

KNOWN AND UNKNOWN TERRITORIES

KINETIC SCULPTURE

PETER ROCHE

TROPHIES & EMBLEMS



WELLINGTON CITY ART GALLERY
24 May - 30 June 1991

ARTSPACE
16 October - 10 November 1990

DUNEDIN PUBLIC ART GALLERY
25 July - 8 September 1991

Published by Peter Roche for the exhibition TROPHIES & EMBLEMS

Copyright: © Peter Roche 1990

All rights reserved.

Photography: unless otherwise stated all photography by Peter Roche

Cover: SENTRIES, 1990

Catalogue Design: Peter Roche/John Bailey

Essay: © Bridget Sutherland 1990

Editor: Christina Barton

Printer: PDQ PRINT

Peter Roche wishes to acknowledge the Queen Elizabeth 11 Arts Council of New Zealand and the Computer Gallery for their assistance during the preparation of TROPHIES & EMBLEMS.

Peter Roche also wishes to acknowledge the sole sponsor of the catalogue, New Zealand Steel.



Peter Roche is represented by: FOX STREET GALLERY, Auckland, New Zealand.

KNOWN AND UNKNOWN TERRITORIES

BRIDGET SUTHERLAND

"Of course you can't, they go faster than sound."

"Yes but - thats not it," words are bursting out between the pulses of shivering - "the other kind, those V-1s, you can hear them. Right? maybe you have a chance to get out of the way. But these things explode first, a-and then you hear them coming in. Except that, if you're dead, you don't hear them."

"Same in the infantry. You know that. You never hear the one that gets you."

"Uh, but - "

"Think of it as a very large bullet, Slothrop. With fins."

Thomas Pynchon Gravity's Rainbow¹

"My point is not that everything is bad, but that everything is dangerous."

Michel Foucault²

Dreams and nightmares of the body, the fantasies of childhood and the horrors of a military reality are the treacherous areas that Roche's present exhibition moves between. As the two **Sentries** stationed by the doorway prefigure, *Trophies and Emblems* raises the question as to what is guarded and disguised in representations of these worlds

and the nature of the line that divides them. Working with the psychological implications of space and of the body with its territories and boundaries, the sculptures invoke also a wider political arena: the manoeuvring and policing of this space by technology and modern military surveillance mechanisms. Roche's exhibition is a strangely mobile and disruptive map of these regions. Paying attention to the lesser known routes and side roads, the separate works function as keys or signposts to the many possibilities for interpretation of our psychological and political selves.



Hal Foster has pointed out that contemporary culture has a fascination for images of fascism. Related to this is the way that the different states - fascist, communist, capitalist - all invest in the *same* models of representation, the same types of monuments and emblems for their notion of Empire and its heroic past. Like the mixture of insignia in **Bladerunner** or **Captive**, these monuments are indicative of a loss or repression of history rather than of its preservation. Roche's concern for the horrific theatrics of war and its pompous ideological displays is made

clear by his title *Trophies and Emblems*. His sculptures conjure, for example, the World War 1 practice of collecting enemy insignia from fallen planes, or the numerous displays of medals and trophies in museums and memorial or Victory parades. Shaped like a star, **Warden** reads not only as the principal sign for the American Military, but as a badge for brave conduct that could be worn by soldiers either side of the battle line. The star itself calls into play the whole conglomeration of flags, regimental colours and military paraphernalia characteristic of all Empires and Nations whose aspirations have been the institutionalization of force.

DIVE BOMBER, 3-MOONS AND GLOBAL MILITARISM

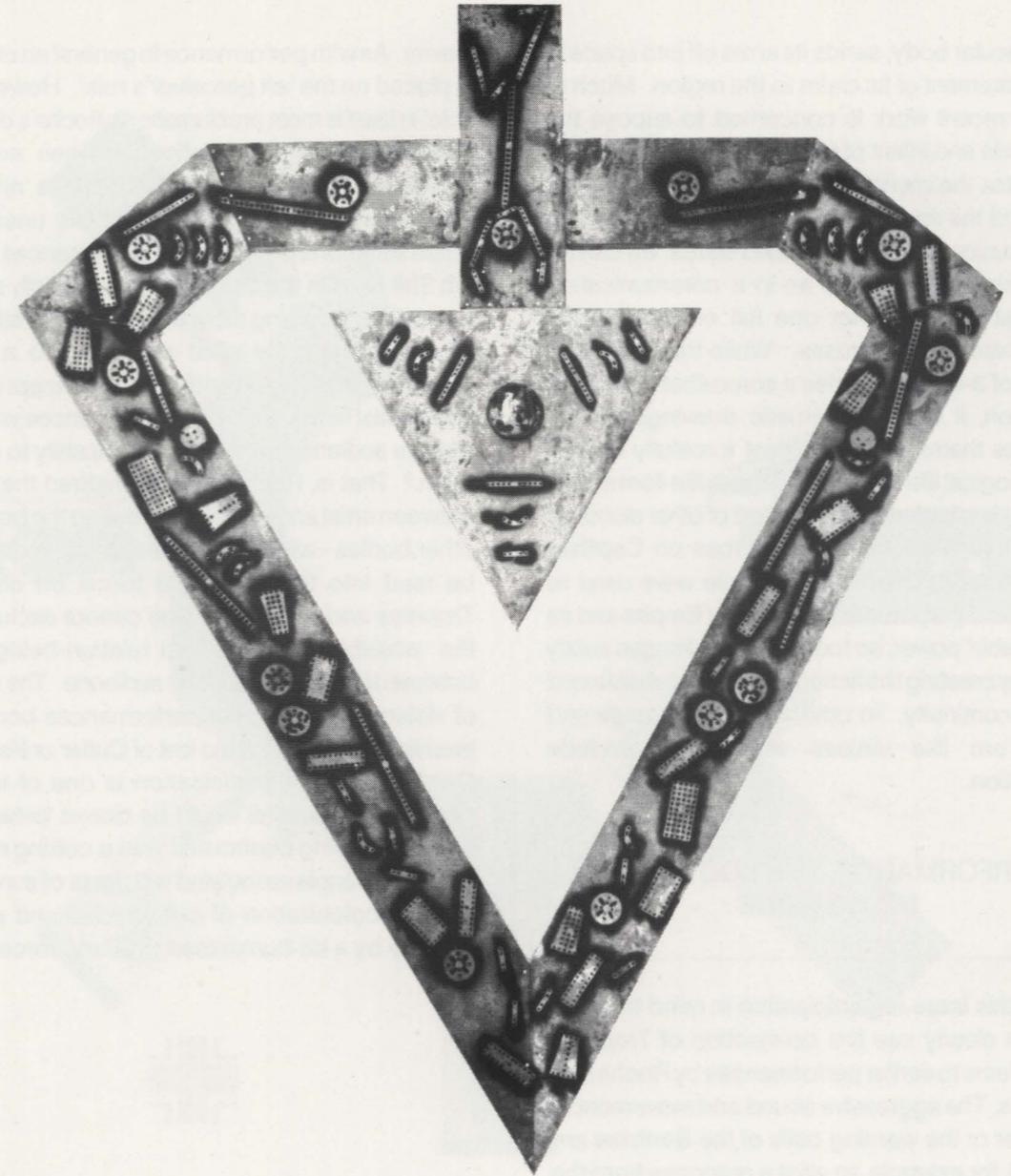
*If there is a war of images in the sense of TV channels, one against the other etc ... it is conjunct with the war of images across states of orbital space, across satellites, across new technologies... winning today, whether it is a market or a fight is merely not losing sight of yourself.*³

The workings of modern militarism (of which Reagan's 'Star Wars' was a fantastic extension) is primarily a perceptual phenomenon, one that aims to control the planet, the territory 'point by point, pixel by pixel'. **Dive Bomber** exemplifies this sense of an omnipresent gaze, the capacity for instantaneous perception of all points of a territory. The slowly rotating globe at the center of the work is a world that is exposed and hopelessly surrounded.

The 'arrowhead' of the outer structure points to its capacity for destruction that so obviously outweighs and already encompasses its target. A silhouetted shape painted onto the stem of the arrow is reminiscent of a human figure hanging upside down. That is, a human figure made redundant not only through its seeming inability to do anything against such a build up, but in technological terms too slow to compete with the 'absolute violence' of instant response in the machine. Limited by the temporal properties of this consciousness, man is ideally replaced, in business or in war, by the new technologies. But it is of course the threat of the human itself, the unpredictable capacity for violence and transgression that is also referenced by Roche's upturned figure. The body is an upturned site of resistance, an unknown region with abilities to intuit and comprehend over and above the computer. There remains a concern however, as with all the sculptures, to identify points in common between man and machine, an attempt to grasp how one power group can have almost global control by monopolizing our psychological and physical territories.



3-Moons also makes reference to the totalising aspirations of the military enterprise. An orbital superstructure holds together three spheres, symbolic emblems perhaps for a world, a satellite or a human mind. The shape itself, like a diagrammatic illustration

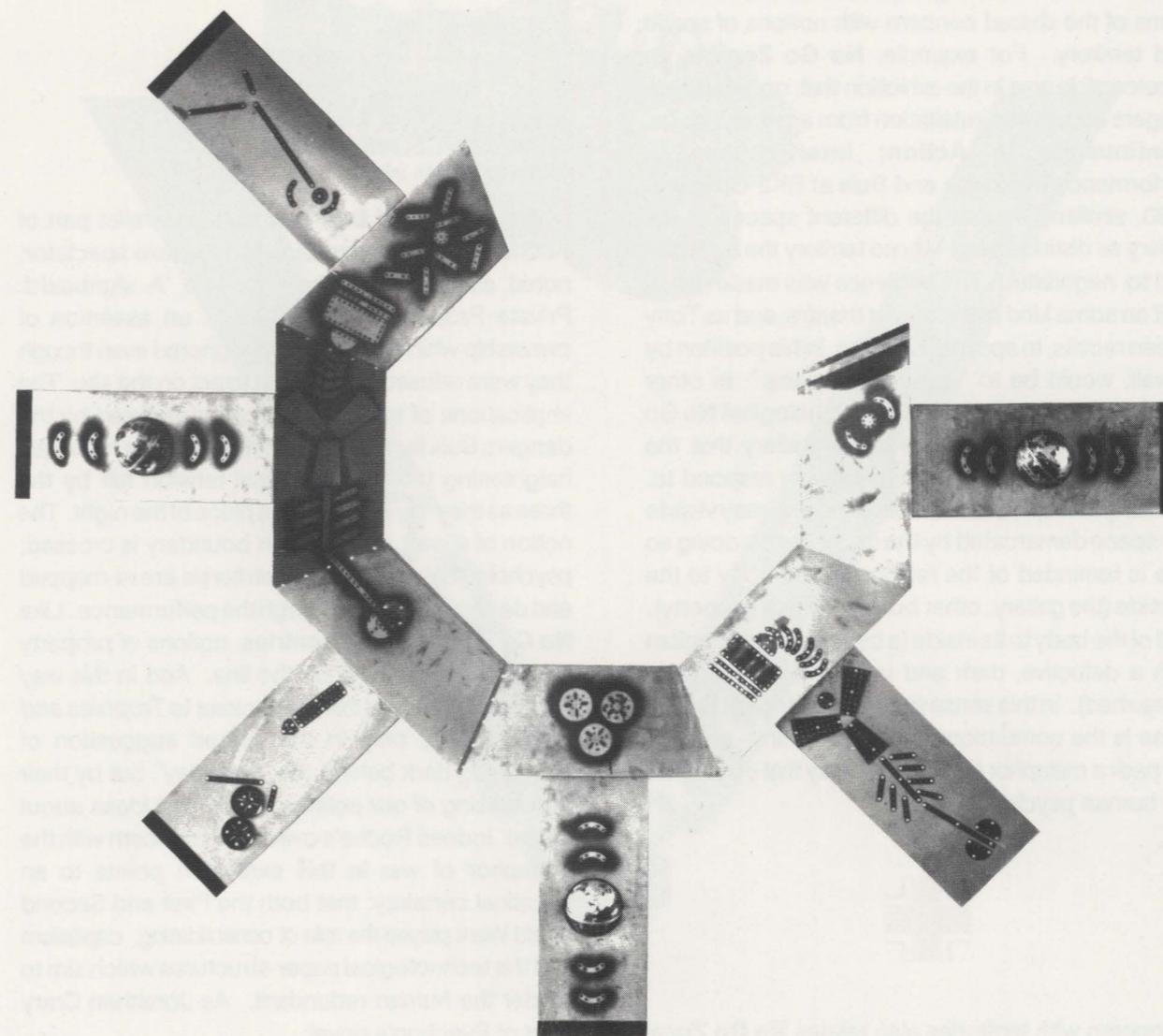


of a molecular body, sends its arms off into space in a bold statement of its claim to the region. Much of Roche's recent work is concerned to expose the global scale and intent of technological colonization.⁴ It illustrates the menace and dangers of this to the planet and the ensuing collapse and disintegration of communication. As Paul Virilio states, we can no longer think of ourselves as in a communication society at all but rather one full of images that contaminate us like viruses. While the molecular schema of **3-Moons** carries a somewhat biological suggestion, it is the schematic drawings on the sculptures themselves that most forcefully remind us of biological life-forms. And these life-forms take on sinister implications in the context of other stencilled markings such as the Maltese cross on **Captive**. Just as these emblems and insignia were used to enhance and perpetuate the image of Empire and its 'untouchable' power, so today's media images subtly control by creating the fiction of an untouchable and 'natural' continuity. In other words, language and images are like viruses when they exclude participation.

PERFORMANCE, THE BODY AND NO GO ZONE

It is with this issue of participation in mind that one can most clearly see the connection of *Trophies and Emblems* to earlier performances by Roche and Linda Buis. The aggressive sound and movement of **Harbinger** or the warning bells of the **Sentries** are designed, for example, to elicit a response from the

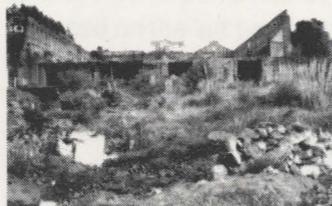
viewer. As with performance in general an emphasis is placed on the 'art perceiver's role'. However, this 'role' in itself is most problematic as Roche's disturbing interrogation of the relation between artist and audience demonstrated. His various and often violent assaults on his body, or the uneasy and tense situations provoked in performances such as **Oh Shit No, On the Contrary**, 1979, directly affronted the spectator, forcing them to question the art context of such actions by what amounted to a kind of psychological assault on their own concept of bodily and spatial limits. Roche's performances worked to alienate audiences, and most significantly to objectify them.⁵ That is, Roche de-personalized the relation between artist and audience, treating the body - and other bodies - as objects. This same tendency can be read into the humanoid forms on display in *Trophies and Emblems*. One cannot exclude here the possibility of a Sadean relation being set up between the art work and the audience. The memory of violence in the earlier performances becomes a promise as we stand at the feet of **Cutter** or **Harbinger**. Our response or participation is one of fear and paranoia. A parallel could be drawn between the anxiety of being confronted with a cutting machine and the paranoia associated with fears of surveillance and the colonization of our psychic and physical territory by a de-humanised (military) force.



Trophies and Emblems' relation to performance, then, has wide reaching implications, especially in terms of the shared concern with notions of space and territory. For example, **No Go Zone** is an imperceptible area in the exhibition that, once crossed, triggers a recorded retaliation from a pack of dogs. **Continuance in Action: Interferences**, a performance by Roche and Buis at RKS Gallery in 1980, similarly treated the different spaces of the gallery as distinct zones 'whose territory the audience had to negotiate'.⁶ The audience was made to feel as if on some kind of a stage or theatre, and as Tony Green recalls, to approach Roche, in his position by a wall, would be to 'violate' his space.⁷ In other words Roche and Buis set up psychological No Go Zones - fictional territories in the gallery that the audience could willingly or unwillingly respond to. Similarly in *Trophies and Emblems*, one may violate the space demarcated by the dogs, but on doing so one is reminded of the relation of the body to the outside (the gallery, other bodies, private property), and of the body to its inside (a biological mechanism with a defective, dark and unknown side already unleashed). In this sense the pack of dogs in **No Go Zone** is the correlation of our 'becoming- animal', the pack a metaphor for the multiplicity that constitutes the human psyche.⁸



A concern with territories also relates **No Go Zone** to earlier performance works such as **Night Piece**



NIGHTPIECE, 1981. (site)

where Roche and Buis negotiate a derelict part of Auckland city. Wystan Curnow, the sole spectator, noted as he approached the site 'A signboard: Private Property. Keep Off'.⁹ - an assertion of ownership which the performers ignored even though they were refused permission to act on the site. The implications of transgression are paralleled by the dangers Buis faced as she inched along a high wall, heightening the psychological tension felt by the three as they 'lay claim' to this piece of the night. The notion of a wall, an unknown boundary is crossed; psychological and physical territories are re-mapped and de-territorialized through the performance. Like **No Go Zone** and the **Sentries**, notions of property and the body are put on the line. And in this way **Night Piece** seems curiously close to *Trophies and Emblems* not only in the shared suggestion of something dark behind the 'everyday', but by their historicising of our political reality and ideas about space. Indeed Roche's over riding concern with the metaphor of war in this exhibition points to an historical certainty: that both the First and Second World Wars played the role of consolidating, capitalism and the technological super-structures which aim to render the human redundant. As Jonathan Crary says of Pynchon's novel:

Gravity's Rainbow tells us better than any



other text how World War II was above all an operation of modernization: how it was the necessary crucible for the obliteration of outdated territories, languages, affiliations, of any boundaries or forms that impeded the installation of cybernetics as the model for the remaking of the world as pure instrumentality.¹⁰

FLEXI-HEAD, CAPTIVE AND SIGNPOST

Taken as a group **Flexi-Head**, **Captive** and **Signpost** reflect interestingly on this process of modernization. The stencilled signs and insignia printed on their surfaces appear to be chaotically mixed, logical divisions of nationality or indeed the boundaries between life and death seem to have broken down. The upper shapes of the works are reminiscent of air-craft wings, they 'hang' above us like a child's mobile of a model air-craft in 'dog-fight' position. **Flexi-Head**, **Captive** and **Signpost** seem both futuristic and primitivistic. There is something uncanny about them. They stand like totems to some secret union, forbidden yet only temporarily suppressed. Freud's definition of the uncanny as the 'reassertion within adult life of more psychologically primitive states, namely those related to the "omnipresence of thoughts" and to a belief in animism'¹¹ could be applied to these sculptures that, on all accounts, are not alive - but also, disturbingly, not dead. The so-called sophistication of our technological age is hauntingly captured by this group. Fitting props for Kurtz's 'heart of darkness', their irrational and

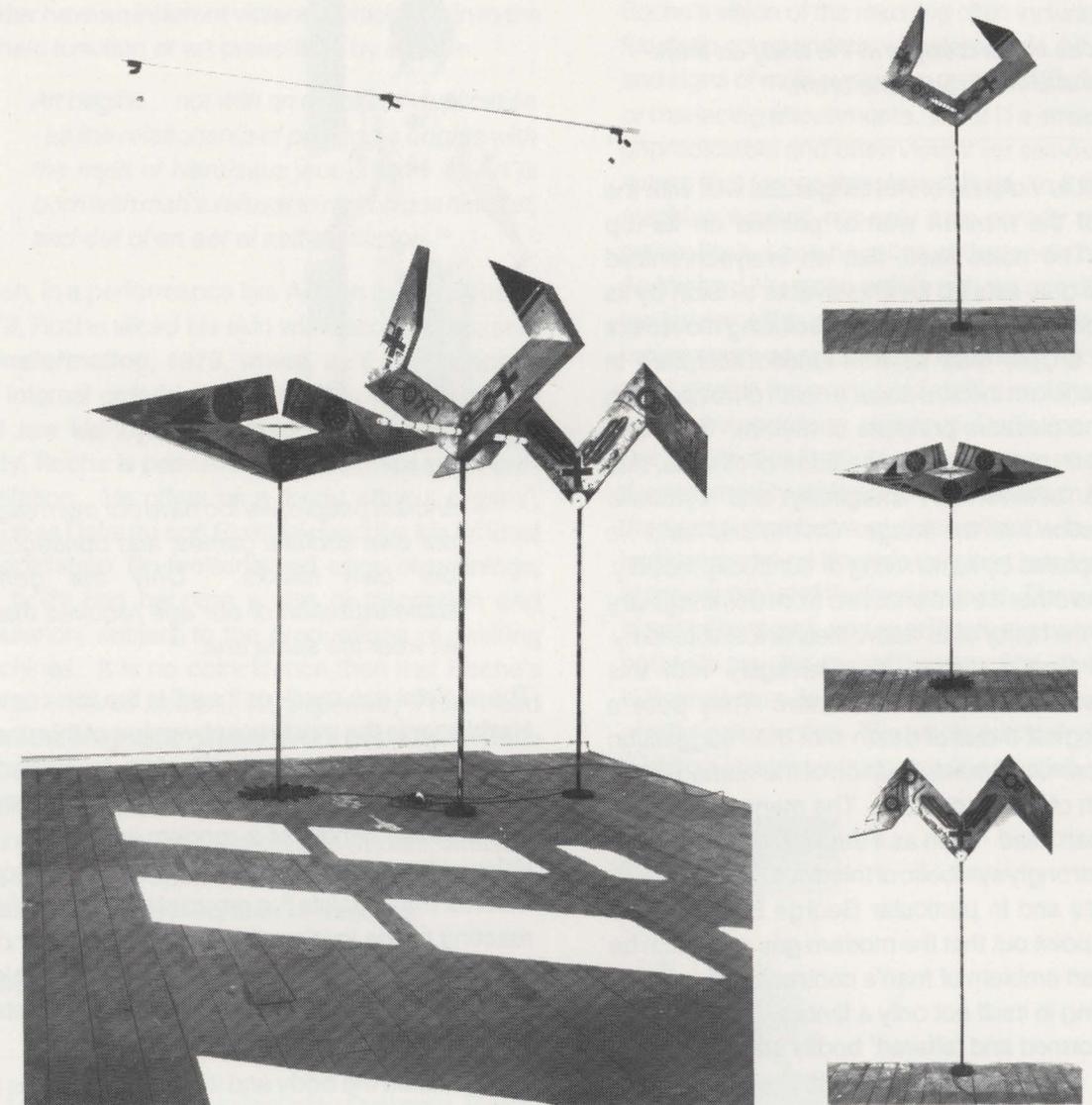
menacing appearance reflects on the construction and processes of civilization.



The neon-tube that pierces **Signpost** seems to suggest not only the vulnerability of intelligence (or in crude science-fiction terms, the 'conscience' that is inseparable from intelligence), but also raises the question of what constitutes an ability to comprehend our urban environment. We can no longer conceive of space, of a city existence without this 'other' light of electrons and photons.

*Its no longer sunlight, it's electronic light, it's the light of the speed of light i.e. that of the instantaneous interface between the here and now, in the television set or vision monitor.*¹²

If the infiltration of this new light into our consciousness constitutes a type of wounding or torture (as Roche has displayed it), we now carry it around in our heads like an appendage. The propeller shape of **Flexi-head** is just such an appendage, a strange contraption which may be joined up/in to the human head. In its reference to torture machines it finds an interesting analogy in the sinister distensions, spirals and wheels depicted in the paintings of Hieronymus Bosch.

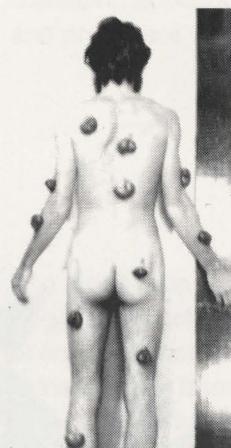


HARBINGER

*There is as much thought in the body as there is shock and violence in the brain.*¹³

The audible violence of **Harbinger** sits well with the image of the modern warrior painted on its top panel. The noise itself, like an unsynchronized machine gun, sets up an irresolvable tension by its unpredictable timing. It is in this oscillating movement (on/off, on/off) that, as with kinetic sculpture in general, one can theorize about a death drive operating below the pleasure principle of rhythm. That is, a movement, not unlike the condition of cinema, that pulls us between an imaginary and symbolic identification with the image. On the one hand we are encaptured by its mirroring of our bodily mobility, but on the other we are shocked from this imaginary world by the horror of its violent mechanical autonomy. Roche's kinetic pieces play savagely with this sensation of shock and separation. They pose a psychological threat of death with their suggestion of an impending transformation of the human to the condition of the automaton. The menacing outline of a human head - seen as if through a pilot's flying-mask is strongly symbolic of this drive. The dissident surrealists and in particular George Bataille, were quick to point out that the modern gas mask can be seen as an emblem of man's contradictory nature - suggesting in itself not only a fantasy for death, but for a deformed and 'altered' bodily state.

... if religion, the cult of the dead, and the festivals of Dionysos turned the mask into a sacred ritual ornament among the various



TRANSFORMATION, 1979.
PHOTO: LINDA BUIS

*ancient people, we too have our own religion, our own societal games, and consequently our own masks. Only the general standardization of our age requires that we all wear the same one.*¹⁴

The skeletal gas-mask or 'head' in the top center of **Harbinger** is the most recent version of this dream. The lower illustration on **Warden** is similarly a schematized version of the breathing apparatus and steering handle of a modern jet fighter. This vision of the mechanized head of man was a frequent motif for the Dadaists¹⁵, a group of artists specifically reacting to the irrationality and unmitigated horror of World War I. Likewise, *Trophies and Emblems* marks the limits or conditions that such a 'history' necessitates.

Bataille takes the body and its representations as a site of resistance. Transgression and excess are valued over order and social progress. Strange

hybrids of man and machine like **Harbinger** or **Cutter** have an inherent violence which is akin to the archaic function of art prescribed by Bataille:

*Art begins... not with an act of self-duplication - as the relationship of painting's origins with the myth of Narcissus would have it. Art is born with man's refusal to reproduce himself, and out of an act of self-mutilation.*¹⁶

When, in a performance like **Action (set + subset)** 1979, Roche sliced his skin with razor-blades, or in **Transformation**, 1979, where, as if in defiance of the internal ordering of the organs themselves, he had raw kidneys sewn onto various parts of his body, Roche is performing just such an act of self-mutilation. He offers us a 'body without organs', which as Deleuze and Guattari describe it is its ideal schizoid state. De-territorialized, a flow of meanings, the body has become a site of inscription and simulation, subject to the productions of desiring machines. It is no coincidence then that Roche's group of three sculptures, especially **Flexi-head** recall the enigmatic depiction of a desiring machine in Duchamp's **The Bride Stripped Bare By Her Bachelors, Even**. The desiring machines invoke connections between part-objects (mouth, intestine, etc) and as such operate at the level of a fantasy - the effect of a relentless referral of meaning.

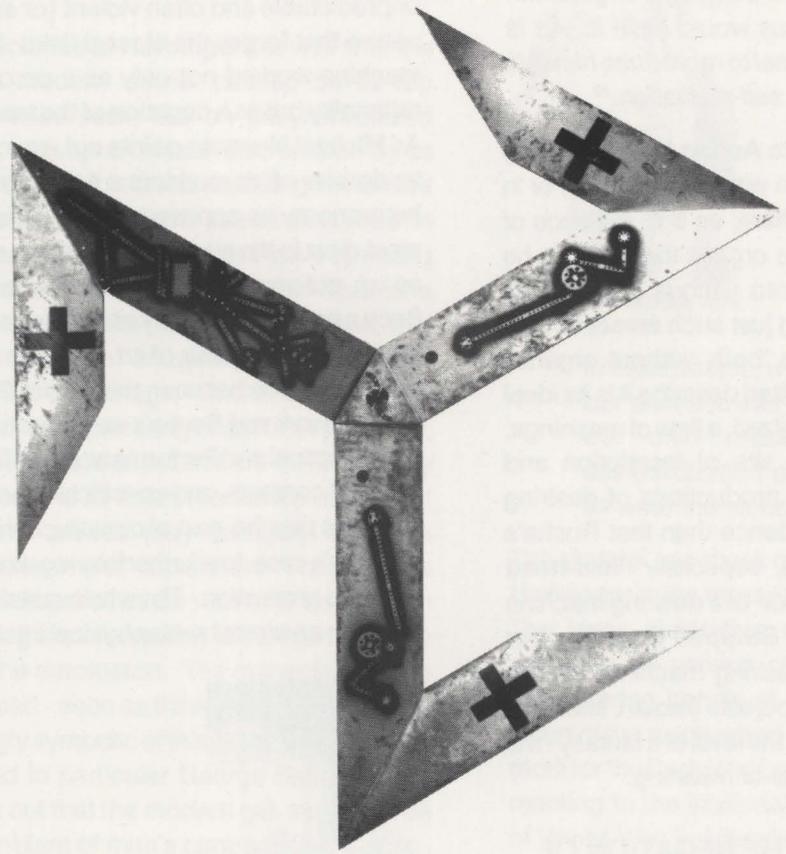
MOVING ART AND THE NEGATION OF FORM

Roche's work is clearly indebted to Duchamp, Picabia and Tinguely in its incorporation of movement and

ironic, mechanistic (and found) features. Like theirs, Roche's vision of the machine often includes strange futuristic components, wheels, spirals, bits of metal and signs of malfunctioning motors with dangerous or menacing attachments. But it is a stress on their unpredictable and often violent (or self-destructing) nature that forges the closest links. In this way the machine worked not only as a parody of western rationality but as a negation of the tenets of art itself. As Michael Newman points out, we can distinguish tendencies within modernism which are more towards heteronomy as opposed to autonomy - a tendency most clear in the avant-garde critique of the aesthetic as an autonomous realm, in Dada for example. Such a practice implicitly encompasses a critique of the commodity status of art - which in turn highlights the connection between this earlier Dada, or Dada-inspired work and Roche's very concrete foundations in conceptual and Performance art. The exploration of social contexts, and specifically the context of the body - its psycho-sexual construction - leads again, in Roche's case, to a further interrogation and negation of artistic production. The whole question of negation takes on an almost metaphysical intensity: from the



CLOSED CIRCUIT, 1980.
PHOTO RONALD BROWNSON



negating and cancelling of his own body through exposure to burning light in **Suspension Piece**, 1979, to his lacerating the skin with blades in **Action (set + subset)**, 1979, to the loss and dispersal of the self through video feed-back installations such as **Closed Circuit**, 1980. Similarly the sculptures presented here work as a type of displacement and negation of the body both in their outward appearance and in the shadowy outlines of absent body parts and organs painted on their surfaces.

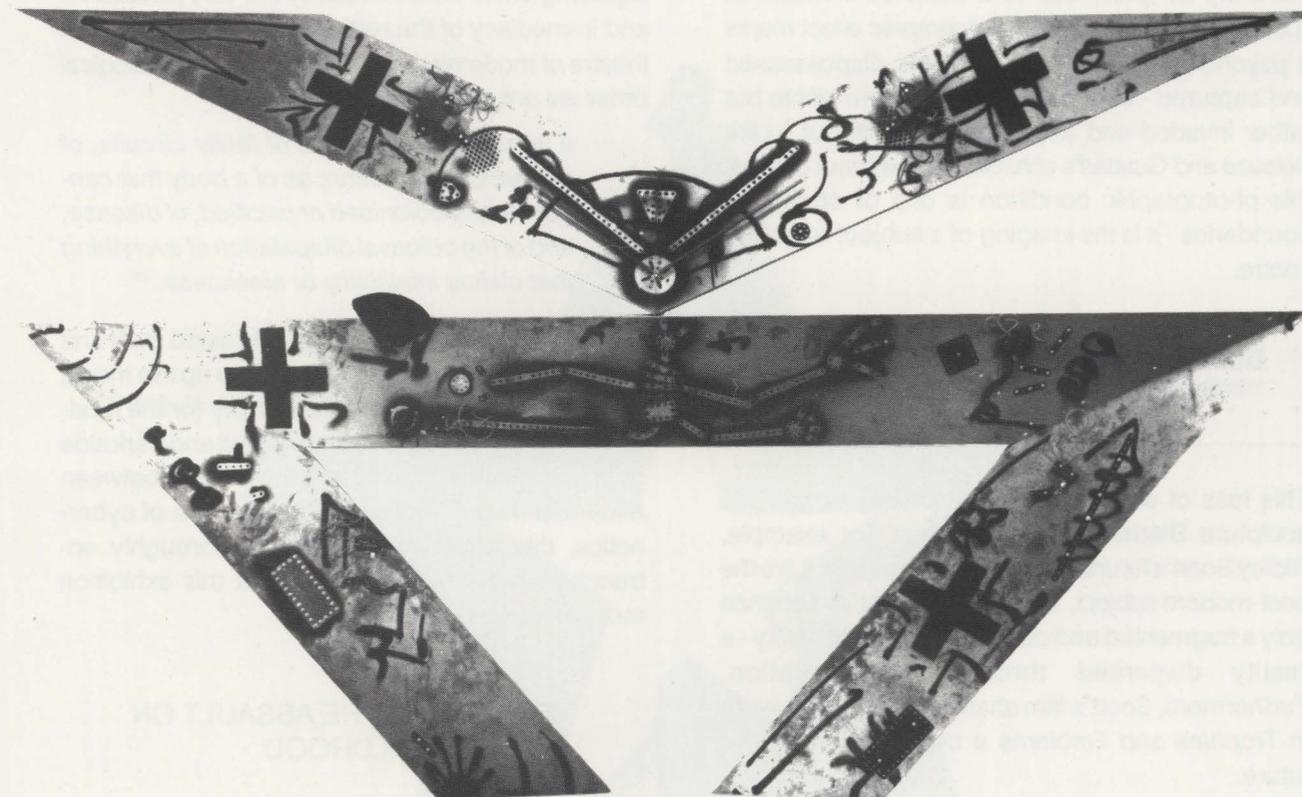


Another precedent, especially in the light of his proximity and Roche's interest in kinetic sculpture is Len Lye. Although Lye's modernist taste for off-beat knowledges may be at odds with Roche's project, there are also certain, perhaps unconscious, affinities. Not unlike Artaud, Lye tells of 'distancing' his experience of the body and movement in particular, as one means to understand it. In his essay 'The Art that Moves'¹⁷, he writes of wanting to put the feeling for a figure of motion outside of himself, or of getting the feeling for motion down to such things as how his eyeballs moved in their sockets as he scanned lines of print. Although this acute introspective awareness of bodily movement, the urge to separate and objectify the body from a sensation of 'self', has disturbing implications, Lye's translation of movement in general is far less violent and fragmented than Roche's. However, there does seem to exist a shared concern for conflating bodily

movement, especially on a biological level, with a more global and super-structural dynamism (but perhaps Lye translates the universe in terms of nature whereas Roche's universe is culture). It is with this shared interest in the biological, in gene patterns and their irregularities that certain visible affinities could be drawn, for example, between the stencilled markings on Roche's sculptures and the animated forms in some of Lye's films. Like unconscious bodily extensions - or 'doodles' as Lye would call them - the markings suggest genes or body parts in a constant process of re-arrangement, breaking down, proliferating into unpredictable and often menacing configurations. (The 'doodle bug' was the name given to the V-1 robot bombs.)

A BODY WITHOUT ORGANS

The impression that these gene patterns present on Roche's sculpture is that of X-ray photography, a type of negative print that portrays a strange disembodied view of an unknowable anatomy. *Trophies and Emblems'* military associations turn the little skeletal figure on the lower arm of **Blade Runner**, for example, into the figure of death - a memento mori. In these terms the markings with their solarized X-ray appearance, speak of the after affects of an atomic explosion - they are faint shadows of radiated bodies. But there is another reading of these solarized markings on metal that is related to their impression of being photographic. As Rosalind Krauss notes, the process of solarization (a burning of the image into the metal) presupposes the



disintegration rather than the creation of form. These stencilled markings read as a type of optical corrosion, the body as given way to a depicted invasion of space. In other words this photographic effect marks a psychological state - of subjects dispossessed and captured - seized not so much from within but rather invaded and assaulted from without. Like Deleuze and Guattari's schizoid body without organs, this photographic condition is one of crumbling boundaries - it is the imaging of a subject without a centre.

BLADERUNNER AND THE RUNNING DOWN OF THE SYSTEM

This loss of self is textually inscribed across the sculpture **Bladerunner**. It quotes, for example, Ridley Scott's futuristic film of the same title. Like the post-modern subject, Scott's 'replicants' experience only a fragmented and disconnected temporality - a reality dispersed through representation. Furthermore, Scott's film shares with Roche's work in *Trophies and Emblems* a certain vision of the future.



The film portrays the city, not as an idealised aesthetic technological order, but one which creates an aesthetic of decay, exposing the dark side of

technology and its processes of disintegration and cultural dispersal. Rather than a flawless and 'self-regulating' world we are struck by the 'very persistence and immediacy of the rotting edifices of a previous theatre of modernisation'.¹⁸ Instead of technological order we are confronted by:

*a sense of breakdown, of faulty circuits, of systemic malfunction; as of a body that cannot be fully colonised or pacified, of disease, and of the colossal dilapidation of everything that claims infallibility or sleekness.*¹⁹

Certainly Roche's creations of half-rusted steel and erratic motorized componentry conjure up this mood, a mise-en-scene of the modernist city (or the modernist battle ground). The ambiguous and dark side of our mechanised reality, the breakdown between mind and matter implicit in the evolution of cybernetics, this whole new world so thoroughly entrenched in the old is in part what this exhibition monumentalizes.

VOLLEY AND THE ASSAULT ON CHILDHOOD

The formation of a military consciousness - 'old' material with new and ever faster methods for its implantation is referenced by an unnerving attention to childhood. At the same time Roche's interest in childhood works to problematize our fears about the loss of origins and meanings. A sense of unease and insecurity is suggested for example by the 'innocence' of meccano outlines (meccano being a



simulation for children of the mechanical constructions of industrial modernism) or the 'toy' wheels in **Wreath** (being used as a funeral emblem). A work like **Volley** whose title suggests the discharge of firearms, the massive use of heavy artillery, portrays simultaneously the simplicity of clouds rolling through the sky. It points to the way in which language carries hidden meanings, and the way that everyday objects and phenomena can be made to correspond to a violence inherent in society itself. From the world of innocence one is thrown into experience and the meanings of a symbolic order. The exhibition as a whole, with its perpetual play between child and adult meanings, reads as a form of Blakean nightmare. Constantly the child-like features of this work are qualified by their context. On the one hand these sculptures could read as enormous toys for a child's wild imagination yet on the other, in line for example with the totemic appearance of a work like **Cutter**, they appear born of the terrors of repression and the imposition of patriarchal meanings onto human desire.

WREATH AND THE TIMING OF DEATH

The 'meaning' of **Wreath**, with its recollection of those large wreaths of roses made for ANZAC day, speaks of a special function for these emblems: to commemorate death. Its circular format gives it a clock-like appearance, which again with its reference to the realm of time, serves as an analogy for death. **Wreath** has been designed to intensify these readings: one wheel sets the rest of the car wheels in motion (which in turn rotate on their separate centers, each

activating the next). However this movement is imperceptible from certain angles, or appears as if only one or two wheels are moving, where in fact the whole thing never stops. The strangeness of this work is that it elicits simultaneously a sense of its own inherent fragility as well as strength. By playing with our perceptions it creates a feeling for the unexpected and uncanny elements of movement - and by extension, the unknown or imperceptible relation of time to history. As Henri Bergson has stated, time is an everchanging process of duration and movement, the flow of past into present can never be 'truly discerned by either the human consciousness or memory'.²⁰ Man's mechanization of time is simply a monument to rationalize death, it does not explain it. Now, too, in the contemporary workplace 'time' has become the time of objects, of their production - it belongs to a capitalist order (that thrives on weapon manufacturing).

The car wheel in **Wreath** is particularly apt, then, when seen in the light of this consolidation and expansion of capitalist and militaristic territory. In the years immediately preceding the war it was the car together with television which sustained the dominant machinery of capitalist representation. The wind shield of the car, as with the television screen, by framing visual experience as if through a window, were able to provide a coherence and unity for a world, where in fact there was only the madness and disjunct realities of the market place. At its inception, the car was conceived only as a vehicle for leisure and recreation - but eventually it became synonymous with social participation.²¹ In this sense its corollary can be found in the introduction of video



and computer games. Certainly notions of the game and the fun-fair are being parodied by Roche in this exhibition. The two **Sentries** at the entrance are reminiscent not only of video games themselves but of figures at the entrance to side shows, ghost trains and halls of mirrors. **Volley** and **Wreath** both play off the magnetic appeal of moving objects - perhaps the moving targets of the fun-fair. **Volley** takes on almost cartoon characteristics, while **Warden** recalls Hollywood and Disneyland with their myths of the war hero or the sheriff (the fighter on the frontier). Recoded critically, these myths may be seen as testimony to the logic and workings of colonialism. Recent history's re-playing of World War II as an 'adventure' is one dangerous example of this.

TARGET

Target, a sculpture of dispersal as opposed to centres, brings us again to the issue of surveillance and the coercive workings of modern militarism. Its numerous antennae elicit a sense of something attempting to probe even our darkest secrets. Like the dissecting and objectifying impulse of Foucault's scientific gaze, these ambiguously blind distensions are listening perhaps for our every breath. Although a paranoid reading, it is partly this response of paranoia itself that the sculptures are externalizing - in a sense we are confronted with machines that picture for us our own viewing habits. Yet as with all the works, this violent intent is matched with the inefficiency, unpredictability and irrationalism of the machine. The probes scrape past each other in their

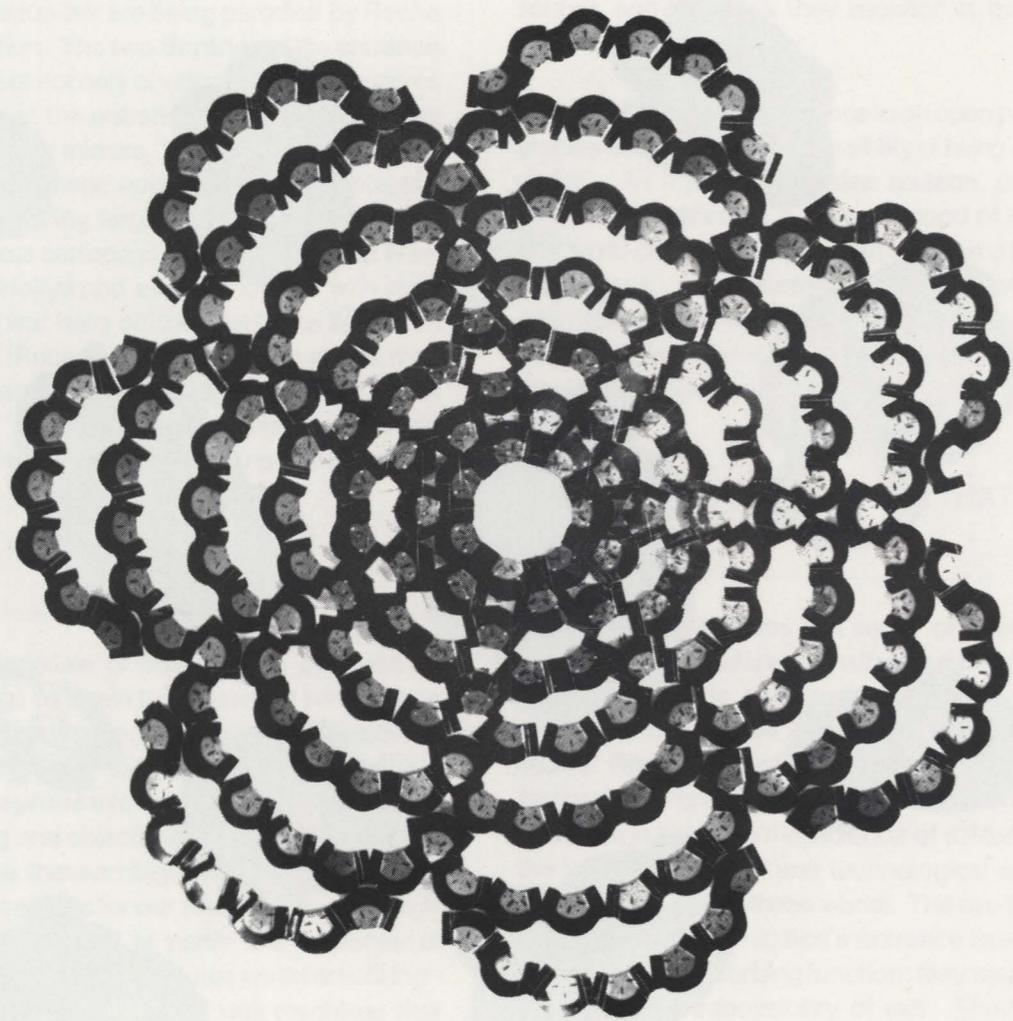
aimless journey, making a garbled translation of the sounds and thoughts they monitor in the space around them.

Target's deliberate resemblance to an open parachute enables us to envisage the possibility of being captured or 'hit'. As if playing Russian roulette, desire for escape is qualified by a general mood of menace. This world of automata bears with it dark and troubling undertones. Like **Gunner**, itself so obviously a contorted human figure with a rotating 'head' for a target, Roche is involving the spectator in a form of psychological terrorism.

'YOU NEVER HEAR THE ONE THAT GETS YOU.'

Trophies and Emblems is a series of monumental frames from some dark and half remembered movie. Its images merge and climax, fragment and run loose in a plot that inescapably has us as its principal actors. Roche's use of sound reflects ambiguously on the meanings in play here. The apparently silent connection between the violence of militarism and the logic of industrial and technological society is audibly exposed by these works. The two **Sentries** stationed at the exhibition's entrance have in this sense a rather disturbing function: they mark not an entry, but the impossibility of exit. Their smiling faces disguise a terrible truth - one which alerts us not only to the dangers, but to the prohibitions of boundaries in general and of the subtle policing of transgressive thought. ■



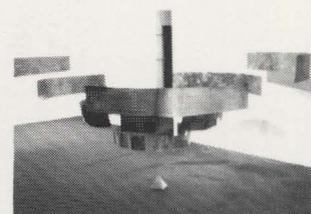


NOTES

1. Thomas Pynchon, *Gravity's Rainbow*, Picador, 1975, p.48
2. Michel Foucault, From a last interview quoted in Jay 'The Empire of the Gaze', ICA Documents *Postmodernism*, ed. L. Appignanesi, Institute of Contemporary Art, London 1986, p.48
3. Paul Virilio, 'The Work of Art in the Electronic Age', *Block* 14, 1988, p.7
4. For example, **Observation**, 1985, refers to surveillance and the power of the look to become an internalized and self-regulating mechanism. Modes of observation, control and communication are dealt with in **Radio Cone**, 1986, with its large circular panels parodying the immensity of our communication networks. It suggests that such radios represent only a one-way system, that there is no mechanism for a subject's reply or participation. Similarly, **Interview**, 1985, exposes the difficulties of competing with technology and, most significantly, the example of **Solar Sphere**, 1989, which marks the failure of global mechanization and the ensuing breakdown of the environment.
5. Christina Barton, 'Post Object Art in New Zealand - 1969 to 1979 Experiments in Art and Life', University of Auckland, MA Thesis, 1987, p.175

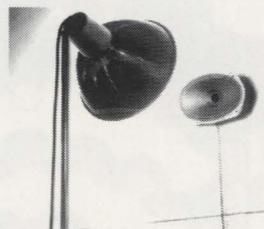


SOLARSPHERE, 1989.
PHOTO: AUCKLAND CITY ART GALLERY



RADIO CONE, 1986.

6. Christina Barton, *ibid* p.89
7. Tony Green, *Parallax*, vol.1, no.2, p.168
8. As Paul Judge has pointed out to me **No Go Zone** (as with the exhibition as a whole) has an interesting contemporary parallel in the war zone of the



INTERVIEW, 1985.

Middle East - especially considering the cyclic return of World War I imagery in news coverage from this region, with the imminent use of gas and, subsequently, the frightening concept of a zone without images.

9. Wystan Curnow, 'A Gathering Concerning Three Performances', *Parallax*, vol.1, no.2, 1983, p.182
10. Jonathan Crary, 'Eclipse of the Spectacle', in *Art After Modernism - Rethinking Representation* ed. Brian Wallis, New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, 1984, p.292
11. Freud quoted in R. Krauss, 'Corpus Delicti', *October*, 33, 1985, p.59
12. Paul Virilio, *ibid*, p.4
13. Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2, The Time-Image*, Athlans Press, London, 1985, p.205
14. Limbour quoted in R. Krauss 'No More Play' from *The Originality of the Avant-garde and Other Modernist Myths*, MIT Press, p.68
15. Especially amongst the Berlin dadaists, for example, the *Mechanical Head* of Raoul Hausmann, 1921, or George Grosz's, *Daum marries her pendantic automaton*, 1920
16. George Bataille quoted in Krauss, *ibid* p.82
17. Len Lye, *Figures of Motion; Selected Writings*, ed. Wystan Curnow and Roger Horrocks, Auckland University Press, Auckland, 1984, p.82
18. Jonathan Crary, *ibid* p.290
19. Jonathan Crary, *ibid*
20. Henri Bergson, *Time and Free Will: An essay on the immediate data of unconsciousness*, Allen and Unwin, London, 1910
21. Jonathan Crary, *ibid* p.290

TROPHIES & EMBLEMS

All works are of partially rusted and painted steel incorporating electromechanical components.

In all dimensions, unless otherwise stated, height precedes width and width precedes depth.

GUNNER, 1989	2440 x 2440 x 110 mm
DIVE-BOMBER, 1989	2740 x 2230 x 150 mm
3-MOONS, 1989	2440 x 2440 x 150 mm
WARDEN, 1989	2290 x 2290 x 110 mm
BLADERUNNER, 1989	2440 x 2440 x 110 mm
HARBINGER, 1990	1520 x 2440 x 110 mm
FLEXI-HEAD, CAPTIVE, SIGNPOST, 1990	Freestanding works ranging in height from 2440 to 3350 mm
MALE & FEMALE SENTRIES, 1990	Each 1970 x 1680 x 240 mm
CUTTER, 1990	3750 x 2590 x 285 mm
VOLLEY, 1990	Dimensions variable
TARGET, 1990	Dia. 2110 x 300 mm depth
WREATH, 1990	Dia. 2070 x 180 mm depth
NO GO ZONE, 1990	Dimensions variable

PETER ROCHE

Born 1957, Auckland New Zealand.
1979 Bachelor of Fine Arts, Elam School of Fine Arts, Auckland University

PERFORMANCES

1979-1984 25 Performances in collaboration with Linda Buis

INSTALLATIONS

1984 September *Installation* Portsmouth Polytech, Portsmouth, England
November *Installation* Southampton Row, London, England
1985 May *Installation* Artworks, Federal Street, Auckland, New Zealand
1988 March-July *Dome Installation No. 10* Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui, New Zealand
1989 January-February *Kinetic Installation* Star Art, Auckland, New Zealand
August *Solarsphere* Auckland City Art Gallery, Auckland New Zealand

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

1983 *Six Performances* RKS Art, Auckland,
1985 *Conversations and Interviews* RKS Art, Auckland
1986 *Drawing and Sculpture* RKS Art, Auckland
1987 *Sculpture and Works on Paper* George Fraser Gallery, Auckland
1988 *Sculpture and Works on Paper* Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth
3 Kinetic Drawings 33-1/3 Gallery, Wellington
Six Kinetic Drawings RKS Art, Auckland
1989 *Up in Arms* Gallery 5, Auckland
Transmutations Centre for Contemporary Art, Hamilton
Transmutations 33-1/3 Gallery, Wellington

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

1979 *Artists' Books Show* National Art Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand

- 1980 *Artists' Books Show* Christchurch Art School, Christchurch, New Zealand
- 1981 *Artists' Books Show* Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Christchurch, New Zealand
Australian Sculpture Triennial (Performance) La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia
ANZART (Performance) Christchurch Arts Centre, Christchurch, New Zealand
- 1982 *Paris Biennale*, New Zealand Support Documentation Paris, France
- 1983 *ANZART* (Performance) Art Gallery of Tasmania, Hobart, Australia
- 1985 *ANZART* (Installation) Auckland, New Zealand
Artists' Books Show Auckland City Art Gallery, Auckland, New Zealand
- 1986 *Auckland/Halifax Exchange* Exhibition (Sculpture) Eye Level Gallery, Nova Scotia, Canada
- 1987 *Auckland/Halifax Exchange* (Sculpture) Artspace, Auckland, New Zealand
Exhibition 1. *Group* (Sculpture and drawing) 33-1/3 Gallery, Wellington, New Zealand
The Opening (Kinetic drawing) Gallery Five, City Road, Auckland 1-15 November
- 1988 *Drawing Analogies* (2 Kinetic drawings) Wellington City Art Gallery, Wellington,
- 1989 *Art Too* National Library of New Zealand, Wellington
- 1990 *Paper Works* Fox Street Gallery, Auckland
- 1990 *In the Forest of Dream* an exhibition organised and toured by the Moet & Chandon New Zealand Art Foundation

PUBLICATIONS

- Museum Piece* published 1980. Photo-litho containing text and photo images. Dimensions: 42x33cm
- Street Piece* published 1980. Photo-litho containing text and photo images. Dimensions: 42x33cm.
- Memorial Piece* published 1980. Photo-litho containing text, photo images, drawing
- Liaison* published 1980. Photo-litho containing photo

images from the performance bound in aluminium foil, embossed recto and verso.
Dimensions: 17x12cm

Six Performances published in 1983 in association with QEII Arts Council of New Zealand. Photo-litho containing text and photo images 28 pages plus cover. Dimensions: 22.5x14.25cm

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Action*, December-January, 1979-1980
- Art New Zealand*, Issue No.13, 1979
- Art Network*, Issue No.2, Spring, 1980
- Australian Sculpture Triennial Catalogue*, 1981
- Art Forum*, 1982
- Art New Zealand*, Issue No.24, 1982
- New Zealand Listener*, February 26, 1983
- Parallax*, Vol 1, No2, Summer, 1983
- Art New Zealand*, Issue No.28, 1983
- Auckland Star*, August 9, 1983
- Splash*, Issue No.2, 1984
- New Zealand Herald*, October 21, 1985
- Art New Zealand*, Issue No's 36, 37, 1985
- Art New Zealand*, Issue No.42, 1987
- Auckland/Halifax Exchange*, Catalogue, 1986
- New Zealand Herald*, July 9, 1987
- Daily News*, October 8, 1987
- Evening Post Review*, February 4, 1988
- National Business Review*, February 5, 1988
- Drawing Analogies*, Catalogue, 1988
- New Zealand Herald*, March 23, 1989
- National Business Review*, March 31, 1989
- National Business Review*, October 27, 1989
- Evening Post*, November 8, 1989
- Art New Zealand* Issue No's 50, 53, 56, 1989/90

