

Notice of Exhibition @ Whangarei Art Museum

Final Exhibition of the Year



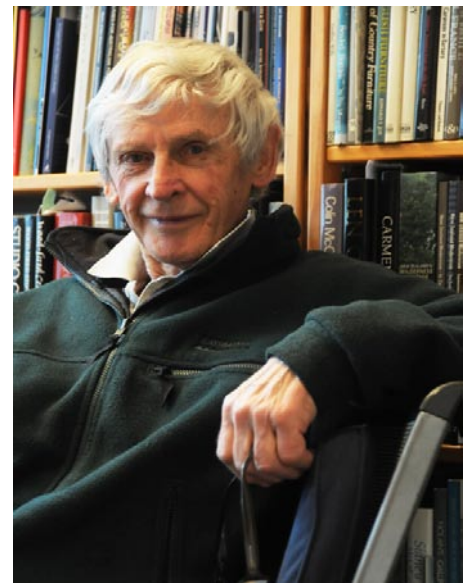
15th December 2008 – 1st February 2009

Len Castle: Mountain to the Sea

Len Castle b. 1924 CBE NZOM NZ Arts Foundation Icon Award 2003

Whangarei Museum is proud to premiere this substantive survey exhibition of a multi award winning Northland resident artist before its national tour of New Zealand.

Len Castle has supported the Whangarei Art Museum in many of its exhibition programs and graciously gifted a suite of photographs by Theo Schoon to the art museum in 2005. The art museum has acquired several works in its collection by Castle which will also be on display in the exhibition **Len Castle: Mountain to Sea**. Due to significant cuts to the current exhibition budget this will not only be the last exhibition for the year, but unfortunately the last for the current fiscal year also. It is highly fitting then that we are able to exit the year with such an iconic artist of the modersit era.



Len Castle. Photographer Chris Hoult

Growing up in the Auckland suburb of Westmere gave Len Castle (b.1924) ready access to the beaches around the inner harbour and the opportunity to discover and explore many elements of the landscape which continue to inspire and influence his work.

Mountain to the Sea is a celebration of the inspiration that many aspects of New Zealand's landscape has been for Castle, and in particular with the *Volcanic* and *Sea Secrets* series that he has been developing since the early 1990s. The exhibition contains approximately 60 works that have been created between 2006 and 2008.



Castle has been documenting the landscape with photography since the 1960s. These beautiful images depict those parts of our landscape where the elements are most extreme, and in which the brute force and unpredictability of nature are most potent. They sit naturally alongside Castle's ceramic work that so clearly reflect an exploration of the landscape through

the medium of clay and glaze materials. These explorations have resulted in a wide range of works, from his elegant blue lake bowls through to the gritty lava tubes and fossil-like forms that illustrate his absolute mastery of clay.



Mountain to the Sea also includes poems by leading New Zealand poets, both profiled within the exhibition and in the accompanying publication. Bringing poets and poetry into the mix was intended as a way to allow a new exploration of this body of work, and the inspiration behind it. The ten poets invited to take part - Riemke Ensing, Paula Green, Michael Harlow, David Howard, Jan Kemp, Theresa Lloyd, Olivia Macassey, Cilla McQueen, Richard Reeve, and Jack Ross - were provided with a selection of images - both ceramics from the exhibition and Castle's landscape images - and asked to respond to either element, or both. Some chose to respond to a specific work or image, while others were more general in their approach. In all cases the poems provide the reader, and viewer of the exhibition, new opportunities to reflect on the many layers of possible meaning and intent behind each piece.

The publication also titled *Mountain to the Sea* which accompanies the exhibition, includes an essay by Peter Simpson, Associate Professor of English at The University of Auckland and Director of the Holloway Press.

Mountain to the Sea is a touring exhibition organized by the Hawke's Bay Museum & Art Gallery. The exhibition and publication have been generously supported by Creative New Zealand and Cambrian Plastics.

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This exhibition is supported by a colour poster, two publications, and an education kit. Exhibition will also be available on-line to view at the Whangarei Art Museum website:

www.whangareiartmuseum.co.nz

For more information and images contact Whangarei Art Museum.

Opening hours Monday to Friday 10.00am - 4.00pm, Saturday & Sunday 12.00pm - 4.00pm

Ph. (09) 430 4240 or email whangareiartmuseum@wdc.govt.nz