

with the place when she saw it and relishes bringing up young children with beaches, bush, streams and waterfalls at her doorstep and being sufficiently far from a motorway. She has never lived in bush before and has responded very directly to her environment by creating drawings, tapestries, collages, rugs and decoupage that reflect the botanical aspect of her environment. When the children were very young she would collect leaves from a specific tree and record them later in her studio. One of her favourite places, the pohutukawa glade walk at Karekare Beach, inspired her drawings for a children's book.

The Waitakeres attracted a number of European migrants. Outsiders appreciated the views, the ruggedness and the tranquillity. Designer Michael Penck came to New Zealand from Germany and lived in Titirangi from 1980 to 1986 before moving to Adelaide. Fellow designer Michael Smythe, another Wellingtonian who had discovered Titirangi, introduced him to the area and Michael Penck was attracted to the wild beaches, the clean water, the black beaches, the smell, the trees and the artistic community who had congregated there. He loved 'the many hidden secrets you only discover when you make an effort to actually climb through the gorges', but disliked the rain '24-hours a day six weeks in a row'.

He discovered New Zealand timber and made his first significant pieces of furniture when he was living in Wellington prior to moving to Titirangi. When he lived in Titirangi he was able to buy some timber from the Crown Lynn kilns in New Lynn. By this stage he was 'well into the wood scene in Auckland as a member of the wood group, preaching aesthetics which nobody wanted to hear ...'. On one of his solitary walks along the beach after a severe storm Michael recalls finding an old kauri railway sleeper with steel rods still attached to the rock. Under cover of darkness he removed the sleeper and dragged the wet timber home where he carefully dried it for three years before turning it into an award-winning table.

One of Michael's closest friends was the late Levi Borgstrom who made exquisite



Fig 8.
Ann Robinson, *Orchid Vessels*, 1997; lead crystal glass, 635 x 170 x 170mm.
Private collection

wooden spoons. Levi came to New Zealand from northern Sweden in 1951, escaping from the pressures of the religious group to which his family belonged. As a teenager he had used his father's chisels to form wooden spoons, cups and ladles and he continued working this way all his life. He built his own A-framed house in Titirangi, complete with outside toilet. Michael and Levi would go on timber-cutting excursions seeking particular bends in pohutukawa branches and looking for timbers that would inspire the forms of Levi's elegant designs. The last unfinished spoon is in Michael's significant collection of Levi's work.

Titirangi attracted many creative people including Leo Cappell who came to New Zealand from Amsterdam and is well known for making musical instruments. Frank Finan