BACK STORY 2

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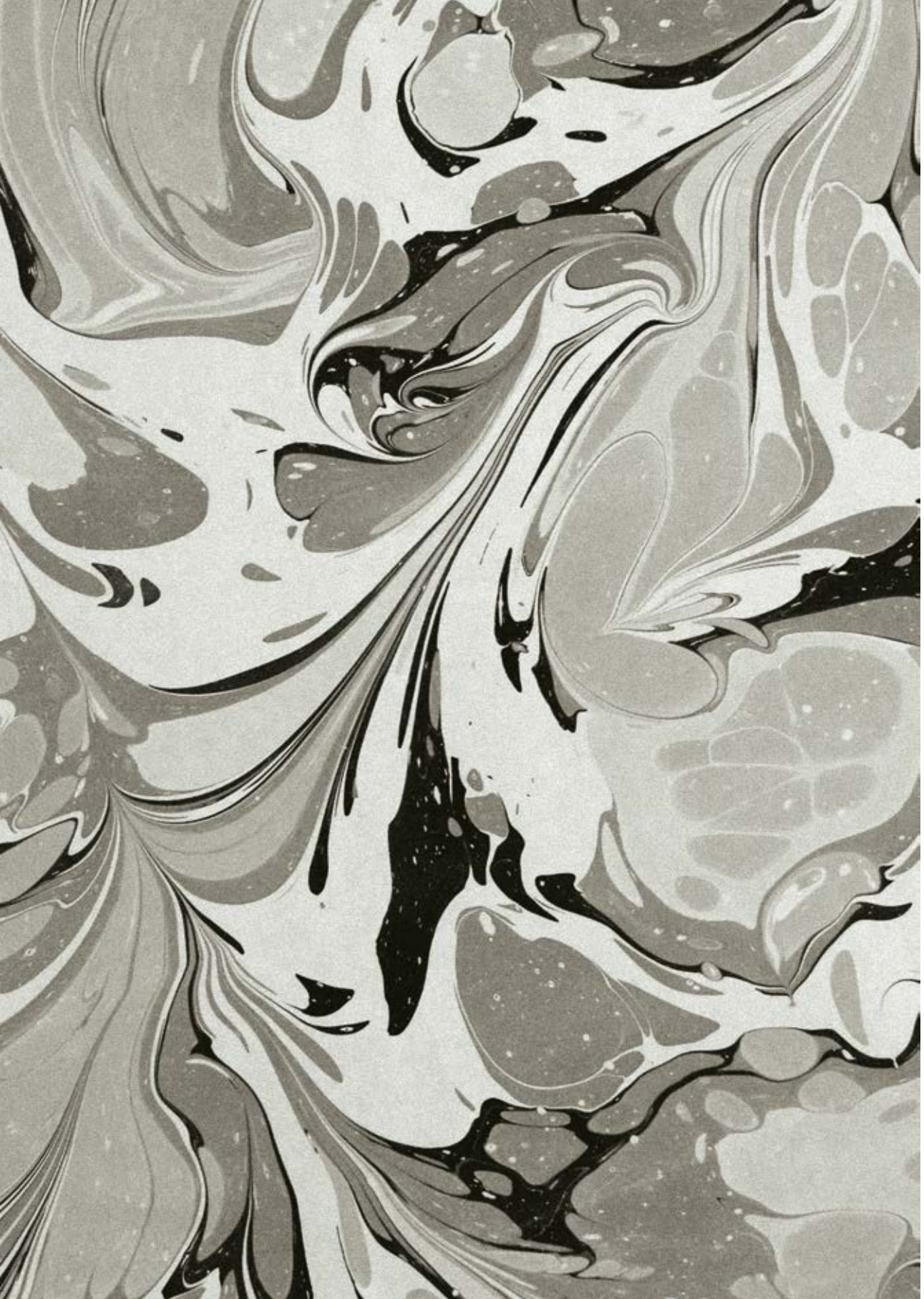

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Editorial

Kia ora and welcome to the second issue of *BackStory*. The members of the Backstory Editorial Team were gratified by the encouraging response to the first issue of the journal. We hope that our current readers enjoy our new issue and that it will bring others to share our interest in and enjoyment of the surprisingly varied backstories of New Zealand's art, media, and design history.

This issue takes in a wide variety of topics. Imogen Van Pierce explores the controversy around the Hundertwasser Art Centre and Wairau Māori Art Gallery to be developed in Whangarei. This project has generated debate about the role of the arts and civic architecture at both the local and national levels. This is about how much New Zealanders are prepared to invest in the arts. The value of the artist in New Zealand is also examined by Mark Stocker in his article about the sculptor Margaret Butler and the local reception of her work during the late 1930s. The cultural cringe has a long genealogy.

New Zealand has been photographed since the 1840s. Alan Cocker analyses the many roles that photography played in the development of local tourism during the nineteenth century. These images challenged notions of the 'real' and the 'artificial' and how new technologies mediated the world of lived experience. Recorded sound was another such technology that changed how humans experienced the world. The rise of recorded sound from the 1890s affected lives in many ways and Lewis Tennant's contribution captures a significant tipping point in this medium's history in New Zealand as the transition from analogue to digital sound transformed social, commercial and acoustic worlds.

The *New Zealand Woman's Weekly* celebrates its 85th anniversary this year but when it was launched in 1932 it seemed to have very little chance of success. Its rival, the *Mirror*, had dominated the local market since its launch in 1922. Gavin Ellis investigates the Depression-era context of the *Woman's Weekly* and how its founders identified a gap in the market that the *Mirror* was failing to fill.

The work of the photographer Marti Friedlander (1908-2016) is familiar to most New Zealanders. Friedlander's 50 year career and huge range of subjects defy easy summary. She captured New Zealanders, their lives, and their surroundings across all social and cultural borders. In the journal's profile commentary Linda Yang celebrates Freidlander's remarkable life and work. Linda also discusses some recent images by Friedlander and connects these with themes present in the photographer's work from the 1960s and 1970s.

The *Backstory* editors hope that our readers enjoy this stimulating and varied collection of work that illuminate some not so well known aspects of New Zealand's art, media, and design history. There are many such stories yet to be told and we look forward to bringing them to you.

Peter Hoar

Contemporary Debates: The Hundertwasser Art Centre with Wairau Māori Art Gallery

Imogen Van Pierce

Keywords: # Hundertwasser Art Centre # Wairau Māori Art Gallery # Hundertwasser # Whangarei # Northland region # community art project

What began as a humble sketch on the back of an envelope, the Hundertwasser Art Centre with Wairau Māori Art Gallery project has evolved into a unique and ambitious quest for artistic representation in Northland. The history of this controversial public art project, yet to be built, has seen a number of debates take place, locally and nationally, around the importance of art in urban and rural societies and the broader socio-economic context surrounding the development of civic architecture in New Zealand. This project has not only challenged the people of Northland to think about the role of art in their community, but it has prompted New Zealanders to question whether there is an appropriate level of investment in the arts in New Zealand.[1]

Figure 1: Sharp, Steve, *Photoshop Image of Hundertwasser Art Centre in Whangarei Town Basin*, c. 2015, reproduced with permission of YES Whangarei.

Figure 2: Hundertwasser, Friedensreich, *ARCH 78/I WHANGAREI PUBLIC ART GALLERY - DRAFT DESIGN, 1993*, Hundertwasser Non-Profit Foundation, Vienna. © 2017 NAMIDA AG, Glarus, Switzerland.

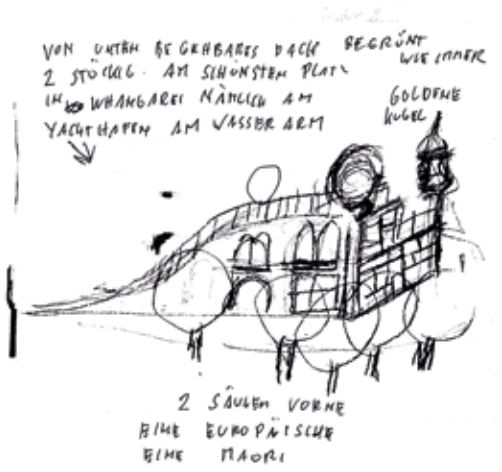

Figure 3: Hundertwasser, Friedensreich, *ARCH 78/II WHANGAREI PUBLIC ART GALLERY - DRAFT DESIGN, 1993*, Hundertwasser Non-Profit Foundation, Vienna. © 2017 NAMIDA AG, Glarus, Switzerland.

The story begins with one of Austria's most celebrated modern artists, the self-named Friedensreich Regentag Dunkelbunt Hundertwasser (translating to 'realm of peace, rainy day, darkly multi-coloured, hundred waters'). The painter and 'architectural doctor' adopted New Zealand as his second home in 1974, purchasing land in the Bay of Islands, Northland. From the beginning, Hundertwasser was engaged in the New Zealand art scene and environmentalist circles, contributing his *New Zealand Conservation Week Poster* in support of the national movement in 1974 and his *Koru Flag* design in 1983. The late Jo Hardy, a highly regarded member of the Whangarei arts community, remembers how it was one of Hundertwasser's great wishes to have one of his signature designs built in New Zealand.[2] The rejection of his Te Papa spiral design in 1990 disappointed the artist, so the opportunity to design an art gallery for Whangarei in 1993 was encouraging for both Hundertwasser himself and the local arts community. There had long been a vision amongst local Northland artists, particularly Yvonne Rust and Jo Hardy, that Whangarei needed a dedicated space for the city's regional collections. Hundertwasser himself believed it was a disgrace that Northland had no regional art gallery of its own in which to celebrate the local artists, therefore the opportunity to design an art gallery was a chance to help rectify this situation.[3]

THE DESIGN

As a determined environmentalist and human rights activist, Hundertwasser put forward a provocative oeuvre, or body of work, focused on man's relationship with nature. Famous for his public demonstrations, such as the drawing of 'The Line of Hamburg' at the Hamburg Institute of Fine Arts in December 1959, Hundertwasser argued that the "straight line is godless."[4] Hundertwasser's architectural proposal for Whangarei works on similar ecological principles, formally recognising the spiral as being an iconic motif in the New Zealand landscape. In the absence of straight lines, the design incorporates an internally spiralling tower topped by one of Hundertwasser's signature golden domes. Communal green spaces include a generous roof top garden, rising from ground level to the full height and length of the Centre. Planted with trees, this undulating public space will encourage visitors to relax; and while the curving walls and paved footpaths pay tribute to organic forms in nature, a decorative façade, featuring both Māori and Pākehā columns, pays tribute to New Zealand's multiculturalism. Designed to be multifunctional, the Hundertwasser Art Centre aims to provide an educational space where students can study art, architecture and ecology. The study of art occurs via two 'state of the art' exhibiting spaces, consisting of a main gallery of Hundertwasser's own art on the second floor and a contemporary Māori art gallery on the ground floor. The building itself will be a study of sustainable architecture with recycled and reused materials present in the design, and the study of ecology through Hundertwasser's inclusion of native flora and organic forms.

HUNDERTWASSER
ART CENTRE
with Wairau Māori Art Gallery
WHANGAREI • NZ

Figure 4: Hundertwasser, Friedensreich; Hundertwasser Non-Profit Foundation, *Hundertwasser Art Centre with Wairau Māori Art Gallery Logo*, reproduced with permission of YES Whangarei.

When Hundertwasser sketched his initial design in 1993 there was difficulty finding a suitable site and the project stagnated for the first time.[5] The "uninspired alternative" to the Hundertwasser gallery, the Whangarei Art Museum opened within the old Plunket Rooms at Cafler Park in 1995.[6] According to Jo Hardy, the establishment of the art museum at the old Plunket Rooms confirmed Whangarei's historic legacy of minimal investment in the arts and prompted concern about the wellbeing of Northland's cultural sector. There was particular concern that a limited investment within the arts would cause repercussions across the Northland region, particularly within schools where students lacked access to quality arts facilities, resources and institutions.[7]

Turning from this, Hundertwasser went on to design and build the Hundertwasser Toilets in Kawakawa in 1999. A hugely successful community project, the Hundertwasser Toilets have effectively re-stimulated Kawakawa's fragile economy over the last decade by encouraging an estimated 150,000 visitors to stop in Kawakawa every year.[8] Researcher Lorna Kaino discussed this point in her 2014 article, 'There's something special about this little town: cultural identity and the legacy of Hundertwasser in Kawakawa, New Zealand' (Continuum 28, No. 1: 65-76). Kaino argued that Hundertwasser's toilets have not only helped to protect the local community from further economic decline by providing local cafes and businesses with a steady stream of tourist traffic, but that more importantly they have helped to develop a sense of 'community spirit' in Kawakawa.[9] Supporters of the Hundertwasser Art Centre believe the project will similarly draw people into Whangarei, supporting the local economy, providing jobs and a 'point of difference' within the community.[10] Northland needs economic investment when you consider that in 2013 it held the highest unemployment rate in the country, 9.7 per cent, and also projected some of the lowest personal and household median incomes in New Zealand.[11]

PROJECT HISTORY

In 2011, Deloitte was employed by the Whangarei District Council to undertake a feasibility study on the Hundertwasser Art Centre project. The purpose of the study was to assess the potential economic benefits for Whangarei and the wider Northland region. Deloitte's assessment of the project's net economic benefit was calculated at

Northland Regional level (as opposed to Whangarei District level), because regional data was more detailed in terms of visitor numbers and spending, both of which were necessary for an accurate feasibility study.[12] In 2011, Deloitte calculated that Northland's net economic benefit could stand at $3.5 million per annum (and potentially more) if the Hundertwasser Art Centre attracted the same proportional increase in visitor numbers for the Northland Region as Te Papa did for Wellington when it opened in 1998.[13]

In conjunction with the *Economic Impact Assessment*, Deloitte also produced a *Hundertwasser Art Centre Feasibility Study* for the Whangarei District Council in September 2011. Deloitte's base financial projections concluded that the Hundertwasser Art Centre would make cash surpluses, sufficient for the Whangarei Art Museum Trust, which would be the eventual operator of the Art Centre, to make capital reinvestments at a later date.[14] The report found sufficient evidence to suggest the Hundertwasser proposal would encourage further business development in the Town Basin precinct, which fits in with the Whangarei District Council's long term strategic vision for "revitalising" the Town Basin by "developing a sense of place."[15] The ongoing economic benefit of $3.5–$3.7 million per annum would encourage further development within the tourism sector, including the potential for a four-star hotel development, a previously untapped market in Whangarei. The potential for the cruise ship industry to expand into Whangarei via Cruise New Zealand and Northport, the commercial port facility at Marsden Point, is also viable. Northport has agreed to accommodate the cruise industry and conveniently, has the ability to offer re-fuelling services, via the Marsden Oil Refinery situated nearby.[16]

The figures stood up in 2011 and the project's fundraising progressed under the Whangarei District Council in 2012, however when it came to the 2013 local body elections, the status quo shifted and the newly elected council took a stance opposing the Hundertwasser Art Centre project. In June 2014 the Whangarei District Council subsequently voted to drop the project, their justification for doing so: a telephone survey of a thousand Whangarei residents conducted by Versus Research in April 2014. According to Versus Research, 53 per cent of the people surveyed opposed the Hundertwasser project with its current funding model (which would see the Whangarei ratepayer invest $8 million into the project).[17] The accuracy of the survey was contested by Prosper Northland Trust, a community-focussed collective formed in response to the Council's decision to drop the Hundertwasser project. According to Prosper Northland Trust, the survey was "badly

designed" and missed 22 per cent of Whangarei households who rely on mobile phones.[18]

Following the Whangarei District Council's decision to drop the Hundertwasser project, Prosper Northland Trust picked it up in late 2014. The Trust began working to secure the project's future by establishing a sound funding model and business plan, which did not seek to overburden the Northland ratepayer, but instead aimed to source appropriate financial backing through well-trodden funding avenues.[19]

PUBLIC REFERENDUM

In September 2014, the Whangarei District Council opened up a public process to find an eventual use for the old Harbour Board Building in the Town Basin. Proposals were due by October 2014, so Prosper Northland Trust put forward their Hundertwasser Wairau Māori Art Centre proposal which joined 21 other public proposals. In November 2014, the decision was made that the top two proposals, the Hundertwasser Wairau Māori Art Centre project and the Harbourside project, proposed by Future Whangarei, would be put to the vote the following year in a public referendum. Demolition was added in as a third option.

Concerns were raised by Councillor Tricia Cutforth, who believed the submission time frame favoured the Hundertwasser project, which had the advantage of years of development and "considerable financial assistance" from the Council itself.[20] Cr Cutforth claimed the submission from Prosper Northland Trust was "substantially unchanged" from the project that had already been rejected by the Whangarei District Council in June 2014.[21] These claims however, were disputed by Morris Cutforth, the former Mayor of Whangarei (2010–13), who argued Prosper Northland Trust's proposal operated on a completely new funding model that presented minimal costs to the ratepayer.[22]

In opposition, the Harbourside project targeted the existing history of the old Harbour Board Building and planned to house a museum of local maritime history. The museum would feature an aquarium, a Māori art gallery, facilities for digital art exhibitions and a learning centre.[23] According to Future Whangarei's spokesman, Walter Yovich, the "Town Basin is maritime" and is not an "appropriate location" for the Hundertwasser project.[24] Cr Tricia Cutforth agreed with Yovich, stating that the Hundertwasser project has "no connection" with Whangarei. According to Cutforth, Hundertwasser's relationship was with the Kawakawa community in the Bay of Islands and that they are the ones who are keeping his legacy alive through the Hundertwasser Toilets he built there in 1999.[25]

The decision to implement a public referendum allowed the Harbourside group more time to develop their proposal and left the decision of what would replace the old Harbour Board Building up to Whangarei residents. In preparation, the Whangarei District Council commissioned Deloitte to conduct a feasibility study on the Harbourside project and provide an updated report on the Hundertwasser project. Published in March 2015, these studies formed the basis of the referendum information prepared by the Council for voters.

When it came to the public referendum in June 2015, 51 per cent (14,256 people) voted in favour of the Hundertwasser Art Centre, while 29.9 per cent (8,080 people) voted for demolition and 19 per cent (5,609 people) voted for the Harbourside project.[26] As a result of the public referendum, Prosper Northland Trust was given two years to finalise their project plan and devise their fundraising model, with construction beginning mid-2017.

By September 2015 the Trust had finalised their project plan for the art centre, complete with its official name, logo and funding model.[27] The project's official name, the Hundertwasser Art Centre with Wairau Māori Art Gallery, was created in collaboration with the Wairau Māori Art Gallery Board. The logo is based upon the KunstHausWien (Hundertwasser Museum, Vienna) flag that was originally designed by Hundertwasser.[28]

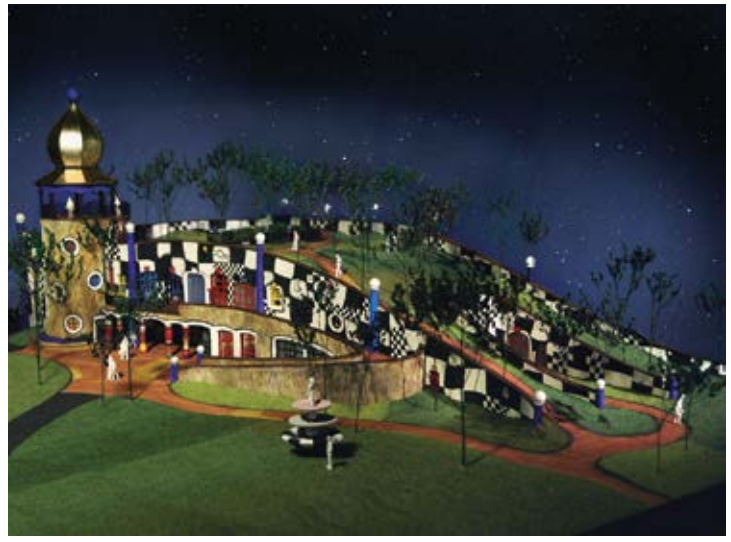

Figure 5: Yes Whangarei (photo image); Hundertwasser Non-Profit Foundation (scale model), *Hundertwasser Art Centre with Wairau Art Gallery model*, reproduced with permission of YES Whangarei.

A central committee called the Project Control Group heads the project and includes representatives from Prosper Northland Trust, the Whangarei Art Museum Trust, the Wairau Māori Art Gallery Board and the Hundertwasser Non-Profit Foundation.[29]

The opening of Te Kakano in the Whangarei Town Basin on Friday 21st October 2016 was an important milestone and an essential first step towards the realisation of the Hundertwasser Art Centre with Wairau Māori Art Gallery. Te Kakano, 'the seed' was funded separately as the art folly or test piece required for the development of a full scale Hundertwasser project. Designed and built by the Whangarei-based firm Harris Butt Architecture, the architectural sculpture offered local craftsmen the opportunity to test all elements of the design, materials and construction needed to build the Art Centre. A spiralling koru, Te Kakano pays tribute to the work of Friedensreich Hundertwasser and was produced in close consultation with the Hundertwasser Non-Profit Foundation. Featuring Hundertwasser's iconic black and white mosaics, colourful glazed columns and terracotta paving stones, Te Kakano will provide the community and local schools with an interactive art study

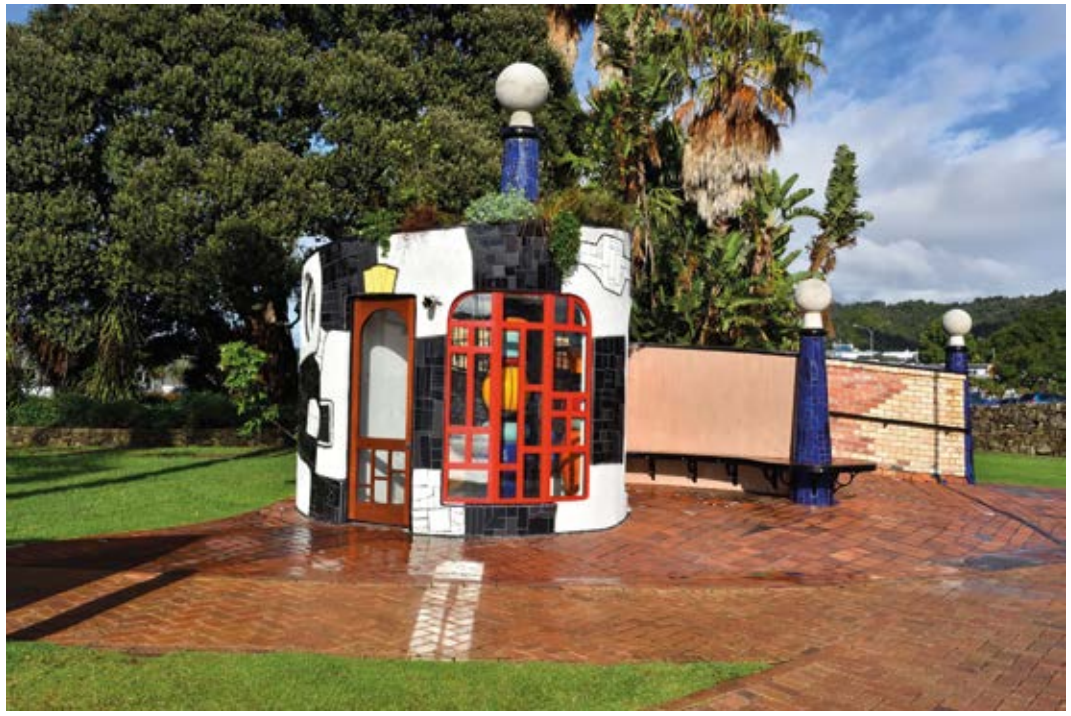

Figure 6: Brown, Ben, *Te Kakano*, HB Architecture LTD.

and tangible concept of what is to come with the development of the Hundertwasser Art Centre.[30]

Originally, and in accordance with the requirements of the referendum, Prosper Northland Trust had until the 30th June 2017 to raise the required $16.25 million, along with a $2 million underwrite over ten years. The estimated cost of the Art Centre has risen to $20.97 million due to increased construction costs and enhanced seismic strengthening measures.

As of the 16th June 2017, the Hundertwasser Art Centre with Wairau Māori Art Gallery is set to become a reality. The $20.97 million fundraising goal has been reached with the help of a last minute $3.5 million boost from the New Zealand Lotteries Commission on the 14th June, and a further grant of up to $3 million from The Ministry for Arts, Culture and Heritage two days later. The Government's total contribution to the project now sits at a $7 million. With the funding secured, the Project Control Group has a year to produce a fully-costed design and commence construction. There is potential for construction to begin prior to the mid-2018 timeframe, while the projected opening date still sits at mid-2020.[31]

THE WHANGAREI ART MUSEUM TRUST & THE WAIRAU MĀORI ART GALLERY

Central to the development of the Hundertwasser project has been the involvement of the Whangarei Art Museum Trust. The Trust was established by the Whangarei District Council in 1996 and charged with the governance of the Whangarei Art Museum Te Manawa Toi. Grant Faber, Chair of the Trust, explained that he believes the Hundertwasser Art Centre will generate a "significant operating surplus" which will feed back into the Whangarei Art Museum and the local arts community.[32] As the eventual operators of the Hundertwasser Art Centre and the charitable trust responsible for facilitating the fundraising efforts, the Trust maintains a close working relationship with the Project Control Group.

The Wairau Māori Art Gallery Board was established by the Whangarei District Council in 2012, when the idea to develop a Māori art gallery in conjunction with the Hundertwasser Art Centre project was voiced among the Whangarei arts community. The incorporation of Māori art was one of Hundertwasser's original requests for the

gallery and thus the project evolved.[33] The Board is made up of a group of highly regarded Māori artists and scholars who recognise the importance of promoting contemporary Māori art within a dedicated exhibition space in New Zealand.[34] The original group has been maintained over the years; however, the deaths of Jonathon Mane-Wheoki in 2014 and artist Manos Nathan in 2015 have deprived the Board of two dedicated individuals.

Chair of the Board is Elizabeth Ellis CNZM, JP (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Porou). Ellis believes the Hundertwasser Art Centre with Wairau Māori Art Gallery project is an outstanding initiative for Whangarei and will provide a means of promoting Māori artists and advocating for high quality Māori art.[35] The Board believes the inclusion of Māori art "will build a positive profile for all Māori, serving across all hapu and iwi, and will form an invaluable global link with other indigenous communities."[36]

THE HUNDERTWASSER NON-PROFIT FOUNDATION

Prosper Northland Trust also focused on re-forging important relationships between Whangarei and the Hundertwasser Non-Profit Foundation in Vienna. Obtaining the support of the Foundation is vital to the project's success in many ways. As the kaitiaki or 'guardians' of Hundertwasser's artistic legacy, the Foundation has the unique ability to provide architectural design support for the project, including Hundertwasser's original concepts, architectural drawings, and most importantly, access to a series of architectural drawings developed by 'Hundertwasser' architect, Heinz Springmann. Enlisted by the Foundation in the early stages of the project's history (2008), Springmann had developed a series of architectural drawings loyal to the artist's original vision for Whangarei.[37] Prosper Northland Trust has proceeded to re-establish a good working relationship with the Foundation and with Richard Smart, their New Zealand representative.[38] The Foundation has generously agreed to circulate a selection of Hundertwasser's original artworks through the proposed Art Centre, making it the only other dedicated Hundertwasser gallery outside of Vienna.[39] The art works to be circulated would include sketches, drawings, paintings and prints that Hundertwasser created throughout his lifetime. The Foundation's support is linked to Hundertwasser's love of New Zealand and the authenticity of the Whangarei project.[40]

CONTROVERSY

Not everyone is convinced of the project's merits, however, with approximately 49 per cent of voters in the June 2015 referendum choosing either the Harbourside project or demolition. Whether people think the project is too expensive, too commercially focused or perhaps ill-suited to the chosen site in the Whangarei Town Basin, the debate has highlighted the fact that many New Zealanders do not see an investment in the arts as a catalyst for economic development.[41] Looking at Whangarei, it is clear to see the sports bias of previous regional investment with the Toll Stadium, Sport Northland's Kensington Stadium, the ASB Leisure Centre and Whangarei's Aquatic Centre. Jenny Pike, a resident of Whangarei, put forth such sentiments in a letter to the editor (*Northern Advocate*, November 18th 2014): "As a ratepayer I have not minded my contributions to the council being used to fund/support/enable various cricket grounds, stadiums, hockey grounds, gymnasiums and numerous other worthy causes. I always figured the arts community would have its turn."[42] This sentiment is part of a wider New Zealand struggle, where local and central government often underwrites the importance of cultural investment in New Zealand's regional societies.

The debates surrounding the Hundertwasser project have been fuelled by political controversy. Over the course of the project's twenty-four year history, seven councils have come and gone, each with a different take on the perceived benefits of the project. Whangarei residents and councillors alike have repeatedly raised concerns over the Council's processes that have guided the project over the years. Tangled council procedure, personality conflicts and occasions of political manoeuvring which saw the Hundertwasser Art Centre become, in the opinion of Whangarei Art Museum Trustee Kirsty Hughes, "a bit of a political football", have all contributed to the prolonged history of the project, and at times, overshadowed the artist's vision for Whangarei.[43]

Many of the debates have nevertheless been concerned with costs and funding. Understandably the Northland ratepayer does not want to foot the entire bill for the Art Centre, but even under the current funding model which requires more than 82 per cent of the capital cost to be raised through non-ratepayer sourced means, many are still opposed to the idea.[44] While the 2002 Local Government Act requires all councils to consider the cultural, social, economic and environmental well-being of the area in their decision making, there seems to be an unspoken assumption that cultural wealth is an

"additional spend" in Northland.[45] As one of New Zealand's poorest regions, it is not hard to see how this perception is validated, when money is already spread so thinly that basic infrastructure is constantly in demand. In 2013, for example, 43 per cent of Northlanders were on the lowest band of the national deprivation index, compared with 20 per cent of New Zealanders.[46] So while the underlying scepticism of the arts as a successful means of enriching Northland's economy is understandable, it is naive not to consider the international acclaim of the Hundertwasser brand.[47] Vienna has the acclaimed Hundertwasserhaus and the KunstHausWien museum. According to Vienna City Administration, the KunstHaus recorded 126 visitors for every thousand that visited Vienna in 2013. If you consider that 13.5 million people visited Vienna in 2014 and that by 2015 this figure climbed to 14.3 million overnight visitors, Whangarei has real potential to capitalise on the Hundertwasser Art Centre project.[48]

Placing the Hundertwasser project within an international context has seen it being likened to the 'MONA effect' that has become apparent in Tasmania, Australia. The Museum of Old and New Art (MONA) in Hobart is an excellent example of how an art gallery has positively impacted on the tourism of a city. Hobart has become an international tourist destination for the arts, due to the art museum's modern architecture, reputation for the avant-garde and ability to attract internationally recognised artists such as Marina Abramović to Tasmania. The year ending June 2012 saw 25 per cent of all visitors to Tasmania visit MONA, while the year ending June 2016 saw 29 per cent of visitors head to MONA. According to the biannual Tasmanian Visitor Survey, MONA consistently ranks as the second most visited tourism attraction, behind the Salamanca Market (at 34 per cent of visitors).[49] Pro-Hundertwasser supporters have quoted the 'MONA effect' stating that a Hundertwasser gallery in Whangarei could have a similar impact on Northland's tourism and could become a national icon.[50] Deloitte supports this theory in their *Hundertwasser Wairau Māori Art Centre Feasibility Study Update: March 2015* for the Whangarei District Council. According to Deloitte, not only is the Art Centre's proposed location in the Whangarei Town Basin linked directly to the artist, Friedensreich Hundertwasser, it is "strategically located" (10 mins from the CBD) to incentivise investment in the local economy.[51]

Deloitte goes one step further, stating the building itself will be an artwork on a "grand scale" and will become one of New Zealand's few iconic buildings. According to the updated feasibility study, the Hundertwasser Art Centre could have an impact on Whangarei which

"parallels" the economic revitalisation that has occurred with Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain, effectively putting Whangarei on the international stage.[52] On the opposing side, however, Councillor Tricia Cutforth believes that the Hundertwasser project is aesthetically a "cultural cringe" and is not suited to the Town Basin environment. According to Cutforth, Mt Manaia and the distinct landscape surrounding the city is Whangarei's point of difference and she questions whether tourism is the "best type of industry" that Whangarei could be supporting.[53] Lorna Kaino's research contradicts this notion, suggesting that tourism may just be one of the few industries preventing the decline of Northland's towns.[54]

In response to Deloitte's economic assessment, supporters of Hundertwasser Art Centre have called upon Northlanders to look at the success of the Sydney Opera House, the Eiffel Tower and, more recently in New Zealand, the Len Lye Centre in New Plymouth, as proof that monumental and often controversial architecture can and does enhance a city's attraction to international tourists. According to Sally Blundell, the battle lines in New Zealand are familiar, with councils deliberating over the merits of a landmark structure luring much-needed tourist dollars against a purely local institution reflecting community history and aspirations.[55] The Hundertwasser Art Centre debate has shown that it takes courage to invest in unique architecture, even more so in regional New Zealand where money is scarce.

As part of a broader assessment, a comparison can be made between the Hundertwasser Art Centre project and the newly opened Len Lye Centre in New Plymouth. The Len Lye Centre opened as a result of the New Plymouth District Council's 35-year commitment to the project and houses art works gifted to New Plymouth by the world-famous multimedia artist, Len Lye. A monumental piece of modern architecture, the structure boasts a 32 tonne, 14m-high mirror-grade stainless steel façade that wraps around the centre. Designed by New Zealander, Andrew Patterson, the Centre is a contemporary interpretation of the "essence" of Lye's art.[56] The shimmering and seemingly fluid façade presents a provocative expression of movement as the curving steel reflects the light.

Like the Hundertwasser project, the Len Lye Centre attracted its fair share of criticism in New Plymouth, with many calling it as a waste of money and a burden on ratepayers.[57] However the New Plymouth District Council managed to overcome this, source the funding and build the Centre after a decade of planning. The Len Lye Centre opened in July 2015. This contrasts with the Hundertwasser

project which was eventually rejected by the Whangarei District Council, only to be picked up by Prosper Northland Trust, under whom the project has progressed to the point where the $20.97 million fundraising goal has been achieved within the specified timeframe.

The two projects differ in a number of ways, firstly, that the New Plymouth District Council's decision to develop a gallery for Lye's work was based upon legal documents, a Deed of Gift and then a later Deed of Relationship. These documents effectively charged the New Plymouth District Council and the Len Lye Foundation with the joint guardianship of the artist's oeuvre. In contrast, the Whangarei District Council has not been driven by any legal commitment to Hundertwasser's legacy and his art is not in their possession. All access to Hundertwasser's material legacy is subject to permission from the Hundertwasser Non-Profit Foundation in Vienna. This brings the debate to an important point, the fact that Len Lye was first and foremost a New Zealand artist, whereas Friedensreich Hundertwasser was Austrian, although granted New Zealand citizenship in 1986. It could be argued that perhaps some New Zealanders feel a greater 'sense of ownership' of Len Lye than they do of Hundertwasser.

Also significant was the funding model chosen by the New Plymouth District Council and the close relationship between the Len Lye Centre project and the Govett-Brewster Gallery. The Len Lye Centre's funding model was largely supported by private and corporate investment, thus placing minimal stress on ratepayer revenues. Economically this has proved satisfactory in New Plymouth and now is also being met with success in Whangarei under Prosper Northland Trust's direction. Lastly, the immediate support of a highly regarded institution such as the Govett-Brewster Gallery cannot be overlooked when considering the successful development of civic architecture. For the Len Lye Centre, the Govett-Brewster Gallery provides extensive curatorial support and resources, and now a similar supportive network, made up of the Whangarei Art Museum Trust, the Wairau Māori Art Gallery Board and the Hundertwasser Non-Profit Foundation, is working to provide the Hundertwasser Art Centre project with a comparable support structure.

CIVIC ARCHITECTURE

Brent Mawson, the former Associate Dean of Auckland University's Te Tai Tokerau Campus in Whangarei, pointed out that the basic conflict underpinning the debate around the Hundertwasser Art Centre has been about the "purpose" of city councils in developing civic architecture. Mawson believes many people have a "very limited" view of what a city council's responsibilities are when it comes to the arts and culture; yet, for a healthy city, cultural investment is necessary and important.[58] Cultural developments like the Len Lye Centre and the Hundertwasser Art Centre are about cultivating a sense of pride among regional communities and supporting local economies. By investing in the arts in the regions, New Zealand is developing 'liveable' towns which work to attract new residents, whether they are young professionals, business owners or families. Put simply, if regional centres cease to be inspiring and positive places then people will leave. Urbanisation is a familiar trend, involving the relocation of people to larger cities to get better jobs, better education and greater access to services and facilities. The arts are part of this 'urban attraction', but at a time of a national housing crisis it must make sense to invest in regional communities which are able to draw people away and thereby ease pressure on the main centres.

In summary, the controversy attached to the Hundertwasser Art Centre with Wairau Māori Art Gallery project in Whangarei has brought the topic of art and the city council's role in nurturing and developing the arts to the forefront of contemporary discourse in New Zealand.

Northland has always had a strong artistic community; Ralph Hotere (Te Aupōuri, Te Rarawa), Seraphine Pick, Florian Habicht and Laurence Aberhart are well known figures in the New Zealand art scene. Despite this, Northland has historically lacked an engaging venue in which to display art. Friedensreich Hundertwasser had the architectural vision for such a venue in Whangarei. The stony path to realising that vision has involved a number of debates. Over money—who pays for the Hundertwasser Art Centre and the associated running costs. Whether the project is a cultural fit with Northland and does it fit the mandate of providing local artists with an engaging venue for the display of art. There is the question of what will be the benefits to the local community; which site will be used; and who will run it. Personality conflicts, back room political trade-offs and manoeuvrings have at times overshadowed the vision and hijacked the debating

process. However, the public referendum in June 2015 settled the question of whether Whangarei wants the gallery or not, and as a result, the project was able to progress. Recently on the 16th June 2017, anticipation levels reached a new high with the announcement that the Hundertwasser Art Centre with Wairau Māori Art Gallery had hit its $20.97 million fundraising goal. Construction is now proposed to begin in late 2017, rather than mid-2018.

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From K Road to iTunes: Social and cultural changes in New Zealand recorded music communities

Lewis Tennant

Keywords: # recorded music # record shops # music retailing # music consumers # online music

This article explores how recent technological changes have affected the social and cultural practices of New Zealand communities that are based on recorded music. It considers the shrinking number of brick-and-mortar record shops in the wider context of discussing how now widespread Internet usage has forever changed the music producer-distributor-consumer relationship, as well as the relationship audience members have with one another. The account tracks the history of the record retail space in 20th Century New Zealand, before drawing on conversations with 30 highly-engaged music consumers in order to explore the relevance of the record shops that remain today. Participants also discuss the impact Internet access has had on New Zealand-based music aficionados. The central theme that emerges during these conversations is that though 'something' is lost with increasingly less physical community spaces to congregate, the Internet provides a potentially more inclusive and expansive platform for a greater cross-section of audience members to feel involved.

FROM TALKERIES TO TOWER: MUSIC RETAILING IN 20TH CENTURY NEW ZEALAND

In recent years brick-and-mortar record stores have fallen on hard times, with over 3000 having closed in the US for the decade through to 2008,[1] and 90% of recorded music retailers having closed in the UK as of 2015.[2] Over the last twenty years in New Zealand the number of specialty music stores has fallen from approximately 300 to about 30.[3] Brick-and-mortar record shop closures are typically a result of the rise in online music retailers and streaming services, online music piracy, major recording labels trending toward backing blockbuster pop stars rather than developing and nurturing a wider range of artists' careers, and 'big box' retailers such as The Warehouse offering physical music sales for prices smaller retailers cannot compete with. Of these factors, it is Internet usage that has had the most effect on the lessening number of physical record shops and physical recordings. Since Napster was introduced in 1999, the variety and amount of music available to the public has continued to increase, as has the ability to share, stream, and download music collaboratively, often for little or no cost.[4] The effects of the Internet on the recorded music industry have been relatively swift, considering that the industry's supply chain remained fairly static throughout the 20th Century.

Following Edison's 1877 demonstration of the phonograph in the US,[5] sound recordings were made available to the public in stores selling any combination of musical instruments, sheet music, and radios. By the 1940s the first stores principally selling recorded music emerged, such as Colony, Commodore, and Sam Goody's in New York, and Wallich's Music City in Los Angeles.[6] In New Zealand the phonograph was demonstrated 18 months after its debut in the US, with locals quick to embrace recorded sounds.[7] This afforded locals a greater sense of connection to international culture.[8] In 1901 a chain called Talkeries was established, specialising in selling discs and phonographs. Charles Begg & Co followed in 1906, opening a gramophone and phonograph department in their Dunedin store, and by 1911 five Begg's stores nationwide had such departments.[9] By the mid-1920s most homes owned a disc player, while HMV opened a disc pressing plant in Australia which increased the variety of titles available locally.[10] Like the US, by the 1940s there were stores primarily focussed on selling recorded music, notably HMV in Wellington, and Marbecks in Auckland.[11]

Murray & Hayden Marbeck, c.1960. The first Marbeck Record Store was opened in 1934 by their mother and father, Eileen & Alfred. Today, Murray's son Roger operates Marbeck's Records in Queens Arcade, Auckland.
Photo courtesy of Roger Marbeck.

World War Two had two significant yet distinct effects on recorded music consumption in New Zealand. The first restricted the supply of records locally. By the 1940s the British-owned HMV/EMI controlled 90% of the music distributed in New Zealand (the result of Imperial Preference laws & anti-trust laws), an arrangement which meant that HMV could punish local retailers for acquiring discs from other places. Supply restriction was further exacerbated by wartime rationing of aluminium and shellac (used in the production of music discs) as well as limited access to now war-sensitive shipping routes.[12] The second effect of the War was that local tastes began to veer toward US music and popular culture, usurping the hitherto British Empire-derived focus on music from England. American troops stationed in New Zealand had brought their culture as well as their music with them.[13] In the early 1950s the HMV/EMI monopoly was broken in time for the arrival of rock and roll near the close of the decade. Record retailers struggled to keep up with the demand for discs. By this stage the 78 rpm disc was being superseded by the 45 rpm single, and sales of the latter jumped from 125,000 in the first half of 1957, to 589,000 in the second half. In the same year imported sales dropped by two-thirds as local pressing plants were established.[14]

There is no formal record of the history of music retailing in New Zealand from 1965 onwards, but the trajectory followed by the industry here is comparable to what occurred in the US and the UK. In the US the 'British invasion' brought about by The Beatles in the 1960s hastened the growth of independent record stores there as demand

Photographer: John House. Year: 1984, Title: '1980s hair in the EMI Shop (Cuba Mall, Wellington)'

grew for sheet music and 45s,[15] while in the UK stores primarily selling recorded music began to flourish from the late-1960s onwards.[16] In the US, UK, and New Zealand a greater number of smaller independent stores emerged, many of which began to specialise in specific genres, and these coexisted alongside larger stores selling more general titles, as well as mail order record clubs.[17]

The 1970s saw even greater diversity between stores, with some known for knowledgeable staff, some for considerable back catalogue or second-hand stock, some for specific genres, and some for stocking accessories for the counter-culture such as alternative magazines or apparatus for smoking cannabis. Examples in Auckland included the Record Warehouse (which had the best singles collection in New Zealand), and Direction Records (which was the first of the alternative stores of the post-hippie era). Professor Longhairs specialised in punk and new wave, and the Record Exchange on Karangahape Road dominated the second-hand market from the mid-1970s until early into the 21st Century.[18] As was the case in the US, corporate music retailing chains spread throughout the country from the 1980s onward, including Sounds, HMV, EMI, Tower, Tracs and The CD Store. The 1990s saw the advent of 'big box' retailers gaining discounts for bulk buying from record companies, enabling chains such as The Warehouse to offer CDs at a retail price independent stores could not realistically match.[19] The turn of the Millennium heralded the rapid disintermediation of the 20th Century recording industry business model, and subsequent record shop closures.

Independent brick-and-mortar record shops have traditionally been a key intermediary between the recorded music industry and recorded music consumers. The rapid decline in the number of physical stores has led to discussions regarding the historical and ongoing social and cultural relevance of these spaces, particularly as community hubs for those who regularly frequent them. Previous studies have argued that independent brick-and-mortar stores provide lifestyle spaces that aid in fostering music-based subcultures, scenes and communities.[20] Gracon (2010) described independent record shops as counter-hegemonic, stocking a wider variety of products than available from the mainstream media machine.[21] Everrett (2009) suggested independent record shops can function as educational spaces,[22] Gracon (2009) further positing that music is not the only focus, in that discussions instore can extend to the wider issues of the day. He argues that in this regard there is counter-hegemony too, with these spaces often fostering alternative viewpoints to mainstream media messages.[23] McIntyre (2009) contends that independent shops can foster a sense of community for patrons and staff, encouraging social interaction between like-minded people.[24] The sense of community felt in many independent shops appears to involve a collective group identity, cultivated by shared interests, language, visual symbols and ideas.

FROM BRICKS TO BINARY: CHANGING MUSIC DISTRIBUTION AND CONSUMPTION PATTERNS

The following account considers how recent technological changes have affected the social and cultural practices of recorded music communities in a New Zealand context, in turn reflecting on some of the key findings that emerged in the studies of Everret (2009), Gracon (2009, 2010) and McIntrye (2009,2011). These themes were explored during a series of focus groups conducted in Auckland, New Zealand. Over a two-month period in late 2014, 26 people who self-identified as 'highly-engaged music consumers' each took part in one of a series of focus groups.

Owing to this study investigating changing human behaviours as a result of the recent proliferation of Internet usage, a wide range of age groups was sought. Thirteen who took part were aged in their thirties, nine were in their twenties, four in their forties, and three in

their fifties. Six of the participants were under 25, and though they had some memories of physical format recordings and physical format retail outlets, their primary reference point for where to procure recorded music was the Internet. However, in terms of these younger participants being skewed towards online resources, age did not always correlate with where music was primarily sourced. For example, two participants in their twenties claimed they procured over 80% of their music offline, while two participants in their 50s stated they sourced over 99% of their music online. As engaged music consumers and fans, all participants indicated they were regular and competent Internet users. The latter point proved fruitful where the older of the participants were concerned, as all had engaged with, and had a long-term perspective on, both traditional and modern audience practices.

The data from the focus groups and one-on-one interviews was analysed using Grounded Theory [25] in order to generate a set of explanations about participants initial and ongoing engagement with recorded music, what pleasures they seek when consuming music, their engagement with and reflections on changing music and communication technologies, their involvement with and perspectives on recorded music-based communities and social interactions, and finally their reflections on the ongoing social and cultural relevance of the independent brick-and-mortar record shop.

The contemporary music consumer exists in a media distribution and communication environment shaped by the substantial changes that have occurred since around the turn of the 21st century. The way participants described acquiring and consuming music, as well as interacting with other music fans, was consistent with the recent disintermediation that has occurred within the music industry.[26] That is, participants described a contemporary world of choice, characterised by access to a vast amount of music and music-based information, as well as far greater potential to directly interact with other audience members globally.

In regard to accessing music, the environment participants described growing up in was limited both by geographical and industrial factors.

> *I spent two hours in the record section of the stationers in Howick, which was where records were sold in those days. (Si)*

> *Yeah, we lived in Palmerston North, and I think there was one CD store in the city centre and we'd only go there once a weekend. (Paz)*

Despite an age difference of 27 years, Si and Paz described the same situation regarding growing up in New Zealand. The following thoughts from Vincent highlighted the industrial restrictions of this pre-Internet environment.

> *I remember growing up in Mt Manganui same thing. One record store and it was very much like a rock, Top 40 record store and, like you'd end up having to go to the Flea Markets and buy stuff or garage sales to buy like your old classics and stuff. (Vincent)*

Participants were not only restricted by physical location (seemingly accentuated in 'small town' New Zealand), but by the wholesale commercial control of the supply of music globally at the time. With music availability once wholly dictated by the record company, distributor and retailer,[27] these participants' options were a limited selection of titles distributed and made available in a limited number of locations. This is precisely the scarcity Anderson[28] describes in his reflections on the 'Long Tail' of the modern media environment, where near unlimited selection now replaces the 'hit driven' economics that led Vincent away from his local music retailer in search of more esoteric options elsewhere.

Age 22, Eric's recent experience of going to Auckland's Real Groovy highlighted the irreversible shift that has happened in the production, consumption, and exchange of music.[29]

> *It's one of those moments where you go to Real Groovy and you pick up the record and you are like 'wow I'm seeing it in real life!' And it costs too much. (Eric)*

What was once a physical item sold at a set price is now able to be shared infinitely amongst audience members. Eric visits Real Groovy to wonder over holding a physical copy of a record and 'seeing it in real life' as he has only known an environment where recorded music is available easily on the Internet for low or no-cost. Piracy is now

normalised,[30] and many artists openly encourage accessing their music at a price determined by the consumer, and that price is often 'free'.[31] It is thus unsurprising that Eric regards Real Groovy, and the trinkets it houses, as a curio.

The majority of participants used the Internet as their primary source for procuring recorded music. However, regardless of where participants procured music, most suggested brick-and-mortar record shops do maintain relevance, though only for a particular niche of audience members. These individuals appeared to frequent these spaces not because of a singular necessity to source the music in them, but rather for wider social and cultural factors linked to utilising them.

> *I always visit, I can't help it. Even if it's in Wellington, I can't help to walk into RPM Records and have a little dig. Even Conch. I'll go there for a coffee and I'll still just find myself flicking through the bins. It's just a habit because there's always those things that I want the hard copy of, and things I've been looking for for years, those elusive bits. (Drew)*

> *I like being able to pick up a record because you have that... you don't know before you get there that you're going to get it. And you have a feeling of like 'sweet I've found it' as opposed to just mindlessly scrolling through pages. (Bob)*

> *The chance factor. You gotta be rewarded. It's a personal reward that nowadays is really hard to come by. Like, when you actually find that record. (Drew)*

For participants who frequented physical stores, there appeared to be a sought after ritualistic aspect to record shops that cannot be replicated online. The degree of unexpectedness, physicality, and personal reward that they felt cannot be replicated digitally. Though all conceded that the Internet offers a far more extensive and instantaneous inventory of music, the chance and serendipity involved in patronising record stores, as well as the overall slower process of searching through as well as traveling to them, continued to be a beneficial and rewarding experience.

Participants' described the record store space as offering more than just a point of exchange for money and goods. Similarly, earlier studies have found that independent stores often encourage music-based subcultures, scenes and communities[32] based on

stocking and promoting a wider variety of products than is available from the mainstream media machine.[33] However what appears markedly different at this juncture is that the fulfilments these spaces offered participants appears overwhelmingly personal rather than interpersonal. 'Digging' for records seems to place no great emphasis on the community-building aspects of shops, rather describing quite a solitary activity in a space albeit inhabited by other people.

Less than a decade after the studies of Gracon (2009, 2010), McIntyre (2009), and Everett (2009), participants described enjoying many of the culturally significant aspects of independent brick-and-mortar stores described in these investigations, but very little of the social. None mentioned the value of independent stores as an alternative to the mainstream media machine,[34] perhaps because the internet now fulfils this role in participants' lives. Aside from Jim and Hannah, no one described independent stores as educational spaces,[35] nor spaces which encourage the airing of counter-hegemonic viewpoints.[36] Again, aside from Jim and Hannah, nobody cited store employees as go-to people for advice and recommendations,[37] nor did they allude to any meaningful sense of group identity.[38] It seems widespread access to the Internet has considerably reduced the need for people to interact on any meaningful level in brick-and-mortar shops.

The apparently diminishing social draw to physical record shops might begin at the counter. Participants described a pre-Internet environment where staff members played a crucial role as both tastemakers and gatekeepers.

> *... in the '90s there was one store in Tauranga called The Source, and there was a guy called Chook, he used to play in a metal band called The Abyss, and he was the guy who put us onto a lot of metal at one point. (Drew)*

> *Was that a result of this guy Chook? (Interviewer)*

> *I guess he was that classic record store dude. You'd go to see him because (a) he was older than you and (b) he was playing in a cool band, and he'd he'd be like, 'oh you should check this out', like he kind of got to know what we were buying so when we came in the next time he'd be able to recommend something. (Drew)*

Drew's description of Chook, a record shop employee in 1990s Tauranga, New Zealand, appropriately illustrates the cultural significance of the store clerk as key tastemaker in the then limited media and information environment. The significance of a 'Chook' was not uncommon amongst particularly engaged 20th Century music consumers. However, with widespread access to the Internet in the developed world, and the disintermediation of traditional industry structures, it might be said that now any audience member might be a 'Chook' if they so wish, and their expertise need not be restricted to the small New Zealand town they reside in.

As one of a handful of participants who had themselves worked in traditional music retail, Hannah's description of being an 'expert' record shop employee was telling.

> *I remember there was a guy who would come in and he was really interested in the alt country scene, so he came in as a fan of Ryan Adams. A couple of us were there when he came in and he was like 'oh, what else do you think I should listen to?' And we kind of gave him all of these ideas and he ended up coming back every month or so based on... it was really based on the Border Catalogue and the Rhythm Method catalogue, but that was it. (Hannah)*

Hannah's honest description of appearing an expert to the customer in question though 'it was really based on the Border Catalogue and the Rhythm Method catalogue' perfectly illustrates the restrictions in place for most audience members in the pre-Internet environment. In that more intermediated environment having access to the catalogues of record companies represented having access to different titles, and in turn being able to act as a middleperson in the consumption process. Now audience members can autonomously source, access, and consume a wide range of titles, representing the 'freed' music Hill referred to in his article on changing music consumption patterns.[39] As a result, contemporary music consumers arguably have significantly less reason to call on the expertise of traditional 'gatekeepers' like the record shop employee.

A number of participants described experiencing social anxiety in physical record shops, which suggests that the Internet might provide a less intimidating platform to interact with others.

> *Real Groovy was one of those places when I worked there... it was... there was a community, but there was definitely contempt in some ways [laughs]... (Jim)*

> *I mean, record stores are some of my favourite places, and everywhere I go I try to get to a record store, at least one. But, you know, they can be intimidating, and I remember record stores where you do get that Jack Black character in High Fidelity. He's a kind of composite of people... (Nasir)*

Jim and Nasir both referenced the fictional book[40] and subsequent film adaptation *High Fidelity,*[41] a comedy-drama in which central character Rob Gordon owns an independent brick-and-mortar record shop staffed by Dick and Barry (the latter of whom is played by actor Jack Black). Barry is brash and obnoxious to customers who he does not feel possess the requisite knowledge of (and taste in) music required to frequent the store, often resulting in customers either being told to leave or hastily exiting of their own volition. As Jim observed as a record shop employee, and Nasir as a customer, 'Barry' is based on an employee stereotype that exists, and does not fit well with the notion that brick-and-mortar shops are inclusive spaces.

Participants' observations regarding power relations might be linked to the significance these individuals attach to music in their lives, as it seems unlikely such social anxiety would be attached to shopping for something like groceries. In the following passage, Bob's comparison of his record shop experiences with shopping online suggest that the intimidation felt by some in physical stores might be lessened by the relative anonymity the Internet accommodates.

> *I dunnoh if it's really related but... you asked about the benefits of online. Like I was in Real Groovy a few months ago and I bought a Chaka Khan record. This '80s, you know fluoro... and the guy at the counter was like this hardcore punk and I could tell he was just having the time of his life... 'look at this guy buying this pansy ass record'. And he had it out and he was displaying it. I was like 'put it in the bag! Put it in the bag!' Maybe a little in my head... but hey, if I'd bought it online... (Bob)*

Feedback from participants also emphasised the value of what is now immediate access to music and music-based information, particularly when based in New Zealand. Whereas access to new music and music journalism was once dictated by the limits of airspeed or telephony, the Internet allows those with unrestricted connection instantaneous access to information and communication, irrespective of geographic location.[42] Local audiences can now link globally to people with similar tastes with ease, encouraging a greater sense of self-identity with a customisable network of like-minded individuals.[43] From the standpoint of music production, a modern incarnation of the 'Dunedin Sound' (a tag for a revered style of indie pop music created in Dunedin in the early 1980s) might now be the distinctive musical output of a global collective who convene and share ideas and files on a Facebook group page.

CONTEMPROARY MUSIC COMMUNITIES: ALONE, TOGETHER?

The following comments from Sean, Jed, Tony, and Jim encapsulate the sense of community once felt in many local independent brick-and-mortar record shops.
Sean and Jed recounted interacting in-store.

> *You used to go to a record store and there'd be a community of people who play all different genres and listen to all different genres, you kind of mix and um... (Sean)*

> *There was the old Real Groovy thing where there was so many people there and I'd see like [inaudible] on the other side of the room and be like 'hey here's one for you'. The old Real Groovy thing doesn't really happen and that was a massive sort of social ground... (Jed)*

> *Back in the day with BPM and Beat Merchants you kind of had a rapport with the staff. Now there's a big turnover, and you just don't know these people. And now it is less of a sort of social outing, and they're just sort of doing the sales, you're just in a queue, there's not the same kind of amount of time and banter, and um... (Sean)*

Painting the Soul Mine, Kilbirnie, Wellington, 1986.
L to R. Tui Karawana (2Ski), Tony Murdoch, Rhys Bell (DJ Rhys B), and 'The Devastating Double Agent'

> *[On record shops in Auckland, New Zealand in the 1980s and 1990s] Had people in the music scene, you know, it wasn't just a job. They might have been musicians, deejays whatever... it seemed like a unified kind of existence. (Jim)*

Participants' comments frame a community atmosphere in shops as a historical phenomenon. Sean stated 'you *used* to go into a record store and there'd be a community of people' and 'now it is less of a sort of social outing, and they're just sort of doing the sales, you're just in a queue, there's not the same kind of amount of time and banter', Jed referred to 'the *old* Real Groovy thing', Jim described working in shops in the 1980s and 1990s as not 'just a job' and a 'unified kind of existence'. These sentiments are unsurprising, considering that the Internet now accommodates many of the social facets of the brick-and-mortar store environment that originally drew people to these spaces. The disintermediation that has occurred in the recorded music industry has lessened the significance of a number of middlepersons traditionally involved in the business, placing more power in the hands of artists and audience members and leaving both groups to forge a more direct relationship with each other. This might explain Sean's

observation that many store staff are now 'just sort of doing sales' while he is 'just in a queue'.

Vincent explained how the ability to interact online had allowed him to connect globally with people with the same specific interests rather than locally with people with more diverse preferences.

> *I remember when a lot of us kind of jumped online mid-2000s and it straight away went to a much more global kind of reach I guess. And so instead of going and seeing the same five guys at your local record store every Saturday—who aren't into the same stuff but they kind of like tolerate it or whatever, and they talk about stuff, but it doesn't really mesh—you all of a sudden got in touch with 200 people who were all around the world who were possibly even much more focussed into your immediate interests. And so that's become really powerful. (Vincent)*

Though the majority of participants agreed that physical spaces like the brick-and-mortar record shop can still yield significant social and cultural benefits, the same participants' current engagement with recorded music and fellow music fans indicated the Internet now provides these same benefits, in turn providing a seemingly more inclusive and expansive place for interaction. Participants' reflections—from growing up with a reliance on one record shop and a radio, to now being able to instantly access a range of music and information on a global scale and with relative ease—tracked the transition from the 20th Century music industry model where the availability of recorded music was much more widely dictated by the record company, distributor, and retailer,[44] to the modern 'post-Napster' media environment where near unlimited selection has replaced the 'hit driven'[45] environment of old. Where once Tauranga's Chook guided local metal fans to new artists and albums, there are now many 'Chooks' informing people's tastes globally. For those who experience social anxiety in face-to-face situations, the Internet can provide a potentially more inclusive space. Feeling a sense of community in local record shops was discussed in an increasingly historical context, because online environments now provide many of the social benefits record stores once did. Where New Zealand's geographical isolation has often been woven into popular culture narratives—as well as narratives concerning national identity—responses in this study indicate physical location may be becoming less of a marker of identity and belonging, and less of a determinant as to how communities form around specific interests.

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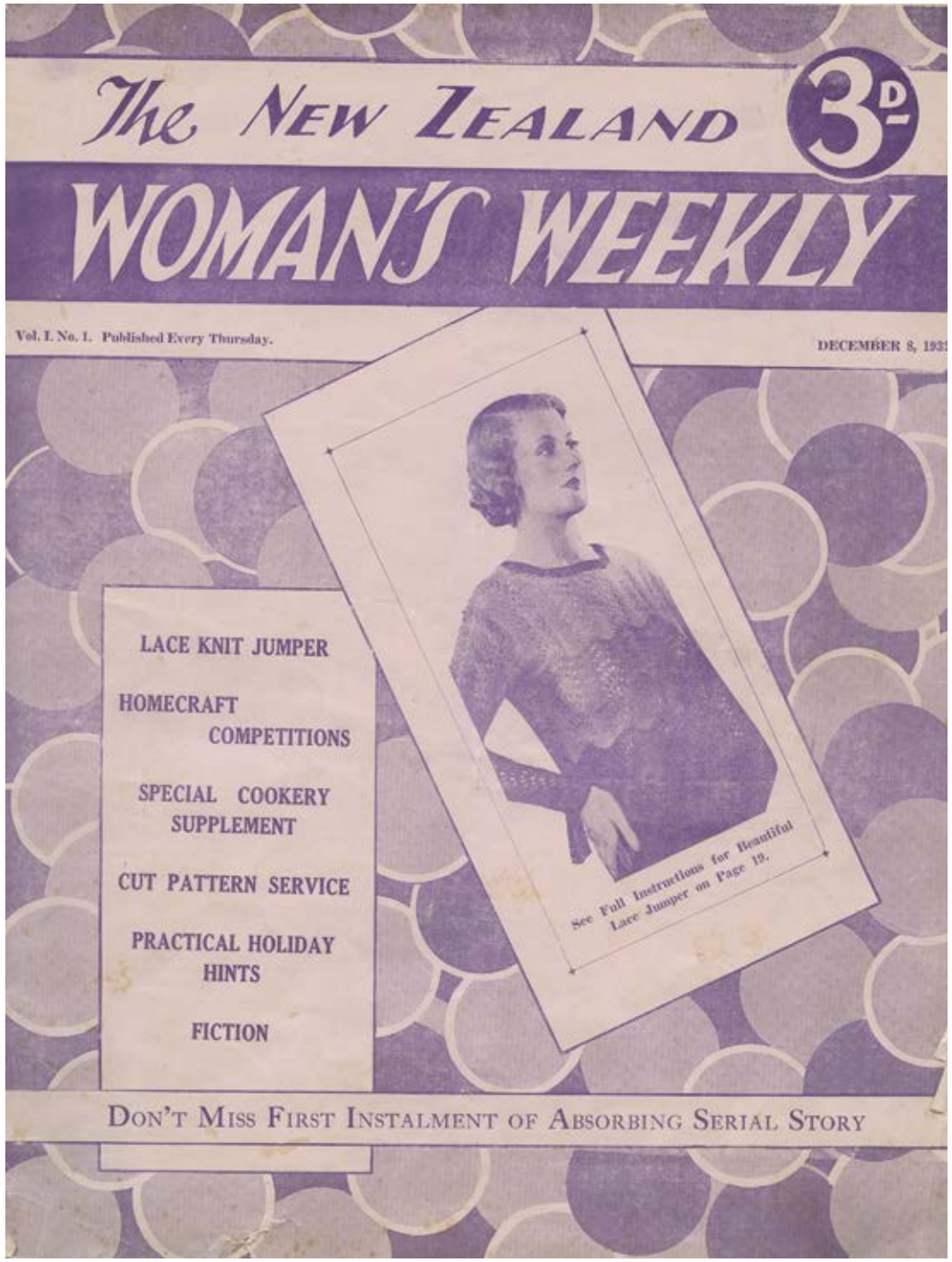
Poor cousin who came to stay: The well-established Mirror and the depression-era launch of the New Zealand Woman's Weekly

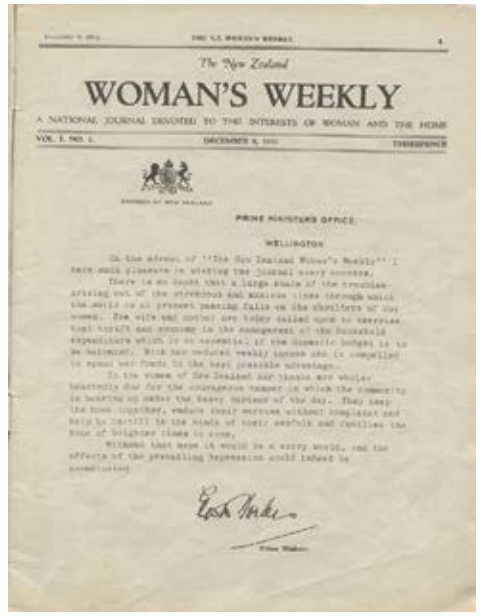
Gavin Ellis

Keywords # New Zealand Woman's Weekly # the Mirror # women's magazine market # depression-era magazines # feminine identity

This article places the *New Zealand Woman's Weekly* magazine within the processes of change that were occurring in the years following the First World War when perceptions of the roles of women were changing and domestic consumerism was evolving. It contrasts the first issue of the magazine, launched on 8 December 1932, with that month's edition of New Zealand's largest selling home journal, the *Mirror*, to illustrate how its founders had identified a gap in the depression-era market in spite of their meagre resources.

A frisson of fear must have passed through the owners of the New

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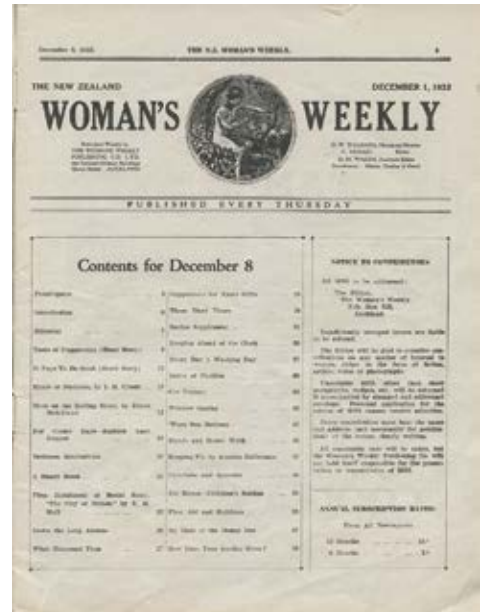
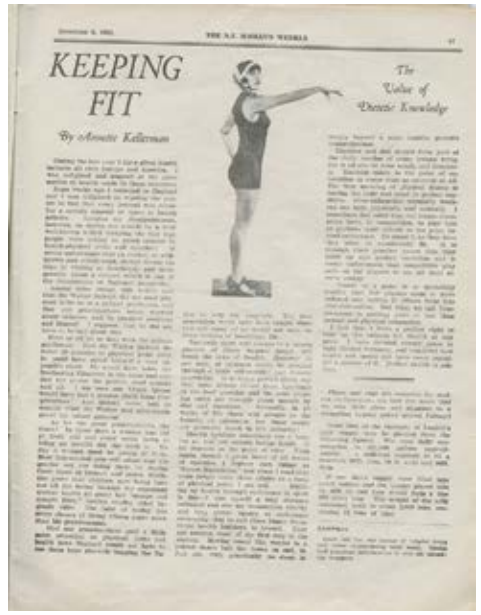
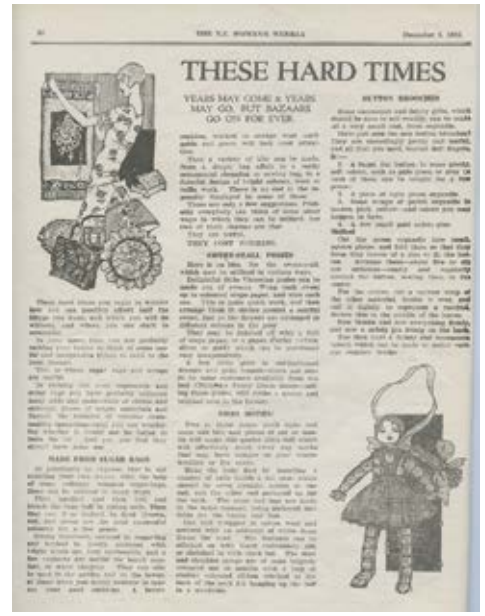
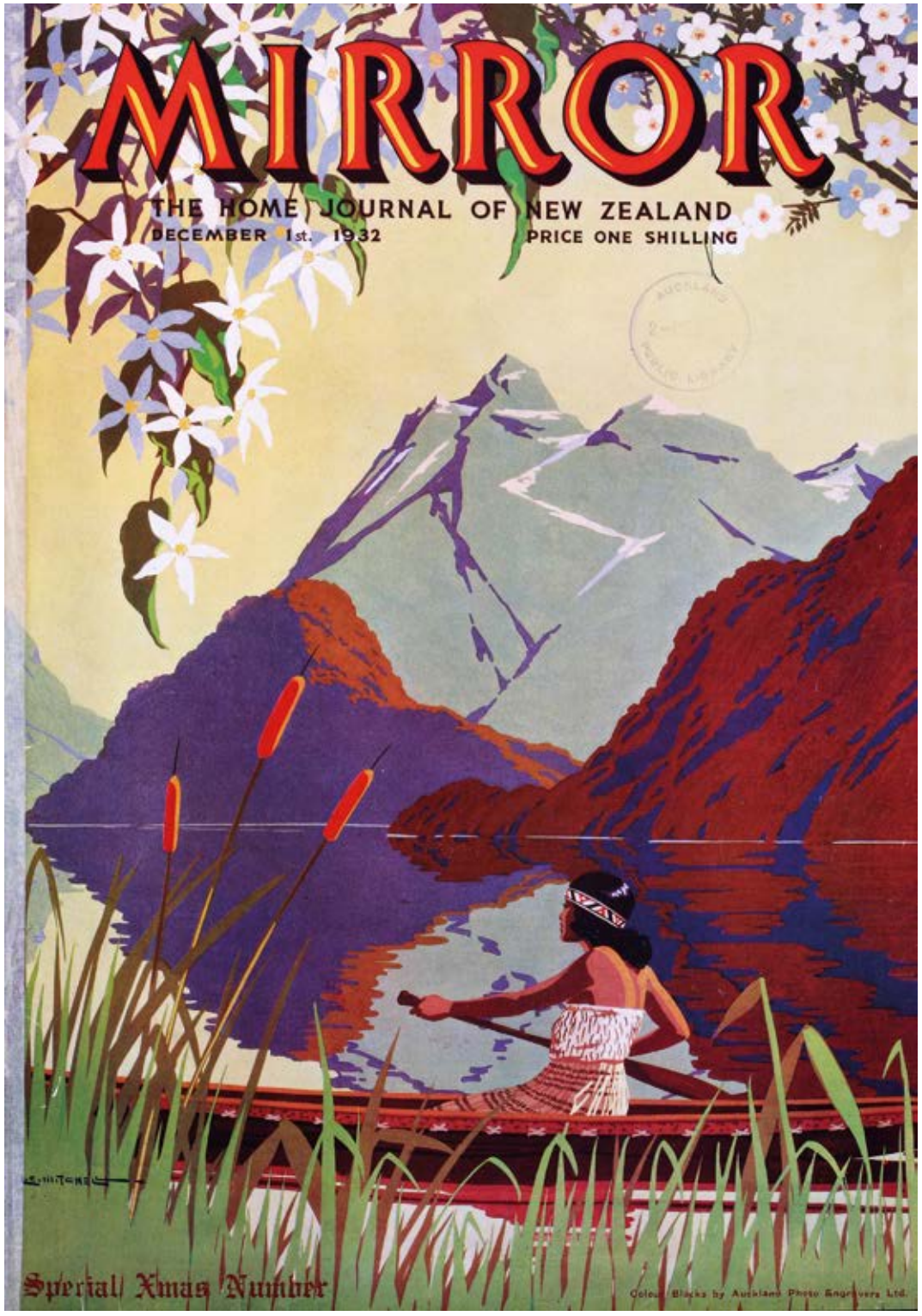

THE NEW ZEALAND
WOMAN'S WEEKLY
DECEMBER 1, 1932
PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY
Contents for December 8

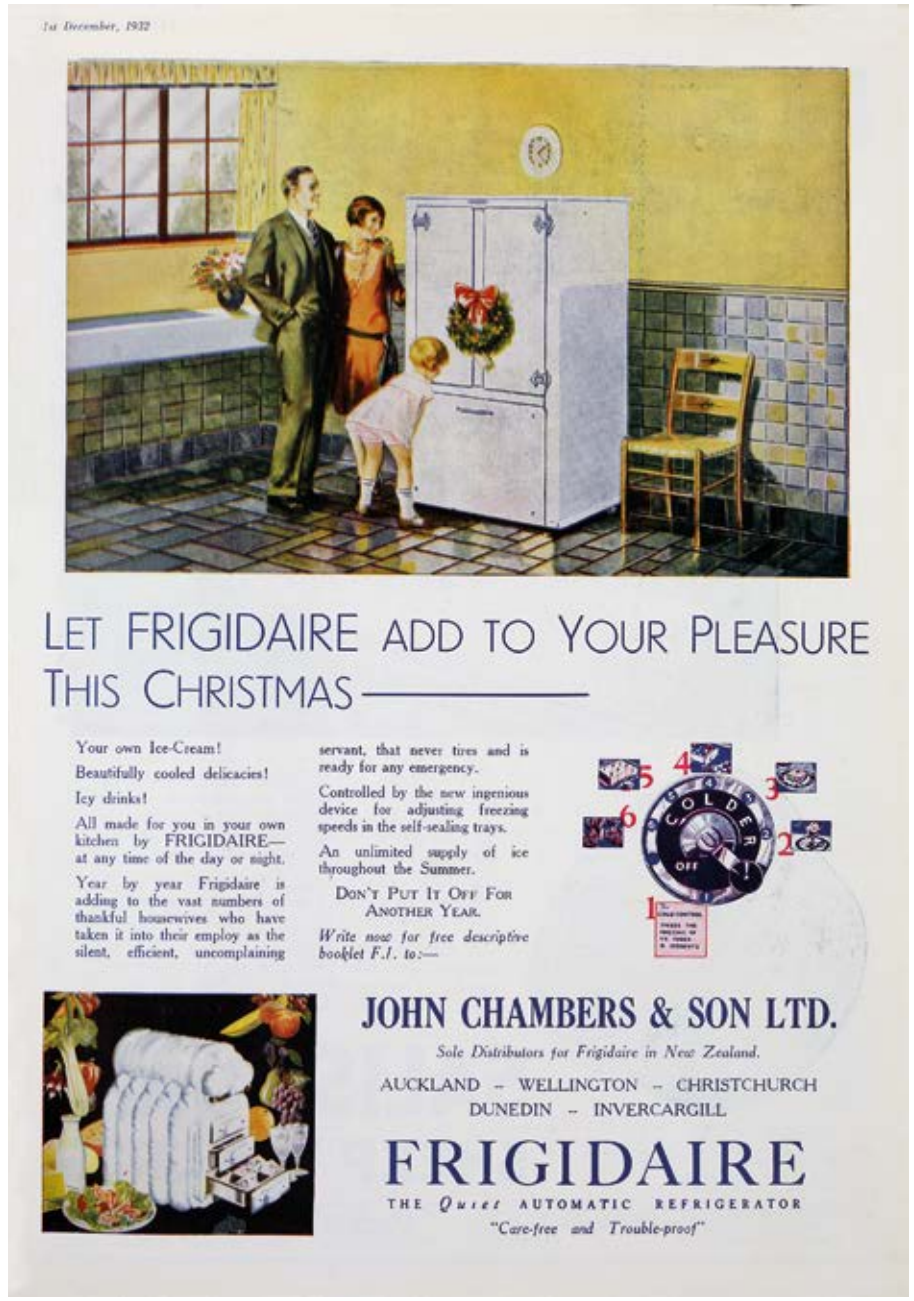

KEEPING FIT
The Value of Dietetic Knowledge
By Annette Kellerman


THESE HARD TIMES
YEARS MAY COME & YEARS MAY GO, BUT BAZAARS GO ON FOR EVER.

New Zealand Woman's Weekly

The Woman's Weekly first appeared in 1932 but became synonymous with its editor, Jean Wishart, who led the magazine from 1952 to 1985. Circulation peaked at 250,000 in 1983 although the issue covering the marriage of Prince Charles and Diana Spencer was a sell-out at 300,000 copies. In 1988 the magazine, along with the *New Zealand Listener,* was sold by New Zealand News (publisher of the *Auckland Star*) to Wilson & Horton (publisher of the *New Zealand Herald*). In 2014, it became part of the stable of magazines published in New Zealand by the German-owned Bauer Group. The magazine has an emphasis on celebrity news and in March 2017 had an audited circulation slightly below 50,000 copies.





The Mirror

The Mirror began life in 1922 as *The Ladies' Mirror: The Fashionable Ladies' Journal of New Zealand*. Although successful, a year later it was acquired by one of the original investors and an Auckland entrepreneur, Henry Kelliher. Kelliher assumed the editorship in 1930, the same year he acquired an interest in the brewery that launched his career as one of the country's 'beer barons'. The magazine was aimed at an affluent middleclass reader. At its peak, it had a circulation of about 25,000 copies. It was published until 1963 when it closed during the rebuilding of its printing works and – in the face of stiff competition – did not reappear.

Zealand Woman's Weekly in the first week of December 1932. The Woman's Weekly (NZWW) was the brainchild of Otto Williams, a former editor of the Mirror (New Zealand's top-selling home journal), and a freelance writer named Audrey Argall, who ran a nursing home in Paeroa. They had a shoestring budget and operated from a single room in the Colonial Mutual Life Building in Auckland's Queen Street.[1]

They were taking a significant risk. The Great Depression was at its height. Their publication would be the first weekly magazine to target the country's female population. And they could not match the aesthetics and production values of the monthly *Mirror*, which had a strong hold on the market. It was a market that internationally was in a state of change as the role of women as consumers and domestic decision-makers became increasingly evident.

Less than two months before the launch of the *NZWW,* one of Britain's largest magazine publishers, George Newnes Ltd launched the weekly *Woman's Own* as "the home paper that realises that any girl worth her salt wants to be the best housewife ever – and then some". It became an immediate success. Cynthia White's study of women's magazines from 1693 to 1968 noted that the arrival of such magazines marked the reorientation of women's journalism away from the servant-keeping leisured classes and toward the middle ranks and, in the case of *Woman's Own,* to the lower middle ranks serving readers with little or no outside help and a need for advice on both personal and practical matters.[2]

Six months after the *NZWW* made its appearance, Frank Packer launched the *Australian Women's Weekly* in Sydney as a magazine to occupy idle time on his presses. It took a different approach, treating women's issues as news rather than merely as matters of domestic routine.[3]

The year 1932 was, according to John Mulgan, when the Great Depression settled on the New Zealand people 'like a new and unwanted stranger, a grey and ghastly visitor to the house'.[4] The number of registered unemployed had reached 78,000 and in seven months the Auckland City Mission provided 37,000 beds and 102,800 meals.[5] Tony Simpson in *The Sugarbag Years* says this "ill-defined monster" cast a long shadow. It was "a blight on everything it touched".[6] A report in the *Auckland Star* on the day the *Weekly* was launched spoke of social workers seeing "semi-starvation, often amid illness, obviously due to malnutrition".[7] 'Registered unemployed' was a misleading term. Keith Rankin estimates that by 1933 there were 240,000 fully or partially unemployed people in the New Zealand workforce. Furthermore, there were 240,000 people with incomes above zero, but less than £1 per week, at a time when an adequate living wage was in excess of £4 per week.[8]

There were few safety nets. Matthew Wright notes that New Zealand's history to this point had been one of minimal welfarism. He believes this was due, in part, to a 'green fields' colonial attitude that determined that even Britain's inadequate social support systems were unnecessary here.[4] As a result, when the effects of the depression bit deep, there was an affirmation of traditional values of individualism and community cohesion[9] – those in adversity had to make the best of things. It was, nonetheless a period of rising dissent that had its most obvious expression in street riots in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch.[10] In 1935 a Labour government, intent on a broad agenda of reform, was elected in a landslide.

However, the Great Depression was not an unmitigated disaster for all New Zealanders. Tom Brooking, with a degree of understatement, describes it as "an uneven experience". Despite chronically high unemployment, the demand for consumer goods continued unabated and sales of electric stoves and electric water heating – indicators of the modernisation that was growing in the interwar years – continued to rise.[11] Michael King has noted that there were some whose occupation or private income meant they scarcely noticed its passage.[12] Keith Sinclair recorded that some relief gangs were put to work making golf courses[13] and this author's own father earned more than his foundry worker father by caddying on an Auckland golf course during the depression. Rankin estimates that in 1933 there were almost 67,000 men whose income fell into the 'high' category of more than £260 a year.[7]

British colonisation of New Zealand may not have brought with it the rigid British class system but the egalitarianism celebrated in the young country was as much myth as reality. There were stratifications that are often overlooked in scholarship that concentrates on the rising power and affluence of the working class. In fact, Nolan notes that underclasses – economic, female and Māori, "have long been part of the New Zealand which slipped through the nets of arbitration, welfare and employment systems".[14] The distinction was already evident in the pages of *The Weekly News*, whose pictorial supplements in 1932 juxtaposed coverage of the metropolitan riots and unemployment relief camps with the pictures of fashionable ladies attending the Wellington Racing Club carnival at Trentham and a fashion shoot of beach pyjamas, the 'popular vogue at the seaside'.[15] As the *New*

Zealand Woman's Weekly joined *The Weekly News* and the *Mirror* on the newsstands, it was easy to identify the destitute, the poor working class, the middle class and the wealthy in 'egalitarian' New Zealand.

Internationally, magazine publishers came to recognise two distinct markets: The affluent who did not wish to be reminded of the afflictions of the have-nots, and those determined to make the best of what little they had. In Britain, George Newnes Ltd published *Country Life* for the former and *Women's Own* for the latter. In Germany, *Die Dame* (The Lady) commanded the fashionable end the market while *Das Blatt der Hausfrau* (Housewife's Journal) concentrated on practical domesticity.

On 8 December, 1932, the *NZWW* carried advertisements for Clever Mary (the enemy of grease) and Creamoata rolled oats while the *Mirror* suggested a Frigidaire refrigerator for Christmas or a new Austin Ten-Four family car. There was little doubt about where they sat or that the New Zealand market was a reflection of developments further afield. Both were part of a growing ideology of domestically-oriented consumerism that encouraged women of all social classes to see the home in a new professional light that was closely tied to purchaser influence and decision-making.[16] Each magazine, however, had a clear perception of the limits of its readers' purchasing power. Recognition of women as skilled managers of their homes also was part of a wider feminist movement and such magazines – to varying degrees – acknowledged that a woman's destiny may not be only matrimonial and parental.

Much women's magazine scholarship concentrates on feminist studies, arguing that women's magazines are manipulative and contribute to the media's reinforcement of gender differences and inequalities. Some scholars see the apparent 'helpfulness' of women's magazines as superficial and, in fact, reinforcing the oppressed status of women. The harmful construction of 'femininity' in such magazines has been a focus of research from Betty Friedan's seminal book *The Feminine Mystique* onward. Socio-cultural research on body image has placed women's magazines squarely in the frame– even if the sum of findings on that particular subject points to complexity rather than definitive cause and effect.[17]

Ethnographic studies by Joke Hermes suggest women's magazines need to be seen within the context of 'everyday talk' which is non-reflective, pragmatic and used to explain or justify. She cautions against confusing the media critic with the ordinary reader.[18] Hermes believes media use is 'a fleeting, transient experience that doesn't leave much trace in how everyday practices are structured'. This view of magazine readership is supported by Todd Gitlin who describes magazines as 'a limited liability experience' that provided 'low-risk access to a bountiful world'.[19]

Nonetheless, Anna Gough-Yates makes a persuasive argument that analysis of magazines at the latter part of the 20th century shows how cultural discourses around particular forms of feminine identity were a crucial factor in determining their form.[20] It is a conclusion that can equally be drawn from a study of the impact of modernity on the status and aspirations of women in the interwar years.[21] Historiographic studies – tracing the development of women's magazines through this period of social and economic change including the rise of consumerism, the women's movement and feminism, changing patterns of media consumption and so on – testify to women's magazines reflecting socio-cultural change as much as the profound effect that the Great Depression had on their stratification and reorientation.

Women's magazines in the 1930s were a sometimes-incongruous amalgam. More than 80 years later, our task of analysing and understanding them is made easier if we keep an historical frame of reference.[22] Rather than applying a 21st century lens, if we place ourselves in that period of socio-economic turmoil that lasted from the end of one world war to the start of the next, we are better able to explain some of these incongruities and use these two publications to illustrate how they were manifested.

This was a transitional age in which the traditional perceptions of the role of women were being contested by a more enlightened and emancipated view of womanhood that challenged an overtly and largely uncontested patriarchal society. On the one hand, women's magazines of the time championed the very domesticity that kept women in the home while, at the same time, offering tantalizing insights into the possibilities that awaited those who broke the chains. For those whose destiny (chosen or otherwise) was to be a homemaker, the magazines offered a different form of escape. They took their readers to the fashion salons of Paris and transported them into the fictional world of short stories and serials.

Social status, on the other hand, was only too well delineated by the two magazines. The first issue of the NZWW looked like the affluent Mirror's poor cousin even though the weekly's cover price of 3d aggregated to the monthly's one shilling. Its purple monochrome cover with a crudely clear-cut image of a woman modelling a lace

jumper ("full instructions on page 19") was accompanied by a series of nondescript cover lines and a strap-line telling potential readers "don't miss first instalment of absorbing serial story" without giving the slightest hint of its subject. It was a no-nonsense, practical cover that would appeal to the woman who had to watch her pennies. In stark contrast, the cover of the Mirror was a striking colour picture of a mountain peak with a young Māori girl paddling a canoe in the foreground. It was the work of Leonard Cornwall Mitchell (1901-1971), one of the period's most accomplished poster painters. His work for the Tourist Department produced some of New Zealand's most memorable scenic posters and the iconic imagery that advertised the New Zealand Centennial Exhibition in Wellington in 1939.[23] This cover spoke of an untroubled land.

The *Weekly's* title page carried a well-wishing letter from the Prime Minister, George Forbes, that acknowledged "a large share of the troubles arising out of the strenuous and anxious times through which the world is presently passing falls on the shoulders of our women". An unsigned introduction (most likely penned by co-owner Otto Williams) made no mention of the depressed state of the economy and took an upbeat approach that would "preach the gospel of usefulness, cheerfulness and happiness". Nor did Audrey Argall's editorial introduction acknowledge dark days, although her description of future content suggests she was aware that many of her readers would expect considerable value for what the introduction described as "the trifling sum of threepence".

The editorial in the *Mirror,* on the other hand, was a serious doctrinaire essay on the folly of unrestrained monetary credit. The magazine's editor (and owner) was Henry Kelliher, later to become a knight and New Zealand's archetypal beer baron as chairman of Dominion Breweries. Kelliher was a champion of Douglas Social Credit – which gained some currency in the 1920s and 1930s – and used the *Mirror* to promote his views on monetary reform.[24] He had strong ideas about how New Zealand could extricate itself from The Slump and his editorial warned that failure to heed his words would result in "a lowering of the standard of living and physical and moral degradation," to say nothing of civil unrest.

The pages of both magazines reveal vastly different production qualities. The *Mirror* was lavishly illustrated with full-page half-tone photographic images, photographic spreads and a colour supplement. The *NZWW* appeared to have been produced on a tired monochrome sheet-fed press that left variable type impressions on the page.

Photographs were limited to head-and-shoulder portraits and the majority of illustrations were line drawings and stock typographical decorations. While the *Mirror's* accomplished design and lavish illustration left a graphic impression, the *Weekly* had a strong but unimaginative reliance on the printed word.

The new magazine did, however, have a strongly feminine look that stood in marked contrast to the *Mirror's* passing regard for its female readership. Kelliher played little part in the production of the magazine. That was left to his deputy, Oliver Gillespie, a decorated First World War officer, who produced a magazine that had more in common with *The Weekly News* or *New Zealand Free Lance* than with contemporary women's magazines. The December issue, for example, contained illustrated articles on the importance of shipping services, the strange behaviour of seabirds, and Winston Churchill's assessment of the effects of Prohibition in the United States (he was not a supporter).

There were common elements in both magazines, notably in their approach to fiction. They contained almost equal amounts of fiction (14 pages in the *NZWW* and 15 pages in the *Mirror*) although the newcomer set a new standard with the content it acquired. Its romantic short story offerings included work by Everett R. Castle (a widely-syndicated writer) and Ivor Brown (later editor of London's *Observer*). It contained a mystery story by A.J. Alan, the pseudonym of Leslie Harrison Lambert, a well-known BBC broadcaster and short story writer who was also a British intelligence officer and later a senior codebreaker at Bletchley Park in the Second World War. However, the fiction coup for the *Weekly* was that "first instalment of absorbing serial story" announced on the cover. It was 'The City of Stones', a desert romance by E.M. Hull who was the author of *The Sheikh*. That novel had been adapted into a film starring Rudolph Valentino and, along with a sequel, had enjoyed "extraordinary showings" throughout New Zealand in the 1920s.[25] The centre-piece serial in the *Mirror* was 'Evensong' about the life of an opera singer. Its author was Beverly Nichols, an eclectic writer at the beginning of his career. He had been Dame Nellie Melba's private secretary and, although it was not known at the time, the story may have been based on aspects of her life.

The first *Weekly* contained no locally-written fiction although it did publish an article on women's right to choose a business career[26] by Auckland journalist Isabel M. Cluett (Isobel Maud Peacocke) who contributed fiction and non-fiction to magazines including the *Mirror.* Distinctive New Zealand fiction was beginning to emerge from the pens of writers such as Frank Sargeson and Robin Hyde. The *Mirror* published

the work of New Zealand writers but tended to select material that reflected the middle-class values of its audience and few of these writers rose to prominence.[27] The *Weekly's* weak financial position in its formative stage saw it lean more toward cheaper overseas syndication, although it later published material by New Zealand authors such as Hyde. While pushing boundaries, the tone of these contributions was moderate. More radical contributions by women appeared in *Working Woman* and later in the short-lived *Woman Today* – edited by Elsie Freeman (Locke) and with contributions from writers such as Robyn Hyde and Jessie Mackay. Its three-year life abruptly ended with the outbreak of the Second World War.

Overall, the fiction in both magazines had a distinctly English tone that also permeated other parts of the magazines. In the case of the *Mirror,* the tone reinforced its middle-class appeal which was also supplemented by social pages with a marked Vice-Regal element and pages of photographic studio portraits of the well-to-do and their children. Its Christmas cooking pages assumed the reader could pay for turkey, goose, "boar's head", rum punch and Christmas pudding with brandy sauce. The NZWW, in contrast, told its readers that Christmas would be incomplete without a cake "however plain or fancy the cake might be" although it, too, may have been aiming a little high in suggesting that "the average housewife keeps the cake and biscuit tins always well stocked". Generally speaking, the *Weekly's* centre pages cooking section ("easily detached and kept by readers for future reference") were based on low-cost ingredients.

The contrast between fashion coverage in the respective magazines was even more marked. While the *NZWW* emphasis was on making clothes and making-do, the *Mirror* impressed its readers with Linda Anivitti's fashion despatch from Paris, in which she casually let drop that the previous week she had gone to the Riviera to see the latest in holiday fashions. The *Weekly's* readers made do with line drawings of frocks and children's clothing but the *Mirror* enhanced its notes on the "chic Parisienne" with fashion photographs.

The period between the wars saw a rising interest in female fitness, either as an adjunct to the young, fashionable image first symbolised by 'the flapper' of 'the roaring twenties' or as part of a realisation by women of their 'inner selves'.[28] The December issue of the *Mirror* featured fitness as an aid to beauty while the *NZWW* emphasised the wellbeing benefits of keeping fit. The weekly's editor made a clever choice of writer. Australian Annette Kellerman was not only internationally-known as a lecturer and writer on women's fitness but

was also a swimming star and Hollywood actress who had appeared in the movie *Venus of the South Seas,* a popular US-New Zealand co-production shot in Nelson in 1924.[29]

Although the *Mirror* contained articles on 'homemaking'– and in spite of its claim to be "the home journal of New Zealand" – the emphasis was elsewhere. Only 14 of its 90 pages were devoted to home and family and generally supposed a level of affluence. By contrast, after providing women with a figurative escape from the realities of the depression, the second half of the first issue of the *NZWW* was devoted to helping women run their households and care for their children. Twenty of its pages covered aspects of life in households with tightened belts, beginning with 'These Hard Times' and ideas for using old sugar bags (more creatively than was the case in Tony Simpson's *The Sugar Bag Years,* where they were characterised as a carry-all and raincoat for the unemployed).

The times were indeed hard and no less so than for the *Weekly* itself. Its first issue of 66 pages carried the equivalent of only 11 pages of advertising compared to 33 pages in the *Mirror's* 90-page edition – a ratio of 16.6 per cent advertising against 36.6 per cent in the *Mirror.* By its fourth week, the *NZWW* carried the equivalent of 14 pages of advertising but the size of the magazine had been reduced to 54 pages. After three months, the Woman's Weekly Publishing Company ran out of money and Williams sold the title to Ellen Melville, an Auckland lawyer and women's rights activist. A further year, and two more owners later, it was sold to the proprietors of the *Auckland Star.* Nevertheless the poor cousin outlasted the *Mirror,* which closed in 1963, and in 1977 became the largest selling women's magazine per head of population in the world.[30]

The December 1932 editions of the *NZWW* and *The Mirror* provide clear illustrations of the socio-economic stratification of consumer magazines that was becoming apparent in the interwar years. Cheap, mass circulation weekly magazines for less-affluent female readers filled a market gap and did not challenge the position of monthly periodicals aimed at the affluent middle class. The *NZWW* stated in its first issue that it was to 'cater for all of the people, irrespective of class, creed, age, or social standing' but each successive page points to that market gap. Even the titles suggested market differentiation. There was the *Woman's Weekly* but *The Mirror* was *The Ladies' Mirror* long after its title was foreshortened.

These issues also support cultural production theories

of identity and the methods employed by magazines to shape relationships with their readers for both commercial and cultural reasons. The *NZWW*, for example, acknowledged attempts by the less-affluent woman to emerge from the restrictive stereotypes of domesticity but seamlessly allowed this to co-exist with the pragmatic demands of domestic life in the Great Depression. Audrey Argall was a working woman who saw no inconsistencies between stories on career aspiration and home management that required intelligence and skill. Even in its first edition the magazine signalled that it understood its readers at an almost personal level. *The Mirror*, on the other hands, equated the gender of its readership with status and wealth. Henry Kelliher was a businessman on the rise and his deputy a journalist of the old school. They and their magazine had the New Zealand Establishment writ large: the relationship with the reader was one of comfort and security, perhaps even cosy detachment from harsh realities.

Magazines mirror culture, they do not create it.[31] They have provided rich sources for research on social and cultural change. However, no single issue of a women's magazine can provide an accurate picture of social reality. Perhaps no single women's magazine can do so. The purpose of the comparison presented here has been to demonstrate that the social, cultural and commercial distinctions which emerged in the New Zealand magazine market were obvious from the first issue of the *Woman's Weekly*. Alongside *The Mirror,* its cover cried poor for a reason that went well beyond the meagre capital of its founders.

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25 *Evening Post*, 5 April 1922, P. 3.
26 The *Mirror's* recognition of the career woman was not by-lined (yet pock-marked by personal pronouns) article on page 53 about the Wellington-based owner of a group of fashion salons, Mary Garden.
27 The Mirror regularly carried a page of answers to correspondents who had submitted manuscripts. The responses ranged from encouragement to mercy killing. Examples from the December issue: Knitting (IED, Masterton): Distinct improvement. Carry on; My Garden (MM, Foxton): We advise you to study the technique of the art of writing before producing further efforts; My Ships of Simple Secrets (TT, Morrinsville): Wrecked on the rocks of ruthless re-editing. In 1933, Frank Sargeson received the following rejection of a short story: 'Very fair. Marred by an overdose of up-to-date slang. Make your dialogue more convincing'. In a 1996 doctoral thesis "New Zealand English Language Periodicals of Literary Interest Active 1920s-1960s", Stephen Hamilton noted that the Mirror printed work by an enormous number of New Zealand's amateur and serious poets and short story writers but the popular nature of most of the material published has excluded many of its authors from inclusion in the generally accepted canon of New Zealand literature.
28 Charlotte Macdonald, "Body and Self: Learning to be modern in 1920s-1930s Britain", in *Women's History Review*, 22:2 2013, pp. 267-279.
29 *Venus of the South Seas* featured Kellerman, who also wrote the script, as a pearl diver. Parts of the movie were filmed underwater and one reel was shot in Prisma Color. The movie was one of the last shot using the process, which was overtaken by Technocolor [IMDb]. Kellerman had earlier gained a certain notoriety by becoming the first major actress to appear nude on film (*A Daughter of the Gods,* 1916)
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Marti Friedlander
(1928 – 2016)

A Profile Commentary by
Linda Yang

This profile celebrates the life and work of Marti Friedlander, particularly her photographs of New Zealand subjects.
A selection of more recent photographs is contextualised within her overall body of work, tracing thematic connections with some of her photographs from the 1960's and 70's.

Marti Friedlander was always curious, and always looking. Her camera was the medium through which she explored her surroundings, took the temperature of the people around her, and expressed herself. We are very fortunate that for most of her life, New Zealand and New Zealanders were the subjects of her photographs, and through her lens we may reflect on our shared history with fresh eyes.

Marti moved from London to New Zealand with her expat husband Gerrard in 1958. The sudden shift from her vibrant, independent London life to a quiet existence in semi-rural Henderson was a shock, and Marti often discussed how those first three years in New Zealand were the most difficult and isolating time of her life.[1] The camera became her coping mechanism, to help make sense of this peculiar world that she found herself in.

Previously, photography was not a particularly personal pursuit for Marti, but a professional one. At the age of fourteen, she won a trade scholarship to the Bloomsbury Technical School for Women, where she studied photography as a means of learning a trade to support herself (1940's, Figure 1). She went on to work as an assistant

Figure 1. Marti spotting prints, 1940's.

Figure 2. Scratching Fence, 1967

for professional photographers Douglas Glass and Gordon Crocker, who shared a studio in Kensington.[2] Crocker, in particular, nurtured Marti's talent, and recognised her aptitude for printing and spotting. Marti continued to enjoy processing her photographs in the darkroom, often discovering unseen gems as she developed them.

Marti's adventurous spirit fuelled her life and work. She travelled the length and breadth of New Zealand both on professional assignments and personal holidays, with camera in hand. Small moments became eloquent statements, such as *Scratching Fence* (1967, Figure 2). She always thought it a witty image, and "so New Zealand".[3] A wire fence suggests the DIY industriousness of farmers, and tufts of sheep wool dot the fence caught by the barbed wire. A boundary that marks the division of land transforms into something rather friendlier, conjuring up sheep scratching themselves with relief against the fence from both sides.

Similarly, a seemingly straight-forward photograph of a young girl holding a doll becomes more complex upon further inspection (2012, Figure 3). The girl's smile betrays a touch of wariness, as if she is

unsure of the situation. She clutches an unsettlingly realistic newborn doll, and is not aware that her doll's arm is impossibly twisted upwards. This is not a sentimental image of youthful play and happiness, but an accurately nuanced visualisation of the emotions that govern childhood: uncertainty, innocence and insecurity.

Marti's talent for revealing something remarkable about an ordinary moment in an ordinary day is also demonstrated by a photograph of Ponsonby Road in 1969 (Figure 4). Two men relax outside a pub, creating an unintentionally elegant tableau between their bodies and the windows behind them. Marti continued to show changing cross-sections of society, spotting fleeting moments even from a moving car. The interplay of reflections in the photograph *Foreign X-Change* (2012, Figure 5), for instance, creates a multi-faceted image, appropriately for a multi-cultural moment. The two women seem almost uncannily signposted: one stands directly under 'X-Change', while 'Civic' is mirrored perfectly over the walking woman. There is an architectural duality too, with the blank modernity of the bank's wall juxtaposed against the façade of the Civic theatre opposite.

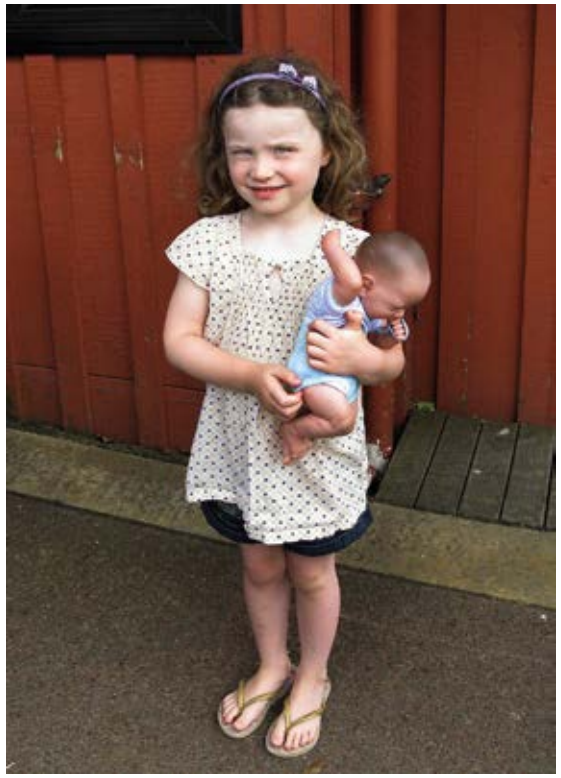
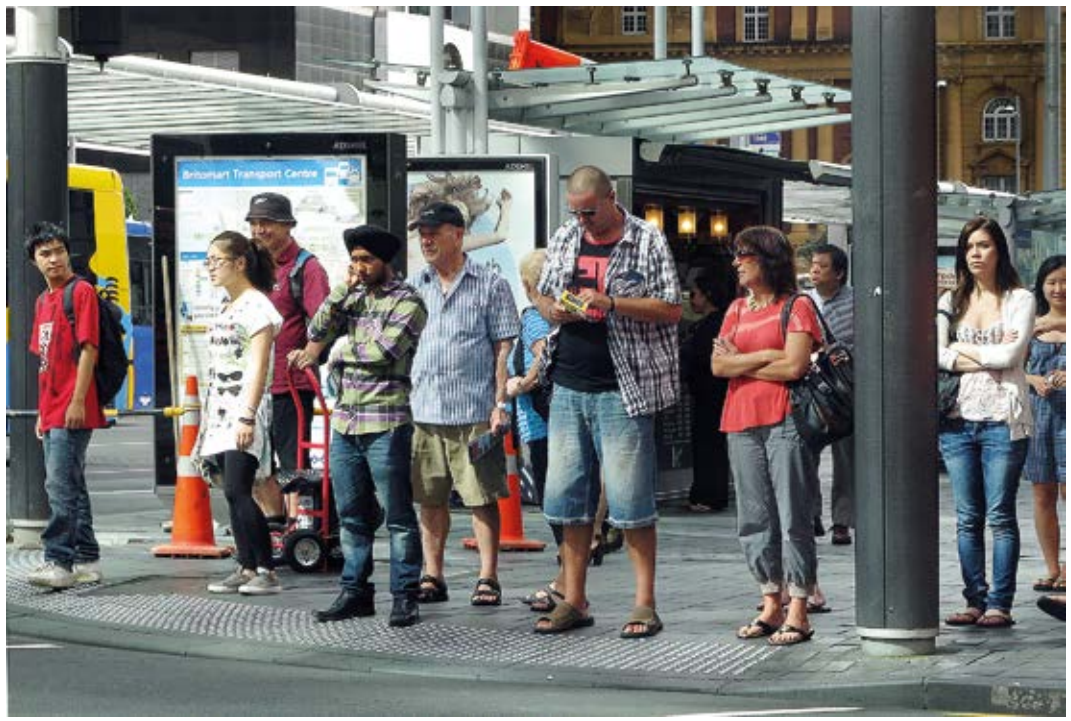


Figure 3. Girl with doll, Waiheke, 2012

Figure 4. Ponsonby Road, 1969.

Figure 5. Foreign X-Change, Queen Street, 2012



Above: Figure 6. Britomart, 2013

Left: Figure 7. Frontispiece, street corner meeting,1969

Following page: Figure 8. Auckland parking warden and woman in burqa, 2013

An immigrant herself, Marti was excited and encouraged by the growing diversity around her. Her photograph of pedestrians at Britomart acts, as she describes in her memoir, as "a mirror of a section of Auckland which will last forever."[4] A range of ages, cultures, emotions and lives co-exist in one shared moment (2013, Figure 6). The image recalls another photograph of many faces in a crowd: the frontispiece for *Larks in a Paradise: New Zealand Portraits* (1974, Figure 7). Here, we encounter another fascinating collection of people. Marti invites us to study each face, follow each gaze, and so invite an empathy with every person.

Even when the subjects' backs are turned to the camera, Marti creates compelling images of human interaction. Her photograph of a woman, wearing a burqa, and a parking warden is a powerful meditation on complex relationships (2013, Figure 8). Both figures are obscured by their clothing, becoming monolithic shapes that fill almost the entire frame. Their hidden faces lend an air of inscrutability to the conversation: is it antagonistic or amicable? Their proximity to each other and the camera make us witnesses of their exchange. We are uncomfortably close eavesdroppers.

Marti was always an avid supporter of artists. She wanted to picture them: "As I was travelling around the country, a priority was to seek out artists. It seemed to me that artists were struggling for recognition, and I resolved to photograph as many of them as I could."[5] Many of her artist portraits became iconic images, such as those of Rita Angus and Ralph Hotere. Friedlander's portraits are layered with echoes of character and encounter: not only revealing something about the person, but also the particular rapport between photographer and subject. Her portrait of Anna Miles and Sebastian Clarke is one such image (2013, Figure 9). The two gallerists look directly and openly into the camera, eroding any sense of distance between us. But this is a double image of encounter, since behind them are two photographs by Edith Amituanai (the second recipient of the Marti Friedlander Photographic Award, 2009). The portrait thus encapsulates a network of relationships: those between Edith and her subjects, between Edith and Marti, and between Marti, Anna and Sebastian.

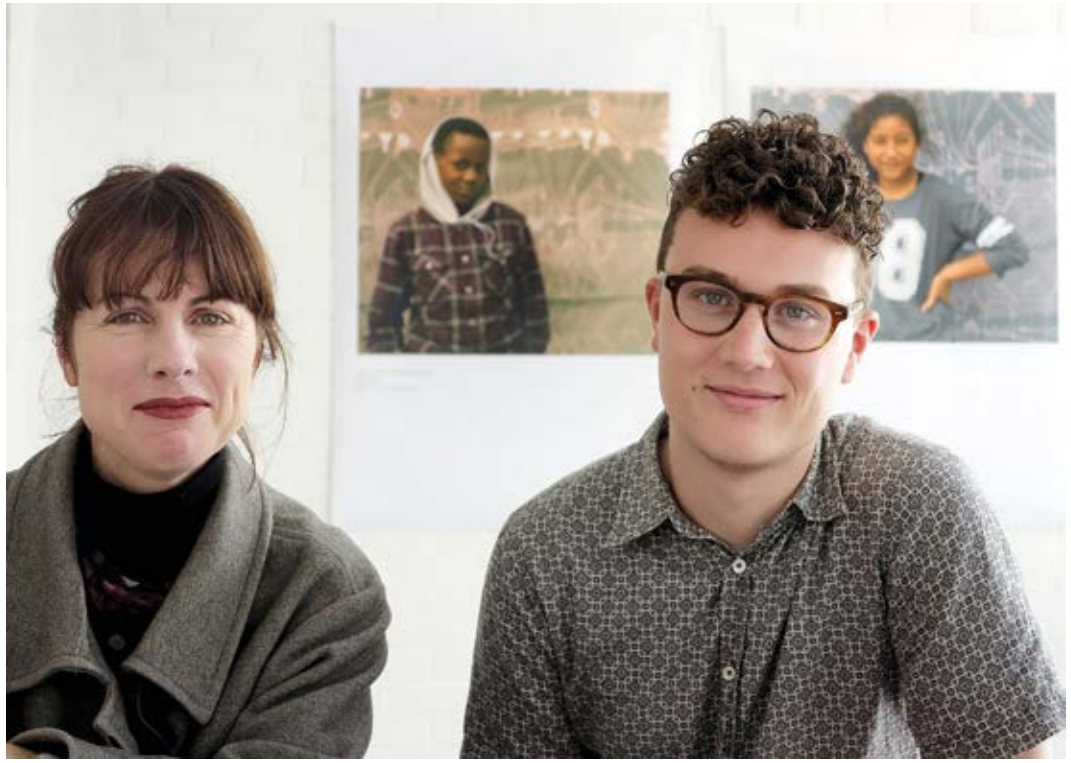


Figure 9. Anna Miles and Sebastian Clarke, 2013

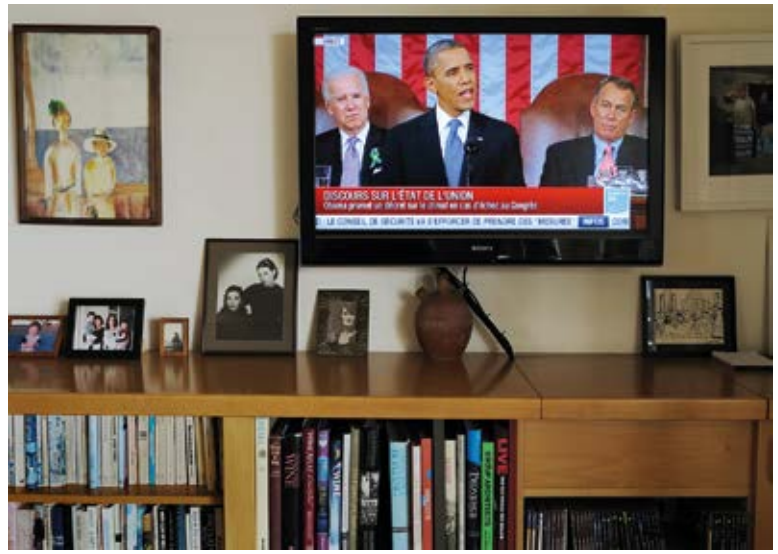


Figure 10. Living room, 2013

Marti's body of work is a rich celebration of life – not just her own, but all those that she touched and observed around her. A photograph of her living room wall offers a sampling of her own life, a kind of still life/self-portrait (2013, Figure 10). Treasured photographs of family and friends dot the bookshelf, including a portrait of Marti with her sister Anne by Gordon Crocker. A selection of books and music provide a glimpse into the Friedlanders' interests, and gifted works of art flank the television. The television itself, with Barack Obama's State of the Union speech frozen as a still image, collapses the space between past and present, art and life. Ultimately, Marti Friedlander's photographs document her life's journey, a journey that we will always be invited to share.

ENDNOTES

1 Leonard Bell, *Marti Friedlander* (Auckland, New Zealand: Auckland University Press, 2009), p.4.
2 Ibid, p.3.
3 Marti Friedlander, conversation with author, Auckland, September 2015.
4 Marti Friedlander with Hugo Manson, *Self-Portrait*, (Auckland, New Zealand: Auckland University Press, 2013), p.250.
5 Quoted in Kathlene Fogarty (ed.), 'A Silent Waltz: Photographs by Marti Friedlander', *Landfall*, 184, Spring 1999, p.257.

Prophet without honour: Margaret Butler and the status of sculpture in New Zealand, 1937–40

Mark Stocker

Keywords: # Margaret Butler # sculpture # art collecting
art criticism # National Art Gallery

This article consists of two parts, an introductory text, followed by long-forgotten primary source publications from 1937 to 1940 in the *Evening Post*, *Dominion* and *Art in New Zealand*. Predominantly letters to the editor, they address the reputation and profile of the sculptor Margaret Butler who had returned to her native New Zealand in 1934 after a prolonged stint overseas. Their authors include the literary figures Charles Marris and Alan Mulgan. They all note the critical acclaim she achieved in Paris and Vienna, and the merits of her sculpture. The writers also ask why native artistic talent appears to be neglected by institutions such as the newly-established National Art Gallery in favour of expensive overseas art, and press for the acquisition of more of Butler's works. No official response was recorded and in any case Butler's sculptural career had effectively ended by the time of the last such letter, dated November 1940.

Margaret Mary Butler (1883–1947) (Figure 1) is a unique sculptural presence in New Zealand. This applies in several respects: she was the first major sculptor born in this country, beating William Thomas Trethewey (1892–1956), a genuine but showier and shallower talent, by almost a decade.[1] During her ten-year sojourn in Europe (1923–34), her sculpture received warm praise from world leaders in the field, the Frenchmen Antoine Bourdelle (1861–1929) and Charles Despiau (1875–1946), culminating in an acclaimed solo exhibition at the Galerie Hébrard, Paris (1933). She took sculptural rendition of Māori to a new level of profundity in the works that followed her return to New Zealand, notably *La Nouvelle Zélande* (c. 1936–38) (Figure 2) and the *Māori Madonna* (c. 1937–39).[2] Butler's gender made her *ipso facto* part of the 'obstacle race' faced by women artists, but a still greater challenge was her disability, especially given the physical nature of sculpture. A serious childhood accident left her with lifelong lameness

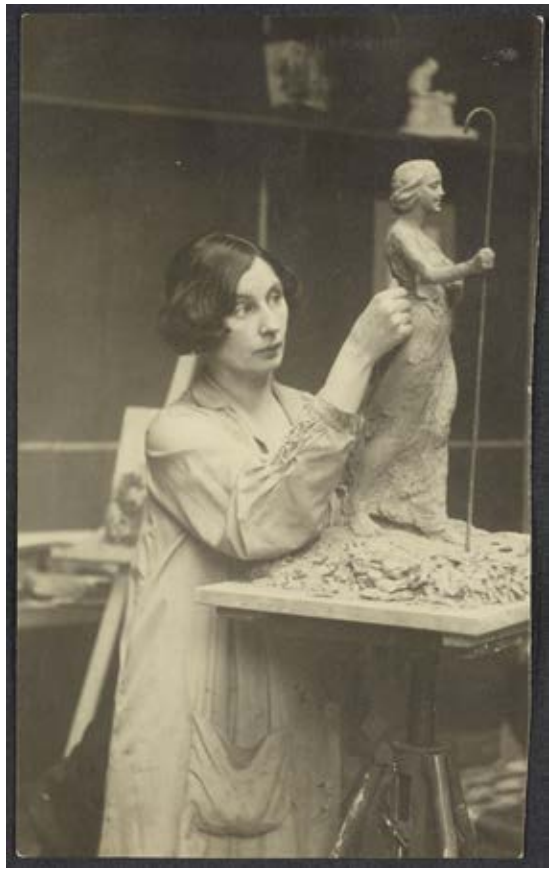


Figure 1: Unknown photographer, *Margaret Butler working on the Shepherdess*, 1930. Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

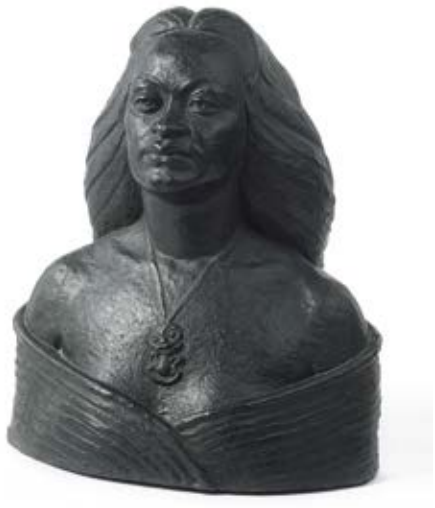


Figure 2: Margaret Butler, *La Nouvelle Zélande*, 1936-38, bronze, 550mm high. Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Gift of the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts, 1950.

and dependence on her devoted elder sister Mary (d. 1943). Butler's achievement, "a level of sculptural understanding unequalled by any of her New Zealand contemporaries," as Michael Dunn puts it, is thus all the more remarkable.[3]

Yet that feat was – and regrettably still remains – largely unheralded; Butler was "almost forgotten when she died."[4] In several publications I have attempted to rectify the condescension of posterity and have, moreover, examined her work stylistically. Here I will address the neglect that she faced in the period between her return to New Zealand (1934) and her effective cessation of sculpture by 1940.[5] Butler was not without powerful champions: Lord Bledisloe, the Governor-General, declared her 1934 solo exhibition at the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts "one of the great surprises of my sojourn." And it was a wonderful surprise: "New Zealand had produced a really great sculptor... whatever be her future destiny, our local lady Praxiteles will carry with her the warmest good wishes of her native country."[6]

Unfortunately for Butler, acclaim from the top did not translate into demand for her sculptures, whether as commissions or as sales of exhibits. Several factors explain this. In the art world at the time, sculpture did not enjoy high status as a medium. Butler's contemporary in Christchurch, Francis Shurrock (1887–1977), ruefully observed that "if you didn't do painting you weren't an artist."[7] The economic depression of the early 1930s was still severe at the time of Butler's return, restricting potential commissions. Furthermore, there was little support from the Roman Catholic Church, of which Butler was a devout communicant. Economic circumstances meant that the Church accorded 'good works' priority over artworks. Moreover, it lacked artistic sophistication. The late Michael King believed that "both the material and artistic poverty of the Catholic Church... accounts for the lack of interest in somebody as gifted as Margaret Butler. In the time I grew up [in the years immediately after Butler's death], anyone Catholic who knew anything about art despaired of the church's philistinism at the institutional level."[8]

Butler's admirers deplored the absence of support where it might have been reasonably expected from another institution – the National Art Gallery, established by Act of Parliament in 1930. It opened to the public in purpose-built accommodation, shared with the Dominion Museum, in 1936. However, for its first decade the gallery lacked a reliable source of acquisition funds. It was further hampered by the reluctance of the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts, effectively the gallery's controlling body, to acquire works by living New Zealand

artists. The National Art Gallery's Centennial Exhibition of International and New Zealand Art in 1939-40 was dominated by the former – 'International'. The gallery felt "its part in celebrating the cultural advancement of New Zealand... could best be carried out by bringing the public into direct contact with the works of eminent contemporary painters overseas as well as those of their own country."[9] 'Eminent' usually meant academically inclined artists; 'overseas' meant, almost invariably, Britain; and 'painters' implicitly excluded sculptors like Butler. Her admirers naturally stressed her overseas reputation in arguing her case, but the official response, other than the acquisition of one work, the bronze head *Berto* in 1939, was negligible. Art historians have tended to focus on the National Art Gallery's failure to acquire works by Colin McCahon and Toss Woollaston in later decades, but the neglect of native talent, Butler included, long precedes this.

A remarkable sequence of articles and letters to the editors of the *Evening Post* and *Dominion* in February and March 1937 championed Butler and amounted to something of a campaign on her behalf. A catalyst for this was the opening of the National Art Gallery almost exactly a year earlier, and a sense that expectations had not been met. Subsequent writings carrying a similar message were published in *Art in New Zealand* and the *Dominion* in 1939, and two further relevant items appeared in 1940. Although several were written under noms de plume, a particularly tantalising one being the impassioned 'B.W.S.', their authorship is sometimes traceable. The most prominent supporter was journalist and broadcaster Alan Mulgan (1881–1962);[10] 'Prester John' was Mulgan's friend, the prolific journalist, editor and anthologist, Charles Marris (1876–1947);[11] while Haitaitai resident Mark Levy was a member of the Civic League and the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts, and is sometimes featured in the social pages of Wellington newspapers. These writings form the core of this article; taken together, they constitute a powerful plea for Butler and for the wider recognition of sculpture. Despite this, there appears to have been no published answer from any National Art Gallery or New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts representative.

Butler's attitude towards all the well-meant publicity in any case seems equivocal. She was always the more private of the two sisters. Mary was far more outgoing, and enjoyed a certain reputation in Wellington society for her charming performances as a *diseuse* or dramatic monologist.[12] Such attention probably suited the more reserved Margaret, who was happy to see her sister shine in a complementary medium. In a letter to the poet Eileen Duggan

(1894–1972), who later became her close friend, Butler wrote: "The article about me & my work... was too kind... It made me feel very shy & fearful to disappoint. Limelight is necessary for actors but for such as me I think it is harmful. So you can see I am writing as much to scold as to thank."[13]

By the time of the final letter, November 1940, Butler's last significant recorded sculpture, a plaque commemorating the biologist Professor Harry Kirk, had just been unveiled. In early 1942, she and Mary moved to Rotorua for health reasons. Mary's unexpected death there in October 1943 was a severe blow to Margaret and is documented in several pathetic letters to Duggan, one of which states:

> To think about my work is an agony, there are so many things I wish to do, but pain & weakness, even if I had a suitable place to work in make it impossible ... I wanted to retire into a convent after Mary's death... but there was no place for me ... It would seem Our Lord had no need of my work & so I have been allowed to perish. So be it..."[14]

Margaret Butler died of cancer in December 1947. The wish, expressed by her admirers, that her sculpture should be acquired by the nation, did belatedly materialise. She bequeathed her studio contents to the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts which, after exhibiting 28 works in August 1950,[15] transferred them to the National Art Gallery, forerunner of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Here they remain in safekeeping, and at least two of them, *La Nouvelle Zélande* and *The Dreamer*, a meditative statuette figure, have been periodically exhibited.

ART IN NEW ZEALAND
[*Evening Post* (5 February 1937): 6]

(To the Editor.)

Sir, --Will the day ever dawn when New Zealand learns to accord to her outstanding sons and daughters the appreciation which is their due? An almost utter lack of recognition is meted out to the men and women of this country who have made valuable contributions to the world of art and letters. New Zealand-born artists who have created considerable stir at Home [the UK] and abroad have scarcely caused a ripple of interest

in the land of their birth. One perhaps expects a very young country to neglect the arts, but New Zealand is reaching years of discretion and the time is ripe for her to pay a little more attention to the aesthetic side of life, and take her just place among the cultured nations.

It comes as a surprise to see in the [National] Art Gallery that examples of Miss Margaret Butler's work are only lent. Surely it would be to our advantage to secure them for the city. At least, let us make certain of retaining the bronze "Rosalie," (Figure 3) for only an inspired hand could recapture the pathos of such sorrow and resignation.[16] Are there no public-spirited men and women here who would act as patrons of art? The Old World seems to have managed these things better. Much beautiful music and many lovely pictures would have been lost to us if patrons had failed to come forward to aid and encourage. It would be superfluous to point out the vital and civilising effect of beauty upon mankind, but it is indeed necessary to draw attention to the fact that creators of beauty here are not allowed to languish in obscurity, if not actual starvation.

It is difficult to understand why in New Zealand art galleries' preference is given to loans from overseas rather than to first class work by New Zealanders.

In the Wellington Gallery space has been afforded to pictures that would stand no chance in an English or Continental exhibition. When limited funds must be considered there might be some excuse for a young and growing gallery to include inferior work in a collection, if none other were to be had, but when talented local artists whose demands are not exorbitant are knocking at the door, this explanation is valueless…

MRS. E. CONNORS.

ART IN NEW ZEALAND
[*Evening Post* (9 February 1937): 8]

(To the Editor.)

Sir, --It is, I must confess, difficult to understand the neglect of Miss Margaret Butler's work referred to by your able correspondent… The only explanation I can suggest is that those responsible for our art exhibitions have never heard of her, or, if they have… they have never seen her work. This would also explain the absence of her productions from the works of art to be sent to London for exhibition at the Royal Institute Galleries, Piccadilly, during the Coronation celebrations in May.[17]

According to the published reports, this exhibition is being organised by the Council of the Royal British Colonial Society of Artists and is to be fully representative not of any particular school of art group, but of the contemporary art of the five Dominions. Now we learn that the New Zealand Committee of Selection are shipping 32 paintings, water-colours, and drawings, but apparently no sculpture. The invitation of the British Society was surely wide enough to embrace all kinds of

Figure 3: Margaret Butler, *Rosalie (Paris)*, 1930, plaster, 588mm high. Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Gift of the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts, 1950.

art, including sculpture. If Miss Butler's sculpture is absent from any collection of the work of local artists it is not representative of the best that New Zealand can produce.

I have visited most of the important art galleries of the world, and I know that Miss Butler's work will hold its own with that of great contemporary artists in the old world. I happened to be in Paris when there was an exhibition of Miss Butler's work at the Galerie Hebrard. To show how highly her productions appeared to those capable of judging, I am going to quote M. Thebault Sissons [sic], one of the greatest, if not the greatest of all living art critics.[18] Writing in "Le Temps", he said: "This artist has a real talent for sculpture. She is gifted, very gifted. One visit to her works in the Hebrard Gallery, Rue Royale, proves this. This is not the last we shall hear of this artist, who analyses with penetration all the types of the human species that she portrays." (The translation is mine.)

Perhaps now that attention has been drawn to the matter her work will receive the recognition it deserves, and visitors to our National Gallery will soon have the opportunity of studying the works of our distinguished countrywoman, Miss Margaret Butler…

ART LOVER.

ART IN NEW ZEALAND: MISS BUTLER'S WORK
[*Evening Post* (27 February 1937): 8]

(To the Editor.)

Sir, --The question is often asked in this country why Rhodes Scholars do not return to New Zealand after they have completed their University courses in England. I think that if one wanted to get the real answer to this problem he could do no better than apply to Miss Margaret Butler, the talented sculptor born in and now resident in Wellington. I have been waiting for those who know more about art and especially sculpture to take up the matter raised by Mrs. E. Connors and by "Art Lover," as I feel satisfied that with the limited knowledge at my command I cannot do justice to my task.

It must be about three years since Miss Butler returned to this, her native land, and gave an exhibition of her work. Anyone with the slightest knowledge of sculpture and especially if he has seen sculpture in the other lands as I have done must have been impressed with the fact that at last New Zealand has produced a real sculptress. And yet what do we find? At the National Art Gallery there is a hall of sculpture and Miss Butler's work is represented by one piece--an immature one executed before she left New Zealand to study--presented by a former president of the academy, the late T. Shailer Weston.[19] (Figure 4)

I have recently been making inquiries from those in a position to advise me and I understand that when Miss Butler's exhibition took place the academy was short of funds and it did not purchase any of her work. Yet shortly afterwards Mrs. Murray arrived with a collection of paintings by English artists (and they were none the better and none the worse for that) and the academy desiring to purchase a painting from this collection, circularised those interested to raise a sum of over £300.[20] I believe that Miss Butler's most highly-priced pieces cost about £100. In the face of these facts and of the appreciation by M. Thebault Sissons… I say that the public of New Zealand especially of Wellington are entitled to some explanation from the Board of Trustees of the National Art Gallery why an effort has not been made to purchase some of

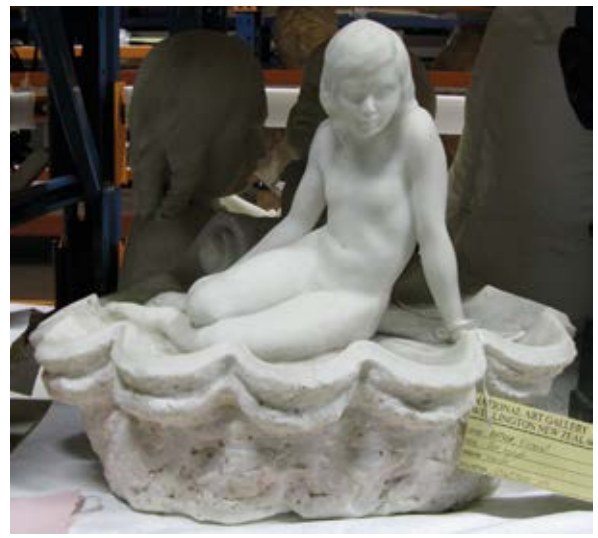


Figure 4: Margaret Butler, *Sea Nymph*, before 1923, marble, 343 x 426mm. Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Gift of the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts, 1936.

her works for exhibition in our Gallery. Everyone recognises that art is international, but when we paid our subscriptions towards the Gallery and Museum we did not think that our own country's artists would be the last to receive recognition.

Another matter upon which the public are entitled to some explanation is the reason for the absence of her sculpture from the works of art to be sent to London for the Royal Institute Galleries during the Coronation period. Here is a lady who obtained her early art education in this country, who later went abroad and received tuition at the hands of eminent sculptors in Europe, whose work was exhibited every year for eight or nine years at the leading salons in Paris (no mean achievement), and also later at the Royal Academy in London, whose work received most favourable notices from many of the best art critics in Paris, was approved by such great sculptors as Bourdelle, Despiau and [Léon-Ernest] Drivier, and represented photographically in such papers as "L'Art et les Artistes," "la Comoedia," "la Peinture," and in the salon catalogues. Surely in such circumstances one is entitled to expect that at least one piece of Miss Butler's work would have been selected by those in whom the trust of the public is imposed to choose representative works of New Zealand artists for exhibition in London at a time when probably more visitors will be there than on any previous occasion. This matter cannot be allowed to rest where it is, and if the selection committee does not make some explanation of the matter, I propose to write to Viscount Bledisloe, our late Governor-General, to ascertain if possible whether statuary was included (specifically or otherwise) or excluded from the works to be sent to London.

In the course of a long life I have been interested in many matters, but never in one which is so baffling and apparently devoid of any kind of satisfactory explanation. I could understand if the committee selected works concerning which there was doubt as to their merit, but to treat an artist like Miss Butler as if she did not exist is incomprehensible.

It would be very interesting and instructive if the Board of Trustees of the gallery and/or of the selection committee for the London exhibition would state for the information of the public and for the guidance of future aspiring artists the height to which New Zealand-born sculptors must raise or the honour which they must obtain before their

work can be accepted for our instruction and pleasure. Is it any wonder that talented New Zealand architects, scientists, etc., are leaving this country and seeking recognition in other lands? --I am, etc.,

PERPLEXED.

ART IN NEW ZEALAND
[*Evening Post* (9 March 1937): 8]

(To the Editor.)

Sir, --The complaint voiced recently in the columns of your paper by "Perplexed" in regard to the lack of recognition given to the work of Miss Margaret Butler, the New Zealand sculptress, as being incomprehensible, is justified. On the other hand, to many experienced judges possessing the necessary qualifying experience and knowledge to pass opinion authoritatively, it is also considered equally incomprehensible why display space is given to some of the exhibits which are to be found, not only in the principal art galleries in the Dominion but are also to be seen the periodical exhibitions held by New Zealand art societies. The function of a selection and hanging committee the world over is an onerous and invidious duty; but there are definite principles laid down according to which they can always set about their task in order to do so without fear or favour. A public art gallery must be regarded as fundamentally an educational medium and as such should contain only works of art which can be regarded as being of a quality worthy of note and exhibition as such or by artists of recognised ability in whose works general interest has been established. Unfortunately this modus operandi is not the invariable policy acted on by all those entrusted with the welfare of New Zealand art. Insufficient discrimination is made in the selection of works offered for exhibition.

If such promising talent as we have in New Zealand is to be led in the right direction… and if those who visit art galleries shall do so with the knowledgeable assurance of having represented before them worthy examples of all that art means, art societies will have to be more selective in the

appointments to selection and hanging committees in order that the personnel thereof shall be sufficiently possessed of the powers of knowledge and perception.

The reference made by "Perplexed" regarding the fact that most Rhodes scholars do not return to New Zealand after their university courses in England does also apply to New Zealand artists. There is abundant evidence that New Zealand artists (both professional and commercial) not having met with the appreciation and practical support that their work has justified, have left these shores for elsewhere to meet with fuller appreciation and greater practical support towards a sufficient livelihood…

MARK LEVY.

OPEN LETTER TO THE EDITOR AND PUBLISHERS OF ART IN NEW ZEALAND [*Art in New Zealand*, 38 (June 1937): 195]

…There is another controversial matter I should like to raise. It is the craze for the imported article, to the neglect of the local product. A typical and outstanding example is Miss Margaret Butler. This young lady, a sculptor, was trained under one of the greatest instructors in France, if not in Europe.[21] Her best work reveals the outcome of such a training, plus an inherent artistic temperament. Her work is eloquently sensitive in conception and expression. It was sought after by the leading salons of Paris. Nevertheless, Miss Butler is still a prophet without perceptible honour in her own country. One of her latest pieces is the head of an East Coast Māori woman (no depreciating pakeha blood here), which has well-defined classic qualities.[22] It is the wahine unsophisticated, true to the tribal strain, with striking facial contours and a regal pose. Its price may be the cost of a couple of second-rate imported paintings, but it is worth a dozen of such negligibilities. You will be doing a service to the country if you can persuade the National Gallery to enrich its collection with this noble example of the sculptor's art…

PRESTER JOHN

OURSELVES [*Art in New Zealand* 41 (September 1938): 5]

…Margaret Butler's success in Paris will come as no surprise to those who know the work of this sensitive and clever sculptor.[23] Margaret Butler had her triumphs overseas before returning to New Zealand after a decade of study in France and Austria, and we hope the time will come when her own country will accord her the recognition that her art deserves…

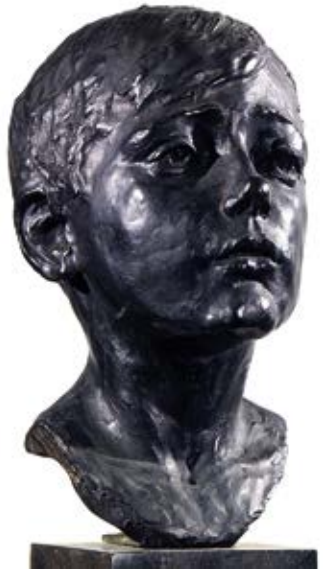


Figure 5: Margaret Butler, *Berto*, 1928, bronze, c. 1936, 434mm high. Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Gift of the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts, 1940.

BRILLIANT WORK [*Dominion* (30 November 1939): 6]

New Zealand Sculptor's Achievements

MARGARET BUTLER
Lack Of Recognition in Own Country
(By B.W.S.)

The purchase by the National Art Gallery of a bronze by the Wellington sculptress, Miss Margaret Butler, brings into the news one of the most distinguished British artists [sic] of the present day. (Fig. 5) One of the most remarkable things

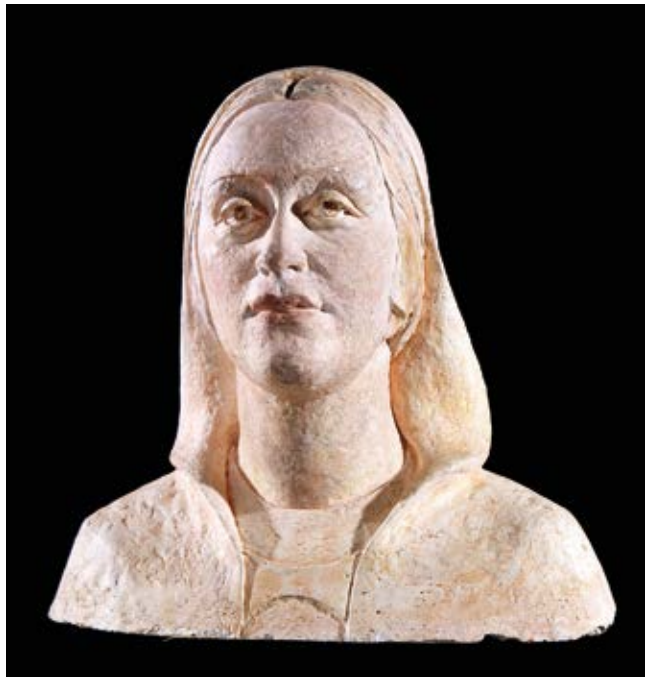


Figure 6: Margaret Butler, *Maori Madonna*, c. 1937-8, coloured plaster, 606mm high. Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Gift of the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts, 1950.

about Margaret Butler is that, like the traditional prophet, she is almost without honour in her own country. It must be five years since she returned from abroad, and since then she has been quietly working in her studio on The Terrace in the midst of a Wellington which, far from feeling honoured by her very presence, has scarcely even been aware of it.

Till the latest purchase, Margaret Butler has been represented in the hall of sculpture at the National Art Gallery by one immature study, done before she left New Zealand to study abroad. From that time Margaret Butler became a name known and honoured in the greatest European galleries. She exhibited every year for nine years in the leading salons in Paris and at the Royal Academy in London.

Her work has been admired and approved by such great sculptors as Bourdelle, Despiau, and Driver [sic][24] and she has received favourable notices from many of the best art critics of the day. Typical of the praise her work evoked wherever it was shown is this extract from the "Vienna Herald,"[25] when she was living in that city in 1932:--

"It is difficult to define the quality of great art, just as difficult as to define the quality of this rare artist.

Her work lives and glows; it is imbued in all her portraits with a fine and mysterious life of its own, which the French call 'interieur,' and the Germans [V]erinnerlicht.

"There is a serenity and purity, divorced from every superfluous touch, about all her sculptures, which marks the superb artist. She goes to simple types or she takes most frequently as model a countenance expressive of a single, straight-forward thought or tendency of mind. Her analysis of character is profound as her sympathies are broad. She depicts the sublime poetry and tragedy of peasant lives with very simple modelling. Her characters are eloquent, intense, and concise. These are rare qualities in the artist nowadays, and their very simplicity places them outside the ken of 'the moderns.'

"On the other hand, Margaret Butler, in the sense that she reflects the beauties and tragedies of the human soul, which do not fade or change with time, is just as modern as anyone who ever prated dadaism. She has that clarity of vision born of true sincerity. Every one of her portraits confronts us with a life, impels us to the study of man, and we are the richer for the experience. This is great art."

…It is said of Margaret Butler that she has immortalized types of Brittany, with a surety and perspicacity worthy of Meuniere [sic],[26] though there is nothing similar in their methods except that each has touched the soul of the labourer and the soil. The same quality of conception of the spirit of a people is reflected in her more recent Māori studies. One, a Māori Madonna, can be seen in the Catholic section at the [New Zealand] Centennial Exhibition.[27]
(Figure 6) A bust, "Rosalie," in the fine arts section of the women's court at the exhibition, has already aroused considerable interest and admiration.

Perhaps the reason why New Zealanders have scarcely been aware of the genius in their midst lies in the fact that they have had very little opportunity to know anything of Margaret Butler's work. The new acquirement [sic] for the National Art Gallery shows an awakening on the part of those in whose power it lies to reveal to an art-hungry public the best productions of its own country's artists.

In the meantime, working steadfastly and quietly in her roomy studio, Margaret Butler hides herself from all

publicity. This brilliant sculptor, to whom fame in the great art-loving countries of the Old World came as her natural due, would not seek honour in her native land. When she left Vienna they said of her: “Vienna is honoured to have had this sterling artist from that distant new world of New Zealand in her midst, and we sincerely hope she will often come again, and remain longer here.”

Now that they are able to have a first real taste of Margaret Butler’s work, it is to be hoped that New Zealanders will appreciate their brilliant countrywoman sufficiently to encourage her to stay here for many honoured years.

MĀORI LEADERS
[*Evening Post* (16 November 1940): 13]

WORK FOR MINISTERS
SUGGESTION BY MINISTER

The suggestion that the Centennial year should not be allowed to close without the talent of New Zealand sculptors being set to work to preserve for future generations the likenesses of living Māori leaders was put forward today by the Minister of Education (Mr [Rex] Mason), before he unveiled the memorial plaque and tablet to Professor H. B. Kirk in the new biology block at Victoria University College.[28] (Figure 7) The Minister said that the pakeha was proud to share the name of New Zealand with the Māori.

The Minister asked whether New Zealanders sufficiently appreciated and encouraged their own New Zealand artists, and thought that the talent of Dominion sculptors might be employed to a greater degree than at present. He took pride in the fact that the plaque and tablet were the work of New Zealanders; the former was modelled by Miss Margaret Butler, whose work had been accepted in the Paris Salon, and the tablet was made by another New Zealander, Mr. R. J. Hill.

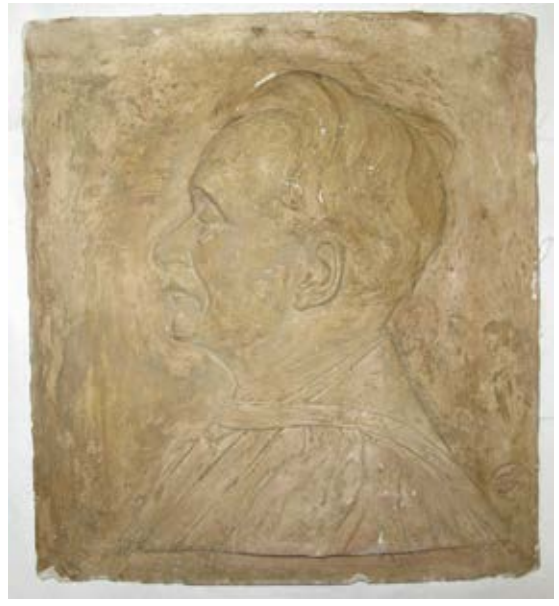


Figure 7: Margaret Butler, *Professor H. B. Kirk*, 1940, plaster, 400 x 360mm. Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Gift of the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts, 1950.

RECOGNITION OF ARTISTS
[*Evening Post* (27 November 1940): 6]

(To the Editor.)

Sir, -May I raise a point in connection with your report of that interesting and encouraging ceremony, the unveiling of a plaque to Professor Kirk in Victoria University College?[29] In your report of the ceremony, you did not mention the name of the artist who made the memorial, Miss Margaret Butler, nor was her name included in the letterpress under the illustration. You did mention her elsewhere, but I don’t think this is quite the same thing. I raise the point as a matter of principle. There is a disposition in this country to give artists less than their due. Sometimes the names of givers of works of art are a good deal more prominent than the names of the artists who, after all, do count for something…

I notice that the Professor Kirk plaque bears Miss Butler’s initials, neatly inscribed in the corner. May I ask if there will be any further indication to students and visitors, now and in the future, that the memorial is the work of Miss Butler? Will we have people asking who “M.B.” is?...

ALAN MULGAN.

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ENDNOTES

1 For Trethewey, see Michael Dunn, *New Zealand Sculpture: A History* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2008): 44-49; Mark Stocker, "'Give us peace in our time, o Lord': W. T. Trethewey's War Memorial in Christchurch, New Zealand," *Burlington Magazine*, 157 (2015): 776-780.

2 For discussions of earlier, predominantly ethnographic studies of Māori by the sculptors Allen Hutchinson and Nelson Illingworth, see Dunn, *New Zealand Sculpture* (2008): 36-39; Roger Blackley, *Te Mata: The Ethnological Portrait* (Wellington: Adam Art Gallery/Victoria University Press, 2010).

3 Dunn, *New Zealand Sculpture* (2008): 41.

4 Dunn, *New Zealand Sculpture*: (2008): 43.

5 Mark Stocker, "'Our Local Lady Praxiteles': Margaret Butler and her Sculpture," *Art New Zealand*, no. 81 (1996): 74-79, 87; Mark Stocker, "Pakeha Praxiteles: The Sculpture of Margaret Butler," *Melbourne Art Journal*, no. 6 (2003): 93-106; Mark Stocker, "Margaret Butler: An Invisible Sculptor?" http://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/2016/03/14/margaret-butler-an-invisible-sculptor/, 14 March 2016; Mark Stocker, "Butler, Margaret Mary," from the *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography. Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/biographies/4b55/butler-margaret-mary (accessed 8 May 2017)

6 Quoted in Stocker, "Pakeha Praxiteles," (2003): 102.

7 Quoted in Mark Stocker, *Francis Shurrock: Shaping New Zealand Sculpture* (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2000): 9. This situation applied to patronage, critical attention and reputation alike.

8 Michael King, e-mail message to the author, 7 August 2002.

9 Quoted in William McAloon, "Introduction", *Art at Te Papa*, ed. William McAloon (Wellington: Te Papa Press, 2009): 7. Favoured artists tended to be on the more conservative rather than experimental side of 'International', i.e. British art, e.g. Philip Connard, Laura Knight, Alfred Munnings and Philip Wilson Steer. This reached an extreme point with the use of a substantial part of a government donation to purchase a portrait of the former Governor-General, the late Earl Jellicoe, by the capable but highly conservative society painter Reginald Eves. See McAloon, p. 8.

10 For Mulgan, see Lawrence Jones, "Mulgan, Alan Edward," from the *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography. Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/biographies/4m67/mulgan-alan-edward (accessed 8 May 2017)

11 Marris was literary editor of *Art in New Zealand*. For his biography, see Stephen D. Hamilton, "Marris, Charles Allan," from the *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography. Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/biographies/4m40/marris-charles-allan (accessed 8 May 2017)

12 The Butler sisters received one of the most famous American monologists of the era, Ruth Draper (1884–1956) at Margaret's studio, on a New Zealand tour. See "Here and There: 'Five O'Clock' Party," *Evening Post* (6 August 1938): 18.

13 Archdiocesan Archives, Wellington Catholic Centre, Eileen Duggan Collection. Margaret Butler to Eileen Duggan, 2 September 1937. I have been unable to trace this article, despite careful perusal of Duggan's chief outlet, the *New Zealand Tablet*.

14 Archdiocesan Archives, Duggan Collection, Butler to Duggan n.d. [c. 1946].

15 *Evening Post* (3 August 1950): 6.

16 Rosalie Tobia was the *patronne* of a restaurant in Montmartre, Paris, and "the kind-heart who maintained the renowned painter [Amedeo] Modigliani, when that virtuoso was unable to maintain himself." See "Margaret Butler Returns," *Art in New Zealand,* no. 23 (1934): 161-162.

17 See *Exhibition of paintings, drawings and sculpture by artists of the British Empire overseas, May 8th-29th, 1937: representative work by artists of Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand & South Africa at the Royal Institute Galleries* (London: Royal Institute Galleries, 1937). The New Zealand selection was monopolised by painters and included works by W. H. Allen, Ida Carey, Russell Clark, R. N. Field, Roland Hipkins, Marcus King and James Turkington, all of whom were considerably younger than Butler. See "Art Notes," *Art in New Zealand*, 38 (June 1937): 225-226.

18 The critic's name was François Thiébault-Sisson (1856–1936) and is repeatedly spelled incorrectly. For his review, see his "Art et Curiosité: Margaret Butler," *Le Temps* (16 June 1933): 4. Although he had championed Edgar Degas as a sculptor and had earlier been the author of the significant *Claude Monet: An Interview* (1900), the poverty of French art historiography is reflected in the absence of any academic studies of him.

19 This observation is perfectly reasonable. *The Sea Nymph* is a small, rather sentimental statuette, carved in marble and atypical of the 'mature' Butler that was to come.

20 For Mary Murray Fuller, see McAloon, *Art at Te Papa* (2008): 7-8. The painting in question is probably Philip Connard, *Dieppe*, purchased for 350 guineas by the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts in 1935.

21 'Prester John' (Marris) is referring to Antoine Bourdelle. He and other writers sometimes underestimated Butler's age, possibly because of gallantry, but more likely due to her animated features. See for example "Clever Sculptress: New Zealand Girl," *Evening Post* (5 September 1933): 11, which states: "The young sculptor is unusually gifted." Butler was aged 50 at the time. The previous 'controversial' item was Marris's criticism of newspaper and popular adulation of British painter S. J. "Lamorna" Birch, who had recently visited New Zealand.

22 This description relates to *La Nouvelle Zélande*.

23 Butler's exhibits at the Salon des Tuileries in 1938 were *La Nouvelle Zélande* (284) and *Une petite fleur sauvage* (285).

24 Léon-Ernest Drivier (1878–1951), French sculptor and illustrator.

25 Probably the *Wiener Zeitung*.

26 Constantin Meunier (1831–1905), Belgian sculptor.

27 See "The Catholic Pavilion," *Dominion* (2 February 1940): 11.

28 For Kirk, see John T. Salmon, "Kirk, Harry Borrer," from the *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography. Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/biographies/2k9/kirk-harry-borrer (accessed 8 May 2017). Kirk enjoyed the rare distinction of being memorialised within his lifetime in Butler's bronze plaque, her last recorded sculpture. The plaque was placed in the entrance foyer of the original Kirk building (now Old Kirk) and was relocated to New Kirk in 1972. Te Papa's plaster portrait is the model for Butler's cast.

29 Alan Mulgan, the author of this letter, was referring to "Work for Science. Professor H. B. Kirk. Memorial Unveiled. A High Tribute," *Evening Post* (16 November 1940): 13.

Photographers Hart, Campbell and Company: The role of photography in exploration, tourism and national promotion in nineteenth century New Zealand.

Alan Cocker

Keywords # Hart, Campbell # national promotion # photography and exploration # picturesque # Frontier thesis # savage grandeur

It has been argued that "the history of New Zealand is unique because the period of pioneer colonization closely coincided with the invention and development of photography"[1]. However, as the first successfully recorded photograph in the country was not made until the late 1840s, the widespread use of photography came after the initial European settlement and its influence coincided more closely with the development of early tourism and with the exploration and later promotion of the country's wild and remote places. The photographic partnership of William Hart and Charles Campbell followed the path of the gold miners into the hinterland of the South Island aware of its potential commercial photographic value. Photographers understood the "great public interest in what the colony looked like and in the potential for features that would command international attention"[2]. Photography was promoted as presenting the world as it was, free of the interpretation of the artist. By the early 1880s the Hart, Campbell portfolio was extensive and their work featured at exhibitions in London, Sydney and Melbourne. Yet their photographs were criticised for fakery and William Hart's photograph of Sutherland Falls, 'the world's highest waterfall', promoted a quite inaccurate claim.

By the 1870s, when William Hart and Charles Campbell became active as photographers of the landscapes of Otago and Southland, photographs were held to have clear advantages over other forms of visual depiction such as the painting, watercolour or sketch. In *Photography and Exploration* James Ryan quotes the nineteenth century writer Gaston Tissandier on the photograph: "no one can deny their accuracy. A photograph represents an object just as it is....Nothing is deficient in the print. A painting or a watercolour can never have such rigorous precision".[3]

For Hart and Campbell the landscape photographs they took were part of a quest to cater to a growing market for dramatic landscape views both within New Zealand and internationally. For the New Zealand colonist it has been argued that the acts of surveying and photographing were part of colonisation attaching "a possessable image to a place name. A named view is one that has been seen, known, and thereby already possessed"[4]. But the images could also be a source of pride for the settler, their new land was blessed in its beauty, and they could proudly send back photographs of it to their relatives in their home countries. Drawing on ideas of the picturesque[5], first formulated by mid-eighteenth century artists capturing England's Peak and Lake Districts, the photographers of New Zealand's wilder regions also sought to depict "a more savage grandeur"[6] an evocation of the sublime where there is awe and reverence of nature at its most fearsome.

In identifying a common language of landscape representation in New Zealand and California in the nineteenth century, Schenker argues that painters and photographers forged cultural identities "using images of 'nature' and the 'natural' landscape".[7] Those who seem to have that common language would be photographers like Alfred Burton and the Hart and Campbell partnership in New Zealand and Carleton Watkins, William Henry Jackson and Eadweard Muybridge in California. Schenker believes that the landscapes of both places were appropriated as an emblem of national identity, the lands being seen as 'natural wonders' with paintings and photographs serving to make exotic places familiar, accessible and consumable. Painters and photographers "evoked the sublime by means of a repertoire of established compositional formulae"[8].

Rod Gilbert argues that photographs of wilderness areas and national parks "have been crucial for the formation and maintenance of national identity"[9]. The early European settlers in the United States and New Zealand regarded the land as a spiritual and physical void which had to be tamed and civilised in the name of progress. However,

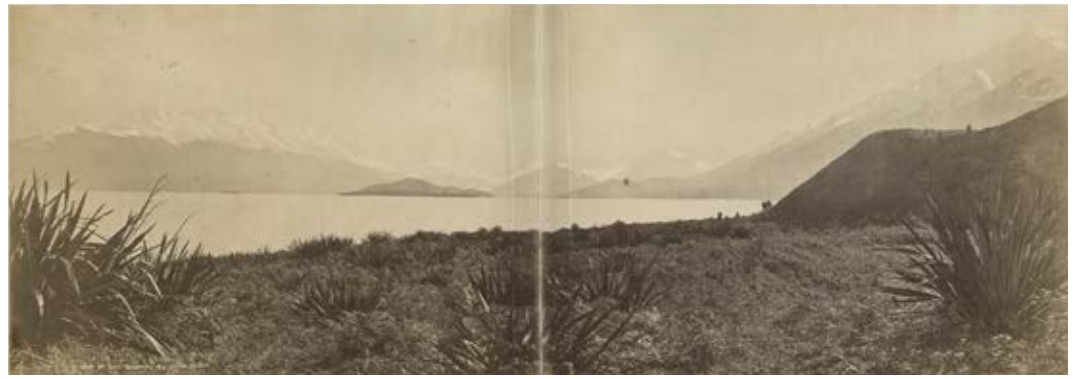

Figure 1: Image entitled 'head of Lake Whakatipu from 26 mile' by Hart, Campbell & Co. Collection of the author.

by the later nineteenth century there were signs that these attitudes were being countered by changed perceptions of the natural world in these countries. In 1893, Frederick Jackson Turner was to propound his 'Frontier Thesis' in the United States. He argued that: "American democracy...came out of the American forest[10]" and it gained new strength each time it touched a frontier.

By the 1870s, European exploration had opened up more remote parts of New Zealand for the traveller. Steam ship companies began to advertise trips for tourists to New Zealand and printed guidebooks for their instruction. Writer Thomas Bracken set the scene in a publication entitled *The New Zealand Tourist* for the Union Steam Ship Company in 1879: "Until a few years back, New Zealand was a terra incognito to the great mass of mankind, and even now there are comparatively few persons living out of the Colony itself who have anything but the very faintest conception of the marvellous magnificence of this peerless land".[11] Bracken, who was to later pen the words for the country's national anthem, claimed that the "romantic character of our New Zealand scenery is not surpassed in any other portion of the world". [12]

In presenting New Zealand to the world, James Hector, the Director of the country's Colonial Museum, felt that only photographs could adequately represent the country at the Vienna Exhibition of 1873 and the Philadelphia Exhibition of 1876. Rice states that Hector was "not just interested in the aesthetic appeal of photographs but saw them as having the capacity to enhance the educational aspect of the exhibits"[13]. It was felt that photography enabled audiences to view with a new and unprecedented truthfulness the wonders of the world.

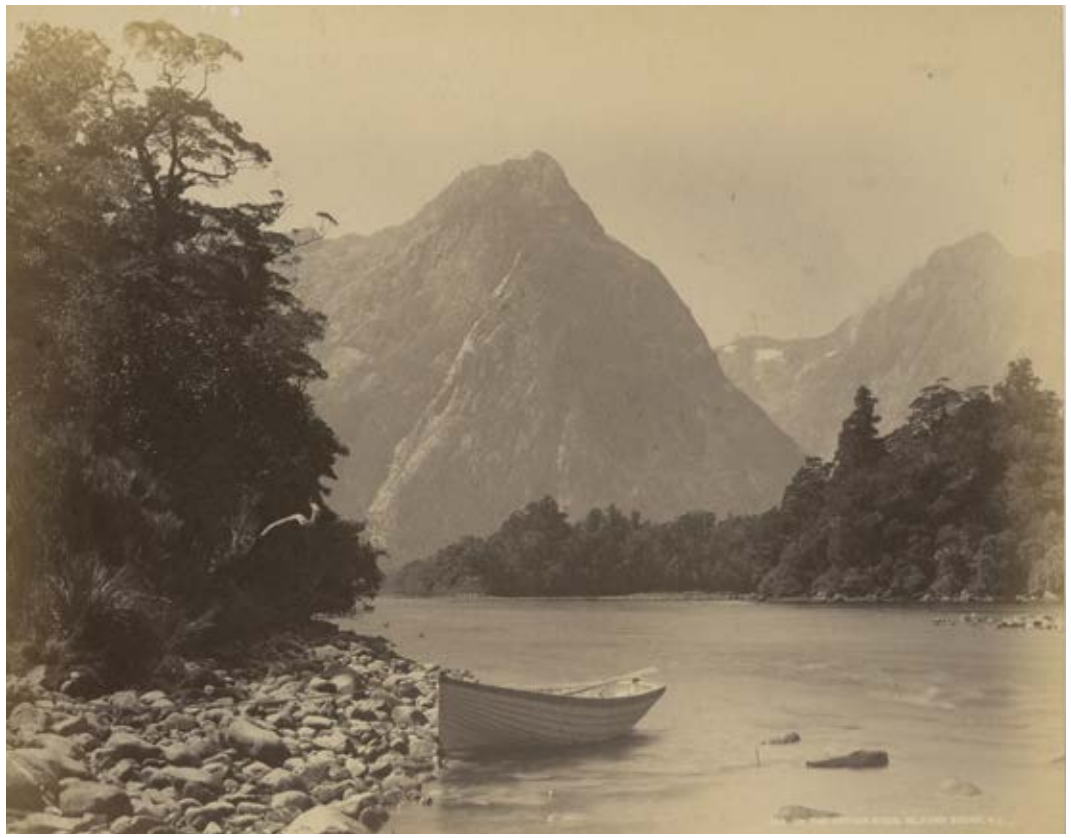

Figure 2: Image entitled 'On the Arthur River, Milford Sound, N.Z.' by Hart, Campbell & Co. Collection of the author.

Dunedin was the home of the largest photographic studios in the mid to late 1800s and many photographers learnt their trade working for these studios. William Hart began as a photographer with Clifford & Morris whilst Charles Campbell stated that he had a nine year relationship with the Burton Brothers.[14] Both Hart and Campbell were born in Scotland and arrived as boys in New Zealand, Hart aged ten in 1856, and Campbell when he was eight years old in 1863[15]. According to New Zealand photographic historian Hardwicke Knight, as a young man Hart joined the gold rush and worked as a miner in Central Otago. Apparently unsuccessful in this quest he worked in a store in Arrowtown before taking up photography in the mid-1870s. He also had a reputation as a cross-country runner and long distance walker, attributes that would assist him in carrying his camera equipment into the mountains of New Zealand's South Island.[16] As Campbell claims in 1876 to have already served nine years with the Burton studio, he must have joined them as a teenage apprentice.

From 1876 to 1889 Hart and Campbell were in partnership based in the southern city of Invercargill as Hart, Campbell and Company. After the two partners initially undertook a photographic tour through the region capturing gold mining activity, the new sheep stations and scenic views[17]; Campbell appears to have spent most the rest of the partnership in the Invercargill studio whilst Hart undertook a more peripatetic existence as a landscape photographer. Mitchell writes that: "Geographically remote landscape features were a marketable subject for nineteenth century photographers".[18]

Hart, Campbell and Company sent examples of their views to the Sydney and Melbourne Exhibitions of 1880. Twenty-five photographs of scenes of the 'Lakes District' of the South Island were exhibited by them in Melbourne[19] and in Sydney they were awarded a certificate and second position amongst New Zealand competitors for their selection[20]. A correspondent for the *Otago Witness* newspaper[21] reported that over the past season there had been a great influx of visitors to the Lake District and that "many of the tourists stated that they were induced to make the trip by the views of Lake Whakatip (sic) scenery exhibited by Messrs Hart, Campbell and Co at the Sydney Exhibition". However, at a subsequent exhibition of their photographs in Dunedin in 1881 they were accused of 'faking' because they introduced certain effects, such as moonlight, into their images. A writer in their defence argued that it was "pretty well known by those who take any interest in photographic work that all negatives are now modelled and manipulated"[22]. The correspondent further felt that it was well-known that moonlight photography was not yet possible and no one could be deceived into believing that the night effects were natural and not the result of clever manipulation. Another report in the same newspaper two months later[23] stated that criticism did not take into account "the wintry aspect and evident elevations at which several of the negatives have been secured" which suggested "a good deal of hardship endured by the artist" and it had to be "conceded that the work of converting day into night had been most cleverly done".

In capturing 'new landscapes' of places largely unknown to the European world, photographers sought to combine scientific discovery and objectivity with the desire to create a pleasing picture conforming to conventions of landscape beauty. Ryan states that despite the tendency among twentieth-century historians of photography to separate 'scientific' from 'artistic' photography, these domains were never entirely distinct and in its early days photography was commonly referred to as an 'Art-Science'[24]. He quotes the nineteenth-century

Figure 3: Image entitled 'Moonlight over Lake Hawea' by Hart, Campbell & Co. Collection of the author. On the print the moon has been clearly 'painted in'.

soldier and photographer William Abney who wrote in his popular photographic instruction book of 1871 (*Instruction in Photography):* "To become a good photographer...it is necessary to turn to it with an artistic and scientific mind". [25]

For Hart and Campbell the foremost consideration was sale in a commercial market. The government saw the virtue in the photographs for the promotion of tourism, for the understanding of the country's geography and cultural identity but the photographers did not have the benefit of any public funding for their work. It is therefore understandable that they would focus on those aspects of any scene which might enhance an image's saleability. Certainly the claim of a breakthrough in photographic art, the capturing of a scene in moonlight, would attract the interest of the consumer of landscape views. Notions of the sublime in landscape art also pushed photographers and artists to seek ever more dramatic scenes, or what has been described as 'savage grandeur'[26].

Perhaps the perfect example of this dramatic subject matter was furnished by Donald Sutherland. In November 1877, Sutherland, a Scottish adventurer with a colourful background which had included fighting as a volunteer for Garibaldi's Italian patriots, set sail in a small boat from the southern city of Dunedin for the remote West Coast of the South Island[27]. On the 3rd of December he landed at Milford Sound and after an unsuccessful period prospecting, he turned to exploring in the hope of discovering an inland route to Queenstown and thus

creating an overland link between the east and west coasts of southern New Zealand. During this exploration he discovered on the 10 November 1880 what he believed to be the world's highest waterfall.

News of Sutherland's discovery attracted surveyors, prospectors, artists and photographers. William Hart travelled into Milford Sound, Fiordland in February 1883 in the company of fellow photographers Alfred Burton and Fred Edwards[28] and painter, Francis Huddlestone[29] where they joined Samuel Moreton, an English artist who had come from Australia to, in his own words, "add a valuable stock of sketches" to his portfolio[30] . Milford and Fiordland were believed to offer scenery that far surpassed anything in Switzerland. The camera would be important in alerting the traveller "well-schooled in landscape aesthetics"[31]. The prime attraction, however, was the waterfall which promised the ultimate in 'sublime' natural scenery.

The practical difficulties of carrying photographic gear into the largely trackless terrain were daunting. Fabian and Adam characterise the problems encountered by the nineteenth century travelling photographer: "The early photographer's journey was ...considered an 'expedition', his machine a 'travelling camera', and the actual taking of the photographs an 'operation'".[32] When Hart journeyed into New Zealand's Fiordland "pack animals do not appear to have been an option for traversing the steep landscape at Milford Sound and there was nowhere for ships to land".[33] Thus photographers had to carry their own equipment or rely on others for help.

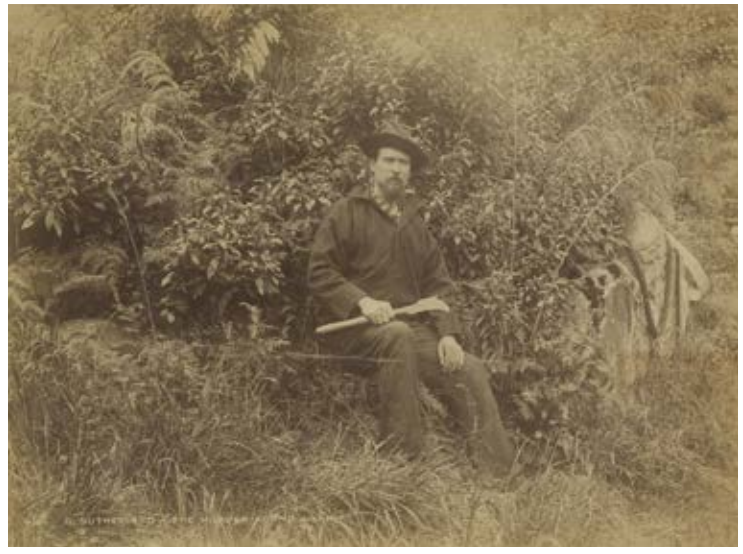

Figure 4: Image entitled D.Sutherland - "The Milford Sound Hermit". Photo has Burton Bros. number. Collection of the author.

The utility and practicality of photography was steadily improved by technical developments. Particularly the advent of dry plates and the greater light sensitivity of the gelatine-bromide process in the 1870s, and later the advent of celluloid 'roll film' in the 1880s. In part, states Ryan[34], the history of the interaction between photography and exploration is a story of changing technology. After the introduction of dry plates the Royal Geographical Society was encouraging explorers to adopt the medium because this new process allowed photographs to be taken everywhere and anywhere[35]. Hart and Campbell announced in August 1882[36] that they had been using a gelatine emulsion and dry plate process for upwards of twelve months which would indicate that William Hart had the ability to work with a dry plate process in Fiordland although Mitchell states that "Hart was one of New Zealand's most artistically assured photographers with the wet plate collodion process" and that he continued to use it long after other photographers had changed to dry plate.[37]

Although three photographers and two artists had gathered with their equipment at Milford Sound in February 1883, only William Hart and Samuel Moreton would accompany Donald Sutherland on an expedition to the 'world's highest falls'. Alfred Burton, of the established Burton Brothers photography studio had visited Milford Sound before and the previous year had been thwarted in the attempt to accompany Sutherland to the falls by bad weather. According to Moreton for this expedition he had "provisions and paraphernalia...as much as all the rest put together" and he believed this was an unfair burden on the other members of the party.[38] But Moreton further argued that Burton, the oldest in the party, was not fit enough to make the trip and he deliberately contrived to sabotage Burton's participation by hiding a canoe which the expedition needed as part of their journey. Once Burton, Huddlestone and Edwards had left Milford Sound by steamer, Sutherland, Hart and Moreton set out and successfully reached the falls in four days. Moreton seeks to justify his actions by saying that even though Hart was an athlete:

> "...towards the end of the journey down he frequently referred to the fact that upon no consideration would he think of facing the same journey. The fatigue that was undergone was beyond, and could never be described; many a time I had to go and rescue Hart, who had broken through and was forked by both legs and fixed, and had to be lifted bodily upward, swag and all. And when I compare the two men – viz. Hart and Burton – instead of the latter heaping on his satirical abuse, he should fall on his bended knees and thank God for saving him to his family".[39]

Although they reached the falls Hart's problems were not over. Again in Moreton's account the photographer "could not make pictures, on account of the nearness and tremendousness of the surroundings", so in order to capture the falls at all the party had to retire some two miles from it. The image Hart took does very little justice to what was intended to be a sublime landscape scene. It shows only the top part of the falls above the tree line whilst in the foreground artist Samuel Moreton is sketching beside the expedition's tent (Figure 5). Even technically the image has issues with Moreton's face blurred, presumably as he had moved his head during the exposure. It seems a meagre return for such an arduous undertaking to 'the world's highest waterfall'.

The photograph which was meant to be an exact representation of reality, also perpetuates a myth. Sutherland had estimated the height of Sutherland Falls, named by Hart[40] after their discoverer, at 5,700 feet. This would have made them the highest falls in the world. However by its nature Hart's photograph disguises any attempt to verify this. It would be another six years (October 1888) before a party of surveyors led by Otago Province's Chief Surveyor, C.W. Adams, accompanied by photographers, including Alfred Burton,

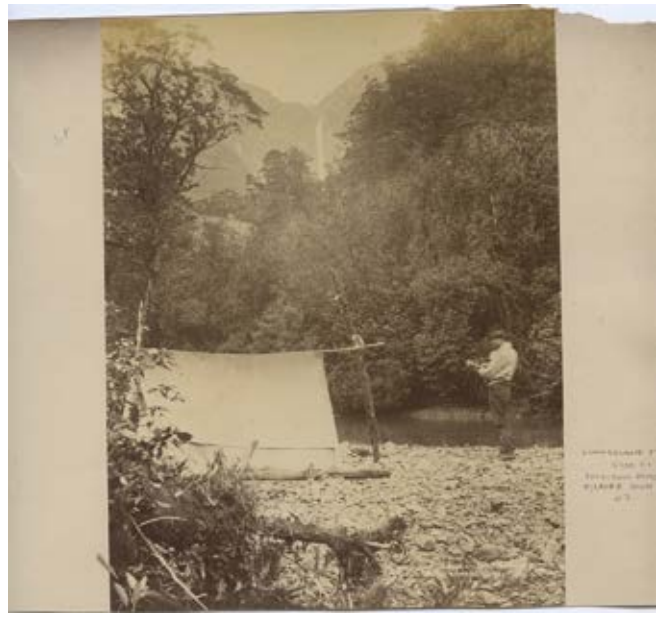

Figure 5: Entitled 'Sutherland Falls, 5,700 ft., Poseidon River, Milford Sound, New Zealand by Hart, Campbell & Co. Collection of the author.

estimated that the waterfall was 1,904 ft. high. A year later surveyor William Quill ascended Sutherland Fall and confirmed this height. His report to Adams stated: "The Sutherland Falls is 1904ft high, and strikes the rocky precipice twice in its descent, forming three leaps, the upper being 815ft, the middle on 751ft, and the lower 338ft".[41]

Thus the original claim for the height of Sutherland Falls was nearly three times their actual height. As Mitchell points out[42] whether Sutherland consciously exaggerated the height is unknown but if it was a profitable attraction for the area it would help his recognition as an explorer and gain financial assistance for his work. For Hart it would have made commercial sense to repeat the claim on his photograph that the falls were 5,700ft. Therefore, he had been the first to capture an image of the world's highest waterfall. Despite Quill's measurements showing Sutherland Falls to be only the seventh highest, postcards continued to be printed claiming it was 'the highest waterfall in the world' into the early twentieth century.[43]

It is recounted that photography was the child of a desire to bring home in visual form an unequivocal description of wonders seen.[44] Fox Talbot was sketching on the shores of Lake Como in Italy when he was saddened that his artistic ability was not up to the task of faithfully recording what he was seeing. He resolved to investigate whether it would be "possible to cause these natural images to imprint themselves durably and remain fixed upon the paper"[45]. However, the medium he helped to create would not be the unproblematic 'pencil of nature'. The photographic views of William Hart and Charles Campbell were used to attract travellers to New Zealand and record the discovery of 'sublime' natural phenomena. However, their view of the world was coloured by commercial imperatives and this could lead them to present day as night or perpetuate a myth about the world's highest waterfall. Their photographs were not exact scientific records; art, and particularly, commerce, appear to have been the more important considerations for these photographers.

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ENDNOTES

1 This claim is made by Hardwicke Knight in his 1971 book *Photography in New Zealand: A Social and Technical History,* p.9.

2 Lissa Mitchell 'Photographing Sutherland Falls' in the *New Zealand Journal of Photography* No. 63, p.16.

3 In James Ryan, *Photography and Exploration,* p. 13.

4 The quote is from Alan Trachtenberg, *Reading American Photographs: Images as History, Matthew Brady to Walker Evans,* New York, 1989, p.125. Christine Whybrew in 'Reading' Photographs: Burton Brothers and the Photographic Narrative, The Journal of New Zealand Studies, No.12 (2011), pp.77-90, quotes Trachtenberg and Giselle Byrnes, Boundary Markers: Land Surveying and the Colonisation of New Zealand, Wellington, 2001, pp.5-6; to make the point that photography was part of the colonial process of identifying and possessing the land.

5 The concept of the 'picturesque' was one of three aesthetic concepts established during the romantic era which divided the natural world into categories, the other two were the 'pastoral' and the 'sublime'. The 'pastoral' and 'picturesque' depicted a comforting and tamed nature. William Gilpin in his *Three Essays:* On picturesque beauty; on picturesque travel; and on sketching landscape printed in London in 1792, described the 'picturesque' as landscape in its natural state. The 'sublime', however, was untamed nature. Quoted from Heath Schenker, 'A common language of landscape representation: New Zealand and California painting in the nineteenth century', p. 44.

6 James Ryan, *Photography and Exploration, p. 91.*

7 Heath Schenker, 'A common language of landscape representation: New Zealand and California painting in the nineteenth century', p.43.

8 See p.820 of the *Encyclopaedia of Nineteenth–Century Photography, Vol. 1* edited by John Hannavy.

9 P.11 in Rod Gilbert, *Landscapes of Culture and Nature*. Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, 2009.

10 See p.xiv in Benson Tong and Regan A. Lutz (eds.). *The Human Tradition in the American West*.

11 Thomas Bracken writing in *The New Zealand Tourist* in 1879, p.vi.

12 Ibid, p.vii.

13 Rebecca Rice, 'The Art of Photography at nineteenth century international exhibitions', p.10.

14 This information comes from an advertisement Hart and Campbell placed in the *Lake County Press* (3 May 1876, p.1) soon after the formation of their partnership. They were offering their services to the 'inhabitants of Arrowtown and surrounding District' as portrait and landscape photographers.

15 Charles Campbell's Death Certificate records his birthplace as Moffat, Scotland and the number of years he had resided in New Zealand. William Paterson Hart was born on the 4 July 1846 at Paisley, Renfrew Scotland. Information from https://family search.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XTJT-3PV Accessed 24/03/2016. His date of arrival in New Zealand is from Hardwicke Knight. See Endnote 10. Knight does not source this information.

16 This information comes from Hardwicke Knight's short biography of William Hart in Jane Thomson (Editor), *Southern People: A Dictionary of Otago Southland Biography* published in 1998 by Longacre Press and the Dunedin City Council, p.214. Knight does not give any sources for this information although a search does identify a W.P.Hart competing at the Dunedin Cricket Club Sports in April 1874 in the 120 yards hurdle race (Otago Witness, 25 April, 1874, p.8). There is also evidence of a mining licence being granted to a William Hart on *the* 3rd of October 1864 at Lawrence, Otago. See: http://www.kaelewis.com/database/prospector.php?database=-gold&query=hart (accessed January 9, 2017).

17 This led to an extensive portfolio of 'views', eighty of which appeared in their photographic album entitled: *Gems of Photographic Art. A new series of views of New Zealand's scenery* by Hart, Campbell & Co. Collection of the author.

18 Lissa Mitchell, 'Photographing Sutherland Falls', p.16.

19 As reported in the *Southland Times,* 24 July, 1880, p.2

20 See the *Southland Times,* 23 August, 1880, p.2.

21 News report headed 'Lake County', from our own correspondent, *Otago Witness,* 3 April 1880, p.19. The 'great influx' was estimated by the writer to have been about 1,000 travellers.

22 In an article entitled 'Dunedin Industrial Exhibition No.IV', *Southland Times,* 12 July 1881, p.2.

23 'The Industrial Exhibition, No.9'. *Southland Times,* 12 September, 1881, p.2.

24 James R. Ryan, (2013) *Photography and Exploration,* p.78.

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid, p.91. Ryan writes: "While the picturesque presented a safe and agreeable form of beauty...intrepid explorers also sought scenes of a more 'savage grandeur'.

27 See biography by W.T.Parham in the online Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand at http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/2s53/sutherland-donald Accessed 17 November, 2016.

28 Samuel Moreton identified the third photographer as 'Edwards' who worked for the Auckland photography studio of Bartlett and Co. (See correspondence in the *Otago Witness,* 17 October, 1889, p.9.) Thus the photographer was probably Frederick William Edwards, a photographer who managed Bartlett's studio in Auckland before setting up his own (see http://canterburyphotography.blogspot.co.nz/2012/01/edwards-f-w.html).

29 Francis Fortescue Croft Huddlestone also known as Frank was a surveyor as well as a water colourist. See http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-PlaNine-t1-body-d1-d617.html and http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nzlscant/artists.htm

30 See Lydia Wevers, 'The Pleasure of Walking', 2004. p.42.

31 Ibid.

32 Rainer Fabian and Hans-Christian Adam. (1983) *Masters of Early Travel Photography,* p.13

33 Lissa Mitchell, 'Photographing Sutherland Falls', p.17.

34 James R. Ryan, (2013) *Photography and Exploration,* p.13.

35 Ibid.

36 See advertisements in the *Southland Times* on the 15 August, 1882, p.2 and on 16 August, 1882, p.2. "Photography – Messrs Hart, Campbell and Co., of Tay Street, elsewhere inform the public that they have been taking photographs by the instantaneous process for the past year or more" (15 August).

37 Lissa Mitchell, 'Photographing Sutherland Falls', p.20.

38 Alfred Burton, 'Lakeland. Wintering on Lakes Te Anau and Manapouri. A photographer's diary', *Otago Witness,* 17 October, 1889, p.9. and the response by Samuel H.Moreton in the same issue.

39 Ibid.

40 Sutherland in turn named a nearby mountain, Mt. Hart, after the photographer.

41 William Quill, 'Ascent of the Sutherland Waterfall', *Oamaru Mail,* 24 March 1890, p.4.

42 Lissa Mitchell, 'Photographing Sutherland Falls', p.20.

43 Ibid.

44 D.H.O. John, *Photography on Expeditions,* p.9).

45 Ibid.

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Burton Brothers, *North Shore, Auckland,* 1870s, Museum of New Zealand.

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