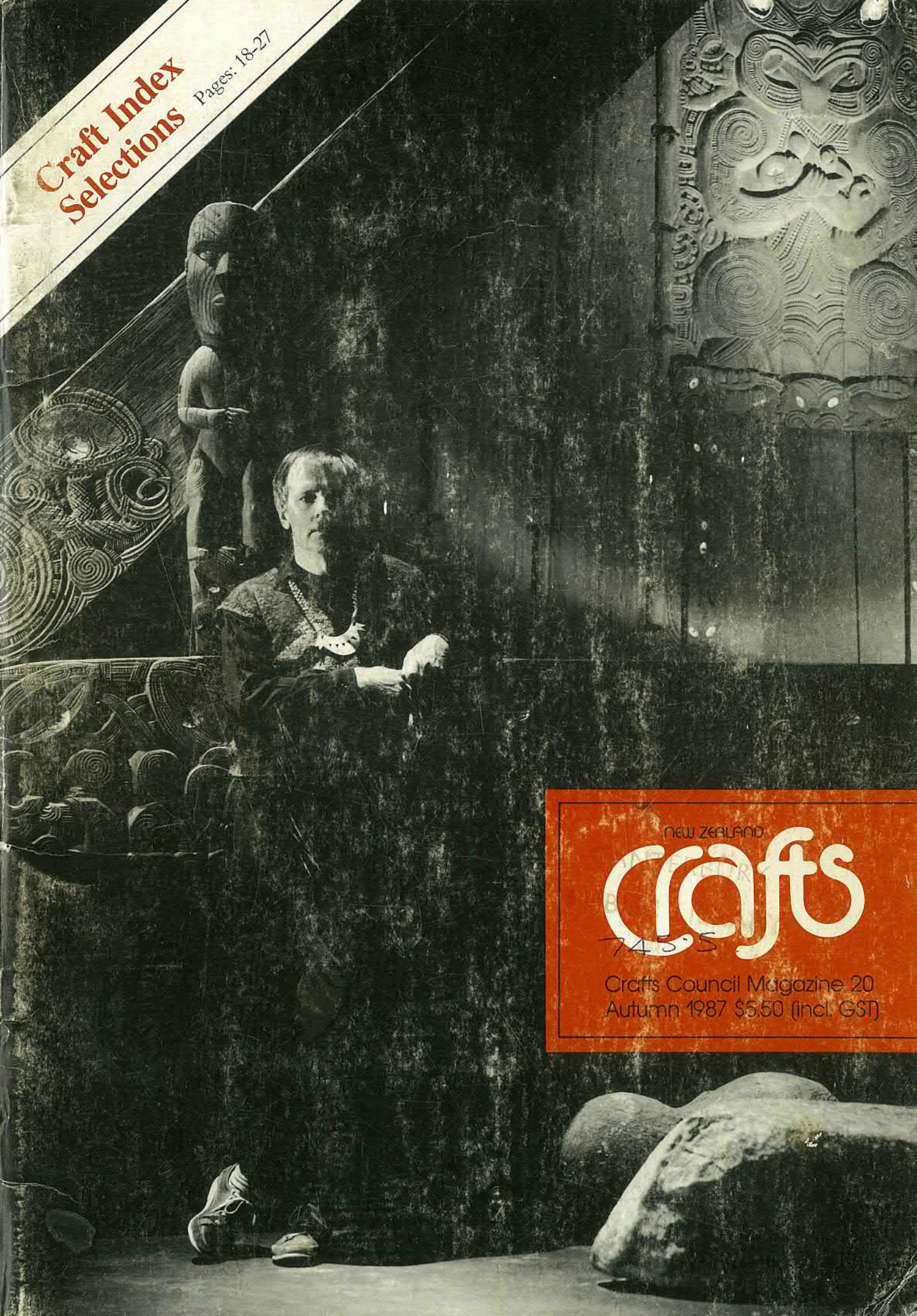


**Craft Index  
Selections**

Pages: 18-27



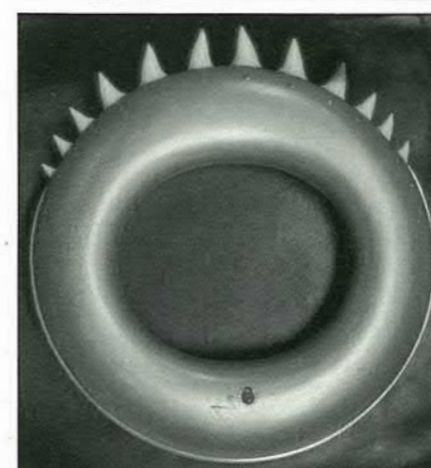
NEW ZEALAND

# Crafts

Crafts Council Magazine 20  
Autumn 1987 \$5.50 (incl. GST)

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# NEW ZEALAND Crafts

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## Message from the President

These are turbulent times for the Crafts Council. There are more irons in the fire than ever before and yet (as always) there are never enough hands to keep them turning.

So when the Executive Director who has for almost three years defied the laws against perpetual motion and managed to keep most of those irons turning, whilst simultaneously balancing the Crafts Council on a taut budgetary shoe-string; - when this juggler, diplomat and financial wizard announces that he is off to take a new step up his career ladder, you would expect at least a degree of panic amongst the organisation wouldn't you?

Well, oddly enough, you would be wrong. Such is the confidence that John Schiff has inspired during his time as Executive Director, that his notice of impending departure was regarded as simply another problem that would have to be coped with. It's another sign of the increasing professional maturity of the Crafts Council.

It is no coincidence that the period of John Schiff's tenure has seen a phenomenal advance in the growth of the organisation. The decision to appoint such a person to the post was made with the firm conviction that in order to progress with its aims, the Crafts Council needed to profoundly increase its profile and status amongst the Arts, Business and Government communities.

Two years and nine months under John Schiff's direction have seen those objectives well on the way to achievement. Thanks to John's astute management, integrity and professionalism, the Crafts Council now enjoys a reputation which is the envy of other such organisations.

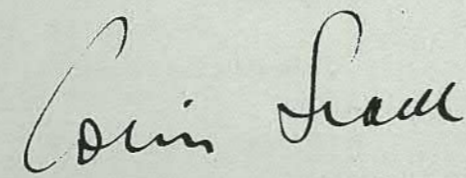
The successes that have depended on John's personal touch are too many to list, but notable have been the move into prestigious new headquarters on The Terrace and latterly the closer and for more effective relationship with the QE II Arts Council, a partnership which owes much to John's personal attributes.

John Schiff has taken up the position of Executive Director of the Booksellers Association. He takes with him our sincere gratitude and very best wishes - and, I hope, a thick bundle of copies of this very magazine to show off to his new members!

As I have stated, these are indeed turbulent times for us. In the course of its rapid progress, the Crafts Council has had to make some tough decisions, not all of them without controversy.

I believe that the direction decided upon by the executive which appointed John Schiff, has been absolutely justified and if New Zealand Craft is to flourish then this direction **must** be maintained. I am equally committed to those same ideals of universal human fellowship which inspired the founders of the World Craft Council and the New Zealand Chapter (now CCNZ) in its turn. I believe strongly that the Crafts Council exists for (and because of) all people for whom craft is important, whatever their level of involvement or achievement. We have succeeded in large measure in winning the confidence and respect of the public and corporate sectors. We must not ignore the need to retain the confidence of the wider craft community if we are to continue to nurture its growth.

The role of Executive Director of the Crafts Council will undoubtedly continue to be a highly demanding one. Rosemary Shannon comes to it with an impressive array of skills and experience. I believe that the Crafts Council could not be in better hands and as I welcome her to the position, I wish Rosemary a happy and successful association with all of us!



## LETTERS

### Maori Art Today

Friends and family have drawn my attention to an article in the Summer '86 issue of NZ. Crafts in which Ray Thorburn reviews the exhibition 'Maori Art Today'. In his review he raises one query I feel competent to answer, and makes an erroneous statement which family and friends urge me to correct.

The query was based on the absence of works of some well-established Maori artists and can be answered easily - lack of time, lack of space. The 'Maori Art Today' hung in the Dunedin Public Art Gallery throughout December and January, was outstanding. Given the time, artists had replaced 'old' works, and others were able to contribute three works each, many of them created with the exhibition in mind. Thus the Dunedin exhibition was given a breadth and impact not possible with the time and space limitations in Wellington.

The erroneous statement was that pertaining to my painting entitled 'Uenuku' which Ray inferred owed something to the influence of one Bridget Riley - and for which he has already apologised.

'Uenuku' (in the Te Maori exhibition) is the carved taonga representing the life force of the Tainui people. It is an immensely powerful object. But the name had long puzzled me. Why Uenuku? The rainbow? Perhaps because in creation, two are needed... Uenuku, the painting represents two forces necessary for life: the principal one being Light - which although invisible allows us to see, light becomes visible when combined with Water to form a rainbow.

I've used Maori weaving patterns to evoke the creative power of Uenuku pulsating, and colour to show light emerging from the darkness to the visible form of the rainbow, thence to the invisible - visible only because of the black shadow which is the only constant throughout the painting.

Toi Te Rito Maihi

## LETTERS

### Exhibiting overseas

The Soapbox by Warwick Freeman and the obituary on Jim Grieg by Michael Volkerling made a thought provoking juxtaposition in the summer issue of Crafts. A careful reading of Michael Volkerling's speech supplies valid refutations to Mr Freeman's generalised criticisms - Jim was after all an artist who had major success overseas.

The Craftshop I am a partner in stocked Jim's work until his death. Jim supported us in the generous way he supported all honest creative endeavours in the crafts. He accurately foresaw his New Zealand market would contract as he developed his larger, more serious, less functional pieces although he continued to put his works before the New Zealand public and to live on a barely viable income. The day his death was announced people came into the shop wanting to buy his pieces and have been coming with that hope ever since. I attribute this sudden market explosion in part to publicity of his reputation in Japan and the ironies of the situation are inescapable.

While creating links and earning appreciation in Japan Jim still maintained a sense of responsibility to New Zealand. In 1985 to 1986 he worked for five months without income for a major exhibition at the Wellington City Gallery. He conceived this exhibition as a complete form composed of a series of monumental pieces arranged together in a progressive sequence that made the whole more than the sum of its parts.

Lack of liaison and understanding by the Gallery led to them declining to exhibit all the pieces. In an act of cultural vandalism only a selection of forms were chosen. They were relegated to the upstairs gallery area, a space unsympathetic to their scale. The main exhibition area and much of the publicity was given to an overseas exhibition.

I would like to think that even for Warwick Freeman this would be reason enough to look to Tokyo or Kyoto for your next show!

Jim never saw this exhibition mounted as he had conceived it. The pieces made their first united public appearance when they formed a backdrop of poignant magnificence to the memorial service on the lawn of his home.

The tale is longer than this but I hope that Jim's example will help stimulate us to think more deeply about why some artists **because** of their convictions and integrity must and should continue to seek an audience outside New Zealand.

Polly Barr

### Promoting the Crafts Council

How many people react with a blank look when you mention the Crafts Council in conversation? One of the aims of the Crafts Council is 'to promote the image of New Zealand crafts'. A first step would surely be to work on bringing the Crafts Council to the attention of more New Zealanders and also to more visitors from overseas. There is much self-congratulation in the annual report about the improved profile resulting from the move to 22 The Terrace, but while this may well be true in Wellington, the effect out here in the provinces has been negligible.

The public face of the Crafts Council outside of Wellington is this magazine, for which we pay about two thirds of our annual subscription. Yet the distribution of the magazine is poor and its appearance irregular. Last financial year about two and a half percent of the total expenditure of the Crafts Council was spent on 'publicity and promotion'. Perhaps it is time to increase the budget in this area to pay for an increased print run of the magazine. The magazine should be widely distributed, at the very least in the main tourist destinations.

The Dunedin Chapter of the Crafts Council has gone one step further in raising the profile of the Crafts Council by opening the first regional gallery. Although this move was in part motivated by the lack of a suitable outlet for fine craft in Dunedin, flying the flag of the Crafts Council was a major factor. A mutual benefit system of fine crafts promoting the image of the Crafts Council and the Crafts Council promoting the image of New Zealand craft is potentially a good one.

During the last year, local groups of members have become more active. If the Crafts Council is to be more effective in 'promoting the image of New Zealand craft' then local groups need to work vigorously, in partnership with the national office, to raise the profile of the Crafts Council nationwide. Grumbling about the working of the national office are rife at the regional level but the Crafts Council belongs to all its members so let's do something active on a local level to make it work for us.

Simon King

### Knitting Awards at Compendium

What a pity that the photographs used with Amy

Brown's review of Kaffe Fassett's Selection of Knitting Awards were not in colour. Why oh why is something like this Competition "Painting with Wool" reduced to black and white?

In my opinion it is poor journalism when the reviewer does not get the facts right about who won awards.

Some people who did not make it got reviews and some who got awards were not mentioned ("Amy Brown reviews his selection"?)

The reviewer should note there were several "named knitters" in the competition but evidently unknown to her. Craft reviews of this type are upsetting to Craftspeople.

Congratulations to Compendium Gallery for such an interesting competition and brilliant display - pity about the vibrant colours not coming through in the article.

David Barratt

I enjoy your magazine and I am not in the habit of writing letters of complaint, *however, if no-one* writes, the people concerned may never know the other viewpoint.

1. The whole object of the Kaffe Fassett knitting is colour. Your article was in black and white only!

2. I do not know Amy Brown but her article, I felt, was poor. The heading 'Amy Brown reviews his selection' bears no relation to her review. In fact many award winners might never have been in the competition at all as their work has been non-existent according to Amy Brown's articles. One who specially comes to mind is Betty Barratt who had a superb gentle-hued (lavenders and greens) dreamy jersey; but other award winners were equally ignored. How disappointing for those entrants - and modesty will many times forbid them from writing any complaints. It gives me no pleasure to write in this matter but not being a competitor in this instance, I feel I am able to present a logical and clear viewpoint to you.

Mary Copley

### Typo

I would like to draw readers' attention to a typographical error in my review of "NZ Contemporary Jewellery" NZ Crafts 19.

The last line of the second paragraph on page 29 should read "But perhaps the chief strength of this show was seeing the work of lesser known people". The transposition of "well" for "lesser" unfortunately

renders that paragraph and the subsequent paragraph so confused as to be quite unintelligible.

Philip Clarke

### Mono culture?

In contrast to Anthony Williams (NZ Crafts, Letters, Summer 1986), I find John Edgar's provocative statement that "we are Polynesians now, not Europeans" to be one of those truisms that enliven our familiar landscape with fantastic creatures.

I see plenty of pushmi-pullyus but no sign of "Polynesian mono-culture" anywhere.

Paul Annear

### Campbell Hegan's Review

Aspects of Campbell Hegan's review of the Fletcher Brownbuilt Exhibition (Spring 1986) give me great cause for concern.

It grates that Mr Hegan feels that the opportunity to write a review gives him licence to expound his personal ideas at the expense or providing the reader with an overview of the Exhibition. Not being able to attend the Exhibition myself I would have preferred to hear more about the techniques and styles used than be presented with an article of which half is devoted to Mr Hegan's observations of so-called "exhibitionism".

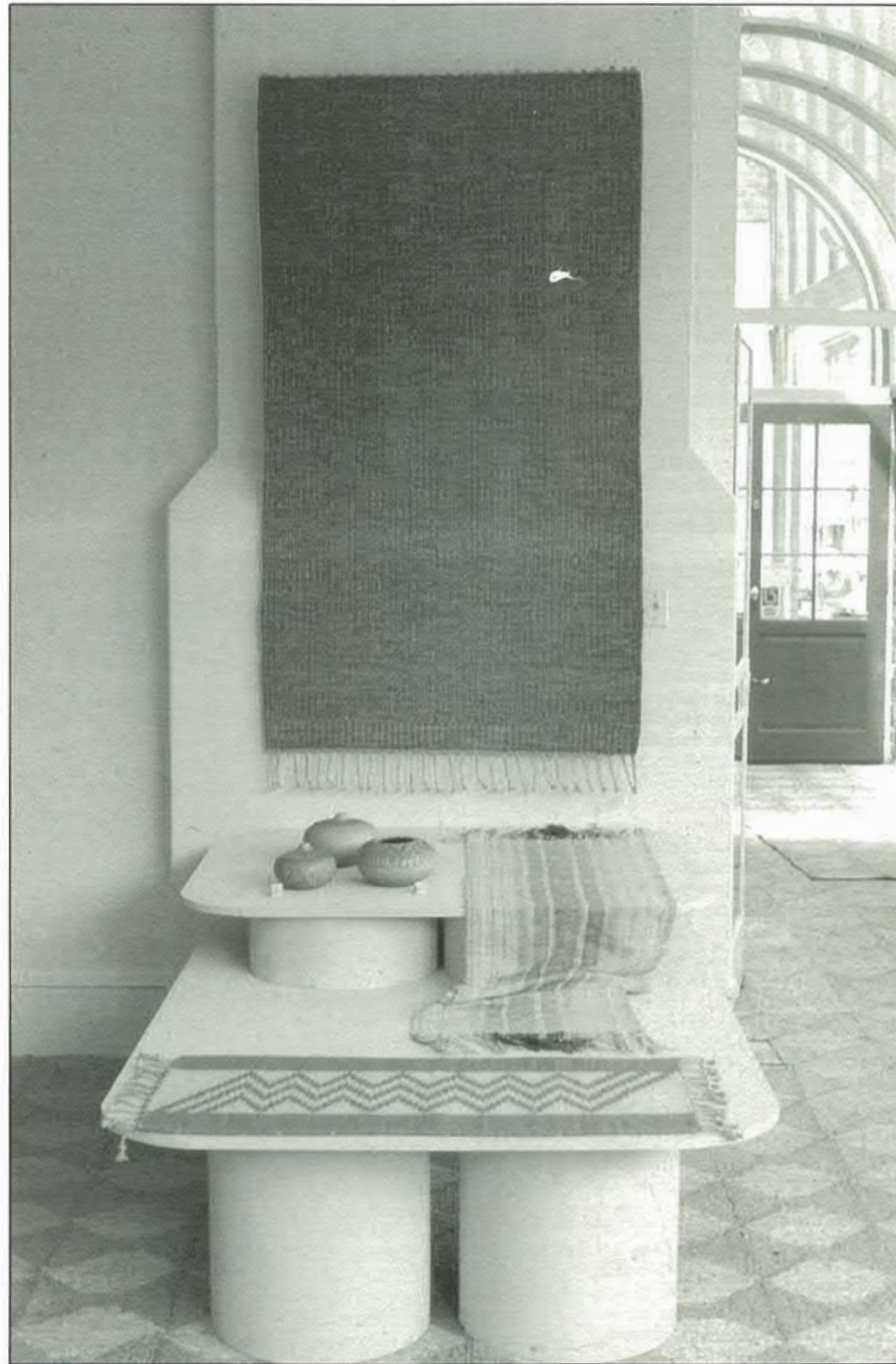
Even more concerning is his accusation of "plagiarism". I consider it a highly dangerous practise for a person to make such a criticism in the media without substantial evidence and hence, without the right of reply. Just who is plagiarising who and from where does Mr Campbell obtain the authority to make such an accusation?

All in all the "review" was most unsatisfactory and I don't believe encouraging to the ceramic world as a whole. It shows a distinct lack of journalistic integrity, an issue at which I think editors of all such publications should look at closely.

Adrienne Matthews

The Dunedin Chapter of the New Zealand Crafts Council has opened a retail outlet, the first venture of this type outside Wellington. John Reid Jnr outlines its growth and future.

## A new Crafts Council Gallery

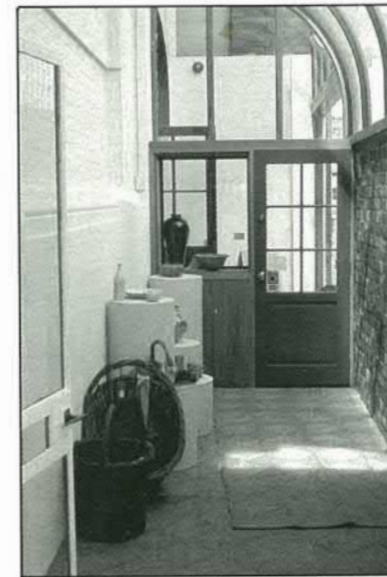
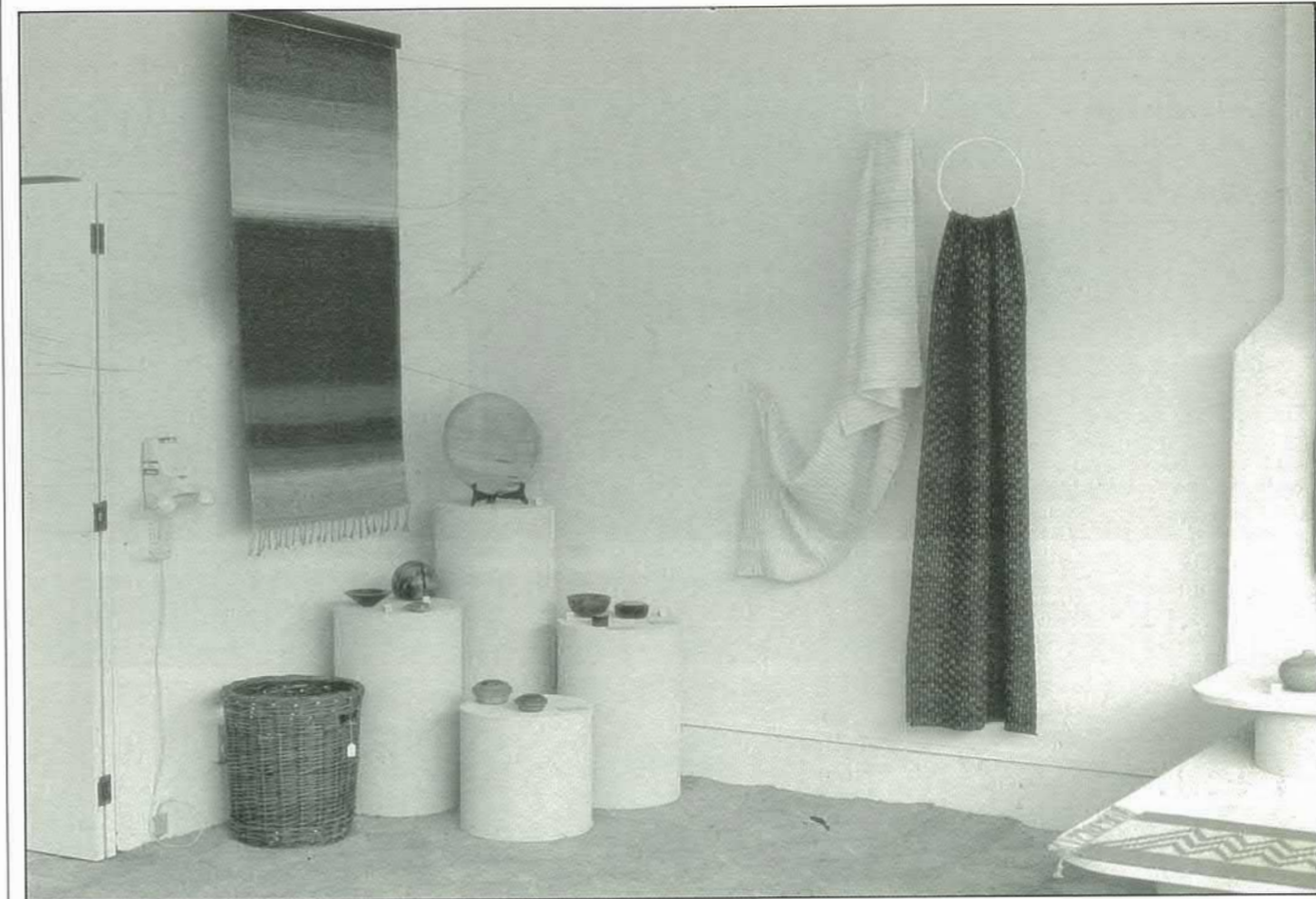


A few years ago, the Crafts Council employed a firm of marketing consultants. Their recommendation to have a Council gallery in all the larger centres was adopted as policy but not as practice.

Recently, expectations of once-a-month cups of tea and biscuits metamorphosed into a major effort in Dunedin. Already, there are other regional groups looking at developing their own businesses. This has

implications for Crafts Council members all around the country.

Location says a lot about one's aims and objects. When anything is sold, part of what is sold is image; implied provenance. Outlets in the Dunedin area have tended to have a lot of factory produce in their displays. At best they were selling 'variety handcrafts'. Time and energy given to craft work was not being recompensed in display or promotion.



Work could be sent to other centres and to the gallery in Wellington; an expensive, time consuming effort, aside from the loss of intangibles, such as communication between the craftsperson and patron.

The Chapter had already held an impressive local exhibition in the Carnegie Gallery earlier in the year. Paul Dalimore of the Carnegie Centre was looking for a complement to the existing three art galleries in the building, not a 'deserving group'. Five weeks after the initial approach from Paul, the Chapter opened its craft gallery.

In the three months since opening, sales targets have been comfortably exceeded. Budgeted allowance for paying back the initial capital, made up from \$500 interest free loans from members, will be available by the end of the first years trading. The gallery will become debt free.

One grant was applied for but the application was not pursued. It was felt that a commercial organisation, if professionally run, shouldn't need gifts. Goodwill, yes, but if, as individuals, they were serious about making a living from craft then the local organisation should proceed in a similar way.

Financial success has justified the faith Paul Dalimore put into the venture. He underwrote the initial rental period to facilitate an unhampered practice assessment.

Nicola Robb, the art galleries manager, is very pleased with

performance: "It is a perfect answer to the space, better than we could have done ourselves. It has that extra dimension of commitment: knowledge and giving of themselves to the craft."

One of the pleasures of the place is the co-operative nature of the organisation. Members work one day a fortnight in the gallery, ensuring contact with customers. There is compensation for this service in a reduction of commission from 33 1/3% to 20%. Others, not working a full day, donate their services gratis.

The possibility of employing a manager is not precluded by the present system and it has the advantage of keeping expenses and risks lower.

In the period it has been open, it has been an on going experience for all those involved. Developed talents in the craft field are learning the newer skills of selling to the public and appreciation of other fabrics from crafts not their own. The method of staffing gives the public the opportunity to speak with those committed to their particular craft, to learn about the care and use of articles; a post-sale aspect beloved of modern marketers.

Because the profile of the local Chapter has been heightened, people have been coming forward who are not members of the Council. They are being encouraged to submit their work to the adjudicating group. All work goes through this screening process to maintain high standards.

The approach by some crafts people to their craft is via techniques, others by content and form. The priorities may differ and yet lead to ends that are equally valid. However, flawless technique can make vapid nonsense. By assessing an article against itself, judgement is by results.

Quality in craft work is of vital importance. The contrast to the throw-away world must be complete. And the really successful work will have something of the makers personality in it as well; individuality.

This perfectly serious aim for quality is not concerned with production method. The insidious division between 'one off's' and, for example, batch production, is of no consequence. Production and sale of quality crafts implies professional control.

One of the problems has been to ensure a sufficient supply of quality wares. Naturally, the desire is there to feature Southern craftspeople. Others are very welcome to submit work to the gallery. At the moment, approaches are being made throughout New Zealand to encourage submissions.

A promising report is being developed with younger craftspeople in the area. Students from the local arts school can talk to people actually working in their field. Tutors in institutions can attempt to help students to understand the pitfalls and problems on the way to a secure professional life. Unfortunately, it is difficult to be realistic while insulated from the harsh light of day by the umbrella of a state salary.

For Blair Smith, a jeweller recently out of his apprenticeship with Tony Williams, the gallery is an opportunity to show his work without the expense or inconvenience of renting space. Immediate, positive feedback from selection is gratifying and, more important, encouraging. Sales define directions that he may follow up.

Acutally being able to see one's work on display is an annealing and tempering process in itself. In the future individuals or a craft will be a special feature each month. During the late autumn 'Winter Warmth' will feature fabrics, scarves and hand knitted garments.

The possibility of a future 'Focus' on one's work can provide a goal to work towards, a necessary reward for many people, especially the newer craftspeople who is still developing productive work patterns.

The forming of this linkage between public, novice and craftsprson has become one of the rewarding and significant gallery functions.

Stephen Mulqueen was faced with a small dilemma. He already works and displays his jewellery in 'Fluxus'. His decision to offer his work was an act of solidarity. The gallery provides another platform for his work and exchanges the sharp focus of a

1 Selection Committee Danny Moorwood (r) Anthony Williams and Margery Blackman examining work submitted by Ross Richards.

2 Setting up a Jewellery Exhibition.



specialist gallery for the resynthesis of different crafts in the Chapter's gallery.

The customer walking in to see something specific may buy an entirely different article. The target market is spread a little wider; the typical narrow spectrum of support from craft patrons is widened.

Every piece is simply displayed using contrast to heighten interest. Matching the work up provides its own problems because when an object is bought its companions must be reassessed and restated. It isn't like an exhibition where purchases are not removed until the close. The work is an extension of the space. The environment must fit the scale of the work.

Shop fittings have been designed and made by members even to the ticket holders. Unity and conservative taste (in the best sense) articulate the gallery.

Woven grass matting fits in well with the ambience of hand-made work. Unfortunately, that product of

modern ambiguity, the stiletto heel, stabs through the grass surface and tends to stay there. A more suitable floor covering is top of the list of priorities.

The building itself is very familiar to Dunedin, being the old Public Library, recently renovated and recommissioned as the Carnegie Centre. It is the home of art galleries, retail stores, a restaurant and workshops. The location is Moray Place, centre of the city proper.

Windows to the craft gallery abut directly onto the pavement which runs on a diagonal from the ceiling to the floor. There is an intrinsic tease for the passing pedestrians in the gradually revealed interior.

An amusement for shoppers, a hook for dollars for the coffers? The Gallery is these things. Also there is calmness, control, balance, a sense of the placement of things and their underlying structure. There is discipline. □

## Casting off the Cultural Corset

**"The Dowse collects Fine Arts in materials traditionally associated with Crafts". James Mack defines the Art Museum's collection policy in conversation with Bob Bassant.**

James Mack talks easily and with vigour about his vocation.

That "Strong commitments have been made within the bounds of the Dowse Art Museum's collection policy" has become obvious during the past six years he has been the Director of "the Dowse" as it is affectionately known in the community. Apart from that he has in his own words an "absolute belief that the pursuit of excellence should be guiding Philosophy in the purchase of works of Art" and in the guidance of what he perceives to be the primary function of the Art Museum:

*"Education absolutely and positively is the primary function of this institution - there's no function that gets anywhere near it in its primary objective - if one does not do things to educate taste - educate eye - educate consciousness - then you are failing in a public institution."*

*One of my other one-liners which I tend to use all the time is important in the terms of the Dowse also - "the Public will forgive you anything except being boring". Too many Art Galleries fall into this trap - syndromes of "looking" are put upon the public; often through the cultural corset they, like Galleries - have had to put upon themselves.*

*You have got to do things which are vigorous - which are challenging - which are commanding, otherwise you fail once again in the education process."*

James Mack's commitment to education comes as no surprise. A trained teacher with special qualifications in the teaching of Art and Crafts he also spent several years as Arts and Crafts Advisor to the South Auckland Education Board, before taking up various posts, from Exhibitions Officer to Director of Art Galleries all over Aotearoa - the name he prefers to use.

In 1974 he was offered a Fellowship with the East West Centre in Honolulu where he spent the next four years as a Senior Fellow and finally as a visiting Research Associate.

He ran experimental projects for young museum/cultural professionals from Asia, the Pacific and the United States and organised a major international conference on conserving cultural values:

*"Of anything in terms of my Curriculum Vitae, that was the most important thing that ever happened to me."*

*Because not only did it give me a closer reinforcement as a Pacific Islander - and I have no problems about that, I believe I am a Pacific Islander - but it also gave me strong links with the East. It gave me a much stronger Pacific consciousness than I ever had before."*

James Mack's obvious concern for and fanatical belief in the values of bi-culturalism and things Pacific is reflected in his choice of Art and Crafts.

*"One of my concerns is glass. I believe the things that are happening in the glass world are some of the most exciting things happening in the country today. One of the things I have to be able to do, for the sake of the collection is to buy some mature work of the people that were at their height of creative power during the sixties-seventies era - but not only in glass. We also collect jewellery, not the jewellery which reflects the ideology of Northern Europe, but jewellery which reflects the Pacific."*

*I personally have defined a policy which says (and I hope it never changes) "The Dowse now collects Fine Arts in materials traditionally associated with the crafts". We have made some strong commitments within the bounds of that policy and they will probably change from Director to Director - the commitments I mean - not the policy.*

*The existing collection when I came to the Dowse was rich in ceramics - but only ceramics. There was nothing else in the Fine Arts/Craft line. Although I am not too happy with some of the pieces they are important as part of a historical collection, and one day that collection which David Miller started and Jim Barr followed up will give the collection as a whole a superb historical shape. You've got to build on what you've got, particularly in NZ because of its historical perspective."*

Inevitably the conversation is getting around to the matter of personal taste. Any choice no matter how well informed and rationalised is bound to be subjective to a degree and as far as the establishment is concerned it could be controversial to the extreme. The Watch Dogs of Polite Good Taste, and Public Morality (in Arts), are forever ready to pounce. James Mack has had his share but his attitude is uncompromising.

*"You've got to stand and be honest and own up to the fact that your personal taste affects everything you do - whether you like it or not. There are some things*

that I pursue in historical terms that I think sometimes more important than the aesthetic – but I think the professional responsibility is absolutely to the aesthetic side, no question about that and no matter what you buy.”

Narrowing down one's choices within the parameters of a collection policy has its difficulties, particularly when the final say on a purchase is open to questioning. Although that happens only rarely it still hurts when it concerns a work perceived to be of major cultural importance:

“I have a directorial prerogative to buy anything under one hundred dollars – over that I make submissions to a group of three people, but they believe they have a responsibility to the Director as a professional person. I need a two out of three vote – but most works have been bought with a consensus approval. I have been turned down for one major purchase – because some people were worried about it. I would have liked to have bought the entire exhibition of ‘Songs of the Gulf’ by Denis O'Connor. It was cheap at the price asked and may never happen again.”

“When you are collecting not only do you have to think about collections management you also have a responsibility towards the aesthetic to collect that which can move into the 21st Century with no major problems. You are really courting one of these enigmas that could like Godtalk – you are in fact actually buying for perpetuity.

“The collection that I put together will not be seen in its importance until it has moved into the next century – it will only be seen in its rightful historical/aesthetic relevance by the coming generations. And I hope I am doing it right – I think I am – I am convinced I am otherwise I would not be doing it in this way.”

“Do you have a veto right?” I asked him.

“No. I wouldn't want it. It would be extremely difficult to use politically, neither do I have access to other professional colleagues – but if anything did get out of hand I would call for them. I stand and own an embarrassment – I did give in about the Percy Dowse portrait. \* I gave in about that for the sake of the institution. I realised that if I continued to put up too much of a fight about that it could have become detrimental to the Dowse collection as a whole.

However, publicity aspects of a controversy like that are in fact quite important because it states my belief and that happens best in the public face of the institution. The important thing to remember is this: Not only do we buy well, but – and here I use a strong one-liner “we also have a responsibility to make the Artifacts radiate their own excellence”.

I also believe that buying just one work from somebody is wrong – I believe that if you make a decision that somebody is good enough, you have to buy from them regularly; instead of collecting the occasional one-off item – we are collecting the shape of an artist. Being able to have ten or twenty pieces means that we can show them as an art producing person rather than giving the impression to people that these kinds of magic only happen now and again. And we all know that is not true. The creative artist is in a constant state of flux and if they aren't there's something going wrong. And we've got to buy that flux.

A whole lot of my professional colleagues, particularly the ones in the “Fine Art world” are very much against what I am doing, but I think it is an absolute responsibility to do something unique for this place.”

When he applied for the Dowse Directorship, he knew that it was not going to be a regular “Art

Gallery” oriented administrative position:

“There was more to it – there was something else – really important – there was going to be a museum to it, and I knew that at the time – that was the real carrot that brought me here. I knew that for the first time ever I was going to do something with that which is called an Art Museum, and then a whole lot of other things just fell into place. Initially this was going to be an Early Settlers Museum but then we made this resolve to go for an Art Museum.”

The question of elitism arises – particularly in relation to the age old Art/Craft dichotomy. Mack professes not to have the last word but offers a reflective hypothesis:

“No – its schooling – an attitude, “they” are in fact perpetrating: the Vasarian thing – you know the guy who wrote the Michaelangelo Biography – that the Arts are categorised as painting being the most important followed by sculpture, drawing is next then printmaking and so on. That attitude is still being reinforced by the education system, particularly in the “Fine Art” schools, though polytechnics have helped enormously to break down this Vasarian hierarchy.”

Art/Craft dichotomy in the age of Post Modernism?

“I find this line of demarcation absurd – absolutely absurd! and the word Post-Modernism drives me berserk!”

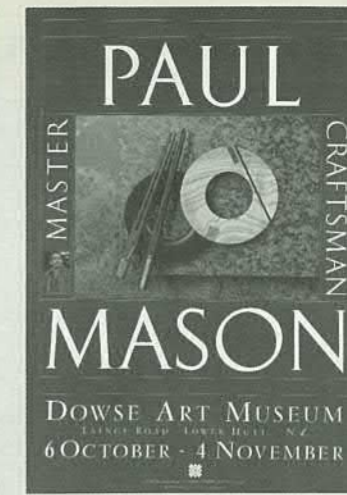
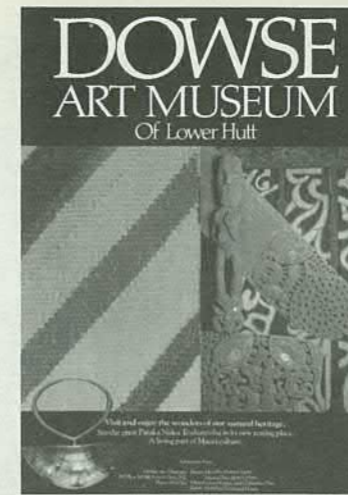
Mack's obviously getting into his element – bristling with pseudo indignation, and genuine missionary zeal:

“The carrot of coming here to the Dowse, was the opportunity to put certain kinds of things into people's heads – because if I was doing anything it was addressing the fact that – Any conscious creative act is worthy of attention in this kind of place. The conscious part is the important part and that allows you then to look at Maori Artifacts, which form an ergonomic point of view are sublime, which from an aesthetic point of view are divine and should not be treated as curiosities. It then allows you to ‘do’ the contemporary artists, because I believe this kind of institution has a responsibility to contemporary artist, particularly, those artists who are pursuing avenues which are a little off beat even if in traditional materials. Because once again it has to do with the boring thing. If one presents the same kind of orthodoxy all the time you've got a real problem. And you've got to educate and encourage to get more people in here.”

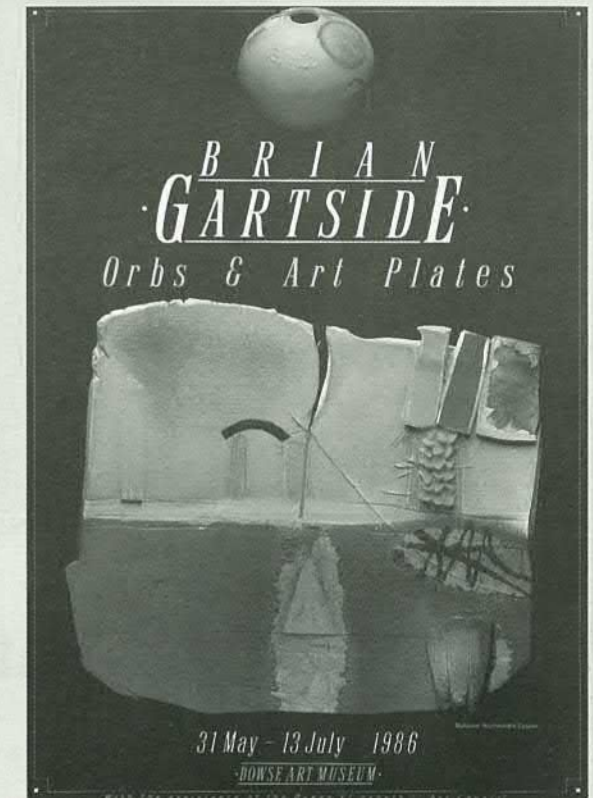
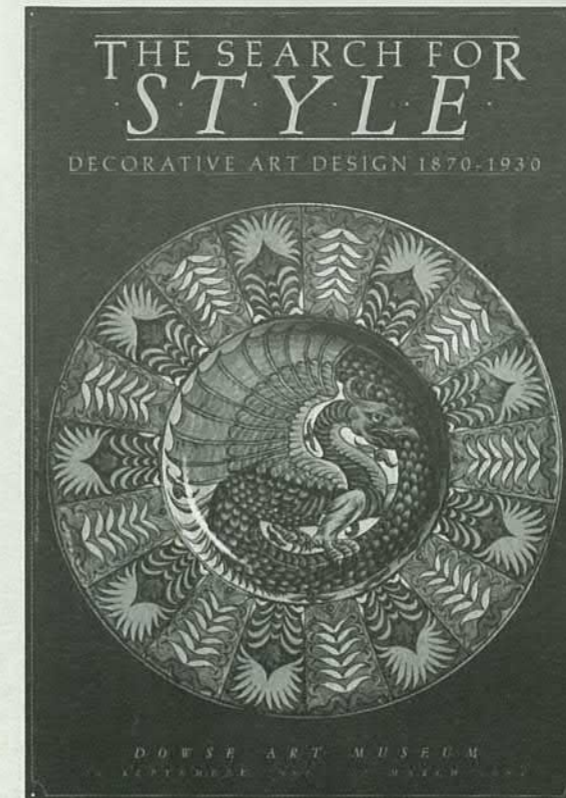
Elaborating on Maori artifacts leads to “Te Maori” its significance and impact on the peoples of Aotearoa. He deeply cares for the Maori people and their culture, partaking in Maori language courses to be able to move closer himself to Tangata Whenua. His is not a fashionable, Pakeha liberal attitude towards things Maori but an unshakeable belief in cultural values.

“The most exciting museum experience that I have ever had is spending some time in and around “Te Maori”. For the first time of my 46 years of life in New Zealand, Maori members of this land have been participating in a Museum Experience – we all know the reason why – but 30-40% of the audience passing through are Maori. I hope that we as a profession have touched them in such a way that they might come back, but as NZ moves towards the year 2000 – and if we do not observe our bi-culturalism we will have horrendous problems on our hands – if you in fact can set up wonder and set up a society which is totally and absolutely unique in the world, is that not exciting?”

Mack hopes to be around for some time yet. There is work to be done, a lot of work on the



Copies of these posters are available from the Dowse Art Museum.



educational side – the Crafts Education Schemes coming on stream provoke his comments:

“If there isn't enough inspirational talent around all you're doing is establishing an opportunity to promote dilettantism in the worst kind of way. I can't see that there are enough people around the place that have the get up and go from a teaching point of view – let alone from a student point of view to make these kinds of thing work. I think that with a population of only 3 million the training should be in specialist interest centres. This is the only way it will work. Centralisation is the answer, not diffusion.

Another pet subject related to education is the Artist in Residence Scheme to be launched at the Dowse Art Museum this year. James Mack is very enthusiastic about its potential.

“That's one of the most important things that is happening at the Dowse at the moment and it's going to be difficult to get off the ground but once we get it going it will be a worthwhile asset. The scheme will be for three months initially, which seems a bit short, but the people I have in mind, people like Warwick Freeman and Malcolm Harrison can give it the right kind of

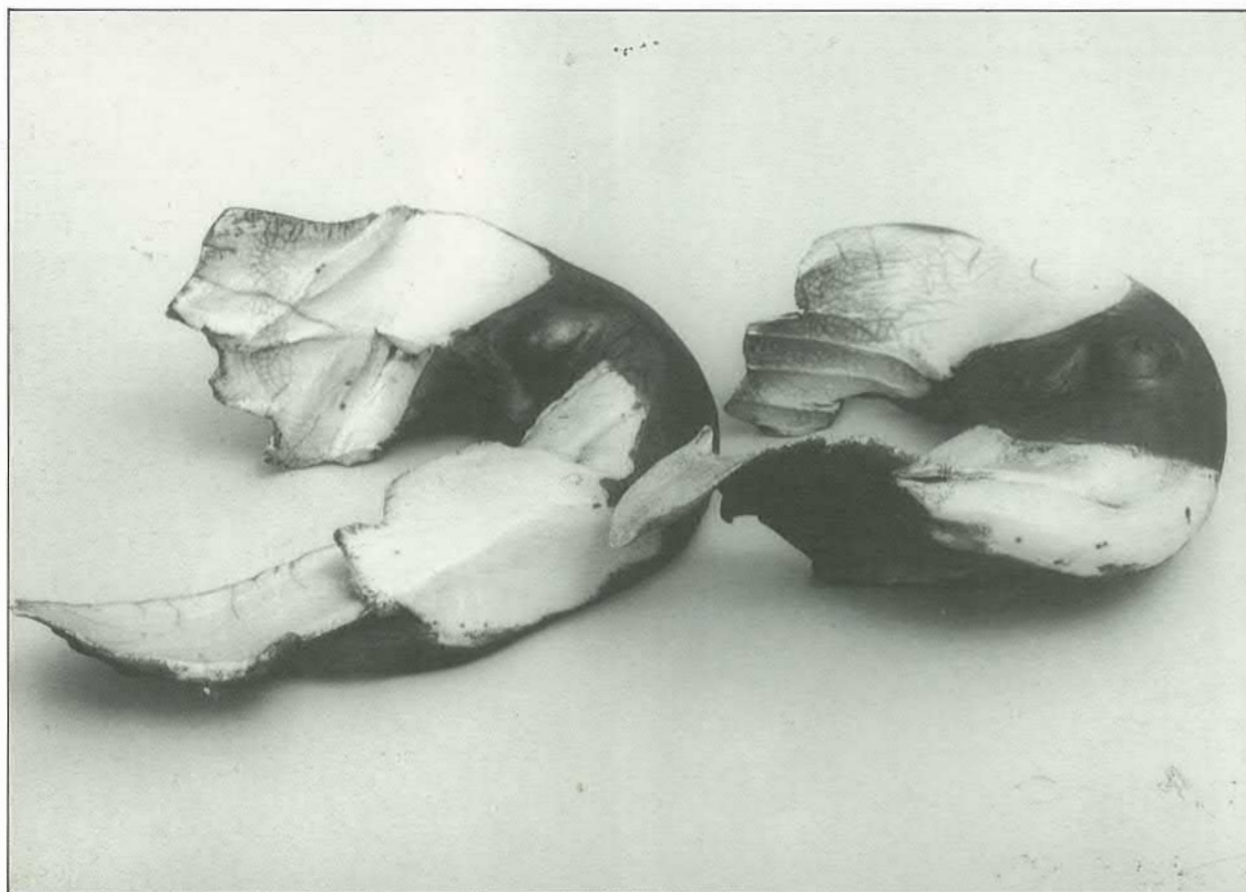
flourish, so the city can see that it is important to the city. I want people who can work with the community as well – people who can do teaching with a reasonably high profile. And then we'll be bringing in some people who don't have that profile yet or the skills, but I obviously can't have all the Punks and Rockers and all that arriving in the first batch, otherwise the city will have a blue fit!”

In his Curriculum Vitae James Mack states his professional Raison d'etre as follows:

“I observe my life function as an animateur who publicly interprets in coherent but simple visual form the passage of special men and women who have made a mark on this world.”

And if one of the marks of a true professional is the pursuit of excellence in his/her chosen vocation or occupation then there's little to add to that, apart from the fact that I emerged from our discussions feeling that I had been through some kind of Baptism by Fire. □

\*the Percy Dowse Portrait controversy originated in the refusal of James Mack to hang a portrait of the late Percy Dowse – Mayor of Lower Hutt City and Founder of the Art Museum – on purely aesthetic grounds.



Nicky Jolly Shrimp ladies. Stone ware. 1. 115mmx310mmx190mm. 2. 90mmx165mmx205mm.

## The State of the Nation in Things Clay

"Ceramics '86" opened on the 16th of October of last year in the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery in New Plymouth. Curated by Chester Nealie, in association with the New Zealand Society of Potters it was heralded by the museum staff, and a handful of local potters and interested people. There should have been many more – the exhibition was worth it.

In his foreword to the catalogue, Nealie notes "Ceramic Artists in the 1980s started to use clay and ideas with unlimited freedom – No longer the need for hand-dug clay – choking diesel fumes and ashglazes.

The medium was liberated to commercial materials, unlimited colour, lower temperatures and diverse ideas. But with this new-found freedom there should also coincide a similar responsibility to creative excellence.

In this exhibition I have tried to show the strength of the past and the talent of the future. The objects present are not just a pretty shape. They are the culmination of years of looking, experimenting and feeling."

Nealie's choice of pieces was final. To single out any, separately for review, feels to me to be contrary to the spirit of the exhibition.

In the Gallery space the 80 pieces stood out – the three-level arrangement giving wonderful perspective – each piece within its own individual area – the height of the display good – there was little need for crouching – to view a ceramic exhibition in this country, standing straight, is an achievement.

The temptation, as an insider, to 'recognise' pieces, was there, but still there were surprises.

The cult of the individual showed in the diversity of techniques, the open-endedness of the material and the total commitment of the artists.

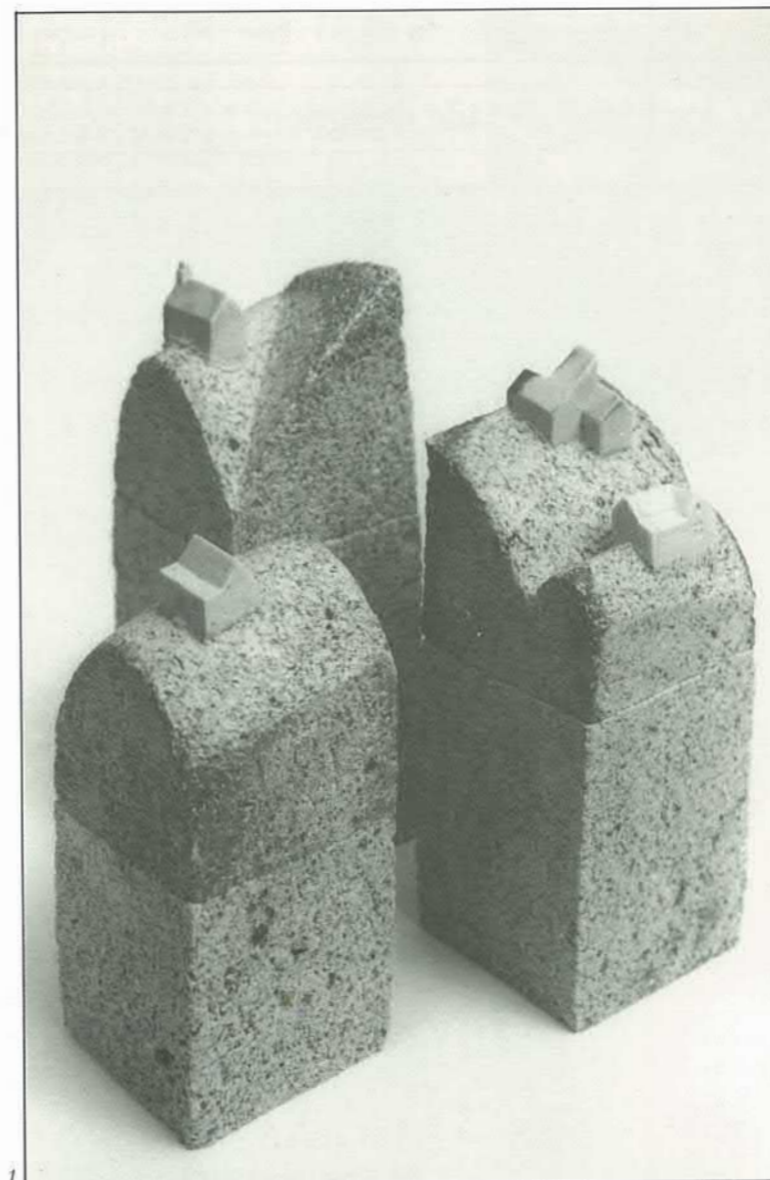
The result was a very rich kaleidoscope, memorable for the pieces displayed, as well as for the catalogue (prepared by Roger King) – equally important!

It is the first statement of potters in print, since Doreen Blumhardt's look ten years ago and is well compiled – with statements, photographs, biographies and addresses – full information for the interested – therefore excellent publicity.

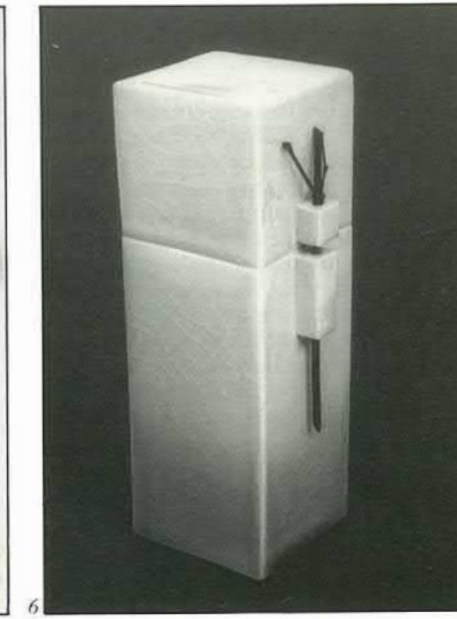
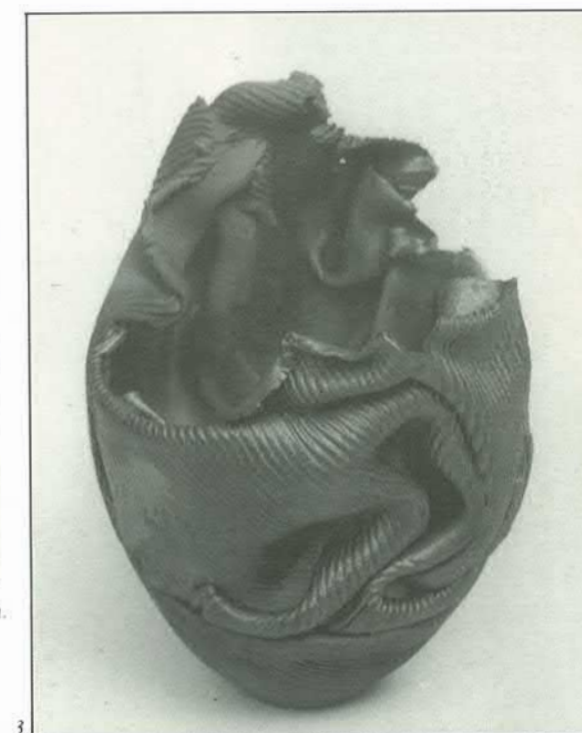
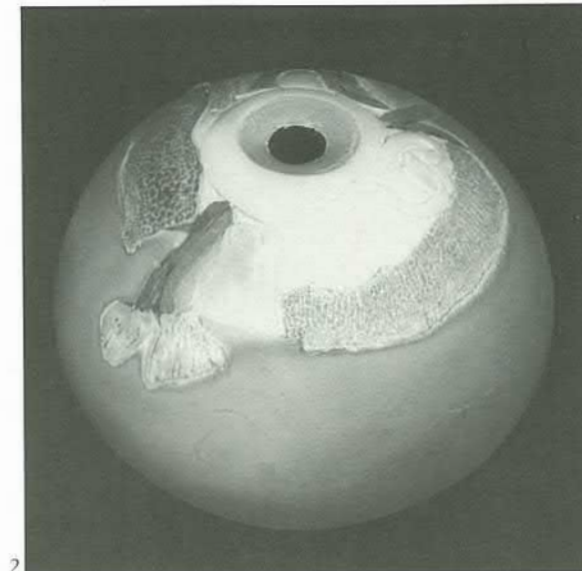
It is a pity, that we are so often hampered by finance, and that in this case only 300 copies were printed.

On the whole, an excellent publication for using in foreign promotion (I'd also like to see it displayed at our international airports and our museums), as an indicator of 'the state of the nation in things clay' and that was the exhibition's incentive.

To have it in New Plymouth – away from Auckland and Wellington – within the hallowed halls of Art of the Govett Brewster, was also a coming of age of the intrinsic value of artists in clay and buried the hackneyed craft versus art discussions well and truly.

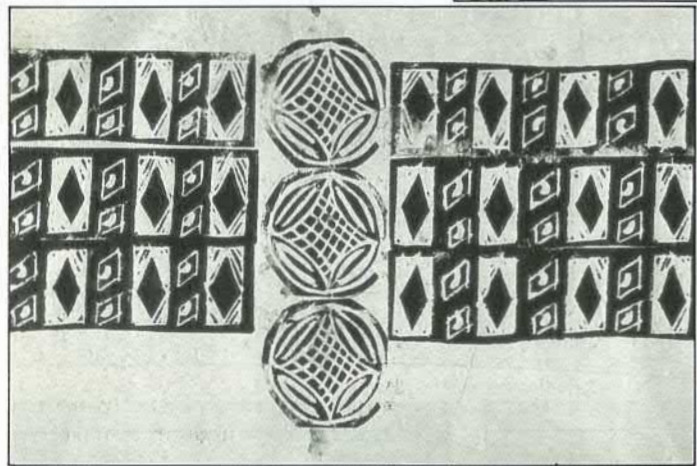
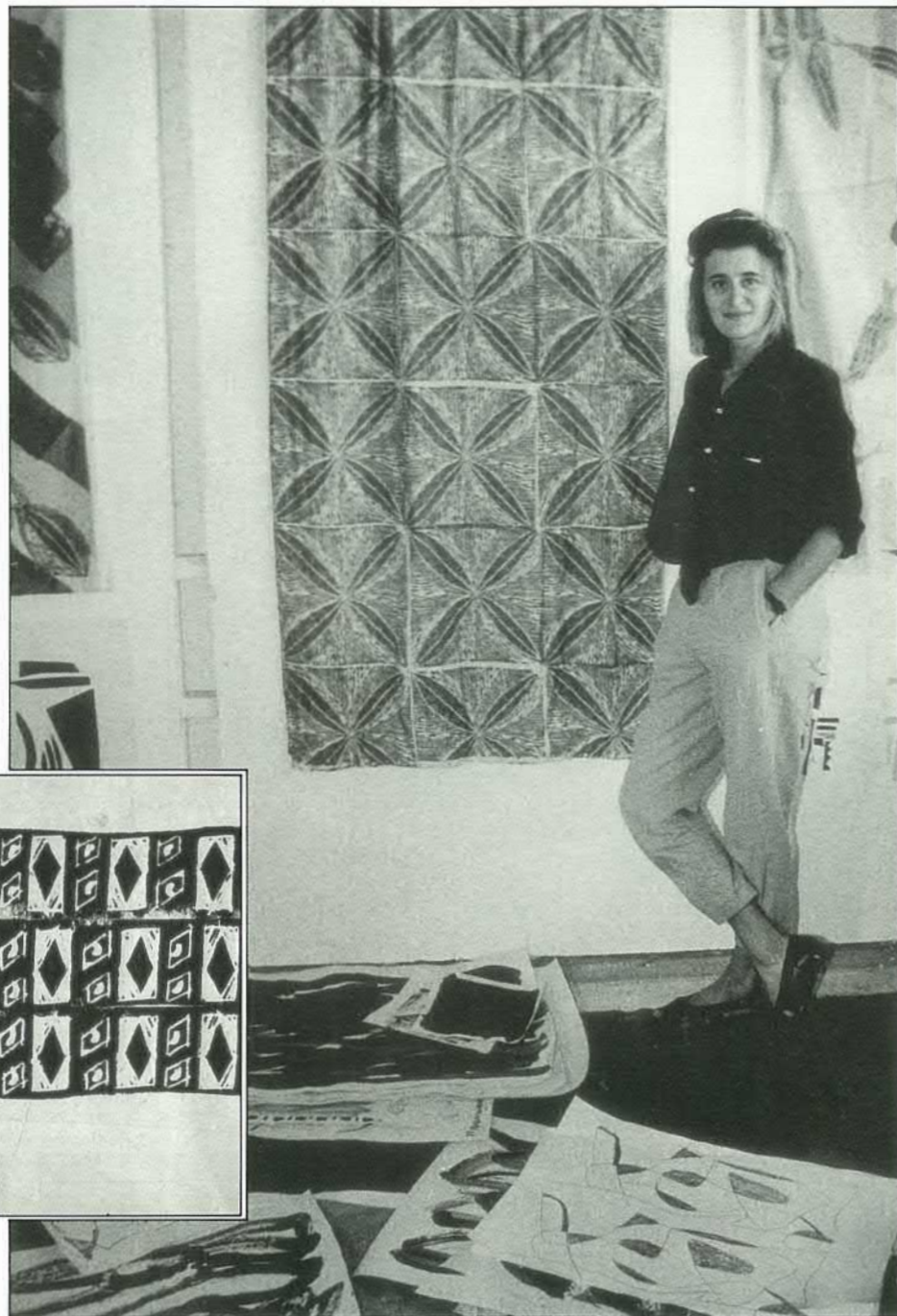


1 Wendy Masters. Hillside Boxes. Mixed Media. Approx. 115mmx58mmx58mm.  
2 Brian Gartside. Orb. Stoneware. 340mmx400mm.  
3 David Brokenshire. Wind Bowl. Procelain. 100mmx80mm.  
4 Andrew van der Putten. Vase. Stoneware 200mmx135mm.  
5 Jan Russell. Trio Egg Forms. Raku Fired. Largest Egg Form. 85mmx100mmx86mm.  
6 Jean Hastedt. Box with Bamboo trim, porcelain. 190mmx65mmx62mm.



Amy Brown profiles Ingrid Dubbelt, Auckland Textile designer

Textiles from Tapa

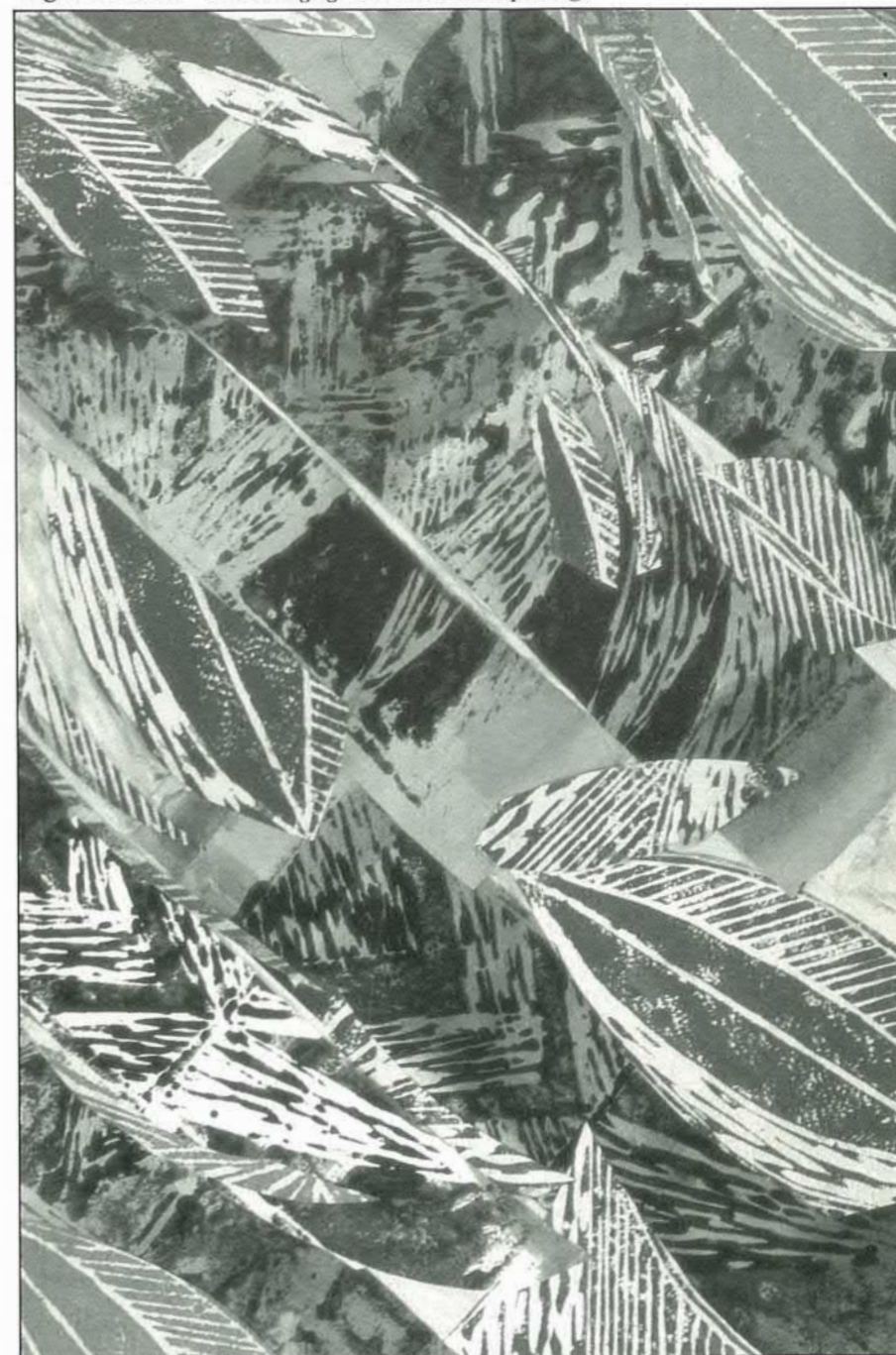


Ingrid Dubbelt – lino cut based on Hawaiian Bamboo Stamps. Repeat Pattern.

*“When I settled on textiles it was a kind of revelation and such a relief to have finally decided. I’d been living in England for 6 years and during that time I’d felt that I really wanted to explore and develop this love of cloth that I’d always had.”* Ingrid Dubbelt arrived back in Auckland late in 1985 with the intention of opening a screen printing studio and pursuing her designing and printing of fabrics as a business. Armed with a Diploma in Printing and Designing from the prestigious Central School of Art & Design in London Ingrid has opened her studio in the heart of Auckland city. Steely determination and

exceedingly hard work made her year a tough one. It also made her achieve the first part of her intention. Ingrid Dubbelt is a rather extraordinary artist. She comes to her chosen craft via an academic career. A double major in English & Art History and first class honours in English Literature were her qualifications when she left New Zealand. Soaking up the quality of European life in Italy and Greece for 6 months was the precursor to 6 exhilarating and demanding years divided between London and France. In London she furthered her academic road with a Diploma in

Ingrid Dubbelt – Fabric hanging. Lino cut & Block printing.



Teaching English as a Foreign Language. She then taught English at advanced level for some time, in between visits to France. And in France she demonstrated the versatility that many New Zealanders have shown in their travels, in situations various, but included among them a job as a video assistant recording street and home life situations for language teaching. Back in London she became an assistant to Jane Willingale, a Textile & Ceramics Designer, a job that allowed her to pursue the interest that she’d always had in cloth. Ingrid’s particular interest was in the symbolic nature of cloth – the way it can be used; worn, sat upon, able to give shelter and decoration. And she became interested in the way that in different cultures it signified different values. Having examined African, Japanese and Polynesian cloth, she decided to put forward a portfolio of work for submission to the Central School of Art & Design to do postgraduate studies in Textile design. Not having any printing facilities meant the necessity for invention and creativity. She collaged cloth together, not for its applique effect but as an approximation of printing techniques, giving the look of texture and depth. Her portfolio gained her acceptance into the course with her thesis proposal being a study of tapa cloth. The course gave her the opportunity to develop design ideas and study the technology of printing and dyeing, but more important it allowed her, with her academic background, to develop the practical skills necessary to define her ideas and enable her to fulfill her desire to have a career as a textile designer in New Zealand. Her decision to study tapa in depth came out of her distance from home. “The physical distance made me think about my country and think about the Polynesian aspect of living in New Zealand and the huge importance of it to our culture. It was really in response to that, that I took a closer look at tapa. While I’d always loved it I hadn’t paid a lot of attention to it. I studied the collection of tapa cloth that was in the British Museum and found it absolutely wonderful. Their really rich collection amazed me with its sophistication. I’d been very naive I think. I’d assumed that the Fijian motifs were the beginning and ending of tapa. Of course I was quite wrong. Tapa changes throughout the Pacific. And looking culturally at the different use of cloth and the designs on cloth made me realise how eminent tapa design was, and how close to it we were here in New Zealand. It provided a focus, a key to my whole feeling about cloth. I thought for awhile that I’d want to study traditional methods of creating tapa, but I don’t actually think that that’s

where my route lies. It’s not my prerogative as a Pakeha to do that. I feel strongly about Maori designs, perhaps even more so as a New Zealander, and feel that it’s essential as a pakeha to have sensitivity to other people’s cultures. So while I feel I don’t need to learn the traditional ways, it remains a great source of interest and learning for me; and I think that as a New Zealander you can’t be shut off from the influences and importance of tapa imagery. I associate it with the South Pacific. It’s an identifiable thing in my mind, but it was not until I had travelled that I felt it in that sense. It’s part of a vocabulary that I want to use in translation to study the symbolism behind the imagery. At the same time I’m very aware of and influenced by European tendencies in art, like Matisse.”

The first designs and images that Ingrid worked on were based on tapa using lino cuts. These she printed on paper which were then put onto screens and into repeat. After learning to do basic block repeats she then got into one-offs with banners and hangings. “I laid the cloth on the table, had an idea where I was going but experimented at the same time and came up with something a bit more pictorial, and also abstract. I learnt about borders and what you could do with them and then what to do with the internal spaces that were left. What I was doing, and what I’m trying to do now is to work out a repeat that’s not a dead accurate repeat. I think that can be quite monotonous. I’m interested in the random quality and in textural effects and these are the two things that I’m pushing and





experimenting with. I believe it's possible to do that with screen printing. I want to incorporate printing onto the cloth and onto the screen. I want to get a lot of texture and dimension in the screen printing itself. Not necessarily with just one screen. What I'm aiming to do is to get a collection of screens with different textures and then mix my screens and vary them and set them off sync. and so on."

Ingrid Dubbelt's studio in Auckland is on the 3rd floor of Queen's Arcade.

You could hardly get closer to the pulse of the city and her studio, with its huge tables and enormous sink, is full of light and the sounds of the city. She shares the premises with a photographer and a designer, but it is here that she has worked for the last year setting up the studio, finding a printing partner, designing her samples and finally printing up a sample range to show to prospective buyers.

Screen printing is physically very demanding and Ingrid is working with very big screens that it would be impossible to manipulate herself. She's always worked with a partner and has never printed on her own. Her partner is an experienced printer and is always there when there's printing to be done.

It takes a long time to set up a studio and the difficult thing with textiles is that you can't get people interested until you've got some samples to show and to get the samples you need a studio, a lot of time, a lot of money and a lot of effort.

Her samples are very good and the display of cloth that she has on the

walls is quite beautiful and has a definite feeling of the South Pacific. They give every indication that Ingrid is a textile designer who should do well. She's particularly interested in creating textiles for interiors - curtaining, upholstery, room dividers, screens - and she'd love the chance to develop one-offs and work on commissions, designing around an occasion or an individual.

"Based on my feelings for tapa and what tapa signifies I designed a piece for the birth of a friend's child and then subsequently for her first birthday. In the first birthday cloth, while I did a repeat pattern of the birth cloth, I incorporated imagery that was significant to this child to do with her star sign and alchemic calligraphy, so that it was personal to her, but also universal in that it had a decorative quality. That's the sort of thing I'd really like to follow up on."

Ingrid was excited and influenced by the street fashions and street culture in London and says that what is happening in arts, crafts and textiles is very exciting.

She met a Swiss agent who came regularly to see what was happening in the colleges and to buy the work of English designers, who, the agent said, were head and shoulders above their European counterparts, particularly in vitality.

"In England there's always been a respect for craft. There's been a rich tradition of developing and combining art and craft rather than it being compartmentalised. Craft is not looked down upon. And now, in the 80s, it's

really being recognised as people diversify too. Combining skilled work with an artistic sensibility has proved to be a going concern. And the drive is not confined to the young. There are so many people in Britain that influences come from all age groups.

"I've been surprised about how much we've gone ahead since I've been away from home. Surprised and delighted. There's a growing richness and quality. Trying as I'm trying to do to make my livelihood, and I'm determined to do that, you have to make a lot of sacrifices.

I've been fortunate to get on a self-employment scheme from the Labour Department for people like myself who're trying to set up a business. That's tricky because I haven't got business skills, although I am learning. But this subsidy scheme provides a basic income for 6 months while I'm setting myself up. And I hope that by then I'll be set up. However, I'm looking for part-time work because I have to, but I'd like to minimise how much part-time work I have to do."

Ingrid Dubbelt's dream is on the point of realisation, thanks to her talent and design skills, her determination and her hard work. And her ability and belief in herself to be able to change her whole path in life from an academic career to a skilled creative craft.

It would be good if she can begin to get those orders coming in.

Such a waste of talent if she has to take a part-time job to subsidise what she's good at doing. After the hard work, she needs a little bit of luck! □

## PROFILE

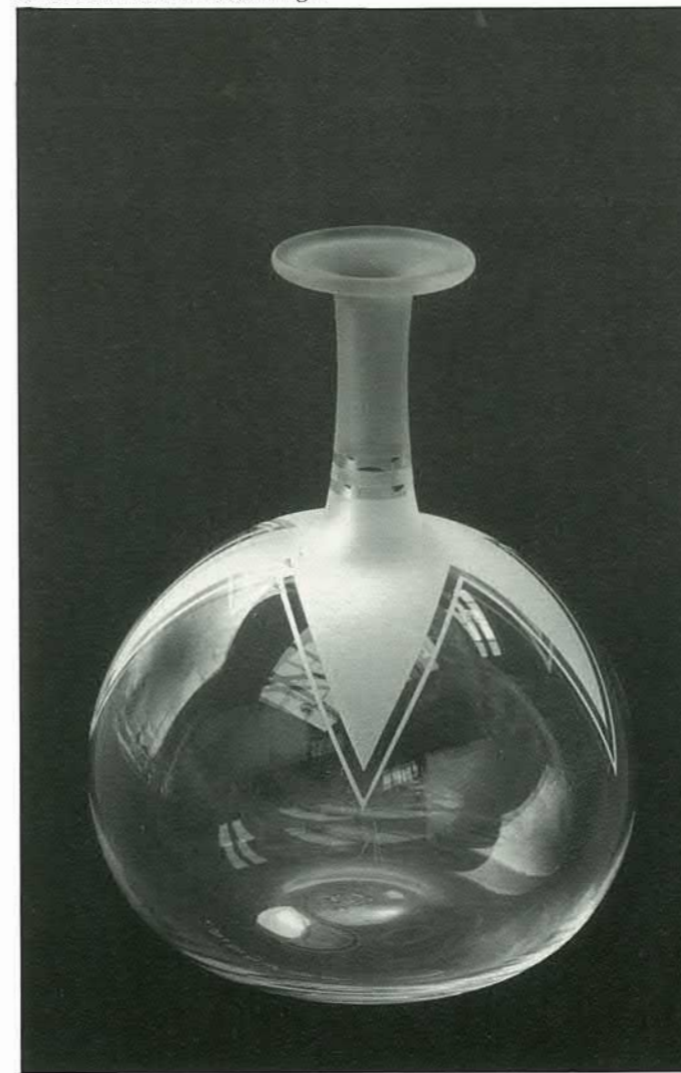
### Jack Laird profiles glassworkers Marie and Ola Hoglund.

Marie and Ola Hoglund in their studio.



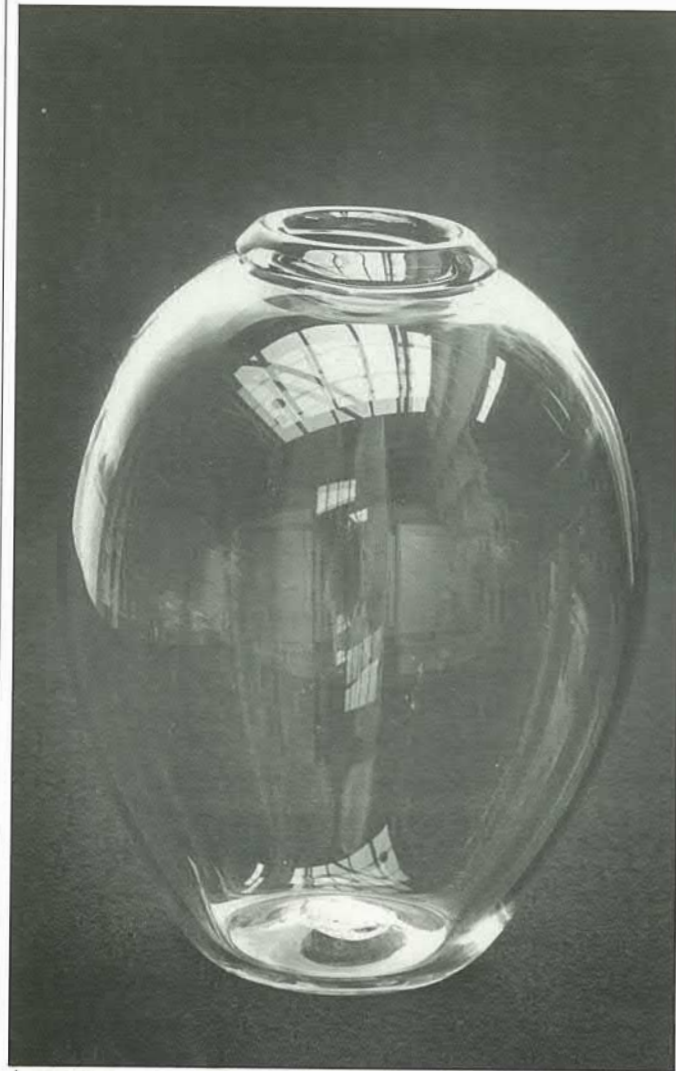
## Scandinavian Skills in Nelson

Sandblasted Decanter 290mm high.



It is very possible that the idea for the establishment of The Craft Habitat started with the Hoglunds. Paul Laird met Ola and Marie while he was on holiday on the West Coast, and while discussing crafts with them hit on the idea that room could be found for them to found a glass studio alongside Waimea Pottery. At the time, Peggy and I were thinking about plans for some vacant buildings which adjoined the pottery, and so the Hoglunds were installed and Craft Habitat was founded. Ola and Marie had been declined a QE II grant, but got off the ground with some financial help from Paul and Peggy, plus Ola's outstanding skill and ingenuity in recycling stuff from the heaps of old kiln materials, scrap steel, fans, and all the gear collected during twenty two years of potting by my magpie self. From this, and some Sillimanite slabs from Temuka Pottery Ola and Marie built their equipment with all the flair of a Barry Brickell or a Harry Davis.

While Ola came from a "hot glass" family, both he and Marie were introduced to glass skills at the Orrefors Glass School, where they studied drawing, design, glassblowing techniques and glass technology. From here they went to Kosta Boda, and developed skills and techniques by intense practice under some of the finest glassblowers in the world. While Ola stayed on, Marie who had concentrated on engraving, decided to enlarge her experience at Emmaboda College by a two-year study of Handweaving and Fabric Design. In 1977 they worked at Vastkusthyttans Art Glass Studio. Ola as a designer-glassblower, and Marie as a designer-engraver. From here they were sent by the Swedish International Development Authority to Swaziland, where between 1978-1981 they trained local talent for a new blown-glass project. Then to the West Coast, New Zealand to work at Hokitika where they met Paul.



1 Vase 340mm high.



2 Glass platter with sandblasted decoration. 500mm.

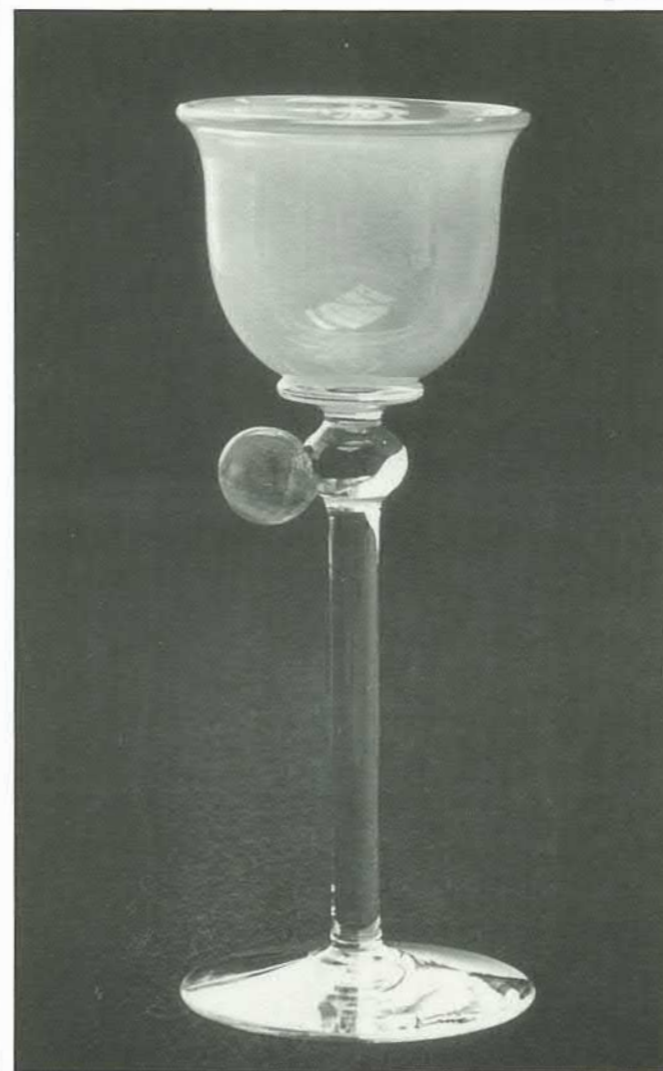


Today they work in the big, airy, studios they have created, with their own gallery alongside, which was set up by Marie in a cool, white, carpeted, top-lighted, room full of fine glass and green plants. Visitors to the gallery watch glass blowing in the open-plan adjoining studio, to the backdrop of mountains across the bay. The right working environment is all-important to them, as is the rhythm of work, from the graceful fluid movements of Ola and Marie leading the melted glass to its frozen form, to the work-rhythm from melt to melt. They make the things they like to make, to give other people pleasure. Their immediate objective is to pay off their financial commitments from the basis of their undoubted proficiency and professionalism, and then they plan spending more time, in a more relaxed way, on creative pieces, than they are able to at the moment. Marie will then spend more time on her glass engraving, and jointly they will evolve to its final form a mural project they have planned. Eventually they will need another furnace for special glass pot mixes.

They see themselves as a team, jointly working on all projects, and developing ideas by responding to each other's suggestions and contributions. Together they are coming to terms with the enormous differences of approach to craft generally, and to glass in particular, they are finding here. In Scandinavia there is a much greater awareness and understanding of the aesthetics of everyday things. Artists-craftsmen-designers to Industry – the roles are frequently incorporated in one person who moves unselfconsciously from one to the other, finding strength from their interaction. A matching set of fine goblets is held in equal regard and is subject to the same evaluative process as a one-off piece. The "I am an artist, you are a craftsman, he is a tradesman" attitude, found here has puzzled them because it is outside their experience and seems irrelevant, and recalls vestiges of English class-system attitudes from which it probably stems. They have found here a lack of knowledge of the Scandinavian craft scene which surprises them, and a lack of understanding of the feeling for an unbroken tradition rather than a recent revival.

Scandinavian crafts were not submerged by the northern industrial revolution which was a much more gradual process than in Britain, and when a threat to traditional crafts became apparent, it was met by a positive response. The crafts early on became organised, skills and traditions conserved, and public awareness cultivated. More profoundly, industry was not regarded with Luddite loathing. Instead a *modus vivendi* grew up in which industry and craft co-existed to the mutual benefit of both.

1 Goblet – 250mm high.  
2 Bottles – 350 and 270mm high.  
3 Bottles – 350mm and various lights.



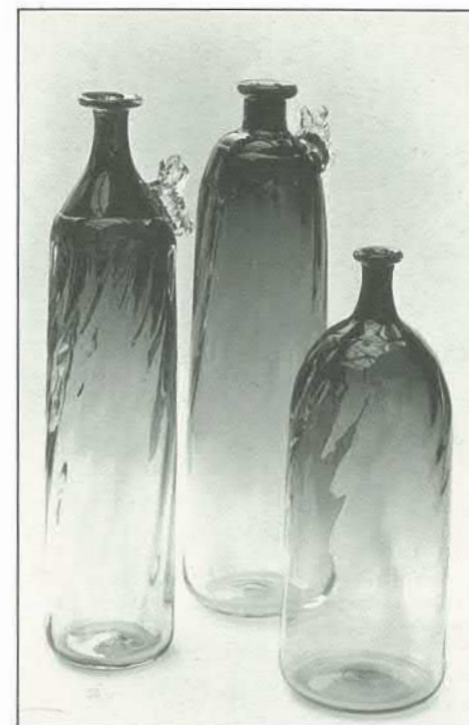
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Because of the high Northern latitudes of these countries, and the hostile winter climate, much time is spent in homes. Consequently a great deal of attention has been given over the centuries to architecture, and the overall development of home environments, that not only offer comfortable and agreeable havens but excitement and stimulus as well. Hence the concern and care spent on the design and development of the forms of even the most humble of everyday things. This preoccupation with traditional creativity within an industrial context has led to the pre-eminence of Scandinavian design, not only in craft-based industries but also in architecture and engineering. Throughout, the Norse traditions of democratic processes have ensured a high priority for human and social values in all these things.

Ola and Marie are nurtured in this environment, and steeped in this tradition. Glass has been blown in Sweden for four hundred years, and whole communities grew up based on small workshops. The more recent advent of large-scale industry has added variety and productivity, without diminishing the vigour of the craft.

The scene in New Zealand is totally different, where glass industry was established first, and craft glass is a very recent newcomer. There is a gulf between industry and craft that inhibits communication.

The present New Zealand craft glass scene is



2



3

predominantly the offspring of USA studio glass, which is itself the product of art schools. Unlike pottery, New Zealand glass has not evolved from a basis of everyday things.

Ola and Marie are aware of the general lack of understanding of what they are now bringing to New Zealand, but they come of tough and determined Viking ancestors who made great migrations in their long-boats, even possibly to the Pacific, as long as 1300 years ago. They have no doubts about the strength and validity of the cultural tradition they spring from, and regard their present problems with acceptance as springing from the newness and immaturity of the New Zealand glass scene; a self-regulating condition which will be remedied when growth and time will lead to the development of a broader vision. They look forward to playing their part by teaching apprentices in their studios and engaging in an on-going dialogue with other emerging glass workers.

Quite naturally they miss the great forests of Sweden, but find consolation in the bush, particularly of the West Coast. They are enthusiastic skiers, and love the Nelson National Parks. This environment speaks to them, and they are learning to respond to its language. It begins to influence their creative work, and they are confidently making their very real contribution to our emerging multi-cultural society. □

The selection for the first Index of N.Z. Craftworkers is over, amid predictable controversy. Lani Morris backgrounds the reasons for an index and explains the process of selection.

## Index of New Zealand Craftworkers

*The first selection for the Craft Council's Selective Index has been made, the names announced, and letters received, the feelings and ideas felt and expressed. Now I want to write an article about it all.*

*I want to set it back in its historical perspective, so that we can all look at it in the broadest possible context and I want to report on the first selection from the point of view of the adjudicating panellists. In doing both I hope to comment on criticisms of the Index.*

*So let's begin at the beginning:*

### The Reasons:

One of the Craft Council's functions has always been to supply information about craftspeople... to other craftspeople, visitors, Government Departments, and the public. As part of this service slides and information about members has been formally kept by the Resource Centre since 1977. But in the last ten years there's been a dramatic growth in the numbers of craftspeople and many of these craftspeople have developed in their work, which has meant that the Resource Centre has a huge number of craftspeople and a huge amount of information and slides to select from. At the same time, as the Crafts Council has become better known and bigger, the number of inquiries has increased. So, in order to do its work most effectively the Resource Centre must select from the information available to it, and the more fully the existing information is grouped into categories the easier that task becomes.

In sheer practical terms, this is one reason for the Index. One of the categories we need to have pre-packaged is "The Top Craftspeople in New Zealand".

At the same time it was felt by the then Executive that such a selection would help to educate New Zealand craftspeople; that the process of selection would focus people on strengths and weaknesses in their own work and presentation; that a standard of excellence would give us all something to aspire to; that a publication with photographs of NZ's best work would provide us all with a permanent reference and inspiration.

As far as I understand it, it was these two functions that were for us and for the other countries who already had such an Index, the main reasons for setting the whole thing up. Certainly they are the reasons I have heard discussed over the last years while I've been on the Executive. And all this time there has been an accompanying cry of "elitism". As elite means "THE best", and as that is exactly what we want the Index to be, I can see nothing wrong about the Index being elite,

or elitist. What I do detect is an implication that by selecting the best we are creating a group who must consider themselves and be considered as less than best. Surely this is so, but maybe only in this particular context. Other craftspeople would be best in a different category... i.e. the most prolific, the ones who sell the most etc. and those are perfectly valid categories to belong to.

The Index is just another category to decide about. You can decide whether or not it is one you wish to belong to, and if you decide that it is and you feel inadequate or threatened then settle down to learn the skills necessary for acceptance.

I think for many of us our development as craftspeople have been through the boom time in the sixties when we could all earn our living from it, and when we taught ourselves. This lack of artistic training can make us feel vulnerable. Along with many industries at the moment we are having to make clear decisions about our work and our businesses. It's no more comfortable for us to accept inevitable change than it is for farmers or any other group that is rather forcibly being restructured at the moment. So, I think for many of us the Index and many anxieties we feel about it are part of a general uneasiness. And now along with everyone else we have to examine the way we present our work and its appropriateness to the place and function. Entry into nearly all exhibitions these days is by slides. Whether we like it or not we have to learn how to do this well if we want to move forward, both here and overseas. And it's also time to learn how to do something and ASK someone else to teach us.

It's our awareness that we need help that has led the Crafts Council to approach the Council for Maori and Pacific Art and Nga Puna Waihunga to assist us with selection of Maori craft for inclusion the Index, and their response has been that they would like more time to think about it and to see if inclusion is even appropriate to their own view of craft/art/culture. We are all learning and growing. And so is the Index. This has been the first selection and the whole will not become apparent and efficient for some time yet. Finally, if you are still finding it difficult to accept imagine yourself in Finland with a couple of weeks at the most in which to see the most exciting and interesting of craftspeople... and there is no booklet or anyone to help you. And then imagine finding a crafts council with helpful staff who show you an illustrated selection of the top craftspeople from whom you can select the ones you most want to see. Wouldn't you be grateful?

## Ceramics

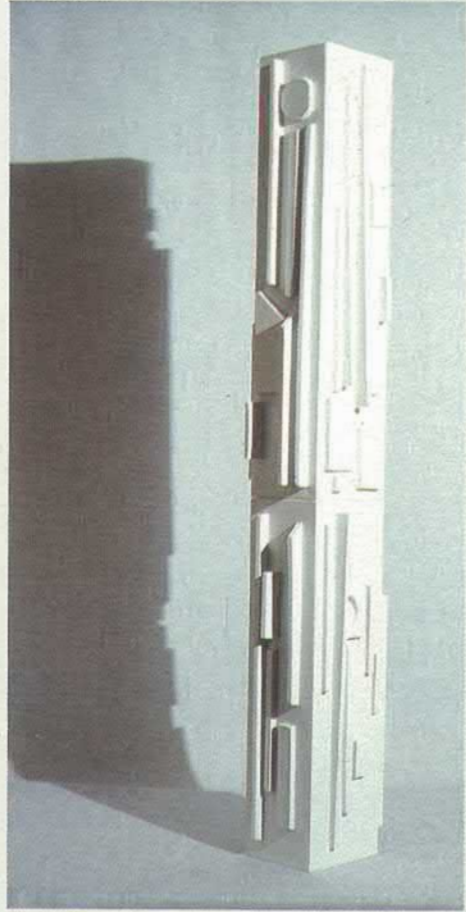
- 1 **Merilyn Wiseman.**  
*Wood Fired Platter – White stoneware Clay.  
Approx. 320mm square.*
- 2 **John Crawford.**  
*Reclining Figure – Ceramic Sculpture  
(T-shaped)  
Approx. 650mm.*
- 3 **Jean Hastedt.**  
*Box: Bamboo trim – Porcelain.  
180mmx60mm.*



- 4 **Jon Benge & Gill Gane.**  
*Jug – Handthrown and Decorated: Porcelain.  
280mm high.*
- 5 **Andrea Barrett.**  
*Two Inlaid Porcelain Rectangular Vases.  
Slab Technique. 280mm high.*

## Ceramics

- 1 **Leo King.**  
*Column 86" s/cast Assembled Ceramic.*  
1200mm high.
- 2 **David Brokenshire.**  
*"Great Wave" Porcelain.*  
250mmx200mmx180mm high.
- 3 **Moyra Elliott.**  
*Terracotta Dish. Slip painted Clay*  
310mmx280mmx60mm high.



1



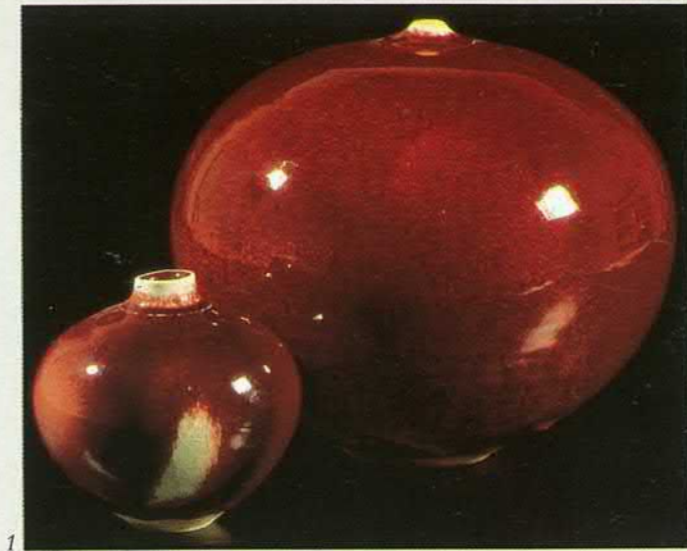
2



3

## Ceramics

- 1 **Campbell Hegan.**  
*Copperglazed Stoneware.*  
320mm highx180mm high.
- 2 **Brian Gartside.**  
*Plate. Multifired Polychromatic Ceramic.*  
450mm.
- 3 **Anne Powell.**  
*Kowhaiwhai carved porcelain.*  
Unglazed. Approx. 120mm high.



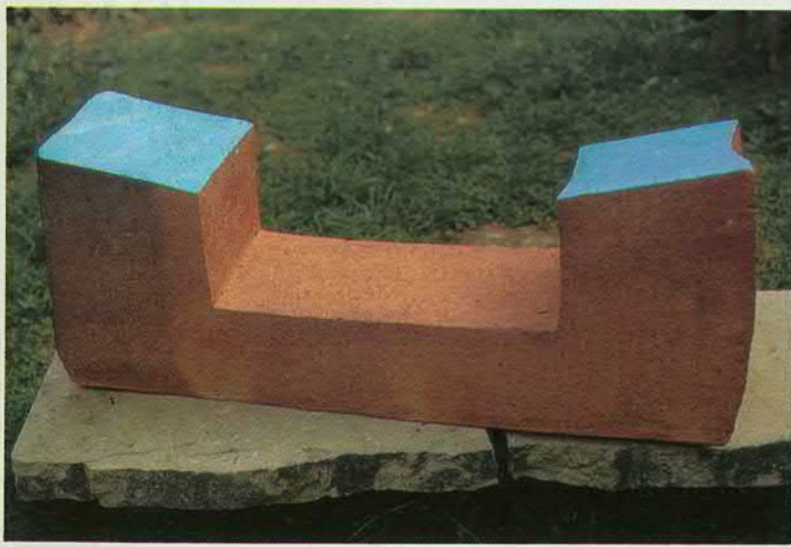
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2



3



- 4 **Jan White.**  
*"Angle Still Form VII" 460mm.*

- 5 **Rick Rudd.**  
*Bottle Form - Raku Fired Clay. 380mm. high.*



5



4

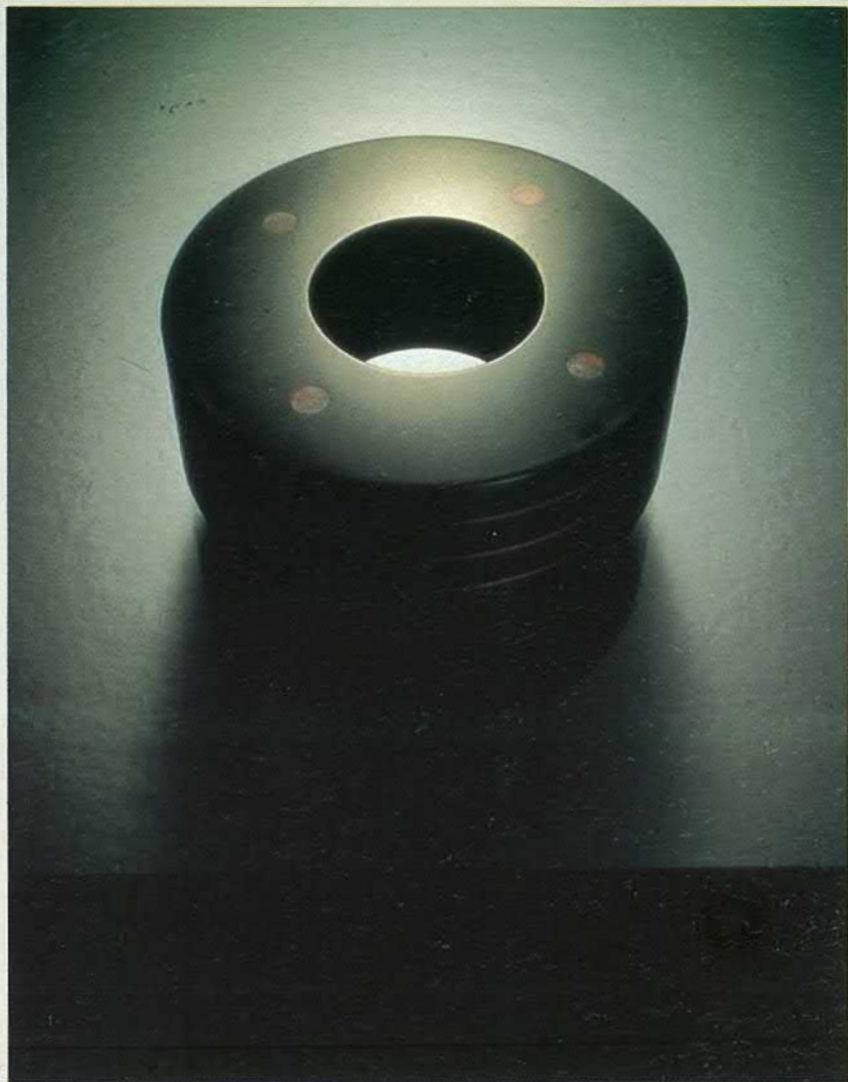
- 4 **Paul D. Johnson.**  
*"Slate Gate 1" Ceramic, Slate, Stainless Steel & Formica. 1000mmx1200mm.*

- 5 **Anneke Borren.**  
*Stoneware. 400mm highx200mm high.*

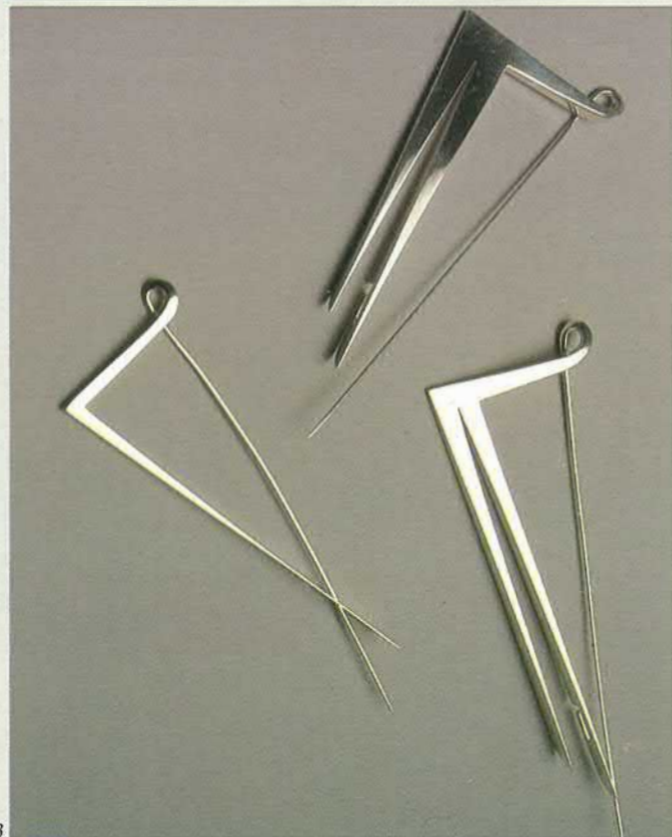
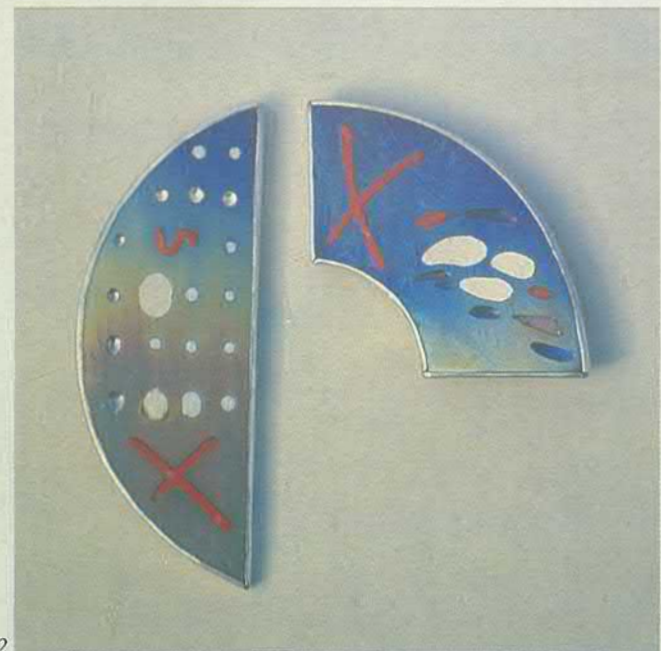


5

**Jewellery**



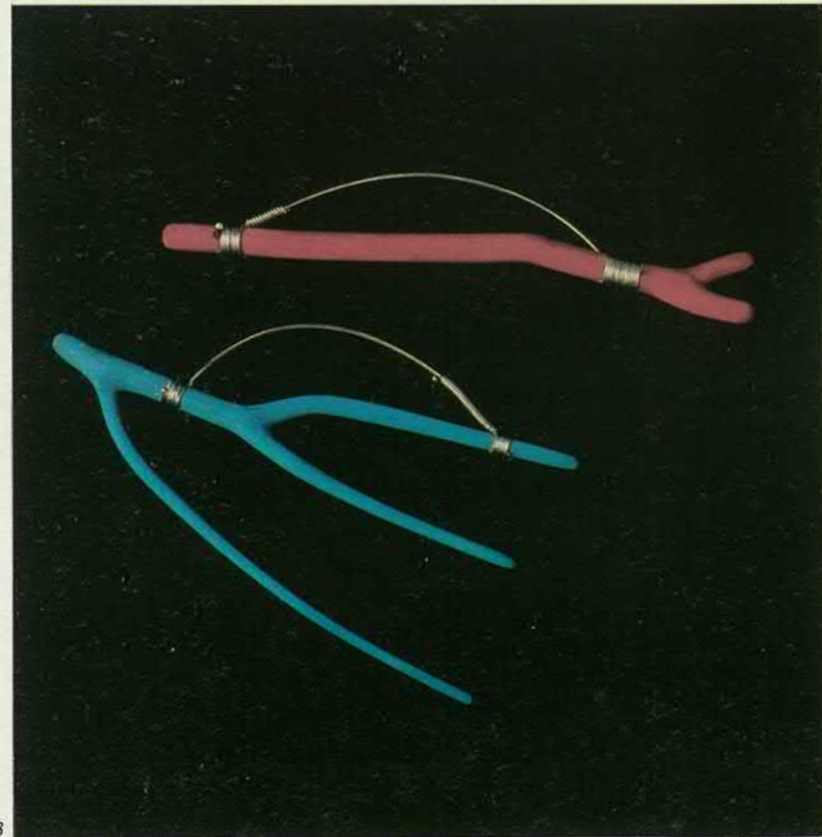
- 1 **John Edgar.**  
*Argillite and Copper Stack.*
- 2 **Eléna Gee.**  
*Two Brooches – Silver, Enamelled and Inlaid Titatimium. 75mm.*
- 3 **Kobi Bosshard.**  
*Silver Brooches.*



**Jewellery**



- 1 **Warwick Freeman.**  
*Flake Necklace  
Flaked Angillite  
Pure Silk Binding  
370x100mm.*
- 2 **Michael Couper.**  
*Bracelet – Forged & Anodised Aluminium, Shark  
Teeth, Ruby & Silver.*
- 3 **Stephen Mulqueen.**  
*Jewellery – Colour Dyed.*
- 4 **Owen Mapp.**  
*Decanter, Beaker & Box. Cowbone.  
170 mm, 70 mm, 280 mm.*

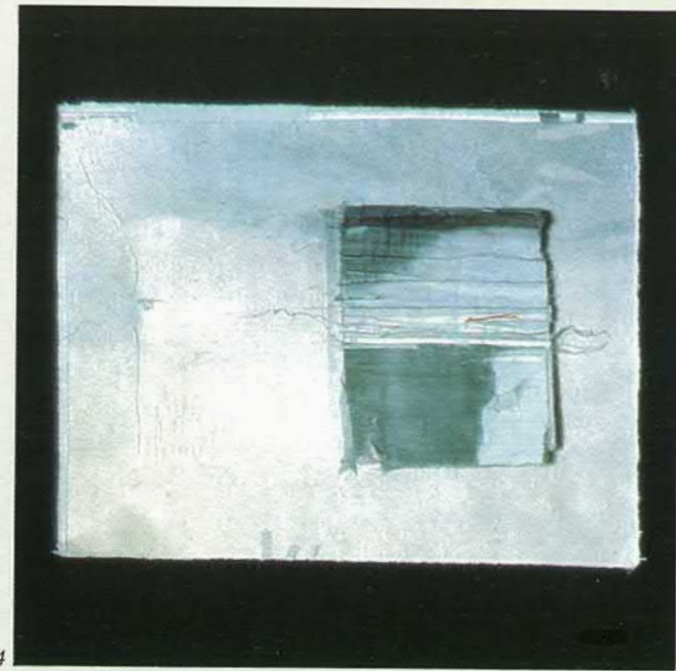
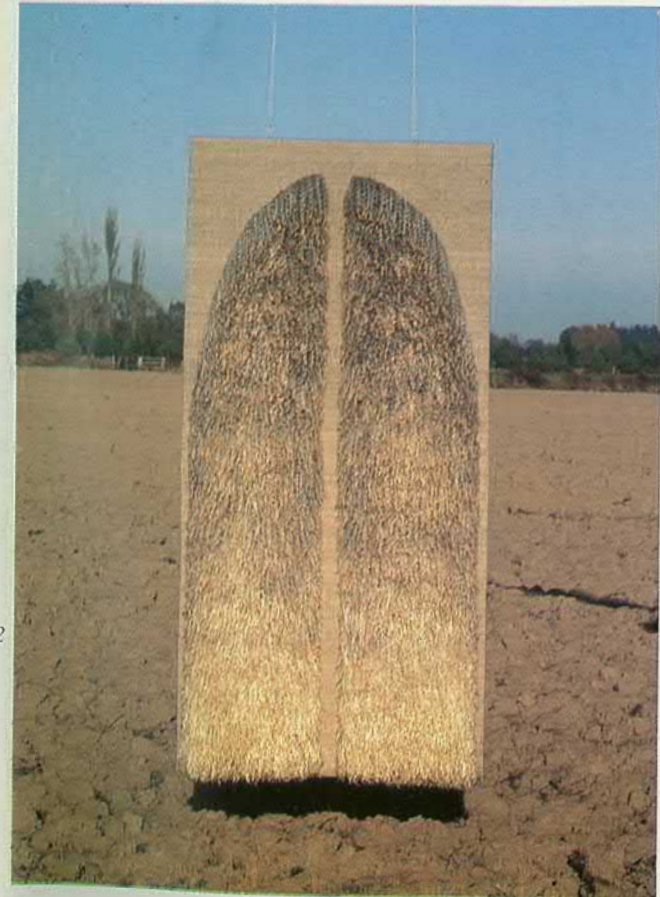


## Textiles

1 **Malcolm Harrison.**  
Quilt - "Lady Hawarden's Room" - No. 1



2 **Judy Wilson.**  
"Grey Fleece" (Series II) 1984.



3 **Margaret Stove.**  
"Rata Blossom" - Shawl. Hand Knitted.  
1100mm Diameter.

4 **Suzy Pennington.**  
"Another Time, Another Place" Stitched  
Canvas. 410mmx510mm.

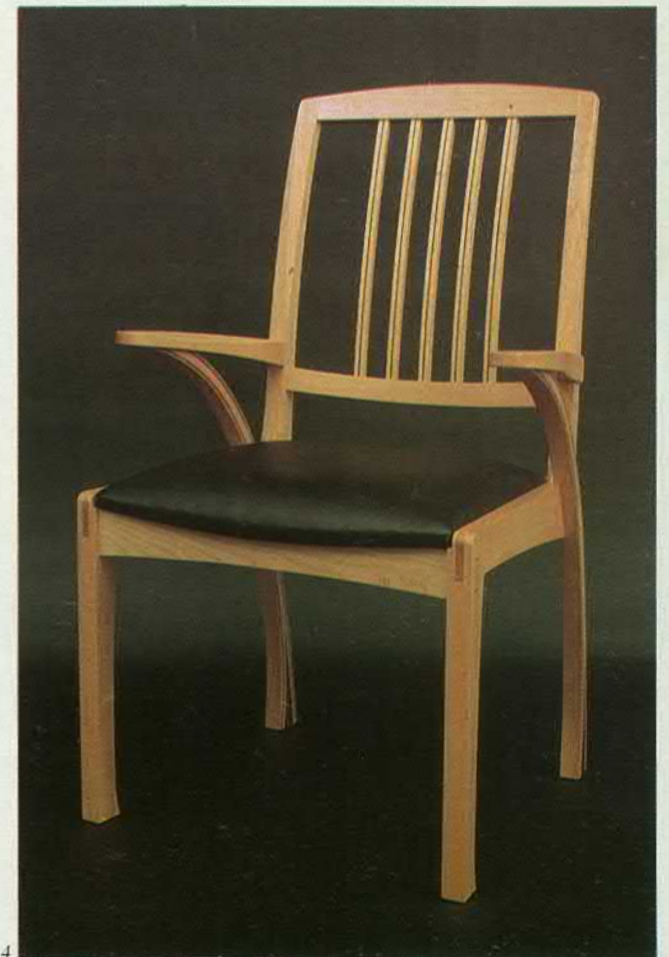
## Wood

1 **Rick Swain.**  
NZTIF. 1986 Awards. Kauri  
7 @ 200mm high 1 @ 350mm high.

2 **Colin Slade.**  
Side Chair. Walnut. Needlepoint Upholstery  
430mmx430mmx900mm (Approx.)

3 **John Shaw.**  
Oak & Seagrass Chair  
(to a design by Vidar Malmsten)  
520mmx500mmx800mm.

4 **Vic Matthews.**  
Carver Chair in Tawa and Walnut with Brown  
Hide Seat.



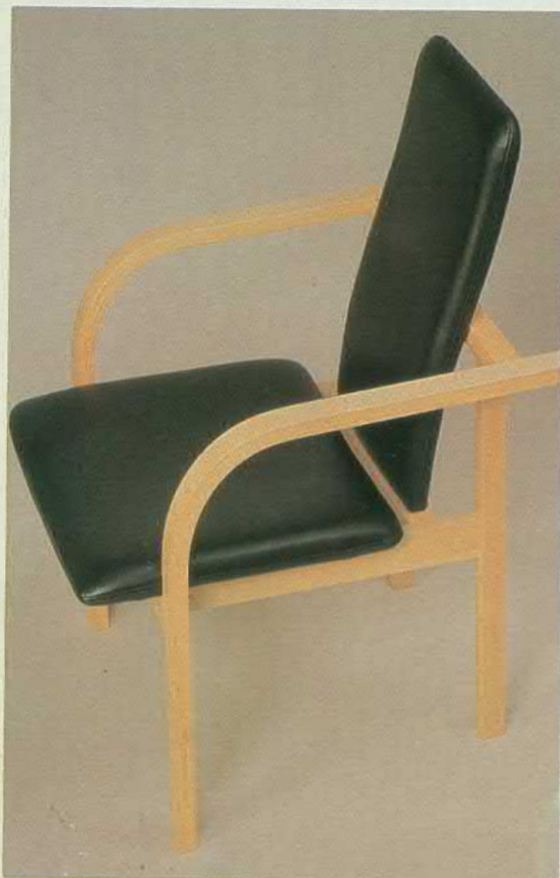
## Wood Glass

### 5 Humphrey Ikin.

Upright Chair - Laminated Tawa, Leather Upholstery. 960mm high.

### 6 Marc Zuckerman.

Dining or Desk Chair - Heart Rimu.



### 1 Ann Robinson.

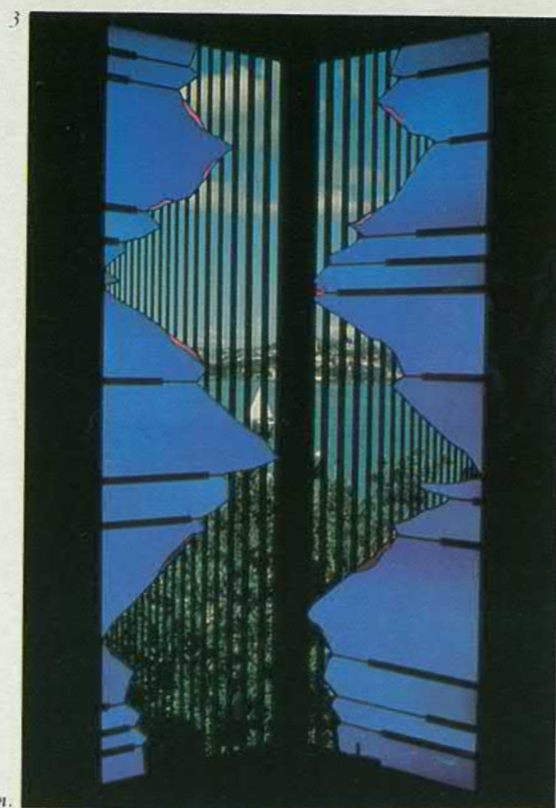
Pate de Vere Bowl.

### 2 John Croucher.

Glass Bowl.

### 3 James Walker.

Stained glass  
"Blue Zig Zag" 1982  
Private Auckland  
residence. 1510x960mm.



## CRAFT INDEX SELECTION

### The Process:

And now the bit you've really been waiting for. What did the panellists think? The first point is that this is the first time we've done it. There was a need for the panels to meet and really agree on the task in hand. In one case one of the panellists found this a little rushed and felt uneasy about the results. In another case a panellist found that it was necessary to change an original perception of the leading craftspeople to THE BEST but was quite happy with this. In the rest of the cases it was quite clear to the panels that they were looking for excellence. And what is also quite clear reading through their reports is that when they saw it they recognised it immediately and unanimously.

The way they described excellence in this context was "a high degree of originality in the work... not a copy-book design"... A quality of "timelessness", "verve", "a unified vision expressing original concepts in a very personal style, resulting in a body of work that has a spirit of its own." "Work which showed complete confidence and clarity of design. Sensitivity and mastery in the use of the chosen materials. Suitability of materials. Consistently high standard. Development of ideas". "Soul, content, evidence of a creator."

On this point it was felt by the panels that there had not been enough information about the need for excellence and the *type* of excellence required and that this was misleading. The Executive hears this and hopes that this article and a changed application form will make the criteria much clearer.

The second main Criticism was PRESENTATION: One person estimated that about thirty percent of the submissions were rejected because of poor presentation. In some cases this led to panellists having the problem of a piece of work and admired by them being so poorly presented in the slide that they were unable to accept the artist for inclusion. Another problem was ten slides covering only three or four pieces of work. In cases where more than one slide is needed to fully show a work then more than ten slides can be submitted. This will also be spelled out on future application forms. Where ten slides were presented in many cases the work was not of a uniform standard which led panellists to feel that the craftspeople were not selective or knowledgeable themselves about criteria for excellence.

Some panellists were a little uncomfortable with the use of slides for selection. "I found that I was looking for exceptionally good craftspeople who were able to prove this fact to me by the content and quality of their slide presentation. I felt the onus was not so much on me to select but on the applicant to provide sufficient proof so as to make acceptance inevitable". Others felt that some crafts are more successfully presented by slide than other

crafts. However, commenting overall on the use of photography as a means for judging, one panellist said "Despite its many inadequacies, photography in this context remains one of the most appropriate, practical convenient and exciting communication mediums". To which I would add that not becoming skilled in using it as a means to communicate about your work closes many doors to you here and overseas.

It was felt by one panellist that the importance of the quality of the slides was not emphasised enough in the application form and that as it was so important maybe in the future it should be stated that applicants should NOT take their own photos unless they are up to a fully professional standard... or that every application form should include a reprint of the Crafts magazine article on photographing your own work. If you still want to photograph your own work the most important factors to remember are "an ability of the photograph to portray the most significant characteristics of a piece of work... to reinforce the work effectively within the proportions of the viewing frames... selecting a lighting quality to enhance the content of the work... selection and quality of the exposure, speed, focus, film type etc..."

Finally it is an overall and complete professionalism that is the basic requirement for selection for the Index. This is reinforced by one panellist. "Every aspect of a mastercraftsperson's presentation should convey a high degree of professionalism. The ability to present with sensitivity, authority, competence and individualism not only in the work itself, but in any supportive aspect such as C.V.s slide selection, notations, and explanations has a distinct influence on the viewers/assessors perception of the craftspeople. *It should be noted that any piece of work is never seen in total isolation.* There are always ambient factors which consciously or unconsciously influence the viewers appreciation. The creators should therefore acknowledge these influences and either predict or orchestrate them to best complement their work." To which I would add, why stop making your artistic statement with just the piece when you can make everything connected with it a work of art. And that those factors you consider when making a work of art can be just as important in the things that surround it.

Finally it was also noted that this was just the beginning. It will take time for the Index to become properly established. Many top craftspeople did not apply. Many panellists did not apply. Even those that did found they learnt a lot. One commented that their own presentation wasn't up to the highest professional standard after he compared it with the best. So, we are all learning, and this is just what the Index is supposed to lead to. Good luck!

Two important overseas exhibitions are currently touring New Zealand. We preview one and review the other.

# International Jewellery on Tour

## American Jewellery Now

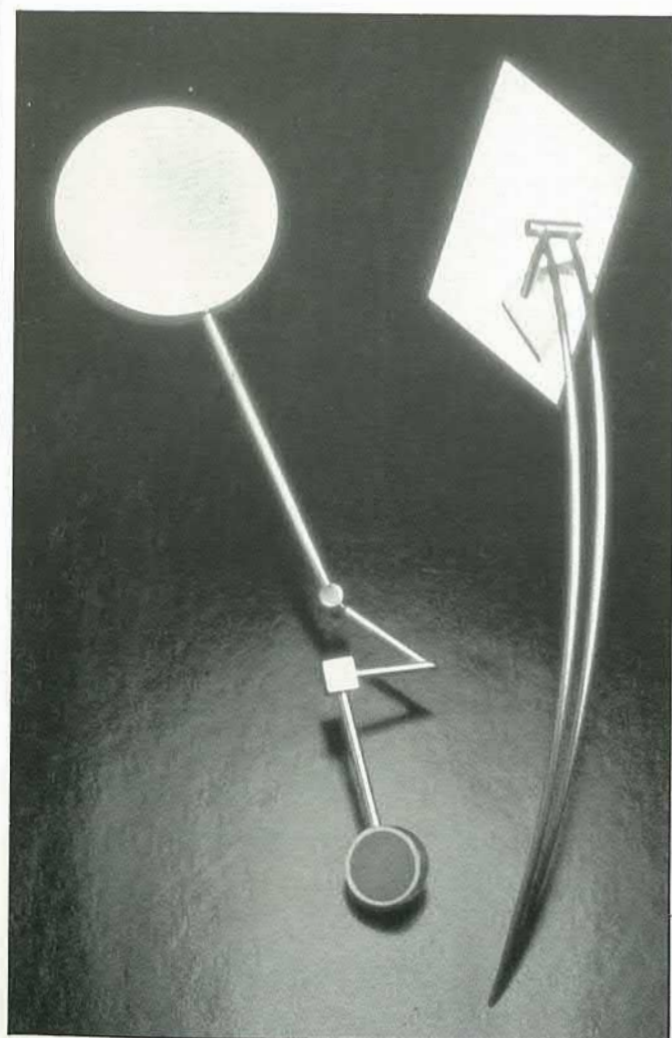
**Arline Fisch. American Jeweller backgrounds this collection from a historical perspective and analyses contemporary developments.**

**AMERICAN JEWELLERY NOW** is a celebration of the richness and diversity of American jewellery in the 1980s. The works range from elegant to outrageous, from simple to complex, from small rings to large collars. They represent diverse attitudes and approaches to the concept and function of jewellery, a multiplicity of style that characterizes the contemporary mood in America. If there is any single, unifying element, it is a spirit of adventure, a willingness to experiment with materials and to explore new forms.

The American jeweller inherits a European tradition, but the "melting pot society" interferes with a strict linear progression of style. Instead, a great mixture of styles has arisen as the result of the ethnic diversity and cultural multiplicity of American society. There are certainly historic antecedents for much of the work being done today, but the connections may be as easily to the tribal ornaments of Africa or the peasant costume jewellery of Finland as to classical Greek and Roman goldwork or European fashion. The artist draws freely from a vast array of sources and information, without the restriction of any single tradition of form or attitude.

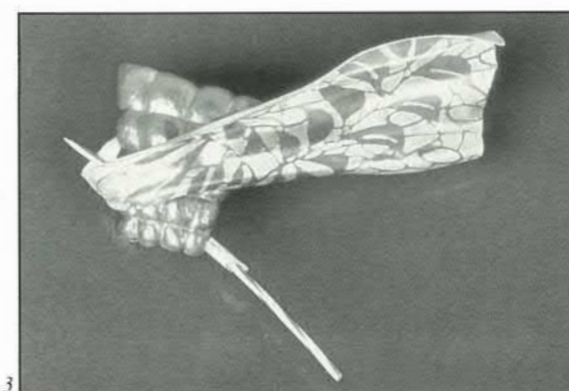
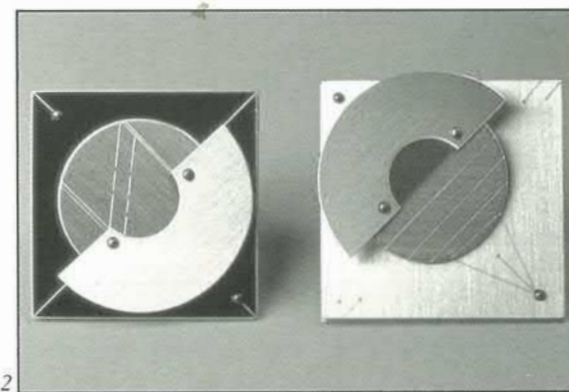
The traditional concept of jewellery as "portable wealth" is not a factor in the development of contemporary American jewellery, nor is the notion that jewellery is only for the wealthy a consideration. Rather, the pieces are seen as a means of expressing personal identity both for the maker and the wearer. For the maker, idea and form have primary importance; the choice becomes aesthetic instead of a matter of cost or market factors. For the wearer, jewellery is a means of achieving status in a society that values individuality; again, choices reflect personality and attitude, and are rarely affected by economic concerns.

The reduced emphasis upon jewellery as a display of wealth has made it possible for jewellers to use nonprecious metals in fashioning serious and precious objects. Initially, such materials – glass, bone, wood, ceramic, found artifacts – were incorporated into works of precious metal. This was followed by the introduction of other metals that are not intrinsically valuable. Copper, brass, iron, steel, titanium, aluminium were used alone or in combination with silver and gold because of their



**Billie Jean Theide, Kite Brooch #3 Mixed Media 5"x1"x1/4".**

**Kite Brooch #4. Mixed Media 4 1/2"x1 1/4"x1/2".**

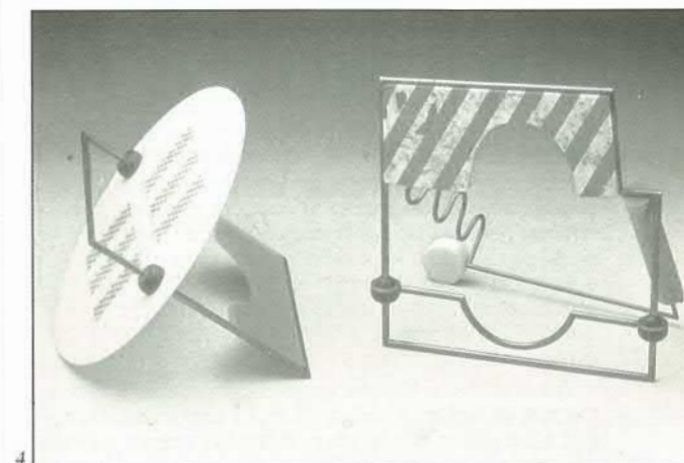


**1 Gerhard Herbst, Collar and Bracelet. Mixed Media. Collar: 5 1/2"x4 1/4"x1 1/4" Bracelet: 2 1/4" diam. x 2 1/2".**

**2 David La Plantz, Brooch #2 - Mixed Media. 1 1/4"x1 1/4"x1/4".**

**Brooch #5 Mixed Media 1 1/2"x1 1/2"x1/4"**  
**3 Kate Wagle, Cushie Brooch. Mixed Media. 3"x3 1/2"x1/2".**

**4 Leslie Leupp, Solified Rality Bracelet - Mixed Media. 3 1/2"x4"x1 1/4".**  
**Bracelet - Mixed Media. 3"x3 1/2"x4".**



special qualities of colour, surface, or strength. Eventually, traditional materials could be totally abandoned in making precious objects. The form and idea are of primary importance for the artist; the object achieves its value through its own inherent powers of communication. All of these variations and combinations exist simultaneously at the current time, and all are represented in this collection.

The field of jewellery as it has evolved in the United States over the past four decades contains several unique aspects that have influenced general attitudes. The first is the relationship of jewellery and metalwork to the general craft movement. In the forties and fifties there were only a small number of "modern" jewellers, many of whom tended to be rather conservative in form and choice of material, remaining committed to the elegant refinements and simple forms of the international style so closely associated with Scandinavian design. Surface embellishments were rare, the addition of gemstones or other materials scarcely apparent. The focus was on purity of material and simplicity of form relative to the intended function. There were a few brave spirits who pursued more personal and idiosyncratic designs, but it was not really until the early 1960s that jewellers began to expand their interests and vocabulary. For some reason, jewellery and metal lagged behind clay, glass, and fiber in developing contemporary modes of expression.

In the 1960s a wide range of unique and personal approaches developed very quickly as artists recognized the scope of content, style, form, and material available to them within the domain of personal adornment. Some aspects were baroque in attitude, a distinct break with the international style; others were even excessive as jewellers explored the many new materials and processes open to them. During the seventies there was a growth in sophistication and refinement, a greater interest in personal statement and imagery. The work was still self-indulgent, exotic, motivated by interests in unusual or shocking effects and breathtaking technical virtuosity.

A more deliberate and introspective approach seems to be apparent in the 1980s. There is evidence of a greater refinements of form and clarity of idea, but certainly no lessening of the exuberance and the individuality that prompts artists to make jewellery objects.

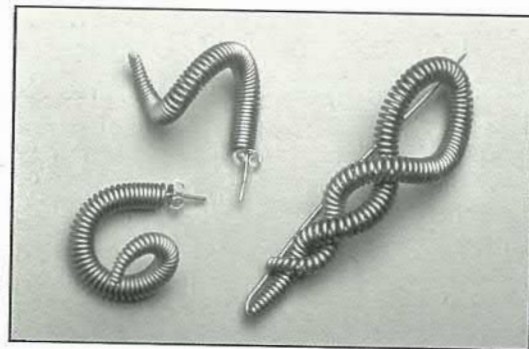
Another important aspect of American jewellery is its connection with the academic world. Metals programs in college and university art departments have been a significant influence on the development of contemporary jewellery. Artists in



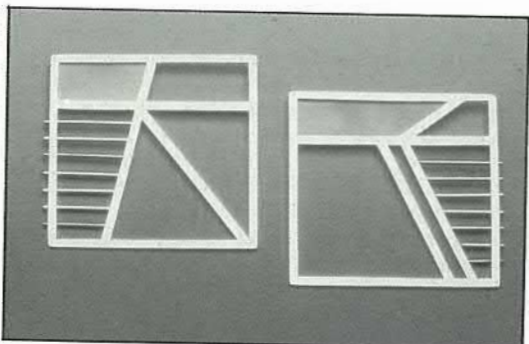
all fields receive their education together within the intellectual environment of the university, rather than in separate schools of design or in vocational training programs. This liberal arts education develops aesthetically literate artists, who are well aware of the historical, philosophical, social, and psychological bases of artistic expression. A greater awareness of style and content results from the intermixing and overlapping of art forms and materials; a thoughtful development of concept evolves as a natural product of academic discipline. But perhaps the most significant advantage of this education is that the artist learns to be both articulate and self-critical, to understand the continuum of artistic expression, and to know the difficult demands placed upon creative production.

An additional benefit of academic training is the pursuit of technical research and experimentation. For a period of thirty years there has been a serious commitment to the investigation of materials and processes, both old and new, which could expand the vocabulary and the technical possibilities of the jeweller. The ancient technique of granulation was studied through literature, technical treatises, and workbench experimentation to achieve mastery using modern chemical equivalents and procedures. Similarly, the equally ancient lost-wax method of casting was examined to arrive at practical procedures for individual expression. More recently, there has been a great interest in traditional Japanese and metalworking techniques such as mokumé-gané and chisel inlay, which have been studied and practiced with favourable results. Modern industrial technologies are still being explored for their adaptability to studio practice. All of this investigation has expanded the technical skill and vocabulary of the artist. More important, it has made possible a new language of form and colour, which has greatly extended the artist's expressive capability.

There are many examples of this extended "language" in *American Jewellery Now*. Some of the more extraordinary works on view are Leslie Leupp's work where she uses colour to make strong graphic patterns on simple shapes, while Dean Smith's work boldly displays the full saturation of the colour range as its primary focus. Ivy Ross, on the other hand, modulates the intense



1 **Dean A. Smith, Pin and Earrings.**  
Anodized Niobium Pin: 2 3/4" x 1" x 3/4"  
Earrings: 2" x 1" x 1 1/4".



2 **David Tisdale,**  
Brooches - Mixed Media.  
2 1/2" x 2 1/2" x 1/8", each.

Arline M. Fisch, a jeweller, is President of the Society of North American Goldsmiths and Professor of Art at San Diego State University. This essay has been reprinted courtesy of Arline Fisch, the American Crafts Council. The exhibition *American Jewellery now* is travelling under USIA and Continental Airlines sponsorship. A slide set of this exhibition is available from the Resource Centre, Crafts Council of N.Z.

colour through texture and overlapping planes to develop a tapestry-like richness.

Pattern as surface embellishment is another visual characteristic evident in a number of pieces in this collection, explored both for its graphic and its textural possibilities. Such embellishments can be seen in the subtle mixed surfaces of Billie Jean Theide and Gayle Saunders, who solder different metals together in specific pattern configurations. It is also important in the spray-etched surfaces used by Linda Threadgril and Kate Wagle, where very strong, precise, and regular repeat patterns predominate.

Another factor affecting the jewellery of the eighties is a growing interest in the commercial viability of limited and one-of-a-kind serial production. This is a relatively recent development as more graduates of university-based jewellery and metalsmithing programs enter the field full time. The work continues to be strongly individual in character rather than product-designed to serve a mass audience. Its intention is, rather, to establish a personal connection between the maker and the wearer, to share the adventure and the visual excitement of form and material. David Tisdale's bracelets in silver and aluminium and Gary Herbst's necklaces in anodized aluminium are limited or serial production pieces which are lively, colourful, and easy to wear, but which demand a certain amount of commitment and confidence on the part of the wearer. The subtlety of form, colour, and surface reflects the spirit and eye of the maker and provides a strong, direct focus for communication. It is not work for the timid or shy. David La Plantz has chosen an industrial material - colour-coated aluminium - for his continuous graphic dialogue in the form of brooches, no two alike, which convey the spontaneity of the artist's drawn gesture.

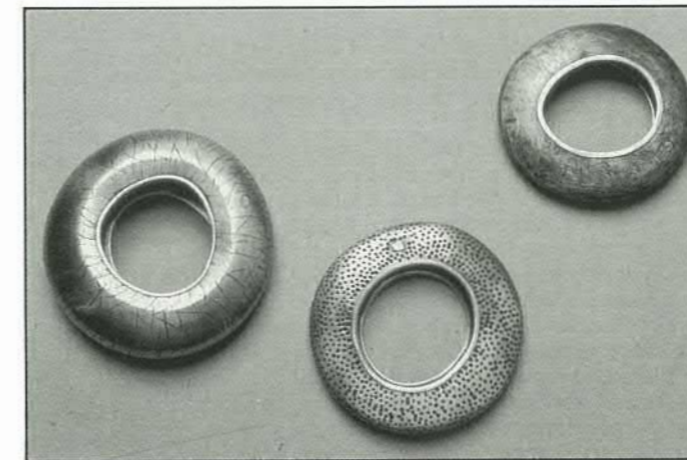
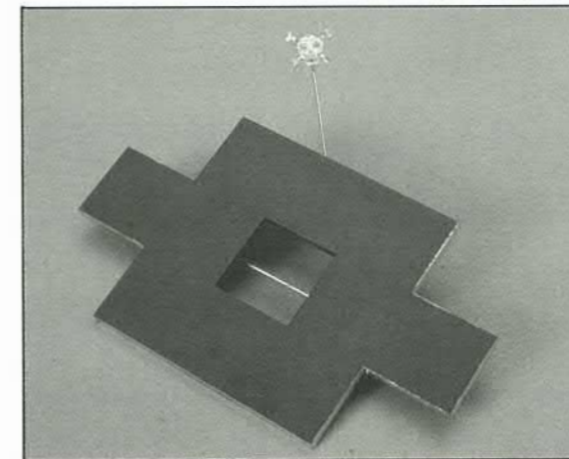
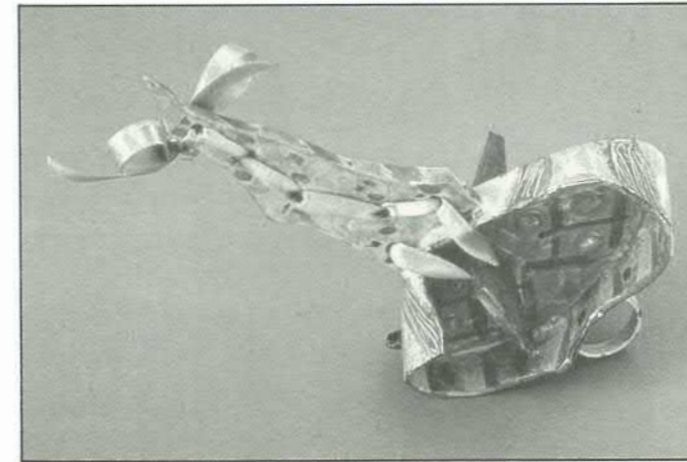
Jewellery is part of the ritual of life: it provides the wearer with identity, style, character, and status. The American lifestyle is so incredibly diverse - ranging from the casual to the formal, from the crude to the elegant, the playful to the serious - that this entire spectrum affords occasion for the wearing of jewellery. American jewellers have enormous scope in this diversity to seek ways of meeting contemporary human needs in visual terms. The artist may be focusing on significant meaning, idea, form, but the resultant jewellery is a means by which the wearer indicates individuality, expresses a spirit, identifies interests and attitude. American jewellers respond intuitively to these needs, attempting to reach beyond the manipulation of materials and visual elements to a more universal level. The artist's concern is also with the establishment of communication between artist and wearer, between wearer and society. American jewellers, those in this collection as well as many others, are meeting this challenge with joyful exuberance. □

## INTERNATIONAL JEWELLERY ON TOUR

# Crosscurrents

Warwick Freeman reviews this contemporary jewellery from Australia, Britain, Holland and Germany

1 **Angus Suttie - Britain.**  
'The Mans Ring', 1984; with purple ribbon.  
180x100x120mm.



2 **Gabriele Dziuba - Germany**  
Brooch 1984; Wood, matt black, gold-leaf.  
80x140x4mm.

3 **Christopher Robertson - Australia**  
Bracelet, 1984; oxidised steel, 925 silver, fine gold.  
120x18mm.  
Bracelet, 1984; oxidised steel, 925 silver, fine gold.  
110x20mm.  
Bracelet, 1984; oxidised steel, 925 silver, fine gold, niello. 125x32mm.

This exhibition was put together on an Australian initiative in 1984 and marks their entry to the international group that have been at the forefront of contemporary jewellery development over the past decade and a half.

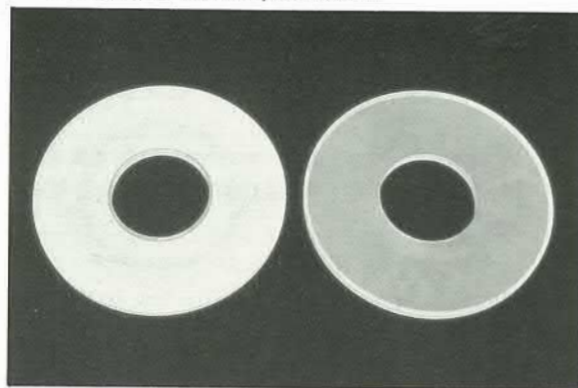
The work was chosen by individual selectors in each of the participating countries and represents work being done by those on the questioning edge of the art. The people working on this edge are examining issues such as jewellery's relationship to the body, its wearability and its social and economic implications. They certainly don't represent the mainstream craft jewellery movement which by all accounts looks askew at the activities of what they have termed "the paper and plastic-smiths" this being a reference to the prominence of non-precious materials in the new jewellery.

Currently on tour in New Zealand, Crosscurrents opened at the Auckland Museum in the same exhibition space and within days of the New Zealand Contemporary Jewellery Exhibition closing (see N.Z. Crafts no. 19), so it was an easy opportunity to make comparisons between developments here and in the countries showing in Crosscurrents.

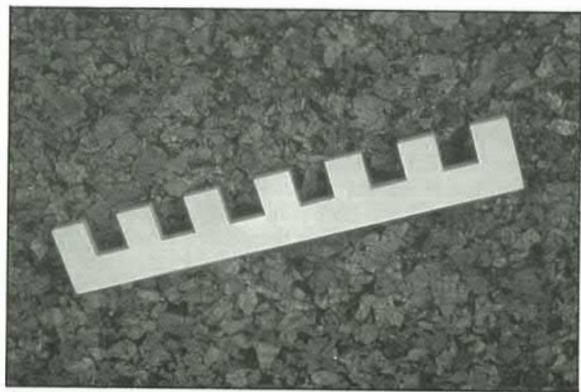
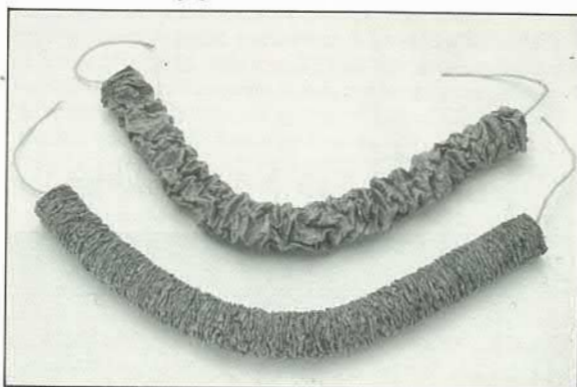
What differences are apparent? Plenty. Despite being familiar through books and catalogues with the international developments that Crosscurrents represents, I found the vast difference between the two exhibitions startling. Why this difference? The most obvious reason would be education, or to be precise, our lack of it. We have no tertiary level jewellery education of anywhere near the level of the countries participating in Crosscurrents. A check of the Crosscurrents Catalogue shows that all of the artists have had tertiary art training. In fact for various reasons the entire German contribution are the ex-students of one class of one school.

It is in this academic environment that the emphasis on concepts that is so apparent in this exhibition is taught. Not that there isn't a strong, conceptual element in some New Zealand work; it's the apparently ruthless adherence to its in Crosscurrents that makes it different and therefore a more exciting exhibition to view than New Zealand contemporary jewellery. Many may find the adherence to concept too severe and doubt the validity of much of the work as jewellery, but I believe much of the work here would improve enormously with even a partial infusion of such ruthlessness. Because of the lack of education and as a consequence our slow development, we have tended to make a virtue out of such things as survival (no mean feat) and technique (nothing wrong with that). But it does seem to have been at the expense of design values. And I don't mean the hardnose values associated with design such as practicality or indestructibility. These are well ingrained here. I mean design in the sense that the work prompts us to question on emotional and intellectual levels what we believe, what we think we believe. I found work in Crosscurrents that gave me that opportunity.

1 Willem Honing - Holland.  
Two bracelets, 1981; acrylic, 200mm.



2 Willem Honing - Holland  
Necklaces 1984; paper. 50x500mm.



3 Gabriele Dziuba - Germany  
Brooch, 1982, 25x150x4mm.  
4 Angus Suttie - Britain  
Ring, 1984, 160x170x20mm.

The German contribution is notable for its cohesiveness. But then as I mentioned it's all from one source. As Otto Kunzli says in his catalogue essay "Soldered Bridges" - "At the Art Gallery in Munich there was no one clear direction. Hermann Junger knew that he would never be able to get us all to beat the same rhythm". Maybe not the same rhythm, but under Junger they beat it with similar intensity. Although, in Kunzli's case the catalogue essay is probably his best contribution to Crosscurrents. His photographic essay of picture frames being worn disappoint. I've long admired the wit of Kunzli's work but the risk is always that the joke may finally run out, as he says in the essay "Jewellery has Consequences".

Gabi Dziuba takes a different sort of risk with her varnished wooden brooches. They're exacting, austere, seemingly emotionless pieces. But then you notice the tiny skull pin displayed with them and you read the accompanying catalogue statement, "I remember love, incredible love - suicide". Read together the various elements tell a story of obsession.

Daniel Kruger's rings with their references to monumental architecture have an ironic side. The architectural motifs reduced in scale gives them the feeling of cake moulds or decorations. Do cakes and monumental architecture have similar qualities of decadence?

The Australian selection can't match the consistency of the German work, but then at the time of this exhibition's inception they had just joined the club. I think by now it would be a stronger contribution. In Australia some might consider Crosscurrents out of date already, but then that's one of the unfortunate consequences of joining this jewellery fast lane.

Jenny Tonybee-Wilson's necklaces are beautiful. They are made from paper, both handmade and commercial varieties. The history of this material is apparent in these necklaces, from its beginning as trees (leaves) to its demise as rubbish (newspaper) and its rebirth as recycled paper.

In Crosscurrents, Chris Robertson's steel

bracelets almost look traditional. But they manage to hold their own because they display an equal and unwavering commitment to concept.

From the Dutch I liked Gijs Baker's spiraling flower petal necklace. The real flower petals preserved between laminated sheet plastic are a fusion of natural and industrial design in a form that gives lie to the words organic and non-organic as they're commonly used to describe objects.

Willem Honing's paper necklaces and acrylic bracelets are strong statements about the materials they are made from - the paper looks robust and the acrylic ethereal. They are more than just a statement about materials though. It's an indefinable quality but they do have about them a sense of atmosphere.

Onno Boekhoudt's work achieves a similar effect. It is consummate work in metal - it makes no difference that the metal is sometimes gold, sometimes lead.

There is some fairly still stuff in Crosscurrents and the British contribute more than their share. But amongst the British it's the completely silly rings by Angus Suttie that I liked - barely wearable and easily broken. Are they good jewellery? See the exhibition and decide what your own parameters are.

Much of jewellery making is compromise but it is eventually the discovery of concepts that are in the end unique to jewellery that I believe make great jewellery. How often does the work in Crosscurrents achieve that uniqueness? A critic in Australia accused it of being fine arts pastiche and that the practitioners are just trying "to assert equality with high art". While I think much of the work can't defend itself effectively against such accusations, overall I did enjoy the exhibition, for its intention and its commitment to the idea - jewellery. It is a pivotal show for the Australians and I would also suggest it could be for jewellery making here - for in the absence of any jewellery education it does have the capacity to teach.

## TRAVEL AWARD

# Barry Brickell in Finland

Barry takes a lively and observant look into European traditions, Finnish ceramics and glass, and even watches tar being made.

Resulting from a slide-show and talk that the organisers of the 1985 'Clayart' symposium in Rotorua invited me to do, I ended up being invited to two venues overseas. The next symposium, organised by the Ceramics Department staff from Northern Arizona University (Flagstaff, Arizona) was held in June 1986 at Helsinki, Finland. As the sole representative of the Southern Hemisphere, from deep down-under, I took the invitation as something of a challenge. The other venue was at Flagstaff; an invitation to build a coal-fired salt-glazing kiln for the University Ceramics Department. This was also a challenge - it's not easy to bend cone 10 at an altitude of 7,000 feet with either spongy pine wood or high ash, low-coking coals.

I was offered a Travel Award by the QEII Arts Council and Air NZ and on accepting this, I promised to furnish reports and do any talks, slide shows etc on my return. Ceramics being my chosen field of craft activities (as well as 'environmental engineering'), I concentrated mostly on clay with some glass, and industrial history and architecture.

Not ever having been to Europe before, the thing that struck me first was the solidarity and craftsmanship of the common architecture. Indeed, we do have some of it right here in many of our older commercial and public works and buildings, but not of that scale or diversity. The Industrial Revolution made the hand of man into a huge nature-bending machine. It was a revelation for me to compare Stoke-on Trent with the Arabia pottery factory in Helsinki; the former maintaining a separation and the latter attempting a collaboration between craft and industry. In England we see a soul-searching process going on with the remarkable evolution of the new museum industry. Every weekend thousands of people flock to museums to discover things about themselves and their culture as well as to be entertained. Industrial archaeology in which the crafts had played a very major role, is now suddenly accessible

(not only to students but also to the general public and is presented in colourful and readable brochures affordable by all). A parallel movement is afoot in America, and is now appearing in Scandinavia. But why, like the Industrial Revolution, did this movement have its birth in England? Conservatism is different from being conservative; it can generate the substance of radical change. Bernard Leach admired old English traditional slipware, despite his vast enthusiasm and sincerity for the philosophy and techniques of Japanese handcraft stoneware pottery. The nails continued to go into the coffin of the English slipware tradition. Only just now, are there appearing some younger people getting to grips with this problem; they are not content with merely making slipware for their livelihood, but also endowing it with the lost spirit. I saw a similar thing in Spain, with a revival of interest in traditional pottery.

There is something heroic about a plain pottery vessel standing on a massive weather beaten patio resigned to the fact that life goes on. I concluded however, that the making of pottery is being badly taught in the West, not entirely because the machine has taken over but also that security has enabled the craft to become a plaything.

The three day Clayart conference in the superbly appointed administration building of the Arabia Pottery Factory, in picturesque Helsinki, was mainly a dialogue between Scandinavians and Americans. About 20 American ceramists were represented of which five were invited to make works in clay. All the Nordic countries were also represented, and Norwegian, Arne Ase (formerly professor of ceramics at National College of Arts and Crafts, Oslo) demonstrated his very interesting work and research into water-soluble salts as ceramic colouring agents in fine porcelain clay bodies.

The demonstrations served well as a communication aid and the

Scandinavians were impressed at the spontaneous, powerful and "disrespectful" manner in which the Americans handled their clay. The Americans, however, indicated their respect for the Scandinavian approach to craft and design excellence, noting their sympathetic treatment of the material and the conscientiousness of their workmanship, leaving little to chance. The organisers had prepared a schedule of individual slide and talk presentations, and ten of the participants were invited to make their offerings including myself. Among these were Rudi Autio, Finnish born but having spent most of his life in the USA, now a well recognised ceramic artist living in Montana. Also presenting material of interest from Finland, was the head of the Arabia Studio, Tapio Yli-Viikari. He acted as our guide, host interpreter and organiser, and was extremely generous in every possible way to help make our visit very pleasurable and informative. Bob Shay, who will be remembered by so many people here as a result of his artist-in-residence invitation to the Wellington Arts Festival, also gave a talk and slide show.

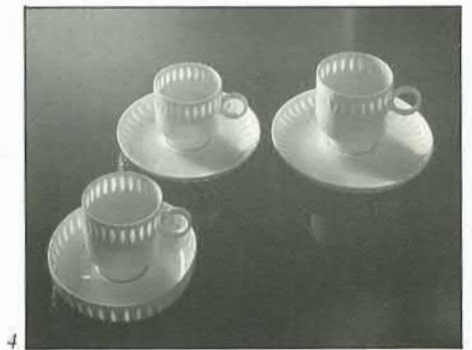
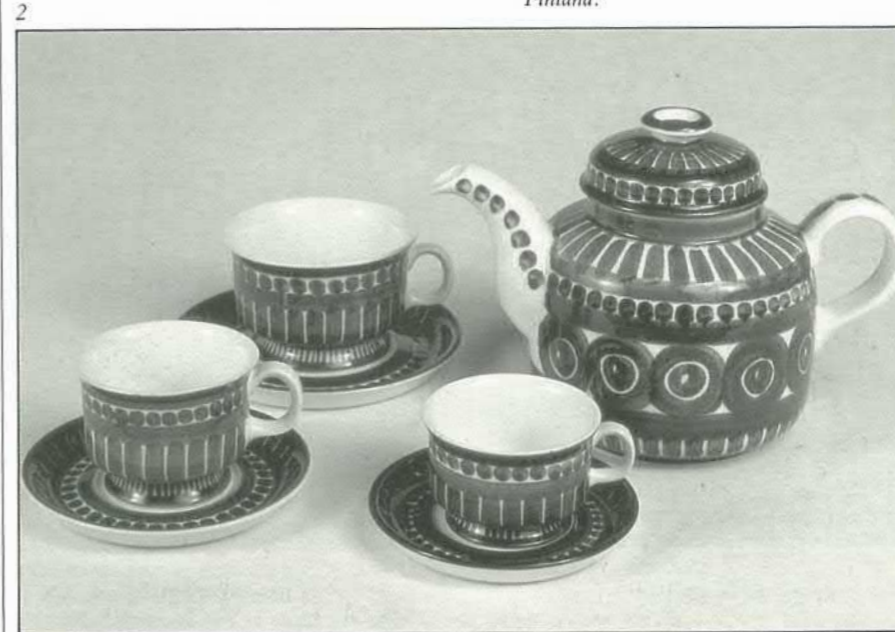
A sense of fun and audacity, abundant energy coupled with a kind of restless soul-searching, characterised not only the American work but also their presentations. My own show contained a fairly wide cross-section of slides of the work of various New Zealand potters and sculptors, mainly derived from the resource centre of the QEII Arts Council, and the Crafts Council of New Zealand.

I must emphasize the need to have these resources and to keep them up to date and comprehensive. They are essential for anyone going overseas who is wanting material to show, as they are our only readily accessible material. While most Art Galleries also have good slide material, few of them have readily available duplicating facilities. There should be someone in this country with a full-time job travelling about collecting contemporary art and craft slide

1 The Arabia Factory Museum – on display are Artworks made by Artists and Crafts people invited to work in the Arabia Studios.



- 2 Hand Decorated Stone Ware. Arabia Pottery, Helsinki.
- 3 Decoration of Production Stoneware, Arabia Pottery Finland.
- 4 Porcelain "Rice ware". Arabia Pottery, Finland.



material for these archives. It would pay off. I had great difficulty in getting material representing our more important artists and craftspeople, and I was very aware of some major gaps in my showing. Of my own work, amusingly enough, it was the slides of my narrow gauge railway that most captivated the audience.

The Arabia factory is a shining example of Finnish industry, management and design. The original 9-storey block is now used for administration, the craft studios, display galleries and sales areas all beautifully equipped and appointed, and meticulously clean. The Helsinki based University of Industrial Arts has recently been given a home there too. The Company, now known as Arabia Nuutajarvi (embracing ceramic and glass) was 100 years old in 1974. Today the pottery factory turns out mainly high quality domestic and sanitary stoneware and a small amount of translucent porcelain domestic ware. Apart from German and French factories, I believe that this is the only apart from porcelain now being manufactured in Europe. Arabian rice ware contains decoratively placed perforations in the body which are filled with the high-fired feldspathic porcelain glaze, resembling some oriental porcelain in its refinement. Some of the stoneware is hand-decorated, mainly in regular and factory designed cobalt blue brush patterns. I brought back a range of samples of both these types of ware.

Perhaps of greatest interest to craft potters is the set of individual artist/craftsman pottery (or ceramics) studios on the top floor, a unique feature of the Arabia factory. It started off as a design department for the factory's products but pride in Finland's only ceramic enterprise persuaded the director in 1932 to engage some full-time artists including some from overseas. "It is one of the tasks of industry to provide the artist with vehicles of expression" said Carl Herlitz back in 1948, at the opening of the company's ceramic museum. "The artist shall enjoy full freedom to develop his (her) individuality within the boundaries of technical possibilities." Throughout the forties, the individual work of the Arabia ceramic artists was exhibited throughout Europe, but due to the increasing factory emphasis on production ware, a gradual separation of the art department from the factory has been taking place. Since the completion of the artists' studios in 1944, the artists have been less involved in the production work while their present role is making unique pieces of "art". In 1951, a special high temperature kiln was installed for their use. The artists are fully supported by the company yet are free to make maximum use of the factory's technical know-how and materials. While it is a cost to the company, the prestige that it brings to both the factory and to Finland as a ceramic design centre is irrefutable. Presently, the question is

being asked as to how much the studio artists should be allowed or encouraged to have more input into the production ware which is a separate activity. The designers have their own department on the third floor and work closely with the factory staff. It would not be easy, say the management, to put into practice such an arrangement – "assignment oriented, with a fine mechanism and constantly flexible". I believe that it will come in time because having a policy of inviting artists to collaborate with industry represents a cross-fertilisation which is very much needed. Keep it up Arabia – we here even in "down under" admire your example.

While in Finland, I also spent some time pursuing Finnish glass. Like the ceramics, I had to ask why these nationally recognised activities exist here when there is such a paucity of raw materials. The only ceramic material obtained locally is silica, with feldspar from Norway, but for glass production virtually all raw materials have been traditionally imported. A visit to the Finnish Glass Museum (Suomen Lasimuseo) at Riihimäki (65 km north of Helsinki by rail or road) helps to understand why, and gives a wonderful insight into the history and diversity of the craft via magnificent displays. The remodelled building is a former glass factory dating from 1914. It was opened in 1981 to mark 300 years of glassmaking in Finland. It would appear that wood fuel from the

local forests was the principle reason for the early establishment of glass making in Finland, coupled with relative ease of transport by water from the south. The Rhine valley in Germany was the chief centre of glassmaking in the Roman days and some glass in fact reached Scandinavia from there, but it was not until 1681 that glassmaking began in Finland. These early glassmakers were from Italy, and Bohemia, and it would appear that pre-made glass in the form of billets was imported from these countries but reworked in Finland into useful articles. I could not find much technical information on early furnace designs using wood; as always even the finest museums show a dearth of this kind of information. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Finnish enterprise saw an increasing amount of glass being made and formed, consuming vast amounts of wood and using imported raw materials. In 1880, large-scale glass industry began and continues today, but of course no wood is used for fuel, it having been replaced by coal (late 18th century) and now natural gas.

At Iittala, north of Riihimäki, is Finland's best known glass workshop/museum complex. It was hot fine weather when I visited and the glass-blowing work shop felt like a furnace itself, with the mainly young craftsmen managing to get on with the job. All the work in the shop is extremely professional, and I purchased a small jug from the studio

sales. Almost all of the work on sale is in fact manufactured in the adjacent factory and the craftspeople mainly work for tourist sales. All the glass that I was freshly made; very little recycled or cullet being used. One feature of interest to me was the use of wooden moulds for hot glass shaping. The charring of the wood by the glass leaves an interesting texture especially on more sculptural objects. The museum room contains an impressive display of old and new glass from the Iittala factory as well as moulds and equipment. On the whole, I became aware of a high degree of technical perfection and concious design aesthetic which I took to represent what is called "Scandinavian design". All very well if you are civilised and sophisticated, but my own "raw colonial" preferences lay with the looser, less perfect, liquid forms of the early glass period; like the pottery, flowing yet strong-shouldered, spirited as well as aesthetically pleasing.

I cannot leave Finland without reference to another old wood-based craft-industry which has now become virtually extinct; tar-making. In the days of sailing ships, tar was an essential commodity, deck caulking, timber and rope preservation and general sealant. My research indicates that what we know as Stockholm tar was not made in Stockholm but distributed from there. The seaport of Oulu, Finland, was in fact closer to the source. Up the Oulu River, about 13

km from the finely designed, pleasant city of Oulu is the Turkansaari Museum.

It contains a host of traditional older wooden buildings of Finland, beautiful, bold and massive in their craftsmanship. The museum also has the only tar-making hearth, now operated annually, in Finland. The pine trees for tar-making are partly debarked for up to two or three years ahead, then cut and split then dried in open air stacks. The wood is carefully placed in dome-shaped mounds, over a rammed earth shallow conical pit with a drain hole leading to an outlet pipe over a wooden barrel in a deeper pit at one side. The mound is covered with turf and then lit at the edges. Few flames are allowed to flare up, these are covered with more turf, but after some days and nights (involving night-watching), the smoke and vapours die away and the mound of resulting charcoal allowed to cool. Meanwhile tar has been flowing into the barrel, the yield depends very much on the expertise of the tar master-in-charge. The tar is fluid and has a beautiful odour; I was given a sample. The old craft is now being taught to some younger people at this museum. □

*The continuation of Barry's trip, through the UK and Spain to the United States will appear in the next issue of N.Z. Crafts.*

## Weaving Ideas

General view of the Nelson Polytechnic School of Weaving exhibition, 1986.



The concept of weaving as an artform and the perceived status of the Nelson School of Weaving were the subject of a discussion during a seminar held in conjunction with an exhibition of student work.

The idea of holding the seminar evolved from the awareness that many people in the art world only regard wall-hangings and tapestries as valid weaving art forms, that there is a need therefore for other forms of weaving, for example, woven cloth made into capes, kimono's, blankets to also be judged on their own merits as Art objects. It was felt also that it would be stimulating for students and the public to be exposed to the ideas, views, thoughts of the seminar panellists.

In regard to the status of the Weaving School it was felt that people need to be made more aware of the professional commitment that the students made in devoting two years of their lives to improve their ability to produce woven objects of artistic quality.

The seminar was chaired by Jack Shallcrass, well known educationalist, who maintained an entertaining and well disciplined discussion programme.

Jack writes of his experience:

"The students at the Nelson School of Weaving are organising a workshop day and would be honoured if you would take part". (Being honoured is hard to resist).

"What do you hope to achieve?"

"Publicity for the school - we think it's great and we want other people to know".

"My role?"

"Be chairperson for the day and perhaps write something about it."

Of course I agreed not least for the chance to meet the guest speakers who included some of our most gifted artists - Brigit Howitt, Suzy Pennington, Anne Philbin, John Hadwen and Peter Ireland plus the School's staff.

It was a splendid occasion rich in wit, challenge and urgency. What is art? Where is the boundary with crafts? How to balance technique and imagination? Is art political? Is weaving a feminist issue? The questions may be constant but every generation finds pleasure and surprise in its own answers.

While styles and fashions change the fibre crafts are as old as humankind. They have always been a primary source of clothing, of shelter and of decoration. Fibres and their uses are a universal part of human experience.

One speaker argued that this tradition required a *School of Fibre Crafts* which would include weaving. That would not only emphasise the basic materials but would also widen the range of techniques and technologies. It makes good economic

sense in New Zealand with its growing range of fibres and its desperate need to add value before export.

In the meantime the Nelson school produces skilful, committed weavers who are also alive to the larger questions of their craft. One of these is the balance of techniques and creativity in their curriculum.

Some of the speakers hold that training in basic skills is a necessary and prior vehicle for later imaginative expression; others argue that when overemphasised it can stifle the creative and produce work that is clever but stilted and without spirit. In viewing the school's work we made our own judgements.

We were told that you can teach techniques but you can't teach creativity which you can only recognise and nurture. This makes teaching a risky business because in doing what is possible you may deny expression to something that is beyond your own vision or discernment.

As a result of being taught at primary school to draw by strict rules of perspective I can draw three, and three only, outdoor scenes - it is automatic. That may be three more than would have been possible otherwise but it is more likely that the technique has imprisoned rather than liberated.

The guests artists generally favoured flexible, varied and open learning with the students setting the rhythm and the pace. They weren't too fussed about whether the work was art or craft because history would decide that. The early weavers of Persian carpets didn't know they were producing art but the best of their work survived because it transcended the contemporary and the utilitarian.

When talking of their own work the guests hoped that they could capture new visions of the familiar which might please and surprise them. They spoke of the insight and discipline that allowed them to stretch beyond the intellect to the edges of mind where understandings floated often just beyond reach. Sometimes it all comes into focus with a "sense of exhilaration and peace".

This was an unwitting description of the concept of *flow* in which people become so attuned to a task and medium as to feel at one with them. To people as diverse as artists, rock climbers, musicians and surfers this can be a peak experience of the spirit.

It was a memorable day, full of interest, honest differences and lively ideas. In retrospect I'm struck by the contrast between that New Zealand and the one in which I grew up. The business of this workshop would have seemed like another planet 50 years

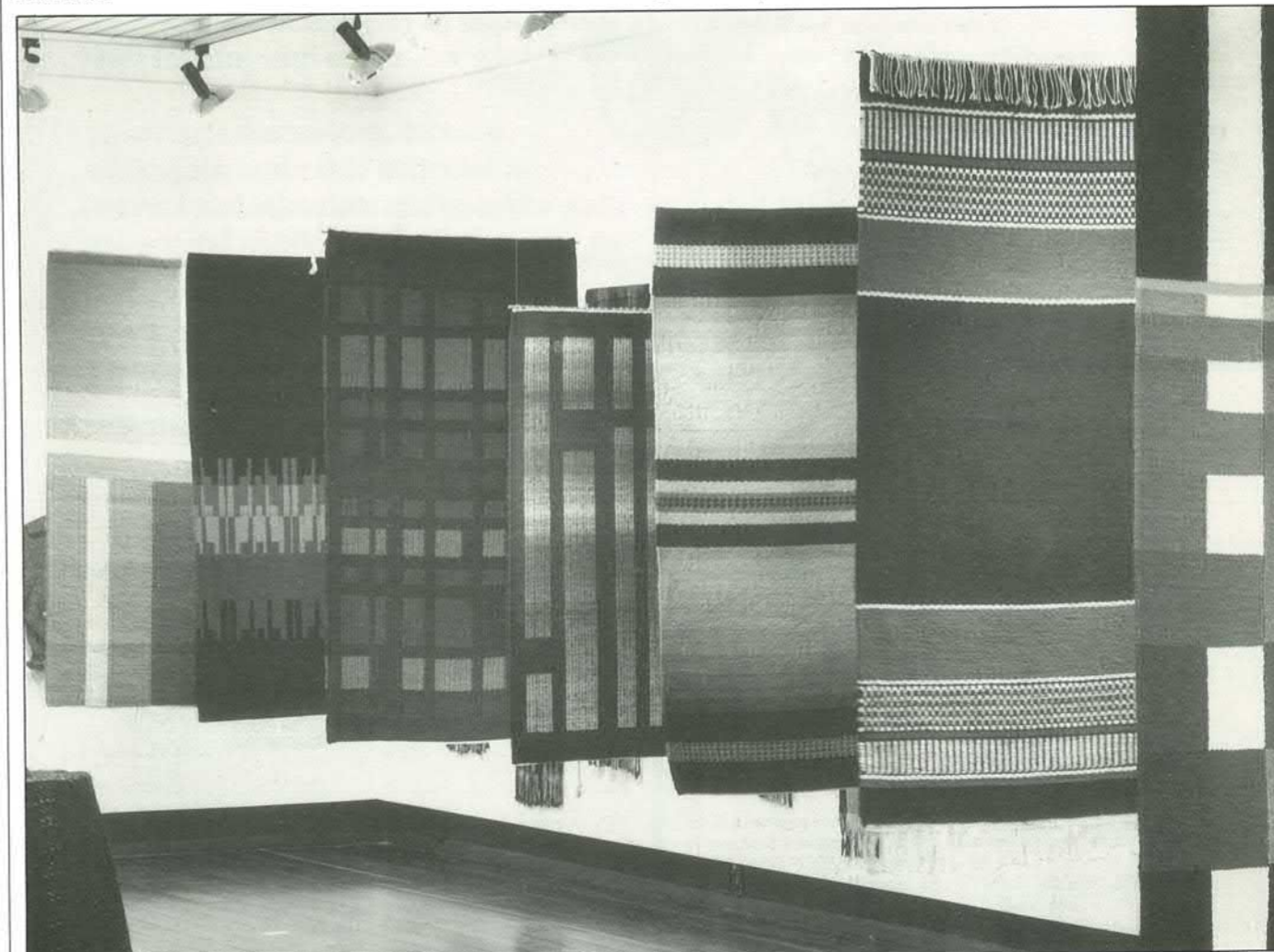
ago. There was talk of this and of some of the people who were the midwives of the change.

Among them were Gordon Tovey who more than anyone else made the arts and crafts a daily experience for New Zealand school children; Elwyn Richardson who captured that change in an internationally renowned book called *In the early world*; Jim Coe who turned art and design into a kind of magic at Hutt Valley High School and who then created the notable School of Design at Wellington Polytech; Bill Sutch who grasped the vision of a sophisticated people who understood the relationship of aesthetics and economics. Beauty, he said, was for daily living - all else followed.

After this workshop I'm sure that local specialist crafts schools are necessary but not sufficient. We really do need a national school of crafts and design where the most gifted people may come from time to time. The recent vocational Training Council report *Education and the Economy* concluded that education should be seen as investment. A national school of crafts and design would be gilt edged. □

Jack Shallcrass' comments have also appeared in *The Listener*

A full transcript of the seminar is available. Send S.A.E. and \$8.00 to Jude Wetzel P.O. Box 77, Houhora, Northland.



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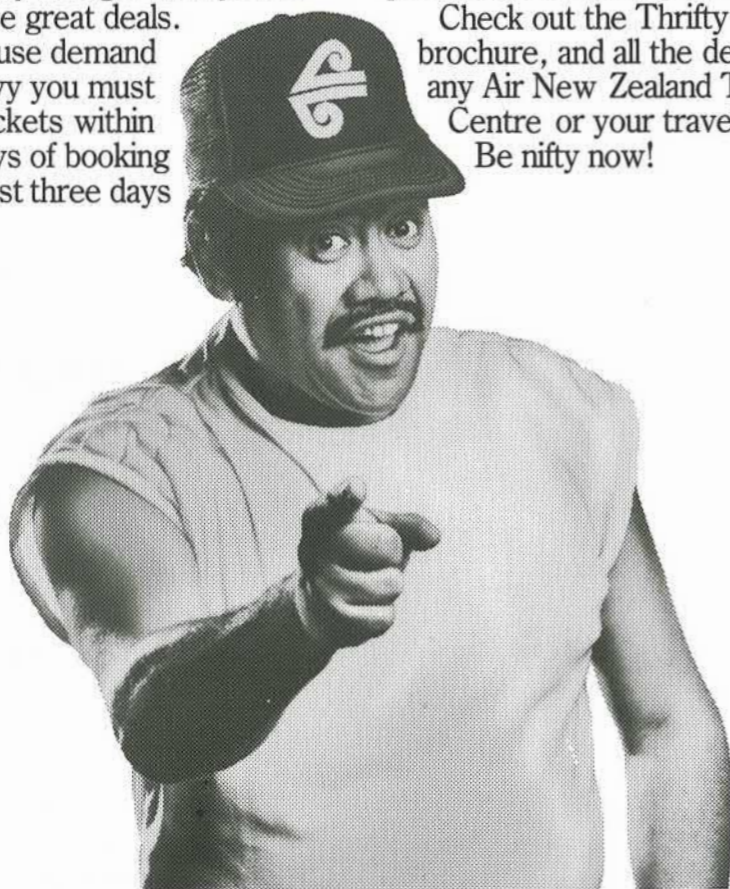
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## The aims of the Crafts Council

- \* To represent craftspeople on a national basis
- \* To lobby for and negotiate on issues affecting craftspeople
- \* To provide a comprehensive information service of resource material on all aspects of the crafts
- \* To facilitate communication between craftspeople
- \* To promote the image of New Zealand craft
- \* To ensure the availability of appropriate craft training and education
- \* To arrange discussions, lectures, workshops and other activities to instruct and stimulate craftspeople and the general public

Become a member of the Crafts Council and you will benefit from the opportunity to:

- \* Submit work for sale in the Crafts Council Gallery — the showcase for the very best of New Zealand craft — on favourable terms
- \* Participate in the Gallery's exhibition programme
- \* Participate in the Crafts Council's Corporate Membership Scheme
- \* Provide slides and information on your work for inclusion in the Resource Centre's slide library for use by architects, designers, Government Departments and Corporations
- \* Submit slides and/or photos of your work for inclusion in the Crafts Council's "Architectural Commissions" Portfolio
- \* Receive information on workshops/lectures organised for visiting craftspeople

### As well you will receive:

- \* Four issues of the "New Zealand Crafts" magazine.
- \* "New Zealand Crafts" is the only New Zealand publication which covers all the crafts and keeps people in touch with what is happening in other crafts. It carries feature articles, profiles, reviews of exhibitions, Crafts Council news and views.
- \* Bi-monthly "Crafts Council Newsletter"

### And you will also benefit from:

- \* All the developments which the Crafts Council are pressing for; for example craft education at an advanced level
- \* The stimulation, support and inspiration that comes from belonging to a body with a variety of members who share common ideals

### Application/Renewal Form

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- Individual member \$35 (incl GST)  
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Return with cheque to: Crafts Council of NZ Inc.  
 PO Box 498  
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# Craft Loans Scheme

Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council subsidised Craft Loans Scheme in conjunction with the Development Finance Corporation.

Applications are now being considered for equipment and workshop development.

Application forms available from:

Edith Ryan  
Manager – Crafts Programme  
QEII Arts Council  
Private Bag  
Wellington

Raewyn Smith  
Information Officer  
Crafts Council of NZ  
P.O. Box 498  
Wellington

## Crafts Council N.Z. Inc.

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## INDEX OF NZ CRAFTWORKERS

Craftspeople are invited to apply for inclusion in the index of NZ Craftworkers.

*The aims of the Index are:*

- to represent the highest quality craft nationally and internationally
- to provide a resource for gallery directors, craft shop managers, exhibition organisers, government departments, architects, educators.

Selection: 27 & 28 August 1987  
3 & 4 March 1988.

*Guidelines for application and application forms are available from;*

**The Information officer**  
Crafts Council of New Zealand  
PO Box 498  
Wellington

## SUTER GALLERY NELSON

*Weavers, knitters, jewellers, painters, potters and sculptors are invited to participate in an exhibition devised to encourage an innovative approach to a generally traditional field.*

*Fibres or fabrics should predominate (and painters should remember that canvas is a fibre) and although a reasonable component of stitching must be included to qualify we see no reason why metals, plastics, paints, stone or clay should be excluded.*

*Corporate sponsorship is being sought to provide a prize fund. There will be an announcement on this at a later date. The exhibition is being promoted and organised by the Suter Gallery in collaboration with the Association of New Zealand Embroiderers' Guilds. Last date for submission of slides or photographs is September 30, 1987.*

**Exhibition dates June 24 – July 17, 1988.**

**Application forms and further details can be obtained from 'New Embroidery', Suter Gallery, PO Box 751, Nelson.**

## BODY ADORNMENT BONE STONE & SHELL

(Working title)

Stone & Bone Carvers, Jewellers and metalsmiths are invited to submit for inclusion in this exhibition.

- funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Managed by the Crafts Council of New Zealand
- Selected by a panel of experts
- Curated by Master Stone Carver, John Edgar

The aim of the exhibition is to present a clear and powerful statement of the state of New Zealand jewellery. This should be made through the predominance though not exclusively, of material of New Zealand and the Pacific.

The work will have to stand up to examination by an international audience in an international setting as well as communicate our uniqueness and New Zealandness.

The exhibition will be touring to Australia in 1988 and Asia 1988/89.

All work will be purchased and hired.

**Closing date for submission for inclusion 29 May 1987.**

**Selection of exhibitors 5 June 1987.**

**Date for receipt of work 30 October 1987.**

**Exhibition Wellington early 1988.**

All applicants can be accepted on official forms only.

Further details and application forms are available from the Information Officer, Crafts Council of New Zealand, PO Box 498, Wellington.

# THE FLETCHER CHALLENGE (PREVIOUSLY FLETCHER BROWNBUILT) POTTERY AWARD 1987

In association  
with  
Auckland Studio Potters.

## ★ Closing Date

All New Zealand entries to be in the hands of the Competition organisers by 14/15 May 1987.

Overseas entries to be in the hands of the organisers by May 1st 1987.

This award is being made annually to encourage excellence in ceramics in New Zealand by Fletcher Challenge in association with the Auckland Studio Potters (Inc.).

## ★ The Work

This year each potter is invited to submit one entry for the 1987 Pottery Award. There will be no category or theme. Each entry will be judged on excellence.

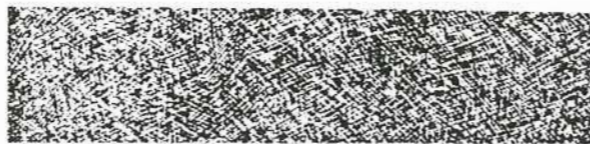
## ★ The Award

The Judge will seek one outstanding winning entry for which an award of \$NZ5,000 cash will be made.

A limited number of Certificates of merit will be awarded at the Judge's discretion.

All communications relating to the award to:-

**FLETCHER CHALLENGE POTTERY  
AWARD. P.O. Box 881 AUCKLAND 1.  
NEW ZEALAND. Ph (09) 798-665.**

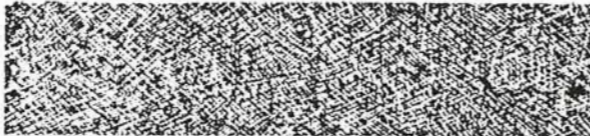


## The Dowse Art Museum

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Weekends and public holidays  
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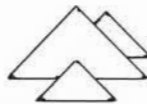


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