



Peter O'Hagan painting at the Manoir Verzy.

Peter O'Hagan is certainly among New Zealand's most successful artists. He is renowned for his spontaneous, vibrant paintings in watercolour and gouache. Most recently he has gained recognition as "artist in residence" at the prestigious Champagne House Veuve Clicquot. In July 1998 Peter travelled to France where he was invited to make his base at the Widow Clicquot's historic Manoir de Verzy near Reims.

Peter's early career as an architect and his work as a curator for the New Zealand Historic Places Trust (at Highwic House in Auckland and Kemp House in Northland), combined with his love for the "finer things" in life are all elements that influence his painting. Favourite subjects include lavish European interiors, fine wines, still lifes and vibrant outdoor scenes.

As a student, Peter received tuition from notable New Zealand artists Patrick Hanly and Agnes Wood. Indeed it was Hanly who encouraged him in 1984 to relinquish his career as an architect in order to pursue his artistic career.

Soon afterwards Peter held a highly successful exhibition aboard the liner QEII, which encouraged him to continue with his chosen vocation and helped to establish his international reputation.

An exhibition of Peter's Tahitian watercolours was held at the Gallerie Artiste on the Boulevard St Germain in Paris in 1992. It was acclaimed in the French press and on national television. Within two weeks the show was a sell out. Peter's subsequent short holiday in Venice and a trip on the Orient Express from Venice to Paris, engendered the series of paintings, "A journey through Italy", which was shown at Jonathan Grant Galleries in Auckland. The success of this show resulted in sponsorship by the company Leading Hotels of the World for Peter to stay at Raffles Hotel in Singapore and travel on the Eastern Orient Express to Bangkok. The paintings from this exhibition have been shown at galleries worldwide.

PETER O'HAGAN

O'Hagan's work has been purchased for leading corporate collections such as Air New Zealand, Hyatt Hotels, the Hotel de Crillon (Paris), Venice Simplon Orient Express, The Government of Macau and of course, Veuve Clicquot Ponsardin. In September 2003 Jonathan Grant Galleries staged Peter's second Paris exhibition at the Ravensborne Gallery in the Place du Palais Royale, which was once again supported by Veuve Clicquot. In 2004, "Fine New Zealand Wines Abroad", combined three of his great passions; travel, the one wines of New Zealand and his favourite French vineyards.

Recently Peter O'Hagan completed a commissioned painting in a new style that celebrated Veuve Clicquot's modernity. The work specifically referenced the collaborative design of Christophe Pillet and Christian Lacroix that created a new modern appearance for the exceptional vintage; La Grande Dame. This painting now hangs in the new La Grande Dame Room at Veuve Clicquot's head office in Reims.

In 2005, the Count Audoin and Countess Roselyne de Dampierre launched their Grand Cru and premier Cru collection of Champagne cuvees in Auckland. O'Hagan had visited the Dampierre's home in Chenay during 2005 and completed sketches that documented his impressions of tasting the family's 1998 reserve cuvée. The resultant painting was sold by auction during the Champagne tasting and the proceeds were donated to the Auckland branch of the SPCA.



*Punting down the River Charente in Cognac.*