

Thursday Arts

Folding screens make a fascinating show

IN a week flush with the opening of interesting shows, the most varied exhibition is *The Folding Image* at the Fisher Gallery in Pakuranga.

This is the second exhibition of screens at the Fisher Gallery and follows their very successful show in 1985.

It is something of an account of the present state of New Zealand art.

Most of the prominent artists in the country have contributed. The challenge of fitting their style and imagery to a double-sided, folding surface has seemed worthwhile to them and the resulting exhibition is fascinating.

There is everything



by T. J. McNamara

here from the grand melodrama of Terry Striager's huge screen featuring the facade of La Scala Opera House in heroic perspective and backlighting to Mary McIntyre's astringent little piece, *A Plump Middle-aged Female Posing as a Goddess on the Shores of Lake Taupo*, which uses the fold of the screen to hide whether the goddess is holding a bomb or an apple.

Some artists have used the screens just as a painting in three parts. Others have used the two sides in a special way and some have varied the outline of the screen itself.

Pat Hanly's happy *Vacation Screen* has figures that lap around both sides of the support and a dancing line that links both surfaces.

Jane Zuster's work, *Good Morning Love*, has a lyrical side, softly coloured, and a darker, much more complex and tense side.

The backs of the screens should not be missed. The whole point of Greer Twiss's beautifully made work in lead and wood, *Hark the Dogs Do Bark*, lies in the apron that is suspended behind the screen carrying the gift of music in its pocket.

The back of *Cosmic Screen*, by Robert Ellis, is not as spectacular as the front but creates an atmosphere of its own as do the two sides of the centre panel of Pauline Thompson's dreamy, atmospheric work.

It all adds up to a splendid show, even in quality, varied in content and completed by a lovely screen by Colia McCahan, an loan speciality for the exhibition.

There is a bonus at the Fisher Gallery. They have opened an excellent sculpture court and the first works to grace it are a group of pieces in corrugated iron by Jeff Thompson, who is also represented in the screen show.

The sculptures are odd, tall, weathered monsters that would have a strong presence even if one did not know that they were a sculptural version of parts of the North Island, identifiable from a map supplied.

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Lumpy and awkward, rusty and weathered, they work better as a group than they would individually.

ually, though there are effective details in some of them, like the hole that is Lake Taupo in *Lower North Island*.