

LAND WORK PEOPLE

DARCY LANGE SURVEY

4 April-5 May 1985

GOVETT-BREWSTER ART GALLERY NEW PLYMOUTH



".....making videos and photography in other people's areas, as I have done with my art — whether it be walking in their area, entering their houses, absorbing their ideas or recording them on their burial grounds or their places of work — was due to many motives, not all good; I must say — at times it was for my career, at other times in search of a new image for art. But these motives were balanced by the reciprocal respect that caught me as I entered other people's territories, as I explored those people so they explored me, and we changed together. In many ways I am a servant of them. I cannot escape and I don't want to. Being an observer is something I have done and cannot be free of, but I must turn it, like all of my gained experience, towards good."

— the artist — extract from unpublished catalogue.

EARLY SCULPTURE

1. **Formality 1 1969**
steel and lacquer
collection of the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery
2. **Formality 2 1967**
steel and lacquer
collection of the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery
3. **Extended formality 1 1967**
steel and lacquer
collection of the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery
4. **Extended formality 2 1967**
steel and lacquer
collection of the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery



".....the end of the Sculpture period at the Royal College of Art brought a movement into the area of film and photography and the beginning of the documentation of people at work; this strategy was influenced by the growing conceptual art movement, and the falling away of the restrictions of the Royal College, plus the continuation of my interest in the subject of work, and the desire to bring out class difference in British society....."

— the artist — extract from unpublished catalogue.

HISTORICAL SURVEY WITH SLIDES AND PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographs made at the Royal College of Art, London,
1969-1971

(These works are no longer extant.)

1. **Untitled (composition and realism with coat) 1969**
steel, lacquer and fibreglass
2. **Untitled (composition and realism with chair and still life) 1969**
fabric, fibreglass and chromium-plated bronze
3. **Untitled (chromed still life and modelling stand) 1969**
chromium-plated bronze and steel

4. Environment of Mokau and reminiscence 1970
wood, acrylic and chromium-plated bronze
5. Stonehenge and bourgeoisie 1971
fibreglass, acrylic paint and chromium-plated bronze
6. Commentary — equality 1971
fibreglass, acrylic paint, wood, wool and photographs

Documentation of sculpture installation, London, 1972

Irish road workers, 1972

fibreglass, wood, scaffolding steel (documented in photographs, slide projection and sound recording)



".....it is hard to think about this period of work studies without thinking about the miners in England being led by Arthur Scargill in their present strike. When I made this set of studies it was just after the success of the 1973 strike, and there was a feeling of optimism in the atmosphere... the studies include portraits done in the miners' Welfares, kind of workmen's clubs, and interviews including feelings about the recent strike... people were good to us, telling us jokes and giving impressions of colliery life which included brassbandery and sports — and of course, politics....."

— the artist — extract from unpublished catalogue.

DOCUMENTATION

Nottingham coalmining communities at Calverton and Pleasley, U.K. 1973

double loop film, sound tape and video



".....what then is the value of video, or video value? I think it has the values of sound tape only, but with picture. It is a great imitating medium. It is good for archiving folk-lore. It is good for replacing bad public television. It is probably going to replace many a library book. Video art has had some pitfalls — perhaps because the artists generally who become involved were artists who in many cases did not exploit the typical video characteristics, i.e. the mobility and the long take quality and the quality of the videographical electronic photography....."

— the artist — extract from unpublished catalogue.

VIDEOGRAPHY

Video Library — work studies 1972-1977

1. Allotment gardens, London, U.K. 1972
2. British factories and workplaces, U.K. 1972
3. Documentation of Calverton and Pleasley coalmining communities, Nottingham, U.K. 1973
4. Craigdarroch: study of shepherds, Dumfriesshire, U.K. 1974
5. Documentation of Bradford working life, U.K. 1974
6. Hera: study of a *tangata whenua* treefeller, N.Z. 1974
7. Clem Coxhead: cowmilker, Opunake, Taranaki N.Z. 1974
8. Portraits at Waitara Freezing Works, Taranaki, N.Z. 1974
9. Ruatoria: study of sheep gathering and a *tangata whenua* shearing gang, N.Z. 1974
10. Competition axemen at Agricultural and Pastoral Show, Stratford, Taranaki, N.Z. 1974

11. Cantavieja: study of work in a Spanish village, Mastrazgo, Spain 1975
12. Study of three Birmingham schools, U.K. 1976
13. Study of four Oxfordshire schools, U.K. 1977

Video selection from work studies 1972-1977

An edited three hour programme of extracts from:

1. Allotment gardens, London, U.K. 1972
2. British factories and workplaces, U.K. 1972
 - Brennon's wood carvers
 - Wildt, Mellor and Bromley (textile manufacturers) Leicester, U.K.
3. Documentation of Calverton and Pleasley coalmining communities, Nottingham, U.K. 1973
 - steam-winder
 - Pleasley Brass Band
4. Craigdarroch: study of shepherds, Dumfriesshire, U.K. 1974
 - clipping
5. Documentation of Bradford working life, U.K. 1974
 - spinning at Whitehead's woollen mill
 - verson press at Hepworth and Grandage Precision Engineering
 - dual lathes at Hepworth and Grandage
 - order assembly at Grattan's mail order
6. Hera: study of a *tangata whenua* treefeller, N.Z. 1974
7. Competition axemen at Agricultural and Pastoral Show, Stratford, Taranaki, N.Z. 1974
8. Portraits at Waitara Freezing Works, Taranaki, N.Z. 1974
 - mutton chain
 - boning calves
9. Cantavieja: study of work in a Spanish village, Spain, 1975
 - ploughing with cows
10. Study of three Birmingham schools, U.K. 1976
 - wheels, Leabank School — Mr Hughes



".....the initial idea for the Bradford project was to be a continuation of the miners' project, a study of workingmen's clubs, life in the home and life at work. But as time progressed . . . I realised that I must take a more precise approach to the studies. It became a somewhat dialectic approach, with the use of colour, and black and white still photography, 16mm colour film and video.

The studies became performance analysis. They searched in the job monotony, they became a questioning of work load, of suffering due to the work, and they became kind of non-complementary Social Realism....."

— the artist — extract from unpublished catalogue.

DOCUMENTATION

Bradford working life, U.K. 1974

- steel smelting industry
- work at a precision engineering company
- work at a woollen mill
- a wholesale mail order warehouse

16mm colour film, black and white photographs, simultaneous video



".....in relation to working with indigenous problems, such as the work on the Maori land issue which, of course, still goes on — it is necessary to stay with it and to remember that this is the very foundation of New Zealand and solved gracefully will mean that we will all have a good life but if left incomplete will mean that there will never be any harmony. The work is only an educational process to me and will probably remain that way. One always has great hopes and ambitions but after a while one realizes that perhaps the very medium chosen to do the consciousness raising is the means to failure. Those artists in Auckland who for 3 months worked feverishly towards a creative anti-tour protest, or those other people who paint a banner and join the people of the protest, probably achieve a more effective and acceptable contribution than my five year video investigation of the land pains of Aotearoa....."

— the artist — extract from published catalogue.

THE MAORI LAND PROJECT

1. Discussions with Maori elders and younger people about their relationship with the land and issues concerning it.
2. A series of children's performances of traditional dances and welcomes.
A presentation made to the Bertrand Russell Tribunal on Indian Issues, held in Holland.
video



".....at the moment I feel that all that we need together with people of different nationalities — is to build a meeting house for craftsmen — artists all over the world. But it is important to accept, in the position of art, that the European lineage is not the only one. We need to re-investigate our sign language pasts."

— the artist — extract from published catalogue.

PEOPLE OF THE WORLD

A recreation of a multi-cultural performance involving the musical theatre of Morocco, Spain, Holland, Surinam, Turkey, Greece and Indonesia, produced to tour in Holland, 1983.
video, slides and 16mm colour film

The Govett-Brewster Art Gallery thanks Mr Tom Hutchins for his interest and support in coming to New Plymouth to open this exhibition.

Assistance in mounting this exhibition is gratefully acknowledged from:

Beckett's Cameraland, New Plymouth
Brooklands Kindergarten
Camera House, New Plymouth
Dominion TV Rentals Ltd, New Plymouth
Mr L Drinkwater, New Plymouth
Education Centre, New Plymouth
Hurdon Kindergarten
Jamo's Video Hire, New Plymouth
Mr Frank Mahoney, Department of Education
Manukorihi Intermediate School
Ministry of Transport, New Plymouth
National Film Library, Wellington
New Zealand Art Gallery Directors' Council
Mr Bob Parkinson, Sony (New Zealand) Ltd
Mr Howard Reid, New Plymouth
Seventh-Day Adventist Church, New Plymouth
Taranaki Museum
Taranaki Polytechnic
Westtown Kindergarten
Mr Caleb Wyatt, New Plymouth