

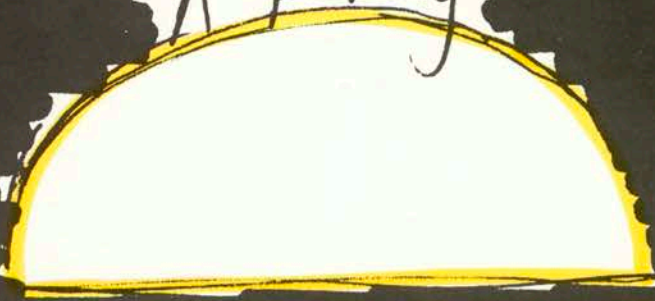
Islands of the Night



The Lock Crows Dawn



'A' Rising



Songs of the Earth

II

Blue wave

Roger Peter

Govett-Brewster May 1991

# SONGS OF THE EARTH II

An installation in four parts

Govett-Brewster Art Gallery

4 May - 9 June 1991

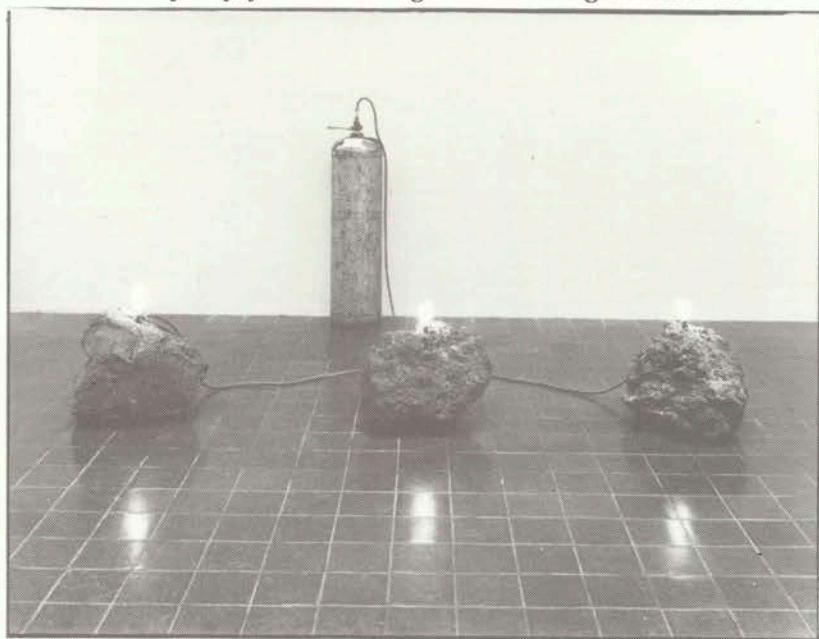
## BACKGROUND NOTES AND ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Roger Peters was born in Wanganui in July 1947. He studied at the Auckland School of Architecture for three years and then at Elam School of Fine Arts for four years, graduating in 1974. He majored in sculpture, receiving the second year prize in that area and winning the Air New Zealand National Tertiary Institute Award in 1972.

The principal works from the student period were the installations **Being in a Space**, **Common Ground** and **Given Time**.

In 1975 he exhibited selected works from those installations and new work in the Project Program Series at the Auckland City Art Gallery under the title *Songs of the Earth*.

*"The works involved simple or recognisable forms such as ladders, baths, boxes, rocks, rings, loops and racks, the majority formed using heat and light sources."*



**The Rocks** 1975 scoria rocks, rubber tubing, propane gas, 450mm x 2550mm

*"My principal idea was to use industrial materials and modern processes in a sympathetic way to create objects of simple form but with a strong poetic feeling. Sculpturally they functioned by using forms of energy, such as heat and light, to cut across the viewer's physical space".*

## SONGS OF THE EARTH II

### **Islands of the Night**

rocks, plaster of Paris, wax, concrete, wood, steel, copper-wire, bronze, green Neon tubing  
height 3 metres, width 6 metres, depth 3 metres

### **The Cock Crows Dawn**

rocks, plaster of Paris, wax, wood, steel, concrete, brass, red Neon tubing, incandescent light  
height 3 metres, width 5.5 metres, depth 2.5 metres

### **'A' Rising**

rocks, plaster of Paris, wax, steel, copper, concrete, yellow fluorescent tubing  
height 5 metres, width 6 metres, depth 3 metres

### **Blue Wave**

plaster of Paris, particle board, Formica, blue Neon tubing  
height 2.4 metres, width 1.2 metres, depth 0.6 metres

# SONGS OF THE EARTH II

## An installation in four parts

Govett-Brewster Art Gallery

4 May - 9 June 1991

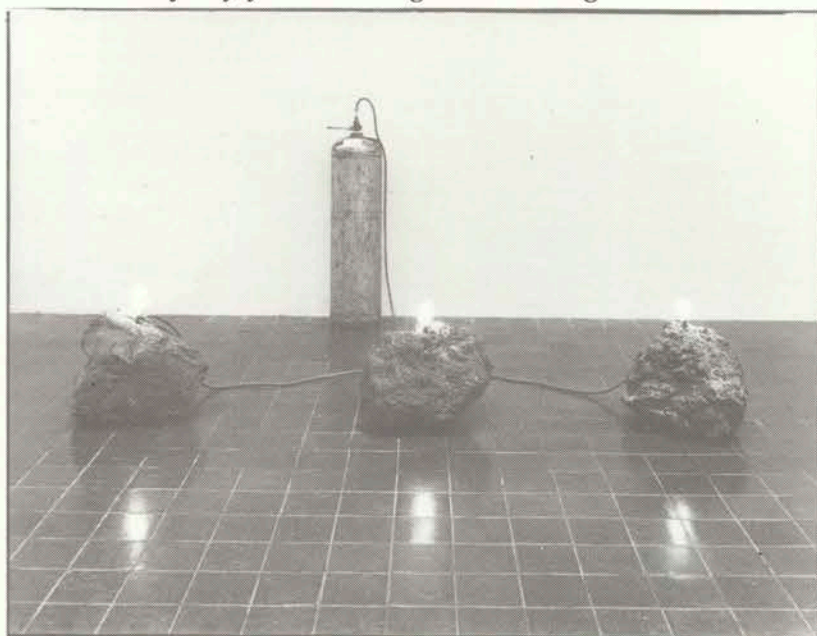
### BACKGROUND NOTES AND ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Roger Peters was born in Wanganui in July 1947. He studied at the Auckland School of Architecture for three years and then at Elam School of Fine Arts for four years, graduating in 1974. He majored in sculpture, receiving the second year prize in that area and winning the Air New Zealand National Tertiary Institute Award in 1972.

The principal works from the student period were the installations **Being in a Space**, **Common Ground** and **Given Time**.

In 1975 he exhibited selected works from those installations and new work in the Project Program Series at the Auckland City Art Gallery under the title *Songs of the Earth*.

*"The works involved simple or recognisable forms such as ladders, baths, boxes, rocks, rings, loops and racks, the majority formed using heat and light sources."*



**The Rocks** 1975 scoria rocks, rubber tubing, propane gas, 450mm x 2550mm

*"My principal idea was to use industrial materials and modern processes in a sympathetic way to create objects of simple form but with a strong poetic feeling. Sculpturally they functioned by using forms of energy, such as heat and light, to cut across the viewer's physical space".*

Peters continued to work in this way until 1978, producing works such as the **Wheel** and the **Trees** (un-exhibited). At that time the danger, fragility and impermanence of some of the works, and a sense of reaching a conclusion to that line of investigation, resulted in his desire to use the human figure in future work. This ambition was partially realised in the quasi-figurative aluminium cut-outs made between 1979 and 1980, but was halted by a move to South Taranaki in 1981. **Songs of Desire** was exhibited at the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery in 1981.

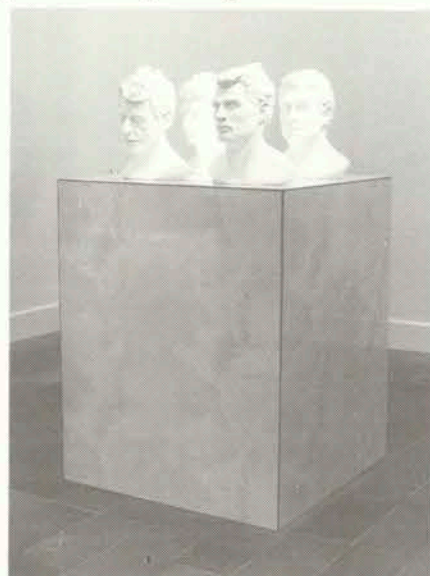


**The Dream** 1978 sheet aluminium  
115mm x 115mm x 40mm

*"The move enabled me to re-evaluate my youthful experiences in the volcanic area of the Central North Island, and was a period of general study and a more particular interest in philosophy, especially that of Wittgenstein."*

*"My return to sculpture led to a marquette of a large cut-out which was exhibited at the 1986 Arts Festival in Hawera. However I had a strong feeling of dissatisfaction with the possibilities of cut-outs. In 1987 I began teaching myself the basic technical and formal skills involved in figure modelling and casting in bronze, concrete and plaster. The early fruits of this work were exhibited in the Taranaki Reviews of 1989 and 1990 at the Govett-Brewster, earning a place in the finals each year."*

*"The work **Four Men on Cloud Onyx** was significant as it introduced into basic figurative projects the added element of more general sculptural and formal (aesthetic) concerns, along with an emotional element."*



**Four Men on Cloud Onyx** 1990 plaster, sheet Formica on particleboard  
1525mm x 900mm x 900mm

*"The non-figurative aspect of the current exhibition had its beginnings over a year ago in a desire to use local river rocks in my work. I began adding small wax-formed objects as a response to an imagined quality in the rocks. A decision to be uncritical in the early stages resulted in a large number of these elements, which gradually resolved themselves into three groupings, one in the studio and two outdoors."*

*"Themes began to emerge of conservation, water, islands, organic processes, and even a brain metaphor of burgeoning ideas looking for some sort of resolution or purpose. An old set of green argon light tubes was added to the indoor set of rocks and that led to a suggestion of an oval shape and from there a sense of form."*

*"The two groups of rocks in the outdoor areas seemed to assume different characteristics from the original*

*group. This was exploited through the use of appropriate rectangular and semi-circular shapes and red and yellow lighting. An invitation to exhibit at the Govett-Brewster meant that the installation could be related to a specific site."*



**Islands of the Night** 1991 (detail, photographed in the artist's studio)

*"The final element was introduced by making use of a beheaded torso that had been a modelling workhorse for the past eighteen months. By adding a base and a blue argon tube to the neck of a plaster cast of the torso it*

*seemed that the ideas of the other three groupings were somehow crystallized in this figurative form."*

*"The complementary nature of the early working process, combining figurative elements and experiments with small wax-formed objects, seemed to assert itself in the final form of the four separate groupings."*

**Songs of the Earth II** addresses Roger Peters' desire of the past ten years to find an effective relationship between the human figure and the one-sided poetry of his early material objects. He has re-used the title of the 1975 **Songs** not only to look back but also to expand its content by using the human form in a tangible way.



Roger Peters in his studio, Kaponga South Taranaki 1991

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

*Auckland City Art Gallery Quarterly*, nos. 62-63, December 1976  
pp 26-29.

*Songs of the Earth*, Roger Peters. Photographs J.Daley. Auckland  
City Art Gallery 1975.

#### EXHIBITION CREDITS

Exhibition curator: **Roger Peters**

Exhibition co-ordinator: **Terry Urbahn**

Catalogue: **Roger Peters, Roger Taberner, Gill Winter**

Design: **Roger Peters, Verne Barrell**

Photographer: **Bryan James**

Auckland City Art Gallery: photograph of **The Rocks** 1975

Govett-Brewster Art Gallery  
PO Box 647  
New Plymouth  
New Zealand

Open hours: weekdays 10.30am - 5pm  
weekends: 1pm - 5pm

ISBN: 0-908848-05-6