



chrysalis seed trust



## The body as art

### Review: *wilderness/weather*

**Michael Parmenter & Sarah-Jayne Howard**  
**Southern Ballet Theatre**  
**26 Sept - 29 Sept/5 Oct 2002 (extended).**

#### **The Body dance festival.**

This two-piece performance of contemporary ballet begins with an intense and gripping myopic examination of man alone. The stage 'dawns' on a narcissus crouched upon a rock in the middle of a reflective pond holding a cluster of long toi toi fronds. Parmenter is spectacular utilising the muscles, shape and tone of his body in extremely subtle transitions, brilliantly lit by Richard Till, as a living canvas. (The simile of a living Michelangelo sculpture is appropriate). *Wilderness* is enhanced by an esoteric score by Somei Satoh. The performance evokes birth; death; the crucifixion; the tragedy, anxiety, bemusement, despair, desperation and finally hope of humanity (as Parmenter slowly raises his hands and face to embrace a divine light). Parmenter creates amazing body and light forms; while dancing his person is silhouetted against the back wall creating an intriguing duality. His image of a crouched 'gargoyle' with arms outstretched, creating fissures of contrast on his upper back was the most spectacular creation from his wilderness. Performing this emotional dance entirely on a small rock demonstrated poise and balance of incredible strength and talent.

Following a twenty minute interlude, *weather* opens with Parmenter and Sarah-Jayne Howard circling the stage in mist, clothed in light garments. The two dancers perform dramatic solo pieces that seem to centre on external violence. They join for a dramatic duo of repeating patterns of individual movement that concludes with a well-lit finale accentuating their

shapes in red/orange light. Howard is a strong performer, her movement sharp, elastic and dynamic. She is well paired with Parmenter (surely exhausted by his introductory *wilderness?*) in episodes of beautiful symmetry. The music by Michael Gordon, featuring double basses and cellos is at points reminiscent of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*, building to a dramatic and recurring climax that suits the performance well. The strength of *weather* for me, was Howard's solo piece. Both dances choreographed by Parmenter, produced by Michael Adams of DFG Management.

#### **John Stringer**

Above left: *Suspended Bodyscape*, Alan Brydon, 2001, photographic print.

Above right: Michael Parmenter, *wilderness/weather* programme, October 2002.

Below: *Firefly*, Alan Brydon, 2001, photographic print.



CHRYSLIS SEED  
**NEWS**  
NOVEMBER 2002

[www.artists.co.nz/chseed](http://www.artists.co.nz/chseed)



seven plus



chrysalis seed trust

## Who we are

Founded in 1997 the Chrysalis Seed charitable trust serves a growing number of contemporary artists. Our mission is 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 above Southern Ballet where all are welcome to explore, read and coffee out.

We have a number of groups and collectives with regular events. The two main artist collectives are for visual artists (Seven Plus) and contemporary poets (CS Poets).

**Seven Plus** is a visual arts collective with an emphasis on exhibiting and producing contemporary visual art.

**CIVA** (Christians Working in the Visual Arts) meetings are broader, for Christians involved professionally in servicing the visual arts community (such as in education, arts advocacy, etc).

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## Kia ora



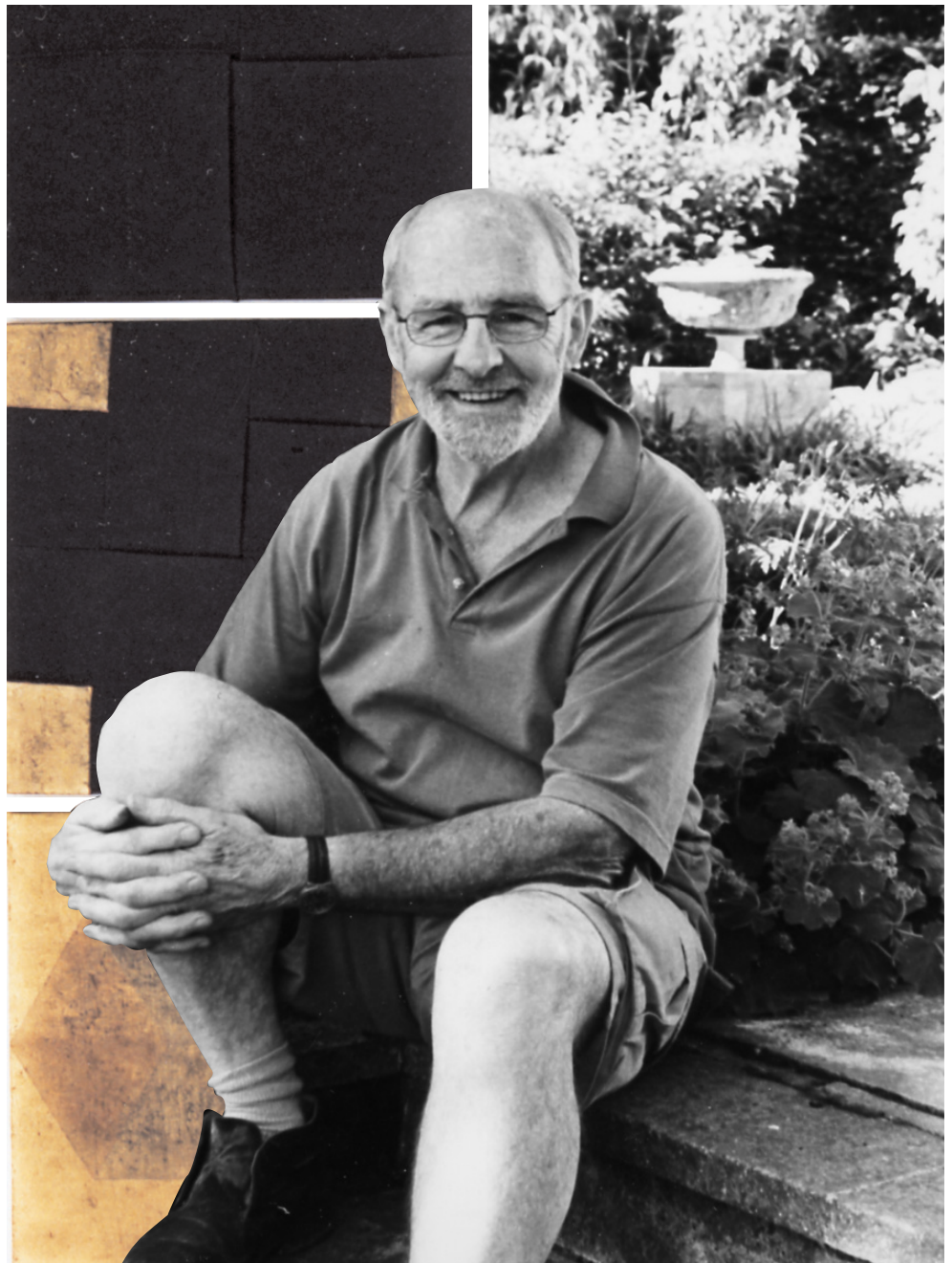
*Our artist profile this edition is a tribute to artist and curator Will Cumming.*

*On Thursday 20 June, Will was killed by a car outside the Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology where he was a tutor. William Cumming was well respected in the Canterbury arts community: curator of the Polytechnic's growing art collection, member of the Olivia Spencer-Bower Foundation selection committee from its inception, curator of the Foundation collection, and executive member of the Friends of the Robert McDougal art gallery for eight years. He joined the staff of the latter in April 2000 as part of the frame restoration project. Will was also a practising artist. His most recent exhibition was in April in the*

*Canaday gallery at the Centre of Contemporary Art. (The works featured below appear courtesy of his widow Jean). Will was a committed Christian and his art frequently represented the cross. "From Byzantine iconography to Malevich and Bamburg, the cross is a familiar symbol for Christianity, the spiritual, and the aesthetic and philosophical conflict or resolution of opposites...Will Cumming maintains his commitment to such an evocative and potent set of ideas and images...Utilising the cruciform/cross and implying geometric and philosophical associations." [CoCA magazine april/may/june 2002].*

*Will was born in 1933 and educated at Hokitika High School. He is survived by his wife Jean and their three children Fiona, Piers and Nicholas.*

**John Stringer**



Will Cumming and works from his recent April exhibition.

# Being not doing

**An interview with artist Andrew Panoho**  
**Samples of Faith exhibition, Christchurch,**  
**1-5 October, 2002.**

A Maori artist of Nga Puhi descent living and working in a studio in London over the last six years, stumbled across a copy of the *CS News* and discovered a group of artists he would love to be connected to. Back in New Zealand, and now based in Blenheim with his young family, Andrew Panoho eventually caught up with the Chrysalis Seed Trust during his exhibition *Samples of Faith* in Christchurch.

Andrew began a full time painting practise after leaving Ilam with a Masters of Fine Art

in 1989. His first major exhibition was a group show, "Contemporary New Zealand Artists," at the Sarjeant gallery in Wanganui. He works in water colours (primarily three pigments) but on a colossal scale, purposely stretching the boundaries of that discipline.

**As a Christian artist, do you think there is still a place for meta-narratives (like the Gospel) in so-called post-modern art when everything is decentralised, devolved, diluted and relative?**

"Post-modernism" is a Eurocentric world view,

a western vantage that doesn't take into account the abstract art traditions and cosmologies of other great cultures throughout the world. In one sense it is like the "great discoveries" of the European maritime seafarers who sailed across the world "finding" already inhabited continents to claim ownership. The western terms of "Modernism" and "Post Modernism" have a semblance of the imperial arrogance of 19th-century colonialists who ignored what already existed. Europeans did not invent abstraction. It amuses me when I hear Eurocentric academics preaching the 120-year-old western-centred arts gospel according to their own anachronistic cultural projections. Maori abstract art traditions are at least 800 years old and probably many thousands of years old.

**Are you a "Christian artist" or an "artist who is also a Christian"?**

Those are two definitions that European Christians angst about too much - they are irrelevant. They're just not questions I'm interested in.

**So, you take a quite holistic approach to art?**

It's about the source of our identity. God is the Supreme Being, not the Supreme Doing. God enjoys being Himself. He didn't need to create the universe to validate Himself, God created it out of his own sense of being. I too am a human being made in the image and likeness of my Maker - I am not a 'human doing.' I don't create for someone else or to cognitively fit into some pre-described abstract cerebral definition. I paint mostly because it is who I am. My vocation comes out of my being. Doing is an outworking of being.

I hope this isn't sounding too esoteric. To me this has been a wonderful discovery that has set me free creatively. For much of my life I was a task/performance-oriented person who was very broken because of my family background. I lacked many of the basic building blocks of identity and was enslaved performing to the gallery of life around me. God in his grace stopped my dysfunctions, taking time with me. He connected me to people in London who retaught me to 'be' His son. Some of my figurative paintings record that journey of healing.

**I can see Van Gogh in your work, are there any other specific influences?**

Yes, Van Gogh. If you read his letters to his brother Theo you get a glimpse of the huge heart that undergirded his physical work - great integrity. Pablo Picasso, for his drafting skill base; Edvard Munch, for his ability to articulate deep feelings and inner pain and his physical use of paint and also his drafting ability; Colin McCahon because he tapped into a depth of Maori spirituality, and expressed that spirituality through the western view frame.

**Why watercolours?**

I enjoy the medium beyond what is traditionally expected. I see watercolour as 'petite' and refined and wanted to expand it to a solid and monumental level yet retain its ethereal subtlety. There is a spirituality to water colours - the fluid nature of the layers, the transparency. After experimenting for a year I selected three pigments as my main palette. They unite my diverse work and subject matter.

Andrew Panoho's exhibition featured a variety of large watercolour figural works (from 134 x 153 to 173 x 134) exploring such themes as boyhood to manhood, transitions, death, life and resurrection. He also exhibited four abstract kowhaiwhai (serpentine rafter paintings) and word paintings.



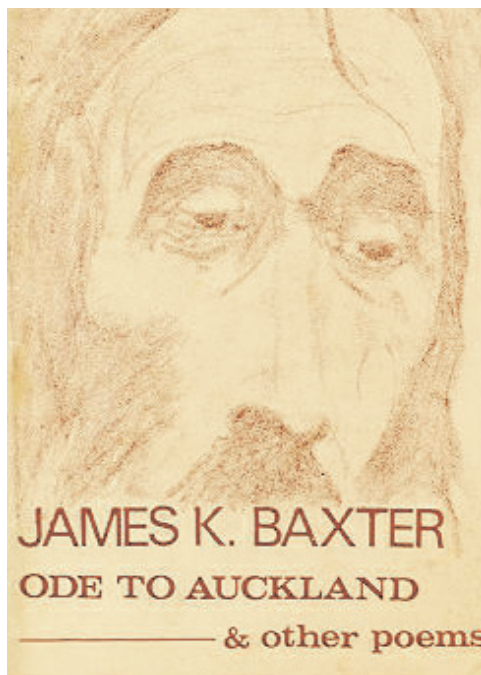
*Towards manhood, Andrew Panoho, 2002.*  
watercolour on paper, 173 x 134 cm.



Andrew Panoho at the Arts Centre, Christchurch.

# Jerusalem down under

It is thirty years since the death of James K. Baxter, described by some European literary authorities as one of the three great English poets of the twentieth century. He was certainly one of New Zealand's foremost writers and easily our most prolific poet. By the time he was attempting to complete his third year of university study, first year students were already studying his work.



Thirty years on, he is something of an icon - listed, quoted and critiqued in any number of literary journals; studied in our schools and universities; the subject of plays, television and films; and painted extensively, particularly by Nigel Brown. His poetry is well disseminated, but shortly distinguished literary editor, critic and poet John Weir will publish a volume of Baxter's prose. John Weir, a personal friend of Baxter and author of his *Collected Poems* (1980, Oxford Uni. Press), spoke at the recent Literary Evening at the Arts Centre organised by the Trust and was a contributor to our published anthology *With Our Eyes Open*. To commemorate his friend, John, and others, have organised a weekend with James K. Baxter, "A Man Went On A

Search: The Spiritual Journey of James K. Baxter (1-2 and possibly 3 November, 2002).

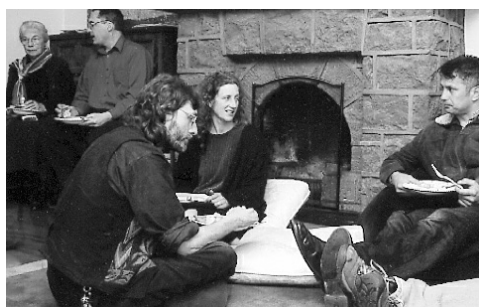
The weekend journey will commence on November 1, at 7.30pm, with a one-man monologue on James K. performed by Jim Firth in the Ngaio Marsh theatre. A panel discussion will follow.

On Saturday 2 Nov. (and possibly extending into Sunday) a variety of papers will be presented in the William Sutton room of the Arts Centre. Topics include James K. Baxter himself, Jerusalem - the place and vision, and other notable personalities associated with Jerusalem in the 1970s. Contributors include Baxter scholar John Weir; Dunedin novelist and playwright Mike Riddell; current resident of Jerusalem and Member of the Sisters of the Home of Compassion, Island Bay, Sue Cosgrove; and close personal Baxter friend from the Jerusalem and Dunedin days, Colin Durning.

For more information on the weekend, phone Kathy on 338-4437.

In addition, Mike Riddell's first play *Jerusalem Jerusalem* was shown at the Globe Theatre in Dunedin as part of the Dunedin Fringe Festival (27,28 Sept., 2-5 Oct.) starring Patrick Davies as Baxter. *Jerusalem Jerusalem* focuses on 1972, Baxter's final squalid year, and draws out the strong prophetic resonance of his thinking, writing and utterances. Riddell drew from the wealth of Baxter poems, writings as well as his now famous 1972 public address in the Dunedin Town Hall, for the content of the play.

Riddell says the life of Baxter is "impossible to ignore." His use of a Classical Greek chorus imbues the play - described by a Press reviewer as "A fitting homage to Baxter" - with added gravitas, pathos and tragi-comedy, well-suited to a portrayal of this remarkable and enigmatic New Zealander. Baxter was something of a New Zealand literary Oedipus, a poet who suffered great hubris yet in the end deserved the fame that has attached to his name. The play, a monologue, the seminar weekend and publication of a major volume of his prose is a fitting commemoration of the thirty years since James K. Baxter's death.



Left to right: Jo OHara, John Stringer, Peter Crothall, Kate Spencer, Andrew Panoho (*Seven Plus* dinner, 2 October).



Did Kate Spencer really study under Marcel Marceau? (*Seven Plus* dinner, 2 October).

## Review: *Spirit in a Strange Land*

A selection of New Zealand verse edited by Paul Morris, Harry Ricketts and Mike Grimshaw; A Godwit Book, Random House New Zealand.

It seemed a happy coincidence that *Spirit in a Strange Land* was released almost at the same time as Chrysalis Seed published *With Our Eyes Open*. While both books share the same Christian focus, this is more obvious in the poems of 'Spirit.'

The cover welcomes the reader through the image of a stark cabbage tree silhouetted against a soft green humid sky, reminding us, who live in this country, that yes, it is still a place of strangeness, quite unlike the northern hemisphere world of the earliest writers in this collection.

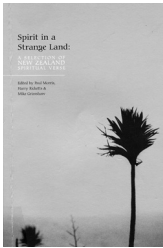
The introduction states that while there have been previous anthologies of New Zealand verse, this is the first to concentrate exclusively

on spiritual writing, and though the poems do not always refer to things Christian, the spirit, in differently guises, is revealed. The poems have been grouped into seven categories: "Godzone," "Holidays & Holy days," "Saints & Sinners," "Troubled Souls," "Jesus Alone," "Book of the Land" and "Rebels & Recluses." The collection includes poems from our most famous writers, and some less well known.

This rewarding book is completed with an end-essay by Paul Morris, *New Zealand Spirituality - A time for re-enchantment*, expressing an overview of the spiritual dimension, past, present and possible future, of a still developing country. *Spirit in a Strange Land* may be read almost poem to poem, allowing the unique mystery that is New Zealand to enter the searching spirit.

**Peb Simmons**

[Two copies of *Spirit in a Strange Land* are available for loan from the CS Resource Centre].



## Director's report



As the curving glass wall sculpture of the new City Gallery emerges plate by plate, the mosaic network of Chrysalis Seed continues to surface.

Over the last week several of us have been introduced to the monumental work of Andrew Panoho. His contemporary raw sienna and blue kowhaiwhai watercolours encapsulate a lot of what Chrysalis Seed affirms: movement, catalyst, release of potential, and connecting with spiritual traditions in fresh ways. All of this undergirds the concept of our exhibition for next year - contemporary responses to historical images of faith.

Recently, we had a discussion on art as work (*Artists in Business* meeting, 5 Sept.), artists presenting progress towards the *12: Dialogues with Time* exhibition (*Seven Plus* dinner, 2 Oct.) and John Weir introducing us to the life and work of James K. Baxter (*Literary Evening*, 6 Sept.), the latter as a trailer to the weekend of workshops and seminars in early November (see story p. 4). John Weir's series of meetings is a reminder of the rich seam of spiritual tradition we have to draw from in New Zealand, both Maori and Pakeha, exploring the search for artistic identity and place in Aotearoa today. The life and work of Will Cumming, Michael Parmenter and Andrew Panoho (all featured this edition) express this process as different tributaries of the same river.

*Spirit in a Strange Land* and Michael Dunn's recently launched *History of New Zealand Sculpture* also document this search.



Rob d'Auvergne reveals his plans for an upcoming sculpture.

(Both books are available to borrow from the Chrysalis Seed library which has moved into a dedicated room). Special thanks to Mike for his work to make the new library possible, and to the Arts Centre. We look forward to seeing you up there to check it all out.

You will find several books reflecting the interface between faith and fantasy. Why not join the book club to reflect on these themes as the time draws near for the release of the second instalment of 'Lord of the Rings.' [see story p.7 - Ed.]

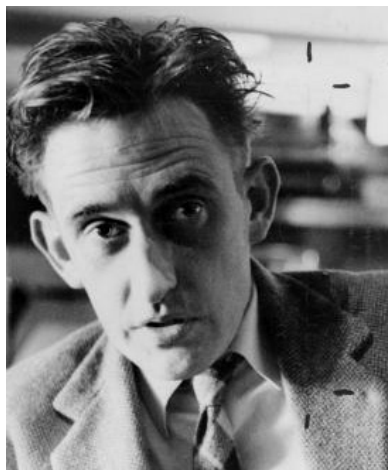
**Peter Crothall**

*Death, Burial and Resurrection,*  
Kim Peters, 2001, wood and whalebone.



To be deceived is human; but till deception end  
What hope of a bright inn, Love's oil and wine?  
One greasy cloth of comfort I bring, friend  
Nailed at the crossroad – I, thief, have seen  
The same dawn break in blood and negative fire;  
Your night I too could not endure.

(from *Thief and Samaritan*, James K. Baxter)



## CD *Tussocks Dancing*

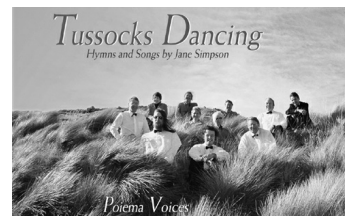
Hymns and songs by Jane Simpson

"Jane Simpson and friends (for hers is a collaborative approach to hymn-making) have created an innovative collection of hymns and spiritual songs that catch the attention with unexpected turns of phrase, uncommon words and fresh images, that challenge singers with changing metres and unusual harmonies. These energetic texts reflect a sense of a faith-journey as a vital, vivid life-full thing. Her Christ is a Canterbury flood, breaking stopbanks, scouring and making new; a wind bracing creation. Her God is not fixed but changing, absorbing, surprising; surrounding with love all in labour, a co-creator indeed. Biblical thoughts and images and traditional rituals are present, but there is also a healthy tone of revolutionary fervour."

**Colin Gibson**

*Emeritus Professor and NZ hymn writer*

For more, see [www.godzonehymns.com](http://www.godzonehymns.com)



## CS Book club

This year we have been discussing the fantasy and science fiction genres.

Fantasy is currently very popular with the release of 'Harry Potter' and Peter Jackson's screen interpretation of J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings: the Fellowship of the Ring*. There has been some criticism of the fantasy genre in Christian circles. If the criticism is justified, how do we relate the use of fantasy to our faith, especially in the arts?

It is exciting to note that the pioneers of such works were Christians, J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis; indeed Tolkien is commonly referred to as the 'father' of the modern 'fantasy' genre (as distinct from science fiction). The Bible has stories in it about dragons, witches, magicians, sorcerers, animals that talk, and people who have visions and dreams about the future, creatures of extraordinary evil or goodness, giants, heroes, people with super human powers and strength, people who control nature, the suspension of the laws of nature and space and time (as we understand them), objects that

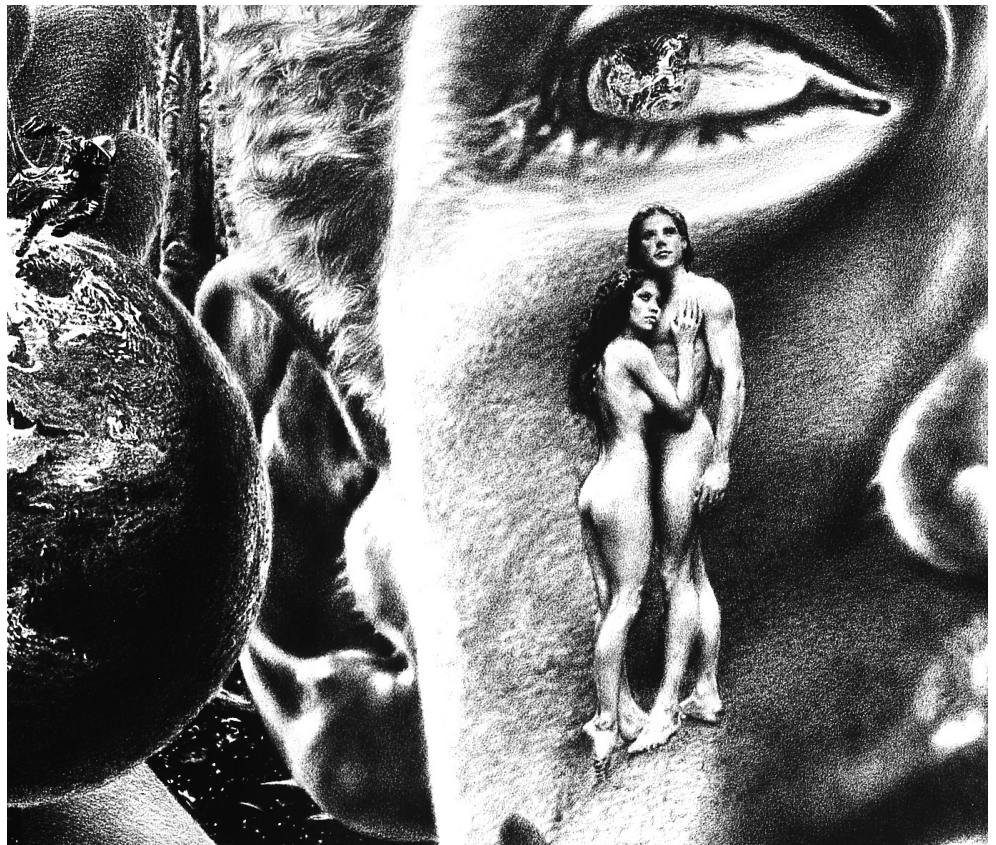
change shape, and the possibility of entering other realms beyond this earth (Lansdown in *Studio #86*).

An author's creation of a fantasy world can challenge our own constructs of reality. Fantasy and science fiction are vehicles to transport us into the realm of unspoken assumptions about our lives and the world we inhabit. The fantastic can have more truth in it than we might suppose. Each work in the fantasy and science fiction genres must, like all creative works, be assessed on its merit. It's about intentions. Does the story glorify the dark side and promote the demonic, or like the Bible, does it invoke the divine and provide a sense of hope. The fantasy genre is being discussed in many of the periodicals Chrysalis Seed subscribes to. The Chrysalis Seed Book Club meets on the fourth Saturday of each

month at the Resource Centre. If you would like to adventure into contemporary issues of art and faith then please join us.



Mike Palmers



Drawing (detail), Kees Bruin, 2001.

## Website

A **Chrysalis Seed website** is now up and running on the [artists.co.nz](http://artists.co.nz) server, one of Canterbury's leading arts sites. It features a general section on the work and purpose of Chrysalis Seed before shifting into a series of 'departments:' "Groups & Publications;" "Exhibitions' (featuring illustrated sections on Seven Plus exhibitions

since the beginning - at the SPACE gallery, 1998); 'Upcoming Events & News;' and "Articles & Topics of Interest."

Full of pictures of people and the art encouraged by Chrysalis Seed, it is a good 'shop window' into the Trust and we hope you enjoy it. Thoughts and suggestions always appreciated.

[www.artists.co.nz/chseed](http://www.artists.co.nz/chseed)

## Opportunities

### 2003 International Screenplay Competition

Presented by the American Screenwriters Association and Writer's Digest, there are more than \$10,000 in prizes.

**Short Story Competition** - Now you can enter online. Bold, brilliant but brief fiction! Entries of 1,500 words or less compete for more than \$3,000 cash and your name in the June 2003 Writer's Digest.

### The 10th Annual *Writer's Digest* Self-Publishing Book Awards

*Writer's Digest* is searching for the best self-published book of the past few years.

### *The Sunday Star Times* Bruce Mason Award

Bruce Mason was one of New Zealand's most significant playwrights: he wrote over thirty plays, several of which have since become classics, and was also a busy actor and critic. He was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Literature by Victoria University in 1977, in 1980 was made a CBE, and in 1982 was given the New Zealand Literary Fund Award for Achievement. Bruce Mason died in 1983.

*The Sunday Star Times* Bruce Mason Playwriting Award recognises achievement by a playwright at the beginning of a career. The \$7,000 award is supported by Independent Newspapers Ltd and administered by Playmarket. Applications should be sent to Playmarket; deadlines each year are around September/October - *Playmarket News* carries full details. Applications should include name, full contact details, a CV outlining playwriting experience and letters of recommendation from one or two referees who have an up-to-date knowledge of your work. No script is needed. A panel of experienced theatre practitioners select the winner.

## News

**Mark Lander** recently returned from another working trip to Australia, this time in Perth. He was one of the guest workshop leaders at a summer school for textile artists in his role as the 'Elvis of papermaking.' Mark also forwarded his installation from the 2001 *up/down/up* exhibition to the school as part of an exhibition the school held at the time.

**Darryn George** has several exhibitions arranged for 2003, one of them a solo show at the Peter McLeavey gallery in Wellington at the end of January.

**Andrew Panoho** will be part of a contemporary Maori group show at the Sueter gallery, Nelson, this December following his Christchurch exhibition in October.

**Rob d'Auvergne** will shortly begin work on a 2003 commission for the Arts Centre.

**Jo O'Hara's** latest sculpture *Jacob's Bethel* has been installed at the Bible College campus as part of the *Portals* collection.

## Upcoming events

• **2 October - 30 November**, **Don Binney** is exhibiting classic Binney landscapes and new bird paintings at the The Diversion gallery, Grove Mill Winery in Marlborough. The 'vintage' Binney celebrates the launch of a new vintage of Grove Mill Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2002.

• **24 October**, Thursday, 7pm, poet and playwright **Kathleen Gallagher** is a guest poet at the monthly reading at the Madras Café, opposite Chch Polytechnic.

• **25 October - 21 November**, *Across the Board* at the Selwyn gallery (Darfield). Jim Instone, sculptor, will be exhibiting his metal sculptures as part of a show of three artists. Opening Fri 25, 7-9pm.

• **26 October**, **CS Book Club**, Chrysalis Seed Centre, 12.30 - 2pm.

• **1-2 November**, "A Man Went On A Search: The Spiritual Journey of James K. Baxter," theatre, panel discussion and papers. For details, see story (p. 4).

• **6 November**, Wednesday, Auckland poet Arthur Amon reads his latest work at "Mainstreet" cafe, 8.30pm.

• **7 November**, Thursday, 7pm. **Artists in Business** meeting, looking at *Art & Soul* (section 1). 30/b Park Tce, Christchurch.

• **24 November**, Thursday, 12.30 - 2pm. **CS Book Club**, Chrysalis Seed Centre.

• **7 December**, Saturday, 11.00 - 12.30pm. Next **Seven Plus** meeting, home of **Mark & Yvette Lander**, followed by Christmas party (see below).

• **7 December**, Saturday, 12.30pm. **Chrysalis Seed Trust Christmas party** at the home of Mark & Yvette Lander, 153 High St, Oxford. BBQ lunch (please bring a plate/meat).

• **Second Wednesday/month**, 7.00pm, **The Live Poets' Society** Linwood Community Arts Centre, Chch, contact Alan McLean 389-0908.

• **Third Tuesday/month**, 7.30pm, **Small White Teapot haiku group**, Mainstreet Café, Colombo St, Chch, contact Joanna Preston jopre@ihug.co.nz.

• **Last Friday/month**, 7.30pm, Mainstreet Café, Colombo St, Chch, contact Jeffrey Harpeng or Eric Mould eric.mould@xtra.co.nz.

### Prayer meetings

1. Every **Wednesday 10:00 a.m.** at the CS Resource Centre
2. Prayer walks every **Friday morning**. Meet at CS Centre 7:00 a.m.

### CS Support group

This group meets weekly on Wednesday nights in homes to support each other and Chrysalis Seed. It is a spiritual growth group which explores ways of fulfilling its vision to be creative, biblical and prayerful. Venue: either 2 Holmcroft Place or 30/b Park Tce. Details: Peter/Jessica Ph 3362848. All welcome.



Jessica Crothall had heard Mark Lander's fishing story before (*Seven Plus* dinner, 2 October, 2002).



Tim Brown and Peter Majendie (*Seven Plus* dinner, 2 October, 2002).