
RHONA
HASZARD
EXHIBITIONS
NEW
ZEALAND

1933

RHONA and I were to have made this journey together. We spoke often of the day when we would return to New Zealand to hold a joint exhibition, and to paint the unique forms of New Zealand with new-seeing eyes.

Now I must come alone, bringing back her work to her own country. Ever since her cruel death two and a half years ago it has been my earnest wish to make this pilgrimage, as the most fitting memorial to her who was my comrade and who did credit to New Zealand during her short life.

She went to Europe for the first time in 1926, and during those few precious year until 1931 her talent was instantly recognised wherever she exposed her pictures: in Paris (despite the chicanery of that unfortunate art-factory); in honest London; and in cosmopolitan Egypt.

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Rhona Hazard was born at Thames, and did not leave New Zealand until she was nearly 25 years old. Her childhood was passed at Hokitika and at Invercargill, and she has left moving records of her vivid, happy life at the Southland Girls' High School in her journals. She was always drawing and painting, and there was never any question but that she would be an artist. In 1919 she became a pupil at the School of Art at Christchurch, under such men as Nicoll, Wallwork, Gurnsey, Booth and Kelly, which gave a discipline to her painting that was the making of it. It appeals more strongly for this very restraint: we see the intensity of her emotion straining against the restriction of forms; and yet it is held just enough for us to perceive its wholeness. Held, but not strangled.

"I cannot paint unless I am happy," she cried so often; and her paintings are witnesses to the truth: they glow with that nameless force, that nearness to life, which is the mark of great painting in whatsoever style, ancient or modern. For

it is not the "way it is done" that makes a painting good or bad: not the lighting, nor the colour, nor the form *as such*: it is the artist's own capacity for emotional feeling, for being alive. Then, if he has sufficient technique, he will produce good work. And Rhona had that sufficiency, thanks to what she learned when she was young in her own country. And she had the capacity to feel: a vivid, thrilling flame of life that I have never known so strong in anyone else. Each one of her pictures was forged in the heat of it; is a product of a moment of intense living, of oneness with the earth, the fields, the sea, the stir of life. She never painted by rote, but because she was moved deeply to it. * * *

I am happy to know that her talent was recognised by her own people while she was yet alive, and so young; that she had the joy and encouragement of hearing that her pictures had been bought for some of the public Art Galleries of the Dominion. * * *

I do not wish to dissipate her work over the wide areas of Europe and America. This might easily be the case were I to yield to the many requests I have had since getting this collection together. I have had some difficulty in convincing people that this selection of her best *is for New Zealand*. "Oh, but that is such miles away!" they all exclaim, as if it were some kind of an argument. But it is my great hope that many of the pictures in the present exhibitions will stay in New Zealand as her memorial, that she be loved and enjoyed in her own land which she never forgot, and to which she would most surely have returned with me to-day.

I have brought her short life's work back to her own people with the feeling that they will welcome it as they would have welcomed back the loveable, vivid person who produced it.

LESLIE GREENER.

[Two]

CATALOGUE



Most of the work selected for these exhibitions has not been seen in New Zealand before. The pictures are numbered in chronological order, and grouped in the same way on the walls, from left to right, so that it will be easy to follow the artist's development.

This passes from the capable naturalistic handling of 1921, through the period of "Finistère" (No. 22), with the emergence of more formal composition, to the masterly blending of colour and mass in the Bloomsbury Still Life (No. 36) and "The Road out of Camaret" (No. 17), which are the peak of her artistic achievement.

The prices of the works have not been changed from those which she put on them herself.

1921-25.				Guineas.
1. Sun Bathing	.....	.....	.....	5
2. Eyeglasses	.....	.....	.....	5
3. The Southern Alps	.....	.....	.....	12
4. North-West Arch	.....	.....	.....	10
5. Christchurch, Hagley Park	.....	.....	.....	8
6. Christchurch, The Avon	.....	.....	.....	9
7. Trees in Winter, Cashmere Hills	.....	.....	.....	5
8. Lunch Time, Cashmere Hills	.....	.....	.....	5
9. Behind our House, Waihi	.....	.....	.....	6
65				
1926.				
10. Waitaki Valley	.....	.....	.....	5
11. A Sark Morning	.....	.....	.....	5
12. At the Foot of the Cliffs, Sark	.....	.....	.....	5
13. The Cock	.....	.....	.....	8
14. Breton Rocks and Cottages	.....	.....	.....	5
15. Concarneau	.....	.....	.....	Res.
16. The Tunny Fleet, Concarneau	.....	.....	.....	Res.
17. The Road out of Camaret	.....	.....	.....	Res.
18. The Green Plate	.....	.....	.....	10

[Three]

38
103

1927.

19. Brittany Mill	.....	.....	.....	8
20. Blossom in the Marne	.....	.....	.....	15
21. In the Marne Valley	.....	.....	.....	Res.
22. Finistère	.....	.....	.....	15
23. Early Morning, Camaret.....	.....	.....	.....	Res.
24. Camaret Harbour.....	.....	.....	.....	Res.
25. La Chapelle du Port	.....	.....	.....	5
26. Sea Pathways	.....	.....	.....	6
27. Sketch for "The Valley of the Marne" (in the Auckland Pub- lic Gallery)	9
28. French Farm	6

49

64

1928.

29. Bernard	6
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70

1929.

30. In Bloomsbury	9
31. Sidi Bishr	15
32. Moie de Gouliot, Sark	7
33. Spring in the Marne Valley (Linocut) unframed	4

31

1930.

34. La Coupée, Sark	.....	.....	.....	40
35. The Mosque at Sidi Bishr	.....	.....	.....	10
36. Bloomsbury Still Life	.....	.....	.....	Res.

50

1931.

37. Sudanese Head	.....	.....	.....	10
38. Four Last Sketches	.....	.....	.....	10
39. One of her last Sketches	.....	.....	.....	7
40. Sketch made on the morning of her death	.....	.....	.....	Res.

27

It is hoped that those who acquire works will permit them to complete the Exhibition tour of the Dominion before taking delivery.

178
103
281

34⁴ X 68
72.

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