

Re-imagining the great masters: translations into print by John Drawbridge

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## Contents

Abstract .....	iii
Acknowledgements .....	iv
List of illustrations .....	v
Introduction .....	1
Chapter 1: John Drawbridge and the European print tradition .....	15
Chapter 2: John Drawbridge and printmaking in New Zealand .....	43
Chapter 3: Reading John Drawbridge's prints: intertextualities in a local context .....	65
Conclusion .....	103
Appendix 1 – The exhibition history captures the exhibitions in which Drawbridge presented his prints .....	107
Appendix 2 – A catalogue of a list of Drawbridge's published prints and prints in public collections .....	111
Bibliography .....	121

## Abstract

This thesis examines the prints of New Zealand printmaker, John Drawbridge, with a specific focus on a small but significant part of his print *oeuvre*, his mezzotints from the 1980s and 1990s, in which he directly quotes European great master artists. Drawbridge studied printmaking in London and Paris in the late 1950s and early 1960s and it is this experience that informed his artistic practice for the rest of his career. Through his quotations of great artists and his practice of working in the hand-made printmaking tradition, Drawbridge recreates that Western tradition through his own technical expertise and imagination. However, what is distinctive about Drawbridge's contribution to this well-established tradition is how he treats his source material: how he takes it out of its original context, and modernises and defamiliarises it by relocating it within a pictorial space that references his own life and location.

In the first chapter, Drawbridge's English and European experiences and education are examined to reveal the background to his work: the traditional printmaking processes and the cultural ethos of the period. The second chapter looks at the artistic scene in New Zealand after he returned in early 1964 and the varied reception to his work. These two chapters provide the necessary context for the concluding chapter in which a case is made for the symbiotic relationship between the European tradition Drawbridge so much admired and his concern to locate his work back in New Zealand. By means of intertextual references, he engages with and explores the nature of the art of the past and the present, the traditional and the modern, the international and the local. This thesis argues that Drawbridge imaginatively critiques and renews the paintings he quotes in these translations from painting to print, and that consequently these prints reward a far more complex reading than they have been previously accorded. Through close examination of these prints it is clear that Drawbridge has made a unique contribution to New Zealand art.

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## List of illustrations

*I have not included edition numbers or references to collections for these prints as they are serving as illustrations for the reader to have a visual reference to the text. Appendix 2 has a list of Drawbridge's prints in public collections and publications.*

Figure 1	John Drawbridge, <i>Loire – near Saumur</i> , 1958, etching & aquatint, 323 x 604 mm.	23
Figure 2	John Drawbridge, <i>Seated woman</i> , 1960, etching, 500 x 400 mm.	24
Figure 3	Jacques Villon, <i>Las couseuse</i> , 1905, drypoint, 168 x 168 mm.	25
Figure 4	André Dunoyer de Segonzac, <i>Le gros chêne à Chaville</i> , 1924, etching, 186 x 219 mm.	27
Figure 5	John Drawbridge, <i>Approach to St André No 1</i> , 1960, etching, 600 x 497 mm.	27
Figure 6	John Drawbridge, <i>Emma</i> , 1967, mezzotint & drypoint, 120 x 220 mm.	31
Figure 7	John Drawbridge, <i>Beach girl</i> , 1967, photo-etching, aquatint, balsa wood, hardboard & paint, 275 x 430 x 35 mm.	32
Figure 8	John Drawbridge, <i>Orange landscape of Beach girl</i> , 1967, photo-etching, aquatint, balsa wood, hardboard & paint, 275 x 430 x 35 mm.	32
Figure 9	John Drawbridge, <i>Héloïse and Françoise</i> , 1983, mezzotint & drypoint, 160 x 250 mm.	34
Figure 10	John Drawbridge, <i>Metropolis No 2</i> , 1972, photo-etching, leterset, aquatint, 340 x 545 mm.	35
Figure 11	John Drawbridge, <i>Matisse, acrobat and Mae West</i> , 1984, mezzotint & drypoint, 250 x 330 mm.	36
Figure 12	John Drawbridge, <i>Woman with Matisse</i> , 1980, mezzotint, 295 x 200 mm.	36
Figure 13	John Drawbridge, <i>Tanya going and coming No 1</i> , 1967, mezzotint & drypoint, 345 x 300 mm.	37
Figure 14	John Drawbridge, <i>A rather transparent girl No 1</i> , 1967, mezzotint, aquatint, soft ground etching & colour engraving on deckle edged paper, 497 x 373 mm.	50

Figure 15	John Drawbridge, <i>Interior with bottles</i> , 1986, mezzotint & drypoint, 545 x 345 mm.	52
Figure 16	John Drawbridge, <i>Sleeping woman</i> , 1959, mezzotint & aquatint, 500 x 600 mm.	55
Figure 17	John Drawbridge, <i>Sleeping woman</i> No 2, 1983, mezzotint & drypoint, 500 x 605 mm.	55
Figure 18	John Drawbridge, <i>Pacific cloud</i> , 1966, mechanically engraved copper plate, aquatint, 560x 355 mm.	56
Figure 19	John Drawbridge, <i>Altocumulus</i> No 1, (red) 1972, mezzotint, 600 x 490 mm.	59
Figure 20	John Drawbridge, <i>Altocumulus</i> No 2, (blue) 1972, mezzotint, 600 x 500 mm.	59
Figure 21	John Drawbridge, <i>Interior with Matisse</i> , 1981, mezzotint & drypoint, 155 x 175 mm.	70
Figure 22	Henri Matisse, <i>Blue nude</i> III, 1952, gouache on cut & pasted paper, 1120 x 735 mm, Centre George Pompidou, Paris.	71
Figure 23	John Drawbridge, <i>Malevich at the Stedelijk Museum</i> , 1980, mezzotint & drypoint, 250 x 177 mm.	75
Figure 24	Kazimir Malevich, <i>Black square</i> , 1915, oil on canvas, 1060 x 1065 mm, Russian State Museum, St Petersburg.	76
Figure 25	Kazimir Malevich, <i>Yellow plane in dissolution</i> , 1917-18, oil on canvas, 431 x 650 mm, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.	76
Figure 26	Kazimir Malevich, <i>Eight red rectangles</i> , 1915, oil on canvas, 570 x 480 mm, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.	76
Figure 27	Colin McCahon, <i>Necessary protection</i> , 1971, charcoal on paper, 1040 x 685 mm, Auckland Art Gallery, Auckland.	77
Figure 28	John Drawbridge, <i>Still life with Malevich</i> , 1988, aquatint, mezzotint & drypoint, 220 x 252 mm.	78
Figure 29	Kazimir Malevich, <i>Black cross</i> , 1923, oil on canvas, 1060 x 1065 mm, Russian State Museum, St Petersburg.	78
Figure 30	John Drawbridge, <i>The Holy family (Rembrandt)</i> , 1983, mezzotint & drypoint, 250 x 163 mm,	81
Figure 31	Rembrandt van Rijn, <i>The Holy family by night</i> , 1638-48, oil on panel, 600 x 770 mm, Rembrandt's House, Amsterdam.	82
Figure 32	Rembrandt van Rijn, <i>The night watch</i> , 1642, oil on canvas, 3630 x 4370 mm, (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam).	84
Figure 33	John Drawbridge, <i>The night watch (Rembrandt: detail)</i> , 1983, mezzotint & drypoint, 250 x 163 mm.	85

Figure 34	John Drawbridge, <i>The music lesson (Vermeer)</i> , 1983, mezzotint & drypoint, 250 x 163 mm.	89
Figure 35	Johannes Vermeer, <i>The music lesson</i> , c.1662-65, oil on canvas, 746 x 641 mm, (The Royal Collection, Buckingham Palace, London).	89
Figure 36	John Drawbridge, <i>The concert (Vermeer with Matisse)</i> , 1983, mezzotint & drypoint, 250 x 163 mm.	93
Figure 37	Johannes Vermeer, <i>The concert</i> , 1664, oil on canvas, 690 x 630 mm, (Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston – until stolen in 1990).	93
Figure 38	Henri Matisse, <i>Dance (I)</i> , 1909, oil on canvas, 2597 x 3901 mm, (Museum of Modern Art, New York).	94
Figure 39	Henri Matisse, <i>The swimming pool</i> , 1952, gouache on cut and pasted paper, 185.4 x 1643.3 mm, (Museum of Modern Art, New York).	94
Figure 40	John Drawbridge, <i>Velázquez infanta</i> , 1994, mezzotint & drypoint, 345 x 545 mm.	98
Figure 41	Diego Velázquez, <i>Las meninas</i> , (detail of infanta), 1656, oil on canvas, 3200 x 2760 mm, (Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid).	99
Figure 42	John Drawbridge, <i>Night tree</i> , 1994, oil on canvas, 1200 x 1200 mm, (private collection, Auckland).	100
Figure 43	Colin McCahon, <i>Necessary protection</i> , 1972, acrylic on unstretched canvas, 1840 x 2973 mm, (Auckland Art Gallery, on loan from private collection).	100





## Introduction

During his lifetime John Drawbridge (1930-2005) worked in several different media, including painting, large mixed-media public murals, designs for stained glass windows and carpets, as well as a variety of print techniques, such as lithography, screen-printing, etching, engraving, aquatint, dry point and mezzotint. This thesis focuses on a small but significant part of his print *oeuvre*, the mezzotints from the 1980s and 1990s in which he directly quotes the European great masters. In so doing, he was connecting himself with the already well-established artistic practice of paying homage to these artists. He was continuing a tradition of dialogue between the past and present and of transformations from paintings to print. What is distinctive about Drawbridge's contribution to this on-going tradition is how he treats his source material, how he takes it out of its original context, modernises and defamiliarises it by relocating it within a pictorial space that references his own life and location.

A brief biographical account of Drawbridge is useful in order to appreciate the training and influences reflected in his artistic practice throughout his career. After he left school in 1947, Drawbridge spent a year at the Wellington Technical College but he found the courses there too dry and 'pseudo-academic' to interest him; it put him off any further art school study although he appreciated the time he spent learning the basics of his craft.<sup>1</sup> Although the college did not offer printmaking, he remembered that he made his first etching while there and some lithographs, possibly in the studio of Fred Ellis (head of the Art School).<sup>2</sup> He recalled the scarcity of art books and teachers available in New Zealand during the war and post-war years and referred to some highlights, such as the purchase of his first art book in 1948, Alfred H Barr's *Picasso, fifty years of his art*, and the 'wonderful' Penguin series of books, *Modern painters*.<sup>3</sup>

It was when Drawbridge went to Wellington Teachers' Training College in 1948 that he felt his real education began. He later recalled the 'extraordinary staff' who introduced

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<sup>1</sup> When at Wellington College, Drawbridge had attended Saturday art classes at the same Technical College because of the shortage of trained art teachers during the war and immediate post-war years.

From, John Drawbridge, 'I feel at home with my work being here', from *Godwits return*, Margaret Clark (ed), Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 1992: 40.

<sup>2</sup> Te Papa Archives – CA000876, side one, interview with Drawbridge by Damian Skinner, recorded 8/4/04.

<sup>3</sup> John Drawbridge, 'I feel at home with my work being here', from *Godwits return*, Margaret Clark (ed), Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 1992: 41.

him to contemporary international writers, including T S Eliot and George Orwell, and local writers like Frank Sargeson. He encountered 'the abstract beauty of music', the art of Kandinsky and was taught by practising New Zealand painters, including Louise Henderson and Roland Hipkins.<sup>4</sup> It was during this period that his interest in printmaking really began with lithography and screen-printing, and he liked to experiment with a variety of other processes, such as scratching an image onto film and then printing it, using the black and white development process. He also tried scratching on cardboard and applying boot polish as an ink to print with.<sup>5</sup> In 1949, when he was still a teenager, Drawbridge was invited to accompany the National Film Unit to the Southern Alps to produce a series of watercolours recording the ascent of Mt Aspiring. He joined a group comprising Brian Brake (cinematographer), Douglas Lilburn (composer) and James K Baxter (poet), and the experience of spending six weeks in a remote place in such illustrious and eloquent company made a lasting impression on him.<sup>6</sup>

In 1950, in his third year at Teachers' Training College, Drawbridge went to Dunedin to study as a specialist art teacher. This was a plan of Gordon Tovey's, the National Supervisor for Arts and Crafts from 1944 to 1966. Tovey wanted to raise the standard of art teaching in New Zealand by placing practising artists in secondary schools and tertiary institutions.<sup>7</sup> It was during this year in Dunedin that Drawbridge met Charles Brasch, the poet, editor and founder of the literary journal *Landfall*, who became a close friend and patron and published some of Drawbridge's work in *Landfall* in the 1950s. (Drawbridge also designed four covers for *Landfall* in 1964, repeating the same design but in different colours.)<sup>8</sup> From 1951 to 1953 Drawbridge worked as an art advisor employed by the Wellington Education Board and by 1953 was back at Wellington Teachers' College – this time as a junior lecturer. He stayed there until 1957 when he

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 42-43.

<sup>5</sup> Peter Coates, interview with author, Wellington, 19 July 2013.

<sup>6</sup> Robert Macdonald, 'John Drawbridge – the student years', in Damian Skinner (ed), *John Drawbridge*, Auckland: Ron Sang Publications, 2008: 13. Unfortunately, the filming was called off due to bad weather and was postponed to the following year but the death of the leading actor meant that the project was never completed.

<sup>7</sup> Gordon Tovey (1901-1974) was an art teacher and innovative educational administrator and was responsible for important reforms in art education during the 1940s and 50s under Director of Education, Dr C E Beeby. He revolutionised the teaching of art from the more academic tradition to a child-centred approach – meaning that art was to be introduced as a 'natural means of self-expression'. From Gordon H Brown, *New Zealand painting 1940-1960: conformity and dissension*, Wellington: Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand, 1981: 37.

<sup>8</sup> Brasch published Drawbridge's images in *Landfall*, December 1951 vol. 5 no. 4 a crayon drawing and a painting between pp 288 & 289. In September 1954, vol. 8, no. 3, four of Drawbridge's photographs of graves are reproduced between pp 164 & 165. The covers he did for *Landfall* in 1964 were in vol. 18 in nos. 1,2,3, and 4. The same design was used from the vol.18 no.1 issue for the three following issues – nos 2,3, and 4, but each in a different colour.

won a New Zealand National Art Gallery Travelling Scholarship to travel and study overseas.

By this point, Drawbridge had regularly contributed to the School Publications Unit and produced illustrations and covers for the *School Journal*, *Primary School Bulletin*, *Tusitala mo vasega tetele Samoa*, *School Bulletin* on Niue, as well as for other journals, such as the cover of *Design Review* (1953) and a drawing on the cover of the literary journal *Hilltop* (June 1949).<sup>9</sup> He was already gaining a local reputation as a printmaker and had exhibited screen-prints and lithographs by the time he left for London.<sup>10</sup> However, it was to study textile design that the twenty-six year-old took up his scholarship at the Central School of Arts and Crafts in London in 1957.

After a term at the Central School, however, he found textile design too limiting and realised it was printmaking that he really wanted to study. This was largely a consequence of witnessing the resurgence of printmaking in England. He was so enthused that the Print Room at the British Museum soon became his 'favourite place in London':

Here I was able to look at Goya's and Rembrandt's etchings on my own. The intimacy of their etchings made me feel that these artists were speaking directly to me. It was here that I also discovered the etchings of Dunoyer de Segonzac, Jacques Villon and Giorgio Morandi.<sup>11</sup>

During his time at the Central School Drawbridge studied various techniques, including engraving, etching, aquatint, line-etching, drypoint and mezzotint, and by 1960 he had completed his diploma with Distinction. That year he was elected as an associate member of the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers & Engravers, London.

In 1960, Drawbridge was granted a fourth year extension to his scholarship and, on the strength of his portfolio of work from the Central School of Arts and Crafts, he went to Paris to continue his printmaking in the workshops of S W Hayter (*Atelier 17*) and later of

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<sup>9</sup> Hamish Thompson, *Coverup: the art of the book cover in New Zealand*, Auckland: Godwit, 2007: 110-15; and Gregory O'Brien, 'Wide open interior', in Gregory O'Brien (ed), *John Drawbridge: wide open interior*, Wellington: Mallinson Rendel and Wellington City Art Gallery, 2001: 89.

<sup>10</sup> For example, at the Dunedin Public Library exhibition in 1951, with The Group in 1952, and at the Architectural Centre Gallery in 1956. Julia Gatley and Paul Walker, *Vertical living: the Architectural Centre and the remaking of Wellington*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2014: 74.

<sup>11</sup> Drawbridge, op. cit. 48.

Johnny Friedlaender.<sup>12</sup> He remarked that ‘the way of studying in Paris was to work alongside others privileged enough to work in the master’s studio.’<sup>13</sup> This year in Paris was an important one for him. It was not just his work in the studios that made such an impression but also visiting other workshops – Lacourière’s, for example, where he saw the etchings of modern masters such as Pablo Picasso, Georges Braque and Marc Chagall being produced. It was an established tradition in Europe for well-known artists to produce an original image onto a copper plate or lithographic stone and for master printers to print editions under the artist’s name.<sup>14</sup> Living in Paris and London during the late 1950s and early 60s provided the opportunity for Drawbridge to travel throughout Europe visiting galleries and museums. Here he was to encounter art work that he had only ever seen in poor quality reproductions, an experience he described as often overwhelming. It was also during this period that he started his own collection of prints by major European printmakers which were sold very cheaply by small dealer galleries in the 1960s.

When Drawbridge returned to New Zealand in early 1964, he continued to work successfully in a variety of media – predominantly painting, printmaking and murals – while also teaching painting, drawing and printmaking at Wellington Polytechnic until he retired in 1990. On the surface, Drawbridge had a very successful career and gained a substantial degree of public acceptance over the years, receiving many awards and honours in recognition of his contribution to New Zealand art: in 1978, he was made a Member of the British Empire (M.B.E.); in 1982, he was awarded a Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council Fellowship; in 1989, he received the Governor General’s Art Award; in 2001, four years before his death, he was accorded the honour of a major retrospective exhibition of his work at Wellington’s City Gallery; and in 2002 he received an Honorary Doctorate from Massey University, Wellington. However, to look at the critical reception of Drawbridge’s work across his career is to discern a more complex interplay of approval and reservation.

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<sup>12</sup> In 1960 his prints were exhibited at Leicester Galleries, London, with those of Friedlaender, Jean Dubuffet, Pablo Picasso and André Masson. Mark Stocker, ‘A window into John Drawbridge’, from *Art New Zealand*, 103 (Winter), 2002: 76.

<sup>13</sup> Drawbridge, op. cit. 47.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.48.

Before Drawbridge left New Zealand in the late 1950s for London, his work had been received very favourably and he was seen as a young artist with a promising future. Gregory O'Brien emphasises his early promise in *Wide open interior*, where he calls him 'a "boy artist" of prodigious ability and remarkable maturity'.<sup>15</sup> In 1949, when he was still only eighteen, this promise was confirmed by exhibiting at the Helen Hitchings Gallery (the first dealer gallery to open in New Zealand) and by being invited to provide the art work for the National Film Unit for *The Ascent of Mount Aspiring*.<sup>16</sup> An early 1951 lithograph by Drawbridge was subsequently praised by Gordon H Brown in the introduction to the 1969 Print Council of New Zealand exhibition catalogue, in which Brown wrote a brief summary of printmaking in New Zealand:

About 1950 colour lithography began to appear but even the best works from S B MacLennan and Juliet Peter were rarely more than just pleasant prints. More substantial was a black-and-white print *Woman* by a young artist, John Drawbridge.<sup>17</sup>

In the May/June issue of *Design Review*, 1953, Edward C Simpson's article, 'The work of John Drawbridge', specifically refers to his monotypes as some of his most interesting work. Simpson concludes:

I will not finish with the trite dictum that we shall see more of John Drawbridge. I will say that he is a sincere, gifted and enthusiastic artist working in a common sense way with both feet firmly planted on the ground.<sup>18</sup>

In London, too, Drawbridge garnered attention. He exhibited his paintings and prints successfully throughout his time there and gained a reputation. The climax of his London success occurred in 1963 (the year he decided to return to New Zealand): his prints were exhibited at the Royal Academy; his paintings were exhibited at the Commonwealth Institute Gallery and with the London Group (and hung next to David Hockney's); and he had a successful solo exhibition at the Redfern Gallery, one of the 'most prestigious modern art venues', and was promised another show the following year.<sup>19</sup> In his obituary of Drawbridge in 2005, Mark Stocker comments: 'More than any other New Zealand expatriate of that era – and they included Pat Hanly, Ralph Hotere and Don

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<sup>15</sup> Gregory O'Brien, 'Wide open interior', op. cit. 12.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Gordon H Brown, 'Introduction', *The Print Council of New Zealand – Exhibition 2*, Auckland: Print Council of New Zealand, 1969: unpaginated.

<sup>18</sup> Edward C Simpson, 'The work of John Drawbridge', *Design Review* 5 (2), 1953: 42.

<sup>19</sup> Gregory O'Brien, 'Drawbridge revisited', *Listener*, 15 December, 2001: 50.

Peebles – John made it in the swinging city.’<sup>20</sup> However in 1962, before his return, Drawbridge expressed some concern about how his painting, specifically, might be received in New Zealand – ‘I don’t know what they’ll think of my work in New Zealand now’ – as he reflected on the increasing abstraction and dramatic colours in his large canvases.<sup>21</sup>

Despite this concern and his initial success in London, Drawbridge and his English wife, the jeweller and sculptor, Tanya Ashken, returned to his home city, Wellington, in early 1964. When later questioned about his decision to return to New Zealand, Drawbridge told Peter Cape that ‘he soon came to the conclusion that to go on being successful he would have to work in the gallery pipeline, doing things which had sold before so that they would sell now’ and he felt that this would stifle his development and desire to experiment.<sup>22</sup> However, once back in Wellington, he and Ashken found it took some time to adjust to living in New Zealand and in *Godwits return* (1992) he commented that ‘it seemed a strange and empty place to us both.’<sup>23</sup> Wellington still had no proper dealer galleries until the Bett Duncan Gallery and Peter McLeavy set up in the late 1960s. Drawbridge did exhibit regularly in Auckland and Wellington galleries and his prints featured as regularly as his paintings. He also participated in international print and drawing biennales and triennales and in 1968 won a major prize for his print *Tanya going and coming No. 1* (1967) at the 10<sup>th</sup> International Exhibition, Lugano, Switzerland. In 1969 he was commissioned to produce a large mural for the New Zealand Pavilion at Expo ’70 in Osaka, Japan. And yet he never really achieved the recognition that the trajectory of his career seemed to promise.

The reviews of his paintings were mixed and his virtual exclusion from the seminal text by Gordon H Brown and Hamish Keith, *New Zealand painting: an introduction* (1969), was indicative of his equivocal standing. Pat Hanly, Ralph Hotere and Don Peebles were each given considerable space in this first edition (and in subsequent editions in 1982 and 1988), with a complete chapter devoted to Hanly. By contrast, Drawbridge was only

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<sup>20</sup> Mark Stocker, ‘Singular Talent’, *The Press*, Christchurch, 3 August, (Arts), 2005: 1.

<sup>21</sup> Damien Skinner, *John Drawbridge*, Auckland: Ron Sang Publications, 2008: 27. This refers to his footnote, ‘London – new mecca for our artists’, *The Weekly News*, Wednesday 28 November 1962: 4.

<sup>22</sup> Peter Cape, ‘John Drawbridge: techniques and values’ from *Landfall*, 106 (June), 1973: 143.

<sup>23</sup> Drawbridge, op. cit. 50.

mentioned once in passing in a single sentence: 'In 1962 and 1963, two painters who had achieved a degree of success in Europe, Patrick Hanly and John Drawbridge, returned to work in New Zealand.'<sup>24</sup> In addition, Keith gave him a lukewarm review in the *Auckland Star* in 1975: 'John Drawbridge has a small collection of delicate and tentative watercolours in the adjoining gallery at New Vision. They are pretty if insubstantial things, but like a lot of new directions offered early by the painter, they promise much.'<sup>25</sup> When reviewing another exhibition in 1981, Brown claimed dismissively: 'in style, Drawbridge's paintings continue to carry overtones of the outmoded School of Paris.'<sup>26</sup> In 2005, Robert Macdonald suggested one reason why Drawbridge's painting (and later that of Don Peebles) were underrated in New Zealand at the time:

His painting was simply considered too abstract, too formalist, too 'international' in its personality – despite its evident poetry and its intimate connections with the landscapes and seascapes of Wellington in particular, and New Zealand in general. There were theorists who wanted a particular kind of New Zealand art, and John failed to supply this.<sup>27</sup>

It was this negative judgement on his style that had an ongoing effect on his wider New Zealand standing in the mid-1970s and early 1980s. His style was considered too old-fashioned and not relevant to the nationalist agenda of New Zealand's art history of the time. His abstraction was associated, implicitly or explicitly, with his perceived 'outmoded' internationalism, part of his European legacy but unconnected to New Zealand.

Not that Keith's and Brown's position on abstraction was itself entirely uncontested. In his 1975 article 'Eight New Zealand abstract painters', Patrick Hutchings acknowledged the current New Zealand view of abstraction as an 'International form' rather than a local one, but strongly refuted this, claiming that the 'form, like everything else carried south of the line, in changing its seasons suffers an absolute if indefinable change.'<sup>28</sup> He also had reservations about the contemporary dogma in local art criticism that New Zealand light necessarily required the hard-edged style in painting, noting that although

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<sup>24</sup> Gordon H Brown and Hamish Keith, *New Zealand painting: an introduction*, London & Auckland: Collin Bros & Co. Ltd, 1969: 177.

<sup>25</sup> ATL MS89-026-008 – records of Elva Bett – clipping from *Auckland Star*, Weekender, 8 March, 1975.

<sup>26</sup> Gordon H Brown, 'It's in the fine print', *Auckland Star*, 29 June 1981: 15.

<sup>27</sup> Robert Macdonald, 'John Drawbridge (1930-2005)', *Art New Zealand*, 116 (Spring), 2005: 95.

<sup>28</sup> Patrick A E Hutchings, 'Eight New Zealand abstract painters', *Art International* XIX/I (January 20), 1975: 18.

a number of the best practitioners subscribed to the dogma, there was in fact considerably more variety amongst New Zealand painters. He presented Drawbridge's painting from a perspective much closer to Drawbridge's own, noting his use of 'the colours of New Zealand' and arguing that his abstract paintings 'are, in the end, rooted in mimesis. And they are always exemplary.'<sup>29</sup> At the same time, and probably tellingly, Hutchings observed that Drawbridge 'is perhaps better known in his own country as a printmaker. And in this medium he is celebrated equally for his fine handling of the motif, New Zealand landscape and skies, and for his meticulous, beautiful, craftsmanship.'<sup>30</sup> A large part of Drawbridge's *oeuvre* was in printmaking and watercolours, which were still considered minor arts in New Zealand and did not command the same status as painting. Painting was still dominant in the canon of New Zealand art and this was probably another contributory factor to his partial marginalisation.

However, although it is fair to claim some marginalisation for Drawbridge in the later part of his career in New Zealand, he was never completely ignored or discounted. There were a number of good reviews of his work. Hutchings (quoted above) thought highly of Drawbridge's work and observed that 'his solutions are always elegant: and his elegance reflects, in a refined way, the clean handsome country which he celebrates' and, 'like Peebles, he [Drawbridge] gives abstraction a precise, local significance.'<sup>31</sup> Other publications on New Zealand art also acknowledged him as one of New Zealand's significant painters. These include Gil Docking's *Two hundred years of New Zealand painting* (1971), Peter Cape's *New Zealand painting since 1960: A study in themes and developments* (1979), Jim and Mary Barr's *Contemporary New Zealand painters*, Volume 1, *A-M* (1980) and a later revised and expanded edition of Michael Dunn's *Concise history of New Zealand painting* (2003). In this revised edition Dunn acknowledges Drawbridge's earlier omission from his and other books on New Zealand painting: 'the obvious sensual qualities of his art and their "retro" look have sometimes counted against an appreciation of his work in the past twenty years. His significance as a

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid. 24.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. 23.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. 24.



modernist painter and printmaker, though, is undeniable and will undoubtedly again receive full recognition.'<sup>32</sup>

Whatever Drawbridge's general reputation as an artist, his mastery of technique and the quality of his prints have never been in question. Reviews and articles about his printmaking indicate that his prints were always well received. In a review of an exhibition held in the Otago Museum foyer in 1967, J G Blackman commented: 'It is evident that from the start Drawbridge has had enviable ability as a printmaker.'<sup>33</sup> In the 1970s, Peter Cape wrote a number of highly respectful and informative articles about Drawbridge and his printmaking which contributed to his standing as a leading New Zealand printmaker. These appeared in the *New Zealand Listener* (1971), *National Business Review* (1972) and *Landfall* (1973), and Cape included Drawbridge in his book *Prints and printmakers in New Zealand* (1974). Cape observed in his 1972 article 'John Drawbridge: hard at it in many media' that although Drawbridge's work involved 'many techniques and media, at the very centre of what he does is his work as a printmaker.'<sup>34</sup> Neil Rowe's review of the 'Unique prints and paintings by John Drawbridge' exhibition at the Elva Bett gallery in 1977 described Drawbridge as 'the country's foremost intaglio print maker' and also commented on his mezzotints and how these demonstrated his 'technical virtuosity and skill as a draughtsman'.<sup>35</sup> Reviewing an exhibition at New Vision Gallery in Auckland, 1981, even Brown conceded that 'the reservations that restrict a full admiration for Drawbridge's skills as a painter evaporate in front of his prints'. Brown describes some of the techniques used by Drawbridge and comments that 'the artist clearly demonstrates his masterly technical command over his media. This factor helps place Drawbridge among the few master printmakers at work in New Zealand today.'<sup>36</sup> Currently, Drawbridge's prints are held in private and public collections in New Zealand and around the world. (See appendix 2).

Concerted critical discussions of Drawbridge's prints began in the 1970s. Over succeeding decades his printmaking has been championed by Cape, Anne Kirker,

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<sup>32</sup> Michael Dunn, *New Zealand painting: a concise history*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003: 130.

<sup>33</sup> J.G. Blackman, 'The Dunedin scene: John Drawbridge in Dunedin', *Ascent* 1(2), July, 1968: 79.

<sup>34</sup> Peter Cape, 'John Drawbridge: hard at it in many media', *National Business Review*, 16 October 1972: 16.

<sup>35</sup> Neil Rowe, 'Drawbridge – the last 20 years', *The Evening Post*, 5 November, 1977: 12.

<sup>36</sup> Brown, 'It's in the fine print', op. cit. unpaginated.

Gregory O'Brien, Gerald Barnett, Lara Strongman and Mark Stocker. Beginning in 1971, Cape's articles (referred to previously) firmly established Drawbridge as amongst the most significant of New Zealand printmakers. Cape described his working methods in some detail and showed great respect for the traditions that Drawbridge brought back to New Zealand from his time at Central School and the *ateliers* of Paris. Cape also admired Drawbridge's independence of thought and ideas, and represented him as a master printmaker with original ideas.

Similarly, Kirker wrote about the prints for *Art New Zealand* (1982) in 'John Drawbridge: from print to construction' and included Drawbridge as one of six contemporary New Zealand printmakers in an exhibition she curated with Ann Calhoun at the National Art Gallery, Wellington, *Face to face: a survey of artists' prints* in 1986. The following year, Kirker presented the Walter Auburn lecture about printmaking in New Zealand, 'Prints – a coming of age'. Here she demonstrated the key role that Drawbridge had played throughout the duration of the New Zealand Print Council (as well as contributing to their exhibitions). Like Cape, Kirker contextualised him as a major *New Zealand* printmaker as well as emphasising the importance of his European experience and the skills and techniques with which he returned to New Zealand.<sup>37</sup>

The most comprehensive discussions to date of Drawbridge's work are the essays in the exhibition catalogue for Wellington City Gallery's retrospective of Drawbridge's work, *John Drawbridge, wide open interior* (2001), edited by Gregory O'Brien. All four contributors clearly see Drawbridge's European experiences as essential to his work in general while specifically building on Cape's and Kirker's discussions of his prints by examining his iconography and a range of his influences. Three essays offer entirely new perspectives on how to read Drawbridge's prints: Gregory O'Brien's own 'Wide Open Interior', Lara Strongman's 'Coming and going: John Drawbridge, Pop art, and the new bohemia in London' and Gerald Barnett's 'Shadowlands: The prints of John Drawbridge'. O'Brien displays an extensive knowledge of Drawbridge, his life and his work, and includes a useful discussion of the artistic lineage of Vermeer, Rembrandt, Matisse and Malevich that Drawbridge refers to in his prints. He provides some detailed discussion of

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<sup>37</sup> Anne Kirker wrote a dissertation for Dip FA (Hons), *A history of printmaking in New Zealand*, Auckland University (1969), in which Drawbridge was included as a significant figure in the establishment of printmaking in New Zealand during the 1960s.

Drawbridge's use of iconography and stylistic influences and analyses a range of other cultural influences on Drawbridge during the period he spent overseas, such as film and literature, and how these are reflected in his prints. In a later essay, O'Brien also briefly discusses Drawbridge's prints in 'John Drawbridge' from *Look this Way* (2007), edited by Sally Blundell. Here he strongly endorses the view of Drawbridge as the dualist who looks to the traditional and the contemporary in his work.

This dualism is central to Strongman's and Barnett's essays. Both draw attention to Drawbridge's contemporary references to Op art and Pop. Strongman's essay initiates a line of enquiry pursued in this thesis as to the double nature of Drawbridge's art practice: on the one hand, his interest in European art history as seen in his reworkings of some old and new Master artists; on the other, his references to the latest contemporary art available in London during his residency there. Strongman examines the influence of popular culture on Drawbridge's iconography and the way he combines these images and the Western tradition in his painting and prints. The duality of his practice is expressed in and through these combinations.

In 'Shadowlands: the prints of John Drawbridge', Barnett focuses entirely on the prints.<sup>38</sup> He discusses the value of the hand-made printmaking tradition to which Drawbridge belongs and emphasises the co-dependence between technique and meaning. Barnett gives a detailed account of the technique of the mezzotint process that Drawbridge favoured as well as commenting on visual influences on Drawbridge that are reflected in this process. Like Strongman, he discusses Drawbridge's allusions to Op art and 1960s Pop art, and he connects these to the contrasting starkness of black and white in Drawbridge's mezzotint prints. Barnett's understanding of traditional printmaking processes as well as the contemporary art of Drawbridge's period in London further underlines the duality of Drawbridge's art practice and its bringing together of the traditional and the contemporary.

Stocker has also made a notable contribution to the literature about Drawbridge. In both *Art New Zealand* (2002), 'A window into John Drawbridge' and his obituary on Drawbridge in *The Press*, (2005), 'Singular talent', he examines the mixed reception of

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<sup>38</sup> As part of the retrospective exhibition of Drawbridge's work in 2001, Mahara Gallery in Waikanae (north of Wellington) held an exhibition of his prints, *Shadowlands: four decades of printmaking by John Drawbridge*.

Drawbridge's work in New Zealand. Stocker reaffirms the importance of Drawbridge's time in London and Europe and comments on the intellectual eclecticism evident in his art. He observes Drawbridge's easy transition between the figurative and the abstract. Stocker extends the critical shift that sees Drawbridge both as a master printmaker in the old tradition and as a practitioner equally able to absorb the ethos of the new.

More recently in *John Drawbridge* (2008), Damian Skinner has given an account of Drawbridge's printmaking as part of a larger monograph about the artist and his work. He obviously agrees with views expressed in the essays from *Wide open interior* and adds that Drawbridge's use of images from art history indicates their ongoing relevance to the present.

This thesis, building on the critical work outlined above, looks at the duality of Drawbridge's art practice as a printmaker and how he negotiated the European tradition within the New Zealand context. In the catalogue for the exhibition *After you: copying, quoting and homage in historical and contemporary art* at the Sarjeant Gallery in 2013, Sarah McClintock observes that 'artists who engage with and quote the history of art are not "stealing" or simply copying the work of another but engaging with it, using the theme, composition or palette of another artist to comment on the symbiotic nature of creativity.'<sup>39</sup> Through a reading of selected prints that quote great master artists of Western art, this thesis demonstrates how Drawbridge engages with that tradition and explores the 'symbiotic nature of creativity' in his art practice through translation into prints.

Chapter One discusses the tradition of the *peintre-graveur* and debates whether or not Drawbridge should be considered primarily as a rearguard 'fine art' printmaker or as one more committed to and influenced by contemporary printmaking practices. Chapter two looks at the developments taking place in the local art scene by the time Drawbridge returned to New Zealand in 1964 and the contribution he made to local printmaking. It weighs up the evidence for whether he should be regarded as a New Zealander drawing

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<sup>39</sup> Sarah McClintock, Introduction, 'After you: copying, quoting and homage in historical and contemporary art', exhibition catalogue, Whanganui Sarjeant Gallery, 2013.

on European traditions or as an ‘international’ artist living and working in New Zealand. Chapter three offers a close reading of selected prints to explain how Drawbridge embeds these with intertextual influences: *Malevich at the Stedelijk Museum*, (1980); *Interior with Matisse*, (1981); *The Holy family (Rembrandt)*, (1983); *The night watch (Rembrandt: Detail)*, (1983); *The music lesson (Vermeer)*, (1983); *The concert (Vermeer with Matisse)*, (1983); *Still life with Malevich (black)*, (1988); and *Velázquez Infanta*, (1994). This chapter examines how Drawbridge recreates that Western tradition through his own technical expertise and how he crucially relocates these great masters within his own time and place. This chapter concludes by arguing that Drawbridge imaginatively critiques and renews these paintings, exemplifying the symbiotic nature of the relationship between painter and printmaker, painting and print, past and present, traditional and contemporary.



## Chapter One: John Drawbridge and the European Print Tradition

*The true tradition of printmaking, which includes many names beside Mantegna, Dürer, Van Leyden, Callot, Rembrandt, Piranesi, Goya, Gericault, Delacroix, Lautrec and almost every major artist in Europe since 1960, is a tradition of brilliant extempore control over materials of printmaking tempered with a respect of what the media will and will not do....* (Robert Erskine, 1959)<sup>40</sup>

When John Drawbridge reached London near the end of 1957, he arrived at a pivotal time in British printmaking. By the 1930s the etching market had collapsed and there were no longer outlets for intaglio prints. In addition, lithography had taken over as the leading print technique in the 1940s and early 1950s. However, the print market began to change in the late 1950s and new dealers created venues and opportunities that blossomed into a print boom in the 1960s and 1970s. In *Godwits return* Drawbridge later recalled the excitement of being in London at this time:

The resurgence of printmaking through the influence of S W Hayter had hit British artists and the art schools. I had not seen anything like these works [prints] in New Zealand and they were a shock to me. They were large and colourful original artists' prints.<sup>41</sup>

In this chapter I try to determine whether, as a printmaker, Drawbridge should be considered a rearguard 'fine art' practitioner or as someone more committed to and influenced by contemporary printmaking practices. In order to do this, it is necessary both to review the tradition and influences that he inherited (and which still underpinned the craft tradition at Central School of Arts and Crafts where he studied) and to consider how he responded to the London art scene he encountered.

There is persuasive evidence to support the case that Drawbridge should be considered a rearguard 'fine art' practitioner of printmaking. At the Central School of Arts and Crafts he received training in engraving and etching because the school looked back to the craft traditions of printmaking and to the processes that had been in use in Western Europe since the 1400s to create multiple copies of a pictorial image. Line-engraving is a highly skilled and lengthy process which requires many years of training in order to

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<sup>40</sup> Robert Erskine, Introduction, *The graven image*, exhibition catalogue, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London: Chareton Press of H Williams & Son Ltd, 1959: 5.

<sup>41</sup> Drawbridge, 'I feel at home with my work being here', op. cit. 45.

achieve clarity and evenness of line. Line-engraving was the process favoured from the mid-1400s to the mid-1800s for reproductions of art works. A major criticism held against line-engravers in the nineteenth-century (especially during the Etching Revival) was that they produced formulaic versions of original artworks which ended up as a cliché of a particular linear syntax, and that they were almost entirely associated with reproductive (as opposed to creative 'original') prints.<sup>42</sup> When photomechanical processes started to take over the reproductive role of printmaking, the threat to the survival of traditional printmaking seemed very real and led to re-evaluations of the role of prints, and the focus turned to the etching technique, in particular. Etching was promoted as a creative process, and thus superior to engraving, because it allows the artist to draw directly onto the plate and thus reveal the artist's hand and individual style. In the second half of the nineteenth century, etching became the preferred method of painter-printmakers, due to this freedom which was more like drawing. Drawbridge himself was attracted to this aspect of printmaking. In his 1974 book *Prints and printmakers in New Zealand*, Cape commented that the processes Drawbridge worked with had become 'as intimate and as personal to him as his handwriting' and added that he liked 'to work through a number of ideas – though all of them grouped around a central thought – developing them on the plate, working out exactly what he want[ed] to be expressed and how he want[ed] to express it.'<sup>43</sup> Through his quotations of the great masters, Drawbridge's prints allude to both these traditional roles of printmaking by creating fine art 'original' prints and by incorporating 'copies' from the great masters into his own.

The Etching Revival movement was a response to the threatened obsolescence of traditional printmaking as a result of photomechanical processes, as well as changes in the economic structure of society that had created a burgeoning middle class with the financial resources to collect art. The fact that a print is a multiple, and hence less expensive than a painting, made the collecting of prints an attractive option for those wishing to become collectors. Publishers and dealers were quick to respond and encouraged artists to complement their painting with prints for this newly-established

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<sup>42</sup> William M Ivins, Jr, *Prints and visual communication*, (9th ed), Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1996: 67-8, & 164.

<sup>43</sup> Peter Cape, *Prints and printmakers in New Zealand*, Auckland: William Collins (New Zealand) Ltd, 1974: 77.



market. In 1862 in France, print publisher and art dealer Alfred Cadart and master printer (also a printmaker) Auguste Delâtre were involved in the formation of the *Société des Aquafortistes* with the aim of promoting etching as an artistic medium but also as a response to the mass-produced and widely distributed reproductions flooding the print market.

In France, many prominent and influential printmakers joined the society. They championed the expressive potential of etching and 'tonal wiping', which made it possible for each print to have a unique quality. Influential art critics such as Théophile Gautier, Phillippe Burty and Charles Baudelaire were important advocates of the Etching Revival through their articles and reviews. Burty, who was an etcher himself, introduced the concept of the *belle épreuve* – which he claimed was the best quality print coming from one of the first impressions pulled. He also suggested that the different states of an impression had an individual uniqueness and accordingly counteracted the problems associated with the 'multiple image'.<sup>44</sup> His ideas about quality and originality assisted the growing esteem for etching. Dealers and etchers stimulated the market by introducing individually signed 'limited' editions of prints to make them more exclusive and attractive to the collector, thus incorporating rarity as another value of the original print. In 1880 in England, the Printsellers' Association endorsed such ideas of different degrees of quality and rarity by identifying the different states of prints and classifying them into four different categories: the artist's proofs; proofs before any letters had been added to designate titles or artist's signature; those proofs with these letters; and the final edition of the print itself. From the 1900s the practice of numbering prints in a 'limited' edition became the norm and continues to be used by printmakers such as Drawbridge who value the 'autographic' quality of printmaking.<sup>45</sup>

Ideas of the Etching Revival were brought from Paris to England in the late 1850s by Francis Seymour Haden and James McNeil Whistler. The revivalists sought to raise the

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<sup>44</sup> Lindsay Leard, 'The Société des Peintres-Graveurs Français in 1889-97', *Print Quarterly*, 14(4), December, 1997: 355-363. <http://www.jstor.org> accessed 21/2/14, VUW Lib.

<sup>45</sup> Laura Suffield, 'Prints' from *Limited edition*, Oxford art online, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/grove/art> accessed 16 March, 2014, VUW Library. Anne Kirker and Ann Calhoun, *Face to face: a survey of artists' prints*, exhibition catalogue, Wellington: National Art Gallery, 1986: 9-10.

status of etching in the art world. They promoted a freer, more linear style and even advised *plein-air* (outdoor) etchings as an attempt to link etching to artistic fashions at the time, such as the French Barbizon School. Both Haden and the art critic P G Hamerton (who published the influential 1868 book on etching, *Etching and etchers*, promoted modern etching as a creative medium, as distinct from the formulaic syntax of engraving, and Haden argued 'that etching should be the result of spontaneous drawing onto the plate from nature'.<sup>46</sup> The etching revivalists claimed a lineage for their aesthetic ideals by linking their etching style back to the work of Rembrandt as well as the more recent developments in France. The establishment of the Society of Painter-Etchers in 1880 was a significant step towards a professional status and acceptance in the art world and in 1928 painter-etchers gained full status as Royal Academicians. (In France a similar society was formed in 1889, *Société des Peintres-Graveurs Français*.) By the early decades of the twentieth century etching was the predominant medium in England but with the financial crash of 1929 and the Depression that followed, the market for intaglio prints collapsed.

In post-war London, during the 1940s and early 1950s, the standing of etchings suffered from their small size and from being mostly in black and white.<sup>47</sup> The only prints regularly exhibited were colourful lithographs and monotypes, and the Redfern Gallery was effectively the only retail outlet for contemporary prints. The situation for intaglio prints changed when Robert Erskine opened St George's Gallery in November, 1955; he not only provided a regular exhibition space but was also a publisher and dealer, exhibiting and commissioning new prints from British printmakers and artists.<sup>48</sup> Erskine provided financial and artistic support to young printmakers and also aimed to educate the public about 'the special qualities of the printed image' and encouraged the British public to buy them.<sup>49</sup> One of Drawbridge's teachers at the Central School, Merlyn Evans (1910-1973), was among those who benefitted from Erskine's patronage. Drawbridge commented to Kirker that he found watching Evans creating his modern series of prints

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<sup>46</sup> Richard T Godfrey, *Printmaking in Britain: a general history from its beginnings to the present day*, Oxford: Phaidon Press Ltd., 1978: 109.

<sup>47</sup> Frances Carey and Antony Griffiths, *Avant-garde British printmaking 1914-1960*, London: British Museum Publications Ltd., 1990: 205.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid. 21.

<sup>49</sup> Godfrey, op. cit. 126.

called *Vertical suite in black*, (1958), inspirational – they were large, abstract and ‘bold intaglio images’.<sup>50</sup>

Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, Evans had been one of the most highly regarded etchers in Britain with his large prints of abstracted forms using the labour intensive method of mezzotint and aquatint.<sup>51</sup> During Drawbridge’s time at Central School the principal, William Johnson, was forward-looking and innovative. He introduced the custom of employing practising artists as part-time teachers and provided fully equipped workshops with technicians so that the artist-teachers could focus on teaching through discussions of philosophy, aesthetics, politics and current ideas on art and life. According to Robert Macdonald in his essay ‘John Drawbridge – the student years’, learning from such established and committed artists encouraged ‘freedom of expression [which] was the hallmark of teaching in the Central’s etching workshop’ as well as exploration of new techniques, such as ‘sugar-lift aquatint’ which Evans pioneered.<sup>52</sup> In *Godwits return*, Drawbridge observes:

The most important teachers for me in London were Merlyn Evans in etching, and Mervyn Peake, the great writer, who taught me life drawing. In the print workshop Evans was inspirational. He was an artist with a profound philosophy and his personal discussions with students made us feel not just worthwhile, but important. Evans was free to discuss ideas of art and life because he had the advantage of having technicians in the workshop ...<sup>53</sup>

Evans had visited Paris before the Second World War and met artists such as Max Ernst, Piet Mondrian and Alberto Giacometti, and it was in France that he also met Stanley W Hayter (1901-1988).

In his essay ‘John Drawbridge: a student in London and Paris’, Robert Macdonald comments on the importance of Hayter’s influence on developments in twentieth-century printmaking:

Hayter led the movement in Paris and later in America to restore the print as an art in its own right and to rescue Printmaking from the moribund condition into which it had fallen in Britain and America.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Anne Kirker, 'John Drawbridge: From print to construction ', *Art New Zealand*, 24 (Winter), 1982: 19.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Robert Macdonald, ‘John Drawbridge – the student years’, 2008, op. cit. 16-18.

<sup>53</sup> Drawbridge, op. cit. 45.

<sup>54</sup> Robert Macdonald, ‘John Drawbridge: a student in London and Paris’, 2001, op. cit. 52.

The main source of Hayter's influence was through his books, *New ways of graveur* (1949), which became an essential text for printmakers, and *About prints* (1962). Macdonald notes that Hayter was 'a powerful influence on the whole direction of teaching in the etching workshop' at Central School and so therefore, at least indirectly, on Drawbridge.<sup>55</sup> Hayter, who was constantly experimenting with new techniques, used the burin for his 'original' prints to create free-flowing lines of twisting shapes and patterns forming amorphous abstractions – a far remove from the parallel lines and cross-hatchings of engravers in the past but much closer to the aims of the Etching Revival printmakers of the late nineteenth century.<sup>56</sup> He revived the fortunes of printmaking in Britain and played a vital role in early- to mid-twentieth century British printmaking, despite spending most of his working life in France and, between the wars, in America. He moved to Paris in 1926 and by the following year, with the help and influence of printmaker Joseph Hecht, had set up his famous studio *Atelier 17* where artists of many nationalities converged (including Pablo Picasso, Joan Miró, Max Ernst, Marc Chagall) as well as Drawbridge himself in 1960.

Hayter provided a culture of innovation and helped to loosen up old processes and traditions; but, in particular, his most important contribution to printmaking was his experimentation with the use of colour and he devised a method of printing three different colours simultaneously on the same plate by using different viscosities of inks at different depths and using hard and soft rollers.<sup>57</sup> It was when Drawbridge was in Hayter's studio in 1960 that he produced the three-coloured etching, *City lights* (1960), employing Hayter's technique of all three colours on the one plate. Hayter was also interested in creating textures using materials pressed into a soft ground and etched; the ethos of his studio was experimentation and collaboration.

It is not hard, therefore, to see the influence of Evans and Hayter, both directly and more generally, in Drawbridge's printmaking practice and in a number of his prints. Like Hayter, he too experimented with textures, sometimes creating a combing method as in

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Graham Reynolds, 'The engravings of S.W. Hayter', Victoria and Albert Museum (ed), London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1967: 2-3.

<sup>57</sup> Godfrey, op. cit. 124.

*Windflow* (1966) and *Red Wave* (1970). In *A rather transparent girl* No. 1 (1967), as well as using the combed-effect on the girl's jersey, he also created texture on the border surrounding her figure, producing a raised crumbly effect. Drawbridge also adopted Hayter's method of pressing materials into a soft ground as in *Metropolis* No.2 (1972), and his earlier *City lights* (1960), was more directly influenced by working in Hayter's studio. From Evans, Drawbridge learned the processes of aquatint and mezzotint and he produced his first mezzotint when at Central School under Evans's tutelage, *Sleeping woman* (1959). In *Art New Zealand* (1982), Anne Kirker refers to the 'striated greys' that Evans created in his suite of prints *Vertical suite in black*, and very similar effects can be seen in several of Drawbridge's prints such as in *Emma* (1967), and *Homage to Malevich* No. VI (1980).<sup>58</sup> For entirely different reasons, Drawbridge was also indebted to Robert Erskine.

Erskine was at the centre of a large and important exhibition, 'The Graven Image', held at the Whitechapel Gallery in London, 1959, where one hundred and seventy-three contemporary British prints were on display. It was Erskine who made such a large exhibition of graphic art possible through the auspices of his own gallery, St George's, where he had exhibited different prints every month for four years. He also managed an annual exhibition which showcased forty of the best prints of the year of contemporary British painter-printmakers. In the introduction to the catalogue for *The Graven Image* Erskine states: 'It is notable that many of the artists' names are unfamiliar. This is because much of the best work comes from the printmakers who have been through art school only in the last two years', and indeed Drawbridge was one of these printmakers.<sup>59</sup> Drawbridge's etching, *Loire – near Saumur* (1958), [figure 1] was included in this exhibition and was very likely the result of a sketch made during his European travels in the summer of 1958 with Brian Carmody and Marion Rayward.<sup>60</sup> This etching depicts a river (the Loire) which stretches horizontally across the centre of the image. Aquatint has been used in conjunction with etching, giving the swirling clouds a damp

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<sup>58</sup> Kirker, 'John Drawbridge: From print to construction', op. cit. 19. Refer to Chapter 2, footnote 35, on the confusion with the numbering of Drawbridge's *Homage to Malevich* series.

<sup>59</sup> Robert Erskine, introduction for exhibition catalogue, *The Graven Image*, held at Whitechapel Art Gallery, 1950. London: Chareton Press of H Williams & Son Ltd., 1959: 6.

<sup>60</sup> Phoebe Bradford, Whitechapel Gallery archivist for exhibitions, email communication with the author, 15 March 2014. The existing literature on Drawbridge does not make specific reference to his inclusion in this exhibition.

and watery effect of varying density. Trees line the edges of a patchwork of fields, some freely inked shapes and others articulated by thinly sketched lines. In conception and technique *Loire – near Saumur* could easily have come from the era of Seymour Haden's plein air etchings that were promoted during the Etching Revival. Almost half of the composition shows a large expanse of sky, indicating transient weather effects – the wind depicted in the loose formation of clouds creating sweeping arcs across the landscape, and the sun breaking through being suggested by patches of blank paper on the surface of the river and by a small clear space above the horizon. The outdoor subject matter and the loosely sketched trees and fields are portrayed with the kind of creative spontaneity endorsed by the etching revivalists. However, old-fashioned or not, the inclusion of this etching in the exhibition must have helped to give Drawbridge a sense of arrival and recognition, especially as he was still a student at Central School. Furthermore, this print was included in his portfolio for acceptance as an associate member of the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers & Engravers, London.<sup>61</sup> By this time, Drawbridge had successfully exhibited his prints in various London galleries, including Erskine's St George's gallery, Whitechapel, Zwemmer and Leicester Galleries. Moreover, in an exhibition at the Leicester Gallery in 1960, his prints had been shown alongside those of J Friedlaender, Jean Dubuffet, Pablo Picasso and André Masson.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> *Loire – near Saumur* is also held in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, in the archive of prints held by the Royal Society of Painter-Printmakers diploma collection. Accession no. RE494.

[http://www.uwe.ac.uk/sca/research/cfpr/dissemination/archives/painter\\_printmakers.html](http://www.uwe.ac.uk/sca/research/cfpr/dissemination/archives/painter_printmakers.html) accessed 4/4/14.

<sup>62</sup> Mark Stocker, 'A window into John Drawbridge,' *Art New Zealand Winter*, 103 (Winter), 2002: 76.



Figure 1: John Drawbridge, *Loire – near Saumur*, 1958, etching & aquatint, 323 x 604 mm, (Archive of the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers & Engravers) Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

1960 was an important year for Drawbridge as he went to Paris to extend his printmaking experiences in the studios of Hayter's *Atelier 17* and then Johnny Friedlaender's studio. According to Kirker in her 1982 article, after only a few months at *Atelier 17* Drawbridge decided to move to Friedlaender's where the focus was more on

... exploring the subtleties of tone in the intaglio process. Until recently he has not regarded colour as an integral part of printmaking, seeing the art more in terms of graphic drawing and as an inheritance from the prints of Dürer and Rembrandt.<sup>63</sup>

This further supports the case for seeing Drawbridge as a rearguard 'fine art' printmaker. So do his etchings *Approach to St André* and *Seated Woman*, both produced in 1960 when at Friedlaender's studio. These etchings show similarities in technique used by two printmakers he admired, Jacques Villon (1875-1963), a friend of Friedlaender, and André Dunoyer de Segonzac (1884-1974).

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<sup>63</sup> Kirker, 'John Drawbridge: From print to construction ', op. cit. 19.



Figure 2: John Drawbridge, *Seated woman*, 1960, etching, 500 x 400 mm, Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington.



*Seated woman* (1960), [figure 2] was a significant print for Drawbridge as it established an approach to printmaking with which he continued throughout the 1960s and beyond. It demonstrates his characteristic interest in vague interior spaces with filtered light and dark revealing shadowy forms. In *Prints and printmakers in New Zealand* Cape reproduces three different states of *Seated woman* (I, III and VI) and describes Drawbridge's working method for this etching which, Cape claims, was similar to the way Drawbridge worked on his mezzotint plates: 'by burnishing and scraping (bringing out the lighter areas) and by deepening the blacks, a basic composition is discovered.



Figure 3: Jacques Villon, *La Couseuse* (*The seamstress*) 1905, drypoint, 168 x 168 mm.

Detail is added in the last state.<sup>64</sup> Jacques Villon's drypoints of solitary seated figures, as seen in *La couseuse* (1905) [figure 3] certainly seem to have been an influence on Drawbridge here. They use a similar subject and method – a solitary seated figure entangled in webs of etched lines. Villon's meticulous precision and changing density for shadow and depth create a lightness that anticipate those qualities in Drawbridge's prints from this period. Tellingly, his own collection of prints contains a print of Villon's (without title or date) in which a network of cross-hatched lines conveys a landscape behind a finely drawn fence. Drawbridge's *Seated woman* employs a similar technique of parallel and cross-hatched lines through which the figure emerges through a darkened backdrop that highlights her form. Drawbridge's series of seated women from this period are some of the most striking in his *oeuvre*.

<sup>64</sup> Cape, *Prints and printmakers in New Zealand*, op. cit. 76-78.

A print of Dunoyer de Segonzac's *Pathway in the woods* (no date) was also in Drawbridge's collection and his *Le gros chêne à Chaville* (1924), [figure 5] seems likely to have influenced the technique and subject matter of Drawbridge's *Approach to St. André* No.1 (1960) [figure 4].<sup>65</sup> This etching depicts a wintery scene with an avenue of loosely etched trees that form a tangled network of etched lines in the canopy and is clearly a homage to the French artist's work. Both prints use a low horizon line to depict the grandeur of the trees that rise above the curving path, however, their line-making is different. Drawbridge's lines are more deeply etched and denser than Dunoyer de Segonzac's and he employs a hard ground in this etching which allows him to use a triple-pointed needle to create the strong parallel lines and greater depth of tone.<sup>66</sup>

In this work and *Seated woman* Drawbridge produced something new in terms of what he would have or could have done back home in New Zealand; however, these prints in subject and technique were still fairly conservative in relation to what was being produced in Europe at the time. So, based on his training and the prints he was producing at that period and the prints from his own collection (discussed in the next chapter), a strong case can be made for placing Drawbridge as a rearguard 'fine art' printmaker. Another New Zealand master printmaker, Barry Cleavin, recently commented 'that for some internalised reason [Drawbridge] want[ed] to slow the world down and pay homage to labour-intensive times.'<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> At the Christchurch Art Gallery, *Approach to St. André No II* is the title given to a print which is most often known as *Avenue near St André*. This latter print is completely different although the image is of the same trees and pathway but from another angle. This title confusion does indicate some irregularity in Drawbridge's records.

<sup>66</sup> Cameron Drawbridge, from interview with the author, 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2013.

<sup>67</sup> Barry Cleavin, from an email interview with the author, 20 May 2014.





Figure 4: John Drawbridge, *Approach to St André No. 1*, 1960, etching, 600 x 497 mm, Aratoi, Museum of Art & History, Masterton.

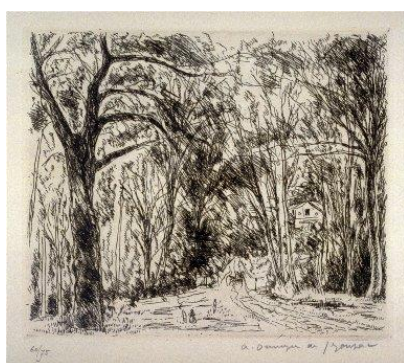


Figure 5: André Dunoyer de Segonzac, *Le gros chêne à Chaville*, 1924, etching, 186 x 219 mm, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, USA.

And yet, a plausible case can also be put for Drawbridge as someone committed to and influenced by the contemporary art practices of his time. In addition to looking back to older traditions, it is clear that he did engage directly with the cultural ethos of the period. He arrived in London on the cusp of the 1960s when London was a vibrant and exciting place to be. Photography, magazines and the fashion industry all centred on youth and the new 'style revolution' that was happening on the streets.<sup>68</sup> Furthermore, in London by the 1960s there was a new optimism and energy in Britain as the standard of living rose dramatically after the austerity of the 1950s and the focus was towards the new and the modern. It was a youth-orientated cultural revolution and British Pop Art was gaining widespread popularity among the younger generation of visual artists in London. Pop Art challenged traditional views of Fine Art and sought to blur the boundaries between low and high art, using imagery from popular culture, including advertising, comics and a variety of mass-produced items in print.

Richard Hamilton (1922-2011) is considered the first Pop artist and his photomontage *Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?* was blown up to life-size and exhibited at the Whitechapel Art Gallery's seminal 1956 exhibition of multidisciplinary collaborations, *This is tomorrow*.<sup>69</sup> Pop art brought with it a new vogue for screen printing as this process proved suitable for both Pop Art and hard-edged Abstraction and fitted well with the widespread view of printmaking as the 'democratic art' due to its lower cost and ability to produce multiples. A number of artist-printmakers during the 1960s and 1970s, including Hamilton and Andy Warhol, deliberately emphasized the mechanical effect of screenprints and valued it because it was 'unadulterated by the personal touch of the artist' – a reversal of the 'hand printed by artist alone' value attached to printmaking of the preceding period (and the Etching Revival).<sup>70</sup> Artists such as Hamilton and Eduardo Paolozzi (who had also taught at Central School) explored all the possibilities offered at the time by modern technical

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<sup>68</sup> Becky E Conekin, Eugene Vernier and Vogue Models in Early 'Swinging London': creating the fashionable look of the 1960s, *Women's Studies Quarterly*, 41 (Spring), 2013: 89-107. ProQuest Research Library, <http://search.proquest.com> accessed 22 March, 2014, VUW Lib.

<sup>69</sup> Ian Chilvers, *Richard Hamilton*, Oxford Companion to Western art, Oxford University Press 2007-2014 <http://www.oxfordartonline.com> accessed 14 March, 2014, VUW lib.

<sup>70</sup> Rosemary Simmons, *Collecting original prints*, New York: Mayflower Books, 1980: 42.

developments and declared screen printing to be the 'modern printmaker's medium'.<sup>71</sup> The multiplicity of these prints and the fact that they were works on paper made them affordable for ordinary people rather than merely the moneyed elite.<sup>72</sup>

However, many of these printmakers depended on the skills of master printers, such as Chris Prater in London. By 1958, Prater had founded the Kelpra screen printing studio and both Hamilton and Paolozzi worked with him, as did the American-born artist, Ron Kitaj. Prater and Kitaj collaborated on a number of very technically demanding editions of the latter's screen prints. For instance, *The defects of its qualities* (1967), was created from a collage of magazine images and texts and Kitaj's contribution to the final result was only in its conception and directions to the printmaker.<sup>73</sup> Kitaj himself had no hand in its production and photomechanical means were used. This combination of the collaborative nature of artists' work with a master printmaker, the use of 'found object' images from mass popular culture and modern technology to create 'artists' prints created on-going problems for the definition of an 'original' print. This subject was constantly debated in the 1960s and 70s with the introduction of each new technological advance and, between 1960 and 1965, various print biennale committees met to establish what qualified as an 'original' print so as to be eligible for the international print exhibitions.<sup>74</sup>

According to Pat Gilmour, this resulted in 'elevat[ing] the "original" print, always equating it with artist handwork.'<sup>75</sup> The creative print was not regarded in the same light as pop art prints which were 'unadulterated by the personal touch of the artist', but was closely aligned with those produced by Drawbridge who largely preferred to work within traditional printmaking processes and produced his own prints singlehandedly. However, living in 'swinging London' (as it was dubbed at the time) did make its

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<sup>71</sup> Godfrey, op. cit. 128-9.

<sup>72</sup> Founded in 1961 in West Germany, the Fluxus art movement went a step further to democratise art declaring that 'everything is art and everyone can do it'. From, *Art since 1900*, Hal Foster, Rosalind Krauss, Yve-Alain Boise, Benjamin H D Buchloh, London: Thames & Hudson, 2004: 456.

<sup>73</sup> This print won a major award at the Bradford Print Biennale in 1968.

<sup>74</sup> In 1960, 3<sup>rd</sup> International Congress of Plastic Arts in Vienna drafted and adopted a definition of an 'original print'. This endapplied to the period from 1900-1960. From 'The Print Council of New Zealand: newsletter', David Peters (ed), Masterton: Print Council of New Zealand, 1975: unpaginated.

<sup>75</sup> Pat Gilmour, *Modern prints*, London: Studio Vista Limited, 1970: 7.



impression on Drawbridge and his wider education extended to his first experience of American contemporary painting. In 1958 a touring retrospective exhibition of Jackson Pollock's painting was held at Whitechapel Art Gallery and, a few months later, an exhibition of New American Painting at the Tate Gallery. A large number of these paintings were in the Abstract Expressionist mode but Drawbridge was particularly attracted to Barnett Newman's larger minimal canvases with 'zips' of vertical stripes. This American art was completely new to him and a revelation.<sup>76</sup> In Drawbridge's own work, allusions to contemporary art and culture show themselves particularly in the kinds of visual imagery that began to appear in his prints once he returned to New Zealand and these have been perceptively discussed by Lara Strongman in her essay 'Coming and going: John Drawbridge, pop art, and the new bohemia in London' in *Wide open interior*.

Strongman points out the influence of Pop culture on a selection of Drawbridge's prints: for instance, on the prints *Emma* (1967) [figure 6] and *A rather transparent girl* Nos I and II (1967). *Emma* is a reference to Emma Peel who, stylishly clad in black with long fishnet tights, was the female detective (played by Diana Rigg) in the popular 1960s television series, *The Avengers*. This print is very dark except for her head and neck revealing her strapless top and shoulders. Her shapely legs have striations of vertical lines and toning. Emma could be pointing a gun in one hand as her stance is both strong and assertive, but the black ink shaping her torso and arms eliminate any detail. It is a seductive image of this favourite television star. Both versions of *A rather transparent girl* recycle advertising images taken from photographs of 1960s fashion models and Strongman points out 'the cheeky provocative pose' of the girl in the No II version.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Kirker, 'John Drawbridge: From print to construction', op. cit. 19.

<sup>77</sup> Lara Strongman, 'Coming and going: John Drawbridge, pop art, and the new bohemia in London', in Gregory O'Brien (ed), *John Drawbridge: wide open interior*, Wellington: City Gallery Wellington & Mallinson Rendel Publishers, 2001: 35.



Figure 6: John Drawbridge, *Emma*, 1967, mezzotint & drypoint, 120 x 220 mm.



Figure 7: John Drawbridge, *Beach girl*, 1967, photo-etching, aquatint, balsa wood, hardboard & paint, 275 x 430 x 35 mm, Dowse Art Museum, Lower Hutt.



Figure 8: John Drawbridge, *Orange landscape of Figure 7, Beach girl*, 1967, photo-etching, aquatint, balsa wood, hardboard & paint, 275 x 430 x 35 mm, Dowse Art Museum, Lower Hutt.



Another series produced in the same year, *Beach girl* (1967) [figure 7] reflects contemporary style and subject matter. Here Drawbridge experiments with a technique that he later came to use in his Beehive mural. In this dual image, he first creates two separate images and then splices strips of each image onto alternating sections of strips of balsa board so that he ends up with a three-dimensional fan-like construction. Depending on where the viewer stands, you either get the image of the beach girl, or an orange landscape [figure 8]. *Beach girl* was created using photo-etching and aquatint and the placement of small strips of balsa boards creating a concertina effect. (Ian Scott was making paintings with similar subject matter at the same time in New Zealand, such as his *Girlie* series 1967-69, which show Pop Art influences with images of women appropriated from popular culture and magazines.) A much later mezzotint *Heloïse and Françoise* (1983) [figure 9] was inspired by a photograph Drawbridge saw in a French newspaper and Gerald Barnett has suggested that he was aware of British film *noir* movies, such as *The Third Man* (1949), and Italian Neo-Realist cinema, such as Antonioni's *Blow-up* (1966).<sup>78</sup> His 1972 *Metropolis* series can be linked to earlier cinema, and in this case, the 1929 Fritz Lang movie with the same name.

For both *Metropolis* No. 1 and *Metropolis* No. 2 Drawbridge used a photo-sensitised plate with fabrics stretched across it together with a sheet of leterset people. The plate was exposed to light and then placed (and thus etched) in a nitric acid bath.<sup>79</sup> The central feature of *Metropolis* No. 2 (1972) [figure 10] is the sheet of leterset figures placed centrally in the lower half of the plate. The dwarfed figures represent the factory workers from the movie; they move and work as automata – all dressed the same, they function in unison to keep the factory machine operating and the metropolis above them thriving. The factory is underground and these workers don't see the light of day – they are each tied to one small cog in the larger wheel of industrialisation and are as dispensable as the small parts of the machinery they have to control; their lives are there to serve only one function – the oppressive management and capitalism. In the print, the leterset figures are the rows of tiny people, (serving a similar function to the workers in the Lang movie). They form vertical or horizontal rows of exactly repeated

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<sup>78</sup> Gerald Barnett, 'Shadowlands: the prints of John Drawbridge', in Gregory O'Brien (ed), *John Drawbridge: wide open interior*, Wellington: City Gallery Wellington & Mallinson Rendel Publishers, 2001: 44-5.

<sup>79</sup> Alexander Turnbull Archives, Records of Elva Bett Gallery, MS 89-026-008, artist's file – D.

figures. For example, there are vertical rows of men, all dressed and modelled alike, as well as a lower horizontal row of an identical woman pushing a perambulator and another row of a figure on a bicycle. In both these horizontal rows, the figures change direction halfway along and face the other way. They all go through their mechanical actions day after day to keep the city functioning. A more sinister sense of menace is indicated by the encroaching blackness that presses in on the figures on both sides. Above them is the light of the world beyond their own. Drawbridge has reduced Lang's movie, also in black and white, to its basic elements. Photosensitivity of the plate allows for a wide range of tonal differences of charcoals, greys and blacks, and minute details of aquatint dots almost stand out in relief. The overall effect is rich with the texture of the fabric enlivening the surface of the print. In his article about Drawbridge from *Wide open interior* (2001), Robert Macdonald mentions his own first impressions of London and the 'awful feeling of greyness' from a city still suffering from the effects of bomb damage. He remembered that 'an air of soulless uniformity seemed to pervade much of the metropolis' and Drawbridge's *Metropolis* No. 2 imaginatively conveys that uniformity.<sup>80</sup>



Figure 9: John Drawbridge, *Héloïse and Françoise*, 1983, mezzotint & drypoint, 160 x 250 mm, Christchurch Art Gallery.

<sup>80</sup> Macdonald, 'John Drawbridge: a student in London and Paris', op. cit. 51.

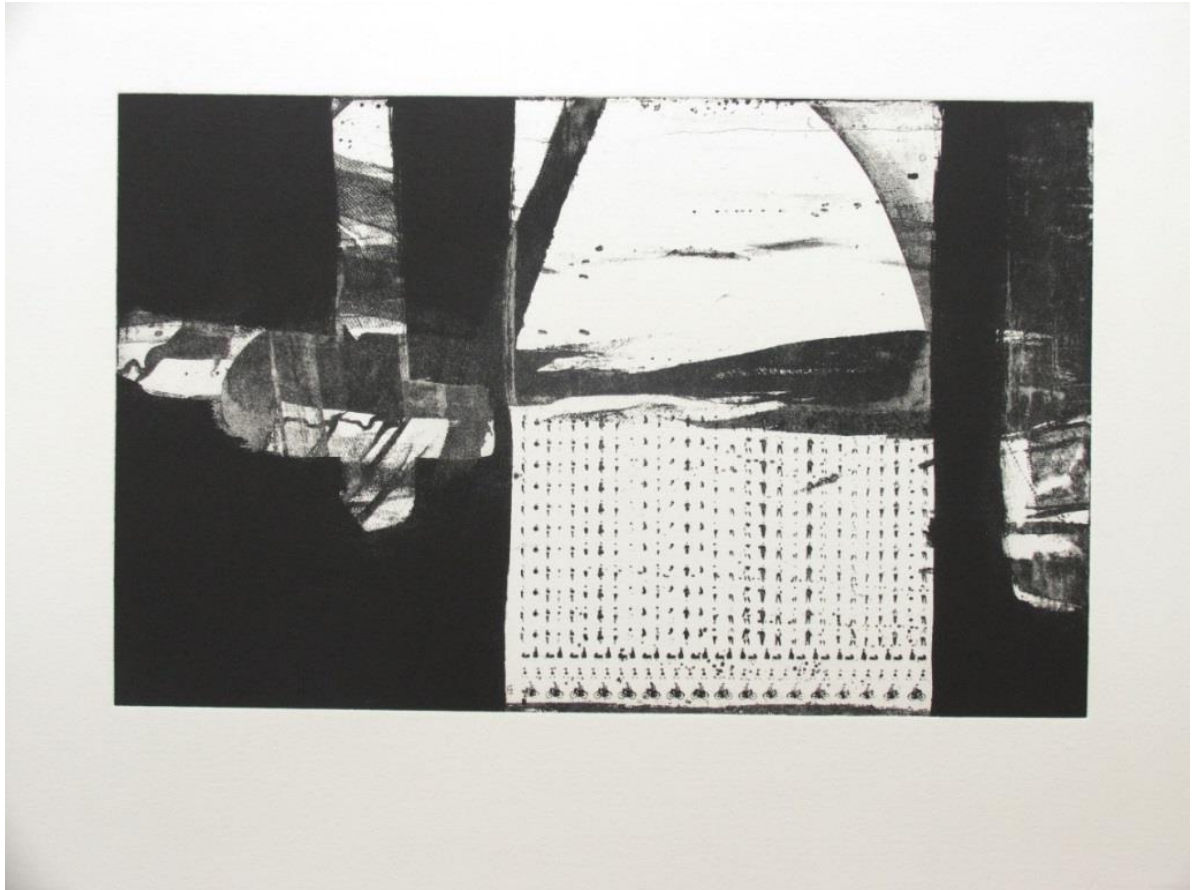


Figure 10: John Drawbridge, *Metropolis No. 2*, 1972, photo-etching, leterset, aquatint, 340 x 545 mm.

The Pop art influence continued to be very fruitful for Drawbridge after his return to New Zealand. In his 1987 mezzotint *Matisse, acrobat and Mae West* [figure 11] he juxtaposes the American actress and sex symbol, Mae West, with Matisse cut-out figures – mixing a popular culture icon with high art (though high art treated in a populist mode). Similarly, in *Woman with Matisse* (1980) [figure 12] a female figure is draped across the foreground in front of a framed image of Matisse's *Venus*. The figure is wearing a black, strapless, mini-dress and long, above-the-elbow gloves – drawing on contemporary photographic imagery of fashion models. Venus, the Greco-Roman Goddess of love and seduction, is supplanted by Drawbridge's modern urban Venus who spills out of the frame.



Figure 11: John Drawbridge, *Matisse, acrobat and Mae West*, 1987, mezzotint & drypoint, 250 x 330 mm.



Figure 12: John Drawbridge, *Woman with Matisse*, 1980, mezzotint, 295 x 200.

These examples, not all used by Strongman, lend significant support to her contention that Drawbridge was as much affected by contemporary Pop art as by traditional art, and that his 'artistic identity' constantly shifted:

between experimentation and tradition, abstraction and figuration, the old world and the new, his artistic lineage informed as much by Pop Art as by Abstract Expressionism, by urban culture as much as elemental nature.<sup>81</sup>

The dual nature of Drawbridge's 'artistic identity', combining the rearguard and contemporary, is apparent in his prize-winning mezzotint with drypoint, *Tanya going and coming* No.1 (1967) [figure 13].

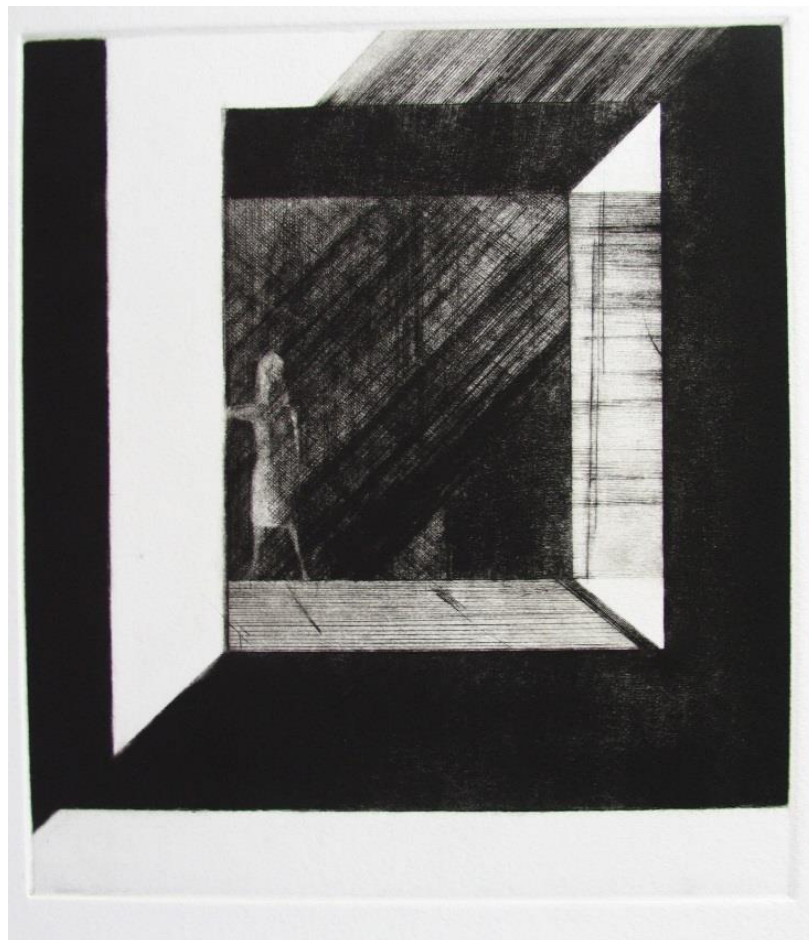


Figure 13: John Drawbridge, *Tanya going and coming* No. 1, 1967, mezzotint & drypoint, 345 x 300 mm, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington.

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<sup>81</sup> Strongman, op. cit. 37.

He produced a series of three mezzotints, *Tanya going and coming*, Nos.1, 2 and 3 in 1967 when Ashken was a Frances Hodgkins Fellow at Otago University, Dunedin. The title refers to her going and coming from their home in Wellington to Dunedin throughout the year.<sup>82</sup> In *Tanya going and coming* No.1, Tanya is positioned to the left and at the back of the interior space, 'going and coming' through hallways and rooms which are partially obscured by shadows. Her long straight hair and mini-dress are again clear allusions to the fashion of 1960s models and indicate Drawbridge's absorption of contemporary culture into his prints from this period. (Strongman plausibly likens Tanya to the iconic teenage fashion model of the 60s, Twiggy.) The figure is lit from the left side and is surrounded by abstracted shapes of frames-within-frames – the juxtaposition of the figurative and the abstract further reflecting Drawbridge's artistic 'dual identity'.

This print shows a continuation of the techniques Drawbridge employed for his etching, *Seated woman* (1960), although for *Tanya going and coming* No.1 he used mezzotint and drypoint – which was to become his most favoured process.<sup>83</sup> The web of parallel and finely cross-hatched lines have a similarity to *Seated woman* and both prints feature a solitary female figure enclosed in confined architectural spaces and articulated by a subtle, side-angled light. The introduction of mezzotint enables Drawbridge to produce deeper and richer blacks which frame the architectural space, within which the small figure of Tanya is positioned. This vibrant black juxtaposed to the white of a side wall imparts a sense of psychological and physical isolation and accentuates the formal abstract elements. The figure is caught in mid-movement – she is either coming or going – and appears to gesture towards something/somewhere unseen. Drawbridge produced a number of prints using the subject of a solitary woman within enclosed architectural space from 1960 to 1970 which some commentators have suggested convey a sense of the psychological isolation of the individual – either referring to the angst of the 1950s Beat generation or the solitariness experienced particularly by the deaf (like his wife Tanya).<sup>84</sup> The prints from this period employing the isolated female

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<sup>82</sup> Damian Skinner, *John Drawbridge*, op. cit. 211.

<sup>83</sup> Mezzotint is a painstaking process (invented in about 1640) that requires the etching plate to be prepared by systematically covering it with small pitted drypoint dots. The plate is then inked and the artist works from dark to light, scrapping back the burr and ink for the light areas.

<sup>84</sup> Neil Rowe suggested the isolation of the individual as a theme for the Beat generation in 'Drawbridge – the last 20 years', *Evening Post*, 5 May, 1977: 12.

figure include *Tanya going and coming* No.2 (1967), *Tanya going and coming* No.3 (1967), *Tanya about to fly* (1967), *Girl at a window* No.1 (1968), *Girl at a window* No.2 (1969), *Girl before a mirror* (1969), and *Interior* (1970).

*Tanya going and coming* No.1 won a major prize for Drawbridge at the Xth Bianco e Nero International Exhibition in Lugano, Switzerland in 1968. He had entered four prints, *Costa della Riviera Occidentale* (1967), *Tanya going and coming* No. 1 (1967), *Tanya e il volo* (1967), and *Ragazza che si pecchia* (1967) – the first is an etching, the others are drypoint and mezzotint. Drawbridge was one of ten prize winners (ten prizes were awarded at every exhibition) and the list of previous prize winners from past years included a number of his personal heroes – Jacques Villon, Giorgio Morandi, George Rouault, Ben Nicholson, S W Hayter in 1958 and David Hockney in 1964, among others. Drawbridge's first entry into the international biennale of prints was for Cincinnati, USA, in 1960. His big success in 1968 with *Tanya going and coming* No.1 was announced in the Wellington newspaper *The Evening Post* on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1968 with the heading 'Wellington artist wins Swiss prize'. The article mentioned that the competition 'is open to an artist once in his lifetime' and Drawbridge commented that he had been 'invited to send a print to the competition'. He entered two other international exhibitions that same year, one for drawings in Rijeka, then in Yugoslavia, and the other in Cracow, Poland for printmaking. Other New Zealand printmakers had previously exhibited in these international exhibitions but Drawbridge was the first to win a prize.<sup>85</sup>

Drawbridge's experiences in London and Paris opened up possibilities that he was able to use throughout the rest of his printmaking career. His training at Central School and in Paris allowed him to develop and refine techniques from the long established tradition of printmaking to produce his 'original' prints. These techniques that survive from the early 1400s in Western Europe had been threatened with obsolescence since the introduction of photomechanical processes in the mid-nineteenth century yet continued to exert an enduring influence. Drawbridge's training and his life-long use of traditional techniques of printmaking support the claim that he was a rearguard 'fine

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<sup>85</sup> The Evening Post, 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 1968. From ATL Records of Elva Bett Gallery, (MS89-026-008) - artists' files – D.



art' practitioner of prints. He drew on values established during the Etching Revival in the late-nineteenth century and his acceptance as an associate of the Royal Society of Painter-Printmakers in 1960 adds weight to this claim. He continued the debate concerning the problematic definition of the 'print' that started with the etching revivalists of the mid-nineteenth century.

At the same time, Drawbridge was just twenty-seven when he arrived in London. To arrive there from a 'cultural backwater' was a huge shock. The New Zealand he left in the late 1950s was conservative and safe and decades behind the artistic styles and attitudes of those in the UK and Europe. The word 'modern' when applied to visual arts in New Zealand had developed into a negative criticism rather than an art practice, as Gordon Brown points out in his article 'The pursuit of Modernism in the 1940s and early 1950s'.<sup>86</sup> Drawbridge would have been familiar with such reactionary attitudes to art in New Zealand before he left: conservative Art Societies often rejected exhibiting artists' work that showed modernist leanings. When he returned in the mid-1960s, having successfully exhibited his paintings and prints in the UK, he found a different term of negative criticism was applied to his painting, that of 'internationalism', implying that his painting was not local enough for prevailing nationalist tastes. In *Godwits return* he describes the local response to his 'more abstract paintings and prints' when he arrived back: 'for a long time people couldn't understand them, and I couldn't explain them either'.<sup>87</sup>

For the rest of his career Drawbridge continued to draw on the skills and memories of both the traditional and contemporary art practices he had been exposed to in the UK and Europe. His paintings are modern European Abstraction in style and his large murals have the scale and size of the Abstract Expressionists – although for Drawbridge there is always a 'restraint and harmony' in his work.<sup>88</sup> However, it is in his prints that Drawbridge fully reveals the dualism of his 'artistic identity'. He looks back to traditional printmaking processes as a rearguard practitioner and, at the same time, absorbs and imaginatively redeploys imagery, styles and techniques from contemporary art and

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<sup>86</sup> Gordon Brown, 'The pursuit of Modernism in the 1940s and early 1950s', *Art New Zealand*, 30 (Autumn), 1984: 28-31.

<sup>87</sup> Drawbridge, op. cit. 52.

<sup>88</sup> Robert Macdonald, 'John Drawbridge – the student years', op. cit. 18.



culture. Accordingly, a more nuanced view of Drawbridge as a printmaker needs to acknowledge the particular and intricate interplay of tradition and contemporaneity in his work.



## Chapter Two: John Drawbridge and printmaking in New Zealand

*The fact is that each writer [artist] creates his precursors. His work modifies our conception of the past as it will modify the future. Jorge Luis Borges*<sup>89</sup>

Drawbridge and Ashken returned to New Zealand in early 1964. By then he had accumulated a wealth of experience during his six years of living and travelling in London, Europe and the USA and visiting the great art galleries of the world. As well as the success he had achieved exhibiting his paintings and prints in London, he brought back an expert knowledge of printmaking – working with metals, acids, inks and presses – and the medium he would come to favour and use for his best known prints, mezzotint.<sup>90</sup> Drawbridge obtained a post at Wellington Polytechnic School of Design where he taught drawing, painting and printmaking, and continued to paint and to make murals and prints alongside his teaching. He noticed a marked difference in the local art scene from the one he had left behind in 1957.

In this chapter I will look at developments taking place in the local art scene by the time Drawbridge returned to New Zealand and how changing attitudes to printmaking (which were already sweeping through the UK and the USA) affected the local scene and his work. My discussion will include an overview of his exhibitions and the contribution Drawbridge made to New Zealand printmaking. I will consider whether it is more appropriate to see him as an artist drawing on European traditions while also actively reconnecting himself with the New Zealand cultural landscape or as an ‘international’ artist living and working in New Zealand.

In the years Drawbridge had been away, various dealer galleries had opened in Auckland, such as the Ikon Gallery, Uptown Gallery, Barry Lett Galleries and the New Vision Gallery. Wellington, however, was still dominated by the conservative New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts and National Art Gallery, until in 1965 Peter McLeavey opened his flat on the Terrace as a part-time gallery. Here he showed the work of contemporary New Zealand modernist artists, including Toss Woollaston, Milan Mrkusich, Colin McCahon, Pat Hanly and Gordon Walters. In 1968 McLeavey set up his

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<sup>89</sup> Jorge Luis Borges, ‘Kafka and his precursors’ from *On writing*, Suzanne Jill Levine (ed), London: Penguin, 2010: 87.

<sup>90</sup> Peter Cape, ‘John Drawbridge: Techniques and values’, op. cit. 141.

gallery in Cuba Street, Wellington and, in the same year, the Centre Gallery closed and its director, Elva Bett, opened the Bett-Duncan Gallery in the same building as McLeavey's. These galleries created increased opportunities for modernist and other contemporary artists to exhibit their work, and Peter Cape claims in *New Zealand painting since 1960* (1979) that 'at the beginning of 1975 there were some fifty private galleries nationally making a substantial part of their income by exhibiting and selling New Zealand paintings'.<sup>91</sup> Such developments suggest that it was becoming possible to generate an income from making art in New Zealand – if not yet a full-time living.

On his return, Drawbridge soon started to take advantage of these increased opportunities to exhibit, as painter, muralist and printmaker. In 1964 he had two solo exhibitions of his paintings in Auckland's Uptown Gallery and Ikon Gallery. In 1965 and 1966 he was included in the Auckland City Art Gallery exhibitions 'New Zealand Painting' and the latter year, 1966, he and other Wellington painters exhibited with the 20/20 Vision group.<sup>92</sup> He exhibited regularly with New Vision Gallery in Auckland from 1966 to 1981 and with the Bett-Duncan Gallery in Wellington from 1969 to 1981.<sup>93</sup> Both galleries featured and gave equal attention to his paintings and to his prints. His prints were also included in exhibitions at the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts in 1965 (*City at Night, Rock Pool, Village near Portiers, Approach to St Andrés, City No. 1*) and the National Art Gallery in 1966 (*Red descending, Loire Valley – near Samur*). The following year, the Otago Museum held a combined exhibition of thirty-six of his prints and four of his paintings, together with sculptures by his wife. And in 1970 one of his prints (*Girl before a mirror*) was selected for the exhibition to mark the Royal visit, 'New Zealand art of the sixties', presented by the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand. As a muralist, he continued to win a number of major commissions. In 1962 in London, he had been commissioned to create the New Zealand House mural. Back in New Zealand, he was chosen to produce the New Zealand pavilion mural for Expo '70 in Tokyo and in 1973 was awarded the Beehive mural commission. But, pre-eminently, throughout this period he was cementing his reputation as a master printmaker.

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<sup>91</sup> Peter Cape, *New Zealand painting since 1960: a study in themes and developments*, Auckland: Collins, 1979: 10.

<sup>92</sup> John Coley (ed), *20/20 Vision Prints*, Christchurch: 20/20 Vision, 1968: unpaginated.

<sup>93</sup> From 1981 he moved to the Galerie Légard later to become the Brooker Gallery in Wellington.

During the late 1950s and early 1960s, local interest in prints gained strength and momentum.<sup>94</sup> Not only were there more exhibitions of overseas prints but, for the printmaker, there were more opportunities to exhibit and sell prints, and by the late 1960s a vibrant printmaking scene was underway in New Zealand. This was partly due to ideals of egalitarianism and the democratisation of art which were exerting a powerful influence in the UK, Europe and the USA. As economies strengthened during the post-war years, the price of paintings rose and the print came to be seen as the 'democratic' art form and as an 'original' art work that more people could afford. In New Zealand, the combined factors of a growing population and the arrival of jet air travel fuelled the growing interest in art which was further reinforced by galleries mounting exhibitions of overseas artists and of New Zealand artists such as Drawbridge, Pat Hanly, Ralph Hotere, Brian Carmody and others, who were returning from study abroad. The printmaking boom too was affected by these same factors.

At the end of 1966, New Vision Gallery in Auckland mounted an exhibition of exclusively New Zealand contemporary printmakers, 'N.Z. Graphics 1966', showing sixty prints by eighteen Auckland and Wellington printmakers.<sup>95</sup> New Vision Gallery was run by Kees and Tina Hos whose contribution to NZ printmaking was prodigious. Kees Hos emigrated to New Zealand from Holland in the early 1950s and taught painting at Elam School of Fine Arts but was also himself an innovative printmaker.<sup>96</sup> The gallery's policy was resolutely democratic in terms of the art exhibited; it supported the whole range of visual arts as well as the merging of high art/low art boundaries (as Helen Hitchings in Wellington had previously done, suggesting the widespread influence of the Bauhaus movement).<sup>97</sup> Barry Cleavin has commented that through New Vision Gallery in Auckland, Kees and Tina Hos 'provided a base and venue around which to feel that the print meant something.'<sup>98</sup> This 'N.Z. Graphics 1966' exhibition set the scene for the

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<sup>94</sup> Damian Skinner, *John Drawbridge*, Auckland: Ron Sang Publications, 2008: 34.

<sup>95</sup> Anne Kirker, 'Prints – a coming of age', The Walter Auburn Memorial lecture from the *Friends of the Auckland City Art Gallery newsletter*, 26 May, 1987: unpaginated.

However, this was not the first exhibition of exclusively New Zealand prints to be exhibited at New Vision Gallery. There was an exhibition called 'New Zealand Graphics '65' that comprised of 76 prints by 14 printmakers – mostly from Auckland and Wellington but also included Vere Dudgeon from Dunedin and Noelle Palmer from Kaukapakapa. This information is from the catalogue given to me by Gary Tricker: *New Zealand Graphics '65*, New Vision Gallery Limited, Auckland.

<sup>96</sup> Peter Cape, *Prints and printmakers in New Zealand*, op. cit. 100.

<sup>97</sup> Kirker, 'Prints – a coming of age', op. cit. unpaginated.

<sup>98</sup> Barry Cleavin, email interview with the author, 20 May 2014.

establishment of The Print Council of New Zealand. Initiated by Kees Hos and Walter Auburn (an immigrant physician from Germany and a connoisseur and collector of prints) in March 1967, a group of like-minded people came together to make plans for its inception. This group consisted of Auburn, Hos, Gordon Brown, Hanly, Stanley Palmer, Mervyn Williams, Gil Docking, Barry Lett, Peter Tomory and Hamish Keith, and the first Print Council of New Zealand exhibition was held in September 1967 in Auckland. (Until this time the Auckland City Art Gallery had been the only public gallery to have any substantial collection of twentieth-century New Zealand prints. Other city public galleries invested in British and European prints, if they invested in them at all.)<sup>99</sup> Drawbridge was one of the sixteen printmakers chosen to exhibit in The Print Council's first exhibition. This consisted of seventy-four prints and at the opening, many of the printmakers were meeting each other for the first time.<sup>100</sup> The organisation provided a huge boost to the interest in and understanding of printmaking in New Zealand and was formed with the intention of bringing the printmaker and the collector together. There was much excitement, and the Print Council appeared to have a promising future. Drawbridge later remarked to Kirker that 'originally [the Print Council] had such a driving force it was envisaged that it would go on forever.'<sup>101</sup> The Council's aims were outlined in their 1969 newsletter:

To promote and support printmaking as a creative art; To publish prints by leading New Zealand printmakers, especially commissioned by the Print Council and available only to members; To arrange and select a two-yearly exhibition of prints ... to be shown in the main centres, and later to be made available to other New Zealand and overseas galleries; To publish a broadsheet ... ; To arrange an annual lecture on prints and printmaking ...; To consider the formation of print workshops, financed and conducted on a co-operative basis; To assist print-makers wishing to participate in international print exhibitions; To encourage the inclusion of print-making in the curriculum of schools and teachers' training colleges.<sup>102</sup>

This was acknowledgement that New Zealand now boasted a substantial number of serious printmakers, and the council was a means of giving them official recognition.<sup>103</sup>

The Print Council not only commissioned prints for their own members but also sought

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<sup>99</sup> Gail Ross, *New Zealand prints 1900 – 1950: an unseen heritage*, PhD diss., Christchurch: University of Canterbury, (CDR), 2006, Vol 1: 107.

<sup>100</sup> The other printmakers selected to exhibit in this first exhibition included Barry Cleavin, Ted Dutch, Mervyn Williams, Kees Hos, Stanley Palmer, Kate Coolahan, Pat Hanly, and Gary Tricker.

<sup>101</sup> Kirker, 'Prints – a coming of age', op. cit. unpaginated.

<sup>102</sup> The Print Council of New Zealand, 'The council's aims', from exhibition catalogue, 1969, Auckland: The Print Council of New Zealand, 1969, back cover.

<sup>103</sup> Ian Roberts, 'The New Zealand Print Council' *Ascent: A journal of the arts in New Zealand*, 1(1), 1967: 45.

commissions for large impressions to be hung in public spaces, such as hotels and city office blocks.<sup>104</sup> In 1967 Drawbridge, Cleavin, Williams and Palmer were the first four printmakers to be commissioned to produce prints by the council for its members. By the 1970s there were more opportunities to exhibit and sell prints than ever before, as indicated by Cape in *Prints and printmakers in New Zealand* (1974):

In New Zealand, the interest in all varieties of prints and printmaking has exploded over the past few years, and what was for a long time regarded as a minor – though admittedly highly skilled – branch of the visual arts has suddenly turned into a major one.<sup>105</sup>

The Print Council mounted six significant touring exhibitions to major cities throughout New Zealand between 1967 and 1976, and Drawbridge participated in four of these. Kirker notes that in these exhibitions there was ‘a preponderance of intaglio processes’ and ‘it was obvious that artist-printmakers favoured etching whereas painters like Hanly, who expanded their repertoire to include the multiple image, preferred the more straightforward, colour-orientated method of screenprinting.’<sup>106</sup>

In 1968 the 20/20 Vision Group invited twenty artists to participate in a print exhibition of serigraphs (screenprints). Each artist was to submit a design which expert silkscreen printers would print. The idea was to promote the principle of collaboration and produce low cost art works (\$2 a print) that a person on an average/low income could afford.<sup>107</sup> In the catalogue, Drawbridge was invited to explain the different kinds of ‘prints’, including serigraphs, which he called ‘industrial prints’ as they were produced by combining ‘the imagination of the artist and the skills of the craftsman’. He also added that one ‘should not be led to believe that a reproduction is an artist’s print or that an industrial print is an artist’s original print’, continuing the on-going debate as to what did actually constitute an ‘original’ print.<sup>108</sup> The Print Council lasted until 1976 and by then had successfully raised the profile of printmaking in New Zealand while, through this

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<sup>104</sup> Bridie Loni and Marilyn Webb, *Marilynn Webb: prints and pastels*, Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2003: 34.

<sup>105</sup> Cape, *Prints and printmakers in New Zealand*, op. cit. 12. (In spite of his claim that printmaking was accepted as a major branch of the visual arts in the 1970s, it does not retain such an elevated position today.)

<sup>106</sup> Kirker, ‘Prints – a coming of age’, op. cit. unpaginated.

<sup>107</sup> Quentin MacFarlane, ‘20/20 Vision print show’, *Ascent*, 1 (2) July, 1968: 49. The gallery 20/20 Vision was formed in 1964 ‘to encourage artists to experiment with new forms and materials and to provide a forum for their most advanced ideas’, John Coley, from the Introduction to the exhibition catalogue, Alexander Turnbull Library.

<sup>108</sup> John Drawbridge, ‘Once upon a print’ from the exhibition catalogue for 20/20 Vision print exhibition, Alexander Turnbull Library, 1968, unpaginated.

Drawbridge produced the screenprint *Untitled* (1968) for his exhibition.

medium, also introducing a number of new artists, such as Robin White, Denys Watkins and Gordon Crook. Although the Print Council experienced financial difficulties in its later years, it felt that it had achieved many of its initial aims by the time of its dissolution. By then most regions had developed their own self-supporting systems and many private galleries were also showing prints. Drawbridge can be seen as integrally connected to these developments and thereby indicating his active participation in New Zealand's expanding printmaking scene.

In his 1975 article on 'Eight New Zealand abstract painters', Patrick Hutchings quotes Drawbridge's view that 'in a social democratic country like New Zealand, prints are a necessary form of art: while paintings need to be fairly expensive, prints can be reasonably cheap.'<sup>109</sup> This view reflected that of other local artists wanting to communicate with a wider public and seeing the possibility to do so through the print's capacity to be produced in multiple copies. For instance, in 1973, Robin White gave, as one reason for her move to screenprinting, that 'if I get a *good image*, then I like to reproduce it. To confine it to one painting, one oil, is to block it off from other people – I like to make it available ....'<sup>110</sup> Yet, for master printmakers, like Drawbridge and Cleavin, printmaking was, according to the latter, less to do with costs, multiplicity or 'glib technology': 'for John's mezzotints, for my etchings/aquatints – it [was] more a matter of the ink and the way that ink looks and lives on the paper.'<sup>111</sup> Another important consideration was the suitability of the process for the meaning: the variety of media and the availability of new technology gave the artist a wider choice of methods for expressing their ideas and achieving the desired effects. Cleavin emphasises this in the catalogue introduction to his exhibition, 'Lateral inversions and other animals', by his comment that the end and the means are 'inextricably and invisibly welded'.<sup>112</sup> In addition, for some printmakers there is 'the actual physical involvement in both preparing the printed surface and the actual printing of the edition [which] is an essential part of the process for many artists', and clearly Drawbridge was one of these

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<sup>109</sup> Hutchings, op. cit. 24.

<sup>110</sup> Quoted in Anne Kirker and Ann Calhoun, *Face to face: a survey of artists' prints*, National Art Gallery catalogue, Wellington: National Art Gallery, 1986: 94.

<sup>111</sup> Barry Cleavin, from an email to the author, 20 May 2014.

<sup>112</sup> Barry Cleavin, 'Lateral inversions and other animals' from the exhibition catalogue *As the crow flew: sequences and consequences*, Sale: Gippsland Art Gallery, 2002: 8.



printmakers.<sup>113</sup> This close involvement at every stage of the process enables the artist-printmaker to have control over each print produced. Kirker quotes from an interview with Drawbridge in 1982 that 'it is "the response to touch as well as looking" that motivates Drawbridge's method.'<sup>114</sup> Hutchings also observes that 'Drawbridge loves the process itself of cutting the metal' and 'an etcher's plate is for Drawbridge a kind of sculpture, and the pull only a kind of proof – the pun is instructive – that the thing has indeed been well cut.'<sup>115</sup> Here, Hutchings refers to the three-dimensionality of the plate which has similarities to that of carving into stone. Cape also refers to this quality of intaglio printmaking techniques in his 1973 *Landfall* essay on Drawbridge:

even the simplest etching is to a minor degree sculptural, and the direct-to-metal techniques even more so. It takes a sculptural skill to drive the cutting point of a burin along a line which exists only in the artist's mind. There is the same direct, final quality in drypoint once the burr of metal has been raised. Although changes are possible in mezzotint, before the image is brought out with the burnisher, the direct metal working again has a sculptural quality.<sup>116</sup>

Although Drawbridge describes his homecoming as a difficult period of adjustment, it is clear that, from the beginning of his return to New Zealand, he was reintegrating himself, exhibiting frequently and proving to be a valuable contributor to the rapidly developing printmaking scene in New Zealand.

However, it also has to be said that Drawbridge's printmaking continued to show evidence of his internationalism. Once back in New Zealand, he kept looking back to Europe and further developing the Pop Art influences he had encountered there. A *rather transparent girl* No. 1 (1967) [figure 14] provides a good example. Here he uses collage effects and mixed techniques, evoking the print techniques of the 1960s while inserting a photograph of a girl's head and face. This photograph was printed on photographic paper before the image was transferred to the plate. The girl has a 1960s' hairstyle, wears trousers and a combed-textured jersey and appears to be sitting on a parapet or window sill against a background of etched ochre-coloured squares. The photograph of her face looks deliberately superimposed onto a cut-out shape of her

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<sup>113</sup> Rosemary Simmons, *Collecting original prints*, London: Cassell Ltd., 1980: 42.

<sup>114</sup> Anne Kirker, 'John Drawbridge: from print to construction', op. cit. 21.

<sup>115</sup> Hutchings, op. cit. 24.

<sup>116</sup> Cape, 'John Drawbridge: techniques and values', *Landfall* 106 (June) 1973: 145.

torso. To produce this collage-effect Drawbridge used three plates. The first plate was covered in a coating that was combed and

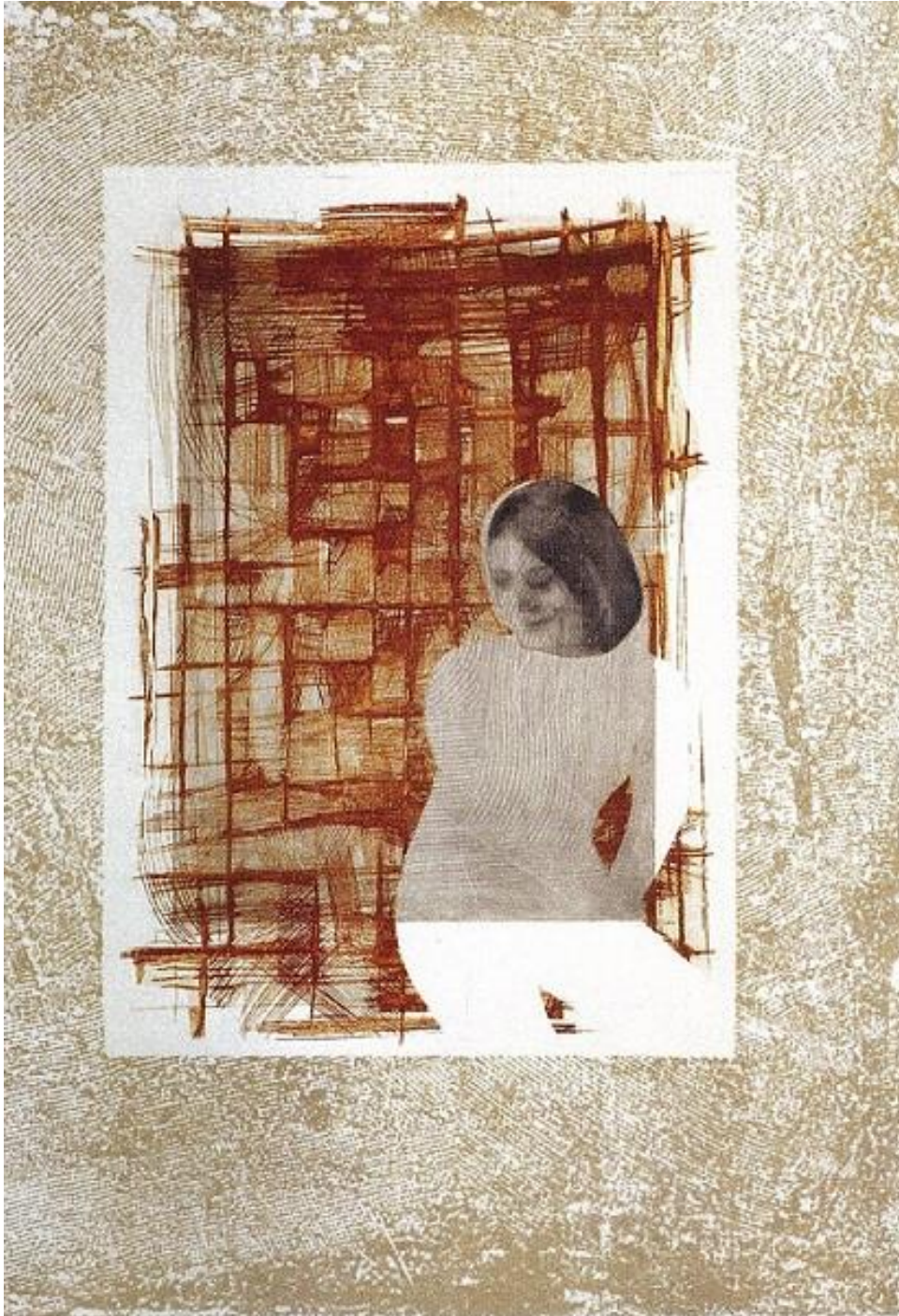


Figure 14: John Drawbridge, *A rather transparent girl No. 1*, 1967, mezzotint, aquatint, soft ground etching, & colour engraving on deckle edged paper, 497 x 373 mm, Australian National Gallery.

scratched with fabric pushed into it, and then some of the coating was scraped back in order to achieve a raised, crumbly texture. The next two plates were over-printed, with some colour on the third plate. There is no ink on the second plate but it is embossed (not inked just textured). The pressure of the plate onto the paper creates the patterns and Drawbridge was clearly very interested in these effects.<sup>117</sup> The face of the girl is on the third plate. Registration is of great importance when using so many different plates and her head is deliberately not perfectly registered here, producing a disjunctive effect. The different plates create varying depths of field adding instability to the girl's presence. She appears to hover back and forth between all three planes – her head more solidly present than her more evanescent body. In *Wide open interior*, Gerald Barnett suggests that Antonioni's 1966 film *Blow-up*, in its complex play with photographic images, was a possible inspiration for this particular image.<sup>118</sup> Whatever the inspiration, the entire effect certainly draws on international styles Drawbridge had encountered while in London in the early 1960s.

As Drawbridge mentions in *Godwits return*, his visits to the print room at the British Museum made a powerful impression on him. They allowed him to study the original prints of past masters that he had only seen before in reproduction, such as the Rembrandts and Goyas as well as discovering other printmakers who were new to him, such as Dunoyer de Segonzac, Giorgio Morandi (1890-1964) and Jacques Villon.<sup>119</sup> The experience of coming face-to-face with renowned original prints and paintings for the first time can be seen to have had both direct and indirect influence on his work. Cape might claim that 'an artist of Drawbridge's quality is unlikely to show derivations', but Brian Carmody later comments more persuasively that 'in the first few years of an artist's work you will always see influences and later these meld into the one – the artist's own style.'<sup>120</sup> So, for instance, Morandi's influence is often rightly referred to in

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<sup>117</sup> Cape mentions recent exhibitions at the Bett-Duncan Gallery and the Academy Gallery in which Drawbridge continued his experiments with embossing. He exhibited some 'small "tablets" which were virtually abstract, paper-sculpted bas-reliefs' which were also uninked. From Cape, 'John Drawbridge: techniques and values', *Landfall*, 106 (June), 1973, 146.

Te Papa Tongarewa have an uninked embossed print in their collection, *Embossed wave*, 1980.

<sup>118</sup> Barnett, 'Shadowlands: the prints of John Drawbridge', op. cit. 44-45.

<sup>119</sup> Drawbridge, 'I feel at home with my work being here', op. cit. 48. (The National Art Gallery in Wellington had acquired a significant collection of European prints in 1952 from a Jack Illot donation but it appears that Drawbridge had not seen these before he left for London).

<sup>120</sup> Cape, 'John Drawbridge: techniques and values', op. cit. 141 and Brian Carmody, from an interview with the author, Wellington, 27 June 2013.

discussions of Drawbridge's prints, and this is clearly evident in his still life prints featuring bottles, such as *Interior with Matisse* (1981), *Bottles* (1982), and *Interior with bottles* (1986), [figure 15] where he has integrated Morandi-like bottle combinations within his own characteristic localised space and mirrored reflections.

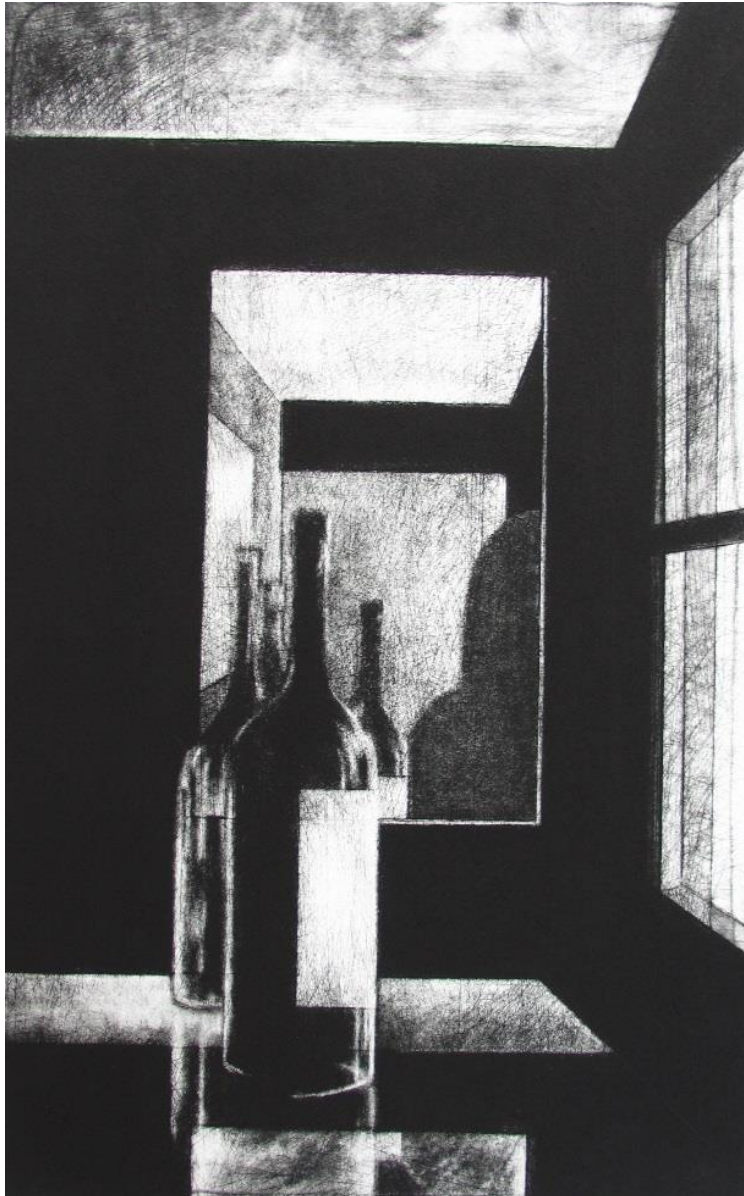


Figure 15: John Drawbridge, *Interior with bottles*, 1986, mezzotint & drypoint, 340 x 530, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington.

Both artists were interested in the effects of light and compositional balance to convey a sense of timelessness. Morandi's prints of bottles are etchings where he employs his distinctive hatching and cross-hatching technique to produce very controlled tones of



light and shade; Drawbridge's prints are mezzotint and drypoint and lighting effects are indicated by a softer range of tonal variation created with varying degrees of burnishing the ink from the plate. However, in spite of these distinct differences, both result in creating a calm and atmospheric stillness. Bottles were a favourite and recurring motif in Drawbridge's prints and these allowed him to explore the formal possibilities of refracted and reflected light, a favourite preoccupation of his. However, it was not only historical printmakers who inspired these motifs in Drawbridge's printmaking but also modern artists such as Malevich who offered a stimulus for another of his favourite motifs – the black beam or rectangle. The seeds of this influence may have begun when Drawbridge was still at Central School in London in 1959 when the first exhibition of Malevich paintings were shown in England at Whitechapel Art Gallery.<sup>121</sup> For example *Tanya going and coming* No 3 (1967), contains a Malevichian black rectangle in the bottom half of the print.<sup>122</sup> Similarly, in *Tanya about to fly*, also 1967, a large black rectangle occupies most of the left side of the print and is also featured behind the figure of Tanya. After he went to an exhibition of Malevich paintings in 1979 at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Malevich black beams, crosses and squares began to be incorporated into many of his prints, murals and paintings and he produced a series of prints as a homage to the artist in the late 1980s.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> The 1959 exhibition of Malevich paintings is listed in the Whitechapel Art Gallery's catalogue list <http://www.whitechapelgallery.org/about-us/history/exhibitions-1950-present> (accessed 13/11/2014) and from a conversation with Tanya Ashken in Wellington, November 2014.

<sup>122</sup> This black rectangle has similarities to his oil painting, *Wrecked angle*, 1969, which O'Brien claims is a homage to the sculptor, painter, collagist and printmaker, Jean Arp. Drawbridge also has some of his prints in his own collection. (O'Brien, 'Wide open interior', op. cit. 19).

<sup>123</sup> There is some confusion about the numbering of his *Homage to Malevich* series as in Kirker's article in *Art New Zealand* no. 24, 1982, p. 19, the red and black *Homage to Malevich* has been labelled no. VI and dated 1980, but in Skinner's book *John Drawbridge*, 2008, p. 228, the same image has been given as no. 4. The 1980 prints of homage to Malevich are *Homage to Malevich I*, a small red print in the artist's collection, and two prints used as a basis for his two aluminium sculptures made in 1980. One of these *Homage to Malevich* No IV with an edition number 3/50 and the other is *Homage to Malevich VI* edition number 21/50 in Kirker's article. (The copy of this one in Skinner's book does not have an edition number). Drawbridge made a variety of proofs from the 4 small plates for these no. IV and VI prints but they were not numbered so would have been proofs. He also produced a wine bottle label for 'Pierre' which is a red ink print incorporating a 'dissolving plane' as in Malevich's *Dissolving yellow plane*. The print for this has been titled *Homage to Malevich* No II and had an edition number 16/50. However, the actual wine bottle label has a date of 1987. *Malevich at the Stedelijk Museum* seems likely to be No. III of these early homages but there is no No. V. The two later prints of homage to Malevich *Still life with Malevich (red)* and *Still life with Malevich (black)* were produced in 1988 and not included in this series of the 1980s Homage to Malevich series. In his website document on *Malevich at the Stedelijk Museum*, Cameron Drawbridge states there are only four in this series *Homage to Malevich*, nos 1-4. He included the *Malevich at the Stedelijk Museum* the *Homage to Malevich* No IV from Skinner's book and the two later ones *red* and *black* produced in 1988 but had not seen Kirker's article and the numbering of that print *Homage to Malevich* No VI, 1980.

While living abroad provided artistic stimuli and references, Drawbridge also brought back the work of some of these artists. Living in Paris and London provided the perfect opportunity for the Drawbridges to buy original prints at very reasonable prices and, in the early 1960s, they started their own print collection. In Paris there were three specialist print galleries from which they bought prints; in London they most frequently used the dealers, Craddock & Barnard, near the British Museum. The first print they purchased was a Cézanne, for which they paid ten pounds.<sup>124</sup> Drawbridge's own collection of English and European prints indicates his admiration for their work and, again, some influences are evident in his prints. His collection includes prints by Cézanne, Pierre Bonnard, Jacques Villon, Pablo Picasso, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Henri Matisse, Joseph Mallord William Turner, André Dunoyer de Segonzac, Marie Laurencin, Edward Lear, Édouard Vuillard, Francisco de Goya, Jean Arp, John Martin, and Elizabeth Frink, as well as American and New Zealand printmakers. As previously argued, the impact of Dunoyer de Segonzac is clear in Drawbridge's *Approach to St André* (1960) and of Jacques Villon in his print, *Seated woman* (1960). O'Brien argues for the influence of Pierre Bonnard (1867-1947) from two prints that Drawbridge had in his collection, *La vie de Sainte Monique* (1930) and *Toilette* (1927) and attributes the mirrored effects Drawbridge employs in *Interior with Matisse* as echoes of Bonnard.<sup>125</sup> More indirect influences from Picasso (1881-1973) and Matisse (1869-1954) can be seen in several of Drawbridge's prints of women, such as the first mezzotint he produced at Central School, *Sleeping woman* (1959), [figure 16] which has close similarities to Picasso's portraits of Marie-Thérèse Walter painted in the early 1930s. Drawbridge's *Sleeping woman II* (1983) [figure 17] and *Woman resting* (1983), also recall Picasso and Matisse. His print *The party* (1986), was taken from his 1961 painting with the same title and exhibits distinctly Cubist forms. The mezzotints he owned by other printmakers he admired, such as Martin and Turner, exerted a more indirect influence through their printmaking techniques. On later trips to England and Europe the Drawbridges bought prints to sell back in New Zealand to help finance future trips abroad. These influences and references strongly point to the ongoing international sources of his work.

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<sup>124</sup> Ashken told me that when they bought the Cézanne, there was a Rembrandt print priced at six hundred pounds – then almost equivalent to the cost of a small house. From Tanya Ashken, email to the author, 25 August 2013.

<sup>125</sup> O'Brien, 'Wide open interior', op. cit. 25-6.



Figure 16: John Drawbridge, *Sleeping woman*, 1959, 500 x 600, mezzotint & aquatint.



Figure 17: John Drawbridge, *Sleeping woman No. 2*, 1983, mezzotint & drypoint, 500 x 605 mm.

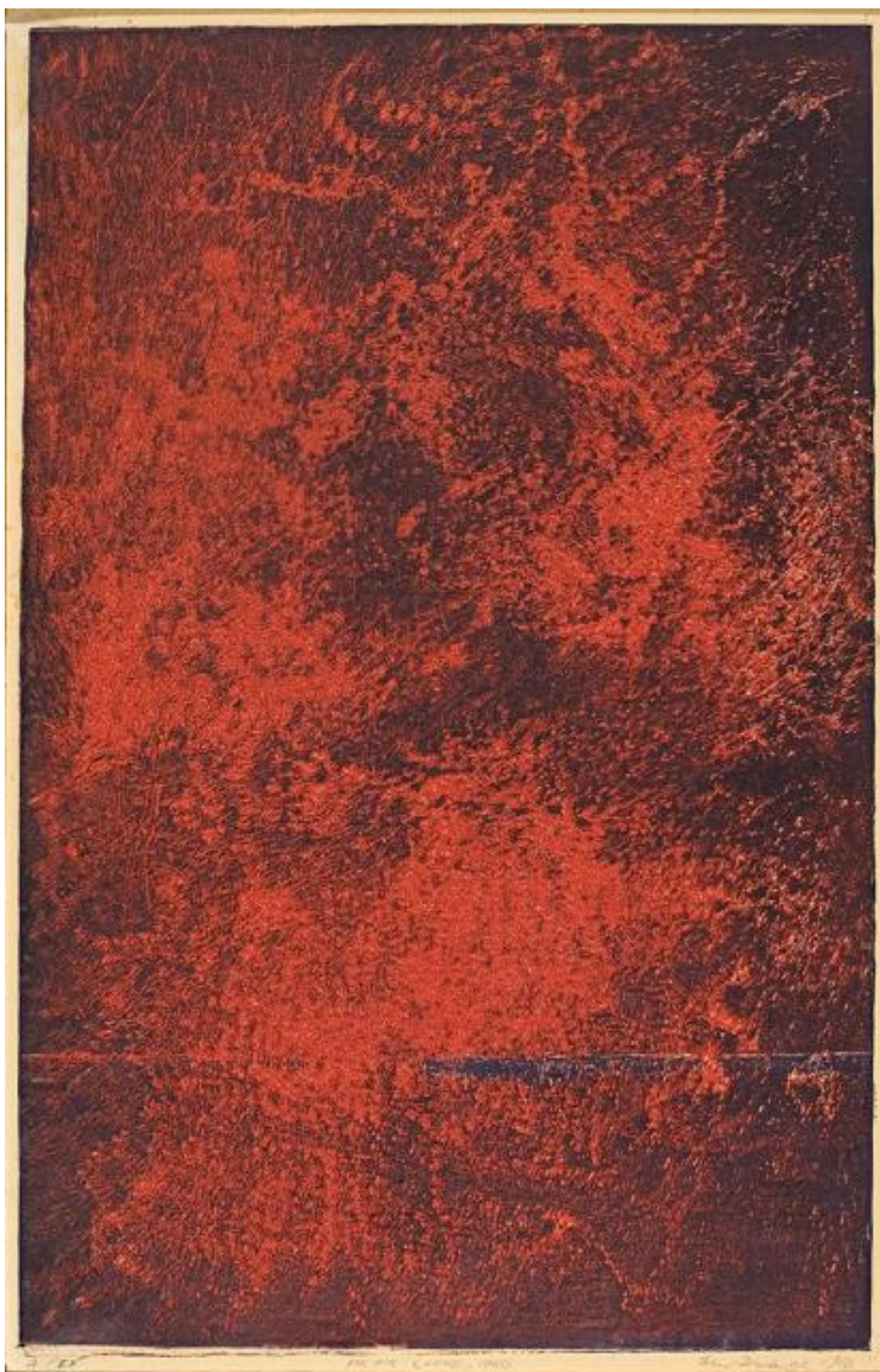


Figure 18: John Drawbridge, *Pacific cloud*, 1966, mechanically engraved copper plate, aquatint, 560 x 355 mm, Christchurch Art Gallery.



However, at the same time, Drawbridge was embedding himself into the local discourse. This is clearly evident in *Pacific cloud* (1966), [figure 18] aquatint and etching ('mechanically engraved' on copper). This print is a response by Drawbridge to French nuclear testing in the Pacific. The colours used are red and black and Skinner describes Drawbridge's technique for this print as attacking the 'copper plate with a hammer chisel'.<sup>126</sup> This apocalyptic image depicts lurid red flames exploding uncontrollably over the whole image, the small parts of black sky enhancing the intensity. Drawbridge was one of a number of artists and writers in New Zealand during the 1960s who strongly expressed their opposition to nuclear testing in the Pacific. Hone Tuwhare's poem, 'No ordinary sun' (first published in 1959, but later collected in a volume with the same title in 1964), became emblematic of anti-nuclear protests. Colin McCahon's (1919-1987) *Gate* series of paintings embodied his concern for the environment and fear of nuclear war during the 1960s. He deliberately used dark shapes to symbolise the obstacles to finding a way through these threats. In another series, *Necessary protection*, McCahon again referred to environmental issues and nuclear war and presents a set of symbols which he used again and again in different forms. Marilyn Webb's series of prints, *Landscape with bleeding rainbow* (started in 1970), was in direct response to the nuclear testing at Mururoa by the French. In these prints a large mushroom-shaped cloud incorporating a rainbow which releases nuclear discharge/radiation on to the land below.<sup>127</sup> Drawbridge's *Pacific cloud* provides clear evidence of his reconnection to local realities.

Drawbridge was also producing other prints with a local identity and scenery – landscapes, seascapes, skyscapes, as well as abstracted views of clouds and landforms. In 1971, Drawbridge with Robin White and Cleavin, were equal winners in the print section of the Manawatu Society of Arts prize for contemporary art. Drawbridge entered his mezzotint and drypoint, *Red Cloud* (1971), subsequently published as part of Hutchings' article for *Art International* in 1975.<sup>128</sup> Like a number of his New Zealand land/seascape scenes, this semi-abstract is solidly framed. Here, a weighty red cloud

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<sup>126</sup> Skinner, op. cit. 209.

<sup>127</sup> Lonie & Webb, op. cit. 39.

<sup>128</sup> The red clouds are a feature in a number of his prints, such as the earlier *Pacific cloud*, 1966, *Altocumulus* No. 1, 1972, and subsequent prints *Red cloud* No. 2, 1979, *Landscape*, 1997, but not all as threatening as in *Pacific cloud*.

forms the horizontal layer of the image and two characteristic black oblong shapes vertically frame the scene. In the bottom half, aligned with the frame, are some loosely etched lines (with drypoint) – representations of New Zealand grasses fronting the shoreline.<sup>129</sup> Drawbridge would often make reference to the view from their house in Island Bay, Wellington, looking out over Cook Strait. For example, *Altocumulus* No. 1 (1972) [figure 19] is a characteristic Drawbridge: through a solid rectangular frame, here with dappled red clouds drifting above, there is a small mound representing the hill visible from their doorway at the bottom of the frame. The red clouds on the white ground are clearly articulated next to the strong solid black of the frame and hill which fill the rest of the image. *Altocumulus* No. 2 (1972) [figure 20] looks as if Drawbridge has used the same plate/s but has reburnished the outside frame so that black clouds, instead of the solid-walled frame, float through and behind the frame. This print has blue clouds against a white ground inside a strongly outlined black rectangular frame with black clouds hovering around and above the doorway. The plate has been turned upside down so that the ‘hill’ image is now part of a wider lintel above the doorway with

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<sup>129</sup> Hutchings, op. cit. 23.

hovering black clouds. Both these images are semi-abstract but with distinctive local references to the scene from his home.

Drawbridge was part of a lively and diverse printmaking scene in New Zealand during the 1960s and 1970s. Marilyn Webb recalled Walter Auburn's comment on printmaking in New Zealand saying 'he was fascinated by the openmindedness of New Zealand artist-printmakers and enjoyed the innovation of new technical approaches and imagery.'<sup>130</sup> Although technically distinct, Drawbridge connected with other printmakers who responded to the landscape, such as Susan Skerman, Stanley Palmer and Webb, as well as with the figurative printmakers such as Cleavin and Gary Tricker. Susan Skerman, who studied at Central School in London a couple of years before Drawbridge, became interested in producing screenprints of the New Zealand bush and created a series called *Bush walk* for Expo '70 in Japan. (Drawbridge created one of his murals for this event.)

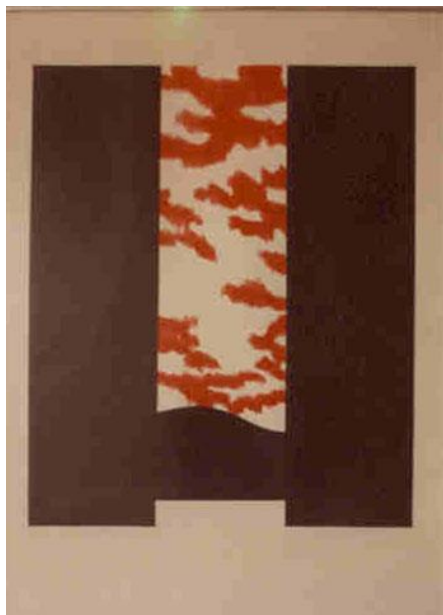


Figure 19: John Drawbridge, *Altocumulus* No. 1, 1972, mezzotint, 620 x 500 mm.



Figure 20: John Drawbridge, *Altocumulus* No. 2, 1972, mezzotint, 620 x 500 mm.

Skerman's life-sized images were printed onto Perspex and hung at different angles to catch the effects of the changing light seen in the New Zealand bush. Her forms are simplified, overprinted and enlarged so much that they appear almost abstract. Stanley

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<sup>130</sup> From a letter or conversation to Kirker, 'Prints – a coming of age ' op. cit. unpaginated.

Palmer was doing something completely new and different, developing his own method of printing by using bamboo sheaths. He scratched his image onto the inside surface of the bamboo sheath (after it had been flattened in a press and the rectangles or squares placed together on a plate). The ink would be held in the scratched line once the surface ink was wiped off. This created quite a different effect from other intaglio processes or drypoint and looked more like wood-engraving as the texture of the bamboo creates a fine streaking effect across the image.<sup>131</sup> Palmer used this technique to produce moody and romantic depictions of his local environment with long swirling lines moving across land and sea forms. Though technically and stylistically different, Skerman's and Palmer's work, like Drawbridge's, draws inspiration from the local landscape. Webb was also interested in her local environment and the images of landforms, coastal profiles and cloud forms create distinctly linear patterns and tonal values from layers of soft colour.<sup>132</sup> Her concern was with 'land as a life force' and references her Maori ancestry and concern for environmental issues.<sup>133</sup> Webb developed a technique of linoleum engraving by incising line into the surface of the linoleum and using engraving tools to get a clear and sharper line. She enjoyed the simplicity and warmth of using linoleum and the way the surface held the ink in interesting ways.

O'Brien observed that 'through the 1960s, a gulf was visibly widening between John Drawbridge's painting and printmaking, with figure-based subjects increasingly confined to printmaking while the paintings become more and more abstract.'<sup>134</sup> It is the figurative aspect of his subject matter that he shares with Cleavin and Tricker. Cleavin, like Drawbridge, is an expert intaglio printmaker, and both printmakers share this continuity with past traditions. Cleavin has most often worked in etching combined with aquatint for his prints while his subjects, usually figurative, are full of wit and irony, using visual and verbal puns to make comments on the absurdity of human behaviour. His prints often have a surrealist quality as he employs imagery from museum collections, military and architectural treatises.<sup>135</sup> In spite of the delicacy of line, he

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<sup>131</sup> Cape, *Prints and printmakers in New Zealand*, op. cit. 156.

<sup>132</sup> Lonie & Webb, op. cit. 26-7.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid. 35.

<sup>134</sup> O'Brien, 'Wide open interior', op. cit. 18.

<sup>135</sup> Cassandra Fusco, 'As the crow flew: sequences and consequences' from the exhibition catalogue *As the crow flew: sequences and consequences*, Sale: Gippsland Art Gallery, 2002: 17.

produces powerful, imaginative images with puzzling meanings. In contrast to Cleavin's freely drawn lines, Drawbridge preferred mezzotint technique as it suited his painterly concerns and the play of light and dark contrasts. Gary Tricker is mostly self-taught and since the 1970s his prints have been etching and aquatint. He etches his outline on the plate and then uses resin creating a splatter effect which introduces a visual complexity to his entertaining scenes – usually involving a black cat or two. Mervyn Williams, like Drawbridge, was also an abstract painter. As in his paintings, Williams's prints are mostly abstract and he favours screenprinting because of its ability to achieve hard-edged patterns and flat colour. His strongly geometrical patterns are similar to Op art and he describes his work as having religious and musical associations. By comparison with these contemporaries, Drawbridge's prints are never completely abstract and nearly always have a point of reference or decipherable motif. All these printmakers took part in international biennales and travelled abroad to develop their techniques and participate in a variety of printmaking opportunities.

Drawbridge was given another of these opportunities when he was awarded a Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand scholarship in 1973 and he spent six months in the Brigit Skiöld print workshop in London. While there he found out that he had won the commission for the Beehive mural and this was to occupy him fully, along with his teaching, for the next three to four years. Consequently, most of his other work went on hold and it was not until the late 1970s that he staged two further exhibitions of his prints. The first, in 1977, was 'Unique prints and paintings by Drawbridge' at the Elva Bett Gallery (previously the Bett-Duncan Gallery). For this he wrote an introduction to the catalogue, describing the different states of the twenty-five prints exhibited: 'most of these works are not editions, but show instead the development of ideas. Consequently, they are often explorations and are "unique" prints.'<sup>136</sup> He explained the differences between a 'unique' print and an 'edition' print, and each of the prints on display was given its specific status in terms of its production. For example, his aquatint *Metropolis* No 1, had two different states of the same print on show. These were unique prints (there was only one of each state) and the identification of different prints in this way clearly indicates how Drawbridge subscribed to the notion of 'process' as an end

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<sup>136</sup> Te Papa Archives: CA00001/003/002 folder 30, Artists' files, Drawbridge and Ashken, 1966-1975.

product itself. In the second major exhibition in 1978, 'Works on paper', a solo exhibition at New Vision Gallery, Auckland, Drawbridge drew directly on these concerns. He listed the different states of the prints exhibited and whether or not they were 'unique' prints, also giving proof numbers of some 'unique' prints and accordingly identifying different parts of the process as equally valid. These prints were a mixture of aquatint, mezzotint, drypoint and the occasional engraving and etching made at an earlier date.<sup>137</sup>

Two years later he had a solo exhibition at New Vision Gallery where he showed thirty prints and two constructions; many of the prints were based on the work of Malevich and the two constructions made of painted sheets of aluminium, were also in homage to the same artist. These Malevich-inspired prints are evidence of Drawbridge's desire to bring his European influences back to New Zealand, to ground them in a local context and discourse. Drawbridge saw himself as unequivocally influenced by his time in Europe, but he equally saw himself as integrally connected to and shaped by his birthplace, New Zealand.

As well as bringing back European prints to New Zealand and demonstrating his familiarity with European precedents, Drawbridge participated in the wider community of printmaking through international print biennales and triennales. Since they were first established after WWII, these regular international print exhibitions were vital to the infrastructure of global printmaking culture. The first and longest running of the 'open' biennales for graphic arts, was held in Ljubljana (then in Yugoslavia) in 1955. Eastern European countries have played an important role in providing venues for these exhibitions and, initially, there were clearly underlying political and economic motives for setting up such an international forum in the 1950s and early 1960s. They provided an opportunity for connection with the world beyond the 'iron curtain' and for artists to experience art trends in the West opposed to Social Realism. Following this, other biennales were established in Tokyo in 1957, Cracow in 1966, Bradford in 1966, among many other locations, providing exposure for printmakers who might not otherwise

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<sup>137</sup> Te Papa Archives: MS25, New Vision Archive, Series one, folder 44.

However, for the mezzotint process, the plate is reburnished for each individual print and therefore, as Barnett points out, 'while the printmaker attempts to reproduce identical multiple impressions from a single plate for an edition, the subtle variations that occur in the process [of mezzotint] are inherent in the medium' which suggests that there is some 'uniqueness' in each print of an edition of mezzotints. Barnett, op. cit. 41.

receive an airing in the major metropolitan art venues.<sup>138</sup> Each biennale had its own criteria for entry but usually a committee, comprising those with expertise in prints, selected entries and an international jury was selected to judge for prizes. For printmakers, these print biennales/triennales had a special significance as they afforded a truly international setting for the circulation of printmakers' work and a chance to see how their works compare with new global art trends in printmaking. For Drawbridge and others like him living at a great distance from the main artistic centres, these biennales formed an essential opportunity to exhibit their prints and a means of generating critical attention from a wider audience. Drawbridge participated in at least 22 biennales around the world during his printmaking career, from 1960 until 2002. He commented that exhibiting his prints through the forum of international biennales offered an essential point of connection with an 'international "club" of artists.'<sup>139</sup>

In addition to contributing works to international exhibitions, Drawbridge made many trips to Europe after his return to New Zealand, as well as visits to the United States of America, Russia, Turkey and later Hong Kong and China. There were museums that he returned to repeatedly on these trips, such as the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, and these visits contributed decisively to his homage to Malevich series. Also in Amsterdam is the Rijksmuseum that holds Vermeer's *The Love Letter* and Rembrandt's *Night Watch* from which Drawbridge produced the mezzotints quoting these works. A large number of the mezzotints Drawbridge produced in the 1980s and early 1990s look back to these visits to European museums.

While Drawbridge has no direct followers, his contribution to printmaking in New Zealand is widely felt. He served on various committees and councils involving the visual arts. He was a member of the visual arts panel of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand from 1967 to 1974; a council member of the Print Council of New Zealand from 1968 to 1976; and a council member of the Regional Arts Council until 1977. He was generous with his skills and knowledge and a very supportive teacher who influenced a large number of printmakers through his guidance and practice. For instance, he became involved in the creation of community print workshops in the

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<sup>138</sup> Deborah Wye and Wendy Weitman, *Eye on Europe: prints, books and multiples, 1960 to now*, New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2006: 32-33.

<sup>139</sup> Drawbridge, 'I feel at home with my work being here', op. cit. 53.

1980s and contributed his expertise and support to the Print Studio at the Wellington City Art Gallery.<sup>140</sup> Cleavin has commented on his generosity: ‘he passed on to me his method to create a “Molly Bloom” plate. That was a generous thing to do as lesser mortals are usually very coy about handing over information.’<sup>141</sup> As well as his teaching at Wellington Polytechnic, Drawbridge took summer courses and evening classes in printmaking where other adult artists would join in with the full-time younger students, artists such as Kate Coolahan, Janet Paul, Penny Ormerod, Shona McFarlane, John Lethbridge and Susan Skerman – all of whom were to play an important role in the rising interest and status of printmaking in New Zealand.

Drawbridge played a pivotal role in the creation of a culture for printmaking in New Zealand. His distinctive contribution was to maintain and foster a deep respect for his European forebears and uphold connections to international print culture, as well as to develop subjects depicting local landscapes, atmospheres and issues. In Chapter 3, I present a considered analysis of a small subset of his prints which quote from European masters to explore the specific ways in which he re-frames these in relation to his local antipodean context, and argue that these epitomise his achievement.

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<sup>140</sup> It was later moved to Inverloch House.

<sup>141</sup> Barry Cleavin, email to the author, 29 July 2013.



### Chapter Three: Reading John Drawbridge's prints – intertextuality in a local context

*Remembrance, after all, is in the end nothing other than a quotation. And the quotation interpolated into a text or an image forces us ... to revisit what we know of other texts and images, and reconsider our knowledge of that world.*<sup>142</sup>  
W G Sebald.

All texts, including images, carry the cultural framework of their original context and removal from this context forces a renewed consideration.<sup>143</sup> Drawbridge's printmaking, specifically during the 1980s and early 1990s, melds the histories of art he absorbed from his art-making in Europe and New Zealand and reinterprets and modernises them. As will become evident, Drawbridge approaches each artist in different ways and re-renders whole works, or parts of works, a new medium by reducing the original image to its basic elements which allows new possibilities and meanings to emerge. Drawbridge's images taken from great master artists of western art are freed from their familiar context and relocated to a modern, sometimes local, context. Such recontextualising establishes continuity between then and now, there and here, while forcing the viewer to see these art works afresh. In these prints, Drawbridge's connections to the old world and his circumstances in New Zealand find a point of contact which is fundamental to understanding his work as an artist-printmaker.

In this chapter I examine the various strategies involved in Drawbridge's pictorial intertextuality from paintings to prints, from past to present and from international to local contexts. The artists Drawbridge refers to are Henri Matisse, Kazimir Malevich (1879-1935), Johannes Vermeer (1632-1675), Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669), Diego Velázquez (1599-1660), and Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519). Through examining his use of the intricate and time-consuming process of mezzotint with drypoint, I will demonstrate how Drawbridge enacts these transformations into print. In these prints Drawbridge acknowledges his artistic debt to those to whom he pays homage. Neither thief nor plagiarist, he treats the artists' work as a source for his dialogue with them,

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<sup>142</sup> W G Sebald *A place in the country* (trans. Hamish Hamilton) London: Penguin, 2013 p 169.

<sup>143</sup> Tony Schirato & Susan Yell, *Communication and cultural literacy: an introduction*, Australia: Allen & Unwin, 2000 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition), pp 52-53.

from artist to artist, from printmaker to printmaker. Drawbridge reworks great and complex paintings into refined black and white mezzotints, simultaneously inserting himself into the European tradition (by citing great art and providing continuity of its cultural function) and modifying that tradition by its relocation within a New Zealand context.

In her article 'Intertextuality in painting', Wendy Steiner argues against the traditional view of a work of art as a closed text with self-contained meanings which, she asserts, denies the richness and complexity of meaning through its connectedness to other art works and literature. She claims that 'pictorial meaning is conditioned by these connections'.<sup>144</sup> Probably the most crucial synecdochic quality in paintings is the title. The bestowing of titles is a fairly modern phenomenon, with older paintings often being subsequently given titles that reflect their subject or genre, thereby linking them to other works with the same title. Such encoding of works of art also places them in an historical and intertextual continuum. So, art works and literature can be connected by common subject matter (such as religious and mythological), but formal elements of style and composition also create links between art works. For example, a specific pose, use of chiaroscuro, idealisation of the body, treatment of light, and other formal considerations connect art works to particular artists or schools of art. Conversely, these connections may be employed for parody and irony, where traditional meanings are undercut, reversed and subverted but still rely on familiarity with the original art work.<sup>145</sup> Collages that bring together artistic fragments offer the opportunity for different kinds of connections. Drawbridge uses a variety of these strategies of pictorial intertextuality and his titles provide synecdochic links to the great masters to whom he pays homage.

Drawbridge's selection of artists from the canon of European art clearly reveals his preferences. He was drawn to those artists who display a mathematical approach to the design of an image, artists such as Vermeer and Velázquez. He was also drawn to artists,

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<sup>144</sup> Wendy Steiner, 'Intertextuality in painting' from *The American Journal of Semiotics*, 3.4 (1985): 57-67.

<http://search.proquest.com/docview/213747028/> accessed VUW Lib. May, 2013.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

again Vermeer, with a feeling for the effects of light, and drawn too to artists who were masters of chiaroscuro, such as Rembrandt and Leonardo. Conversely, his more abstract forms and patterns indicate a predilection for modern masters, such as Picasso, Matisse and Malevich. In *Godwits return*, Drawbridge observes that 'we had not grown up with these works and in some ways we were not intimidated by the traditions surrounding them', suggesting that being from New Zealand, and therefore an 'outsider', he was able to respond to paintings in a less over-awed, more detached and freer fashion.<sup>146</sup> His choice of the technique of mezzotint is also germane as it is the form of intaglio printmaking that is closest to the painterly concerns of oil painting, and Drawbridge uses his mastery of the technique to convey the richness of dark shadow as well as subtle variations in the effects of light.

Mezzotint was traditionally used as a reproductive technique in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries (before the invention of photography) because of its ability to create tonal variation and get closer to the effects of chiaroscuro as seen in oil paintings.<sup>147</sup> It is unusual for the printmaker as he works from black to white on the plate and thus not only has to visualise the entire image in reverse, but also from darkness to light. Mezzotint is essentially a tonal technique which is less suited to line and fine detail but shape, mass and contrast are key concerns. It requires a painterly touch on the plate to produce subtle tonal variations and it was this response to touch that so appealed to Drawbridge.

Drawbridge's technique involved using his whole arm as he moved his hand around the top of the plate, feeling the plate through his fingers.<sup>148</sup> As he always worked on the plate, there are no preparatory drawings but a number of proofs of drawings he developed on the plate. As described by Peter Cape in 1974, he 'like[d]s to work through a number of ideas – though all of them grouped around a central thought – developing them on the plate, working out exactly what he wants to be expressed and

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<sup>146</sup> Drawbridge, 'I feel at home with my work being here', op. cit. 46.

<sup>147</sup> It is interesting to note that it came to be known as *la manière-anglaise* because of its popularity in Britain. Gerald Barnett suggests that due to old master paintings being covered in centuries of grime and soot, 'the English were convinced that fine art was dark art'. Gerald Barnett, op. cit. 44.

<sup>148</sup> Kirstin O'Sullivan, interview with the author, Wellington, 19 July 2013.

how he wants to express it.<sup>149</sup> He would begin drawing on the plate with crayon, and then use the dry point needle to scratch out lines and work over the entire plate with a mezzotint rocker to produce the pitted surface. When inked, the lifted edges of the pitted surface (the burr) holds the ink and, if left, the entire print would be black. The printmaker works to produce his image by cleaning off the ink and scraping back the lifted edges to produce a range of tones and whites for the final printed image. Because the inking of the plate involves so much removal and wiping back of the ink, there will invariably be subtle variations between each impression. A characteristic feature of Drawbridge's mezzotints is his use of black; he loved black and strongly disliked grey. To create the rich, dense and velvety blackness for which his mezzotints are renowned, he would add blue to the special black ink, Charbonnel's *Laque Verte Solide*, which could only be acquired from Paris.<sup>150</sup>

Drawbridge worked on his mezzotints of paintings by great master artists from 1980 to 1994. He was interested in these artists and their methods of composing a work, and Gerald Barnett comments that Drawbridge felt 'very close to these artists as he works through their images'.<sup>151</sup> The strategies he deployed vary with each artist but all include the name of the artist and the title of the work he quotes from as a point of reference and acknowledgement. Familiarity with the original is assumed as the painting is altered and modified through its transition from paint to print. The reversal of the image made from the plate to the finished print and the two-dimensional quality of the black and white are inherent in the process. In these prints Drawbridge is exploring the act of recognition as well as homage. For instance, in *Hands (Leonardo)* (1983), instead of focusing on the famous and familiar Mona Lisa smile, he selects her hands and creates a cartoon-like version of the original by simplifying and modifying a less celebrated aspect of Leonardo's portrait. He doesn't close off the original; he opens it up and modernises it. Similarly, in *The night watch (Rembrandt: detail)* (1983), Drawbridge selects and reduces the original group portrait of Rembrandt's *Night Watch* to a single figure (the lieutenant) which emerges from the dark, black surround. Meaning and context are

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<sup>149</sup> Peter Cape, *Prints and printmakers in New Zealand*, op. cit. 77.

<sup>150</sup> Cameron Drawbridge, interview with the author, Wellington, 27 June 2013.

<sup>151</sup> Barnett, 'Shadowlands: the prints of John Drawbridge', op. cit. 47.

dramatically altered by the absence of the rest of the militia company and particularly of its captain, Frans Banning Cocq.

In his many prints of homage to Malevich, Drawbridge incorporates the exhibition space of the museum preserving Malevich's colours but employing his own logic and visual language. With Matisse he uses a collage-like strategy and treats Matisse's cut-outs as a 'ready-made' that he locates in his own (and Vermeer's) architectural interiors.

Matisse's cut-outs appear within Drawbridge's own characteristic frames and doorways. Where interiors are concerned, Drawbridge is clearly attracted to Vermeer's paintings of musicians inside the Dutch drawing-room. He simplifies and reframes them so that instead of Vermeer's geometrically precise and carefully calculated perspective system, he has abstracted the detail and flattened the space. In *The Concert (Vermeer with Matisse)* (1983), he constructs a dialogue between one great artist and another by placing the painting of a 20<sup>th</sup> century modern master, Matisse, on the wall of Vermeer's 17<sup>th</sup> century Dutch interior. However, Drawbridge's composition, placement of figures and objects, and the fall of light are all from Vermeer's original, though in reverse.

The most altered and modernised of these translations from painting to print is Drawbridge's *Velázquez Infanta* (1994), in which he selects the single character of the Infanta (but only her face) from the group of figures represented in Velázquez's *Las Meninas* (1656). The image of the Infanta is completely transformed as most of her face is blackened and enclosed within a heavy dark frame. She is not only relocated but totally altered from the pretty blonde princess, Infanta Margarita, to a mysterious, unsettling image of her with dark hair and eyes that pierce through her partially blackened face. Drawbridge produced sixteen of these prints always acknowledging his source: *Woman with Matisse* (1980), *Malevich at the Stedelijk Museum* (1980), *Homage to Malevich I* (1980), *Homage to Malevich IV* (1980), *Homage to Malevich VI* (1980), *Interior with Matisse* (1981), *The Holy Family (Rembrandt)* (1983), *The night watch (Rembrandt detail)* (1983), *Hands (Leonardo)* (1983), *The love letter (Vermeer)* (1983), *The music lesson (Vermeer)* (1983), *The concert (Vermeer with Matisse)* (1983), *Matisse*,

*acrobat and May West* (1987), *Still life with Malevich (red)* (1988), *Still life with Malevich* (1988), and *Velázquez Infanta* (1994).<sup>152</sup>

The following discussion examines in detail eight of the above prints which both quote from the works of the great European masters (ancient and modern) and radically recontextualises them within Drawbridge's own art practice. He began this particular series of prints by looking to the modern masters, Matisse and Malevich during 1980 and 1981 (and again in the late 1980s) and from 1983 he incorporated the old masters, Rembrandt, Vermeer, and Velázquez.

In 1981, after producing his initial print quoting Matisse, *Woman with Matisse* (1980), [figure 12] he turned again to Matisse and produced a more complex quotation, *Interior with Matisse* (1981) [figure 21]. Matisse's *Blue nude III* (1952) [figure 22] is incorporated within a re-creation of Drawbridge's own interior space.



Figure 21: John Drawbridge, *Interior with Matisse*, 1981, mezzotint & drypoint, 155 x 175 mm.

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<sup>152</sup> He also made an oil painting after these prints including some additional intertextual references such as, *Vermeer-Rembrandt-Malevich* (1984) from his print *The love letter (Vermeer)* 1983, where he includes his own print *The night watch (Rembrandt: detail)* 1983 on the right side of the door frame and two Malevich paintings behind the figures in the centre.



Figure 22: Henri Matisse, *Blue nude III*, 1952, gouache on cut & pasted paper, 1120 x 735 mm, Centre George Pompidou, Paris.

Matisse's *Blue nude* series was already widely known and Drawbridge could expect most viewers to recognise this reference. Not only does the quotation recognise and pay homage to Matisse but more subtly, Drawbridge employs a number of his favourite personal motifs from his printmaking *oeuvre*. *Interior with Matisse* includes recurring features from his earlier prints, such as frames of doorways and windows within frames, light passing through glass, interior figures, reflections and hazy ambiguous spaces. By alluding to his own art alongside that of Matisse, Drawbridge performs an act of artistic self-assertion. Not to be intimidated by the traditions surrounding the great masters, ancient and modern, meant being able to absorb and modify them into his own art practice.

*Blue nude III* is placed in the centre of the composition in *Interior with Matisse* and dominates this confusing architectural interior with its un-naturalistic scale and vague, enigmatic spaces. The figure of the blue nude is now black and sturdily framed by the deep, black of the surrounding wall. It accordingly offers the only certainty in this interior – the only element that doesn't appear to be evanescent and/or illusory. Matisse's cut-out has been firmly fixed. As well as creating the visual equivalent of intertextuality, using the copied image within the image, there is also a process of exchange. The supple and curvilinear form in *Blue nude III* accentuates and contrasts with Drawbridge's geometric precision of setting and emphasises oppositions of flowing

line and solid form. Matisse's aim with these cut-outs was to simplify forms to their essentials.<sup>153</sup> This is taken even further by Drawbridge through the process of the black and white print. He additionally flattens and simplifies the form by exploiting the stark contrast between the blackness of the framing wall and figure and the white of its surrounding ground. By way of exchange, Drawbridge draws Matisse's *Blue nude III* into his own artistic vision of reflections and half-lights seen in the part image of the figure in the table-top – her image has been cropped, mirrored and immersed in the shadowy haze of its context. Matisse's blue nude figures had a corporeality with their solid mass and razor-sharp contours and yet Drawbridge's immersion of *Blue nude III* into his own uncertain pictorial space where nothing appears quite tangible has in no way diminished its solid presence.

Drawbridge adopted a contemporary collage approach for the creation of *Interior with Matisse* as he combines several smaller plates to create the whole. These include a bottlescape, Matisse's *Blue nude* (which is also partially reflected in the table top), and an interior with figure.<sup>154</sup> The inclusion of interior with figure also looks back to his own earlier prints of the 1960s with the half-lit, solitary female figure within confined architectural spaces, such as *Seated woman* (1960) [figure 2] and *Tanya going and coming* (1967) [figure 13]. In *Interior with Matisse* the figure of Tanya is again 'going and coming' through hazy hallways and doorways to the right of *Blue nude III*, and the still-life of familiar Morandi-like bottles is to the left and reflected in the glass table top in the foreground. The table-top also includes Drawbridge's familiar motif of reflections (previously seen, for instance, in his mirror images of *Girl before a mirror* (1969). Light is coming in through the window to the left of the *Blue nude III* but this does not reconcile with the light on the right side of the print. The new setting for *Blue nude III* is unstable and mysterious and suggests the possibility of a mirage. *Interior with Matisse* includes Drawbridge's copy of Matisse's *Blue nude III*, but Drawbridge also includes a reflection of his copy of *Blue nude III* on the table-top. This self-referential act suggests a dialogue between Drawbridge and Matisse, artist to artist and printmaker to printmaker and creates a double act of intertextuality as he references his own art alongside that of Matisse's.

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<sup>153</sup> John Elderfield, *The cut-outs of Henri Matisse*, London: Thames and Hudson Ltd., 1978: 7.

<sup>154</sup> Elva Bett, 'Etchings reflect artists' finesse', *Dominion*, Wellington, 10 December, 1982: 17.



The duality of Drawbridge's artistic persona is clearly evident in *Interior with Matisse*. Here he achieves an 'original print' which juxtaposes the traditional and the contemporary. The traditional is embodied by the handcrafted mezzotint and drypoint techniques and his reference to art historical genres, such as the still life and the female nude. The recontextualisation of Matisse's naked female form adjacent to a transparent, empty bottle and glass also hints at some suggestive juxtapositions, such as a number of traditional vanitas references. For instance, the transitory nature of life is indicated by the full and voluptuous human figure and the transparent, empty bottle; and the traditional motif that beauty too is temporary is obliquely evoked by the reflection of the figure on the table-top acting as a mirror. The contemporary practice of treating Matisse's *Blue nude III* as 'ready-made' which he incorporates into his own local setting demonstrates how Drawbridge's dialogue with Matisse has melded the contemporary and traditional and brought European art history to a local context.

Malevich was the artist Drawbridge most frequently quoted in the 1980s. As already discussed, Drawbridge may have seen the exhibition of Malevich's work at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in 1959 and he certainly sought out the Russian artist, one of the founding figures in the history of non-objective painting, on his visits to the Stedelijk Museum in 1978/79 and subsequently. Given his commitment to recognisable subject matter, it is worth considering what drew him to Malevich's work while he shied away from pure abstraction in his own work. He may have been attracted to Malevich's commitment to pure form and colour as an assertion of the aesthetic and of the creative act. He may also have been drawn to Malevich because of formal similarities to the work of Colin McCahon – especially in the latter's *Necessary protection* series.<sup>155</sup> What can be claimed is that in his prints Drawbridge integrated the formal geometries of both artists into his three-dimensional architectural space. By so doing, he locates the quotations and places them physically in conversation.

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<sup>155</sup> Drawbridge was taken with McCahon's 'extraordinary originality' and valued his contribution to NZ art. From Te Papa archives, CA000876/1/5 side 2 of tape 2– recorded interview with Damian Skinner, 8/4/04.

In 1920 Malevich wrote that Suprematism had three evolutionary phases – a black, red and white phase – and these trade-mark Malevich colours have been combined in Drawbridge's, *Malevich at the Stedelijk Museum* (1980) [figure 23].<sup>156</sup> Drawbridge not only alludes to Malevich's *Black square* (1915) [figure 24] and *White on white* paintings, but also the spaces of the museum in which Malevich's Suprematist paintings were originally hung. The museum space is indicated by the receding square in the centre of this image which represents the interior wall. Walls, corridors and paintings of squares are melded into the one design, creating an optical puzzle. Visual complexity is created by the similarity between Drawbridge's own visual logic and Malevich's forms. Squares, rectangles (beams) and angled planes equally represent Malevich's paintings and Drawbridge's own setting for his paintings with the result that his preoccupation with frames within frames is both figure and ground. Drawbridge turns Malevich's *Black square* on its side to become a Malevich dissolving plane [figure 25] (but without the dissolving edge), and Malevich's *White on white* painting is the cube within rectangular black frames on the left of the back wall. Cameron Drawbridge, who visited the museum with his father in 1987/8, describes the white stripes above and below the black frame containing *White on white* and *Black square*, as 'indicat[ing] the existence of a corridor that runs to the left and right of the paintings on the back wall.'<sup>157</sup> He described the experience of being in the museum rooms with Malevich paintings as 'like being in a Suprematist construction yourself' with the 'paintings emerging' from the 'big white walls' of the museum interior.<sup>158</sup> The red rectangular shapes to the right of the angled *Black square* and interior wall of the museum allude to both Malevich's *Eight red rectangles* (1915) [figure 26] and to his *Red square* (1915).

<sup>156</sup> Linda S Boersma, 'Suprematism and 0, 10', in *Kazimir Malevich and the Russian Avant-garde*, Catalogue for Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Köln: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2013: 100.

<sup>157</sup> Cameron Drawbridge, 'John Drawbridge', [http://www.tki.org.nz/tki-content/search?SearchText=john+drawbridge&SubTreeArray\[\]=2&SearchDate\]=1&TKIGlobalSearch=1&SearchButton.x=0&SearchButton.y=0](http://www.tki.org.nz/tki-content/search?SearchText=john+drawbridge&SubTreeArray[]=2&SearchDate]=1&TKIGlobalSearch=1&SearchButton.x=0&SearchButton.y=0) ([www.tki.org.nz](http://www.tki.org.nz) word search "John Drawbridge").

<sup>158</sup> Cameron Drawbridge, interview with the author, Wellington, 27 June 2013.

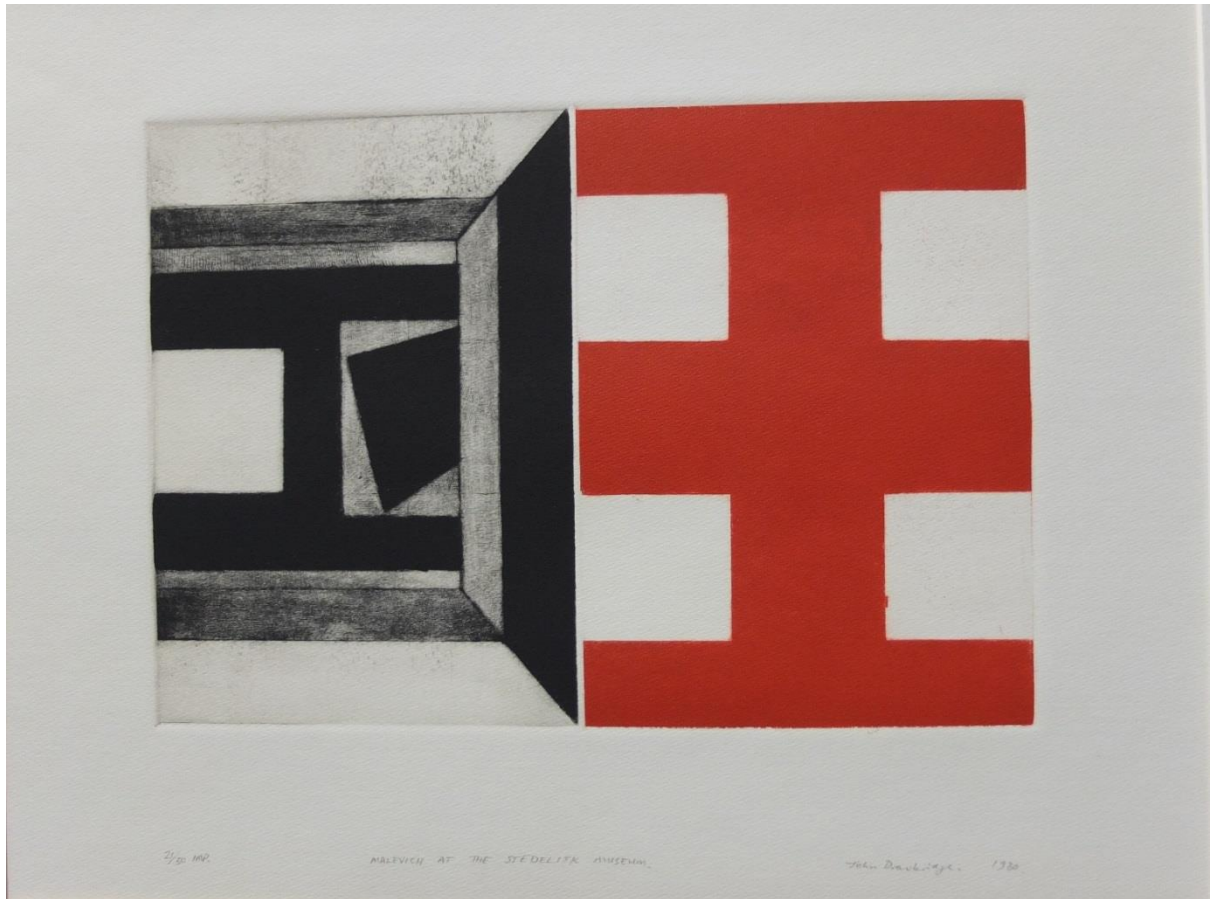


Figure 23: John Drawbridge, *Malevich at the Stedelijk Museum*, 1980, mezzotint & drypoint, 250 x 177 mm.

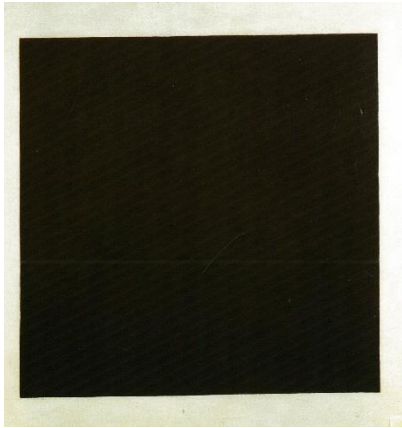


Figure 24: Kazimir Malevich, *Black squares*, 1915, oil on canvas, 1060 x 1065 mm, Russian State Museum, St Petersburg.

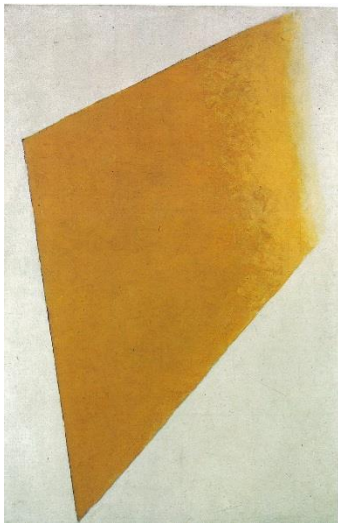


Figure 25: Kazimir Malevich, *Yellow plane in dissolution*, 1917-18, oil on canvas, 431 x 650 mm, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.



Figure 26: Kazimir Malevich, *Eight red rectangles*, 1915, oil on canvas, 575 x 485mm, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.

Drawbridge also refers to his contemporary McCahon in *Malevich at the Stedelijk Museum*. For instance, in Drawbridge's print *Malevich at the Stedelijk Museum*, there is a clear reference to McCahon's *Necessary protection* series of 1971-2. To select one specific example, *Necessary protection* (1971) [figure 27] charcoal on paper (out of a

number of possibilities from the series), the characteristic McCahon 'I' and 'T' shapes are the same (although figure and ground are reversed). While paying homage to Malevich, Drawbridge is simultaneously paying homage to his fellow painter, McCahon.

McCahon's *Necessary protection* series was partly a response to environmental issues of destruction and protection and a response to the French Government's nuclear testing in the South Pacific. There is also a concern with spirituality and humanity's need for protection.<sup>159</sup> In McCahon's words:

They have to do with the days and nights in the wilderness and our constant need for help and protection. The symbols are very simple. The I of the sky, falling light and enlightened land, is also ONE. The T of sky and light falling into a dark landscape is also the T of the Tau or Old Testament or Egyptian cross.<sup>160</sup>



Figure 27: Colin McCahon, *Necessary protection*, 1971, charcoal on paper, 1040 x 685 mm, Auckland Art Gallery, Auckland.

Drawbridge creates a double-act of intertextuality as he draws on references from his local artistic environment as well as the international, bringing the two hemispheres together in the one image.

In his 2007 article 'Suprematism in the antipodes: Malevich in New Zealand' Peter Stupples draws attention to influences of Malevich on New Zealand artists, in particular Colin McCahon, but also Drawbridge, Max Gimblett, Gretchen Albert and Stephen Bambury. But Drawbridge's *Malevich at the Stedelijk Museum* shows a high degree of complexity as he acknowledges both Malevich and McCahon in a single print.

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<sup>159</sup> Marja Bloem & Martin Browne, *Colin McCahon: a question of faith*, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 2002: 217-18.

<sup>160</sup> Wystan Curnow, 'Necessary protection', *McCahon's "Necessary protection"* New Plymouth: Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, 1977: 12.

Drawbridge's later homage to Malevich, *Still life with Malevich (black)* (1988) [figure 28] includes further elements and shapes based on Malevich's precedents. Not only is *Black cross* [figure 29] obviously a direct quotation but the conical forms of jugs in the foreground reference Malevich's earlier Neo-Primitivist paintings of 1911-12, in which he focused on volume with cylindrical and conical forms.<sup>161</sup>

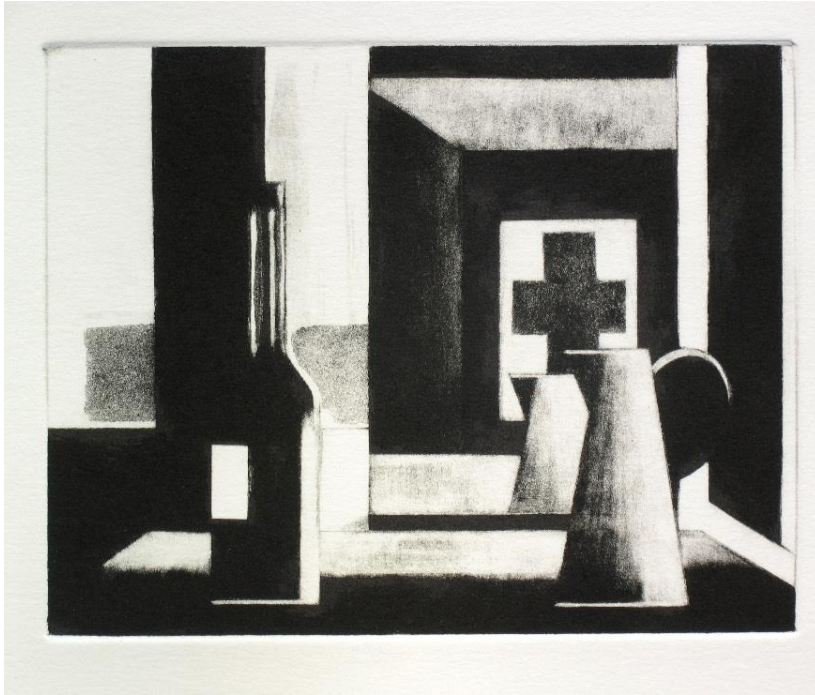


Figure 28: John Drawbridge, *Still life with Malevich (black)*, 1988, mezzotint & drypoint, aquatint, 200 x 252 mm.



Figure 29: Kazimir Malevich, *Black cross*, 1923, oil on canvas, 1060 x 1065 mm, Russian State Museum, St Petersburg.

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<sup>161</sup> Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, *Malevich*, Troels Andersen, Amsterdam, 1970: 24.



The inclusion of Malevich's *Black cross* within the geometrically formal composition of Drawbridge's *Still life with Malevich (black)* is recognition of the decisive elements of Suprematism – the square and the beam. The *Black cross* is placed off-centre and in the centre of the print is a black wall (or plane) at a diagonal to the picture plane. This references Malevich's paintings, a dissolving plane (without the soft edge) or *Black square* (but without the white ground) with black beams framing the *Black cross*. The traditional references include the still life as well as the shape of the Cross – a reference to Christian iconography as the Cross of Christ's crucifixion. Or, equally, it can signify cross-roads – a point of decision making. Drawbridge acknowledges Malevich's art through his quoting of *Black cross* and in the title of this print, *Still life with Malevich (black)*, and incorporating his *Black cross* and conical shapes. By combining Malevich's pure forms within his geometric setting, he melds the traditional and the modern, recontextualising the Russian icon into his local setting, and bringing together the duality of his artistic persona – the figurative with the abstract.

Drawbridge creates a subtly ambiguous space within which he locates Malevich's Cross and still life elements. This space is articulated by the play of light and shade and by the suggestions of perspectival recession. It is unclear whether we are looking at an interior of linked rooms or across a table behind which a painting is hung. Either way reference to Malevich is to his painting as a material object that is located in space and not to the pure forms that appear on the surface of his canvases. Drawbridge includes some of his own favourite motifs: a bottle reflecting light in the left foreground and frames within frames – integrating and juxtaposing his own art with that of the great modern master.<sup>162</sup> The intertextual references are clear as Drawbridge establishes frames within frames: he 'reframes' Malevich's *Black cross*, which also has its own frame. To this he adds the frames in which the painting is held and finally, there is the framing of Drawbridge's studio wall. The emphasis here is on the process of framing and the effect this has to distance as well as reify Malevich's Cross.

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<sup>162</sup> The proofs for this print indicate that he started with the simple outlines of the window-frame on the left and a bottle in front of it together with other vaguer shapes in the foreground. In the next proof he includes one of the jugs, the bottle is given a form and a black square fills the space which is now the *Black cross*. However, in the final proof and the printed edition, Malevich-like beams and squares fill the image, creating a geometrical composition with strong vertical and horizontals that firmly fix *Black cross* inside Drawbridge's architectural frames.

In 1983 Drawbridge looked back to older masters of the seventeenth century, recalling his visits to the Rijksmuseum and Rembrandt's house in Amsterdam where he would have seen original paintings and prints by the most famous Dutch painter and printmaker, Rembrandt van Rijn. Drawbridge created two prints in homage to this great master: *The night watch* (1642), [figure 32] and *The Holy Family by night* (c.1638-48) [figure 31].<sup>163</sup> These prints are very different from those that quote the modern masters where he incorporates their work into his own localised space. In these prints he takes a smaller part of the whole painting and significantly shifts the scale and context of each. In Drawbridge's print, *The night watch (Rembrandt)* (1983), [figure 32] he concentrates on a single figure from this famous military group portrait, focusing on the Lieutenant from Rembrandt's painting. In *The Holy Family (Rembrandt)* (1983) [figure 30] Drawbridge takes the central section of *Holy Family by night* containing the figures of the Holy family, and reduces the painting to its essential elements.<sup>164</sup> In both these prints he emphasises different elements of Rembrandt's paintings but still recreates a recognisable section of each painting.

The composition and the title of *The Holy Family (Rembrandt)* clearly indicate their connection to Rembrandt.<sup>165</sup> Drawbridge has kept the same composition of the group and the architectural backdrop from Rembrandt's painting but the whole has been reduced to its essential elements with abstract shapes in the shadows and simplified outlines for the figures in light. For instance, in Rembrandt's painting *The Holy Family by night* the large interior space dwarfs the figures but Drawbridge simplifies and cuts out most of the setting and directly draws the focus on to the Holy family. A strong feature of Rembrandt's painting is the warm and soft, night light that depicts a peaceful and intimate family group with similarities to a Dutch genre scene. Drawbridge was clearly taken by the beauty of Rembrandt's night-light and he emphasises these effects using

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<sup>163</sup> This painting is no longer attributed to Rembrandt but by an unknown pupil. At Rembrandt's House in Amsterdam, the audio notes about this painting explain the reason for this misattribution was connected with the strong contrasts of light and shadow for which Rembrandt is renowned, but the very precisely defined figures are not rendered with 'Rembrandt's masterly touch'. However, I will continue to refer to it as Rembrandt's painting as the reattribution was confirmed later than Drawbridge's print of the same painting. (From, Audio Notes, Rembrandt's House, Amsterdam, 9 Jan, 2015).

<sup>164</sup> This painting obviously made a strong impression on Drawbridge as he had a reproduction of the print on his studio wall according to his son, Cameron Drawbridge (from an interview with the author, Wellington 27 June, 2013).

<sup>165</sup> Drawbridge did several proofs for this print and produced one in sepia (self-consciously ageing strategy) as well as the double-plate image of this print and the *Night watch* that he titled, *Memories of Rembrandt* (also in sepia) and dated 1983-5.



drypoint and mezzotint. However, in the print he produces much stronger and more powerful shadows and thus creates stark contrasts from dark to light. For instance, the figure of Mary is blocked out in black shadow including the chair she sits on; there is no softness here, and the figure of Anne and Mary's book are revealed by clear black outlines where the light envelops them in the painting. The sleeping Christ Child is depicted with little detail and only light sketchy outlines, and the strong white line of the cradle string that leads from Anne to the cradle suggests an umbilical cord connecting the generations.

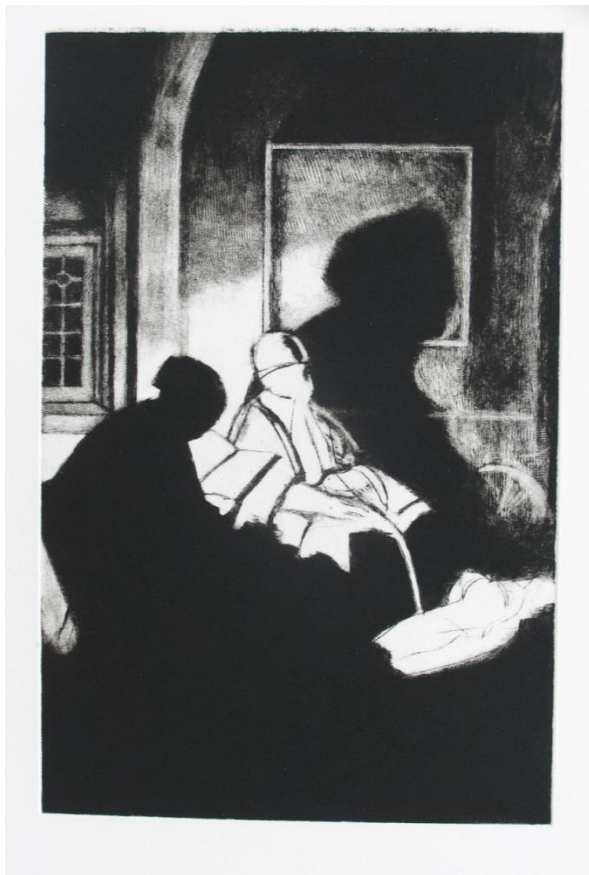


Figure 30: John Drawbridge, *The Holy Family (Rembrandt)*, 1983, mezzotint & drypoint, 250 x 163 mm.



Figure 31: Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Holy Family by night*, 1638-48, oil on canvas, 600 x 770 mm, Rembrandt's House, Amsterdam.

Although Mary's over-large shadow cast on the wall emphasises her significance in the scene, it also has a more sombre effect.<sup>166</sup> In traditional iconography such symbolism at a Nativity scene suggests her future sadness and the fore-knowledge of her son's death and, in Drawbridge's print, her shadow (which casts a sense of melancholy) dominates the entire scene as it hovers over the Holy Family. Drawbridge keeps the diagonal line of the heads and the formal arrangement of the figures but the dark abstract form of Mary makes her a much more dominant figure. The white and rather formless shape of the baby floating in a sea of black (but tied to Anne) has lost the centrality of its relationship with Mary, his mother, and Anne's face, devoid of any features, gives her a vaguely amorphous, even anonymous, presence.

Drawbridge modernises a traditional religious scene of the Holy family by combining figurative and abstract forms and by simplifying this much larger and three-episode scene to its bare essentials. He draws out the formal dimension of Rembrandt's original – it's play of chiaroscuro and emphasises the spatial qualities this produces. By juxtaposing a silhouette and its shadow, he creates a light and warm centre where the intimate figures of mother and child are singled out. The rectangle on the wall behind which signifies a painting is sufficiently ambiguous as to serve as a flat ground on which the shadow is cast – almost as if 'tradition' (Rembrandt's model) is literally thrown onto a flat plane of the 'modern' picture.

*The night watch* (1642) (or *Militia Company of District II under the Command of Captain Frans Banninck Cocq*, also known as *The Shooting Company of Frans Banning Cocq and*

<sup>166</sup> This shadow, which I have attributed to Mary, might equally belong to her mother, Anne. In fact, its shape does not quite fit either figure exactly; in this, however, Drawbridge has followed the original painting.

*Willem van Ruytenburch*) is one of Rembrandt's most famous and recognisable paintings [figure 32]. The fame of the painting rests on Rembrandt's original and skilful treatment of this military group portrait. In Dutch 17<sup>th</sup> century painting, contemporary military portraits were usually treated in a compositionally static manner with men standing or seated in a row so that each member would be clearly recognised. However, Rembrandt created a far more dynamic painting with action, expression and movement. He chose to depict the moment when Captain Frans Banning Cocq gives the order to his Lieutenant, Willem van Ruytenburch, to prepare the company to march out. Rembrandt creates a sense of cohesion and unity in the painting, using the device of subordination: the subordination of the Lieutenant to the Captain as he receives his orders and the subordination of the militiamen to the command to move out. It is this subordinating effect of the command that impels the militiamen to busy themselves with their weapons and energetically prepare for the march. The taller and more powerful-looking figure of the Captain, who holds his hand in a commanding gesture, strides authoritatively into the viewer's space with the smaller and more unassuming-looking Lieutenant at his side. Rembrandt has selected this psychological moment, driven by the impulse of the Captain's gesture, to represent the company of *kloveneirs* in their group portrait.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> Aloïs Riegl, (Benjamin Binstock, trans) excerpts from "The Dutch group Portrait", *October* 74, Fall 1995: 15-20.



Figure 32: Rembrandt van Rijn, *The night watch*, 1642, oil on canvas, 3630 x 4370 mm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

Drawbridge generates a dialogue with Rembrandt in *The night watch* (*Rembrandt detail*) [figure 32] by visually alluding to the latter's treatment of *chiaroscuro*. Similarly, he recalls the history of Rembrandt's painting and its later ascribed and now commonly familiar title.<sup>168</sup> He does this through the darkness with which he surrounds the Lieutenant and the barely recognisable faces piercing through the black surround. However, Drawbridge does not seek to alter the figure that Rembrandt has painted but carefully re-renders details from the painting into the medium of mezzotint as an acknowledgement of Rembrandt's immense skill, not only as a painter but also as a printmaker. He acknowledges this in his print by demonstrating the capabilities of the mezzotint and drypoint printmaking process, and to recreate the theatrical effects of *chiaroscuro* in Rembrandt's painting.

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<sup>168</sup> The title, *The night watch*, was not ascribed to the painting until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century when the darkening of the painting over time led to the assumption that the company watch happened at night. However, since the cleaning and restoration of the painting in 1975, and the more recently installed LED lighting in 2011, this assumption has been contested and it is evident that the moment of marching out is in daylight (although the background where soldiers are coming through the city gate is dark).



Figure 33: John Drawbridge, *The night watch (Rembrandt: detail)*, 1983, mezzotint & drypoint, 250 x 163 mm.

The shimmer of the Lieutenant's costume, the clarity of the cast shadows, and the sense of action and forward movement in the step of the Lieutenant are all re-rendered without any sense of loss from the original. Drawbridge has also created a coherence and softness in tonal treatment – not a quality evident in his *The Holy Family (Rembrandt)* – and yet loses none of Rembrandt's dramatic immediacy. Drawbridge is able to render details of the Lieutenant's costume in a way that is comparable to that of the painting: the folds in the sash and embroidered borders; the shine of the steel gorget around his neck; and the clarity of the shadow of the Captain's outstretched hand

on the Lieutenant's costume. By focusing on the one figure from the painting, Drawbridge demonstrates the capabilities of the medium of printmaking as a homage to Rembrandt as one of the medium's greatest exponents.

Equally, by selecting this one detail from Rembrandt's painting, Drawbridge has magnified the Lieutenant's significance. The figures surrounding him are merely faces, watching and listening to his orders as he marches past. Through the reversal of their positions by means of the printmaking process and the deep velvety black shadow of mezzotint, Drawbridge has reversed the chain of command, or subordination; the figure of the Captain is pushed further back into pictorial space into the dark shadows while the white glow of the Lieutenant's costume pulls him forward. The altered context and absence of all symbolism present in the original painting establishes a different implied narrative with the subordination of the Captain to the Lieutenant's order (or gaze). However, this change in command has not altered the sense of movement and activity as the Lieutenant strides towards the viewer.

On first viewing, the print may appear to be merely a traditional reproduction of the original but the reversal of the figures and the removal of most of the other militia men and their setting, radically reinterprets the role of the Lieutenant and the role of the commission – a military group portrait – transforming it into a single figure portrait. A usurpation of command has taken place. This change in command may reflect and embody Drawbridge's more egalitarian New Zealand sympathies – he was quoted in Hutchings' 1975 article as believing New Zealand was a social democracy – it serves to reinforce his belief in printmaking as a medium accessible to the people.<sup>169</sup>

Drawbridge's traditionalism is confirmed by his choice of subject (as homage to Rembrandt) and by means of his meticulous technique. Through the latter, he recalls the role of reproductive prints in disseminating the original paintings. However, the transformations of this in print demonstrate a contemporary approach in the use of his deep, velvety black ink that flattens the space surrounding the Lieutenant and produces a darkness into which four other figures from the original painting recede. The reversal produced by the print process and the blackness of the ink create a twist in the outcome

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<sup>169</sup> Hutchings, *op. cit.* 24.

of Rembrandt's original commission and affirm the duality of Drawbridge's artistic practice.

In the same year as he produced his homages to Rembrandt, Drawbridge was inspired by another famous seventeenth-century Dutch artist, Johannes Vermeer. He directed his attention towards three of his paintings, *The music lesson* (c.1662-63) [figure 35], *The concert* (c.1665-66) and *The love-letter* (c.1669-70). He addresses these paintings in a similar manner to his treatment of Rembrandt's *Holy Family by night* by selecting the central focus of each painting and reducing and simplifying the originals. Drawbridge would have seen *The love-letter* in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and *The music lesson* in the Royal Collection, at St. James's Palace, London, or at the National Gallery where it was regularly on loan. He never went to Boston, so is unlikely to have seen *The concert* held in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (until it was stolen in 1990).<sup>170</sup> Drawbridge was clearly attracted to Vermeer's remarkable sense of geometry and acute feeling for light and shadow but he also was drawn to the intimate interiors which figures in his prints in general.

Domestic, everyday life was a favourite subject in 17<sup>th</sup> Dutch century art and these scenes are familiar subjects in Dutch iconography of the period. Although musical references are very popular in these domestic scenes and were frequently linked to the theme of love, the symbolic associations can carry a variety of implications. The ephemeral nature of music can, for instance, suggest *vanitas* interpretations, including the transience of life and the virtues of moderation. The presence of musical instruments can also imply the social aspirations and/or social status of the figures in the painting. Equally, the harmony of music can indicate harmony between the figures represented. Conversely, the sensory and sensual quality of music meant that music-making was often viewed with suspicion and as a trap for the innocent and unwary.<sup>171</sup> The three paintings by Vermeer that Drawbridge selected to transform into print all contain musical references in a domestic interior. O'Brien has proposed a personal dimension for these references suggesting they were:

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<sup>170</sup> Tanya Ashken, from email to the author, Wellington 17 October, 2014.

<sup>171</sup> Marjorie E Weiseman, *Vermeer and music: the art of love and leisure*, London: The National Gallery, 2013: 9-31.

a kind of visual accommodation of the fact that his wife was deaf. In a dwelling where, for many years, music was seldom played because it made verbal communication impossible for Tanya, the house musicians are here relocated/transposed to the harmonic chamber of the mezzotint print.<sup>172</sup>

Of all Drawbridge's prints that directly quote the great masters, his 1983 prints of Vermeer's paintings are the closest to the original paintings and the most readily recognisable for his viewers.

In *The music lesson (Vermeer)* [figure 34], Drawbridge focuses on the interaction between the young woman at the harpsichord and the male teacher (or, it has been suggested, a fashionable gentleman with a cane or even a suitor).<sup>173</sup> His print reduces the content in Vermeer's painting to less than one-half of the original. By omitting the whole of the left side of the painting and cutting out some of the foreground on the right, he brings the subject much closer to the viewer and, as a consequence, removes some of the detail and iconography in the scene as well as Vermeer's sharply receding space and sense of perspective.<sup>174</sup> For example, Drawbridge has omitted the bass viola da gamba lying on the floor of the Vermeer painting and he does not include the motto on the lid of the virginal which refers to the theme of music and friendship (or love), 'music is the companion of joy, the medicine of sorrow'. However, he pays homage to this great master through his references to Vermeer's sense of geometry by indicating the criss-crossed tiled floor in the mirror above the woman playing the virginal and by the interplay of chiaroscuro – both of which are significant components of Vermeer's deep perspective.

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<sup>172</sup> Gregory O'Brien, 'John Drawbridge', in Sally Blundell (ed), *Look this way: New Zealand writers on New Zealand artists*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2007: 47.

<sup>173</sup> Marjorie Wiesenman suggests that with his fashionable costume and cane, he is more likely to be a suitor listening to the young woman play, rather than a teacher as there is nothing to indicate that it is an actual music lesson. (From Marjorie E Wiesenman's, *Vermeer's women: secrets and silence*, University of Cambridge: The Fitzwilliam Museum, 2011: 132.)

The original title for this painting by Vermeer is unknown and has also been referred to as *Couple standing at a virginal* and *Lady at the virginals with a gentleman*. As Vermeer's intentions are never completely clear these other titles are all equally possible.

<sup>174</sup> Norbert Schneider, *Vermeer: the complete paintings*, Köln: Taschen, 2007 (orig 1994): 38.





Figure 34: John Drawbridge, *The music lesson (Vermeer)*, 1983, mezzotint & drypoint, 250 x 163 mm.



Figure 35: Johannes Vermeer, *The music lesson*, c.1662-5, oil on canvas, 746 x 641 mm, The Royal Collection, Buckingham Palace, London.

In addition to preserving the same configuration of figures and furniture from Vermeer's painting, Drawbridge has kept other elements that make the source of his homage very apparent. For instance, he keeps the mirror reflecting the woman's face turned slightly towards the man (as well as the tiles), thereby making a connection with Vermeer's subtle method of observing human interactions. In Vermeer's painting, the reflection in the mirror provides the only clue that there may be a degree of intimacy between the man and young woman, her eyes looking towards him as he gazes at her (or perhaps past her) [figure 35]. In Drawbridge's representation of this feature, he includes the mirror (with its shadow on the wall) and the tilt of the woman's face towards the man, but, crucially, she is not looking at him; she is watching her hands on the keyboard (although her right arm is awkwardly placed lower than the keyboard). Furthermore, the music teacher looks over his arm towards her hands on the keyboard and his upright stance, reinforced by holding a cane in his right hand, gives him a sense of authority and asserts his position as her teacher. There is no suggestion of intimacy between the two. The reflection in the mirror indicates her absorption in playing the music which echoes that of the teacher watching and listening to her play. Both are absorbed in the act of 'attention', just as the viewer is absorbed in the image of her playing. The use of the mirror focuses our attention on the nature of 'attention' itself – a prerequisite for the act of music, just as Vermeer's painting refers to the act of painting itself by indicating a small corner of his easel in the top right of the mirror.<sup>175</sup>

Vermeer created intimacy between his male and female figures by distancing them from the viewer and placing them in their own private space far back from the viewer; Drawbridge creates intimacy by bringing the scene close up into the viewer's space. But this intimacy is not between the male and female figure but between the viewer and the figures. The highly lit and deep-shadowed areas in the print compress the space of the original setting and between the viewer and the figures in the painting. The very features that Vermeer has left in shadow to set the figures back into space, Drawbridge has highlighted and pulled forward into the viewer's space. This change of focus and flattening of space moves the work from three-dimensional illusionistic representation

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<sup>175</sup> South Bank Show (television programme on Arts Channel 27/3/08), *Vermeer: light, love and silence*, (produced & directed by Michael Gill) DVD04765, VUW Lib.

to two-dimensions of modern painting. By omitting contextual details and deep space, Drawbridge modifies certain suggestions of the original painting.

Drawbridge uses the qualities of mezzotint to produce strong contrasts of light and dark – the white of the paper against black ink forms. As in his rendering of Rembrandt's painting, *Holy Family by night*, different aspects of the original painting are given a new emphasis. In *The music lesson (Vermeer)*, Drawbridge's flattened space, using closely layered planes of light and dark, and the reversal of the image in the print also draw attention to different aspects of Vermeer's painting. For instance, the bright white of the empty chair becomes a major feature in contrast to the deep black of the forms in front and behind. Drawbridge's chair demands attention and draws the viewer into the space between the two figures – as if the empty chair is inviting the viewer's own presence at the music lesson. The chair also highlights the detail of the patterned Oriental rug in front of it. Here, Drawbridge juxtaposes the modernist abstract shapes of the woman's skirt (and floor beneath her and the chair) against the fine detail of the rug. This rug, draped over the table in the foreground, demonstrates Drawbridge's technical expertise in the traditional medium of mezzotint. He is not only able to render a recognisable Oriental pattern on its surface, but the weight of the rug is felt by its deeply-shadowed folds and the lightening of tone on its top and sides as it hangs heavily over the table.

At first glance, Drawbridge appears to be making a literal reproduction of Vermeer's paintings and concerning himself merely with only the reproductive and traditional role of printmaking, as indicated by the exquisitely rendered detail of the Oriental rug and by his preservation of familiar references to the Dutch 17<sup>th</sup> century iconography. However, with his abstract and flattened modernist forms, the reversal of figures from the printmaking process and the stark contrasts of white and black, the original painting undergoes significant recasting and is brought into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In Vermeer's own paintings, intertextual links are most readily achieved through his incorporation of readily identifiable paintings into his interiors, paintings recreated within paintings. *The concert* (c.1664) [figure 37] for instance, includes two paintings in a music-making setting. The one on the right side, hanging above a woman singing, is *The*

*procuress* (1622) by Dutch painter Dirck van Baburen and depicts a lusty bordello scene.<sup>176</sup> The other is a romantic pastoral scene. In addition, the harpsichord lid portrays an idyllic Arcadian landscape scene which faces the man playing the cittern with his back to the viewer. The cittern was the most popular accompanying instrument during this period and in Dutch genre iconography was often seen metaphorically as suggesting harmony between players. Just as the presence of musical instruments in paintings were often understood to symbolise love and/or friendship, references to paintings within paintings were often similarly associated with love and/or seduction. However, iconographically, the cittern could also carry with it more sexual and lustful associations. This was especially the case with paintings like van Baburen's *The procuress*, in which prostitutes hold and/or play the instrument.<sup>177</sup> In Vermeer's painting, the man who is placed between the two paintings and the women making music, creates a shadowy yet strong connection between the two women. Only the end of the fingerboard with the tuning pegs of the cittern are visible, so one reading of the painting would see the man as providing harmony between the two women and/or providing a controlling balance between their different desires (as suggested by the paintings above them) – the tuning pegs hinting at his position of control. Equally, the interpersonal dynamic could be seen in a more ambivalent light. Although the arms of both women are directed towards the man and the three are depicted as psychologically connected, their desires, other than musical ones, remain teasingly unclear. The cittern player is central yet anonymous and, like many of Vermeer's figures, his role is ambiguous.

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<sup>176</sup> *The procuress* belonged to Vermeer's mother-in-law and is also included in at least one other of his paintings, *Lady seated at a virginal* c.1673-5. Motifs of brothel scenes were a popular genre and often interpreted as a lesson in morality or possibly the reverse of this and seen as a reaction against increasingly prudish morality. (Schneider, op. cit. 23-4.)

<sup>177</sup> Wieseman, *Vermeer and music: the art of love and leisure*, op. cit. 27-8.



Figure 36: John Drawbridge, *The concert (Vermeer with Matisse)*, 1983, mezzotint & drypoint, 250 x 163 mm.



Figure 37: Johannes Vermeer, *The concert*, 1664, oil on canvas, 690 x 630 mm, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston (until stolen in 1990).





Figure 38: Henri Matisse, *Dance (I)*, 1909, oil on canvas, 2597 x 3901 mm, Museum of Modern Art, New York.



Figure 39: Henri Matisse, *The swimming pool*, 1952, gouache on cut and pasted paper, 185.4 x 1643.3 mm, Museum of Modern Art, New York.

The two paintings on the back wall in Vermeer's domestic setting become the site of Drawbridge's pictorial intertextuality in his 1983 print, *The concert (Vermeer with Matisse)* [figure 36]. As indicated by his title, Drawbridge introduces Matisse into his print of *The concert*, replacing Vermeer's Dirck van Baburen painting with Matisse's *Dance (1)* (1909) [figure 38]. In addition, the romantic pastoral painting is replaced, perhaps, by a reference to another of Matisse's cut-outs, such as one of the nude figures in his *Swimming pool* frieze (1952) [figure 39]. In the proof for this print, Drawbridge had originally used Vermeer's own choice of paintings on the back wall but he obviously rethought what he wanted to say when he included these 20<sup>th</sup> century references within Vermeer's frame. These create an entirely different tone and tension within the seemingly harmonious domestic setting and provide a more personal insight into Drawbridge's artistic training and allegiances. These references affirm that, for him, printmaking was a means to acknowledge and invoke the tradition of Western art of which he was endeavouring to be a part.<sup>178</sup>

Although Drawbridge has retained many of the main features from Vermeer's painting, the black and white of the print and the abstracted foreground reduces the space surrounding the figures and objects, and a number of details are omitted. For instance, the rug on the table is now an amorphous shape within which the bass viola da gamba is absorbed, and the inside of the harpsichord lid is completely black. The absence of such details from Vermeer's painting removes, or at least reduces, the potential implications of the original iconography in a similar manner to Drawbridge's re-creation of *The music lesson (Vermeer)*. Drawbridge looks at Vermeer's *The concert* afresh. He brings together two of his own favourite artists, who lived nearly two-and-a-half centuries apart, and imagines a kind of 'spiritual' dialogue between them as he physically links them within the same frame.

The harmony of music-making in Vermeer's scene of Dutch 17<sup>th</sup> century 'bourgeois propriety' is explicitly challenged in Drawbridge's print by the juxtaposition of the Matisse painting hanging above the musicians. Matisse's *Dance (1)* depicts a bacchanalian scene with intoxicated-looking naked figures dancing in a circle. The

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<sup>178</sup> In his painting of Vermeer's music lesson, *Vermeer with Matisse* 1984, Drawbridge has included his print *The concert (Vermeer with Matisse)*, hanging above and behind the music teacher.

background is black and the figures are simplified, flattened and appear roughly sketched. This replacement painting provides a sexualised, modern equivalent to the Dirck van Baburen, but the impact of such uninhibited nakedness produces an abrupt disconnection in visual harmony. Similarly, Vermeer's painting of a romantic pastoral scene is replaced by another homage to Matisse. He brings together Matisse's flattened figures and space into the mathematically ordered world of Vermeer's Dutch genre painting. Although the emblematic content in the paintings could be considered equivalent, the disjunction between the past and the present is brought to the fore with a union between these two modes of representation – the traditional and the modern.

The dualism in Drawbridge's practice is very apparent in *The concert (Vermeer with Matisse)*. Using his technical expertise with the traditional mezzotint printmaking process, Drawbridge produces a reproduction of an original painting but, at the same time, is able to differentiate between the tonally blended painting style of the Dutch 17<sup>th</sup> century Master, Vermeer, with the looser, more sketchy forms of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Master, Matisse. Drawbridge recontextualises Matisse's work within Vermeer's interior, but he has turned Vermeer's world into a space of cultural anachronism and temporal juxtaposition.

Over 10 years later, Drawbridge produced one of his most intriguing prints, *Velázquez infanta* (1994), [figure 40] with a quotation from a detail of Velázquez's *Las meninas* (1656) [figure 41]. *Las meninas* is one of the most discussed, debated and quoted paintings in art history.<sup>179</sup> The painting was held in the Spanish royal collection until 1819 and the opening of the Museo del Prado in Madrid, where *Las meninas* still resides.

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<sup>179</sup> From the first, it generated comment and imitation for the few who had access to the Spanish Royal Palace. For instance, Palomino in the early eighteenth-century noted that Luca Giordano, another artist in the Spanish Royal Court, in 1692 described Velázquez's painting as 'the theology of painting' and produced his own *Homage to Velázquez* (c.1692-1700), now in the National Gallery, London. Palomino himself called *Las meninas* "'truth not painting'" in his 1724 biography of Spanish painters, from Uziel Awret, 'Las Meninas and the search for self-representation' *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 15(9), 2008: 9. (This Palomino quote comes from his book *El Mueso Pictorico y Escala Optica*, Madrid: Aguiar, 1724. The painting *Las Meninas* was not given this title until 1843.) More recently, Michel Foucault's influential 1970 essay about *Las meninas* in *The order of things: an archeology of the human sciences*, has sparked numerous articles, essays and debates about the painting. Foucault focuses on classical seventeenth-century thought about what he terms 'the classical episteme' and argues for *Las meninas* as its quintessential pictorial representation. Initially, the painting appears to depict reality – a Royal group portrait where everything is ordered and in its place and it is this aspect that Picasso so comprehensively undoes in his numerous Cubist versions of the same painting in 1957.



By quoting one of the most famous figures from Western art history, Drawbridge contributes to a tradition within which numerous other illustrious artists have paid their respects to this great painting. These include Francisco de Goya (1780-5), Edgar Degas (1857), Picasso (1957), Salvador Dali (1958) and Richard Hamilton (1973) – the latter creating a double reference in *Las meninas of Picasso* – a tribute to Picasso's many versions of *Las meninas*, as well as Velázquez.

In 1957, Picasso produced what are by general consent, the most famous reworkings of *Las meninas*. As early as 1950, he had been telling Sabartès:

suppose one were to make a copy of The Maids of Honor; if it were I, the moment would come when I would say to myself: suppose I moved this figure a little to the right or a little to the left? At that point I would try it without giving a thought to Velázquez. Almost certainly, I would be tempted to modify the light or to arrange it differently in view of the changed position of the figure. Gradually I would create a painting of The Maids of Honor sure to horrify the specialist in the copying of old masters. It would not be The Maids of Honor he saw when he looked at Velázquez's picture: it would be my Maids of Honor.<sup>180</sup>

The result was 58 different images, mostly paintings, created by Picasso where he takes Velázquez's painting to pieces showing the many possibilities of what can be seen, imagined and missed in this great painting as he simultaneously explores, analyses and critiques *Las meninas*. Drawbridge was very likely to be familiar with Picasso's versions and in 1993 he produced his own small card-like version in a print, *Las meninas – after Velázquez* – which might be thought of as a homage to a homage. The print simplifies, reduces and reverses Velázquez's painting into a shadowy photographic negative of the original with most of the background blacked-out, except for the figure of the queen's chamberlain in the doorway on the back wall. Creating this small version probably inspired Drawbridge to create his bust-portrait print of the Infanta, *Velázquez infanta*, in the following year.

Like Picasso, Drawbridge creates his own distinctive version of the Infanta in the print *Velázquez infanta* (1994).<sup>181</sup> He employs a similar strategy to his earlier print, *The night*

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<sup>180</sup> Susan Grace Galassi, *Picasso's variations on the Masters*, New York: Harry N Abrams, 1996: 124. The quotation is from the introduction to Sarbatès, *Picasso's variations on Velázquez' painting, 'The Maids of Honor' and other recent work* (footnote on p 128).

<sup>181</sup> In the proof for this 1994 print, the Infanta is very clearly recognisable from the original painting and Drawbridge retains her blonde hair and particular decorative features on her dress and in her hair. Using toning, he creates shadow and detail but the lower part of the Infanta's face is partially obscured by black shadow, as in the final version. The shift from this proof to the final editioned print indicates a rethinking of Drawbridge's original conception of the

*watch (Rembrandt: detail)* and produces a close-up of the central figure from the original painting [figure 41]. However, in his print *Velázquez infanta*, Drawbridge radically alters the original.



Figure 40: John Drawbridge, *Velázquez infanta*, 1994, mezzotint & drypoint, 345 x 545 mm.

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Infanta as he deleted a considerable amount of the toning included in the proof and created a more solid and much more formidable Infanta in the final edition.



Figure 41: Diego Velázquez, *Las meninas* (detail of Infanta), 1656, oil on canvas, 3200 x 2760 mm (complete painting), Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.

The Infanta has been entirely removed from her royal/courtly context, and her image has been reduced to head and shoulders, her hair and most of her face blackened. Only her forehead and the whites of her eyes pierce the darkness. The princess is hardly recognisable (except for the turn of her head and her outline), being transformed from the pretty and poised blonde five-year-old into a figure from contemporary gothic fiction.<sup>182</sup> The sunlight no longer embraces the princess as she is now cast in a menacing darkness; the heaviness of the black framing adding intensity to her penetrating gaze as she looks out of the frame – sideways and just past the viewer. There is no longer any reciprocity of gaze. As a consequence of the reversal of the printed image, the Infanta now by-passes the viewer, appearing to have other concerns. Picasso wanted to ‘modify the light or to arrange it differently in view of the changed position of the figure’; similarly, Drawbridge has made this Infanta an unsettling and powerful image of his own.<sup>183</sup> Typically, Drawbridge sets figures and objects into clearly partitioned spaces.

<sup>182</sup> O’Brien finds analogies here with Mervyn Peake’s gothic masterpiece, the *Gormenghast* trilogy and the personality of Fuchsia. Peake taught Drawbridge life drawing at Central School in the late 1950s, and the latter certainly later read Peake’s novels. From O’Brien, ‘Drawbridge revisited’, *Listener*, 15 December 2001: 50 and email from Tanya Ashken to the author, 21 November 2014.

<sup>183</sup> Galassi, op. cit. 124.

This references other works by the artist including *Night tree* (1994) [figure 42] and *Malevich at the Stedelijk Museum*.<sup>184</sup>



Figure 42: John Drawbridge, *Night tree*, 1994, oil on canvas, 1200 x 1200, private collection, Auckland.

Drawbridge's intertextual references here are multi-levelled. The references to Velázquez are clear in the title and in the adaptation of Infanta's portrait (reversed and blackened). Then there is the allusion to his own work in the adjoining frame, and, less obviously, the further allusion to McCahon's *Necessary protection* (1971) [figure 43] series where the Tau cross vertically divides the print in half.



Figure 43: Colin McCahon, *Necessary protection*, 1971, acrylic on unstretched canvas, 1840 x 2973 mm, Auckland Art Gallery (on loan from a private collection).

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<sup>184</sup> Cameron Drawbridge suggested that it was a reference to John's painting either *Urewera forest* (1992), *Forest wind* (1992) or *Night tree* (1994). *Night tree* (on its side) is the closest in likeness and particularly relevant in its title and he was working on this painting in the same year. From an interview with the author on 27 July, 2013.

In Drawbridge's *Velázquez infanta* the figure and ground of the 'T' are reversed as the dark of the sky falls onto the once bright light emanating from the princess. He recontextualises Velázquez's original painting into his local context and surrounds the Gothicised Infanta with references to his own and McCahon's art and, more indirectly, to Picasso's 58 recreations. Her blackened face emphasises the formalist concerns of McCahon's Tau cross while also offering another interpretation of subverting the European tradition of innocence and the blonde young girl. Within a single image, Drawbridge fuses the two hemispheres - the international is brought into the local context, combining the traditionally figurative with the contemporarily abstract. The result is one of Drawbridge's most innovative and striking transformations of a famous art work into print and that emphasises, yet again, the dualism at the heart of his art practice.

Drawbridge's skilful narratives in print exemplify Steiner's view that a work of art is not 'a closed text with self-contained meanings', as he explores, connects with, and localises some of the great art of the past.<sup>185</sup> His choice of artists and the strategies he deploys with each print reflect his fascination with the challenges that faced the artists creating these great paintings. At the same time, he can be seen to be conducting his own explorations and innovations in print. In each print discussed here, he opens up the original and modernises it, while using traditional printmaking techniques. Consequently, he ensures the continuity of these works of art, as each painting is revived in the consciousness of those who recognise it.<sup>186</sup> Barnett observes in *Wide open interior* that 'Drawbridge has revisited mezzotint's early history in an ambitious series of prints in which he gives us his own versions of great paintings by Vermeer, Rembrandt

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<sup>185</sup> Steiner, 'Intertextuality in painting', op. cit. unpaginated.

<sup>186</sup> Drawbridge obviously enjoyed reworking artistic concerns of these great masters and extended the practice to his paintings throughout the 1980s and 90s. An interesting feature of these paintings is how he employs the same reversal of the original subject matter that naturally occurs in prints – suggesting that he made the prints first, again preforming a double-act of intertextuality: not only does he quote his own act of printmaking (and thus his earlier print of the same subject) by painting Vermeer's original in reverse, but he is also quoting his own prints within the paintings. For instance, in his painting of Vermeer's music lesson (taken from his own print *The music lesson - Vermeer*) he includes his own print *The concert (Vermeer)* 1983, and places it above the music teacher in his painting *Vermeer with Matisse*, 1984.<sup>186</sup> Similarly, in his painting *Vermeer-Rembrandt-Malevich* (1984) taken from his print *The love letter (Vermeer)* 1983, he includes Malevich paintings on the wall behind the figures and incorporates his own print, *The night watch (Rembrandt detail)* 1983, on the side wall of the doorway – double quoting himself.<sup>186</sup> However, in 1988 he produced a print *Still life with Malevich (red)* and a painting *Still life with Malevich* and this time the print is a reversal of the painting – suggesting that his print is a reference to his painting, as well as including a reference to Malevich. Drawbridge continued with this practice of quotation of the great masters in both his paintings and prints until the mid-90s.

and Velázquez. Reviving the early function of the mezzotint, Drawbridge's images are masterly distillations of complex paintings; translations into the mezzotint language of light and dark.<sup>187</sup> This is well said, but Drawbridge does more. He creates highly interactive spaces within which the traditional and the contemporary, the past and the present, the international and the local are brought together to produce works of subtly understated originality.

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<sup>187</sup> Barnett, *op. cit.* 47.

## Conclusion

*... as any interpreter of visual art knows, paintings can give rise to meanings that are propositional, tensed, and general, and that, moreover, rival literature in their richness and complexity.* Wendy Steiner<sup>188</sup>

As a master printmaker John Drawbridge employed traditional printmaking processes and conventions. Consequently, he could be viewed as purist and old-fashioned or as someone uninterested in the contemporary. He predominantly worked with the traditional etching, mezzotint and drypoint processes and he pulled his own prints, preferring to have control over the whole process from beginning to end. However, Drawbridge also enjoyed experimenting with modern techniques, such as using photo-sensitised plates, adding fabric and using a variety of implements to obtain wide-ranging textures from his plates. This thesis argues that Drawbridge's printmaking practice combined both the rear-guard and the contemporary. It is the combination of both the figurative and the abstract in his prints that highlights the dual nature of Drawbridge's artistic identity: the traditionalist still committed to the small, 'hand-made original' print, the 'modernist' influenced by Abstraction and Pop Art, reflecting the ethos of his time.

The experience of living in London and Paris for six years continued to exert a powerful and visible influence on Drawbridge's prints throughout his career, and his later prints that quote the great masters are a direct consequence of that paradigm-shifting experience. After his return to New Zealand, this amalgamation of the figurative and the abstract appears as a recurring feature in his printmaking practice from the mid-1960s: black Malevich-like rectangular shapes are juxtaposed against finely cross-hatched figures carefully articulated with light and shade – for instance in *Tanya going and coming* No. 3 (1967) and *Tanya about to fly* (1967). Drawbridge continued to combine these opposing modes of representation throughout his career.

To argue this point, I have chosen to focus on Drawbridge's prints that refer directly to past masters, produced between 1980 and 1994. Though these represent only a small part of his complete *oeuvre*, they illustrate his ability to interact creatively and dynamically with the work of other artists. These prints offer a wide range of

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<sup>188</sup> Wendy Steiner, 'Intertextuality in painting' from *The American Journal of Semiotics*, 3.4 (1985): <http://search.proquest.com/docview/213747028>

intertextual references, but they are not mere quotations. The selection, editing and transformation of his sources renders them richly original. Unlike critics, such as John Hurrell writing in the *Press* in 1984, who claims that 'Drawbridge's prints 'do not go beyond exploitation to develop new qualities outside of the formal attributes', I have argued they achieve something new.<sup>189</sup> And if other reviewers have praised Drawbridge's technical ability to translate the more three-dimensional quality of the paintings into the two-dimensional quality of the black-and-white print, they do not trust the prints to go beyond received expectations. Such admiration reinforces the perception of the traditional nature of Drawbridge's printmaking, rather than perceiving the originality of his intertextual juxtapositions.<sup>190</sup>

Instead, I argue that Drawbridge demonstrates the 'symbiotic nature of creativity' by extending the interpretive possibilities without losing touch with the aesthetic of his originals.<sup>191</sup> This thesis has shown that Drawbridge offers a wide range of intertextual references and demonstrates Steiner's general claim 'that paintings are always connected to each other and often to works of other arts, [and] that pictorial meaning is conditioned by these connections ...'.<sup>192</sup> Drawbridge not only draws on the work of the artists that he quotes, but he simultaneously references his own art, generating double acts of intertextuality, as in *Malevich at the Stedelijk Museum* (1980), *Interior with Matisse* (1981), and *Velázquez Infanta* (1994).<sup>193</sup> These double and/or multi-levelled acts of intertextuality provide a richer and more complex meaning for these prints than has otherwise been acknowledged.

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<sup>189</sup> John Hurrell, 'Drawbridge prints', *Christchurch Press*, 11 March, 1984: 11.

<sup>190</sup> Wedde refers to Drawbridge's reworkings of these famous paintings as 'variations on a theme'. From, Ian Wedde, 'Variations on a theme', *New Zealand Art News*, October, 1984: 4. Brett Riley wrote an informative and complimentary review for the *Christchurch Star*, also in October, 1984, in which he comments on Drawbridge's technical preoccupations and concerns. However, like Hurrell, Riley too describes some of Drawbridge's Matisse prints as 'unabashed appropriation' – also failing to consider why Drawbridge might quote Matisse and what he achieves. From Brett Riley, 'Direct and tactile', *The Star*, Christchurch, 3 October, 1984. In a more admiring review for *Art New Zealand* (1984), Susan Foster praises Drawbridge's ability to retain Vermeer's 'sense of timelessness' in his printed homage to the artist Vermeer and comments on Drawbridge's ability to adapt Vermeer's mathematically balanced composition, using geometric shapes that are not unlike the abstraction of the modern master Mondrian. From, Susan Foster, 'Wellington: Chris Booth, John Drawbridge, Ans Westra', *Art New Zealand*, 33 (summer), 1984: 16-17.

<sup>191</sup> Sarah McClintock, Introduction for exhibition catalogue, *After you: copying, quoting and homage in historical and contemporary art*, Sarjeant Gallery, Whanganui, March – July, 2013.

<sup>192</sup> Wendy Steiner, 'Intertextuality in painting' from *The American Journal of Semiotics*, 3.4 (1985): <http://search.proquest.com/docview/213747028>

<sup>193</sup> In his mixed-media painting *Vermeer-Rembrandt-Malevich* 1984, Drawbridge does not quote his own print *The Night Watch* (Rembrandt detail) he actually includes the print as part of the art work.



Drawbridge explained that one of the reasons he returned to New Zealand was to avoid becoming caught up in 'the dealer-gallery pipeline'. This, he felt, would place too many restraints on his development and desire to experiment – he did not want to be typecast. However, back in New Zealand, it was exactly this need to pigeon-hole Drawbridge as a particular kind of artist that has affected the reception of his prints.<sup>194</sup> Although highly regarded as a technician and practitioner, the conceptual and intellectual aspect of his prints has been until recently almost entirely overlooked and undervalued.<sup>195</sup> Drawbridge himself seems to have felt this undervaluing. In an interview with Stocker, he remarked that he wished that 'New Zealand artists had adopted the total approach that was taken for granted in France, where "artists were artists, they were painters, printmakers, sculptors, they did it all."' <sup>196</sup> More recently, Barry Cleavin has commented that Drawbridge 'projected the "print" as a way of life equal to either sculpture or painting'.<sup>197</sup> Through these prints, Drawbridge found his own way to engage with the European tradition he so much admired, providing his own distinctive critique and interpretation. By incorporating these well-known paintings into his own cultural space and into the medium of the print, he shows himself to be a resourceful and imaginative commentator on art of the past and the present, the international and the local, the traditional and the modern.

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<sup>194</sup> Cape, 1972: 16 and Mary Morel, 'Printmaker/Illusionist,' *Pacific Way* 1987: 60.

<sup>195</sup> It was not until the 21<sup>st</sup> century that Drawbridge's prints have been discussed with some intellectual depth – in the 2001 exhibition catalogue *Wide open interior* with essays by O'Brien, Strongman and Barnett and in 2002 by Stocker in *Art New Zealand* (103).

<sup>196</sup> Mark Stocker, 'A window into John Drawbridge,' No. 103 (Winter), 2002: 76.

<sup>197</sup> Barry Cleavin, from an email interview with the author, 20 May 2014.



## APPENDIX 1

Exhibition history of John Drawbridge's prints (most often included with his paintings or group shows) and some solo print exhibitions. (This list is not conclusive and a work in progress)

1951	Dunedin Public Library – mostly paintings including his lithograph <i>Woman</i>
1952	'The Group Show', Christchurch
1956	Architectural Centre Gallery, Wellington
1959	Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, <i>The Graven Image</i>
1960	Leicester Gallery, London & Zwemmer Gallery, London (his prints were exhibited alongside Friedlaender, Jean Dubuffet, Picasso & Masson)
1960	St George's Gallery, London
1960	International Biennale of Prints, Cincinnati, USA
1960	elected as an Associate member to The Royal Society of Painter-printmakers, London (1960-1986)
1964	Ikon Gallery, Auckland (combined exhibition of his paintings, prints & drawings)
1964	Uptown Gallery, Auckland
1965	New Vision Gallery, Auckland, NZ Graphics '65 exhibition
1965	Barry Lett Galleries, group exhibition of prints
1965	Academy of Fine Arts, Wellington 'exhibition of NZ sculpture, pottery and graphic art
1966	National Art Gallery, Wellington 'exhibition of recently acquired paintings & NZ graphic art'
1966	Auckland City Art Gallery, NZ Print Council's first exhibition
1967, 1969, 1973: exhibited in 4 of the 6 print council exhibitions	
1967	Otago Museum, Dunedin, 36 prints, 4 paintings & with Ashken
1967	7 <sup>th</sup> Print International, Ljubljana, Yugoslavia
1968	1 <sup>st</sup> International Graphic Art Exhibition, Buenos Aires, Argentina
1968	10 <sup>th</sup> International Exhibition of Graphic Art, Lugano, Switzerland
1968	Bett-Duncan Gallery, 20/20 Vision printmakers – group exhibition
1969	8 <sup>th</sup> Print International, Ljubljana, Yugoslavia

1969/70	New Vision Gallery, Auckland, solo exhibition
1970	Bett-Duncan Gallery, Wellington printmakers, group exhibition
1970	2 <sup>nd</sup> British International Print Biennale, Bradford, UK
1970	3 <sup>rd</sup> Biennale International de la Gravure, Krakow
1970	New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts, Wellington, 'New Zealand art of the sixties'
1970	Expo '70, Osaka, Japan, included one of his prints ( <i>Red wave</i> )
1971	2 <sup>nd</sup> Triennale, New Dehli, India
1971	Wairarapa Arts Centre, Masterton, paintings, prints & Ashken's sculptures
1971	Uptown Gallery, 'Prints: John Drawbridge' solo exhibition
1971	New Vision Gallery, Auckland, 'Wellington '71' included 2 of his prints
1971	Victoria University Library, 'The Picture group' group exhibition including his prints
1971	Elva Bett Gallery, Wellington printmakers, group exhibition
1972	Barry Lett Galleries 'Prints' group exhibition
1972	Manawatu Art Gallery 'exhibition from the permanent collection'
1972	New Vision Gallery, Auckland, solo exhibition of 14 prints and 4 paintings
1972	3 <sup>rd</sup> British International Print Biennale
1973	Bett-Duncan Gallery, solo exhibition of paintings and prints
1973	Bett-Duncan Gallery, group exhibition
1973	Bett-Duncan Gallery, Wellington printmakers
1974	1 <sup>st</sup> International Graphic Art Exhibition, India
1974	New Vision Gallery, group exhibition of intaglio prints
1974/5	9 <sup>th</sup> International Biennial Exhibition of Prints, Tokyo
1976 prints	Dowse Art Gallery, Lower Hutt, '9 invited Wellington artists' included 2
1976/7	10 <sup>th</sup> International Biennale Exhibition of Prints, Tokyo
1977	Elva Bett Gallery, exhibition of unique prints & paintings
1977	Victoria University Library, 'Expressions' group exhibition of artists' prints
1978	International Print Exhibition, Cracow, Poland

- 1978 New Vision Gallery, solo exhibition in May 'works on paper'
- 1980 International Print Exhibition, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 1980 Canterbury Society of Arts Gallery, Christchurch, 'original prints'
- 1980 Govett-Brewster Gallery, New Plymouth, 'Directions in NZ printmaking'
- 1980 Williams Gallery, Lower Hutt, exhibition
- 1980 Victoria University Library, solo exhibition of prints.
- 1981 New Vision Gallery, Auckland, solo exhibition of 30 prints, 8 paintings, 2 constructions
- 1981 Gingko Gallery, Christchurch
- 1982 New Vision Gallery, Auckland
- 1982 Galerie Legard, Wellington, group exhibition included prints
- 1983 Morant Gallery, Christchurch, 'Graphic Art', group exhibition
- 1983 Antipodes Gallery, Wellington, exhibition of prints
- 1984 Galerie Legard, Wellington, paintings & 16 new prints
- 1984 Artis Gallery, Auckland, with others
- 1984 Westport Library, exhibition of touring prints
- 1984 National Art Gallery, Wellington, exhibition of prints for Japan from NAG
- 1984 Gingko Gallery, Christchurch, solo exhibition of 23 prints
- 1985 107<sup>th</sup> Bankside Gallery, London. Autumn Exhibition of contemporary prints by members of the Royal Society of Painter-Etcher & Engravers including a special display by 11 NZ printmakers.
- 1986 Brooker Gallery, Wellington, solo exhibition – mixed works
- 1986 New York Art Expo, USA, paintings and prints
- 1986 National Gallery, Wellington, 'Face to face' exhibition of prints in the collection (included 1 of his)
- 1987 Portfolio Gallery, Auckland, Drawbridge's mezzotints
- 1987 Hawkes Bay Arts Society, prints exhibition
- 1988 US Print Consortium, members' travelling exhibition, USA
- 1989 Lopdell House, Titirangi 'invited printmakers' exhibition'
- 1991 Salamander Gallery, Christchurch, prints & Ashken's sculptures
- 1991 Marilyn Savill Gallery, print exhibition

1993	International Print exhibition, Maastricht, Netherlands
1994	Lane Gallery, Auckland
1994	Triennale of small prints, Chamaliers, France
1995	Turnbull Gallery, Drawbridge family exhibition
1997	Triennale of small prints, Chamaliers, France
1997	US Print Consortium, members' travelling exhibition, USA
1998	Studio 4, Wellington, prints, oils & watercolours and Ashken's sculptures
1998	Statements Gallery, Napier, 'Coastlines' group show of printmakers
1999	Crossroads Gallery – Drawbridge and Ashken (watercolours, prints & sculptures)
2000	Triennale of small prints, Chamaliers, France
2000	US Print Consortium, members' travelling exhibition, USA
2000	Marsden Gallery, Featherston, 'Leaving a lasting impression'
2001	Mahara Gallery, Waikanae (part of retrospective exhibition at City Gallery, Wellington)
2002	12 <sup>th</sup> Space International Print Biennale, Seoul, South Korea
2003	Statements Gallery, Napier, group show
2004	Mahara Gallery, Waikanae, exhibition of prints by Drawbridge
2004	Tinakori Gallery, Wellington 'JD prints, 1957-2004'
2005	William's Gallery, Petone 'survey of works' with Marilyn Webb
2006	Diversion Gallery, Renwick, posthumous exhibition of his final 3 prints (he died 2005)

## Appendix 2

### Appendix 2: Prints in publications and public collections

This catalogue is to provide sources for viewing these prints. It is incomplete but a work in progress.

List of abbreviations used: aq = aquatint; dp = drypoint; mz = mezzotint; dtd. = dated; etch. = etching; engrv = engraving; pf = proof; ap = artist's proof.

TITLE	DATE	MEDIUM	EDIT.	SIZE	Publication/s	Public collections
<i>Woman</i>	1951	Lithograph		570 x 417	Skinner: 202 O'Brien: 14	Hocken Lib.
<i>Saucepan &amp; jug</i>	1953	Lithograph		240 x 330		Hocken Lib.
<i>Bare trees &amp; house</i>	1956	Lithograph	40	440 x 330		Hocken Lib. (17/40)
<i>Harlequin</i>	1956	Screenprint		375 x 285	Skinner: 202	Hocken Lib. Dunedin PAG
<i>Plimmer steps</i>	1956	Lithograph	35	440 x 330	Skinner: 203	Hocken Lib. (4/35)
<i>Clown</i>	1958	Screenprint	35	375 x 280		Hocken Lib. (3/35)
<i>Loire Valley, near Saumur</i>	1958	Etch & aq	50	265 x 486		Dunedin PAG Mus of NZ (ap) Waikato Mus. RSP-E archive (Ashmolean, UK)
<i>Village near Poitiers, France</i>	1958	etch				Aigantighe Gal., Timaru
<i>Long landscape</i>	1959	Aq, etch & engrv				Hocken Lib. (ap)
<i>Man of Larisa, Greece (aka man in a café)</i>	1959	Etch & aq		610 x 500	Skinner: 203	
<i>Rain at sunset</i>	1959	Etch & aq	50	505 x 500	Skinner: 204	Hocken Lib. (1/50) MFAT Tehran
<i>Rock pool (also called Water &amp; rock)</i>	1959	Etch		505 x 500	Skinner: 205	Hocken Lib. (trial pf) Mus of NZ (ap) V & A collection, London
<i>Sleeping woman</i>	1959	Aq & mz		500 x 600	Skinner: 204	
<i>Approach to St André No. 1 (or</i>	1960	Etch		600 x 497	Skinner: 207	Aratoi (35/50)

<i>Avenue of trees?)</i>					<i>Landfall</i> (1973): 145 O'Brien: plate 4 <i>Art NZ</i> (2002): 77	
<i>Avenue near St André (Approach to St André No. 2)</i>	1960	etch & aq.,		490 x 590	Skinner: 206	Chch AG (has No. 2 title) Hocken Lib. (2/50)
<i>Chartres Cathedral</i>	1960	Etch				Dunedin PAG
<i>City at night</i>	1960	Etch & aq				Chch AG (pf)
<i>City at night II</i> (Colour variations on first one)	1960	Etch & aq			Cape (1974): 78-9 (pf)	
<i>Darlington landscape, Devonshire</i>	1960	Deep line etch				Dunedin PAG
<i>Seated woman</i>	1960	Etch	50	500 x 400	Skinner: 205 Cape (1974): 76-77. (state I, state III, & state IV) O'Brien: plate 5 <i>Art NZ</i> (1982): 18	Anderson Park (4/50) Aratoi, Mast. (29/50) HBGM (45/50) Hocken Lib. ap Coloured version Te Manawa, (30/50) & (1981 ap) MFAT, deacc. Mus of NZ (3/50) NGA, Australia (33/50)
<i>Tower, Florence</i>	1960	Etch.		241 x 152		Hocken Lib.
<i>Wet landscape II</i>	1960	Etch & aq				Waikato Museum
<i>Girl's head (or Portrait of a girl)</i>	1961	engraving		349 x 276		Hocken Lib. (ap)
<i>White design</i>	1962	Blind print		400 x 260		Hocken Lib.
<i>Red descending</i>	1965	Relief + mesh background	20			Mus of NZ (1/20)
<i>Sunburst</i>	1965	Relief print	20	730 x 435		ACAG library Waikato Museum (1/20)
<i>Tree in town</i>	1965	Photomechanical offset lithograph			Made for a Xmas card	Hocken Lib.
<i>Bush walk</i>	1966	Screenprint	50	377 x 500		Hocken Lib. (6/50)
<i>Fallout</i>	1966	etch				MFAT deaccd.
<i>Pacific cloud</i>	1966	Mechanically engraved copper plate/engrv & aq		560 x 355	Skinner: 209	Chch AG (3/25) Hocken Lib. (6/25)



<i>Windflow</i>	1966	Etch & aq	50	380 x 500	Skinner: 208 7 <sup>th</sup> Int. exhibit. Ljubljana 1967: 219	ACAG collection (2/50)
<i>Abstract design no 1</i>	1967	Collograph		258 x 255		Hocken Lib.
<i>Abstract design no 2</i>	1967	Collograph		252 x 255		Hocken Lib.
<i>A rather transparent girl No. 1</i>	1967	Aq. & soft ground etch & col. engrv.	50	497 x 373	Skinner: 218 O'Brien: plate 15	Dunedin PAG (2 copies) Hocken Lib. (13/50) NGA, Aust (20/50)
<i>A rather transparent girl No. 2</i>	1967	Deep etch & mz		555 x 275	Skinner: 219 O'Brien: plate 16	
<i>Emma</i>	1967	Dp & mz		120 x 220		Dunedin PAG
<i>Girl before a mirror</i>	1967	Etch & mz	50	345 x 300	Skinner: 216 (dated 1969) O'Brien: 46 (dated 1969) <i>Art NZ</i> (2002): 77 <i>Ascent</i> (1967): 41	Govett-Brewster (dtd.1981) Hocken Lib. (34/50) Waikato Museum (1981) Govett-Brewster AG Te Manawa (35/50) Mus of NZ NGA (33/50)
<i>Summer in three</i>	1967	Aq on 3 mounted sheets as 1	50	568 x 110 each sheet		Hocken Lib. (2/50)
<i>Tanya about to fly</i>	1967	Etch, dp & mz	50	345 x 300	Skinner: 210 8 <sup>th</sup> Int. exhibit. Ljubljana, 1969: 250	Dunedin PAG (43/50) Govett-Brewster (43/50) Hocken Lib. (5/50) Mus of NZ (9/50)
<i>Tanya going &amp; coming No. 1</i>	1967	dp & mz	50	345 x 300	Skinner: 211 Cape (1974): 81 <i>Art NZ</i> (1982): 20 <i>Ascent</i> (1967): 42	Sarjeant AG Mus of NZ (5/50)
<i>Tanya going &amp; coming No. 2</i>	1967	Dp & mz	50	345 x 300	Skinner: 212	AU Coll. (19/50) ACAG (5/50) Dunedin PAG Mus of NZ (8/50)

<i>Tanya going &amp; coming No. 3</i>	1967	Dp & mz	50	345 x 300	Skinner: 213 O'Brien: 38 <i>Ascent</i> (1967): 44	Mus of NZ (5/50)
<i>Girl at a window [No. I]</i>	1968	Dp & mz		628 x 352	Skinner: 215	Hocken Lib. (8/50) Waikato Museum V & A, London
<i>Untitled</i>	1968	Silkscreen		555 x 773		ACAG collection (No. 7) Chch AG Hocken Lib.
<i>Girl at a window No. II</i>	1969	Dp & mz	50	200x 715	Skinner: 214 3rd Bien. Poland, Cat, 1970: 119	Mus of NZ (21/50) Dunedin PAG Dowse AG (41/50) Hocken Lib. (4/50) Sarjeant (42/50)
<i>Green phase</i>	1970	Etch & aq		510 x 390	Skinner: 221	Aratoi 4/50 MFAT, Canberra
<i>Interior</i>	1970	Dp & mz		628 x 350  (630 x 355)	Skinner: 217 Cape (1974): 80	British Museum (3/12 4 <sup>th</sup> state) Waikato Museum Anderson (8/25 5 <sup>th</sup> State) Aratoi (5/25) Waikato (5 <sup>th</sup> final state)
<i>Red wave</i>	1970	aq & etch	50	500 x 320	Skinner: 220 Cape (1974): 74 (5/40) 2 <sup>nd</sup> Brit. bien. Cat. 1970: 26	Hocken Lib. (6/50) MFAT Canberra Mus of NZ (19/50)
<i>The green phase</i>	1970	Etch & aq		510 x 390	Skinner: 221	
<i>Long grass</i>	1971	Dp & mz	15	502 x 500		Te Manawa (11/15)
<i>Red cloud</i>	1971	Dp & mz	25	507 x 510	Skinner: 224 Art Intern. (1975): 23 9 <sup>th</sup> Tokyo Bien. Cat. 1974: fig 12	Govett-Brewster (2/25) Te Manawa (1/25) Mus of NZ
<i>Woman and stars</i>	1971	Aq, dp & mz	100	500 x 495	Skinner: 223 O'Brien: 21	Dowse AG Waikato Mus (ap 2, 6 <sup>th</sup> imp) San Fran Art Mus.

<i>Red cloud No II</i>	1972	Dp & mz				Waikato
<i>Altocumulus No I</i>	1972	mz		620 x 500	<i>Landfall</i> (1973): 147	MFAT deaccd.
<i>Altocumulus No. 2</i>	1972	mz		620 x 500	<i>Art Internat.</i> (1975): 24	MFAT - Warsaw
<i>Beach girl</i>	1972	Photo etch & aq, on balsa wood		275 x 430 x 35	<i>Landfall</i> (1973): 144	Dowse (1/4)
<i>Big scape</i>	1972	Dp & mz		610 x 1220	Skinner: 222	Aratoi
<i>Distant hills</i>	1972					MFAT deaccd
<i>Red cloud No. 1</i>	1971	Dp & mz	25	507 x 510 (503 x 500)	Skinner: 224 <i>Art Internat.</i> (1975): 23	VUW Col. of Ed collection Govett-Brewster Mus of NZ
<i>The window</i>	1973	Dp & mz	50	600 x 500		Dowse (3/50)
<i>Migration</i>	1974	Aqz			In 10 <sup>th</sup> Tokyo Bien, exhib. Cat. Fig 5.	
<i>Small-scape</i>	1977	etchz		225 x 280		Mus of NZ (ap)
<i>Interior II</i>	1979	Dp & mz		630 x 350	O'Brien: 37	
<i>Red cloud No. II</i>	1979	Dp & mz		670 x 500	Skinner: 225	Waikato Museum
<i>Wave</i>	1979	Dp & mz	50	250 x 177		Mus of NZ (8/50) Dowse AG (ap)
<i>Brother Jonathan, Brother Kafka I</i>	1980	Dp & mz	50	130 x 100	V O'Sullinan (1980): op. 13	
<i>Brother Jonathan, Brother Kafka II</i>	1980	Dp & mz		130 x 100	Skinner: 226 V O'Sullinan (1980): cover & op. 33	
<i>Brother Jonathan, Brother Kafka III</i>	1980	Dp & mz		130 x 100	Skinner: 226 V O'Sullinan (1980): op. 24	
<i>Brother Jonathan, Brother Kafka IV</i>	1980	Dp & mz		130 x 100	Skinner: 226 V O'Sullinan (1980): op. 40	
<i>Brother Jonathan, Brother Kafka V</i>	1980	Dp & mz		130 x 100	Skinner: 226 V O'Sullinan (1980): opp. 2	
<i>Brother Jonathan, Brother Kafka ( 5 plates together)</i>	1980	Dp & mz		130 x 480	Skinner: 226 <i>Pacific Way</i> (1987): 60	Mus of NZ
<i>Cloud &amp; pyramid</i>	1980	Dp & mz	50	247 x 177	McIntosh: 32 (31/50) Face to Face, exhibit: 90	Mus of NZ (8/50) Waikato Mus. 1982 (16/50)

					<i>Pacific Way</i> (1987): 60	Chch AG
<i>Embossed wave</i>	1980	Embossing				Mus of NZ (trial pf)
<i>Homage to Malevich VI</i>	1980	Dp & mz		128 x 216	<i>Art NZ</i> (1982): 19 Skinner: 228 (called no. 4 in error)	
<i>Malevich at the Stedelijk Museum</i>	1980	Dp & mz	50	250 x 177	Skinner: 227	Mus of NZ (21/50)
<i>Woman with Matisse No. I</i>	1980	Mz		295 x 200	Skinner: 229	
<i>Interior with Matisse</i>	1981	Dp & mz		155 x 175	Skinner: 230 Contemp. NZ Prints cat: fig. 10	Chch AG (33/50) MFAT - deaccessioned
<i>Black aurora</i>	1981-2	Dp & mz		545 x 690	Skinner: 231	
<i>Bottles</i>	1982	Dp & mz		350 x 310	Skinner: 232 <i>Pacific Way</i> (1987): 58 <i>Landfall</i> (1973): 146 (slightly diff. image to Skinner's)	
<i>For Kafka no. III</i>	1982	Mz		127 x 95		Waikato Museum (pf)
<i>For Kafka no. IV</i>	1982	Dp & mz		130 x 96		Waikato Museum (pf)
<i>Bottles II</i> (Same image as <i>Interior with Bottles</i> at Te Papa)	1983	Dp & mz		545 x 345	Skinner: 246	Mus of NZ
<i>Girl with a mirror</i>	1983	Dp & mz		180 x 260	Skinner: 239	
<i>Heloise &amp; Françoise</i>	1983	Dp & mz	100	160 x 250	Skinner: 243 (dated 1983) O'Brien: 43 (undated) <i>Pacific Way</i> (1987): 56	Chch AG (6/100)
<i>Interior with Tanya</i>	1983	Dp & mz		250 x 160	Skinner: 240 O'Brien: 33	
<i>Open window</i> (Also called <i>A Tribute to Birgit Skiöld</i> )	1983	mz	25	1350 x 750		NGA Aust (1/25)
<i>Sleeping woman</i> (No. 2)	1983	Dp & mz		500 x 605	Skinner: 237	
<i>The concert</i> ( <i>Vermeer with</i>	1983	Dp & mz		250 x 163	Skinner: 233	

<i>Matisse)</i>						
<i>The Holy family (Rembrandt)</i>	1983	Dp & mz		250 x 163	Skinner: 236	
<i>The love letter (Vermeer)</i>	1983	Dp & mz		250 x 163	Skinner: 235	
<i>The music lesson (Vermeer)</i>	1983	Dp & mz		250 x 163	Skinner: 235 O'Brien: 40 <i>Art NZ</i> (1984): 16	
<i>The Night Watch (Rembrandt: detail)</i>	1983	Dp & mz		250 x 163	Skinner: 234	
<i>Woman resting</i>	1983	Dp & mz	100	250 x 225	Skinner: 238	British Mus (20/100)
<i>Matisse, Acrobat &amp; Mae West</i>	1987	Dp & mz		250 x 330	Skinner: 248	
<i>Woman reading</i>	1984	Dp & mz		245 x 166	Skinner: 241	
<i>Edge of earth</i> (also created <i>Tigris &amp; Euphrates</i> from these plates)	1986	Dp & mz	20	545 x 365	Skinner: 249	ACAG collection (1/20) & (trial pf) Chch AG Dunedin PAG Sarjeant (6/20) Suter Gallery (4/20) Mus of NZ (2/20)
<i>Interior with bottles</i> (also known as <i>Bottles II</i> in Skinner)	1986	Dp & mz	100	545 x 345	Skinner: 246 McIntosh: 34 (42/100)	Mus of NZ (45/100)
<i>Kind heart</i>	1986	Dp, mz & oil pastel	unique print	840 x 1040	Skinner: 242	
<i>Large wave</i>	1986	Dp & mz	100	560 x 350	Skinner: 245 <i>Pacific Way</i> (1987): 58	
<i>Small clouds</i>	1986	Dp & mz	100	555 x 350	Skinner: 244	
<i>The party</i>	1986	Dp & mz	100	345 x 545	Skinner: 247 O'Brien: plate 2	
<i>Matisse, Acrobat and Mae West</i>	1987	Dp & mz		250 x 330	Skinner: 248	
<i>Still life with Malevich (black)</i>	1988	Dp & mz	100	195 x 245	O'Brien: 22	
<i>Still life with Malevich (red)</i>	1988	Dp & mz	50	245 x 152	Skinner: 250 O'Brien: plate 25	MFAT Tokyo (dtd. 1989) British Museum, UK (dtd. 1989)
<i>Green cloud</i>	1991	Mz	100			VUW coll. of ed. (11/100)

<i>Velázquez Infanta</i>	1994	Mz		345 x 545	Skinner: 251; O'Brien: 45	
<i>South coast</i>	1996	Dp & mz		120 x 130	Skinner: 252	
<i>Landscape, 1997</i>	1997	Dp & mz		250 x 180	Skinner: 253	
<i>Bottles and table</i>	1998	mz		172 x 150	O'Brien: 24	
<i>Double portrait I</i>	1998	Dp & mz		245 x 180	Skinner: 254	
<i>Two women No. II</i>	1998	Dp & mz	50			Millenium PAG (8/50)
<i>Pacific horizons No. 1 (also No. 2)</i>	1999	Dp & mz		170 x 125	Skinner: 255	
<i>Island Bay doorway No. II</i> Same plates as No. 1 rearranged	2001	Dp & mz		100 x 400	Skinner: 256	
<i>Lake Ada (Milford Track)</i>	2001	Dp & mz		200 x 265	Skinner: 257	
<i>Pacific clouds</i>	2003	Dp & mz		250 x 265	Skinner: 258	
<i>Ocean sky</i>	2004	drypoint		346 x 271	Skinner: 259	
<i>Hell's Gates</i>	2005	drypoint		350 x 270	Skinner: 261	
<i>South Pacific sanctuary</i>	2005	Dp & mz		450 x 600	Skinner: 260	

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ACAG—Auckland City Art Gallery  
 Anderson Park Gallery, Invercargill  
 Aratoi, Wairarapa Museum of History and Art, Masterton  
 Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, UK  
 AU – Auckland University collection  
 British Museum, London  
 Chch—Christchurch Art Gallery  
 Dowse Art Gallery, Lower Hutt  
 Dunedin PAG – Dunedin Public Art Gallery  
 Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth  
 HBGM – Hawkes Bay Art Gallery and Museum  
 Hocken Library, Dunedin

Millenium Public Art Gallery, Blenheim  
MFAT – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade  
NGA – National Gallery of Australia, Canberra  
San Fransisco Art Museum  
Sarjeant Gallery, Whanganui  
Suter Gallery, Nelson  
Te Manawa Museum of Art, Science and History, Palmerston North  
Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington  
V & A – Victoria and Albert Museum, London  
VUW – Victoria University, Wellington  
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E-929-F-005 – Rex Roberts (Art collector), 1970-1973 collection of exhibition folders

MS-Papers- 5437-197 – Eric Lee-Johnson papers

MS-Papers-7561-24 – Inward correspondence (C4 1/2 ) (c)

MS-Papers-8351-05 – Exhibitions – Leaving a lasting impression

MS-Papers-89-026-008 – Records of Elva Bett Gallery and papers, 1971-1984, Artists' files-D

MS-Papers-9703-021 – Dame Doreen Blumhardt papers, miscellaneous papers on art and artists

MS-Papers-89-026-037 – records of Elva Bett Gallery and Galerie Légard; Peter McLeavey Gallery; Molesworth Gallery; Settlement Gallery; Te Aro Gallery; Victoria University Library exhibitions: overseas galleries and miscellaneous

#### **E H McCormick Research Library, Auckland Art Gallery**

Artist's file – Drawbridge

RC2001/23 - Ikon Gallery Records, Box 2, folder 1, Drawbridge file

#### **Te Papa Archives, Wellington**

CA000001/003/0002 – folder 30 – Artists' files – Drawbridge and Ashken – 1966-1975

CA000002/006/0004 – folder 44 – General correspondence file – letter D

CA000002/007/0007 – Folder 60 – General correspondence file – letters D-E

CA000007/001/003 – folder 3 – New Vision Gallery exhibition sales, 1972

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CA000084/003/0002 – folder 27 – Louise Beale Gallery – artists’ files, 1968-1978

CA000118/001/0002 – Helen Hitchings exhibition and are related newspaper clippings c. 1947-1969

CA000118/001/0003 – Helen Hitchings copies of newspaper clippings c. 1947-1969

CA000118/001/0004 – exhibitions and art related clippings c. 1949-51

CA0000120/002/0009 – The gallery of Helen Hitchings

CA000120/002/0011 – Box 2 - Ann Kirker’s thesis, 1969, *A history of printmaking in New Zealand*

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CA000883/1/3

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CA000876/1/5 – recorded 8/4/04

CA000876/1/10 – recorded 18/8/04

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