

Observed and imagined

PAINTINGS by Auckland artist Peter Siddell are on show in Pakuranga this weekend.

The Fisher Gallery exhibition brings together over 30 works, from first-time exhibits of early work to several recently completed paintings.

Siddell's work focuses on images drawn from his surroundings. The works selected centre on architectural studies and landscape views relating to the Auckland region.

Siddell says his paintings are "an amalgam of things observed, imagined and remembered."

The artist says the fact that he has lived in Auckland all his life has influenced his work. Two years ago he and his family moved to Mt Eden from their long-time base at Blockhouse Bay and this has shown itself in his work.

Many recent paintings contain a suggestion of the outlook from Mt Eden to the Manukau Heads.

The 53-year-old artist trained as an electrician and primary school teacher before taking up painting in the late 1960s. He had his first exhibition in 1973 and has since had nearly 20 solo and many group exhibitions around the country.

The paintings in this exhibition date from 1970. Siddell says a number of the themes in his work are poor-

ly represented because work selected had to be chosen from paintings which were available.

"I don't work through one theme for a period of time but will return to an idea again and again so that related paintings are often years apart."

Exhibition curator Louis Johnston says an interesting aspect of the work is that the fine detail makes the viewer want to establish it as a specific place but, after careful study, the observer finds the shops, mountains and clouds are of no particular location, he says.

"They are aspects that are selected and assembled to resemble an understood place.

"But this is only one part of the complexity in the work."

What: Peter Siddell art exhibition.

Where: Fisher Gallery, Reeves Road, Pakuranga.

When: Until October 23.

Times: 1pm to 4pm weekends; 10am to 4pm weekdays.

Admission: Free. Donations welcome.

Parking: Behind the gallery or at the Pakuranga Shopping Centre.



Peter Siddell with his 1973 acrylic work *House, Lake and Storm*.