

Bulletin
Christchurch Art Gallery
Te Puna o Waiwhetu

Summer
December 2014—
February 2015



B.178

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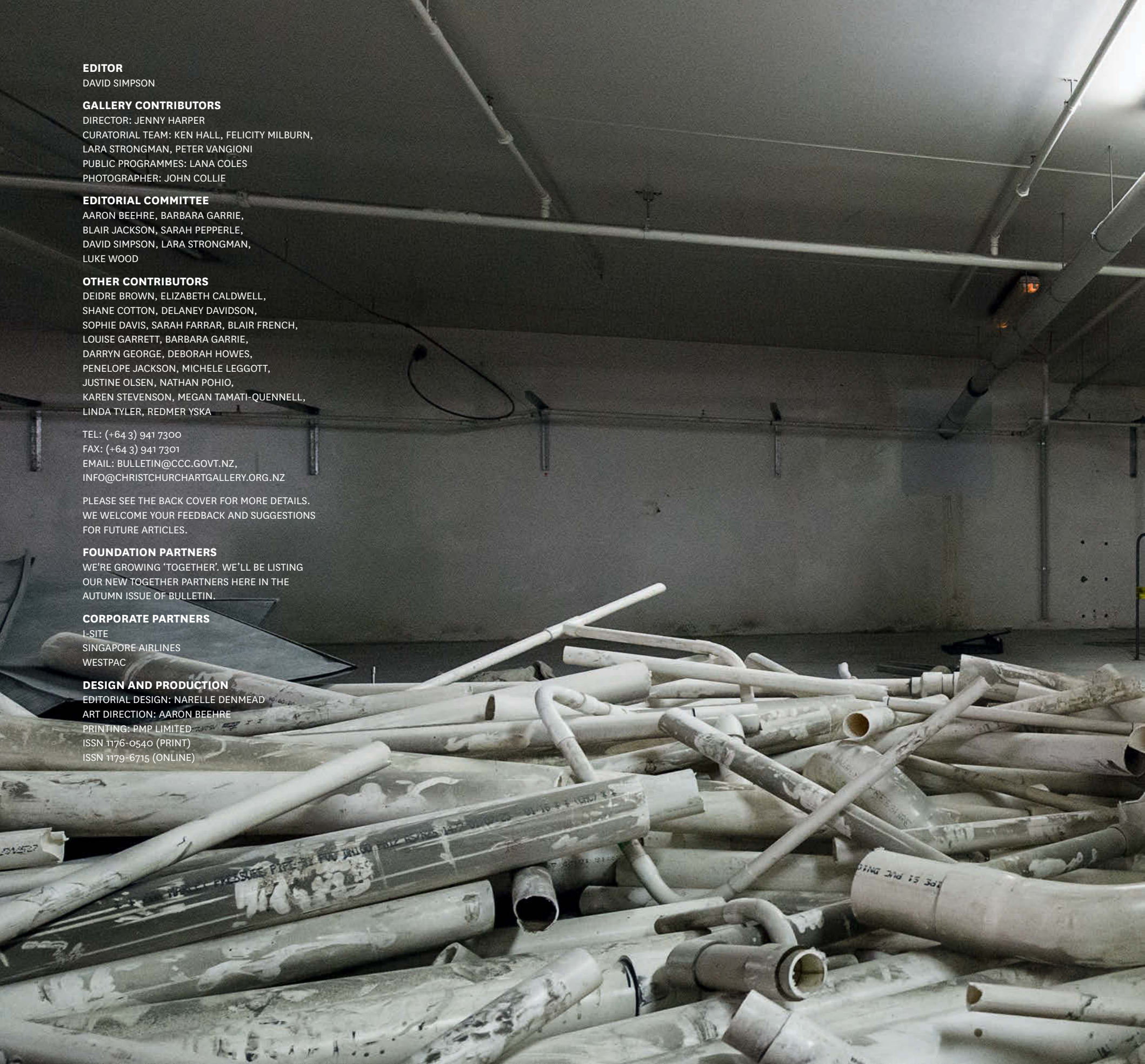
EDITORIAL DESIGN: NARELLE DENMEAD

ART DIRECTION: AARON BEEHRE

PRINTING: PMP LIMITED

ISSN 1176-0540 (PRINT)

ISSN 1179-6715 (ONLINE)







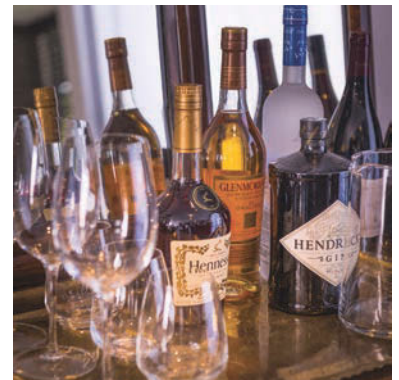
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Director's Foreword



Paul Johns: South Pacific Sanctuary / Peraki / Banks Peninsula is now a month into its run at 209 Tuam Street, and our visitor services staff report it's being very well received. A quiet, thoughtful exhibition, its roots are in an activity that is far from reflective—whaling. At a time when the world is objecting to whaling, Johns prompts us to think about our whale-hunting past, and its role in bringing Europeans to this region. As well as his meditative landscape photography, the exhibition contains relics from Peraki Bay—the site of the first permanent European settlement on the Banks Peninsula—and extracts from the Peraki Log, a diary kept by whaler Captain Hempelman.

Paul Johns will be followed in late January by **David Cook: Meet Me in the Square**, which has at its heart Christchurch during the early to mid-1980s. After the earthquakes in 2010-11, Wellington-based photographer and lecturer at Massey University David Cook realised that he had an archive of around 6,000 images dating back to a documentary urge during his time at the University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts. Cook's images document day-to-day life in a Christchurch now lost forever, and a number of the subcultures that gathered in and around the city. This exhibition is preceded by a new publication from Christchurch Art Gallery, which we've published in time for Christmas. It's available from our online shop and at bookshops throughout the city.

Also newly available in a shopping situation is Michael Parekowhai's *Chapman's Homer*. Although to be accurate, he's in one shop—PlaceMakers Riccarton, perhaps appropriately near the barbecues. He's there for the next month or so thanks to Grant and Sandra Close, who were the first to sign up as 'Bull sitters'. You can find out more, including how you or your organisation can apply to have him on site for a while, on page 47. We're thrilled to not only have him back out on public display, but in a place where he can meet and be enjoyed by a new audience.

In this issue of *Bulletin* we feature an interview with Deborah Howes, director of digital learning at

the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Susie Cox, our educator, talked to her about the strides MoMA has taken in demonstrating how an art museum can connect with students young and old online. And Sophie Davis and Barbara Garrie of the University of Canterbury look at the holdings of our library and archives in an attempt to define the artist book.

The pagework in this issue is one I'm amused to see, as it has a family connection for me—or at least that's what I read into it. At first glimpse, UK-based New Zealand photographer Boyd Webb's contribution is a couple of fishing flies—so familiar, but where are the hooks? As with much of Webb's work, that first look is deceptive and, as with much of what we call art, a glance does not do it justice.

In this issue of *Bulletin* we also pay tribute to our colleague Jonathan Mane-Wheoki, who died in October. Like so many in our profession, senior curator Lara Strongman was a student of Jonathan's at the University of Canterbury, where he taught art history for many years; she talked to him about his life and career at his Auckland home and has invited others whom he taught to reflect on his legacy to New Zealand's art and museum professions.

On behalf of the Gallery I'd like to thank our *Bulletin* designer for the past three issues, Narelle Denmead. A final-year student at the School of Fine Arts, Narelle is the first student to undertake design of the magazine under the tutelage of lecturer Aaron Beehre as part of our newly formed relationship with UC. This will be her final issue at the helm, and I wish her all the best for the future.

I was fortunate to speak at a conference in Dubrovnik and visit this city for the first time in September. It was a magical place—the old city so concise and, it seemed, so perfectly formed. I didn't know a lot about it before and was amazed when I found out that this city, important for so many powerbrokers from medieval times was flattened by an earthquake in 1667. It was entirely rebuilt then (with just a single Renaissance building remaining) and much of it again after the brutal wars of a few

years ago. It is a heartening example of a city and its people bouncing back—but as the guidebooks say—slowly and with difficulty. I spoke of our post-closure **Outer Spaces** programme, of becoming a ‘gallery without walls’, and of how we had supported our creative community as best we could. Attendees were uniformly impressed—but I also impressed on them how much this seemed like an extended range of *hors d’oeuvre* at a banquet and that we were anxious for the main course to appear.

This coming year is very special for us as we expect to reopen in December 2015. It will be wonderful to be able to say ‘this year’ from 1 January; and to eventually name a date. As a staff we’ll be planning, writing, researching, speaking with artists and their agents, re-staffing and, closer to the actual date, preparing and installing works for your viewing. We can’t wait to exchange this life for the reality of visitors we can see and count each day enjoying art.

All at Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu wish you, our readers, and our audiences near and wide, off- and online, best wishes for the New Year. Here’s to 2015 and the chance to once more demonstrate fully what we do for this city.

Jenny Harper
Director
November 2014

Exhibitions

Paul Johns: South Pacific Sanctuary / Peraki / Banks Peninsula

Until 24 January 2015

The residue of history is awakened in new work by Christchurch-based artist Paul Johns, whose consideration of Japanese whale-hunting activity in nearby southern Antarctic waters and the ensuing protests has led to a reflection on our local whaling past. The artist’s personal connections to Banks Peninsula contribute to a finely tuned response that reveals how, although the substance of the past is eroded over time, resonant traces are left behind. The contrast between past and present also draws attention to changing or evolving attitudes to animal life.

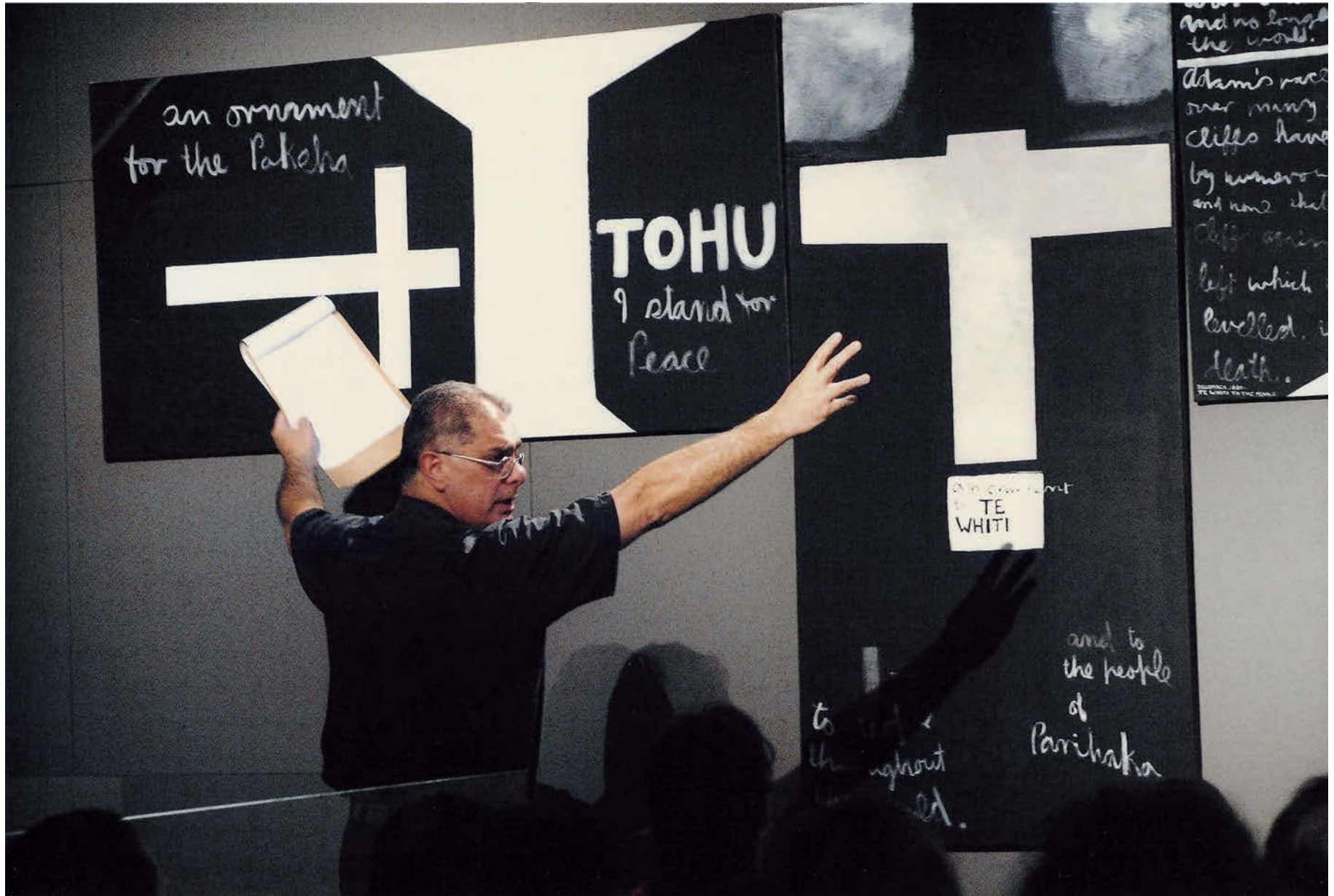
David Cook: Meet Me in the Square

31 January – 24 May 2015

Where were you in 1980s Christchurch? (Or if you weren’t born yet, where was your mum?) Dishing out generous servings of nostalgia and retro, **Meet Me in the Square** shows central Christchurch as we’ll never see it again. As a student in photography at the University of Canterbury’s School of Fine Arts, David Cook wandered the streets at all times of day and night, finding new vantage points, meeting strangers. The camera was his licence to explore. Part anthropologist, part cultural commentator, he captured bell-ringers and boot boys, beery crowds, nuns, mums with prams, the Seagull Man and royal watchers—and in doing so, created a body of work that continues to resonate. #meetmeinthesquare

Jonathan Mane-Wheoki: Teacher

Lara Strongman



There are some teachers you remember all your life: extraordinary individuals who view learning as a boundless source of energy, both for themselves and their students. This sort of teacher has not only total command of their subject, but an infectious enthusiasm for it that transmits itself to the minds of others. Teachers like this create advocates for their subject. They impart knowledge, but more importantly they show you a way of being in the world. It's a rare teacher who teaches you how to learn, but Jonathan Mane-Wheoki was one such individual.

Jonathan died recently in Auckland after a long illness. At his Requiem, held at Holy Trinity Cathedral in Parnell, I looked around the many hundreds of people who had assembled for the occasion—and the range of prominent roles in the fields of art and culture they represented—and realised just how many had either been taught by Jonathan or had been lucky enough to be mentored by him. He taught on the art history programme at the University of Canterbury for thirty years, seeding the next generations of art historians, curators and writers; he assisted young Māori artists through his work with the Māori Education Foundation; and he was a role model and mentor for younger academics, particularly those of Māori and Pasifika descent. He was a person who would not only open doors for you, but give you a gentle push through if you needed it, and he continued to keep you within the ambit of his view for years to come.

He also had a long association with the Gallery, and one of my first acts as newly appointed senior curator was to arrange an interview with him for *Bulletin*. He had recently spoken about his life and faith on Radio New Zealand's *Spiritual Outlook* programme. He pronounced himself relaxed about his impending death ('What else could I be?') and described the joy he was taking in making arrangements for his Requiem, and for the tangi at which he would be laid to rest beside his father at his marae, Piki Te Aroha at Rāhiri in Northland. Recalling that Ralph Hotere was transported on his final journey in a black Hummer, Jonathan said that he had arranged a rental van ('a modest people-mover') to take his body north.¹ When I went to see him in Auckland in early September, at the mid century house he shared with his partner Paul Bushnell, it was with the knowledge that there was not much time left.

'I don't regret one second of my years of teaching,' he

He altered my perception of Māori forever. Growing up and seeing images in the media of Māori as troublemakers in society, made me embarrassed about revealing my Māori heritage at school. That changed when as a student at UC, I heard a lecture by Jonathan. He was refined, intelligent and articulate, and what's more, he oozed mana.

—Darryn George, *artist*

I've noticed in recent days how he was so often photographed, arms wide before an artwork, as if not only directing the attention of his audience but addressing the very heart of the work itself. These images reinforce the memory of his oratory presence as a teacher. But they also bring back to mind his clear, crucial exhortation to we his students to look. Look at the work in front of you. Look, think, discuss. And then always look again. Look long and hard and recognise that only through looking will pleasure, understanding and meaning form.

—Blair French, *assistant director of curatorial and digital, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney*

He suggested that the best way to start looking at the material he had gathered was to get to know the artists—to establish a community. Now second nature to me, the concept of this kind of 'community' was new to me. I had roughly equated it to networking, but it means more than that ... there is a sense of social obligation associated with community—it is something you become a part of, not just something you are associated with. There is a sense of responsibility, a respect, a need to give back, a need to create connections. I have infused this concept, not only into my research and teaching, but into my way of being.

—Karen Stevenson, *adjunct senior fellow, University of Canterbury (Art History)*

told me. I mentioned his achievements as an academic—the change in scope of the two-year art history survey course from a Eurocentric focus to a global perspective, the establishment of a contemporary Māori art history paper, his appointment as dean of music and fine arts at the University of Canterbury and later head of Elam School of Fine Art in Auckland—but it was clear to me that it was the act of teaching itself that he most valued. Appalled by academics who hated teaching and dodged undergraduate lectures, he said that the best teachers should always teach from stage one, ‘to encourage and captivate students and enthuse them about the subject’.

His own first teacher was Colin McCahon. When Jonathan’s family moved to what E.H. McCormick described as the ‘sylvan slums’ of Titirangi, he became friends with the McCahon children, and vividly recalled McCahon painting the *Northland Panels* (1958) on the back deck of their house one summer afternoon.² He became an artist himself, studying first with McCahon in night classes taught in the attic of the Auckland Art Gallery during the 1950s, and secondly with Rudolf Gopas at the UC School of Fine Arts in the mid-1960s. ‘Colin McCahon and Rudi Gopas opened me up to two very different worlds of art,’ he told me. ‘They were great teachers because of the example they set as painters. McCahon, though, said that the painter’s life was exemplified by R.N. Field. Of course, many people later said the same about McCahon.’

While a student in Christchurch, Jonathan visited the Robert McDougall Art Gallery often to look at McCahon’s *Tomorrow will be the same but not as this is* (1958–9). Painted at about the same time as the *Northland Panels*, it provided a tangible link to his own history as well as an ongoing metaphor for ideas about creation—both spiritual and artistic—through the cleaving of light from darkness. After graduating with a diploma in fine arts and a degree in English, he worked in 1971–2 as exhibitions officer/assistant to the director at the McDougall, developing programmes and organising film screenings that included pioneering New Zealand film-maker Rudall Hayward’s feature *Rewi’s Last Stand* (1925/40). When he left Christchurch for London to study at the Courtauld Institute of Art, he credited his experience talking to public visitors at the Gallery with his newfound ‘surprising confidence’ in academia: ‘I was always so reticent at Canterbury.’³



Within the Gallery's archives is a large file of Jonathan's correspondence home to the McDougall's director, Brian Muir. 'Brian,' he writes not long after arriving in London, 'It strikes me that one or two items a year might strengthen certain sections of the McDougall's collections—in particular, graphics old and new. Valerie has a gorgeous stripey Bridget Riley screenprint and a super Alan Davie. I have been trying to con ex-Chch students in London into subscribing a small amount to a picture fund so you *may* be receiving gifts from time to time.'⁴

In a subsequent letter he provides a wish list of purchases for Christchurch, based on works that he has seen for sale.

Suppose I had a million dollars to spend on paintings for the McD Gallery: what would I buy? A modest Cézanne watercolour, a beautiful Monet, a super Roualt regions-landscape painting (absolutely fabulous!), a modest but typical Renoir, an early Kandinsky, and Breughel's 'The Four Seasons', plus 4 or 5 Goya etchings, a Pechstein lithograph, the Cranach ptg, the Corneille de Lyon, a Henry Moore sculpture (a small one), a Klee drawing. In many ways I wish I were still in Ch.ch so that I could get a fund going. It is going to be so important to have these works in Chch. When Art History is taught in the University. WHEN...⁵

Brian Muir seized the opportunity to secure Jonathan's services as a London-based agent for the Gallery; provided with a budget and modest annual stipend, he located and recommended potential works for the collection. Many important acquisitions were made for the city by Jonathan over this period, including Andy Warhol's 1972 screenprint *Mao Tse-Tung* ('powerful, completely convincing, technically marvellous, a devastating image'⁶), which he saw on a trip to Oxford and noted had also been selected for the British Arts Council's collection; Bridget Riley's *Untitled (Elongated Triangles 4)* (1971), and a version of Antoine Coypel's *Venus and Adonis*, as well as works on paper by Degas, Cézanne, Corot, Piranesi, Lucien Simon, Karel Appel and others. Within the archive is a telegram asking for urgent permission to spend the entire year's print budget on the Degas, which was granted.

At the Courtauld, Jonathan was taught by the Russian spy Anthony Blunt, whom he remembered as a brilliant teacher, and by Alan Bowness who went on to become director of the Tate Gallery. 'They knew their subject and were passionate about it,' he told me, comparing them

The teacher shapes their material and creates the threads—lines that exist within a continuity. They also never know or see where these go, and that's just part of the deal. You offered great handfuls of shining threads—pieces to be held, weighed, studied, appreciated, seen. Your 'Worlds of Art' was a highlight of my University Art History 'starter pack', and you certainly knew where to find the threads. I've been surprised at how many of these have since woven themselves into a bigger picture, a larger, shifting pattern.

—Ken Hall, *curator, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu*

Kind and always energetic, Jonathan tended his art history flock—after all who had ever travelled so far? With an eye for detail and always context he led us through the art and out again to the Victorian buildings, then the interiors, furniture and stained glass. From Pugin and Ruskin to Morris, Jonathan preached the sacred past but also the present. ... Over barbeques and drinks and evening functions, he relayed the same message—love for work, for people and always for art.

—Justine Olsen, *curator decorative art and design, Te Papa Tongarewa*

[Out] of the purpose-built cupboards containing audio collages of people who knew McCahon and the house well came Jonathan's voice, talking about growing up along the road in Wood Bay. Almost forty years melted away and I was back in the dark of an art history lecture listening to that voice put words to the torrent of slides pouring off the big screen.

—Michele Leggott, *professor of English, University of Auckland*

As the Gallery's kaitiaki Māori, he gave his time and tactful, judicious advice freely, and was generous in smaller ways too—once placing his hand on my shoulder during an opening speech and pronouncing me to be 'unflappable', when he well knew I felt anything but.

Most vividly, I remember Jonathan's fabulous laugh, booming out of the Annex office and down the gallery space like a sonic wave, startling the punters and bringing smiles to the faces of the volunteers: reminding us all that art and fun needn't be mutually exclusive.

—Felicity Milburn, *curator, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu*



Architectural field trips were a specialty and must have been a huge amount of work to research and organise. I went on every one I could. We dubbed them Jonathons, as the pace was unrelenting and running shoes the preferred footwear—in fact, he frowned if heels were worn. No nineteenth-century edifice in the South Island was safe from our investigations, and once he took us to Melbourne. But it was in Timaru that I can remember opening the door of the motel unit at 2am to a furious and pyjama-clad Jonathan who could not get to sleep for the racket we were making with our raucous partying.

—Linda Tyler, *director,*
Centre for Art Studies,
The University of Auckland

Jonathan mentored a couple of generations of art historians, who benefited greatly from his wisdom and limitless knowledge. Above all else, he was always caring and professional. ... His mana as an art historian and teacher will not be forgotten.

—Penelope Jackson, *director,*
Tauranga Art Gallery

Despite knowing him for more than thirty years now, I still cannot look at him without thinking of him standing in the doorway of the Farrys motel unit in Dunedin all those years ago, in his immaculate Pierre Cardin pyjamas, telling the rambunctious students to be quiet (it was our turn to host the evening party on that Victorian architecture inspired field trip).

—Elizabeth Caldwell, *director,*
City Gallery Wellington

it and so, often, do they, though it is quite strenuous.

Exhibitions: a Morris Louis retrospective and also Anton
Tapiès at the Hayward Gallery; a superb Byron commemorative exhibition
at the V. & A.; Auden and Henry Moore lithographs ~~to~~ poems at the B.M.;
David Hockney drawings; Richard Dadd at the Tate; Holbein at the
National Gallery. But in Paris! centenary exhibition of the
Impressionist movement; Cézanne retrospective; Miró retrospective;
Juan Gris....don't these make your mouth water? And for the most
part I am no closer to getting to these exhibitions in Paris than you
are.

Look after yourself, my regards to all,

Jonathan

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as teachers with McCahon and Gopas. 'You knew, as a student, that you were getting the real deal from them.' He did some teaching himself, and recounted to me one particularly resonant moment, with a group of students from Grinnell College at the University of Iowa:

Those kids gave me my basic precepts for teaching. Odd little things. I remember one day a student said to me: 'May I ask you a question?' 'Of course,' I said. 'I feel stupid because I don't know the answer,' she said. 'Well, do you want to know the answer?' I asked. 'Yes.' 'No question is stupid if you want to know the answer.'

In 1975 he returned to Christchurch as a lecturer on the recently-established art history programme at the University of Canterbury. His area of speciality was Victorian church art and architecture, the subject of his master's thesis. He had realised, to his surprise, in London that he was already familiar with the vocabulary of Victorian ecclesiastical architecture from the wooden colonial churches of New Zealand; teaching in Christchurch, he incorporated the Gothic Revival buildings of the South Island in his lectures and field trips.

A second transformative moment came in the early 1980s when his father Hetiraka died and Jonathan took his body home to the Far North.

I went through all that fantastic experience of the tangi and that changed me or released something in me that had been dormant. From that point onwards I began to feel that it was payback time for my ancestors. I began to develop my thinking about Māori art and that's what eventually led me to a huge involvement with Māori contemporary art. Little by little I've come round from being an internationalist in the European sense of an art historian to an unashamed regionalist art historian who's anchored in the Pacific, trying to make sense of the world from that perspective.⁷

Teaching, then, as a process of making sense of the world, a process of creation for both the teacher and the student: teaching as a process of learning. Jonathan gradually began to incorporate an expanded world view into his academic teaching, developing new courses to deal with the problem of the acceleration of history and to explore indigenous art histories. In 1992 he was appointed as kaitiaki Māori/curator of Māori art at the Robert McDougall Art Gallery, a position he held until 2004 when he left the university to become director of art and



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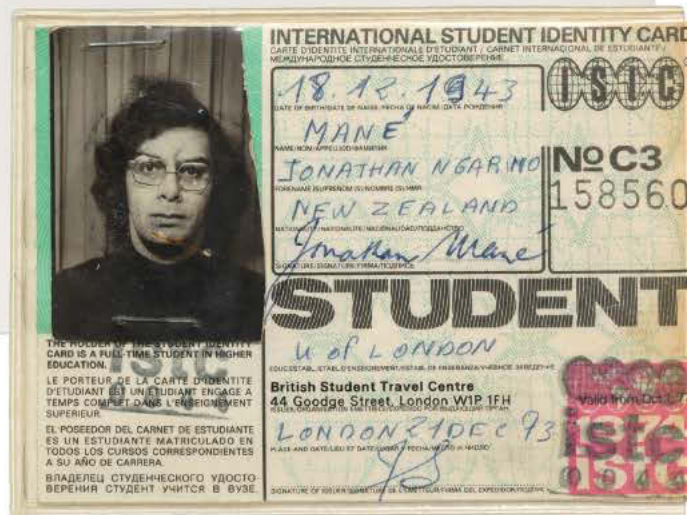
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*Kimihi te kahurangi; ki te piko
tou matenga, ki te maunga teitei*

*Seek above all that which is of
highest value; if you bow, let it be
to the highest mountain*

The whakatauki I have used here speaks about choosing a higher goal and not being deterred by anything of lesser importance. For me I think it fits with an ethos to do with art and art history but also in relationship to something I would write about Jonathan Mané-Wheoki.

Jonathan's contribution to art and art history for me has been his work, writing and research on the first Māori artists to engage with international modern art and the recovery of that art history.

—Megan Tamati-Quennell,
*curator modern and
contemporary Māori and
Indigenous art, Te Papa
Tongarewa*

A leader, a Rangatira, a mentor for aspiring Māori artists, writers, critics and curators, at a time when taura Māori in academia needed such role models. I am honoured to have known and worked with Jonathan. Honoured that he wrote about my work, in the context of contemporary Māori art practice. Honoured to have been considered within his writings, within his unique vision of a New Zealand art history.

—Shane Cotton, *artist*

[What] we learnt through Jonathan's art historical perspective was always already visual culture. We learnt the idea of attempting to see, and to see particularly. Prominent in this was, of course, Colin McCahon—the simple idea that McCahon's hills always have an outline because the geographical aspect of Aotearoa is quite narrow so the sun is inevitably shining from the back of those bare hills we are shown—lit up from the backdrop of the sea. And there's McCahon's acknowledged study of geography. But there's also the fact that that this particular vision was inadvertently created by colonialism—trees were burnt down in order to make way for sheep stations, and this must have created a particular view, and indeed system, that McCahon's paintings intuit, and that Jonathan was able to make us drab undergraduates see.

—Louise Garrett, *lecturer,
Culture, Criticism, Curation,
Central St. Martins, University
of the Arts, London*



Jonathan formed a small group from the separately operating Māori academics, artists, and writers on campus and embraced other Māori artists in the immediate area. Around 1992 we went to Hui with Ngā Puna Waihanga at Omaka Marae in Blenheim, this was our first outing together and for this Jonathan had determined he needed baseball caps made for us all. We must have been a sight with those flash things, velvety black corduroy with ‘Waitaha’ in deep red embroidery—very smart, very Jonathan.

—**Nathan Pohio, artist and exhibition designer, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu**

It’s not an exaggeration to say that my life changed when I studied Jonathan’s ‘Worlds of Art’ course at the University of Canterbury in the 1990s. Everything I had been taught or presumed was turned upside down and reshuffled. I felt as though I could see clearly for the first time how New Zealand art—past and present—fitted into a global matrix. The Anglo-American viewpoint that I took for granted was exposed for what it was—a viewpoint, and only one way of seeing the world.

—**Sarah Farrar, acting senior curator art / curator contemporary art, Te Papa Tongarewa**

He taught thousands of art, art history and architecture students. His classes were often transformational experiences. My 120 third year architecture students were the beneficiaries of one of his last lectures, on which he was an authority, the New Zealand Gothic Revival. I had forgotten to tell him that the majority of my students were of Asian descent and born outside of New Zealand. A gifted orator, who could speak eruditely often without notes, he immediately seized on the opportunity to collapse both time and space by relating transformations in nineteenth-century Chinese religious worship to the tension between Neoclassical and Gothic architecture in contemporaneous Dunedin. As he did in all his lectures, he enabled each and every student in the class to connect with times, places and art that they might have previously seen as remote or irrelevant.

—**Deidre Brown, associate dean research and postgraduate, National Institute of Creative Arts and Industries, Auckland**

collection services at Te Papa Tongarewa. He co-curated several exhibitions for Christchurch over these years, including *Aoraki/Hikurangi* (2004), *HIKO! New Energies in Māori Art* (1999), and *Te Puawai o Ngai Tahu*, to open the new Gallery building in 2003.

Even before shifting out of the university environment, Jonathan developed a role as a public intellectual, moving back and forth between the academy and the broader realm of museums and art galleries. His research interests continued to range from Victorian colonial architecture to contemporary Māori and Pasifika art—but were always, in one way or another, concerned with the connection of people to place, the expression of identity and with the broader agency of art within our culture.

Head of the Elam School of Fine Arts at the University of Auckland from 2009 to 2012, in 2013 Jonathan returned to Te Papa to take up the position of head of arts and visual culture. He was made a Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to the arts in this year's Queen's Birthday Honours and in late September was awarded a medal as Companion of the Auckland War Memorial Museum. He was awarded the Pou Aronui Award from the Royal Society of New Zealand Te Apārangi in 2012 in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the development of the humanities in Aotearoa New Zealand. Beyond his contribution as a scholar, however, what might be counted as his ultimate legacy is his example to others: his daily demonstration of how to be an art historian, in a way which encouraged and inspired many others to join him.

I asked him, towards the close of our conversation, what made a good student.

'Constant questioning and self-criticism. Good students make a contribution to a dynamic environment. And are prepared to take risks, which includes not always agreeing with your teacher. Teachers need a degree of humility: students need a certain amount of arrogance. All within the bounds of good manners, of course.'

'What makes a good teacher?' I asked the best teacher I've ever had.

'You must love your students. You must love your subject. Without love, you can only hope for perfunctory results.'

Senior curator **Lara Strongman** talked to Jonathan Mane-Wheoki in Auckland in September 2014.



NOTES

1. Jonathan Mane-Wheoki, 'Facing Death', *Spiritual Outlook*, Radio New Zealand, broadcast 3 August 2014.
2. E.H. McCormick, *An Absurd Ambition: Autobiographical Writings*, Dennis McEldowney (ed.), Auckland University Press, 1996.
3. Jonathan Mane-Wheoki, personal correspondence to Brian Muir, 20 November 1972.
4. Jonathan Mane-Wheoki, personal correspondence to Brian Muir, 10 November 1972.
5. Jonathan Mane-Wheoki, personal correspondence to Brian Muir, 20 November 1972.
6. Jonathan Mane-Wheoki, personal correspondence to Brian Muir, 13 February 1975.
7. Jonathan Mane-Wheoki, quoted in 'Art historian straddled two worlds with ease', *The Press*, 18 October 2014.

All photographs supplied. Archive documents are from the collection of Christchurch Art Gallery, Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives.

Full texts of the tributes to Jonathan Mane-Wheoki can be found online at christchurchartgallery.org.nz

Physical Education?

With so many institutions now making their collections available online, the internet is transforming the field of gallery and museum education. Distance from a museum is no longer a barrier to attendance, and students can have fully educator-led learning experiences without ever entering a gallery. So is the little crocodile of children trailing around

the gallery becoming a thing of the past? Deborah Howes, director of digital learning at MoMA in New York, was recently in New Zealand talking about MoMA's hugely successful online education programme. Gallery educator Susie Cox talked to her about the cultivation of a truly worldwide audience and the development of community.



Susie Cox: As you will know from your visit to New Zealand, Christchurch is currently a city of the transitional, and temporary solutions are needed to bridge gaps in all areas of life. At the Gallery, in practice, that means that I have spent a considerable portion of the past three years running our education programme out of the back of a Toyota Yaris. That experience has got us thinking about other means to connect with students and new ways to engage with the public, including digital solutions. There are clearly benefits to being able to bring your classes out of the gallery space, but also limitations. There will I'm sure always be a place for an on-site lesson or tour, but how do you see the digital space integrating in to the future of Museum education?

Deborah Howes: I was so inspired by my visit to Christchurch last year, especially how intelligently and tastefully your city has transitioned out of epic devastation and how resourceful everyone has become in thinking differently about the future, including museum educators who fill their trunks with teaching objects—bravo! As I explored the downtown area, I saw a number of very interesting art installations responding to destroyed sites nearby—they were alternately poignant, funny, solemn and heartfelt, but all communicated a strong civic spirit that will persevere despite all odds. I felt so much better about the future for Christchurch after my visit, and can't wait to come back to see what happens next.

At MoMA we see our digital learning opportunities as complementary to our physical ones; our goal is to offer a seamless spectrum of lifelong learning opportunities to everyone, no matter how old they are or where they live. If you want to research what to see or do at MoMA before you come, we have a free app for families and a robust web site to help you. If you are visiting and you need some interpretation help, the free digital guides and the app carry text and audio content translated in nine languages to help you understand what is on view. And if you are inspired to continue learning after your visit, you can sign up for an online course to deepen your experience and maybe even connect with others who share your passions and ideas about art. Joining one of our social media channels will help you find out about online events in which you can participate. Digital learning enables us to be a 24/7 museum: we are open whenever you are ready to engage with us.

Whether we are creating websites, apps or online

courses, using digital technologies is the best way to share our passion for, and knowledge about, our collection with as many people—no matter what their age and no matter where they live—as we possibly can. Of course we hope that someday the twenty million people who find us online every year will come to our museum, but simply contributing excellent online opportunities to increase the world's general knowledge and excitement for art, architecture and design is, in and of itself, a huge benefit to MoMA.

SC: Can you explain more about the kind of educational experience you offer online, and how this fits in with your offline educational activities?

DH: The MoMA Learning website is our continuously expanding online resource dedicated to modern and contemporary art topics.¹ It was created with primary and secondary teachers in mind and therefore offers a range of educational materials—slide shows, how-to videos and thematic essays, for example—that help them bring art into their classrooms in meaningful and effective ways. But everyone can learn something in MoMA Learning: it's sort of like our multimedia handbook for the collection. Our online courses often link students from the course site to definitions and other related materials. Many students join our active social media community through Twitter and Facebook. We also create and host Google Hangout interviews that are recorded and stored on the site.

SC: What sorts of people participate in the online courses? Do you have a 'typical student'?

DH: Currently we support three different kinds of online courses, and each attracts a distinct audience. Our longest-running online course programme (since 2010) is MoMA Courses Online;² there are seven courses to choose from offered in two different modes: instructor-led and self-guided, covering topics in art history and studio practice. Course enrolment fees depend on length of course, course mode and whether students are museum members. The demographics of these online students are very consistent with our MoMA members: people fifty years of age or older seeking opportunities for lifelong learning and creative expression who cannot get to MoMA as often as they would like.

In Summer of 2013 we partnered with Coursera to build free Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) expressly for primary and secondary school teachers all around the world who wanted to improve their

teaching methods and include more art in their curriculum.³ Our first two MOOCs—Art and Inquiry and Art and Activity—attracted over 50,000 total enrolments and to our surprise, half of these students were not teachers. Courserians tend to be much younger than our Courses Online students—most are in their twenties and thirties—and seek our courses for personal and professional development.

Our youngest online student group are enrolled in our free teen courses—our second course began 3 November with over 160 teens from all around the world actively participating in online discussions and art-making activities for four weeks. The course content is created by alumni of the onsite MoMA teen programme, who write all of the content, plan and execute all of the videos and teach the course. The online programme is a great way to extend our MoMA teen programmes around the world: this year we have students from Australia, Argentina, Iceland, Israel, Singapore, Sweden and the Philippines ready to participate and connect.

Most students take our courses for the sheer joy of learning and engaging in a creative art adventure. Many repeatedly enrol in instructor-led courses because they enjoy meeting like-minded art enthusiasts from all over the world and participating in the creation of an online learning community. This is especially true for students who live far away from art museums and/or active cultural capitals.

We don't have any methodology or systems to track the frequency of actual museum visitation by our online students, but anecdotally, we know that if they can get to MoMA, they do. And they contact us when they get here and want to say hello. Of course it matters to us that our students visit MoMA, but if they can't, we also want to inspire them to visit and support their local art institutions.

SC: Do you think the value of the online learning is seen throughout the museum? What's the process of producing online content?

DH: We have across-the-board support for online courses; they are an important aspect of the museum's digital presence and strategy. So generally speaking, staff members are pleased to contribute to the effort if they have the time: there is no arm twisting and we work together on preparing the content for the video shoot. There is no formula in online course making; we embrace a range of approaches and subjects





Deborah Howes interviews former MoMA curator Doryun Chong for MoMA Courses Online. Seen in background: Nam June Paik **Untitled** 1993. Player piano, 15 televisions, two cameras, two laser disc players, one electric light and light bulb, and wires. Bernhill Fund, Gerald S. Elliot Fund, gift of Margot Paul Ernst, and purchase. © 2013 Estate of Nam June Paik

with the goal of creating a robust and diverse set of offerings. We try to triangulate between three major poles of activity: 1. taking advantage of opportune museum moments (e.g., interviewing a curator on concepts of beauty in the Cindy Sherman temporary exhibition); 2. exploring collection areas that are less well represented in physical spaces (e.g., creating a course on the history of sound, video and performance art); and 3. finding the hidden stories and archival materials that are not normally accessible to the public (e.g., demonstrating how and why our conservators use specialised equipment to measure colour). We can start with any one of these three points, and develop a course idea from there.

SC: You have stated in the past that the building of a ‘lifelong learning community’ around the alumni of your online courses has been very important to both your staff and educators and your students. How do MOOCs, where you offer learning to an unlimited number of students for free, affect this—is it still possible to build a community or do you find you are engaging a different kind of student?

DH: In a way, MOOC students are no different to museum visitors attending a gallery tour: any number of them could show up, nobody has the same background or interests, and many probably prefer to learn in a style other than lecture mode. Museum educators, a heroic group to be sure, battle these odds everyday in increments of one hour or less and usually succeed in inspiring most, if not all, of their visitors to engage with the collection in a deeper way, thanks to their on-the-ground experience and ability to improvise. However MOOC classrooms are different from both galleries and even ‘closed’ online courses, in which class size is limited and individualised instruction and communication can be supported. Every aspect of classroom content, interaction and output has to be premeditated and worked out in advance.

Although some students enrolled in MOOCs choose not to engage in the discussion forums, the active peer-to-peer learning that goes on is probably their most distinguishing—and interesting—characteristic. Once the course is opened, we spend a lot of time combing through the thousands of posts made by students and we follow their conversations—these are the best indicators of how well the course is progressing and point us to areas that could use improvement.

However the communities forming as a result of attending our Coursera MOOCs are different, mostly because they are created specifically to help primary and secondary school teachers improve their teaching skills and adjust their pedagogy in order to integrate art more effectively into their classrooms. The MOOC discussion forum content is energised by thousands of teachers all over the world asking and responding to questions about best practices, inspirations, and examples drawn from their own classrooms. Having witnessed this phenomena three times, I can attest that peer-to-peer learning for professional development works very well in the MOOC discussion forum format.

SC: I think all art museums dream of their online collection being used as an educational tool. What do you think drives students to you—is it the collection itself, the brand recognition of MoMA, or something else?

DH: I think the real transition that many museums are finally understanding now is that adding object records to your online collection database does not necessarily increase traffic to your website nor does it make your website more useful. What drives web visitors—students, teachers, parents, retirees, whomever—to your online resources is how accessible you have made your museum content. I mean accessible in two different ways: Firstly, is it easily discoverable by web visitors who may not know where to look? In this case MoMA’s name and stature in the field of art can help recognition, but more importantly, is MoMA content part of larger online efforts where the general web population goes to seek information—Wikipedia, Google Art Project, Khan Academy and Coursera. More than 80% of our Coursera students in the very first MOOC told us they had no familiarity with MoMA but enrolled in the course because we were part of the Coursera network. And secondly, do you surround your collection objects with a rich context that helps visitors find them? The MoMA Learning website presents masterworks from the collection in thematic groupings that appeal to a range of interests and are not exclusively based in scholarly language or academic concepts. The chances are good that the general public are not typing ‘analytic Cubism’ into Google, but they might be asking ‘what is modern art?’

SC: Here at the Gallery, we built our My Gallery tool as a way to encourage teachers and students to use our collection. Broadly speaking, it’s been a success, but there is definitely an argument that siloing our content in proprietorial systems limits its reach.

How does an institution sidestep that?

DH: I think the My Gallery tool is a marvellous way to help visitors engage with your collection and also add value to your interpretive content. Every My Gallery that is shared with the public helps your web visitors to see your museum objects in a new way. I think it is possible that some of these more creative and thematic uses of ‘online collecting’ activities could blend with more standard search and browse behaviours via a very clever interface. But I still think it is valid to have separate entrances for specific functions; whether you consider these silos or not, these entrances can all still lead to same content sources, but behave and look differently as you navigate them.

SC: Where do you see digital learning moving from here? What are you excited about?

DH: There is so much to be excited about in the digital learning space right now, especially as a museum. Online courses present a huge opportunity to showcase on a very large scale the amazing documents, images, sounds and videos of MoMA’s collections, research, facilities and faculty that we have been manufacturing and storing for decades. For example, our award-winning Catalysts course presents interviews with artists and art critics about the early history of media and performance arts in New York City and also streams a dozen artist videos from MoMA’s collection. That is more work by artists like Yoko Ono, Bill Viola, Nam June Paik, and Joan Jonas than we could ever have on view in our permanent galleries at any given time. The opportunity for online courses to extend and support the physical gallery experience is really endless and we have only begun to explore how and why.

Deborah Howes is director of digital learning at MoMA in New York. This interview was conducted by email in August 2014.

NOTES

1. www.moma.org/momalearning
2. www.moma.org/coursesonline
3. Coursera is an online education platform that partners with top universities and organisations worldwide. www.coursera.org/moma





MEET ME IN THE SQUARE

Redmer Yska



The first thing you notice, even before the pageboy haircuts and oversized plastic spectacles, is the absence of smiles. The unhappiness in the eyes of the average Cantabrian snapped on these grey, chilly streets seems palpable. Even the Christ's College cadet, cradling a rifle as part of soldiery drill, looks ready to turn the gun on himself. In 1983, the year when David Cook began a project to explore his hometown, a camera as his compass, most locals look distinctly brassed off.

Should we be surprised? And was this mood peculiar to Christchurch? The economy was certainly tanking after Robert Muldoon, our most polarising prime minister ever, locked down a Stalinist-style wage and price freeze that lasted for two long years. But things were tough all over: the previous year's beacon pop song, *Come on Eileen* by Dexys Midnight Runners, provided a cheer-up call to the three-million unemployed in Thatcher's England.

In New Zealand, as in other Western democracies, many of the old postwar certainties were crumbling. The economic regime change associated with the latter part of the decade began to stir as US consultants put the New Zealand Railways Corporation under the microscope. By 1990, the railway workforce, including hundreds who'd come up through the locomotive workshops out at Addington, was slashed to the bone: from 21,000 to 6,000.

A rail workers' fightback is one of a hundred threads in this exhibition, many of which revolve around Cathedral Square. The entry in Cook's work diary for Monday 18 April 1983 is typical of his busy schedule. We read of him racing out to shoot a railways protest march headed for the Square. At its front is a coffin carrying a sign that reads 'Restructuring = Death of NZ Rail'. All assignments are approached with equal fervour: a week later, as Cook snaps soldiers' graves, after ANZAC Day, he doesn't even notice someone pinching his bicycle ('caught bus home', he reports).

For some, a happy memory of 1983 is of the baby Prince William frolicking with a wooden Buzzy Bee toy during a New Zealand visit with his parents, the Prince and Princess of Wales. On the morning of 28 April, Cook is in the Square by 8.15am, ready to snap the ritual mobbing of Princess Diana by huge crowds, timed for 10am. There, he stands shoulder to shoulder with 'school groups, families, police, anarchists, the Wizard—everyone was there. In the rain.'

He continues: 'Royal hand-shaking time. Frenzy... Everyone is so excited to see her. But I realize I'm standing on the south side with Charles, and I can't burst through the police cordon to get over to the action. I manage to shoot Charles instead.'

His images record the expectant, bundled-up crowds in the Square, waving mini Union Jacks and waiting for the royals. The city has always been famously Anglophilic, Eurocentric and white—accused by some of tolerating a quiet racism linked to the absence of Māori, Polynesian and Asian peoples.

We see the same Union Jack emblazoned on a knitted jersey worn by a local boot boy, an acolyte of a very British, white supremacist subculture that will later become notorious for periodic attacks on ethnic minorities in the city. In 1983, punks would strut and skirmish in and around the Square.

Cook strives, often heroically, to record this significant, if repellent, episode of city history. His diary entry for 17 June records his attendance at a dance in the Caledonian Hall, organised by the Unemployed Rights Centre. Two suitably named bands, The White Boys and ACAB (All Cops Are Bastards), provide the music. He recalls: 'gutsy music ... boot boys, punks everywhere ... it's dark but I try taking photos with no flash—to capture the ambience'.

As ever, our recording angel goes to the wire for his art, narrowly avoiding a beating after he ventures into the street in search of better pictures. Without thinking, he snaps four punks trying to crash start a car.

One guy gets really angry and tries to knock me over—tries to grab my camera. We fight and almost end up in the Avon River. I say, 'Hey man, the flash didn't work. I don't have a photo of you.' Then the police come and the punks run away. Someone tells me I had been photographing them trying to steal a car.

By the 1980s, random violence of this kind would see public spaces in the main centres throughout New Zealand emptying out—with people, especially families not returning. Central Auckland has still not fully recovered from an infamous 1984 riot that saw hundreds rampaging through Queen Street after a free rock concert in Aotea Square.

In Christchurch, crowds were already thinning out in the Square, after city fathers outlawed traffic from the area in front of the Cathedral steps. Newly permitted food stalls, buskers and a cast of eccentrics such as



the Wizard and the Seagull Man helped stem the flow. But the crazed, the threatening and the inebriated that flocked there on a regular basis didn't help the cause.

Hatched in the 1850s as city fathers worked to replicate a British-style public space with a cathedral at its heart, Cathedral Square was always one part crossroads, one part menagerie. John Robert Godley, exalted founder of the settlement (despite only actually living there for two years), watched over it all from his stone plinth. Like other municipalities, Christchurch created open spaces, or what were then called 'lungs'—places where the multitudes in unhealthy, cramped housing could promenade and strut their stuff. By 1900, the Square was lively, even bustling; a magnet for people in a city often mocked as dull and 'churchy'.

The Square was, above all, a transport and entertainment hub. But its status as a mini Hyde Park Speakers' Corner was always a crowd puller. A yeasty variety of political and religious speakers flocked here to lecture the citizenry, probably hoping journalists from the nearby *Press* Building (opened in 1909) might be taking note. In 1911 the cheeky leftwing weekly *Truth* accused the city council of what it called the 'Holy City' of pre-judice: banning socialist firebrands from the Square while letting the upright Salvation Army band play on.

The aged and administratively infirm City Council of Christchurch obtained a conviction against Socialist Cooke for spouting in the square on a forbidden spot, after being shooed per by-law over to the north-western corner ... Booth's noisy religionists also refused to leave the forbidden spot but the wowser-ridden Council didn't prosecute.¹

Others flocked to the Square simply to be. In 1914, the new daily *Sun*, championed the 'seat-warmers' of the Square, helping create its identity as a haven of peace and leisure.

There, the old men sit in the shade or in the dappled sunlight that filters through the trees. All day they sit there, and across the space of asphalt they stare at the United Services Hotel, and the buildings beside it ... they are of the hopeless type; not colonial, though they may be, but men who have lost keenness in the fight, and are content to be discontent and will sit there until the twilight. Presently they will amble off to a home somewhere, and the next day they will be on the seats again.²

By 1929, *Truth* was calling the Square 'the daily and nightly meeting place for thousands, the starting point for transport services and the point on which the main roads north, south, east and west of Christchurch all converge'. The article continues: 'To the younger generations of Christchurch, it is tersely referred to as the Square; to the teams of pioneers who cherish memories of the struggles before the province was definitely established, it is revered as the Godley site.'³

The economic depression of 1932 saw violent clashes break out here between striking tramway men employed by the city council and strikebreakers ('scabs') hired to run the trams. Windows on a tram were smashed and a motorman wounded. In May 1945, as war in Europe ended, the Square would be jammed with the largest crowds seen since the end of the Great War.

By the mid 1950s, the Square would play host to another set of 'seat warmers'—the first of the postwar youth cultures that would, a generation later, spawn the angry boot boys who tried to chuck Cook into the Avon. These were the bodgies, widgees and milkbar cowboys: American-styled teenage rebels, who mainly slouched around the Square, displaying what would later be called 'attitude'.

In 1956, a group of psychology students from the University of Canterbury, then located in the city centre, reported on what they called street society in the city ('its chief characteristic was its apparent aimlessness').⁴ Their study followed publicity about young and restless folk who 'congregated in the streets and in milkbars, some on motorbikes [who] caused obstruction and inconvenience to both wheeled and pedestrian traffic'.⁵

On the evening of 20 April 1956, six student observers patrolled the city in areas including the Square proper and the streets between it and Armagh Street. Their report said of milkbar cowboys: 'On Saturday evening they were present most of the time between the Square and Armagh Street, outside the Crystal Palace in the Square ... these groups were continually moved on by the police.'⁶

Their behaviour is forensically recorded:

A group of three youths are lounging outside a milkbar. They are dressed fairly quietly, but wearing 'soft' shoes and longhair styles. A man and his wife are walking by when one youth flicks a cigarette on to the woman and it falls to the footpath. The man tells his



wife to walk on; he stops and says to the boy, 'I could twist your nose' ... he lectures the boy on manners, then drags him to his wife several chains down the street and makes him apologise.⁷

Never again would Christchurch teenagers be as compliant. They'd soon band together, vanish off the streets and head through the doors of venues like the Teenage Club, where rock'n'roll was played at all hours. By the 'swinging' 1960s, as youth culture became a powerful social and commercial force, the city's grooviest venue was centred just off the Square. The Stage Door, at 4 Hereford Street, was where hard-driving, long-haired rhythm and blues band the Chants held sway, as writer Tony Mitchell recalled:

The intense and cramped basement atmosphere of the Stage Door also established it as almost literally an underground bunker beneath the staid parks and neo-Gothic architecture of Christchurch. Chants gigs also took place within a context of running battles between mods, rockers and surfies around Christchurch, sometimes in Cathedral Square, which has long had a reputation for violent encounters.⁸

The city would soon find itself caught up in the other social and political upheavals of the day. In 1971, more than 6,000 protesters gathered in the Square to voice their opposition to the Vietnam War. A decade later locals would again be here in force, as the 1981 Springbok Tour divided the country.

The space had meanwhile been redeveloped as a pedestrian area, with the south-west section closed to traffic. Over time, the Square became much harder to fill. For some, it was also becoming harder to love. The people of Christchurch, as elsewhere, began to flock to the sheltered, security-guarded shopping malls, often called the modern-day public square.

But not in 1983. Yet. As punks prowled and a princess from a faraway kingdom twinkled, Cathedral Square still looks like a photographer's paradise. And even if Cook's true interests lay in larger, spikier moments, he made it his duty to record daily life within a built environment that seemed rooted to the spot: eternal, indestructible.

All that would be up for grabs after February 2011, as a great earthquake struck the city, killing 185, toppling buildings and turfing Godley on his bronze ear. And if

life during the Stalinist 1980s had robbed the smiles from the faces of the people, things were about to get *really* grim. The founder's neighbour, Robert Falcon Scott, also brought to his marble knees in 2011, better exemplifies the values of endurance and forbearance Christchurch would have to draw on over the coming years. Associated with the tragic deaths of the explorer and his party, Scott's statue also carries an aura of grief and loss. In 2014, the city, too, mourns those who died and what is no more.

Which is why we relish the warm heart of this exhibition, with its bearded bell-ringers in the Cathedral, cyclists in a sun-splashed street, capped student lighting up a celebratory fag and darkened *Press* Building. Thirty years on, as a broken city—and its beloved Square—re-emerges, David Cook's quotidian images have a precious, elegiac, reassuring quality that makes us grateful to a snapper ready to lose his bike, even risk a thrashing, to go out and get them.

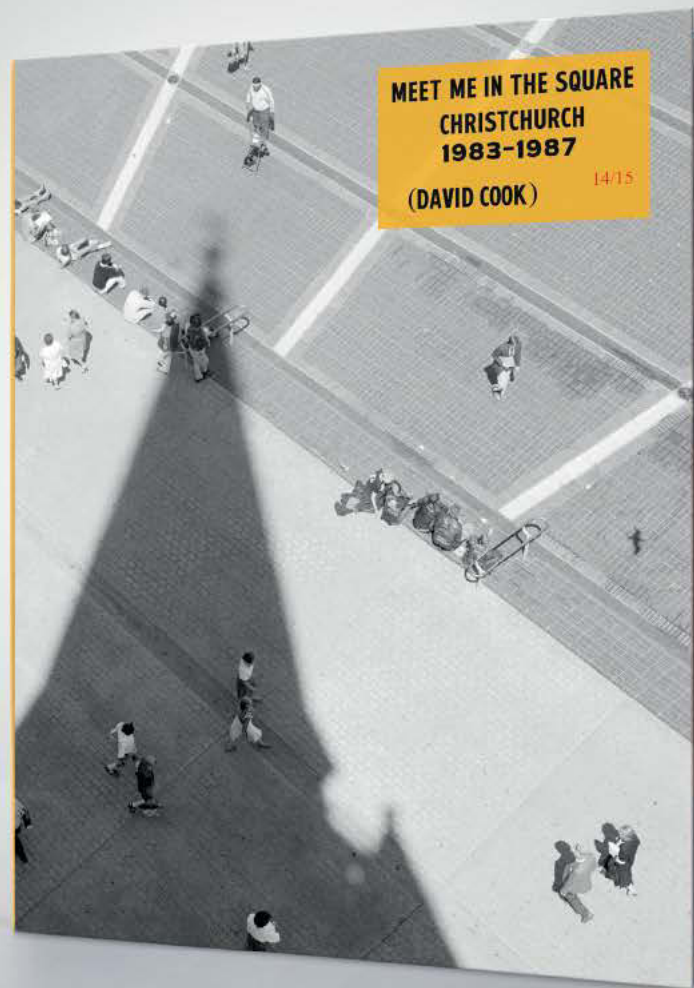
Redmer Yska is a Wellington writer and author of five works of New Zealand history. His first published news story was about a 1977 visit by Auckland punk rockers to the capital.

NOTES

1. *New Zealand Truth*, 22 April 1911.
2. *Sun*, 6 February 1914.
3. *New Zealand Truth*, 2 May 1929.
4. Dorothy Crowther (ed.), *Street Society in Christchurch*, Department of Psychology, Canterbury University College, Christchurch, 1956.
5. *Ibid.*, p.1.
6. *Ibid.*, p.6.
7. *Ibid.*, p.7.
8. Tony Mitchell, 'Flat City Sounds: the Christchurch Music Scene', paper presented at IASPM Conference, UTS, 1997.

All photographs David Cook, Christchurch 1983/4.
Reproduced courtesy of the artist

David Cook: Meet Me in the Square is on display at 209 Tuam Street from 31 January until 24 May 2015, and is accompanied by a new Christchurch Art Gallery publication, *Meet Me in the Square: Christchurch 1983–1987*.



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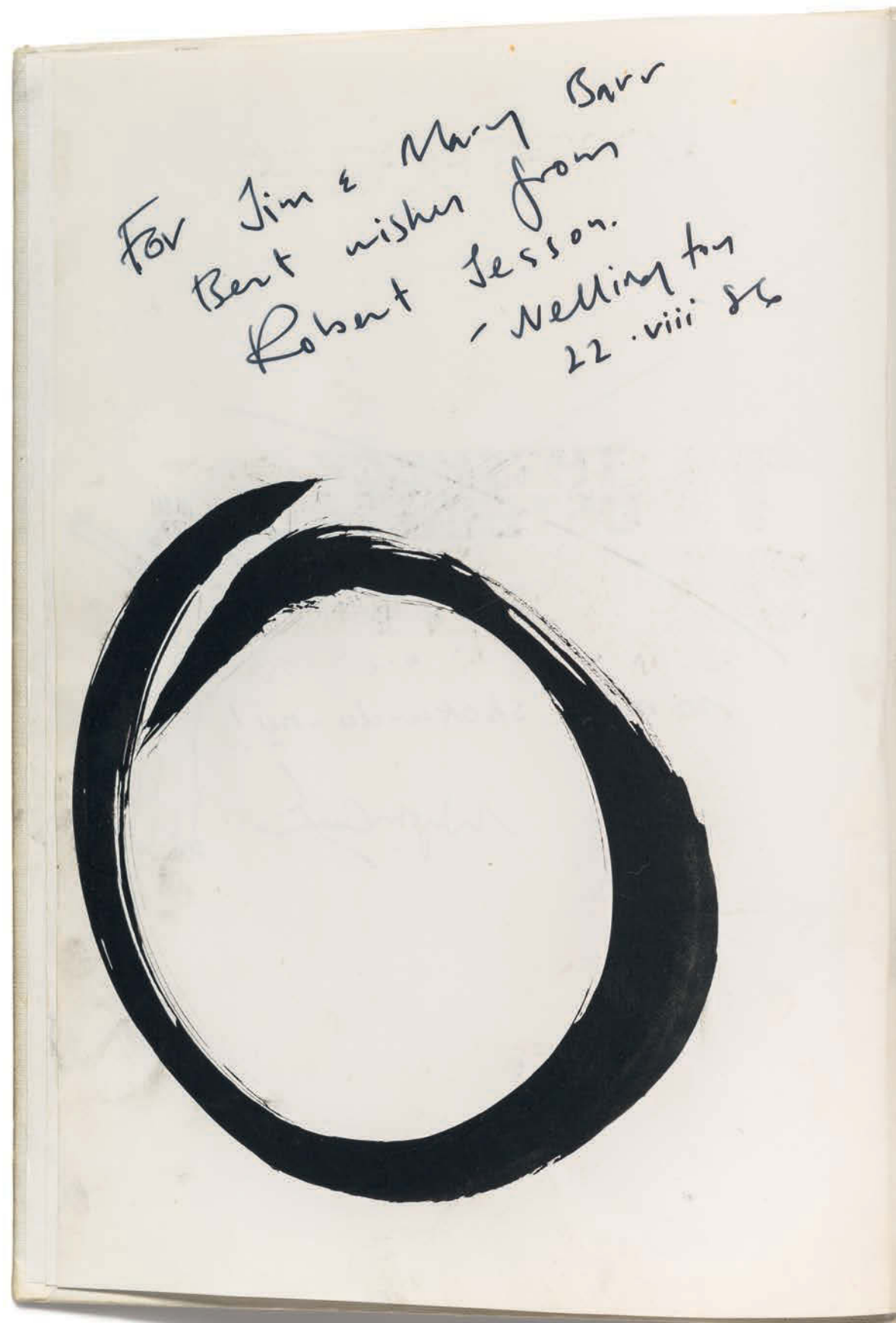
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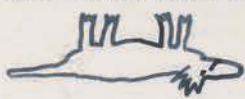


ROBERT HUGHES

For Jim & Mary Bar
with best wishes
from
Bob Hughes

THE SHOCK OF THE NEWT

ART AND THE CENTURY OF CHANGE



Wellington 19.iii.86.

For Jim and Mary
Bar with
Best Wishes from
Robt. Leard
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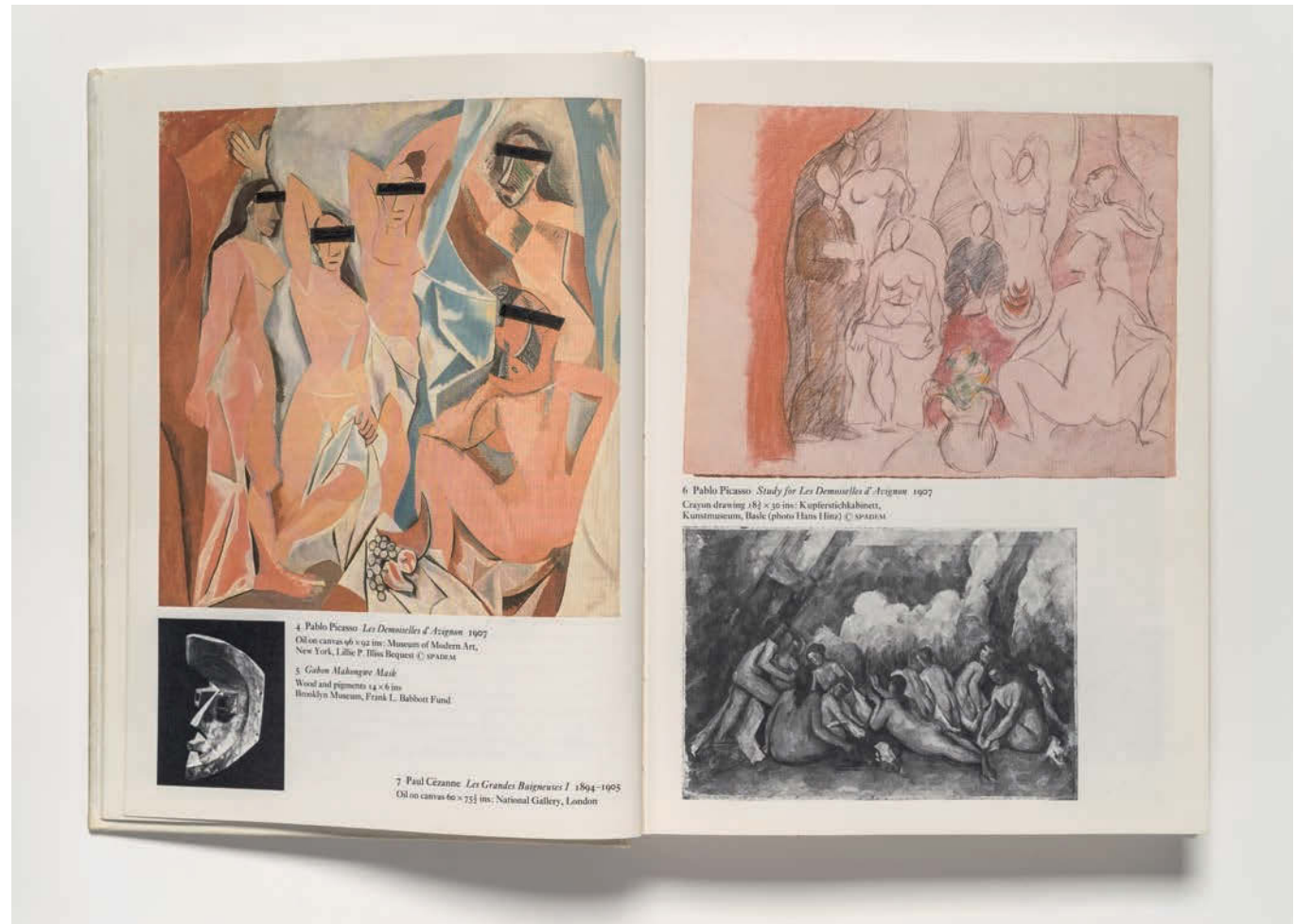
For Jim & Mary,
A FEW ZENGA,
in a living house,

LoAX.
7.3.86.

British Broadcasting Corporation

CHALLENGES IN COLLECTING THE CONTEMPORARY ARTIST BOOK

SOPHIE DAVIS AND BARBARA GARRIE



Previous page:

The Shock of the Newt.

Annotated copy of Robert Hughes, *The Shock of the New*, 1980. Collection of Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu. Gift of Jim Barr and Mary Barr 2011

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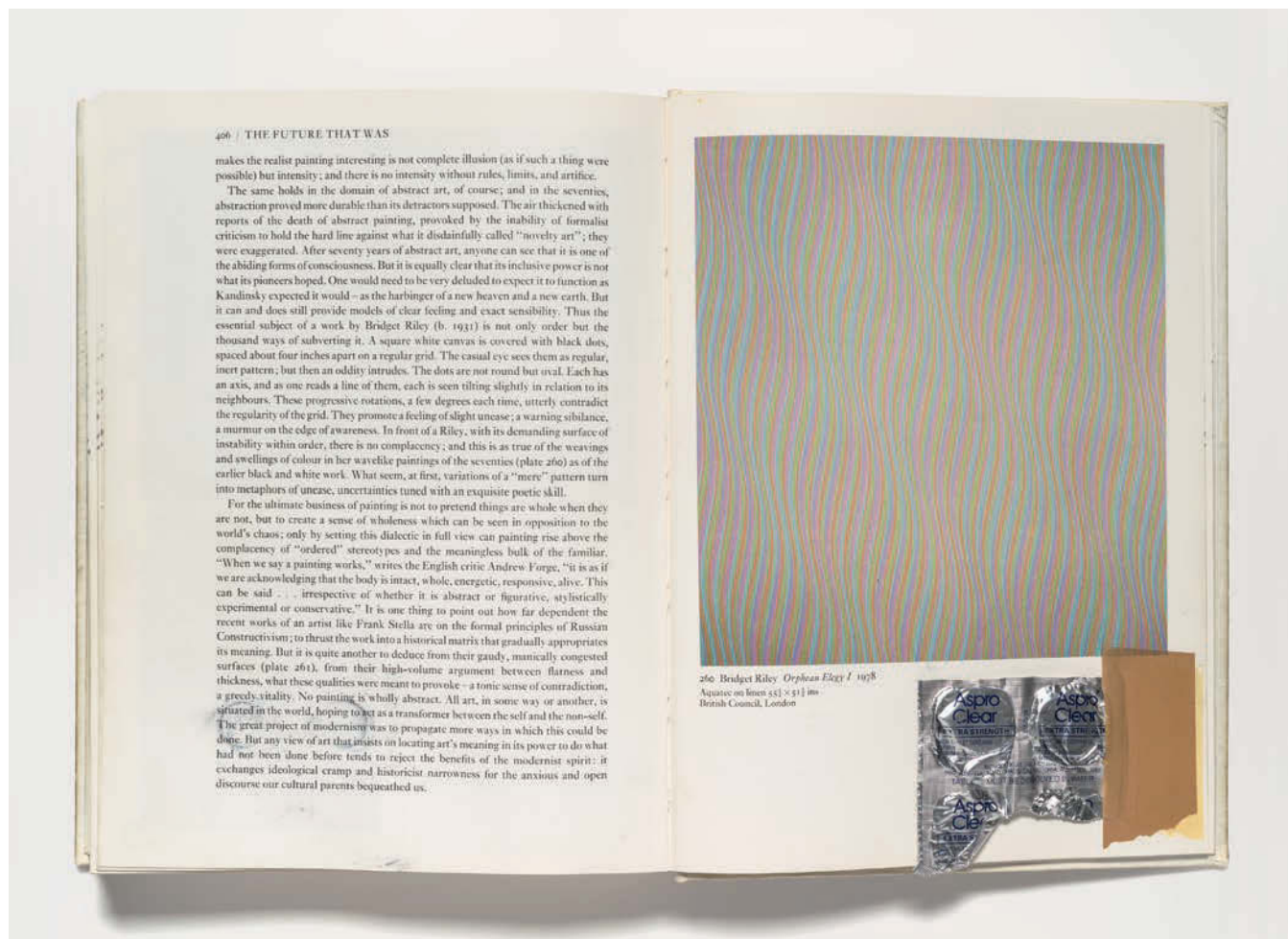
Annotated copy of Robert Hughes, *The Shock of the New*, 1980. Collection of Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu. Gift of Jim Barr and Mary Barr 2011

Robert Hughes's canonical text *The Shock of the New* was first published in 1980 following a successful television series that aired in the UK that same year. In this book, Hughes provided a lively and challenging account of the development of modern art and design in the twentieth century. That this volume should find its way onto the bookshelf of New Zealand art collectors Jim Barr and Mary Barr is no surprise. But the Barrs' copy of the book subsequently became the site for a series of interventions and adaptations that have altered its meaning and significance. Upon visiting the Barrs in their Wellington home, artists including Neil Dawson, Marie Shannon and Julian Dashper were invited to annotate, cut-

up, collage and doodle on the pages of the book. Dashper's mediation, for example, was a playful gesture in which he removed van Gogh's ear from a reproduced self-portrait, revealing the lines of typed text on the following page. Other interventions include the addition of a silver-foil strip of extra-strength aspirin taped beneath one of Bridget Riley's disorienting Op Art compositions, and the obscuring of the nude models' eyes in Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Avignon*. Another equally mischievous intervention saw the book's title amended to the nonsensical *The Shock of the Newt*.

The Shock of the Newt, along with forty other books by significant New Zealand artists, was gifted to Christchurch Art Gallery's Robert and

Barbara Stewart Library and Archives in 2011. The collection reflected the Barrs' relationships with artists such as Dashper, Giovanni Intra, Richard Killeen, Ralph Hotere, Simon Denny and Ronnie van Hout. In their new home at the Gallery, these works support and extend the existing artist books collection. The Gallery frequently acquires artist books that relate to its exhibition programme or other areas of the collection—acquisitions that demonstrate the Gallery's commitment to the art of the book. As well as collecting these objects or publications, curator Peter Vangioni has also recently mounted a suite of book-related exhibitions that have been successful in giving these items greater visibility.



In 2013, for example, *The Shock of the New* was shown in **Face Books**, an exhibition of books from the Gallery library that featured portraiture by New Zealand artists.

Books are a ubiquitous element in most of our lives—from school textbooks to bedside novels; cookbooks and travel guides to private journals—but artist books are more enigmatic objects, and notoriously difficult to define. Put simply, they can be understood as works made or conceived by an artist that take the form of the book as a point of departure. In this sense, artist books are distinct from exhibition catalogues, monographs or books of illustrations. They can be produced as one-off objects, as part of a

limited edition, or as inexpensive mass-produced items; they can use a variety of different materials, formats and sizes; they can consist of text, images, or a combination of both.

The contemporary artist book is generally considered to have first emerged in the 1960s. During this period, artists began to work with printed matter to explore some of the possibilities and difficulties posed by conceptual art. However, until very recently, critical discussion of artist books has been preoccupied with establishing the book as a legitimate art form in itself, and attempting to pin down a definition for the artist book that considers its complex relationships with other creative practices.

Over the past fifty years, critics and art historians have emphasised this ability to resist easy definition. As Clive Phillpot, former director of the library at MoMA, has pointed out, artist books are in fact ‘distinguished by the fact that they sit provocatively at the juncture where art, documentation and literature come together’.¹ Johanna Drucker, one of the most prominent writers on contemporary artist books, considers them as a ‘zone of activity ... made at the intersection of a different number of fields, disciplines and ideas, rather than at their limits’.² The possibilities of the book-as-artwork are expanded through these intersections with other creative practices like independent publishing, graphic design and literature, which can

The Shock of the New. Annotated copy of Robert Hughes, *The Shock of the New*, 1980. Collection of Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu. Gift of Jim Barr and Mary Barr 2011

be exploited by cultural practitioners wishing to experiment with different mediums and formats in their work.

One commonality that many artist books share is an emphasis on the material properties of the book. Conventionally designed as a series of flat pages bound into a fixed sequence, the book engenders a one-on-one relationship between reader and text. It also elicits a certain tactile allure; its very 'objectness' necessitates the turning of pages, feeling the texture of paper and the weight of the volume. These characteristics are often played on, but also subverted, by makers of artist books, producing objects that stretch and challenge entrenched ideas about the book both materially and conceptually. Form, structure and content are reimagined in ways that ask us to radically rethink the cultural, historical and political economies in which the book is embedded.

However, these types of books can present a range of problems to collecting institutions in terms of storage, conservation and display. Not only do artist books resist easy classification—making them difficult to place within collections—but the fragile and often rare nature of many of these objects also means that they cannot be displayed on library shelves or borrowed as conventional books. As book artist Annie Herlocker writes:

Artists' books have become a dichotomous experience in that they are valuable art objects, but unlike most traditional forms such as painting or sculpture they need to be handled by the viewer to be experienced fully. As such, artists' books straddle the space between the world of museums or art galleries and that of library special collections.³

The Gallery's collection illustrates some of the ways that artist books can be integrated into public art gallery holdings, and how they might fit within institutional practices of archiving, conservation and exhibition. Merylyn Tweedie's 1988 MA thesis, another work gifted by the Barrs, emphasises certain tensions inherent in collecting artist books. With a cover by Judy Darragh, the thesis flouts academic convention. Decorated with the inexpensive found materials typical of Darragh's work, including artificial flower petals, paua shell, leopard-print fabric, synthetic fur and diamantes, the cover also features a working mini light bulb that can be plugged into the wall—perhaps a play on the assumption that a thesis or academic text should somehow illuminate its reader.

Tweedie's thesis is stored in its very own handmade case, carefully crafted by the Gallery's technician Martin Young. The cover is very fragile, so much so that attempting to read its contents is a delicate exercise that could not feasibly be allowed in the gallery. As a result, exhibition would likely require it to be presented as a more rarefied art object: in a display case, no touching—or reading—allowed.

Paradise (c.1997) by L. Budd is another artist book in the form of a treated text. Taking a found copy of Wendy Haley's pulp Gothic novel *This Dark Paradise* (1994), the gold embossed title on the spine of the book has been partially effaced and the name of L. Budd added as author. The cover is concealed beneath a layer of roughly applied white paint and the front is inscribed with a handwritten text: *Beauty of omission, of judgment, the wanting heart*. Budd confounds our normal expectations of the book by gluing the pages together so that the information or ideas they

contain are no longer accessible. No longer does it function as a vessel for knowledge or communication; instead the book is rendered mute. This is in keeping with the artist's broader practice, which often critiques power structures and institutional systems. Here, the book is identified as a political metaphor as much as a material object; by nullifying its contents the artist gestures toward the importance of identifying and interrogating the ideologies and systems of knowledge that underpin our contemporary societies.

These examples exist as single rather than editioned objects, calling into question some of the assumptions often made about artist books, in particular what Drucker has identified as 'the myth of the democratic multiple'. She writes that:

The idea of the democratic multiple was one of the founding myths of artists' books in their incarnation as mass-produced works. Artists' books were to counter the traditions of fine press, limited edition livres d'artists, escape the institutional context of galleries, fly in the face of print and photographic protocol, and circumvent the established order of the fine art system.⁴

Within contemporary practice, however, the artist book has taken on such myriad forms that claims to this kind of democratic identity no longer always hold true. Artist books are frequently produced as autonomous or limited edition objects, intended to operate within the sphere of fine arts practice; like the Gallery, art institutions and libraries around the world are actively collecting, researching and exhibiting these books.

Contemporary artist books have also maintained a relationship to the gallery

Opposite page:
MA Thesis by Popular Productions with handmade cover by Judy Darragh. Collection of Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu. Gift of Jim Barr and Mary Barr 2011





L. Budd *Paradise* c.1997.
Collection of Robert and Barbara
Stewart Library and Archives,
Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna
o Waiwhetu. Gift of Jim Barr and
Mary Barr 2011

institution through the increasingly popular trend of producing books that document or extend an existing body of work. This type of artist book signifies the expanded role of the book in documenting and realising project-based art in the twenty-first century, as production increasingly revolves around research, writing and installation-based practices. Nick Austin's *The Liquid Dossier* (2013), for instance, was published on the occasion of an exhibition of the same title at the Hocken Collections, Dunedin, in early 2013.

Austin's publication explores the gallery system, anticipating and responding to processes of cataloguing, collecting and filing that take place within the library and archive following

the exhibition cycle. Inside the folder is the cheaply printed ephemera associated with various stages of the exhibition process: a postcard invitation to the exhibition opening, a reproduction of an etching by Giorgio Morandi, a text by Jon Bywater entitled *Powernap*, a list of works and a foldout poster featuring a reproduction of Austin's acrylic painting *Homesick* (2012). Also included is a sachet of Gregg's Red Ribbon Roast instant coffee stapled to a piece of A4 paper, a wallet of photographs printed at Warehouse Stationery, and a DVD titled *Dentists on Holiday*.

The Liquid Dossier is filed between fine press publications in the library's rare books cabinet. Yet the bleached paper and throwaway qualities of

these materials are in stark contrast to the heavy, luxurious stock, careful binding and letterpress of other items in the cabinet. The loose contents of the folder provide various familiar tactile experiences, several of which—pieces of copy paper, staples, the crunch of freeze dried coffee granules within a foil pouch—recall an everyday office environment.

To exhibit the materials in Austin's publication would be to restage the exhibition in a different form. *The Liquid Dossier* is like a folder in a gallery archive, drawing attention to the accumulation of printed materials generated by an exhibition and the way these items are stored and documented.

These examples represent only



a glimpse into the collection of contemporary artist books held by the Gallery, but they touch on a number of problems that these hybrid objects present for collecting institutions. From storage to display, the multiple forms of the artist book challenge the divisions between library, archive and art collections. They also ask to be handled and ‘read’ in order to be fully experienced, provoking a series of negotiations and compromises for curators and conservators alike.

The problems encountered in engaging with artist books, however, are precisely the points of tension that they often seek to exploit, and in relation to which they become most resonant. These productive

antagonisms provide fertile territory for different types of projects and exhibitions that seek to contribute to an ongoing conversation around the artist book and its many possibilities.

Sophie Davis is currently studying towards an MA in art history at the University of Canterbury. She is co-founder of North Projects, an artist-run space in Christchurch.

Barbara Garrie is lecturer in contemporary art at the University of Canterbury. She is currently researching the University of Canterbury artist books collection.

NOTES

1. Clive Phillpot, ‘Books by Artists and Books as Art’, in *Booktrek*, Switzerland, JRP Ringier and Les Presses du Réel, 2013 (first published in Cornelia Lauf and Clive Phillpot, *Artist/Author: Contemporary Artists’ Books*, New York, Distributed Publishers and American Federation of Arts, 1998), p.186.
2. Johanna Drucker, *The Century of Artists’ Books*, New York, Granary Books, 2012, p.1.
3. Annie Herlocker, ‘Shelving Methods and Questions of Storage and Access in Artists’ Book Collections’, *Art Documentation: Journal of the Art Libraries Society of North America*, vol.31, spring 2012, p.67.
4. Johanna Drucker, ‘The Myth of the Artist’s Book as a Democratic Multiple’, *Art Papers*, November–December 1997, p.10.

Nick Austin **The Liquid Dossier** 2013. Collection of Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu



Home for a Gnome

To celebrate our tenth birthday last year, Gregor Kregar made *Reflective Lullaby*. Standing staunch outside the closed Gallery, the two three-metre tall mirror-finished gnomes were comic-heroic ornaments for the post-quake garden city. We're pleased to say that Robert is staying with us for good, and will reappear close to reopening. But Gow Langsford kindly offered to lend John to a home anywhere in Canterbury until mid January 2015. We auctioned him off at our Foundation fundraising dinner in August, and one Christchurch couple jumped at the chance.

Gregor Kregar **Reflective Lullaby (John)**
2013. Mirror-polished stainless steel.
Courtesy of the artist and Gow Langsford
Gallery. Provided by Gow Langsford
Gallery, Gregor Kregar and Christchurch Art
Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu

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.

It's good to write about Boyd Webb's *Denatured* so soon after **Burster Flipper Wobbler Dripper Spinner Stacker Shaker Maker** completes its run at ArtBox. For that exhibition reminded us clearly of a key task of the artist—to make.

When I first saw Boyd's pagework, I immediately recalled a fishing trip, probably made in 1996 when we were working on the national touring exhibition of his work (it came to the former Robert McDougall Art Gallery in 2000). Boyd and I had driven from Dunedin and were on our way to Christchurch to discuss the exhibition with staff there. We'd driven over the Pig Route in North Otago because Boyd wanted to remind himself of places he'd gone with his family when growing up in New Zealand, and on through the Mackenzie Country—so awe-inspiring it hardly needs another reason to visit. We called in to see my parents, then living in Carew on the Inland Scenic Route, and finished up staying two nights.

Boyd was keen to see off the beaten track, so my father promised to take him up to the source of the Rangitata in back country Canterbury early the next morning. It was a beautiful trip but, on the way home, Dad indicated there was somewhere else he'd *really* like to show Boyd. By later that morning they and my brother George were heading up the Orari Gorge, with fishing in mind. Dad spotted fish (and George caught one for that night); Boyd was fascinated in addition by a range of details he observed: tufts of sheep's wool caught on barbed wire fences, the fishing flies themselves. They've since appeared in his art.

Eighteen or so years later, we asked Boyd to contribute a pagework for this edition of *Bulletin*. When I showed them to Dad over Labour Weekend, he had the same reaction: 'They're fishing flies—but he's forgotten the hooks.'

While Boyd is known as a photographer, his raw material is fabricated or arranged in some

way—made by the artist. Feathers, wire, quills, deer hair, plastic or fine wire are twisted, turned, shaped and adhered for the camera. Puzzling and reminiscent, these things are simply offered to us on this occasion. *Denatured*, certainly, but who's fooled? Whose confidence in things real is undermined—or reinforced—as they look? The size of our *Bulletin* page gives us no clue to the size of the 'flies'. Our task is to admire.

As I took the images away, Dad called out: 'You better tell Boyd to send them to me and I can fit the hooks'. He's still fishing. And whether or not these particular flies are made by an artist does not stand in the way of his reception of the pagework.

Jenny Harper

Director

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

Boyd Webb *Denatured* 2014. Colour photographs. Copyright the artist







Archibald Nicoll **A Flemish Waterway**. Oil on canvas. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, presented by the Canterbury Society of Arts, 1932

MY FAVOURITE

The Avenue

The trees have no branches and tall trunks. Reaching up into the sky down either side of the road. A hill in the distance. And the trees further down the avenue are paler than the ones up close. Clouds climb the sky. An unreal landscape, unlike here. Unlike our flat plates of two-dimensional land, smacked hard into a frame by some contemporary local hand and thrown into submission by our harsh light. No gentleman scholar posing as pragmatic hard-arse... Yes, quietly here lies the Avenue. Unreal in its charm. Eyes wander the road, deeper into what lies further down it. Out to the hill, the shape of a stand of trees on the hill and the future. Another time inside another time.

Local truths are lies elsewhere, goes the old Chinese saying. For landscape this is true as well. Nearly thirty-years later I sat in a bus, listening to Django Reinhardt and driving somewhere up the top of France. I felt like I was driving in a dream. This is the Avenue I thought. The road with trees on either side. I looked down the road, and moved into the distance. I felt like I was

about to begin a strange conversation with a younger me, the same feeling as hearing your own alarm clock ring halfway through the day when you have been up for hours, and expecting it all to disappear in front of your eyes as you wake into a different reality. The bus drives into the distance.

Back home, trying to trace the weird roots of a dream, I looked again for that old picture, searched under French artists, Belgian artists, Flemish, Polish, Bohemian and German. It was impossible to find it. I thought back to where I was at the time and entered 'Calais'. Only one picture came up and it was the Avenue. It wasn't even of a road. I looked to see the elusive nationality and saw it was by a New Zealander. I wonder what his alarm clock sounded like.



Delaney Davidson, Woolston's best-kept secret, spends half his time in New Zealand and the other touring his music in Europe and the USA. Jump Trash, Folk Noir, Hobo Deluxe.

BACK MATTER

Best in Heritage 2014

In September director Jenny Harper was a presenter at the thirteenth annual Best in Heritage conference, which was held in Dubrovnik. The event was attended by a range of heritage professionals from around the world, with 136 coming from thirty-three countries and a host of working environments. All those invited to speak were there because they had received a national award. The Gallery was among twenty-four museum, heritage and conservation laureates presented, in a packed three-day programme that represented almost all aspects of best, present-day practices. Jenny's paper, titled 'Good Art Really Matters', introduced our **Outer Spaces** programme to an appreciative international audience.

Christchurch Art Gallery Foundation and New Zealand at Venice

On 25 November, the Christchurch Art Gallery Foundation invited the New Zealand at Venice team to share their progress with Simon Denny's presentation for the next Venice Biennale of Art, which opens in May 2015. Heather Galbraith, commissioner for New Zealand, chair of patrons Leigh Melville and curator Robert Leonard, joined Foundation members and guests for an intimate evening introducing Denny's presentation and predicting the impact it will have. Foundation partners Grant and Sandra Close opened their home and talked about how pleased they are to be supporting the Foundation over the coming five years, and helping to build a collection of works which treasures this time.

Closed But Still On Sale

This year, as a present to those who've continued to support the Shop since the Gallery's closure, we've reduced the prices on a surprising range of products. Art lovers can indulge in a bargain, with 25% off some award-winning Gallery publications, or a selection of half-price digital reproductions of collection favourites. All of our t-shirts are reduced, and we're also offering free postage worldwide. Stock is limited on many items, so get in quick to avoid disappointment.

christchurchartgallery.org.nz/shop

Pacific Flotsam Crosses the Tasman

The Gallery's *Pacific Flotsam* is on the move. Bill Culbert's light installation, which was a firm favourite in our **Brought to Light** exhibition, is the centrepiece of a new exhibition of the artist's work to be held at the National Art School Gallery, Sydney, and timed to coincide with the Sydney Festival 2015. This is Culbert's largest solo project in Australia to date, and we're very pleased to be able to contribute by lending a major work. Also travelling to Sydney is *Strait*, which was made for Culbert's 2013 Venice Biennale presentation. While *Pacific Flotsam* references the Great Pacific garbage patch, *Strait* comes from somewhere a little closer to home—the contents of our staff room fridge.



Bill Culbert **Strait** 2013. Photo: Jennifer French

Teachers—New Outreach Art Lessons Available for Term 4!

We've added three great new art workshops to our outreach programme for term 4.

In *3D clay*, students can learn to sculpt by manipulating clay and exploring mark-making, pattern and texture. *Taking a Line for a Walk* encourages students to develop confidence in their ability to use oil pastels by exploring the idea that drawing is as simple as 'taking a line for a walk'. And in *Still-life Painting* students learn to use paint and brushes effectively, including tips on how to mix and manage paint, as they create their own still-life painting.

Each workshop takes ninety minutes and is held in your classroom. We provide all the materials plus a teacher to facilitate. For more information or to book your class workshop tel: (03) 941 7373 or email Bianca.VanLeeuwen@ccc.govt.nz

Good Summer Reading

Tell You What: Great NZ Nonfiction 2015 (Auckland University Press) showcases a recent selection of terrific, compelling true stories. Editors Susanna Andrew and Jolisa Gracewood have chosen twenty-nine pieces published in magazines, in journals, on blogs and in newspapers over the last few years. These well-wrought tales, by household names and talented new arrivals, tell us what it's like for all sorts of New Zealanders right now: from the auction house to the doctor's surgery; from the kitchen bench to the top of the world's highest mountain. Four strong essays from Christchurch—including a moving reminiscence by our own Lara Strongman—anchor the collection, which unfolds like a conversation with a room full of long-lost friends.

And keep an eye out for the summer issue of *Art and Australia* this December, which contains an interview with Lyttelton printmaker and guitar demon Jason Greig by curator Peter Vangioni. In it, Greig discusses everything from growing up in Timaru and the influence of Féliçien Rops and Odilon Redon, to dealing with his own personal demons and heavy metal: 'I'm an old school metallor, I just love heavy metal and all the symbolism that goes with it ... they're dredging up the same archetypal well of images as me.'

Both are available from all leading bookstores.

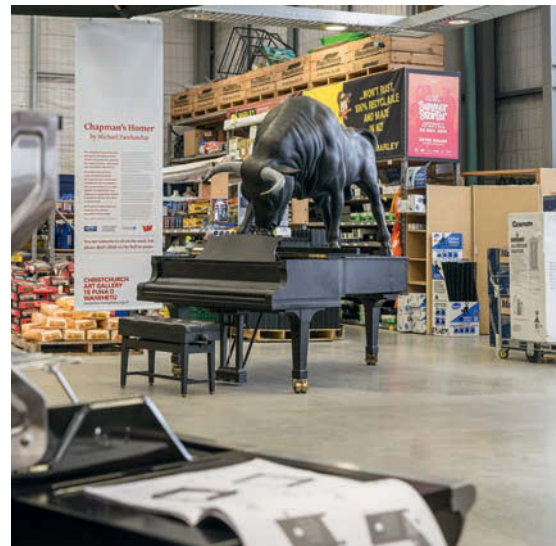
Bull Sitting

Christchurch's favourite bull can now be found at PlaceMakers Riccarton. That may sound a bit unusual, but these are strange times. *Chapman's Homer* was initially shown in Madras Street and later at the Arts Centre during the Arts Festival. Next Christchurch City Council hosted him where tourists, council and CERA staff and customers got to see him... and now he's being seen by a new crowd—builders.

Grant and Sandra Close, owners of PlaceMakers Riccarton, were among our Leaders of the Charge during the initial fundraising and enthusiastically signed up as our first bull sitters. Like us, they believe that good art really matters in Christchurch. They also reckon their customers are creative in how they are helping to craft this new city.

Bull sitting is not as easy as it sounds though—there are some key requirements. First and foremost, you need to share our passion for art. You will also need a fair bit of space. And of course, you need to be able to keep him secure.

If you think you've got what it takes, get in touch.
together@christchurchartgallery.org.nz



Michael Parekowhai **Chapman's Homer** 2011. Bronze, stainless steel. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 2013 with the assistance of Christchurch City Council through the Public Art Advisory Group, Christchurch Art Gallery Foundation and Westpac, IAG, Ben and Penny Gough, Chartwell Trust, Ravenscar Trust, Friends of Christchurch Art Gallery, Grant and Sandra Close, Dame Jenny Gibbs, Kevin and Joanna Hickman, Stewart and Nati Kaa, Tony Kerridge, McFadden family, Andrew and Jenny Smith, Chapman Tripp, Colliers, Meadow Mushrooms, MWH Ltd, Pace Project Management, The Press; and with additional thanks for contributions from 1,074 other big-hearted individuals and companies.

Public Programmes

Film: Baroque! From St Peter's to St Paul's part 2

This episode follows Baroque to its dark heart in Spain, especially focusing on the route of the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, and featuring painters Velázquez, Caravaggio and Zurbarán. Then it goes through Belgium and Holland to discover Rubens and Vermeer.

6pm / 3 December / Alice Cinematheque / free

60 mins

Christmas Workshop: 'Tis the Season to be Jolly Crafty

Decorate your halls with something other than your usual snowflakes, stars and hearts. Take a little crafting glue, glitter and paper, throw in some walnuts and pasta, and you can make beautiful Christmas decorations while building lasting festive memories with your kids. Suitable for the whole family.

10am–12pm and 1–3pm / 6 December / WEA, 59 Gloucester Street / \$10 or \$20 per family per session

Bookings essential

www.christchurchartgallery.org.nz or phone 941 7382

Film: Baroque! From St Peter's to St Paul's part 3

This episode explores the English tradition, which finds its climax through Sir Christopher Wren and St Paul's Cathedral.

6pm / 10 December / Alice Cinematheque / free

60 mins

Māori, Whales and Whaling: an Ongoing Relationship

Marine mammal specialist Dr Martin Cawthorn presents a fascinating insight into the intertwined history of whales and Māori.

6pm / 21 January / 209 Tuam Street / free

Artist Talk: David Cook in conversation with Ken Hall

Join artist David Cook and curator Ken Hall as they take you on a photographic trip to the Cathedral Square of the 1980s.

11am / 31 January / 209 Tuam Street / free

Film: Finding Vivian Maier

This is a critically acclaimed documentary about a mysterious nanny, who secretly took over 100,000 photographs that were hidden in storage lockers and only discovered decades later. Maier's work is now appreciated as part of a renaissance in interest in the art of street photography.

6pm / 4 February / Alice Cinematheque / free

84 mins

Guest Speaker: The 1980s—the Great New Zealand Revolution?

The 1980s saw arguably the most significant overturning of the New Zealand value system for over a century. What were the elements of that revolution and where did it come from? Eminent historian Jock Phillips presents an illustrated talk covering this extraordinary time.

6pm / 18 February / 209 Tuam Street / free

Film: Of Time and the City

A pertinent film for Christchurch, it is both a love song and a eulogy to Liverpool. It is also a response to memory, reflection and the experience of losing a sense of place as the skyline changes and time takes its toll.

6pm / 25 February / Alice Cinematheque / free

74 mins





MAKING GOOD PRINTING GREAT

30 BIRMINGHAM DRIVE CHRISTCHURCH

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The Gallery is currently closed to the public.
Our off-site exhibition space is upstairs at
209 Tuam Street.

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