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THE ART MARKET AND THE STATE IN BRITAIN  
A critical examination of the relationship between  
the contemporary British state subvention system for  
visual arts and various art markets

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May 1989

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My academic and administrative colleagues in the Department of Arts Policy and Management of the City University and in particular Professor John Pick who has helped me with his example, comments and judicious enquiries concerning my progress. My postgraduate students who have required me to explain myself. I am particularly indebted to all those who have followed my MA modules of study and who have gone on to develop Long Studies in areas related to my research. The many conversations I have had with my research students have likewise provided information and moral support, being fewer in number I have space to mention those here relevant by name, Michael Fopp, David Whiting and latterly Phyllida Shaw. Janet Summerton compiled fig3 for me and is advancing her own parallel research dealing with art worlds.

There are many individuals from both the public and private sector who have talked to me and my students about their own work in the arts. My negative critique of the public sector does not imply the same of them as individuals.

In presenting an argument it is necessary to cite examples and those beyond the scrutiny of publication may well have been better. I am, therefore, grateful to all those

individuals who have gone on record.

It is obvious from my text and references that my work has benefited from the labour of others in the same field. I have drawn on the work of Dr Nicholas Pearson and Andrew Brighton, accepting their invitation to examine the shared attitudes and beliefs of the Art world. Borrowing a popular horticultural metaphor from my subject, their spade-work has allowed me to cultivate my critique.

Finally it is necessary to thank my wife, daughter and friends, for, as ever, their forbearance. I hope they consider my lengthy retreat worthwhile. They may be pleased to know that I now have a greater awareness of my own economic situation as a visual artist. Whether I am able to capitalise on it remains to be seen.

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis is an examination of the complex relationship between a broadly defined art market and the British State. It is an examination of the visual arts economy within a British market economy.

It demonstrates the state's failure to support and improve this economy even as it declares such a commitment.

For the sake of the visual arts and the national economy, an alternative to the Orthodoxy of the State is argued and a mechanism for its achievement proposed. This has required me to reveal and question some firmly held attitudes and beliefs about art, artists, connoisseurs and public good. Although they constitute a comfortable notion of patronage for a minority, these contemporary notions of art, artist and connoisseur contribute to a decidedly uncomfortable economy for the majority.

For Mil and Miriam.

"Think not to find one meant Resemblance there  
We lash the Vices but the Persons spare"  
William Hogarth

## INTRODUCTION

This thesis is about the Art Market of international dealing in art objects and about those other markets for art which exist, some barely, and those which might exist if it wasn't for a peculiarly limited definition of art prevalent today.

An attempt to develop an economic argument for the general welfare of art and market, with a particular focus on the art and artists of today, must begin with an examination of the language of discourse about art. My research confirms that too many ambitions to improve art and its economy have been thwarted by a parochial view of that which constitutes the subject. In the first part of this thesis I, therefore, take some trouble to understand the role of art in our specialised and compartmentalised culture. In contrast to the work experience of some art-makers today, in our own and other countries, and the experience of anyone who looks at the working habits and conditions of artists of the past, we now seem to have a very particular definition of art. Art is, now, that which is made by the romantic self-expressive artist. A once integrated tradition of art, craft and design now appears separated with varying degrees of commitment or contempt for the above notion of artist. Networks of emotional, intellectual and commercial vested interest sustain this phenomena and in so doing blind us to

possibilities present in the history of art. We are now, obliged to over-look the application of art with the diversified practice which characterised the working lives of artists in former times. Artists are now required to choose between Fine Art rigorously unapplied or the rigorous application of their art skills. If they choose the latter they run the risk of not being taken seriously as artists by those who have made it their business to exploit art. These individuals I have given the generic name Connoisseurs with members of the species having a variety of professional names and sub-species yet others, eg dealers (auctioneers, agents) arts administrators (keepers, curators).

In Part Two I look at the various now separate strands of an image-making tradition and how they are exploited by private art markets and their connoisseur entrepreneurs. I identify four or five strands but I have chosen to concentrate on the two most dominant and then on the most dominant sub-strands within one of them, the Art Market. (In order to distinguish this art market from others I will continue to use capital initial letters.)

As Brighton and Pearson point out it is important not only to describe the various art markets but also to reveal a consensus of "values and beliefs" if a critique is to be advanced. I have tried, therefore, to utilise a broad range of available resource material. It is, in itself, evidence of the dominance of the Art Market of international dealing in

art objects and its success at appropriating our definition of art that material on this market predominates. Here a sort of sensational exposé journalism can be contrasted with a sober and statistically exhaustive scholarship (1/2)

I have tried to utilise both types of material and steer a course between them in my account. Autobiographical accounts by participants have also been widely used because they have proved effective ways of revealing shared attitudes, values and beliefs. I have also benefited from descriptive models provided by other researchers not least Brighton and Pearson but latterly Becker which I have freely used and, I hope, not abused. (3/4) Whatever their authors conclude, I hope they are reassured by my attempt to create a broad paradigm which returns the application of art and modern media to our consideration. Magazine and newspaper journalism has also helped me keep a living and developing phenomena in focus and up to date. It has also confirmed my own observations where there is a paucity of more solid published information.

In addressing art markets I have revealed the work of those connoisseur entrepreneurs who risk their own capital in a risky business with the outside chance of substantial profit. The most successful can justly claim connoisseurship, the ability to recognise excellence, at least within the terms and conditions of the market they're in business to exploit. Like everyone else involved in risky commodity markets they seek the best possible endorsement for their product to increase profits and minimise risk. The State is only too happy to oblige those in the art market who seem to share their values and beliefs while studiously ignoring others.

If blame is to be apportioned for such a comfortable symbiosis which uses public money it cannot be directed at the Art Market even if it is, as we will see, in receipt of all the benefits.

I devote Part Three of my thesis to a description and a critique of the State's involvement in what it chooses to call the Visual Arts. I eventually develop a focus on that nexus of public and private institutions which appear to form a cosy world of shared attitudes and beliefs and which has been called the Art World. (As previously I will identify this particular usage in my text with a capital initial letter although like "art market" the term "art world" frequently has a more general and valuable metaphoric use).<sup>(5)</sup> As with Part Two, I draw on a wide variety of sources which can be broadly characterised in the same way. My descriptive model for the pattern of state subvention capitalises on the wealth of reports on the subject although even the best of these can be predicated by limited working definitions. As with the art market I have sought to embrace applied art and modern media, as and where it appears to be supported by the State. My justification is to re-establish the paradigm of an integrated tradition. A tradition now vigorously partitioned by the State. Although my description might be seen simply as an account of the various ways public money is spent on art I demonstrate that subvention, despite protestations to the contrary, implies intervention. What is supported and how this is done, reveals those values and beliefs held by the various agents and agencies of the State. As complex as the

pattern of state subvention is, it is still possible to identify corporate attitudes, beliefs, values and intentions. The latter most easily, perhaps, because they are frequently published, by the agencies involved, in annual reports and in a recent flowering of policy and strategy documents. Although expressed in different ways, the State declares an interest in achieving an educational and improving role in co-operation with others. An examination of activity against declared intention provides a substantial indictment of the State as far as it is involved in the Visual Arts. The State doesn't do what it says it should.

To press such an indictment I have used accounts of the various agencies of the State written, not infrequently, by ex-employees or by authorised individuals. I have also used the agencies own published material, not infrequently published residue of their own events and, where available, the published statements of agents of the State, public employees. What is revealed is an arcane process of selecting and promoting "excellence" at all levels of the system: no where more so than in the visual arts in the old Arts Council maxim "few but roses" applicable today. This appears, at first glance, to be the same kind of connoisseurship as that exercised in the private market sector but in fact there is a marked difference. The connoisseurship of the dealer and auctioneer is tested by the market place and the imperative of profit if they are genuinely in business. The public sector is free from this or any other accountability to the public (except financial

auditing) for its actions.

Individualistic and intuitive selection is exercised without reference to declared aims of the agencies involved. This sort of uninhibited connoisseurship can also be found in those agencies of the State concerned with what might appear to be applied art.

An Orthodox Tradition of selective provision by connoisseurs persists in the visual arts and is pursued with an unquestioning missionary zeal more appropriate to an imperial past.\* A catalogue of failure judged against declared aims and objectives follows naturally from such conceit. A catalogue of consequences in the form of economic or audience surveys are conveniently provided by agencies capable of identifying symptoms but not causes. It is surprising that a system which places such great emphasis on a particular professionalism in artists diverting much of its attention to so called "professional artists" can be so amateurish in its approach to its own objectives.

An accumulating opposition to the values implicit in such an approach and its results, frequently motivated by a feeling of profound disadvantage, is effectively neutralised by a sort of residual addiction to such connoisseurship and to the

\* The truth of this observation was acknowledged by the one time director of the Art Department of the Arts Council of Great Britain in a BBC Radio 3 interview, Joanna Drew/Julian Spalding (1987) For Arts Sake.

ubiquitous notion of the Romantic Artist. An artist apparently equipped with magical powers but unable to work them without the intercession of a connoisseur mediator. The Alternative Tradition is gathering momentum but it too is inhibited by its own addiction to the power of uninhibited connoisseurship and the devastatingly effective administrative expedient of naming - this is an Alternative to our way of working.

In Part Four I suggest a mechanism for the reinstatement of what I have called responsible connoisseurship through the use of clear and unequivocal commissions from the State to artists and others to achieve the laudable aims and objectives of the State. I point to the much maligned Mega-Visual Tradition, particularly advertising, as a model of possibilities. An improved market economy of fine and applied art will follow from a general understanding of their reciprocal value to each other and arts value to the economy.

The usual difficulties of examining contemporary social phenomena have been encountered by me in this research. The most significant has been the accumulation of political and economic pressures which have affected changes within the systems as I write. I have, therefore, added a postscript which has addressed recent changes, testing my thesis against them. I have also added revisions to the text as well as a number of footnotes which update my arguments.

I am obliged to conclude that substantial change in the

administration of subsidy has not changed the orthodoxy. The changes seem to have been made to protect rather than to break the mould. There has also been a steady growth in some of the art markets. Auction house business has diversified and expanded and records have been broken. Sothebys currently hold the record for price fetched at auction - £30.2 millions for Vincent Van Gogh's "Irises", which is a substantial increase on the Turner cited in the main body of my text (see also appendix).

Commercial galleries have proliferated throughout out the centres of the western world with, in the UK, new concentrations of gallery activity in the Portobello and Hackney districts of London but the economic stimulus caused by de-regulation of the stock market in 1982 has suddenly and drastically ceased for a marginal market like the dealer art market in Britain. As a dealer commented recently "the 'funny money' which came into art disappeared after 'Black Monday'". The stock market crash of 1987 was followed in 1988 by the worst ever balance of trade deficit caused by a consumer boom for imported consumer goods. Home designed and manufactured goods continue to fail the test of even a booming retail market.

Paradoxically perhaps, there has been an increase in popular and specialist interest in Art, Craft and Design and their markets. A number of new books have been published and their observations have been considered. The popular media interest has been more difficult to assimilate partly because

impressions rather than arguments are presented. The majority have focused either on the glamorous power of the curator or the mystique of the artist. The striking feature of all this media attention (with sometimes elaborate production values confusing programmes with advertising) has been its focus on the same artists and the same curators. The media reflect the attitudes and beliefs of the Art World. As a telling example, BBC television celebrated the opening of the Tate of the North in Liverpool in 1988 with A week of British Art featuring British artists featured in an inaugural exhibition of the Tate's brand new, one an only northern outpost.

## PART ONE

### DEFINITIONS

#### The Market

We all know what markets are, they are as my dictionary defines, " a periodic concourse of people for the purpose of buying and selling". Most of us have experience of the general market which occupy the market squares or streets through-out Britain and from which we buy our domestic needs like fruit and vegetables. Although we are less likely to frequent them, we are also aware of other markets which specialise in meat, stocks and shares, vegetables, fish, corn, metal etc and although we could, if we so wished and if we had the expertise, confidence, time and energy participate in these markets most of us prefer to let the experts act on our behalf. The market stall holder, on the general market, will first buy his goods from the specialist market; we understand and depend on his judgement since we have criteria in common. Whatever the market, even when enhanced by computer technology, their physical existence as arenas of exchange is centrally important for business. It is the place where buyers buy and sellers sell. It is also the place where information is exchanged, produce judged and prices fixed. The flow of goods follows the universal route of producer - wholesaler/retailer - customer because it is mutually beneficial. There is, of course, no real reason why the producer can't take a stall in the market, if he can afford it, or the customer buy direct from the producer at the place of production, although the accepted wisdom

suggests, producers are usually better at producing than selling and despite the possibilities of a better price and quality (although the best might have gone to market) most of us simply can't afford the time to drive down to the country for vegetables or whatever, wherever. If the truth be told we are also a bit apprehensive of market traders parked by themselves offering apparent bargains since participation in a market validates the trader. Markets are frequently regulated by external licensing authorities eg. local authorities or by the participants themselves forming trading associations. When this happens an ethical dimension is introduced and traders can be trusted precisely because they are associated. In the event of malpractice recompense is provided by the market if not by the trader even though he might be required to by law, as with the Consumer Protection Act. Compensation funds, as with the Stock Exchange provide recompense when a member firm fails to meet its obligations. A trader or market can be validated by a prestigious client, the further removed from association with trade the better - by appointment to a royal household being a typical example. Such endorsement appears to guarantee the quality of the product, adds value and ensures further clientele for the trader. Independent consumer "watchdogs" are a feature of competitive modern markets and perhaps the best known in Britain is the Consumer Association with its magazine Which. Which can serve the same validatory purpose while protecting consumer interest. A complimentary mention is a profitable endorsement by a disinterested party.

As consumers we tend to think competition between traders is

the usual and desirable situation but there are markets in which demand far out-strips supply. Markets in which febrile competition between consumers pushes prices ever upwards. This is a trader's dream, realisable by careful control of supply and market conditions. It can also realise a dream for the lucky consumer who wins possession. Since he holds an object with investment potential provided the market continues to rise. The Stock Exchange calls this a Bull Market but they also have a name for the opposite condition, a falling market is a Bear Market. Reitlinger shows that art markets are no different to others; they can go up and down. Currently the Art Market is a booming investment market.

Control of supply is only one aspect of market control, licensing also limits the the number of participants to the benefit of those already licensed. Too many retailers trading in similar goods might create a surplus in a market with consequent reduction in unit cost and profit. In a commodity market, over-production by too many manufacturers is also a danger controllable by licence. In the art market a race memory of 17th Century Holland lingers to chasten even the most generous art dealer spirit - too may artists producing too much art for a saturated home market. In the arts, time of monastic or courtly patronage limited access to income but in a more open market of bourgeoisie patronage, as existed in 17th Century Holland and which continues through to the 20th century in the western world, artists themselves can attempt to control access. The art academies of Europe and America are such devices which give us an aspect of the

history of modernism with its succession of challenges to academic orthodoxy.

The experience of Constable with the Royal Academy of Arts in London reveals the danger for all, even those licensed to participate. A painting submitted "incognito" by Constable for inclusion in A Royal Academy exhibition was rejected as "devilish bad - cross it" (6). A problem with market control systems is that they can sometimes actually work against the best interests of participants as well as the general interest of the market.

The "Big Bang" is the nick-name for changes in the British Stock Exchange's rules and practices thought necessary to improve British competitiveness with Japan and the U.S.A.. The rule changes allow greater access, abolishing the market making monopoly of the jobbers and fixed commissions on transactions. The British art market would seem to need similar de-regulation. We need to create markets rather than restrict access.

There is also a widely used metaphorical sense to the work market deeply engrained in our culture and language. We live in a market economy where the market place is considered the acid test of all enterprise. Our "Enterprise Culture" forces engagement with a market. Burgeoning disciplines like marketing reinforce the point since they are about how to engage a consuming market. Marketing applied to the arts and latterly the visual arts reveals a tension not always creative. The arts claim an other-worldly spiritual dimension

hard to reconcile with the demands of the market place and the world of business. Speaking admittedly of another art form, Jean-Christophou Agnew describes the problematic relationship

"Theatricality is to the serious person of business what commerciality is to the serious person of the theater: a threat to the foundation of trust on which each enterprise stands. From this perspective the two figures appear to inhabit entirely different, if not wholly contradictory realms. Reality and fiction. Materialism and symbolism. Necessity and freedom. Work and play. What are these terms but variants of the pairing of market and theatre? And how else to think of them except as worlds apart? (7)

Agnew goes on to examine this relationship and he admits his conclusions are equivocal denying and affirming separate worlds.

Admittedly speaking from a hospital bed after an attempted assassination outside Andy Warhol Enterprises, the artist Andy Warhol comes to a similar conclusion:

"Business art is the step that comes after Art. I started as a commercial artist, and I want to finish as a business artist. After I did the thing called "art" or whatever it's called I went into business art. I wanted to be an Art Businessman or a Business Artist. Being good in business is the most fascinating kind of art. Du ring the hippie era people put down the idea of business - they'd say "Money is bad" and "Working is bad", but making money is art and working is art and good business is the best art". (8)

The art world indignation against Marlborough Fine Art, good business men in art, on publication of Lee Selders account of the exploitation of Rothko and the market for Rothko's after the artist's suicide was in part engendered by contrary expectations of business and art. (9) Selders account of sordid corruption (for the artistic sensibility) is in fact

the stuff of business now glamourised in soap opera (Dallas and Dynasty). The doubly glamorous world of the art market (spiritual and business) is extremely seductive. When we come to discuss the art market we must be aware of all the possibilities derived from our everyday experience. There are specialists and specialisms in the art market, art can be found in the general market although some would dispute this and there are regions where art is in demand or where a demand can be created although acquisition of the artefacts concerned may not be an important feature of certain markets. Art is used rather than acquired.

The difficulty of discussion an art market, as apposed to meat, metal or stocks is the confusion and dispute about what constitutes Art and its contemporary equivocal relationship with commerce.

## The Art and The Artist

Like so many words "artist" has a variety of meanings and interpretations. Raymond Williams in his useful book, Keywords : A Vocabulary of Culture and Society, succinctly demonstrates the history of changing usage of both "art" and "artist".<sup>(10)</sup> He also makes plain the persistence of several differing and sometimes quite different uses of the words. Unlike flesh and blood artists, old and/or differing usages do not die out suddenly. Williams takes us neatly from the 13th century general meaning of art as any kind of skill, which he points out is still active in English today, "the state of the art" for example, to the much more specialised artist as a special sort of worker, usually with the fine art processes of painting, sculpture and drawing. Although he does not go into any great detail in Key words, he indicates the accretion of creative, imaginative and expressive associations which have lead to the still not uncommon practice of capitalising "Art" and "Artist"\*. Almost in passing, he touches on a most important factor in usage by citing the example of the 18th century Royal Academy's successful attempt to exclude engraving from the list of legitimate art skills. (An interesting contemporary parallel is the various attempts to include or exclude photography; attempts which appear, likewise, motivated by a desire to restrict or gain access to a controlled market for art.) What Raymond Williams does not do is spell out a simple and

\* Raymond Williams' argument is developed in greater depth in Culture and Society: 1780-1950, Chatto & Windus, 1958

for our purpose important characteristic: in all contemporary usage, with the exception of the persistence of the 13th century general meaning and unless otherwise qualified e.g. lyric art, art is visual and artists are image makers. Image makers who create in a plastic or malleable medium in two and three dimensional images which are invariably, therefore, objects. This is, for our purpose, the useful common characteristic, a thread running through the history of mankind which enables

THE VISUAL ARTS SPECTRUM (BOTH AMATEUR AND PROFESSIONAL)

UNAPPLIED ART

APPLIED ART

(THE FINE ART TRADITION) (AND THE MEGAVISUAL TRADITION)

ART

CRAFT

DESIGN

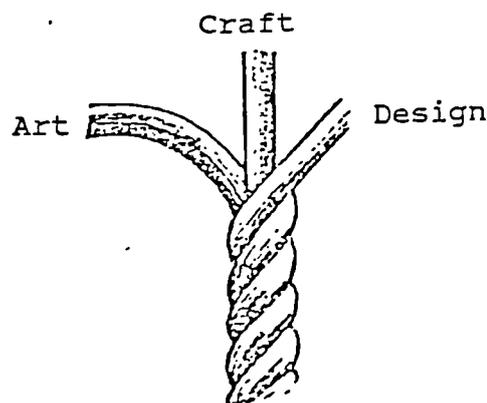
SOME COMMON IDENTIFIED SPECIES

Fine Artist, Artist-Craftsperson, Designer Maker, Designer

SOME COMMON SUB-SPECIES

Painter, Sculptor, Printmaker, Potter, Metal Worker, Graphic Designer, Illustrator, Product Designer, etc, etc may occur anywhere on the spectrum depending upon their usual market. A painter could, therefore, be a fine artist or a designer and equally a designer, by name, may be more interested in unique self expression more usually associated with fine art.

Fig. 1 (a,b)



art historians to delve into history and cultures to select, with impunity, certain extant artifacts as art and their makers as artists even when examples are taken from periods and cultures devoid of such contemporary conceptions. The eminent art historian E H Gombrich in his seminal popularising work The Story of Art uses just such a thread. He begins his introduction on "Art and Artists" by declaring boldly,

"There is no such thing as Art. There are only artists. Once there were men who took coloured earth and roughed out the forms of a bison on the walls of a cave; today they buy their paints and design posters for the Underground; they did many things in between".  
(11)

Cautioned by Williams (remembering the many meanings) but encouraged by Gombrich we can equally draw our thread horizontally through society, rather than vertically through history, to reveal a wide spectrum of art produced by contemporary artists, henceforth, in this thesis, referred to as the visual arts (who knows what a Gombrich of the future will make of our art?); a visual arts spectrum much wider than many sectional interests will admit.(fig. 1a) At one end we have those artists who provide the glamorous and persuasive imagery of advertising and who refer to themselves as graphic designers or, if they are in a managerial capacity, as art or creative directors (are these Gombrich's poster artists?). At the other end we have the avant-garde or would be avant-garde artists who usually work to their own instructions rather than to those of a client or patron. They do their "own work" rather than someone else's. In between these extremes are all those image-makers who either

produce work speculatively for a more or less predictable market, marine or landscape artists for example, or those who work for an individual patron with a commission to paint, sculpt or draw a portrait of a person or piece of property or who illustrate a particular subject or provide an image-making service for a particular industry. As is the way with contemporary specialisation and division of labour the latter might be called designers but in essence there is little to distinguish their basic activity from that of other artists. Although, as we will see, a great deal of energy is being expended to separate design from art and art and craft from design, closer examination of working method and habitat reveals a great deal in common\*. There is a common reliance on traditional fine art processes and their associated media (even when the mode of industrial mass production might translate them into others). There is also a shared language of discourse about images and a shared aesthetic in the sense that there is a remarkable consensus about what is technically proficient and appropriate. This accord is hardly surprising when we consider the majority, now practising, were trained in the same sorts of institution, art schools, with, in many cases, a shared foundation course and all draw succour from a shared inheritance of art history (where art and design is frequently undifferentiated) which presents a

\*Creative Design: A New Look at Design Principles (1987) Philip Rawson, London, Macdonald Orbis, investigates this assertion in detail.

consensus of what is thought significant and, therefore, good. (fig 1.b) Recent legitimate attempts to argue against this consensus, from a particular stand-point such as Germaine Greer's feminist The Obstacle Race are further confirmation of its existence.<sup>(12)</sup> Various ethnic or racial or social class groupings might legitimately stand in opposition to an apparently ubiquitous aesthetic and feel similarly disadvantaged. The difference between these various areas of art practice is not one of fundamental nature but rather difference occasioned by the requirements of different patronage, employment or ambition. Art as Gombrich contends is defined by artists but particular artists are defined by the patronage they receive. Referring to the market of my title they are defined by the history of usage, themselves and their peers and the market (as patron) or that part of the market in which they operate or aspire to operate. Its not necessary to be successful to be influenced by a market. As long as the market exists definitions can remain constant. When markets collapse, as they can, or when they are unable to sustain all those willing to participate , artists, like everyone else, must redefine their activity; find new markets if they and their art are to survive. This process does not, or perhaps I should say, should not, disqualify them as artists.

When any of these artists (and designers) or their advocates refer to themselves or to their art they are happy to evoke the more generalised, positive and rather mysterious associations which Williams informs us lead to the

capitalisation of Art or Artist. In practice today the tendency to capitalise seems to be innate, confirming immediate association, however tenuous, with the great of art history. The professional portrait painter will be proud of his/her lineage back to and beyond Rembrandt and even the most laconic amongst them will be able to recite anecdotes of "the master`s" behaviour as justification of their own; usually an attempt to avoid the overly specific requirements of the patron. Graphic artists and designers are well versed in the efficacy of the judicious uses of the artistic, with costume to match, when it comes to convincing a client over a lucrative contract and even advocates of the avant-garde (or whatever the current acceptable term) will lay claim to abilities, like "lateral thinking", which may recommend them in a renewed courtship of a reluctant old flame architecture as patron but which is clearly not the prerogative of artists nor likely to occur in the majority of artists obliged to produce minute variations on the same theme in compliance with a dealer market\*. A market they usually aspire to inhabit.

The cachet attached to art and artists is a potent force which is utilised by many in the general market of our market economy. So efficacious can it be in securing a sale that the words art and artist are quickly co-opted by those anxious to market goods and services which by no stretch of the imagination can be called art or made by artists.

\*Lateral thinking is a term coined by Edward de Bono whose Cognitive Research Trust seeks to develop creative and effective thinking for all.

Capitalised Art and Artist has suffered the same fate as Professional, Executive, Style, Trend and latterly Design and soon Classic. They have become misused, as adjectives, to improve the dubious status of anything we care to name eg Executive Suite and Designer Jeans are classic cases. Through excessive use in this way applied to blatantly inappropriate objects the words quickly acquire originally far from intended perjorative overtones. While not directly responsible for this particular abuse and negative implication the art community, all more or less culpable, are responsible for others. Like many other professionals, doctors and lawyers for example, artists have encouraged a mystique to surround their work. Art is held to be an all-faculty process where uniquely the artist communions emotionally, intuitively, intellectually with the muse through a non-verbal medium to produce the unique artefact, the work of art. With such a promotion art like law and medicine (similarly claiming special powers) can be lucrative but also vulnerable to the "Kings New Clothes" accusation: their professional clothes are sometimes transparent. Artists, lawyers, doctors once their mystique is broken can be revealed naked and only too frail, human and sometimes not worth the money paid. Art with a capital "A" invites debunk. It too can be an ass\*. A commitment to the image of artist as a sort of super-medium through a plastic medium can lead the impressionable artist to neglect person, family as well

\*The work of Biff Products pokes fund at artists and arts administrators with postcards like How to behave at a preview .

as the social, management and communication skills which are the necessities of normal life; especially when encouraged by apparent believers in the form of art educators or arts administrators to do so. Abnormality, simulated or real, alienates as well as attracts and so it can be with art especially if some hold "it's high culture" and if you don't understand why it is so then you're a philistine who should be either left in ignorance or given help to gain "access" to the mysteries. This profoundly patronising attitude implicit in the words and deeds of many professional mediators who conveniently forget that today's "high" was frequently yesterday's "low" alienates as many as it convinces. This then is the rag-bag of usage and association both positive and negative which art and artists normally carry around and with which artists, arts administrators and art educators must contend. Whenever we meet someone new using the words we have to work-out just what meanings they're using or abusing; we can be sure they imply a capital A, even in irony or opposition.\*

Thankfully, there are others who just do it, drawing, painting and sculpting, potting, weaving or taking photographs.<sup>(13)</sup> Going back to our spectrum, at the one end the jobbing printer will turn his hand to a bit of artwork to get the job done, perhaps because the graphic artist is out to lunch or financially out of reach. At the other end

\*Sir Roy Shaw, one time Secretary-General of the Arts frequently demonstrated his position and that of the Council by drawing attention to the need to make "accessible" as well as available that which the Council or its clients had chosen through the exercise of "critical judgements" (the title of

the 1980-81 ACGB Annual Report).

the artisan working in the same medium as an avant-garde artist will make a piece of "modern art" declaring, "even a child can do it" perhaps in parody of a recently publicised example and unaware of the self indictment. In between the expedience and the parody there are millions of adults and children drawing, painting and sculpting not for profit or posterity but for pleasure, relaxation and simple expression. The art teacher in general education still guided by Herbert Read and his "education through art" dictate is convinced art is as efficient as, or in some ways superior to, numeracy and literacy as a way of making sense of experience. (14)

Similarly, the art therapist can see and is employed by those who can appreciate the all too apparent benefits of painting, drawing and sculpting for the mentally or physically ill or handicapped. The designation Art and Artist (with capital A) is given by others not by the makers (at least not until they are made aware of their status as Artists and the potential profit therein). All those who just do it are amateur artists although paradoxically some amateurs, with no professional training but substantial income, are more professional than some professionals (at least as far as the Inland Revenue is concerned). As we will see "professional" too has its users and abusers. We should always, in a discussion of an art market be aware of the primary dictionary definition of professional as making a living and the secondary definition of qualification and eligibility to practice; as well as the cachet attached to the word itself implying expertise, quality and reliability. A professional

artist can be doubly endowed or doubly handicapped. A special sort of professional amateurism is required by the State of its artists and arts administrators frequently justified in the name of "artistic freedom" or freedom from "committee compromise".\*

Although happy, as I have said, to accept the accretion of qualities now associated with capitalised art many artists and/or their promoters are anxious to qualify themselves and their activity. They identify themselves or their protégés as makers of a particular genre eg marine or equestrian artists, or as working in a particular medium eg watercolours; as professional (especially if it is not self evident from income) as opposed to amateur or as generally opposed through race, temperament or politics to what is seen as the art establishment. As further examples we therefore have "community artists" and "ethnic artists" who see themselves or sometimes they are seen by others as under-represented or as not having the same rationale or aesthetic as an elitist British Art Establishment. This qualification can also be a way of finding or being placed in a niche; a place in a special market. Although in the short term perhaps such designations are necessary in relationship to the administration of state subsidy, say, in the long term

\* See for examples Contemporary Arts Society p238 for an example of the Connoisseur freedom. George Bernard Shaw's character Tanner in Man and Superman defines artistic freedom - "the true artist will let his wife starve, his children go barefoot, his mother drudge for his living at seventy, sooner than work at anything but his art".

there is no absolute reason to suppose these artists are profoundly different from any other sort of artist. They are, after all, image makers usually working in the traditional media who, like everyone else, would like the opportunity to do what they are good at and make a living from their art and/or art skills. They are not really a special breed or species of artist requiring different treatment.

There is then no single water-tight definition of art apart from Gombrich's pragmatism of that which is made by artists. Instead we have today, as perhaps never before, a wide variety of apparent specialisations all drawing succour from the same root system of the history of art. An attempt to examine and come to conclusions about the art market requires closer examination of the separated strand which once constituted the strong rope of art (fig 1b).

A final observation must be made before moving on to this examination. The multiplicity of sectional interests, formed to carve out a place in a market, combined with a generally cultivated and accepted 19th century romantic image of the artist, as a special sort of person struggling in isolation to realise a personal vision, has led, in the 1980's, to a fragmented community of artists unwilling or unable to take an overview of their predicament nor yet able to present a unified front. There is, therefore, nothing comparable in strength or efficiency in the visual arts to the musicians' or actors' union or to the Performing Rights Society although

there is a great variety of professional associations and self interest groups. (15)

Musicians and actors would seem to be no more immune to the romantic image but they have learnt to apply their art as well as keep it for themselves. Acting or playing in a television commercial is still acting or music and not a separate category of activity reserved for others and scorned by professional actors and musicians.

## PART TWO

### THE PRIVATE ART MARKET: TRADITIONS OF TRADING IN VISUAL ART

#### The Mega-Visual Tradition: a market for images

In his 1982 Power Lecture Peter Fuller observes "...the Fine Arts had become only a small strand in what I have called elsewhere, 'the mega-visual tradition' of monopoly capitalism. Here I am referring to such phenomena as photography, mass-printing, bill boards, neon-signs, television, video, holography and so on with which we are constantly surrounded." Whether or not we agree with his subsequent dismissal of these media as not being "the mode of the aesthetic dimension in our time" we cannot help but accept his observation about our image saturated culture.<sup>(16)</sup> The Mega-Visual Tradition is all about us and has an almost insatiable appetite for new and seductive imagery.

If we accept Gombrich's more cautious and liberal definition of art (aesthetic dimension) it can be said that it is the mega-visual tradition which is the major employer (patron) of artists and the major way in which the majority of the population experience art today. In other words, the Mega-Visual Tradition is the major component in the art market and not as we might have supposed the art dealers, as retailers, or the Arts Council of Great Britain or the National museums of art as customers. It is hard to quantify a phenomenon as diverse as the Mega-Visual Tradition but if we attend to

\* Peter Fuller's ideas are developed in many articles periodically published in compendia, eg Beyond the Crisis in Art (1980), London, Writers and Readers.

advertising, arguably the most ubiquitous form and "closer to the aesthetic dimension than straight-forward photography" we can begin to apprehend the scale of operation. It is estimated that over £4 billion was spent on advertising in 1984.<sup>(17)</sup> Contemporary image-makers (artists) in the service of advertising can be extremely well paid. According to sources within the profession, a competent photographer can earn £500 - £2,000 per day for a "shoot" and similarly graphic designers and illustrators can command high incomes, especially if self employed. A single illustration for advertising can earn the illustrator or visualiser £50 to £1000 depending on the time spent and the reputation of the artist and the particular market.<sup>(18)</sup> Whether or not Peter Fuller considers the end product art many, if not all, of the image-makers, including photographers, in line seemingly with Gombrich, consider themselves artists and are paid handsomely for their skill.

Apparently, not satisfied with being paid well and the validation their own section of the art market can provide, a growing number of these artists are seeking recognition for their art outside the professional world of what was once happily called "commercial art". They are developing dual-careers as commercial artists and fine artists. These professional (in all senses of the word) artists now preserve the original "art-work" of their commercial art, protect its use through rigorous and professional application of copyright law and produce self-initiated work which can and

is being exhibited and offered for sale in the more traditional section of the art market, the Fine Art Market of dealers and galleries. A number of galleries are happy to show such work - some even specialise - but, as they will acknowledge, it rarely receives the critical attention it might deserve nor is it bought in any significant degree for public collections which purport to represent British Art. These artists seem to participate in the fine art section of the market not so much for financial reward but for the recognition as Artists which such participation might bring. They are seeking validation for themselves from the market. Usually they are disappointed in this respect since they have been categorised as a particular sort of inferior commercial artist, irretrievably compromised by their usual patronage; the Mega-Visual Tradition.\* Although extreme, Peter Fuller's observations are typical of a general prejudice against the mega-visual.

Faced with this irrationality, we could equally question the morality use, and motives of much art patronage in the past without disqualifying the artists and their art, there can be a natural defensive response such as that expressed by artist Ian Pollack;

"when I hear the word 'Art' I reach for my Rapidograph. Illustration is not so precious; it's influenced by fashion and taste and by what's happening today, I like that."(19)

Although a legitimately defiant remark from a well respected artist in the service of the mega-visual it does reveal a

\*Berstein on "commercial" as perjorative see p 53.

popular assumption about capitalised Art. Ian Pollack assumes Art (his capital) isn't influenced by fashion, taste and what's happening today. Art (with a capital A) isn't above such influences, as a quick look at Art magazines or round galleries will reveal.

Although the photograph which accompanies this comment contains a poster by Ian Pollack advertising a Royal Shakespeare Company production of King Lear, he is more usually employed in the creation of illustrative material for publications such as books and magazines. The plethora of illustrative imagery for purposes other than advertising distributed through "mass printing" makes publishing, in its various forms, another significant mega-visual element of the art market along with advertising and all those listed by Peter Fuller.

Although we may for various more or less legitimate reasons question the morality and aesthetics of advertising or simply the ubiquitousness of the Mega-Visual Tradition in general we cannot deny it is a major user of art and employer of artists; unless, of course, we choose a special Luddite definition of art and in so doing deny the mega-visual artist a place in the Art Pantheon and participation in a market of validation, as the Royal Academy of Art once denied engravers and for not dissimilar reasons\*. The imagery of advertising may be lucrative but it is still not Art according to some observers.

\*See Derek Jarrat (1976) The Ingenious Mr Hogarth, London, Michael Joseph.

There are however significant differences between this form of art and patronage and others. One is the presence of a dialogue between artist and patron (although patron might not be the word used). The resulting art work is a product of the artists technical and interpretative skill in response to the "clients" (patrons) "brief" (instructions). Another significant difference is the the presence of other people at the various stages of the creative process. The resulting image may well be the individual artists but many others will have been involved in its evolution. Christopher Frayling itemises the process and the people involved under "Who does what in an advertising agency". He goes on,

"Different agencies have different labels for their departments. Ad-people are among the most nomadic in the western world, and at present upwards of 15,000 of them work in British agencies. The most standard practice is as follows:

The creative director coordinates the various creative teams.

The chief executive officer brings in new clients.

The copywriters put together the words.

The art directors put together the visual design.

The researchers prepare studies of the client, the product and the market, and they feed the results into the creative departments.

The account executives liaise between the clients and the various heads of department in the agency.

The media department liaises between representatives from the media and their opposite numbers in the agency.

The art directors often farm out projects, or parts of projects, to production companies and graphics companies outside - hence the use of "big name" film directors for television commercials and distinguished artists and designers for posters."(20)

The images, then, in the Mega-Visual Tradition, are the product of an essentially linear, group problem-solving process. A general briefing from the client is followed by

identification of the specific task by the agency; interpretation (both visual and verbal) is made by artist and copywriter; presentation (which may occur several times) and ultimate selection by the client is guided by the various expertise of the agency. What is sold to the client is the expertise of the agency and the resulting image not, as is the case with other aspects of the art market, the actual art work. The client may receive exclusive use of the image for the duration of the advertising campaign but usually copyright reverts to the artist (or agency) and the artwork remains the artist's property. The artist is a member of a team not an isolated individual like his fine art counterpart.

A mega-visual tradition with an insatiable appetite for images requires its artists to work to its tight schedules and to be ever vigilant for new images which he or she might derive from his/her own research work as (fine artists) or frequently from the self motivated research of other artists working exclusively in the Fine Art Tradition. There is a substantial catalogue of such borrowing which some might consider unlicensed application of research. Examples seem to take two forms, the first is generally influenced by the imagery of a particular fine art school or movement. Surrealism, for example, is repeatedly and widely used by advertising. Examination of the Arts Council of Great Britain's catalogue for its collection of "work by British artists" confirms my previous assertion of neglect but reveals a few exceptions. Surreal photographs by Brian Duffy

and Adrian Flower bought from the advertising agency Collett, Dickenson, Pearce and Partners Ltd., were originally used in the Benson and Hedges award winning cigarette advertising campaign.<sup>(21)</sup> More specifically, a lavish promotion of a particular fine artists' work by a public sector gallery, like the 1984 Hayward Gallery exhibition of David Hockney's photo-compositions spawned a family of quite blatant imitations, advertising products as diverse as shirts, watches, photocopiers and cars. Although Hockney wasn't the first to use the post-cubist, post N.A.S.A. technique of fragmented compositions with a collage of photographs, it is fair to acknowledge that he made it his own, for a while, and demonstrated its potential in art. In other areas of creativity, science or music for example, blatant borrowing might well be the basis for legal action and financial compensation, if proved. Unlicensed commercial exploitation of the fine arts is not uncommon nor is it a new phenomena although litigation and recompense are virtually unknown. In the 1960's the painter Bridget Riley developed a great variety of optical effects which were quickly and widely exploited by the fashion and advertising industries. The art and design of the more distant past can likewise be exploited with little if any reward for the public institutions which act as unwitting and free reference facilities for those wishing to develop new products or campaigns.) Advertising and the other applied art industries do not, as a rule, acknowledge this free research service, on the contrary they are quite prepared to, on the one hand, exploit fine art imagery or the general cachet of art (witness the number of advertisements that use galleries or proximity to art works)

and on the other to poke fun, almost in revenge(?), at the overly serious art and artist. Several 1985 bill-board and television campaigns for beer and household paint did just that. (22)

The artists in the service of the Mega-Visual Tradition are a highly paid group of professionals who work openly and directly to their patron's instructions. Their art like any other branch of professional art draws succour from art history, is sometimes original and nearly always well crafted, once it reaches the consumer. Yet it remains largely unacknowledged as serious art worthy of critical consideration in an art historical context. What these professionals lack is not income but status as Artists. It is, as we will see, a sad contemporary irony that many of their siblings in the so called professional fine arts have a sort of status as Artists confirmed by their art school training, if not by their subsequent experience, but little, if any, income from the practice of their art. These fine artists eschew a direct dialogue with a patron and, therefore, the possibility of a reliable income while maintaining, somehow, life and limb and personal art output in the statistically vain hope of success in another art market which seems to command serious art historical consideration. What better, if ironic, confirmation of this situation can we have than the largest private collection of contemporary art in Britain. The collection of advertising executive Charles Saatchi and his wife Doris doesn't contain examples of advertising art. The relatively small British

holding in this collection is drawn from a small international "Art World" within the universe of the Fine Art Tradition.(23)

Despite the occasional guest appearance of big name fine artists in advertising, used more for the cachet of their name as artists than for their ability to produce apposite imagery, a yawning gap exists between contemporary applied art advertising and contemporary unapplied art, fine art. Participation in one market seems to prevent participation in another. The word "illustrator" is also now a mild perjorative. As Nigel Pollitt succinctly puts it "As an illustrator, he might well be regarded by the doyens of international fine art as some kind of fellow traveller, nice, but not quite in the same car."(24)

## The Fine Art Tradition : A Market for Objects

As can be seen from our spectrum, the Fine Art Tradition like the Mega-Visual Tradition embraces a great deal of activity. The unifying characteristic of this diverse universe is a reliance on the traditional art processes of painting, drawing, carving, modelling and printmaking without subsequent mass production and distribution (although limited production and distribution is accepted). Many practitioners are prepared to define themselves, apparently in self deprecation, as simply painter, carver or, being still somewhat problematic, artist-printmaker. A new quarterly journal of the fine arts is called Modern Painters. The adherence to such old-fashioned labour intensive, craft image making processes, with latterly a marked preference for traditional media within them, like oil rather than acrylic paint, is important to the self image of the various exponents as artists, to the art market which serves them by selling their art product and confirmed with renewed vigour by all those who argue, through invidious comparison with "mechanical" media, for the superior and organic quality of these traditional processes.\*

In an otherwise fragmented universe the consensus seems to be total. Even advocates of "A New Spirit in Painting" can

\*Authors like John Berger have developed their ideas on this subject originally expressed by the German critic Walter Benjamin in The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction to be found in an English collection called Illuminations, London, Jonathan Cape 1970.

declare,

"The artists' studios are full of paint pots again and an abandoned easel in an art school has become a rare sight. Wherever you look in Europe or America you find artists who have rediscovered the sheer joy of painting. In the studios, in the cafes and bars, wherever artists or students gather, you hear passionate debates and arguments about painting. In short, artists are involved in painting again, it has become crucial to them, and this new consciousness of the contemporary significance of the oldest form of their art is in the air tangibly, wherever art is being made."

Christos M Joachimides, author of the above, goes on, in a similar passionate vein, to identify a further characteristic which we may recollect Ian Pollack satirised in the last chapter,

"This new concern with painting is related to a certain subjective vision, a vision that includes both an understanding of the artist himself as an individual engaged in a search for self-realisation and as an actor on the wider historical stage".

(You can't get more precious than this.) Joachimides continues,

"The subjective view, the creative imagination, has come back into its own and is evident in a new approach to painting. Artists, no longer satisfied with the deliberately objective view, are beginning to respond to their environment, allowing these reactions to be expressed in the form of images. We are confronted with an art that tells us about their personal relationships and personal worlds. This is a need, of course, that goes far beyond the boundaries of art to permeate all levels of society. It is the need to talk about oneself, to express one's own desires and fears, to react to daily life, indeed to reactivate areas of experience that have long lain dormant. A re-interest in the significance of the private life shows signs of emerging everywhere and in art it takes the form of a conspicuous subjectiveness."(25)

The man in the street has, really, no need to rediscover this phenomena he has always held this view of artists at least since his great grandfather, if he was aware of such things,

# Arts Review

14 February 1986 £1.40

Peter Moores exhibition at the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool

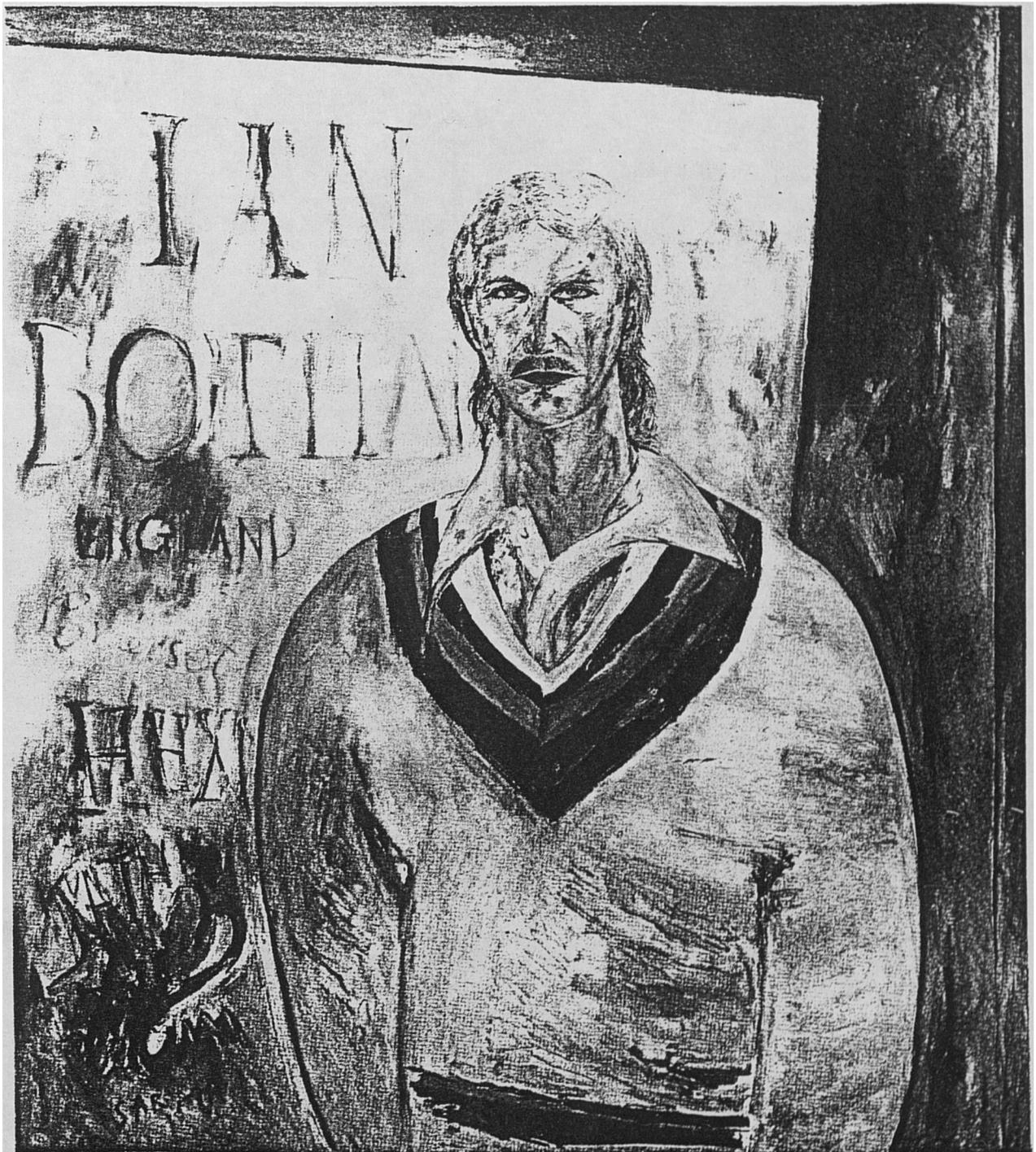
Max Blond at the Hanover Gallery, Liverpool

Wilson Steer at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

Artists in the Theatre at the Hatton Gallery, Newcastle

Julian Trevelyan at Waterman's, Brentford

Museum restaurants — feature



John Bellany's portrait of Ian Botham, commissioned by the National Portrait Gallery (above), on view there with 30 new portraits. Concurrently, a large exhibition of John Bellany's important visionary paintings is also in London at **FISCHER FINE ART** Eight page pull-out exhibition guide

was introduced to the idea by the 19th century Romantic movement and subsequently he has had it confirmed by the mega-visual entertainment tradition in the form of movies about the lives of artists with titles like "The Agony and Ecstasy", "Lust for Life" and "Savage Messiah". Everyone agrees, these days, the fine artist is a serious individual "acting on a historical stage" concerned with a "conspicuous subjectiveness" expressed through a traditional image making medium like oil on canvas or equally, in three dimensions, chisel on stone or wood. This now universal attitude even, although in a watered down form, amongst those apparently working to the direct commission of a patron to create a very specific art product such as a portrait. An attitude, in portraiture which has produced works of art and news. The tension between the artist's subjectiveness and the patron's desire for a likeness has led to the disappearance, presumed destroyed, of Graham Sutherland's portrait of Winston Churchill and continues with recent remarkable unlikenesses as well as likenesses, commissioned by the National Portrait Gallery. (See opposite).

If we reflect for a moment on Gombrich's thumbnail social history of art this "conspicuous subjectivity" is a relatively new phenomena and certainly not a prerequisite of art or artist. The history of portraiture can be seen as the history of this tension between contrary expectations.

The implicatons of our contemporary fine art and artist definition are profound and largely un-addressed by those

concerned although it is obviously a central plank in the stage of art commerce in whatever form. The mega-visual artist creates images for mass consumption by doing other people's work the fine artist by doing his/her own work, creates objects for individual ownership, often speculatively produced with no particular client in mind, although generally influenced by the market. All trade on the notion of Artist (with a capital A). Once something becomes Art it can be traded in a different way to other commodities, it can command prices way, way beyond its material worth. It can enter the capital "A" capital "M" art market.

Although there are unifying principles like the foregoing, which we have begun to address the Fine Art Market can be divided into several worlds with their special markets which today are remarkably self contained. Brighton and Pearson have identified several of these worlds within the universe of the fine art market; one they have actually called the "Art World" and of which more later. (26)

They also make reference to what they call the Media and Genre Exhibiting Societies as well as the still extant Academies such as the very much alive Royal Academy of Arts. Societies such as The Royal Society of Marine Artists or The Society of Wildlife Artists and broadly speaking the academies identify a distinct grouping within the art market. Artists in this area operate in two ways either to commission, or by making their own work for a more or less predictable market in line with a more or less popular taste in popular subject matter. Although some might dispute it,

their art can be said to be conservative with the artist's imagery being, more or less, in accord with popular taste. For such artists their mimetic ability in traditional fine art media, such as oil paint or water colour, is central to their success in this market. Many of these artists demonstrate consummate skill in their chosen media in portraying people, animals, ships, landscapes etc but, with the exception of a few relatively new members of the Royal Academy of Arts, they eschew the modernist, post-modernist, avant-garde tradition with its legacy of experimentation in and with media, imagery and attitude in favour of a more or less traditional approach. Many develop a very individualist style but their work is essentially "representational - the precise reproduction of a thing as it is", to quote Cyril Asquith's letter to Sir Alfred Munnings one time and notorious President of the Royal Academy of Arts.<sup>(27)</sup> Because of their imagery and its popular appeal no special knowledge is required to understand their work which, after all, represents things as they are. They reflect everyday experience shared by everyone. These artists are much closer to the artists of the Mega-Visual Tradition such as the illustrator than they would care to admit. Many media or genre artists would be profoundly insulted by the appellation "illustrator" or to hear their work described as merely "illustrative" even when a substantial part of their income may come from such work. Like many reactions in the art market this one is hard to account for rationally, yet if we recollect the portmanteau of meanings which now surround art and artists we can begin to understand if not

concur. In one sense at least, these artists share a self-image as artist with the modernist or avant-garde artist which is, paradoxically, in accord with a popular conception. An image derived from 19th century Romanticism and succinctly described by Sara Cornell,

"Romantic art was a movement of many styles grouped around common themes. Poets, painters and composers alike reacted against the self satisfied complacency of an increasingly bourgeois society by cutting themselves off from the rest of humanity. The act of creating a work became an individual expression of intuition acting on a natural stimulus; the poem, painting, or musical composition expressed its creator's attempt to see past the tangible world and to capture a glimpse of infinity: 'Genius inspired by invention, rends the veil that separates existence from possibility, peeps into the dark and catches a shape, a feature, or a colour in the reflected ray'".(28)

Given this sort of inheritance we need no longer wonder. These artists are obliged to avoid association with such crass commercialism with its implication of "sell-out", compromise and association with the all too "tangible world".

For all those fine artists without private means, a significant socio-economic factor frequently overlooked in the recent history of art, a mild but necessary self deception is required; with the market as it is, he or she will illustrate out of necessity but "serious" work is retained for another market. A market, that has more in common with common retailing than it cares to acknowledge, where art objects are sold in special sorts of shops called galleries and their keepers are called dealers. Paradoxically, the hard commercial reality of this commerce, justifying the previous self deception, is firmly based upon

the romantic notion of artist just described. "Genius, inspired by invention, can rend the veil" which separates mere existence from prosperity, with the right marketing.

The unique selling point, is genius or a touch of genius or genius potential. The maintenance of such a problematic concept requires the intercession of a third party, the dealer, whose skill and reputation resides in identifying, taming, nuturing and then sustaining a market for the product of genius. The dealers zenith of achievement is to sell the product of an elite group of irrefutable geniuses. In the jargon of the profession, borrowed from other markets, a "stable" of "blue chip" artists producing "blue chip" art (blood and stock respectively). The word "genius" may be too strong for contemporary British taste and the decorum of a very special sort of retailing but the intermediary stage requiring only the confirmation of recent history, can be attained in the life-time of the artist. That condition is "master" for the artist and "masterpiece" for the art product. Despite the variability of human production, we all have our off days, the condition of master automatically bestows the status of masterpiece on the product. The sign of the master in the form of a signature and/or style of manufacture, preferably both to be certain and presented by a dealer of repute is all that is required. This is the essential principle for all commerce in fine art at whatever level. Nowhere more so than in the Genres and Media section which ajoin the mega-visual world of illustration and can, therefore, so easily be tainted by plain commerce in imagery;

a commerce which, we have to remember, doesn't even require the acquisition of the object, merely temporary copyright. David Bernstein in his introduction to the exhibition That's Shell that is! addressing what he refers to as "the heyday of commercial art" refers obliquely to the problem.

"It's a term (commercial art) in general disfavour. More's the pity, for it accurately expresses the fusion of artistic means and commercial ends into something which, at its best, is neither sell out nor compromise but a synergy in which a genuine work of art could also be used for commercial purpose."(29)

Bernstein may be right, but he refers to a brief golden age before the mega-visual boom, state subvention in the arts, professional specialisation and a welfare state which created freer access to education/training and, therefore, the rightful expectation of participation in the art market, of a market economy, from a growing band of those who are eligible in the sense of being professionally qualified as well as able.

The problems for the mimetic Genre or Media artist in the Fine Art market where there is at least the potential to acquire the midas licence of genius are several and can be itemised as:

1. mimetic ability in traditional media is not rare in fact it is the main goal of a popular recreation.
2. cameras can do it. A medium irrevocably tainted as "mere photography".
3. the mimetic fine artist can be confused with the illustrator and therefore diminished in status.

4. received wisdom tells us genius is in short supply and because it is by definition original and innovative it is not likely to work in a traditional genre.

5. the very popularity of their imagery may paradoxically be a handicap in an exclusive market.

Human ingenuity has found solutions to all the above by constant reference to the romantic genius model and by just being very good at something everyone can understand. Few have difficulty appreciating consummate skill although they may need convincing of the price it costs through reference to the rarity of genius - it's the unique product of genius.

For another section of the Fine Art Tradition, aspiring to its market, no such problems of confusion exist although others do in abundance. Sadly, for the artist, there is no simple touchstone like "precise reproduction of things seen" nor is there an overt brief from which to work like the servant of the Mega-Visual Tradition or like the genre artist, the portrait painter, who has to make it look like the sitter. This is Brighton's and Pearson's Art World or "the would be avant-garde" as I have called them on another occasion.<sup>(30)</sup> More precisely, we are talking about a tiny section of the Art World community who participate in the international Art Market of dealers and galleries. The majority simply aspire to this condition without the time, energy or contacts to make it a reality, being usually otherwise engaged in another career in order to subsidise their art. These are the artists Brighton and Pearson have

called "dual career artists" who were frequently artist/teachers but who are now more and more obliged to be artists and something else to sustain their economically untenable position.

As far as the British art market is concerned commerce in the products of this particular world is firmly located in London and, to be more precise, in a particular area of London, Cork Street and its approved satellite streets. The rest of the British Isles has no such Art World Art Market to speak of although a small exception might be made for a handful of major cities in the U.K. with a very modest involvement. During the 1960's boom aspiring participants teaching or training in Art Schools throughout the land spoke with awe and some reverence of the Bond Street galleries. Today, having, apparently, recovered from a crisis of faith in the market and its traditional media in the '70's, they speak with renewed enthusiasm of the Cork Street galleries. The centre of this market, very much a physical and critical arena of trade, may move, probably in response to imponderables like fashion, property values and rates but the general area north of Piccadilly has traditionally been the home of what we might call the Private Art Market (no apparent state subsidy). The reasons for such a location are various but a few are highly significant here. This is an area of exclusive trading with a wealthy national and international clientele (the very word implying a group of people distinguished by their ability to employ knowledgeable sometimes scholarly and discerning advisers who double as shop keepers); a clientele that may well reside, while in

London, in the exclusive hotels and dine in the exclusive restaurants which are part of or in proximity to this area. Originally too, the proximity to the Royal Academy of Arts would have been of importance as is perhaps, today, the Arts Council of Great Britain, at 105 Piccadilly (identified by me as part of a contemporary academy) and so too The National Gallery with its latter day outpost for modern art on Millbank, The Tate Gallery. All these institutions in their time and way are organs of state patronage providing the artists, the art and the necessary additional validation and selection so necessary for all exclusive goods. Just like the luxury goods elsewhere in the area the products on display and for sale in the Art World, Art Market have been selected and endorsed, for a rich clientele, not only by the shop keeper (the dealer) but, as we will see, by the State (by appointment to the State) through its activities as a client and selector.

Unlike some other luxury goods these art goods have little intrinsic material value. There would be no profit in a thief reducing the object to its ingredient parts as a jewel thief might a well known piece made of precious stones. Their value resides in their unique integral object-hood and uniqueness derived from their traditional craft manufacture by "renders of the veil" in the service of their own "conspicuous subjectiveness". As a rule these objects have no utilitarian function although they are presented as objects of intellectual and/or spiritual use; they are not commissioned as representations or as images of persuasion or

information. Being the product of the artist's own private concerns, the central skill of the dealer, here more than in the Genre and Media section of the market, lies in matching art works, speculatively produced, with a sympathetic and acquisitive audience. An audience which does not pay an entrance fee at the door of the gallery but which accepts the legitimacy of such an artistic pursuit and is prepared to spend their own or their corporations or their museums money in order to possess the work of art. The dealer will appeal to the educated (with one to one, on the spot supplementary education if required) as opposed to the popular taste of the client - "Our clients have good knowledgeable taste", is implicit in the transaction. If they are to stay and flourish in business, the dealers will seek to develop the loyalty and collecting habit of the client preferring, wherever possible, to sell to "serious" collectors rather than to "unknown" impulse buyers. The advertising campaigns of these galleries confirms the above observation. They are always discreetly placed in specialist magazines and even though the gallery might have a listing and occasional review in the more popular press we will never see the sort of advertising which even the "quality" retailing neighbours might indulge. Gucci, for example, might advertise its bi-annual sale in the Evening Standard but this is something galleries, especially Art World galleries would never do. Just as in the Genre and Media section, such crass commercialism would undermine the whole market, based as it is upon the idea of reputation. The reputation of the artist as genius (or soon to be), the art as his/her product and the dealer as a serious and scholarly individual possessing,

like a far seeing cyclops, a "good eye"; the ability to recognise good art (with a good never defined, only recognised). The dealer is a connoisseur of the Fine Art market for connoisseur clients.

Both the Genre and Media and the Art World sections of the Fine Art Market can, be viewed as separate pyramid systems with a small group of galleries and their dealers occupying the apex of each pyramid and many more at the broader base . These top organisations, are distinguished by their financial scale, the international nature of their operation and by the fact that current activity is often based upon family involvement in dealing which need not necessarily have been in contemporary or avant-garde art. They will either have their own galleries in other countries or be closely associated with otherwise independent foreign galleries. In the latter case there may be reciprocal exclusive arrangements such as promoting each others artists in the different national market places with prices often quoted in the currency of the country of origin or, in the case of art from a country with an unstable currency in a more reliable currency. In a recent enquiry the price of works by an Italian and a German artist on sale in London, were quoted in U.S. dollars and D.M.'s respectively. The reluctance to divulge the price, on behalf of the member of the gallery staff, was probably due to my lack of reputation as an identified serious collector and a degree of quite justified

caution occasioned by the activities of individuals, deemed parasitic on the dealers, who buy and sell on artworks at a profit without the overheads of the gallery dealer. At the moment the top end of the British Art World Art Market is made up of five to ten galleries. Here substantial works of art sell for upwards of the price of a family car and relatively inexpensive works on paper, say, will sell for more than an expensive domestic appliance like a cooker or washing machine. These galleries are necessarily part of an international market sustained by frequent international travel, participation in international trade fairs (Art Fairs) and a thorough knowledge of appropriate art and clientele. Although passing trade may play some part it is true to say these galleries would survive without it. Yet despite the high cost, galleries are maintained in expensive parts of London so that the business can be seen to be participating in the Market and can, therefore, be validated by the market place.

In a sense the gallery is a microcosm of the market place itself showing a variety of new lines and promotions on the strength of its corporate reputation. There are two main ways of presenting art work for consideration in these mini-markets. One is the mixed exhibition, like the one consulted above, the other, more usual, is the one person show. Work for such shows being supplied by one of a small Art World "stable" of up to twenty artists, for each gallery, who expect and usually receive an occasional presentation of their work usually "every two or four years". It may come as a surprise to a lay reader to learn that these occasional

events in the Art World, even with relatively well known artists, are not always financially viable, sales do not always cover costs but this apparent act of philanthropy by the dealer, for the artist, is in fact an investment in the reputation of the artist and his/her future selling power. Even more than the Genre and Media section of the Market all concerned are aiming for a particular reputation, masterhood. Like the Genre and Media Market the financial resources for such activity can come from dealing in "blue-chip" stock. In other words, a holding of paintings, sculpture etc, usually not on display, owned or handled by the dealer and made by artists with established and apparently irrefutable reputations. Dealing in old modern masters helps nurture new would-be modern masters. Despite the variable timescale of fruition and the occasional failure (in commercial terms) this is an accepted method of trading although for all concerned there must be a heavy investment and some risk in the process of transition, building the artist's reputation. When it is achieved the dealer has the ideal seller's market; a limited production which is out-numbered by anxiously acquisitive clients. From available evidence, it would seem that the Art World is today where this desirable state is most likely to occur and where prices are highest. Carefully nurtured competition for ownership leads to high prices and a reliable investment especially when production is once and for all limited by the demise of manufacturer. A chilly prospect for artists made palatable by romantic possibility of post-humous deification (Savage Messiah).

Over the last decade or so a number of British dealers have gone on record, mainly in the specialist art press, by participating in interviews. One such interview confirms the above observations about the nature of the business. When asked, "What was your intention as a dealer?" Leslie Waddington's straight forward reply was, "My intention as a dealer always has been and still is to make money". Although in the context of the interview there seems to be no reason he goes on,

"Obviously I'm also what most people would term as power-orientated. I have a responsibility to make maximum profits under the company laws of this country but I don't think it's sufficient for anyone anymore just to make profits. I always have been interested in having influence. I don't mean that is that I want to be a big success and very popular. I suppose it's a form of egoism on my part."

Although at first sign the Art World Art Market, in particular, might appear philanthropic, the motivations are the same as any other business, money, power and influence. When asked which of his dealings were the most profitable, Leslie Waddington replied, "Stock-dealing without a doubt".<sup>(31)</sup> In order to change mere potential into blue-chip and therefore stock the dealer needs power and influence. In another interview with another critic, Leslie Waddington reveals the mechanisms of his power and influence. When the critic Waldemar Januszczak asked what Waddington did for his painters, he replied,

"What we do for them is a) we generally take a 50%, b) we provide a catalogue, we put on exhibitions. If someone from a museum comes round for a show we can supply it. We advise them on tax matters. We advise them on divorce questions - yes, that's right, divorce.

Artists in middle age tend to have problems at home. We look after everything for them."(32)

This is financial and emotional power over the artist and substantial influence on the programming of public museums which reciprocate endorsement of product by presenting it for serious consideration outside the commercial market place.

Clients for Waddington and others like him are drawn from a tiny international community of the wealthy and committed. Tom Wolfe in his now infamous (in the Art World) debunk attempts to quantify this community,

"...if it were possible to make such a diagram of the art world we would see that it is made up of (in addition to artists) about 750 cultured in Rome, 500 in Milan, 1750 in Paris, 1250 in London, 2000 in Berlin, Munich and Dusseldorf, 3000 in New York and perhaps 1000 scattered about the rest of the known world. That is the art world, approximately 10,000 souls - a mere hamlet - restricted to les beaux mondes of eight cities." (33)

Ten years later we might expect Wolf to concede the addition of Tokyo, Sydney and Cape Town but yet his observation remains true especially when we can expect top price works of a living artist to sell for in excess of £157,000 (Jasper John '83 prices). There are just not that many wealthy committed people with the right personal provenance in the world.

Another dealer, Rene Gimpel, discusses the Art Worlds clientele of the '50's and '60's:

"Joseph Hirshhorn was buying freely for his collection of several thousand paintings and sculptures and he just headed the list of the big spenders. At the other end of the collecting scale, young, mobile, affluent, highly trained Technocrats (we might call them yuppies today) were eager to enjoy the comforts of their class - one of which was art. Art magically combined characteristics irresistible to these nouveaux riches: it was prestigious to own, conspicuous to display and vied with the stock market in investment potential (a footnote here tells us this statement first appeared in an unidentified American art magazine). Five years ago the average Art in America reader owned 1-4 sets of china and 8.2 works of art. Through possessing college and often graduate degrees, the great, majority of this new audience of apparatchiks had been deprived of liberal education in the post sputnik panic for national scientific superiority. Their cultural level was fixed at the verbal: their eyes 'read' art but could not see it. But no matter; their cultural predecessors, the liberal bourgeoisies of the 19th and early 20th centuries had ignored the Impressionists, the Fauves, the Cubists and the Surrealists. It was a mistake the new generation was not going to repeat. No avant-garde movement would escape them. No art object, no matter how radical, unorthodox or ephemeral could remain uncollectable."(34)

Provided, we might add, it is marketed in the right way.

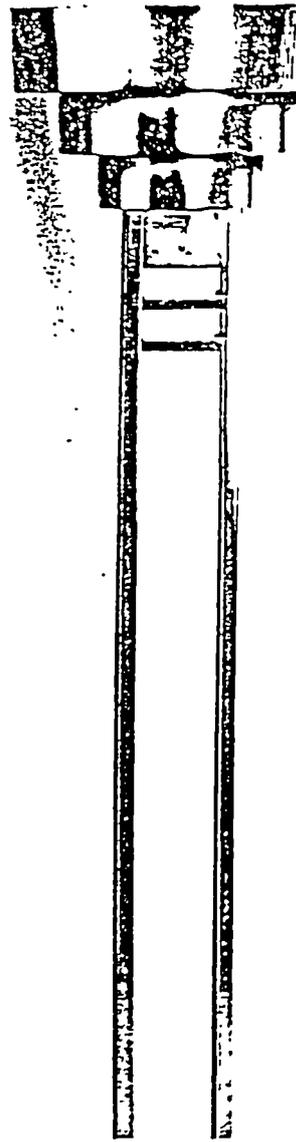
The '60's are generally acknowledged as a boom time and following a slump in the Seventies, when incidentally many of the British dealers found time to discuss their business in public, the 1980's seem to be witnessing a similar boom. There are new nouveaux riches in need of education and contemporary Hirshhorn's like the Saatchi's with large budgets in need of nurturing if not educating (Saatchi's have their in house expertise).

The growth of the young urban professional clientele is a market younger, relative new-comers to the Art World Art Market are eager (and obliged) to develop as well as attempting to break into a market of prestigious private and public clients. The advertising campaign of a



**"Buying an original painting shows what you feel about mass production!"**

Nicola Jacobs, gallery owner



There are very few things in this world that are unique. Cartier doesn't restrict itself to one Tank watch. Rolls-Royce make more than one Silver Shadow.

A painter is different. Every work is an original. A one-off. That's part of the pleasure of owning a picture. Knowing that it is the only one of its kind in the whole world. And you're the only one who owns it.

There's an enormous excitement about buying your first original. Taking it home and hanging it is an experience you never feel with

anything else you buy.

And sometimes, like any major purchase, you can pay it off month by month.

Perhaps it's time you came to a private view. I'm showing Simon Edmondson's work from May 2nd. He's only 27, but his reputation is growing internationally and right now, his prices range from £400 to £2000.

Why don't you come and see for yourself? Just ring me on 01-437 3868 and ask for an invitation to my next private view. You can meet Simon and look at his work over a glass

of wine. You will find it's a very civilised way to browse.

Please call. We'd love you to come.

**Nicola Jacobs Gallery**

- |                          |                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| 9 Cork Street, London N1 | 01-437 3868     |
| Works by                 | Jeff Lowe       |
| Louise Blair             | John McLean     |
| John Carter              | Lisa Milroy     |
| Snelagh Cluett           | Mari Morris     |
| Jennifer Durrant         | Paul Rosenblom  |
| Simon Edmondson          | Colin Smith     |
| Jon Groom                | Derek Southall  |
| Ken Kiff                 | Anthony Whishaw |
| Kim Lim                  | Gary Wragg      |

younger London dealer attempts to develop this market for her gallery by unusually advertising in glossy magazines (as well as the more usual art magazines): magazines with a more general readership who, it is assumed, will be economically and temperamentally suited to participation. Nicola Jacobs' advertisement in The World of Interiors (See appendix and opposite) reveals the art of commerce in the art of today. While identifying the acquisition of art objects as similar to the acquisition of luxury goods from Cartier and Rolls Royce the advertisement stresses the difference,

"A painter is different. Every work is an original. A one off. That's part of the pleasure of owning a picture. Knowing that it is the only one of its kind in the whole world. And you're the only one who owns it."

The advertisement goes on to hint at an increase in value,

"He's only 27 but his reputation is growing internationally and right now his prices range from £400 to £2,000."(35)

The principles neatly identified here are,

- 1) Although a manufactured luxury good, the product is unique.
- 2) The product is made by a different sort of manufacturer and manufacturing process.
- 3) Like all rare goods with a market the value will increase.
- 4) The object may have long term investment potential but since there is no utilitarian function nor, in most cases, valuable materials used the price is dependent on the

reputation of the artist.

5) The Art Market in Britain is seen as part of an international market which subscribes to the same view of art. An international reputation is therefore essential.

The latter principle is expressed in another way by another dealer, Nicholas Logsdail,

"A local reputation is no use to any artist or gallery except at the beginning".(36)

The continued existence of the Nicola Jacobs Gallery as opposed to the demise of the one time comparable Moira Kelly Gallery can be attributed to three factors. Nicola Jacobs' sustained capital investment with premises in Cork Street in the centre of the market, the development of stock dealing in "blue-chip" art and an apparently successful and original marketing campaign in the form of advertisements like the above and the development of marketing devices like occasional thematic shows with a more popular appeal but containing some "blue-chip" and some fairly recondite art. We can also add Nicola Jacobs' ability to travel widely attending international art fairs to promote her gallery and artists. In contrast, in An Open Letter to Everyone Concerned, Moira Kelly explains the demise of her gallery which went into voluntary liquidation on December 16th, 1982. She quotes the Director's Report,

"It is quite clear that the failure of the company has been due to insufficient capital to allow it sufficient time to build up its business in this extremely difficult field".

In the second part of her letter Moira Kelly continues,

"It is generally held that our location was the main cause of our demise. It is true that we were in 'the unfashionable Essex Road' but this did not deter our discerning clientele many of whom came from miles away to see us. While I dearly would have loved to move the gallery to a more central location, I don't think an increase in passing trade would have made a substantial difference. Our difficulty was always cash, rendering us unable to pursue certain worthwhile projects and to travel both at home and abroad. Finally we were unable to pay ourselves a living wage."(37)

The appeal of a gallery as a business associated with art and artists requiring only modest investment is regrettably an illusion. The idea of art on consignment (sale or return) from artists to dealer in a venue with modest overheads in an "unfashionable" area fits in nicely with ideas of the "avant-garde" or "real fine art", but in reality it can easily be a market stall without a market place. As such the business can only succeed if a market can be generated or if the gallery supplies something that a large unsatisfied market needs or thinks it needs and is prepared to seek out the source of supply. Alternatively the business can diversify into stock dealing but that needs capital, time and expertise or into art or other stock with a more popular appeal. In a sense the dilemma faced by Moira Kelly is the one faced by all in the Art World, none more so than the artist; many of whom, like many a business person, develop a dual-career in order, in the artist's case, to sustain the production of art without a ready market. Without some sort of financial underpinning the gallery, perhaps even more than other small businesses is extremely risky, especially when it relies on the sale of "real fine art". Moira Kelly's letter was a last

attempt to secure Arts Council subsidy for her business venture.

In even more "unfashionable" areas of London and the British Isles, galleries do of course exist and survive without state subsidy but they do so by facing the afore mentioned economic realities. They either respond to a geographically specific market like a tourist trade in, say, Lakeland Scenes and/or they provide services and materials which subsidise more problematic dealing. Both possibilities have prestigious antecedents. Canaletto, for example, provided images of Venice for the Grand Tour collector and a number of proto-dealers for the modernist movement were firstly dealers in artists' materials taking paintings from impoverished artists in exchange for material (or so the art story goes). Brighton and Pearson have designated this type "Shop" placing them at the bottom of their stratification model although I suspect owners of such establishments will not be pleased by such a characterisation. Some of these galleries attempt to show "difficult" or Art World art, original paintings or sculpture, or even occasionally the work of an Art World superstars in the form of prints or posters. More usually though their exhibitions cater for a localised audience with a predictable "uneducated" taste (unaware of the Art-world). Nonetheless, these galleries, almost because they're obliged to do so, make real efforts to reach new acquisitive audiences for the visual arts in their marketing and related education programmes. A suburban gallery like the Blackheath Gallery for example, offers painting and

drawing classes and the framing services of the neighbouring Gallery on the Heath can be the initial contact which leads to the sales of works of art.

The spread of this sort of gallery business, offering original works of art in traditional media for sale as well as an ancillary service like framing and retailing inexpensive two dimensional imagery like posters, post cards and greetings cards testifies to a large though "uneducated" consumer market for visual images made by professional image-makers (artists). Such an observation is further confirmed by the growing number of High Street or Shopping Centre retailers specialising in what has become known as paper products; inexpensive mass produced imagery. Here the special market for Art (with a capital "A") overlaps with a non-specialist market for visual images, the Fine Art Tradition with the Mega-Visual Tradition.

Although, today, we have a Fine Art Market which trades on the basic principle of art objects as unique, a review of the history of art reveals that this is not a universal feature of that which is considered art. The idea of reproducing an image, perhaps originally created in a traditional medium like oil paint, has a long history and although it is possible to cite any number of examples a British example seems most pertinent in this context. William Hogarth (1697-1764) was both a painter and engraver but it is through the medium of his immensely popular prints which include "A Rakes

Progress" and "Marriage a la Mode", that he reached a wider public than any other artist of his time. Although for a brief period he enjoyed the favour of Society and even the Royal Family for his paintings, his living then and his reputation as an artist today derives as much from his work as an engraver (a type of art the Royal Academy sought to exclude from its pantheon) as from his painting. Hogarth painted for the few and engraved for the many. He did so because he lost an exclusive market for his paintings, the unique objects, and through these circumstances recognised a wider market for the reproduced image of the original. He was also to produce engraving conceived in and for this medium. So lucrative was this popular market that Hogarth's images were often pirated. Under one such engraving, "A Midnight Modern Conversation", Hogarth engraved, "Prints should be prized as Authors should be read".<sup>(38)</sup> A legend which could be interpreted as a claim for parity with the world of books and authors. Hogarth seems to be asking, "If the work of authors can be distributed to a wide audience then why not the work of artists?" and, indeed, Hogarth's prints were often sold through bookshops. Certainly, today, modern technology and modes of distribution mean that it is possible, even on a global scale, to reproduce and distribute practically any two dimensional and most three dimensional images. In a sense, the illustrators and some genre artists are inheritors of this tradition: a tradition much developed by the Victorians, particularly dealers like Ernest Gambart, who were in the habit of buying paintings along with rights of reproduction and having engravings made by craftsmen for mass circulation.<sup>(39)</sup> The oil painting, "The Light of

World", by Holman Hunt, spiritually illuminated many Victorian homes, in the form of inexpensive engravings, and today the "original" is to be found in St Paul's Cathedral as well as Keble College, Oxford. Even the self consciously radical Pre-Raphaelite wasn't averse to reproducing an image by hand, painting it again.\*

The contemporary Fine Art Market has developed ways of preserving some of the rarity value of a unique object while presenting for sale multiple version of the same image in the form of limited edition prints or three dimensional equivalents like casts. The idea of limited editions derives seemingly from the deterioration which took place with a hand-printed etching or engraving or moulding. Modern printing and other reproduction techniques and materials, even when done by hand, means the image does not deteriorate rapidly, if at all. Nonetheless, rarity value is retained by artificially limiting the volume of production through destroying the means and by having the artist sign each one. A contemporary refinement is to have "artists' prints". In some cases, like Hogarth, made by an artist whose reputation originally resides in his/her ability with more traditional media like oil on canvas as was the case with the 1960's Art World boom in multiples, prints and other objects produced through the co-operation between the artist, often with a

\* The market for prints in Victorian Britain was also stimulated by the repeal of the tax on glass which reduced framing costs for works on paper. See Reitlinger in Hughes On Art and Money (1985) Art Monthly, London.

previously established reputation as painter or sculptor, and a print medium craftsman. The output of the Kelpra or Curwen Studios being British examples. This method of reducing unit cost but maintaining rarity value is still common in all areas of the Fine Art Market. As well as specialist print publishers and galleries with their print "bins" there seems to be an active mail-order trade. Conscious of a wide new market, Christies, better known as auctioneers, have diversified into limited edition prints appealing to a wider but still relatively wealthy clientele with advertisements headed "An original work of art for the price of a dinner at Langans" (a dinner for four, we are told "would be worth every penny" of the £100 or so it would cost).<sup>(40)</sup> Significantly even when the market expands into mail order it seeks to evoke the exclusivity of the Fine Art market place, Cork Street and environs with their restaurants nearby. Even here the seller must educate his/her clients in the necessary distinction, as problematic as it can be in certain instances, between reproductions and artists' prints even when business is transacted by post. "Each print is part of a strictly limited edition, created, signed and numbered by the artist" continues the above advertisement. Waddington Galleries achieved this same educational goal by producing a guide to prints and their collection by Pat Gilmour the printmaking authority, Understanding Prints: A Contemporary Guide.<sup>(41)</sup>

The potential of this paradoxical limited "mass" production , for reaching a wider and sometimes new market, has to be acknowledged. It is not simply the appeal of a lower unit

cost, although this is an important factor, but also the "finish" of the print which can appeal to those used to looking at printed imagery of the Mega-Visual Tradition if not fine art. The print's ease of storage and transport must also appeal to a collector of more modest means. Nonetheless, a tension exists in this section of the art market. Brighton and Pearson allude to the problem elsewhere. The problem is one of undermining the "specialness" of art and artist. They quote the autobiography of the animal and locomotive painter, David Shepherd, "but at this stage of my life when clients are willing to wait many months for my originals I knew that if I allowed further work to be churned out in unlimited numbers, whatever the quality, I would very quickly damage the demand for my original paintings".<sup>(42)</sup> Although this may be a real problem for certain artists and their dealers, we cannot assume it to be universal. The Everyman Print series of the Artists International Association published in 1940 was a systematic attempt to bring fine art to a mass market "at a price so reasonable that the outlay need not involve anxious consideration, and the collecting of prints is now within the possibilities of every purse".<sup>(43)</sup> In 1942 a report to members outlined production and retailing difficulties admitted ultimately only about 5000 prints sold. It may well be that opening years of a World War are not the best time to sell or buy modern prints. We must also note in passing that the credibility of this section of the Art Market may have temporarily been diminished by allegations of some sharp practice abroad. Controversy, for example, surrounds the

graphic out-put of Salvador Dali after signed blank sheets of paper were seized by Custom's men.

In a sense, this ambition for a multiple art has been achieved elsewhere in the Fine Art Market in the publishing of illustrated art books and postcards of original art works. These publications when offered for sale are not marketed as art but they can be a substantial tool for the marketing of "real" art. Complementary illustrated catalogues and monographs are obvious sources of reputation enhancement for the artist especially when they are written by apparently disinterested professional mediators like critics or public sector curators.

If we're prepared to concede a wider definition of art we can find numerous examples of postal selling of "collector's" items with images made by artists. These promotions can come complete with Market Analysis Reports alluding to substantial investment potential and offer certificates of authenticity. As an example, a recent postal selling campaign offers a chance to acquire "a historic first issue" of Birds of Your Garden. And yet there was never a "Cardinal" bird in Britain. Like other sections of the art market this seems to be international; although sold through the Bradford Exchange of Banbury, the origin of this art is the U.S.A. The fascinating aspect of the business of this organisation is the offer of resale through the exchange.<sup>(44)</sup>

The well known international auction houses are perhaps

better known for this function. They are, after all, public arenas for the exchange of second-hand art. Here buyers and would be buyers offer an increase on the price offered by another with the article going to him/her who bids highest. Deriving works of art from sundry sources, the auction houses act as agents for sellers receiving a percentage commission and some even charge an additional premium (buyers and sellers premium) on the transaction for services rendered. For the Art Market this is a public testing of the reputation of the artist and his/her work. Depending on the type of art being offered for sale, there is an international clientele who bid in person or through an agent and with telephone bids being received and the bid, in the various currencies, being simultaneously displayed. The two major auction houses, Christies and Sotheby's, with centres in London and throughout the world, coinciding neatly with Tom Wolfe's locations, are the ones primarily concerned with the art of today in Britain and abroad but they are not by any means the only participants particularly when we consider the art market in general including objets d'art, antiques and old master painting, sculpture and prints. Bonhams and Phillips would be other British examples. A national and international network of such houses provides the dealer with stock and an arena of exchange between themselves and with a collecting market.<sup>(45)</sup> Being a public arena the dealer must be ever vigilant for the appearance of the art of his/her artists as he/she has a vested interest in maintaining a price comparable with those in his/her gallery. The prices "fetched" at auction are of popular interest and are widely reported. At the time of writing the world record price paid

for a painting at auction was set in 1984 when William Mallord Turner's "Seascape: Folkstone" fetched £7.4 million at Sotheby's in London which beat the previous record of \$5.3 million paid for Picasso's "Self Portrait" at Sotheby's in New York in May 1981. Prints, too, come up for auction and the Lyle Official Arts Review, 1985, reported a series of prints by Odilon Redon fetching £79,000 at Sotheby's.<sup>(46)</sup> It is interesting to note, with these three examples, that the artists work resulted from their own very personal enquiries, they were not commissions.\* It therefore seems to confirm that it is possible to make the most money from uncommissioned work.

Having examined the Fine Art Market, we can make the following general comments about its nature. First, it is exclusive, financially, attitudinally and geographically. The majority of the world's and our nation's population cannot afford to buy even the most inexpensive work of fine art and even the majority of the financially able are not convinced of the monetary or other value. Fine art is not unique here, this after all is the fate of all hand-made goods compared with the relatively inexpensive out-put of mass machine production. Even with the most popular of imagery the value of the fine art, as apposed to the mega-visual product, has to be learnt and appreciated. Dealers and auctioneers in fine art are, therefore, obliged to be

\* Sotheby's currently hold the world record at £30.2 million for Vincent Van Gogh's "Irises".

educators, sustaining the convert and seeking to convert the uninitiated to the pleasures of art, art buying and collecting.<sup>(47)</sup> There is also for the dealer the continuous process of establishing and sustaining the reputation of the artist and therefore his/her financial value. A reputation which is part financial but also linked to supposed or real art historical significance. Even at the lower end of the market this financial/historical significance link is used. It is the common knowledge that J W M Turner's "Seascape" fetched £7.4 million at auction rather than one of his marine art contemporaries which confirms that authentic originals from the hand of a master are the driving force behind a genuinely commercial market. Should we ever doubt this we should notice the dramatic fall in price once an incorrect attribution is noted. There may be some, like any other business, in it for the fun only but, as Leslie Waddington points out, the object is to make money. Kahnweiler, the dealer partly responsible for establishing Picasso's reputation, expressed the same attitude,

"the business of selling paintings like any other business is concerned with making money. In order for a business to exist it must have merchandise that sells".<sup>(48)</sup>

While accepting this axiom of business, we must acknowledge that contemporary saleability may not be the same as art historical significance although the dealer has a vested interest in conflating the two notions. Reitlinger's accounts of the rise and fall of reputation and prices makes sobering reading for would-be dealers and artists.<sup>(49)</sup> The

need for power and influence in the art-world, declared by Leslie Waddington, is a necessary consequence of this dual notion as well as the more general need to protect a market. Apparent acts of philanthropy by dealers and auctioneers in providing free exhibitions or catalogues for the public sector museums and galleries and sponsorship for yet other exhibitions in the public sector are really sensible investments in the future welfare of their business, an inexpensive entrance charge into the Pantheon of Genius.<sup>(50)</sup>

A business which depends on the sale of unique hand made objects must sustain invidious comparison with the mega-visual tradition which utilises the image but has no need for the original unique object. A paradox here is that an international trade in objects with the sort of reputation we are discussing now requires photo-mechanical media to help market them internationally. First acquaintance for a potential client thousands of miles away may well be in a glossy catalogue or art magazine picture. Although it would be difficult to prove a direct causal link, we should be aware of a tacit requirement of the business. The requirement for the art to be photogenic, which isn't necessarily the same as those plastic qualities which are traditionally held to be the prerogative of fine art. Put another way, a piece which makes a strong photographic image may not be a strong piece of fine art. Another paradox concerning this trade in the unique is the need for stylistic consistency in the artists' production. A requirement too of an art history conceived of as a history of style as well as

the, perhaps more mundane, need of the client to have his acquisition recognised as from the hand or studio of the artist. This requirement can lead inexorably to the permutation of a predictable visual vocabulary rather than significant developments. Perhaps less obviously an international market also requires international appeal and as with catering, clothing and the holiday trade, local colour can be neutralised or compromised by the latest international fashion. In this respect Ian Pollack is quite wrong.\*

The artist, with our contemporary self image of artist, must embrace all these influences on his/her work if he/she wishes to participate in this, the international Art Market. Many are prepared to do so because it can be a very efficient way to preserve the artistic, self expressive way of life. It has to be admitted that it is also, currently, the best way to be considered seriously as an Artist. As Gombrich has suggested, it is not the only way to be an artist but we might be forgiven for assuming so today. Certainly, as we will see, the Public Sector does little to disabuse us of this notion preferring instead to derive its professional models from the world of commercial galleries and dealers in the Art Market.

\*The intimate alliances with the world of fashion has been commented on by Calvin Tomkins (1988 in his Post to Neo: The Art World of the 1980s New York, Henry Holt & Co. As Tomkins observes "The Tradition of the New (Harold Rosenberg's phrase) is so firmly established by now that shifts of emphasis are mistaken for seismic events" an ideal situation for a fashion/art industry.

There can be no doubt that the Art Market, based as it is on selling unique objects correctly attributed to unique artists of reputation, needs the support of an independent authority. With the art of the past, even the most recent past, the scholarship of institutions or individuals with authority (the more so for not being directly associated with selling) may be required to correctly identify and endorse an object: when dealing with the art of the present day it is paradoxically the maker who needs endorsement since attribution is less problematic. The relationship between an apparently independent authority and a dealer is still perhaps best exemplified by the relationship between the dealer Duveen and art historian Berenson. The business association between the Englishman Joseph Duveen and the American Bernard Berenson lasted for some thirty two years. Berenson's authority as the pre-eminent expert on the Italian Renaissance and Duveen's skill as a salesman in the exclusive international market for art make them pivotal figures in the formation of large private collections many of which were subsequently bequeathed to nations. Our own National Gallery contains works exported from Italy by "the firm" as they called themselves. Contemporary restoration work carried out at the National Gallery and Meryle Secrest's careful research, outlined in her biography of Berenson, reveals that Berenson's judgement was far from infallible or as genuinely independent or disinterested as clients were led to believe. Secrest studies sixty-nine paintings with problematic attributions and concludes that sixty-two were misrepresented. Even the most respected connoisseur of his

day and still considered the father of Renaissance scholarship was not infallible.<sup>(51)</sup> The activities of contemporary forgers, fakers or even "Sexton Blakers" like our own Tom Keating and the controversy surrounding his "Samuel Palmers" demonstrate that contemporary experts can be confounded and confused and their employment by the State while confirming additional authority does not always guarantee 20/20 vision in their "good-eye" of the connoisseur.

Perhaps because there is greater opportunity for careful scholarship and/or detective work, not infrequently to reveal the mistakes of previous scholarly connoisseurs, the market for Old Masters is now well established and stable. The old master art work is a very sound investment which "can bring greater capital gains than glamour stocks or a corner lot in Wall Street".<sup>(52)</sup> The activities of a Dr W Bongard have attempted to provide more certainty for would be investors in the potentially more volatile market for the work of living artists. Dr Bongard's Kunst Compass provides a list of the worlds top selling artists and demonstrates how the product (the artist) is endorsed.\* According to Waldemar Januszczak's account of Bongard's activities,

"To reach the top of the charts, to be the world's number one most prestigious artist requires a continued high visibility in exhibitions, museums and the prestigious (art) publications".

\*The interesting feature of Bongard's index when compared with the Times-Sotheby Index of the early 1970's is the focus on the artist rather than the art object. For an account of this index see Geraldine Keen (1971) The Sale of Works of Arts, London, Nelson

Bongard's system attributes points for the type of exhibition, museum or gallery and according to Januszcak artists were awarded,

"100 points for an appearance in the 1983 Hayward, 100 points for every work on show at the Tate Gallery or similarly at the Stedelijk in Amsterdam or the Museum of Modern Art in New York and 250 points for a cover story in an international art magazine like Art Forum of Flash Art".

The accumulation of such points provides the league table and again according to Januszcak,

"At the top of the chart for the sixth year running is the German artist Joseph Beuys, selling at £43,000 for an average work."(53)

What Januszcak fails to tell us is that the activities of himself and others like him, art critics, might well constitute one of Bongard's parameters, albeit, depending on their position in their own professional league table. Should a Bongard for critics exist he might well attribute 100 points for a guest appearance as an exhibition selector for a Public Sector gallery.\* Januszcak, with credits in this respect, might be said to have begun his own ascent with stars like Apollinare, Rosenberg and Greenberg to guide his way. It may well be, however, that critics with ambitions to be the champion and discoverer of a new school or movement

\*Although critics have played a significant role in promoting the modernist movement, recent decades have seen a shift in the location of this power towards the public sector curator. A crop of articles in 1987/88 emphasise the point, usually by interviewing the curators. In one such, as introduction, Simon Morley (The Curators, Artline Voll No 01 1988) asserts "There has emerged a breed of young curators, more stylish in character and with the power to make or break artists".

would be better advised to seek a post as an arts administrator, of one form or another, in the Public Sector with exclusive or controlling use of exhibition facilities. The power and influence of such a public sector employee in a system quantifiable by the likes of Bongard means the Public Sector employee has become a pivotal (if unwitting?) figure in a new "firm". For the art of today the selection and endorsement service provided for Duveen by Berenson is provided by the State; closer examination reveals the State's preference for the Art World. The new firm is the State and the Art World Art Market.

## The Craft and Design Tradition : Formerly a Market for Skills

So widespread is the desire to "talk about oneself" or to do "one's own work" as Joachimides tells us, that many object makers working in the traditional craft media such as wood, glass, ceramic, metal, stone, and textiles have eschewed mass or batch production in favour of limited production of one-off unique and often non-functional (in the utilitarian sense) objects. The craft tradition, formerly and almost exclusively a market for skills, has largely mutated into a sub-section of the Fine Art/Dealer Market. In Britain, as we will see, we have been encouraged by the State, in its various manifestations to accept the idea of an "artist-craftsperson" at precisely the time when the paucity of applied skill utilising traditional media is acute. The anonymous tradition of someone accomplished in a particular medium and able, therefore, to apply that skill to various tasks including other people's utilitarian needs, is in danger of being replaced by a cult of the individual maker involved like the contemporary fine artist in realising a subjective vision. Similarly, the ability to fulfil a need through making, after first identifying precisely the need, has largely passed to other professionals concerned with the convenience and economy of manufacture rather than use and who are either devoid of such craft skills or else not required to use them. Design has been separated from Craft just as surely as Craft now cleaves to Art with its market of

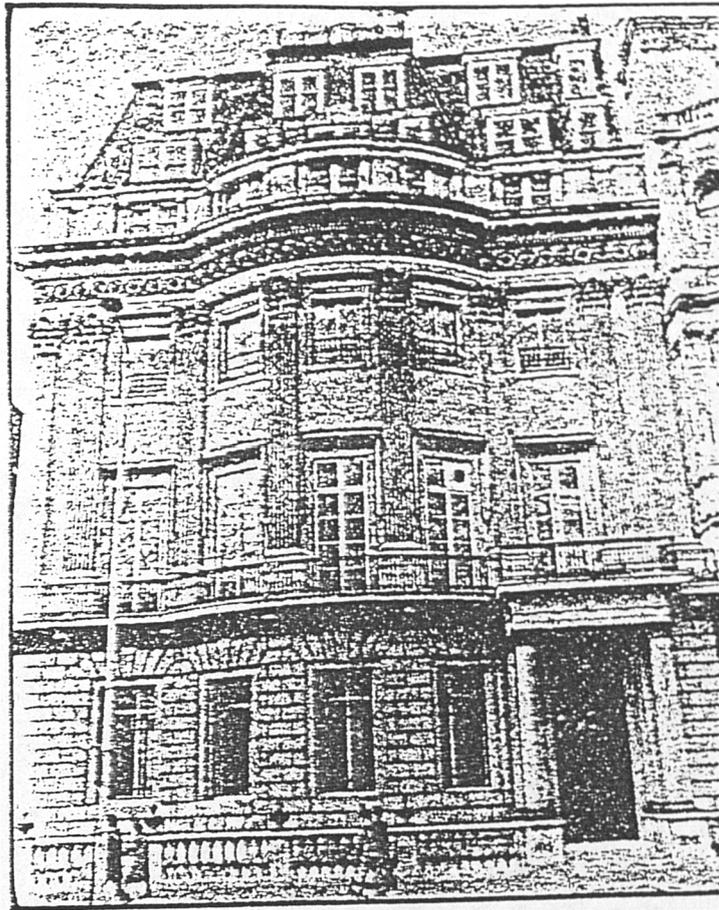
galleries and dealers approved by the State. The State now desperately attempts to remedy a failing design and craft economy oblivious to the fact that the State has and continues to contribute to a decline; not maliciously but through its definitions and methods of support. There is a Crafts World but it admires the Art World. There is a Design World but it adopts the Art World's methods.

### The Amateur Tradition : A Market for Recreation

The Fine Art Market being a market for unique objects permeated by the romantic idea of the artist as a special sort of individual has exploited the idea of untrained or naive art or mentally ill or damaged artists. There are dealers and agents for the sale and promotion of this sort of amateur work. An initial recreational or therapeutic interest can lead to a lucrative professional involvement for the untrained artist provide he/she and his/her art retains an "untrained charm". A money making involvement in the Fine Art Market but also in the Mega-Visual Markets of illustration and possibly advertising. The career of Beryl Cook, sea-side landlady turned professional artist, is a fine example. Her original paintings are eagerly collected and her imagery is to be found reproduced in books and on postcards.\* She evidently participates in several markets perhaps because she is not a professional artist in the sense of being certificated.

Within easy walking distance of Cork Street and the dealers in fine art, brazenly facing the portals of 105 Piccadilly, home of the Arts Council of Great Britain, there is another market place which trades on the same principles as the dealer market although without elegant premises and other professional accoutrements. Here original works of art and craft can be bought from traders acting as agents for

\*See Gallery Five publications Beryl Cook London 1987



THE ACGB AT 105 PICCADILLY



THE ART MARKET ON THE RAILINGS AT GREEN PARK

artists or directly from artists and crafts people themselves acting as retailers. The Green Park Arts and Crafts Association like others throughout the land control and allocate railing space to these professional people who make a living from their art by selling directly and immediately (no waiting until the end of the exhibition) to a passing clientele of tourists and locals. A denizen of the other place (see opposite) responsible for "professional and excellent" in art may dismiss the wares displayed as amateurish or kitsch but the mere existence of this and other open air galleries throughout the land, demonstrates a market for art which responds to the home and foreign market of popular taste.

A tourist visiting Green Park or the other well-known open air "gallery" at Bayswater Road in London in search of typically English art might be taken with an "original" oil painting painted by an "original" English artist, but in fact he will be considering an investment in a mass-produced product of the Far East. Import penetration is conclusive proof of a lucrative market for fine art and a common feature of our home market for the applied arts as well. The general High Street market is flooded with hand-made, more or less utilitarian, frequently third world, goods made by makers with no conception of themselves as artists or crafts persons.

U.K. amateur artists provide a market themselves; a market for art education, recreation and the possibility of critical

participation. In fact, education is something every aspect of the art market requires and something the State could provide as a service for everyone, including artists, dealers, clients and all those interested but without the wherewithal to participate in the dealer market. Such an educational service properly performed could have a substantial, positive influence on the art market but an obsession with a very particular sort of professionalism makes this unlikely at present. When amateurs are encouraged to participate as with the Royal Academy Summer Show, the response and profits are spectacular. (54)

What amateur artists frequently lack is the opportunity, like the professional of the Mega-Visual Tradition, to participate in a market of serious consideration. The opportunity to learn and develop through presenting their art to the public. The success of Adult Education classes, "How to do it" books and Correspondence Art Colleges are further testimony of such a need which the state could help fulfil. A vast army of amateur artists could be a reliable audience for professional art if they could see something in it for them. The wealthy might even turn to buying art.

Access to educational opportunity successfully provided by the Open University may in due course be followed by similar success for the new Open College of the Arts. Its own account of recruitment in its Guide to Courses and Tutorial Centres 1988/89 confirms my observation, "They were of all ages from 18 to 83 and came from a wide range of occupations

including cooks, dentists, architects, teachers, waiters, postmen, farmers, writers, taxi drivers, accountants, a professional singer, a circuit judge, a weapons designer and a fish farm consultant."

We can then legitimately refer to the amateur tradition of art practised as a complement to another career. Many famous politicians, lawyers, bankers, musicians and actors have been amateur artists. A visitor to Chartwell in Kent will see how seriously Sir Winston Churchill took his painting and Noel Coward's paintings were auctioned in 1987. That such a tradition continues is evident in the exhibitions of the work of British actors like Keith Michel or the American, Tony Curtis; the photography of Denis Healey and Prince Andrew and the water colours of Prince Charles. The pop musicians of the 1960's and '70's, frequently art-school trained, continue their art practice and highly successful image makers in modern media will continue a discrete practice in more traditional media. The paintings and photographs of David Bailey being an excellent example.

The Art-world, Craft-world and Design-world have an ambivalent attitude to the participation of amateurs in their respective markets. Occasional indulgence and selective nurturing by organisations like the Outsiders Archive established by Victor Musgrave (suggesting an Inside) have to be contrasted with a general exclusion. Just how equivocal this relationship can be is seen in the way the possible naivety or psychological state of the amateur can be used to promote the work of professional artists. Although L S Lowry

attended art schools for the best part of twenty years, he was frequently presented as a simple man, a perception Lowry himself was happy to perpetuate:

"I am a simple man, and I use simple materials: ivory black, vermilion, prussian blue, yellow ochre, flake white and no medium. That's all I've ever used for my painting. I like oils." (55)

The question raised by this relationship is not whether the market should use such devices (it should if we accept the laws of a market economy) but rather why the state should be so dead set against such a constituency of amateurs, the majority tax-payers, denying their participatory access while protesting the need for education to provide appreciation of professional art. Eventually some in the public sector must recollect the lives of artists before state subvention. A life of diversified practice and multiple careers frequently without professional art qualifications.

That there is such a participatory market of amateurs is evident in the way in which other areas of commerce exploit its potential. The June 1987 issue of Country Living seeks new subscribers by advertising holidays where one can learn "to stencil with Lyn le Grice or paint with Cressida Bell". On the following page in the same magazine a Design on a Plate competition is promoted;

"In conjunction with Poole Potteries we are looking for an undiscovered genius to carry on the lively tradition of artists like Roger Fry, Vanessa Bell, Trinda Carter and Edward Bawden who contributed their vigorous freshness to ceramics. The judges for this bucolic masterpiece will be Deirdre McSharry and Margaret Caselton from Country Living and Arnold Smith, Chairman of Poole Potteries".

We are reminded that this is not simply philanthropy by the last sentence which reads "Copyright on all designs will be retained by Poole".

The argument against such openness, often presented in the public sector, is the need for quality control. The debate is obliged to focus on whether indeed we have the best and whether such a method efficiently achieves other declared objects (sic) of the State exemplified in the published charter of the Arts Council of Great Britain.

The survival, albeit marginalised, of art societies like Blackheath Art Society (1947- ) which could once boast the association of artists as distinguished as Graham Sutherland and Victor Pasmore are a "just living" testimony to an integration of the amateur and professional.

### PART THREE

#### THE STATE AND THE VISUAL ARTS: A PUBLIC SERVICE TRADITION

Talking to artists, dealers, arts administrators, exhibition organisers, curators and collectors you soon encounter a widespread disappointment in the art market. Generally it's assumed the British are not "a visual nation". The nation's financial and intellectual elite may have benefited from a literary tradition encouraging them to buy books, but there is no visual tradition, to speak of, encouraging them to buy art.\* Dealers will tell you that things are much better in the USA, Germany and Japan and even a major part of their dealing in the U.K. is to foreign visitors.\* The Mega-Visual Tradition, while claiming to be "the best in the world" will underline their self awarded accolade by pointing out that it has been achieved in an environment of indifference. Good British designers and design are recognised abroad, we are told by the designers themselves and the State, while our manufacturing industry languishes in a torpor induced by an apparent profound ignorance of design. The director of a gallery in receipt of public subsidy will claim inhibitions caused by lack of funding and all will complain of lack of serious critical discussion and debate in the national press. All, particularly artists, will claim a general lack of

\* A Culture primarily reinforced by favourable tax laws making books, VAT exempt - there is yet no VAT on books although there is on the retail purchase of works of art.

\* Many of the cited interview texts echo this observation of neglect, indifference or even hostility. As an example John McEwen informs us "He (Lesley Waddington) is adamant that it is impossible to support a gallery on the work of living artists at least not in the long term in England where the rich are still happier to invest in houses and horses" (31) In a 1987 Sunday Times interview Francis Bacon declared a reciprocated love of France but "the critics in England loathe everything that I do".

spiritual, intellectual, financial and moral support. Although not seeking to deny the absolute truth of these be revealed by examining their context. As with the word "art" insight can be gained by seeing who is making the statement. A general complaint by a dealer that there isn't a U.K. market for art might in fact be more accurately presented as a lack of a market for the art the dealer is trying to sell. A funding short-fall might be caused by the high and sometimes unrealistic aspirations of the director of the gallery to join an international circuit of galleries exchanging exhibitions of recondite avant-garde art rather than an unsympathetic funding bureaucracy. Likewise, attempts to reach a new 20% might not be necessary subject matter for a professional association of public galleries (Art Galleries Association) if a programme of exhibitions in member galleries followed from properly constituted market research.<sup>(56)</sup> Similarly, the fact that London based critics have not reviewed the latest exhibition in a provincial publicly funded gallery is not the cause of a lack of audience but simply a transfer of guilt (it's the critics fault). And so we could go on decoding accepted and reassuring wisdom.

Although not wishing to be an apologist for successive governments, complaints about lack of state support for the visual arts are, like the previous examples, only half truths, although we might, admittedly, be lead to such a conclusion if we hold a very narrow definition of art or examine the apparently static budgets of particular public institutions such as the Arts Council (fig. 3). Removing such

blinkers reveals a wide spectrum of provision and funding covering the spectrum of visual art we addressed earlier. A massive public resource, rather than a lack of state provision. We have, in a sense, an embarrassment of riches, although, sadly, such a wealth of state provision, of which we could be proud, falls far short of its own declared objects by being largely uncoordinated and, what is reprehensible, the former being possibly the "natural" condition of complex bureaucracies, seemingly obsessed with attitudes and consequent modus operandi which are wholly appropriate in the contemporary world of fine art dealing or private collection or in a Utopia of shared values and ideals but which are largely inappropriate in a system of public service in an increasingly heterogeneous society. Put bluntly, far too many public servants within this complex system conceive of themselves as a sort of dealer highbred, selecting various art and artists for presentation and promotion and rejecting others without any accountability for their actions. This regrettable and in the long term damaging state of affairs, not least, as I will seek to demonstrate, to the broad art market, derives from institutionalised and, therefore, tacit notions of art and artists derived from our 19th century Romantic model of artist: a model which we identified in previous chapters and which, taken too literally, has led to a profoundly patronising attitude both to artists and audience. It is assumed, "the work of the artist is individual and free, undisciplined, unregimented, uncontrolled. The artist walks where the breath of spirit blows him. He cannot be told his

direction; he does not know it himself".(57) In response to this widely-held caricature a tradition of individual and individualistic connoisseurship, formerly employed by private patrons, for private gain in amassing a private collection has been adopted by the public sector, apparently for public good, within the broad guide-line of policies and charters stressing a nurturing and educational role. In this situation the contemporary artist is not asked to participate only provide since he/she can't, being "undisciplined, unregimented, uncontrolled", and the audience (real or imagined) must receive whatever is chosen on their behalf. The notional audience being less beholden than certain sections of the art making community may go elsewhere or stay away.

The apotheosis of such a now orthodox role in the visual arts must be the one time pupil of Berenson, Kenneth Clark. Lord Clark, the connoisseur personified who, albeit in a time of greater certainty, gave us Civilisation in television serial form and was in his time Keeper of Fine Arts at the Ashmolean Library; Surveyor of the King's Pictures; Director of the National Gallery; Chairman of the Arts Council and the I.T.A.; Trustee of the British Museum; Member of the Advisory Council of the Victoria and Albert Museum, the National Art-Collections Fund and the National Theatre. He was also owner of the previously mentioned record breaking Turner and many other extremely valuable works of art. We have already looked at the amateur tradition amongst artists and in a sense Lord Clark personifies that other amateur tradition of public service in the arts in Britain, the tradition of "the

great and good" of public service. Not for Lord Clark the qualifications of today's salaried "professionals", an art history degree or its currently acceptable equivalent occasionally followed by a diploma in arts administration or museum studies (although he probably would have benefited from both) but rather a life-time of, largely, self education in the practice as well as appreciation of art, made possible by the leisure and financial resources which his inherited wealth brought. In the first part of Lord Clark's biography Another Part of the Wood: A Self Portrait, we see the beginnings of this process in the very revealing chapter "The Making of an Aesthete". Lord Clark tells us, "At the age of nine or ten I said with perfect confidence, 'This is a good picture, that is a bad one'". He goes on, "When I was moved by a work of art it never occurred to me that someone else, with more mature judgement, might feel differently. This almost insane self-confidence lasted till a few years ago, and the odd thing is how many people have accepted my judgement". He continues, "My whole life might be described as one long harmless confidence trick".<sup>(58)</sup> This is self doubt of the highest order in one of our recent history's most influential individuals and reflecting too the misgiving of Berenson about such a role. How much more appropriate would his doubt be today when applied to the legion of publicly funded aesthetes deciding what is good and bad art for the nation at the nation's expense and without the personal resources and leisure (we might in fairness add) at Clark's disposal. As we will see an ad-hoc system of quangos and quasi-quangos with their amateur councils, panels and

their regional spawn, apparently the British way to protect against central government control (the effectiveness of which can be disputed), does not protect us from the "insane self-confidence" of selection unencumbered by plan, strategy, guidelines or rationale. In fact, the vice (borrowing Hogarth's term) which it becomes without safe-guards is presented as a virtue: a way of protecting against "committee decisions", pressure groups and lobbies. Paradoxically, as some now question, the artist's right to "artistic freedom", such "undisciplined, unregimented, uncontrolled" freedom remains, anachronistically, the prerogative of the arts administrator in the Public Sector even when administering schemes designed, in part, to encourage greater understanding of art and attitudinal changes in artists. With almost "insane self confidence" the prerogative can be passed by the salaried professional to other selected amateur selectors.

In order to expedite my critique of shared values and beliefs, of which exposure of the foregoing is part, I should quickly refer my reader to the various attempts to identify support for the arts in general or for the visual arts in particular rather than rehearse them in detail here. None, with the exception of the previously mentioned, Economic Situation of the Visual Arts, have attempted to relate Public Sector activity with private commerce in the visual arts nor have they, being outside their terms of reference, attempted to embrace the activities of the various applied visual arts (advertising etc) nor have they attempted to address in any detail the still vexing and problematic task of definition. The 1981-82, Public and Private Funding of

the Arts, for example, concludes "Our inquiry has been restricted to the funding of the professional arts but in this regard we believe that the taste of professional excellence stimulates the desire to explore, participation in and further enjoyment of the arts".<sup>(39)</sup> At the time of this House of Commons Inquiry, Brighton and Pearson's difficulties in defining "professional" for the visual arts had been published even if their report had not. The matter of what constitutes "excellence" is likewise far from a foregone conclusion, nor is it something contemporaries are usually very good at judging, if art history is to be believed. The conflict between innovative talent and academies is well documented in the lives of the artists. The otherwise capable parent of this family of reports and surveys, widely known as The Redcliffe-Maud Report, acknowledges its own limitations.

"It is outside the scope of my Report to comment on the artist/designer in industry or on the role of the Design Council. These subjects, however, are of great, and not irrelevant, importance. It seems clear that in present circumstances the artist is isolated from wide areas of activity in which his special talents are badly needed and could do much to improve our economic prospects as a nation."

Why design should be excluded is deeply rooted in our contemporary narrow perception of artist and in the institutionalisation of such a perception. Despite the foregoing acknowledgement, Redcliffe-Maud himself seems to share a now orthodox view.

"Many of the problems facing the artist are aspects of one basic problem: he does not earn enough from the sale of work to make a living. The market for modern art is not a large one either in Britain or internationally. Some well-known artists can ask high prices for their works but the great majority cannot."

Lord Redcliffe-Maud is referring to the Fine Art Market and in particular the most exclusive section of it, the Art World. As confirmation, in a preceding paragraph, Redcliffe-Maud identifies British stars in the firmament of the Art World,

"Moore, Hepworth, Nicholson, Hockney, Riley, Denny, Phillips and many others of our modern artists are world figures".(60)

This is only a tiny, though arguably the most prestigious, section of the art market (and a fragment of a potential market for art as defined by Art History), and in which the State is heavily involved. Redcliffe-Maud, like so many, assumes this is the only market for art.

Regrettably, the idea of the State is itself far from straightforward, but, for my purpose, it is appropriate to define it as the source of and structure through which public money, contributed by tax-payers, is spent, in this instance, on that spectrum which we are calling visual art. The complexities of the concept "State" have been revealed by Nicholas Pearson in his book, The State and the Visual Arts. I can do no better than to refer my reader to it for a detailed analysis. Pearson, for example reveals the involvement of the Monarchy as an aspect of the State; previous patronage today recognised by the prefix Royal with institutions like the Royal Academy of Art, "seen as being a 'private' institution, though with a 'public' role".(61) Although the contemporary power and influence of the Monarchy cannot be overlooked and its continued participation acknowledged, in some quarters, eg, H.R.H. Duke of Edinburgh

STATE SUBVENTION IN THE VISUAL ARTS

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CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

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GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

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THE NATIONALS

---

THE QUANGOS

---

THE REGIONS AND AREAS

---

THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES

---

(figure:2)

as patron of the Design Council, it must depend on the energy and enthusiasm of individual members of the Royal Family.\* I will, therefore, here dwell on what we might perceive as the usual mechanisms of state involvement in what is called the Public Sector. As Pearson explains in The State and the Visual Arts, subvention involves intervention despite the frequently evoked "arms length principle" as a mechanism for preventing such interference.

A geological image (fig. 2) seems appropriate to describe this system with money emanating from and controlled by central government percolating through the various strata of disbursement. We must remember that like rock formations there are fissures, pervious and impervious layers inhibiting or encouraging flow. The tax-payer may be the source but the incumbent government is the reservoir which currently channels money to the arts through the Minister for the Arts and his Office of Arts and Libraries formerly within the Department of Education and Science and, accepting a wider definition, through the Minister and the Department of Trade and Industry for Design as well as the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and even the Ministry of Defence.

A number of institutions are directly funded by Government for the acquisition, presentation and preservation of the visual arts; these have become known as the Nationals.

\* HRH Prince Charles revealed his misgivings about the design of our built environment in A Vision of Britain, London, BBC1, 1988.

## The Nationals

This direct funding is the case for the national institutions of art and design although not the case for the other art forms like theatre. State subsidy for the National Theatre being a currently contentious example of funding from the A.C.G.B. Similarly the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden is hardly "a private institution" like the Royal Academy of Arts, but rather a major revenue client of the Arts Council. The National Gallery, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the British Museum, the National Portrait Gallery and the Tate Gallery are the "nationals" which concern us. These largely independent institutions (in terms of self government) each with their own board of trustees, relate to the art market in a variety of ways. They largely ignore advertising and its art product (although they might have the same taste in agencies to advertise themselves), they buy art from dealers and artists and they may directly commission artists. Their national status makes them extremely important as institutions for the validation of works of art and artists (by appointment to the Nation rather than the Crown through exhibition or acquisition or both). Their authority in this respect residing symbolically in the neo-classical building they inhabit but practically in the exercise of individual or small group connoisseurship acquiring works on behalf of the nation or by involving artists and their art in temporary exhibitions which frequently foretell acquisition. Although purporting to be scholarly, the nearer these exhibitions come to art produced today the less scholarly in objective terms they must be. They are more in the way of speculations

about what will be art historically significant. Despite this misgiving, the power and influence the exercise of such connoisseurship brings was neatly demonstrated in a recent advertisement for a Keeper's Post at the Tate Gallery captioned: "A powerful influence in the art world".<sup>(62)</sup> The title 'Keeper' itself identifies the role of the individuals and institutions concerned: they are collectors and keepers of the nations art. The Victoria and Albert Museum is marketed as "the Nation's Treasure House". Although precise demarcation over what and by whom in the acquisition, preserving and presenting stakes is fudged it is still just possible to perceive apparently separate functions. The Tate Gallery is the national collection of what we have come to call modern art including, sculpture, prints, drawings and photographs and of British painting before 1900. In the Economic Situation of the Visual Artist Brighton and Pearson use purchase by the Tate Gallery as a means by which artists and galleries might be defined and located within their descriptive system. It is also a defining factor, more perhaps in a Becker sense, in the British Art-World. Acquisition or inclusion in a Tate Gallery exhibition is a mark of achievement, a sign that the artist has arrived.

The "powerful influence" of the institution is perhaps best demonstrated by the introduction in 1984 of The Turner Prize, now frequently compared with literature's Booker Prize as it awards a cash prize of £10,000 to the successful artist. The prize derived from an anonymous donation in the first three years, is organised in co-operation with a privately funded support organisation called Patrons of New Art. The Patrons

of New Art is essentially an exclusive club whose primary purpose is to buy works of art which are offered to the Tate Gallery. Funds for such patronage are derived from covenanted membership fees of, at the time of writing, about 120 members at £250 per annum.

Gordon Burns, writing in The Sunday Times Magazine of 4 November 1984, highlights the value of such patronage, which is way beyond the money paid, by comparing this prize with the Grand Prize for painting at the Venice Biennale. Citing the lengths which Robert Rauschenberg's dealer Leo Castelli went to achieve such an accolade for his artist, Burns regrets the lack of "good honest hucksterism", overlooking the possibilities for the kind of discrete patronage exercised by public sector curators and the network of their "powerful influence".<sup>(63)</sup> To date they have made up the major part of judging panels for the Turner Prize and dealers and collectors and gallery owners as well as "disinterested" individuals make up the membership of the Patrons of the New Art. Those who are able to place the artist into Turner's Pantheon, the Tate Gallery cannot overlook the economic consequences for the artist and dealer. The frequent coincidence of public and private sector exhibitions is no coincidence.

The National Gallery consists of European painting of all schools from the 13th to 19th century masters. The Victoria and Albert Museum is a museum of fine and applied art of all countries, styles and periods. The V & A also contains the national collection of post-classical sculpture but excluding

modern works although modern prints are collected and exhibited as part of a prints and drawings collection. Paintings can also be seen at the V & A as can contemporary crafts as part of the museums growing collection and even bought by the visitor from a Craft Shop within the museum managed by the Crafts Council. Latterly, the museum has accommodated within its Boilerhouse the Conran Foundation Gallery of Design which confers national museum status (intentionally or by default) on the programme of temporary exhibitions of design selected and presented by the connoisseur employee of a private foundation.\* The National Portrait Gallery is a collection of portraits of famous British men and women from the 16th century to the present day executed in a variety of media including photography. Although these are the four major national institutions concerned with art and design, the tripartite role of acquisition, preservation and presentation at this directly funded level, we can easily add others. The Imperial War Museum acquires contemporary art and commissions war artists, whenever there's a significant war, and has a large collection of 20th century British art resulting from the War Artists Schemes from the World Wars. The War Artists Scheme is a remarkable example of the way the state may employ

\*The Boilerhouse Gallery of Design has now removed from the Victoria & Albert Museum and is to open as an independent museum as a separate site.

artists to examine, record and respond to a nation's predicament. Less dramatic than war there are pressing issues which artists might be employed to address as artists (image makers with imagination today).\* The British Museum also has a holding of Paintings and Drawings as well as a collection of other artefacts of unparalleled range and significance: most descriptions begin by claiming lack of space to do justice to its contents. There are yet others without give away adjectives which belong to the nation through bequest.

The home countries, of Scotland and Wales, benefit through their own national offices from similar direct funding, eg, the National Gallery of Scotland or the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art which is the only national exclusively concerned with the contemporary visual arts. Such separatism proves necessary when what emerges is a British resource of art and design crammed into London. With the loss of the Victoria and Albert circulations department, responsible for sending touring exhibitions of objects and photographs to the provinces and a general conservator's unwillingness to distribute collections, the term "Keeper" remains wholly appropriate in the most literal sense. Such "Keeping" in buildings now totally inadequate for the purpose leads to disasters like the 1986 Victoria and Albert flood where case loads of precious ceramics and documents were destroyed or damaged. Keeping linked to habits of personal advancement

\* For accounts of this scheme see Meirion & Susie Harries (1983) The War Artists, London, Michael Joseph. See also the 1930's employment of artists and others in Britain by Mass Observation (1986) Ed. Tom Harrison & Charles Madge, London, The Cresset Library.

through personal research and scholarship overlaid with contemporary economic exigencies may well lead a Keeper to overlook the obligation to present, with large portions of all these national collections to all intents and purposes permanently in store rather than on public view. We need only replace the word "art" with the words "foods" or "water" to highlight the vice.

### The Quangos

Below this strata of direct financial support and provision by the State we have the Quangos representing the broad spectrum we have identified. The Design Council, Crafts Council and the Arts Council are the three Quangos central to this examination although we must quickly add others once we consider a modestly catholic definition of art. The relatively modern media of film, television and video being represented by the British Film Institute and an international market for art as a cultural export catered for by the British Council. All receive a financial allocation from central government, quite separate from the Nationals, routed through government departments or offices with their respective minister and civil servants.

As we have seen, the Arts Council and the Crafts Council receive their allocation from the Office of Arts and Libraries. The precise amount may be of some negotiation but the final decision is made by the incumbent minister in line with his party's policies. The Design Council, on the other hand, receives its allocation through the Department of

Trade and Industry and is responsible to that minister. A schism between art and applied art is here institutionalised at the highest governmental level and the respective amounts of financial allocation reveal the present government's priority for design, publicly promoted by the Prime Minister. Despite this separation, strangely at odds with the thinking which led to the establishment of the Victoria and Albert Museum, closer observation of respective policies and activities reveals remarkable similarities although applied to different sections of our spectrum.

In terms of policy each Quango has its charter which we must assume is intended to define an area of work. Charters are invariably lengthy documents but each Quango produces condensed versions up-dated and re-interpreted for public information in the form of leaflets or as a feature of annual reports. I will use these to develop my description and argument. Broadly speaking, we can characterise policy and activity in the following way. They are all involved in the direct provision of services such as exhibitions and publications; in the selection of product and producer; in the general promotion and well-being of their part of the spectrum by increasing awareness and understanding amongst the general public, in stimulating markets for product and in funding others to do any of the afore mentioned at regional and national level. The Arts Council and Crafts Council, for example, organise exhibitions and fund others to do likewise. Although the precise wording may differ from that which appears in the Arts Council's documents, "To co-operate with government departments, local authorities and other bodies to

achieve these objects", it would seem reasonable, given the above policies and activities and the public nature of their work, that co-operation should be paramount. In contrast to such an expectation, separate corporate identities and egos predominate. Substantial direct provision in central London premises based upon ill-defined areas of involvement can lead to duplication rather than co-operation between the Quango and precious little contemporary co-operation between the National museums and galleries and the Quangos; even when, apparently, closely aligned in terms of objectives. Subsequent descriptions of the Quangos will highlight the lesser vice of duplication but an example of the greater is neatly revealed in Anna Somer Locks' history of the Victoria and Albert Museum. Ms Locks tells us,

"The museum was born out of the spirit of free trade and radicalism which flourished after the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832. This had brought a completely new class of person into power, the men of the new industrial Britain who had a confident belief in progress and in the importance of technical and mechanical innovations, but who also felt that the dislocation of the traditional crafts by mechanisation was leading to a decline in standards of execution and design. As early as 1835 the House of Commons was so worried about the effects of declining standards that it set up a Select Committee of Arts and Manufactures to enquire into the problem. The crucial sentence in the Report which emerged is: 'To us, a peculiarly manufacturing nation, the connection between art and manufactures is most important - and for this merely economical reason (were there no higher motive), it equally imports us to encourage art in its loftier attributes...'"(64)

Emblazoned across the front cover of the Design Council 1984/85 Annual Report is the legend,

"The aim of the Design Council is 'to promote by all practicable means the improvement of design in the products of British industry'"(65)

Ms Locks goes on in her account of the Victoria and Albert's foundation,

This utilitarian attitude towards art remained a recurrent theme through the history of the museum, swelling louder, one suspects when it suited museum officials trying to wrinkle money out of the government. In this case, the Committee recommended setting up state-supported schools of design for the upper artisan classes in the various cities of England. This, it was hoped, would lead to an improvement in standards so that the dreaded French with their superior designs would no longer steal our markets."(66)

If we substitute "the dreaded Japanese and Germans" for "the dreaded French" we confirm the singularity of purpose but there is little evidence to suggest these two publicly funded institutions are close and co-operating allies against import penetration and the loss of international markets caused by the paucity of good design? Further, as we will see, "the men of the new industrial Britain" would question, as we should, the continued separation of Design, Craft and Art; now institutionalised in separate Quangos.

### The Design Council

In a booklet currently available from the Design Council called, The Design Council: What we are....what we do and why we do it, the Quango with a staff of "about 300" is unequivocal,

"The Design Council is a Government sponsored body set up to 'promote by all practicable means the improvement of design in the products of British industry'".(67)

It received, according to the 1984/85 Annual Report grant-in-

aid from the Department of Trade and Industry of £4,149,000 plus a grant from the Northern Ireland Industrial Development Board of £36,750 and income from activities of £8,662,720 giving a gross income of £12,848,470. These raw figures are in a sense misleading since a substantial portion of the Design Councils budget is "earned" from its services of one sort or another. Nonetheless, simply in terms of grant-in-aid from the Department of Trade and Industry, we can see an almost 100% increase in grant-in-aid from the previous figure of £2.8 million.<sup>(68)</sup> Unlike the other Quangos the Design Council is experiencing a boom in funding.

The booklet goes on to briefly demonstrate "why design is important" and how the Council achieves its objects under the following headings: "Design advice to industry, Information and promotion, Exhibitions, Publications, Marketing Assistance, Design education" and "Who to contact" and "Where we are". Summarising the information provided under these headings we are left in no doubt that the Design Council was set up, in 1944, specifically to help British industry to improve the design of its products. An economic argument, as we've seen, remarkably similar to the V & A's almost one hundred years earlier. The Council defines products as both consumer goods and capital equipment like machine tools. Its interests, we are told,

"cover both the design skills with an aesthetic bias whose practitioners are trained in colleges of art and design, referred to as "industrial designers", and skills with a technological bias whose practitioners are trained in colleges of engineering and are thus called "engineering designers"."

Acknowledging that few British companies today employ all the design expertise they may need, the Council offers a variety of services to manufacturing industry through its Design Advisory Service and its Design Advisory Officers based in London, Cardiff, Wolverhampton, Glasgow and Belfast. These officers are experienced engineers or industrial designers who are central in the administration of a funded Consultancy Scheme run by the Design Advisory Service on behalf of the Department of Trade and Industry. This scheme is a brokerage and finance scheme supported by the maintenance of records and contacts useful to the process of putting designers in touch with industry and funding the marriage. In addition, our Design Quango places great emphasis on information and promotion of one sort and another, for example, selecting items of "above average design" for inclusion in a Design Centre Selection Index. Once selected such products can carry a Design Centre Label and so demonstrate Design Council endorsement in the Market for such products (by appointment to the Design Council).\* As a consequence of such a selection, there are Design Council Awards and the Duke of Edinburgh Designer's Prize. These products and designers, once chosen, provide the basis for much of the Council's own exhibitions, publications and marketing to and for manufacturers. The Design Centres in London and Glasgow provide continuing but changing exhibitions of design of the two types identified (the distinction not being as easy as

\*1987 has seen the end of the Design Council label and professional criticism of the Design quango, brought to public attention by Lord Snowdon. His interview with Design Council chairman elect Simon Hornby in February Vogue magazine led to his forced resignation from 26 years of unpaid advisory service to the council.

separate nomenclature might imply) as well as housing product information on 7,000 "well designed" consumer and contract products. The Council also co-operates with the British Overseas Trade Board and the Central Office of Information in mounting occasional exhibitions of well designed British goods overseas. From information available the Design Council does not seem to co-operate with the Nationals nor with other Quangos, such as the Arts Council, who occasionally initiate exhibitions which include design. It was, for example, the Arts Council who co-operated with the V & A on the Hayward Gallery Thirties exhibition of art and design not the Design Council. Similarly, the Crafts Council's inaugural exhibition of their new central London gallery, The Maker's Eye, included product and engineering design but was exclusively the work of the Crafts Council. The Design Council seems to avoid the accusation of "referee and player", contingent on organising exhibitions and funding others to do likewise and familiar to the other Quangos, by simply avoiding funding others, apart from their own regional offices. Paradoxically, the Department of Trade and Industry might occasionally directly fund an exhibition like Young Blood, an exhibition of Britain's Design Schools at the Barbican Art Centre in London. (69)

In pursuance of its improving aim, the Design Council like, all other Quangos is heavily involved in another form of direct provision, publishing. In the Design Council's case, publishing takes the form of two monthly magazines Design and Engineering as well as books, directories and other periodicals intended for professional and educational

readers. These publications are available by post or from the recently refurbished London Design Centre Bookshop which stocks a comprehensive range of books on all aspects of design but does not have a fine art section and only a modest section on craft. The Council also has a picture library containing 35,000 slides of good examples of design which are available on loan or for sale as well as historical and other resources which students and teachers may study by appointment. The Design Index is both an educational resource and part of a strategy designed to stimulate the design market.

The Design Council is the first of the Quangos for the visual arts spectrum but unlike the other Quangos it seems to have an expanding budget in part generated by its own activities and in part by its, seemingly, flexible relationship to its funding department rightly anxious to improve our performance in world markets for manufactured goods. In order to do this the Council has set about trying to achieve the improvement of design in the products of British Industry through the methods previously described. Whether it has been or whether it could be successful given other factors is ultimately a moot issue but certainly one worth considering. The degree of import penetration into the British market and the lack of involvement in world markets for manufactured goods is evident in the Design Council's own exhibition 30 Years On. The demise of the British motor-cycle, merely as one example amongst many, highlighted by John Blake in the accompanying "catalogue" to the exhibition, serves to

illustrate the failure. A failure not of British engineering design (the exhibited Norton was a superb piece of engineering design) but of British Industry's failure to respond to a market's needs satisfied by designed products (industrial design). As former owners will recollect, the Norton bike eschewed a market's need for convenience.

A previous Design Council exhibition Designed in Britain Made Abroad, demonstrated clearly that we have the designers and the education system which produces them but not the industries with the imagination to use them. We have instead industries which remain singularly unable to identify, anticipate and satisfy market requirements profitably and therefore unable to brief designers. They are profoundly ignorant of design; if and when design is considered it is usually too late and then seen only as the serious business of engineering design, solving an engineering problem, rather than as industrial design, solving the problem of a market's needs. Industrial design is still too often perceived by industrialists as frivolous and artistic. The Design Council is right to indentify an educational role but it needs to develop a much broader educational commitment, in cooperation with others, involved in the complex web of state subversion in art and design in order to change these attitudes. Its largely successful attempts to promote design education at all levels of state education has been achieved at the expense of its partner art. The renaming of metalwork and woodwork in secondary schools as "design" or "design and technology" (partly in response to Design Council initiative) and marginalising art, to various forms of self-

expression therapy, diminishes both Art and Design and the abilities of the designers of the future of whom we expect so much. At Further and Higher Education level, anyone witnessing at close quarters the assault on the Colleges of Art and Design will have seen the transmutations required to survive.

As we were previously reminded, the Select Committee of Arts and Manufacturers reported in 1835;

"To us, a peculiarly manufacturing nation, the connection between art and manufacturers is most important.....".(70)

It would be, in my view, a profound sadness for Henry Cole and Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg, founders of the Victoria and Albert Museum, established to achieve objects not dissimilar to the Design Council's, to see how little co-operation exists between the Design Council and the Victoria and Albert and how little art there is in what remains of British manufacturing industry (apart that is from the occasional silkscreened decorative flower).

Thirty years of state connoisseurs selecting good design hasn't checked the failure of British industry nor has it prevented substantial import penetration and the loss of overseas markets. The Design Council has been very active these past thirty years but without seeming to question the premises on which its activities are based. There is an explicit moving away from the other visual arts of crafts and fine art while paradoxically using marketing methods more usually associated with the fine arts, the connoisseur

method, of selecting the "best". The markets that have been lost and the markets for future development do not require exclusive reliance on engineering design elevated by our industrial past to macho supremacy, but rather a combination of art, design and engineering. The Council can be justly proud of its educational achievements for Design (as they define it) both in secondary and higher education but the schisms they encourage aided and abetted by central government have not been successful in changing attitudes. The countries who have usurped U.K. markets are countries which continue to profit from the marriage of art, engineering and design rather than suffer from state encouraged separation. They also seem to take a rather less self-righteous approach to satisfying markets. Good design for them is a by-product not an end in itself. They are prepared to respond to markets as well as lead them into accepting what the State (Design Council) thinks is good design.

## The Crafts Council

Although someone will probably write an authorised and definitive history of the Crafts Council it is not my task here so to do. However, in the context of my examination, a brief look at the Craft Council's inception is important. The Crafts Council began life as the Crafts Advisory Committee set up in 1971 by the then Minister for the Arts, Lord Eccles, to advise him on the needs of the "artist-craftsman". According to Redcliffe-Maud, "It had been felt that the Crafts deserved encouragement and support from a central body and that this function was not one that could be undertaken by the Arts Council". Why this should be so Redcliffe-Maud does not reveal, although he does point out that at the time the separateness from the Arts Council was discussed but not "seriously contested". Views were put forward that amalgamation with the Arts Council " might well mean as in the past, that crafts would be regarded as secondary to the fine arts".<sup>(71)</sup> Significantly in the early days the Design Council provided administrative services for the C.A.C. and its director, Sir Paul Reilly, became, additionally, the Committee's Chief executive. What caused the subsequent separation from the Design Council will perhaps be revealed in the memoirs of the then incumbent "great and good" but by 1979 the Committee had become a Council in its own right incorporated under Royal Charter. Information leaflets of the time stress the centrality of "artist-craftspeople" as a focus for the Crafts Council's various activities. The foreword to the 1977-80 report of

the Crafts Council attempts to define more closely this sort of craftsman in the following way:

"A craftsman is one who can give a physical presence to the strange and beautiful results of imagination, so that what would not exist but for one person's vision and dexterity becomes available to others..."(72)

On the evidence of this definition, not by any means unusual, in Crafts Council literature, the Council's activities and subsequent separation from the Design Council, the Crafts Council might be more properly called the Art-Crafts Council. Just as fine artists have today orientated themselves towards self-initiated and self-expressive work, so too have many crafts persons, especially those selected and aspiring to be selected by the Crafts Council. The Council is not concerned with the general welfare of the crafts as its title and charter might suggest, but rather with the welfare of a very particular section of the craft community. In fact, in order to focus more closely on this section the Crafts Council has recently divested itself of a previous responsibility for Conservation (an application of craft skill, largely, by its very nature, devoid of self-expression). Fortunately, and not before time, a new term for an older craft concept has entered the vocabulary of discourse about the crafts, the designer-craftsman or designer-maker. This term suggests a return to the application of hand craft skills in the solving of design tasks but such a positive and frankly necessary development has to work against institutionalised separation of design from craft. The Design Council, turning calvanistically to serious engineering design and product design for machine

production, and the Crafts Council looking to "the strange and beautiful" artistic hand-made crafts. This separation is even more difficult to comprehend when we see how similar in many respects are the activities of the Design and Crafts Councils although the latter is financially far less well endowed (through the Office of Arts and Libraries, rather the Department of Trade and Industry). One distinguishing feature though is the Crafts Council's co-operation with a lower strata of arts funding and management, the Regional Arts Associations, to grant-aid craft activities and with joint support for funding specialist Craft Officers in certain regions and for specific schemes like bursaries and fellowships (for crafts people) in the regions. Under the Council's grants schemes financial help is offered to craftspersons for establishing workshops. As the previously mentioned Select Committee Report pointed out much of the Crafts Council's work is therefore analagous to the "small industrial finance" of the Council of Small Industry in Rural Areas.<sup>(73)</sup> Grants and loans are also available for special projects planned by craft organisations or individuals; projects such as mounting exhibitions of craft work. There is also a commission scheme to provide craft works for public places, again administered in cooperation with the Regional Arts Associations. Like the Design Council, the Crafts Council is involved in education work. In the case of the Crafts Council about crafts, as they define them, with a specialist education officer for the job. Available as a complement to this education work is an elaborated information service based upon selective and non-selective indexes. The selected index present, in

categories echoing in some cases the Design Council's, 35mm slides and the biographies of crafts persons thought worthy of such promotion. The commissioning of these selected crafts persons is encouraged. The non-selective index is little more than a card index of practitioners who have taken the trouble to have themselves placed on the index and is not, therefore, promoted as Crafts Council approved and selected. The Crafts Council not only selects, in the connoisseur tradition, crafts persons and crafts for these schemes, but also provides leaflets on selected craft shops and galleries where approved craft work can be bought. Despite very ambitious charter objects and an extremely modest budget, the Crafts Council is directly involved in the retail market for craft work by being a collector of art (with a recently updated collection catalogue) and a retailer too with its own Crafts Shop in the V & A. The commercial value of inclusion in any of these schemes at least for those crafts people who see themselves as part of this milieu is substantial, particularly when the Crafts Council seems to be paternalistically committed to its crafts persons once selected and heavily committed to an interventionist approach in the market for their craft. In what seems to be an unprecedented act of intervention the Crafts Council boasted to Leslie Geddes-Brown last year, of its achievement in aiding U.S. collectors in the U.K.:

"Last month, 18 American Collectors were brought to Britain by the Council and given a brisk tour of our best craft workers, shops and galleries. They spent £40,000 in the one week. The American collectors just swept through the little shops we took them to says Dougan, 'they found the quality of our work astounding'".

The article goes on to point out further direct selling achievements at the Chelsea Flower Show and at London's Contemporary Art Fair where "we took £25,000 in four days".(74) This article, while apparently demonstrating a shift in emphasis away from grant-aid for artist-craftspeople to the all-out marketing of their work, provides examples which are not marketing in the sense of building and sustaining old and developing new markets, but rather selling in an existing, limited market in competition with those already in business to do so, including one grant-aided client of the Crafts Council. The British Crafts Centre, a major revenue client of the Crafts Council, also took a stand at the Contemporary Art Fair. The tacit assumption demonstrated by participation in Art Fairs and by importing collectors is obvious, the market for craft is assumed to be the same as the dealer Fine Art Market for unique and expensive objects made by authentic crafts persons (proved by biography) and not a much broader application of craft skill. In, paradoxically, the same article David Mellor, former Chairman, is quoted as hinting at an alternative,

"I felt we should be concerned also with craftsmanship on its broadest front - on skills like plastering a wall properly".(75)

The above-mentioned tactics of Art Fairs and U.S. collectors while glamorous and powerful for the Crafts Council do not encourage a wider interest or use of the crafts although, as Mellor suggests, the nation is desperately in need of craftsmanship and not just in the building trade.

In 1985 a special issue of the Crafts Council News outlined "a framework for determining future action and priorities". The document is presented as a radical and "controversial" document but in fact signals only a modest shift in emphasis and a continued obsession with craft as fine art (as we now know fine art). Nonetheless, this clear statement of intent is to date a rare example of an attempted dialogue with what we might choose to call a constituency or, at least, trying to locate a constituency. Sadly, such an invitation to debate, which might include adverse criticisms, has been missing from the quango system of support for the visual arts. This document although an object lesson in clarity for the other Quangos in terms of its presentation, inadvertently reveals the weakness of a system which provides general guidelines for action in the form of a Royal Charter aims but allows "very considerable flexibility in interpretation" to pragmatic institutions unused to continuing the philosophical exercise common in professional education, for example, of establishing general aims, formulating particular objectives and continually testing these objectives against particular experiences including public debates. The Royal Charter quoted in this Special Edition, sets out three aims for the Crafts Council:

- a) to advance and encourage the creation and conservation of works of fine craftsmanship;
- b) to foster, promote and increase the interest of the public in the works of craftsmen;
- c) and (to ensure) the accessibility of these works to the public in England and Wales.

These aims are dependent on a clear perception of craftsmanship, a misinterpretation or a limited

interpretation can inhibit success as measured against these aims and can, in fact, be part cause of "denigration of standards" and other identified ills in the worlds of Craft. Thus an organisation which identifies the first of three concepts "arising from our basic aims" as "the crafts as an extension of the world of fine art" rejecting "the tired notion of the crafts as being only useful items " and which it claims, "has been well and truly laid to rest by craftspersons and the Crafts Council" cannot, with impunity, go on as a second concept to "rail at the shoddy quality of much of our mass-produced goods", since it has helped to confirm an attitude amongst craft makers away from designing or helping to design "useful items". Later in the Newsletter legitimate concern is expressed about the economic viability of a profession which earns an average £3,500 per annum for a 65 hour week but does not consider the possibility that the primacy of fine art craft in Crafts Council thinking and action and consequent attitudes away from applying the craftspersons' skills to someone else's task may be part cause of such a regrettable situation. The third notion (somehow-metamorphosed from "concept" to "notion" in the text) is indeed only a notion. A notion not proven that "the talent of craftspeople can be expressed in many ways. Their sensitivity; their aesthetic judgement, their feeling for the appropriate, can be put at the service of other activities such as industry and commerce".<sup>(76)</sup> Some craftspeople may indeed have these refined sensibilities but there is little evidence to suggest that the majority have, or are able to apply them in the way described. The habit amongst professional mediators of abstraction and annexation of

abilities not exclusive to artists or artist craftspeople may in itself alienate industry and commerce, especially if the usual result of the exercise of these sensibilities, is the "strange and beautiful" rather than the functional.

Like the other Quangos of our visual arts spectrum, the Crafts Council is heavily involved in its own activities. In the case of the Crafts Council we can cite the Council's own publications of which the most glamorous must be the full colour Crafts magazine and its own catalogues as well as publication in other media such as slides and videos about crafts persons or aspects of the crafts. Far less glamorous but a substantial if discreet contribution to the crafts are publications on aspects of the business of being a crafts person.

The runaway success of Running a Workshop: Basic Business for Craftspeople amongst would-be and amateur as well as working professional craftspeople is ample evidence of such a contribution, as are yet more modest but no less valuable booklets on subjects like Working to Commission. With the exception of the afore-mentioned business skills publication, other Crafts Council publications, in a sense, complement Crafts Council exhibitions shown in their glamorously refurbished (in a post-modern style) premises in Central London. Here, whether the exhibition is generic (ceramics, for example), historical or an exhibition of the work of an individual artist-craftsperson, the works are presented as unique and made by unique individuals who are presented and promoted by the Crafts Council. The cult of the unique

individual so very necessary in the sort of private commerce undertaken by dealers in fine art has been adopted by the Council as its marketing strategy for its exhibitions. This is not just in the way the exhibitions are conceived and displayed but in the publicity material which often features photographs of the craftsperson making or posed by his/her objects. The Crafts Council will also tour exhibitions in various regional venues and the same methods apply, supported by the resources of the Crafts Council. These resources can still be used when the craftsperson's work becomes fine art, potter turned sculptor, or when the theme of the exhibition might sensibly be considered appropriate material for one of the other art and design Quangos - e.g. a major exhibition of applied fine art, The Omega Workshop exhibition of 1984 was solely the product of the Crafts Council yet Omega workers were noted for their lack of craft skill, abundantly evident in the exhibited works.\*

In April 1986 the Crafts Council issued a Statement of Policy which continues with the task of interpreting its charter duties and deciding on a strategy. This document is revealing in many respects. Visually it confirms the criticism of the cult of the individual makers. The discreet grey on white and grey-on-grey typography so evocative of the commercial gallery is complemented not by illustrations of craftwork but of three makers. The text locates the

\* For an account of the Omega Workshops and their production see Judith Collins (1984) The Omega Workshops, London. Secker & Warburg Ltd. In Roger Fry, founder of the workshops, we have a typical connoisseur philanthropist at work. Concerned for the welfare of impecunious young artists, at least those he favoured, Fry sought to improve public taste by having artists decorate furniture and rooms for wealthy clients.

Crafts Council on the "ground between the Arts Council and the Design Council" and attempts to take on board a broad, essentially educational role linked with a pressing need to develop the craft economy.<sup>(77)</sup> To date, 14 years of activity focused on selected artist-craftpersons seems to have done little to improve the craft economy, on the evidence of the Crafts Council's own research, nor has it had an appreciable or perceptible improving influence on standards in general or on increasing public appreciation of fine craftsmanship, again by its own admission. Like the Design Council its obsessions with selecting the few has made it fall short of its own chartered objects. It has enhanced the images of itself and a handful of makers but at a great cost, the separation of Craft from Design and a continued decline of a market for applied craft. It has tried too hard to prove the artist craftsman is equal to the fine artist and the Crafts Council is an independent organisation with its own charter and modest state patronage to dispense equal in prestige if not in cash to the Design Council and the Arts Council (see below).

GRANTS FROM THE OFFICE OF ARTS AND LIBRARIES (or its forerunners)  
TO THE CRAFTS COUNCIL

Year	£ Amount	Percent Increase
1971/72 (4 months)	50,000	-
1972/73	178,000	256.00
1973/74	304,700	71.18
1974/75	372,716	22.95
1975/76	531,120	42.20
1976/77	669,848	26.05
1977/78	768,590	14.74
1978/79	839,392	9.25
1979/80	1,148,000	36.72
1980/81	1,250,000	9.76
1981/82	1,425,000	13.10
1982/83	1,600,000	12.29
1983/84	1,765,000	10.31
1984/85	1,777,300	0.68
1985/86	1,880,000	5.80
1986/87	1,925,000	2.39

## The Arts Council of Great Britain

The Arts Council is a large and complex arts funding bureaucracy concerned with funding all those arts it chooses to recognise. We are here primarily concerned with a department apparently operating within Arts Council charter and policy and ultimately governed by the Council (should it choose to exercise the power) the Art Department. When people speak of the Arts Council in the visual arts they are usually referring to the Art Department. The Arts Council, like most Quangos, has made special and now largely separate provision for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. England, by contrast, has no such separate particular national provision but is rather served by twelve separate Regional Arts Associations (which we will examine later) who receive finance from the Arts Council of Great Britain. A recognised need to develop a national art identity in Scotland, Wales and to some degree Northern Ireland has led to different and in some cases more evolved policies and strategy which we will also examine later. Proceeding to examine the work of the Art Department of the Arts Council of Great Britain we must be conscious that it mainly serves England (if we are to acknowledge the evidence of the distributions of provision) but has an influence throughout Britain. We must also remember that the Art Department does not have exclusive control of the Arts Council's spending on the visual arts. Arts Centres and Community Projects for example will invariably involve or even be initiated by fine art trained artists but they are as a rule funded by other departments and not usually the concern of the Art Department Officers or

BREAKDOWN OF ACCB ART DEPARTMENT BUDGET

	Direct Spending	Grants Guarantees	Total
1979/80	£1,632,471	£1,079,784	£2,712,255
1980/81	1,555,159	1,434,336	2,989,495
1981/82	1,959,938	1,339,986	3,299,924
1982/83	1,654,598	1,428,707	3,083,305
1983/84	2,164,031	1,365,043	3,529,074
1984/85	2,303,814	1,252,500	3,555,314

Direct spending includes net cost of exhibitions, running Hayward and Serpentine Galleries, Art films, publications and promotions.

(fig. 3)

the unpaid Panel which advises the Art Department. A major though not exclusively visual art venue like the Institute of Contemporary Art in London for example may have a degree of freedom of action envied by major revenue clients of the Arts Council's Art Department. Such a venue might choose a more catholic definition of art rather than a narrower party-line required as a condition of subsidy (subvention invariably means intervention). Finally and before looking at detail we must also comprehend the relative financial scale of operation within the Arts Council. In 1985 the Royal Opera House received state subsidy via the Arts Council to the tune of £13,386.891, which is over four times the annual budget of the Art Department (see fig. 2). Itemised expenditure by art form in the A.C.G.B. 1985 Annual Report reveals Art allocation as about a quarter of Drama and less than one half of Music. Closer examination of Art Department figures reveals that over half the Art Department's funds are spent on its own self-initiated and managed activities rather than in the case of other departments on grants and guarantees to others. (fig. 2) In this the Art Department is in line with the other Visual Arts Quangos but out of line with apparent A.C.G.B. policy. In 1984 the Secretary General could declare, "we should be the enabling fund not quasi-creators" and yet, as we will see, the Art Department has always been a creator of exhibitions and other schemes. (78)

In 1985 the Art Department published an information leaflet similar in format although more colourful than the other Art and Design Quangos. In this leaflet the Arts Council's Royal

Charter is rehearsed. Its aims according to this source are "to develop and improve the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts; to increase the accessibility of the arts to the public throughout Great Britain".<sup>(79)</sup> This is an abbreviated version of the usual abbreviated version published in the A.C.G.B.'s Annual Reports. The brochure version conveniently deletes an enjoiner to co-operate with others which can only lead us to assume that the Department considers that direct provision, not co-operating with others, is the best way to achieve the two quoted general aims. Significantly, therefore, the first three items in our leaflet deal with the A.C.G.B.'s direct provision of exhibitions. The Hayward Gallery is a "major national exhibition gallery". The Council goes on to list with pride its exhibition achievements at the gallery, "since its opening in 1968 by Her Majesty the Queen the Hayward has displayed the finest art of the past and the present in more than a hundred exhibitions".(see Appendix) The leaflet explains that exhibitions at the Hayward and at the Serpentine Gallery and for touring are selected on the advice of the Arts Council's Exhibitions Committee which is made up of a changing group of artists, specialist curators, art historians and critics. According to the author "the aim of the (resulting) programme is to present outstanding art from all periods and cultures in a way that speaks to today's audience". Such an invitation to measure the Council's achievements once presented, must be used. Many are less fulsome in their praise of both programme and individual exhibitions. The former owners of the Hayward Gallery, the G.L.C., attempted to demonstrate their discontent with what

they considered an elitist programme by initiating eviction proceedings. Amongst the major exhibitions listed by the Arts Council is Dada and Surrealism Reviewed. An audience survey commissioned by The Arts Council revealed that this exhibition spoke "fully" only to those able to understand French, German and with a fore knowledge of the Dada and Surrealist movements. This survey is clear evidence, amongst much more that I will present, of a dilemma that the Arts Council, like the Crafts Council and the Design Council, have been unable, to date, to resolve. They protest a commitment to the general public, who indirectly provide their finance, but they are unable to grasp the full implications of what must therefore be a largely educational task (clearly stated in their respective Charters). Christopher Wilson the author of the afore-mentioned report concluded of Dada and Surrealism Reviewed,

"The organisers intended an explanatory exhibition and the visitors, in fortunate compatibility, came to learn. Evidence of the educational input of the exhibition indicated, though, that visitors came and left with a very limited knowledge of Dada and Surrealism." (80).

The word "elitist" frequently used by detractors of the Arts Council distracts both the Arts Council and its critics from a profound educational and marketing failure. Seen in total the Hayward has had a very mixed not to say, on occasions, popular programme with some well-attended and sometimes profitable exhibitions (we must remember Hayward Exhibitions

are not free). \*The failure is not a programming failure but a failure to understand that "access" is created by making exhibitions themselves educational; something the Arts Council is quite capable of achieving with historical exhibitions like the Thirties but is unable to apply to exhibitions of contemporary British Art. Flattered rather than chastened by the back-handed compliment "elitism" (too easily accepted as confirmation of individual conceit) the A.C.G.B. has latterly turned to Education for Arts Council exhibitions, at the Hayward (and Serpentine); provided not by the Council but by seconded London teachers. This has meant providing ancillary material and experiences for targeted sections of a notional audience, naturally children mainly, so that they too might appreciate a product predetermined and unencumbered in its formulation by educational objectives. The freedom of the individual exhibition's organiser (or selector) to do what he or she likes is, as we will see, inviolate particularly when dealing with the art of today. The work and achievement of the Art Department's own Education Officer is strangely restricted to Touring Exhibitions largely unseen in London at the Hayward or Serpentine.

\*Sir Roy Shaw wrestles with the difference between "good art" as presented by the A.C.G.B. or its clients and "surrogate" or "cheap" art. He sympathises with those who can only enjoy the Beatles and Porridge. The latest version of his views can be found in The Arts and the People (1987), London, Jonathan Cape. His Booklet Elitism versus Populism in the Arts, City Arts, highlights his confusion. He argues that culture should not be for the few but is unable to accept a culture which is not defined by a few like (Shaw) minds.

Closer examination of adverse criticism in the national press and even some of the art magazines which serve the Art World reveals a concentration around the series known as the Hayward Annual. The Arts Council represents these as "a commitment to showing the achievements of living British artists" but they are, even by the Arts Council's own figures ("400"), only a showing of a tiny section of art made by living British artists. What's more all are drawn from what Pearson and Brighton have called the "Art World", as the ubiquitous habit of publishing potted biographies confirms. Education work for these exhibitions is singularly difficult because the organisers (or selectors) abandon, reject or subvert a rationale, plan or argument; in the puzzling assumption that to adopt in selection or presenting in exhibition form such arguments would inhibit or confuse the selector and the notional audience.

An indictment of a major national exhibition gallery, in so far as it purports to have a commitment to living British artists and an audience for their work, requires further evidence. This is liberally provided in the exhibitions themselves and in the accompanying publications, the exhibition catalogues. Catalogues to these exhibitions which a member of the lay public might buy in sanguine expectation of further insight, merely reflect the blank whiteness of the galleries in which the exhibitions are shown. Many are nothing more than expensively produced portable galleries containing excellent reproductions of the exhibited artists' work (not always work in the exhibition) with titles such as "Untitled"; biographies of the artist but never the selectors

who may be equally as obscure to the uninitiated audience and even to the reasonably initiated, and prefaced by an account of the difficulties of the selectors and their unwillingness to be pressed into presenting an argument through or with an exhibition. Working backwards through the Hayward Annuals we therefore encounter in 1986 the selectors Barry Barker and Jon Thompson,

"In this particular case, the show presents no historical map, furnishes no didactic argument, no theme and only a deeply hidden critical prognosis."(81)

In 1984 we discover that the Arts Council not only encourages such an attitude but almost insists upon it. Nigel Greenwood the art dealer reveals his predicament accepting the carte-blanche honour of being a selector,

"When Andrew Dempsey asked me if I would like to select this year's Hayward Annual my immediate response was to ask him, "what was the Hayward Annual?" He replied, tactfully as ever, "I was rather hoping you would tell us."(82)

In 1983 Kate Blacker, artist, eschewed "predetermined theme or rationale" in favour of "instinct" as a way of choosing work for her part of the exhibition, The Sculpture Show, which spilled from the Hayward Gallery over onto the South Bank and into the Serpentine Gallery.(83) In 1980 John Hoyland, artist, tells us plainly,

"this exhibition is not intended to be a comprehensive survey of that (good) painting, but simply a personal choice, a slice of British Art Cake".(84)

And in 1979 Helen Chadwick, artist, tells us,

"Never having felt part of a school or movement in art, I have been drawn to work that has its own idiosyncratic appeal. It has been hard to pin-point my decisions and rationalise why I consider this work and these artists to be significant. Analysis often serves

to confuse rather than clarify. Ultimately it has been a very personal and often intuitive response."(85)

It would seem from the foregoing that the Arts Council, in its attempt to deal with the art of today at the Hayward and, as we will see, elsewhere, has somehow come to the conclusion that inviting a selector to exercise his or her intuition to make a personal choice of artists, without guidelines from the Council for a subsequent promotion in an exhibition which avoids demonstrating an argument or rationale, is the best way to achieve aims set down by its Royal Charter and the best way to use a major national exhibition gallery to speak to "today's audience about today's art."(86) This conclusion is, to say the least, arguable and frankly strange. It seems to require of all concerned, particularly the audience, a blind faith in the efficacy of this process since no attempt is made to demonstrate, argue or rationalise its value. Compared to other areas of public expenditure it is a unique and ultimately an unaccountable way of operating. The audience may reasonably ask the simple question, "why this artist or this art rather than another?" but no answer is given except that some unknown individual has instinctively responded to "idiosyncratic (or some other) appeal". This is the latter-day publicly funded connoisseur at work but without a view of "Civilisation" to present and without the self-doubt which afflicted Lord Clark. The occasional use of such a way of working in a major national venue may be mildly diverting but its exclusive use when dealing with today's art betrays a lack of imagination and scant regard for developing and improving knowledge, understanding and practice and increased accessibility to the art form in

question. As we will see this approach has been adopted as the model for virtually all, if not quite all, in the Public Sector from the Arts Council down (and across). Certainly it has been a central feature of programming at the Serpentine Gallery, the A.C.G.B.'s other gallery, with a programme which "concentrates on the work of living British artists with one person shows and mixed exhibitions devised by invited selectors". The Hayward too has such one person shows but they would seem to be of "our most celebrated artist". The cult of carte-blanche for selectors at the Serpentine has led to further examples of apparently contrary behaviour by the Art Department insofar as temporary selectors in the employ of the Department have been allowed to get away with contravention of apparent guidelines. Although there is a profound problem of definition the Arts Council has sought to concern itself exclusively with what it considers professional art and artists. This would normally rule out of consideration student or amateur artists but individual selectors have had no difficulty selecting students or amateur artists for inclusion in Serpentine exhibitions even as the gallery administration rejected others by that criteria.<sup>(87)</sup> The vice here is not the selectors right to select and present particular exhibitions but the inconsistent and on occasions downright contradictory behaviour unbecoming in a public institution. The Serpentine, like the Hayward and the Crafts Council Gallery, has also presented exhibitions which would appear to be the primary concern of other Quangos. Just as the Crafts Council has presented what are essentially fine art exhibitions so the Arts Council's Serpentine Gallery has presented craft

exhibitions and demonstrations. The Arts Council's ambitions for the Hayward have included exhibitions of architecture, film, craft and set design. The Art Department of the Art Council through its own London galleries obsessively pursues a policy of direct provision overlooking that Charter enjoinder to co-operate. There is indeed, on occasions, a tendency to compete rather than co-operate and certainly to date a great deal of missed opportunity for co-operation between the Arts Council, the other Quangos and the Nationals over exhibitions.\* A natural partner is the Tate Gallery but the example of successful early co-operation before the A.C.G.B. had venues of its own is now largely ignored.

The Arts Council's touring programme might be seen as such an opportunity but in fact provincial venues, sometimes funded by the A.C.G.B., are, more often than not, passive recipients. According to our source "many of the exhibitions presented at the Hayward and Serpentine Galleries are shown outside London. Others are devised specifically without a London launch for touring. In 1983 "fifty-six exhibitions received over three hundred showings outside the capital". Here we see the war-time and immediate post-war enthusiasm for sending out exhibitions to the provinces from London continuing even though the necessity does not (as the next item in the Gallery's leaflet demonstrates). The Hayward and Serpentine do send out exhibitions but rarely do they receive exhibitions from other sources in the United Kingdom; nor,

\*In the appendix, Serpentine Exhibitions, we can identify exhibitions arguably more the provenance of other venues e.g. 1982 The Living Arts of India: Nine Craftsmen or 1984 Hans Coper, both Crafts Council Exhibitions?

strangely do they show their own touring exhibitions which on occasions do acknowledge the educational potential of the exhibition itself. The A.C.G.B.'s British Art Show being nothing of the kind but rather a personal selection which nonetheless did try to present an Art World argument about the British Art World wasn't shown in London nor was "the most ambitious exhibition on Ruskin for over twenty years". One can only speculate about the reasoning behind such a policy but perhaps it is a perverse way of making amends for a surfeit of London provision by depriving London audiences of the opportunity of conveniently seeing major exhibitions.

According to our useful leaflet:

"about a third of the Arts Council's spending on art and photography is devoted to support of eleven independent organisations. These include two photography galleries, two London-based studio organisations, Acme and Space and such important centres for the presentation of contemporary art as the Arnolfini, Bristol; the Ikon, Birmingham; the Museum of Modern Art, Oxford; and the Whitechapel Gallery in London. These and other galleries funded by the Regional Arts Associations, including the Sunderland Arts Centre, the Midland Group in Nottingham and the new Manchester Arts Centre constitute a group of independent organisations which have an unrivalled record of mounting exhibitions of new and often controversial art." (38)

These centres may indeed have an "unrivalled record" but their current activities and their future, in at least three cases, have been jeopardised by the Arts Council itself. Their exhibitions are obliged to compete in a market for exhibitions with the Arts Council, who fund others but who also produce their own. An "independent's" (not of A.C.G.B.'s influence and money) exhibition tour in the U.K. has to compete with the Arts Council's marketing operation which, includes subsidised hire fees, publicity and

exhibition organising staff who are employed exclusively on the task of making and promoting Arts Council exhibitions. The Arts Council's recently published strategy document The Glory of the Garden mentioned in the leaflet, declares that it seeks increasingly to draw the local authorities into support of these galleries and at the same time proposes a new and sustained relationship with a number of municipal galleries to develop their potential for a more active presentation of contemporary art. The local authorities in Birmingham and Bristol were drawn with threats to withdraw Arts Council support from organisations which the Arts Council helped to establish and sustain. To date this strategy not only jeopardises the Ikon Gallery, Birmingham and the Arnolfini Art Centre, Bristol but is based on the inaccurate and provocative assumption that the local authorities are not already sufficiently involved in funding the visual arts. Apart from less obvious financial involvement which I will discuss later, local authorities fund libraries and municipal galleries, many of whom existed before the "independents" were established and have pursued a more modest but no less valuable task of presenting contemporary art alongside permanent collections of art or books on art. It may well be at least partly, the fault of the Arts Council that these facilities were not recognised and developed at the time of the burgeoning of these independent centres and are consequently in need of development now. Taking a broader view than mounting exhibitions of new and controversial art, it may be damaging to the task of increasing audiences to establish a separation between the art of the past and the art of the present:

something the independents (revenue clients of the Arts Council) and others funded by the R.A.A.s have inadvertently done.

Although there are notable exceptions these "independent" venues have been only too willing to adopt the connoisseur model of leadership with management and covert policy round the decisions of the director and his/her advisers about what exhibitions to put on drawn exclusively from the "Art World". The art of the past and the art of amateur or other professional artists has been given scant consideration over the last twenty or so years as an examination of programmes will reveal. (89)

Our brochure shows the Arts Council also provides grants to galleries to enable them to be more ambitious in the presentation of works of art than their finances would normally allow:

"last year some thirty galleries throughout England received grants to mount special exhibitions designed either to stimulate greater enjoyment and understanding of contemporary work or to encourage a fresh look at the art of the recent past."

The two examples provided, in the leaflet, refer to exhibitions of the work of various contemporary British artists, all of whom could be described as "Art World" artists and the recipient galleries were in development areas designated by the Arts Council in its strategy document and an Arts Council funded trainee was curator at one of them. While not wishing to discourage strategic development nor,

for that matter, wishing to deny opportunity for a new curator, the two examples demonstrated the Arts Council's continuing desire to influence and even control the national scene. A former London revenue client of the Arts Council, the AIR Gallery, associated with SPACE studios, was "encouraged" in a drastic re-programming and consequent redesignation of role in the "Art World" (as show-case for lesser known artists) by the withdrawal of funding, a change of management and the necessary occasional application to the Arts Council for grant-aid for particular exhibitions acceptable to the Arts Council. At precisely this time the Serpentine Gallery decided to terminate this aspect of its work in the Summer Shows programme.

Artists' patronage, the next subject to be discussed, reveals a variety of schemes designed to complement the Council's support through exhibitions. Like the exhibition programme, this is support for a tiny section of the "Art World" and once favoured some can rely on continuing indirect support of this sort as a glance at Hayward and Serpentine exhibitions will reveal. Unlike the Crafts Council the Arts Council does not now give grant-aid direct to its makers although it does fund Acme and SPACE which are associations formed to provide housing or studio space for artists in London. Like the Crafts Council it has an Index of approved makers but not now maintained.

Working closely with the Regional Arts Associations the Council offers grants of up to 50% of the total cost of commissioning or purchasing works for public sites and

towards picture purchase funds of such bodies as Hospital Boards. In addition the Council offers guidance to commissioners of art for public places and recently, although unusually, co-published with the Crafts Council and the magazine 'Art Monthly', Art Within Reach which is represented as "a comprehensive guide to recent work in the field and a practical tool for artists and patrons alike". Art Within Reach is indeed "a practical tool" but it comprehensively demonstrates a preference for "Art World" art.<sup>(90)</sup> Its general tone of enthusiasm and energy, anticipating a renaissance in patronage can be contrasted with the pessimism expressed in the Anniversary Journal of the Royal Society of British Sculptors, sculptors who in the main make their livings from commissions. Nigel Boonham in his introductory article "Sculpture - the Missing Link" comments:

"What is popularly regarded as the mainstream of British Sculpture has involved itself in more cerebral forms of expression. Unfortunately, it could be argued that, however valid, these can be seen as an indulgence in intellectual gamesmanship. A small, but significant proportion of contemporary public sculpture, applauded by a vociferous minority, has genuinely bewildered the majority who walk by with increasing disinterest."

Boonham continues:

"While reliance on Government subsidy has proved fruitful for some, the funds available have been limited and inaccessible to the broad range of sculptors active in this country."<sup>(91)</sup>

What Boonham is referring to is the support of Art World sculpture at the expense of other professionals. In practice the schemes illustrated and described in Art Within Reach

depend on the brokerage activities of a small number of state funded individuals or individuals who have graduated from state funding, who consciously or unconsciously have demonstrated a marked prejudice against sculptors such as the membership of the Royal Society. Instead they operate in an Arts Council, Art School nexus and have identified their task as finding a new market for "Art World" art and artists. The schemes mentioned in Art Within Reach are not as a rule widely advertised nor is genuine open competition encouraged, rather these works

"find their way to their sites with great trouble and care; many meetings, letters and hours of work on the part of the commissioning patrons, authorities and arts administrators who have set up the commissions, judged, and awarded them arranged funding and given support to the undertaking and installation of the works; many hours of work and consideration on the part of the artists, especially for the placing and context."(92)

While many of the examples patently refute the latter assertion regarding context we can see how many professional artists and potential patrons busily trying to make a living might be unwilling or frankly unable to participate in such a process. For most professionals in any field the dialogue must be direct along the lines of "we want this"; "can you make it?"; "how much?" and not an elaborate public relations exercise which might require on-site performance of being an artist as well as, for the artist, time consuming and difficult task of coming to the notice of the broker (arts administrator) in the first place.

Like Commission Schemes, Residencies have been initiated by the Arts Council and in some cases subsequently developed by

the R.A.As, as a way of increasing patronage for Art World artists. Although some arts administrators involved would be anxious to refute such assertions of bias they cannot deny the biased requirements of this form of patronage. They seem to be based on the far from proven assumption that familiarising the public with the working practice of a particular sort of artist and offering the artist an involvement with a community is a way of increasing patronage or at least achieving some of those more general Royal Charter objects. Although, according to the Arts Council, "all residency appointments are competitive and nationally advertised", they are not available to all. They are not, importantly, available to those artists who have established a long-term involvement with a community to subsidise themselves, nor are they available to professionals who earn a living exclusively from direct commissions. This form of public expenditure on artists is available only to those artists who are available. The full implications of such a situation will continue to escape the notice of arts administrators with vested interests but they will not escape the notice of artists unable to participate. Residencies have quickly become a route to further opportunity for individual artists; opportunity for further exhibitions or further commissions. They bring artists to the notice of those able to dispense the patronage of the State.

Rory Coonan, Arts Council Art Officer responsible for Art in Public Places, itemises some examples of residences leading to commissions and, as he points out, an exhibition is often an integral part of a residency and artists' biographies

demonstrate progress from one scheme to another. Coonan also asks, "what is the point of it all?". The short answer would seem to be those commissions, those exhibitions, those opportunities which might stem from the scheme. He further asks why should hosts "bother to take on this strange, unpredictable creature, the artist?". The short answer again might be to discover inadvertently that artists are not "strange unpredictable creatures" while attracting inexpensive publicity, matching funding, improving industrial and public relations, adding temporary and possibly different personnel to the complement and possibly acquiring subsidised work/s of art. Coonan's statement about artists as "strange and unpredictable creatures" (reflecting Maynard Keynes' forty years previously) indicates a central dilemma of definition shown by all Quangos under discussion.<sup>(93)</sup> The Arts Council's definition of artist, for its section of our spectrum, is Coonan's caricature. Residences and Commissions (those discussed) while protesting otherwise reinforce such a ultimately damaging caricature which does, however, fit in rather nicely with the self image of the new breed of arts administrator as connoisseur. These schemes are their "galleries without walls", their opportunity to exercise the power of selection albeit more a drastic pre-selection for patrons such as local authorities to make the final decision. For the growing number of artists marginalised by exclusion, it is the arts administrators who can appear "strange and unpredictable" not themselves. An artist with a dual career as school teacher, graphic designer, factory worker, arts administrator etc, is hardly likely to be attracted, even if

he/she was available, to an opportunity which required far more than being an artist and producing art (making two and/or three dimensional images with imagination). These schemes require them to be missionaries for art by performing as artists.

Continuing, our leaflet informs us that the Arts Council Collection "is the largest of contemporary British Art and represents the work of more than 1,600 artists". This may be true, but as with the previous schemes and as examination of the catalogues will confirm, it contains the work of Art World artists. It is a collection of largely uncommissioned sculpture, paintings, artists' prints, drawings and photographs made by art school trained artists and selected without published criteria or guidelines by a succession of individuals or groups invited to do so by the Arts Council.(94)

The works are bought directly from the artist or from dealers or from exhibitions in publicly-funded galleries. This process requires the selector to find the artist but latterly artists have been "encouraged to apply to have their work considered and purchased" by sending slides which may then be followed by a visit to the artist's studio for final selection. The purpose of this "working collection" is to travel and be seen widely. In this sense it is supposed to be different "from most national collections" although it can only fairly be compared with similar collections of contemporary British Art like the British Council's and the Tate's and the Scottish National Gallery who likewise travel

and exhibit their working collections. "The character of the collection reflects the Council's intention to represent the work of both established and less well-known artists" but its pattern of buying reflects the pattern of the Tate and the British Council and the content of the Council's own exhibitions. Some of the artists included may be "less well-known to the general public" but they are as a rule well-known to the Council's selectors.<sup>(94)</sup> The Arts Council collection contains, as well as examples of what we might call the traditional fine art media, almost 1,300 photographic prints by over 150 photographers. The Arts Council, nonetheless, when it comes to discussing its involvement in photography points out that it has "supported photography as an art since the early 1970's". Presumably, not photography in all its uses and manifestations but only when it is art?

As a latecomer to the Department's consideration, and perhaps because photography was considered sufficiently different from other media to warrant separate consideration (even though it was art?) the Art Department, has developed an apartheid system of management for photography. Photography has its own Officer and its own Photography Advisory Group within the Department. It also produces its own similar format brochure. This separate development has led to a remarkably different approach to the task of supporting and promoting photography. Unlike the rest of the Department, photography seems to be in a genuine partnership with the Regional Arts Associations. The main responsibility for all regional galleries, workshops and support for individual

photographs is passed to the appropriate R.A.A., although the Council continues to fund two organisations in London, the Photographers Gallery and Camera Work. These two organisations in a sense represent two diametrically opposed attitudes. The Photographers Gallery exhibits photographs as fine art, whilst CameraWork, as its name might suggest, has a community approach emphasising community use of photography. Photography unlike the Art Department as a whole, does not consign community involvement to a separate department for separate consideration. In this the regional photography venues would seem to concur, having programmes which demonstrate a combination of the two approaches. Without a network of clients and without a major commitment to its own exhibitions and venues, the Council's main role in photography becomes broad-based and educational. It supports the publication of photography books and magazines, has established a grant scheme for educational developments in photography and has accepted and demonstrated through action that one of the best ways to achieve Royal Charter objects is to provide advice and services (based upon research and debate) for others rather than using the majority of available resources for its own activities. Even its collection holdings of photographs have been passed to others. (95)

Although film is firmly the responsibility of the oldest Quango, the British Film Institute, the Arts Council has an interest in two aspects of film and video-making. These it identifies as "films on and about the arts and artists' film

and video". The Arts Council's Art Department accommodates a film section to translate this interest into practice. Dealing with the less problematic first, the Arts Council commissions independent production companies to produce films about all the arts, not just fine art. Sometimes these projects are financed in partnership with television. In 1984 Channel 4 transmitted Just What Is It...? a survey of new British sculpture much of which appeared in the A.C.G.B.'s Hayward and Serpentine show in 1983 The Sculpture Show previously mentioned.

The A.C.G.B. Artists Film and Video Sub-Committee defines its concern as:

"Work supported by the Council's Artist's Film and Video Sub-Committee can be defined as more experimental".

This Sub-Committee allocates funds for individuals in the form of awards and bursaries for materials. Distribution of their product is handled by "artists" organisations including London Video Arts and the London Film-Makers Co-op. The genre, Artist's Film or Video, judging by the history of these distribution systems and the biographies of individual makers reveals makers who used film as a time-based extension of painting or even sculpture, or at least that's how they got into it. Recently a number of video-artists (artist video makers) have been taken up by the Pop Music business and their experimental work has suddenly become part of a growth market for "arty" video. Film and video as a sub-committee of the Art Department has had no difficulty with funding issues or community-type video. The relatively new

media of photography, film and video present a model within the Arts Council itself which most in the visual arts spectrum could follow. The makers here employ their medium and their skill with it in a variety of markets (and modes); they are not restricted to the Art World model which hangs like an albatross around the neck of the Art World fine artist. The Art World fine artist is required to be "strange and unpredictable" requiring residencies and art in public places to make his/her work and themselves accessible. A growing number of workers in the new media simply get on with making a living as well as doing their own more experimental work. If they are "strange and unpredictable" they have learned to make a living from it themselves without the intercession of professional brokers.

Despite a relatively modest budget the Art Department (often misleadingly referred to as simply the "Arts Council") has a great deal of influence and power in that world it chooses to recognise. So much so that it is often accused of "misdemeanours" it does not commit or of being the sole organ of state subvention in the arts. The cause of the former is usually sloppy journalism attributing Tate bricks to the A.C.G.B. for example, but the latter is certainly not discouraged but rather utilised by department and officers to lend corporate and individual authority to their decisions. The Art Department perhaps more than most requires fortification because it retains half of its annual budget for its own activities and retains influence over venue clients, schemes and a not inconsiderable influence as we

will see, on the workings of the R.A.A.s. Most of all it has power over individual artists by defining what they should be in order to receive state support. Ultimately this power resides in the self-appointed right to select, to be a subsidised connoisseur. The Art Department seems to have an image of itself as a group of connoisseurs selecting art and artists for the good of the general public and artists. Although seeming, on occasions, to sub-contract actual selection to individuals or committees, in effect the power remains with the Department and its officers since they have selected the selectors. Administration of such power becomes the sole and real objective not the achievement of Royal Charter aims. The formulation of policy and strategy in response to Charter aims and changing social and economic circumstance becomes merely a peripheral irritant to individuals inundated with work caused by importuning administrators, artists seeking largesse and the administration of their own schemes.

The trouble with being a renegade Department within a large Council bureaucracy is that occasionally the Council imposes its own requirements onto the Department in response to external political and economic pressures and so recently the Art Department had to create its own apparently hurried response to The Glory of the Garden. Strangely The Glory of the Garden is "A Strategy for a Decade" for "The Development of the Arts in England" devised by the Arts Council of Great Britain, Scotland and Wales apparently remaining immune. For the visual arts in those countries (parts of Great Britain?) this is probably just as well since in the short term, at

least, provision and venues have been jeopardised, local authorities have been insulted, whole regions have been disadvantaged while a status quo has been preserved. The status quo of direct provision and influence. On page one of this document the Arts Council (as a whole) presents the indictment of itself,

"The Arts Council has been in existence for nearly forty years, but not until now has it undertaken a thorough and fundamental review of all its work. Forty years is too long a period for an organisation like the Arts Council, which needs to be lively and flexible in adapting to changing circumstances, to operate without undergoing such a review. The arts never stand still, and the Council needs to move with them. The need for a review has increased in recent years, since the resources made available to the Council by the government have remained virtually static in real terms, making it very difficult for the Council to respond to changes in the arts and in the expectations of Society."(96)

In this the Art Department is as culpable as any other and as the Council itself. In his account of the history of the Council Eric White confirms that the habit of direct provision is accidental,

"It is accidental that the major part of the Arts Council's work for the visual arts takes the form of providing an exhibition service, a job that in theory might equally well be done by an independent organisation outside the Council, provided it had the right sort of set-up and adequate funds."(97)

Accidental or not, the habit has persisted and, as White shows, the pattern and manner of supporting Art has changed very little in forty years despite drastic changes in circumstances.

On the face of it such a fundamental review which The Glory

of the Garden promises would seem to be the blow which would break this mould; but in fact little has changed. Identified "Aims and Purposes" under item 24 merely confirm a status quo for the Art Department while forcing token meddling based upon experience not specific to the Visual Arts. These "Aims and Purposes" are:

- 1) raising the quality and increasing the quantity of arts provision in the regions to bring it nearer the standards of provision in London.
- 2) identifying new developments in the regions for direct support from the Arts Council itself, focusing on the dozen or so areas within England where the population is most densely concentrated;
- 3) making a start towards redressing certain historical imbalances in funding which favour some art forms at the expense of others;
- 4) in appropriate cases, basing the Council's own subsidy decisions more consistently and deliberately than in the past on the availability of matching funds raised locally.

In other words a Regional Development Strategy designed to increase and improve provision in designated areas subject to the availability of matching funds raised locally, with Art being, presumably, one of the art form areas requiring redress; although the summary of new resources would seem to belie such a conclusion, Drama as usual taking the largest slice - £2,000,000 as opposed to Art's £500,000. Not that these figures mean very much when under "Financing the Development Programme" we find out how the monies are to be raised; by making reduction in its spending within many of the individual allocations: Art having to make savings not by cutting its (the Department's) own activities, which would provide substantial savings, but by cutting or threatening to cut existing clients. Clients with established reputations for producing exhibitions which seemed to satisfy the Arts Council's metropolitan standards previously; and who existed

in major areas of population identified in The Glory of the Garden as areas of development (the Arnolfini, Bristol and the Ikon, Birmingham). Two others were to suffer total or partial withdrawal of funds (AIR Gallery, in London, a pivotal service between private commerce and the public sector and the only independent with a collection, Kettle's Yard, Cambridge). This assault on exhibition-providing venues (part of the task?) was intended to help the furtherance of a development programme, during a five year period

"in consultation and partnership with local authorities to help existing public galleries throughout the strategic areas to develop their facilities and exploit their expertise and resources to maximum benefit; and to increase the existing expenditure on schemes which encourage the patronage of individual artists."

"Helping public galleries will involve continuing to make progress along the following lines:

- i. collaborating with regional galleries through the provision of touring exhibitions and grant-aid for their own exhibition programmes;
- ii. continuing to make seeding appointments of exhibition organisers in selected galleries, in collaboration with local authorities and the Regional Arts Associations;
- iii. subsidising traineeships in galleries with active exhibition programmes in order to increase the number of experienced curators concerned with the presentation of contemporary art and of a contemporary view of art;
- iv. developing the educational programmes associated with exhibitions, along the lines already initiated by the Council's Art Education Officer;
- v. maximising the effectiveness of the Council's own touring programme to provide high quality exhibitions to London and the regions;
- vi. collaborating with strategic municipal galleries to enable them to take on a more active role in the presentation of contemporary art. (98)

The Arts Council's influence in the Art World is substantial and far more than its modest budget would suggest. By using

half this modest budget itself and carefully controlling the use of the rest, the A.C.G.B. has preserved its power.

When dealing with the art of its day the Council has assumed the practice described in the Hayward Annual as the best way to achieve chartered objects (unless it has chosen to ignore them). The notion of a selector, a latter day connoisseur, selecting from that which falls within his or her range, unencumbered by other considerations, has become an orthodoxy throughout a complex system of state subvention influenced by the Arts Council. It is perhaps because the Council has not "undertaken a thorough and fundamental review of all its work" that its perception of what constitutes legitimate art practice remains fixed even in schemes which seem to acknowledge other possibilities and different markets for art.

Starting as simply a provider of exhibitions for an exhibition starved post-war Britain the Council has expanded steadily to its present form embracing a wider and wider media-based definition of art, if not of artist. Art is anything made by Arts Council supported Artists. Today it is more likely to duplicate provision found elsewhere in the system than to co-operate. An insatiable appetite for production rather than service has sent it in frantic pursuit of subject matter for its own activities; embracing design, craft, film, television, performance, printmaking, while returning as if for reassurance to the romantic notion of artist (the alter-ego of the over-worked bureaucrat) and its chosen agent the selector likewise "free and uncontrolled" in

the exercise of the power of selection within the Art World. In so doing the Arts Council has helped create and sustain one art world in the universe of art possibilities.

In 1987 there was an unprecedented change in the structure of the Art Department of the Arts Council. The exhibition-making team including the Director, Director of Exhibitions, Publicity Officer and others were transferred to the Hayward Gallery, now part of the South Bank Arts Centre. Here they continue to make exhibitions under the aegis of the South Bank Board (a major revenue client of the Arts Council rather than the Art Department of the ACGB). The Hayward Gallery is programmed and exhibitions are toured by this essentially ACGB team. A similar "devolution" occurred with the Serpentine Gallery, now, in Arts Council parlance, an "independent" client of the now renamed Visual Arts Department of the ACGB. The director of the Serpentine Gallery is a former Arts Council officer. Programming at the two institutions, as might be expected, continues to have an Arts Council style and content and both employ the services of seconded teachers to provide educational activity and material for exhibitions.

In the same year Joanna Drew, formerly Director of the Art Department of the ACGB and now Director of Exhibitions on the South Bank was interviewed about her career in arts administration (that "awful term" according to Ms Drew) and was encouraged by Julian Spalding, Director of Museums and Galleries, Manchester, to air her views on arts funding and providing. Her preference for making exhibitions rather than

policy is clear and unequivocal. She also acknowledges the existence of Arts Council art and artists and the value for them of being selected (For arts Sake (1987) BBC Radio 3). The remaining team at 105 Piccadilly with a new director, is still in the process of clarifying a role for itself without exhibitions but with the residue of The Glory of the Garden strategy. They still have clients like the Serpentine and Whitechapel galleries and they still administer opportunity with a Special Projects fund. Reassuringly a willingness and enthusiasm for policy, research and advocacy of art is evident as recent work in support of artists copyright, percentage schemes for art and exhibition payment rights would indicate. There remains a strong influence on the Art-world exerted by controlling opportunity and money and there is still according to the new director, Sandy Nairne, in conversation with City University students in 1987, a need to protect and promote excellence. Works considered excellent are still bought for the ACGB collection by 105 Piccadilly employees. In his concern for quality Sandy Nairne concurs with the ACGB Chairman, Lord Rees-Mogg;

"Those responsible for the distribution of public monies to the arts must never lose sight of the goal of excellence"

in the 1987-88 Report of the ACGB. The question of whose excellence remains.

## The British Film Institute

The British Film Institute is the oldest of our national institutions with quango status, responsible for state subvention in the visual arts. It was established in 1933 "to encourage the developments of the art of the film, to promote its use as a record of contemporary life and manners and to foster public appreciation and study of it".<sup>(39)</sup> In 1961 the Institute, keeping up with the times and recognising the family resemblance, amended its memorandum of association to incorporate a further aim "to foster study and appreciation of films for television and television programmes generally and to encourage the best use of television". Like the other quangos, which the B.F.I. now belatedly is (1983), it is funded by a government grant though in this case, the Department of Education and Science. It is not, as the B.F.I. is anxious to point out, a government department nor does it come under the control of the film or television industries not even the British Broadcasting Corporation although its aim would seem to be similar. Nonetheless, the B.F.I. like the rest is far from absolutely independent being controlled by a Board of Governors who are directly appointed by the Minister for the Arts and who serve in an honorary capacity, normally for periods of three years.

Like the rest once provided with general aims, in this case memorandum of association, interpretation into policy is the job of the Governors (Council) and interpretation into objectives and carrying out such objectives is the task of

various divisions (panels) receiving further modification from professional officers and amateur advisers (unpaid Committee members). Like the other Quangos, with one exception, the B.F.I. has continued the habit of direct provision and funding others to do likewise. The National Film Theatre on the South Bank "has become since its foundation in 1952 an established part of London's cultural life". Such a claim is debatable since by the B.F.I.'s own account "entrance to the N.F.T. is normally restricted to Members and Associates of the B.F.I. and their guests but on certain occasions members of the public are admitted, notably for the London Film Festival". The N.F.T. has two cinemas (NFT 1 with 466 seats and NFT 2 with 162 seats) and club facilities such as a bar, restaurant and bookshop. Like all private club facilities these are "available" to non-members but nonetheless the public face of the N.F.T. is private (and even for members tickets for popular events are notoriously difficult to obtain).

In addition to this publicly funded, private subscription, club the B.F.I. has what it describes as an archive whose "function is to select, acquire, preserve and make available to bona-fide users films and television programmes of artistic, historical or scientific interest". Although its terms of reference for acquisition are extremely broad its use is restricted very much like a national library such as the British Museum's Library. Access is "for bona-fide students and researchers" not a general public. Due to the condition of many older acquisitions the B.F.I. finds itself

with a substantial conservation task which it vigorously maintains employing the majority of its 440 staff on a promethean conservation endeavour. Like so much of the conservation of our cultural heritage in the visual arts, this work is under-funded and barely able to keep pace with deterioration. Nonetheless the B.F.I. must be congratulated for a noble effort. Unlike the Crafts Council the B.F.I. still accepts conservation as an important part of its work. Like both the Arts Council and the Crafts Council the B.F.I. has its collection in the form of this National Film Archive (directed by a Curator and not a librarian archivist). It also has a collection of stills, posters and designs.

Through its Production Board serviced by a Production Division, the Institute has an active involvement in film-making. At the time of writing "any person or group who wish to make an original and independent film and able to establish their technical competence and reliability may apply to the Production Board for a grant". A brief history of the Production Board reveals a feature of subvention unique to the B.F.I.. In 1952 the forerunner of the present Board, the Experimental Film Production Committee, was founded using funds donated by the film industry and was responsible; we are told by B.F.I. literature, "for encouraging such major talents as Karel Reisz and Tony Richardson". In 1966 the fund was reconstituted as the Film Institute Production Board with enlarged resources provided by the B.F.I.. In 1986 the Production Division received further outside funding from the Independent Television Companies Association. This would seem to be

acknowledgement by an independent and commercial sector of the value and need for experimental work to be subsidised. An avenue of funding which other Quangos might be encouraged to consider.

The B.F.I. also has a Distribution Division which acquires and distributes films and television programmes and provides funds, advice and services for film and video cassettes chosen for their relevance to the art and history of film and television, produces critical writing to support them and offers programming support, film booking and publicity services. The B.F.I. acknowledges through action the substantial contribution such a national organisation can make to the encouragement of interest in film and television by providing such distribution services. As part of this task it also monitors and picks out the best (as it sees it) of the entire range of cinema and television and attempts to ensure these remain available for hire. Such a discreet but valuable service might be viewed in sharp contrast to other Quangos whose publicity and distribution is used exclusively for their own product.

The B.F.I. plays its part in regional developments by funding film and television activity often through Regional Arts Associations. The objective for this funding is to give help with the various facets of film and television (production, exhibition) which " can be brought fruitfully together to provide a focus for activity and discussion in a community". An example of such funding might well be the Watershed in Bristol which considers itself "Britain's finest media

centre" receives funding from the B.F.I. and embracing all these activities. Importantly such centres are clear acknowledgement that community, amateur and professional production, exhibition, photography and film making are closely related and not separate entities requiring separate consideration for the purposes of funding. The Arts Council seems to have a similar policy towards funding photography but not towards what it considers to be Art.

The Institute places great emphasis on what it describes as Information. The Information Division in the B.F.I.'s own words consists of all those departments which,

"collect and disseminate information to its public and to the film and television industries; it collects, preserves and catalogues but also goes out to the public by commissioning and publishing, by advising schools and universities on material and documentation, by holding courses and conferences, by working with scholars, critics and research institutes in Britain and abroad".

In brief the B.F.I. has comprehensive library services, publishes periodicals and books, not just monographs but information and debate about key issues in film and television criticism, theory and public policy. The B.F.I. has played a key role in the development of film and television studies through these publications but also through an advisory service for all levels of the education system. For the teacher of film and T.V. there is a wealth of material such as study guides, education packs, slide sets available from the B.F.I. Of all the Quangos the B.F.I. most comprehensively accepted the challenge of education seeing in it the potential to achieve its chartered

aims. In this respect it has also attended to all aspects of the mega-visual tradition even the most popular and most ubiquitous of its aspects, television.

Although such a great emphasis on information and education makes the B.F.I. different in degree to the Arts Council and the Crafts Council perhaps its unique feature is its membership. Unlike the others it is a membership organisation (although a Quango). Uniquely therefore the B.F.I. can be said to know its audience, an audience with a taste for the broadest possible range of television and film, not an exclusive interest in professional artist's film and television, although it does not exclude the latter. In dealing with artist's films and films about art it can be seen to overlap with the Art Department of the Arts Council just as there are regions of overlap between the Crafts Council and the Arts Council and the Crafts Council and the Design Council. The fact that they have been observed and commented upon by succeeding generations of reports has had little, if any, influence on the Quangos who continue to insist upon separate identities even though three are the offspring of the same government department (the Department of Education and Science).

Like other Quangos the B.F.I. provides validation for its part of a market for the image maker's art especially those who aspire to be considered as Art. There is an Art Film World just as there is an Art-Craft World and an Art World supported by the State.

## The British Council

In 1984 the British Council was 50 years old and to mark the occasion Frances Donaldson's The British Council: The First Fifty Years was published.<sup>(100)</sup> In the preface to this book Frances Donaldson acknowledges the co-operation of the British Council, particularly the research of Dr Harriet Harvey Wood a member of the British Council's staff. In this sense it is different in character to the reference work consulted when discussing the Arts Council, which is a critical discussion by an ex-employee rather than a definitive and, apparently, approved history. From this source and from annual reports we can perceive three or four areas of involvement with our subject - fine art, film, photography. The Visiting Arts Unit, although concerned with these three is outside our concern since its purpose is to encourage, co-ordinate and assist in the presentation in Britain of the arts of other countries. Nonetheless, it is worth mentioning as a singular example of possible co-operation between Quangos and government offices being as it is administered by the British Council and funded by the Arts Council, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the British Council and the Arts Councils of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. It should also be noted that it can, therefore, contribute to the programming and augment the budget of venues e.g. an international exhibition of sound sculpture A Noise in Your Eye was shown at the Mappin Gallery, Sheffield and subsequently toured. Returning to the work of the Council overseas a statement of its early aims and objects reveals a broad promotion of British culture and language. Since these

remain, according to Frances Donaldson, a fair description of the aims and objects of the British Council today they are worth quoting here:

"To promote abroad a wider appreciation of British culture and civilisation, by encouraging the study and use of the English language and thereby to extend a knowledge of British literature and of the British contributions to music and the fine arts, the sciences, philosophic thought and political practice. To encourage both cultural and education interchanges between the United Kingdom and other countries and, as regards the latter, to assist the free flow of students from overseas to British seats of learning, technical institutions and factories, and of United Kingdom students in the reverse direction. To provide opportunities for maintaining and strengthening the bonds of the British cultural tradition throughout the self-governing Dominions. To ensure continuity of British education in the Crown Colonies and Dependencies."

Despite the dissolution of the British Empire these words, as Frances Donaldson points out, give us a fair description of the aims and objects of the British Council which are, broadly speaking, promoting aspects of British culture (of which science, philosophy, political practice as well as the arts are part) abroad. Those aspects of culture which are our concern here are therefore only part of a state mechanism of international diplomacy. Put another way, the promotion of visual culture is not the British Council's major concern. Nonetheless, according to the B.C.'s Annual Report of 1985, 71 fine art exhibitions went to 41 countries and 39 grants were given to artists; 24 documentary, photographic and information exhibitions went to 76 countries. Under Film and Video the catalogue of achievement continues,

"231 films were entered for 37 international film festivals and 27 prizes were awarded; 197 feature films were supplied for British film weeks in 17 countries;

37,000 films and videos were held in the London Film and Video Library and in Council libraries overseas; 7,000 in London and 30,000 overseas; and finally 89,000 films and video were loaned from Council libraries overseas."(101)

From these impressive statistics we can divine the now familiar quango pattern of operation, selection and provision and, significantly, how the British Council has chosen to define visual culture. Although this Report contains a denial, the Council is still in a sense an overseas Arts Council for the promotion of fine art and photography as well as a British Film Institute for the promotion of film and video abroad. It is not apparently in the business of promoting craft nor for that matter design. There is no evidence in Francis Donaldson's book or elsewhere to suggest there has been a policy decision to exclude but rather, as elsewhere in our network, a sort of policy inertia these last forty years or more. The Director General's report in the same Annual Report provides substantial mitigation if not a complete excuse for such a short-coming:

"If a world market which economists could measure existed for information and culture and if consumer choice were sovereign, running and funding the British Council, not to mention the B.B.C. External services, would be problem-free. They would beat the competition hands down. But not even Sir Richard Stone, Britain's Nobel Laureate for Economics in 1984 and the greatest measurer in the business, could devise a system for assessing the costs and benefits of what is loosely called 'cultural diplomacy'. If he could, the enervating annual battle for public money and the energy-sapping preoccupation with limiting the damage inflicted by cuts might at last be terminated."(102)

As the Director General later points out, "this amounts to a twenty per cent grant-in-aid cut". Hardly then the right circumstance under which to consider the expansion of

definitions and consequent provision but possibly cause for policy and practice review. We might also, in fairness, acknowledge the difficulty the British Council would have in promoting to them new ideas like artist-craft, in traditional media like weaving or pottery, alongside the anonymous craft traditions of some countries.

Although in general terms contested there is some substance to the impression of the British Council as "the overseas arm of the Arts Council" especially if we look at the way the British Council promotes fine art:

"In the fine arts, the paintings of Howard Hodgkin caused a sensation at the Venice Biennale and an exhibition of his works was also sent to the United States later in the year. The sculpture of Anthony Caro were shown in Denmark, Germany and Spain. A major exhibition of contemporary figurative painting from Britain broke new ground in India, where it was shown to most appreciative audiences in New Delhi and Bombay from December 1984 to February 1985."(103)

The British Council like the Arts Council selects from the "Art World" artists and art for promotion abroad through exhibitions with their accompanying publications (catalogues). These artists are no way discovered by the Council but rather selected by the Fine Art Committee of the Council from events organised by the Arts Council, The Tate Gallery or other aspects of a network of state funded venues or agencies, and the dealers and galleries which represent the artists. Without the resources to do otherwise the B.C. are following and amplifying discoveries made by others. The British Council, like the Arts Council, also has a "working collection" of fine art. The recent simultaneous exhibition of works from the two collections at the Serpentine Gallery,

with their accompanying catalogues, is eloquent testimony to a similarity of taste, method and purpose. The exception perhaps being the exclusion by the British Council of photographs, unless they are photographs used by designated fine artists and presented as Art.\*

The British Council like the Arts Council but more acutely perhaps, has had to defend itself or have itself defended against "the cuts". Its champions have spoken, often eloquently, of its undoubted substantial achievements. One such was Lord Kilmarnock, quoted in Frances Donaldson's chapter on the Burrell Report (the Report that seems to have occasioned the cuts). Lord Kilmarnock speaking in the House of Lords said,

"In the period 1945 to 1970 ... very largely as a result of initiatives by British Council in sending shows of avant garde experimental British art to such events as the Venice and Sao Paulo biennials and as far afield as Japan, the reputation of London as an art centre rose until it was the top of the world league. I am not setting out to make a strictly economic argument but anyone interested should ask dealers what this meant in terms of their trade ..." (104)

If we recollect the dealer Nicholas Logsdail's comment about the need for an international, as opposed to a local, reputation we can see what this still means in terms of trade. We have a dealers answer to Lord Kilmarnock's rhetorical question. The biographies of an older generation of artists reveal the process at work and prices vouch for its efficiency. As merely an example, Roger Berthoud's detailed biography of Graham Sutherland reveals the

\*In 1987 there was a change in nomenclature to Visual Arts from Fine Art at the British Council.

involvement of the State in its many aspects and not least the British Council. (105)

Without wishing to impugn reputations or integrity it is worth asking whether this connoisseur's approach, ideal as a complement to a dealer market, is the only way to achieve the Council's aims and objectives as they apply to the visual arts. A complementary, if not quite an alternative approach, can be found in the Council's use of photography. Quoting from the Annual Report again,

"The most significant documentary exhibition was A Woman's Place: The Changing Picture of Women in Britain which opened at London's Royal Festival Hall in April 1984. This marked a move away from exhibitions concerning artists, writers and scientists to exhibitions about life in contemporary Britain. The exhibition attracted considerable attention, including a long article in The Guardian. After moving to Turkey it is to tour Italy, Portugal, Greece, Spain and several countries in Africa and Asia." (106)

Of course this approach will never provide for favoured artists or dealers such individually significant aids to international trade as the more usual fine art exhibitions but it might provide a showcase for more British achievement and a wider international market for more British art and more international opportunity for more British artists. Painters, sculptors, potters, woodworkers, designers are as able as photographers to represent life in contemporary Britain although many have been encouraged to discount their ability to do so. And so it was Aspects of British Art Today rather than Aspects of British Life Today Through Art which the British Council mentions in its annual report as "an economic argument" for the British Council's activities in fine art, but perhaps a sounder economic argument could be made for a broader-based international

market development for all aspects of what art history calls art and for more people who call themselves artists. Paradoxically just such an "export drive" was provided by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office the funding office of Government for the British Council, an office, like the D.T.I., not averse to taking direct initiative as well as funding a Quango to do the same. According to John Thackara 's report in the Sunday Times on The British Design Exhibition in Vienna "for the first time industrial design, art and crafts are being shown together. With its accent on new work by younger designers and artists rather than on a static array of inert products, the show has the potential to change the world's perception of British creativity." In his brief but lavishly illustrated account Thackara shows how this exhibition was the initiative of "our man in Vienna" mobilising Foreign Office and other state resources to support the venture. He also points out bureaucratic difficulties

"but the Design Council has quarrelled with the Foreign Office about the design and art show's content. According to the Council a respectable design show should include a proper complement of aero engines and industrial machinery (engineering design) and as little as possible of the dreaded crafts."

It is easy at this point to go along with the vaguely censorious tone of the article against the Design Council, but as we've seen, the Crafts Council has played its part in the formulation of this attitude against craft. Despite recent additions to their vocabulary the history of the Crafts Council is a history of artists craftspeople and craft turned away from mass manufacture and the consequent need for industrial design. Thackara's conclusion is in my view far

more significant than his snipe at the Design Council,

"The show reveals the strong links between our artists, designers and craftspeople - links which official bodies like the Design Council, Arts Council and Crafts Council try hard to keep separate. If ambassador Michael Alexander could be brought back to London to head a 'Creativity Council' superseding the leaden-footed design, art and craft Quangos then we might be able to exploit the breakthrough that is being made in Vienna. Crossover design would at last come of age."(107)

It is sobering to recall again the foundation of the V & A and our Colleges of Art and Design to develop and exploit "the connection between art and manufacture". Thackara's is a mould-breaking suggestion but not one likely to appeal to the mould nor to the commercial and other interests in the separate and uniqueness of art, craft and design. Nonetheless, Thackara's suggestion is worthy of consideration particularly by the British Council, which is after all an organisation with a cultural remit, "to promote abroad a wider appreciation of British culture and civilisation". At present our culture can be seen as one dominated by a handful of state funded "mandarins" as Bryan Appleyard calls them who select for promotion abroad a handful of artists who do not, no matter how excellent, represent "British contributions" to the arts nor even the "fine arts".\* Former colonies will see that colonial attitudes persist at home even though the British have lost the opportunity to exercise them abroad. There is still an Establishment which thinks it knows best what is best.

\* In his The Culture Club: Crisis in the Arts (1984, Bryan Appleyard declares "These are the mandarins to whom we give money and from whom we expect art in return". These are not the artists but salaried mediators, as we have seen, mediators obsessively concerned with excellence.

### Museums and Galleries Commission

In sharp contrast to the previously discussed agencies of the State charged with remarkably similar aims and objectives concerned with the promotion and well being of these separate aspects of the visual arts spectrum, we should include one more so discreet that it has not, as yet, reached the exalted height of quango status, although it will soon if its stated ambitions are achieved;

"It has also been agreed that the Commission should seek legal incorporation and charitable status under a Royal Charter. This will put the Commission on a constitutional basis comparable with other government agencies operating in the arts field. This is planned to take place later in 1986."(108)

Although the sources is lost in frequent usage the Standing Commission on Museums and Galleries as it was formerly called, was referred to when at all as "the recumbent (as opposed to standing) commission". In a sense rightly so since little was seen or heard of the Commission since it was established in 1930, following a Royal Commission on National Museums and Galleries. The Commission's original terms of reference were restricted to advising on general and specific questions relating to the national museums and galleries and promoting co-operation between them and provincial institutions and stimulating public benefaction. It is a role that seems to require discretion rather than the high profile direct provision characteristic of the others. In 1981 the Government seems to have decided to awaken the Commission by changing its name, expanding its terms of reference and giving it executive functions. In 1985 further functions were given and a consequent increase in staffing

and work. The Commission's funding through the Office of Arts and Libraries emphasises the awakening. Its vote has increased from £72,000 in 1981/82 to £5,900,000 in 1986/7 (a little more than the Art Department of the Arts Council and the Crafts Council put together).

According to a Commission information sheet, its formal mandate is now:

- 1) "to advise generally on the most effective development of museums and galleries and to advise and take action as appropriate on any specific matters which may be referred to them from time to time;
- 2) to promote co-operation between museums and galleries and particularly between the national and provincial institutions; and
- 3) to stimulate the generosity and direct the effort of those who aspire to become public benefactors."

The Commission's present executive functions include the control of the services of the National Museums Security Adviser, the allocation of grants to the seven Area Museum Councils in England (and the monitoring of the 9 A.M.C.s generally) and co-ordination of the funding and monitoring the work of the Museum Documentation Association. The Commission directly administers a capital grant scheme for non-national museums and since 1984/85 a scheme for conservation grants. Since April 1985 the Commission has had responsibility for the Purchase Funds for local museums which are administered on its behalf (as they were before 1985) by the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Science Museum. The Commission's concise information sheet continues:

"In addition the Commission exercises an important role in advising government on indemnities and the acceptance of works of art in lieu of Capital Transfer Tax, including in situ cases. Executive responsibility for these two areas was transferred from the Office of

Arts and Libraries (OAL) in April 1985. With effect from 1 April 1986 the Commission will assume a responsibility for conservation, taking over work previously done by the Crafts Council, and other functions arising out of the abolition of the G.L.C. and the six Metropolitan County Councils.

More generally the Government has explicitly encouraged the Commission to be concerned not only with the welfare of the national institutions - its original remit to which it is giving renewed attention - but also to take an active role in providing advice and guidance to local museums, of which there are some 2,000 in the U.K.

The Commission's publishing programme includes reports on museum developments generally as well as other detailed reviews on professional topics of current concern. Recent reports include; Framework for a System of Museums (HMSO, 1979); Conservation (HMSO, 1980); Museums in Wales (HMSO, 1981); Countywide Consultative Committees (HMSO, 1982); Museum Travelling Exhibitions (HMSO, 1983); Review of Museums in Northern Ireland (HMSO, 1983); Eleventh Report 1978-83 (HMSO, 1984). The most recent report to be published is the Museums and Galleries Commission Report 1984-85). A Review of Museums in Scotland is due to be published later in 1986. Reports planned for publication in 1987 include one covering national museums throughout the UK, and another reviewing museum professional training and career structure."

Although there are similar functions like the allocation of grants to the regions (in this case the Area Museums Councils) the M.G.C. differs significantly from the other Quangos. Devoid of direct provision (its publications are not complementary products for its own exhibitions) its attention is directed towards policy, funding and advisory matters (to Government and clients) functions which are implicit in the charters of the others but which have been relegated to a secondary position by their overriding concern for direct provision. It is hoped the eventual conferring of a Royal Charter does not encourage such ego enhancing activity but rather enhances the M.G.C.'s ability to achieve their already substantial mandates and functions. It is perhaps a little unfair to be critical of a recently awakened

Sleeping Beauty but if we judge her as we have the others by their own declared aims and objectives she is still short of total success. Considering first her original terms of reference to promote co-operation between the National and provincial museums and galleries, there is still much to be done in this respect at both national and local level. The Tate Gallery Expansion in the Albert Docks, Liverpool is an example that could be followed by other collections which have long outgrown their own storage space. Of course this particular example is not just an example of co-operation between galleries but rather between a national gallery, central government, a local authority and sponsors. On perhaps a more modest scale the relocation of collections in store is an example to be followed, and to suburb as well as region, especially with the assistance of the Commission and the Museums Security Adviser. It is hoped that the Commission's advisory role to central government is vigorously pursued. If, for example, the government had been persuaded to accept Giorgio de Chirico's painting The Uncertainty of the Poet in lieu of tax on the death of Sir Roland Penrose, the Tate could have acquired the work for nothing rather than paying over £1,000,000. Although we have to acknowledge this would have deprived the commercial sector of the market of a major sale, other more modest acquisitions would have been possible, purchased from artists and dealers. As it was, a good part of that year's acquisition budget for the Tate went to acquire the painting by Giorgio de Chirico for the nation.

If we stick with a fine art definition of art we might perceive the Commission as a large bed for some unlikely bedfellows. However, if we accept, as we must, that all are in the same business of presenting artefacts (exhibitions) the differences are less marked and the sleeping arrangements more comfortable than a bed full of actors, singers, musicians, writers and their accompanying resource-draining venues and impressarios. Such, at present, are the arrangements for the Art Department of the Arts Council and the Fine Art Department of the British Council, small parts of Mega-Quangos.

In Britain the spectrum of what might be legitimately called art is represented by the previously described Quangos. Their activities have been examined by a succession of reports and conclusions noted can still be applied today. As merely one example, the critical observation made by Redcliffe-Maud of "centralism" and "lack of flexibility" of the B.F.I. and "its failure to respond sufficiently to the initiatives of others" and its "too rigid a view of what needed to be encouraged and in what way" could equally apply to all the full-blown Quangos. Ironically the B.F.I. has done more to remedy the situation than the others. The sheer weight of direct involvement has prevented flexibility and response and a discussion of different ways. By virtue of their national status, yet apparent freedom from central government and their control on state subvention to others their way has been a profound influence on the national framework not least in deciding what is appropriate activity for support. As we will now see their tacit definitions of

art, design and craft have been largely adopted by the regions, areas and localities throughout Britain, particularly in England. The most damaging has been the assumption that art, design and craft are separated activities and that there is an essential difference between applied and fine art. In practice their inability to avoid over-lapping on each other's activities has not been recognised as confirmation of their essential unity. The possibilities of co-operation rather than competition being rigorously avoided. Laudable general aims provided by their respective charters appear to be cynically overlooked in favour of the opportunity to select and promote stars for the firmament of their own Art Worlds. Failing to be cautioned by the failure of establishments of the past to recognise and nurture innovative talent or our failing economy their policies and strategies have evolved only as far as providing "access" to their own unquestioned good taste.\*

\*A Royal Charter for the Museums and Galleries Commission was granted in 1987.

## The Regions and Areas

England, unlike Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, does not have an Arts Council but rather twelve Regional Arts Associations. These are, to quote from the House of Commons Select Committee Report on the Public and Private Funding of the Arts - "the chosen regional instrument through which the national commitment to the performing and creative arts is expressed". Like the Arts Council the R.A.A.s have a broad commitment to all the arts not just that area of the arts which is our concern. They do not however, have a perceptible commitment to design. The R.A.A.s receive the majority of their funding from the Arts Council of Great Britain (currently 79%) with more modest support from the British Film Institute (4.5%), the Crafts Council (1.5%) and by their constituent local authorities (13%) and no support from the Design Council which has, as we have seen, some regional centres of its own. Being obliged to leave aside design for a moment and using figures provided by the Council of Regional Arts Association we can understand the division of financial resources:

"In 1981/82 the English Regional Arts Association made 6,500 grants totalling £8.5 million to individual artists and organisations. The grants were divided as follows

	£
Drama	1,840,000
Dance	490,000
Music	1,250,000
Literature	400,000
Visual Arts	1,290,000
General & Community Arts	2,670,000
Film	590,000
Crafts	220,000
	(109)

Far from being a modest concern our visual arts, through

simple addition, are seen to be the second largest; and if we accept that general and community arts might include a substantial element of visual arts we have to conclude that the visual arts are the biggest concern of the R.A.A.s. Recent policy developments and devolution strategies would seem to have amplified this situation. Of course such a perception does not figure as a part of policy formulation or statement because visual art, taking a lead from the Arts Council, is identified as a particular branch of the fine arts, the Art World. Being, therefore, a minority interest (with a small budget in the Arts Council) the visual arts are simply carried along by a general policy formulated by those with other art form interests, expertise and concerns. Policy based upon perceptions made from the point of view of these interests and concerns are unlikely to have the best interest of the visual arts at heart no matter how visual art is defined.

The C.O.R.A.A. pamphlet consulted for our financial breakdown also provides a potted history. A history of the gradual emergence of a network of twelve R.A.A.s not complete until the formulation of South East Arts in 1973. The growth of this network was dependent on local initiatives and even today does not represent a comprehensive view of or strategy for England although the formation of C.O.R.A.A. does provide a mechanism for such a co-ordination. Nonetheless as C.O.R.A.A. itself points out a difficulty;

"For Regional Arts Associations a 'region' is best defined pragmatically as an organisationally sensible grouping of local authorities which may or may not have

an overall sense of cultural identity. Such a definition does not deny the existence of a strong sense of place in most of the country, but it acknowledges that such an identification is usually with a town, city, or county. Even where there is a strong sense of regional identity (the South West or the North East) the edges blur." (110)

Even with C.O.R.A.A. the twelve regions have been unable to provide a coordinated policy and programme of development for England in the way that the Arts Councils of the other home countries are now doing.

The R.A.A.s like the Quangos at national level are concerned with advising, promoting and funding those arts, artists and organisations thought worthy by themselves and their advisors. Not all the arts, artists and organisations in any one region are thought worthy. There is for example little recognition of amateur visual arts unless it receives some acknowledgement through redefinition as General and Community Arts nor are, what one might refer to as, indigenous professional crafts in a region considered. It is, rather, the artist-craftsperson and his/her wares which are given the three part treatment of advice, promotion and funding (if selected).

The familiar connoisseur role is, in practice, executed by an officer advised by a panel and committees: they too know "good art" when they see it. They operate with a department structure not dissimilar to that of the Arts Council although the expansive term "visual arts" (probably invented for just such a purpose) can embrace craft and frequently photography. In the early days such specialisations would have been dealt

with by an essentially fine art officer and panel, but further subvention from the Crafts Council, B.F.I. and from the Arts Council has led to the appointment of specialist officers. Although as late as 1985 Northern Arts could boast in its jobs details that it was the only Regional Arts Association to have a full-time Crafts Officer. Film is in this sense better represented with B.F.I. support, as indeed to date is photography through devolution policy decisions made by the Arts Council's Photography Officer and his specialist advisers. Whatever the general policy objectives of a Visual Art Department they will be hedged about by the sheer weight of existing commitments to fund. Every R.A.A. has its revenue clients and is engaged in a set pattern of occasional funding responding to applications which it receives from artists and organisations. Their policy is made manifest through positive discrimination in favour of the artists and organisations which fit. A typical example of such a funding policy could be itemised as 1) funding client galleries; 2) exhibition subsidy where applications from galleries are considered for special projects; 3) payment to artists: fees are paid where and when funds are available, for one-artist and two-artist shows only in approved galleries the fee for the artist being #100 and #50 respectively, in other words, reward for one and two artist exhibitions only (even those unaware of the work of Pavlov will be aware of the consequence of such conditioning); 4) Residencies and Art in Public Places, now frequently linked, are funded sometimes with additional A.C.G.B. support. Here as with all else the R.A.A.s fund selected proposals. Although, as when discussing A.C.G.B. initiatives in this

area, it is not positive to denigrate the achievements of individuals, it has to be acknowledged that these schemes are highly selective, prejudiced and based upon the assumption far from proven that artists are an alienated and misunderstood community who are in the main separated from a market or audience and they, like various communities of non-artists, can be improved by interaction one with the other. Such inter-action being brought about by the intervention of a third party professional and by the judicious use of public money. Although there have been significant achievements in encouraging joint private corporate and public patronage of individual artists, the sheer weight of evidence presented to support these schemes demonstrates the Art World provenance of the recipients. Art and Artists in Public Places is currently a very fashionable form of state patronage taken up with vigour by the R.A.A.s but no one seems to question whether this is the best way to,

"create and maintain opportunities for access to all the arts for the population of a region" or

"to encourage the development of the arts and of standards of practice in the arts at all levels in a region".

Paradoxically those artists who are independently making a living from commissions or who are working in a non-art public domain to subsidise personal art activity are unable to participate and are denied access, unless of course, they wish to give up their income in order to be available for public patronage and state endorsement. Schemes are also available through the R.A.A.s for artist-craftspersons and photographers. All these schemes are characterised by a

vagueness of intent and expectation and the general absence of a commissioning brief stating the patron or patron's requirements of the artist. Timothy Hyman commenting on his own Artist in Residence at Lincoln is typical,

"The funding at Lincoln was complicated. The art school provided a studio, the cathedral a flat, while Lincolnshire and Humberside Arts (the R.A.A.) would pay for pictures (and BP would later step in with a further commission). Yet the basic £6,000 salary (paid by the Art School, fed in by Lincolnshire and Humberside Arts, was in reality the gift of the Arts Council. I was slow to see the implications of all this; I never entirely worked out which of these four or five masters I was ultimately responsible to, and I think it took me the full year to piece together the various strategies of which my residency became a focus. The problem hinges, as I see it now, on whether the institution concerned is chiefly interested in the work one produces, or in one's public role. I think this is true of the majority of residences; in taking the job on you are partly allowing yourself to become an instrument of publicity; and your work and character may or may not coincide with the role prepared for you."(111)

The desire to "protect" the personal imagery of the artist seems to be central to many negotiations. As Deanna Petherbridge points out in an Art Monthly article, "Architects can be very specific in their expectations" while artists, in contrast, expect freedom from overly specific expectations. Deanna Petherbridge quotes Wendy Taylor the sculptor on this subject,

"I'm not a sub-contractor to the architect's or client's fantasies. When an architect is too explicit in his ideas, I say - fine, let me give you the name of some factories. I'm not here to make other people's dreams - I have my own vision".

Earlier in the same article a similar sentiment is expressed by another artist, Tim Scott,

"It is fundamental for a sculptor to have a strong idea of what his work itself constitutes, otherwise he will get bastardised by collaboration." (112)

Although this article was published in 1981 as a survey of the then current sculptural commission, the attitudes persist in the minds of artists and their mediators and "protectors" the arts administrators. In fact the very concept of arts administrator as "a necessary enabler, someone who shoulders the financial and legal complexities that are invariably involved in bringing the arts to the public", put forward in Art Within Reach, seems based upon assumptions about the capabilities of artists and the nature of art belied by the social history of art and probably more appropriate to more elaborate co-operative ventures like theatre.

It could be argued that if the R.A.A.s are genuinely interested in the aims identified by C.O.R.A.A. then selecting uncompromising art and artists from the Art World through elaborate schemes of intervention by arts administrators for temporary or long term placement of art or artists in public (non-gallery) places, might generate particular animosity rather than general good will. Rather than encourage developments in the arts and standards of practice in all levels in a region these schemes support a minority through elaborate schemes of pre-selection of Art World artists, not infrequently imported from outside a region. If the R.A.A.s, like the Arts Council, are interested in developing a market for art, other than the dealer system, why do they continue with methods more

appropriate to art dealing? If a commissions market is to be encouraged and resurrected perhaps a broader marketing of the idea of commissions with its implicit obligation of dialogue and concessions from artists as well as patron is required. The utilisation of artists is required. Achievement of the general policy objectives of the R.A.A.s as applied to the visual arts are inhibited by administrative procedure consequent of a very narrow definition of visual artists. Paradoxically this narrow definition is blatantly revealed in both Residencies and Art in Public Places schemes which seeks a new market but seems to require a particular life style and attitude to art.

The R.A.A.s have in the main abandoned direct exhibition provision but they continue to be heavily involved in funding others to put on exhibitions. Like the Arts Council, they have their venue clients sometimes acquired (devolved) from the Arts Council. These client galleries are largely funded to show Art World art and Craft World craft. They are not funded to show design, not even Design Council approved Design. The Design Council has no funding or other involvement with that vast network of galleries funded by the R.A.A.

The career structure for the incumbent exhibitions organiser for these venues, following a model established by the Quangos involved and their major revenue clients (where appropriate) requires the ambitious to establish a reputation for themselves as a selector of art and artists and a maker of exhibitions which are admired by their professional

colleagues (if not by local communities). Such ambitions frequently lock these professionals into a debilitating round of successive exhibitions which can leave little time for other roles which might be seen as implicit in publicly funded institutions. Such self inflicted "punishment" leaves little time for evolved policy or strategic development, little time for cultivating a constituency; a regular and loyal audience for art.

This is not to say that their product within their terms cannot be excellent but it does create a system of priorities which orientates the exhibition maker away from a general audience.

The R.A.A.'s as institutions of the State are now satisfied to exercise their direct connoisseurship in maintaining regional collections and their own Index of Artists.

### Area Museum Councils

Just as the English R.A.A.s are linked to their funding body, the London based Arts Council, so too are the English Area Museum Councils linked to their soon-to-be Quango the Museums and Galleries Commission. Again, separate provision is made for Scotland and Wales with a Council for Museums and Galleries in Scotland and a Council of Museums in Wales being funded by the Scottish Education Department and the Welsh Office respectively. The allocation of grants to the seven English Area Museums Councils comes from the Office of Arts and Libraries via the Museums and Galleries Commission.

The Area Museums Councils originated as a co-operative grouping of those museums in which the local authorities had the major financial interest. Gradually, stimulated by various reports on the museum framework and the services area councils might provide, they have taken on new roles which encourage co-ordination between museums and liaison with other bodies, such as Education Authorities, as well as being a funnel for matching funding to the local authority museums and galleries. Juxtaposing the two maps of Britain opposite, one with the seven Area Councils (including Scotland and Wales) and the other with the twelve R.A.A.s (plus the Arts Councils of Scotland and Wales) we have a graphic demonstration of geographical correspondence but, to date, there has been little co-operation between the R.A.A.s and the Area Councils. Rather, since the inception of each, there has been separate development; each with their own

venues for presenting artefacts many of which are works of art. As with elsewhere in the system enjoiners to copyright remain unheeded.

The relationship between the Area Museums Councils and the Museums and Galleries Commission parallels that of the Regional Arts Association and the Arts Council. In this, their respective capacity to stimulate the Art Market is as finite as their acquisition budgets; their infinite capacity to stimulate the whole art market through co-ordinated activity remains as unlikely as the convergence of parallel lines. (113)

### The Local Authorities

It is a popularly held belief that the local authorities are disinterested in and do little for the Arts. Peter Dormer writing in Art Monthly expresses such a belief,

"the task of motivating local government to take action on the arts always founders on the lack of interest in the arts in our Town Halls". (114)

It must be surely such a belief which is behind, at least in part The Glory of the Garden and its challenges to the local authorities. Similarly Regional Arts Associations will bemoan the lack of financial involvement of the local authorities in their region and the global figure of 80% funding from the Arts Council to the R.A.A.s (according to The Glory of the Garden) would seem to justify such a complaint; as will the existence of a few local authorities who on occasions opt out or who are not now embraced by the R.A.A. map, for example, the whole shire of Buckingham.

Certainly the local authorities have no statutory duty to act, as they have for other amenities, nor are they specialists in arts subvention but they are, nonetheless, heavily involved in the arts, particularly the visual arts. Closer examination of local authority activity reveals a complex pattern of involvement although as we will see, many local authorities have a quite different attitude to art often diametrically opposed to the Arts Council and the R.A.A.s.

The recent controversy over the South Bank in London reveals neatly such a difference in attitude and although a very

particular example it does reflect local authority attitudes elsewhere. An attitude which local authorities, elected and rejected by constituents, are obliged to hold. Their view of art must be more populist if they are to keep the goodwill of the electorate and ultimately remain in power. An "Independent Report" commissioned by the G.L.C. Art on the South Bank, was primarily concerned "with visual art and the Hayward Gallery in particular" but it promotes debate on the South Bank arts complex both practically and artistically (according to an accompanying press release).<sup>(115)</sup> The hasty reader of this independent document, in the context of surrounding much-publicised controversy over the ownership of the Hayward, may have concluded that the ills of the South Bank were solely the responsibility of the Arts Council whereas the much photographed architect-related squalor in the report was more properly the concern of the landlord rather than the tenant. The lack of facilities within the Hayward and the lack of co-operation with other exhibition programmes on the South Bank site are less easy to excuse; although understandable given the Arts Council's self-imposed priorities of providing ambitious quality exhibitions. As the report pointed out, the Hayward was at that time run by a senior Art Department officer with an advisory committee who had responsibility for London exhibitions (at the Serpentine and Hayward) and not for the proper management of a public amenity. A summary of recommendations made by the authors, although directed at the South Bank and paying particular attention to the Hayward, were equally applicable to the other venues (The National Theatre, The Queen Elizabeth Hall,



THE STRUGGLE FOR OWNERSHIP BETWEEN A LOCAL AUTHORITY AND THE ARTS COUNCIL.

The Royal Festival Hall and The National Film Theatre) and to the then landlords the G.L.C.. Furthermore the South Bank Report with its recommendation to widen the definition of visual art, strengthen coordination, improve facilities and nurture a constituency, could be applied to the nation as a whole as well as to this microcosm. Although extreme, with actual geographical separation, the arts management phenomenon of a senior management detached from the venue is sadly far from rare with spectacular examples in other art forms to divert attention, the visual arts should not be complacent.\* The broad responsive obligations of local authorities can place them in destructive opposition to gallery directors, or theatre directors for that matter, who consider themselves first and foremost connoisseurs, and whose self-appointed task it is to provide a programme based on their apparently innate ability to select the best, as they see it, rather than address issues of relevance and the task of formulating a programme in response to a constituency (see opposite).

\*Until the creation of the South Bank Arts Centre the Hayward Gallery did not have a resident director but was, instead, directed from A.C.G.B. headquarters at 105 Piccadilly. The Peter Hall's Diaries: The Story of a Dramatic Battle (1983) Edited by John Goodwin, London, Hamish Hamilton, reveal the sundry and, some argued, conflicting interests of the one time impresario director of the neighbouring National Theatre.

## Colleges of Art and Design

Paradoxically, the local authorities in the visual arts, at least financially, play a large part in preparing those artists who will become part of the selection pool. As Redcliffe-Maud observed in 1976,

"...though there are still a few private art academies, such as the Royal Academy Schools, almost all art education in Britain is now state art education".

Of course what Redcliffe-Maud was referring to was the establishment of higher art education but we could take his statement quite literally. What art education takes place at all levels, with the exception of private education, is the responsibility of the local authorities, and therefore of the State. What Redcliffe-Maud has to say is worth quoting at length:

"In 1959 there were 180 local authority art establishments, but only 111 in 1970. Most of this decline is due to the amalgamation of smaller units, and in recent years the process has gone further through the absorption of many art colleges in polytechnics. During this period total student numbers dropped from 130,000 to 100,000 but the reduction was in part-time students only: full-time student numbers went up (in line with the general population increase) to about 30,000." (116)

With the dubious benefit of being Redcliffe-Maud's future we can easily see the continuation of this decline with amalgamations, closures and reduction in teaching staff and student intake. Nonetheless, we are still able to observe what is a major aspect of state involvement in visual art. A nation-wide system of training and employment of artists (the "dual-career artists" of Brighton and Pearson's Report). An examination of the range and extent of the influence of such

institutions can be found in the papers presented to the symposium The Teaching of Art: The Roots of Self-Deception organised by the University College of Wales in conjunction with the Welsh Arts Council in 1981. Defence or criticism of the current system was stimulated by the following statement by Dr Nicholas Pearson:

"Art Schools are central and powerful institutions within the world of Art. They exercise an influence way beyond the mere training of future Artists. They have come to exercise a dominating influence over what is defined as Art, who is defined as an Artist, and what the practice of Art is about. Yet in many way our 'public' Art Schools are very un-public, introverted, self-referential organisations. They have tended to bring about, sustain, reproduce and promote a highly un-(anti-) public approach to Art and its practices, and have, therefore, contributed centrally to the decline and malaise of Contemporary Art as a significant public affair." (117)

We may not fully agree with the conclusion of 'malaise' but we cannot but accept the analysis that Art Schools are central and powerful institutions at least within the Art World if not in all the worlds of the visual arts universe. Conference papers demonstrate how Art School power and influence is exercised, the style and content of courses and the conception of art and artists inculcated. Although this Conference was held in 1981 their conclusions still apply. Their "dual career artists" are still the mainstay of the Art World as the very convenient habit of publishing biographies demonstrates.

Despite the continued erosion of the state education network there is still a substantial state involvement represented by the local authorities. The extent of this involvement can be gauged from a recent discussion of the formation of The

London Institute, an amalgamation of at least seven formerly independent Colleges of Art and/or Design in the capital. Anne Boston helps us grasp the national scale,

"12,000 students on 30 sites in the capital which will spend over 10% of the nation's allocation for art and design" - a budget of £30 million". (118)

If we multiply by ten we can estimate the local authorities spend £300 million on Art and Design education. Consulting the current directory for the Council for National Academic Awards (the validating Quango) we discover the range of courses and including fine art, craft and design. When we look at Fine Art, we discover the uniformity of approach to teaching the subject. Courses are characterised in the following way:

"A Fine Art course may be based on the traditional activities of painting, sculpture, drawing and printmaking, or it may encourage the student to use other media or combinations of media. In either case, a course in this area is likely to be relatively open-ended, taking its direction from the creative development of the individual student. All courses contain elements of critical and theoretical studies, including the history of art and design. See also courses in the Art and Design: Multidisciplinary section." (119)

These are not post-graduate courses where such an approach might be appropriate but undergraduate courses. Such a student centred approach is common to all art and design courses at whatever level and not just fine art. The central notion of the self expressive artist is strongly in evidence throughout the range of the courses and has an influence on both craft and design students; as a visit to any graduation degree show in the land will demonstrate. The examination convention requires students to exhibit evidence of their three years' work, evidence of their unique artistic

identity, for assessment. The resulting exhibitions require some expertise to distinguish between clearly interrelated disciplines. These exhibitions are temporary and essentially visual affairs but documentation can remain to confirm, even at post-graduate level. The annual degree show at the Royal College of Art (funded by the UGC unlike most colleges of art and design) and recorded in a limited edition catalogue demonstrated such a continuum. Of the thirty or so art and design disciplines represented in 1985 all can be seen to bear the mark of fine art and many being, frankly, indistinguishable from fine art. It is a sad irony that art and design institutions under threat from central government higher education cuts (establishing what local authorities can spend) have sought to survive such economic pressure by jeopardising or in some cases sacrificing fine art. Ravensbourne College of Art and Design, for example, is now the Ravensbourne College of Communication and Design.

The National Advisory Body for Public Sector Higher Education (appropriately acronymmed N.A.B.) which advises government on how to spend the funds it is willing to make available to Local Authorities has advised drastic cuts in Fine Art provision. Advice which is based upon mistaking the nature of fine art for how it is now taught and understood and assuming, wrongly, that the contemporary romantic notion of artist (a debased Romanticism), so central, and not just to fine art, is the absolute condition of both art and artist. Fine Art educators, particularly have done little to disabuse their colleagues although what could have been done to balance the ascendancy of Design apparently vigorously

opposed to Art it is difficult to suggest; although an awareness of the social history of art might have provided some clues to those interested in looking. Such agility of mind seems to have been beyond the scope even of the well-meaning. It is a sad irony of the recent history of art education that those who accepted the challenge of the findings of Redcliffe-Maud;

"Few of the art courses make any serious attempt to prepare students for life as an artist. Some of the most serious problems facing artists when they emerge from training are these: how to find and pay for studio space and meet the cost of materials and equipment; how to publicise their work and interest galleries in it; understanding how commercial galleries operate and what arrangement should be sought between artist and gallery; how to find part-time teaching work; the position of a self-employed person for income tax and national insurance purposes. Few artists are taught at college about the patronage structure on which many of them rely for help or about rights to public assistance." (120)

have so happily accepted an orthodoxy which Redcliffe-Maud unquestioningly presents. One might seriously ask which other undergraduate course provides such professionalisation as part of a curriculum and what sort of profession is it which expects immediate investment in workshop, materials, equipment and publicity as well as a comprehensive knowledge of a very particular commercial system while considering the dole in the absence of part-time teaching. The genuinely complementary study of art history seen as a social history might well provide viable alternatives and even those which would allow for personal individualistic work as an aspect of a working life employing knowledge and skills acquired as a student artist. Of course the orthodoxy, especially the orthodoxy of a dual career as artist and art school teacher

remains sound advice if the artist wishes to benefit from state patronage as presently constituted and which can be seen to draw on this community of so-called professional artists. At present there is no better way to benefit from state patronage than to be uncompromisingly on the dole or an art school teacher. Furthermore, income from a dealer system is unlikely if the artist can be seen to be applying their art elsewhere. Such an alternative dual career would do nothing for the artist's reputation in the Art World with its Art Market for the few.

## Local Authority Museums and Galleries

The Eleventh Report of the Museums and Galleries Commission published in 1984 noted a proliferation of new private museums "at a time of extreme financial stringency" as well as the development of some existing local authority museums.<sup>(121)</sup> In the local authority sector it listed the remarkable achievements of Stoke-on-Trent City Museum and Art Gallery, Leeds City Art Gallery and Birmingham Museums and ends with the spectacular achievement of Glasgow City Council, substantially aided by the Scottish Office, to open a brand-new building, costing over £20 million in 1983, to house the Burrell Collection. The Burrell Collection is a wonderfully diverse collection of fine and applied art collected by Sir William Burrell using his own money derived from a successful family shipping business based in Glasgow. Sir William, distinguished only by the scale of his achievement, is a typical example of a wealthy private connoisseur collector turned public benefactor. The City of Glasgow, like many other British cities, is now the custodian of a valuable collection of art and design. For these local authorities, in respect of the visual arts, their first civic obligation is to preserve property owned by the people of their city or district. Responsible authorities see their next obligation as to show people the property they jointly own and much lower down the list there may be a modest obligation to add to these collections. The temporary exhibition of contemporary art may not be considered, in this context, important or even necessary. Although general aims might appear similar, especially with modified legislation

(the Local Government Act 1972 implemented 1974) which gave local authorities the freedom to raise monies "to develop and improve the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts" (a phrase borrowed from the Arts Council's Charter), priorities can be quite different. Both the Arts Council and the Crafts Council now see it as important to stimulate the municipal sector in the provision of temporary exhibitions of contemporary art or craft but such temporary provision strategically important for Quangos may be far less so for the local authorities with the previously described obligations. Taking a couple of rooms in a municipal gallery, built and designed to house a municipal collection, for temporary exhibitions of contemporary art and craft work, with their white space requirements, may well mean putting some of the permanent collection in store and creating an environment alien to the rest of the building. Nonetheless, but usually without ambitious extensions or budgets, many municipal galleries have keepers or curators with a specific or adopted responsibility for temporary exhibitions. A Directory of Exhibition Spaces intended to be "of particular value to artists, craftspeople, photographers and performance artists", lists some 2,000 venues throughout Great Britain that hold regular temporary exhibitions, including museums, galleries and exhibition spaces in colleges, libraries, schools, studios and workshops.<sup>(122)</sup> Leafing through this invaluable guide we discover the extent of local authority involvement (alongside Quangos and R.A.A.s). Practically every city and town in the country has an exhibition space. The distribution of Local Authority collection based venues reflect the distribution of

nineteenth century industrialisation and commerce. These industries made the money which allowed private connoisseurs to collect and ultimately bequeath to their fellow citizens, sometimes in necessary recompense, but also frequently intended to improve the citizenry. As Pearson points out in The State and the Visual Arts such collections were used both at national and local level as means by which the citizenry could be educated and morally uplifted. His quotation from William Ewart, chairman of the 1835-6 Select Committee on Art and Manufactures, speaking in a 1839 parliamentary debate is here appropriate and further revealing:

"The public libraries, the public galleries of art and science and other public institutions for promoting knowledge should be thrown open for the purpose of inducing men merely by the use of their outward senses to refine their habits and elevate their minds." (123)

The nineteenth century notion that art can improve people and environments, is still widely held although the nineteenth century attempt to establish a link between Art and Manufacturers is now almost forgotten.

Now, as then, local authorities are involved in the funding and management of libraries and education. Not only do libraries stock books and magazines on art and design, but a growing number have exhibition spaces ranging from the purpose built to the modest improvisation. Local authorities' statutory obligation to provide education embraces art and design at all levels, not least facilities for adult education where amateur artists learn and enjoy art

and professional artists are simply employed, without the aid of arts administrators, to teach.

Local Authorities also fund, or more usually co-fund, Arts Centres and Community Arts Projects as well as the venues specialising in temporary exhibitions previously mentioned.

A glance at an arts jobs page in a national newspaper reveals that the Local Authorities are the main state employers of artists and arts administrators, not the Art and Design Quangos or even the R.A.A.s or their revenue client venues. The nomenclature may be confusing - Arts and Recreation, Arts and Leisure, Arts and Libraries, and even Arts Councils and Arts Associations with their Officers but the involvement is self-evident. What is different is the range of involvement and the motivation for it. The definition of Art is different. A local authority is politically obliged to integrate Arts with Libraries and Recreation and is, therefore, less motivated to consider the selection of professional excellence as their primary concern.<sup>(124)</sup> This different set of priorities can put them at odds with Quangos interested in leading with professional excellence rather than identifying ways in which art can be used. This points to the danger of "challenges" in the visual arts which may be wholly appropriate in other art forms and to some authorities. The example, cited in The Glory of the Garden, of Stratford upon Avon where the local authority benefits substantially from the Arts Council's funding of the Royal Shakespeare Company without contributing itself may prove a case, but not for the Visual Arts. There is a danger

that a quango department like the Art Department obliged to be lead by experience in other art forms might develop strategy more appropriate to other art forms less well represented by local authorities.

Nonetheless, the Local Authorities are frequently willing to accept an orthodox model for subvention in the visual arts which reflects the Nationals and the Quangos. An orthodoxy which accepts the aspiring romantic genius as artist and even the lowliest arts administrator as an aspiring Lord Clark. Many local authorities, like their nineteenth century predecessors, think Art and Artists can work miracles transforming areas and communities in need of a great deal more than art.

Local Authority collections supplemented by the V & A and other funds can provide the pleasure of dispensing patronage and participating in the dealer market for the occasional local authority employee; a connoisseur on the rates.

## The Alternative Tradition in the Public Sector

The surprising orthodoxy, more appropriate perhaps to the nineteenth century, provided by the State is challenged from time to time. These challenges are of two sorts, administrative and philosophical and come from within and without the network. The administrative challenges come from within and are advocated by arts bureaucrats and politicians who are acknowledged and eventually heeded, perhaps because they are articulate in the language of administration. The process of devolution of resources although painfully slow, now seems inexorable and accelerating especially since the economic and social arguments are demonstrable to all political parties. The arts are playing their part in reviving regions such as Merseyside, Tyneside and others. A proper regional share is a political argument hard to resist; latterly! Philosophical challenges which question very definitions may be acknowledged but also neutralised and overlooked simply by the common administrative expedience of placing the challenge outside usual terms of reference. An Alternative Tradition confirms and reinforces an orthodoxy. The challenge of such alternatives in the visual arts is further reduced by the willingness of certain individual exponents to be subsumed into the existing orthodox system even though they initially adopted a strident oppositional stance. The invitation to become a connoisseur at the service of the State, with the power it provides, is hard to resist. Potential challenges which do not present themselves as Alternatives are simply

ignored. The potentially devastating challenge to the orthodoxy of artists who simply get on with making a living remains unacknowledged as does the ability of artists working in new media to utilize their media for self expressive art as well as applied art. The arguments that certain new media and genre are intrinsically inferior is to be heard in both radical and conservative camps and is frequently linked to the supposed magical improving properties of these traditional media.

Despite reservations about the ability of these challenges to change a dominating orthodoxy an examination of a few cases in more detail will reveal their, far from exhausted, potential.

## Community and Art

Black Arts in Britain is the latest in a long line of attempts to re-establish or find a link between a community and art. In his recently published The Struggle for the Black Arts in Britain Kwesi Owusu charts the progress of a movement which seeks to sustain the

"inseparable link between arts and politics and between Black Arts and the Black Community which nurtures and sustains them". (125)

Although much more than an account of the state's inability to respond; Owusu's book does highlight the debilitating process of naming and marginalising. In an interview in Artists Newsletter with Anne Wheeler about his book and issues raised by it Owusu restates one of the main problems for Black Art,

"For about 10 years we have had the Ethnic Art industry dominating what you might call Black creativity. Ethnic Arts set out to try and get a better deal from the State for Black artists but it made a mistake in its diagnosis of the problem. The problem isn't that British institutions are ignoring Black art, but that they are refusing to accept and celebrate the immense contribution Black artists and Black culture have made to the prominent British culture. Ethnic Arts still just means steelbands and chapatis to a lot of people. Or it's meant that 'unfortunate' Black artists were taken to classrooms and other places to parade themselves as exotica." (126)

A need to counter such a reductionism was also part of the motivation behind the Black Art Gallery, in Islington, London, opened in 1983.

"It (the Black Art Gallery) came about as a response to the scarcity of space and lack of opportunities for Black artists to exhibit their work."

The author/s continue,

"Some artists had tried to get their work exhibited in established commercial art galleries - which are dominated by white, private enterprise. Owners of these establishments argue that they can only handle work that is commercially viable, and that the work produced by Black artists does not fall into this category. When they do display any interest it is only in the stereotypical images of what they expect and believe Black art to be ....." (127)

Individual exhibitions and the programme at the Black Art Gallery of the last three years, can be placed in telling contrast to the Hayward Annuals to date. Rather than eschewing "rationale or plan" the rationale of the Black Art Gallery, is evident in its programme and exhibitions. The exhibitions address issues relevant to the Black community (artists or not). The inaugural exhibition Heart in Exile is typical; an exhibition of painting, drawing, sculpture, crafts and graphics where the artificial distinction between media, professional and amateur was not imposed and where a comprehensible theme was used. It is evident that this approach does not diminish orthodox quality, as the movement of a number of included artists into the so called mainstream demonstrates.

Apparently pre-dating the "Ethnic Arts industry" (quoting Owusu) the Community Arts industry has developed as a rather self-consciously radical alternative (although still seeking state subsidy). The community art and artists are theoretically placed directly at the services of indentified communities but because such art and artists declare such a service as a priority its detractors have criticised its apparent willingness to abandon orthodox standards. The fact that many early exponents were ill-equipped technically and

socially to deal with a "new" situation has provided some weight to these negative arguments especially when detractors continue to use the same old visual art examples of peeling murals.\* The impossibly high expectations of any art or artist in a context of urban decay and deprivation (the usual community location) has likewise diminished its achievement. A work of art can never compensate for a lack of services and facilities. Nonetheless, the idea of art as a sort of service industry rather than a vehicle for individual and individualistic self expression or as a process valuable in its own right as a socially cohesive force demonstrates the usual though frequently forgotten functional nature of art. It is historically only recently that the unique product of the unique individualistic individual (with genius potential) has become an item of trade and therefore necessarily detached from a context of creation. The dealer "sells on" portable art whereas community art remains in and for a community. Community Arts continues to remind us of this fact although separated now from Fine Art for the convenience of state funding by the Arts Council and the Regional Arts Associations. The application of art skills is likewise seen as separate or marginal as are the possibilities of the integration or unity of all art forms described in Owusu's book as "orature".

There is perhaps now a tendency to under-value the outpouring of apparently radical cultural activity that took place in

\* See Sue Braden (1978) Artists and People London, Routledge & Kegan Paul.

the late 1960's because we have come to suspect the social conditions and values on which it was based but it too was an "orature" (a fusion of arts, community and politics) of a kind. As Owen Kelly in his book, Community, Art and the State, tells us it is from this that the Community Arts movement came. He also describes proto-Arts Centres, Arts Labs, as one of the three strands from which Community Arts was woven. The second he identifies as "the movement by groups of fine artists out of galleries and into the street" and the third was "the emergence of a new kind of political activist who believed that creativity was an essential tool in any kind of radical struggle" and not the prerogative of the studio artist. (128)

## Arts Centre

In 1984 the National Association of Art Centres conducted a survey of

"over 290 art centres and similar organisations which provide public access to a number of art forms and whose programmes usually offer both professional and participatory elements".

The premise of this survey would seem to be a reasonable definition of an arts centre. According to statistics provided by the National Association there are some 302 arts centres in England, Scotland and Wales and 87% of these have exhibition programmes whilst 65% screen films. The majority therefore are concerned with the visual arts presented in the form of exhibitions. The survey provides a breakdown of exhibition types for the year 1983/84.

### Exhibitions

#### **Type**

Fine Art	55.7%
Photography	17.8%
Crafts	15.4%
Video installation	2.0%
Other	9.1%

#### **Source**

Centre originated	35.2%
Artist arranged	24.3%
Amateur	17.1%
Touring (general)	14.9%
Touring (Arts Council)	3.8%
Other	4.7%

Although admittedly for one year only these statistics reveal a broadly defined exhibition programme although omitting, it would seem, design exhibitions but including exhibitions by amateur artists, and, suprisingly, only 3.8% of the

exhibitions came from hiring in Arts Council touring exhibitions; further evidence against a pressing need for the A.C.G.B. product. (129)

A look at the history and development of arts centres (34 in 1967 and 302 in 1984 according to Association figures) reveals two types for the purpose of description if not convenient separation. One with a policy and programme broadly in tune with the Community Arts approach seeing the centre as a community facility and the other which accepts an orthodox definition of art (Craft World, Art World, Design World) and seeks to provide an excellent programme, as the incumbent exhibition organiser sees it, in the context of a building providing or involved in the other arts. In the latter case the location and community use are unimportant, in the former essential. Of course these centres, like any other institution, are made up of people with different ideas of what is appropriate and it is not unknown to discover a particular art form programme demonstrating a quite different set of priorities to the rest of an institution or, more spectacularly, a funding authority or authorities with a different perception of what is needed for the management and programming of a centre. Such situations can lead to conflict between art form and centre or centre and local authority. In extremis, the nomination of one member of staff for a prestigious prize for service to art, and for others, like senior management in the same centre, the "opportunity" to develop an arts administration career elsewhere. Milena Kalinovska, Exhibition Organiser at Riverside Studios (an Art Centre in Hammersmith, London), was

short-listed for the Turner Prize at the Tate Gallery in 1985, according to Tate publicity in recognition of her series of exhibitions devoted to work by young artists. In that same year the Art Centre's Artistic Director, David Gothard was required to leave his post. In self-justification Gothard declared, in the Observer of 10 March 1985, "We haven't compromised; we've gone for the best and shown it can work". In the same article the Chairman of the Board of Riverside Studios explained, "The problem, of course, is money - and vaulting ambition." Despite such difficulties many art centres attempt to consider a broad definition of visual art and acknowledge the educative potential of exhibition programmes although, given the context, a surprising number do not. The orthodoxy of the incumbent organiser as the sole or primary author of a programme can remain; as all those who attempt to promote ready-made exhibition packages will discover. As an example, an exhibition proposal sent to Ms Kalinovska by this author for a showing of young artists' work at Riverside in 1985 was returned by an assistant explaining "although we like the work we do not respond to exhibitions proposals from artists."

## Local Authorities Venues

We have already examined a difference in attitude and objectives in the Local Authorities funding and providing of art. We can also see in various local authority funded venues different attitudes to their own nature and function. The following two examples will serve to indicate a possible alternative. In the preface to the exhibition catalogue Rocks and Flesh: an argument for British Drawing, selected by Peter Fuller, Lynda Morris, Curator of the Norwich School of Art Gallery, discusses the role of the curator in a public gallery (the Gallery at Norwich School of Art and/or its exhibition, is funded by the Arts Council, Eastern Arts Association, Norwich School of Art and, for this exhibition, Norfolk and Norwich Triennial Festival):

"One of the major influences on the kind of art provided in recent years has been the one-man exhibition. This is a form adopted by the Public Sector from the Private Sector, but it is deeply destructive to the production of good art. The commercial gallery needs annual one-man exhibitions to draw attention to their chosen stable of artists and to establish their star status. Artists able to take the intolerable pressure of annual one-man shows end up producing endless variations on a fashionable, saleable theme. There should be no need for Public Galleries to work as part of the commercial star system. They have the privilege of public funds to provide a humane context which takes account of the ten or more years an artist may need, after leaving college, to slowly develop a visual language able to express the human condition experienced by their contemporaries. The duty of a Public Gallery is to create the conditions for artists which enable and encourage them to produce their best possible work and to show that to the public. Mixed exhibitions are therefore the logical form of exhibitions in the public sector. The curator should not aspire to the role of kingmaker but to that of caretaker or housekeeper."(130)

Perhaps it is because Lynda Morris works amongst a community of artists at Norwich School of Art that she presents her

alternative for a public gallery as one of nurturing artists. With a commitment to a welfare state model of public patronage described elsewhere in her preface a commitment to an audience might be seen as a priority. Nonetheless, Lynda Morris' statement is a radical challenge to an orthodoxy insisting as she does on group and mixed exhibitions and resisting the model so universally adopted in the public sector of imitating the private sector of dealers and their "role of kingmaker". For many others this is still an attractive and powerful orthodoxy encouraged by peer group pressure and required for professional advancement of the exhibition organiser. Accountability to lay, as opposed to expert, funding bodies can encourage reconsideration of the orthodoxy in other ways.

When appointed to the service of a local authority as Keeper of the Mappin Art Gallery, Michael Tooby attempted to describe the factors which would shape the gallery's policy and therefore his job. This very act is itself a radical challenge to an orthodoxy which encourages the process of selecting exhibitions in a carefully maintained aesthetic vacuum.

"A publicly-funded municipal gallery such as the Mappin Art Gallery has a number of background factors in shaping its policy; its history; its funding; its future plans; the plans of the local authority in which it operates."(131)

The exercise identified by Tooby central to any job of public service is frequently avoided in the Public Sector visual arts in favour of an autocratic and individualistic selection process devoid of the context which might derive

from examining factors like those outlined by Tooby.

Although apparent restrictions, these factors can provide a stimulus to the creativity of the exhibition organiser or, to borrow Goldstein's term, applied by him to advertising art, they can encourage a "synergy" out of the obligation to consider context. They can also provide a synergy for artists if carefully managed by the arts administrators (exhibition organiser). Intimations of such possibilities are to be found but frequently, on closer examination, examples prove to be inhibited by an institutionalised addiction to the power behind the throne. The absolute authority of the selector of "kings". A power exercised discreetly beyond public scrutiny.

Open Competitions, as an example, have become a feature of the network of state subvention in the visual arts but despite their public context they are far from open in the sense of available or accessible to all or publicly accountable. Instead they are advertised in the art press and invite submission from 'professional artists'. Once through this very efficient (self) selection process the would be exhibitor encounters very few overt restrictions apart from the medium and size of the work in question, the size of the handling fee and occasionally the need to be located in the designated geographical catchment area. From a sometimes massive response a small selection panel will select a miscellany of works for subsequent exhibitions. Usually these exhibitions have no title other than the name of the venue or sponsor, eg The John Moores Liverpool

Exhibition or The Whitechapel Open or The Midland View or The Tolly Cobbold/Eastern Arts Exhibition. As presently constituted, it is unlikely they could be called anything else except, perhaps, the names of the selectors involved. Selection panels are usually made up of a representative of the commercial sponsor, if appropriate; a representative of the initiating venue and invited guest selectors drawn from the Art World. These are invariably arts administrators, critics or artists, the latter not infrequently previous prize winners. A tracking device fitted to these individuals would reveal for some an apparently endless round of selection. Selection for their own venue, for a competition, for a collection, for a commission, for a residency or whatever other scheme is devised. The resulting exhibitions are therefore simply show cases displaying the choice of the selectors. In a sense these exhibitions are the Hayward Annual Orthodoxy elsewhere. As a typical example with typical selection procedure, the Whitechapel Open, 1986, instructions to artists reads:

"Selection: the exhibition will consist of works selected from the open submission but the selectors will also invite a small number of artists to show work (arising from the gallery's education programme during the year)."

This document goes on to protect the selectors and the gallery staff,

"neither the selection nor the placing of the works in the gallery is open to question".(132)

Such a firmly stated refusal to engage in a dialogue with an art making community can only be understood by closer examination of its context. Artists have been invited to

present "their own work" of which they are proud (rightly or wrongly) to a jury who do not reveal their criteria but who are proud (rightly or wrongly) of their ability to select work which they think worthy for presentation or promotion. Egos are at stake here made fragile by the context of artistic freedom in which they operate; freedom as much for the selector as the artist. Exhibitions which result from this uninhibited process invite informed and misinformed speculation in the national and art press as well as amongst artists. The Whitechapel Open is seen by the Art World and its critics as a platform for "the largest concentration of artists in Europe" and is, therefore, castigated for including amateur and child art. An action that might be seen by others as necessary, a breaking down of the artificial barrier between amateur and professional. The early '80s growth in competitions as a vehicle for presenting art seems to have slowed perhaps because organisers find themselves in a situation in which whatever they do is wrong, for some artists (only those rejected), critics and other arts administrators. The eventual outcome is a refusal by administrators to discuss such a painful experience further and a lack of enthusiasm for competitions.

The movement of selectors from one exhibition or some other competitive scheme to another encourages enervating speculation in the art making community particularly about who is favoured, by whom and why. Professional artists (those that take a professional approach to advancement) quickly learn that a handful of ubiquitous individuals have inordinate power to enhance and presumably if they so wished,

inhibit careers in the Art World (the same can be said of the Craft World and Design World).

The advocacy exercised by public employees (temporary or permanent) is powerful precisely because it is discreet and dispensed by someone without an apparent profit motive which might cast doubt on the activities of others, such as dealers, operating in the same capacity. The advocacy by Lord Clark of Henry Moore, Graham Sutherland and others is well documented in their respective biographies and in some detail in Walter Hussey's autobiographical account of his own career as "the last great patron of art in the Church of England". As well as providing this dust jacket characterisation of Hussey, Lord Clark also provided, for Hussey, his judgement of Moore and Sutherland and the facilities of the National Gallery for negotiations over Henry Moore's Madonna and Child and Graham Sutherland's Crucifixion for Saint Matthew's church, Northampton. (133)

Although we have to acknowledge the special circumstances, this was war time Britain, we cannot now deny the existence of such personal patronage today (the discreet promotion of individuals by an employee of the State); unless of course we believe in profound changes in human temperament and behaviour. Although few would admit it these competitions can be competition for this sort of longer term personal patronage as well as a place in a temporary exhibition. Personal patronage which, in the fullness of time, might lead to nomination for the new but now most prestigious competitive patronage from the Patrons of New Art, with their

Turner Prize, at the Tate Gallery.

Competitions with specific briefs to the broad community of artists are spurned and sometimes disparaged by the professional artists and arts administrators of the Art World perhaps because to demonstrate an ability to portray or illustrate A Spirit of London (as in the recently deceased G.L.C.'s sponsored competition)\* might be overly specific for future promotion out of the context of the exhibition and breaks with the tacit convention of avoiding subject matter which might restrict everyone's artistic freedom. The provision of published guidelines for selectors as well as artists might just inhibit patronage and creativity although it might also provide a "synergy" if properly handled.

The combination of public and private monies has led to a remarkable growth in the late 70's and early 80's of this area but even with brand new and apparently different competitions old attitudes die hard as the recent Tradition and Innovation in Printmaking Today demonstrates. While presenting "a unique opportunity for artist printmakers aged 40 or under to be represented in a new collection of contemporary prints" by asking them to submit work under the themes "Work and Leisure in Society and Innovation" the selectors preserved for themselves the right to select "prints which are not connected with either theme".(134) It would seem the organisers here do not wish the artists to take the themes seriously and they seriously want to preserve

\* Now (in 1988) resurrected as the South Bank Picture Show

the right to select whatever they like. In sharp contrast to this approach, but equally impressive as an example of public and private sponsorship, is the John Player Portrait Award organised annually by the National Portrait Gallery in association with John Player. As the rules to this competition rightly claim, this project "has become a highly successful annual event aimed at encouraging young artists to specialise in portraiture".<sup>(135)</sup> It is also highly successful at achieving the broad aims of the State for art and design as articulated in the various charter statements (best characterised by the Arts Council's and borrowed by the local authorities "to develop and improve knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts"). It achieves these aims by generating public interest in contemporary portraiture and importantly highlights the continuation of a tradition of portraiture by relating contemporary practice to the past. It also commissions and rewards artists and contributes to a national resource in a patently rational way. The reasoning and rules appropriate to an admixture of public and private sponsorship, are here unequivocal for everyone involved. The selectors know they are selecting portraits and the audience know they will see portraits when they visit the resulting exhibition. Their respective notions of what is good or bad in painting have a clearly defined context within which to operate. As with advertising some may dislike the co-patron but few can dispute the value of the patronage and not only for artists but for the audience too. Such a straightforward commission to the broad community of artists avoids by its very straightforwardness accusation of partiality (sexism, racism, art worldism) which have been

levelled at other competitions and schemes which require all to operate in a vacuum of unrestricted personal choice. The artists to submit what they like and the selectors to choose what they like.

Sadly in common with many other schemes an accusation of ageism is more difficult to deny. On the evidence of rules and regulations there is a widespread view that only young artists need to be encouraged in this way. For artists the same age or older than the Arts Council, life might begin at forty, but for many in schemes using public money opportunity ends. The State just like the Art Market, and other markets in a market economy seems to require new lines. When line and manufacturer are one and the same we have ageism, an arbitrary turnover of artists as well as art. Much of the membership of the Royal Society of Portrait Painters are excluded from such a competition by virtue of their age and professional commitment to art making in a now marginalised genre.

## Festivals

Many towns, cities and regions have cultural festivals in which the visual arts take a part and which might provide the opportunity for the professional employment of artists. The previously cited exhibition at Norwich School of Art is an example of how a curator can secure additional funding for her programme. In a miscellany of arts and other events taking place in a locality during a festival a gallery will be presenting an exhibition. Its relationship to the rest of the events is usually but not always simply one of coincidence and convenience. As a rule, the Festival does not impinge on the nature or content of the exhibition. Events may be taking place in the streets and parks and other arts venues, some approaching Owusu's orature, but the visual arts are as a rule not involved just as the poetry reading in the library, say, is similarly not involved. They are, in a sense, fringe events.

In 1984 Merseyside Development Corporation initiated an International Garden Festival which utilized the visual arts as a central rather than a fringe event. A new park was created and as the preface to festival sculpture declared this was "an opportunity to take up the tradition "widespread much earlier this century, of commissioning artists to produce sculpture for a specific site like a park". This project can be distinguished from other attempts to place art in public places since the public place itself was being built to accommodate sculpture as the sculpture was being commissioned. The task of "selecting sixty pieces of

sculpture within 125 acres of new landscape", is indeed, "an exciting privilege" as the selector Sue Grayson acknowledges. (136)

Her Foreword to Festival Sculpture reveals the process of selection. A process which relies heavily on Ms Grayson's personal judgement derived from her experience as an arts administrator in the public sector and particularly her experience as an Arts Council officer responsible for exhibitions at the Serpentine Gallery. As a simple process of cross referencing participants in Festival Sculpture with previous Hayward and Serpentine exhibitions, the Arts Council Collection, the conveniently provided biographies and photographs of artists work in previous situations in the catalogue of the exhibition. Such habits of documentation reveal the selector's almost exclusive reliance on the British Art World, to the exclusion of other sculptors more used to working to commission, like membership of the Royal Society of British Sculptors. Ms Grayson's "proudest claim, that Festival Sculpture includes work from every generation, every degree of family and many parts of the country" does not refute the contrary claim that this presentation of sculpture is profoundly partial. The project depends upon Sue Grayson selecting sculptors she has encountered. The only genuinely open part of this festival "finally" thanked by Sue Grayson, is the Art for the Garden competition launched through the Sunday Times and displayed through the support of the Abbey National Building Society. The foreword continues,

"An appeal for good design to match Britain's love for gardens was made a year ago by Sir Roy Strong, Director of the Victoria and Albert".

It probably appears churlish to reveal the reverse side of what was undoubtedly a very successful venture but it is done not to undermine achievement but to suggest greater success. It is a testimony to Sue Grayson's sensitivity that she responded to the site and context and commissioned 25 of the 55 sculptors selected to produce animals for a "zoo". Such an approach goes a long way to making sculpture accessible to a lay audience but it is a pity that access to such an opportunity was denied to the majority of artists.

Finally Sue Grayson's thanks reveals the vested interest of dealers and colleges of art; part of a complex web of interaction between public support and private commerce. The initiative of the Local Authority on Merseyside was enthusiastically sponsored by other aspects of the State, a private foundation and by commerce; its achievement could have been even greater with a more open approach to public patronage.\*

\*Other researchers may wish to cross-reference exhibitions artists and selectors. As a convenient example the above Garden Festival with its publication (136) can be examined in conjunction with the Hayward and Serpentine Gallery lists provided in the appendix. As examples the publication is illustrated on at least three occasions with photographs of sculpture exhibited at the Serpentine Gallery where Ms Grayson was exhibition organiser.

## Independents

In Arts Council parlance an "independent organisation" seems to be one dependent on subsidy. (Such a contrary definition echos the Art World's use of "professional".) A more usual use of the word is to be found in the activities of independent museums like those represented by the Association of Independent Museums. These organisations are independent of direct subsidy from the State whether local or national although sometimes confused with state supported institutions.\* Although few would put it so bluntly one of their primary aims must, therefore, be to make money. They are obliged to find and sustain a market for their product whether that product is a permanent exhibit or a programme of temporary exhibits or a mixture of the two. Their exceedingly accurate acronym, AIM, identifies their individual need to understand their own nature and function. They are required by their very independence to have a clear aim. If they are to survive they are also obliged to cater for an audience of non-specialist as well as specialists. Although the Arts Council's "independents" might claim to do the same, their programmes and exhibitions require a specialist knowledge and sympathy for art. They do not as a rule have a clear aim or a clear target audience. The paucity of audience research and information, in the state sector, is indirect testimony to this claim.

\* Just as with the world of advertising, the activities of the State have created favourable conditions for the development of museums, not least is the MSC scheme providing subsidised labour and local authorities have encouraged their growth as an antidote to inner city decay and the disintegration of other industries

The existence of the Independents demonstrates the leisure market for exhibitions many of which include art and many more could. Paradoxically through an obligation to earn from their product they're obliged to engage and even educate a paying audience of the general public who pay for the experience rather than for acquisition.

## Education

In the mid-1970's the so called professional arts and that network of state subvention required to sustain them "got education" much in the same way as others get religion. For some the conversion was total for others slow and partial and for yet others simply an expedience, a commitment to be affected rather than lived. Perhaps it was the recession in professional education, in full swing by 1975, which made influential figures in the Quangos realise that their charters could be interpreted as essentially educational and, which made them, as only missionary zealots can, oblige others to convert to the new faith while retaining the benefits of the old ways for themselves.

As Nicholas Serota, Director of the Whitechapel Gallery (a major revenue client of the A.C.G.B.), could recollect recently,

"The Arts Council's attitude to education programmes was very negative in the mid-Seventies: they were concerned that the money they gave us should be spent on exhibitions, not education. Now the situation is almost entirely the reverse - unless a gallery runs an education programme it will have difficulty getting a grant." (137)

The irony of the belated development of education provision at the Hayward and Serpentine and the Art Department's partial conversion with an Education Officer employed for Touring Exhibitions only cannot have escaped the notice of Serota and others in receipt of funding for exhibitions

with, suddenly, a new obligation.\*

The missionary metaphor has a great deal more potential for an imaginative reader to develop but it is sufficient to say that the orthodox connoisseur approach to state subvention in the visual arts continues and has led to a firm system of priorities. The priorities are, first select what's good, then present it, and finally assist an audience to appreciate, if not fully understand, why what is selected is good. Last on the list is education but a very special sort of education which more properly might be called initiation. This education is assistance in beginning to understand; an introduction, in the religious sense, to the mysteries ultimately irreducible, of selected Art. This is not a comprehensive programme designed to encourage education through art or even education in art but rather an approach which knows what's good and reaches out through the activities of Education Officers, connected to Quangos or venues, with "outreach work" to find new audiences. This new breed of professional "reach out" because they are not allowed to "reach in". The professional educationalist's

\*In 1981 The Arts Council and Education. A Consultative Document could report on p12; "In London, education arrangements have inevitably (?) been more ad hoc since there is no education staff. Free and cheap publications are provided for most exhibitions and audio-visual programmes are frequently used. The recent experiment with acoustiguides for the Pissaro exhibition was successful and they will be used for the Picasso and Indian exhibitions. Links have been established with the ILEA, the Extra-Mural Dept and the Institute of Education of London University. An American post-graduate student will be working voluntarily at the Serpentine Gallery to provide educational programmes for this year's Summer Show."

conclusion that what is selected, how it is selected and how it is presented, might be the most effective educational tool, is denied these professionals. They are obliged to remain amateur initiators rather than professional educationalists. The orthodox white or grey walls with regularly spaced works and discreet labels providing the merest cryptic information (date, title and media) confirm that no educationalist was involved with presentation in most state funded galleries. School children littering gallery floors busily copying some recondite example of Art World Art like so many mini supplicants in some esoteric religion would make Herbert Read and even the more formal Marion Richardson weep. The usual public sector catalogue, visually replicates the conditions found in the gallery and contains reproductions, biographies, bibliographies, lists of work, anecdotes of the selectors and a sometimes "scholarly" piece on the artists and their work. For the gallery visitor requiring more than a lasting aide-memoire, they are an expensive disappointment.

The plethora of "tacked on" ancillary events in public galleries, now providing approved supplementary employment for otherwise unemployed artists, testify to the need for the employment for artists and for apparent initiates to

initiate.\* The litter of inexpensive or giveaway exhibition guides (contrasting with increasingly expensive full colour catalogues), eagerly snatched up by the perplexed, reveal that the austerity of the exhibitions conceals and ultimately, the hardest of all to acknowledge, the art works themselves do not reveal their meaning, if they did then education would not be required. Pearson's un(anti)- public approach is manifest in art galleries as well as art colleges where it might, just, have some justification, and as it most certainly has in private galleries, which can provide one to one supplementary education if required.

Lynda Morris' observations about the Public Sector imitating the Private Sector applies to the very style of presentation as well as the method of operation.

#### The other British Nations and their Councils

Both the Welsh Arts Council and the Scottish Arts Council have developed markedly different approaches to achieve those general Arts Council aims which they share.

\*Education work in state funded galleries has been a requirement of subsidy for over a decade (as Nicholas Serota has pointed out - see page 217). Serota refers to the Arts Council but the same is true for clients of the Crafts Council, BFI, Regional Arts Associations and the local authorities. As a typical example of the educational provision the much imitated Whitechapel Art Gallery provides lectures, workshops, videos, fully illustrated catalogues and inexpensive exhibition guides with most of its exhibitions. Its Community Education team arrange art and artist in public places schemes outside the gallery.

### The Welsh Arts Council

The state support for the arts in Wales acknowledges in its administration an integration of art and craft; Craft follows Art and precedes Dance in the Welsh Arts Council's Annual Report. (139)

Although the Welsh Arts Council still has its own gallery, the Oriel in Cardiff, it can legitimately claim to follow a policy of providing "little arts activities itself" and being "a source of money, of ideas, of advice." Even its Exhibition Service is now less a provider of exhibitions and more involved with "transporting, advising upon and co-organising a wide variety of exhibitions". In the same year that the A.C.G.B. Art Department chose to emphasise its own successes at its own galleries, the Hayward and Serpentine, the Welsh Arts Council, in its 1984/85 Annual Report, highlighted its involvement with the Mostyn Art Gallery's Turner in Wales exhibition. The same report, while noting changes in the management of its Oriel Gallery, also reported the gallery's tenth birthday celebrated by an exhibition of the work of the 56 Group, Wales. According to the Report an exhibition of work by the same group had inaugurated the Oriel Gallery programme in May 1974 and due respect was paid to the significant part many of its members had played in the improving the art scene in Wales over the past ten years. A look at the financial review for 1984/85 in this report reveals that the 56 Group was one of a number of artists' organisations in receipt of grant aid. The most significant,

financially, is the Association of Artists and Designers in Wales with a grant of £55,000. This is a noteworthy commitment to an association of artists and designers and to the value of having such a pressure group in the country. A value not as yet recognised by the Quangos for Great Britain who prefer support for local studios rather than national associations of artists. Like support for the English regions both the Crafts Council and the British Film Institute provide grant income for Welsh Arts Council to encourage activities in these areas of the visual arts.

Further evidence of a service role, as opposed to a providing role, can be found in the Welsh Arts Council's innovative scheme Collector Plan which offers "interest free credit to encourage private individuals to buy paintings and sculpture from more than twenty art galleries in Wales". Galleries in the scheme are both private and public, (in source of income and ownership) and include artist-run galleries which "Collector Plan" literature reminds us are a part of a long tradition going back to the foundation of the major art academies and societies in the 18th and 19th Centuries. Information about "Collector Plan" is presented in a bilingual brochure which also provides information on the galleries taking part in the scheme.<sup>(140)</sup> The type of information - maps, photographs of gallery proprietors in their galleries surrounded by exhibited art, advice on how to use a gallery and the types of gallery - seems to suggest a targetted audience of locals, non-locals and non-specialists. The brochure also tells of the Welsh Arts Council's willingness to help the visitor locate artists in Wales

with a computer aided slide and information library. This section of the brochure continues,

"Whether you want to commission a piece of work (from a small portrait to a large sculpture), select artists for exhibition, research information for an article or thesis or simply browse through the images out of interest, please get in touch".

Such an efficient library is in telling contrast to a largely moribund and inaccessible Arts Council of Great Britain Index.

The Welsh Arts Council also provides, in the form of the bilingual Arts News an invaluable information service to artists and all those interested in the broad spectrum of visual arts in Wales. A typical edition might report and discuss events, issues and schemes relevant to the furtherance of the visual arts and its audience. As an example, Art News No 14 '85 discusses the value of Open Exhibitions not just for Art World artists but for all artists and perhaps more importantly for the Welsh nation. The, then, anticipated 1986 Royal National Eisteddfod is discussed in this context, and the item on the main fine art open exhibition, The Gold Medal in Fine Art, reveals unequivocal instructions to artists, inviting work to be submitted interpreting the theme Ebb and Flow. This theme is a commission to the community of fine artists in Wales. The event is associated with a programme of Arts and Crafts events which are part of a national cultural festival; it does not take place in isolation, like others in Britain.

The Welsh Arts Council seems to be anxious to provide

services for the visual arts, frequently in partnership with local authorities and regional associations rather than its selection of what it thinks excellent. The Welsh Arts Council is no longer a major provider of exhibitions it is instead a major service to the Visual Arts in Wales. The growing visual art economy in Wales is testimony to its success.

### The Scottish Arts Council

The Scottish Arts Council seems to be now adopting a similar strategy as an examination of its 1985/86 Report reveals. Lindsay Gordon, Art Director, reports the health and vigour of the art form he and his department represents;

"There cannot have been a time when Scottish art was so effervescent, when to be an artist in Scotland seemed not such a daft thing and when daily the post brought invitation cards for Scottish exhibitions from all over Britain, Europe and the Americas."(141)

After charting the achievement of a few Scottish stars in the Art Markets elsewhere, Gordon admits "life is still hard for the majority of Scotland's young artists". (As ever, middle-aged and old artists must be somehow comfortable.) He also tells us how facilities have improved so that

"Scotland now has just about the minimum requirements in terms of studios, galleries and activities that a country needs to support a healthy art practice".

Of course, what Gordon has to say in this context is bound to refer to those activities which the Scottish Arts Council subsidises but in so doing his words reveal the now familiar orthodox view of what art is and what it, therefore, requires. It could be argued that a market for art in

Scotland is what is required to support a healthy art practice. The lack of such an indigenous market, at least for Art World Art, implicitly referred to, requires Scotland to export its artists and art.

Like the Arts Council of Great Britain the Scottish Arts Council has its client venues although it has divested itself of its own permanent venue for its own exhibitions. It does still, however, organise touring exhibitions (sometimes toured in its own mobile gallery) although now much more in co-operation with others, such as regional museum services and councils. Gordon reports that during the course of 1985/86 the SAC reviewed its own exhibition policy and the future of its collection and as a result the council

"will continue to withdraw from areas of exhibition working which are covered by others and to concentrate on those not presently catered for in Scotland".

We are also informed that planning was begun "to organise occasional large-scale international exhibitions" and that the intention is to collaborate more with the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art specifically, apparently, to help tour work from the S.N.G.'s Collection. The S.A.C.'s own Collection is to be retained so that the Council will continue to buy the art of today alongside the Scottish National Gallery rather than withdraw from this area of work covered by an other.

Gordon also points out that Scottish galleries are considering "how they present exhibitions" but as he acknowledges (in common with the rest of Britain) this

"educational element is 'tacked on', almost as an after thought". He continues by citing two exceptions to this rule, amongst S.A.C.'s revenue clients, which appear to be real attempts to make genuinely educational exhibitions. Surprisingly such initiatives came from an artists' group and an art centre and not from one of SAC's prestigious exhibition producing, revenue client galleries. In one of these educational exhibitions, at the Crawford Art Centre, the exhibition organiser provided panels by each picture offering "a personal response and a suggested method of approach". Such useful and discreet assistance contrasts with the attempts to avoid or even subvert an interpretation or a particular approach which seems to be the orthodoxy elsewhere in Britain.

The lack of and need for a forum of opinion and critical debate is recognised and the appearance of a Scottish art magazine to be launched in 1986 is heralded by Gordon as hopefully a solution since such a service is necessary to most creative workers and particularly those who work in isolation. The support for the project of a wide range of publicly funded galleries and workshops reported by Gordon should not absolve them from their role of providing a complementary forum of opinion and critical debate. It is a depressing feature of contemporary society, not peculiar to Scotland, that despite the proliferation of galleries, art centres and other venues, the majority of art, craft and design remains unused, unseen and unappreciated. An art magazine may "nurture critical writing" but exhibitions which

themselves presented arguments, theories or even opinions would perhaps do as much if not more to stimulate response. It must be acknowledged that it is hard to write about somebody else's intuitive selection. Critics or would be critics like everyone else are not invited to participate. Like everyone else they can take it or leave it with little additional help from cryptic press releases, private or press views and cheap wine (dispensed free to critics if recognised). The marketing conventions adopted uncritically by the public sector from the private commercial sector with invitation cards sent to critics, artists and arts administrators like Lindsay Gordon do little to encourage unless like Lindsay Gordon you know the artists involved. (Blank white cards with simply the artist's name are not uncommon and a contemporary taste for funereal style and colour can lead even the initiated to expect the worst.)

In the conclusion S.A.C.'S Art Report (within the Councils Report) we are informed that the Art Committee gave

"some consideration to its policy in respect of photography and agreement was reached on setting up a Working Party".

No mention is made of Craft, Design or Film in the Art Director's report but closer scrutiny of the financial report reveals support directly or indirectly for craft exhibitions and expenditure on film production and training. Reviewing itemised expenditure, particularly recipients of revenue grants, we see a substantial commitment to the manufacture of art (with a peculiarly Scottish taste for printmaking judging by the number of print workshops) and the manufacture of

exhibitions. An annual programme in excess of nine exhibitions seems to be normal in Scotland as it is in the rest of the public sector responsible for temporary exhibitions of contemporary art throughout Great Britain. With such a demanding work-load of exhibitions, Lindsay Gordon should not be surprised that "education" is merely "tacked on" and again the Scottish experience is not unique.

What seems to be unique to Scotland is the way public money allocated by the S.A.C. for the visual arts to client venues is accounted for in the Report by indicating the amount allocated, the total annual attendance (when available) and the number and type of exhibitions presented. This is a convenient way of testing Lynda Morris' observation about the Public Sector imitating the Private Sector. In Scotland it happens to be easier to see those arts administrators who see their future in the stars (of the Art World).

Like the Arts Council of Great Britain and the English Regional Associations, the Scottish Arts Council and the Welsh Arts Council are seemingly aware of the dangers of relying solely on a dealer market and so they all look to Public Art and Artists as an alternative without, apparently, realising that as these schemes are now administered they remain "un-public" and "anti" - all those artists who are independently trying to make a living.

Although Nicholas Pearson, in The State and the Visual Arts, was careful to emphasis the remaining difficulties for

Wales and Scotland in a way their national identity and their national councils demonstrate the positive implications of an accountable system of public support for the Visual Arts. The friend of Raymond Williams from the North of England quoted by Pearson who bemoaned his English region's disadvantage against a dominant "minority culture" could be echoed throughout England and its regions and addressed now to those groups who identified themselves and their culture as separate culture. Recent success in the international Art Market for a hand-ful of Scottish artists should not divert the Scottish Arts Council from its broad national role but already Scotland and Wales are an object lesson for the Quangos of Great Britain.

#### Alternative Selling in or on the edges of the Public Sector

While agreeing with Lynda Morris' observations about the Public Sector aping the Private Sector one feature not imitated is the active selling of art. Even if a potential customer suspects the works in question are for sale in a public gallery it is often difficult to find out the price or even someone to take money. Perhaps it is because selling art is labour intensive with one-to-one educative attention required, or perhaps because prices themselves can be provocative, that publicly funded galleries do not make an effort to sell art to the public. They seem to be a little more motivated to sell to a prestigious public collection. When we add to this situation the usual complexities of a financial transaction where the gallery staff are in effect acting as agents for the artists with commission and V.A.T.

to collect and handicapped, as they are, with accounting procedures not designed to handle occasional and unpredictable income we can see a substantial catalogue of disincentive. An overworked and usually underpaid arts administrator may think it is just not worthwhile, especially if earned income may be debited from grant aid. The uneven distribution of private commercial outlets for art, craft and designed objects contrasted with a national network of public galleries suggests there is opportunity for market expansion but the disincentives are substantial not least for the public sector employees with other ambitions not to be fulfilled by generating and servicing a market for visual art. The burgeoning of trading in the

Independent museums and in the Nationals, now that income, in the Nationals, is not returned to government, makes it possible to see the potential for such a market although it does suggest possible problems. Trading in art might diminish the status of incumbent arts administrators as disinterested connoisseurs and a Private Sector market might not be too happy with an efficiently run Public Sector market which became a genuine and permanent competitor.

The dealer market can appreciate the value of occasional charitable events like auctions in support of publicly funded galleries which have lost their public funding. The popularity of such events in the Art World is now beginning to put an undue strain on certain sectors of the art making community. The irony of being asked to donate a work of art to support a gallery or art centre exhibition space which did

little to sell an artist's work while he/she exhibited in that space does not escape the artist whose production is severely limited by the pressing need to make a living elsewhere.

Other, so called, alternative markets serve to complement rather than compete with the dealer market. The Contemporary Arts Society market/s, for example, provide an occasional stimulus to the London Art World Market for fine art and, to a lesser degree, fine craft. It encourages new art buying and adds its validation to the products.

"It is the element of personal selection from an 'informed' position, giving a mild stamp of approval which works so well with the public many of whom last year were first time buyers",

reports Deanna Petherbridge of a conversation with Caryl Hubbard, Chairperson of the Contemporary Arts Society.<sup>(142)</sup> Like the auctions, the inaugural C.A.S. art market rose out of a need to raise money to replace state subsidy; in this case an Arts Council purchase grant. Unlike the auctions the Contemporary Arts Society's market does not seek donations from artists but rather takes its commission on the sale of selected artist's work to help raise money for its cause of buying art from artists and dealers for subsequent distribution to subscriber public galleries and other public institutions. Its more usual task, then, is buying rather than selling art. It is this purchasing power, plus its ambivalent status, appearing both independent (private) and public, with its office at the Tate Gallery; almost but not quite an organ of the State. Membership forms for the Contemporary Arts Society provide a brief history informing

us that the Society was founded in 1910,

"to promote the development of contemporary art and to acquire works by living artists for gift or loan to public collections".

This document also tells us how the Society acquires works of art and craft:

"The Society's officers are advised by a committee of about 20 members and each year two or three of these chosen in rotation, become buyer for the year."

We are told the now familiar story:

"They spend the annual sum allotted to them entirely to their own taste; this avoids committee compromises and ensures that there is variety and quality in the Society's purchases." (143)

An exhibition called "Contemporary Choice" held at the Serpentine Gallery in 1981 reveals the results of this process: a collection of Art World art reflecting the taste of the buyer and frequently the institutions which some of them represent in their public capacity. (144)

A singularly important achievement of the Contemporary Arts Society over the last decade has been its contribution to the development of private corporate collecting in Britain. Contemporary Arts Society officers and committee members have helped companies acquire substantial collections of Art World art: the National Westminster Bank and the Unilever Collection are but two of many.

Considering the accord over taste in art (demonstrated in Contemporary Choice) and stated aims it seems strange that the Arts Council of Great Britain has ceased to fund the Contemporary Arts Society. It is the stuff of dangerous

speculation but the Contemporary Arts Society seems to have latterly developed what might be seen as a job for the State without funding from the State. although it has stuck firmly with the State's definition of art and its connoisseur approach to patronage it has, at least, expanded the market for Art World art.

Only history will tell whether their reliance on the personal taste of individuals is the right approach to patronage for an excellent art. Its attempts to develop new markets and more informal selling practices might provide a model for the Public Sector, to be practiced throughout the national network. This might prove to be the Contemporary Art Society's original and significant contribution to the visual arts, distinguishing it from the similar National Art-Collections fund.

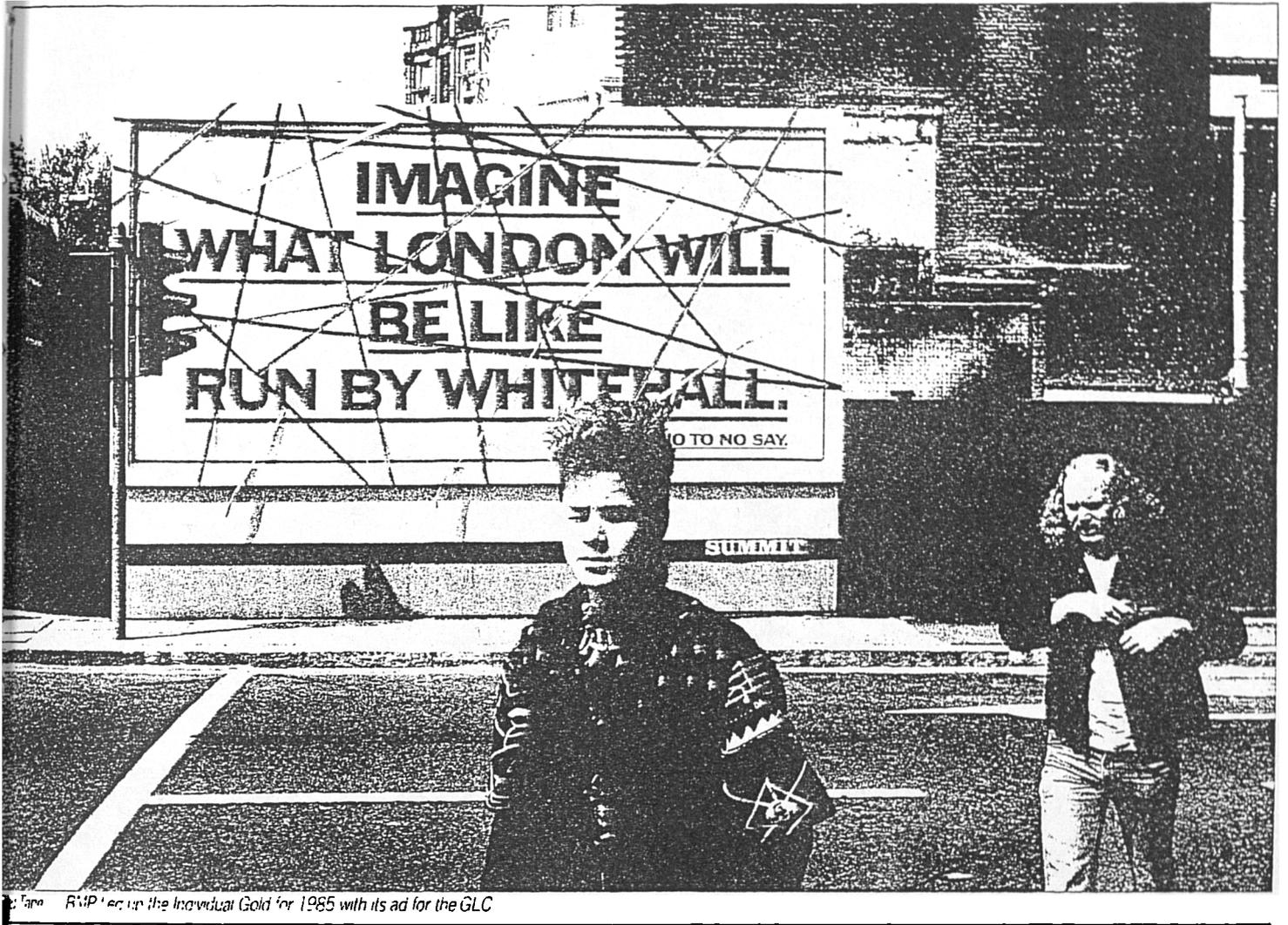
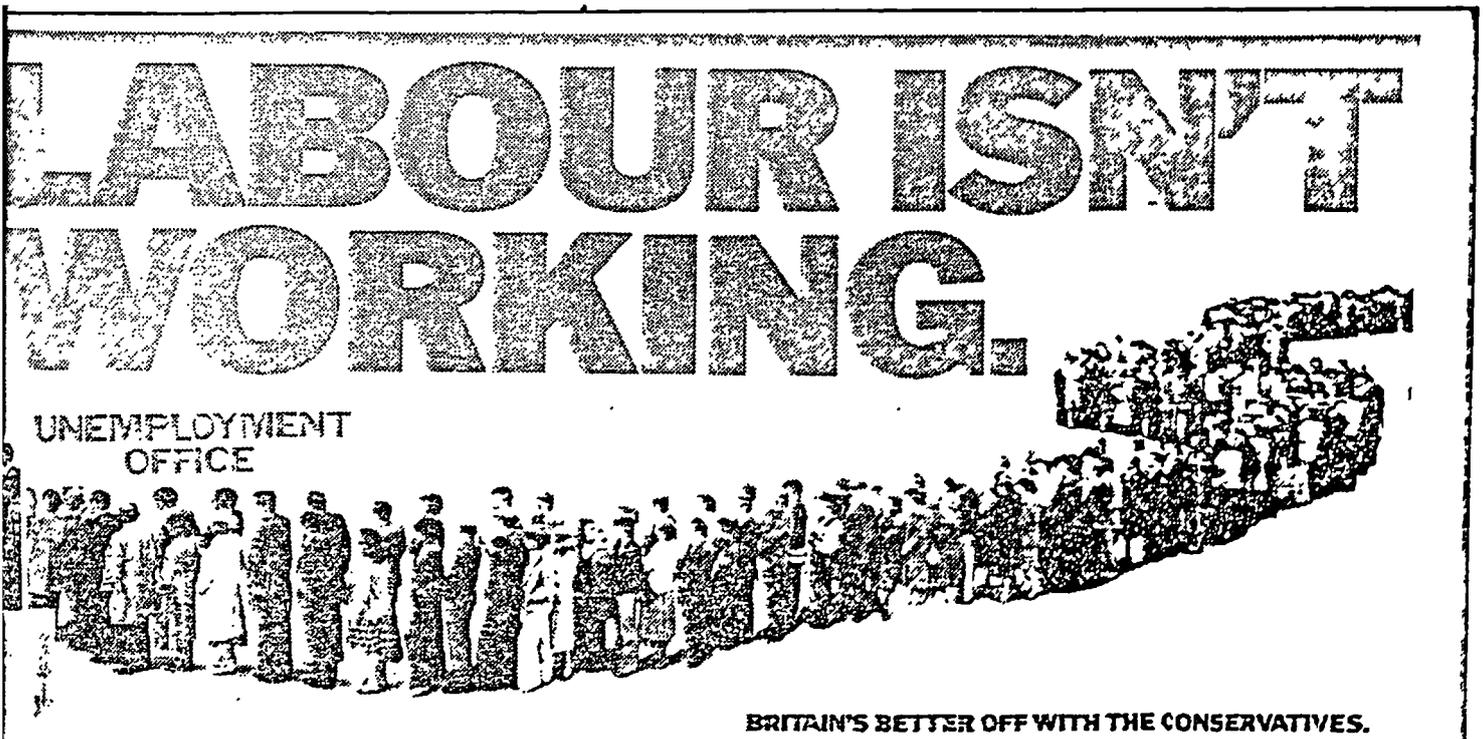


Photo: RIP! set up the Individual Gold for 1985 with its ad for the GLC



Controversy: the poster that stirred political rancour in the summer of 1973. It unsettled Labour and, shortly afterwards, Callaghan delayed calling a general election

## PART FOUR

### TRADITION AS A GENUINE ALTERNATIVE

The Mega-Visual Tradition and particularly that aspect known as advertising demonstrates the continuance of a tradition of employing people to make images. The market for the image maker's ability (some would say art) is vital and expanding. The health of the advertising industry is not a product of direct state subvention of the sort just described but it is the product of a state favourably disposed to advertising. The State is prepared to back advertising by allowing advertising costs to be set against corporation tax and by directly employing advertising in election campaigns and as part of the execution of political strategy. The present Government's "selling off" of publicly-owned industries like gas and telecommunications is an example of how advertising and its image makers are employed by the State. Governments of different political colour, at local as well as national level, are equally convinced of the efficiency of advertising (art) and employ the makers of "sophisticated visual images and witty punch-lines" albeit in sometimes messy internecine power struggles.<sup>(145)</sup> (Over the last year my progress along the Old Kent Road has been dangerously diverted by impressive G.L.C. advertising). Whatever we may think of its motives and its product, its aesthetic weakness may well be the love of the visual/verbal pun as an easy answer to tight schedules (not restricted to advertising), the advertising art market demonstrates a traditional alternative: artists commissioned to do someone else's work. It also reveals a state more discretely but more efficiently involved in creating a healthy market for the products of an industry and the

workers in it. It has created the right condition for a market and it uses the market rather than intervene in the market. Excellence in advertising art does not derive from the intervention of the State as selector but derives instead from the opportunity to practice created by the State.

The success of this approach is in telling contrast to the State's involvement in fine art, craft and design where an interventionist connoisseur approach of selecting what the state representatives consider is best has in fact depressed a general art market while, admittedly, stimulating small sections, of the Art World, Craft World, Design World, of it. Organs of the State, particularly the Quangos, can justly claim a succession of successes with their product (exhibitions and patronage schemes) because they have put so much of the State's resources (public money) into them over the last forty or so years. The State's partiality for art, design and craft as they define them rather than as they are or might be is demonstrable at all levels. A partiality which has led to the marginalisation of traditional art practice and practitioners and has contributed to the decline of traditional modes of employment of artists (patronage). The State through its institutions has exacerbated a dangerous and unnatural contemporary partition between applied art (design) and un-applied art (fine art) and has come dangerously close to severing the vital connections between the past and present. Its support continues to go to those aspects of the market which require its validation and the intercession of its agents the art administrators as

agents and brokers.

Although we have dwelt on Pearson and Brighton's "Artworld" in the fine arts as a world bounded and defined by the State and a particular private market which capitalises on it we could have equally examined in detail a Craft World and a Design World. So powerful is the influence of the State that we are in danger of concluding that these state endorsed worlds are the only worlds of that universe now called Visual Art and that they are the sum total of the art market. A justification for my focus on the Art World has been its pernicious influence on both Design and Craft, both frequently obsessed with individualistic creativity.

The State's now traditional defensive rejoinder, heard from Quangos and the rest, is that they merely respond to the situation as found. An observer with only half an eye (and not even a "good eye" at that) can see that response is to those spot-lighted sights the State is predisposed to see. Operating in this way, more like a private connoisseur than public servant, the State has failed to remember the contribution of integrated art, design and craft with, latterly, its possible relationship to technology and to manufacture. In this respect organs of the State have come close to contravening their own charters, objects of education, promotion and improvement. Being preoccupied with their own product they have simply forgotten the public duty to efficiently use their resources and cooperate with others in the Public Sector involved in the same task. They have chosen to promote themselves through their choice of art

rather than art in general through their activities. The egoism of today's artist, identified by Jachomides, extends into institutions and individuals of the State for Art and prevents such cooperation for the general benefit of all in art. A more discreet service role would require a role reversal for most if not all in our complex network of state subvention.

At the time of writing, the not-yet-quango, the Museum and Galleries Commission demonstrates such a service role possibility. A service for the Museums and Galleries in Great Britain with no glamorous direct provision. Its recent vigilance on behalf of the art market reaffirms the value of such an approach. According to a recent report in the Observer newspaper, it was the Commission's Chairman who alerted the Arts Minister to the imposition of E.E.C. VAT regulations which according to a dealer

"is the most dangerous threat to the art market in London that there has ever been".(146)

It is to be hoped, once quango status is achieved, that this agency doesn't behave like the rest. \*

Although it is comforting for a radical lobby to assume the corporate State is a reactionary force it is possible to demonstrate with reference to organs of the State, with a particular responsibility for art in particular communities, how this contact and subsequent dialogue with a community makes the State behave in a more responsible manner.

\* 1.1.87 The Museums & Galleries Commission incorporated under Royal Charter.

Although not perfect the Scottish and Welsh Arts Councils participate in a culture by providing services for the development of their respective national arts cultures, are an example to be followed. The Welsh Arts Council, for example, has done much to develop an independent Welsh art market for a broad range of fine artists, designers and craftspeople although Scotland can still bemoan the lack of a market in Scotland while enjoying its success in others.

Art thrives best through being used and appreciated in all the ways presented to us by art's social history. In a market economy the dangers of relying on one market are only too apparent as are the equal dangers of separating "research" from application in whatever field. Artists are obliged to remember while arts administrators choose to forget.

In 1981 the Crafts Council inaugurated its refurbished central London premises with an exhibition called The Maker's Eye. The intention was to present "crafts for the 1980s as they are perceived by the makers themselves". The now orthodox method of organising an exhibition was used and so on this occasion fourteen selected selectors selected an exhibition which reflected "his or her personal experience" and the resulting choice was "presented in separate groups to emphasise that these are individual not committee choices". David Pye, one of the selectors, wrote of his dilemma in making his selection,

"What are 'the crafts'? Where do you draw the line between the crafts and industry? Or between the crafts

and fine art? If wood carving is craft and sculpture is fine art, where do you draw the line between carving and sculpture? Is Thomas Bewick, being a wood engraver, therefore a craftsman? If so what about Albrecht Durer or Rembrandt the etcher?"

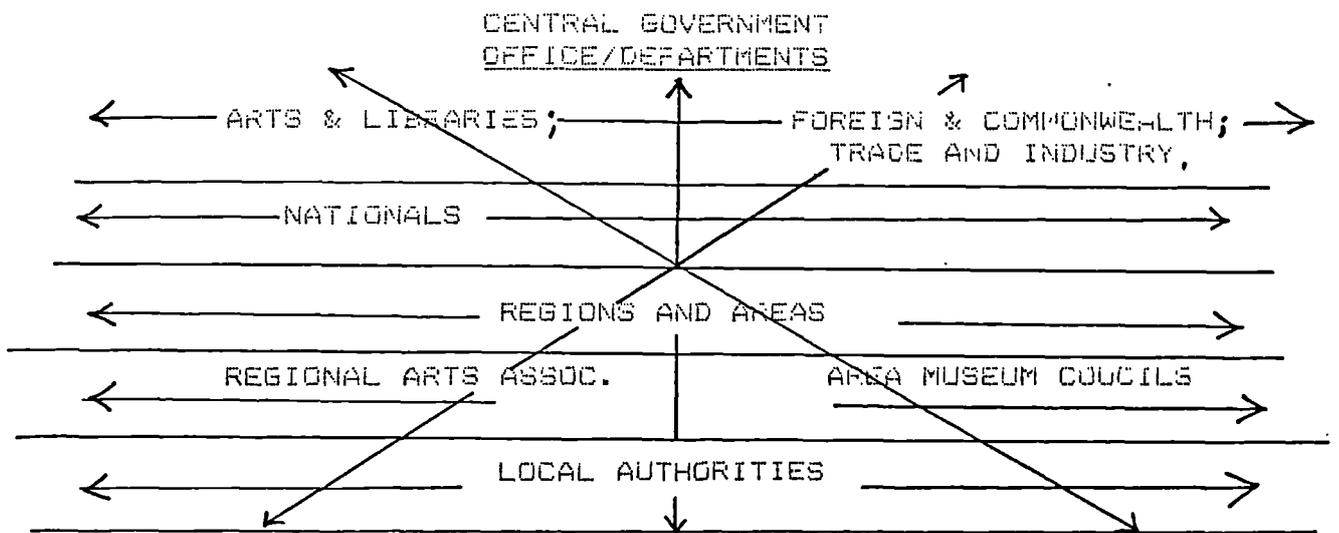
Pye continues and answers himself,

"But all such questions are foolish. The fine arts, the crafts and industrial production are manifestly all part of one continuum. The crafts are the central part of it merging into industry on one side and into fine art on the other. Anything in any part of this continuum can rise to the level of art".(147)

This eloquent expression of the maker's attitude is in marked contrast to the art market, partitioned into fine and applied art (one section of the market selling exclusive named goods and the other utilizing the more anonymous application of skill, sometimes with substantial reward). On either side of this partition the market sub-divides into special markets each of which upholds the principle of separation.

A complex market structure is now reflected in a vast and complex bureaucracy of state subvention in the visual arts. A bureaucracy of funding and providing at national, regional and local level which in its many facets dangerously undermines that continuum which Pye and art history describe as unified. Art, Craft and Design are now firmly institutionalised as separate with the State's preference for the applied art of Design clearly evident in the amount of money it injects into this part of the market. It is the Design Council which has the money to spend and the Arts Council and Crafts Council who have to bandage cuts. If we look at yet another aspect of state subvention, education, we can see in stark detail the consequence of this preference. Fine Art as an area of study is cut and Design developed.

COOPERATION IN THE STATE SUBVENTION SYSTEM



(fig 4)

The traditional unity demonstrated in naming our Colleges of Art and Design and which was the primary motive for the establishment of the Victoria and Albert Museum and the nation's art education network is now almost forgotten. The State today seems to be denying the existence of such a possibility and has set up Design in opposition to Art and anything associated with it. Such a partitioning, wholly appropriate to certain sectors of the art market committed to the unique object of genius, should not be replicated by the State. The maker's experience should be heeded. The integration of art, craft and design should be sought as a priority and, not institutionalised as separate by the State. The Public Sector tradition of piously hoping for cooperation between various aspects of itself without doing much about it must be changed to actively seeking cooperation. If we recollect our geological model the possibilities of lateral, vertical and diagonal cooperation are legion and desirable for profoundly improving and educational reasons as well as the simple, but not to be disparaged economic need.(fig. 4) Somehow the State will have to deal with the Jachomides Syndrome in institutions and arts administrators. Proper cooperation might mean the suppression of corporate and individual ego and the adoption of a service role rather than the ego enhancing interventionist approach. How this renaissance is to be achieved is itself a matter for cooperation and debate but models have been provided by an Alternative Tradition, by the way in which a new(ish) medium like photography is supported and by those agents and agencies of the State aware of and responsive to a

constituency. Working through the strata of state subvention we can see a pressing need for cooperation and strategic development for the United Kingdom as a whole; not just for England or Wales or Scotland or Northern Ireland. The lateral cooperation between the Nationals must start with establishing a clear identity for each of the Nationals amongst all the nations of the United Kingdom. A "who does what?" exercise followed by "how and when?" is central to education, marketing and management and should be central to those involved in the same activity of spending public money in the visual arts. The rationale behind the foundation of the Victoria and Albert Museum could be profitably recollected. Contemporary visual art practice and the market desperately needs such as an educational resource. The Victoria and Albert Museum: A Resource Centre for Art and Design and likewise identifying and titling throughout the network of Nationals would do a great deal to facilitate this process. As ambitious development plans come to fruition at the Tate Gallery and the National Gallery and the V & A the need to understand respective roles will become more, rather than less, acute and the potential for cooperation greater. Cooperation too between nationals and locals, with the possibility of extended loans and transfer of resources to suburb as well as cities. The Tate in the late 1980s has provided the model to be followed. Can we look forward to a V&A of the North with relocation of the Indian Collection?

Perhaps the strata where need and potential for cooperation

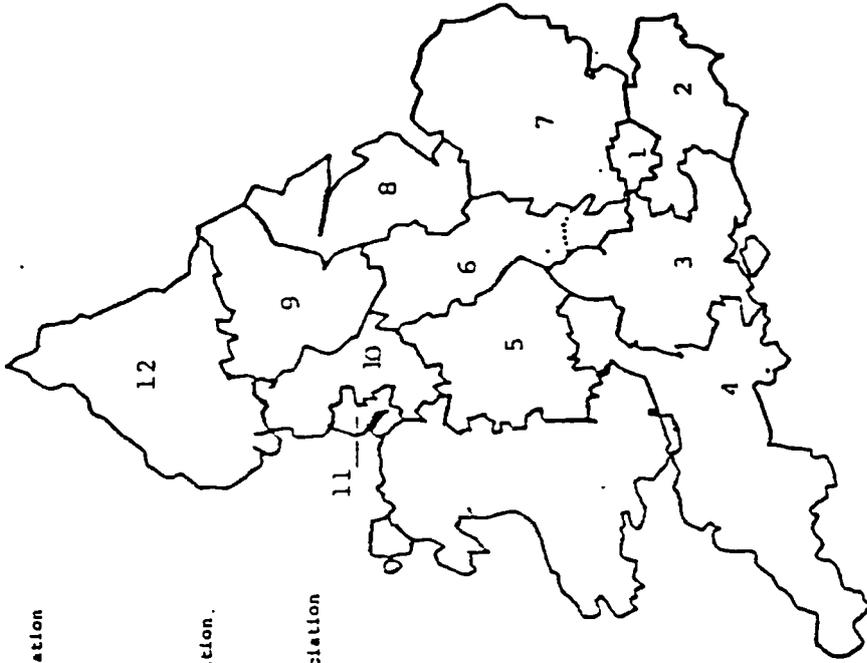
is greatest is where, at present, it happens least. The headquarters of the Quangos are in easy walking distance of each other but they are worlds apart in terms of attitude. Whether we need a Creativity Council is another matter. Thackara's observation about the "leaden-footed" may be correct but the prospect of a Mega-Quango is as, frankly, problematic; as the Arts Council, that other multi-form Creativity Council. If a Department of Trade and Industry and an Office of Arts and Libraries as well as a Foreign and Commonwealth Office could recognise their commonality of purpose for Art, Craft and Design (the Visual Arts) then they could insist on a more efficient use of the public's money for home and abroad by requiring cooperation and reciprocal representation between Quangos, institutionalised and accountable, charged with improving, educating and promoting roles. Just as with the Nationals a sorting-out of "who does what and when" should be institutionalised as a feature of an association of Quangos which might include The Design Council, The Crafts Council, the Art Department of The Arts Council, The British Film Institute and the Museums and Galleries commission and for an international dimension the Fine Art Department of The British Council. Both the quango departments within councils have more in common with the afore-mentioned than with their current obliged bedfellows. Closer examination of each other's objects and the means by which each has set out to achieve them can reveal possibilities for cooperation as well as object lessons in independent achievement. Although there are examples of cooperation these seldom, if ever, occur, with the Quangos' own precious product more usually with activities which make

that product accessible. A degree of enlightened self interest doesn't invalidate the argument for enforced cooperation. The noteworthy cooperative achievements of The Crafts Council and The Design Council over aspects of education could be emulated by all the Art and Design Quangos but also considered for product, if we conclude we still need a quango product. At the moment we can only speculate on the nature of a major British Art, Craft and Design exhibition held at, say, the V & A and co-resourced by all. Likewise, co-productions through other media like television or publications emphasising unity rather than separateness might be more efficient vehicles for achieving similar objects. A quality, in terms of production and content, visual arts magazine (published or broadcast) might be a more efficient vehicle for promotion than separate Design, Craft and Art magazines and separate exhibitions. The inclusion of the Museum and Galleries Commission in our spectrum of Quangos is important to demonstrate the commonality of purpose even when dealing with relatively static permanent collections of the visual arts and other artefacts of the past. The Arts Council might have rightly, but belatedly, recognised the damaging implications of such a separation which they initially encouraged in their support of their Independents and belated courting of the municipal galleries. It is interesting to note, in passing, how commercial enterprises have capitalised on this market potential. The contemporary crop of house, garden and interior magazines picks up a British tradition of domestic integration of the visual arts established in this form by the Studio magazine in the last

**Area Museum Council Boundaries**



1. Greater London Arts Association
2. South East Arts
3. Southern Arts Association
4. South West Arts
5. West Midlands Arts
6. East Midlands Arts
7. Eastern Arts Association
8. Lincolnshire and Humberside Arts
9. Yorkshire Arts Association
10. North West Arts
11. Merseyside Arts
12. Northern Arts.



**AREA MUSEUM COUNCILS**

**THE REGIONAL ARTS ASSOCIATIONS**

century with its association with the Arts and Crafts Movement.

The respective histories and practices of the various Quangos present possibilities which could be adopted by others. As merely one example amongst many, the British Film Institute's recognition of the place of so-called experimental work in film culture should be recognised as a significant achievement although it would be hard to re-introduce a levy on commercial applied art, as the B.F.I. once did in film. The idea of acknowledging the value of experimentation in visual vocabulary by fine art might still be possible from those who profit from it; advertising. Advertising executives amassing collections of art is one way of supporting fine art and its market but other possibilities like sponsorship from advertising agencies might be considered for exhibitions and schemes designed to stimulate the market. A prospect perhaps more likely if advertising artists were finally acknowledged as Artists and included by being commissioned to participate.

The geographical correspondence between Regions and Areas might not be exact but sufficient geographical overlap and the recognition of a commonality of purpose should suggest coordination and even cooperation. The achievements of Scotland and Wales in this respect should provide an object lesson. Readers of Art News - the Welsh Arts Council's magazine for the Visual Arts, will read of groups and organisations such as The Welsh Federation of Museums and Art Galleries as well as artists, designers and crafts groups and

schemes. In the April '86 edition it is reported that the Secretary of State for Wales has commissioned a major feasibility study into The Housing of the Visual Arts in Wales. A similar report for England, commissioned by the Arts Council, seems to have sunk without trace, judging by the lack of response to its conclusions and recommendations which, like so many before, questioned the continued need for methods more appropriate to the immediate post war years of an art starved Britain. Today the somewhat folksy conclusion to the so called Forty Report, "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach him to fish and you feed him for life", could be replaced by, "please, allow him to fish".<sup>(148)</sup> "He doesn't need teaching, only a bit more tackle and the time to do it." Such rights and equipment could come from Quangos adopting a service rather than an exhibition providing role. As just one example of this we can begin to imagine the possibilities of project funding from the Design Council for exhibitions in that existing national network of state funded venues.

A geological analogy might suggest the local authorities are a lower order of involvement but I hope I have demonstrated the contrary. Their inheritance of collections and facilities and their closeness to an identifiable constituency has sometimes made them appear less than enthusiastic in the pursuit of the excellence of others while being overly sensitive to local opinion. Such local accountability is not incompatible with the exhibition of apparently difficult visual art although the mode of presentation and selection

will have to be altered substantially. Being non-specialist in art subvention the local authorities have had some freedom to experiment but they too have been thwarted by accepting too readily an orthodoxy of providing rather than servicing a community which will include artists. Many local authorities, encouraged by the Quangos and Regional Arts Associations, continue a policy of importation of art rather than the exploitation of indigenous ability in art. My own London borough, one of those lower rent districts targeted by the Whitechapel Gallery as a source of artists for its Whitechapel Open, brought the borough an Artist-in-Residence presumably for the purpose of those now familiar shared objects, which might have been better achieved by creating a local opportunity for local artists; many of whom are professional artists (whichever way you use the term).

Even politically radical local authorities are seduced by the two actors on the stage of state subvention in the visual arts. One plays the part of the Romantic Connoisseur and the other the Romantic Artist. We can change the names to arts administrator (with its many sub-species like curator, keeper, exhibition organiser, officer) or professional artist (with its many sub-species like artist-craftsperson, or artist-in-residence) but the dramatis personae remain intact. These parts have been refined by much practice but there are others for both the artist and the arts administrator.

Assuming, just assuming, the artist is more important, as many disingenuous arts administrators claim, we can look for models to the time before state subvention and even to those

other art worlds which currently fall outside the State's area of interest, like Advertising. For the artist a tradition of diversified professional practice, frequently to sustain personal and "difficult" work as well as life and limb can be seen to have enriched individual output and the traditional applied arts. Such a model of existence was a common feature of the working lives of British and foreign artists before state subvention in art. A useful British example would be Graham Sutherland who developed a career through applying his art skills as well as doing his own private work which he might sell through a dealer market. He participated in art markets which now appear diametrically opposed. Roger Berthoud's biography of Sutherland in a chapter headed "Teaching and Design" outlines Sutherland's involvement not only in the now more orthodox dual career of teaching but in what Berthoud has legitimately called design. Illustrations show Sutherland's involvement in designing ceramic, glass, stamps and posters for Shell-Mex Ltd.<sup>(149)</sup> We should, however, remember this is pre-war Britain and the early part of his career before Sutherland's championing by both the British Council and the Arts Council. If the State would encourage this sort of traditional employment of artists they would do a great service to art although this

will not be achieved "by invitation only".\* It is, for example, an under-use of an imaginative idea by the A.C.G.B. to invite four well-known artists to devise Four Rooms for a touring exhibition rather than using such a commission as, say, the theme of a Hayward Annual, open to all.

Looking, not too hard, for one more example of diversified practice from a slightly older generation of British artists we encounter the polymath Eric Gill, carver, printmaker, author, propagandist, publisher, business man, who developed a diverse career without the intercession of an Arts Council, Crafts Council, Design Council et al. Had he lived today it is interesting to ponder whose protégé he would be. Biographical details supplied by Malcolm Yorke suggest he might have fallen out of the range of our Quangos being initially, at least, a jobbing mason, rather than an artist-craftsperson, fine artist or product designer and he certainly wasn't an engineering designer. Gill's biographer suggests he might have fared no better from indirect state support being a founder member of the Society of Woodengravers and an Associate of the Royal Society of British Sculptors; both societies presently being way outside quango fields of vision. In 1936, only four years before his death, Gill was appointed Royal Designer to Industry.<sup>(150)</sup> In the 1980's it is hard to imagine polymaths, even Sutherland,

\*The invitation only exhibitions at the Serpentine Gallery can be sharply contrasted with the Country Living Design a Plate competition previously mentioned.

being taken seriously. It is more likely that their reputation would be damaged by their impure past and overly diverse activities. Even the Film World, as Alan Parker reveals, isn't free from such prejudice.

"Because I began by directing television commercials, critics still refer to my "impure past" as if there's something wrong with doing that."(151)

It is also doubtful whether professionals need the intercession of an arts administrator to find patronage and an audience although clearly it turned out to be invaluable for the international reputation of Sutherland as a state endorsed "hot property" in the dealer market. Whether, of course, it is the State's job, especially with its clearly stated charter objectives, to improve and educate is open to question. If this question remains unaddressed, public employees and institutions must be called to account not with balance sheets but with their record of achieving stated objects; most, at present, would fail the test.

A viable art economy requires artists to be employed in a mixed market economy and certainly not inhibited in their endeavours by the State fixated, as at present, on a particular notion of a Romantic artist who requires paternal and maternal intercession on his/her behalf by employees of the State.

Bruce Cole outlines a traditional alternative when he describes the place of the Renaissance artist at work in society. Artists, designers and craftspersons employed on a great variety of tasks:

"The shop of a Renaissance painter might make painted shields and armour as readily (and willingly) as altar pieces". (152)

This is not a call for the suspension of state involvement (or for a revived shield industry) but for the use of different methods and a proper recognition of existing objectives for state involvement. The value of a service role is evident; once recognised there is a different job for the arts administrator, as public servant rather than individualist, operating in the public domain.

'Arts administrator' like 'artist' is a useful portmanteau term. Throughout this thesis I have used it to embrace that new breed of public sector professionals otherwise known as keeper, curators, exhibition organisers, officers and agents. All, like their occasional amateur sub-contracted colleagues and advisers, act as selectors when they deal with the artists and art of today. Although I have attempted to indicate its origins (in a paternalistic connoisseur tradition), inflated and institutionalised with CEMA's "Best for the most" and inherited by the ACGB, its undoubted glamour and power, and its continued validity in the world of private dealers and galleries, I cannot fully account for its continuance as the sharp-end of state subvention today. It is, in my view, an anacronism damaging to all concerned and not least the arts administrator. Absolute power even in a micro-world can corrupt absolutely; to the extent of blinding the "good eye" to alternatives and responsibilities. A genuine alternative needs to start to question the educational, marketing and economic value of having

individuals select what they think is best without any guidelines. As we have seen, such activity when exercised in a commercial market is tested by the market but no such accountability exists in the Public Sector with a supposed tradition of accountability.

If we examine what this profound change of attitude might mean for that main vehicle for the presentation of works of art the exhibition, we can begin to comprehend the possibilities. Everyone concerned with visual art recognises the need for education. The dealers and the auction houses provide publications and tuition for their clients or potential clients and the Quangos and Regional Associations insist their grant-aided clients provide education as a condition of funding. Even those without the resources like individual artists or the small workshop or newly established under-capitalised galleries or other retailers will appreciate the invaluable service the State could offer in increasing the general awareness of art and its application and, thereby, the general market for art and its appreciated use. The acknowledged failure of British industry to utilize our national design resource of designers, not to mention the fantastic resource of our colleges and museums requires urgent remedial education. Despite the efforts of the Design Council this general education has not been achieved for design nor has it been achieved for other aspects of our spectrum with their respective Quangos. Their depressed economies are adequate testimony to this lack of education about how their visual art might be used.

There exists, as we have seen, a national network of venues for showing and storing art but most have had the nature of their art and exhibitions circumscribed by the activity of their resident connoisseur. Arts administrators should be encouraged to understand as a matter of urgency, by their funding bodies, that their task is primarily educational and that their legitimate expectations of career advancement should come from success in achieving educational objects rather than in contributing to a speculative art history at the service of the Art Market. Exhibition venues programmed with educational objects in view would require a broad commitment to the continuum and variety of visual art. An annual, educational, programme of exhibitions would include exhibitions dealing with the art of the past and other cultures, the contemporary fine arts, craft and design and the variety of new or newish image making media. The current obsession with Art (with its capital A meaning the excellence of the personal taste of the selector) would be replaced by attempts to make exhibitions articulate and effective educational tools. The exhibited artifacts would not be required to "speak for themselves" or "to each other" in a carefully created vacuum but would be presented in such a way that their voice is heard and their place in a theory, rationale or plan is made known not subverted or disguised. The more recondite the art the more articulate must be the exhibition. The venue should seek to engage its audience not through providing a plethora of "tacked-on" educational material but by making the exhibitions themselves educational. Some, rather than at present most, of that audience for exhibitions would be artists who would be

encouraged to participate and cooperate in this general educational venture by the venue. They would be encouraged by being commissioned to do so rather than by being selected as examples of a selected selector's taste. (This applies as much to Craft and Design as Fine Art.) Needless to say, with the current limitations on resources selection would still take place but a context for it would be demonstrable. The selector could account for his/her selection as part of an educational and public relations process. Approached in this way theme exhibitions need not end up being crudely didactic or simplistic. Themes for such exhibitions would not be simply dreamed up by the venue arts administrator/s, as presently, but would be derived from identified and encouraged constituencies as in the example of the Black Art Gallery or the competitions organised to coincide with the Eisteddfod in Wales. They would be manifestations of an identified culture rather than impositions on an unknown culture.\* Competitions with themes must also be taken seriously if they are to have any educational value. The discipline of a specified task does not inhibit creativity if evidence of Sistine Chapel ceilings and the majority of art history is to be believed. Educational commissioning for

\* Since writing this account theme exhibitions are once again in fashion but the practice of dreaming up exhibition ideas without prior consultation creates animosity rather than appreciation or understanding. In 1987 Kettles Yard, Cambridge brought us "Death" and the University of London, Goldsmiths' College Gallery in 1988 made visible in various stages of sexual arousal The Invisible Man: an installation of work which deals with the construction of 'Male' identity. According to local press, all the paintings were removed before the arrival of Princess Anne as the only solution to an editing controversy between curator and college authorities anxious not to offend the princess.

exhibitions may well return that "synergy" that Goldstein laments. The value of a commissioning approach is not restricted to education, as a marketing tool, for example, it means advanced publicity can be more than dates and the name of artists, selector or sponsor. A carefully chosen theme is an effective way of generating anticipatory interest in a general audience as well as providing the basis of dialogue with an art making community. An invitation to discuss before rather than a refusal to discuss after the event. (A refusal to discuss selection or placement in an exhibition is a usual condition laid down by organisers for open submission exhibitions. See Whitechapel Open for example.)

When dealing with the art of the past we are obliged to reconstitute the original context to understand the original meaning of the work in question. When dealing with the art of the present the curator is in the position of being able to provide that context, for artists and audience, through which understanding and appreciation will follow for the good of all concerned. Exhibitions should cast light not shadows.

A traditional commissioning approach, treating community and artists (frequently an ingredient part of a community) with respect rather than with what often appears as contempt can and should be applied to schemes which take art and artists into non-gallery spaces. Schools, factories, hospitals, museums should be encouraged to commission artists directly for imagery that they themselves want rather than rely on

elaborate brokerage schemes which amongst other things seem to be designed to protect Art World artists from overly specific commissions. Admittedly selection will take place here too but publicly rather than privately. Galleries in the locality could participate in the process by helping schools etc to identify need and process response. This is not the same as the pre-selecting which occurs now. A genuine liaison between gallery and schools, rather than seeking out captive audiences for predetermined exhibitions, might be seeking curriculum related subject matter for exhibitions rather than users of the gallery product. A primary school project, for example, could be enhanced by the participation of a local gallery and artists. A hospital's visual therapeutic needs could also be provided in this way. If we reflect on the autocratic and individualistic nature of programming in most galleries one of the most significant tasks for an Education Officer, should one exist, will be to effect such a radical change in programming within the gallery. In so doing the Education Officers should not imagine that he/she is out to snatch a piece of the selection action but rather rediscover a traditional service role for their gallery, frequently found mentioned in the archives of galleries, art centres and museums and in many instances a justification for charitable status and its consequent tax advantages.

The integration of the network described should itself suggest infinite possibilities. As an example we can imagine, or look to Scotland, for the fruits of cooperation between an Area Museum Council and Service with Regional Arts

Association and Local Education Authority. The contents of our local as well as national treasure houses could be rediscovered, represented and reinterpreted by local professional artists as well as amateur, student and child artists. The activities of star artists like Henry Moore at the British Museum or recently Eduardo Paolozzi's representation of almost forgotten items from the Museum of Mankind in an exhibition called Lost Magic Kingdoms could be imitated by galleries throughout the land with their own local resources.

As another example, resulting from cooperation between the Nationals, the development of a co-ordinated strategy toward today's art and artists, might lead them to conclude that an annual residency for a painter at the National Gallery is not the best way to serve today's audience, art and artists. Perhaps a leaf from the National Portrait Gallery's book might suggest an alternative with a national competition on the reinterpretation of a master work in the nation's collection open to the nation's artists. This might provide a remarkable insight into the possibilities of the resurrection of the art of transcription and reveal, as it would, the variety of styles and approaches being practised today by artists. A scheme more educational than peering at a specimen Artist in Residence.

The market value for the individual artist of such a prestigious residency cannot be disputed but the educational and general improving value can. Art and Artists in Public

Places seems to be an intuitive response by the State and its arts administrators to the limitations of the dealer market (art necessarily sold out of context) and yet paradoxically, through employing the same methods as the dealer, this development is profoundly limited by an unwillingness to fully acknowledge context. Like so much else in the network of state subvention, these schemes, laudible in their endeavour, remain minor extensions of the dealer market rather than an educational service for the whole market. A market including the temporary enjoyment of art, rather than permanent acquisition for those financially unable to participate in exclusive markets.

It is a truly ironic contemporary paradox that wealth derived from a lucrative market in applied images (where objects are not acquired) has been used to amass a huge private collection of unapplied images (fine art). In a way the industry which provides the resources for the Saatchi Collection also provides a model for a viable art economy. Artists applying their art in public as a way of supporting other more private art if the artists wishes. A general public will be better able to appreciate private art because they will have learnt how art can be applied and how applied art can benefit from private research as so evident in advertising. Such an awareness might lead to a broad, diverse and healthy art market with a variety of activity and product, appropriate to a mixed market economy. The States straightforward willingness to employ advertising is also evident on streets and on our television screens. The connoisseur would not be redundant just accountable, just

like the market stall holder in the general market. Critical judgement of the aesthetic dimension, so beloved by the State, requires a context within which to operate. A wide choice with a diverse market is the best way to bequeath a truly excellent visual arts heritage rather than picking the best instinctively from an already heavily pre-selected market.

## POSTSCRIPT

1985/6, the fortieth birthday year of the Arts Council, seemed like an appropriate time to take stock of the art market and its relationship to the State. The renaissance in state subvention which I am suggesting for the later part of the twentieth century may lead to a renaissance in art and even a much needed renaissance in the economy. We should not, however, overlook the negative as well as positive power and influence of the dramatis personae of Artist and Connoisseur each with vested interests in the other which has inhibited this development to date.

On the face of it a great deal has happened since I started my autopsy on the body of Visual Art in 1985. The dissolution of the metropolitan authorities, well known for their support of the Alternative Tradition, seems to have led to some apparently positive developments for the more orthodox visual arts' providers in the state system.

Over the last year the A.C.G.B., seems to be undergoing a metamorphosis possibly into the service agency I recommend. Both the Serpentine and the Hayward in their different ways are now independent of direct A.C.G.B. control although to what extent transfer of personnel and resources, away from 105 Piccadilly, will create an independence of programming still remains to be seen. The Hayward, now part of the South Bank Art Centre, may be obliged to consider at least its neighbours as a factor in its programme planning. We can only wait to see if it considers its relationship to the

whole network described. London still sorely needs a gallery capable of receiving as well as sending out excellent exhibitions. It is yet another but recent paradox that the A.C.G.B. exhibitions touring the provinces have acknowledged but far from exhausted the educative potential of the traditional form of presenting the visual arts. In 1986 the A.C.G.B. seems to have also recognised that the development of a wide market for art objects might be one of their tasks and has co-operated with Liberty, the department store, on an exhibition of art in domestic setting, held at the Ideal Home Exhibition called Living Art. It is to be hoped it becomes a contribution to a living tradition but as yet this exercise has not been repeated by the A.C.G.B. or the South Bank Board.

There are positive signs too in the other Quangos but some might appear as temporary false hopes thwarted by the remaining obsession for own product. The appearance of design exhibitions and events at the new Manchester Corner House art centre, for example, suggested project funding from the Design Council but sadly that is not the case. The general improvement of British manufactured goods, still so desperately needed, might be achieved in this way if exhibitions were realised through liaison with local manufacturers as well as other curators. The Design Council soldiers on with energy and enthusiasm in its own campaign to change the attitudes of British manufacturers who "still aren't utilising one of the nations greatest assets" without realising that some of its advocates might need a little "updating" if not education about design.

"Critical concepts like value for money, safety, easy maintenance and effective operation are all part of the design mix, alongside the aesthetic and functional necessities: carefully designed products must also look the part",

suggests doubtful separation and priorities, at least in the way its expressed.<sup>(153)</sup> The Victoria and Albert has opened its new Toshiba Gallery of Japanese art and design. A vigorous pursuit of sponsorship by, a public institution, to remedy apparent lack of government financial support should be cautious if the validating function of museums is recollected. A gallery for British Art and Design in the V & A must be a necessary antidote displaying exhibitions like the Vienna Exhibition (much praised by Thackara) and funded by the visual arts Quangos perhaps even in preference to some sponsorship.

Two quite original events, organised by the Crafts Council, occurred in 1985 and were reported in 1986. Tony Ford, Deputy Director of the Crafts Council, in his foreword to a report on proceedings emphasised the uniqueness of the latter:

"The second, in September, brought a number of people from the museum world face to face for the first time with representatives of the Arts Council, the Crafts Council and the Design Council."

The first was a more partisan, "straightforward attempt to encourage the museum world to take greater interest in contemporary crafts".<sup>(154)</sup> Although heartened by this initiative, organised by the Education Officer of the smallest visual arts Quango, we cannot but notice the lateness (42, 40, 14 years after the formation of the Design

Council, Arts Council and Crafts Council) nor can we avoid noticing an aspect of the motivation. A motivation neatly revealed in the opening words of the report of the second event:

"The Arts, Crafts and Design Councils existed to promote their separate specialisations in this country. In so doing they produced materials and services - including exhibitions, publications, slides and tapes - that could be of use to county council museums and art galleries";

-seeking a market for the Quangos own product.

The Quangos have been obliged, thankfully but belatedly, to acknowledge that sections of the nation have been disadvantaged in relation to their activities but sudden vigorous attempts this past year or two to make amends must not make us accept as a working proposition the inevitability of disadvantage in some quarters or regions. If in hard "real-world" terms this may be ultimately so much can be done to alleviate the worst excesses and is easily achieved by making public servants accountable to an identified constituency for their actions. Such a self remedying process will naturally avoid excessive disadvantage. Any system which relies on the idiosyncratic behaviour of unaccountable selectors is bound to appear and will be prejudiced against sections of communities. The very nature of many schemes, as presently constituted, are themselves prejudiced particularly against those individuals who have had the independence of mind and spirit to make their own contact with communities. The Regional Arts Associations and the National Arts Councils (Scotland & Wales) are in a better position perhaps to achieve this contact but some will still

not account for some of their decisions or create accountable schemes. Greater London Arts, as an example, may as its slogan proclaims be "looking to the future" with an enhanced budget occasioned by the abolition of the G.L.C. but it still refuses to account for its action when dealing with individual artists as clients (unlike institutions no reasons for failed applications are given). Greater London Arts, like the other R.A.A.s, does not have a remit for Design and, unlike the others, still has no remit for Crafts.\* G.L.A.'s Art Department's orientation remains towards fine art with fixed and apparently sacrosanct schemes. The largest concentration of artists and cultural industries in Britain requires radical alternatives to existing awards to artists; revenue clients for exhibitions and for studios and art and artists placed in impoverished boroughs if G.L.A. . is to perform "the dynamic, co-operating role" which it declares in a recent advertisement for a new Director. (155)

1986, the year of the demise of the G.L.C., occasioned vigorous debate about the State of the Art or the Art of the State. but such questioning and calls for strategic development is as yet overlooked by successor organisations who do not look at themselves, their context, nor present themselves for account in the way I suggest. It is interesting to note that even such a radical document when it comes to recommendations rehearses the state orthodoxy

\*This changed in 1987 although there is little evidence of craft-support in London apart from the Crafts Council.

differing only in order of presentation; and so we have, for example,

"6) A register of London artists should be compiled  
12) A series of artist's residencies in schools, hospitals, employment centres, should be developed 14) An education officer should be attached to all borough art galleries to implement outreach programmes 18) A policy for housing/studio space for artists should be implemented." (156)

A vigorous exercise in deconstruction is reconstructed as The Orthodoxy: special treatment for special creatures waiting to be helped to help art deprived communities.

The application of visual art for a variety of communities in a variety of markets is the best way to utilise our national resource of art and artists. The State's task, following its own declared objects, is to create the circumstances under which this can flourish. It will continue to fail as long as it remains obsessed with the power of idiosyncratic patronage which seems to require empire building and can so quickly lead to patronising artists and communities. Even the art market of dealers and galleries in Art World art would benefit from a state system less concerned with frequently premature choice of recipients of state largesse and more concerned with nurturing a great choice (a multiplicity of art worlds and markets). A similar suggestion concerning the Crafts was made by Michael Fell, Chairman of the Society of Designer Craftsmen:

"Maybe the museum and public gallery policy of buying a few contemporary works very expensively at precisely the wrong moment for the taxpayer, might, for the health of the arts generally, be swapped for a policy of promoting a far broader range of contemporary work." (157)

The first step towards a genuine service role is to have public servants realise they are just that and not private connoisseurs. How this is to be achieved requires further debate but perhaps in all seriousness a moratorium on the personal pronoun "my" and the capital "A" in art would help. The enthusiasm for Art and Artists in Public Places might be extended to include a few placements for arts administrators. The change of attitude and work practice the "existential panic" noted in professional artists in this situation might also make arts administrators more professional. (158)

In conclusion, it is worth remembering that Kenneth Clark, as his biographer points out,

"believed that the truly creative act of patronage required the commissioning of a work". (159)

In the short and long term the State would provide a great service to all in the art market by directly commissioning artists to contribute to its educational task and to help address pressing social, local and national issues. Should this occur, we might, more easily, be able to talk of art markets rather than the Art Market and see a variety of excellence develop from a variety of opportunity, encouraged by truly professional arts administrators. As a consequence, many more artists would be truly professional and less dependent on the State and the intercession of its employees. Relinquishing the power of intercession, the State and its employees could turn their attention to improving the markets for art objects and the markets for art skills through education about art and advocacy on behalf of art so needed by everyone concerned, and not least the economy.

Attempting a view of the future we have a government committed to the disintegration of a welfare tradition, assisted in the arts by quangos, encouraging financial independence (through dependence on sponsorship) as an antidote to decreasing subsidy. The arts are now championed by those who locate them as part of a leisure, or as Robert Hewison has called it, a Heritage Industry.<sup>(160)</sup> The most successful enterprises in this market have responded to a market need for contact with a missing past as witnessed by the success of theme parks like Beamish in County Durham, or industrial museums reminding us of recent past industrial glories, or on popular taste exploited by commerce for things old (simulated or real).

The visual arts of today could provide for an equally missing present by responding to contemporary situations and needs (spiritual and practical) as the War Artists once did. The creative solution to economic survival discovered by all those artists, craftsmen and designers not in receipt of sustained state largess required integration into communities and a willingness to do other people's work as well as their own. Artists and connoisseurs will realise that this does not deny excellence but rather can contribute to the refinement of the sensibilities needed to recognise and/or develop excellence.

Arts Administrators must also learn to accept a more threatening truth for them. In contemporary society it is

not the art or artists that alienate, as is popularly supposed amongst them but rather it is their own activities and their product (their exhibitions and other schemes). It is these which bring people face to face with art from a different culture, the culture of the arts administrator - this is good arts, good craft, good design.

An abiding reservation for men and women of conscience must be the lesson of art history. Academi~~zs~~ are designed to protect the selected but they do not foster innovation or original talent or for that matter new markets or audiences. The shared attitudes and beliefs which I have examined constitute a State supported Academy for Art, Craft and Design as restrictive as any 19th Century academy. The influence of these new academies is far more pernicious than the academies of old since they are based not upon media virtuosity judged by artists (such academies still exist) but by the ability to appeal to modern arts administrators acting as connoisseurs. As a profession these new connoisseurs are ill-equipped to succeed being overstretched with fund-raising and evoking contact, sometimes tenuous at best, with a scholarship, art history, which is itself coming under renewed critical scrutiny. We all know what we like but are we certain our choice, our personal taste, instinctively exercised has any lasting value; Lord Clark had his doubts but sadly his successors do not.

If the visual artist (artist, craftsman or designer) is to

contribute to economic regeneration as the political and arts administrative rhetoric suggests (there have been four international conferences on inner city regeneration in the past month) then he/she must be allowed to do so, on the terms of art defined by arts social history in response to locally identified need. The resulting art should be designed to suit this need. But again newspapers can report, "Again an artists' pile of bricks is causing controversy" with, as Martin Wainwright writing in The Guardian of 17 October 1988 reports, "a still unbuilt Colossus of Leeds". Northern brickmanship is being played yet again by arts administrators. A gentle, unassuming brick giant, mildly amusing if located in a theme park but hardly a provocative, avant-garde work of art made by an Art-world artist Anthony Gormley is controversial because of how it is presented, as a fait accompli. That British Rail is providing a site and £50,000 from its total £650,000 arts programme and the Arts Council and Yorkshire Arts are involved is little comfort for the depressed economy of Leeds, those condemned to travel on British Rail or for those that recollect the architectural and engineering splendour of British Railways. British Railways was a masterpiece of applied art, craft, product and engineering design whose whole-sale destruction is catalogued by members and associates of Save Britain's Heritage in Railway Architecture. (161)

Nearing the end of the twentieth century we seem to be witnessing an even greater vandalism. A cultural vandalism perpetrated by those who claim the well-being of art and

artists. Their "connoisseurship" is likely to bequeath a desolate inheritance of their taste in what they have chosen to call visual art.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

### I INTRODUCTION

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2. Gerald Reitlinger (1961) The Economics of Taste, London, Barrie and Rockliff: published in three volumes.
3. Andrew Brighton and Nicholas Pearson (1985) The Economic Situation of the Visual Artist, London, Calouste Gulbenkian. On page 77 Brighton and Pearson refer to a critique of "shared values and belief"; this is my task.
4. Howard S. Becker (1982) Art Worlds, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London, University of California Press.
5. Nicholas Pearson (1982) The State and the Visual Arts, Milton Keynes, Open University.
6. Eric Soames (19981) The Genius of the Royal Academy, London, Royal Academy, John Murray.
7. Jean Christophe Agnew (1986) Worlds Apart. The Market and the Theatre in Anglo-American Thought, 1550-1750, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
8. Andy Warhol (1975) From A to B and Back Again. The Philosophy of Andy Warhol London, Cassell/Dempsey.
9. Lee Selders (1978) The Legacy of Mark Rothko New York, Holt, Reinhart and Winston.

### II DEFINITIONS

10. Raymond Williams (1976) Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society, Glasgow, Fontana/Croom Helm.
11. Ernst Gombrich (1962) The Story of Art, London, Phaidon.
12. Germaine Greer (1979) The Obstacle Race: the Fortunes of Women Painters and their Work, London, Secker and Warburg.
13. Arts Council of Great Britain (1982) Arts: Facts and Figures for very conservative figures relating to participation in drawing, painting and crafts £4m ('79); consumer spending on photography £590m ('80).
14. Herbert Read (1943) Education Through Art, London, Faber and Faber. Typical of Read, "We demand ... a method of education that is formally and fundamentally aesthetic and in which knowledge and manual ability, discipline and reverence are but so many easy and inevitable by-products of a natural childish industry."

15. The National Artists' Association may well prove such an organisation if it can endure the burden of conflicting sectional interests and lack of state support.

### III THE PRIVATE ART MARKET: TRADITIONS OF TRADING IN VISUAL ART

16. Peter Fuller (1983) Aesthetics After Modernism, London, Writers and Readers. Fuller provides a useful generic term for the imagery which seems at times to saturate our culture. I do not share his value judgements about photography.

17. Total expenditure on advertising for 1984, figures derived from the Advertising Association's Advertising Statistics Yearbook, 1985. In that same year, the year prior to its flotation, British Telecom was second only to Procter and Gamble in the league table of The Top 100 Advertisers.

18. Figures derived from personal enquiry addressed to photographers and graphic artists in the employ of advertising agencies in London in 1985-86.

19. Ian Pollack (1984) Sunday Times Colour Magazine, 8th April.

20. Christopher Frayling (1985) The Art of Persuasion, New Society, 14 June.

21. Arts Council of Great Britain (1979) Arts Council Collection, London.

22. Readers will have their own favourites. In 1985 mine were the Dulux Solid Emulsion and the Romford Bitter ads., the latter mocking Art and the former the Artist. In 1988 the agency Yellowhammer launched its FIAT campaign by parodying art, art-speak and galleries.

23. The Saatchi Collection (1985) catalogued as Art of Our Time, four volumes to date, London, Lund Humphries.

24. Nigel Pollitt (1986) Ciphers: Russell Mills, London, Curwen Gallery. This is Pollitt's introduction to Mills' exhibition. Mills is typical of those artists who have to struggle against the commercial stigma just because he has chosen to make a living for himself from commissioned work for the Mega-Visual Tradition.

25. Christos M. Joachimedes (1981) A New Spirit in Painting, London, Royal Academy of Arts. A catalogue to an exhibition of the same name selected by Joachimedes, Norman Rosenthal and Nicholas Serota.

26. Whenever I use this term, in the Brighton and Pearson sense, I will use capital initial letters. Post Becker et.al. it is legitimate to use "artworld" to identify any cultural nexus which helps sustain particular attitudes to art and artists. The Artworld dominates other artworlds because it is a powerful alliance of business and state intervention and because it has made itself custodian of attractive life styles - the romantic artist and his connoisseur. The dominance of the Artworld suggests to the shortsighted that it is also the custodian of Art (capital A). I will use Art Market and art market in the same way with the same reservation.
27. Alfred Munnings (1955) An Artist's Life, London, Readers Union/The Museum Press; page 204. Munnings, one-time president of the Royal Academy of Art made no secret of his hatred of so called modern art and particularly Picasso. Cyril Asquith's letter supports his views and thanks him for a dinner held for "various men who had written letters to the Times about the Picasso exhibition held in the Victoria and Albert Museum at South Kensington in 1946. Such assaults have encouraged some art administrators to imagine it is their job to "protect" advanced or avant-garde art from the Philistines.
28. Sara Cornell (1983) Art, A History of Changing Style, Oxford, Phaidon.
29. Bernstein (1983) That's Shell that is! Lond, Barbican Art Gallery/Shell UK Ltd. A catalogue introduction to an exhibition of Shell advertising art held at the Barbican Art Centre.
30. Moody, Eric, (1984) Support for the Avant-Garde in the Visual Arts in the 1980s Lond, The Journal of Arts Policy & Management, Vol 1, No 2, August. My own term would now appear unfashionable but it does reveal the Artworld's desire to be innovative and the Art Market's need for new lines.
31. Leslie Waddington (1977) Leslie Waddington on Art and its Marketing, London, Art Monthly No 20 see also No 11. This candid two part interview with Peter Fuller reveals the then appropriate facts and figures; for an update see John McEwen (1986) Big Deal in Cork Street: Anatomy of an Art Dealer, London, The Illustrated London News, May, No 7054, Vol 274. For example, "In 1985 the main company exported £11 millions worth of goods. This left a profit in 1984 of £1.06 millions and in 1985 of £1.25 millions.
32. Waldemar Januszczak (1982) Hung, drawn and half the profits, Manchester, Guardian, March 24th; based on an interview with Leslie Waddington.
33. Tom Wolfe (1975) The Painted Word, New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux Inc.

34. Rene Gimpel (1977) Dealing - Shortcomings and Pitfalls and the Advantages to Artists, London, Art Monthly No 9 July/August.
35. One of a series appearing in The World of Interiors, London, Pharos PUblications Ltd; this example May '84.
36. Nicholas Logsdail (1985) Nichoals Logsdail interviewed by Simon Vaughan Winter, London, Artscribe No 50 Jan/Feb.
37. Moira Kelly (1984) An Open Letter to Everyone Concerned, Art Monthly, No 65 April.
38. See Derek Jarrett (1976) The Ingenious Mr Hogarth, London, Michael Joseph Ltd., for an account of Hogarth's life and work.
39. See Jeremy Maas (1975) Gambart: Prince of the Victoria Art World, London, Barrie & Jenkins Ltd.
40. Part of a series appearing in newspapers like the Sunday Times and Observer throughout 1985 and 1986. Another example, from the Observer, 30 March 1986, read "Today's Unknown, Tomorrow's Hockney?" (see also appendix).
41. Pat Gilmour (1979) Understanding Prints: A Contemporary Guide, London, Waddington Galleries. Gilmour calls prints the "democratic art"
42. Nicholas Pearson and Andrew Brighton (1978) The 'Specialness' of Art and Artists, London, Art Monthly No 21.
43. Lynda Morris and Robert Radford (1983) The Story of the Artists International Association: 1933-1965, Oxford, Museum of Modern Art, exhibition catalogue.
44. My letter opens, "Dear friend, Suppose that twenty-five years ago the Chairman of I.B.M. had offered stock in his company, and guaranteed to buy it back any time during the first year for the full price you paid ...". The Bradford Exchange, 1986.
45. For detailed accounts of the activities of an auction house see Frank Hermann (1980) Sotheby's: Portrait of an Auction House, London, Chatto and Windus Ltd, or Nicholas Faith (1985) Sold: The Revolution in the Art Market, London, Hamish Hamilton.
46. Tony Curtis (1985) The Lyle Official Arts Review (1985): Price Guide to Paintings, Galashiels, Lyle Publications. This guide acknowledges 54 auction houses in Britain.
47. See Christies' Collectors Guides, for example Huon Mallalieu (1984) How to Buy Pictures: Practical Advice on all Aspects of the Market, Oxford, Phaidon/Christies Ltd.
48. Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler (1971) My Galleries and Painters, London, Thames and Hudson.

49. op cit Reitlinger.

50. Sarah Jane Checkland (1986) sheds new light on the value of public sector exhibitions, "Every auctioneer and dealer know that exhibitions have a powerful effect on prices - recent examples include bronzes by Alfred Gilbert whose value has risen five times ... since their Royal Academy exhibition". The Sunday Times 13 July, The High Price of Success.

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#### IV THE STATE AND THE VISUAL ARTS; A PUBLIC SERVICE TRADITION

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62. Advertisement, appearing in The Guardian 25 November 1985, for Keeper of the Modern Collection at the Tate Gallery.

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69. Kate Baynes (Ed) (1983) Young Blood: Britain's Design Schools Today and Tomorrow, London, Design into Industry Ltd./Lund Humphries.
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71. op cit Redcliffe-Maud.
72. Robert Gooden (1980) The Work of the Crafts Council 1977-1980, London, Crafts Council.
73. op cit H.M.S.O., Public and Private Funding of the Arts
74. Leslie Geddes-Brown (1985) Away with Macrame, London, Sunday Times, 30 June.
75. Ibid.
76. Craft Council (1985) News: Special Issue, London.
77. Crafts Council (1986) Statement of Policy, London.
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79. See Arts Council of Great Britain (1985) Arts Council: Art, Photography, Film, London. Unless otherwise stated all quotations are from this source.
80. Christopher Wilson (1978) Dada and Surrealism Reviewed: Audience to an Audience, London. A.C.G.B.
81. Barry Barker & John Thompson (1986) Falls the Shadow, Recent British and European Art, The Hayward Annual, London A.C.G.B.
82. Nigel Greenwood (1985) A Journey through Contemporary Art with Nigel Greenwood, The Hayward Annual, London A.C.G.B.
83. Kate Blacker (1983) The Sculpture Show, The Hayward Annual, London, A.C.G.B.

84. John Hoyland (1980) Hayward Annual, A.C.G.B.
85. Helen Chadwick (1979) Hayward Annual A.C.G.B.
86. Joanna Drew op cit, Nigel Greenwood, Art Director's Foreword.
87. In 1981 an unsigned letter was sent out by the Serpentine Gallery to artists containing the following paragraph:-  
 "Unfortunately you may not have realised that only graduates who have completed their studies by a minimum of one year may apply for exhibitions at the gallery. We feel that it is important to reserve space from non-student work". In that same year a Royal College of Art student was included in the Summer Show programmes at the Serpentine Gallery. In 1985 the gallery had a whole exhibition devoted to student work. (see appendix).
88. Op cit Arts Council: Art, Photography & Film.
89. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to itemise the programmes of these venues although readers are encouraged to do so themselves. They will find that these galleries are the residue or inheritors of an earlier, 1970's (pre-oil crisis recession) A.C.G.B. strategy of funding "centres of excellence" focused on "new and often controversial art" rather than the broad range of visual art.
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92. op cit Townsend.
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99. B.F.I. (undated) British Film Institute, London. All quotations from this source unless otherwise stated.
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106. op cit Annual Report, British Council.
107. John Thakara (1986) Vienna Secession, London, Observer 27 April.
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111. Timothy Hyman (1985) Out of the frying pan into the fire: an artist in residence in Lincoln, London, Artscribe No 51, March/April.
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114. Peter Dormer (1977) Splendours and miseries of local government patronage, London, Art Monthly No 15.
115. Richard Cork, Balraj Khanna, Shirley Read (1985) Art on the South Bank, London, Greater London Council.
116. op cit Redcliffe Maud.

117. Nicholas Pearson (ed) (1981) The Teaching of Art: The Roots of Self Deception?, Aberystwyth, University College of Wales, /Welsh Arts Council.
118. Anne Boston (1986) How the Art Student turned Polytechnic Man, London, Sunday Times 27.4.86.
119. Council for National Academic Awards Directory of Higher Degree and Diploma of Higher Education Courses 1985-86, London.
120. op cit Redcliffe Maud.
121. Museums and Galleries Commission, Eleventh Report 1978-1983, London, H.M.S.O.
122. Neil Harrison, Susan Jones (1983) Directory of Exhibition Spaces, Sunderland, Artic Producers.
123. op cit Pearson.
124. The quality of provision and commitment can vary tremendously between authorities. The best are distinguished by a willingness to respond to local amateur and professional initiatives.
125. Kwesi Owusu (1986) The Struggle for Black Arts in Britain. What can we consider better than freedom, London, Comedia Publishing Group.
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128. Owen Kelly (1986) Community, Art and the State: Storming the Citadels, London, Comedia Publishing Group
129. Simon Sherwin (1984) Some Facts about Art Centre, Darlington, National Association of Art Centres.
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133. Walter Hussey (1985) Patron of Art. The Revival of a Great Tradition Among Modern Artists, London, Weidenfeld and Nicholson Ltd. In the accounts of the various commissions initiated by Hussey there is a remarkable degree of specificity which contrasts with the remarks of the artists quoted by Deanna Petherbridge in 108.

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150. Malcolm Yorke (1981) Eric Gill: Man of Flesh and Spirit, London, Constable.
151. Pendennis (1985) Fear of Flying, quoting Alan Parker, London, Observer, 16 June.

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#### APPENDICES

1. Nicola Jacobs + Christies Contemporary Art advertisements.
2. Auction house records as a feature of advertisements.
3. Exhibitions at the Hayward and Serpentine Galleries.

1 Nicola Jacobs + Christies Contemporary Art  
advertisements.



**"People think private views elitist.  
Until they go to one!"**

Nicola Jacobs, gallery owner.



Unfamiliar territory is usually daunting. Like your first opera, first couture collection, first auction. And indeed, your first private view.

But once you attend one, you'll find it's a gathering of people who come to see new paintings, have a glass of wine and chat to the artist about his work. The next thing you know, you're hooked.

Everybody has to do something for the first time. Perhaps you should take the plunge and come to my next private view.

I'm showing Ken Kiff's new paintings from November 16 to December 24. You should find his work fascinating. People who visit the Tate and The Museum of Modern Art in New York do.

Why don't you ring me on 01-437 3868 and ask for an invitation to the evening? It costs nothing, but you'll find this new experience is worth a lot.

I can practically guarantee you'll find the art world an exciting place to visit. You might

even want to live there.

Come and see us. We'd like to meet you.

### **Nicola Jacobs Gallery**

9 Cork Street, London, W1

01-437 3868.

Works by

Jeff Lowe

Jon Carter

John McLean

Sheragh Cluett

Mali Morris

Jennifer Durrant

Paul Rosenblom

Simon Edmondson

Colin Smith

Jon Groom

Derek Southall

Ken Kiff

Anthony Whishaw

Kim Lim

Gary Wragg

"The Tate takes its time to buy a painting!"

Nicola Jacobs, gallery owner.



Paintings are not impulse buys. They take time, consideration and then finding out whether you can live with them. Even experienced buyers like the Tate do that. They bought two of Jennifer Durrant's paintings. Luckily, time is a facility that any good gallery offers. If you like a particular painting, so, we'll reserve it. You can keep coming to visit it before making a final decision. Sometimes, I might even let you take it home out.

Have you ever bought an original work of art? It's a most exciting experience. Very pleasurable.

Do you like this painting? It's one of Anthony Whishaw's. I'm giving an exhibition of his new work from February 29. Why don't you come along to the private view and have a look? You'll meet new people, have a glass of wine, get to talk to the artist and generally, you should have a good time.

Just telephone me at 01-437 3868 for a

free invitation to the private view. It would be nice to meet you.

### Nicola Jacobs Gallery

9 Cork Street, London, W1 01 437 3868

Works by Jeff Lowe

Louise Blair John McLean

John Carter Lisa Vitroy

Shelagh Cluett Mali Morris

Jennifer Durrant Paul Rosenbloom

Simon Edmondson Colin Smith

Jon Groom Derek Southall

Ken Kiff Anthony Whishaw

Kim Lim Gary Wragg

**"I'm surprised  
when anything in  
Nicola's Gallery is  
more than £1000?"**

George Roland, collector.



**"Don't be.  
Some are!"**  
Nicola Jacobs  
gallery owner.



Most of my paintings and drawings range from £200 to £1000. But some can cost a lot more.

Ken Kiff, for instance. His work goes as high as £10,000 now. Mind you, he didn't start out that way. The first painting of his I sold went for £250. That's before he became an international name.

And that is the joy of buying almost-well-known artists. You get them for a reasonable price and hope they take off. Most of mine have. Not all, but most.

At the moment, I represent fifteen artists. And I give them exhibitions because I expect them to make a name for themselves. Which is good for them, me and you.

Have you ever bought an original painting? It says an awful lot more about you than any furnishings ever will.

Perhaps you should come to one of my private views. All you have to do is telephone me at 01-437 3868 and ask for an invitation. We'd love you to come, see the pictures, meet new people and talk to the artist.

It's a very nice way to spend an evening

### **Nicola Jacobs Gallery**

9 Cork Street, London, W1

01-437 3868

Works by

John Carter

Shelagh Cluett

Jennifer Durrant

Simon Edmondson

Jon Groom

Ken Kiff

Kim Lim

Jeff Lowe

John McLean

Mali Morris

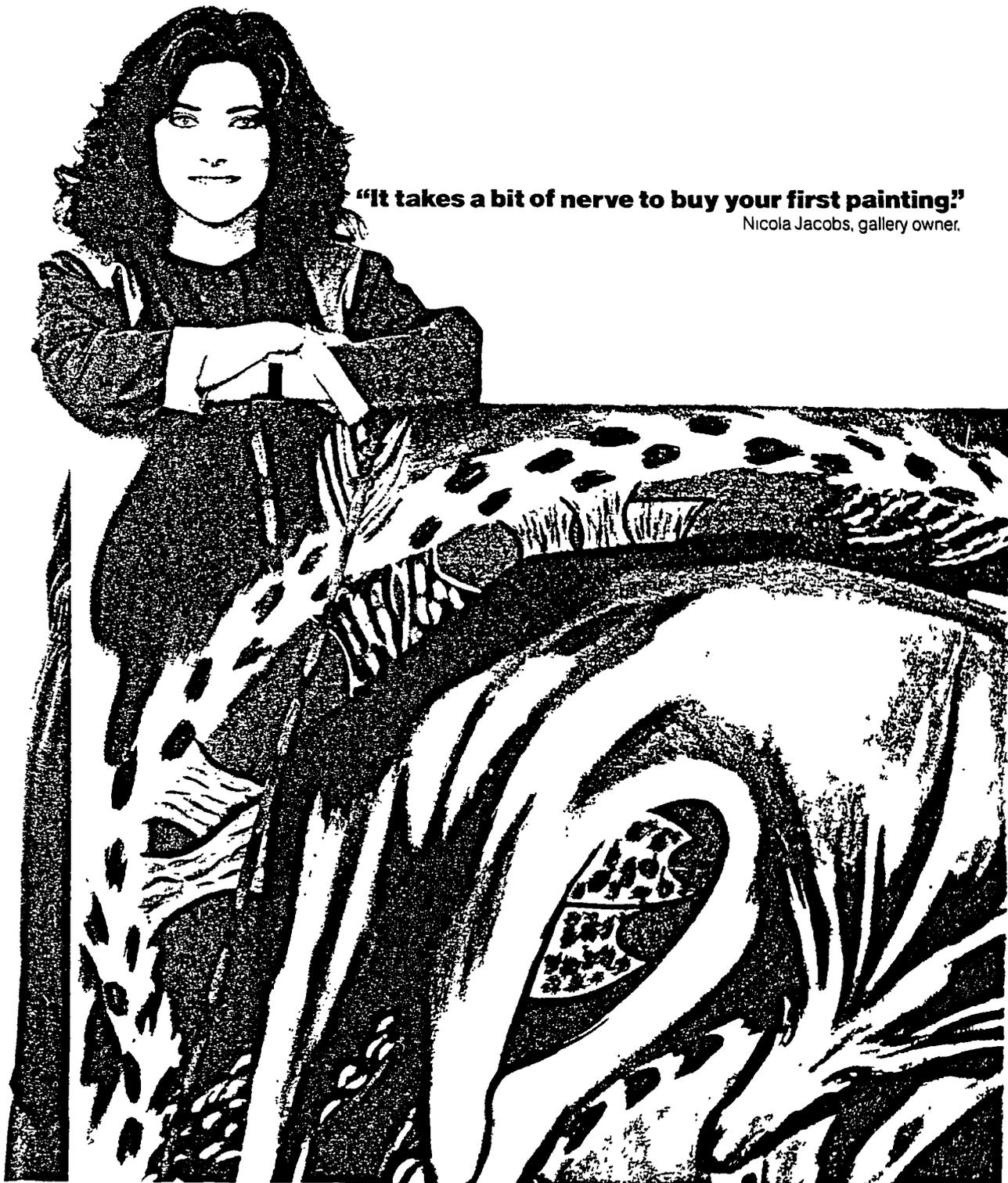
Paul Rosenbloom

Colin Smith

Derek Southall

Anthony Whishaw

Gary Wragg



**"It takes a bit of nerve to buy your first painting."**

Nicola Jacobs, gallery owner.

Most people are apprehensive about walking into a gallery for the first time.

Rick Chandler is a perfect example of that. He only came in because a friend of his brought him to a private view. Much to his surprise, he found himself really looking at the paintings and liking one in particular.

Anyway, Rick started talking to the artist.

The next thing he knew, he was actually considering buying. Well, this rather startled him. He certainly hadn't thought of owning an original before. But then he realised that what he wanted cost less than an Eames chair and stool. I think that settled it for him.

Rick was even more relaxed about it all

when he found I was willing to let him try it out at home and live with his painting before he made up his mind.

He does laugh at himself when he tells the story and says he can't imagine why he'd been so intimidated in the first place. He isn't anymore, of course. As Rick says 'buying your first painting opens the door to a very pleasurable world.'

It does. It is.

Wouldn't you like a new and pleasant experience? Just phone me at 01-437 3868 and ask for an invitation to my next private view on June 21. I'll be exhibiting works by both Suzanne Hutchinson and Louise Blair

from June 22 to July 16 and they're definitely worth seeing. Looking costs nothing admission is free and so is a glass of wine.

I'd love to meet you.

### **Nicola Jacobs Gallery**

9 Cork Street, London, W1 01-437 3868

Works by

John Carter

Shelagh Cluett

Jennifer Durrant

Simon Edmondson

Jon Groom

Ken Kiff

Kim Lim

Jeff Lowe

John McLean

Mali Morris

Paul Rosenbloom

Colin Smith

Derek Southall

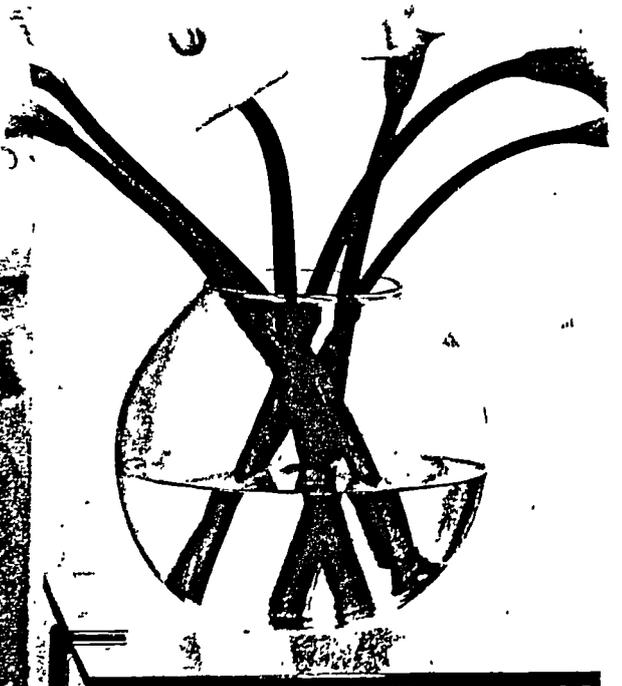
Anthony Whishaw

Gary Wragg



**"A painting says more about you  
than curtains ever will!"**

Nicola Jacobs, gallery owner.



talking to someone the other day and  
d that although he didn't mind how his  
decorated the flat, he couldn't tolerate  
posing the pictures. Chauvinist.

was quite interesting that he saw  
ings as his province. He felt they  
ed his personality and desires. Why  
n't feel that way about expensive  
things. I could understand. Probably  
use curtains and sofas wear out and  
ways be changed.

atings, on the other hand, don't wear  
ey grow with you. Which is why it's a  
serious purchase. Not necessarily in  
y terms. After all, you can buy an original

picture in my gallery for as little as £400. But  
it is a more emotional choice than deciding  
on the right fabric, for example.

That's why sometimes I'll let you take a  
picture home, hang it and live with it for a  
while before you both agree on it. And you  
certainly can't do that with fabric. Once  
you've had the curtains made, you're stuck.

Have you ever bought a picture for your-  
self? Maybe it's time you did. Why don't you  
come along to my next private view? I'll be  
exhibiting paintings and drawings by Gary  
Wragg. His prices range from £500 to  
£5000.

You'll get a chance to meet the artist and

discuss his work over a glass of wine. I think  
you'll find the atmosphere a lot more fun than  
choosing chintzes.

Please call me at 01-437 3868 for an  
invitation. We'd love to meet you.

### **Nicola Jacobs Gallery**

9 Cork Street, London, W1

01-437 3868

Works by

Jeff Lowe

John Carter

John McLean

Shelagh Cluett

Mali Morris

Jennifer Durrant

Paul Rosenbloom

Simon Edmondson

Colin Smith

Jon Groom

Derek Southall

Ken Kiff

Anthony Whishaw

Kim Lim

Gary Wragg

**"An art gallery is the artist's theatre.  
Except the show is free!"**

Nicola Jacobs, gallery owner.



You don't pay admission to my gallery. First you look, then you buy. Maybe. But any good gallery is flexible. Mine certainly is. Because my business is based on trust. So I want to help you in any way I can before you make a firm commitment to a painting.

An original picture is unique, after all. The only one of its kind in the world. Even though it may cost less than an Eames chair, it's a very personal thing to buy. You must be sure.

Which is why sometimes, a client can take a picture home and hang it for a while before making that final decision. If it doesn't

suit, it can always come back.

Have you thought of buying an original painting? It's a most pleasurable experience. Your very first picture gives you a thrill that no other purchase can.

Why don't you come to a private view and find out what the art world's all about. I'm showing Judy Rifka's new paintings from October 5 to November 5. She's an American and this is her first London show. Just ring me at 01-437 3868 and ask for an invitation.

You'll meet new people, chat with the artist over a glass of wine and absorb a

different kind of atmosphere. You'll find it's the only place in the world where you get to meet the artist onstage. Without admission.

Do phone. We'd like to meet you.

### **Nicola Jacobs Gallery**

9 Cork Street, London, W1

01-437 3868

Works by

John Carter

Shelagh Cluett

Jennifer Durrant

Simon Edmondson

Jon Groom

Ken Kiff

Kim Lim

Jeff Lowe

John McLean

Mali Morris

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Colin Smith

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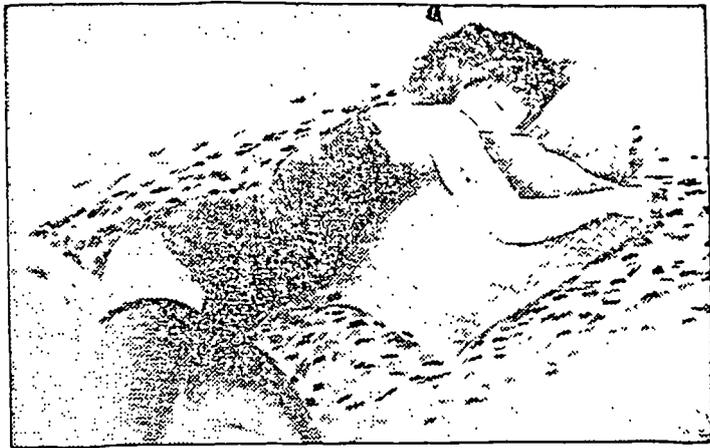
Gary Wragg

...the  
...ological level.  
...the market begin  
...had been defined at 80 c.  
...the end of that week it was down...

...that he

Continued on page 44

# An original work of art for the price of a dinner at Langans.



*'Pillow Print' original screen print by Adnan George.*

A feast for the eyes, or the palate? Both offer exceptional pleasure.

Dinner for four in the unique surroundings of Langans would be worth every penny of the £100 or so it would cost. As would an original work of art that doesn't just last an evening, but a lifetime.

Our free colour catalogue features original etchings, screen prints and lithographs by rising and established artists starting at around £75. Though you'll naturally pay a lot more than that for works by Hockney, Picasso and Henry Moore.

Each print is part of a strictly limited edition, created, signed and numbered by the artist.

They are available by post or direct from our Dover Street Gallery and on the fourth floor of Harrods.

For a copy of the catalogue, post the coupon or call us on 01-491 2523 (24 Hrs).

To: Christies Contemporary Art, FREEPOST 30, 8 Dover Street, London W1E 7JZ (01-491 2523 - 24 hours)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

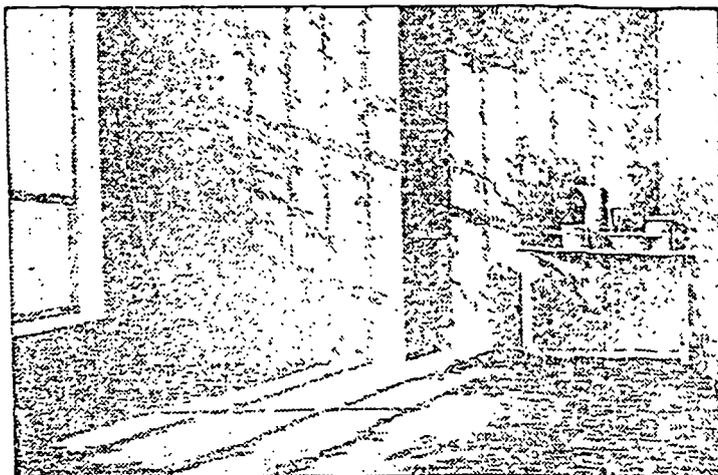
**Christie's Contemporary Art**  
from CCA Galleries plc



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'Blue Interior' original lithograph by Olivier Raab.

## Today's unknown. Tomorrow's Hockney?

An original work of art can cost as little as £75, yet who knows what it might fetch in years to come?

Our free colour catalogue features a wide selection of original etchings, screen prints and lithographs.

You can choose works from promising young artists at one end of the scale, to Picasso's at the other.

Each print is part of a strictly limited edition, created, signed and numbered by the artist.

So even if you're not interested in owning tomorrow's Hockney still send us the coupon, or call us on 01-491 2523 (24 hours).

For we can just as easily provide today's.

To: Christies Contemporary Art, FREEPOST 30, 8 Dover Street, London  
W1X 3PJ (01-491 2523-24 hours)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Christie's Contemporary Art  
from CCA Galleries plc



022.03/24

30.3.86 D.

For everyone lucky  
enough to miss out on  
TSB shares.



*'Pillow Print' original screen print by Adrian George.*

So you didn't get your quota. Never mind, there's an alternative which looks a lot better on the drawing room wall than a share certificate.

An original print from CCA Galleries can cost anything from £50 to well over £10,000, although most come in at under £100.

Each one is part of a strictly limited edition, created, signed and numbered by the artist.

You can get our free colour catalogue by 'phoning, sending us the coupon or calling in at one of our galleries. We have one in Dover Street, a master print gallery at 17 Princes Arcade, Piccadilly and a new gallery at 13 Lion and Lamb Yard, Farnham.

They all sell the kind of investment which could be more valuable later but guarantees some reward immediately.

To: CCA Galleries, FREEPOST 30, 8 Dover Street, London W1X 3PJ (01-491 2523-24 hours)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

**CCAGALLERIES**  
CHRISTIE'S CONTEMPORARY ART



572 30 56

Original art.  
£24,749,875 less than  
a Van Gogh.



*'Le petit Dejeuner' original screen print by Aldo Salvadori*

What price original art?

If it's by Aldo Salvadori, a painter represented in major international museums, with exhibitions in London, Italy and Japan behind him, £125.

And he's only one of dozens of artists in our collection whose work is available for less than astronomical sums. True, we sell Picassos and Mirós for upwards of £10,000, but prices start as low as £50.

Each of our original prints is part of a strictly limited edition, created, signed and numbered by the artist.

And a wide selection is on view in our free colour catalogue which you can get by phoning or sending us the coupon.

Alternatively, come and browse in our main Dover Street gallery or one of our new galleries at 17 Princes Arcade, off Piccadilly or in Lion and Lamb Yard, Farnham.

To: CCA Galleries plc, FREEPOST 30, 8 Dover Street, London W1X 3PJ.  
(01-491 2523-24 hours)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

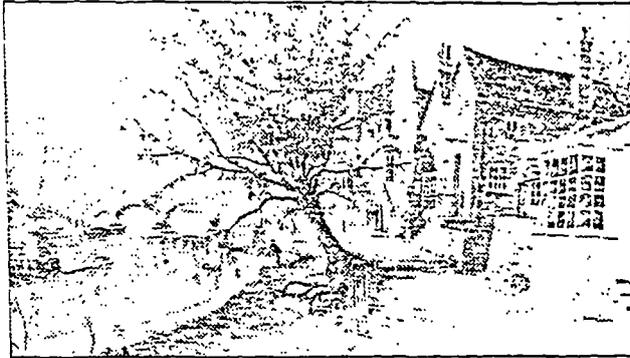
CCA GALLERIES

OFFICES

LONDON NEW YORK TOKYO



ST 7 9 86  
If this original cost only  
£75 you'd buy it.



Strand on the Green Original lithograph by Jeremy Sins

## It does.

Few people realise what remarkable value original prints can be. True we sell Picassos and Miros for upwards of £10,000, but prices start as low as £50, and most cost under £100.

CCA Galleries was formed as Christie's Contemporary Art in 1972. Our free catalogue features a wide selection of original etchings, screen prints and lithographs. Each print is part of a strictly limited edition, created, signed and numbered by the artist himself.

If you are pleasantly surprised by the price of the original above, you'll be just as delighted by the rest of our collection.

For a copy of our free colour catalogue, post the coupon or call us; or visit our Dover Street gallery.

To: CCA Galleries, FREEPOST 30, 8 Dover Street, London W1X 3PJ. (01-491 2523-24 hours)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. No. \_\_\_\_\_

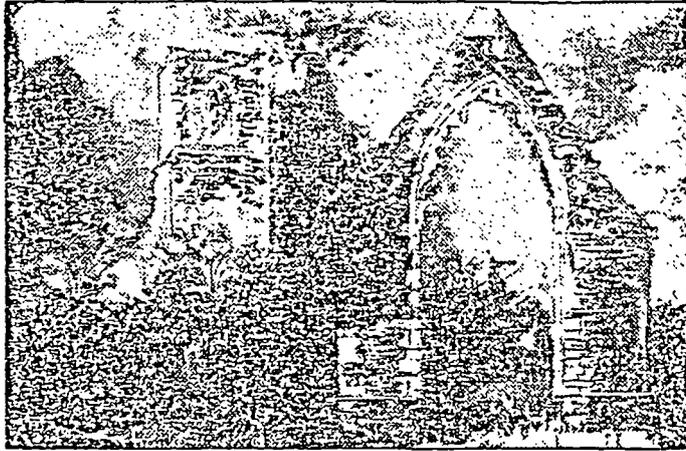
**CCA GALLERIES**  
CHRISTIE'S CONTEMPORARY ART



ST1 09 86

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# A more attractive investment than British Gas.



*'Bubungley' Original screenprint by John Piper.*

## A British artist.

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2. Auction house records as a feature of advertisements.

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ST 2.2.87

# Minor work or major discovery?

The two small 19th century seascapes opposite may look quite similar to the non-expert eye. Yet one sold for £385, and the other for £17,050.

The picture above by John Brett, is a typical work of the period, estimated at £200-300. However, the small watercolour below - only 10½ inches wide - was immediately seen as a significant discovery for the art market. The work of William Holman Hunt, it had been in the possession of one of the family since 1900, and had not appeared on the market for 45 years.

Research into Holman Hunt's letters to his daughter Gladys show that the little watercolour was nearly lost forever:

"...a sudden gust of wind carried my nearly completed picture away and looking over the edge of the cliff, I saw it circling about,



with the gulls in the abyss below - when, luckily for me, a fresh gust of wind bore it aloft until it lodged on a tuft of grass on the brink of a precipice. With assistance ... I was able to retrieve it."

Reprinted in the catalogue, this anecdote combined with the pristine colouring and vigour of the work raised considerable interest among collectors and resulted in an excellent price.

Sotheby's has done much to inspire the last decade's re-appraisal of this neglected period. For example, original research has been done on the monograms favoured by artists of the time: Holman Hunt's is shown here. Sotheby's expertise is always at the disposal of clients, and the advice and opinions of our experts is offered entirely free of charge.

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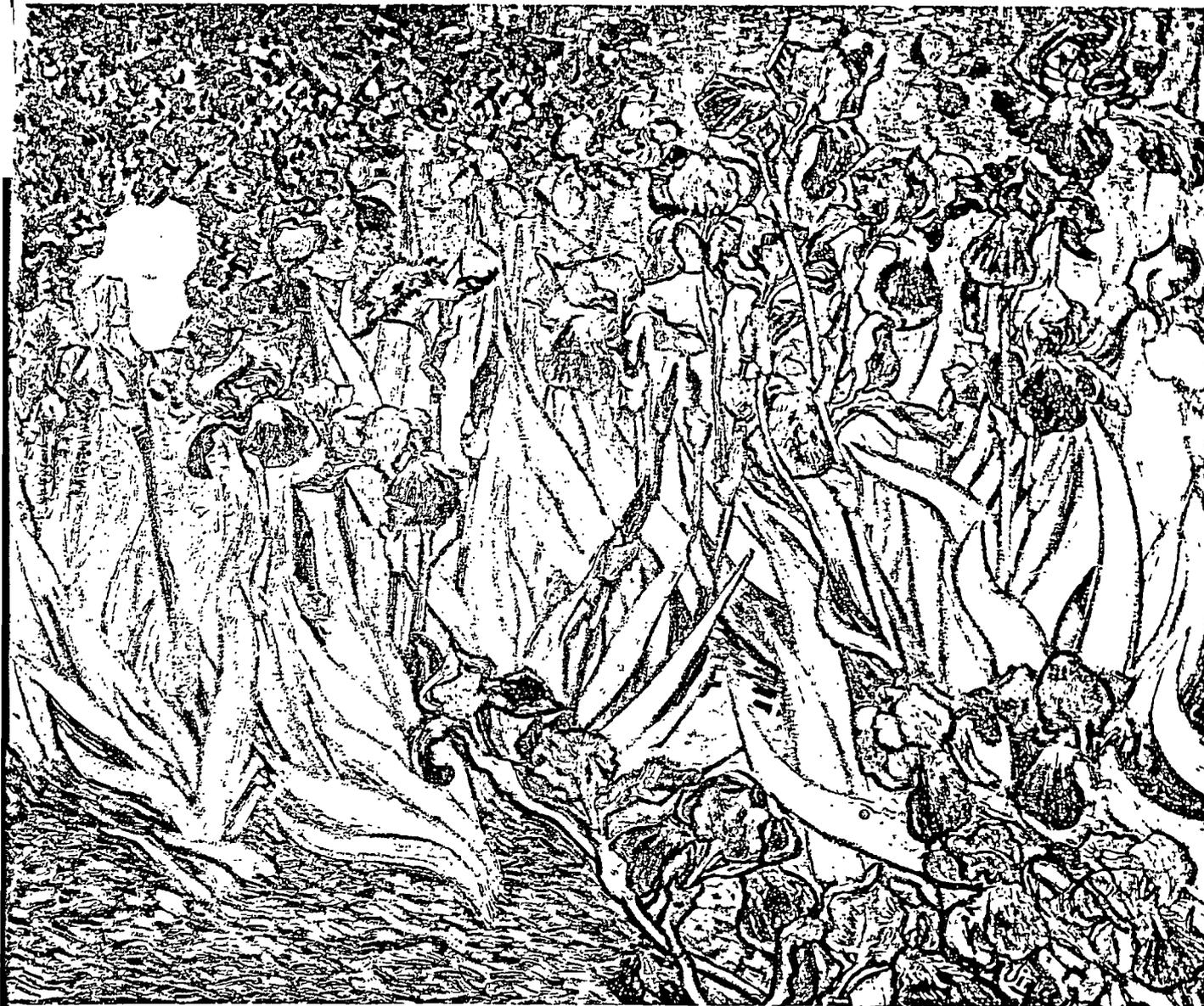
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Vincent van Gogh, *Iris*, signed, oil on canvas, 71 by 93cm. Sold in New York on 11th November 1987.

# The world auction record for a Post-Impressionist painting

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3. Exhibitions at the Hayward and Serpentine Galleries.

Exhibitions organised by the Arts Council at the Hayward Gallery

- 1968 Matisse  
Nolde Watercolours  
Van Gogh
- 1969 Anthony Caro  
Frescoes from Florence  
Pop Art  
Biederman  
Popular Paintings from Haiti  
Claude Lorrain  
Six at the Hayward
- 1970 Rodin  
Yugoslav Sculpture  
Bill Brandt  
Continuum  
Kelpra Prints  
Frank Stella  
Kinetics  
Early Celtic Art  
Helen Sutherland Collection  
Gerhard Frankl  
Mansart  
Derek Boshier
- 1971 Art in Revolution  
Laurens  
Hodler  
Bocklin  
Bridget Riley  
Piscator  
Tantra  
13 Los Angeles Artists
- 1972 Interval exhibition - Large Paintings  
Miro Sculpture  
Rothko  
Rietveld  
Bernard Cohen  
Indian Paintings  
French Symbolist Painters  
The New Art  
Islamic Carpets
- 1973 Impressionists in London  
Dieter Rot  
Staging the Romans  
Identifications  
The Environment Game  
Pioneers of Modern Sculpture  
Interval exhib. Richard Smith  
Interval exhib. Noel Forster/Peter Joseph/  
Alan Miller  
Salvator Rosa  
Pencil and Watercolour Drawings by Cezanne  
Dalwood (Otera)

- 1974 Munch  
Lucian Freud  
French Pop Imagery  
Vorticism and its Allies  
Diane Arbus  
Morris Louis  
Tapiés  
British Painting '74  
Paul Klee  
British Sporting Painting
- 1975 Treasures from the Burrell Collection  
The Real Thing: an anthology of British  
photographs 1840 - 1950  
The Condition of Sculpture  
Palladio  
Georgian Playhouse  
Burne-Jones  
New Work I  
New Work II
- 1976 Millet  
Arts of Islam  
Bryan Wynter  
The Human Clay  
A.C. Collection 75/6  
Peter Logan  
Sacred Circles
- 1977 Ian Stephenson  
Agnes Martin  
Edward Weston  
Hayward Annual Part I  
Hayward Annual Part II  
Matta  
The Modern Spirit
- 1978 Dada and Surrealism Reviewed  
Piranesi  
Pictorial Photography  
Frank Auerbach  
Jasper Johns  
Hayward Annual  
Cartier-Bresson  
Neue Sachlichkeit and German Realism of the  
Twenties
- 1979 Hubert Dalwood  
Outsiders  
Lives  
Miro  
Film as Film  
New Painting New York  
Three Perspectives on Photography  
Hayward Annual  
Thirties

- 1980 Hungarian Avant-Garde: The Eight & the  
 Activists -  
 Ellsworth Kelly  
 Pier & Ocean  
 British Art: A.C. Collection 1940-1980  
 Hayward Annual  
 Pissarro  
 Michael Andrews
- 1981 Edward Hopper  
 William Johnstone  
 Phillip King  
 Raymond Moore  
 Picasso's Picassos  
 Lutyens  
 Late Sickert
- 1982 In the Image of Man  
 Chaim Soutine 1893-1943  
 Hayward Annual 1982  
 Arte Italiana 1960-82
- 1983 Landscape in Britain 1850-1950  
 Indian Drawing  
 Francis Davison, paper collages  
 The Eastern Carpet in the Western World  
 Anthony Hill, retrospective  
 Whistler in London and Venice (South Bank  
 Weekend)  
 The Sculpture Show  
 Raoul Dufy 1877-1953  
 Hockney's Photographs
- 1984 1066: English Romanesque Art  
 The Drawings and Sculpture of Henri Matisse  
 Photographs by Josef Koudelka
- 1985 Renoir  
 John Walker  
 Edgar Degas: the painter as printmaker  
 The 1985 Hayward Annual  
 Hockney Paints the Stage  
 Edward Burra  
 Homage to Barcelona  
 Torres-Garcia
- 1986 Falls the Shadow: recent British and European Art -  
 1986 Hayward Annual  
 Dreams of a Summer Night: Scandinavian painting at the turn of the century  
 L'Amour Fou: surrealism and photography  
 Rodin: the sculptures and drawings  
 Mark Boyle
- 1987 Le Corbusier

ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN

Serpentine Gallery

List of Exhibitions

1970

Summer Shows 1-6

Selected by the Serpentine Committee of Lawrence Gowing, Professor Kenneth Rowntree, Norbert Lynton and Edward Lucie-Smith

May 2-24

Post-diploma work from Chelsea, Manchester and Birmingham colleges of art

May 30-June 21

John Dee, John Howlin, David Inshaw, Barry Martin

June 27-July 19

Rodney Gathercole, Nigel Hall, Ken Lee, David Prentice

July 25-August 16

Christine Beattie, Keith Brocklehurst, Anthony Slirn, David Whitaker

Aug 22-Sept 13

David King, Justin Knowles, Lynne Moore, Peter Waldron, Ron Wilman

Sept 19-Oct 11

Colin Cina, Pat Douthwaite, Peter Eveleigh, Graham Gilchrist, Carlos Grainger

1971

Summer Shows 1-7

Selected by the Serpentine Committee of Professor Lawrence Gowing, Professor Kenneth Rowntree and Edward Lucie-Smith

April 8-May 12

Fred Brookes, David Hopher, David Hurn, Stuart Mealing, Nick Wyndham

April 10-12 & 17-18

Blow Up 71 - inflatables etc.

May 8-31

George Hainsworth, John Loveless, Alan Miller, Gordon Richardson, William Tillyer

May 29-31, outside

Raynaud & 4000 pots

June 5-26

Kate Barnard, John Claridge, Chris Coles, Paul Martin, Rick Ogins, Telfer Stokes, Susan Tebby

July 3-25

Peter Cartwright, Colin Finn, Michael North, David Shepherd, Patrick Ward

July 31-August 22      Graham Clucas, Maurice Cockrill, Gareth Jones,  
John Knox, John McLean, Jan Suckling

Aug 28-Sept 19      John Benton-Harris, Jon Bird, George Hostler,  
Tony Ingram, Roy Naylor, Christopher Orr, Robert Tagg,  
Gerard Wilson

Sept 25-Oct 17      Michael Brick, Ann Gattward, Barry Herbert,  
Andrew Lanyon, John Murphy, George Percy

1972

Summer Shows 1-6      Selected by Professor Lawrence Gowing, Edward Lucie-Smith  
and Paul Huxley

March 30-April 23      Jim Arnold, Jeffrey Edwards, Michael Gorman,  
Rosemary Smith, Richard Ward, Glynn Williams

April 29-May 21      James Allen, Anthony Beers, Tom Edmonds, Chris Sayers,  
Tim Threlfall, Madelon Vriesendorp, Stephen Young

May 27-June 25      Festival at the Serpentine: kinetics, spectator  
and participatory events

July 1-23      Trevor Allen, Su Braden, Marc Chaimowicz,  
Robert Frankland, John Liggins, Stephen Lobb,  
Ron McCormick, Ed Sirrs, Alan Welsford

July 29-August 20      Bob Evans, Elizabeth Harrison, David Henderson,  
Ian Lees, John Maine, Philip Vaughan

August 26-Sept 17      Stephen Amor, Stephen Collingbourne, Sue Gollifer,  
Sylvester Jacobs, Martin Naylor, Roger Palmer,  
Carl Plackman

1973

Serpentine Committee: Edward Lucie-Smith, Paul Huxley and Hubert Dalwood

April 4-May 6 Photo-Realism: Paintings, Sculpture and prints from the Ludwig Collection and others  
Outdoor sculpture: Denys Short

Summer Shows 1-4

June 2-24 Serpentine Sculpture 73 (selected by Hubert Dalwood):  
John Harper, Paul Neagu, Ainslie Yule, Roger Dainton,  
Michael Ginsborg

June 30-July 22 Serpentine Paintings 73 (selected by Paul Huxley):  
Daniel Dahl, Michael Ginsborg, Julian Hawkes (sculpture  
Richard James, Barry King, Gina Medcalf outside)  
Welfare State ('Beauty and the Beast')

July 28-August 19 Serpentine Photography 73 (selected by Peter Turner of  
Creative Camera):  
Gerry Badger, Edward Baxter, Kurt Benning,  
Michael Berry, John Blakemore, John Chard,  
Colin Curwood, Andrew de Lory, Ian Dobbie,  
James Fahey, Margaret Gathercole, Robert Golden,  
Neil Gulliver, George Hallett, Lesley Hamilton,  
Bruce Hemming, Larry Herman, Paul Hill, Geoff Howard,  
Graham Howe, Howard Jeffs, Kevin Keegan, Simon McBride,  
Bob Mazzer, Daniel Meadows, Richard Meara, John Myers,  
John O'Hagan, Malcolm Perkins, Martin Pover,  
Paul Rotheroe, David Sample, Enrique Saenz de San Pedro,  
Philip Sayer, Sean Sprague, Paddy Summerfield,  
Philip Warren, Andrew Watson, Donald Waxman, John Webb,  
Sean Welland, Roy Wilson, Richard Wood

September 8-30 Serpentine Graphics 73 (selected by Edward Lucie-Smith):  
D Mary Barnes, Henry O Barrett, Janet Brooke,  
Michael Carlo, Ian Colverson (joint project with  
Denis Masi), Paul Somerset-Cousins, Anthony Deigan,  
Julia Farrer, John Fassolas, Ian Gardner, Jane Godfrey,  
Richard Hartwell, Eileen Rogan, David Inshaw,  
Andrew Lawson, Michael Lye, Eric Marwick, Denis Masi  
(joint project with Ian Colverson), Robert Mascn,  
Jack Miller, Andrew Moran, Warwick Moreton, David Samuel  
Pearson, Michael Smith, Ingrid Webendoerfer, Roy Wood

October 6-28 William Tucker: Sculpture 1970-3

November 10-Dec 9 Landscape: Paintings by Norman Adams, Adrian Berg,  
John Hubbard and Edward Middleditch

1974

- Serpentine Committee: Hubert Dalwood, Paul Huxley, William Feaver
- March 1-31 Roger Hilton: Paintings and Drawings 1931-1973
- April 6-28 From Barrie Bates to Billy Apple
- Summer Shows 1-3 Selected by the Serpentine Committee
- May 4-28 Julian Cooper, Jennifer Durrant, Mark Edwards, Terence New
- June 1-23 Kerry Kennedy, Mary Webb, Tony Wilson, Kevin Burrows, Knighton Hosking
- June 29-July 21 Anne Brodrick, Tony Carter, Paul Hempton, Judith Lear, Alex Thomson
- July 27-August 18 George Fullard: 1923-1973
- August 24-Sept 15 Five Dutch Artists: Douwe Jan Bakker, J. Floris van den Broecke, Jules de Goede, Cornelius Rogge, Van de Wint
- September 21-Oct 20 Art into Landscape 1
- November 1-Dec 1 Five from Germany: Edgar Hofschen, Nikolaus Lang, Ansgar Nierhoff, Hans Peter Reuter, Rainer Wittenborn
- December 14-Jan 12 Art As Thought Process: (selected by Michael Compton) Kenneth Martin, Malcolm Hughes, Bridget Riley, Richard Smith, Tom Phillips, Mark Lancaster, Keith Milow, Judy Clark, Stephen Willats, Victor Burgin, Michael Craig-Martin, John Hilliard, Art Language

1975

- Serpentine Committee: Hubert Dalwood, William Feaver and Patrick Caulfield
- March 20-April 20 Outdoor Sculpture: John Hoskin  
Drawings: Jasper Johns
- May 1-26 The Video Show
- Summer Shows 1-3 Selected by the Serpentine Committee
- May 31-June 22 Allan Boston, Ken Kiff, Nigel Rolfe, Graham Stevens (sculptureoutside), Ken Watts, Michael Crowther
- June 28-July 20 Charles Grafton, David Holt, Richard Rome, Robert Russell
- July 26-August 17 Christopher Allan, Laurence Anthony, Stephen Cripps, William Henderson, Sirkka-Lisa Konttinen, Glen Onwin, Ilric Shetland, Graham Smith
- August 20-26 Eight Good Reasons to Visit the Serpentine Gallery:  
Festival of Performance Art: Rob Con, People Show, Dance Organisation, Exploded Eye Events Group, Mike Westbrook's All Star Brass Band, Situations, Jacky Lansley and Sally Potter, Ed Sirrs

- September 2-28 Sculpture: John Panting 1940-1974
- October 4-Nov 2 Mark Boyle: Journey to the Surface of the Earth (cont.)  
Richard Hamilton: Paintings, Pastels, Prints
- November 8-Dec 7 Discovery and Investigation: Five Swedish Artists:  
Sten Eklund, Tom Krestesen, Lars Millhagen,  
Torsten Renqvist, P G Thelander
- December 20-Jan 18 Order and Experience: American Minimal Art.  
Prints by Agnes Martin, Sol LeWitt, Robert Ryman,  
Robert Mangold, Bruce Marden, Edda Rencuf,  
Dorothea Rockbourne

Drawings of People: selected by Patrick George  
An exhibition of twenty-seven artists' drawings

Portrait of England: photographs by Sylvester Jacobs

1976

Serpentine Committee: William Feaver, Patrick Caulfield and Derek Boshier

January 28-Feb 29 Tom Phillips

March 6-28 Previous exhibitors: Jennifer Durrant, Michael Ginsborg,  
Knighton Hosking, Alan Miller,  
Chris Orr, Bob Evans, David Whitaker,  
Glynn Williams, Nick Wyndham

April 3-25 Jeremy Moon: Paintings and Drawings 1962-1973

May 1-31 Howard Hodgkin: 45 Paintings 1945-1975

Summer Shows 1-5

June 5-27 Selected by Eduardo Paolozzi (co-opted by Committee)  
Edward Allington, Roberta Booth, Ian English,  
Kyriakos Katzourakis, Paula Levine, Pete Ling,  
Barbara Loftus, Ken Turnell, Ann Westley, Paul White

July 3-25 Selected by John Golding (co-opted by Committee)  
David Evison, Sylvia Guirey, Peter Hide, Jeff Instone

July 31-August 22 Selected by the Committee  
Carole Ashley, Paul Beauchamp, Richard Kidd,  
David Nash, Nicholas Pope

August 28-Sept 19 Selected by the Committee  
Frank Brookes, Raymond Brown, John Gray, James Griffin,  
Garth Lewis, Mak-Kum-Siew, Ray Masters, Noel Myles,  
Malcolm Poynter, Belinda Sharvell, Diana Slocock,  
Trevor Sutton, David Sweet, Andrew Whamond,  
Rhonda Whitehead

September 25-Oct 17 Selected by Michael Craig-Martin (co-opted by Committee)  
Lynne Elton, Colin Nicholas, Amikam Toren,  
Yehuda Safran, The Theatre of Mistakes

- October 23-Nov. 21 Prunella Clough, recent paintings  
Harry Thubron  
Outdoor sculpture: Alf Dunn
- November 26-Dec 12 Six Times: Performances and Installations  
Exploring Duration and Change  
Max Eastley, Charles Garrad, Susan Hiller,  
Michael Livingston-Booth, Paul Neagu, Dick Whall

1977

Serpentine Committee: Patrick Caulfield, Derek Boshier and Judy Marie

December 18-Jan 16 Beyond Light: Bill Culbert & Liliane Lijn

February 5-March 6 Terry Frost: Paintings, Drawings and Collages

March 12-April 11 Michael Kenny: Sculptures  
Arshile Gorky: Paintings and Drawings

Summer Shows 1-3 (Summer Show 4 follows Art into Landscape II)

April 16-May 8 Selected by the Committee  
John Clinch, Ron Haselden, Alan Hutchinson,  
Peter W Lewis, Shelagh Wakely

May 14-June 7 Selected by Tim Hilton (co-opted by the Committee)  
Michael Bennett, Katherine Gili, Vivien Rothwell,  
Gerald Wilde

Outdoor event featuring Bruce McLean

May 21, 22, 25, 27, 28 Spring Holiday and Jubilee Day Celebrations featuring  
June 5, 6, 7 Action Space

June 11-July 3 Selected by the Committee:  
Karin Fleischer, Raf Fulcher, Mali Morris,  
Fred Stiven, Lee Tribe, Roger Westwood

July 16-August 14 Art into Landscape II

August 20-Sept 11 Serpentine Photography, selected by Aaron Scharf:  
Janette Beckman, Peter Benson, Laurence Bernes,  
Victor Bowley, Robert Brook, Clare Chamberlain,  
Charles Colquhoun, Roy Cornwall, Pip Dunstone,  
Jane England, Heather Forbes, R Gordon Taylor,  
John Goto, Jim Harold, Howard Jeffs, Paul Joyce,  
Chris Locke, Peter Mitchell, Jeremy Preston,  
Andrzej Slezak, Malcolm Thomson, Stephen Weiss,  
Liz White

Outside sculpture: John Clark

September 17-Oct 16 Ian Hamilton Finlay

October 22-Nov 20 Sculpture: Peter Startup (1921-1976)

November 26-January 8 The Sculptures of de Kooning, with related paintings,  
drawings and lithographs

1978

Serpentine Committee: Derek Boshier, Judy Marle and Myles Murphy

January 21-Feb 19 Jack Smith: The Written and the Diagrammatic, paintings and drawings

Spring Shows 1-2

February 25-March 19 Selected by David Annesley (co-opted by the Committee)  
John Gibbons, Abraham Newman, Jesse Watkins,  
William Crozier, Clyde Hopkins, Jeff Lowe

March 25-April 16 Selected by Stuart Brisley (co-opted by the Committee)  
Brian Alterio, Kevin Aherton, Ken McMillen,  
John Aiken, Tina Keane, Georges Levantis

April 22-May 14 Art for Whom? selected by Richard Cook:  
Conrad Atkinson; Peter Dunn and Loraine Leeson;  
Islington Schools Environmental Project; Public Art  
Workshop; Stephen Willats

May 20-June 11 Bryan Kneale: Sculpture, work in progress  
Jeffery Camp: Paintings of Night and Day  
Open Photography 1978: Midland Group Nottingham

July 1-October 8 Henry Moore at the Serpentine, 80th Birthday Celebration

October 21-Nov 19 Scale for Sculpture selected by Carol Hogben:  
David Dye, Garth Evans, Roland Miller and Shirley Cameron,  
Nicholas Monro, Carl Plackman

1979

Serpentine Committee: Judy Marle, Myles Murphy and Nicholas Pope

November 25-Jan 7 Barry Flanagan: Sculpture 1965-1978

January 17-Feb 25 Saul Steinberg

March 10-April 1 Arts Council Awards and Recent Purchases (no catalogue)

April 7-May 6 French Art 1979: An English Selection  
Jean-Baptiste Audat; Christian Boltanski; Louis Chacallis;  
Alfred Courmes; Roland Flexner; Dominique Gauthier;  
Vivien Isnard; Annette Messenger; Anne & Patrick Poirier;  
Claude Viallat; Jean-Louis Vila

May 11-June 8 Allen Jones: Retrospective of Paintings 1957-1978

Summer Shows 1-3

June 16-July 15 Selected by Sue Grayson (invited by the Committee)  
Lee Grandjean, Kieran Lyons, Michael Lyons,  
Michael Mason, Frank Nelson, James Ravillious,  
David Redfern, Tony Sinden, Harry Snock,  
John Swanson, Laetitia Ynap, Benno Zehnder

- July 21-August 19 Selected by Judy Marle, with Prunella Clough, Jennifer Durrant and Katherine Gili, Kim Farley, John Foster, Stuart Hodgkinson, Patrick Jones, Balraj Khanna, Geoff Rigden, David Walker-Barker
- August 25-Sept 23 Selected by Myles Murphy, with John Ernest and Michael Moon  
Stephen Farthing, Paul Gopal-Chowdhury, Jeff Hellyer, Christopher Le Brun, Gary Woodley
- September 19-Oct 28 John Hoyland: Paintings 1967-1979
- November 7-28 Art into Landscape 3 preliminary exhibition  
Tim Head: two installations
- December 29-Feb 10 André Kertész

1980

Serpentine Committee: Judy Marle, Myles Murphy and Nicholas Pope until 1 April, when the Serpentine Committee was subsumed into Exhibition Sub-Committee

- February 16-March 16 A Winter Show at the Serpentine:  
Colin Cima, Dennis Creffield and Henry Mundy
- March 29-April 27 Art into Landscape 3
- May 3-June 8 David Smith: Drawings and Sculptures
- June 14-July 13 Patrick George, paintings and drawings 1937-1980

Summer Shows 1-3

- 19 July-10 August Selected by Alan Miller (co-opted by the Committee)  
Chris Baker, Ian Friend, Ian Grainger, Peter Grieve, Michael Heindorff, Heinz-Dieter Pietsch, Neil Talbot, David Wiseman, Stephen Young
- 16 August-7 Sept Selected by Tony Carter (co-opted by the Committee)  
Colin Barnes, Leigh Crampton, Pete Johnson, Peter Lloyd-Jones, Mari Mahr, Wendy Smith, Richard Wincer, Stephen Johnson
- 13 September-5 Oct Selected by Stephen Cox (co-opted by the Committee)  
Graham Ashton, Allan Buckett, Christina Floyd, Robert Koenig, John Mitchell, Gavin Scobie, Terry Setch, Roy Turlington, Gera Urken, John Sharp
- 11 October-6 Nov Jack Bush: paintings and drawings

1981

- 5 December-3 Feb E C Westermann / Sam Smith

- 28 February-29 March Continuous Creation selected by Michael Compton:  
Robert Filliou, Paul Thek, Anna Oppermann, Bruce Lacey,  
Jill Bruce
- 10 April-17 May Alberto Giacometti: sculpture, paintings, drawings
- 23 May-28 June Mary Potter: Paintings 1922-1980
- Summer Shows 1-3
- 4 July-2 August Selected by Miranda Strickland-Constable:  
Michael Murfin, Andy Goldsworthy, Robert Callender,  
Steve Joy, Jane Boyd, Andrew Darke
- 8 August-6 September Selected by Adrian Henri:  
Graham Ibbeson, Saleem Arif, Mikey Cuddihy,  
Alexis Hunter, Di Livey, Elizabeth Ogilvie,  
Alexandra Leadbeater, Helen Moslin, George Wyllie
- 12 September-11 October Selected by Tony Cragg:  
Sarah Bradpiece, Nigel Inglis, Anish Kapoor, John Kippin,  
Ian Macdonald, Jan Mladovsky, Susan Ormerod, John Virtue,  
Hazel Wildman, Jane Womersley, Peter Banks
- 17 October-22 November Frederick Sommer: photographs, drawings and musical  
scores  
Johannes Dörflinger: Life Cycle, paintings and drawings
- 1 December-24 January 1982 Craigie Aitchison: paintings 1953-1981
- 1982
- 30 January-7 March Ger van Elk: recent painting and sculpture and  
a selection of earlier work
- 13 March - 25 April Eureka! Artists from Australia  
Micky Allan, Tom Arthur, Peter Booth, Paul Partos,  
Wesley Stacey, Imants Tillers
- 8-31 May The Living Arts of India: nine craftsmen
- 8 June - 4 July Adrian Stokes 1902-72, a retrospective
- 10 July - 8 August Summer Show 1, selected by John Lessore  
Ray Atkins, Jake Attree, Richard Cook, Anthony Farrell,  
Paul Gildea, David Gould, John Kiki, Anne Norman,  
John O'Donnell, David Roberts, Nicholas A. Simington,  
Jessica Wilkes
- 14 August - 12 September Summer Show 2, selected by John McLean  
Douglas Abercrombie, Gabriel Flynn, Tricia Gillman,  
Jonathan Hart, Ian Herdman, John O'Donnell, Shirley  
O'Neill, Fred Pollock, Paul Tonkin, Jim Unsworth
- Summer Show 3, selected by Richard Francis  
Christine Angus, Jeremy Hunter-Henderson,  
Shirazeh Houshiary, Sharon Kivland, Peter Randall-Page,  
Tony Wild

- 23 October - 21 November Contemporary Art Society: Purchases  
Victor Willing (North Gallery)
- 27 November - 9 January 1983 Raymond Mason
- 1983
- 15 January - 13 February Martin Froy  
paintings, constructions, drawings 1962-82
- Tony Carter  
Images of subject/object duality 1968-82
- 19 February - 20 March Alive To It All:  
an exhibition including: Klee, Miro, Milton  
Ayres, Fullard, Durrant, Hayman, Kiff,  
Laurens, Setch, Calder, Pollock, Davison
- 26 March - 24 April Lawrence Gowing
- 30 April - 20 May Leon Vilaincour: paintings 1962-83
- Nigel Henderson  
Head-Lands: Self portraits and  
imagined landscapes 1960-1983
- 4 June - 3 July Summer Show 1, selected by John Roberts  
Helen Chadwick, Charles Garrad, Roberta Graham  
Dick Jewell, Brian McCann, Alison Winckle
- 9 July - 7 August Summer Show 2, selected by Noel Forster  
Brian Chalkley, Julian Cooper, Eileen Fletcher  
James Faure Walker, Stephen Harper, Richard  
McGowan, Emrys Williams
- 13 August-9 October The Sculpture Show  
selected by Paul de Monchaux, Kate Blacker  
and Fenella Crichton  
(at Serpentine) Michael Sandle, Richard Long,  
Bill Culbert, Paul de Monchaux, Laura Ford,  
Garth Evans, Richard Deacon  
(in Kensington Gardens) Richard Cole,  
David Nash, William Tucker, Andy Frost  
Christine Angus, Hilary Cartmel,  
Kevin Atherton, John Cobb
- 18 October-20 November Leonard McComb  
painting, drawing, sculpture 1960-1983
- 26 November - 8 January 1984 Gillian Ayres
- 1984
- 14 January-19 February 1984 Rebecca Horn
- 25 February - 25 March Eugene Atget: photographs of Old France  
Adrian Berg: watercolours  
John Murphy: Beyond the fixing of  
appearances
- 12 April - 28 May Anthony Caro

