







# Crafts Council of New Zealand

There's something about a box. It's an object that we can all relate to in a quite instinctive primeval way, as if it has belonged in our lives for thousands of years. And so it has, of course, which is what makes a collection of boxes such as you see in this exhibition all the more interesting. Out they have come, example upon example of the talents and creative imaginations of our craftspeople in a myriad of forms, styles and interpretations. It may not have been an original theme, but it has proven the delight that craftspeople take in responding once again to the challenge of interpreting its form.

It is some years since the Crafts Council joined in presenting a national exhibition. It's an event that doesn't happen very often simply because it takes a lot of energy to co-ordinate. We must thank the committee who worked behind the scenes to bring the exhibition together; the sponsors, whose all important role has enabled us to bring an additional flourish to the event; and Carl Andrew, who has consented to lay his honour on the line and come out and make his selection.

I hope you will enjoy the exhibition. It brings you the best in New Zealand craft at this important time in its expressive and energetic development. It's a statement made in the unique language of our craftspeople, affirming that in these quarters at least, the nation is in good heart.

### Carin Wilson

President: Crafts Council of New Zealand

# Wellington City Art Gallery

the mark. This unyielding adherance to excellence can only raise the level of performance amongst artists and expectations amongst viewers.

On behalf of both Wellington City Art Gallery and the Crafts Council of New Zealand, I would like to acknowledge the sponsorship offered by Winstone Wellington, Bright Building Supplies, and N.Z. Forest Products. Thanks also to Wellington City Council. staff at both the Crafts Council and the gallery as well as the hardworking volunteers who unpacked, catalogued and repacked works. Special thanks too, to Carl Andrew, our selector, lan Athfield, our opening speaker, Roger Whyte, our auctioneer and Michael Langford, our photographer. There are other individuals who have exceeded normal expectations as a result of administrative changes at the Crafts Council. Among them, Philip Clarke, Jenny Shearer and Joan Bright were "taxed to the max".

No acknowledgement would be complete without thanks to Wellington Ratepayers who provide this gallery and the hard-working artists all over New Zealand who rose to the challenge presented in the prospectus.

I sincerely hope that this marks the beginning of a long and fruitful co-operative relationship between CCNZ and WCAG and that next time around we will be administratively prepared to "get the show on the road".

### Anne Philbin

Director: Wellington City Art Gallery

SHOW represents yet another event where Wellington City Art Gallery, uniquely suited to serve the local and national art interests, worked creatively with another institution. Collaboration with the Crafts Council of New Zealand on both concept and management of the BOX SHOW has given viewers an extraordinary little show exploring an idea as only artist-craftspeople can.

THE GREAT NEW ZEALAND BOX

Carl Andrew, the selector was sensitive to the exhibition concept and hard on the entries. Of 170 submissions, only 68 made

## SELECTOR'S COMMENTS

The selection of an open exhibition is always a challenging and exhausting experience. The first stage is easy—those works which are obviously of no merit and those which are conspicuously excellent can be put at opposite ends of the room. But the larger number which need careful individual consideration constitute the real task of the selector.

If the selector is an outsider, as I have been, then he or she has several advantages. Personal friendships and loyalties can play no part at all and the aftermath is dealt with by others. The outside selector must judge the individual works submitted without knowledge of their context within the maker's history of achievement. And so a major figure might be rejected because she or he didn't take the exhibition seriously enough and sent in a minor work at the last minute. A local selector, aware of that person's high standing would possibly have included that minor piece.

In selecting this crafts exhibition I have looked for quality concept and design and then for appropriate levels of execution. As with any work of art the concept of the work determines the criteria by which it must be judged. A hard-edge painting must be immaculately executed and will be judged in accordance with that requirement just as a silver box of classical geometric form must have a tight-fitting lid if it is to satisfy the requirements of its own concept. Entirely different criteria apply to the execution of an abstract-expressionist painting or a raku ceramic form.

Many of the works which were not included in this exhibition were well conceived but inadequately executed. Others were poorly conceived but wonderfully well made. In some crafts media, embroidery and jewellery in particular, the demands of the medium in meticulous work and time spent have often been disproportionate to the quality of the creative concept. The execution has become an end in itself.

The crafts media are now demanding, and rightly, that they be taken seriously by public museums and galleries, by critics and by collectors and that they be accepted as forms of expression as valid as painting and sculpture.

This acceptance is now occurring all over the world and is manifested in the collecting policies of art museums, the market values of the finest craft works and the international publications devoted to crafts media. But craftspeople must individually apply to themselves the highest critical standards if they are to achieve the status which they seek. If four pots out of five must be smashed then so be it. If a hundred hours of stitching are judged as wasted time then one must see that as part of the creative process.

The selected works which make up this

exhibition say much about the high levels of achievement of craftspeople in New Zealand. The work of many of these people is of the very highest quality and deserves to be much better known abroad. I hope that major exhibitions of contemporary New Zealand crafts tour internationally over the next few years.

I want to express my thanks to the Crafts Council of New Zealand and the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council for having made my visit to New Zealand possible. It has been, in every way, a most enjoyable and stimulating experience.

#### Carl Andrew

Museum of Applied Arts and Science, Sydney

### HIGHLY COMMENDED

BRIAN FLINTOFF 15. Ring Box A beautifully executed object of inventive concept using traditional forms.

NEIL HANNA 20. Nephite Jade Box A superbly executed box of extreme simplicity and refined form making inventive use of natural figuration of the stone.

GEORGE KOJIS 27. Quarter Acre Section A strong and evocative sculptural form with a witty functional element.

DUGALD PAGE 44. Cube Narcissus II A highly inventive and elegant sculpture based upon spatial illusionism which is fully exploited in this finely constructed work.

RICK RUDD 51. Raku No. 723 A fine sculptural piece with superbly modelled and glazed animal head.

#### CARIN WILSON 67. Cornered

A very finely made piece which is both sculptural and practical with good use of wood colours and textures.

### WINSTONE PRIZE (\$1000)

PHILLIP HEATH 24. Waka Huia

This is an object of extraordinary refinement which is based upon a traditional form but is interpreted in another material. The concept and the execution of the piece are perfectly in harmony and result in an object of serene and timeless beauty.



























