

'Mondrian behind bars' by Andrew Clarkson

Moving beyond violence

*Extract of speech by Peter Biggs,
Chair of Creative New Zealand*

Wednesday 28 March 2001

Just as art comprises those three things – wholeness, harmony and radiance – so the arts can bring wholeness, harmony and radiance to an individual, to a community and to a society.

I am not talking from theory here. I have seen with my own eyes the wonderful Arts in Prisons Programme run by Arts Access Aotearoa. I visited Paremoro Prison just last year. Prisons are not nice places. They are institutional, inhuman and intimidating. We walked through long corridors sealed off with bars and metal doors.

And then we entered an amazing space. One lone, brave and wonderful woman and about 20 inmates. And in this cold, institutional place, they were creating art – painting, sculpture and carving. It was an extraordinary experience. I saw, and talked to, men whose lives had been full of destruction now focused on creation. Men whose lives had been filled with ugliness now creating beauty. Men who, in James K Baxter's words, are "the children who have never grown" now talking with passion and confidence about their work and how it came to be. And men who felt that they had achieved nothing in their lives now standing proudly beside a completed art piece or object. In that room the arts were bringing forth in the wounded lives of these men wholeness, harmony and radiance.

I have stayed in touch with that prison and that programme. And I have experienced first-hand how the arts, by appealing to the better angels of our nature, can make gentle the life of the world.

This experience has convinced me that – not just in Paremoro but in Manukau, Turangi, Wellington and Christchurch – the arts are a tool in bringing about a non-violent society in Aotearoa New Zealand.

And it is not just in New Zealand that this is going on. Between September '95 and March '97, Comedia, a leading independent research centre, undertook a study into the social impact of arts programmes....

A specific case of the arts helping a community move beyond violence is the Batley Carr Estate in England – known for its very poor housing conditions, increasing vandalism, open drug-dealing and reports of violence. An artist in residence programme and arts projects were introduced with dramatic results....

More and more around the world the arts are being used as a tool to move communities and individuals beyond violence – in the prisons in the United Kingdom; in the prisons and institutions in California; in the prisons and outside the prisons in Australia....

To me, violence springs from anger, alienation, fear and frustration. And these have their dwelling place in the spirit of humankind. And it is to the spirit that the arts speak. It is the spirit and the heart that the arts move. It is the human spirit that the arts nourish. For the arts reveal to the human soul its own unique rhythm of beauty.

I truly believe that the call of every man and every woman is to be a creative hero. I believe too that this nation is called to be the most creative, civilised and noble country on this planet. Sadly, this call is not heeded by so many – through choice, through fear and through circumstances....I believe this call is issued to a country as well as the individual. We must answer the call to be a creative country, moving beyond the tired, traditional and out-worn slogans and solutions of more process, more laws, more policy and more institutions.

The key to solving the problem of violence in our society lies in the spiritual transformation of human beings. Only in this way can we transform their lives from a wasteland of low self-esteem, despair and violence to a life of wholeness, harmony and radiance. And it is through the arts – because they speak to the human spirit and because of their transforming power – that we can achieve the dream of a country where people walk without fear, act with integrity and compassion and live creatively and without the threat of violence. I know this because I have seen it with my own eyes.

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seven plus



chrysalis seed trust

Who are Seven Plus?

We are a network of like-minded visual artists in Canterbury who meet to encourage each other in our art and faith. Most of us are established working artists, local to Canterbury, ranging in age from early 20's to mid '60s. We represent various aspects of the art world: some of us exhibit locally, nationally and internationally; others work in commercial art and design, or teach. Some are currently studying art at the School of Fine Arts or the Polytech and others have been around longer than we care to mention. Included in our ranks are also a network of art lovers who have a commitment to the vision of Seven Plus but may not be practising artists. Their support is greatly valued.

Seven Plus is one of the art networks under the umbrella of the Chrysalis Seed Trust which is a charitable trust under the auspices of Spreydon Baptist Community Services.

The mission of Chrysalis Seed Trust is to help resource the arts community from a Christian perspective.

Chrysalis Seed Trust Trustees

Peter Phillips (Anthony Harper)
Rupert Calvert
Peter & Jessica Crothall

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Kia Ora!

The role of art in society has been in the news recently. Leading New Zealand actor/director, Jim Moriarty has produced a series of theatre productions involving New Zealand prisoners that has profoundly impacted the lives of the participants. In this issue of Seven Plus News Creative New Zealand chair, Peter Biggs, discusses the transforming power of art to uplift the human spirit. Warren Feeney, on the other hand, in an article in The Press entitled 'Beware the social agenda', warns that 'serious art may be in danger of becoming nothing more than a new department of the social welfare services.' He adds, 'There is an increasingly pervasive sense that art is less about creativity, excellence and profundity, and more about providing a cure-all for society's problems.' Warren concludes, 'I believe serious art is undervalued when it is required to focus on accessibility or to meet the aspirations of a social welfare agenda. Art operates on a more subtle and complex platform. It may reveal aspects of society's troubles, but it is not a universal remedy for them. In matters of high culture, elitism should be celebrated. Elite does not mean inaccessible. It means excellence.' [The Press, Wed, April 18, 2001:23] I wonder if any of our readers have anything to contribute to this discussion. If you would like to write a short letter to the editor we will publish any responses in our next newsletter. All letters must be typewritten and signed, and sent to Seven Plus News PO Box 629, Christchurch by 20 June.

We had a wonderful opening week at the Chrysalis Seed Art and Faith Resource Centre - it was exciting to see the rooms buzzing with people, the various resources of books and periodicals well leafed through and people from many art disciplines beginning to see the possibilities of networking through this art and faith resource centre. If you haven't yet had the opportunity to come and visit you are most welcome any time. The centre is open Monday-Friday 12.30-5.30pm and Saturday 10-4pm.

On Easter Saturday twenty Seven Plus members met at Mona Vale for brunch. One of the highlights of our time together was the viewing of recent art by Seven Plus artists - beautiful ceramic angels by Erica d'Steewart, interior designs by Rosemarie Clouston, prints by Jo O'Hara, recent paintings by Jessica Crothall, Kees Bruin, Glenda Deed and Averil O'Hara, and designs for Chrysalis Seed by Andrew Clarkson.

You will note that this newsletter has a poetry and theatre supplement which reflects the wider vision of Chrysalis Seed to engage with all the arts. We have also included a response card which you can fill in if you would like to change your address details, or if you would like to be taken off the newsletter mailing list. Simply tick the boxes that apply to you and pop it into the post - we will pay the postage.

*Arohanui and blessings!
Bridget Underhill*

Seven Plus news

Congratulations to **Florence Lim** who recently won the Robert McDougall Gallery's Farina Drawing Award. Florence is currently in her final year of visual communication studies at Christchurch Polytech.



'Winter run' by Jessica Crothall

Averil O'Hara had two paintings accepted for the Centre of Contemporary Art Members Exhibition last Christmas, along with Jessica Crothall and Anee Fountain. Averil exhibits her work in Wellington and in Fitzroy, Melbourne.

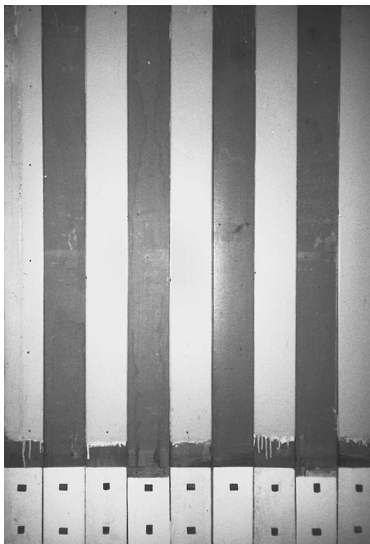
Jinji Koyama had a solo show at the Centre of Contemporary Art earlier in the year and will be part of 'Leading Impressions' at CoCA from 16 May - 2 June. This show features the work of six contemporary printmakers who are graduates from the University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts.

Stations of the Cross. Peter Crothall writes:

'Good Friday this year was highlighted in a special way by an installation by the **Majendie family** which was held at Opawa Baptist Church. It was truly an icon for us. A visual window to God. It crossed the threshold from art to worship without compromising aesthetic integrity. The unifying image of a hand was used in a deceptively simple way. Watch out for plans to expand this next Easter.' Peter Majendie adds: 'I was very pleased - 300 people visited the installation. One of the Stations encouraged the writing of a letter to God and then spiking it onto a totara cross covered in barbed wire - at the end of the whole event it was covered with papers and notes.'



'Musterion' by Kees Bruin



'Suburban Sunset' by Ken Hall

Martin Langlands and Paul Drake's exhibition 'Earthscapes/Soundscapes' will be held at the Selwyn Gallery, Darfield from May 26 - June 14, 2001. The show will feature paintings by Paul Drake with Martin 'soundscaping' the exhibition using 100% original music-textures-sounds that will play in a non linear fashion (random play) during the exhibition. All are welcome to visit this show. Paul and Martin will be at the gallery during the weekends.

Katie Thomas has a show at the Front Gallery of the Centre of Contemporary Art from 16 May - 3 June.

The **Naked Strength** life drawing class went well at the Space Gallery on Saturday April 21 with some interesting drawing possibilities with the Circo Arts contribution. Unfortunately due to lack of numbers the next class has been cancelled.

New Hymns by poet on the web. A poet, a scientist, and a harpsichordist have combined their talents in one of the newest hymn writing ventures in New Zealand. **Dr Jane Simpson**, poet and historian, has written and composed ten hymns since July, assisted by her husband, **Dr Bill Ahlers**, a former environmental scientist. Both are members of S. Michael and All Angels, Christchurch. They have been assisted by **Dr Peter Low**, a well-known Quaker and harpsichord practitioner. Jane and Bill are now publishing and licensing their hymns to congregations, schools, chaplaincies, and branches of organisations throughout the world. Their first hymn, Tussocks Dancing, is their gift to the Church and can be played on their website. For further information contact:
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Art and literary competitions, awards and opportunities

The Left Bank Art Gallery, Greymouth.

Call for interest in exhibiting work. Gallery space available now! The Left Bank is a focal point for the Arts on the Coast and comprises the "Vault Space" for \$60 per week, and the Main Gallery space for \$150 per week. The gallery charges a 30% commission and work must be for sale. Please contact gallery Director, Wayne Lorimer on 03 768 0038.

A contemplative studio residency for artists.

Project proposals are invited from those who are consciously exploring through their art a deeper communion with the Divine. The media categories for summer 2001 (July 20-29) are drawing and water-based painting. For further information, contact the Department of Art and Music, Institute for Arts and Spirituality, 420 Main Street, Nashua, NH 03060-5086. Ph 603-8997-8276 email: artmusic@rivier.edu

Olivia Spencer Bower Foundation Annual Scholarship for painters and sculptors

Calling for applicants for 2003 and 2004. Value \$28,000 plus studio at the Arts Centre, Christchurch. Further information from Guardian Trust, NZI Building, 96 Hereford St, Christchurch. Ph 379 0644.

Recent email received at the Chrysalis Seed Centre:

Worship Leader Magazine seeking good artwork to showcase its magazine. Will take artwork in any format (non-returnable). They pay \$850 for cover art and about \$150 for feature articles. Please send all materials to: David Di Sabatino, 31781 Camino Capistrano, Suite 303, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675 USA.

Greenstone Pictures is making a new arts series for TV One with the working title of Mercury Lane. This will cover all artforms, with an emphasis on making powerful, entertaining stories about

artists and their work. Mercury Lane would like to hear from arts organisations and individuals about their plans for the coming year. Please forward all correspondence to Kirsten MacFarlane: email mercurylane@gspictures.co.nz, Ph (09) 623 7768.

The Slak Guest Studio

("Stichting Atelierbeheer Slak") have a guest studio available for foreign artists. The guest studio is for visual artists from abroad who are invited by museums or art organisations from the area to participate in a project or a special exhibition. An artist's individual request may also be granted. Contact: Stichting Atelierbeheer Slak, t.a.v. Ruth Keteldijk, Koningstraat 12, 6811 DE Arnhem, The Netherlands, email guest.studio@slak.nl Web: www.slak.nl

Applications for international residencies

29 June deadline. Creative New Zealand is calling for applications from New Zealand visual artists for three international residencies: Sydney's Artspace, the Künstlerhaus Bethanien in Berlin, and the International Studio Program in New York. The residencies are part of an international artists' residency programme offered by the Arts Board of Creative New Zealand. They include the airfares and a \$3000 per month stipend for the chosen artists. Download criteria and application forms: Artspace, Künstlerhaus, International Studio Programme

"Ashes to Art",

27 July Closing date for submissions. Presented by Funeria in San Francisco, CA, Nov. 30 through Dec. 2, 2001. This is an opportunity for artists and the general public to participate in the first international juried exhibition of fine art funerary urns, vessels, and reliquaries. "Ashes to Art" was conceived to advance a concept that art and beauty sanctify life—helping to assuage sorrow and fear of death. Visit www.funeria.com for full details and a downloadable prospectus.

7th International Competition for Female Composers

31 July Closing date for compositions. Chamber music composition for a wind instrument sextet (flute, oboe, clarinet, cornet, bassoon and bass clarinet) presented in complete written score with comments. A cassette or CD may be submitted along with the score. Contact Ursula Pawlak, Rheingoldstr. 50, 68199, Mannheim, Fax 049-621-154577. Mannheim, Germany.

29-31 Aug 6th National Golden C'Art Multi-Media Exhibition

The Exhibition is on from 7-16 September and submissions must reach the organisers between 29-31 August. Supreme award of \$3000.

For more information:

<http://goldencart2001.homestead.com/files/index.htm>, email a.royal@xtra.co.nz, or download an application form.

2001 Takahe Short Story Competition

Closing date: 30 September 2001. Judged by James Norcliffe. First prize \$250 Second prize \$100 Contact: Takahe Collective Trust PO Box 13 335 Christchurch.

Choir Olympics

5 Dec Deadline for applications to participate. 19 to 27 October 2002, Seoul, Korea. For more information: www.choiolympics.com

May 2002 or May 2003 China Art Workshop

For more information contact Angie McIntosh, email angiemcintosh@home.com www.ChinaArtTours.com

Upcoming events

books & beyond May 30 - June 4, 2001. The 5th Annual Books and Beyond Christchurch Book Festival at the Arts Centre will feature writers' workshops, discussion panels, poetry evenings, read aloud in schools programme, an essay competition, library activities and more. Programme available at the Arts Centre Information Centre from 1 May.

The Arts Centre Artist in Residence from April to early June is songwriter and singer Mahinarangi Tocker who will perform a lunchtime concert in the Great Hall on 1 June at 1.10pm as part of her residency.

Vivat Victoria Regina! This is a series of lectures linking the 150th anniversary of the founding of St Michael & All Angels Church with the centenary of the death of Queen Victoria. All lectures will be held in St Michael's Church, cnr Durham and Lichfield Sts. from 6.00 - 7.00pm. Admission by koha (donation).

Thursday 19 July: 'In memoriam Queen Victoria: monuments and statues' - Dr Mark Stocker.

Friday 20 July: 'Queen Victoria, amateur artist extraordinaire' - Dr Pamela Gerrish Nunn.

Aspects of Victorian Church Art.

Monday 23 July: 'The Gothic Revival and the Catholic Revival' - Jonathan Mane-Wheoki

Tuesday 24 July: 'William Butterfield and All Saints, Margaret Street, London' - Jonathan Mane-Wheoki

Wednesday 25 July: 'The Victorian Revival of Ecclesiastical Embroidery' - Jonathan Mane-Wheoki

Thursday 26 July: 'William Holman Hunt and the Light of the World' - Jonathan Mane-Wheoki

Chrysalis Seed Book Club Meetings.

All meetings at Chrysalis Seed Art and Faith Resource Centre, The Arts Centre.

Saturday 2 June 12.00-1pm, Discussion on the recent book on art-faith issues - *Art and Soul*.

Saturday 23 June 12.00-1pm, Helen Jacobs, published poet and former mayor of Eastbourne, will be the guest poet at this meeting and will read poetry and discuss some of her work.

Chrysalis Seed Poets. The Chrysalis Seed poets collective meet on the fourth Saturday of every second month. Saturday 23 June 1.30pm is the next meeting at the Chrysalis Seed Art and Faith Resource Centre.

Seven Plus - next event - Tour of the art galleries.

Saturday 26 May 10am. Meet at the Chrysalis Seed Art and Faith Resource Centre. We will probably have time to visit four galleries at the most. Bring something to share for lunch.

Joint show by Jessica Crothall and Jo O'Hara at the Salamander Gallery in August 2001.