

Thursday Arts



Perspective on Art

by T. J. McNamara



A puzzling ambiguity of tone also complicates response to the large work by Greer Twiss in the Sculpture Court of the Fisher Gallery in Pakuranga. Surely the artist is aware of the connotations of "a dead balloon" as a common saying for something that has never had any life in it?

The piece is called *Scene One, Act One* and is an impressive structure with a buttress, plinth, dome and stern and heavy Baroque moulding.

It exactly captures the feeling of the structures of the Renaissance in Italy and was inspired by the artist's travels.

The symbol of the traveller is a balloon set at a jaunty angle in contrast to the monumental weight of the rest of the structure.

So far so good. The work splendidly evokes structures and memories but it is all in black.

The black comes from the lead with which the structures are covered. It is a malleable medium and takes the form wonderfully but it establishes a gloomy funeral tone even on the balloon which floats but still is leaden and dull.

Was the travel so wrapped in gloom? Does the artist despair of old Europe? Is everything really blackened by pollution?

Does he consider these forms on which he has lavished such skill to be dead forms?

Formally the work is admirable but the tone is inexplicably puzzling.

The Fisher Gallery is filled with an excellent exhibition called *Review '92* which collects together nearly 50 outstanding works first shown in dealer galleries last year and well worth another visit. It is a short guide to the variety and power of art activity in Auckland.

It would be excellent if such a fine review were to become an annual event.

