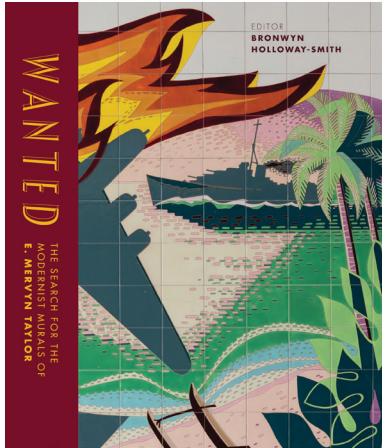




# Wanted

## *The search for the modernist murals of E. Mervyn Taylor*

BRONWYN HOLLOWAY-SMITH



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CATEGORY: New Zealand art

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### THE DETECTIVE HUNT FOR SOME OF THIS COUNTRY'S MOST IMPORTANT AND BEAUTIFUL MURALS

Mervyn Taylor — wood engraver, painter, illustrator, sculptor and designer — was one of the most celebrated New Zealand artists of the 1930s to 1960s. He was highly connected to modernism and nationalism as it was expressed in the New Zealand art and literature of the period. Between 1956 and 1964 he created twelve murals for major new government and civic buildings erected in that era of great economic prosperity, during which New Zealand first began to loosen its apron-string ties to England.

Tragically, some have been destroyed and others presumed lost — until now. This fascinating and beautiful book, bursting with archival material, details the detective hunt for the murals and tells the stories of their creation. They cement Taylor's place as one of New Zealand's most significant artists, and are a celebration of the art and culture of our modernist era.

*'In highlighting the fate of one artist's work, *Wanted* reflects on all public art launched with fanfare, paid for from the public purse, then carelessly discarded. It underlines discussion on visual art as a valuable repository of cultural history, and echoes the call in cultural corridors to establish a national register of public art and reconsider heritage legislation with particular focus on art made for architectural installation.'* — Rosa Shiels, *Sunday Star-Times*

*'Eminently readable, interspersed with gorgeous photographs, and sustained by the narrative of discovery and restoration, this publication reveals the stunning oeuvre of an artist whose special feeling for the demands upon art of public space and for the intercultural history of New Zealand is a revelation for those unfamiliar with the work of this important artist.'* — Art Association of Australia and New Zealand 2019 judging panel

LONGLISTED FOR THE 2019 OCKHAM NEW ZEALAND BOOK AWARDS

BEST ANTHOLOGY: HIGHLY COMMENDED AT THE 2019 ART ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND BOOK AWARDS

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Bronwyn Holloway-Smith** is a project director at Massey University's College of Creative Arts, where she is also completing a PhD. She lives in Wellington with her three young children.

### SALES POINTS

- Major essays by a range of expert writers on architecture, art, and the nationalist project of the era
- Beautifully designed and packaged
- A small print run makes this a collectors' item