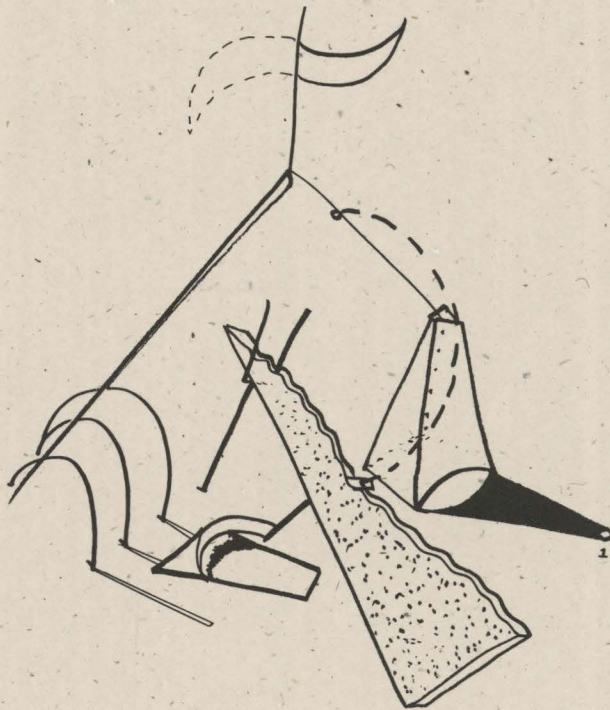


Between ROCKS and GLASS HOUSES



ANDREW DRUMMOND / NOEL LANE
Artist *Architect*

***Between* ROCKS and GLASS HOUSES**

a project by

ANDREW DRUMMOND / NOEL LANE
Artist *Architect*

WELLINGTON CITY ART GALLERY
WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL

Between Rocks and Glass Houses

Gregory Burke

We see before us a configuration of vertical wooden forms. This ordered *placement* of the outer sections of tree trunks encourages us to think of a forest. But this is an allusion, a *displacement*, a re-presentation. For these forms are off-cuts, a residue of the process by which building timbers are produced. As such they form an appropriate gateway to this installation by sculptor Andrew Drummond and architect Noel Lane.

Between Rocks and Glass Houses is the first in an occasional series of collaborative projects between artists and architects at the Wellington City Art Gallery. It is also a continuation of a current focus of the exhibition programme which explores actual and potential interaction between architecture and the visual arts.

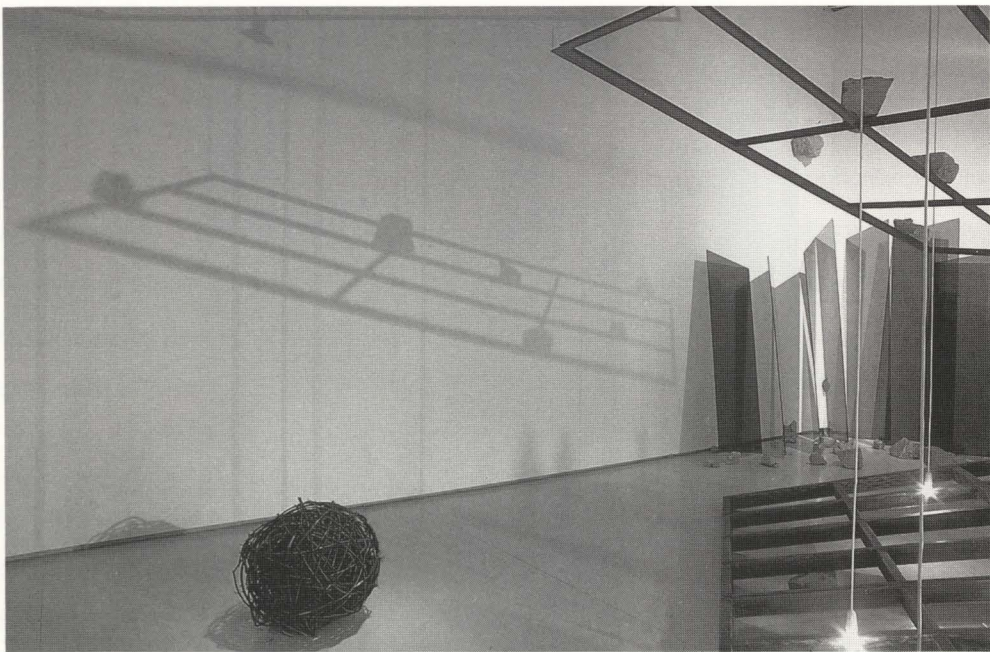
In initiating this series, the Gallery seeks to explore the connections and test the boundaries between art

and architecture and to offer selected mid-career artists and architects the opportunity to build on the intersections between the more philosophical aspects of their work. Importantly the terms of reference encourage a critical approach to the accepted hierarchies between art and architecture.

For Drummond and Lane this has resulted in a meditation on the spaces between polarities; between natural and artificial orders. Fundamental to their installation are selected principal structures and materials of building construction related to one another in unexpected ways. In the centre of the space a skeletal wooden building frame is cantilevered off the floor. Suspended at an oblique angle above is a steel gridded window frame that has been painted blue. The relationship between these two frames activates a set of tensions around which the installation pivots. These include tensions between



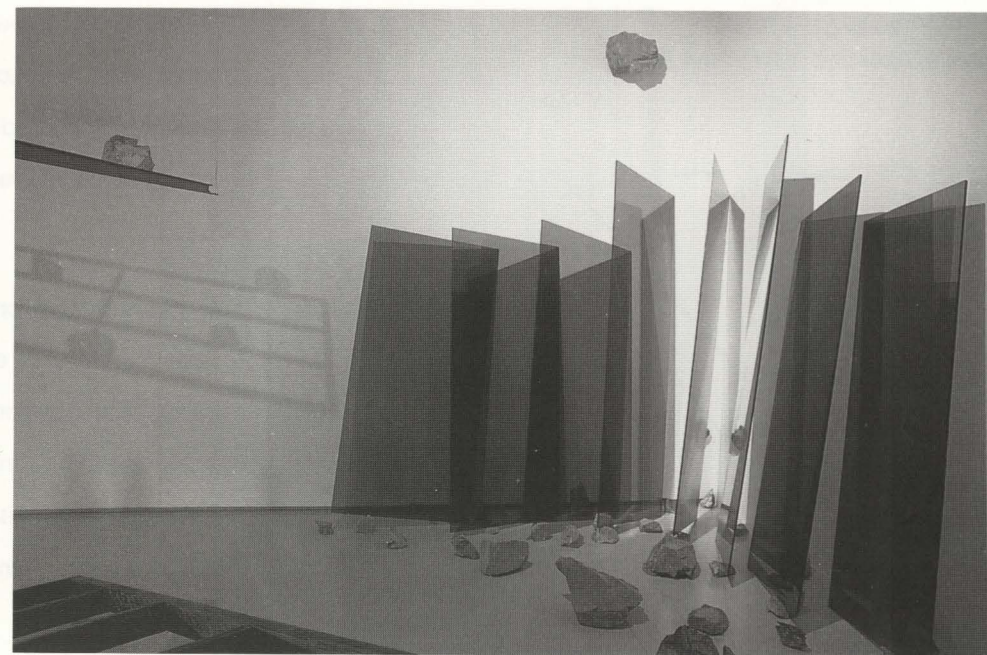
Between Rocks and Glass Houses 1992
Installation view (detail)



Between Rocks and Glass Houses 1992
Installation view (detail)

notions of interior and exterior; between practical considerations of entry and the more abstract considerations of exit; between the internal and familiar geometric logic of the building frames and the

apparent disorderly logic of their positioning. Here then is the cardinal device of the installation which calls the historic logic of the codes of building into question.

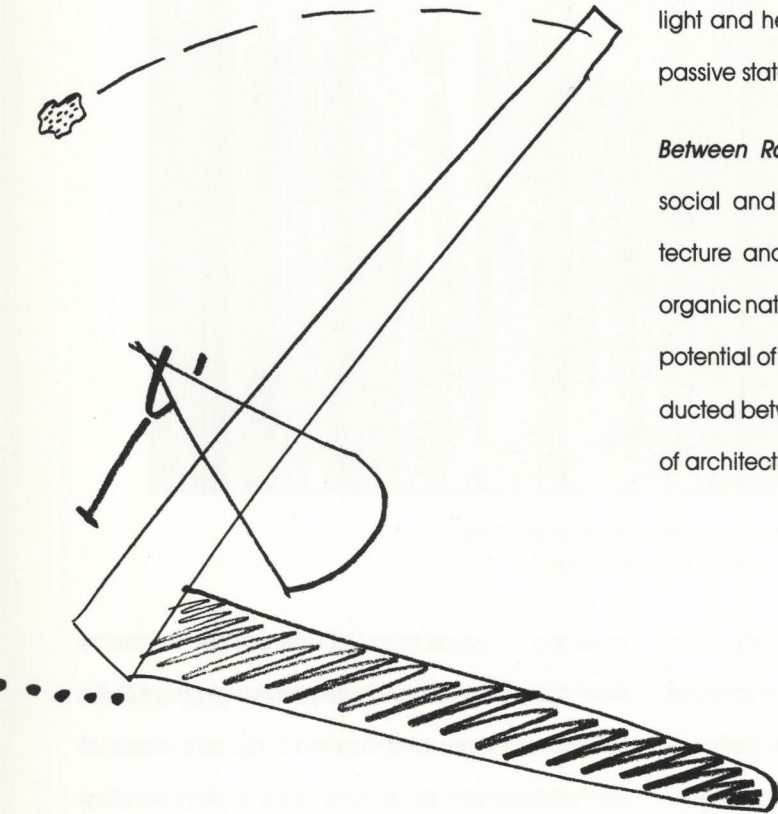


Between Rocks and Glass Houses 1992
Installation view (detail)

As the viewer journeys through the installation tensions are compounded and one's expectations continue to be reoriented. Rocks sit precariously atop the unglazed window frame, the metaphorical

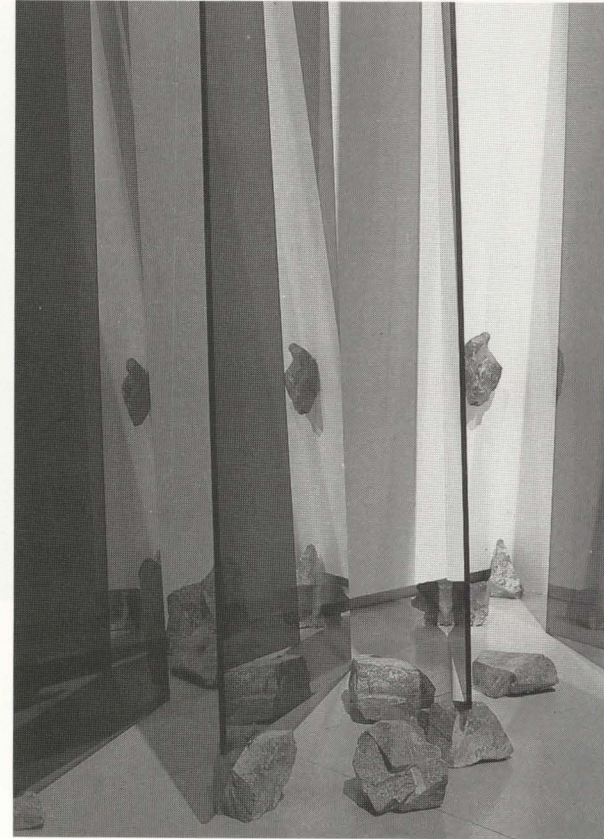
ceiling to the installation. This ceiling is penetrated by the installation's internal light source, hanging light bulbs that hover above and illuminate models, made of melted beeswax, stones and glass, resting on glass

Working Drawing for
Between Rocks and Glass Houses 1991-92

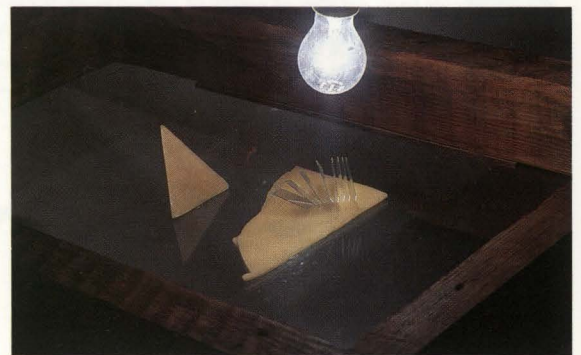
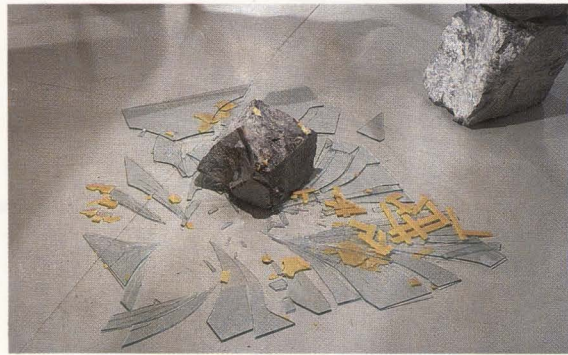
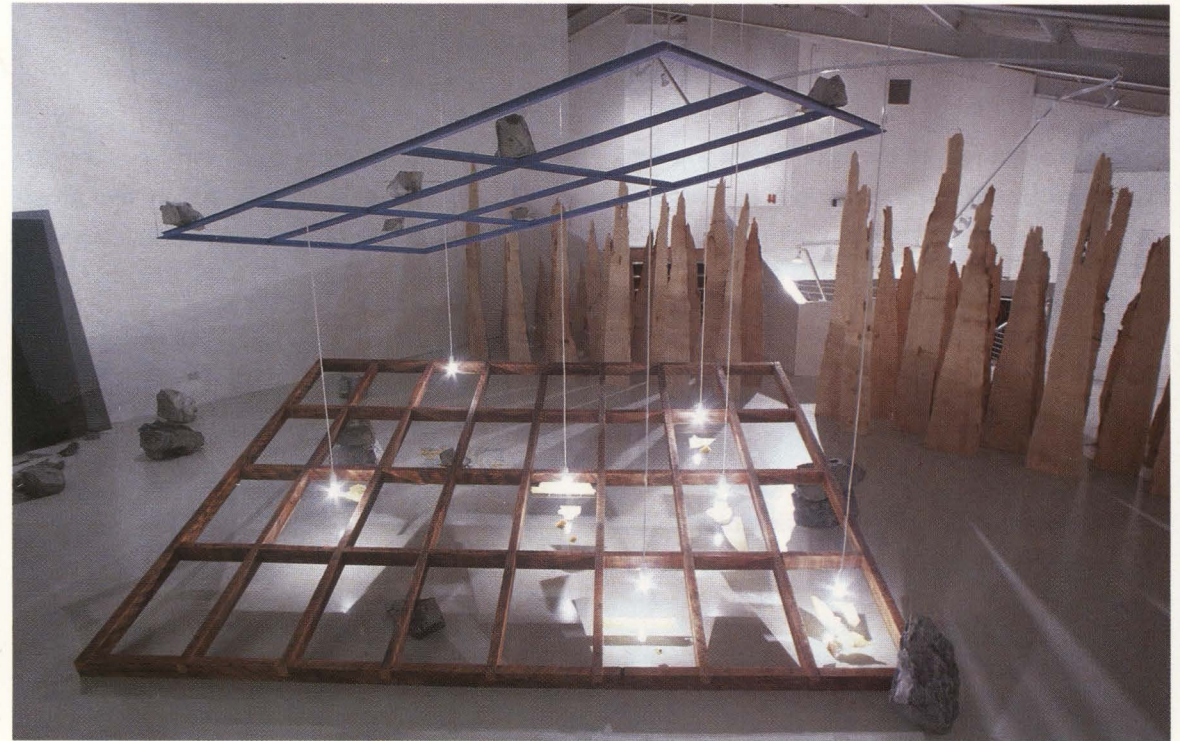


panes placed in the grid of the building frame. This device sets up tensions of scale and introduces a concern for the relativities between material and light, light and heat, model and construction, active and passive states.

Between Rocks and Glass Houses focuses on the social and environmental considerations of architecture and highlights an interaction between the organic nature of building materials and the symbolic potential of building structures. A shadow play is conducted between the narrative potential and function of architecture and its material underpinning.



Between Rocks and Glass Houses 1992
Installation view (detail)



Between Rocks and Glass Houses 1992
Installation view (details)

Interview with Andrew Drummond and Noel Lane

Gregory Burke

G.B. Can you talk of the experiences you have each had working with architects and artists?

A.D. In the past my experience has been negative. Invariably architects have involved me at a late stage where my work had to be tacked on at the end, where the brief didn't really address attitudes to working within the space or working in any way collaboratively.

G.B. Has there ever been a dialogue with architects on the philosophical dimension of your working as an artist in relation to architectural practice?

A.D. We have talked but there has been no real dialogue. I have said 'Listen, when you begin planning the structure involve artists then rather than doing a superficial tack on'. I must say that not all architects are like that. Noel has involved artists in projects from an early period.

N.L. I have found it easy to work with artists because I have involved them at an early stage and they have been people I have sought out for their skills. So it was productive to have them involved throughout the design and building process.

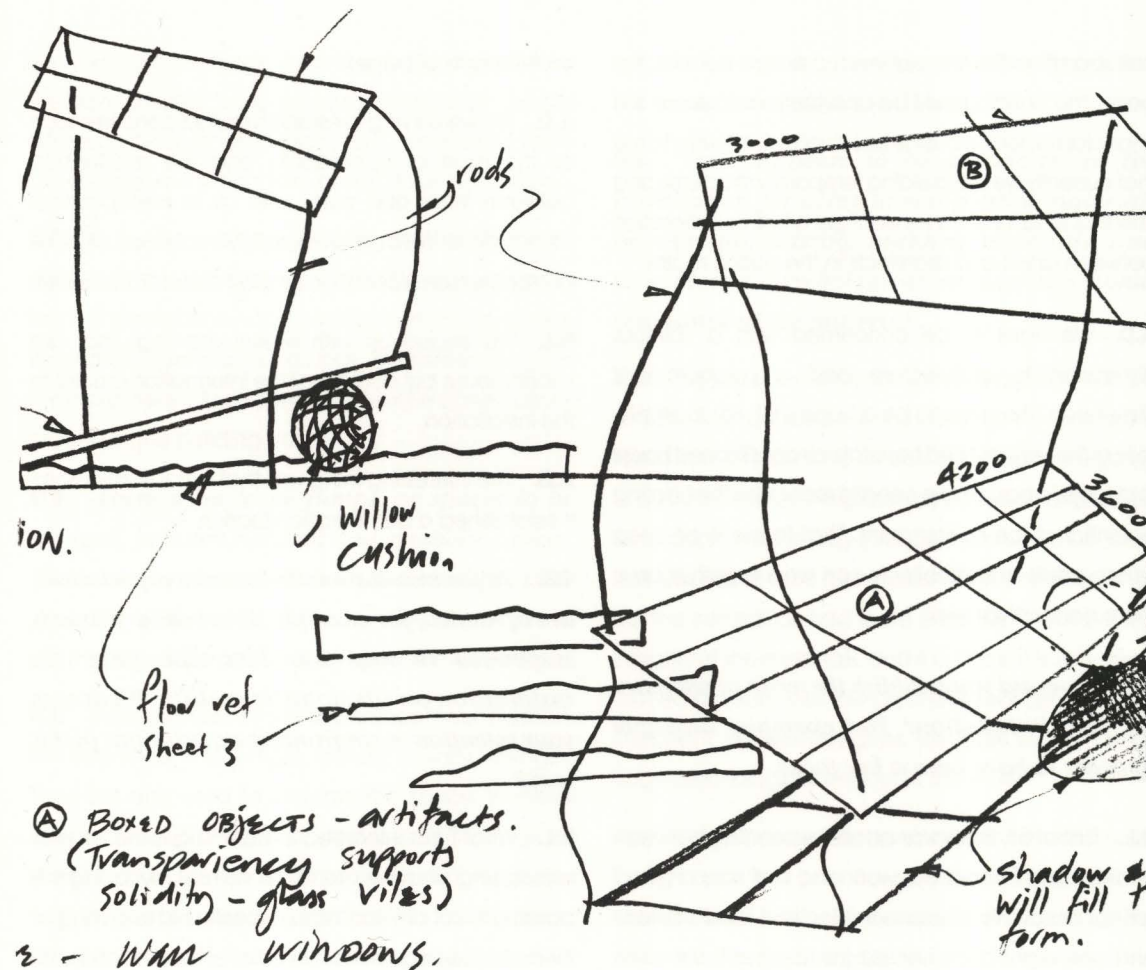
G.B. In the past going back centuries artists worked closely with architects, on the great churches for example. Distinctions between each practice were blurred. What has changed?

N.L. Life is a lot more complex now for architects. We have to be lawyers, accountants, project managers, there is a business side that wasn't as dominating in the past as now. Our training base is quite different and attracts different personalities. Each architect however needs to recognise their own position in relation to involving artists and to involve them as soon as possible or not involve them at all.

G.B. It seems to me that there will be limited opportunities for public art statements in the future. In terms of the public realm I would suggest that artists will be looking to work with architects in new ways that address the changing social issues related to the use of buildings as well as an awareness of the environmental impact of building.

N.L. Yes, I think that for a long time architecture was an ornament and that in itself is a dead end. The more

Working Drawing for
Between Rocks and Glass Houses 1991-92



collaboration there is between creative people, the better the buildings will be and the more secure the financial risk for the businesses involved. It seems to me that currently we are building temporary structures and until that situation shifts we won't get a true collaboration between artists and architects in the public realm.

A.D. We have to be concerned with a spiritual dimension to architecture and a psychological dimension. There has to be a huge shift. For example, look at the way we build hospitals, air conditioned boxes that recycle bad air. We need to recognise the healing potential of the environment. That to me is an area where artists and architects can work together on a more conceptual level.

G.B. *How did you establish the terms of reference for this installation? For example, dialogue appears to have been a key focus.*

N.L. First of all, there was an understanding between Andrew and I about our work and that was a good springboard. We discussed intentions and interests and one night documented the concepts we were jointly interested in. We did that by drawing line for line

on A4 sheets of paper.

A.D. We were trying to establish mutual concerns such as the issue of vulnerability and the relationship between inner and outer with all its metaphorical associations. We built an expansive conceptual base but focused on a common ground of four or five issues.

N.L. We ended up with twelve drawings that are spontaneous but contain all the information crucial to the installation.

A.D. The interesting thing was that initial relationship. It established a democratic situation.

G.B. *In the installation the viewer's expectations are up-ended, for example the window frame is suspended in mid air. This also gives the installation an illusionistic quality. What was your intention in confronting expectations in this way?*

N.L. What I am interested in exploring is the issue of reassessing what we are told is normal, by taking the parameters of physical requirements and relooking at them and seeing if there are other answers that are as workable, if not more workable. In the installation I think

we are dealing with processes of arrival and departure. We have created two gateways or thresholds. The first is through the sentinels, the second is conceptual. There are people who will not take or can't take the next step.

A.D. It is also making people reassess 'Am I an explorer? Do I want to continue this little exploration?' In terms of expectation, when you move into the space the installation opens up like a book, the further you go in the more there is to discover, like the little constructions placed in the building frame.

G.B. *There seem to be jumps, or spaces to be bridged, between natural and symbolic orders. There are tensions that exist, for example with your use of the rocks, there are constructive and destructive tensions operating at the same time.*

N.L. The stones are not only a reference to construction, the reference is to weight, density, solidity, strength. They are also used to animate the space, to make connections with the ground and glass. With the glass, sheets of glass are always a visual exit way through any wall. In this case we have explored the use of glass as an architectural element as well as exploited its reflective qualities and highlighted its own density. You

approach the glass as an edge rather than face on but the sense of a window is still there.

G.B. *There appears to be a concern in the installation for using unembellished materials or recycling existing building materials, and to exploit a psychological or even emotional resonance of the material.*

A.D. The use of material was carefully considered. The window was recycled out of a building, the rocks were taken from a quarry, the off-cuts of the logs were going to be thrown away, the glass was borrowed and will be used again. All the way through there was a concern that we did not want a preciousness in a crafted sense but the installation had to be precious in terms of the integrity of the materials, and it is. I think it is very finely crafted actually but the psychological allusions are important, like with the glass. The glass sheets have a huge psychological impact in the work.

N.L. Also a recycled element implies a time frame so it refers back to a pre-occupation of things, pre-uses, especially if it has been manipulated by man, so the materials are once again referring to memory and history.

Andrew Drummond

Andrew Drummond was born in Nelson in 1951. He studied art at Waterloo University in Canada, returning to New Zealand in 1977. At this time he was involved in performance art, much of which centred around connections between the body and the environment, as in *Vein* (1980), a performance and installation work, the first part of which was carried out in remote tussock land near Dunedin. The second part, *City Vein*, was an installation in an art gallery.

In 1980 Drummond took up a Frances Hodgkins Fellowship in Dunedin. In 1984 he travelled to Britain, working as Artist-in-Residence in Orkney and Portsmouth and also participating in ANZART in Edinburgh. In 1987 he took up another residency at the Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui and in 1990 was Artist-in-Residence at the Queensland Art Gallery. In 1992 he moved to Christchurch from his Auckland base and is now Head of the Sculpture Department at Ilam School of Fine Arts. He has exhibited widely in both New Zealand and Australia.

From the early eighties Andrew Drummond's work shifted from performance-based art to installation and sculpture. However, he retains an interest in the cor-



Andrew Drummond
Five Sights 1987

relation between the natural world and psychological and physical states as well as a concern for the environment. He has made repeated use of organic materials such as copper, slate, beeswax and willow, often with allegorical intent.

Between Rocks and Glass Houses is the first site-specific installation Andrew Drummond and Noel Lane have worked on collaboratively.

Noel Lane

Born in 1955, Noel Lane studied at the Auckland School of Architecture, graduating in 1981 with a Bachelor of Architecture with Honours. He then worked on several projects as a Graduate Architect with the Ministry of Works & Development before forming his own practice in 1983. In 1984 he joined with Richard Priest to form the Auckland partnership *Lane Priest Architects*. In 1992 he again formed his own practice, *Noel Lane Architects*.

He has received numerous awards including the Silver Medal Award from the prestigious International Design Competition of the Central Glass Company in Japan, 1981. He has also won several NZIA Branch Awards including those for the Pollock House (1986), the Moors House (1989) and the Gibbs House (1991) and a Designers Institute Premier Design Award for Guadalupe Restaurant, Auckland (1991). Since 1990 he has also exhibited in a gallery context, in *Artiture Furniture Expo* at Auckland Museum and in a solo show, *New Allegories* at Fox Street Gallery, Auckland.

Lane has been involved with a wide range of design work, creating both private and commercial build-



Noel Lane
Amanda Gibbs' House 1990

ings and environments. He has often worked with artists, as in the *Long Room*, a bar in Auckland where he commissioned Gavin Chilcott and Tony Lane to design and paint aspects of the interior.

The artists would like to thank Parapine, Horokiwi Quarries, Kelly Glass and David White.

Published to document the installation
Between Rocks and Glass Houses
by Andrew Drummond and Noel Lane
16 May – 26 June 1992, at the Wellington City Art Gallery.
The first in an occasional series of collaborative projects
between artists and architects.

© Wellington City Art Gallery, 1992.
First published 1992.

Printed in an edition of 250 on Finekote recycled paper (text),
and Hickory recycled paper (cover).

Cover: Working drawing for *Between Rocks and Glass Houses* 1991-92

ISBN 0-908818-21-1

Editor: Gregory Burke
Designer: Leon van den Eijkel
Editorial Assistant: Barbara Blake

WELLINGTON CITY ART GALLERY
WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL

P O Box 2199, Wellington, New Zealand

