

RARE AND UNRIVALLED BEAUTY

'It is a land of rare and unrivalled beauty typified in the words "God's own country". It should become a mecca for top-ranking artists throughout the world.'

— Sir Henry Kelliher

LANDSCAPE PAINTINGS FROM THE KELLIHER ART TRUST COLLECTION



4. Peter McIntyre *The Manuherikia, Central Otago 1960*

SOUTH ISLAND TOURING EXHIBITION 2021 - 2023

EXHIBITION ITINERARY

1. Leonard Mitchell

Born Palmerston North 1925
Died Coggeshall, Essex, England 1980
Summer in the Mokauiti Valley 1956
Oil on canvas, 915 x 1150mm
Winner, 1956 Kelliher Art Prize

2. Douglas Badcock

Born Balclutha 1922
Died Queenstown 2009
Boat Harbour, Nugget Point 1959
Oil on canvas, 680 x 875mm
2nd Prize, 1959 Kelliher Art Competition

3. David Barker

Born Chichester, England 1941
Beach Strays, Takatu 1960
Oil on board, 670 x 900mm
2nd Prize, 1960 Kelliher Art Competition

4. Peter McIntyre

Born Dunedin 1910
Died Wellington 1995
The Manuherikia, Central Otago 1960
Oil on board, 710 x 910mm
3rd Prize, 1960 Kelliher Art Competition

5. Cedric Savage

Born Christchurch 1901
Died Aegina, Greece 1969
Summer, Hawke's Bay 1961
Oil on canvas, 830 x 910mm
1st Prize, 1961 Kelliher Art Competition

6. Austen Deans

Born Riccarton 1915
Died Peel Forest 2011
Kea Hut and Mt Sefton 1962
Oil on board, 715 x 855mm
1st Prize, 1962 Kelliher Art Competition

7. Derek Ball

Born Masterton 1944
Morning, Matahiwi 1962
Oil on board, 595 x 780mm
Special Prize, 1962 Kelliher Art Competition

8. Peggy Spicer

Born Auckland 1908
Died Auckland 1984
Waterfront scene 1963
Oil on board, 645 x 800mm
2nd Prize, 1963, Kelliher Art Competition

9. Douglas Badcock

Born Balclutha 1922
Died Queenstown 2009
Head of Wakatipu from Bennett's Bluff 1965
Oil on board, 600 x 800mm
1st Prize, 1965 Kelliher Art Competition

10. Rodger Harrison

Born 1931 Wellington
Died 2012 Waikanae
Tokaanu, Taupo 1965
Oil on board, 645 x 840mm
3rd Prize, 1965 Kelliher Art Competition

11. Ian Scott

Born Bradford, England 1945
Died Auckland 2013
Low Tide, Anawhata 1965

Oil on board, 700 x 905mm
Special Prize, 1965 Kelliher Art Competition

12. Peter Mardon

Born Christchurch 1937
Lyttleton Harbour 1966
Oil on canvas, 585 x 885mm
First Prize, 1966 Kelliher Art Competition

13. Robert Watson

Born Auckland 1911
Died Wellington 1980
Early morning, Queenstown 1966
Oil on board, 495 x 590mm
3rd Prize, 1966 Kelliher Art Competition

14. Brian Halliday

Born Wanaka 1936
Died Wanaka 1994
The Outlet, Lake Wanaka 1967
Oil on board, 495 x 670mm
3rd Prize, 1967 Kelliher Art Competition

15. Colin Wheeler

Born Dunedin 1919
Died Oamaru 2012
Cattle Muster, Lake Hawea 1969
Oil on board, 660 x 890mm
3rd Prize, 1969 Kelliher Art Competition

16. Rodger Harrison

Born 1931 Wellington
Died 2012 Waikanae
Skippers Canyon 1970

Oil on board, 620 x 1000mm
1st Prize, 1970 Kelliher Art Competition

17. Rex Turnbull

Born Taihape 1947
Last puha before the storm, Taihape 1973
Oil on board, 600 x 750mm
1973 Kelliher Art Award

18. Graham Braddock

Born Auckland 1942
In the Stillness, North Harbour, Kawau Island 1976
Oil on board, 675 x 905mm
1976 Kelliher Art Award

19. Robert McDowell

Born Ashburton 1937
From the Lighthouse Road, near Akaroa 1976
Oil on board, 600 x 905mm
1976 Kelliher Art Award

20. John Clifford

Born Glasgow, Scotland 1932
Died Orewa 2015
Beached, Maraetai 1977
Oil on board, 590 x 1055mm
1977 Kelliher Art Award

21. Violet Watson

Born Taranaki 1906
Died Hamilton 1992
Maratoto Hills, Paeroa 1977
Oil on board, 595 x 500mm
1977 Kelliher Art Award

22. Michael Smither

Born New Plymouth 1939
St Bathans Diggings: Day and Night 1998
Oil on board, 1000 x 1750mm
Purchased 2005. Kelliher Art Trust

23. Richard McWhannell

Born Akaroa 1952
Zephyr through Toetoe 2005
Oil on canvas, 700 x 1050mm
Purchased 2005. Kelliher Art Trust

24. Stanley Palmer

Born Turua, Coromandel 1936
Aotea 2007
Oil on canvas, 700 x 1600mm
Purchased 2007. Kelliher Art Trust

25. Justin Boroughs

Born Paignton, England 1952
View of Puketutu Island 2008
Oil on panel, 500 x 1200mm
Commissioned 2008. Kelliher Art Trust

26. Dick Frizzell

Born Auckland 1943
Two Sheds and a Power Pole 2009
Oil on canvas, 755 x 1050mm
Purchased 2009. Kelliher Art Trust

27. Michael Hight

Born Stratford 1961
Motatapu River, Otago 2011
Oil on linen, 760 x 1675mm
Purchased 2011. Kelliher Art Trust

28. Trenton Garratt

Born Auckland 1980
Glencairn (GPS -37.39073, 174.84199) 2015
Oil on canvas, 600 x 850mm
Commissioned 2015. Kelliher Art Trust

29. Aroha Gossage

Born Auckland 1989
Hauturu 2016
Oil on canvas, 895 x 1200mm
Commissioned 2016. Kelliher Art Trust

30. Freeman White

Born Hastings 1979
Poplars, Tukituki 2018
Oil on Belgian linen, 757 x 1110mm
Commissioned 2018. Kelliher Art Trust

31. Caroline Bellamy

Born Nelson 1995
Light in the valley, Lawrence River 2019
Oil on board, 850 x 1200mm
Commissioned 2019. Kelliher Art Trust

32. Rosanne Croucher

Born Hamilton 1987
After yesterday. One Tree Hill 2020
Oil on canvas, 700 x 1100mm
Commissioned 2020. Kelliher Art Trust

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2. Douglas Badcock *Boat Harbour, Nugget Point* 1959

FOREWORD H.R.I. WHITE Chair, Kelliher Art Trust

Sir Henry Kelliher once said New Zealand 'should become a mecca for top-ranking artists throughout the world.' Today, hardly a month goes by without an international film producer or director talking about the 'star quality' of New Zealand.

Sir Henry was a visionary. He had a passionate love for his country, and not only for the beauty of its landscape; he demonstrated it through his businesses, his economic theories on monetary reform, his encouragement of higher old-age pensions and his philanthropy, which ranged from free milk for schoolchildren to helping destitute artists. His name, however, is best associated today with the landscape painting competition he established in 1956, which ran for two decades.

The Kelliher Art Trust is grateful for and very pleased to acknowledge the enthusiasm for this exhibition expressed by the art museums which are participating in this tour. Some of them, and their communities, have strong associations with landscape painters, such as the Forrester Gallery's connection with Colin Wheeler, while others have hosted a Kelliher exhibition in the distant past, such as the Aigantighe in 1979; the first national touring exhibition from the collection; or a

little more recently *Representation and Reaction: Modernism and the New Zealand Landscape Tradition 1956–1977*, our nationwide joint exhibition with the Fletcher Trust Collection, also shown at The Suter Art Gallery Te Āraoi O Whakatū.

Sir Henry never lost sight of the key premise of his competition, rephrasing it many times in exhibition-opening speeches or written forewords, variations on a theme: 'The natural beauty of New Zealand and its topography demands that landscape painting is to the fore in the art of painting and with the grandeur of our scenery it would indeed be sad if this were not so . . . This type of painting is very contemporary. There is now an expanded consciousness of our scenery with conservationists intent on preserving its pristine glory, and I am happy to say that around the world there is a burgeoning interest again in representational art.' Sir Henry said this in 1979, but such sentiments could still be expressed today. Sir Henry frequently emphasised the importance of recording the natural beauty of New Zealand while it was 'still unspoilt'. Indeed, some of the landscapes captured in the 1960s and '70s have been significantly changed through development, and the painters' views are hardly imaginable nowadays.

The Kelliher Art Trust remains as strongly committed to the art of New Zealand landscape painting as our benefactor was. Earlier this century, it seriously debated reviving the competition once more. Instead, in 2006, the trustees updated the



objectives of the original trust deed to reflect not only the demise of the competition but also the momentous changes in the New Zealand visual arts sector since that time, in particular the growing professionalism of both artists and galleries, in part stimulated by the success of the Kelliher Art Competition.

Following on from this decision, the trustees took steps to modernise the collection somewhat, through the purchase of a cross-section of contemporary landscape paintings. More recently, the acquisition strategy was modified to include adding to the collection by commissioning paintings by emerging landscape painters. In doing this, the trust is continuing not only to support Sir Henry's original objectives, but to develop a nationally significant collection of New Zealand landscape paintings.

Accordingly, the selection of this exhibition by our curator, Christopher Johnstone, represents these three strands of acquisition: Kelliher prize-winning paintings purchased by Sir Henry and the trust at the time; more recent landscape paintings, mostly purchased a decade or so ago; and paintings commissioned by the trust in the last few years.

The Kelliher Art Trust Board is especially grateful to Sarah McClintock, curator of The Suter Art Gallery Te Āratoi O Whakatū, Nelson, for her insightful essay for this catalogue, designed by Jill Godwin of Godwin Design. Christopher Johnstone has also contributed a new short history of the Kelliher Art Competition, which is published here for the first time. The board is also particularly grateful to the directors of the art museums and galleries presenting the exhibition; their prompt and enthusiastic commitment enabled us to confirm and organise it in an efficient and timely manner.

Throughout its history, the Kelliher Art Trust has been committed to presenting touring exhibitions from the collection to the widest public possible, including internationally. Our intention is that exhibitions like this one both continue the Kelliher tradition and at the same time contribute to the trust's goals of stimulating interest in landscape painting among artists and their publics.

¹ Sir Henry Kelliher at the opening of *Kelliher Prize Winners Exhibition*, Aigantighe Art Gallery, 1979.

1. Leonard Mitchell *Summer in the Mokauiti Valley* 1956

3. David Barker *Beach Strays, Takatu* 1960

5. Cedric Savage *Summer, Hawke's Bay* 1961

6. Austen Deans *Kea Hut and Mt Sefton* 1962

INTRODUCTION

CHRISTOPHER JOHNSTONE, Curator, Kelliher Art Trust

From as far back as the 1966–67 exhibition which toured the United Kingdom, *The New Zealand Landscape: Paintings from the Kelliher Art Trust*, exhibiting its collection has been a fundamental objective of the Kelliher Art Trust.

The last major exhibition from the collection was a joint exhibition with the Fletcher Trust Collection: *Representation and Reaction: Modernism and the New Zealand Landscape Tradition 1956–1977*, which toured nationwide in 2002–05. Most recently, an exhibition limited to winners only of the Kelliher, *Infinitely Varied*, toured to three North Island art museums in 2018–19, and was very well received.

As a result, the trustees felt it was time for an exhibition to tour the South Island, especially as scenes from this region were plentiful in the competition, particularly of Central Otago, Sir Henry Kelliher's birthplace, about which he was passionate.

The Kelliher Collection is based on the paintings that came to the trust from Sir Henry's own collection. As well as paintings acquired by Sir Henry which had won prizes in the Kelliher art competitions and awards, from its inception in 1956 until the last award in 1977, it includes portraits and landscapes by Australian artists who judged the competitions, such as Ernest Buckmaster and William Dargie. Among the collection are paintings by artists who were or would become leading landscape painters of their day, from Austin Deans, Douglas Badcock and Peter McIntyre through to Rodger Harrison, Brian Halliday and Colin Wheeler.

The collection has grown considerably since the end of the competition, with two particular flourishes so far this century. The first was a series of purchases by the Kelliher Art Trust from around 2006 to 2012, of paintings mostly by established landscape painters. The intention of the board of the trust at the time was to revitalise and modernise the collection. The resulting acquisitions were paintings by artists ranging from Rita Angus and Sir Toss Woollaston to Dick Frizzell and Michael Hight.

In recent years, the trustees have commissioned landscapes from younger — and in several cases 'emerging' — landscape painters as well. Most of these are included in this exhibition, along with a representative selection of paintings from the Kelliher Art Competition era and the early twenty-first century purchases.

The trust's intention is to build on this substantial base of just under 100 paintings to develop a nationally significant collection of New Zealand landscape paintings, from the mid-twentieth century onwards, as financial resources will allow. To the extent that one can be prescriptive about the future focus of our collection ambitions, there is undoubtedly a need to ensure that more modernist landscapes from the Kelliher era are added to the collection when possible, joining paintings by Woollaston and Robert Ellis, for example.

In her essay (see page 7), curator and collection manager at The Suter Art Gallery Te Āratoi o Whakatū Sarah McClintock points out that the trustees have also added more paintings by female artists to the collection — both by purchase and, more recently, through commissions. These purchases are represented here by Caroline Bellamy and Rosanne Croucher, and the only two Kelliher-era landscapes by women in the collection — by Peggy Spicer and Violet Watson — are also included in this exhibition.



7. Derek Ball *Morning, Matahiwi* 1962

8. Peggy Spicer *Waterfront scene* 1963

The lists of exhibitors in the Kelliher competition archive show a fair number of female entrants in the earlier years. However, only Spicer ever had a podium finish (second prize in 1963). Several women won the portrait prize, and when the competition became the award in 1974, with five equal winners, several more women were recipients, including Watson, a regular entrant from 1956, winning five merits and an award in both 1974 and 1977. In total, seven women won merit prizes for their work; in 1961, judge William Dargie singled one of them out in his speech: 'It would be difficult for anyone to overlook or forget the blaze of golden light in *Thunder over the Coromandel* by Ida Bale. This was one of the most popular pictures in the Exhibition, and deservedly so.' No doubt Bale's painting was swiftly snapped up after Dargie's encomium!

It must be remembered that, over time, an increasing proportion of the paintings selected to be displayed in the competition exhibition were sold. The Kelliher provided another market besides local art-society exhibitions. Ironically, however, the fact that it was a selling exhibition was a contributing factor to the Kelliher's eventual demise, because as the country's art museums became more professional, selling shows became increasingly frowned upon.

In attempting to select a cross-section from the collection for this exhibition, I was keen to include a good number of paintings depicting South Island scenes, as well as works by Kelliher-era artists who are still working. Where possible I have been in touch with these artists, and the information they supplied has informed the extended label texts in the exhibition. They often provided fascinating details and memories; the only Māori artist in the exhibition, Sydney-based Rex Turnbull, is one such example.

Sir Henry's vision for and dedication to the New Zealand landscape art project, both in terms of depicting and recording the epic and the ordinary, and the significant stimulation of excellence in painting, was matched by his generosity. He purchased the first-prize-winning paintings from 1957 to 1960 and donated them to the then National Art Gallery. The best of those — indeed, one of the finest of all Kelliher winners — is Arthur Hipwell's *Mount Taratara* (1957), which can be seen on a Bennetts chocolate box if not actually displayed on the wall of our national museum. Sir Henry, and then the trust he set up, paid for the entire costs of the competition for two decades. It is arguable that no single arts philanthropist, or philanthropic organisation, would come even close to matching that level of support today. No subsequent sponsored art prizes lasted more than a handful of years, and it is doubtful that they produced much long-term benefit.

There is undoubtedly an enduring interest by artists and the public alike in landscape painting, as indicated by the huge and popular exhibition *Mystical Landscapes: From Vincent van Gogh to Emily Carr* in Paris and Toronto in 2017, and the major Thames & Hudson book, *Landscape Painting Now: From Pop Abstraction to New Romanticism*, published in 2019.

Today landscape painting comes in many forms and styles, and the more modernist and contemporary approaches to the genre do not appear at all out of place in our leading contemporary dealer galleries. This exhibition can only be a snapshot of landscape practice in New Zealand over the last 65 years, but I am hopeful that it amply illustrates its vitality and persistence.



13. Robert Watson *Early morning, Queenstown 1966*



9. Douglas Badcock *Head of Wakatipu from Bennett's Bluff 1965*



10. Rodger Harrison *Tokaanu, Taupo 1965*



12. Peter Mardon *Lyttleton Harbour 1966*



15. Colin Wheeler *Cattle Muster, Lake Hawea 1969*

THE MEANING OF NEW ZEALAND LANDSCAPE: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

SARAH McCLINTOCK, Curator, The Suter Art Gallery Te Āratoi o Whakatū, Nelson

'Landscapes can be deceptive. Sometimes a landscape seems to be less a setting for the life of its inhabitants than a curtain behind which their struggles, achievements and accidents takes place. For those who are behind the curtain, landmarks are no longer only geographic but also biographical and personal.'

— John Berger, *A Fortunate Man: The Story of a Country Doctor*, 1967

In Priscilla Pitts' essay 'The Unquiet Earth: Reading landscape and the land in New Zealand art', she refers to the landscape as a contested space, 'an occupied zone whose constantly reread and rewritten histories do not lie in quiescent layers but jostle, shift, and thrust, as changing and unstable as the land itself.'¹ Landscape painting in Aotearoa has been understood as having a role in shaping and reshaping our understanding of nationhood and national identity.

In the nineteenth century it was a tool for propaganda — selling the vision of New Zealand as an agrarian utopia for colonialists. Fantasies around identity and colonial expansion became inextricably linked with the land during this period.² As ideas of nationhood were expanded and questioned through the two world wars, there grew a desire to understand the social, cultural and aesthetic qualities that make this country unique. The land once again became the focus for this search for identity.

The quest for and understanding of national identity through landscape is not unique to Aotearoa; it is something which connects many Western cultures.³ New Zealand's landscape did not see the physical trauma that occurred in Britain, Europe, the Middle East or Asia during the world wars — we did not have cities levelled and buildings scarred — but the psychological impacts of this time were universal. For some, the geology and geography of the land was a comfort — structures could be destroyed but the earth remained. But others, as expressed through the rise of Modernist art, saw the landscape and its role as a metaphor for national identity as fragile in the face of globalisation.⁴ The land therefore became a site of anxiety in the middle of the twentieth century.

In New Zealand the search for a quintessentially 'New Zealand art' found its



31. Caroline Bellamy *Light in the valley, Lawrence River 2019*

expression in the Regionalist landscape paintings of The Group in the 1930s. By 'New Zealand art' they implicitly meant Pākehā art, born from the Western aesthetic tradition, which was focused almost exclusively on the hard, flat light of this country and the way in which it carved out the forms of the landscape. But soon, with the rise of Modernism and the writing of the history of New Zealand art, the artist's relationship with the landscape began to shift. It is in this climate that the Kelliher Art Competition was born.

The first winner of the Kelliher was Leonard Mitchell, with his work *Summer in the Mokauiti Valley* (1) in 1956. In this lush painting we see farms and fences bisecting the land, trees have been felled and two sheep happily graze in the foreground. It is the perfect representation of a productive, welcoming and pure landscape. Established to encourage not only the development of high-quality art but also the appreciation of the unique landscape of this country, the Kelliher Art Competition, and the collection that was created from it, championed 'traditional' landscape painting. However, the scope of the work that has since been added to the Kelliher Art Trust collection is surprisingly and refreshingly broad. For a competition long associated with tradition, the later works are in no way academic. The collection ranges from the hyper-realist work of Rosanne Croucher to the structured strokes of Caroline Bellamy, the flattened forms of Michael Smither and the shadowed view in Richard McWhannell's *Zephyr through Toetoe* (23). The stylistic expressions of the land are expansive; what binds them together is their commitment to representation – holding on to the identifiable characteristics of place.

It is this allegiance to representation that brought the most criticism to the competition. In the context of the Kelliher Art Competition, the landscape could not be abstracted, and critics argued that this kind of rejection of Modernism was a denial of progress. With the writing of New Zealand's art history, which began in earnest in

the 1960s, any art form which embraced tradition was deemed regressive. If it did not add to the progression of art towards Modernism it was going to fall prey to 'repetition or diminution'.⁵ The paintings that were created for the Kelliher Art Competition were not avant-garde. They often went against what the art world considered exciting or cutting edge, yet the competition has become an important record of a time and place – a time capsule that captured our shifting relationship with art and the land.

To the modern eye the works remain approachable for the general art-viewing public, and feed into the same nostalgia that inspired the painting of many of them. Standing in front of these works does not make a viewer uncomfortable – they feel like memories of summer days, adventure, hard work and restful calm. They do not challenge or conceal their meaning through abstraction, concept or materiality. But this does not mean that they are devoid of ideology and that there is nothing to be learned from examining them.

Through these paintings we see the important distinction between landscape and nature. Few images from the early years of the competition are devoid of humanity; instead, they bustle with activity, or the promise of it. Boats are moored ready to launch in Douglas Badcock's *Boat Harbour, Nugget Point* (2), figures gleefully frolic in the braided river of Peter McIntyre's *The Manuherikia, Central Otago* (4), and in Colin Wheeler's *Cattle Muster, Lake Hawea* (15) we see two horsemen at work moving stock with a storm coming. In this way we see landscape painting as being a representation of nature filtered through culture. Nature is understood through its relationship with humans; we see it in terms of our harnessing of it as a resource as well as a backdrop against which our lives play out.⁶ But that is about us, not the land, which existed long before us and will go on after we are gone. As Toss Woollaston wrote in 1960, 'The landscape, too, is inert, and knows nothing of what we think of it and do with it when we paint. The picture is entirely a building we make for our imagination to dwell in.'⁷



23. Richard McWhannell *Zephyr through Toetoe* 2005



11. Ian Scott *Low Tide, Anawhata* 1965



29. Aroha Gossage *Hauturu* 2016

The land is heavily gendered in many cultures. In the Māori creation myth the land is Papatūānuku, the earth mother, from which all life sprang in the aftermath of her separation from her husband Rangiūi, the sky father. The 'earth mother' story is common across many cultures — from ancient Greek mythology to Algonquian legend. Fertile and nurturing, the earth has been long associated with femininity. In Western history it was men's responsibility to conquer the land and to make it productive.

Within this cultural context, depictions of the land are also highly gendered. The history of art, and the history of the Kelliher Art Competition, reflects this gendering. The vast majority of the winners and finalists of the competition were Pākehā men. After the competition ceased, the Kelliher Art Trust maintained its commitment to supporting landscape painters and began purchasing and commissioning landscape paintings, and in this era they have been able to focus their collecting on adding more work by women and Māori artists.

Aroha Gossage's dreamlike *Hauturu* (29) presents a vision of Aotearoa as untouched. The island it represents sits in the Hauraki Gulf (the kaitiaki of Te Hauturu-o-Toi are Ngāti Manuhiri) and has been a wildlife sanctuary since 1897. It is understood to be our 'most intact, undisturbed ecosystem'⁸, and as such its importance is in opposition to the colonial reading of the land — which asserts that the value of the land resides in its relationship with humanity. It is instead a critically important place because of the exact opposite; access to it is strictly controlled, to protect it from any harm. We see in Gossage's painting, and through her perspective as both a woman and tangata whenua, that the land is not ours to own, and that its value is intrinsic and not dependent on our occupation of it. It exists through a series of complex and equally important relationships with animals, trees and water, as well as with people.

In looking at the competition, the Kelliher Art Trust and its continued collecting, we must ask what is the future for representational landscape painting? Our understanding of the toxic relationship humanity has created with the land has solidified with the worsening climate crisis. Fires are destroying forests, rising sea-levels are eroding coastlines, and mining has collapsed mountains. Paintings of these landscapes have become archives of loss; in fact, climate scientists have been using the paintings of J.M.W. Turner and other artists to examine the levels of pollution in nineteenth-century Europe. Their shifting shades of pink, purples and greens, and red sunsets, have been studied and interpreted to reveal important data about the

changes in the environment created by the advent of industrialisation.⁹

The climate crisis is, and will continue to be, more than simply a topic for contemporary art to address; 'it is a historical condition that informs all contemporary art.'¹⁰ Landscape painting can occupy a space that highlights the fragility of the natural world and our impact on it, but it can be more. It has the ability, in this new paradigm in which the land has become a centralised point of hope and anxiety, to give us insight into what has led us to this place, and act as a visceral reminder of ways in which we rely on the land to nurture us and shape our understanding of ourselves.

¹ Priscilla Pitts, 'The Unquiet Earth: Reading landscape and the land in New Zealand art' in *Headlands: Thinking Through New Zealand Art*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 1992, p. 87.

² Jedediah Purdy, *After Nature: A Politics for the Anthropocene*, Harvard University Press, 2015, p. 184–85.

³ For an example of this, see Catherine Jolivet, *Landscape, Art and Identity in 1950s Britain*, Routledge, 2009.

⁴ Tim Barringer, 'Landscape Then and Now', *British Art Studies*, Issue 10, 2018 <https://doi.org/10.17658/issn.2058-5462/issue-10/tbarringer> (accessed 11 June 2021).

⁵ Francis Pound, *The Invention of New Zealand: Art & National Identity 1930–1970*, Auckland University Press, 2009, p. 119.

⁶ William S. Smith, 'Climate Changes Everything', *Art in America*, May 2020, pp. 28–33, <https://www.artnews.com/art-in-america/features/climate-change-contemporary-art-1202685626/> (accessed 10 June 2021).

⁷ Toss Woollaston, *The Far-Away Hills: a meditation on New Zealand landscape*, Auckland Gallery Associates, p.43.

⁸ Te Hauturu-o-Toi/Little Barrier Island, <https://www.tiakitamakimaurau.nz/discover-tamaki-makaurau/learn-about-your-area/bfa-te-hauturu-o-toi/> (accessed 24 June 2021).

⁹ Diego Arguedas Ortiz, 'The climate change clues hidden in art history', *BBC Culture*, 28 May 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20200528-the-climate-change-clues-hidden-in-art-history> (accessed 11 June 2021).

¹⁰ Smith, 'Climate Changes Everything'.



14. Brian Halliday *The Outlet, Lake Wanaka* 1967

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE KELLIHER ART COMPETITION

CHRISTOPHER JOHNSTONE, Curator, the Kelliher Art Trust

'It is a land of rare and unrivalled beauty typified in the words "God's own country". It should become a mecca for top-ranking artists throughout the world.' — Sir Henry Kelliher¹

The seeds of the Kelliher Art Competition were sown in 1944 when Henry Kelliher, then managing director of Dominion Breweries, saw an exhibition of the works of Australian painter Ernest Buckmaster (1897–1968) at Sydney's David Jones Gallery. Kelliher invited Buckmaster to New Zealand to paint some portraits and landscapes, and in 1954 Kelliher commissioned him to tour the country and paint landscapes to decorate DB's hotels. At the conclusion of his painting safari and '6000 miles driving',² Buckmaster bemoaned the lack of landscapes on display in the country's major art galleries. Presumably with Australia's Wynne Prize (established in 1897) in mind, he recommended that Kelliher initiate a competition for landscape painting here.

Kelliher, who was born and raised in the Waikerikeri Valley, near Alexandra, a region where his grandfather had been a pioneer, was passionate about the 'scenic splendour of [his] native land'.³ Responding to Buckmaster's idea, in December 1954 he 'held discussions on the merits of setting up an Art Competition, open to all artists

in New Zealand' with Ronald Yock, vice-president of the New Zealand Fellowship of Artists.⁴

The following year Buckmaster, resident in Devonport, Auckland at the time, attended the fellowship's August meeting, when arrangements for a competition were well advanced: 'It was made clear to the committee by Mr Buckmaster that Mr Kelliher would not split the prize money or give more than one prize', with an emendation in pencil 'for only one year'.⁵

The first the public knew of the competition would have come shortly afterwards, when the *New Zealand Herald* carried a story under the headline: '£500 Prize for best outdoor canvas': 'The offer of an annual £500 prize for three years for the "best New Zealand landscape or seascape painting of the year" was made by Mr H J Kelliher last night'.⁶ The first competition would be in 1956, probably in Auckland, and Buckmaster would be a judge.

Most significantly for the nature of the competition, the die was cast when Kelliher stated that he was impressed with the objects of the fellowship, 'which supported a more normal presentation of nature'. He concluded: 'Who knows? This may bring forth a truly great landscape artist'.⁷

Later in 1955, the fellowship applied to the Auckland City Art Gallery for 'space in the Gallery for exhibiting a selection of the entries submitted in the Kelliher Art



16. Rodger Harrison *Skippers Canyon* 1970



19. Robert McDowell *From the Lighthouse Road, near Akaroa* 1976

Competition'. The recipient was the gallery's newly appointed acting director, Colin McCahon; Dr Eric Westbrook had just finished up (to become director of the National Gallery of Victoria), and Peter Tomory would not replace him until March 1956. On 15 December 1955, McCahon wrote a memorandum to the Auckland town clerk advising: 'As this is a country-wide competition. . . I would suggest that a definite date be booked for this exhibition. . .'⁸ And thereby McCahon, an artist whose work neither Kelliher nor Buckmaster would have countenanced, as functionary ushered into being the first Kelliher Art Competition, for which Tomory, Buckmaster and Annette Pearse, director of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery, would be judges. The first Kelliher Art Prize Competition exhibition, organised by the fellowship's tireless committee member Algie Gifford, was held at the Auckland City Art Gallery from 24 July to 5 August 1956.

At this time there was already a prize for landscape painting in New Zealand: the Bledisloe Medal, which was awarded to the best landscape in the annual exhibition of the Auckland Society of Arts (ASA), between 1932 and 1988, though not every year. In terms of the exhibiting of new art, the Auckland Art Gallery showed *Young New Zealand Painters* (1953), *Contemporary New Zealand Painters* and *Object and Image* (1954), curated by McCahon. In addition to the fellowship's and the ASA's annual exhibitions, there were regular exhibitions of the Rutland Group and the Elam School of Art. From a national perspective, McCahon was also busy putting together *New Zealand Painting* (May–June 1956), the largest survey exhibition of New Zealand painting since the centennial in 1940, with 112 artists each represented by a single work. The *New Zealand Painting* catalogue lists several artists who would shortly also appear

in the Kelliher, including Austen Deans, Dennis Turner and William Sutton. Peter McIntyre is a significant absence from both exhibitions.

The inaugural Kelliher Art Prize Competition exhibition at the Auckland City Art Gallery displayed 72 paintings, with a further 83 hung at the Exhibition Hall on Karangahape Road 'next door to the Rising Sun Hotel'. Among the more prominent painters of the time listed in the catalogue are Sydney Thompson, John Oakley, Norman Scott, Marcus King, Charles Tole and Colin Wheeler. Others who would become well-known (and Kelliher winners) include Arthur Hipwell, Douglas Badcock, Robert Watson and Violet Watson, who would receive five merit prizes before winning the first of two awards in 1974.

Imric Porsolt, the *New Zealand Herald's* art critic, opined that less than one in ten paintings of the seventy-two 'merit serious consideration as works of art'. He explained that the competition conditions specified 'the highest achievement in painting the visible aspects plus aesthetic qualities in conception and composition' of New Zealand landscape, and artists were required 'to portray in a realistic form of art the unlimited range and variety of New Zealand's scenic attractions.'⁹

However, the *Herald's* editorial a few days later was much more encouraging: 'In four days 2500 people have viewed the Kelliher art prize pictures in the art gallery and some hundreds more have visited the overflow exhibition in Newton. This and the sale of 10 pictures together with a large entry for the competition clearly show that new Zealanders take a natural and genuine interest in representational landscape painting, both as a pursuit and as something to see and enjoy'. It continued



17. Rex Turnbull *Last puha before the storm, Taihape 1973*

'Mr. Kelliher has earned the thanks of his fellow countrymen . . . [and] by instituting a substantial prize for three successive years he has set a welcome example of private art patronage which is otherwise rare at present in this country.'¹⁰ A total of 11,500 people saw the exhibition in its 13-day run.

'HM', writing in the *Auckland Star*, felt that the competition's 'artistic value has been reduced by the condition that artists were required "to paint visible aspects of New Zealand's coastal landscape scenes in a realistic and traditional way"',¹¹ a criticism which dogged the competition on and off over the next two decades.¹² A little surprisingly HM's other comment was that a painting's minimum size of '7½ square feet proved a hurdle too disconcerting for many to overcome'. Whether this referred to the challenges of painting something so large — Kelliher was hoping for some substantial, high-quality masterpieces — or the expense of the cartage to get such a big painting to Auckland, the size limits would later be modified.

As mentioned, the prize was £500, around the average worker's annual earnings at the time, and worth approximately \$25,000 today. The winner was Leonard Mitchell's *Summer in the Mokauiti Valley* (1), whose success Porsolt ascribed, perhaps a little ironically, to 'the lusty shapes of his trees and sheep, standing proud before the listless background'¹³ of the valley. Kelliher purchased the painting and the copyright for a year so that it could be reproduced in the Dominion Breweries calendar and in *The Mirror*, his popular illustrated magazine.

In subsequent years, second and third prizes were added, along with merit prizes, a portrait prize, a special prize for artists under 21 and a figure studies prize, until

the competition became the Kelliher Art Award in 1974, and five equal awards were offered for what turned out to be the last four Kelliher's. Although the conditions were occasionally modified to reflect suggestions by the judges — mostly Australian artists — the essential requirements remained unchanged.

Following the first competition, Kelliher generously presented the next four first-prize-winning paintings — by Arthur Hipwell, Mitchell again, Peter McIntyre and Owen Lee — to the National Art Gallery. Although still organised by the fellowship (until 1963), from 1957 most of the Kelliher Art Competition exhibitions would be held in the galleries of the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts (NZAFAs) in Wellington.

The annual Kelliher exhibitions received enormous publicity. The openings were black-tie affairs attended by politicians, community leaders and celebrities of the time, and were extensively reported in the press. The winning paintings were illustrated nationally in newspapers and magazines.

In 1961, at Buckmaster's suggestion, Kelliher announced the establishment of a trust to organise and fund the competition, its objects to include helping destitute artists, lending paintings to schools and organising travelling exhibitions.

As early as 1963, the year of the last competition organised by the fellowship, Sir Henry Kelliher (knighted in the New Year Honours) was considering a permanent home for the collection. One option was to establish a gallery on Puketutu Island (Te Motu a Hiaroa), his home on the Manukau Harbour, and another was a three-way partnership, with Auckland City to donate land for a gallery, the Edmiston Trust to construct the building and the Kelliher Art Trust to fund the running costs in perpetuity.



21. Violet Watson *Maratoto Hills, Paeroa* 1977

In the competition's tenth anniversary year, 1966, Sir Henry reported that its aims had been substantially fulfilled. Possibly to mark this, the trust organised an exhibition, *The New Zealand Landscape*, comprising 14 prize-winning paintings and works by each of the 10 judges to date, which toured to at least 14 UK art museums in 1967–68.

By 1967, prizes to the value of \$45,000 (almost \$1.8 million today) had been distributed, sales reported by artists totalled \$55,000 (just over \$2 million today), and popular support for the competition continued. Artist John Oakley, a highly regarded lecturer at the Canterbury College School of Art, had recently written an article entitled 'Landscape painting is a legitimate form of art'. Responding to this, the *New Zealand Herald*, in an editorial 'The art of the landscape painter', wrote: 'That such a comment should be necessary reveals the lamentable breach which has widened between the avant-garde of modern art and the people at large . . . who seek reassurance on the form of art which the Kelliher competition seeks to preserve and promote'. It concluded: 'There need be no tampering with its provisions for the sake of any cult.'¹⁴

At the 1970 exhibition opening, Sir Henry announced that in response to pressure from South Island artists the 1971 competition would be held in Christchurch, thus eliciting the *Wellington Post* editorial: 'Will Art Flee The Capital'.¹⁵ The 1971 event was held at the Canterbury Society of Arts in Christchurch where, due the smaller space, just 75 paintings were hung. This was the first indication that the Kelliher could be facing difficulties in finding alternative venues to the NZAFA.

However, the Dunedin Public Art Gallery agreed to host the now renamed Kelliher Art Awards in 1974 (there were no Kelliher in 1972 and 1973), with its five equal prizes of \$750 (each worth around \$9000 today). After another gap year, the Hastings Cultural Centre held the 1976 event, which attracted more than 10,000 visitors, approximately a third of the city's population, and 32 of the 79 paintings were sold, valued at over \$9000 — a record for the Kelliher.

The Kelliher trustees were optimistic that the 1977 event would be held at the new Manawatu Art Gallery, and DB made a donation towards its construction costs. However, the Art Gallery Society and its director Luit Bieringa — who was reported to have 'virtually rubbished the exhibition on television'¹⁶ — turned it down. Massey University saved the day, and what turned out to be the final Kelliher exhibition was shown in the not entirely satisfactory foyer of the Social Sciences Lecture Block.

In the early 1980s there was a flurry of activity at the Kelliher Art Trust, otherwise quiet since 1977. It may have been initiated by an invitation in 1979 from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery to host the competition and exhibition. In 1981, following the receipt in January of a pragmatic position paper by former judge Sir William Dargie, the trust sought views and opinions from various quarters, including Bieringa, now the director of the National Art Gallery. It may have been Bieringa who expressed the 'antagonism towards the Kelliher Art Awards felt by members of the Art Gallery Directors' Council'.¹⁷ To see if this could be lessened, the trust secretary approached former winning artists Graham Braddock and Peter Williams for their views about the changing the conditions of entry. While Braddock favoured loosening the conditions to allow more contemporary approaches to landscape painting, his priority was to increase the prize pool to attract leading artists, as their work already commanded prices in excess of \$2500.

By early 1983 the trust had decided to go ahead and revive the award, with the event to take place at the Canterbury Society of Arts, Christchurch in August. Detailed plans were drawn up; Dargie had agreed to judge and the prizes settled on: a grand prize of \$5000 — no mean sum, equating to over \$20,000 today — and four merit awards of \$500 each.

However, on 26 July, following a meeting of the trust, a press statement announced that the 'popular long-term project has been brought to a successful conclusion'. The wording reflects the final option in a recent paper by Dargie himself: 'A third and by no means unattractive possibility is to treat the sponsor's aims and ideals as being

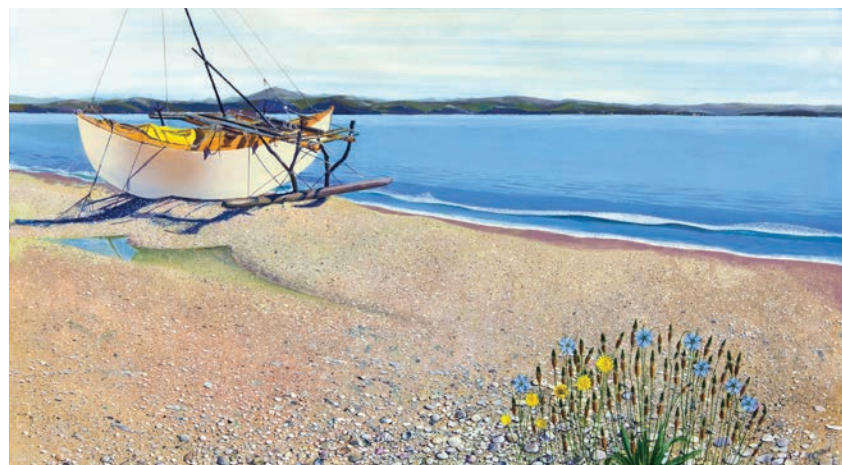
already accomplished and in no need of further action'.¹⁸ Dargie shrewdly added that 'no negative statements [should] be made and that the members of the Trust are proud that the 27 years of the Trust's activities have achieved the aim of revitalizing traditional art in New Zealand. The artists they have promoted and encouraged are now carrying forward those aims and ideals by means of their professional activities in the community.'

The press release re-stated Sir Henry's primary object: 'to encourage New Zealand artists to create in a traditional figurative style an artistic record of New Zealand's way of life and the richness and variety of its landscapes and unrivalled natural beauty . . . Because the Kelliher Art Competition has fulfilled its purpose so well, the climate in which the original Competition flourished no longer exists. There are scores of skilled painters prospering and supported by an appreciative public.' In acknowledging the 18 iterations of the competition/awards over 21 years, it should also be remembered that tens of thousands of dollars in prize money went to 83 painters, and many times that number sold thousands of dollars worth of paintings to an enthusiastic public.

One criticism of the competition that was soon proven invalid was the idea that art prizes should no longer be offered, because other art prizes were established while the Kelliher was still running – the Manawatu, the Hay's, the Benson & Hedges – although they were short-lived in comparison. And what art museum today would consider holding an exhibition to mark *their* contribution? The Kelliher's longevity alone was a considerable achievement, and one of visionary and generous patronage which has been rarely matched since.

Critics of the competition were simply unwilling to accept that for Kelliher it was not simply an art competition; as Sir Henry put it himself, its aim was 'to encourage the appreciation of the beauties of our own country' through painting.

Sir Henry stuck to his guns, writing: 'There has been some criticism of the [conditions] but none that I have heard seems to be valid: the prize money and the costs of organising and mounting the competition are borne by the donor so it is surely unreasonable to object to a measure designed to encourage the type of art and artist he sincerely believes in. New Zealand artists who do not wish to work within the limits of the representational tradition could with more logic lament the apparent reluctance of some others to put up the money for a parallel competition with different conditions . . . Anyway, there is nothing wrong with realism in art. However, the mere attempt to paint a naturalistic picture does not mean the result will become automatically a good work of art. Bad painting is just bad painting whatever style the artist chooses to work in.'¹⁹



20. John Clifford *Beached, Maraetai* 1977



18. Graham Braddock *In the Stillness North, Harbour, Kawau Island* 1976



26. Dick Frizzell *Two Sheds and a Power Pole* 2009

¹ *Evening Post*, 16 August 1958.

² Ernest Buckmaster, letter to Henry Kelliher, 2 July 1955.

³ Undated speech, Kelliher Art Trust archive.

⁴ Undated note, Kelliher Art Trust archive.

⁵ New Zealand Fellowship of Artists Executive Committee Minutes, 9 August 1955.

⁶ *New Zealand Herald*, undated clipping, 1955, Kelliher Art Trust archive.

⁷ Undated press cutting, 1955, Kelliher Art Trust archive.

⁸ Letter from Colin McCahon to Town Clerk, Auckland City Council, 15 December 1955.

⁹ *New Zealand Herald*, July 24, 1956.

¹⁰ *New Zealand Herald*, July 28, 1956

¹¹ *Auckland Star*, July 24, 1956

¹² In this short history there is insufficient space to address the various criticisms of the competition, largely relating to the realistic approach required by the conditions of entry, nor the various responses

¹³ *New Zealand Herald*, July 24, 1956.

¹⁴ *New Zealand Herald*, July 22, 1967.

¹⁵ Undated cutting, 1971, Kelliher Art Trust archive.

¹⁶ Mr I N MacEwan, Public Relations Officer, Palmerston North Council, quoted in *The Tribune*, undated clipping, 1977.

¹⁷ File note, Kelliher Art Trust archive.

¹⁸ Sir William Dargie, undated position paper, 1983, Kelliher Art Trust archive.

¹⁹ Sir Henry Kelliher, undated speech, Kelliher Art Trust archive.

Note on references: Unless otherwise stated all material quoted is in the Kelliher Art Trust archive, where unfortunately many of the press cuttings are undated.

KELLIHER ART COMPETITION PRIZE AND AWARD WINNERS

Based on the list compiled by Richard King in *The Kelliher Art Trust: 67 Award Winning Paintings of the New Zealand Landscape and its People*, Orakau House, Auckland, 1979.

1956

Leonard Mitchell (1925–1980),
Summer in the Mokauiti Valley (Kelliher Art Trust)

1957

1st Arthur Hipwell (1894–1964), *Mount Taratara*
(Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa)
2nd Douglas Badcock (1922–2009), *Karitane coastline*
3rd Peter McIntyre (1910–1995), *Rangitikei River*

1958

1st Leonard Mitchell (1925–1980),
Stormlight and snow, Ruahine Mountains
(Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa)
2nd George Packwood (1916–1991)
Quiet water, Hutt River (Kelliher Art Trust)
Merit prizes: Owen Lee, Julia Lynch, Josephine Macarthur,
Peter McIntyre, Irvine Major, Don Neilson, Paul Olds,
Maurice Poulton, Gwyneth Richardson, Colin Wheeler

1959

1st Peter McIntyre (1910–1995), *Sunday in Dunedin*
(Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa)
2nd Douglas Badcock (1922–2009),
Boat Harbour, Nugget Point (Kelliher Art Trust)
3rd Paul Olds (1922–1976), *Wellington* (Kelliher Art Trust)
Merit prizes: Beverley or Bill Bennett, Austen Deans, John
Logan, Irvine Major, Howard Mallitt, Robert Watson, Violet
Watson, Colin Wheeler

1960

1st Owen Lee (1918–2003), *Midsummer haze, Waiwera
Valley* (Museum of New Zealand/Te Papa Tongarewa)
2nd David Barker (1941–), *Beach strays, Takatu*
(Kelliher Art Trust)
3rd Peter McIntyre (1910–1995), *The Manuherikia, Central
Otago* (Kelliher Art Trust)
Merit prizes: Edward Lattey, Peter Mardon, Allan Mitchell,
Kenneth Turner, Colin Wheeler, Peter Williams

1961

1st Cedric Savage (1901–1969), *Summer, Hawke's Bay*
(Kelliher Art Trust)
2nd Don Neilson (1924–2013), *Near Paekakariki*
(Kelliher Art Trust)
3rd Peter McIntyre (1910–1995),
Canterbury shearing shed (Kelliher Art Trust)
Special prize: David Barker (1941–), *Maori fishermen,
Matauri Bay* (Kelliher Art Trust)
Merit Prizes: Ida Bale, Minos Fotinopoulos, Owen Lee,
Stewart Maclennan, Peter Mardon, Maurice Poulton,
Robert Watson, Colin Wheeler

1962

1st Austen Deans (1915–2011), *Kea Hut and Mt Sefton*
(Kelliher Art Trust)
2nd Emerson Porter (dates unknown), *Waiwera Valley*
3rd Douglas Badcock (1922–2009), *Mt Sefton,
winter morning*



24. Stanley Palmer *Aotea* 2007

Special prize: Derek Ball (1944–), *Morning, Matahiwi*
(Kelliher Art Trust)

Special prize: John Fijn (1943–2020), *Wellington Harbour*
(Kelliher Art Trust)

Merit prizes: Peter Blackburn, Brian Halliday, Owen Lee,
Colyn Nicholls, Maurice Poulton, Violet Watson, Peter
Williams, Geoffrey Wood

1963

1st Austen Deans (1915–2011), *Rakaia Headwaters*
2nd Peggy Spicer (1908–1984), *Waterfront scene*
(Kelliher Art Trust)

3rd Peter McIntyre (1910–1995), *Country scene*

Special prize: John Horner (1944–), *Sunlit boats*
(Kelliher Art Trust)

Merit prizes: Robert Chilvers, George Genet, C Kirkpatrick,
Carl Laugeson, Ainslie Manson, Robert Watson, Violet
Watson, Colin Wheeler

1964

Competition not held

1965

1st Douglas Badcock (1922–2009), *Head of Lake Wakatipu*
(Kelliher Art Trust)

2nd Colin Wheeler (1919–2012), *Sluicing for gold, Naseby*
3rd Rodger Harrison (1931–2012), *Tokaanu, Lake Taupo*
(Kelliher Art Trust)

Special prize: Ian Scott (1945–2013), *Low tide, Anawhata*
(Kelliher Art Trust)

Merit prizes: Austen Deans, S Diederich, Norman Hurn,
Leslie McCullough, Peter Mardon, Maurice Poulton, Cyril
Whiteoak, Peter Williams

1966

1st Peter Mardon (1937–), *Lyttelton Harbour*
(Kelliher Art Trust)

2nd Colin Wheeler (1919–2012), *Landscape near Benmore*
3rd Robert Watson (1911–1980), *Early morning,
Queenstown* (Kelliher Art Trust)

Merit Prizes: Robert Chilvers, Gaston de Vel, Myra
Kirkpatrick, Don Neilson, Maurice Poulton, Sylvia Robins,
Ian Scott, Cyril Whiteoak, Peter Williams

1967

1st Robert Watson (1911–1980), *Winter feed,
Central Otago* (Kelliher Art Trust)

2nd Peter Williams (1934–2018), *Paua picnic*
(Kelliher Art Trust)

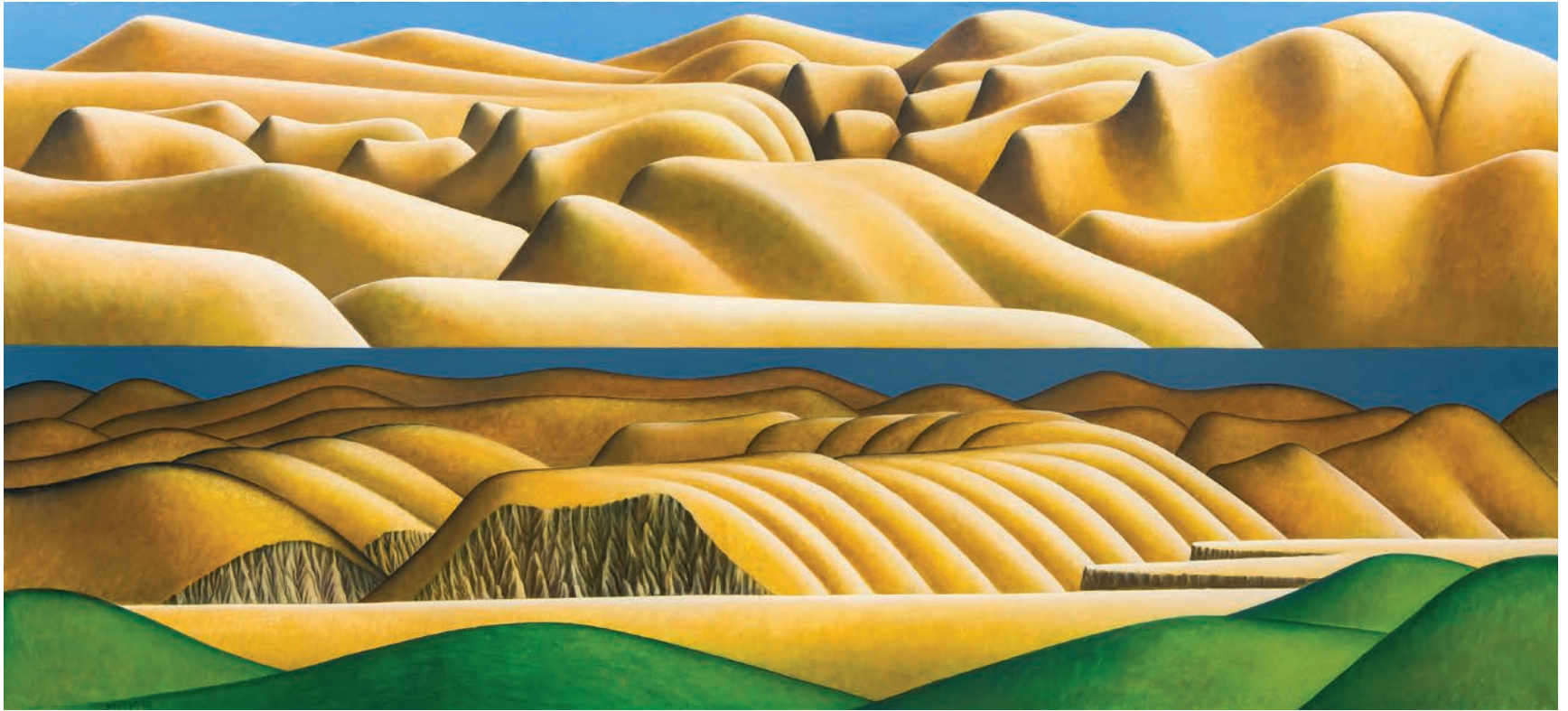
3rd Brian Halliday (1936–1994), *The Outlet, Lake Wanaka*
(Kelliher Art Trust)

Merit prizes: Alan Crombie, Austen Deans, Roy Dickinson,
Maurice Kerr, Stewart Maclennan, Peter Mardon, William
Moore, Colyn Nicholls, Maurice Poulton

1968

1st Rodger Harrison (1931–2012), *Morning light,
Tauherenikau Valley* (Kelliher Art Trust)

2nd Colin Wheeler (1919–2012), *Grasmere, Canterbury*
3rd Alan Crombie (1930–2019), *West Coast sawmill*



22. Michael Smither *St Bathans Diggings: Day and Night* 1998

(Kelliher Art Trust)

Portrait prize: Ida Carey (1891–1982), *Amohia Tuhua*

Portrait prize: Gaston de Vel (1924–2010), *William Roche*

Merit prizes: Robert Chilvers, John Clifford, John Crump, Owen Lee, Peter Mardon, Don Neilson, Robert Watson, Violet Watson, Jonathan White

1969

1st Rodger Harrison (1931–2012), *Totara Flat hut* (Kelliher Art Trust)

2nd Austen Deans (1915–2011), *Glacial remains* (Kelliher Art Trust)

3rd Colin Wheeler (1919–2012), *Cattle muster, Lake Hawea* (Kelliher Art Trust)

Portrait prize: Vy Elsom (1908–2000), *Self-portrait*

Figure studies prize: John Clifford (1932–2015), *Surf fishing contest, Muriwai* (Kelliher Art Trust)

Merit prizes: Gaston de Vel, George Genet, Maurice Kerr, Owen Lee, Ainslie Manson, Peter Mardon, Allan Maund, Jack Salt, H Smith

1970

1st Brian Halliday (1936–1994), *Skippers Canyon* (Kelliher Art Trust)

2nd Austen Deans (1915–2011), *Rangitata Terraces*

3rd Colin Wheeler (1919–2012), *Mackenzie Country*

Portrait prize: Richard Jackson (dates unknown), *P Skoglund*

Figure studies prize: Owen Lee (1918–2003), *Preparing for the season* (Kelliher Art Trust)

Merit prizes: Peter Beadle, Gaston de Vel, J Hazeldine, M Lacey, Jack Salt, J H Smith, Gordon Tuck, Violet Watson, Jonathan White

1971

1st Rodger Harrison (1931–2012), *Skippers Canyon* (Kelliher Art Trust)

2nd Jonathan White (1938–), *Bush track, South Westland*

3rd Kenneth Nelson (dates unknown), *Towards the Maniototo*

Portrait prize: J Lynch (dates unknown), *Miss Dorothy Wypych*

Figure studies prize: Owen Lee (1918–2003), *Maintenance on the Western Viaduct* (Kelliher Art Trust)

Merit prizes: Peter Brown, Jessie Chapman, Robert Chilvers, Gaston de Vel, Austen Deans, Henry Edwards, Allan Maund, William Moore, Phyllis Perry

1972

Competition not held

1973

Competition not held

1974

Five equal awards:

Peter Brown (1921–2005), *Sefton* (Kelliher Art Trust)

Owen Lee (1918–2003), *Trawlers at anchor* (Kelliher Art Trust)

Els Noordhof (1924–2013), *Boy in empty room*

(Kelliher Art Trust)

Rex Turnbull (1947–), *Last puha before the storm* (Kelliher Art Trust)

Violet Watson (1906–1992), *Maratoto valley farm*

1975

Award not held

1976

Five equal awards:

Graham Braddock (1942–), *In the Stillness, North Harbour, Kawau Island* (Kelliher Art Trust)

Owen Lee (1918–2003), *Sunday relaxation, Albert Park* (Kelliher Art Trust)

Robert McDowell (1937–), *From the Lighthouse Road, Near Akaroa* (Kelliher Art Trust)

Els Noordhof (1924–2013), *Youth* (Kelliher Art Trust)

Belinda Wilson (1954–), *Pensioner* (Kelliher Art Trust)

1977

Five equal awards:

Brian Baxter (1940–) *Sea, sand and snow, Kaikoura*

Michael Blow (1943–) *Solo mother* (Kelliher Art Trust)

Graham Braddock (1942–), *Reflections on the past* (Kelliher Art Trust)

John Clifford (1932–2015), *Beached, Maraetai* (Kelliher Art Trust)

Violet Watson (1906–1992), *Maratoto Hills, Paeroa* (Kelliher Art Trust)



32. Rosanne Croucher *After yesterday. One Tree Hill* 2020

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Douglas Badcock

Born Balclutha, 1922
Died Queenstown, 2009

After schooling in North Taieri, where he excelled in drawing, Badcock worked for the Inland Revenue Department, then transferred to the Valuation Department in Auckland for health reasons. There he took evening classes at the Elam School of Art. At the outbreak of World War II, he joined the photography section of the RNZAF but was discharged in 1944 because of his chronic asthma. Following his recuperation in Hanmer Springs, he settled in Queenstown, working as a photographer and painting in his spare time. He married in 1947 and by the late 1950s was painting full-time, coming second in the 1957 and 1959 Kelliher Art Competitions. In 1960 his first solo exhibition at James Smith's Gallery, Wellington was a sell-out, as was his second, a little later, at Smith & Caughey's, Auckland. Thereafter he showed regularly at McGregor Wright, Wellington and Fishers, Christchurch, as well as at his home gallery in Speargrass Flat near Queenstown. After 30 years in the area Badcock moved to Clyde, Central Otago. In addition to a merit in the 1960 Kelliher, he placed third in 1962 and won in 1965. Badcock published three books: *My Kind of Country* (1971), *A Painter in Fiji* (1973) and *My Kind of Painting* (1978).

Derek Ball

Born Masterton, 1944

Ball grew up in Eastbourne and attended the Elam School of Fine Arts, graduating with honours in painting. Ball was the third Frances Hodgkins Fellow at Otago University in 1968. Following a stint studying and teaching in England, he studied for an MFA at the San Francisco Art Institute, specialising in plastics. His interest in kinetic sculptures led to his success producing them in limited editions. Returning to New Zealand, Ball became a lecturer in sculpture at the Otago Polytechnic School of Art, where he continued making sculpture, including public commissions, and exhibiting widely. In 2002 he moved to Nelson.

David Barker

Born Chichester, England, 1941

Barker emigrated to New Zealand in 1951 with his family, and was brought up on Auckland's North Shore. He was 19 when he came second in the Kelliher to Owen Lee, who had been his teacher at Takapuna Grammar School. He studied at the Elam School of Fine Arts, graduating with honours in 1964, the year of his first solo exhibition, West Coast. This was to be the first of 10 exhibitions at the John Leech Gallery, Auckland. An award and scholarship enabled him to study for his Master of Fine Arts at the University of Hawaii, after which he taught in Hobart and Sydney before

embarking on his career as an international painter, yacht designer, sailor and author. He has written several books, including *David Barker: The Man and his Art* (1983) and *Antarctica: An Artist's Logbook* (1991), which documented his journey there in 1988 aboard Skip Novak's *Pelagic*. Barker lives in Devonport, Auckland.

Caroline Bellamy

Born Nelson, 1995

Nelson-born Bellamy's father is a signwriter and painter and her mother a medical illustrator, so she started painting at a young age. She sold her first painting when she exhibited for the first time at the Rutherford Gallery, Nelson, with her sister Michelle, in 2011, when she was only 14. Bellamy graduated from the Ilam School of Fine Arts, Christchurch in 2016 and had her first solo exhibition, *Moving Wild*, at Auckland's Parnell Gallery in 2017, the same year she had a joint exhibition at the Suter Art Gallery with her father Steve. In 2020 they were joined by Michelle at Parnell Gallery. Her most recent solo exhibition was at Nelson's Parker Gallery in 2018. Bellamy moved to Queenstown in 2020 and is currently the artist in residence at the Queenstown Art Centre. Passionate about New Zealand's wild landscape, Bellamy is a keen tramper and in 2018 became a World Ready 'ambassador' for the outdoor clothing company Kathmandu.

Justin Boroughs

Born Paignton, England, 1952

Boroughs emigrated to New Zealand with his family from London in 1955, and grew up on the Ohakea airbase, where his father was an air traffic controller. Bruce Rennie, Boroughs's art teacher at Rangitikei College, encouraged him to go to art school. At the Elam School of Fine Arts from 1971 to 1974 his teachers included Don Binney, Gretchen Albrecht and John Turner. Following teacher training, Boroughs practised and exhibited as a photographer. After extensive travel and painting in Europe and North Africa, the United States and Mexico, Boroughs returned to New Zealand and started teaching at Auckland Grammar School in 1982, where he remains head of art. Boroughs had his first solo exhibition at John Leech Gallery in 1991. His most recent solo exhibition was at Parnell's Artis Gallery.

Graham Braddock

Born Auckland, 1942

Largely self-taught, Braddock was a graphic artist and voluntary youth worker, then ran his own print and framing business. He started painting professionally in 1974 and won the Cambridge Art Award the following year, when he established the Downtown Hilton Gallery. He won the Kelliher Art Award in 1976 and 1977. He lives, paints and teaches near Kaukapakapa.

John Clifford

Born Glasgow, Scotland, 1932

Died Orewa, 2015

Clifford was a graduate of Glasgow School of Art, winning Portrait Award of the Year. He undertook postgraduate study in Paris before emigrating to Canada. There he taught art classes, painted portraits and landscapes, and was resident tutor at the Vancouver Businessmen's Art Club. He painted in San Francisco for two years before finally emigrating to New Zealand, eventually settling on Auckland's North Shore. He was a successful freelance illustrator for advertising agencies and his work has been published in calendars and in books, as well as a range of greetings cards celebrating New Zealand's sesquicentenary. He was particularly known for his seascapes and sailing paintings, as well as landscapes, portraits and bird studies. He was successful at three Kelliher's, winning a merit in 1963, the figure studies prize in 1969 and an award in 1977.

Rosanne Croucher

Born Hamilton, 1987

Hamilton resident and mother of two Croucher has been exhibiting publicly for almost a decade, has won several awards and is represented in the Wallace Arts Trust Collection. Following her Bachelor of Design and Visual Arts at Unitec, Auckland (2009–2011), she completed her Master of Design in 2013. She has participated in numerous group exhibitions, most recently the opening exhibition of Raglan's Wharf Gallery in 2020. Her key solo exhibitions to date are *Ablaze* (2015), at the Lake House Arts Centre, Takapuna and *Wish you were here* (2017) at Studio One Toi Tū, Auckland.

Austen Deans

Born Riccarton, Christchurch, 1915

Died Peel Forest, Canterbury, 2011

Deans was one of New Zealand's best-loved painters of the mountains and high country. A descendant of the pioneering Deans family of Riccarton, Deans was brought up in the Malvern Hills, Canterbury. He studied at the Canterbury College School of Art under Archibald Nicoll, graduating in 1939. Deans saw war service in Egypt and Libya and was an Assistant New Zealand War Artist. Following recuperation from war wounds he married, and studied from 1948–50 at the Sir John Cass Institute, London. On his return he settled in Peel Forest and embarked on his career as a mountain climber and painter. Deans won the Kelliher Art Award in 1962 and 1963, with *Kea Hut and Mount Sefton* and *Rakaia*

Headwaters respectively. His autobiography *Pictures* was published in 1967. In 1981 he travelled to Antarctica, and in 1994 the Canterbury Society of Art presented a major retrospective exhibition of his paintings.

Dick Frizzell

Born Auckland, 1943

Frizzell graduated from the Canterbury School of Fine Arts in 1963 and moved back to Auckland, completing his teacher training in 1966 before spending a few years working in advertising. Soon after beginning to paint full time in 1976 he had his first solo exhibition. In 1978 he took on a part-time lectureship in painting at the Elam School of Fine Arts. In 1987 he had been unwell, and to paint himself out of artist's block after his recuperation, he decided to paint landscapes. He first exhibited them in 1989, a breathtaking development for an artist hitherto immersed in popular imagery. He returned to being a full-time artist in 1995, and in 1997 was given a major retrospective at the City Gallery, Wellington. In 2005 he had a residency in Antarctica and his monograph *Dick Frizzell: The Painter* was published in 2009. *It's All About the Image*, a rough guide to New Zealand art history, appeared in 2011. His latest book is *Me, According to the History of Art* (2020).

Trenton Garratt

Born Auckland, 1980

Garratt received his Bachelor of Fine Arts from Whitecliffe College of Art and Design in 2003 and his Master of Fine Arts from Elam School of Fine Arts in 2009, where he won the Henrietta and Lola Anne Tunbridge Scholarship. He has had solo exhibitions at Enjoy Gallery, Wellington (2008); Starkwhite, Auckland (2011, 2013); and The Engine Room, Massey University, Wellington (2012); and participated in group exhibitions at Artspace Aotearoa, Auckland (2010); Grimmuseum, Berlin (2011); and City Gallery, Wellington (2012). In recent years he has worked on commissions and is currently producing new works for exhibition. Married with two children, Garratt lives in Auckland.

Aroha Gossage

Born Auckland, 1989

Aroha Gossage (Ngāti Wai, Te Āti Awa) first studied for her Bachelor of Fine Arts at the Quay School of Arts, UCOL, Wanganui and completed it AUT in 2013, before continuing there to gain her Master of Art and Design in 2015. She first exhibited at Artis Gallery, Auckland in a two-person show in 2016. Gossage had her first solo exhibition, *Whenua*, at Artis in 2017, followed by *Wairua* (2018) and *He Māra Oranga* (2020). Gossage is represented by works in the collections of the Auckland Museum and the Wallace Arts Trust.

Brian Halliday

Born Wanaka, 1936

Died Wanaka, 1994

Halliday studied at the Dunedin School of Art and is strongly associated with Wanaka, where he lived for most of his life. He became a full-time painter in 1962, setting up his studio in Albert Town, near Lake Wanaka. He was also a horse breeder, and his portrait of Cardigan Bay hangs in the American Trotting Hall of Fame. Halliday won a Kelliher merit prize in 1962, a third placing in 1967 and a first in 1970. His *Central Otago Paintings* (with text by Paul Powell) was published in 1972.

Rodger Harrison

Born 1931, Wellington

Died 2012, Waikanae

Harrison attended Berhampore School and Wellington Technical College before joining the National Film Unit as an animator. He then became an art director at the advertising agency Carlton Carruthers Du Chateau. After gaining a merit prize in 1960 and coming third in 1965, Harrison won the Kelliher three times (1968, 1969 and 1971), thus becoming the most successful of all Kelliher winners. He

also won the National Bank watercolour and mural awards. He was a regular exhibitor at the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts from 1953 until 1974.

Michael Hight

Born Stratford 1961

A self-taught artist, Hight has been painting since he was 14. He earned his Bachelor in Social Sciences at the University of Waikato in 1982 and then travelled, lived and painted in London, returning for his first solo exhibition in 1984 at Words and Pictures Gallery, Auckland. From 1988 he began showing regularly with Gow Langsford Gallery, Auckland and started painting full time in 2001. He has received several QEII grants and his work is held in many New Zealand collections including the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, the Chartwell Collection and the Wallace Arts Trust.

Peter Mardon

Born Christchurch, 1937

A self-taught artist, Mardon, 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. In the 1960 Kelliher Mardon won the first of his five merit prizes. He showed in the 1962 and 1963 Hay's Art Competition and won a prize in its fourth and final iteration in 1966. His only podium finish in the Kelliher was first prize in 1966.

Robert McDowell

Born Ashburton, 1937

McDowell studied at the universities of Canterbury and Otago and took private art lessons. He worked in graphic and architectural design before becoming a full-time painter and tutor in 1973, specialising in portraiture. He lives and paints in Christchurch.

Peter McIntyre

Born Dunedin, 1910

Died Wellington, 1995

McIntyre set out to be a journalist but in 1931 he abandoned his studies at Otago University in favour of the Slade School of Art in London, after which he worked as a freelance commercial artist, book illustrator and set painter at the Sadler's Wells Theatre. In 1939 he enlisted with the 34th Anti-tank Battery, a New Zealand unit, and in 1941 General Bernard Freyberg appointed him an Official War Artist. His depictions of New Zealanders at war were published in popular magazines such as *Parade*, *The Illustrated London News* and *The New Zealand Listener*. His work covered the campaigns in Greece, Crete, the Western Desert, Libya, Tunisia and Italy. He was promoted to the rank of Major at Cassino in Italy.

Exhibitions of McIntyre's work toured New Zealand both during and after the war, when he settled in Dunedin working as a cartoonist but also producing portraits and landscapes. He moved to Wellington in 1949 and had his first solo exhibition in 1952, though he found it difficult to make a living from his painting alone. His Kelliher successes and well-publicised voyages to Antarctica in 1957 and 1959 helped to grow his reputation and eventually he began to have regular exhibitions in Wellington and Auckland. Following the publication of *West*, his American work, he had large solo shows in San Francisco and Los Angeles. He was awarded an OBE in 1970. His popular books, eight in all, include his biography *The Painted Years* (1962), *McIntyre Country: New Zealand Landscapes* (1979) and *Peter McIntyre: War Artist* (1981). In addition to gaining four third prizes in the Kelliher, he won a merit prize in 1958 and a first in 1959.

Richard McWhannell

Born Akaroa, 1952

A painter and sculptor, McWhannell was brought up in Akaroa and Christchurch, where he studied under Rudolph



27. Michael Hight *Motatapu River, Otago 2011*

Gopas at the School of Fine Arts at the University of Canterbury from 1970 to 1972. He then spent some time with Toss Woollaston in the Nelson region. He had his first solo exhibition at the Canterbury Society of Arts in 1974, before moving to Auckland in 1977. A QEII Arts Council travel grant in 1982 enabled him to travel to Europe in 1977–78, and in 1985 he became a full-time artist. He was included in *Contemporary New Zealand Realist Paintings* at the Auckland City Art Gallery in 1979 and in *Content/Context* at the National Art Gallery's Shed 11 in 1986. In 1988 the Fisher Gallery, Pakuranga, presented a 10-year survey exhibition. McWhannell has exhibited widely in group and solo shows throughout New Zealand and at the International Biennial of Graphic Arts in Ljubljana, Yugoslavia (1989). He currently exhibits at Orexart, Auckland.

Leonard Mitchell

Born Palmerston North, 1925
Died Coggeshall, England, 1980

Mitchell studied at Wellington Technical College from 1939 to 1942. In 1947, following army service, he visited Britain and, on his return, worked in his father's commercial design studio and taught at Wellington Tech. In 1954, he opened the Lambton Art Galleries. By now a successful portrait painter, he was commissioned to paint three large murals in the Lower Hutt War Memorial Library, completed in 1956, the year he won the inaugural Kelliher Art Award. He won again in 1958. In 1959, taking up a fellowship from the Netherlands Institute for International Cultural Relations, Mitchell sold the lease for his gallery, married and moved to Holland, then to England where, in 1961, he settled in Essex. There he earned a modest living, mostly through selling his exhibits at the Paris Salon.

Stanley Palmer

Born Turua, Coromandel, 1936

Palmer was brought up in Mt Albert, Auckland. He attended Auckland Teachers' Training College from 1957 to 1958, followed by a year of specialist art training at Dunedin Technical College, after which he returned to Auckland

as an art and craft adviser. His woodcuts and bamboo engravings brought him widespread popularity in the late 1970s and 1980s. Through the 1960s Palmer had several school teaching positions and taught popular evening classes and printmaking summer schools at Murrays Bay Intermediate on Auckland's North Shore. Palmer's first solo exhibition of paintings was at the Uptown Gallery, Auckland in 1965. He then had regular exhibitions at New Vision, Auckland, until 1982. In 1969 Palmer received an Arts Council award for printmaking and he became a full-time artist the following year. During the 1970s Palmer's prints were frequently shown overseas. An Arts Council travel grant allowed Palmer to tour Europe in 1974 and he toured the United States and Canada in 1983. Since the 1990s Palmer has concentrated more on paintings. He shows at Melanie Roger Gallery, Auckland. Amongst his more important publications are *Stanley Palmer: Poor Knights* (1992), *West* (2000), *To the Harbour* (2007) and *East* (2009).

Cedric Savage

Born Christchurch, 1901
Died Aegina, Greece, 1969

Savage was one of the most popular painters of his generation in New Zealand. After studying at the Canterbury College School of Art from 1916 to 1918, he became an architectural modeller and designer and worked on Parliament Buildings, Wellington and the Sydney State Theatre. He then took up painting, and moved to Fiji from 1930 to 1933 to paint and teach. After war service in 1945 he settled in Takaka, near Nelson, to paint full time. His paintings sold in good numbers at the annual exhibition of the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts in Wellington, where he showed from 1931 to 1969, and was on the council in the 1940s. In 1955, probably because of waning interest in his work, he moved to Europe to live, mostly in southern Spain, Italy, Greece and the Aegean Islands, making the occasional return visit to New Zealand and showing in the Paris Salon and London's Royal Academy. In 1956 the New Zealand Government presented the Queen Mother with one of his New Zealand landscapes.

Ian Scott

Born Bradford, England, 1945
Died Auckland, 2013

In 1952 Scott's family emigrated to New Zealand, settling in West Auckland. At Kelston Boys' High School, Garth Tapper and Rex Head were his art teachers, and Scott took Colin McCahon's classes for a year before going to Elam School of Fine Arts (1964–67), followed by Auckland Teachers' Training College in 1968, when he was a finalist in the first Benson & Hedges Art Award. In 1969 he had his first exhibition, with Rick Killeen, at Barry Lett Galleries, Auckland, and was a finalist in the Manawatu Art Prize. Scott's first solo exhibition was at the Peter McLeavey Gallery in Wellington in 1970. Scott taught at Nelson College from 1971–73. Back in Auckland he won the Pakuranga Art Prize in 1977 and the Benson & Hedges in 1978. In 1980 Scott travelled to the United States and Europe on an Air New Zealand travel grant. In 1991 he had a survey exhibition at Lopdell House Gallery, Auckland. In 1997 a major book on his work by Warwick Brown was published, followed in 2004 by *Ian Scott: The Model Series Paintings, 1996–2004* and in 2005 *Ian Scott: Lattices*.

Michael Smither

Born New Plymouth, 1939

In 1959 Smither enrolled at Elam School of Fine Arts, but left in 1961 when he had his first solo exhibition at Mollers Gallery, Auckland and was included in *Contemporary New Zealand Painting* at the Auckland Art Gallery. In 1963 he returned to New Plymouth and through the 1960s his reputation steadily grew, with commissions for sculptures, stained-glass windows, murals and later book jackets. In 1968 he was a finalist in the Benson & Hedges Art Award, and was the 1970 Frances Hodgkins Fellow. In 1984 the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery in New Plymouth presented a touring survey exhibition of his work. After three years in Golden Bay, and following further moves, in 1996 Smither settled in Otama, Coromandel. In 2004 *Michael Smither: Painter* was published and he was made a CNZM. In 2006 a major retrospective exhibition *Michael Smither:*



25. Justin Boroughs *View of Puketutu Island* 2008

The Wonder Years was shown Auckland, Wellington and New Plymouth. Smither's last solo exhibition was at Artis Gallery, Auckland in 2015.

Peggy Spicer

Born Auckland, 1908
Died Auckland, 1984

After attending Diocesan School for Girls in Auckland, Spicer attended the Elam School of Art and then travelled with her artist mother, Ella, to England and Egypt, where they exhibited together in Cairo. From 1936 until 1947, Spicer exhibited regularly with the Auckland Society of Arts, frequently with Auckland subjects; the Canterbury Society of Arts; and the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts (1937–1962), as well as being a member of the Rutland Group and later the Auckland Fellowship of Artists. Spicer won second prize in the 1963 Kelliher.

Rex Turnbull

Born Taihape, 1947

Turnbull grew up on the family farm in Taihape and as a 17-year-old chose art over rugby. Of Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Kahungunu and Scottish descent, Turnbull was awarded a Maori Education Foundation grant to study graphic design at Wellington Polytechnic. In 1973 he won a Kelliher Art Award and the funds enabled him to go to London the following year, where he eventually became the art director for Harrod's. He returned to New Zealand in 1978, then moved to Sydney, where he now has his graphic design studio in Rosebery but still practises as an artist, exhibiting at the Wentworth Galleries. In 2007 he was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, London.

Robert Watson

Born Auckland, 1911
Died Wellington, 1980

Watson was educated at King's College and Wanganui Collegiate. He went on to gain a Master in Law from Cambridge University. Watson served with the RNZAF and eventually became a stock broker in Wellington, but

painting was his true passion. He attended classes at the Heatherley School of Fine Art, one of London's oldest independent art schools, and later studied under Australian portrait painter Sir William Dargie, a friend of Sir Henry Kelliher's and regular Kelliher judge. In his fifties, Watson travelled both internationally and throughout New Zealand, frequently painting on his travels. He was an exhibitor at the Paris Salon, exhibited at the McGregor Wright Gallery, Wellington and was a regular exhibitor at the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts from 1952 to his death. He served as a councillor on the NZAFA and as treasurer in the 1960s. Watson's paintings were included in the Kelliher Art Competition exhibitions from 1959, when he received his first of four merit prizes (1961, 1963, 1968), and he won third prize in 1966 and first prize in 1967.

Violet Watson

Born Taranaki, 1906
Died Hamilton, 1992

Watson, considered a Coromandel artist, studied under Adele Younghusband and Ida Carey. She made her living from teaching (for 30 years) and from painting, exhibiting in Auckland (at the Auckland Society of Arts), Christchurch and the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts (1959–1973). She entered the first Kelliher competition in 1956 with *Puru, Thames Coast*, won five merit prizes (1959, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1970) and was the first woman to win one of the five Kelliher Awards in 1974, and then again in the last Kelliher in 1977.

Colin Wheeler

Born Dunedin, 1919
Died Oamaru, 2012

In 1936, after attending boarding school in Oamaru, Wheeler became a graphic artist for a printer and publisher in Dunedin. In 1940 he was transferred to Christchurch and took evening classes at the Canterbury College School of Art. After war service he returned to his pre-war employment until going freelance in 1946. After teacher training, Wheeler taught at Tainui School and was included

in the Dunedin gallery's *New Zealand Artists*. In 1951 he was included in *Young Contemporaries* at the Auckland City Art Gallery. He moved to Oamaru and from 1952 to 1957 taught at Waitaki Boys' High. After a year off to attend Camberwell School of Art, London he returned to Waitaki Boys' as an art teacher until 1966, when he had a solo exhibition at the Dunedin gallery. He was a regular entrant for the Kelliher Art Competition from 1956, winning five merit prizes, three seconds and two thirds. During the 1960s Wheeler ran a popular painting school in Central Otago. His first book, *Historic Sheep Stations of the South Island*, appeared in 1973 and *Historic Sheep Stations of the North Island* two years later. In 1995 the Forrester Gallery, Oamaru presented a major Wheeler retrospective exhibition.

Freeman White

Born Hastings, 1979

Napier resident White grew up in Hawke's Bay. He briefly studied at the Elam School of Fine Arts (1998) and the Learning Connection, Wellington (2000). In 1997 he was an exchange student in Germany when he was influentially exposed to the great art collections of Europe. He has since returned to Germany several times and has twice exhibited in the REAL international symposium for figurative art. In 2006 he won the Adam National Portrait Award, judged by James Holloway, director of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, who offered him a residency in Edinburgh, where he completed a number of portrait commissions, including the actress Tilda Swinton and former Lord Mayor of London Allan Trail. Soon after returning to New Zealand in 2009 he had his first solo exhibition of landscapes at Black Barn Gallery, Havelock North. He was artist in residence in Key West, Florida. His most recent solo exhibition, of seascapes, was at Sanderson Gallery, Auckland in 2019.

'THE KELLIHER' — A CHRONOLOGY

1955

Henry Kelliher announces that the first of three annual landscape painting competitions would be held in 1956.

1956

The inaugural Kelliher Art Competition for the best oil painting by a New Zealand artist depicting 'the visible aspects of New Zealand's landscape and coastal scenes in a realistic and traditional way' is held at the Auckland City Art Gallery. The three judges are Peter Tomory, director of the ACAG; Annette Pearse, director of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery; and Australian painter Ernest Buckmaster. From the 73 paintings displayed (of the 201 entries submitted), the £500 prize (worth around \$25,000 today) was *Summer in the Mokauiti Valley*, by Leonard Mitchell.

1957

The second Kelliher (and the majority of the subsequent competitions) is held at the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts (NZAFA), Wellington. The competition rules are modified to 'include panoramic views of cities or towns. Though not essential, most landscapes and coastal scenes are enhanced by judicious inclusion of "incident" — some representation of life and movement which will add vitality to the painting'. First, second and third prizes are awarded, a practice which is continued until 1971. The judge is noted New Zealand painter (then resident in Australia) Robert Johnson, assisted by the director of the National Art Gallery (NAG), Stewart MacLennan. The winning painting, *Mount Taratara, Northland*, by Arthur Hipwell, is purchased by Henry Kelliher and donated to the NAG, as are the winners of the three next Kelliher's, on the understanding that they would be toured nationally.

1958

Melbourne painter Napier Waller is the judge. Instead of a third prize being awarded, ten merit prizes of £25 (worth approximately \$1250 today) are awarded. Subsequently, merit prizes are awarded in addition to first, second and third places.

1959

Australian painter William Dargie is appointed judge, for the first of four competitions. Entrants are encouraged to depict 'the normal activities associated with life in New Zealand', and paintings can be no more than 7 sq ft (0.65 m², or the equivalent of 60 x 110 cm). The exhibition, though under the auspices of the NZAFA, is held in the NAG. The winning painting is Leonard Mitchell's *Stormlight and snow, Ruahine Mountains*.

1960

An announcement is made that the competition will be run for another five years. Sydney painter Rubery Bennett is the judge. Subject matter is specified as the depiction of 'landscapes or coastal scenes, agricultural or pastoral scenes, and if possible should include the representation of such activities as would normally be associated with the scene chosen'. The two-week-long exhibition of 282 paintings attracts 12,000 visitors.

1961

William Dargie selects 195 paintings for the exhibition. On the opening night Henry Kelliher announces that he has established and funded a charitable trust to administer the competition, to ensure its continuation. The *New Zealand Herald* records that 'The Trust would conduct the competition for the next five years', but the deed was not actually signed until 1962. A Special Prize of £100 is introduced, to be awarded to the best entrant under the age of 21.

1962

The judge, Sydney painter Douglas Pratt, selects from the 476 entries 203 paintings for display at the NZAFA, and

96 for the James Smith's Exhibition Gallery. Thirty-nine paintings are sold.

The H.J. Kelliher Art Competition Trust deed is signed on August 7. Objectives include helping older artists who had fallen on hard times and were unable to continue painting, lending paintings to schools, and organising travelling exhibitions.

1963

Judged by Australian John Loxton, who had regularly painted in New Zealand since 1946, this is the last competition administered by the New Zealand Fellowship of Artists. Of 442 paintings submitted, 174 are hung. The newly knighted Sir Henry Kelliher begins investigating the possibility of establishing a permanent home for the competition in Auckland.

1964

Due to a lack of venue, the competition is not held.

1965

The first year the competition is organised by the Kelliher Trust. The objective of the competition is restated: 'To encourage artists to paint faithfully the beauty and the essential character of the New Zealand scene and thereby develop a livelier appreciation both of the fine arts and the infinitely varied aspects of our land'. Acceptable subject matter is also redefined: 'Competitors should submit characteristic New Zealand subjects [which may include] natural features of our landscape . . . urban, rural and maritime subjects, including the activities of the people normally associated with such scenes.' English painter Claude Muncaster selects 155 paintings from the 420 submitted.

1966

Sir Henry Kelliher announces that after 10 years it can be said that the aim of the competition 'has been substantially fulfilled'. Australian painter Alan Baker selects 117 paintings from the 431 submitted, but a lack of entries from artists under 21 results in the special prize being dropped.

1967

Assisted by a committee, with two members each from the trust and the NZAFA, English portraitist Philip Lambe selects the final exhibition of 121 paintings. To this point, the Kelliher had distributed prizes worth \$45,000 (in the dollars of the day), and sales valuing \$55,000 had been reported.

Fourteen paintings from the previous year's competition joined ten by competition judges and twenty earlier winners already in the United Kingdom to form a travelling exhibition, *The New Zealand Landscape: Paintings from the Kelliher Art Trust*, shown in fourteen public galleries around the UK in 1967–68.

1968

A portrait prize, of £500, is awarded for the first time. Almost 50 portraits are among the 402 entries judged by Australian official Vietnam War Artist Kenneth McFadyen. For the last time, the objective of the competition is rephrased: 'To encourage artists to paint the essential character of the New Zealand scene and the ways of life of its people and thereby to develop a livelier public appreciation, both of the fine arts and of the infinitely varied aspects of our land.' The prescribed subject 'must be recognisable as such'.

1969

A Figure Study category is added: 'Each portrait shall be of a New Zealand citizen and each figure study should depict the activity of a New Zealand citizen, or citizens, in their normal daily pursuits in work, sport, or form of relaxation.' Australian portraitist and Archibald Prize winner Joshua Smith selects just 144 of the record-breaking submission

of 592 works. An exhibition of the winners, plus seven others chosen by Smith, is shown at the Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Christchurch (10–27 July 1969).

1970

Australian painter Max Ragless chairs the selection committee, which selects just 102 paintings from a total of 503 works submitted. Thirty-four are sold, for a total of \$4950.

1971

In response to pressure from South Island artists, the competition exhibition is held at the Canterbury Society of Arts in Christchurch. Just 75 paintings are hung, selected by Australian painter and gallerist John Brackenreg.

1972/1973

The Kelliher is not held, while the trust concentrates on an exhibition of Australian and New Zealand war artists at the Auckland War Memorial Museum, in April–May 1973.

1974

The competition was renamed the Kelliher Art Awards, and five equal awards of \$750 are chosen by Sir William Dargie (knighted in 1970), from the 95 paintings displayed at the Dunedin Public Art Gallery.

1975

The Kelliher is not held.

1976

Australian painter Frederic Bates, winner of the 1970 Wynne Prize for landscape, selects 79 paintings for the exhibition at the Hastings City Cultural Centre, adding several highly commended works to the five award winners. Over 10,000 people — equivalent to almost a third of the city's population — visit the exhibition. A record 32 paintings are sold (for a total value of \$9270).

1977

The last Kelliher exhibition (though this was not known to be the case at the time) is held in the foyer of the Social Sciences Lecture Block, Massey University, Palmerston North. This is Sir William Dargie's fourth and final stint as judge, selecting 77 of the 330 submissions.

1979

Publication of the book by Richard King *The Kelliher: 67 award winning paintings of New Zealand landscape and its people* coincides with an exhibition at the Downtown Hilton Gallery, Auckland, of 67 prize-winning paintings, plus recent paintings by winning artists.

1980/1981

Despite an earlier offer from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery to host the award, it does not take place. The trust is also unable to find a suitable venue in 1981. It begins to consider other projects 'to take its place'.

1982

The trust reviews a range of options for the future of the award and the Art Competition Trust.

1983

The trust approves an action plan for the award, scheduled to be hosted by the Christchurch Society of Arts in August, but on 26 July issues a press release in the name of trustee Sir William Dargie, stating that the award had 'fulfilled its purpose so well, the climate in which the original Competition flourished no longer exists. There are scores of skilled painters prospering and supported by an appreciative public.'



28. Trenton Garratt *Glencairn* (GPS -37.39073,174.84199) 2015



30. Freeman White *Poplars Tukituki* 2018

SIR HENRY KELLIHER 1896–1991

‘... I have had a very rewarding and fulfilling life. Apart from whatever success I may have achieved in business, the development of Puketutu Island and involvement in the arts have been absorbing interests.’¹

Sir Henry Kelliher held a clear view for New Zealand and its people: ‘whereby all should have access to reasonable living standards, education and health, given the unique opportunities life in New Zealand offers.’² From relatively humble beginnings in a pioneering Central Otago family, Kelliher was able to utilise his success in business and apply the proceeds built up from a lifetime of hard work to create a trust for the benefit of others.

Kelliher was born in 1896 in Waikerikeri, Central Otago where his father, originally from Munster in Ireland, had been a goldminer before settling as a pioneer farmer. Young Henry went to school in Clyde, and by the age of 17 had become a drover and a wool classer, in Carterton in the Wairarapa.

Kelliher enlisted in the New Zealand Expeditionary Force in 1914 and served at Gallipoli, then in France, before he was gassed at the Somme in 1917. Later that year he married a young widow, Evelyn McLaughlin (née Sproule), in Belfast, Ireland. In 1918 the couple, who would have four daughters and a son, settled in Carterton, initially to farm, but instead Kelliher bought the Marquis of Normanby Hotel.

Three years later the Kelliher family shifted to Auckland, where he set up Kelliher and Co, an exporter and trader in agricultural products, but also holding the lucrative sole agency for one of J. H. Dewar’s whiskies. He was also involved in printing and publishing, and in 1923 took over the *Ladies’ Mirror* (later *The Mirror*). He became its editor in 1930 and turned it into a progressive women’s magazine, but it was also a mouthpiece for his economic views.

Kelliher now entered the brewing industry, first in partnership with the Coutts family, who had just started the Waitemata Brewery at Ōtāhuhu, which in due course Kelliher would purchase through a new company, Dominion Breweries. He then floated the company and became its managing director. After the Second World War, it expanded into owning hotels throughout the country, its success largely down to Kelliher. He finally retired from its board in 1982.

In 1938, Kelliher was appointed to the board of the Bank of New Zealand, having become well-read in economics and an advocate for a balanced money supply. He later served a term as director of the bank. Also in 1938 he purchased Puketutu Island in the Manukau Harbour, which he used for raising pedigree stock and racehorses. In the 1940s he established his home there.

He was made a Commander of the Order of St John in 1955, and a Knight of the Order in 1958. In recognition of his role as a business leader, promoter of monetary reform and philanthropist, he was appointed Knight Bachelor in 1963.

Kelliher had established the Kelliher Art Competition in 1956, and in 1961 the Kelliher Art Trust was formed to run it. The Kelliher Art Competition, renamed the Kelliher Art Awards in 1974, ran almost annually until 1977. Sir Henry established the Kelliher Charitable Trust in 1963 as a way of extending his philanthropy and assuring stability of ownership for his estate on Puketutu Island, which was at that time the major trust asset and revenue provider.

The Kelliher Charitable Trust divested itself of Puketutu Island, which is now in the hands of Auckland Council, and will eventually become a regional park. The trust, however, has maintained its investment in the rural economy through its purchase of Glencairn Farm in northern Waikato. Given that the revenue from Puketutu provided the basis for Sir Henry’s philanthropic interests during his lifetime — the disabled, the elderly and those in hospice care, and returned servicemen and women suffering hardship — the Kelliher Charitable Trust continues to support such causes, as well as funding the Kelliher Art Trust and the Kelliher Economics Foundation.



Sir William Dargie (1912-2003)
Sir Henry Kelliher 1961
Kelliher Art Trust

^{1,2} Undated text, Kelliher Art Trust archive

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Kelliher Art Trust is indebted to the work of Richard King (1948-2008) — better-known as a book designer, editor and publisher - author of the pioneering history of the Kelliher Art Competition: *The Kelliher: 67 Award winning paintings of the New Zealand landscape and its people* (Orakau House, 1979). The fully-illustrated book, which includes an essay, ‘Recollections and Reflections’ by the four-time Kelliher judge Sir William Dargie, records a wealth of data about the competition which is not available elsewhere.

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All material quoted which is not otherwise credited is from the Kelliher Art Trust’s archive.

Exhibition Itinerary

Millennium Public Art Gallery, Blenheim, 11 December 2021 - 13 February 2022

Suter Art Gallery Te Āraatoi O Whakatū, Nelson, 5 March - 22 May 2022

Lakes District Museum & Gallery, Arrowtown, 3 June - 17 July 2022

Ashburton Art Gallery, Ashburton, 9 August - 2 October 2022

Forrester Gallery, Oamaru, 29 October - 22 January 2023

Aigantighe Art Gallery, Timaru, 18 February - 30 April 2023

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Kelliher Art Trust

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Kelliher Charitable Trust