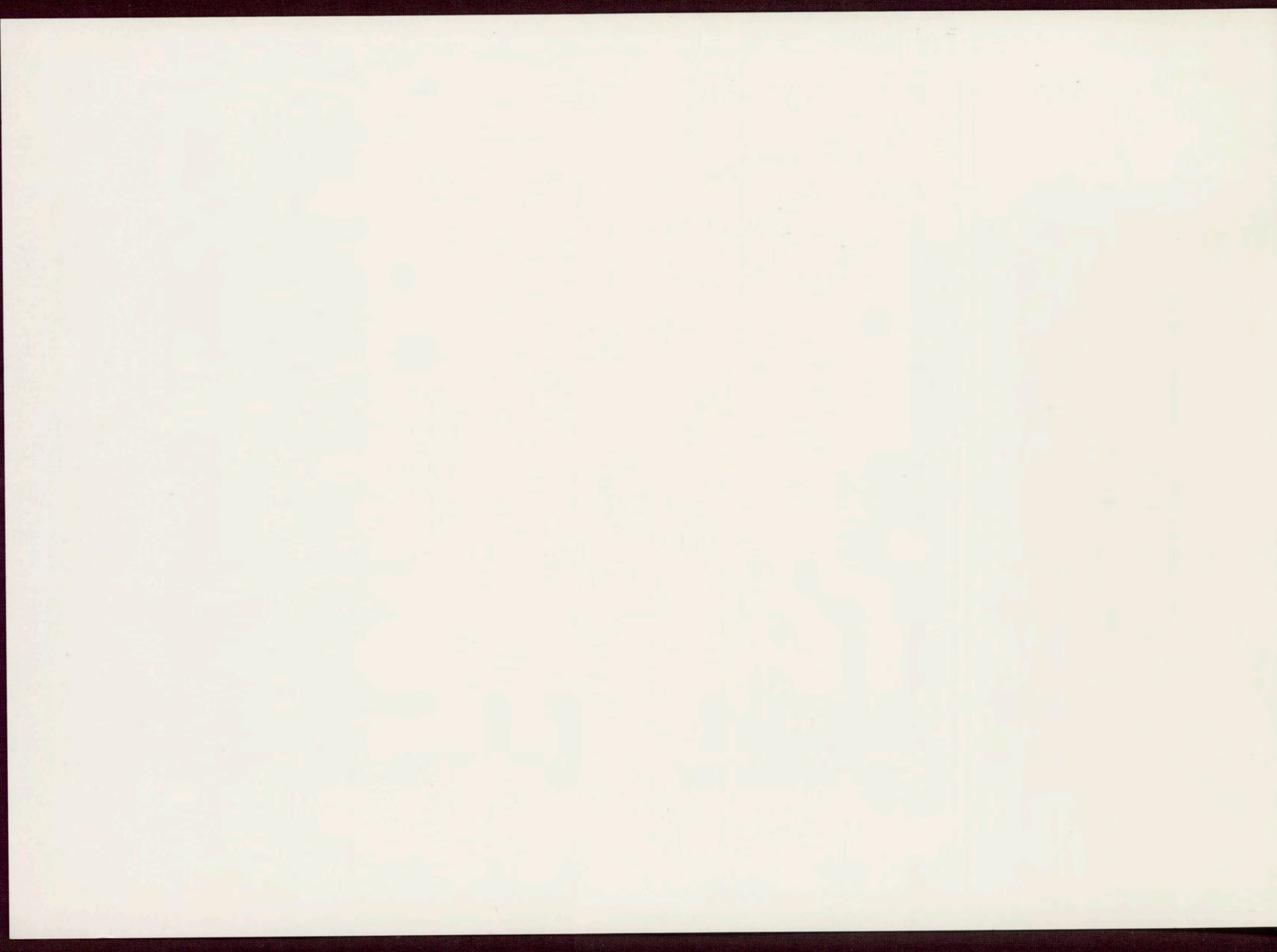


STATIONS OF THE + CROSS

11 MARCH

20 APRIL 1981



Stations of the Cross

An Exhibition based on the passion of Christ

11 March — 20 April, 1981

**Govett-Brewster Art Gallery
New Plymouth, New Zealand**

Introduction. By the Reverend Alex Sutherland B.A., B.Th. of Auckland.

Since, at least, the fourteenth century, many Christians have longed to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. They have desired to pay homage at Bethlehem, the traditional site of Jesus' birth. They have longed for a sight of the Sea of Galilee and its environs where Jesus began his ministry and selected his close followers. More significantly, Christian pilgrims have sought out Jerusalem with the wish to walk where their Lord once walked in the week of his passion. For some reason, it is these last events in the life of Jesus that have both captured and haunted the imagination of Christians in the intervening years. The suffering and death of a carpenter turned preacher and miracle worker, like some invisible magnet, has drawn pilgrims to Jerusalem to seek out the traditional sites, to walk in his footsteps, and to pay homage to the one they hail as Lord and Saviour. No other death has that same fascination for people, unless in watching this man die they find themselves aware of their own human frailty and inevitable mortality. So the pilgrims have gathered in Jerusalem, and by way of homage and obedience ("If anyone wants to come he must forget self, carry his cross, and follow me." Gospel of Matthew 16:24), have walked the Via Dolorosa — The Way of the Cross.

But for many, perhaps most, the walk in the footsteps of Jesus has remained the impossible dream. Some churches in the Middle Ages had small chapels which commemorated an event in the passion of Christ. However, it was not until the fifteenth century that the Franciscans developed the devotional we now call "The Stations of the Cross". They seized every opportunity to educate the poor and the illiterate of their day. In doing so, they made skilful use of the art forms available to them.

The origins of "The Stations" are a little vague. Almost certainly the experience of pilgrims who had walked the route from Pilate's house to Calvary was influential in the development of a more contemplative walk. From an early date, there were those who wished to reproduce a similar devotional exercise back home.

The other possible shaping influence may have been the Medieval Mystery Cycles. Liturgical dramas had developed from the Christian liturgy, particularly from the Easter celebrations. Originally, these plays were performed inside the church, in Latin, by priests and choirboys. Eventually, they moved from the church to the market-place, where they were performed in the vernacular by the trade guilds. Spectators were either stationary while each guild production moved past them (the play being repeated at each stopping-place from a cart on which the appropriate scene was arranged); or the action was performed in an early form of theatre-in-the-round, with the audience moving from one play to the next. (The various cycles are revived from time to time, and the famous Passion Play at Oberammergau belongs to this tradition). If there was not an actual structural influence on "The Stations" as they developed (and I think there is a good argument for suggesting that there was), the plays certainly had a dramatic influence.

The crucifix had emerged late as a dominant symbol in the Church (probably as late as the eleventh or twelfth centuries). More attention was given about this time to the sufferings of Christ, no doubt to arouse pity in those who viewed a representation of the crucifixion. The suffering, pain and agony of Jesus' death were further highlighted in the Mystery Cycles, and these plays almost certainly stimulated a dramatic and emotional response which found its way into the devotional exercise that developed as "The Stations of the Cross". ("The medieval church was above all a church of sacraments, visible means of divine grace, supported by a whole range of media in words and images to heighten the human response" — p. 263 Albert C. Moore, *Iconography of Religions — An Introduction*.)

While it was the Franciscans who popularised "The Stations", there was considerable variance in the practice. The number of "stations" (from the Latin, "statio", implying either "a standing still" or "a gathering at a place") varied greatly. In 1731 the number of "stations" was fixed, by Pope Clement XI, at fourteen; nine commemorating events related in the Gospels and five from early tradition. They could be used, either as a private penitential exercise, or in public. The latter took the form of a church service in which the congregation moved from "station" to "station". At each "station" a priest would lead a brief meditation. While moving, the congregation would sing a verse of the "Stabat Mater".

At first, "The Stations" were literal, melodramatic and sentimental — in the form of a wooden cross and a representation of an event in the journey from the place of condemnation to the hill of Calvary. If they were too graphic, at least there was a genuine attempt to capture the emotion and movement of The Passion. As they developed, realism gave way to greater symbolism and allusion. The result was an enriching process; the providing of a starting-point for contemplation rather than a pain-staking portrayal of the event. It left much more to the imagination of the devotional pilgrim. This is the case in most of the works in this exhibition.

That the Cross and crucifixion of Christ continue to fascinate the artist is fully evident in the works collected for this show. To some extent, the exhibition simply evolved. There was an idea, a few initial enquiries, and an effort made to secure known and recognised work (e.g. Colin McCahon's "Stations") From there things snowballed. One contact would suggest another, or recall a painting seen in a private collection. Some of the work was quite unsolicited. An artist having heard of the exhibition, just wondered about the possible inclusion of his contribution.

The result is a predominantly contemporary exhibition, although it does include a splendid set of sixteenth century works by the Italian artist Bernardo Poccetti. This realism stands in sharp contrast to the twentieth century response to the crucifixion by New Zealand artists.

Each of them comes to the Cross with a very personal (in some cases, quite private) vision. That they choose to share it involves an element of risk. The exposing of one's personal questing, and the committing of it to canvas cannot be easy. This self-disclosure may well result in misunderstanding, confusion and even derision by those who choose to see nothing more than paint, or have some preconceived and unshakeable notions about the death of Jesus and its significance. Colin McCahon, in a recent interview said he painted beauty. He thought a lot about Christ and Christ's life and he painted that. He said, 'No one seems to know what I'm about, it amazes me, no one seems to know that I am painting Christ.' " (New Zealand Listener, May 17, 1980).

That so many of our artists choose to reveal something of themselves and their personal vision fills me with some awe. I may not comprehend fully or even appreciate at first glance what I am viewing, but that does not detract from the feeling that before me is the sharing of something very important. In the case of some works, I find my response to be one of reverence. Self-disclosure is a very "holy" thing.

The artists, whose works appear in this show, use a great variety of images and symbols. Central to most is the Cross. It is not simply the Cross of Calvary. It is, much more, a universal symbol of suffering and pain, and of death. Furthermore, the Christ-figure is not just Jesus of Nazareth. In the paintings, the dying Christ is a symbol of humanity. It would, however, be a mistake to see "the Christ" as an "everyman" symbol. Jesus on the Cross is the man apart, the prophetic figure whose self-disclosure led not only to misunderstanding but also the sham of a pre-arranged trial and a cruel death. Some works (e.g. those of Philip Clairmont, Nigel Brown's cross on which hangs the poet James K. Baxter, and Jeffrey Harris whose work tends towards the autobiographical) may shock and disturb. They will be regarded by some as presumptuous, even blasphemous. While that might be a legitimate initial reaction, even more legitimate is the artist's vision. The crucifixion of Jesus Christ is about his suppression by those who could not comprehend him. It involves the nailing down of the creative response; the denial of personal self-expression and the validity of a personal vision.

The contrast between light and dark is used effectively by a number of artists, particularly Colin McCahon, Ralph Hotere and John Parker. The contrast and movement between them become another symbol. The light/life, dark/death dichotomy picks up, albeit unconsciously, the imagery of the prophet Isaiah:

"The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light.
They lived in a land of shadows,
but now light is shining on them." (Isaiah 9:2)

and the words of Jesus:

"I am the light of the world;
whoever follows me will have the light of life
and will never walk in darkness." (Gospel of John 8:12)

The "land of shadows" (in this exhibition) is, I believe, identifiably New Zealand — the distinctive landscapes of Otago and Blenheim; the foothills beyond the Canterbury Plains; the familiar Auckland landmark, One Tree Hill.

Are the works in this exhibition religious? Colin McCahon has said "None of my work is religious"; Michael Smither, "All my work is religious." I hope I'm not doing either an injustice when I suggest that they are saying the same thing. I agree with them. Would the works hang well in churches? I believe they would. If you have some time to spare next time you're in Auckland, visit the chapel at the Mission Sister's House of Studies in Upland Road, Remuera. Colin McCahon's "Stations", painted a little earlier than those in this exhibition are very much at home, as are the superb concrete "Stations" by Michael Smither in Saint Joseph's Catholic Church here in New Plymouth. At 106 Powderham Street (only a short walk from the Gallery) they too are worth a visit. I'm pleased that some churches are being adventurous, and commissioning significant artists to explore various aspects of the faith in paint, metal and stained glass, for in this unique way "the Word" takes on fresh meaning. The artists, whose work is exhibited here, raise questions about life and death that we all ask. In some cases, they confront us with those questions. If we stop just long enough to look a second time and think again, we may well discover some answers.

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Catalogue

and fourteen poems by the
Rev. Alex Sutherland based on
Colin McCahon's 1966 Stations of the Cross

I. IT BEGINS

i
have often joined
Christ Jesus
in the olive grove
above the stile
on Maungakiekie,
with the scoria rocks
sleeping among gnarled trunks
like friends who have fed too well
on bread and wine.

here,
(for me)
the journey begins;
before the kiss,
before the judas crowd,
before the pharisaic laughter,
all before
the crowing of the cock
and the sound of running feet.

August 1980

CHRIST IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

Passing washroom conversations
dismiss
morning proceedings;
What has past
is passed
marmalade
sentence
water.

Judge and jury,
(now relieved)
make for
counter-lunches
at
the local bar.

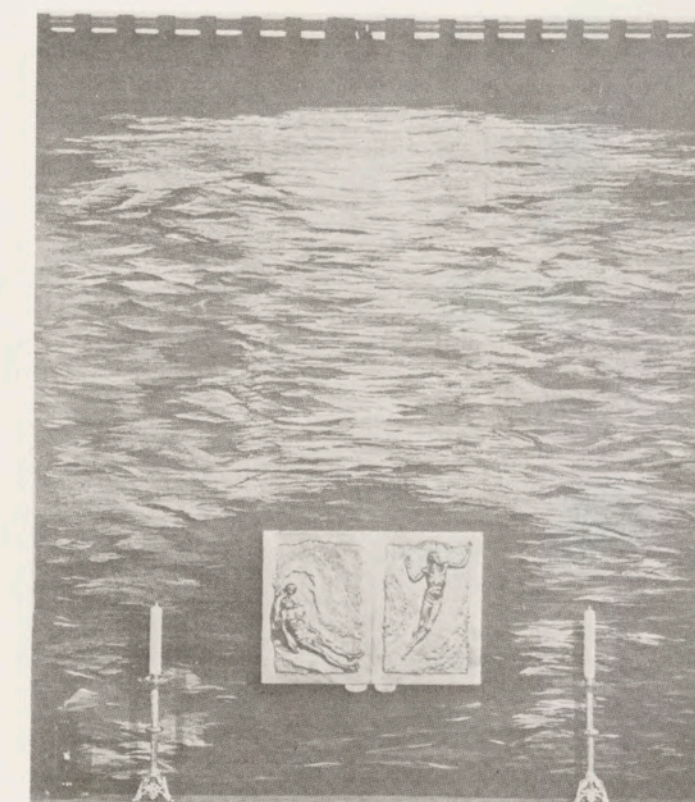
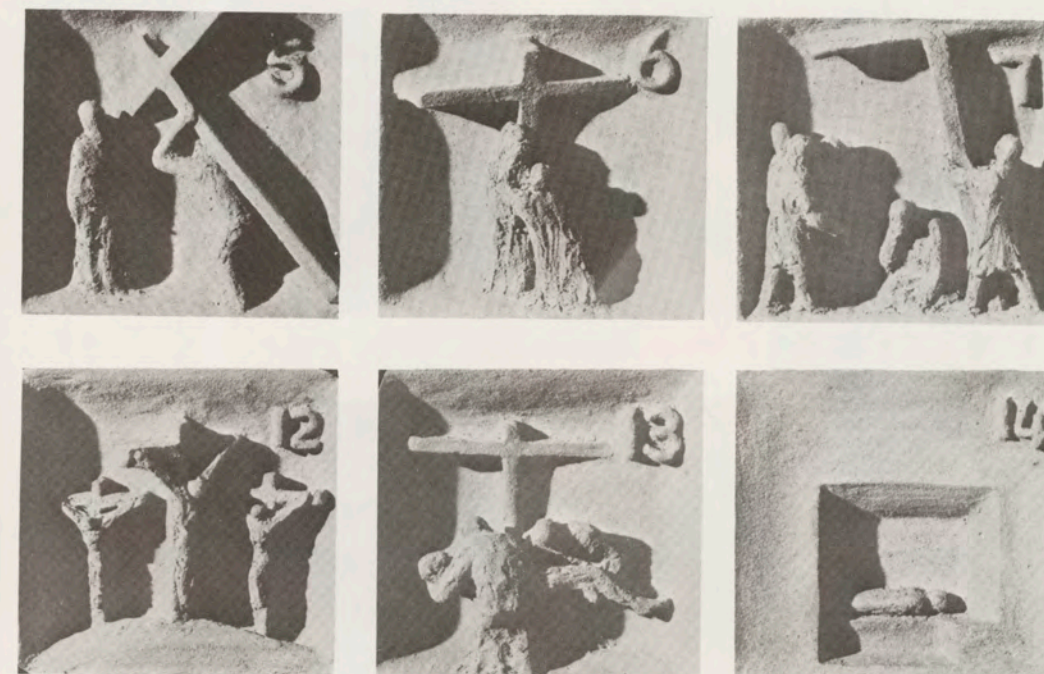
19 December 1980

Diedre Airey
1. Fourteen Stations of the Cross 1973
Wood Fired Terra-Cotta
155 x 155mm
Collection of Artist, Coromandel



Cat. 1.

Ria Bancroft
2. Tabernacle Screen Doors 1977
Plaster
Pieta 540 x 420 x 30mm Ascension 560 x 425 x 30mm
Collection of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery,
Christchurch.



Cat. 2.

II. THE CROSS IS LAID UPON HIM

*From
the local hall (victim of
some pyrotechnic apprentice)
I took charred samples;
scorched kauri planks,
nail-invested struts
6-by-6
and
of a good length.*

*Most was destined
for the
fire that winter
but at Easter
I
remembered the lumber.*

*With two scarred planks
and a few rusted nails
I fashioned me
a cross.*

*It was rough enough.
I'm a mean carpenter.*

*The pageant lady agreed:
a Jesus on my cross
would get his hands dirty;
his white tunic stain
with soot;
and rust marks are
hard to remove.*

*Thank you all the same,
(sweetly said)
it's not quite what we had in mind.*

28 November 1980

- Paul Beadle
3. Deposition Medalion 1964
Bronze
dia. 85mm
Collection of the Artist, Auckland.
4. Statio Secunda 1978
Bronze and Wood
152 x 90 x 175mm
Collection of Mrs. Elliott, Howick.



Cat. 3.

- Nigel Brown
5. A Poet as Christ (Fires of No Return) 1980/81
Acrylic on Paper
455 x 305mm
Collection of the Artist
6. Yellow Christ
Oil on Board
1100 x 1000mm
Collection of the Waikato Art Museum.
7. Interviews with Christ (Four Drawings) 1971
Watercolour
300 x 235mm
Collection of Harry Baynes, Wellington.



Cat. 7.

III. HIS FIRST FALL

*Of the dance
Grand Master
motion magician
in
time and
space
laugh
lead*

*trip the
light fantastic
through suburban streets
waltz me
through the living rooms
of debutantes
and maiden aunts*

*take care
don't stumble on the shag-pile
or touch
the Royal Doulton figurines
the raymond ching-a-ling duck
is watching
from a gilded frame.*

19 December 1980

Philip Clairmont

8. Self Portrait, Head of Christ 1980
Oil on Canvas
670 x 550mm
Collection of the Artist, Auckland.

9. Wardrobe-Grunewald Isenheim 1976

Oil on Board
535 x 430mm
Collection of Elva Bett Gallery, Wellington.

10. A Study for a Contrary Ideological Viewpoint c.1975

Mixed Media
910 x 580mm
Collection of the Artist, Auckland.



Cat. 12.

11. Easter Sunday c.1970

Oil on Canvas
1475 x 1075mm
Collection of Julee Hansen, Palmerston North.

12. Crucifixion Triptych 1975

Oil on Canvas
1210 x 920mm 1210 x 585mm 1210 x 870mm
Collection of the Dowse Gallery, Lower Hutt.

"My Crucifixions are representations not of an historic event,
but of an act of man's behaviour to another"

Francis Bacon 1966

Tony Fomison

13. Head of Christ (After Morales) 1966

Oil on Hessian
335 x 240mm
Collection of Artist, Auckland.

14. Pieta (After Belini) 1967

Oil on Hessian
550 x 740mm
Collection of Artist, Auckland.

15. Detail from Piero della Francesca's "The Resurrection"

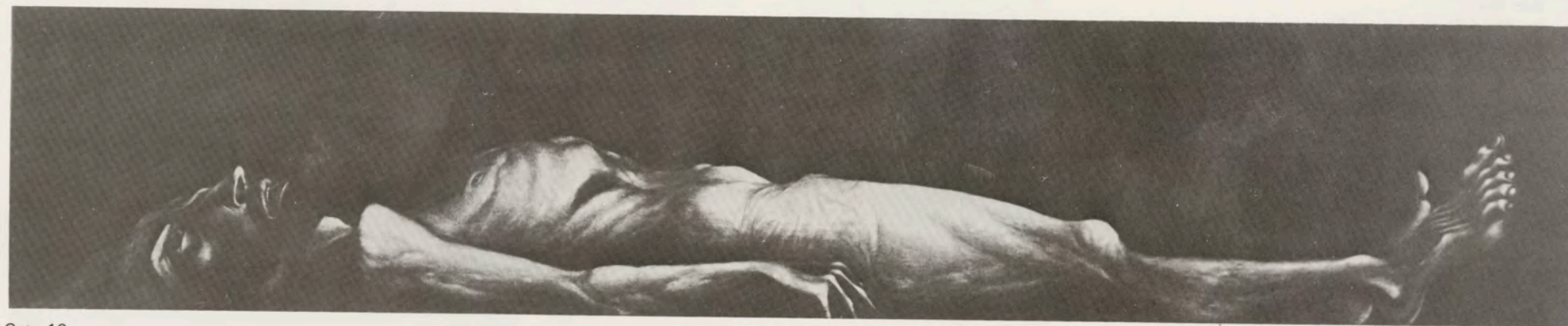
1970
Oil on Hessian
400 x 310mm
Collection of John Papas, Auckland.

16. Corpse of Christ (Study after Hans Holbein) c.1971

Oil on Canvas
660 x 3150mm
Collection of Bob Holdsworth, Wellington.

Painters being human beings — Who wasn't? — have a regrettable tendency to identify with the heroes of the institutionalised religions instituted for the benefit of all of us of course. Well most of us just don't have the time to go into the desert ourselves — Christ with that increasingly refined Essene upbringing, got it down to 40 days. On the other hand you get someone like St Anthony of Egypt, quite content to forget the Temple — and future Church — *and* even teaching anyone — he took his time, his whole time, in the Desert. So, lets face it, only the hardiest of flowers grow there, outside the help of back-yard care.

Tony Fomison, 1981



Cat. 16.

IV. HE MEETS HIS BLESSED MOTHER

In
Mountain Road
the maternity wing of the Mater
now houses
beds
for the dying

HAIL MARY FULL OF GRACE

This
life-to-death
transformation
has been a matter
of expediency.
No
more children here . . .
only
the incurable whose
journey is one way,
a kind
of Calvary

HAIL MARY

And the
scrubbed floors of Ward 3
at National Women's
are a far cry
from Bethlehem's crowded
streets where
the journey begins

FULL OF GRACE

Mother . . .
child
meet
somewhere
between National Women's
and the Mater
now

HAIL MARY FULL OF GRACE

August 1980

Jeffrey Harris

17. Figures in Landscape with Crucifixion. 1976
Oil on Board.
180 x 260mm
Collection of Rev. Alex Sutherland, Auckland.

18. Pieta 1976
Oil on Board
205 x 305mm
Collection of Diedre Airey, Coromandel.

19. Crucifixion 1977
Oil on Board
390 x 410mm
Collection of Rachael Power, Auckland.

20. Boy with two Angels 1976
Oil on Board
180 x 235mm
Collection of Janet Paul, Wellington.

21. Crucifixion June 1973
Pencil on Paper
340 x 270mm
Collection of Manawatu Art Gallery, Palmerston North.

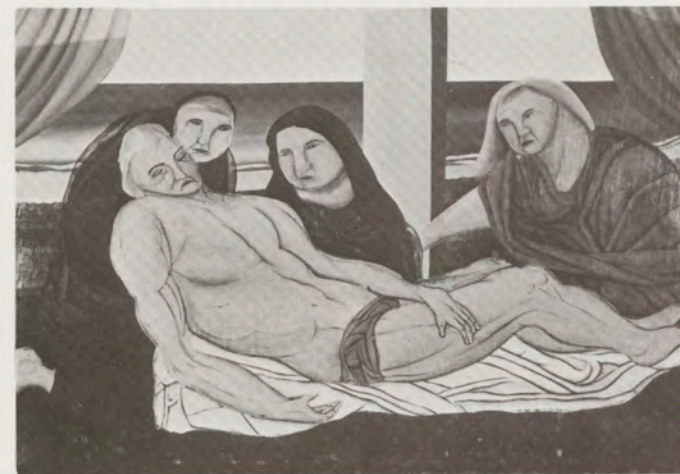
22. Religious and Allegorical Painting August 1973
Oil on Board
1210 x 1210mm
Collection of the Artist, Dunedin.

23. Figures in Landscape April 1970
Oil on Board
960 x 775mm
Collection of the Artist, Dunedin.

24. Adoration of Christ December 1971
Oil on Board
890 x 1210mm
Collection of the Artist, Dunedin.



Cat. 17.

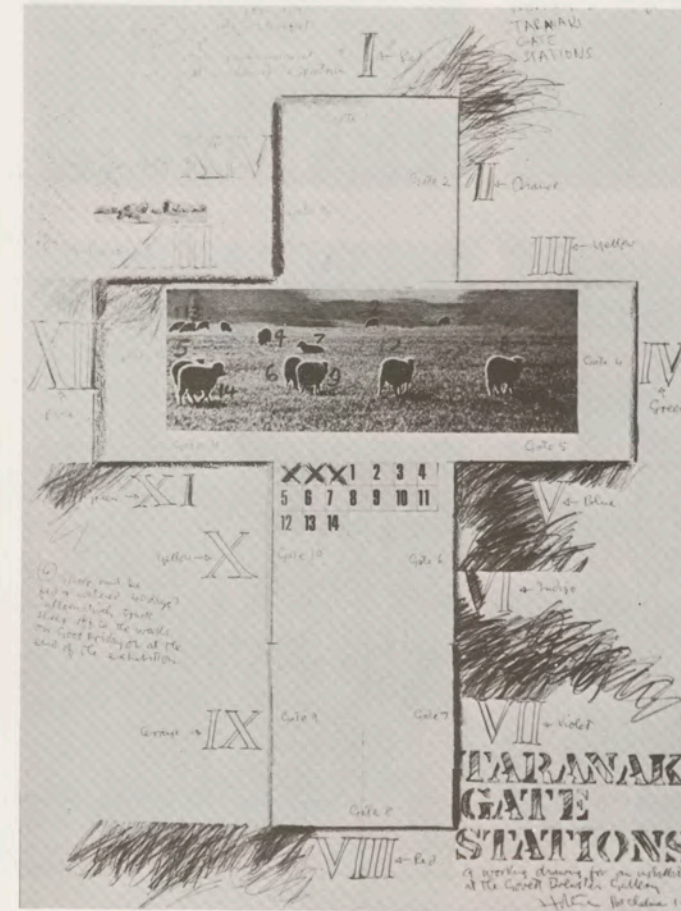


Cat. 18.

Ralph Hotere

25. Black Cruciform 1969/70
Acrylic on Canvas
1770 x 1370mm
Collection of the Waikato Art Museum, Hamilton.

26. Requiem 1973
Cellulose lacquers on Board
747 x 1075mm
Collection of Sargeant Gallery, Wanganui.



Cat. 27.

27. Two Drawings for Installation 1981
Pencil & Ink on Paper
760 x 560mm
Collection of the Artist, Dunedin.



V. SIMON IS MADE TO BEAR THE CROSS

at
a busy
inter-
section

waiting for
some change
from the lights

simon
simply
singled-out
crossed-off
christ
at
cross roads

they charged him
to pull
his weight

19 December 1980

Colin McCahon

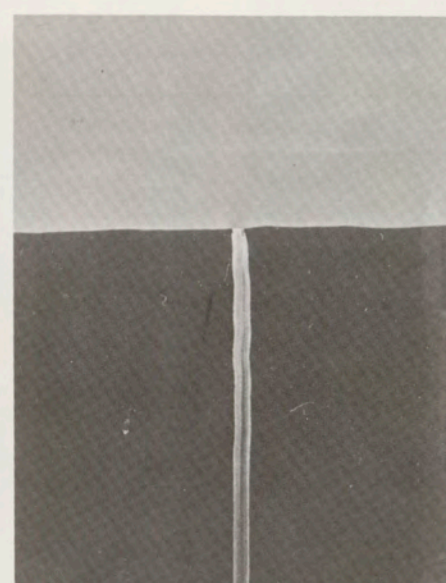
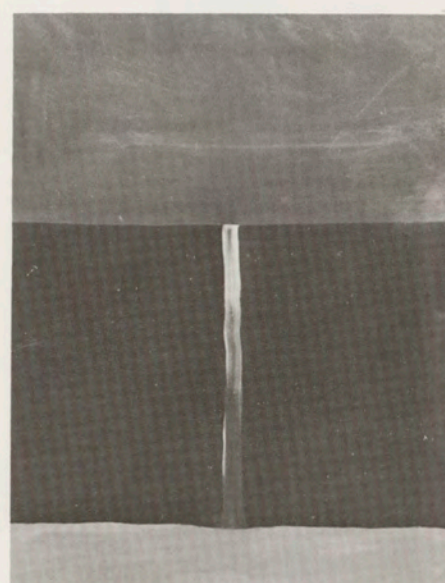
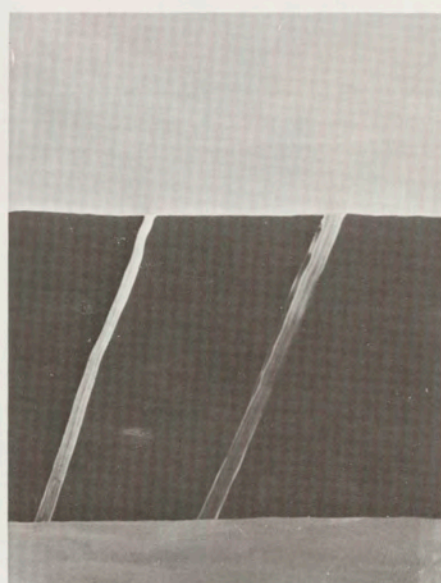
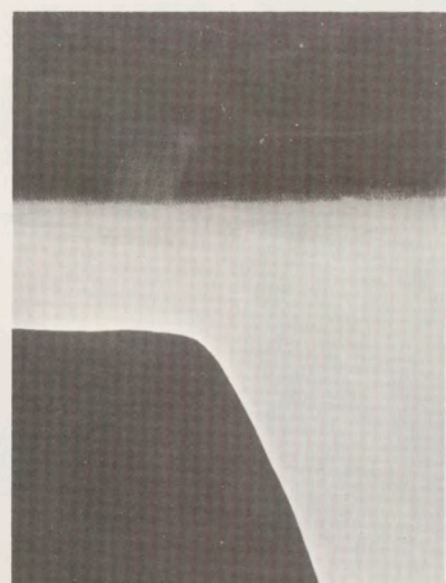
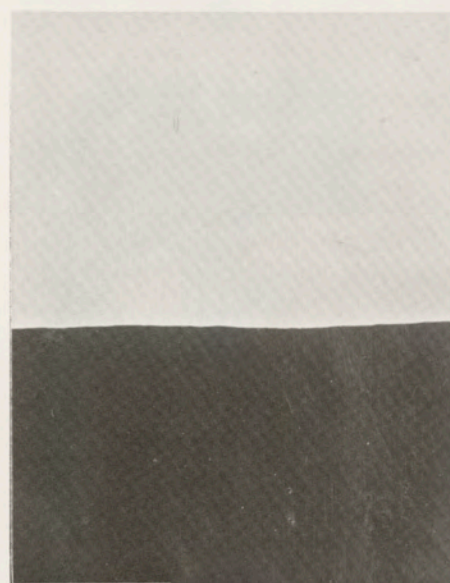
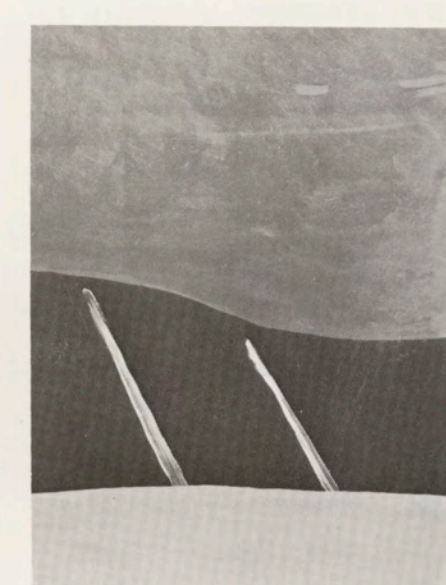
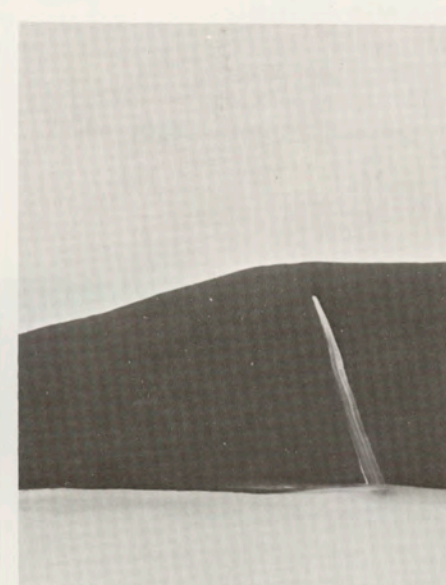
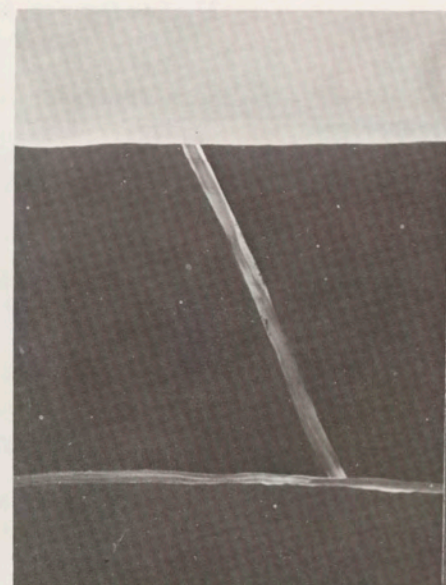
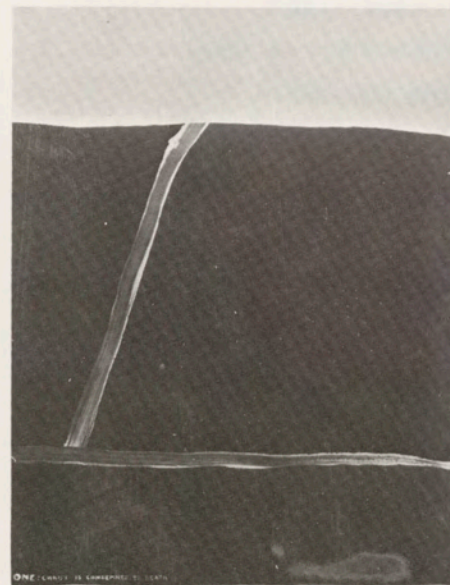
28. Fourteen Stations of the Cross 1966
Acrylic on Paper
750 x 555mm
Collection of the Artist/Auckland City Art Gallery.

29. Crucifixion 1949
Oil on Board
475 x 442mm
Collection of the Artist/Auckland City Art Gallery.

30. Christ taken down from the Cross 1947
Oil on Board
505 x 635mm
Collection of the National Gallery, Wellington.

31. Entombment after Titian 1947
Oil on Board
640 x 510mm
Collection of the National Gallery, Wellington.

32. The King of the Jews 1947
Oil on Board
620 x 520mm
Collection of Ron O'Reilly, New Plymouth.



VI. HIS FACE IS WIPED BY VERONICA

*Wide-eyed Veronica
sits
(unto herself)
and reads,
reads and sits
(lunchtime lady on the library lawn)
i
(watch and)
wonder
if this young miss
could soothe
the savage breast
or brow.*

28 November 1980



Cat. 33.

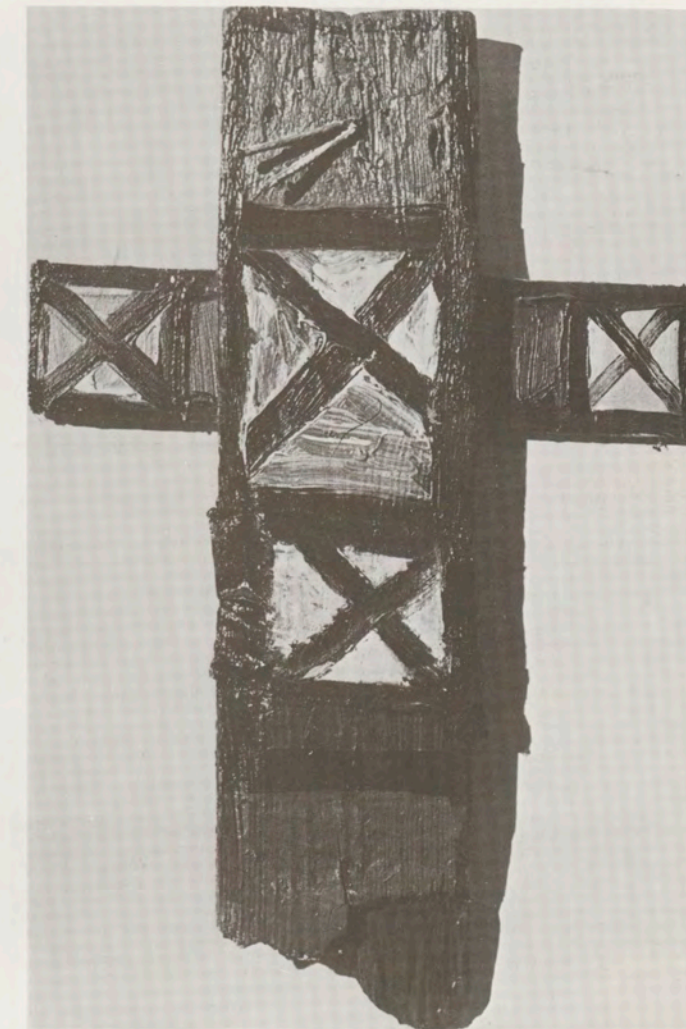
John Middleditch
33. Crucifix 1964
Copper and Wood
970 x 705 x 70mm
Collection of the Artist, Dunedin.

Russell Moses
34. Words in Pain (Seven Utterances from the Cross) 1981
Terra Cotta Pit Fired in Cow Dung
810 x 2150mm
Collection of the Artist, Dunedin.

John Parker
35. Visual Prayers 1980
Watercolour
1035 x 735mm
Collection of the Artist, Blenheim.
36. Visual Prayers 1980
Watercolour
750 x 550mm
Collection of the Artist, Blenheim.
37. Visual Prayers 1980
Pastel
405 x 285mm
Collection of Rev. Alex Sutherland, Auckland.
38. Cross 1979
Mixed Media
600 x 400 x 40mm
Collection of Rev. Alex Sutherland, Auckland.



Cat. 37.



Cat. 38.

VII. THE SECOND FALL

*When I was a
kid
my mum had
her operation
in
Aotea
(a private hospital
in Ranfurly Road)*

*My sister and I
(unwelcome guests)
bounced
in
the back seat of the
Humber 90,
while my dad
delivered flowers,
fruit,
and greetings
from the neighbours.*

*Now it's the
fathers
who wait while
unwelcome
children
are delivered
discretely.*

August 1980

VIII. HE MEETS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

*Will you
(will you?)
women weep
tears of holy consolation*

*Leave the well-side
and the self-examination*

Leave the kitchen preparations

Leave the late-night street flirtations

*Will you
(will you?)
women weep.*

23 December 1980

Bernardo Poccetti

39. Fourteen Stations of the Cross 16th Century
Pen & Ink Wash on Paper
292 x 423mm
Collection of the Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui.



Cat. 39.

Michael Smither

40. Fourteen Stations of the Cross 1975
Gouche on Paper
915 x 585mm
Collection of John & Allison Brebner, Feilding.

41. Crucifixion 1966

Oil on Board
1015 x 1210mm
Collection of the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New
Plymouth.



Cat. 41.

IX. THE THIRD FALL

*The across-town kids,
the see-saw
sliding
swing kids
are clowning (the clown)
around.*

*Tease,
tug-a-sleeve,
trip him boys:
Here I am
he is.*

16 January 1981

X. HE IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS

Plastic
bag
bearing
harbinger

of

hope

Do the clothes you collect
really benefit the poor?

Why — you're only a waif yourself.

Precious little you'll get from
the selling of discarded garments.

24 October 1980

Michael Smither

Fourteen Stations of the Cross 1968

Concrete

530 x 450mm

These stations may be viewed in St. Josephs Church,
Powderham Street, New Plymouth.



Michael Smither. Fourteen Stations of the Cross.

XI. CRUCIFIXION

The builders
on the site
use a pneumatic
stapler;
a far cry
from the hammer
and pound of nails.
I hear it spitting tacks —

pi—tchew
pi—tchew

Laugh men,
laugh,
the joke is a good one
despite the heat

pi—tchew
pi—tchew

And you
(stapler-gun technicians)
are performing your particle piece;
the room-by-room
floor to ceiling
walling-up
of this space

pi—tchew
pi—tchew

By Christmas
an instant subdivision;
and in the clay
grey suburban houses
half-dead tenants
will hang (what
they believe to
be)
signs of life.

pi—tchew
pi—tchew



9 January 1981

XII. DEATH ON THE CROSS

*Death
must be,
on this hill,
the hardest thing
to talk about :
for in the graveyard
I spy
the living simply
(so they say)
pass on.*

*From
tree-top perch
I see
an undulating afternoon
of gold ;
— dancing wheat (with
the Manukau piping the tune):
now
(pinned down)
kauri corrugations in
¼ — acre packages
of
privacy.*

*Here,
on this forsaken Friday
I
(so sure of death)
will plant
one
solitary grain.*

16 January 1981

Terry Stringer
42. Crucifix Figure 1978

Bronze
325 x 265 x 70mm
Collection of Mr Moodabe, Auckland.



Cat. 42.

Lois White

43. Gethsemane 1955
Oil on Canvas
1205 x 1525mm
Collection of the Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui.

44. Christ Carrying the Cross (Two drawings) c.1941
Conte
310 x 240mm
Collection of the Manawatu Art Gallery, Palmerston North.

45. Religion and Life c.1941
Oil on Canvas
990 x 740mm
Collection of Terry Stringer, Auckland.



Cat. 45.

XIII. HIS BODY IS TAKEN DOWN

*Te totara-i-ahua
sacred sign and symbol
of a birth
(or births);
Forgotten name.
Some bastard cut you down
— a pakeha invader
without the decency (even)
to invoke Tane,
(and presumably without a
reason).*

*Te totara-i-ahua
sacred sign and symbol;
Fallen tree,
I weep for you
no longer grace this scoria skull
— cut down —
and from your roots
a solitary pine
(planted by the English
with sense of wisdom and
fair play)
draws its life blood;
scarcely a symbol of anything
let alone birth
or death.*

*Te totara-i-ahua
sacred sign and symbol;
Forgotten name,
Fallen tree;
Perhaps one dark night
another vandal
(race: pakeha)
will have the courage
to clamber the slopes
with a spade over his shoulder
and a sapling under his
arm.*

24 October 1980

XIV. HE IS LAID IN THE TOMB

*On
the
summit
of
Maungakiekie
the
bones
of
John
Logan Campbell
— knight —
keep watch over the isthmus.*

*Now
somewhere
between the Waitemata
and the
Manukau
they will dig a new grave.
No doubt
the site
will be somewhat less
prestigious:
a lava cave,
some rediscovered moss-wet, war-time tunnel,
a sexton's hole
in the garden of Tahuri,
and
where the hungry caterpillars
once ate their way
through her kumara patch
the worms will feed well
on
royal flesh and blood.*

12 October 1980

Unknown Italian Artist

46. Figure of Christ Crucified 14th Century

Silver stump work on velvet.
780 x 521 x 62mm (depth)
Collection of the National Museum, Wellington.



Cat. 46.

Stations of the Cross

According to the Bible

I. Jesus is Condemned to Death.

Jesus stood before the Roman governor, who questioned him. "Are you the king of the Jews?" he asked. "So you say," answered Jesus . . .

So Pilate said to him, "Don't you hear all these things they accuse you of?"

But Jesus refused to answer a single word, with the result that the Governor was greatly surprised.

At every Passover Festival the Roman governor was in the habit of setting free any one prisoner the crowd asked for.

At that time there was a well-known prisoner named Jesus Barabbas. So when the crowd gathered, Pilate asked them, "Which one do you want me to set free for you? Jesus Barabbas or Jesus called the Messiah?" He knew very well that the Jewish authorities had handed Jesus over to him because they were jealous . . .

The chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask Pilate to set Barabbas free and have Jesus put to death. But Pilate asked the crowd, "Which one of these two do you want me to set free for you?"

"Barabbas," they answered.

"What, then, shall I do with Jesus called the Messiah?" Pilate asked them.

"Crucify him," they all answered.

But Pilate asked, "What crime has he committed?"

Then they started shouting at the top of their voices, "Crucify him."

When Pilate saw that it was no use to go on, but that a riot might break out, he took some water, washed his hands in front of the crowd, and said, "I am not responsible for the death of this man. This is your doing."

The whole crowd answered, "Let the punishment for his death fall on us and our children."

Then Pilate set Barabbas free for them; and after he had Jesus whipped, he handed him over to be crucified.

Gospel of Matthew 27:11-26

II. The Cross is Laid upon Him.

So they (the chief priests) took charge of Jesus. He went out, carrying his cross, and came to "The Place of the Skull," as it is called. (In Hebrew it is called "Golgotha.")

Gospel of John 19:16,17

III. He Falls the First Time.

No record occurs in the Gospels of the three falls traditionally associated with The Stations of the Cross. It can only be assumed that there is some link between them and The Temptation of Jesus in the Wilderness recorded in the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke — see Matthew 4:1-11). Because this link is tenuous, it is perhaps safer to think of Jesus stumbling under the sheer weight of the Cross as he makes his way to Calvary.

IV. Jesus Meets his Blessed Mother.

Once again, there is no Gospel record for this "Station". Presumably, tradition has placed her among the women of Jerusalem, of whom mention is made in the Gospel of Luke (see No. V111). In the Catholic tradition the association between Jesus and his mother Mary has been close and intimate. Here, supposedly, they meet for one last embrace — a moment for solace and mutual comfort before the ordeal that lies ahead.

V. Simon is Made to Bear the Cross.

As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene named Simon, and the soldiers forced him to carry Jesus' cross.

Gospel of Matthew 27:32

VI. Veronica Wipes His Face.

There is no mention in the Gospels of Veronica. According to legend, (probably French in origin) she was a woman of Jerusalem who offered her head-cloth to Jesus so that he could wipe the blood and sweat from his face. It was returned with his features impressed on it. Various "originals" of the head-cloth have appeared.

VII. Jesus Falls the Second Time.

See note Under No. III.

VIII. He Meets the Women of Jerusalem.

A large crowd followed him; among them were some women who were weeping and wailing for him. Jesus turned to them and said, "Women of Jerusalem, don't cry for me, but for yourselves and your children. For the days are coming when people will say, 'How lucky are the women who never had children, who never bore babies, who never nursed them.' That will be the time when people will say to the mountains, 'Fall on us,' and to the hills, 'Hide us.' For if such things as these are done when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

Gospel of Luke 23:27-31

He Falls the Third Time.

IX. See Note under No. III.

X. He is Stripped of his Clothes.

The Gospels do not record the stripping of the garments, only the division of them:

After the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier. They also took the robe, which was made of one piece of woven cloth without any seams in it. The soldiers said to one another, "Let's not tear it; let's throw dice to see who will get it."

This happened in order to make the scripture (Psalm 22:18) come true:

"They divided my clothes among themselves and gambled for my robe."

And this is what the soldiers did.

Gospel of John 19:23,24

XI. He is Nailed to the Cross.

There (Golgotha) they crucified him . . .

Pilate wrote a notice and had it put on the cross. JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS is what he wrote. Many people read it, because the place where Jesus was crucified was not far from the city. The notice was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. The chief priests said to Pilate, "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but rather, 'This man said, I am the King of the Jews.'"

Pilate answered, "What I have written stays written".

Gospel of John 19:18-21

XII. Jesus Dies on the Cross.

It was about twelve o'clock when the sun stopped shining and darkness covered the whole country until three o'clock; and the curtain hanging in the Temple was torn in two. Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Father, in your hands I place my spirit."

He said this and died.

Gospel of Luke 23:44-46

XIII. His Body is Taken Down.

After this, Joseph (of Arimathea) asked Pilate if he could take Jesus' body . . .

Pilate told him he could have the body. Joseph went and took it away. Nicodemus, who at first had gone to see Jesus at night, went with Joseph, taking with him . . . spices. The two men took Jesus' body and wrapped it in linen according to the Jewish custom of preparing a body for burial.

Gospel of John 19:38-40

XIV. He is Laid in the Tomb

There was a garden in the place where Jesus had been put to death, and in it there was a new tomb where no one had ever been buried. Since it was the day before the Sabbath and because the tomb was close by, they placed Jesus' body there.

Gospel of John 19:41,42

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