NEW ZEALAND SCULPTURE

A HISTORY

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AUCKLAND
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Acknowledgements

Firstly I wish to thank the sculptors who have checked my text relating to their work, helping to ensure its accuracy. In some cases they also assisted with the provision of transparencies for reproduction. In addition, I wish to thank my wife Patricia for her encouragement and patience with the project. I also would like to thank Mark Stocker for reading the draft in full and making numerous editing corrections and suggestions for improvement. His enthusiasm and support have been of enormous value in the later stages of this undertaking.

First published 2002
Auckland University Press
University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland, New Zealand
http://www.auckland.ac.nz/aup

ISBN 1 86940 277 4

Published with the assistance of a grant from

Design by Christine Hansen
Typeset by Chris O'Brien
Printed by Kyodo Printing Press, Singapore

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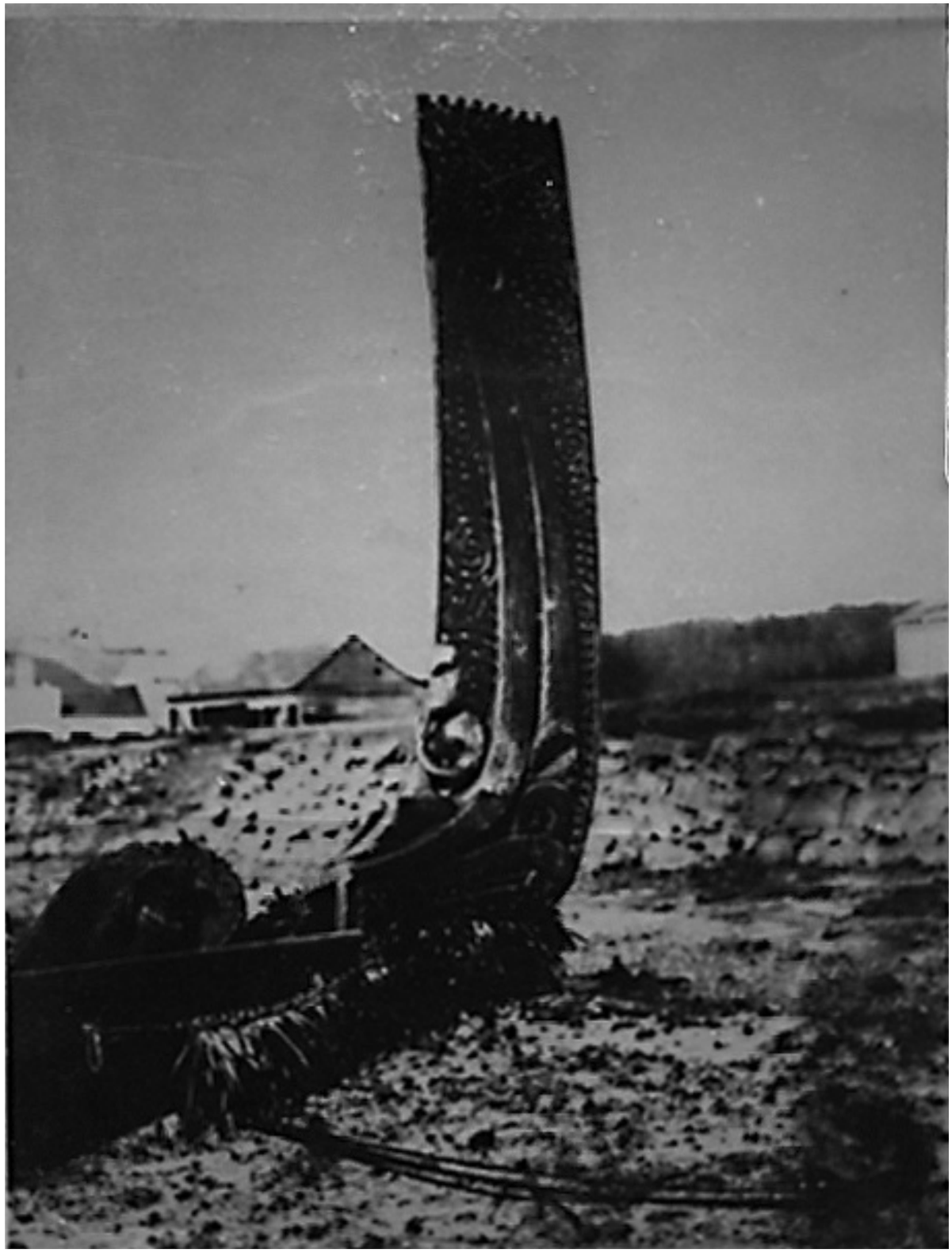


Introduction

Among Polynesians of the South Pacific, sculpture, especially wood-carving, reached its most elaborate and striking manifestation with the New Zealand Maori. Maori carving is noted for its curvilinear design, often incorporating the spiral that is used to decorate surfaces of figures — canoe sternposts, boxes and other artefacts. With the introduction of metal tools after European contact, carvings became more elaborate and pictorial but remained inside the same formal tradition. The intricate design and vigorous execution of Maori carving soon won the interest of visitors from Captain Cook onwards. For example, the visiting painter Augustus Earle, who travelled through Northland in 1827–28, responded to the skill of Maori artists. In his book, *A Narrative of a Nine Months' Residence in New Zealand in 1827*, Earle saw 'the dawning of the art of sculpture amongst them'.

Throughout the nineteenth century Europeans systematically collected Maori carvings and ornaments, some of which entered museums in Britain, Germany, Sweden and elsewhere in Europe and the United States as well as New Zealand. Often they were prized more for their ethnological than their artistic value and some were disfigured by strategically placed nameplates because of their sexual frankness. During the early years of British settlement most colonists did not think of Maori art in terms of a cultural heritage from which they might draw inspiration. The photographs of amateur artist the Reverend John Kinder (1819–1903) are exceptional in that they reveal his aesthetic appreciation of Maori carvings. For example, about 1867 he photographed the sternpost of a great waka taua, or war canoe, at Auckland (Figure 1). His close-up shot focuses on the carving of the sternpost with its two ribs, grasped at the top by a manaia, and the spiral patterns seen against the sky. He also included the canoe bailer, placed near the stern, with its fine carving. This image is arresting because he shows the canoe outdoors, as part of life, instead of in the customary museum context.

FIGURE 1 **John Kinder, *A Carved Sternpost of a Maori Canoe, Ornamented with Feathers*, c.1867, Hocken Library, Dunedin. Albumen print, 223 x 170 mm**

As an Anglican clergyman, Kinder would have known the views of missionaries who took little interest in traditional Maori carving because of the non-Christian ideas it embodied. For example, about 1845 a carving of the Madonna and Child was made in traditional style for a Catholic church in the Bay of Plenty (Figure 2). Its carver, a recent convert to Catholicism, took the work to a priest who rejected it for display in church on the grounds that it signified a pagan culture. As this incident shows, the gulf between Maori and European sculptural traditions and what they represented was wide and difficult to bridge in the nineteenth century. The carver, for example, introduced the male facial tattoo to the Madonna not by mistake but to give a symbolic dimension to the image. Maori carving carries strong cultural associations and meanings, just as European monuments do.

Because Maori carving was conceptualised, and not based on observation and imitation of actual people and things, it could not be reconciled with the Western sculptural tradition. Knowledge of Maori carving was confined to a limited number of skilled practitioners who had the status of tohunga or priest. Only they knew the correct rituals to observe in carving and the formal language for creating it. For them tradition was enormously important and had to be safeguarded. This acted to preserve Maori carving as unique and identifiable throughout the later nineteenth century when tourism became important. Tourists valued the traditional forms of Maori carving because they were different

from European art, and thereby they helped ensure their survival. Widespread awareness of the value of tribal art in an aesthetic sense, which began in Europe with the Cubists, did not affect the appreciation of Maori art in New Zealand until much later. Effectively Maori carving continued as a separate and distinctive tradition into the twentieth century.

The growth of sculpture in New Zealand after organised settlement began in 1840 is based heavily on European standards of taste. Being mainly European in stock, the colonists chose to import their own artistic standards and works into the country. Understandably at first there was little scope for sculptors in the practical world of the early settlers. The situation was quite unlike that which Samuel Butler, who was in New Zealand from 1859 to 1864, describes in his imaginary world of Erewhon where statues were so plentiful at one stage in its history that the citizens rose up in fury and destroyed good and bad alike to clear their streets and public squares. Although the true setting of his book, *Erewhon, or Over the Range*, 1872, was based on Butler's knowledge of the Canterbury landscape as it was in colonial times, he parodies the situation in nineteenth century England where 'colourless heroes and heroines' would 'loaf about in squares and corners of streets in all weathers without any attempt at artistic sanitation'. By contrast, in colonial New Zealand such places were at first empty of statues so that settlers subscribed funds to pay for commemorative statuary to be brought in from Britain.

Apart from ornamental carving by local stonemasons, New Zealand imported most of its sculpture in the nineteenth century. By the early twentieth century circumstances changed. As settlements became towns and cities, some sculptors found enough work for a small local practice. Teaching positions in art schools established in the main cities helped others make a living. Naturally enough, since most of the sculptors who came to New Zealand were trained in Britain, their work reflected similar ideas and approaches. For the first locally born and trained sculptors the struggle for an independent expression was to be a long and difficult one.

The aim of this book is to study the growth of sculpture in New Zealand from circa 1860 to the present with a view to compiling a concise history of the subject. Traditional Maori carving lies outside the scope of this study because, as we have seen, it has its own distinct cultural history and identity independent of the European tradition. Also, Maori carving has been written about extensively and has been the subject of many books, whereas the work dealt with here has

FIGURE 2 **Unknown artist, *Madonna and Child*, c.1845, Auckland Museum Te Papa Whakahiku. Wood and paua**

received little attention. In the first hundred years there is a strong dependence on British taste and conventions in sculpture. This dependence passes through several different but related stages. At first there is the complete importation of statuary. Then follows the importation of British-trained sculptors as teachers and practitioners. Then appear locally born and trained sculptors who reflect to varying degrees the standards of their teachers.

Gradually New Zealand sculptors challenged British conventions of sculpture by looking to a wider range of sources and seeking more personal forms of expression. An increased awareness of the advantages of working in a unique geographical location with its own natural materials became apparent in the 1940s. Also, an increased feeling of cultural identity as a Pacific nation became firmly established in the 1970s and 1980s, allowing New Zealand artists a more distinctive base for their practice. It is against this background that contemporary sculpture is positioned.

While sculptors have difficulty finding the same support from private patrons as painters, opportunities for commissions have increased. This is especially true in the area of public sculpture. Recently leading sculptors such as Brett Graham and Neil Dawson have completed large commissions in the main centres. An emerging worldwide interest in indigenous peoples' art has lifted the profile of contemporary Maori artists outside the confines of New Zealand.

Of necessity this study is not exhaustive and some sculptors have been excluded for reasons of space and clarity. However, every attempt has been made to present an accurate and undistorted view of the principal developments. If the selection of recent sculptors discussed suggests an Auckland bias, this has been caused more by the size of the city and its increasing importance as an art centre than by any other considerations. In the main, the account is chronological rather than thematic though care has been taken to group artists where there is a shared technical or thematic interest. Applied arts, coinage and medals have been excluded from this study unless they relate directly to an understanding of the sculptors under discussion.

The first five chapters of this book are closely based on my master's thesis written for Melbourne University in 1974 and supervised by the late Sir Joseph Burke. Because of my research in the early 1970s I was able to interview a number of sculptors such as Francis Shurrock, Molly Macalister and Robert Field while they were still alive. My own art training at both the University of Auckland and Canterbury Schools of Art allowed me to be taught by and meet other sculptors such as Jim Allen, Tom Taylor, Paul Beadle and John Kavanagh.

Since I began my work nearly thirty years ago, there has been a gradual growth of sculpture research, especially in the Art History departments at the universities of Canterbury and Auckland. The research of Dr Mark Stocker on public statuary and individual sculptors has been especially important, as has the work of Dr Robin Woodward. Several outstanding theses have been written on sculpture topics, most notably on Beadle, Butler, Hellyar, Trethewey, Twiss and Post-Object Sculpture, and I acknowledge my debt to their authors. Much still remains to be researched if sculpture is to receive the status now accorded to painting. It is my hope that this book will spark further investigations and debate about a long-neglected yet rich aspect of New Zealand culture.

Michael Dunn
Auckland, 2002

I

Early Carvers and Masons: 1860–1890

The origins of European sculpture in colonial New Zealand are to be found in the decorative carving made by carpenters and stonemasons for domestic and public buildings, furniture and gravestones. The functional character of the earliest sculpture relates to the economics of colonial life in which there was little time for cultural pursuits. The domestic buildings were at first simple affairs, sometimes mere huts similar in construction to those of the Maori. Even good furniture was a luxury. Until skilled cabinetmakers arrived in the colony, the settlers were dependent on what could be brought out on small vessels from England or Australia. In such an environment it is easy to see that there was little place for sculpture as a fine art. The same was true at first of colonial painting, which began with occasional sketches made by surveyors and clergymen in time left free from their regular profession.

Just as much colonial painting is of historic rather than artistic interest, so too much early decorative carving in New Zealand is charming in context but little more. Occasionally, however, as in some elaborate and inventive wooden gravestones in Northland cemeteries, unknown craftsmen could integrate skilfully carved patterns with commemorative lettering. But the first substantial body of carving grew from the needs of architects for detailing on the Gothic and Classic Revival buildings erected in the 1860s as the colonial settlements grew in size and as more permanent, imposing structures were required. The period of systematic colonisation in New Zealand, begun in 1840, corresponded with the early Victorian age in Britain. In architecture this was a time of revival styles, none of which was more influential than the Gothic. It was to the revivalist taste in architecture that New Zealand owes its best early carving in Dunedin, Christchurch and Auckland.

Victorian architectural taste required skilled stone cutting to ensure the proper execution of designs, as well as occasional inventive carving to give authenticity of detail, especially in Gothic Revival buildings. Carving of this kind had flourished as the Gothic revivalists passed from their early satisfaction with sham ruins to the enthusiasm for fastidiously exact detail epitomised in the practice of Augustus Welby Pugin and the writings of John Ruskin. Ruskin, who was an earnest advocate for careful imitation of nature in carved architectural ornament as well as in painting, had taken pleasure in the elaborate carvings of the O'Shea brothers at the Oxford Museum. Augustus Selwyn, first Anglican Bishop of New Zealand, and Frederick Thatcher, his architect, both members of the Cambridge Camden Society, introduced the influence of that society to ecclesiastical building in the colony. This background of ideas made architects readily receptive to the skills of stone and wood carvers who were able to introduce inventive detail to their buildings.

For example, Edward Rumsey (1824–1909), who built Auckland's Supreme Court building to a Gothic design in 1865–68, was quick to use the services of a young immigrant who proved his ability to carve gargoyles and portrait heads on the exterior of his building. In this case Rumsey gave the carver considerable freedom once he was sure of his artistic ability. Similarly, William Mason (1810–1897), who designed many buildings in the colony, employed the services of skilled carvers to provide ornamental stonework on his major structures such as the Post Office in Dunedin (1865), built in a Neoclassic style and incorporating a carved frieze. Because of the scattered nature of the New Zealand settlements and their comparatively small size, the number of buildings erected which incorporated original carving was not large. Notable works only resulted when fortunate circumstances brought architect and skilled mason together.

Conditions for a time were more favourable for this to happen in Dunedin

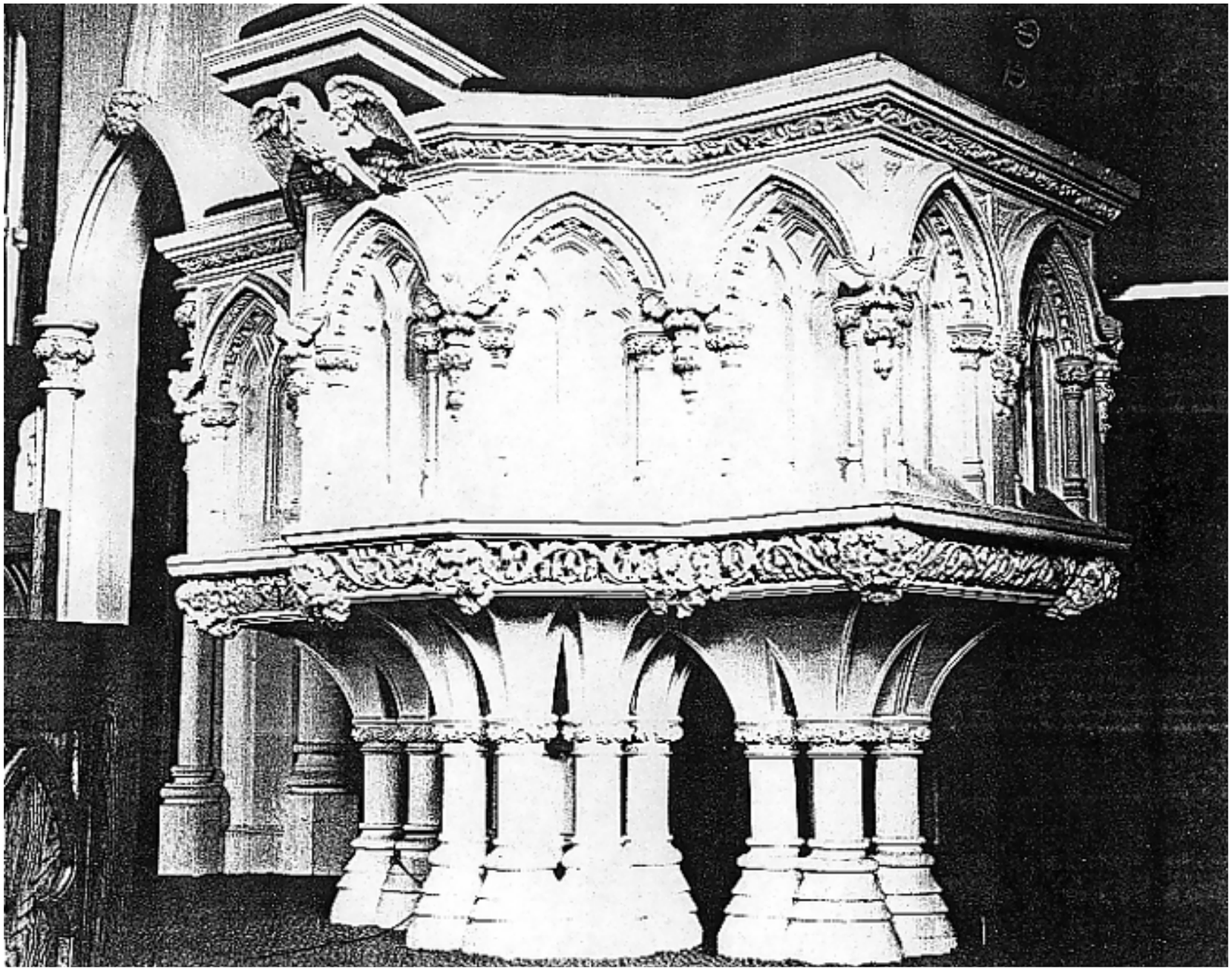


FIGURE 3 **John Louis Godfrey, *Carved Pulpit*, 1873, First Church, Dunedin. Oamaru stone, 2350 x 2600 x 2600 mm**

than elsewhere. Owing to the discovery of gold in Otago in 1861, Dunedin prospered more than the other settlements. Suddenly, builders, architects and masons were in demand as the population of the southern town more than doubled from 12,000 to 30,000 in the second half of that year. It was a propitious moment for skilled craftsmen to arrive there.

Among those drawn to Dunedin at that time was a talented English carver, John Louis Godfrey, whose work is of some sculptural interest. Perhaps attracted by the lure of a quick fortune to be made in the goldfields, Godfrey arrived in Dunedin about 1862 and he found extensive scope for his talent as a stone and wood carver on major buildings erected in the following years, including the Bank of New Zealand (1863), the Post Office (1865), First Church (1861–73) and Larnach Castle (1871–76). Both the extent of his practice and the frequent references to his work by name in the local press attest to his reputation as the best carver in the city.

Godfrey's carving is of a decorative kind, based on a close observation of nature, especially of plants, flowers and bird life. His style is seen at its best in his work for First Church, a Gothic Revival building by R. A. Lawson, for which he carved interior detail, including the stone pulpit (Figure 3). On the pulpit he carved a magnificent ornamental frieze of intertwining vines, fruit and flowers. His technical virtuosity is evident in the deep undercutting from which the frieze gains tonal depth as well as formal strength. There is sureness in his delineation of natural forms without strain or fussiness. Elsewhere, on the interior capitals there are carvings of butterflies, birds and mice, including a bird feeding its young, which attest to Godfrey's acute powers of observation. Work such as this allowed the artist's inventive ability full scope.

Although Godfrey probably thought of himself more as a craftsman than an artist, it is worth noting that he exhibited examples of wood carving at the first New Zealand Exhibition, held at Dunedin in 1865. This shows pride in the quality of his carving, which in this instance was shared by the judges who awarded him an honorary certificate and commended his work for its 'completeness of execution and finish'. Judging from the list of his exhibits at the exhibition, which included a carved mantelpiece, candelabra and a fire screen, Godfrey was a versatile craftsman able to adapt his carving skills to the task in hand. This versatility was useful for survival in a young country.

Godfrey's versatility is also apparent in his willingness to experiment with Oamaru stone, a local material quarried to the north of Dunedin and used increasingly in construction work throughout Otago at the period. Before its tendency to fail on exposure to weathering was known, Oamaru stone had a vogue as a material especially suited to ornamental building. The Governor, Sir George Grey, attended an exhibition in 1867 at Dunedin to witness the speed at which balusters and capitals could be made from the stone. Godfrey was one of the carvers whose skill with the material was demonstrated on that occasion. Not only was Godfrey enterprising enough to experiment with Oamaru stone, but he also carved on commission a New Zealand subject of a hen waxeye at its nest to demonstrate 'to those in neighbouring colonies the adaptability of this stone for building and ornamental purposes'.

Godfrey too was among the master craftsmen engaged by a wealthy businessman and Member of Parliament William James Mudie Larnach (1833–98) to realise his ambition for an 'elegant house' in what was described as the 'English Manorial' style, which he built on the Otago Peninsula. The architect was R. A. Lawson. Helped by his sons who were trained as carvers, Godfrey worked along with Italian plasterers specially brought out to decorate the interior rooms of the castle. At the castle Godfrey and his sons carved an elaborate ceiling for the dining room, ornamental brackets, a stairway and stone lions flanking the entrance steps. It was a major commission which kept Godfrey fully occupied until at least 1879, for in that year some of his finished carving was sent for inspection by the Governor. Of this work an enthusiastic reporter for the *Otago Witness* commented that 'Few finer specimens of carving have ever been exhibited, even in the Home Country'. A fitting term of praise for adornments to Larnach's castle which, in itself like its owner's tomb (a scaled-down model of Dunedin's First Church), was a symbol of British cultural discernment in this remote outpost of the Empire.

Drastically changed circumstances in the 1880s produced an economic depression and led to an exodus from Dunedin. In 1887 Louis Godfrey sold the house in King Street that he had bought for £850. Shortly afterwards he left the country, never to return. His last Dunedin work was on St Joseph's Cathedral, 1886, designed by Francis William Petre, where his eldest son, Louis, assisted him by carving the high altar. The son stayed in Dunedin but found little work and died a pauper in 1910. His father's career had spanned the prosperous years of the city's growth to which his skill had added considerable adornment. Godfrey's carvings demonstrate the transplanting of British taste to a New Zealand city. Its anonymous quality and functionalism made it an acceptable expression of success, both public and practical, when sculpture as an art struggled to find local relevance. Elsewhere in the country conditions were comparable.

Carving in Christchurch, as in Dunedin, was introduced in ornaments on the rising Gothic buildings which gave to the young city an impressive skyline and an air of consequence. The city's favourable location on the Canterbury Plains provided easy access to pastoral lands, from which wealth was to flow less dramatically but with more consistency than from the goldfields of Otago. Among the first and most impressive of Christchurch's public complexes were the Canterbury Provincial Government Buildings, by Benjamin Mountfort, erected between 1858 and 1865. Its elaborate Gothic design culminates in the vaulted stone Great Hall, described by Nikolaus Pevsner as one of the finest High Victorian spaces outside Europe. Fittingly, the decoration of this building, housing as it did the seat of provincial government, was ornamented with painting and carving.

The sculptural ornaments were carried out by a mason from Nottingham, William Brassington (1840–1905), who came to the colony at the age of twenty-three. Brassington carved corbels and capitals for the Great Hall as well as Gothic quatrefoils and ornament of a highly decorative character on the capitals of the stone stairway columns leading to Bellamy's refreshment rooms. On many of

FIGURE 4 **William Brassington, *Two Hands*, 1865, Provincial Council Chambers, Christchurch. Stone, life size**

the capitals clusters of tree leaves, including oak and ivy, are shown as well as birds and animals introduced with 'playful humour', as a contemporary critic described them. Brassington's range of subjects included small portrait heads of nineteenth-century notables including Queen Victoria, Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, Florence Nightingale, Major-General Charles George Gordon, David Livingstone and the Marquess of Salisbury. Despite certain awkwardnesses in their drawing, these blocky faces integrate very well with the architecture, to which they are totally subordinate.

The most unusual subjects in the whole building are situated in the shadows of the Press Gallery. These are carvings of two hands shown as if clasping the stems of the leaves, which decorate the corbels (Figure 4). There is no better example of Brassington's ability to conceive his ideas within the framework of the architecture. Yet these two hands contain a comment on labour as well, for one is broad and sturdy, the other slender and graceful; one is the hand of a manual worker, the other of a scholar. The mason apparently used his own hand as a model for that of the workman, thereby testifying both to his skill and to a pride in his work. His comment on two kinds of labour was singularly appropriate to the buildings housing a democratically elected Provincial Government, and prophetic too of a society in which manual work was long regarded as worth at least as much as that of the intellect. As a further evidence of his contribution to the building, Brassington carved a self-portrait on a corbel showing him with chisel in hand, as if he had just looked up from his task.

Comparatively, Brassington's carving is less accomplished than Godfrey's executed at Dunedin at the same time. But Brassington's works are noteworthy more for their honest qualities of design and invention than for technical excellence. The Canterbury Provincial Government Buildings contain Brassington's major achievement as a creative sculptor. Unfortunately his practice as stonemason and builder afterwards took a more functional turn. However, it is worth noting that he was entrusted with designing the pedestal for Thomas Woolner's statue of John Robert Godley, which was ordered from England. This pedestal was to contain a design with an oak tree and native flax plants. Brassington completed the work in 1866 only to find that the measurements supplied from England were inaccurate so that his pedestal was unusable. As a consequence a second pedestal without any ornamentation was hurriedly completed for the inauguration.

This incident shows the comparatively lowly status of the local mason and his work in relation to the elevated position of English sculptors and their statues. Although Brassington was able to carry out carving as an applied art on a building, there appears no evidence that he was ever commissioned to make freestanding sculpture. At this stage such works were invariably imported from Britain. Significantly, too, the important commission for sculptural panels on the Selwyn pulpit in Christchurch Cathedral was given to the English sculptors John Roddis and R. L. Clark, even though the subject matter, drawn from the history of the Anglican Church in New Zealand, would have been suitable for local talent. Undoubtedly the local mason was at a severe disadvantage in such cases when competing with trained British artists.

Brassington spent the rest of his career primarily as a builder and stonemason in Christchurch. There appears to have been no other carver in the city who followed his lead. However, his son, Claudius, born in 1873, who trained as a sculptor, must have been influenced by his father's example. Creative carving remained a sporadic development in the New Zealand towns depending very much on circumstances bringing architect and mason together. In Wellington, where because of the fear of earthquakes most of the building was in wood, there is little of sculptural interest at this time, although the range and variety of wooden fretwork on colonial buildings is remarkable.

By contrast Auckland was fortunate to attract a talented young die-caster from Westphalia in Prussia, Anton Teutenberg (1840–1933), who practised as a stone carver in the city for a short period in the 1860s. In a series of architectural carvings for public buildings he revealed an extraordinary sculptural ability. The son of a gunsmith to King Frederick William IV of Prussia, he had been trained by his father as a die-caster. While visiting New Zealand in 1866, he met Messrs. Amos and Taylor, contractors for the new Auckland Supreme Court building

PLATE 1 **Anton Teutenberg, *Queen Victoria and Prince Albert*, 1866, High Court, Waterloo Quadrant, Auckland. General view.**

(now High Court). From this acquaintance came his commission to make carvings for the courthouse.

Relating the casual origin of this commission, Teutenberg once said: 'I had never done work of that kind before but I said I would try. I practised on a piece of sandstone and to my surprise the architect, Mr Rumsey, said I could go ahead.' Teutenberg began with carved heads for the label-stops of the entrance porch, working to designs supplied by the architect. Although generally there seems to be little method in the selection and positioning of the portrait heads, Queen Victoria and Prince Albert were given pride of place, facing each other from either side of the central entrance arch of the porch (Plate 1). People of importance in the colony, such as Sir George Grey (who was twice Governor of New Zealand) and Edward Gibbon Wakefield (who had done much to advance the progress of organised settlement) were also honoured with portraits.

Teutenberg conceived his best carvings broadly so that they look uncluttered. For example, his head of Victoria (Figure 5) is basically ovoid and at an angle to the simple cylinder of her neck. Details of eyes, nose and mouth, which are secondary in importance to these main forms, are cut out with refreshing simplicity. Even the coronet that Victoria wears is not obtrusive but is integrated with her hair into a framing arch around the face. These carvings show the young craftsman's natural talent, which found an outlet almost by chance. Because of Teutenberg's success with his first carvings, he was given a free hand to invent gargoyles for the upper parts of the building. His imaginative ability was considerable, as the completed carvings show.

Although the Supreme Court carvings are generally accepted as Teutenberg's earliest works in Auckland, a case can also be made for a group of twenty heads carved on the façade of the Pitt Street Methodist Church. Since the church was opened in October 1866 and the carvings were placed high up, some on the finials of the Gothic façade, it is unlikely that they could have been worked on

FIGURE 5 **Anton Teutenberg, *Queen Victoria*, 1866, High Court, Auckland. Stone, 260 x 260 x 240 mm**

after the building was in use. This suggests that Teutenberg would have carved these heads contemporaneously with his first work for the Supreme Court. In style the Pitt Street carvings are comparable. The heads include those of Charles and John Wesley, the founders of Methodism, which are situated on the dripstones above the central window of the Pitt Street façade. Unfortunately the height at which the carvings are placed does not allow the details to be seen clearly. Also the small scale of the carvings means that they function more as ornaments to the building than as individual sculptures.

Once work had been completed on the Supreme Court, Rumsey again employed Teutenberg for similar carving on his Gothic Revival Post Office in Shortland Street (now demolished), which opened in 1867. As in the earlier commissions, he carved portrait heads on the label-stops above the pointed arches of the two-storeyed façade. His rate of pay was £1 a day, an increase over the 15 shillings he was paid for his carvings on the Supreme Court. The Post Office heads are over life-size, which marks an enlargement of scale over the earlier series with which they have similarities both in subject matter and technique. Once again figures of importance such as Queen Victoria and Sir George Grey were portrayed as well as some of the Maori leaders of the period including Potatau Te Wherowhero (1800–1866) (Figure 6). He was the first Maori king who helped to unify the Waikato tribes during the New Zealand Wars with the settlers.

Compared with the earlier portraits, those on the Post Office reveal a definite progression in characterisation. This is most noticeable in the difference between the two versions of Queen Victoria. The earlier Supreme Court carving (Figure 5) shows the Queen as young and beautiful, as she might have appeared at her coronation some thirty years earlier. The Post Office carving (Figure 7), however, reveals a somewhat different aspect. Queen Victoria is depicted as a plain and determined middle-aged woman. Teutenberg has refrained neither from carving bags beneath her eyes nor from indicating the sagging flesh under her jaw. These details have been rendered without any loss of the sculptural statement of the head. The same is true of the portrait of Potatau Te Wherowhero, whose pronounced tattoo follows the forms of his face without disrupting them. It seems in this case that the sculptor enjoyed the rhythm of the spiral forms of the tattoo, which are echoed in the animated treatment of his hair, cut into curly tufts full of movement and life.

Significantly, Teutenberg's depiction of the Maori is not naively romantic, like that of Gustavus von Tempsky (1828–68), an army officer during the New Zealand Wars and a fellow Prussian who portrayed in his watercolours glamorous scenes of battle between resolute soldiers and fierce native warriors. Teutenberg's objectivity is remarkable considering the tensions of that epoch. The 1860s was a difficult period of war between the Maori and the settlers, fought largely over the questions of land and sovereignty. In these wars the Maori proved a worthy opponent whose fighting prowess won respect from the British army. Teutenberg's portrayal of Potatau shows him as both man and warrior. The same is true of his portrait of Paora Tuhare (1825–98), a chief of the Ngati Whatua tribe and friend of the Pakeha. While recording Paora's features without flattery or condescension, Teutenberg was able to look past racial differences to the basic humanity of his subject. In doing so, he proved his perception as a portrait sculptor who could approach his subjects without compromising his democratic spirit.

This is verified, too, by an anecdote recorded about his work on the Post Office. Apparently the carver was found in the act of putting his own features on one of the carvings when the contractor interrupted him and demanded

FIGURE 6 **Anton Teutenberg, *Potatau Te Whero Whero*, 1867. From Shortland Street Post Office, Auckland. Stone, height, 401mm**

FIGURE 7 **Anton Teutenberg, *Queen Victoria*, 1867. From Shortland Street Post Office, Auckland. Stone, height, 401mm**

that his face and not that of the artisan should be recorded for the benefit of posterity. At this Teutenberg picked up his mallet and shattered the head with one blow; the contractor's face which finally took its place was distinguishable by its unflattering expression. With the Post Office commissions Teutenberg's brief career as a professional stone carver came to an end. He is said to have remarked that such work was 'only a hobby for which there was no scope'. This observation was certainly true, for architectural tastes changed rapidly to exclude ornamental carving of this kind.

In later years Teutenberg executed the occasional commission, such as the wooden pulpit for St John's Methodist Church off Ponsonby Road, Auckland, for which he also carved a Gothic reredos. This kind of work, however, was purely ornamental. Teutenberg's creative energies were now directed into the manufacture of jewellery and die-making. One of his best-known works of this kind is the Fire Brigade Association Long Service Medal, for which he made the die in 1886. In 1933, when Teutenberg died at the age of 93, his carvings had become part of Auckland's early history. They provide a fascinating example of the taste for architectural embellishment, which extended throughout New Zealand during the 1860s. The passing of this taste spelt the end of the commissions and the inventive designs to which they gave rise. But it was to this coincidence of taste and skill that the colony owed its first substantial body of sculpture. Divorced from architecture, the art was slow to take root in colonial soil, where emphasis was focused more on economic than artistic objectives.

II

Public Statuary of the Victorian and Edwardian Periods

As the New Zealand settlements grew steadily during the late nineteenth century they took pride in their short but eventful histories. Their awareness of the role played by the pioneers of the settlements and of the contribution made by noted politicians and citizens found public expression in commemorative statuary. The Victorians attached great importance to memorials as a means of commemorating individuals who had made their mark in the public sphere. This extended to the lavish use of statuary for family memorials in the spacious cemeteries that evolved during Queen Victoria's reign. Victoria herself approved one of the most elaborate memorials of the age with the Royal Albert Memorial in London's Kensington Gardens (1864–76). Its centrepiece is a statue of Prince Albert. Monuments to individuals became important features of the Victorian and Edwardian townscapes. The single figure, cast in bronze or carved in marble, was set on a high pedestal above the surrounding streets and parks. In its aloofness and stasis the monument was at once part of life and remote from it.

The first public statue erected in New Zealand, of John Robert Godley in Christchurch, was commissioned in 1862 by the Provincial Council of Canterbury as a tribute to the prematurely deceased founder of the settlement (Figure 8). Godley, a High Church Tory and idealist, symbolised the Utopian plans with which Canterbury had been founded. It was singularly appropriate, therefore, to erect a public statue of Godley which acknowledged his individual achievement and at the same time commemorated the values for which he stood. Such a monument shows the way in which an open society could pay tribute to an individual it thought worthy of commemoration. It was no longer the case that only monarchs or victorious generals were celebrated in this way. Instead there was a democratic process of raising money from the people through subscription or fund-raising events. By placing the statue in an urban context, in this case in the central location of Cathedral Square, the people brought the monument close to their daily lives where it became a cause of civic pride.

Commissioning of the statue was entrusted to a committee in England that decided, on the advice of Sir John Simeon, to invite Thomas Woolner (1825–92) to execute the work. Woolner, once a member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and later a full member of the Royal Academy, was then enjoying a rising reputation as a sculptor. The Godley statue commission established a pattern for commemorative statuary which was to remain basically unaltered for over fifty years. Almost invariably statuary was imported from Britain, usually on the advice of either a committee or respected individual. The sculptor was an established practitioner of academic persuasion and impeccable qualifications. At first, with no local sculptors available to do the work, it was inevitable that monumental statuary and the standard of taste it represented had to be imported. Although the quantity of public statuary commissioned was not large and the quality not always of the highest order, these monuments merit attention because of their historical and social interest as well as the influence they exerted on subsequent sculpture in New Zealand.

Woolner's Godley statue is not only the first public statue imported into New Zealand but arguably also the finest. Woolner had not known Godley during his lifetime, but had photographs as well as verbal descriptions of his subject. From this basis he succeeded in creating a dignified image that satisfied Simeon, who had been a close personal friend of Godley, as well as the sculptor's fellow artists. They were well pleased with his conception, thinking that he had solved 'the difficulty of modern costume in sculpture'. This reference to 'the difficulty of modern costume' implies the continuing influence of the neoclassical school of thought on British sculpture. The influence of John Flaxman (1755–1826)


JOHN ROBERT GODLEY
FOUNDER OF CANTERBURY.
1850.

PLATE 2 **George Lawson, *William Sefton Moorhouse*, c.1884, Botanical Gardens, Christchurch. Bronze, over life size**

and the successful practice of Victorian adherents of the style, such as John Gibson (1790–1866), gave neoclassicism lasting authority. Concerned that rendering modern costume would impair their works, neoclassical sculptors preferred either heroic nudity or draperies modelled on classical lines.

Although Woolner was not a committed opponent of neoclassicism, in portraiture he preferred, as did Sir Francis Chantrey (1781–1841) before him, to use contemporary dress and a more naturalistic approach. This is evident in his Godley where the pose is informal, contributing to a natural effect. He shows Godley walking towards us with his coat casually over one arm and his hat in the other, as if he had stopped to greet us and removed his hat in a polite gesture. The pose does not go as far as those used by the French realist painter, Gustave Courbet (1819–77) in his famous painting *The Meeting*, 1854. Courbet drew on popular imagery for his informality and directness. Nevertheless, in a less forceful way, Woolner has affinities with the realist spirit it embodies. The Godley statue, one of the sculptor's earliest full-length portraits, points to the increasingly realistic direction British sculpture was to take in the latter part of the century. Then, under French influence, sculptors turned to bronze in their search for naturalistic modelling, stressing textures and a lively surface. An important influence here was Aimé-Jules Dalou (1838–1902), in London from 1872 to 1879, who was an exponent of what was termed the New Sculpture.

By arranging Godley's costume with an eye for rhythm and big masses, Woolner escaped a feeling of fussiness even where he took delight in details such as the creases in the waistcoat. The pose, though informal, is elegant. In particular, the head is an accomplished performance, remarked upon by the novelist Anthony Trollope when he visited Christchurch in 1873. He thought the whole statue 'very noble' observing: 'Among modern statues I know no head that stands better on its shoulders'. The statue was much admired not only in London, where it was first exhibited prior to its shipment, but also at Christchurch when it was unveiled in 1867.

With its acquisition of the Godley statue Christchurch had been extremely fortunate. Later works imported from Britain varied in quality. Their reception, too, was not always uncritical. The statue of William Sefton Moorhouse, which was the second public commission for the city, illustrates this (Plate 2). Moorhouse (1825–81), who had been a Superintendent of Canterbury, was associated especially with the successful project of linking the town with its harbour by means of a rail tunnel. Funds for the memorial were raised by public subscription. George Lawson (1832–1904), a Scottish sculptor resident in London, was selected to carry out the work. Lawson was a reputable artist who exhibited regularly at the Royal and Scottish Academies, though he was a member of neither.

Whereas Woolner had managed to satisfy both the requirements of art and portraiture, a difficult task at any time, Lawson was apparently unable to do so, judging by initial dissatisfaction with his portrait. Like Woolner, Lawson had been asked to work from photographs of a man he had never seen. When the statue arrived in Christchurch, a hastily called meeting of Moorhouse's friends was asked to inspect the statue and then answer two questions: one, whether the statue was a reasonable likeness; two, whether it possessed artistic merit.

FIGURE 8 **Thomas Woolner, *John Godley*, 1863–65, Cathedral Square, Christchurch. Bronze, height 2972 mm**

According to a newspaper report in the *Press* newspaper of August 1885, the answer to the first question was 'a unanimous no'; to the second, from those who felt qualified to judge, an equally emphatic negative. But, after this initial outcry, supporters of the statue took the opposite view: '. . . the statue of the late William Sefton Moorhouse . . . on being viewed by more competent judges, has been proclaimed a very fair likeness, and exceedingly good work of art '. There the matter rested. As an early instance of colonial connoisseurship, it is entertaining proof of a critical spirit.

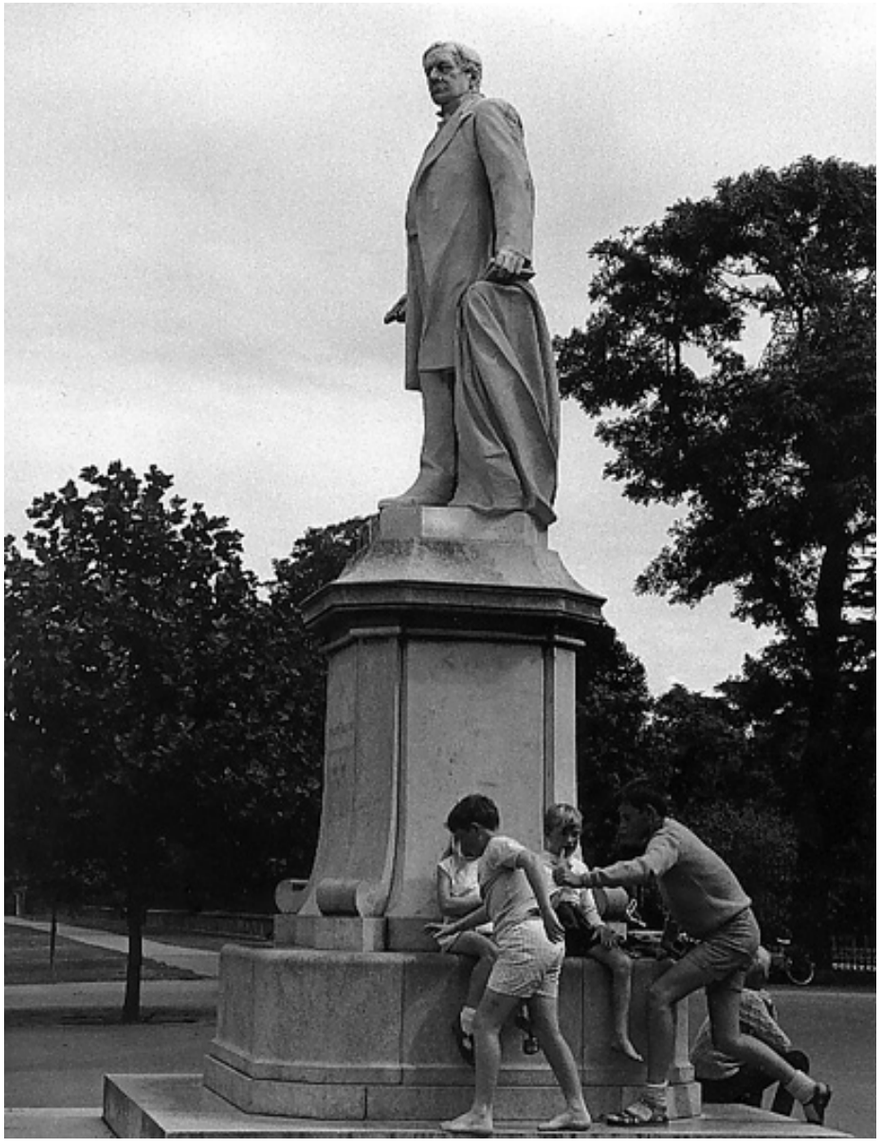


FIGURE 9 **Herbert Hampton, *William Rolleston*, 1905–06, Canterbury Museum Forecourt, Christchurch. Marble, height 2408mm**

Lawson depicted Moorhouse seated in his chair gazing towards the tunnel with which he was associated. Like Woolner's Godley, Moorhouse is in contemporary dress, and he is posed informally with arms folded and legs crossed. Sir Francis Chantrey had popularised the casual, seated pose in works such as his memorial to James Watt (1824) in Birmingham. Whereas Chantrey had simplified details of costume and retained a measure of reserve in the pose, Lawson reflects the greater naturalistic interests of the late nineteenth century in his textural treatment of Moorhouse's dress and full beard. Moorhouse's crossed legs add to the informality of the work.

A later statue was commissioned to commemorate the noted statesman William Rolleston (1831–1903) who, like Moorhouse, had been a Superintendent of Canterbury and Member of Parliament. Unveiled in 1906, the over-life-size marble statue (Figure 9), was carried out by the English sculptor Herbert Hampton. At the time Hampton's work was considered a good likeness and he was thought to have 'caught the expression on the face with notable success'. Indicative of the sentiments behind the erection of such statuary are the remarks made at the unveiling by Sir Charles Bowen, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. The *Canterbury Times* reported him as saying 'he was quite sure that future generations would be the better for seeing the memorial to such a man in their city. It would remind them of the moral and intellectual inheritance they possessed.'

As a symbol the statue functions well enough but, unlike Woolner's and Lawson's bronzes, Hampton's marble figure is rigid and now lacking in surface interest (perhaps because of weathering). Rolleston is shown standing and resting one arm on a supporting block of marble, designed to look like drapery. Although the head has some life, the same is not true of the costume. It is possible that his studio assistants carved large areas of this with more patience than inspiration.

Similar faults mar the monumental marble figure of the noted Governor and Prime Minister Sir George Grey (Figure 10) erected at the corner of Grey's Avenue and Queen Street, Auckland, in 1904. It was commissioned from Francis Williamson (1833–1920), sculptor to Queen Victoria, who had a wide and distinguished practice. Williamson was requested to show the Governor in the prime of life addressing and exhorting an audience, and thus displaying the oratory for which he was famous. However, the final pose is unimaginative in conception. In fact it resembles that later used by Hampton in his Rolleston statue. Both have the figure standing beside a supporting block, one foot forward the other set slightly back, with one arm at the side and the other raised in gesture, and the head turned at an angle to the body. To add to the similarity in both instances the figure is clad in a three-quarter-length frock coat.

If we did not know the effect aimed at, we would imagine that Sir George Grey was engaged in nothing more than a light conversation about the weather. His face is almost expressionless, like the drapery, which is carved with a dull competence and no feeling for the material. To indicate Grey's association with the Maori people the supporting column, behind the figure, is carved with a Maori design. But this lifeless travesty of Maori woodcarving demonstrates the gulf between the two cultures (Figure 11). Anything more antithetical to the virile spirit of Maori carving than this frozen marble form is difficult to imagine. In addition, the carvings show puzzling departures from Maori practice, despite the availability of examples to Williamson in London. The lowly position of the carving can now suggest subordination and conquest of the Maori, though it was probably intended to represent the cementing of ties between them and the settlers. The statue was shifted to Albert Park in 1922 where it has become a target of vandals and Maori activists. For example, on Waitangi Day in 1987 the head of the statue was broken off as a protest against Grey and what he had come to represent in terms of recent issues in race relations. Because the original head was not recovered, a local sculptor Roderick Burgess was asked to make a replacement. At present other parts of the statue remain in a vandalised condition.

Fortunately some of the later public portrait statues have more distinction. This applies to the statue of Sir John Logan Campbell (1817–1912), a pioneer and benefactor of Auckland, who was accorded the unusual honour of having a monument erected to him during his lifetime in recognition of his generous gift of Cornwall Park to the city. The statue was commissioned from Henry Pegram, R.A. (1862–1937), who also obtained orders for two portrait busts for Parliament House, Wellington. The monumental full-length statue, unveiled in 1906 (Plate 3), shows Campbell in mayoral robes standing in a stiff, hierarchic stance on a granite plinth above a rock base that rises from the circular pool to form a mound. It could be argued that this symbolises the towering character and achievements of Logan Campbell who was apparently satisfied with the work. Plumes of water play over the rocks creating an effect of sound and moisture. The combination of the memorial statue with a fountain is unusual for New Zealand and gives some interest to the work, as does the park setting. Also of good quality is the full-length bronze of Richard Seddon, the noted Liberal Prime Minister, by Sir Thomas Brock, R.A. (1847–1922), prominently located outside Parliament House in Wellington. Brock, by showing Seddon in typical orator's pose, as if emphasising a point by emphatic gesture, has obtained something of the vitality of his sitter that Williamson and Hampton missed in theirs. This work was unveiled in 1915.

FIGURE 10 **Francis Williamson, *Sir George Grey*, 1901–04, Albert Park, Auckland. Marble, height 2700mm. Photograph of the unveiling ceremony, Auckland Public Library**

FIGURE 11 **Francis Williamson, *Sir George Grey*, 1901–04, Albert Park, Auckland. Detail**

PLATE 3 **Henry Pegram, *Sir John Logan Campbell*, 1904–06, Cornwall Park, Auckland. Bronze, height 2897 mm**

Apart from the commemoration of those who contributed to local public affairs, some statues were erected to symbolise cultural and imperial ties. For example, public statues in Dunedin, Timaru, Hokitika and Auckland commemorate the Scottish poet Robert Burns. Appropriately, a great-grandniece of the poet unveiled the Dunedin statue in 1887. Scottish colonists, who had strong emotional links with their home country, founded Dunedin and the initial stimulus for the Burns statue came from the Ayrshire Society, a group dedicated to preserving links with that county and keeping up Scottish traditions.

Sir John Steell (1804–91), Scotland's most famous Victorian sculptor, was chosen to model the statue. At the time of the Dunedin commission Steell was nearing the end of a long and successful career, in the course of which he had carried out several Burns statues, notably those for New York, Dundee and London. His conception of the poet is a graceful and contemplative one (Plate 4). He shows a youthful Burns, quill in hand, seated on a tree stump gazing unseeingly ahead, as if lost in thought. In its studied informality, Steell's Burns recalls works by Chantrey, who had been an admirer of the younger man's

PLATE 4 **Sir John Steell, *Robert Burns*, 1884–87, Octagon, Dunedin. Bronze, height 2700 mm**

sculpture. Steell has an interest in naturalistic aspects, evident (for example) in his attention to the bark on the tree stump and the folds of the cloak. But this is complemented by his feeling for major movements, such as the flow of the cloak curving from the poet's left shoulder to right thigh. The head is symmetrical and somewhat idealised.

Auckland's Burns statue, by Frederick Pomeroy R.A. (1856–1924), is less idealised than Steell's and presents us with the rugged image of a man of action. Pomeroy, who was a student of Dalou at Lambeth Art School, depicts Burns in a more forceful pose, standing with one arm resting on a plough, as if he had paused from labour to write a line of verse. It is hardly accidental that Burns was the only significant poet commemorated by public statues in New Zealand. He was popular with the people and had a down-to-earth quality that was appreciated by the colonists and their immediate descendants. This aspect is illustrated by a story about the Dunedin Burns statue, which is situated in the Octagon directly in front of the Anglican cathedral. It is said that an old woman just arrived from Scotland was moved to declare on seeing it: 'Ah, Rabbie, ye

old de'il, as bad as ever, I see; your back to the kirk and your face to a public house'. Whether by accident or design, to this day Burns faces away from the cathedral and gazes in the direction of a hotel on the other side of the Octagon.

Despite the popularity of Burns, it was fittingly Queen Victoria herself who received the most numerous public commemorations, with statues in each of the four main cities. These works, all commissioned either towards the end of her long reign or shortly after her death, were tributes to the perceived benefits achieved under her rule, as well as symbols of empire and imperial ties. On the occasion of the unveiling of the Auckland statue (Plate 5) in 1899, the *New Zealand Herald* made pertinent comment about the significance of the statue of the Queen, as follows: 'the statue will remain when all of us have passed away to remind our children and our children's children of a wise and virtuous ruler whom we loved and honoured, and of our attachment to the British monarchy and our affection for the Motherland.'

In a later passage the same writer drew attention to a different but related aspect recalling that: 'The foundations of Auckland province were cemented with the blood of Maoris slain in battle, and today the foundation on which Auckland's statue of the Queen rests is of stone cut and quarried at the instance of the Maoris in peace and amity, as a token of their love for the great Empress.' At the unveiling ceremony itself the editor saw the 'Imperial power' of the British race displayed when the Governor-General, 'attired in afternoon dress' and 'accommodated with a cushioned seat' drew back the Royal Standard of Britain wreathing the statue and exposed the 'great white empress' to the admiring public of the colony.

The Auckland Queen Victoria was the first of the four statues in the major cities and the only one erected during the monarch's lifetime. It was commissioned from Francis Williamson, who, as a favoured sculptor to the Queen, was well qualified for the task. His statue, a bronze variant of that commissioned by the Royal College of Physicians (1887) in London, depicts the Queen standing and holding a fan and handkerchief. He shows Victoria as elderly but dignified. Because of the relatively small scale of the work and the modest height of the pedestal, Victoria appears more accessible and less intimidating than in many other memorials. Williamson found every part of the Queen's costume worth his attention, so we need to be close enough to see the detail. His recording of seemingly unimportant trivia, such as the patterns on her dress, contributes to her characterisation as a woman as well as a monarch and helps to humanise her image. Williamson's approach found favour with the Queen, who gave him sittings and lent him the crown, robe and jewellery to help him achieve exactitude. It is a far remove from the 'severe simplicity' that John Gibson had aimed for in his monumental version of Victoria, designed some forty years earlier, in the Houses of Parliament, Westminster. The Christchurch Queen Victoria statue, another but larger version of the Auckland one, was designed as a Jubilee memorial for the province. It was approved in 1901, shortly before Victoria's death, but not completed until 1903. Elaborate and vivid bronze reliefs by

FIGURE 12 **Alfred Drury, *Queen Victoria Memorial*, 1902–05, Kent Terrace, Wellington. Bronze, height 3010 mm**

PLATE 5 **Francis Williamson, *Queen Victoria*, 1897–99, Albert Park, Auckland. Bronze, height 1800 mm**

Williamson set into the base commemorated the early pioneers of Canterbury, the industries from which the province derived its wealth and the South African war.

Once news of Queen Victoria's death reached Wellington in January 1901, donations were made to start a memorial fund. This eventually led to the commissioning of an over-life-size bronze statue of the Queen, dressed in robes of state and holding the orb and sceptre (Figure 12). At the unveiling ceremony in 1905, recorded in the *New Zealand Times*, Lord Plunket, the Governor, commented favourably on the work and choice of site, as follows: 'I think it is, indeed, only fitting that in the capital city of one of the most prosperous and contented portions of the British dominions, there should be erected a worthy memorial of the Great Queen of our Empire. I think that it is a very happy circumstance that this statue should stand where it does, for it proclaims to the anxious weary immigrant, as he arrives upon your shores, that besides the better material prosperity he has been led to expect, he has come among a loyal people, and is under the British Constitution, with the freedom which every British subject enjoys, and which is the envy of every foreign nation.'

Appropriately, in view of these sentiments, the Queen is shown holding an orb surmounted by a winged figure of 'Victory'. Beneath the main statue, on the base, are three bronze relief panels. The most significant of these depicts the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. The other relief panels on the base symbolise the achievements of her reign in the arts and in mechanical invention.

The sculptor was Alfred Drury (1856–1944), a regular exhibitor at the Royal Academy of which he was then an Associate, and later a full member. Drury's is a monumental conception with a high degree of feeling for the major volumes of the figure. His Queen is old, stern and haughty, gazing from sunken eyes out over the windswept streets of Wellington with forbidding disdain. Unlike Williamson's more human vision of the Queen, Drury's Victoria is unapproachable. The statue is a massive symbol of British power elevated above the material world. Yet the statue is not idealised in any obvious way. In fact, one contemporary writer thought the likeness 'an excellent one'.

Drury had learnt his skill as a modeller under Dalou, at South Kensington, where he had been an outstanding student. He designed his massive statue to be seen from below so that the viewer can experience its full effect. Also, from a distance it forms an impressive silhouette against the sky. The sculptor advised the Mayor of Wellington in a letter written in 1903 to have the base for the statue made exceptionally high, so that, to use his words, 'this addition will greatly enhance the beauty of the monument'. In this context it is helpful to know that the Wellington Queen Victoria statue is another cast of one made for the City of Bradford that he designed to be placed at the top of a flight of steps.

Although the statue was ready by December 1903, there were considerable delays in having it cast due to heavy demand on bronze foundries at that time. Writing to the Wellington Town Clerk in 1904 Drury explained the delay as follows: 'The statue being so great in bulk it is impossible for them – the founders – to cast more than one such figure at once. Before the death and as a result of the death of the late Queen they had a tremendous rush of work, so that they were only able to begin casting a short time ago.' It is entertaining to reflect on this feverish manufacture of bronze Victorias to satisfy the demands of loyal subjects in England and throughout the Empire.

Of the panel reliefs on the base *The Signing of the Treaty of Waitangi* (Figure 13) merits attention. For the Waitangi panel Drury undertook research into traditional Maori costume. His composition is divided into two parts, the right hand being occupied by Governor Hobson, his aide-de-camp and the missionary Henry Williams, the left by a group of Maori chiefs. The costuming of the Maori, comprising flax skirts and feather cloaks, is contrasted with Hobson's naval uniform and Williams's cassock for artistic rather than strictly historical reasons. (Hobson in fact only wore his full uniform during consultation with the chiefs on the day before the signing, but Drury has given the occasion added dignity by depicting him in his regalia.) These strangely disparate groups are linked by the scroll of the Treaty and the handshake between Williams and one of the Maori across the table. In the foreground plane, the action of one of the chiefs, shown naked to the waist with a feather in his hair, who is signing the Treaty and leaning over towards Hobson, further links the two groups compositionally together. Thus the symbolic nature of the Treaty as an act of trust between two peoples totally different in background and way of life is well illustrated in Drury's composition. While the Treaty did signify the start of British rule in the colony and the end of Maori sovereignty, it also gave to the Maori the rights and privileges of British subjects, previously lacking, and guaranteed them freedom under British law. The Treaty panel, therefore, should not be seen simply as depicting the imperial power of Victoria, but also as exemplifying the justice of her dominion. However, the Maori appear subservient and unequal partners in the transaction.

Dunedin's Queen Victoria statue, a standing marble figure by Herbert Hampton, was, like the Wellington memorial, commissioned after Victoria's death

FIGURE 13 **Alfred Drury, *The Signing of the Treaty of Waitangi*. Relief Plaque on base of Queen Victoria Memorial, 1902–05, Kent Terrace, Wellington. Bronze, 992 mm x 810 mm**

FIGURE 14 **Alfred Drury, *Spring*, 1902, Wintergarden, Auckland. Marble, height 1980 mm**

in 1901, but not erected until 1905. A further resemblance occurs because both Hampton's and Drury's statues depict the Queen in robes of state holding the orb and sceptre. But Hampton had been requested to depict Victoria as she would have appeared forty years earlier, so as to accord with the image settlers had of her when Otago was colonised. Whereas Drury discovered a compositional interest in the curving volumes of the Queen's figure and flowing robes, Hampton did not. His figure is rigid and the draperies angular in effect. However, as with his Rolleston, the head is strongly characterised. Hampton's Victoria, although stern of feature, is portrayed sympathetically. Compared with Drury's ruthless portrait, unsparing of the ravages wrought by age in the sagging flesh, sunken eyes and drooping lips, Hampton's appears almost benign. The inclusion of two life-size bronze allegorical figures of Justice and Wisdom, flanking the pedestal below the Queen, symbolises the virtues of her reign and give the Dunedin monument a distinctive aspect.

That no fewer than four major statues of Queen Victoria were erected in New Zealand, all raised by public subscription, at a cost of several thousands of pounds each, demonstrates the bonds of affection and allegiance to the Queen and Britain. Not unimportant, too, was the awareness that Victoria's reign had spanned the years in which the New Zealand settlements were founded and grew to prosperity. Victoria's image, therefore, gained added symbolic meaning. In another sense, as examples of British sculptural taste and standards, these statues are also symbolic. For in New Zealand, throughout Victoria's reign, there was great dependence on Britain for professional works of sculpture.

Ornamental statuary for public parks was also imported. For example, when Helen Boyd, widow of a pottery manufacturer, donated funds in 1898 to purchase statuary for Auckland's Albert Park, the commissions went to overseas sculptors. A local committee approved the acquisition of allegorical figures *Spring* and *Victory of Peace* by Drury and Andrea Lucchesi (1860–1925) respectively. Both statues depict standing female figures in a classicising style. Of the two, Drury's is the finer work. Now located in the Wintergarden, his *Spring* (Figure 14) is an idealised female figure contemplating a rose she holds in her right hand. Semi-draped, she is an allegorical personification of the season, based on classical prototypes, and stylistically unlike his realistic Queen Victoria. With this statue Drury demonstrated his range as an artist and his ability to adapt to different situations. For the occasion he sought to meet the patron's expectation that the statuary would be ornamental and diverting to the public. Despite the idealisation of his figure, Drury managed to give a degree of individuality to the face and torso; it seems likely that he began by observation from the life model.

Outside the categories of commemorative statues to individuals and ornamental statuary, war memorials erected during the Victorian and Edwardian periods often included sculpture. But these memorials were normally ordered from a stonemason, who obtained sculpture through trade sources. An early example is the monument at Moutoa Gardens, Wanganui, erected in 1865 to honour the memory of Maori who fell fighting adherents of Hauhauism the previous year. It incorporates a marble, mourning figure bought from a

Melbourne firm by Dr Isaac Featherston, Superintendent of Wellington Province.

By far the largest group of early war memorials was erected to commemorate soldiers who fell during the South African War of 1899–1902. New Zealand involvement in the war was enthusiastic and full of jingoistic fervour for Britain's cause. Men from all parts of the country joined the armed forces. As a consequence, war casualties affected every community though the actual loss of life was small. After the war, patriotic monuments to the fallen were soon erected in prominent city and town locations. Italian craftsmen carved marble soldiers in battle kit for some of the memorials basing their figures on photographs or drawings supplied for the purpose.

One of the most elaborate of the South African War memorials was erected at Dunedin in 1906. This monument incorporates a figure group entitled *Amor di Patria* and carved in Italy to the design of Carlo Bergamini (1870–1934), an Italian mason then working in the city (Figure 15). Situated dramatically on top of a marble pylon is a life-sized soldier standing guard over a dying companion. Striking in conception, the group has stylised, heroic figures carved with Italian grace rather than truth to battlefield conditions. Bergamini also designed the standing soldier on the South African war memorial at the town of Oamaru, in North Otago.

This memorial provides an interesting instance of enthusiastic fund raising by a schoolmaster, described in the local newspaper the *Oamaru Mail*, of 1905, as follows: 'To all intents and purposes the history of the memorial is a history of Mr. Graves' labours during six months. He lived on his bicycle, and gave up the whole of his term holidays and Christmas vacation to the pursuit of the all-powerful coin which meant the success or failure of the project . . . he was out in all weathers, and visited all kinds of localities, returning home often in the small hours of the morning, and on one occasion he had to camp out during the night at a railway siding, a mishap having befallen his bicycle . . . Mr. Graves' total expenses were five shillings.' With dedication of that order it is no wonder that the Oamaru memorial, featuring a trooper with rifle at the ready position, on top of a pylon, is out of proportion in its grandeur to the modest size of the town.

The late Victorian and Edwardian periods were the great eras of public statuary in New Zealand. It is the memorials erected in this period, most of them of British or European origin, that still dominate public places in New Zealand's older cities. Even a smaller centre like Rotorua could acquire statuary, as happened with the purchase in 1908 of several classical marbles by Charles Francis Summers (1858–1945), an Australian sculptor who worked in Rome. These were bought for the Rotorua bath house. Although imported sculpture

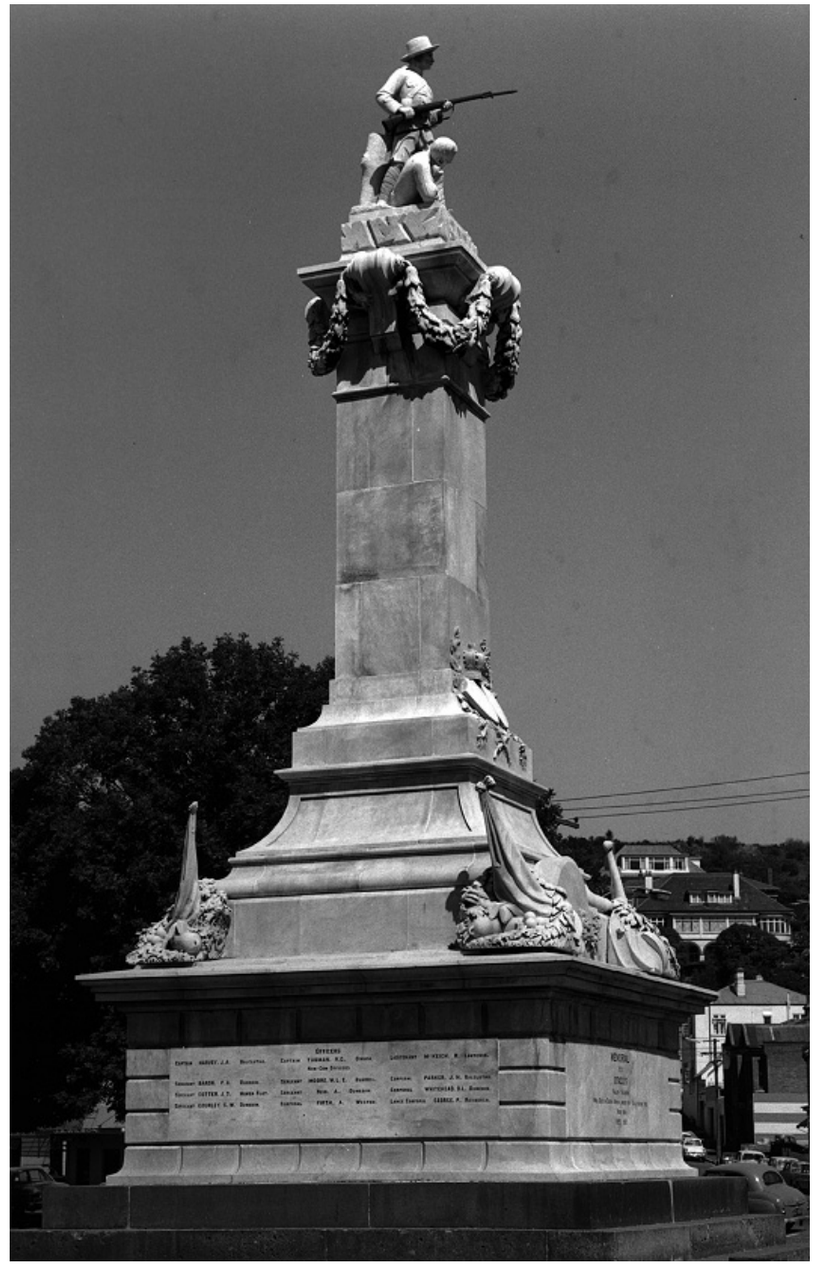


FIGURE 15 **Carlo Bergamini, *Boer War Memorial*, 1906, Dunedin. Marble, figures life size**

was the rule during this time, in the last decade of Victoria's reign we also discover the origins of a modest local sculptural practice. Continuity of taste was ensured because it was mainly based on British standards and was initially in the hands of British sculptors, either resident in New Zealand or visiting the country.

III

The Origins of Local Sculpture

As the country progressed from pioneering conditions to those of a settled, growing community, public recognition of the visual arts saw the origins of art schools and galleries. The Dunedin School of Art in Dunedin was first to open in 1870. Then followed the Canterbury College School of Art, Christchurch, in 1882, the School of Design, Wellington, in 1886, and the Elam School of Art and Design, Auckland, established in 1889 and opened the following year. Art societies, too, were formed in the main centres at that period. These societies soon acquired or leased halls in which group exhibitions could be held. Annual exhibitions at the societies became the main artistic event of the year in the four main centres and in smaller towns, like Timaru, which followed suit.

FIGURE 16 **James Kilgour, *Dunedin School of Art*, c.1891, Hocken Library, Dunedin. Oil on canvas, 756 x 1093 mm**

Initially, only a few amateurish sculptures were shown at the art society exhibitions. Many art society exhibitions consisted mainly of watercolours, small in size and easy to paint as a pleasant recreational pastime. Sculpture, even at an amateur level, required more commitment and expense, as well as resources (such as studio and casting facilities) only readily available at the art schools.

At first the public art galleries, established in the main centres, neither patronised local sculptors nor gave them the opportunity to see good examples of overseas sculpture. Of the galleries, Auckland, founded in 1888, was initially the best provided for, thanks to bequests from Sir George Grey and from a prominent citizen, James Tannock Mackelvie. Mackelvie had made a small collection of statuettes, mainly of classical copies, including an ancient head of Seneca and a draped female figure known as the *Statue of Peace*, reputedly found in the ruins of Pompeii. In 1878, Thomas Russell, a successful businessman, donated plaster casts of antique statuary to the city. These full-size casts included works like the *Apollo Belvedere* and the *Laocoön* described at the time as 'the very gems of ancient art now known to the world'. Placed in the museum, they were available for study by art students. Teaching collections of casts made from antique statuary were also provided in Dunedin and Christchurch as early as the 1870s. As a view of the Dunedin School of Art in 1891 shows, these collections were of use to painters as well as sculptors (Figure 16).

One of the earliest, if not the earliest, patrons of sculpture was John Logan

Campbell, who was a founder and benefactor of Auckland. He gave financial support and patronage to a young American sculptor, Pierce Francis (Frank) Connelly (1841–1932). While resident at Florence in the 1860s, Campbell met Connelly and commissioned from him busts of himself, his wife and his deceased son. They established a close friendship based in part on Logan Campbell's belief in Connelly's talent. Connelly's works in marble, though, have little distinction and belong to a conventional neoclassical taste. In 1877 Connelly travelled to Auckland at the invitation of Logan Campbell. Little is known about the extent of Connelly's sculptural work in New Zealand since he seems to have been mainly active as a painter while he was staying in Auckland. By the time Connelly left the city in 1878, his relations with Logan Campbell had deteriorated. The sculptor had disappointed his patron and cost him a substantial amount of money. In 1881, however, Logan Campbell commissioned a marble fountain from Connelly for erection in Cornwall Park but it was never completed. The scheme was for an Italian type of fountain complete with allegorical figures, sea horses and tritons.

It was on Connelly's advice, according to Logan Campbell in his autobiography, that he opened an art school in 1878 where annual prizes were awarded in various categories, including modelling. Medals, designed by Anton Teutenberg, were presented to the prizewinners. In a speech at the prize-giving ceremony in 1884, reported in the *New Zealand Herald,* Logan Campbell reflected upon the geographical resemblance between the Auckland isthmus and that of Athens. He looked forward to a time when an antipodean Pheidias (a famous ancient Greek sculptor) would vie with the European sculptors for artistic excellence. It was a romantic speculation and one framed typically in terms of European culture. Campbell's Free School of Art closed when the Elam School of Art and Design opened.

The art schools provided some instruction and support for local sculpture. Modelling and casting became a part of the syllabus, reflecting the English programme of the South Kensington School of Art in London, with which the New Zealand art schools developed affiliations. In fact, during the 1890s New Zealand students, such as Frances Hodgkins, were encouraged to sit for the South Kensington examinations. Passes in the examinations became a recognised qualification for those planning to teach art. The usual approach for figure work was to study details from plaster casts, such as an ear or eye, before progressing to the more ambitious task of modelling from life. Unfortunately not many New Zealand students had sufficient perseverance to reach that stage. Most of the students were women who preferred painting, bookbinding or needlework to sculpture.

Apart from providing facilities for students to learn sculpture, admittedly in a rudimentary fashion, the art schools also provided positions for teachers interested in practising sculpture themselves. Two of the earliest sculptors to work and live in New Zealand for any length of time both taught at art schools for a number of years. They were William Leslie Morison and Charles Kidson.

Of the two, less is known of Morison. In fact, his relegation to obscurity is as complete as a century of neglect can make it. The known details of his career can be quickly stated. Of Scottish origin, he came to Wellington in 1887 where he remained until his death in 1935. He took classes in modelling, casting and terracotta at the School of Design, Wellington, in 1887. But soon afterwards he set up his own institution known as Morison's School of Art. This was described by the *Cyclopedia of New Zealand* in 1897 as follows: 'This School was established by Mr. Morison about 1888. It is held in a large room on the second floor of the National Mutual Buildings. This room contains a fine supply of models and of all appliances used in a modern school of art. Mr. Morison gives instruction in every branch, including drawing, painting, modelling and sculpture work.' How successful this venture was it is difficult to say because little is heard of it after this date. Of Morison, too, we do not know much except that in 1904 and 1908 he exhibited sketch models of Sir John Logan Campbell and the recently deceased Prime Minister Richard John Seddon at the New Zealand Academy.

In 1894 Morison became the first local sculptor commissioned to execute a public statue. That year the Stuart Memorial Committee awarded first prize to his sketch model of Dr Donald Stuart, Minister of Knox Presbyterian Church, Dunedin. The committee had been formed to commemorate the services of this well-loved minister to the Dunedin people. As a fellow Scot, Morison was sympathetic to his subject. His success with this commission is quite remarkable when we consider the circumstances. We wonder at the courage of his supporters, among them William Mathew Hodgkins, who insisted on 'a colonial artist', took Morison's model on its merits, were undaunted by his comparative lack of facilities and lived to see their confidence well justified.

Working in his Wellington studio, Morison soon shaped his scale model into a figure of uncompromising realism. Stuart is shown seated, wrapped in a heavy plaid, clasping his walking stick firmly in one hand (Figure 17). Because of the absence of foundry facilities in New Zealand the plaster model had to be shipped to England for casting in bronze. The completed statue was regarded as a fine likeness and thought to convey the resolute character of Dr Stuart extremely well. In conception it is comparable with Lawson's Moorhouse statue (Plate 2) at Christchurch, erected some ten years before. Like Lawson, Morison uses the crossed legs pose to give an informal air to the portrait. But it is the

FIGURE 17 **William Morison, *Dr Stuart*, 1894–97, Queens Gardens, Dunedin. Bronze, height 2100 mm**

powerfully characterised head of Stuart that gives strength to Morison's work. With head slightly bowed and brows drawn, Stuart emanates energy. All the details are modelled with the same sure grasp of essentials and a rugged honesty. Morison's statue is a monument not only to the worthy minister but also to the initiative of its sculptor. The Italian artist Girolamo Pieri Nerli (1860–1926) met Morison while he was in Dunedin painting Stuart's portrait for Otago Girls' High School. There is a relationship between Nerli's and Morison's Stuart portraits suggesting an exchange of ideas between the two artists. Unfortunately Morison's later career is little known at present.

Of Charles Kidson (1867–1908) we are much better informed. Tragically cut down by illness in his 41st year, Kidson nevertheless had a short but active career as a sculptor in Christchurch. There is an engaging earnestness about his life and work that attracts attention. His is the story of a young immigrant establishing himself in a distant colony, realising by stages his talent for sculpture, and finally making the step into a professional career as a practising artist. To read Kidson's journal of 1907, in which each hour of the working day is accounted for, is to catch a glimpse of a careful craftsman to whom employment in the arts was a cherished possession. Although brought up in England, Kidson developed his art in Christchurch so that his claims to be the first local sculptor have a basis in fact. His attitudes, too, judging by his childlike wonder at Westminster Abbey on his return to England in 1903, would appear to be those of a colonial.

The son of a blacksmith who emigrated from Bilston, Staffordshire, to Nelson in 1885, Kidson began his art education by attending lessons at the Birmingham School of Art in the evenings, while by day he worked for an engineering firm. His art studies included freehand drawing, model drawing, geometry and perspective for which he obtained certificates of proficiency between 1884 and 1888. In 1888, due to illness, it was thought advisable for him to join his parents in New Zealand, where it was hoped that a more benign climate would restore his health.

Soon after his arrival, he applied successfully for a teaching position at the recently established Canterbury College School of Art. He took up regular duties in 1892 instructing in life drawing, the antique, geometry, perspective, modelling, carving and repoussé work. He proved a 'thoroughly capable and efficient teacher' according to the Headmaster, G. H. Elliott, in a reference written for him in 1903. He had a strong bias towards applied art, perhaps a reflection of his engineering training. After his marriage in 1896, his practical talent enabled him to make beaten copper ornamental hinges for the doors of his house, and copper panels for the fireplace. He developed a lasting friendship with Samuel Hurst Seager (1856–1933), a local architect then teaching at the School of Art,

who designed his house and later obtained commissions for him, including the Kaiapohia Memorial, 1898–99, and the John Grigg Memorial, 1905, his most important statue.

For twelve years Kidson taught at the School of Art, finding time also to paint and carry out design work. In 1903 he returned to England for six months, intending to further his studies. While there, he not only visited major art collections but also took woodcarving classes at the South Kensington School of Art and studied modelling at the Central School of Arts and Crafts. This shows his determination to improve his sculptural knowledge so that he could develop his work in New Zealand. Certainly his London experience appears to have acted as a catalyst for his development as a sculptor. On his return to Christchurch, he undertook a number of major works while retaining his old post at the School of Art. In 1906, however, he left to begin his full-time but sadly brief career as a sculptor and craftsman.

In taking this step he hoped to increase his income, certainly not to lead an obligation-free bohemian life. He was prepared to undertake any kind of work from making lead-light windows to caddy spoons, fire screens and ornamental door hinges. Judging by his receipt book, he was paid £87 for work completed during the last six months of 1906. This would indicate a modest income even for that time. It is hard to estimate what his prospects would have been for the long term. In the event he was fully employed until his premature death in October 1908.

An obituary in the *Dominion* newspaper referred to him as 'the well-known sculptor' and noted: 'Although the late Mr. Kidson had done a considerable amount of colour work it was sculpture that most attracted him.' This shows that despite his other activities he was most highly regarded as a sculptor. Kidson seems to have executed most of his sculpture after his return from England in 1904. To judge from a representative sample, his work was conservative in style and subject. There is portraiture of local dignitaries, such as mayors and councillors, as well as more intimate pieces such as his *Daughter of Eve* (Plate 7), a marble study of a smiling young girl.

Kidson can make no claims to great talent as a portraitist, but his finished works bear favourable comparison with many shown at the Royal Academy in those years. His approach was craftsmanlike in its sober fidelity to the model. An example of his official portraiture was a bust of Richard John Seddon made for Parliament House after Seddon's death in 1906. Basing his work on photographs, Kidson first made a clay model before carving the final marble bust. Although now destroyed, the bust appears from photographs to have been a competent likeness enlivened by some texturing in the beard and around the eyes. Kidson conveyed something of Seddon's bluff vitality by setting the forceful head at an angle on the broad expanse of shoulder. He seems to turn towards the viewer.

FIGURE 18 **Charles Kidson, *John Grigg*, 1905, Baring Square, Ashburton. Stone, height of figure 2400 mm**

The award of this commission to a local sculptor was in itself remarkable, and was probably due as much to Kidson's efforts as to ministerial support. In a letter drafted to Seddon's successor as Prime Minister, Joseph Ward, Kidson expressed his viewpoint as follows: 'I feel strongly that, if possible, the honour of such commissions should go to those who are struggling in our little community to make progress in art . . . Should you see your way to giving me

the commission it would be a help and an incentive such as you would perhaps hardly realize.' Ward himself seems to have taken little interest in the matter, which was brought to a successful conclusion with support from several members of the House of Representatives.

Kidson's success on that occasion was followed by a local commission at Christchurch to carry out a marble bust of Sir John Hall, a former mayor of the city. A change of viewpoint on such commissions was now evident. This was expressed clearly by C. H. Opie in a congratulatory letter of 1907 to Kidson as follows: 'It is now, I think, generally conceded that we need not send to Europe for what we can get done as well or better here.' Opie was then chairman of the Canterbury College School of Art. The age of imported statuary was now passing, but the standard of taste that it represented remained unchallenged.

This is nowhere more evident than in Kidson's major public statue, the John Grigg memorial at Ashburton, completed in 1905 (Figure 18). Grigg was a pioneer farmer renowned for his successful draining of swampland to develop some of the country's finest pastures. In its pose Kidson's full-length statue has more than a passing resemblance to Woolner's Godley memorial (Figure 3). Like Godley, Grigg walks forward bareheaded, holding a coat over his arm. In style, too, Kidson follows Woolner's example in his balancing of details such as the wrinkling of the skin of the hands and creases in the trousers with the simplification required for an impressive, general effect. In fact, Kidson's statue is an example of the British public memorial transplanted to colonial soil. Compared with Godley it appears stiff and provincial but it received praise in the *Ashburton Guardian* of December 1905 as follows: 'Great credit is due to Mr. Kidson for the admirable manner in which the design has been carried out . . . It is most satisfactory that such artistic work could be produced wholly within the colony.'

Almost as interesting as Grigg himself are the small reliefs on the base of the monument. These reliefs depict farming activities, namely shearing, stooking (Plate 6) and ploughing, activities with significance to Grigg's life as a farmer at his property 'Longbeach', but with wider relevance to the Canterbury farming community as well. Each is a simple composition with one main figure. In each scene the figure is shown bending down: to adjust the plough, to gather up the sheaves, to shear the sheep. This repetition suggests that Kidson had a limited range of invention. There are limitations, too, in the design and carving of the figures, especially in the arms and legs that look flat and unconvincing. In these shortcomings the gap between the imported memorials and a locally made work such as this is noticeable.

It is worth considering what Kidson's achievement might have been if his life had not been cut short in 1908. Would his sculpture have matured into a more personal and independent style? Speculation on such issues is difficult, yet there is no reason to believe that he would have broken from British standards and example. In the arts generally at that time, New Zealand's finest talents found an outlet not in developing a distinctive local style but in leaving the colonial situation altogether to identify with the British and European culture with which their ties were so strong.

Even if we turn to one of Kidson's last and most admired sculptures, his *Daughter of Eve* (Plate 7) of 1907, it is clear that despite the sensitivity to subject and material the conception is far from original. It derives directly from academic work of the day. In fact, Alfred Drury's *Age of Innocence*, of which a version was in Christchurch at that time, provides a very close parallel. Both are studies of young girlhood, both are obviously attractive in a vein that borders on the sentimental. But it says much for Kidson that his work stands comparison with Drury's, for Drury was ranked among the finest sculptors in England at that time.

Kidson's importance lies not in the originality of his art, which was limited, but in the professional standards he set in some of his best work and represented in a colonial environment. In addition, he established a precedent for a sculptor living from the sale of his art and competing successfully for commissions with British sculptors.

PLATE 6 **Charles Kidson, *Stooking*, 1905, Relief plaque on base of the Grigg statue, Baring Square, Ashburton. Granite, 550 x 580 mm**

PLATE 7 **Charles Kidson, *Daughter of Eve*, 1907, Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Christchurch. Marble, height 295 mm**

During this period, while Kidson and Morison were struggling to establish a place for local sculptors, two visiting artists, Allen Hutchinson (1855–1929) and Nelson Illingworth (1862–1926) came to New Zealand and worked there for several years. Neither was to remain to make a lasting contribution to sculpture in the country, yet both made studies of the Maori people and found some local patronage for their work. The first to arrive was Hutchinson, who has been described as 'an itinerant sculptor' because of his travels around the Pacific and America studying native peoples with an eye to their ethnographical as well as artistic interest. Illingworth, who was British-born but resident in Australia, came with a view to obtaining commissions from the New Zealand government.

Allen Hutchinson apparently first visited New Zealand in the 1870s when he travelled through the Pacific and spent a year in the Chatham Islands. It was during that period, in all probability, while he was an impressionable young man, that the artist's interest in Polynesia developed and led him to undertake his later studies of racial types in Hawaii and New Zealand. Born in 1855, Hutchinson, the son of an Anglican clergyman, first joined the Navy, then, after extensive travels, decided on a career as a sculptor and medallist. In London he studied under Edouard Lanteri (1849–1917), the famous follower of Rodin and a master of modelling technique, who played a major role in directing English sculpture away from classicism towards a more expressive approach.

Hutchinson first exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1883 with a terracotta portrait study of a man's head that is close in style to Lanteri. The following year he exhibited a portrait of Bishop Selwyn at the Royal Academy, suggesting a continuing interest in New Zealand during his London years. Certainly, by 1886, the young sculptor felt the urge to travel again, and set off to Canada to study the indigenous people of North America. In the intervening years, before his return to New Zealand in 1899, Hutchinson spent time in California, Hawaii and Australia. During this period he developed his studies of racial types, made with both commercial and artistic motives. He hoped to sell his models to museums and had some success in doing so.

For example, at Hawaii in 1896 he was given a commission by the Bishop Museum to do a series of six reliefs depicting Hawaiian life and industry. These reliefs, according to the *Hawaiian Star*, showed only 'absolutely pure natives' engaged in traditional occupations such as beating tapa. 'A great deal of pains' was taken 'to secure the correct motion' and show 'typical' Hawaiians of both sexes and representative ages.

Hutchinson came to New Zealand planning to make a similar record of Maori. Shortly after his arrival at Auckland in October 1899, he went to Te Kuiti to record typical Maori types in relief sculptures. Judging by his written remarks

FIGURE 19 **Allen Hutchinson, *Gottfried Lindauer*, 1902, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki. Bronze, height 302 mm**

about this trip, Hutchinson was very much aware of the passing of the traditional Maori way of life. In an article for the *New Zealand Illustrated Magazine* in 1900 he wrote: '. . . the Maori how changed is he. The whare has given place to the sawn timber house; the native dress has gone.' And again: 'It is sad to see the decadence of the race in comparing the old generation with the new; this was very evident in my contact with the various ages. I noticed how the word of the old could be relied upon, how willing they were to suffer the tedious sittings and do their part to help me. With the younger ones it was the reverse, they

FIGURE 20 **Allen Hutchinson, *Old Woman, Te Arawa,* 1900, Bishop Museum, Honolulu. Plaster, height 560 mm, width 395 mm**

were unreliable and lacked character.' Hutchinson quickly concluded that he was in a unique artistic position. He explained: 'Surely it is a privilege, while we yet have the opportunity, to hand down to posterity that which still remains, of what is most vigorous and noblest, in a race which has been called the noblest savage in the world.' His phrases spell out the contemporary belief that Maori were not only changing through European contact but also verging on extinction.

In 1896 Augustus Hamilton began an ambitious record of Maori art for the Governors of the New Zealand Institute, intending to preserve from 'the devouring tooth of time' carvings and 'works of skill' that were irreplaceable owing to the 'tide of colonization'. The Polynesian Society, founded in 1892, also sought to record the legends and life style of the old-time Maori in its scholarly publications. In literature a similar concern appears in works such as A. A. Grace's *Tales of a Dying Race* of 1901.

Even in the visual arts Hutchinson was not alone. The painter Gottfried Lindauer (1839–1926) had set out for New Zealand in 1873 with the intention of making a pictorial record of Maori life. In fact, Lindauer's greatest patron, Henry E. Partridge, who formed a large gallery of his Maori paintings, purchased Hutchinson's New Zealand studies for his collection. He also commissioned from him a portrait bust of Lindauer, now in the Auckland Art Gallery (Figure 19).

Hutchinson made six Maori studies, all life-sized, in January 1900. They are relief sculptures of the head and shoulders of Maori of both sexes shown in profile and of systematically selected age groups. At one extreme is a portrait of an old woman (Figure 20) of the Arawa tribe, at the other youths from Taupo and the Waikato. Unlike some of the Maori studies of the painter Charles F. Goldie (1870–1947), Hutchinson's are not sentimental. For instance, in his portrait *Pirimi Te Pahau*, the firm jaw and proud demeanour of the head evoke our admiration not pity, illustrating the sculptor's belief that the distinctive feature of Maori was 'force of character'. Despite the artist's ethnographical concerns, the incisive draughtsmanship and confident modelling give Hutchinson's reliefs some artistic as well as historical interest.

Apart from these Maori studies, Hutchinson also made a bust of Sir George Grey, now lost, which he exhibited at the Auckland Society of Arts in 1901, along with more than 30 other works. Included among these were two panels entitled *Zealandia despatching Troops to fight for the Empire* and *In Memoriam, those killed in South Africa* indicating that Hutchinson had entered into a memorial competition. He failed to get regular work even though he achieved some local recognition. This included a studio visit from the Governor, Lord Ranfurly, in March 1901. After unsuccessful attempts to gain major commissions in Auckland, Hutchinson left for San Francisco in February 1902.

Shortly after Hutchinson's departure, Nelson Illingworth visited New Zealand in 1906. He came hoping to obtain a government commission for a bust of the recently deceased Seddon. To help his cause he brought letters of recommendation to Ward. Born in Portsmouth, Illingworth had studied at the Lambeth Art School and worked at the Doulton pottery before emigrating to Australia in 1892. In Australia he had had some patronage as a portrait sculptor. After arriving in Wellington, he soon convinced Ward of the need for a bust of Seddon. He had his plaster ready in time for the Christchurch Exhibition in November 1906

(Figure 21). The marble, now in the General Assembly Library, Wellington, was finished in 1907.

Judging by a contemporary account of the work in the magazine *Red Funnel*, Illingworth aimed high: 'In the creation of a bust of Mr. Seddon his subject inspired him with a desire to transcend his former efforts, to distinguish his work with a finished excellence, to give it a dignity no less stately than the noble character of the departed leader.' The finished marble is admittedly very carefully executed but lacks forceful characterisation. In this respect Charles Kidson's Seddon bust was superior. But it would appear that by commissioning two Seddon busts the Government was trying to get the best of both worlds. By accepting the recommendations of Kidson's supporters, Ward satisfied feelings about the need to support local talent; yet by also commissioning a bust from Illingworth he could be sure of at least one thoroughly professional, if uninspired, portrait to add to the others in Parliament House.

After completing the Seddon bust, Illingworth obtained a government commission to make a portrait bust series of notable Maori. He modelled eight of these during 1908. In some ways comparable to contemporary paintings by Goldie, Illingworth's busts have some documentary value but lack Goldie's approach to the old-time, tattooed Maori as a 'noble relic of a noble race', to quote the title of one famous picture. Most of Illingworth's Maori studies are prosaic accounts of features, tattoos and ornaments. Unlike Goldie, Illingworth seems to have had little personal involvement with the Maori people or vision of their role in New Zealand history. His portrait busts were not thought to be good likenesses, being unfavourably compared in that respect with Goldie's. But the busts vary in quality, and while most of them are appropriately displayed as museum exhibits, at least one, *Tupai* (Figure 22), is modelled with authority. The stern, proud head is set firmly upon a powerful, muscular pair of shoulders suggestive of physical strength and prowess as a warrior. In this case Illingworth

FIGURE 21 **Nelson Illingworth Modelling the Seddon Bust, 1907, National Assembly Library, Wellington. Bust, marble, height 840 mm**

FIGURE 22 **Nelson Illingworth, *Tupai*, 1907–08, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington. Plaster, height 725 mm**

avoided the clutter of native costume and ornaments that too often distracted attention from the head.

More ambitious than these works was an elaborate bronze monument, unveiled at the Papawai Pa in the Wairarapa in 1911, in memory of the chief Tamahau Mahupuku. Tamahau rose to prominence as an assessor to the Maori Land Court and was also the Premier of the Kotahitanga Movement's Maori Parliament at Papawai. This monument, now damaged, featured three bronze panels by Illingworth, one representing the chief in his cloak, another a Maori warrior standing guard beside his wife, the third showing the signing of the deed for the sale of Lake Wairarapa to the Crown in 1896 (Figure 23). Two of these panels, though badly broken, are in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. One is of Chief Tamahau, the other of the signing of the deed.

Hampered by lack of bronze-casting facilities, Illingworth improvised and appears to have used a technique of beating out part of the figure compositions from sheets of metal and then packing the indentations at the back with molten lead. Perhaps thanks to his unorthodox approach, he achieved a rugged directness of modelling quite different from his usual, lifeless surfaces. But there is no finesse in either drawing or composition. In fact, *The Signing of the Deed* is compositionally a very rough reworking of Drury's Treaty of Waitangi panel in Wellington, which Illingworth certainly knew. The composition has simply been reversed. Tamahau takes the place of Drury's chief signing the Treaty of Waitangi, and Seddon replaces Hobson in a seated position.

In 1912 Illingworth returned to Sydney, by his own account in a great hurry. Apparently he had been involved in a business venture that failed leaving creditors empty-handed. Writing to Augustus Hamilton, then Director of the Dominion Museum, on 20 November 1912, from Sydney, he remarked: '. . . I had to leave at two hours notice. I lost everything and just managed to get away with my body safe; some day my late company may pay something in the pound, but I am not troubling about that, with the usual Illingworth spirit I start over again.' Judging by his activities in New Zealand, Illingworth was something of a sharp dealer with an eye for making quick returns from commissions without too many scruples about quality in their execution. But, by his visit, he made a small and interesting contribution to the development of professional sculpture in New Zealand.

Although conditions at this period, around the turn of the century, were difficult for anyone hoping to make a career in sculpture, some patronage was definitely there. This was not large but did suggest growing prospects for sculptors, especially those prepared to supplement their income with teaching or other employment. Kidson, for example, had some success with commissions.

FIGURE 23 **Nelson Illingworth, *The Signing of the Deed of Sale of Lake Wairarapa to the Crown*, 1911, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington. Relief from the Papawai Monument. Bronze, height 1120 mm, width 635 mm**

He not only obtained the commission for the Grigg statue but also that for the Seddon bust as well as several other official portrait busts. He had work bought by the Canterbury Society of Arts and by private clients. In addition he had the support of friends such as Hurst Seager, the architect, and T. E. Taylor, a local Member of Parliament.

The experience of Allen Hutchinson and Nelson Illingworth was similar. Both achieved a measure of patronage during their stay in New Zealand. Hutchinson had several buyers for his work including Henry Partridge and Isa Outhwaite, who presented two of his works to the Auckland City Art Gallery. These works are now in the Auckland Memorial Museum Te Papa Whakahiku. Illingworth also had several commissions from the Government and the Wairarapa Maori. It could be fairly said that it was during this period that the foundation of a local sculptural practice was laid, a foundation that would be built on in the following decades.

IV

Sculpture Between the Wars: 1918–1939

The first generation of sculptors born and trained in New Zealand grew to maturity in the difficult years immediately before the First World War. At that time, because of the limited local opportunities and facilities, many young artists left the country to study and live in Europe. It was the age of the expatriates, of Katherine Mansfield and Frances Hodgkins, who represented some of the finest talents in literature and painting to emerge from New Zealand. Neither could develop their art in the closed colonial environment. In painting, movements such as Impressionism were regarded with open scepticism or disbelief by New Zealanders long after the turn of the century. In politics, too, the country drifted away from the progressive policy of the Liberals towards a conservative government under William Massey and his Reform Party.

Although the First World War was a calamity that retarded many artists' careers or ended them prematurely, for sculptors it did provide in its wake a multitude of war memorial commissions. While many memorial figures were ordered from Italian factories, some were designed and executed locally. The sculpture and memorials depend heavily in style on British and European academic examples, as do other commemorative statues of the period. Being the most important sculptural commissions of the time, they faithfully reflect prevailing taste. Locally available British sculpture and sculptors formed this taste, which was then reinforced by art school teaching.

For a young New Zealand sculptor the best escape from this environment was travel and study in Europe. Especially interesting in this context is the career of Margaret Butler (1883–1947), the first New Zealand-born sculptor of significance. Not only did she study in Europe for an extended period, but she also developed her work on French rather than British principles. She was fortunate to be left enough money to pursue her career as a sculptor without financial worries. Born at Greymouth, the daughter of a county overseer, she first studied at Wellington where she took lessons at the School of Design. She was one of a number of women students who studied modelling there but the only one to achieve a sculptural career. After local success at Wellington exhibitions, she left for Europe in 1923 to further her studies at Paris in the circle of Émile-Antoine Bourdelle (1861–1929). Contrary to reasonable expectations, her work was well received there by sculptors of the calibre of Charles Despiau (1874–1946), who praised her 1933 solo show. But, unlike Frances Hodgkins who remained in Europe to ultimately find some success and recognition, Margaret Butler returned to Wellington to face lack of interest and obscurity. She spent her last years in Wellington and Rotorua devoted to a study of the Maori people, the theme of her late work.

Apathy and neglect cannot disguise the real talent of Margaret Butler or the New Zealand significance of her work. While it is true that she did not respond to the radical aspects of modern sculpture from Cubism onwards, she followed Bourdelle's example in developing her own form of figurative sculpture based on recent French models. For a sculptor used to a diet of British academic work this seems a dramatic development, but far from an illogical one considering the reputation of Dalou and French realist sculpture in Britain.

At Wellington she learnt modelling from Joseph Ellis (c.1880–1941), an Irish sculptor who had taught at the School of Design since 1908. Although not an outstanding talent, Ellis was a sound teacher whose students obtained a good technical grounding. He had studied at the Belfast School of Art where he later taught before emigrating to New Zealand. Ellis was a capable portraitist who depicted sitters such as William Massey.

From Ellis, who at first strongly influenced her work, Margaret Butler acquired

a lasting interest in portraiture. For example, in her bust *Sir William Hall-Jones*, she recorded the features literally like her teacher, but modelled details such as the nose, lips and brow with greater sensitivity. By the time she completed her *Hall-Jones* bust in 1921, having nothing more to learn in Wellington, she exhibited for the last time at the Art Society before leaving for Europe the following year. At thirty-eight she was no longer young but it seems that family circumstances and her physical disability may have delayed her decision to study overseas. Her unmarried sister Mary accompanied her.

According to Butler's own account, ill health prevented her from undertaking any sculpture in Europe until 1926. She was frail by nature and crippled with a clubfoot. But judging from the letters of Frances Hodgkins who met the sisters in France they enjoyed the social life. She wrote to her mother in 1924: 'The Butlers are in the thick of all the Nice festivities — trust the high-spirited Mary for that — They are mighty good sorts and don't take life too seriously — Peggy's art needs training — but my experience of New Zealanders is that they don't care about hard work — they are all out for a good time — who can blame them?' This opinion may well have been coloured by Frances Hodgkins's own straitened circumstances compared to the relatively comfortable financial position of the Butlers. But in a letter in May 1924 she refers to Margaret Butler's ill health as follows: 'Peggy had been very ill — a sort of nervous breakdown — she looked a wreck the day I saw her — white and thin — the doctor had been treating her wrongly.'

After this difficult start to her European studies, she entered the circle of Bourdelle in Paris. She described herself as his student in the 1928 catalogue for the Société des Artistes Français where she exhibited her bust of William Hall-Jones. Under Bourdelle's personal guidance her style of modelling became more fluid and expressive. There is a feeling for overall mass and a new sense of unity. An example is the fine bronze *The Dreamer*, c.1932 (Figure 24), a study of a young girl in reverie. The composition is subtle and rhythmic. The girl is seated with one leg distended lethargically, the other drawn up under the drooping head and arms to form a flowing compact form. Details are secondary to the total formal arrangement. This is especially noticeable in the back view where torso, hair and arms are distinguishable yet bound organically together in a curving, down-flowing design. The surfaces are varied to break up the fall of light so that the movement of forms is complemented by the flow of light and dark. This impressionist dimension recalls Rodin, as does the theme of her work, which has some affinities with the French master's famous work *The Thinker*. In both sculptures there is an emphasis on the inner world of thought and the subconscious, though in Butler's work there is also a subtle erotic overtone.

FIGURE 24 **Margaret Butler, *The Dreamer*, c.1932, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, New Zealand. (B28230) Plaster, 464 x 348 x 186 mm**

Appropriately Butler used as a model a blind girl called Esta who posed for her on several occasions.

With works such as this, Margaret Butler reached a level of sculptural understanding unequalled by any of her New Zealand contemporaries. Her portraiture, too, developed in this impressionistic style. An example is her bust *Rosalie*, 1930, a study of an aged model who had often posed in Parisian studios. She conveys the character of her model's careworn face, not by a painstaking rendering of details but by a bold use of the medium to suggest the major forms. Light and the shadows it casts play an important role in suggesting sunken cheeks and wrinkles under the eyes.

After some seven years of sculptural practice in Paris, where she exhibited at the Salon des Tuileries annually, Margaret Butler returned to Wellington in 1934. Her reasons for doing so are unknown. The highlight of her Paris career was a solo show at the Galerie Hébrand in June 1933, only a year before her departure. The exhibition consisted of some twenty works and was reviewed in the newspaper *Le Temps.* The reviewer described her as having a 'real talent for sculpture' and noted the breadth and freedom of her modelling.

Shortly after returning to New Zealand, she held a Wellington exhibition that was opened by the Governor-General, Lord Bledisloe. In his address he noted that while art in New Zealand had not reached the high English level, in Margaret Butler the country had produced 'a really great sculptor'. He went on to express the hope that sculpture, an art given little attention in New Zealand, would receive, 'a much-needed impetus from Miss Margaret Butler's successful work and example'. His hopes, however, were not well founded. Her retiring personality attracted little public attention. Soon, too, the onset of the Second World War deflected interest away from the arts.

Representative of her late works are two studies of a Maori dancer, Miriama Heketa, modelled in 1938. One entitled *La Nouvelle Zélande* (Figure 25) is a bust; the other *Girl with Pois* is a full-length study of her model in traditional costume. Reaching beyond the works of artists who saw Maori purely as exotic subjects, Butler aimed at a sculptural treatment. She wanted to achieve more than a documentary recording of features and costume.

Her bust *La Nouvelle Zélande,* for example, is not simply a portrait of an attractive Maori girl. Although the features are strongly characterised, the formal design is equally important. Frontal and symmetrical, the bust is built from a basis of the softly curving volumes of the breasts that are echoed in the masses of hair framing the face. From the side and back views, the flowing mane of hair is a dynamic sculptural form that undulates with a majestic rhythm. Her conception draws on the European convention of characterising a country by a symbolic female figure. Rather than using a classical figure, she has chosen a Maori woman to give a distinctive and authentic aspect to the idea. Further, her figure projects a strong image of women in a way that is comparable with the goddess paintings of Rita Angus. She felt sufficiently pleased with this work to send it to Paris where it was shown in the 1938 Salon des Tuileries. It was also exhibited at the New Zealand Centennial Exhibition in 1940, held at Wellington, where its nationalistic dimension was especially relevant. Butler made one further work featuring a Maori model, her *Maori Madonna,* in which she tried to introduce a local dimension to devotional imagery for the Catholic Church. This, too, was conceived as a bust with a haunting melancholic presence.

She was almost forgotten when she died in 1947, coincidentally the same year as Frances Hodgkins. The writer Eileen Duggan, in her *Evening Post* tribute at the time, saw in Margaret Butler 'the frustration of an artist whose body could not cope with the imperiousness of her gift'. Yet she overcame her natural disabilities to be acclaimed as a sculptor in France — an important measure of her achievement. Unfortunately she appears to have had no influence on Wellington sculpture and there is no reference to her having had pupils or taken classes. In her will she left her unsold sculptures to the National Art Gallery, Wellington. They are now in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

Younger than Margaret Butler, but drawn like her to study and live overseas, was the sculptor Francis (Guy) Lynch (1895–1967). Although details of his career are far from complete, some facts can be established. Born in Melbourne, he came to Auckland with his family before the First World War. According to William Moore in his *The Story of Australian Art*, Lynch served with the New Zealand Expeditionary Force and was at Gallipoli. After the war he studied in London and received guidance from Benjamin Clemens who taught at the Royal College of Art. Lynch later returned to Auckland where he obtained an important commission for the Devonport War Memorial, unveiled in April 1924 (Plate 8). Judging by this work, a life-size bronze of a soldier in battledress, Lynch had acquired competence in a naturalistic style of modelling. He modelled his figure from the life, attempting to capture a typical rather than heroic image of a soldier. This was in contrast to the stiff, expressionless marble soldiers imported from Italy for many Australasian memorials. Lynch's soldier is a man of action with bootlaces undone and a uniform that looks lived in rather than sartorially perfect. He turns to look back in sorrow at his fallen comrades as he prepares to evacuate his position. Lynch made a second cast of this figure for the Masterton War Memorial, which suggests that it met with approval from the New Zealand public.

Unable to find sufficient work as a sculptor in Auckland, Lynch shifted back to Australia. Late in 1924, he exhibited a plaster cast called *The Satyr* at Sydney in a show by 'The Younger Group of Australian Artists'. Now cast in bronze this work is located in the Sydney Botanic Gardens. Depicting a seated satyr, the sculpture was controversial at the time because of its 'pagan' values. Lynch studied with the noted sculptor Rayner Hoff during the mid-1920s at East Sydney Technical College. Although his work received critical attention in Sydney, Lynch shifted to London in the 1930s where according to Moore he was 'making

FIGURE 25 **Margaret Butler, *La Nouvelle Zélande*, 1938, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, New Zealand. (B32702) Bronze, 540 x 460 x 340 mm**

PLATE 8 **Francis (Guy) Lynch, *Devonport War Memorial*, 1919–24, Auckland. Bronze, life size**

good progress'. Lynch's later work remains to be studied, but it seems he made no lasting impression in London.

Very different is the career of William Thomas Trethewey (1892–1956), who was born in Christchurch. Of the same generation as the expatriates Butler and Lynch, but unlike them, he was to spend his entire life in New Zealand. Although less gifted than Margaret Butler, he made a greater local reputation. He became the first locally born and trained sculptor to establish a successful local practice. This said, it must be admitted at once that Trethewey's work sometimes has an awkwardness of conception that betrays the provincial origins of his art.

Stylistically Trethewey based his early sculpture on the only models available to him, those from the British academic tradition. His mature works, however, are closer in spirit to the pseudo-grandeur of the social realist monuments erected in Europe during the 1930s. Social realism is now associated with the Fascist governments in Italy and Germany even though it was international in scope and was practised by the American artists like Paul Manship (1885–1966). Significantly, in this context, Trethewey's major works were patriotic memorials for those who fell in the First World War and symbolic groups erected to celebrate the New Zealand Centennial in 1940.

After leaving school in 1906, Trethewey studied at the Canterbury College School of Art where his instructor was Frederick George Gurnsey (1868–1953), a fine decorative carver who had trained at the Central School of Arts and Crafts in London and also in Edinburgh. Gurnsey not only taught but also practised as a carver in Christchurch where he executed many major commissions, including decorative lions on the Bridge of Remembrance and the Gothic reredos for the chapel of St Michael and St George (1947–49) in the Christchurch Anglican Cathedral. From Gurnsey, Trethewey acquired a thorough knowledge of carving techniques but not of modelling. To rectify this he went to Wellington in 1914 to study under Joseph Ellis who, at that time, was the only qualified modelling instructor in the country. Both Gurnsey and Ellis were competent technical teachers but had little to offer Trethewey in terms of a stylistic approach for his own work.

Trethewey first exhibited at the Canterbury Society of Arts in 1918. He achieved success the following year when one of his works, *The Bomb Thrower, Gallipoli*, was bought by the Society, though the work now appears to be lost. Perhaps due to his experience with that work, he was awarded the commission for the Kaiapoi War Memorial, a full-length marble statue of a soldier, completed in 1922. His subject — described in the *Kaiapoi Record* as a 'soldier . . . resting after a desperate charge' — was received enthusiastically by the public. The mayor of Kaiapoi wrote in a letter to the artist: 'It was our attention to have a memorial . . . distinctly New Zealand in character, and in a form which would impress upon the onlooker the greatness of the work done and the sacrifices by our brave men. Your conception of the New Zealand Digger is forceful and characteristic, and both in features and in pose, the figure is full of individuality. The modelling has won the praise of judges and is marked by faithfulness to detail and technical excellence of workmanship.'

Judged by these criteria, Trethewey's monument is certainly successful. Battered, with arm bandaged, the Digger leans in exhaustion against a pile of wreckage, a symbol of courage in adversity. The conception is brutally realistic

PLATE 9 **William T. Trethewey, *Dr. Margaret Cruickshank*, 1922–23, marble, Seddon Square, Waimate. Height 2700 mm**

FIGURE 26 **William T. Trethewey, *Captain Cook*, 1931–32, Victoria Square, Christchurch. Marble, height 2745 mm**

and the style of carving in sympathy with it, even if the pose of the Digger is somewhat stiff. His conception can be compared with Lynch's Devonport soldier whose unkempt appearance gave an impression of realism based on first-hand experience in the trenches.

Trethewey's later statue of Dr Margaret Cruickshank, erected in 1923 at Waimate where she had practised medicine, has an effect of simplicity and strength (Plate 9). The Cruickshank is noteworthy because it is one of the rare monuments to a woman (other than Queen Victoria) commissioned in New Zealand. As the first woman doctor to practise in New Zealand, Cruickshank won community praise for her role as a selfless caregiver who had died ministering to her patients in the influenza epidemic of 1918. Trethewey stressed her Christianity by the Bible she holds in her prominent hands. She is depicted clad in an academic gown to indicate her exceptional status as a qualified doctor at a time when few women took up the profession. Sometimes called the 'Florence Nightingale of the South', Cruickshank embodied moral values that lent public support to her commemoration by a statue.

Like the Kaiapoi memorial, it was carved from one block of Carrara marble. The shape of the original block is still noticeable in the upright stance of the

lady doctor, whose pose suggests an unyielding devotion to duty. Trethewey's drawing is uncertain — especially in the arms, where the proportions are incorrect — but these faults went unnoticed in Waimate by friends and relatives of the doctor, who complimented the artist on the accuracy of his likeness and the 'splendid workmanship'. Despite its faults, the Cruickshank was an impressive achievement for a young local sculptor without the advantages of overseas study.

These early carvings led to what is arguably Trethewey's most competent work of public statuary, the Captain Cook in Christchurch, completed in 1932 (Figure 26). Here, aided in his composition by an eighteenth-century engraving, Trethewey depicted the famous navigator in naval attire leaning on a capstan, a telescope in his right hand and gazing thoughtfully into the distance. The statue is almost identical in pose and detail to the famous bronze of 1914 by Sir Thomas Brock that stands near Admiralty Arch in London. Making allowances for the different materials, the closeness of style is striking. But Brock manages to give a feeling of tense vitality to his figure that Trethewey's lacks. Whereas Trethewey's Cook leans against the capstan in a graceful pose, Brock's stands in front of it like a man ready for action. Yet, considering Trethewey's provincial training, his Cook statue is a close approximation to the British academic style he imitated, and technically a fine performance.

In 1936 Trethewey completed a full-length figure of the Maori statesman Sir Maui Pomare (1876–1930) for Manukorihi Marae, New Plymouth. This was an unusual commission by Maori for a European type of monument which stands somewhat incongruously next to the carved meeting house Te-Ikaroa-a-Maui, carved in traditional style for Pomare's commemoration and opened at the same time as the statue was unveiled. Trethewey presents Pomare as a man at ease in a bicultural world, striding forward dressed in a suit overlaid by a Maori cloak. He holds a scroll in his hand and appears ready to speak in his role as Member of Parliament on behalf of his people. Not surprisingly there were regrets expressed in the souvenir booklet that a monument so far removed from Maori culture should have been commissioned in the first place. Trethewey's statue reveals the gulf between Maori and Pakeha cultures, rather than suggesting an accommodation between them. In the marae setting it has a Surrealist dimension which time has enhanced rather than diminished.

Some time after completing the Cook statue, Trethewey undertook a more ambitious commission for a group of monumental figures to form the Christchurch Citizens' War Memorial (Figure 27). Plans for a memorial had been

FIGURE 27 **William T. Trethewey, *Christchurch Citizens' War Memorial*, 1937–38, Cathedral Square, Christchurch. Bronze, total height with cross 16 metres**

instigated as early as 1919, but due to indecision and lack of finance and other problems no positive action was taken until 1933. The memorial was to be erected on land owned by the Christchurch Cathedral Chapter, who advised: 'If statuary is included, the Chapter would wish that it should be of an inspiring character, and that the main ideas should be those of youth, energy, high endeavour and purpose, aspiration, sacrifice, victory (in the sense not of conquest of enemies but rather of achievement and attainment); and also of resurrection or immortality, and of peace'. It was a daunting programme for any artist.

Trethewey's winning design involved allegorical figures including *Sacrifice*, a centrally placed mourning figure with arms outspread, *Justice*, a blindfolded figure holding scales, *Valour*, personified by St George in armour, and above them all a soaring female winged figure of *Victory* breaking the sword of battle 'in order that all feeling of triumph over the vanquished may be dispersed'. The group of bronze figures, standing before a monumental cross over fifteen metres high, was unveiled on 9 June 1937, ominously close to the fresh outbreak of hostilities. Trethewey's figures are impressively large: his *Victory*, for example, is five metres high (Plate 10). The allegorical figures are somewhat uniform, having a family likeness that is reinforced by their even modelling and texturing. Overall the effect is solemn and impressive. Each figure is a unit retaining its identity to some extent at the expense of the whole. However, the large, central figure of *Victory*, with her outstretched arms breaking the sword of battle, has a striking pose and gives the group a focus. The allegorical female figure was appropriate to a memorial such as this because it could embody the idea of military triumph while distancing it from the harsh realities of the recent war. It also acknowledged the role of women in the war as active participants.

But there is a gulf between the intended symbolism of some figures and their hollow embodiments. *Valour*, for example, remains a posed figure clad in fancy dress. Here Trethewey used the conventional figure of St George clad in armour so popular in British war memorials. In a New Zealand memorial St George seems less appropriate even though the allegorical meaning is very accessible. Trethewey lacked the imaginative or emotional insight needed to breathe fresh life and conviction into the figure. The overall effect of the memorial is like some giant tableau cast in bronze. This is partly caused by the way the figures face the front, as if posing for an audience on a stage, even though the memorial is free-standing and can be walked around.

Trethewey's last major works, undertaken for the New Zealand Centennial Exhibition in 1940, were in a similar vein. He modelled groups of allegorical figures illustrating important episodes in the country's history. The most elaborate and only surviving example of these is a monumental group depicting the legendary discovery of New Zealand by Kupe, navigator of the first Maori canoe. Entitled *The Coming of the Maori* (Figure 28), it was an attempt to endow the event with epic overtones. Kupe stands resolutely in the prow of his canoe. He and his wife are heroic figures with physically powerful bodies that relate back to the idealised nudes of Classical Greece. Beside Kupe is Hine, his Amazon-like wife, bared to the waist, who gesticulates with outstretched arm to the horizon where she sights land. Next to them an old tohunga reflects on the momentous import of their landfall. At the Wellington exhibition in 1940 the group was

PLATE 10 **William T. Trethewey, *Christchurch Citizens' War Memorial*, 1937–38, Cathedral Square, Christchurch. Detail of *Victory***

FIGURE 28 **William T. Trethewey, *The Coming of the Maori*, 1939–40, New Zealand Centennial Exhibition, Wellington. Plaster, height 6710 mm. Installation photograph**

mounted on a special pedestal shaped like a canoe prow. There the group stood above the reflecting waters of an ornamental pool where Trethewey's dramatic group found an apt stage setting for its histrionic grandeur. Its frontality and conception closely resemble his Christchurch Citizens' War Memorial. Indeed the figure of Kupe holding his spear closely resembles *Valour* from that memorial, though it is arguably more expressive.

For many years the group remained in the plaster and in a temporary location at the Wellington Railway Station. In 1999 a trust was established to have the work cast in bronze and it was erected on the Wellington foreshore near the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa in January 2000. Today the group can be seen to capture appropriate bicultural ideas acknowledging the founding and settlement of the country by Maori and celebrating their prowess and achievement. Trethewey expressed the hope, recorded in a newspaper clipping, that 'it could be cast in bronze as a permanent memorial to the Maori people, who played so great a part for good and ill in the settlement of this country, and who were dispossessed by the Pakehas'. It is gratifying that his wish has been fulfilled.

Trethewey's other groups of statuary for the occasion included *Pioneer Men* and *Pioneer Women* (Figure 29) as well as a monumental frieze, thirty metres long, across the tower block of the exhibition buildings, featuring a procession of figures, symbolic of 'achievement, prosperity and national life'. At the centre of the frieze was a figure of *Progress* set in front of a sunburst pattern. Figures from New Zealand's history were to the left side of the frieze, including pioneers, traders and Maori, while to the right were figures depicting the industrial and cultural achievements of a more recent era. In the themes, as in Trethewey's rendering of them, we discover reflections of patriotic fervour fostered by the centennial. He contrasted the groups of *Pioneer Men* and *Women* by using gender stereotypes. The male group of father and son stressed physical labour, with the boy holding an axe to symbolise the exertion of clearing the bush for settlement, and the father stripped to the waist ready for hard work. The female group was conceived rather like a secular madonna with the mother seated on a throne-like chair holding a baby on her knee, while her daughter stands at her side. This emphasis on maternity and the role of women in nurturing a new generation of citizens was typical of the time and can be found in German, Italian and Soviet memorials. In celebrating the pioneers New Zealand was showing an awareness of its history and the progress made since colonial times. Appropriately Trethewey gave the figures a heroic dimension by making them stoic and monumental. They are conceived as people who made sacrifices for the good of those who followed them and who set an example of high moral values. Because of the large amount of work involved, Trethewey used assistants, among them Alison Duff and Chrystabel Aitken.

After the Second World War Trethewey's practice declined. A number of smaller commissions followed, such as the Nelson Centennial Memorial completed in 1946, but they added nothing new. At various times throughout his career, Trethewey attempted small-scale sculptures including torsos, portraits

and fanciful subjects with titles such as *Cleopatra's Slave* and *The Buccaneer*. He was not very successful at achieving a reputation in fine arts circles, perhaps because his audience was not the cultivated literati but the general public to whom his monuments possessed that most important of qualities, intelligibility.

He died in 1956 at a period when his art must have seemed an embarrassing anachronism to younger sculptors. The hope once fondly expressed that he would become another Mackennal was not to be realised. Unlike the noted Australian academic sculptor Sir Edgar Bertram Mackennal (1863–1931), Trethewey never acquired a professional training in Britain, much less membership of the Royal Academy. His art remained very much a provincial one with strictly local relevance.

Despite Trethewey's professional success, his career was somewhat overshadowed by the achievements of Richard Oliver Gross (1882–1964), an English-born sculptor who came to New Zealand in 1914, and for the next forty years executed public sculptural commissions. Like Trethewey, Gross was primarily a sculptor of public monuments rather than small-scale pieces. Both men adopted

FIGURE 29 **William T. Trethewey's Model of *Pioneer Women* for the National Centennial Exhibition, Wellington, 1939**

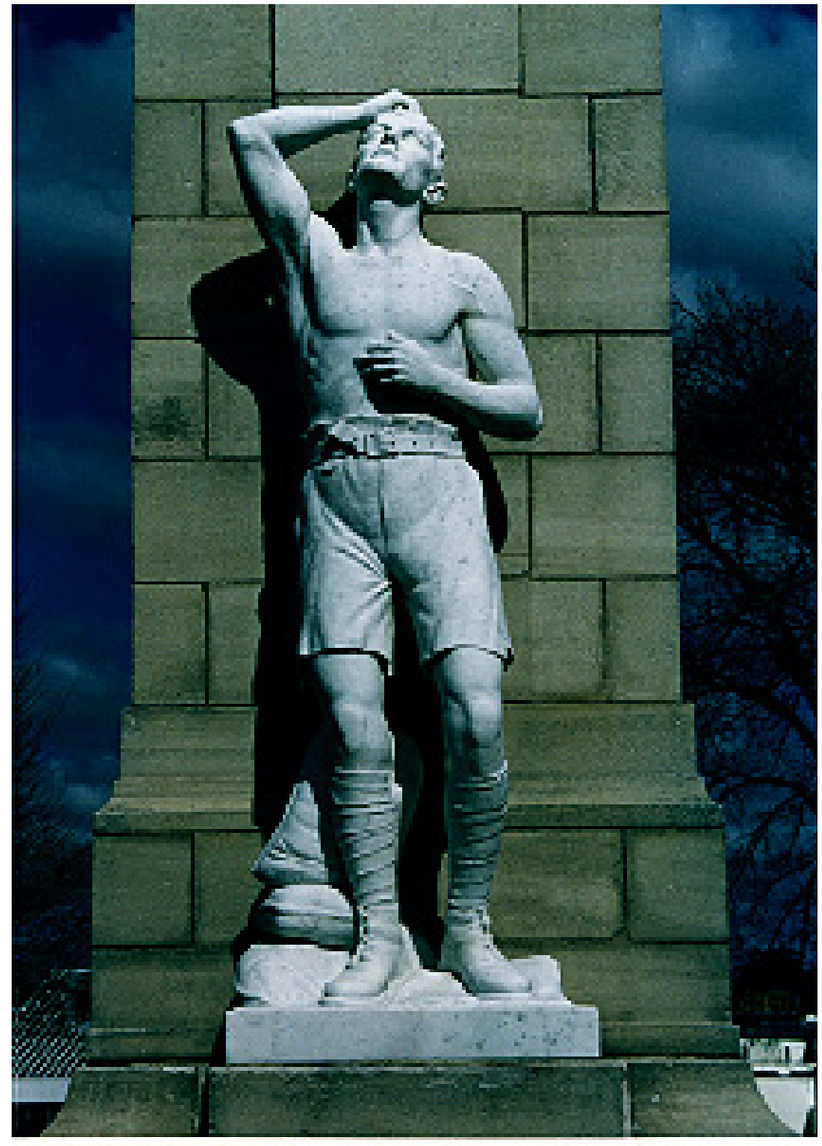


PLATE 11 **Richard Gross, *Cambridge War Memorial*, 1923, Cambridge. Marble, height of figure, 2700 mm**

a conservative approach to style and technique, and both were professionals who tried to make a living from their work. But Gross, who had benefited from study at the Camberwell School of Art under Albert Toft (1862–1949), had a superior training. His sculpture is free from the awkwardness of conception that sometimes mars Trethewey's early carving. It is more confident in conception and at best has greater claims to artistic merit.

Between them Gross and Trethewey accounted for the majority of public statuary commissioned between the wars. Living in Auckland, Gross predominated in the North Island while Trethewey, based in Christchurch, dominated in the South.

PLATE 12 **Richard Gross, *Athlete*, 1936, Domain Gates, Auckland. Bronze, height 2745 mm**

Before coming to Auckland, Gross did architectural carving in South Africa. He came to New Zealand intending to farm but instead set up a studio in Newmarket, an inner city suburb. From the outset he was successful in obtaining public commissions, usually in collaboration with architects such as William Gummer (1885–1966). These included two life-size figures for the National Bank, Auckland, 1922, a marble figure for the Cambridge War Memorial, 1923 (Plate 11), a bronze statue for the Auckland Grammar School War Memorial, 1924, and the bronze equestrian group and relief plaques for the Wellington Citizens' War Memorial, 1932 (Figures 30 and 31). Through these commissions Gross established an extensive sculptural practice for New Zealand.

As a group, the works have some consistent features. In each the central figure is nude or semi-nude, and with one exception it is a male nude. For Gross the male nude remained the highest form of sculptural expression and this justified its use in his major sculptures of the following decade, such as the *Holland Memorial*, Bolton Street Cemetery, Wellington, 1937 (Figures 32 and 33) and the Domain Gates *Athlete*, Auckland, 1936 (Plate 12). In each work, too, the central nude embodies an abstract ideal, for example, *Sacrifice* in the Cambridge Memorial and *Endeavour* in the Auckland Grammar School Memorial.

His nudes show a basis in life study as a preliminary step to an idealised rendering of the figure. In each case, Gross worked from the life while modelling the maquette. His model for the Grammar School statue was his son, Leo, who remembers posing. This approach corresponds with that advocated by Gross's teacher, Albert Toft, who wrote in his book *Modelling and Sculpture*: '. . . there is only one course open if we desire to attain the Ideal, and that is to study, with infinite care, closely and conscientiously the Real, and Natural.' Starting with the life study, Gross designed nude figures embodying his ideas. For example, in the Auckland Grammar School Memorial the youth standing on a globe is on the tips of his toes, has one hand extended upwards, the other tensed and his head cast back looking towards the sky. The whole figure reaches heavenwards to evoke the idea of *Endeavour* in sculptural form. As in this example and the Auckland Domain Gates *Athlete*, Gross sometimes favoured a mobile airborne figure reaching upwards to escape the bonds of gravity. Such figures matched the abstract ideas found in his works where mobility and freedom were important.

Like Toft, Gross firmly believed in academic sculpture. Toft, revering the classical art of ancient Greece with its focus on the male nude, used several Greek examples as standards of excellence in his book on sculpture. In sharing this view Gross was not alone at the time, since noted European sculptors such as Carl Milles (1875–1955) based their sculpture on similar principles. Accordingly, it is misleading to see Gross's approach as anachronistic. Instead it should be judged on its own terms, not on those of an abstract aesthetic canon.

Gross was familiar with trends in modern sculpture though little was to be seen in New Zealand between the wars. He even acknowledged its liberating role. But he argued in a 1937 address entitled 'Art and how the Sculptor views It' that 'the old methods still had much to teach'. Gross was no innovator, nor a highly inventive sculptor. Most of his figures have reminiscences of other works, especially those by British academic sculptors, such as Hamo Thornycroft (1850–

FIGURE 30 **Richard Gross, *Wellington Citizens' War Memorial*, 1932, Wellington. Bronze and marble, total height 20 metres**

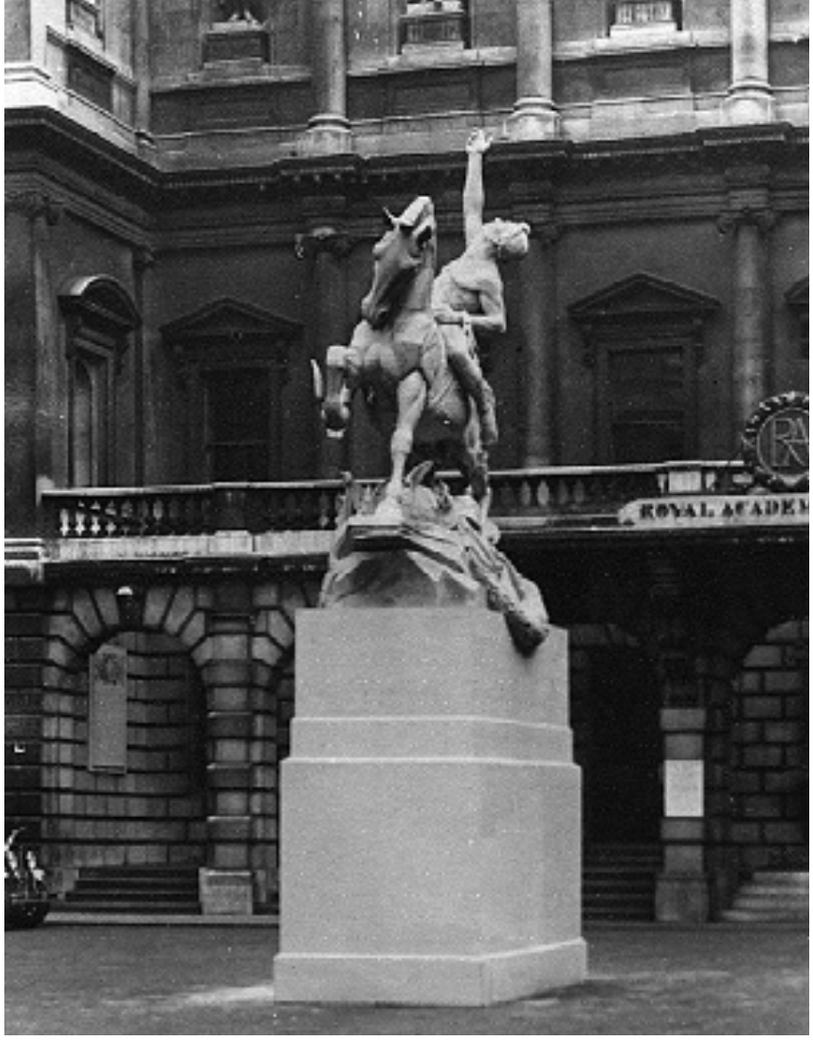


FIGURE 31 **Richard Gross, *The Will to Peace*, exhibited at Royal Academy, London, before installation on Wellington Citizens' War Memorial**

1925) and George Frederick Watts (1817–1904). An obvious example of derivation occurs in his major work, the equestrian group of the Wellington Citizens' War Memorial (commonly known as the Cenotaph), that is remarkably similar to Watts's *Physical Energy* statue in Kensington Gardens, London. Nor was he always successful in striking a satisfactory balance between the ideal and real in his works. For example, in the Cambridge War Memorial his half-naked Digger suggests physical exhaustion and despair rather than sacrifice.

But as a marble and bronze technician Gross had no local equal. In 1924 he became the first Auckland sculptor to build his own bronze foundry for small casts. Employing studio assistants to help execute his commissions, he took a truly professional approach. Because much of his sculpture was for architectural settings, he had to work closely with architects. This applies to his war memorial commissions in particular, where architect and sculptor often submitted the winning designs, as was the case with the Wellington Citizens' War Memorial (Figure 30). As the most important work of its kind in New Zealand and as a representative example of Gross's sculpture at its best, it merits closer consideration.

Public subscription had made funds available by 1926, when a competition for the memorial was held and won by Gross in conjunction with the architects Grierson, Aimer and Draffin of Auckland. The memorial consists basically of a reliquary chapel surmounted by a pylon with an equestrian group on top. Gross described the meaning of his equestrian group in the *Wellington Memorial Booklet* published in 1932 as follows: it 'is the figure of victorious youth holding the victor's wreath; but who in order to rise above mundane or material things has mounted the winged horse of inspiration to seek something finer and more ethereal: Pegasus spurning underfoot the victor's spoils of war, and rising into the heavens enables his rider to emerge from the deluge of blood and tears, and to receive the great spiritual assurance of peace'. Gross entitled this group *The Will to Peace* (Figure 31). To evoke aspiration Gross modelled a nude youth mounted on a steed with one leg raised as if to take flight. Gross tensed the boy's body and raised his right arm and head to give a soaring effect. This he aided by making the statue's base rise up in sympathy with the movement of horse and youth.

With this work Gross reached a milestone in his career. He went to England in 1929 to model the full-size equestrian group and have it cast. Before it was shipped to Wellington, Gross exhibited the group at the Royal Academy where critics commented on it favourably. One of these, Frank Rutter, wrote: 'To symbolize "Peace", in its essence a negative idea, is a difficult task for painter or sculptor; but "The Will to Peace" is a positive aspiration, and aspiration is clearly expressed in the soaring lines of Mr. Gross's statue.' Using Watts's *Physical Energy* group as a model, Gross changed the original design by bringing the point of balance further forward. He also increased the forward momentum by the exuberant gesture of the youth and the upward tilt of the base.

Less spectacular than the *Will to Peace* but of importance in the memorial complex are the two large relief sculptures flanking the entrance door to the chapel. The left panel illustrates the *Sacrifice of Work*; a young boy takes the plough as his older brother heeds the call to duty; a young woman relegates her infant to a younger sister, so that she can serve as a Red Cross nurse. The right panel shows the *Sacrifice of Human Ties*; mother and father farewell their son; a young married woman with her children farewell their father as the trumpet, blown by a solider to the left, calls him to duty.

Compared to the equestrian group, these reliefs are more narrative in character: the figures are dressed in contemporary costume, and greater attention

is paid to descriptive detail. It is as if the *Will to Peace* is a poetic expression, the relief sculptures prose. Here Gross displays considerable skill in his designs. For example, in the *Sacrifice of Human Ties* the regimented, repetitious shapes of the soldiers marching in order are contrasted with the varied outlines of the soldier farewelling his wife and children. Around this family group there is an expanse of ominously bare background serving both to accentuate the group and to stress the soldier's sacrifice to duty.

The reliefs express very well the lines of the poet Rupert Brooke, inscribed above the chapel door:

> These laid the world away; poured out the red
> Sweet wine of youth; gave up the years to be
> Of work and joy, and that unhoped serene,
> That men call age; and those who would have been
> Their sons, they gave, their immortality.

The Wellington Citizens' War Memorial was dedicated in April 1932, but for Gross, who was entrusted with work on the reliquary casket, his association with the monument was not over. In fact, due to additions made after the Second World War, Gross was involved with further sculpture there until 1959.

In the Wellington Citizens' War Memorial Gross managed to strike a balance between his ideal and its realisation. But this balance was not always struck as his memorial to Labour Party leader Henry Holland (1868–1933) illustrates (Figure 32). Taking his usual approach, Gross attempted to commemorate the politician by a symbolical conception. On a rectangular pedestal he placed a nude figure of a young man, face upturned to the sky, holding flowers in one hand, fruits in the other. He was to represent the spiritual aspirations of man and his rightful enjoyment of the fruits of the earth. On either side are two crouching figures in attitudes expressing the material hardships and superstitious fears of mankind. Members of the Labour Party at that time, perhaps in a mood of euphoria at their rise to power, approved this unlikely conception. It was unveiled in October 1937.

Unfortunately Gross's finished marble is not totally convincing. The nude youth appears self-conscious, as if unsure of the symbolism he is meant to convey. Also there is an unhappy mixture of realistic detail and ideal symbolism. It is easy to understand the critical reaction to the statue at the time. There was also a public controversy over Gross's bronze athlete set on a pylon at the entrance

FIGURE 32 **Richard Gross, *The Henry Holland Memorial*, 1937, Bolton Street Cemetery, Wellington. Marble, height of central figure 1830 mm**

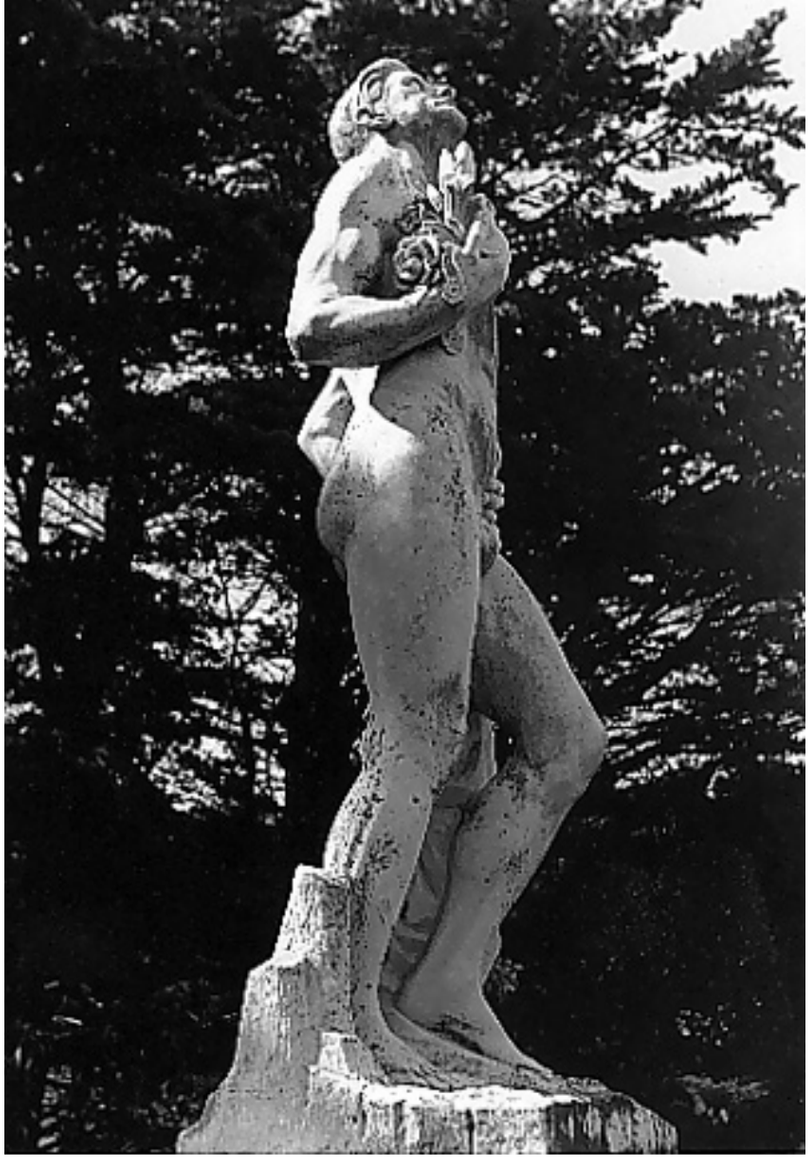


FIGURE 33 **Richard Gross, *The Henry Holland Memorial*, 1937, detail**

to the Auckland Domain (Plate 12), which was approved by the City Council in 1934. This figure was controversial because of its supposedly corrupting nudity, not because of its artistic merits or lack of them. Gross's figure captures the spirit of the nude figures of athletes, based on classical prototypes, found in Italian and German stadiums in the 1930s. It is a celebration of physicality and vigour, the body beautiful so beloved by Fascist theorists of the time who wanted to recapture the ideal forms of classical Greece in life and art. For Gross it was the most complete sculptural realisation of his interest in the ideal male nude.

Although Gross continued to carry out public commissions during and after the Second World War, his main contribution belongs to the years between the wars. The *Maori Warrior*, One Tree Hill, Auckland, completed in 1940 but unveiled in 1948, was among his last major works. Like Trethewey's *Coming of the Maori*, this is a heroic image paying tribute to the values of the past rather than the present. Gross's rangatira stands in a traditional mat with a huia feather in his hair. The figure is designed to embody Sir John Logan Campbell's desire to create, in his words, 'a permanent record of his admiration of the achievements and character of the great Maori people.'

Recognition came to Gross in the form of the award of the CMG and membership of the Royal Society of British Sculptors. For many years he was President of the Auckland Society of Arts and a Member of the Mackelvie Trust. In the latter capacity he was responsible for advising on the acquisition of modern English bronzes by Jacob Epstein and Henry Moore for the Auckland City Art Gallery in 1947.

At the time of his death in December 1964, Gross was a respected conservative who had lost touch with contemporary developments in sculpture. He had no followers, perhaps because the values he represented ceased to be viable in the changing sculptural climate of post-war Auckland. Although Gross is largely forgotten today, it must be realised that to him more than any one else belongs the credit for building a professional image for New Zealand sculpture. He was a sound craftsman, a ceaseless worker and an active spokesman for sculpture over a period of fifty years. As a sculptor of war memorials he was able to respond to popular sentiments and translate them into enduring monuments of stone and bronze. The basis of his art lay in his English background and training, although he was also able to absorb ideas from contemporary European sculpture when they were compatible with his taste. In fact, with the exception of Margaret Butler who modified her style under the influence of Bourdelle in Paris, the years between the wars witness, in the main, a further extension of British influence on local sculpture.

Although these years were unsettled and difficult ones, they were not devoid of opportunity for sculptors. In addition to subscribing to war memorials, the general public also donated funds to commemorate prominent individuals, such as the Margaret Cruickshank statue in Waimate. Private bequests allowed other commissions such as Christchurch's Captain Cook statue. The New Zealand Labour Party commissioned the Holland memorial, and later the Labour Government ordered several works including the bust of Sir Apirana Ngata, 1945, in Parliament House, Wellington. Alexander Fraser (1877–1953) who taught at Wellington School of Design modelled this bust. Centennial Exhibition statuary must also be included in the category of government sponsorship. Public institutions, such as the National Gallery in Wellington and the Canterbury Society of Arts in Christchurch, also bought several sculptures by local artists including Trethewey and Margaret Butler.

V

The La T robe Scheme: Sculpture and the Art Schools: 192 0 –1960

Shortly after the First World War, new staff was appointed to teach modelling and sculpture at the art schools in Auckland, Christchurch and Dunedin. These appointments were instigated by the new superintendent of technical education, William Sanderson La Trobe (1870–1943), as part of a programme designed to bring qualified staff to all departments of the art schools. La Trobe's association with art education began in 1904 when he was appointed director of the Wellington Technical School, a position he was to hold for fourteen years. During this period, in which he pioneered New Zealand's first technical day school, La Trobe was in charge not only of art training but also of vocational courses in subjects such as engineering and homecraft. Consequently he saw art training as a branch of technical education requiring, in the same way as engineering or carpentry, the development of specialised skills.

To ensure a high standard of art instruction La Trobe, as superintendent, advised the Department of Education, which now controlled the art schools, to advertise vacancies for art school staff in Britain, insisting on qualifications from recognised institutions, preferably the Royal College of Art, London. La Trobe wanted to eliminate amateur teaching methods, widen out vocational training to include some academic subjects and make it unnecessary for art teachers to go overseas for proper training. His policy effectively strengthened the English art school influence when an alternative might have been timely. For sculpture, though, any professional instruction was better than none. La Trobe's policy resulted in markedly better opportunities for students to learn sculptural techniques.

When La Trobe became superintendent, Joseph Ellis was the only qualified modelling instructor in the country. Significantly, La Trobe appointed him to the Wellington School of Design while he was its director. Within a few years the new superintendent made sure that each of the main art schools had a qualified modelling instructor. The new staff held diplomas from the Royal College of Art and all remained in New Zealand to make contributions as teachers and sculptors. No women appear to have been appointed under this scheme.

The new staff comprised Francis A. Shurrock (1887–1977) at Christchurch, appointed in 1924, Robert N. Field (1899–1987) at Dunedin, appointed in 1925, and William H. Wright (1886–1943) at Auckland, who was appointed in 1926. Before attending the Royal College of Art, all three had trained in provincial English art schools. Shurrock studied at Chester School of Art, Field at Bromley and Southend-on-Sea and Wright at Nottingham. Of the three the youngest and most adventurous was Field who, unlike the others, had studied at the Royal College after the war. At that time, with William Rothenstein as principal, a new spirit of adventure entered the institution. Rothenstein appointed staff such as Leon Underwood and Eric Kennington who challenged academic methods of teaching. Henry Moore later said that Rothenstein brought an entirely new outlook to the college.

Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth were students at the same time as Field. He was able to see and admire their works as well as those by Henri Gaudier-Brzeska and Ossip Zadkine among others. He and his fellow students questioned the traditional approach to sculpture, looking for alternatives in the art of Egypt, Mexico, Africa and Polynesia. By contrast, Wright and Shurrock adhered to the academic principles of their revered instructor at the Royal College, Edouard Lanteri (1848–1917) then at the end of his long, influential teaching career.

From Lanteri, Wright and Shurrock acquired an excellent grounding in the technical side of modelling and casting. Lanteri, in a testimonial written in 1917,

described Wright as 'one of the best students' he had ever taught. Wright and Shurrock passed on such skills to students unsympathetic to academic principles but willing to put the technical knowledge to use in making their own work. By contrast, the less orthodox Field was interested in teaching direct stone carving to his Dunedin students. This procedure eliminated the preliminary studies and safeguards of an academic approach.

Unfortunately the teaching conditions that confronted the sculptors on their arrival in New Zealand were uniformly dismal. Field found that the Dunedin School of Art, reduced to the status of a department in the Technical College, had only five or six students. The main quarters of the Art School were inconveniently situated in a room at the top of three flights of stairs: a little additional space was provided in the basement. Apart from the remains of a plaster cast collection featuring the *Venus de Milo* and a battered *Discobolos*, there was no indication that sculpture had ever been taught.

At Christchurch, Shurrock, thinking he was to teach adults, found instead he had to teach ten long periods per week, half to children in the twelve-to-thirteen age groups. The Canterbury College School of Art was more like a secondary school than an English art school. Classes were held in one room in an old Gothic Revival building. Conditions for Wright at Auckland cannot have been very different. But he was fortunate in that the new Director, A. J. C. Fisher (1896–1959), a fellow graduate of the Royal College, was appreciative of his qualifications and a firm supporter of his approach.

Despite these discouraging circumstances, all three set to work improving the situation. At Auckland, Wright quickly developed the sculpture facilities so that students could model and cast full-length figures from the life model. Soon his senior students' work was attracting favourable attention. For example, in 1934 an *Art in New Zealand* reviewer described the Art School's modelling section as 'outstanding'. As a further endorsement the Auckland City Art Gallery twice acquired works by Wright's students for its permanent collection. This was a dramatic change from the situation in 1921 when one of the Elam Art School managers complained about the absence of modelling in the curriculum.

At Christchurch, Shurrock, restricted by cramped quarters, found it necessary to teach modelling and carving in the same room used for painting and printmaking. Over the years only a few of his mature students were interested in sculpture specifically. But these included Molly Macalister, Alison Duff, Alan Ingham and W. R. (Jim) Allen, all of whom were later to make careers as sculptors. At first Shurrock made his modelling students develop reliefs from their designs of rabbits, dogs, birds and sprays of foliage. More advanced students could then do sculpture in the round modelled from the life or copied from the antique. Shurrock, like Wright, was conventional in his teaching methods, which were based on Lanteri's handbook. While interested and sympathetic to students, he was reluctant to accept 'modernist' sculptural developments. In Wellington Joseph Ellis represented similar standards at the School of Design. His students began by copying models of birds, animals and fish, before advancing to life modelling.

Field's approach at Dunedin was rather different. He adopted a less formal method of teaching, encouraging students to experiment with both painting and sculptural styles and techniques. With the help of his friend and fellow teacher at the Art School, W. H. Allen, also a graduate of the Royal College, he attempted to build up the student numbers and inject enthusiasm into his classes. Soon after his arrival, having gathered a few keen students around him, Field formed the Six-and-Four Club. This club has been described as 'a first expression of modern art in Otago'. The club derived its name from the original composition of the group, six girls and four boys. It was a talented gathering, including several who were to make a contribution to art in New Zealand. The following recollection by Mrs Field written for the author in 1972 gives an idea of the spirit behind the club: 'Each week these students had a project to produce a piece of work — given theme — and many of them would come to our Anderson's Bay home and work on stone or at painting, all Saturday afternoon, then meet in the evening for mutual evaluation of work done.'

Club members held group exhibitions from time to time in order to present their work to the public. At the Six-and-Four Club and the Art School, Field encouraged students to carve with local materials, such as Oamaru stone. By setting an example of direct carving he soon captured the imagination of his students who eagerly experimented in the basement room of the Art School. Chips from their exertions piled high on the floor, and even a reprimand from a clergyman, who disapproved of such activity taking place on Anzac Day, failed to quell their enthusiasm. Direct carving came into fashion in Europe at this period as a reaction against the revisions and refinements of modelling. Its directness gave an authenticity to the work and meant that there was no intermediary between the sculpture and its maker. The comparative clumsiness of the carving was in tune with the growing appreciation of alternative traditions of art such as the African, Egyptian, Assyrian, Oceanic and Mexican. For sculptors like Henry Moore and Eric Gill the British Museum, with its great collections of non-Western sculpture, became a place of study.

FIGURE 34 **William Wright, *Louise Tilsey*, 1929, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki. Bronze, height 345 mm**

At first Field's experimental approach to painting and sculpture found little sympathy with the Dunedin public. A typically conservative selection committee of the day, having failed to see any merits in 'modernist' art, rejected a painting he had submitted for the New Zealand and South Seas Exhibition in 1925. That exhibition included a number of sculptures from Britain, France and Australia. Potentially it could have been an important force for generating a new awareness of modern sculpture overseas. Unfortunately this was not to be. The selection was conservative and suggested nothing of contemporary developments.

Apart from their involvement with art teaching, Shurrock, Field and Wright were also active as public speakers and writers about art. Shurrock in the 1930s was an earnest advocate of art for the people. He hoped to encourage a wider participation of the public in what he described as the joy of making. By public talks on sculpture the three artists helped to create a greater awareness of the art and a more questioning approach.

But more important was the example set by their sculptural practice. Wright was active as a modeller throughout his teaching career; Shurrock also did a considerable amount of modelling and carving, as did Field. Although there was not a strong demand for their sculpture, the artists were able to exhibit as working members of the art societies to which they belonged. Wright also held a one-man show of his works at the Auckland City Art Gallery in 1931. Shurrock and Field also exhibited with the Christchurch Group, an informal society of artists who tried to generate a new and more experimental kind of artistic expression.

Of the three, Wright was the most accomplished as an academic modeller. Prior to his arrival in Auckland he had achieved success when the Glasgow Art Gallery purchased one of his figure studies, *Caprice*, 1919. In Auckland, finding little scope for figurative compositions, he concentrated almost exclusively on the modelled portrait bust. He drew sitters from his family, from students or from acquaintances at the Elam School of Art, such as Louise Tilsey who taught lettering there. In part this was because his sitters were available and free. Although conservative, Wright's busts have the virtues of careful design, correct drawing and fastidiously exact modelling. Viewed as a whole they form a coherent group that begins with the *Louise Tilsey* (Figure 34), exhibited in 1929, and draws to a close with the *Monna Malcolm*, 1942.

These portraits make no radical departure from Lanteri's style, suggesting that his pupil found little reason to question his approach or the premises on

PLATE 13 **William H. Wright, *Molly Woolcott*, 1930, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki. Bronze, height 750 mm**

which it was based. Compared with Epstein, Wright appears conservative. However, he had no inclination to follow what he regarded as 'the grotesque phase' of Epstein's work embodied in carvings such as *Rima,* 1925, and *Genesis*, 1931. He shared the popular abhorrence of such extremism that could find no place in his art. In this respect his outlook can be compared with that of Shurrock and Ellis who also were conservative. Today it may seem strange that the upheaval caused by the Cubist artists could have left a gifted sculptor like Wright unmoved. But his years at the Royal College from 1912 to 1917 were years of war and disrupted communications. Furthermore, in sculpture the modernists did not achieve the same impact as Braque and Picasso did in painting. Despite the work of Epstein and Gaudier-Brzeska, who practised in London and reflected in their sculpture the influence of primitive art and new ideas of form, there was little revision of attitudes to sculpture in Britain until after the war. In fact Wright admired Auguste Rodin more than any other sculptor and as a portraitist sought to emulate him rather than his own contemporaries.

The Vorticist movement, to which Gaudier-Brzeska belonged, never gained a large following among sculptors. To a successful academic student like Wright, such experimentation would have appeared as a dangerous undermining of his own training and qualifications. His exceptional success in academic disciplines, such as life modelling, would have made it doubly difficult for him to accept art forms in which they had little or no importance. Unlike Field, who responded to the more experimental aspects of Epstein's art, Wright accepted only his more conventional portraits in which he could discern a link with the style of modelling he had been taught by Lanteri.

Perhaps the earliest, and certainly one of the finest, of Wright's New Zealand portraits is the *Louise Tilsey*, 1929 (Figure 34). Using a very narrow base for this portrait, Wright kept his conception simple and his modelling restrained and unobtrusive. The whole force of our attention falls on the head, where his modelling is sensitive and satisfying. Similar in conception is his portrait *Eleanor Heatherington*, modelled the following year. Wright's design sense is apparent in the shaping of the girl's hair into a pyramidal form echoing, in reverse, the shape of her shoulders and bust. This illustrates his belief that 'balance, rhythm and pattern' are to be expected as much in a successful portrait as in an imaginative composition. His half-length portrait of a dancer, *Molly Woolcott*, 1930, shows his concern for these values (Plate 13). The young woman is shown in pensive mood fingering her necklace. Here the arms are arranged decoratively across the bust to produce an elegant composition. The sculptor's command of anatomy is revealed in his fluent and delicate modelling of the hands and face.

Compared to Wright, Shurrock, who also made a number of modelled portraits at that time, is a less refined and more direct modeller. Whereas Wright was most successful with portraits of attractive young women, Shurrock's forceful approach was suited more to male character studies. Shurrock's first New Zealand portraits, his *James Shelley* and *Archibald Nicoll*, both exhibited in 1925, are powerful characterisations, as is his later *Rewi Alley* modelled in 1937 (Figure 35).

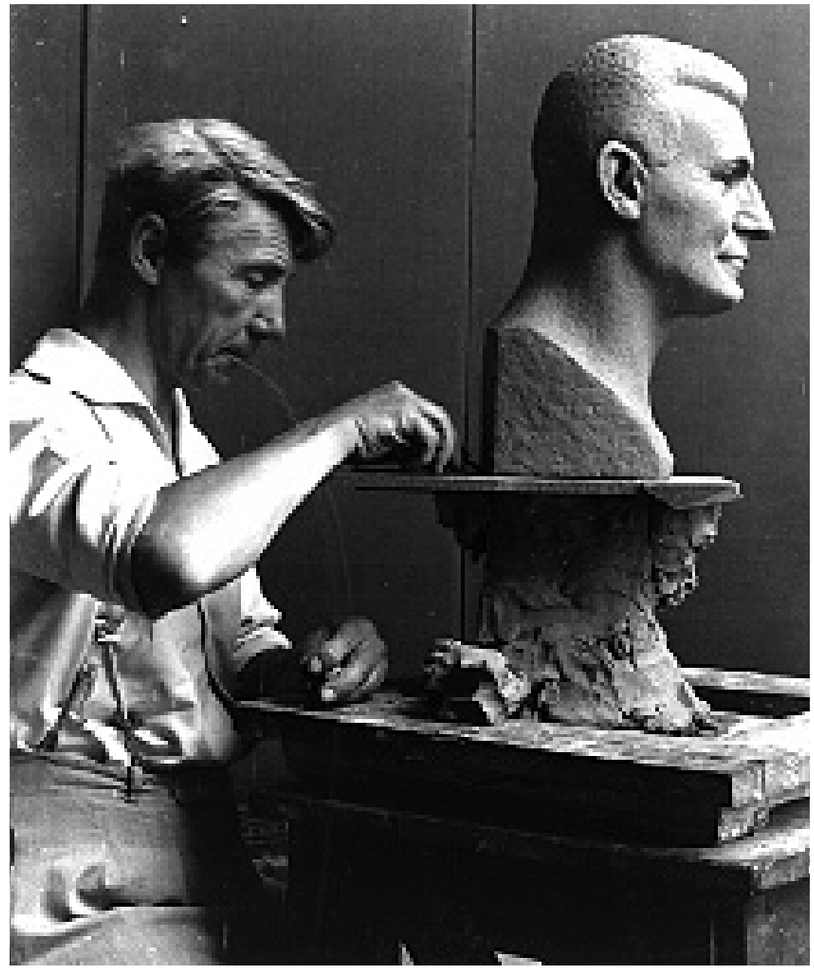


FIGURE 35 **Francis Shurrock modelling *Rewi Alley*, Christchurch, 1937**

In his portrait of Shelley, then professor of education at Canterbury College, Shurrock displays his sobriety in the careful, descriptive modelling of the head, and of such items as the collar and tie. In the Nicoll the drawn brows, scowling lips and protuberant nose give an unflattering but forceful idea of the character of the man who was a dominant personality in art circles. Nicoll (1886–1953), a well-known painter, was director of the Canterbury College School of Art from 1920 to 1928. Unlike Wright, Shurrock never had much sensitivity in his modelling. His surfaces tend to be heavy and dull even though his work is technically excellent. Nor did he have Wright's skill as a designer and

FIGURE 36 **Francis Shurrock, *Christopher Perkins*, 1932, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin. Bronze, height 445 mm**

draughtsman. Instead his portraiture usually depends on its honest direct approach for interest. But, as one critic pointed out, it could be 'vividly descriptive, bitingly so on occasion'.

Shurrock's attitude, expressed in a series of independent and thoughtful articles for the left-wing publication, *Tomorrow*, was that labour and craftsmanship should be the basis of art. Like Eric Gill, Shurrock saw no distinction between the artist and any other kind of labourer who did a good job. He wrote: 'all those who are engaged in work worth doing are artists in that they do their work well, and all art is founded on labour.' Like Gill, too, Shurrock was opposed to the separation of art from work, and agreed wholeheartedly with the Gill's statement: 'We have now separated art and work, cut them right asunder and made foolishness of both.'

Shurrock himself had been accused of being unfit to carry out a commission on the grounds that he was not an artist, only a craftsman. Rejecting this accusation he wrote: 'It is a terrible thing we have in our midst, this artificial idea of art, this low opinion of labour.' In adopting this outlook, Shurrock was in tune with political ideas of the 1930s when the Labour Government established the Welfare State. Also he was attempting to justify a place for the arts in a predominantly working-class society, one just emerging from the Depression.

Although much of Shurrock's portraiture is prosaic there is one notable

exception — his bust of Christopher Perkins, 1932 (Figure 36). Shurrock regarded this as his finest work. Unlike his other portrait busts, this one retains in its fresh, direct modelling the feeling of a sketch. The strong twist of Perkins's head generates a movement not found in Shurrock's other portraits. Perkins (1891–1968), who was a painter, a lively thinker and a controversial character in art circles because of his critical views, inspired Shurrock to throw aside his cautious approach and conceive the work as a whole. The bust was modelled in an afternoon during one of Perkins's brief visits to Christchurch. Shurrock described the circumstances in a 1971 letter to the writer: 'Ever since I first saw Perkins I wanted to model a head or bust life-size. I had the preparations all ready . . . at lunch I put the proposition to him and he quite liked the idea, provided he didn't have to sit for it . . . I had a maximum time of five hours.' Thus his Perkins bust is like a study modelled with energy and enthusiasm rather than a finished portrait. Shurrock believed he had produced a work worthy of his old teacher Lanteri. In his letter he observed: 'I believe Lanteri would have been very happy to see the result, indeed it could pass as an original Lanteri.'

Such thoughts were far from Robert Field's mind when making his early sculptures. He first exhibited at the Otago Art Society in 1927 with two small pieces; one a carving in Oamaru stone entitled *Cupid Lost in Thought*, the other a modelled figure called *Grief* (Figure 37). In both works he departed from the

FIGURE 37 **Robert N. Field, *Grief*, 1927, Private collection. Plaster, height 150 mm**

FIGURE 38 **Robert N. Field, *Head of Tilly Frankel*, c.1930, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki. Oamaru stone, height 235 mm**

academic approach of Wright and Shurrock. In both, too, he thought about how to express his ideas three-dimensionally without copying nature. He based neither work on a specific model nor made much preliminary drawing. His novel approach caught the attention of an *Otago Daily Times* reviewer who referred disapprovingly to the sculptures as 'remarkably modernist' works.

Of the two pieces the smaller and in some ways more successful is the little plaster figure *Grief*. Although it is small enough to be hand-held and closely inspected, there is almost no detail in its deceptively simple form. Instead our attention is taken by the artist's skilful evocation of a strong emotion by means of his expressive figure. Despite the small dimensions, Field conceived his sculpture in monumental terms. From the front he created a powerful movement beginning with the bowed head and the downward thrust of the arms that he joined together between the thighs to create a triangular shape of considerable power. From the back he made a less clearly pronounced movement from the division of the buttocks and depression of the backbone. In its general statement of heavy unbroken mass Field's figure can be compared with Henry Moore's early stone carvings.

Despite an unfavourable critical response to these works, Field continued experimenting with direct carving in local stone. His subjects included figure compositions, portraits and animal studies. In these carvings Field worked to the shape of the block, often allowing the stone itself to suggest the contours of his figures. Among the most successful of the early portrait carvings is his *Head of Tilly Frankel*, 1930 (Figure 38). Field carved this work directly into Oamaru stone by first cutting with a pointed chisel, getting as close as possible to the final forms, and then using a claw chisel to establish the main planes of the head. This was his usual method. He took care to respect his materials so that the head appears to emerge naturally from the block of stone not to be imposed upon it. Field left visible chisel marks to help enliven the surface of the stone and show the role of his hand in the making. This texture also invites us to touch the surfaces and gain a tactile appreciation of the forms. Truth to material had gained almost cult status in Europe at this period, as witnessed in the carvings of artists like Brancusi and Hepworth. These artists credited the hand with playing a thinking role in the creation of their works so that there was a close relationship between process and material.

When Field exhibited the work at the 1931 Group Show, in Christchurch, a reviewer remarked on its 'architectural values'. Compared with Trethewey's marble portraits of the time pointed from plaster models, Field's work was revolutionary. To that period also belongs Field's portrait of Francis Shurrock (Figure 39), carved in the latter's Christchurch studio. The two sculptors, so

unlike in attitude, were then in close contact and exchanged ideas about modelling and carving. Field's portrait is a study of the structural planes of the head that are emphasised by the sharp contours made where they intersect. As a character study the carving is also successful, despite this formal emphasis, for the cast of the head and drawn brows suggest very well Shurrock's nervous energy. Contrasted with modelled portraiture of the era by Shurrock or Wright, Field's carving is radically simplified in its reductive treatment of the planes of the head and consequently feels more solid. Its technical limitations give the portrait a lack of artifice that enhance its authenticity and contribute to its novelty. Not surprisingly, direct carving was rarely used for traditional portraiture.

The importance of these early Field carvings is that they introduced new sculptural ideas to Dunedin and Christchurch art circles. In fact, Field closely reflected contemporary movements in English sculpture up to 1930. In January 1933 he returned to England for two years to refresh his ideas and to study new techniques. Before his departure he had come to the conclusion that one of the reasons for the comparative backwardness of New Zealanders in sculptural appreciation was lack of familiarity with three-dimensional form, even at craft level. He felt sure that the introduction of pottery in schools and adult education programmes would make an important difference.

Stimulated by this idea he spent part of his time in England studying pottery techniques at Camberwell School of Art. During 1934 Field visited the Unit One exhibition in London where he was able to see some of the most advanced works by British sculptors and painters. At that exhibition, recent works by Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth, Ben Nicholson and Paul Nash helped him to see the direction British art was taking. But the completely non-representational work in that show was not sympathetic to his own taste. He was more attuned to the Art Deco works of John Skeaping with which his carvings of foals, lambs and fawns have much in common. Shurrock shared this interest.

Perhaps in response to Unit One Field proceeded to carve one of his finest works, a small study of a woman entitled *Wahine* (Plate 14). The stone, a piece of Cornish serpentine, suggested a seated figure that he developed into a monumental image of a Polynesian woman arranging her hair. Compared to the work of Moore and Hepworth at that time, Field's carving is very compact and there is no penetration completely through the stone. From the front *Wahine* resembles the Maori heitiki in arrangement, but stylistically it is close to the spirit of Moore in the treatment of the limbs as heavy, simplified masses. Field appears to have been the first sculptor practising in New Zealand to allow 'primitivist' elements to enter his style.

There is an impression of slow, inevitable movement. There is also a brooding

FIGURE 39 **Robert N. Field, *Francis Shurrock*, 1930, Private collection, Dunedin. Oamaru stone, height 368 mm**

introspection in the features that adds to the feeling of lethargy emanating from the carving. Unlike his contemporary, Christopher Perkins, who came to New Zealand seeking a Polynesian paradise, Field made no serious attempt to render the special features of the land or the people. This has led one writer to question whether *Wahine* is indeed a Maori figure. Its heaviness and gravitas, however — which contribute to the figure appearing conceptually rooted in the earth and its locality — tend to endorse rather than contradict the Maori reading. Such qualities were sought after in much European figurative sculpture of the period.

Unfortunately for New Zealand sculpture, after his return to Dunedin in 1935 Field gradually gave up stone carving. He concentrated for a period on pottery teaching, implementing a programme of basic training in form. In the process his sculptural practice declined, apart from some terracotta portraits of members of the family. Various factors, including a young family, difficulties at the Art School, as well as conversion to a strict religious observance of Moral Rearmament, combined to weaken the creative drive so remarkable between 1925 and 1935. But with his stone carving Field had anticipated the direction that was to be taken after the Second World War by a younger generation of New Zealand-born sculptors. For them, also, the example of Moore and Hepworth was to be of vital importance and a key to a new world of formal ideas.

Although teaching made it difficult for the art school sculptors to carry out commissions, except on a small scale, they did receive over the years a certain amount of patronage. Wright, for example, had several works bought by the Auckland City Art Gallery as well as one purchased by the National Art Gallery in Wellington. In addition, he was commissioned by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Auckland to execute a bronze portrait bust of Bishop Jean Baptiste Pompallier for St Patrick's Cathedral, to celebrate the centenary of the founding of the church in New Zealand. This was installed in April 1938. Shurrock also had a number of public commissions, notably a commemorative relief of William Massey at Wellington, 1930, a full-length statue of James FitzGerald for Christchurch, 1939, and sculptures for the Dunedin Centennial Memorial, 1957. Apart from some statues of Madonnas for cemetery memorials, Field appears to have been less successful in this way.

Wright also received an important commission for statuary to commemorate the Centennial of Auckland, celebrated in 1940. As one of the most ambitious works undertaken by any of the La Trobe sculptors it deserves detailed attention. Wright won the commission in a closed competition with Richard Gross. The sculpture was financed by funds from the estate of Alexander Watson, who had left money specifically for public statuary. Wright submitted a scheme to the Auckland City Council that he described in a letter as follows: 'I would suggest two figures in bronze, symbolising young New Zealand advancing towards maturity. A becoming of Age.' The group was to form the central feature of a scheme that would eventually include statues of personages concerned with the history of New Zealand.

This conservative scheme gave no thought to the distinctive origins of Auckland as a Pacific city of combined Polynesian and European peoples, though at the time this omission was less controversial than it would be today. The city council decided, with the assistance of a fine arts sub-committee, to accept Wright's scheme and ask him to make a model. When the model had been completed it was favourably received, as the following Mayor's report shows: 'I have seen the model and have been deeply impressed by it . . . three life-size bronze figures of a symbolic nature, the one in the centre represents Auckland finding its strength. On the right Wisdom is offering a bay leaf to the figure representing Auckland. On the left a figure representing the Fertility of the Soil is offering a cornucopia. The conception appeals to me.'

This conception became the final one. Working from life models, Wright enlarged the figures to life size in less than eight months (Plate 15). His sculptural intention was reported in the *New Zealand Herald* of June 1939 as being 'to pose the figures in suspended slow movement, such as may be seen in a Greek frieze'. The lines of the drapery were to be 'severe' and the garments 'rather Greek in style but not strictly so'. Consequently, Auckland's Centennial was commemorated by figures in pseudo-Grecian garb acting out a symbolic ceremony redolent of a culture far distant in time and space. The transfer of European values to a new land could never have found a more complete expression. As a symbol of cultural dependence, the statuary had a singular aptness for the occasion, in view of the effort that had been made over the span of one hundred years to introduce British and European tastes to New Zealand. Viewed from behind a spacious pond, the figures have a dignity and grace that is effective and decorative.

Owing to the efforts of the La Trobe scheme sculptors, the years between the wars were important ones at the art schools. Their presence ensured professional instruction and encouragement for students with an interest in sculpture, while their own sculptural practice, though limited, also set an example. The closer geographical relationship between Dunedin and

PLATE 14 Robert N. Field, *Wahine*, 1934, Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Cornish serpentine, 150 x 130 x 120 mm

PLATE 15 William H. Wright, *Auckland Centennial Memorial*, 1938–39, Auckland Domain. Bronze, height 2020 x width 630 x length 3080 mm

FIGURE 40 **John Kavanagh Modelling a Portrait Bust, Auckland, 1971**

Christchurch, which allowed Field and Shurrock to work and exhibit together, provided a more stimulating environment than elsewhere. Many of the more important, younger generation of painters and sculptors, including Colin McCahon, M. T. Woollaston, Doris Lusk, Rita Angus, Molly Macalister and Alison Duff, developed their ideas in that environment.

At Auckland and Wellington the situation was less favourable. Wright seems to have been isolated from other sculptors and deprived of the stimulus this might have given him. His academic instruction did not have a stimulating effect and few of his students continued with sculpture after leaving art school. At Wellington, Joseph Ellis was more influential in the early part of his career than later. By the time illness led to his retirement in 1939 he appears to have been out of touch with his students. Alexander Fraser who succeeded him was both a fine craftsman and a competent portrait modeller. However, he was conservative in approach and continued academic principles into the post-war period when they were no longer influential.

Shurrock taught at Canterbury until his retirement in 1949; Field resigned his Dunedin position in 1945 and moved to Auckland, where he taught art at a secondary school; Wright died prematurely at Auckland in 1943. Several of the positions they vacated went to men of similar background who taught sculpture into the following decade. For example, John Kavanagh (1903–1984), a distinguished portraitist (see Figure 40), was appointed to Elam in 1950, succeeding Monna Malcolm who had filled the position after Wright's death. A Royal College of Art graduate and Prix de Rome winner, Kavanagh proved unsympathetic to modernist sculpture. He remained at Elam until his retirement in 1968 and appeared an isolated figure, whose reasons for coming to the Antipodes were hard to fathom. A good example of his New Zealand work is the bust of Dr Douglas Robb completed in 1957. He influenced a number of practitioners notably Anthony Stones (b. 1934) who studied portraiture with him in the late 1960s. Stones has carried out a number of important public commissions in New Zealand including *Lord Freyberg*, 1981, Auckland, and *Jean Batten*, 1989, Auckland International Airport. He now lives in England where he is vice-president of the Society of Portrait Sculptors.

Eric John Doudney (1905–87), who replaced Shurrock at Canterbury in 1950, proved somewhat conservative, indeed ineffectual, in his teaching methods. He had worked on various civic and religious commissions in Britain and retained a strong decorative dimension in his New Zealand works, such as a striking carved fireplace for his own home. Doudney spent considerable periods of time in Northern Italy, where he made a study of the interrelationship between sculpture and architecture. He retired in 1971. By the 1950s the La Trobe scheme had outlived its usefulness. It remained for a younger generation of New Zealand-born sculptors to breathe new life into the art schools in the 1960s, by overthrowing old teaching methods and allowing more experimentation.

VI

Post-War Sculpture: 1945 –65

The year of New Zealand's centennial, 1940, saw a recognition and commemoration of achievements in literature and the arts. For the visual arts this was manifested in the Centennial Exhibition of New Zealand Art and the publication of Eric McCormick's volume, *Letters and Art in New Zealand*, as part of a commemorative series. In the exhibition, however, sculpture formed a small part. In the introduction to the Centennial Exhibition catalogue, A. H. McLintock summarised the history of art in the Dominion, omitting any specific reference to sculpture. McCormick, too, excluded any mention of sculpture from a discussion of the visual arts in his influential book. His silence reveals his lack of any real awareness of a sculptural tradition in New Zealand.

It was in literature, not the visual arts, that McCormick sensed the strongest local development in the work of writers such as Frank Sargeson, who drew on local patterns of life and distinctive characteristics of speech. *Phoenix,* a publication by a group of Auckland students, also expressed a feeling of national identity among young local writers such as Charles Brasch, Allen Curnow and A. R. D. Fairburn. The successful launching in 1947 of *Landfall*, a quarterly devoted to local writing, was further evidence of literary strength that far surpassed that of the visual arts, especially sculpture.

Deprived of a local sculptural tradition capable of capturing the imagination of either artists or their public, sculptors of the post-war years faced a difficult task. New directions had to be discovered and followed. But the freeing of sculpture from its almost total bondage to British academic principles was not easy to accomplish. That the younger generation of sculptors were also to be influenced by trends in British sculpture was perhaps inevitable. The ideas of Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth, especially the former, emerged with overpowering strength after the war. To ignore them would have been reactionary, while to arrive at something of comparable power independently would have required real genius. This the New Zealand sculptors did not possess.

Their achievement was to be in breaking with the academic approach, adopting a more questioning stance, and educating a reluctant public to accept modern sculpture. In the latter respect an increasing demand for sculpture suitable for commercial and domestic settings played a role in making it relevant. The magazine *Home and Building* gave regular coverage to events of sculptural interest while also promoting the placing of small sculptures in a typical household environment.

Two of the first locally born and trained sculptors to make a contribution after the war were Alison Duff (1914–2000) and Molly Macalister (1920–1979). They were both pupils of Francis Shurrock at the Canterbury College School of Art. He also taught Chrystabel Aitken, a gifted sculptor, who exhibited with the Christchurch Group. Both Duff and Macalister certainly owed a debt to Shurrock's infectious enthusiasm and sound grounding in techniques, even though neither adhered to his rather conservative ideas of sculpture. They continued the tradition of important contributions by talented women to the arts in New Zealand. One thinks in literature of Katherine Mansfield, in painting of Frances Hodgkins, and in poetry of Eileen Duggan and Ursula Bethell. Though trained before the war, Duff and Macalister reached maturity in the 1940s and 1950s when they helped sculpture become more experimental and expressive. To some extent their work was an extension of the direction taken by Robert Field in the late 1920s.

Born in Invercargill, Alison Duff went to the Canterbury School of Art in 1934, where she studied for three years, obtaining her Diploma in 1936. Molly Macalister, also born in Invercargill, attended classes at Canterbury from 1936

to 1939. At first divided between painting and sculpture, under Shurrock's tuition she soon showed ability as a carver. One of her student works, a cat carved in Oamaru stone (Figure 41), datable 1938–39, has stylistic features found in her later sculpture. It is a simple, solid form with a minimum of detail. The block of stone is not penetrated at any point. As with much of her work, the figurative interest is important despite the formal emphasis.

Duff, unlike Macalister, extended her training on Shurrock's advice by attending East Sydney Technical College from 1936 to 1938. Her teachers there included Rayner Hoff (1894–1937) and Lyndon Dadswell (1908–1986). Teaching at that time, under Hoff's influence, was rather conservative. Dadswell, however, was more experimental in his approach and showed an awareness of contemporary developments in British sculpture. Inspired by reproductions of carvings by Moore and Hepworth, Duff experimented on her own with direct carving in stone and wood.

Apart from a brief period in 1939, working with Trethewey on the Centennial Exhibition sculptures in Wellington, she spent the next ten years in Australia where she held teaching positions at Hobart and East Sydney Technical College. Her Australian work was predominantly direct carving in stone and wood. An example is *Osiris*, 1944, carved in wood by candlelight to assist in softening transitions between the forms. She tried to retain a feeling for the original shape of the wood. The finished work appears an uneasy compromise between naturalistic details in the face and abstraction in the torso. The chisel markings left on the surface give some textural interest but are too regular to be effective. At this stage Duff rarely achieved a satisfactory balance between the formal and figurative aspects of her art.

Her most ambitious carving made after her return to New Zealand in the early 1950s was entitled *Manaia* (Figure 42). *Manaia* is a woodcarving, just under two metres high, carved in native kauri timber salvaged from a swamp. In Maori art the manaia is an image with the characteristics of both man and bird. But Alison Duff's *Manaia*, despite its Maori name, is stylistically close to British carving. It is overtly an antipodean reworking of Henry Moore's woodcarvings. The holes pierced through the wood, forming the stylised legs at the lower extremity and indicating a gap between the arm and torso above, recall Moore's use of form-penetrating openings in his carved figures of the 1930s. Comparatively Duff's treatment is unduly naturalistic in parts and lacks Moore's imaginative use of form and space freed from representation. Viewed as an abstract form, *Manaia* is pleasing enough but the rhythms are mechanical and the work somewhat angular.

Manaia was more important for what was attempted than for what was actually accomplished. Wood sculpture of this size and type had rarely if ever been carved before in New Zealand outside the traditional Maori context. Therefore it is paradoxical that the sculptor could envisage a subject such as *Manaia*, carrying through the Maori connotations of the birdman in the stylised beaked head and anthropomorphic body, without influence from Polynesian

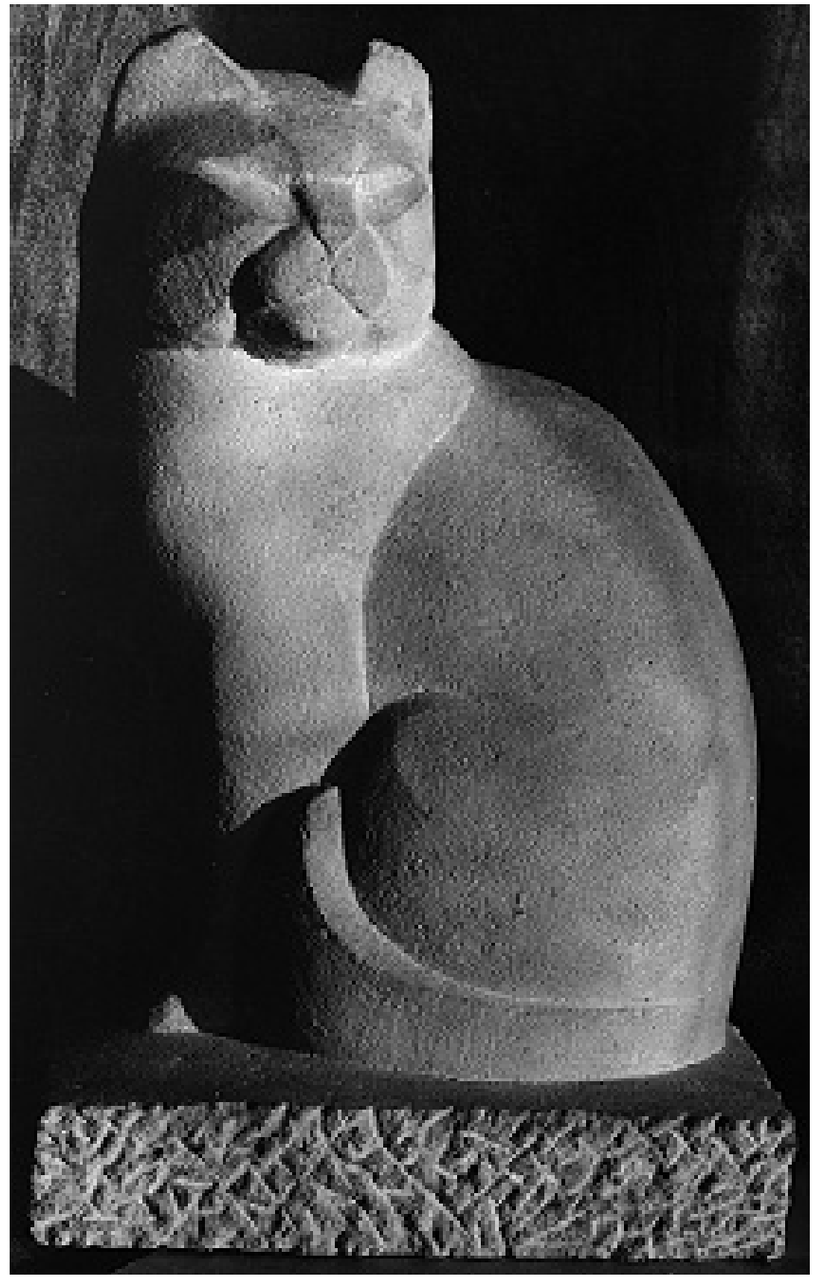


FIGURE 41 **Molly Macalister, *Cat*, 1938–39, Private collection. Oamaru stone, height 410 mm**

FIGURE 42 **Alison Duff, *Manaia*, 1954, Hocken Library, Dunedin. Kauri, height 1830 mm**

carving. It does, however, indicate the extent of Alison Duff's indebtedness to British sculpture at that period.

While Alison Duff was in Australia, Molly Macalister, not attempting a full-time career in sculpture, worked for a time at the Otago Museum making dioramas before shifting to Auckland in 1943. After her marriage she managed to combine domestic duties with a small sculptural practice. Her early sculptures present several consistent characteristics. They are predominantly figurative, economical in drawing, closed and solid in form. These characteristics appear in one of her earliest stone carvings, *Sleeping Child*, of 1940. Here the shape of the stone determined the crouched pose. Like an embryo, the child is enclosed as if in a stony womb, enhancing the organic feeling of the carving. Although it is an independent conception, *Sleeping Child* can be compared with works such as Barbara Hepworth's *Infant* of 1929. But the ultimate source of this kind of

PLATE 16 **Molly Macalister, *Head*, 1941–42, Private collection, Auckland. Jarrah, height 190 mm**

FIGURE 43 **Alan Ingham, *Bookend*, 1941, Private collection, Christchurch. Wood, height, 445 mm**

carving in Britain is the work of Henri Gaudier-Brzeska whose animal studies in particular have a similar closed, organic feeling for form.

A slightly later carving of 1941–42, *Head* (Plate 16), is a fine conception with a hint of influence from tribal masks though it is hard to detect much interest in 'primitivist' sources for her ideas. There is a simplicity and strength about the carving due to the sculptor's concentration on broad planes in the brow, nose and cheeks. Details are kept to a minimum. The eyes are reduced to oval indentations, while the hair is roughly textured to contrast with the smooth finish of the face. This work illustrates Macalister's conception of sculpture, later expressed as follows in an article for *Home and Building* in 1956: 'What we have to look for in a piece of sculpture is not a dead copy of another kind of life, but a life that is an entirely new creation, giving the work a power and presence that is unique.' Certainly this carving has an undeniable presence, impressing the viewer and evoking the Maori concept of mana and the power of a person who possesses it to command awe and respect.

But despite its quality, much of Macalister's early work is eclectic and derivative, mainly from contemporary British sculpture. *Female Figure* c.1948–49, for example, is a wooden torso reminiscent of carvings by Gaudier-Brzeska and Eric Gill. She allows the wood grain to follow the forms, stressing their gently curving volumes. Her portraiture of the late 1940s, such as *Digby Nelson*, 1947, owes a debt to Jacob Epstein. But portraiture was not a major interest, nor was Epstein to be an enduring influence.

The 1940s was a decade of comparative isolation for Macalister. But with the arrival of a number of young sculptors in Auckland in the early 1950s the modern movement gathered momentum. In addition to Duff, Alan Ingham (1920–1994) and W. R. (Jim) Allen (b. 1922) came to the city at that time. Between them they contributed to a sense of vitality in Auckland sculpture. Ingham and Allen had also studied with Shurrock at the Canterbury College School of Art. Both furthered their studies in Britain after the war. Their influence, however, was to be of a markedly different character. Whereas Ingham worked in Auckland for only a short period before leaving to live in Australia, Allen remained longer to exert a strong influence as a teacher.

Of the two, Ingham was slightly older. Born in Christchurch in 1920, he was not at first interested in sculpture until he was introduced to Russell Clark (1905–66), a painter and commercial artist who married his sister. Although sculpture was a minor interest for Russell Clark in the 1930s when Ingham first knew him, there were some examples of woodcarving in the artist's Dunedin studio, which made an impression, as did drawings displayed there. An example of Clark's carving at that time is *Tohunga*, 1940–41, a sharply stylised work in the Art Deco manner, then influencing his approach to commercial art. Significantly, Ingham's early sculpture was to be wood carving inspired by Clark's example.

From 1939 to 1941 Ingham attended evening classes at the Canterbury College School of Art, where Shurrock taught him. But he was also able to develop his carving in the daytime by working on details for a model Maori canoe at the Canterbury Museum. His own carvings were in a different style, one based on the example of the Croatian sculptor Ivan Meštrović (1883–1962), whose work he had seen in a book and admired. An early work, dated 1941, is a carved bookend with a woman's head in profile (Figure 43). It is simple in conception, but Ingham has extracted some interest from the downward movement of the head seen in profile.

After the war Ingham studied at East Sydney Technical College under

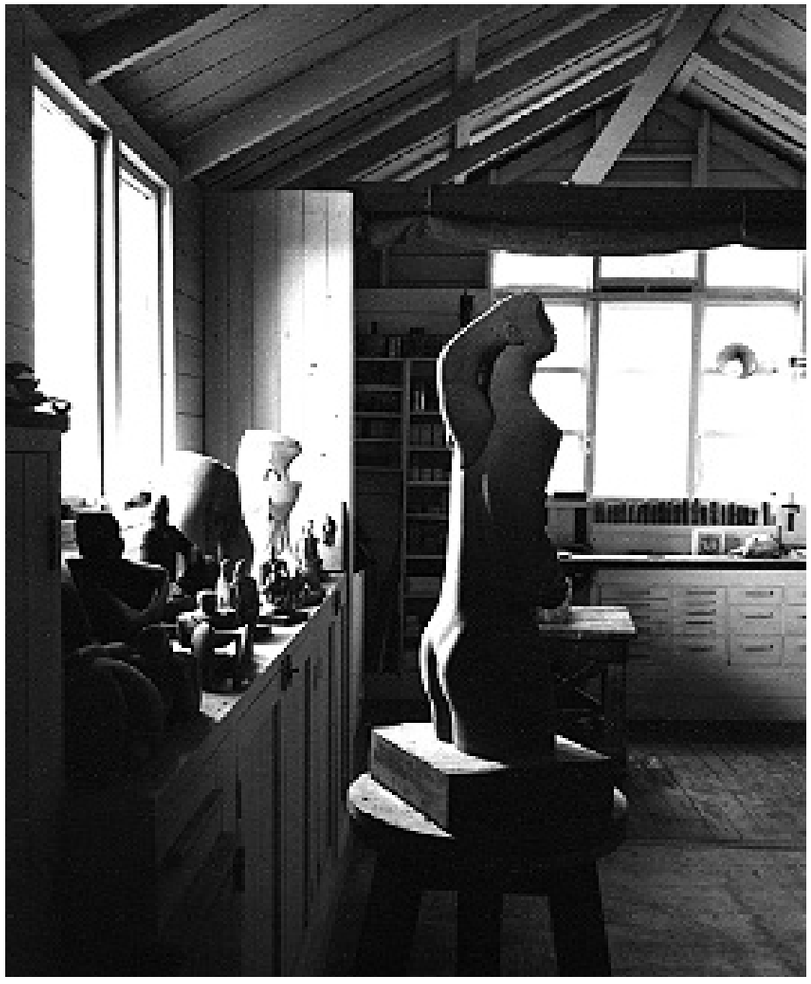


FIGURE 44 **Russell Clark's Studio, Christchurch, circa 1954. Photograph**

Dadswell. In 1947 a travelling exhibition of works by Moore made a powerful impression and stimulated a desire to study in England. Having completed his diploma in 1948, he travelled to London where he studied for a few months at the Central School of Art before accepting a position as an assistant to Moore. His work for Moore ranged from helping with casting — he remembered making a cast of one of the *Helmet Heads* — to enlarging maquettes into full-size sculptures. The most important of these was the *King and Queen* group of 1952–53. These years with Moore were extremely rewarding ones for Ingham, who found the sculptor 'a magnificent man to work with'. With Moore he learnt the basic skills of bronze casting. He made a kiln for Moore to bake out moulds, after having been given a 'carte blanche' to do so, provided costs were kept low.

While working for Moore he managed to make a few small bronzes that he exhibited at the Royal Academy and with the London Group. He also contributed to an exhibition by Dominion artists, held at New Zealand House in 1951. In style his sculpture inevitably came heavily under Moore's influence. An example of his work while with Moore is *Head*, 1952, a small carving in Poliphant stone. At that time Moore was making a number of pieces, such as *Warrior's Head*, 1953, which interested Ingham. But the closest parallel with Ingham's work is found in Moore's earliest heads, such as *Head of a Woman*, 1926. Ingham has, however, introduced a distinctive lightness into the design of the face with the gently curving lines of the neck and brow.

His bronzes of that period, too, were derivative of Moore, pointing to one of the great disadvantages of working with a master of exceptional stature, that of stylistic and artistic subservience. This was to remain a lasting problem for Ingham. Many British sculptors of the period found themselves in a similar situation, among them Anthony Caro, a fellow assistant with Ingham. Caro was one of the few to break away and find a personal expression.

While with Moore, Ingham corresponded with Russell Clark, who was so enthusiastic about Moore's works that he arranged through him for the purchase of a fine watercolour, entitled *Family Group* in 1951. In this connection Moore wrote to Russell Clark from Hoglands on August 7th 1951: 'Dear Mr. Clark, This is only a note to tell you that your letter with a draft for £25 came while we were away on holiday. Thank you very much. . . . I liked the choice you made . . . when I do my next lot of drawings I will talk it over with Alan and between us we will try to find the kind of drawing you would choose. I am glad you got the photographs Alan sent and if anything is reproduced in the New Zealand "Listener" I shall be very pleased.'

Clark's purchase was not the first work by Moore to enter a New Zealand collection. The Mackelvie Trust had purchased a small bronze, *Two Seated Women and a Child*, 1945, for the Auckland City Art Gallery in 1948. Later, in 1954, a drawing was donated to the same collection and this was followed by the purchase of an early bronze. During 1953 a touring exhibition of British drawings provided an opportunity for New Zealanders to see one of Moore's shelter drawings. By these means Moore's art was made known in the country. Clark, then teaching at the Canterbury College School of Art, was in a position to familiarise his students with Moore's style.

A strong reinforcement of this influence came with Ingham's return to New Zealand in 1953. His decision to return was due to a desire to break with Moore and start an independent career. He arrived back in Christchurch in December and worked for a period with Clark. Clark responded to contact with Ingham and began a group of works influenced by Moore's sculpture. One of the earliest of these, datable to Ingham's stay in Christchurch, is *Two Figures*, 1953–54

FIGURE 45 **Russell Clark, *Two Figures*, 1953–54, Private collection, Christchurch. Concrete, height 591 mm**

(Figure 45). It is reminiscent of Moore's *Family Group* bronzes of 1945–47 with the small heads, long necks and wide shoulders, as well as the complex interlocking of the figures typical of that series. Clark, however, fails to achieve the extreme economy of Moore's treatment; for example, he rendered details such as ears, eyes and nose naturalistically compared with Moore's inventive use of knobs and split-head forms.

Influenced by the stone *Head* Ingham brought back with him, which he was later to own, Clark began a series of heads in local marbles. An example is *Girl with Ponytail*, c.1955–58 (Figure 46), which is an individual variation of the theme. Here Clark's strong design sense is apparent in the profile, where the wedge-like shape of the ponytail balances the features. The distinctive Moorean space penetration is treated naturalistically as the gap between the hair and head. In

the features, too, Clark reverts to his own more literal approach to form.

While with Clark in Christchurch, Ingham carved a small *Girl's Head* (Figure 47), in Oamaru stone. The long, tapering neck gives an effect of elegance in profile as well as setting off the compositional lines of the head. The head is conceived in a series of elliptical movements. At the back, the projecting hair repeats the form that fascinated Clark for so long in his own carvings. Another carving he made in Christchurch was an irregular form pierced by a hole looking like a belated version of the exercise Hepworth and Moore carried out in 1931–32. But discouraged by lack of opportunity in Christchurch, Ingham left for Auckland in the winter of 1954 hoping to find enough work to make a living.

By then W. R. (Jim) Allen was also in New Zealand, having returned from London. Allen, born in Wellington in 1922, had studied at the Canterbury College School of Art from 1946 to 1948 where he had won recognition as an outstanding student. In 1948 he was awarded a £1,000 scholarship by the Association of New Zealand Art Societies to study at the Royal College of Art in London. Allen attended the Royal College from 1949 to 1952 when he graduated with a first-class diploma in sculpture.

At the Royal College Allen found that his ideas of sculpture, based on Shurrock's academic example, were regarded as old-fashioned. Under the influence of teachers such as Frank Dobson (1888–1963), who set an example by his own childlike eagerness to learn even at a mature age, Allen responded to new ideas. One of the strongest forces at the College was Henry Moore who, though not an official teacher, paid visits to the sculpture rooms at regular intervals.

On graduation, Allen decided to return to New Zealand. His work of this period, such as *Female Nude*, 1951 (Plate 17), is figurative but modernist in the manner of Dobson. He was hoping to find employment as a professional sculptor but in this he was to be disappointed. Instead he accepted a position as field officer in the Art and Craft Branch of the Department of Education, thereby beginning his influential teaching career. Later his subsequent position as liaison organiser brought him to Auckland in 1955. This period saw Allen developing his experimental approach to teaching allowing considerable freedom of activity and encouraging individual initiative. In a letter to Gordon Tovey, his superior at Wellington, he wrote in May 1954: 'If we accept the fact that personal development — environment and conditions — is the desirable philosophic course, we are at odds with a system which endeavours to submerge the individual to a point of mass utility and experience. This system by its nature bluntens or kills the very attributes, personality and imaginative, constructive thought, which it would claim to foster.'

FIGURE 46 **Russell Clark, *Girl with Ponytail*, c.1955–58, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington. Marble, 250 x 135 x 385 mm**

FIGURE 47 **Alan Ingham, *Girl's Head*, 1953, Private collection, Sydney. Oamaru stone, height 165 mm**

Allen became highly critical of conventional methods of teaching sculpture, as well as predictable solutions to sculptural projects. Each work was a response to different circumstances and thus required an individual solution. While teaching, Allen was unable to produce much of his own sculpture and some of what he did he later destroyed. His teaching, however, is important because it indicates the start of his break with any one set of rules or approach to problem solving. Allen was active in sculpture education at various levels including adult education classes. For example, in 1954 he took a lively Summer School at the Auckland City Art Gallery.

At that time the Auckland City Art Gallery under the guidance of its first professional director, Eric Westbrook, took a leading role in art education. Westbrook, with a background as exhibitions officer for the Arts Council of Great Britain, was appointed to the position in March 1952. He enlivened the gallery by modernising the buildings, appointing new staff, arranging exhibitions of contemporary New Zealand painting and sculpture, and fostering the use of the gallery for art classes and musical recitals. It was due mainly to his encouragement that Alan Ingham, who had known him in England, decided to move to Auckland.

At Auckland, Ingham set up a studio at Birkdale (Figure 48) where he built a bronze foundry. His intention was to make a living by combining his own sculptural practice with commissions for casting from other sculptors and commercial firms. With the help of a young sculptor, John Kingston (b. 1932), he had the primitive foundry ready for use by October 1954. It consisted of a furnace in an old shed made with two deep pits lined with firebricks, and a rough brick oven for baking the moulds. It was a makeshift arrangement and not entirely safe as was demonstrated when a crucible blew up violently the first time it was tested. Although it was not the first bronze foundry for sculpture in Auckland, since Richard Gross had been operating one for years, it seems to have acted as a catalyst for a renewed interest in bronze as a material that has continued to the present. Unlike Gross who did not offer facilities to Auckland sculptors, Ingham cast their work for a small fee. Later Ron Ranby, Gross's assistant, was to make casts for Macalister and other Auckland sculptors.

Thanks to support from Westbrook, Ingham received commissions to cast several works for the Auckland City Art Gallery's permanent collection. Also he cast a small group, *Birds*, 1954 (Plate 18), for Macalister who was now able to experiment with working in bronze as a medium. *A* tabletop sculpture, *Birds*

PLATE 17 **W. R. (Jim) Allen, *Female Nude*, 1951, University of Auckland. Stone, height 1100 mm, depth 450 mm**

FIGURE 48 **Alan Ingham in his Studio, Auckland, 1954**

could easily be accommodated in a family home. Russell Clark and Alison Duff also had several bronzes cast at Ingham's foundry. Despite their support, the venture proved economically unrealistic. Within a year Ingham was forced to seek more regular employment in Australia.

Ingham's most ambitious work at Auckland was a standing figure for which, following Moore's practice, he made a small maquette thirty-three centimetres high, which was later enlarged to a plaster over two metres high, now destroyed. *Standing Figure*, 1955, is known from the maquette (Figure 49) and photographs. The wide, trapezoid shape of the torso, shallow and hollowed at the back, the separated, mound-like projections of the breasts, even the design and fall of the

skirt can be paralleled in works such as Moore's *Seated Figure*, 1952, or *Standing Figure No. 3*, 1952. It must have been an impressive revelation of the power of modern figurative sculpture when it was shown as the centrepiece of an ambitious exhibition of contemporary New Zealand sculpture, held at the Auckland City Art Gallery in June 1955.

That there could be an exhibition devoted exclusively to sculpture was itself innovatory in New Zealand; that enough contemporary sculpture could be gathered together to fill an entire room of the Auckland City Art Gallery was unprecedented (Figure 50). No clearer proof of the growth of sculpture in Auckland during the early 1950s could be given. The exhibition should be seen both as a recognition of that growth and as an attempt to assess achievement at that point.

Several characteristics emerge from a survey of the exhibition. The majority of works shown were figurative and stylistically derivative from modern British sculptors, Moore in particular. Older artists in the show, such as Gross, however, continued in the earlier academic style. Some of the works, including examples by Ingham, Macalister and Allen, were over life-size, indicating a search for greater monumentality. But there was little evidence of personal styles, and anyone hoping for the emergence of a distinctive local identity must have been disappointed. It was the quantity of serious sculpture, as well as the manifest concern for understanding contemporary developments, that deserve recognition.

PLATE 18 **Molly Macalister, *Birds*, 1954, Private collection, Auckland. Bronze, height 203 mm**

FIGURE 49 **Alan Ingham, *Standing Figure*, c.1954, Private collection, Sydney. Plaster maquette, height 330 mm**

There was also the beginning of a critical swing away from the kind of representational modelling typified by Gross. Writing in *Landfall*, Michael Nicholson, a painter, remarked on Macalister's search for a style and noted the comparative originality of Allen's *Sculpture 1*, 1955. But he criticised Gross's sculpture, saying that it 'revealed the sterility of an intelligence which has not begun to penetrate the sensual façade'. Unkind though this observation was, it did point to a radical change of values. Unlike Gross's exhibit, a bust of a Maori woman, Allen's *Sculpture 1* was a formal exercise based on the human figure but simplified to a box-like trunk, standing on two wedges and surmounted by

an ovoid form to serve as a head. It was essentially a study in contrasting forms, justifying its existence in sculptural terms alone. Allen's work was the most independent in the exhibition.

Retrospectively the timing of this exhibition, just before the departure of Westbrook and Ingham for Melbourne, seems to sum up and mark the close of a short but vital epoch. Both Westbrook and Ingham, the former as spokesman and patron who bought works for the Auckland collection, the latter as influential practitioner and bronze founder, contributed much to an improved climate for local sculpture. Due to Westbrook, exhibitions of this kind were made possible and given wide publicity. Sculptors had gained a new feeling of unity as well as a public image. His successor Peter Tomory, appointed director in 1956, continued the momentum by encouraging the purchase of sculpture by artists like Maillol, Epstein and Hepworth.

Tomory organised the exhibition of sculpture by Moore that toured New Zealand the following year, causing unprecedented controversy and interest. Crowds poured into galleries throughout the country to be outraged, puzzled or enlightened. For the general public Moore may still have been a novelty whereas for sculptors he was, by that date, a familiar and almost oppressive influence whose giant shadow lay across the path to personal expression. Although some were deeply concerned about Moore's ubiquitous influence, others, notably Clark, were willing to accept and work within it. Because Clark was extremely active as a sculptor during the late 1950s, his adaptation of Moorean forms for public commissions ensured further exposure and dissemination of the style. Hepworth, too, remained an influential figure and the acquisition of her bronze *Torso II* by the Auckland City Art Gallery in 1963 caused a public outcry.

Clark was very successful at obtaining public commissions for Government buildings as well as for commercial firms. His sculptures were sometimes commissioned for architectural settings because architects were increasingly aware of modern sculpture and its potential to complement their buildings. Typical of Clark's works are the Timaru Post Office sculpture, 1957, the Auckland Bledisloe Place *Anchor Stones*, 1958–59 (Figure 51), and the Haywright's Shopping Centre *Family Group*, 1960, at Christchurch. All these works involve quite conscious derivations from contemporary English sculptors, Moore in particular, though Hepworth and later Lynn Chadwick influenced Clark as well.

The Timaru sculpture is a stringed abstract, designed to suggest the idea of communications by means of telegraphic wire. Although this concept was unfamiliar in Timaru, where the sculpture was quickly and derisively labelled the *Ear*, a student of sculpture has no difficulty in tracing its origin to the *Stringed*

FIGURE 50 **Contemporary New Zealand Sculpture Show, Auckland City Art Gallery, 1955**

Figures of the late 1930s by Moore or to Barbara Hepworth's similar pieces of the 1950s. Hepworth, in fact, designed a stringed piece entitled *Winged Figure*, 1962, after Clark's work was completed, which was planned for a similar function, to operate on a flat wall providing ornamental relief and a play of shadow as the light changes direction. This similarity of solution points to Clark's close identity with the aesthetic behind Hepworth's work. Unfortunately, owing to a miscalculation, Clark failed to achieve the correct scale for his sculpture. It appears diminutive and out of proportion.

A similar failing is apparent to a lesser extent in the *Anchor Stones* (Figure

FIGURE 51 **Russell Clark, *Anchor Stones*, 1959, Bledisloe Place, Auckland. Hinuera stone, height 1850 x depth 1400 x width 2100 mm**

51), which are relatively small compared with the architecture behind them. In this instance Clark followed Moore's example by making maquettes, then enlarging them to full size. This can be a dangerous process, as Hepworth has pointed out, because enlargement requires alterations if the final work is to operate successfully. Gordon Wilson, the architect of the Bledisloe Building, who had designed a modernist structure with minimal decoration, commissioned the sculpture from Clark. He also suggested the use of the stones as the basis of the design. It is good example of a satisfactory working relationship between a modernist architect and sculptor. Buildings of this kind required public sculpture to give them a sense of human scale and a better integration with the city environment. Clark was among the first New Zealand sculptors to meet this need.

The finished sculpture is an interesting example of influence from Moore and Hepworth. Ostensibly the models for the design were two historic Maori

anchor stones that are, in reality, boulders shaped by the passage of water into rounded, irregular forms, such as Moore sometimes used as the basis for his work. But Clark modified the anchor stones extensively. Whereas the original *Tainui* stone rests horizontally over a chief's grave, in his sculpture Clark changed the form and stood it upright. He modified the *Matahoura* stone, too, by giving it sharp contours instead of the original's worn profiles. The original stone is now in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

The completed sculpture has a calculated balance of curving and straight contours reminiscent of Moore's *Time/Life* carvings of 1952, as well as Hepworth's works of the late 1950s. At the final stage, Clark was asked to incise a double spiral on the *Tainui* stone to give it a visible reference to Maori culture. Clark's modification of the original stone shapes was directed by preconceived ideas about abstract sculpture derived from Moore and Hepworth. His *Family Group*, 1960, too, is unthinkable without Moore, though Clark has flattened and sharpened his forms in a somewhat mannered and personal way. While lacking originality, Clark helped introduce the public to what were then controversial ideas of sculptural form.

Despite attempts to develop an alternative to Moore, he continued to be influential into the following decade. Jim Allen's monumental *Conversation Piece,* 1965 (Plate 19), formerly at Pakuranga Shopping Centre, Auckland, but now destroyed, had more than a trace of Moore's late *Figure Pieces* with their rugged textures and high degree of abstraction. Also, the pedestal was very close to that of Moore's *Reclining Figure on Pedestal*, 1959–60. It was designed so that children could play on and around the sculpture, interacting with it in an outdoor setting (Figure 52). One of the most accomplished of the younger sculptors, Greer Twiss (b. 1937), who trained at the Elam School of Fine Arts, also referenced Moore in his bronze fountain at Karangahape Road, Auckland, completed in 1969 (Plate 24). This work has reminiscences of Moore's *Seated Figures Against a Curving Wall* of 1956–57.

But by that time, there had been a widening of the range of styles influencing local sculptors. One important development was an awareness of contemporary Italian sculpture. A student of Marino Marini, Anne Severs (b. 1931) worked and exhibited after 1957 in Auckland, where she became friendly with Macalister. She had an important figurative work entitled *Prisoner*, 1959, bought for the Auckland City Art Gallery. It was arguably the first major modernist sculpture by a New Zealander to enter the collection. Severs, who had studied with Marini from 1952 to 1953, gave impetus to an interest in Italian sculpture. This was furthered by a major exhibition, *Contemporary Italian Sculpture*, which toured the main centres in 1965–6. Works by Emilio Greco, Giacomo Manzù and Marino

PLATE 19 **W. R. (Jim) Allen, *Conversation Piece*, 1965, Pakuranga Shopping Centre, Auckland (destroyed). Concrete, height 3050 mm**

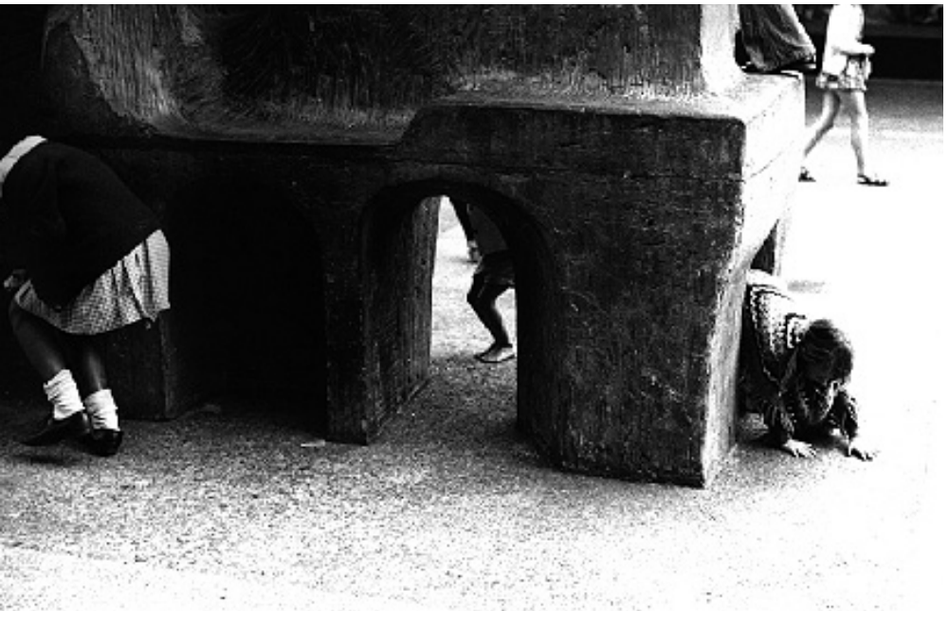


FIGURE 52 **W. R. (Jim) Allen, *Conversation Piece*, 1965, Pakuranga Shopping Centre, Auckland (destroyed)**

Marini were included. The influence of these sculptors is found in the figurative work of Severs, Macalister, Duff and Twiss among others and provided a needed alternative to Moore. Further reinforcement of the Italian influence came with the arrival in Christchurch in 1962 of Ria Bancroft (1907–93), a figurative sculptor who had studied at the Florence Academy.

The most significant response to Italian sculpture came in the later works of Macalister. At first her friendship with Anne Severs provided her with some direct stimulus to modify her approach, then a trip to Europe in 1962 allowed her to see recent original sculptures at first hand. She made figurative works in cast concrete and bronze with pronounced surface textures, recalling those of contemporary Italian pieces. *Standing Figure,* 1959 (Plate 20), is a good example of her work of this kind. It is a male figure that emerges from a base that is unshaped as if to suggest the creative process happening as we watch. The roughed-in head is small in scale so that the emphasis goes on the trunk and arms that hang down beside it. A shallow incision in the centre of the torso helps shape and structure it in a manner also found in Severs's works, which were an undoubted point of reference.

In works like *Standing Figure*, 1959, and related sculptures such as *Bird Watcher*, 1961, Macalister focused on the nude figure as seen inside the Western tradition but was more interested in the expressive aspects than the ideal. The

PLATE 20 **Molly Macalister, *Standing Figure*, 1959, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki. Concrete, height 1035 mm**

mannerisms of Moore were replaced by more naturalistic figures seemingly based on life study. Her portraits of this same period also echo the approach of Manzù and Marini, who looked back to pre-classical sources such as Etruscan art for strength and simplicity. The Italian artists suggested ways of making modelled sculpture for a wide audience that were up-to-date, yet still accessible. This suited Macalister's essentially conservative but non-academic approach.

Macalister's career culminated with her monumental bronze of a *Maori Warrior*, the first public statue in Auckland by a woman (Figure 53). She received the commission in 1964 but the work was only unveiled in 1967. It could be cast in bronze locally thanks to the expertise of Ron Ranby, a former studio assistant of Gross. In 1956 Ranby had established D.M.S. Foundries whose name, standing for Designers, Moulders and Sculptors, indicated Ranby's willingness to undertake sculptural as well as commercial work. He helped not only Macalister and Duff but also other sculptors like Twiss to cast bronzes at affordable prices.

Macalister aimed for an effect of nobility, strength and calm. To the extent that her concept was controversial, it was because the figure negated violence instead of embodying it as some councillors had expected. The conventional warrior ready for battle was realised instead by Lyndon Smith (b. 1927) in his 1969 bronze for the Auckland Savings Bank, a work now relocated in Aotea Square. Macalister concentrated on the cloak as an all-important mass of drapery that contributes unity to the figure. The warrior's head appears forceful rather than aggressive while his mere is held down against his side in a non-confrontational manner. Sculptural interest derives from the few folds of the drapery that give volume and form to the conception.

While the statue seemed daring to some Auckland viewers, it depends on several well-known sculptural antecedents. Of these Rodin's *Balzac* appears as a likely reference point in the radical way that the novelist was conceived, clad in a dressing gown that drapes his body rather as Macalister's cloak covers that of her warrior. In both cases all other detail is subordinated to that grand effect. But Macalister also knew Manzù's series of bronze figures of cardinals in which heavy robes with a few deep folds provide the primary interest. The face of the warrior also has resemblances in its conception to the broad, simplified modelling of features by Marini and Manzù in their figures. It has very different connotations to the usual statues on a pedestal found in city locations. Instead of commemorating an individual, it pays tribute to a people and their culture. In 1979 the statue was relocated on a lower pedestal that diminishes the intended effect of grandeur previously achieved when the figure had towered above the viewer.

FIGURE 53 **Molly Macalister, *Maori Warrior*, 1964–66, Queen Elizabeth II Square, Auckland. Bronze, height 3225 mm**

Shortly after finishing *Maori Warrior*, Macalister undertook another public sculpture, this time for the Hamilton City Council. The work was to celebrate the city's centennial in 1964. Her finished bronze, *Little Bull*, 1967, resembles the earlier work in its emphasis on one major form to which all detail is subordinate. However, *Little Bull* is intended as a play sculpture for children, so that its safe contours without sharp edges have functional as well as conceptual

FIGURE 54 **Alison Duff, *Frank Sargeson*, 1962, Auckland Public Library. Bronze, height 500 mm**

justification. The work is placed close to the ground to make it accessible to small children. Macalister's choice of subject can be seen as suited to a city that depends on its rural hinterland for its existence. Thematically it provides a link back to her early carvings of animals done in the 1930s. It was the kind of subject she felt most comfortable with, and she commented at the time that she 'felt most enthusiastic about this work right from the start'.

Molly Macalister's last sculptures before her premature death in 1979 were more abstract. She began to feel that she needed to develop her art in new directions and experimented without a clear sense of direction. Examples include the small bronze made for State Insurance, Auckland, in 1971, and a suspended multi-piece work for the Takapuna City Council in 1973.

As a person Macalister was engaging and sociable. Making her home and studio open to visits from other artists, writers and friends, she helped a great deal in creating an enhanced profile for sculpture in the community. While not an innovator, or in any sense an avant-garde artist, she was a talented sculptor whose natural sense of form helped people relate to her work. She made a major contribution towards public acceptance of modern sculpture and helped educate a new generation to think of it as relevant to their lives.

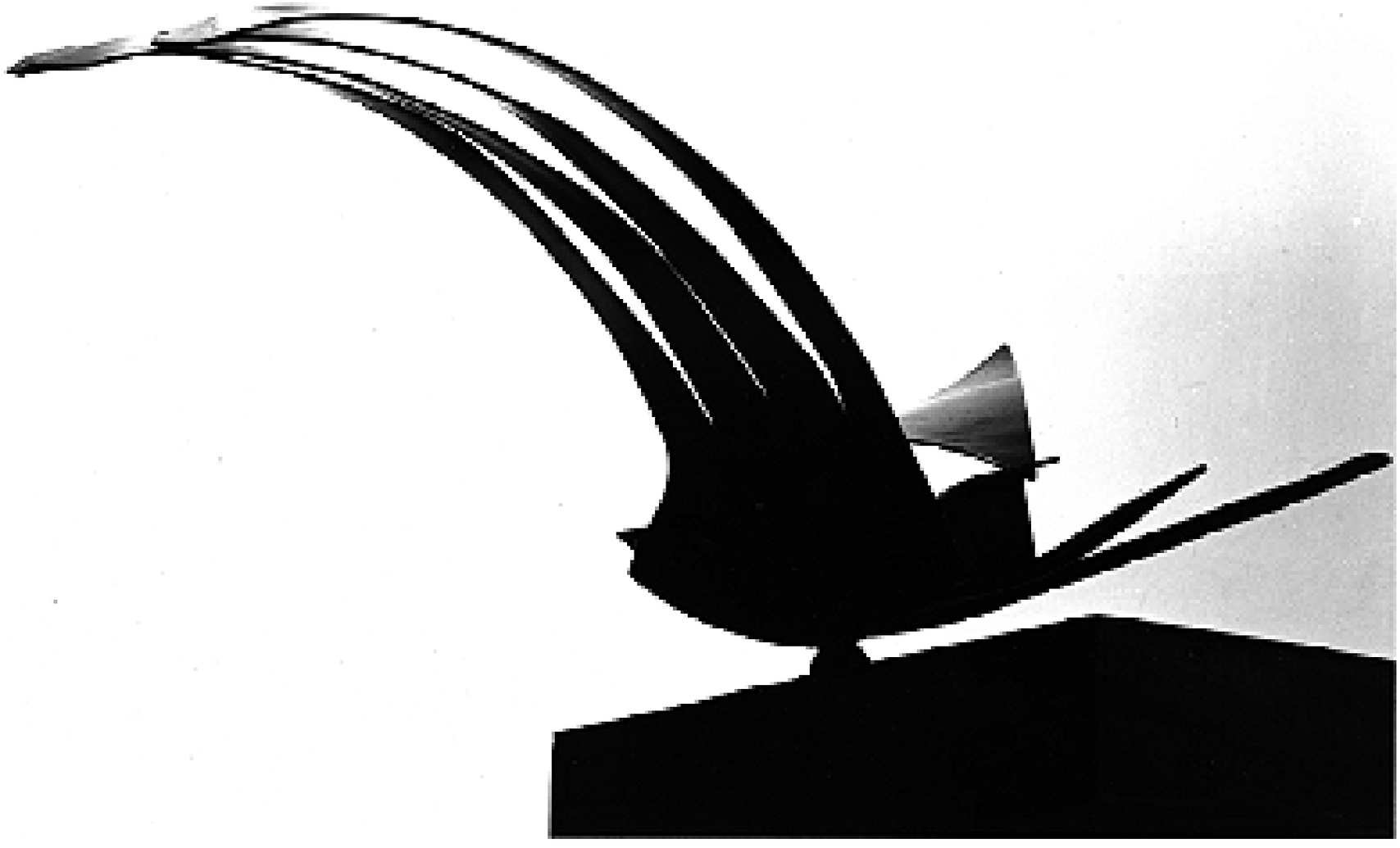
Comparatively speaking, the later development of Alison Duff was more private, more idiosyncratic and consequently less known. Unlike Macalister, Duff became reclusive, rarely appearing in public. Perhaps because she did not seek important public commissions, her reputation contracted rather than expanded after the 1960s. Her best-known works are portrait busts of the writer Frank Sargeson, 1962, and the mountaineer and adventurer Sir Edmund Hillary, 1961. The Sargeson is a half-length figure showing the writer in animation as if engaged in a lively discussion (Figure 54). Duff's knowledge of the sitter comes through in the informality of the pose with its understandable emphasis on the mental rather than the physical attributes of the writer. By contrast the Hillary bust, made in four variant versions, has a broad blocky approach to the modelling and a pronounced emphasis on the sitter's square jaw that rests directly on the plinth. This conception helps convey the informal, outdoors nature of a man known for his deeds of physical strength and courage. It has points in common with Macalister's portrait busts of the same period that Duff would have seen. In her portraits Duff depicted people she either knew or respected. She was uninterested in official commissions.

Duff also enlarged her range of work to include mobiles made of steel and brass with rods and hooks to assist suspension and movement. Some of her sculptures of birds are of this type and are designed to be placed in a garden. Others are tabletop works like *Bird Flying Over Water*, 1960, which successfully captures the impression of flight (Figure 55). They also show her interest in native flora and fauna. The thematic and conservationist dimensions of these sculptures echo Don Binney's better-known bird paintings of the same period. Duff was interested not only in the kinetic potential of her work but also in sound effects allowed by having the moving parts strike one another in the wind. She continued to work on into the 1990s outside the sculptural mainstream until her death in March 2000. Together with Molly Macalister, she epitomises the spirit of professionalism and commitment in sculpture that emerged in New Zealand in the 1940s and 1950s and laid the foundations of much subsequent practice.

In retrospect, these decades were ones of change for sculpture. Not only did artists like Clark, Macalister and Duff reflect new ideas and trends both thematically and technically, but also they widened the range of work available to the public and made it more relevant to the local context. The use of materials such as indigenous timber and local marbles and stone helped relate their work

more directly to the New Zealand situation. Sculptors like Duff and Macalister mixed with writers, painters and critics who were concerned with shaping a culture that had its roots in local life and experience. Their work started to have a place in the community that was more relevant and meaningful to the general public than had been the case previously. Commissions for shopping malls and government buildings brought everyday life and sculpture together in a way more relevant for New Zealanders. Tabletop works allowed private patrons to become collectors of sculpture as well as painting. Gallery directors like Eric Westbrook created a supportive climate by organising exhibitions of local and international sculpture that attracted attention, controversy and debate. All these factors contributed to a coming of age in New Zealand sculpture.

FIGURE 55 **Alison Duff, *Bird Flying Over Water*, Private collection. Steel, height 300 mm**



VII

Figurative Sculpture Post-1960

Some of the more influential critics, among them Peter Tomory, date the beginnings of sculpture in New Zealand to the 1960s. This is only true, however, of the beginnings of more modern or contemporary styles. Practice in New Zealand had lagged far behind that of Europe and the United States, partly out of ignorance of what was going on in the Northern Hemisphere, but partly also because of the conservatism of ideas surrounding sculpture in the art schools and art societies. This situation began to change quite rapidly in the 1960s with the improvement of communications due to international air travel and with the arrival of a number of new sculptors in the country, especially in Auckland. The increasing availability of magazines on contemporary art also helped to inform local artists about current overseas work. During these years dealer galleries opened in Auckland and elsewhere, providing outlets for local artists to sell and promote their work. Gradually patrons emerged who were knowledgeable about contemporary painting and sculpture. Critical support from writers like Hamish Keith and Peter Cape also helped to publicise the visual arts to a wider community. It was in this favourable environment that sculpture became more practised and more in touch with ordinary people.

Among the most prominent sculptors to emerge in these years was Paul Beadle (1917–92). Born and trained in Britain, he had spent the years from 1944 to 1960 in Australia before shifting to Auckland. Bohemian in type, Beadle was a large bearded figure whose shorts and sandals became something of a trademark. His contribution to the visual arts as practitioner, administrator and spokesperson was wide in scope and impact and his genial personality helped establish him quickly in his new environment. There his work underwent rapid change and evolution.

Beadle dated his interest in sculpture to a period he spent at Cambridge Technical College in 1933–34. He subsequently worked with the sculptor Alfred Southwick before gaining a scholarship to attend the Central School of Arts and Crafts, London. While at Central he was taught medal design, which became a lifelong passion and a field in which he enjoyed an international reputation. He attended life classes, drew, painted and both modelled and carved figure compositions. At Central, too, he was to learn bronze casting and die making. There appears to have been some influence from the art and theory of Eric Gill, especially in his practice of blurring boundaries between fine and applied art. Beadle always preferred figurative art to abstraction. He recalled in 1977: 'I have for most of my life been a figurative sculptor . . . I soon came to the conclusion that I was not destined to continue working in the abstract.'

At the outbreak of war, Beadle joined the Royal Navy, serving in the Home, Mediterranean and Pacific fleets. He served as a submariner and in that capacity went to Australia in 1944. At war's end, having no desire to go back to England, he turned to teaching art. Between 1947 and 1960 he held various art school positions at East Sydney, Strathfield, Newcastle and Adelaide.

As a teacher, Beadle gave his students a sound technical training so that they could realise their own ideas. At each art school he questioned established practice and put the courses on a more professional basis. Active in fostering artistic growth in the wider community as well, he helped found the Society of Sculptors and Associates in Sydney in 1951. The society's aims included: 'to advance the understanding of sculpture'. Far from being elitist, the Society attracted a wide audience by holding events such as an open-air sculpture exhibition. At Newcastle, Beadle played a large part in establishing the war memorial cultural centre, which included the art gallery of which he was the first honorary director. During these years, Beadle carved directly in stone or

wood and modelled in clay and cast in cement. His work was figurative with a solid yet elegant look rather like that of Gill or Frank Dobson. His portrait sculptures of the period have similar characteristics in their simple forms and decorative design.

In 1961 Beadle was attracted to the post of chair at the Elam School of Fine Arts because it had a distinguished history dating back to 1890 and was a university-based institution. There was an established sculpture section with qualified if somewhat conservative staff. Beadle had a great deal to do in modernising the school, employing fresh staff and supervising the completion of a new studio complex. He also took part in the cultural life of the city, serving as president of the Auckland Society of Arts and the New Zealand Society of Industrial Designers, among other duties.

Beadle's move to Auckland changed his sculpture radically. He moved from making solid carvings to small, perforated bronzes full of movement, anecdote, wit and humour. He found a way of working which allowed him a new freedom of expression. The starting point for the new work was supposedly a commission for a chess set. This forced him to think small and to change the parameters of his art. He recalled in an interview with Gil Docking in 1968: 'The commission came to nothing as such but it started me working on a lot of small figures — and fitting one's ideas into the conception of a chess set was a tremendous discipline. This is really the beginning of the type of work I am doing today.'

Beadle saw his bronzes as 'a long-delayed development of a personal style and outlook'. By using sheets, rods and balls of wax, he was able to achieve a creative process that he likened to drawing. It allowed his fertile imagination full sway. The lost wax casting could be done at the D.M.S. foundry with the skilled help of Ron Ranby. But he still had to prepare the moulds and do the time-consuming finishing. He was greatly supported in such activities by his wife Betty Cutcher, herself a sculptor, potter and medallist.

Undoubtedly his changed environment in Auckland contributed to the new approach, as did his escape from conventional routine. He enjoyed the freedom

FIGURE 56 **Paul Beadle,** Bus Stop**, 1969, Private collection. Bronze, 115 x 245 x 115 mm**

of the academic lifestyle as it was then, seeing the world with humour and a twinkle in his eye. Perhaps the smallness of Auckland and the few artists working in sculpture helped him to forget about what was fashionable and to adopt an approach that some saw as conservative or even frivolous. He was approaching his fifties when he made this stylistic change. Because it was late in his career, he worked with renewed zeal.

His bronzes deal with a new range of subject matter which can be divided broadly into scenes of everyday life, myth and some religious items. Beadle saw his focus as mankind. In the Docking interview he remarked: 'I see Man as a rather funny little fellow — it is me too — and I accept, if not understand, most of his faults . . . I have got much more faith in Man than in some of the things he has concocted to have faith in — like democracy and the church.'

Beadle drew widely from diverse sources for the formal inspiration of his art. On the one hand there were the Ashanti gold weights, some of which he collected, with their spontaneity, their humour and their appealing sexual frankness. On the other hand there was medieval religious art such as church candlesticks and stained-glass windows and illuminated initials of manuscripts. All was grist to his mill and was absorbed before being translated into his own unique language.

Clearly the vitality of Beadle's work came from his own observation of the world, not from borrowings from other artists. Sculptures like *Bus Stop*, 1969 (Figure 56), depend on characterisation of the figures in their poses and actions for a striking effect. Sometimes he would act out the poses and expressions in front of a mirror to gain authenticity. In this work the young mother who stands in resignation, feet apart waiting, while children clutch at her dress and cling to her shoulder, typifies an everyday situation with which we can identify. The frieze-like line of figures has an animated play between silhouetted shapes of figures, hats, street lamps, arms and legs. He designed the open areas, as well as the shadows they created, to achieve the best contrast between them and his figures.

Some of Beadle's best bronzes are spherical or circular. In some he used the sprue required to pour the bronze as a spindle on which the sculpture stands or as an axis on which it can be turned. Movement is the essence of these works, as is metamorphosis and change. The sphere takes on the symbolic connotation of the world — a connotation very appropriate for Beadle whose little bronze figures represent humanity. A good example of this type is the *University of Auckland Mace*, 1969 (Figures 57 and 58). Beadle designed it to be turned so that the figures symbolising the then ten faculties can be seen in sequence. Beadle made a self-portrait for the mace showing him at work to personify the Fine Arts.

FIGURE 57 **Paul Beadle,** University of Auckland Mace**, 1969, University of Auckland (detail). Bronze on wooden staff, total height 1000 mm, bronze 260 x 130 mm**

FIGURE 58 **Paul Beadle,** University of Auckland Mace**, 1969, University of Auckland (detail)**

PLATE 21 **Paul Beadle,** Dial a Vice or Virtue**, 1978, Private collection, Auckland. Bronze, 242 x 175 mm**

Beadle also evoked the cyclical in his sculptures, implying the passage of time as well as the repetition of human frailties with their inevitable consequences. *Dial A Vice or Virtue*, 1978 (Plate 21), recalls an old-style telephone. You can spin the sculpture to target your vice as you might have dialled a number to reach a telephone listing. Biblical subjects also offered him scope for his gentle moralising. In some of his bronzes Beadle used found objects as a starting point, as in *The Beadle Family at Ilkley*, 1978, where he used a toy wooden bench, once part of a child's doll's house, as a support for the bronze seated figures.

With his bronzes Beadle achieved success rare for a sculptor both in Australia and New Zealand. His solo exhibitions regularly sold well because their

accessibility contrasted starkly with much modernist art of the 1960s and 1970s. Not surprisingly for such an idiosyncratic artist, Beadle had few followers in Auckland. His teaching encouraged students to develop their own styles, not copy his. For example, his *The Relief of Algiers, 1942* (Plate 22), shows a North African brothel in which a variety of sexual encounters take place. At once humorous and satiric, it draws on his war service experiences and demonstrates his virtuosity in modelling small figures with character and flair. Mature work such as this was individual and inimitable — it was also outside the sculptural mainstream of the time.

While he was in Auckland, Beadle also made medals and designed coins. His most important undertaking was to design reverses for the New Zealand decimal currency in 1967. Beadle made numerous full-size studies to test motifs associated with New Zealand flora and fauna as well as historical and emblematic subjects. His submitted designs, including a one cent coin depicting a rifleman bird, a five cent tuatara coin and a twenty cent with a striking motif of a white heron, were accessible and of high artistic quality. He was careful not to make illustrations, preferring stylised images set against a plain background in the classical tradition. To his disappointment the government did not select his designs. In 1972, however, he was commissioned by the New Zealand Treasury to design the commemorative dollars and to produce Victory and Commemorative medals for the tenth Commonwealth Games held at Christchurch. He also designed a dollar coin reverse to commemorate the Royal Visit in 1981. In this area he set new standards that have been rarely equalled since.

PLATE 22 **Paul Beadle,** The Relief of Algiers, 1942**, 1973, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki. Bronze, 200 x 195 mm**

Of sculptors who emerged in the 1960s, few achieved the success of the Auckland artist Greer Twiss (b. 1937) whose career as practitioner and teacher has spanned over forty years. Much younger than Beadle and unlike him born in New Zealand, Twiss developed what has been called an indigenous art that was really a vernacular expression of what he knew and observed in life around him. The early part of his career coincided with the later part of Beadle's, providing an interesting comparison. Like Beadle's his early work has an underlying wit and observation of the world around him. Like Beadle, too, he usually retained a figurative aspect to his sculptures so that they rarely become totally abstract or inaccessible to the average viewer. Also, never being completely in tune with modernism or the ideals it embraced, his work can be conservative and idiosyncratic by turn. His early sculptures are small bronzes providing a further point in common with the older artist.

Born in Auckland, Twiss studied at Elam from 1956 to 1959, before Beadle's arrival, when its teaching methods were conservative especially in sculpture. His lecturer was John Kavanagh who instilled a classical training with emphasis on life modelling. While Kavanagh disliked modern sculpture, he allowed his pupil to look at British sculptors such as Henry Moore, Kenneth Armitage and Reg Butler who continued the figurative tradition. Twiss's responses to these artists can be seen in his early art school works.

When Kavanagh was on study leave in 1958, Twiss worked with Lyndon Smith (b. 1927), who had been an outstanding student at Elam from 1954 to 1957. Smith, a fine technician, experimented with bronze casting, sparking an interest in Twiss who went on to make small bronzes and lead figures himself. Smith's own sculpture, conservative in character and figurative in type, is epitomised by his *Maori Warrior*, 1969, in Aotea Square, Auckland. However, his most important work is a monumental bronze of mother and children for the Hall of Memories, National War Memorial, Wellington, completed in 1962. Smith's simplified generic figures have echoes of Moore and Marini. In

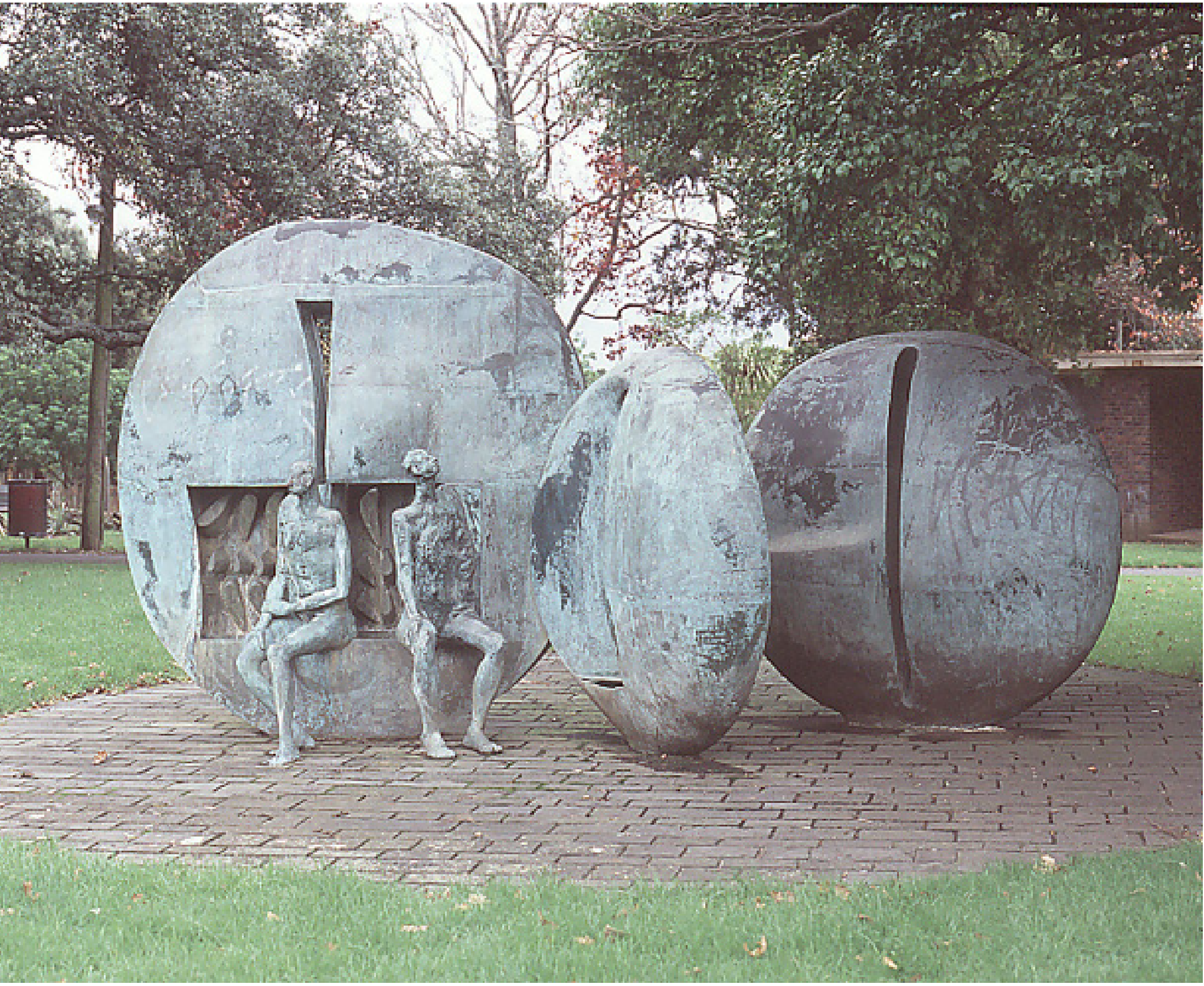
FIGURE 59 **Greer Twiss,** Athletes, Group 1**, 1964, Private collection, Auckland. Bronze, height 270 mm**

comparison Twiss was more experimental and individualistic.

In 1965 Twiss was awarded a grant to study bronze-casting techniques in Britain and Europe, allowing him to see what was happening in London as well as to see the works of sculptors such as Greco and Marini in Italy. Twiss studied the lost-wax process, a technique he used to good effect in his early bronzes. He was to write in 1976: 'My images are small and complex. I need a strong material capable of taking fine detail and having a degree of permanence. Bronze has all these qualities.'

His mid-1960s bronzes of athletes and protest marchers comprise some of his best-known and best-loved works. Small in scale, accessible in subject as well as local and topical in references, these sculptures brought to his audience qualities they could both identify with and admire (Figure 59). The athletes evoke New Zealand's great era of middle-distance running when Peter Snell held world records and jogging became a popular activity. By using a small base, Twiss was able to suggest movement, direction and unstoppable force. In

PLATE 23 **Greer Twiss, *Marchers*, 1967, Private collection, Auckland. Bronze and paint, 1130 x 640 x 600 mm**



no sense illustrative, Twiss's figures recall antique statues of gladiators and athletes as much as contemporary works by Alberto Giacometti. The protest marchers capture a group dynamic with individual figures clustered and merged together to evoke a collective purpose (Plate 23). Making an appearance in some sculptures are slogans such as 'The Bomb Will Maim' or 'Vote for Freedom'. They spell out messages of social concern. Twiss captured a mood relevant to an era when freedom of expression took the form of demonstrations, placard waving and public marches through the streets. But, as an artist, he is as much concerned with the dramatic action as with the message. In contrast to Beadle's subjects, Twiss's are more contemporary and local in their meaning.

In 1966 Twiss was appointed to a lecturing position at Elam, thus beginning a teaching career that was to span four decades. He became one of the new team of younger artists appointed under Beadle and was to play a part in revitalising the sculpture section. As a teacher, his sense of enquiry and his ability to improvise proved helpful, even if at times his fiery temper would lead to angry outbursts if things went wrong or his standards were not met. Importantly, teaching gave him the financial resources to pursue his sculpture somewhat independent of commercial considerations.

Prominent among his 1960s Auckland bronzes is the *Karangahape Road Fountain*, 1967–1969 (Plate 24). Designed for a small park, it is set back from the street in a low-lying, accessible position. The life-size seated figures gaze out at their surroundings, helping to relate man-made and natural features of the environment, while the abstract disc-like forms echo one another as well as the bluestone circular base on which the work is sited. By perforating the disks, Twiss followed Moore and Hepworth in using this device to integrate the sculptural forms with the surrounding space. Taking into account the strong winds of the site, he restricted the water to a trickle down the sculpture. At the time of the commission he remarked that he wanted to 'get away from the conventional idea of a fountain as a piece of sculpture set in a pool.'

While making the fountain, Twiss's ideas evolved and his method of working changed. He began to use fibreglass and to introduce colour into his new pieces. Of these the *Bikini Girls* of 1968 and the fragments of figures used in the *Frozen Frames* series of 1968–1969 are characteristic (Figure 60). His bikini-clad figures can be compared with the painter Pat Hanly's *Figures in Light* series of 1964. Common to both artists is the presentation of cropped figures: in Hanly's works, either leaving or entering the space; in Twiss's, sliced at points dictated by the

PLATE 24 **Greer Twiss, *The Karangahape Road Fountain*, 1967–69, Auckland. Bronze, height, 2445 mm**

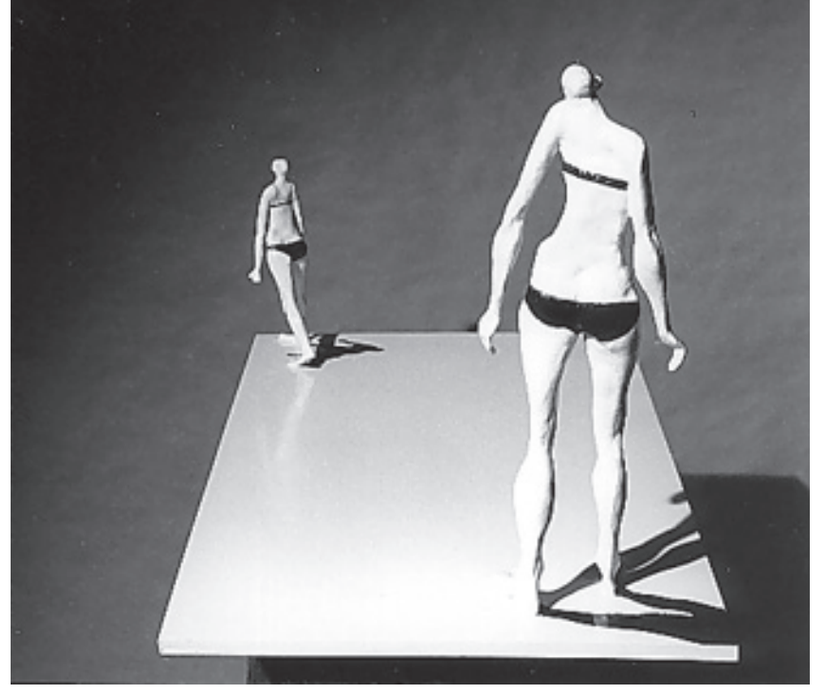


FIGURE 60 **Greer Twiss, *Frozen Frame*, 1968, Private collection, Auckland. Bronze and aluminium, 310 x 610 x 310 mm**

artist. In both cases the parts of figures function as if attached to an implied whole figure, which the viewer must imagine. In both, too, the artists use cast shadows to create space while defining a light source. In Twiss's work the device is unrealistic because his figures, unlike Hanly's painted ones, occupy real space and can cast real shadows that contradict the ones fabricated by the sculptor. But this is the kind of paradox that Twiss likes.

These works bring a return of the female figure to his work with, at times, an erotic overtone. While there are some echoes of Greco's bikini figures of 1957–59, the mood is closer to British Pop Art of the 1960s which Twiss saw at first hand in London. He began to use fibreglass with bright, painted colours, later recalling: 'In London I had seen a lot of painted and fibre-glass works and these, plus the interest in colour that I started to develop in Italy, came together in 1969. I couldn't afford to make large bronzes, but fibre-glass in those days was not excessively expensive and became a medium that I explored for a while.' The smooth, anonymous painted surface gave a brash, contemporary feel not previously seen in Twiss's work or in that of other New Zealand sculptors. At one stroke he seemed to have closed the gap with painting and made sculpture, too, seem exciting and up-to-the-minute. It was a period of great creativity evidenced by over one hundred works in the *Frozen Frames* series. But few sold and many were recycled, so that not many survive.

By setting his figures on a base plate and framing them as if frozen by the camera, Twiss was able to generate a series of works where perceptual problems play games with the viewer. The strangeness of some of these works in which

pairs of legs, for example, are cut off by the imagined frame, contributed to their lack of popularity with viewers. There is never a story to give a narrative meaning. Changes of scale help to disorient the viewer and contribute to the idiosyncratic nature of these works. What happens is that increasingly the tensions and spatial relations central to the works seem at odds with the figurative components.

As part of his 1968 *Frozen Frames* show Twiss included a multiple — that is, a replicated work designed to satisfy what has been called a 'socialist concern to make his work freely available to everyone'. In the catalogue notes, he stated that the multiple was an attempt to get around the expensive and exclusive nature of sculpture. He claimed that it was 'a mass produced work, economically accessible to all, leaving the collector in the position of accepting the work for what it is, rather than for its rarity'. But he was criticised at the time for degrading the status of art work by undermining its unique properties.

With his *Intersections* show of 1972, Twiss moved from modelled sculpture towards assemblage. He began to use found objects, body casts and casts from found objects. The artist usually arranged the elements on a steel plate that defines the limits of his composition. An example is *V.W. Split*, 1974, where a cast of a hand holds a tensed string onto a square plate. The string defines the angles of the cut made through a cast of a toy Volkswagen, dividing it in two halves. The work becomes an arranged event with puzzling dimensions both literally and conceptually. Anecdotally, the work suggests a 'happening' of some kind, but not a real event because the discrepancy of scale between hand and car is too great for consistency of that sort. Other pieces like *Coil*, 1972, incorporate rope, as does *Hang*, 1972, which includes cast hands that cling or hold like extensions of the sculptor's body. This applies also to *Touch*, 1972 (Plate 25).

In a few brief years Twiss's work had changed radically because he had revised his ideas about sculpture. He moved a long way from the work of Beadle. No doubt the reasons for these changes are complex. But it seems reasonable to see some response to visiting lecturers at Elam, among them the abstract sculptors Adrian Hall (b. 1943), John Panting (1940–74) and Stephen Furlonger (b. 1939). All three had studied in the 1960s at the Royal College of Art. In particular, Hall's preference for found materials like bricks, steel, wood and rope in his sculpture interested Twiss. His own use of assemblage, found objects, steel plate, rope, metal clamps and rings coincides with Hall's time in Auckland. Hall drew attention to the materials and processes of sculpture in a provocative way.

During the 1970s Twiss abandoned the figure almost entirely, except for allusions to its presence. His *Sight/Site Works* of 1976 and *Barriers* are assembled pieces in steel and bronze. These sculptures spread across the floor to control

PLATE 25 **Greer Twiss, *Touch*, 1972, University of Auckland. Bronze and paint, 160 x 170 x 140 mm**

and occupy the space like an installation. This effect is almost achieved with *Siteworks*, 1977, a commission for the opening of the Rotorua Art Gallery, where Twiss designed the work to relate closely to the space. There is an accompanying increase in scale to allow our participation. We no longer look at the sculpture but are actively involved with it because we share the same floor space. This applies to *Link*, 1976 (Plate 26), where the sculptor used both floor and walls. Twiss's *Tripod* sculptures of 1980 continued a preoccupation with work issues yet retained a puzzling rejection of function by their unusual proportions, for example being too high to use, or by carrying elements such as blocks or wedges that have no practical use.

The mid-1980s saw Twiss continue making assembled sculptures which combined cast elements, found objects and supports such as scaffolding or planks. Gradually the process of making the sculptures became more casual, even eccentric, with combinations of elements that are almost surreal. At the same time the mood of the work darkens, an aspect that is reinforced by the use of lead as a material. The artist himself finds lead congenial: 'I actually think it is a lovely material, it's got a lot of life to it which I think is marvellous.' An

example from this period is *No Sun, No Rain, No Radiation*, 1986, made after the artist's house had burnt down. It incorporates casts of family memorabilia such as a teddy bear and a toy plane that survived the fire. A tent-like shelter, made of lead, suggests the paradox of this material, which has both protective qualities as a radiation shield, while being poisonous.

Since 1990 Twiss's work has changed further. He has made two large installations, both of which involved galvanised steel as a material and included the use of sound. The first, *Decoys and Delusions*, 1993 (Figure 61), an installation of unprecedented scale for Twiss, was large enough to occupy the main space of the Fisher Gallery, Pakuranga. Twiss used his theatrical and illusionistic skills to create an environment in which nothing was what it appeared to be. Twenty-nine lead ducks provided a clue to the deception in which initial impressions were contradicted. By using different conventions in various parts of the work — for example, tin cut-out trees alongside real trestles — Twiss asked questions about what we perceive as real or not real. The second, *A Right Royal Summer*, 1995, was installed initially at the Artis Gallery, Parnell. This ambitious work had a theme that can be related to republican aspirations and involved figurative elements again, like Queen Victoria and Rangitoto Island, as well as bird song and a Gilbert and Sullivan soundtrack. It showed the continuing inventiveness and unpredictability of Twiss as a contemporary sculptor.

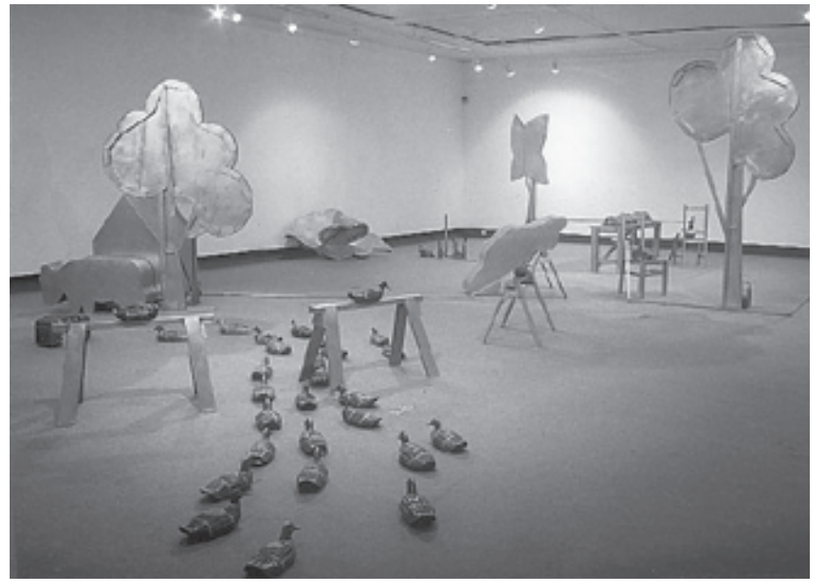


FIGURE 61 **Greer Twiss, *Decoys and Delusions*, 1993, Installation, Fisher Gallery, Auckland. Galvanised iron, lead, audiotape, site specific**

PLATE 26 **Greer Twiss, *Link*, 1976, University of Auckland. Steel and lead, 1525 x 2340 mm**

While Greer Twiss emerges as a major force in figurative sculpture in the years after 1960, he had no true followers. Like Beadle, he was too idiosyncratic and lacking in political correctness to be a useful role model for students. Indeed Twiss encouraged individuality in those he taught. Yet, in contrast to Beadle Twiss is a more varied practitioner who takes risks and has a range that extends from small bronzes to large constructions. Never comfortable, his work reflects the sweeping changes that overtook sculpture from the 1960s onwards. He is a strong enough talent to question what was happening and to extract what he wanted from it. For others, that proved more difficult. However, Twiss is but one of a number of talented artists who have used traditional materials and ways of working since that time. Other important practitioners include Paul Dibble (b. 1943) and Terry Stringer (b. 1946).

Like Twiss, Dibble trained at the Elam School of Fine Arts under Kavanagh and Allen. He grew up in Thames, a small town on the Coromandel Peninsula, where he had only the local war memorial to introduce him to public sculpture. At Elam in the years 1964–67, he learnt the basic techniques of bronze casting, and later he was able to set up his own foundry at his studio in Palmerston

North. Dibble has become most associated with works in bronze, though after leaving art school he experimented with a diverse range of materials such as feathers and timber in his installations. He has always retained a strong interest in natural forms in his sculpture, but his focus in recent years has been on the human figure.

Since 1986 Dibble has established his reputation with a series of whimsical bronzes (Plate 27) in which stylised female nude figures are shown alone or juxtaposed with other elements, often of a still-life aspect or drawn from nature (Plate 28). In one example a truncated figure on a shallow pedestal engages in a neo-surrealist dialogue with an outsize bronze leaf mounted on a base beside it. The nudes Dibble uses are often postmodernist quotes or pastiches of figures from well-known examples of European sculpture or painting. He expects the viewer to make the connection. Dibble frequently employs this kind of referencing so that his figures function as signs of imported culture.

Despite their accessible imagery, Dibble's sculptures are in no sense naturalistic or narrative in the way they work. Like Twiss, Dibble blocks a literal interpretation of his sculpture by preferring to set up an open-ended relationship between sculptural elements. For example, his introduction of Maori motifs like the koru into his bronzes can allow consideration of the debate about bicultural issues or the ownership of cultural property. While engaging with such issues and the options available for a contemporary sculptor in New Zealand, Dibble's bronzes belong very much to the European tradition. Their scale and feel recall French modernists like Aristide Maillol (1861–1944), whose bronze nudes are quoted in his work.

Dibble's work suggests full three-dimensional depth and completeness of form but does not deliver it. Instead, most of his figures are made like a relief, being essentially thin and flat rather than full and round as their contours imply. He delights in perforating his sculpture to reveal its shallowness and to draw attention to the knife-edge contours that establish the divide between front and back views.

The mannerisms of Dibble's figures such as small heads and large thighs or arms can recall Picasso of his neoclassical period in the 1920s. The lushness and indeed sensuality of his figures are unusual for New Zealand, where prudery and restraint normally hold sway. While Dibble's sculptures lack the range and diversity of ideas found in those of Twiss, they have a confidence and charm that make them sought after for public spaces and private collections. By moving

PLATE 27 **Paul Dibble, *Under the Hula Moon*, 1998, Private collection. Bronze, 2400 x 1120 x 450 mm**

his scale up to over life-size, Dibble has dramatised the inherent formal beauty of his works and given them greater impact.

Like Dibble, Terry Stringer (b. 1946) works mainly with the figure in bronze. He, too, retains strong links to the classical tradition of Western sculpture by alluding to the forms and conventions of antique draped figures, torsos and monumental heads. Stringer is a cool, reflective artist whose imagery has the formal resolution that comes with calculation and thought. Yet beneath the simplified contours and the decorative shapes and lines of his works there is an inherent intensity of feeling.

Stringer achieves an imagery that is always accessible in terms of form, despite his tendency to fragment, to slice and to rearrange the sculptural parts of his figures. Compared with Twiss in his *Frozen Frames* series, Stringer seems less radical in the way he crops his figures because they always make a coherent image. Whereas Twiss cut his figures ruthlessly where they intersected his sight line or base plate, Stringer arranges his parts of figures to make a composition that works as an entity. They always achieve a balance on the plinth. Alternatively, when he crops a face, he arranges it like a photographic close-up to be self-sufficient. A hand, as in *Behold*, 1993, is balanced on the severed wrist to create a sense of stability and poise.

Despite his faceting of forms in some works, Stringer is not a committed Cubist, as he has been called, but rather someone who looks back to a range of approaches and styles. For example, he is interested in classical antique art and literature, as he shows by his allusions to antique prototypes with their timeless sculptural forms. Stringer's references to Cubist sculpture and painting derive as much from nostalgia for early modernism as from any attempt to make his figures look contemporary. By using faceting, he could hollow out the surfaces of his figures to allow space to enter the works as a sculptural element freed from representation. This is true of *Schoolgirl*, 1983 (Plate 29), where the facets and movable parts of the figure also create movement. A parallel can be made with Alexander Archipenko's figure sculptures. Stringer was initially attracted to the possibilities of interchange between the conventions of painting and those of sculpture that his type of Cubism allowed. In some cases he painted his works illusionistically with cast shadows, making it hard to tell where painting left off and sculpture began. Ultimately he found the Cubist look formulaic and discarded it.

Like Twiss and Dibble, Stringer studied at Elam under Kavanagh. In 1966,

PLATE 28 **Paul Dibble, *Snapshot*, 1997, Private collection. Bronze, 1020 x 240 x 240 mm**

his final year, he had Twiss as a teacher. Twiss was important as a precursor who showed the possibilities for a young sculptor wanting to focus on the figure. Also influential was Macalister who taught at Elam for a term. Consequently Stringer had a solid training in traditional modelling and casting of the figure. He has continued to draw from the nude model since leaving art school, a practice that gives assurance to his work. His life drawings in coloured pencil or conté have a naturalistic aspect with the emphasis on contour. Stringer is usually more concerned with the model as motif rather than as an individual. Consequently it is rare for him to execute a sculpture such as *Grand Study*, 1989, where the figure seems naturalistic, an effect enhanced in this case by painting over the bronze to give a flesh tint. Normally his application of colour is judicious and restrained.

Stringer achieved prominence early in his career with his success in the competition to design a fountain for Aotea Square, Auckland, in 1979. His winning design, rather like a bronze mountain, is uncharacteristic of his sculpture. It provides a plain, bland surface for the trickle of water that flows down its bronze sides. However, it does have a robust quality that is necessary in a public situation with heavy pedestrian traffic. The Aotea Fountain remains an exception for Stringer, who normally works in the domestic not the public arena.

From the 1980s Stringer frequently turned to still-life subjects, especially everyday objects displayed on a table. Traditionally, painters have explored still life more frequently than sculptors, a point worth noting considering Stringer's interest in the two-dimensional qualities of his art. In these still lifes Stringer employed a Cubist-like faceting to squeeze the forms into a space shallower than they would normally occupy. He tilted his bronze tables upwards to create space rather like a relief, giving them a pronounced pictorial effect. By using exaggerated perspective, he made the objects seem to recede rapidly from the eye. The viewer is thus made aware of the illusionistic conventions in play and to take part in the game. The artist emphasised the domestic connotations of such works by exhibiting some of them in his suburban villa before he sold the house and moved to an apartment. A good example is *Table in Two Planes*, 1987 (Plate 30).

Perhaps more developed are Stringer's heads and figures executed in the late 1980s and 1990s, where he has avoided the faceting to produce works that are cropped or sliced to give an intensified presence. In sculptures like *Pacific Mask*, 1988, the cutting of the head at chin and forehead level helps produce a

PLATE 29 **Terry Stringer, *Schoolgirl*, 1983, Collection B. Grossman, Auckland. Bronze, height 1200 mm**

PLATE 30 **Terry Stringer, *Table in Two Planes*, 1987, Collection J. Gibbs Trust, Auckland. Bronze, height 1400 mm**

PLATE 31 **Terry Stringer, *Seize the Day While You May*, 1998, Collection artist. Bronze, height 1500 mm**

stable, seemingly timeless image, reminiscent both of classical Roman colossal heads of emperors and the monolithic carvings of Easter Island. Much ancient art has been ravaged by time so that only the most durable fragments remain. From these, as in Stringer's heads, we can construct an even larger whole by using our imagination to complete the figure. *Seize the Day While You May*, 1998 (Plate 31), is an excellent recent example.

The incompleteness of Stringer's bronze figures reduces the more trivial aspects of representation. It also largely eliminates the old-fashioned dimensions of the complete figure. By placing the focus on form and feeling in response to what is there and what is implied Stringer allows scope for interpretation. His use of the mask to project the underlying character points to his interest in layers of meaning. He has dwelt, too, on the shadowy elusive forms reflected in the mirror and their value as projections of hidden dimensions of people.

Because it is largely self-contained, Stringer's work makes few demands on its surrounding space. His sculpture fits easily into a domestic context, where its formal refinement and carefully worked surfaces give a pleasingly decorative effect. Stringer does not much deal with specific regional themes or motifs in his art. He rarely introduces obvious Pacific or national references as Dibble does. Nor does he address topical local issues of the kind found in works by Twiss. Instead, he believes that his art naturally partakes of the region where it is produced with its constraints and freedoms. Because his art crosses national boundaries, he has a market in California and elsewhere outside New Zealand. In October 2000, Stringer opened his own sculpture park just north of Whangaparaoa Peninsula where he displays his work in a rural setting. Called

PLATE 32 **Denis O'Connor, *High Court Triptych*, 1990, Auckland. Mt Somers stone, height 500 mm, width 1700 mm (each section)**

Zealandia, this park allows Stringer to showcase his sculpture to a wide public with both a commercial and an educational function.

Another sculptor who can be mentioned with this group, despite his individual characteristics and conceptual concerns, is Denis O'Connor (b. 1947). While O'Connor has a feeling for abstract design, it is often possible to find a strong figurative dimension in his art. This becomes clear in his literal carving of distinct objects or parts of the figure that take on a concrete character. His early carvings were often made up of figure fragments or still-life objects superficially not unlike those found in Terry Stringer's works. But whereas Stringer prefers bronze, O'Connor has gravitated to stone. In both artists there is a pronounced commitment to exploring the traditional values of these materials so richly imbued with the traditions of ornamental sculpture.

O'Connor, who studied at the Wellington School of Design, began as a potter modelling his forms from white porcelain and a rich iron-saturated Waiheke Island clay. His clay tablets already contained symbolic references to the myths and trades of the pioneer inhabitants of the Hauraki Gulf. While Frances Hodgkins Fellow at the University of Otago in 1985, he made a shift to stone, using white limestone to make immaculate narrative works that juxtaposed natural forms, man-made utensils and fragments of human figures, especially hands. His carvings seemed closer to the heraldic traditions of stonemasonry than to contemporary sculptural practice, but this appearance was subversive in intent. Incised Roman letters and classical texts were succeeded by eccentric logos and private majuscules full of poetic allusions. In his recent works, O'Connor introduces found objects of an *arte povera* type to undermine the associations with commemorative art.

O'Connor's first major exhibition entitled *Songs of the Gulf* was shown in 1984 and 1985 at the Auckland City Art Gallery and the Dowse Art Museum, Lower Hutt, at a stage when he was making a transition from clay to stone and was becoming aware of the historical background to his art, noting: 'I trace the roots of my own image-making down a long line of Irish stone-carvers.' The ingredients of his mature style were present in these works, where he emphasised

PLATE 33 **Denis O'Connor, *UA (Out of, from)*, 1994, Private collection. Oiled slate, 1874 x 1460 mm**

shallow-relief modelling and clear contours set against smooth backgrounds. With his symbolic imagery of bells, tools and birds, often laminated together in ironic dovetailing, he extended the metaphoric and narrative potential of his art in fresh visionary ways. A later example of his public stone reliefs in an architectural setting is his triptych for the Auckland High Court, 1990 (Plate 32). In this work there is a sense of continuity with Teutenberg's carvings for the adjacent Victorian building, as well as the realisation that O'Connor's symbolic forms of jug, boat and feather belong very much to the contemporary world.

More recently, he has made dense black slate and marble reliefs on a grander scale. He has carved many commissioned public works as well as his *13 Stemmata* series of 1994 (Plate 33), and the *Lachrimae* series of 1997, made after a sojourn in France as a Moët & Chandon Fellow. Here O'Connor introduces a new minimalist austerity to enhance the dramatic potential of his work. He has also added electric backlighting to his sculptural vocabulary. Whereas his earlier allusions drew on folk histories and local traditions, now his preoccupations have broadened to embrace themes of immigration, patriation, sacrifice and loss. Personal identity, cultural identity and naming emerge as central concerns. His art draws inner strength from what he has described as 'a deepening conversation' with the ghosts of his own genealogy. O'Connor's sculpture continues to develop in response to the challenges posed by such universal and contemporary issues.

Among contemporary New Zealand sculptors, Bronwynne Cornish (b. 1945) is one of the few apart from Denis O'Connor to use clay as a medium. She studied initially with the potter, Helen Mason, who developed her skills in handling the material, from which she has made works both on an intimate and monumental scale. Her bigger pieces are made in sections so that they can be assembled into a larger whole, a technique that links her with other practitioners such as Christine Hellyar. Cornish's work is figurative in nature, sometimes encompassing still-life and animal forms as well as architectural and human subjects. Her sculpture has a primal quality, an association with the earth and with enduring natural processes. For example, her large female figures set in the ground reinforce the equation of women with nature (Plate 34). She has introduced organic materials into her works and planted gardens over and around them so that the association with natural cycles is reinforced.

Figurative sculpture in the traditional materials of bronze and stone has continued to attract a range of practitioners. Of an older generation, Ria Bancroft (1907–93) made her local reputation in Christchurch with figurative sculpture, some of a religious nature. Bancroft's works retained overtones of her academic

PLATE 34 **Bronwynne Cornish, *The Dreamer*, 1989, Private collection, Whangarei. Clay, sand and plants, 3000 x 2000 mm**

training in Florence, being conservative in form and somewhat sentimental in mood. Her *Mother Teresa*, 1977, depends heavily on Italian images of the Madonna for its conception. The downcast head and hands clasped in prayer create a devout but hackneyed image that borders on the maudlin. Her bronze panels for the tabernacle screen doors of the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, Christchurch, 1975–77, depicting the dead and resurrected Christ are among her best works. Their Italian lineage is apparent in the conception of both panels and in the tactile modelling of the figures in deep relief. They relate to the Italian tradition of the idealised nude figure of Christ and, while appealing, are distant from the major concerns of contemporary sculpture at that period. Compared with Russell Clark, her exact contemporary, Bancroft appears more conservative and less convincing in bringing a local dimension to her sculpture. While she can be compared with Alison Duff in some respects, her portraiture falls below the level Duff achieved with her Hillary and Sargeson busts. Molly Macalister in her figurative sculpture appears formally a more varied and stronger artist.

Better known in Christchurch is Llew Summers (b. 1947), a self-taught artist whose public sculptures featuring large nude figures are accessible to a wide audience. Summers works in traditional materials and is especially noted for his stone carvings with bold simplified forms. His art relates back to the expressionist direction in early twentieth century sculpture and has echoes of Ivan Meštrović and Käthe Kollwitz (1867–1945) among others. An example is *Love Me Tender*,

1994, Ashburton, where two nude figures are shown in an intimate embrace. Purchased with funds raised by a public appeal after it was shown at an exhibition in the Ashburton Art Gallery, *Love Me Tender* displays the monumentality of form combined with erotic feeling that make Summers's works popular.

Among other figurative sculptors Barbara Ward (b. 1955) and Chiara Corbelletto (b. 1956) can be mentioned. Of the two Ward is the more conservative and traditional practitioner. Self-taught as a sculptor, she has developed a series of stone carvings of the figure, especially the female, that reflect her social and moral concerns. Ward has been an active organiser and participant in stone-carving symposia in Auckland since the first such event was held in 1986. There have been other events of this type in Wellington and elsewhere. They tend to attract capable but conservative practitioners whose contribution is to popularise modern sculpture and widen its audience.

Corbelletto, though a participant at some of these symposia, occupies a position somewhere between abstraction and figuration. Born and trained in Italy, where she studied architecture at the University of Milan, she arrived in New Zealand in 1981. At first her works had architectural references to prehistoric shrines or little temples. But her sensitivity to natural forms emerged in her coral, shell and seed forms carved with the purity and tonal subtlety of a Giorgio Morandi still-life painting metamorphosed into stone. Her more recent works, from the mid-1990s onwards, include propeller-blade forms or gold discs arranged in repeating patterns and made in light materials, like moulded paper or styrene, so they can be suspended in the air. She has expressed an interest in tessellation, a modular repetition of elements suggestive of infinity in their potential for endless replication (Plate 35). In much of her sculpture she shows sensitivity to tonal modulation of forms by light and an awareness of her work in relation to its architectural setting. By addressing contemporary formal issues in her art, Corbelletto has developed and made her work more progressive than those who have remained inside the parameters of traditional figurative sculpture. Her work shows respect for the figurative tradition, but also the need to develop sculpture reflective of the contemporary world in conception and materials.

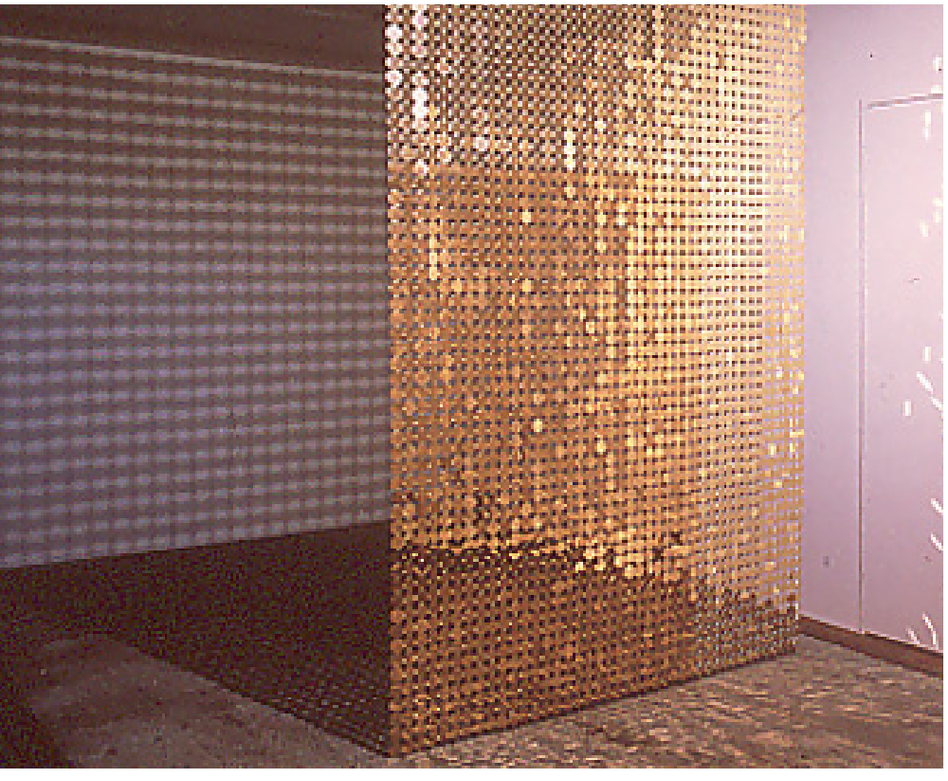


PLATE 35 **Chiara Corbelletto, *Gold Disks Installation*, 1996, Archill Gallery, Auckland. 2500 styrene disks, 4500 brass links**

Most of the influential developments from the 1960s onwards involved new materials and ways of constructing and thinking about sculpture. Abstraction and Conceptual Art became more important as carved and modelled sculpture lost the capacity to fully engage with modern life and its rapidly changing pace and technology. It was no longer enough to render subjects, even local ones, in traditional techniques and materials. Even skilled figurative artists like Bancroft needed to find ways of making their work seem exciting and relevant. The same challenges were found in Britain, Australia and the United States. For many artists, both painters and sculptors, this led to the abandoning of figurative art and the embrace of abstraction in its various manifestations. Adding to the depth of the sculptural scene, traditional practitioners continued to work alongside more experimental ones. Inevitably differences became divisive, and various critical positions were defined that were hostile to one another.

VIII

Abstraction and Modernism: 196 0–1990

The introduction of radical new ideas and approaches to sculpture happened comparatively slowly in New Zealand. As we have seen, for a considerable period after 1945 local sculptors were mesmerised by the works of Moore and Hepworth. This was also the case in London in the early 1950s while Jim Allen was a student at the Royal College of Art. Ultimately, this kind of work became a *cul-de-sac* for anyone searching for an individual direction. For some a means of escape came in the change from modelled and carved sculpture to construction. In England, Anthony Caro (b. 1924) was among the first to develop constructed sculpture in the 1960s which was conceived totally in abstract terms without reference to the scale and proportions of the human figure. His part-time position as a lecturer at the St Martin's School of Art, London, made his influence especially strong among younger artists. He had been to the United States where he had met the pioneering abstract sculptor David Smith (1906–65) and the noted critic Clement Greenberg who supported his work. At the same period, the sculpture of important American Minimalist artists such as Donald Judd (b. 1928) and Robert Morris (b. 1931) became better known in London through exhibitions at the Tate Gallery and elsewhere.

The humanist quality found in Hepworth and Moore was replaced by a more mechanical conception of form. By welding his sculptures out of prefabricated steel, Caro was able to concentrate on the shapes, masses and angles of the work. His use of strong colour helped give the works a contemporary, non-allusive dimension. Caro's sculpture, like Smith's, opened up new avenues for exploration. Caro conceived much of his work directly in relation to the floor or ground without a base or pedestal. His work had the literal quality of self-reference, which had also emerged in post-war abstraction with painters like Ellsworth Kelly and Kenneth Noland. However, Caro retained an interest in mood that was reflected in his titles for sculptures and in his unpredictable assembly of disparate forms. Some younger sculptors were attracted to American work by the uncompromising use of geometric elements, the surface uniformity and the total rejection of allusions beyond the sculpture itself.

New Zealand sculptors learnt a good deal about developments in modernist sculpture through interaction with the Royal College of Art and St Martin's School of Art from the mid-1960s to the early 1970s. A number of talented artists with British connections studied and taught at Auckland or Christchurch in that period. These artists included Stephen Furlonger, Terry Powell, John Panting, Carl Sydow and Matt Pine. All five were ready to absorb whatever was new and promising in sculptural theory and practice. Two of these artists, Panting and Sydow, died young before they had time to develop their work. Powell and Furlonger became British residents who maintained New Zealand contacts but no ongoing presence. Matt Pine was the only one to return and make his career in New Zealand over an extended period of time.

Each of these artists brought back to New Zealand a first-hand knowledge of current English practice. Stephen Furlonger, (b. 1939) visiting artist at Elam in 1970, had studied at the Royal College from 1962 to 1965, exploring new sculptural materials such as fibreglass. While he was in Auckland, Furlonger executed a number of floor-based works unlike anything previously seen in New Zealand. Totally abstract, these works function best when seen from above like a floor-mounted relief. Furlonger focused on formal qualities by paying meticulous attention to edge, to plane and to volume. His work positioned sculpture in the modernist movement alongside abstract painting. At one blow, Furlonger suggested an alternative to figurative sculpture set on a base. Such

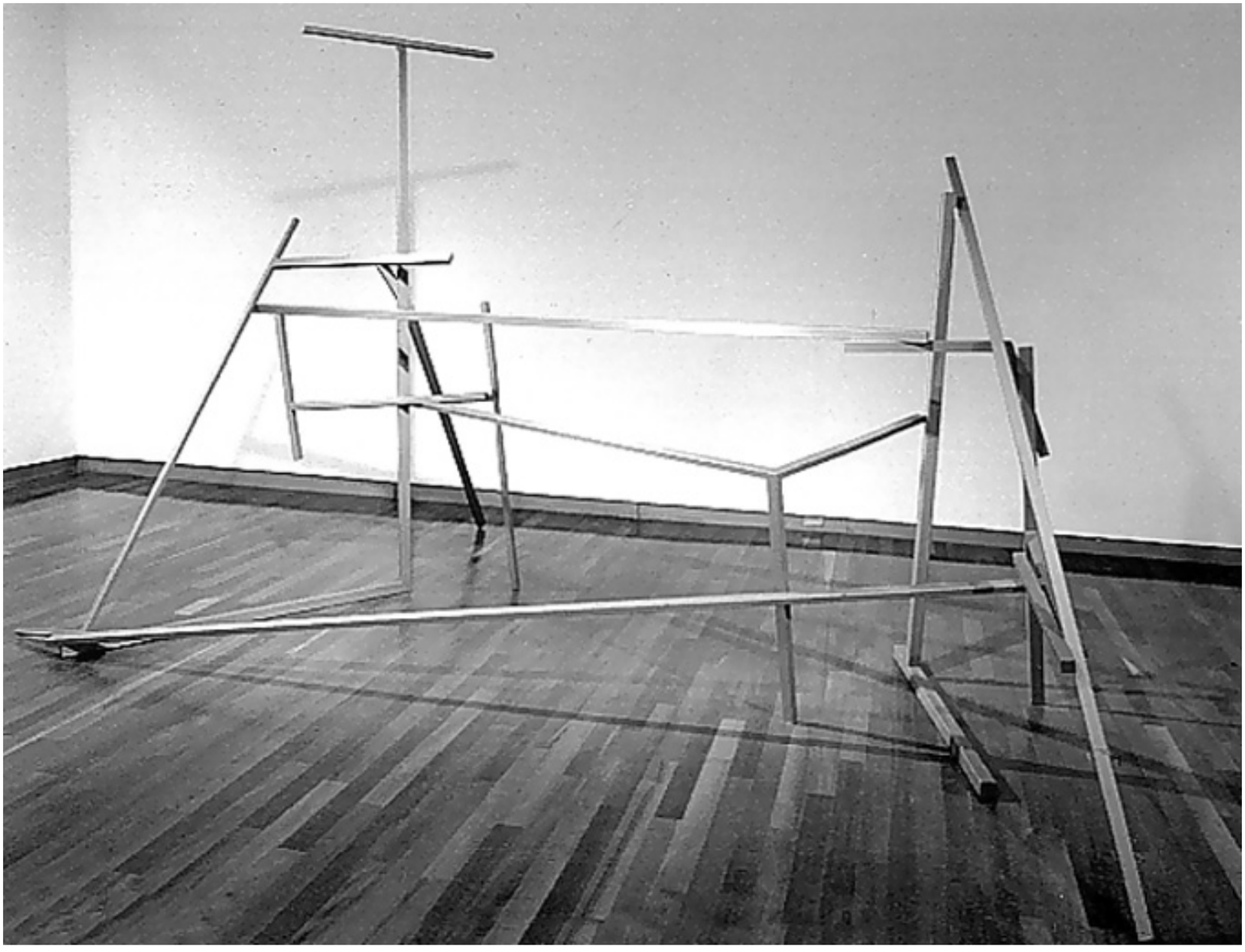


FIGURE 62 **John Panting, *Untitled III*, 1972, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki. Mixed media**

sculptures quickly made an impression on artists in Auckland. Furlonger subsequently returned to London where he taught at the Central School of Art from 1978 until his retirement in 1996. Terry Powell (b. 1944) was also to settle in London where he held a number of part-time teaching positions before becoming a tutor at the Royal College. Having studied at Elam in the mid-1960s, he attended classes at the Royal College from 1970 to 1973. Powell became an accomplished exponent of modernist sculpture made from contemporary materials such as plastic and perspex. When he returned as a visiting lecturer to Elam for a year in 1976, he introduced his ideas to Auckland.

At the time of his premature death, John Panting (1940–74) was on the way to achieving a European reputation. Early study at the Canterbury School of Art from 1959 to 1962 was followed by attendance at the Royal College from

1964 to 1967. In London, Panting evolved a style of modernist sculpture making use of new materials such as steel, perspex, aluminium and wire cable. Among his mentors was Caro whose open-form, welded sculptures provided him with influential models. But he also looked at exhibitions of American Minimalist art shown in London from the mid-1960s. An example of Panting's steel sculptures is *Untitled III,* 1972 (Figure 62), which is constructed out of narrow steel bars welded together to form a scaffolding of lines and movements through space. The piece is characteristically elegant, extending confidently across the floor. Panting has been said to put the emphasis on linear drawing as a means of generating shape and form. This is especially true of his 1972 works where he used thin steel bars like lines to draw in space. There is asymmetry, tension and freedom from the figurative constraints of much preceding sculpture.

Panting was an obsessive artist who thought nothing of working all night in the studio. His more massive last works incorporate demolition timber as well as steel and resin. Perhaps critical of his own earlier achievements, he looked for a raw quality in these works as if they had been thrown together. Panting was a visiting lecturer at Elam in 1969 when it was possible to see his kind of work as avant-garde. He returned to London where he was appointed principal lecturer in sculpture at the Central School of Art in 1972. It is more than likely that Panting would have proceeded to have an important career in London, but it is doubtful whether his style could have been adequately supported in New Zealand.

At the time of his death in 1974, Panting's sculpture looked excitingly new and radical to his friends and students. Thirty years on it seems mainstream in terms of international modernism. Such works, however, opened up the use of new materials for sculpture in New Zealand and allowed a more environmental impact. The reality of the sculpture became important, as did the way it occupied the same space as the viewer.

Panting, Powell and Furlonger all brought modernist ideas about sculpture to New Zealand while they were still current overseas. The travelling exhibition called *Recent American Art* in 1972 gave local sculptors the chance to see comparable modernist works by the Americans Donald Judd, Sol Le Witt and Tony Smith. Not surprisingly, a number of sculptors working in New Zealand turned to constructed metal sculpture in the 1970s. While it is arguable that none achieved anything distinctive, Tom Taylor (1925–94), a Christchurch-based sculptor with an architectural background, understood the principles better than most. From 1960 until his retirement in 1991, Taylor taught at the Canterbury School of Art where he played a key role in making sculpture an important section of the School. After a 1969 European trip funded by an Arts Council grant, he changed to a modernist style. He studied recent bronze and steel sculpture, looking closely at modern constructed sculpture in London. On his return, Taylor executed a number of large commissions for public buildings.

A good example is *Transit* (Plate 36) in the stairwell of the Auckland Medical School. Dated 1976, it was carried out as one of a group of modernist works commissioned by art consultant Hamish Keith for the new building. Other artists represented are Twiss, Marté Szirmay and Don Driver. Taylor used metal beams bolted together and jutting out into the space from mountings on the concrete walls of the landing. The work has a pronounced industrial look totally at odds with the older figurative tradition of Eric Doudney in which he trained. Uncompromisingly abstract, his sculpture addresses formal matters including the interrelation between the metal beams and the box-like space of the architecture. The beams appear to move in space, creating a contrast with the architecture and a frame for the view through the window to the Domain gardens. However, Taylor did not sustain his interest in this kind of work, later reverting to bronze portraiture. As a teacher, Taylor earned wide respect, though as a practitioner he failed to fulfil his potential.

Working in London during the 1960s was the expatriate Edward Bullmore (1933–1978), who developed an individual kind of painted relief. His constructions apparently originated in his work as a set designer for the Court

PLATE 36 **Tom Taylor, *Transit*, 1976, University of Auckland. Steel, 2700 x 4200 x 3300 mm**

Theatre, Christchurch. After his return to New Zealand in 1969, the self-effacing Bullmore failed to establish much of a New Zealand profile but he held several exhibitions at the Barry Lett Galleries, Auckland. The earlier was in 1971 when he showed his *Astroform* series. Bullmore had studied at the Canterbury School of Art from 1951 to 1955, gaining a diploma with honours before travelling to Italy in 1959 and then to London, where he was based for the next decade. He showed his works at various Commonwealth exhibitions, became a member of the London Group and taught at British art schools to make a living.

His *Astroform* series of the mid-1960s marks the high point of his career. Despite the abstract presentation, its suggestive curving forms and openings have explicit sexual connotations, which caused unease to some viewers. By recycling bent chair frames, Bullmore created projecting supports for the canvas or padded areas he picked out in strong colour. His reliefs connect to modernist directions in the constructed sculpture of 1960s London rather than to anything found in New Zealand at that time. While Bullmore did achieve a personal dimension with his British works and the *Icon* series of the 1970s, his work was too unsettling to gain much of a following in his home country (Plate 37).

Some New Zealand artists tried to adapt modernism to a local or vernacular tradition. Of these Carl Sydow (1940–1975) was among the more inventive. He had begun his training at Canterbury School of Art when figurative bronze sculpture was still dominant. With a similar background to Greer Twiss, he at first absorbed influences from Henry Moore and Kenneth Armitage (b. 1916). While studying in London, Sydow came in contact with Panting and Furlonger and before long changed to modernist constructed sculpture.

Back in Christchurch in 1967 he began to make sculpture assembled from modern industrial materials. His use of plastic tubing, hose, iron and perspex gave his works the anonymous look typical of the international movement. Gradually he developed a more individual manner, as seen in his *Meander* series of the early 1970s. He found a way of arranging bright coloured plastic tubing in a perspex base to evoke an effect of nature, even though it was metaphorical rather than descriptive (Plate 38).

Set on the floor, these works are accessible and not in the least monumental. The undulating hosing in primary colours contrasts in its garish opacity with the transparent perspex and mirror base. Sydow was making sculpture that was modern, light in feel yet slightly idiosyncratic. In comparison with Panting or Furlonger, Sydow seems less austere and more fun. Judging by his working drawings, Sydow was developing various methods to achieve motion at the time of his death. By using vertically mounted zinc mesh screens, set one behind another, he began to find ways of achieving ephemeral and changeable effects of shape, light and space as the viewer moved past the work. He might well have developed a personal type of kinetic sculpture if his premature death had not brought his promising career to a close.

Kinetic sculpture had also attracted the expatriate Len Lye (1901–80), who came to prominence in New York during the 1960s. He helped promote modernist ideas in New Zealand sculpture through a visit home in 1977 for an important exhibition of his work at the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery. Engineer John Matthews

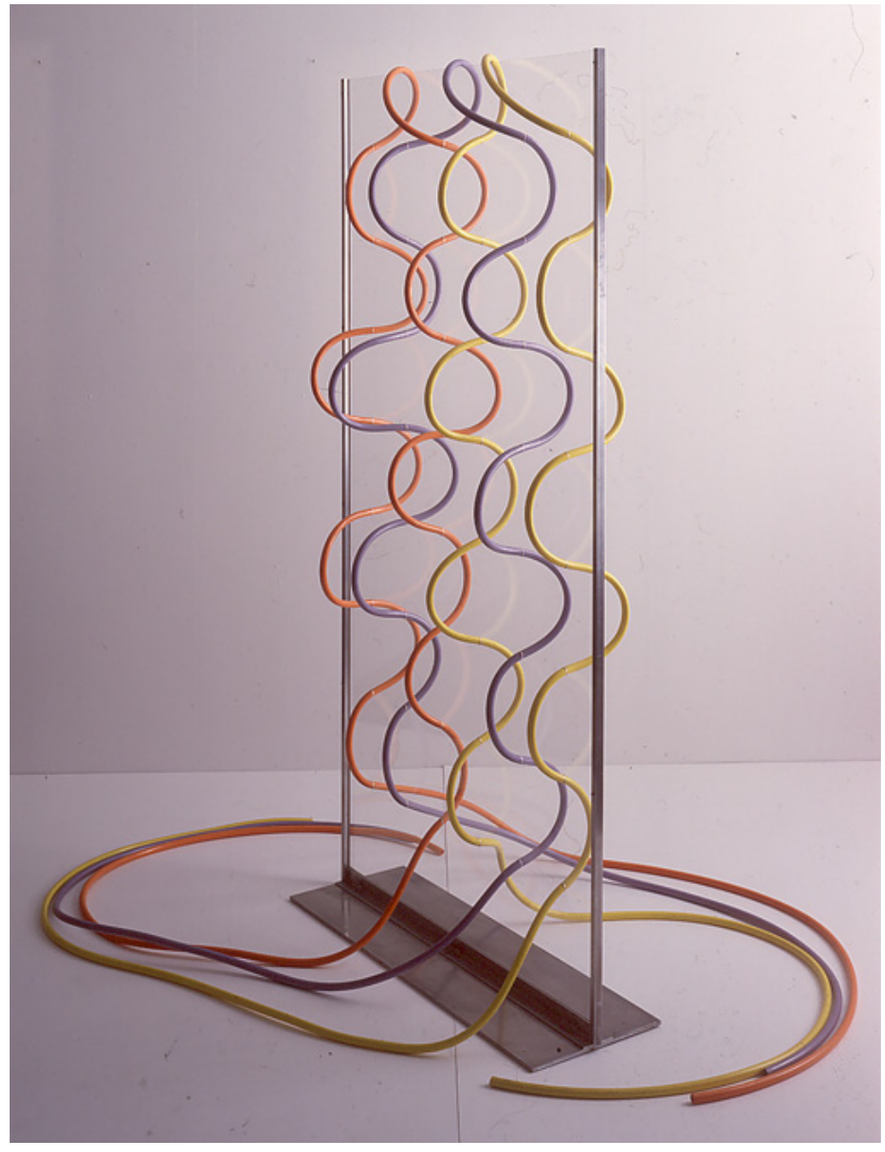


PLATE 38 **Carl Sydow, *Meander I*, 1970, Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Christchurch. Perspex, hose and aluminum base, 1832 x 920 x 308 mm**

PLATE 37 **Edward Bullmore, *Hikurangi No. 8*, 1964. Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Christchurch. Mixed media,1220 x 870 x 130 mm**

fabricated a number of Lye's kinetic sculptures to his specifications at New Plymouth for the show, providing the technical support he needed but rarely had experienced in his career. Born in Christchurch, Lye spent his entire working life outside New Zealand. Early on he shifted to Sydney and then London in the 1920s, becoming a pioneer of animated film. Before his death, he arranged to gift his surviving works, plans and drawings to the Len Lye Foundation established in New Plymouth. His visit in 1977, his works and a later major survey show of his art staged by the Auckland City Art Gallery drew attention to his ideas.

Kineticism never achieved much sculptural prominence in the modernist movement even though the mobiles of Lye's acquaintance Alexander Calder (1898–1976) became popular and familiar to a wide audience. Lye is now acknowledged as among the most important modernist practitioners of kinetic sculpture. His kinetic works avoid the problems of much motorised art, which can degenerate into low-tech gimmickry or toy-like inconsequence. Lye employed motors and magnets to create movement and sound in his metal sculptures but programmed his work so that it has time-based as well as sound-based components. By using shimmering polished surfaces of metal he introduced light as a further integral element. He shared the modernist interest in construction and new materials while seeking to link them to technology in an innovative way. The speed and rhythm of Lye's motorised works, with their effects of light and sound, are very different from Alexander Calder's quiet mobiles set in motion by currents of air. Comparatively, too, the Swiss artist Jean Tinguely's kinetic sculptures are ironic commentaries on machines, involving the idea of self-destruction rather than the formal and monumental dimensions of Lye's sculpture.

Lye's *Trilogy* (*A Flip and Two Twisters*), 1977 (Figure 63), carries his kinetic vision to a scale where the power, energy and noise of the forms in movement have a total sensory impact. The sound and vibration of this work in full motion has a frightening energy and an appeal once encapsulated in the term 'the sublime'. Despite its size, this sculpture is smaller than the huge unbuilt works Lye projected, which would require temple-like buildings to house them. Underlying his technological interest was a deep spirituality that informs his art, prompting the viewer towards awe and meditation rather than idle curiosity. Not all his kinetic sculptures are loud or agitated. *Fountain*, built in various versions from 1959 onwards, consists of 120 stainless steel rods splayed out from a central container to create an effect not unlike a plume of spray. It is calm, with only the most gentle of movements and sound, which a motorised base keeps in a state of flux. *Trilogy* and *Fountain* represent the two contrasted aspects of Lye's kinetic works and both were built for the 1977 New Plymouth show to a greatly enlarged scale.

FIGURE 63 **Len Lye, *Trilogy (A Flip and Two Twisters)*, 1977, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth. Stainless steel with motors, 7500 x 1200 x 7000 mm**

It is true that Lye had a limited direct influence on sculpture in New Zealand but his works provided a yardstick of international quality. The kinetic aspects of the work of Andrew Drummond and Peter Roche come to mind as responses to his example. His works fabricated in New Plymouth are arguably the finest examples of modernist sculpture in the country.

By far the most prolific and inventive local sculptor to use a modernist approach is New Plymouth artist Don Driver (b. 1930). Driver was able to see and study Lye's sculpture at first hand, though there is no obvious stylistic influence. Having a streak of the irrational and surreal in his make up, Driver was never one to follow a single direction for long. His works of a minimal, modernist type can be found in the late 1960s and early 1970s when he produced a series of striking relief sculptures made from recessed panels held in a frame. These reliefs are remarkable for their simple, flat surfaces differing from one another in colour or material — for example, paint and stainless steel. There is no allusion to anything beyond the work itself, the effect being as literal as a Judd sculpture or a Noland painting. From the mid-1970s he produced numerous assemblages of found objects and materials in which he sought the opposite qualities — improvisation, recognisable objects, lettering and the detritus of the modern consumer society.

Driver, a largely self-taught artist, travelled in 1965 to the United States, an experience that influenced his work directly in a series of reliefs that involve found objects and materials. *Mid-West*, 1965 (Figure 64), with its prominent skull, involves a pun on his location in New Plymouth as well as acknowledgement of his debt to American art. In 1969 he became an employee

FIGURE 64 **Don Driver, *Mid-West*, 1965, Private collection, New Plymouth. Mixed media 1837 x 1508 mm**

of the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, with access to its library as well as contact with visiting artists and critics. There are some overtones of Pop Art, a movement that appealed to Driver as well as to painters such as Ian Scott at that time.

Driver was ridding his art of the hand-made, representational qualities of an older style. In the process, he could select forms that were part of contemporary life and could more accurately situate his sculpture in the modern world. The step to the colour reliefs of 1970–1974 was relatively simple (Plate 39). He could now use flat bands of strong colour, simply as colour, without modulation or any concessions to illusionism. Each colour usually had its own physical support to which it was coded. There had been little like it in New Zealand sculpture before, but its context in international modernism was unmistakable. Because the colour was so pronounced, critics sometimes categorised Driver as a painter or as an artist occupying some kind of halfway house between painting and sculpture. Although he did some painting, his three-dimensional emphasis moves his works into the sculpture category. The stainless-steel panels in his reliefs introduced a material that had connotations of industry and the real world as distinct from that of art illusionism. Yet the polished surfaces could reflect surroundings and viewers in a way that broke down the relief's autonomy and made it part of its environment.

In 1973 Driver made some five or six constructions in box-like containers called the *Cosmos* series. His boxes, of either rusting oxidised metal or timber, sheltered brightly coloured contents such as PVC pipe or coloured Formica. In the *Cosmos* series, Driver was alluding to the closed-box forms of Judd and Morris while using transparent sheeting to allow the viewer to look in and through his boxes. Related reliefs used coloured plastic balls among other novel materials. These works had a palette of bright zingy colour, lipstick pink, lemon yellow and sky blue, the like of which had never been seen in a local gallery before, though it can be noted that the ideas went back to his reliefs of the 1960s. Here were brash accents in place of tasteful tones — colour freed from other kinds of servitude and breaking out with the modishness of a 1960s mini dress or pair of latex boots. Instead of being repulsed by plastic, Driver embraced its inert surfaces with enthusiasm for the fresh effects and meanings they produced (Plate 40).

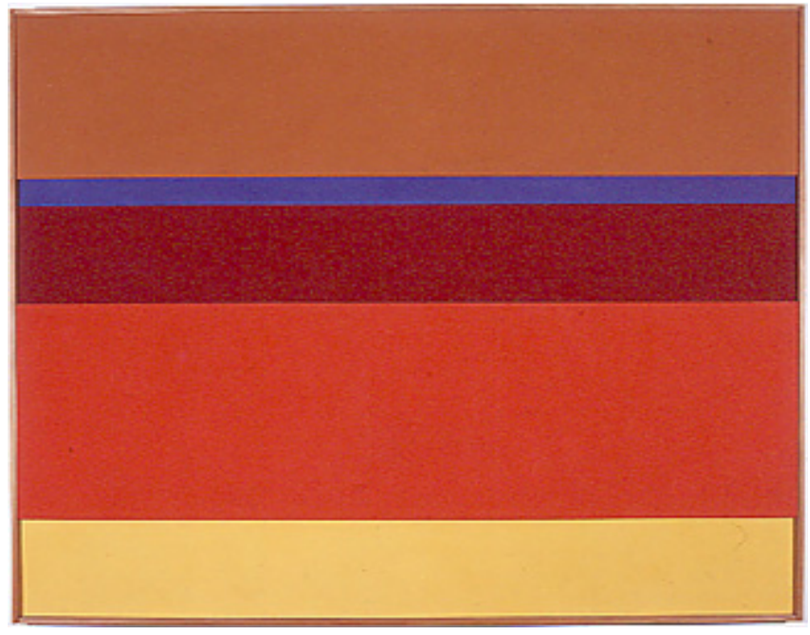


PLATE 39 **Don Driver, *Relief No.10*, 1972, Private collection, Auckland. Acrylic on canvas panels, 1455 x 1860 x 65 mm**

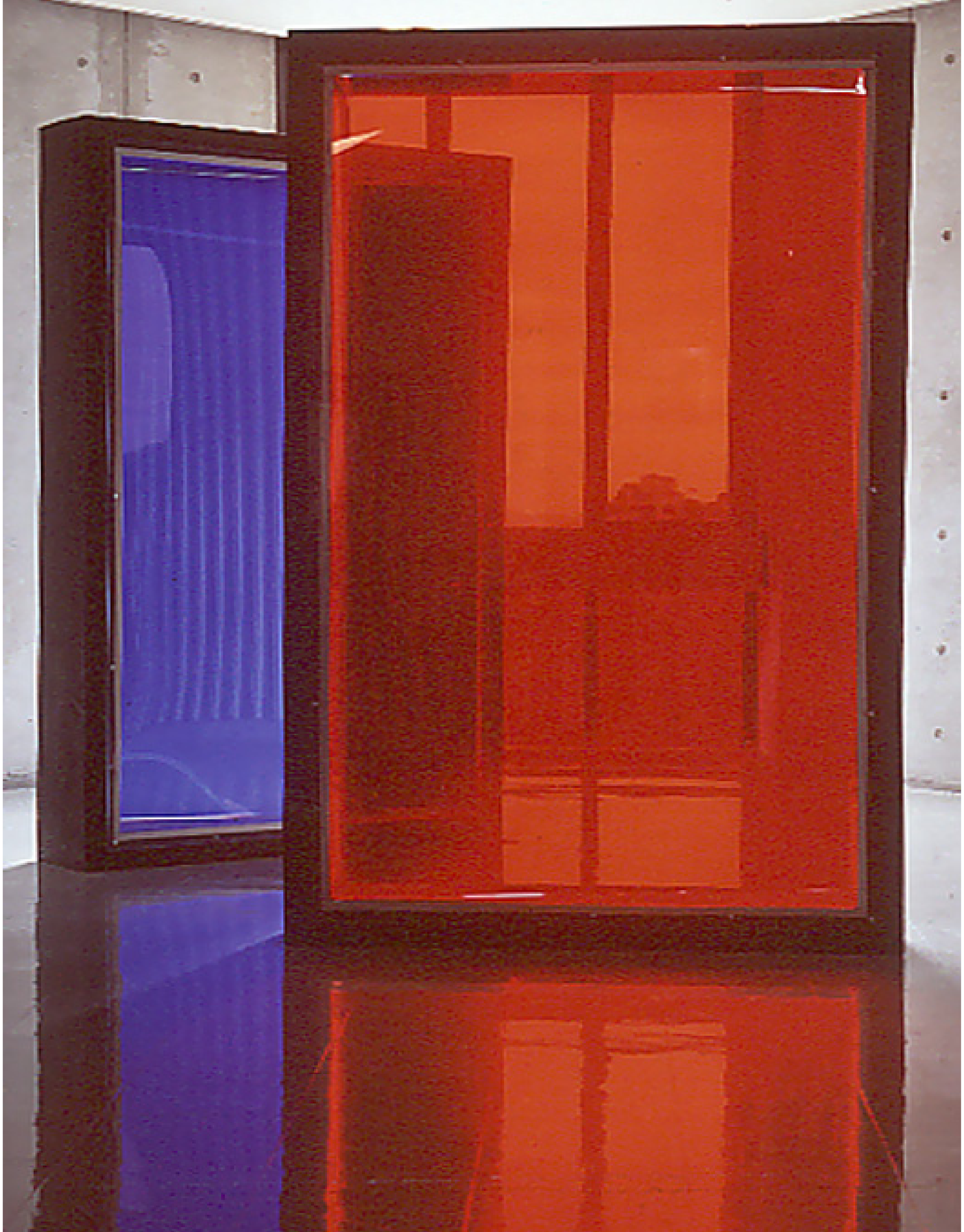


PLATE 41 **Don Driver, *Tooled Diptych*, 1996, Collection of artist. Mixed media, diameter 1630 mm**

Although his sculptures have different antecedents, there are parallels with Twiss's fibreglass works.

Driver quickly achieved recognition by winning prizes like the Hansells Sculpture Award in 1974. John Maunsell, managing director of Hansells New Zealand Limited, established this award in 1971 to recognise the importance of sculpture in New Zealand. In the 1970s the award provided a forum for sculptors, especially those concerned with the object, even though the small-town venue of Masterton ultimately counted against its continuing success. The award encouraged a number of sculptors like Driver and Peter Nicholls who went on to make professional careers.

Always prolific, Driver refused to be confined to any one approach. In the late 1970s he launched out into a seemingly indiscriminate assemblage where anything seemed to go. He used old sacks, stencilled letters, pitchforks, you name it — all was grist to his mill. His assemblages are daring, witty, yet not unaffectionate statements about an agricultural town and province. Not afraid to use fertiliser sacks complete with brand names and instructions in his assemblages, Driver introduced references to the local farming industry that were very different from those in the realist, regional landscapes of the New Plymouth painter Michael Smither. At all times his low art materials achieve high art benchmarks. He has continued to make refreshingly varied works of this kind up to the 1990s, an example being *Tooled Diptych*, 1996 (Plate 41).

By using found material Driver could adopt a range of personas in his work. Soft pieces of canvas or old sacks lie alongside metal implements. In his idiosyncratic modernism Driver deconstructed his own identity to become something less considered, but more human. His movement out of the confines paralleled that of an artist like Ralph Hotere whose work, like Driver's, veers somewhere between relief sculpture and painting. His questioning of the technical divisions of the fine arts is itself representative of much that was happening in this period, when definitions of sculpture underwent radical change. Affinities have been found with Dada in some of his works, even though Driver always retains an interest in formal values. The introduction of dolls, toys and prams into his work extended its range of connotations to include comment on contemporary society and its values. In New Zealand art he stands out as an individualist, always driven by his own agenda. His long-standing interest in Asian sculpture, of which he has a small collection, points to the breadth of his knowledge and range of references.

Among other sculptors attracted by a modernist aesthetic who have chosen to work in a provincial environment, Peter Nicholls (b. 1936) has a distinctive practice. Mostly associated with sculptures assembled from massive pieces of

PLATE 40 **Don Driver, *Large Cosmos*, 1975, University of Auckland. Wood and perspex, 2020 x 1380 x 300 mm**

recycled timber, Nicholls embraces the principle of construction, one that links him to modernists such as Panting despite the otherwise disparate nature of their works. He often likes to use second-hand materials such as hardwood bridge beams, worn wharf piles or trusses from demolished warehouses. By doing so, he establishes links with an earlier era of hand-made woodworking in the service of industry (Plate 42).

Usually Nicholls prefers the wear and tear of nature and use to the machine-made surfaces of modern materials. In the process his art can seem more idiosyncratic than international even though beams of wood — even railway sleepers — can be found in North American sculpture of the 1960s and 1970s. The Canadian Fred Loopstra's *Homage to Will,* 1971, made for the Auckland Sculpture Symposium, is an excellent example. Its earth-bound forms, roughed out to symbolise a plough, have precisely the overtones of honesty, hard work and history that we find captured in Nicholls's art. Nicholls also favoured organically curved branches from trees in his sculptures of the 1970s and returned to that material for *Rakaia*, 1996–97 (Plate 43), a more recent site-specific work. Although his work was made in isolation from the main art centres, it coincided with developments in organic naturalism in Britain, Europe, the United States and Australia.

By mounting his sculptures on the ground, by bolting them together, by allowing his recycled timber to lean, to lie and to stand up vertically against the sky, Nicholls can convincingly capture the spatial qualities of modernist sculpture. While keeping rich associations of nature and the rural, he alludes constantly to the formal properties of modernism. There is an aptness in his works to an image of New Zealand as a country place of low-tech farming and honest toil. The heaviness, the roughness and lack of finesse of his sculptures seem to capture an appropriate provincial accent, the opposite of Terry Powell's work with its polished cosmopolitan phrasing. On occasion Nicholls has made sculpture in materials other than timber. For example, early in the 1980s he co-opted army engineers to execute sculptures using winches, dynamite and boulders as gravitational forming devices onto sheet steel in *Full Stop*, 1982, or power poles and boulders as anchoring systems to sheet metal winched into curving planes in *Sprung Arc*, 1984.

Born in Wanganui, Peter Nicholls studied at the Elam School of Fine Arts where he had a sound grounding in traditional stone-working and woodworking techniques, as well as modelling. He gained his diploma with honours in 1963.

PLATE 42 **Peter Nicholls, *Luff*, 1988, cedar, jarrah and bronze, 5000 x 5000 x 3000 mm. Private collection, Auckland**

PLATE 43 **Peter Nicholls, *Rakaia*, 1996–97, Keystone Trust Collection. Australian hardwood with timbercryl, 4500 x 60,000 x 5000 mm**

Later on, in 1979, he completed a master's degree in sculpture at the University of Wisconsin. After an initial figurative period, he changed to a modernist style in the 1970s and shifted to Dunedin where he has taught sculpture at the Otago Polytechnic School of Art. Most of Nicholls's sculpture has been for public situations, such as his large wood sculptures at the University of Otago, the University of Auckland and the Dunedin Public Art Gallery, to mention a few.

An exact contemporary of Peter Nicholls is Warren Viscoe (b. 1935), who studied at Elam from 1963 to 1965. Like Nicholls, he likes to use natural materials, especially timber, and shares his affinity for the rustic. Viscoe has never been a committed exponent of any one kind of sculpture but has made constructions out of recycled materials, including timber. His experience as a builder sometimes comes through in the fluency of his approach to putting together pieces of timber to make figures or structures to hold and support things. Substantial as they are, his works do not appear monumental even when constructed from architectural forms such as arches and lintels. Instead, they have a folk art quality, an element of fun and the unexpected. In his sculptures of the 1980s he used boxes, compartments and shelves to order and display his items including tree branches, stones and coins (Plate 44).

While he has flirted with figurative works on occasion, Viscoe is at his strongest when he keeps a dividing line between representation and his naturally inventive approach to form. He constructs his male figures from pieces of timber, sometimes from tree branches, cutting out their heads from plywood so that they appear like animated mannequins. His figures are workers whose actions lack grace but comment on the relationship between man and his environment.

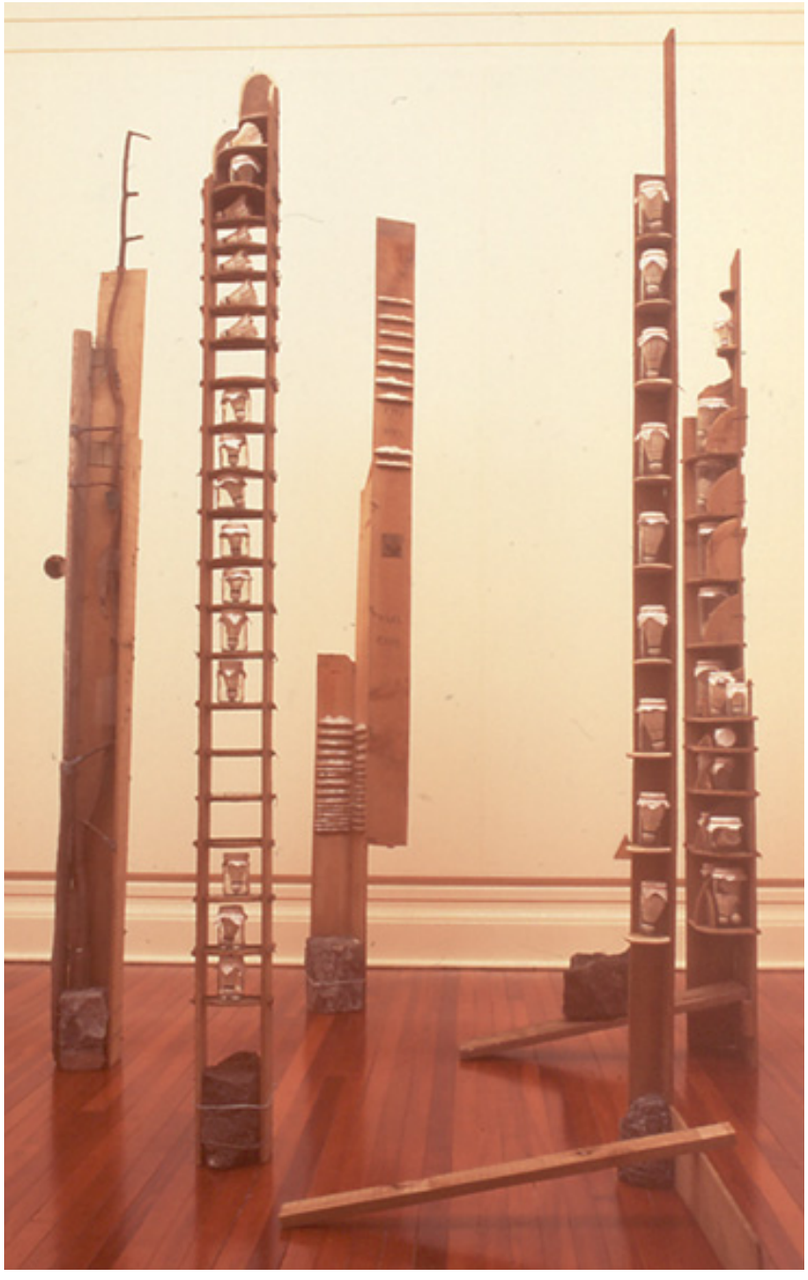


PLATE 44 **Warren Viscoe, *Fifteen Bird Calls*, 1982, mixed media. Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui**

With Viscoe it is possible to see a range of influences coming through, among them that of the American sculptor Louise Nevelson. He has an uncanny sense of scale, and an ability to contrast textures to suggest movement and life. He often mounts his sculpture directly on the floor to create an impression of informality and contact with the viewer.

Although the majority of New Zealand sculptors who embraced modernism were men, there was also a small number of women adherents. There had been no real barriers to women becoming sculptors, as the careers of Butler and Macalister attest. But the prospects of a successful career were limited while the costs were high. One artist who overcame most of these problems is Marté Szirmay (b. 1946). Marté Szirmay is the stepdaughter of sculptor Frank Szirmay, a Hungarian sculptor who came to Auckland as a refugee in 1957 along with his family. His own work remained in a conservative, figurative manner with minimal changes resulting from his new environment. Undoubtedly Marté drew an initial interest in sculpture from her stepfather and was assisted by growing up surrounded by the materials and tools of the art world.

While a student at Elam from 1965 to 1968, she benefited from the more open teaching typical of the Beadle era. Encouraged by Jim Allen to major in sculpture rather than painting, Szirmay soon established an individual profile. She rose to prominence straight out of art school by winning a public sculpture competition in 1969. This was the Smirnoff Sculpture Award funded by Gilbeys New Zealand Limited (Plate 45). Her winning entry was for a large aluminium abstract fabricated to her instructions by Roskill Sheet Metal Works. Constructed from eight interlocking pieces, the sculpture suggests movement and life, despite the absence of organic or figurative references. Unlike most of her later constructions, the *Smirnoff Sculpture* is a fully enclosed form that reads as a monumental entity. It clearly reflects an understanding of constructed sculpture brought to Elam via contacts with the Royal College of Art at this time.

Quite simply this was a radical work for Auckland. It was a big step from Macalister's *Maori Warrior* (Figure 53) of a few years earlier. Szirmay's work was the first large abstract sculpture to be commissioned in Auckland. Also, it was made from a modern material, aluminium, that had contemporary connotations of industry and commerce, not of the fine arts. Its method of construction with no individual working by the artist herself was also in line with modernist practice. Unlike Macalister's work, it moves away from anthropomorphism to minimalist forms with no human dimension. Situated in a small Newmarket square, the sculpture has a public accessibility and presence, which have contributed enormously to its impact on artists and the public. Part of its success came from the artist's willingness to accept the aluminium material with its particular properties instead of trying to make it look like something else.

The *Smirnoff Sculpture* in some ways looked forward to Szirmay's subsequent work. It seemed in one bold statement to capture much of what she had to say as an artist. Viewed in retrospect, it is possible to see aspects of her later practice reflected in its shiny surfaces, for she has frequently worked in aluminium since,

PLATE 45 **Marté Szirmay, *Smirnoff Sculpture*, 1969, Newmarket, Auckland. Aluminium sheet, 2600 x 4900 x 2000 mm**

to such an extent that she is most often associated with that material. She had further early success by winning the Frances Hodgkins Fellowship in 1971–72 and receiving a grant to travel in Europe. Spending 1974 and 1978 in Europe gave her first-hand knowledge of constructed sculpture. Since 1980 she has spent further time in both Europe and the United States.

After the *Smirnoff Sculpture,* Szirmay carried out a series of public commissions for institutions and corporations. Most of these larger commissions have been in aluminium or stainless steel. She completed one work for the University of Auckland (Plate 46) and another early example for the Otago Medical School, Dunedin, in 1975. Mounted on a shallow base close to the ground, the Dunedin work has painted abstract forms cut out of sheet aluminium with contrasting curved and straight profiles. While small in scale, the Dunedin piece is significant

PLATE 46 **Marté Szirmay, *Untitled*, 1975, University of Auckland. Stainless steel, 1350 x 1600 x 1350 mm**

for introducing horizontal, ground-oriented sculpture to a New Zealand urban setting. The Auckland work is also floor-mounted and made from stainless steel. In both works Szirmay designed the neutral forms so that they harmonise with each other rather than creating unexpected juxtapositions.

One of her most ambitious public commissions was made in 1987 for the Chase Plaza, Auckland (Plate 47). In this case, Szirmay introduced water that trickled down the rear wall, splashing over the sculpture into the pool at its base. Twin stairs with elliptical forms enclosed the sculpture and were echoed in the work's steel shapes. Szirmay benefited from the growth in corporate sponsorship during the 1970s and 1980s when modern sculpture was increasingly commissioned for new buildings before the stock market crash. Art patronage became (ostensibly) a sign of affluence and good taste in the corporate world. The work was regrettably dismantled when the fortunes of Chase Corporation nosedived and the use made of the complex was changed. This illustrates the boom-and-bust cycle familiar in New Zealand business and the negative as well as positive sides of corporate sponsorship.

Some of the later works such as that at Auckland Girls' Grammar School, 1986, use the spiral form. This form, like the circle also present in other works, relates to Szirmay's conceptual concerns as an artist. She noted in 1994: 'My work is a synthesis of my philosophical and spiritual understandings. I use archetypal forms and shapes — circles, pyramids, squares, spirals — all of which can be found in the traces we have of ancient civilisations all over the world.' She has worked with these forms on both an intimate and a large scale, making pieces small enough to be hand-held as well as monumental public sculptures. Her varied techniques involve modelled as well as constructed forms. Usually she has avoided titles for her sculpture, preferring to rely on an interaction between sculpture and viewer.

Her works of the 1980s and 1990s often refer back to early European modernism. Recently she has sought an accommodation between the modern technology of her art, fabricated in materials such as stainless steel, aluminium and engraved acrylic sheet, and the age-old organic references to life and growth encapsulated in its forms. In particular she has responded to the vitalist direction, seeking to find analogies with growth patterns in nature. Szirmay has made many pieces based on organic forms, such as the shell, which she has translated into materials as diverse as stainless steel and resin. Quite often her pieces involve curving forms that unfold, flower-like, from a central core. She has been interested in finding an underlying order or continuum in the world (Figure 65). By locating some of her works in the landscape she has achieved integration between her forms and those of nature. This consideration, too, has led her to introduce water as an element. The flow of water down the metal surfaces helps unify them while making the link with the natural world more convincing. There

PLATE 47 **Marté Szirmay, *Chase Plaza Water Sculpture*, 1987, Auckland (destroyed). Stainless steel, 7000 x 2000 x 6000 mm**

have been suggestions of feminist concerns in her sculptures, most obviously in the emphasis on flower-like forms and patterns evocative of fertility and growth, if not of embryonic life in the womb. Szirmay has sustained her art over the years by teaching art at secondary schools and since 1994 at the Manukau School of Art.

Viewed in retrospect, modernism and abstraction have had only limited appeal for New Zealand sculptors. Significantly, the work of Wellington sculptor Tanya Ashken (b. 1939), which shares some of the formalist interests of Szirmay's, also had European roots. Ashken studied in London at the Central School of Art as well as the Camberwell School before emigrating to New Zealand in 1963. Her highly refined abstract carvings and bronzes relate to the tradition established by Constantin Brancusi and Barbara Hepworth more than to local sources. The sculpture of fellow Wellington artist Guy Ngan (b. 1926) also belongs to the modernist movement. Trained in London at Goldsmiths College of Art and the Royal College, Ngan developed a fluent style of abstract bronze sculpture that won him important commissions for public buildings throughout the country. In the 1970s he completed wall sculptures for the Reserve Bank, Wellington, and the Newton Post Office, Auckland (now Artspace), among other projects. Ngan's work is distinguished by strong two-dimensional design, reflecting his practice as a design consultant. The bronze sculptures of Edgar Mansfield (1907–1996), based on driftwood forms found on the Napier foreshore and exhibited locally in the 1960s and 1970s, can be mentioned in this context. An expatriate who trained and worked in London most of his life, Mansfield believed firmly in the ideals of modernism and the power of abstraction to 'communicate a new significance with time'.

It could be argued that the international dimension of the abstraction practised by Ngan and Ashken limited references to New Zealand as a Pacific country with its own identity, which became increasingly important in the 1980s. Furthermore the purity of modernist abstraction conflicted with the creative impulses that were surfacing by the mid to late 1980s. In that era, with the theorists of postmodernism in full cry, the time was right for a more varied, eclectic and regionally relevant sculptural practice to emerge. It was also appropriate for young Maori artists to reassert their presence in sculpture, the art form most practised by their ancestors.

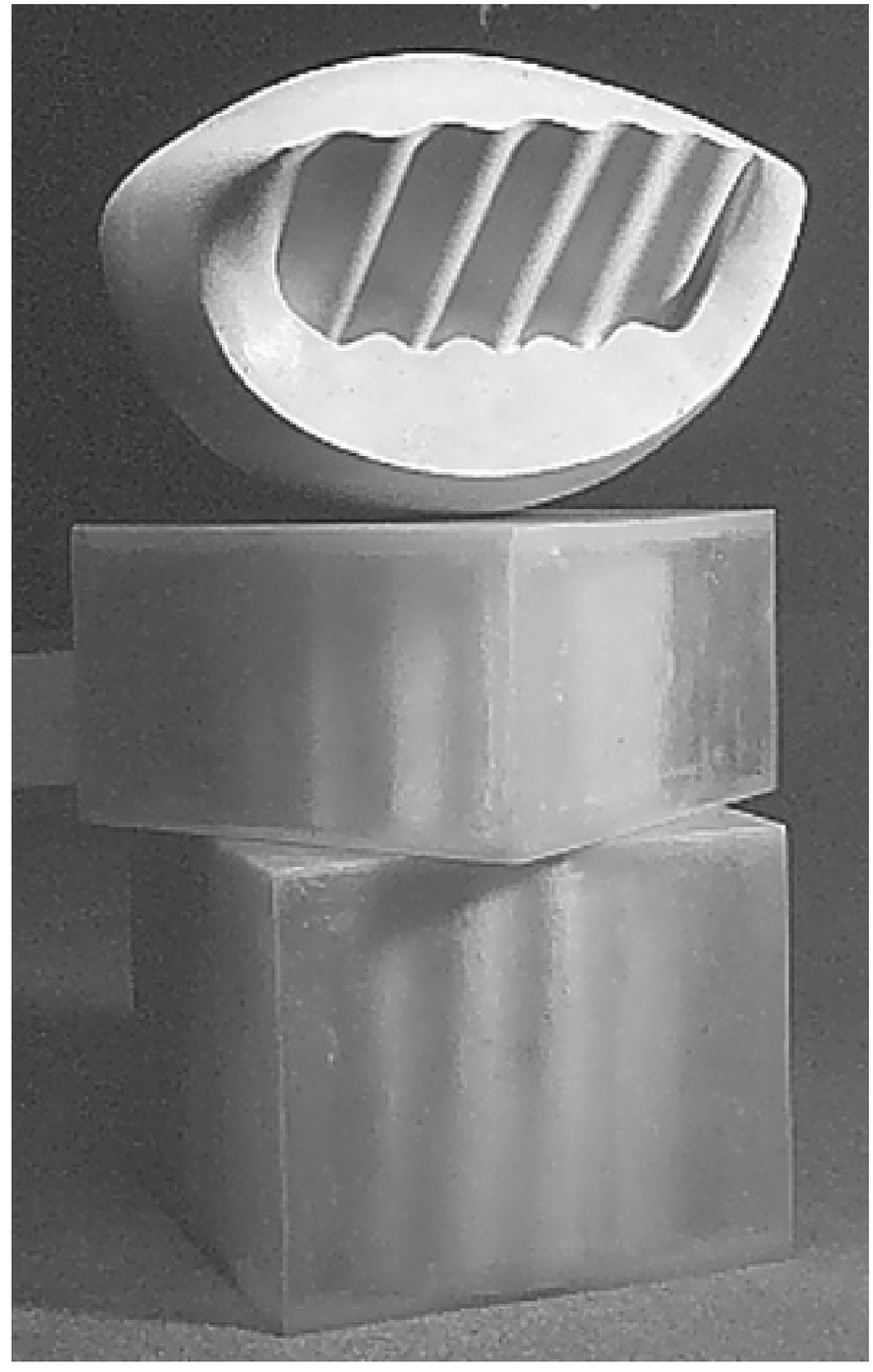


FIGURE 65 **Marté Szirmay, *Sulis (All Seeing Eye*), 1995, Private collection, Auckland. Polyester resin, concrete and pumice, 1300 x 500 x 500 mm**

IX

Post-Object and Conceptual Art: 1969 to the Present

No art form was to undergo a more radical transformation internationally in the late 1950s and 1960s than sculpture. Until then its parameters seemed set along lines that had been in place for many years. Even non-figurative modernist sculpture retained elements in common with the past. There was still very much an emphasis on the object in modernist sculpture, even if the piece of stone or wood was no longer related to a recognisable subject. Despite controversy about abstraction, the works had continuity with sculptural tradition. Many modernist sculptures still had a base or else conformed to the conventions of the relief. The materials might be new, the colours bright and brash, but some underlying principles were constant. Soon this was to be challenged by a group of artists and students centred on the Elam School of Fine Arts. They drew on ideas and practice developed during the 1950s and 1960s in Europe and the United States. For the first time concept and theory achieved a new status. Artists focused on forms such as environmental and performance art as alternatives to traditional sculpture.

Jim Allen was crucial to the introduction of conceptual and Post-Object art to Elam and the country. Certainly he was at the centre of this movement in its initial years. Under his guidance, sculpture at Elam widened its scope to include environmental art, happenings and time-based art. The inclusion of what was then the new technology of video with sound was characteristic, as was an emphasis on process rather than product. At the time New Zealand practitioners preferred to use the term Post-Object, despite its problems, to refer to their art. The term Post-Object captured a number of important ideas central to the movement.

Post-Object suggested the idea of progression; of moving to a new stage in the way art was experienced and valued. While not everyone accepted the left-wing convictions of some adherents, there was a belief that object art was often an exclusive, elitist product that had monetary value and could be bought and sold. It could be purchased for investment and was able to be manipulated by institutions such as art museums to acquire a cult status of prestige and exclusivity. In short, art lent itself to mainstream capitalist systems. An important aspect of Post-Object art was that it was ephemeral. It existed only for the duration of the performance, the installation or the event. There was nothing to buy or sell in the usual sense of an artist–patron transaction. Frequently the work depended on a specific site for its meaning and on audience participation. Afterwards, all that remained was the residue of the work as recorded by film, video or sound. The unique art object so central to the capitalist market system was dispensed with.

Another important dimension to Post-Object art was integration with real life. The word ‘real’ occurring in titles and documents indicates that the works were not set apart from the everyday world. Instead of being sealed off from the public, the works took place in the spaces people occupy, so that they could enter and take part in the action. Performance art or happenings located in the streets or in parks encapsulated this dimension. Intended here, too, was the idea of breaking down the exclusive nature of the art work as inaccessible and daunting. The actions or works did not necessarily involve skill or esoteric knowledge. Theoretically anyone could take part. In fact the artists did not want actors with dramatic skills or a script, preferring indeterminacy and chance in the making of their work. But, in practice, participation by spectators who knew nothing about the work in progress and were unwilling to accept the event as art proved ultimately undemocratic and patronising and undermined its original intentions. For Post-Object art was accessible in reality only to its own elite,

those in the know. What constituted an experience of art as contrasted with ordinary life needed more definition.

Post-Object art also concerned itself with the institutions for selling art, displaying and storing it. By making the gallery space the focus of attention, rather than the objects it would normally contain, artists could raise questions about previously taboo or unchallenged areas. What was the function of an art gallery, how did it transform the objects in it, how did its displays validate certain works and values while denying others? The politics and power plays implicit in museum curatorship came under scrutiny for the first time. In the process, accepted values and expectations were exposed to criticism from which they emerged in a new and unfavourable light. Environments and installations in which the whole space of the gallery was programmed to enclose and involve the spectator in a total sensory experience became favoured mediums for Post-Object artists. Subsequently installations became widely accepted in contemporary sculptural practice by artists with wide-ranging agendas, an enduring legacy of the movement.

Whatever one's evaluation of Post-Object art, in its initial phase from 1969 to 1979 it radically transformed the way sculpture was understood and practised. Few artists were unaffected by it. Many absorbed aspects of it into their method of working. The radical, indeed revolutionary aspect of the movement emerged with the political unrest of the late 1960s in Europe and the United States. The challenge to authority of demonstrations, marches, sit-ins and happenings all provide a context for Post-Object art as well as an international framework. It was not a New Zealand art form; rather it seems international in scope. What happened in Auckland was a provincial manifestation of that bigger whole. Artists who played an important role were W. R. (Jim) Allen, Philip Dadson, Bruce Barber, Peter Roche and Andrew Drummond.

Knowledge of the new art came from visits to France and Britain by artists like Allen, as well as contact with current ideas through magazines like *Studio International* and *Art Forum.* Although Allen is now best remembered for his role in promoting and introducing Post-Object sculpture to Auckland, as we have seen above, he came to this kind of work late in his career. It was at Elam that Allen confirmed his radical change in philosophy from his Christchurch years. He entered the School at the same time as Paul Beadle, who encouraged a more experimental approach to teaching. Beadle gave quite a degree of latitude to Allen, who gradually positioned himself independently of Kavanagh, then head of sculpture, and of Beadle himself. After a period of study leave in the late 1960s, Allen embraced the principles of Post-Object art in his experimental works while continuing with his commercial commissions. He took on a leadership role as teacher and facilitator at Elam for a brief but fertile period between 1969 and 1977, when he resigned his position and moved to Sydney. During those years, he along with students such as Maree Horner, Bruce Barber and Philip Dadson made Elam a centre of experimentation and controversy. Allen's work was championed by Wystan Curnow (b. 1939), a leading critic, who co-edited with Allen a book *New Art* in 1976 that now remains as a record of some of the ideas and events of that era.

Because Allen's work was ephemeral, depending on specifics of time and place as well as audience participation, there is virtually no surviving sculpture

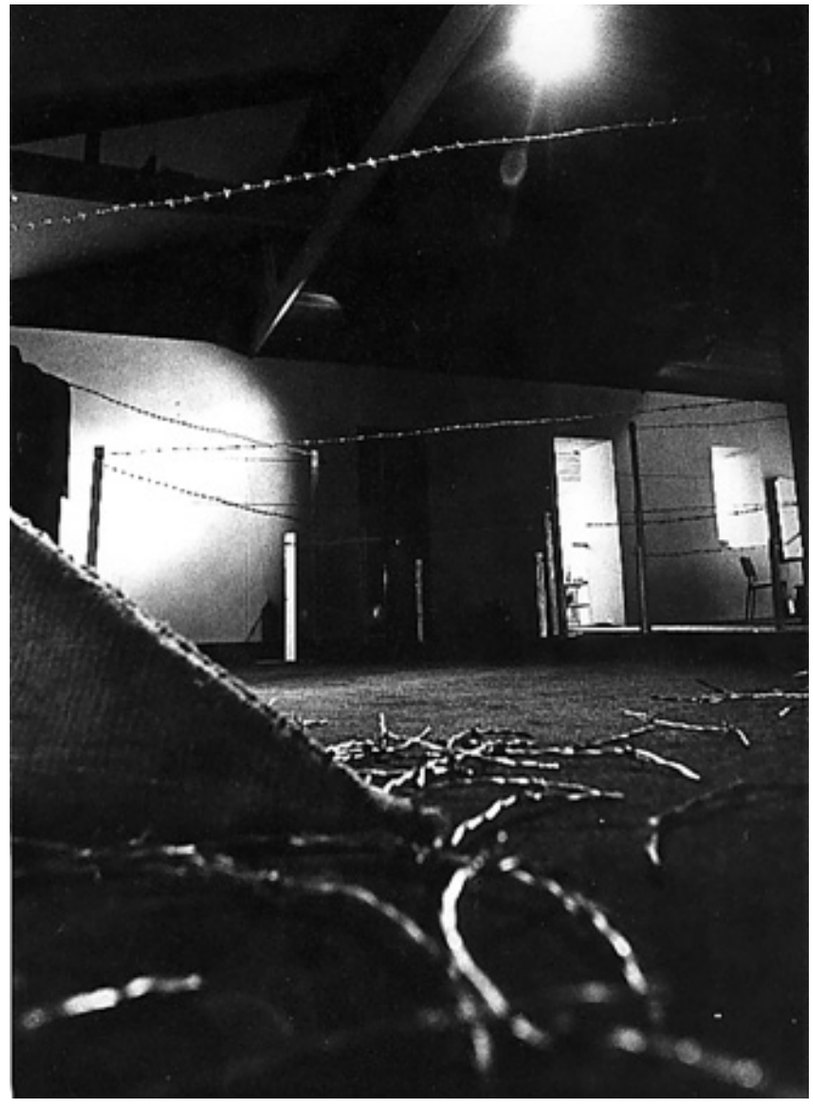


FIGURE 66 **W. R. (Jim) Allen, *Arena*, 1970, mixed media with barbed wire, Barry Lett Galleries, Auckland. Installation**

to evaluate. That was his intention. His works involved dimensions that could not be assessed by conventional standards. Allen made use of a number of venues for his work — namely, the Auckland City Art Gallery, the Barry Lett Galleries and public spaces in central Auckland. Among his pieces for the Barry Lett Galleries was *Barbed Wire: Two Environments* of 1970. One of these works called *Arena* involved the erection of a boxing-ring type of structure in the gallery with barbed wire hung at three levels of vulnerability, eyes, groin, knee (Figure 66). Not only was the object itself crude and non-aesthetic, it occupied the gallery floor in a way that confined the viewer to the perimeter, the opposite of normal expectations. There was nothing to look at! Instead you must brave the wire and enter the enclosure to find a haven from its threatening presence. Art critic Hamish Keith noted in the *Auckland Star*: 'Allen's environments are not beautiful. They have no formal structure for intellectual art lovers to analyse in safety.' Allen thwarted the expectations of an art gallery situation, shifting the audience from the role of spectator to that of participant. His works did not have a pre-planned content. They were experimental and depended on the reaction of the audience to function effectively or function at all. They occupied psychological space as much as physical. Allen was drawing attention to the assumptions involved in displaying and evaluating art in a safe environment in which nothing was challenging or unexpected.

Another of Allen's installations was *O-AR II*, 1975, for the new upstairs galleries of the Auckland City Art Gallery (Figure 67). He cleared the floor and walls of the galleries where art usually was placed. Instead, he suspended two continuous rolls of plastic sheet from the ceiling of each gallery, one opaque and one clear. From the entrance foyer it was possible to take in each gallery as a receding space occupied in a new way by Allen's minimalist endeavour. He made the gallery spaces his sculpture, the viewer the means by which they could be experienced and understood. This attention to the gallery as a ritualistic space with its own aura was a major focus of Post-Object art. By removing the art objects it was possible to show how powerful and conditioning the systems of art presentation could be. The public gallery could confer a status to works that they could achieve in no other way. Allen demonstrated an alternative view — but not one that could remain in place or remain valid. It belonged to a moment, and had meaning only to the small elite who visited art galleries or cared much about modern art. Ironically, it also depended on the liberal-mindedness of the gallery to be self-critical.

Allen helped forge contacts outside Auckland, especially with the Mildura Sculpture Triennial held in a country town near the border between New South Wales and Victoria. In the early 1970s artists such as Allen, Bruce Barber and

FIGURE 67 **W. R. (Jim) Allen, *O-AR II*, 1975, Auckland City Art Gallery. Installation**

Philip Dadson all took part, helping to give New Zealand Post-Object art a strong presence in Australia. This venue was suitable for such works because it was in the context of a festival that people came to out of a sense of fun, not obligation. The work could be staged outdoors free from the cultural environment of art galleries and the big city. A lack of pretence and controls allowed a freedom for the works to interact with the public so that the process had the emphasis Allen preferred. The relationship of art to nature and the land was also important.

Politically, Allen's role at Elam polarised opinions and led to the development

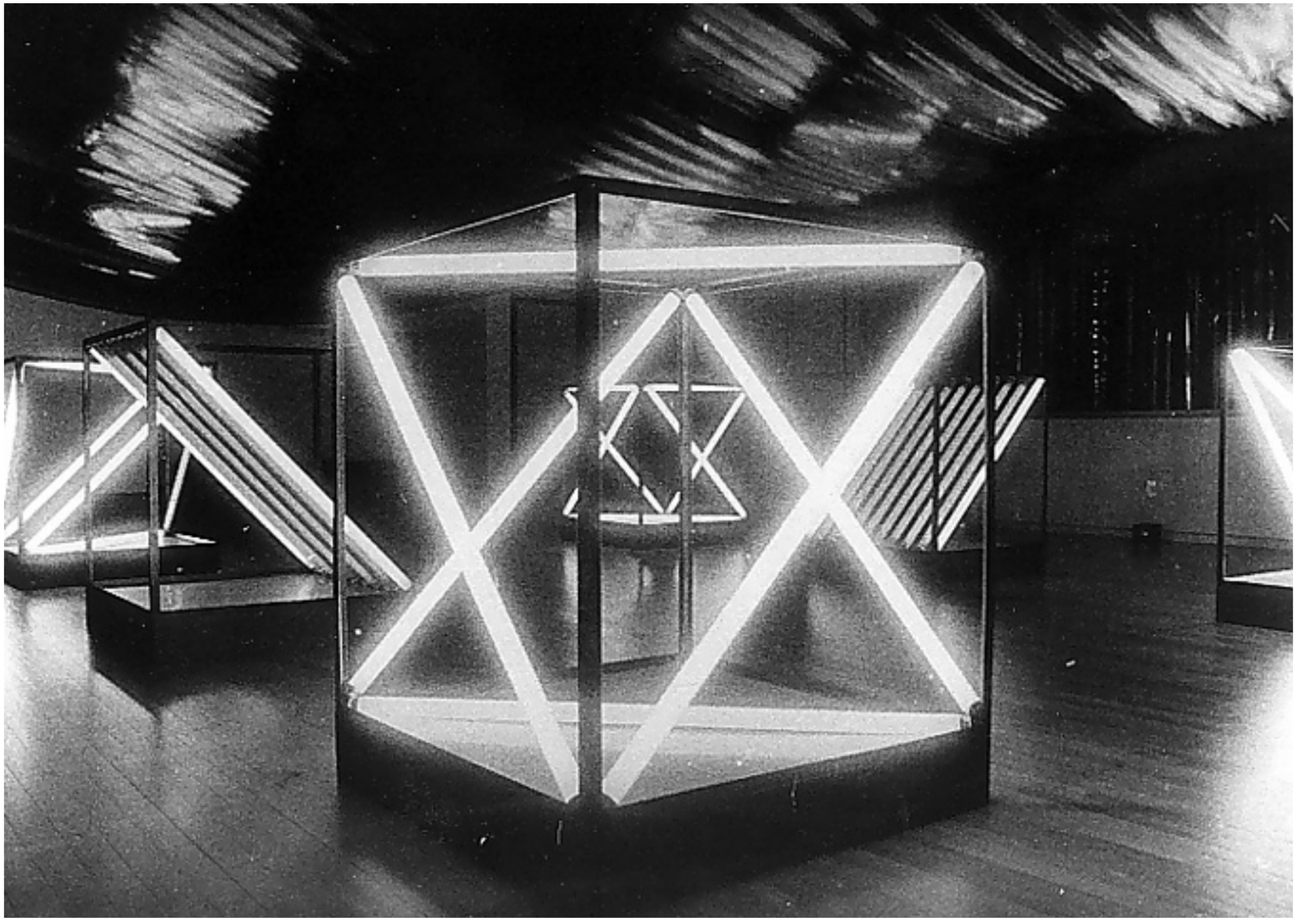


FIGURE 68 **Leon Narbey, *Real Time*, 1970, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth. Installation**

of factions in the school. His willingness to approve as sculpture the work of Philip Dadson raised questions in some quarters of Elam. Not everyone was willing to accept Conceptual Art as sculpture or to believe that students should graduate with no traditional skills of the kind Allen himself had acquired. Furthermore, the issues raised by the new sculpture caused a critique of the way Elam and the university functioned. There was an arrogant flouting of authority and willingness to not only involve the public but cause outrage and criticism of the institution. The so-called rubber phalluses incident of 1974, when a third-year sculpture student displayed erect, over-life-size rubber phalluses on the Elam Open Day, caused media attention and concern on the part of the University Council. The student, Paul Gibbs, noted in an interview for the *Sunday News* that 'Art is a field which does shock people sometimes . . . but we should be able to accept it.' To the public it seemed as though Elam was becoming uncontrollable and its art the product of 'sick depraved minds'. Beadle was moved aside as Dean in 1975 as one result of this discontent. Allen, after sixteen years at the University of Auckland, felt it was time for a change. In 1977 he

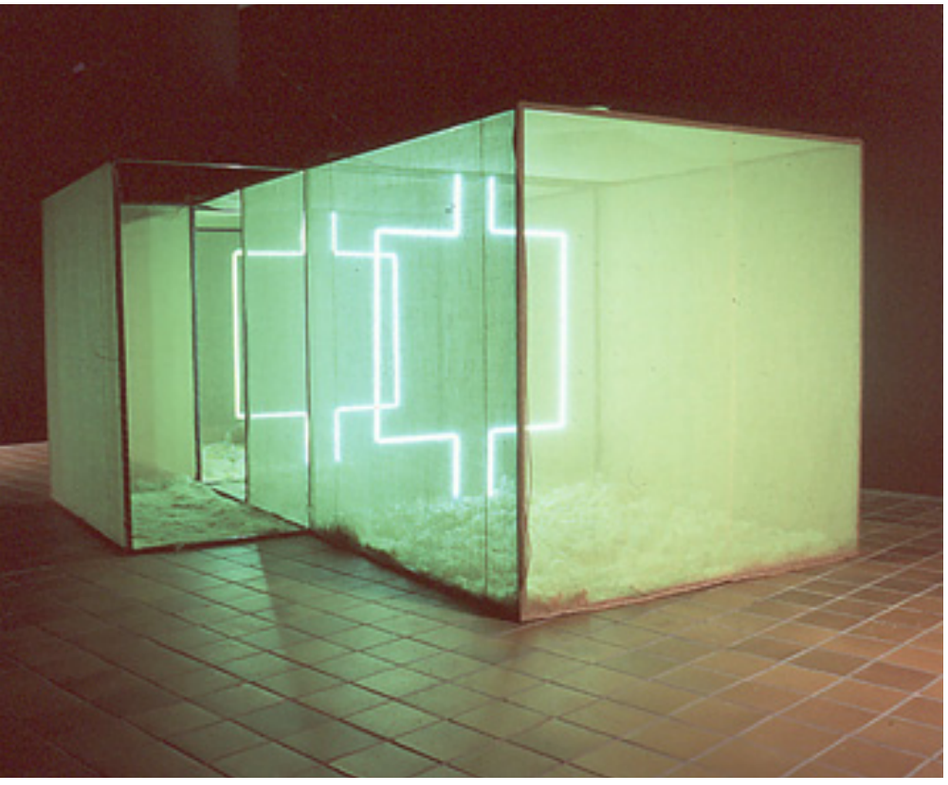


PLATE 48 **W. R. (Jim) Allen, *New Zealand Environment, No. 5*, 1969, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth. Mixed media 1830 x 1830 x 5486 mm**

resigned to move to Sydney where he became founding head of the Sydney College of the Arts School of Art.

While it would be simplistic to see his departure as marking an end of this movement at Elam, there is no doubt that it was a turning point. After Allen's departure the school became more conservative and less willing to accept the more avant-garde ideas and concepts uncritically. For Allen had been influential as a facilitator of Post-Object art, as well as someone who raised funds for events like the International Sculpture Symposium of 1971 held in Auckland. The symposium brought Pacific Rim sculptors like Helen Escobedo and Michio Ihara to the city where they executed public sculptures for selected sites in parks. Most are still in place. Events around the symposium helped raise public awareness about contemporary sculptural practice. The works themselves in their diversity showed the range of ideas, materials and techniques available to international sculptors at that time.

As a teacher, Allen appears to have been forceful if not charismatic. He allowed things to happen but did not instruct in particular techniques. It is after 1969 that his influence is most apparent. The retirement of Kavanagh in 1968 certainly helped to reinforce his position. A major talent to emerge from Elam at that time was Leon Narbey who established his reputation with one work *Real Time,* an installation to mark the opening of the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery in New Plymouth in November 1970. *Real Time* (Figure 68) was not the first installation sculpture to be constructed in New Zealand. That claim has been made for Allen's *New Zealand Environments* of 1969. But *Real Time* was the most ambitious, the most acclaimed and arguably the most influential such work. It filled the entire gallery, which appropriately was a converted picture theatre. Narbey used neon tubes as light sources, plastic sheet cut in strips, and sound and strong colour to give a new, fun look to the space. Instead of being a space to display objects, the gallery became the work, the viewers were participants in an experience that needed their reactions for its proper functioning. *Real Time* actually joined art and life in a way that was exciting and memorable. It was appropriate to a gallery with no collection and no heritage of the past. Its emphasis on modern materials and technology, as well as on multi-media presentation, broke down boundaries for artists and public alike.

New Plymouth was fortunate in having a director, John Maynard, who was young, twenty-three, enthusiastic and aware of developments in contemporary art. Without his vision and support, *Real Time* would not have happened. Equally the gallery would not have acquired Allen's *New Zealand Environment No. 5*, which is the only surviving example of his environmental sculpture (Plate 48). Appropriately in miniature, its space has neon lighting and materials such as barbed wire, wood shavings and wool, conducive to a total sensory experience anticipatory of Narbey's large, fluent demonstration of a year later. Maynard was not to stay long at New Plymouth, shifting to the Auckland City Art Gallery in 1974 where he became exhibitions officer. In that role he arranged the Project Programmes series of the later 1970s — a series that included a number of important Post-Object performances by Allen, Barber and Philip Dadson. Ian Hunter, an Irish artist and arts administrator who was based in New Zealand from 1973 until 1983, also played an important role in the facilitation of Post-Object art. He helped establish artist-run spaces and to organise discussions and conferences about issues in contemporary art.

Of all the students who worked with Allen, Bruce Barber (b. 1950) was undoubtedly the most serious and committed in his espousal of Post-Object art. Not only did he collaborate with Allen on occasion, but also he initiated several ambitious performance pieces that went beyond anything previously done in New Zealand. Barber was the director of his *Mt Eden Crater Performance*, 1973 (Figure 69), in which Kieran Lyons (b. 1946), a visiting lecturer to Elam, played the part of the Blind Master. In this ambitious piece, the Blind Master negotiated the slopes of Mt Eden blindfolded so as to render his actions difficult, clumsy and at times dangerous. The work extended in time throughout a day

FIGURE 69 **Bruce Barber, *Mt Eden Crater Performance*, 1973**

FIGURE 70 **Juliet Batten, *100 Women Performance*, Te Henga, 1985**

— a fact that contributed to its exhausting physical dimension. Barber wanted to interact with life in the public domain, feeling the need to remove himself and the work from the security of the art gallery. His movements and interactions with people who entered the space were recorded on video and sound tape. There was no editing of the footage, so that viewing it became a demanding task for the audience. The performance involved assistants, accompanying sound, drummers and a planned movement into and out of the crater. Barber described an aspect of the work as follows: 'In the act of overloading or the deprivation of sensory (physical) and intellectual experience, I am thereby enlarging my own and others capacity for sensory and intellectual experience.' *Mt Eden Crater Performance* captured the associations with nature and cyclical time, which can be found in some performance work of that period.

Such work involves nostalgia for ritualistic actions as performed by tribal peoples who were perceived as closer to the rhythm of nature than city dwellers of the present day. Somewhat later this aspect of performance was developed by feminist artists like Juliet Batten (b. 1942) who saw links between the cycles of nature and those of women (Figure 70). Not surprisingly, Barber included texts that were chanted out at intervals during the day. Other works by Barber included a performance at Whatipu Beach and a work called *Bucket Action* staged in the Auckland City Art Gallery. Barber benefited from his contact with visiting sculptors at Elam, notably Kieran Lyons and Adrian Hall.

Barber was born in Auckland where he studied at the Elam from 1969 to 1974. He taught for a year at the school in 1975 before enrolling at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in 1976. Since 1981 he has been on the faculty staff at Nova Scotia. Barber has developed an international profile as a conceptual artist with a real concern for the ills of society. One of his more recent works entitled *Squat*, 1998, provided a basic living environment for a former vagrant who became a poet in residence for a month and could document his experiences. As in all Barber's work, the process was important and the final outcome not fully predictable. Equally there was nothing to sell. The work demonstrated Barber's desire to 'take art out of the commodity market', as he has expressed it. His departure from New Zealand closely preceded that of Allen, and much of his Auckland work was done while he was still a student. Other students of Allen's included Kim Gray and Maree Horner, whose student work benefited from the Elam context but did not survive beyond it.

Mention should be made here, too, of Philip Dadson (b. 1946) whose own work developed into sound rather than sculpture. Initially Dadson's involvement with Scratch Orchestra overlapped with the Post-Object movement. Thanks to Allen, he found a supportive environment in the sculpture section for his performances that put the emphasis on team effort, improvisation and a strong visual dimension. For example, he organised performances to mark the winter solstice at the crater of Mt Eden, Auckland (Figure 71). Dadson was one of the first to see the potential of new media like video and photocopying to link artists in New Zealand with the wider world. He was also responsive to the idea of networking with sympathetic practitioners overseas. His *Whole World* art piece of 1973 was of this kind. He favoured the evolution of mail art and the development

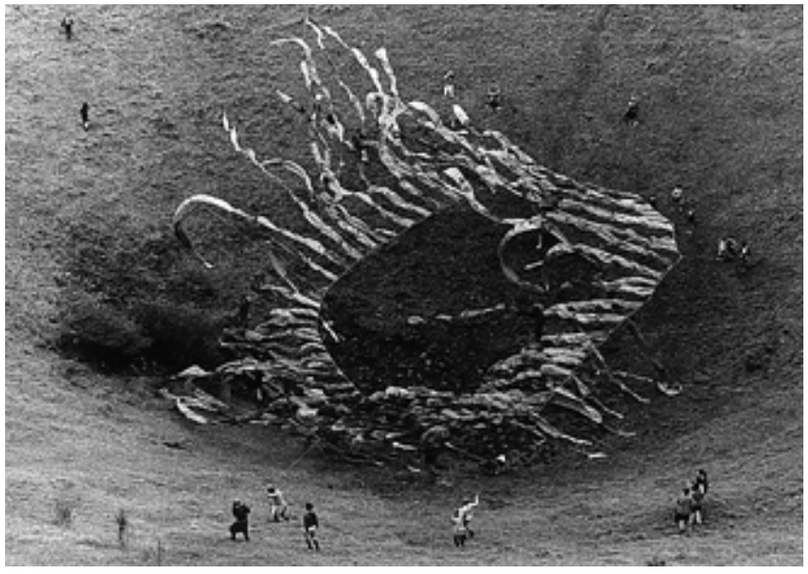


FIGURE 71 **Gundred Witt & Others, *Winter Solstice Performance*, Auckland, c.1984**

of works that cut across traditional studio boundaries. In his case it would be quite misleading to see his work as drawing from the example of Allen. He developed his work independently and Allen's departure had no real effect on it.

After 1976 the initial Post-Object movement at Auckland had mostly run its course. However, performance and installation art continued in a climate that was less revolutionary and more mature. The early works of Peter Roche (b. 1957) emerge from this context. Roche introduced a degree of sado-masochism that carried elements found in Barber's performances to a new extreme (Figure 72). Roche studied at Elam after Jim Allen had left and drew his ideas from American work. One of his most controversial performances had him suspended almost naked by wrists and ankles from a tree in Albert Park. His intention was to subject himself, and by association the audience, to a severe testing of his thresholds of pain, tolerance and endurance. This kind of work had an underlying narcissistic and masochistic dimension that fell outside the accepted social norms of New Zealand society. It seemed that Roche felt a need to shock and horrify so as to obtain a reaction that might promote such works to art status. Interestingly, Elam issued a statement dissociating itself from the event. Roche's series of performances staged with Linda Buis relied on violence, slapping, hitting, and coarse language to break down any barriers to spectator reaction.

A similar degree of controversy characterises the early work of Andrew Drummond (b. 1951). This reached a climax in a performance piece called *Crucifixion*, 1978, where he was tied naked to a St Andrew's cross in the Canterbury Society of Arts Gallery, Christchurch. Clad only in a gas mask and wearing a heart monitor, he was covered in latex that was allowed to harden, making a cast. At the climax of the performance he tore off the cast and exited leaving the latex skin spread over the cross. He also left ten Polaroid photographs recording the performance. While for Drummond the piece was about ritual rebirth and the 'spirituality of life' (as he put it), controversy centred on the nakedness of his body and particularly his exposed genitalia. His violation of religious taboos later outraged Christian viewers who took him to court on the count of immoral conduct. Police seized the offending photographs. Although the charges were dismissed five months afterwards, the case, sensational in its coverage, severely dented Drummond's will to continue his exposure of body and soul in public. His need to strip naked, removing any cover to his vulnerability, marks the limits of such performances.

Drummond's early work represents a late manifestation of performance art, which by the 1980s fell somewhat from favour. Its interest appeared limited after the novelty wore off and its audience became more demanding. In all cases, overseas practitioners had preceded in action and conception what happened here. It is mainly the application of performances to local sites and landscape that can be seen to be original and relevant to New Zealand.

Drummond's work scandalised Christchurch, a centre that lagged substantially behind Auckland in the evolution of Post-Object sculpture. At the Canterbury School of Art, Tom Taylor had espoused aspects of modernist practice by the 1970s and allowed new developments to develop gradually. But he played

FIGURE 72 **Peter Roche, *Transformation*, 1979. Performance, Auckland**

less of a catalytic and confrontational role than Jim Allen had in Auckland. Unlike Allen, Taylor certainly did not embrace Post-Object art in his own practice, even continuing to make bronze portrait busts late in his career. He did, however, allow his students to follow their own directions in a supportive climate.

Taylor's lack of commitment to Post-Object art can be contrasted with the practice of Pauline Rhodes (b. 1937) who studied at the Canterbury School of Art from 1972 to 1974. Rhodes has many affinities with the Post-Object movement in that her environmental art is ephemeral and survives after the event only in photographic documentation. Her *Extensum* series involving the introduction of environmentally friendly materials, such as coloured fabric and cord, into the landscape of the Southern Alps or the beaches of Banks Peninsula has been ongoing since the 1970s. She uses few elements in her non-monumental works, sometimes introducing only a single pole or piece of fabric, which she leans or lays in position. Her works act to frame or mark the land as indicators of human presence and passage. But they do not deface or scar the earth, functioning instead as objects of contemplation. An important aspect of her work is that sense of place, so typical of art in Canterbury where regionalism has always been a force.

Her indoor *Intensum* installations have involved natural processes such as oxidation and rusting of metals as part of the work. She has noted in a letter to the writer: 'Intensum and Extensum projects are worked on concurrently, interconnecting with and cross-fertilising each other. They respond to specific spatial situations either intensive or extensive — as indoor installations or as projects outdoors.' She has made her installations of recycled materials like cardboard or plastic sheet to convey a conservationist message and one of harmony between man and the environment. The conceptual basis of her art and its avoidance of commodification relate Rhodes's work intimately to the Post-Object movement, even though her practice has outlived that historical context.

The reduction of performance art did not affect conceptual work or installations, which continued unabated into the 1980s and 1990s. In fact, Billy Apple (b. 1935), arguably the most important of the conceptual artists, carried out a series of works in public gallery spaces between 1979 and 1980. Apple's series *The Given as an Art-Political Statement* involved collaboration with the critic Wystan Curnow who articulated the ideas and implications of the works in written form. Apple had no direct connection with Allen or Elam initially, though for a month in the late 1970s he was a visitor to the school. His work was an independent development made in the New York context.

Born in New Zealand, Apple studied at the Royal College of Art, London, from 1959 to 1962 where he came to some prominence as a member of the English Pop Art movement. It was there that as an art work he changed his name from Barrie Bates to Billy Apple, drawing attention by establishing a memorable brand identity. Apple developed an interest in the advertising world and began to explore its relations with the art scene. Much of his New Zealand work relates back to his first-hand contacts with the art world in London and subsequently New York where he lived for twenty-six years, showing at the Leo Castelli Gallery along with major American artists. Apple knew Andy Warhol but lacked his business acumen and cynicism.

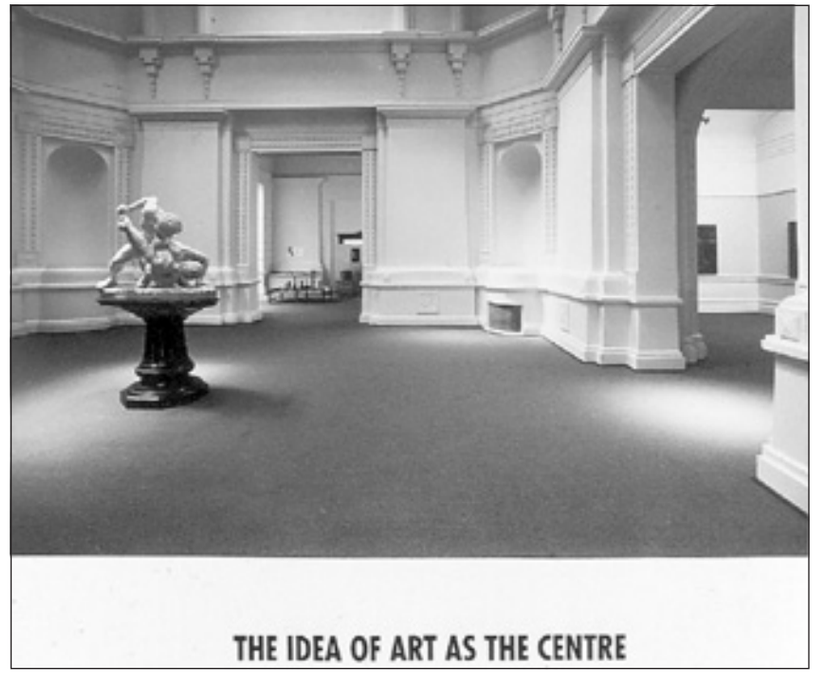


FIGURE 73 Billy Apple, *Towards the Centre, The Idea of Art as the Centre*, 1979, photograph and typewritten sheet, 29.5 x 21 cm. Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui.

By refraining from fabricating any of his works, Apple implies that the art object is secondary in importance to the concept. That said, it must be observed that he is very particular about the presentation of his work. The *Art-Political* series drew attention to the art institutions of New Zealand in a systematic, provocative way. Perhaps the most effective demonstration of Apple's power as an artist was his alteration to the Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui, entitled *Towards the Centre, The Idea of Art as the Centre*, 1979 (Figure 73). This work involved the removal of a prominent cultural fixture, a marble replica of a famous Greco-Roman carving called *The Wrestlers. The Wrestlers* was situated under the dome of the neoclassical structure, in the most prominent place. As the best-known item in the collection, *The Wrestlers* embodied the idea that art was foreign and

inaccessible, doubly so in that it was not an original marble but a copy. Apple's concept of the impact of removal was nicely judged. He left empty the space where the pedestal had been as a sign of absence.

Predictably there was protest. Where had the art gone? Apple pointed out that his work did not prevent the reinstatement of *The Wrestlers.* It merely showed the cult status of the work in this revered location and questioned the values encapsulated there. Was it appropriate, or did it reinforce a belief that local art was second-best? *The Wrestlers* did not return and that space has since been the site of a series of New Zealand installations that has countered the previous cultural priorities by bringing the local and original to its rightful place under the dome.

In this same series Apple carried out works at the Auckland City Art Gallery, as well as the Barry Lett Galleries, a dealer gallery very receptive to the avant-garde. The proprietors Barry Lett and the late Rodney Kirk Smith (1937–96) put art values before profits. That they did so greatly advantaged conceptual and Post-Object artists. Apple is an artist who crosses the boundaries of the visual arts. His gallery works make use of space, of mass and proportion, but not in conventional object-sculpture terms. The majority of his gallery works involved modifications to the interiors such as widening stairs, exposing columns or drawing attention to imperfections on wall surfaces, like ventilation vents, which he picked out in red. At the time in the late 1970s and early 1980s these works were radical for New Zealand and related to pieces he carried out in New York shortly afterwards. Apple has been equally adept at critiquing the arts of painting, photography and printmaking. In some ways he stands outside any local movement: his first-hand knowledge of overseas conceptual art gives his works a professional edge.

Light sculpture is an art form that has attracted those who wish to create works with a dimension that transcends the object. Neon tubes were widely used in 1960s Europe and the United States, usually in the context of installation. The New York artist Dan Flavin was especially influential with his use of raw neon tubing placed on the floor or in the corners of darkened gallery spaces. Apple himself was active as a neon artist while working in New York in the late 1960s. He tried to achieve a freer kind of presentation than Flavin but came up against the technical limitations of the medium and safety constraints. As we have seen, light was a prominent part of Leon Narbey's *Real Time* installation of 1970, its first major use in New Zealand art.

Subsequently the expatriate Bill Culbert (b. 1935) has become well known locally and in Europe for his inventive light works where neon tubes as well as light bulbs and illuminated plastic containers are massed together to make installations where light and colour substitutes for the object as a space and shape modulator (Plate 49). He is undoubtedly the most accomplished of the artists using light but has been based in Britain and France since 1960. He studied at the Royal College of Art, London, coming into contact with many of the most influential artists in modern sculpture. Culbert has shown his works increasingly in New Zealand in recent years and has collaborated on a number of installation works with the painter Ralph Hotere (b. 1931). A representative example of their collaboration is *Pathway to the Sea–Aramoana*, 1991. This is made of fluorescent tubes and paua shells that they designed to be laid on the gallery floor in parallel strips as a directional and space marker. Subsequently Culbert and Hotere have made striking works in which the light of Culbert's fluorescent tubing is contrasted with Hotere's characteristic black corrugated iron. Their work is distinctive and carries potent symbolism.

Of artists based in New Zealand, Paul Hartigan (b. 1953) has been the most creative and skilful in using neon. While Hartigan is a fine painter he has achieved a more distinctive profile with his neon wall sculptures. Hartigan studied at Elam between 1971 and 1973 where he learnt about painting and acquired an interest in neon signs. He recalls being mesmerised by the bright flashing neon signs of Newmarket when he first arrived in Auckland. Not surprisingly his artistic origins can be traced to Pop Art through his response to comics and other forms of popular culture. Neon signs and advertisements attracted him as part of that world of everyday life. From these sources came his interest in materials like enamel paints and colours of bright, crass intensity. In the early 1980s he was swept into the orbit of the New Image artists Dick Frizzell and Gavin Chilcott.

Hartigan outgrew those origins to become a deeper, more reflective artist. His use of neon goes back to the 1970s when he collected examples of shop signs and began to learn how to make his own. For a time he made neon signs as a job. From this experience he gained a technical command of his materials which sets his works apart from the installations of recycled neon tubes trailing flex, often found masquerading as light sculpture. Hartigan crafts his neon into broad lines of colour set against a pale or dark backdrop. With his early neons like *The Plight of Persephone*, 1982, he created a floating, pulsating image of calligraphic motifs. His motifs are sometimes identifiable as a star or spiral but as often as not float free from specific meaning. Hartigan likes openness to different layers of interpretation. His influences include Len Lye, whose pictographic marks and kinetic sculptures impressed him. Yet he always aims for an individual result (Plate 50). He noted in 1983: 'What I've tried to do with neon is come up with a personal approach, and most important for myself, to try and transcend established neon entities.'

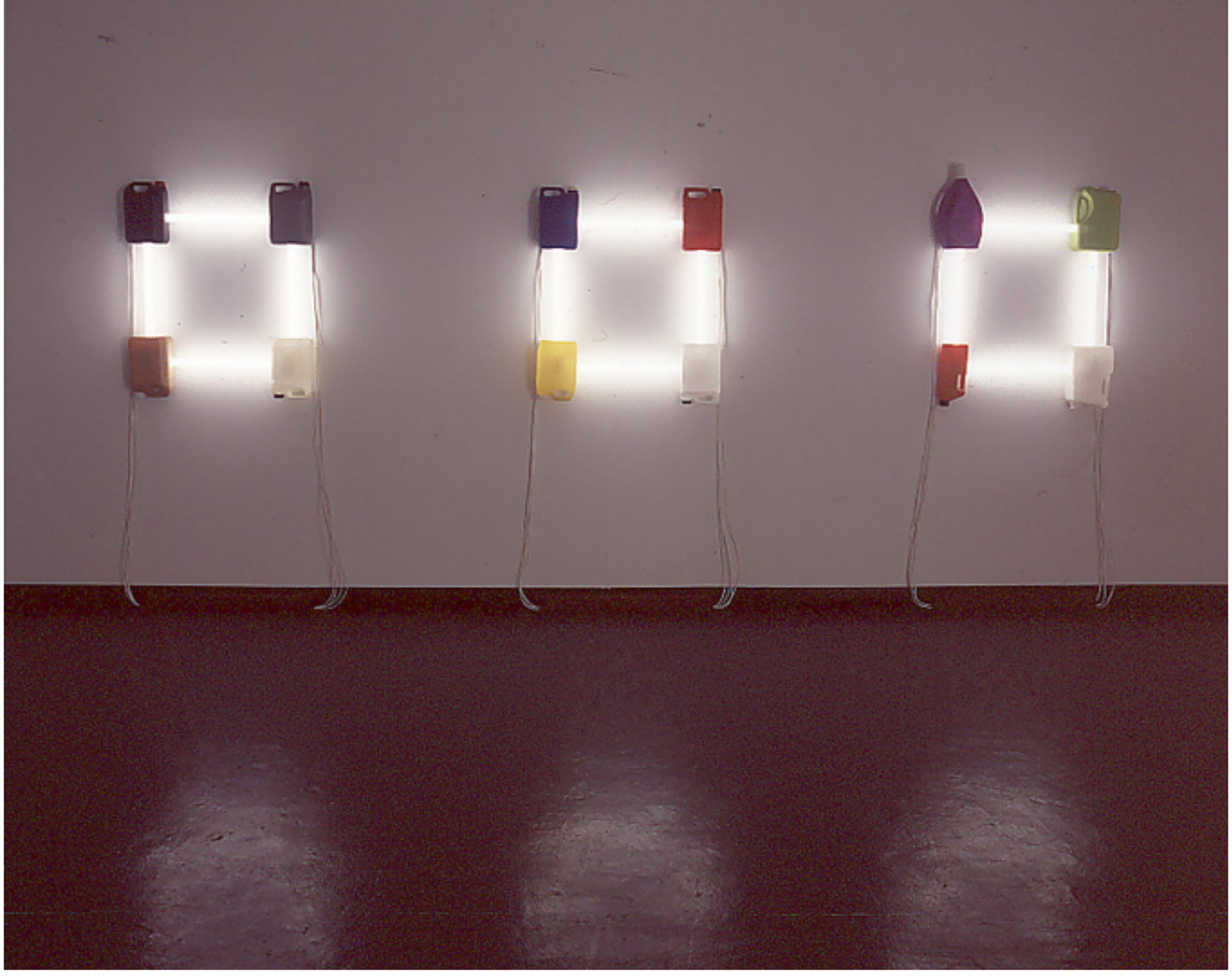


PLATE 49 **Bill Culbert, *Colour Theory*, 1991. Neon, installation Wellington City Gallery**

Light art struggles for artistic relevance, like much Post-Object sculpture, when it fails to deliver the enduring values of traditional media. Hartigan's neon works escape this problem. Rather, he tries to combine its ephemeral entertaining aspect with conceptual depth. For example in his show *Art-Speak*, 1997, he uses neon to make word sculptures from terms like 'postmodernism'. In the process Hartigan gently satirised the verbiage that piles up around art, often confusing rather than clarifying its meaning. His bright coloured neon letters are deliberately at odds with the pretentious terms they spell out. With *Art-Hysterical* Hartigan alludes to the term 'art historical', implying that some art talk gets out of control. One critic found these works lacking in humour, maybe because they are satirical rather than funny. Hartigan reveals here his thoughts on the relation between word and image — a discourse going back to Colin McCahon, a mentor from his past. A more recent neon *Pathfinder*, 1997, carries his neon calligraphy to mural size on the façade of the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery in New Plymouth.

Hartigan's use of words in his neons parallels the practice of younger sculptors

PLATE 50 **Paul Hartigan, *Flush Arena (with Timekeeper)*, 1987–95, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth. Neon, 2800 x 5800 mm**

interested in text as a vehicle to express their ideas and concerns. For example, Mary-Louise Browne (b. 1957), an artist with a subtle feminist agenda, makes text an integral part of her works. Initially, she was active as a performance and installation artist but turned to using durable materials such as granite in the mid-1980s. As with Billy Apple, it is the concept that occupies her, not the object or its manufacture that she sometimes leaves to others.

Her best-known works like *Rape to Ruin*, 1990 (Plate 51), consist of stone plaques on which words have been sandblasted. In this case Browne had eight identical granite plaques sandblasted with one word each. There is a sequence from the word 'rape' on the first plaque to 'ruin' on the last. What engages our attention is Browne's adaptation of a parlour game in which words of identical length beginning with the same letter are modified by changing another letter at each step to create a new word. Thus by substituting the 'u' of ruin for the letter 'a' the word rain is created. She suggests a narrative of sorts built around the notion that rape leads to ruin. We can interpret each intervening word such as rope, rail or rain as a stage in this progression. By fixing her message in stone the artist gives it an enduring quality, worthy of serious attention. In this sculpture the memorial connotations of her plaques, like those used in lawn cemeteries, stand as a commemoration of rape victims. The layers of meaning the work contains are typical of the depth of thought that lies beneath the surface simplicity of Browne's creations.

Her most ambitious work of this kind is *Body to Soul*, 1996 (Plate 52), a permanent installation commissioned by the Wellington Sculpture Trust as one of a series of public sculptures for the city's Botanic Gardens. Here the engraved plaques become treads in a staircase structure which can be climbed while being read, giving an added dimension to the experience. With this work she realised an ambition to create sculpture in a garden setting and incorporate landscape into the piece. Browne begins at the bottom with the word 'body' and transmutes it through eleven steps to its opposite 'soul' appropriately at the top of the stair. As well as granite, Browne has used mirrors as vehicles for sandblasted words. In the 1991 *Maxims* series she sandblasted New Zealand girls' school mottoes onto the glass of second-hand mirrors so that the imperatives of phrases such as 'By Love, Serve' took on new meaning. Browne encouraged viewers to see themselves inside the confines of the mottoes by being reflected in the same glass surface as the words. Because the mirror image is illusory not real, the artist can question the truth and substance of the mottoes and the society that endorsed them. Browne achieves the difficult task of making visible concepts that seem invisible and giving them a concrete presence.

Browne studied at Elam from 1976 to 1982, graduating with a master's degree. She benefited from the lively climate for performance and conceptual

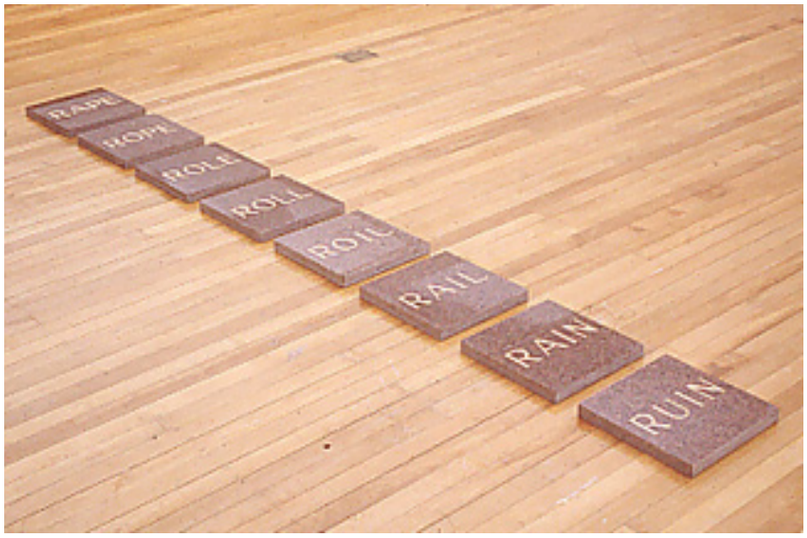


PLATE 51 **Mary-Louise Browne, *Rape to Ruin*, 1990, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth. Granite and gold leaf 2820 x 300 mm**

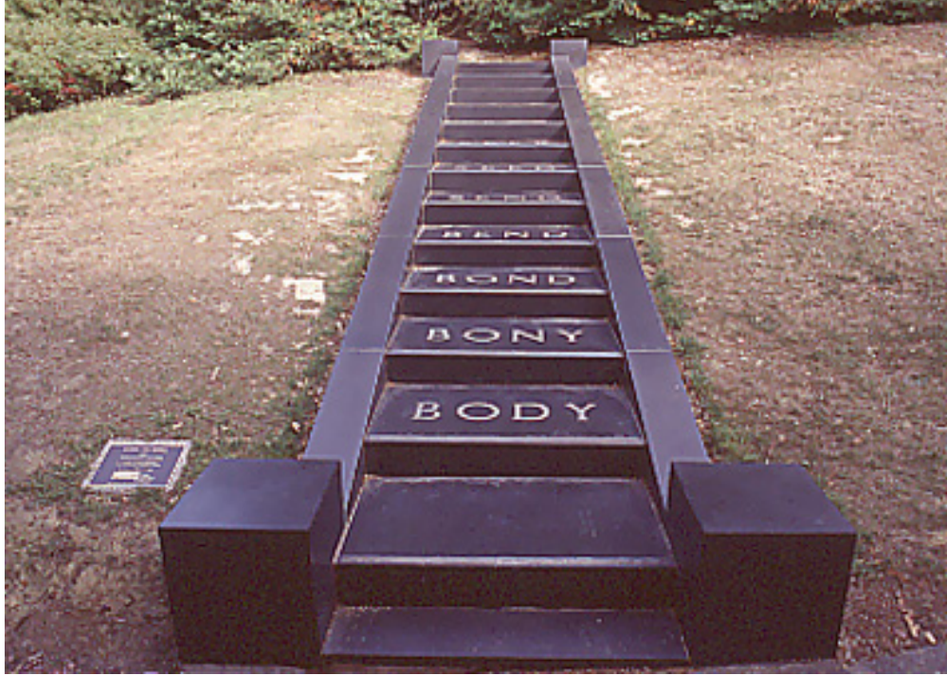


PLATE 52 **Mary-Louise Browne, *Body to Soul*, 1994, Wellington Botanic Gardens. Granite, 7020 x 1000 mm**

art fostered by Philip Dadson during that period. She has subsequently had extensive professional experience in art administration, being founding director of Artspace, Auckland, and programme manager for the City Gallery, Wellington — positions which allowed her to support experimental sculpture in both centres.

Paul Cullen (b. 1949) is also an artist who arguably gives more importance to the conceptual basis of his work than to the object. Influenced by Duchamp and Beuys, he has created installations from found materials such as bricks, string and offcuts that suggest but do not supply structural solutions to problems. In one exhibition he used pre-cut furniture, plastic buckets and jelly moulds to subvert the expected order of things, by placing them in unlikely and impractical relationships. Cullen's work has been called 'artless' because of its unassuming character and ephemeral nature. Once dismantled, the components of his works can return to serving as everyday objects. He studied at the Canterbury School of Fine Arts, being awarded his diploma with honours in 1975. He currently teaches at the Manukau School of Art.

Among emerging artists who have been attracted to process and the ephemeral is Denise Kum (b. 1968). After graduating from Elam in 1992, Kum has made a number of works and installations using materials such as beeswax, seaweed, honey and oil. These are consumables that cannot be kept and by their nature have a short life. She belongs to the direction established in Post-Object art by Beuys who made use of materials such as fat, which have strong symbolic dimensions but are not traditionally thought of in sculptural terms because of their impermanence. Kum has also used food items from Chinese supermarkets to introduce an Asian cultural reference that reflects the multi-cultural dimensions now prevalent in contemporary New Zealand art. By allowing her materials to decay and break down, she questions accepted values about race and custom and their ability to endure. Similar concerns can be found in the early pieces of Yuk King Tan (b. 1971) where matters of cultural difference and identity surface in her installations and ephemeral drawings, some made with the scorch marks and residue of exploded firecrackers. Tan also used found objects from Chinese shops in works that allude to her experience as a New Zealand artist with an Asian background. Like Kum she studied at Elam, graduating in 1993.

While the first rush of Post-Object art soon lost momentum, the ripples of conceptual art, performance, installation and multimedia continue to radiate outwards in ever widening but more diffuse and gentler circles. It is obvious that no art form, however revolutionary, can be immune from repetitious and pointless activity. Post-Object art more than most depends on a high quality of ideas and content, without which it can be boring and self-indulgent. New media or technology do not in themselves guarantee a worthwhile result, especially when the speed of technological change renders this year's state-of-the art equipment tomorrow's dinosaurs and its capabilities quaint and outmoded. Nor do assemblages of found objects acquire meaning by that process alone. It is now time for a more rigorous critical examination of Post-Object and Conceptual Art to assess its ongoing relevance and importance in contemporary practice.

X

Contemporary Maori Sculptors

A distinctive feature of contemporary New Zealand sculpture is the work of Maori artists who draw on their own cultural heritage. While being at once part of the total sculptural scene and current practice, they share concerns unique to their situation as indigenous people in a country where their language, customs and art were marginalised for a long time. Traditional Maori carving was marae-based and took its place on communal buildings such as the wharenui (meeting house) or the pataka (food-store). After European settlement there was a gradual loss of the life-style and beliefs that sustained traditional forms of carving. Inevitably the numbers of carvers declined until the 1920s when a university-educated generation encouraged a revival. Central to this movement was Sir Apirana Ngata (1874–1950), who helped establish the first Maori carving school at Rotorua in 1927. The policy of the school was to study the methods and designs of master carvers from the past. Initially there was no focus on innovation or ways of making the work relate to contemporary life. However, the school did provide skills for an ambitious programme of building new carved houses on marae throughout the country, along with encouragement of arts like tukutuku for their decoration.

It is not until the post-World War Two era that the origins of contemporary Maori art develop. The art training programmes at the teachers' training colleges played a formative role here by introducing gifted young Maori artists to their own culture as well as to the European. An important contributor was Gordon Tovey (1901–1974) supervisor of arts and crafts to the Department of Education. He encouraged Maori art advisers to go out into the schools introducing their pupils (both Maori and Pakeha) to Maori culture. The principle was one of sharing and exchange at a time when cultural transactions tended to be one-sided.

Important aspects were the validation of the programme by the major tribes and the training given to the advisers on the marae by the master carver Pine Taiapa, who worked closely with Sir Apirana Ngata. Pine and his younger brother Hone worked on numerous carved houses in the North Island, demonstrating fine technique and a respect for tradition. Pine also supervised the building of the carved house at Waitangi, erected to commemorate the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. Since carving was so central to Maori art, it helped develop sculptural awareness. Significant, too, was the work of Jim Allen while he was working as an art adviser to schools in the north in the 1950s. The knowledge he brought of the European sculptural tradition and materials was to help lay a foundation for later practice. The emphasis was on the creation of new work of high quality, not on replication of traditional forms for the tourist trade.

One of the most significant forces in contemporary Maori sculpture is Arnold Manaaki Wilson (b. 1928) (Tuhoe, Te Arawa). Born in Ruatoki, he began studies at Elam in 1947 and in 1953 completed a diploma in fine arts with honours. He was one of the first Maori students to do so. At that time Elam was a monocultural institution whose teachers consistently ignored and indeed denied the value of traditional Maori carving. On one occasion the director, Archie Fisher, told Wilson that if he wanted to make Maori art he should live in a hut and wear a grass skirt. His sculpture instructor was John Kavanagh who kept rigidly to academic methods of making modelled figures and busts for casting in bronze. Another lecturer, John Weeks, introduced Wilson to some aspects of modernism. Himself a painter, Weeks made the connections between artists like Picasso and tribal art relevant to Wilson's situation as a student. While at Auckland Teachers' Training College Wilson met Peter Smith, who encouraged him to look at his own Maori culture as well as the European. This was reinforced by Gordon Tovey's policies.

But Wilson's discovery of his cultural identity had to wait until in 1955 he began teaching in Northland at Okaihau and Kawakawa. Seeing his Maori students bored with lessons about English history, he realised they needed something more relevant. This encouraged him to relate his teaching to their culture and history. He took practical steps like getting permission to cut down some pine trees so that his students could have materials for carving. In 1958 he became the art teacher at Bay of Islands College, where he encouraged his students to visit their marae and study the art of the meeting house. From the example of Maori carvers like John and Pine Taiapa, he learnt how to work with timber. He made carvings in native totara such as *He Tangata. He Tangata*, 1956 (Plate 53), using notching like that found in traditional carvings to create a figure that draws on both contemporary European conventions and Maori methods.

He conceived his art to be contemporary not historic, and certainly unlike the tourist products of the Rotorua carving school which he called a sausage factory. He pointed the way for a new kind of sculpture based on his bicultural background. In 1963 he shifted to Auckland where he taught at Mount Albert Grammar School. There he was an influential teacher involved in experimental work, drawing on the diverse cultural backgrounds of his students. To him it was important to achieve rapport with the community so that the art related to life. Wilson exhibited with contemporary Maori artists at the first Maori Festival of the Arts at Turangawaewae, Ngaruawahia, in 1963. He went on to become a major art educator in charge of cross-cultural programmes at the Department of Education for some eighteen years. In that capacity he was a catalyst for change in art education.

His early sculpture began with blocky wood and stone figurative works. Some of these from the mid-1950s are 'primitivist' in their proportions and non-European conventions. They can be compared with the woodcarvings of Alison Duff and Molly Macalister from the 1940s. But Wilson gradually developed his art into works that reflect his Maori roots and concern themselves with cultural and environmental matters. His *Pou Whenua* series, begun in the 1980s and continued in the 1990s (Plate 54), consists of vertical woodcarvings, some with figurative elements of heads, arms and legs kept within the pole shape. By using the pou form, he empowers his art with its traditional meanings as a marker defining a site or boundary. It seems symbolically to stake out his territory as a sculptor able and willing to draw strength from his own heritage. In addition to the pole form, he has also introduced distinctive motifs like the double spiral

PLATE 53 **Arnold Wilson, *He Tangata, He Tangata*, 1956, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki. Wood, 1170 x 360 x 300 mm**

widespread in Maori carving and painting. He uses the vivid colour and conventions of some figures in the series to quote from other tribal art, especially that of New Guinea. His recent works deal with the land and conservation, issues also of concern to Pakeha sculptors such as Chris Booth. This applied most strikingly to his installation *Ode to Tane Mahuta* at the New Gallery, Auckland, in 1997. Here Wilson used totem-like carvings to evoke the raped forests of the country and condemn the commercial forces that had destroyed them.

Apart from his own work, Wilson has been important for the guidance he has given to young Maori teachers and artists. Through his example, they have learned to see the way an accommodation can be achieved between the traditional materials of Maori art, such as wood and paint, and modern western sculpture with its diverse range of materials. It is significant that Wilson sees installation as a method of presentation which lends itself to the total involvement of the spectator that he desires.

A contemporary of Arnold Wilson is Fred Graham (b. 1928) (Ngati Koroki, Raukawa) who, like him, was involved for many years in art education. Despite his teaching commitments, he was able to develop as a sculptor with a bicultural dimension to his work. Graham originally studied at Ardmore Teachers' College, then at Dunedin Teachers' Training College where he spent an extra year specialising in art. He held various teaching jobs before becoming a full-time sculptor in 1984. Even though his uncle Waka was a traditional carver, in his early years Graham had little knowledge of Maori culture and was encouraged to succeed in Pakeha terms. Learning about his own heritage was a gradual process in which his art was to play a prominent role.

An important turning point came when he was working at Palmerston North Teachers' College. While there between 1957 and 1962, he met the head of the Art Department, Thomas Johnston (b. 1923). Johnston, who was a sculptor, allowed Graham to help with technical procedures like making plaster casts. Through his influence Graham decided to become a sculptor, though initially he had little interest in traditional carving or marae art. He commented in 1986: 'I don't really take traditional Maori carving into consideration when I am working.' Instead he developed a modernist approach, drawing ideas from a range of sources including Barbara Hepworth. However, he looked closely at his own heritage for motifs and symbols, finding elements that contribute a recognisable identity to his carvings. He wanted to discover a means of communicating with the Maori community who he felt would be more

PLATE 54 **Arnold Wilson, *Pou Whenua III (Three Poles)*, 1998, Private collection, Wellington. Wood, each 3000 x 250 mm**

PLATE 55 **Fred Graham, *Kereana*, 1984, Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hamilton. Steatite, 640 x 520 x 745 mm**

responsive if the work included stories and motifs familiar to them. A feature of his art is its accessibility to many Maori who do not go to galleries or relate to contemporary sculpture.

Fred Graham has often carved bird forms because of their importance in the natural world and in the mythology of the Maori. An example is *Kereana*, 1984 (Plate 55), in which the nurturing function of the bird protecting the chicks with its wings is conveyed in a simplified but accessible manner. The polished grain allows the natural material to bring out the head of the bird, while the unpolished surfaces evoke the texture of its plumage. In this instance, Graham used a piece of stone supplied for a stone carving symposium, and its

form suggested his conception. This had the practical advantage of allowing the carving to be completed quickly to meet the symposium deadline. Through his carvings Graham shows the traditional respect of Maori for the natural world and their concern for the environment.

Much of Graham's carving is figurative, with recognisable if stylised subjects. He has introduced stories from Maori mythology like that of Rangi and Papa as well as references to artefacts like the waka giving an accessible, bicultural aspect to the work. Over the years he has carried out large commissions for corporations such as the Ford Motor Company and for galleries and public buildings such as Waikato Hospital. He has shown his works mainly in group exhibitions of Maori artists, like those organised by Te Waka Toi, and has been largely outside the commercial dealer network. This has reinforced his profile as a Maori artist even though his work draws heavily on European sources as well. He has been a bridge between a time of little or no bicultural emphasis in sculpture to the present when it is a major force.

Slightly younger than Fred Graham is Para Matchitt (b. 1933). Born at Tokomaru Bay on the East Coast, he grew up in rural environments, living at Te Kaha but travelling extensively on family visits all over the coast between Opotiki and Gisborne. He learnt a good deal about making things and caring for tools from his father and in the workshop on his grandfather's farm in Edgecumbe. He went to teachers' college in Auckland from 1955 to 1956 and was selected to train as an art specialist at Dunedin. He did not attend classes at art school, apart from some cursory visits to the King Edward Technical School in Dunedin and a visit to Elam, where he saw the plaster casts of antique and Renaissance sculpture. Instead he decided to work out his own way of making art. In 1957 he was appointed arts and crafts adviser for the South Auckland Education Board and was to be based in Hamilton for some seventeen years. He did not have any formal training in traditional Maori art but knew Pine Taiapa. On the initiative of Gordon Tovey he went to Ruatoria with other art advisers to work with Pine for a two-week-long intensive Maori Arts and Crafts course.

Matchitt made paintings and sculptures from the late 1950s but he destroyed many of his early works so that few of them survive. He incorporated Maori stories and history in some of his works, but he was not interested in reviving traditional art forms although he was asked to help with restoration of some decorated houses, in one case working on his home meeting house at Te Kaha. However, his real interest was in making new works of his own from whatever materials were at hand. At first he worked mainly with wood because he knew how to cut and join it using modern tools. As he has observed, his sculpture taken out of the local context would not be readily identifiable as Maori.

PLATE 56 **Para Matchitt, *Bridge Sculpture*, 1993, Civic Square, Wellington. Timber and mixed media (detail)**

By a deliberate process of experimentation he gradually developed his own kind of sculpture. He made a number of large-scale works for marae settings, for example at Turangawaewae Marae, Ngaruawahia, in 1975, where he departed from traditional styles, materials and colours. Matchitt's work is always the outcome of a careful process of refinement and thought from which the final product emerges. Often he has used recycled materials, as is the case with his sculpture for Aotea Square, Auckland, but his sculpture for Civic Square, Wellington, 1993 (Plate 56), was made from newly milled timber. His best work is large scale and suited to outdoor situations. In some recent sculptures, such as the *Heritage Fountain*, Napier, 1996 (Plates 57 and 58), he has used sheet metal to create simple, symbolic forms, some natural like his birds and fish, others geometric. In this case, also, the word Napier appears cut out in letters that evoke the Art Deco style for which the city is famed.

Frequently Matchitt has conceived his designs on paper, drawing them in profile so that they can be cut out to his directions. The symbols he uses — like the star and bleeding heart, derived from a pendant flag made in Hawke's Bay and commandeered by Te Kooti — often register strongly in silhouette. Matchitt

PLATE 57 **Para Matchitt, *Heritage Fountain*, 1996, galvanised steel. Marine Parade, Napier. Height 8000 mm**

PLATE 58 **Para Matchitt, *Heritage Fountain*, detail**

was originally drawn to Te Kooti, the guerrilla fighter who later became the founder of the Ringatu church, because he was attracted by what he saw as Te Kooti's innovation, daring and freedom from convention. Recently he sees the symbols as having been personalised to his own art, and not encoded with the past or with any 'ism'. He incorporates the technology, techniques and materials suited to his sculptures, many of which are monumental in size. In his sculpture for the Manukau City Law Courts, 1999, he sub-contracted the cutting of his steel shapes to an engineering firm to save his own labour and time. He shifted to Napier in 1975 to take up a job as art tutor at the Hawke's Bay Community College, but since 1986 he has been a full-time artist.

A friend of Matchitt is Selwyn Muru (b. 1937). Brought up in Te Hapua in Northland, Muru was self-taught as an artist. He studied originally at Ardmore Teachers' College where Phil Barclay encouraged him to concentrate on his art work. He had his own studio there for two years. Looking at books in the library, he learnt about artists like Brancusi and Moore, whose work he came to admire. He made both paintings and sculptures at that time and has continued to work in both disciplines. After teaching for a while, he came to Auckland in 1961 and concentrated on painting. He met artists from Elam like Robert Ellis, with whom he became friends, but did not attend art school. However, while unknown to the art community, he had his paintings accepted for exhibition by the Auckland Society of Arts when Paul Beadle was President and selection criteria were toughened.

Muru has a wide-ranging knowledge not only of Maori art but also of poetry and literature. This, together with his command of spoken Maori and his prestige on marae all over New Zealand, has well qualified him to be a mentor for his people and for Pakeha alike. Muru has sometimes been seen as an activist because of his outspoken views on land rights and on issues to do with Maori cultural property. However, he is open to a wide range of ideas in art and life, seeing scope for creative interaction between politics and the making of sculptures and paintings. In the early 1960s he lived in Wellington and became involved in Maori broadcasting, at first on radio and later on television. Shifting back to Auckland, he became a freelance artist and broadcaster. Muru is not interested in making traditional carvings that he sees as limited and belonging to the past. He has remarked that Maoridom has many carvers but few sculptors. Instead, he uses whatever means are at hand to make new work relevant to the contemporary world. He was a founder of the Maori Artists and Writers Group in 1973. From 1993 to 2000 he taught at Elam.

Muru was initially known more as a painter than a sculptor. His paintings such as the *Parihaka* series of the 1970s have a narrative quality somewhat in the pseudo-primitive style of the Australian painter Sidney Nolan's *Ned Kelly* series. But in the 1980s he began to make sculptures from found materials, recycled timber, iron and paint. Using his knowledge of major western artists such as Picasso and Moore, he began to combine elements of various traditions and styles into his own creations. In his sculpture and more recent painting, Muru has become more abstract and more powerful, often using assemblage as a technique. In his first year as teacher at Elam he made a vertical totem-like work from recycled timber and metal that he placed like a marker in the grounds near the Te Toi Hou complex. He wanted to show the arrival of Maori artists at Elam in a symbolic way by a contemporary sculpture that nevertheless recalled the pou, or vertical markers of traditional Maori culture.

His best-known sculpture is *Waharoa*, 1990 (Plate 59), in Aotea Square, Auckland. This is a symbolic gateway welcoming visitors to the city. While it is evocative of the entrance gates to the Maori pa, it also recalls the rafters of the painted Maori house in the angles of timber and the relief figures carved there. Muru intended his figures to represent the spiritual forces of the sea, the sky and the land. As with Matchitt, the work has a bold, free style of execution. It relies for its effect on its scale, its presence and its symbolic power. Muru avoids the association with tourist art, a widespread, debilitated art form that has ransacked traditional Maori artefacts to produce trinkets and souvenirs. His work, which has mana, pride and grandeur, symbolises what has been called the Maori art renaissance.

Linked to Matchitt and Muru in background, if not philosophy, is Clifford (Cliff) Whiting (b. 1936) (Whanau a Apanui) who was born in Te Kaha and went on to become an art adviser. He has acknowledged his debt to Pine Taiapa and also to Gordon Tovey for his vision of shared cultures. Whiting has his rural background in common with the other major figures who developed a modern style of carving. He retains an underlying understanding for traditional values while being very much aware of the need to bring in qualities that are new and capable of creating interest as contemporary art. He values the tribal area as a means of giving identity to the artists and the people they represented.

As an artist, Whiting has been willing to take liberties with traditional forms, by introducing new materials like particle board as well as bright colours such as blue and yellow unknown to the old-time carvers. He has, though, also worked extensively in stone and native timber, finding in natural materials a means of retaining Maori values and spirituality. For example, in his 1989 carvings for the Christchurch High Court, *Nga Kete Wananga*, he skilfully uses the polished wooden surfaces of his figures to enhance the sense of volume and contrast with the textures of the moko on their faces and thighs. While recalling ancestor

PLATE 59 **Selwyn Muru, *Waharoa*, 1990, Aotea Square, Auckland. Timber and paint, width 10,000 mm**

figures in a meeting house, these carvings differ in being free-standing rather than in relief. Whiting has done a lot of work on the marae, finding there a context for his art where it can speak for and with the people. It bypasses the confines and meanings of the Pakeha world of the art gallery or private home. There, in tribal settings, Whiting's use of Maori legends and genealogy takes on a deeper meaning as part of a total cultural package. He retains the connection between his carving and the Maori world of myth, legend and history, which provides subjects for his work. He is also involved with contemporary issues like visions for iwi, hapu and whanau.

Whiting's most prominent recent work has been in overseeing the meeting house sculptures at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, opened in 1998 (Plate 60). Carving motifs here include items like the English rose as well as the Maori koru and spiral to project an inclusive programme of shared cultures. He has taken the risk of using thin, tracery-like forms of carved custom board in place of the solid, heavy timber of the conventional meeting house. It has allowed animation beyond what is normally expected, as well as a lighter, brighter feel. If it can seem gaudy and a shade commercial in its appeal to the spectator, Whiting's carvings are a rebuff to the belief that Maori art in a traditional setting cannot be inventive and new. In 1986 he wrote: 'When I was starting out, I got this continuous criticism. In effect, some people did not want to see the creation of new art forms; they maintained that there was a tradition, and they did not want to change it.' Similar sentiments still exist today. Whiting has been interested for a long time in painting, so that it should cause no surprise that the Te Papa sculptures impress as much with their colour as their form. This work has the decorative, rhythmic qualities that are typical of his art. Critical reaction to it has varied from enthusiasm to condemnation as kitsch, in some ways mirroring reaction to Te Papa as a whole.

Matt Pine (b. 1941) (Te Ati Haunui-a-Paparangi, Te Atiawa, Ngati Tuwharetoa)

belongs to a younger generation than Matchitt and Whiting. Born in Wanganui, he studied at Elam from 1960 to 1962. He then travelled to London where he undertook further study at the Hornsey College of Art from 1962 to 1964. He was in London at the same time as expatriate New Zealanders such as John Panting, Carl Sydow and Bill Culbert, with whom he had some contact. Pine developed a style of modernist sculpture built on the Constructivist models of artists like Judd, Caro and Le Witt. Comparisons could be made with the early development of the painter Ralph Hotere. After graduating, Pine lived in London for ten years, producing elegant works in contemporary materials such as metal and perspex.

He returned to New Zealand in 1974 when there was a great expansion of sculptural practice and ideas. Pine's methods fitted into a context created by the works of artists such as Furlonger and Panting in the preceding few years. He gradually began to absorb elements of Maori culture into his art in series based on details of meeting-house design and construction. Pine brings together modern materials and ideas to comment on historical matters such as the trenches used in Maori fortification.

Technically, Pine has used the methods of assemblage of elements rather than carving or modelling. If his sculpture appears at variance with that of Whiting, it is because he has retained allegiance to European and American sculptural principles. He has not attempted to make art for the marae, preferring instead to retain the context and parameters of the art gallery. His bicultural dimension emerges from his thematic concern with the weaving together of the Maori and the Pakeha components. This is clearly a legitimate stance to take and one that is in line with the aesthetic to which he adheres (Figure 74). Recently, he has created works to do with ecological matters and endangered species of birds, fish and insects. He noted in 1994 his desire to put 'the focus on the plight of endangered species of fauna and flora'. Works from this series were shown in the

PLATE 60 **Cliff Whiting and others, *Te Hono ki Hawaiki*, 1998, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, New Zealand. (F.4383/3)**

FIGURE 74 **Matt Pine, *Weka (Lost Generations)*, 1994, pencil, paper, sheet metal, 215 x 350 x 85 cm. Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui**

Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui, in 1996, some mounted on the floor, others on the walls and ceiling. This series sees the introduction of figurative elements into his art in a linear or flattened form to suggest loss, death and extinction.

Robert Jahnke (b. 1951) (Te Whanau A Rakairoa, Ngati Porou) belongs to a generation that has placed bicultural issues and protest at the centre of its art. Originally trained in design and film, Jahnke in recent times has emerged as a sculptor. Like Pine, he prefers assemblage of elements to carving or modelling. However, he makes use of a more diverse range of resources than Pine, including found objects as well as Maori and English text. He finds, like Ralph Hotere and others who wish to communicate a protest message, that text can facilitate the process. Often he employs words with double meanings to reinforce his message, an example being his *Conversion* works of 1994. There he hyphenated the word after 'con' so that the idea of trickery came to mind in relation to the colonial land transactions that were a theme of the works. Jahnke used the axe as a symbol of inequitable exchange for land as well as for its connotations as the instrument for destroying native forests.

In his works Jahnke points out the grievances of Maori over the loss of land and natural resources. He has the ability to respond to issues while they are topical, as happened with his *Koha* exhibition of 1998 (Plate 61). In this instance he used the customary fishing rights issue to focus attention on ownership of natural resources deriving from the Treaty of Waitangi. He presented bronze casts of snapper on plates mounted on wooden plaques inscribed with stencilled phrases such as 'This is not a customary rights issue. This is a Koha.' Jahnke brought out the complexity of the issue by playing on the various meanings of the fish, as a food, as an item of trade, and as a symbol of Christ. Not lacking in humour, he also displayed chocolate fish arranged to spell the word koha and available for a contribution decided by the consumer. Frequently he presents his works on the wall like a relief but also introduces free-standing elements to engage the viewer in the action. Jahnke trained at Elam where he graduated with an MFA in 1978. He also has an MFA from the California Institute of the Arts in Valencia, California. He is currently the coordinator of Maori visual arts in the School of Maori Studies at Massey University in Palmerston North.

Also based in Palmerston North is Albert McCarthy (b. 1954) (Ngati Tuwharetoa), who has emerged as a forceful painter and sculptor. Like Jahnke, his work contains a political dimension and incorporates the adaptation of traditional forms such as the waka to contemporary sculptural installation. He has held various residencies at tertiary institutions, including one at Elam in 1998, where he has been an influential role model.

Few younger sculptors have achieved the profile of Brett Graham (b. 1967). Born in Auckland, the son of sculptor Fred Graham, he was educated at Elam before gaining a scholarship to study at the University of Hawaii from 1990 to 1991. An early influence came from his father, whose ideas and practice were an important part of his formative years and led to his decision to become an

PLATE 61 **Robert Jahnke, *Koha*, 1998, Installation, Artis Gallery, Auckland. Totara and bronze, each work 700 x 300 x 40 mm**

artist. While at Elam in the mid-1980s, Graham found the sculpture staff initially unresponsive to his interests in carving and his Maori heritage. However, he learnt a good deal about contemporary British sculpture, especially the works of Richard Deacon, Tony Cragg and Anish Kapoor. For him the issue of cultural identity became critical in the face of dominant European influences. About the loss of culture he noted in 1994: 'with this disappears the uniqueness of a world view, the ability to formulate thought from a rich vocabulary of visual and spoken language, and the joy of seeing the world through the colours of one's own cultural perceptions.' These concerns emerge as a powerful current in his work.

He quickly showed his precocious talent when he was commissioned by the John Weeks Trust to carry out a relief mural for the Maidment Theatre foyer at the University of Auckland. This work, known as the *Maidment Muses,* 1989, was executed in lead sheathing over a wooden underlying support. His interest in lead derived from the example of Greer Twiss who was using it at that time. Each of the nine pieces represents one of the muses in an abstract symbolic form. The arrangement of the figures in a row has a chant-like quality that recalls the ancestor panels (pou pou) set in the entrance porch of the Maori meeting house. It is a work of great accomplishment for a young sculptor barely out of art school. Here Graham shows his early interest in creating a bicultural art drawing on both Maori and Pakeha heritages to create a new kind of sculpture. The work is contemporary in feel yet strengthened by its referencing of the sculptor's own heritage in an effective manner.

Brett Graham's work has a basis in working of stone and wood that connects him to the great tradition of Maori carvers stretching back through the generations. But he also has a considered, theoretical position that lies behind each work. Often he has introduced ideas to do with race relations and the effect of European colonisation on Maori. For example his 1992 installation *1492–1642* was dedicated 'to the indigenous peoples of the world whose cultures have sprouted, flowered and then withered in the winter of colonisation'. But his art is never conceptual at the expense of form. In Hawaii he was able to study the background of other Polynesian cultures as well as to develop his own practice. While there he benefited from contact with scholars of Polynesian culture who furthered his interest in arts of the Pacific. A period in Japan in 1991 with the sculptor Okamoto helped him develop his handling of stone carving. Also, he found the Japanese belief in the life force of stone sympathetic with Maori values. His belief in the object gives to his art a monolithic timeless quality.

Brett Graham often uses vertical wood or stone forms. These can be columnar, as in his 1995 pieces carved from recycled Oamaru stone, or fluted

PLATE 62 **Brett Graham, *Manu Tawhiowhio*, 1996, Auckland Institute of Technology. Wood, copper and riverstone, height 7000 mm, base 650 mm in diameter**

shapes carved in pine, which are redolent of antique classical art but have also been compared with Maori pou, vertical pole markers. He usually achieves simple uncluttered forms that are worked with surface projections and recesses to create textural interest. Such a work is the sculpture *Manu Tawhiowhio*, 1996, where Graham depicts a bird in abstracted terms by means of an ovoid form divided by copper bands (Plate 62). In this case the historical role of migratory birds as guides for seafarers seeking new lands is alluded to, while the satellite reference is a symbol of modern communications. Graham's use of bird, tree and flower forms reflects his concern for the natural world and the important role played

by the environment in the culture of indigenous peoples. He has also made disc-like forms with grooves following the circular shape and culminating in the double spiral found in traditional Maori art.

Graham has worked since 1992 at the University of Auckland. Currently he teaches a programme called *Te Toi Hou*, the new way, at Elam. This programme is not restricted to Maori art forms or to Maori students. Rather it draws on both local and international sources to provide stimulus to the students, many of whom are Maori or interested in bicultural issues. His presence there has already given encouragement to young Maori and Polynesian artists who wish to work in a modern idiom. Comparable programmes are in place at Northland Polytechnic and at Massey University under Robert Jahnke. Their existence is a sign that progress is being made in recognising the mentoring needs of emerging Maori artists. Such programmes have encouraged a revival of carving in stone and wood at the art schools, where it had long been out of favour.

Brett Graham is an artist who has read extensively about sculpture and the issues surrounding First Nations art. He has written papers on the subject and attended conferences around the world. He has had a number of public commissions for large-scale sculpture, for example at Tamaki Campus, University of Auckland, at Fletcher Challenge, Penrose, and the Tjibaou Centre in Noumea, 1998 (Plate 63).

A contemporary of Brett Graham is Michael Parekowhai (b. 1968) (Nga Ariki, Ngati Whakarongo), an artist who shares some of his theoretical agenda but executes his works in a very different manner. Born in Porirua, Parekowhai

PLATE 63 **Brett Graham, *Lapita*, 1998, Tjibaou Centre, Noumea. Stone, 2000 x 800 x 800 mm**

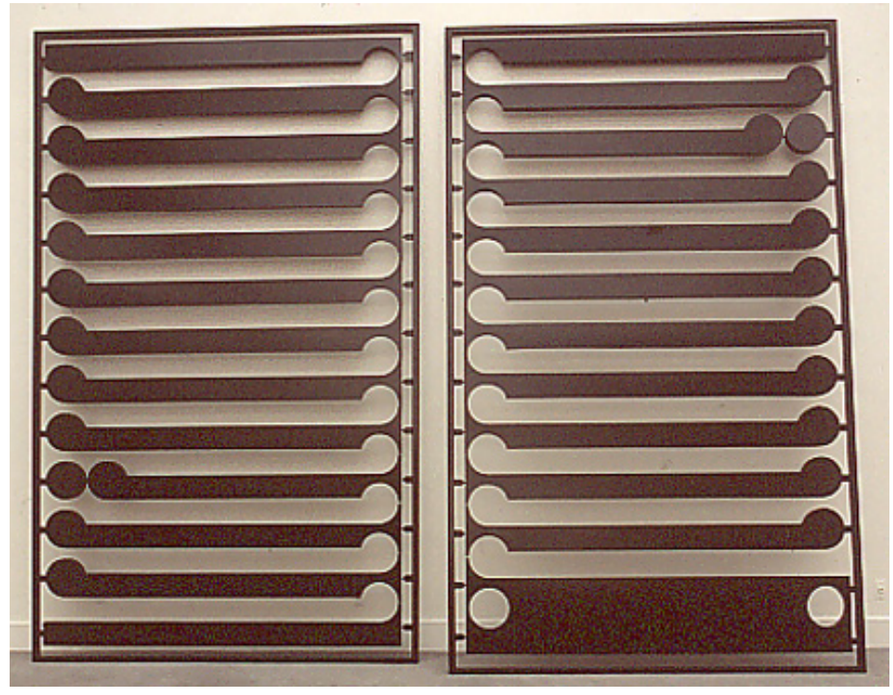


PLATE 64 **Michael Parekowhai, *Kiss the Baby Goodbye*, 1994, Chartwell collection. Powder coated steel, 4000 x 4000 x 200 mm**

attended Elam from 1987 to 1990, majoring in sculpture. Immediately after graduation he made an impact with conceptually strong sculptures presented in a provocative way. Compared with Brett Graham, Parekowhai is much less concerned about the monumental role of sculpture, designing his works instead for the gallery context to which they relate in terms of ideas and issues, as in *Kiss the Baby Goodbye*, 1994 (Plate 64). By scattering his works on the gallery floor or leaning them against the walls he critiques the qualities encapsulated in traditional sculpture and relates to the subversive agendas deriving from Marcel Duchamp, to whose works he has made specific allusions in several of his sculptures, for example *Mimi*, 1994.

Parekowhai is very aware of the roles of art institutions and critics in controlling how sculpture is seen and valued. By making references to respected local painters like Colin McCahon and Gordon Walters, he can both acknowledge and critique the status accorded them by the art establishment. His allusions, as a sculptor, to painters and a painted history are noteworthy. For it is true that sculpture in New Zealand has not achieved the status of painting in terms of patronage and public acceptance. By making sculpture about painting, he can bring the critical debate around the painters' works to include sculpture as part of the total situation instead of ignoring or excluding it.

Through his sculpture, Parekowhai encourages discourse on topical issues in contemporary art, seeing this as an essential aspect of his works. Because

both his parents are teachers, he knows better than most the relationship between art and education. His art helps to develop bicultural awareness without being didactic. Cultural identity emerges as an ongoing theme in his work, where there is limited evidence of Maori materials or imagery. He communicates as someone contemporary who is informed by his European and Maori heritage. In doing so he avoids heavy-handed polemic in favour of subtle commentary on a range of topics. This was already apparent in his early word sculpture *The Indefinite Article*, 1990, in which he gave new meaning to the words 'I am' used by Colin McCahon in a word painting of 1954, based on a text from Exodus containing words spoken to Moses by God in definition of his identity: 'I Am, that is who I am'. By mimicking the painted letters of the older artist and changing them to read 'I am he', Parekowhai critiques the egotistical reading of McCahon's work where there is some confusion of the identities of artist and the Creator. In Maori the word 'he' is the indefinite article meaning 'a' or 'some'. Parekowhai thus draws attention to the fact that his work is not the definite article, a McCahon, but something other with a Maori dimension. The self-reference in this and other works personalises the issue of cultural identity that is one of his preoccupations.

His later *Kiss the Baby Goodbye*, 1994 (Plate 64), transformed Gordon Walters's painting *Kahukura*, from that artist's koru series, into a sculptural relief cut out of sheet steel. Parekowhai presents his version of *Kahukura* like a kitset model with koru motifs that look as if they could be mechanically stamped out and replicated. Since Walters made his reputation with the koru series in which each painting is restricted to a few generic forms derived from the Maori art, Parekowhai's version draws attention to the older artist's procedure. He shows that Walters' koru motifs removed from their original context in Maori culture take on a new identity as tools for making modernist abstraction. Without being judgmental, Parekowhai in this instance educates the viewer to see how issues of appropriation and authenticity are central to a balanced assessment of Walters' art.

He has also commented on how art is displayed and valued. For example, in 1997 he exhibited customised number plates with the names of artists and appropriate price tags instead of registration numbers. His cynical equation of value with established artists' names rather than their works addresses one of many concerns about the marketing and promotion of art, an area explored earlier by Billy Apple. He has also introduced into exhibitions formally dressed mannequins with name tags that read: 'Hello my name is Hori'. The mannequins appear to view the works while themselves drawing attention to racial stereotypes and expectations of gallery audiences.

PLATE 65 **Michael Parekowhai, *Ten Guitars*, 1999, Artspace, Auckland. Guitars, cases, straps, raisers. Each guitar 1040 x 430 x 130 mm**

He has sometimes alluded to the moral issues involved in loss of culture and land. The toy axes, spades and guns he introduced in works of 1993 refer to the colonial conquest of the nineteenth century when large areas of Maori land and resources passed into the new settlers' hands. Here his theme and symbols are much the same as those found in other contemporary Maori artists, among them Shane Cotton and Robert Jahnke. Parekowhai's art, while essentially western in style and presentation, reflects the concerns of urban Maori today. His *Ten Guitars*, 1999 (Plate 65), employs instruments and words appropriated from Western culture to show how Maori have claimed as theirs the ideas of harmony and togetherness encapsulated in the lyrics and performance of a popular song. In this work there is a performance aspect in that musicians played the song *Ten Guitars* on the instruments at the opening in each new venue as the show toured the country. Increasingly Parekowhai is working across disciplinary boundaries, and he exhibited large colour photographs in exhibitions during 2001.

All the Maori artists discussed so far are male. This may seem surprising until it is realised that traditionally in Maori society men did the carving. Sculpture in its classic forms was therefore a male domain and one that has rarely been challenged by women artists. It is therefore appropriate that the leading Maori women artists who are sculptors work with installation rather than with object sculpture. Installation allows for the introduction of fibre, of weaving and related art materials that lay inside the domain of women in the traditional division of art work in Maori society. No doubt there are other aspects of installation that appeal to women practitioners, such as the involvement of the spectator in the physical space of the work and the absence of a commodity emphasis.

Of women artists with Maori lineage Jacqueline Fraser and Maureen Lander

are the most prominent practitioners in installation art. Of the two Fraser has had the higher profile until recently. From Dunedin, Fraser (b. 1956) (Ngai Tahu) is of Maori and European descent. When she studied at the Elam from 1974 to 1977 she rejected the traditional sculptural materials because they had little relevance to what she wanted to do. However, environmental art and installation were established by then in the sculpture section, allowing her to pursue a more congenial direction. She originally made her works out of bought and found materials, cutting, sewing and plaiting them together in ways that are traditional to women's work in both modern and tribal societies. After graduation, Fraser began exhibiting immediately and has subsequently made large-scale installations for all major art galleries in New Zealand. She has also exhibited overseas. Gradually she began to develop works that could be dismantled and moved from one location to another, thus allowing them a degree of permanence despite their fragility.

Fraser's work has a feminine dimension that is accentuated by her use of female-specific media such as fabric and thread. Her works are very light and almost ephemeral, the opposite of Maori male sculptors' works in stone and timber. The feminine dimension comes not from her gender but from the nature of her work. Her variation of the carved pendant the heitiki underscores this by its treatment in lines that seemingly sketch the contours of the form denuded of its mass and opacity. Fraser often uses line to make her forms in space, preferring materials like braid or more recently electrical wire, which lend themselves to linear presentation (Plate 66). She also has introduced curtains, bows and tassels from European sources into her art with their full overlay of associations with women, finery and the home. But her feminine referencing does not deflect her art away from concerns about space and light that are central to her sculpture as an art form. She creates an art in which heavy materials and physical processes are not needed. There is often a decorative delight in rhythmic movements repeated to give a lyric dimension to her work. She prefers curving lines to straight, contour to mass. It seems an intuitive response rather than one based on specific theories or concepts.

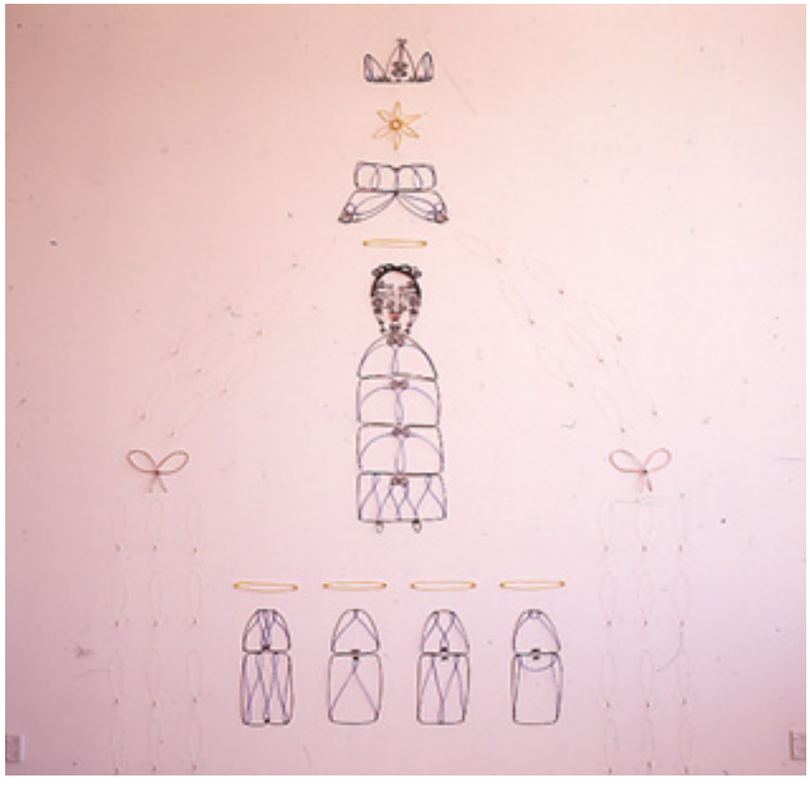


PLATE 66 **Jacqueline Fraser, *The Illumination of the 38 Dresses*, 1995, Sue Crockford Gallery. Wire, 2500 x 1500 mm**

An important part of Fraser's work relates to her Maori identity. She can be seen as a contemporary Maori artist not simply because of her racial origins but also because she chooses to draw attention to that cultural heritage. For example, she uses Maori titles, she references Maori spiritual and social values and she makes her own versions of traditional motifs like the tiki and double spiral. She echoes in her creations the forms of Maori meeting houses, of ancestor figures and guardian spirits. Yet Fraser does not recreate the old, rather she alludes to a rich cultural tradition while making something new and unique to herself. By introducing materials like electrician's wire, plastic, lurex and modern fabrics she achieves a contemporary look. The result is arguably as much European as Maori. And certainly Fraser is more at home as a professional artist who shows in galleries than as someone who makes work on the marae. She manages to draw together strands of meaning that contribute to the delicate balance of cultures from which her art derives.

In 2001 she was selected to represent New Zealand at the Venice Biennale. She chose that occasion to voice dissatisfaction with her critical reception in New Zealand, and vowed never to exhibit there again. This indicates that she has been concerned with the provincial context in which her work has been discussed and the craft overtones sometimes associated with it. Clearly Fraser, like other contemporary practitioners, seeks the international forum where her work will be assessed against stringent benchmarks.

Equally, Maureen Lander (b. 1942) has kept close to her Maori roots. She is knowledgeable about Maori fibre art, often incorporating references to it in her installations. Lander is very site-specific in her works, which are constructed for a particular situation and cannot be viewed in the same way again. She can

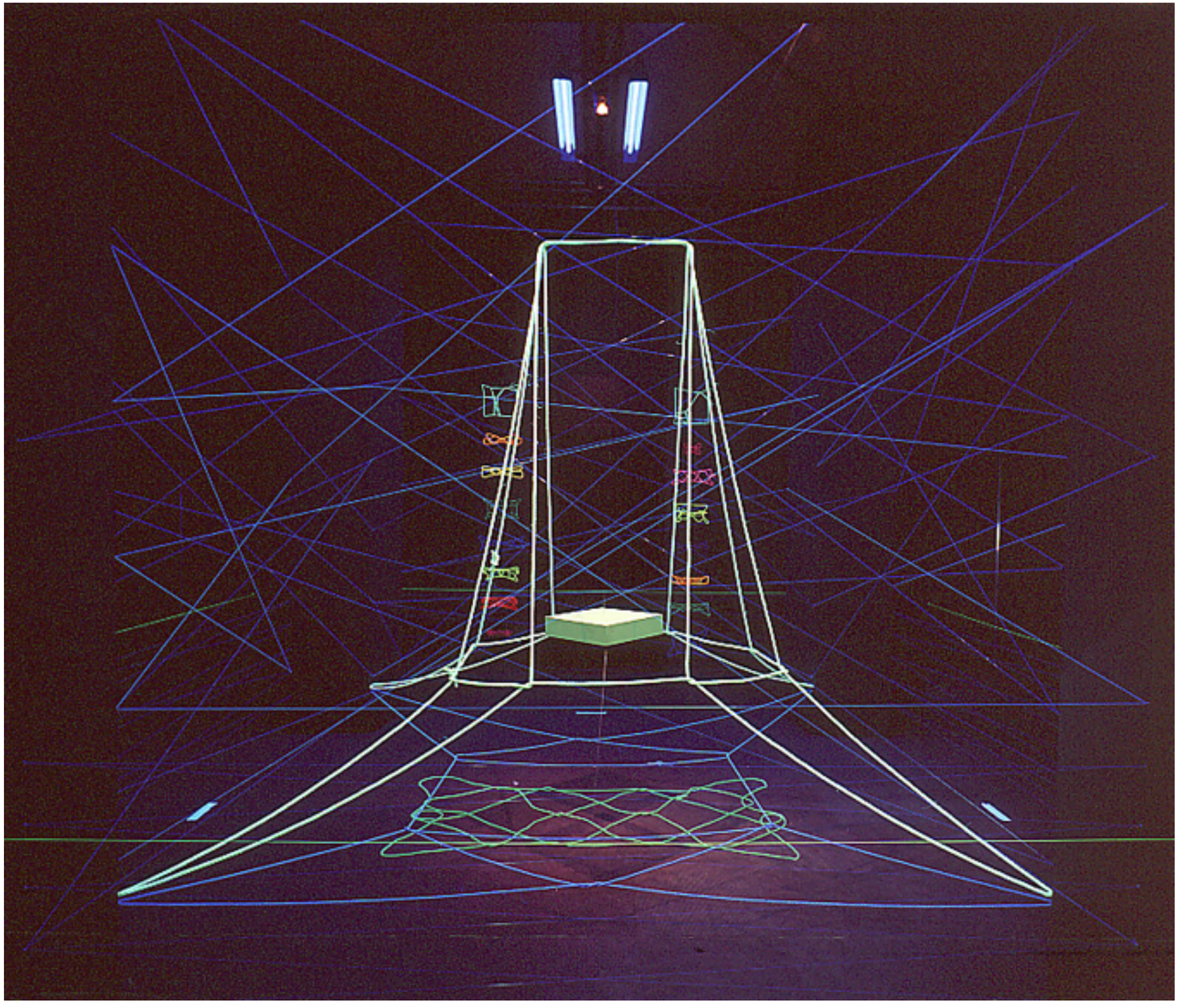


PLATE 67 **Maureen Lander, *String Games*, 1998, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, New Zealand. Installation, mixed media**

dramatise the spaces by a use of controlled lighting and by introducing modern media such as computer imagery to enrich her meanings. Lander has made contact with artists internationally who share her interest in relating traditional tribal arts to a contemporary context. She has exhibited extensively in New Zealand and overseas.

A major example of Lander's installation is *String Games*, 1998 (Plate 67), commissioned for the opening of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington. In this work Lander drew on traditional Maori string game patterns to create the centrepiece of her installation, which was dramatically highlighted against a darkened room by fluorescent coloured strings activated by ultraviolet black light. It was possible for viewers to enter a specially constructed room where the work was installed, and to walk around but not actually enter the space it occupied.

On surrounding walls, a variety of string patterns in different, light-enhanced colours carried the theme to the perimeter of the space. While the artist acknowledged her Maori sources by including historical photographs of string games in progress, she also incorporated references to Duchamp whose portable museum idea is represented centrally, both physically and conceptually. *String Games* had a conceptual and visual richness of meaning characteristic of Maureen Lander's recent works. She draws on both Maori and European art sources to create the unique identity of her own sculpture. Subsequently, in collaboration with John Fairclough, she made a digital version of this work in which there was an interactive component.

Lander, born at Rawene in the Hokianga, studied at Elam from 1987 to 1993. She also has a BA in Maori Studies from the University of Auckland where she teaches programmes in Maori material culture. Her knowledge of Maori weaving techniques and materials can be seen in her installations where she blends muka, harakeke and other traditional materials with modern fabrics and colours. In her Wellington work *This Is Not A Kete*, 1994, she placed woven flax baskets in a sculptural installation so that the emphasis was on formal and symbolic values rather than utility.

She has often worked in collaboration with a range of artists, embracing their ideas and sharing her knowledge. At times this has involved a situation outside New Zealand. In 1998, for instance, she made an installation, *Conversation Inverse*, at the Tjibaou Cultural Centre, Noumea, where she consulted with Kanak artists and used coconut palm leaves, a local material, along with nylon fishing line and flax edging discarded by another New Zealand artist. The installation was made up of eight suspended forms of variable size designed to recall the thatched roofing of traditional Kanak architecture. For this work, Lander inverted the cone construction of the house thatching. She prefers her art to be ephemeral rather than permanent, to be something owned by the viewer not the gallery where it was displayed. Her works cross the boundaries between craft and fine art in an explorative way.

PLATE 68 **Hariata Tangahoe, *Whakapapa Hou*, 1997, Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hamilton. Installation, mixed media**

Hariata Tangahoe (b. 1952) by contrast established herself as a painter before moving into installations and stone carving. Her exhibition *Whakapapa Hou*, 1997 (Plate 68), at the Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hamilton, was a major installation involving a fluent disposition of elements around the walls of the main gallery space. Using wooden forms, she depicted ancestors, birds, angels and goddesses across the walls in an eclectic mixture of styles and references. Drawing on her own culture as well as Christianity symbolised through small crosses, she arrived at an all-encompassing evocation of a journey both spiritual and material. Of this work she noted: 'I use old and new found materials to link the past with the present. This can be seen in the use of demolition timber. Some pieces are left with their original paint to show their past history, whereas others are painted afresh, or decorated with mixed media or collage.' The natural forms of dead leaves sprinkled on the floor and pinned to the walls enriched the installation.

In 1998 she began to make a series of relief carvings in Oamaru stone. These works with their incised figures continued the cross-referencing of cultures typical of her work. Her nude female figures recall Indian stone carving as much as anything specifically Maori in origin. Tangahoe claims a freedom of expression for herself and does not allow herself to be inhibited by traditional boundaries

or taboos. By making figure sculpture she has encroached on what was traditionally a male domain, taking a path already traversed by Shona Rapira Davies (b. 1951). In her major work *Nga Morehu* (*The Survivors*), 1982–88, Rapira Davies draws together expressionistic life-size figures, woven Maori mats on which they stand, and Maori language inscriptions. This large free-standing work is made up of female ceramic figures that advance one behind another in a ritualistic manner, crying out in anguish. Their upturned heads, open mouths and gesticulating arms seem to challenge the viewer as well as the naked child who stands confronting them. This powerful work is concerned with a number of issues including the rape of women and the land. Rapira Davies has made paintings and installations that deal with social ills that afflict Maori women. The political dimensions of her art can be related to those of painters such as Robyn Kahukiwa and Emare Karaka. Rapira Davies graduated from Otago Polytechnic School of Art in 1985.

Shona Rapira Davies is not alone in raising a voice of political protest in her sculpture. Diane Prince (b. 1952) (Ngati Whatua, Nga Puhi) makes installations with a strong social message of disquiet and anger focusing on the disadvantaged position of Maori in a society controlled by Pakeha systems. She has observed: 'Democratic structures are no guarantee for the political safety of colonised indigenous peoples anywhere.' Like Maureen Lander, she has worked together with indigenous artists from other cultures in North America and the Pacific, finding a common cause in their marginalisation. Her ability to generate a reaction to her work was demonstrated by *Flagging the Future: Kaitangata the Last Palisade*, 1995, in which she placed a New Zealand flag on the floor of the Auckland City Art Gallery and invited visitors to walk over it. This deliberately provocative installation polarised public opinion and led to protests about the exhibition. Her work made a maximum impact because it came at a time of questioning of cultural identity in New Zealand and debate about an alternative flag for the country that dispensed with the Union Jack and its connotations of subservience to Britain.

Sculptors who are Maori and who deal with issues of cultural identity and difference are now an important and identifiable part of contemporary New Zealand art. Their concerns are social, political, cultural and environmental. In their various ways they have given a tangible presence to previously marginalised ideas. By reaching beyond the galleries and spaces occupied by Western art, Maori sculptors have pushed out the boundaries to enable their work to reach a new audience. In the process they have contributed to changing the look and range of sculpture. It is now richer and more diverse, as well as more challenging. Importantly, it has allowed connections to be made internationally with the work of other First Nations artists, giving it a wider audience and context.

XI

Contemporary Sculpture in New Zealand

Since 1980 New Zealand sculptors have responded to the greater opportunities made possible by a growth of corporate and private patronage. Commissions from institutions such as public art galleries and universities, offices, banks and shopping centres, as well as funding support from the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council (now Creative New Zealand), have encouraged more diverse and ambitious work. As public institutions such as art galleries and museums have grown in number and size, their role in commissioning sculpture for curated exhibitions has developed and made possible projects that previously were unachievable. Non-profit-making galleries, such as Artspace in Auckland and the City Gallery, Wellington, have been at the forefront in presenting installations and performances that otherwise would have struggled to find a venue. Sponsorship from companies and civic corporations in major centres like Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch has further added to the vitality of the scene. For example, Orion, the electricity network company, commissioned Paul Hartigan's major neon work *Nebula Orion* for its Christchurch premises in 2001 (Plate 69). This powerful work has a range of symbolic references including an artist's palette, a stellar constellation and the neurological pathways of the brain. Taking up the entire wall of a building, it is an excellent example of the way in which art and commerce can reinforce one another and add a new visual dimension to a city. An increased recognition of the importance of the visual arts at government level has helped as well. The appointment of the Prime Minister, Helen Clark, as minister for arts, heritage and culture in the Labour–Alliance coalition government formed in 1999 signalled an important change in status backed up by substantial new funding.

Since 1980 artists have been more open to a variety of styles, methods of working and theories of art. Object sculpture of diverse kinds practised by artists such as Jeff Thompson, Charlotte Fisher, Bing Dawe and Chris Booth is one trend. Installation art as practised by sculptors such as Maureen Lander and Christine Hellyar is another. But some Post-Object forms, notably performance art, have fluctuated in popularity and are probably less common than before. Among most artists whether of European, Asian, Maori or Polynesian descent, cultural identity is now an important issue. At the same time, there is a desire to relocate the cultural centre of local sculpture to New Zealand and the Pacific

PLATE 69 **Paul Hartigan, *Nebula Orion*, 2001, Christchurch. Neon, 11530 x 7060 x 100 mm**

rather than see it as peripheral and provincial to art practice elsewhere. The emergence of magazines like *Art & Asia Pacific* in the 1990s helped promote such a viewpoint. This tendency has been furthered by the greater international acceptance of indigenous cultures on their own terms. The increased immigration of Asian people into New Zealand in the 1990s, especially in Auckland, has contributed to a much richer and more diverse cultural mix. Inevitably in this climate, different and even contradictory art practices have developed.

A concern for some sculptors has been conservation of the natural environment as a life-enhancing force now under threat. While New Zealand has a reputation internationally as a clean, green country much of its flora and fauna have been placed under stress by farming, urban sprawl and tourism. Artists and writers have been active in raising consciousness about environmental issues and endangered species. Among them sculptors like Chris Booth and Bing Dawe are prominent in their espousal of issues to do with the land and its well-being.

Of these sculptors, Chris Booth (b. 1948) has become identified with sculptural assemblages made from stones and boulders fashioned by the forces of wind and water and often set in the landscape from which they originate. Booth is an active conservationist who lives in a rural setting at Kerikeri, away from the urban centres. He grew up in a largely Maori community from whom he acquired an early reverence for the land and its spiritual values. This contributed to his respect for indigenous people and the special relationship they have with their environment. His conservationist interests and respect for nature are widely shared by many New Zealanders and are supported politically by the Green Party (which has had a voice in the coalition government although not formally a member of it). These concerns enjoy a worldwide following, a fact that has contributed to the international profile Booth has achieved as an artist.

The heavy stone components of his sculpture are individual to his practice. These found materials do not require the hand of the artist to shape them individually but do need to be strung together into vertical columns, arches or mounds that take on a sculptural identity. By aggregating these stones Booth gives to them the connotations of a man-made artefact, such as a cairn or arch, while retaining the elemental strength of natural materials naturally made. His works function very successfully in the landscape where the rugged materials echo the forms of nature. Booth remarked in 1993: 'Above all I am trying to make my sculpture in harmony with the land.' There are conscious overtones of prehistoric monuments in ceremonial sites such as Avebury in Britain.

It could be argued that these are rustic sculptures, deliberately awkward and lacking in finesse. But this would be misleading. Skill is required to transform Booth's found objects into something stronger and more meaningful. He creates simple, monumental forms like the arch and the column in which the component stones form part of a symbolic structure. Unlike architecture, these structures do not function as places to dwell but as symbols of the human desire to live harmoniously with nature. At times there is an anthropomorphic dimension to his sculpture, especially in the vertical stone columns such as *Silent People,* 1991, where the title evokes connotations of standing figures. Booth stacks and shapes his boulders by using steel cabling to string the parts together invisibly like beads on a thread. He hides the weight of his material by lifting the massive boulders high in the air so that they appear light and free from gravity. A good example is *Gateway*, 1990, Albert Park, Auckland, even though in this case structural considerations required that the upper boulders were cast in aluminium to lighten the load on each column. In *Gateway*, Booth introduced water as an element that drips down the stones rather like a stream trickling over a cliff face.

Perhaps there is a limit to how varied responses can be to accumulations of such specific materials, especially when they ultimately can only pile up in mounds or columns of limited shape and type. They would seem not to have the capacity to describe more than a few forms, especially when assembled by steel cabling that brings them together in tidy stacked piles or columns. But Booth has continually pushed out the boundaries of his art, creating works as varied in effect as the *Rainbow Warrior Memorial*, 1990, Matauri Bay, Northland, and *Kaipara Strata*, 1992, Kakanui Point, Kaipara Harbour. By introducing other elements such as the propeller in the *Rainbow Warrior Memorial,* he can vary the look and meaning of his works significantly. In *Cave*, 1994–97, Takahanga Marae, Kaikoura (Plates 70 and 71), he used different kinds and sizes of stone together with steel cabling and wire to create a ceremonial gateway in harmony with the nearby meeting house and marae. As his work has developed, it has become more diverse, confident and daring in conception.

Booth originally studied at the Canterbury School of Art from 1967 to 1968 but broke off his course to travel and work in Europe. In Italy and Britain he studied with a number of professional sculptors before returning to New Zealand in 1970. He began his career with works shaped out of rough pieces of native timber, kauri logs and stumps, and manuka sticks. His art can be related through its specific earthiness to the creations of a number of English artists like Andy Goldsworthy. But what Booth does is create his own vernacular language, which celebrates rather than denies its rural, provincial origins. He has succeeded in creating an individual look to his work that relates directly and honestly to the environment from which his materials are sourced.

PLATE 70 **Chris Booth, *Cave*, 1994–97, Takahanga Marae, Kaikoura. Stone, stainless steel cable and wire, 3000 x 3000 x 5000 mm.**

In recent years, Booth has established an international reputation with commissions both public and private in Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States, Italy and Scandinavia. While doing so, he has preserved his close association with the land and the specific regional values of the places where his sculptures are located. Because his work is often large and heavy, it needs to be made on location and cannot be transported easily, if at all. To maintain his integrity when working overseas or in sites remote from his home, Booth lives for a time in the area, getting to know the place and its people before making his work. That way he can integrate local materials and associations into his sculpture. Examples of this are found in his Australian commissions such as *Tuuram Cairn*, 1996, for Deakin University, Warrnambool, Victoria, where he consulted local Koori people before developing his work 'to encourage remembrance of the recent suffering of this land and its Indigenous People'. Other Australian examples can be found in Queensland (Plate 72) and Victoria.

PLATE 71 **Chris Booth, *Cave*, detail**

Among Christchurch sculptors, Bing Dawe (b. 1952) is one who has achieved a wide and varied practice, drawing on his local environment for subjects and materials such as river stones and timber. In his love and care for the land he can be compared with Booth, though he expresses his concerns with different forms. In particular, his work often involves figuration whereas Booth's excludes it. Bird, fish and human figures occur in his works, which address environmental themes and the need for equilibrium between man and nature. Dawe grew up in rural South Canterbury and North Otago where the rivers, flowing over stony beds rich with fish and eels, had a strong formative influence on him. He attended the Canterbury School of Art, graduating in 1976. In the 1980s he made a series of works devoted to endangered birds, crafting skeletal forms from wood to suggest ancient bones like those of the extinct moa, the large flightless bird that was once common in Canterbury and North Otago. His political themes included protest against an aluminium smelter planned for Aramoana and anti-nuclear-war subjects interpreted in an individual and symbolic way. In these themes he shared concerns with artists like Ralph Hotere, whose work he admired.

All his sculpture has a highly crafted quality with a great attention to detail. This is especially true of his sculptures of eels, which are rendered with uncanny verisimilitude. The eel becomes a symbol of nature, of mystery and cyclic migrations little understood by those who capture and kill them. His *Eel — Birdling's Flat — Black Stones Waitaki River*, 1997 (Plate 73), features a cabinet on which the carved eel is displayed. This acts as a novel pedestal for it while hinting in its closed recesses at a trap or hiding place. Dawe won the Wallace Award in 1999 for a work from this series called *Figure with Eel*, in which a figure gazes at and touches a captured eel. The juxtaposition so created sums up the inquisitive and enigmatic nature of Bing Dawe's art. It implies that there must be greater understanding and respect for the natural world and the creatures that depend on its health for their existence. Whereas Booth works on a monumental scale in outdoor locations, Dawe prefers the intimacy of smaller pieces and the gallery or domestic setting.

Auckland artists Virginia King (b. 1946) and Charlotte Fisher (b. 1959) share some of Booth's and Dawe's concern for the natural world and like them have recycled organic materials in their works. Both trained at Elam, King between 1963 and 1964 and Fisher between 1985 and 1988. King's environmental interests have led her to use demolition kauri in works designed to comment on

PLATE 72 **Chris Booth, *Wiyung Tchellungnai-najil (Keeper of the Flame)*, 1997, Evandale Sculpture Walk, Gold Coast City Art Gallery, Queensland, Australia. Stone, 9000 x 7500 x 7500 mm**

PLATE 73 **Bing Dawe, *Eel – Birdling's Flat – Black Stones, Waitaki River*, 1997, Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Christchurch. Wood, canvas, paint, 500 x 600 x 260 mm**

the destruction of New Zealand's native forests. She has also introduced symbolic forms based on leaf and seedpod sources to her installations for gallery spaces or outdoor settings. Similarly Fisher has made sculptures from materials where growth patterns and water-worn surfaces help reinforce the organic dimension. She has sometimes mounted arc or boat forms on vertical columns to create elegant evocative images full of a rich layering of symbolic meanings (Plate 74). The arc can refer to the horn, crescent or moon, for example, whereas the boat can evoke a passage both physical and psychological from one place or state to another. *Boat*, 1996, Sky City, Auckland, is a characteristic example. Fisher has returned to stone carving in some of her sculptures, finding in it a link to the early years of modernism as represented by an artist like Brancusi, to whom she has paid tribute in her work. Her sculptures have a formal strength and monumentality suggestive of the enduring values of the natural world rather than its transience.

Whereas Dawe, King and Fisher use a range of materials for their sculpture, Jeff Thomson (b. 1957), like Booth, is thought of in terms of a specific material. With Booth it is stones, with Thomson corrugated iron. This material has a history of its own, closely identified with colonial housing, with cheap baches and low-cost structures. Its versatility and toughness have both made it popular and contributed to its cult status as an icon of the down-under culture. It lends itself usually less to high-art applications than to low-art, amateur and kitsch creations. Thomson comments: 'As an art medium it's so common, cheap, utilitarian, accessible, pliant . . . it's so immediate, easy to join, to add to, it's versatile — can be curved, stacked, layered, cut into strips and woven. It needn't stay indoors.' Thomson has frequently recycled material and given it new life in his art works. Like Booth he has a concern for nature and achieves a low-tech kind of art that is undemanding of the environment.

It can be guessed that Thomson's works grow out of the same origins as Pop Art with its appeal to the commonplace and the commercial rather than to the refined and elitist. Some parallels could be made with a painter like Dick Frizzell (b. 1943) who has not only depicted typical New Zealand buildings made of corrugated iron but also used low-art imagery, such as advertising

PLATE 74 **Charlotte Fisher, *The Arc*, 1991, Australian sandstone and hinuera stone, 2000 x 1100 x 500 mm. Private collection, Auckland**

PLATE 75 **Jeff Thomson, *H.Q. Holden*, 1991, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, New Zealand (B.28157)**

slogans and shop signs, in his painting. Like Frizzell, who worked as a commercial artist for a while, Thomson has a business making vases, birds, animals and furniture out of iron for clients on commission. These commissions help fund his more experimental works and installations. Even more apt are the associations with folk art, such as souvenirs covered with paua shell or wool. Thomson covers his objects with iron or cuts out shapes in iron to give them a generic look. He is quite happy to recycle second-hand sheets of iron, even ones already painted, to give them a history and identity.

By being first and foremost a sculptor of corrugated iron, Thomson risks being seen as an entertaining novelty artist rather than as a serious practitioner. His patrons have been people who can relate to the fun element of an elephant or cow cut out of iron and painted in bright colours. It is the uniqueness of the idea that gives the works a recognisable identity. Like a well-known product, Thomson's works can be easily recalled and just as easily identified. In New Zealand sculpture this is indeed a rare achievement (Plates 75 and 76).

Thomson studied at Elam from 1978 to 1981, majoring in painting. But he developed his ideas by responding to the countryside with its provincial feel. He acknowledges a debt to the rural folk art he saw in the form of mailboxes, each with its own distinctive design. By rejecting modernism and the international look, Thomson can celebrate the quirky, the gauche and the individual. He likes to question the nature of art and its role in the community. For example, since 1995 he has actually worked on existing rooftops from an artist's perspective, designing new roofing systems and making his own customised lead-head nails to secure the roofing sheets of iron.

Much of Thomson's early art is only tin-deep, working in silhouette but not in the round. A good example is the elephant fence designed for Auckland patron James Wallace in 1985 for his former home in Remuera. Like an advertising hoarding or neon display, it faces one way so that it can be thought of more as a relief than as a three-dimensional sculpture. It has now been relocated to Wallace's sculpture park at his Epsom house 'Rannoch' where the large elephants, since increased in number, appear to emerge from the bush. It has joined various other works commissioned by Wallace, who is an important supporter of contemporary sculpture.

Since 1986 Thomson has worked more fully in three dimensions. When he clad an old Holden station wagon with iron in 1991, Thomson gave a more solid look to his material. Realising that he had made all sorts of objects but had never covered a structure as a builder clads a roof, he used the stimulus of a casual idea to make the station wagon piece a reality in *H.Q. Holden*, 1991 (Plate 75). The acquisition in 1987 of an old plumber's curving machine for making iron water tanks and bull-nosed verandah roofing helped him to make curving forms of a fully three-dimensional character. His stationwagon has a lived-in quality that is symbolic of the nomadic lifestyle that Thomson led when he drove around Australia and New Zealand in search of freedom and inspiration. The radio aerial, bent in the shape of Australia, pays wry tribute to the relationship between Holden and the country of its manufacture, where it is indeed a national icon.

His art is accessible as much for its childlike charm as for the material from which it is made. Thomson displays his pieces on the ground or leans them against the wall to achieve a disarming casualness in the way they relate to the viewer. He has managed to get away from the stuffy constraints of the art gallery by making his art for outdoor settings, where its engaging freshness is like a gust of country air. Thomson stands outside much contemporary sculptural practice, yet this has not counted against his popularity with patrons both in New Zealand and overseas. Increasingly his work is in demand in Australia, Holland and Germany. What he does is make sculpture fun, debunk its pretentiousness and make it accessible. And that is no small achievement in a country that has often been unresponsive to three-dimensional art.

By comparison Christine Hellyar (b. 1947) is a versatile sculptor who collects things that she assembles into works that transcend their modest origins. She, too, has strong conservationist values that can be readily sensed in her art. Like Thomson, she has created art out of her own experience and surroundings. One of her early sculptures, called *Country Clothes Line*, 1972, consists of 22 pieces of clothing in latex rubber, which can be pegged out on a line propped up by a wooden pole. Here Hellyar, with a selective eye for a subject not normally

PLATE 76 **Jeff Thomson, *Pirouette*, 1993, Collection of artist. Corrugated iron, height 3000 mm**

thought of as sculptural, evokes an everyday reality of women's lives in the country. There are overtones of Pop Art in the focus on ordinary objects, while the light, soft forms suspended off the ground reject the conventions of heaviness and mass previously the norm in New Zealand sculpture. In retrospect it seems to open up new directions for sculptural practice.

An enduring influence for Hellyar came from the sculptor Don Driver, who worked in New Plymouth, where she grew up. Driver displayed a willingness to introduce found objects into his works in ways that were daring and exciting. From 1966 to 1969 Hellyar studied at Elam where she related most to the approach of Greer Twiss, then at the start of his career. She appears not to have responded to academic sculpture or to the minimalism coming to Elam via the Royal College. Hellyar also met and became friends with Molly Macalister, who was at the school for a short period. In her last two years at Elam she focused on landscapes and landforms in her sculpture. From the start she thought independently and took an individual approach. After leaving Elam, she began taking moulds from natural forms like leaves in order to cast them in latex rubber. She was the first to do so in Auckland.

Hellyar likes collecting interesting natural objects that she finds in her environment. She can then arrange them appropriately to reveal the cyclic processes of nature that often concern her as an artist. After first taking moulds

from such objects, Hellyar gives them durability as well as unity by casting them in a variety of materials such as latex, clay, plaster, bronze and lead. Including organic elements such as bird feathers and animal fur, her collections allow thematic interpretation through their arrangement. Her themes address constants in the natural life cycle — growth is matched by decay, life by death, softness by hardness. The combining of polarities in terms of content and formal properties runs as a thread through her work. In addition, she always shows great sensitivity to texture and colour in her sculpture.

After leaving Elam, Hellyar taught art for a while before travelling to Britain in 1974 where she stayed in Cornwall, relating to the landscape and its sense of history. For a time in the period 1977–78 she lived in Scotland. On her return to Auckland, she experimented with various means of presenting her sculpture, sometimes installing it in gallery spaces on the floor, at other times suspending it from the ceiling or hanging it from the walls. Among the first New Zealand artists to make an installation sculpture, Hellyar has refined this kind of presentation over the years. *Shelter*, 1982, an installation for the Auckland City Art Gallery, is a good example. Here Hellyar spun, wove and plaited forms from various materials such as twigs, muslin, flax and cord to make nets, traps and enclosures of various kinds. The billowing muslin forms gave a lightness and ephemeral quality to the gallery, occupying the zone between floor and ceiling. Inside these constructions the artist placed small creatures fabricated from fur, bark and shell to suggest the way they would seek refuge in such enclosures. At the same time the more sinister overtones of capture or entrapment are implied in the net-like forms suggestive of traps or cages.

With such works Hellyar moved her art well away from the solid objects associated with sculptors like Twiss. She also deliberately chose materials (such as muslin) and techniques (like plaiting) associated traditionally with the work of women. Accordingly the installations can be read as claiming recognition for more craft-oriented materials and processes. Here, as in much of Hellyar's art, there is a feminist dimension that critiques accepted practice and hierarchies of taste.

In some of her works, Hellyar comes across as an inveterate collector with an eye for ordering her found objects into systems of presentation reminiscent of old museum displays. One system she has employed has been the convention of the cupboard. A cupboard allows presentation of seemingly disparate objects side by side, or above and below one another. She has bought used cupboards from second-hand shops to recycle them as ready-made containers for her works. *Clutch, Brood and Echo,* 1990, is an example of this type (Plate 77). Hellyar's cupboards contain meanings beyond the spectrum of their utilitarian counterparts. Their contents comment on styles of art, hierarchies of ideas and categorisation.

Hellyar has often clustered or grouped objects together on walls or floors so that their surfaces provide a unifying backdrop. This system allows a big work to be made from a multiplicity of parts, none of which is large or dominant. *Skin,* 1987 (Figure 75), is of this kind. Here Hellyar's clay casts of leaves allow the veins and leaf shapes to be read in shallow relief. By preserving its identifying shape each item contributes to the range of form and silhouette. Such works bring to mind Richard Killeen's *Cut Out* paintings of some five years earlier where he cut out insect forms, for example, from sheet aluminium and mounted them on the wall. Whereas Killeen at that stage drew and cut each insect by hand, Hellyar allows the found leaves to provide her shapes and forms. The skin reference can allude to the parallel between the way the earth is covered with leaves, grass and lichen and our human body is clad in skin. Hellyar's clay models are like fossil records of the processes of growth and replication in a unified frozen form. At this stage the artist achieved a subtle balance between form and content, as well as integration with sculptural concerns.

In 1982 Hellyar joined the staff in the sculpture section at Elam. This provided her with the opportunity to teach many talented artists both male and female, among them Denise Kum and Lisa Crowley who have proceeded to professional sculpture careers. Her contributions as teacher and role model have been considerable. She resigned from Elam in 1996 in order to focus more on her own work.

In the early 1990s, Hellyar made a series of sculptures in which she continued her interest in natural plant forms. An example is *Armlet*, 1993 (Plate 78). Using nikau, flax, toetoe, punga fronds and stems, she created a series of floor-mounted pieces that stand erect as if growing from the ground. She cast the works in bronze, a material she used sparingly before that time. These bronzes retain her previous textural and organic interests while transforming the found objects into something more enduring and substantial. Part of their appeal is the paradox set up by the contrast between their apparent fragility and their actual strength. With these works she showed her desire to develop and change her art while retaining a consistency in her ideas. It also allowed her work to move into an outdoor setting in more permanent material.

Hellyar has created a large and varied body of sculpture based on a range of techniques and concepts. Not only does she collect objects, but also she has an interest in words and phrases appropriate for her ideas, which she assembles into notebooks and workbooks. In its unmistakable feminist concerns and its eclectic nature, Hellyar's work belongs to the postmodern aesthetic. She is well

PLATE 77 **Christine Hellyar, *Clutch, Brood and Echo*, 1990, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, New Zealand. (B.36380) Mixed media**

aware of the sources, both visual and literary, of the art she has produced. Hellyar at all times preserves her focus on the aesthetic values of sculpture. In that sense her work, despite its conceptual content, is not in accord with Post-Object art.

Hellyar is only one of many women who have developed their work strongly since 1980 and are making a distinctive contribution to contemporary art. Practitioners such as L. Budd and Judy Darragh indicate some of the richness and diversity that has emerged in that period. Comparatively L. Budd, a persona of Merylyn Tweedie (b. 1953), is more concerned with the message than the means, often creating genuinely Post-Object sculptures where the physical appearance of the works is repellent or inconsequential. For her, the land and place where she works is not central to her work. Instead she positions herself in the international arena of ideas and theory. In doing so she adopts a stance that is widespread among contemporary practitioners who have a range of options open to them.

Budd's practice can be related to the European Fluxus movement, an anti-art group of the 1960s opposed to traditional art values and professionalism. Her adoption of various personae, such as the one 'L. Budd', can be seen as a desire to escape the cult of names and established reputations. But her refuge of anonymity cannot be preserved as a safe sanctuary in a small art community like New Zealand. Clearly she has looked to the example of Joseph Beuys in arriving at her assemblages of unattractive objects such as dirty neon tubing, old wall heaters or junk furniture. Such things affront the cultivated eye by offering nothing of visual beauty to the viewer, not even the bad taste of popular kitsch. She commented in 1999: 'I have a fear of results that look good (that is successful) but don't think well (that is have depth). For me the visual has always come at the end.'

Born in Christchurch, she studied at the Canterbury School of Art from 1972 to 1975. Initially she worked as a photographer, creating prints that were out of focus, rough and defaced by scrawled inscriptions. Her feminist beliefs found an outlet in the collection of slogans and words that drew attention to the way women were referred to and thought of in popular discourse. The postmodern aesthetic gave her a means, as it did other feminist artists, of bringing more attention to a minority viewpoint. She developed the persona L. Budd between 1991 and 1992. By then feminism had become less important in her practice, which had widened in scope.

FIGURE 75 **Christine Hellyar, *Skin*, 1987, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki. Clay, 1850 x 1450 mm**

FIGURE 76 **Christine Hellyar, *Skin*, 1987, Detail**

PLATE 78 **Christine Hellyar, *Armlet*, 1993, University of Auckland. Patinated bronze, three units, height 1370 mm**

FIGURE 77 **L. Budd et al, *Art Across Oceans*, installation, Copenhagen, 1996. Television set, painted slide screens, books, tape-recorder**

While using found materials such as second-hand books, magazines and wallpaper, she usually manipulates these in some way to achieve her purpose. She moved from photography to photocopied slogans and pages of texts to installations (Figure 77). These works have established a niche for her in the debate on what art is about in the 1990s, but cannot be evaluated by conventional means. She may suggest an alternative to conventional expectation, but it is not one that has enduring value or appeal. She likes the temporary nature of video and moving images that have a fragile existence but does not see this as closing off other kinds of expression. Her critique does not seem to have seriously challenged orthodox sculptural practice, though it has raised questions about its assumptions.

Judy Darragh (b. 1957) can be compared with Budd in her enthusiastic embrace of low-art materials for her work though she includes more feminine bric-à-brac resonant of the traditional realm of women, the home. Darragh eschews the monumental in favour of light, ephemeral forms such as plastic flowers, tacky tulle, mirrors or framed reproductions in sham gold frames. She delights in bad taste, assembling found objects from junk shops into shrines of memorabilia. It is a celebration of the ordinary and the awful that depends for meaning on the way it challenges our ideas about taste in art and life.

What she brings together has little commercial value, or artistic value as conventionally understood, until it is transformed by her concept of the work as a whole. That new entity traces a part of our popular culture, the one most people know in their homes and lives. Accordingly she documents a vulgar or common taste of the sort previously ignored by artists and art galleries. Her stance seems ambivalent, both slightly mocking and respectful at the same time. She does access by this means a rich lode of visual imagery, much of it three-dimensional, that would otherwise escape attention. Her validation of the cheap and debased finds its equivalent in contemporary museum and gallery displays where popular culture is presented alongside high art in an attempt to give a more complete picture of an era.

PLATE 79 **Judy Darragh, *Two Graces*, 1994, Collection of artist. Mixed media, 1600 x 1600 mm**

Darragh is not a conventional sculptor because she creates a form of art that elides boundaries between painting, sculpture, photography and assemblage. She cares less for the hand-made than the found object, though she does work the surfaces of her objects to give them the tone she requires. Her *Rock and Rose Bed,* 1989, has the full three-dimensional thrust that her art can acquire. Its witty comment on marital relationships is anchored in such a literal form that it is simultaneously both humorous and memorable. Her *Two Graces*, 1994 (Plate 79), sends up the tourist presentation of Maori and Polynesian culture in the form of dancers dressed in piupiu and grass skirts. The kinetic sculptures move as if to music, but lack the grace and rhythm we expect in such a context. Darragh trained at the Wanganui Polytechnic where she gained a diploma in 1979. She subsequently went to Auckland Teachers' College and has been practising as an artist since the late 1970s.

Very different in her approach is Elizabeth Thomson (b. 1955), who established her reputation with wall-mounted installations of bronze insects and moths. But she, too, has used a wide range of media in her search for an appropriate form for her ideas. While studying printmaking at Elam from 1983 to 1988 with Denys Watkins and Alberto Garcia Alvarez, she began to make three-dimensional constructions and use photography as a basis for her prints. Her sculpture grew out of elements in her prints such as the insects and the surreal landscapes she depicted in her etchings. While making a study of dioramas for her master's thesis she came into contact with museum staff and methods of display. Work as an assistant at a local bronze foundry taught her the rudiments of bronze casting and encouraged her in her own exploration of the medium. Both experiences contributed to her sculptures and installations, in which her care for accurate presentation is combined with knowledge of bronze to make them a vehicle for her ideas.

Thomson's methods of studying the natural world can be compared with the scientific processes of collecting and collating specimens and material. She has collected, examined and photographed her subjects, always with a view to the visual effect. Thomson makes her creatures seem alive, as if alighting on the wall, not pinned to it like specimens. Her works are suggestive of movement and flight. Her wax models allow adjustments of size, so that her creations can and do differ from real life. She treats the surface of the bronze with patinations that closely imitate those in nature. Here there are traces of her printmaking background in the graphic effects she achieves. Thomson deals in kinds of illusion, including the device of *trompe l'oeil* in which her sculptures can be so real as to deceive the eye. Although her moths are made of heavy metal we experience them as airborne and light, rather than earthbound and weighty. In fact her sculpture often has a lightness, even translucence, as can be seen in her more recent glass works.

In the late 1990s she extended her range of subjects to include plant forms and microscopic matter. She has presented these on a plain background, either directly onto the gallery wall or on pristine gessoed panels, isolating, dramatising and organising the material for her viewer. An example is *Southern Cross Parterre*, 1997–98 (Plate 80). This work consists of cast and hand-painted bronze leaves arranged to form a green cross against a white ground. Thomson has noted: 'By presenting things as realistically as possible they assume a truth, they seem real. With a shift in scale and context, the familiar elements take on a new identity, distilling and often moving into the abstract.' In this instance the artist drew on her childhood recollections of vegetation standing out against the snow of Mount Taranaki to make an image of apparent simplicity that contains

layers of meaning. The formal presentation, in contrast with her seemingly casual placement of the earlier insect and fish works, reveals the diversity of her art. Involved are ideas of fresh growth and regeneration as well as a memorial to her mother who had recently died.

Thomson has experimented with different kinds of presentation. With her installation *Walking up Slowly*, 1996, she created an eerie environment that surrounded the viewer, a direct reference to her earlier investigations of the museum and the diorama. She has examined and enlarged her works through the use of the electron microscope, creating works that are visually rich and multi-layered. These works have an elegant, icy presence. Glass appeals as a medium with the potential to allow evolution in her work while retaining continuity in the use of natural forms. It suggests new ways of introducing light and colour to her work, giving her the freedom to move between the abstract and the figurative, examining the concepts of real/unreal, and nature/culture. She was commissioned to make an important work of this kind for the Sun Alliance Centre, Auckland, in 2000.

More conventional in some respects are the sculptures of Richard Reddaway (b. 1962). He uses the human figure as the main motif in his art, a figure generic rather than individualistic in its character. His figures are mainly male, appearing as self-projections perhaps, replications that conform not to an ideal of form but to an awkward angularity. Their robotic compliance with the dictates of society promotes a feeling of constraint rather than mental and physical freedom (Figure 78).

Reddaway was born in Lower Hutt and moved to Christchurch in 1981, where he studied at the Canterbury School of Art until 1985. Since then he has exhibited widely and has taught at various art schools including Elam, Canterbury and the Wellington Polytechnic (now Massey University). He has won several awards from the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council, one in 1989 allowing him to travel to Germany, where he studied at the Düsseldorf Kunstakademie under Christian Megert.

Initially Reddaway used photography as well as sculpture, the two media being closely entwined in his art practice. His photographs of the nude body were cut and collaged into architectural forms such as a pediment or column. His desire to subordinate the figure to a predetermined shape or position was in accord with his overall aesthetic. In some cases an arch shape composed of replicated figures in crouching poses recalls the way in which medieval craftsmen carved figures into caryatid roles in their buildings. Such figures are oppressed or constrained by the needs of their architectural function. In Reddaway's art, subjugation derives from the mindset imposed by society and its expectations.

PLATE 80 **Elizabeth Thomson, *Southern Cross Parterre*, 1997–98, James Wallace Trust, Auckland. Bronze, oil paint patina, 1800 x 1060 mm**

FIGURE 78 **Richard Reddaway, *Untitled*, maquette, 1994, Private collection. Cardboard on wood, 1800 x 900 mm**

It is paradoxical that his figures lack the specific character of Thomson's insects, moths and fish. Whereas her works delight in detail, Reddaway's figures can seem faceless robots lacking any kind of individuality. But as the artist has noted: 'While the figures are structurally identical, they are given individuality through their material being.' Reddaway's recycling of everyday materials such as ceramic tiles, broken crockery and timber seems to endorse a humdrum, low-value dimension in his manikins. Sunk in a world of mediocrity and repetition, they go through the motions of life without losing a touch of humour and a suggestion of hope.

Usually there is little strong colour in Reddaway's world, which is hardly surprising in view of its general themes. Rather it is in reflected light from the covering of mirror-glass tiles that some animation occurs, passively happening without any effort from the figures themselves. It could be said that his art reflects in more ways than one a society where conformity is prized and mediocrity valued above true excellence. The shattered dislocated look of his figures can stand for the dysfunctional aspects of the same social world. But Reddaway is no moralist or storyteller. His messages are built into the very structure of his work from which we tease out his meanings.

In contrast to Reddaway, the Christchurch sculptor Neil Dawson (b. 1948) does not represent the human figure in his art, nor does he typically give his works a feeling of weight or substance. Although Dawson's work is object-based, it is innovative in its conception and execution. Often his clients are corporate or civic, which allows him to create on a grand scale for public locations. Dawson epitomises the freedoms and opportunities for a professional sculptor in New Zealand. Whereas Dawson has been able to concentrate full time on his art, Reddaway, like many sculptors in New Zealand, has had to support his work by teaching. Dawson's commercial success is owed not only to the quality of his work but also to its compatibility with contemporary buildings and urban settings.

Dawson's sculpture is individual, unique and easy to recognise. In fact his sculptures flout convention in their lightness of feel, their transparency and their escape from the conventions of earthbound pedestal-based display. In his early solo exhibition entitled *House Alterations*, 1978, Dawson positioned his pieces around the walls and corners of the gallery, seeming to hang them like pictures rather than sit them like sculptures on the ground. In construction they were slight, being fabricated from wire so that they looked like drawings rather than solid things. The subject was the average house, a small box-like structure as featureless in its ordinariness as Reddaway's figures who might well feel at home in them. Dawson wanted something that everyone could understand and relate to. Already he was concerned about his audience and accessibility for his work. In this he was consciously turning away from the Post-Object art of the time with its obscure ritualistic dimension.

Born in Christchurch, Dawson grew up in Petone, Masterton and Hastings before attending the Canterbury School of Art from 1966 to 1969. Among his fellow students were gifted artists such as Boyd Webb and Philippa Blair. At Canterbury Eric Doudney and the more experimental Tom Taylor taught him sculpture. Once Taylor was in charge of sculpture in 1969, he allowed his students much the same freedom as Jim Allen encouraged in Auckland. A visit of expatriate

sculptor John Panting to the school in 1969 offered Dawson a window on the exciting world of modernism and contemporary British practice.

In 1972 Dawson was able to travel to Melbourne with the aid of a Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council grant to study at the Victorian College of the Arts. This began an enduring relationship with Australia, where he has exhibited widely and installed public works in the major centres. Having gained a graduate diploma in sculpture, he returned to New Zealand the following year. After his return, he taught design and drawing at the Christchurch Polytechnic from 1975 to 1983. Over this period he exhibited regularly and carried out temporary installations that later were to develop into commissions. Gradually he established a national and then international reputation.

Dawson found an individual identity for his work in the 1980s by enlarging its scale while retaining an elusive absence of the expected materiality and mass of conventional sculpture. His use of materials such as steel mesh, aluminium, carbon fibre and epoxy resin has allowed him to create an ephemeral kind of art that suggests space and three dimensions while dispensing with the bulk, the weight and the opacity of conventional sculpture. Mesh and aluminium allow the creation of forms that are transparent, perforated and resistant to precise definition. You simultaneously see and see through the forms, especially when the light of the sky surrounds the work, as happens with Dawson's outdoor pieces such as *Echo*, 1981, Arts Centre, Christchurch, and *Ripples*, 1987, Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hamilton. He relies on illusion to suggest substance and to allow involvement. His subtle command of perspective tricks the eye while drawing attention to his artifice in a way both elegant and knowing. In recent years he has used computer design, laser and water abrasion cutting as an important part of the working process.

A feature of Dawson's works has been the positioning of them in the air, literally off the ground, as if free from gravity and able to hover or float against a background of sky and clouds. This quality appeared first on a large scale with *Echo*, in which a simplified outline drawing of the Arts Centre, Christchurch, was suspended in the air above the real building. This drawing in metal tubing was itself three-dimensional but linear, hollow and weightless compared to the structure below. The juxtaposition was dramatic, allowing only one position for the sculpture to work its illusion and others in which the structure dissolved into an incoherent form. Dawson's use of the term 'echo' captures the light, fleeting quality of his work that seems to depend on something outside itself for its effect and presence. Like an apparition, his sculpture can evoke a response of surprise and wonder from people with no art background.

Some of his small gallery pieces of the mid-1980s like *Sky Walls*, 1985,

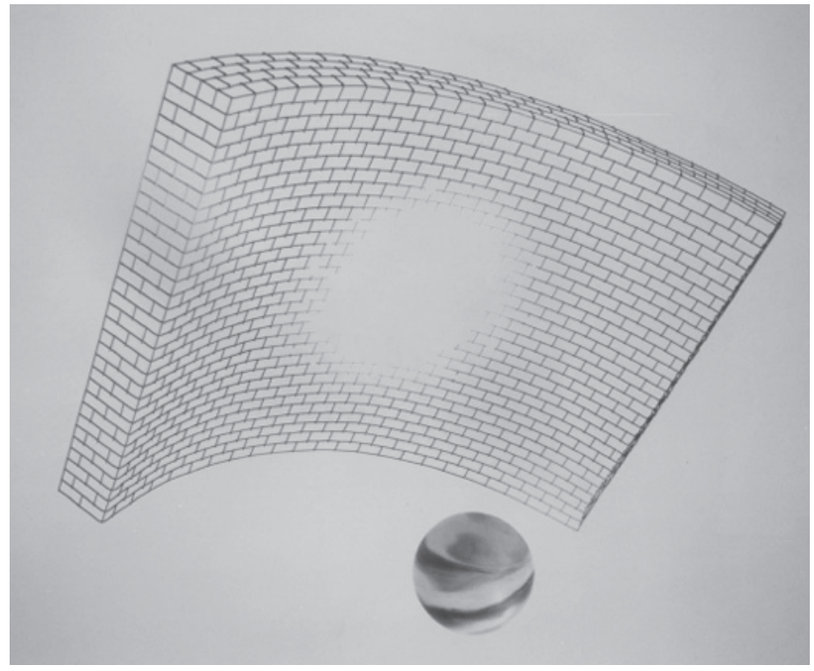


FIGURE 79 **Neil Dawson, *Impact*, 1985, Private collection. Mixed media, 1200 x 1200 x 800 mm**

simulate the effect of *Echo* by the use of mesh and paint to evoke the impossible — a brick wall floating through the sky. A related work, *Impact* (Figure 79), includes a found object, a rubber ball, positioned above the mesh wall that is curved as if in response to a collision with the ball. The ball appears to prefigure the globe works that follow soon after. *Ripples,* which is located near the Waikato River, projects into the sky the image of ripples of water radiating from a central point, as if in response to a cast stone. In this case the sculpture is like a reflection, indistinct, hard to pin down, and permeated by the sky.

Dawson's practice in the 1980s and 1990s has seen him carry out commissions for a variety of locations, some corporate like *The Rock,* 1984, for the Bank of New Zealand Centre, Wellington, and several for institutions, like *Featherlight*, 1990, suspended in the foyer of the Aotea Centre, Auckland. He has also completed a major commission *Horizons*, 1995 (Plate 81), for a private collector near Auckland. This large work, some thirty-five metres long, was based on an idea first developed in 1983 and achieves integration with the landscape in a way that the artist likes. On the international front Dawson has completed a variety of commissions, including *Canopy*, 1993, for the Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, and *Globe*, 1989, for the Pompidou Centre, Paris. His art is invariably clever, specific to its site and distinctive in its elusive position between the tangible and the perceptual. The problem with this kind of art, which Dawson has solved,

PLATE 81 **Neil Dawson, *Horizons*, 1995, Keystone Trust Collection. Steel mesh, length 35,000 mm**

is crossing the borderline between cleverness that can pall, and real meaning which endures. His art can appear materialistic in feeling but Dawson attempts to go beyond the appearances of the world to inner meanings or allusions. In this there are some parallels with Baroque sculpture and illusionism in both a symbolic and technical sense.

A characteristic example of Dawson's work is *Ferns*, 1998, located above Civic Square, Wellington (Plate 82). Realised as a globe suspended fourteen metres in the air, it is light and ephemeral but provides a focus for the eye from whatever point of the square or adjacent buildings it is viewed. Made out of sheet aluminium, the globe becomes a centrepiece for the square. After preliminary ideas were discarded, Dawson decided to shape his globe out of metal fern frond shapes. But he did not want a static effect, preferring, as he has said, 'a haphazard look that makes you feel as though the wind might have just blown the ferns into this sphere'. It has a constantly changing aspect as light reflects off its exterior silver surfaces or catches the gold inner parts of the globe. Dawson has given this piece a specific regional and iconic status through the use of native fern-leaf motifs that he has transformed into a memorable three-dimensional structure. His design incorporates five different varieties of native ferns including the silver fern, often used as a national logo. It can be related to *Leaf Sphere*, 1997, one of several public commissions the artist has carried out in Kuala Lumpur in recent years.

His large commission *Chalice*, 2000, for Cathedral Square in Christchurch involves some of the same ideas in leaf forms cut through the metal and seen

PLATE 82 **Neil Dawson, *Ferns*, 1998, Civic Square, Wellington. Painted aluminium, diameter 3600mm**

PLATE 83 **Andrew Drummond, *Listening and Viewing Device*, 1994, Wellington Botanic Gardens. Copper and steel, 5000 x 4500 x 600 mm**

against the sky in the upper sections of the work. Here, too, the inner cobalt colouring contrasts with the aluminium exterior to give colouristic richness to the conception. The leaf forms derive from indigenous species such as the titoki, kowhai and koromiko. As a millennium project, *Chalice* succeeds in bringing a contemporary dimension to a precinct very much imbued with the past and the founding of Canterbury. Dawson now works almost exclusively on large commissioned works and has not exhibited in a dealer gallery for several years.

The presence of Dawson in Christchurch contributes to its importance as a sculptural centre. In addition, it is the home of Andrew Drummond (b. 1951) a sculptor of comparable status whose work has a national profile. He began his career as a performance artist, staging a number of controversial public presentations in which his body was subjected to exposure and pain. In some ways his early career parallels that of Aucklander Peter Roche (b. 1957) whose body works similarly tested endurance thresholds. Drummond made specific corporeal references in early performance works such as *Filter Action,* 1980, where he alludes to kidney function, and *Vein*, 1980, to the circulatory system of the blood. He explored the interconnections between the body and nature with a view to commenting on important issues such as our management of the environment. For example, in *Filter Action* he performed a number of cleansing actions on the Aramoana foreshore, straining and filtering mud and water to ritualistically purify them. By doing so he protested against the potential pollution of the Aramoana estuary by an aluminium smelter proposed for the site. *Filter Action* embodied concerns about the conservation of natural resources that appear consistently in Drummond's art.

As his work developed, Drummond turned from performance art to the manufacture of finely crafted objects, presenting some pseudo-scientifically in wooden cabinets or glass-domed jars. His *Hanging Devices* series of 1994, for example, provokes the lost feelings of wonder generated by contemplating rare or remarkable things in old-style museum displays. Their glass domes exhibit found organic materials such as pieces of sphagnum moss and wax as well as fabricated components made from copper and brass. Each glass dome protects a hermetic world of natural and man-made forms as the earth's atmosphere safeguards our environment. The artist shows the fragility of our world and the need for conservation. On occasion Drummond introduces kinetic elements, such as pistons, to create mechanical movement. By doing so he can metaphorically allude to the breathing, living dimensions of the human body as well as make symbolic machines for cleansing the air. His *Listening and Viewing Device*, 1994, located on Druid's Hill in the Wellington Botanic Gardens (Plate

83), takes on an architectural dimension through its larger scale and outdoor setting. The suspended copper cone that responds to the natural forces of wind and rain magnifies sound and funnels vision. It is enclosed as if in a little temple, which gives it a shrine-like quality and alludes to Drummond's mystical side — he comes from a legend-rich, Celtic background. In such works the legacy of Len Lye can be sensed.

In recent sculptures Drummond has looked at the living history of the earth, using polished pieces of coal, for example, to draw attention not only to its visual properties but also to the lengthy organic processes required in its creation. One work, *Coal Wheel*, 1998 (Plate 84), in the form of a wheel ringed with pieces of coal, recalls the low-tech machinery once used locally to take miners underground to extract the mineral. A large version of this concept was installed in the Sun Alliance Centre, Auckland, in 2000. Drummond's sculptures have a distinct beauty as objects, with resonances less of the computer age than that of the nineteenth century. However, he has noted to the writer: 'I think it would be wrong to frame the work in a regressive manner as I am trying to allude to a way forward.'

Andrew Drummond attended art school in Canada graduating in 1975 with an honours degree in fine arts at the University of Waterloo. Since 1992 he has taught sculpture at the Canterbury School of Art. To his considerable achievement as a practitioner he is now adding a contribution as a lively and influential teacher. Over the years he has carried out various public commissions, including *Headland*, 1995, for the Tamaki campus at the University of Auckland. In 2000 he prepared a controversial design for a sculptural bridge across the Avon River in Christchurch.

Graham Bennett (b. 1947) has also established a distinctive presence in Christchurch, working in an abstract idiom. Trained at the Canterbury School of Art, he has made works which frame and comment on the landscape. Of his recent sculpture he has noted: 'I try to build a layered dialogue between the naturally occurring and the manufactured, measured or charted.' He likes to bring together materials like stone, wood and steel, combining and contrasting the man-made and organic. Bennett was recently awarded an important commission for an entrance sculpture to the new Christchurch art gallery. His commission, called *Reasons for Voyaging*, consists of seven stainless steel poles of varying angles and heights up to thirteen metres. Each pole is surmounted by an angled overhead element operated by digital controls and motors. Bennett alludes in the work to navigational systems such as star maps, stick charts and global segments.

Auckland, as the largest city in New Zealand, has become an established

PLATE 84 **Andrew Drummond, *Coal Wheel*, 1998, Jensen Gallery, Auckland. Brass and coal, diameter 2000 mm**

centre for contemporary sculptors and the best commercial venue for exhibiting and selling their work. Dealer galleries such as Gow/Langsford, Andrew Jensen and Sue Crockford provide strong support for their sculptors, while agents like Jane Sutherland actively promote others. In addition, the presence of Artspace, an important gallery for non-commercial work, and a cluster of art schools with sculpture departments make the city a lively place for established and emerging sculptors to live in. It also means that there is scope for a range of different theories and practices. Of contemporary male Auckland sculptors making object works, Peter Roche, Derrick Cherrie and Christopher Braddock indicate something of this diversity.

Peter Roche (b. 1957) began his career, as we have noted, as a performance artist but shifted in the mid-1980s to making object sculptures. These led to his series *Trophies and Emblems* of 1990 which consisted of kinetic sculptures, some wall- and some floor-mounted, that had moving mechanical parts which were noisy, technically unstable and in some cases dangerous to the viewer. This abrasive quality captured some of the aggression associated with Roche's performance pieces.

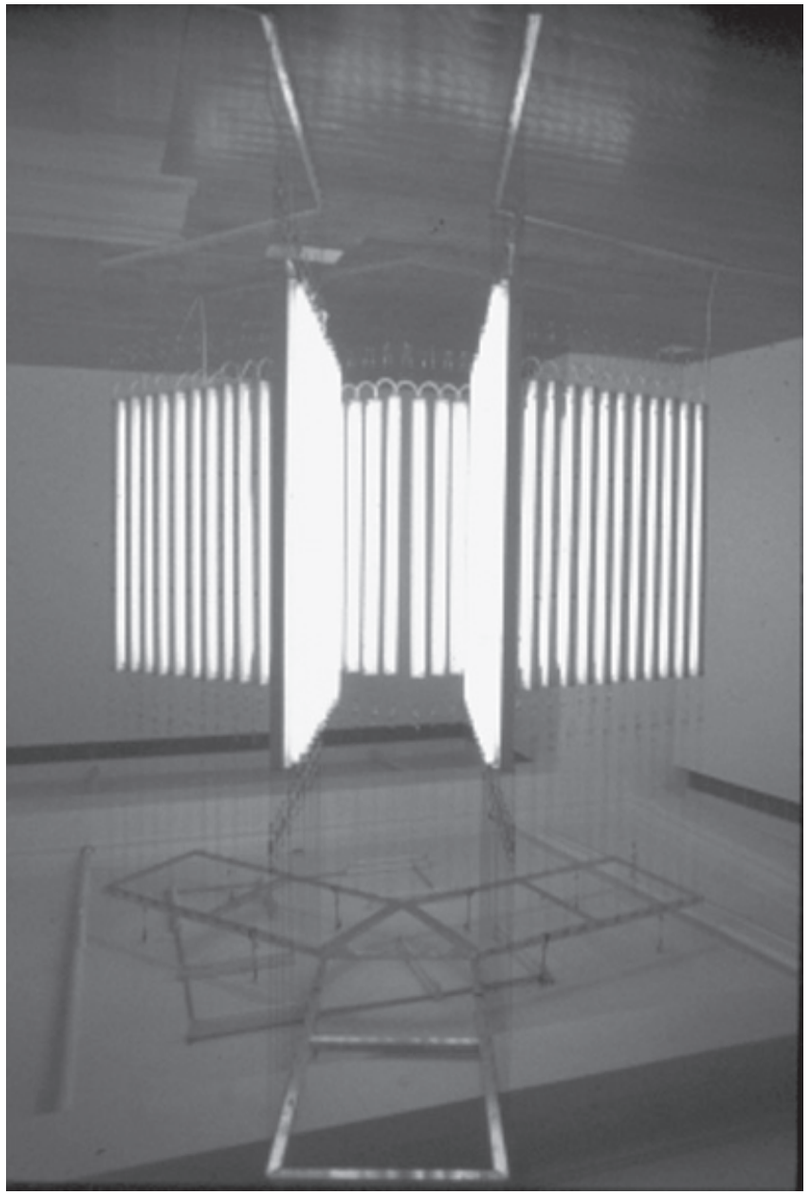


FIGURE 80 **Peter Roche, *Conduit*, 1998, Collection of artist. Fluorescent lights, 3500 x 3500 x 3700 mm**

These were followed by a major series of geometric wall sculptures made in the period 1992–1994. The works are themselves shaped in circular, hexagonal or octagonal formats with hard black enamel surfaces against which the sharp-edged shapes of his design were registered in a light, off-white tone. An excellent example of these is *Michelangelo*, 1993, a tondo inscribed with a reductive version of the Renaissance master's pavement design for the Capitoline Hill in Rome. In the centre a protruding neon tube creates a central nodal point of real light that pushes forward physically and tonally to create a pulsating feeling of projection and recession in the field. Roche has made powerful light sculptures, most notably *Conduit* for the Auckland Art Gallery in 1998 (Figure 80).

With works such as these, Roche established himself as an individual voice in abstract sculpture. The allusions in these works to the past and to different traditions of art have the layerings of meaning typical of postmodern practice, belying the surface appearance of modernist abstraction. The overtones of Op Art invite a comparison with the paintings of Gordon Walters.

The carefully constructed art of Derrick Cherrie (b. 1960) has a consistency in style and content that is assured without being complacent. He makes objects to look like products you might find in a commercial showroom. His 1992 *Supraluxe* suite of customised beds, for example, was originally displayed to look like a range of furniture in a store. Viewers wanted to check out its features rather than experience his sculpture as an art work. Cherrie makes sure that we encounter his works unconventionally by changing the expected relationship between audience and sculpture.

He embraces commercial materials like plastics, foam, formica and custom wood, as well as standard fittings such as sink drains, bed heads, chains, buckles, screws or castors. Cherrie has noted: 'I like the collective and individual associations that go with everyday objects.' Some of his works are like toys for adults; others have the associations of equipment for an institution, such as a hospital or place of correction.

The slick surfaces of his depersonalised materials can be read more as a critique than an endorsement of the capitalist obsession with *mod cons*, with the latest models, the newest features. Cherrie's objects, being literally drained of the individual, extol the generic and the uniform. Like Reddaway's figures, Cherrie's sculptures evoke a society of conformity, consumerism and the material. His preference for nearly new styles introduces the concept of obsolescence, the need to trade up to the latest model when this year's new model becomes superseded. The depressing awareness that you are stuck with a superseded range emanates from works like the Proluxe beds with their outmoded curves and slippery vinyl. Once noticed, details like depressions in the material make an impact on the senses and allow thoughts of people who might use or need these beds, some of which, equipped with hand rails or drainage holes, imply disability or dysfunction.

Cherrie's objects both attract and repel. Ultimately they are signs of what is both typical and tragic in modern life. They are furniture and playthings for the mind more than the body. For all their quality of manufacture, Cherrie's sculptures lack appeal as crafted objects because they celebrate the impersonal and mass-

PLATE 85 **Derrick Cherrie, *Studio,* 2001, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Galvanised steel, cedar, aluminium, copper, plywood, including chattels and mixed media components, 3700 x 5000 x 4000 mm**

produced. His major work *Studio,* fabricated in 2001, for example, is perhaps more interesting for what Cherrie has called 'the psychology of the spaces' than the object itself (Plate 85). As a half-scale model, it frustrates categorisation as a building or sculpture. At first sight it appears reassuringly normal and open for use, but on closer inspection its doors are locked and the external stair frustratingly small and hard to access. It raises questions about identity appropriate for a museum context, such as who and what it is for. Its potential use as a studio is implied in the title but made problematic by the reality of its small scale and puzzling emptiness.

Cherrie studied at Elam from 1974 to 1982, returning in 1995 to do a master's degree. He has taught extensively at tertiary level both at Elam and at the Unitec School of Art. Since 1997 he has been head of sculpture at Elam. Like Drummond, he now combines an active sculptural practice with teaching.

Among contemporary sculptors Christopher Braddock (b. 1962) shares some concerns with Cherrie. Like Cherrie, he is both artist and teacher. Also, he is a maker of objects that in his case are carefully crafted from materials such as timber and wire mesh. An example of these pieces is *Suck*, 1997 (Plate 86). At first his works have a cool, calculated look reminiscent of artefacts in a museum display. However, while his slatted sculptures are abstract in nature, they make references to the body so that the human dimension is always present. Braddock employs phallic forms to convey both the profane and sacred dimensions of sexual desire.

On close examination, his sculpture reveals a layering of symbolism. For example, his most recent pieces include votive-like tin boxes with lids perforated by crosses or hearts. Sourced in his Christian upbringing, the heart and cross with their connotations of devotional imagery are used to question the various meanings of votive objects and their symbolic power. Braddock studied at the University of Canterbury School of Art, in Paris and London. He now teaches at the Auckland University of Technology School of Art and Design.

PLATE 86 **Christopher Braddock, *Suck,* 1997, Private collection, Auckland. Wood 1960 x 3230 x 1960 mm**

PLATE 87 **Ani O'Neill, *Rainbow Country*, 2001, Courtesy Sue Crockford Gallery. Wool, steel rings, 200 pieces, 1550 x 2440 mm**

Conclusion:

Contemporary sculpture has a diversity and scope not seen before in New Zealand's history. While, as always, sculpture is a daunting career to pursue, it has become possible for artists to make a living by obtaining significant commissions both locally and internationally. The outstanding achievements of young Maori sculptors highlight the depth of New Zealand art today. As the new millennium begins, it can be confidently predicted that sculpture will continue to develop as an established part of the country's multicultural profile. Artists like John Ioane (b. 1962) and Michel Tuffery (b. 1968) of Samoan descent make reference to their Polynesian heritage in works that widen and enrich the range of contemporary practice. Also, the days when art was thought of purely as painting are long over. In fact, painting is often seen as an outmoded art form that cannot respond to the modern world with its wide range of new technology and ideas. Comparatively, sculpture is more open in its potential to absorb the new materials, technology and imagery that are part of the contemporary world. Because it involves real time and space, sculpture also has a direct impact denied to most painting. It is the preferred vehicle for artists with a message to communicate to the public at large, and not just to a gallery audience.

Increasingly, sculptors look to a variety of media and technology to create their works. This can include traditional materials such as stone or wood but also embrace more modern substances like aluminium, fibreglass, concrete, plastic and resin. Recycled materials play a prominent role, ranging from discarded furniture and motorcars to plastic containers of bright and varied colours such as those found in Culbert's work. Ephemeral substances such as honey, milk or jam have made an appearance in sculptural installation. Often the organic and the man-made are brought together in new and unlikely combinations. Traditional Maori motifs like the koru have been reinterpreted in substances like perspex and lit to give them a new look and contemporary meaning, as happens with some of Parekowhai's recent works. Ani O'Neill (b. 1971), who has a Cook Islands background, has turned to traditional crochet techniques to produce vibrant wall reliefs of novel and distinctive appearance in the gallery context, as happens with *Rainbow Country*, 2001 (Plate 87). She has been able to draw on the craft skills of an older generation to make motifs that, under her direction, take on new meaning as works of contemporary art. Sculptor Richard Shortland Cooper (b. 1962) found reinforced concrete very suitable for his colossal *Millennium Sculpture, He Taonga Hiranga Whakanui Whanau*, 2000 (Plate 88), for Manukau City, even though the imagery derives from his heritage as a New Zealander of Maori and Cook Island descent. It lent itself to the intimacy of registering the hand prints of his children as well as to the monumentality of the totemic form *E Tu* with its perforated opening symbolising an eye. He, like Dawson and Matchitt, has found laser cutting a useful technology for making large metal sculpture without the physical labour previously required.

A noteworthy development for some sculptors is their response to digital technology in the age of the Internet. Not only can imagery be manipulated in new ways but also spectator participation can be factored into the equation. For example, a digital version of Maureen Lander's *String Games* presented in 2000 at the Fisher Gallery, Auckland, in collaboration with John Fairclough, developed the original installation of 1998 to include interactive elements

PLATE 88 **Richard Shortland Cooper, *Millennium Sculpture, He Taonga Hiranga Whakanui Whanau*, 2000, Manukau City. Reinforced concrete, height 11 metres**

PLATE 89 **Maureen Lander, *Glorified Scales*, 2001, Auckland Museum, Te Papa Whakahiku. Multimedia installation**

controlled through computer manipulation of the imagery. Interactive elements also play an important part in Lander's multimedia installation *Glorified Scales*, 2001, Auckland Museum Te Papa Whakahiku. In this case participants could not only walk through the space but also don headphones to hear bird calls and poetry relevant to the theme of the work (Plate 89). Lander, like many contemporary artists, uses a web site as part of her overall technology when presenting her works to the public. It is not purely a tool for communicating information because she can also include additional visual and sound dimensions that enhance the work. The Internet has allowed sculptors like Chris Booth to have sites that project their work to a world audience. This is an advantage in creating an international profile when your home is in a geographically remote centre. Distance and a provincial location, so long a handicap for New Zealand sculptors, are no longer obstacles to their being known worldwide.

Increasingly a truly international dimension has arrived for artists who can participate in residencies in major art centres and show their sculpture to different audiences around the globe. Consequently they have first-hand access to contemporary art markets on a global scale that was impossible in earlier periods covered in this book. International biennales also provide ready opportunities for artists to travel and exhibit their works alongside their peers from other countries. New Zealand artists participated in the Venice Biennale for the first time in 2001, thanks to funding support from Creative New Zealand. Travelling to see major overseas exhibitions is no longer a once-in-a-lifetime experience. In New Zealand the introduction of themes and ideas from Asia has happened in recent years with immigration from Hong Kong, Korea, China and elsewhere. European and British art no longer holds a central position amidst these diverse cultural models. As a result, horizons have become broader and sculptural practice more wide-ranging. The existence of residencies for overseas artists in New Zealand also means that the cultural traffic flows in two directions. However, few contemporary sculptures by overseas artists have entered New Zealand collections. The Edmiston Trust gifted a major work by the American kinetic sculptor George Rickey (1907–1999) to the Auckland City Art Gallery in 1985 and a large piece was commissioned from British sculptor Richard Deacon (b. 1949) for the Auckland Savings Bank headquarters in Auckland in 1991. Such acquisitions are the exception rather than the rule.

The first years of the new millennium are an exciting time to be a sculptor, and a challenging one. For those like Terry Stringer, who still model and cast their works in traditional ways, there is no longer the same kudos for their craftsman skills. More value is placed on the concept than how it is rendered and on the message than the means of its delivery. Novelty and the ability to provoke a reaction seem more important than enduring formal statements. As the Virgin in a Condom controversy proved in Wellington a few years ago, contemporary sculpture can still shock. The popularity of Wearable Art competitions, in which

there is a sculptural dimension, helps to enliven public interest in novel forms and presentations. If such works are ephemeral in effect, some think that is so much the better. With the options of installation and performance art still available, sculptors can operate effectively without producing objects or selling them. Non-profit-making venues, like Artspace in Auckland, provide galleries and back-up for sculpture that would otherwise not be economically viable. Admittedly few artists continue with such works for long, as the careers of Drummond and Roche prove. But the non-commercial freedoms of Post-Object sculpture have attracted creative talents who do not fit easily into the conventional artist–patron relationship.

If there is no Colin McCahon figure among New Zealand sculptors, this is hardly surprising. Great sculptors are relatively few in any period. There are nevertheless many talented sculptors working in New Zealand today who are equal or superior to the painters who have received more critical attention and acclaim. Some young sculptors are ambitious and will rise to the challenge to build on the firm foundations laid for their practice by the artists discussed in these pages. Their challenges were different in kind, but the exacting standard required of sculptors who want to make works that will endure or have lasting meaning remains the same. It has always been difficult to reach the highest benchmarks and no amount of new technology or gimmickry will change that. It is interesting to note that there has been something of a revival of bronze statuary in recent years and early in 2002 plans were afoot to commemorate Sir Peter Blake in this way. Sculpture has the potential to reinvent itself in its traditional forms as well as to explore new technologies and ideas. The conditions for creating significant work have never been more favourable and we can look to the future with optimism.

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2 **Selected Articles**
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4 William Brassington, *Two Hands*, 1865, Provincial Council Chambers, Christchurch. Stone, life size

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7 Charles Kidson, *Daughter of Eve*, 1907, Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Christchurch. Marble, height 295 mm

8 Francis (Guy) Lynch, *Devonport War Memorial*, 1919–24, Auckland. Bronze, life size

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11 Richard Gross, *Cambridge War Memorial*, 1923, Cambridge. Marble, height of figure, 2700 mm

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18 Molly Macalister, *Birds*, 1954, Private collection, Auckland. Bronze, height 203 mm

19 W. R. (Jim) Allen, *Conversation Piece*, 1965, Pakuranga Shopping Centre, Auckland (destroyed). Concrete, height 3050 mm

20 Molly Macalister, *Standing Figure*, 1959, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki. Concrete, height 1035 mm

21 Paul Beadle, *Dial a Vice or Virtue*, 1978, Private collection, Auckland. Bronze, 242 x 175 mm

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23 Greer Twiss, *Marchers*, 1967, Private collection, Auckland. Bronze and paint, 1130 x 640 x 600 mm

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25 Greer Twiss, *Touch*, 1972, University of Auckland. Bronze and paint, 160 x 170 x 140 mm

26 Greer Twiss, *Link*, 1976, University of Auckland. Steel and lead, 1525 x 2340 mm

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28 Paul Dibble, *Snapshot*, 1997, Private collection. Bronze, 1020 x 240 x 240 mm

29 Terry Stringer, *Schoolgirl*, 1983, Collection B. Grossman, Auckland. Bronze, height 1200 mm

30 Terry Stringer, *Table in Two Planes*, 1987, Collection J. Gibbs Trust, Auckland. Bronze, height 1400 mm

31 Terry Stringer, *Seize the Day While You May*, 1998, Collection artist. Bronze, height 1500 mm

32 Denis O'Connor, *High Court Triptych*, 1990, Auckland. Mt Somers stone, height 500 mm, width 1700 mm (each section)

33 Denis O'Connor, *UA (Out of, from)*, 1994, Private collection. Oiled slate, 1874 x 1460 mm

34 Bronwynne Cornish, *The Dreamer*, 1989, Private collection, Whangarei. Clay, sand and plants, 3000 x 2000 mm

35 Chiara Corbelletto, *Gold Disks Installation*, 1996, Archill Gallery, Auckland. 2500 styrene disks, 4500 brass links

36 Tom Taylor, *Transit*, 1976, University of Auckland. Steel, 2700 x 4200 x 3300 mm

37 Edward Bullmore, *Hikurangi No. 8*, 1964, Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Christchurch. Mixed media, 1220 x 870 x 130 mm

38 Carl Sydow, *Meander I*, 1970, Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Christchurch. Perspex, hose and aluminum base, 1832 x 920 x 308 mm

39 Don Driver, *Relief No.10*, 1972, Private collection, Auckland. Acrylic on canvas panels, 1455 x 1860 x 65 mm

40 Don Driver, *Large Cosmos*, 1975, University of Auckland. Wood and perspex, 2020 x 1380 x 300 mm

41 Don Driver, *Tooled Diptych*, 1996, Collection of artist. Mixed media, diameter 1630 mm

42 Peter Nicholls, *Luff*, 1988, cedar, jarrah and bronze, 5000 x 5000 x 3000 mm. Private collection, Auckland

43 Peter Nicholls, *Rakaia*, 1996–97, Keystone Trust Collection. Australian hardwood with timbercryl, 4500 x 60,000 x 5000 mm

44 Warren Viscoe, *Fifteen Bird Calls*, 1982, Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui. Mixed media.

45 Marté Szirmay, *Smirnoff Sculpture*, 1969, Newmarket, Auckland. Aluminium sheet, 2600 x 4900 x 2000 mm

46 Marté Szirmay, *Untitled*, 1975, University of Auckland. Stainless steel, 1350 x 1600 x 1350 mm

47 Marté Szirmay, *Chase Plaza Water Sculpture*, 1987, Auckland (destroyed). Stainless steel, 7000 x 2000 x 6000 mm

48 W. R. (Jim) Allen, *New Zealand Environment, No. 5*, 1969, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth. Mixed media 1830 x 1830 x 5486 mm

49 Bill Culbert, *Colour Theory*, 1991. Neon, installation Wellington City Gallery

50 Paul Hartigan, *Flush Arena (with Timekeeper)*, 1987–95, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth. Neon, 2800 x 5800 mm

51 Mary-Louise Browne, *Rape to Ruin*, 1990, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth. Granite and gold leaf 2820 x 300 mm

52 Mary-Louise Browne, *Body to Soul*, 1994, Wellington Botanic Gardens. Granite, 7020 x 1000 mm

53 Arnold Wilson, *He Tangata*, *He Tangata*, 1956, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki. Wood, 1170 x 360 x 300 mm

54 Arnold Wilson, *Pou Whenua III (Three Poles)*, 1998, Private collection, Wellington. Wood, each 3000 x 250 mm

55 Fred Graham, *Kereana*, 1984, Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hamilton. Steatite, 640 x 520 x 745 mm

56 Para Matchitt, *Bridge Sculpture*, 1993, Civic Square, Wellington. Timber and mixed media (detail)

57 Para Matchitt, *Heritage Fountain*, 1996, Marine Parade, Napier. Galvanised steel, height 8000 mm

58 Para Matchitt, *Heritage Fountain*, 1996, galvanised steel. Marine Parade, Napier. Detail

59 Selwyn Muru, *Waharoa*, 1990, Aotea Square, Auckland. Timber and paint, width 10,000 mm

60 Cliff Whiting and others, *Te Hono ki Hawaiki*, 1998, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, New Zealand. (F.4383/3)

61 Robert Jahnke, *Koha*, 1998, Installation, Artis Gallery, Auckland. Totara and bronze, each work 700 x 40 x 100 mm

62 Brett Graham, *Manu Tawhiowhio*, 1996, Auckland Institute of Technology. Wood, copper and riverstone, height 7000 mm, base 650 mm in diameter

63 Brett Graham, *Lapita*, 1998, Tjibaou Centre, Noumea. Stone, 2000 x 800 x 800 mm

64 Michael Parekowhai, *Kiss the Baby Goodbye*, 1994, Chartwell collection. Powder coated steel, 4000 x 4000 x 200 mm

65 Michael Parekowhai, *Ten Guitars*, 1999, Artspace, Auckland. Guitars, cases, straps, raisers. Each guitar 1040 x 430 x 130 mm

66 Jacqueline Fraser, *The Illumination of the 38 Dresses*, 1995, Sue Crockford Gallery. Wire, 2500 x 1500 mm

67 Maureen Lander, *String Games*, 1998, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, New Zealand. Installation, mixed media

68 Hariata Tangahoe, *Whakapapa Hou*, 1997, Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hamilton. Installation, mixed media

69 Paul Hartigan, *Nebula Orion*, 2001, Christchurch. Neon, 11530 x 7060 x 100 mm

70 Chris Booth, *Cave*, 1994–97, Takahanga Marae, Kaikoura. Stone, stainless steel cable and wire, 3000 x 3000 x 5000 mm

71 Chris Booth, *Cave*, 1994–97, Takahanga Marae, Kaikoura. Detail

72 Chris Booth, *Wiyung Tchellungnai-najil (Keeper of the Flame*), 1997, Evandale Sculpture Walk, Gold Coast City Art Gallery, Queensland, Australia. Stone, 9000 x 7500 x 7500 mm

73 Bing Dawe, *Eel – Birdling's Flat – Black Stones, Waitaki River*, 1997, Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Christchurch. Wood, canvas, paint, 500 x 600 x 260 mm

74 Charlotte Fisher, *The Arc*, 1991, Private collection, Auckland. Australian sandstone and hinuera stone, 2000 x 1100 x 500 mm

75 Jeff Thomson, *H.Q. Holden*, 1991, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, New Zealand (B.28157)

76 Jeff Thomson, *Pirouette*, 1993, Collection of artist. Corrugated iron, height 3000 mm

77 Christine Hellyar, *Clutch, Brood and Echo*, 1990, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington, New Zealand. (B.36380) Mixed media

78 Christine Hellyar, *Armlet*, 1993, University of Auckland. Patinated bronze, three units, height 1370 mm

79 Judy Darragh, *Two Graces*, 1994, Collection of artist. Mixed media, 1600 x 1600 mm

80 Elizabeth Thomson, *Southern Cross Parterre*, 1997–98, James Wallace Trust, Auckland. Bronze, oil paint patina, 1800 x 1060 mm

81 Neil Dawson, *Horizons*, 1995, Keystone Trust Collection. Steel mesh, length 35,000 mm

82 Neil Dawson, *Ferns*, 1998, Civic Square, Wellington. Painted aluminium, diameter 3600mm

83 Andrew Drummond, *Listening and Viewing Device*, 1994, Wellington Botanic Gardens. Copper and steel, 5000 x 4500 x 600 mm

84 Andrew Drummond, *Coal Wheel*, 1998, Jensen Gallery, Auckland. Brass and coal, diameter 2000 mm

85 Derrick Cherrie, *Studio*, 2001, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Galvanised steel, cedar, aluminium, copper, plywood, including chattels and mixed media components, 3700 x 5000 x 4000 mm

86 Christopher Braddock, *Suck*, 1997, Private collection, Auckland. Wood 1960 x 3230 x 1960 mm

87 Ani O'Neil, *Rainbow Country*, 2001, Courtesy Sue Crockford Gallery. Wool, steel rings, 200 pieces, 1550 x 2440 mm

88 Richard Shortland Cooper, *Millennium Sculpture, He Taonga Hiranga Whakanui Whanau*, 2000, Manukau City. Reinforced concrete, height 11 metres

89 Maureen Lander, *Glorified Scales*, 2001, Auckland Museum, Te Papa Whakahiku. Multimedia installation

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