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Christchurch City Council

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Visitors to the Gallery in front of Fiona Hall's *The Price is Right*, installed as part of the exhibition Fiona Hall: Force Field.

Front cover image: Rita Angus A Goddess of Mercy (detail) 1945-7. Oil on canvas. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 1957. Reproduced courtesy of the Rita Angus Estate

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TE PUNA O WAIWHETU CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY

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This quarter is a busy one at Christchurch Art Gallery, as we host not only one of New Zealand's best-loved and most respected artists, but also one of its most successful architects. With exhibitions on both Rita Angus and Sir Miles Warren showing in the Gallery, and the Ellerslie International Flower show in town, this edition of *Bulletin* has something of a green, or garden, theme. We're looking at everything from landscapes to land art; from gardens to 'flowers' crafted from old mops.

As *Bulletin* continues to settle into its new format, we thank you for your positive comments. Contributors this quarter include renowned American writer, architect and landscape artist Charles Jencks, who has written extensively on modernism, postmodernism and architecture and here discusses gardening and the cosmos.

Sir Miles Warren has long been regarded as one of New Zealand's premier architects, and his contribution to this country's architecture, and Christchurch's skyline in particular, cannot be underestimated. The Gallery is very proud this quarter to host the first ever retrospective exhibition of Sir Miles's work in this, the year of his 80th birthday. Starting with his early architectural drawings, this exhibition takes us through his major achievements, including the beautifully crafted formal garden at his home, Ohinetahi, in Governors Bay.

Coming to us fresh from highly successful runs at both of its previous venues, **Rita Angus: Life & Vision** is a comprehensive survey of the oeuvre of one of New Zealand's most significant artists. Honouring the centenary of Angus's birth (the anniversary falls five days after the exhibition's opening in Christchurch) this exhibition has been developed by Te Papa and brings together 143 of her works, some of which have never been seen in public before. It is also a wonderful chance to welcome the Gallery's own painting, *Cass*, back to Christchurch. Voted New Zealand's Greatest Painting in 2006 by viewers of 'Frontseat', it has been out on loan since May 2008. While the methodology used to establish its iconic status may have been somewhat dubious, there can be no denying that this work is both a clear favourite and a source of inspiration to artists and public alike.

It makes perfect sense that Rita Angus should be accompanied in our exhibition programme by Joanna Margaret Paul. Both artists refused the common characterisation of drawing and watercolour as 'minor' media, instead creating art that is at once light in touch and deeply serious. Paul was an artist and poet to whom drawing was incredibly important — a constant way of noticing, valuing and responding to the people and landscapes around her. On her tragic death in 2003 hundreds of drawings came to light in her Wanganui studio, many of which had never before been exhibited. Subjects to Hand has been touring since 2006 and presents a selection of these drawings. Christchurch Art Gallery is proud to be the latest venue to bring Paul's work to the attention of the New Zealand public, particularly at a moment when Paul's attentiveness to the natural world speaks directly to current environmental concerns.

As we move towards a complete overhaul of our permanent collection displays in late 2009, we are continually striving to refresh and replenish the selection of work on public display. As part of this you can enjoy **A Garden Enclosed: Eileen Mayo Prints** from 30 May. The Gallery has been actively collecting prints by Mayo, one of Canterbury's most respected printmakers, since 2005. From *Winter Sleep*, her first print produced in New Zealand, to late works like *A Garden Enclosed*, this is a wonderful opportunity to see prints from across the artist's career.

And finally, following the success of last edition's 'Pagework', we were delighted to invite Christchurch-based artist Zina Swanson to create a new work of art especially for *Bulletin*. Zina is a sculpture graduate from the University of Canterbury, and has exhibited throughout New Zealand, including in **Another Destination** (2006) and **Wunderbox** (2008-9) at Christchurch Art Gallery. I hope you agree that the stunning work on paper she has created continues our new 'Pagework' feature in fine style, offering an intricate contemporary reflection on the ways culture and nature intertwine.

Jenny Harper Director *February* 2009

MARCH, APRIL, MAY 2009

NATURE'S OWN VOICE Until August 2009

Nature's Own Voice includes examples of work by New Zealand's most accomplished *plein-air* painters, highlighting their interest in painting nature through direct observation outdoors, recording natural light and atmospheric effects in different weather conditions. Also included is *Cornfields* by Eugène Boudin and rare film footage of Bill Sutton painting outdoors. *Collection Galleries*

WHITE ON WHITE

Until October 2009

Keeping younger audiences in mind, White on White is an exhibition brimming with the imaginative possibilities of white. The exhibition includes new or recent works by artists including Sean Kerr, Steve Carr, Scott Eady, Simon Shepheard, Niki Hastings-McFall and Gregor Kregar, with highlights from the collection by Eileen Mayo, Ando Hiroshige, Peter Robinson and Jude Rae.

Burdon Family Gallery Family worksheet available

RITA ANGUS: LIFE & VISION

7 March — 5 July 2009 Rita Angus is widely regarded as one of the

leading New Zealand artists of the twentieth century. **Rita Angus: Life & Vision** features 143 works drawn from public and private collections throughout New Zealand. The exhibition reveals the full scope of Angus's work throughout her career.

Exhibition developed and toured by Te Papa.

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

MILES: A LIFE IN ARCHITECTURE 7 March — 14 June 2009

Celebrating the achievements of leading New Zealand architect Sir Miles Warren, this exhibition reveals his contribution to modernist architecture and his success as a watercolourist and gardener. The exhibition traverses the career of Sir Miles, from his formative years and the design of the Dorset Street flats, to such landmarks as College House, the Christchurch Town Hall and the New Zealand Chancery in Washington. *William A. Sutton and Ravenscar Galleries*

SUBJECTS TO HAND:

JOANNA MARGARET PAUL DRAWING

14 March — 17 May 2009

This exhibition examines Joanna Margaret Paul's drawings in depth. Paul's exquisite graphic touch and ardent observation of the visual world have long been appreciated by those who cherish the tradition of drawing, but this exhibition is premised on a conviction that her drawings also have fresh currency in a contemporary art context. *Monica Richards Gallery*

HANNAH AND AARON BEEHRE: JS.02.03

14 March — 17 May 2009

This intriguing projection of stylised leaves by Christchurch artists Hannah and Aaron Beehre responds to your voice or footsteps by falling in unexpected patterns. *Tait Electronics Gallery*

THE COLLECTIONS

From Petrus van der Velden's thundering Mountain Stream, Otira Gorge of 1893 to Robert Hood's Samuel Butler (My Rifle, My Pony and Me), filmed in the South Island landscape 110 years later, the first-floor collection galleries hold a rotating selection of treasures from the Historical, Twentieth Century and Contemporary Collections. Collection Galleries Collections catalogue available

A CONSTANT FLOW OF LIGHT

Fifty years since Colin McCahon began his renowned work *Tomorrow will be the same but not as this is*, this focus exhibition from the collections brings together remarkable works spanning the life of this great modern painter, and points to the 'afterlives' of his art in the works of two contemporary artists.

Collection Galleries

A GARDEN ENCLOSED: EILEEN MAYO PRINTS From 30 May 2009

Drawn entirely from the Gallery's permanent collection, this focus exhibition features fourteen prints covering Mayo's career. *Collection Galleries*

OUTER SPACES

A programme of artworks in spaces beyond the traditional exhibition galleries. Featuring *United We Fall* by Sara Hughes in the foyer and *The Gathering* by Richard Killeen on Worcester Boulevard. And don't miss a new addition to the foyer, timed to coincide with the Ellerslie International Flower Show. Niki Hastings-McFall will be lining the water features with strings of flowers, draping the sombre stonework of the foyer with a bright Pacific welcome.

TWINSET

A rapid-fire programme of new video art on the twin screens in the foyer. This season featuring videos by Daniel von Sturmer (March), Sarah Jane Parton (April) and Ariane Pauls (May).

SUBSONIC

The autumn **Subsonic** programme features a variety of sounds from Birchville Cat Motel, Gate and Julian Dashper.

RITA ANGUS: LIFE & VISION

Rita Angus is widely regarded as one of the leading New Zealand artists of the twentieth century. **Rita Angus: Life & Vision**, the largest and most comprehensive exhibition dedicated to her art in more than twenty-five years, features 143 works drawn from public and private collections throughout New Zealand. This exhibition, which has been developed and presented by the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, reveals the full scope of Angus's work throughout her career and the recurring themes of identity, spirituality and nature central to her art. Fresh from highly successful runs in both of its previous venues, the exhibition features a diverse range of works, including Christchurch Art Gallery's *A Goddess of Mercy* and the iconic *Cass*. In the pages that follow we present a selection of works from the collection that feature in the exhibition.

TOURING A, B, C & BORG HENRY GALLERIES 7 MARCH — 5 JULY 2009



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A Goddess of Mercy

Rita Angus painted *A Goddess of Mercy* as a tribute to her sister Edna, who died suddenly in 1940. The pattern of the goddess's skirt comes from one of Edna's favourite outfits.

More generally, the goddess paintings celebrate a mystical female world, which Angus presents as an alternative to the destructive male culture of wartime.

Angus marries Eastern and Western symbolism in this work. The young woman recalls the figure of the Virgin Mary in Christian art. The painting's title, on the other hand, evokes the Buddhist divinity Kuan Yin, who represents mercy and compassion. Angus was deeply drawn to Buddhism at the time.

A Goddess of Mercy 1945-7. Oil on canvas. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 1957. Reproduced courtesy of the Rita Angus Estate



Mount Maud

ish me now.'

In early 1941 Rita Angus worked for several months as a seasonal tobacco picker on a farm at Pangatotara, near Motueka. She was joined by fellow pacifists Chrystabel Aitken and Courtney Archer, who bequeathed this work to the Gallery.

Painted in a graphic, decorative style, strongly influenced by Japanese woodblock engraving, this work also shows Angus's dedication to identifying an unmistakably local scene. She inspired many other artists in their quest to celebrate distinctively New Zealand imagery.

Mount Maud 1938. Watercolour. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, Harry Courtney Archer Estate 2002. Reproduced courtesy of the Rita Angus Estate

Rita Angus painted this tranquil watercolour on her first trip to Wanaka. A keen traveller, she found new subjects and fresh inspiration in her journeys. 'Live in a suitcase,' she advised her sister Jean.

Angus painted her watercolours of Central Otago with great sensitivity and skill. She remembered the period as one of almost effortless work, remarking eight years later, 'My vitality and strength then aston-

Hop Kilns, Motueka

Hop Kilns, Motueka 1941. Watercolour. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, Harry Courtney Archer Estate 2002. Reproduced courtesy of the Rita Angus Estate





Irises

Rita Angus was a keen gardener. She grew irises at her Clifton home and painted them many times. To create this watercolour, she carefully observed them from bud to bloom, paying attention to the texture of the petals as they caught the light.

Irises had a special appeal for Angus. She was attracted by their elegance and beauty, and she was also interested in their history as symbols in art and literature. Traditionally, the iris is associated with faith, wisdom and courage — virtues that Angus held in high regard.

Irises 1942. Watercolour. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, Lawrence Baigent / Robert Erwin bequest 2003. Reproduced courtesy of the Rita Angus Estate



Riverbed, Waiau 1932. Watercolour. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased with assistance from the Olive Stirrat bequest 1990. Reproduced courtesy of the Rita Angus Estate

Riverbed, Waiau

The high viewpoint in this work provides a sweeping view of the Waiau riverbed and the Southern Alps beyond. During the 1930s Rita Angus painted many Canterbury backcountry landscapes such as this.

She used a distinctive style of realism in her drawings and paintings with well-defined shapes, blocks of strong colour and a clear, pervading light. She painted this work in a deliberate and precise way, with the details simplified and each area of the composition given equal emphasis.



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Cass and Mountains, Cass

Cass was a breakthrough work for Rita Angus. Crisp, bright and rhythmic, it shows her distinctive style.

Angus planned *Cass* very carefully. The diagonal lines of the hills, for example, contrast with the verticals and horizontals of the buildings, power poles and stacked wood in the foreground. Everything is sharp and clear, and the painting glows with colour.

For Angus, *Cass* had a deeply personal significance. It 'expresses joy in living here,' she wrote. Clearly a lot of people have agreed. In 2006, *Cass* was voted New Zealand's greatest painting in a television poll.

Cass 1936. Oil on canvas on board. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 1955

Mountains, Cass 1936. Watercolour. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, presented by Robert Erwin in memory of Lawrence Baigent 1985. Reproduced courtesy of the Rita Angus Estate

EVENTS

Saturday 7 March

Rita Angus: Life & Vision Tour with William McAloon William McAloon, co-curator of Rita Angus: Life & Vision, leads a floortalk of the exhibition. 12pm / meet at the front desk / free

Wednesday 11 March

Rita Angus: Life & Vision Meet Jill Trevelyan, co-curator and author of Rita Angus: Life & Vision, for a floortalk and tour of the exhibition. 6pm / meet at the front desk / free Sponsored by The Press

Saturday 14 March

Art In the Morning Friends Breakfast and tour through Rita Angus: Life & Vision with Dr Pamela Gerrish Nunn. 8.30am / Alchemy / Friends \$20/ public \$30 / book by 12 March

Wednesday 15 April

Rita Angus: New Zealand Landscape in View Ron Brownson, senior curator at Auckland Art Gallery, gives an illustrated talk on the landscapes of Rita Angus and discusses her paintings in the Gallery's collection. 6pm / Philip Carter Family Auditorium / free Sponsored by The Press

Wednesday 22 April

Rita Angus: Modern Woman and New Zealand Artist Julie King examines how Rita Angus and her fellow female artists contributed to the development of early modernism in New Zealand. 6pm / Philip Carter Family Auditorium / free *Sponsored by The Press*

Wednesday 29 April

CINEMA Lovely Rita: A Painter's Life. Introduced by director Gaylene Preston

Rita Angus stood uncompromisingly alone among those in her generation. This film tells her story a life previously surrounded by secrecy. Film also showing Wednesday 20 May. 6pm / Philip Carter Family Auditorium / free Sponsored by The Press

Wednesday 6 May

Heirloom – Fashion Inspired by Rita Angus Laurie Foon, of New Zealand fashion house Starfish, presents this exclusive, modelled preview of its Heirloom winter collection. A key inspiration for this collection is Rita Angus's unique palette and interpretation of New Zealand landscapes. Finish the evening with a private guided tour of Rita Angus: Life & Vision. Ticket price includes complimentary champagne on arrival. Cash bar available. 7pm / Philip Carter Family Auditorium / \$20 / tickets tel: (o3) 941 7382 Sponsored by The Press

Wednesday 13 May

Courage and Conviction in the Works of Rita Angus Peter Shaw, art writer and curator of the Fletcher Trust Collection, explores Rita Angus's powerful pacifist convictions, her isolated position as a conscientious objector, and the ways in which this influenced her art.

6pm / Philip Carter Family Auditorium / free Sponsored by The Press

Showcase Julia Morison

Strange things often happen at the end of Julia Morison's paintbrushes, and never more extravagantly than in this recent addition to the collection, *Teaching Aid 1: Appropriate brushes for large flower paintings*.

Modern artists have always looked for alternatives to the good old horse-hair paintbrush. Jackson Pollock spilled paint from a stick to create his big nets of paint. Brice Marden uses a long bendy branch to make things harder for himself and more interesting for the painting. Philip Trusttum cuts to the chase and draws direct from the tube. Max Gimblett dunks a mop in ink and lets fly with a Zen whoop ...

But Julia Morison does something special in this work — she turns the brushes into the artwork. *Teaching Aids* is really nothing more than ten lowly mops fixed to the wall on straight steel rods. But Morison transforms these tools of 'women's work' into things of bizarre beauty — tweaking, perming and transforming each one into the head of an extravagant flower.

The result is a gigantic, goofy flower-painter's kit, created by a teacher as a kind of bouquet to her students and — much farther back in time — to the overlooked 'lady flower painters' of Canterbury. It's a kit too big to use, of course, but I love the vision it inspires. Imagine a new generation of flower painters, heading out with these brushes in hand to mop the world with colour.

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Justin Paton

Senior curator

Julia Morison **Teaching Aid 1:** Appropriate brushes for large flower paintings (detail) 2001. String, plaster, resin, galvanised pipe and set of ten wall labels. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 2008





A Garden Enclosed: Eileen Mayo Prints provides a valuable insight into one of Canterbury's best-loved and most respected printmakers

A Garden Enclosed 1980. Screen print. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu. purchased 2005. Reproduced courtesy of Dr Jillian Cassidy

Drawn entirely from the Gallery's permanent collection, this exhibition features fourteen prints covering Mayo's career, including examples of her early linocuts and wood-engravings three years the Gallery has actively sought and acquired examples of Mayo's prints from her New Zealand period to build on and enhance examples of her work already in the collection.

Mayo was a prolific artist who worked proficiently in several mediums. Apart from her interest in printmaking she was also a masterly calligrapher, book illustrator, designer of stamps and coins and a painter. While she excelled in all these fields it is her for Sydney, Australia where she designed posters, murals work as a printmaker for which she is best known and regarded and stamps alongside her work as a printmaker. In 1962 today.

Mayo's career as a printmaker began in London in the mid 1920s when she studied wood-engraving under Noel Rooke and

also studied linocut under Claude Flight, whom she met in 1929. Mayo was an incredibly gifted designer and by the 1940s had developed an impressive reputation not only for her printmakas well as her later screenprints and relief prints. Over the past ing but also her book illustrations. She wrote and illustrated many books over her career, many focusing on subjects relating to her interest in the natural world, including her mammoth The Story of Living Things and their Evolution (1944) which features over 1000 illustrations.

Plants, animals and insects were prominent themes in Mayo's work throughout her career. In 1953 she left England Mayo moved to New Zealand where she was initially based at Waimate, South Canterbury, before settling in Christchurch in 1965. Apart from several years spent in Dunedin during the mid John Farleigh at London's Central School of Arts and Crafts. She 1970s, Christchurch was to remain the artist's home until her

Winter Sleep 1964. Screen print. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 2005. Reproduced courtesy of Dr Jillian Cassidy

Mantis in the Sun 1968. **Relief print.** Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 2008. Reproduced courtesy of Dr Jillian Cassidy

New Year 1949. Wood engraving. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 1972. Reproduced courtesy of Dr Jillian Cassidy





death in 1994. It is works from this New Zealand period, from 1964 to the production of her last print in 1985, that the Gallery has focused on acquiring over the past several years.

Recently acquired prints include A Garden Enclosed (1980) which features the Cunningham glasshouse located in Christchurch's Botanic Gardens. Mayo portrayed the lush green vegetation, exotic palms and shrubs, protected and secure within the confines of the glasshouse while outside the deciduous trees are laid bare in their skeletal mid-winter forms. The pale red sun barely casts any warmth onto the scene and the white frost, such a prominent feature of Christchurch's winter mornthe coldness of the outside.

Mayo's first print created in New Zealand was *Winter Sleep* (1964), also significant as it represents one of her earliest forays into screen printing, a medium she continued to use for the remainder of her career. In this work Mayo arranged stylised plant forms as patterns throughout the composition; the bare branch, the unfurled fern leaf, various leaves and bulbs and dormant insects are all included. The plants and insects lie in a subdued state awaiting the warmer weather of spring. Mayo herself was a keen gardener and would look to her garden to provide subject matter such as flowers, vegetables and resident insects. One of her last prints, *Victorian Jug* (1984), displays a wonderful arrangement of cut flowers from her garden.



What is very evident in many of Mayo's late period prints is her growing interest in abstraction and her continued effort to develop and push her imagery in new ways. She often adopted new and unconventional techniques to produce desired visual effects. She experimented with a variety of textures, as seen in the rock-like form in the background of Mantis in the Sun (1968), which has been created by printing the surface of a scrunched up plastic bag.

A Garden Enclosed: Eileen Mayo Prints provides a rare opportunity for Gallery visitors to enjoy a selection of Mayo's prints from throughout her long and successful career as a ings, covers the ground surrounding the glasshouse enhancing printmaker. The exhibition covers a fifty-four year period the earliest example, a linocut titled *Turkish Bath*, dates from 1930 while Victorian Jug, produced in 1984, was to be one of her last. The exhibition includes six recently acquired prints and highlights the Gallery's commitment to acquiring examples of work by this important artist.

Peter Vangioni

Curator

Alphabets 1982. Screen print. Collection of

Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 1987. Reproduced courtesy of Dr Jillian Cassidy



Victorian Jug 1984. Screen print. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 1987. Reproduced courtesy of Dr Jillian Cassidy

A GARDEN ENCLOSED: EILEEN MAYO PRINTS IS IN THE COLLECTION GALLERIES from 30 May 2009





 Best known for the Christchurch Town Hall and Wellington's Michael Fowler Centre, Sir Miles Warren is the doyen of post-war New Zealand architecture, the first New Zealander to be knighted for services to architecture, an Icon of the Arts Foundation of New Zealand, and a leading figure in the arts in Christchurch. The garden at his Governors Bay home, Ohinetahi, beautifully crafted by Miles with his sister Pauline Trengrove and her husband John, has also secured for him a reputation as one of our most remarkable garden designers.

WILLIAM A. SUTTON AND RAVENSCAR GALLERIES 7 MARCH — 14 JUNE 2009



65 Cambridge Terrace House and Offices, Christchurch, garden façade 1962. Photograph. Mannering & Associates Ltd

Previous pages: Christchurch Town Hall, Kilmore Street, Christchurch, main auditorium detail 1972. Photograph. Martin Barriball



Harewood Memorial Gardens and 1963. Photograph. Martin Barriball

The exhibition Miles: a life in architecture, mounted in celebration of Miles's 80th birthday, presents him as an architect, as a traveller and watercolourist, as a sensitive designer working within the constraints of heritage buildings as diverse as St Augustine's Church, Christ's College, the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament and New Zealand Parliament House, and as a gardener.

Miles Warren began his career in architecture as a sixteen-year old pupil of Cecil Wood, while studying in the evenings at the Christchurch Atelier — part of a distance learning programme for architectural students unable to study at the University of Auckland's School of Architecture. After a period combining work and on-the-job training, with evening class work at the Atelier, Miles moved to Auckland to complete his studies as a full-time student.

After graduation Miles returned to Christchurch, to the office of architect Bill Trengrove, before heading to London in 1953. There he worked for a time in the architectural office of the London County Council, developing the Alton West Estate at Roehampton Lane — a modernist mid- and high-density residential project. Miles was strongly influenced by contemporary Danish and Swedish architecture, introducing his own version of the Danish enfamiliehuset in the reinforced concrete-block houses with which he was so closely identified; houses characterised by their steeply pitched 45-degree eaveless roofs just one room wide, low door-height singlestorey walls, and fair-face concrete lintels with expressed form work. These classic Miles Warren houses revolutionised

domestic architecture in Christchurch and much farther afield, being imitated by many.

Soon after returning to Christchurch, Miles joined forces with former fellow student Maurice Mahoney, creating the firm that still carries their names: Warren and Mahoney. Their first project, the spare, modernist Christchurch Dental Nurses' Training School of 1958-9 was followed by a succession of fine buildings that established Warren and Mahoney's reputation — buildings such as the seminal Dorset Street flats, Carlton Mill flats, the Christchurch Wool Exchange in Whiteleigh Avenue (now a church), the Harewood Crematorium, his own residence and office at 65 Cambridge Terrace, and, most impressive of all, the residential blocks and chapel at Christchurch College (now College House).

A constructivist aesthetic and modularised construction was as characteristic of the early commercial buildings as concrete block and fair-face concrete was of the early houses and flats. It was first employed in the Chapman Block at Christ's College, and then in several mid-rise office blocks such as the SIMU Building, Canterbury Frozen Meats office, the CML building and Insignis House.

Opened in 1974, the Christchurch Town Hall was the most ambitious and complex of Miles Warren's buildings from the first twenty years. It marks the culmination of his interest in modernism, and is a convenient milestone marking his growing fondness for the eclectic, often wilfully decorative forms of postmodernism, a 1970s reaction against the functionalist ideals of modernism. The contrast between Christchurch's

Crematorium, Christchurch, exterior

Harewood Memorial Gardens and Crematorium, Christchurch, long garden 1963. Photograph. Martin Barriball

Christchurch Wool Exchange, Christchurch, exterior 1963. Photograph. Martin Barriball

Town Hall and Wellington's Michael Fowler Centre (in many respects closely similar projects), is the contrast between the culminating work of Miles's first two decades, and the new aesthetic which came to mark his work of the late 1970s and 1980s.

By now Warren and Mahoney was a substantial practice employing a large team of architects, and with an office in Wellington as well as Christchurch. The mid-rise office buildings of Christchurch began to make way for high-rise projects generated by the rebuilding of Wellington, and the growing commercial prosperity of Auckland. The New Zealand Government commissioned a splendid Chancery building for Observatory Circle in Washington. Warren and Mahoney's first all-brick building, it was designed to be contextually appropriate in a neighbourhood of brick Georgian-styled houses and the adjoining British Embassy by Edwin Lutyens.

Two buildings — Union House in Auckland from 1982, and Trust Bank Canterbury three years later — saw Miles explore a new functionalist aesthetic, with the structure of the buildings expressed externally. These were countered by the more decorative forms that characterise buildings such as Clarendon Tower in Christchurch, Wellington Club and 80 The Terrace, and Wellington's Bowen House. Yet others — the TVNZ Network Centre in Auckland, National Insurance House in Wellington and the closely similar Sofrana House in Auckland — are sleek buildings with taut skins of reflective glass and metal. Rotorua's Civic Centre, the grand Mulholland House near Wanganui, and, especially, the superbly crafted St

Patrick's Church of Napier, are the most rigorous and perfect of Miles's postmodern designs.

On retiring from Warren and Mahoney in 1994, Miles took with him his old school and long-term client, Christ's College. Over the following years he continued to add to that extraordinary collection of heritage buildings, while also practising as an independent architect from home. In a recent project - again working with heritage buildings - he bridged two grand Park Avenue buildings, one a house by Hurst Seager and the other a house by his former employer and mentor, Cecil Wood, to produce the 'Parkbridge' apartment complex. It is one of the most appealing adaptive reuses of heritage buildings achieved in recent years. Now, in the concluding months of his 80th year, Sir Miles Warren is still an active and energetic architect.

Miles: a life in architecture provides a comprehensive survey of some forty years of architectural practice. It also offers a selection of architectural watercolour paintings supporting his building proposals; a number of travel watercolours meticulously observed and lovingly executed studies of buildings and architectural details - and unsuccessful competition entries for two museum projects, the Museum of New Zealand and Christchurch Art Gallery. Informal video interviews by Gerard Smyth introduce the exhibition visitor to Sir Miles, his sister Pauline and partner Maurice Mahoney. Large models present the Washington Chancery and Christchurch College Chapel in the round, and a final selection of photographs takes the visitor on a tour of the garden at Ohinetahi.

MILES: A LIFE IN ARCHITECTURE IS IN THE WILLIAM A. SUTTON AND RAVENSCAR GALLERIES FROM 7 MARCH — 14 JUNE 2009.

Bowen House, Lambton Quay, Wellington 1990. Photograph. David Greenburg

EVENTS

Wednesday 25 March Sir Miles Warren Join Dr Rodney Wilson as he discusses the lifetime achievements of leading New Zealand architect, Sir Miles Warren

Saturday 18 April

Art in the Morning Friends Breakfast and tour of Miles: a life in architecture with architectural historian Jenny May. 8.30am / Alchemy / Friends \$20/ public \$30 / book by 16 April



Pyre Gould Corporation

LUNEYS









Michael Fowler Centre, Wakefield Street, Wellington, exterior 1983. Photograph. Martin Barriball



Christchurch Wool Exchange, Christchurch, interior 1963. Photograph. Martin Barriball



6pm / meet at the front desk / free Sponsored by The Press

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M Warren and Mahoney[®]





LIVING WITH MILES

David Turner Dorset Street Flats

The Dorset Street flats were completed in 1957/8 and I remember as a child of six or seven looking at them and thinking how wonderful they were and trying to picture myself living there. It was quite common in those days to go for a 'Sunday drive' — we would pick up the grandparents and virtually do a 'tiki tour' of all the new houses and suburbs. My family, as most of the fifties generation, were fairly pedestrian in their tastes and a lot of jeering and guffawing at anything 'modern' was par for the course on these Sunday drives. Apparently bus tours would also drive past this block of flats and 'jeer at their prison-like qualities' — at the time they were known as Fort Dorset. Their openness to the street and of course the northerly aspect and the sun made them seem like a shop window somehow. Nothing was hidden, all was revealed; it seemed to be a reaction against the many layered net curtains and blinds of past generations, in fact the same environment that I myself lived in, where privacy was sacrosanct and the outside world was to be shut out at all costs.

Miles's choice of materials, colours and building style brought a breath of fresh air to the staid and rather ordinary architecture of the day. He seemed to give a huge amount of thought to *how* people would live in these spaces, and he provided the necessary tools for them to live in a modern way. The front of the living room area has a huge glass door which slides back to give a great indoor/ outdoor flow, the bedroom has a glass Dutch (two part) door that could be opened to allow access to the courtyard garden. The concrete beams in the apartment give a sense of solidity and in their battleship-grey colour look almost industrial. With their timber slatted ceiling over a dark base the downstairs flats have a very cosy and comfortable, almost cosseted, feel.

I think these buildings came along at just the right time. People were looking for a new way of doing things, a new way of living; the war was over and with the new hope for the future a fresh approach was yearned for. Miles Warren's style of building was just what was required — everything about the buildings must have lent an air of being 'somewhere else'. These flats have stood the test of time very well and are just as much appropriate living spaces now as they would have been when first built. One of the City Council's requirements is that this building stays exactly as it is; all surfaces and colours must be retained — even the block wall facing the street is unpainted 'Vibrapac' block in its original imperial size. Apart from the growth of trees and the Virginia creeper over the block walls these flats look pretty much as they did in their heyday.

Richard McGowan 65 Cambridge Terrace

It's not unheard of for a young man to leave a city for a woman, but to leave a city for a building?

In 1998 an opportunity presented itself: a move to Christchurch after ten years of living in Auckland; a move which hinted at the possibility of living and working in Miles Warren's famous house and office at 65 Cambridge Terrace. This was a building I had known all my life and the opportunity to inhabit it for a time — if I could arrange it — was highly appealing, even a little miraculous.

Returning to Christchurch after a long absence (and just in time for the shortest day of the year) was a daunting prospect, and the change in pace — and space — took a little getting used to. I arranged with Ath (the incumbent tenant) and Sir Miles to move into the tiny garret flat on the upper floor of the building, last lived in by F.M.W. in the late sixties, and to open the local office for Patrick Clifford's practice, Architectus, on the north mezzanine (at one time the owner/architect's bedroom and bathroom). The two spaces are separated by the office's dramatic (and Building Code defying) open stairwell, and both have a view of what remains one of my all-time favourite courtyard gardens. Enclosed by buildings on three sides and a blocky hedge at the fourth, a discrete boarded gate affords access to a tightly ordered, lushly planted and entirely concealed garden and reflecting pool. In my experience, only Scarpa's constructions at Querini Stampalia in Venice and the Brion cemetery outside Vicenza seem comparable.

The flat itself is tiny but perfectly formed, a yacht-like space on the roof of the building, in which the half-gable section, north/south decks and continuous ribbon window generate the most marvellous and compact living environment. Space, of course, is at a premium — I calculated that the entire bedroom and bathroom would fit in the 'left over' space between the sofa and windows of my recentlyvacated K' Road, Auckland, loft apartment without touching the perimeter walls. However, the nature of the environment, though small, is inherently luxurious — and inherently Warren and Mahoney.

I lived in this magic building for nearly five years, often sitting reading in the garden for whole weekends, uninterrupted. I worked late in the office, slept in on Saturdays, fixed up thirty-year-old Italian cars and filled the built-in, fullheight bookcases to bursting as the architect had intended. Periodically I attempted to persuade Ath to let me live for a time in the gallery flat beside the garden — a spectacular space added adjacent to the main building in 1980. Unfortunately, this was never to be as he enjoyed being there so much himself when in town, which of course was no surprise to me.

What is the secret of these houses? I'm increasingly convinced that — in addition to undeniably seductive proportions — it is their sensible scaling (compare with the eye-wateringly ambitious, budget-stretching programmes of much of today's commissioned housing) and durable, essential materiality that offer clues. For my own part, the opportunity to live in one of the office's early houses while designing some of our current ones was an elegant symmetry, and one which reminds me that invention can best occur when grounded in a thorough knowledge of quality precedent.

Garth Gould Cashmere Road property

In 1959 I was having an evening meal at the Coffee Pot on New Regent Street with Miles. A popular establishment to which we repaired several times a week, it provided solid 'family type' meals to a number of flat dwellers in Christchurch — a group of which we formed part. During the



course of the meal I informed Miles that I had decided to build a small house on a section of my property at Halswell because I was 'sick of living in a town flat without any area of garden'. His large eyebrows shot up to the top of his forehead and I was fixed with what can only described as a baleful stare. 'Who, might I enquire, is designing this establishment for you?' he enquired. When I produced with some reluctance a piece of graph paper on which I had inscribed my ideas, he contemplated it for a few seconds, folded it and put it in his pocket. 'Gould' he said, 'I will not have you living in a builder's bungalow and I will send you a drawing in a week's time.'

The plan duly arrived a few days later, and it was so obviously superior in every respect that I could only agree to proceed. It differed from the normal small bungalows of those days with innovative features like insulated concreteslab flooring, exposed beams supporting the roof, open areas of ceiling extending to kitchen via glass panelling, exposed concrete-block walls, and doors of vertical wooden strips. When built the effect was of a much larger and airier house than the small bungalow that was the reality.

The pleasure which I derived from living in it arose from a combination of practical and aesthetic features: the good insulation arising from the slab and the linings of the walls and roof; the validity of the structure and its materials, which were all visible; and the sheer practicality of the basic design of a minimalist house. Today all this appears quite normal and ordinary, but in 1957 it should be remembered that, due to the war and the Depression, virtually nothing had been built since about 1928, and most of the concepts, particularly relating to the use of concrete, were new.

When some years later my wife and I built a larger house on the adjoining site we incorporated the same basic ideas — perhaps the only major improvement being covered ceilings which I think give a more pleasing balance to the rooms.

Sir Miles Warren 65 Cambridge Terrace House and Offices, Christchurch, perspective from garden 1962. Watercolour. Collection of Warren and Mahoney, ref: 1421, Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury



Ellerslie International Flower Show

From Wednesday 11 to Sunday 15 March, the garden city will be host to New Zealand's largest flower show. Since its beginnings in 1994, the *Ellerslie International Flower Show* has been held in the Auckland region, but in 2008 it was purchased by Christchurch City Council.

A number of exhibitions at the Gallery this season complement the themes of the show, from Rita Angus's archetypal New Zealand landscapes and the *plein-air* painting of **Nature's Own Voice**, to a work for the foyer by Niki Hastings-McFall and a display of Julia Morison's *Teaching Aid 1: Appropriate brushes for large flower paintings* (see p.14). In particular, **Miles: a life in architecture** takes us to Miles Warren's spectacular formal garden Ohinetahi (pictured).

Christchurch Art Gallery is celebrating this year's *Ellerslie International Flower Show* with special extended opening hours, and a number of related events.

Late Opening Hours — Wednesday 11 March: 10am to 9pm Thursday 12 March: 10am to 8pm Friday 13 March: 10am to 8pm



EVENTS

Wednesday 11 March

Rita Angus: Life & Vision Meet Jill Trevelyan, co-curator and author of Rita Angus: Life & Vision, for a floortalk and tour of the exhibition. 6pm / meet at the front desk / free Sponsored by The Press

Art Trek 2009 Live Performance The Richard Neave/Nick Harte combo on electric guitar and drums, followed by a performance from Simon Kong, who modifies a variety of sound sources with digital software. Both acts base their experimental sound around improvisation. Art Trek takes you into the cultural heart of the city to enjoy a diverse range of artistic activities in public galleries, dealer galleries and not-for-profit art spaces, all opening for one evening throughout the inner city of Christchurch. 8pm / foyer / cash bar available

Free buses connect the galleries around the city from 5 to 8pm. Details available at www. christchurchartgallery.org.nz

Thursday 12 March

Nature's Own Voice Join curator Peter Vangioni for a floortalk on Nature's Own Voice as he examines the work of some of New Zealand's most accomplished *plein-air* painters. 5.15pm / meet at the front desk / free

What is the Future of Heritage Trees in the Garden City? How much time remains, or are we

already too late? Arborist Dieter Steinegg evaluates the condition of our heritage tree stock. 6pm / Philip Carter Family Auditorium / free

Over several years I have worked on a Scottish landscape called, immodestly, the Garden of Cosmic Speculation, speculating with scientists and others on the fundamental laws and forces behind nature and what they might mean to us. Using growing nature to conjecture on what is basic to the universe is an old practice common to gardeners, but it raises some unlikely questions.

Most people understand a big distinction between living nature and the laws of nature — that is, organic growth and electromagnetism — and they do not reflect that in a garden as elsewhere the latter may underpin the former. Furthermore, the gardens of the last hundred years are for pleasure and relaxation, games and flowers, and not a place for public art. A big question follows from this: what, in our fragmenting culture, could communal expression achieve today, especially in an era driven by a runaway art market and fast change (not to mention toxic debt)? What beliefs command assent or, to shift to the public realm; which clients are brave enough to pay for a public park dedicated to a significant idea? My own experience in Italian and German parks is that to get any agreement on content is an uphill struggle, though very much worth trying.

It is much easier to experiment on oneself, and here I have been fortunate. My late wife Maggie and I started work on this garden around her family home in 1988 and slowly, area by area, it has grown into a landscape with about twenty areas dedicated to the fundamental units of the universe: a Black Hole Terrace for dining on in the summer months; a

Cascade and so on. Each insight into deep nature, many of which are recent, becomes translated into nature and sculpture. Landform is my generic name for this genre that cuts across art, landscape, architecture and the customary categories, and there must be something like twenty-five of them throughout the garden. Some landforms refer to theories of folding and fractals, others (when they fail) to catastrophe theory. As every gardener knows, the dialogue with nature is always two-way and it pays to exploit the unintended consequences of nature's acts.

Why dedicate a garden to the laws of nature? Partly because everybody relates consciously or not to the larger picture; we identify with nature and its various moods and states. And partly because in an era of global turmoil, when Tracey Emin and Damien Hirst are the public face of art, these cosmic laws can give us a public iconography that is as eternal as anything there is, and more engaging than an unmade bed. But the emergent iconography of the universe, as seen through the culture of science, has one big public problem: the interpreters tend to follow Emin/Hirst & Co. Hence for the birth of the universe we get the metaphor of DNA Garden of the six senses; the Quark Walk; the Universe a 'Big Bang' — used by ninety-nine per cent of scientists to

THE GARDEN OF COSMIC SPECULATION **CHARLES JENCKS**

'Fred Hoyle coined the adolescent Big Bang metaphor derisively, but it caught on for the same reason that George Bush was able to coin 'Shock and Awe' for his bombing of Iraq.'

The Universe Cascade depicts the 13.7 billion year history with rocks, words, planting, sculpture and water. It lies at the heart of the garden, and is conceived not as a mechanistic but jumping universe (going through many phase changes, including the ty-seven jumps shown here on each platform). Other erses in the multiple cosmo we might inhabit are shown to surround it on three sides.



describe the mother of all things. It wasn't big (the inflation of a quark-sized event), and it wasn't a bang (no one heard it). Rather it was the 'hot stretch' of space that balanced the basic forces (a much more engaging idea). Fred Hoyle coined the adolescent Big Bang metaphor derisively, but it caught on for the same reason that George Bush was able to coin 'Shock and Awe' for his bombing of Iraq. We live in a Pentagon-driven world where scientists in charge of the public understanding of nature regularly tell us that 'selfish genes' are in charge of robot vehicles, and that 'Wimps and Machos' are the ultimate stuff of the universe.

So, in the Garden of Cosmic Speculation I try out questioning metaphors, and this means that all design is really double design: that is, solving formal and functional problems, and coming up with new, appropriate meta-

phors (both visual and verbal). For instance, the Black Hole Terrace shows the space-time warps of super-gravity, the event horizons and rips in space-time. However, as design was progressing in 1995, and many were discovered and thought to lie at the centre of galaxies, the metaphor was changed to 'Invisibilia', the female generator that helps hold much of the stars, planets and gas in their rotational shape. It is not just destructive, but a creative force. When the Chinese asked me to design a rotating black hole for the Beijing Olympics, they accepted the design with delight but asked for a name change. We came up with several including Wu-Ji, and Wu-Chi, varying from 'nameless chaos' to the 'mother of everything'. Re-naming and re-conceiving go together, and so I have come up with a series of different visual metaphors for the basic things. Fundamental to the whole garden is the 'jumping universe', which is portrayed in the cascade that tells the story of the cosmos over its 13.7 billion years; and a 'landscape of waves', for the undulating and linear language that unifies everything. Everything, physicists show, has its wave-form.

Public art must of course be understandable and moving, but I believe it also should engage with the basic insights on the cosmos. This endeavour is collective, part The Jumping Bridge goes over two streams and curves in a way to allow seats for viewing the fish. It also jumps into the ground before curving cross the water on another route.

The Snail Mound is next to the Snake Mound, neither named except for those who built it in machines and had to know. The landforms sculpt the might with their paths - sharp edged and with sweet curves so the morning and evening light accentuates the earth's shape

of what has been called The Universe Project, where no one has the last word. A hopeful sign is that The Royal Society of Chemistry has just re-christened the Large Hadron Collider 'Halo' after running a contest to find a more appropriate moniker for the atom-smasher — name changes are a minor but significant place to start in the creation of a more public culture, even while acknowledging that no one controls language. 'Shock and Awe' and 'selfish gene' were intended to catch on and they did, and as Walt Disney once said, 'no one ever went broke underestimating the taste of the American public'. But it is also true that there is a large public fed up with this regressive taste, waiting to feed on a culture that is more nourishing, and true, to life.

Charles Jencks is an American architectural theorist, landscape architect and designer. He has written widely on the history and criticism of modernism and postmodernism, particularly in relation to architecture, and is a leading figure in British landscape architecture. Subjects to Hand: Joanna Margaret Paul Drawing Monica Richards Gallery 14 March — 17 May

Narrowing the Gap

Bridie Lonie

if I think of an aluminium smelter at Wycliffe Bay it is as if I had swallowed a few saucepans the hotwaterbottle was grafted to my back the bathtub got out with me like a hood as if surgeon's fingers slipped the U.S. annual defence budget cast in plastic deftly between my liver and my spleen

the earth is a creature we are earth creatures

& by bitumen & uranium lead & plastic .aluminium we are not fed

from 'the whole grain'

These stanzas are the first and last of a poem resisting a 1970s proposal to build an aluminium smelter on one of two wetland areas on the Dunedin coastline. Already Joanna Paul was an artist who chose the medium best suited to the mark she wanted to make and the audience she wished to address. She might at this point paint, draw, make installations, write in prose or in poetry, or film. Each medium offered differently appropriate ways of dealing with the wideranging concerns that preoccupied her. Always in tune with her time, she aligned the relationships between public and private, simple and complex. How deftly the first stanza moves between the everyday and the horrific; how firmly the final stanza conveys a practical morality and the metaphors of her approach to Christianity. Until her early death in 2003 she worked with the gap between the objects and facts we live with and the ways we feel about what they mean.

Drawing of Joanna Paul's kind involves looking at and through the concrete. She had a modernist, Cézanne-based approach to the complications of binocular vision and the resistance offered by the flat white surface. But, equally for her, meaning was also conveyed through words and the Joanna Margaret Paul Night sky 1998. Colour pencil. Courtesy of the Joanna Margaret Paul Family Trust



Joanna Margaret Paul, like

love poems, selected poems,

Bernadette Hall (ed.)

Victoria University Press

Wellington 2006, p.110-11





ethic of everyday attentiveness to value mattered most.

considering. Each was a doorway into and from her mind, what we hope for and what the world offers us. and a negotiation between the given and what one might want. When in 1977 she invited artists to take part in a project called A Season's Diaries, we were to consider each day in relation to the preceding and the following, taking an element from the previous day and adding a new one each time. This was to be an exercise in meditation, its medium, means and format up to us. She knew the process would bring to life the time that we spent within it.

When I look any one of her works I am again aware of how much she read contemporary philosophy, with its concern for the engagement between mind and body and

books that held them. Her parents were publishers and as she would insist, at least for herself, spirituality. The booksellers, her mother an artist and writer. She learned work, both verb and object, is always about, attached to, its very early how images and texts complement each other subject. Saturated tone and colour press toward the front as they balance fact and feeling through text, image and of the picture plane and spaces are gaps and assaults that typography. She learnt to use these to make political and one might fall through until lines bring us back. Graphic ethical points from the position of someone for whom an conventions move in and out of illusionistic space and remind us that this isn't simply, for instance, a description No drawing for her was simply a visual response, though of a building's front, but something we might lose if we are her work and her writing convey how strongly colour or its not careful. Sometimes there is a kind of horror of emptiness absence affected her. Each drawing involved a consideration in her work, and at other times that space is filled with of the implications of the environment, the context, the something transcendent, in colour or in whiteness. But each ways that others might think through the subject she was time, as we follow her eye and line, the gap narrows between

Bridie Lonie

Bridie Lonie is head of the School of Art at Otago Polytechnic.

Subjects to Hand: Joanna Margaret Paul Drawing is in the Monica Richards Gallery from 14 March — 17 May 2009.

Exhibition developed by Mahara Gallery Waikanae in association with the Joanna Margaret Paul Family Trust. Toured by Exhibition Services Ltd.



Joanna Margaret Paul Untitled (still life with roses) 1994. Pencil, gouache. Courtesy of the Joanna Margaret Paul Family Trust

Joanna Margaret Paul Untitled (seated figure) 1992. Pencil, colour pencil. Courtesy of the Joanna Margaret Paul Family Trust

Peter Harrison Photograph of Joanna Margaret Paul 2003. Photograph

EVENT

Wednesday 18 March

Drawing the Negative Space Joanna Margaret Paul's life and poetry are presented by leading Canterbury poet, playwright and literary editor Bernadette Hall, with help from actor and director, Helen Moran. Copies of Paul's Like Love Poems: selected poems, edited by Hall, are available for sale. 6pm / Philip Carter Family Auditorium / free Sponsored by The Press

Hannah and Aaron Beehre JS.02.03 2003. Projection. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 2003

HANNAH AND AARON BEEHRE: JS.02.03 Tait Electronics Gallery 14 March — 17 May 2009

The stylised leaves in this 'hedge' respond to sound — voices, coughing, footsteps, music — by falling in unexpected patterns, depending on the volume and duration of the sound. The leaf motif suggests time and seasonal change, but ultimately it always falls back into the same pattern. The result is simultaneously vacuous and profound — sitting somewhere between a screensaver and a meditation wall.

The title of the work relates to a cataloguing system Hannah and Aaron Beehre have developed for their work. Drawing on the worlds of graphic design and fashion, this work is typical of their approach, in which Hannah designs objects and motifs and Aaron translates them into either electronic media or printed form.

Hannah Beehre graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the University of Canterbury in 1999. Aaron has worked as a graphic designer since 1995. In addition to their visual arts practice, they are musicians and members of the acclaimed band, Pine.

ANZAC

LIFE AND DEATH, SORROW AND LOSS, WAR ... AND PEACE. IF WE ARE FORTUNATE, THE ART THAT WE EXPERIENCE CAN CONNECT US TO THINGS THAT CONFRONT OR DEEPLY MOVE US, REVEALING THE HUMANITY OF ITS MAKERS, AND ALLOWING US TO RECOGNISE OUR OWN.

CONNECTIONS



James Cook **Bomber's Moon** 1941. Oil on wood panel. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 1969



Zealanders' lives.

In paying tribute to this tragic history, Parekowhai's work also speaks into a continuum, sharing psychological space with works by other New Zealand artists from earlier generations. Made as a memorial to another First World War battle, Archibald Nicoll's sombre canvas of bombedout ruins, Becordel AD 1916 (1930) was painted fourteen





Frances Hodgkins Belgian Refugees 1916. Oil and tempera on canvas. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased with the assistance of the National Art Collections Fund, London 1980

Archibald Nicoll Becordel AD 1916 1930. Oil on canvas board. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 1996

Belgium is a mere skeleton of herself, two thirds of her population are flocking to England, penniless and starving ...' Declaring herself envious of those 'with something definite to do', Hodgkins wrote also that she regretted that her offer to work as a secretary at a nearby Red Cross hospital had not been taken up.

The circumstances under which the expatriate Christchurch-born James Cook's powerful Bomber's Moon (1941) was painted are unclear. A small painting with a large impact, Bomber's Moon was made in the year in which Cook left Britain to commence employment with the Civil Construction Corps in Australia. While undoubtedly related to his direct experience of war in London, it could have been painted in either location. A darkened scene of stretcher-bearers negotiating a muddy path beneath a silvery glow, it is a powerful depiction of the horrors and tragedies of war.

Ken Hall

Assistant curator

Passchendaele is on display in White on White; Belgian Refugees and Bomber's Moon are currently on display in the Permanent Collection Galleries; Becordel AD 1916 is awaiting specialist conservation treatment but can be seen on the Gallery's website.

White on White is in the Burdon Family Gallery until October 2009 and is generously supported by Chartwell Trust

Currently on show in the exhibition White on White, Michael Parekowhai's photographic floral arrangement *Passchendaele* (2001) meets such weighty themes with an unexpected brightness. The work's potency increases through an appreciation of its title, this being one of a series of twelve works by Parekowhai named after locations in which New Zealand soldiers fought and died during the First World War. Passchendaele was the location of a prolonged battle in Belgium in 1917, fought under impossible conditions and with the loss of some 5,000 New

years after the Battle of the Somme in France, in which the artist had been personally involved. Up to 1.2 million men were killed or wounded in the Somme, and, of the 15,000 New Zealanders involved, 6,000 were wounded and 2,000 died — many of these in the locality of the village of Bécordel-Bécourt, near the town of Albert. Nicoll himself, as a gunner, was badly wounded in the conflict, resulting in the amputation of his right leg.

Leading expatriate New Zealand artist Frances Hodgkins's deeply anxious Belgian Refugees (1916, painted during the period in which the Battle of the Somme was raging) also clearly grew from events that moved her. Painted in England, it was first exhibited in late 1916 in London with the title Unshatterable. Hodgkins was first touched by the plight of the Belgians in October 1914, when she wrote to her mother describing 'a black week. The fall of Antwerp a great blow ... The misery and horrors are too awful —



Nature's own voice

Collection Galleries Until August 2009

Up in a tree a bird sings so sweetly Nature's own voice — I hear Rustling whistling leaves turning breeze to speech Call to me now — ease my mind I'll turn something new My mind's laid with dew Nature — enter me ...

The title of the exhibition **Nature's Own Voice** is taken from the 1969 hit song 'Nature' by New Zealand band The Fourmyula. Written by Wayne Mason, this iconic New Zealand pop song is a celebratory response to the natural world; in many ways parallels can be drawn between the song, with its wonderfully up-beat tempo and lyrics, and the visual artists who have sought out the natural world through *plein-air* painting.

En plein-air is a French term commonly used to describe the act of painting outdoors, directly from nature. Artists have painted and studied nature *en plein-air* for centuries; the John Constable exhibition held at Te Papa in 2006 highlighted this particular artist's love of *plein-air* painting, particularly his studies of cloud formations, which he began in 1819. *Plein-air* paintings can serve as finished works in themselves or as sketches or working studies for artists to use as a basis for larger and more finished studio-based paintings.

Olivia Spencer Bower Ngaio Marsh Painting c.1934-9. Watercolour. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, presented by the Friends of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery 1993. Reproduced courtesy of the Olivia Spencer Bower Foundation



Margaret Stoddart Camiers, France 1902. Watercolour. Christchurch Art Gallery Trust Collection

orothy Richmond Track over the brow of a hill 1908. /atercolour. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, donated rom the Canterbury Public Library Collection 2001



During the nineteenth century *plein-air* painting became a very popular way of working. Nowhere is this seen more clearly than in the work of the artists involved with the Barbizon School and the Impressionist movement in France during the mid to late nineteenth century. A primary aim of the artists involved in these movements was to respond more directly and honestly to nature through attempts to capture the varying atmospheric effects and natural light when painting *en plein-air*.

In Britain the Newlyn School of painters based at Newlyn, Cornwall during the late nineteenth century was another important movement associated with *plein-air* painting. The influence of this group and their interest in *plein-air* painting continued to resonate into the twentieth century, influencing their work from the established Art Societies of the day. many New Zealand expatriate painters drawn to the region.

The works included in Nature's Own Voice have been selected from the Gallery's permanent collection and all are by New Zealand artists (including expatriates) with the exception of the small oil painting, *Cornfield*, which is attributed to the French artist Eugène Boudin. Previously in the collection of the Christchurch art collector and Gallery benefactor, James Jamieson, Cornfield reveals Boudin's use of lively direct brushwork to capture his impressions of the colours and textures of the sun-drenched fields. Boudin was an important figure in the promotion of *plein-air* painting in France during the 1860s and is noted for encouraging the famous Impressionist Claude Monet to paint directly outdoors.

retreat for artists within a short distance from the city environs completing a *plein-air* sketch in the field. of Wellington. Both the Palette Club and the Wellington Art Club

The works selected for **Nature's Own Voice** have a vibrancy and freshness in their execution that is the hallmark of plein*air* painting. They have all been completed on an intimate scale that reflects the ease of carrying paper or small canvases in the outdoors. Works such as Olivia Spencer Bower's Ngaio Marsh *Painting* reveal something of the joys experienced by escaping the city and studio with fellow artist friends and heading for the country for what can be considered the ultimate working "The Gallery would like to thank Quentin Macfarlane for donating holiday. Marsh simply radiates in the hot summer sun as she completes her plein-air study and is herself the subject of Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu. Spencer Bower's *plein-air* painting.

painting; 'Into the car with watercolours, sandwiches and

The 1890s witnessed the growth in popularity of *plein-air* Thermos and head off up country beyond Cass and listen to the painting in New Zealand, with groups of artists banding together Waimak and the breeze in the beech forest and come back with to promote and foster painting outdoors. In Christchurch a successful sketch.' (Pat Unger, Pat, Bill's Story: A Portrait of the Palette Club was formed in 1889 with members including *W.A. Sutton*, Christchurch, 2008, p.198) The exhibition also Margaret Stoddart and Alfred Walsh. The Wellington Art includes film footage of Sutton completing a watercolour sketch Club was formed in 1892 and counted among its members on the hills overlooking Lyttelton Harbour above Governors the influential Scotsman James Nairn. From 1894 Nairn and Bay.' This film not only offers a rare insight into the artist's his followers rented a cottage known as Pumpkin Cottage at watercolour technique, a medium he was incredibly skilled in, Silverstream in the Hutt Valley, providing a welcome country but also provides fascinating documentary evidence of an artist

Nature's Own Voice includes examples of work in both offered alternative opportunities for their members to exhibit watercolour and oils from some of New Zealand's most accomplished *plein-air* painters, including James Nairn, Edward Friström, Margaret Stoddart, Alfred Walsh, Frances Hodgkins, Rita Angus, Doris Lusk, Toss Woollaston, Olivia Spencer Bower, Gretchen Albrecht and Bill Sutton.

Peter Vangioni

Curator

a copy of this film to the Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and

Bill Sutton once summed up the appeal of plein-air Nature's Own Voice is in the Collection Galleries until August 2009

EVENTS

Thursday 12 March

Nature's Own Voice Curator Peter Vangioni examines most accomplished *plein-air* painters 5.15pm / meet at the front desk / free



Nature's Own Voice, which features the work of some of New Zealand's

Saturday 16 May

Art in the Morning Friends Breakfast and talk about Nature's Own Voice with curator Peter Vangioni and a guest artist. 8.30am / Alchemy / Friends \$20 / public \$30 / book by 14 May

James Nairn Sunlit Estuary 1898. Watercolour Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, Robert Bell bequest 1943



Sarah Jane Parton Bright Light 2008. DVD, Collection of the artist, Wellington

This season featuring James Oram in the foyer, and, in **Twinset**, Daniel von Sturmer, Ariane Pauls, and Sarah Jane Parton.

A debutante sitting in the corner of a community hall. A gymnast stiffly going through her moves in an empty stadium ... Sarah Jane Parton likes to shine a spotlight into the gaps between dream and reality, between who we are and who we hope to be. In her video Bright Light, playing alongside works by Daniel von Sturmer and Ariane Pauls in this season's Twinset programme, Parton turns her attention to modern motherhood — and not just anyone's motherhood, but her own. Parton made the video while nine months pregnant in the weeks preceding the 2008 Olympics, and the result is an unlikely but endearing marriage of those two disconnected experiences. Perched like a brooding bird in her own leafy dell, Parton performs a Tai Ch'i-like exercise routine while cooing along to the song 'Suicide is painless'. She's training, but for something more fundamental than sport. *Bright Light* is part exercise video, part new-age birthing rite, part natural history documentary, and — like all Parton's works — both funny and oddly uncomfortable to watch.

James Oram is interested in the idea of failure, particularly given the emphasis on winning and success in contemporary culture. By photographing a small trophy, of the kind that might be given out for minor bodybuilding competitions, then blowing it up to almost human scale on the Gallery wall, he satirises the idea of being 'number one' in any sphere. Against the scale of the banner and the wall behind it, the tiny figure's gesture of triumph, far from appearing heroic, becomes a little ridiculous.

Dwarfed by its black background, the anonymous, wellmuscled form, with its gleaming faux gold, seems puny rather than impressive. Unexpectedly, we view it not as part of an adoring audience, but from behind — are we the support crew or the next competitors? Rendered deliberately in lower case that diminishes its swaggering boast, the title of the work, which could be read as 'no one', is enigmatic. What and whose success does this trophy commemorate? Does it mark an obscure sporting glory, a corporate victory or simply the accomplishment of making it onto the Gallery wall?

James Oram **no.1** 2008. Digital photograph



Photograph: Guy Pask

Staff Profile

The Management Team



rom left: Mike Heinemann operations manager), Paul Doughty (development nanager), Jenny Harper director), Blair Jackson visitor experience manager), Neil Semple (projects manager)

We know that an art gallery's success is measured by the breadth and richness of its collection and the scope and variety of its exhibition programme and publications — as well as the number of people through its doors. But how are these factors managed, and how do you actually steer something as large and unwieldy as a gallery to success?

From the moment you enter Christchurch Art Gallery, everything you see has been planned and coordinated by the Gallery's management team. From the overall shape of the programme to the generation of sponsorship income; from building security to the development of team culture, the team is charged with keeping budget, programme and staff all happily on track.

Gallery director Jenny Harper's responsibility is to represent the Gallery within the City Council and externally, on both national and international fronts. A former director of the National Art Gallery and head of art history at Victoria

University of Wellington — where she was also assistant vicechancellor (academic) for three years — she is charged with the development and realisation of the Gallery's vision.

Jenny is supported by visitor experience manager Blair Jackson, operations manager Mike Heinemann, projects manager Neil Semple and development manager Paul Doughty. All bring practical 'shop-floor' experience to their roles, from having worked as an artist or landscape architect to curatorial, administrative and fund-raising roles in other cultural institutions. So how important is this in running a successful gallery? Jenny says, 'I was surprised at how useful my experience of taking Victoria University through a major academic audit became when providing benchmarking data to support our Gallery's bid for funding. So experience from other spheres directly supports what we are aiming for here, which is to create a rich and memorable experience of art for all our visitors.'

And the best moment of the job? Blair is in no doubt: 'the first time I walked into Daniel Crooks's exhibition everywhere instantly once it was up and running. I was totally mesmerised by the sheer scale and sound of the show!' For Mike it was watching thousands of people streaming through the doors the day the Gallery opened for the first time after months of construction; for Jenny it was the mounting excitement as the Gallery reached its two-millionth visitor in early July 2008. Neil's favourite moment was when the Gallery received its Māori Language Week award in 2007, and for Paul it was 'returning to the **Colin McCahon** exhibition with a completely different perspective after an inspiring lecture by Professor Lloyd Geering'.

PAGEMORK#2

ZINA SWANSON

The following double-page spread of this magazine is given Her mixed-media drawings depicting delicate hybrid forms over to the second instalment in our 'Pagework' series. Each and her fragile glass sculptures convey a tenderness towards quarter the Gallery will commission an artist to create a new nature's organisms as they hover on the brink between life and unique work of art especially for *Bulletin*. This allows the and death; this work is the latest in a series of drawings that Gallery to deepen its involvement in the contemporary art of combine human and botanic elements to create imaginary

University of Canterbury in 2004. She was the 2004 CoCA/ sculptures. Anthony Harper Award winner and has appeared in exhibitions throughout New Zealand, including Another Destination 'Pagework' has been generously (2006) and Wunderbox (2008-9) at Christchurch Art Gallery. supported by an anonymous donor

New Zealand and actively support the generation of new work. scenes of regeneration and decay. Drawing plays an important Zina Swanson graduated with a BFA in Sculpture from the role in Zina's practice, often working in conjunction with her



Over page: Zina Swanson **Untitled** 2009. Watercolour and ink on paper. Reproduced courtesy of the artist





Robbie Deans is a former All Black and coach of Canterbury's Crusaders. He currently coaches the Wallabies in Australia.

John Gibb Lyttelton Harbour, NZ. Inside the breakwater 1889. Oil on canvas.

Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, presented by the Lyttelton Harbour Board 1989



I was first asked to write this piece back in October 2007 when I ran into family friend and Gallery director Jenny Harper in Changi Airport, Singapore. We've known each other for years our fathers are best of mates, and I'm of an age with her brothers. I was heading for the Rugby World Cup, and we were both boarding the same flight to Paris. We chatted, and when it came up in conversation that one of her brothers had not yet visited the Gallery, I kept quiet — it didn't seem like the right time to confess that I hadn't visited either. When finally I did confess, Jenny invited me to not only visit the Gallery, but also to write a short piece about what I saw.

It was a busy time for me then but I accepted the invitation possibly thinking it would never come around. Things subsequently got even busier when I took on a new challenge in Sydney and accepted the role of Australian national coach, and so it was Christmas 2008 (after the Wallabies' UK tour) before I was back in Christchurch with enough free time to visit the Gallery.

Art has never been a passion of mine. Although there are plenty of artists in my family, including Austen Deans, unfortunately that particular 'art gene' appears to have skipped my brother and me. But what really impressed me about the Gallery was just how much there is in there, and — another confession — how much interested me. I suppose it shouldn't have surprised me. After all, in a gallery you are dealing with artists who are masters of their field and experts at thinking outside the box. What struck me most was how the artists highlight things and places we might walk past and take for granted every day. Which brings me to the artist and the place I liked best.

I can't regale you with art history, or reveal the hidden depths of a work like a wine buff might reveal the subtle flavours of a fine wine. But I can say that this image of Lyttelton harbour stopped me in my tracks. It struck me as such a particularly potent contrast to my own situation. Here I was, having just left the country (and still living out of a suitcase while I waited for my

belongings to arrive in Sydney) and I thought of the early settlers arriving with their luggage, stepping off the boat into the unknown and ready for a fresh challenge. Leaving Canterbury and heading for Australia felt like a big shift to me, but looking at these people and imagining the hike over the Bridle Path put my own travels in perspective.

Because of my background I've always enjoyed landscape — the rivers and mountains that make up the distinctive scenery of the South Island. Particularly now that I live in Sydney, my wife and I tend to collect works that say a little about where we come from. Perhaps this says more than most. If I could add it to my collection, I would.

(Mental note: I must get down to Geraldine and visit my sister's walking track at Four Peaks.)

My Favourite

Children complete the Fiona Hall holiday quiz in **Fiona Hall: Force Field.**

Fiona Hall **Tender** 2003–5. US dollars, wire, vitrines. Collection of Queensland Art Gallery, purchased 2006. The Queensland Government's Gallery of Modern Art Acquisitions Fund



The distant



Pre- and post-conservation photographs of: Petrus van der Velden Jacksons, Otira c.1893. Oil on canvas. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, Stirrat bequest fund 2003



Van der Velden work conserved

Petrus van der Velden's exceptional oil painting Jacksons, Otira has recently undergone extensive conservation treatment by the Gallery's painting conservator, Edward Sakowski and will go on display in June. The rare opportunity to acquire this major example from Van der Velden's Otira series arose in 2003 when the painting was offered for sale at Bonhams auction house in London. The Gallery's framing conservator, Ben Braithwaite, has also been restoring a large gilt frame for the work. Originally built by the Christchurch firm Fisher and Son, this is known to have been a favoured style of frame used by Van der Velden at the time Jacksons, Otira was completed around 1893.

Refreshing the collections

In May 2009 the works on paper in the historic permanent collection galleries will be replaced with a new selection. Often highly susceptible to light damage, the selection of displayed works on paper is changed annually so as to minimise exposure to excessive light levels. As well as the Garden Enclosed: Eileen Mayo Prints display, other works on paper bays will feature a small collection of Charles Meryon's Paris etchings, Louis Le Breton's suite of lithographs of the Auckland Islands from 1846 and a selection of Alfred Walsh watercolours.

Charles Meryon La

our de l'Horloge,

Paris 1852. Etching

allery Te Puna o

Vaiwhetu

n paper. Collectior

Christchurch Art



Gallery artist receives ONZM



of Bulletin.

Jenny Harper has been busy in her role as commissioner for New Zealand's contribution to the Venice Biennale 2009. The venues for the New Zealand exhibition in Venice have now been confirmed, and Judy Millar and Francis Upritchard will exhibit in the Sant' Antonin church and the exquisite Fondazione Claudio Buziol respectively. Jenny said, 'Each venue is interesting in its own right, the Fondazione Buziol with its smaller-scale charm and uniqueness, and Sant' Antonin with its larger, but manageable, architectural scale. There is no question that each artist will be able to realise their creative endeavours to the best advantage in these venues.'

CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY TE PUNA O WAIWHETU

The Gallery congratulates John Edgar, who was named an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM) in the 2009 New Year Honours. Edgar's sculpture *Element* was acquired for the Gallery's collection in 1995.

John Edgar Element. Granite, glass. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu purchased 1995

Gallery closures in Christchurch

The last quarter has seen the closure of two well-respected Christchurch dealer galleries. Grant Banbury's Campbell Grant Galleries ceased trading at the end of 2008, and Helen Calder's and Julia Morison's 64zero3 Gallery closed its doors for the last time on 14 February 2009. Christchurch Art Gallery has always maintained good relations with both of these institutions, and it is with sadness that we note their closure. A very generous gift from several artists and Campbell Grant Galleries will be profiled in the next edition

Countdown to Venice 2009

Crafting beauty in wood: fine wood craftsman Kenji Suda

An illustrated presentation and floortalk with Kenji Suda, recognised as one of Japan's leading artists in traditional woodcraft, metal and lacquer techniques. His sophisticated works combine modern design with traditional skills.

Wed 8 April / 6pm / free Sponsored by The Press



Kenii Suda Hivoku (Wings abreast). Box of maple wood with design in inlay finished raw lacquer (Urushi)

Heirloom — fashion inspired by Rita Angus

Laurie Foon of New Zealand fashion house Starfish, presents this exclusive, modelled preview of its Heirloom winter collection. A key inspiration for this collection is Rita Angus's unique palette and interpretation of New Zealand landscapes. Finish the evening with a private guided tour of Rita Angus: Life & Vision. Ticket price includes complimentary champagne on arrival. Cash bar available.

Wed 6 May / 6pm / \$20 / tickets tel: (03) 941 7382 Sponsored by The Press



A model wearing clothing from the 'Heirloom' Starfish Winter Collection 2009.

How to make a television series

Senior curator Justin Paton is currently filming a television adaptation of his book How to Look at a Painting. Consisting of twelve half-hour episodes, the series is produced by Desert Road and scheduled to screen on TV1 later this year. It is directed by Paul Swadel, a graduate of the Canterbury School of Fine Arts who also directed the art series The Big Picture, presented by Hamish Keith. So far the crew have filmed in Dunedin, Oamaru and Auckland, with some excursions farther afield occurring in March. While closely based on the book, the series will also include new material, including an episode on abstract painting and why, according to Justin, 'even though it's been around for a century, it still rubs many people up the wrong way'. Best filming moment so far? 'Driving along Rakaia bridge about one metre behind another car with an expensive camera lashed to the roof. As close as I'll ever get to stunt work.' Will Christchurch Art Gallery works feature? 'The show is a personal account, so we're paying attention to things I've been around recently, and naturally guite a few of them are right here.' The series is scheduled to air in late summer 2009.



Justin filming in front of a portrait of his greatgreat-grandfather n Oamaru's Forrester Gallery.

Art for families

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Creative clay for kids

Sculpt, squish and coil yourself in clay — wear your old clothes! Weekdays only / Education Centre / \$5 10-11.30am or 1-2.30pm /14-24 April Bookings tel: (03) 941 7382

HOLIDAY QUIZ

White-out explore and draw!

Explore White on White and the Gallery's collections with this drawing activity. Enter into the draw to win a set of art materials.

Collect from front desk 10am-3pm / 11-26 April / free

et al.

The collective et al. has exhibited widely both nationally and internationally. The major works of the collective are installation based, with a strong industrial aesthetic and socio-political themes. Recent works have addressed fundamentalist practices and ideological schemes, and their impact on societies. The artists' approach is to use fiction and appropriation to mirror various political and belief structures. The work for Christchurch Art Gallery will continue this process of exploring aspects of superfiction as conceptual and visual artworks.

24 July — 22 November 2009

Séraphine Pick: Tell Me More ...

Séraphine Pick's original and imaginative practice has made her one of New Zealand's most highly regarded painters. From the spectral dresses, leaky baths and teetering suitcases of the 1990s to the psychologically charged dreamscapes of more recent years, this large-scale survey exhibition will bring together more than a hundred works made between 1994 and 2009. Tracing the effects of Pick's ongoing interest in memory, identity, sexuality and imagination, the exhibition will unveil several new paintings and be accompanied by a richly illustrated publication featuring essays on relevant aspects of Pick's practice as well as responses to individual works by leading art writers.

24 July — 22 November 2009

Ronnie van Hout: Who goes there

This exhibition will be a haunting and hilarious journey through Ronnie van Hout's art from 2000 onwards. Now based in Melbourne, Van Hout was raised in Christchurch and has placed childhood memories at the heart of many of his recent sculptures and videos. Beginning with *House and School* from the Gallery's collection — a scale model of his childhood home and school — this exhibition brings those works together in a labyrinthine installation that evokes the wayward workings of memory.

14 July — 18 October 2009



et al. altruistic studies - no vote! 2008. Installation: Interstitial Zones: Historical Facts, Archaeologies of the Present and Dialectics of

Seeing. Argos Centre for Art & Media, Brussels. Courtesy Argos Centre for Art & Media, Brussels, et al.



Séraphine Pick **Untitled** 1998. Oil on canvas. Oil on canvas. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 1998

PRINCIPAL SPONSOR:





Ronnie van Hout **Ersatz** (Sick Child) 2005. Mixed media.

Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased by the Friends of Christchurch Art Gallery 2007

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



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