

# New Zealand Painters

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- 15- Kelcy Taratoa
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- 17- Dick Frizzell
- 18- Tania Thompson (Misery)
- 19- Graham Sydney

## To Come:

John Walsh  
Jeffrey Harris  
Peter James Smith

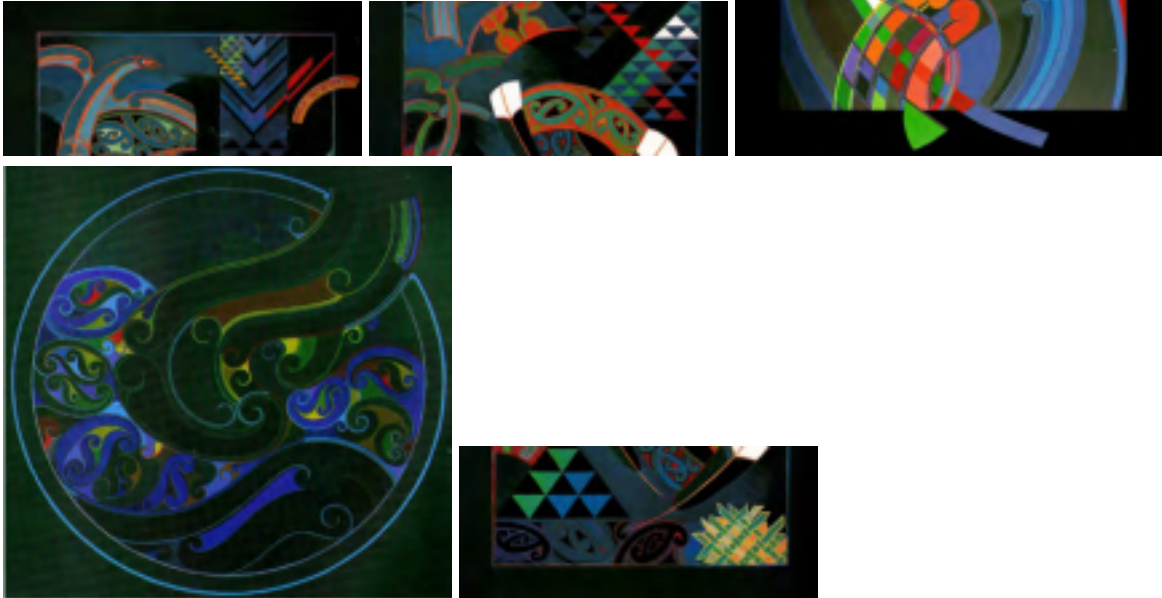
Geoff Harris, 2008 ☺

## Sandy Adsett

Born 1939, Ngati Kahungunu

“As I see other art perspectives form dominant cultures forcing their presence, questioning our

beliefs and placing their values on our art, I tend to strengthen my resolve to continue to explore coteremporary directions in my work form a conceptual basis that is totally Maori” (Adsett cited in Sotheran and Saines, 1998, p.130)



Koiri Series C 1984  
Acrylic on board 1200 x 1200mm

Manu  
1985  
Acrylic on board 1200 x 1200mm  
Nag Mihi Aroha Ki A Koe

1994-95  
Acrylic on board  
1040 x 820mm

### **Key Features**

### **Feature Significance**

Bi-Cultural European painting technique to depict Maori concepts using kowhaiwhai patterns and stylised interpretations of natural forms.

Colour A full range of bright colours painted against a dark surrounding frame to make them more intense. Innovative departure from traditional Maori black, red and white.

Narrative Images often based on a traditional myth. Abstract designs and stylised objects relate to specific parts of the story.

Flat Colour Smooth paint applied with little evidence of brushstrokes. Similar to Kowhaiwhai style but also to modern international colour field painters like Frank Stella.

Sharp Edges Sharp clean edges to give the painting a graphic quality. Also similar to Kowhaiwhai and hard edge colour field painting.

Break-Outs Elements of the design break out of the frame. These could symbolise links between two worlds; inside/outside, Maori/Pakeha, present/past, earthly/spiritual.

Balance Designs carefully considered in terms of the balance between light and dark, curve and straight, and hot and cold colours.

### Further Information

Mata Ora - The Living Face, Sandy Adsett, Cliff Whiting and Witi Ihimaera, David Bateman, Auckland, 1996

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## Nigel Brown

Born 1949, Invercargill

"I want a human face to my art. Art can be a product of a person in the deeper sense. My concern is with the dilemma of modern existence...the ongoing frailty of humanity's material – moral and spiritual." (Brown cited in O'Brien, 1991, p.9)



Dominion Bitter 1977  
Oil on board 1180 x 700mm



### Key Features

Listen to the Women 1986



Acrylic on board 1120 x 1500mm  
Damaged  
Landscape 1 1989

### **Feature Significance**

Framing Uses a bold framing device in some work which focuses the viewers attention on the imagery contained within it.

Strong contrasts Uses black silhouette and bold outlines. The use of black contrasts dramatically against a light background.

Expressive painting Paint is applied loosely, but with care. Objects are sometimes distorted to create more expression and mood in the composition.

Symbols Elements such as the black Ponga, the singleted man and the black dog are examples of objects that are often repeated by the artists, in various works, as symbols for the story he is telling.

Spacial elements A sense of special depth exists in the artworks, but the space can appear jumbled and unreal because of the arrangement of the composition.

Text element When text is used it complements the subject matter in the composition. This adds further meaning to the artwork.

Narrative Each composition is arranged to tell a story or describe an idea. The narrative is sometimes related to man's interaction with the land.

Assembled  
composition

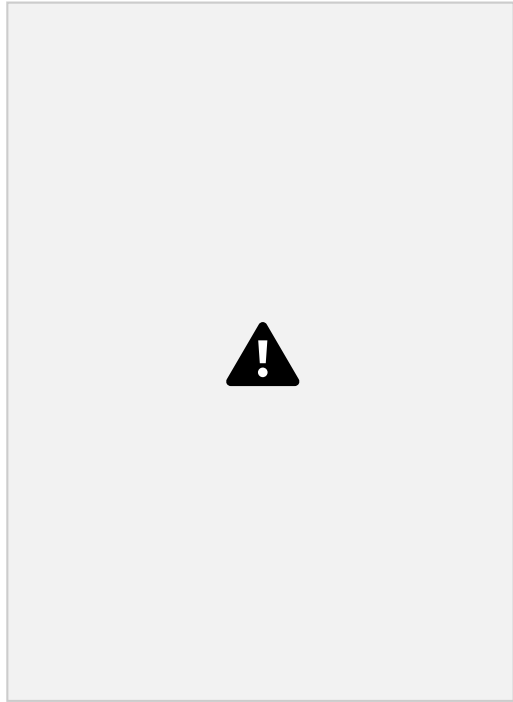
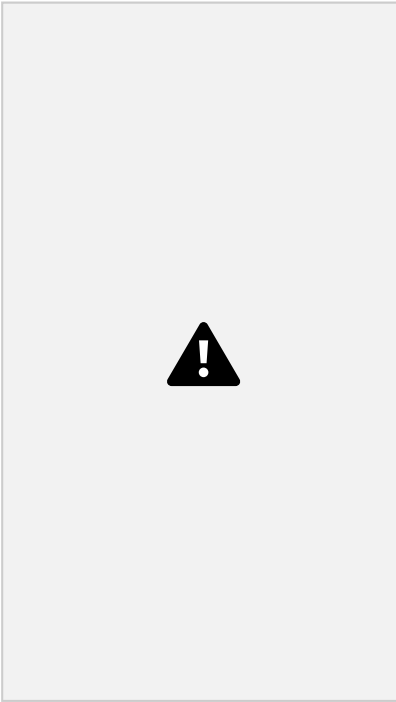
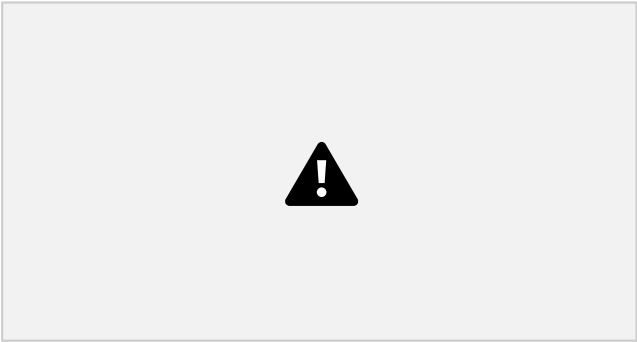
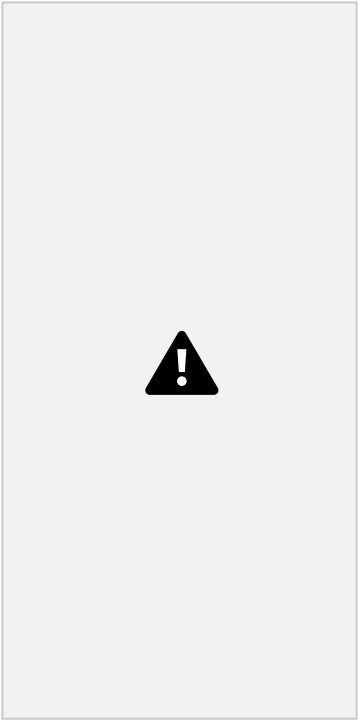
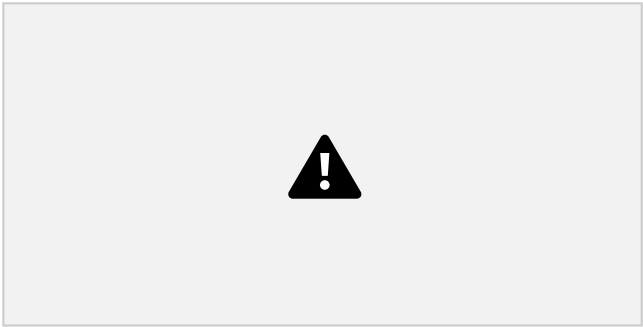
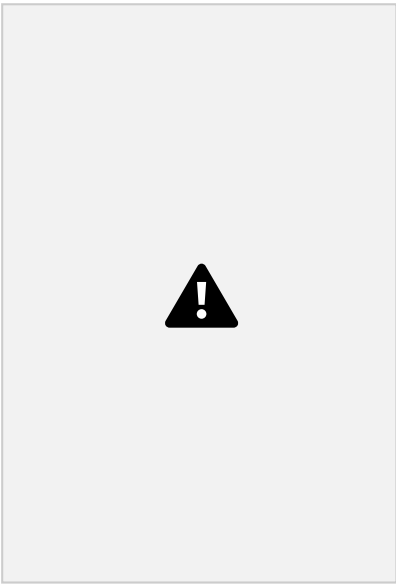
Compositions are arranged to tell a story rather than describing a view of an actual place.

### **Further Information Books**

100 New Zealand Paintings, Warwick Brown, Godwit Publishing Ltd, Auckland, 1995

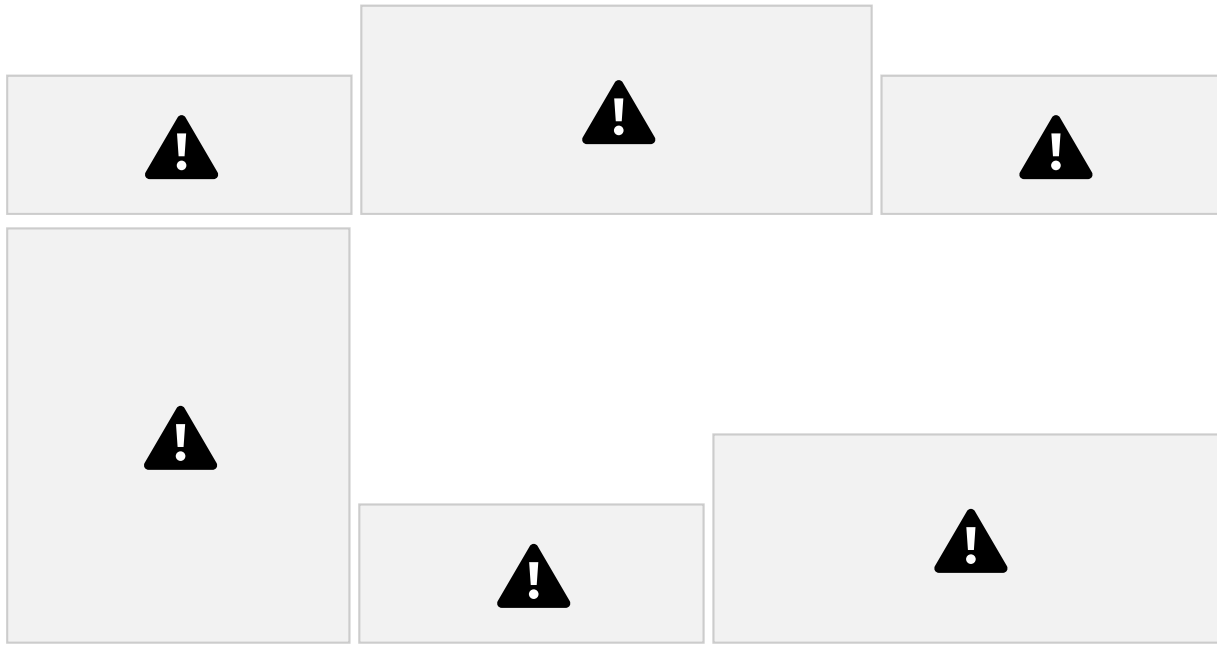
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# Shane Cotton

Born 1964, Nga Puhi, Ngati Rangi, Ngati Hine “My work is very much related to a personal journey of awareness...The only way to move forward is to come to terms with what has happened in the past – revisiting can bring clarity to our existence in the present” (Cotton cited in O’Brien, 1996, p.191)



Artificial Curiosities  
1993  
Oil on Canvas

**Key Features**  
**Feature Significance**  
Picture Painting 1994

Oil on Canvas  
Diamond Line 1995  
Oil on Canvas

European and Maori Uses European painterly techniques to explore Maori imagery and ideas.

Monochromatic Creates visual unity by using only a variety of browns to complete the painting.

Grid Composition Contains and organises a wide range of different imagery. Symbolises the museum cataloguing approach to cultural artefacts and helps to organise a painting made up of lots of different types of objects.

Text elements Refers to specific places and ideas and used as visual images in themselves. Symbolises differences between Pakeha and Maori outlook. (Pakeha uses writing to record history while Maori uses oral or spoken language)

Symbolic objects Each object represents specific meaning for artist and the changes in scale and placement affect these meanings. Selects objects that symbolise European colonisation and Maori tradition.

Strong Contrast Dramatic impact by having strong contrast between light and dark objects creating a very graphic effect.

Patterns Repeats objects such as Waka, mountains, and letterforms to create Kowhaiwhai

like patterns.

Flat picture plane No perspective used to create the illusion of depth. Symbolises that

Cotton is not “buying-in” to the Pakeha ways of looking at the world.

Appropriation Taking images from other places. Often taken from very different sources eg  
– Christianity, traditional Maori imagery, Gangs, popular culture – combined together as a metaphor for contemporary multifaceted cultural synthesis and conflict.

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## Shane Cotton

1993 = Became lecturer at School of Maori Studies at Massey University. Became interested in Wharenuī of Te Kooti, Rongopai, a meeting house at Waituhi near Gisborne.

“I wanted to bring more prominence to that work, to comment on it and point out that the paintings weren’t simply naïve depictions, that they had strong conceptual basis tied intimately with identity”

Rongopai - 1880 Carved and painted Whare in Gisborne

- First Marae to use significant amounts of Pakeha technique, materials and stylistic features)
- Painting all over not just for Kowhaiwhai, using European realism techniques for Maori imagery,
- Pot plant and other naturalistic objects used as symbols
- Represented contemporary figures with written labels in Gothic script identifying them. - Imagery used to convey information to illiterate (just like Christian churches)

Sombre colours

- Browns reflect serious issues about land claims and injustices done to the Maori during the colonial period
- Monochromatic = unified picture surface and means Cotton was able to explore issues of style and content without worrying about the complications of colour – similar to analytical cubism.

Influences

- McCahon – Grid structure and glowing horizon
- Toni Fomison – sombre colour scheme (also cubism, abstract expressionism) -
- Bill Hammond – Surreal landscape context (Cotton trained in Christchurch) -
- Michael Shephard – Historical features and imagery

Symbolism

- Letterforms – often single letters that do not make a whole word = symbol for difficulties of translation and different outlook between Maori and Pakeha - Gothic script is 19<sup>th</sup> learnt by Chief Hongi Hika (Nga Puhi) when he went to London in 1814 = Maori power gained by learning Pakeha ways
- Potted Plant – colonisation – how the natural world (and indigenous peoples) can be contained in a restricted area – Refers to the 1865 Native Lands Act that forced Maori to make individual claims which fragmented the traditional communal ownership

- Flower is a Chrysanthemum painted by Gordon Walters in an early work = reference to Walters stealing (**Appropriation**) of Maori motifs without acknowledging their cultural context
- Grid Structure = Land survey and dividing ownership into small parcels –Also possible influence of McCahon, Mondrian and/or colonial survey map making charts - Flags and roman numerals refer directly to specific dates of events and geographical mapping data used to determine ownership of land.
- Coastal Profiles – Refer to mapping silhouettes drawn by Captain Cook and other explorers to navigate around NZ – symbolise colonisation, exploration, invasion, desire to possess etc
- Glowing horizon – sunrise/sunset from McCahon – symbol for dying or reviving culture

## Morphology

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Objects change, some become much bigger than in reality while others become smaller, changing the scale changes their meaning in relation to one another. Flag pole is much smaller than a food basket which talks about the relative importance of each.

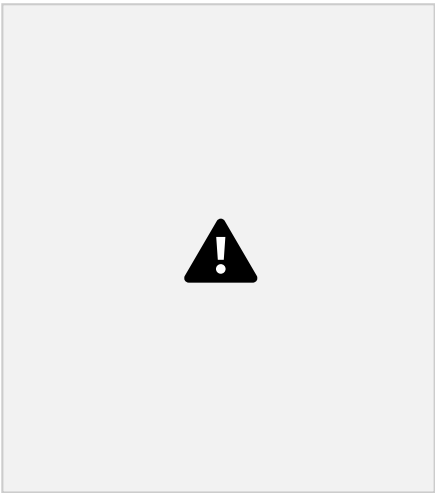
## Appropriation - Post-Modern Sampling of images

Pot motif painted in Pakeha style by Maori artist (in Rongopai) – The reference to Pakeha artist using Maori motifs (Walters). Cotton takes images from McCahon, De Chirico, Frizzell and other artists to refer to appropriation and cultural ownership, colonisation, domination.

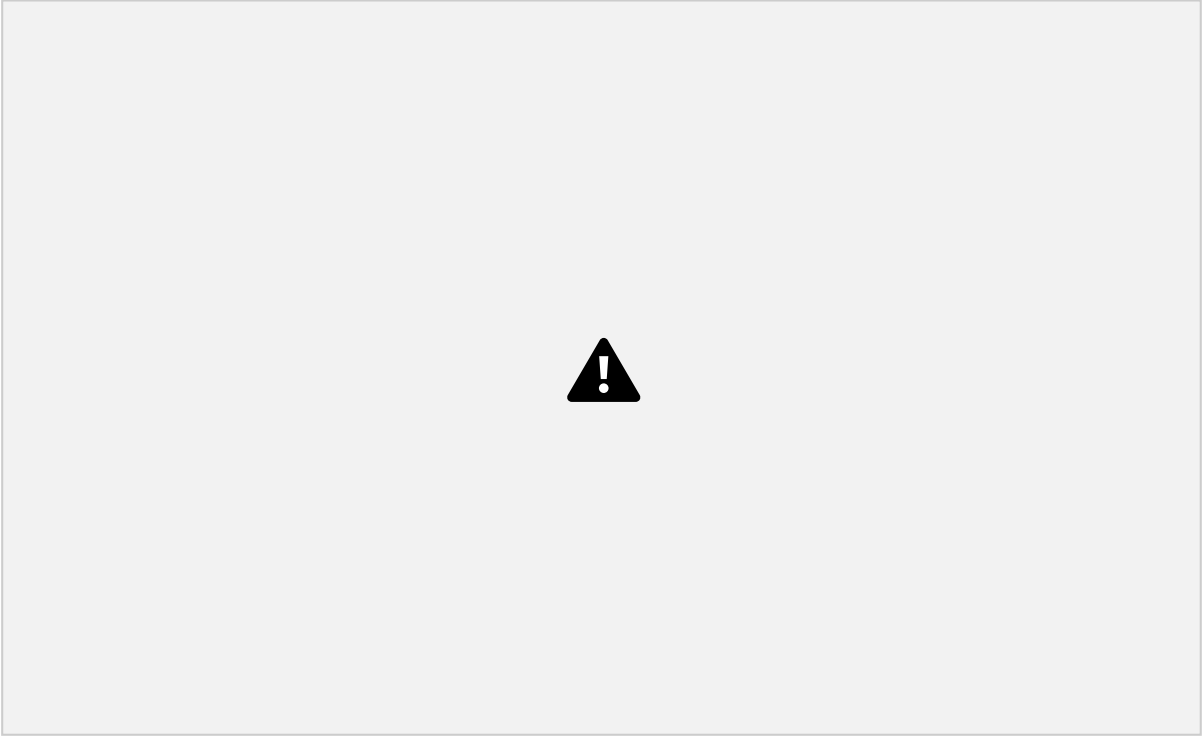
## Post-Colonial

Colonialism believed that the British culture was superior to the indigenous culture because it is more advanced (technology, religion, and social rules). In Post-Colonialism one culture is not better or worse than the other, just different. Therefore Maori beliefs are just as valid as Pakeha beliefs.





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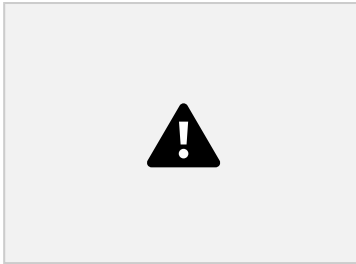




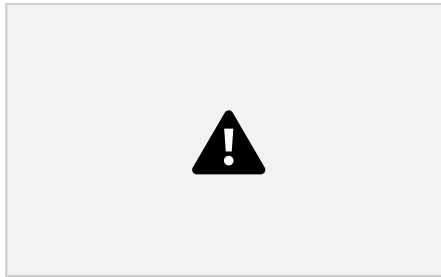
# Fatu Feu'u

Born 1964, Poutasi Western Samoa

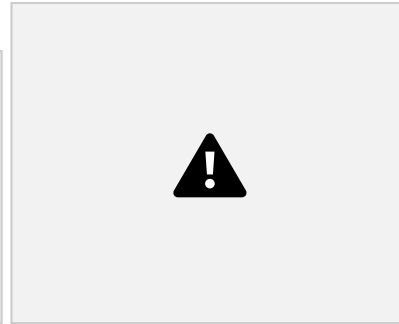
"To me, art is not just about painting or sculpting. Art is part of everything we do, whether it's building a house or the way we talk to our family or friends. Something we do with respect" (Feu'u cited in Pearson, p5)



Taula'aitu, 1996  
Lithograph and woodcut



**Key Features**  
Tamilo I Moana 2004  
Woodcut, 760 x 1070  
Vai Manino, 2004  
Acrylic and oil stick on



canvas 2420 x 1520

## **Feature Significance**

Use of grid Often uses the grid to organize a range of imagery. The grid connects to the idea of traditional tapa design layout and helps organize images to help tell a story.

Symbols and motifs Makes use of significant imagery from tatau, tapa and lapita pottery in a contemporary way.

Painting technique Uses a direct, expressive brush stroke. Sometimes draws line work onto the surface with oil stick.

Printmaking Creates large multi-plate, coloured woodcuts. Sometimes uses lithography as well.

Text Has begun to incorporate text into recent large paintings, which adds further meaning to the works.

Flat picture plane There is no illusion of spacial depth in the work. There is a sense of layering shown through overlapping imagery and media.

Linear aspects Line work is used to describe some features and objects. This stands out because it contrasts with the tonally different space behind it. For example, white lines over black space.

Narrative Describes stories and ideas relating to his Samoan heritage by combining significant colours and arrangements of symbols

## **Further Information**

### **Books**

Speaking In Colour. Conversations with artists of Pacific Island heritage, Sean Mallon and Pandora Fulimalo Pereira, Te Papa Press, Wellington, 1997

Art NewZealand Number 111/Winter 2004,

Of Tapa and Tatau The Art of Fatu Feu'u, Helen Pearson, Interactive Education, Whangaporaoa  
Samoan Art and Artists O Measina a Samoa, Sean Mallon, Craig Potton Publishing, Nelson, 200





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# Nicky Foreman

Born 1970, Wiatara, Taranaki

“I like to take ordinary objects and turn them on their head, to place them out of context so people examine them more closely and relate to them in a different way” (Foreman Cited in Whitespace Catalogue, 2004, p.18)



Fragments of Origin Untitled  
2001  
Oil & Mixed Media on Board  
1200 x 1200mm

## Feature Significance

Ngaere  
2003  
Oil & Mixed Media on Board 1200 x 1200mm

## Key Features

Grid Format Using horizontal and vertical black lines to divide the pictures into sections. Lines can be thick or thin, or images can be butted up next to each other. Creates a sense of order where very different images can be placed together without confusion.

Local Imagery Subjects taken from a country highway theme (including road signs and markers). These place the painting within a specific location.

Naturalism Realistic drawing and painting. Objects are accurately drawn and attention given to specific colour and texture.

Fragments Sometimes only parts of the objects are shown with the viewer filling in the rest for themselves. This creates some visual tension and enables different viewers to read the painting in different ways.

Limited Colour Limited range of colours (yellow, red, black and white) to create a harmonised picture where everything fits together well.

Juxtaposition Placing unusual objects next to each other to create a surprise. This forces the viewer to think about what they mean.

Mixed Materials Uses canvas, wood, and sometimes metal parts. Introduces the real materials of rural life to create interest, unexpected surprise, and show the inherent beauty of these materials.

Text Latitude and longitude numbers, together with place names are decorative elements in themselves but also identify specific locations.

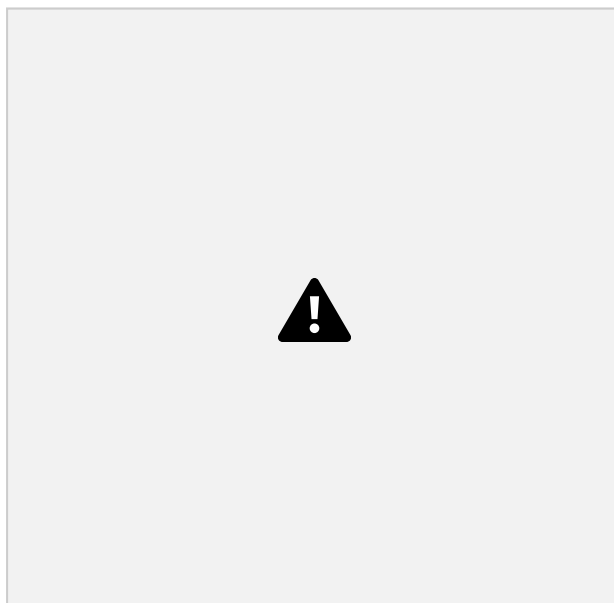
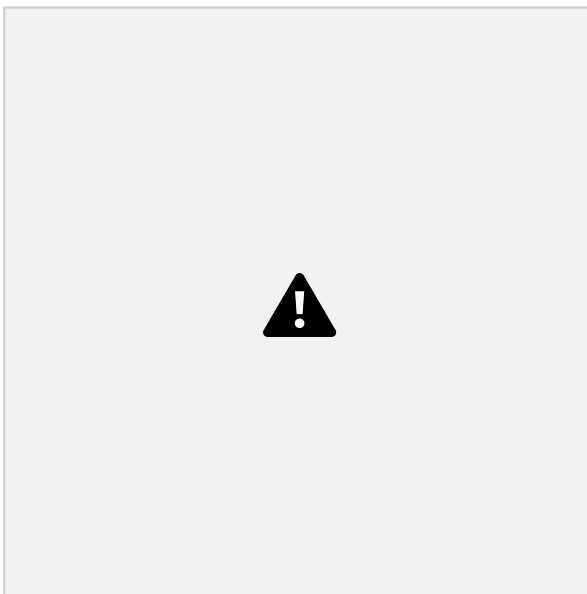
Stamps and  
envelopes

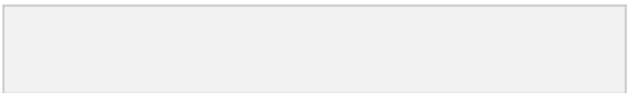
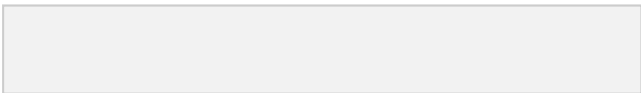
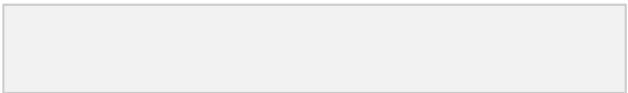
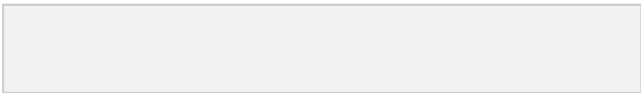
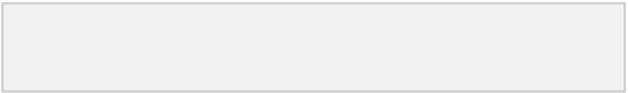
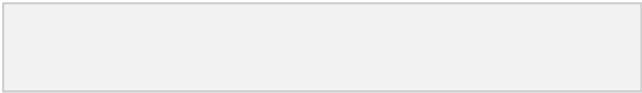
Used as a different kind of visual style and  
symbolise people living on the land as well as  
the history of that occupation

### Further Information

Nicky Foreman 2004, Deborah White, Whitespace Contemporary Art, Auckland, 2004

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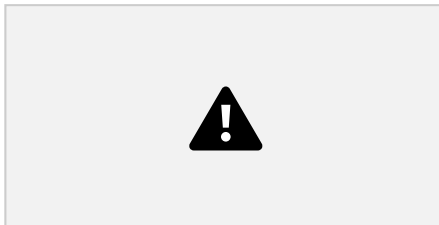
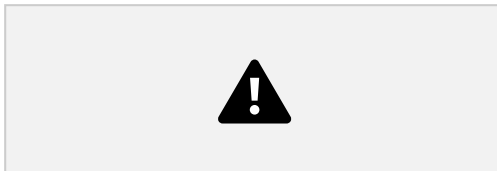


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# Rosalie Gascoigne

Born 1917, lived in Australia since 1943, died 1999

“Beware of the nice things that you find that say nothing; they are like new wood from a hardware shop. I look for things that have been somewhere, done something”. (Gascoigne cited in Savage and O’Brien, 2004, p.17)





Big Yellow

1988

Sawn retro-reflective road  
signs on plywood

1715 x 2700mm

### Key Features

Honeybunch

1993

Sawn timber rectangles

1090 x 820mm

Foreign Affairs

1994

Sawn wood on craftboard

778 x 772mm

### Feature Significance

Monochrome Only one colour has been used. This unifies the picture by creating a single overall image out of lots of different parts

Found Objects Road signs, packing boxes, and other graphic materials have been used to create the picture. These have been weathered by use and signify their use and the history of the location they came from.

Fragmentation Road signs cut into small pieces so they cannot be read but become an abstract pattern. Irony created by taking something designed to communicate and making it unintelligible. Makes us re-look at the objects for their own unique beauty.

Grid Structure Original material cut into squares and rectangle and then reconstructed. Contrast between weathered graphics and precise cuts.

Scale Some works are very large. Symbolise the huge open space of Australia.

Symbolism Useful bits and pieces of contemporary culture that have been discarded. Reassembled but removed from their original context = fragmented society.

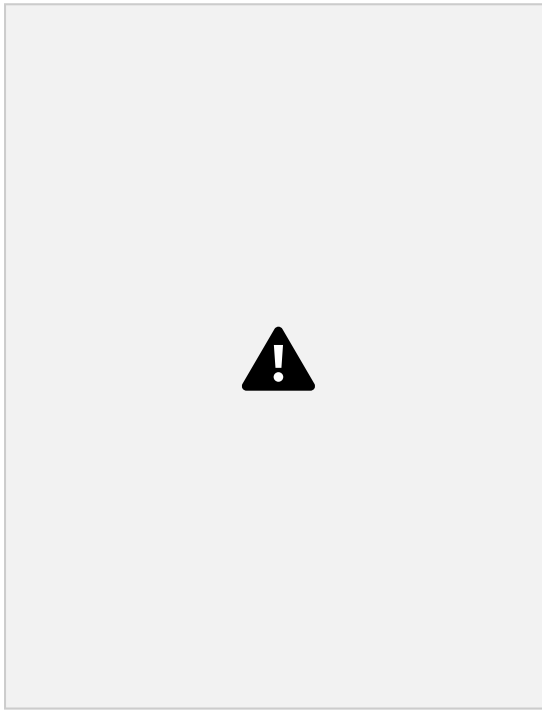
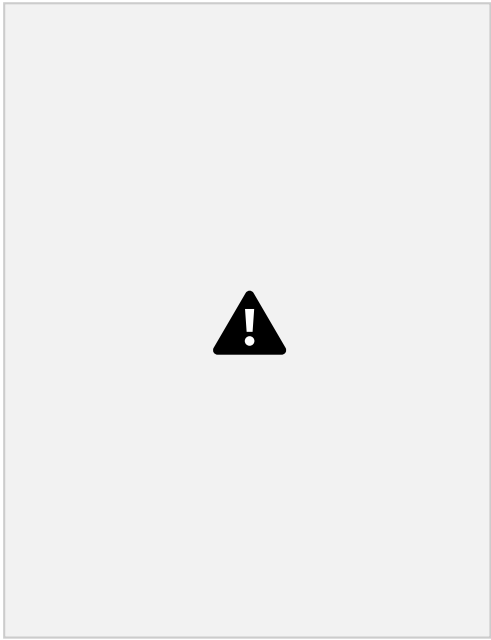
Dichotomy  
(contradiction)

Tatted old junk from rubbish tip turned into fine art for the gallery. Questions what we value and why we value it.

### **Further Information**

Rosalie Gascoigne Plain Air, Paula Savage and Gregory O'Brien, City Gallery Wellington, Victoria University Press, Wellington, 2004





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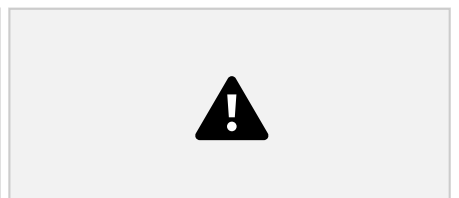
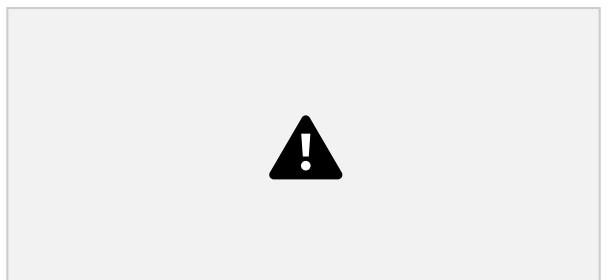
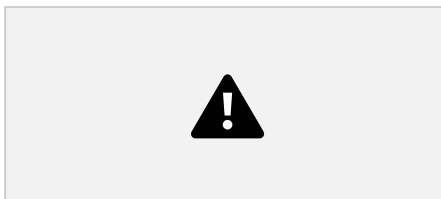
## Bill Hammond

Born 1947, Christchurch

“I read papers, I watch TV, take it all in. I’ve always included popular culture in my painting”

“A little world with its own air and its own atmosphere”

(Hammond cited in O’Brien, 1996, p.64)



Channel Zero	1992	Acrylic on Linen
1988	Acrylic on four board	1600 x Triptych, Each section 450 x
Acrylic and varnish	3050 x 1600mm	300mm
1530mm	<b>Key Features</b>	
Piano Forte	Watching for Buller (Costume Design)	1994

### **Feature Significance**

Pop Imagery Images taken from comic books, video games, advertising, and television. Uses these images to talk about the pressures and practices of contemporary culture.

Historical Imagery The bird paintings are based on Walter Buller's study of native New Zealand birds. Buller was a 19<sup>th</sup> Century ornithologist who killed hundreds of birds to study them. Paintings allude to how colonialism kills off native flora and fauna as well as indigenous people.

Surrealism Objects are distorted in scale and proportion. Space and perspective is also distorted. This creates a strange nightmare landscape that symbolises the pressures of contemporary society.

Anthropomorphism Ordinary objects seem to come to life. Symbolises how cultural activities like exercise and video games can be bad for you

T e x t Words taken from song lyrics, advertising, and historical texts are included to give specific meaning to the paintings.

Colour Bright, clashing, unnatural colours are used to create an "otherworldly" feel to the images.

Crowded Compositions characters that all seem to be doing their own thing. This chaotic disorganised effect relates to the many pressures of modern life.

Hammond fills his paintings with dozens of Painterly Effects Hammond uses thick paint, watery stains, careful blending, scratchy scribbles, and deliberate dribbles for different parts of the painting. This creates visual interest and deliberate disharmony between each element adding to the nightmare quality.

### **Further Information**

Bill Hammond: 23 Big Pictures' (catalogue), Dunedin Public Art Gallery, 2000.

Art New Zealand 40:30 'Bill Hammond' by Jonathon Smart, 1986.

<http://www.nz-artists.co.nz/hammond/hammond.htm>





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# Jason Hicks



Artifacts, 2001  
Oil on canvas, 580 x 580 mm

**Key Features**

**Feature Significance**

Gathered, 2000  
Oil on canvas, 870 x 1870 mm

Reduced colour palette  
Compositional devices  
Uses painterly techniques to explore  
imagery and ideas about people and  
the land.  
Uses a limited range of earthy colours  
to create balanced compositions.  
Assembles and organises a wide  
range of different imagery, sometimes  
using a grid, to explore ideas.

European and Maori

Text elements Uses Maori and English words to add meaning to the  
compositions.

Symbolic objects Selects and uses symbols and images that relate to  
people and the land.

Strong Contrast Uses strong contrasts to highlight parts of the  
composition, but some elements are allowed to blend  
into each other.

Spacial effect Although compositions are assembled from different  
sources objects and images are painted to show an  
illusion of space.

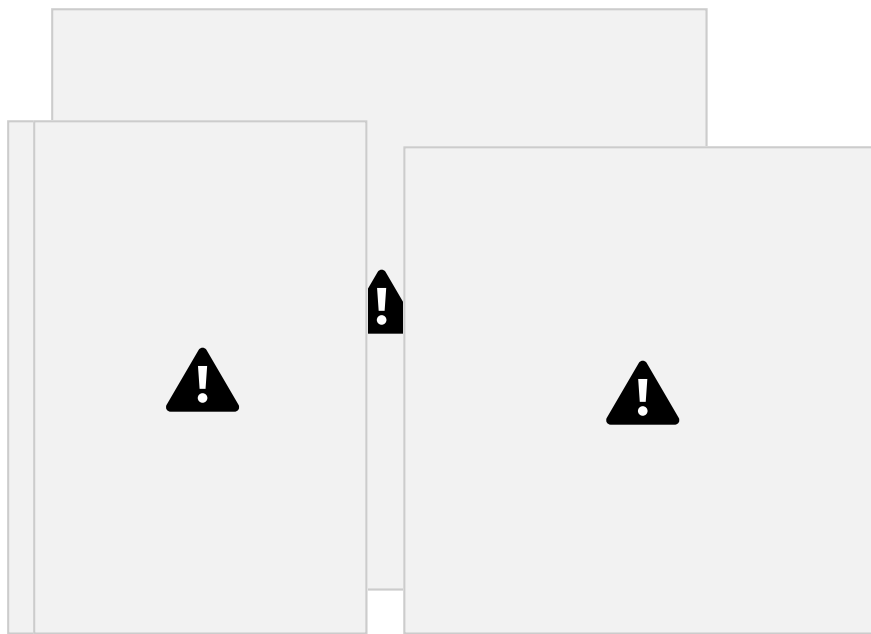
**Further Information**

**Books**

New Zealand Art Today, Edited by E.M.Caughey, Saint Publishing , Auckland, 2002  
[www.artfind.co.nz/](http://www.artfind.co.nz/)

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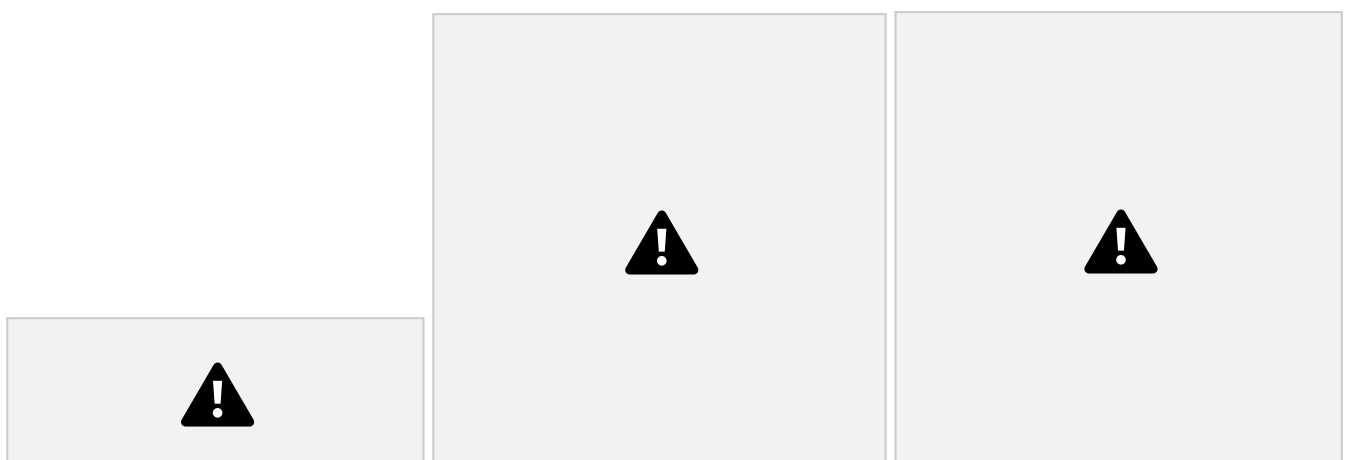


# Robin Kahukiwa

Born 1940, Sydney. Ngati Porou

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“There is still a place for traditional art in the meeting house...but to say things about Maori now I've got to use today's medium.” (Kahukiwa cited in Betts and Ritchie, 1990, p.14)





Hine-titama  
1983

Oil on hardboard 1180 x 1180mm

### **Key Features**

Taranga  
1983

Oil on hardboard 1180 x 1180mm  
Karu Hama, Urukehu, Kiri Tea,  
Engari He Kakano, Rangatira - 1994  
1585 x 1470mm

### **Feature Significance**

Narrative European techniques are used to tell Maori stories from traditional mythology and present day events. Objects are carefully chosen and arranged to symbolise events in these stories.

Political Explores issues of cultural identity, the dispossession of Maori from their tribal lands, Maori urbanisation, and the role of women in past and present Maori society.

Traditional Element In the Wahine Toa Series Kahukiwa includes at least one traditional element like a Kowhaiwhai or Taniko. These are combined with modern realism to link the past with the present.

Range of Styles Different paint application techniques can be used to describe different parts of the picture. In Hine-titama the face is smoothly blended while the tiki is carved in thick paint.

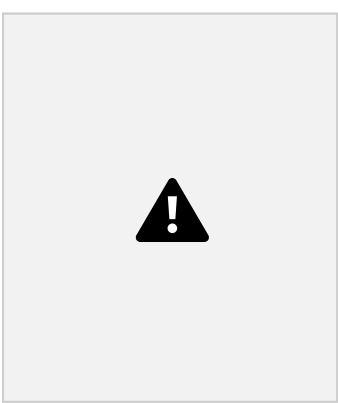
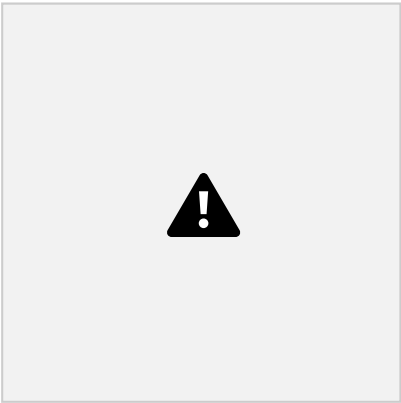
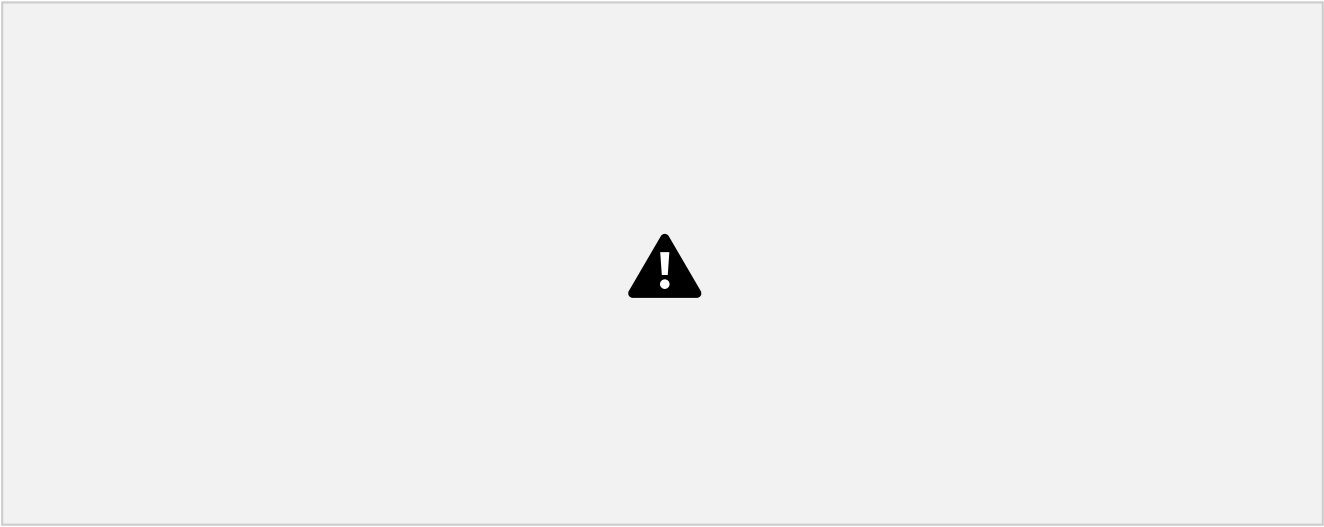
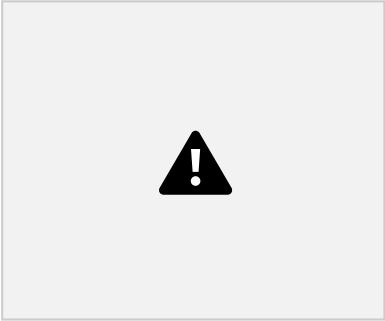
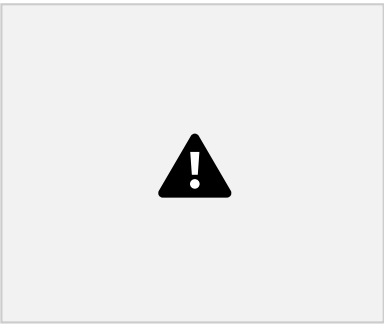
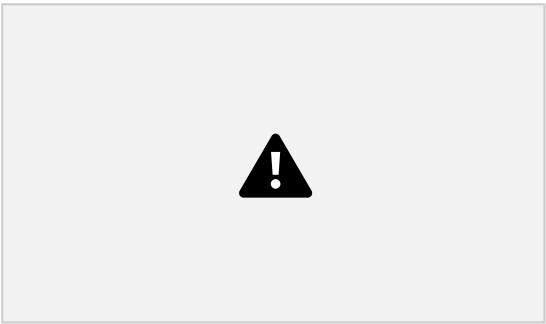
Centralised Composition composition which includes lots of different kinds of objects and elements  
All three of these examples have a strong central element which stabilises the

Colour Symbolism Colours are carefully chosen to reinforce the meaning of the painting. In Karu Hama, the black and white symbolises deceased relatives while the brown expressive side panels are distant ancestors.

### **Further Information**

Wahine Toa, Women in Maori Myth, Kahukiwa and Grace, Penguin Books, Auckland, 2000.  
Maori Art and Artists at the McDougall, A. Betts and J. Ritchie, Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Christchurch, 1990.

[www.robynkahukiwa.com](http://www.robynkahukiwa.com)





Geoff Harris, 2008 ☺

# Colin McCahon

Born 1919 Timaru, Died 1987

“...something logical, orderly and beautiful belonging to the land and not yet to its people” (cited in Keith and Brown, p183)

“Once more it states my interest in landscape as a symbol of place and also of the human condition.” (McCahon cited in Betts and Ritchie, 1985, p.33)



Six Days in Nelson and  
Canterbury  
1950  
Oil - 890 x 1170mm **Key**

## Features

Urewera Mural 1975  
Acrylic on canvas 2480 x  
5410mm

A Painting for Uncle Frank  
1980  
Acrylic on loose canvas 2330 x  
3000mm

## Feature Significance

Cultural Context The theme of Urewera Mural is a specific landscape with recognisable features. Personal and family connection with a special landscape is not previously found in most European art. McCahon worked with Komatua to advise him on the correct placement and positions of each name.

Text Maori words in Urewera mural list the Whakapapa of the Tuhoe from the Urewera region. Words also used from Peotry and Bible. Letters change size, thickness, and colour to reinforce their meaning.

Colour The very limited use of colour is unifies the painting. Later word paintings done  
just in black and white.

Contrast McCahon frequently uses a dramatic contrast between light and dark often symbolising the conflict between good and evil, life and death, or ignorance and knowledge.

Simplified Tried to depict the “essence” of what lay beneath the landscape rather than the texture and details on top. This is an influence of the French painter Paul Cezanne.

Scale Large scale works to indicate that McCahon was dealing with important public issues not just making pretty pictures. Influence of American colour fields painters like Mark Rothko.

Abstraction Landscape simplified to pure geometric shapes. Influence of Di Stijl abstract artist Piet Modrian.

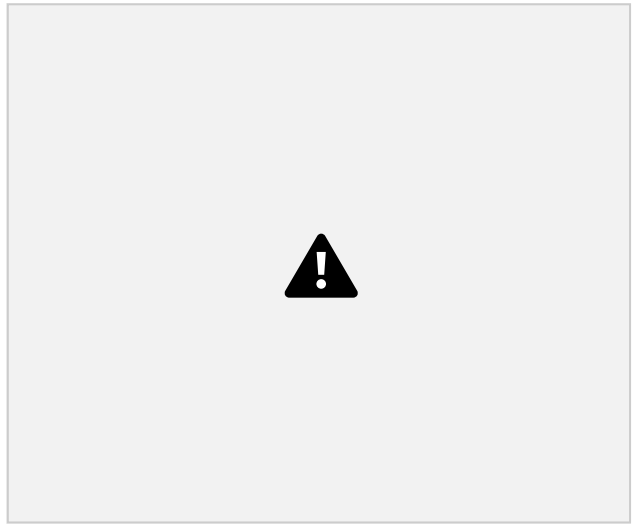
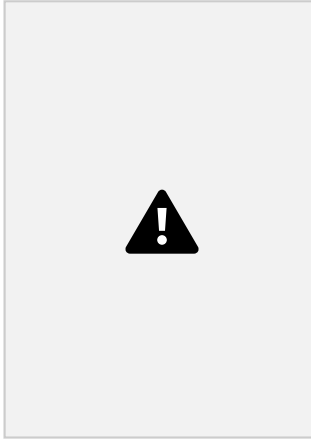
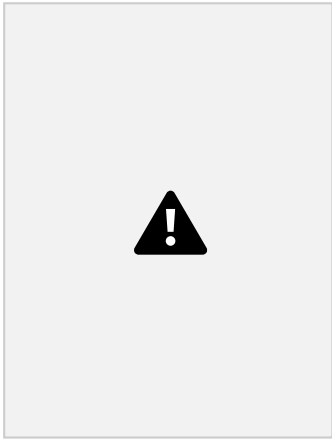
### Further Information

Colin McCahon: Artist, Gordon H. Brown, A.H. & A.W. Reed, Wellington, 1993 I Will Need Words: Colin McCahon's Word and Number Paintings, Wynstan Curnow, National Art Gallery, Wellington, 1984

Introducing Our New Zealand Artist: Colin McCahon, A. Betts and J. Ritche, Robert McDougal Art Gallery, Christchurch, 1985

Geoff Harris, 2008 ☺



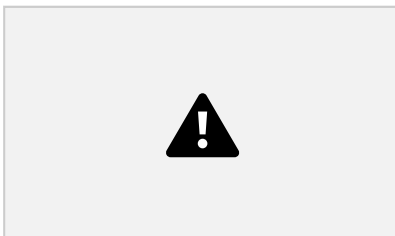


Geoff Harris, 2008 ☺

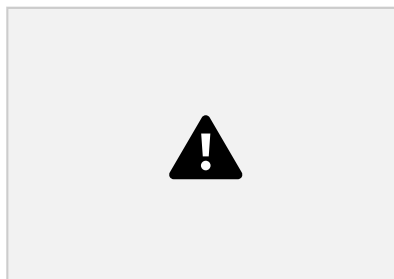
# Stanley Palmer

Born Turua, Coromandel, 1936

“My work is very tonal, which is why people relate it to the natural world and what the eye sees out there, ...I’m interested in tone more than colour....I’m also very interested in one area being whiter than everything else – the eye picks up something that’s slightly whiter than anything else.” (Palmer cited in O’Brien, p53)

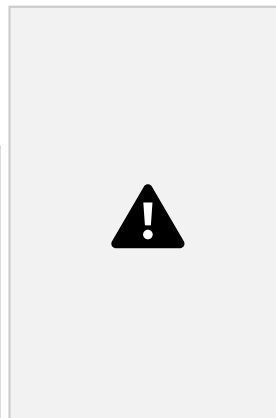


Above the Harbour,  
Akaroa, 1994.  
Oil on linen, 1300 x 1600.



## Key Features

Beside the Road,  
Karamea, 1992.  
Monoprint 1020 x 640.



On South Terrace – NZ  
Index XV11, 1995. Oil  
on linen 970 x 1660.

## Feature Significance

Use of landscape Conservation and the past human use of the land are shown in his artwork. The landscapes often show mans past influence on the landscape. The manmade features are often blended into the landscape through his use of tone and colour.

Spacial dimension Objects diminish in size as they move away in the picture.  
This creates a depth of space in the composition.

Simplified forms Real objects are often simplified or rounded to shapes in his compositions. This gives more emphasis to the tone and light the subject

Earthy colours He uses subdued natural colours that relate to the land.

Strong tonal contrast each work is lighter than any other, in

Dark areas contrast with light areas to order to capture the viewers attention.

create a sense of drama. One area of

Mood Creates an atmospheric response to the landscape through the use of tone and light.

Technique Paint or printing ink is blended and layered, often using a dry brush, blended style.

### **Further Information**

#### **Books**

Lands and Deeds, Profiles of Contemporary New Zealand Painters, Gregory O'Brien, Godwit Publishing Ltd, Auckland, 1996

Prints and Printmakers in New Zealand, Peter Cape, Collins, 1974

Geoff Harris, 2008 ☺



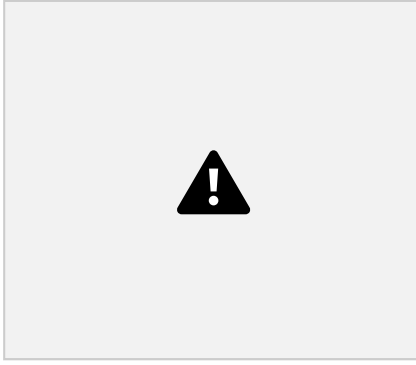


Geoff Harris, 2008 ☺

# John Pule

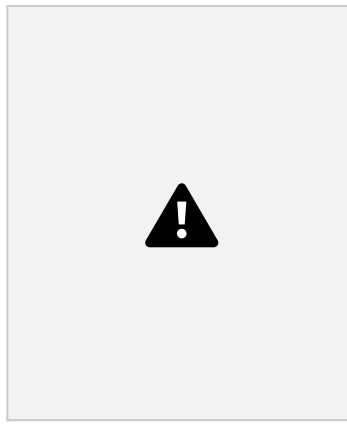
Born Niue 1962. Came to New Zealand 1964

“When you look down on the tapa, the patterns look like a plan of a village, or a plan of tracksgoing down to the ocean. I have also seen photo’s of old Niuean tapa, decorated with big circles, and painted in these cicles were twigs, branches and leaves.” (Pule cited in Mallon and Pereira, 1997)

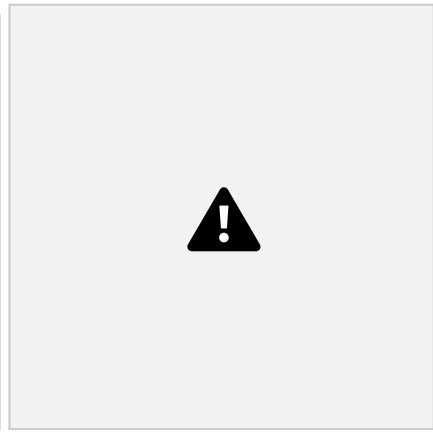


Nukulafalafa, 1994

Woodcut and lithograph, **Key Features**  
1/30 720mm x 720mm



Mahalo, 1995  
Oil on canvas



2060mm x 1710mm

Veveheua, 1994  
Lithograph, 4/8

### **Feature Significance**

Flat picture plane Elements are arranged on the surface of the composition with little attempt to create an illusion of receding space.

Linear elements Line is used to describe objects creating a graphic quality in the work. Line is used thinly or to describe symbols or objects in silhouette.

Strong tonal contrast and line to stand out clearly from each other.  
Dark tones are used over a white background which allows objects

Narrative Images of symbols, structures and stories are interwoven in his work to tell a story.

Grid Parts of the composition are often arranged by using a grid to separate ideas or create a focal point, or as a framing device.

Monochromatic Black or earth coloured pigments are used to contrast with a white background in many of the works. They are similar to the colours used in tapa.

Symbols He uses symbols from his Niuean heritage along with those invented by himself.

### **Further Information**

#### **Books**

100 New Zealand Paintings, Warwick Brown, Godwit Publishing Ltd, Auckland, 1995

Speaking In Colour. Conversations with artists of Pacific Island heritage, Sean Mallon and Pandora Fulimalo Pereira, Te Papa Press, Wellington, 1997





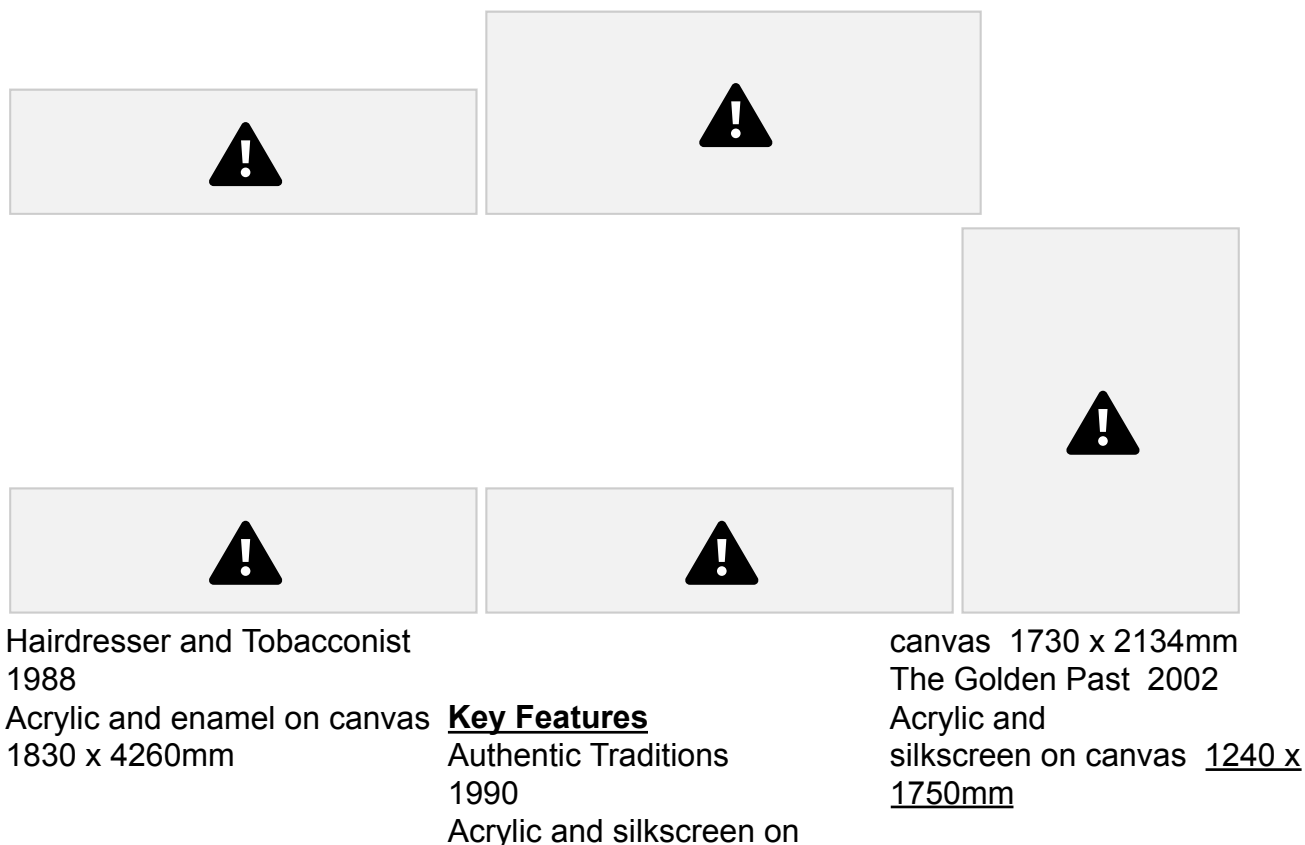
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**Ian Scott**

Born 1945, England. Moved to New Zealand 1952

“The copied paintings were mostly done much larger than the originals, in flatter, brighter colours

and with a looser technique...I tried to do them with a sense that I was doing a painting of a painting, rather than just copying.” (Scott cited in Brown, 1998, p.27)



### **Feature Significance**

- Appropriated Imagery from high culture (famous paintings) and low culture (DB logo) to show that all cultural symbols are equally important.
- Image Juxtaposition Unexpected combinations of imagery to surprise the viewer and create meaning. Mountains (land), Walters (culture), and the flag (politics) are all New Zealand icons in Authentic Traditions.
- Grid Structure Horizontal and vertical divisions between areas as well a square and rectangle inserts into a larger image. These are devices used to combine a number of different images but still retain order.
- Range of Techniques Some areas are painted with either enamel (shiny) or acrylic (flat) while other images are screen printed onto the painting. This technique influenced by the American Pop Artist Robert Rauschenberg. Create visual interest and reminds us that Scott is using borrowed images on purpose to reference the past.
- Range of Styles Flat paint, thick paint, faded and distorted images are all used to create decorative interest. They also help to integrate images taken from different stylistic sources.
- Colour Often more intense than the original and with less subtle variation. Almost comic like colour could indicate commercial popular issues rather than refined art issues.
- Scale Often much larger than the originals. This changes the way people relate to them as they become public cultural objects (like billboards) rather than private decorative artefacts (painting and sculpture)

## Further Information

Ian Scott, Warwick Brown, Marsden Press, Auckland, 1998

Geoff Harris, 2008 ☺



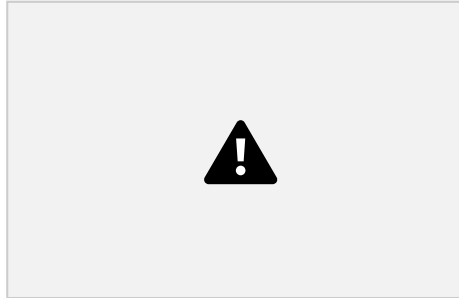
## Michael Shepherd

Born 1950, Waikato

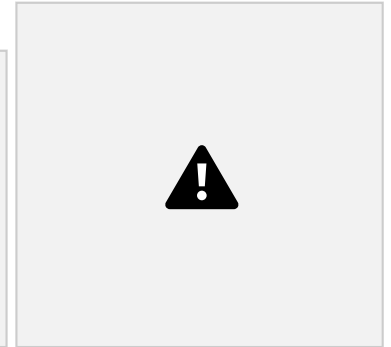
“The mental and imaginative reconstruction of our history is a challenge – there are no castles here, there were only pa and redoubt sites but you have to look closely at the land to detect where they were. Only bits remain here and there.” (Shepherd cited in O’Brien, 1996, p.112)



Looking For Mercer 1990  
Oil on board  
480 x 550mm



A corner of some Foreign  
Field that is Forever New  
Zealand 1991  
Oil on board  
163 x 223mm



Old Values 1997  
Oil on Linen 310 x 330mm

### Key Features

#### Feature Significance

Two Dimensional Images

Most of these images are taken from two dimensional materials like historic photographs, letters, envelopes and

documents. Shepherd always includes information (like text beneath the photo in Looking for Mercer) to remind us that it is not a real subject.

Sepia Tones Brown is the dominant colour in most images to remind us that these are historic themes. Images before the 1950s are usually recorded in black and white as colour photography hadn't been invented.

Documents Lost and obscure documents feature in many paintings. These have a beauty of their own but also remind us of the political plans and practices of the past.

Text Styles Shepherd uses two main types of text. Formal objective text where he accurately reproduces the original graphics (Old Values), and informal subjective text where he adds his own carefully chosen words (A corner of some Foreign Field).

Painting Technique Slow and meticulous 17<sup>th</sup> Century Dutch painting technique (Oil on linen) used to paint discarded scraps of paper. Shepherd is reminding us of the stature and importance of these documents.

Small Scale Influenced by the scale of the original material. Takes large historical issues and makes them very intimate and personal.

Inserts Colour insert in Looking for Mercer is a present day view of the same area. Reminds us that the even though things can change beyond recognition, the past is still influencing the present.

## Further Information

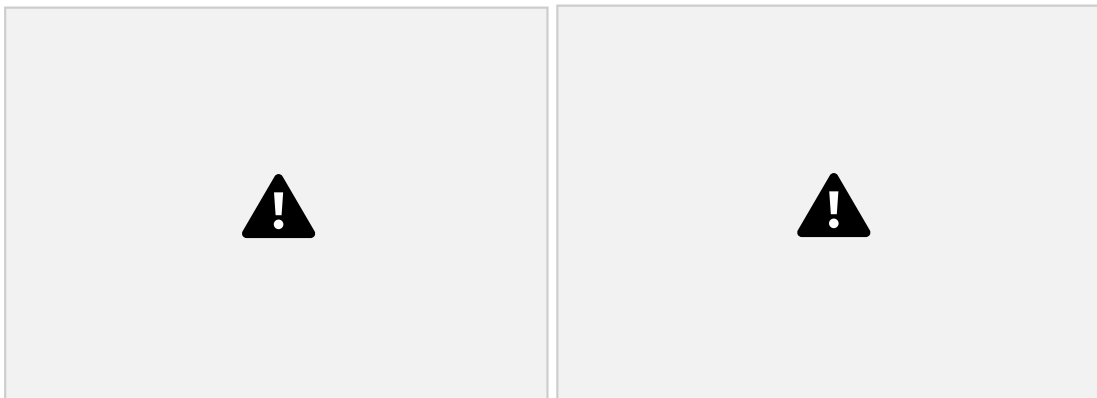
Lands and Deeds, Gregory O'Brien, Godwit Publishing, Auckland, 1996

Geoff Harris, 2008 ☺



## Kelcy Taratoa - (Ngaiterangi and Ngati Raukawa) "Graphic Streetwise, self portraiture"

"My work is a social commentary and investigates the link between history, social situation and identity creation. These are the concurrent themes are explored in relation to their impact on experience and paradigm". "My work and me as an artist I believe fit in being together we tell a common story about urban Maori; about the impact of colonialism in this country; and it makes a statement about acceptance of the self and others; and being an agent for change in terms of embracing and accepting diversity".



Episode 0022 2006 Episode 0018

### Key Features

#### Feature Significance

Pop Culture Objects and images drawn from contemporary youth culture – comics, toys, BMX, transformers, etc – Memory, fantasy – Big business getting rich by selling escapism to poor people

Urban Environment something imagined or remembered rather than realist. Often uses unusual dramatic angles like in comics.

Bright colours and Hard edges Stylistic qualities similar to comics – flat bright high saturated colours, with sharp edges and areas of negative space to balance against busy areas.

Objects and images drawn from urban environment – buildings, street signs, roads, traffic lights, cars. etc – Highly stylised and simplified to make them like

Self portrait Often places himself in the environment – to indicate the works are about Maori youth in modern cities – clash of cultures

Episodes Titles like a comic strip or chapters in an autobiography. Influence of comics – fantasising about his own life as a superhero – comment on youth blurring boundaries between fantasy and reality - "What I also find intriguing about all this is that these technologies that enable us to step outside our reality increasingly blur the line between the real and the unreal— the line is not so easily distinguished anymore."

Digital Hard edged computer graphic feel to some images – influence of digital technologies to record, manipulate and manage images

Large scale Big, bright – attract attention and entertain – but also no compromise demand – Street youth feel overlooked

Distorted scale and perspective sense of tension, unreal, discomfort – child's distorted view of world

Strangle low level views and small toys enlarged to giant proportions, dominating the landscape creates

Symbolism Street signs = Separated Neighbourhoods (Street gangs?)

Advertising = Influence of commercial capitalism on Maori youth

Empty spaces = barren soulless wasteland of modern cities?

Influences Shane Cotton – Exploring issues of Maori in contemporary NZ, Using modern images Surrealism  
– Strange distorted perspectives create sense of alienation and dislocation Pop Art – Cultural references  
and critiquing of modern values

Artist's Aim 1 – Identity 2 - Escapism

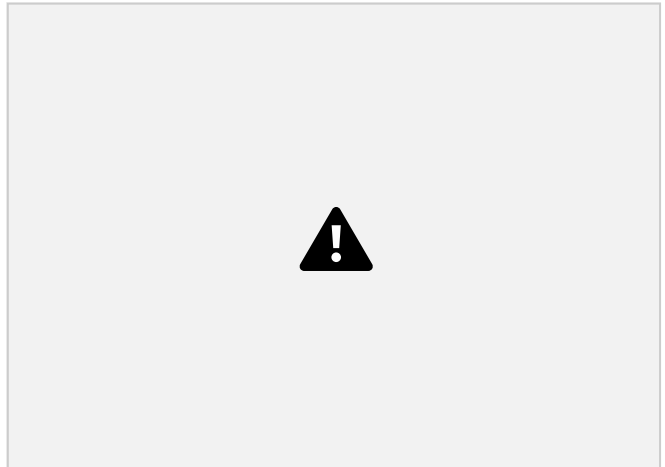
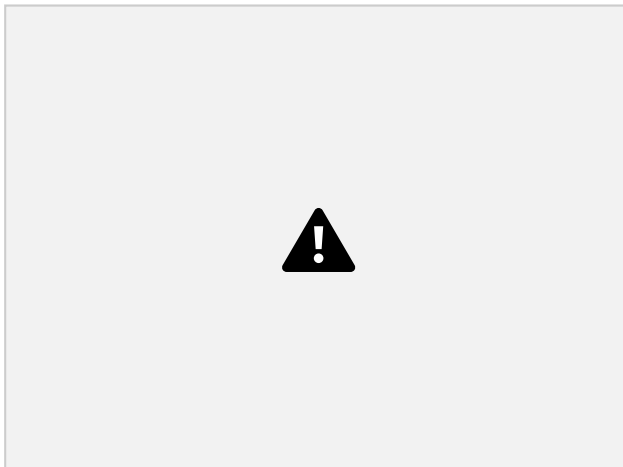
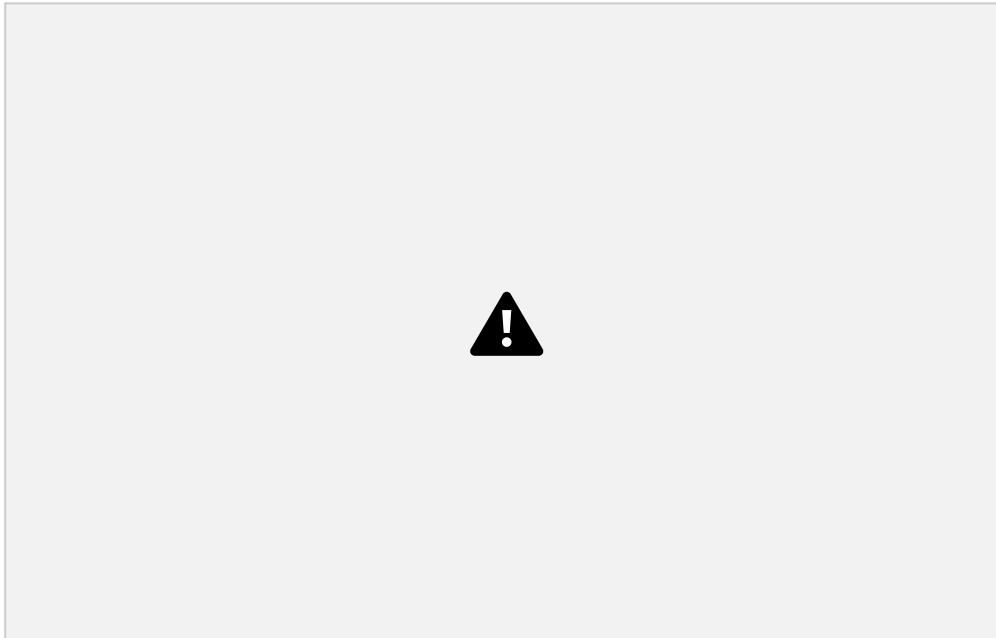
Taratoa explains that "there are three distinct areas of the world we live in."

focus: links between history, social-situation and  
identity-formation; ethical self-determination; and

individual perceptions – viewing and making sense of

Escaping from one's reality is a daily exercise whether  
we consciously engage or not," he says.

Geoff Harris, 2008 ☺





Geoff Harris, 2008 😊

# Gordon Walters

Born 1919 Wellington, Died 1995

“The form (koru motif) is used to establish relationships and is varied in both positive and negative forms so that an ambiguity between figure and ground is created. This gives the painting its life. One cannot read both at once so the eye is continually on the move.” (Walters cited in Sotheran and Saines, 1998, p.122)



Painting No 8 1965

## Key Features



Painting (AKA Te Whiti)  
1964

Rongotai 1970



## Feature Significance

Koru Motif The shape that is repeated again and again to make up a pattern. Walters said this was adapted from New Guinea and Maori Art but is not used in a direct way.

Op Art Geometric lines and circles with that are pure black and white with no blending or shading. Creates and optical vibration and hints of colour

between the lines.

Positive / Negative Rotation and reflection used to create variety with a careful balance of the positive and negative (Black and white) spaces. Can be seen as white forms on a black background or black forms on a white background.

Titles Maori title although Walters claimed “Te Whiti” was named after a street that he lived in Wellington rather than having a cultural reference. Some works left untitled or called Painting or Study to signify their abstract non-figurative nature

Appropriation Walters was accused by Ranginui Panaho (an art theory commentator) of ripping off Maori symbols without giving anything back to the culture. Other critics like Francis Pound said that Walters was the first to produce a new art that combined both Maori and Pakeha together to produce something new and unique.

Bi-Cultural Could be seen as combining Maori Motifs with Pakeha methods to create a uniquely New Zealand style

### **Further Information**

Gordon Walters, Michael Dunn, Auckland City Art Gallery, Auckland, 1983.

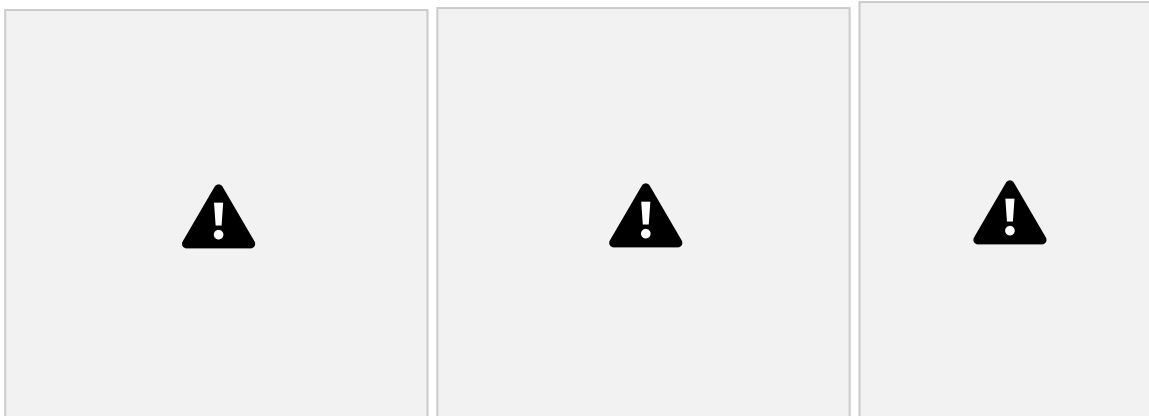
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Geoff Harris, 2008 ☺

# Dick Frizzell – born 1943, Auckland, New Zealand



Big Guy, 1982, enamel on  
board

## Key Features

### Feature Significance

Self Portrait as a Serious

Artiste, 1978

A1 King Mack, 1979, enamel  
on board

Grid

Composition

Sometimes pictures are divided into grid sections with  
each section being treated similarly in terms of

compositional layout and media. He may choose  
variations in colour ways and paint in a flat way to fill  
the area which references the effect of screen print. The  
arrangement of composition can also reflect the way  
comic books frames are used to tell a story.

Inserts Little inserted shapes or floating objects add alternate views or different imagery Text Frizzell's  
background is in advertising. He worked as an animator, commercial artist and illustrator. Often includes hand  
painted signs that reference our Kiwi 'No. 8 wire' culture and the kinds of signs seen on every dairy and  
roadside stall.

Appropriated imagery

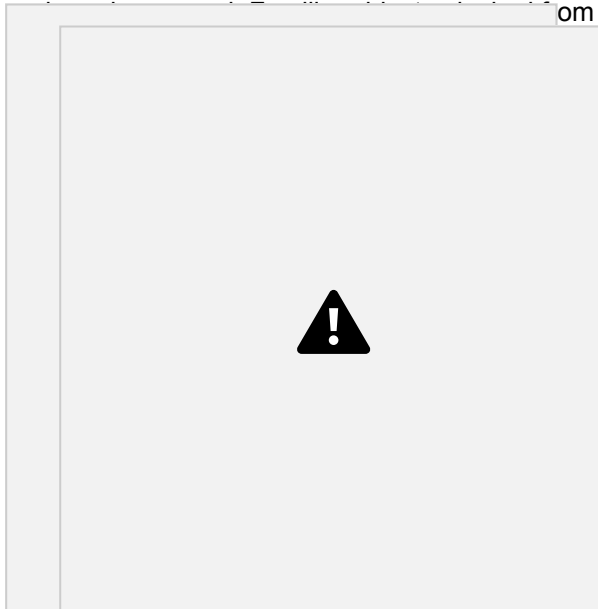
Monochrome and polychrome

Linear overlay and Outlining Brush Handling  
Techniques

Reference to Popular Culture

His training in advertising led him to draw on found images as source material. Appropriated source material from magazines, advertising images and books. Bases his work on pre-existing images.

Nostalgic icons of past popular culture such as comic book hero The Phantom and NZ's Four Square logo



Obvious reference to Andy Warhol one of the most famous of Pop Artists in his pictorial choices. See Brown Squares, 2005.

In 1992 created a popular but also controversial series incorporating the Maori motif of the Tiki. Many people took offence at this appropriation of a Maori motif and the presentation of it in a comic book manner. Seemed to trivialise a cultural treasure. Frizzell was more interested in the commercialisation of traditional images by the tourism industry than debates regarding cultural appropriation.

Colour is used to organise the picture and control where the viewer looks. Often chooses either Mono or Polychrome for a single work, not combined in a work. Bold, bright, primary colour references advertising and comic illustration.

Used to create complexity, layered meanings and to reference the comic book style of outlining areas of colour.

Uses scratch back, drawing back into paint with pencil, stippling and dry brush techniques as well as rough gestural painting techniques combined with carefully painted areas. Includes objects from our everyday lifestyle and culture. Items that are consumable, materialistic, fashionable and represent what we want and how we live now.

Identical 'process' dribbles compete with actual dribbles. Material...the interplay of rendered (copied) brush marks and

New Zealand painting in the art culture of his youth – 1970's. Has blurred the boundaries of high and low art and what should and shouldn't be painted

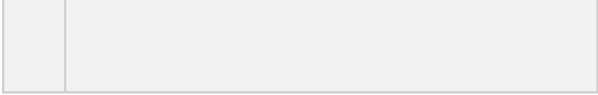
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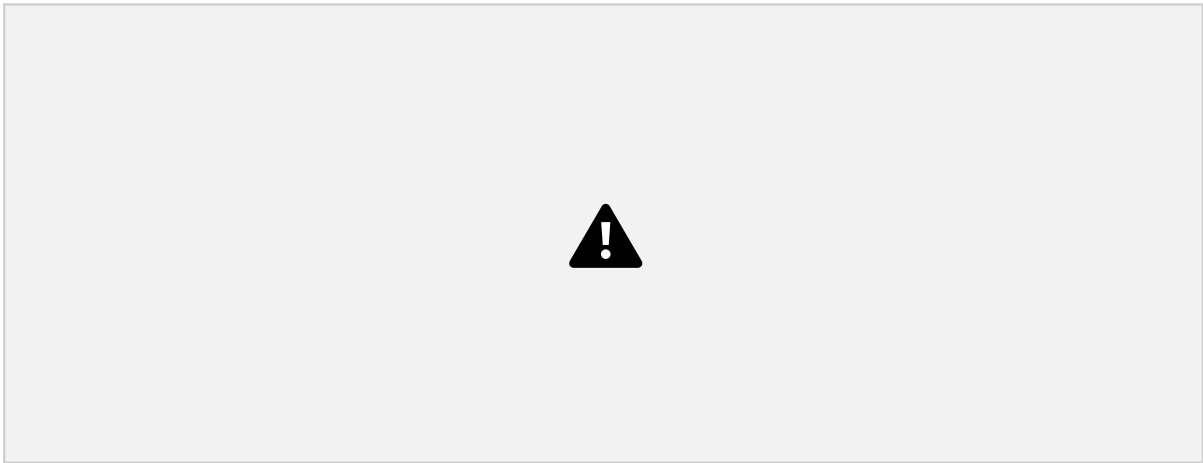
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ste. City Gallery Wellington/Dunedin Public Art Gallery.

Geoff Harris, 2008 ☺



Good Value, 1981, enamel on board Holy Mackerel, 1978, enamel on canvas



Geoff Harris, 2008 ☺

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## **Key Features**

### **Feature Significance**

Colour Reflect contemporary popular and street culture and are opposite to restrained intellectual art. She uses strong black and red associated with graphic novels, graffiti art, love, sex and death, alternative / underground scenes – punk, rock, Goth, tattoo...etc. And juxtaposes this with pastel pinks, blues and yellows associated with children's toys and stories etc.

Pop Culture Influences Imagery influenced by Betty Boop, Nightmare before Christmas, tattoo art, graffiti art, cartoons and comic illustration, 1960's mass produced big eye prints, rock n roll, street culture and fashion, underground art, Japanese anime and collectable toy industry – responding to the real world around her – embracing mass market / street and low art rather than intellectual conceptual art that people can't relate to or understand.

Radiating Compositions Often has large central figure – smaller figures and objects surround it and often are angled toward the centre directing the eye and creating focal point.

Style Some paintings are sharp and clean like commercial graphics or illustration while others are painterly and messy like graffiti art. This reflects the human vs. mechanical nature of our world. Mass produced vs. hand made, street vs. gallery, formal vs. expressive, control vs. accidental. She has created a uniquely recognisable Misery style.

Scale Large outdoor wall works vs. small intimate work made for gallery space

Mixed-media and techniques references the surfaces that street artists use –

Different types of media used all together. found surfaces. Not bound by conventional

Stencil, enamel spray, collage, acrylic, air brush, ideas of oil on canvas to make expensive

house paint etc. to reference the materials used artwork for galleries. Challenges what is

by graffiti/street artists – using whatever they can appropriate subject matter and techniques for art

get for free, cheap or steal. Surface is galleries. Rejects intellectual conceptual art

appropriate to the image and/or idea – approaches.

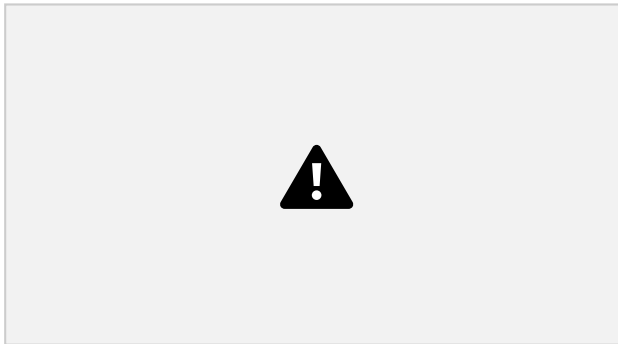


*"In essence so many of his paintings are about staying not leaving, about enduring, hanging on. How do you persist and exist here, glory in what you see, respect what has gone before, what remains, and what will live on? What does live on? Nothing organic remains the same; little of what we, humans, make is assured of continuance. But a painting might last, a poem, a story. The land tells a story, the dilapidated buildings testify to other stories bound up in the land's story, and the clouds are transient but keep on coming, forming and reforming.*

*Sydney's world, his wilderness where the spirit is tested and strengthened by a pure airiness, great space, is almost always unforested. Or is it? If you can locate yourself here it is in a forest of loneliness, temperamentally, where you are exposed to yourself and everything else. You need strength of purpose, of character; you need courage to stand up here and not avert the eyes. Only through distance can you find yourself. Beyond the far blue, gold, or dun hills and mountains, beneath cirrus edged with gold, there's a self to be reckoned with.*



*Do we explore the land, or does it explore us?" (Brian Turner about Grahame Sydney's Art)*



## **Key Features**

### **Feature Significance**

#### **Iconic**

#### **Landscape**

#### **Absence / Presence**

Massive sense of "AWE" – powerful beauty (rather than pretty or decorative) Desolate, vast, makes man feel small and insignificant –

Mans objects breaking down = Landscape more powerful than man Similar to Casper David Friedrich  
Man's presence is often included (building, telegraph pole etc) But figures not include = Lonely isolated (When figures are painted it is one at a time with no companions or interaction = alone, isolated) – similar to Edward Hopper

**Wabi Sabi** Japanese aesthetic where we appreciate the beauty of a weathered object – bleached, peeling paint, rust, decay = beautiful

**Nostalgia** "This is the way rural New Zealand used to be. You know, you can take all your fancy gadgets, your technology things, your Sky television. Forget them. You can come down here, fish, swim, have a round of golf and a drink. This is what life really is." – Grahame Sydney

**Still / Calm** Often very calm quiet pictures = timeless meditative quality

Created through vast empty areas (negative space) and mainly horizontal/verticals

**Photorealism** Super accurate, fine detail – Big part of their appeal is the virtuoso craftsmanship the Sydney achieves – big paintings take weeks to finish – so people that know nothing about art can appreciate how much effort and skills has gone into each painting.

**Idealised** Subtle changes to the real view – leaving out things that would distract from the main image.

**Naturalistic** colour range **Theodore Rousseau**

But sometime heightened to increase the drama – slightly peace in the empty open spaces of the unspoilt landscape "Whenever I'm away I feel worse and more contrasting of slightly more intense colour saturation. whenever I come back and look over the Waitaki I feel better and I can't explain that - that's just me."

19<sup>th</sup> Century philosopher – believed that man was corrupted by civilisation and that man can only find

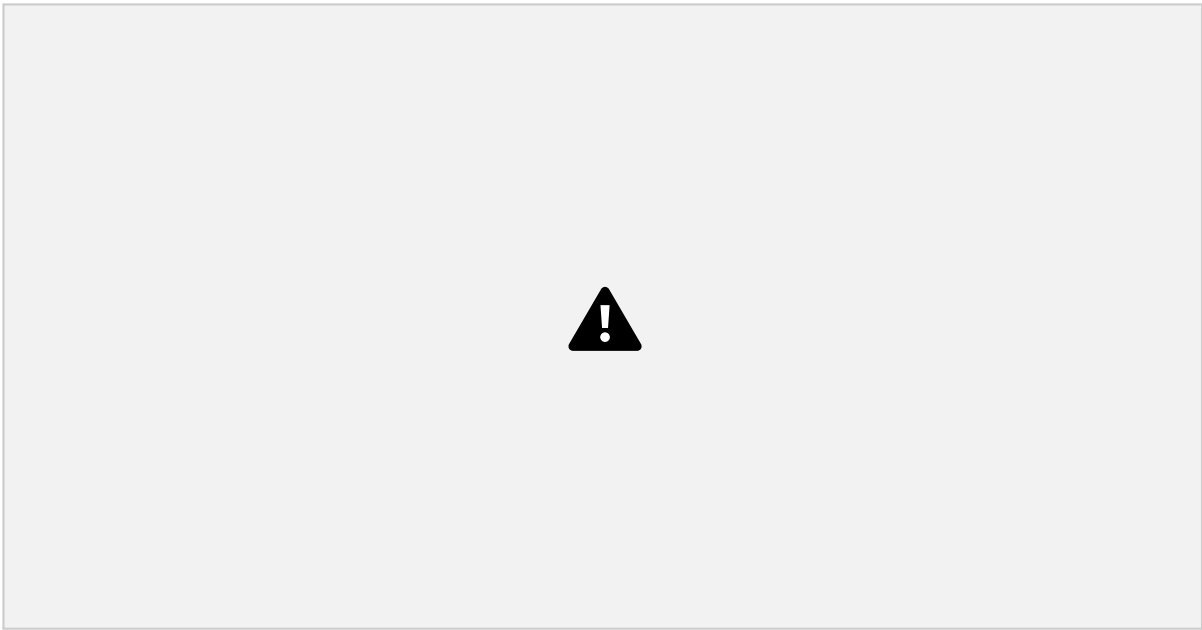
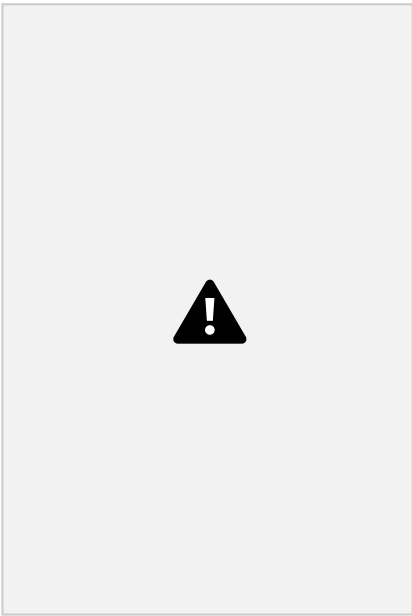
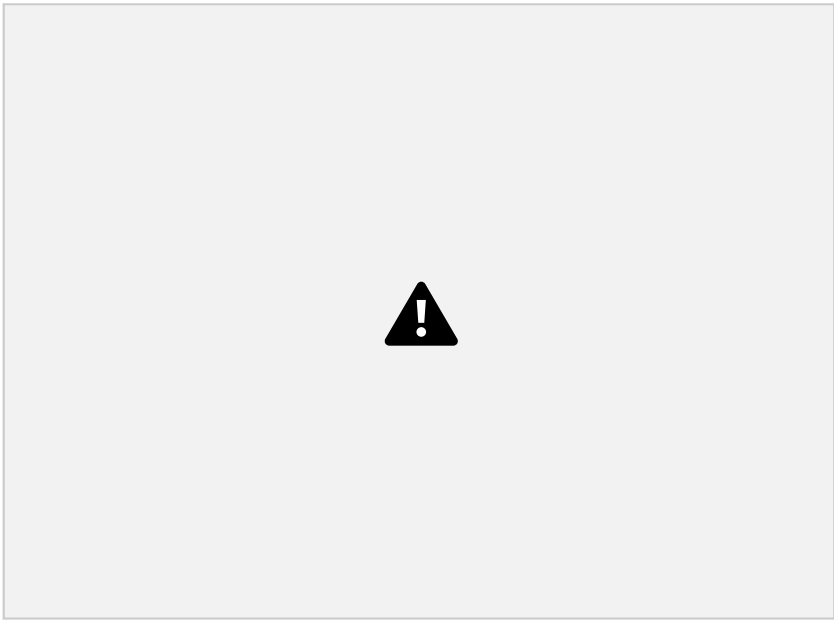
Geoff Harris, 2008 ☺





Geoff Harris, 2008 ☺





Geoff  
Harris, 2008 ☺

