

Editorial

Welcome to Newsletter 14. Viv has just returned from a hectic trip to Britain where she was invited to attend a conference in Manchester organised by Ian Hunter. You will recall that Ian presented a paper last year at Public Practices in Dunedin. His interest in alternative strategies and organisations for art making is the theme of his conference, Littoral and you can read about this in Viv's report in the next newsletter. SIAP is considering a project on information technologies and while 'up north' Viv took the opportunity to attend the Fifth International Symposium on Electronic Art held this year in Helsinki. So she's flat out writing reports and I've agreed to introduce this issue.

Featured in this issue are articles by Raina Tutaki, Chris Appleby and Jonathan Bywater. Raina has interviewed Peter Robinson, Chris Heaphy and Christine Harvey about their identity and practice as contemporary Maori artists. Chris Appleby, Board member and our legal advisor, has written about contracts and the intellectual copyright for artists. Jonathan Bywater has critiqued Stimulus to Style, a recent and interesting exhibition of contemporary artists at the Canterbury Society of Arts Gallery.

It is with considerable regret and a deal of reluctance that we have accepted Jude Rae's resignation from the Board. Jude has been with us from the start and without her effort, South Island Art Projects would never have flown. She was one of a small group who initiated the idea then took on the onerous task, as our first Director, of putting the idea into practice. She worked tirelessly establishing our projects programme, the newsletter, the accounts, the film programme and all the other organisational aspects essential to an organisation like this. She also established a network of artists and art workers which forms an essential part of our communications resource. A testament to her effort is our most recent publication, public practices. This collection of essays, and art works is a culmination of the project we undertook in Dunedin last year. Jude put considerable effort into that project and the publication reflects her commitment and professionalism. Thank you for your dedication,

Cover and back cover - Chris Heaphy

Jude and we wish you well. Best wishes from SIAP.

And while I have the opportunity, I'd like to extend my appreciation, in a more public way, to the Trust and the Management of SIAP. Many of the Board give considerable time and expertise in supporting the organisation and its projects. Members like Stuart Griffiths and (previously) Linda Tyler, who live in Dunedin, would drive through the night to attend and contribute to our meetings in Christchurch. We could not have done without Stuart's effort on the ground in Dunedin in bringing about Public Practices.

None of our Projects would see the light of day without our Director, office staff and volunteers. Viv Stone has brought a different dimension to the management of our projects this year using her PR skills to their fullest in promoting artists, their work and our organisation. She also has gathered around herself an excellent team of supporting workers. Belinda Drum and Kate Woodall are both employed on Taskforce Green. Belinda our assistant, has been with us for several months and, amongst other things, practices her burgeoning graphic design skills on our newsletter. Kate was employed more recently, as a researcher to prepare education kits for schools to compliment our project, Tales Untold. These will be available next year. Both contribute their time and energy far more widely to the running of SIAP and it has been their effort which has kept the office open and running during Viv's absence.

In issue 13 we featured an interview with Fiona Gunn. Earlier this year, Fiona accepted an appointment as Lecturer in Drawing and Critical Studies at the School of Fine Arts, University of Canterbury. Recently, she agreed to join our Board and contribute to SIAP. We are very pleased that Fiona has offered her services and look forward to capitalising on her knowledge and experience as an installation artist and theoretician. Welcome Fiona.

Evan Webb

Chairman





South Island Art Projects News T'Arting Up Town

Public Practices book.

Last month SIAP published public practices. Documentation of our major project for 1993. The book contains images and text of the six artists projects for public practices by: Di Ffrench, Siegfried Köglmeier, Vivian Lynn, Jacqueline Fraser, Russell Moses and Kaoru Hirabayashi. The public practices book also includes papers by leading art in public theoreticians John Barrett-Lennard, Ian Hunter, Rob Garrett and Gerard O'Regan. The public practices book is available through the SIAP office for \$ 7.50.

Tales Untold Accessories

A limited number of Tales Untold undies (white Y fronts with SIAP logo) are available from the Siap office for \$8.00 - a great investment in art couture! Towards the end of the year the Tales Untold book will be out - more info on that later.

Siap Directors Position

Job descriptions on the Directors position will be available from the 14 October through the Siap office. Tel. 03 3795583. The position becomes vacant at the end of the year.

The publication of an art in empty city windows project that occurred in Christchurch October 1993 - January 1994. It contains images of the installations by the 20 participating local Christchurch artists. Available from the Siap office for \$9.00.

BIO Opening.

On August 15 Cafe de La Poste, the old Sydenham Post Office became the venue for the opening of *By Invitation Only*. B.I.O. is a mail art project by Christchurch artists Kristy Gorman, Phil Fickling, Belinda Drum, Carolyn Menzies, Kirsty Gregg, John Malcolmson and Karin van Roosmalen. The venue, apart from being particularly appropriate to the theme of the project, provided an interesting non art environment with in which to view and celebrate the ideas and artworks behind the postal project. Not only was a great time had by all but it was also a great introduction for people who were new to Siap and its projects. Enticed by the prospect of BIO mail art the mailing list has increased tenfold.

Film and Video Programme

In November Siap will be hosting two 80 minute film programmes curated by the British writer and independent film and video programmer Ian Rashid.



The dates for this are 21 & 22 November at the Metropolis, Dunedin and the 23 & 24 November at the New Clocktower Theatre, Christchurch (to be confirmed). Ian Rashid and his film programme are being toured by Siap and the Arts Council Toi Aotearoa.

As well as coordinating film and video programmes, Ian Rashid is a member of the Board of Management of the London Filmmakers Co-Op and regularly writes and speaks on the work of British and Canadian Black and Asian film/video artists and Queer Cinema.

The two film programmes are *Uneasy Tales of Desire* and *Beyond Destination*. *Uneasy Tales of Desire* consists of recent British Gay and Lesbian works through which the programme contrasts different approaches to examine the tensions between power and lesbian/gay sexuality in contemporary film and video.

Beyond Destination is programme about journeying by South Asian artists from the UK, USA and Canada. The journeys depicted, whether geographical or imaginary, resist the usual focus on a point of arrival; just as the artists who have devised them refuse singular or fixed notions of their cultural identities. Instead, the artists seek creative ways of living in flux, in the dynamic spaces between nations and cultures.

FROM UNDIES TO SHORTS

Cannes Shorts come to the South Island

In conjunction with the New Zealand Film Commission Siap is touring the eight short films that featured at Cannes around the South Island. The films are:

a game with no rules - Dir/Scr: Scott Reynolds.

the model - Dir: Jonathan Brough.

sure to rise - Dir/Scr: Niki Caro.

stroke - Dir/Ed/Scr: Christine Jeffs.

i'm so lonesome i could cry - Dir: Michael Hurst.

the dig - Dir/Prod: Neil Pardington.

eau de la vie - Dir/Scr: Simon Baré

lemming aid - Dir/Scr: Grant Lahood.

Touring Dates and Venues are:

Christchurch: 13, 14, 15 October
Academy Cinema.

Dunedin: 20, 21 October
Odeon Theatre

Invercargill: 27, 28, 29 October
Art House Cinema.

Queenstown: 24, 25 October
Embassy Theatre



DISASTER! Maudlin High Street Groupies Unsure What to Do Next

On the 3rd of September, the High Street Project was officially closed with a small gathering of those who have been associated with the project over the last couple of years. We tried to get invitations out to everyone who has had a show at the space, but please accept our apologies if you were not aware of this closing event.

The Project would like to extend our warmest thanks to Michael Richards for his support and tolerance (ie some of those fairly loose openings that occurred) and for providing the opportunity for establishing the High Street Project. Mr. Richards required the space for his own use thus ending the Projects two year reign.

It is unfortunate timing for a gallery which had consolidated a strong position for itself by supporting the work of young and emerging artists, particularly within the South Island. Depending on your viewpoint, it's management policy could be viewed as subversively difficult to locate or practically non-existent. Either way, the High Street Project was unparalleled in terms of access. In 22 months there were over forty shows in the space including such memorable moments as 'Nature Tat - Drawings for Tattooes' and this years 'Prostrate Canterbury - An Homage to New Zealand Art all that beer, all that cool art, the mess out the back, those floorboards, those Paton reviews, that sharp edge . . .

A dedicated bunch of High St junkies are considering what to do next. Given current funding schemes there is little possibility of direct Arts Council assistance. If the High Street Project II (the sequel) is to continue, we will need to consider other options for funding. The Project was especially fortunate in enjoying a 'Rent-Free Adolescence' above Michael's Restaurant. As this is unlikely to occur in a new premises, we will need to provide a regular income for the Project - possibly through a combination of sponsorship, charging for the use of the space and the re-institution of the membership fees.

Discussion with Siap is evolving and we are starting to consider the ways in which the organisation may be able to assist the High Street Project. A new space has also been located and, if you can believe it, it's still in the High Street. Absolutely heaven sent. However, nothing can be confirmed until the vital issue of how we are going to pay for establishing and confirming a new space (minimal as those costs may be) is a little more resolved.

So, thats about where it's at, at the moment. The people who have been regularly discussing options for the future of the Project are Mark McIntyre, Belinda Drum, Jonathan Bywater, Violet Faigan, Saskia Leek and Maddie Leach. Please feel free to contact anyone of us or the Siap office with questions, arguments and smart ideas.

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Contemporary Maori Art

What is happening in Christchurch now

My views and observations shaped by discussions with three practising artists, Christine Harvey, Peter Robinson and Chris Heaphy.

By Raina Tutaki.

Without realising, the three contemporary Maori artists I chose to interview for this article just happened to be of Kai Tahu descent, like me! The realisation struck me while I was interviewing the first artist, Christine, in her studio in Hazeldean Road. She mentioned the "blue book". (the title of the blue book is The Ngaitahu Kaumatua Alive in 1848 as established by the Maori Land Court in 1925) At that point I thought back to my own encounter with the "blue book" and wondered if Peter or Chris had ever consulted it. I later discovered they both had and decided that this was very auspicious, he tohu.

From different pages of the blue book our tipuna remind each of us, artists and writer alike, where we have come from and how we are connected to each other.

5 On one level then, I am connected to the artists by whakapapa and at another level I am an acquaintance who stands on the outskirts of the artists circle, making my contribution as an informed observer and promoter of Maori artistic endeavours.

The question of what Maori art is arose again and again during my conversations with these three artists. For me the answer is clear. If the artist is descended from iwi Maori their work is Maori Art. One cannot deny the reality of ones own existence.

For the three artists here, whakapapa has been verified in a very formal way by the existence of the blue book. This is the kind of information that artists tend not to turn away from because it is tied to their very identity. So tentatively, carefully, slowly they explore what being a Maori artist and creating Maori art is, was and can be for them. They are wise to progress with caution, matters of whakapapa run deep, matters of identity even deeper.

Having established my definition of Maori art I turn now to the artists, their work and their perspective's.

It surprised me that Christine had commented to me before I arrived at her studio that many people would not think of her art as Maori art. To me there were many things in her work that told me the artist was Maori: her materials, sand and shells; her subject matter, the land,

the figurative carving style; the shape of her work, some of her recent work has the overall shape of a whare, or pataka; her technique, to attempt to bring the colours out of the work.

Christine points to Tony Fomison as an influence. She has adopted his technique of glazing as a means of allowing the colour to come through her work. Traditional carving styles provide another influence for Christine. Both in terms of subject matter and technique. This is evident when she carves back into the sand in her work. Influenced also by other contemporary Maori artists, it is important for her to be aware of what they are doing and be able to recognise what they do.

Once she discovered that her tipuna was in the "blue book" she was encouraged to find out more. She points to the use of spirals in her work as indicative of her spur to discovery, or to risk a cliché, a vehicle for her journey. The continuum of spirals represents to her the future the past and now. She also recognises a similar spur in Peter's work in the form of his aeroplanes.

Christine is outside the network of the other Kai Tahu artists in Christchurch, mainly because they went through the Canterbury School of Fine Arts and she did not, however they do stay in touch with her and let her know what's happening. She asserted that because they are Kai Tahu they like to stick together, especially when attending art hui in other parts of the country.

She feels ambivalent about attending hui, a feeling shared by Peter and Chris. On the one hand it is an inspiration to be able to mix with contemporary artists, including "the big names", for example Sandy Adsett and Robyn Kahukiwa. On the other hand it is frustrating for Christine, Peter and Chris who prefer to work individually when there is an expectation to work collectively in a bigger group.

I asked Christine what her aspirations were. She said that she would like to be a recognised artist in her home town, Christchurch!

My next interview was with Peter. His influences come from many people including: Jackie Fraser; Michael Parekowhai; Shane Cotton; Bamard McIntyre; Peter's three art dealers; his studio colleagues, Seraphine Pick, William Dunning and Tony Delatour; Cliff Whiting and Bill Solomon, at Takahanga marae.

One important thing about contemporary Maori art to Peter is that artists are challenging what Maori art is or looks like. Some Maori people are producing art that does not

have Maori content. For example Bamard McIntyre's work, which is geometric abstraction using unusual materials, lino and artificial wood veneer.

Another area that must be acknowledged is the diversity of Maori art. Peter revels in the fact that Rangimarie Hetet, our most famous and revered weaver, Brett Graham, whose work is more traditionally based than Peter's and Jackie Fraser, known for her distinctive ribbon and wire installation, exist side by side. Each artist talking about different experiences and each one valid. Peter asserts that this is because as Maori people we live many different roles and our art reflects all of the experiences relevant to us here and now.

Peter consciously began incorporating Maori themes into his art work for a Te Atinga Exhibition in 1990. He had been encouraged by feedback from Stephen Gibbs, about a sculpture he exhibited with the College of Education students the year before. Peter helped Steve set up and take down the Te Atinga Exhibition which travelled to three marae in the South Island.

The next year Peter exhibited with Shane Cotton in Wellington. Peter based his work around taumata atua (god sticks) and waka tupapaku (burial chests) in that exhibition.

It is interesting to note the change from waka tupapaku in his earlier work to waka rererangi (aeroplanes) in his work now. Perhaps he travels with more optimism and animation than before.

Being Kai Tahu has lead him to reflect on Kai Tahu traditional art forms. Peter talked about the fact that our traditions lie in amulet designs and rock drawings, not carved meeting houses and canoes prevalent in the North Island; a difference recognised by the other two artists.

Peters strongest Kai Tahu link is with the people at Kaikoura and he looks to Bill Solomon, Upoko Runanga of Kati Kuri, for his support.

Attending Maori artists hui where he has been asked to facilitate workshops present Peter with a scary proposition. He assumes that the group of people he will be working with know a great deal more about Maori culture than he does so he wonders what right he has to tell them about Maori art? In spite of his anxieties he has facilitated at least two such workshops in the last year. One for the Kai Tahu Cultural Hui and another for the regional Nga Puna Waihanga Hui, both at Taumutu.

Peter's long term aspiration is to keep challenging himself and not fall into the trap of turning out "just another Peter Robinson" - to continue creating art not just making a product.

The third interview was with Chris. He includes an American artist, Philip Guston as being one of his recent influences and also Rua Kenana's use of card suit symbols as another.

He sees that there are a group of artists that are developing parallel to each other, namely himself, Peter, Eugene Hansen and Shane Cotton. Chris refers to them as a new influence in Maori art and noted that the more each of them develop their work the more acceptance they will gain.

The art going public should not be surprised by a reluctance by these artists to explain what their particular brand of Maori art means. Like any art there are levels of meaning. It is not that I wish to shroud the work in mystery only give their work a perspective and respect it deserves.

The difficulty for Chris of being a Maori artist at the Canterbury School of Fine Arts was that there were no Maori art tutors at the School and he didn't want to create art that had no way of being assessed, by Maori assessors. In 1991 a group of Maori student artists exhibited at the School of Fine Arts Gallery and since then Chris has acknowledged things Maori in his work.

Chris revealed that he had done quite a bit of reading relating to the Kai Tahu land claim and that almost all of his works are about the loss of land - the deals made, promises broken, the price put on the land and the price paid for the loss of land. References to economic starvation are painted onto coasters and tablecloths and hang on the walls of his studio.

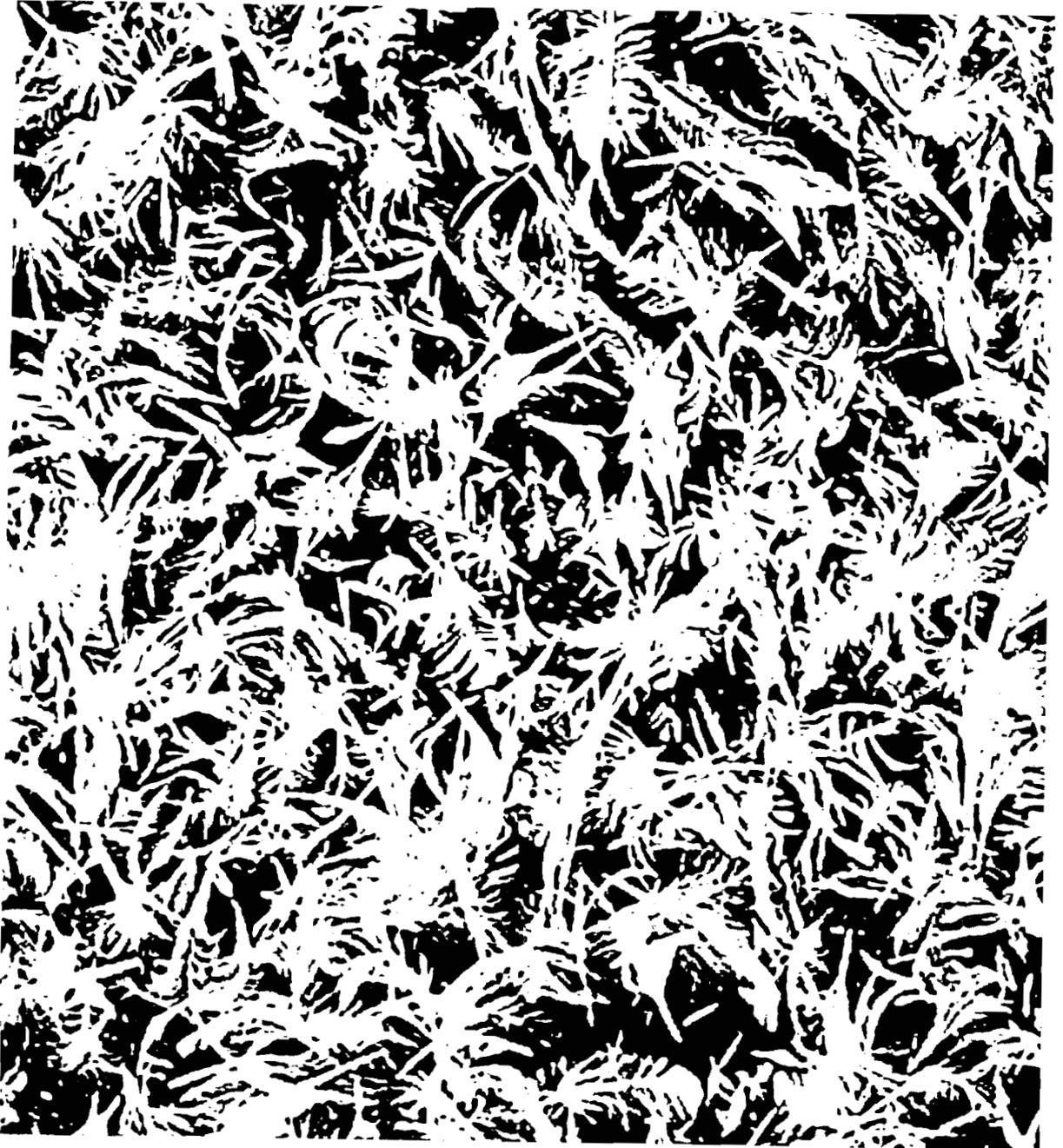
I asked Chris about his aspirations and he replied that he wishes to continue making art. That is his only aspiration.

So what is happening in Christchurch with Maori artists today? Connections are being made, Kai Tahu/Maori issues are being explored in their work and the more work they create the more their confidence grows.

Raina Tutaki is also of Ngati Kahungunu descent. She coordinated the 1993 contemporary Maori art exhibition, Te Tipunga, at the School of Fine Arts. And was appointed coordinator of the Ngata Centenary Celebrations 1994, and is a member of Nga Puna Waihanga local branch.



Grant Lingard. Tar and Feathers 1994.



Stimulus to Style : "a good big show of contemporary art"

"Gone are the days when artists required a lump of marble or a tube of paint to get started." Mark Amery, "Titillation for a time", *NZ Listener*, July 23 1994, p.44.

Justin Paton, reviewing *Stimulus to Style* for the Christchurch *Press*, opened by pointing to perhaps the show's most conspicuous contextual feature, what some people might have taken to be its *raison d'être*. "At last," he exclaimed, "the shuffle of yawn-inducing shows at the CSA gallery has been interrupted by a good big show of contemporary art." Patently, from the point of view of someone engaged in the discourses surrounding contemporary art, the CSA has had little to offer in recent times. He repeated his point as he closed: "To say that *Stimulus to Style* is the best thing that has been seen at the CSA this year is not really much of a compliment, considering what has been on at the CSA." Whatever you think of his evaluative claims, it is likely that you did see *Stimulus to Style* as something different for the CSA. To think on this difference invites consideration of some quite general issues:

In the foreword to the *Stimulus to Style* catalogue (in itself an out-of-the-ordinary move for the CSA), the CSA's new director, Nigel Buxton, tells that the original rationale for the exhibition was "to explain some of the processes of art making" in order that fewer people be "left stranded, wanting a way in to the experience offered by the artist."² Why should anyone be in such a predicament? Because, he thinks, of "the mute nature of the artwork" a gallery visitor is likely to find. Several questions are begged by this account of the motivation for the show (answering some of them, I suspect, might bring us back to the reviewer's point): What art is it that people find 'mute'? And, of course, who is it that finds it this way? Exactly what is it for an artwork to be 'mute'? And how will laying bare some processes of art making improve this situation?

Part of the predicament facing any institution in showing contemporary work is a cliché. Between the curator and her audience stands the beret-wearing, palette- or chisel-wielding Artist (of the purported public's imagination or of ceiling tile advertisements), who defines Real Art. Hence a stupendous banality like Mark Amery's (which I quote

¹ "The Press", Christchurch, August 10, 1994.

² *Stimulus to Style*, CSA Gallery: Christchurch, 1994, p.5.

above) introducing *Assemblage* at the Auckland City Art Gallery to the *Listener* audience. Announcing life beyond Western European Renaissance traditions to a notoriously liberal reading public could be taken as witty understatement. Unfortunately, such reactionary media coverage as the *Sunday Star Times* article on *Art Now*³ makes such an assumption seem reckless. Certain people seem to find much contemporary work dumb rather than mute. We might have to admit that a 'mute' artwork is more likely to engender opinionated hostility than patient curiosity. Illustrating working methods will be of doubtful use in dispelling such closed-mindedness, especially if these methods fail to conform to some acceptable variation of (in the terms of value of the wider economy) Honest Hard Work. (It is interesting to consider how artists do present themselves, keeping this sort of thing in mind.)

In several places recently I have noticed other curatorial attempts to offer an introduction to contemporary artistic practice. Locally, Elizabeth Caldwell and Clare J. Regnault writing for *4x2* at the McDougall Art Annex inform that "Having stretched and broken all of its defining rules, sculpture now traverses an expansive terrain of art making."⁴ The point of the *4x2* shows is to "offer a glimpse of just how diverse contemporary sculptural practice has become." More cautiously, Christina Barton, writing for the *Art Now* pamphlet predicts that "The show will test visitor's [sic] definitions of sculpture." She goes on to explain that "Artists now use a vast range of materials in their work...." Again we hear that "artists no longer carve, model or cast discrete objects to stand on pedestals."⁵ (Well, of course, some artists do still do such things, and there is no reason even to suppose that these are all the same people whose shows induce yawns in the likes of Justin Paton.) Her misplaced apostrophe (or missing definite article) becomes a token of the urgency of the problem she is addressing. It voices for her a fear of unpopularity, a worry about a declining audience for art.

If an aim of *Stimulus to Style* was to make contemporary art more accessible, it is something like Barton's problem that the CSA sought to face up to. This view of the show, however, has to be reconciled with the fact that a great deal of initiative and imagination would have been required, on the part of the kind of viewer normally "left stranded", to achieve this. Even the phrase 'stimulus to

³ Sunday, 11 September.

⁴ *4x2: A Solid equation*, Elizabeth Caldwell and Clare J. Regnault, McDougall Art Annex: Christchurch, 1994.

⁵ *Body/Site/Sign/Material*, Christina Barton, Te Papa Tongarewa: Wellington, 1994.

style' failed to offer much guidance to the viewer. John Hurrell's catalogue essay could be read as implying the superficiality of the title, and further, its dubious applicability to contemporary practice. By the end of his piece, he seems to be disowning it outright. (The curiously worded subtitle, "the metamorphosis of an artwork" [metamorphosis of an *idea* into an artwork?], certainly added to the impression that it was there more for the sound of it than for any particularly illuminating fit to what was exhibited.)

What, then, was on show?

Starting on the ground floor, the visitor was first confronted by one of the predominance of sculptors in the show. Andrew Drummond displayed two recent sculptures as well as a maquette for a large commission, *Listening and Viewing Device*, and several dozen snapshot photographs of this huge piece under construction. The latter illustrated a grand style. Welding, excavating, and earth moving were all there. I searched in vain, however, for the artist in action. Despite the busy scenes they depicted, not one of the photos included Drummond himself. The image of the artist was one of a co-ordinator, a user of camera and telephone, a long distance operator.

9 Drummond's intention was that, by showing together three works employing similar spiral-wound copper tubing, he might indicate the way an individual sculpture for him is often a variation on a visual idea which he has worked in other ways before. In *From the Littoral Zone*, copper, for example, is used as a literal conductor of electricity, while the other works exploit the connotation of conductivity in relation to fluids and, more abstractly, perception.

Up the step in the Canaday Gallery, Riduan Tomkins showed eleven finished paintings, all untitled. Soft-toned blues, pinks, greens and a bright mango yellow were the predominant oil colours used to describe abstract spaces on stretched canvas, in the painter's signature style. These fields were occupied in the main by apparently heterosexual couples, also highly abstracted, strolling with parasols or balloons, playing or juggling.

I met someone who supposed at this point they were in another show altogether. Slight variations in price were as close as the artist came to commenting directly in the gallery on his own work. His deliberate silence was a pointed statement in the context of the show. In the catalogue, he showed his reluctance to specify his motivations, saying simply "Work can feed off anything including itself." Rather than a modesty about self-knowledge, a comment like "I would want the works

themselves to show how they come about" suggested a firm position on the appropriateness of considerations external to his work in coming to understand it.

Tomkins' move was made more striking by his isolated position in the hanging of the show, and thus it became one of the clearer ways into questioning the suppositions of the show's theme. Upstairs in the Mair Gallery, Cathryn Shine's and Grant Lingard's similarly undocumented work seemed to make excuses for itself amongst other people's installations: A photographer doesn't do rough sketches, does she? What kind of planning could you possibly need for a construction as simple as Lingard's? Although, their contributions to the catalogue were vocal (in Buxton's sense), it was still disappointing that they didn't offer up anything to put in the gallery, and while Lingard commented forcefully on art making in general, Shine's pages in the catalogue hardly went beyond the currently standard 'artist's statement' or 'artist's pages' - the usual means for showing "a way in to the experience offered by the artist."⁶

Amongst the artists who did offer material evidence of their preparations for art making, some basic contrasts were plain.

The elegantly minimal collection of things chosen by Jude Rae reflected work which is a prolonged meditation on a very focused range of visual ideas. Images that made more explicit reference to some of the connotations she evokes with her representations of fabric-like surfaces were displayed with the same clean precision with which she paints.

Margaret Dawson presented a carefully chosen example of the stimulus for a particular image, the large photographic print "Cave". She showed her critical reaction to a mundane image, a newspaper photofile picture of 'The Empty Tomb', and its presentation. Like Drummond, she also put up conceptually related work.

Next to these installations, Michael Reed's and Bing Dawe's busy syntheses of materials were quite a contrast. Reed pinned and taped up a whole mess of newspaper cuttings, postcards, flyers, photocopies from books and magazines, and drawings of his own. His diverse range of source imagery remained visible in silkscreened silk that hung on the end wall of the gallery.

Margaret Hudson-Ware provided a kind of benchmark for the show, demonstrating perhaps the most traditional practice. Her ink and wash and small oil studies for

⁶ Nigel Buxton, *Stimulus to Style*, CSA Gallery, Christchurch, 1994, p.5.

Tony De Latour - Bad White Art 1994 (Detail)



Tony De Latour - Hot Stuff 1994



various components of her figurative compositions were supplemented by photocopies (of, for example, the Albrecht Dürer etching from which she began) and photographs (of paintings at various stages in their making) but such things were clearly not necessarily part of her usual method.

One of the rawest and bravest offerings, Pauline Rhodes' was of photocopied workbook pages were covered mostly with words. Drawings were restricted to roughly cartooned, barely illustrative sketches. Here we could see her grappling with materials ("Black drain pipe 6"?! How do I deal with This stuff?") and grappling with an awareness of what she is doing (Does she want control or not? Words like "random", "decisions", "chaos" and "control" were inscribed repeatedly, peppered with question marks.). She showed her making process as something of a struggle, something of which she was not entirely master. Her engagement with abstract considerations and theoretical texts was honestly displayed: "often one senses a fairly simple thought, maybe a true one, lost inside a cloud of dark abstractions...."

Rhodes' notes referred to Julia Kristeva writing on Proust on subject of time. Fiona Gunn's working drawings gave the reference for a work on the texts of Giles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, from whom Rae wrote out a quotation in hers. "The new element is the art theory basis of working." John Coley was quoted as saying recently.⁷ "That's added another element - an internal dimension." Internal to the work? What could he mean by 'internal'? "I feel there are quite a lot of limitations placed on artists today . . . academic restraints...." Such inclusions, then, might have given pause to people, like John Coley, who seem unsure as to how such texts fit into art making.⁸

Bing Dawe's installation, a recreation of an area of his studio, contained large frottage studies, attached to which were newspaper clippings and photocopies of old illustrations. (Quite how reportage of the impending impact of Shoemaker Levy 9 on Jupiter, for example, related to the sexual, grotesque, ceramic figurines might not be such a different question from how Deleuze and Guattari inform, say, Rae's paintings.)

Tony De Lautour took one of the lightest and at the same time one of the more revealing approaches to illustrating his inspirations. He displayed twenty-six plastic bags, each

⁷ All Quotations are from Garry Arthur's article on the School of Fine Arts, "The Press", Christchurch, September 10, 1994

⁸ See the last newsletter (no. 13) for an exchange between Fiona Gunn and John Hurrell on this topic.

marked with a letter of the alphabet, containing variously, comics, a VHS video recorder instruction pamphlet, a plastic kiwi, a tattoo magazine, an ad for a Motörhead concert, and other trinkets, presumably from his day to day environment. By offering these things as if they were courtroom exhibits or medical specimens, he emphasized the artificiality and the selectivity of the process. Displaying stimuli became itself unequivocally an exercise in style.

The twelve artists invited some very different kinds of attention to the things they put before us. Near one end of a continuum you might put Michael Reed. Clarity and impact are the terms in which you might imagine him to think. His collage of working drawings and references illustrated an interest in the bold drawing styles of 1920s Russian graphics and Mexican imagery. His means of communication are visual. At the other end, is work like Fiona Gunn's where the work is devised with attention to all aspects of the artist's experience of the gallery space. (Her notes revealed such comments as, "the gallery is like a big barn - it echos" and "I must spend more time in the space.")

This variety of intention interestingly disoriented my perception of the work. Which elements of a piece or of its presentation were to be treated as neutral and which as loaded in some way became more than usually ambiguous. Features of the gallery became obtrusive, like the annoying, tannoyed easy listening. (Fiona Gunn's protest evoked empathy: "No Music!!!!!!")

In a piece as minimal as that constructed for Grant Lingard, for example, anything other than cursory examination required that you notice something about the gallery itself. The fragments of newspaper in the latex protecting the picture rails from the tar, the power point and the speaker connection with its one black and two red pins. The scuff marks on the tiled lino floor, the concrete blocks behind the paint in the wall. The olive coloured skirting, the one and a half white tiles that precede the beige flecked ones as you move from the wall to the floor. From here it became interesting to wonder whether the tar and feathers might apply to the gallery, a mark of its less than prestigious status in the art world. The tarred lines might also cock a snoot at the idea of linear progression (from stimulus to finished work)?

The CSA building is used by the Christchurch City College. As you enter, by reception, there is a stand of white and blue pamphlets advertising courses in things like understanding contemporary art, and Intermediate Painting. Next to Margaret Dawson's nicely placed

photograph of a chair (almost life size and just where you'd expect a real chair to be), "This is Not Her Chair", was a sign pointing the way upstairs to the venue for the art classes. The hand drawn sign,

*ART CLASSES -

This way \ →

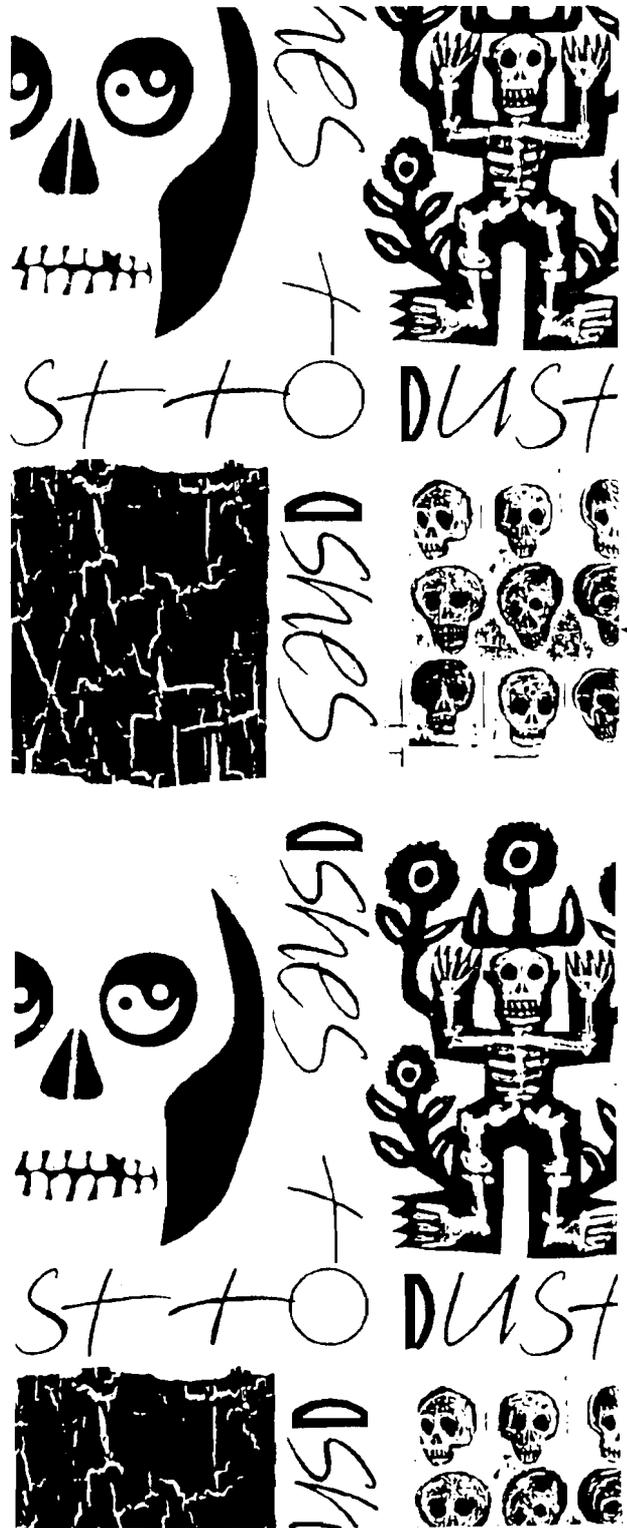
had been written, erased and redrawn, leaving a trace of the first attempt at inscription (reminiscent of part of Tomkins' technique). Coexisting on the highest floor of the gallery were Pauline Rhodes installation, sprawling over the floor and up the walls and railings, and the paper-covered tables and jars of brushes of the art school.

In the catalogue, Margaret Hudson-Ware notes a similarity between the themes she paints and her teaching of art making.⁹ Such connections between the gallery, the show and the teaching of art, made it hard to ignore that many of the waist-height, capitalised name plates could have been reproduced from a university office door. Fiona Gunn, Cathryn Shine, Andrew Drummond and Riduan Tomkins all currently teach at Canterbury University's School of Fine Arts, where Grant Lingard was an Artist in Residence this year. Bing Dawe and Michael Reed teach at the Christchurch Polytechnic. It seemed clear that such an authoritative group must be here to teach some kind of lesson. In as far as the kind of art that does not speak to people was the kind presented, the show was a move to bring the CSA up to date, at least as much as it was a move to bring some viewing public up to date.

(A story I heard recently, suggested that at the Ham School of Fine Arts one student has become so involved in documenting her making process that she hardly ever makes finished work and quickly destroys it when she does.)

Jonathan Bywater

Jonathan Bywater is an artist and writer currently living in Lyttelton.



Michael Reed. Ashes to dust to dust.

⁹ Stimulus to Style, CSA Gallery: Christchurch, 1994, p. 34.

Artist's Rights - A legal Overview

Consider the following scenarios:

1. You are an artist who shows with a dealer gallery and you agree to allow one of your works to be shown by a Public Gallery in another city. The work is a valuable one and is damaged to the point of destruction in transit by the carelessness of the carrier. Your dealer has neglected to take out insurance and the carrier's liability is limited in law to \$1,500 (under the Carriage of Goods Act 1979).
2. You are a sculptor who has had ongoing negotiations for several months with a local Council which has indicated a wish to commission you for a public work. You are led to believe that you are the person selected for the commission and start work on the project, incurring substantial costs in doing so. Before the work can be completed the Council writes to you and advises you that the deal is off.
3. You have been approached by a dealer gallery and offered a show but the dealer refuses or declines to enter into any sort of written agreement with you, saying that a verbal contract is enough.
4. The same dealer gallery, a year later, decides to raise its commission without consulting you.
5. You are an artist who discovers that their work has been reproduced in printed form without your express authority.

It should not come as a surprise to most readers of this article that the above examples are taken from the realm of reality and not fantasy. Neither would it come as a surprise that in the majority of such disputes the artist comes off second best. The aim of this article is primarily to prod at least a few more artists into action in the way that they interact with

other parties. Secondly, given the constraints of space, some practical tips are offered in the area of contracts. Thirdly, it is hoped that this article may assist in laying the foundation for a broader movement of artists in all media to consider the possibilities of establishing a legal advisory service for artists and art-related workers. More on that later.

As an introductory comment to the discussion which follows it should be considered for a moment that most if not all artists, whether they realise it or not, enter into commercial relations with other parties, be they dealers, city councils, museums, galleries, art organisations, or freight companies. It would be fair to say that there is a deep well of passivity amongst artists in managing their affairs. Be assured that this problem is not confined to New Zealand; a look through back issues of any Australian, American or European art magazines would reveal a similar malaise amongst artists everywhere. This is a general comment and is not intended to denigrate those artists who put a great deal of effort into the management of their art practice. There are many such artists in New Zealand and they should be applauded for their efforts. Neither is this comment intended to be a criticism of artists in general, but merely to give the problem some perspective.

Once you as an artist cross the threshold into the commercial arena you can do one of two things. You can either direct yourself to being an active participant in the process of whatever it is you are trying to achieve; or, you can leave it up to the other party to set the rules. The first option is hard. The second is easy. In the latter case, when something goes wrong there is always someone else to blame.

What we are talking about is power, which is of course the flip side of powerlessness. If you don't think artists should be empowered to extend control over their affairs then don't read on.

My view, based on experience with practising artists, is that with a little application and thought and some discussions with colleagues and peers, the power of an artist to control his or her dealings with other parties can be markedly and rapidly increased. Remember that there are rarely any perfect solutions when two or more parties with differing interests are brought together. The aim is not to obtain everything you want on every occasion but rather to ensure that both the artist gets a fair deal.

The question is, how? The easiest and cheapest method of improving your knowledge is to connect with other artists in order to draw on their experiences and lessons they may have learned. Secondly, any documents which are put in front of you should be read and read carefully. There is never any reason why a document of any sort should be signed under pressure. You should ask to take the document away to consider the implications of signing the document. Thirdly, and ideally, you should take professional advice according to the type of agreement you are about to enter into. Most frequently such advice would be sought from an accountant or lawyer.

The common thread running through the above advice is to inform yourself as fully as possible, by whatever means are available to you, to the point where you are satisfied that your needs have been met.

In referring back to the five examples set out at the beginning of this article, the problems described can be broken down into two broad areas. The first (and by far the most common) are contract based problems. The second area, as per example 5, is a copyright problem.

Most if not all commercial arrangements can be reduced to the form of a written contract. A contract arises, in simple terms, when two or more parties agree to do certain things in relation to each

other. Contracts need not be in writing although if they are not, then there is a high probability that the terms of the contract will be in dispute if anything goes wrong. There is nothing special, frightening or magical about a written contract. All you need is access to a typewriter or word processor. For a contract to be binding, all parties have to be named, they have to agree to the terms set out in the contract, and the contract should be dated and signed in ink by all parties. Very rarely do contracts need to be witnessed by third parties.

Do not be cut off by anybody who tells you that a written contract is not necessary and that a verbal contract is all that is required. There is no logical reason why the other party should decide what form the contract is to be in. It is almost always the case that a written contract will provide more certainty for everyone than if the contract is verbal, although it should be remembered that just because the contract is not in writing, this does not mean that you are powerless to do anything if something goes wrong. A verbal contract can be as binding and enforceable as any written contract. The problem really is with the degree of certainty about terms of the oral contract.

If you are drafting a contract yourself, assuming there is no professional help available, try and foresee problems which may arise. For example, what happens if goods are damaged in transit to another gallery. Whose responsibility is it to take out insurance? Focus on the matters which you wish to have dealt with and make those known to the other party.

The above advice is not intended to be a detailed set of instructions on how to enter into a contract. Ideally professional advice should be sought whenever possible.

Turning briefly to the question of copyright; copyright is essentially protection, granted to original works,



from copying by others. For copyright to exist, the work of art need not have any merit or necessarily originate from an original idea. There must however be a certain amount of skill and labour involved in its creation. The only comment I can make with regard to copyright if you are in a position where you believe your work has been copied is to take specialist legal advice.

Finally, I would like to make mention of a Sydney based Government funded organisation called Arts Law. Funding has been obtained to provide a nationwide toll-free legal advisory service for artists and art related workers. The organisation arose from the efforts of a group of lawyers in Sydney who devoted themselves to working in the field of arts and music. The office is staffed by at least one legal professional, together with support staff. South Island Art Projects is itself working on a proposal whereby funding for a similar service, may be obtained from various bodies around New Zealand. The process is very much in the planning stages but we will keep you informed of progress in future newsletters.

The writer hopes that this article has been of assistance and more importantly has stimulated artists everywhere to think about their rights and how they should go about getting what they want.

Note: South Island Art Projects advises readers that the above article is not intended to be professional legal advice but rather contains general comments only. If readers have legal problems, seek legal advice where the full facts can be made known to your advisor.

Chris Appleby.

Chris Appleby is a lawyer and Board member of SIAP.

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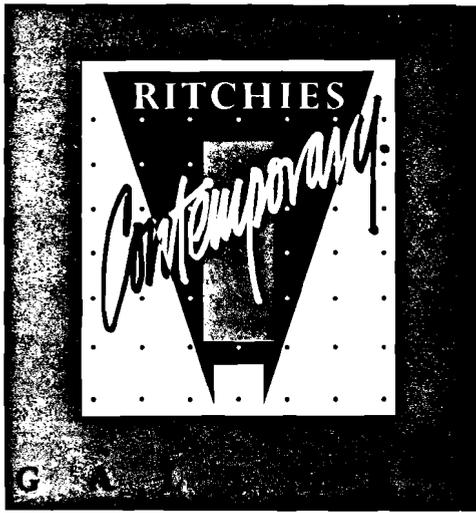
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News Bulletin

Te Waka Toi Hui

2 October, Multicultural Centre, Hokitika

9 October, Omaka Marae, Blenheim.

In the development of a strategic plan for The Maori Arts Board, Te Waka Toi are consulting with maori iwi throughout Aotearoa. For further info contact Te Waka Toi 04 - 473 0880

University of Canterbury School of Music

Lunchtime Concerts: 1.10 pm at School of Music
Tuesday 27 September

Julia Grenfell, flute and Iola Shelley, piano. Music by Schubert, Huë, Varèse and Douglas Mews.

Thursday 29 September

Students from Leipzig.

Tuesday 4 October

Martin Riseley, violin and Maurice Till, piano.

Thursday 6 October

Alexander Ivashkin, cello and Martin Setchell, organ. Music for cello and organ.

Evening Concerts: Great Hall, Arts Centre at 8 pm.

Saturday 1 October

University of Canterbury Trio. Music by Beethoven.

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As well as SNAFU the Super 8 magazine, Chris Trotter's *FreeCopy*, the OUSA literary Review, and the Needle

Exchange's indispensable *DIVO news*, another free magazine has been launched in Dunedin. The thirty-two page first issue of Vault appeared in September, with poetry, page works and prose by the likes of Forbes Williams and David Eggleton. Submissions for the next issue can be sent to:

Alison Beck and
Laura Solomon
The editors
Vault
P O Box 5854
DUNEDIN

Following THE LONELY SOFA, a successful show by second year students at the Otago Art Society in August, twelve female third year students are exhibiting at the Carnegie Gallery, Moray Place as FEMME FETE. The exhibition runs from 19 September to 29 September.

The Dunedin Public Art Gallery is screening the Arena productions video, *Cindy Sherman: American Photographer* on 30 October at 3pm, and Melvyn Bragg's South Bank show interview with French installation artist and head of sculpture at the Ecole des Beaux arts in Paris, Christian Boltanski, on the 13 November at 3pm.

Performance and installation artist Jules Novena Sorrell has recently received a QEII Southern Regional Arts Council Grant to tour her work around the place. Emily Buttle continues as Artist-in-Residence at the Cafe Zenith throughout September and the collaboratively run artists' space ARTHOUSE Dunedin Inc. has shared studios available for \$15.00 per week, or single studios at \$45.00 a week. Contact through 90 Crawford Street, (03) 477 5210

Events in Dunedin

Awards/Residencies

Lion Breweries Art Awards Cambridge Society of Arts organisers. SUBJECT: The NZ scene (may include any aspects of the NZ scene, its lifestyle or its people). Several awards \$1500-\$3000. Entries close 5 October. Entry forms from Joan Willers, Secretary, PO Box 160, Cambridge Ph (07) 827 6372

49th International Ceramic Art Competition Fraelza September - October 1995. Application forms are due in no later than 26 November 1994, accompanied by a curriculum vitae of the artist, critical dossiers and 3 slides per works maximum, major prizes. call Artists Alliance Ph. (09) 376 7285 for details.

Pollock-Krasner Foundation. Financial assistance to artists of recognised merit working in paint, sculpture, craft or mixed media. No age or geographic limitations. Grants awarded throughout the year, vary in size and length according to each artist's circumstances. Contact: The Pollock-Krasner Foundation, 725 Park Ave. New York, NY 10021 USA. Ph. (212) 517 5400.

Rome Scholarships and Awards. The British School at Rome is accepting applications for scholarships and awards. "Rome Scholarships" in painting, printmaking and sculpture and "Abbey Scholarship" in painting enable artists to spend 9 months at the School in Rome, including studio, board, lodging and 4500 pounds. No age limit. All British and Commonwealth artists are eligible. For details/entry forms: Rome Scholarships and Awards, The British School at Rome, Via Gramsci 61, 00197 Rome, Italy.

Rockerfeller Foundation Scholars and Artists in Residence Program. At Bellagio Study and Conference Centre, Lake Como, Italy. 4 to 5 week residencies available to scholars and artists of significant achievement in any discipline and from any country. Preference to candidates whose work at the centre will result in publications or exhibits. No financial assistance available but once at the Centre participants are guests of the Foundation. Applications are considered 4 times per year but artists should apply a year in advance of desired residency period. Info: Bellagio Center Office, Rockerfeller Foundation, 1133 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036 USA. deadlines: Mar 1, June 1, Sept 1 and December 1.

United States Information Agency. Offers grants to cover travel expenses for foreign artists going to the US for residencies. Grants are by nomination only. For information: Kathleen Johnson, Fund for Artists Colonies, 6 East 43rd St. New York NY 10017 JSA Ph. (212) 661 8680.

Women's Studio Workshop Grants. For book artists. Stipend \$1200 a month for up to 2 months. Grant includes: access to studios, generous materials budget, free technical assistance, distribution, royalties and more. To apply: send a page description of proposed project, medium(s) used to print the book, number of pages, size, edition number, a dummy, materials budget, resume, 6-10 slides, preferred time of residency and SASE to: Women's Studio Workshop, PO Box 489 Rosendale, NY 12472, (914) 658 9133.

Artpark Sponsors residencies for professional artists at its upstate New York colony, a retreat for artists working in a variety of media. Artists are paid \$450 per week, receive a living allowance of \$200 and can stay up to 6 weeks. No application fee. For info: Joan McDonough, Artpark, Box 371, Lewiston, NY 14092 JSA (716) 745 3377.

Banff Centre. The Lieghton Artist Colony provides time and space for artists to produce new work. Residencies available from one week to 3 months. Applicants accepted on the basis of resume, reviews and samples of recent work. Info: Office of the Registrar, Banff Centre, Box 1020 Station 22, Banff, Alberta T0L 0C0 403/762 6180. Also NETWORKING - A NEW RESEDECY PROGRAM: The Art Studio at The Banff Centre for the Arts now offers three 10-week residencies each year. There will be 20 artists in each residency who will come from across Canada and from many other countries. Info: Lorne Falk, Art Studio (above address)

Can Serrat. Artists studios available at the 17th century vineyard outside Barcelona. Also offers courses and seminars. Contact: Maria Can Serrat, 08194 El Bruc, Provincia de Barcelona. Tel 395 343 770037

European Ceramics Work Centre Offers artists working in Fine art, crafts, design and architecture an opportunity to work in clay. Work periods are 3 months. Acceptance based on previous work (slides/photos, cv, catalogues), quality of proposed project, suitability of Centre to proposed activity. Accepted artists are provided with rent free studios and \$500 a month of materials and firings. Expenses approx \$500-700. Contact: Zuid Willemsvaart 251, 5211 SG's Hertogenbosch, The Netherlands. Tel 037 124530.

Fuente Studios Studio and living accommodation available in the village of Competa in Southern Spain. Periods from 3 - 12 months from approx \$200 to \$280 per month. For details: Victoria Brooke, Apt 72, Fuente Studios, Competa 29754, Magala Provincia Espana.

Iceland Studio apartments for visual artists, authors, musicians etc. in Reykjavik Municipal Art Museum, Breska Sendiraio, Laufasvegi 49 101 Geykjavik, Iceland.



CREDITS

SOUTH ISLAND ART PROJECTS

ARTS CENTRE, CHRISTCHURCH
P O BOX 902

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Research Kate Woodall

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SOUTH ISLAND ART PROJECTS
ARTS CENTRE,
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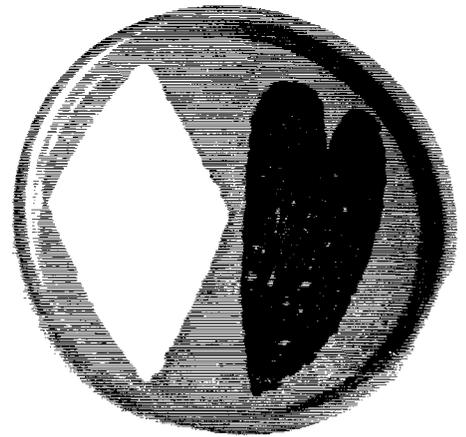
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