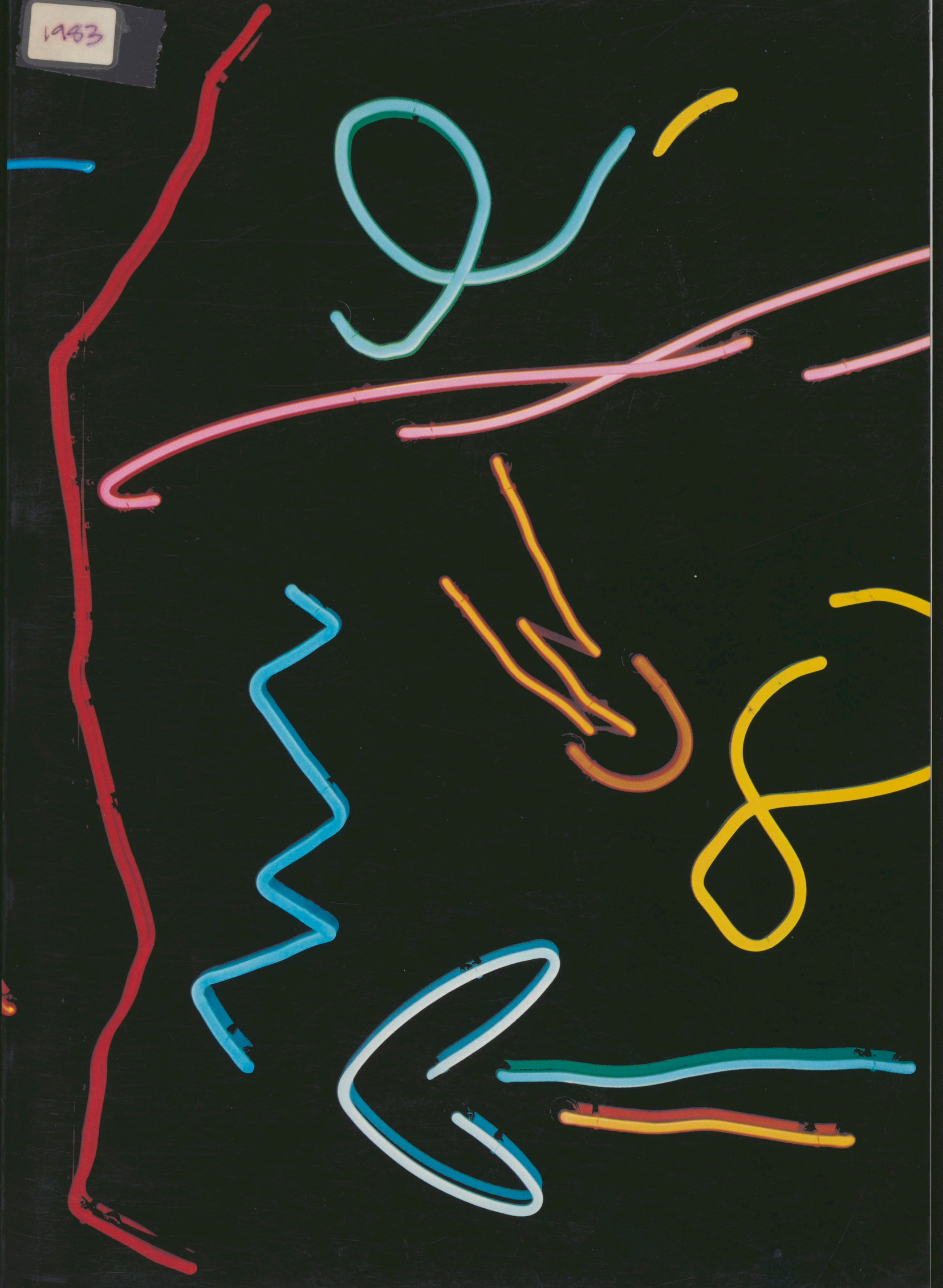


1983



ERRATA

New Image

- Page 9 Urban Imagery Title of painting should read
Gertrude Stein discovers Rangitoto
- Page 12 References to *Morris Louis Painting Machine*
should read *the Morris Louis staining device*
- Page 22 **Real Estate** The butcher shop referred to is in
Sandringham Road, Auckland.
- Page 27 Catalogue number 4 should read:
collection Miss A Bidwill
- Page 30 Title of catalogue number 7 is *the Morris Louis staining*
device
& 31 Catalogue numbers 6, 7, and 8 were not exhibited at Peter
Webb Galleries
- Page 37 Richard Killeen won the Benson and Hedges Art Award in
1976
- Page 41 Catalogue number 23 should read:
Collection Mr Philip Peacocke
- Page 45 Catalogue number 37 was exhibited at Barry Lett
Galleries under the title *Rolling Stone Cover*
Measurement should read 845 x 615
- Page 50 The photograph of *The Nile in flood*, catalogue number 43
is printed upside down
- Page 53 Catalogue number 55, should read:
inscribed l.r. GB81

New Image

Aspects of recent New Zealand art

Auckland City Art Gallery 1983
RESEARCH LIBRARY
AUCKLAND CITY ART GALLERY

cover: Paul Hartigan

The Plight of Persephone 1982 (detail)

neon tubing and galvanized iron

collection: Auckland City Art Gallery

Purchased with the assistance of
Q.E.II Arts Council of New Zealand.

Designer

Ross Ritchie

Editor

Ronald Brownson

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Preface

The curator for this exhibition has been Francis Pound for the New Zealand Painting and Sculpture Department of the Auckland City Art Gallery. He has written the introductory text and all artist essays, with the exception of the George Balogh essay which is by Andrew Bogle. The organising curator is Alexa Johnston. We are deeply indebted to Francis Pound for his discerning selection, incisive eye, and his eloquent writing.

The exhibition will tour throughout New Zealand and this tour has been organised by the New Zealand Art Gallery Directors Council. Our thanks go out to the NZAGDC, as well as to the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand, and the ratepayers of Auckland City, who have jointly financed both the exhibition and its catalogue.

The catalogue, designed by Ross Ritchie and edited by Ronald Brownson, will be joined by others of similar format over the next two years. In due course they will represent a compendium of information on some of the most persuasive art and artists of the 1970s.

Foreword

by T. L. Rodney Wilson
Director

Aspects of recent New Zealand art is a short series of exhibitions and linked publications which looks at some manifestations of contemporary New Zealand art through the seventies and into the early eighties. These exhibitions, of which this is the first, are 'curatorial' exhibitions; that is, they seek to come to grips with certain phenomena by examining works of like artists. The artists concerned in each group will not necessarily have a consciousness of working within an 'area' such as the ones defined by the exhibitions — there is no 'movement' as such — but their works will concern themselves with similar issues and will possess certain similarities. These similarities may be evident when comparing one artist with another within the group but they will be especially so when comparing that artist with others outside the group. In each case the exhibitions seek to represent the wholeness of each area explored and the curator has sought to plot the development of that particular way of seeing.

The exhibition series is not intended to add up to a survey of recent New Zealand art. Instead it seeks to explore in depth some characteristic concerns of the last few years. Certain other concerns will remain, for the time being, unexplored, or will have been the subject of separate exhibitions independent of this series ("Seven painters/the eighties"). It is hoped that the publications prepared for each show will contribute a useful update to the documentation available on contemporary New Zealand art.

New Image concerns itself with a group of figurative painters, or painters who evoke memories of, or associations with, objects. They are linked by these qualities, by certain shared concerns, by a similar language and by choice of colour, paint quality and surface. They are a diverse group for all the similarities, sharing a mix of attitudes and formal vocabulary rather than any pursuit of a common goal or adherence to common models.

New Image

by Francis Pound

All the painters here catalogued under New Image paint figurative images, or might be said to do so, but the images they paint mostly *look* different from those painted before abstraction. So such painting in the 1970s in Europe and America was labelled, not just New Image, but Post Abstraction, and it was claimed for it that it was the new movement after abstraction's demise. Now, there's no need to believe that abstraction is entirely done for. We may still see that, in the 1970s in America and Europe, despite the disgust of formalist critics, the image was resurgent, an image that bore traces with it of the abstraction through which it had come. Some of these image painters — Philip Guston for example — had even been abstractionists once. This painting didn't pretend abstraction never had happened. So it was not, necessarily, retrogressive. (Its *quality*, I know, is another matter: can it offer, a voice without origin asks, painters as fine as Stella, or Rothko, or Newman?)

A similar thing happened in New Zealand in the 1970s. Young painters appeared for whom the image was important, and a different kind of image from previous New Zealand images: such diverse painters as Chilcott, Frizzell, Hartigan, Killeen, Watkins, Wong Sing Tai.

Of the painters shown here, Frizzell most happily accepts the title New Image, and all the anti-abstractionist critical baggage it has sometimes carried in America, and Killeen least happily takes it — *his* origins are as much in formalist abstraction. Be that as it may, all these painters paint images, new images for New Zealand, and paint them in a new kind of way.

The painters catalogued here under the title *New Image* are not a group in the way, say, the Impressionists or Cubists were. They do not paint in the same style, nor share the same images. My selection and hanging are intended, rather, to show their differences, their individuality. But they do all have some things in common.

Images

Most obviously, they all use images. Though they use different images, and use images differently, the image is important to all of them.

They are what is called "figurative" rather than "abstract" painters. But those labels don't fit them easily: "figurative" ignores the abstract elements in their work, and the abstract *works* in their work, "abstract" ignores the appearance of familiar images. Killeen, Chilcott, Hartigan and Wong use images that swing between figurative and abstract. They may all represent recognisable things, yet remove them from their normal context (Killeen's insect, or Hartigan's doughnut). None of them copies a thing as it looks in the world; they abbreviate it, exaggerate it, offer only its identifying sign — as in a dictionary definition. Images from the world are radically transformed in their passage to art: in scale, material, placement, colour. To an extent this transformation may neutralise "meaning". The image may become then: a physical object, an abstract shape, a receptacle for paint, part of an ambiguous narrative, a piece of a formal game — or all of these things. And yet, always, meanings cling to their images still, like a fine and pervasive dust.

Art about art

Naturalism is pre-eminently the bourgeois style which, as with bourgeois ideology, pretends to be no ideology at all — just nature. If naturalism is the style which pretends to be no style at all, just a copy of what we see in the world, then these artists are not naturalistic. They make things that blatantly declare themselves art.

Their brushwork may be so assertively visible as to declare we are looking *at* a surface, not *through* it, at a picture plane and not, not at all, through a window to the world (Frizzell, Killeen, Hartigan). Colour may be presented flat, pure, unmodulated by light and shade, so that there is no illusion of volume

(Killeen, Hartigan, Wong, Chilcott, Watkins). The image may be isolated from all natural context (Killeen and Hartigan especially, or Frizzell in his *Home is where the Art is* and his *Everybody's Business* paintings). Or the image may be outlined in black (Hartigan, Watkins, Frizzell). So purely artistic conventions are stressed: there is no brushwork, nor colour uncircled by light and shade, nor image without context, nor black outline, in nature.

One other way they make things that declare themselves art is to make artworks that refer to other artworks.

Killeen has a cut-out paint dribble taken from an Ian Scott dribble on the studio floor, cut-outs of Chinese jades, and such art-things as Egyptian pots. Denys Watkins has an abstract painter striding as a classical nude, a Morris Louis painting machine, a sculptural monitoring showcase, and paintings painted within paintings. In *Real Estate* 1972 he paints Lichtenstein's *Brushstroke*, itself a comic style version of the Abstract Expressionist stroke, now, with Watkins, a painting three ways removed from the world. Frizzell has a McCahon-like lamp in *A Holy Land of Sorts*; a punning take-off of Goldie in *Golden Oldie*, a portrait of an old Maori chief; has done a remake of Stubbs' *Lion attacking a horse*; he has a parrot declaring "now that's what I call painting", his painting praising itself; his title *Metaphysical Cheese* cheeses the Metaphysical painters de Chirico, Carra and co. Hartigan, in his screenprint *Untitled — Nailpolish*, shows a fingernail lovingly being painted, cosmetics being, as Baudelaire said, like all arts, an improvement on nature. In his *Dictionary* paintings Hartigan lists the subjects from some years of his own painting — and one of them is the artist's palette. His *Picasso*, 1982, offers Picasso's signature in neon — the signature — nothing else. Picasso, the art-star, the very *sign* of modern artness in the popular mind: the signature, the very *sign* of the artwork's value — for investors buy signatures, not paintings — the very *sign* of the bourgeois myth of individual genius. Wong, in *Temple of Apollo*, refers to Lichtenstein's comic-style version of the same, making another image three times removed from the world, and in an otherwise straight copy of a Mondrian, ruffles one of Mondrian's edges. Chilcott paints *Meet me in the sculpture garden at four*, *Museum Piece*, *Laocoon revisited* and *Madonna with the Long Neck* (the title of a painting by Parmigianino).

There is also a constant reference to non-art images — posters, comics, tattoos, graffiti, labels, logos, camouflage, patterns on pottery, lino, or cloth, to movies or sci-fi mags, to all signs and symbols, as much references to images of the world as to the world to which the images refer. Their art is an art of images, an art whose images refer as much to images of the world as to the world: an art about *ways of seeing* the world, as much as an art *about* the world.

International idiom

Unlike the New Zealand regional realists, these painters are not self-consciously *New Zealand* painters. Killeen's 1971 painting, *The New Zealand landscape painting tradition?* made this a matter for explicit remark. It had white twig on its frame, a teasing reference, perhaps, to the old house and dead tree school of New Zealand painting, had the word *painting* brightest (as does McCahon have some of his words brighter), as if to say it is *painting*, not landscape, that ought to be the painter's proper concern. Saying it, ironically, in a style that is at once a respectful bow to, and a refusal of the McCahon style of landscape painting in New Zealand. In his cut-outs, while Killeen may include Cook's *Endeavour*, and if some other artefacts are Maori, as many are Chinese, or American, or Egyptian: the same with his plants, insects or animals — as many are exotic as native. Frizzell, Hartigan, Chilcott — they are as liable to paint a cactus as a kauri. Wong's only landscapes are moonscapes, or of the Californian badlands — chosen to symbolise states of mind, not as symbols of place. As Killeen says: "Is there a New Zealand *physics*?" No one, he means, expects *that*. Then why should there be a New Zealand painting?

In the 1930s, 1940s, 1950s and 1960s in New Zealand there

was a self-conscious search among artists, writers, critics, for New Zealand content, New Zealand style, New Zealand identity (and a critical conspiracy to deny or suppress overseas influence, a pathetic sort of patriotism). A new generation of painters, the painters of the 1970s, couldn't care less about all that. For them, a New Zealand identity in art is, now, a dead question. They look freely to America, England, Mexico, the moon — elsewhere.

Urban imagery

"Nature, today, is the city" (Roland Barthes). Only a very selective vision can make it seem not so. Either the artist makes sketching trips to the country (a very 19th century performance) or decides to abandon the city, home of art, and actually *live* in the country. But one always felt with a Palmer print, or a Binney painting, that just outside the frame was a power pylon, or a Beazley bach.

The new generation of artists, on the other hand, are at home in the city. They *like* suburbia. Significantly, this is as true of the "abstract" artists as it is of the "figurative". Ian Scott, for instance, says: "I happen to like the suburban landscape, with its neatness, bright colours, clean edges — an area of white weatherboards, a touch of bright red curtain to one side, a green hedge in front, and a blue sky above." (*Art New Zealand* no. 13, p.34.) So Scott and Killeen in their early hard-edge realist works (not included in this exhibition) showed a kind of ironic affection for suburbia, as did Watkins in such works as *Gertrude Stein discovers America*. And the posters, billboards, ads, neon, the effusive glitter of the city, all its amorous sparkle, as much a conglomerate of images as anything, is enthusiastically accepted by such artists as Hartigan, Chilcott, Frizzell and Wong.

This, in turn, relates to the internationalist idiom. New York has no dead trees, nor kauris, or weatherboard and tin roof houses, no, nor dark hills — but, like Auckland, it has neon, billboards, posters, the strip club facades Hartigan likes and Wong says he grew up among, ads, tv, the trash of image heaped upon image, an international language of signs.

Not neurotic, no anguish nor angst

"No jars of blood or bottles of angst" declares Frizzell, not "the dead baby school" says another. As for Killeen, let one of his titles speak: "At last a happy, normal painting." The New Image artists are not among those who look on the dark side of life, finding it less trying to the eyes. These artists keep cool about their images. A detachment is maintained either by the radical manipulation of images, an interest as much in their formal relation as in their content (Killeen especially), by using images that are images of what already are images, and so are relatively non-personal, even if personally liked (Killeen, Hartigan, Chilcott, Frizzell, Watkins, Wong), or by various levels and manners of irony.

Wit — verbal and visual

Hartigan's *Little Lies* for falsies, or *Treasure Chest* for a big bosom, his *Primary School*, a school of chocolate fish in three primary colours; Frizzell's awful punning, putting it all on the lion, as he says, his A-Fishial Art Exhibition; Killeen's surprising juxtapositions, or his occasionally self-deprecatory titles (*Pea beau*, a fly-spray — to be used on his insect cut-outs?); Chilcott's *Bermuda Triangle Regatta*, a dangerous race; Wong's dolphin flying over Rangitoto: there is a levity. Sometimes their art is ironical about other art. Let me adduce again Wong's wobbled Mondrian. Or art conventions are ironically treated, as with the convention of the frame in Killeen's 1979 cut-out, *Potter Wasp*, where the lobster is sliced by an invisible frame, or as in Watkins' *Landscape painter's kit*, where instead of a landscape we are offered the conventional gear to paint one. Or look at Watkins' depicted canvases stretched before depicted landscapes. They are, I suppose, ironical landscape paintings, ironical about the very convention of landscape, landscape the *picturesque* — the already painted.

Again, cannot even abstract shapes and colours seem ironical? *Silly Shapes* is the title of one of Hartigan's works. A

lot of his half-abstract, half-figurative shapes are shapes that don't seem to take themselves seriously, refuse to be so taken — jellybean, doughnut, soft wobbly shapes, absurd scatterings. And the colours too — of lolly scrambles or comics. Similarly, with Chilcott, one sometimes has the colours of ice-creams, the pastels of a 1950s bathroom. It is hard to say of pale lime green that it should be taken seriously — that it is profound — and that is because of such a colour's associations. One of Chilcott's works is called *Blue Moon* — both the title of a corny song, a cliché, a 'beautiful' image, and a superb ice-cream made in Hawkes Bay. And his patterns may sometimes remind one of 1950s lino or curtains — those *art moderne* shapes (modernesque, as Hartigan would say), shapes for which Chilcott feels, I suppose, an ironic affection.

The discredited

All these artists turn to images not ordinarily associated with art — images of low art rather than high. Chilcott and Hartigan turn to *art moderne* patterns of the 1950s (not, even then, quite in "good taste"); Hartigan to tattoo and graffiti, for the middle class the art of louts and vandals; Wong to sci-fi mags, saying "the most potent contemporary art is not to be found in the galleries but in the mass media"; Frizzell and Hartigan to the colours and subjects of comics (pop art showed them the way); Watkins to Tin Tin books; Killeen to bookplates of tools, insects, pots, etc., intended as scientific illustration, not art. With all these painters, from non art images come images of art.

Neither are their *materials* those of high art, or, at least, of traditional high art. Frizzell and Hartigan use enamel — housepainter's stuff not art's — though McCahon here may have (unwittingly) shown them the way. Hartigan's latest works are in neon; Wong paints on perspex; Killeen sprays lacquer on aluminium sheet — like a car painter; Chilcott doesn't stretch his canvases properly (McCahon again?); and even Watkins' medium of watercolour has so fallen into disrepute that at art school, the present writer was asked "When are you going to do your watercolours in oils?" i.e., into *real* painting — and this in a place where a line of grease on a pavement could happily be called painting, or a sound, sculpture. Watercolour, now, is thought to be fit only for old ladies and children.

In Summary

Images; art about art; international idiom; not neurotic, no anguish nor angst; wit, verbal and visual; sources in the discredited: these things these artists share. But they *are* very different.

Wong Sing Tai
by Francis Pound

The artist as critic: how this piece is constructed

Wong detests critics, or rather, the shrill clamour of criticism, its irresponsible chatter. Art, he believes, is best left in silence to speak for itself. He would hardly agree with Wilde that criticism itself is art, both creative and independent, no more to be judged by a standard of imitation or resemblance than the work of poet or painter. Wong will not agree that criticism, like painting, works with materials and puts them together in a form that is both new and delightful.

This section comes almost straight from the artist's mouth, not the critic's pen. But Wong's words are, of course, critically arranged. They are arranged best to show the artist as critic. Two remarks from another critic, Michael Dunn, are also included. Nor do I resist the occasional temptation of having my say.

Why I haven't done a lot of paintings

"I don't do a whole series of paintings to try to define something. Each painting is a complete statement — I'm not interested in working up to something — I go for the kill on each one. That's why I haven't done a lot of paintings."

Technique/style

"I paint on the back of perspex. I use a scalpel and masking tape for edges — not a brush."

Perspex, scalpel and tape give to Wong Sing Tai's work sharpness of outline, a flat clarity of colour. There is no shading. If there is shadow, there is no continuous gradation: the shadow, like the light, is a single, flat, clear, continuous colour.

"I can get high colour frequency with perspex — it's like an eighth of an inch of varnish."

"I aim at total clarity of image — at overkill. I'm not into the art of art, but into the meaning of the statement. I don't use (visible) brushwork because for me style is only a means of clearly expressing an idea. Brushwork would distract."

"Style is a natural extension of meaning. It comes to me simultaneously with the idea for a picture."

Anti-formalist

"I'm interested in *content*. I think paintings have *meaning*."

"I'm really against the people who get locked into ART in capital letters so they forget the meaning behind it."

Established images

"The obvious advantage of using established images is that you've got an immediate connection with the spectator — a response, or empathy. I use clichés deliberately, because clichés contain a universal language — admittedly obscured by over-use — but, nevertheless, diamond images within themselves."

"The example of Roy Lichtenstein, the American 'pop' artist, has influenced Wong's latest work in this respect. He feels that a banal image, such as the 'Jolly Roger' flag, can have an expressive force inside a painting."

(Michael Dunn, 1975)

Wong knows well that art is a language of signs. That is why he turns to established signs — their meaning is already clarified. Like Wilde's critic, he deals with materials that others have, as it were, purified for him, and to which imaginative form and colour have already been added.

Art from art

Wong Sing Tai did a Mondrian with one square wobbled for a group show, *Artists on Artists*, Peter Webb Galleries, 1979. He is presently painting the table from Leonardo's *Last Supper* — empty, perpetually waiting to be laid. He has done a variant of Lichtenstein's *Temple of Apollo*. Why?

"A well-known work of art becomes an image of an accepted and universal meaning. You can make a quantum jump — by

changing the meaning. That's why I use Mondrian a lot. He's so basic and pure — just horizontals, verticals, black, white, and the three primary colours. To make just one change in him can be very effective."

"The well-known image can become a symbol of place. Like Lichtenstein's pyramids."

And such a use of art from art as Wong's is, of course, itself a form of painterly criticism, criticism painted.

Words

"Words . . . I use them, too. Basically I'm dealing with metaphors. The magic of names, of fast sounding places, hits my imagination."

"Often a word will occur to him and its meaning provide his starting point for painting, as happened with *Badlands No. 5*, 1974. The word 'Badlands' came to him and dominated his thoughts; then he made the link with the landscape forms which are his vision of Colorado."

(Michael Dunn, 1975)

Metaphors

"My paintings are metaphors. I paint vehicles a lot. They are shells in which an energy exists. They are symbols of various kinds of energy. Yes, Francis, of various states of feeling. The aircraft I painted is a bomber — because I'm attacking. The image is a statement of intent."

"Art for me is a visual language. *Badlands*, for instance, is about being in the wilderness . . ."

"In *Black Freighter*, 1974, Wong was oppressed by feelings he could not explain. Now he relates them to the death of his mother, which occurred soon after he finished the painting. Unconsciously, he had used black in his title and the work, a colour symbolic of death."

(Michael Dunn, 1975)

Anti-angst

"With *Outside the inside out*, which used prison as a metaphor, I had an immediate success." (The painting won the Benson & Hedges Award, 1968.) "I was embarrassed by the success. I was so embarrassed to show my anguish or angst that I stopped doing that kind of painting. I could have made a *profession* out of that."

Urban

"I've lived in the city all my life. Where I grew up, I was surrounded by tattooists, strip-clubs, right in the centre of Wellington."

Non-regionalist

"I knew straight away I wasn't part of the local image painting, the regional realists. I was always interested in a universal art."

Wong's images come from as far away as . . . the moon.

Sources

"I've no allegiance to any particular style. I consider every source as valid."

"I think like Magritte — evolving feeling, imagery, economically, towards the metaphysical."

"I went through art school impressed with Clifford Still and Motherwell — the big Americans. I was wrapped up in abstract painting in the sixties. I remember distinctly the first pop painting I saw — it was a revelation. It threw all traditional concepts of art out of the door. The Abstract Expressionists were traditional: pop art had new materials, new approaches — everything was new. I was sold on it."

"My Zig-Zag painting (based on the Zig-Zag rice papers for cooler smokes) was my first exhibited painting" (*mid '66*; Barry Lett Galleries). "I see it as my first real painting. It was also one of the first pop images painted in New Zealand. I got on to that image well before the hippies did — it later became their symbol for the psychedelic movement."

"I'm very influenced by tv and even more by radio — by sound rather than images. I work from sound — transmitting

sound into pictures."

"The most potent contemporary art is not to be found in galleries but in the mass media."

Movies

"I'm breaking away from art, because it's too limited. I'm into multiple, fast images — prints, movies."

Wong Sing Tai is now working on a film script — *The Lost Tribe* — "a science fantasy". He has formed a film company: *Green Island Productions*.

"My movies will be like a lot of paintings. Instead of doing twenty paintings for a show, I'll be doing 20,000."

"My blows are aimed at the head or heart. Movies allow movement — a rocket rushing straight at your head. art is too still — you stand back and watch it — it doesn't get you."

"I'm a product of the 60s"

Zen, the *I Ching*, the psychic — things which Wong Sing Tai often mentions — a non-Western and anti-rationalist kind of thought, came to New Zealand, became fashionable among the young — along with psychedelic drugs — in the 60s. Wong's spoken language too bears traces of the 60s. Note his use of 'into' above. The story Michael Dunn tells of Wong's mother dying after his painting *Black Freighter* was done — when the meaning of the painting came clear — and the story that Wong discovered that the Badlands, Colorado, were the most radioactive place in the world, after he painted them, is significant. Wong believes the artist is a kind of psychic receiver and transmitter...

Denys Watkins

by Francis Pound

Making Marks

"I wanted to remove myself from making marks that had anything to do with expression as such. I began using a tracing pen because basically it gave me a line that was consistently even all over. I was more interested in producing the image in the picture than in the marks the pen was making. It was a way of becoming more involved with putting the drawing together, of concentrating on its construction. In a way I was aiming at something like the severity of Patrick Caulfield, yet without trying to imitate him."

(Denys Watkins, 1978)

In his watercolour series, Watkins marked out boundaries with the repeatograph pen, marked off things one from another, and developed a consistent system of signs for things. Grass is marked with short dashes, irregularly angled and placed; planks of wood with wiggly intermittence, starting and stopping in straight lines; earth with little irregularly outlined clumps within the outline of the larger heap; bricks are dotted; so, more finely, is sand; clouds have a traditionally cloudy, mottled wash; and water a watery wash. Only shadows and clouds aren't penned with dark outlines. Their insubstantiality is marked by denying them the substantiating mark of the pen.

After the watercolour series, Watkins dropped the repeatograph for charcoal and pastel, a freer looking and faster medium. "I wanted to deny what I was doing before — I don't want to repeat myself."

In some later drawn works (*It Crept into my Hand, Honest*, 1978), the line is expressive, expresses nothing but itself, or marks the time of its making on the paper: there are artful scribbles, dashes off, all over the place.

"The marks were to break up the surface. I stopped using them, too — they became too fashionable a way. But I still don't want to deny drawing — for me it's a more direct communication than painting."

Constructions

Construct, v.t. Fit together, frame, build (also fig.); (Gram.) combine (words) syntactically; draw, delineate, as a *triangle*. [f.L. con (*struere* *struc* — pile, build)].

Watkins' watercolours are constructions that sometimes depict constructions. Such depicted constructions are drawn rather than built. In *Real Estate*, 1972, for instance, there is a pool constructed with planked walls, a dug-out construction, marked off with boundary pegs and rope, there are pyramids, hoses, earthpiles.

Some of Watkins' works are *real* constructions. Such real constructions are built rather than drawn. In *Work*, 1978, there are planks of wood, a little bale of straw, a straw figure, glass and canvas, and other miscellaneous objects; *Migration* has ceramic ducks, each duck on a heap of shell, and behind it a wall hanging; and so on.

"I started to set up constructions in a swamp and take photographs of them. After a while I got involved in doing drawings of them and this took over from constructing the actual things in three dimensions. At the time there was a lot of building going on in the area" (Waiheke, where Watkins was living), "so that it was just part of my natural environment."

(Denys Watkins, 1978)

This was the order of events: the real constructions in swamps were done at the same time as the depicted constructions in watercolour and pen; the "public" (that is, the exhibited) real constructions came later.

Construction, n. (Gram) syntactical connection

Construction, n. Act, mode, of constructing; thing constructed; syntactical connection between words; construing, explanation (of words); interpretation (of conduct etc), as put good, bad, upon his refusal. Hence ism n., artistic expression

by means of mechanical structures (chiefly theatr.). In Killeen's cut-outs, there is an extreme refusal of construction, for no image is granted more importance than another. They are like words that refuse construction into a sentence; none becomes predicate to some other that is a subject. They can be called a dictionary of images, but there is not even, as in a dictionary, an alphabetical ordering. "In linguistic terms, one might say the figures are distributional but not integrative; they always remain on the same level." (Roland Barthes)

In Watkins' watercolours, on the other hand, while the images may only capriciously relate (pyramid, palm, bucket, Lichtenstein brushstroke, a seeming random collection), the disjunctions of these things are integrated into a traditional representation of space. They endure then the diminution with distance caused by perspective, that magical device, as Apollinaire called it, for making all things shrink; they suffer overlapping, whereby one image masks off part of another; some suffer being pushed off into the wings; they endure all the conventional devices of space representation. They are like words that accept construction into a sentence; some become predicate to others that are the subject; though what the sentence says may remain enigmatic, what construction we put on it remains open.

The whimsical arbitrariness of Watkins' selection and ordering of images is tempered: first, by perspective, a traditional ordering system, a syntax as coded as the grammatical arrangement of words into sentences, a mode of construction with its own grammar of rules (the rule, for instance, that the diminution of an image is in an inverse ratio to its distance). Second, this arbitrariness is sometimes tempered by narrative, or by the suggestion of narrative, of action in time, one thing leading to another. In *Sunday Suicide*, despair → the canvas axed → despair → suicide. In the *Morris Louis Painting Machine*, the paint pouring → the canvas where the paint has poured. And, as in traditional painting, the structure of represented time is intermeshed with, or absorbed into, the pre-existent structure of represented space.

In Watkins' later paintings, a clear narrative is more often stated, or implied. His images, then, allow more easily of construing, of syntactical connection, of interpretation, of explanation. *Listening to the Radio* shows a woman doing just that; *Cry Wolf* shows a little wolf cried from a mouth. There is, seemingly, a less arbitrary association of images. But, in such later paintings, the space-creating object is floated on a flat colour field, the space-denying surface of modernist painting. We are offered — at once — something like traditional narrative, and denied the traditional representation of space that it might take place in. In the earlier watercolours, conversely, we were more often granted traditional space structure and denied traditional narrative structure. Only occasionally did Watkins fit both together at once — traditional narrative and traditional space. And now, it seems, he seldom does.

A montage of objects

Montage n. (cinemat.). Selection, cutting, and piecing together as a consecutive whole of the separate shots taken in the making of a film. (f.F. *monter* to mount).

"I've always done assemblage work. Putting unrelated things together, to create an event, a new way of looking at things, a new dialogue of objects. Sometimes the things are related, other times they are unrelated. Sometimes I put in something to contradict the rest of what's going on — like that Lichtenstein brushstroke in *Real Estate*." (Denys Watkins, 1982)

In photo silkscreens he did at the Royal College of Art, Watkins made montages of found objects, or found images. For instance, he found some newspapers of the 1950s under his kitchen lino. Such chance finds appeared in his screenprints. Watkins' technique at the time was, exactly, the *selection, cutting and piecing together* of separate images, and the mounting of them on paper to *make a consecutive whole*.

Watkins in those days was impressed by the use of found objects and images, and of chance, in the work of Rauschenberg and Cage.

"Later, I tried to use the structure of that way of making pictures, but with things that related a bit more."

Back in New Zealand, Watkins stopped using cut-out photographs in his prints, but he kept on using and still does use, in his words, "a montage of objects".

Image duplicator

WHAT? WHY DID YOU ASK THAT? WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT MY IMAGE DUPLICATOR?

So reads the comic-style inscription on Lichtenstein's painting, *Image Duplicator*, 1962. It's no accident that Watkins' *Real Estate* has a version of Lichtenstein's version of an Abstract Expressionist *Brushstroke*. For Lichtenstein himself was often concerned to duplicate previous art images, through the mesh of his comic-book style (a Picasso head in *Woman with Flowered Hat*, 1963, a Mondrian in *Non Objective 1*, 1964); and to comment on the making of art (the canvas and stretcher seen from behind); or to comment on art institutions (*Brad Darling, This Painting is a Masterpiece*, or that comic-book hero who faces the gallery, saying *But it's Just an Empty Room*).

Watkins, too, duplicates previous images of art through the mesh of his own style (Vermeer's woman and curtain in *The Academy*, Cezanne's card players in *Men from Atlantis*); or comments on the making of art (*Landscape Painters' Centering Kit* with its materials of art, *Sunday Suicide* with its sad end of a making, and *Morris Louis Painting Machine* with its tease about making abstract art); and Watkins, too, comments on art institutions (*Sculptural Monitoring Showcase*).

In Watkins' *Men from Atlantis* etching, the card players are taken by Watkins from Cezanne's room to the sea. In Watkins' *The Academy* etching, the curtain and woman are taken from Vermeer. This "taken" is not theft but quotation. As often with quotation, since context is part of content, the meaning of a quote, once quoted, is changed. But (what do you know?), if the spectator knows the source of a duplicate image, the duplicate carries with it, still, traces of its earlier incarnation — or, more exactly, these appear in the spectator's mind. This apparition, this trace of an earlier work of art in the spectator's mind, becomes part of the duplicate's content. Such image duplications ask of the spectator: WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT MY IMAGE DUPLICATION? And what the spectator does know becomes part of the new image's meaning.

The framed framed, the depicted depicted

In traditional perspective, first codified by Alberti (1435), every picture is, he says, a view through a window. The picture plane is the glass, and intersection of the visual pyramid whose apex is in our eye, and whose base is in the objects seen. Certain paintings by Magritte suggest in paint what Barthes was later to suggest in words: that the artist stands at the window, not so much to see, as to establish what he or she sees by its very frame: the window frame creates the scene. The Italian words for picture — *quadro* — and for to frame — *inquadrare* — acknowledge that the picture is that which is framed. Watkins' framed frames, his depicted depictions, his paintings within paintings, extend the principle that the frame creates the scene, and by them naturalism is further compromised.

To depict a scene is to place before a continuum of objects the frame which Barthes suggests naturalistic artists always carry with them — imagine it: golden, cumbrous, elaborate. Nor can the continuum of objects ("reality") be drawn without this compulsive ritual.

The framing of objects in the "real" world has been treated (as if in anticipatory illustration of Barthes) as an amusing gag by Magritte and, following him, by Watkins. Magritte realised that in order to draw the "real", the naturalistic artist first transforms through a mental frame the "real" into the

"represented" (framed) object: after this preliminary ritual he can take the object out from the frame, he can "de-represent" it — put it into the picture, "re-represent" it. If those steps seem hard to separate off, or hard to follow in that sentence, so they are in Magritte's or Watkins' painting too. Before (in front of) the landscape, Magritte depicts on an easel a depiction of the landscape; the depicted depiction is almost inseparable from the depicted landscape, continuous with it, its scale the same, its colour, light and brushwork, its style the same — its difference marked only by its framing edge.

In *Sunday Suicide*, Watkins puts an empty stretcher frame before the landscape, with a pane of glass propped up against it. The landscape behind is like Alberti's picture as a view through a window, already *represented*, as Alberti says, on the pane; and like Magritte's depicted depiction, is continuous in scale and style with the landscape depicted — only the framing edge marks its difference.

To see is to refer not from an eye to the seen, to represent is to refer not from a language to a referent, but from one schema to another. Look with Alberti through the window to the scenery. A dictionary has it that scenery is: noun: painted stage scenes, natural features of landscape which please the eye. As the order of this definition suggests, *the scene is the already painted*.

What we like in landscape is the already painted. Is it a sudden and despairing realization of that, perhaps, that has led Watkins' Sunday painter to axe his unpainted painting in *Sunday Suicide* and to do himself in? But let's not condescend; nature is unknowable to us all, we all see it through a frame, and all we see through that frame is the already painted. It is no accident that Magritte's twice framed vista is called *The Human Condition*. Nor is it accident that what Watkins shows in his depicted depictions, his framed frames is, sometimes blatantly, the already painted. In *Morris Louis Painting Machine* we see a Morris Louis dribbled; in *Real Estate* we see Lichtenstein's *Brushstroke*, Lichtenstein's comic-style version of an Abstract Expressionist stroke, itself allegedly not so much a direct transcription of nature as of the artist's soul. Watkins knows, only too well, that all art can offer is its own language; all painting offers is painting. If painting is a mirror, it does not mirror the world: it is, as in Alberti's myth of the origin of painting, the mirror of Narcissus. Look into this mirror and see only your own human eyes seeing seeing.

So naturalism, Watkins' depicted depictions show us, consists not in copying nature ("the real") but in copying a re-representation of the real. Naturalism is not a "copier", but, as Barthes has said, a *pasticheur*, a copier of copies. Much vaunted reality, like some paranoid who refuses to be seen face to face, is *the already framed, the already veiled* in canvas. Furthermore, it can only be captured in a pictorial or mental frame, in which it has been flattened (squashed), shrunk, and sliced into squares before being put into paint. Hardly an operation reality can survive.

The picture unveiled

Watkins has sometimes depicted curtains held back at the edges of his paintings or prints. *Untitled*, pastel, 1978, is a classic example. Watkins' use of this device, whereby the picture opens its curtains for us, presumably comes from Hockney, its best known recent exponent. But it is an ancient device, the picture opening itself up to its spectator, as in those fourth century sarcophagi where marble curtains are tied back so a mystery is unveiled, there, the mystery of the Incarnation, the cross between the alpha and omega. Sometimes, traditionally, figures are depicted drawing open the curtains, so the effect is as of "a sudden revelation". In the 17th century, pictures had *actual* curtains drawn over them when they were not being looked at. But invariably, as in Watkins' *Untitled*, what is implied by the painted curtain is this: it is the whole picture that is unveiled. And the whole picture is this: an unreality incarnate, a vision in paint's (or pastel's) flesh.

Theatre

"The theatre is precisely that practice which calculates the place of things as *they are observed*: if I set the spectacle here, the spectator will see this: if I put it elsewhere he will not, and I can avail myself of this masking effect and play on the illusion it provides."

(Roland Barthes)

The proscenium arch and curtain is like the picture frame, the plane it defines is like the picture plane. They acknowledge that the theatre, like painting, is a *representation*.

For representation is not necessarily imitation: its defining quality is this: a plane intersecting a pyramid whose apex is the spectator's eye or mind, and whose base is in the objects seen. That is as true of theatre as of painting.

Diderot wrote that the theatrical scene and the pictorial tableau are the same, the play is just a series of tableaux "as many real tableaux as there are in the action moments favourable to the painter".

Nothing happens in painting; only painting happens. We can say of a picture what Mallarmé said of drama: "A dramatic work displays a succession of exteriors of the act without at any moment attaining reality, and, in the end, anything happening." In narrative paintings like Watkins' *Fire in my Wire*, or drawings like his *Untitled*, these "exteriors of the act" are the figures' poses. To pose is to strike an attitude which signifies to the spectator what the figure is doing or feeling, "to vary the movements of the body", as Alberti says "in accordance with the almost infinite movements of the heart". The narrative, whether painted or theatrical, presents a spectacle of signs: its function is not mimetic but referential; it does not imitate the world, it merely refers to it.

The pictorial, literary, cinematic or theatrical tableau is a cut-out plane with sharply marked edges: it is closed to the world, everything outside it is exiled to nonentity, unmentioned. Inside it is everything the artist wants us to see, arranged, as if at the most favourable moment, to grant the spectator both an understanding and a pleasure — instruction and delectation, as old aestheticians used to say. In another moment, Watkins' curtains imply, that night punter will glide outside the frame, off-stage, invisible, forever, that happy instant, that fire in my wire, be burnt out.

Richard Killeen
by Francis Pound

Formal wit

Wit is a word well fitted to Killeen's cut-outs. *Wit*: power of invention; contrivance, ingenuity. Killeen is an ingenious contriver; he is the most formally inventive of the young painters in New Zealand. Among his diverse works and qualities a constant is wit.

One definition of wit is that quality which consists in the apt association of thought and expression, calculated to surprise by its very unexpectedness. And what could have been more unexpected, for an audience accustomed to his triangulated grids, than the sudden appearance, in 1978, of Killeen's cut-outs, or be more unexpected than the curious conjunctions of image within them? Wit implies, as well as the pleasures of the unexpected, a certain stress on form, so that the actual form of its language may count as much as its content. Wit is "a quality akin to humour, but depending more on point or brilliancy of language" — in Killeen's case, the language of painting.

The frame abandoned

Among the games of surprise Killeen has played with the language of painting have been those with the frame; they come, in the cut-outs, to the most astonishing of all — the frame's abandonment, the abandoning of all — and it is a lot — the frame implies. (Here, and throughout this writing, the word 'frame' is used both in its ordinary sense, and in the sense of the rectangular edge of a painting.)

To see just what Killeen is doing with pictorial form in the cut-outs, and justly to see how radical the implications are of the frame's abandonment, we must first see what the frame has traditionally meant to painting.

The frame's functions

First, the frame is a familiar sign of "depictivity", a sign we see not the world, but a depiction of the world. The frame gives on to the world, while at the same time it closes the depiction off from the world, for the world is not framed, nor are things in it.

The second function of the frame is this: it stresses the painting as a material thing, rather than as a representation. One does not frame in ornate and cumbrous gold a 'view'; one may only ornament a 'thing'.

The third function of the frame is this: it determines the composition of the framed. It is this composing function of the frame that Killeen most wanted to escape, and did finally escape, in the cut-outs.

The frame tends to impose an invisible grid of horizontals and verticals on the painting which determines how and where the depicted forms are placed. Images tend to be placed on the horizontals and verticals, so those of the frame are affirmed. What is central becomes most important. Everything at the sides faces into it. Sides and centre are determined by the frame. Hierarchical composition is likely to result, some things important (especially things in the centre), some things less so. And composition, especially hierarchical composition, is what Killeen most sought to escape in the cut-outs.

Free of the frame

The unordered (that is, unrepresented), world outside the frame: that is what Killeen's cut-outs have joined. For in the cut-outs, all three traditional functions of the frame are denied, or made irrelevant, and new freedoms are gained.

The first function of the frame, I have said, is as a sign of depictivity, a sign we see not the world, but a depiction of the world. The frame closes the painting off from the world. In abandoning the frame Killeen signifies his cut-outs as objects *in* the world, not depictions of it. And that, formally, is what twentieth century painting has been about: making a painting as much a *thing* as a picture.

The second function of the frame, that it serves to stress the materiality rather than the representationality of the painting,

is at once made irrelevant (the cut-outs are *already*, in the absence of the frame, material objects in the world, not depictions of it), and is met in other ways (the cut-outs are clearly flat, material forms, with a flat, material layer of paint upon them).

The third function of the frame — that it determines the composition of the framed — is denied: the separate elements of the painting are now free, uncomposed — what composition can be made of these elements (of which none looks more important than another) is left to the person who hangs them. Since the pieces of the cut-outs come from the artist in a box, the gallery staff or the buyer must hang them: so the spectator is allowed into the art-act.

An astonishing move. An astonishing freedom. Wit: calculated to surprise by its very unexpectedness. The cut-outs *were* unexpected. But now they *are* done, we can see their precursors in Killeen's earlier work. As he says himself, "The things I'm doing now go back ten years. I've tried the ideas before but never so well or so successfully." (Statement by Killeen, quoted page 120, *Contemporary N.Z. Painters*.)

Anticipating the cut-outs

First, in his earlier works, he often played games with the frame. He stuck things on it, to stress its materiality, painted on it, or depicted it in paint; he attempted, by cropping, or by the use of chance in placing his images, to escape its composing effects. There was, all along, a consciousness of the frame and its meanings.

Secondly, Killeen has always had a tendency to place flat images against flat grounds. In his hard-edge realist works of the 60s, flattened figures were often depicted against an interior or exterior wall parallel to the picture plane. In the cut-outs, real objects against real walls: in the early realist works, depicted objects against depicted walls — though the jump from one to the other was not one that Killeen could immediately make. But in the end, nothing could be flatter than the cut-outs — pieces of aluminium sheet tacked to the wall.

The third quality in Killeen's earlier work to anticipate the cut-outs is this: a constant tendency to place separate elements together in a way that looks relatively uncomposed. The fourth quality culminating in the cut-outs is the mixing of "figurative" and "abstract" elements. Figurative/abstract: jumping from one to the other, from one series to another, within one series, within one work, so the critics have said. In Killeen's "figurative" works of the the 60s, "abstract" paintings might be depicted framed off on a background wall, and figurative elements be abstractly treated; later, the mixture might be uneasy; or Killeen will stick resolutely to one or the other. But only in the cut-outs do the two come truly together, seem like one thing.

"I've tried to work out a style that will let me do the abstract and pictorial things at once. I've always had this trouble with pictorial things in that the elements are not integrated into the painting." (Statement by Killeen, *ibid.*)
In the cut-outs they are.

Figurative/abstract

Figure 1. n. External form; bodily shape, woman's bust; (geom.) space enclosed by line(s) or surface(s); image, statue or picture of human form; emblem; type; diagram; illustration; decorative pattern.

2. v. Represent in diagram or picture; picture mentally; be a symbol of.

Killeen's cut-outs are all these things but the bust; they are at once external forms in the world (geom.), spaces enclosed by line(s) and surface(s), and images of things; they are type, emblem, diagram, illustration; they are wonderfully decorative patterns.

They represent in diagram or picture; symbolise things in the world, things in the mind.

Abstract 1. Adj. Separated from matter or practice or particular example, not concrete; ideal, theoretical. 2. n.

Essence, summary. 3. v. Deduct, take away, summarize.

Killeen's cut-outs are art, flat images on gallery walls, in that sense separate from the world of matter and practice; they are not particular examples — either of a tank or a triangle; they are images of an ideal tank or triangle, their summary. They are tank or triangle as dictionary, not "that particular tank or triangle which . . ."

They deduct from a tank, a triangle, a gull, its light and space, they take away, they summarize, they attempt to be *the* tank, *the* triangle, *the* gull, or rather, *the* image of them, in the mind/on the wall.

Duchamp once said that one day abstract and figurative won't look any different: looking at Killeen's cut-outs, we can now see what he meant.

Congruence/incongruence

Definitions of wit generally agree with John Locke in his *Essay on Human Understanding*, of its "lying most in the assemblage of Ideas, putting them together with quickness and variety". But some stress the *arbitrary* association of images: Leigh Hunt, *Journal of Education* (1884): "Wit consists in the arbitrary juxtaposition of dissimilar ideas for some lively purpose of assimilation or contrast, generally of both." In many of Killeen's cut-outs, geometric and organic elements are assimilated and contrasted, both. Some tend more to contrast. In *Duality*, for example, black artefacts from the Otago Museum are contrasted with red geometric shapes.

Other definitions of wit stress congruity and resemblance: "Wit consists in assembling and putting together ideas in which can be found resemblance and congruity, by which to make pleasant and agreeable visions" (Locke).

Other definitions compromise between "natural" associations, and "arbitrary" ones that surprise. Webster: wit: the faculty of associating ideas in a new, ingenious and at the same time natural and pleasing way, exhibited in the apt use of language (an excellent description of *all* the cut-outs).

Is there just reason for which images Killeen selects for each assemblage, each cut-out? A reason of form, or a reason of content? Might title sometimes, as with *Duality*, be a clue?

There is a clear reason for the title and the association of images in *Black Crawlers*: all black insects. Or in *Scream*, a drawing for a cut-out, where birds wheel and dive, where everything spins. In *Black Insects*, *Red Primitives*, primitive pattern and insect have the same spikiness. *Three mammals* has three, and one fish, and five clubs — all long thin things, all to be horizontally hung. *Wish you were here*, words of a postcard cliché, has a camel — a postcard from Arabia, maybe?

Killeen associates images for reasons both of form and content — sometimes more for reasons of form, sometimes more for reasons of content. If insects and primitive pattern seems an extravagant mix of ideas, the mix of their images does not. In *Black Insects*, *Red Primitives* it looks right — even "natural" — now it's done. *Don't be afraid of things you don't understand* has black insects and red triangles, and *Living and dying* red triangles and black moths — somewhat ominous titles, ominous colours and creatures. For *Don't be afraid of things you don't understand* and *Strontium 90*, there is a stipulation the elements be hung touching, "to make them more intense", Killeen says. *Dreamtime*, July, 1980, has dark, nightlike colours, and organic shapes, many drooping softly down. *Dreamtime*, June, 1980, dreams of night and Australian aborigines in more than its title and colours — there is a lizard, a boomerang, and a bat. *Welcome to the South Seas* (Victoria University collection) even has Cook's *Endeavour*. But sometimes the title is just "a song on the radio at the time". So let's not be too literal about titles. Best to regard them, as Duchamp did, as "another colour added to the painting".

Finally, in all of the cut-outs, while the things signified may be diverse, even incongruous, the resemblance of form, method and technique make them one. Dead eel, triangle, fish, bird or spiral, when reduced to silhouettes cut out of aluminium sheet look more like each other as objects (objects that signify) than they look like other objects in the world.

Latest moves

Wit: calculated to surprise by its very unexpectedness. A last question of Killeen: what will he do next with the cut-outs? Answer: attempt an escape from the Oxford's definition of wit — 5b: Practical talent or cleverness, mechanical ability; ingenuity, skill. Obs. as a specific sense. Perhaps the earlier cut-outs, too much, in Spencer's words, "spake the praises of the workman's wit". They certainly did not look home-made. As Michael Dunn wrote in 1978 of Killeen's paint, it was "distinctly removed from the associations of hand made or crafted constructions of an older generation" (Michael Dunn, *Art New Zealand* 10, 1978). But the latest cut-outs are a bit jaggy at the edges, look cut, and aren't neatly painted, but brushworky, baroque, hand-done. The very latest are palette-knifed and sometimes two-toned. And since these sentences were written, Killeen's cut-outs have offered 3D effects, pretending to bend in, or to come out of the wall. So Killeen has broken from the rigid rules of the old formalist abstraction, for which flatness was everything — the required assertion of the painting's material fact. No one can predict Killeen.

At last, a happy, normal painting

Wit: Oxford. Dict. def. 4. The understanding or mental faculties in respect of their condition: chiefly = "right mind", "reason", "sense", "sanity".

At last, a happy, normal painting, April 1978. That title was cited by Dunn as evidence that "Killeen paints positively". It was perhaps, too, a tease against what has been called the "angst school" of New Zealand painting. Killeen has a different vision of the world. For both the imagery of the cut-outs, and the way they are put together, the democracy of composition, the freedom they grant us — to hang them as we like, to conjoin their meanings as we like — *do* imply a vision of the world.

A vision of the world

"Meaning is above all a cutting out of shapes" (Roland Barthes). In Killeen's cut-outs, neither the cut-out shapes nor their meanings are arranged into a hierarchical order; no transcendent logic links them, or determines their contiguity; they are not arranged with a view to a final end. If logic there is, it depends on "the needs, the injunctions, the pleasures of his image repertoire" (Roland Barthes, *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments*). Such a principle of composing shapes and meanings argues a purely modern vision of the world, a democratic vision, a vision opposed to the old hierarchical and seemingly final world order: God and king at top, through nobles, to peasant held at the base.

The meanings of the images collected in each cut-out "stir, collide, subside, return, vanish" (Roland Barthes, *ibid*). To discourage the temptation to dictate a final meaning to the spectator, or for the spectator to find a final meaning, it was necessary for Killeen to offer an absolutely insignificant or, at least, *absolutely undetermined* order: the spectator may conjoin the images, and their meanings — *as he or she chooses*. The spectator is offered what Barthes has called "a horizontal discourse: no transcendence, no novel (though a great deal of the fictive)."

The world offered is a world without final and transcendent meaning. There is nothing *behind* things (no essences); there is nothing *above* them (no transcendence); things simply *are* — the world simply *is*. Any significance things have in the world is granted them by their spectator: the world is regarded as a system of signs whose order and meaning is open.

Sources

Wit: the faculty of associating ideas in a new and unexpected manner.

Paintings have been painted before Killeen in one flat colour to stress their objectness (Ellsworth Kelly). The painting was then a one-coloured thing, not a thing to which colours have been applied. Paintings before Killeen have escaped the rectangle too — Frank Stella's shaped canvases. Faced with

the problem that when you put a mark on the canvas, you are left with "the rest", a background, Stella simply cut away that pervasive nuisance — the rest. The eccentricities of the shapes of Stella's canvases made them less pictures (not, certainly not views) than objects. Artists as diverse as Duchamp, Arp, Pollock and Morris have played games with chance to avoid old habits of composition, old hierarchies. But while Duchamp and Arp stuck the results of their games of chance down, forever, Killeen's chance is (theoretically) continuous, his composition remains open to change, forever. The works that *look* closest to Killeen's cut-outs are Matisse's cut-outs. But Matisse, like Duchamp with his "canned chance", stuck his cut-outs down on a background, forever. Nor do Killeen's cut-outs, like Matisse's, bear traces of the classical tradition, imply space by foreshortening and overlapping, nor do they have lyrical outlines, or lyrically conjoin: They are as abstract as a stamp, as unlyrical as signs, as logos, or definitions in a dictionary; their flat clarity is all that they offer.

Killeen associates the idea of flatness, the idea of the shaped canvas, the idea of avoiding traditional composition, in ways that are new, unexpected. If Killeen's work formally is in the modernist tradition, invariably *he makes it new*, and makes it anew with his own dictionary of shapes.

Paul Hartigan

by Francis Pound

Surfaces

Hartigan's are delectable surfaces, as sweet sometimes to the eye as icing to the tongue. And this remains true, though his sources for such surfaces are, we shall see, far from the normal objects of visual delectation. His surfaces are always inflected, never quite flat. Bits of underpaint, of the layers below, show through, by a kind of cultivated chance, especially at the edge of forms — an effect as of the misalignment of colour layers in cheap colour printing.

Out of register colour: this comparison, Hartigan comments in a marginal note, "is on the nail exactly".

From a commercial misadventure, to a conscious effect of style; colour's dress is showing its slip.

"The patina," Hartigan says, "of flaking paint layers, and bleached paint, revealing the brushwork of the signwriter on old signs, is my source for surfaces mainly, or those incredibly bad home-made signs seen in low budget shops, fleamarkets and do-it-yourselfers."

From these to delectable surfaces? It is his *care* for such things, itself already in part aesthetic, and for the paint with which he shows his care, that transforms them.

Hartigan's enamel is creamy. It's about as runny as cream unwhipped. Unwhipped? Caressed, rather, for he is enamoured of enamel. He slides enamel across a surface. For this kind of soft slide actually depicted in action, see his *Untitled - Nailpolish* (1976). The brush is in loving declension, there with the sticky lacquer. To enamel is, among other things, to adorn with colour: with Hartigan, often (and this despite the avowed badness of his sources), to adorn with a fondling touch.

Outlines

Most of Hartigan's works use dark outlines, are graphic in fact or in look. The outlines are made first, then coloured in — as in a colouring book. The outlines may wobble a bit, or blur — sometimes they run. In some drawings for the *Picturesque* exhibition, the outlines were drawn first, in a thick blobby ink, and the paper held up and jerked, so the ink flares off, runs — allowing of an element of chance. There are dribbles of paint in some of his paintings too — from the early *Crossword* (1973), to *Landscape no. 1* (1974). Dribbles make lines, mark time, stress that the works are essentially marks — are not sculptural or pretending to be. Hartigan's job is essentially: *marking*.

Tattooing, the marking of human skin with indelible patterns, is an art form Hartigan admires. He paid homage to it in his exhibition *Tattoo Classiques*, 1980. He has a Japanese coy fish tattooed on his right thigh, and a snake on his left arm; in 1979 he went to the Fourth World Tattoo Convention in Texas. With tattooing there is the same use of black outlines as in his art. There is also, as in some of his drawings, a slightly muzzy colour within, and a tendency (but in tattooing, with time) to blur.

Hartigan's outlines, his treatment of the surface within, make clear the essence of his task: *marking the painting's skin*.

As in a colouring book

Hartigan still has the *MGM Ben Hur Colouring Book* (1959) he coloured in when he was "about seven or eight". He still buys colouring-in books. He likes the way the coloured pencil goes on to the soft, greyish, pulpy paper. The colours go on pale, pastelly, not pure. He must like the paper, too: the drawings for the *Catalogues*, *Picturesque*, and *Tattoo Classiques* shows were done on the same kind of paper. Looking up from his Ben Hur book to *Dictionary II*, the astonishing thing is — *how alike* they are: the same heavyish, softish, not entirely certain, dark outlines — the same pastelly colours within — but now consciously refined.

Comic colours

The happy unreality of Hartigan's colours, their unserious look, come from comics, from Donald Duck and Uncle

Scrooge. There, says Hartigan, "red skies, purple buildings, or blue grass, were the rule rather than the exception".

"The colours," he says, "of grass or whatever, would change from frame to frame, to make it look good, across the whole page." So, the *arrangement* of Hartigan's colours, freed from the necessity to describe local colour, owes its freedom to comics. And the *quality* of his colour owes something to their cheap printed effects on cheap paper. If the arrangement of comic colour was conscious, and its printed effect accidental, they are both now, with Hartigan, conscious effects, as he says, "to make it look good".

"A private alphabet of shapes"

Alphabet implies language, language allows of a dictionary, an item of meta-language, the language which talks about language. Hartigan has made two paintings called *Dictionary*; they are summaries of the shapes he has been concerned with, paintings about his paintings.

Pillow shape, Caspar the ghost, Hepworth, boomerang, tv-video, Aboriginal stone/draper's chalk, palette, bone, cog, hungry enzyme, doughnut.

Hartigan's *Catalogues* show had a similar concern: to catalogue his concerns.

He plays with these shapes, combines and recombines them, for reasons both of form and content — sometimes, perhaps, for reasons more of one than the other. Many of his shapes are softish — jellybean shapes, gelatinous pill capsules, palette, boomerang, chocolate fish, the number 8, television screen, video, doughnut, pillow, bone, Caspar the ghost, Aboriginal stone/tailor's chalk, hungry enzyme — and those that aren't soft are *made* soft — cogs, or geometrical shapes, triangle, circle, or square.

These are the shapes he feels at home with: more exactly — the shapes he *feels at paint with*.

Sources

Hartigan's softish shapes remind one of the shapes favoured in the 50s — both in high and low art — shapes called then "organic" — from Barbara Hepworth and Calder to kidney-shaped tables, to patterns of fabric (curtains and carpets especially), to patterns on linoleum — a word that *feels* like Hartigan's shapes — or on vinyls and tiles. A pity you can't see his apartment — it's full of such shapes and things.

Hartigan gives an off-the-cuff list of some artists he likes: "Calder, Ruscha (for his verbiage), Killeen, Tom Kreisler, Frizzell, Allen Jones, Richard Hamilton, Tanguy, and Hanly, Fomison, Angus, I like the way they apply paint. Ah, and Matisse of course and Picasso."

Childhood Memories

Jellybean, Phantom, aeroplane, Caspar the ghost, pillow, doughnut, tv etc: these are the shapes he feels at home with. Why? Simply, they are shapes of a childhood in the 50s. Hartigan might say, as Constable of quite other shapes from his childhood: these things made me a painter and I am grateful.

Not high art

Baudelaire once saw a prisoner in the dock with NO HOPE tattooed on his brow — it was, Baudelaire, said, the truth. Tattooing is frowned on by nice people. Tattoo is not a bourgeois art form, and sometimes its images are consciously anti-bourgeois — broken bottle, jail-dot, or syringe tattooed down the mainline. Tattoo, like many of Hartigan's sources is low art — *the discredited*.

Graffiti pleases him but not the owners of walls. Graffiti, for the middle-class, is the art of louts and vandals. The girlie mags he uses (50s soft porn) for his screenprinted *Girls & Gags*, still, even in translation into art, remain offensive to feminists. As for the titles of his first xerox exhibition — *Pox, Slot, Miss, Twot, Piss, Muff* — what is there to say? If one was middle-class, one's parents tried to stop one reading comics: Hartigan still reads and collects them. The decorative patterns of the 50s Hartigan likes were never quite "in good

taste". Art deco patterns, low art patterns borrowed from high art patterns, now return with Hartigan to their source. He makes art of them.

Enamel itself, Hartigan's main medium, is not the stuff of high art. It is housepainter's stuff. To use it is to attempt to escape from the associations of artist's oil paint on canvas, redolent, inescapably, more than of linseed and turps, of old masters, old paintings, the whole grand tradition. Hartigan also uses screenprint, neon and xerox — materials more common to commerce than art.

Perhaps the first modern artist to use low art as a source of high art was Courbet. He used crude, popular prints as the basis of compositions: they were to remind his viewers that his art was democratic, an art of the people, popular, an engine of revolution. Pop artists in England and America in the 60s and 70s are today's best known users of low art: comics, ads, billboards, etc. It was presumably they who encouraged Hartigan to turn to his beloved and discredited images. In some early works (*The Phantom*) and in his screenprints (which are something of a homage, close, too close, to Warhol and Hamilton), his debt to pop art is clear. And, in the 60s and 70s, there was an artistic revival of art deco in America, among pop artists (Lichtenstein) and abstractionists (Frank Stella). That too must have offered Hartigan . . . a way to return to himself.

As with pop art, Hartigan's use of low art joyously infects not just his art's content, but also its style, its technique and form — inseparably.

Words

A critic's words may most easily embrace the subjects of an artist's work, less easily its style, and least easily of all the *style's content* — the meaning and feeling of its forms and colours. Words ought, as Peter Leech has said, to be pitched up towards the level of the work.

"I do not myself find it a surprising fact that art critics operate, or should operate, to an attentive and concerned degree with words . . . For the hardest task that any critic faces is to ensure that his linguistic medium of expression is the match of the visual medium of expression of which it is the object." (Peter Leech)

Words at one with the work. Hartigan himself has often critically played with words in this way — beating the critic to the draw as it were — in his xerox prints especially. In the *Colorword* series, the words used were colour words — green, purple, and so on — coloured in the colour they signified, colour and content inextricably one. In *Picasso*, 1982, Hartigan's neon version of the artist's hand, we get that word which is most important on every painting — the artist's signature. And just think what *that* signature is worth — to have it on your wall is better than having the winning ticket of the Golden Kiwi. In Hartigan's *Picasso*, the word is not just the most valuable part of the work, the word *is* the work — there is nothing else. In *Primary School*, there are three chocolate fish, a small school of a prime food of that age, painted in the three primary colours: red, yellow and blue. *Tell Tales* is of fish tails. Words, as titles, here, do, as Duchamp said, add another colour to the painting. The words of Hartigan's paintings are, like his paint, of all the pleasing colours of wit.

Dick Frizzell
by Francis Pound

Self portrait

The construction of this portrait of Frizzell's work is largely an arrangement of quotes from Frizzell: a self portrait, aided.

Almost, as the saying goes, straight from the horse's mouth. "Consciously cultivating a public persona of arrogance and intolerance . . . i.e. a deliberate cultivation of both a public and private personality."

(Letter from America, Frizzell to Hamish Keith)

Self portraits are examinations of artistic personae. Among Frizzell's many self portraits are:

Self Portrait as a Serious Artiste, brush in hand, a simulated cover to the rock magazine, Rolling Stone, Frizzell as star; *Stranger Meets Phantom*, Frizzell's homage to the Phantom, Frizzell as explorer, pith helmeted, of comic jungles; *Self Portrait as a Slightly Worried Man*, his head in the lion's mouth; *Inside Self-Portrait* and *Keeper's Keeper*, self portraits as lion tamer; and *Self-Portrait as a Cannibal*.

Oscar Wilde in *Pen, Pencil and Poison*, said,

"These are some of the grotesque masks under which he chose to hide his seriousness or to reveal his levity. A mask tells us more than a face. These disguises intensified his personality."

Lucky breakthrough

"The area of renewal that I'm personally concerned with (and consequently in my view the only real issue; Pluralism being merely an excuse dreamed up by 'everybody else') has been labelled anything from New Image or The Bewildered Image to Naive Nouveau. (!?)

"The basic rationale for this current resurrection of the image is the determination to put back some real content without necessarily denying the information existing thanks to previous formal inventions.

"That is; to force subjects (images) to function in abstract pictorial space — or — subject matter suddenly thrust into the context supplied by modernism (to put it another way)" (Frizzell Manifesto)

Literally, in his exhibition *Home is where the art is* (1981), a dictionary of homely images, Frizzell's images were painted in a context supplied by modernism. The objects of a New Zealand back yard were scribbled with the brush on to domestic-size colour fields — one object per field.

Again, in his exhibition *Everybody's Business* (1982), Frizzell forced images to function in abstract pictorial space. Images, say, of tyre-mending, are scattered, irrationally, as if by Killen's chance, all over the flat colour field of modernist painting.

"So the image is back — as it always seems to be when things get too sparse — but not back as in Regionalism, as in pop or photo realism or whatever, but back as an overhauled and totally contemporary force."

(Frizzell Manifesto)

Low art: not such an awesome thing

"To become familiar with the popular sources or inspiration of the Art serves to 'demythologize' it to a considerable extent — It becomes more understandable or approachable and not such an awesome thing."

(Quote from Frizzell's American diary)

"Of course I have my own ideas why I feel part of this adventure. Originally (in fact, my main motivation), I entertained noble/naive ideas of toppling the 'ivory towers of elitism' with a popularist art but found popularist art on my terms not half corny enough for the job and instead of dragging down any ivory towers I got the sinking feeling(?) that they were actually dragging me aloft! But at least my initial intention restrained me long enough till I worked out exactly what I was doing (i.e. stumbled upon the post-modernist debate).

So, while I had set out to take the wind out of ART, I found the

consequent paradoxes and illusions (Low Art is High Art — Lightweight is Heavyweight — Anti-intellectual is intellectual spelt backwards etc etc) so complicated (too 'cosmic') and ultimately so meaningless — like the 'problems' of modernism (the relationship of figure to ground, illusionistic space etc) that they suddenly ceased to matter and new problems presented themselves for consideration."

(Frizzell Manifesto)

"I read comics as a kid all the time. I stopped reading them at art school — I was ashamed of being seen. Now I'm past all that shit. I can be myself."

(Frizzell, statement to the writer)

"Old faded Popeye cartoon colours — pinks, greys, pastel ochres, etc. Soft tonings. I like my work to have the look of printed works."

(Letter from America, Frizzell to Hamish Keith.)

"I like the cheap printing of comics — the way the black line misses the colour and bits of colour come through in the wrong places."

(Frizzell, statement to the writer.)

The off-register colour layers of cheap printing — in comics, etc — clearly infect Frizzell's *Beyond Conversation*: significantly, that painting is owned by Paul Hartigan — he too takes pleasure in such surfaces, making art of them.

Low art sources: comics, Dick Tracey, the Phantom, Donald Duck; cartoons; tinned fish labels; bubble gum wrappers; Victorian popular illustrations; commercials; jukeboxes; the songs on them; home-made or otherwise crudely drawn advertisements: they offer to Frizzell two gifts: their image and its mode of depiction — at once.

Anti-formalist

"Like the beginning of the end of the hoary old myth, 'Respect The Paint!' As if it were some divinely created medium and not just a man-made convenience to assist in the external presentation of his aspirations. 'Paints Paint Bert!' as the ad so wisely notes."

"It's what's done with the paint that makes the magic — not the paint itself."

"The Medium is the Message!?! To hell with that. Perhaps one day the message will be the message. Perhaps one day composition will be something you notice after the message — the same goes for quality of line, colour values, tonal relationships etc etc."

"Did Giotto worry about *his* diagonals?"

"It's the Art Historians who put the triangles in — and then the Abstractionists said 'Let's just use the triangles and so on and so on.' "

(Frizzell Manifesto)

New Life for Old Art

"Are you tired of contemplating those blank expanses that cost too much to throw away?"

"Are your walls chock-a-block with vast tracts of nothing, leaving you no space left to expand your collection?"

"Are you a bit nervous about making any large investments in this new 'post-modernist' thing?"

"Do your friends think your collection is passe?"

"Don't panic!"

"Don't extend the west wing!"

"Don't auction the old horrors off (nobody else wants them either)."

"Relax! Post-post-modern technology and good old kiwi ingenuity has come up with the answer."

"Pic-Stic is here!"

"Pic-Stic! The revolutionary new artifice designed to bring new life to old art!"

"Brighten up those barren wastes!"

"Jazz up those modernist monsters!"

"Quickly and cheaply, Pic-Stic will give new meaning to any art surface."

"No formal training required!"

"Doctors, Lawyers, Art Historians! Anyone can do it!"

"If you can still remember how you decorated your old school exercise books you'll have no trouble with Pic-Stic."

"Yes, it's that easy!

"Join the fun, NOW!

"It's the new image decal system that's got everyone talking.

"Inquire now for further information about the complete Pic-Stic catalogue.

"Also included FREE: 'How to make attractive coasters and place-mats from old installation and performance documents' and 'How to overdub exciting BJ and the Bear sequences over old video loops'."

(Frizzell, fake advertisement, *Art New Zealand* 22, p. 13)

Anti avant-garde

"The avant-garde is dead — long live the avant-garde"

"For sale: ladders, lights, video loops, little piles of dirt, jars of blood, bottles of angst, gobs of this, blobs of that, painted twigs, painted string, tape loops, broken mirrors, neon tubes, panes of glass, scotch tape, heaps of latex, sponge rubber, rocks, pebbles, marbles, stools and all the rest of that tedious apparatus clogging up the (Art) works.

"Wanted to buy: Easels, palettes, brushes, paints, pencils, inks etc (but no berets)."

(Frizzelli Manifesto)

Unserious

1. *Self Portrait as a Serious Artiste* — the deflating "e".

2. "We've got to get less stuffy or 'serious' about the peculiar ethical code we seem to have drawn up in isolation. We seem to be locked up in some puritanical time-warp where art has to be seen in an almost direct communion with the gods before it even gets a C+."

(Letter from America, Frizzell to Hamish Keith.)

3. Frizzell's puns — *Home is where the art is* (Exhibition title, 1981).

4. "I'm a lightweight." (Frizzell, statement to the writer.)

Frizzell refers (presumably) not to his work's aesthetic worth, but to the weight of its content: no profundities, a light-hearted art, the *mock* heroic, only. If he rides Pegasus he has his tongue in his cheek. His *Holy Land* has a McCahon-like lamp (illumination being so common a Christian metaphor it has embedded itself in the language), but it is only a *Holy Land of Sorts*; it has a pyramid, as though from some transcendent cult of the dead, but its pyramid is only a gazebo in the Egyptian manner, made of planks, taken from a Victorian gardening book. His *A man's gotta do what a man's gotta do*, with the Phantom donning his mask, teases the heroic nonchalance of masculine duty; *Stranger meets phantom* offers a Frizzell as heroically laconic as the finder of Livingstone: "The Phantom, I presume?"

5. *Apollinaire at 21 from an age when art was much more fun*, 1978. (Title of a Frizzell painting.)

6. Frizzell's having fun in his art.

Some sources

1. *Westermann*: Frizzell learned from him to try to be crude in his drawing, deliberately dumb, to try to deny his own graphic skill.

2. *McCahon*: A reproduction of McCahon's *Valley of Dead Bones* hangs on Frizzell's studio wall. An artist so open about his sources as Frizzell makes it easy for this historian: it is written for him on the wall. Frizzell must have liked in early McCahon the deliberately "crude" figurative drawing, the use of dark outlines, the use of low art sources (Rinso packet, speech bubble, the signwriter's art); in later McCahon, the use of enamel (McCahon, in such series as *The Gate*, became the only man alive doing old master glazes in Dulux). Frizzell's inscription, "Here I Give Thanks to the Phantom" in his *Stranger Meets Phantom* is a teasing homage to McCahon's painting *Here I Give Thanks to Mondrian*.

3. *Pop art*: all those comics, and images from comics, Frizzell's celebration of the ordinary, adverts, labels, etc., his ironic affection for the banal. And the idea of a public persona — that must have come from such pop figures as Warhol or Hockney.

Narratives

Frizzell often paints narratives. In *Manscarer*, a naked woman frightens two kiwi blokes from the room; *Grand Canyon* shows the Frizzells, there, in their car; in *Stranger Meets Phantom*, Frizzell is shown travelling in darkest Africa, in *Lion Attacking a Horse in the Jungle*, we see just that. Frizzell returns art to its traditional function: a *telling of tales*.

Gavin Chilcott
by Francis Pound

The curtain opened

The curtains are drawn back — so the play of Chilcott's painting begins.

He plays with curtains a lot. Painted curtains sometimes hang to the sides of his paintings. Curtains — those necessary items of a perfect domesticity — frame his *Family Group* 1980; another pair opens the spectacle of *You Look Lovely Tonight Darling*. Even in the hall of his house there is a painted one hanging, awaiting a suitable scene to enframe. It used to hang on *Broken Engagement Act 1* 1980, a painting since destroyed by the painter, saving only that curtain.

Curtains are drawn on the drawings too. In one, *A Modern Dress Drama*, 1981 — with curtains to the left and right of a checkerboard floor and a backdrop of ruins — all the theatricality implied in Chilcott's art comes clear. Those ruins are from a ballet backdrop by Christian Berard. From a performance so frankly 'stagey' as this drawing's, from such references to drama as 'Act 1', from the fact that all Chilcott's paintings are like backdrops to unwritten plays, we may now mark the entry of a constant character to his work: *artificiality* — "a preoccupation," in his words, "with the artificial rather than the real".

"A total paucity of angst"

Chilcott says there is a total paucity of angst in his work. "It's all light and inconsequential," he says.

If some of his titles might suggest some painful performance — say *Rebus Suicide Note*, or *Broken Engagement Act 1* — all anguish is deflected by irony. *Suicide Note* is protected from the front by *Rebus*, and *Broken Engagement* from the rear by *Act 1*, 'rebus' distracting us by a problem rather of the mind than of the heart, 'Act 1' making a broken heart just part of the predictable comedy of human affections. Who, in any case, gets *engaged* any more? The readers of love comics, perhaps? Certainly, many of Chilcott's titles might be the captions that are lived by in all stories of love, whether in real life or in the fictions from which real life love derives.

Many of his works have a faint but unmistakable odour of mockery about them, especially those where some preposterous banality is highlighted: *Bermuda Triangle Regatta*, *Happy Family*, *Happy Anniversary*, *Made for Each Other*, *Bechuana Tummy*, *A Right Pickle*, *You Look Lovely Tonight Darling*. If to mock is to hold up to ridicule, it is also to ridicule by imitation, to counterfeit: if mockery is derision, it is also, convenient miracle, a counterfeit representation, precisely what Chilcott's paintings are.

Rebus

Chilcott's paintings, I said, are counterfeit representations. Counterfeit representations of what?

Just by chance (but what's chance?) Chilcott has titled a drawing *The Rebus Suicide Note*. It includes, among other things, steps up into the fictive space of the picture, and on them are objects on which the spectator might mentally trip. (The picture opens itself up to us, then, but a partial barrier remains.)

Rebus, n. Enigmatic representation of name, word, etc., by pictures etc. suggesting its syllables. (f. L *rebus*, abl. pl. of *res* thing).

Now for a list of things Chilcott so consistently represents that they might be called, as in a rebus, the symbolic units, or syllables, of what it is he is saying. If, as in a rebus, their meaning might be sometimes for a moment delayed, a barrier, partial and temporary, be suspended between the spectator and the meaning he or she seeks, such suspense is always, of course, a suspense purely 'stagey' — like that (Barthes' irresistible metaphor) of a *striptease*.

The faceted stone; the ring (engagement); dashes of light, in sparkling intermittence; lightning bolts; zigzags; snakes; rectangles with one or more sides comb edged; curtains; shadows; windows; checkered floors — grids they are more

fashionably called; tables, with or without cloths; spots; the pointing patterns of bricks or blocks.

Shadows

Shadows are not, in Chilcott's work, the darkest part of a picture, but are often the brightest, as with the red shadow of *Meet Me in the Sculpture Garden at 4*. They are not so much a dark figure projected by a body, as the brightness of another body; not so much a body's appendage as its co-equal — like a wife in a modern marriage. Nor are they tremulous, fugitive, faint edged: they are as sure, as sharp, as anything.

Often a Chilcott seems to have no shadows — but one suddenly bends off to make a shape of its own. There is in Chilcott's work no unified light source.

Nor is there a shadow of modelling, that is, shadows on things, rather than shadows cast by them. Unlike the world, where, as Leonardo says, all things are encircled by light and shade, in Chilcott's works there are just flat patterns of colour. There is no shadow of doubt in them, their face is not shaded with melancholy. There is certainly nothing like Psalm 23's "the shadow of the valley of death", such biblical rhetoric as McCahon has used. There is, rather, everywhere, the display of a light inconsequence.

It can be astringent, though, in that light.

Sources inconsequent

Chilcott's sources are mostly inconsequent, wanting in logical sequence, irrelevant, disconnected, abrupt — from Red Indian to Palladio, as he says. As casual as riffling through books from the public library, taken out, not even by him, but by his wife, as a magpie's plucking at any momentary gleam.

Parfleche

Parfleche: the rawhide skin folder of Plains and Rocky Mountain Indians, for storing cloths, dried meat, etc. Their patterns include zigzagged, zappy geometrics, symmetries, brightnesses, borders — constants in Chilcott's work.

The surfaces of the parfleche are wrinkled and scuffed — an effect Chilcott has wanted to approximate in his own painted surfaces.

Titles like *Birch Bark Canoe*, or *Springcleaning the Teepee*, or *Parfleche* mark Chilcott's use of Indian art, albeit with a foreign and personal irony. Chilcott has done to the Indian a whole exhibition of homage — *Red Indian*, 1979.

Childhood revisited

"It's a protracted childhood thing," Chilcott explains of his Red Indian interest. "I had a teepee of my own as a child." Like many children of his generation he was fascinated by an imported mythology of Indians — in the serials and matinee movies, in comics, in books. Chilcott's colours, in fact, are far closer to the Indian art of childhood annuals and books, all analine, than to the colours, all organic and earthy, of Indian art itself.

Chilcott's first one-man show, *A New Look Back At Taste* (Barry Lett Galleries, 1977), granted his paintings the decor of a 1950s living room. "Growing up in the 50s was a font of visions," Chilcott says. "My parents ran a drapery shop: And textiles now are a favoured visual source."

Dressing-gown materials, curtains, the *art moderne* patterns of sofas, 'lounge' furnishings, patterns on plates, all filtered through the memory, find their place in his art, the happy, familiar sights of childhood. The images of "a spoiled brat of the 50s", Chilcott says.

The fabric unframed

Chilcott's paintings are unframed, unbacked. The fabric's edge is marked only by hemming. The painting's at most by a painted border.

"Ideally," he says, "I'd like them to look like battered side-show drop cloths. Or to look as though they'd been through the washing machine . . . have the quality of a tattered relic."

Some of the fabrics of Chilcott's works are actually patched with applied fabrics — appliquéd. It's as though there wasn't a big enough cloth for the job, or some bits needed repairing. He says: "At first it was a way to make one good painting out of two bad ones." A technical problem — frayed edges — led to stitching the applied bits with red stitching. Later, the red stitches were *represented* in paint — in such works as *Birch Bark Canoe*, 1979 — artificially cut up, then, imitation patched, become part of Chilcott's preoccupation with the artificial rather than the real.

There are also, of course, in not framing or backing paintings on canvas, the physical facts of convenience. It's easy to transport an unstretched canvas — you simply roll it up — it's easy to staple it to the wall to paint on.

But as always in art, a technical problem and its solution affects content as much as form, its resolution may become part of the picture's meaning. What the rumpled 'unframedness' of the cloth is saying is this: "Look — I'm not really all that precious."

Windows and checkerboard floors

A number of Chilcott's works conjoin windows and checkerboard floors (*Family Groups*, 1980), or treat of them separately (*Meet Me in the Sculpture Garden at 4*, *Made for Each Other*, *Take Your Hands off Me*). Windows and checkerboard floors — they irresistibly recall the devices of traditional perspective. Its first theorist, Alberti, in a now classic metaphor, regarded the picture as a view through a window, a window to the world, the glass pane as the picture plane. This idea of the picture as a view through a window instructed painting through all the centuries until our own. To construct the view through the pane, the painter was instructed to begin by constructing a checkerboard pavement, on which all objects might then be placed at a measurable distance.

In Chilcott's work, however, there is no measurable recession, nor even convincing representation of depth. Orthogonals don't converge properly to a point — some even *diverge* into space; transversals don't recede with proper regularity; perspective misbehaves. The checkerboard floor, traditionally used to survey a measurable depth, intended now more as a *sign* of space than as an attempt at illusion, is just another of Chilcott's flat patterns.

Chilcott's windows give on to nothing, are no longer transparent to the world, are just streaked with diagonal rains of light. Chilcott's pictures, allude to depth as they may, never offer its convincing representation: the flat opacity of a painted surface is all that they offer.

Laocoon revisited: art from art

If Chilcott's art gives on to anything, it gives on to art as much as to the world. There are four possible ways of making art about art: first, artworks with art materials as subjects; second, artworks about the making of art; third, artworks that refer to the art system — to art institutions; and fourth, artworks that refer to other artworks. Chilcott uses the third (*Rejects — Venice Biennale, 1959*, *Meet Me in the Sculpture Garden at 4*) and the fourth (*Good Morning Mr Westermann*, *Laocoon Revisited*, *Madonna with the Long Neck*). Such art looking at art is not, of course, new. Take *Laocoon*, for example.

Chilcott has done a series of works with snake-like shapes entwining a form or two (*Made for Each Other*, *Take Your Hands off Me*, *Laocoon Revisited*).

Laocoon is a classical statue dug up during the Renaissance. It shows the unfortunate Trojan priest and his sons strangled by snakes. Titian did a parody of it, with the sons and priest as apes. He was, presumably, teasing the innumerable artworks which copied or followed *Laocoon* — Michelangelo's *Ignudi* on the Sistine ceiling, for instance — teasing those artists, 'aping' its style.

Chilcott uses the snake, lovingly entwining or strangling his heroes and heroines, as a metaphor of love and hate. Now this is not entirely new, either. The scurrilous Aretino, in his

Dialogues, once compared the look on the face of a cardinal making love to a nun to "that funny look the marble statue at the Vatican Museum gives to the snakes that are strangling him between his sons".

Whether Chilcott knows such previous use of *Laocoon*, or not, doesn't matter at all (though it *is* related in a book, *Infinite Jest*, the artist's wife has had from the public library). What counts is this: Chilcott's work is in a long tradition of art that refers to other art, referring to other art in such a way that the reference becomes as much a matter of content as of form.

Drawn

Chilcott likes lines drawn with the brush. Sometimes planes are outlined with colour — as is, say, the red comb shape with blue line and the blue comb with the red line in *Made for Each Other*. Other times, lines striate a plane from *within* its boundaries — as in the blue diagonals of the red, and the red diagonals of the blue comb, in *Made for Each Other*. In some paintings, the drawing convention is tonally put into reverse — so outlines and shadow lines are in white instead of the expected black. Line becomes then less some definitive fissure between one thing and another, or the mere absence of light, but *itself* — purely a pattern of paint on a painted surface. All the shapes of *Family Group*, for instance — checkered floor, table, family trio, windows, curtains — are outlined and striped with white. Since folds in curtains in the "real" world are in shade and here they are represented with lines of white, what emphatically is stated is this: like everything here, the curtains are drawn with the brush.

George Baloghy
by Andrew Bogle

Eccentric/Eclectic

Baloghy is perhaps the most eclectic of the new painters, a charge he willingly accepts. As he sees it, artists have always borrowed from other artists, but usually they try to conceal it. To identify the sources in Baloghy's paintings is half way to understanding the works. Sometimes a 'point' is explicit, as in *Eleven forty-three and still no sign of the train* 1981, where the warrior Hamiora Tu, from Gottfried Lindauer's painting (Auckland City Art Gallery collection) waits in front of the fireplace of Rene Magritte's famous painting, *Time Transfixed* 1932. The warrior is too early; the train is too late. Immortalised Maoris keep popping up in the most unlikely places. In *Te Kooti as an Abstract Expressionist* 1979, the great warrior is bent over his canvas, spread out on the ground, in the pose we know so well from the famous photograph of Jackson Pollock in action. In *Cultural Dilemma* 1979, yet another sentinel warrior — this time from William Hodges' painting *A View of Dusky Bay, New Zealand* 1773 (Auckland City Art Gallery collection) has been transported through a time lock to Hahei (where Baloghy takes his holidays). Beside the noble savage, fixed to a post in the sand, like a road sign, is an action painting, pointing the way to cultural progress.

Cultural dilemma

An ironic variation of this theme is *Spoilz to the Victors*, a pastiche of Louis J. Steele's well-known bondage piece *The Spoils to the Victors* 1908 (Auckland City Art Gallery collection) and Marcel Duchamp's *Bicycle Wheel* 1916. The zed of "Spoilz" in Baloghy's title is an oblique jibe at Frank Womble's affectation of substituting zeds for esses. With the entrance of Duchamp's "bicycle wheel", stage left, pathos exits stage right, where the bare-breasted Maori maiden is bound by her hands to the pallisades. In Baloghy's hands the carnal bondage scene is reduced to tragi-comedy. "The bicycle wheel is the victor, you see. That's the irony of it. Because Steele didn't realise that he was working in an outmoded fashion around the same time as Duchamp was working in his relatively revolutionary way."

Additions, subtractions. Some art political statements

In *Spoilz to the Victors* and *Meat 'n' Three Veges* 1979, Baloghy's modifications to the paintings he parodies consist of simple additions — Duchamp's bicycle wheel in the former painting and the archetypal New Zealand dinner (to an Ian Scott lattice "table cloth") in the latter. But *Taranaki* 1982 in which Baloghy dovetails two milestones of New Zealand landscape painting — Christopher Perkins' oil *Taranaki* 1931 and Charles Heaphy's watercolour *Mount Egmont from the Southward* 1871 is a more complicated piece of joinery. The highly stylised cone of Taranaki and the tree and ferns in the foreground are Heaphy's; the middle distance with the dairy factory, macrocarpas and water tank are Perkins'; the tarsealed road and yellow and blue Japanese hatchbacks are Baloghy's own. These late model Japanese cars are really no more incongruous in this context than Heaphy's "Mount Fuji". Baloghy has also done a version of Manet's masterpiece, *Déjeuner sur l'Herbe*, with a shiny red Honda, "driven" out of the advertisement, parked demurely behind the happy picnickers. Shouldn't the naked lady be draped seductively over the bonnet of the car in the obligatory advertising pose?

Three main types

Among Baloghy's paintings three main types can be distinguished.

1. Real Estate

Strictly speaking, these are cityscapes — for example, *Food* 1980, where the title is taken from a fast food sign, and *1st Grade Meat* 1980, which is a painting of the turquoise butcher shop in Dominion Road, Auckland. *Food* is the painting

which comes closest to "fine art". "This is the closest to photo realism. All it needs is the elimination of the black lines, but I shied away from it."

2. Altered States

Examples of these are *Sculptural proposition: Carpark* 1979 and *I can see right through this gallery* 1979. In paintings of this type, Baloghy takes a given view of a well known public or private institution and either adds to it (the forest of parking meters in front of the Auckland War Memorial Museum, in the former painting) or subtracts from it (everything but the facade of the Barry Lett Galleries, in the latter painting).

3. Art Pastiche

The paintings of this type are lampoons of paintings by noted foreign artists such as Jackson Pollock, René Magritte, Marcel Duchamp and Edouard Manet, or such New Zealand notables as Charles Heaphy, Christopher Perkins, Louis J. Steele, Ian Scott, Richard Killeen, Billy Apple and Brent Wong.

Sending up the institutions

Public institutions are a popular target for Baloghy's wit. In *Additions and Alterations — an Art Political Statement* 1980 — a reference to Billy Apple's sculptural preoccupation with the Auckland City Art Gallery building — Baloghy has cleverly transformed the mansard roof of the French chateau style building by superimposing the broad red and white stripes of somewhat similarly styled roofs of Kentucky Fried Chicken outlets (no, this work is not in the Auckland City Art Gallery collection). In *I can see right through this Gallery*, he takes a humorous side swipe at the Barry Lett Galleries, which is just as much a New Zealand institution as any of the public galleries. Through the first floor window of one of New Zealand's best known private galleries, we see, to our surprise, a clear blue sky and buildings — just a facade. Rodney Kirk-Smith, Baloghy's dealer and long time director of the Barry Lett Galleries (now called RKS Art) was able to take the joke. Whether the New Zealand painters who have been at the receiving end of Baloghy's brush have reacted as good-humouredly to the treatment they have received is perhaps another question. To Baloghy it's all fair play. Once an artist exhibits his work, the images become public property, to his mind. As an exhibiting artist himself, he is, of course, just as susceptible to criticism about his own work.

Young man flogging a dead horse?

One such criticism of his art on art lampoons, is that they are so many variations on a somewhat limited theme. It is an issue he has already addressed himself to in a self-portrait as a young man flogging a dead horse in the street outside his Mt Eden home. "It's been said by someone that the history of drama can be reduced to some forty plots. I'm sure that the same can be done with art. The significance is not in the newness of the product but in the newness of the presentation."

Technique

1. Enamel skies

Apart from a few gouaches, Baloghy generally uses acrylic and high gloss enamel house paint. "The enamel occurs mainly in the skies, in some paintings it occurs all over. But in most paintings, you'll find it in the skies, especially with clouds. I like the flatness and luminosity of the sky colour. When I pour white paint into it, it swirls around in a cloud-like fashion; whereas I want solid textures on the ground, in the grass, for example, and therefore I use acrylic."

2. Putting the line under it all

Baloghy's forms are almost invariably reinforced by hard black lines, a device sometimes used by Frizzell, Hartigan and Watkins also. What's unusual, however, is the 'negative' technique he uses to produce them. The way this is done might seem somewhat perverse, but it is highly effective. Perkins, incidentally, used it in his *Taranaki* painting. To give

an example, the power lines which cut across the sky in Baloghy's *1st Grade Meat* have been made by painting broad blue bands (the strips of sky between the wires) over a black field, instead of by the conventional method of brushing thin black lines on top of a blue field. There are advantages to this procedure in that the width of the lines is more easily controlled. If a thinner line is required, a little more can be whittled away. At close quarters, a curious effect is produced, since the wires appear to be behind or "under" the sky. Baloghy arrived at this unusual technique by beginning his paintings with an all-over black field.

3. Jumpy lines

One of the characteristics of lines produced by this method is their erratic edge. "I like the sensuality of the line that is produced by this procedure. If you get a repeatograph and draw a line, it's quite a boring line; whereas a line drawn in this manner is quite exciting and sensuous. That's one of the things I enjoy about painting — the sensuous quality."

In keeping with his "jumpy" line, Baloghy often gives his pictures a similarly irregular border, also edged with black, outside of which is a raw strip of unprimed canvas which puts paid to any Greenbergian pretensions the painting might have of being an object. Baloghy's paintings are definitely pictures (even pictures within pictures) and not objects.

4. Varnishing shadows

Another distinctive effect he achieves is in the translucent brown shadows his forms cast. For these he uses burnt sienna oil paint diluted with varnish generally applied over acrylic. The way this mixture sometimes crawls or bleeds in a highly naturalistic way is similar to the behaviour of the enamel paint in his clouds. In *1st Grade Meat*, this glaze has been used with realistic effect to describe the dirt stain along the base of the butcher shop wall by letting it bleed into the underlying turquoise field.

5. Why enamel?

"For certain, because I saw some of Pat Hanly's paintings and some of the quality — not so much the splatter parts, as the accidental mixing — immediately suggested clouds. I had tried to figure out how to do clouds for a long time and they always ended up looking overworked like the clouds in Brent Wong's paintings — very precise. So, I thought to myself — how do clouds actually form? — and I thought — it's the fusion of two like substances, like when you pour ink into water. It's just two bits of enamel paint flowing into each other which simulates the swirls and patterns of clouds. It's like the real thing."

Methodology

1. The painter as photographer

"I see my straight landscapes as a direct connection with my interest in photography; that is why I go around recording things." He regards his photographs of city buildings — houses, petrol stations, butcher shops, fast food outlets, etc. — as bona fide works in themselves, as well as aids to his painting. His choice of such subjects, it is worth noting, is based on purely subjective, formal considerations. The photographs are not part of any systematic documentation of our changing social environment or similar such project.

"But in some cases I work directly from photographs. In others I work from a slide. I project it on to a surface and trace around it. In other cases — if it's from an ordinary photograph — I will draw it on to the canvas in a variety of ways. Sometimes I just draw it freehand. I make corrections and alterations all the time. I delete things. I remove things that clutter."

2. Just jest

"I generally admire the things I parody. They're usually images that come to my mind and then I go to libraries and so on to search them out. So they are images that were strong enough to have haunted me for a while." *Meat 'n' Three Veges*, ironically, was suggested by the "victim". "Actually, I

met Ian Scott once at the Tokoroa art awards. I asked him about his lattice paintings and he said he was contemplating making some of these patterns of his into place mats and selling them commercially. And then it dawned on me that they looked like table cloths. I have since likened that flat series of his to a table cloth. It's just that it appeared to me very flat and so I treated it as a flat surface on which to put something. Also we had a conversation once on the merits of the New Zealand art scene with the Big Apple art scene. So I sort of implanted a directly New Zealand kind of thing — meat and three veges — on to his New York kind of image." The preparatory study for this painting was executed in gouache on a reproduction of a Scott lattice painting torn from Art New Zealand. "It worked. If it hadn't worked formally, I wouldn't have done it."

"With most of my paintings — not all; not the straight landscapes — there are more than double meanings. Sometimes there are triple, sometimes quadruple, sometimes more, meanings. That's the real fun of it for me, the allusion to things."

Against the grain

In spite of being figurative, a lot of what Baloghy paints goes against the grain of traditional artistic practice. "One of the interesting things about art is that it breaks rules." He combines oil and acrylic; he desecrates "revered masterpieces"; he outlines his forms in black; he doesn't take his paintings to the edge of the canvas but leaves them fluttering like a flag; his landscapes don't celebrate the natural beauty of our countryside (parking meters are more numerous than trees in his paintings); he mocks his fellow artists; and he disrespectfully satirizes the impending demise of our sheep-farming industry, the traditional backbone of our economy. For example, in *End of an Era*, sheep in a field graze amid ruins of monuments to the industry — "sheep on pedestals". A similar allusion to New Zealand's changing social and cultural patterns is embodied in *Meat 'n' Three Veges*.

Chic or cheek

Baloghy is not alone in his references to other artists' paintings and advertising imagery; one has only to think of Hartigan's "hungry enzymes", Chilcott's *Laocoon Revisited*, Frizzell's *Lion attacking a horse* and Watkins' *Morris Louis Staining Device*. Actually there is a curious parallel between Watkins' Heath Robinson painting contraption and the conveyor belt carrying Duchampian chocolate grinders in Baloghy's painting *Broyeuse*. Baloghy and Watkins have even made reference to the same painter, Jackson Pollock, in their respective pictures *Te Kooti as an Abstract Expressionist* and *Painting References in the 50's* (screenprint). Consider the thematic parallel between Watkins' *Gertrude Stein visits Rangitoto* and Baloghy's *Te Kooti as an Abstract Expressionist*. In *Now that's what I call a Real Painting* Frizzell painted a picture within a picture. Baloghy has done a similar thing in *Installation View 1979*, a view of a row of Baloghy paintings. Like Frizzell, Hartigan and Watkins, Baloghy accentuates his forms with black lines. Like Frizzell and Hartigan he uses enamel paint. There are other parallels besides these. But in the final analysis he stands apart from all these artists in certain crucial respects.

Specifically Baloghy's paintings carry more social comment; less aesthetic nostalgia. There is something *chic* about Chilcott's cocktail party titles, deco shapes, and linoleum colours. There is something *chic* about Watkins' picture book style, parrots, and references to Aztec culture, voodoo, ecology and rock-and-roll. The same goes for Hartigan's colour xeroxes, candy colours, mirrored surfaces and neon lights; Wong Sing Tai's cowboy terrains, and Buck Rogers' moonscapes, and Frizzell's swimming pools, circus types, pyramids and Phantom comic references. What characterises these artists' paintings, drawings and prints is a certain nostalgia for a bygone era and style — the fifties — and the sentimental childhood associations that go with them — Tarzan, Tin Tin, colour-in books, paintboxes, stiletto heels,

juke boxes, tin toys, cowboys and Indians, Boy Scout lore, horror stories and circuses.

This is where Baloghy parts company. There is nothing *chic* about his pictures. Parking meters, fast-food outlets, Romney ewes, dead horses and lamb chops are not chic, whatever else they may be. The black lines he puts around things suggest not so much comics and colour-in books as the black rubber seal around a Honda windscreen or the painted border of an AA sign. His colours are descriptive not of Magic-Markers, Smarties, fingernail polish, pinball machines, tattoos and linoleum; but of mundane materials and surfaces — like asphalt, concrete, brick and grass.

Baloghy's art is rooted firmly in a recognisably New Zealand landscape and culture; the other painters' art has a more international flavour.

Catalogue of the Exhibition

In the recording of dimensions, height precedes width.
Exhibition information on the paintings was compiled with the
co-operation of the artists' dealers.

WONG SING TAI



Wong Sing Tai

Born Otaki 1943.

Attended Wellington Technical College 1958-60.

Awarded special scholarship for all art subjects 1960.

Attended Wellington School of Design 1961-62.

Awarded Benson & Hedges Art Award 1968.

Has exhibited since 1966 and is represented in most public collections in New Zealand.

1. *Badlands* 1974
screenprint on perspex 1016 x 1016
- inscribed
l.l. W.S.T. 6/65
l.r. Pacific Graphics 1975
- exhibited 1974 22 May-10 June Wellington
Victoria University Library
Wong Sing Tai Paintings cat. no. 1
(earlier edition)
- 1975 March Auckland
Barrington Gallery
Figurative Art Now (earlier edition)
- reference M. Dunn, *Figurative Art Now: 9 New Zealand Artists*, 1975 pp 11-12, p 50, illus. p 51
(earlier edition) *Art New Zealand* 1981-82
no. 22, "The New Image Painters", F. Pound,
pp 24-33
- collection Auckland City Art Gallery

2. *Black Freighter* 1974
acrylic on perspex 1020 x 1020
- inscribed W.S.T.
- exhibited 1974 29 April-10 May Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
Mad Mountains of the Moon cat. no. 8
- 1975 March Auckland
Barrington Gallery
Figurative Art Now
- reference M. Dunn, *Figurative Art Now: 9 New Zealand Artists* Barrington Gallery 1975, p 12
- collection Auckland City Art Gallery

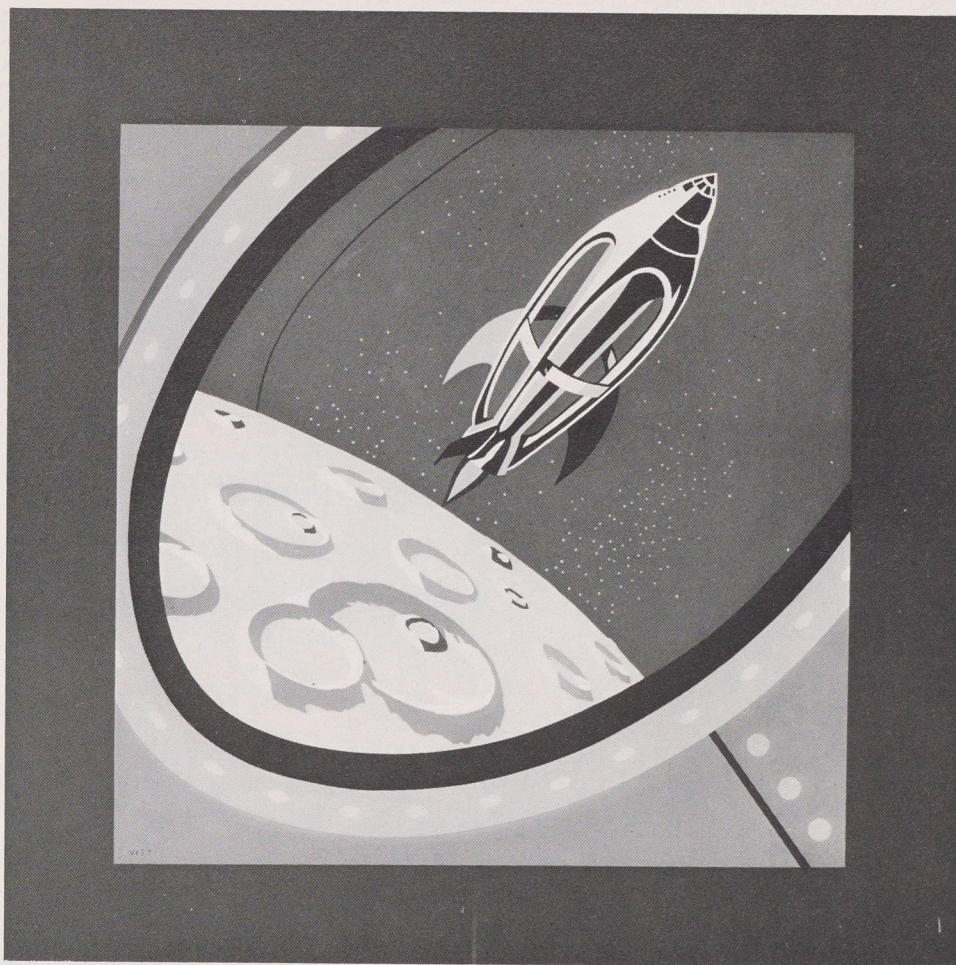
3. *Interception* 1974
acrylic on perspex 1020 x 1020
- inscribed
l.l. W.S.T.
- exhibited 1974 29 April-10 May Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
Mad Mountains of the Moon
- collection Wong Sing Tai

4. *Mondrian painting no. 1* 1979
acrylic on perspex 600 x 490
- inscribed
l.r. H.W.
- exhibited 1979 10-21 September Auckland
Peter Webb Galleries
Artists on Artists
- reference *Art New Zealand* 1981-82 no. 22, "The New
Image Painters", F. Pound, pp 24-33
- collection Ms A. Bidwell

5. *Flightplan* 1981
acrylic on perspex 1020 x 1020
- inscribed
l.l. W.S.T. 81
- collection Wong Sing Tai



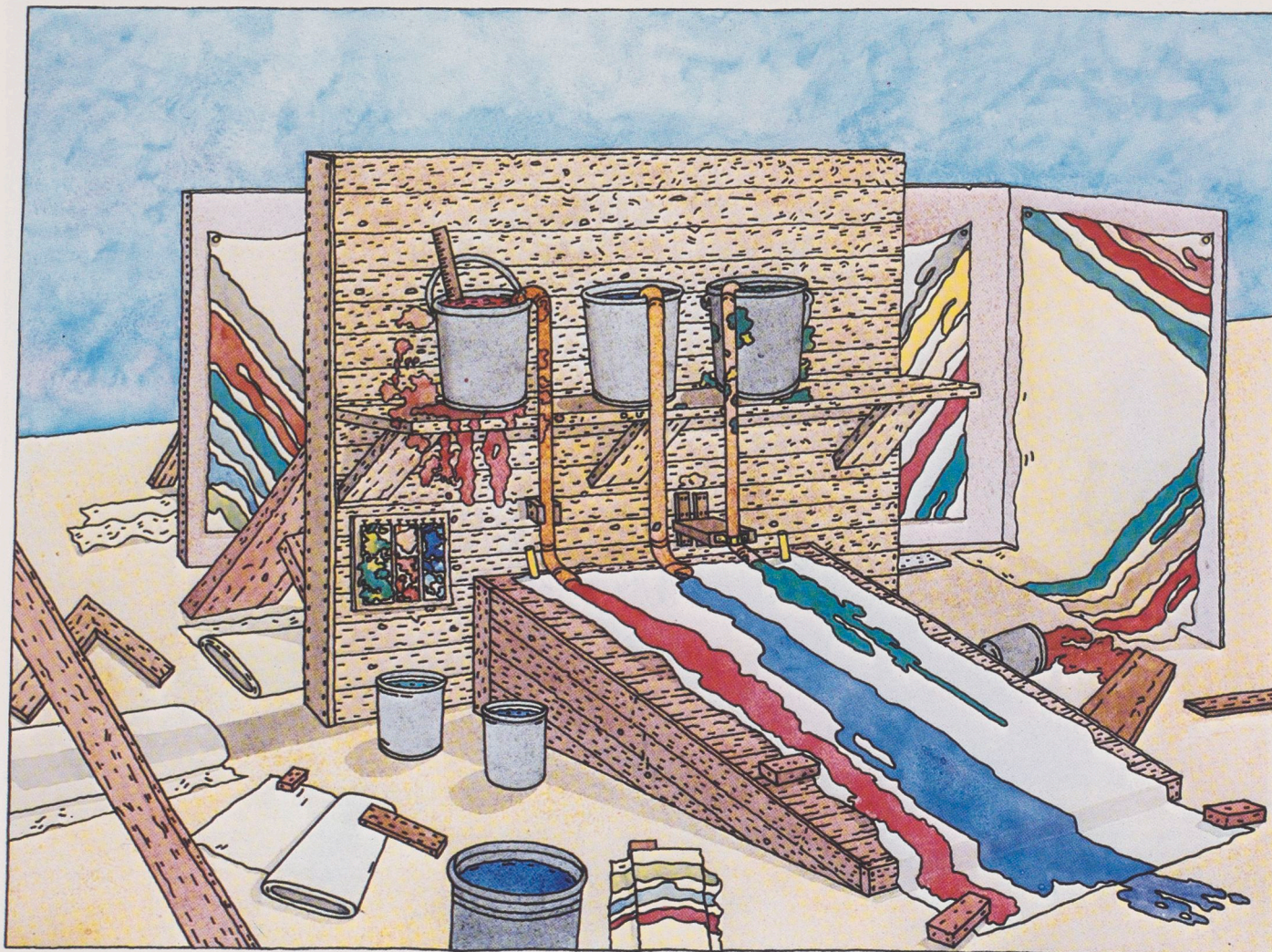
1. Wong Sing Tai *Badlands* 1974



3. Wong Sing Tai *Interception* 1974



5. Wong Sing Tai *Flightplan* 1981



Denys Watkins

Born Wellington 1945.

Attended School of Design, Wellington Polytechnic, Central College of Art and Royal College of Art, London.

First one-man exhibition Barry Lett Galleries 1971.

Awarded ANZ Bank Drawing Award 1975, National Bank Art

Award 1978, South Pacific Television Travelling Arts

Scholarship 1978.

Has exhibited widely in New Zealand and overseas.

6. *Real Estate* 1972

pen and watercolour on paper 580 x 770

exhibited 1973 29 September-17 October Auckland
Peter Webb Galleries
Denys Watkins Watercolours

1973 2-23 November Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
Denys Watkins Watercolours

reference *Art New Zealand* 1978 no. 11, "The Evocative Art of Denys Watkins", G.H. Brown, pp 36-37, p 63 illus. p 36
Art New Zealand 1981-1982 no. 22, "The New Image Painters", F. Pound, pp 24-33

collection The Artist

7. *Morris Louis painting device* 1972

pen and watercolour on paper 510 x 700

Inscribed

l.r. Denys Watkins 72

exhibited 1973 29 September-17 October Auckland
Peter Webb Galleries
Denys Watkins Watercolours

1973 2-23 November Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
Denys Watkins Watercolours

reference *Art New Zealand* 1981-1982 no. 22, "The New Image Painters", F. Pound, pp 24-33, illus. p 31

collection The Artist

8. *Sunday Suicide* 1973

pen and watercolour on paper 510 x 700

inscribed

l.l. Sunday Suicide
l.r. Denys Watkins 73

exhibited 1973 29 September-17 October Auckland
Peter Webb Galleries
Denys Watkins Watercolours

1973 2-23 November Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
Denys Watkins Watercolours

collection The Artist

9. *Starmap* 1976

assemblage, mixed media 2133 x 1879 x 1422

exhibited 1976 18-29 October Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
Denys Watkins Etchings Drawings Constructions

1981 mid-May-mid-June Auckland
Auckland City Art Gallery
Contemporary New Zealand Painting

reference *Art New Zealand* August/September/October 1977, p 22, illus. p 23

collection Auckland City Art Gallery

10. *Human Bondage* 1977

ink and watercolour on paper 455 x 610

inscribed

l.l. Human Bondage
l.r. Denys Watkins 77

reference *Art New Zealand* 1981-1982 no 22, "The New Image Painters", F. Pound, pp 24-33, illus. p. 25

Twelve New Zealand Artists (calendar) 1983, publ. Optic Art, illus. January page

collection The Artist

11. *Gertrude Stein Discovers Rangitoto* 1978

pencil and watercolour on paper 500 x 760

inscribed

l.l. Gertrude Stein discovers Rangitoto
l.r. Denys Watkins 78

exhibited 1978 13-28 February Auckland
Peter Webb Galleries
Rangitoto Special

references *Art New Zealand* 1978 no. 11, "The Evocative Art of Denys Watkins", G.H. Brown, pp 36-37, p 63

Art New Zealand February/March/April 1978 no.9, illus. p 22

collection Hocken Library, Dunedin

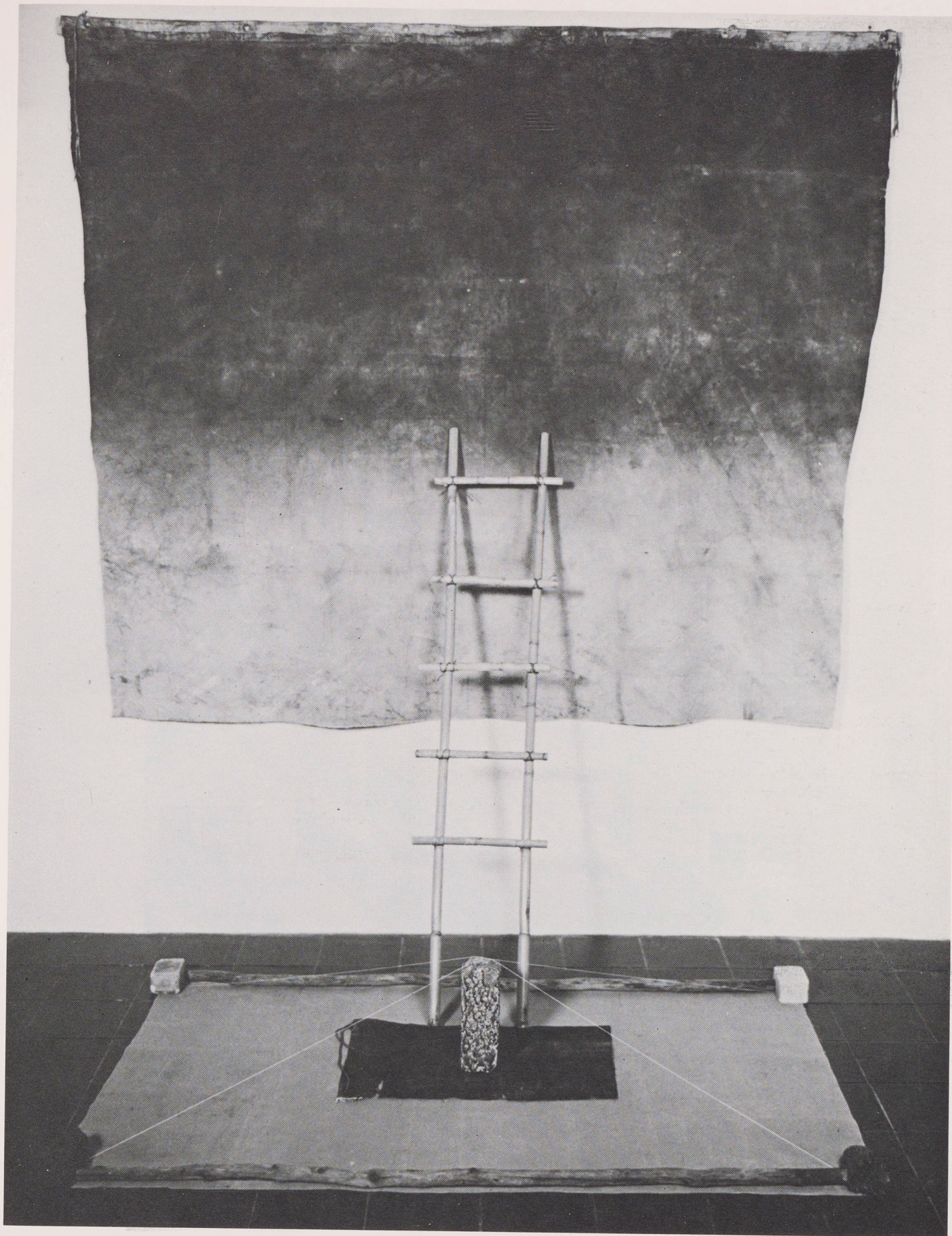
12. *Work* July-August, 1979

assemblage, mixed media 550 x 1650 x 1650

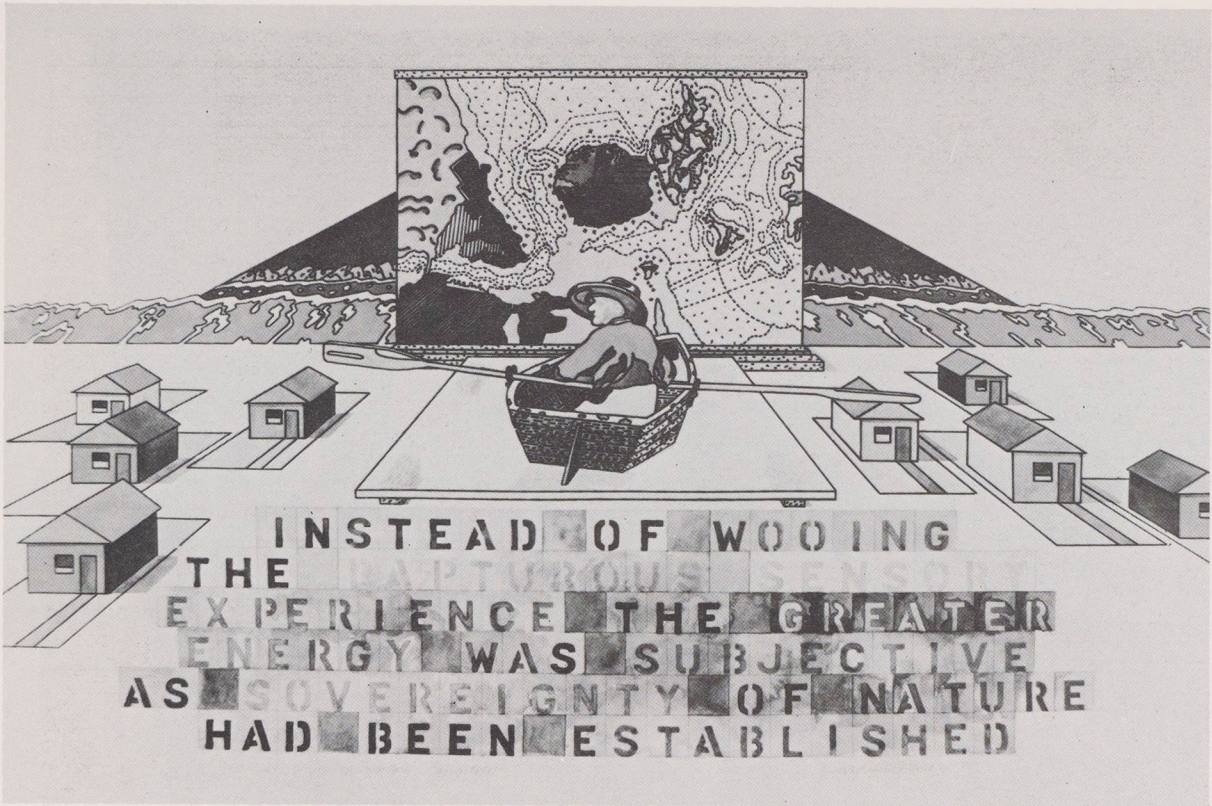
exhibited 1978 5-31 October Auckland
Auckland City Art Gallery
N.Z. Sculptors at Mildura

1979 17 January-11 February Hamilton
Waikato Art Museum
N.Z. Sculptors at Mildura

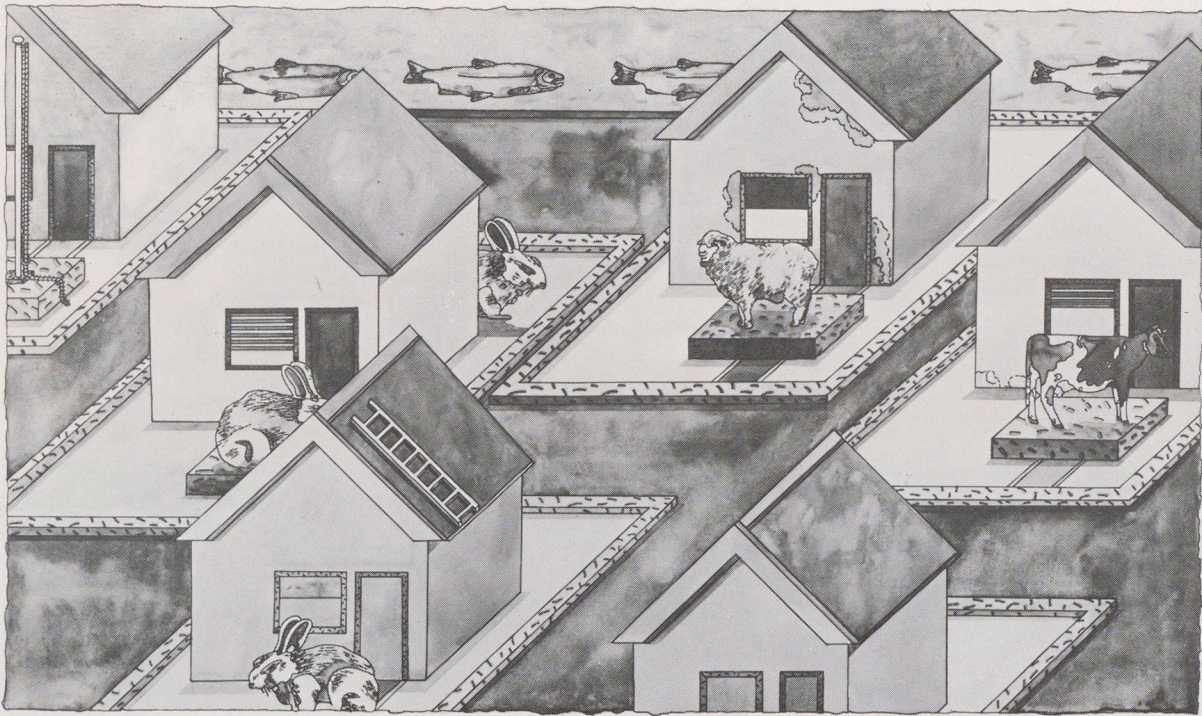
- 1979 22 February-18 March New Plymouth
Govett-Brewster Gallery
N.Z. Sculptors at Mildura
- 1979 10 May-10 June Wanganui
Sarjeant Gallery
N.Z. Sculptors at Mildura
- 1979 21 June-22 July Wellington
National Art Gallery
N.Z. Sculptors at Mildura
- 1979 9 August-9 September Christchurch
Robert McDougall Art Gallery
N.Z. Sculptors at Mildura
- 1979 20 September-3 November Dunedin
The Hocken Library
N.Z. Sculptors at Mildura
- 1981 22 February-18 March New Plymouth
Govett-Brewster Gallery
Permanent Collection Exhibition
- reference *N.Z. Sculptors at Mildura*, catalogue, H. Keith,
T. McCullough, N. Spill, W. Curnow, pp 44, 45,
illus. p 44
- Art New Zealand* 1978, no. 11,
"The Evocative Art of Denys Watkins",
G.H. Brown, pp 36-37 p 63, illus. p 63
- collection Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth
13. *Untitled* 1978
pastel on paper 740 x 870
- exhibited 1978 20 November-1 December Auckland
Peter Webb Galleries
Denys Watkins Prints & Drawings
- collection Mr Julian Miles
14. *Fringe benefits* 1978
Ink and watercolour on paper 470 x 790
- inscribed
l.c. Fringe Benefits
l.r. Denys Watkins 78
- exhibited 1978 20 November-1 December Auckland
Peter Webb Galleries
Denys Watkins Prints & Drawings
- 1979 May-June Auckland
Auckland City Art Gallery
Recent Acquisitions: Works on Paper
- collection Auckland City Art Gallery
15. *Science* 1980
acrylic on paper 565 x 760
- inscribed
l.r. Denys Watkins 80
- exhibited 1980 29 September-17 October Auckland
Peter Webb Galleries
Here and There
- reference *Art New Zealand* 1981-1982 no. 22 "The New
Image Painters", F. Pound, pp 24-33, illus.
p 33 (date and medium incorrectly ascribed)
- collection Mr Paul Little and Ms Tricia Scott
16. *Never Cry Wolf* 1980
acrylic on paper 565 x 760
- inscribed
l.r. Never cry wolf
- exhibited 1980 29 September-17 October Auckland
Peter Webb Galleries
Here and There
- collection The Artist
17. *Fire in my wire* 1980
acrylic on paper 565 x 760
- exhibited 1980 29 September-17 October Auckland
Peter Webb Galleries
Here and There
- reference G.H. Brown & H. Keith *An Introduction to
New Zealand Painting* 1982, illus. p 219
- collection Mr Patrick Hanly



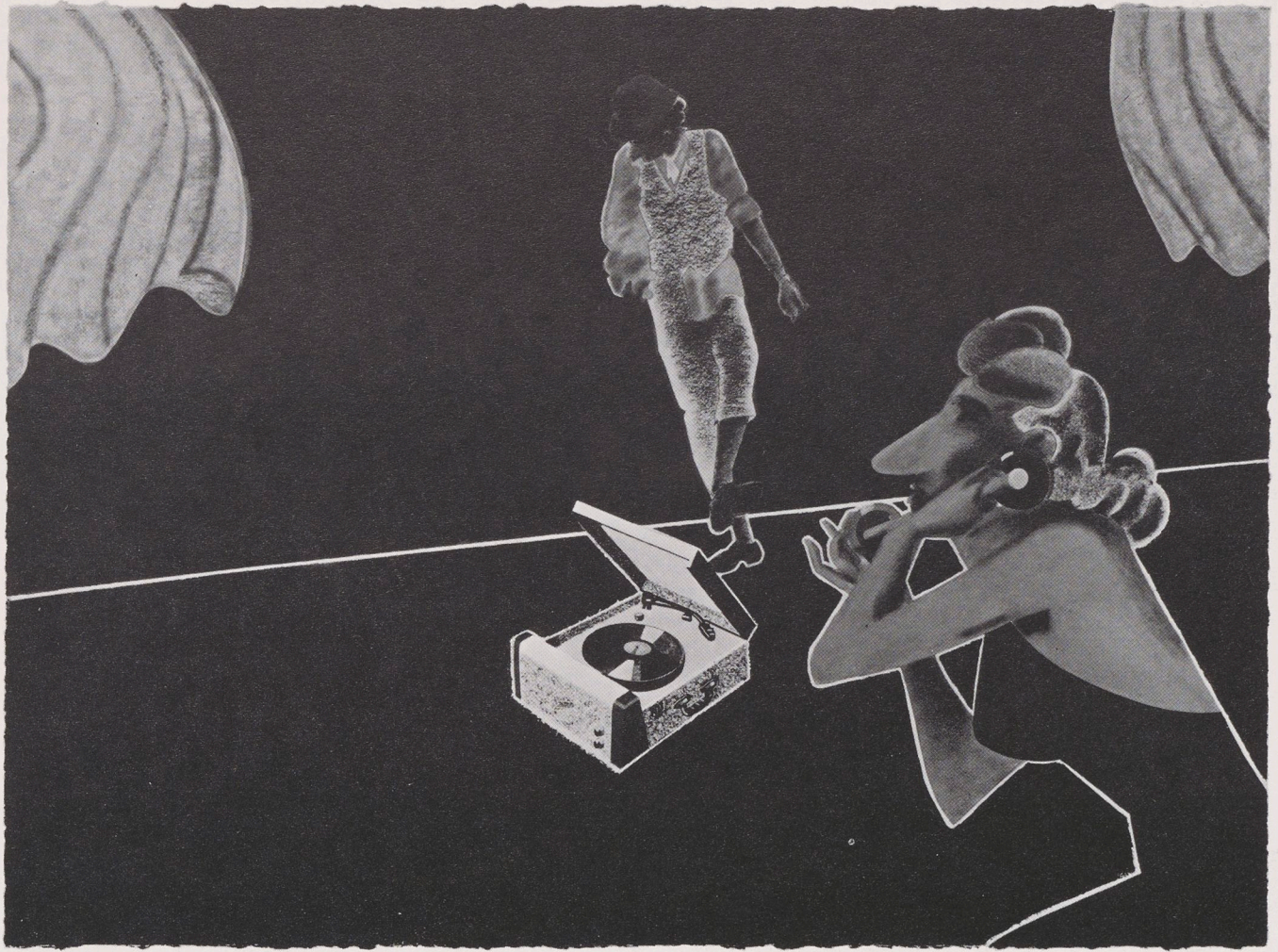
9. Denys Watkins *Starmap* 1976



11. Denys Watkins *Gertrude Stein Discovers Rangitoto* 1978

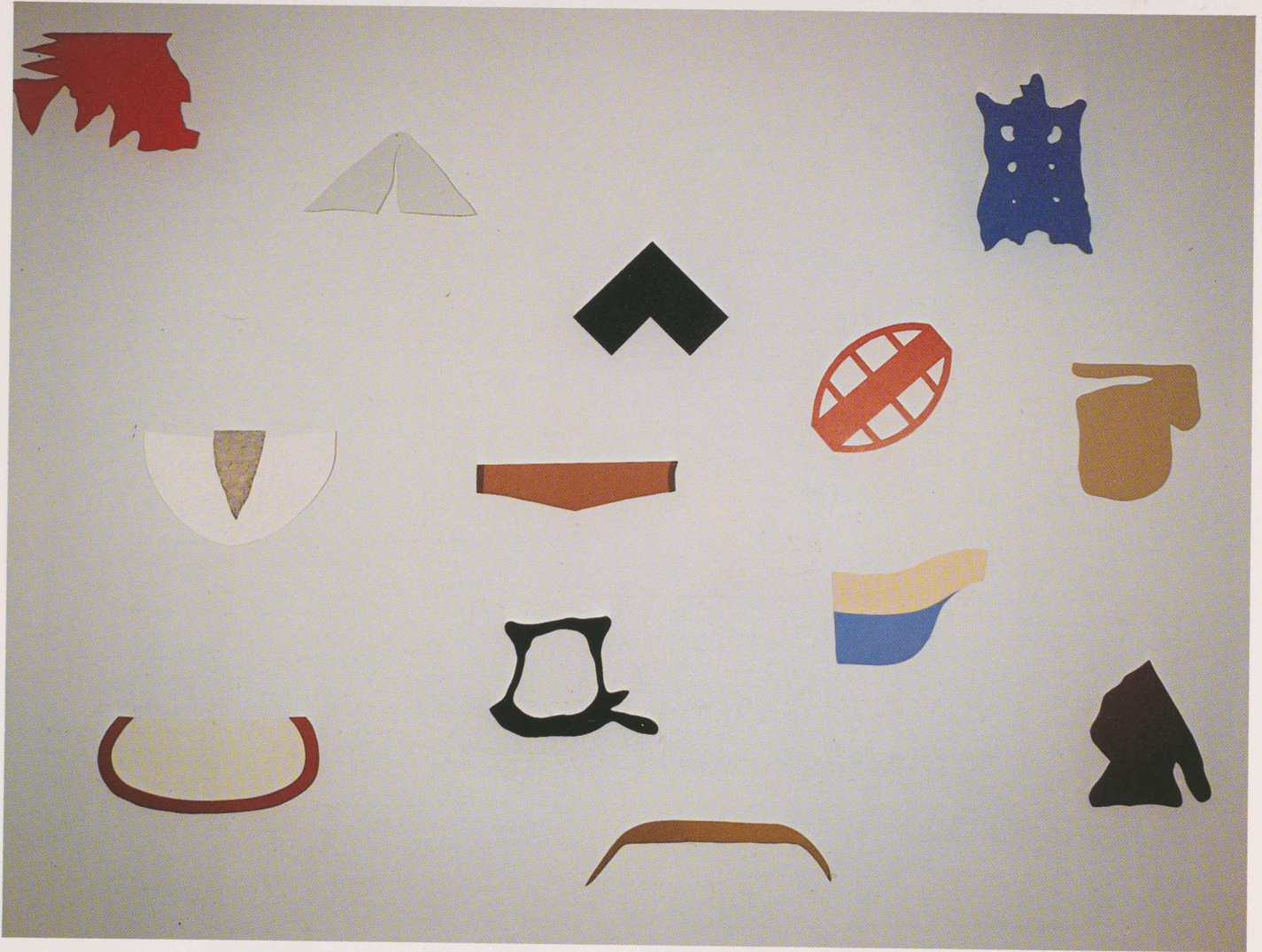


14. Denys Watkins *Fringe benefits* 1978



17. Denys Watkins *Fire in my wire* 1980

RICHARD KILLEEN



Richard Killeen

Born Auckland 1946.

Attended University of Auckland School of Fine Arts 1964-66.

Gained Diploma of Fine Arts.

Awarded the Benson & Hedges Art Award 1970.

Has exhibited widely throughout New Zealand since 1967.

18. *Collection from a Japanese garden, 1937* August 1978
acrylic lacquer on aluminium (30 pieces)

inscribed

reverse title, date, and number of pieces

exhibited 1978 19 September-6 October Wellington
Peter McLeavey Gallery
Richard Killeen, Recent Work

1979 May-June Palmerston North
Manawatu Art Gallery
Flight Fancies

reference *Art New Zealand* 1978 no. 11, "Exhibitions",
Neil Rowe, pp 20, 61, illus. p 20

J. & M. Barr *Contemporary New Zealand
Painters* vol. 1, A-M, 1980, pp 120, 122, 126,
ilus. p 123

collection Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth

19. *Black insects, red primitives* November 1980
acrylic lacquer on aluminium, 19 pieces

inscribed

reverse signature, title, date

exhibited 1981 2-19 June Christchurch
Brooke/Gifford Gallery
Recent Works

reference *Art New Zealand* 1980 no. 20, "The Escape
from the Frame: Richard Killeen's Cut-Outs",
F. Pound, pp 34-39, illus. p 38-39

collection Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Christchurch

20. *Left/Right* October 1981
alkyd on aluminium (13 pieces)

inscribed

brown

piece l.r. Killeen 81

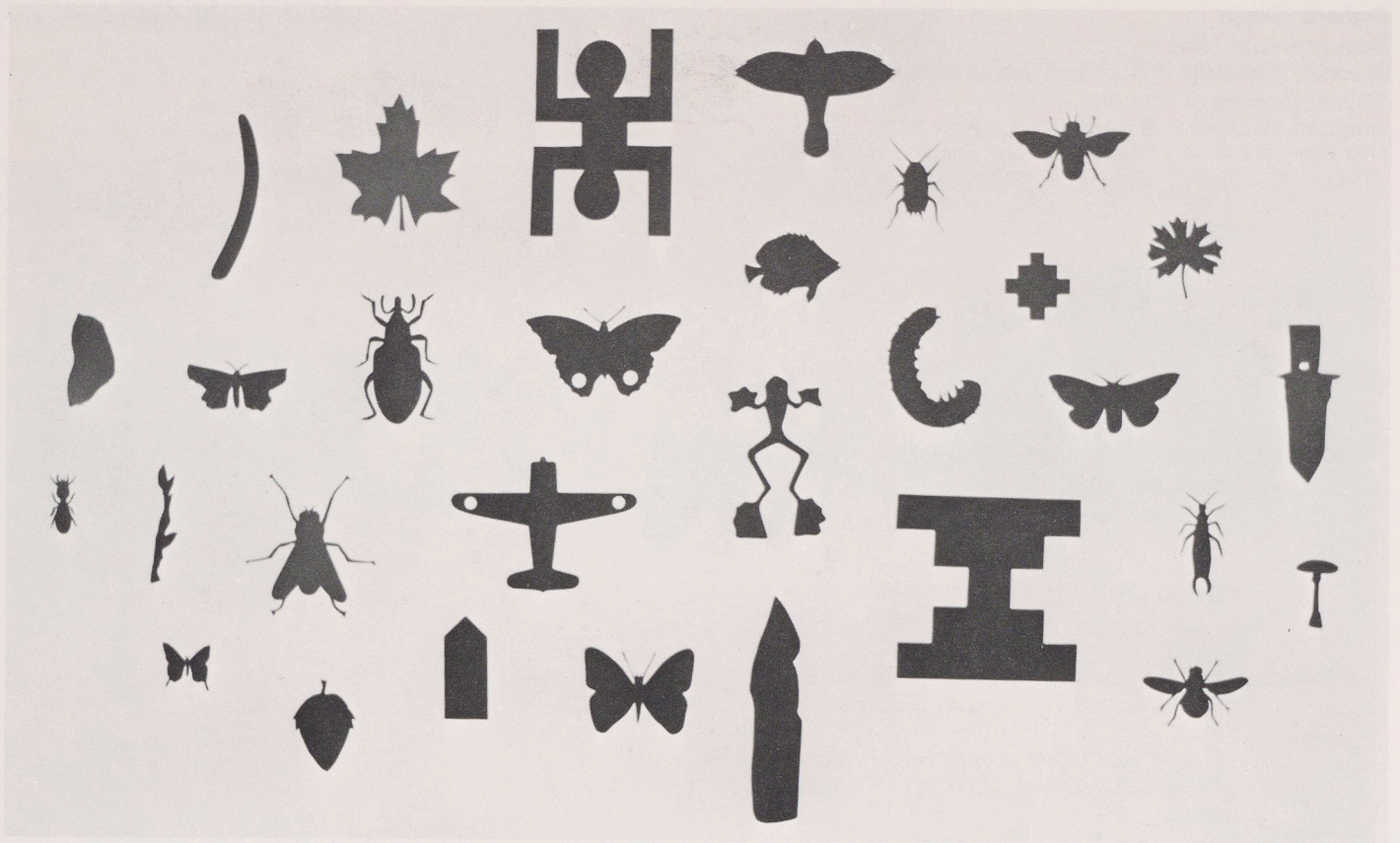
all pieces

reverse Left Right October 1981

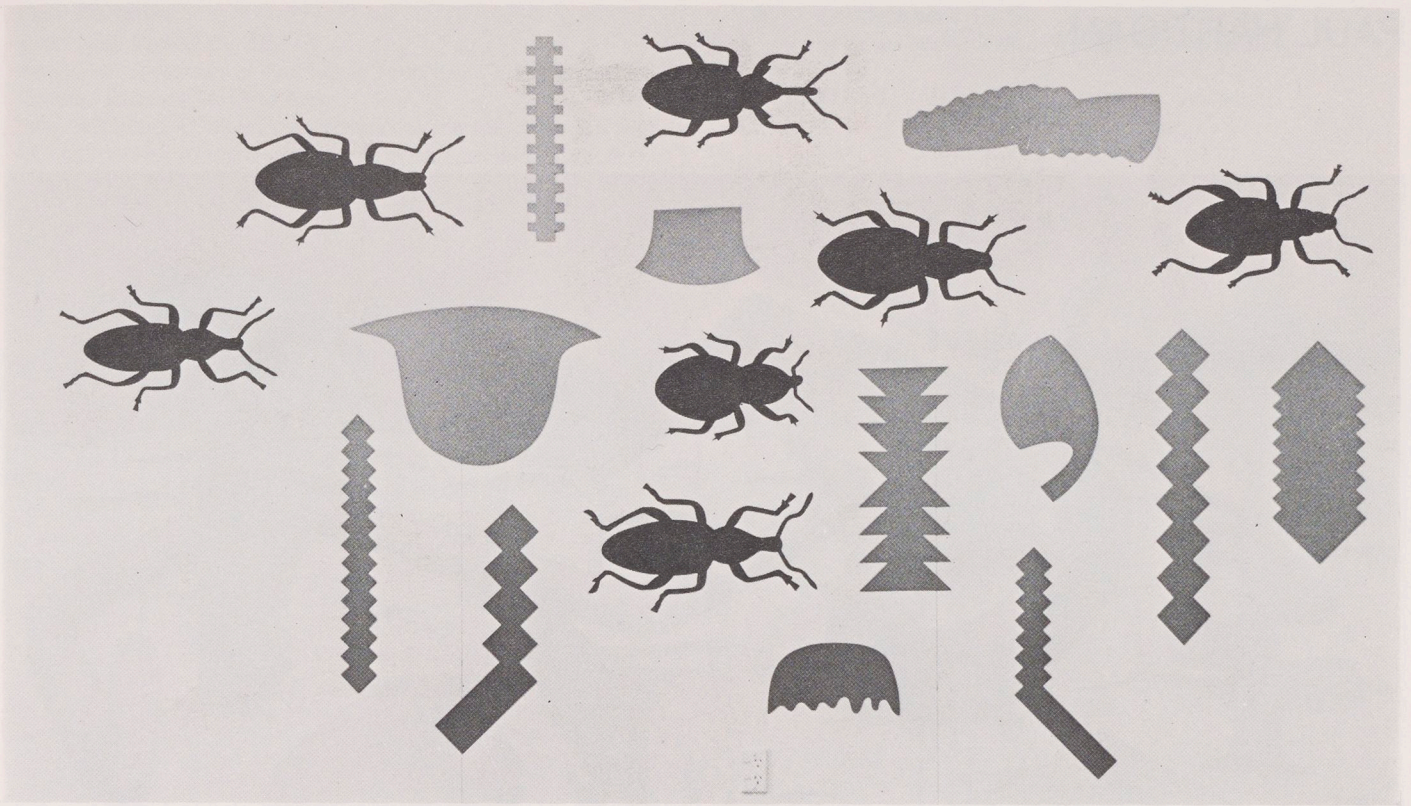
exhibited 1981 1-12 November Auckland
Peter Webb Galleries
New Work

1982 7 October-31 December Auckland
Auckland City Art Gallery
Recent Acquisitions, New Zealand Collection

collection Auckland City Art Gallery

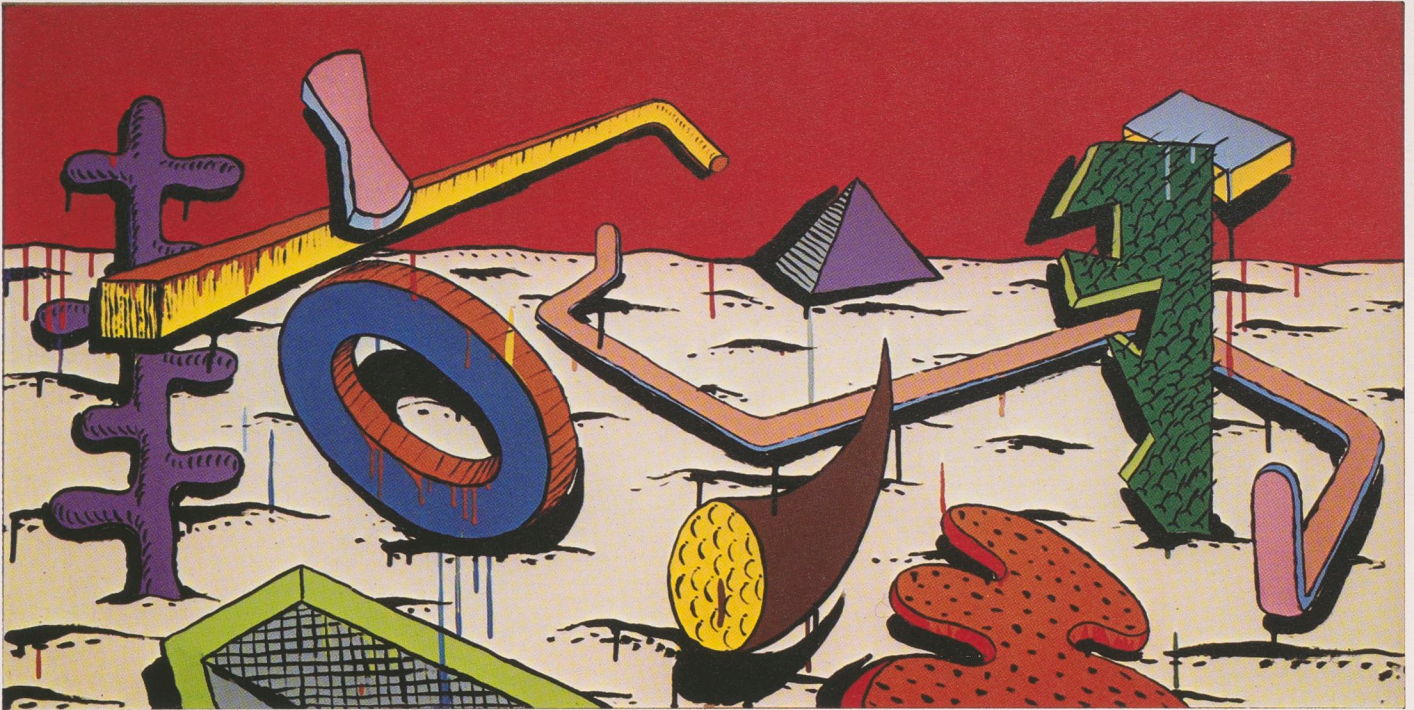


18. Richard Killeen *Collection from a Japanese garden, 1937* 1978



19. Richard Killeen *Black insects, red primitives* 1980

PAUL HARTIGAN



Paul Hartigan

Born New Plymouth 1953.

Attended University of Auckland School of Fine Arts 1971-73.

Gained Diploma of Fine Arts.

Has exhibited in New Zealand and overseas since 1975 and is represented in most major public and private collections.

21. *Landscape no. 1* 1974
enamel on board 609 x 1210

exhibited 1979 1-12 October Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
Picturesque

1981 October-May 1982 Auckland
Auckland City Art Gallery
Artichoke

1982 7 October-31 December Auckland
Auckland City Art Gallery
Recent Acquisitions, N.Z. Collection

reference *Art New Zealand* no. 14, "Paul Hartigan's
'Picturesque': a Survey Show", S.Ellis,
pp 20, 21, 67, illus. p 21

collection Auckland City Art Gallery

22. *Landscape 1* 1975
enamel and mirror on glass 509 x 659

exhibited 1975 December Auckland
Auckland City Art Gallery
Project 7

Private collection, Auckland

23. *Landscape 2* 1975
enamel and mirror on glass 509 x 659

exhibited 1975 December Auckland
Auckland City Art Gallery
Project 7

collection Mr Paul Peacock

24. *Landscape 3* 1975
enamel and mirror on glass 509 x 659

exhibited 1975 December Auckland
Auckland City Art Gallery
Project 7

reference *Art New Zealand* 1981-1982 no. 22,
"The New Image Painters", F. Pound,
pp 24-33, illus. p 33

collection Auckland City Art Gallery

25. *Landscape 4* 1975
enamel and mirror on glass 509 x 659

exhibited 1975 December Auckland
Auckland City Art Gallery
Project 7

collection Ms Rachel Power

26. *Landscape 5* 1975
enamel and mirror on glass 509 x 659

exhibited 1975 December Auckland
Auckland City Art Gallery
Project 7

collection Ms Rachel Power

27. *Landscape 6* 1975
enamel and mirror on glass 509 x 659

exhibited 1975 December Auckland
Auckland City Art Gallery
Project 7

collection Ms Rachel Power

28. *Boomerangs* 1978
enamel on board 165 x 220

inscribed
l.r. Boomerangs 1978

exhibited 1978 3-22 December Auckland
Denis Cohn Gallery
Opening Show

1979 1-12 October Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
Picturesque

collection The Artist

29. *Tell Tales* November 1978
enamel on board 333 x 268

inscribed
l.r. Hartigan Nov 78

exhibited 1978 3-22 December Auckland
Denis Cohn Gallery
Opening Show

1979 1-12 October Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
Picturesque

reference *Art New Zealand* 1981-1982 no. 22,
"The New Image Painters", F. Pound,
pp 24-33

collection Mr Russell Wells

30. *Four Ways* 1979
ink and watercolour on paper 361 x 506

inscribed
l.r. Hartigan

exhibited 1979 1-12 October Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
Picturesque

collection Auckland City Art Gallery

31. *Primary School* 1979
enamel on board 472 x 460

exhibited 1979 1-12 October Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
Picturesque

reference *Art New Zealand* 1981-1982 no. 22,
"The New Image Painters", F. Pound,
pp 24-33, illus. p 32

collection The Artist

32. *Dictionary II* 1981
enamel on board 658 x 610

inscribed
l.r. Hartigan 1981
reverse Paul Hartigan Dictionary II 1981

exhibited 1982 15-27 February Auckland
RKS Art
Summer 82

1982 September Hamilton
Studio Gallery
Works from RKS Gallery

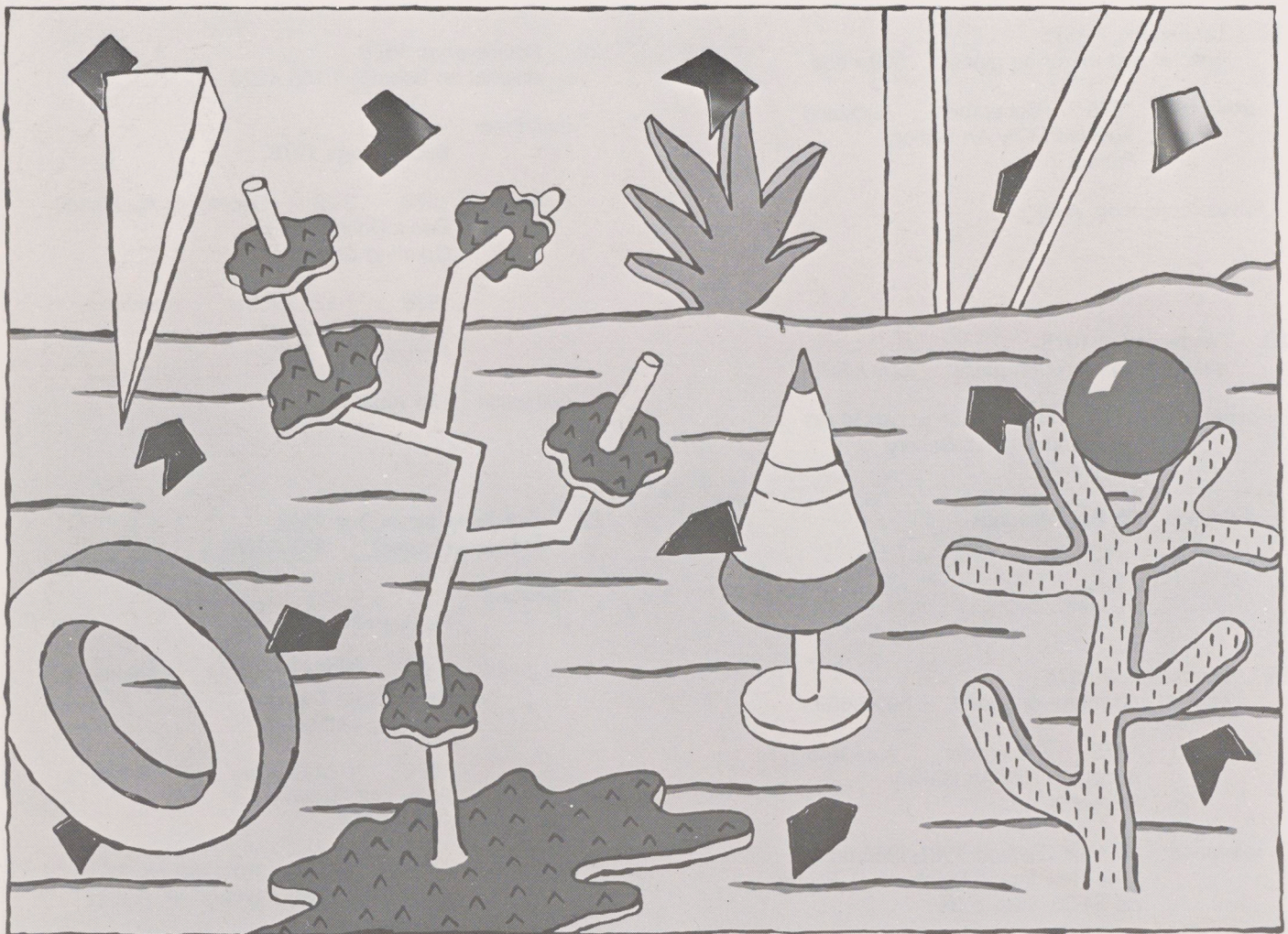
reference *Art New Zealand* 1981-1982 no. 22
"The New Image Painters", F. Pound,
pp 24-33

collection The Artist

33. *Yellowcake* 1981
enamel on board 800 x 1200

inscribed
l.r. Hartigan 1981

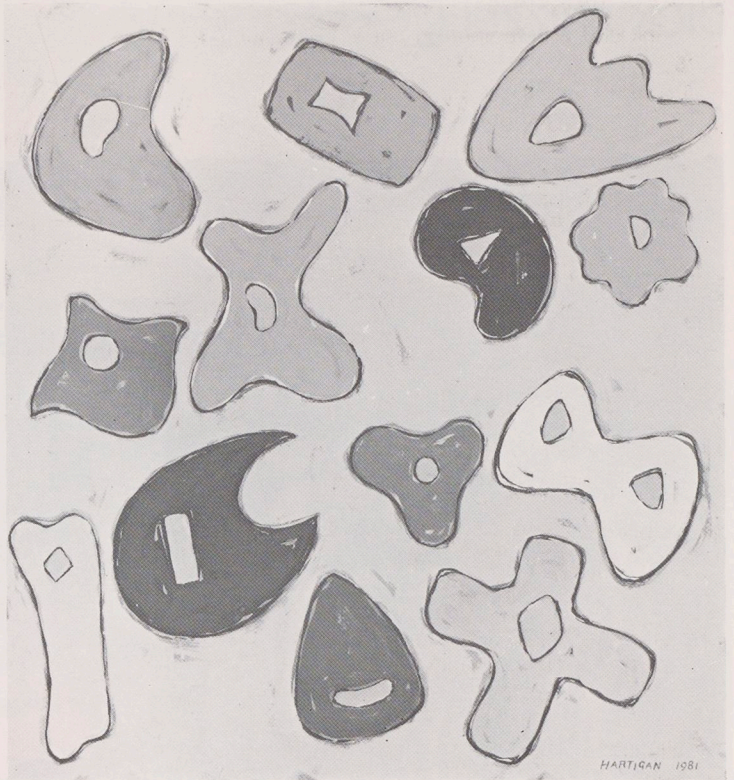
Collection The Artist



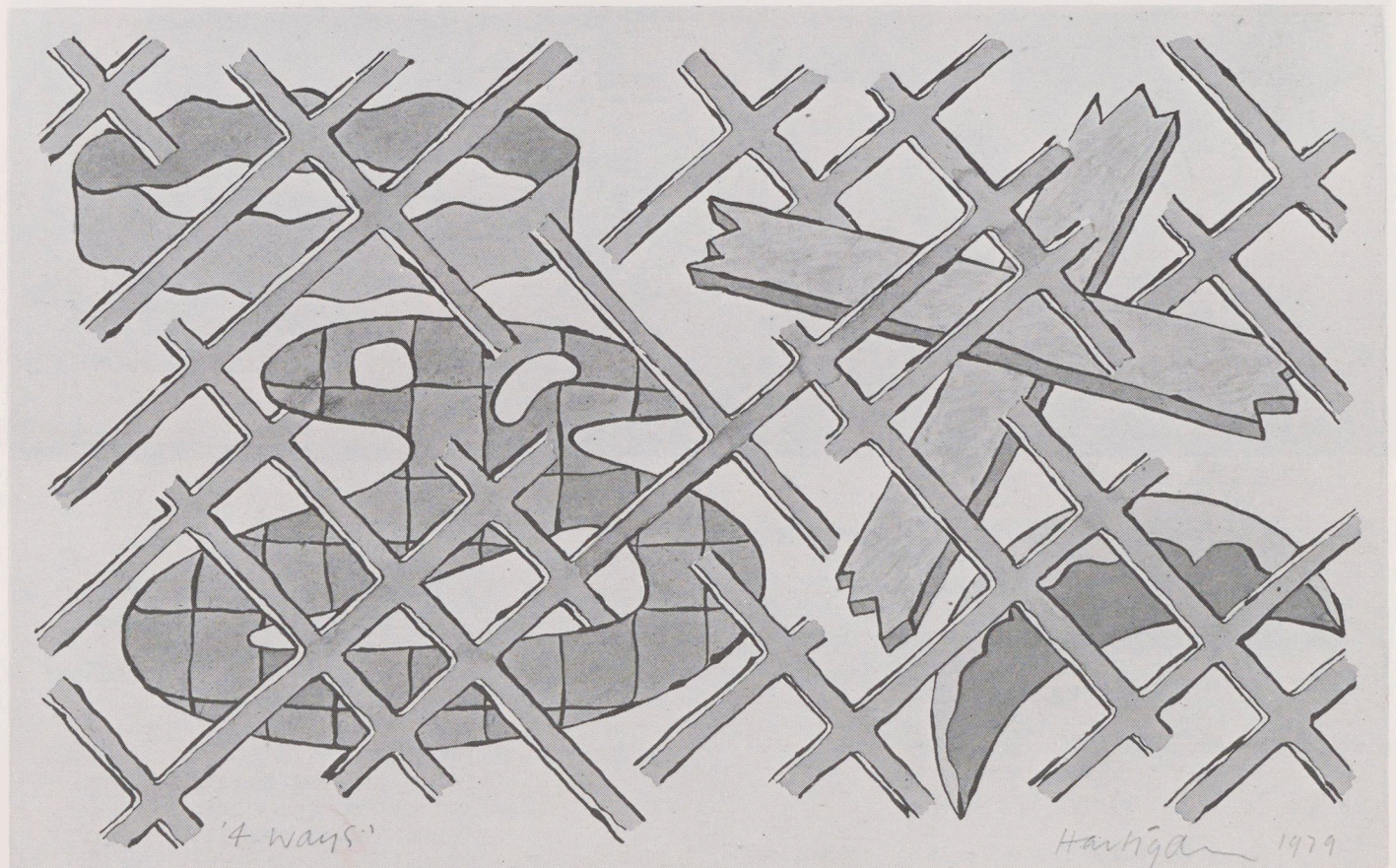
25. Paul Hartigan *Landscape 4* 1975



29. Paul Hartigan *Tell Tales* 1978



32. Paul Hartigan *Dictionary II* 1981



30. Paul Hartigan *Four Ways* 1979

DICK FRIZZELL



Dick Frizzell

Born Hastings 1943.

Attended University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts 1960-64.

First one-man exhibition Auckland 1978.

Lives and paints in Auckland and periodically works as an illustrator.

34. *The Metaphysical Cheese* 1977
enamel on board 708 x 705

inscribed

l.l. The Metaphysical Cheese Frizzell 1977

exhibited 1978 27 February-17 March Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
A-Fishial Art Exhibition cat. no. 24

collection Stephanie and Gavin Chilcott

35. *Black Geisha* 1978
enamel on board 780 x 1000

inscribed

l.r. Black Geisha Frizzell 20/2/78

exhibited 1978 27 February-17 March Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
A-Fishial Art Exhibition cat. no. 18

1981 mid-May-mid-June Auckland
Auckland City Art Gallery
*Contemporary New Zealand Painting,
Permanent Collection*

1981 October-May 1982 Auckland
Auckland City Art Gallery
Artichoke

reference J. & M. Barr, *Contemporary New Zealand
Painters* Vol. I A-M, 1980, p 84, illus. p 85

collection Auckland City Art Gallery

36. *Self Portrait as a Lion Tamer* 1978
enamel on board 900 x 925

inscribed

u.l. Self Portrait as a Lion Tamer 20/10/78

exhibited 1979 26 February-26 March Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
Putting it all on the Lion cat. no. 6
(there titled *Keeper's Keeper*)

collection MacHarman Ayer Advertising Agency,
Auckland

37. *Self Portrait as a Serious Artiste* 1978
enamel on board 615 x 845

inscribed

l.r. Dick Frizzell 4 December 1978

exhibited 1979 26 February-26 March Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
Putting it all on the Lion (though
not included in catalogue)

1982 5 February-28 March Wellington
National Gallery
Artists' Self Portraits

references *Art New Zealand* 1981-1982 no. 22,
"The New Image Painters", F. Pound, pp 24-33
Poster, Air New Zealand and
Queen Elizabeth II Arts
Council, illus.

collection Mr Owen Hughes

38. *Lion Attacking a Horse in the Jungle* 1979
enamel on board 973 x 1220

inscribed

l.r. Lion attacking a horse in the jungle From
a George Stubbs Enamel Frizzell 8/2/79

exhibited 1979 26 February-26 March Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
Putting it all on the Lion cat. no. 22

references *Art New Zealand* 1981-1982 no. 22,
"The New Image Painters", F. Pound, pp 24-33

collection Manawatu Art Gallery, Palmerston North

39. *The Dancing Chicken* 1980
enamel on board 863 x 914

inscribed

l.l. The Dancing Chicken Frizzell 20/2/80

exhibited 1980 26 February-7 March Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
Illustrations of America cat. no. 24

1980 28 July-15 August Wellington
Elva Bett Gallery
Illustrations of America

1980 24 November-5 December Christchurch
Brook/Gifford Gallery
Illustrations of America

reference *Art New Zealand* 1981-1982 no. 22,
"The New Image Painters", F. Pound,
pp 24-33, illus. p 24

collection National Art Gallery, Wellington

40. *Tyre Doctor* 1981
enamel on board 1003 x 1000

inscribed

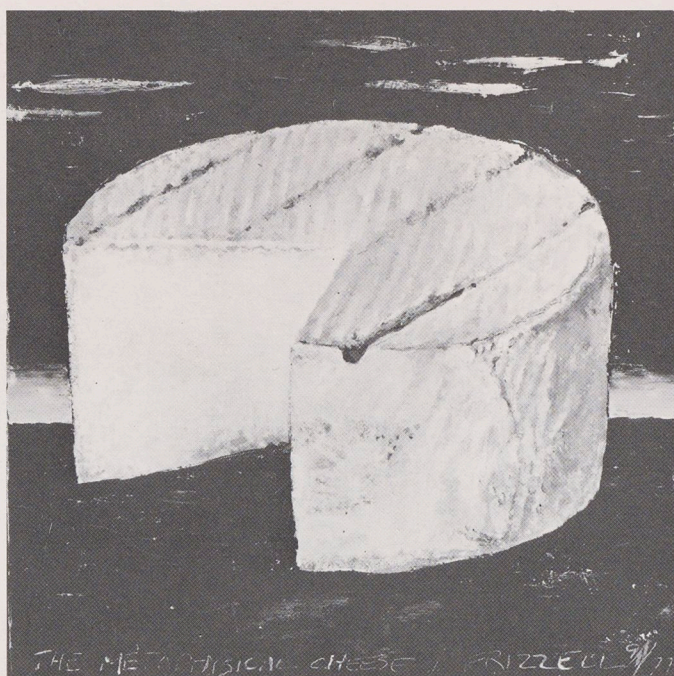
l.r. Tyre Doctor Frizzell 10/10/81

exhibited 1982 1-13 March Auckland
RKS Art
Everybody's Business

1982 28 June-9 July Wellington
Louise Beale Gallery
Everybody's Business

reference *Art New Zealand* 1981-1982 no. 22,
"The New Image Painters", F. Pound,
pp 24-33, illus. p 29

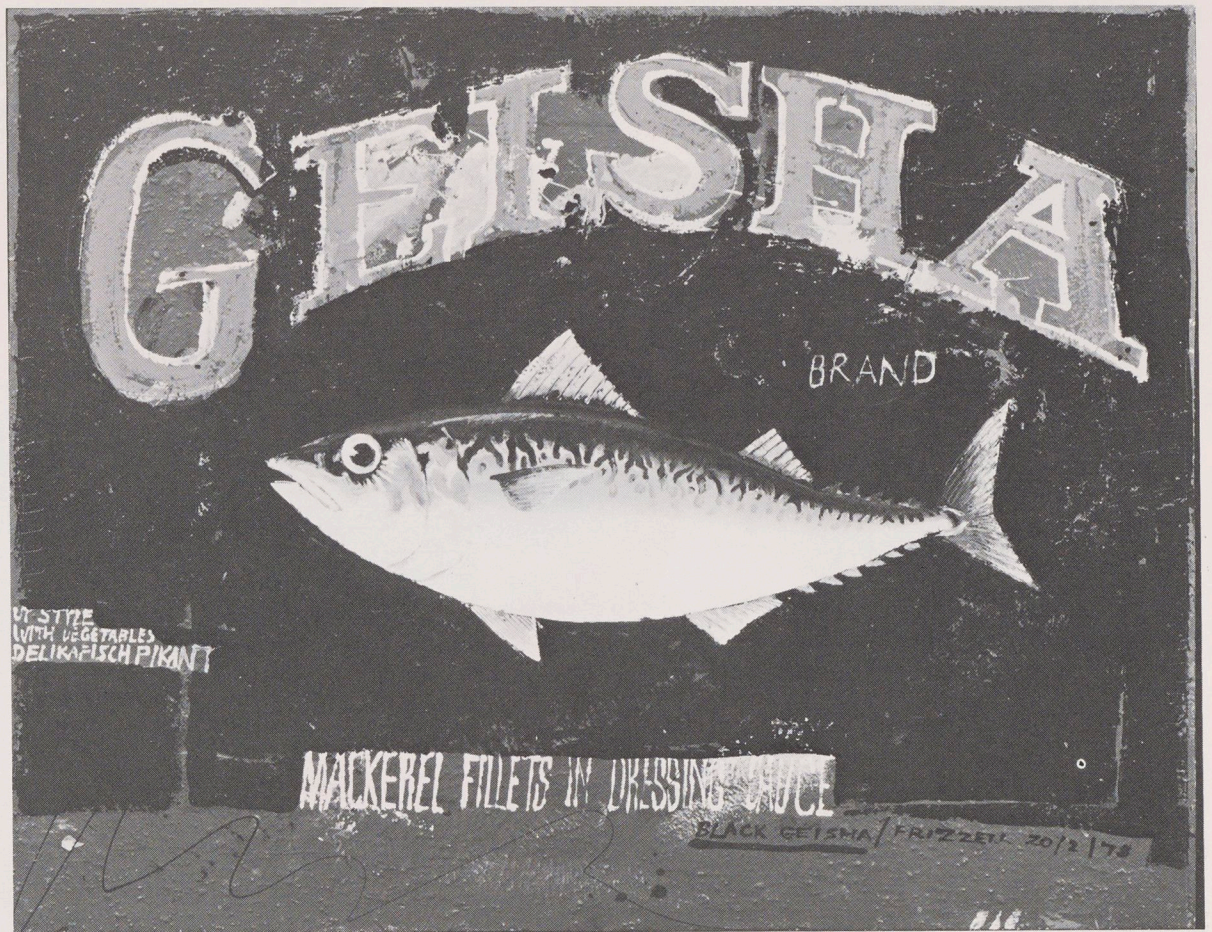
collection Mr T. Greenhough



34. Dick Frizzell *The Metaphysical Cheese* 1977



39. Dick Frizzell *The Dancing Chicken* 1980



35. Dick Frizzell *Black Geisha* 1978



38. Dick Frizzell *Lion Attacking a Horse in the Jungle* 1979



Gavin Chilcott

Born Auckland 1950.

Attended Elam School of Fine Arts 1968-70.

First one-man exhibition Barry Lett Galleries 1976.

Is represented in most public collections in New Zealand.

references *Art New Zealand* 1981-1982 no. 22, "The New Image Painters", F. Pound, pp 24-33

collection Ms Emerald Alba and Dr Robert Gilmour, Melbourne

41. *Bombing Plan* 1977
coloured pencil on paper 390 x 500
- inscribed
l.l. Bombing Plan
l.r. G. Chilcott
- exhibited 1977 3-28 August Auckland
Auckland City Art Gallery
39 Drawings 8 New Zealand Artists
- 1979 May-June Auckland
Auckland City Art Gallery
Recent Acquisitions: Works on Paper
- collection Auckland City Art Gallery

45. *Laocoon Revisited* 1980
acrylic on canvas 1785 x 1765
- exhibited 1980 8-19 September Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
Glazed Looks
- 1980 28 October-15 November Wellington
Galerie Legard
A Glazed Look
- reference *Art New Zealand* 1981-1982 no. 22, "The New Image Painters", F. Pound, pp 24-33
- collection The Artist

42. *Rock Gardening* May 1977
coloured pencil on paper 486 x 635
- inscribed
l.l. Rock Gardening
l.r. G. Chilcott May 77
- exhibited 1977 9-19 August Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
Gavin Chilcott — 7 paintings & 20 drawings
- 1979 May-June Auckland
Auckland City Art Gallery
Recent Acquisitions: Works on Paper
- collection Auckland City Art Gallery

46. *You look lovely tonight darling* 1980
acrylic on canvas 1350 x 1260
- exhibited 1980 8-19 September Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
Glazed Looks
- collection Dr Alison Copland

43. *The Nile in Flood* 1978
acrylic on canvas 1730 x 1180
- exhibited 1978 20 November-1 December Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
Paintings & Drawings Gavin Chilcott
- collection Ms Sylvia Harvey

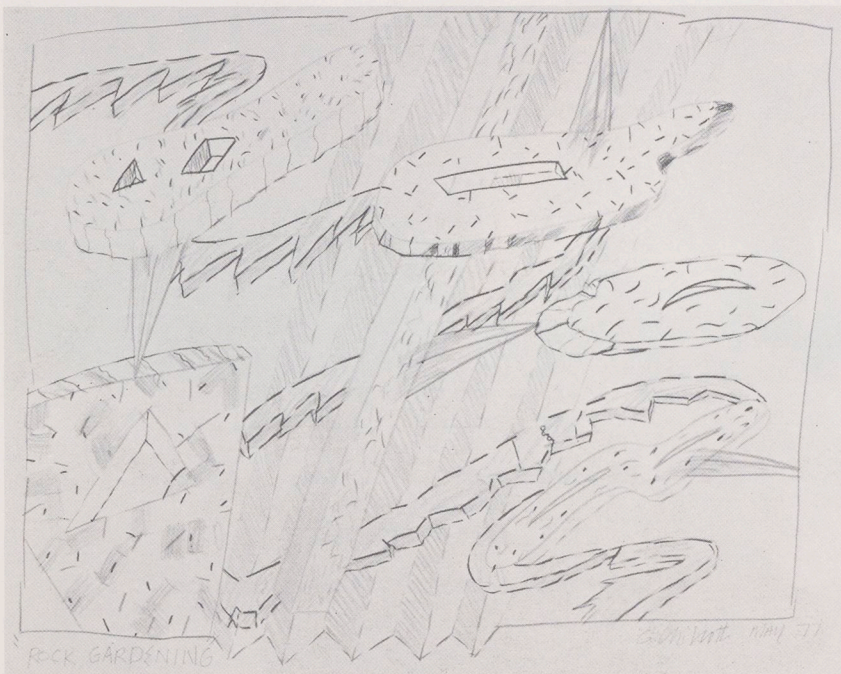
47. *Domestic disturbance* 1981
acrylic on canvas 1350 x 1260
- exhibited 1982 23 August-3 September Wellington
Janne Land Gallery
Love and Painting
- collection The Artist

44. *Meet me in the sculpture garden at 4* 1980
acrylic on canvas 1385 x 1370
- exhibited 1980 8-19 September Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
Glazed Looks
- 1980 28 October-15 November Wellington
Galerie Legard
A Glazed Look

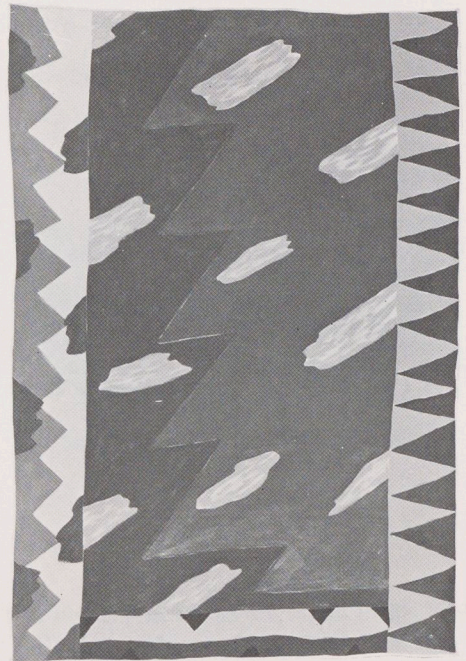
48. *Madonna with the long neck* 1982
acrylic on canvas 1378 x 1378
- exhibited 1982 17-28 May Auckland
RKS Art
Love and Painting
- collection Waikato Art Museum, Hamilton



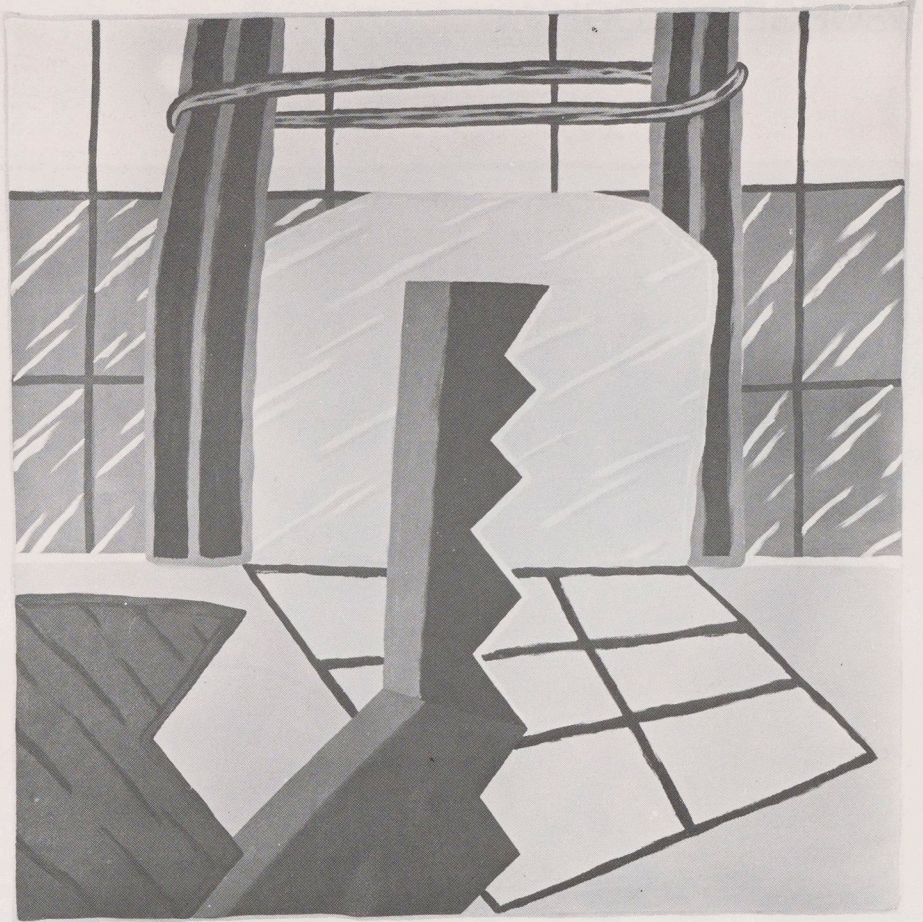
41. Gavin Chilcott *Bombing Plan* 1977



42. Gavin Chilcott *Rock Gardening* 1977



43. Gavin Chilcott *The Nile in flood* 1978



44. Gavin Chilcott *Meet me in the sculpture garden at 4* 1980



45. Gavin Chilcott *Laocoon Revisited* 1980

GEORGE BALOGHY



George Baloghy

Born Budapest, Hungary, 1950.

Arrived in New Zealand 1957.

Studied graphics at Auckland Technical Institute 1973.

Attended University of Auckland School of Fine Arts, specialising in photography and painting. Graduated Bachelor of Fine Arts 1977.

First one-man exhibition Barry Lett Galleries 1978.

Awarded Tokoroa Art Award 1979.

Has exhibited throughout New Zealand and overseas since 1976.

49. *I can see right through this Gallery* 1979

acrylic, gouache, oil glazes over gesso base, on paper 610 x 920

inscribed

l.r. GB

exhibited 1979 29 November-7 December Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
George Baloghy Paintings

collection Mr N. Westbrook, Auckland

50. *Meat 'n' Three Veges* 1979

acrylic on canvas 920 x 920

inscribed

l.r. GB

exhibited 1979 26 November-7 December Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
George Baloghy Paintings

1980 30 March-13 April Wellington
Elva Bett Gallery
George Baloghy Paintings

collection Mr P. R. McKay, Lower Hutt

51. *Sculptural Proposition: Carpark* 1979

acrylic on canvas 920 x 920

inscribed

l.r. GB

exhibited 1980 5 May-25 May Christchurch
Brooke/Gifford Gallery
George Baloghy Paintings

1981 30 March-13 April Wellington
Elva Bett Gallery
George Baloghy Paintings

1981 30 January-12 February Sydney,
New South Wales
Hogarth Galleries
George Baloghy Paintings

reference *Art New Zealand* 1981 no. 19, "Some
New Realists", T. Walker, p 27, illus. p 27

collection Waikato Art Museum

52. *1st Grade Meat* 1980

acrylic house paint, oil glazes
over gesso base on jute 762 x 702

inscribed

l.l. GB

exhibited 1980 22 September-3 October Auckland
Barry Lett Galleries
*Sheep Farming in the South and
Urban Real Estate*

1981 mid May-mid June
Auckland City Art Gallery
Recent Acquisitions (New Zealand)

1981 October-1982 May
Auckland City Art Gallery
Artichoke

collection Auckland City Art Gallery

53. *Eleven forty-three and Still no Sign of the Train* 1981

acrylic, oil glazes on canvas 760 x 650

inscribed

l.l. GB 81

exhibited 1981 14 September-26 September Auckland
RKS Art
*Ripping off the Artist, or the Art Object as
Readymade*

1982 20 September-1 October Wellington
Louise Beale Gallery
George Baloghy Paintings

collection The Artist

54. *The Japanese Perspective II* 1981

acrylic, oil glazes on canvas 760 x 1114

inscribed

l.r. GB 81

exhibited 1981 14 September-26 September Auckland
RKS Art
*Ripping off the Artist, or the Art Object as
Readymade*

collection Mr and Mrs D. K. Simcock, Auckland

55. *Taranaki* 1981

acrylic, oil glazes, enamel house paint on canvas
615 x 915

inscribed

l.r. B 81

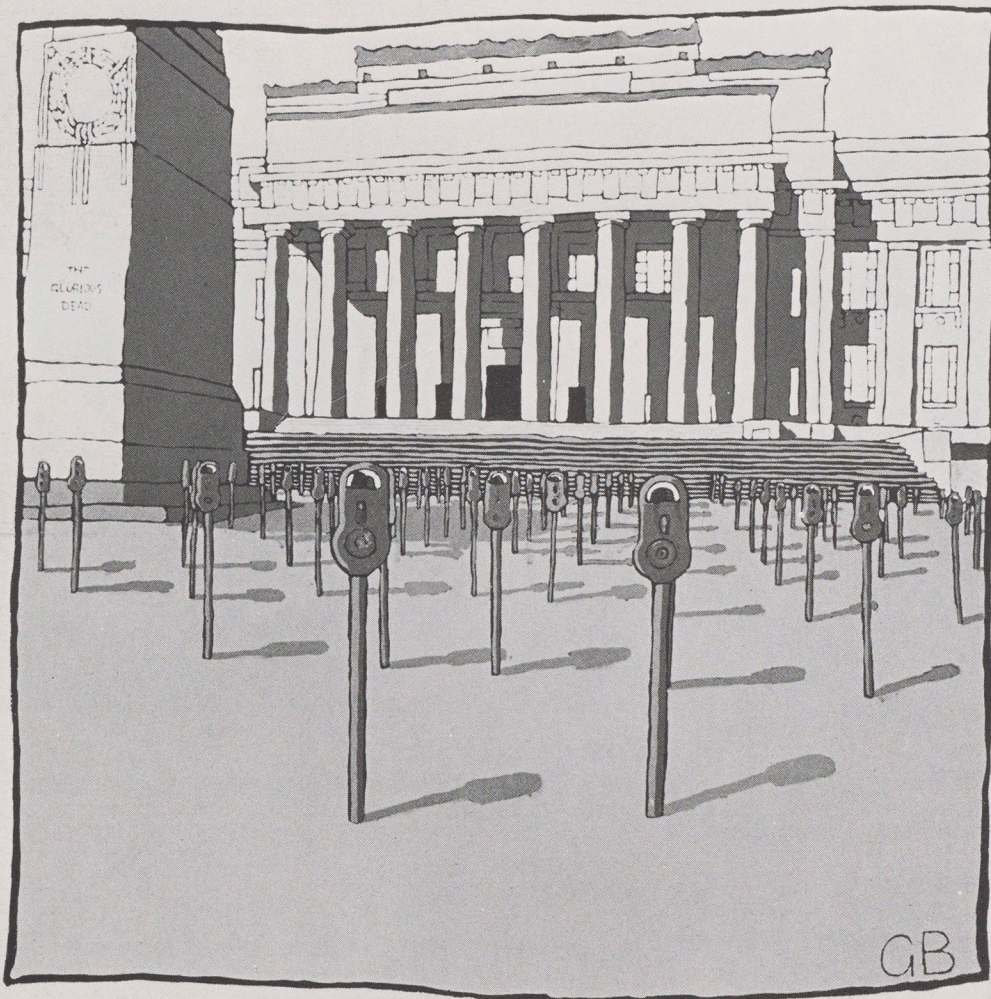
exhibited 1981 14 September-26 September Auckland
RKS Art
*Ripping off the Artist, or the Art Object
as Readymade*

1982 7 October-24 November Auckland
Auckland City Art Gallery
Recent Acquisitions

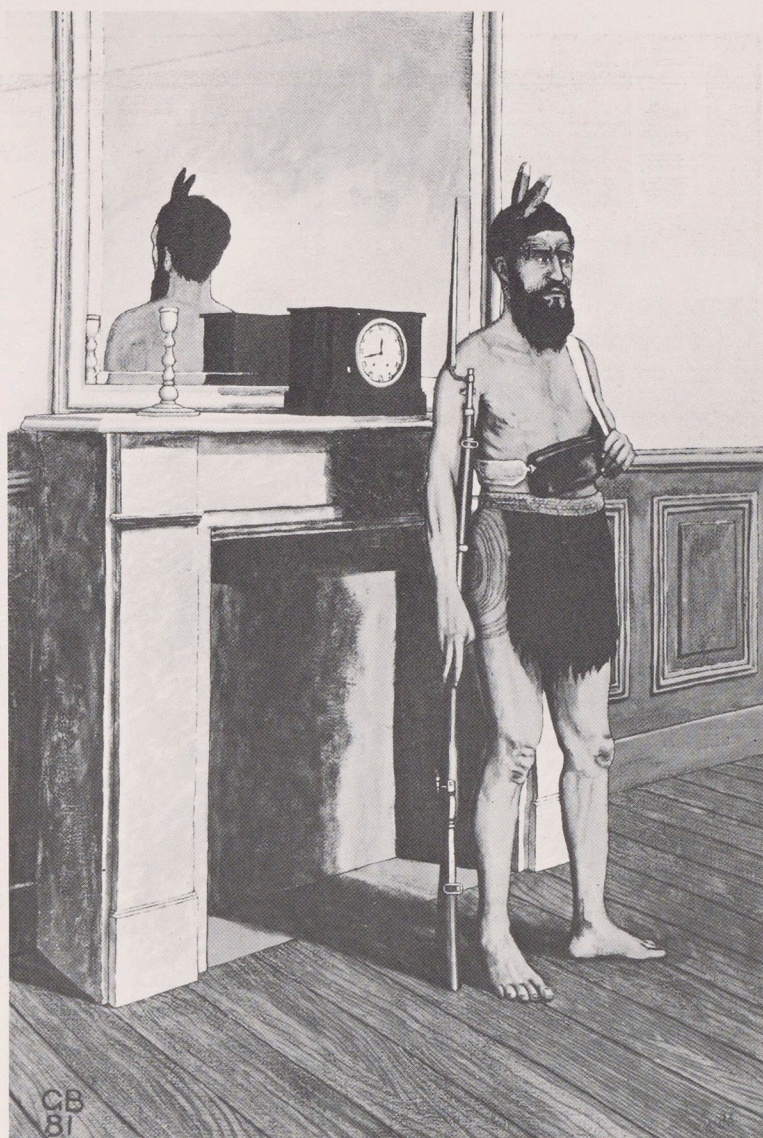
collection Auckland City Art Gallery



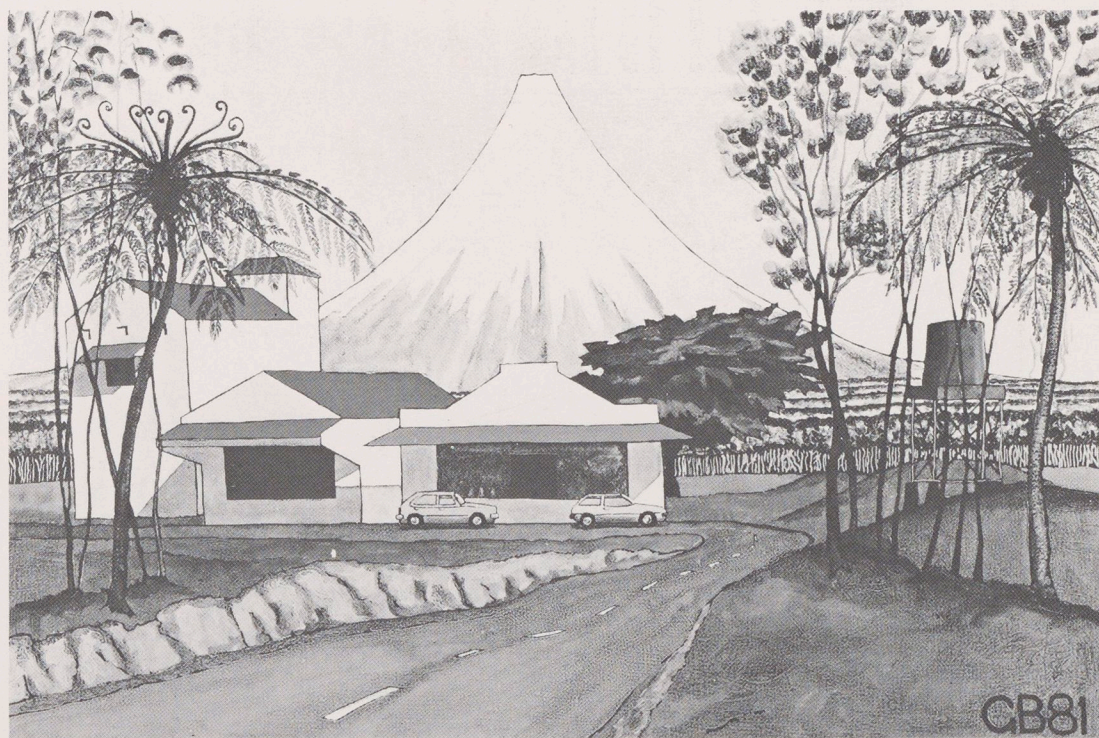
49. George Baloghy *I can see right through this Gallery* 1979



51. George Baloghy *Sculptural Proposition: Carpark* 1979



53. George Baloghy *Eleven forty-three and still no Sign of the Train* 1981



55. George Baloghy *Taranaki* 1981

