



PLATE 162 L. Budd, 12 panels from *Fresh Ideas for Man the Masterpiece*, 1988, Mixed media, 24 panels, each 370 x 370 mm, Private collection, Wellington

question and deconstruct its meaning. By cutting out pieces, cancelling words and overlapping, her art is given a disjunctive, subversive quality. While there is no one meaning and no narrative, the attack on sexist language and ideas is a constant theme (plate 162). She sees the link between language and sign and how oppression is built into the means of communication in modern society. Gender issues involving words, signs and similar techniques to Tweedie's can be found also in artists such as Terence Handscombe and Julia Morison.

Figurative painting has continued to attract a younger generation of women painters like Jenny Doležel (b. 1964) and Séraphine Pick (b. 1964). Both have created distinctive and individual imagery that draws upon the wide range of sources

and influences open to painters since the impact of postmodernism. While Doležel was at Elam between 1983 and 1986 her lecturers, Denys Watkins and Dick Frizzell, had a formative influence upon her work. Like Watkins and Frizzell, she has moved freely between media, working as both an etcher and a painter. Her art appears fantastic and sometimes disturbing because she draws on her imagination and inner experiences to generate her subjects. Having a liking for masquerade and the theatrical, Doležel is unconcerned with recording the everyday world and seeks to penetrate beneath its surface.

In Doležel's paintings the autobiographical dimension is apparent in her questioning of identity, gender and human relationships through puppet-like projections of herself and her acquaintances in disturbing compositions (plate 163). In *Night Shift* she explores aspects of desire and individual identity in the setting of night time when boundaries become more fluid between our inner and outer personas, and a shift can occur between one and the other. She employs variations of scale in her figures as well as puzzling reversals of orientation, so that some figures appear upside down to the viewer. She has noted: 'I want the viewer to do a little work to put the images together bit by bit, like an elaborated follow-the-dots game.' The large staring eyes, abrupt gestures and acidic colours she uses all contribute to her easily recognised style.

She comes across very much as a painter whose thematic concerns are closely linked to those of contemporary women. Doležel often uses words in her paintings and relates them to the figures by giving clues to her meanings. Commands like 'feel me', 'frighten me' or 'protect me' seem addressed to society as a whole as well as to the viewer. They point to social problems and unease in a way that is topical and relevant to New Zealand in the new millennium. It is a country where change has undermined past social systems but not replaced them with workable new ones, and the role of both male and female is no longer clear-cut.

Séraphine Pick's paintings also have a quirky quality that suggests the world of the subconscious and of dreams rather than everyday life. Like Doležel, Pick creates a world that relates specifically to contemporary women and their desires and fears. She trained at the Canterbury School of Fine Arts from 1984 to 1987, and after graduating she painted mythological subjects before developing reductive images of various domestic objects such as chairs, tables and beds against plain backgrounds. These objects appear to float rather than be grounded, and give the appearance of dreamlike imagery with a haunting and persistent quality (plate 164). She has related objects like the iron bed that occurs

PLATE 163 (OPPOSITE) Jenny Doležel, *Night Shift*, 2000, Oil on canvas, 1510 x 1810 mm, Private collection, Los Angeles, California

