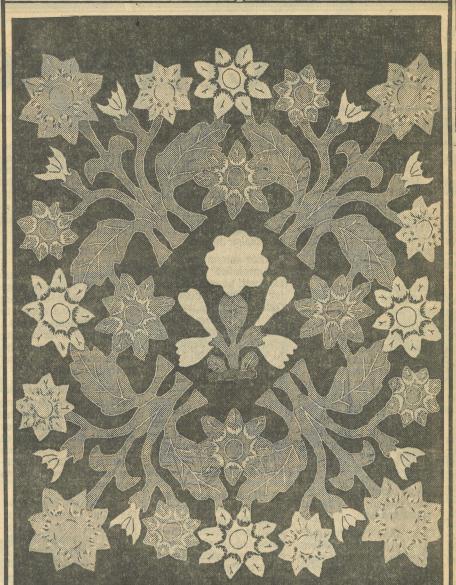
hursday Arts



• Tiare Maori tivaevae manu, at the Fisher Gallery. The tiare flower forms the centre of this tivaevae, which was designed, cut and arranged by a 14-year-old. The piece was handworked by a group of 13 and 14year-olds as an introduction to tivaevae making.

Colours will knock your socks of impact of Threads: We are uniquely privi-Pacific this work is hard to de-scribe. The place jumps leged, both to have the opportunity to see them An exhibition cele-

and contemporary Cook Islands tivaevae, at the Fisher Gal-lery, Reeves Rd, Pakuranga, until April In the 150 years since the skills of piecework, applique, and quilting were introduced to the women of eastern Polynesia, a wide diversity

brating traditional

veloped. In Hawaii, complex twopiece applique, and unique undulating style of quilting, have become a widely admired source of regional pride and identity.

the In

of regional styles has de-

groups, a patterned top only is made, using applique or piecework methods. These are tivaevae. In the Cook Islands, both methods are equally popular; embroidery, as embellishment and

other

Island

delineation of shapes, is a unique feature of their applique work. Tivaevae play a vital role in the domestic and ceremonial life of all east-Polynesia, replacing ern fine bark cloth in gift pre

to

honoured

sentations

guests, in rites of passage and other significant contexts. They are usually made by groups, sometimes by one woman; frequently, one woman who has recognised skill will design and sut the places. design and cut the pieces, and others stitch the tivaevae. The new tivaevae in this exhibition were made by the women and girls of the Kuki Airani Angaanga Tupuna Trust, Auckland, in the 1980s. Their tutor, Mrs Matarena George, a collector of old and new tivaevae, is herself a highly skilled and re-

spected artist.

with colour: magnificently flamboyant embroidered and appliqued flowers. and appliqued flowers, rich mosaic patterns, in colours to knock your socks off. Mrs George's own Pansy embodies the artistic principles of tivaevae making: technical skill, in the design and the

meticulous embroidery; symmetry, in the arrangement of the simple flower and leaf motifs and place-ment of colours; contrast, in the deep rich blues and verdant green upon crimson ground; framing, in the well-judged tance between the design's edge and that of whole the Chrysanthemum, which salmon-pink flowers, on in emvaried broidered shades, mauve ground, is also a fine work. The vibrant qualities and two-dimensional, 'flat" appearance of the and piecework depends upon strong colour contrast; tonal graduation is not important

ics, made of octagons, hexagons or squares. Turtles and starfish appear in some of these. An adaptation of the American Log Cabin block is seen in a particuimpressive arrangement here, in relatively subdued shades. Old pieced and appliqued quilts and cover-

Several saturated hues are combined with white and primary colours to

produce dramatic mosa-

from Europe, American and Polynesia, lent by the Auckland War Memorial Museum, provide a historical perspective for this important exhibition. Credit is due to tive the ogranisers, who recognised the artistic and culvalue of amazing objects.

and to have such a rich, vital textile tradition on our own doorstep. **Bronze Vessels and** Stone Tables, Paul Mason, at the Compendium Gallery, until Tablets,

March 18. THINK of the word bronze, and you think of a colour — soft, shining brown; a texture — a brown; a texture — a rough, cast surface; and weight — a heavy, immov-

able permanence. Stone, too, has these connotations: weight, permanence, texture rough or smooth. Imagine, then, a vessel, graceful fluted form curving outwards at the rim, the smooth surface a sumptuous deep bluegreen flecked with aqua, the rim a bright polished band, the whole rising from a circular base of

half-egg-Another, half-egg-shaped, dark blue, with a like sandpaper; surface inside the hollow, a pat-terning of verdant green, turquoise, brown-gold. Others still — smooth, perfect forms, mysterious rich colour, a pleasure to behold. Imagine, too, a small ncave square, deliconcave square, de cately inscribed a divided — as if inlaid and

deep red-brown.

These are Paul Mason's bronze vessels. Their ele-gant form at first belies their substance and solidyet on further quaintance these properties seem to be in

into coloured parts, with a

surface as smooth as silk.

perfect harmony. The surface colouring and apparent polishing is achieved by a chemical process known as patinising, a process over which this artist has great con-trol. The vessels are sandcast; the red-brown base

on the fluted forms is of red granite. His stone tablets have the appearance of magi-cal tokens, or of artefacts. A black serpentine disc has a raised inlaid centre of red-banded jasper; black-grey pakahoe disc, with a natural fissure in its side, has a straight line

mound of polished red granite inlaid at the centre of one face, of incised across, and black granite on the other. of poi-Other tablets, ished stone, granite, jade, have similar properties of stone-within-stone, magical markings, mysterious origins. These are all

origins. These are all deeply satisfying objects to contemplate: the work of a patient and masterful craftsman.

- Sue Curnow

