



chrysalis seed trust



*Balm*, Claire Beynon, 2004, Charcoal and pastel on paper, 665 x 1000mm, courtesy The Arthouse gallery, Christchurch.

Aside from her current exhibition at The Arthouse, *Somewhere Between Intuition and Reason*, 31 August – 19 September, Claire is part of the group exhibition, *Beyond*, at Peter Rae Gallery, Dunedin (2 – 26 October). Other artists exhibiting in *Beyond* are: Mary Horn, Shelly Johnson, Maria Kemp, Steve Mulqueen and Susan Frykberg (musical installation).

# CS NEWS ARTS QUARTERLY

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## Who we are

Founded in 1998 the Chrysalis Seed charitable trust serves a growing number of contemporary artists. We aim to 'help resource the arts community from a Christian perspective'. We meet regularly to encourage each other and participate in a range of activities designed to support artists and their profession. We operate a resource centre in the heart of the Arts Centre, where all are welcome.

### CS News

This is our main publication, which goes to artists, galleries, poets and supporters around New Zealand and overseas. Designed for the wider arts community, it engages with contemporary artists, art issues and events.

We have a number of groups and collectives. The main collective is for contemporary visual artists.

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### Poets in this edition

Claire Beynon  
John Dennison  
Luci Shaw

### Reviews in this edition

Wendy Grace Allen (Palmerston North)  
Barbara Garrie (courtesy of The Arthouse)  
Jennifer Hay  
Albert Moore (Dunedin)  
John Stringer

### Interviews in this edition

John Stringer  
Wendy Grace Allen (Palmerston North)

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### Mailout

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Jessica Crothall (artist)  
Peter Crothall (poet)

**Note:** The writing and views contained in this publication are not necessarily the personal views of the editor.

## Trace

Because you walk  
on water  
your footprints  
are invisible.  
Yet we keep looking  
for a wet mark  
from the ball  
of your foot  
or even  
a lick of  
dried salt  
on the stones.

### Luci Shaw

Reproduced from *Water Lines:  
New and Selected Poems*  
Eerdmans 2003 p. 25

## Kia ora!



This week we experienced a moving performance at the Court Theatre. Directed by Sue Rider (with Cathy Downes and Teodor Surcel) *Vincent in Brixton* looked at a brief phase when Vincent Van Gogh stayed in England, before he launched his artistic career. Towards the end of the play he had returned for a brief visit to his English friends. He was trying to be a missionary to the poor. While admirable, it was not a successful venture. In the name of religious zeal and devotion he was in danger of missing his true calling.

His former lover and friend in England desperately urged him to pick up his painting again. If Vincent had not eventually heeded her advice, the modern world would have been denied the genius and colour of his achievements, and he would not have expressed his greatest God given gifts and calling.

This encapsulates a vital part of the vision of Chrysalis Seed. We embrace without a hint of hesitation all the arts. We will not stop to do all we can to encourage and support those who are gifted and skilled in experimenting in the contemporary arts, as the most profound, spiritual and devout way of expressing their love for the Creator of all.

Margaret Hudson-Ware has just completed a workshop with CST at BCNZ which included 'the Creative Arts as praise'.

This edition is primarily focussed on our first group exhibition in Dunedin, so we thought it would be a good opportunity to have an Otago emphasis in this edition. The theme of the show is *Beyond*. Part of the sense behind the title is exploring ways of expressing the invisible through the visible. Capably managed by Susan Frykberg, it also expresses our passion to explore the interaction between various arts media. Two of the artists Claire Beynon (poet) and Shelly Johnson explore aspects of the dynamic interaction between word and image in their work. Susan is a composer and will be organising a performance event at the Peter Rae gallery exploring the interaction between electronic music, poetry and the visual art exhibited.

Instead of an article, in this edition we are exploring the theme through poetry including that by Claire Beynon, Luci Shaw and John Dennison. Most of those interviewed are from Dunedin, including several artists, activist Anna-Kate Loughnan and lecturer Mark Stocker. Albert Moore's review is a reminder of the Stanley Spencer exhibition which toured the country recently, ending in Dunedin.

**Peter Crothall**



*Between the lines* (detail), Jessica Crothall,  
2004, pen and ink.

## Between the lines

I can't help noticing  
how falling leaves and rain  
print their trajectories -  
traces in the air, on the window glass -  
as if writing some cosmic equation.

My algebra was always bad but  
trigonometry - its angles  
and curves, its tangents and sines  
and signs - always wakes something  
quite beyond logic in my heart

As if the mystery of existence were becoming  
visible - my small gasps of prayer,  
meant to rise, not fall, triangulating  
in the wind. And the simple  
snow - each flake unique, intact, as it

flies through space - giving chaos  
a chance to re-integrate to a kind of holy  
order, filling cracks, hollows - the muddy ruts  
in the playing field behind the school  
white, beautifully level again.

**Luci Shaw**

Reproduced from *Water Lines: New and Selected Poems*  
Eerdmans 2003 p. 9

## Late in the day, a seminar

Throughout this room blank  
rectangles extend their squareness—  
a way of talking, sounding out;  
we keep our mouths closed,  
shuffling silences—our failures  
to receive one another.

Framed in the pocked dust of the darkened panes,  
a building across the way shrouds itself in scaffolding,  
outlining the methodology of its grief.  
Having risen abruptly to pre-empt further questions,  
it is becoming its own tomb.  
Above, the sky, unasked, gives itself again.

**John Dennison, 23/4/04**

Unpublished poem, reproduced with permission of the poet.



*What God Wants*, Peter Cleverley, 1998, oil on gesso on board, 326 x 545mm, courtesy of Gregory Flint Gallery.

## Interview: Peter Cleverley

The Arts media in New Zealand have questioned for some time whether Peter Cleverley is a sinner or a saint, a 'doubting Thomas' or a 'Son of Thunder': *Finding God in the Landscape* (Sunday Star Times 1992), "Cleverley is not pushing a religious or any other barrow" (The Press, 1998). Perhaps he's too Cleverley by far, filling his paintings with a variety of Christian imagery, symbols and allusions, but distancing himself from any specific McCahon-like faith journey. He grew up in a Christian home, but claims not to be religious. "I use Christianity, Jesus, heaven, to evoke all sorts of things...Aspects of Christianity are reflected in my work."

With works titled: *Walk a Mile in My Shoes*, *Johnny Said to Jesus* (1997), *Jesus in North Otago* (1998), *Kakanui Prayer Songs*, *What God Wants* (1998), *A Jesus of your own* (1997), and exhibitions like, *Lolling around heaven all day*, (1994) it's hard not to notice a deeply spiritual artist at work within a Christian orbit. What is going on with this Otago painter and is there any conscious faith/art crossover within his work?

"I primarily use my life experience in my art. Being in places like Bamiyan (Afghanistan) and sitting on the heads of those idols to Buddha (where you can see to the Russian border) and then those huge objects being bombed down to non existence two years ago by the Taleban, a massive destruction of art, experiences like that and my travels in the 70s and 80s help me identify with other people and other religions."

Cleverley was born in 1954 in Kakanui just south of Oamaru, a third generation. He was in art

school from 1971-74 graduating with a Diploma of Fine and Applied Arts. After the obligatory rite-of-passage at the local abattoir, he departed on an extended O.E. through England, Afghanistan, India, S.E. Asia and Australia, returning to New Zealand in 1980. He was employed at the Forrester Gallery, Waitaki Boys' High School and Otago Polytechnic and held his first solo show in 1982, in Oamaru. He lives in a small cottage by the sea (a deep influence) and teaches adult art students three days a week.

"I used to teach painting and drawing, but more recently I'm concentrated on painting. I do the teaching to give me a consistent income so I don't have to flog my own painting and make it commercial. This way I don't have to show so much or make so much out of it. The teaching is a financial thing primarily, but the interaction with students is really important too. I get a lot back from them."

**You seem to have a profound sense of place. You etch the geography of each painting's manufacture into the work, and have said "Good paintings are journeys...that seem to lead back to Kakanui". It's also been said your *Kakanui prayer songs* are a response to locale ...**

My grandfather and father lived down here and I've lived most of my life here. Kakanui is a special place and a very sheltered part of Otago. I talk about my environment in my work as a generalisation. I don't 'plein air' paint or draw the landscape, I memorise it and bring it back to my studio. I use the shape, colour, forms and depth I remember, the way the wind moves, I chase the

sea. In some ways the landscape is a backdrop to a comment; sometimes written in text, sometimes it looks like a title or looks a bit biblical or religious but it's not. I'm not prosaic, I'm not saying anything to anyone else. My paintings explore the structure of my own life and what's happened, and hopefully some messages are given out.

**Are you exploring God or the Divine in environment and place?**

Yes, but I'm not on a quest. I'm not sure there is anything 'after', or one God. I'm fascinated by the human being being captivated by Beginning. The fear of death is the thing. Our own mortality is the umbrella heading in much of my painting. There's a fascination with "what is After?" I positively say, 'look at what we are and what we're doing here' because I don't really think there is another thing. I'm interested in how the human psyche is trying to find another existence, God, something to take them above their own selves, if you like.

I've been in parts of the world where God and the after life is fundamental, even manic. I find it eternally fascinating. People like McCahon were popping the question up there all the time, more than really saying "I've turned". Sometimes I find his paintings quite irreligious, questioning. So I'm putting up the question, and I get a bit of flak back for that.

**Do you use religious irony in art?**

I try not to use irony, rather reality. I use the things I've been confronted with, witnessed, and my imagination. Not many people are using their imagination. I 'imagine' my paintings, I'm trying to make something not seen before. I'm really really sick of this tardy 'copy the photograph', the overhead projection thing, pure colour, good application of paint, but so what? I'm not chasing a buck with my work, I want to make something new, that comes from the imagination.

**Lyttelton artist Bill Hammond once said, "Good art comes from a hard place". Four years ago a young man drowned in the surf metres from Cleverley's home [it emerges during the interview, the young man was the interviewer's cousin Rikki]. The artist tried to save him from the surf, the tragedy having a profound effect.**

The drowning was one of those things. I saw this person in the extremes of life and death, and of course I was trying to save him but wasn't able to. The experience was equal to when I was in Calcutta, India. There was a dying 30-year-old female on the footpath and I bent down to help her, there were flies around her eyes. I was abused because as a white person I'm in the top caste and shouldn't be bending down like that. The drowning was like that, when you see those kinds of extremes, it makes a balance for your experience, like Red Cross workers or others at work in wars, despicable things that go on. Human beings are amazing animals, and experiences like that change your life.

**What are your immediate plans for the future, current artistic themes and thoughts?**

I'm working on a series on the local rivers, generated by the Waitaki Project Aqua controversy: the Maheno, Kakanui and Waianakarua. They are all underground fed from the Waitaki, and I live at the mouth of the Kakanui. I'm doing simplified landscapes, the palette is reduced to a dark and a white (almost black and white), a mossy green, cadmium yellow and that's it. There are simplified mountains, a dark night sky with the moon, stars, and the river courses.

**Is there significance to the water pitcher and drinking horn that appear so frequently in your work?**

I depict water a lot because it's an essential for growth, for the planet. Water is going to be a huge future battle. We think oil is big, wait till water is rare. Then see what the human being does. So I often place a vessel of water in my painting, or a bowl of water, some reference to water. A bit like McCahon's candle. I wouldn't say I copy the art I really like (Hammond, Hotere and others), I don't paint like them, but the icons I'm using are similar, in fact they're used all over the world, which is interesting.

**John Stringer**



**I'm really really sick of this tardy 'copy the photograph', the overhead projection thing, pure colour, good application of paint, but so what? ...I want to make something new, that comes from the imagination.**



Shelly with one of a series on vessels: *My Grace is Sufficient for You*, (work in progress – a commission that must have lilac and turquoise in it), Shelly Johnson, 2004, acrylic and clay on canvas, 100 x 60cm.



**God found  
me really,  
took care  
of me**

## Interview: Shelly Johnson

Shelly Johnson is a painter as well as a photography-major in her fourth year at Polytechnic. She also works in collage and mixed media and is one of the invited artists in the *Beyond* exhibition: Peter Rae Gallery, 215 Stuart Street, Dunedin, 2 - 26 October 2004. She is part of a small weekly group at art school run to encourage and support each other in art and faith. Johnson is developing mainly paintings for *Beyond* that include text and screen printing onto fabric.

### **About this group she elaborates:**

There is a core group of five and another seven who come when able. They are painters Briar Alison and Mike Cooke, David Teata, sculptors Amy Sheraton and Benjamin King, photographers Jo Osbourne, Rachel Walker, Kate Walkinshaw, Rosy Harray, 2nd Year, sculpture major I think, and Cedric Osten clothing design.

### **Fellowship of the Brush**

My church is very supportive of the visual arts and what I am doing, I have a group there called the *Fellowship of the Brush* with about 20 interested people. I'm planning a series of artist talks, perhaps once every month or so, have started planning an 8-10 week block course, a sort of painting 101, from a Christian perspective, with a small art historical component, the Christian perspective coming in through group discussion on key scriptures which relate to visual media and associated issues. I plan to

have monthly exhibitions at the church.

### **Is there any intersection between art and faith for you?**

A huge intersection. I've only been a Christian for four years. When I was first at art school (1997-99) I wasn't a Christian. I had my daughter and took three years off and became a Christian during that time. I've always been a searcher, looking for truth. My family wasn't Christian but I searched everywhere. God found me really, took care of me. Unbeknown to me, my brother had become a Christian and he and his wife were praying for me solidly every day. I'd come to the end of myself. That's when God revealed himself to me through the Bible and other influences around me.

### **How does all that impact on the art?**

Just before I was a Christian I had begun using text as image in painting. More as an aesthetic formal thing. But now I'm exploring using Biblical texts within my work, like McCahon did. For me the text is rich in meaning and it's almost taking over from the visual. The text is looming larger, but it's visual too.

### **What are your aspirations for the future?**

I'm rapt to be asked to be part of *Beyond*. It's a great opportunity to get to know other artists, build some works for the future. My plan is to be a full time artist making a living from my art.

**John Stringer**

# Interview: Allie Eagle



**What role do you think that artists working from a Christian perspective will contribute to the dialogue of contemporary art practice in New Zealand?**

Quite a big one...if they want it. They

always have had a contribution...if you think of Baxter and McCahon for starters. I think now that Christians might be beginning to perceive themselves to be not the moral majority anymore, so it could mean that there is more of a mature decision to think long and hard about how they position themselves. There is a challenge always for the Christian to not be tyrannised by moulds that are incompatible. But also there's a need to be savvy to speak in the language that they are most attracted to, and it is important for many art school trained people to speak with the aesthetic language of the day.

## **'dumbing down' in art school**

When I have taught at a number of tertiary institutions I have noticed how the Christian art students have been encouraged to dumb down their Christianity. I have seen some students experience an oppressive loss of creativity and/or a pressure to "say very little". A student I knew was encouraged to be so minimal that she stopped painting altogether and then did photographs of corners of walls...the emptiness of art school..she got A+ for those final works...very savvy...while in some ways this is good...to use the minimalist and ambiguous formats that are the currency mostly in use..the student felt absolutely drained of any art making impulse for a long time after leaving art school. I think it is time to bring back the mana back to the language that we love...and there is a rich life the heaven-bent Christian can contribute to the art world.

## **isolated from their calling**

I have seen some extraordinary things happen to the lives of artists who have been isolated from their calling through using the framework that is determined by a contextual base that is way outside of their own faith. So...getting to work with artists in Chrysalis, having exchanges with one another, stirring each other up to be "living creative stones jointly knit together" as makers of objects d'art that can withstand the heat of heavenly critique and encouragement... could just mean some pretty amazing art. I expect to do better and better myself as I apply these principles and I have a huge confidence that I am not the only artist in this land that is having a heartbeat tuned like this.

**Wendy Grace Allen**

## **Not a Word**

Consider for a moment  
the image that is loud  
with sound, yet it must wait  
in silence. Explain

the wall so daily dense  
with words and rhymes,  
it could mouth the alphabet  
into the lap

of a listening hand? Observe  
the heart that is alive  
with language, yet there is  
not a single adjective

or verb to be found. No  
joining words, no clever nouns  
lining up for the taking. Notice  
the ear resting, as it does

on an outer edge, leaning  
against the dark in a place  
older than speech. Listen.  
Do you hear that rush of sound

rising? It is climbing through  
the walls, thickening the air.  
The room is humming now  
groaning with temperament.

Imagine. All that sound  
and not a word out of it.

**Claire Beynon, 2004**

Unpublished poem, reproduced with  
permission of the poet.

# Review

*Everyday Miracles, The Art of Stanley Spencer*  
2003 - 2004, exhibition at Auckland Art Gallery, Wellington City Gallery and Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Catalogue by Mary Kisler and Justin Paton, curators, 2003.

After three months in Dunedin, this exhibition proves to be rich and rewarding. A modest selection of 25 works, it ably represents the various sides of Spencer's work, from his confident self-portrait as a promising graduate of the Slade School of Art in 1913 to the unsparring self-portrait of 1959 when he died of cancer. In between come a series of paintings on Biblical themes set in his beloved home village of Cookham, realistic scenes of gardens and landscapes (Spencer's 'pot-boilers'), a double-nude of his sexual obsession with Patricia Preece, family scenes and four of his *Christ in the Wilderness* series.

Dunedin has had a series of lecturers and floor-talks by the NZ curators of the exhibition and art historians from Britain and Dunedin, such as Peter Stipples and Mark Stocker, as well as Otago artist Grahame Sydney. Having attended as many of these as possible, I have been amazed at the continuing interest and illumination which the speakers have been able to draw out of the paintings. Spencer's

The end of the twentieth century saw him recognised as a great British artist of enduring reputation - of special interest in the way in which he forecast cultural attitudes, "ahead of his time". Thirty years before the hippies emerged in USA Spencer's painting *Love among the Nations* expressed the theme of "make love, not war". Likewise his focus on religious themes, often seen as brilliant but eccentric, is now accepted as a vision of fresh insight, locating the Bible in Cookham, for instance, as a modern context. Some splendid examples are featured in the exhibition.

The Resurrection of the dead is pictured as occurring in Cookham village with people rising from their tombstones in the cemetery and streets. They awaken not to harsh judgment but to a recreation of ordinary Cookham life in the fullness of joy. This expresses Spencer's belief that the Kingdom of God is already here and now in the everyday; (hence the title of the exhibition, *Everyday Miracles*. This can be seen as a visualisation of "realised eschatology" - the biblical theology of British scholar C H Dodd in the mid 1930s which Spencer is unlikely to have read. There is joy in the Kingdom of God being already working around us, if only we would awaken to it.

Undeterred by the abject failure of his second marriage Spencer set to work on his plan for a series of chapel paintings depicting the forty days of *Christ in the Wilderness*, 1939. Spencer felt that he was deeply involved because his own life at this point was in the wilderness. Only eight were completed on the plan - but what paintings, what power! I myself was first attracted to Spencer's work in the 1950s by seeing his remarkable paintings of Christ with *The Scorpion* and with *Foxes have holes*, reproduced in the popular Penguin *Modern Artists*. Years later when I asked students to rate artists' representations of Christ as convincing, the two at the top of the list were a Rembrandt etching of Christ preaching and Stanley Spencer's painting of the benevolent Christ holding the scorpion in his great hands.

Spencer's scenes on the *Beatitudes of Love* are represented by a 1938 "Romantic meeting of a gangly pair of lovers which strikes the viewer as a grotesque caricature." But Spencer treasured those as sacred grotesques, as really religious paintings. Why? Because the Kingdom of God works also in the odd, the despised and the marginal. Reinhold Niebuhr, the great American theologian of this time (whom, again, Spencer is unlikely to have read) called it the "Transvaluation of Values". The Gospel of Christ takes us by surprise - to turn the world upside down.

**Albert C. Moore**

Former professor in Religious Studies at Otago University.



*The Last Supper*, 1920, Stanley Spencer,  
Oil on canvas, 36 x 48 inches,  
Stanley Spencer Gallery, Cookham.

combination of realism in his skilled draughtsmanship with a highly original imagination is a rich and productive mix. Spencer described this variety of concerns as "the whole-committee of ideas" within himself which he hoped to express in a large "Church-House" collection of his works, "the Church of Me" in Cookham. Although it never materialised it has been presented as a "virtual reality" project on a film shown at the exhibition.

Although often disparaged in his lifetime as an odd and somewhat scruffy artist, obsessed with themes of sex and religion, and conforming neither to traditionalist nor modernist expectations in the Art-world, Spencer was honoured with a knighthood at the end of his life.



## Interview: Susan Frykberg

Susan Frykberg is a composer and the co-ordinator of the *Beyond* exhibition, Peter Rae Gallery, 2 - 26 October 2004. She has an MA in Electroacoustic Music Theatre from Simon Fraser University, Canada, a classics degree in Ancient Greek and Latin and is currently completing a Theology degree from Otago University. She tries to balance spirituality, creativity and good works and volunteers at the Catholic Moran Chapel in the Octagon, in a number of capacities, including as a Gregorian Chant singer.

### What is your concept for the upcoming show?

The show is a meeting place for contemporary and experimental arts and the Christian faith. My contribution to the exhibition will be an electroacoustic sound installation created from intertwining the soundscapes of "church" with

Other artists in *Beyond* include: Claire Beynon, Mary Horn, Shelly Johnson, Maria Kemp and Steve Mulqueen. Claire's work explores ideas around transformation. Mixed media assemblages (using paper, outre materials, wood, wax and stone), explore and reconfigure inherited paradigms. The personal and the historical are presented in new relationships. Mary Horn (a Dominican sister and abstract expressionist) views artistic creativity as a form of speaking in and to the church. Shelly Johnson is looking at the story of the vision of the burning bush and contextualising it within the New Zealand ethos. Maria Kemp explores the land pouring forth speech through oil on board landscapes (Ps 19). Stephen Mulqueen, an installation and jewellery artist, is interested in place names and making objects around objects.

2 - 26 October 2004

Preview: Friday 1 October 6pm

Peter Rae Gallery

215 Stuart Street, Dunedin

Phone 03 470 1022, Fax 03 470 1023

Hours: Tuesday - Friday 11am - 6pm

Saturday 11am - 3pm

[www.peterraegallery.co.nz](http://www.peterraegallery.co.nz)

## beyond

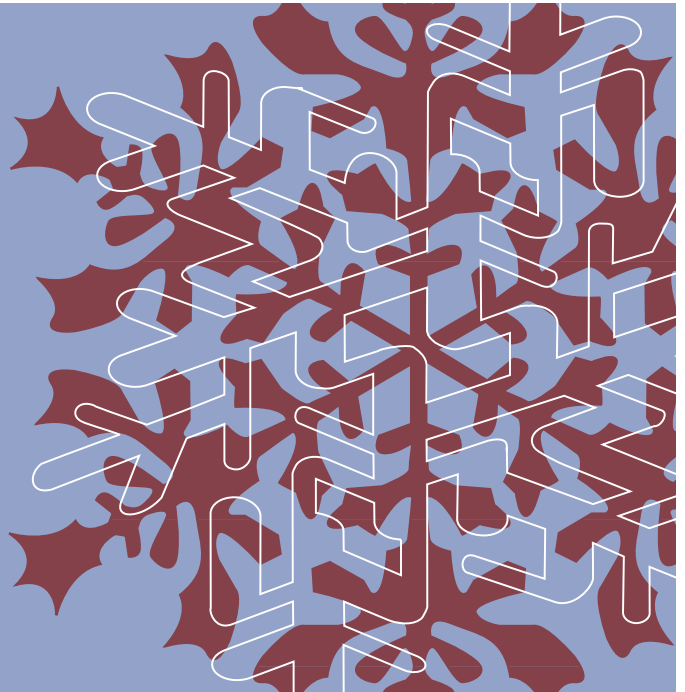
Mary Horn  
Claire Beynon  
Shelly Johnson  
Maria Kemp  
Stephen Mulqueen

Electroacoustic music installation  
by Susan Frykberg.

Words and Music event featuring  
local poets and musicians, Friday 8 October 6pm

chrysalis seed trust  
GROUP EXHIBITION

Peter Rae  
**Gallery**  
AT THE TERRACEHOUSE



instrumental and environmental sounds. I am also organising a words and music event featuring text from the artists, and other local poets, in combination with local musicians. This will take place at 6:00 on Friday 8th October. I hope we can create a kind of sound-text-art performance with instruments and spoken/sung voice, in dialogue with the visual works of Claire Beynon, Mary Horn, Shelly Johnson, Maria Kemp and Stephen Mulqueen.

### Was there a key artistic influence in your life?

I studied at the Centre for Contemporary Arts at Simon Fraser University. It was an interdisciplinary centre where you always had to work alongside many different media - the visual arts, theatre, dance, film and of course music. So my creative thinking tends to cross boundaries. I was also very influenced by Canadian/Dutch visual artist Robert Mulder who combines lush visual environments with music and dance.

Stephen is creating an installation from brass-bullet casings transformed into poppies.

### John Stringer



Watching, 2004, Anne Marie Verbeek,  
Oil on canvas, 503 x 600mm.



## Review

*Trophies*, Anne Marie Verbeek  
July 2004, Crank Cafe, Wellington

*Trophies* is refreshing in its playfulness. The work is painterly and unpretentious which gives it a freshness often lost in art that becomes too contrived and clever. The paint application of Verbeek's paintings at first appears naive but this gives the work its charming fresh quality. Her use of colour and handling of paint is intuitive and the composition of the work in the main, well balanced. The canvases are treated as flat rather than employing perspective that simulates a receding picture plane; this also adds to the naive qualities of the work.

Verbeek's work exudes a love affair with paint. Her real strength is in her use of colour. This

works particularly well where she mixes and overlays colour. Verbeek needs to be careful not to mix too many colours so the work becomes too disjointed or muddy; alternatively where the colour is too bold or primary the paintings lose the fresh quality of more successful works. She obviously enjoys "taking a line for a walk" in paint - adding to the intuitive and expressive qualities of the artwork.

The title work in the exhibition, *Trophies* was painted in response to the America's Cup and questions the values that are upheld by the race. Verbeek uses symbolism that references her faith but is careful so as to make the work accessible to a wide audience. Ichthys (the fish) is a well known Christian symbol used by early disciples, Verbeek uses fish on a platter in her *Two Fish* painting, that would connote the Christian reference to those who know about her faith. She hopes her paintings would touch people on a deeper level, but an everyday object like fish can be recognised and enjoyed universally regardless of the intended symbolism.

In the same week Verbeek was part of a group exhibition at ROAR! Gallery in Wellington. Her *Pick 'n' Mix* show experiments with work in varying sizes and media. I would like to see her work on a larger scale. Verbeek hopes to take up the challenge of presenting more of her artwork to the public; her *Trophies* and *Pick 'n' Mix* shows are a decisive start.

Wendy Grace Allen



## From the Resource Centre

### The ACG Mentoring Project Handbook

Over the last 2-3 years the Arts Centre Group, in the UK, has sponsored a mentoring programme for Christian artists.

The CST library has a copy of this handbook which is a capsule full of practical and theoretical perspectives to assist and encourage the work of professional Christian artists. It's like a miniature tool kit. Written by artists, authors and art activists, the topics include 'A biblical vision for the arts, Pursuing excellence in your craft, Creating and managing opportunities in the visual arts, Handling rejection in the arts and media, Engaging with our divided culture and 'The Great Evangelical art theft'.

### Artisan: The Ambitious Issue Spring 2004

An expanded version of Backstage, it heralds a new level of networking between Christian professionals involved in the arts and media in London, New York and LA. It contains a cross section of personal stories and challenges from arts workers, some devotional perspectives and professional challenges.

One article by Wade Bradshaw is entitled 'The Tiger in you'. He writes, "Ambition is an animal, a

beast that lives in our minds. And it is difficult to think of a creature harder to reach down to its den and understand. I have been mauled by it more than a few times over the years in the search."

Both booklets have pithy, to the point stories, and perspectives valuable for anyone seeking to make sense of their faith in the arts community today.

Come up to the Centre and copy any of the articles that may be of interest.



## Interview: Dr. Mark Stocker Art historian, Otago University.

Mark Stocker was born in Watford, UK. After studying Art History at Cambridge, he went on to do a PhD on the sculptor Sir Edgar Boehm, the most popular and prolific British sculptor of the 1880s. Previously of the University of Canterbury, a past Chairman of Friends of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery, editor of the *The Journal of New Zealand Art History*, I caught up with him during a recent visit to Christchurch.

### How did art history end up being your field of interest?

I enjoyed art at my north London school (more the drawing than the painting), did the old fashioned O-level in art, but in my heart-of-hearts knew I didn't have the hunger for it. A perceptive art teacher steered me in the art history direction. I must have been one of the first people to have taken the equivalent of the British History of Art A-level. At about 17 I had to make the big decision (education being more specialised in the UK than NZ) of studying either Politics at Oxford or Art History at Cambridge, the art history winning out.

### What brought you to New Zealand?

NZ has always been a very special place for me. While my late mother was Czech., my paternal grandparents were New Zealanders. Although I am originally British, NZ was never exactly an unknown place to me. NZ grandparents, cousins, uncles and aunts would visit us while I was growing up. I first came over here as a teenager, an enlightened headmaster letting me miss a term at school to visit, considering the travel very educational. Ten years later I came to Canterbury as a visiting lecturer for a year replacing a colleague on study leave, and was invited to stay afterward. I completed my PhD on St Valentine's Day 1986 and on the following Wednesday was on the plane to Christchurch.

### Do you have any particular art/art historical interests?

When I was a student I did history for the first two years, then art history. I grumbled a bit (the Cambridge degree structure was very archaic in those days), but it has been a wonderful foundation. Now being in a history and art history department at Otago, where there are no barriers between the disciplines, I find that a happier fit than say the Canterbury scenario where art history is a sub-field of Fine Arts. I have a big regard for Andrew Drummond, I love his anarchy, and Barry Cleavin. Both are very dear and valuable to me. But, in the essential way I work - unless I was a contemporary specialist, a digital art geek - and I'm not - I feel I have more in common with say, a historian or a classicist: there's an historic component to these disciplines, and that's where I fit best.

### Considering your role first at Canterbury, and now at Otago, how do you find the different structures?

I've not changed my identity as a consequence of

the change. Otago is more intimate, we keep a tighter ship (just three immediate colleagues, including the theorist Peter Leech) Canterbury, as a bigger department and one established for more years, has an enviable library and slide facilities but Otago has something special in the air. I have a sense students at Otago are more committed to being there, as a lifestyle. Perhaps their parents discovered 'sex, drugs and rock n roll' back there in the 70s and now their children want much of the same in their own way. A huge advantage of Otago is that it is still a central campus with the Hocken Library and art collection nearby, not to mention the Dunedin



Public Art Gallery, indispensable places for the study of NZ art. This is unlike Victoria or Canterbury which are more scattered.

### Do you have any reflections as Chairman of The Friends of the Robert McDougall years ago?

I was Chairman 1997-2000 succeeding Chris Brocket and succeeded by Marianne Hargreaves. During my time I saw the animal change from little more than a dozen people of a certain age 'doing good works' (no disservice to how the *Friends* used to operate) to being executive of a much tighter, professionalised thousand-strong team. It has necessarily had to become a less intimate group now, but doing similar support work to what the *Friends* did in the 'good old days'.

I think it's very healthy that *Friends* do not have a historical role in acquisitions policy. It is my view that the role of the *Friends* is to be friends. Once or twice I got into sticky situations, but regardless of whatever private views I might have had, my role was to be a support to the gallery and its director.

### What are the origins of the *The Journal of New Zealand Art History* and your vision for it?

*The Journal* - which was originally the *Bulletin* - has been going since 1972. It was set up in Auckland by Emeritus Professor Tony Green,

Dr Mark Stocker of Otago University with Ernest Gillick's *Ex Tenebris Lux*, Christchurch Art Gallery, August 2004.



I have a sense students at Otago are more committed to being there, as a lifestyle. Perhaps their parents discovered 'sex, drugs and rock n roll' back there in the 70s and now their children want much of the same in their own way.

Michael Dunn and one or two others. It had some time in Canterbury, and is now based in Dunedin. It has grown exponentially. Since 1989 it has been based at the Hocken. Librarian Stuart Stachan takes a very serious view of *The Journal* being an identity of interest with scholarship and the Hocken. The Hocken has been very generous in terms of its printing and publishing of *The Journal*.

It missed several issues in the eighties, but my no nonsense predecessor who worked closely with the Hocken, Roger Collins, got it back on track and it has appeared regularly since then and will continue to do so. I inherited a success story from Roger, but I could see it needed a facelift (cover design, print, paper, colour illustrations, etc. cost money) and we're committed to 96-112 pages to accommodate good articles of a wide variety.

I want it to grow and I'm exploring fundraising and grants. I don't want it to turn back; it has got to carry the colour and quality it does while maintaining scholarly rigour. Although I'm somewhat pigeon holed as a conservative I like to think I have a liberal view of the sweep of NZ art history. I would welcome an intelligent and readable article on Et Al even if I might personally get more of a buzz out of William Hodges as an artist. The Journal is all about the historical, the modern and contemporary fabric of our art practice in NZ. Art history is not a narrow connoisseur's field, that is the excitement of it. For example, I have an interest in coins, but my study of NZ's first coins necessarily looks at national identity, politics, personalities, the Royal Mint, how NZ viewed itself at that time, design. It's a multidisciplinary study, albeit a miniature one, but no less interesting for it.

**What are your thoughts about the \$500,000 spent on the concept of the Venice Biennale, Et Al, etc.?**

It strikes me as being invidious that half a million dollars of taxpayers' money can be found to

support Et Al, but not a counterpart, a complement, for the Hodges exhibition at the National Maritime Museum. He was the first pakeha artist of moment to visit these shores. The curatorial team there told me the travel costs for the Hodges canvases would be too expensive. Despite NZ institutions having expressed interest, as well as professional colleagues, it looked like "Sorry, but not on". Let's have 'both/and'. Of course I'm more drawn to Hodges than to Et Al, but that's like comparing Camembert with rhubarb; we need both.

**There has been a lot of controversy about public sculpture in Christchurch. Where do you fit in?**

It's a particularly live issue in Christchurch and watch this space. I've published in this area but my next book project will be on sculpture in the public eye. Christchurch generates fuss unlike elsewhere, and Christchurch does love its controversies. It's big enough to accommodate a bigger volume of sculpture than, say, Dunedin can, and that is good, and it always generates controversy with it.

**A controversial question, somewhat absurd, but some are arguing the toss as to whether Christchurch or Wellington is the 'arts capital' of NZ.**

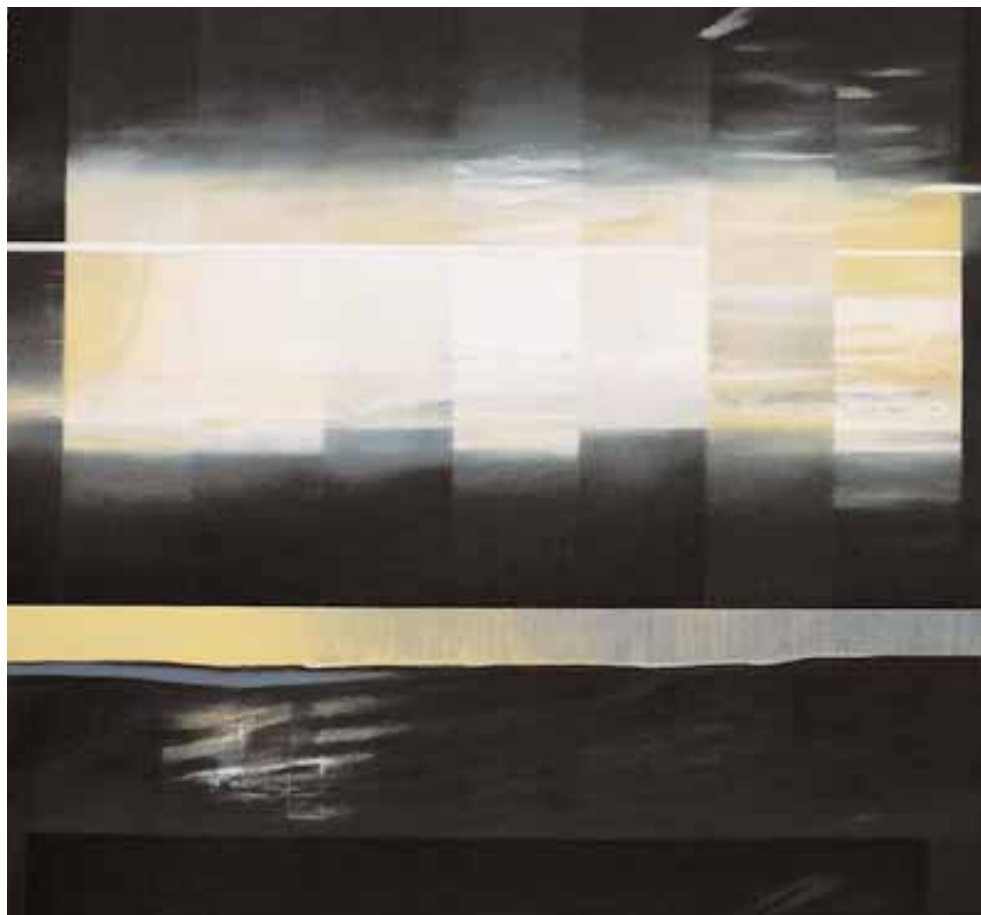
It's not a useful argument, and you don't mention Auckland. One of the problems is about Te Papa and its painful birth and why it turned out the way it did. Good people like Seddon Bennington and Jonathan Mané-Wheoki are redefining its role. They are mindful it did neglect something called "art history" at its peril and lost a constituency in the process. It will take them a while, and good luck to them, and yet it must continue as the popular place it is. The Christchurch Art Gallery was able to benefit from Te Papa taking on the populist role; it enabled Christchurch to say, "we'll remain true to art and art history", and to be fair the Auckland Art Gallery has always done that too.

**John Stringer**

Claire Beynon at work in her Dunedin studio.



*Somewhere Between Intuition and Reason*,  
 Claire Beynon, 2004,  
 Pastel on paper, 1240 x 1240mm,  
 courtesy The Arthouse gallery, Christchurch.



## Review

*Somewhere Between Intuition and Reason*, Claire Beynon  
**The Arthouse, Montreal St, Christchurch**  
**31 August – 19 September 2004**

Claire Beynon's recent body of work at The Arthouse continues her exploration into a visual articulation of interior spaces. Her psychological landscapes are variously rendered in charcoal and pastel, on gessoed paper, wood and stone.

The passage from shadow to light is particularly resonant in *Crossing the Divide*, a charcoal and pastel drawing that combines abstract form with a sense of physical journeying and travail of the mind. In the larger *Fulcrum*, Beynon imbues the work with warm orange tones akin to a sunset or rays of light breaking through storm clouds to cast an aura on a land of graphite hues. A similar effect of chiaroscuro is achieved in the pastel *Somewhere Between Intuition and Reason* and other drawings that break the picture plane into grids, revealing a synthesis of mind and hand. Within these multi-view drawings lie a compelling array of subtle tonal evocations, horizon lines, reflections, silhouettes and rich sweeps of pastel and charcoal textures.

Throughout this comprehensive and elegant exhibition, a sense of the artist's personal history being worked through can be ascertained. Her use of Welsh slate, salvaged from the Dunedin Law Courts, becomes an ancestral link, as her surname Beynon is Welsh. *Seven*, or what the artist calls her "stone poems", combines this

slate (having journeyed on a sailing ship from Wales to New Zealand in the mid nineteenth century), with wood, wax, aluminium, horseshoe nails and oil. The intriguing mix of mediums results in a series of interchanging patterns and allusions to biblical tablets and learning. The external history, or weathering process inherent in such ancient raw material, is echoed in part by the transformations humans experience over time and ultimately wear as part of our physiognomy. Such particles of history embedded in the stone (and in personalities) intrigue Beynon and in some of the drawings such as *Puzzling I, II and III*, a frottage effect mimics these surfaces.

Hidden layers and contrasts have direct links to the past and here atmospheric passages of calmness, turbulence and changes in mood or temperature, although part of Beynon's interior world, evoke vast landscapes of sea, sky and land. The artist's commitment to addressing "an endless and ongoing continuum" is conveyed by her interweaving of the mysterious with the remembered. Beynon grew up in South Africa and she writes, "my childhood home stood on a hill surrounded by miles of veld and high skies. Temperatures could be extreme. The weather could change from dry, beating heat to fierce electric thunderstorms in minutes". *Somewhere Between Intuition and Reason* projects the artist's recognition of the universal and personal, the past and the future, allowing for an un-prescribed and open reading of the work.

**Jennifer Hay**

Curatorial assistant at the Christchurch Art Gallery.

*First* (detail), Dawn Mann, 2004,  
 oil painting, 605 x 910 mm.

## Interview: Anna-Kate Loughnan Azucena gallery, Dunedin.

Anna-Kate Loughnan, a 24-year-old student completing a PhD in neuro-anatomy medicine at Otago (the anatomical effects of alcohol on the foetus) is pioneering Azucena, a gallery, café and trust in Dunedin. The trust provides mentoring for Christian artists, support and opportunities to feed back into the community.

Azucena is the Spanish name for the 'Madonna Lily' which is commonly held to signify eternal life, love and majesty and grew from Anna-Kate's photographic and artistic focus on the Arum lily in her own art.

### What is the vision for the Azucena Trust?

It began when I was working in what we might call 'creative ministries' at Dunedin Apostolic church. We were using the arts as a tool to encourage the talents and skills of Christians. For me, I view the arts as a way of communicating ourselves as well as allowing other people to make their own judgements on what we are saying, who we are. The benefit of that is the community can access our creativity outside the church walls, not feel threatened or enclosed within a church background.

I really started to think about this issue of being free to explore ideas within one's faith when I noticed the impact that the church had on one of my brothers. As an artist his views and interpretations on faith and life were often misunderstood by those within the church. As a result he felt that in order to belong he would need to conform or at least not question. That being an essential part of who he is, the only alternative was to either give up his exploration within the arts or give up his faith.

3 years ago I started to look into taking what I was wanting to achieve, the encouragement of Christian artists, outside of the church and into the community. I wanted to provide a space which supported them in an open, non-threatening environment where anybody from any background would feel comfortable.

It only solidified at the beginning of 2003, as a way to encourage Christian artists in their faith and spiritual walk, to really express who they are through their art medium. So it's about encouragement and support as well as an opportunity to input back into the community by providing community workshops and mentoring.

### How do you see Azucena fits in with the wider visual arts community?

The arts are such a powerful tool in all aspects of life, which includes a spiritual aspect. Azucena is not about isolating the Christian artists from the wider arts community, rather acting as perhaps a "springboard" to encourage Christian artists in their faith and their involvement within the arts community.

There is a role for strongly narrative pieces. Some can explore their own beliefs and faith through that mechanism. It also enables others to

watch the artist's exploration of that and reflect back on it and interpret it.

Whether or not the art "speaks a message" I don't think is as important as encouraging and supporting the artists themselves.

### Do you have any particular Christian-artistic influences?

I don't have a particular favourite but I am inspired by the Catholic expression of the arts, particularly their tradition of stained glass windows.

### What sort of artists do you like to show?

Personally I would really love to have a whole hoard of textile artists! Azucena is currently showing visual artists, however there are some upcoming slots for music, and we would love to incorporate poetry.

### How do you see the connection with the vision of Chrysalis Seed?

An interesting question. I can definitely see the two visions being complementary and working in well together, both working for the artists and the arts community. Before starting Azucena we had little, or no, idea of Chrysalis Seed and it has been encouraging for us to discover more about CST. While there are many aspects that are similar between CS and Azucena there remain some aspects which make each distinct and not in competition, i.e. CS supports all artists (visual artists/poets) while Azucena aims to support Christian artists and their faith within the arts community.

**Past exhibitions** at the new gallery have included: Josh McMillan, a printmaker who identifies himself as a "New Zealand Polynesian"; Shelly Johnson (see interview), collage; Mike Cook, acrylics, and Kate Walkinshaw, photography (both third year arts students); Dana Pierce and Katie Gray, acrylics; and Pete Thompson, photographer and skate and snow board artist.

**Exhibitions planned for the near future at Azucena, include:** Dave Teata, third year art student, acrylic painter and printmaker; a group exhibition of Polytechnic students organised through the Polytechnic alongside an acoustic music event in the gallery featuring local bands. Future plans include a sculpture exhibition in a dedicated outdoor space behind the exhibition room which will extend Azucena as an indoor/outdoor experience.

The gallery is situated at 233 Stuart Street, Dunedin.

**John Stringer**



Anna-Kate Loughnan, Azucena, Dunedin.



## Review

*Echoes and Shadows*, Cristina Popovici  
**The Arthouse, 3 - 29 August 2004.**

*Reproduced by permission of The Arthouse*

In her first exhibition in Christchurch since relocating to Auckland late last year, Cristina Popovici continues to be influenced by her connections with the South Island. Hues of brown, yellow and ochre, a typically Cantabrian palette, dominate many of the works in the show and a more subdued aesthetic emerges. The artist recognises these new works both as a response to her Canterbury roots and as expressions of a growing sense of personal and artistic maturity.

Unlike her impetuous works of two or three years ago which are characterised by the more overtly spontaneous and impulsive application of paint and the use of bright, uncompromising colour, this latest series of paintings is more reserved. Where earlier works seemed to shout at the viewer, demanding attention, the images in *Echoes and Shadows* are satisfied to hold conversations within themselves; they have a more contemplative and self-aware emotional content. Popovici builds up the surface of the images with multiple layers of paint, glazes and/or collaged elements. This not only creates a sense of visual depth in respect to the formal elements of painting but also demonstrates the artist's own engagement with the images. While Popovici had a more transient relationship with earlier canvases these new works require time and a more considered approach.

As the title of the exhibition suggests, *Echoes and Shadows* is about repetitions and oppositions; light/dark, positive/negative, mirror images and resonances. Popovici's range of paint techniques, masterfully combined within individual canvases to produce complex compositions that explore the potential of colour, texture and form, is impressive.

*Echoes and Shadows* is at once an invigorating and reflective show. A must see.

**Barbara Garrie,**

August 2004, copyright The Arthouse

*Stained Glass Women*, Cristina Popovici,  
2004, Mixed media on canvas, 1650 x 500mm.

# Nelson

*Walking Past Each Other* (see opposite)  
**The Suter, Nelson, 10 September - 17 October.**

After the final flurries, the exhibition was opened by an address by Jonathan Mane- Wheoki (Curator of visual arts and culture at Te Papa, Wellington). The event started with a blessing at 5 pm. A good crowd from local galleries and artists was supplemented by visitors from as far afield as Canterbury and Auckland. A continual stream of visitors were humming around the exhibition in between checking the sculpture symposium and the last Wearable Art Awards in Nelson.

**Editor**

## Allie Eagle floortalk at The Suter

Allie Eagle's animated and passionate floor talk on Sunday 12th Sept. at The Suter in Nelson enthralled a large and very diverse gathering (men and women, old and young, lesbians and Christians). She was confrontational, expressive, compassionate and funny, but above all Allie's deep humanity came across as she explained the exhibition, walking us through all the works as a menu to a smorgasbord of her own life and thoughts. At two hours, perhaps a bit long, but I enjoyed every minute, including the spontaneous group singing (American Pie, old Sunday School jingles). Her insights into the rationale for the show were revealing and enhanced our appreciation of the art on display as well as provoking our prejudices about 'us and them' mentalities and our interaction with one another (Maori and pakeha, gay and straight, colonial and indigenous, men and women etc.).

**JS**

## Mac's Sculpture Symposium

Anna Korver is one of 12 participating sculptors at the Nelson Arts Festival (10-25 September) Mac's (brewery) Sculpture Symposium (4-19 Sept.) in Trafalgar Square. Artists work in public at the top of the Square under a large marquee and under lights at night. Jeff Thomson is also a participant, speaking at a seminar for sculptors. Korver, who was a guest artist in the 2003 Chrysalis Seed group show, is working ash and macrocarpa into abstract figural sail-forms (she sailed while growing up in Nelson) which will be auctioned on site at the end of the symposium.

"I'm loving it, it's like a holiday retreat for sculptors. We are all so different and it's a very collegial, highly uncompetitive environment."

Her first solo show (*Fitted Skin*, works in glass, latex and wood) opens at Creation (Cathedral square, Christchurch) 27 Sept. to 8 October 2004.

**JS**

The Bishop Suter Art Gallery Trust Board  
Warmly invites you to attend

**A TURN IN THE GARDEN, YOUR GRACE?  
WALKING PAST EACH OTHER  
ON LOCATION WITH THE BISHOP**

Participating artists:  
Allie Eagle, Derek March, Michael Parekowhai  
Pippa Sanderson and Stephanie Ross

**10 September – 17 October 2004**

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