

## and Craftsmanship

**T**HIS is unquestionably a time of great excitement and stimulation at the art gallery of the Red House Museum, Christchurch.

In the past two weeks Christchurch's disabled artist Jim Best sent the pulse beating with a vivid and powerful exhibition of his work.

Now for another fortnight comes the second miniature festival of design and craftsmanship to be presented by the Companions of Music and the Arts. Once again the imagination takes a leap.

The Companions are two men—David Ballantyne of the pottery department of Bournemouth College of Art, and Maurice Hardy, former principal 'cellist of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra.

They have decided that the work of the local artist has remained remote from the public long enough. These festivals are an attempt to give the man in the street the opportunity of discovering what is being created in his midst.

### INDEPENDENT

The festivals are also a step towards forming an artists' co-operative movement, independent and self-supporting, which they hope might give encouragement to other artists to form similar groups elsewhere so that in time they might all federate into some sort of national association.

What surplus the organisers make from the commission on sales of the exhibits, when festival costs are covered, will go towards a fund to enable them to present a companion miniature festival of chamber music at the museum in alternate seasons.

Certainly this festival is the result of co-operation between a variety of artists, most of them master craftsmen, all deserving of wide recognition.

### PROLIFIC

Mr. Ballantyne himself is the most prolific exhibitor with a superb and sweeping selection of the salt glazed stoneware he produces at a kiln he built himself at his Highcliffe home.

The rarity of salt glaze ware today makes his work all the more interesting and valuable. He is following in the great tradition which flowered so brilliantly in the late 18th century at the hands of the Staffordshire potters.

A choice selection of perhaps the finest craftsman-designed and made furniture available in this country today is shown by Edward Barnsley, a founder member of the Craft Centre of Great Britain, who has workshops at Petersfield.

The price of £237 for a dressing table and £291 for a china cabinet might seem ridiculous until you take a close look at the quality of the workmanship. Then you feel like saving up.

Elizabeth Nolan, also on the staff of Bournemouth College of Art, cannot fail to bewitch you with three paintings that are as charming as they are off-beat, while Ann Sutton of Sussex, the only outsider in the exhibition, brings a new and attractive concept to the style of woven wall hangings.

### HALLMARKS

The hallmarks of originality and skill continue throughout the fascinating metal constructions and

sculptures of Peter Hand, yet another staff member at the Bournemouth College of Art, and the more straightforward designs of one of his pupils, David Lewis; the wood carvings of Jack Wright and Fred Watson, who not so long ago emerged from a degree course in fine art at King's College, Newcastle, specialising in sculpture; the paintings of David Andrew and Fred Sinkinson; and the letter cutting and reliefs of John Andrew, an assistant to the Dorset letter designer, Reynolds Stone.

Anthony Holloway, who first started studying in Bournemouth and now has his stained glass work widely featured in walls of new L.C.C. buildings, should have a sample of his work arriving at the exhibition today.

Maurice Hardy, together with his violinist wife Margaret, plans to be "at home" to a small invited audience with a programme of solos and duos later this week.

M.G.