
- (4) In Fog Hawkes Bay the that Rita Angus has used are typical of the North Island compared with Cass in which the are typical of the South Island.
- (5) In Iris Rita Angus has made the flowers look as as possible.
- (6) In Cass we can see the shape of a repeated several times.



Join the letters A B C and look at the shape they make. Find other similar shapes in this painting and draw around them.

- (7) In Fog Hawkes Bay we are shown the different of the buildings as if we are seeing them from the window of a moving bus.
- (8) One of her final paintings was called



LANDSCAPES

Fill in the gaps using the words listed above:
(1) A painter representing a place of the country is called a landscape painter.
(2) Sometimes Rita Angus brought together several views in a single painting.
(3) An example of a composite painting is 'The Bay of Islands'.

Fill in the gaps using the words listed above:

(1) A painter representing a place of the country is called a landscape painter.

(2) Sometimes Rita Angus brought together several views in a single painting.

(3) An example of a composite painting is 'The Bay of Islands'.

(4) In 'The Bay of Islands' Rita Angus has used two typical of the South Island landscape with the Bay of Islands and the forest of the South Island.

(5) In 'The Bay of Islands' Rita Angus has made the foreground look as if it were a bay.

(6) In 'The Bay of Islands' we can see the Bay of Islands and the forest of the South Island.

(7) In 'The Bay of Islands' Rita Angus has used two typical of the South Island landscape with the Bay of Islands and the forest of the South Island.

(8) In 'The Bay of Islands' Rita Angus has made the foreground look as if it were a bay.

(9) In 'The Bay of Islands' we can see the Bay of Islands and the forest of the South Island.

(10) In 'The Bay of Islands' Rita Angus has used two typical of the South Island landscape with the Bay of Islands and the forest of the South Island.

Join the letters A B C and look at the shape now made. Find a word that means to draw a picture and draw around it.



(1) In 'The Bay of Islands' Rita Angus has used two typical of the South Island landscape with the Bay of Islands and the forest of the South Island.

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(5) In 'The Bay of Islands' Rita Angus has made the foreground look as if it were a bay.

(6) In 'The Bay of Islands' we can see the Bay of Islands and the forest of the South Island.



Rita Angus

PORTRAITS

background, portrait, symbols, balance,
self portrait, bright, interests, subdued

Fill in the gaps using the words listed above:

- (1) A painting of a person is called a
- (2) In the Betty Curnow portrait the or setting tells us something about the sitter.
- (3) A special type of portrait in which the artist paints herself is called a
- (4) In A Goddess of Mercy a sense of is achieved by having a deer, a haystack, a cow and a snowy mountain peak on each side.



- (5) In her self portraits, Rita Angus was telling us about her at that time.
- (6) In A Goddess of Mercy the colours are and clear, compared to her self portrait in which they are more
- (7) Rita Angus often used to give us clues about her own interests or those of the person she was painting.



PORTRAITS

background, pattern, spatial balance
self-portrait, bright, intense, muted

1.1 In the case of the word listed below, write the name of the artist and the title of the work.
(1) A painting of a person, is called a portrait.
(2) The artist, James Gurney, painted the portrait of a woman, called 'The Girl with the Pearl Earring'.
(3) A special type of portrait is called the 'self-portrait'.
(4) A portrait of a person, is called a portrait.
(5) A portrait of a person, is called a portrait.
(6) A portrait of a person, is called a portrait.
(7) A portrait of a person, is called a portrait.
(8) A portrait of a person, is called a portrait.
(9) A portrait of a person, is called a portrait.
(10) A portrait of a person, is called a portrait.

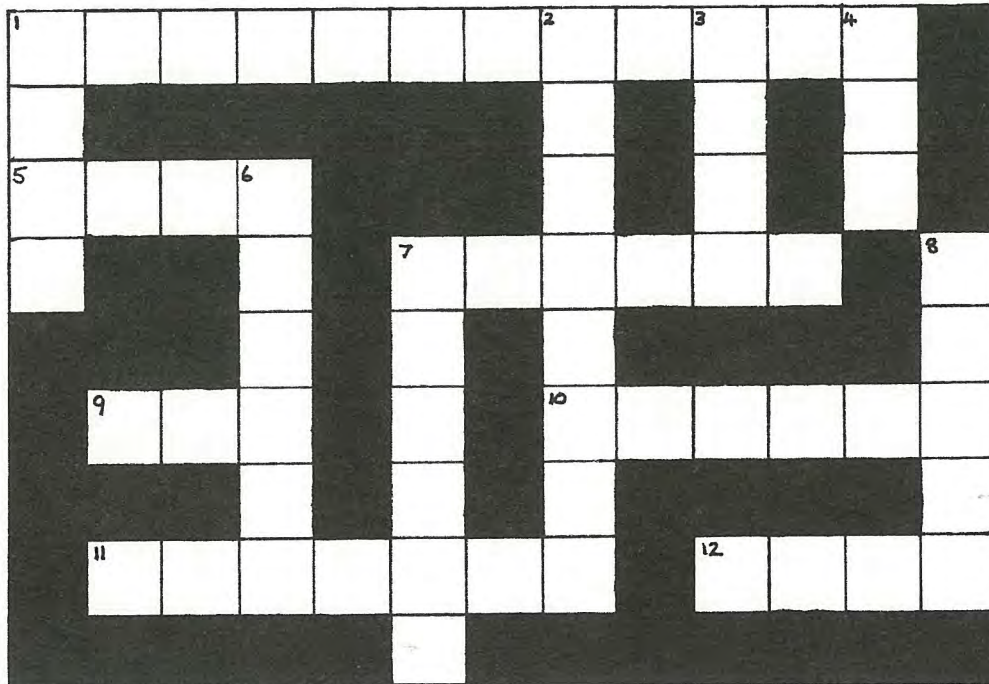


1.2 In her self-portrait, Rita Angus was sitting on a chair. The background is a simple, light color. The colors are muted and the style is realistic. The portrait is a study of light and shadow, and the woman's expression is thoughtful. The portrait is a study of light and shadow, and the woman's expression is thoughtful. The portrait is a study of light and shadow, and the woman's expression is thoughtful.



Rita Angus

CROSS WORD



CLUES

Across

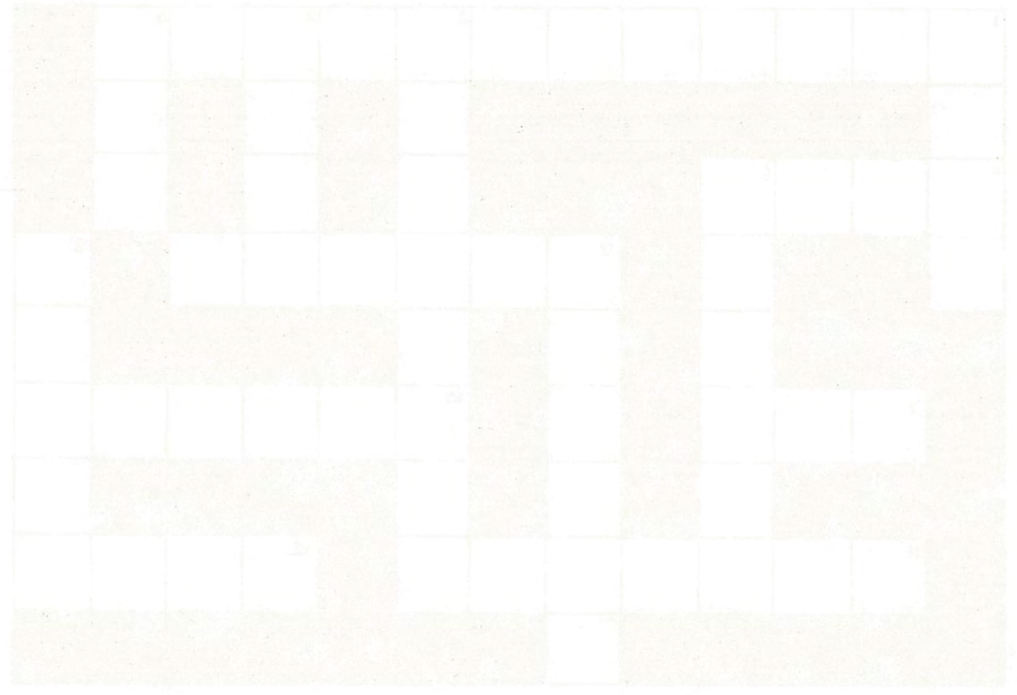
1. Rita Angus spent the 1940's studying and painting in (12).
5. A portrait painted by the artist of him or herself is called a portrait (4).
7. In Fog Hawkes Bay are obstructing the road (6).
9. In the same painting we can see in the distance (3).
10. Rita Angus was very interested in (6).
11. Cass is on the way to Pass (7).
12. In her portrait of Betty Curnow we can see several shapes (4).

Down

1. Rita Angus painted the railway station at (4).
2. Rita Angus was born in (8).
3. She painted the Irises so that they looked very (4).
4. In her self portrait Rita Angus is very smartly dressed, but she is not wearing a (3).
6. One of her final paintings was called(6).
7. In her use of in Fog Hawkes Bay she has captured the greenness of the countryside (6).
8. In Journey Wellington we can see a number of shapes (5).



CROSSWORD



1. In her portrait of Jerry, she was very interested in the subject of the artist's life. (10)

2. A portrait painted by the artist of his or herself is called a self-portrait. (7)

3. In the same portrait, she was very interested in the subject of the artist's life. (10)

4. One of her most famous portraits was called "The Artist's Self-Portrait." (10)

5. In her portrait of Jerry, she was very interested in the subject of the artist's life. (10)

6. In her portrait of Jerry, she was very interested in the subject of the artist's life. (10)

7. In her portrait of Jerry, she was very interested in the subject of the artist's life. (10)

8. In her portrait of Jerry, she was very interested in the subject of the artist's life. (10)

9. In her portrait of Jerry, she was very interested in the subject of the artist's life. (10)

10. In her portrait of Jerry, she was very interested in the subject of the artist's life. (10)



Rita Angus

ANSWERS TO JUNIOR WORKSHEETS

a. General Revision

- A. portrait of a friend
- B. still life
- C. landscape
- D. self portrait
- E. symbolic painting

b. Landscape

- 1. landscape
- 2. composite
- 3. Journey Wellington
- 4. colours x 2
- 5. real
- 6. triangle
- 7. faces
- 8. Flight

c. Portrait

- 1. portrait
- 2. background
- 3. self portrait
- 4. balance
- 5. interests
- 6. bright, subdued
- 7. symbols

d. Answers to Crossword

Across

- 1. Christchurch
- 5. Self
- 7. Cattle
- 9. Fog
- 10. Nature
- 11. Arthur's
- 12. Oval

Down

- 1. Cass
- 2. Hastings
- 3. Real
- 4. Hat
- 6. Flight
- 7. Colour
- 8. Wheel



ANSWERS TO JUNITO WORKSHEET

- a. Concept of balance
- A. portrait of a friend
- M. still life
- C. landscape
- D. self portrait
- E. symbolic meaning

- b. Landscape
- 1. landscape
- 2. composition
- 3. Journey to Whangarei
- 4. colour & light
- 5. rest
- 6. landscape
- 7. layer
- 8. Effect

- c. Portrait
- 1. portrait
- A. background
- 3. self portrait
- 4. balance
- 5. texture
- 6. still life meaning
- 7. symbols

c. Answers to Expository

<u>Answers</u>	<u>Items</u>
1. Christchurch	1. Car
2. Self	2. Hastings
3. Castle	3. Red
4. Fog	4. Hat
10. Nature	6. Flight
11. Arthur's	7. Colour
12. Oval	8. W. eye



Rita Angus

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

ART AND CRAFT

- (1) Paint or draw a self-portrait using a mirror or photograph or from memory (Rita Angus used a mirror).
- (2) Paint or draw a portrait of a friend against a background you think suits their character.
- (3) Do a portrait of yourself or a friend wearing some sort of costume that makes them into a person from a story, legend or another age.
- (4) Paint or draw a flower (or any natural object) paying careful attention to the detail.
- (5) Compose a painting bringing together several views - perhaps concerning your interests or different parts of your life.
- (6) Paint or draw your own idea of what a goddess might look like.
- (7) Look at the work of other artists who painted portraits or self portraits, e.g. Rembrandt, Picasso, Van Gogh.
Discuss in class what type of people they are showing themselves to be.

LANGUAGE


Write:

- (1) A short story about your favourite Rita Angus painting - say why you like it, how it makes you feel, etc.
- (2) "I am a painter"
- (3) A poem about the feelings you get from "Flight".

Dramatisation - the life of an artist

SOCIAL STUDIES AND OTHER

- (1) Find on a map of New Zealand some of the places where Rita Angus lived and worked.
- (2) Rita Angus was a pacifist. Find out more about pacifism, what it means, its history etc.

- 
- (3) Find out more about Eastern philosophies, particularly Buddhism.
 - (4) Find out more about the role of women in New Zealand during the 1930's. Relate this back to the lifestyle of Rita Angus.
 - (5) Visit your local Art Gallery, looking at other landscapes, portraits and still lifes.



Rita Angus

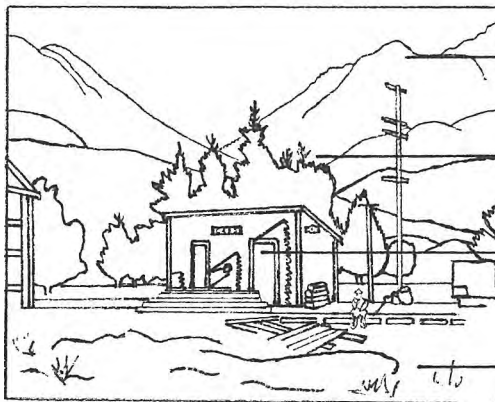
GALLERY WORKSHEET 1 LANDSCAPES

After studying the kitset works by Rita Angus, visit an Art Gallery and try out your newly learned skills.

Exercise 1

A painting representing a piece of the country is called a "landscape".

Cass is one of Rita Angus's well-known paintings.



background

middle distance

centre focus

foreground

Choose a painting exhibited in the Gallery which you would call a "landscape".

Look carefully to see what you find in the background, middle distance and foreground and sketch these on your sketch.



Check the Gallery label for:

- a. Artist
- b. Title
- c. Date (if known).

Label the work in the same way that Cass has been labelled above.





Rita Angus

GALLERY WORKSHEET 2 PORTRAITS

A painting of a person is called a "portrait".

A special type of portrait in which the artist paints herself is called a self portrait.



background features

costume

pose

the way the figure is standing, position of body, limbs, head etc.

Choose another portrait in the Gallery and make a quick sketch of it in the space below:

From the Gallery label find

- a. Artist
- b. Title
- c. Date (if known)

Label it in the same way that the self portrait above has been labelled.





Rita Angus

SENIOR SECTION

FORMS 5-7

This material is to extend the notes already given in the Junior Section; it will therefore be advisable also to refer to the Junior Section of the kit.

Rita Angus



SENIOR SECTION

FORMS 5-7

This material is to extend the notes already given in the Senior Section; it will therefore be advisable also to refer to the Senior Section of the kit.



Rita Angus

Slide 1 Photograph of Rita Angus

Rita Angus enrolled at the Canterbury School of Art for the Diploma of Fine Arts in 1927 to begin a four year full time course. From her own comment on her training and tutors we read in the Yearbook of the Arts in New Zealand, No.3, P.67-58:

"Early influences - Richard Wallwork, Archibald Nicoll, Cecil Kelly, Leonard Booth, James Cook - the important factor in my training has been the 'academic'....."

By this she was probably referring to the traditional art training favoured by tutors such as Wallwork and Nicoll. Drawing techniques were strict and very thorough, based on careful tonal renderings of plaster casts from classical sculpture or from selected still-life and in figure studies. The painting style favoured was generally characterised by low-key colours applied with immaculate tonal shading through numerous thin glazes. The surface of a finished work would be absent of visible brush stroke or hard edged abrupt transitions. Generally, the academic tradition was also reflected in compositions following the traditional "rules of the golden section" or of compositional arrangements inherited from the major art works of the past. For examples of these academic influences see Wallwork's A Cairo Gateway, Nicoll's portraits, or The Awakening of Leonard Booth.

The second important factor in her training was "especially seeing reproduction (screened) in History of Art lectures. The composition of paintings impressed me. I was absorbed in the work of Vermeer and Cezanne".

Exercises

1. Find illustrations or slides of works by Vermeer and prepare a diagram showing the basic forms in the composition and their spatial relationship within the image.
2. Young artists are influenced by many older artists or artworks. Discuss any influences you feel may have been operating on Rita Angus.



Rita Angus

Slide 1: Biography of Rita Angus

Rita Angus enrolled at the Canterbury School of Art for the Division of Fine Arts in 1917 to begin a four-year full-time course. From her own comment on her training and tutors we read in the Yearbook of the Arts in New Zealand, No. 3, p. 57-58:

"Early influences - Richard W. Brock, Archibald Nicoll, H. Kelly, Leonard French, James Cook - in important places for my training has been the 'academic'."

By this she was probably referring to the traditional art training favoured by tutors such as W. Brock and Nicoll. Drawing techniques were strict and very thorough, based on careful tonal renderings of plaster casts from classical sculpture or from selected still-life and in figure studies. The painting style favoured was generally characterised by low-key colours applied with immaculate tonal shading through numerous thin glazes. The surface of finished work would be absent of visible brush stroke or hard edged abrupt transitions. Generally, the academic tradition was also reflected in composition, following the traditional 'rules of the golden section' or of composition; arrangements derived from the factor six works of the past. For examples of these academic influences see Wainwright's A Guide to the Art of the Twentieth Century, or The Awakening of Leonard Brock.

The second important factor in her training was "especially being restricted (concerned) in history of art lectures. The composition of paintings discussed in the work of 'Robert and Gerson'."

Exercises

1. Read the biography of Rita Angus and prepare a report on how the factors mentioned in the text influenced her work.
2. Study the work of Rita Angus and prepare a report on how the factors mentioned in the text influenced her work.



Rita Angus

SLIDE 2 Self Portrait 1936-37.

The simplicity and directness of this self-portrait make a dramatic contrast with portraits painted in the 1930's by Rita's contemporaries and tutors. We see for instance in portraits painted by Evelyn Page (see Valmai Moffit, 1933, collection of Dunedin Public Art Gallery) or in work by Archibald Nicoll and Mary Trip either a formal academic presentation of a half figure in three quarter profile pose or the inclusion of considerable anecdotal detail. They tend to have realistic backgrounds of landscapes or rooms. Faces and figures are also presented with careful attention to realistic shading and surface detail of crumpled cloth, wrinkled skin or hair etc, all elements which you will see are absent from Rita Angus' self portrait.

We are told that through a study of reproductions and book images, Rita Angus was particularly interested in early artists like Giotto, 1266-1337.

In a lecture delivered in 1952, Rita Angus said "My reasons for enjoying the painting of Giotto are several. He probably introduced for the first time in Italian art accurate portraits of living people..... Giotto painted contemporary life and clothed his figures in the costume of the day. He portrayed human emotions penetrating deeply into the human heart... He is a painter who has the sense of form, clear-cut drawing and harmonious composition."

Giotto's work is also characterised by a tendency to reduce the elements into basic units with clearly defined and articulated spatial and rhythmical patterns. Notice how Rita Angus has treated the separate planes and units particularly in the face and the coat. Consider the rhythmical patterns in the coat sleeves and discuss how they relate to the pattern in skyline and cloud.

There is nothing of the Impressionist technique in this treatment. Rita Angus worked with the traditional academic painting processes that were particularly labourious and slow. Taking a stretched canvas or a piece of hardboard she would build up her images from a succession of paint layers using the oil pigment mixed with copal varnish and later copal concentrate.

From initial thin monochromatic outlines and shadings the final layer gave the appearance of a rich and unified colour scheme. In an innovative portrait, then, she was still using the elaborate Renaissance procedures and technical processes.

Exercises:

1. *Select an image by Giotto or Della Francesca and trace off the basic units or forms defined in the painting.*
2. *Sketch the basic forms and rhythms on the Rita Angus Self Portrait.*
3. *Using the material given for this slide in the Junior Unit discuss the psychological significance of the pose, costume, and background. Consider what elements you would use for a self portrait and for a portrait of a friend, classmate or a member of your family.*



Rita Angus

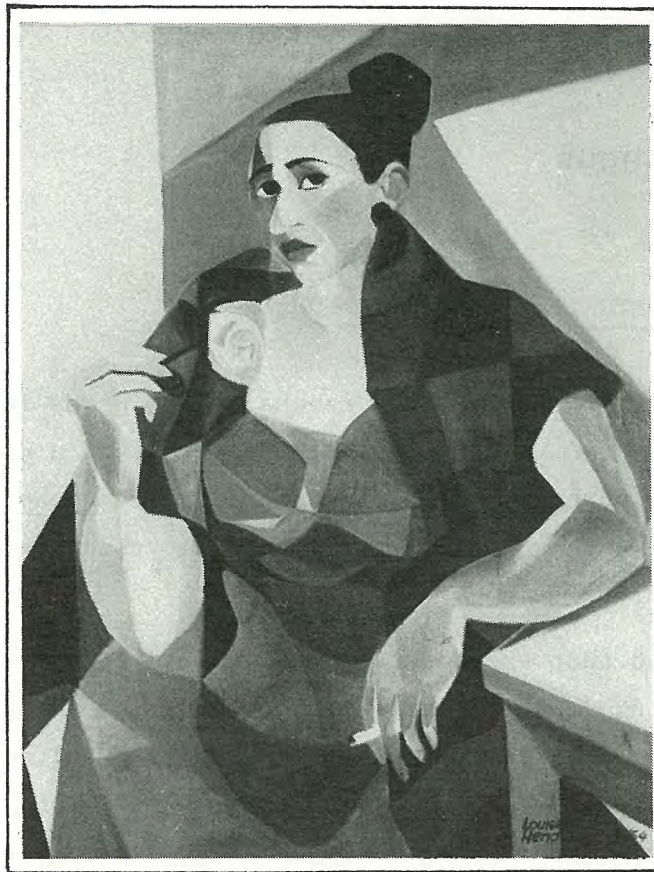
SLIDE 3 PORTRAIT OF BETTY CURNOW 1942.

This portrait of Betty Curnow is one of the peaks in Rita Angus' career. Painted in 1942 it is the portrait of a close friend deliberately portrayed with careful reference to her life, her family background and the close network of family relationships which surround her.

We understand that the painting came about through the gift of a large painting canvas and some paints, luxuries which Rita Angus had during the war years been forced to manage without. With these special materials, therefore, she made a deliberate artistic statement. Her self declared aims, as outlined a few years later in the 1947 Year Book of the Arts in New Zealand, were "To show to the present a peaceful way and through devotion to visual art to sow some seeds for possible maturity in later generations. I am Colonial several generations and for me New Zealand is, in essence, medieval. As a woman painter, I work to represent love of community and faith in mankind in a world which is to me richly variable and infinitely beautiful. I endeavour to record the alive construction and courteous spirit of the age."

Her feeling that New Zealand is "in essence medieval" may be reflected in this painting. You will notice the small reproduction of the Breughel painting Harvesting the Corn - Summer c. 1551-69 included in this painting. Do you think she may also have consciously worked a medieval element into the portrait? A centuries-old tradition of a seated woman may be seen in medieval paintings of the Virgin and Child, and perhaps we can see some similarities in the pose and presentation of the mother's image in this painting.

It is very interesting to compare this image with Louise Henderson's portrait of Betty Curnow.



Here we see a contemporary artist and close friend of both Rita Angus and Betty Curnow tackling the same subject but in a startlingly different way. Louise Henderson uses a cubist technique and accentuates the French and European ancestry of the sitter. Betty Curnow is seen as a stylish and vivacious modern woman. It is obvious therefore that it was not just the appearance or character of the sitter that influenced Rita Angus' work. It is interesting therefore to consider what statements Rita Angus may be making by her choice of pose, costume and background detail.

The composition of the Angus portrait seems to focus on an oval form. Note the dominant oval of the face emphasised by the treatment of the hair and reinforced by the small oval portrait close behind. The plant on the shelf, the shoulders and the back of the carved wooden chair also carry a strong oval rhythm which is completed by the arms meeting on the lap. The blouse pattern is also dominated by light oval shapes, and notice the bright red nails. A counter balance to the oval forms is provided by the horizontals and verticals in the book case and the wall pictures which are deliberately cut by the picture frame.

It is interesting to compare the treatment of the forms in this painting with the self portrait in Slide 2. You will notice how in the portrait of Betty Curnow the face and skirt are painted in the clearly stated planes and forms so distinctive in the self portrait, but generally there is less interest

in using the folds in the clothing to create a rhythmic pattern. Instead the extremely energetic rhythms in the fabric of the blouse dominate.

The strong contrast between the light tones of the face and the dark hair help to centre our attention on the woman's face. Beneath that the bright colours of the red blouse and the strong blue of the duster dominate the quieter tones of green and brown in the remainder of the painting.

Exercise:

1. Compare and contrast the Rita Angus self portrait (Slide 2) with the Portrait of Betty Curnow.
2. Compare and contrast the Louise Henderson portrait of Betty Curnow with this one by Rita Angus. What statements can you make about each artist and about their styles, composition, and treatment of form?
3. Study the use of colour in this painting and discuss the significance of the positions of the brighter or more dominant hues.
4. Consider the symbolism used by Rita Angus and in particular the significance of the oval shapes.

In using the color in the clothing to create a rhythmic pattern of lines
the artist creates a rhythm in the lines of the dress and jacket.
The strong contrast between the light tones of the face and the dark
hair help to create our attention on the woman's face. Besides that the
bright colors of the red blouse and the strong blue of the skirt dominate
the picture tones of green and brown in the remainder of the painting.

Exercise:

1. Compare and contrast the two figures with the portrait of Betty Curran.
2. Compare and contrast the two figures with the portrait of Betty Curran.
With this one in the figure, what statements can you make about
each figure and about their styles, composition, and treatment of form?
3. Study the use of color in this painting and discuss the significance
of the position of the subject or more dominant hues.
4. Analyze the artist's use of color in particular the
significance of the two figures.



Rita Angus

SLIDE 4 A Goddess of Mercy 1946-47.

The artist is using an idealised treatment of her own portrait for the "goddess" and we have discussed in the Junior Section the personal significance of this image to her. As we see it is a distinctively contemplative and mystical painting perhaps conveying something of Rita Angus' urge to "record the alive constructive and courteous spirit of the age. My paintings express a desire to unite with a great many individual artists everywhere, as well as groups of all arts, so as to create a living freedom from the afflicting theme of death." (Rita Angus 1947)

John Summers, giving his impressions of Rita Angus in Art New Zealand, speaks of her "longing for harmony, peace and goodwill on the threshold of the mystical and the apocalyptic..... Mysticism and painting do not easily go hand in hand, and loss of form in sentimentality are the hazards of this particular goal. However, at its painterly best mysticism is an appreciation of form at a level transcendently beyond the simpler objective record of visual effects, but almost of necessity using nature as the springboard to that inward vision."

We understand that Rita Angus was interested in Eastern philosophy and religion and therefore was probably aware of the Asian images of the Buddhist goddess Kwan Yin. It is this goddess who is described as "She who always pays attention to sounds, that is she who hears prayers". Perhaps you can detect a sense of listening, of concentrated stillness conveyed in part through the gaze, the gesture made by the hands and arms and by the overall symmetry of the composition.

Above the figure notice the gentle rhythms of the bare curving branches which stand perhaps for a halo, aura of radiance or nimbus around the head of a saintly figure. The flower also has symbolic meaning. In Eastern art the lotus, often represented like this yellow crocus, refers to the Godhead and denotes the presence not just of spring and new life but also of God.

Another interesting point is that the usual symbols for Kwan Yin were flowers and the female breast. Is it stretching the imagination too far to see breast forms also in some of the landscape features?

It is interesting to see here that Rita Angus presents the figure against a distinctively New Zealand landscape. Note how along with the careful symmetry there is a selection of different types of landforms giving a universal or composite site.

New Zealand's place in the Pacific is perhaps also referred to in this painting via the Polynesian fabric and style in the skirt. The Asian element is also seen in the glance, pose, gesture of the figure, in the flanking deer and in the generally symmetrical composition. As we quoted earlier, Rita Angus was interested to "unite with a great many individual artists everywhere".

The artist has used here the clear bright colours and clearly defined facets and forms which have become her own distinctive style. Consider however the symbolic significance of the colours chosen for the goddess' costume and the effect of the undecorated white blouse.

Another interesting element is the treatment of space. At first glance we see the landforms stretching naturally behind the figure and arranged in parallel strips. With closer examination however, we notice the sense of composite forms and the distinct flattening of pictorial space which brings the distant forms forward to a plane approaching the foreground.

Exercises:

1. Consider the idea of a painting being an "icon" and discuss the extent to which A Goddess of Mercy could be considered in this category.
2. "It is difficult to be specific about the symbolic language used in these portraits" writes Ron Brownson. Bearing in mind the element of "personal opinion" discuss the symbolic meanings of each element in this painting.



Rita Angus

SLIDE 5. Irises 1945.

In this carefully realistic study of Irises, Rita Angus displays not only her own magnificent water colour technique but also her great love of nature.

Evident too is her early Art School training to observe with minute attention to detail, to draw with an accuracy and honesty of line and to use the paint medium in a manner suited to its special features. Rita Angus recalled with gratitude that at the Art School she was "taught an accuracy of observation and to make notes" and that she learnt to "see left spaces between branches and leaves". Consider carefully the nature of these spaces in this painting. Do you feel they reflect, enhance or contribute to the general impression of the iris flowers?

Rita Angus also spoke of an interest in Leonardo da Vinci's flower works. "My interest is with Leonardo's study of flowers and plants, while his drawings and paintings are of special attention to me, as well as the universality of Leonardo's outlook as an artist. I enjoy his classical interest in beauty".

We also know that Rita Angus was a friend of Theo Schoon whom she had first met in 1942 in Wellington soon after his emigration from Java. Schoon's photographs of plant forms and his study of Eastern philosophy greatly interested Rita Angus.

Another interesting association could be seen in the traditional European symbolism associated with the iris. In Greek mythology the iris is the goddess of the rainbow and messenger of the gods. In early Netherlandish painting the iris is instead of the lily the flower of the Virgin (Hall's Dictionary of Symbols).

It is interesting to compare Rita Angus' Irises with the flower painting by Rata Lovell-Smith 1895-1969 shown below:



You will see how Rata Lovell-Smith uses the traditional method, presenting her flowers arranged in a vase and against a window. A study of Dutch flower paintings of the 17th century will show you how Rata Lovell-Smith uses many devices employed by the Dutch masters: the reflective light on the vase, and the flower falling forward across the front ledge giving a trompe-l'oeil effect etc. By comparison Rita Angus' flower work has a quiet and cool, almost classical mood.

Exercises:

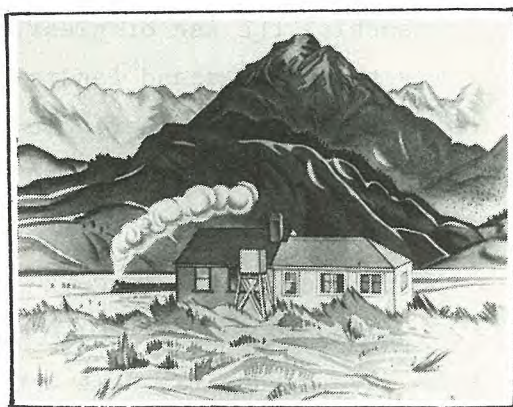
1. Compare and contrast other famous flower paintings (e.g. Van Gogh's Sunflowers, Rachel Ruyoch Arrangement of Flowers by a tree trunk c1680, or Ambrosius Bosseheart etc.) with this work by Rita Angus.
2. This painting is a watercolour. Identify and list all the specific characteristics of the water colour medium which you can detect from this painting.
3. Select a type of flower with which you are familiar and describe what you feel would be the most suitable way of depicting it.



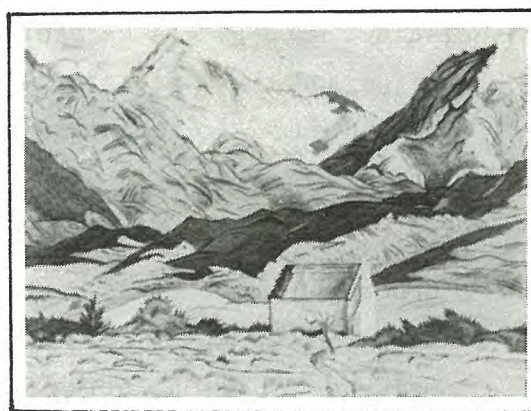
Rita Angus

SLIDE 6 CASS 1936

As explained in the Junior Section, this painting was produced after a sketching trip to the University biological field research station near Cass. The two watercolours shown below are developed from this trip and it is interesting to see in them some of the elements later refined and further developed in Cass.



A



B

Compare, for instance, the buildings. In A, Untitled (Mountain biological station, Cass), you see the huts used by the party and the smoke of a passing train, in B, Mountains, Cass, an isolated and crumbling mountain hut. Although a small photocopied image is difficult to show detail you may be able to discern the difference in the treatment of the landscape in these works compared with Cass which we know was painted after her return to Christchurch. In Cass the landforms have been simplified and reduced and used to express a special sense of rhythm and balance.

Two years earlier, in an article in Art in New Zealand, A.R.D. Fairburn wrote "We must draw rather than paint even if we are using a brush or we will not be perfectly truthful. The natural bleakness of our man-made scenery - buildings, bridges, railway stations and cuttings, telegraph poles and so on - does seem to need the burning

honesty of a Van Gogh to extract what aesthetic truth may lie in it". It could be that in Cass, Rita Angus is remembering this comment. Certainly Rita Angus is recognised as being one of the first New Zealand painters to capture the landforms without sentimentality and to realise the hard clear essence and loneliness of the inland scene.

We read also that Rita Angus was familiar with and very interested in early New Zealand paintings. At the Canterbury Museum and at the Alexander Turnbull Library we know she saw works by some of the early artists we now term "topographical painters". Their work is distinguished by its careful draughtsmanship, the use of clear broad outline and the direct and vigorous way the New Zealand landforms are painted. It is interesting therefore to see whether some of these elements could have been incorporated by the artist into Cass. If so, why do you feel Rita Angus may have done this?

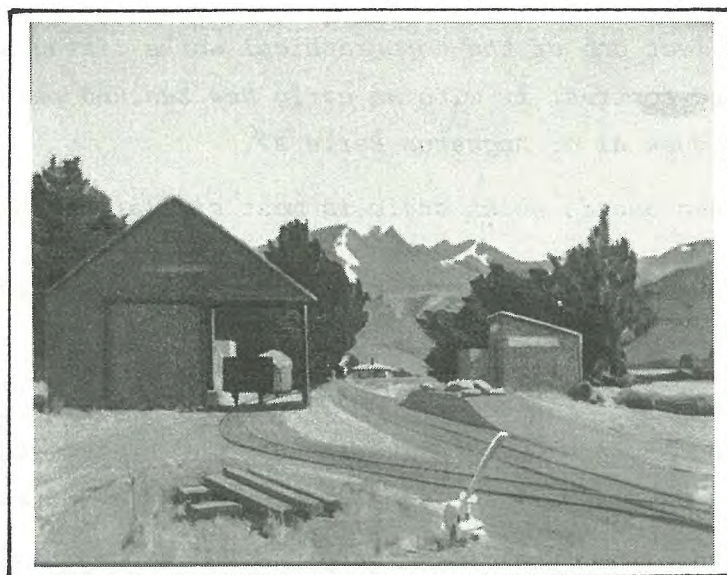
Another influence could perhaps be found in the works of Cezanne or even in Renaissance masters like Piero della Francesca. John Tarlton considers "In her painting Cass, Angus developed a flatness and simplicity loosely based upon Cezanne's principles of redirecting nature into geometric forms. The self-contained areas of colour dissect the picture plane and build up the entire composition by the inter-relationship of the various parts. Her primitive abstraction of nuances and structural components in the more classical sense of landscape also reinforced her ideas of the isolation of a sparsely inhabited terrain and contributed towards pictorially establishing the quiet and provincial lifestyle of rural New Zealand - lifestyles dominated by nature, where an old railroad station, fences, machinery retain the same weather-worn significance as the mountains that surround them.

Rita Angus' landscapes, with their acute focussing of atmosphere, seem familiar, yet remain distant and untouchable. Their simplification and their philosophical associations make them general ideas of place rather than any specific reference to a particular location."

The composition of this painting is also particularly interesting and contributes greatly to the overall sense of balance and unity. The

small wooden railway station stands centrally in the painting space, its position emphasised by the triangular frame of trees. Behind, the mountains rise with a slowly increasing rhythm to the stable triangular blocks of the large mountain slopes in the background. Balancing the triangular shapes and emphasising their broad stable base are the strong horizontal lines of the railway platform, the station roof, and the timber pile. Note too the balancing of the verticals. The tallest power pole is echoed by the second pole and finely counter-balanced by the edge of the shed seen in the right foreground and by the other vertical forms you see in the composition.

Comparing Rata Lovell-Smith's painting Hawkins, 1933, with Cass you can see similar elements - the railway station, the shed, the trees and the mountain landscape beyond.



What particularly distinguishes Cass is this magnificent use of compositional placement and balance and the strong sense of pictorial unity that is correspondingly produced.

Yet despite this deliberate manipulation of the units, Rita Angus also manages to make the scene look and feel remarkably "real". This comes chiefly from her very careful study of each element.

There was in the 1930's and 1950's a growing sense of "regionalism" in New Zealand painting. This involved a deliberate search for a local identity. In Cass Rita Angus made an important contribution to the development of a timely New Zealand landscape. Her influence on New Zealand landscape painting has been particularly strong.

Exercises:

1. Using reproductions or slides of one or two early "topographical" painters, analyse the way the landscape is depicted, and make a comparison with Cass.

Slides you could use from the University Entrance Art History, New Zealand Painting sets are: William Fox, Port Lyttelton Immigrant's Luggage disembarking C6, John Buchanan, Milford Sound B2, Rev. James Preston, Clayton Station, South Canterbury B6.

2. Select one of the topographical works listed above and compare and contrast it with an early New Zealand painting by William Hodges A1 or Augustus Earle A2.
Then decide which style is most similar to that of Cass.
3. Make a diagram of the main compositional units or blocks you find in Cass.
4. Find and list all the objects, natural and man-made, apart from the hills and mountains in Cass and suggest the symbolic associations or meanings each object may be said to represent.
5. Study the idea of symmetry through a comparison of Cass with Charles Heaphy's Mt Egmont from the south west. (Slide A4.)
6. Consider Rita Angus' Cass and Rata Lovell-Smith's Hawkins and discuss the similarities and differences in these two paintings. Suggest attitudes and influences which may account for the differences or similarities.
7. Study the painters generally considered to belong to "The Canterbury School" (e.g. Colin and Rata Lovell-Smith, William Sutton, Doris Lusk, Archibald Nicoll, Grace Butler etc.)

and discuss Rita Angus' place and significance in this group.

- 8. Consider the idea of "regionalism" and discuss the importance of Cass as a New Zealand painting.*

and discuss the "idea of 'epitaphs'" and discuss the

group.

1. Consider the idea of "epitaphs" and discuss the
importance of Case as a New Zealand painting.



Rita Angus

SLIDE 7 Fog Hawkes Bay 1966 - 68

Thirty years after painting Cass Rita Angus is now using a very different style. In this painting we see a modified form of cubism which is particularly well-suited to the land, atmosphere and landuse of this Hawkes Bay region. Making frequent journeys between Wellington and her parent's home in Napier, Rita Angus here reflects the long tedious bus journeys and the landscape through which she passed.

Janet Paul in Art New Zealand No. 26 said "Rita Angus was eclectic and persistently self-educating. She looked back to Egyptian geometric composition, to the pre-Renaissance painters; she learned from Vermeer and Cezanne; studied in her own time Picasso, Wyndham Lewis, Morandi and Bacon". In Fog Hawkes Bay we can see her employing some of these artistic influences.

It could be that Cezanne has been a fairly strong influence. Paul Cezanne, 1839 - 1906, studied through the organisation of plane and colour to "do Poussin from nature", in other words to paint from nature but to capture as well the sense of order and necessity seen in the masterpieces of Poussin, 1594 - 1665. While he appreciated and applauded the Impressionists' fresh responses to the visual realities and the truthfulness of the immediate glance, Cezanne wanted also to add the personal dimension which emphasised the 'actuality' of the object. To some extent this is also what Rita Angus was attempting in this work.

Yet while the objects are shown multi-sided as though from repeated glances as a journey progresses, they are also kept tightly within the overall unity of the composition. In this way they are made to reflect both the fluid nature of the painter's view and the 'spiritual inspection' as it was called by Descartes. Here Rita Angus has worked towards painting a landscape which captures both the innocence of the first glance and the total formal control we have constantly found in her works.

Speaking of cubism Rita Angus copied into one of her sketchbooks "The Cubist analysed this apparent unity of nature and found that it in fact consisted of separate facets or separate and distinct moments of vision. He slowed down the film and found it was composed of single static images. The fragmented facet of a form which he sees is in truth the total image which the eye and mind perceive in the moment of vision".

While obviously using a form of cubism in this painting and aware of its philosophies and principles Rita Angus according to Janet Paul " .. had no concern for art fashion. She knew what was going on in painting overseas but at no time trimmed her sails to the winds of Art International. Though no servitor of fashion she was, in fact, quicker to pick up contemporary ideas that were useful to her; colour theories, cubist flattening of form in drawing, simultaneous views of the same object (splayed out two ends of a shed) or composite views of the same landscape. Her technical range was wider and more susceptible to change than that shown by either Evelyn Page or W.A. Sutton; although she described her own work as "coming somewhere" between these two." Nor did she become 'abstractionist' or 'realist'; but something from these modes can be found in her work. The notes she made of exhibitions seen overseas (1958 - 59) show that she was well aware of contemporary art movements. Her difference lay in her ability to absorb or reject the contemporary and also to return to the traditional by careful study even in the final decade of her life, of such a treatise as Eastlakes' Methods and Materials of the Old Masters'.

It is also interesting to see that of Fog Hawkes Bay Rita Angus wrote these notes "I do paint landscape occasionally but it has to be more than what I see; e.g. Fog Hawkes Bay, composition from squares (I plan colour), a red moves forward in a surround of neutral green, red the smaller mass, yellow ochre undulating forms - beyond that, reddish purples which harmonise with the first red, grey blues".

Finally perhaps we should pay careful attention to the composition of this work. Central and very dominant is the road, its surface

shown by the tonal changes to be uneven and bumpy. It meanders slightly and its passage to the distant hills is frustratingly blocked in the middle distance by the loaded sheep truck and the wandering cattle. Patches of fog cloud floats fragmentally between the viewer and the distant hills tantalisingly obstructing the view towards journey's end.

Exercises:

1. Describe the use of cubist techniques in this painting and suggest the rationale or the reasons why Rita Angus may have decided to abstract the landscape forms like this.
2. Consider the man-made features in this landscape and discuss any symbolism, meaning or social comment you may be able to read from these.
3. Compare and contrast this landscape with Cass (slide 6).
4. Compare and contrast Fog Hawkes Bay with a landscape by Cezanne (e.g. Mt Sainte - Victorie) and an early Cubist landscape by Picasso or Braque. (e.g. Picasso, Landscape with a Bridge 1908; Braque Le Chateau de la Roche Guy).

show by the coal changes to be uneven and lumpy. If members
slightly and its passage to the distant hills is frustratingly
blocked in the middle distance by the loaded sheep truck and the
wandering cattle. Patches of fog cloud these frustratingly
between the viewer and the distant hills, creating a
the view towards journey's end.

Exercises:

1. Describe the use of light and shadow in this painting and...
the landscape from the far...

2. Consider the...
meaning on social comment you can be able to recognize from there.

3. Compare and contrast this landscape with the one...

4. Compare and contrast the landscape of the...
... and the...
... in the...



Rita Angus

SLIDE 8 Journey, Wellington 1962-63

We know from Rita's notes that this painting was made "mostly from sketches made going to the Public Hospital for daily physiotherapy treatment following a spinal injury in 1962; as an outpatient again, during a part of August - September 1963". You can sense the selection of separate scenes and the significance of the bus steering wheel set slightly askew in the centre of the composite image.

As Anne Kirkner writes, "The final work is disquietening. It seeks to compress her experience of the bus route through central Wellington with an attendant sequence of events, glimpsed briefly, then captured collage-like in the central form of the driver's steering wheel."

And Frederick Page said, "Again there was her flat statement of our comical little Wellington buildings, a bus driver's steering wheel and an odd sense of something askew? Menacing?"

Perhaps the most menacing element is found in the upper section of the painting where we see the strange unity of day and night, advancing solid clouds and large luminous planets. Since returning from London in 1959 Rita Angus frequently visited the Kelburn Observatory and made numerous sketches of sky studies etc. Around that time she wrote "In June this month the moon has shapes near and colours on damp and cloudy nights quite brilliant, more so than usual. I have made several drawings from time to time; last month the moon was encased in a red-orange egg. The Observatory told me the moon had passed near Mercury last month (Mercury throws a red-orange light) and last Sunday evening the Moon passed Mars, also Venus. The last two nights there have been parts of circles with moon showing but I cannot see Venus from here, it is over Tinakori Hill. I have part-painted two moon paintings last month with moon passing Mercury."

However it is also interesting to see how space has been treated. The sky section is almost single plane or 2 dimensional form. In strong contrast is the perspectival 'space' used for the city, hills and bay below. Note too how the divisions across the composition are particularly strong. They divide the work into four quarters but with a well controlled and well adjusted balance of colour and form. The final division through the mass of the city is made by the road, the central 'theme' if you like, as suggested by the painting's title, Journey .

The way in which this painting is divided into the balanced quarters could be related to Rita Angus' ideas on abstract art expressed in an address given in 1952:

"The one common factor implicit in all the arts of man resides in a certain juxtaposing of forms....

In theory "abstract art" is no more than a conscious assertion of this truth. It is, then, the assertion, in isolation, of a real and indeed a first principle; the least "abstract" work (in the contemporary sense) could not be made apart from this principle, for without it a "thing" having integration and a life of its own could not be".

Another interesting point which can develop from a careful study of this painting is the way in which the artist has treated the city buildings. The hard crisp edges and the solid volumes of each shape are most distinctive. Compare these buildings, for instance, with the barns and woolsheds in Slide 7, Fog, Hawkes Bay, or with the railway station in Slide 6, Cass, and consider why details like wallboards or alternate views or moving shapes have not been included here. Consider too the psychological effect of the windowless and doorless forms. The forms of the city buildings make a distinct and almost impassable barrier through which the central road seems to be forced to pass. By comparison the side road leading to the bay and marked with its trees and a Klee-like arrow seems so inviting and enticing. You are presented with an alternative, and we can't help but feel that to the artist it was a much more attractive proposition. Wellington harbour and the 'bay' appears again in Slide 9, Flight, of 1969, and it is interesting to see this earlier attraction to that spot.

Finally, one small detail which you may like to follow up with some further research: the small building in the foreground, centre left, with its three rectangular windows and its three circular windows is strongly reminiscent of buildings in Giotto's frescoes for the Arena Chapel, Padua c1313. In our comment on Slide Two, Self Portrait 1936-37, we have already referred to Rita Angus' interest in the work of this Medieval painter and in particular his 'pattern and unity of line and colour'. It may be interesting to look at Giotto and other medieval artists and in particular their manner of dealing with buildings, and their volume, tone and perspective.

Certainly Rita Angus was extending the generally accepted views of abstraction when she presented Journey, Wellington to the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts for exhibition in 1964. Her fury when they unceremoniously rejected the work is today much easier to understand and appreciate.

Exercises:

1. Consider the idea that Rita Angus expressed in 1952 that "the one common factor....in all the arts of man resides in a certain juxtaposing of forms" and explain how this may be illustrated in Journey, Wellington .
2. Using biographical information speculate on the symbolism or significance to the artist of each of the elements used in Journey, Wellington .
3. Describe how in Journey, Wellington Rita Angus deals with the idea of space, perspective and volume.

Finally, one small detail which you may like to follow up with some further research: the small building in the foreground centre left with its three rectangular windows and its three arched windows is strongly reminiscent of buildings in Grotto's sketches for the Arena Chapel, Padua c.1305. In our comment on Slide Two Self Portrait 1935-37 we have already referred to this artist's interest in the work of this Medievo painter and in particular his pattern and unity of line and colour. It may be interesting to look at Grotto and other medieval artists and in particular their manner of dealing with buildings and their volume, tone and perspective.

Certainly Miss Angus was extending the generally accepted view of abstraction when she presented Journey, Wellington to the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts for exhibition in 1964. Her work when very unceremoniously rejected the work is today much easier to understand and appreciate.

Exercises:

1. Look at the two slides that Miss Angus presented in 1964. The one on the left is Journey, Wellington. The one on the right is Self Portrait 1935-37. Try to identify the elements used in each and to describe the way in which they are used.

2. Using the principles of composition, describe the way in which the elements used in Journey, Wellington are used to create a sense of movement and direction.

3. Describe the way in which the elements used in Self Portrait 1935-37 are used to create a sense of volume and perspective.



Rita Angus

SLIDE 9 Flight 1968-69

The general biographical details related to this work and the source of the features used are discussed in the Junior Section of the Kitset, so here we will concentrate on the more formal aspects of the painting.

In Flight, which is one of Rita Angus's last works, we can see how her characteristic discipline and tight control of the painting elements (i.e. composition, colour) have produced a work of distinctive grandeur, measured balance and harmony. It was, according to her friends, Rita Angus' habit to work sometimes for several years on a painting, continually reworking and altering until the entire composition achieved a harmonious unity in feeling and style.

By studying Flight we may be able to see how some of the painting's features contribute to this unity. For instance consider how the artist has constructed or composed this work. The landscape is actually assembled from symbolically related units - the gravestones from the Bolton Street cemetery, the rocky shoreline, Island Bay with its fishing boats, the hills of Makara, and the scrub fire with its rising column of smoke are all made to hang together as a coherent and sensible unit.

Each element in the composition (i.e. gravestones, hills, bay etc) is also presented with sharp clarity, clear crisp edges and subdued but vibrant colours. No one element dominates the other as each is given equal emphasis defined by crisp, clear outlines and placed within a clear and rational space or perspectival depth.

The only irrational element is the marble dove hovering heavily in the centre. Yet even this rather surrealistic bird is interrelated with the composite elements of the landscape by a deliberate system of balance and counterbalance within the composition. Notice for instance how the jumble of dislocated

gravestones rises into a general triangular unit. This triangle then continues up to the body of the dove where its apex is formed by the wings. The dropping cloth (or whatever!) carried in the bird's beak is neatly counterbalanced by the rising column of smoke on the distant hills. The central triangular composition is also very neatly and finely compensated for or equalised by the horizontal lines of the water in the bay, the hills and the band of blue sky, and the small plain strip of earth in the foreground.

Put together in such a controlled and finely modulated way the composition contributes greatly to the overall sense of balance and harmony. Because of this special feature in many of the major works by Rita Angus she has frequently been compared with Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665) and works such as his The Arcadian Shepherds of c1650.



(B) Poussin: *The Arcadian Shepherds*, c. 1650, Louvre, Paris

Writing of his works, P & L Murray say "The late works are essays of solid geometry. By comparison with his early works they are frigid and cerebral but they are the logical exposition of his themes: a picture must contain the maximum of moral content, expressed in a composition which shall convey its intellectual content; the pattern must be pleasing in itself and not conflict

with the two-dimensional quality of the picture planes; the colour must offer no sensuous charm to lessen the unity of vision." Considering these ideas on content, composition, pattern and colour there does seem to be a similarity to the features we see in Rita Angus' Flight.

Final points to be noted about this painting include its relatively small size. On a board only 59x60cms Rita Angus had condensed this painting of tightly controlled and concentrated vision. Also we may be interested to consider the personal symbolism associated with the elements in the picture, especially in the light of the artist's poor health at the time.

From whatever angle we consider Flight however, we cannot but appreciate the solemn and poetic beauty which makes it a particularly fitting last image for Rita Angus, who died in Wellington the following year.

Exercises

1. Study the composition of Flight by sketching the main outlines, angles and spaces, and comment on the way in which the separate elements are grouped and arranged.
2. Using the "themes" in Poussin's work as described in the quotation from P & L Murray—i.e. the special treatment of content, composition, pattern and colour—compare Flight with a work by Poussin.
3. At the death of Rita Angus in 1970 Olivia Spencer Bower, a fellow artist and friend, stressed Rita's dedication to her art, and the respect her fellow painters had for her. Olivia Spencer Bower said Rita Angus was "a painter's painter". Do you agree with this statement? Support your answer with features from Flight or another Angus work you have studied.

4. Compare and contrast Flight with a painting by Brent Wong, where large masonry pieces float above a landscape (e.g. Colonial Summer, External Reverberation or Abandoned Settlement. G.Docking, Two Hundred Years of N.Z. Painting p205, etc).



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