



DEDICATION

Professor Bill Sutton
who redirected the journey

and Frances Stringer
writing her own Notebook.

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Kees Bruin's four-decade painterly oeuvre.

1970s-1990s	Photo-realism; Surf, Sea, Skate, culminating in <i>Euphoria</i> , 1995. The Peace Tree series
Early 1980s to early 1990s	The Door series
Early 1990s	The Eve series
Mid-1990s to mid 2000s	The Bride series
2000s	The Masters
Mid to late 2000s	The Vanitas series
Late 2000s	The Bride Grounded culminating in <i>Signs of the Son of Man</i> , 2009.
<i>4 September 2010</i>	<i>7.1 earthquake, Canterbury (Darfield)</i>
<i>22 February 2011</i>	<i>6.3 earthquake, Canterbury (Port Hills)</i>

Forward

1. Changing the Way We See

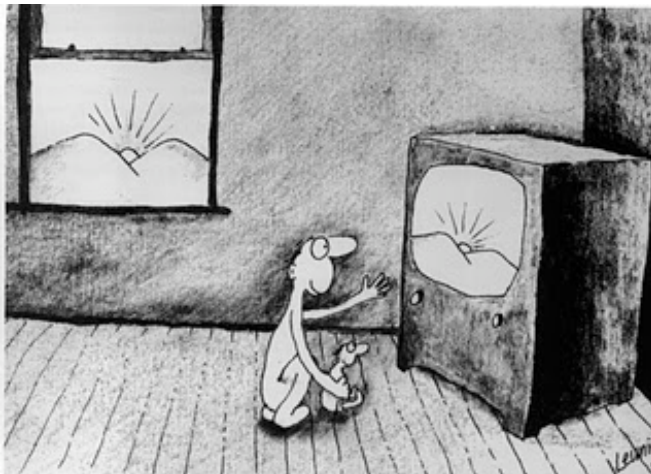
The emotional pathos of tragedy is well captured in art:

war (Picasso's *Guernica*, 1937; Goya's *The Third of May 1808*, 1814),
mental angst (Munch's *The Scream*, 1893; Van Gogh and James Robinson),
loss (Nigel Brown's *I Miss You Terribly*, 1979; *Gains & Losses*, 1980), and
dislocation (Margaret Hudson-Ware's *Refugees*, 2003).

More than any other artistic medium of the nineteenth to twenty-first centuries, certainly up to the time of the Impressionists, it is perhaps *Photography* that has catalogued tragic pathos the most vividly. In the late twentieth century the camera—including movie cameras and television, as well as digital technology and manipulative processes—more than any other artistic devices were the major influence on art and documentary. Photography, and its subsequent artistic evolution from 1826 onward, re-shaped the imagery through which we perceive reality.

I have always been very interested in photography. I have looked at far more photographs than I have paintings, because their reality is stronger than reality itself.

- Francis Bacon.



Michael Leunig cartoon.

Photography created whole new genres in art (the Daguerreotype, Calotype, gicleé, serigraph, Film, Op-Art, Pop-Art) and influenced painting in a wide variety of ways. Many artists engaged these mediums, such as the nineteenth-century Realists while others viewed the process negatively. From Leonardo da Vinci's use of lenses to transpose images to linen, to Andy Warhol's repetitive serigraphic silk screens, photography became as valid as studio life drawing and painting.

Photography changed the way we see and changed the way artists used paint and other media, to make us see (Matthew Brady and Alexander Gardner's *The Dead of Antietam*; Eddie Adams' photograph of Nguyen Ngoc shooting a Vietcong operative). From the beginning of his life, Kees Bruin was concerned with drawing the way

things were. From the beginning of his professional arts practice there was a conscious thread in his mind about re-evaluating painting reproduction and art.

As well as actively seeking to capture pathos—grief, vanity, betrayal, death and mortality—in his art, Bruin painted within an historic photographic evolution.

In my ongoing research I have learnt there is strong evidence to suggest that Caravaggio and Vermeer used lenses and projections as tools for their works.¹

Photographs infuse his work as an influence as much as drawing from memory does, or collage compositions, or a variety of other techniques used to achieve his vision. All of these techniques test his artistic powers of observation (viewing several different photographs of the same object, viewing a hired life model from different angles in different light) and his practical artistic interpretation.

A carefully organized composite imbued with symbolism, illusion and allusion – a construct of ideas, places, people and images from the artist's own invention.²

And while American-style photo-realism is an obvious element (“I like my paintings to give the illusion of being like a big photograph without the inherent distortions”³) as an artist Bruin has always been interested in maintaining essential truths as underlying symbolic messages that force the viewer to ‘see’ hidden artistic treasure within his works.

His work is a synthesis of traditional and contemporary modes of realism.

I use photos, but I'm always seeing the mistakes, the inaccuracies of the recording of nature, so I make up for those inaccuracies. I change them to suit my own vision.⁴

An example of this is Bruin's technique of blending his finished photo-realist brush strokes to mimic the realistic blur of the human eye as it ranges across perspective and focuses and un-focuses on different parts of the painting. This deliberate ‘distortion’ actually makes the finished product more ‘real,’ than say an accurate technical drawing of a botanical illustration which is less ‘real’ but ‘accurate.’

Although well known, perhaps more abroad than in New Zealand, and critiqued in the media as much as any contemporary artist, Bruin has never been published in a monograph before. With forty years of fulltime painting to his credit, mostly to international markets, and over 150 substantial works in his portfolio, it is time this ‘Sumner Vermeer’ was recognized for the contribution he has made to New Zealand

¹ “The Real World of Kees Bruin,” *Bay-Harbour News*, 02 February 2005, p. 6.

² Neil Roberts, *Allusion & Illusion, Kees Bruin*, Christchurch Art Gallery, 10 February – 7 May 2006.

³ Kees Bruin, *Allusion* op. cit.

⁴ “The Real World of Kees Bruin,” op. cit.

painting. He remains one of our finest realist painters and holds a position alongside contemporaries like Grahame Sydney, Martin Ball or Raymond Ching. Neil Roberts attributed him a “unique identity” and he was recognized by a major retrospective in 2006 at the Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu. His super-realist technique is so refined that viewers sometimes suggest his work is not painting at all, but some kind of fused photographic process such as *Photoshop*, or a blend of computer and oils. But Bruin paints one hundred percent the hard way, with easel, canvas and magnifying glass, as visitors to his studio can testify. His works include no computerized or enhanced collage; they are one hundred percent paint. The torturous truth of this is evident in the artist’s aggravated *ankylosing spondylitis* (a condition affecting his neck) caused by thousands of hours hunched over an easel with a handful of brushes in one hand and a brush, sometimes of a single hair, in the other.

In attempting to interpret Bruin’s work, it has to be understood that he views art and painting as a trade, and has little sympathy for struggling artists who demand support from the wider community so they can ‘do their art.’ Having supported himself all his life by his artistic endeavor, Bruin understands the commercial imperative and the important conversation artists need to have with their audience (their eventual buyers). At art school he was deeply influenced by the Philosophy of Art lessons sculpted by Ted Bracey who taught his students art school existed to train professional artists to make a living from their art. Bracey taught Bruin that art was also a service to the community-at-large, and that an art ‘trade’ was also a didactic device. It is no surprise, then, that immediately after art school, Bruin completed teacher training in art. These three ideas (art as trade, as didactic, as a service) framed his philosophy about art. He viewed art largely, but not entirely, as a service or trade to a wider public to whom he should appeal and from whom he could benefit through a mutual exchange.

I’m simply trying to do good paintings (2011)⁵

My sense of painting is to first of all simply do good paintings .⁶

This foundation then, created a framework in which the artist chose ideas and themes that would appeal widely. This also explains his early attraction to Realism and distance from Abstraction or Expressionism. His work would be didactic while generating sales from which he could trade and live. At his first exhibition following graduation, former professor and artist Don Peebles gave Bruin a simple piece of advice about painting - “always trust your own convictions.”

Bruin has, to his credit, achieved all these things. It is seen in his excruciating dedication to a refined photo-realistic technique; the production of works that teach and instruct on history, religion and philosophy; the establishment of an appreciative international public and private clientele who regularly buy his works; the

⁵ Kees Bruin, interview with the author, 1 September 2011.

⁶ Letter to Mrs Draper re *Art & Faith* exhibition, Auckland, 1996.

achievement of a discerning and educated audience, as well as reaching a popular audience. In 2005 *Witness Caravaggio* was the inaugural People's Picture, a \$32,500 purchase by public donation for the Christchurch Art Gallery and on display for six months; and sales of his gicleé reproductions continue strongly into 2012.

He represents an important contemporary chapter in the regionalism of Canterbury art alongside artists like Rita Angus, Colin McCahon, Bill Sutton and Trevor Moffitt. Moreover, Bruin lives and paints in Sumner, one of the suburbs of Christchurch at the epicenter of the devastating 2010-2012 earthquakes. His work is poignant within recent historic and social events (some of his original works were completely destroyed in private collections across the city) and therefore his painting represents a vital artistic tableau in the discussion of these historic events.

In the same way that nature has altered *what* we now see, Bruin changes the *way* we see by drawing on various old and new traditions of art (including photography and its artistic evolution) to present us a distinct and personal vision of what is real.

John Stringer
Christchurch, 2012.

2. Beginnings and Influences

Kees⁷ Bruin was born in Roxburgh, Otago, in 1954 the same year as Peter Cleverley in Oamaru. His father's name is also Kees (the Dutch derivative of Cornelius, as in Cornelius de Bruin, Dutch painter 1879-1940). His mother's maiden name was Aafje Wit. He was the eldest of four siblings, his younger brother Gerald lives and works in Holland and he has a younger twin brother and sister who both live and work in Christchurch.

Bruin's first awareness of an ability to draw was about seven years of age at primary school in Otematata. He won an art class contest with a fanciful drawing of a dragon. Even as a child, Bruin was conscious of capturing things the way he saw them and he drew a lot.

When I was a child I knew I could draw. However, I was afraid I might not be able to paint reality as I saw it, because colours are difficult to capture accurately. Until I went to art school I mainly drew in black and white because of the fear I could not capture reality.⁸



Family Home, 1985. (Not the Bruin family home).
280mm x 360mm, lead pencil on paper. Private collection New Zealand.

He moved on to Linwood High School in Christchurch where he studied art under New Zealand author and illustrator Gavin Bishop before moving on to the University

⁷ Pronounced "Case."

⁸ Interview with the author, 18 March 2012.

of Canterbury School of Fine Arts (Ilam) where he was tutored by several well-known artists including: Rudi Gopas, Don Peebles, Quentin Macfarlane, Bill Sutton, Ted Bracey, Martin Mendelsburg and Doris Lusk. He graduated with a Diploma of Fine Arts (Hons) in painting in 1977. Bruin also completed a Secondary School Teacher's Certificate in Art at Christchurch College of Education as well as a Film Production Training Programme Certificate.

More than four decades on, Bruin has established a “unique identity within the framework of New Zealand realism.”⁹ We can perhaps blame Bill Sutton for this, as Bruin's initial focus was on sculpture, but Sutton persuaded him to try brushes rather than chisels. It was visionary guidance and something Bruin has paid tribute to in paint.



Homage to William Sutton, 2001.

2000mm x 1000mm, acrylics on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.

Bruin's 2001 panorama mimics Bill Sutton's various Port Hills panoramas that are so redolent of land and sky, such as *Te Tihi o Kahukura and Sky VIII [The Citadel of the Rainbow God]*, 1979. 'Homage' is a view of east Christchurch from Sumner beach. The spur at left is Clifton Hill, the natural termination of the various Banks Peninsula spurs portrayed by Sutton, such as in *The Four Seasons* series. The wispy wind-driven cloud is a classic Nor'west cloud formation with which Sutton was familiar (*Nor'wester In the Cemetery*, 1950) and Bruin has added the jet vapour trail that appears in Sutton's *Plantation Series II*, 1985.

Two years after graduating, Bruin was exhibiting alongside Leo Bensemann, Don Binney, Doris Lusk, Trevor Moffitt, Peter Siddell, Olivia Spencer-Bower, Grahame Sydney, Robin White, and Brent Wong. He immediately began to win awards. In 1977 he won the NZ Royal Commonwealth Overseas League Art Award (again in 1986) and the Tauranga Art Award (again in 1983) the first of many accolades, including

⁹ Neil Roberts, *Allusion* op. cit.

finalist: the James Wallace Art Award, the Blake prize for Religious Art in Australia, the Cranleigh Barton Drawing Award, Montana Art Award.

After Ilam art school, he taught at Christchurch Secondary Schools as well as tutoring children's art classes, and appeared in several TV art programmes. Somewhat under-appreciated in New Zealand, Bruin is well represented in collections around the world. His work hangs in Iran, Italy, Switzerland, England, Canada, America, Austria, Holland, Australia, and in public and private collections in New Zealand.

At Ilam, Bruin had become disillusioned with his contemporary painting fraternity who all seemed to be turning out the same work, principally Abstraction or Expressionism.

From the beginning of my studies at Art school I have remained suspicious about so-called 'style' in painting, especially in Realism. Even with the more imaginative works I generally attempt to be as objective as I can in the way everything looks to the eye.¹⁰

Bruin took his second year at arts school off and began working with photographs and using the photo-realist technique called "super-realism" that had been pioneered in California in the 1960s.¹¹

I was half-way through painting a picture of some motorcycles and some friends of mine when I saw an exhibition of American photo-realism at the Robert McDougall Art Gallery. Up close you could see the paintings had been done with an airbrush and had a thin sprayed effect and no depth. I wanted to do the same but with the depth that comes from oils.¹²

I was impacted greatly by...photo-realist paintings (a branch of Pop Art) by the most recognised artists of this genre from America. I felt for the first time that if I were to paint, that photo-realism would be my springboard. Hence *Reminiscing*, 1975, oils on wood, which includes typical elements of this movement and later *Self-Portrait in Armagh Court Window*, 1977.¹³

¹⁰ 1 September 2011 op. cit.

¹¹ 1973 year 1 of Ilam art school, Sculpture.
1974 year off to explore American-style photo-realism.
1975 Ilam art school, shifted to Painting.
1976 Ilam art school graduation.
1977 One of two invited to do Honours.

¹² "Reality on Canvas" op. cit.

¹³ 1 September 2011 op. cit.



1977 in his shared studio at Ilam and half way through painting 'Armagh Court.'

***Self-Portrait in Armagh Court Window*, 1977.**

1520mm x 1220mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.



Reminiscing, 1975.

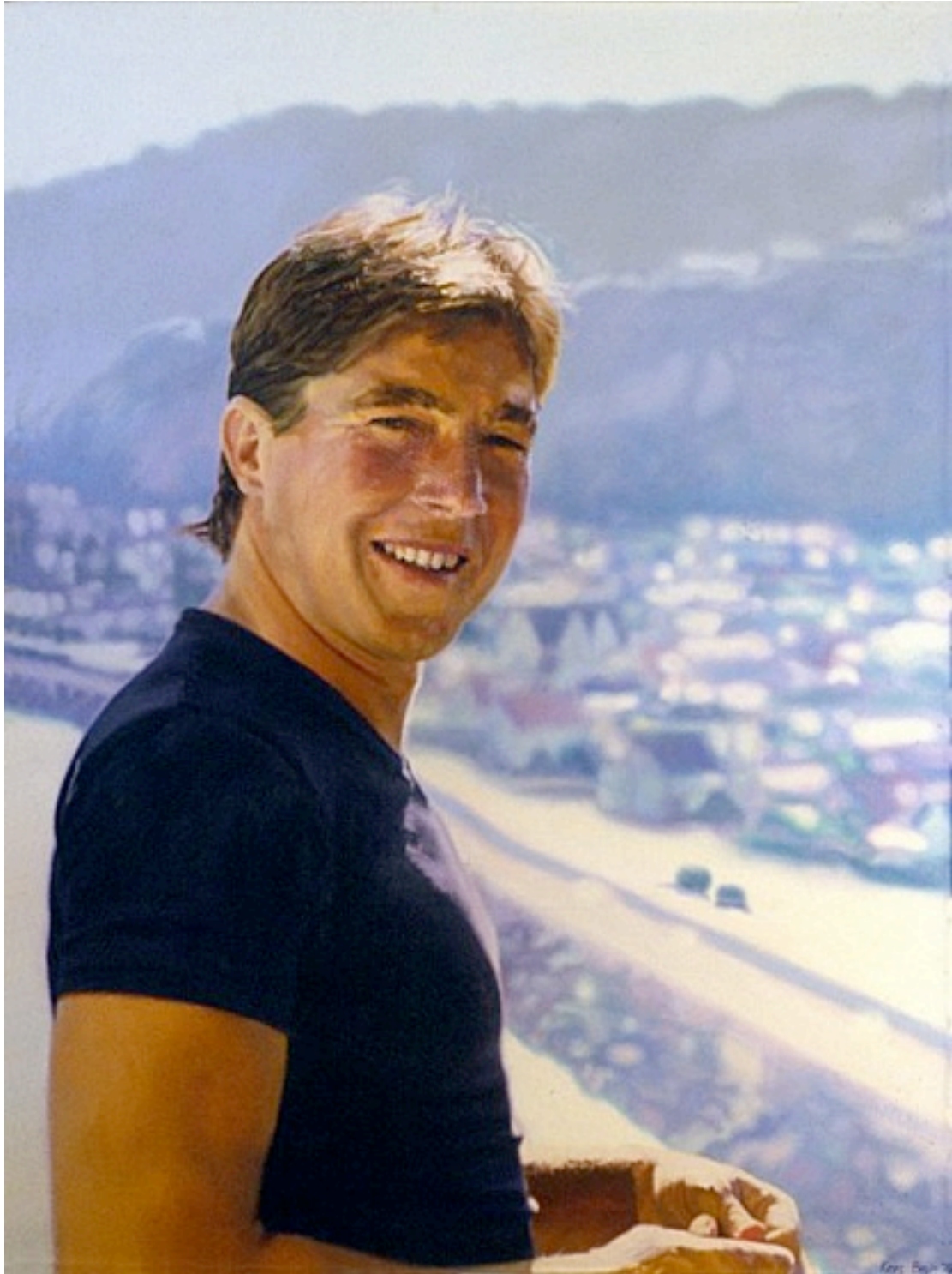
1220mm x 1220mm, oils on wood. Private collection New Zealand.

Bruin sketched a composition on to a red-primed canvas and then studied several photographs to perceive the visual ('photographic') finish he wanted. A good example is *Portrait of a Young Man*, 1978 [later titled "Tim"]. Bruin faithfully paints in the soft out-of-focus blur of a source photograph as a photo-realist background to which he then contrasts precise detail on the face in the foreground. This technique is also seen in *A Spirit over Christchurch*, 1995, where Bruin deliberately distorts the focus as well as the arrangement of the buildings to enhance the perspectives of the photo-realism.

The Realism style is intended to be again a mixture of traditional naturalism with photo-realism – hence the city is slightly out of focus because I didn't want it to be too much in competition with the focus of the figure.¹⁴

¹⁴ Letter to Mrs Draper op. cit.

The composition of *Tim* is many times life size, which at once distorts the reality. The precision and humanity of the sun-drenched face attracts us as a viewer (a brother or friend at ease on a sunny day) while immediately dislocating us due to its proportion. The technique recalls Chuck Close, Claudio Bravo or Franz Gertsch and is similar to the disturbing confusion of Ron Muech's colossal human sculptures at once 'so real' yet disorientatingly small or massive; or the 'real' zoological hybrid sculptures of Patricia Piccinini. It is all 'visionary realism.'



Tim, 1978 [previously *Portrait of a Young Man*].

1520mm x 910mm, oils on canvas. Commissioned. Private collection New Zealand.

Early in his career Bruin explored space and illusion blended with time and theology. Categories of his 2006 retrospective reflected: “The Figure in Space,” “Interior Space,” “Historical Allusion,” and “Reflections.” This produced works of openness (seascapes, waves, empty sand shores and open skies) that at times under-represented an obvious talent. Bruin says he was,

...trying to make the banal transcendent. At times some of the impetus for my works was simply a desire to paint certain textures of things, e.g. clouds, sand etc. in a more accurate manner than I had been used to seeing.¹⁵

Unlike the haunting and sometimes empty Otago landscapes of Grahame Sydney or the focused subject matter of Raymond Ching, Bruin’s Canterbury realism is much more figural and embraces a wider diversity of subjects. He paints contemporary people (skateboarders, surfers, divers), German Romantic landscape, Flemish and Dutch still life & domestic painting, mimics seventeenth-century Renaissance masters such as Caravaggio and Vermeer, and explores fantasy epic in pencil.

Bruin divides his work into three self-defined over-lapping categories: photo-realism, super-realism and what he terms “visionary-realism.” On top of exquisite landscapes (predominantly the Christchurch estuary and south eastern coastline) and photo-realist portraiture, it is this visionary category that suggests Bruin’s unique contribution. His use of symbols and metaphor is in company with other New Zealand artists who draw on subjective theological and visionary perspectives (McCahon, Binney, Brown). Bruin’s work is emotionally engaging and filled with biblical themes, “hubris, death, disappointment, sex, betrayal, vanity and loss.”¹⁶

The main development I wanted [for recent work] was a more obvious emotional response...I was satisfied with *Reading* [2003] being a contemplative work harking back to Vermeer’s tradition of women reading letters...My latest work...is more emotionally engaged and engaging [to appeal to a wider audience].¹⁷

In the tradition of Colin McCahon (*Elias*, 1959), Peter Cleverley (*What God Wants*, 1998), Nigel Brown (*Sebastian Aotearoa*, 2011) religious themes frequent Bruin’s work, mining the spiritual iconography of Christianity and the traditions of Western civilization. The painter is a dedicated Christian and this comes through in his work.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ John Stringer, “Review. Allusion & Illusion Kees Bruin,” *CS Arts* 25, November 2006, pp. 18-21.

¹⁷ Kees Bruin quoted in John Stringer, “A Vermeer in our Sumner Midst,” *CS News Quarterly*, January 2005, p. 4. Bracketed clarifications inserted by the author, 2012.



***Second Coming of Christ*, 1977.**

2000mm x 2000mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.

***The Transfiguration*, 1984.**

525mm x 580mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.

***Baptism of Christ*, 1999.**

370mm x 280mm, lead pencil on paper. Commissioned. Private collection Holland.



***Baptism of Christ in a New Zealand River Scene*, 2006.**

500mm x 500mm, oils on canvas. Commissioned. Private collection New Zealand.

Destroyed in the 22 February 2011 earthquake.

An avid theological reader, Bruin's work reflects a honed worldview influenced by personal tragedy. *Elizabeth with Goldfinch*, 1994¹⁸ depicts his terminally ill fiancée with a bitter/sweet grimace on her face reminiscent of the ambiguous smile of the Mona Lisa. On the bed next to Elizabeth is a goldfinch, symbolic of life and death. It is a reoccurring avian motif much like the repeating candleholder or "I AM" in Colin McCahon or Nigel Brown's work (McCahon having tutored Brown). The goldfinch is adapted from Raphael (*Madonna with the Goldfinch*, 1506) and others, such as Giovanni Tiepolo. Goldfinches nest in thorn bushes. Mythologically the smudge of red on the face of the male bird is said to have come from the blood of Christ as one of the birds plucked a twig from the crown of thorns at the Crucifixion.



Elizabeth with Goldfinch, 1994.

650mm x 550mm, oils on canvas. Collection of the Christchurch Art Gallery.

¹⁸ Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, who own five Bruin works:

Hope in the Door I, 1991

Hope in the Door II, 1991

Door to Door, 1992

Sumner Landscape, 1994

Elizabeth with Goldfinch, 1994

Witness Caravaggio, 2004 [on loan Christchurch Art Gallery Trust].

Following the death of his fiancée Elizabeth in 1994, Bruin, who remains a bachelor in his fifties, expressed his grief and the emotional journey of losing Elizabeth by creating his well-known Bride series. This was a natural development of an earlier Eve series that explored concepts and metaphors of original sin, the warmth of life, the coldness of death, and judgment, within the theological iconography of Eve over a more personal subplot. The bride imagery that developed was symbolic of the Church as the Bride of Christ. They are less grounded than Eve, his brides ascending above known landscapes (mainly Christchurch) into the heavens.

As well as a goldfinch, Eve, or an ascendant bride, other symbols repeated by Bruin include: a black pansy (a symbol of life and death, love and psychology); metal facades (present in the Eve and Skateboard series); black sneakers with white laces (present in *Vanitas*, 2004 and *Achilles' Halo*, 2004); self portraits (as a kind of Adam); as well as mirrors and reflections. Bruin's interest in using reflections and mirrors within mirrors builds multiple layers of meaning that can be explored by interested viewers wanting to go a bit deeper in to his paintings, in the same way Doris Lusk built layers of meaning within her industrial imagery set in rural landscapes. Look closely at *Witness Caravaggio*, 2004, for example. The illusion within this painting is not at first apparent. In "Reflections of Fine Art Work" (*The Press*, 1977) a reviewer reflecting upon *Self Portrait in Armagh Court Window*, 1977, asked,

Where was the photographer? And where was the painter? The questions arise from a painting by fourth year Canterbury University fine arts student Kees Bruin...Mr Bruin has submitted this painting of reflections in Armagh Court windows for his final examinations.¹⁹

In 2006 Neil Robert's said of 'Armagh Court,' "the viewer is placed in the disconcerting position of seeing what is before and behind the camera," and of *Aotearoa*, 1994, which uses the same technique,

Across the barrier of the almost surreal contents of the antique shop window the artist effectively manipulates the ambiguities of reflected space to tease and challenge the viewer.²⁰

Early in his career Bruin used reflection and portraiture together, often depicting himself as a cameo (frequently as a photographer) reflected in windows or mirrors within his paintings, much like Hitchcock or Jackson do in their films;²¹ *Surfer and Self-Portrait*, 1992 and *Vanitas*, 2004 being two examples. Over time his compositions changed radically as he wove a spiritualised repertoire of paintings, drawings and retouched gicleé reproductions across his "visionary realism."

¹⁹ "Reflections of Fine Art Work," *The Press*, date 1977.

²⁰ Neil Roberts, *Allusion* op. cit.

²¹ In *Lovely Bones*, 2009, Jackson depicts himself in a store buying a movie camera. In January 2005 *The Press* critic Christopher Moore said of *Witness Caravaggio* (that depicts Bruin with a camera), "... it's a painting harbouring sufficient visual enigmas to fill the scenarios of several Alfred Hitchcock films. "D:Arts People's Picture," Christopher Moore, *The Press*, 12 January 2005.



Doris Lusk, NZ Post first day cover, 1999. Kees Bruin was considered for a stamp run in 1991.



Aotearoa, 1994.
1000mm x 1300mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.





Top photograph, Linwood High School 1972, second left front.



Ilam Art School, Christchurch, 1977. Selected attributions: Quentin Macfarlane (right of man with raised arm), Tom Taylor (left of woman seated on ground), Doris Lusk (leaning on statue).



1970s. Kees carrying a battery for a public address system with Professor Laurence Shustak, Professor of Photography, Canterbury School of Fine Arts; and an unknown student.



Ilam Art School, Christchurch, 1977. Selected attributions: Don Peebles (above 'm' of "must" hand on knee), Simon MacIntyre (second right of Peebles), Stuart Page (holding shutter cable above 'w'), Glen Jowit (astride 'm' of "submit"), Kees Bruin and Professor Simpson (framed within the four ground windows right of the tree), Bill Sutton (folded arms in front of the central doorway), Professor Shustak (far left within V of path),

From about 2003 onwards Bruin matured toward more figural studies within tighter compositional parameters to produce some of his finest works, including: *Reading*, 2003; the Caravaggio series, 2004; and *Helen & Giorgione*, 2005.

This season of works presented contemporary people within Renaissance and Baroque contexts. The artist blends old and new in space, infused with theology or contemporary events such as the Olympic games (*Achilles' Halo*, 2004), politics (*Insurgent*, 2008) or Vermeer's *Girl with a Pearl Earring* set against a modern day Jerusalem at night in flames (*Girl with the Pearl Earring*, 2009).

The uneasy ambiguities increase. The young man is actually a portrait of a younger Kees Bruin as he was in the 1970s. The woman is from the 21st century. The Caravaggio was painted in 1598. Three time zones are in collision..."²²

Bruin paints a perfect facsimile of a masterwork such as Caravaggio's *Betrayal of Christ* as his backdrop. But he paints it in reverse, accurately (*Witness Caravaggio*, 2004) only to revisit the same backdrop in another work orientated the other way (*Is That You Caravaggio II*, 2005). He is again distorting, using space and orientation in the same way he uses old and new (baroque and contemporary) as an expression of a multi-layered technique to evoke 'vision.'

Vanitas explores the effects of interior and reflected space juxtaposed in the same composition: the result is a kind of spatial tour de force, loaded with allegorical symbolism related to time and morality.²³

In recent times the good prices of his contemporary works (\$50,000-70,000 for an original) has been made more accessible with the artist pioneering the use of gicleé reproductions (pronounced *zhee-clay*) of selected paintings restricted to 150 canvas prints. They are individually signed and sometimes with small painted additions. The process is the same used by David Hockney, Robert Rauschenberg and the Louvre in Paris. Bruin refined this process with a specialist Canterbury print maker to allow for quality copies on canvas to hang in additional collections at a fraction of the original cost. They are difficult to discern from the original works.

In demand across the globe, Bruin remains committed to oil on canvas, painting from his humble studio on Sumner beach where he continues to create Christian idiomatic masterpieces in super-realism. In the future his work will be more greatly appreciated within the New Zealand arts canon and prized in generations to come as a master painter quietly and humbly at work, underscored by a particular vision and having endured through the 2010-2012 earthquakes.

²² Christopher Moore, *ibid*.

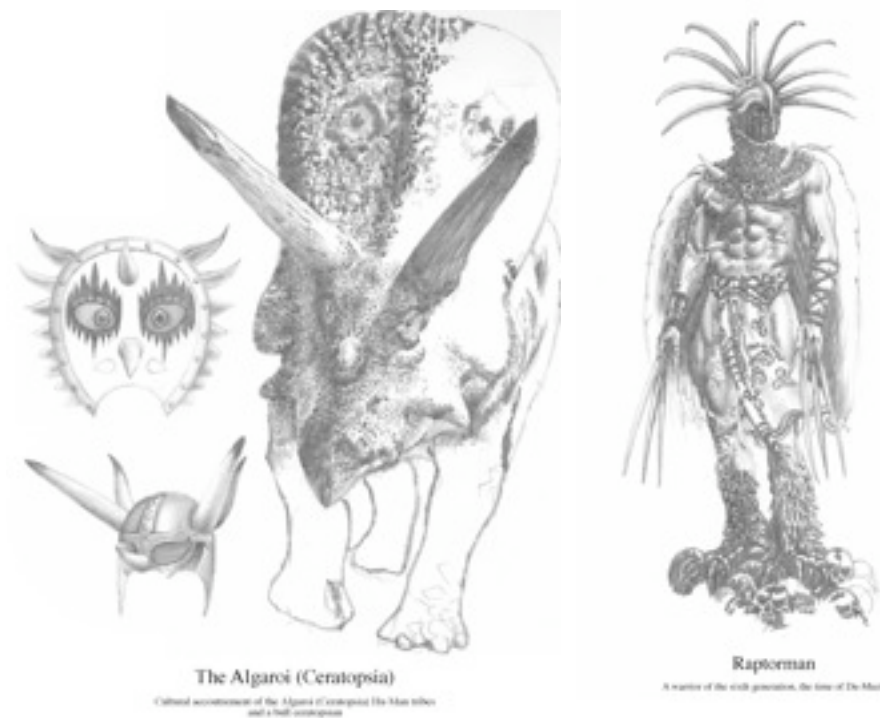
²³ Neil Roberts, *Allusion* op. cit.



Decision Making, 1999.

320mm x 450mm, lead pencil on paper. Private collection USA.

Commissioned by a USA author as one of three book illustrations on Christian marriage.



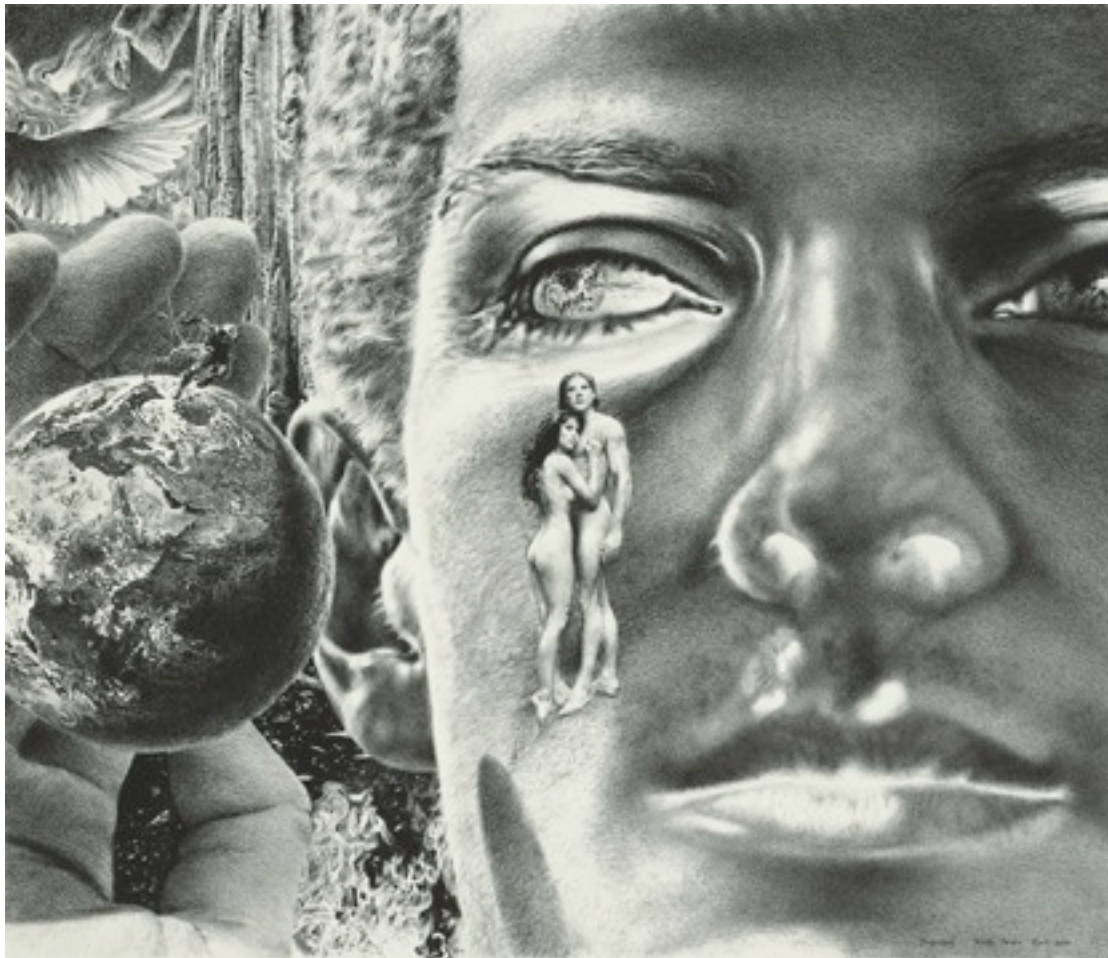
The Algaroi (Ceratopsia), 2010.

355mm x 580mm, lead pencil on paper.

Raptorman, 2010.

355mm x 580mm, lead pencil on paper.

Part of a series commissioned as USA book illustrations by John Stringer. Private Collection New Zealand.



Who has an ear on the world and an eye on the future. We have. 1998.
120mm x 280mm, lead pencils on paper. Private collection New Zealand.

Who has an ear on the world and an eye on the future. We have. No, II, 2000.
600mm x 575mm, lead pencil on paper. Private collection New Zealand.

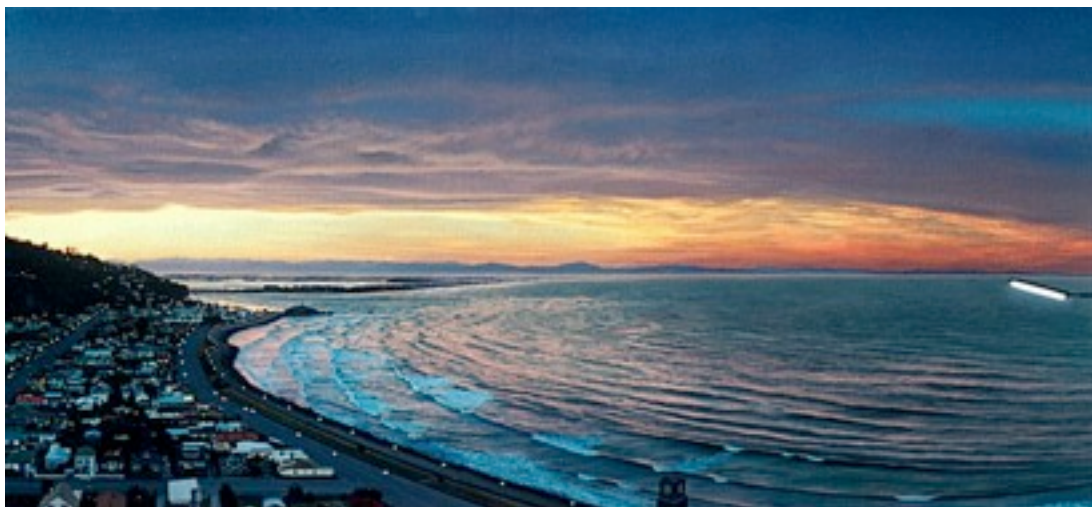
3. Landscape

From the beginning of his arts career Kees Bruin has always been a painter of landscapes. His unique contribution is his narrow regional focus. Much like Angus at Cass or Binney in the Waitakeres of west Auckland at Te Henga (*Drawing the Waitakere Coast*, Don Binney, Godwit 2010) Bruin is known for his south eastern coastline of Christchurch (Sumner, Redcliffs, the Avon-Heathcote Estuary, Shag Rock, Southshore and Scarborough). This area was badly damaged in the 2010-12 earthquakes and many of Bruin's iconographic backdrops are changed forever. This makes his painterly record of this distinctive part of New Zealand all the more valuable, and it is presumed his future work will comment on the radical typographical change to the area, as well as being an art historical focus for the dialogue between dramatic historic events, art and environment.



Shag Rock before and after 4/9/10 and 22/2/11 and detail (inset) of *Sunset Sumner No. I*, 1993.

Bruin lives on the esplanade at Sumner opposite the sea where he surfs for recreation. He can hear the waves washing on the beach as he paints in his studio. Surf and sea have always been a passion to the painter. Sumner is a quaint seaside village at arms length from Christchurch, more so since the earthquakes of 2010-12 and now bisected by 'Berlin Walls' of shipping containers stacked two high. It holds a dedicated core of residents that appreciate the distinctive environment of ocean, rocks, volcanic cliffs and caves. Bruin's art frequently reflects his vision of this area, caught in the reflections of water-soaked sands against various turbulent atmospheres such as the distinctive Canterbury Nor'west arch (as painted by Sutton) or the tempestuous southerly squalls that assault the Banks Peninsula coastline.



Cave Rock at Night, 1985.
900mm x 1200mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.

***Norwest Arch, Christchurch*, 1986.**

600mm x 1200mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.



***Scarborough Late Afternoon*, 1984.**

400mm x 900mm, oils on canvas. Private collection Holland.

***Rapture Sumner*, 1986.**

1220mm x 1830mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.



***Roys Bay Wanaka*, 1988.**

370mm x 700mm, acrylics on paper. Private collection New Zealand.

***Imaginary Garden*, 1990.**

910mm x 1220mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.



***Sumner Landscape*, 1994.**

450mm x 900mm, oils on canvas. Collection of the Christchurch Art Gallery.

***Sunset Sumner No. I*, 1993.**

500mm x 1000mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.



Eve Reflection, 1999.
880mm x 1310mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.

Homage to “the Last Picture Show” by Gareth Eyres, 2000.
900mm x 1200mm, oils on canvas. Private collection Holland.



***First Day of Spring*, 1990.**

500mm x 1800mm, acrylics on cardboard. Private collection New Zealand.

***Twilight Sumner*, 2001.**

1000mm x 1300mm, oils on canvas. Private collection Holland.

Imaginary Garden, 1990, is an example of Bruin working from nothing to create his own visionary scene. The work shows Southshore and the Estuary from atop Clifton Hill, the last spur leading round to Sumner. The two girls seated in the center background in an imaginary garden evokes for me the later Sir Peter Jackson interpretation of Pauline Parker and Juliet Hume in their imaginary garden in his film

Heavenly Creatures, 1994, in a scene almost identical to this 1990 painting. Of interest is that the events of the 1954 murder in Victoria Park off the Dyers Pass Rd is not far from where this painting was created, and where several scenes in the movie were filmed. They all share the same landscape.

4. Portraiture and Still Life



Kees Bruin with a life drawing in pencil of Stuart Page, 1977. Photo: Stuart Page.

Alongside Bruin's landscape work is his dedication to portraiture and still life in the tradition of Dutch Domestic painting borrowed from his heritage.

A transitional work between portraiture, still life and Dutch Domestic painting is *Vanitas*, 2004 which commenced Bruin's Vanitas series. The painting shows a portrait of a young man as well as a self-portrait of the artist reflected in a mirror. He and the young man frame a still life composition on a tableau with vase, skull, clock, and candleholder.²⁴ The work references Dutch Domestic painting by featuring: an interior with anteroom (*The Doctor's Visit*, Gabriel Metsu, ca. 1660; *Tavern [Brothel] Scene*, Frans van Mieris, ca. 1653) in which we glimpse a reclining bride; reflection in glass (*Young Man Writing a Letter*, Metsu, ca. 1665; *Young Woman Reading a Letter*, Metsu, ca. 1665); and a male and female duality (*Tavern Scene*; *The Music Lesson*, Johannes Vermeer, ca. 1662; *The Drawing Lesson*, Jan Steen, ca. 1665).

Several of these images are characteristic Bruin motifs to which he adds others: black and white laces, a nude, a goldfinch in flight. They are all features redolent of Bruin's life/death, light/dark symbolism. The sleeping black panther in the anteroom is the 'beast and maiden' motif common to art (*Minotaur Attacking An Amazon*, Picasso, 1913 and 1933) and represents the dormant carnal passions. The sleeping bride is a continuance of the Bride series discourse, specifically an interpretation of one of the foolish virgins of the biblical parable. The goldfinch represents the only way out of earthly vanity, expressed as a bird in flight as a metaphor of the soul escaping death into eternal life. Overall the series is an artistic commentary on the vanity of carnal

²⁴ Representing: flower fading, death, time, and extinguished life, respectively.

human existence and being controlled by one's passions. "You sweep man away in the sleep of death; they are like new grass..." (Psalm 90:25) and "vanity of vanities... All is vanity!" (Ecclesiastes 1:2).



Vanitas, 2004.
1095mm x 1005mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.



Vanitas II, 2009.
610mm x 760mm, oils on linen. Private collection New Zealand.



Vanitas III, 2010.
500mm x 600mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.

Vanitas IV, 2010.
460mm x 610mm, oils on canvas. Collection of the artist.

In the 2000s he executed a series of challenging still life paintings as a continuation of the Vanitas series. *Vanitas II-IV* (2009-2010) commits more exclusively to the still life tradition (flowers in a vase, fruit in a bowl, reflections in glass). The artist demonstrates his skill by portraying light plastic, tin foil or white marble statuary against white or dark backgrounds. Aware of past artistic conventions and traditional composition he adds his own flair by incorporating items of post-modernity (a cell phone, cellophane, a model warplane, a packet of cards, a celebrity photograph) commenting on the reach of human vanity across time.

Many of these works were bought in Holland where the traditions Bruin is referencing are better understood. But they remain a contemporary New Zealand reflection of a much older Dutch painterly tradition—the new informing the old from which it is moulded.

So, in keeping with past concerns in my visionary painting, time is spanned by integrating historical and contemporary characteristics.²⁵

Self conscious about appropriation, the still life works were a desire to resort again to using imagination and his own arrangements, as well as sensitivity to perceptions of ‘plagiarism.’ Despite common appropriation by the masters in their work as well as a hallmark of post modernism being quotation of image and icon, Bruin sought to stamp a badge of originality on these paintings. Many of his portraits were of family, friends and clients, which moved him fully into the area of originality and away from image appropriation.

²⁵ Artist’s handwritten statement for *Imminent Harvest*, 24 February 2003, unpublished.



Study of Paul, 1987. Commissioned.
305mm x 400mm, crayons on card. Private collection New Zealand.



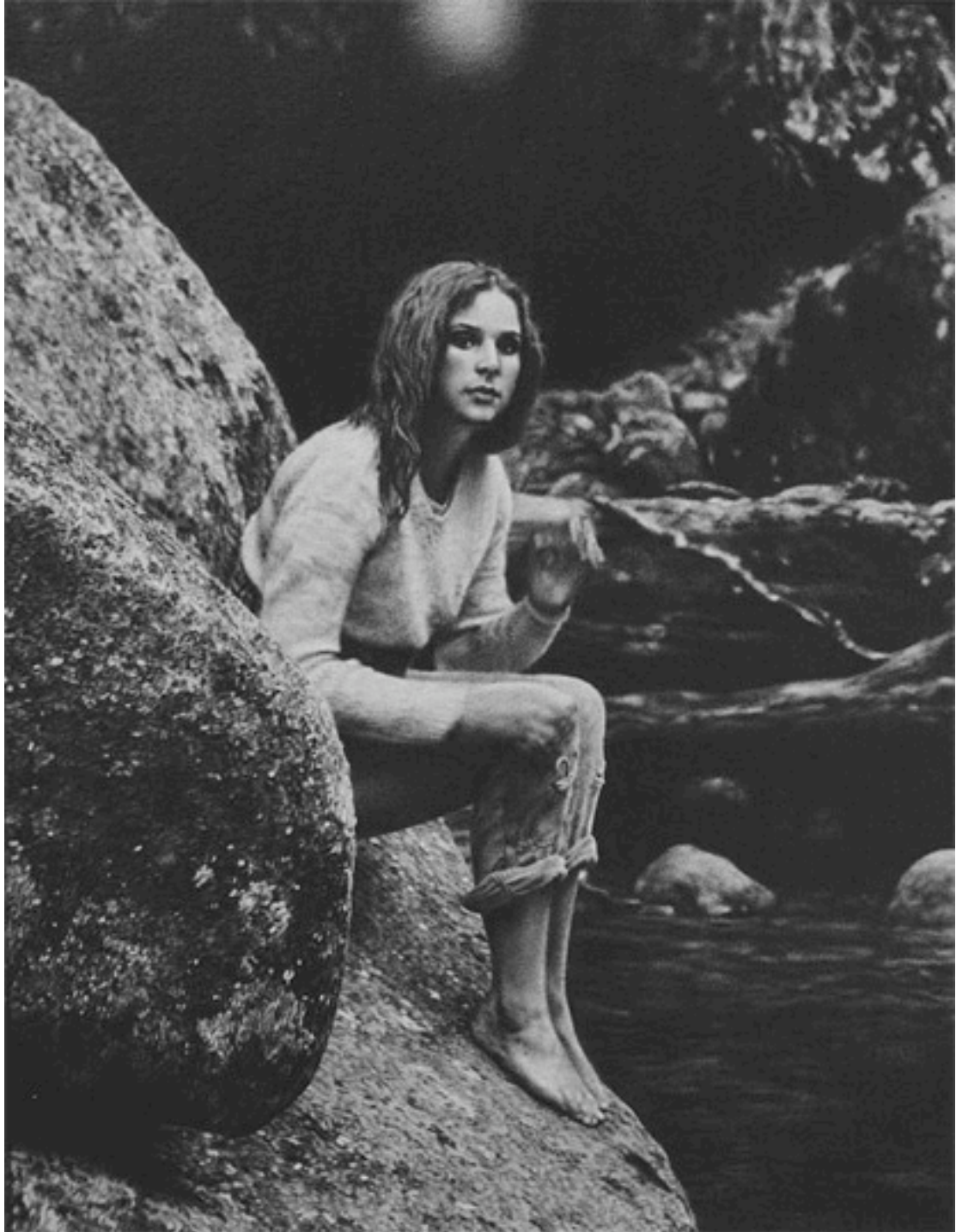
Study of Jaap, 1989. (Kees' uncle).
240mm x 190mm, crayons on card. Commissioned. Private collection Holland.



Elizabeth, 1987. (Kees' fiancé).
264mm x 380mm, crayons on card. Private collection New Zealand.

Lizzie No. II, 1994.

315mm x 400mm, oils on canvas. Commissioned. Private collection New Zealand.



Helen-bearer-of-light, 1985.

375mm x 280mm, lead pencil on paper. Private collection New Zealand.



Violin Player, 2003. Commissioned.
210mm x 265mm, oils on canvas. Private collection Iran.



Rachael, 2000.
318mm x 450mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.

This painting was influenced by the works of Lord Frederic Leighton in the Victoria & Albert Museum.

5. *Surf, Sea, Skate* series

Closely aligned to his landscapes are works reflecting Bruin's love of skateboarding and water sports such as diving and especially surfing. The artist surfs regularly at Sumner. But as with all his work, his idiosyncratic vision plays out through the simple celebration of surf, snow, sea, sand and skateboard and sporting figures take on layered symbolic meaning. Many of his figures are self-portraits (all four below).

It is this weightlessness that is important as a metaphor of our space age, or speed, thrill-seeking daring, even an ecstatic spirituality.²⁶



Surf Tryptich I, 1975.
1000mm x 1000mm, oils on canvas.

Surf Tryptich II, 1975.

²⁶ Kees Bruin, "Ramp Skills brushed up," *The Christchurch Star*, 1992.

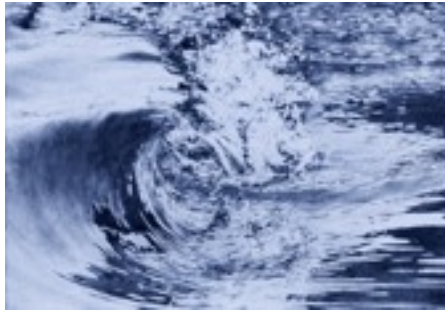
1000mm x 1000mm, oils on canvas.

***Surf Tryptich III*, 1975.**

1000mm x 1000mm, oils on canvas. Triptych, private collection New Zealand. All three panels destroyed in the Christchurch earthquakes.

***Journey to Truth via Surf*, 1993.**

1000mm x 1000mm, oils on canvas. Commissioned. Private collection Australia.



***Miniature Wave*, 1979.**

175mm x 250mm, Bic biro on card. Private collection New Zealand.

An airborne surfer or diver is a raptured 'bride' or Mankind at his apex (skateboarders). Bruin himself is a worshipping Adam in the Surf Triptych series. In 1993 he reworked his self-portrait of 1975 in *Surf Tryptich I* into the 1993 *Journey to Truth via Surf*.

In 1992 a research professor in Melbourne asked Bruin if he was the painter of 'Surf Tryptich' because ever since, he had seen it exhibited at the Canterbury university library. Having tracked him down to Sumner, he asked him if he was prepared to do another version of the work since the original had been purchased long ago, and this resulted in the more sophisticated version '*Journey to Truth*.'

This is the first part of the tryptich, about one's journey for truth. Coincidentally when I was half way through painting this project I became a Christian and the paintings became a metaphor covering a span of time of my search for truth culminating in the third painting of the set.

I hasten to add that I'm not attempting to use painting purely as a propaganda tool. I'm simply trying to do good paintings and when the narratives include symbols and meanings, and they nearly invariably do, I consider those aspects as natural extras.²⁷

'Surf II' is a beautiful symbiotic colouring of water and human flesh with the figure (the artist himself) replicating the curl of the wave with his body and a halo of filtered light anointing the head. The divers and surfers are surrounded by water representing cleansing and righteousness as it is in the Bride series. The first bride figure (1987), for example, sloshes through Sumner surf, and then in 1995 both brides trail ribbons of 'holy water' behind them like inverted divers or Pythian priestesses dispensing water libations. The artist says the tide sloshing around the ankles of the 1987 bride represents the unexpected return of Christ.

²⁷ 1 September 2011 op. cit.



***End Times*, 1983.**

282mm x 386mm, crayons on card. Private collection New Zealand.

***Warren Skating*, 1983.**

240mm x 386mm, crayons on card. Private collection New Zealand.

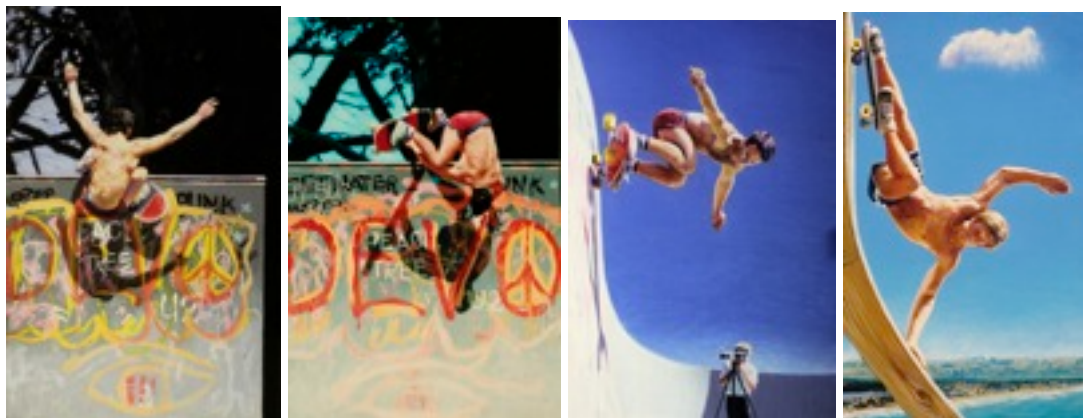
***Carpe Diem No. II*, 1983.**

240mm x 400mm, crayons on card. Public collection for the Cook Strait ferry.

From 1983 onward, skateboarders became motifs. In *End Times*, 1983, the figure skates as an ominous apocalyptic cloud rolls toward him. Another skater is symbolic of the zest of life in (Seize the Day) *Carpe Diem No. I* and *II*, 1983. Later, they are envoys of peace (the Peace Tree series of 1983²⁸) or harbingers of judgment (*Beginning of Judgment No. II*, 1992). In the latter we see for the first time fire bursting spontaneously from the ground, developed later in the Bride paintings. In 1992 the skateboarders became liminal agents as the Door series worked skateboarders against a cold metal facade adopted from the earlier Eve series.

The metal facade in the skateboard paintings represents the sky or the environment and man's ongoing damage to it. The door is Christ, man's hope of escape. The graffiti 'Devo' represents evil (devolution) with the skater at its apex, the only way being down, so the composition represents the human condition and the imminent decline (the downward slope) of modern civilization. This is the significance of the apocalyptic cloud rolling toward the skater in *End Times*. The photographer in 'Skater 3D' is Stuart Page, a friend from Ilam art school also depicted in the drawing on p. X. Bruin represents himself the same way in 2004's *Witness Caravaggio* painting, a commentary on the different ways of seeing within photography and paint.

²⁸ "Peace Tree" is an obscure title for Christ.



Peace Tree, 1983.
260mm x 393mm, crayons on card. Private collection New Zealand.

Peace Tree No. II, 1983.
300mm x 450mm, crayons on card. Misplaced in Christchurch, whereabouts unknown.

Skater 3D Photographer, 1983.
256mm x 380mm, crayons on card. Private collection New Zealand.

James 414, 1983.
510mm x 310mm, crayons on paper. Private collection New Zealand.



Door-to-Door, 1992.
1400mm x 1400mm, oils on canvas.

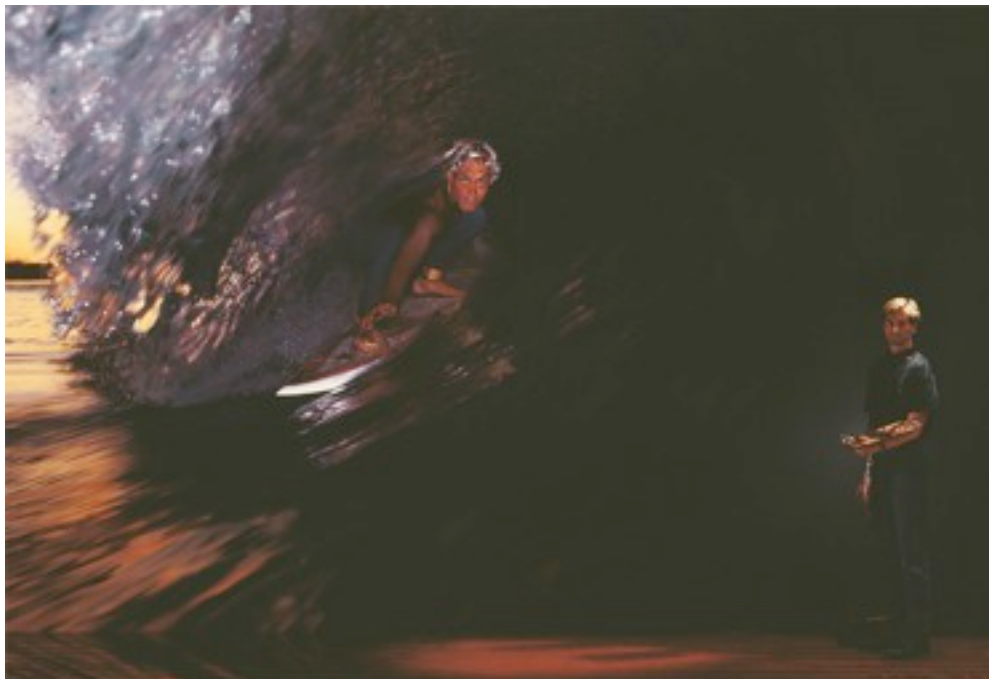
Hope in the Door I, 1991.
1400mm x 1060mm, oils on canvas.

Hope in the Door II, 1991.
1400mm x 1060mm, oils on canvas. All collection of the Christchurch Art Gallery.



Skyscraper, 1991.
960mm x 1300mm, oils on canvas. Private collection USA.

Beginning of Judgement No. II, 1992.
1220mm x 1000mm, oils on canvas. Private collection Holland.



Surfer-and-Self-portrait, 1992.
1200mm x 820mm, oils on canvas. Private collection Holland.



Euphoria, 1995.

1220mm x 2440mm, acrylics on wood. Commissioned. Private collection Canada.

The Surf, Sea, Skate series climaxed in the commissioned triptych *Euphoria*, 1995, that incorporates the elements of snow, surf, sky, snowboard, surfboard and skateboard.

In 2001 he returned to the theme when contributing a work for the inaugural CoCA annual skateboard art exhibition *Board Art*, when New Zealand artists were invited to contribute works painted on to a supplied skateboard and hung in a popular exhibition in the upper gallery.

6. The *Eve* and *Bride* series.

On top of landscapes, portraiture, still life drawing, and other constants within Bruin's work such as: photo-realism, the nude, contrasts, theology, symbolism, and reflections in glass or mirror, a number of progressive themes and developmental explorations map his work. They can be outlined as follows:

1970s-1990s	Photo-realism; Surf, Sea, Skate, culminating in <i>Euphoria</i> , 1995. The Peace Tree series
Early 1980s to early 1990s	The Door series
Early 1990s	The Eve series
Mid-1990s to mid 2000s	The Bride series
2000s	The Masters
Mid to late 2000s	The Vanitas series
Late 2000s	The Bride Grounded. culminating in <i>Signs of the Son of Man</i> , 2009.

In the early nineties Bruin began a series of paintings exploring Eve as his subject, perhaps reflecting on the failing health of his fiancée, Elizabeth. The painted nudes stand on bleak beaches or before cold dark metal facades, known earlier from the Door skateboarding series, representing doors of mortality. The battered metal walls also represent the damaged environment (Eve in a fallen Garden of Eden) "the atmosphere or the first heaven" as Bruin has called it. The cold colours of the metal walls contrast with the illuminated soft flesh of Eve, seen freshly reprised from a couch (Eve, 1992 and 1996) whereas later she is reclined (*Vanitas* 2004).

Flowers such as lilies or a black pansy are incorporated as symbolic motifs of death and resurrection. Black in a flower symbolizes death and the pansy being the 'love' flower also means "you occupy my thoughts." Death and love, cold metal and warm flesh rework the Bruin contrasts while the series evokes the personal subplot of Elizabeth as she prepares to pass through the mortal door into eternity.



Eve, 1992.

418mm x 590mm, oils on canvas. Public collection Aigantighe Gallery, New Zealand.

Restored Eve No. IV, 1996.

800mm x 500mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.



Easter Lilly and Eve, 1996.

660mm x 500mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.

Behold the Bridegroom, 1997.

700mm x 500mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.



A Spirit over Christchurch, 1995.
400mm x 250mm, coloured pencils on paper. Private collection New Zealand.

Christchurch Bride No. I, 1997.
700mm x 500mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.

Christchurch Bride No.II, 1998.
800mm x 600mm, oils on canvas. Private collection Holland.



Rapture, 1991.
1165mm x 1500mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.

Diver, 1991.
128mm x 193mm, watercolour on card. Private collection New Zealand.



***Musterion*, 2000.**

1200mm x 700mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.

***Bride Eclipse*, 2000.**

1022mm x 620mm, oils on canvas. Private collection Holland.

As this series matured over the mid to late nineties, the female motif evolved in to his celebrated Bride series. Eve (Elizabeth the fiancée) was now transformed in to a beloved bride painted over distinctly regionalist landscapes (Christchurch city and the eastern coastline, especially Sumner). Bruin was anchoring faith to place and exploring the pathos of a lost bride through art.

The Bruin Bride series began as a coloured pencil work in 1995 (*A Spirit over Christchurch*, 1995) showing a girl in a twisting dive arching upward over the city. The figure wears a virginal white slip, a biblical motif representing righteousness, and a precursor to the full satin wedding dress of later Bride paintings. 'Spirit' was created in response to an invitation to contribute to a sister-city exhibition in the Robert McDougall Art Gallery. Works were to be Christchurch-referenced alongside an Adelaide event.

I was initially inspired by the wonderful high board diving event of the Barcelona Olympics. In particular, with the views of divers tumbling through the air with inspiring backdrops of the city. I employed a model to assume a certain pose, such as the crossed wrists representing 'Bound with Christ'. This work marks the beginning of an on going series, interspersed by other different genre works, based on the Bride of

Christ and the resurrection. ²⁹

Another catalyst was his realization that the bride could be simplified, and thus the nude figure of 'Bride I' in 1997 in the tradition of the Eve nudes. This had represented for the artist ideas of the unashamed state and was a link with the earlier Eves, but he dropped the concept and adopted again the dynamic symbolism of the wedding dress that enriched his motif, in much the same way as Michelangelo's nudes were later over-painted with clothes in the Sistine Chapel.

Ideas I have attempted to express in the Bride series are self-esteem, boldness, expectancy, innocence, purity and a looking towards the Bridegroom...³⁰

Bruin's interest in this prophetic motif had first occurred to him while still at art school in the seventies. He grappled with the idea through a number of preparatory drawings but at the time was unable to resolve the concept with any satisfaction. The Adelaide-Christchurch invitation gave him the opportunity to resolve the idea and the brief necessitated the inclusion of architecture which he developed more fully fifteen years later in the Bride Grounded series of the late 2000s (*Gospel Remnant Bride*, 2007; *Pieta and Queen of Sheba*, 2007).

Since the first institution of Christianity was the Catholic Church I felt enabled to include my favourite historic building, the Catholic Basilica of Christchurch [Bride I and II]. The hole in the night sky represents the extra dimensional celestial world and I reinterpreted my view of the city for compositional reasons.³¹

Ironically, he entered 'Bride I' into a national Catholic art award in Auckland but it was rejected. He persevered and developed *Christchurch Bride No. II*, 1998, this time in wedding garb with a background that has apocalyptic overtones reminiscent of *End Times*, 1983. The fire in this work represents the trials and tribulations of this life, and again the cityscape is distorted [a mirrored panorama] for compositional reasons. Bruin selected the Christchurch basilica in this painting because it is the earliest and most recognized major institution of Christianity and is also familiar to local people (Bruin has never painted the iconographic Anglican cathedral of Christchurch).

With the Bride of Christ concept germinating as early as art school, the series had had a tentative first outing in 1987 when Bruin painted a bride in Sumner surf as one of the characters from the parable of Matthew 25 (*Behold the Bridegroom*, 1987). She is one of the proverbial wise or foolish bridesmaids (virgins) trimming their lamps as they await Christ. The lantern in her hand, like the candleholder in McCahon or Brown, is a theological motif. Here, it is almost extinguished, signifying her careless ambivalence to the teachings of Christ compared to the five wise bridesmaids. The waves washing past her represent her nonchalant preparedness for the Bridegroom's return, in the same way as the reclining nude in *Vanitas*, 2004 is unprepared being

²⁹ 1 September 2011 op. cit.

³⁰ *Imminent Harvest*, 24 February 2003, op. cit.

³¹ 1 September 2011 op. cit.

undressed and asleep.

From 1995 these two theological threads come together to inform a fully developed artistic thematic in the life of the artist, expressing both personal subplots and complex religious symbolism. An obvious artistic symmetry of this series is to “The Bride” released in 2003 by ‘Q and U’ as the *Kill Bill* movie trilogy based on the 1970s Japanese *Lady Snowblood* manga and movies. In that Japanese-Americana artistic oeuvre, however, The Bride is the grieving party and revenge and redemption are the dominant themes in contrast to Bruin’s earlier works evoking wisdom and preparedness.³²

In 1997 he re-worked the pencil composition of 1995 in oils (*Christchurch Bride No. I*, 1997) choosing to portray the figure as a nude in a nightscape. As well as an allusion to the parable of Matthew 25 in which the Bridegroom returns late in the night, Bruin feels that nightscapes add mystery and enhance the spiritual nature of his paintings. The fire bursts of ‘Bride I and II’ (1997, 98), seen earlier in the Door series as motifs of judgment, in this case represent a glimpse of the unseen heaven.

The trailing water from the feet of ‘Bride I and II’ represents baptism, being washed for marriage, and a life spent by ‘the washing of the Word,’ a core meaning of Christ’s parable in Matthew 25 which is the focus of the series. These brides ‘dive’ from this earth into eternity. To this element of water Bruin often adds the contrast of fire (*Beginning of Judgment No. II*, 1992; *Christchurch Bride No. II*, 1998) or as lightning into water (*Allegory of New Testament*, 1986).

These inclusions hint at a distant heaven and suggest a portal—a fiery birth from flesh to celestial, beckoning ‘Bride I’ from the sky, and through which ‘Bride II’ passes rapturously. Bruin’s sky opens dramatically above the Catholic basilica, perhaps prophetic of the series of earthquakes thirteen years later that brought down the basilica as well as the iconographic Christ Church cathedral. “Visionary realism” indeed!

The artist has always been fascinated with views of earth from outer space, perhaps inspired by the photographs of the 1969 Apollo 11 mission with their characteristic jet black background framing an illuminated earth. As the new millennium drew near, the brides were launched in to the upper atmosphere (*Bride Eclipse*, 2000). Bruin enjoyed the contrast of night and day which expressed for him the idea of the Bride’s universal resurrection transcending geography as well as earth time. *Bride Eclipse* shows the earth in both night and day. The sun is eclipsed by the moon, symbolizing a special day of illumination for the bride—“The city [*New Jerusalem*] does not need

³² *Lady Snowblood*, 1972/3 serialised manga by Kazuo Koike and Kazuo Kamimura (translated in to English and serialised in *Dark Horse* comics in 2005, 2006) adapted into Japanese film 1973, sequel 1974, remake 2001.

Kill Bill I, 2003; *Kill Bill II*, 2004; *Kill Bill III* pre-production 2011. *Lady Snowblood* is especially referenced in *Kill Bill* in the snow duel between Beatrix Kiddo (the Bride) and O-Ren Ishii. “Q and U” stands for Quentin (Tarantino) and Uma (Thurman) who developed the (USA) Bride movie concept.

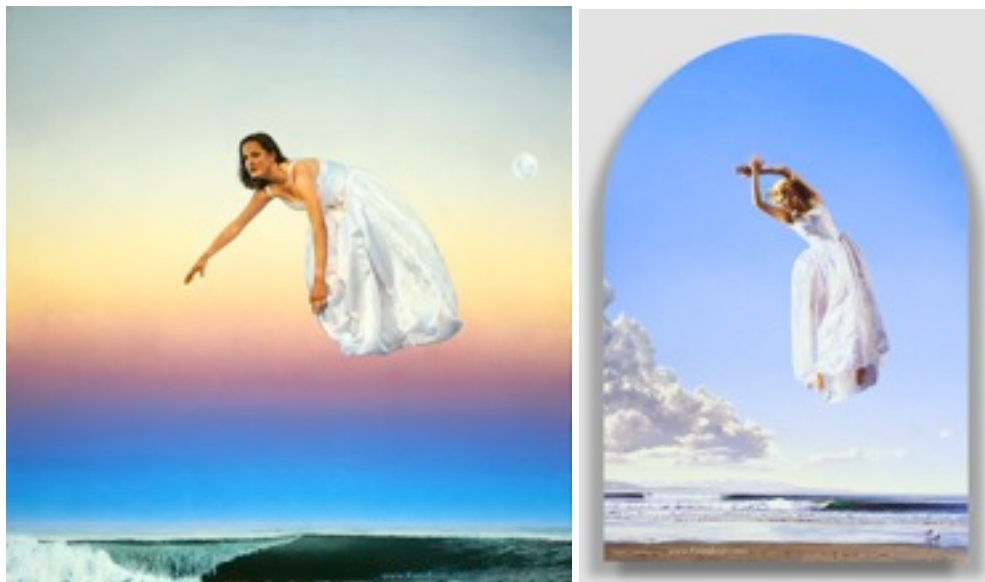
the sun or moon to shine upon it,” Revelation 21:23.

As the series progressed through the late nineties, the Bride was jettisoned in to true outer space like a holy satellite, leaving the grasp of earth behind and skyrocketing towards the angelic. These dark bridal spacescapes are reminiscent of Bruin’s earlier nightscapes of the late seventies and early eighties, such as *Cave Rock at Night*, 1985.

The Bride hovers mid-outer space, celestial and disengaged from the earth as she awaits Christ (“We shall be caught up and meet him in the air”³³). This is a painterly depiction of the biblical Rapture. Bruin’s millennium work *Musterion*, 2000 and *Harpazo*, 2002 are both titled after the literal Greek for this mysterious phrase coined by the Apostle Paul.³⁴

After the nineties, Bruin’s brides return to the inner atmosphere, hovering over Sumner surfscapes and open Canterbury skies before finally touching back down to earth.

One of the most successful works in this series is *Harpazo*, 2002, painted on a curved canvas like a church window. The Bride’s arms now form a cross as a developmental forward step from the ‘Bound with Christ’ motif (‘Take up your cross also and follow...for you are bound with Christ’³⁵). The arms are crossed and she wafts ethereally opposite Nor’west cumulus cloud and Sumner surf, connected regionally. For the first time, the sand of Sumner beach reappears, albeit tentatively, at the very bottom of the painting, anchoring the Bride to place.



³³ I Thessalonians 4:17.

³⁴ ‘The mystery (musterion) of the catching away,’ Greek “harpazo” literally “caught up” or “taken away” translated to Latin as “raeptius” and old English as “rapture.”

³⁵ Acts 17:11 and Romans 7.

***Bride of Great Price*, 2001.**

1200mm x 1200mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.

***Harpazo*, 2002.**

700mm x 1000mm, oils on canvas. Private collection Holland.



***Imminent Harvest*, 2003.**

1200mm x 700mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand. Destroyed in the Christchurch earthquakes.

***Southshore Bride*, 2005.**

1200mm x 700mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.

The following year the Bride's arms move to a more traditional crucifixion pose in *Imminent Harvest*, 2003 and *Southshore Bride*, 2005 and landscape continued to remerge in the extremes of the painting. In 2003 he also moved the theme forward after exhausting the Rapture by introducing a hand-painted facsimile of a harvesting angel by the super-realist Moroccan artist Claudio Bravo (*Temptation of St Anthony*, 1984 itself appropriated from Caravaggio). The figure is a male companion to the ethereal raptured Bride. The angel emerges from the right of the canvas, like a windswept bee, his reaping sickle outstretched to sting but the painting is grounded by the addition of Scarborough hill (facing north) at the very bottom consistent with the Bride paintings throughout 2003-2005.



***Gospel Remnant Bride*, 2007.**

960mm x 800mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand. Destroyed in the Christchurch earthquakes.

***Pieta and Queen of Sheba*, 2007.**

350mm x 300mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.



***Signs of the Son of Man*, 2009.**

450mm x 610mm, oils on canvas. Private collection Holland.

The motif has now moved to the harvest and vintage of souls, and the painting is a conscious re-appreciation of the Renaissance era, in particular Caravaggio. The Church hovers as the Bride at left, the Bravo reaping male angel arrives at right.

In the next cluster of paintings and with a linkage to the harvesting angel, the Bride matures in to a motif of the Gospel itself. In *Gospel Remnant Bride*, 2007 she hovers over a Pieta and Christ or appears as a covering chaperone (*Pieta and Queen of Sheba*, 2007).

In 2007 she actually lands, and returns to the figure first explored twenty years earlier in 1987 in the Sumner surf with lantern in hand. The 2007 'Sheba' bride is partly obscured and almost ancillary to the Passion played out in the center foreground. She has completed an entire theological discourse and tour-de-force across two decades.

In 2009 she is drawn dramatically forward in the painting as never before to conclude the series (*Signs of the Son of Man*, 2009). The 2009 final bride is perhaps the most animated and engaging of them all. Her face and arms are caught in a photographic split second of time, as she is worshipping, still engaged as a witness in the world, thus the man emerging at left (who is not Christ but hints at the Second Coming). The painting depicts the second before the invisible Christ appears, two lovers re-united after two decades apart. It is one of Bruin's most human paintings. The emotional intimacy caught mid-moment in the expression of the Bride's face is one of his most powerful artistic accomplishments, on a par with Elizabeth's grimace/smile in 1994.

The painted "signs" within the Son of Man surrounding the Bride gather several Bruin motifs in to a climax akin to the busy reflected window of *Aotearoa*, 1994. Present is Bruin's interest in outer space, baroque statuary, the Scarborough headland and a Christchurch beach. As the decade turns, the Bride is left with Christ surrounded by motifs of His Second-Coming, and the artist turns to other themes.

7. The Masters, a shift in direction

Towards the middle of the 2000s when the Bride series was beginning to exhaust its thematic, Bruin made a conscious shift in direction that altered his subject matter and the composition of his paintings. He moved away from the empty sea and skyscapes of the past and turned solidly to figural work with more compact compositions that referenced Western masters. This is perhaps one of the most significant turns in his career and has produced some of his finest work.



***Helen and Angel of Light*, 1999.**
510mm x 500mm, oils on canvas. Private collection Holland.

***Reading*, 2003.**
560mm x 610mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.

***The Doom Fulfilled and the Light of the World*, 2005.**
510mm x 510mm, oils on canvas. Private collection Holland.

In his own words, Bruin was revisiting his art historical exposure at art school.

Although it isn't uncommon throughout art history for the masters to at times derive their works from others, I came to a point, especially about ten years ago [ca. 2000] along my journey as an artist in the market place, that I wanted to have more diverse intellectual reasons for a profession as a painter. One being, that I was inspired to express a direct respect for some of the masters in the history of my art education by incorporating their paintings into my compositions. It is proving to be a continuing

influential exercise.³⁶

Historically, Bruin wanted to define his works as belonging to a link in the chain of Realism from where it had roughly left off at the end of the Victorian era. As an artist he also feels the thread of Realism has become disconnected in the current modern era, which he humbly wishes to rethread.³⁷ To achieve this, he chose works by several masters and reworked these into his paintings, usually as his background. Coupled with his interest in contemporary genres such as Op-Art and photo-realism, he had majored in the study of the Pre-Raphaelites at art school. It was also a pragmatic exercise, to make his work more appealing to a wider, and increasingly European (especially Dutch) buying clientele.

A consequence of this shift was that some colleagues and art commentators were at odds with his work at a time when the fashion was to explore more extreme elements of introversion and post post-modernism.

Realism is often marginalised in terms of contemporary art...Realist artists are often seen as being technically proficient but totally lacking in any kind of imagination or inventiveness.³⁸

On the face of it, Bruin's work was viewed by some as a 'cop out,' a simple return to well-worn grooves in Realism. But closer examination showed that Bruin had lost none of his visionary realism nor his playful use of reflections and multiple layers of perspective. *Witness Caravaggio* is a painting in the same tradition as 'Armagh Court' or *Aotearoa* thirty years before, but uses elements of European art.



Witness Caravaggio, 2004.

500mm x 550mm, oils on canvas. Collection of the Christchurch Art Gallery Trust on loan to the Christchurch Art Gallery.

Is That You Caravaggio II, 2005.

700mm x 500mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.

³⁶ 1 September 2011 op. cit.

³⁷ Artist handwritten statement for *Is that You Caravaggio II*, 6 May 2005, unpublished.

³⁸ Neil Roberts quoted in Christopher Moore, op. cit.

This extended even to the style of the picture frame within the painting. Bruin consulted scholarly books on baroque picture frames and selected a style of the early 1600s in keeping with the Caravaggio depicted in the background of 'Witness' which is dated to 1598-1601. The woman in profile in 'Witness' is staring directly at a work on a gallery wall. She, and everything to her right, is reflected behind her in a dark wall-length mirror (which draws us back to the facades of the Eve series). To her actual right, and shown to us in reflected reverse, is a self-portrait of the artist as photographer, Caravaggio's *Betrayal of Christ*, and the baroque gilt frame. The unreflected orientation of Caravaggio's 'Betrayal' is painted correctly in Bruin's 'Caravaggio II,' 2005.

'Witness' 2004 is a complex composition with multiple layers, reflections and reverses of perspective.

It's a painting harbouring sufficient visual enigmas to fill the scenarios of several Alfred Hitchcock films.³⁹

The backgrounds of Bruin's 'Masters' filled out and became complex, exhibiting his mature treatment of complexity and challenging material. The subjects move forward, like the final 2009 bride, engaging with the viewer in a much more intimate and confronting way. 'Vanus Emporio' and 'After Bulgari,' (both 2006) are not the shy wilting virgins of the late nineties or the distant esoteric brides of the 2000s. These figures are confident contemporary women looking us directly in the eye.

There was also a passion by the artist to retain the direction of the Christian narratives woven throughout his work, and where better to evoke these than through the European masters. But Bruin did not ape past traditions. As well as his layering of reflections, he drew historical and modern elements into his works too, like the photograph of motorcycles used to inform *Reminiscing*, 1975.

I am in a phase at the moment of expressing this synthesis in a most obvious way by combining actual historical works of note with contemporary figures.⁴⁰

His models were modern men and women (and often self portraits) either painted in historical conformity (*Reading*, 2003) or in contrast to it (*Muse*, 2007). A number of personal, artistic and educational threads came together to make these works uniquely Bruin's, such as his penchant for painting masters scenes in reverse, or in a different scale as a play on his reflection-ology.

³⁹ Christopher Moore op. cit.

⁴⁰ *Is that You Carvaggio II*, 6 May 2005 op. cit.



Helen and Giorgione, 2005.
360mm x 550mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.





Vanus Emporio and Supper at Emmaus, 2006.
600mm x 300mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.

After Bulgari and Dali's Crucifixion (Corpus Hypercubicus) 1953-54, 2006.
650mm x 900mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.



Allegory of fame, 2006.
705mm x 505mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.



Achilles Halo, 2004.
840mm x 800mm, oils on canvas. Private collection Switzerland.

Muse, 2007.
630mm x 700mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.



Insurgent, 2008.
460mm x 610mm, oils on canvas. Private collection New Zealand.

Post Babylon, 2008.
500mm x 610mm, oils on canvas. Private collection Holland.

At this time he also began to date his paintings differently, in the same fashion as Herb Foley using Roman numerals (MMIII, 2003). This was a direct reference to his European heritage as well as an allusion to his philosophical understanding of the modern world as a 'Second Roman Empire' and the final empire before the return of Christ.⁴¹

This book closes with Bruin's work mid-2010, the Vanitas still life paintings expressing the vanity of carnal life. On 4 September 2010 the 7.2 earthquake hit Christchurch like a pile driver, followed by the more devastating but shallower 6.3 22

⁴¹ *Imminent Harvest*, 24 February 2003, op. cit.

February earthquake of 2011 with the epicentre at the heart of Bruin's regional landscapes and altering his environment irrevocably. Several of his original paintings across the city were destroyed. As an artist who survived the physical challenge, when many others did not, these events will no doubt call to his significant talent to capture and give voice to the pathos these historic New Zealand events evoke.

I'm sure his visionary realism will rise to the task throughout the rest of the decade.

8. A Vermeer in our Sumner Midst:

An interview with Kees Bruin, Super-realist painter, Sumner
by John Stringer.

First published in *CS News Arts Quarterly* 19, January 2005 (reproduced with permission,
www.cs.org.nz).

A Vermeer in our Sumner Midst:

An interview with Kees Bruin Super-realist painter, Sumner.



allegorical motifs. *Vanitas* (2004), *Reading* (2004) which critiques Vermeer and was an entry in the 2004 CoCA Art Awards, and *Achilles' Halo* (2004) are all ambitious oil on canvas works that demonstrate a widening interest and empathy in the emotional life of chosen human subjects. Viewers are still incredulous that Bruin's works are not photographs, but his work remains 100% brushed. There is no Photoshop at work here.

JS. Was there a progression of thought between your recent work and your 'bridal series'?

"Only very slight. In the background of *Vanitas* there is a nude on a couch. She is a metaphor for one of the foolish virgins, one of the brides not ready for the Bridegroom in the biblical parable. She's resting, not there with the other brides. Before, I was painting larger landscapes with smaller figures in the tradition of the German romantic landscape painters. In my recent work the figures have become more dominant, more centred, than the environment in which they are placed."

What are you heading towards?

"The main development I wanted was a more obvious emotional response from my paintings. I was satisfied with *Reading* being a contemplative work harking back to Vermeer's tradition of women reading letters. I introduced contemporary aspects, like the Picasso work on the cover of the *CS News* that she's reading as well as historical references. My latest work is a woman in profile in front of a Christ by Caravaggio. When you view my latest work, compared to *Reading*, the subject is more emotionally engaged and engaging. *Reading* is more passive and restrained."

Bruin was approached by the Christchurch Art Gallery for a 30-year retrospective of his work. The Gallery holds over five of his original works, including *Elizabeth and Goldfinch* (1994) which depicts Bruin's fiancée who died of cancer before they could marry [The Collections catalogue, Christchurch Art Gallery, p. 90].

What are you hoping to achieve with the retrospective?

"I'm looking forward to presenting an overview of my career for the first time. It will be a difficult task as we can only fit perhaps 25 works from the hundreds I've painted over the years, perhaps from a pool of 130 to 150 canvases."

Because of the intricate nature and scale of his work, Kees Bruin is only able to complete between five or six paintings a year, three of which go to a gallery in Amsterdam. With a waiting list for commissions, he can now choose what he wants to paint. In recent years a partnership has formed with dealer Cheryl Kinder (Kinder Bruin) to pioneer high class giclee reproductions of Bruin's work, such as are used in museum galleries in Europe (like the Louvre) to

Retrospective exhibition,
Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu
17 February – 20 May 2006.

We can blame Bill Sutton for Kees Bruin's painting career. In the early seventies Bruin was studying at the Canterbury School of Fine Art in sculpture and Sutton (then Head of Painting) persuaded him towards brushes. "My grades were as good, if not better, in sculpture, but he and some of the other staff encouraged me to take to painting." It's just as well he did. The painter has produced 30 years of exquisite works since, most often reflecting Canterbury landscapes (particularly Sumner and surrounds), now held in collections all over the world. As such, he is an important contributor to, and ambassador of, Canterbury's story of art.

Bruin, just turned 50, has been painting seriously for over two decades, a fact acknowledged by the Christchurch Art Gallery's planned retrospective exhibition of his work in early 2006. Born in Roxborough, he was educated in Christchurch graduating with a Diploma of Fine Arts (Hons) in painting. He also received a Teaching Diploma and a Certificate in Film Production. He has exhibited frequently since 1977 and has won a number of awards, including:

- first prize 1977 NZ Royal Commonwealth Overseas League Art Award
- first prize 1983 Tauranga Art Award
- finalist 1986 Montana Lindauer Award
- finalist 1993 James Wallace Art Award
- finalist 2001 Cranleigh Barton Drawing Award

After a series of paintings using an ascendant bride image (usually over Christchurch landscapes) as a metaphor for the Bride of Christ (his 'bridal series') Bruin turned to more figural



**If I didn't know
what I believe to be
the truth I would be
very confused about
why or what I
should be painting.**



Vantaz, Kees Bruin, 2004, oil on canvas, 3000 x 900mm, private collection

Freelance contributing writer for CS News, and independent arts advocate



9. Allusion & Illusion, Kees Bruin

by Neil Roberts.

First published in *b.144* (Autumn, March-May 2006) *Bulletin* published by Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu (reproduced with permission).

There is no question that your thinking as a Christian pervades most of your work. How important is your faith to you?

It gives me a reason to work. If I wasn't a Christian, I would be seriously sidetracked by all sorts of ideas and contexts. In a real sense, it concentrates my focus.

Has the influence of Christianity changed your work over time?

Yes, in good and bad ways. I guess the fundamental basics of Christianity have stayed constant in my work, but in recent years especially I have discovered there are many critical issues in Christian teaching and preaching, largely because of the misled and personal agendas of some church leaders, of both liberal mainstream and charismatic evangelical persuasions, who manipulate listeners with the promises of success in all that they want – deliverances, healings, prosperity and church growth. Because of this, many Christians are misled and practise a distorted, unbalanced form of Christianity – including myself in some areas, until a few years ago. I am so thankful and inspired that the truth in all the critical issues can be found and practised, and I continue to discover answers to questions. I believe in this premise: never stop learning what you think you already know. The Bible even teaches this principle, because of the many false teachers in the church.

You use photo-realism or super-realism as a stylistic vehicle for your painting to extend the influence of your Christian beliefs – you must have felt this was the most appropriate stylistic means to convey what you wanted to do. Was there any choice? For instance you could have quite easily become an expressionist or minimalist. Do you feel that photo-realist super-realism is better to convey your Christian beliefs than other stylistic approaches?

No! And yet, I guess, for me personally it is. You see, I believe most modern art philosophies are arrogant or naïve to say that for nineteen hundred years artists have followed invalid belief systems in painting. I always remember an essay topic 'A Fresh Impetus in Realism Painting' assigned to us by [lecturer] William Sutton around the time I began to major in painting at [the University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts]. I want to continue the thread of western Judeo-Christian painting, which was largely broken about one hundred years ago. This is my heritage and my background education. I feel it is important to pay homage to these traditions – Christianity and realism – and synthesise them with contemporary and new ideas, just as succeeding artists have done in history. So, a sense of integrity, among other reasons, is important to me.

Is Truth part of that?

Yes.

Truth to whatever, truth to the identity of reality. I am wondering if there was any significance in your choice of stylistic approach, because truth is fundamental to Christian belief.

I guess I have always been more impressed with reality in the way I see it in painting. In my art history studies I was at first unimpressed by most of the realism painting of the Judeo-

Christian heritage. I always thought it looked wooden and inanimate until I saw the first examples of good American photo-realism from the 60s and 70s.

Then I was suddenly moved and inspired, and said to myself, hang on, this kind of realism is the closest thing to contemporary realism that I have ever seen in painting, and this is how I want to paint. Secondly – and this came about through the philosophy of art history with [lecturer] Ted Bracey and my own sort of conclusions – I recognised that this is what impressed the greater proportion of the community in painting and what they most easily relate to. I still believe that realism is preferred by the community.

It's more accessible?

Yes. That's the integrity part of the question. I was really surprised with Ted Bracey's approach to art, because he is very much an abstract sort of painter and yet he had a very pragmatic philosophy of art. He taught us that being a professional artist should be seen as nothing different to another trade. We should not see ourselves as more special than anyone else. We have a job to perform like a trade. That influenced me quite a lot.

What difference do you think having a faith in religion makes to being an artist?

Well, for me personally, and I suppose that it would be the same for others who are asked the same question, you have a purpose, you know what life is about. You don't have the questions that most artists struggle with to find what they are looking for.

We have discussed the place of being a Christian in your work generally, but what works in particular have emphasised this commitment more than others?

Well, there are some paintings where the meanings are a lot more obvious than others – for example, a recent painting of the baptism of Christ in a New Zealand river scene. Most people, including non-Christians, realise what it is about when they first look at it. The figure of Christ looks like a Christ figure. Then there are other paintings that I feel are equally as good or equally satisfying for their Christian meaning, which is more hidden, and I am equally satisfied.

Would you prefer people to be aware of your faith before they view your work?

With regards to my artworks it doesn't matter, but people who know my faith may find another level of meaning.

Artists can paint Christian imagery without having a faith.

There are artists who have painted like that. Colin McCahon, for example. I actually rang him one day and asked him, point blank, 'Are you a Christian?', and he said no. So I asked, 'Would you call yourself a Mystical Christian?' He hesitated and said he supposed so. I was doing a bible course at the time, and one of our projects was to design a tract. The Robert McDougall Art Gallery had just purchased McCahon's painting 'As there is a constant flow of light we are born into the pure land' for \$10,000, and it was causing quite a stir in the local press. As soon as I saw it, I thought, wow! what a great painting; it was so abstract and not normally the kind of painting that strikes me. There was something about it, its composition, the feeling of light coming through that square, and I was really impressed by it. Inspired. I thought about the work and decided to design a tract based on it, and ask McCahon's permission to use an image of his painting. I also wanted to ask him if I could incorporate my interpretation of what I felt he was trying to say. When I rang, I told him this is what I think it says: 'as there is a constant flow of light' alludes to as we find Christ we are born into the pure land, eternal life. And he said yes, that's fair enough, so he gave me permission.

Is there anything more you would like to add concerning your faith. Any post-script?

It is important for me as a painter to try and appeal to as wide a cross-section of the community as possible. That is the first hook, and then I find that if people have an experience with my paintings they are more receptive to things they can't put their finger on.

And disregarding the Christian aspect of my work, there are two main tenets I believe in about what is art. Over the years I have summarised it as: one, there should be obvious technical excellence; two, there should be the feeling of magic, something that inspires you.

Something that stirs the soul. In other words, technical excellence and soul motivation.

11. Appendix

Education

Otematata District Primary

Linwood High School

Canterbury School of Fine Arts (Ilam), University of Canterbury

Christchurch College of Education, Teachers Training College (from 2007 University of Canterbury)

CPIT (Film cert?).

Awards & Commissions

1977 NZ Royal Commonwealth Overseas League Art Award

1977 Tauranga Art Award

1986 NZ Royal Commonwealth Overseas League Art Award

1983 Tauranga Art

The James Wallace Art Award

The Blake prize for Religious Art in Australia

The Cranleigh Barton Drawing Award

Montana Art Award (finalist).

Selected Exhibitions

- Canterbury University, 1976
- CSA Gallery, 1977, 1979, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1986, 1987, 1989, 1992, 1994
Including:
 - Art for Christ's Sake*, CSA gallery, 1987
 - Real-Surreal*, CSA Gallery, April 1992
 - Seascape Reflections*, CSA gallery, 1993
 - Fax About Art*, CSA Gallery 1994
- Elva Bett Gallery, Wellington, 1978
- Christchurch Teachers College, 1979
- *Contemporary New Zealand Realist Paintings*, Auckland Art Gallery,
26 Oct. – 2 Dec. 1979
- Gallery 111, Christchurch, 1983
- Willeston Gallery, Wellington, 1984
- *Williams Art Award* exhibition, National Gallery, Wellington, 1984
- *'60 from 1984*, exhibition tour Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin, 1984
- *Montana Lindauer Art Exhibition*, Gisborne, 1985
- *Blake Prize for Religious Art* tour exhibition, Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra, Hobart 1987.
- *Rotoart*, Hamilton, 1985
- Finalist *Montana Lindauer Art Award* exhibition, 1986
- Group show of paintings and drawings, 1989
- Canterbury Gallery (Papanui Rd, Christchurch), 1991
- *Contemporary Self-Portraits*, Salamander Gallery, March 1992
- *Ten Paintings*, Salamander Gallery, June 8- 21, 1992

- *Annual Spring Exhibition*, Invercargill, October 1993
- *Real Vision*, Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Nov. – Feb. 1994
- *About Town*, Robert McDougall Art Gallery, 1995
- *Recent Acquisitions*, Robert McDougall Art Gallery, 1995
- *Two Real*, Robert McDougall Art Gallery, April – June 1997
- *Art & Faith* exhibition, Auckland, 1998
- *Back to the Garden*, Centre of Contemporary Art (CoCA, old CSA), 1999
- *Recent Works*, CoCA, 2000
- *What Love Is This*, Lincoln University, July 2000
- *Journey*, Seven Plus group show (Chrysalis Seed Trust), CoCA, 13 Dec. -6 Jan. 2001
- *Emergence*, Salamander Gallery, 2002
- *12: dialogues with time*, Chrysalis Seed Trust group show, CoCA, 8-27 April 2003
- (Inaugural) *People's Picture*, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu atrium, Dec. 2004 – June 2005
- *Allusion & Illusion*, Kees Bruin, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, 10 Feb. – 7 May 2006
- *The Chamber* public art gallery, Rangiora, 2006
- *Night & Day*, Chrysalis Seed Trust group show, CoCA, 9 March – 2 April 2005
- Exhibition of giclees, Bryce Gallery, Christchurch, 2005
- *Existence: Life according to Art* group show, Waikato museum, 2007-2008
- *Reconstruction: Conversations on a City*, “Outer Spaces” outdoor exhibition programme [post-earthquake], Worchester Boulevard, Christchurch City Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, 2012
- *Muse*, two-story outdoor shipping container canvas hanging at Sumner Cliffs (Peacocks Gallop), c/- L'Estrange Gallery, Sumner, 2012
- Alexis Fine Art gallery commercial hangings, 2009 – 2012

Collections

Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu
Christchurch Art Gallery Trust

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www.keesbruin.com

Artist's statement, *12: dialogues with time*, 2003, Chrysalis seed Trust group show, CoCA.

Handwritten statement for *Imminent Harvest*, 24 February 2003, unpublished.

Handwritten statement for *Is that You Carvaggio II*, 6 May 2005, unpublished.

Handwritten statement for *Morning Surfer and Self-Portrait*, undated, unpublished.

Handwritten statement for *Beginning of Judgement II*, undated, unpublished.

Letter to Mrs Draper re *Art & Faith* exhibition, Auckland, undated.

Kinder Bruin advertising leaflet, undated.

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“Reality on Canvas,” *The Living Arts*, 1984.

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