

A curator creates opportunities for people to look at art. This exhibition presents a generous number of pictures from the rich and varied collection of The Suter Art Gallery Te Aratoi o Whakatu.

Looking at pictures is one of the best things in life. People find different pleasure in pictures, and look at them for a variety of reasons. It is not the job of the curator to tell people how to look at and think about pictures. Just stick 'em up! Who needs themes and "thematic clusters"?

The works were selected for exhibition within the space of a day or so, using rapid, intuitive judgements. Most of the paintings are "painterly"; you are aware of the painted surface. They do not represent an "expressionist" style, but are as close to "pure painting" as I can find. Not all the works in the exhibition are paintings. But they are all (though this a contentious point) either purely "representational" or purely "abstract", as opposed to semi-abstract.

I have looked for qualities of innocence, freshness, integrity, purity, eccentricity, joy ... these are vague approximations. On the whole, the pictures are intended to reflect an idea put forward by the American artist and critic, Walter Darby Bannard, who maintained that art has no specific purpose other than to be good (in contrast to many things in the world that are not good). This does not mean that the pictures in the show are all good in the sense of technically accomplished, clever or immediately impressive. But they all have some good in them.

Although certain works are grouped together (usually for reasons that are obvious or even silly), connections and comparisons have been left for the viewer to make. Minimal information is provided. The best way to look at pictures is with an open mind, seeing them first as arrangements of form and colour. It does not matter what they are (supposedly) "about".

I hope you get pleasure from these pictures, and I hope you come back and look again, and find new pleasures.

Edward Hanfling