

# 1

## **Leonard Mitchell**

Born Palmerston North 1925

Died Coggeshall, Essex, England 1980

### ***Summer in the Mokauiti Valley***

1956

Oil on canvas

Winner of the 1956 Kelliher Art Competition

The £500 prize for the inaugural Kelliher was an average worker's annual pay and the equivalent to \$27,000 today. In the *New Zealand Herald* review, under the unkind headline: 'Art prize fails to draw notable work', the critic Imric Porsolt wrote that Mitchell's success was 'possibly due to the lusty shapes of his trees and sheep standing proud before the listless background of his *Mokauiti Valley*'. The location is south of Te Kuiti.

Mitchell's paint is rich, luscious and vibrantly descriptive. Not since the 19th century had the country been painted so green and with so many greens. Idealised, verging on cliché, it is a rural idyll, as vividly observed as it is painted.

It was reproduced in colour in the December 1956 issue of Sir Henry's magazine, *The Mirror*, with Mitchell's revealing text: 'I happen to know the family that lives there; I knew their struggles and their ambitions. The picture is not so much one of scenic grandeur but of human aspiration. I saw the valley as it was in the beginning, when man first went there and began the long task of moulding it, with much toil, for the well-being of their loved ones. To me the scene is a symbol of our country's greatness, a symbol of man's courage, perseverance and achievement'.

After his win Mitchell was a guest of Sir Henry's at his Puketutu Island home, where he made several paintings there including a quasi family portrait of the family on horseback. However, there was soon a falling out because, before being reproduced in *The Mirror* and without consultation, Sir Henry had painted out the calf, originally just to the right of the sheep.

## 2

### **Douglas Badcock**

Born Balclutha 1922

Died Queenstown 2009

#### ***Boat Harbour, Nugget Point***

1959

Oil on canvas

2nd Prize, 1959 Kelliher Art Competition. Kelliher Art Trust

Badcock, who would become one of the foremost painters of his generation, was born not far from Nugget Point, which is at the northern end of Otago's Caitlins coast. The historic lighthouse, built in 1896, little more than a blob of white, is clearly visible and below are some small rocky islets, The Nuggets. Badcock has also indicated some buildings, probably the lighthouse keeper's house (the light was not automated until 1989) now, at a guess, where the visitor car park is situated.

This is a classic, bold and forward-looking landscape of its era, confidently and colourfully painted with thick, creamy brushstrokes. It could easily have been given first place, but William Dargie (knighted 1963), who was the judge for this the first of his four Kelliher judging stints, passed it over for Peter McIntyre's underwhelming *Sunday in Dunedin* (donated by Sir Henry Kelliher to the National Art Gallery).

The artist has carefully and cleverly constructed his composition around a small shed which clearly marks its centre. The strong diagonals, implied by the rocks and the landforms, aided by the bright sunlight from the left, make for a perfectly balanced composition, so the whole scene can be taken in without the eye being obviously drawn to any particular feature. Nevertheless, there is an almost mysterious pull from the bottom right corner, through the white boats, alluded to in the title, towards the lighthouse.

### 3

#### **David Barker**

Born Chichester, England 1941

#### ***Beach strays, Takatu***

1960

Oil on board

2nd Prize, 1960 Kelliher Art Competition. Kelliher Art Trust

In *David Barker: The Man and His Art* (1983), the artist wrote: 'Rather than spend time with fellow students [at Elam in the early '60s] I withdrew to the farmlands especially where they went down to the sea. I would watch over the top of my board the light on the profiles and forms, the changing colours of the land, rendering them into watercolour, pastels and oils. While my contemporaries took note of the Art Movements illustrated in magazines from New York studios and assembled their repertoires, I sat in the wind on a peninsula and assembled mine.'

Takatu is at the tip of the Tawharanui peninsula, north of Auckland, now a regional park. Barker was given permission by the owners to use the shearer's hut shown in the painting. Then access was by a long winding gravel road from Warkworth but Barker returned there several times to work. He recalled hearing penguins under the floor during the night and thinking it curious the cattle would spend time out on the beach by day. 'The painting was started *alla prima* full size on the hillside... [and] completed at home. No sketches were made though I started a number of other oil paintings there>.

The competition judge, Rubery Bennett, commented: 'here is water that looks like water', a prescient observation for Barker went on to make light reflected on and or seen through water an enduring theme. In addition, the colour hues and values in *Beach strays* hint at the artist's future palette as does the compositional device of the high horizon.

In the next Kelliher Barker won the Special Prize (for an artist under 21), the judge, equally prescient, describing him as 'an enterprising and gifted youngster'.

#### 4

##### **Peter McIntyre**

Born Dunedin 1910

Died Wellington 1995

##### ***The Manuherikia, Central Otago***

1960

Oil on board

3rd Prize, 1960 Kelliher Art Competition. Kelliher Art Trust

Peter McIntyre had been an official war artist in World War II. He had his first solo exhibition in Wellington in 1952 by which time he was already represented in the National Art Gallery and other regional art museums. He would soon come to epitomise the public's perception of the professional artist.

The Manuherikia River rises in the St Bathans and Hawkdun Ranges and joins the Clutha River at Alexandra. An educated guess might situate the view near Omakau, with a glimpse of the Raggedy Range in the background.

McIntyre's elevated position, possibly atop a bluff, afforded an extensive view of the river and valley landscape and allowed him to include signs of habitation and everyday activity. The author Peter Cape suggested that McIntyre's appeal was 'his crisp treatment of his subjects and his choice of the subjects themselves. His paintings invariably have about them the qualities of a quick-caught glimpse of a memorable moment', often resulting in 'archetypal New Zealand-ness'. We don't know if the artist actually saw the bathing figures but with a few deft brushstrokes he makes them, their clothes and reflection totally convincing.

One of the star paintings in the Trust's collection, the Australian judge Rubery Bennett placed *The Manuherikia* third after the Barker (3) and that year's winner Owen Lee's *Midsummer haze, Waiwera Valley* (donated by Sir Henry Kelliher to the National Art Gallery).

## 5

### **Cedric Savage**

Born Christchurch 1901

Died Aegina, Greece 1969

### ***Summer, Hawke's Bay***

1961

Oil on canvas

1st Prize, 1961 Kelliher Art Competition

Savage had been one of the country's most popular painters of his generation, his paintings selling well at the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts annual exhibition in Wellington. After ten years in the Nelson area, interest in his work waning and sales reduced, he considered himself as 'thrown to oblivion' in this 'country of blockheads'. So in 1955 he sought recognition in Europe where he lived at times in conditions close to poverty.

*Summer, Hawke's Bay* was painted on one of his rare return visits in 1960-61, probably in search of funds and renewed recognition, which this painting duly delivered. But to ensure he would become the oldest and most experienced painter to win a Kelliher, Savage put aside the loose, colourful, contemporary style of his Mediterranean sojourn and returned to a less painterly and conservative approach.

It is probably a view in central Hawke's Bay, with probably the Kaweka Range in the background. Its elevated view suggests he was on a road bridge overlooking a river. It was painted in the studio but most likely based on drawings and possibly a *plein air* oil sketch made on the spot. The golden light contrasting with the deep purple of the distant ranges makes for an evocative, nostalgic view.

And there would have been nostalgia in the air; for whatever reason Savage had chosen his 60<sup>th</sup> year for this return visit, which would be his last. It was for that earlier more successful era, the 1940s, when someone wrote: Savage 'captures the golden sunlight of New Zealand in its most halcyon moods with devices that can only be called brilliant'. And that year's judge, William Dargie (1912-2003), clearly recognised those brilliant devices and gave the older man the guernsey.

## 6

### **Austen Deans**

Born Riccarton 1915

Died Peel Forest 2011

### ***Kea Hut and Mt Sefton***

1962

Oil on board

1st Prize, 1962 Kelliher Art Competition. Kelliher Art Trust

Because of the accuracy of Deans' view we can exactly identify the scene; Mt Sefton is the highest peak, with Sebastopol just in front to the left and The Footstool to the right. We can also locate where he took the view from; he was positioned on the eastern shore of the Tasman River at the end of a long track that runs north from the Mount Cook Station huts. On the topographic map of the area Kea hut is shown just south of Tasman Point, just across from where the Mt Cook Airport is today.

Today the spot is not far north of where the Alps 2 Ocean Cycle Trail crosses the Tasman River then runs south to reach the Braemar Road at the Jollie River. When Deans visited, however, it would have been quite a trek. Many of his paintings were made on tramps which he undertook laden with all the required painting paraphernalia including a supply of boards, easel, oils and brushes, so he could paint *en plein air* in front of his motif.

Deans seems to sculpt his mountains out of paint, bathing the hut and the promontory in light, so there is a progression of alternating dark and light from foreground to the cloudless sky.

Deans had been an Assistant War Artist in World War II. After recuperating from war injuries and a spell studying in London, he returned to settle at Peel Forest as a painter and mountaineer and became one of our best-loved painters of the mountains and the high country.

## 7.

### **Derek Ball**

Born Masterton 1944

#### ***Morning, Matahiwi***

1962

Oil on canvas on board

Special Prize, 1962 Kelliher Art Competition. Kelliher Art Trust

Living in the Nelson area since 2002, the sculptor Derek Ball now makes his innovative three-dimensional landscapes in resin. But, as this painting reveals, the 18-year-old seventh-former was already a sophisticated landscape painter, taking out the 1962 Special Prize for artists under 21, the year before he went up to Auckland to study at the Elam School of Fine Arts.

Ball's artistic talent was first encouraged by his musical parents. His Standard 4 teacher, recognising his precocious ability, gave him his first oil paints and his father made him a donkey easel with folding legs so he could paint outdoors. Noelene Bruning, his art teacher at Hutt Valley High School, would see him through his Fine Arts Prelim. He also had some private lessons in Eastbourne with Ruth Browne, who had studied at the Slade in London. She helped him select his colours and set them out on the palette.

Ten kilometres from Masterton, a family friend, the sole charge teacher at the Matahiwi School, rented the Ball family a house for the holidays. Ball was friendly with the neighbouring farmer and would wander over his land shooting rabbits with his air rifle when he wasn't painting.

*Morning, Matahiwi* has all the hallmarks of being painted outside in front of his motif. Looking directly west across the Wairarapa Valley to the Tararua one can guess that the cloud-obscured peak near the centre of this late summer view is Mount Holdsworth, just 15 km away.

Ball uses dryish paint, thinly and sketchily applied to distinguish his forms and unify the overall composition. The resulting easy informality belies the youngster's skill beyond his years and it is no surprise that he not only left Elam with an Honours Diploma but in 1968 went on to Dunedin as the third Frances Hodgkins Fellow.

## 8

### **Peggy Spicer**

Born Auckland 1908

Died Auckland 1984

#### ***Waterfront Scene***

196

Oil on Board

2nd Prize, 1963 Kelliher Art Competition. Kelliher Art Trust

When *Waterfront Scene* garnered Spicer Second Prize in 1963 (between Austen Deans and Peter McIntyre) she was the most senior painter after Cedric Savage to achieve Kelliher success. She knew Auckland's waterfront area well; it had been a favourite subject for John Weeks' students at Elam School of Art. The painting records the appearance of what was called the Viaduct Basin, a commercial harbour used mainly by fishing boats as in the picture. It was totally redeveloped for the 2000 America's Cup and is now a marina surrounded by restaurants and bars.

With lots of points of interest, human activity and local colour, Spicer successfully interpreted the Kelliher 'rules' for that year's judge, Australian landscape painter John Loxton. Loxton had visited New Zealand to paint in 1946 and as a *plein-airiste* himself he would have been drawn to Spicer's fresh and confident brushwork. However, the composition is too complex and the paint handling too measured to have been painted, or at least completed *in situ*.

Spicer appears to have accurately rendered the scene, probably the area closest to the end of Quay Street. Importantly, her viewpoint from the wharf looking down to the moored vessels at low tide, ensures there is no horizon or sky. She takes in the warehouses or cool stores behind a steam engine and flatbed railway truck and lorry. The prominent white fishing boat with the man on the foredeck is the *Dorothy* and she still exists. The *Ionero*, one of the Harbour Board's Blue Boats, is moored next to the distinctive marine crane.



**Douglas Badcock**

Born Balclutha 1922

Died Queenstown 2009

***Head of Wakatipu from Bennett's Bluff***

1965

Oil on board

1st Prize, 1965 Kelliher Art Competition. Kelliher Art Trust

After garnering Second Prize in 1959 Badcock managed a Merit Prize in 1960 and Third Prize in 1962 before winning with this classic view of Lake Wakatipu, selected by that year's judge, British landscape painter Claude Muncaster.

The artist chose his spot on the Glenorchy-Queenstown Road, almost certainly where the Bennett's Bluff Lookout is now. It's a totally still and clear day, the lake glassy smooth, the foreground a patchwork of rocks and grasses. We are looking north towards Glenorchy and Paradise beyond, with the snow-covered peaks featuring Mt Earnslaw in the far distance.

This is a slick, fast painting, impressing by its strong shapes and colouring, which result in a classic and attractive South Island landscape - postcard perfect. Mobil's advertising agency must have thought so too since the view features in a current television commercial. Would it be too fanciful to think that Badcock's painting was the inspiration?

One of the leading landscape painters of his generation his first solo exhibition in Wellington in 1960 sold out in two days. A reviewer at the time described him as 'a realistic painter and absolutely sincere with a natural talent and a high technical standard ... A master of the New Zealand landscape, he paints New Zealand as he sees it'.

Perhaps unsurprisingly there are two paintings by Badcock in the personal collection of HM Queen Elizabeth II, gifts from Queenstown to her mother and to her.

## 10

### **Rodger Harrison**

Born 1931 Wellington

Died 2012 Waikanae

### ***Tokaanu, Lake Taupo***

1965

Oil on board

3rd Prize, 1965 Kelliher Art Competition. Kelliher Art Trust

A year after Harrison made this painting construction began to transform Tokaanu from a village into a hydro-electric town and the centre of the Tongariro Power Scheme. Looking south, the view is from an elevated spot, probably the lookout overlooking Waihi Bay, on the south western shore of Lake Taupo. Harrison uses SH41, heading to Turangi to join the Desert Road, as a diagonal device which both divides the picture in two and leads our eye towards the distant volcanic peaks. The conical hill is Maunganamu - or Mosquito Hill, around which the Tokaanu Intake curves to the hydro station which is now prominent between the town and the base of the maunga.

The little headland in the foreground features a large house, a jetty and boats pulled up on the shore. Today it is occupied by the Braxmere/ Lakeland House complex.

The foreground trees with their variety of greens are enlivened with parallel lines as if dragged through with a comb. The painting is structured not only around the diagonal, but the stark contrast between the vivid blue of Taupo and the yellow of the mid-ground, sandwiched between the dark tones of foreground and mountains beyond.

Influenced by the graphic art and illustration of his day job in advertising in which such approaches to image making are commonplace, Harrison would develop a distinctive style, which in turn would contribute to his Kelliher success. After gaining a Merit Prize in 1960 and coming third with this painting Harrison won the Kelliher in 1968, 1969 and 1971.

**Ian Scott**

Born Bradford, England 1945

Died Auckland 2013

***Low Tide, Anawhata***

1965

Oil on board

Special Prize, 1965 Kelliher Art Competition. Kelliher Art Trust

Scott was the last of the three young immigrants from England to win the Special Prize before it was dropped, apparently from lack of interest. Already a good drawer, Scott attended Kelston Boys' High School in West Auckland, where he was taught by Rex Head a landscape painter and regular Kelliher Art Award entrant. Head also helped Scott develop a painting style suited to the Kelliher, which he first entered in 1962, still a schoolboy.

Scott also took Colin McCahon's classes in the attic of the Auckland Art Gallery before going to Elam School of Art in 1964. There he painted *Low Tide, Anawhata*. Anawhata on Auckland's west coast is between Te Henga (Bethells Beach) and Piha. The painting is traditional in composition, the darks and light areas balanced, competent reflections and movement of the waves, the figures almost flicked onto the beach. The paint is applied with the fast, assured strokes of the palette knife, fashionable at the time. This is the slick and bravura painting of a tyro and, unsurprisingly, following this Kelliher success, Scott's paintings were popular and sold well.

After having essayed a New Zealand kind of Pop Art, at times quite controversially, Scott became best known for his hard-edged *Lattice* abstracts. However, he enjoyed painting landscapes, especially *en plain air* and he continued to do so throughout the rest of his career.

## 12

### **Peter Mardon**

Born Christchurch 1937

#### ***Lyttelton Harbour***

1966

Oil on canvas

1st Prize, 1966 Kelliher Art Competition. Kelliher Art Trust

Ahead of the much better-known Colin Wheeler and Robert Watson, Australian portrait and landscape painter Alan Baker awarded Mardon first prize for this immediately appealing painting.

Mardon's scene is the Governors Bay jetty, where in earlier times the ferry from Lyttelton docked. It was probably painted from the boat builder Lionel Jefcoate's slip, which was since demolished. The shallow anchorage required the long wharf which suits Mardon's compositional needs, taking the viewer's eye towards the middle of the scene, where the Sugar Loaf towers above in the background.

The centre point of the composition is the patch of sunlight just above the end of the wharf and the line of the far shore, parallel to that, divides the composition: water-land-sky. The entire painting is consistently handled whatever zone Mardon works in but most effective is the crisscross brushstrokes for the water in the foreground. Another compositional device is the way the shape of the mountain is echoed in reverse in the disposition of the clouds.

Mardon, a self-taught artist, has lived and painted in Christchurch all his life, regularly exhibiting with the Canterbury Society of Arts and the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts in Wellington although he has not exhibited recently. *Lyttelton Harbour* gave him his only podium finish although he had won the first of his six Merit Prizes in 1960. He was also a finalist in the third and final Hays Ltd Art Competition in 1963.

## 13

### **Robert Watson**

Born Auckland 1911

Died Wellington 1980

#### ***Early Morning, Queenstown***

1966

Oil on board

3rd Prize, 1966 Kelliher Art Competition. Kelliher Art Trust

Watson's paintings were included in the Kelliher Art Competition exhibitions from 1959, when he received a Merit Prize, to 1968. This painting was the first to be placed and the following year he won first prize.

In a way this painting is all about light and shade. Watson would have been up early to capture the strong morning light and the distinct contrasts between the sunlit, the shaded and the shadowed. The Remarkables are still mostly in shadow as is the left half of the town. While at the bottom left corner a tallish building with a flagstaff out of the picture creates a deep shadow; the sunlight catching the right side, including the only signs of life, two figures, and a car.

*Early Morning, Queenstown* would have been of particular interest to Sir Henry Kelliher because it features the then DB-owned Eichardt's Hotel, the large red-roofed building in the centre right. Established during the Gold Rush it became Eichardt's Queen's Arms Hotel enlarged and much changed over the years. The painting featured in the DB Breweries calendar for 1969 and was accompanied by this comment: 'the quiescent mood of a township resting on the shore of Lake Wakatipu is well depicted in this artist's unusual and colourful conception.'

Whether consciously or not, by giving third to this townscape, the judge, Australian painter Alan Baker, covered all the bases, since first prize went to a coastal scene, Mardon's *Lyttelton Harbour* (12) and second went to high country landscape by Colin Wheeler.

## 14

### **Brian Halliday**

Born Wanaka 1936

Died Wanaka 1994

### ***The Outlet, Lake Wanaka***

1967

Oil on board

3rd Prize, 1967 Kelliher Art Competition. Kelliher Art Trust

The Otago artist Brian Halliday studied at the Dunedin Technical College School of Art and is strongly associated with Wanaka. Halliday had only turned professional five years earlier, setting up his studio at Albert Town, not far from where this was painted.

*The Outlet, Lake Wanaka* was his first Kelliher podium finish, after a Merit in 1962 and before taking first prize in 1970. At Lake Wanaka's southern end, the Outlet near Albert Town, is where it drains into the Clutha River, the longest river in the South Island. Dublin Bay is on the right. In the centre is the southern end of The Peninsula with Mt Alta beyond to the left and Mt Albert on the right. This is almost by definition a classic Kelliher picture and the kind of quintessential South Island view which earned Halliday his reputation.

In its painterly handling the late summer scene appears effortless, the intensity of the glassy lake surface smoothly presented, contrasting with the vibrant brushwork of the foreground vegetation and shore, with the mountain range and wispy clouds providing the dramatic backdrop.

Halliday also painted - and bred - horses. His book *Central Otago Paintings* (with Paul Powell) was published in 1972.

## 15

### **Colin Wheeler**

Born Dunedin 1919

Died Oamaru 2012

#### ***Cattle Muster, Lake Hawea***

1969

Oil on board

3rd Prize 1969 Kelliher Art Competition

Wheeler has a special place not only as an Otago painter but as an artist whose paintings and writings documented sheep stations throughout the country in his popular books. In 1966, Wheeler quit teaching at Waitaki Boys' High School to travel and paint full time. He never won the Kelliher outright. His first success was the first of his five Merit Prizes in 1958, followed by three seconds.

Despite being a strong Kelliher subject, combining its distinctive landscape with its 'associated human activities' (as per the guidance for entrants), *Cattle Muster, Lake Hawea* only gained him a third. Viewed from the west side of the lake, perhaps from the Lookout on SH6, we look directly east to the distinctive mountain range on the other side of the lake.

Instead of reflecting the curve of the mountains in the lake itself, Wheeler echoes it in the curved foreground with the cattle and musterers. He cleverly uses the superbly painted tussocks at the bottom left as a foreground anchor for the eye, balanced by the bright sunlit clouds at top right. The artist seems to have frozen a moment in time in more ways than one. One of the masters of high country painting at the top of his game.

**Rodger Harrison**

Born 1931, Wellington

Died 2012, Waikanae

***Skippers Canyon***

1971

Oil on Board

First Prize, 1971 Kelliher Art Competition. Kelliher Art Trust

Rodger Harrison was one of the most successful Kelliher entrants. After gaining a Merit Prize in 1960 and a third (No.10) in 1965, Harrison won the Kelliher three times, in 1968, 1969 and 1971 with this painting, probably the last time he entered. (He was also a winner of the National Bank watercolour and mural awards).

Brian Halliday had won the previous year with a vivid view of Skippers Canyon and the Shotover River and one suspects that Harrison felt he should essay another South Island subject, in contrast with the recent subjects which were close to Wellington, where he lived and ran and worked in an advertising agency.

Long a popular excursion from Queenstown for its majestic rugged scenery and the old gold mine diggings, Skippers Canyon is probably better known today for the bridge Bungy jump. Harrison's dramatic view features Aspinall's Terrace and is taken from Skippers Road.

Whether influenced by his commercial art or not his stylistic development tended towards the more graphic techniques of an illustrator. Very much of its era, there is certainly a strong, almost Scandinavian, decorative edge to his paint handling, which seemed to appeal to several Kelliher judges including this year's, Australian painter and gallerist John Brackenreg. The strong forms are as if sculpted and yet there are delicate marks and patterns which bring the eye back to the surface and remind one that it is two-dimensional.



**Rex Turnbull**

Born Taihape 1947

***Last puha before the storm, Taihape***

1973

Oil on board

Award, 1974 Kelliher Art Awards. Kelliher Art Trust

After giving this painting one of the five Awards Sir William Dargie explained his thinking: 'Any figure painting depicting human activities attracts my attention... This is a painting – somewhat stylized but none the worse for that – of solid intelligent design. In particular, I like the disposition of the arms – always difficult elements to integrate satisfactorily into a close-up group of figures. The whole composition, with figures placed high on the sky-line against a distant range of mountains, has a certain monumentality.'

The foothills of the Ruhahines in the background, the setting is near the Hautapu River which meanders alongside SH1 east of Taihape 'where puha was plentiful', Turnbull explained. 'My cousin and I used to go puha picking for a 'boil-up' almost every week and come home with kete full of puha which we would share with friends and neighbours'.

The composition is actually in the form of a family group portrait. The young man, almost dead centre, firmly fixing the viewer with his gaze, as if staring at a camera, is clearly a self-portrait of the artist. The other figures are the artist's aunt and her husband and his brother's fiancée.

Turnbull described the development of the painting: the figures 'were painted from memories of foraging with them. I did several sketches of each character and then composed them into a group composition'.

The three figures holding bulging flax kete, are set close to the picture plane. The handling of the painting presents a strong graphic appeal and was certainly an unusual subject for its era, at least outside Maori media.

**Graham Braddock**

Born Auckland 1942

***In the stillness, North Harbour, Kawau Island***

1976

Oil on board

Award, 1976 Kelliher Art Award. Kelliher Art Trust

Largely self-taught, after leaving Mt Albert Grammar School, Braddock became a graphic artist and voluntary youth worker and then ran his own print and framing business. He started painting professionally in 1974 and won the Cambridge Art Award the following year.

In 1975 he won the first of his two Kelliher Art Awards with *In the stillness*. On the back of the painting Braddock described the location of his painting as 'The Anchorage', North Harbour, Kawau Island, adding: 'There's a special magic about being out on the water before sunrise in a sheltered inlet. The world seems to take on an almost tinkling crispness'. A night on his father's yacht gave the artist the opportunity to 'gaze at the reflections of neighbouring boats... The world seemed crammed with exciting landscape and seascape possibilities that spoke of clean air, freedom and revealed the New Zealand way of life'.

*In the stillness* appears to be self-consciously photographically based, perhaps in response to the currency of Photorealist painting at the time, especially its rendering of reflections in glass, mirrors and water. The strikingly low viewpoint results in two thirds of the painting being water, featuring in particular the reflection of the mast and rigging of the principal yacht. Note that the reflection of the mast hits the bottom edge of the painting virtually at the centre point. The other key characteristic of this kind of painting is the facture (paint handling) which eschews any evidence of brushwork.

Braddock continues to paint and teach in Kaukapakapa in rural north Auckland, close to the southern reach of the Kaipara Harbour.

19

**Robert McDowell**

Born Ashburton 1937

***From the Lighthouse Road***

1976

Oil on board

Award, 1976 Kelliher Art Award. Kelliher Art Trust

McDowell studied at the universities of Canterbury and Otago and took private art lessons. He worked in graphic design and architecture before becoming a full-time painter and tutor in 1973. He exhibits at the Bryce Gallery in Riccarton.

Three years after turning professional McDowell found Kelliher success with this fine painting, its immediate appeal and quality recognised by that year's judge, Australian landscape painter Frederic Bates.

Lighthouse Road runs south of Akaroa all the way to Akaroa Head Scenic Reserve, ending at the former site of the Akaroa Lighthouse (replaced by an automated light a century after it was first installed and moved to the township).

In addition to giving a title to their paintings artists were required to indicate the location of the subject and McDowell identified the view as 'Brae's Nose, a peak near Akaroa'. Brasenose (Oteauheke) is a prominent feature in the Misty Peaks Reserve and clearly visible from Lighthouse Road. McDowell selected the view about 5km south of Akaroa as he was driving along with his wife and family. He took the view pretty much from the roadside, his wife playing with the children while he worked.

McDowell has managed to capture the distinctive topography of the region's landscape but the ruggedness of the scene is tempered by the strong sunlight and the grazing sheep.

20

**John Clifford**

Born Glasgow, Scotland 1932

Died Orewa 2015

***Beached***

1977

Oil on board

Award, 1977 Kelliher Art Awards. Kelliher Art Trust

A relatively new international painting style of this era was Magic Realism, sometimes referred to as Hyperrealism. It was successfully introduced to the Kelliher by John Clifford with this striking and meticulously detailed shoreline scene at Maraetai, east of Auckland. The view is across the Hauraki Gulf to Waiheke Island. The composition is unusual with the boat and outrigger out to the left and the unlikely clump of flowers - is it nigella? - at the bottom right. However, the composition seems to hang together helped by the diagonal of the water's edge and the low profile of Waiheke parallel to the picture frame. Add to this another bit of trickery from the realist painter's repertoire, the strangely-shaped pool of water with its reflection of a patch of blue sky, and you have a seascape which fascinates and intrigues - no doubt a popular winner.

Before this Award-winning painting, Clifford had won a Merit Prize in 1968 and the Figure Studies Prize in 1969 with his *Surf fishing contest, Muriwai* (Kelliher Collection).

Clifford was particularly known for his seascapes and sailing paintings, as well as landscapes, portraits and bird studies. In addition to painting and teaching art classes on Auckland's North Shore, Clifford was a freelance illustrator for advertising agencies and his work has been published in calendars and books as well as for a range of greetings cards celebrating New Zealand's sesquicentenary.

**Violet Watson**

Born Taranaki 1906

Died Hamilton 1992

***Maratoto Hills 1977***

Oil on board

1977 Kelliher Art Award. Kelliher Art Trust

Considered a Coromandel artist, Watson made her living from painting, exhibiting in Auckland and Christchurch, and from teaching. Born in Taranaki Watson moved with her family to Waikato. As an avid art enthusiast she studied painting with local painters Adele Younghusband and Ida Carey before starting to make a name for herself as a landscape painter.

She entered the first Kelliher in 1956 and subsequently won five Merit Prizes (the first in 1959) before winning her two Awards; this one followed her earlier success in 1974 with another view of the same area, *Maratoto Valley Farm*, also selected by the same judge, Sir William Dargie.

While the artist located the view as Paeroa, the Maratoto Hills, at the beginning of the Coromandel Range, are a little further to the north of the town. The jagged peaks are a distinctive feature of that area. The Maratoto Road borders the Hikutaia River, presumably shown here, as it descends from the hills to feed into the Waihou River on its way to the Firth of Thames.

Watson gives a nod to the Kelliher mantra about including activities appropriate to the location with a figure in the garden and another on horseback and smoke in the middle distance. But this attractive and accomplished painting is equally about the pure pleasure of painting the landscape the artist knows well and loves. The painting's high key colouring suggests a mid-summer scene, captured one might guess from the broad, confident brushwork, *en plein air* – in front of the scene.

22

**Michael Smither**

Born New Plymouth 1939

***St Bathans Diggings: Day and Night***

1998

Oil on board

Kelliher Art Trust. Purchased 2005

Smither first stayed in a relative's cottage (little more than a shepherd's crib) in Patearoa, on the Maniototo Plain, when a student in 1962. In 1969 he moved there to live for a year or so with his wife and two children, before taking up the Frances Hodgkins fellowship in Dunedin. Here, just 15 minutes south of Ranfurly, he painted his first Central Otago landscapes, using the panoramic format that he repeats here, one on top of the other.

In this large and impressive canvas Smither revisits the scene of a painting made then, 30 years before, as Justin Paton explains (*Michael Smither Painter* 2004): 'This painting is a split-screen landscape, painted in layers of colour so transparent that light breathes magically from the surface. Above: the landscape of day, stretching out like a fugue. Below: the landscape of night, its flank sluiced away in great gouges... To call it a record of environmental damage is true, but insufficient... It is as if, by returning in memory to the earlier painting, Smither is measuring the space between 1969 and 1998, between the landscape he visited then and the landscape he is revisiting now, and thus offering an oblique self-portrait. A place, he seems to be telling us, is something more than mere geography, and something more than a name on a map. It is a mysterious alloy of memory and art, and in this painting it still glows.'

23

**Richard McWhannell**

Born Akaroa 1952

***Zephyr through toetoe***

2005

Oil on canvas

Purchased 2005. Kelliher Art Trust.

During the 1980s McWhannell concentrated on self-portraits, portraits and imaginative paintings and sculptures. However, in 1992, on a family visit to Akaroa, he made a painting of the approach of huge storm, observed from Carews Peak, which rekindled his 'delight... in incisive observation' and in landscape painting.

*Zephyr through toetoe* is an evening view of Pararaha on Auckland's west coast, between Karekare and Whatipu to the south, accessible only on foot or by water. The artist told Gregory O'Brien: the Pararaha paintings 'came out of a compulsion to record a place I love rather than a willful act of trying to find my own place in the New Zealand regionalist tradition... Having gone to Pararaha and painted it, I didn't feel I had to go and search out another landscape'.

McWhannell appears to be interested in the tension between the real and the imagined in painting; not so much of what is visible in a landscape but what one knows or feels about it. In this nocturne the hills are solemnly grey and black and while the bottom half of the composition is caught by last light of the day, picking out the toetoe slightly swaying in the gentle wind of the title.

The painting was preceded by a small watercolour sketch with annotations in pencil made at the scene. Pararaha is a constantly changing landscape and what three decades ago was a lagoon, filled by the Pararaha Stream, descending from the Waitakere Ranges, is now the wetland, between the tideline and the hillside. The Pararaha Valley is behind the dark central landform and the Zion Track runs north to Karekare from the left of the picture.

24

**Stanley Palmer**

Born Turua, Coromandel 1936

***Aotea***

2007

Oil on linen

Kelliher Art Trust. Purchased 2007

Stanley Palmer's extensive knowledge of the geography, history and culture of New Zealand feeds into his paintings of many locations throughout the country. Besides numerous exhibition catalogues documenting his work he has produced elegant books especially *West* (2000) and *East* (2009) with an accompanying text by Gregory O'Brien.

Remote coastal locations have always fascinated Palmer, places where 'the road peters out, the edge between the civilized and where we have no control...the oceans and the sky.' In titling this view of Great Barrier Island, in the Hauraki Gulf, just north of the Coromandel Peninsula, the artist has chosen to use its Maori name Aotea.

Palmer has frequently painted Aotea with the area around Harataonga Bay being one of his favourite locations. However, this view, further south, is of Palmers Beach, with Palmers Island and Lion Rock beyond, just a few kilometres north of the Kaitoke Creek. It has since become built on. So far Palmer hasn't been able to uncover a Maori name for the area.

Palmer is a very slow and careful oil painter and uses traditional application techniques. There are few visible brushstrokes as he tends to meticulously and frequently rub down his work, often, for example the sky and ocean around the horizontal horizon line, so that the weave of the canvas is clearly revealed. Palmer shows the land in its once natural state, untouched by people and development.



**25**

**Justin Boroughs**

Born Paignton, England 1952

***View of Puketutu Island***

2008

Oil on panel

Commissioned 2008. Kelliher Art Trust

This painting is one of two commissioned by the Trust to mark the transfer of Puketutu Island - Te Motu a Hiaroa - formerly Sir Henry Kelliher's family home since the 1940s, to Auckland for a future regional park. Boroughs based the view on a close study of earlier photographic images to make a painting that would pictorially restore a number of the island's original topographical features (before quarrying) and its previously more romantic appearance.

The panoramic nature of the composition was made possible by a helicopter flight over and around the island with the result that it is seen here in relationship to the Manukau Harbour and the Heads in the far distance. However, it is not an exaggerated aerial view and its elevated viewpoint would be little higher than if from the nearby Mangere Mountain, which would be too the left of the picture.

The painting looks back half a century to a partially forgotten past, though not entirely pristine, since some early dwellings are shown on the northern shore. The causeway, the road to the island, is only hinted at while below it, using a little artistic license, Boroughs has included the old Mangere Bridge.

Having first exhibited as a photographer after art school, Boroughs travelled and painted extensively in Europe and North Africa, USA and Mexico before returning to New Zealand to teach at Auckland Grammar School in 1982 where he remains head of art.

26

**Dick Frizzell**

Born Auckland 1943

***Two Sheds and a Power Pole***

2009

Oil on canvas

Purchased 2009. Kelliher Art Trust

One of our most popular artists working today, Frizzell has a reputation for a kind of Post-Pop commercialism, arch humour and, at times, provocation. However, when it comes to landscape painting he is as serious as any other.

In 1987 Frizzell had been unwell and to paint himself out of artist's block after his recuperation, he decided to paint landscapes. First exhibited in 1989, they were a breath-taking development for an artist hitherto immersed in popular imagery. Allan Smith wrote: 'Many regard Frizzell's landscapes as a critical aberration...' and that he 'is abandoning the difficult heights of respectably serious art for the lowlands of easy popularity and commercial gain'.

When asked about this painting Frizzell explained: 'I photographed this little scene between Taupiri and Cambridge. I was attracted to the obvious symmetry of the two isolated sheds and the lovely asymmetry of the power pole... and back in the studio I discovered a deeper layer of complexity: the panel of rust on the unpainted shed that echoes the door frame of the red shed...the soft angle of the broken red shed door...the loop of wire from that shed to the power pole...and the fabulous ladder of detail to the right of the sheds leading up through the middle ground to the background.>

Frizzell usually spots his landscape subjects when driving, so he stops, takes some photographs and studies them more closely when back in the studio. So, what appears to be a very simple, uncomplicated and even banal scene, can, on closer inspection present compositional intricacies and details that the artist then exploits to their full.

27

**Michael Hight**

Born Stratford 1961

***Motatapu River, Otago***

2011

Oil on linen

Purchased 2011. Kelliher Art Trust

Hight's distinctive landscapes with beehives have made his paintings widely recognised and admired. In a statement he wrote: 'The beehive paintings involve extensive travel throughout New Zealand and an element of chance. Several key ideas are at work—the idea that the paintings are a literal recovery of found sculptural installations on the landscape, notions of transformation and the electric connections between light and dark, stillness and movement, order and chaos.'

Hight's view is a few kilometres west of Glendhu Bay, near the southern end of Lake Wanaka, not far from the settlement of Motatapu. The painting features all the elements of the artist's pictorial repertoire: farm machinery, hills, mountains and the near abstract shapes of beehives which dominated his paintings for a decade or so from 1995.

In terms of painted realism it is a *tour de force*. The highly realistic treatment of detail, whether the varied surfaces of the hives, the grasses and rocks, provide the viewer with endless fascination. Hight also ensures that background and foreground remain absolutely clear without receding into atmospheric haze.

The scene presents a vivid sense of place that reflects its basis on photographs the artist took of the scene. Hight has often used rivers as 'regional focus points' in his work as here. The title intrigues since there no river is visible. However, the Motatapu River is actually located out of sight, behind the viewer and we are looking towards Lake Wanaka, which lies between the mid ground ridge and the distant range.

**28**

**Trenton Garratt**

Born Auckland 1980

***Glencairn (GPS -37.39073,174.84199)***

2015

Oil on Canvas

Commissioned 2015. Kelliher Art Trust

Glencairn Farms is the Kelliher Charitable Trust's property in the North Waikato hill country, a little to the south west of Onewhero. It was acquired after the Trust transferred Puketutu Island, Sir Henry Kelliher's family property and home, to Auckland Council, to continue the Trust's investment in farming.

Garratt visited the farm where 'a series of steep hills and ridges provided dynamic scenery reminiscent of Chinese landscape painting traditions'. The artist recalled that 'ideas for what I would paint began to crystallise and I began thinking of art historical references': paintings by Van Eyck and Grunewald, the weather in paintings by Turner, Constable and Courbet, 'the fresh pastoral greens and play of light amidst patchy weather of William Hodges. And the quotidian character of a farm, the cottages, the talk of family history etc, reminded me of paintings by Gerhard Richter'.

Garratt's jewel-like landscape is meticulously painted, its pristine finish belying the fact that it was made by hand. The weather he depicts chimes with that when he visited: 'fresh with the odd calm patch of sunshine between blasts of westerly wind and rain.'

29

**Aroha Gossage**

Born Auckland 1989

***Hauturu***

2016

Oil on canvas

Commissioned 2016. Kelliher Art Trust

Hauturu is Maori for Little Barrier Island, the traditional home of Gossage's family iwi, Ngati Manuhiri, a hapu of Ngati Wai.

New Zealand's first nature reserve and predator free, its full name is Te Hauturu o Toi, or the resting place of the wind. Gossage's painting is from a body of work which focuses on her personal and spiritual relationship with the coastal area north of Auckland, including Pakiri.

Her intention is to imbue her paintings with a sense of the wairua - the spiritual, and mauri - the vital essence, of the landscape. She sought to achieve this by painting the landscape in a way that the viewer can experience the specific place, through attention to detail, atmosphere and limited colour and tonal range. Gossage's composition is unusual with the triangle of the pebble shore leading the eye to the middle of the painting and then out towards the point, beyond the frame, and then back up following the ridge to the wispy clouds around the tops and the cloud-covered sky. The dark bush and foreshore vegetation and the pebbles reflect the artist's close observation.

Aroha Gossage earned her Masters in Art and Design from AUT University in 2015 and had her first solo exhibition at Artis Gallery in 2017, where she now regularly exhibits. The painter Star Gossage is her sister.

**Freeman White**

Born Hastings 1979

***Poplars Tukituki***

2018

Oil on Belgian linen

Kelliher Art Trust. Commissioned 2018

In 2006 Freeman White won the Adam National Portrait Award, judged by James Holloway, director of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, who offered him a residency in Edinburgh.

On his return to New Zealand in 2009 after three years in Europe he began to focus on landscapes. To address the Kelliher commission White made several *plein air* studies of his chosen view. White stated: 'The palette is very autumnal which really speaks to me as this view can be rather different in summer or winter.' He began the painting in April to ensure he captured the autumn colour. The distinctive view of the Tukituki River is from a private property called 'The Poplars'. The view is looking south towards the prominent Round Hill, on Longacre farm, dead centre top.

White enjoys following classical landscape compositional techniques and tricks, such as balancing the distance tree-topped hill with centrally placed rock, which both anchors the bottom of the picture and marks the picture plane.

Napier resident, Freeman White grew up in Hawke's Bay. He began painting at an early age and briefly studied formally at Elam School of Fine Art in 1998 and the Learning Connection, Wellington. In 1997 White spent a year in Germany as an exchange student when exposure to the great art collections of Europe was to become very influential on his career as a painter.

**Caroline Bellamy**

Born Nelson 1995

***Morning light in the valley, Lawrence River, New Zealand***

2019

Oil on board

Commissioned 2019. Kelliher Art Trust

Bellamy has a passion for the outdoors and New Zealand's wild landscape. A keen trumper and hunter, she hikes in the remote areas, often for days at a time, directly experiencing the landscape, which informs her bold and colourful landscape paintings.

She was drawn to the Lawrence valley, because its 'characteristically beautiful landscape epitomised for her the wild, remote and untouched beauty of our country'. *Morning light in the valley* is a view looking towards the Lawrence River, taken from just before one crosses the Clyde River to get to the Erewhon Station Hut.

Bellamy recalled: 'I chose this view as it captures the expansive, wide river beds contrasted with the steep rugged mountains, characteristic of the main wilderness rivers in New Zealand. The perspective creates depth and also communicates the scale of these extraordinary valley systems which glaciers used to fill'.

Bellamy's composition is based on photographs and sketches made in the mountains and back in the studio set out on the canvas with burnt umber under-painting. 'From there on I build up my layers through directional, confident but refined brushstrokes at the same time building up within the painting a complexity of colour relationships, the process evident in the finished painting. Some layers are painted wet on wet and others wet on dry, allowing room for changes'.

So what at first glance appears to be a fast and spontaneously made painting is in actual fact carefully planned and meticulously executed.

**Rosanne Croucher**

Born Hamilton 1987

***After Yesterday - One Tree Hill***

2020

Oil on canvas

Commissioned 2020. Kelliher Art Trust

Croucher's paintings can be subtly striking, with touches of mystery and surprise; or in her own words: 'realistic landscape paintings with a twist'.

In May 2020, following the Covid-19 lockdown, when Croucher accepted this commission, she explained that she 'wanted to make a very 'light filled' landscape in response to the somewhat dark times that will characterise this year, especially in the future'. Not finding quite what she wanted close to her Hamilton home, Croucher went through older photos and found some of One Tree Hill that she took before moving from Auckland. 'I actually always planned to make a painting out of these but knew it would be a good one and I wasn't ready at the time to do it justice!'

The events of 2020 inspired her to depict time as well as place: 'As the nation collectively stayed home many of us were caught in opposing tensions. Longing for beautiful views that were inaccessible, but finding beauty in the ordinariness of our neighbourhoods. Hoping the light times would dominate over the dark times. Enjoying moments of rest and solitude, while missing the company of others. Wishing for straight paths ahead while navigating the hills of the unknown.'

'In response, I've created a painting that contains darkness but is permeated by a warm glow. A space that encourages wandering and reflection. Shapes and animals have been hidden in the leaves as a reminder of how small joys can add up to be significant. And the fleeting effects of the setting sun bring reassurance that tomorrow is a new day.'