

TBP 1971

205

BIG

TEN

PAINTINGS

E.T. COPY



Auckland City Art Gallery

February 1971

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TEN BIG PAINTINGS

'The Big Picture, or perhaps I should say the Big Canvas, is a peculiar phenomenon of our period. By the Big Canvas I mean something actual, in physical size; a canvas whose footage in both directions is larger than the comprehensive image the eye is capable of taking in from the customary distance. The customary distance is that normally and previously satisfactory for a complete view of the average easel painting, prior to the increase of this average in the past ten years.' E. C. Goossen, Art International, November, 1958.

Because of space and financial restraints, there have been few opportunities in New Zealand for the development and production of very large paintings. Large, in this case, is quite relative, as some American painters, particularly since about the fourth-decade of this century, have produced paintings of huge dimensions. Earlier, in the 16th century, the power and wealth of Venice was glorified in grandiose canvases of tremendous size. And a monolithic scale was felt to be a need by some European painters of the 19th century. In May 1969, the Exhibitions Section of the Auckland City Art Gallery devised

the Ten Big Paintings project. The idea behind this proposal is that scale is of paramount importance and that the works should not be a collection of small paintings hung closely together. That the City Gallery should arrange and subsidise the exhibition, prepare the stretched canvases and co-operate with ten invited artists to produce an exhibition of large-scale paintings as part of the re-establishment of the gallery's activities and the re-opening programme of the new Edmiston Wing.

Each painter was left with complete autonomy over their work but was given a chance to do something which, under normal circumstances, could be uneconomic. Some painters had expressed their interest in working to this scale, but without a specific project and purpose the production of large-scale works is usually impracticable.

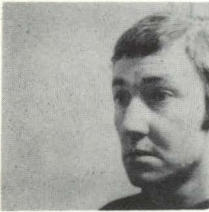
From the beginning the project has been conceived as an exercise in positive patronage. Also, apart from the general interest created amongst the painters and public alike, this exhibition could make a worthwhile point to architects and others who could make use of large-scale works in building projects.

We are all grateful to the Auckland City Council for granting funds involved in preparing this exhibition and to the painters for their useful suggestions and co-operation throughout. We also thank the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council who have made money available for a New Zealand tour of this exhibition.

GIL DOCKING Director

Sizes are given in feet, height before width

1



Don Driver born Hastings 1930
FIVE PART WORK 1970
acrylic on canvas 10 x 20

2



Michael Eaton born Blenheim 1937
UNTITLED 1970/71
liquitex and polyurethane enamel 5 x 40

'The chance to execute a painting of this size is an exciting challenge. But the greatest attraction for me is the hope that a work of this nature will totally involve the viewer in perceiving the areas of colour and shape – the way they interplay and interact on each other – therefore evoking some positive response or reaction.'

3



Robert Ellis born England 1929
JOURNEY
oil on canvas 10 x 20

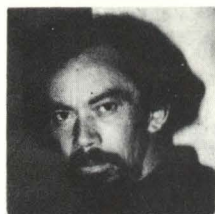
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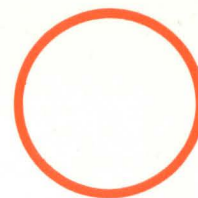
Patrick Hanly born Palmerston North 1932
WHENCE COME WE? WHAT ARE WE?
WHITHER GO WE?
(Paul Gauguin)
oil on canvas 10 x 20

*'The works from nearly three years ago up to the present are based on the idea of the **Divine** molecular event existing in **all** things, even in the void where creation begins.'*

5

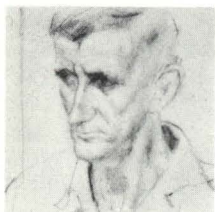


Ralph Hotere born Mitimiti 1931
 FEBRUARY MAY AND THE BIRDS OF ICE
 THE MOON DROWNS IN ITS VOICES OF WATER
 (Poem: *Bill Manhire*)
 pigment dyes in alkyd resin on canvas 10 x 20



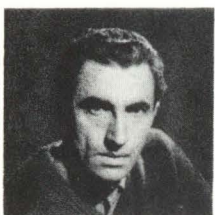
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Drawing: Garth Tapper



Colin McCahon born Timaru 1919
 GATE III NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1970
 acrylic on canvas 10 x 35

7



Milan Mrkusich born Dargaville 1925
 UNTITLED
 acrylic on canvas 10 x 20

8



Don Peebles born Taneatua 1922
 PAINTING 1970
 acrylic on canvas 10 x 20

'One can discuss one's methods, one's ideas; but the painting done must be left to speak for itself. Enough then of the artist's explanatory jargon which reveals only his need to compensate for pictorial weakness – painting is a silent art.'

9



Ross Ritchie born Wellington 1941
 INCH
 acrylic on canvas 10 x 20

10



Wong Sing Tai born Otaki 1943
 DEDICATED TO AMOGHASIDDHI
 acrylic on canvas 10 x 15

