

# PhotoForum Flashback: 1977:

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PHOTO-FORUM RESEARCH SUPPLEMENT, APRIL 1977.

## **Results of a survey on the State of New Zealand Photography as regards Public and Private Art Galleries, Libraries and Museums.**

### **Introduction**

This survey was begun in October 1976 with the stated aim of preparing "a brief analysis of the position of photography in New Zealand, and the local gallery interest."

A list of questions relating to photographic collections, exhibitions, and intentions regarding photography, were sent to 150 public and private museums and galleries, as well as some libraries. Fifty per cent of these replied.

The response shows that the museums of this country are mostly small, and that they are concerned mainly with local history. In keeping with their function, they recognise the photograph as a valuable historical document reflecting a past which is our history.

The present forms that history, and given the increasing local body awareness of both this and the documentary value of photography, the near future, it seems, holds the promise of financial and moral support for important contemporary historical projects. In fact, the precedence has already been set. The Hawera Borough Council, The Thornton Historical Society, and The Historic Places Trust are among those who have commissioned such projects.

On the other hand, our galleries are beginning to recognise photography as a viable art form" in itself. Increasingly over the last ten years they have been accepting travelling exhibitions, and arranging their own shows — both on a local and a national level.

In the last eighteen months we have seen three specialist photographic galleries open; two in Auckland and one in Christchurch. And in Wellington Photo-Forum also has organised regular exhibitions. Some galleries, such as the Manawatu Art Gallery, and the Auckland City Art Gallery, are actively building up contemporary and historical photographic collections. It is notable and disappointing, however, that our National Art Gallery can still say that they have neither a photographic collection, nor intentions regarding photography.

Interestingly, it is the smaller public institutions and the private dealer galleries that have bravely faced the problems that photography presents as a 'new art' and they are the closest to the survival line. They must rely on the tender patronage of a not always appreciative public, who are too often 'content to view, but not buy'.

As the Pofflatt Gallery points out, photography is not yet a 'popular' art medium. There is still a real need to educate even some of the more responsive galleries in the good and bad of it. It seems that many of our museums and galleries would welcome the support of local photographers in the form of practical help, (the printing of old glass plates and negatives, for instance) and constructive criticism. It is also important that we remember the necessity of gallery visiting — galleries can not be expected to continue to show photographs if their exhibitions are poorly patronised by those interested in the medium.

Or would they be trying to squeeze blood from a stone, as the Hastings Cultural Centre's reply would suggest? 'We are keen,' they say, 'but are the photographers in New Zealand?'

For help with the publication of this survey we would like to thank those who took the time to contribute, as well as Photographic Wholesalers Ltd. for their generous advertising support.

*Ted Quinn,*

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## **PART I: PUBLIC ART GALLERIES, LIBRARIES AND MUSEUMS**

### **NORTHLAND:**

**Far North Regional Museum**, PO Box 94, Kaitaia. Local/historical. Northwood collection.

**Captain Cook Memorial Museum**, York Street, Russell. Local/historical collection from 1860 onwards on permanent display.

**Whangarei City Council Museum**, Caffer Avenue, Whangarei. Local historical (Northland)collection, in temporary recess re transfer to Northland Regional Museum. Exhibitions: United States Information Service travelling shows.

### **AUCKLAND:**

**Auckland City Art Gallery**, Kitchener Street, Auckland 1. Permanent photography collection founded 1975, under joint honorary curators Tom Hutchins and John B. Turner. Purchases made each year of contemporary and historical New Zealand work. Holdings totalling over 100 contemporary prints include: Gary Baigent, Ben Boer, Simon Buis, Glenn Busch, Gillian Chaplin, Richard Collins, Bryony Dalefield, John Daley, Rachael Feather, John Fields, Marti Friedlander, Murray Hedwig, Paul Hewson, J.H.G. Johns, Alan Leatherby, Allan McDonald, Mac Miller, Max Oetli, Peter Peryer, George Silk, Clive Stone, Do Van Toan, John B. Turner, Len Wesney and Ans Westra.

"We see these as the base for a continuing acquisition year by year so that a representative collection of contemporary and recent New Zealand work might be built up systematically".

Exhibitions organised or toured include: The Photographer's Eye, Maori in Focus, Nineteenth Century N.Z. Photo-

graphs, Brassai, Bill Brandt, New Photography U.S.A., Three New Zealand Photographers: Baigent, Collins, Fields, and Colour Photography and Its Derivatives\*.

**Auckland Central Public Library**, Wellesley Street East, Auckland 1. Local/historical collection (in N.Z. department). Their interest is in information contained in images: 8,000 glass negatives with prints, 3,200 glass negatives without prints, 7,500 film negatives with prints, 1,000 prints with or without copy negatives. Several display collections: goldfields, early aviation, etc. Touring exhibitions shown.

**Auckland Institute and Museum**, Private Bag, Auckland 1. Historical collection established 1950 by Library. Exhibitions: Photo-Forum — Contemporary N.Z. Photography, Auckland Photographic Society Annual Salon and some touring exhibitions. Original prints include: W.H. Fox Talbot, Richardson Collection, D.L. Mundy (Album of N.Z. Scenery, 1870s • 80s), John Kinder (three small albums), Bruno Hamel (accompanied Hochstetter through Auckland 1859). Original negatives by William Beattie senior (Pacific Islands, especially Melanesia), Henry Winkelmann (N.Z. scenes, yachting). (Scenes of Auckland by Winkelmann are also included in the Auckland Central Public Library), Josiah Martin (New Zealand scenes — ethnological studies of the Maori, carving, villages etc.), Breckon: staff photographer N.Z. Herald, Tudor Collins (mainly Wartwort, kauri industry etc.). (Part of Collins collection also at Matakoe museum], V.C. Cooper.

**Museum of Transport & Technology Inc.**, Great North Road, Western Springs, Auckland. Department established in 1970. Historical collection (especially aviation, transportation). Film library. Photographic equipment. Permanent displays. Concern with copying and preservation.

#### **WAIKATO:**

**Thames Mineralogical Museum**, Cochrane Street, Thames. Small historical collection (200 prints on mining). Permanent display.

**Waihi Arts Centre & Museum**, Kenny Street, Waihi local historical collection (re mining days). Permanent display. Exhibitions: Peter Maughan and Max Oetli.

**Waikato Art Museum**, Box 937, Hamilton. Historical collection of 4,000 prints (2,000 catalogued with copy negatives). Small contemporary N.Z. collection. Intending to expand collection, especially historical. Exhibitions: 3 + 1 (four Waikato Photographers\*), Marti Friedlander\*, Max Oetli\*, Mac Miller\*, Photography 1971 •, The Active Eye, Edward Weston 19th Century N.Z. Photographs, Maori in Focus, New Photography U.S.A.

**Museum of the Cambridge Historical Society**, Town Hall, Leamington, Cambridge. Local/historical collection. Permanent display. "The photographs are loaned on occasions to various groups in the town. Cambridge Rugby Assn. recently borrowed photos of various football teams — 100 years of football was recently celebrated in Cambridge".

**Te Aired & District Museum**, PO Box 526, Te Aired. Local/historical collection of 800 prints. Permanent display. Exhibitions; Local camera club and Brian Brake.

#### **BAY OF PLENTY:**

**The Elms Trust**, c/o Mr D.H. Maxwell, The Elms, Madden Street, Tauranga. A.N. Brown collection (1860-1880): 4 albums (approx. 200 each), plus 116 loose, Maxwell family collection (1870 to present day). Intend supplementing Brown collection and history of "Elms" (Te Papa Mission Station). Historical photographs available to bona fide research workers.

**Whakatane District Centennial Museum**, P.O. Box 203, Whakatane. Local/historical collection of 1,500 prints, some negatives copies and filed. Permanent display. Have shown touring exhibitions but they were not very popular.

#### **VOLCANIC PLATEAU:**

**Army Museum, Waiouru**. Historical collection of 2,000 prints. Recruiting displays etc., tentative plans for department.

**Rotorua City Museum**, PO Box 627, Rotorua. Department established 1969. Local/historical collection: 4,000 prints, 4,000 film negatives, 1,000 glass plates. Permanent and temporary displays. "The most comprehensive collection of photographs of the Volcanic Plateau".

#### **HAWKES BAY:**

**Hawkes Bay Art Gallery and Museum**, P.O. Box 429, Napier. Local/historical collection of 7,000 photographs, negatives, and glass slides. Permanent display. Exhibitions: 'Precious Moments' — James White\*, The Active Eye, Maori in Focus, Gaslight on Muddy Streets. Article in May/June 1971 issue New Zealand Photography by Bruce Weatherall.

**Hastings City Cultural Centre**, Private Bag, Hastings. Local/historical collection. Keen to exhibit work of "innovative and artistic merit." Exhibitions: Historical Architecture of France (ex French Embassy), 'Old Hastings in Photographs' \*. "We are keen, but are the photographers in New Zealand???? We would welcome any suggestions you have for photographic exhibitions."

#### **TARANAKI:**

**Govett-Brewster Art Gallery**, PO Box 647, New Plymouth. 19th Century N.Z. Collection. Exhibitions: 19th Century N.Z. Photographs\*\*, The Active Eye, Edward Weston. Interested in further exhibitions and purchase, mainly of 19th Century work.

**Taranaki Museum**, PO Box 315, New Plymouth. Local/historical collection. (Also glass plate collection from an Opunake photographer, 1880-1940). Intend cataloguing collection and maintaining historical record of Taranaki. Permanent display of Colonist "portraits.

#### **MANAWATU:**

**Manawatu Art Gallery**, PO Box 565, Palmerston North. No departments. "Flexible bodies, minds and cupboards". Acquisition of photography since 1974. Holdings include: Maori in Focus (42 works), Jim Payne (2 works), David Aitken (1 work), Glenn Busch (portfolio). Intend purchase of contemporary work on regular basis, i.e. large proportion of 'The Active Eye' likely to be bought.

Exhibitions: Photography 1971, Leith Jennings & Jim Payne\*, New Photography U.S.A. (& Workshop), The Active Eye\*\*, Environment Ketetahi (David Aitken)\*\*, Max Oetli "Night Out\*", Marti Friedlander, Edward Weston, Cody Photographs and works by Noel Trustrum & David Aitken, Maori In Focus\*\*, Bill Brandt.

Photographs also included in group exhibitions, e.g. annual Manawatu Review. The new gallery will have space for permanent displays and accessible print storage for study purposes.

**Manawatu Centennial Museum**, PO Box 153, Palmerston North. Department established 1970, with main concern record of artifacts etc. Historical material lodged with Palmerston North Public Library. Exhibitions: Kibbutz (Israel Office of Information), China (Chinese Embassy), Photographs by Brian Brake.

**Saricant Gallery**, PO Box 548, Wanganui. Have had photographs in permanent collection since 1925. Denton International Print Collection (83 prints) 1925, Frank Denton Collection (46 prints) 1965, Ken Griffiths' Flesh Series: Mortuary (12 Prints) 1976. Exhibitions: Environment Ketetahi (David Aitken), Three New Zealand Photographers, Civil Engineering in Switzerland, Photography as a Fine Art (U.S.I.S.), Max Oetli Photographs, Professional Photographers' Association Exhibition, The Active Eye, Wanganui Camera Club Annual Exhibition\*.

#### **WAIRARAPA:**

**Norsewood Pioneer Museum**, North Norsewood. Local/historical collection.

**Wairarapa Arts Centre**, PO Box 90, Masterton. Exhibitions: Commemoration of Centennial of Masterton, Trust Lands Trust, 1972\*, Max Oetli, Maori in Focus, The Active Eye. Interested mainly in local work.

#### **WELLINGTON:**

**Academy of Fine Arts**, Private Bag, Wellington. Exhibition: "Ex Camera", 1977\*.

**Alexander Turnbull Library**, P.O. Box 12-349, Wellington. Department established 1944. Historical collection of about 141,000 negatives, 148,000 prints and 583 albums. Displays from collection 4-6 per year, and "Maori Heritage". "Will continue collecting, organising and making historical photographs available. Basic purpose of collection is to serve historical research workers".

**Dowse Art Gallery**, P.O. Box 30-396, Lower Hutt. Exhibitions: Ans Westra\*, Brian Brake (40 Photographs)\*\*, Canadian Photographs and The Active Eye. "The Dowse is committed to photography as an art form and will do what it can in education and display to further this commitment."

**National Archives, Department of Internal Affairs**, 85 The Terrace, Wellington. Historical collection of about 13,000 prints from 1890 to 1965. "Photographs included in archive's groups according to provenance. As holdings increase is hoped to acquire specialist staff and equipment for preservation."

**National Art Gallery**, Private Bag, Wellington. "Over the eight years that I have been here there have been about six exhibitions.

**National Museum**, Private Bag, Wellington. Department (with varied emphasis) since about 1905. About 60,000 negatives comprised of the following main collections: Burton Bros/Muir & Moodie (Maori portraits & N.Z. topographical views 1880-1910), G.L. Adkin (family photographs & views of Horowhenua and Wellington, 1910-1940), Chapman-Taylor (concerned mainly with his architecture), G.H. Burt (commercial and industrial work, 1920-1940), F.B. Butler (commercial portraiture & views around Taranaki 1870-1940), Thos. Andrew (Samoa: people and scenes 1900-1915), Spencer Digby (commercial portraiture and industrial work 1930-1950), James Bragge (Wellington and Wairarapa scenes, buildings, about 1875), Connolly & Co. (portraits of Wellington dignitaries, about 1887), American Photographic Co. (Maori portraits, about 1870). Also a large number of original prints including work of Rev. John Kinder, Alfred Burton, George Moodie, Josiah Martin, James Bragge, W.H. Davis and Frank Coxhead. Exhibitions: Gaslight on Muddy Streets\* •, Maori in Focus, 19th Century N.Z. Photographs, Camera in the Coral Islands\*\*, Wellington 1857-1973\*\*, D.S.I.R. Science Photography\* •, Brian Brake, and Raupo and Velvet\* •.

**Police Museum**, Private Bag, Trentham. Historical/crime collection of about 100 prints. Intention is to build up historical collection.

#### **MARLBOROUGH:**

**Renwick Museum**, High Street, Renwick, Blenheim. Local historical collection of 800 photographs. Permanent display. "We find the old photographs are of keen interest to the elderly folk but of little interest to the younger ones".

#### **NELSON:**

**Cawthron Institute Museum**, PO Box 175, Nelson. Local/historical collection. Davies N.Z. plants collection. Permanent display.

**Murchison Museum**, PO Box 108, Murchison. Local/historical collection (Murchison earthquake, gold mining). Permanent display.

**Nelson Provincial Museum**, PO Box 313, Nelson. Department established 1973. Historical collection (from 1850s to 1940s), includes about 250,000 negatives. Photographers include the Tyree brothers, W. Davis, W.E. Brown, T. Bloch, Davis & Nairn, Brusevitz, Kingsford, J.N. Jones. Local historical collection. Darkroom facilities. Tyree exhibition in preparation. Permanent displays.

#### **WEST COAST:**

**West Coast Historical Museum**, Hamilton Street, Hokitika. W. Heinz Collection, Ken Shannon Collection (local/historical). Interest is in Westland. Permanent display. "Small museums suffer financial difficulties in catering for research and processing."

#### **NORTH CANTERBURY:**

**Arthur's Pass National Park Headquarters, Arthur's Pass**. Intention is to expand photographic coverage of the Park for records and display purposes.

#### **CHRISTCHURCH:**

**Canterbury Museum**, Rolleston Avenue, Christchurch. Department established 1972. Collections of daguerreotype, ambrotypes, tintypes, etc. and historical photographic equipment. Has about 15,000 glass lantern slides, 15,000 glass negatives and about 30,000 photographs (Canterbury, Westland, Antarctic), and an album collection. Intention is to provide reference facilities for the public (authors, researchers, family historians etc.) make copies of photographs available, preserve and prevent deterioration of material. Regular local/historical exhibitions.

**Canterbury Public Library**, Cambridge Terrace/Hereford Street, Christchurch. Historical collection, including postcards, is uncatalogued. Intention is to have a subject catalogue and proper storage, and to collect historic work. Currently doubling annual expenditure on photography books and periodicals.

**The Fenrymead Trust Technological Transport Museum**, PO Box 81, Christchurch. Historical collection includes cameras and negatives. Intention is to set up a historic camera display, Victorian photographic studio, and photographic archives as funds permit.

#### **SOUTH CANTERBURY:**

**Aigantighe Art Gallery**, 49 Wai-iti Road, Timaru. No holdings. Exhibitions: Chinese Peoples' Republic Exhibition, Sally Adair: 'Asian Journey', Christchurch Printmakers. Will continue to exhibit photographs.

#### **DUNEDIN:**

**Dunedin Public Art Gallery**, PO Box 566, Logan Park, Dunedin. Department established 1972. Photographic Society of New Zealand Permanent Collection. No plans for collection. Exhibitions: Press Photography — South Island\*, The Printmakers, U.S.I.S. (2 exhibitions), Yesterday — Today (prints from early plates). The Active Eye.

**Dunedin Public Library**, Moray Place, Dunedin. Album collection containing about 1,000 prints. Intention is to make collection more accessible, and improve storage.

**Otago Early Settlers' Association**, Lower High Street, Dunedin. Local/historical collection of about 1,000 prints. Permanent display.

**Otago Museum**, Great King Street, Dunedin. No Holdings. Dunedin Photographic Society club rooms and display area. Have shown touring exhibitions and "Would like more".

**Hocken Library**, Great King Street, Dunedin. Has 40,000 - 50,000 photographs, negatives and a full-time Photo Librarian, and knowledge to collect and care for photos.

#### **OTAGO:**

**Lakes District Centennial Museum, Buckingham Street, Arrowtown**. Local/historical Collection. Permanent display.

**Vincent County and Dunston Goldfields Museum**, Clyde, Otago. "We have originals of early settlers, dredges, sport, mining, school groups, on display under glass on wall of separate room."

#### **INVERCARGILL:**

**Invercargill Public Gallery, Anderson Park**, Invercargill. No holdings. Exhibitions: The Active Eye combined with local photographic displays and seminars. "We have probed the possibility of promoting photography with the help of the Arts Council of N.Z."

**Southland Museum, Victoria Avenue, Invercargill.** Department established 1974. Local historical collection (equipment, **films**, negatives, prints, slides, plates: 2,500 items). Exhibitions: Early Southland\* and several touring shows.

\* Originated exhibition.\*\* Originated and toured exhibition.

## **PART II: PRIVATE ART GALLERIES**

### **AUCKLAND**

**John Leech Gallery**, 106 Albert Street, Auckland. "We do not intend at present to go in for exhibitions of photography. This gallery deals only with original works of art."

**New Vision Gallery**, 8 His Majesty's Arcade, Queen Street, Auckland 1. Exhibited Gary Baigent, 1967. "We do not plan to hold further photographic shows".

**Peter Webb Galleries**, Lome Street, Auckland 1. Exhibited Peter Peryer, 1976. Intends showing works by both Paul Johns and Ian Macdonald. Peryer photographs in stock.

**Snaps — A Photographers' Gallery**, 30 Airedale Street, Auckland 1. Exhibited in 1976: Max Oetli, Rachael Feather, Peter Peryer, Murray Cammick, Ben Boer, Glenn Busch, Robin Morrison, Greg Stevens, Gillian Chaplin, Allan McDonald, Merylyn Tweedie, John Reynolds, George Balogh, Ted Quinn, Paul Hewson, John B. Turner, John Fields and Murray Hedwig.

Snaps has photographs in stock and on consignment. "Snaps in 1977 will continue to provide a regular place to exhibit and view and we hope we will promote a greater understanding of photography."

**The Photographers' Gallery**, Brown's Mill, Durham Lane, Auckland 1. Exhibited: 'Erotic Photographs' by eleven Auckland photographers, Robin Morrison, John Owens, Kim Goldwater and stock showings. Photographs are held in stock and on consignment. Their intentions are to "give photographers a chance to display their work on a permanent basis, and to let the New Zealand public see the work being done in photography." "Surprised at the lack of drive many photographers appear to have regarding their own work."

**Pofflatt Gallery**, Pollen Street, Thames. "We would be happy to carry works on consignment provided the prices are reasonable and such as to stimulate sales. We feel that photography is not yet recognised by the public as an art medium, and that until there is a response from the buying public the attractiveness of the photographic exhibition from the point of view of sales is limited. The public would be content to view, but not buy, particularly at the prices now asked. Some guarantees as to permanence of materials, and the limitation of editions might attract the collector. Until the photograph is on the same acceptance basis as say screenprints and etchings and promoted on the same lines, I see little hope for its development as a popular art medium."

### **HAMILTON:**

**Waikato Society of Arts**, Victoria Street, Hamilton. Exhibited: Waikato Society of Arts Photography Group (annually), Photography as a Fine Art: work by students in America (U.S.I.S.), and a three-man show by George Lelieveld (Auckland), Jim Payne and Des Kelly (Wellington). "We have not found photographs particularly saleable but we encourage photography because we consider it a viable art form. Members of the Society belong to our Photography Group because they are disenchanted with what camera and photographic societies offer."

### **WELLINGTON:**

**Antipodes Gallery**, Hope Gibbons Building, Comer Taranaki and Dixon Streets, Wellington 1. Exhibited Peter Gabelle, 1976. They intend "to present photographs only if a sincere attempt has been made to explore and develop the medium in a creative way. It is a medium that is yet to be accepted by a lot of people as an art form. We noticed that in the current Printmakers exhibition touring the country a lot of the artists had used photography in some form."

**Mark Twain Gallery**, Copperfield Centre, Beach, Paraparaumu. "We have been approached by individuals regarding exhibitions but to date no firm arrangements have been made. We would be prepared to hold photographic exhibitions."

**Taj Mahal Gallery**, Courtenay Place, Wellington 1. Exhibited: '36 Exposures' (eight Wellington photographers), 'Taking Off', Anne Noble, 'Wellington Thomas Gordon Cody', 'A Private View', Ans Westra, and 'Photographs by Trevor Ulyatt, Posters by Frank Wylie'. "Taj Mahal exhibition space is hired by Wellington Photo-Forum for exhibitions. It is not generally accepted as part of the Wellington gallery circuit and it has problems with humidity. Photo-Forum is aiming at setting up a Photographers' Centre in Wellington, with a gallery incorporated, but this scheme naturally depends on available finance". (Latest news is that the Taj Mahal has been closed, with Photo-Forum/Wellington looking for new accommodation.)

**Wellington Settlement Gallery**, 155 Willis Street, Wellington. Exhibited: 'The Active Eye', Warwick Teague, Victoria Ginn and Sally Adair. Although they have no photographs in stock or on consignment, they would be interested in doing so. "We have received excellent response and interest in shows held to date and would be most interested in showing further work (we would be pleased to receive enquiries for further one man or group shows in 1977)".

### **NELSON:**

**Suter Art Gallery**, Queen's Gardens, Nelson. "Would be very interested in any photographic exhibitions. This is a semi-public Art Gallery interested in showing anything really creative."

**CHRISTCHURCH:**

**Canterbury Society of Arts**, 66 Gloucester Street, Christchurch 1. Exhibited: group shows, 'New Artists 1976' and Paul Johns in 1976. "We would like to widen this particular aspect of the visual arts. The "Print Gallery" is most conducive to photographic exhibitions."

**Labyrinth Gallery**, 27 New Regent Street, Christchurch. Exhibited: Glenn Busch and Larence N. Shustak, Merylyn Tweedie, and Dr Joel Cayford. The Gallery holds prints in stock and on consignment. "We are prepared to hold exhibitions of full time photographers, but unfortunately due to the premises going up for sale I have to suspend the Labyrinth Gallery until I find suitable premises. I have noted that in the last two years the public are taking a great deal more interest in photography, but unfortunately they are not prepared to pay the high prices that many artists put on their work.

**The Photographers' Gallery**, Artist's Quarter, 40 Oxford Terrace, Christchurch 1. Exhibited: Larence N. Shustak and Markham Mail. "We officially opened on 19th September 1976 and are exhibiting our second show at the present time. Our only interest lies in the creative photography field. We expect to have one exhibition per month; our bookings now take us into mid 1977."

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