

B.157

Bulletin B.157
Christchurch Art Gallery
Te Puna o Waiwhetu

Winter
June — August
2009

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Ronnie van Hout *End Doll* 2007. Mixed media.
Produced as an edition of twelve for The Physics Room, Christchurch, New Zealand. Various owners. Reproduced courtesy of the artist. Photograph by Mark Gore, courtesy of The Physics Room



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TE PUNA O WAIWHETU
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This winter may be cold and stormy, but the exhibitions showing in the Gallery are a breath of fresh air. With major survey exhibitions on the work of three important contemporary New Zealand artists, all with connections to Canterbury, this is set to be a vibrant and exciting season. In this quarter, we open exhibitions by Séraphine Pick, Ronnie van Hout and et al., each giving us a very different take on art in New Zealand today. We shall also draw attention to the legacy of Ron O' Reilly, who collected art for and on behalf of Canterbury in his role as the city's librarian.

Contributing to the magazine this winter is author, screenwriter and director Peter Wells, who muses on the paucity of erotic art to be found in New Zealand and offers some strong opinions on what this may say about New Zealand society. Also featured in *Bulletin* this quarter is Christchurch-based artist, Telly Tu'u. This issue's 'Pagework' artist, Telly is currently completing an MA in fine arts at the University of Canterbury and will be exhibiting in **Cloud9**, the next of the Gallery's young contemporaries series, later this year. Telly's work and a number of the articles in this edition of *Bulletin* pick up on a theme of identity that runs through the three major exhibitions.

The Gallery's winter season is our contribution to the 2009 Christchurch Arts Festival, ensuring a strong visual arts presence throughout this important city festival. The first of the exhibitions to open is **Ronnie van Hout: Who goes**

there. Van Hout has exhibited regularly in New Zealand and Australia since 1981, and in 2005 he was awarded an Arts Foundation of New Zealand Laureate Award in recognition of his contribution to the arts in New Zealand. Now based in Melbourne, Van Hout was raised in Christchurch, and has placed childhood memories at the heart of much of his work over recent years. This is his first solo show at Christchurch Art Gallery and it will feature work produced over the last ten years, including a major new piece made specifically for the exhibition as a result of his recent residency in Antarctica.

In contrast to the sculptural installations of Van Hout, Séraphine Pick produces beautifully-worked paintings. However, like Van Hout's work, Pick's frequently monumental paintings make the Gallery experience particularly immersive. A graduate of the University of Canterbury's School of Fine Arts and past recipient of the Olivia Spencer Bower Foundation Art Award, Pick first shot to fame more than ten years ago, and has steadily built a reputation as one of New Zealand's most highly regarded painters. **Séraphine Pick** will bring together for the first time more than a hundred works made between 1994 and 2009 in a comprehensive survey of the artist's career to date. We are pleased to continue our commitment to publishing with a sizeable catalogue for this exhibition, featuring an essay by curator Felicity Milburn as well as contributions by a range of other writers.

Also in the touring exhibition galleries is a new installation created for the Gallery by the et al. collective, which promises to be a challenging and extremely rewarding piece of work. Continually blurring the boundaries between fact and fiction, **that's obvious! that's right! that's true!** develops further the industrial aesthetic and socio-political themes demonstrated in their critically acclaimed installation *the fundamental practice*, which was exhibited at the 2005 Venice Biennale. et al. have exhibited widely both nationally and internationally and recent works have addressed fundamentalist practices and ideological schemes, and the impact of these on societies. The artists' approach is to create superfictions — conceptual and visual works of art that use fiction and appropriation to mirror various political and belief structures.

During his tenure as Christchurch's city librarian, Ron O'Reilly was pivotal in the development of many of the library's major policy decisions, such as the provision of free public access to serious literature and non-fiction titles. He was also the man who persuaded an initially very reluctant council to accept the gift of Colin McCahon's masterpiece *Tomorrow will be the same but not as this is*, now one of the mainstays of the Gallery's collection. Timed to coincide with the Christchurch City Libraries' 150th anniversary celebrations, **Ron O'Reilly: The Collector's Eye** provides an opportunity to see first hand the breadth of their art collection, a good proportion of which was eventually placed with the Gallery.

We anticipate that in late July or early August, the permanent collection galleries will close for the first major rehang since the new Gallery opened some six years ago. It has become increasingly apparent that, while the touring exhibition galleries are flexible and provide a constantly changing experience to visitors, the permanent collection is not generating the repeat visits that we know are possible. While excitement about the possibilities is mounting among the curators and designers as they plan for this refurbishment, please take the chance to come in over the next two months and look at the current collection display using one of the new six-work Freerange tours that we have developed in conjunction with some well-known writers. In the next edition of *Bulletin* we hope to feature a sneak preview of how the newly-worked spaces will appear when they re-open in November. Certainly, however, it will be a timely moment to show some key new acquisitions alongside old favourites.

Jenny Harper
Director
May 2009

JUNE, JULY, AUGUST 2009

GARY HILL: UP AGAINST DOWN
23 May — 23 August 2009

Gary Hill is world renowned for his bold experiments with moving images. In this show, he explores the paradoxes and difficulties of the human attempt to communicate. The best known of the works on show, *Wall Piece*, is a high impact fusion of light, language and body language. *Tait Electronics and Monica Richards Galleries*

RON O'REILLY: THE COLLECTOR'S EYE
6 June — 16 July 2009

Nigerian sculptures meet paintings by 1950s and 1960s New Zealand modernists. Ron O'Reilly, Christchurch city librarian from 1951 to 1968 and founder of the Library's art loan collection, is recognised as a significant collector and champion of the arts. O'Reilly's personal art collection also included impressive traditional African art. *Collection Galleries*

RONNIE VAN HOUT: WHO GOES THERE
4 July — 18 October 2009

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

SÉRAPHINE PICK
23 July — 22 November 2009

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

Touring A, C and Borg Henry Galleries
Catalogue and iPod video available

ET AL.: THAT'S OBVIOUS! THAT'S RIGHT! THAT'S TRUE!
23 July — 22 November 2009

The collective et al. have exhibited widely both nationally and internationally and, with their critically acclaimed installation *the fundamental practice*, were New Zealand's representatives at the Venice Biennale 2005. The artists' approach is to use fiction and appropriation to mirror various political and belief structures. This exhibition continues this process of exploring aspects of superfiction as conceptual and visual artworks. *Touring Gallery B*

MILES: A LIFE IN ARCHITECTURE
Until 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. *William A. Sutton and Ravenscar Galleries*

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

RITA ANGUS: LIFE & VISION
Until 5 July 2009

Rita Angus is widely regarded as one of the leading New Zealand artists of the twentieth century. This 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*

Exhibition developed and toured by Te Papa. Touring A, B, C and Borg Henry Galleries
Catalogue and iPod audio tour available

A GARDEN ENCLOSED: EILEEN MAYO PRINTS
Until July 2009

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

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. *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. *Burdon Family Gallery*

Burdon Family Gallery
Family worksheet available

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*

Collection Galleries
Collections catalogue available

OUTER SPACES

A programme of artworks in spaces beyond the traditional exhibition galleries. Featuring *United We Fall* by Sara Hughes in the foyer, *The Gathering* by Richard Killeen on Worcester Boulevard and *A wall, and other thoughts* by Fiona Jack on the car park bunker.

TWINSET

A rapid-fire programme of new video art on the twin screens in the foyer. This season featuring video by Julian Dashper and Ronnie van Hout.

SUBSONIC

The winter Subsonic programme features a variety of sounds from Julian Dashper and Richard Neave.

Séraphine Pick: Assumed identities

The celebrated faces gracing two of the paintings in Séraphine Pick's Brooke Gifford Gallery exhibition late last year wore expressions that were hard to pin down. Defensive, evasive and devoid of their customary charisma, the only thing they clearly conveyed was their wish to be somewhere — anywhere — else. Perhaps that wasn't surprising, given that Pick's images of Elvis Presley and Janis Joplin originated in a series of famous police mugshots. Removed from that context and dropped into the comparatively elegant spaces of a commercial gallery — alongside a series of portraits that were, by contrast, poised and aloof — Pick's versions were both strange and familiar, like the strains of a well-known song performed by an unknown artist. Lined up against a wall and stripped of their microphones, stages and entourages, Pick's Joplin and Presley appeared as alternate versions — inadequate stand-ins for their former selves.



Séraphine Pick *Untitled (Blue)* 1999–2004. Oil on canvas. Private collection, Wellington. Reproduced courtesy of the artist

SérAPHINE PICK *Untitled*
2008. Oil on linen.
Collection of the artist.
Reproduced courtesy
of the artist

SérAPHINE PICK *Untitled*
2008. Oil on linen.
Collection of the artist.
Reproduced courtesy
of the artist



‘Subversion and sabotaging of identity is a recurrent theme for Pick ... her paintings are seldom straight recordings of identity; instead her subjects often conceal more than they reveal.’

Like the real Charlie Chaplin, who once entered a Charlie Chaplin lookalike contest and did not even make the final, many of Pick’s recent works have explored the creation of deliberately inferior replicas — the aura of star quality we associate with these figures has suddenly deflated around them, like a pricked balloon.

This subversion and sabotaging of identity is a recurrent theme for Pick, whose interest in portraiture is tempered by her fascination with the equivocal. Whether they depict friends, family, anonymous strangers or her own (continually altered) image, her paintings are seldom straight recordings of identity; instead her subjects often conceal much more than they reveal. In fact, it is the very act of obscuration that is at the heart of many of Pick’s works — metamorphosing, turning away, wearing masks, sunglasses and hats, her players avoid the direct stare that we, their audience, offer them in a variety of amusing, ingenious and imaginative ways.

Pick’s 1997 series *Looking Like Someone Else* included thirty-six small ‘portraits’, none of which satisfy a conventional understanding of that genre. As with her recent works, the subjects were drawn from a variety of sources, including photographs, books and magazines, but also

featured altered and blurred images of the artist herself. Far from offering us more information about the sitters, these tantalising images deflect us from every angle. In one especially intriguing ‘anti-portrait’ a young woman refuses to face us, presenting instead only the back of her head and her bare shoulder. Robbed of the eye-to-eye connection we expect, we are reduced to studying the extraneous details for information; gleaning suppositions and half-truths from the bruise on her bicep, or the hint of a tattoo on her arm. This, of course, is Pick’s point: identities are but a collage of a million individually inconsequential details, so the turn of a shoulder or a bluntly cut fringe become triggers that set our minds searching through the databanks for recognisable connections.

Early in Pick’s career, commentators were keen to interpret her imagery as part of a tightly autobiographical narrative — a tendency that was undoubtedly reinforced by Pick’s frequent inclusion of childhood references within her works. Despite her own collusion in this process, Pick was occasionally frustrated by the literality of these readings, which she believed could inhibit her audience’s experiences of the works, discouraging them from bringing their own imaginations into play. With this

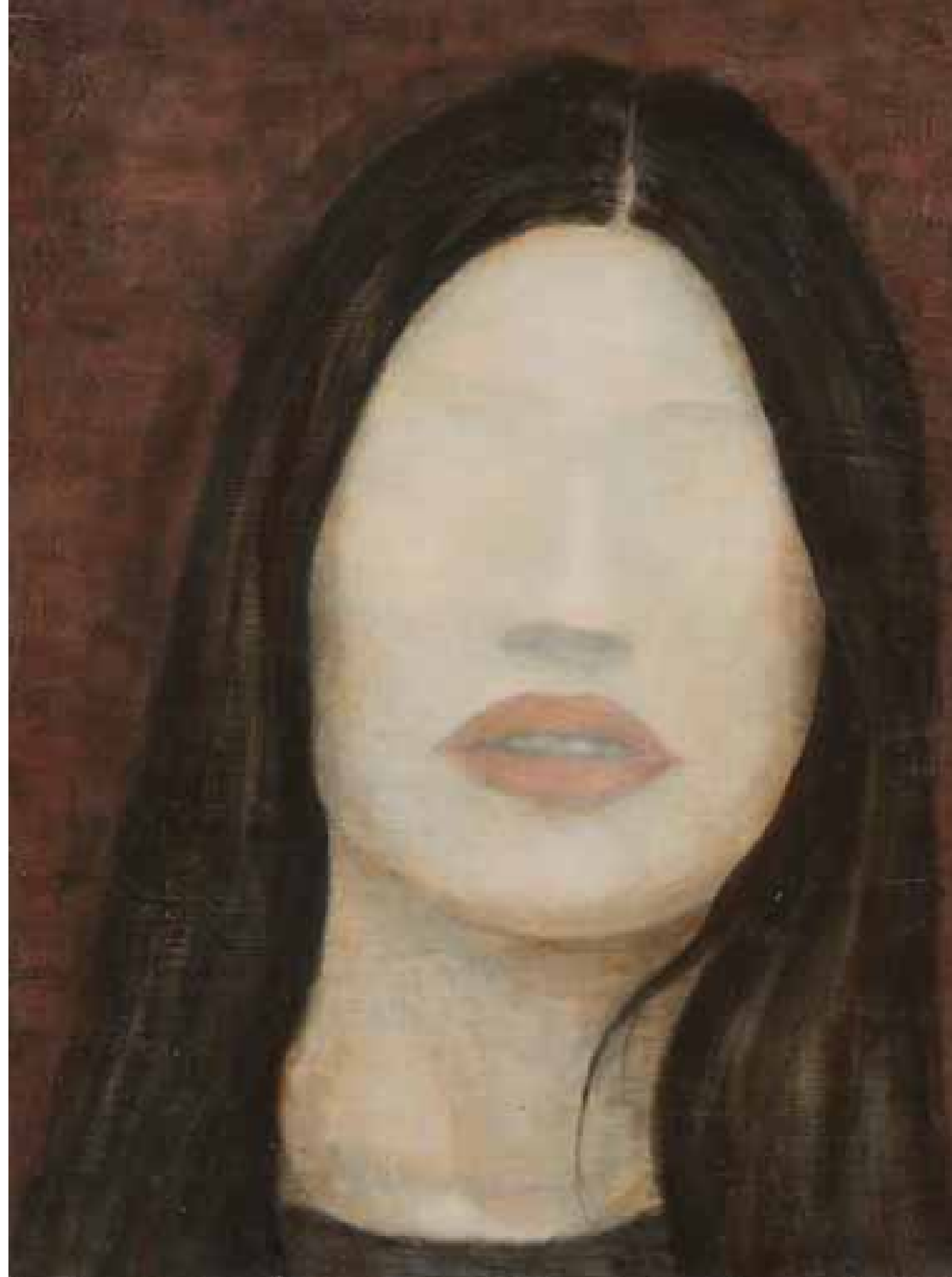
SérAPHINE PICK *Looking Like Someone Else*
1997. Oil on canvas.
Private Collection,
Wellington.
Reproduced courtesy
of the artist





Séraphine Pick **Looking Like Someone Else** 1997. Oil on canvas. Private Collection, Wellington. Reproduced courtesy of the artist

Séraphine Pick **Bearded Lady** 2003. Oil on canvas. Private collection, Wellington. Reproduced courtesy of the artist



‘Pick’s compositions so clearly fused imagination and fantasy with memory as to render any definitive ‘real-world’ interpretation tantalisingly elusive.’

in mind, it is perhaps no great surprise that her subsequent forays into portraiture and representation have been characterised by a desire to exploit and expose all possible ambiguities and uncertainties. Instead of removing any trace of herself from the works, she deliberately placed portrait-like images at the centre of many, then created such implausible and inventive worlds around them that it quickly became apparent that any idea of veracity or insight was being gently ridiculed. It is true that any viewer with the opportunity and inclination could still piece together a rich and racy storyline featuring the artist as its protagonist, but Pick’s compositions so clearly fused imagination and fantasy with memory as to render any definitive ‘real-world’ interpretation tantalisingly elusive.

Other works further disrupted the traditional order of portraiture, where it is expected that the subject will be a person of some significance or worth, or at least have some connection with the painter. Pick’s portrait-like paintings were just as likely to prioritise nameless figures clipped in anonymity from magazines, or to home in on incongruous and eclectic details, such as a chihuahua so tiny it can be held in one hand. One unifying factor, however, was her interest in expression and psychological connection — for though her figures may hide behind hoods, paper bags and veils of blurred and scratched out

paint, they are nevertheless distinctly animate. Though Pick has experimented with unpeopled landscapes on occasion, they are very much the exception rather than the rule. Indeed, she has often likened her painting to theatre, and has always been fascinated by the personas we adopt and discard in our everyday lives and relationships as well as the intricate negotiations and exchanges that take place between friends, lovers and families — the crossed wires, the ecstatic connections and the potential for danger and damage.

When enthusiasts of Pick's paintings discuss her work, their conversations reveal a sense of personal connection and involvement with the figures and situations she brings to life on the canvas. Her compositions may be alternately fantastical and out-of-kilter, but she also has an eye for those real moments where truth is demonstrably more compelling than fiction. However, it is Pick's interest in disrupting and subverting the anticipated relationship between the viewer and the imaginary painted worlds she creates that makes her one of our most interesting, and continually rewarding, artists. Like that moment in an air-plane flight just after take-off, when the houses, roads and fields of the landscape below lose their immediacy and become like the features of an architectural model, her creations are familiar, but not completely so; recognisable, but becoming less clear with every second. If we are lucky, the real world surrenders its hold and we are invited, temporarily, into a world that is a captivating concoction of artifice, experience, invention and memory.

Felicity Milburn
Curator

A longer version of this article was originally published in *Takahe* # 65, issue 3, 2008.

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ERNST & YOUNG

Séraphine Pick *Untitled (Dobermann)* 2005. Oil on linen. Collection of the artist. Reproduced courtesy of the artist



Séraphine Pick *Five Miles to You* 2009. Oil on canvas. Reproduced courtesy of the artist and Michael Lett

EVENTS

SATURDAY 25 JULY

Séraphine Pick: A Personal View
Following breakfast in Alchemy, Séraphine Pick leads a tour through her exhibition.

8.30am / Alchemy / Friends \$20 / public \$30 / book by 22 July

Meet the Artist: Séraphine Pick

Join Séraphine Pick for an artist-led floortalk of her self-titled exhibition.

1pm / meet in the foyer / free

WEDNESDAY 5 August

Séraphine Pick

Curator Felicity Milburn leads this floortalk.

5.15pm / meet at the front desk / free
Sponsored by *The Press*

Elizabeth Knox: *The Love School*

This acclaimed author gives a reading of her work inspired by Séraphine Pick's painting.

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

WEDNESDAY 2 SEPTEMBER

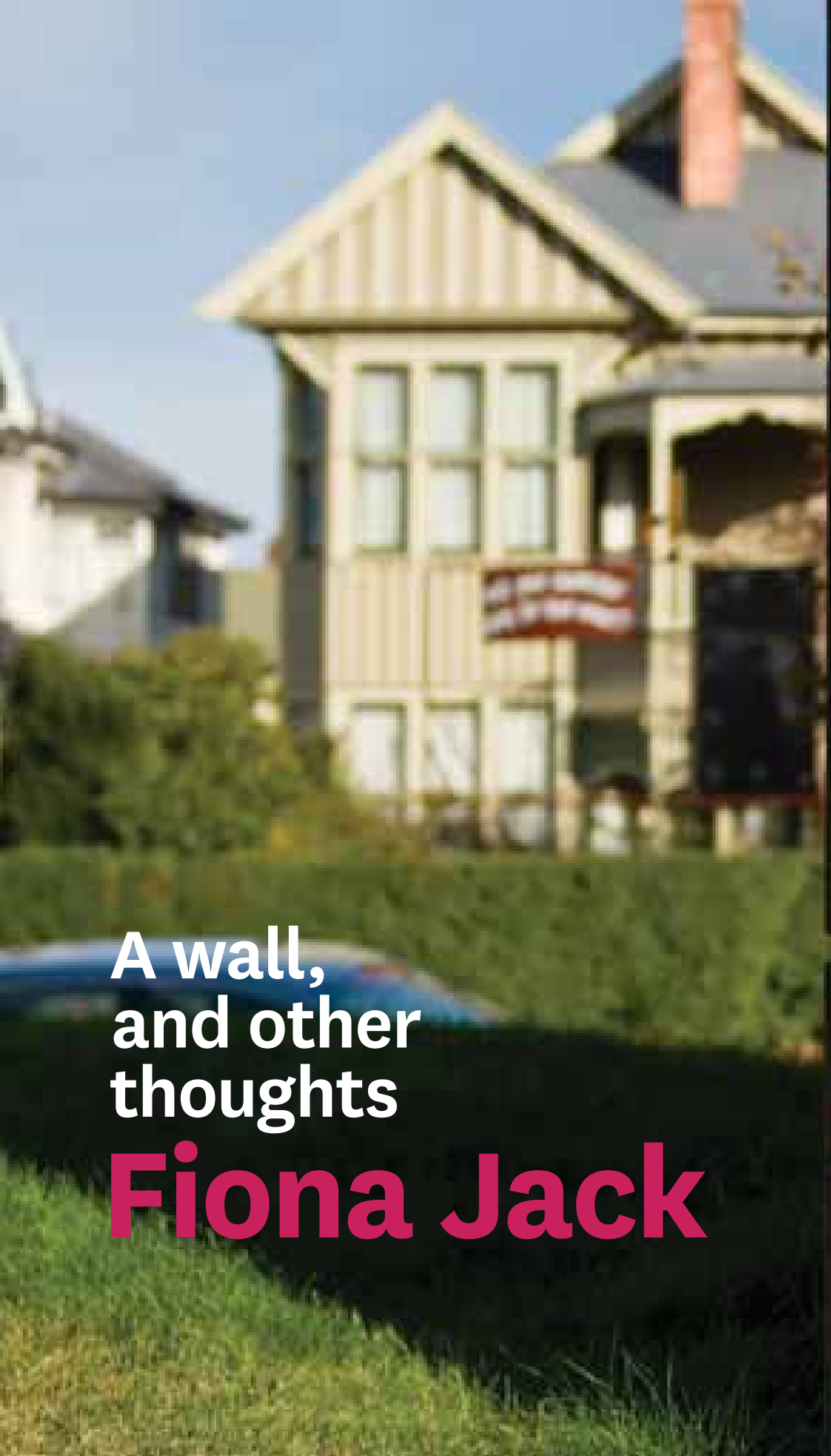
Séraphine Pick: *Withdrawals from the Image Bank*

Felicity Milburn, curator of Séraphine Pick, discusses the artist's use of memory, found images and imagination.

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

Séraphine Pick
is in the Touring
A, C and Borg
Henry Galleries
from 23 July until
22 November





A wall, and other thoughts Fiona Jack

Senior curator Justin Paton talks with Fiona Jack about a wall, and other thoughts, the painting she created, with the help of passers-by, on the wall of the Gallery's car park bunker during a week in April.

Next page: Fiona Jack *A wall, and other thoughts* (detail) 2009. Acrylic on wood. Reproduced courtesy of the artist

JP: When someone wants to make a big visual noise in public, they often choose photographic billboards or, say, neon. Why do you favour the older medium of painting?

FJ: I don't always paint — I also make billboards with photographs. It depends upon the site, what I want to talk about, and many other factors. But if I do choose to paint I really enjoy the immediacy of the experience. It requires very little in the way of tools, resources, technology. The same is true of the comments people supplied, which were written on slips of paper with whatever pen or pencil was handy.

JP: You have to be really close to read some of the commentary, but the colour of the work hits you from miles off. Why red?

FJ: A couple of reasons. For hundreds of years red has been the colour most associated with protest, with activism. I wanted this painting to yell a little, but also to be very quiet — hence the layers of small and in some cases unreadable text. It's all voices, great and small, creating a big red noise.

JP: The biggest wall painting you have made was in Santiago, Chile. Do words on walls there lead a different life than they do here in New Zealand?

FJ: Yes, I believe so. In Chile throughout the Pinochet coup and dictatorship, and a number of the years before and after, walls were a kind of newspaper for resistance movements and for artists. There is also a strong tradition of mural painting, going a long way back in Chilean socialist history, which is always on the street. 'Brigades' of mural painters would paint massive street murals in one day. I saw one being painted when I was there. It was amazing: about fifty people all armed with brushes and this massive mural was finished in about four hours.

JP: Could you describe the range of responses you received? Engaged, apathetic, reflective, serious...?

FJ: I enjoyed how some people answered the questions in a broad philosophical sense, and then on the other hand how some people went straight to such very specific issues. It made me reflect on both ends of that spectrum as I worked — big questions all the way to local issues. After I'd been working for a while some responses seemed to talk directly to others and that was nice — a conversation conducted through a public wall.

Fiona Jack's *A wall, and other thoughts* will be on display on the car park bunker at the Gallery until late 2009.



Justin Paton: We're all used to seeing words on walls, but your word painting is unusual in that the words aren't yours — you've asked passers-by to supply them. Why is that?

Fiona Jack: I wanted this to be a painting of a moment. To capture the input of those who happened to pass by during the time I was making this work. The responses relate to political issues and ideas about protest. I moved back to New Zealand about a year-and-a-half ago, and have noticed how little protest is occurring here. As opposed to Los Angeles where I was living, where protest has become, as in French cities, a part of street life almost. That may have changed since Obama came to power, but nonetheless, active political debate in all levels of society is very visible in Los Angeles. I wanted to ask what we think about protest here. Can we visualise a moment where it may become vital again? Do we think it is useful? What kinds of issues would be central to us? In feeding all of this input into a giant noisy picture on a wall I wanted to look at the collisions between ideas and see what happened.

Fiona Jack *A wall, and other thoughts* (detail) 2009. Acrylic on wood. Reproduced courtesy of the artist

SUPER

MEANINGLESS WAR

NOTHING

LIVE WHAT YOU BELIEVE
DON'T HOLD UP A STICK AND BURN

HUMAN RIGHTS

IT'S NOT

seeing it shortened
before my eyes.

civil liberties and
human rights are directly
get out of threatened
RUIN THE IDEA

i already have.
Whanau

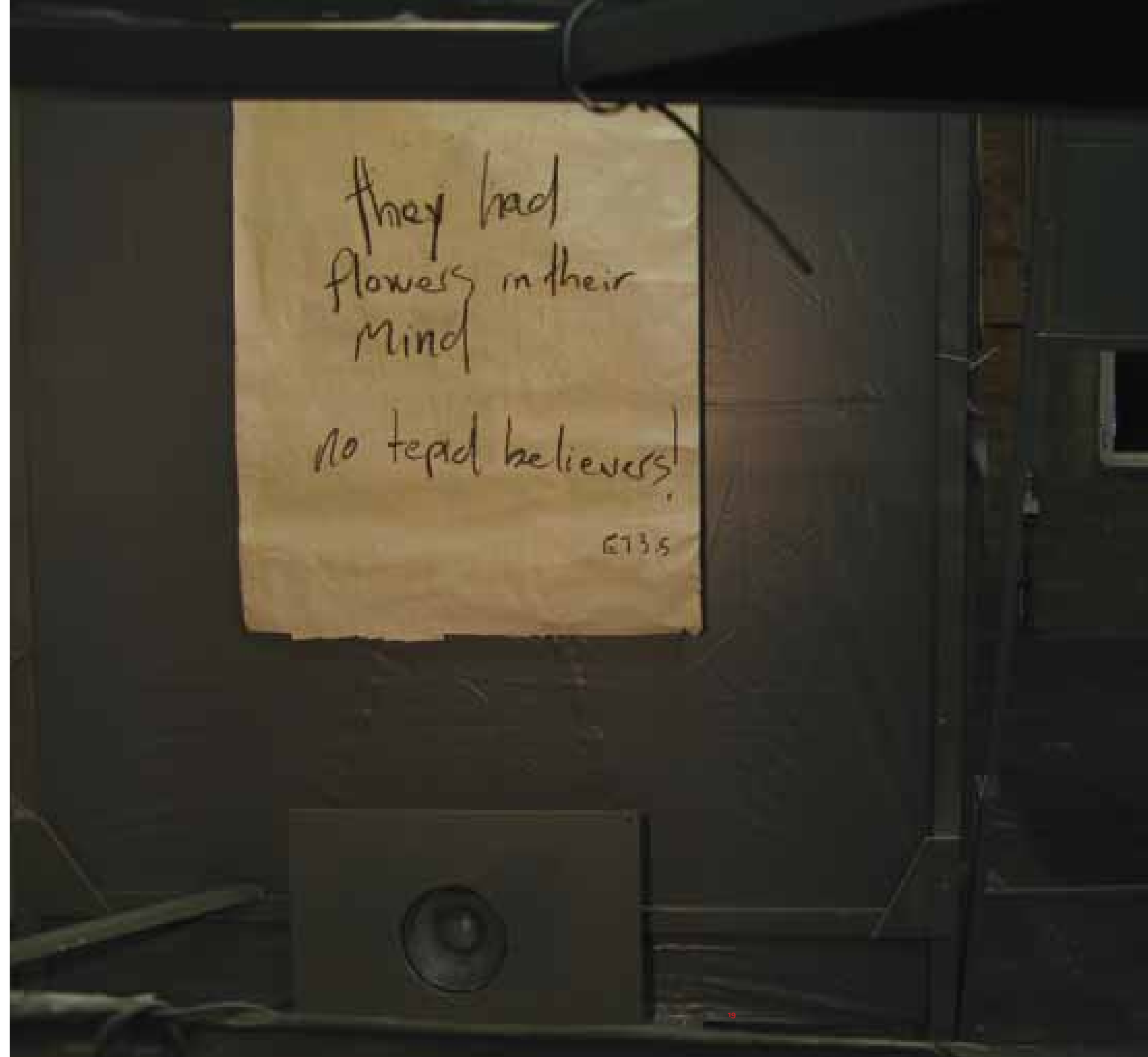
if it comes into my life
and affects me directly

et al.

that's obvious! that's right! that's true!, the new installation by et al. for Christchurch Art Gallery, confounds as much as it elucidates questionable ideologies both past and present. For over twenty years et al. (a Latin abbreviation for 'and others'), have produced films, sound works, books and installations that engage fragments of images, text and voices.

By investigating scientific experiments, religious belief systems, military and political beliefs and behaviour modification, et al. aim to disclose the insidious and nullifying effects of mass mind-control. Their controversial installation *the fundamental practice*, exhibited at the Venice Biennale 2005, was a cacophony of sound, moving metal units, fences and fragments of text that amplified the existence of opposites, discord and control inherent in each individual and in the wider world. *the fundamental practice* conveyed

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.
Reproduced courtesy et al.



et al. *altruistic studies* —
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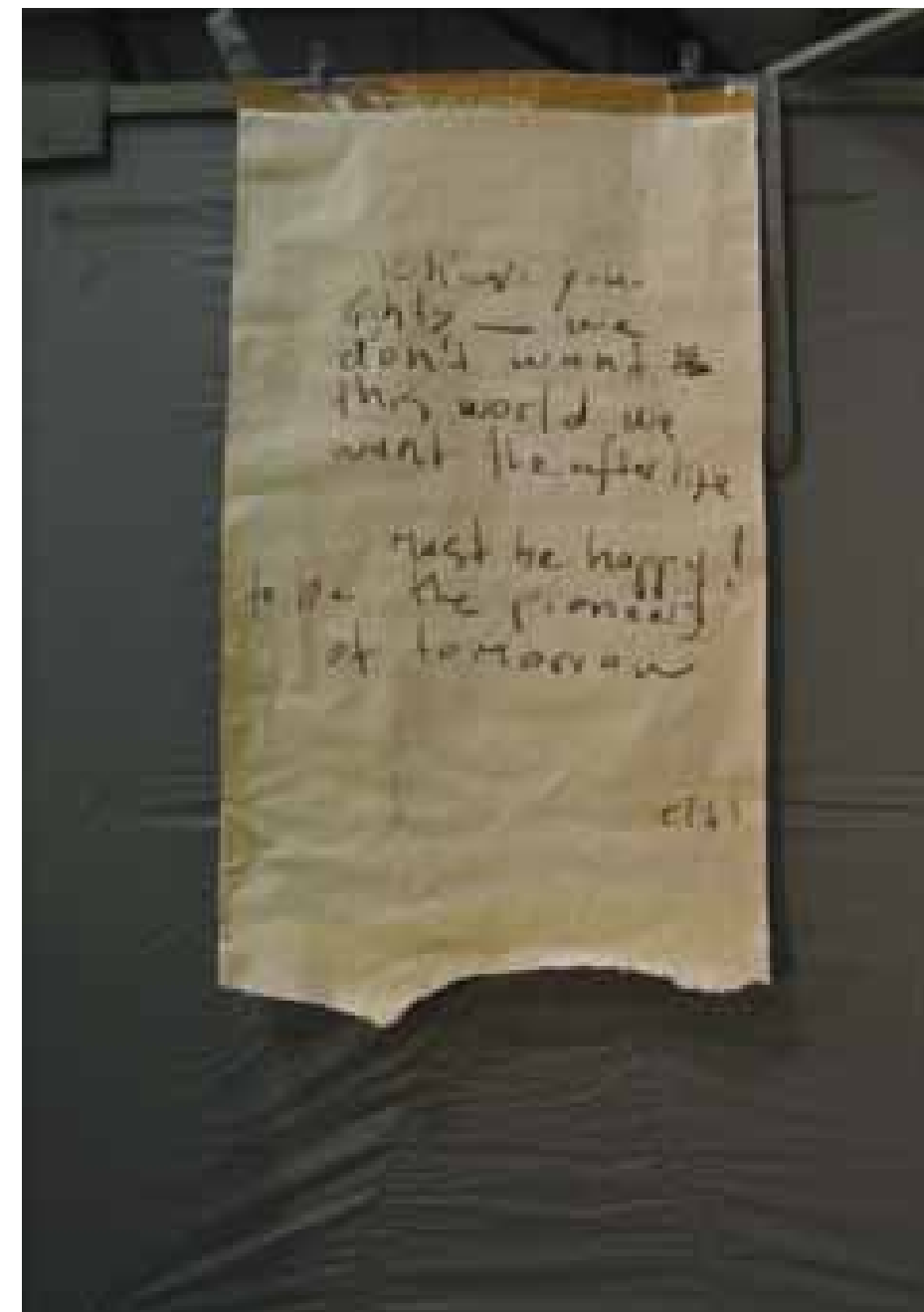


the collective's strategy of asserting no fixed narrative and instead employed dysfunctional and incoherent elements. As curator Mark Kremer wrote, 'Something's rotten in the works of et al. An et al. exhibition presents the seething sediments of frenetic mental activity. Matter and mind are at odds; what's displayed is animated by deranged thought. Here reason breeds mania: we've entered the realm of omnipotent fantasy.'¹

et al.'s practice of intentionally blurring the boundaries between myth and fact is a subversive act aimed to condition viewers' perceptions. By using technology, text and sound and ironic tactics of deceit and invention, et al. present us with truths about society — disguised as possible parallel realities. As the collective writes, 'We are Artists now. And when we act, we create our own reality. And while you are studying that reality: judiciously: (as you will): we will act again, creating other new realities, (which you can study too). And, that is how things will sort out. We are history's actors: and you: (all of you): will be left to just study what we do.'²

Often described as 'apocalyptic', their work is especially resonant given the current climate of global economic strife and political and religious conflict. Their signature use of institutional grey paint combined with theatrical lighting, obfuscating writing and discordant sound, evokes a perverse sense of anxiety. In 2008 et al. exhibited *altruistic studies* — *pr systems* at the Argos Centre for Art & Media, Brussels. This installation — 'an unmanned, computer generated performance'³ — comprised polling booths, posters, a Google Earth link and excerpts from

et al. *altruistic studies* —
no vote! 2008. Installation:
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Present and Dialectics of
Seeing, Argos Centre for Art
& Media, Brussels.
Reproduced courtesy et al.



speeches by George W. Bush, Saddam Hussein, Mahood Ahmadi-Najad and Muslim activists such as Osama bin Laden and Sheikh Mohammed Bashir. et al. identified the phenomenon of suicide bombers, political prisoners, terrorists and other marginalised groups as candidates for a voting system that could reflect the so-called democratic principle of proportional representation in contemporary politics.

Paul Willemsen, director of Argos, writes of the installation, 'The world [is] reduced to a uniform, globalised economic operating terrain and culturally to an all-encompassing supermarket of religions, wisdoms, cultures and political beliefs. Outside no longer exists.'⁴

In a typical et al. double-take, the word altruism is derived from the Latin for 'other': alter. The literal translation of altruism is 'other-ism'. The collective's altruistic studies project therefore cleverly overlaps with their moniker — et alia (and others) and their gender swapping identities while also insinuating patriarchal society and all those that would be called 'other'.

that's obvious! that's right! that's true!, while not strictly identified as being part the altruistic studies series, continues the collective's research into religious ideologies and their impact on intellectual freedom. Like an ominous announcement for a mysterious meeting, a phalanx of billboards demarcates the foyer and gallery space. Collection boxes for dubious charity organisations, metal trays, construction fencing and Perspex domes with speakers complete the installation, which refuses to be narrative, orderly or contained.

Altruism — having empathy with strangers with no consideration of the possible benefits to ourselves — is a behavioural phenomenon that et al. conceptually experiment with. In their newspaper publication *New Zealand Altruism Review*, June 2009, they outline in drawings and text the volatility of disenfranchised extremists and note the results for such election categories as Vote Statistics for Humiliation, Injustice, or Extraordinary Rendition and Vote Statistics for Communal Nationalism Based on Real or Perceived Group Inequalities. The title for the collective’s Christchurch exhibition could just as easily read ‘that’s not obvious! that’s not right! that’s not true!’; but upon closer inspection, the installation articulates how past injustices still continue to bleed into the present.

And in the philosophical words of et al. ‘Conclusion. It is a chain of momentary existences.’⁵

Jennifer Hay
Assistant curator

¹ ‘et al., or the shadow broker’, Mark Kremer, *et al. the fundamental practice, New Zealand at the Venice Biennale*, Creative New Zealand, 2005, p.69

² et al. quoted from *Venice Document. et al. The Fundamental Practice*, Creative New Zealand, 2006, p.19

³ et al. quoted from Paul Willemsen, *Interstitial Zones*, Argos Centre for Art & Media, Brussels, p.4

⁴ Paul Willemsen, *ibid*

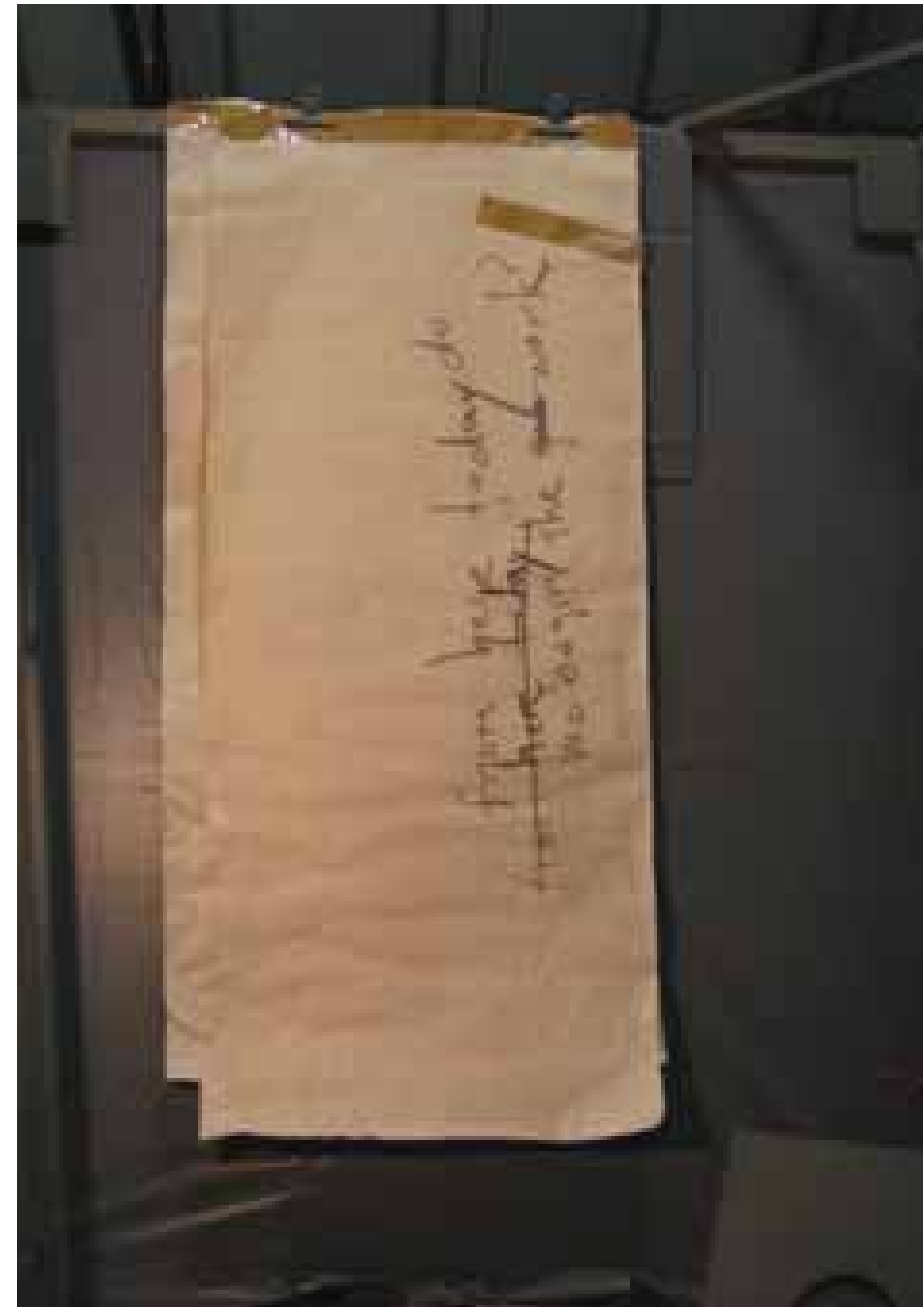
⁵ et al. quoted from *Venice Document. et al. The Fundamental Practice*, Creative New Zealand, 2006, p.74

EVENTS

WEDNESDAY 12 AUGUST
Exploring et al.

Art reviewer Andrew Paul Wood discusses New Zealand’s most enigmatic art collective. Followed by a floortalk of the Gallery’s exhibition with curator Jennifer Hay. 6pm / Philip Carter Family Auditorium / free Sponsored by *The Press*

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. Reproduced courtesy et al.



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. Reproduced courtesy et al.

et al.: that’s obvious! that’s right! that’s true! is in the Touring Gallery B from 23 July until 22 November

A Delicate Art: the annual works on paper rotation



Charles Meryon *La Rue des Mauvais Garçons, Paris* 1854. Etching.

Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 1982

Visitors to Christchurch Art Gallery from June will notice that the works on paper bays in the collection galleries have a new selection of works on display. Peppered throughout the galleries, the works displayed in these bays are changed annually to preserve their condition and to protect them from prolonged exposure to the damaging effects of light. The detrimental effects of light on watercolours in particular are dramatically evident in a number of works that were on constant display for numerous decades at the Robert McDougall Art Gallery, which, prior to the 1970s, featured a natural top-side lighting system that allowed diffused sunlight to shine in the galleries.

Today the lighting of works of art is carefully monitored by the Gallery's conservation department and installation team, taking light-meter readings to ensure that works are displayed to the highest international conservation standards. Annually rotating the selection of works on paper not only ensures that their condition is preserved for future generations, but also provides opportunities for new works to be displayed. A highlight of this year's selection is the small focus exhibition of Eileen Mayo's prints. Also included, and another of the highlights of the hang, is a selection from Charles Meryon's Etchings of Paris series, including the sullen *La Rue des Mauvais Garçons, Paris*. Meryon, who was based in Akaroa with the French Navy between 1843 and 1846, is widely regarded as one of the most talented etchers of his generation. His etchings of Paris are immensely personal and uneasy scenes that are often charged with an atmosphere of mystery. Their sense of foreboding is enhanced by the artist's use of sharp contrasts between light and dark and the immense scale of the buildings when compared to the people on the streets.

Watercolours by New Zealand expatriate artists Owen Merton and Margaret Stoddart feature alongside other New Zealand and international artists in the twentieth-

century works on paper bay, which also includes prints, drawings and watercolours by Clare Leighton, Augustus John, Charles Worsley and Roland Hipkins. Both Merton and Stoddart worked predominantly in watercolour and their styles developed significantly on their respective trips to Great Britain.

Several works by Alfred Walsh highlight his ability with the watercolour medium. Walsh was a prominent figure in Christchurch art circles during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, establishing himself as a leading *plein-air* painter. In 1887 he was appointed assistant master at Canterbury College School of Art, where he taught for twenty-four years and became a popular and influential figure with many of his students. In 1889 Walsh was a founding member of the Palette Club, a group of Canterbury artists who fostered and encouraged *plein-air* painting. Walsh left Christchurch for Auckland in 1912 where he continued to paint until his death at Tauranga in 1916.

A set of six lithographs depicting Durmont D'Urville's southern hemisphere expedition to the Auckland Islands in March 1840 are also on display. It was after the expedition's visit to the Auckland Islands that D'Urville's ships, the *Astrolabe* and *Zelee* travelled on to Otago and Akaroa harbours before travelling further north. Original drawings by the ship's artist, Louis Le Breton, were taken back to France, where they were executed as lithographs to accompany D'Urville's published account of the journey, *Voyage au Pôle Sud et dans l'Océanie* (Voyage to the South Pole and in Oceania) (1842–6). The imagery in this selection of lithographs is incredibly detailed and highlights the degree of skill achieved by lithographers in France during the 1840s.

Peter Vangioni
Curator



Alfred Walsh *Low Tide, Auckland Harbour* 1911. Watercolour.

Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, presented by G.W. Bradley 1951

Owen Merton *Back Street, St Ives* 1910. Watercolour.

Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased with assistance from the Olive Stirrat bequest 1988



Louis Le Breton *Ilot Basattique dans la Baie de Sarah's Bosom* 1846. Lithograph.

Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 1980. Lithographer: attributed to Johann Georg Meyer, German, 1813–1886

GARY HILL: UP AGAINST DOWN



At Christchurch Art Gallery in the past year video art has ranged from vast and immersive to modest and self-effacing. Impossible to miss, Daniel Crooks's sliced train engulfed one huge wall of the touring galleries. Much harder to find, Kentaro Yamada's digital landscapes in *Let it be now* could be seen only by peering into the edge of a slice of plastic. Meanwhile the easiest way to find Hannah and Aaron Beehre's interactive work was to follow the sound of visitors as they stamped their feet, making leaves fall from a glowing virtual hedge.

Following on from these young artists at the Gallery this May is a show by a pioneer of the medium, Gary Hill. Hill is world renowned for his bold experiments with moving images, but his body of work is too agile and various to be categorised narrowly as video art. Hill's works range from all-the-cords-showing installations using basic monitors through to colossal projections of digital animations in sites such as the Colosseum and Temple of Venus and Roma in Rome. But, even at their largest, Hill's installations retain the open and exploratory spirit of first-wave video art.

In an era when many people speak to the world through moving images, made at home and posted online for whoever wants to see, Hill's experiments look even more timely — particularly those that deal with the perennial human struggle to make oneself seen, felt and heard. In the newest work in this exhibition, *Up Against Down*, Hill seems to press against his own physical limits, and in the process to press against the very walls of the darkened gallery in which the work screens. In *Wall Piece*, Hill throws himself repeatedly against a wall in a darkened room. At the moment of contact, a flash of light erupts and Hill speaks a single word. This pulse of light, language and body language is intensified and sometimes obliterated by a real strobe light pulsing in the gallery itself. Here language is not just heard but seen and felt — something we must throw ourselves into. And the video image, consisting only of weightless projected light, becomes as visceral and full-bodied as sculpture.

Justin Paton
Senior curator

Gary Hill *Wall Piece* 2000. Single-channel video/sound installation. Video projector, strobe light and strobe controller with steel floor mount, two speakers, one DVD player and one DVD (colour; stereo sound). Reproduced courtesy of the artist and Donald Young Gallery, Chicago



GARY HILL: UP AGAINST DOWN is in the Tait Electronics and Monica Richards Galleries from 23 May until 23 August

This exhibition is made possible through a collaboration between St Paul St Gallery at the Auckland University of Technology and Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, with the support of The Arts Centre, Christchurch.



A Singular Bliss



Richard McWhannell 'Coitus' Erotic series, 2nd version 1995-7. Oil on canvas on board. Collection of Richard McWhannell. Reproduced courtesy of the artist

Eroticism is an expression of delight, joy, pleasure. It relates to sex, is its friskier sister and twin brother. The erotic in art has to be seen and viewed. It becomes dangerous when it slips from the private to the public. And it is just this intersection wherein it becomes most challenged. Obscenity as a concept had tight legal restraints in New Zealand right up until the late 1980s. But probably an informal censorship — a sense of what was allowable — was as powerful. In such a culturally conformist country as a one-time colony, the unsayable became the unviewable.

The French philosopher Foucault talks, by way of contrast, of the *ars erotica* in the cultures of 'China, Japan, India, Rome, the Arabo-Moslem societies... Truth is drawn from pleasure itself, understood as a practice and accumulated as experience... evaluated in terms of its intensity, its specific quality, its duration, its reverberations in the body and the soul.' A master held these secrets and the initiate underwent trials in order to experience 'an absolute mastery of the body, a singular bliss, obliviousness to time and limits...' In our primarily Western culture, Foucault posits the view that science problematised this erotic view of life: allowing only the confession to remain as the space within which eroticism could be articulated. Sex became a subject of 'great suspicion... the fragment of darkness that we each carry within us: a general signification, a universal secret, an omnipotent cause, a fear that never ends.'

Sound familiar? This is the feverish imagination which lies embedded in so much contemporary art. Eroticism, the pleasure principle, finds it hard to enter this suspicious, darkened, polluted arena. It could be the smudged background of a Séraphine Pick painting. As for the 'entire glittering sexual array, reflected in a myriad of discourses', this could be a whole raft of contemporary New Zealand artists. But pleasure? The body? Forget it.

Why was this? Or rather why is it? If one looks back, one can see the suppressed power of eroticism most clearly in the treatment of the naked body: the nude.

Let's take Lois White's full-bodied *Self-portrait (Nude at Easel)* (c.1935) as an example. This was never made for public consumption. It was a bold statement — made by herself, for herself — perhaps to be viewed by a more understanding future. (Richard Wolfe asserts it was financial restraint that made White paint herself nude: she could not afford a model.) Yet there's an undeniable eroticism in the ripe pear shapes of the artist's body. Then there are Rita Angus's nude self-portraits, disturbingly intense. They are private but the very nakedness cannot help asserting the possibilities of eroticism. Nakedness in a self-portrait also stands for something more: a sobriety of inspection — a virtual introspection through gazing at the subject body. There is something painfully Calvinist here: less celebration than evisceration. Yet the sheer physical womanliness — in such a spiky, difficult woman — asserts Angus's body as a sexual force.

The intersection of private and public tends to be key. Who knows of the highly sexualised oeuvre of the figurative painter, Malcolm Ross? Can it be said to even exist when the public never sees it? A student at Elam in the 1970s, praised by McCahon, Malcolm Ross dropped out of sight. He was eulogised after he died by Douglas Wright in *Ghost Dancer*. Ross's paintings exist, and were painted, sometimes expressly for clients but at other times to articulate an unstoppable vision. Almost entirely homosexual in their sensibility and depiction of physical acts, these paintings could be said to be invisible since they are never publicly viewed. Yet like unexploded mines, they await their ignition by the future viewer — if they survive.

This relationship between client and painter is probably a key factor in the seeming absence of erotic art in New Zealand. Its lack of visibility owes to the high walls round the home of the rich collector. Erotic works were often placed within a library. Many of these were works on paper — easy to hide, discreet, viewable by the dreaming individual. As an acknowledgement of this tradition Richard McWhannell made a series on paper in the late 1980s. The figurative

Rita Angus *Self-portrait (nude, seated)* c.1942. Pencil and wash. Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, on loan from the Rita Angus Estate. Reproduced courtesy of the Rita Angus Estate

works in oil which followed this have stunningly eroticised images of men and women in flagrante — somewhere between a Goyaesque struggle and the mess and heat of the act of sex. This sort of work is not easy to exhibit. It is even harder to sell to public institutions.

Today we live in a world in which censorship has largely been withdrawn. The definition of obscenity is limited to matters dealing with urine, defecation, paedophilia and bestiality. Yet it has not unleashed a cornucopia of exhibitionism. New Zealand films are infamous for their dour view of coupling. New Zealand art remains, on the whole, stolidly conformist in its refusal to take delight or pleasure in sexuality. The disastrous coupling of Christianity and Māoridom from earliest days has meant a kind of avoidance of sex prevails in much Māori contemporary art. Perhaps the conflation of sexuality with identity issues — now so deeply unfashionable (and art is nothing if not obsessed with the movement of fashion) — has made contemporary artists uncomfortable with looking at issues to do with the delights of the body. Or maybe every contemporary artist in New Zealand is bad in bed? Maybe they all just hate sex? I jest of course. But most contemporary artists seem to feel more at home with the stain, the bruise and underarm hair than the singular bliss Foucault talks of.

The irony of course is that New Zealand as a nation is full of teenage slappers, grandmothers at twenty-eight, proudly parading tots who dress like crack whores. Unbridled sexuality is everywhere on television. The web is one big suppurating sex market. 'Never have there existed more centres of power; never more attention manifested and verbalised; never more circular contacts and linkages; never more sites where the intensity of pleasures and the persistency of power catch hold, only to spread elsewhere,' as Foucault, now long dead, said. Yet New Zealand contemporary art feels more at home in 'the infinitesimal violences that are exerted on sex, all the anxious gazes that are directed at it' — the fracture not the caress, the shudder and shiver not the cry of delight. That 'obliviousness to time and limits' awaits us, a brave new country yet to be discovered in these self-censoring islands.

Peter Wells

Peter Wells is an award-winning author and film-maker. He was made a member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for his services to literature and film in 2006. His most recent novel, Lucky Bastard, was published in 2007.



RONNIE VAN HOUT, SERIOUSLY

I ENCOUNTERED ONE OF THE ODDER SIGNS OF OUR TIMES IN MELBOURNE AIRPORT IN 2003. THERE IT WAS, WRITTEN IN BOLD LETTERS AND WITHOUT A HINT OF IRONY ON A SIGN BESIDE THE CHECK-IN COUNTER: 'ALL JOKING WILL BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY.'

PERHAPS THE FIVE-IN-THE-MORNING START WAS TO BLAME FOR MY BLURRING, BUT IT TOOK ME A WHILE TO REALISE WHAT ON EARTH THE SIGN MEANT. A NEW PUBLIC RELATIONS EXERCISE TO MAKE UNFUNNY PEOPLE FEEL BETTER ABOUT THEMSELVES? AN ATTEMPT TO BOOST THE STANDARD OF AUSTRALIAN HUMOUR WITH INFUSIONS OF COMEDY FROM ABROAD?



Ronnie van Hout Peep Show (detail from Hold That Thought) 2008. Mixed media. Collection of the artist. Reproduced courtesy of the artist and Hamish McKay Gallery, Wellington

BUT NO. THIS WAS POST-9/11 SERIOUSNESS — A NEW BRAND OF HUMOURLESSNESS EVOLVED EXPRESSLY FOR THE ‘AGE OF TERROR’. SHOULD YOU BE TEMPTED TO CRACK A JOKE ABOUT A BOMB IN YOUR BAG, A TOXIC BREW IN YOUR WATER BOTTLE, OR YOUR SECRET ABILITY TO TAKE OUT SECURITY OFFICERS WITH NOTHING MORE THAN A FOUNTAIN PEN — SHOULD YOU MAKE A JOKE ABOUT ANY OF THIS, THE AIRPORT WAS PROMISING TO TAKE YOU VERY SERIOUSLY INDEED. TO FINE YOU AND QUESTION YOU AND SEARCH YOU AND DETAIN YOU. NO JOKE.

My early morning double-take was intensified by where I'd just been. The previous day I'd been in Ronnie van Hout's studio, talking about jokes. 'There's always something else going on in a joke,' Ronnie had been saying, as we looked at a recent video on a small television monitor. It was Ronnie on screen too, but dressed up in the rumpled suit and rubber chimp mask favoured by his alter ego, Monkey Madness. The video seemed to be telling a story of decline-and-fall, reversing the momentum of the famous 'Dawn of Man' opening scene from *2001: A Space Odyssey*, in which the apes discover a futuristic black column in their midst. Kubrick's apes are on their way to the future: they wildly worship the shiny art-thing. Ronnie's monkey seemed to be going the other way: he was on his way down and out. Instead of Kubrick's obelisk, the video offered the huge red motorway sculptures you drive beneath when heading to Melbourne airport. Then came pedestrian underpasses, bleak urban landscaping, an ornamental billabong. Monkey Madness staggered through this unpeopled landscape, swigging from a bottle in a paper bag.

You had to laugh, but the laughter wasn't comfy or heart-warming. There was a lag between set-up and punchline, and in that gap there was just enough time for Monkey Madness to veer away from comedy and lurch briefly towards other territory — towards pathos, anger, even an odd kind of tenderness; towards matters of dissolution, dispossession, estrangement... Of course comedy prevailed in the end, but those other spectres had been raised.

What am I saying? That there are two ways of taking a joke seriously. The airport security way, which may end in unpleasant experiences in a holding cell. And the Ronnie van Hout way, which involves pleasurable discomforting experiences in white-walled gallery spaces.

That video turned out to be one of the last appearances by Monkey Madness in Ronnie's art. He showed up again a few years later, sitting on a couch with Ronnie himself and another character called Sculp-D-Dog, the three of them looking like patients in a waiting room. The monkey may come back again (things have a way of rising from their graves in Ronnie's work), but there's only one sign of him in the exhibition **Who goes there** at Christchurch Art Gallery.



Ronnie van Hout Sleep
Less 2006. Mixed media.
Private collection,
Australia. Reproduced
courtesy of the artist

Ronnie van Hout Help Me
2005. Painted resin.
Private collection,
Melbourne. Reproduced
courtesy of the artist





Ronnie van Hout *Bed Sit* 2008. Painted plywood, epoxy resin and fibreglass on polyurethane, doll wigs, painted resin, speaker, sound, DVD projection. Collection of the artist. Reproduced courtesy of the artist

Go right through the exhibition, or alternatively take the cheat's route to the end by going in through 'the back door', and you'll find the monkey mask itself. Squashed down and laid flat on its back, it looks like a farewell of some kind — the old comic character reduced to a relic and sealed under glass. I think of the death-mask casts made of the faces of the famous in the eighteenth century. *Monkey Madness*, in memoriam.

I doubt it's coincidental that Ronnie made this goodbye work in 2004, the same year a major survey exhibition of his work began its tour of most New Zealand public galleries. Artists often remark how strange it is to be 'done', to see past works gathered in from collections and then cuffed into a tidy narrative. Ronnie's survey show, which I helped to organise, was a kind of anti-retrospective, an attempt to unravel that tidiness. By bringing together works in a bewildering variety of media by an artist who loves to duck and dive through different voices and personae, the aim was to create a survey that was bound to fail — that failed to deliver a closed and conclusive account of who and what Ronnie van Hout was. A survey with an escape hatch built in, so that the artist could quietly step out of the institutional frame and find his way into new and other works. Which, after laying *Monkey Madness* to rest, is what he did. **Who goes there** is a show about where he went.



Ronnie van Hout *Good Day Sunshine* (detail from *Hold That Thought*) 2008. Painted cast resin fruit and painted MDF cabinet. Collection of the artist. Reproduced courtesy of the artist and Hamish McKay Gallery, Wellington



Ronnie van Hout Rooms 2004. Photograph. Collection of the artist. Reproduced courtesy of the artist

Ronnie van Hout Failed Robot (detail) 2007. Polystyrene, fibreglass and paint. Private collection, Melbourne. Reproduced courtesy of the artist. Photograph by Vicki Petheridge

'TO REGISTER THE STRENGTH AND STRANGENESS OF THESE WORKS, IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO OBSERVE FROM A DISTANCE. YOU HAVE TO CROUCH DOWN, STEP INSIDE, AND GO TO WORK ON THE UNRELIABLE EVIDENCE THAT THE ARTIST HAS LAID FOR YOU.'

And where he has gone, more often than not, is into rooms. The rooms of a vast plywood box, called *On the Run*, in which soldier Ronnies communicate, or fail to communicate, with each other. The room he slept in as a child, remade at claustrophobic scale in drooling shades of brown. A room with pristine cupboards, one of which contains a portrait of the artist long deceased. A room seen through a peephole, where a naked model of the artist sits engaged in some unnamed activity. A sparsely furnished bedroom that sits, uncannily, alongside its own three-dimensional mirror image...

What are these rooms? They are head spaces, black boxes, memory theatres, psychological interiors. They're spaces haunted by the artist's personal history (Christchurch health camps, the bike ride to primary school). And they're spaces haunted by art's history (ten points, students, for spotting the reference to Marcel Duchamp's *Étant donné...*). But most importantly — and perhaps this is too obvious to need pointing out — they're rooms we can enter, or at the very least peer into and imagine inhabiting. Van Hout still creates models at tabletop scale, like the tiny, banana-bodied man clutching a sign that says 'Help me' that you'll discover in this show. But across the last five years he has worked to

put us not just in front of but *inside* his paradoxes. To register the strength and strangeness of these works, it's not enough to observe from a distance. You have to crouch down, step inside, and go to work on the unreliable evidence he has laid for you.

From his early UFO paintings through to the embroidered swastikas of the 1990s, laughter in the dark was a speciality of Ronnie's. It still is, except that now the dark is darker and the laughter echoes more. For me his work of the 1990s felt like an extended chase. We viewers pursued the artist as he careened outward through the facts and fragments of the wider culture — ducking and diving through rock music, pulp sci-fi, popular history, conspiracy theories and alien abduction lore, grabbing disguises and just as quickly abandoning them, gear-shifting between frustration and freedom and constantly trying to escape himself, to outrun the shadow of his own self-consciousness. That nervy, headlong, sceptical energy was present in the title of his survey show: *I've abandoned me*.

In his sculptures of the last five years, though, there's a lower energy, a thicker atmosphere, a heightened sense of vulnerability. Each room he has made in that time seems to connect to the next at some odd and unexpected angle.



And because the spaces are often big enough for us to be in, because they occupy and sometimes colonise the spaces of the gallery itself, it's clear the problems of self and soul that Ronnie raises are our problems too. The show's title, it seems, is addressed not to some unknown intruder but to us: the 'who' in **Who goes there**. Instead of fleeing and fragmenting his own identity, Ronnie now seems more interested in creating spaces where we can wonder and productively worry about our own identities. Who exactly are 'we', after all? And are we welcome or are we intruding in this who-goes-there space? Part of the pleasure of Ronnie's work, for me, is its insistence that looking at art isn't always a friendly, upbeat, nice-to-meet-you business: that there can be something needy, tense and even a bit passive-aggressive about the encounter; that art isn't always obliged to love its maker or its audience back. Far from draining the pleasure out of our encounters with art, this kind of tension and friction is often a key to it. Without it, you're in for one dull relationship.

Am I sounding too serious? If so, remember this is a show that opens with a portrait of the artist shaking his fist at the sky while standing in an enormous cowpat. It is also a show containing *Failed Robot*, a flat-on-its-back slab of grey resin that connects with viewers through the only parts of its body that work — alarmingly lifelike eyes and

teeth. And then there are the *End Dolls*. Commissioned as a multiple in an edition of twelve by the Physics Room in 2007, these doll-sized portraits of the artist are coming together for **Who goes there** in what might be called a one-man family reunion. I think the *End Dolls* are some of the best New Zealand multiples ever, and that's because, unlike many multiples, they make an issue of their multiplicity. Seen on its own, a single *End Doll* seems to show the artist imagining the worst, sculpting himself as a corpse dressed for the afterlife and stored in a little coffin. Keep looking in this show, though, and you'll encounter another little death, and then another and another. The artist cheats death a little with each new surrogate. There's no end to his stand-ins, you soon realise. These little goners just keep coming.

It's a joke, a sculptural sight gag; now you see me, now you see me again. But it's a joke that illuminates the most serious topic there is, the one we all have a shared stake in: The End. That's how it goes with the best jokes. They are ways of raising and releasing thoughts that can't comfortably be contained by politer forms of conversation.

Just don't try telling that to Melbourne Airport security.

Justin Paton
Senior curator



EVENTS

TUESDAY 21 JULY

Meet the Artist: Ronnie van Hout
Join Ronnie van Hout for an artist-led floortalk of *Who goes there*.
12.30pm / meet in the foyer / free
Sponsored by *The Press*

SATURDAY 15 AUGUST

Ronnie van Hout: Who goes there
Senior curator Justin Paton explores the world of Ronnie van Hout with an illustrated lecture and floortalk in the exhibition.
8.30am / Alchemy / Friends \$20 / public \$30 / book by 12 August

WEDNESDAY 26 AUGUST

Disappearing acts
We've all heard of emerging artists. But what about disappearing ones? Taking Ronnie van Hout's current exhibition as his starting point, senior curator Justin Paton talks about the art of disappearance.
6pm / Philip Carter Family Auditorium / free Sponsored by *The Press*



Ronnie van Hout *End Doll* 2007. Mixed media. Produced as an edition of twelve for The Physics Room, Christchurch, New Zealand. Various owners. Reproduced courtesy of the artist. Photograph by Mark Gore, courtesy of The Physics Room

Ronnie van Hout *Hold That Thought* (detail) 2008. Mixed media. Collection of the artist. Reproduced courtesy of the artist and Hamish McKay Gallery, Wellington

**RONNIE VAN HOUT:
WHO GOES THERE
WILLIAM A. SUTTON AND RAVENSCAR GALLERIES
4 JULY — 18 OCTOBER**

Into the Void
performing in the Gallery
foyer, 29 March 2006.
From left:
Mark Whyte (drums),
Dave Imlay (guitar),
Paul Sutherland
(gramophone),
James Greig (guitar),
Ronnie van Hout (vocals),
Jason Greig (guitar)



Unknown photographer
Ron O'Reilly,
Christchurch City
Librarian September
1958. Photograph
Reproduced courtesy
of Christchurch City
Libraries

RON O'REILLY

THE COLLECTOR'S EYE

In 1951, when Ron O'Reilly became chief librarian of the Canterbury Public Library, that library still circulated its collection on a rental basis. Ron was told that his ambition of providing free access to serious literature and non-fiction would take several years to gain acceptance by the city council; in the event he managed it in about six months.

It took a little longer to persuade the council to accept the gift of the first McCahon painting to enter the collection of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery. However, within a year or two they did and Ron (with John Summers and a small cabal of rebellious art lovers) finally saw the beautiful and enigmatic *Tomorrow will be the same but not as this* is accepted on behalf of a then very reluctant population.

These two incidents demonstrate a number of Ron O'Reilly's qualities. His trained philosopher's mind and moral and ethical underpinnings were born of an innate belief in the power of cultural activity for good, and made his intellect a quite persuasive tool. He was also persistent and single-minded. He believed in the transformative power of the arts.

When Ron arrived in Dunedin to study in 1938, he joined a student theatre group and met a teenaged Colin McCahon, set designer with Rodney Kennedy of a production of *The Insects*. The following year Ron was again involved with McCahon during a production of the 'anti Anti-Semitic' play, *Professor Mamlock*, for which McCahon made, as Ron described it, 'a Bauhaus still-life' painting. Ron was deeply impressed with this, the first original piece of modernist art he had seen. The episode was evidently transformative, opening Ron's eyes to the art of painting.

Colin McCahon *Tomorrow will be the same but not as this* is 1959. Solpah and sand on board. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, presented by a group of subscribers, December 1962. Reproduced courtesy of the Colin McCahon Research and Publication Trust.

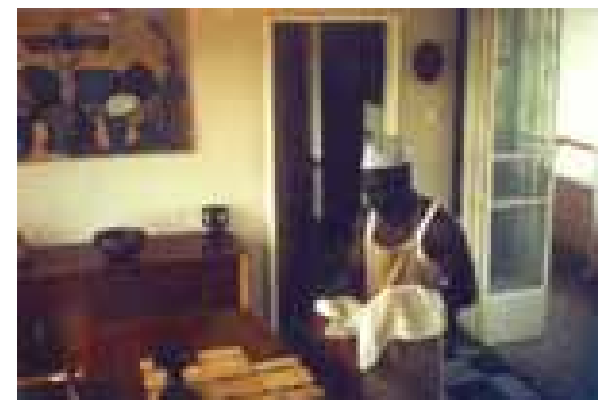


As impressed by the young artist and his seriousness of purpose as Ron was, McCahon too found something important in the relationship. As Ron gained greater mental and intellectual discipline from his studies at Otago, he became better and better as a critic and sounding board for the artist, and thus their relationship developed around a mutual interest in art. That McCahon's art was driven along by its content is easily recognisable now: central to both men's interest in art was what it could achieve. There seemed to be a mutual recognition that the general cultural context was continually being woven into the content of art.

In early 1947 McCahon and Ron cycled from Nelson to Mapua so that Ron could meet Toss Woollaston. From that moment Ron's intense interactivity with that artist's work began, just as it had with McCahon's. The pattern was set for his later interactions with other New Zealand artists, Nigerian art, and thence with Māori art till the end of his life. The principal characteristic of his engagement was its life-long intensity.

From being a supporter of an artist, Ron had become a supporter of artists and of art in New Zealand.

In the forties and fifties the attitudes of the art societies meant they were largely enemy territory and, with no real system of dealer galleries yet in place, suitable exhibition



Ron O'Reilly Dining room with cook, Ibadan, Nigeria c.1964–6. Photograph. Private collection

Colin McCahon Crucifixion according to St Mark 1947. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, presented by Ron O'Reilly in accordance with the wishes of the artist. Reproduced courtesy of the Colin McCahon Research and Publication Trust

venues were very scarce. (The annual Group Show in Christchurch was an exception, being the only friendly haven for those interested in articulating modern trends locally.)

From 1951 to 1968, the librarian's house at 109 Cambridge Terrace became an intellectual hub in the city. Philosophical Society meetings took place there, vociferously and loudly, as did with similar energy levels the Friday and Saturday evening drinking schools with friends of the Theatre Arts Guild, the local artists of liberal persuasion and their sympathisers. It was here that Eric Westbrook, then newly appointed director of Auckland City Art Gallery, met Colin McCahon: a meeting which led directly to McCahon's removal to Auckland.

Above all, this activity took place in a house whose walls teemed with art; work that showed a continuum of the artists' productive effort. At the same time, much of the work shown there was also in transit, as Ron continued his efforts to support the artists and find opportunities for new work to be seen by the public. He tirelessly defended them against often cruel and uninformed attacks in the press, interpreting the work through what he wrote and said. Ron's activities were not for a faint heart.

From 1964 to 1966 Ron taught in western Nigeria, and this time had important consequences for his thinking about art. His fascination with the objects of art and their content quickly led to him forming a large collection of Yoruba carvings, most important of which subjectively for him would be the *ibeji* or 'twin' figures, that he sometimes called 'family'. These taught him intimately about the power and meaning of magic in art. The 'ju-ju' of these revered pieces forced itself upon him as persuasively as McCahon's early work had, and as Fomison's engagement with the spiritual power of Māori art had, pointing him to the power of the irrational dimension of human culture. The bulwark of Ron's rationalism was fully met by this challenge.

The rest of his life would in many ways be spent in the attempt to reconcile this clash of cultures. It all happened during those culturally tumultuous years of the sixties. During his last two years in Christchurch, Ron wrote a connected pair of articles in *Ascent* magazine on the nature of Māori art, in which he made the then radical recognition of its full nature as art (as opposed to ethnographic object). He was preparing the way for Māori art's normalisation as art and its entry into the art museum.

The remaining years of his life from late 1968 to 1982 were spent first in Wellington, at the New Zealand Library School as its director, then, from early 1975, mostly in New Plymouth as director of the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery. While the development of commercial dealer galleries, and subsequent growth of a market for contemporary forms of art, made some of the old ways of support he had undertaken now redundant, he continued to develop his eye through his professional time in New Plymouth and through his own ever widening activities as a collector of art. His devotion to the art of his old friends McCahon and Woollaston continued to the last. Ron's last two years were spent assembling a touring exhibition of Māori post-contact painted art under the aegis of the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery (which unfortunately he was unable to complete) that would have pre-dated the watershed of the Te Maori exhibition. Ron O'Reilly was never one to sit idle.

Matthew O'Reilly and Rachel Watson

Matthew O'Reilly and Rachel Watson are the children of Ron O'Reilly, and spent part of their childhood in Library House.

O'REILLY AND THE LIBRARY ART LOAN COLLECTION

Coinciding with the 150th anniversary of Christchurch City Libraries, this exhibition honours Ron O'Reilly, the founder of their art collection, while highlighting the gift of a substantial number of artworks from the Libraries to the Gallery in 2001.

A significant early supporter of progressive artists such as Toss Woollaston and Colin McCahon, Ronald Norris O'Reilly (1914–1982) became a key figure in this city's cultural life during his time as Christchurch city librarian from 1951 to 1968. Ron O'Reilly was a philosopher, art critic and avid collector who maintained an advanced appreciation throughout his life. In 1953 he founded the library art loan collection with the aim of encouraging education and informed debate. Initially consisting of framed reproductions of work by famous artists and a number of modern British lithographs, from 1955 it also included original recent works by New Zealand artists, selected by O'Reilly from local exhibitions, dealer galleries or directly from artists. He also kept the library stocked with the latest international art publications, which (with the art loan collection) became an important learning resource for younger artists, many of whom also later had their works purchased for the library collection.

The art purchased by O'Reilly during the 1950s and 1960s for the art loan collection covered areas of collecting that were almost completely neglected at that time by the city's, then deeply conservative, Robert McDougall Art Gallery. In recognition of this, however (and resulting from consultation with later Gallery directors), in 2001 Christchurch City Libraries generously made the gift of 155 artworks from their collection into the Gallery's care. With the greater proportion of these having been personally selected by Ron O'Reilly, he is recognised as an individual who has played a major role in shaping this city's permanent public art collection.

Ken Hall
Assistant curator

Ron O'Reilly: The Collector's Eye is in the Collection Galleries from 6 June until 16 July

EVENTS

SATURDAY 27 JUNE
Art In The Morning: The Collector's Eye
Breakfast and tour of this exhibition with curator Ken Hall.
8.30am / Alchemy / Friends \$20 / public \$30 / book by 24 June

WEDNESDAY 1 JULY
The Collector's Eye
Matthew O'Reilly and Rachel Watson discuss the life of their father, Ron O'Reilly — founder of Christchurch City Libraries' art collection. Followed by a floortalk on O'Reilly's Nigerian sculpture collection with Canterbury Museum's Roger Fyfe.
6pm / Philip Carter Family Auditorium / free Sponsored by The Press



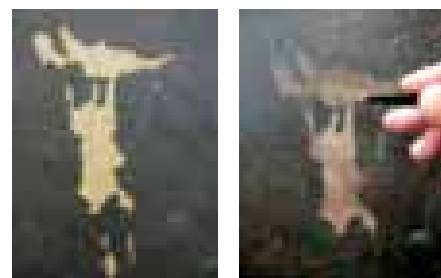
Sir Toss Will Woollaston *Two White Chairs*. Oil on board. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, donated from the Canterbury Public Library Collection, 2001. Reproduced courtesy of the Toss Woollaston Trust



Ron O'Reilly A sampling from Ron O'Reilly's collection of Ibeji (twin cult figures), Nigeria c.1964–6. Photograph. Private collection

BROUGHT TO LIGHT:

the restoration of a classic painting by Petrus van der Velden



In May 2003 Neil Roberts, the Gallery's senior curator at the time, received a telephone call from Kerry McCarthy of the Canterbury Museum alerting him to a Petrus van der Velden oil painting titled *Jacksons, Otira* (c.1893) being offered for sale through Bonhams auction house in London. The Gallery subsequently secured the painting with an absentee bid, and the work arrived at Christchurch Art Gallery in June 2003, one hundred and ten years after it had been painted in Christchurch.

The work was purchased in a damaged state with evidence of paint loss due to water damage on the rear of the canvas. When the painting was unpacked Edward Sakowski, the Gallery's painting conservator, began work immediately, consolidating and stabilising the rear of the canvas and any loose areas of paint. The painting was removed from its original stretcher (which was refurbished) and then painstakingly cleaned. Once the old yellowed coating of varnish was removed, the areas of paint loss were then filled with gesso which was carefully worked over to recreate a similar aged crazing pattern to the rest of the original surface. A new coat of varnish was then applied over the entire surface in preparation for retouching the areas of paint loss. An original black and white photograph of the work was located in the archives of the Gallery's library, which assisted Edward in this step. A final coat of varnish was then applied to the entire surface of the work. This lengthy undertaking was completed, as time permitted, between 2003 and 2009 while Edward completed his other ongoing conservation treatments of collection works.

Petrus van der Velden
Jacksons, Otira c.1893.
Oil on canvas.
Collection of
Christchurch Art
Gallery Te Puna o
Waiwhetu, Stirrat
bequest fund 2003

Jacksons, Otira has been matched with a restored gilded frame by the Gallery's framing conservator, Ben Braithwaite. Originally built by the Christchurch picture framing firm, McCormick and Pugh's, this profile, with its distinctive pierced edging, was used by Van der Velden on another of his Otira paintings and can also be seen with several paintings in a photograph of his Durham street studio taken in the 1890s.

Jacksons, Otira was originally purchased from the artist by William Bassett in April 1898 just prior to Van der Velden's departure from Christchurch for Sydney. Bassett was an ardent supporter of Van der Velden, commissioning a double portrait of his parents and purchasing several major paintings from the artist, one of which, *The Satara Player* (c.1890-3) was bequeathed to the Gallery in 1964 by Majorie Bassett, William's daughter. The painting *Jacksons, Otira* was last seen publicly in Christchurch in 1951 at the Canterbury Society of Arts Retrospective Exhibition. At some point after this it was taken to London by another descendant of William Bassett, Dr J.M. Bassett, from where it ended up in the Bonhams' sale in 2003.

Peter Vangioni
Curator

Jacksons, Otira is currently on display beside Van der Velden's *Mountain Stream, Otira Gorge (1893)* in the *Collection Galleries*.

The Gallery is currently preparing a survey exhibition of Van der Velden's Otira series and would like to encourage anyone with examples of his Otira works, both oil paintings and drawings, to contact curator Peter Vangioni on (03) 941 7300.



Showcase

Recent gifts to the Gallery's collection



On 20 December last year, after eleven years of dealing in art, Campbell Grant Galleries closed its doors for the last time. It was a sad moment for the artists the gallery represented and for art collectors and appreciators alike. In the hands of director Grant Banbury the gallery had built a reputation for elegantly installed exhibitions in a variety of media by senior, established artists and emerging talents, and for providing an exhibition platform for many local practitioners.

Christchurch Art Gallery was surprised and delighted to be contacted by Banbury shortly before the closure of the gallery with the offer of six works for the permanent collections. Donated by Campbell Grant Galleries and four of its represented artists — Jennifer Matheson, Robert McLeod, Kazu Nakagawa and Bill Riley — this extremely

generous gift is both a welcome boost for the collection and an appropriate legacy for the contribution Campbell Grant Galleries has made to the Christchurch arts scene.

One of three works gifted by the Scottish-born, Wellington-based painter Robert McLeod, *Yellow II* is typical of McLeod's late-nineties practice in its curvaceous plywood ground, bold colouration and incorporation of found objects such as cutlery and plastic containers. By contrast, *Two Tongues* is a classic example of McLeod's eye-popping cartoon-based works of the early 2000s, in which garishly coloured shapes — grotesquely gurning faces, weapons, mutating body parts — twist and turn in a complex and confrontational composition. In *Ringmaster*, and in his other freestanding cut-out works of 2002, McLeod took his paintings onto the floor, directly invading

Robert McLeod *Two Tongues* 2002. Oil on plywood. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, gift of the artist and Campbell Grant Galleries



the viewer's personal space with all the bawdy humour and physical drama of the circus.

Being Water (2000), by the Christchurch-trained artist Jennifer Matheson, is the companion piece to another work, *Being Air*, that is already part of the collection. Originally exhibited together, both assume the ephemeral form of the *noren*, a traditional Japanese room divider, to consider the idea of passage from one state to another. Using screen- and block-printing, Matheson has applied imagery relating to historical events that weigh heavily in collective social memory, such as the sinking of the *Titanic* in 1912 and the *Hindenburg* disaster of 1937.

English-born artist Bill Riley's works reveal his interest in the materiality of painting, its traditions and visual language. In *Luxury Aspect* (2003), a painting in oil on

acrylic sheet and aluminium, stencils of an embossed wallpaper are embedded into layers of deep-red oil paint.

A series of drip marks down the face of the painting inject a note of ambiguity and disrupt the atmosphere of delicacy and decorative order. Born in Tokyo, Kazu Nakagawa established a sculpture studio on Waiheke Island in 1998 and has since exhibited throughout New Zealand. In *Fuisse* (1992), nine milk cartons have been cast into cement, lending their usually flimsy forms a sense of classical monumentality and resonance. Like all of Nakagawa's work, these simple forms take on a larger presence, resolutely emphasising and articulating the space they occupy.

Felicity Milburn
Curator

Kazu Nakagawa *Fuisse* 1992. Cement. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, gift of the artist and Campbell Grant Galleries

CHANGING TIMES

On 6 May 2009 Christchurch Art Gallery celebrated its sixth anniversary. During our first six years we've welcomed almost two and a half million visitors through our doors, and presented a vibrant and ever-changing selection of exhibitions. However, one area of the Gallery has remained relatively static — our first-floor permanent collection galleries. The first hang of the permanent collection was intended to be up for five years and it is time now for it to be refreshed. The doors will close on the current display in late July and, during the ensuing few months, we will work to create a fresh hang in reconfigured spaces that are more versatile, more inviting and easier to navigate. We consider the care and display of our collections to be at the heart of what we do and this is an exciting opportunity to put some new acquisitions on display for the first time, to refine the selection of our collection, and to offer some surprises and fresh connections.

Before the changes happen, we encourage you to come and revisit the first-floor permanent collection galleries. Let us know if there's something you feel simply **MUST** be on display when the galleries re-open in November, and we'll make sure it's given good consideration. We are trialling some special tours of the collection, Freerange, and we'd love to know what you think of looking at old favourites with the guidance of writers such as Steve Braunias, Chris Knox, Margaret Mahy and Harvey McQueen.

Sir Henry Raeburn Mrs Barbara Walker of Bowland 1819. Oil on canvas. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, presented by the Walker family 1984



Bill Hammond The Fall of Icarus 1995. Acrylic on canvas. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 1996. Reproduced courtesy of the artist



Staff Profile

The registration team



From left: Rebekkah Pickrill (assistant registrar), Gina Irish (registrar), Tasha Mansbridge (assistant registrar)

Christchurch Art Gallery has a collection of over 6,000 objects, and an ambitious exhibition programme that means valuable works of art are entering and leaving the building constantly. The Gallery's registration team of Gina Irish, Tasha Mansbridge and Rebekkah Pickrill manage these processes, documenting the collection, ensuring its safety, dealing with copyright issues and managing all movements of works in and out of the Gallery — from individual loans to entire travelling exhibitions. This means ensuring that the works are correctly handled and packed, arranging transports throughout New Zealand and the rest of the world, and ensuring the Gallery is protected against undue legal risk.

All three have a background in the arts. Gina has an MA in art history and has previously worked on the CPIT art collection. Tasha and Rebekkah both gained their degrees in design, and Tasha worked in image services at Canterbury Museum. As this magazine goes to press, the team are preparing for the hang of

Séraphine Pick, Ronnie van Hout: Who goes there and et al.: that's obvious! that's right! that's true! Three very different shows, for which the collective logistics of the movement, handling, packing and security of the artworks are huge.

A large part of the job is arranging transport, and the team is often involved in transporting some strange objects, both around New Zealand, and into the country from abroad. One need only look as far into the future as the Gallery's forthcoming **Talisman** show, which includes jewellery made from animal products, to see some of the work registration must do with customs to ensure nothing restricted enters the country.

So, do the highs — visiting artists' studios and private collections that are never open to the public, meeting the collectors and the collected and getting close to works of art — outweigh the lows — long sleepless journeys in trucks, traversing the length and breadth of New Zealand on tight budgets and tighter timeframes. All three agree that they do.

But surely there must be some weird stories? Perhaps the smell that emanated from the woolly jumpers that Gregor Kregar's sheep had been wearing on the Gallery forecourt (they had to be returned to the artist within twenty-four hours, or before the stains became permanent). Or the challenge of trying to fit the two lubed-up pieces of Peter Robinson's giant *Das Es* sculpture together. Either way, the nature of the Gallery's exhibition programme ensures that there's always something interesting going on.

B.157

PAGEWORK #3

TELLY TU'U

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

Telly Tu'u's paintings and drawings depict disembodied, fractured forms caught in a moment of becoming. Located in seemingly vast areas of space, heads comprised of geometric shapes appear to merge into an amorphous organic whole. Tu'u's recent focus has been the sensory experiences of sight and touch, channelled through the thalamus; the grey matter lying between the cerebral hemispheres of the brain.

This delicate drawing reveals Tu'u's fascination with combining representational imagery with abstraction. The fine shapes and symbols are a personal, internalised language that evokes a sense of uncertainty about these suspended heads, we can not be sure if they are materialising or breaking apart.

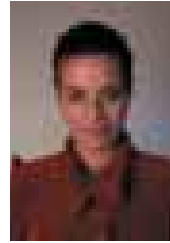
As he says: 'They contribute to a kind of portraiture which captures an ongoing process and calibration of identity involved in the act of being.' Tu'u (b. 1976) is currently completing an honours year in painting at the University of Canterbury. His work will be included in *Cloud9*, a group exhibition of emerging artists (29 August — 8 November).

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



Over page:
Telly Tu'u Untitled 2009.
Indian ink, graphite and
pen on paper. Reproduced
courtesy of the artist





Ladi6 is one of New Zealand's premier vocalists and MCs. Renowned for her energetic live performances, sublime soulful vocals and socially conscious lyrics, her debut solo album *Time Is Not Much* was released in New Zealand and Australia in October 2008.

My name is Karoline Tamati, but I am more recognised for my stage name and family nickname, Ladi6.

I have had no previous art appreciation courses, nor ever regularly attended art exhibition openings. So when I was asked to pick a piece of art that I liked and to write about it for *Bulletin* magazine, it seemed quite the daunting task. I met with a curator and was shown around the Christchurch Art Gallery, after recently moving back to Christchurch in December. I thought that I would take a while to find something that appealed to me — the truth was though there were so many pieces I did like, so the task just got harder.

Ten months prior to my visit to the Gallery, my little cousin Shaquille Witchell Luafutu, my ten-year old cousin, very suddenly passed away. That was why I dedicated my album, *Time Is Not Much*, to her memory six

months ago. She was like a little sister to me, as are all my cousins. We are all very close. She looked a lot like me and my little sister. When she was three-years old, she looked just like a photo of me at three years. I called her my little mini-me. Her family nickname was Boogie. Now six months later, just two weeks ago, another one of my cousins passed away. Her name is Jazmine Danielle Luafutu.

I grew up with Jazmine, and she was thirty-one when she passed — only four small years older than me. She was my two older sisters' best friend and close cousin. One of those cousins that was just like an older sister. She and my older sisters taught me, by example, how to be a young woman, and how to treat younger cousins and siblings. (With the appropriate amount of disinterest, until old enough. Ha!) I was with Jazmine only days before she passed away. The

thoughts and memories of her still being alive, talking and laughing with me, haunt me. She was a huge part of my family. She has three gorgeous daughters who now need to be cared for, and a whole home full of household things, that need new places to go.

I loved her. I love her. I miss her. I miss them both.

So when I asked if there was any art in the Gallery done by another cousin/sister of mine, Lonnie Hutchinson, and was then shown her *Sista7* piece, I knew I had found the piece of art close to my heart. I realised in that moment that art is exactly that — for the heart and for the people.

He tangata, He tangata, He tangata. The people, The people, The people.

In this case, 'The people', are my sisters, to whom I owe a great debt, for building my character, for nurturing me. For loving me as I love them.



Lonnie Hutchinson *Sista7* 2003. Black building paper. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 2003. Reproduced courtesy of the artist



Support Gallery publications

Christchurch Art Gallery is committed to producing publications of the highest quality, as we have recently for the artists Daniel Crooks, Bill Hammond (Montana NZ Book Awards 2008 Illustrative winner) and Julia Morison (shortlisted Montana NZ Book Awards 2007). While the Gallery commits substantial resources to these projects, due to the high costs of printing and production it is only through the generous support of art patrons that publications of this standard can be produced.

Three future exhibitions for Séraphine Pick, Neil Pardington and Andrew Drummond will each be accompanied by artist publications. To help finance books worthy of the scope and calibre of the artists' work, each artist is offering a limited edition work in return for financial assistance for their publication. This is your chance to support an artist, receive a limited edition work and a signed copy of the publication. For more information contact Paul Doughty, Development Manager, Christchurch Art Gallery, (03) 941 7348.

More awards for the Gallery

Christchurch Art Gallery has been awarded the Qualmark® 'Silver' Enviro Logo, which will sit alongside our Qualmark® logo for endorsed visitor activity. The Silver Enviro Logo offers Christchurch Art Gallery the opportunity to promote ourselves as a Responsible Tourism business working towards more sustainable practices, as well as to support New Zealand's 100% Pure positioning.

By meeting the Responsible Tourism operations criteria we show our visitors that we are caring for our part of the world; we are contributing to New Zealand's reputation as a sustainable destination and we are making positive changes in our business that help the environment and our community.



Calling all Thomas Cane enthusiasts

Margaux Warne, a Gallery guide and art history student, is researching the watercolours and buildings of Thomas Cane for her MA thesis. Cane was Canterbury provincial architect from 1875 to 1876 and designed several of Canterbury's most notable buildings of the late 1870s, including the Timeball Station, Lyttelton (1876), Girls' High School (1876–8) and St Michael's School Hall (1877). Cane was also a regular exhibitor at the Canterbury Society of Arts between 1881 and 1900 and exhibited landscapes of Banks Peninsula and Lyttelton, as well as architectural studies based on his earlier travels around France, Belgium and Germany. Although several of Cane's watercolours are owned by galleries and museums, including Christchurch Art Gallery, many of them are privately owned. Margaux would therefore encourage anyone who owns an original Cane watercolour to contact her via email at mbw36@student.canterbury.ac.nz.

Celebrating thirty years of voluntary guiding

This July we celebrate thirty years of voluntary guiding at the Robert McDougall Art Gallery and Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu. Since 1979 the volunteer guides have been committed to enriching the Gallery experience for our many international, national and local visitors.

The volunteer guide team now comprises forty-six guides. With free guided tours offered daily, the guides continue to be a vital part of the Gallery team.

On 7 July 2009, the Gallery will celebrate this anniversary with past and current Gallery guides, to thank and acknowledge every voluntary guide over the past thirty years for their enthusiasm, dedication and generous commitment of time to our Gallery and the community.

If you have been a volunteer guide at the Robert McDougall Art Gallery or Christchurch Art Gallery and have not already received your invitation, please telephone (03) 343 6436 and leave your name and address by 30 June.



Listen / Rita: Silencio New Music Ensemble

A performance of music, images and words. Silencio assemble statements by Rita Angus and other female literary voices with contemporary arrangements of key Douglas Lilburn musical works.

3 and 4 July / 7.30pm / foyer / \$20 / tickets tel: (03) 941 7342
More information at christchurchartgallery.org.nz



Staff development at the Gallery

A number of Gallery staff are undertaking training over the next few months. We are very pleased to announce that visitor experience manager Blair Jackson has been accepted onto the Getty Leadership Institute's prestigious Museum Leadership Institute programme — a three week intensive residential course to be held at the Getty Center, California. Designed to enhance the leadership of experienced museum executives and strengthen their institutions' capabilities, this academically rigorous course will address many of the problems facing museums and galleries today.

Fourteen Gallery staff are currently undertaking study towards the National Certificate in Museum Practice. Aimed at an introductory to intermediate level, it is intended for people who are currently employed by or are training for a career at a museum or art gallery in New Zealand. The certificate ensures candidates have essential knowledge of the four cornerstones of museum practice in New Zealand: knowledge of museum collection maintenance; Treaty of Waitangi and cultural issues; the purposes, functions and responsibilities of museums; customer service; and the skills required to scope and propose a public programme.

The role of community in revitalising Māori language

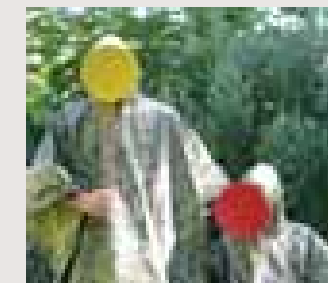
Ruakere Hond (Taranaki, Ngāti Ruanui, Te Ati Awa), a member of the Māori Language Commission, reflects on Māori language as the living, natural language of New Zealand. Part of Māori Language Awareness week.

29 July / 6pm / Philip Carter Family Auditorium / free

Cur meets Cumuna

An absurdist sound performance with Auckland-based artists Sean Kerr and Simon Cuming, using DIY electronics, hackware and moving images.

21 August / 7pm / foyer / free



KIDSFEST SKYART WORKSHOP

Decorate the massive KidsFest flying banner by dipping your hands in paint baths and making your mark on the world's biggest flying artwork!

6 and 7 July / drop in between 10am and 3pm / Cowles Stadium, 170 Pages Rd / free

8, 9 and 10 July / drop in between 10am and 3pm / Christchurch Art Gallery / education centre / free



THE BREEZE MIX MASH MUSIC BASH

Join with the Sound Gardeners and play on creations made from recycled materials or bring your own — check out the TV2KidsFest website for ideas from CoolStuff. March and play with a giant samba band before a sausage sizzle at the Gallery. Watch out for the TV2KidsFest SkyArt banner flying over the Gallery forecourt.

16 July / 11.30am–1.30pm / forecourt / free

For information tel: (03) 941 7382

EXPLORE AND DRAW

Explore the Gallery with this fun drawing activity and enter the draw to win a set of art materials.

4–19 July / 10am–4pm / collect from front desk / free

NEW!

OH BABY — IT'S ART

Free guided tours for parents with babies. Get your culture fix and encourage your baby's sense of wonder. Enjoy meeting other mums and dads and explore the exhibitions before the Gallery opens. Buggies welcome.

First Thursday of the month from 2 July / 9.30–10.15am
Enquiries tel: (03) 941 7347

Coming soon

The Vault: Neil Pardington



Neil Pardington *Natural History Store #2, Whanganui Regional Museum 2006*. LED / C-print. Reproduced courtesy of the artist and Jonathan Smart Gallery, Christchurch

Working behind the scenes in museums and galleries throughout New Zealand with his large-format camera, Neil Pardington brings to light the hidden collection storage spaces that are normally closed to the public. His gathered results hold a natural fascination as storehouses of memory or places filled with mystifying treasure. For Pardington (Kai Tahu, Kati Mamoe, Kati Waewae, Pākehā) the works signify the 'collected culture and history of those things we deem important enough to keep, and what those things tell us about ourselves'. This exhibition represents a significant recent body of work by a leading contemporary artist photographer.

6 November 2009 — 14 March 2010

CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY TE PUNA O WAIWHETU

CHRISTCHURCHARTGALLERY.ORG.NZ

Cloud9

Pete Wheeler *No One But Himself Knows 2008-9*. Oil on canvas. Reproduced courtesy of the artist



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

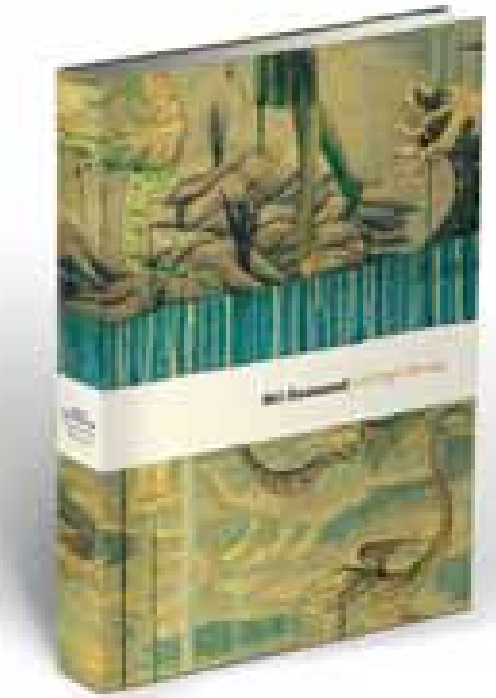
29 August — 8 November 2009
Monica Richards Gallery



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

STRATEGY
DESIGN & ADVERTISING

WWW.STRATEGY.CO.NZ



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



Spectrum Print

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

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

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Email: info@christchurchartgallery.org.nz

GALLERY SHOP
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