

Bulletin
Christchurch Art Gallery
Te Puna o Waiwhetu

Autumn
March—May
2012

B.167



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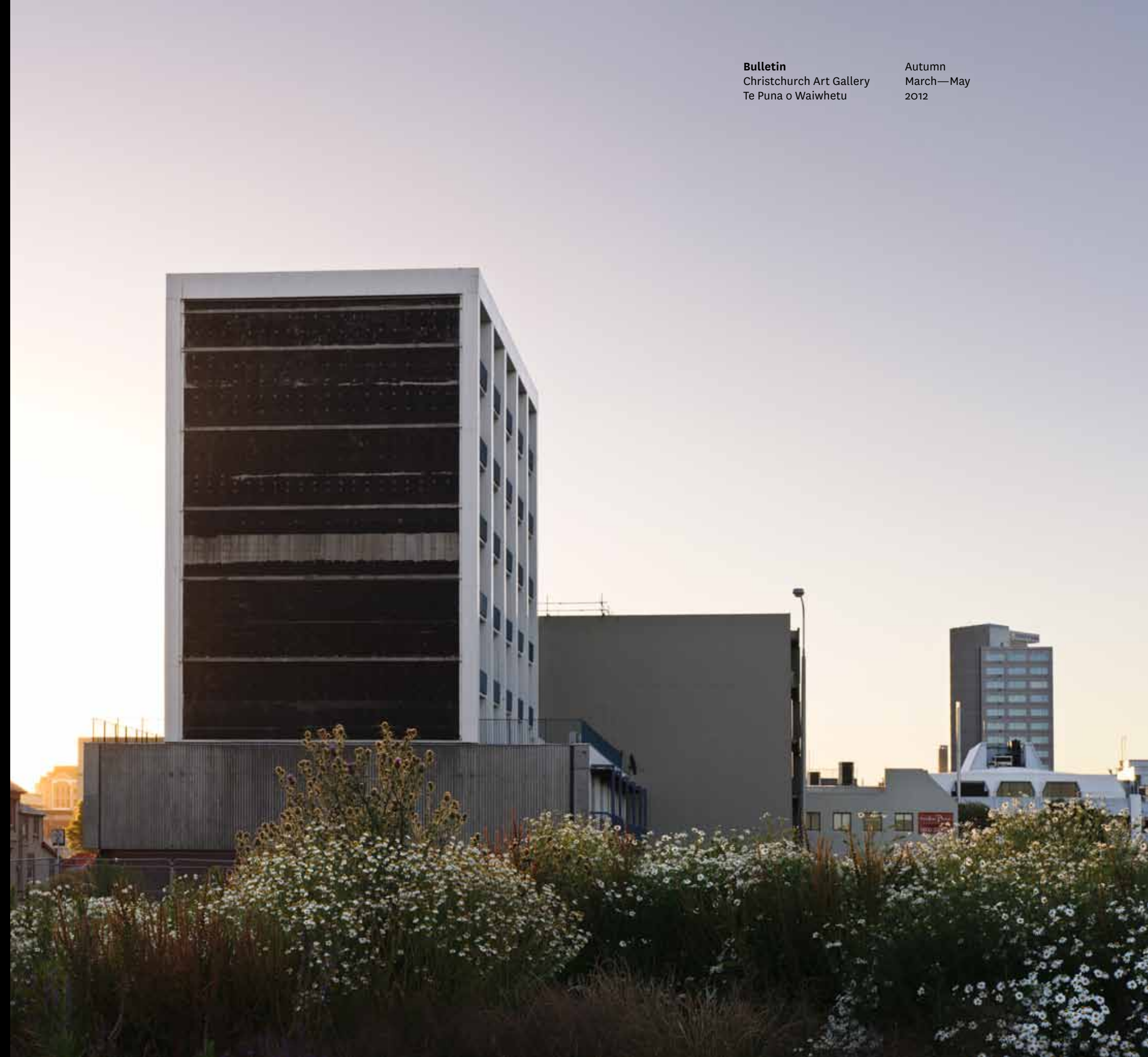
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TE PUNA O WAIWHETU
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Cover: Wayne Youle **I seem to have temporarily misplaced my sense of humour** (detail) 2011. Design for a mural presented by Christchurch Art Gallery and Gap Filler. Reproduced courtesy the artist

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WELCOME TO THE AUTUMN EDITION of *Bulletin*. Christchurch recently marked the one-year anniversary of the 22 February earthquake—an event that has changed this city forever. Here at the Gallery, it's hard to believe that we have now been closed for over a year as a result. And, unfortunately, we can now say with certainty that we'll be closed for over a year more.

As many of you will have seen, on 27 January we announced that the anticipated date of our reopening is mid 2013. Of course, this is considerably later than we, or you, would have liked. So I feel it is important that we set out as much as is possible the reasons for this delay. All our engineering reports indicate that the building's primary structure has performed incredibly well through an exceptionally challenging period (as I write this, we've had one earthquake at magnitude 7.1, three over 6, thirty-seven over 5 and 341 over 4). However, what our engineers are referring to as 'secondary structural elements' have sustained some damage. Amongst these we can count the Gallery's glass façade—the steel structures holding together its 2,184 panes of glass require attention—external parapets, cladding and ceilings. In addition, the precise nature of the settling of the building and its car park are also still to be fully assessed.

Before we can even start work on fixing these, Council approval must be granted for the repairs and their insurers and assessors need to agree with ours. When we do get started, the repair work is forecast to take nine months to complete. At the other end, we're looking down the barrel of another major collection move, and a gallery installation programme that will make our efforts during the run up to the **Brought to Light** collection rehang seem positively tame. It's a lengthy process, but one that it's essential we complete properly.

The importance of this Gallery to the city cannot be overstated. As any art gallery relies on trust and reputation, we must be able to demonstrate clearly that lenders can put their trust in the structural integrity of our building—particularly if we want to be in a position to host major international exhibitions like **Ron Mueck** again. When the dust finally settles, we need to make sure that this Gallery's reputation as a secure building outweighs Canterbury's reputation as an earthquake-troubled region.

To return to the here and now, however, and putting our frustrations at our delayed opening aside, this issue still feels like it comes at something of a turning point for the Gallery. Why? Because despite all the hurdles, we're presenting art again. Before this year, the **Outer Spaces** programme was a loose affiliation of works that didn't fit within our traditional exhibition spaces. We used monitors, stairwells, billboards and bunkers to present new art, and the resulting works were a great addition to our usual programme. So when the sudden removal of our exhibition galleries meant that the **Outer Spaces** was all we had left to work with, we took art to the streets. We've embraced gap sites, abandoned buildings and several alternative venues, and so far the reaction has been incredibly positive. Accordingly, the **Outer Spaces** is a theme that will run through the next few *Bulletins*.

At the end of November 2011 we worked with local artist Wayne Youle to produce a mural for the Christchurch suburb of Sydenham. Nine months earlier, the Gallery had been preparing to hang Youle's **10 Down** survey exhibition—his biggest show to-date. Our version of that show didn't eventuate, so it was good to work with Wayne to produce a piece that focused on what was lost in Christchurch, and the courage, steadfastness and sense of humour that will be needed to 'restart' the city.

The public response to his work has been fantastic—it made the front page of *The Press*—and there is a palpable sense of pride in the work to be felt in Sydenham.

'Wayne's Wall' was followed in late December by Ronnie van Hout's *The creation of the world*—a nocturnal projection housed in the old villa opposite the Gallery on Worcester Boulevard. In it, a bearded Van Hout spews forth tiny Ronnies from a first-floor window. And in February we presented local artist Julia Morison's **Meet me on the other side**, shown in a space above NG on Madras Street. Forced to move away from the forms and materials she usually employs to make art, Morison began to use found objects, and an unlikely and pernicious substance—liquefaction (one of Morison's early forays into the medium was made with the pages of *B.164* and presented in *B.165*). We're grateful to NG for their help in making this project happen—with staggering views out into the city's red zone from its windows, the new space is a fantastically apposite place to view the art.

We plan to use the NG space again—this time to show the much delayed **Rolling Maul**. It's been a long time coming for everybody and, although its form has been necessarily re-thought due to the constraints of a new space, we're delighted to finally be in a position to display new works by local artists, and we're thankful for the patience of all involved.

Sadly, patience is a virtue we're all going to have to display as we wait for a return to the Gallery proper. But in the meantime we will continue providing first-rate art experiences around the city wherever and whenever we can. Watch this (outer) space.

Jenny Harper

Director

February 2012

MAUL ROLLING MAUL ROL



A lot of water, and Lord only knows what else, has flowed under the bridge since Justin Paton and I first hatched our plans for a fast-paced, post-quake showing of new work by local artists. **Rolling Maul**, so far, has been quite the antithesis of 'fast-paced', and despite our best efforts, it is yet to roll anywhere—rather it has been beset by the same delays, cancellations and frustrations as all of the Gallery's other in-house plans.

Our original concept, as outlined in *B.165*, was based around the use of one of Christchurch Art Gallery's ground-floor exhibition spaces, which we hoped to reoccupy as soon as they were no longer required as part of the City Council/CERA earthquake response. But as we are now only too aware, we won't be showing anything there any time soon.

However, Gallery staff are nothing if not tenacious in the face of a good wall-to-wall thwarting, and the chance to expose some of Christchurch's considerable talent was too good to give up on. It's also true to say that, with some notable exceptions, the opportunities for artists to exhibit in the city are still few and far between.

So, in what is rapidly becoming classic Christchurch style, we have licked our wounds and re-grouped. In the process, **Rolling Maul** has evolved from a group exhibition in a single space with a regularly changing line-up to a dynamic project series that unfolds as, when and where the best opportunities arise. The first wave will be launched as a series of quick turnaround solo and group exhibitions in our new favourite venue, the spruced-up gallery space above NG at 212 Madras Street, and we'll keep you updated as new **Rolling Maul** elements come into play over time.

In the following pages, we introduce a few more of the artists who will feature in the programme over the next few months and discover, in their own words, what they've been working on recently.

Felicity Milburn
Curator



Scott Flanagan

Quite simply everything has changed significantly for me since the advent of the earthquake. My studio was in the Bains Warehouse, Lichfield Street, for eleven years—that's a long time to make and collect things in one place. I managed to escape from my collapsed studio with a pair of sneakers, trousers, a t-shirt, my laptop and my life. Everything else was destroyed under tonnes of steel. I left Christchurch five days later.

I went to Nelson, then back to Christchurch, then on to Port Chalmers and finally found a small reclusory in Deborah Bay. The shock and trauma of the event affected me for many months (and I suppose will continue to do so for some time in various manifestations), rendering anything other than reading seemingly effete.

In June I started drawing; art's natural compulsion surfacing through the roiling cauldron of my everyday uncertainty. The act of drawing compelled me to think about art and, in all honesty, to consider the question of whether I wanted to continue with my career—an understandable reaction to recent unenviable losses.

I reached a point where I was drawing for ten to fifteen hours a day, so I was contemplating my relationship with art a lot. Being a ruminative person, it took a few weeks for the penny to drop—I was drawing ten to fifteen hours per day, therefore my essential relationship with art was intact and quite healthy. A selection of works from this period was for an invitational drawing show at PaperGraphica from September to October.

Now I am ready to start a new studio. Somewhere in Dunedin is a small, rundown, ramshackle garret of the same vintage as the Bains Warehouse and I'll call it home for a while. I'm feeling quite comfortable with the challenge of starting on square one again, as while no one was watching I secretly moved my square one to the square four position.

Rolling Maul!



Charlotte Watson

Initially the quakes had no effect on my work, but eventually I felt I was ignoring the elephant in the room. It wasn't the destruction and disaster, but the heavily opinionated aspect of rebuilding the city that I was interested in, which resulted in sculptural work that left the construction up to the viewer. Aside from that, the continuing interruptions throughout the year just made me grit my teeth and become more determined. My processes became more innovative and localised; I chose materials that were quick to work with, and drawing became a major consideration. For those reasons 2011 became quite formative for me.

At the moment I am working towards a show at Chambers@241 in March. For that, the art school has kindly given me a space for a few months, so I have been ferreting away at some drawings and vinyl and Formica works. I am finding I have the time to explore some ideas that have been sitting on the back burner for a while, and to test some designs for future sculptural work, which is a process that I am really enjoying.

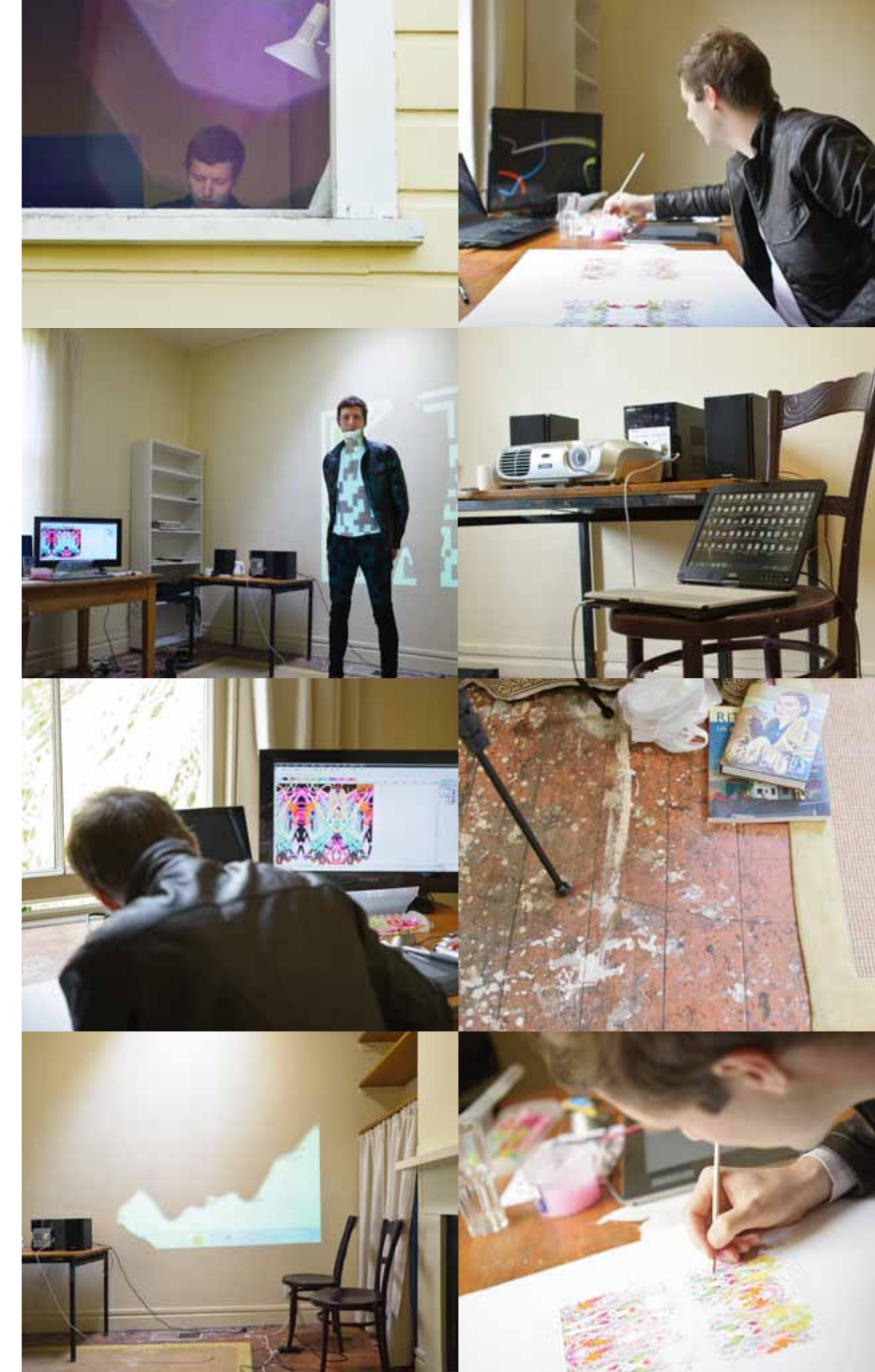


At the end of 2011, I undertook the Rita Angus Residency in Wellington. The residency is in Rita's old Fernbank Studio in Thorndon—so I found myself working in a place where the historical context was quite front and centre. For some time physical, geographical, and technological distance have been driving parts of my practice in different ways—most obviously in my *hyper/links* exhibition at the Physics Room before the earthquake and a work based on Jackson Pollock's *Blue Poles* at the Waikato Museum.

Although the visual interface in those works was in the form of code, the type of interface is always changing. During the residency I thought a lot about the idea of returning one of Rita's works to the studio of its making. There are a great deal of ghost stories about the cottage, and past works dealing with this such as a séance performed by Dane Mitchell a few years ago. I was thinking about what the contemporary version of reaching out to Rita might be, so I created a live event called *Channelling Rita*. After tracking down a work made in the studio to a private collection in Wellington, the owners kindly let me into their home to set up a webcam capturing the work over a two-hour period. This was live-streamed and projected in the studio onto a blank canvas at the same size as the original painting.

I also produced some new gouache paintings and drawings—a selection of which were shown at Bartley and Company Art in November. In many ways, these were the complete opposite to the economical and direct process of the coding work. They began as visual fragments drawn together from all kinds of digital media—from iPad apps, Google image searches and screensavers to drawing software.

Andre Hemer





The quakes affected me personally and professionally (for an artist the lines between these two spheres can be indistinct). I was affected along with everyone else in fundamental ways; worry and anxiety over the safety and wellbeing of whānau (friends, family, flatmates and our art community) and the damage to my house. We've all had to come to terms with losing our city as we knew and loved it.

Beyond this, I lost two studios in the quakes; the first (the Druids building on Manchester Street) was damaged in September and then came down completely in February (a friend described the two-storey building to me as 'a roof on the road'). Luckily, our studio group had left and moved into a church, which has since been sold to become a restaurant. These relocations meant I had to twice reschedule a solo show coming up at the Sarjeant Gallery (now planned for August).

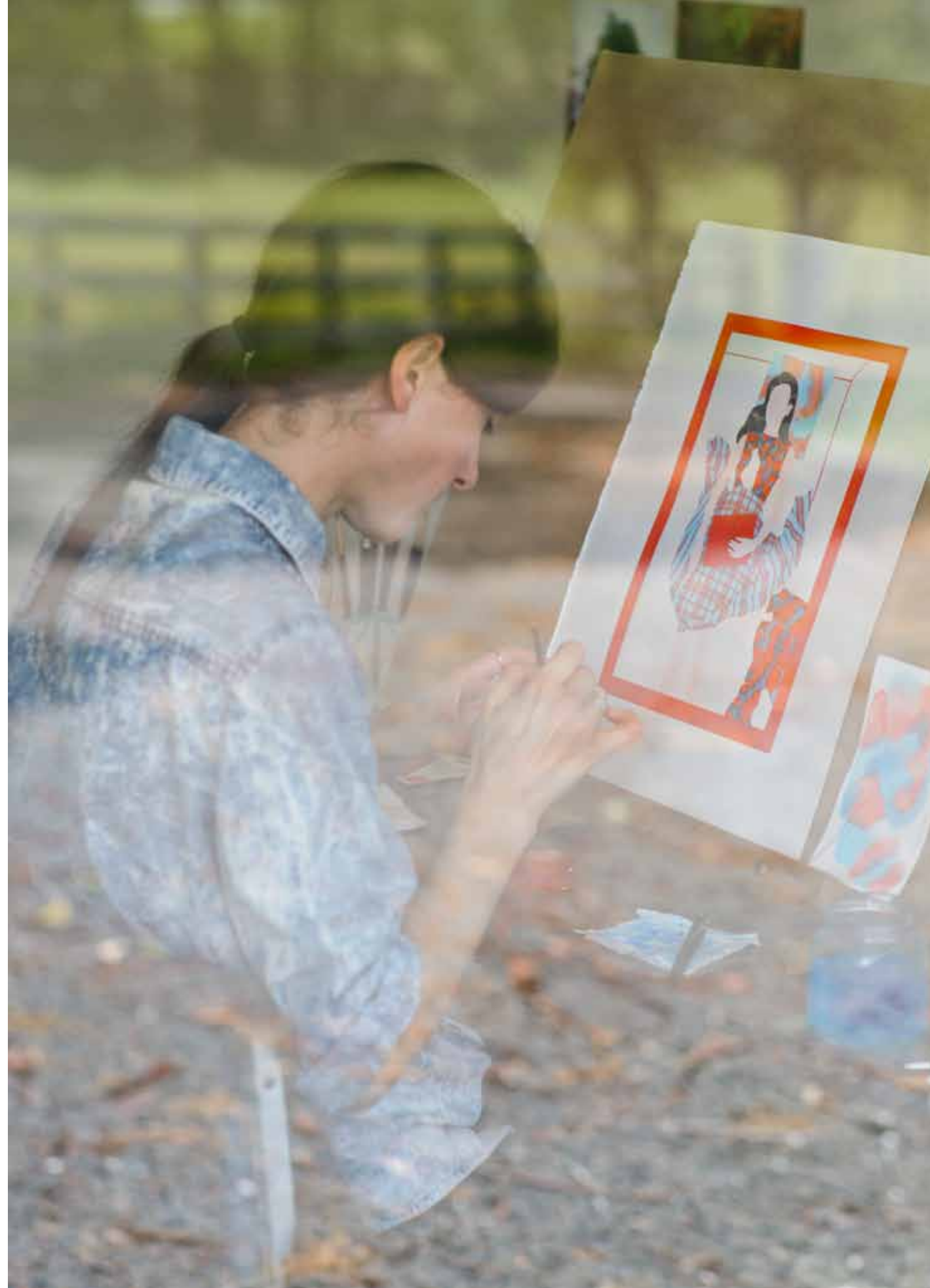
Miranda Parkes

The importance of studio space to my work can't be overestimated. The way that I paint is process-based and responsive rather than planned beforehand, so the studio provides the platform against which the work develops. As I discovered through its absence, it offers a mental space to tie the work to when I'm at home dreaming and thinking about it.

My work is completely self-structured and comes from a deeper level beyond daily life that demands absorption; the earthquakes affected my ability to work, both in the sense of physically painting and having the mind space to focus on it.

With time between studios, however, I was able to complete research that is now manifesting in my work. 2012 is already a full year: I have a project show coming up in Sydney, my show at the Sarjeant Gallery, a November show at Jonathan Smart and, of course, **Rolling Maul**. The work for these will be fuelled by the quakes to the degree that my living environment always impacts upon it. The changing city can be found in *Boomer*, the work for my Sydney show, where old spaces have closed off, new spaces have opened up and there is a sense of unease and movement, both visual and actual.





I had been based at the Arts Centre as the Olivia Spencer Bower Foundation artist-in-residence for only two weeks before the 22 February earthquake, but I had been living in Christchurch for a year prior to this and during 2008. As a result of the quake I no longer had accommodation or a studio in Christchurch so I made the decision to move to Auckland to be with family. I am currently living and working twenty-minutes north of Auckland city in a rural area, so everything has changed in terms of my working environment. I am much more isolated than I would have been at the Arts Centre, and am working in a smaller space, but it is a good place to really focus and develop my work.

I have recently made a series of works that evolved from the experience—the earthquakes, aftershocks and sudden relocation. In these works the female figures that previously existed as images on the walls of my interiors have made their way to the forefront of the painting. The architecture of the space is less apparent and the focus has closed in on the body; furniture and other objects are no longer visible. A painted frame holds the body and an elusive backdrop. There is a new sense of movement butting up against stillness, and an intense vibration of colour. Even though I have been away from the aftershocks for some time now, I still seem to have a heightened sensitivity to vibration, certain sounds and movements, and I think this comes through in the work. I have been thinking about ideas of protective colouration, in the way that the body meets its surroundings. I have continued to explore ideas of private and protective spaces, and the control or meaning created in our lives through our relationship to spaces and objects. I am slowly bringing back the depth of the interior space, the architecture and other objects into the work.

Georgie Hill



PERIMETER NOTES: A DAY AROUND THE RED ZONE

With Christchurch Art Gallery still closed and the city rattled by aftershocks, senior curator Justin Paton set out early this year for a walk around the red zone to look for ‘signs of art-life’. In this diary of his day, he finds toppled monuments, long-hidden murals, ‘outlaw greenery’—and a whole lot of wire-mesh fence.

10.01.12

It’s 8:30 in the morning on 10 January in the earthquake-shaken city of Christchurch, and I’m at home packing my bag in preparation for a day ‘on assignment’ around the centre of town.

Don’t, however, let that shiny word ‘assignment’ fool you into thinking I know what I’m looking for.

I’ve explained the trip to *Bulletin’s* editor as a kind of tour of the public-art horizon, something to tie in with the public art programme that the Gallery has just launched. I’ve played up the idea of curator as reporter, trudging the city with Dictaphone in hand. But the truth is that my motives today are looser and more obsessive (plus, I don’t own a Dictaphone). Partly, yes, I do want to see how public art as we know it is surviving in a city where so much has been damaged or demolished. But I’ve got to admit that I’m just as fascinated by everything in the city that’s *not* art—by all the things in the post-quake landscape that seem to imitate or ignore or outdo it. And if I’m completely honest, I need to admit that art may have nothing to do with it—that I’m heading back to the edge of the so-called ‘red zone’ to simply and dumbfoundedly *stare*.

Déjà vu all over again

It’s quiet on the roads as I bike into town and you could put that down to the holiday season. But there’s a larger and more anxious silence that seems to hang over the city this new year—one caused not by post-celebratory exhaustion, but by a fresh burst of seismic activity. After a horribly timed jolt on 23 December (Merry Christmas to you too), Christchurch has been rattled throughout the new year by

hundreds of fresh aftershocks. It’s been like nature’s version of a bad Hollywood blockbuster—heartless, over-reliant on shock effects, and far too predictably plotted.

Certainly, the story is starting to feel stale for those of us who work at Christchurch Art Gallery. Our *real* offices were already out of bounds thanks to quakes and demolitions. Now, thanks to the recent quakes, our *temporary* offices are off-limits too, and the prospect of finding *temporary temporary* offices is too dreary and convoluted to contemplate. But the duller plot line in our own quake saga relates to the Gallery itself, which remains as closed as any public gallery has ever been in this country, pending neighbouring demolitions and what the experts call ‘remedial engineering’; on our rare trips inside the building to retrieve books and gear, you can almost hear the dust settling.

One way for a curator to deal with all this would be to take the nostalgic-depressive route, sitting inside with the curtains pulled while watching old Christchurch Art Gallery security tapes. (And believe me, there are times I’ve been tempted.) But today I’m trying a more constructive approach to the Gallery’s closure and the general art-drought. Call it open-air therapy, constructive dawdling, or perhaps an act of sheer desperation. My aim is to walk the whole red-zone cordon before the day is out, tracing a ragged kind of square around the off-limits city centre and all the demolitions occurring within it—south, west, north, east and south again, with a few detours and errands along the way.

The long way round

I lock up my bike behind an abandoned car-yard on Cashel Street and start walking roughly south. Public art of any kind is in short supply round here, but what isn’t scarce is fencing. Whoever’s renting wire-mesh fence in this city must be laughing all the way to the bank. Thousands of panels of the stuff ring the inner-city red zone, marking the line between gawkers like me, on the outside, and the demolition crews within. And while it’s pleasant to contemplate the computer-rendered visions of the Christchurch of the future—all cafés, riverside walks and happy families—anyone with an interest in Christchurch’s public spaces right now has to reckon first and foremost with this fence. Security isn’t as fierce as it was in the doomy days after the quake, but there are still soldiers stationed at the entry-points, and you still hear stories of night-time trespassers caught by hidden cameras. Even if your mission involves nothing more than a bit of benign art tourism, the fence still makes life unpredictable. Already this morning, it’s forced me into a couple of side trips and backtrackings as I’ve come up against blocked streets and confusing chicanes along the wrecked eastern edge of the city. In short, the fence is fiercely practical and also powerfully symbolic—the butt-ugly emblem of a city we can’t get inside.

Lost in space

I’m walking west along St Asaph Street, fence to my right and traffic to my left, and coming into view on the intersection ahead is the first bona fide public sculpture of the day.

Passing Time, by Anton Parsons, was installed in early 2011, just a few days before 22 February when the huge earthquake struck. Sitting today on its corner plot like a robotic twist-toy for giants, the sculpture looks undamaged but somehow stunned by the events that have overtaken it. Its shining curves now frame a view of the red-zone fence on High Street, where one apt placard unwittingly replies to the spiralling numbers on *Passing Time* with a countdown of its own: ‘Month 1, Month 2, Month 3. How long to recovery?’

Passing Time’s troubles look mild, however, compared with those afflicting Phil Price’s big kinetic sculpture *Nucleus*, which has been marooned by the earthquake deep inside the red zone. Peering through the wire-mesh I can see the sculpture standing in the ruins, its red quadrants silently turning in the rising nor’west wind. In the





past I've had trouble with the sheer frictionlessness of *Nucleus*, which felt too much like a corporate logo reborn in three dimensions. But its precision-engineered surfaces, like those of *Passing Time*, feel different, more interesting, today. As the sculpture opens and closes in the wind, it starts to look sentient, groping, half-alive. And in a setting where there's not another moving thing, that movement becomes oddly expressive—as if the sculpture were some sci-fi creature signalling to be rescued from this blasted bit of Earth.

How long until help arrives is anyone's guess. What comes through in the meantime is a limbo feeling, a thickened sense of waiting. The sculptures seem paused in neutral—passing time—until their city comes back.

Out from under

One block further on at the Manchester Street cordon, two tourists are performing what might be called the Red Zone Reach, holding their cameras up above the fence to get an uninterrupted view. Taking in the view myself, I can't blame them for wanting a record. From west to east the scene unfolds as a non-stop panorama of loss, made worse (for art fans, anyway) by the knowledge that this part of town once contained a good chunk of the city's art scene. But amidst all this loss, the demolition work has also revealed something unexpected. Right there on the newly exposed outer wall of the old Brooke/Gifford Gallery, there's a faded but thoroughly lovely example of old-school hand-painted signage—a message deposited by unknowing tradesmen for viewers here in the twenty-first century. 'PAINT', it says in huge curling yellow letters. And above



that: 'PROTECT YOUR INVESTMENT.' It's not exactly useful maintenance advice in this broken-down corner of the red zone, where the major landmark is the sagging carcass of the Hotel Grand Chancellor. Paint won't help it now.

I'll kiss it better

The protection idea is back in play just fifty metres away on the corner of Manchester and Welles, where someone has pasted a big paper Band-Aid to a demolition-damaged brick wall. I'd guess this artwork cost its maker about ten dollars, and as such, it's a world away from the big-chunk-of-metal school of public sculpture. But precisely because the materials are so modest, the spirit of the gesture really resonates. As anyone who has applied a Band-Aid to a child's all-but-invisibly scraped knee can tell

you, its function is often symbolic—more about the reassuring gesture than about healing the wound. Transferring that gesture to a broken public wall is both tender and bitterly ironic. On one hand, it feels like an expression of genuine care, with the artist as a kind of urban physician, doctoring to the city's wounded spaces. But you can also see it as an expression of anxiety and frustration, as if the artist is wondering, in the face of all this damage, what anyone can actually do. Are all our symbolic expressions of care and concern just Band-Aids on an unhealable wound? Whatever the answer, this tattered bit of street art is also weirdly exemplary, demonstrating how the best public artworks, rather than guzzling huge budgets, can manage to do more with less.

Word up

The major Emerging Trend of the morning is a proliferation of words. All along the red-zone fence line there's a mutter of mixed messages. It's as if the absence of people from this part of town has triggered an outbreak of signage, with written, sprayed and painted words making up for the lack of spoken ones. Of course there's the usual yammer of WE HAVE MOVED and YES WE'RE STILL OPEN. But I've also accumulated biblical quotes ('When you are broken-hearted I am close to you'), romantic poetry (William Blake, no less), and declarations of LOVE and HOPE. For a city where everyone has an opinion, words of protest are relatively scarce, with only a few signs on the High Street cordon saying things like SAVE WHAT'S LEFT. For sheer feebleness, though, there's no competing with the spray-painted VEGANISM on a prominent wall several blocks on. I mean, 'Veganism'?—sure, it's spelled correctly, but beyond that, what about it? But much as I think the graffitist in question should have, you know, clarified their position, I have to give them credit for lighting up the difference between the gallery setting and the public domain. In a gallery, after all, I could turn to a wall label to find out what the hell the artist was thinking. Out here, however, I'm on my own, and the feeling is surprisingly liberating.

**Desire lines**

It's 11am now at the Colombo/Tuam corner and the nor'wester is really hurling through. Seen from this spot, with glare whacking down, Christchurch looks like the world capital of Forlorn. This is partly due to the state of the old City Council building, with its patched windows and shredded curtains. But it's also due to the sheer extent of the demolition at this intersection, where dozens of buildings appear to have vanished without a trace. The sense of removal is so extreme it leaves me pondering half-pie paradoxes, like: do the buildings define the street or does the street define the buildings? Certainly, without the buildings there to shore them up, the streets and footpaths seem somehow sketchy and insubstantial, and it's only through habit (and maybe the fear of spraining an ankle) that I find myself sticking to them. When all the demolition is complete in the city (and there's a whole lot more to go), it'll be interesting to see whether Christchurch goes from being a city of the grid to one of wayward diagonals, where pedestrians simply strike out directly towards their location—beelining it across the rubble. A city defined not by the needs of drivers but by those unofficial paths called 'desire lines'.

The three Cs

In the meantime, what defines the city visually is collision, confusion and change. The three Cs are on full display a block or two further up Colombo, where demolition and redevelopment face off across the street. To one side, there's the reassuring sight of the

new Re:Start shopping mall, with its steady flow of slightly stunned looking tourists. Meanwhile, on the other side, the whole city's being slowly dismantled. Contrasts like this are so common now that the shock starts to wear off, but there's one detail on this block of Colombo that always stops me short—two dressing-room mirrors still attached to a wall three storeys up. The room they were part of is long gone, and so is the building the room stood in. Instead the mirrors just hang there, reflecting sky, waiting for a levitating customer.

Surprise

The roomless mirrors leave me wondering again about the place of art in all this. How could an artwork hope to compete with a sight so strange and so piercing? My own favourite public artists are exponents of surprise; they liven up the prose of the city with unexpected moments of poetry. But the challenge for public artists in Christchurch now is that there are so many surprises—so many jolts and disruptions to process as you make your way through the city.

Looking

Beyond the Re:Start mall, the red-zone perimeter merges briefly with the Avon River, and this produces a memorably weird moment in the history of Christchurch gardening—a mown bank on one side facing a terrifically woolly one on the other. What really surprises me here, however, is the number of people out walking. Some, to be sure, are just your standard urban hurriers, on their way to or from the mall. But there are also plenty, backpacked and

camera-toting, who have clearly come in just to look. My assumption that they're all cruise-ship tourists runs aground near the Worcester Boulevard cordon, where I get talking to a guy whose ironed leisurewear and fresh Nikes have me thinking he's from Tulsa or Florida. In fact he's visiting from nowhere more far-flung than the Christchurch suburb of Bryndwyr. It's his first proper visit to the inner city; his wife still refuses to come in. When I ask him what he thinks of it all, he puffs his cheeks and shakes his head, as if to say: *Say no more.*

Looking again

I'm still at the fence-line, looking at the Cathedral in the company of perhaps ten other tourists. And, not for the first time today, I'm experiencing mild ethical anxiety about doing all this *looking*. Is it wrong of me to be wandering round the city, treating it like so much *material*? One of the least popular characters in the post-quake imagination is the so-called disaster tourist—the 'rubbleneck' whose engagement with the city involves nothing more than gawking. The basic complaint is that, if you're looking at something, then you're not doing something about it—not *acting*. I don't have a watertight response to this, but I do have a feeling or intuition—a hunch that the looking, far from being frivolous, is an act with its own modest weight. It simply feels important to watch the city change and commit some of those changes to memory. At some hazy and slightly superstitious level, I'm convinced the disappearing city is grateful.

The Boulevard of Broken Art

There's still a bit of art to see along the length of Worcester Boulevard: Jae Hoon Lee's big back-lit billboard, Fayne Robinson's hefty pou, and (for the strong of stomach) Mark Whyte's stodgy *Canterbury Heroes* sculptures. But it's also a place where I find myself contemplating all the art that isn't here: the gaps, vacancies and phantom limbs that now hover in our public art landscape.

Along this Boulevard, the February earthquake left three key sculptures on the ground and in pieces. At the Cathedral Square end, Thomas Woolner's dapper statue of John Robert Godley lay face-planted on the ground, while at the other end, in front of the Museum, the Rolleston statue fell so hard it lost its head (a helpful local took it away for safe keeping and left his cell-phone number on the statue's neck). And between the two there's the plinth of the deposed Sir Robert Falcon Scott, whose broken body I saw glide by one day strapped to a flat-deck truck. Seen today with its empty plinths, Worcester Boulevard might well be dubbed the Boulevard of Broken Art.

Historically, statues are toppled from their plinths during moments of huge political change, as in Russia in the early 1990s when many Soviet-era statues came down. I suspect that's why people reacted so strongly to the press pictures of our so-called 'founding fathers' off their plinths. Here, it seemed, was alarming evidence that nature itself was revolting—that seismic forces were doing all they could to shake the city's composure.



Taking the weight

I have it on good advice that all three sculptures are under repair, and will duly be returned to their proper places. But in their empty state the plinths also raise some pressing but difficult questions about monuments and memorials—namely, in the wake of the earthquake, who and how should we remember?

The three fallen figures all come from a past in which statues were embraced more straightforwardly. There was a clearer idea about what made a 'hero', a firmer sense of who deserved to be rendered in bronze or stone. But for artists today it's a whole lot harder to shoulder that 'monumental' weight. The notion of elevating one person above all others sits uncomfortably with our democratic impulses. And in a setting like Christchurch, where so many people died and where there were, surely, so many unknown acts of heroism, singling out one figure for monumental treatment could seem especially inappropriate. It's easy to see why many contemporary memorialists avoid the figurative path altogether.

Even so, when the time eventually comes for the memorial discussion to begin, I hope the possibility of a figurative sculpture doesn't get ruled out. As is proved by Whyte's *Canterbury Heroes* further along the Boulevard, it could all go horribly wrong (while bad abstract sculpture tends to be merely boring, bad figurative sculpture can really be gruesome). But the tradition of the memorial figure is now so derided and neglected, it would be startling to see it revived. The challenge for artists in this kind of setting is to evoke the general through the particular—to

make one human body somehow take the weight of a larger loss. It's a tall order, but I find myself thinking of the recent sculptures of Christchurch artist Sam Harrison—pale plaster figures richly invested with endurance, inwardness and vulnerability. They seem to bear up, but only just, under nameless emotional burdens.

Honouring what's lost

There's another approach to the art of memory on offer down in Sydenham, where I've come to have a late lunch with the family before heading back to the Boulevard tonight. We're eating our sandwiches in the pocket-sized park just across from Wayne Youle's big 'shadowboard' mural, which fills one of the biggest bare walls in Sydenham with the silhouettes of ninety-five objects. Many of the missing objects are tools; they must be in use for the rebuild. But around and amongst them are the giant-sized shadows of dozens of other objects, a visual catalogue of the shapes of things that someone, anyone, might have lost in the quake. Shoes, rings, a toilet, a teddy bear. A whole house, a pet, a child. Though there's no bronze or stone involved, I do think of Wayne's wall as a memorial, and the lesson it teaches—with great good humour—is that a memorial must always *leave things out*. It has to honour what's lost by evoking its absence, not by trying to bring it back. It has to make us do the remembering, rather than doing the remembering for us. By reducing his chosen things to mere shadows, Wayne leaves us with crucial work to do. We've got to rummage in the tool shed of our own experiences and repopulate the shadowboard of memory.

Is anyone there?

I'm back on Worcester Boulevard in the almost dusk and let me tell you, it's *beyond quiet*. Back before the quakes I'd sometimes complain about the dearth of people in our inner city—the absence of the kind of neighbourly bustle you can find in Melbourne or even Sydney. Christchurch back then, however, seems as busy as Shanghai compared with Christchurch tonight. If a tumbleweed rolled through while a distant dog howled, that'd seem perfectly natural.

But someone is due to make an appearance and at 9pm there he is, looming like a B-movie monster in the top-floor window of the old house just opposite. If you're an art fan you'll probably recognise this face as belonging to Ronnie van Hout. But even if you're not, you can't miss the key fact, which is that he looks *maniacal*. Things only get stranger a few seconds later when the big Ronnie opens his mouth and a smaller version of himself climbs out to check out the view below.

Ronnie's video would make amusing viewing on any urban street. But here on the empty Boulevard, it accumulates an unexpected pathos. It's as if Ronnie has come out to look for human company, cupping his hands against the glass to scrutinise the street below. The only likely suspects during the time I'm here are a couple of backpackers, so besotted with each other that they walk right under Ronnie's nose without noticing. When the smaller Ronnie turns at last and climbs back inside himself, there's a feeling of comic resignation, as if, after surveying the paltry nightlife, he's opted for a cosy night in.



There's always a danger with Ronnie's work of over-explaining the joke, but, in its absurdist way, his video gets me thinking about the biggest challenge facing public artists in inner-city Christchurch—namely their shrunken audience. What does it mean to make public art when the public just isn't much around? If a sculpture falls over on the Boulevard and no one's there to hear it, does it make a sound? What I fear along with many is that we're seeing the emergence of a so-called 'donut city', where all the social and commercial energy has been spun out to the malls and industrial parks on the edges. And you know where most public art would end up in a donut city? It would end up 'in the hole'.

The Burnside Biennale of Contemporary Art

But maybe, I think as I walk away from the Boulevard, public artists should just walk away too. Maybe the problem of the empty centre should actually be seen as a prompt. Maybe artists should do as many others have done and seek spaces further out. Maybe the proving ground for public art henceforth is not the centre but the suburbs. 'The Burnside Biennale of Contemporary Art'

doesn't have quite the right ring to it. But how about 'SCAPE New Brighton', with the empty shops and downtrodden mall reclaimed as an arcade for art? Or for that matter (just dreaming here) persuading the legendary Münster Sculpture Project to open a satellite event in Dallington? I realise there are a few (ahem) funding issues to work through, but otherwise I'm sold...

Stuck

I'm north of the centre now, walking up the middle of Kilmore Street, and there's no need to watch for cars. The Copthorne Hotel squats on its corner like a post-punk Mayan temple, all sagging terraces and broken windows. And further along there's the lopsided Convention Centre, with its foyer full of artworks. Bill Culbert's neon, no longer glowing, snakes through the façade, while Phil Truitt's epic of optimism, *Passport to the New Millennium*, gallops all the way through the building. It seems especially mean that two such joy-giving artists should find themselves stuck in this place, and meaner still that the works in question are almost close enough to touch. As far as I know, there's still no official word on when or even whether the artworks will be rescued. The unofficial word (and here people tend to lower their voices a bit) is that the building is so compromised no one will even go inside.*

The swamp under the skin

From Kilmore to Peterborough, I'm bearing down on the last stretch of

*What did I know, four weeks later the Gallery's own Sean Duxfield helped rescue some of these. See p.58.

the red-zone safari. And with the river nearby, there's a constant sense of a landscape at work *underneath* the city. Everywhere there's evidence of what Christchurch was built on—the swamp under the skin. The silt that the quake squeezed up through the roads still rests in sullen drifts. And on Kilmore especially there are holes in the road that reveal a disturbing lack of solidity below. Of course we're all conscious at some theoretical level that the city wasn't always here, and that asphalt and traffic lights, in the geological scheme of things, are the most fleeting and recent of interventions. But there's nothing like evidence—silt, holes—to bring that knowledge home.

Outlaw greenery

As the ungrand tour continues eastwards, there's another sign of natural life I keep noticing. On cleared lots all along Peterborough Street the weeds are out in force. Even on sites that look grey and dead you can see them when you go in close—little blips and tufts of green emerging in gaps and hollows.

Needless to say this is not the shade of green that people think of when they talk about 'The Garden City'. For me that phrase has always brought to mind the not-quite-real Christchurch of the tourist brochures—a sun-struck leisureland of punts, weeping willows and lawns lawns lawns, where the easterly never blows. It's the city I associate with dull childhood trips across town to see the 'Best Street', which you could always identify by the plaque at its entry and the fanatical neatness beyond, and which I only recently discovered was one of a slew of awards handed out by the

Christchurch Beautifying Association, described on its website in weirdly militant terms as 'one of the most successful pressure groups in the history of Christchurch.'

I doubt the Association's idea of beauty stretches to encompass the weeds I've been noticing. Indeed it's probably only a matter of time before someone vigilant decrees them an eyesore or fire-risk. And for all I know there are good environmental reasons to send in an army of weed-whackers. But in the meantime these patches of outlaw plant-life leave me feeling cheerful. When the alternative is mostly quake-dust and gravel, I'm welcoming any sign of life I can find.

Sunflower seeds

There's more shaggy greenery rising up on Madras Street just past the river. Someone's planted hundreds of sunflowers where the Oxford Terrace Baptist Church used to be. And frankly, if sunflowers don't make you feel good, then it's time to take your soul in for a check-up.

It's only after reading the sign nearby that I make a kind of art connection. This, it turns out, is one of the 'Greening the Rubble' projects that sculptor Andrew Drummond has been driving with the help of local schools (here, Christchurch East) and willing landowners; there's a glorious meadow created in the same way on a big vacant lot in Woolston. What's striking about the project, however, is that it doesn't lean on Drummond's art credentials, despite his status as a battle-scarred veteran of past public art wars in Christchurch (don't mention the Millennium Bridge,

kids). It's as if he's resuming, in the most direct way possible, his early work as an environmental artist. The result is public art so straight-up and straightforward that we may not need to call it art at all.

When the new Christchurch comes into being, no doubt 'real' public artworks will be there—committee-approved, resource-consented and made to last forever. But for Christchurch at the moment, Drummond's modest plantings offer a vastly more interesting model. It's a very long way from public art as we've known it, and I for one want more of it. Art that proliferates at ground level rather than jutting priapically upwards. Art that takes root in unclaimed spaces rather than waiting around for a prime site. Art that requires no 'future-proofing' because it's only made to last a season.

Last light

Last stop before the light fails is the corner of Madras and Gloucester, where Charlie B's Backpackers used to stand. At the launch of Wayne Youle's mural before Christmas I met local artist Briar Cook, who spoke so feelingly about this spot that I resolved to come and see it. And despite the low light, or perhaps because of it, I can see what she meant. To the west across the red-zone fence-line, the whole city seems to have turned its back, the buildings reduced to severe dark shapes by the sun that's setting behind them. And here in the foreground there's another of the city's accidental meadows, a waist-high field of weeds and wildflowers—many of which Briar knew by name. The view seems to hold everything that makes the city both sad and amazing to walk around—the

conjunction of loss and growth, of then and now; and of course the stillness.

What makes a city a place worth walking in, as opposed to merely driving around? One of the best answers I know comes in Rebecca Solnit's book *Wanderlust*, which traces the history of walking from medieval pilgrims to the psychogeographers of today. In particular there's her chapter about Charles Baudelaire and Walter Benjamin, two great modern critics who placed walking at the heart of the urban experience. For both of them, Solnit explains, walking in the city was a way of getting pleasurable lost—not only in the twists and turns of the streets but also in the crowds that moved through them. What I've discovered in Christchurch today, however, is a different kind of disorientation. It's a city where, despite the occasional clusters of tourists, there's often no one around; a place where, rather than getting lost in the crowd, you can easily get lost in your own thoughts.

Having an entire city to yourself can be a dreamy and almost addictive experience, especially at this time of night when the light is falling and the air's still warm. But then the light drops a bit more and it starts to feel desolate. Cities need people. I'm going home.

Justin Paton

Senior curator

Outer Spaces

What do you do when you don't have a gallery to show art in? You show art somewhere else. That, at least, is what Christchurch Art Gallery has been doing since news came in of our delayed reopening. The Gallery already showed art outside, but only on the building's footprint. However, since late 2011 the **Outer Spaces** programme has been expanding into the wider city. From vivid murals on huge public walls to night-time video projections in nearby houses, the programme's aim is straightforward—to introduce moments of surprise, humour, colour and wonder to the post-quake Christchurch streetscape. Here are the current projects, and there are many more to follow.

Justin Paton
Senior curator



Matt Akehurst: **You are here**

Pablo Picasso, Marcel Duchamp, Damien Hirst, Robert Smithson, Michelangelo... Yes, all the big names have arrived on the Gallery forecourt. They've been put there by local artist Matt Akehurst, whose signpost sculpture *You are here* tells you the exact direction and distance to a world-famous work by each of these artists, and by many more. Akehurst is playing with the traditional assumption

that New Zealand is something of an art-island, far removed from the international centres of culture. But he is also responding to the state of the arts in post-quake Christchurch. After all, with the Gallery closed for some time and its collections stored away, local art-lovers may feel newly conscious of everything—sheer distance, as well as seismic inconvenience—that can come between viewers and artworks.

Matt Akehurst *You are here* 2011. Aluminium, steel, paint, vinyl. Courtesy of the artist



Julia Morison: **Aibohphobia**

Julia Morison colonises the Bunker with dizzying 'abyssal' patterns. Do they describe a recession into visual space or a protrusion from it? The sense of visual vertigo is heightened by Morison's use of 'hi-vis green', a colour associated with the earthquake recovery teams who occupied the Gallery for several months after February

2011. Finally the title alludes to the way the two sides of this design reverse or invert each other, so that the relationship between positive and negative space constantly twists and flips. 'Aibohphobia' is the fear of palindromes, which are words that say the same thing when read in reverse. The word itself is, scarily enough if you're aibohphobic, a palindrome.

Julia Morison *Aibohphobia* 2011. Acrylic paint

Ronnie van Hout: The creation of the world

Public artworks are usually designed to be encountered in broad daylight, but this work by Ronnie van Hout only comes alive after dark. Van Hout is well known for making art that's both haunting and funny, and his new video projection for the **Outer Spaces** programme is no exception.

To see it, head along Worcester Boulevard and check out the old house opposite the Gallery, just beside the big ramp that leads up to the City Council building. That's Ronnie you can see in the upstairs window, hatching some strange new 'creations'...

Supported by Mitsubishi Electric and Garrick & Company

Ronnie van Hout *The creation of the world* (detail) 2011. Digital video. Collection of the artist, Melbourne, Australia



Wayne Youle: I seem to have temporarily misplaced my sense of humour

An enormous new public artwork at the gateway to the suburb of Sydenham. Inspired by memories of his grandfather's workshop, Wayne has designed a huge shadowboard like those found in sheds and garages throughout the world. Alongside hammers and other tools, Wayne's board contains some familiar but unexpected

things—like toys, wedding rings, toilets, pet cats and dogs and even an entire family home. In the artist's words: 'this mural is for all those who lent their tools and their hands to all who needed help. Also to all those who lost something in the quakes, no matter what that something may have been. Don't lose your sense of humour and ability to smile.'

Produced in collaboration with Gap Filler

Wayne Youle *I seem to have temporarily misplaced my sense of humour* (detail) 2011. Mural presented by Christchurch Art Gallery and Gap Filler. Reproduced courtesy the artist

Jae Hoon Lee: Annapurna

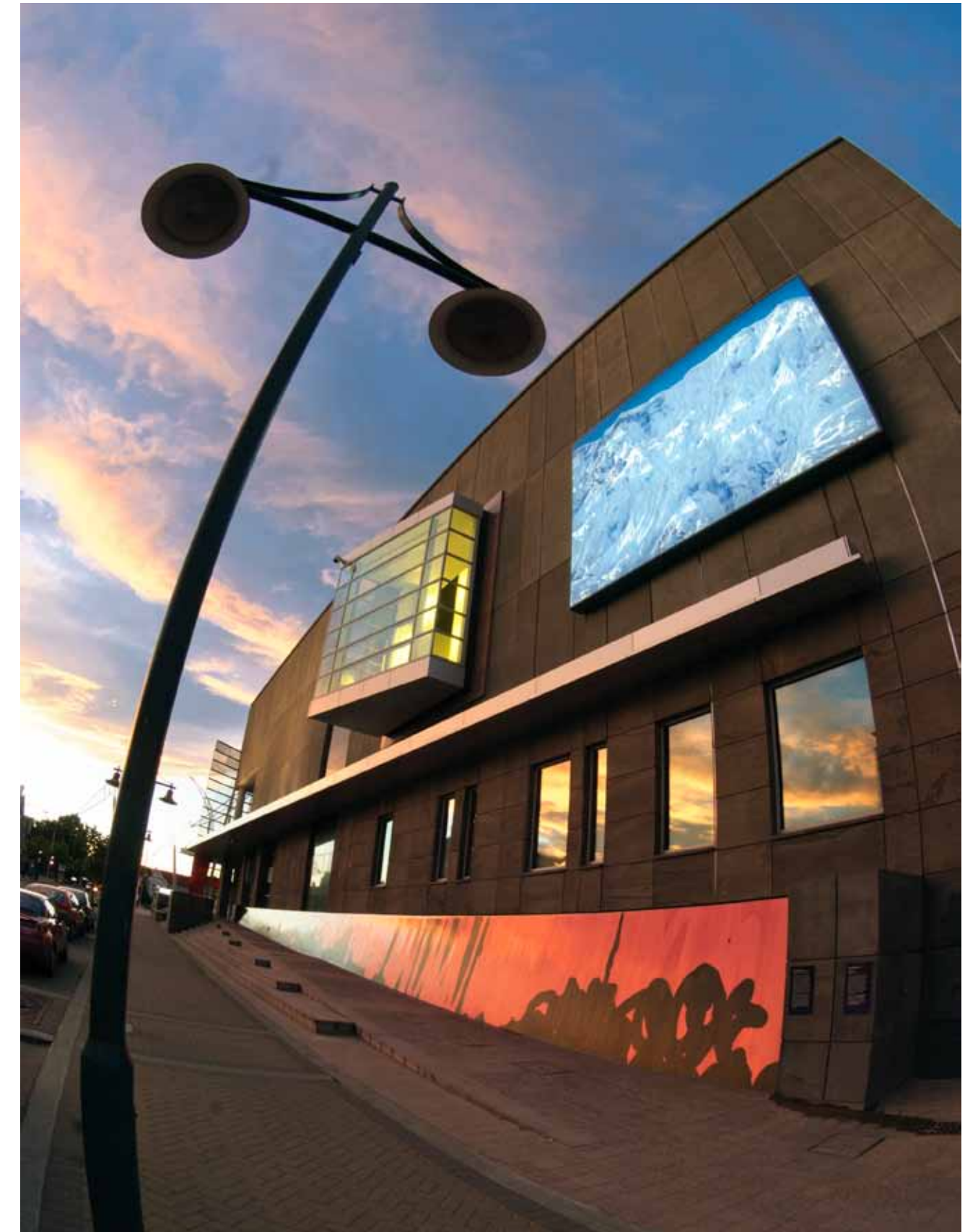
Jae Hoon Lee makes travel photographs with a twist, harvesting hundreds of images in remote locations and then digitally combining and altering them. The image above is the product of Lee's recent travels in Nepal and in particular near the vast series of peaks in the Himalayas called Annapurna. Instead of presenting this landscape in one photograph taken from one point of view, Lee has merged dozens of images. The result, which glows through the night on the Gallery's Worcester Boulevard façade, evokes the cool beauty and dizzying immensity of this sacred landscape.

Jae Hoon Lee *Annapurna* 2010. Digital photograph. Commissioned in 2010 for Springboard

Andre Hemer: Things to do with paint that won't dry

The bands of coloured paint that appear to stream down the (sadly, currently dry) water feature outside Christchurch Art Gallery also seem to flow out from (and back into) the architecture of the Gallery. Andre Hemer is interested in the relationship between the material nature of painting and the process; here he parodies the traditional effects of painting, using computer software to create hard-edged brush strokes, splatters and spills.

Andre Hemer *Things to do with paint that won't dry* 2010. Laminate and digital print on vinyl adhesive



MAKE A DONATION, MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Following the Canterbury earthquakes, Christchurch Art Gallery needs your support more than ever. By becoming a supporter of the Christchurch Art Gallery Trust you can help the Gallery continue to grow as an internationally recognised centre of excellence, providing a stimulating and culturally enriching experience for all who visit in the future.

**CHRISTCHURCH
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WAYS YOU CAN MAKE A DONATION

The Christchurch Art Gallery Trust welcomes all contributions and offers a number of ways you can make a donation.

Annual Giving

Our three-tiered programme for making annual donations allows you to choose the level that best suits your circumstances. Each level of giving confers a number of exclusive benefits, including private dinners and cocktail functions, personal invitations and special viewings of the collection.

Patrons' Circle (\$10,000 and above)

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Benefactors' Circle (\$1,000 – \$5,000)

Collection Development

The Challenge Grant and Challenge Grant Response Fund

The Challenge Grant is a ten-year commitment by Christchurch City Council to supplement the collection development budget by matching dollar-for-dollar any amount raised by the Trust up to a set amount per annum.

Target 2011–12: \$204,000

Total raised by 31 January 2012: \$107,500

\$96,500 to be raised by 30 June 2012

Special Donations

Making a special donation means you can stipulate what you would like your contribution to be used for.

Bequests

This is your opportunity to leave an inspirational legacy for the future by including the Gallery in your will.

Christchurch Art Gallery formally acknowledges the major donors who contributed to the building of the Gallery.

Hon. Margaret Austin, Kiri Borg and Brian Henry, Hon. Philip and Mrs Ros Burdon, Philip Carter, Ben Danis, Sir Neil and Lady Isaac, Neil and Diane McKegg, Monica Richards, Robert and Barbara Stewart, Sir Robertson and Lady Stewart, Stout Trust, W.A. Sutton Trust, Sir Angus and Lady Tait, Adriaan and Gabrielle Tasman, Jim and Susan Wakefield. Many continue to support the Gallery and we thank them.

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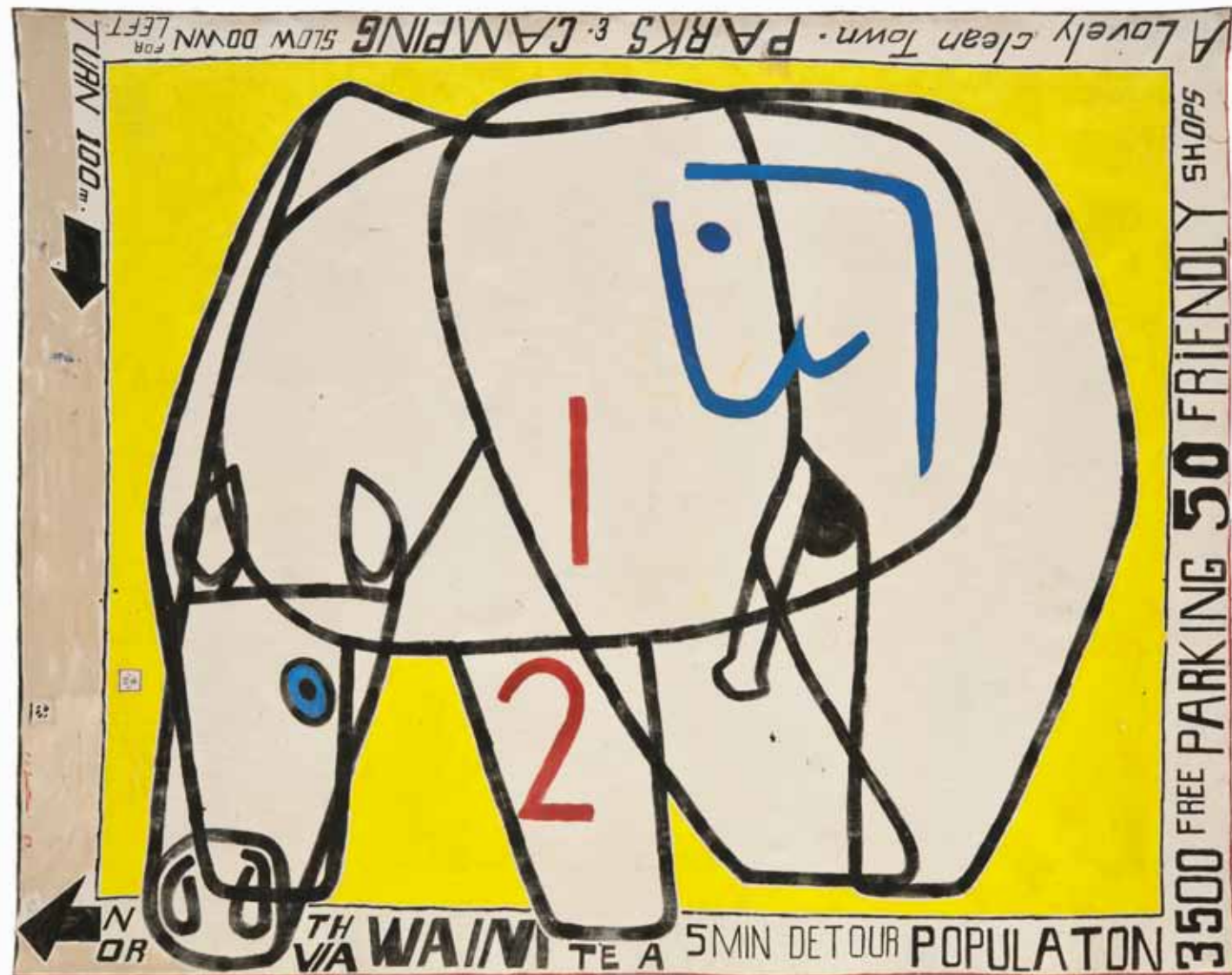
Please contact the Gallery's development manager.
Tel: (+64) 27 2160904; email: cagtrust@ccc.govt.nz

Tax Status—The Christchurch Art Gallery Trust is a charitable trust registered with the Charities Commission. The Trust has tax charity status as defined under the Income Tax Act 2007.



THE ART OF CONTINUED GIVING

Philip Truettum Schooling 1987–97.
Acrylic on canvas. Collection of
Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o
Waiwhetu, presented by the artist 2009



Philip Trusttum Waimate Flag
1987. Acrylic on canvas. Collection
of Christchurch Art Gallery Te
Puna o Waiwhetu, presented by
the artist 2009



Philip Trusttum Chopping
1987/8–2000. Acrylic on canvas.
Collection of Christchurch Art
Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu,
presented by the artist 2009



Philip Trusttum Heavy Going
1989–2000. Acrylic on canvas.
Collection of Christchurch Art
Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu,
presented by the artist 2009

In B.166, we took a closer look at a number of gifts the Gallery has received over the last few years. Here's another great example:

In 2009, Christchurch painter Philip Trusttum made us an extraordinary offer—a gift of twenty works, to be selected by the Gallery, with no limit imposed on scale or value. He proposed that ten works be chosen at the time of the gift and a further ten selected in five years. It was a remarkable opportunity—although the Gallery already had a good range of Trusttum's works in the collection, inevitably, with a senior artist of such prodigious energy, it has not been remotely possible to acquire representative works from every period.

The choice of the first ten paintings placed a deliberate emphasis on Trusttum's recent work, but also sought to represent lesser-known aspects of his practice, such as the interest in the idea of 'women's

work' and craft explored in the book-like *Martin's Sewing Kit*. The epic scale of several works (such as the sixteen metre-long *Depot*), which makes them challenging to exhibit in domestic, or even many public, settings, presents a mouth-watering prospect for the expansive spaces of our collection galleries. All in all, this incredibly generous gift will more than double our holdings of Trusttum's work—and, of course, it has also placed a very welcome item on the Acquisition Committee's 'to-do' list for 2014.

Felicity Milburn
Curator

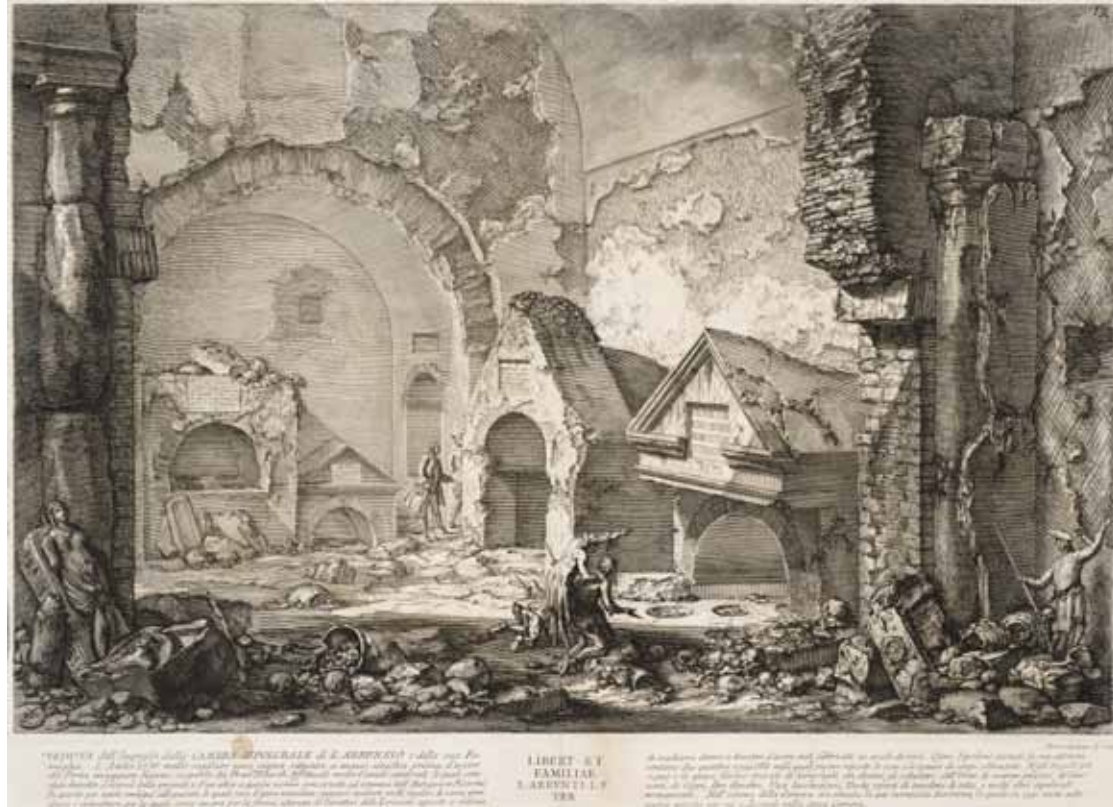
Frances Hodgkins *Phoenician Ruins* c.1937. Gouache on paper. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, gifted by Mr and Mrs M. Ash, England 1980

Surviving History

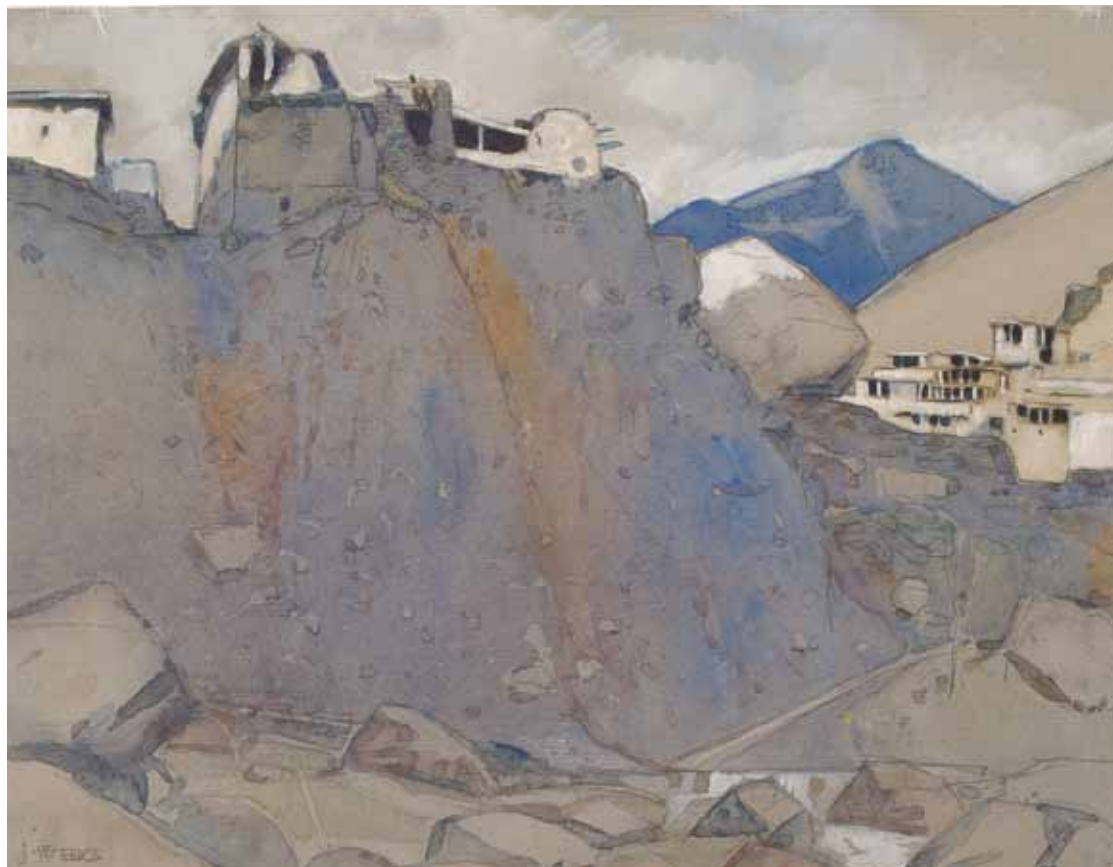
In working towards the planned exhibition **Reconstruction: conversations on a city**, curator Ken Hall discusses ruins and images of ruin in relation to the architectural heritage structures that might remain in our reconfigured cityscape.



Giovanni Battista Piranesi *Veduta dell' Ingresso della Camera Sepolcrale di L. Arrunzio e della sua Famiglia (Interior view of the family tomb of Lucius Arruntius)* 1756. Engraving. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 1971



John Weeks *Ruined Stronghold, Grand Atlas, Morocco* undated. Watercolour. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased with assistance from the Ballantyne bequest and the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council 1969



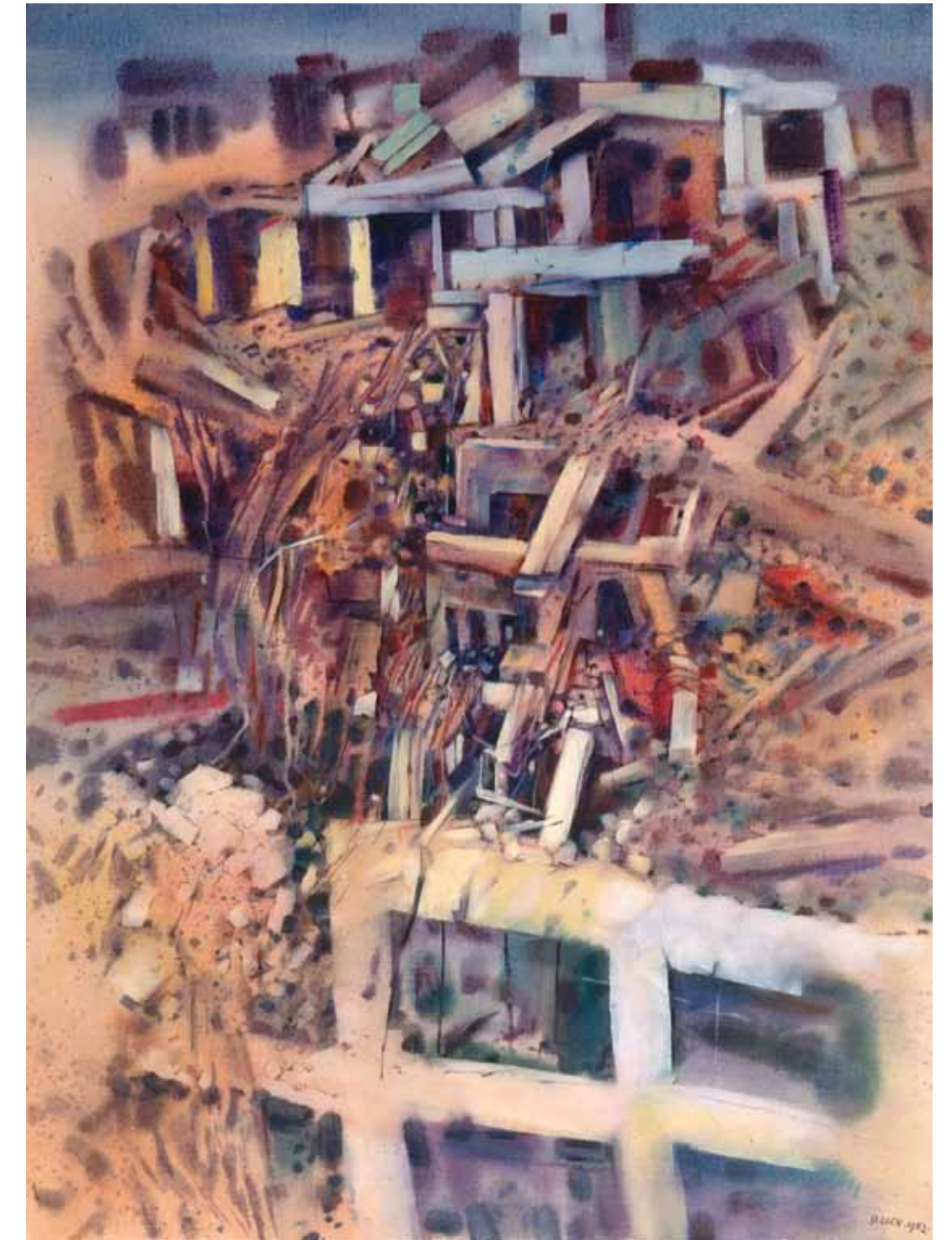
TWO MONTHS AFTER 9/11, the *New York Times* architectural reviewer Herbert Muschamp—aware that he was treading at the edge of sacrilege—spoke of the beauty of the remaining walls at Ground Zero and made comparison between the twisted debris and a recently completed Frank Gehry project nearby.¹ The rubble was being hastily removed, but he saw opportunity within the ruins for a type of memorial; he also proposed the engravings of Piranesi as ‘required study for those now gazing on ground zero’. His aesthetic response was echoed by critic Susan Sontag after her viewing of high-key photographs of Ground Zero by Joel Meyerowitz:

There is beauty in ruins. To acknowledge the beauty of photographs of the World Trade Center ruins in the months following the attack seemed frivolous, sacrilegious. The most people dared say was that the photographs were ‘surreal’, a hectic euphemism behind which the disgraced notion of beauty cowered. But they were beautiful, many of them...²

Understandably, the discussion of beauty wrought through trauma can pose difficulties. Meyerowitz himself found it ‘hard to come to terms with the awful beauty of a place like this’; his struggling, almost thrilled, account recalling the apocalyptic visions of English painter John Martin when he described ‘a spectacle with a cast of thousands, lit by a master lighter and played out on a stage of immense proportions.’³

Art and literature reveal endless dramatic pleasure taken from ruins, in which the aesthetic of the sublime is recognised in part as an aid to naming, ‘the confusion that comes over us when faced with wholesale destruction: we experience storms, battles, earthquakes, and revolutions as equally impressive facts of both nature and history.’⁴ A surprising number of works in the Gallery’s collection depict ruins (and how different they look to us now), from the grand destruction of Piranesi to the neo-Romantic abstraction of Frances Hodgkins in *Phoenician Ruins* (c.1937), where attraction to architectural decay is accompanied by her characteristic painterly vigour. Abstract qualities and pleasing forms also prevail in John Weeks’s spatial construction *Ruined Stronghold, Grand Atlas, Morocco* (undated), as well as in Doris Lusk’s unsettlingly prescient *Finale* (1982), a work decrying Christchurch’s partiality to demolition.

For the eighteenth-century Grand Tourist, ruins signalled timeless endurance (the artist’s or poet’s reflective contribution was naturally diminished where architectural forms remained intact). Ruin appreciation provided allegorical, poetic or metaphysical lessons—reinforcing the idea of *vanitas*, they were a metaphor for the human condition. In earlier Renaissance painting, religious ideas were conveyed by crumbling ruins, the Holy Family in their midst symbolising the new order against a background of antique decay. In Italy, political meaning also became attached to ruins as a growing



Doris Lusk *Finale* 1982. Acrylic on canvas. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 1982



Unknown artist *The Colosseum, Rome* undated. Oil on canvas. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased with assistance from Ballantyne Bequest 1971

nationalist symbol—something generally overlooked by poets or painters in pursuit of Romantic reverie. Images of ruins became intensified in meaning through the inclusion of small-scale human figures, which were part of an established vocabulary. The ruins themselves were essential within the Grand Tour experience, just as today they are an understood part of the global tourist trail. Staying with the here and now, we might identify a trap. In allowing sightseers to be momentarily transformed into poetic thinkers through presenting ruins as an attraction, we should recognise (as author Brian Dillon outlines) that:

*For all its allure, its mystery, its sublime significance, the ruin always totters on the edge of a certain species of kitsch. The pleasure of the ruin—the frisson of decay, distance, destruction—is both absolutely unique to the individual wreckage, and endlessly repeatable, like the postcard that is so often its tangible memento.*⁵

If this risk is deemed not very great in our own time and place, then dare we ask the value of ruins for this city? In considering the remaining two-million-ton pile of debris of the World Trade Center (transfer this thought to Bottle Lake Forest Park), Patricia Yaeger wrote of being ‘forced

... to encounter a formally built environment as its components—as lost labor, lost structure.⁶ In this city, with its enormous loss of Victorian architectural fabric, whether neoclassical or Gothic Revival, we might add the ideas of lost continuity and lost knowledge—invaluable reminders that this is no longer how we build or think. An attempt to retain more of this fabric as ruins could have meant much: it would certainly have provided tourist bait. John Ruskin in 1849 invited his readers to recognise that where we live ‘belongs as much to those who are to come after us ... as to us.’⁷ In this city, the demolition and removal of so very much means that many possibilities to be explored—whether for artist or for everyman—have been efficiently lost.

Ken Hall
Curator

For more images of ruin in the collection, see www.christchurchartgallery.org.nz/mygallery/wy54j/

William Sutton *Ruins of Temple of Apollo Sosianus, Rome*, 20 Jan 1974. 1974. Watercolour. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, gift of the artist 1989



Luigi Rossini *Arco di Druso* 1839. Engraving. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 1998



NOTES

1. Herbert Muschamp, ‘The Commemorative Beauty of Tragic Wreckage’, *The New York Times*, 11 November 2001. <http://www.nytimes.com/2001/11/11/arts/art-architecture-the-commemorative-beauty-of-tragic-wreckage.html>
2. Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, London, 2003, p.67.
3. Quoted in Maria Sturken, *Tourists of History: Memory, Kitsch, and Consumerism from Oklahoma City to Ground Zero*, Durham, 2007, p.196.
4. Brian Dillon, ‘Fragments from a History of Ruin’, *Cabinet*, Issue 20, winter 2005–6. <http://www.cabinetmagazine.org/issues/20/dillon.php>
5. *ibid.* p.7.
6. Patricia Yaeger, quoted by László Munteán in ‘Rubble as Archive, or 9/11 as Dust, Debris, and Bodily Vanishing’, *Trauma at Home: After 9/11*, Lincoln, 2003, p.187.
7. John Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, London, 1849, p.171.

AMNESIA: RONNIE VAN HOUT'S FLYING NUN ESCAPADES

Peter Vangioni

Ronnie van Hout **Pin Group**
Poster 1983. Screenprint on
hand-painted paper. Collection
of Christchurch City Libraries Ngā
Kete Wānanga-o-Ōtautahi



Clockwise from top left:
 Ronnie van Hout, cover for Pin
 Group *Coat / Jim* 1981. Screenprint
 Ronnie van Hout, cover for Pin
 Group *Ambivalence / Columbia*
 1981. Photo screenprint on hand-
 painted card
 Ronnie van Hout, cover for 25 Cents
Don't Deceive Me / The Witch
 1983. Photo screenprint
 Ronnie van Hout, cover for Sneaky
 Feelings *Amnesia / Be My Friend*
 1983. Screenprint
 All private collection, Christchurch

'... AT THE TIME WHEN I WAS AT ART SCHOOL, THERE WAS A GREAT LOCAL MUSIC SCENE HAPPENING, AND A REAL SENSE OF CREATIVE INVENTION CAME WITH IT.'

LOCATED FIRMLY ON THE MARGINS OF THE FINE ARTS, the music video is a genre where film-makers often have license to incorporate more creative and experimental techniques. The exhibition **Art School 125**, held at Christchurch Art Gallery in 2007 to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts, included a number of music videos and documentary films from the 1980s, made for bands that were associated with Christchurch's Flying Nun Records by film students from the school. They were displayed on a small monitor at the top of the stairs, which, at the time, seemed a little like short-changing the film-makers and bands. Looking back, however, maybe it was appropriate that this selection of videos was located outside the main exhibition space: away from the fine art, the poor cousin from the wrong side of the street.

Many of the videos, by film-makers including John Chrisstoffels, Ronnie van Hout, Robin Neate, Stuart Page and Varina Sydow, were experimental in nature and complemented the raw garage sounds of the bands with avant-garde techniques such as cut-up. This aspect of **Art School 125** captured the DIY spirit of the early 1980s post-punk era in Christchurch, and Ronnie van Hout, whose latest film work *The creation*

of the world is currently being displayed as part of our **Outer Spaces** programme, was an important figure in this scene. He not only made documentary films for legendary New Zealand bands Pin Group and The Gordons as well as a video for The Clean but also designed and hand-screenprinted record covers for several Flying Nun bands.

As a young film student at the University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts at Ilam in the early 1980s, Van Hout found an ideal outlet for his artistic interests in the Flying Nun scene in Christchurch. He acknowledges the influence of this on his work:

Importantly, at the time when I was at art school, there was a great local music scene happening, and a real sense of creative invention came with it. It was all a bit underground, because you couldn't get anything shown or played in the mainstream. This group of people was more important than anything happening at art school.¹

Flying Nun made its appearance in Christchurch in November 1981, and the label's first release, the 7" single *Ambivalence / Columbia* by Pin Group, featured a hand-screenprinted cover by Ronnie—a black-on-black found photographic image. The minimal nature of this cover, which features no written information on

the band, the songs or the Flying Nun label, reflects the anti-marketing ethos that the band and label embraced in the early 1980s.

Ronnie screenprinted three other 7" single covers for Flying Nun including the Pin Group's second single *Coat / Jim*, 25 Cents' *Don't Deceive Me / The Witch* and Sneaky Feelings' *Amnesia / Be My Friend*. All were hand printed, which, when you consider the use of multiple colours, was a process that required commitment from the artist. For instance, each cover for *Coat / Jim*, featuring sliced kiwifruit, had to be individually screenprinted three times, and was produced in at least eight different colour variations.

These record covers highlight the influence of Andy Warhol on Van Hout's designs for Flying Nun—the depiction of a fruit parallels Warhol's famous banana on the first Velvet Underground album. (The cat on the cover of the *Amnesia* single is a true homage to Warhol and is after one of the artist's cats, illustrated in his 1954 self-published book, *25 Cats named Sam and One Blue Pussy*.) Van Hout's incorporation of found photographs—making copies of seemingly banal images, soldiers and a helicopter or a person in a welding mask, and reinventing them—is classic Warhol. But perhaps more important still was Van





Ronnie van Hout, still from The Clean *Getting Older* 1982.



Ronnie van Hout, cover for Pin Group *Go to town* 1982. Commercially printed ep cover. Private collection, Christchurch



NOTES

1. Ronnie van Hout, interview with Peter Vangioni, 2007.
2. Ibid.
3. Robert Scott, guest blogger on the Flying Nun blog, 24 September 2010. blog.flyingnun.co.nz/2010/09/24/guest-blog-robert-scott/
4. Laura Preston and Mark Williams, *Object Lessons: A Musical Fiction*, Wellington, 2010, p.40.
5. Ibid.

Ronnie van Hout, cover for Pin Group *Go to town* 1982. Commercially printed ep cover. Private collection, Christchurch

Hout's use of the screenprint medium: the scribbled lines, the variety of colour combinations and the slightly misaligned registration are all hallmarks of Warhol's screenprints.

Screenprinting at the time was not taught in the printmaking department at Ilam—it was essentially an underground print medium and for Van Hout '... practical lessons came mostly from older students, in my year and other years ... I also learned how to do photo silk-screening from a third-year student in my first year. At the time photo silk-screening was banned in the printmaking department.'²

Writing on the Flying Nun blog in 2010, Bob Scott of The Clean summed up the creative atmosphere at the label in the early years, recalling with fondness how he helped, '... glue together the 25 Cents singles in Christchurch in '83, there was a lot of that going on then, posters to be made and put up, large buckets of flour and water to be mixed for the poster run, t-shirts to be screenprinted, all very hands on.' He believes that '... the DIY art side of Flying Nun has been, and always will be, an important part in the look of the label and many people overseas are quite intrigued by this, frequently asking how come there are so many

bands with artists? Which isn't a surprise really, the connection, collaboration and crossover between music and art has always been a centre point of the label.'³

Van Hout finally took the step from printing and designing record covers and filming other bands to forming a band of his own. Into The Void first appeared in the late 1980s with Van Hout on vocals along with fellow visual artists Jason Greig and Mark Whyte and one of New Zealand's pioneering sound artists, Paul Sutherland. Their first release, *Into The Void*, appeared on Flying Nun in 1993.

More recently Van Hout revisited his early Flying Nun imagery in the exhibition *Object Lessons: A Musical Fiction* at Wellington's Adam Art Gallery in 2010, exhibiting large screenprinted and painted canvases alongside his documentary films of The Gordons and Pin Group. Early 1980s images used for the Pin Group were repeated '... to the point of hyper-reproduction'.⁴ By changing the context within which they were experienced—hung in an art gallery as opposed to being pasted to an inner-city wall or used as record covers—the curators for this exhibition proposed that Van Hout was asking the viewer 'What is there to go back for?'⁵ Well, I for one would argue

that it's not about nostalgia for the past but rather more simply the appreciation of some great songs and some wonderfully produced album art. Van Hout's contributions to Flying Nun remain a highlight of the label's early productions and his hand-printed record covers are central to the DIY aesthetic for which the label is now so well regarded.

Peter Vangioni
Curator

Ronnie van Hout: The creation of the world will be on display in the window of the old house opposite the Gallery on Worcester Boulevard until April.

MEET ME ON THE OTHER SIDE

*From strange grey forms resting in cages to old furniture that takes on a life of its own, through to beautiful abstract paintings made from 'liqueurfaction' silt, **Meet me on the other side** is Christchurch artist Julia Morison's evocative response to the earthquake of 22 February. Shown in Auckland in late 2011, where it was acclaimed for its 'horrifying brilliance', this body of work has been brought back to Christchurch for a special showing in a space overlooking the inner-city red zone. Here, Morison speaks to Sally Blundell about silt, shaking and spirits.*



Julia Morison *Fretful thing* 2011. Melted shopping bags, wire cage, chain

Julia Morison *Small triumphal thing* 2011. Melted shopping bags, cement, silt, metal



SALLY BLUNDELL: Meet me on the other side was clearly born of the Canterbury earthquakes—can you tell me how it evolved?

JULIA MORISON: At the time I was working on a series of paintings for Two Rooms gallery [in Auckland] but after the earthquake I was really distracted. It took quite a long time before I could get back into the studio so I was getting a bit panicky and even then, when I did get back, I found I was really struggling. The paintings just weren't working, they didn't seem relevant—the preoccupations didn't make sense. I was making these other things on the side, just as a distraction, then I started to develop them into an exhibition. I didn't want to be defined as an earthquake artist but I knew I had to deal with it in some way, I think it's something we have to do. Not to over-aestheticise it—I have a problem with people going into a disaster and doing that—but in dealing with the situation I found myself in.

SB: You've used a range of materials and media in your practice. In this exhibition you've got melted plastic, silt and found objects—cages, stools, an ironing board—but to what extent are they an evocation of, rather than a commentary on, the February earthquake?

JM: After the earthquake I was just picking up stuff on the street, finding things at Riccarton Market, in garage sales and at Watson's [auction house]—simple things, serendipitous things, things that had been thrown up, that were interesting. The boxes I found on the road—I filled them with liquefaction and silt and dated them. I guess I was saying, let's rebuild with liquefaction, let's make bricks of it! I found the wall brackets in the market—the cement is made to look as if it is sinking into the metal, then the melted plastic is just sitting on top in its own little nest. At that time too you couldn't get many materials, so I made a decision that I had plenty of stuff here in my studio to work with—I made that a parameter. After the [September] earthquake Annie McKenzie had sent me some ceramic dolls' hands. I cast them and added them on to this spiky thing—I was thinking of the vulnerability of the body, of people digging through the rubble and getting out bodies that may or may not be alive. That's a horrific piece I think. So I juxtaposed things, put things together—that way it became much less literal and formally more interesting.

SB: That structural approach comes through in Creon Upton's catalogue essay—a series of almost random images or scenarios that somehow cohere to the work.

JM: It's a parallel piece, a companion piece. It's not logical and

it's not really a narrative, but it picks up fragments. When I read it I can hear myself, I can hear things I've said.

SB: In responding to a real event such as an earthquake of this scale, how important is it to avoid being too direct, too literal?

JM: It is something I've had to be mindful of in this show and in a way that is about distance. If it feels problematic it's usually because it's too complex or too literal in its symbolism, so I'd pull away or add something to it.

SB: The resulting sculptural works are both elegant and repellent—in their dull lumpish physicality they seem to have oozed out of the ground or be groping towards the light in some way.

JM: I've always been interested in the abject. Awful and ugly, beautiful and ugly—I like that territory when you don't quite know. I think a lot of my work is characterised by the sensual, the visceral, the seductive in a way that transcends beauty and ugliness.

SB: The result is a beguiling combination of the planned and the accidental, the ordered and the uncontrolled or uncontrollable.

JM: I think surrealism and the use of juxtaposition is partly to do with that. But it is difficult—even though nothing is really planned you can't just put A and B together, there has to be a link to something else to make it coherent. You have to get the formal stuff right.

SB: Hal Foster describes surrealism's engagement with the abject as a way of testing the sublime, yet in these works there is an interesting combination of horror and humour.

JM: I agree. Some of them are pretty amusing. I've become quite fond of them.

SB: Some of the sculptural works do evoke that kind of response. When you see them rearing up on their plinths or hunkering down in their cage or net they seem almost animate. After the September earthquake a show at CoCA included works by primary school pupils responding to the earthquake—time and again they drew monsters or vicious dogs coming out from under the ground.

JM: You do feel you are walking on the skin of a monster—it's taniwha stuff, animalistic. And these 'things' are

anthropomorphic in a way. They're emotive, they all have names—*Curious thing, Small triumphal thing, Poor thing*. But almost living? I don't know. The material itself is really important, I think. I like the tension between the melted plastic—that stuff is actually really hard—and the silt. You have one that is recycled commercial detritus, the other is like shit—earth vomit coming up from the ground. Yet in a way they are quite similar.

SB: *Looking back on your art practice—the systems of alchemy and of Kabbalism, the symbolism, the surrealism, the strong graphic-linear aspect—does an exhibition such as this, building on real disaster, need necessarily to stand outside the parameters of such a practice?*

JM: I do have a lot of different preoccupations but they all pull together and relate. It's ongoing—I don't abandon the way I process thoughts. The earthquake is a new set of materials but it hasn't changed my direction—it's just expanded it.

SB: *And the graphic element, the fine lines, that sense of beauty and order?*

JM: There is a graphic quality that comes through in the sculptures, in the parallel lines and grids, that is also there in my paintings and drawings. But with the cages and nets there's also that idea of entrapment, of being in a predicament.

SB: *And the alchemic—the paintings in the Liqueurfaction series appear gentle, reticent, yet they are made from the base matter of liquefaction from your own studio. How did they come about?*

JM: We were cleaning up the studio and there were these big shards of glass sticking up from the ground. They looked as if they had penetrated into the floor but it was just the sugar from broken bottles of liqueur acting as a setting agent. You couldn't move them, and as soon as you put hot water on them it just dissolved. I lost the liqueurs so I went out and bought some: crème de menthe, grenadine, curaçao—mainly for their colours—and mixed them with liquefaction.

SB: *And the smell?*

JM: They smell... sweet.

SB: *These different elements—thrown up or seeping out of the ground, remindful of the chaos of that day—how did you think the exhibition would be received by an Auckland audience?*

JM: I really wasn't sure. It started slowly but then it seemed to crescendo. [The show was extended as a result of public interest.] I was told some Canterbury people were in tears—I don't know what they were seeing but they were moved by it.

I think it's the aesthetic, that grey glugginess. And probably the precariousness of it.

SB: *Now you are bringing the show back to Christchurch, to a gallery space overlooking the inner-city red zone—which is a different thing altogether.*

JM: This new space is different—it's smaller, it has beams and the walls are quite disrupted with lines. I was thinking of having very theatrical lighting but to do that I'd have to cover the windows and the fact that it looks over the city centre and all the demolition—that is really important, that is very much part of it.

SB: *The title, Meet me on the other side—how did that come about?*

JM: It was on the day of the earthquake. The cellphones weren't functioning and I kept getting this repeated text message—it was pretty disturbing. The city was like a film set—all grey, and smoky and watery. It's weird—I don't remember [that day] properly, I don't think you can. It's like if you have ever had a broken heart, if you felt that pain continually you would never venture forth again. But I was thinking about this place that we're in now and how we have to traverse this space, so 'meet me on the other side' has a number of connotations.

SB: *Emotional?*

JM: Emotional, yes, and geographic. But it's also about collectiveness—meet me on the other side, join me. Because we've got a lot to do and a lot to get through before we do meet up on the other side—the other side of rebuilding the city, the other side of traversing this space.

Sally Blundell is a Christchurch-based freelance journalist.

Julia Morison: *Meet me on the other side* is on display in a space above NG at 212 Madras Street until 25 March. The exhibition is shown as part of the Gallery's **Outer Spaces** programme.

NG



Julia Morison *Curious thing* 2011. Melted shopping bags, stool, cement, silt

STAFF PROFILE



Left to right: Kate MacShane, Michael Purdie, Alison Brownie, Andrew Shepherd

The Copyright Project Team

When the Gallery is open, the Visitor Services Team is the face of the Gallery: providing information and assistance at the front desk, patrolling the galleries, answering enquiries and ensuring the safety of visitors and artworks alike. We work weekends, staff functions and events, and open and close the gallery spaces. The work is as varied as our visitors.

But since the Gallery has been closed, four of us have been working on a new project under the stewardship of Gallery registrar Gina Irish. Charged with the responsibility of updating the copyright status for all of the works in the collection, we are no longer based within the Gallery building. We now

roam the world via the internet: updating artist contacts, tracking down copyright holders for deceased artists, sending out copyright agreements or denoting copyright status as expired where appropriate. This information is then used to update the Gallery's collection management system, Vernon, and made available to the public through our website.

Silver linings come in all shapes and sizes. Being a part of this project has drawn on and developed a different skill set for those involved; we've developed a more thorough knowledge of the Gallery's collection and in many cases some very specific artist knowledge. Collectively, we've built a valuable network of relationships with other institutions—locally, nationally and internationally. We have been delighted by the

generosity of museums and art galleries all over the world.

As with all research, some days produce results easily, and other times it can take months for that eureka moment. Artists and copyright holders throughout the world have been researched and contacted, and a fascinating by-product of this process has been discovering stories connected with the artworks themselves. A great example of this can be found on the Gallery's website: <http://christchurchartgallery.org.nz/a-dingo-in-somerset/>

PAGGEWORRK #13

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

KATIE THOMAS

It's almost a test. Like something forensic. Marks waiting to be deciphered amongst haphazard shifting stains. Through the undergrowth pushed back, a blur of competing branches, encased layers of scraped and smudging marks. It is something worked by hand, like rock art tracings, but is more like nature, an object left to the autonomy of accident or chance. Investigative zooming in: marks like lichen or its wind-borne spores. Across the calligraphic thicket a grazed surface, the abraded spreading texture of compressed earth. Lifted repairs from the surface of a tar-sealed road. Archaeological lines that both advance and erase.

Against the merging push and pull layers, the gestural meets with process in flux. Indented paper breathes beneath trailing watery lines. Traces of black are like lines from the mechanical road cleaner's broom, partly scrubbed and washed. Liquid movement and paper suffused. Orange ink like rust. Pigment gathered at the edge of evaporating pools. Transition and decay in this new work are inbuilt, invited. There are also limits given to the disorder and decay. The archival imprint attests to a struggle. Is it compressed memory, its maker's invention? Or simply evidence of the artist—a new shoot grown out of old furrows—lost in the making zone?

Ken Hall
Curator

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

Over page:
Katie Thomas **Scratching the surface** 2012. Mixed media on paper. Reproduced courtesy of the artist





I really miss the collection, and the Gallery as a whole. Being asked to select just one work for 'My Favourite' is a hard task, and in some ways I actually think it's disingenuous of me to even say that I have a favourite.

What I enjoyed about the permanent collection at the Gallery was its breadth and size. One could take it in without feeling too overwhelmed. One was able to see older works by Dutch, French and British painters and gorgeous New Zealand paintings by Doris Lusk, Rita Angus and William Sutton, and then stumble (not literally I hope!) across Bill Culbert's *Pacific flotsam* in a room all by itself or admire Georgie Hill's beautiful watercolour in the next room among other contemporary works.

So! The piece I am going to pick out for the required task is *Mother* by Joe Sheehan. **Brought to Light** was the first time I saw it—a crumpled plastic milk bottle carved from a piece of greywacke stone, both objects Sheehan found on a beach. I find the piece extremely clever on a number of levels and particularly for the way it plays with our instinctive reactions. On my first encounter there was a moment of recognition, then confusion—a sort of 'what's that doing here?' moment. Quickly, these sorts of thoughts

Joe Sheehan **Mother**
2008. Greywacke
stone. Collection of
Christchurch Art Gallery
Te Puna o Waiwhetu,
purchased 2008. Photo:
Joe Sheehan

were displaced by admiration for Sheehan's skilful sculpting of the greywacke stone. It reminded me of something I had seen at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago by Maurizio Cattelan, called *All*, that consisted of nine bodies draped in white sheets in a row on the floor—each carved from marble. That brief moment of confusion is fantastic! Learning the title of Sheehan's work—*Mother*—takes you by surprise again and provides more food for thought in terms of gendered readings of the piece—mother's milk, an orifice, an empty vessel...

Recently, I have become more interested than ever in the way an object's value is determined or decided by our consumer society—desirable one day, rubbish the next. I think this piece is extremely current and calls us up on our throw-away society in a very subtle way. A piece of rubbish tossed up by the sea, its likeness carved from stone is now a piece of art. For all these reasons and more, I find it a very complex, satisfying work.

Coralie Winn



Coralie Winn is co-founder of Gap Filler, an initiative she now runs full-time. She is also an actor and collaborator with Free Theatre Christchurch.

MY FAVOURITE

BACK MATTER

Mobile Web Goes Live

If you're one of the several thousand people who visited our website from a mobile phone recently, we're sorry the experience wasn't great. We know that more and more of our virtual visitors are coming to us from mobile devices, and we're keen to make sure that we're ready for them. In B.166 we told you that our mobile website was winning awards and coming your way soon. Well, it's here now. Visit the Gallery's website from your smartphone and (as long as it's technically capable) you should find yourself somewhere new but strangely familiar. The mobile version of the website is a cut-down version of the main site, designed to be fast and easy to navigate on a small screen.

Saved

Over the last year our staff have been busy inspecting and reporting on art in various public buildings, and we have been very pleased to offer our specialist advice in this way. Artworks at Christchurch's Convention Centre were finally rescued in February by Sean Duxfield and his team after being inaccessible for almost twelve months. Philip Trusstum's two large banners and Bing Dawe's sculpture at the entrance were retrieved as was Trusstum's *Passport to the New Millennium* (2000)—a massive undertaking. It was a relief to finally have these works out of harm's way and hopefully they will go back on public display sometime in the future.



Workers remove Philip Trusstum's artworks from the Convention Centre



Don Driver *Painted Relief No. II* 1972. Acrylic on canvas and enamel on aluminium. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased in 1972 with assistance from the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council. Reproduced courtesy of Don Driver

Don Driver 1930–2011

Our thoughts go out to the family of Don Driver, one of New Zealand's most respected artists, who died in December 2011. Don became known for his sculptures assembled from everyday objects, often retrieved from the dump. Christchurch Art Gallery's first Driver purchase was *Painted Relief No. II* (1972), a work from Don's early career that was most recently displayed at the Gallery alongside Julian Dashper's drum-kit homage to Don titled *The Drivers* in 2007.

Adventure and Art

Curator Peter Vangioni will be speaking at the University of Melbourne's Baillieu Library on 9 March as part of a symposium organised by poet and fine press printer Alan Loney to accompany the exhibition *Adventure and Art*. Curated by Loney, the exhibition features books from the Baillieu Special Collections from Europe, North America, New Zealand and Australia. Peter will be talking about the Gallery's collection of artist's books, as well as his own work at Kowhai Press.

Justin Paton Awarded Prestigious Fellowship

Gallery senior curator Justin Paton ('New Zealand's most readable art critic') has been awarded the 2012 Katherine Mansfield Menton Fellowship. He'll be spending April until November of this year in Menton, France, where he plans to turn his attention to a book about 'shelter, memory, belonging and place'.

Justin says: 'Art will play a part, but the focus is broader. Being in Christchurch this year has got me thinking about the meaning of "home". Not just the physical sense of home, but all the intangible stuff—the values and memories—bound up in the idea. That's what I want to explore.'

Justin has also been appointed curator of New Zealand's presentation at the 2013 Venice Biennale. Appointed at the same time was deputy commissioner Heather Galbraith of Massey University. Gallery director Jenny Harper will be commissioner of the presentation again, which will feature work by senior New Zealand artist, Bill Culbert.

Huntsbury Press

The Gallery was very fortunate to receive a collection of books from Leo Bensemann's library in February. Generously donated by his family, the collection, which predominantly relates to Bensemann's work as a printer, designer and typographer, includes three rare titles from the Huntsbury Press.

Huntsbury Press books would turn any New Zealand book collector's head, and they are a great complement to the library's extensive collection of Caxton Press titles. The Huntsbury Press was established by Bensemann at his home in Christchurch's hill suburb Huntsbury around 1975, when he was winding down his involvement with the Caxton Press. By all accounts he could only print at Huntsbury on fine warm days, as the shed in which the press stood had no door and was somewhat exposed to the weather.

The titles are great examples of Bensemann's work as a typographer and printer. Rob Jackaman's *Arthur the King: A Sequence* and Bartolomeo Vanzetti's *7/4/17* were collaborations with Max Hailstone, who taught graphic design at the University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts from the 1970s to 1990s. The frontispiece for *Bzou: A Tale from the French* is quite extraordinary and confirms that Bensemann had lost nothing of his unique ability to execute graphic work in his old age.

Left to right: Rob Jackaman *Arthur the King: A Sequence* 1975. *Bzou: A Tale from the French* 1979. Bartolomeo Vanzetti *7/4/17* 1975



Ralph Hotere ONZ

We'd like to offer our congratulations to Ralph Hotere. His recognition as a Member of the Order of New Zealand in the New Year was a fitting tribute to an artist whose work has truly reflected social, political and environmental issues relating to New Zealand and the wider international community throughout his career.

Closure of ABC Gallery

A couple of issues ago we were pleased to feature the arrival of ABC on the city's rather barren post-quake gallery scene. So it was with sadness that we noted the closure of the gallery in February. ABC was an artist collective and artist-run project space, and featured work by a number of artists who will be familiar from the pages of *Bulletin* amongst other places. Like many properties in Christchurch, the building is now slated for demolition. However, like Christchurch Art Gallery, ABC are planning to continue through offsite activity. We wish them well.

Social Media

In January we announced that we would be closed until mid 2013. Since then we've really appreciated everyone's kind words and best wishes—it's good to know that we'll be missed. So, in the proud tradition of reporting internet chatter like it's news, here are just a few comments culled from our Facebook and Twitter streams.

'We need the creativity to keep flowing. I really appreciate your efforts as it gives hope of a future in chc & can take your mind away from the current reality. Thanks to all involved. :-)' *Kate*

'TBH that's hard news to hear ... but we live in hope!! Keep up the great work with Gallery without Walls!' *Jeff and Naomi*

'So sad. But excited to see what awesome things you guys come up with over the next year.' *Emily*

'Hurry hurry mid 2013... The wonderful ChchArtGallery is expected to reopen then' *CK*

'I'm very sorry it is to be so long. Sorry for you, sorry for us. As you say, at least you can plan firmly now. Keep putting your treasures up on Facebook! Thank you for today's Dutch funeral—one of my absolute favourites—I visit it every time I go. There's still the web-page, too.' *Lynne*

'We'll support you indoors or out! keep up the inspiring work guys.' *Darnia*

'time flys! it will be mid 2013 b4 we realise' *Joanne*

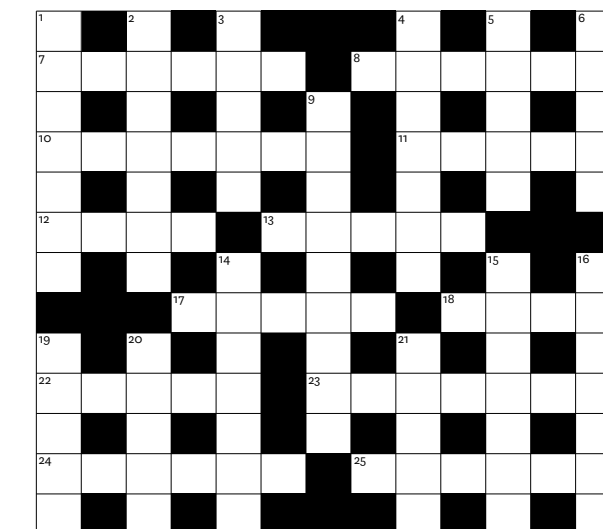
'Hang in there guys:-)' *Debbie*

'I'll look after your LS Lowry for you :)' *Tim*

Crossword

Here, the Gallery steps bravely into new territory. Compiled by our resident quiz master, this is *Bulletin's* inaugural prize crossword. All the answers can be found through our website, so we're definitely encouraging a little judicious 'cheating'. And of

course, all crosswords should be rewarded with a prize, so the first person to submit a completed puzzle will receive a \$100 voucher from the Gallery Shop. All entries to *Bulletin*, Christchurch Art Gallery, PO Box 2626, Christchurch 8140.



T.J.

Across

- 7 and 9 down. Māori name for Christchurch Art Gallery (2, 4, 1, 8)
- 8 Painter of *Making a chain* (6)
- 10 Name of Canterbury Society of Arts monthly magazine (7)
- 11 Both Frank Bramley and James Guthrie painted this subject (5)
- 12 Olivia Spencer Bower painted a shed here (4)
- 13 *Blue globe / Big ark* is by Geoff _____ (5)
- 17 In 2010 we brought the collection back to it (5)
- 18 See 5 down
- 22 Name of a painting by Gretchen Albrecht (5)
- 23 Swiss linocut artist who created *Fixing the wires* (7)
- 24 Birthplace of Andrew Drummond (6)
- 25 Its 2,184 elements are due to be repaired over the next eighteen months (6)

Down

- 1 The 'S' in L.S. Lowry (7)
- 2 A favourite avian subject of Barry Cleavin (7)
- 3 Christchurch-born artist Edith Munnings died here in 1939 (5)
- 4 If you would like to be one of these, please contact Paul Doughty (7)
- 5 and 18 across. Former Robert McDougall Art Gallery director (4,5)
- 6 Michael Parekowhai's *Kiss the baby goodbye* is made of this material (5)
- 9 See 7 across
- 14 Peninsula viewpoint famously captured by William Watkins (7)
- 15 Work by this artist came to Christchurch in 1959, in the show *Japanese Prints* (7)
- 16 When we reopen, you will all be _____ (7)
- 19 and 20. Sydenham mural artist (5,5)
- 21 James Peele painted this beach in 1884 (5)

BACK MATTER

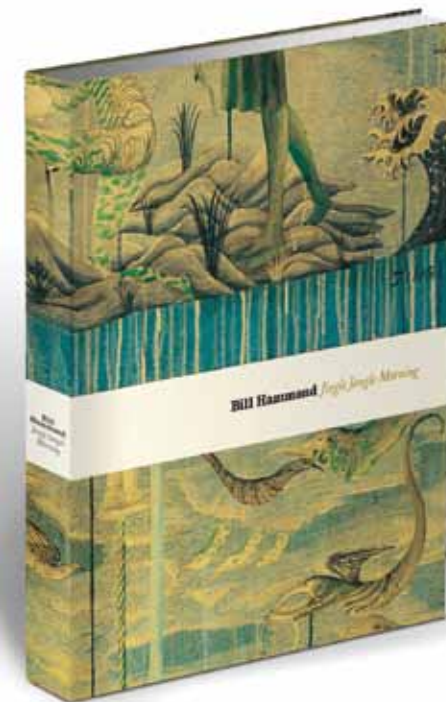


Wayne Youle Launch

19 December, the sun shone, and we launched Wayne Youle's *I seem to have temporarily misplaced my sense of humour* with the Sydenham sausage sizzle. It was great to be in a position to host an event again. Wine was drunk, speeches were spoken, and art was appreciated—in short it was just like old times, but with sausages.

Julia Morison Opening

On 9 February we opened Julia Morison's fantastic *Meet me on the other side*—our first exhibition since the earthquake so naturally we were pretty excited. The show was held in a space above NG on Madras Street—a great room with incredible views out across the red zone. We're looking forward to the next one already.

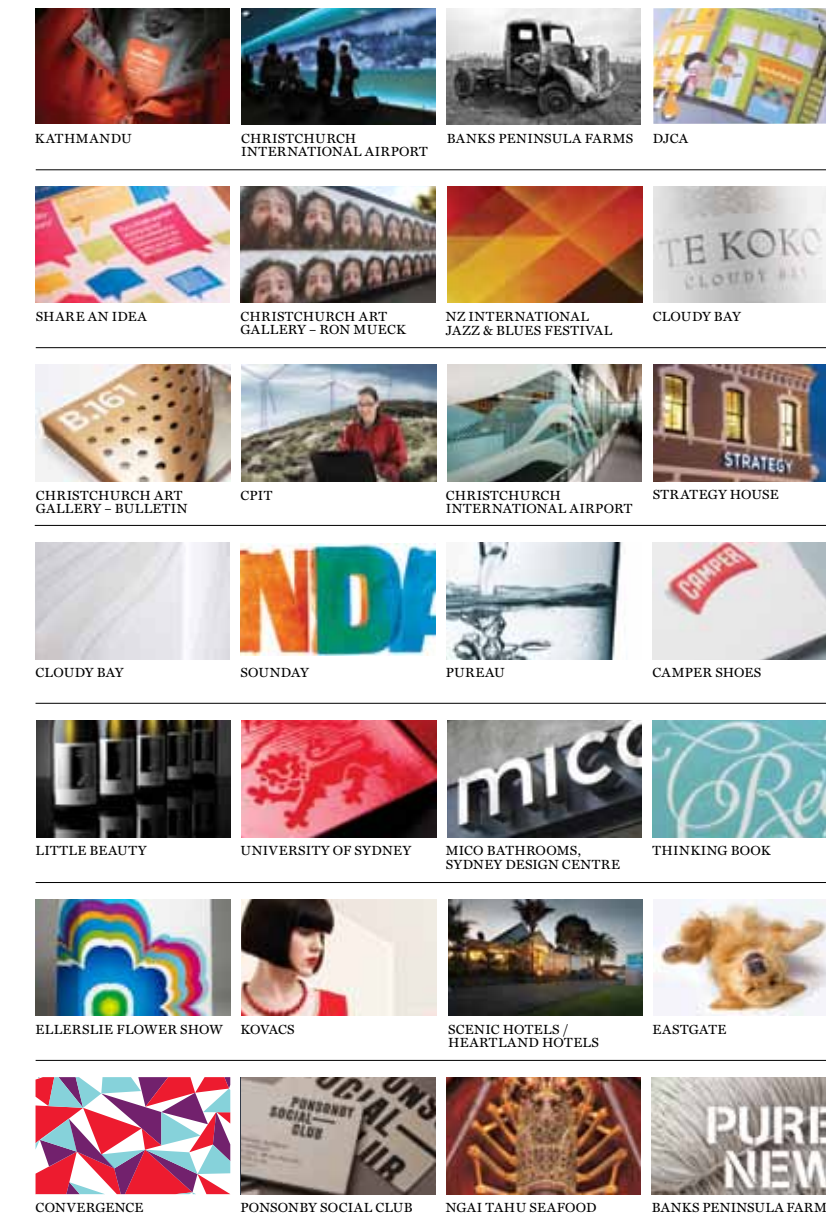


Bill Hammond: Jingle Jangle Morning
 Winner: Illustrative Section, Montana Book Awards
 BPANZ Book Design award winner

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