

B.158

Bulletin B.158
Christchurch Art Gallery
Te Puna o Waiwhetu

Spring
September—November
2009



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ISSN 1176-0540

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TE PUNA O WAIWHETU
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ART GALLERY**

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Front cover image:
Neil Pardington *Herbarium Corridor #1*, Auckland Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira 2008. LED / C-print. Reproduced courtesy of the artist

Inside front cover image:
Neil Pardington *Card Catalogue*, Hocken Collections Uare Taoka o Hākena, University of Otago 2008. Lambda / C-print. Reproduced courtesy of the artist

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Welcome to the spring edition of *Bulletin*. If you've visited the Gallery recently you will know already that big changes are underway this quarter—and in this issue we talk you through our plans. But if you haven't been in of late, there's still time to see the Ronnie van Hout, et al. and Séraphine Pick exhibitions, all of which have been drawing strong audiences through this cold winter. We're also pleased to be organising the exhibition of photographer Neil Pardington's *The Vault* series, which gives you a 'back of house' glimpse into the storage areas of a number of prominent New Zealand institutions, including this one. We plan to tour this exhibition to other centres after its showing here.

Bringing light to previously dark areas of museums and galleries is something of a theme for this *Bulletin*, especially as we reveal plans for the Gallery's own collection rehang. The doors of the upstairs galleries closed to our visitors on 26 July, and since then Gallery staff have been working tirelessly to move all the works to storage and begin the process of rebuilding the rooms (see page 8 for time-lapse photography of the move). We're calling this project **Brought to Light: A New View of the Collection**, and in the pages that follow we will run through some of the key artists, works, genres and collections that will be on display when the doors reopen later this year. Expect to see old favourites side-by-side with new acquisitions and never-before seen gems. Long vistas will combine with more intimate rooms to create a superb new space—we hope you're as excited by the project as we are.

Contributing to the magazine this season is stalwart Christchurch gallery owner Jonathan Smart, who writes on the et al., Séraphine Pick and Ronnie van Hout

exhibitions at the Gallery. Also contributing is Douglas Lloyd Jenkins, director of Hawke's Bay Museum and Art Gallery and one of New Zealand's most-respected design and architecture writers. Linking to our theme of collection storage, he asks what we think of the process of the architectural modernisation of New Zealand's municipal art galleries and museums, and whether perhaps we've lost something in the process. This issue's 'Pagework' comes from Munich-based New Zealand jeweller Lisa Walker, who makes unconventional jewellery with a wide range of unusual materials that are not often considered decorative.

Although the collection galleries are closed this season, there is still plenty to see at the Gallery. On the ground floor is the fantastic **Séraphine Pick**, a major retrospective of one of New Zealand's most highly regarded painters, which brings together over a hundred works made between 1994 and 2009. Next door to Pick, the et al. collective's installation **that's obvious! that's right! that's true!** is an intense investigation of fundamental and ideological practices and their effects on societies—it's interesting to see the engagement of our visitors who give this installation the time it merits. On the other side of the stairwell, **Ronnie van Hout: Who goes there** offers a weird and wonderful glimpse into Van Hout's life—from the route he took to his Christchurch school on his bike, to nine visions of the artist in his coffin.

Moving up the stairs, **White on White**, which is open until November, is a family-friendly investigation of the colour white. And in the Monica Richards Gallery, **Cloud9** is the fourth instalment in the Gallery's series of exhibitions showing the work of emerging artists. An investigation of the painting practices of nine recent graduates,

the exhibition explores new directions in contemporary painting, and clearly shows that painting is in rude health in Aotearoa. Included in the exhibition is work by young artists Elliot Collins, Mike Cooke, Ruth Thomas Edmond, Georgie Hill, Marie Le Lievre, Eileen Leung, Tim Thatcher, Telly Tu'u and Pete Wheeler.

For those of you who will miss your favourite works while the rehang is in progress, **Gembox** features a number of exquisite pieces from the Gallery's collection. From Gerrit Dou's seventeenth-century Dutch genre painting to the elemental simplicity of Colin McCahon's abstracted landscapes, this is a ten-stop tour through over three hundred years of art.

Opening on 6 November, **The Vault: Neil Pardington** is the first showing of leading New Zealand photographer Pardington's *The Vault* series. As an acclaimed exhibition and catalogue designer, the artist is no stranger to museums and galleries. But here he reveals parts of our collecting institutions that are not normally subjected to such scrutiny—the storerooms. His meticulously composed photographs include a number taken behind the scenes in this Gallery, and offer a fascinating glimpse into territory that is rarely seen or thought about by the gallery-going public.

It's an exciting time for the Gallery, and we're aiming to keep you as involved and informed as possible as the building and galleries develop. Find out more about how you can follow our progress electronically inside, and let us know what you think.

Jenny Harper
Director
August 2009

SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, NOVEMBER 2009

RONNIE VAN HOUT: WHO GOES THERE
Until 18 October 2009

Ronnie van Hout is well known for his funny and haunting variations on the self-portrait. In **Who goes there** Van Hout's brand of absurdist sculpture has grown larger, stranger and often darker. Unfolding through a series of linked rooms, the journey takes in failed robots, doll-sized portraits of the artist, shadowy rooms of memory and something strange from Antarctica.

William A. Sutton and Ravenscar Galleries
Activity book and iPod audio tour available

WHITE ON WHITE
Until 15 November 2009

Keeping younger audiences in mind, and including a number of new works by contemporary artists, **White on White** is an exhibition brimming with the imaginative possibilities of white.

Burdon Family Gallery
Family worksheet available

SÉRAPHINE PICK
Until 22 November 2009

Séraphine Pick's original and imaginative practice has made her one of New Zealand's most highly regarded painters. From the spectral dresses, leaky baths and teetering suitcases of the 1990s to the psychologically charged dreamscapes of more recent years, this large-scale survey exhibition brings together more than a hundred works made between 1994 and 2009.

Touring A, C and Borg Henry Galleries
Catalogue and iPod audio tour available

ET AL.: THAT'S OBVIOUS! THAT'S RIGHT! THAT'S TRUE!
Until 22 November 2009

The collective et al. has exhibited widely both nationally and internationally to great acclaim. This exhibition continues their exploration of 'superfiction' by combining words, industrial furniture and video projections to create artworks that mirror political structures.

Touring Gallery B

GEMBOX
Until 15 November 2009

In late November, a new exhibition featuring hundreds of works from the Gallery's collection will go on show in refreshed and reshaped galleries. In the meantime, you can keep in touch with some old favourites in **Gembox**, a show of ten gems from the collection.

Tait Electronics Gallery
iPod audio tour available

CLOUD9
Until 29 November 2009

Strange dreams, imaginary landscapes, celestial structures and the outside world are themes central to the practices of nine contemporary New Zealand artists. **Cloud9** presents new work by Elliot Collins, Mike Cooke, Ruth Thomas Edmond, Georgie Hill, Marie Le Lievre, Eileen Leung, Tim Thatcher, Telly Tu'u and Pete Wheeler.

Monica Richards Gallery

THE VAULT: NEIL PARDINGTON
6 November 2009 – 14 March 2010

Working behind the scenes in museums and galleries throughout New Zealand with his large-format camera, Neil Pardington brings to light the hidden collection storage spaces that are normally closed to the public. His gathered results hold a natural fascination as storehouses of memory or places filled with mystifying treasure.

William A. Sutton and Ravenscar Galleries
Catalogue and iPod audio tour available

BLUE PLANET
Opens 21 November 2009

Blue is a feeling, a place to dream and the colour of our amazing planet as seen from space. Looking at the ways artists have used the colour blue, **Blue Planet** celebrates imaginative art making and thinking, as well as different cultural and global perspectives. Shaped with younger audiences in mind.

Burdon Family Gallery
Activity book available

THE COLLECTIONS
Opens 28 November 2009

The collection galleries are currently closed for a major rehang and refurbishment, but will reopen in late November with the exhibition **Brought to Light: A New View of the Collection**.

OUTER SPACES

A programme of artworks in spaces beyond the traditional exhibition galleries. Featuring *The Gathering* by Richard Killeen on Worcester Boulevard and *A wall, and other thoughts* by Fiona Jack on the car park bunker. In September and October, keep an eye out for an enormous inflatable sculpture by Sean Kerr in the foyer.

TWINSET

A rapid-fire programme of new video art on the twin screens in the foyer. This season featuring video by Ronnie van Hout, Lee Sang Won and Phil Dadson.

SUBSONIC

The spring **Subsonic** programme features a variety of sounds from Richard Neave and Simon Kong.

Neil Pardington Works on Paper Store #2, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu (detail) 2007. LED / C-print. Reproduced courtesy of the artist

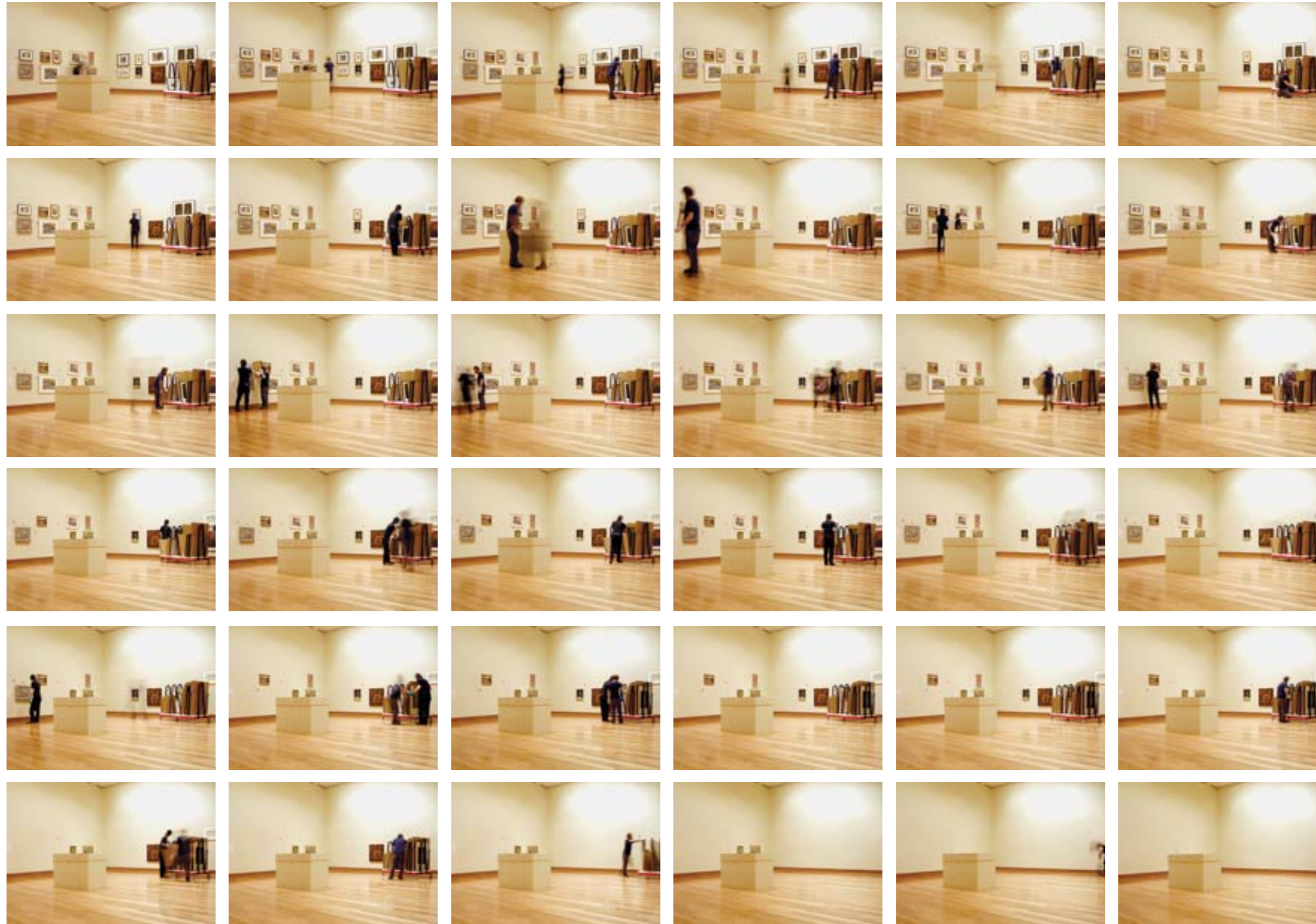
BROUGHT TO LIGHT

A NEW VIEW OF THE COLLECTION

AT THE END OF NOVEMBER, THE NEW-LOOK COLLECTION GALLERIES WILL BE REVEALED. IN THE FOLLOWING PAGES, JENNY HARPER AND JUSTIN PATON INTRODUCE BROUGHT TO LIGHT, AND THE CURATORS HIGHLIGHT SOME OF THE NEW GROUPINGS VISITORS CAN EXPECT TO SEE.



Bill Culbert *Pacific Flotsam* (detail) 2007. Fluorescent light, electric wire, plastic bottles. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 2008. Image courtesy of Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth



KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF BROUGHT TO LIGHT ON THE GALLERY'S BLOG AT BROUGHTTOLIGHT.WORDPRESS.COM

An art gallery which collects is sometimes called an art museum. And I like the clear link this term makes to the collections that are our heart. We collect, we conserve and we display—all traditional enough tasks for a museum. But no matter what building we occupy, the key task of a publicly funded gallery such as this one is surprising and sustaining audiences through great presentations of art. Now and into the future, we need to respect the traditional and connect it with current practice; reveal the collection with new approaches and adventurous juxtapositions; present intellectual and engaged responses to the idea of art; and create a buzz of community interest in what we're doing. Our jobs are a privilege and there's a marvellously generative sense in which art galleries, including this one, are always incomplete.

We've been bringing a sense of renewal to the temporary exhibitions programme for some time, but now it's time to move upstairs and rethink our collection displays. This is the last of the main recommendations of the Paradigm Shift that we are implementing. While to date it's been a major planning exercise, the physical work is about to start.

It will take a huge and committed team effort to take the art down, strip away the many walls and rebuild the display area. But when they reopen in late November our upstairs galleries will have cleaner lines and longer vistas; they will be easier for visitors to negotiate; and most importantly, they will accommodate flexibility, allowing us to change and redirect focus on a regular basis along a constant spine of display. We're planning places for reflection and rest, as well as some lively interactive components for family audiences. And we'll listen to your feedback as we make adjustments in the years ahead.

If you're going to miss favourites like Frederick Leighton's *Teresina* or L.S. Lowry's *Factory at Widnes*, don't worry, because both paintings are in **Gembox**, a 'top ten' of exquisite works from the collection that offers a taste of our historical treasures while the collection galleries are closed. And of course there's a great range of other exhibitions in the building. You can keep in touch with the development of the project through the **Brought to Light** page on the Gallery's website, its related blog (broughttolight.wordpress.com) and the Gallery's Twitter feed and Flickr account, and you can still see the entire collection online. Rather than keep the doors closed on all this activity until opening day, we'd like to share some of the energy, excitement and thinking from back of house—and to hear what you think of it too.

When we reopen we know that many more of our visitors, young and older alike, will encounter the new and fascinating as well as the important and familiar. Everyone who comes here should be clear that we care about art—and that the collection is at the heart of Christchurch Art Gallery.

Jenny Harper
Director

‘WE’LL BE BRINGING SOME LITTLE-KNOWN WORKS OUT OF THE DARKNESS OF THE STOREROOMS, AND IN THE PROCESS SETTING THE SCENE FOR A DEEPER ENCOUNTER WITH SOME PREVIOUSLY UNDER-REPRESENTED LOCAL ARTISTS.’



Fiona Pardington *Mauria mai, tono ano* 2001. Photographs. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 2001

Climb the stairs at the Gallery in December 2009 and you'll encounter a new view of the collection. Almost seven years since Christchurch Art Gallery opened in its new premises, the collection display is about to undergo a complete refreshment. Titled **Brought to Light: A New View of the Collection**, this exhibition will feature many seldom-seen works and many new ones, and encourage many new conversations amongst old favourites. And all of this will occur in spectacularly reconfigured exhibition spaces.

The exhibition's title is inspired by the title of Fiona Pardington's suite of seven photographs, *Mauria mai, tono ano*, some of the first works you'll see in the space. 'Mauria mai, tono ano' translates from Māori as 'to bring to light, to claim again'. Each of the seven photographs depicts a Ngāi Tahu hei tiki (greenstone pendant) from the Auckland Museum, presented at a scale closer to that of a painted portrait than a traditional archival photograph. Using long exposure times and many bursts of measured light, Pardington grants the hei tiki a shifting and mysterious presence. The greenstone appears not to reflect light but to emit it; the forms shift and ripple like live things. Revealing

life and presence within objects that are ordinarily kept from view, Pardington's photographs do as their title proclaims, revealing the importance of all attempts 'to bring to light, to claim again'.

For any art institution charged with conserving the past, registering the present and offering suggestions for the future, the challenge to 'bring to light' is at once daunting and inspiring. **Brought to Light** is our response to that challenge.

In the most direct sense, new views will characterise the exhibition, and one long view in particular. Until now, a series of staggered walls has determined your journey from the historical galleries to the contemporary. When the galleries reopen, that journey will be made through a long arcade that is both an exhibition space and a beginning or end place for visitors to gather. Reaching from early twentieth-century art at one end to early twenty-first-century art at the other, this arcade is a palpable expression of our belief that art's past and its present should be in live conversation with each other.

What will you find in the arcade and in the enlarged spaces alongside and beyond it? 'Old favourites' will be there, certainly, but placed in spaces and in company that will reveal many 'new favourites' too. We'll be bringing some little-known works out of the darkness of the storerooms, and in the process setting the scene for a deeper encounter with some previously under-represented local artists, chief among them the remarkable abstract painter Gordon Walters. We'll be making space for a whole category of objects—ceramics—that occupy a fascinating border position in the collection, poised between form and function, the world of display and the world of use; the aim in doing so is not to nudge that body of objects to one side or other of the art/craft divide, but to show how these border cases and fascinating exceptions throw light on the often unquestioned divisions that structure collection displays. And we'll be using the newly created spaces to exhibit many newly donated or acquired works for the very first time—spaces big enough to house John Reynolds's 1,600-piece art-historical jumble sale, *Table of Dynasties*, and installations as wide and bright as Bill Culbert's *Pacific Flotsam*.

A visit to **Brought to Light** will be, first and foremost, an opportunity to get up close and personal with hundreds of extraordinary works of art—the sheen of a sculpture by Michael Parekōwhai, the glinting copper surface of Gerrit Dou's *The Physician*, the eye-fooling folds of Joe Sheehan's stone carving *Mother*, or the squalls of paint in a Toss Woollaston. But the spirit of the new hang resides, we hope, as much in the conversations that will emerge *between* works of art as it does in the works themselves. The conversation between new and old art, both produced by and depicting Ngāi Tahu, in the very first room of **Brought to Light**. The conversation between those Ngāi Tahu works and the European landscapes that follow them. The conversation between near and far, international and local, that will come to life in the Connoisseurs' Room and in a space dedicated to those artists who travelled energetically between New Zealand and Europe, ferrying ideas and images as they went. The conversation between different times and traditions, which we'll encourage by ignoring the usual hard-and-fast separation of historical

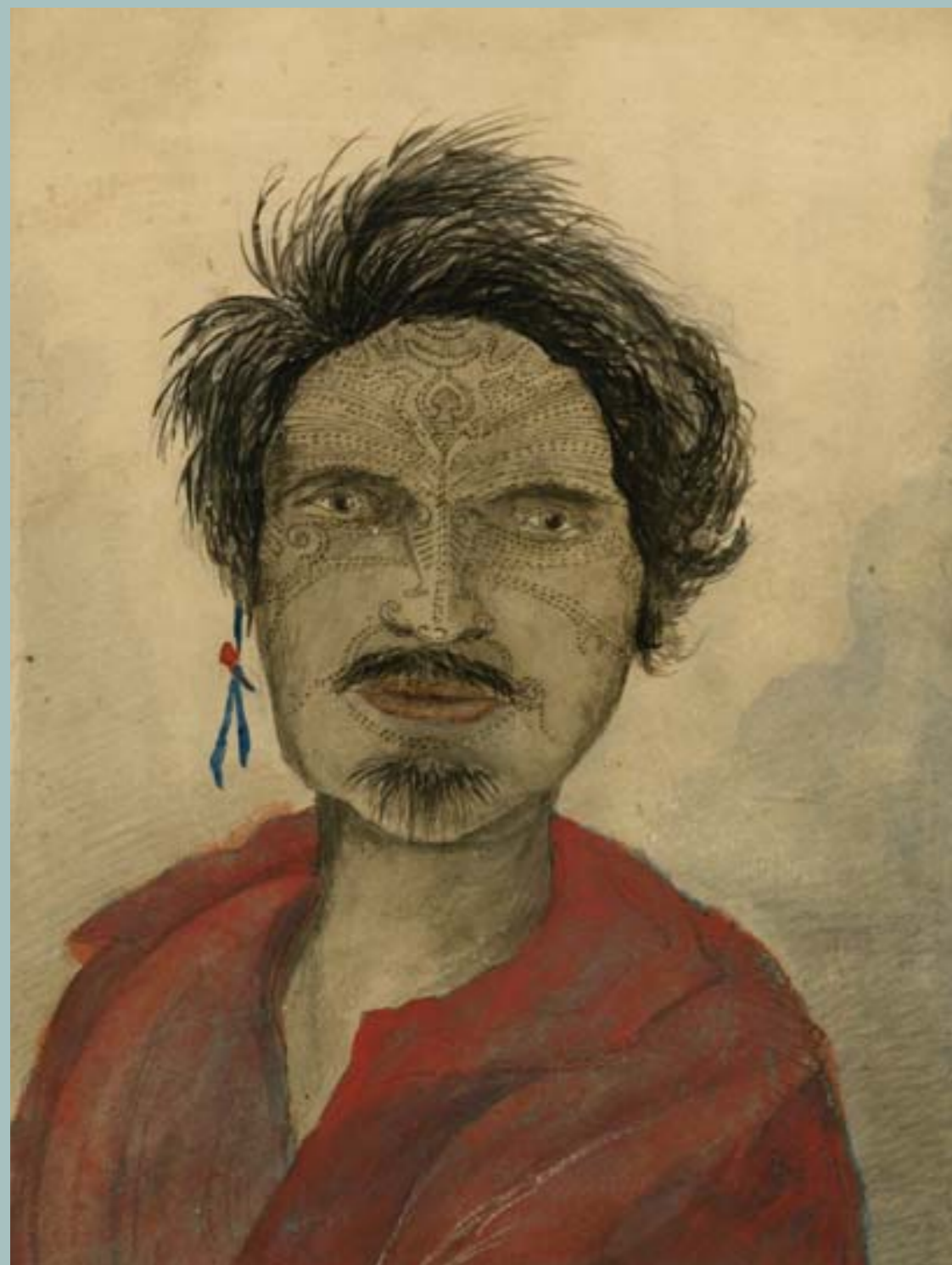
and contemporary: Jason Greig, say hello to Francisco Goya; Colin McCahon, meet Shoji Hamada. And the long conversation about place and how best to portray it, one reaching from the Māori rock art of the South Island, through the responses to that rock art offered by Theo Schoon and Tony Fomison in the twentieth century, to the art created in the landscape over the last two decades by Pauline Rhodes.

Any large collection is a constant conversation between darkness and light. At any given time, many of the more than 6,000 objects in Christchurch Art Gallery's collection rest in the darkness of storerooms, plan chests, Solander boxes and crates. Choices from that collection rotate from storage out into the bright spaces of the galleries. Some may stay in the light for a long time, particularly if they're made of durable materials. Other works—such as those painted on paper—are literally light-shy and must return to 'rest' in the darkness of our storerooms after a few months.

This simple and obvious fact of public gallery life lies behind the last space you will encounter in the rehang: a space dedicated to an ever-changing display of new arrivals in the collection—acquisitions, gifts and the occasional long-term loan or promised gift. The principle is simple: space allowing, when a new work arrives in the collection you'll have a chance to see it. After all, those new acquisitions are not 'ours'. They're yours—with one small proviso. Though works of art legally 'belong' to the collectors who collect them, in an imaginative sense no one can own them or hold them in place. That's because what characterises the best art is its extreme imaginative volatility—the way its meanings change and expand across time. That's what we hope you'll find in the new collection galleries: a space where, each time you visit, fresh meanings come to light.

Justin Paton
Senior curator

TE POWHIRI: THE WELCOME AND THE CHALLENGE



A series of photographs by Fiona Pardington (Kāi Tahu, Kāti Mamoe and Kāti Waewae) of ancient South Island pounamu treasures—hei tiki from the collection of Auckland Museum—is titled *Mauria mai, tono ano*, which translates 'to bring to light, to claim again'. This title also neatly captures the challenge presented to curators by Nathan Pohio (Ngāi Tahu), artist and Gallery exhibition designer—to find ways to bring a relevant South Island Māori presence to the historical section of the new collection hang. None of the collection's early Māori portraits are of Ngāi Tahu subjects, but through collaboration with other museums and collecting institution, it has been possible to bring this (in many ways hidden) story to light. Shown alongside Pardington's hauntingly beautiful photographs from the collection will be a frequently changing series of significant 1850s watercolour portraits and landscapes, many of which have never been widely exhibited or published, by artists including Charles William Haubroe and William Fox. Scenes depicted include Akaroa, Kaiapohia and Rakawakaputa, Port Cooper Plains, painted before the mass arrival of Canterbury Association settlers. Also included are outstanding oil portraits by Gottfried Lindauer of eminent Ngāi Tahu leaders. This year-long focus exhibition is intended to honour mana whenua and—in welcoming visitors into the new collection exhibition spaces—to propose and manifest a new approach.

Ken Hall
Assistant curator

Charles Haubroe **Unidentified Portrait** 1855. Watercolour on paper. Canterbury Museum

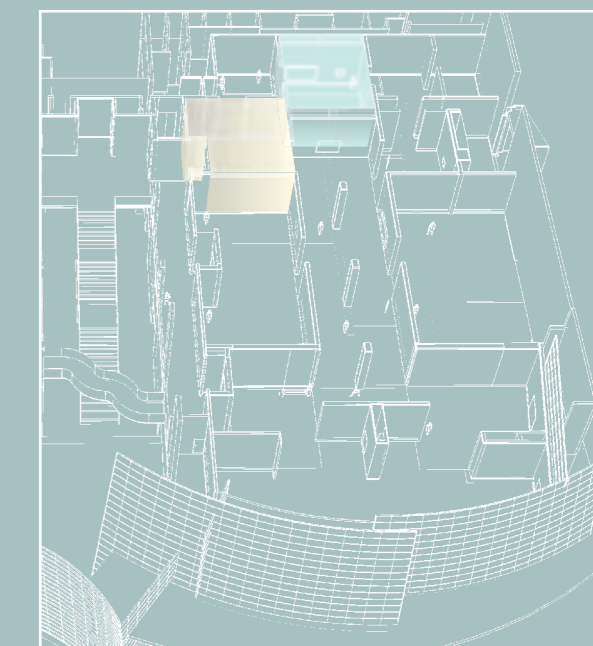
CONNOISSEURS' ROOM



Gerrit Dou **The Physician** 1653. Oil on copper. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, Heathcote Helmore Bequest 1965

Step inside the Connoisseurs' Room for a fresh way of looking at and thinking about the historical collection. The dense, salon-style hang will reflect the tastes and attitudes of past collectors and connoisseurs. With walls loaded with historical treasures, old favourites such as Gerrit Dou's *The Physician* (1663) and George Dunlop Leslie's *In the Wizard's Garden* (c.1904) will vie for position alongside contemporary work such as Steve Carr's *A Shot in the Dark (Bear Rug)* (2008). The works in this space will speak of the notable art connoisseurs of the past—James Jamieson, Sir Joseph Kinsey, Frank White, Heathcote Helmore and of course members of the Canterbury Society of Arts Council (who purchased many of the major works now in the Gallery's historic collection). Many of these works have been generously gifted or bequeathed to the Gallery since it first opened in 1932 by collectors keen to share their love and appreciation of art with the wider public. The Connoisseurs' Room will predominantly feature paintings from the 1600s through to the twentieth century, but these will be accompanied by a selection of sculptures and prints, and a beautifully illustrated eighteenth-century hand-printed book on English butterflies and moths from the Gallery's library collection.

Peter Vangioni
Curator



EXPATRIATES: COMINGS AND GOINGS

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, New Zealand art received enormous infusions of energy from travellers. The country's isolation from the rest of the world has meant that travel has been an inherent feature of its development. This wanderlust has had an impact on New Zealand's art history, in particular between the 1890s and 1930s—the period covered by this section of the collection rehang. In 1890 three professional artists—Petrus van der Velden (Dutch), James Nairn (Scottish) and Giralomo Nerli (Italian)—arrived in New Zealand and successfully established careers as professional artists. In so doing, they provided important role models for a younger generation of New Zealand artists. **Expatriates: Coming and Goings** will examine the arrival of these artists as well as the burgeoning numbers of young New Zealand artists who travelled to Europe between the turn of the century and the 1930s, picking up new and vivid ways of painting as they travelled. One of the most important figures in this display is Sydney Lough Thompson, a New Zealander who based himself in the French coastal fishing town of Concarneau for much of his career. For many years Thompson's studio was an important stop for New Zealand artists touring Europe. Raymond McIntyre's work is another highlight in this display; concentrating on his period based in London from 1909, it will include four of the gem-like portraits of women sitters for which he is so highly regarded. Also included are works by Owen Merton, Margaret Stoddart, Frances Hodgkins, Archibald Nicoll, John Weeks, Rhona Haszard and Olivia Spencer Bower. Displayed alongside the paintings will be a selection of objects drawn from the Gallery's library archives collection and relating to the expatriate experience, including letters, photographs, diaries and sketchbooks.

Peter Vangioni
Curator

Raymond McIntyre Ruth
c.1912. Oil on panel.
Collection of Christchurch
Art Gallery Te Puna o
Waiwhetu, presented by
the McIntyre Family 1938



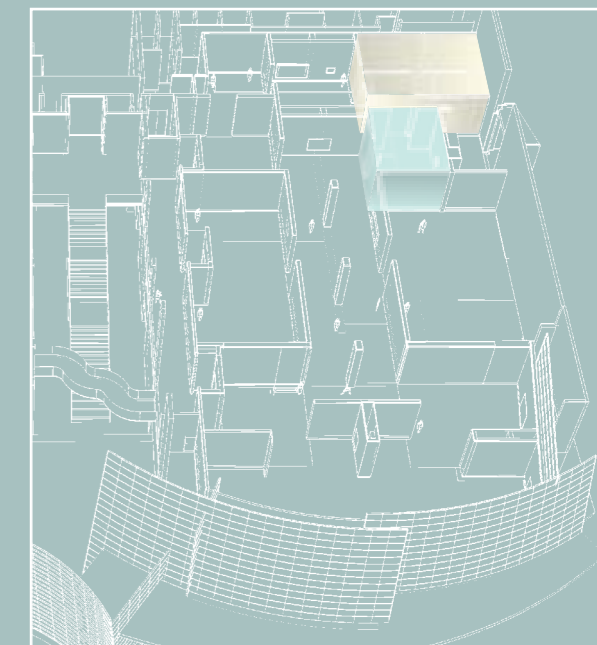
FRANCES HODGKINS



Frances Hodgkins has always been well-known in Christchurch thanks to *Pleasure Garden* (1932) and the controversy surrounding its purchase, but this display places New Zealand's most famous expatriate artist more firmly in the Christchurch Art Gallery picture than ever before, with a stunning group of paintings from one of the richest periods of her career. The Gallery's collection of paintings and drawings by Hodgkins from the 1930s to the mid 1940s, just prior to her death in 1947, provides a fascinating insight into her tendency towards abstraction. Rarely brought together en masse, this display of works offers viewers the opportunity to experience Hodgkins at her best, in mediums ranging from oil paint to watercolour and pencil. *Pleasure Garden* was purchased in 1951; subsequently, during the late 1970s and early 1980s

the Gallery, then under the directorship of T.L. Rodney Wilson, secured several important paintings including *Zipp* (1945), *Spanish Still Life and Landscape* (c.1932–3) and *Ibiza* (1938). These works were, in turn, further enhanced by several acquisitions in the 1980s and 1990s, including the exceptional gouache *Return of the River* (1937). More recently, the British Council has generously deposited a collection of seven works by Hodgkins on long-term loan with the Gallery. Among these is the major painting *Houses and Outhouses, Purbeck* (1938) which will form the centrepiece of this display.

Peter Vangioni
Curator



Frances Hodgkins *Houses and Outhouses, Purbeck* 1938. Oil on canvas. On loan from the British Council Collection, London

BILL CULBERT: PACIFIC FLOTSAM



The collection rehang is a chance to see new works in new spaces. It's also a chance to see one very large new work in a new space all of its own. To find it, just follow the light. At the centre of the new exhibition, in a large room opening off the central arcade, you'll encounter Bill Culbert's *Pacific Flotsam* (2007), a sea of toy-bright plastic and humming white fluorescent light. Culbert is often described as one of New Zealand's most-renowned senior artists, but that description sounds much too settled and solid for someone who moves so easily between London, France and New Zealand, and whose art itself is made from the most weightless and mobile property there is—namely, light. Spreading out across the floor in artful disarray, *Pacific Flotsam* might be seen as a portrait of a place—the lights of an island seen from far above, glowing in the darkness of the Pacific ocean. At the same time, the work's title and materials summon nastier environmental associations, chief among them the Great Pacific Garbage Patch—a soup of plastic trash the size of the USA that circulates endlessly in the ocean between Japan and California. But neither view exhausts this sculpture, which, like many of Culbert's, is at once simpler and more mysterious than its explanations. *Pacific Flotsam* is not an illustration of some other thing but an experience, an encounter, an event—something to immerse yourself in. At five metres wide and nine metres long, it is a big sculpture by anyone's measurements. But the beauty lies in how effortlessly—how lightly—Culbert brings this bigness into being. When the lights go off at night, one of the largest sculptures in the Gallery's collection will effectively cease to exist. And each morning, with nothing more than the flick of a switch, it will leap into being and fill the room again.

Justin Paton
Senior curator

Bill Culbert *Pacific Flotsam* 2007. Fluorescent light, electric wire, plastic bottles. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 2008. Image courtesy of Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth

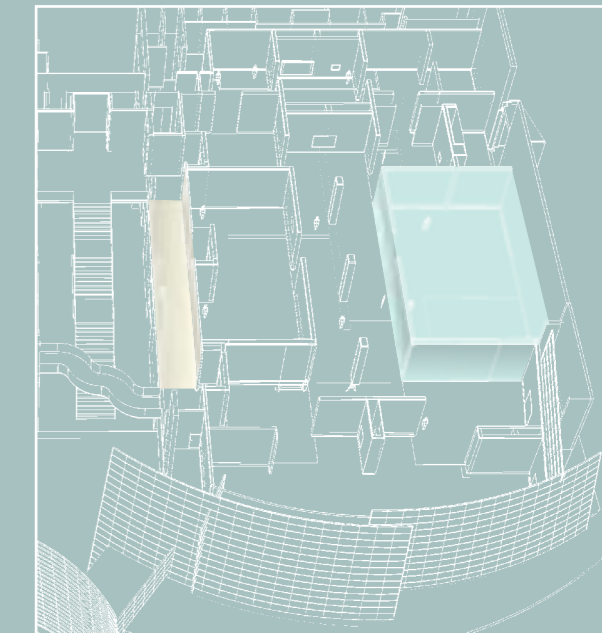
THE CERAMIC COLLECTION



Consisting of two long lightboxes filled with ceramic objects, this new display aims to fire up interest in one of the lesser-known corners of the collection. Are contemporary ceramics art or craft? This display doesn't provide a firm answer to that question, but rather reveals the vast range of objects encompassed by the word ceramics—from studio tableware to objets d'art. The Gallery's collection of ceramics, although modest, ranges from examples of traditional New Zealand studio pottery to work by international practitioners and contemporary expressions of the medium. Pieces by Len Castle were among the first to be purchased in the 1950s, and these were followed by pieces by Mirek Smíšek, Juliet Peter, Barry Brickell and others, purchased after the formation of the Canterbury Potter's Association in 1963, which was intended to coordinate the common interests of potters in the region. Two international master ceramicists, Shoji Hamada and Bernard Leech, were brought to New Zealand by the Association and their influence can subsequently be seen in the simple, unassuming wheel-thrown Japanese style of much work from this period.

The collection began to expand during the 1970s under the directorship of Brian Muir, and in the 1980s and 1990s the Gallery continued to increase the number of ceramics entering the collection, obtaining work that reflected the decorative and sculptural potential of the genre. The technical expertise seen in Rick Rudd's raku fired pots and Graeme Storm's stoneware vessels elegantly articulate the beauty of the medium. A recent acquisition, Raewyn Atkinson's *Neu-Schwabenland* (2005) exemplifies a contemporary use of ceramics through slip cast porcelain and laser-print decals.

Jennifer Hay
Assistant curator



Raewyn Atkinson *Neu-Schwabenland* 2005. Slip cast porcelain, chun glaze, laser-print decals, macrocarpa, fluorescent light. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 2006

Painting, frame, architrave, ceiling, dome

I've been asked to write on gallery architecture to mark the redesign and rehang of Christchurch Art Gallery's collection galleries. Having lived in the North Island all my life, the Gallery's collection remains fairly much a mystery to me, but I long to see more.

Not least because, having always been fascinated with the modern movement, a personal interest in pre-modern art and architecture is a relatively recent development.

My retreat from a fascination with modernism is, in part, a reaction to the overwhelming sense of tedium I experience in the face of the repackaging of mid-twentieth century modernism that is so frequently delivered as a stand-in for contemporary thinking in architecture. I have developed a longing for the ordered mind of a Georgian or the decorative complexities of a good Victorian.

Contemporary architecture has been repackaged as a consumer lifestyle choice. So, too, has contemporary art. We no longer talk much about the specifics of painting and sculpture; we now talk of images and congratulate ourselves on the development of portable processes that allow them to be reshaped to fit our own personal contexts. The architectural package in which art comes to us (the viewers) has also changed. In the desire for mass appeal and media notability, gallery buildings have somehow become less conceptually unique—one type of architecture must now suit all artistic periods, and the key word in gallery planning is flexibility.

I'll begin with a digression—a technique itself favoured by Victorians. I have long had an interest in the original framing of works of art. My interest developed from a background in craft history, and frame-making is a craft form too often overlooked. Yet when you consider the relationship between painting and frame, you begin to realise the importance of the process through which artist and frame-maker, artwork and frame, came together and therefore how much information about the time of their making they have to reveal. In short, I love original frames because they deliver that elusive quality that art writers and historians are always searching for—context. The context of painting and frame is not the discussion here, but it is one worth keeping in mind while we extend the view out a little further.

For such a young country, New Zealand seems to have a disproportionately high number of abandoned art gallery buildings—the Dunedin Public Art Gallery's old Logan Park building, the only occasionally occupied Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Wellington National Gallery and Dominion Museum building (abandoned in pursuit of Te Papa and now a university) and there are others. Some older galleries, like Auckland and here at Hawke's Bay, are casting off later modernisations and beginning partial restoration processes designed to reveal what was there before. But in large part, nineteenth- and early twentieth-century buildings have been forsaken in our desire for the new and the updated.

And yet if the painters and sculptors of the pre-modern period had a broader context in which they intended their paintings and sculptures to be seen, it was an architectural one. They expected the public to encounter their art through an art gallery that conformed to a series of architectural expectations. Can we fully understand pre-modern painting without there being a Doric, Ionic or Corinthian column somewhere in view?

The first big builders of new public art galleries were the Americans, but they didn't invent the form—they borrowed it from Europe where the emergence of the public art gallery coincided with a surfeit of redundant palaces highly suited to the task. Those palaces, designed enfilade, were perfectly suited to the arrangement of painting by type or theme or period. Artists, painters and sculptors expected their work to be seen in fully resolved rooms, with doorways, floors and ceilings: a conceptual whole every bit as impressive as the frames they chose to act as intermediaries between their art and the architecture.

Have we lost something in the move to the flexible, multi-functional spaces of the new gallery architecture, or are we simply a modern country, early adapters in the new age of imagery? As a country established at the very beginning of the



Interior views of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery. Two stalwarts of Christchurch Art Gallery's collection, Henrietta Rae's *Doubts* (c.1886) and Petrus van der Velden's *The Dutch Funeral* (1872), can be clearly identified.

municipal public art gallery, is it not ironic there are so few of that first generation of gallery buildings still accessible to the New Zealand public?

It's worth asking ourselves why New Zealand cities should get to have only one public art gallery, and why major public art galleries should get to operate only one building. Is this not somewhat ironic in this period of ready recognition for the role of creative industries?

In part, the answer lies in the process to which we are required to submit to get new gallery buildings. Every flaw and inadequacy of the previous building must be amplified and profiled repeatedly, to the point where, from the public's point of view, we were all lucky to escape into the new facility before the old one collapsed around our ears. Yet for all their flexibility, modern galleries lack something, and sole reliance on them as the viewing places for art makes our cities poorer.

And so we await the realisation that the terms 'abandoned building' and 'treasured cultural asset' are not so very far apart, and that our cities deserve multifaceted art facilities. In the meantime, we, the viewers of art, need to compensate by using the contemporary notion of portable imagery. So when you stand in front of a newly discovered favourite from the Gallery's collection, make sure that first you've imagined a dome, a massive over-scaled architectural doorway and a noble ceiling.

Douglas Lloyd Jenkins

Douglas Lloyd Jenkins is one of New Zealand's best-known and highly respected design writers. He is currently director of the Hawke's Bay Museum and Art Gallery.





VAN HOUT, ET AL., PICK

by Jonathan Smart

It's all about the gallery experience, and so it should be. Consequently, when exploring Christchurch Art Gallery's suite of shows by Ronnie van Hout, et al. and Séraphine Pick, I decided to let the physical experience of these exhibitions, and particularly the early impressions upon entering, be my guide.



Previous spread:
 Ronnie van Hout *The Thing* (detail) 2009. Painted fibreglass mannequin, wig, clothing, 3 DVDs, painted wood panels, timber, glass, lighting, plaque and switch. Collection of the artist. Reproduced courtesy of the artist

Ronnie van Hout *House and School* 2001. Mixed media. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 2004. Reproduced courtesy of the artist

It was a quiet Sunday morning when I ventured to the Gallery to see, in no particular order, what caught my eye. Easy—Van Hout has placed his *Ersatz (standing figure)* (2006) right under the stairs. And a fine welcome it is: a life-sized figure in gumboots and op-shop pinstripes. With fist upraised he is seemingly berating the powers that be—although no sound comes from his doll-like mouth. Behind him, in a casual hand of blackboard paint, a sign announces ‘The Back Door’ with an arrow pointing left. In front of this, a gaudy line-up of gumboots is full of prosaic musings; a singsong array of utterances ranging from ‘keep on trucking’ to that timeless epithet ‘I love to go a wandering...’ are delivered by little speakers. The effect is light and invitational. Who would not walk with this Everyman and his wellies? So I follow the arrow right into the back door of ‘his’ show.

In front of me are three video screens, each betraying vastly different behaviour at Scott Base, Antarctica. Ranging from serious scientific endeavour to an outrageous fancy dress party, the videos stem from Van Hout’s visit to the continent in 2008 under the auspices of Antarctica New Zealand. Immediately left of the screens is a large lime-green case with three viewing points and a red button to light up the contents. *The Thing* (2009)—the most recent work in the show—has Van Hout (an artist incessant and elliptical in his self-portraiture) in full snow regalia and suffering a nosebleed. He looks cold and is caught in a frigid sort of pose, somewhere between standing and sitting. He has become something other.

Failed Robot (2007) lies opposite, flat on its back on a low black plinth. There is an eerie, alien feel to the three photographs on the wall behind. Adjacent is *Mask* (2005), a rubbery visage of a monkey, with the banana work *Dead Fruit in Three Parts* (2005) rounding out the room. *Ersatz (standing figure)* clutches a banana in a bag. You get the drift. There is a sly sense of play here, of acting up, of failure even.

And so the tone is set. It doesn’t matter that we’ve come at this back to front—Van Hout would probably be happy. The next major work is a big plywood model of his *House and School* (2001). Here we encounter the artist again, looking out at us as we look in. Mounted on the wall behind is a small screen that plays a birds-eye view of us peering at the work. Just who is watching who in this appropriately titled *Who goes there? Peep Show* (2003/4–8) is definitely worth a look. Van Hout has put a lot of effort into these mannequins, but what on earth is he doing here?

Just the name et al. these days can inspire shock and awe—shock that this dubious collective so grim and industrial in feel could possibly have been chosen to represent New Zealand at the 2005 Venice Biennale; awe that they did so with such verve and such success. The subject of the Venice project, entitled *the fundamental practice* (2005), was political and religious fundamentalism, although the work was essentially parliamentary. Different parts of the installation came into voice at different times and talked past one another. Then every few minutes they would in unison break into excerpts from Vivaldi’s *Four Seasons*—universally uplifting and utterly fitting because the work played right behind the very church in which Vivaldi had been choirmaster some centuries before.



Installation views: et al.: **that's obvious! that's right! that's true!** July 2009

Following Venice, et al. was invited to show in New York, asked to participate in Art Unlimited at Art 39, Basel, and included in a major group show 'Historical Facts, Archaeologies of the Present, and Dialectics of Seeing' at Argos, Centre for Art and Media in Brussels in 2008. Currently, they also have the work *maintenance of social solidarity* (2006) on display at the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

This, then, is a mature collective working right at the top of their game. They maintain a challenging practice that interrogates ideas to do with indoctrination and existence, and they have done so in a remarkably consistent way for over two decades now. Technologically, the look may be Stasi-like, but the use of computer sampling and sequencing is top flight. In the lead-up to their Venice installation the television presenter Paul Holmes lambasted the collective's work, then on show in City Gallery Wellington, as a toilet that brayed like a donkey. The sound was, in fact, the rumbling of the seabed recorded in the Waitemata moments after the last underground nuclear test at Mururoa. Shock and awe indeed.

There's only one way in and out of **that's obvious! that's right! that's true!** And right in the way as I enter is a moveable hoarding on which three framed posters have been brown-taped into place. They appear to be presenting information on behalf of the Uzbek Society For Friendship And Cultural Relations With Foreign Countries. But what's in a name? Prominently overwritten in an agitated hand is the statement that 'the people are vulnerable to coercive pressure'. Escape now, or read on.

Hard left are two equally simple and direct statements: 'recent events and the state of the world' and 'examples of continuing conflict'. There is a clear obsession with history and the politics of knowledge, hysteria and power. But hang in on entry—it's worth the ride. Trademark (Uzbek) humour abounds within walls painted detention camp grey. Four wobbly booths to the right look like one should

Installation view: Séraphine Pick
July 2009

vote in them, but are in fact intimate projection booths for indoctrination. There are several other wheeled hoardings, and from on high beneath the displaced ceiling panels and exposed wiring the sound of a woman reading politics (*Das Kapital*, I'm told) is continuous over three loud-hailers.

Space is marked out or corralled by masking tape on the floor. But the hoardings don't obey this wonky regime of theatrical ordering—in fact they tend to obstruct rather than allow easy passage. (And check out the chalk notations on their back. Piece the letters together and an indigenous political system for Aotearoa is outlined.) There are graphs, pie charts and tables of information everywhere—arguing for systems supposedly democratic through to the totalitarian. Except that here you'd wonder if they're not all one and the same. Everything is overload. The booths feature videoed lecture notes on the relative occurrence of family violence, the turnover and circulation periods of advanced capital, and illegal Israeli settlements on Palestinian land. Learning can be a pointed experience, and et al. delivers it to discordant accompaniment of grungy rhythm and sound.

Roughly in the centre of the space is a scaffolding viewing platform with dual access—a surveillance deck with table and voting box upon which we are reminded to vote only once. It's worthwhile scoping the newsprint giveaway on the table—a tabloid called the New Zealand Altruism Review. This is less political instruction than it is delightful strip cartoon—a manifesto et al. style. The content is a blend of

gravity and hilarity, with the military effort in Iraq getting treated with very serious levity.

I wonder sometimes whether et al. is railing against the institution or pumping it up; whether the collective is seeking relevance within the body politic or just damning it with faint praise. It may also be that et al. is speaking directly to our ambivalence, in asking us why we read the work the way we do.

The third exhibition in this carefully calibrated mix is a survey show of the painting of Séraphine Pick. While the Van Hout exhibition is really an ensemble collection of mainly recent work, and the et al. show is a special project—an opportunity to present a major new work—**Séraphine Pick** presents and reads as a reasonably straight chronological walk through fifteen years of painting.

But it's quite a journey. For Pick is a painter who varies her methodology frequently and has pushed herself across a broad palette over a comparatively short period of time. The one real constant is her subject matter, which remains personal, sexual and dreamlike. Even when painting portraits, Pick revels more in a fantastic imaginary than she does in convention or reality. And this makes for compelling viewing.

Entering her exhibition, curator Felicity Milburn offers us the pick presumably of her early work, *Preserves* (1994). This is a diptych in oil, graphite and coloured pencil on canvas. The graphite and other drawn lines are important here, for theirs is a delicate tracery within

SÉRAPHINE PICK





Installation view: **Séraphine Pick** July 2009

the busy and more heavily brushed oil. Pick's fine line describes preserves piled high on one side of the bed, alongside ladders, figures and other domestic implements which float within an evocative dreamscape of white and creamy paint. Two black balloons, tethered yet fancy-free beneath the feet of each bed-end, provide punctuation or visual density within the over-arching field of light.

In fact, the roughly gritted and scumbled surfaces of these early paintings stand up very well in the show. The scratched lovers, so often the (back)ground of these early paintings, are increasingly fleshed out (with brush and colour) as one moves through the show. You can admire this in the strange symbolist aspects of paintings like *Space Junk* (1998) and *Love School* (1999), before things positively explode in terms of surreal fantasy and colour in the big paintings next door. In various combinations, the rich naivety of velvet painting dovetails here with the imagination of an antipodean Rousseau.

There are two big walls opposite one another hung in busy salon style—one works on paper, the other paintings categorised as 'withdrawals from the image bank'. They look very well. One final small room of recent painting completes the show. This work is biggish and predominantly dark—the paintings physically black with mood to match. *Hole in the Sky* (2009) could be support for local band Head Like A Hole, and *Devil's Music* (2009) has a porous unfinished quality to its paintwork which is quite unsettling. In their exploration of the psychology of both the individual and the mob, might these be dark harbingers of things to come?

Locating the personal within a wider group or societal whole is the fundamental imaginary, the drive I think, behind all three shows. Each worries at this template differently: Van Hout through the unstable self; et al. through the manic commitment of dogma and discourse; and Pick via the furtiveness of dream and fantasy. Yet worry, ponder and work at it they do. And that is why fostering good art, and nurturing the research and thinking that informs it, is essential to the health of any community.

Jonathan Smart

Jonathan Smart is a Christchurch-based gallerist, freelance writer and critic. He has been showcasing contemporary New Zealand art since 1987.

imagelab

Who goes there is supported by Imagelab.



Séraphine Pick is a touring exhibition organised by Christchurch Art Gallery and generously sponsored by Ernst & Young.

EVENTS

WEDNESDAY 2 SEPTEMBER
Séraphine Pick: Withdrawals from the Image Bank
 Felicity Milburn, curator of the exhibition, discusses the artist's use of memory, found images and imagination.
 6pm / Philip Carter Family Auditorium / free
 Sponsored by The Press

WEDNESDAY 18 NOVEMBER
The Art of Séraphine Pick: Tracings and Affinities
 Julie King looks at the paintings of Séraphine Pick and their relationship to artistic tradition.
 6pm / Philip Carter Family Auditorium / free
 Sponsored by The Press

NEIL

PARDINGTON:

THE VAULT

LIKE A LOCATION SCOUT WITH A PROJECTED NARRATIVE IN MIND, NEIL PARDINGTON HAS TAKEN HIS LARGE-FORMAT CAMERA TO MUSEUM STORAGE SPACES THROUGHOUT NEW ZEALAND.



Neil Pardington
 Polynesian Spear
 Storage, Otago
 Museum 2008. LED /
 C-print. Reproduced
 courtesy of the artist



Neil Pardington Archives Stack #1,
 Hocken Collections Uare Taoka o
 Hākena, University of Otago 2008.
 Lambda / C-print. Reproduced
 courtesy of the artist

***The Vault* is the intensive and unexpectedly intense series of images that results—a compelling photographic record of where (and how) the nation’s unseen treasures sit.**

In bringing these usually hidden zones to light, Pardington has documented the expansive back-of-house storage spaces, usually off-limits to the public, belonging to a diverse set of archives, galleries and museums. The scenes within are presented at a large scale: sharply focused, formally cohesive, meticulously composed. At first reading, their spacious format, impartial fluorescent lighting and highly readable detail presents Pardington as an objective viewer, but it quickly transpires that the word ‘loaded’ is apt for both theme and series. It is the vaulted status of the rooms filled with specimens, paintings or Pacific and Māori ancestral treasures that provides much of *The Vault*’s magnetic charge.

The large scale of the photographs from *The Vault* is one place to begin in considering the images as more than documentary, with the evidently high degree of aesthetic deliberation in their making providing another aspect for consideration. The visual intensity of the grouped collection of collections and the residual series of afterimages also offer keys to the accomplishment of Pardington’s art. A rich anthology of visual data has been harvested, and his images are generous in poetic nuance, regularly carrying a lavish collage aesthetic and sometimes conveying rude and jarring facts. These storage spaces, it appears, are where taxidermied beasts are sent to pasture; portrait sitters wait to be remembered; or skeletons and mannequins stand at awkward rest. Immaculately mounted and brought together on the gallery walls, these photographic images transform waylaid specimens and treasures into strange art. There are unanticipated details to be found, interpretations to be read, and an expansive story that builds as each scene is encountered.



We are each of us an assemblage of received and stored histories, experiences and ideas. If there is truth in the idea that the works of an artist are the filtered manifestation of their psychological workings or inner life, then Pardington's *The Vault* is a particularly anthropomorphic realisation. *The Vault* may be like a museum of museums, but it is also a metaphor for the idea of memory (both individual and collective) through its potential to retrieve and recall that which has been collected. The quantity of stored material may seem incomprehensibly vast, but it is theoretically possible that even the most obsolete-seeming components might eventually have their day. While *The Vault* seems an invitation to question or challenge this particular notion, from viewing the series it is not possible to know whether Pardington refutes or embraces this idea. However, the suggestion that our institutions are firmly wedded to obsessive patterns of collecting (an offshoot of the inherited cultural convictions and values upon which they have been philosophically based) does arise through the assembled works.

Pardington's own cultural background and history—which includes extensive experience working back-of-house in museums—are further strands to consider. Born in 1962 in Devonport, Auckland, he is of Scottish and South Island Māori (Kāi Tahu, Kāti Mamoe and Kāti Waewae) descent. In many ways he is well-positioned to create a platform for discussion around the function of museums and the implications of cultural guardianship and collecting patterns. A 1984 BFA graduate in intermedia from Elam School of Fine Arts, University of Auckland, Pardington is clearly motivated by art-making rather than anything more trenchantly political. Having exhibited regularly since his graduation, he has also had work purchased by major public collections (three of these institutions—Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu and the Hocken Collections Uare Taoka o Hākena—have also been photographed for *The Vault*).

Neil Pardington *Land Vertebrates Store #1, Auckland Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira* 2008. LED / C-print. Reproduced courtesy of the artist





Neil Pardington
Mannequin
Store #5, Te
Manawa 2008.
LED / C-print.
Reproduced
courtesy of the
artist



Neil Pardington
Taonga Māori
Store #2,
Whanganui
Regional
Museum 2006.
LED / C-print.
Reproduced
courtesy of the
artist

Neil Pardington Art
Store #2, Christchurch
Art Gallery Te Puna o
Waiwhetu 2007. LED /
C-print. Reproduced
courtesy of the artist

Pardington's association with museums began shortly after graduating from Elam, through his employment as designer/photographer at the Sarjeant Gallery Te Whare o Rehau, Whanganui, which is where he became more deeply involved with large-format photography and seriously entered the arena of graphic design (another field in which he is highly regarded). Also significant from this time is his sharing of a darkroom with Laurence Aberhart (then artist in residence at Tylee Cottage), who is acknowledged by Pardington as an important influence. Pardington continued his association with museums in 1987 when he became exhibition designer at the National Art Gallery in Wellington—a post he left in 1989 to establish his own design business and develop his photography.

Other elements that informed Pardington's practice include colour photography by American artists such as Joel Sternfeld and Stephen Shore, and the 1920s *Neue Sachlichkeit* (New Objectivity) photography of Albert Renger-Patzsch. More directly related to Pardington's recent work is the architectural photography of Dusseldorf-based collaborators Bernd and Hilla Becher, and of their students Andreas Gursky, Candida Höfer and Thomas Ruff. Like Pardington, these photographers have left their mark by committing themselves to a highly restrained path in terms of subject matter and—with the latter three—by producing large-scale colour works intended for a broader artworld reception, rather than a purely photographic enclave.

Pardington's commitment to the use of defined themes is reflected also through his production of works in series, with seven of these completed in the past decade. His most recent, *The Clinic* (2003–5), *Rehutai* (2005) and *The Vault* (2004–8), focus on hidden spaces that are inaccessible to the public—from postmortem rooms and operating theatres to the vast array of collection spaces in museums. While these groups of works might appear at first to have been created with an emotionless, objective eye, it soon becomes evident that the territories traversed by Pardington are highly charged and aligned to subjects that

provoke a strong response. *The Vault* is the first major project to bring Pardington's photographs to broad public attention, and its opening at Christchurch Art Gallery is both an affirmation of his achievement and a timely event as the Gallery prepares to release from storage many hidden treasures for the new collection hang.

Ken Hall
Assistant curator

The Vault: Neil Pardington is a touring exhibition organised by Christchurch Art Gallery and will be accompanied by a substantial publication. This will include forty images from *The Vault*, essays by Ken Hall, Neil Pardington and Anna-Marie White (Te Atiawa) and an interview with Lara Strongman.

Neil Pardington's website is neilpardington.com.

The Vault: Neil Pardington is in the Sutton and Ravenscar Galleries from 6 November 2009 until 14 March 2010.



EVENTS

WEDNESDAY 11 NOVEMBER
The Vault: Neil Pardington
Leading contemporary artist
photographer Neil Pardington takes
us behind the lens of his exhibition.
6pm / free
Sponsored by *The Press*

WEDNESDAY 2 DECEMBER
Opening the Vault
Curator Ken Hall examines **The
Vault: Neil Pardington** in relation to
earlier bodies of work, influences
and the work of others who have
entered similar conceptual or
thematic terrain.
6pm / Philip Carter Family
Auditorium / free
Sponsored by *The Press*





From left:

Te Waka Huia performing in the Piazza San Marco, Venice, June 2009

Jenny Harper and Judy Millar

Judy Millar's Venice Biennale installation *Giraffe-Bottle-Gun* at La Chiesa della Maddalena, Venice, 2009

IT'S ABOUT COMMITMENT

BY JENNY HARPER

A POWERFUL AND DISTINCTIVE CEREMONY ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD IN EARLY JUNE THIS YEAR WILL REMAIN VIVID IN MY IMAGINATION FOR MANY MONTHS TO COME. ANCIENT VENETIAN INTERIORS AND STREETS RESOUNDED WITH A TRADITIONAL CHANTED MĀORI BLESSING. SUPPLEMENTED BY THE VOICES AND MOVEMENTS OF KAPA HAKA GROUP TE WAKA HUIA, IT DELIGHTED LOCALS AND TOURISTS ALIKE. THE PRESENCE OF AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND WAS BEING RITUALLY ANCHORED AT THE 53RD VENICE BIENNALE OF ART.

This symbolic encounter between the spirits of two sea-faring traditions celebrated our return to the most prestigious event in the international art calendar, honouring in turn each of our artists and the visual impact of their work in this inspiring context. The blessings, which were followed by a traditional powhiri, haka and breakfast in the historic Piazza San Marco, were moving and transformational. We were in place at last.

The exoticism of the early morning ceremony on this occasion summarises an aspect of the country we have become. Indicative of our ability to link the ancient and current in meaningful ways, it signals the seriousness of our commitment to forging a special cultural identity in what is, relative to Italy, the new world.

Presenting at the Venice Biennale nevertheless remains fraught for a country like ours. Creative New Zealand core funding is of course fundamental to our presence at the event, but a marathon of securing funds from other sources follows the artist selection process. This is inevitably succeeded by the logistical nightmares of working in a city with a very different infrastructure. It's a major commitment for an artist to 'represent' a country, a challenge that is magnified by a perception of the event as a pinnacle of achievement in one's individual career. Sometimes I think we demand a lot from our cultural sector in this respect.

New Zealand presents ready challenges in terms of its emerging hybrid cultural character, with a potential tension between a desire to have our contribution characterised as

a distinctive presence, and the need to have our artists take part on their own terms. Far from seeking to shoehorn New Zealand creativity into a formula, as may be expected on these occasions, it seems crucial that we take a longer-term view. We can be confident that a range of artists will, over time, point to the varied and surprising possibilities which (again over time) summarise and reflect us back to the world.

In the meantime, however, we are relative newcomers to this global stage. There's history to contend with and expectations to be met, there and back home.

The Venice Biennale began in 1895 and is the longest-running and most prestigious biennale in the world. These days it includes a themed exhibition selected by its director in the massive building known as the Arsenale, and a series of shows organised by each participating country. Many of these are held in purpose-built national pavilions in the Giardini, but many more take place in rented buildings within the city, which over the years has become recognised as the third major site. With some eighty or so countries participating and the work of more than 600 artists presented, a large number of approved collateral art exhibitions and unofficial events jostle for attention in a wide range of spaces. However, it is worth it. The 53rd Biennale runs for almost six months, from 7 June until 22 November 2009. By this time hundreds of thousands of arts professionals, collectors, dealers, art lovers and tourists will have visited Venice specifically to see it; many others will have discovered aspects of it and sought out more. It will be written

about, dissected and analysed, works bought for collections, exhibition plans nurtured. When you work in a gallery, nothing quite compares with being there during the opening week—the vernissage, where professional connections and links are made and renewed; it seems at the time that everyone who's anyone in our world is there.

With others I was on a Creative New Zealand panel that selected the artists for this Biennale and subsequently was delighted to be appointed commissioner. This is the fourth time New Zealand has been officially represented. In 2001 we sent Peter Robinson and Jacqui Fraser; in 2003 Michael Stevenson; and in 2005 the collective et al., currently showing at Christchurch Art Gallery. A review in 2007 meant no national art presence, although Brett Graham and Rachel Rakana showed their work in a collateral event. (Korean New Zealand artist Hye Rim Lee made a memorable video that was included in a collateral exhibition this year.)

New Zealand's official presence continues at the 53rd Biennale with installations by Judy Millar and Francis Upritchard. At different stages of their respective careers (Millar graduated from Elam in 1980 and Upritchard from Ilam in 1997), both have well-established practices and strong, highly individual reputations here as well as in Europe. Their work can be linked in generative and imaginative ways in other respects. Their commitment to and connections with a continuum of international art practice—historical and contemporary—as well as their interest in engaging with Venice as a site made



their selection compelling. And Venice is so historically and visually overloaded at the time of the Biennale that a dash of Antipodean assertiveness does not go amiss.

We can be justly proud of Millar and Upritchard. Millar's *Giraffe-Bottle-Gun* quite literally takes over the interior of the only circular church in Venice, La Chiesa della Maddalena, built in 1780. She grasped the opportunity afforded by the Biennale to push the boundaries of her practice, creating a large circular component, sited in the centre of the church: a three-dimensional painting in a round building that intrudes into the viewer's space. Oddly-shaped canvasses lean against the walls of the church, making obvious their temporary placement in Venice and their provisional relationship with this place of worship and belief. Millar herself was surprised by the active dialogue that took place between her work and paintings already in the church, and one of the highlights for the patrons who were with us during the opening week was her guided tour of Tintoretto's paintings at the Scuola di San Rocco. Her own work immediately became part of a lively debate between the history of great Venetian painting and contemporary practice, her pink tones vividly connected to the flesh painted by the late Renaissance master.

Francis Upritchard took a different approach in her installation *Save Yourself*, but one also linked to the art of Europe. Clustered—but at the same time lone—individual figures were positioned with great care on beautifully-crafted tables in front of faded mirrors in three chambers of the

Fondazione Claudio Buziol, sited within the elegant Palazzo Mangilli-Valmarana overlooking the Grand Canal. Their stance links historically with the figures of Hieronymus Bosch and Pieter Brueghel; their faces mask-like as if ready to go onstage in a Japanese Noh theatre production. Searchers, dreamers and dancers, they are consumed in meditative trances, lost in reverie. Nevertheless, each grouping creates an imaginary landscape in an indeterminate historical period. The surfaces of the figures are psychedelic and handmade; they combine the antique and futuristic, making the scene both familiar and unsettling. The work explores time, hope and evolutionary change and points to the uncertain boundaries between high and applied art. Upritchard has used the opportunity of the Venice Biennale to perfect her practice, to ensure a sophisticated summary of what she has been working towards in the past few years.

Together Francis Upritchard and Judy Millar ensure this country has a subtle and strong presence. Their individuality, their confidence, their lack of literal New Zealandness (whatever that might be) assure us not only that they are who they are—but equally that this is us. Perhaps the notion of 'presentation' is better than 'representation'.

Being at the Venice Biennale entails considerable commitments from many quarters. I'm proud that Christchurch Art Gallery was able to contribute and has a small stake in the reputational gain from New Zealand's 2009 presentations. Like many, I'm convinced we need to be at this event long-term.

Each time we take part, we need good supporters and a great team to ensure participation is strengthened. There is no doubt that as much as we give (and we do), every person gains in professional terms from this involvement. And the benefits of these international art opportunities have a habit of flowing in sometimes intangible ways through the cultural and economic food chains.

The impact of the early morning blessings on all who took part was extraordinary. Thanks to this unique cultural gesture, we were confident the artists were properly honoured and their work safely moored for the duration of this remarkable international exhibition. Following the initial flurry of the vernissage, New Zealand's voices in Venice have several months to soar and delight visitors—and, we hope, critics and other art writers. Reputation-building in national terms may be less quantifiable for some time to come, but our continuing commitment should be buoyed and nurtured by the joint successes of 2009.

Jenny Harper
Director

Left: *Long*, part of Francis Upritchard's Venice Biennale exhibition *Save Yourself* at Fondazione Claudio Buziol, Venice, 2009

Above: (from left) Jenny Harper, Alastair Carruthers (Chair, Creative New Zealand), Judy Millar, Heather Galbraith (senior curator, City Gallery Wellington), Francis Upritchard, Leonhard Emmerling (Director, St Paul Street Gallery, AUT)

TO THE (UN)KNOWN NEW ZEALANDER

In June and July of this year, two videos by Julian Dashper, *Untitled (the last 15 seconds of the last Venice Biennale)* (2007-8) and *Untitled (the last second of the last Venice Biennale)* (2007-8), played in the Gallery's **Twinset** programme. As a New Zealand-born artist with a strong profile in America, Australia and Europe, Julian Dashper (1960-2009) often considered the role distance could play in filtering, fragmenting and disrupting the effects of international art movements such as conceptualism and minimalist abstraction.

Dashper's videos record the final moments before the closing of the previous Venice Biennale in 2007. Dashper himself commented that 'this is no "Death in Venice" work. It's not just about Venice (even though that's what it happens to be about) and it's not just about Biennale business as well.

Instead it is more about being witness to something which is really perhaps nothing at all. An event in our minds. Which is precisely the reason, like all good New Zealanders, that I travelled to the other side of the world to be there especially to see it in the first place.'

In 2005, Dashper's work was the subject of a major touring retrospective in America—the first-ever such exhibition for a resident New Zealand artist.

Sadly, Dashper died in the early weeks of August 2009. Some Gallery staff had worked with him elsewhere, known him for a long time and counted him as a warm-hearted and generous friend as well as a great artist. His exhibition **To the Unknown New Zealander** was installed at the Gallery in August 2007, and it was during this time that he made many friends and fans at the Gallery.

Julian Dashper *Untitled (the last 15 seconds of the last Venice Biennale)* 2007-8. DVD. Reproduced courtesy of the artist's estate and Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland

Cloud9

New directions in contemporary painting

Strange dreams, imaginary landscapes, celestial structures and the outside world—these are all themes central to the practices of the nine contemporary New Zealand artists that feature in Cloud9. The fourth in the emerging artists series at Christchurch Art Gallery, the exhibition presents new work by Elliot Collins, Mike Cooke, Ruth Thomas Edmond, Georgie Hill, Marie le Lievre, Eileen Leung, Tim Thatcher, Telly Tu'u and Pete Wheeler. Exploring new directions in contemporary painting, the exhibition celebrates a medium with the ability to transport us to otherworldly realms.

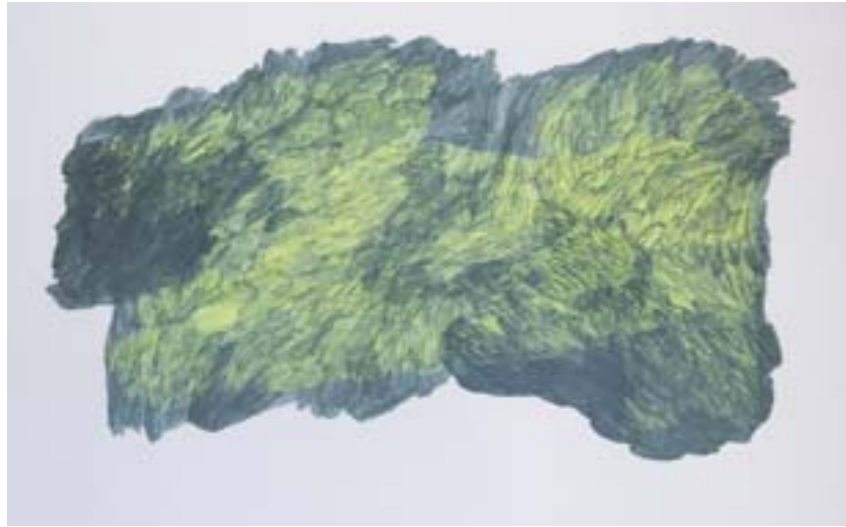
Eileen Leung *Untitled* 2009.
Acrylic on perspex. Reproduced
courtesy of the artist



While all of the artists in **Cloud9** are currently based in New Zealand, their work relays no overarching or specific cultural identity. Rather, it presents unabashedly individual artistic expression, coupled with an awareness and knowledge of painterly traditions within a global context. From Mike Cooke's spectacular manga-inspired canvases to Georgie Hill's intimate, poetic and surreal watercolours, these nine artists variously create separations and slippages between two- and three-dimensional space. By activating physical presences and alluding to that which lies beneath the surface, they probe a rich psychological terrain.

The expression to be 'on cloud nine' connotes the upper reaches of emotional euphoria. Here, that idea is relayed by atmospheric resonances, amorphous colour fields and symbolic tableaux that dodge any earthly pull.

Marie le Lievre, Ruth Thomas Edmond and Eileen Leung's compositions evoke the chimeric shapes and silhouettes of ever-changing clouds. According to the Buddhist 'Heart Sutra' (Prajna-Paramita-Hridaya-Sutra), 'form is emptiness, emptiness is form'; Leung's three-dimensional constructions of acrylic on transparent perspex capture a state of transformation, as if the sky is merging



Ruth Thomas Edmond *Untitled* 2009. Acrylic on paper. Reproduced courtesy of the artist



Telly Tu'u *Untitled* 2009. Oil on board. Reproduced courtesy of the artist

Opposite page:
Marie le Lievre *Cauldron* 2009.
Oil on canvas. Reproduced
courtesy Brooke/Gifford Gallery

with the land. Leung's recent journey to Asia inspired her to research historical depictions of clouds in art. In what she terms her 'shape worlds', she acknowledges their transient beauty while exploring the contradiction between clouds as pictorial devices of perspective and as symbols. As she says: 'like clouds, art provides a space for imagination'.

Ruth Thomas Edmond's layers of acrylic on paper create a diaphanous map of shadow, colour and form. These deftly textured works reveal hidden nuances and depths that defy any single reading, and indicate the cartography of multiple landscapes. The paintings are like thought bubbles, memories or the fragmented whisps of a dream. Exhibiting her intuitive mark-making process and the directional pull of paint, Edmond's works conflate spectral spaces with familiar aspects of our daily lives, such as the passing of time, decay and renewal.

Depicting desirable handbags that are containers for all kinds of human vice or virtue, Marie le Lievre's recent body of work delves into the meaning of 'baggage'—its psychological undertow and its literal manifestation. Bordering on both the fashionable and the contrary, the bags, with their alchemical swathes of saturated oil paint, seemingly morph on the canvas in a spontaneous act of declaration. Like shifting clouds in which the eye perceives recognisable shapes (pareidolia), Le Lievre imbues each of her bags with intense character. These emotional colour fields tackle the baggage of painting traditions, consumer impulses and the mutability of personal circumstances.

Le Lievre shares her interest in the tension between the abstract and organic with Telly Tu'u. His oil on board paintings, while being influenced by pictorial genres such as cubism and Russian suprematism, have no fixed point of origin. In a state of flux, his suspended forms weave like ribbons within a vortex of colour. Seemingly fragmented from a larger whole they imply a state of becoming like a celestial structure or ephemeral phenomena. Tu'u's ongoing investigation into the ways in which memory and knowledge can be broken down and rearranged creates a visual and conceptual paradox that disrupts both perceived notions of identity and spatial representation.





Georgie Hill *Flower bed* 2009. Watercolour on paper. Private collection. Reproduced courtesy of the artist



Tim Thatcher *A Centre* 2009. Oil on canvas. Reproduced courtesy of the artist

Strange déjà vu recognitions, distantly remembered experiences and daydream visions can be sensed in the work of Georgie Hill and Tim Thatcher. Hill's detailed watercolours evoke interior spaces, objects of memorial and elements of the world that play with notions of boundaries. Her finely rendered pencil lines, airy washes of blue and stone-grey and fire-red emblems express a sense of fluidity. In a balancing act of vigour and frailty, certainty and deception, her ambiguous rooms contain gardens that could also be beds of blood and veins, while headboards and ceilings depict Magritte-like cloudscares that draw us into worlds within worlds.

Tim Thatcher's hallucinatory paintings of dislocated plateaux are like threatening fairytale habitats, their sense of disquiet achieved through his use of technique. Images from disparate sources are gathered, discarded, reworked and transformed, resulting in compositions that evoke a sense of struggle. Stairs, piles of logs, tree stumps and odd, defunct pieces of furniture act as props or sculptural entities that appear hopeless, but not empty. As he says: 'I am trying to create something questionable, metaphysical, and numb, a party and a hangover, celebration and regret.'

Contemporary figurative painting techniques are subverted by Mike Cooke (aka The Cartoon Moon) and Pete Wheeler, whose confrontational paintings reference political propaganda and mass media imagery. Both ominous and playful, Wheeler's sensuous painterly surfaces combine with aggressive subject matter to disconcerting effect. Symbols of death, decay and war float amidst textural planes of bruised color, or descend like shadows from the sky.



Pete Wheeler *Still Dangerous* 2009. Oil on canvas. Reproduced courtesy of the artist



Mike Cooke *The New Aloof (Shepherd's Teeth Red & Shepherd's Teeth Blue)* 2009. Acrylic and enamel on canvas. Reproduced courtesy of the artist



Elliot Collins *Still Life with Ominous Clouds* 2009. Acrylic on canvas. Reproduced courtesy of the artist and Tim Melville Gallery

Clear communication between the work and the viewer is also apparent in Mike Cooke's acrylic paintings, which illustrate aspects of modern visual culture as diverse as skateboard graphics, Japanese manga cartoons, music videos and the graffiti of America's west coast. In what he describes as his 'recurring daydreams', characters in sparse and surreal worlds collide with vibrant symbols and colour. Cooke explores methods of simplifying visual language in an attempt to translate his vision into effective two-dimensional paintings with a distinctive filmic quality.

For Elliot Collins, communication is also paramount and text is used as a means to express his observations on the human condition. As he says: 'I am interested in the value systems we place on experiences and the way we edit our lives.' Texts chosen from plays, poems, music, gleaned from the everyday world or simply made up, assert philosophical questions. The failings and shortfalls of painting are highlighted through language, as well as the gift of the imagination.

These recent graduates from Christchurch, Dunedin and Auckland display a wide range of painting styles and concerns. Yet apparent in all of the work is a sense of movement, a gesture, a way of looking that reveals an acute awareness of the medium.

Jennifer Hay
Assistant curator

**CLOUD9 IS IN
THE MONICA
RICHARDS
GALLERY UNTIL
29 NOVEMBER
2009.**

coffey projects

EVENT

WEDNESDAY 9 SEPTEMBER
Floortalk: Cloud9
Join curator Jennifer Hay as she explores
this new exhibition by nine contemporary
New Zealand painters.
6pm / free
Sponsored by The Press

Staff Profile

The Gallery Shop



From left: Gay Rutherford, Shannon Williamson, Jade Scott, Merilynne Evans, Karen Waine, Liz Garland, Maddy Jones, Kay Renwick

What do the cast of the *Narnia* films and New Zealand politicians have in common? No, it's not the start of a joke. They all do their shopping at the Gallery.

Veer to the left after you've descended the stairs in the Gallery's magnificent foyer, and you'll find yourself surrounded by beautiful New Zealand art books, high-quality reproductions, unique stationery and toys. The Shop is managed by team leader Merilynne Evans with merchandising and retail officer Liz Garland, and they are ably assisted by part-time retail sale assistants Maddy Jones, Kay Renwick, Jade Scott, Karen Waine, Shannon Williamson and casual employee Gay Rutherford. Their collective experience is eclectic—from banking, teaching and book retailing, to Gallery guiding and working as a practising artist.

As an important extension to the exhibition spaces, the Gallery Shop has fostered a very loyal local patronage.

It's popular with tourists too—staff are often told that considering the small size of the shop it is comparable to that found in any international gallery—and has received visits from comedians, politicians, movie stars and rugby players. Complementing the physical shop is its virtual presence; through the website, merchandise has reached destinations from Greenland to Antarctica, and Africa to North America.

As a first point of contact for many visitors, the staff field a lot of questions from the public. Ranging from the predictable 'How do I get into the Gallery?' to the gentleman who quietly came round to the back of the counter, put his takeaway food on the print bins and, ready to eat, asked for a spoon. Other favourite enquiries include: 'Is there a special name for the round window in a church?', 'Where is the local tattoo parlour?' and 'I was in here last year and saw a book with a red cover. Can you tell me what it was called?'

The Gallery Shop is one of the best places in Christchurch to buy cards, prints, posters and art books, and best of all, the proceeds from your purchases support Christchurch Art Gallery's collections, exhibitions and programmes.

PAGEWORK #4

LISA WALKER

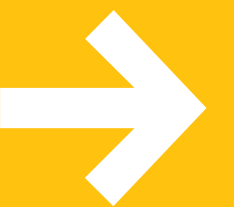
The following double-page spread is given over to the fourth instalment in our 'Pagework' series. Each quarter the Gallery commissions an artist to create a new and unique work of art especially for *Bulletin*. It's about actively supporting the generation of new work.

Lisa Walker is a Munich-based New Zealand jeweller, who exhibits regularly in Europe, Japan, America, Australia and New Zealand. A graduate from Otago Polytechnic and der Akademie der Bildenden Kunst, Munich, Walker has run her own studio in Munich since 2002. By altering and combining found objects, rubbish and organic and precious materials, she makes highly personal pieces of jewellery that are often shocking in their

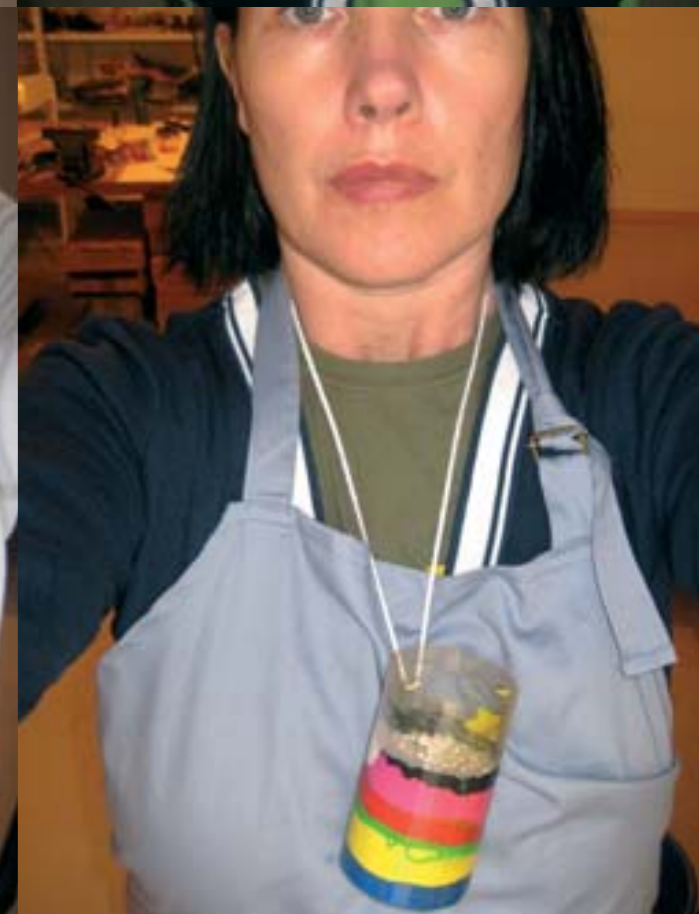
rejection of conventional aesthetics. These twelve photographs document Walker wearing her various gargantuan neckpieces, much like an experimental study in the efficacy of adornment.

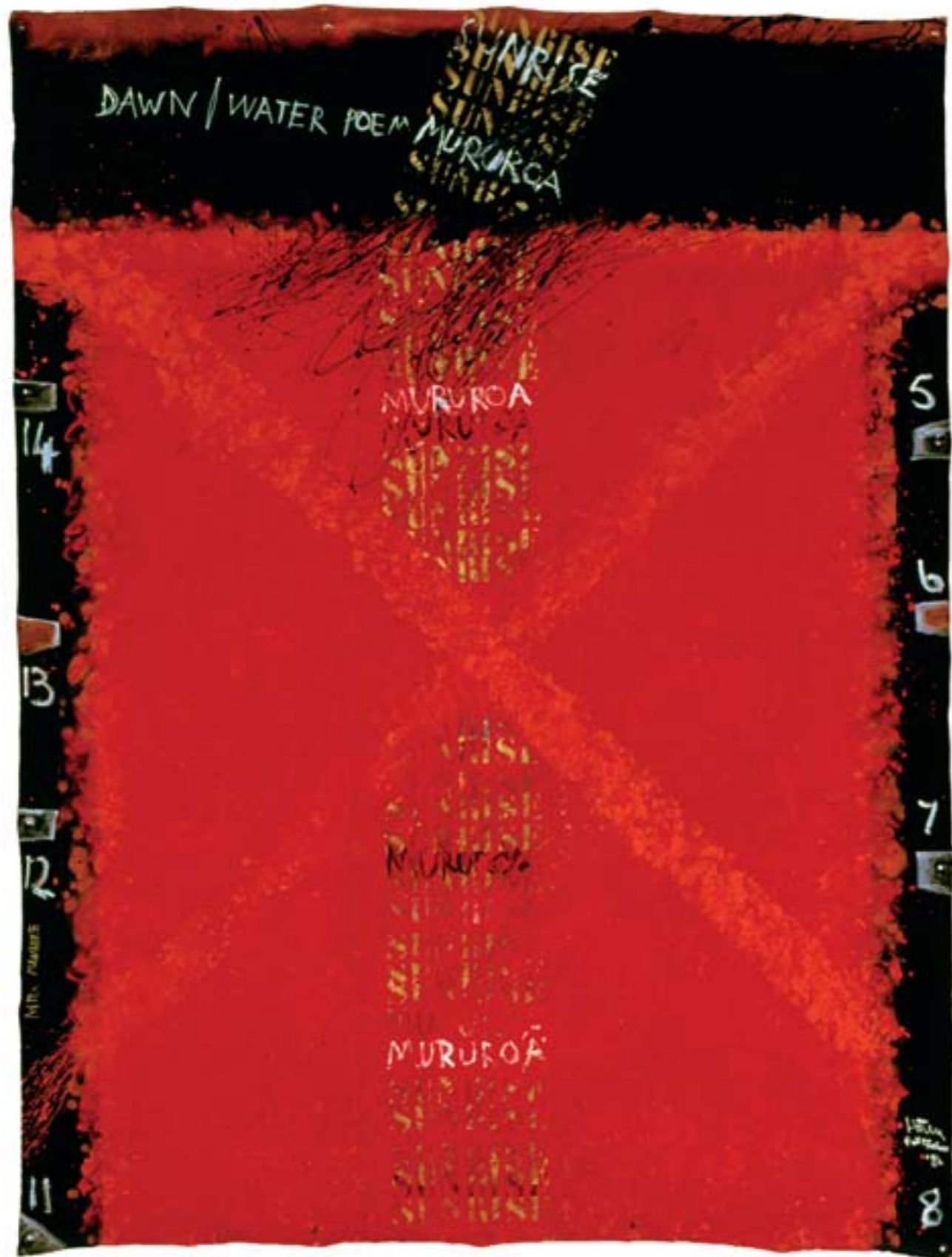
The critic Love Jönsson, in the catalogue to accompany the 2008 exhibition *Think Tank takes on 'Skill'* in which Walker was included, noted that: *On the title page of the catalogue documenting Lisa Walker's diploma exhibition ... one reads that the collection comprises not only finished pieces of jewellery, but also 'pieces that may become jewellery'. Objects are here seen as restless, wild, and with an uncertain character. Being knowledgeable about and sensitive to these aspects of objects is a skill that is manifest in every detail of this artist's jewellery.*

'Pagework' has been generously supported by an anonymous donor.



Over page:
Lisa Walker Jewellery
Portraits 2009. Mixed
media. Reproduced
courtesy of the artist





Ralph Hotere *Dawn/Water Poem* 1986. Acrylic on canvas. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased with assistance from the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council, 1986

My Favourite



The Very Reverend Peter Beck is Dean of ChristChurch Cathedral. A graduate of Oxford University and an Anglican priest for thirty-six years, he is a regular commentator on public issues in press, radio and TV and a trustee of the Art & Industry Trust.

Peter Beck

A few years ago I had a personal breakthrough in my appreciation of art. At ChristChurch Cathedral during Lent we exhibited John Badcock's *The Last Supper* and accompanied it with a series of talks entitled 'Conversations with a Painting'. And that was the turning point for me. Until that time my occasional wanderings around art galleries had been to *look* at pictures, but after that Lenten reflection I realised that what I was really looking for was a *conversation* with a piece of art. Over the period of forty days that we had John's work in the nave, it was often a three-way conversation between the painting, the cathedral and myself, and a rollercoaster of emotions. Since then when I come to the Gallery it is usually for a shortish time because I can't cope with too many conversations one after the other!

When I was asked to do this little piece, I wandered through the collection galleries, 'chatting' with the paintings until I came to Ralph Hotere's *Dawn/Water Poem*. It was the intense brilliance of the red that immediately drew me into a conversation. The raw

power and intensity, both in its life and energy and also its feeling of anger, blood and sacrifice, engaged me.

I came to New Zealand in 1981, with my Kiwi wife and three small children, from Lincoln, an English city surrounded by nuclear bomber bases. There, I had been chair of the local branch of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, so it was inevitable that here we would be drawn into the protest movement over the French nuclear testing on Mururoa. Hotere's painting takes me back to those times and the emotions surrounding them. And as the conversation goes on, the painting, with its defiant cross, demands a continuing protest. The campaign against all that separates, injures and destroys goes on.

At the top of the painting there appears, at least to me, to be a sense of the dawn, as the word 'sunrise' rises from Mururoa. Here is the hope and the determination for a better way. There is a light in the darkness. Life is stronger than death. Love is stronger than hate. And that is the heart of the Christian faith.

To me, this painting is an icon and insists that I stand before it to converse, to contemplate. It has its own unique conversation with each one of us, just like any other work of art. I like Hotere's words: 'There are few things I can say about my work that are better than saying nothing.' Indeed, the painting is what it is, and every response to it is personal and unique. Each time we converse it leads into a deeper conversation.



Hot off the Press!

Due for release in early November, *The Vault: Neil Pardington* is a stunning new 96-page catalogue designed by Pardington himself, with insightful essays by Ken Hall and Anna-Marie White and an interview by Lara Strongman. Order your copy before 31 October and save 15% off the retail price—pay just \$42.50.

Out now and available for purchase from the Gallery Shop, the beautifully designed *Séraphine Pick* features more than 100 full-page images alongside texts by Felicity Milburn, Lara Strongman, Jon Bywater, Allan Smith and Andrew Paul Wood, an interview by Sally Blundell and a short story by Elizabeth Knox (\$79.99).

Ronnie van Hout's *Who Goes There!* is a 28-page puzzle book designed by Ronnie to accompany his exhibition of the same name (\$7.50).

Orders: Gallery Shop, tel (03) 941 7370 or email galleryshop@ccc.govt.nz



Blog: Brought to Light

Check us out behind the scenes at www.christchurchartgallery.org.nz/Collection as staff members report on the progress of our major renovation of the collection galleries. De-installing the current hang, building and painting new walls, designing the spaces, selecting the works, writing labels—it's all up for discussion on our blog.

In Memory

Gallery staff members were saddened by the death of Dr Seddon Bennington, chief executive at Te Papa since 2003. He brought a wealth of experience to the role from previous positions in New Zealand and abroad, and his contribution and commitment to the natural and cultural heritage of this country was significant. Seddon was well-respected within the international museum sector, and valued for his intellectual energy, warmth and dedication. He will be missed.

Dr Diggeress Rangitutahi Te Kanawa (Ngāti Maniapoto and Ngāti Kinohaku) died in July at the age of 89. Diggeress was one of New Zealand's most significant fibre artists and led the revival of Māori weaving. Made a Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit in 2000, Diggeress was honoured in 2003 with an inaugural Arts Foundation Icon Award. She received an honorary doctorate from the University of Waikato for her dedication to weaving in 2007, and Te Waka Toi's premier award for a lifetime commitment to Māori fibre arts in 2006.



Celebrating 30 years of volunteer guiding at Christchurch Art Gallery and Robert McDougall Art Gallery, 7 July 2009



Oh Baby, It's Art!

Christchurch mums and dads can now introduce their babies to the artworld with a new guided tour at the Gallery. The Oh Baby, It's Art tours are free, and have been specially created for people with babies. Parents and caregivers can enjoy an informed guided tour of the works of art on display while sharing their cultural passion with other like-minded people—and all before the Gallery doors open to the general public.

First Thursday of the month / 9.30–10.15am / buggies welcome / breastfeeding room and baby-changing facilities available

Oh Baby, It's Art: discussing Tony de Lautour *Underworld 2* 2006. Oil on canvas. Purchased by the Friends of Christchurch Art Gallery 2007

Art in the Holidays

There's always plenty to see and do at the Gallery during the school holidays. Budding artists can join in our Cartoons for Kids workshops with cartoonist and pavement artist Marc Barnes, and the whole family can enjoy our new holiday quiz Explore & Draw.

COMIC STRIP WORKSHOP

Create your own story and characters.
 Mon, Wed and Fri: 8–12yrs
 Tue and Thur: 5–7yrs
 28 Sept – 2 Oct / 10am – 12 noon / education centre / \$5 / bookings tel 941 7382

COMIC CHARACTER WORKSHOP

Draw characters step-by-step, learning different colouring techniques.
 Mon, Wed and Fri: 8–12yrs
 Tue and Thur: 5–7yrs
 5–9 October / 10–11.30am / education centre / \$5 / bookings tel 941 7382

HOLIDAY QUIZ: EXPLORE & DRAW

Discover art in unexpected places with this fun activity, and enter the draw to win a set of art materials.
 26 Sept – 4 Oct / 10am – 4pm / collect from front desk / free

The Art Event

The Friends of Christchurch Art Gallery's annual fundraising event on Friday 11 September promises to be a glamorous affair. This is an excellent opportunity to purchase original works of art by leading artists at great prices.
 Tickets: \$50, tel 941 7356 or email friends@ccc.govt.nz

The Art of Protest with John Minto

Can art be an agent for change or does it reflect the reality around us? Is it escapist or can it subvert and confront? Hear the views of John Minto, political activist and journalist, and a former listed radical with the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service.

Wednesday 28 October / 6pm / Philip Carter Family Auditorium / free

Sponsored by *The Press*

Arts on Sunday with Lynn Freeman

Radio with pictures, theatre, film, comedy, books, dance, entertainment and music. The award-winning host of Radio New Zealand's Arts on Sunday, Lynn Freeman shares her on-the-job art highlights.

Wednesday 4 November / 6pm / Philip Carter Family Auditorium / free

Sponsored by *The Press*

Barbirolli String Quartet



Staged in the spectacular *Séraphine Pick* exhibition, the renowned Barbirolli String Quartet performs music by Mozart, Delius and Debussy before mingling with the audience. Known for its diverse repertoire and dynamic approach to performance, the quartet last year received the prestigious Guildhall Artists Fellowship. Don't miss this sensational evening, with complimentary finger food and Crater Rim wines.

Tuesday 17 November / 7pm

Tickets: \$70 preferential seating, \$50 general seating / bookings tel 941 7382

Presented by the Royal Overseas League



THE CRATER RIM

1 JULY 2008 – 30 JUNE 2009

It is with great pride that we look back upon another successful year for Christchurch Art Gallery. Despite dire economic times, the Gallery has continued to increase its attendance figures, achieving a 14.6% increase on last year's figures.

This increase means that not only are we surpassing our attendance targets, but we are now attracting the equivalent of 130% of the population of Christchurch (2006 Census). These fantastic visitor numbers are further enriched by a 97% positive response achieved in an independent point-of-exit survey.

The Gallery also functions as a centre for scholarship, and close to 500 researchers, students and other members of the public took advantage of the opportunity to view collection items in storage or use library resources by appointment. These visits are further complemented by the usage of our virtual presence—there were 133,256 individual visits to the Gallery's website during the year, with some 47,000 specifically viewing collections data online.

We are pleased here to report on some of our known, and less well-known, achievements, including the professional accomplishments of our highly committed staff.

18 exhibitions opened during the period, of which 10 were organised by the Gallery. The **Outer Spaces** project has featured 10 foyer and exterior works, 10 video works for **Twinset**, and 10 sound art pieces for **Subsonic**.

455,878 visitors to the Gallery (up 14.6% on the previous year and 66,000 more than our target for the year)

THE GALLERY WAS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR 2,749 HOURS

33,428 visitors viewed our touring exhibitions, **Graphica Britannica** and **I See Red**

GALLERY PUBLICATIONS

Four editions of *Bulletin* (*B.154*, *B.155*, *B.156* and *B.157*)

Daniel Crooks: Everywhere Instantly

Six *Freerange* tours (*Art Speak*, *Dark Star*, *Distant Star*, *Greatest Hits*, *Hidden Secrets* and *Stop and Smell the Roses*)

OTHER WRITING

Jenny Harper

'A taste of NZ treasure', (review of *Ralph Hotere: The Artist*), *The Press*, Christchurch, 24 December 2008, p.B4

Jennifer Hay

'Ann Veronica Janssens' and 'Guillaume Bijl', *Wandering Lines: Towards a New Culture of Space*, SCAPE 2008 Christchurch Biennial of Art in Public Space, 2009, pp.48, 76

Felicity Milburn

'Assumed identities: The elusive paintings of Séraphine Pick' [reprinted in *B.157*], *Takahe* 65, 2008, pp.29–30

'Ghosts in sunglasses', *The Press*, Christchurch, 8 October 2008, p.D1

'Maider López', *Wandering Lines: Towards a New Culture of Space*, SCAPE 2008 Christchurch Biennial of Art in Public Space, 2009, p.88

'Reinventing objects', *The Press*, Christchurch, 21 January 2009, p.D1

'Resonance', *Resonance: Ross Gray*, SOFA, University of Canterbury, 2009, unpaginated

Justin Paton

'Aberhart's magic light', *The Press*, Christchurch, 9 July 2008, p.D1

'Changing space' (interview with Judy Millar), *Judy Millar: You You, Me Me*, Kerber Verlag Bielefeld, 2009, pp.130–5

'Christian Capurro', *Erased*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, 2009, p.18

'Fred Sandback' (review), *Art & Australia*, vol.46, no.2, summer 2008, p.319

'Mixed feelings: Francis Upritchard's 1970s show', *Art & Australia*, vol.46, no.1, spring 2008, pp.96–103

'Peter Robinson' (review of *Snow Ball Blind Time*), *Frieze*, March 2009, pp.154–6

'The information on the edge', *Daniel Crooks: Everywhere Instantly*, Christchurch Art Gallery, 2008, pp.10–19

'Throwing voices', *Artlink*, vol.28, no.4, 2008, p.60

'Uncommon ground', *Terra Firma Incognita*, Peter Wegner Studio in association with GRIFFIN, Santa Monica, CA and Galerie m, Bochum, Germany, 2009

Peter Vangioni

'A fork lunch and a drink or two: Ephemera from the Templar Press, 1966–1983', *The New Zealand Emphemerist, Journal of the New Zealand Society of Ephemerists, Te niupepa a te rōpū tangata puka o Aotearoa*, no.2, March 2009, pp.10–16, 32

'Linocut dynamics', *The Press*, Christchurch, 26 November 2008, p.D1

'Path of the path: Simon Lawrence', *The Physics Room Annual 2007*, Christchurch 2009, p.10

INVITED PUBLIC LECTURES AND INDUSTRY WORKSHOPS

Lynn Campbell

'Care and Conservation of Historic Photographs', Airforce Museum, Christchurch, 17–18 July 2008

'Conservation and Access', Conference IIC, London, 15–20 September 2008

'Disaster Prevention', NZCCM, Alexandra, 19 October 2008

Ken Hall

'How do we know that one painting is better than another?', workshop for Malvern Community Arts Council Committee, Darfield, November 2008

'The Gentleman in Red', Pataka Museum of Arts & Cultures, Porirua, 21 May 2009

'William Jenkins and the trial of Arapata te Waretuturu, an 1861 photograph by John Nicol Crombie', Photographies: New Histories, New Practices symposium, Australian National University, Canberra, 10–12 July 2008

Rebecca Ogle

Guest speaker at the workshop for Free Tours by Marnie Slater, SCAPE 2008 Biennial of Art in Public Space, 2 August 2008

Justin Paton

'Now and When: Beyond the End of Art', Melbourne Art Fair 2008 Forum, National Gallery of Victoria, 30 July 2008

'Poor Things', keynote address at Volume Contemporary Craft/Object symposium, 18 October 2008

'The Mortality of Art', Walters Prize, Auckland Art Gallery, 19 October 2008

PROFESSIONAL ADVICE

Ken Hall

Member, Board of Your Studio Trust

Judge, Marlborough Camera Club competition, Blenheim, November 2008

Judge, Darfield Art Week, Darfield, November 2008

Advisor, Ministry of Culture and Heritage, application for export of protected items, 2008–9

Jenny Harper

New Zealand Commissioner, Venice Biennale of Art 2009

National Museums Training Council, ATTO

Arts Foundation of New Zealand, ICON Awards panel, 2009

Member, Public Art Advisory Group

Member, External Advisory Group, College of Arts, University of Canterbury

Gina Irish

Council Member, Australasian Registrars Committee, 2008

Committee Member, New Zealand Registrars Network

Advisor, Artworks Committee, Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology

Justin Paton

Governor, New Zealand Arts Foundation

Member, Public Art Advisory Group

Judge, Ripe: ANZ Private Bank and *Art & Australia* Contemporary Art Award

Member, Editorial Advisory Board, *Art & Australia*

Contributing Editor, New Zealand, *Art & Australia*

Peter Vangioni

Member, High Street Project Board

Advisor, Ministry of Culture and Heritage, application for export of protected items, 2008–90

THE COLLECTIONS

47 acquisitions (17 purchases and 30 gifts and bequests accessioned)

20 paintings, 201 works on paper and 6 sculptures were treated in the Gallery's conservation laboratory

520 condition reports were prepared on works of art from the Gallery's collection and inward loans

79 loans to other galleries and institutions, including Dunedin Public Art Gallery, New Zealand Film Archive and Sarjeant Gallery

697 loans from other galleries and institutions, including Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (for **Rita Angus: Life & Vision**) and Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (for **Fiona Hall: Forcefield**)

FRIENDS

245 new members made a total membership of 1620

54 events to enjoy, attended by approximately 2684 people

GALLERY SHOP

This year's bestsellers were:

1165 prints of Dick Frizzell's *Mickey To Tiki Tu Meke*

588 copies of *Bill Hammond: Jingle Jangle Morning*

11,945 Gallery cards

298 copies of *Rita Angus: Life & Vision*

357 copies of *Daniel Crooks: Everywhere Instantly*

PUBLIC PROGRAMMES

33,497

PEOPLE ATTENDED ADVERTISED PUBLIC PROGRAMMES

(Kids in Town performances, holiday quizzes and activities, booked tours, public lectures, floortalks, films, events and performances and free guided tours)

EDUCATION

11,936

PEOPLE ATTENDED EDUCATION EVENTS

VISITOR SERVICES

1,144

IPOD AUDIO TOURS WERE HIRED

VOLUNTEER GUIDES PROVIDED OVER

3,000 HOURS

of valued service for more than 15,000 visitors



Gavin Hipkins *Romance: New York (Jellyfish)* 2006. C-type print. Reproduced courtesy of the artist, Hamish McKay Gallery and Starkwhite

Blue Planet

Blue is a feeling, a place to dream and the colour of our amazing planet as seen from space. Looking at the ways artists have used the colour blue, **Blue Planet** celebrates imaginative art making and thinking, as well as different cultural and global perspectives. Shaped with younger audiences in mind.

Opening 21 November 2009



Talisman

Talismans are found in many cultures throughout the world. In this exhibition twelve contemporary New Zealand jewellery artists have made new work responding to the enduring power of the talisman. The inclusion of twelve rare historic talismans from Canterbury Museum's Oceanic collection highlights an exchange across times and cultures.

5 December 2009—14 February 2010

Ricky Swallow

Australian artist Ricky Swallow is best known for his meticulous still-life sculptures. But he is also a maker of playful and atmospheric watercolours. This exhibition surveys Swallow's works on paper, from early sci-fi scenarios through to haunting recent portraits.

A UQ Art Museum touring exhibition.

12 December 2009—21 February 2010

The Naked and the Nude

The unclothed human figure is one of art's oldest subjects, yet it still ignites debate. Bringing together dozens of bodies from the collection, this exhibition charts the tension between the nude and the naked—between works of art that idealise the body and those that try to tell it like it is.

18 December 2009—18 April 2010

Craftsmanship — an enduring, basic human impulse, the desire to do a job well for its own sake.

STRATEGY
DESIGN & ADVERTISING

WWW.STRATEGY.CO.NZ

Bill Hammond: Jingle Jangle Morning
Winner: Illustrative Section, Montana Book Awards
BPANZ Book Design award winner

Spectrum Print

Spectrum Print, 134 Antigua Street, Christchurch
Phone 03 365 0946, Facsimile 03 365 0947

Open 10am—5pm daily
Late night every Wednesday
until 9pm. Admission free.

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