



b.152

BULLETIN OF CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY TE PUNA O WAIWHETU autumn march – may 2008

Exhibitions Programme

March, April, May

ANOTHER DESTINATION

Celebrating the strength and breadth of visual arts practice in Canterbury today with an exhibition of work by five emerging artists: Rachel Brunton, Francesca Heinz, Simon Lawrence, James Oram and Zina Swanson.

Supported by Coffey Projects.

Ravenscar Gallery, closes 16 March, catalogue available

FOSSIL CAIRN: THE WEIGHT OF DESTINY

The fossils collected by Robert Falcon Scott and his ill-fated polar party on their return journey from the South Pole are a catalyst for consideration of human endeavour in this exhibition by Megan Jenkinson.

Tait Electronics Antarctica Gallery, closes 16 March

JOHN REYNOLDS: LLAREGGUB

New Zealand artist John Reynolds spins his renowned webs and grids of line across the walls of the Burdon Gallery. A project resulting from the collaboration between Reynolds and actor/director Geraldine Brophy in a presentation of Dylan Thomas's poetic classic *Under Milk Wood* at the Court Theatre.

Burdon Family Gallery, closes 27 April

Performances at The Court Theatre, until 22 March

COLIN MCCAHON

In 1978 the New Zealand Government gave the monumental *Victory over death 2* by Colin McCahon to the people of Australia. This iconic painting is at the heart of this touring exhibition of works from the National Gallery of Australia's collection, celebrating one of New Zealand's most significant artists.

A National Gallery of Australia Focus Exhibition.

Touring Exhibition Gallery B, 8 March – 8 June

DARRYN GEORGE: PULSE

The walls themselves become the artwork in Darryn George's new project. Stretching more than fifty metres and reaching from floor to ceiling, *Pulse* is an engulfing fusion of customary Māori art and contemporary abstract painting. Using intricate patterns, chanting rhythms and an eye-popping palette of red, black and white, George fills the white expanse of the Sutton Gallery with a continual pulse of light, language and pattern.

William A. Sutton Gallery, opens 8 March

MORRIS & CO: THE WORLD OF WILLIAM MORRIS

William Morris – the man behind the firm Morris & Co. – remains a remarkable figure more than a century after his death. His work endures, with many of his designs for wallpapers, textiles and carpets still popular today. Artist, designer, socialist, poet, novelist and theorist, Morris's work is celebrated in this exquisite show.

An Art Gallery of South Australia Travelling Exhibition.

Touring Exhibition Galleries A, C & Borg Henry Gallery, 14 March – 29 June, catalogue available, admission charges apply

THAW

Perhaps disillusioned by a lack of recognition from his expeditions to Antarctica with Scott and later Shackleton, the enigmatic Ernest Joyce set out to bring together a collection of photographs that cemented his place in history. *Thaw* combines century-old glass lantern slides and negatives with large-scale digital projections, and highlights the ways we encounter historical objects and disembodied images.

Developed in partnership with Canterbury Museum.

Tait Electronics Antarctica Gallery, 21 March – 15 June

FORM AND FIRE

Object lessons in form and fire from some of Aotearoa New Zealand's best potters and ceramic artists. Including artful craft and crafted art, the NZ Potters 2008 annual exhibition showcases what's happening in functional pottery and sculptural ceramics throughout the country.

Exhibition organised by NZ Potters.

Ravenscar Gallery, 29 March – 11 May

I SEE RED

An interactive journey through a high-spirited and wide-ranging selection of contemporary and historical artworks exploring some of the powerful ideas and meanings attached to the colour red. Designed for children and families.

Monica Richards Gallery, ongoing

OUTER SPACES

Expect to encounter art in some unexpected places from April onward at the Gallery. Kicking off soon with a billboard by Richard Killeen on the Gallery's Worcester Boulevard façade, and including a light-filled new work for the foyer by Hannah and Aaron Beehre later in 2008, *Outer Spaces* is an ongoing programme of artworks in spaces above and beyond (and sometimes below) the Gallery's exhibition galleries. See page 18 of this *Bulletin* for a preview.

TWINSET: VIDEO ART IN THE FOYER

Check out the twin screens in the foyer for a rapid-fire programme of fresh video art by artists from Australia, Europe, USA and New Zealand. This quarter featuring sight-and-sound gags by New Zealander Sean Kerr, quick cuts by Nicolas Jasmin from Vienna, and Australian David Rosetzky's meditative film *Nothing Like This*.

THE COLLECTIONS

From Petrus van der Velden's thundering *Mountain Stream, Otira Gorge* of 1893 to Andrew Drummond's *Falling Water*, photographed in the same South Island landscape 110 years later, the first floor collection galleries hold a rotating selection of treasures from the Historical, Twentieth Century and Contemporary Collections.

Collection Galleries, Collections catalogue available

TE PUNA O WAIWHE
CHRISTCHURCH
ART GALLERY

b.152

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Please see the back cover for more details.

We welcome your feedback and suggestions for future articles.



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Director's Foreword

JENNY HARPER

Christchurch Art Gallery will shortly come alive with pattern! In this context, it is good to consider the interdependence of design, art and architecture in our recent history. For art is a coat of many colours, and visual impact is by no means confined to conventional formats or media.

The boundaries between art and craft shifted significantly in the mid-to late-1800s – largely in response to the over-elaborate design and inventive sham favoured in Victorian England. Rejecting both the excesses of that era and the largely uninspiring products of mass industrial processes, a group of progressive artists, led by William Morris, returned to creating simple forms crafted by hand. The beginnings of the arts and crafts movement were overtly socialist and an attempt to re-humanise work in society.

A rebellion of substance as well as style, the movement quickly gained popularity with working and middle class Britain. Paradoxically, the more wealthy and aristocratic also responded positively, with many becoming Morris's most devoted clients. Embraced as a worthy ideal in several countries, the influence of arts and crafts can be found in New Zealand architecture, churches and homes. Indeed, the enthusiasm with which the hierarchies of fine art were broken can still be felt in contemporary art – with the lines between art, craft and design retaining a fluidity that we can trace directly to Morris and his contemporaries.

The Gallery is delighted to be presenting **Morris & Co.**, an exhibition drawn from the collections of the Art Gallery of South Australia, supplemented by some key New Zealand loans. As well as thanking the AGSA and other lenders, we are grateful for the wonderful support of several companies and individuals. Our creative partner, Strategy Design & Advertising, has given the patterns of William Morris an organic and seductive look and feel. Their work will have great impact on billboards, bus shelters, windows and footpaths throughout the city, highlighting the continuing design relevance of Morris's legacy. We are very grateful to Adriaan and Gabrielle Tasman, who have continued their financial support of our international exhibitions programme, and also to Ballantynes and The Press for their support of this exhibition.

Many contemporary artists are reimagining the possibilities of pattern and decoration and we are pleased to be giving several an opportunity to create new work. Alongside **Morris & Co.**, we present Christchurch-based artist Darryn George using digital technology to design an intricately patterned fusion of Māori art and abstract painting to cover the walls of the Sutton Gallery. Elsewhere in and out of the Gallery, Richard Killeen and Sara Hughes are using pattern in contributions to our new programme **Outer Spaces**. Spilling beyond normal exhibition areas, the development of this programme underscores our belief that art – as

Morris himself might have hoped – can thrive in unconventional territory.

The NZ Potters' annual exhibition provides another opportunity to consider the weighting of art versus craft. And, as guest writer Douglas Lloyd Jenkins suggests, the best craft artists have a foot in both camps.

We also welcome back to Christchurch, for the first time since the late 1980s, Colin McCahon's extraordinary painting *Victory over death 2*. The centrepiece of a focus exhibition from the National Gallery of Australia, McCahon's work makes a fascinating comparison with the light-spirited wall drawings John Reynolds is creating for his Gallery project **Llareggub**. Like McCahon and Ralph Hotere before him, Reynolds is making a creative contribution in a theatre context. The Court Theatre's new production of *Under Milk Wood* has provided an opportunity for this highly regarded Auckland artist to work in a different setting – we are sure William Morris would have approved.

In other news, I am delighted to welcome Paul Doughty to the Gallery as our new Development Manager. Paul joins us from New Zealand Opera, where his role saw him managing the company's sponsorship, benefaction and fundraising activities.

My thanks to all who have contributed to this issue of *Bulletin* and to you, our key supporters, at the beginning of 2008.

JENNY HARPER
Director
February 2008

My Favourite

JUSTIN PATON



Michael Parekowhai *My Sister, My Self* 2006 sculpture. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery. Courtesy of the artist and Michael Lett

'My Favourite' has always been my favourite part of *Bulletin*, because it encourages people to do something curators and art historians, bizarrely enough, are seldom encouraged to do – go public in print with their passions. Things are a bit different now, but when I studied art history any peep or minor tremble of opinion met with an instant red cross. Long before affections could be declared or favourites chosen you had to pursue the *why* – had to worry over symbolism, trace genealogies, interpret, explain and unpack. And even then, personal passion tended to come concealed inside big, bland, impartial-seeming adjectives like 'significant' and 'major'. For this reason, curators and art historians sometimes resemble the humourless forensics experts in television crime shows, stepping in with their black bags wherever there's a random outburst of enthusiasm and grimly working out what caused it.

So when you ask me why Michael Parekowhai's *My Sister, My Self* is my favourite, by training I'm inclined to reach straight away for own black curatorial bag full of examples and explanations. I could tell you the sculpture holds me because it wittily combines the international and the local, flipping an icon of European art history – Marcel Duchamp's 1913 *Bicycle Wheel* – onto the nose of a South Pacific seal. Or because it evokes a flashpoint in local cultural history, when artworks by Duchamp met with controversy and even censorship at the Robert McDougall Art Gallery in 1967. Or because it exalts the commonplace, turning a concrete suburban lawn ornament into something heroic in scale and dazzling in its shine. Or because it offers a portrait of the artist as a fearless performer, reaching inside the toy box of twentieth-century sculpture and lofting what he finds there into the air. Or because of the sheer showmanly aplomb with which Parekowhai juggles unlike things – low culture and high, the big top and the ivory tower.

I could tell you all this, but here's the thing: the secret truth is that all these explanations for my choice are rationalisations arrived at after the fact. Ordinarily, I don't believe in the instant response – the artwork that breaks past the usual doubts and reservations and jumps right into your affections. But once in a while you cross the path of an object that gives those doubts no chance. That's how it went when I first saw Parekowhai's seal rising in a ripple of black towards its improbably poised trophy, a perfect balancing of gravity and grace. All I remember is turning a corner, seeing the sculpture, and thinking, *yes, that's how it's done*.

Justin Paton is the recently appointed senior curator at Christchurch Art Gallery. *My Sister, My Self* by Michael Parekowhai will be on display at the top of the stairs from April.

William Morris & Silencio Ensemble, featuring Jennine Bailey

Exclusive performance in the foyer

Friday 16 & Saturday 17 May, 7.30 pm

'I assert first that Socialism is an all embracing theory of life.'

William Morris

William Morris's well-known lecture 'Art and Socialism' opens the door for a musical exploration of the evolution of socialism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In a unique performance in the Gallery foyer, Silencio Ensemble, featuring Jennine Bailey, presents a programme of folk and socialist music by composers Vaughan Williams, Bela Bartok, Dimitri Shostakovich, Hans Eisler, Bertolt Brecht, Woody Guthrie and more. The programme will be accompanied by a pre-Raphaelite

oracle narrating excerpts from Morris's lecture. This performance of music and theatre examines the relevance of Morris's ideas about art and politics in contemporary society, inviting reflection on today's cultural and political climate in the arts in New Zealand.

'One for all and all for one!'

Tickets \$20, Friends, students and unwaged \$15, bookings recommended. Presales available at the front desk or tel 941 7342.



Silencio Ensemble

Jane Burden, Rossetti's Muse, in 'The Blue Silk Dress'

In association with the exhibition **Morris & Co.**, don't miss this performance installation featuring Lucette Hindin as Jane Burden, the wife of William Morris – and the muse of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Burden, a ghost-like presence clad in Victorian underwear and petticoats, hand sews a blue silk dress in which to dress herself. The public can talk with Lucette about Jane and Morris, their circle of friends and the lives they led.

Wednesdays, March 19 & 26, April 9 & 16, May 7, 14 & 21 from 7–9 pm; Sundays, 23 March – 11 May, from 1.30 – 3 pm. Wig and makeup generously provided by Minifies.



Lucette Hindin as Jane Burden

Festival of Flowers

Peter Peryer: Tecomanthe

From 22 February, to celebrate the Festival of Flowers, leading New Zealand photographer Peter Peryer's work *Tecomanthe* will hang in the Gallery foyer. Acknowledging the uniqueness of this rare twining climber, Peryer has photographed a single small flower. Presented as a large banner, he not only plays with notions of scale, but elegantly conveys a message about survival and the fragility of nature.

Sunday 2 March, 2 pm

Visit the Gallery to hear Peter Peryer talk about his beautiful and complex works.



Peter Peryer *Tecomanthe* 2006 silver gelatin print. Courtesy of McNamara Gallery

Earth Hour

Lights Out at the Gallery

Earth Hour is a global energy conservation campaign that has grown from a single event in Sydney in 2007 to a lights-off phenomenon that will occur across six continents and in as many as twenty cities in 2008. The Sydney event saw a 10.2% drop in energy usage – a reduction of 24.86 tonnes of carbon dioxide, the equivalent of taking 48,613 cars off the road for an hour.

This year, Christchurch Art Gallery, as one of the city's most iconic buildings, will be a landmark for Earth Hour in Christchurch.

Earth Hour is on 29 March, 8–9 pm.

SCAPE 2008

Art Biennial begins in September

September sees the start of the fifth SCAPE Christchurch Biennial of Art in Public Space. Running for six weeks, the biennial explores the public spaces of the inner city. Newly commissioned artworks by New Zealand and international artists, including large-scale site-specific pieces and smaller interventions, offer a unique interpretation and experience of the city for local and visiting audiences.

Danae Mossman (New Zealand) and Fulya Erdemci (Turkey) are the curators of SCAPE 2008. We asked Danae about their recent explorations of Christchurch for the biennial:

'Our process has been based around consideration of the global condition of urban transformation in cities – due to globalisation, migration and generally wider mobility. We wanted to locate areas within Christchurch that draw attention to issues inherent in this change. Exploring the city's urban fabric by walking the streets and talking with people has been critical in our research. Having lived in Christchurch for three years now, it's exciting to work with artists within this context and draw out new ways of experiencing the city from their diverse perspectives. We hope to really bring these ideas to life in a public context, and provide

an opportunity for the public to reconsider the city through the lens of critical artistic interventions.'

SCAPE 2008 Christchurch Biennial of Art in Public Space, 19 September – 2 November. The Gallery is the major venue partner for SCAPE 2008, providing a hub for visitors and hosting the indoor exhibition, symposium and public programme.

Thursday 27 March, 6pm

Facilitated by Justin Paton, senior curator at the Gallery, SCAPE 2008 curators Danae Mossman and Fulya Erdemci reveal their plans for the fifth SCAPE biennial. They will be joined by visiting SCAPE artists for a discussion about this significant contemporary art event.



Fulya Erdemci, Danae Mossman

French Documentary Film Festival

Featuring a range of films including *Yves Klein: La Revolution Bleue*, *Rafah: One Year in the Gaza Strip*, *The Sugar Curtain* and many more.

23 – 30 April, \$5, free for Friends and Alliance Francais members. Check the Gallery website for full programme and opening night details.

Paul Doughty

Development Manager

The Gallery welcomed its new Development Manager, Paul Doughty, in January. Having worked in Wellington in the performing arts sector for the last ten years, most recently for New Zealand Opera, Paul has extensive experience in corporate affairs and development. He will manage the Gallery's fundraising activities, while developing valued key relationships with its stakeholders and the arts community. Paul comments, 'I'm excited about joining the Gallery at a time when it's going from strength to strength.'



Paul Doughty



Celebrated in May each year, NZ Music Month was established to raise the profile of home-grown music. The Gallery is pleased to offer a programme of events in support of NZ Music Month – for a list of events visit the Gallery website in the lead-up to May.



Local band Grand Saloon play in the forecourt, 9 January. Photo: Chris Andrews



MORRIS & CO.

THE WORLD OF WILLIAM MORRIS

14 MARCH - 29 JUNE

THE LINKS BETWEEN CHRISTCHURCH AND ADELAIDE ARE STRONG AND EXTEND TO MORE THAN JUST BEING SISTER CITIES AND SHARING THE SAME URBAN DESIGNER, COLONEL WILLIAM LIGHT. THEY ALSO EXTEND TO THE WORK OF THE GREAT NINETEENTH-CENTURY BRITISH DESIGNER WILLIAM MORRIS.



Wreath c. 1876. London. William Morris, designer. Gouache, pencil on paper, 101.6 x 78.9 x 2.7 cm (framed), 75 x 50.8 cm. Morgan Thomas and Mary Overton Bequest Funds and the Art Gallery of South Australia Foundation 2003

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Morris furnishings made their way to Adelaide houses in great quantity, and in 1906–07 Christchurch hosted the *New Zealand International Exhibition* which included, as part of its extensive British arts and crafts exhibits, a range of works from Morris & Co. – the only major display of Morris & Co. works ever offered for sale in Australasia. The Art Gallery of South Australia purchased several examples of arts and crafts metalwork from the Christchurch exhibition, along with some paintings, prints, drawings and watercolours, but nothing by William Morris. At the time, Morris's works – curtain and upholstery fabrics, wallpapers, carpets, embroideries and tapestries – already furnished several Adelaide houses. Many of these have since made their way into the collection of the Art Gallery of South Australia, forming one of the major collections of Morris & Co. furnishings anywhere and the core of this special touring exhibition to Christchurch.

William Morris – the man behind the firm Morris & Co. (1861–1940), which bore his name for eighty years – remains a remarkable figure more than a century after his death. Many of his ideas, concepts and activities still seem relevant and modern at the beginning of the twenty-first century. In his own lifetime, his achievements were considerable and his influence on late-nineteenth- and twentieth-century design and design teaching was enormous. The popularity of Morris's work endures, with many of his more successful designs for wallpapers, printed textiles and carpets available today as reproductions. Morris & Co. became one of the leading interior decorating businesses of Victorian Britain, enjoying an international reputation and clientele. Morris's private press, the Kelmscott Press, for which he designed many of the typefaces and borders, set new standards for high-quality book production. Furthermore, Morris was one of the leading poets of his generation (suggested even

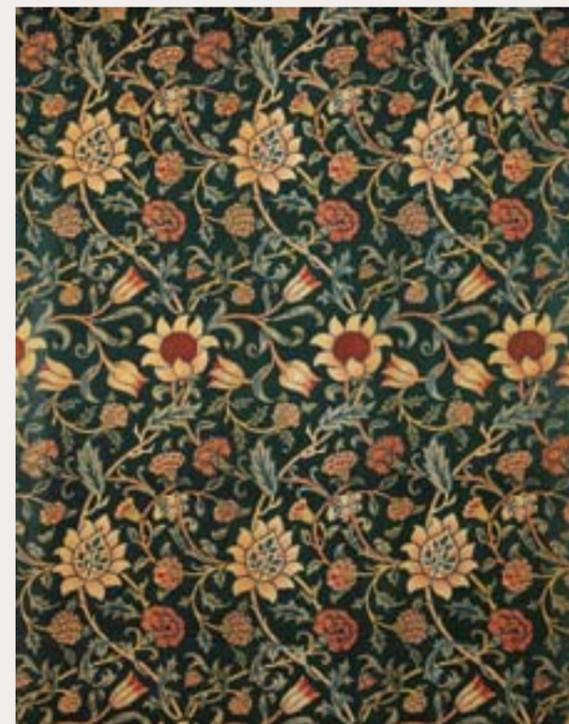
THE MAN BEHIND THE
FIRM MORRIS & Co.
REMAINS A REMARKABLE
FIGURE MORE THAN A
CENTURY AFTER HIS DEATH

as a successor to Lord Tennyson as Poet Laureate), a strong and active force in the preservation of historic buildings, an art and design theorist, a novelist, and an important figure in the early stages of socialism.

William Morris was born in England in 1834 and died in 1896. His parents' wealth gave him a considerable degree of financial independence, and private means underpinned his later business ventures. Morris developed an interest in and taste for historical literature, notably Sir Walter Scott's novels, and medieval art early on in his life. His fondness for the medieval past was part of a nineteenth-century trend that found inspiration in the art of the Middle Ages. Morris went to Oxford University in 1853, intending to study for a career in the church. At Oxford he met Edward Burne-Jones (1833–98) and the two became firm friends, a friendship and collaborative artistic partnership lasting to the end of their lives. Morris and Burne-Jones realised that they were more interested in careers in art rather than the church. In 1856 Morris was articled to the Gothic revival architect George Edmund Street (1824–81). Morris remained with Street for most of that year, but realised he was unsuited to the profession and abandoned this pursuit. In 1859 he married the beautiful Jane Burden, whom he had met in Oxford.

The firm Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. was established in 1861 to bring together variously skilled people to work in the decorative arts. It had developed out of the problems Morris faced when furnishing his newly built house, Red House in Kent, which Philip Webb had designed for the recently married couple. Morris had gathered his talented friends around him to create furnishings that were in a medieval style – large wooden furniture, painted wall decoration, embroidered hangings. The success of this collaborative venture among friends inspired the creation of the design and manufacturing business. Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. gained favourable public recognition at the London *International Exhibition* of 1862, and this success brought the first substantial commissions. In 1865 the firm moved to Queens Square, and during the second half of the 1860s the first major commissions were received.

These included the superb interiors for St James's Palace, London in

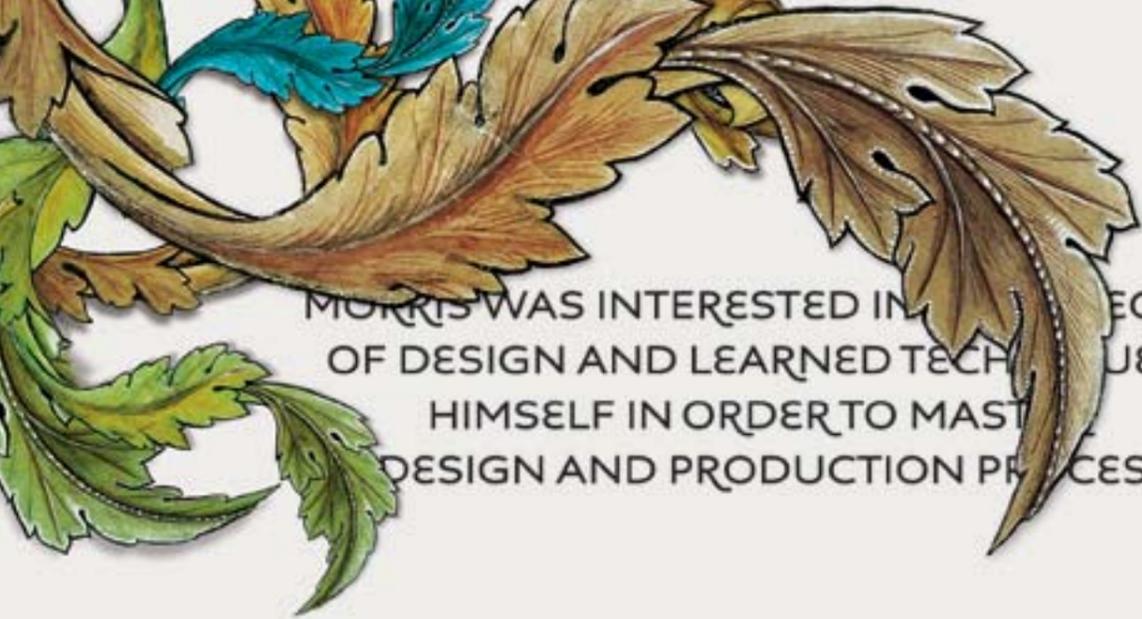


Evenlode curtain c. 1925, designed 1883. London. William Morris, designer. Indigo discharge and colour wood-block print on cotton, 248 x 70 cm (display), 248 x 89 cm. Gift of William & Lili Manos 1991



Bird Curtain c. 1912, London. William Morris, designer. Woven wool, 268 x 118 cm. Gift of Tom and Indika Giles 1993





MORRIS WAS INTERESTED IN ALL ASPECTS OF DESIGN AND LEARNED TECHNIQUES HIMSELF IN ORDER TO MASTER THE DESIGN AND PRODUCTION PROCESSES

1866–67, which partially survive, and the beautiful Green Dining Room (now the Morris Room) at the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1867. Such public commissions helped the firm achieve prominence while Morris was still in his early thirties.

The active working periods of Morris & Co. fall into three stages, reflecting different aspects of ownership, management and production. As would be expected in a design firm running for eighty years, there were considerable changes in the types and styles of works. Its initial phase as Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. ran from 1861 to 1875. During the late 1860s and 1870s it became clear that the contributions made by the members of the firm were uneven, and that more direct managerial control was required if it were to continue as a serious concern. In March 1875 the original partnership was dissolved and the business was restructured under Morris's sole control and renamed Morris & Co. The Oxford Street showroom was created in 1877. In 1917 the firm moved to larger premises at George Street, Hanover Square and in 1925 the firm was renamed Morris & Co. Artworkers Ltd. By the late 1920s, however, its creative period was well and truly over, and the designs were hopelessly old-fashioned. Henry Dearle, the chief designer, died in 1932, and after limping through the 1930s the firm went into liquidation in 1940 and finally closed.

Morris was interested in all aspects of design and learned techniques himself in order to master the design and production processes, which he subsequently taught to others who would then execute the work. His design sources, like much nineteenth-century design, were eclectic and varied; in his lecture 'The History of Pattern Designing' he claims that his knowledge is derived from a study of Ancient Egyptian, Byzantine, Persian, Indian, Northern European and English traditions. What is interesting and appealing about his best designs is the mixture of representational and patterned images. Flowers and leaves are never randomly scattered across the surfaces of his fabrics and wallpapers, but held in clearly structured and articulated repeating frameworks. Morris's greatest skill as a designer



Acanthus portiere 1890s. London. J. H. Dearle, designer; Mary Isobel Barr Smith, embroiderer (Australia, 1863–1941). Silk embroidery on linen, 247 x 167 cm. Gift of Mr & Mrs Jock Gosse 1996

was his ability to create repeating patterns. The woven and printed fabrics and wallpapers show his facility with such design to its greatest advantage. He was interested in all areas of furnishing textiles, including embroidery, carpets, woven and printed fabrics for curtains, upholstery and hangings, as well as tapestry. In the works designed by Morris and, later, by other designers working for the firm, natural forms, flowers and animals are always discernible.

Morris & Co.'s tapestries were the high point and most ambitious undertaking of the firm's textile production. They form some of the great achievements of nineteenth-



Honeysuckle wallpaper c. 1900, designed 1883. London. May Morris, designer (Britain 1862–1938); Jeffrey & Company, printer (Britain 1836–1930). Colour woodcut on paper, 74.5 x 62 x 3.5 cm (framed), 68.8 x 57.8 cm. Gift of Mrs J. H. Bagot 1993

century textile design and manufacture. As with the other furnishings and decorative textiles which his firm supplied, Morris first learned the technique involved before teaching it to others. Tapestry weaving he left until fairly late in his career, weaving his first one in 1879 on a loom set up in his bedroom at Kelmscott House. The firm began producing tapestries on a commercial basis during the 1880s and continued making them until the 1930s.

During the fifty years of tapestry production, around seventy designs were produced. Popular designs were often repeated. The most acclaimed of the ecclesiastical tapestry designs was *The Adoration of the Magi*, produced to a collaborative design of Burne-Jones and Dearle. Originally, the tapestry was produced for Exeter College, Oxford in 1890; nine more versions were later woven, the last in 1907.

A version of *The Adoration* was commissioned by George Brookman of Adelaide in 1900, and it now forms the centrepiece of the Art Gallery of South Australia's extensive Morris & Co. collection. This collection was mostly purchased





The Adoration of the Magi 1900–02, designed 1887, London. Edward Burne-Jones, designer; J. H. Dearle, designer of floral ground. Wool, silk, 251.2 x 372.5 cm. Morgan Thomas Bequest Fund 1917

directly from the firm as decoration for Adelaide houses during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The immensely wealthy Adelaide couple Robert and Joanna Barr Smith and their family purchased vast quantities of furnishings from Morris & Co.'s London shop between 1884 and 1929, making them the biggest international clients of the firm. (Robert Barr Smith was said to be the richest man in Australasia.) Over the years the family furnished eight houses in and around Adelaide with products purchased from the firm, as well as paying for Morris & Co. carpets for the Adelaide Club in the 1920s. The firm even designed some of the Barr Smiths' interiors – working from London – as well as supplying the furnishings. Many of the hand-knotted carpets were designed exclusively for them and not repeated – one of which is entitled *Small Barr*. Two embroideries were also designed and named especially for the Barr Smiths, *Adelaide* and *Australia*. Morris could only achieve his aims with such wealthy, compliant clients and he was fortunate that the reputation of the firm gained him regular international patrons.

The exhibition shows the quality and variety of Morris & Co.'s range. It includes a tapestry, embroideries, carpets, curtain fabrics, upholstered furniture, wallpapers, furniture, designs and books. Morris & Co. was the 'one stop shop' for interior decoration, and by carefully considering the designs, colours and different textures and sheens of the materials – silk, cotton, linen, wool – whole interiors were created from the Morris & Co. range. Morris believed in quality, and many of the Morris & Co. furnishing products were handmade or had a large degree of hand-finishing. It is a testament to the quality of these works and a result of the

careful way in which they have been looked after that we are able to present them in this dazzling array illustrating the richness and variety of the best of late nineteenth-century design. The sumptuous hand-woven silk and wool curtains, hand-printed cottons and linens, hand-knotted carpets and embroideries provided a symphony of patterns and textures when put together sympathetically in an interior. The exhibition, through presenting many of the firm's best designs, gives a sense of progressive late nineteenth-century taste in Britain. It shows the importance that nineteenth-century designers and artists gave to interiors and decoration and their concern to create the total interior. William Morris's designs, so popular in his day, remain enduringly appealing, and the exhibition presents for the first time in New Zealand the diverse range of the work of this great designer.

CHRISTOPHER MENZ

Christopher Menz is Director of the Art Gallery of South Australia. He curated the exhibition Morris & Co., and has published extensively on Australian and European decorative arts, including the exhibition's accompanying catalogue.

Morris & Co. opens in Touring Exhibition Galleries A, C & Borg Henry Gallery on 14 March. The exhibition is toured by the Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide. Admission charges apply. A catalogue is available from the Gallery Shop.



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Morris & Co. is an Art Gallery of South Australia Travelling Exhibition.
All artworks: Morris & Company, London 1861–1940. Collection of Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide

Events

Unless otherwise noted, the events listed below are free and will be held in the Philip Carter Family Auditorium.

From St James's Palace to the Antipodes: Morris & Co. in South Australia

Friday 14 March, 1 pm

Join Christopher Menz, Director of the Art Gallery of South Australia and curator of Morris & Co. for this insightful illustrated lecture.

Beautiful Books by William Morris

Wednesday 19 March, 10.30 am

Cultural commentator Penny Orme will give an illustrated talk as Friends Speaker of the Month, focusing on Morris's Kelmscott Press and his books. See the Friends pages for more details.

Wistful Women, Wine and Wombats:

Art and Life among the Pre-Raphaelites

Montana Wednesday Evening, 19 March, 6 pm

A fascinating discussion presented by Mary Kisler, senior curator at Auckland Art Gallery, bringing unusual aspects of Morris & Co. to light.

Contemporary Theatre:

Jane Burden, Rossetti's Muse, in 'The Blue Silk Dress'

Wednesdays from 7–9 pm: March 19 & 26, April 9 & 16, May 7, 14 & 21;

Sundays from 1.30 – 3 pm, 23 March – 11 May

A performance installation featuring Lucette Hindin as Jane Burden, the wife of William Morris – and the muse of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. See the Noteworthy pages for more information.

Venue: foyer

Art in the Morning: Floortalk with Peter Vangioni

Saturday 22 March

Meet in Alchemy for a light breakfast from 8.30 – 9 am, followed by a private viewing of the exhibition with Gallery curator Peter Vangioni. See the Friends pages for more information.

Friends \$20, non-members \$35 (includes breakfast and discounted entry fee).

Email friends@ccc.govt.nz or tel 941 7356 to register.

Heroes and Villains in Morris's World

Montana Wednesday Evening, 26 March, 6 pm

Morris's work reveals a critique of Victorian society and his vision of a better world. Professor Pamela Gerrish Nunn from the University of Canterbury shows us how this is conveyed by his cast of characters.

Kelmscott Press: William Morris's Printing Adventure

Sunday 6 April, 1 pm

Gallery curator Peter Vangioni discusses Morris's private press, which set new standards for high-quality book production.

Floortalks, exhibition admission charges apply.

William Morris at Home: From Red House to Kelmscott Manor

Montana Wednesday Evening, 9 April, 6 pm

The New Zealand Historic Places Trust presents Dr Ian Lochhead discussing Morris's innovations in English domestic architecture.

Stained Glass Walking Tour

Thursday 10 April, 10 am – 12 pm

Heritage consultant Jenny May leads a tour of the stained glass of St Michael and All Angels Church and the Nurses Chapel, and discusses the influence of pre-Raphaelite and arts and crafts in the design of these buildings.

Numbers are limited. Bookings essential, tel 941 7382. Meet in the Gallery foyer.

William Morris and Anti-Scrape: The Victorian Debate on Heritage Conservation

Wednesday 16 April, 10.30 am

Ian Lochhead, as Friends Speaker of the Month, discusses Morris's role in establishing modern attitudes towards architectural heritage conservation. See the Friends pages for more details.

Arts and Craft Architecture in Christchurch

Montana Wednesday Evening, 16 April, 6 pm

The Historic Places Trust presents: J. H. Menzies: *A Banks Peninsula Craftsman* with Dr Jessica Halliday; *The Work of R. W. and E. H. England: Arts and Crafts Influences on Domestic Architecture in Christchurch* with Dr Dorothee Pauli; and *Samuel Hurst Seager's Architectural Art* with Pam Wilson.

Fashioning Loose Women: Dress Reformers of the 19th Century

Montana Wednesday Evening, 7 May, 6 pm

Jennifer Queree, senior curator of decorative arts at Canterbury Museum, explores the revolutionary fashion ideas of the pre-Raphaelite, aesthetic, hygienic and socialist dress movements of the nineteenth century.

To be followed by...

When the Corset Grew Up: A Journey from Utilitarian

Undergarment to Object of Fantasy to Warrior Princess Armour

Corset designer Jo Drysdall and her suitably attired models explore the history, construction and modern day revival of corsetry in fashion and wearable arts.

William Morris and the Art of Everyday Life

Saturday 10 May, 9.30 am – 5 pm

This one-day conference convened by the Australasian Victorian Studies Association and the University of Otago explores the relationship between Morris and the art of everyday life – from the design of beautiful domestic interiors to his advocacy of a utopian socialism. Professor Florence Boos of the University of Iowa, distinguished Morris scholar and president of the US Morris Society, is the keynote speaker.

\$50, students and unwaged \$25. Tel 941 7382 for more information.

Political Designs: William Morris the Social Anarchist

Montana Wednesday Evening, 14 May, 6 pm

Mark Francis, professor of political science at the University of Canterbury, presents a commentary on Morris the Marxist, revolutionary socialist and political agitator.

William Morris: Art and Socialism

An oration with music by Silencio Ensemble, featuring Jennine Bailey
Friday 16 & Saturday 17 May, 7.30 pm

Morris's lecture 'Art and Socialism' opens the door for a musical exploration of the evolution of socialism. This unique performance of music and theatre examines the relevance of Morris's ideas on art and commerce in contemporary society. See the Noteworthy pages for more information.

Venue: foyer. \$20, Friends, students and unwaged \$15, bookings recommended. Presales available at the front desk or tel 941 7342.

Topsy: William Morris

Montana Wednesday Evening, 21 May, 6 pm

A superb film biography of the father of the arts and crafts movement with art historian Douglas Skeggs, including Morris's intimate relationships with Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Edward Burne-Jones, the decorating of Red House and the founding of Morris & Co.



My grandmother Molly Rhodes re-covered her pale olive-green living room sofa and two chairs when she was in her eighties with a large scale William Morris pattern that I thought extremely bold...in fact, I was quite shocked! She never liked 'granny' patterns, as she called them (although I secretly quite like them myself), and it struck me then that that was the beauty of Morris's designs. She liked it because it looked modern and striking and to be sure it gave the room an amazing lift. She didn't think of it as old fashioned. The pattern had a dense organic style and clear, rich colours that really looked great.



JAMES KIRKWOOD
Artist

If you care about beautiful things, about nature and about humanity, then William Morris will speak to your heart – and your head. You don't have to be a Socialist (what's that?), a Victorian art fanatic or even a connoisseur of epic Icelandic-inspired verse to respond to him, though they were all integral to his fascinating and inspiring life. His designs are superb, and while the values behind them were consistent, they were forever changing. Some may prefer his early gothic sincerity; others (like me) prefer the luxuriance of his late stained glass, tapestries and printed books. Whatever, I eagerly await this exhibition and the opportunity to say hello to Morris in Christchurch.



MARK STOCKER
Associate professor of art history and theory, University of Otago

I've always had a thing for Morris – you never get tired of looking at his designs. They're lovely in themselves, but what I really like is when you put them together – the way they affect each other. It's the layering of them that creates their own exquisite world. In the exhibition I've tried to present the objects in a way that allows their individual beauty to be seen – but when you experience the pieces together there's a luxuriousness and energy that you don't necessarily get from one piece alone.



BERNADETTE MUIR
Exhibition designer for Morris & Co.

Should Morris return today he'd see a society that would seem to him disappointingly unchanged from the one he'd left behind. We have become very much like the mid-nineteenth-century Victorian – consumed with the concept of material status and obsessed with the acquisition of consumer goods that buoy up the illusion of status. We opt for plasma screens and expensive cars, ostentatious furniture, indifferent art and grandiose houses to put them in. I suspect he'd knuckle down and start all over again.



DOUGLAS LLOYD JENKINS
Design writer, curator and critic

Pattern can be found in every part of our lives – mathematics, science, economics, fashion, psychology, history, visual arts. My practice is often entangled in investigating pattern's forms, functions and meanings. Living in New York for six months recently, my new surroundings spurred interest in patterns of human behaviour and patterns from ancient antiquities. I live in a different time and I have different interests to William Morris, and it's sometimes hard for me to separate his work from the greeting card and calendar plethora that has landed upon him, but when I do I'm intrigued not only by his use of pattern but also his intense use of colour, his strong graphic use of line and his complex compositions.



SARA HUGHES
Artist

Morris's designs may go in and out of fashion, but the question that prompted him to found Morris & Co. – 'How shall we live?' – is still relevant. Morris understood that we can design ourselves into situations, and that, as industry reshaped the world, thinking about how people wanted to live was imperative. In the twenty-first century, where technology has become 'remarkable on means but hazy about ends' (John Thackara), Morris's desire, if not his answers, for ethical, people-centred design solutions remains pertinent.



CLAIRE REGNAULT
Concept Development Manager at The New Dowse

Morris was the greatest radical visionary of the nineteenth century, vividly imagining an attractive future world in which labour would be done with joy and satisfaction. He not only dreamed about tomorrow, he designed and printed beautiful books which graphically showed its image. In *News From Nowhere* and *The Dream of John Ball* he created a revolutionary aesthetic which severed civilisation from the leisured classes and joined it to the workers. His journal *Commonweal* wove together the various strands of socialism and anarchism of the 1880s. It was in these printed works that Morris crafted his generation's vigorous opposition to capitalism. While most socialists were content with propagating scientific treatises on economics, he provided social justice with a soul.



MARK FRANCIS
Professor of political science at the University of Canterbury

I think the pattern designs of Morris are still a great teacher. To my eye, he understood perfectly the tension created by the fiction that is nature presented on a flat surface. Despite the density and botanical clarity of the work, it's pattern that's firmly in control through a careful set of constraints that impose culture and a sense of order. I reckon he'll remain relevant because the perception of pattern doesn't change, it's a fundamental instinct that an artist today needs to understand just as he did.



TIM MAIN
Artist

In 2006 I was commissioned by Christchurch City Council to produce a sculpture of Morris's predecessor, John Ruskin, for Ruskin Street in Addington. Both Victorians shared a philosophy that stressed an extreme love of truth which prevailed over beauty. In the face of the industrial revolution, both warned that the decline of art was a sign of general cultural crisis. I find in their ideas many relevant questions that can provide challenges to our own art community today.



CHRIS REDDINGTON
Sculptor

Morris & Co. stained glass in Canterbury

Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. and its successor Morris & Co. are recognised as having produced some of the finest stained glass design of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A vital aspect of their artistic and commercial output, stained glass also provided some of their most spectacular results. Exquisite windows by Morris & Co. may be found throughout New Zealand (mostly in Canterbury), and so a vivid appreciation of this aspect of their production for local audiences is easily possible.

The earliest, and also arguably the greatest, of these is a pair of windows representing the Annunciation at St Mary's Anglican Church in Merivale, dated c. 1910.¹ Designed by Henry Dearle, and based on earlier designs by Edward Burne-Jones, the windows depict the archangel Gabriel and the Virgin Mary: elongated forms in flowing robes in the characteristic Burne-Jones mould. Carefully harmonised colour schemes carry a predominance of greens and jewel-like Byzantine blues, with figures swathed in gold and ivory; in contrast, Gabriel's wings and Mary's halo glow like rubies. The windows easily stand up to William Morris's 1890 dictum for stained glass: 'The qualities needed in the design are beauty and character of outline; exquisite, clear, precise drawing of incident, such especially as the folds of drapery ... Whatever key of colour may be chosen the colour should always be clear, bright, and emphatic.'²

Dearle (sometimes described as Morris's disciple) became responsible for Morris & Co.'s stained glass department following the deaths of Morris in 1896 and Burne-Jones in 1898. Reuse and reconfiguration of existing figures and designs from the company's archive had been an established practice; in this instance Dearle adapted Gabriel from a

¹ These were gifted in memory of Christchurch barrister (and MHR for St Albans) Francis Garrick and his wife Elizabeth. Other Morris & Co. windows are found at Knox College, Dunedin (1922 and 1934); St John the Evangelist Anglican Church, Cheviot (1922 and 1928); and St Augustine's Anglican Church, Waimate (1925 and 1930).

² Morris, 'Glass, Painted or Stained' (1890), reprinted in *The Beauty of Life: William Morris & the Art of Design*, ed. Diane Waggoner, Thames & Hudson, London, 2003, p. 65

³ Burne-Jones's original cartoon for Gabriel is in the collection of the Lady Lever Art Gallery, Port Sunlight, Liverpool.



The Annunciation c.1910 J. H. Dearle (designer) for Morris & Co. Stained glass, St Mary's Anglican Church, Merivale, Christchurch. Photograph: Stephen Estall

design produced for Burne-Jones's own parish church at Rottingdean, Sussex in 1892, and Mary from a design produced for the Albion Congregational Church at Ashton-Under-Lyne, Lancashire in 1895.³ Adding his own particular touch, Dearle adjusted colours to make a warmer, more radiant scheme, and created panels with repeating plant forms above and beneath the figures that had not been in the originals. The plant designs, a specialty of Dearle's, are reminiscent of Morris & Co. fabric and wallpapers (superb examples of which can be seen in the exhibition).

KEN HALL

Ken Hall is an assistant curator at the Gallery.

Photographs of Morris & Co. windows in Canterbury churches by photographer Stephen Estall (who has made an in-depth study of arts and crafts stained glass in New Zealand) will also be exhibited on the balconies during the exhibition Morris & Co.

Further reading: Fiona Ciaran. *Stained Glass Windows of Canterbury, New Zealand*, 1998.

Echoes of Kelmscott Press

"I began printing books with the hope of producing some which would have a definite claim to beauty, while at the same time they should be easy to read and should not dazzle the eye, or trouble the intellect of the reader by eccentricity of form in the letters."

William Morris (1895)

Having established the Kelmscott Press in 1891, partly in reaction to the growing mechanisation in the printing trade during the Victorian era and the resulting decline in the standards and quality of mass-produced books, William Morris went on to become the most celebrated book designer and publisher of his era.

The Kelmscott Press was to return to the basics of letterpress printing. Morris was particularly influenced by early manuscripts and printed material, including incunabula books printed after the invention of moveable type between the 1450s and 1501. The type used in Kelmscott Press publications was hand-set and printed manually on a cast iron hand-press, which in principle differed little from the wooden presses used in the incunabula period. Morris sourced only the finest quality paper, ink, vellum and bindings and developed his own fonts: Golden, Troy and Chaucer. He also designed initial letters and decorative borders and commissioned artists as illustrators – the most successful being his close friend Edward Burne-Jones. The Kelmscott Press produced fifty-two titles between 1891 and 1898, including what is widely regarded as one of the most outstanding books ever printed, *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* (1896), included in the exhibition *Morris & Co.* The example set by the Kelmscott Press inspired the private press movement in England at the turn of the nineteenth



and twentieth centuries. Its legacy is still apparent today; its emphasis on quality influencing modern fine printing presses around the world.

Many New Zealand printers have pursued book production as a craft rather than as a mechanised trade and produced very high quality books. In his 1966 article 'Typographical Printing Today', Denis Glover noted that New Zealand's typographical renaissance did not take place until the early [nineteen] thirties – not more than a dozen years behind the authentic renaissance in England'.¹ He went on to credit Auckland typographer Bob Lowry for getting quality book production underway in New Zealand at this time – Lowry, with Ron Holloway, formed the Unicorn Press in the early 1930s. Other New Zealand presses of note which have focused on hand-printing include Wai-te-ata Press, Otakou Press, Holloway Press, Hawk Press and Pear Tree Press. The following three books are among my personal favourites to have been printed in New Zealand and, while they differ in appearance from the Kelmscott Press books, they are invariably linked to its tradition in the use of the craftsmanship and skill of the letterpress printer, incorporating quality materials and taking care to produce an object of beauty rather than the mass-produced and impersonalised machine-made product which dominates much of the printing industry.

Although primarily a commercial printing firm, Christchurch's Caxton Press also produced a number of high quality, limited edition books throughout the 1930s, 40s and 50s. One of the highlights remains Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, published in 1952 and illustrated and designed by Leo Bensemann, one of New Zealand's most accomplished typographer / printers. Bensemann carefully considered the layout of the text and illustrations and also sourced handmade paper from the Hayle Paper Mill on the Loose Stream in Kent, England. *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* remains a highpoint in New Zealand book production during the post-war era.

The Hawk Press was established at Taylor's Mistake in Christchurch by poet and printer Alan Loney in 1975, primarily to print contemporary New Zealand poetry. It operated until 1983 and produced twenty-one titles, which Loney designed, set and printed by hand. For me, the most significant book produced by the press is Bill Manhire and Andrew Drummond's *Dawn / Water* (1979). The poet, artist and printer all successfully collaborated to produce a book that is an artwork in its own right. Loney is at the forefront of hand-printed book production in Australasia and has established his latest press, Electio Editions, in Melbourne.

Manhire's poem *PINE* was published by the Otakou Press at the University of Otago Library in 2005. This book was devised by Ralph Hotere, Manhire and Wellington-based printer Brendan O'Brien. Hotere interprets Manhire's 'concrete' poem using a range of wooden type to spell the word *Pine*, repeated vertically and rearranged for each separate page. Each page is unique, with variations in the inking of the wooden type achieved through unconventional printing methods incorporating the use of brushes to apply ink.

PETER VANGIONI

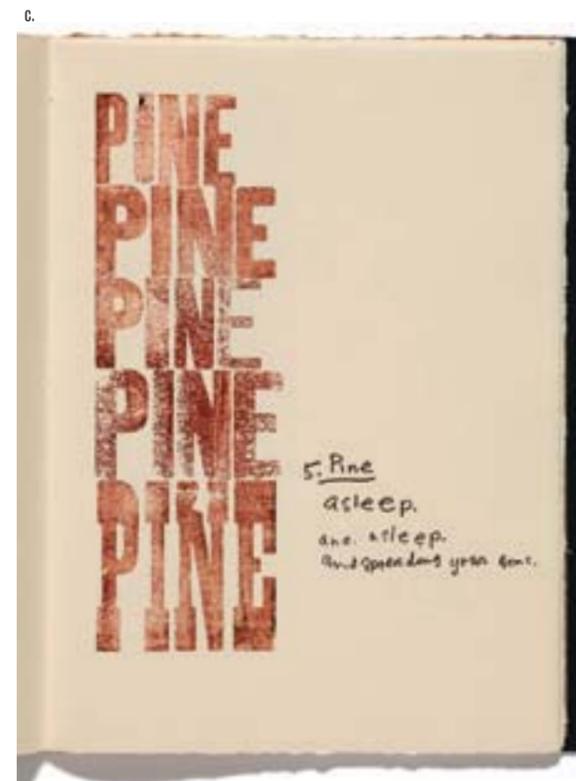
Peter Vangioni is a curator at the Gallery. He has a long-held interest in hand-printed books, and operates his own printing press from home.

¹ Denis Glover, 'Typographical Printing Today' in *An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand*, Vol. 2, Government Printer, Wellington, 1966, p. 872.

² Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Leo Bensemann, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, Caxton Press, Christchurch, 1952

³ Bill Manhire, Andrew Drummond, *Dawn / Water*, Hawk Press, Eastbourne, 1979

⁴ Bill Manhire, Ralph Hotere, *PINE*, Otakou Press, Dunedin, 2005. Page reproduced courtesy of Ralph Hotere



Where's the art?

When visitors come to the front desk at Christchurch Art Gallery and ask that question, the answer is usually a simple one – the art's around to your right and under the stairs, in the exhibition galleries. But from April onward, you can expect some art to cross your path well before you reach the galleries themselves. Welcome to the outer spaces.

From a carpark full of colour, to a stairwell swirling with sound, to an enigmatic object on the roofline, the **Outer Spaces** programme aims to launch art out of its familiar gallery environment and into unexpected spots. Beginning with a brilliant new sculptural balancing act by Michael Parekowhai at the top of the main staircase, the programme will spill down the stairs and outward from there, along the way encompassing banners, billboards, videos, sound recordings, wall paintings and an arresting mannequin or two.

Among the artworks launching soon are a gigantic floral banner by Peter Peryer, a huge (and hugely mischievous)

canine sculpture by Grant Takle, a cascade of digital pattern by Sara Hughes, and an eye-popping image by Richard Killeen for Springboard, the Gallery's new billboard above the water feature on Worcester Boulevard. In the bunker connecting the Gallery's underground carpark to its forecourt, the Subsonic series kicks off with soundworks by Bruce Russell and Bekah Carran. And later in 2008, Hannah and Aaron Beehre will create the first major work for The Glasshouse – the soaring, glass-fronted space that viewers pass through on their way to the exhibition galleries.

Some of this art will be impossible to miss. Some you'll have to hunt out. Propelling all of it, though, is a belief that the most memorable art experiences are often those you don't see coming – the unexpected hits of wonder and moments of pleasurable confusion.

Turn to the next spread for a map of some of the Outer Spaces and a preview of things to come.

Twinset

What's better than a screen dedicated to brand-new video art? Try two of them. One of several new places to see art at the Gallery, Twinset occupies the pair of big high-definition screens you see straight ahead when heading for the ground-floor galleries. It's a rapid-fire programme of fresh video from New Zealand and farther afield. Ranging from short sight-and-sound gags to remixed feature films through to ambitious extended narratives, the programme reflects a moment when – thanks partly to the advent of YouTube and especially to the availability of do-it-yourself digital editing suites – 'video art' is no longer a specialised domain but a vast and various field of activity. Our opening line-up reflects that variety.

Sean Kerr, *Sam*, 2007

The Twinset programme kicks into life with what looks like a pair of dead screens. The Samsung logo drifts across both of them; someone seems to have forgotten to push play. To reveal more about what happens next would be giving the plot away, but keep your eyes – and ears – open for some outbursts of comic life.

Nicolas Jasmin, *Only for your eyes*, 2005–07

A minute-and-a-half of extreme surface tension, from a master of high-intensity editing. Jasmin's raw material here comes from an unlikely place – a mountain-climbing scene in the 1981 James Bond film *For Your Eyes Only*. Slicing up the footage and then splitting and mirroring each slice, Jasmin extracts menacing new energy from a moment of action movie suspense. Lengths of red climbing rope twitch, snap and flex like a live thing at the centre of the screen. As it pulls frantically against its own reflection, the rope seems to be holding together – but barely – an image that constantly threatens to tear apart.

David Rosetzky, *Nothing like this* and *Nothing like this (Autumn)*, 2007

After Jasmin's quick cuts and hammerblow soundtrack, a serene and slowed-down narrative from one of Australia's best-known video artists. Beautiful twenty-somethings drift through a fashion-magazine paradise, while, on the soundtrack, a series of voiceovers offer another story – one of doubts, missed signals, moments of blankness and misunderstanding. Working the gap between advertised lives and real ones, between fashion's alluring images and the mixed feelings we have about them, Rosetzky hints that the gorgeous visuals are a dreamed version of lives that may in fact be 'nothing like this'.



Top: Sean Kerr *Sam* 2007 DVD. Courtesy of Michael Lett
Middle: Nicolas Jasmin *Only for your eyes* 2005–07 DVD
Bottom: David Rosetzky *Nothing like this* 2007 DVD. Image courtesy of Sutton Gallery, Melbourne and Kaliman Gallery, Sydney

Coming attractions: Keep an eye on Twinset throughout 2008 for new videos by Sarah Jane Parton, Terry Urbahn, Jae Hoon Lee, Euan Macdonald, Seung Yul Oh, Axel Stockburger, Daniel von Sturmer and more.

JUSTIN PATON
Senior curator

Coming soon to...

OUTER SPACES

THE GLASSHOUSE
Works in 2 for the foyer
(First up: Grant Table
Then: Hannah &
Aaron Beehre)



SUBSONIC
Sound art in the bunker

Bruce Russell &
Greg Malcolm



Jan van der Ploeg
Wall Painting No. 218
(corridor)



Michael Parekowiak
My Sister, My Self
(top of stairs)



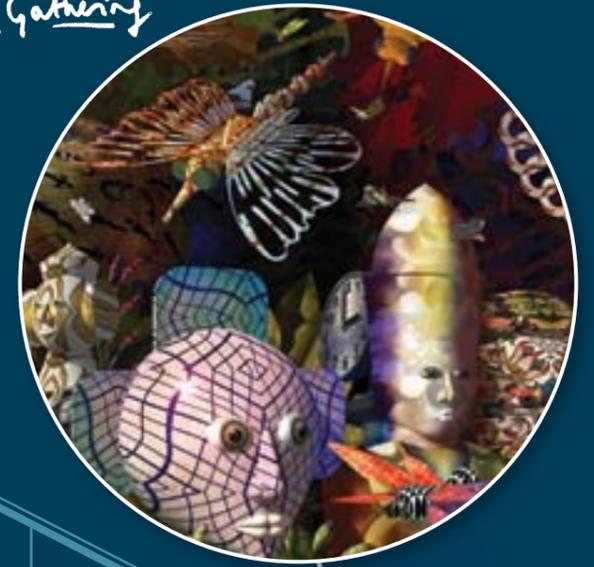
Sara Hughes
(New installation on
the grand staircase)



TWINSET
New video on
twin screens
under the stairs
(Kerr, Jamin, Rosetky)

SPRINGBOARD

Bill board art on the
Boulevard. First up:
Richard Killeen's
The Gathering



Peter Peyer
Tecomante
(foyer banner)



THE SPRING &
THE GARAGE
(Watch these spaces...)

Details, clockwise from left: Jan van der Ploeg digital impression of wall painting 2007. Courtesy of the artist; Hannah and Aaron Beehre digital impression of artist project for The Glasshouse 2008. Courtesy of the artists; Grant Table Stand and deliver 2002-08. Courtesy of the artist; Sara Hughes Scales of Economy 2007 acrylic on linen. Courtesy of the artist and Gow Langford Gallery; Michael Parekowiak My Sister, My Self 2006 sculpture. Courtesy of the artist and Michael Lett Gallery; David Rosetky Nothing like this 2007 DVD. Image courtesy of Sutton Gallery, Melbourne and Kaliman Gallery, Sydney; Richard Killeen The Gathering 2008 digital print. Courtesy of the artist; Peter Peyer Tecomante 2006 silver gelatin print. Courtesy of the artist and McNamara Gallery

LLAREGGUB.

Notes On A Collaborative Project
(A staging of themes
by JOHN REYNOLDS)



16 February – 27 April

"Llareggub Hill, that mystic tumulus, the memorial of peoples that dwelt in the region of Llareggub before the Celts left the Land of Summer and where the old wizards made themselves a wife out of flowers."

Rev Eli Jenkins, Under Milk Wood, Part Five

Auckland artist John Reynolds is well known for his paintings that collude and collide with the ideas of mark-making and drawing, resulting in the slippage between change, movement and stillness, knowing and unknowing. His recent work *Cloud* (2006), installed at the Sydney Biennale, consists of over 7,000 small canvases, each inscribed with a New Zealand colloquialism taken from Harry Orsman's *Dictionary of New Zealand English*. Like shimmering cue cards, *Cloud* exemplifies Reynolds's wit, his love of words and his longstanding interest in theatre and performance.

This year Reynolds embarked on a collaboration with the Court Theatre in Christchurch, designing a stage set and props for the upcoming production of Dylan Thomas's 1954 masterpiece *Under Milk Wood*, directed by Geraldine Brophy. He describes this play as being propelled by language – something that is infinitely attractive to him. Thomas's work was originally conceived for the radio as *A Play for Voices*. Reynolds has emphasised the play's contrasting development of two worlds – the dream world of the subconscious and the real world – by 'fleshing out the stage'.

Reynolds: Because so much of my work is drawn words, the expectation for this project (and a simple way to proceed) would have been to project great tracks of text or even have text on stage. But that would have been the obvious way – not to have any props. I put that idea aside and read the play again, thinking about motifs. What came out of my conversations with the Court Theatre was a sense of something submerged – voices, memories, people, dead people and something arising, much like a day passing. We wanted to arrive at simple, over-scaled metaphors that signal that territory, and possibly overwhelm the stage.

Under Milk Wood revolves around the inhabitants of Llareggub, a fictional Welsh village, who we are introduced to through their dreams. In the space of one day their desires and fears are exposed, and the small dramas of their lives unfold within drawing rooms and on the village street. An animated study of sin, love, regeneration and forces beyond the understanding of the average human being is achieved through the richness of characters such as Nogood Boyo, Polly Garter, Willy Nilly and others.

Reynolds: *Nogood Boyo* is like a Dylan Thomas self portrait – this aberrant character who is always up to no good. What is fascinating is that instead of being just a clown – a Shakespearean idiot – he is like a Greek fate, who at the end almost bemoans that he is a character stuck in a play which in itself is a contemplation of fatefulness.

Reynolds has collaged a plethora of objects that evoke the dual worlds of the characters and reflect the textured imagery found in Thomas's rhythmic, poetic language. Props such as a ladder and a giant spider web dominate the stage, creating the effect of totemic presences. Spider webs often appear in Reynolds's work, and here the web acts as a symbol of something large and over-reaching, with the stage as a trap or lair.



Reynolds: I imagine that these ladders are 'clotted' with the circumstances of life – they've got glassware, cutlery, chairs, a trumpet and so on. We bind the objects to the prop with rope – which is nautical, but also like some crazy spider who just amassed all of these things ... One of the characters in the play has an obsession with cleanliness, so it's like we've taken this tiny gesture of obsessive domestic behaviour and blown it up and made it into something psychotic. Like Samuel Beckett in pre-play mode obsessed about how a sentence and its various words are delivered – the text has to be honoured. Words have a life of their own, they are powerful tools – which I love. In a way, that's how the visual art world works too: the artist obsesses about images and motifs in such a way that they become signature. Much as you could say that there is a Beckett sentence, a Thomas sentence, or a Joycean sentence, there is a 'McCahon', a 'Louise Bourgeois' – there's a similar co-ownership of a set of constraints.

Under Milk Wood expresses the author's belief that what is commonplace unites us all. Reynolds's work also touches this theme of the personal having the ability to reflect a wider cultural condition. Aspects of small town New Zealand can be recognised in the descriptions of the Welsh seaside village (the 'Chosen Land'), something that Reynolds is mindful of. As he says: 'The props are like a sea wreck – washed ashore – we are pretty much washed ashore here too.'

Working with a theatre company is flight into new territory for Reynolds, who has considered the dilemma of audience perception and content. **Llareggub** is an installation at Christchurch Art Gallery that parallels Reynolds's work with the Court Theatre. As well as encapsulating prior moments in his oeuvre, the installation shows how ideas are revealed in the processes of visualisation and construction. As Reynolds describes it, 'the urgency of objects' can relay shimmering layers of truth embedded in *Under Milk Wood's* lyrical 'green-leaved sermon on the innocence of men'.

JENNIFER HAY

Jennifer Hay, assistant curator at the Gallery, discussed **Llareggub** with John Reynolds for Bulletin.

Llareggub is in the Burdon Family Gallery until 27 April. *Under Milk Wood*, directed by Geraldine Brophy, is at the Court Theatre until 22 March.

Photography: Guy Pask



Colin McCahon

8 MARCH – 8 JUNE

In 1978 the New Zealand Government controversially gave the monumental **Victory over death 2** by Colin McCahon to the people of Australia. Media and public alike were unsure of the nature of the gift – joke or treasure – at a time when McCahon's work was far from accepted in mainstream circles. This now-iconic painting is at the heart of a touring exhibition of works from the National Gallery of Australia's collection, celebrating one of New Zealand's most significant artists. Peter Vangioni talked to Hamish Keith, author, arts consultant and broadcaster – and, as Chair of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand at the time, one of the advisors on the gift.



Victory over death 2 1970 Colin McCahon. Synthetic polymer paint on unstretched canvas, 207.5 x 597.7 cm. Collection of the National Gallery of Australia, gift of the New Zealand Government 1978. Courtesy of the Colin McCahon Research and Publication Trust

PETER VANGIONI: **Victory over death 2** is of course now considered an outstanding work of art by an exceptional artist. However, in 1978 at the time the work was donated McCahon's work wasn't widely understood. How did the idea of gifting **Victory over death 2** to Australia develop?

Hamish Keith: There were two events that led to it – the opening of a new national gallery in Canberra, and a visit scheduled by New Zealand's Deputy Prime Minister, Brian Talboys. This may have been the first official visit from the Muldoon Government. There was some discussion (I'm not sure whether this originated with the Arts Council or with the Foreign Affairs Department) between Frank Corner, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, and me as to how this visit should be managed. I'd been concerned for some time, and I guess he had too, about the quality of the gifts the New Zealand Government gave – like greenstone earrings or cufflinks. So we made a point of mentioning that if they wanted Talboys' visit to sink without a trace then just give the usual books and cufflinks, but if they really wanted to make an impression the Government could give a major work of art to the Australian National Gallery [now the National Gallery of Australia]. I set that up with James Mollison [director at the time], and we decided it would be a McCahon. Mollison was keen. He came to Wellington and he and I went to dinner. We offered him the original *Urewera triptych* or the painting *Victory over death 2*. Mollison made the sensible choice, *Victory over death 2*. Then we had to wheel it through the processes. The proposal was made to the Prime Minister who put it to Cabinet. I'm not privy to what went on at Cabinet, but my understanding is that

despite Cabinet's opposition, Muldoon said he would do it anyway. And that is what happened.

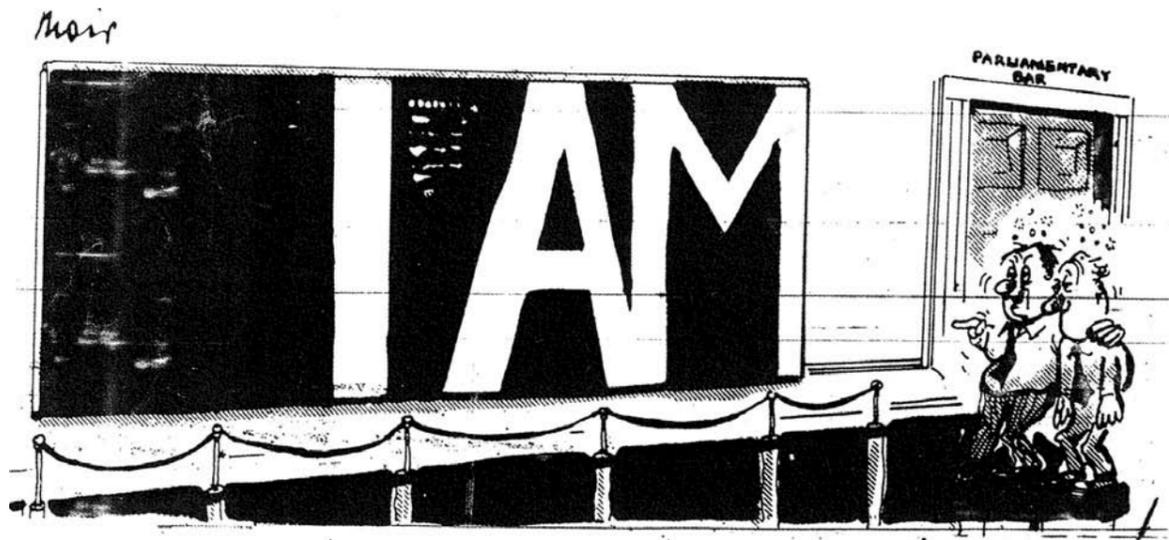
PV: Was it a two-way thing? Has the Australian Government reciprocated the gift?

HK: No, but that's not what you'd expect. The point that we wanted to make was to have a major New Zealand work by a major New Zealand artist in the Australian national collection. And this was a shortcut to getting it there. It had an enormous impact. I said to Muldoon we would be treated to the rare sight of an Australian expert defending a New Zealand artist to the Australian public. That caught his imagination.

PV: There was speculation in the media at the time that the gift was something of an intended joke or a deliberate political ploy. What do you think Muldoon's feeling towards the gift was?

HK: I think he wanted the controversy, and he wanted the gift to be important. His attitude has been presented as malicious, and I think that is unfair to Muldoon – I think he understood the importance of the gift. Of course he went along with one-liners, but fundamentally he made it happen.

It wasn't a prank, as some media said. It was never intended to injure or damage McCahon – in fact, quite the reverse. It was intended to have the effect it did: for New Zealand art to make a major impact in Australia. I think it opened a lot of doors for McCahon and for others. It was one of the first New Zealand works to be acquired by an Australian public gallery, and now of course McCahon is well represented in most of the major public art galleries in Australia.



"Ish that all the time ish . . . ? Lesh 'ave another drink . . ."

The View from Australia. Alan Moir in The Bulletin, 28 March 1978. The Bulletin / acpsyndication.com

The point that we wanted to make was to have a major New Zealand work by a major New Zealand artist in the Australian national collection. And this was a shortcut to getting it there. It had an enormous impact.

PV: What sort of profile did McCahon have in Australia in the 1970s?

HK: Reasonably high. I had friends and contacts in Australia from when I had been working as an intern at the National Gallery of Victoria in 1960, and McCahon did have a reputation among those who knew his work. I had sent a show which included five artists, including McCahon, to Australia in 1965 – which, by the way, was the first contemporary New Zealand exhibition ever to be shown there. It was shown at the National Gallery of Victoria and then also in Sydney and Adelaide.

PV: And in New Zealand he had a decent profile by the 1970s.

HK: Yes, he did. It is hard to figure what the reality of it all was at the time, because you only get the immediate response. But it wasn't a short-term gesture, we believed that in the long run it would be a major thing.

PV: *Victory over death 2* is one of McCahon's major works. Was there any interest in this work from any of New Zealand's public galleries?

HK: No. At that stage I had just persuaded the National Gallery of New Zealand to buy his *Northland Panels*. McCahon was represented quite well in Auckland because he came from there, but he was badly represented by the National Gallery. Christchurch had *Tomorrow will be the same but not as this is*.



Colin McCahon, Titirangi c. 1958 Courtesy of McCahon family archive

PV: What was it about McCahon that attracted you to selecting a work by him?

HK: I'd known his work since I was a teenager. He had worked for my father, and in partnership with my brother, so there was nothing unexpected about his work for me. My original epiphany, the work that made me interested and passionate about art, was McCahon's *The Marys at the Tomb*, which I encountered when I was about twelve or thirteen. I had never had any doubts about McCahon's stature as an artist. I've got to say too that I believe that McCahon, in terms of his level of vision and his work, is quite unique. There are few Australian painters, if any, that match him.

PV: His work is important in an Australasian context?

HK: Well, yes, although of course he will always be our voice. People have to translate what he says into their own voice, and the donation of *Victory over death 2* to Australia is a part of that process. It's a much loved work that rarely comes down.

Colin McCahon opens in Touring Exhibition Gallery B on 8 March. A National Gallery of Australia Travelling Exhibition.



A National Gallery of Australia Focus Exhibition. The National Gallery of Australia is an Australian Government Agency.

Events

Unless otherwise noted, the events listed below are free and will be held in the Philip Carter Family Auditorium.

Colin McCahon: Casting a Long Shadow
Montana Wednesday Evening, 2 April, 6 pm
 Hamish Keith, author, arts consultant and broadcaster, discusses McCahon's influence, imagined and real.

The Life of Colin McCahon
Saturday 12 April, 2 pm
 Professor Lloyd Geering, an eminent theologian, brings his unique insight to the life and works of Colin McCahon.

Art in the Morning: Floortalk with Jonathan Mane-Wheoki
Saturday 17 May
 Meet in Alchemy for a light breakfast from 8.30 – 9 am, followed by a private viewing of the exhibition with Jonathan Mane-Wheoki, Director of Art and Collection Services at Te Papa. See the Friends pages for more information.
 Friends \$15, non-members \$25. Email friends@ccc.govt.nz or tel 941 7356 to register.

Film: I AM
Montana Wednesday Evening, 28 May, 6 pm
 A 2004 documentary film about the remarkable life and work of Colin McCahon, New Zealand's most famous painter.



Tomorrow will be the same but not as this is 1958/59 Colin McCahon. Solpah and sand on board.
Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery, presented by A Group of Subscribers, 1962. Reproduced courtesy of the Colin McCahon Research and Publication Trust

Tests of Time

Fifty Years with Tomorrow

When you next pay a visit to Colin McCahon's *Tomorrow will be the same but not as this is* in the Gallery's permanent collections upstairs, try picturing this small scene.

A Christchurch City Council meeting one evening late in 1962. McCahon's painting is propped up for viewing. It's on offer as a gift to the Robert McDougall Art Gallery, but the room isn't exactly brimming with gratitude. Councillor Stillwell steps right up to the work and calls it a 'monstrosity', and the gallery's director, W. S. Baverstock, also lets his doubts be known. Nonetheless it's accepted, with Baverstock suggesting, rather grudgingly, that the painting be subjected ... to the test of time, which winnows out art directors, art critics, artists and works of art'.

You can view the results of that test for yourself today at Christchurch Art Gallery, where McCahon's landscape has just entered its fiftieth year. A painting that has inspired many later paintings – notably one large work in the Christchurch collection by the celebrated Australian artist Imants Tillers – *Tomorrow* is also one of those paintings that inspires a rare and intense kind of affection in gallery-goers; take it off the walls for even a few days and you're sure to hear visitors asking for its return. With twenty-one McCahons from the National Gallery of Australia soon to arrive in Christchurch, now is the perfect moment to return to this work and wonder why it continues to exert such a hold.

It has to do, I think, with this painter's mastery of the art of suspense, the way he simultaneously pares down the image and heightens the sense of expectation. Of course, McCahon is best known for filling his paintings up – with numbers, symbols, storms of words. But what's arresting here is how much he does away with, and how much he does with what is left. Painted fast and wet with grit-thickened house paint on a surface as big as a doorway, *Tomorrow* has a stark and sudden force, like a glimpse grabbed at the end of the day through the windshield of a moving car. Late light fills the sky, the hills mass darkly in front of it, and the river's just a smear of reflected light. And below all that flows another line of light – the work's enigmatic title sentence, brightening from grey to white as you read.

The painting itself marks a moment of suspense in McCahon's painting life, a telling and highly productive pause between two very different series. Behind him are the cubist-inspired paintings of the mid-1950s, where he slices and dices the Titirangi landscape into a thousand tabs of light. Up ahead are the paintings of the *Elias* series, in which he fills his skies for the first time with those famous painted

words. But in *Tomorrow* the skies have blown suddenly clear, and the whole landscape seems to hum with anticipation. There's a journey afoot, but the painting doesn't say where. There's a change coming 'tomorrow', but we're not sure of what.

Most puzzlingly, there's that black bar reaching down into the composition – one of the most alluring and elusive details in all McCahon's work. If you look at other paintings he made in the late 1950s, then you might guess this is a fragment of a Christian cross, a detail that would permit us to read the painting as a modern resurrection. But the beauty of the work lies in the way it stops just short of that possibility, leaving us wondering if this detail isn't something much more mundane, like the top-swinging windscreen wiper of an old Morris van.

So is this a spiritual journey, or a simple road-trip? A resurrection scene, or just another day in the life? All these uncertainties may sound frustrating on the page, and they'd surely have stoked Councillor Stillwell's indignation. In fact they are signs of McCahon's generosity and tact – the care he takes to leave room in his paintings for us. *Tomorrow* doesn't illustrate some predetermined narrative or hector us with a sermon. Rather it launches us into a situation where there are – even fifty years later – signs to wonder at and choices to be made.

Perhaps someone should send a message back to 1962: the test of time has been passed.

JUSTIN PATON

Senior curator

Tomorrow will be the same but not as this is hangs in the permanent collection galleries upstairs and can also be viewed on the Gallery's online collection at www.christchurchartgallery.org.nz/galleryonline. For further information on the artist and this work, an infosheet and audio file are available online.

To coincide with the National Gallery of Australia's touring exhibition, an exhibition of works by Colin McCahon from the Christchurch Art Gallery collection, titled *A Constant Flow of Light*, will open within the permanent collection galleries upstairs in April.

Tomorrow, Today

Wednesday 21 May, 10.30 am

Senior curator Justin Paton presents a lecture as Friends Speaker of the Month focusing on *Tomorrow will be the same but not as this is*. See the Friends pages for more details.

Venue: Philip Carter Family Auditorium

THAW

PHOTOGRAPHS AND THE (DE)CONSTRUCTION OF AN ANTARCTIC PASSED

21 March – 15 June

“[A] photograph is always invisible: it is not it that we see.”

Roland Barthes¹

Photographs are ambiguous. They are both tangible objects and transient reproducible images. They are inventories of event and detail, and subjective constructions of value and desire. As Roland Barthes suggests, the photographic object retreats behind the perceptual weight of its image, and it is the photograph's materiality that is most often overlooked.

Thaw presents a selection of photographs from the collection of Ernest Edward Mills Joyce, held by Canterbury Museum and assembled by Joyce in response to his participation in three early-twentieth-century expeditions to Antarctica. It combines original photographic objects, in the form of century-old glass lantern slides and negatives, with large-scale digital projections, and highlights the ways we encounter historical objects and disembodied images.

Joyce's Antarctic activities began with a chance opportunity to join Scott's *Discovery* expedition in South Africa, where he was stationed with the Royal Navy. Taking a place among the lower ranks, he demonstrated a tenacity and capability which led to him being given considerable responsibility for sledging and depot-laying operations on Shackleton's *Nimrod* and *Endurance* (Ross Sea Party) expeditions.

Joyce, too, is enigmatic. Little is known about him, but it is believed that he became increasingly embittered about his lack of recognition, historical and financial, in subsequent constructions of this period of Antarctic exploration. He mounted a series of public lectures aimed at addressing this situation, which, along with illustrations for his published account of the Ross Sea Party, appear to be the main reason for the existence of this collection. The photographs are clearly intended to communicate something about Joyce and his perception of Antarctic exploration. However, unaccompanied by his now-lost oratory, and not directly commented upon in the Ross Sea Party book, they stand today in provocative testimonial isolation.

It is not known whether Joyce took any of the photographs. Certainly, he features in many of them, and the collection also includes photographs from events and journeys where he was not present. It ranges from well-known images by professionals such as Frank Hurley, to informal and infrequently seen snapshots taken by unknown expedition members. While these photographs were likely taken for differing reasons and on different terms, and while some operate more easily within visual and historical paradigms than do others, the objects endure, side by side, in Joyce's collection.

Joyce's restless anonymity is reflected in his later life. His final job was as a hotel porter in London, where, in 1941, he was found dead in his room, having gone to bed, as usual, in his sleeping bag.

The Joyce collection asks those who encounter it in the twenty-first century to consider the photographs as objects and as images, as well as the layers of meaning and value they have accrued with time and association. It also brings to the fore the role of photographs in the construction of self and experience. The sheer bulk of the twentieth century's photographic legacy may require that we come to treat with this period first and foremost in visual rather than textual terms. Like the multitudes of 'men of few words', Joyce is marginalised in mainstream discourse by an absence of textual testimony, but his photographs enable and require us to reconsider his role in these now-renowned events, as well as our own terms of encountering and engaging with the past.

KERRY MCCARTHY

Kerry McCarthy is Curator of Pictorial Collections at Canterbury Museum.

Thaw opens in the Tait Electronics Antarctica Gallery on 21 March. Developed in partnership with Canterbury Museum.

¹ Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, trans. Richard Howard, Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, New York, 1981, p. 6.



Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition 1914–17, the *Endurance* trapped in ice, Weddell Sea
H. G. Ponting photograph, E. E. M. Joyce collection, 1981.110.97, Canterbury Museum

Form and Fire

The 49th Annual Exhibition of NZ Potters

29 March – 11 May

NZ Potters presents their 2008 annual exhibition at the Gallery in March. The venue for the exhibition changes yearly, circulating around the country's major pottery centres; such is the enthusiasm with which this event is sought that it is twelve years since the exhibition was last in Christchurch. The Canterbury members of NZ Potters are delighted to present this event, hosted by the Gallery.

The exhibition is open to potters throughout New Zealand and has a rigorous selection process. This year's selectors are Rangiora-based ceramic artist Margaret Ryley and Christchurch gallery owner and pottery collector Grant Banbury, both appointed by the CantaClay organising committee, as well as Peter Vangioni, curator at Christchurch Art Gallery. The exhibition is an opportunity for the pottery community and the public to view the best of current functional pottery and sculptural ceramics throughout New Zealand. Notwithstanding the plethora of low-cost imported clay works that enter the country free of any imposed taxes, our pottery community continues to produce high quality fired ceramic works that compare favourably with the best studio ceramics produced internationally. Our pottery is keenly sought by overseas visitors, and our potters are appreciative of the support given by the sections of our public that continue to value the artistry, skill and craftsmanship of our work.

Thanks to the generosity of sponsors, **Form and Fire** features awards for excellence. This year's sponsors include Ballantynes, Black's Winery in Waipara, Novus Autoglass, The Pot Shop in the Arts Centre, as well as NZ Potters and Christchurch Art Gallery. In addition to the awards made by the selection panel, the public is invited to vote for their favourite work – this selection carries an award to the potter and a prize for one of the voters of a work by David Brokenshire, one of Canterbury's noted ceramists.

NEIL HEY

Neil Hey is a potter and architect based in Canterbury. He is a past president of NZ Potters, and his work is in private collections in the USA, Japan, UK and Europe.



Left: Yi Ming Lin (Leeston) **Still Life** 2007 stoneware
Right: Kumiko Black (Waipara) **Brown Tsubo** 2003 salt glazed stoneware

Form and Fire opens on 29 March in the Ravenscar Gallery. For information on any of the works in the show, please visit Form Gallery. Exhibition organised by NZ Potters.

Events

Saturday 29 & Sunday 30 March
In addition to **Form and Fire**, a wider exhibition of work by potters from the Canterbury region will be held at Canterbury Museum, as well as a pottery convention at the Christchurch Town Hall. The convention is open to the public and features

demonstrations by noted international and national ceramists. These events are organised by CantaClay, a co-operative group of Canterbury members of NZ Potters.

Art in the Morning: Floortalk with Margaret Ryley

Saturday 12 April
Meet in Alchemy for a light breakfast from 8.30 – 9 am, followed by a private viewing of the exhibition with ceramic artist and exhibition selector Margaret Ryley. See the Friends pages for more information. Friends \$15, non-members \$25. Email friends@ccc.govt.nz or tel 941 7356 to register.

Mud, Glorious Mud!

Sunday 13 April
Watch the skill of local potters as they create new works, and try your own hand at throwing a pot.
Foyer, 12–4 pm, free

Entertaining with Clay

Sunday 13 April
Peter Lange, creator of the world's first brick boat and a leading figure in the craft/object art sector, talks about his humorous, satirical and technically exacting approach to clay.
Philip Carter Family Auditorium, 2 pm, free

Art & Craft

Art and craft sit alongside each other. Like art, craft has changed a great deal over the last decade, but it has not so much been a change of styles – though some of this has happened – but a change in attitude. The best craft artists working today have a foot in both the art and craft camps, and it's a shift that has left many practitioners completely bewildered.

For a long time, the essential difference between art and craft has been that while art was practiced individually, craft was considered to be a collective practice. Thus, you had terms like *craft collective*, *craft society* or *craft community*, whereas no one ever spoke about *art collectives* or the *art community* – well, not seriously at any rate.

From the 1950s onwards, craftspeople – be they potters, weavers or wood turners (and later glass makers and jewellers) – tended to come together in search of technical understanding. This led to a strong sense of community and the flourishing of very influential guilds that emphasised technique, and to seeking out large numbers of members to give themselves clout – rather than to create standards of excellence, because those might create barriers to participation.

This was fine as long as the public had a broad interest in craft. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, and even into the 1980s, we marvelled at the cleverness of the techniques and accepted poor quality works because we simply wanted to own a little pottery or have something we could tell people was hand-woven.

Since the 1990s, however, critical interest has refocused on the conceptual

underpinning of a work, rather than its technical finish. The public has increasingly agreed that the best craft works are those that reflect the same types of conceptual dialogues which can be found in contemporary art. The irony is that works like this generally need to be functional. Non-functional craft works are, by and large, seen as inferior forms – a little too sycophantic to be taken seriously by the art world and of no practical use in the home.

It's been a hard change for many craftspeople, but those who have made the transition generally recognise that the first step is to drop any pretence around the notion of a craft community. Today, craftspeople speak with individual voices, and the public pursues craftspeople with individual philosophies and individual solutions to problems.

In ceramics, an earlier generation of Ross Mitchell Anyon and Richard Parker has led the way. Originally prophets of functionality in a climate devoted to the pursuit of clay sculpture, they are now back from the wilderness and have given rise to a generation of practitioners such as Martin Poppelwell, Paul Maysek and Andy Kingston, who happily move between the concerns of art and those of ceramics.

With the emphasis now on the personal iconography of our leading crafts practitioners, rather than on the collective presence of a mass of makers struggling to master technique, we find ourselves asking what role do craft guilds and societies play? One only has to look at the demise of the influence of the 'art societies' which once so dominated art practice to suggest that the future isn't exactly rosy. Bewilderment is an easy response – what's harder is to find solutions that support the development of innovative craft practice in New Zealand while ensuring that a reservoir

of craft skills remains to be drawn on. This will help to ensure craft's presence right where it belongs – next to art, but somehow distant from it.

DOUGLAS LLOYD JENKINS

Douglas Lloyd Jenkins is one of New Zealand's best-known writers on design, craft and architecture. He is Director of the Hawke's Bay Museum and Art Gallery.



FANNY BUSS

The Hawke's Bay Museum and Art Gallery are currently developing a project on Christchurch artist and textile designer Fanny Buss, also known as Frances Cresswell. Her clothes and textiles used the label *Fanny Buss* and were sold throughout a number of New Zealand shops between 1960 and 1980. Fanny Buss also had her own shop in Christchurch in the 1970s.

If you have any information about Fanny Buss, or any clothes or textiles from the *Fanny Buss Studio*, please contact Sarah Snelling, research assistant at the Hawke's Bay Museum and Art Gallery, tel (06) 835 7781 x739 or email ssnelling@hbmag.co.nz. Any information will be gratefully received.



PULSE DARRYN GEORGE

OPENS 8 MARCH

Darryn George's latest artwork looks engulfing, even on a screen thirty centimetres high. On the laptop in the no-fuss studio behind his home in suburban Strowan, George is flipping through working designs for his artist's project *Pulse*. With each double-click, the hard drive whirs and another wall-full of pattern leaps into view. Click: red lines sizzling from floor to ceiling. Click: white forms floating in a deep field of black. Click: blocky shapes locked massively together, like a word-puzzle for giants.

Cut now to the Sutton Gallery on Christchurch Art Gallery's ground floor, where an exhibition has just come down and George is pacing out the long walls and warily eyeing the five-metre-high ceiling. Seen like this, with no art on the walls, the Sutton is a classic 'white cube' gallery – colourless, cool and hushed. But when the signwriters move in here with final designs in hand, it will become anything but silent. George's plan: to power up the space with a continual pulse of language and pattern.

The plan began to grow when George started paying attention to something ordinarily ignored in the Sutton Gallery: the large pillar at its centre. For most viewers the

pillar is simply something to get past before getting a full view of the walls, but George had good reason to give this obstacle a second look.

In his abstract paintings of the past five or so years, George has often alluded to the physical structure of Māori whareniui – the 'big houses' wherein rafters and centre poles represent the ribs and backbones of ancestors. And here in the Sutton Gallery, it seemed to George, was an unnoticed centre pole just waiting to be activated by a coat of colour and pattern. So, turning what first looked like an obstacle into a prompt and inspiration, George began to spin his designs from the centre pole out to the walls. Fusing the whareniui idea with the clean hard look of modern abstract art, he's creating a 'big house' within the house that is the Gallery – a decorative environment reaching from floor to ceiling and all the way around.

If that word 'decorative' sounds a little dismissive to you, then there's no better time to visit the Gallery and have your assumptions turned around. Like the work of William Morris (showing directly across from *Pulse*), and like Richard Killeen's eye-popping mural on the exterior wall



Waru 2008 oil on canvas. Courtesy of the artist and Gow Langsford Gallery

of the Gallery, George's paintings spring from a belief in the power and cultural force of pattern – a faith that decorative forms carry as much cultural voltage, speak as powerfully, as any other kind of imagery.

That faith is literally writ large in George's design for the end wall, where he blocks together an enormous pattern from the elements of the word *waru*. In meeting houses, people often stand, sing and speak in front of the end wall, spiritually supported from behind by carvings or photos of ancestors. In George's wordscape, the wall itself seems to be speaking, sounding out every possible variation on the word *waru*, which means eight and, for George, evokes a spiritual time and space beyond the seven days of the week. Though these words will in the end tower above viewers, their effect in George's on-screen drawings is not domineering but dynamic, as if he's still testing the fit between different pieces of the puzzle.

For we viewers, one further piece of the puzzle is the show's title, *Pulse*. Perhaps it refers to the lines of white punctuating the side walls of George's virtual house – a steady beat of light. Or perhaps it refers to the exhibition

as a whole, one pulse in a larger cycle of exhibitions. But it also seems to take up something quite new in George's work, namely the lines and bands of deep, humming purple that course through sections of his design, only to disappear and reappear farther on.

Looking at the laptop images, you might think of electricity flowing through circuits, or routes marked in glowing colour on a digital map. But when those lines go from screen to wall they'll suggest a pulse that is larger in every sense – lifeblood flowing through the body of the building.

JUSTIN PATON

Senior curator

Darryn George: Pulse opens in the William A. Sutton Gallery on 8 March.

Pulse

Sunday 27 April, 1 pm

Join artist Darryn George for a floortalk in his exhibition.

Artworks from the collection lead their physical lives on the Gallery's walls and in its storerooms. But increasingly they also lead virtual lives, in the Gallery's publications, on its website database – and now in this new feature of *Bulletin*. Every issue, *Showcase* will open a window onto recent arrivals in the collection.

Gifts are especially prominent among the recent arrivals, a number of them deriving from relationships forged with alumni from the University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts during the exhibition *Art School 125*. The plaster sculpture of King Edward VII's famous racehorse *Persimmon* by Elizabeth Harrison hadn't been shown publicly since a 1932 exhibition. Doris Tutill's *Maori whare and tiki design* was a highlight of *Art School 125* – a small work bursting with energy that drew viewers into the show's first room.

Another burst of graphic energy enters the collection from the other side of the world, in the form of a pair of prints by the British master of the linocut medium, Claude Flight, including the high-rev image *Dirt Track Racing*. Soon to go on show in a focus display curated by Peter Vangioni, these two acquisitions anchor and amplify the Gallery's strong holdings in this area.

Michael Parekowhai and Shane Cotton provide two places to leap into the contemporary collections: Parekowhai with the sculptural balancing act discussed on page 3, and Cotton with one of his giddy nightscapes that opens onto mythological depths. Hunkered at the bottom of the facing page are the imaginative offspring of a New Zealand artist a generation younger – London-based, Canterbury-trained Francis Upritchard. Curator Ken Hall describes her *Husband and Wife* as 'slightly creepy and absolutely funny'. As a piecer-together of spare parts, Upritchard makes good company for another young Canterbury artist, Zina Swanson. Recently seen in *Another Destination*, curated by Jennifer Hay, Swanson's tabletop universe of finely grafted objects was purchased for the collection with assistance from Coffey Projects and is itself a meditation on collecting.



Doris Tutill *Maori whare and tiki design* 1932 watercolour. Gifted to the Gallery by Doris Hartley Tutill, 2008

Finally, amidst the other works in this *Showcase*, note Fiona Pardington's photograph of a cockle shell, from the Otago Museum, inscribed with Māori terms for shell at Rapaki and Temuka. In addition to recording an object usually held in the darkness of a museum storeroom, her darkly gleaming photograph hints at the larger possibilities of collecting and display – the way objects and the stories imbedded in them are newly brought to light.



Elizabeth Harrison *Persimmon (Study of a Racehorse)* c. 1930 painted plaster. Gifted to the Gallery by J. H. McGregor, 2008



Fiona Pardington *D63.30 Whakai-o-tama, Temuka, Tuaki, Rapaki, Mactra ovata Grey, 1843* 2004 photograph. Purchased 2007



Claude Flight *Winter* c. 1926 linocut. Purchased with assistance from the Olive Stirrat Bequest, 2008



Claude Flight *Dirt Track Racing* 1928 linocut. Purchased with assistance from the Olive Stirrat Bequest, 2008



Boyd Webb *Iris* 2005 photograph. Purchased 2007. Courtesy of Sue Crockford Gallery



Ronnie van Hout *End Doll* 2007 mixed media. Purchased 2007



Shane Cotton *Takarangi* 2006 acrylic on canvas. Purchased 2007



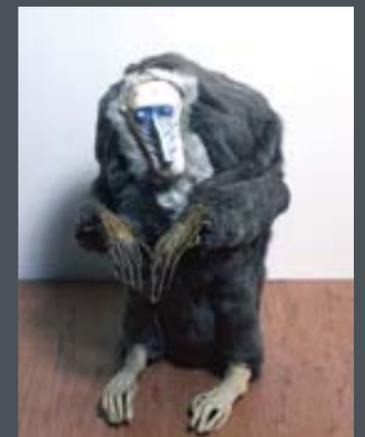
Zina Swanson *Some people's plants never flower...* 2007 mixed media / *Eight untitled drawings* 2007 mixed media on paper. Purchased 2007 with the support of Coffey Projects



Thomas Cousins *On the Wilberforce River near Bonds Station* 1889 watercolour. Gifted to the Gallery by Dawn and William F. Jamieson, 2007



Francis Upritchard *Husband and Wife* 2006 fur, leather, modelling materials. Images courtesy of Kate MacGarry, London and the artist. Acquisition in progress



Exhibitions Team



From left: Emma Vial (graphic designer), Simon Lawrence (gallery technician), Sean Duxfield (exhibition and collections team leader), Scott Jackson (gallery technician), Bernadette Muir (exhibition designer for Morris & Co.), Nathan Pohio (exhibition designer)

When you walk into the exhibition spaces at Christchurch Art Gallery, what you see is the result of months of work behind the scenes by the Exhibitions Team.

From assisting with planning, timetabling, resourcing and scheduling – the domain of Sean Duxfield, the team's leader – to design development and delivery, the team's responsibility is to understand and make real the vision of the artist or curator leading the show.

Exhibition designer Nathan Pohio – and Bernadette Muir, who is contracted to design Morris & Co. – work alongside the artist or curator to bring the show's concept to life. From wall configuration to placement of artworks to furniture design, this is where the artist's ideas are actualised. As Sean says, 'There's a lot of talking done at this stage – what needs to go where, what might not fit – it's quite a process to make sure we can achieve what's required by the artist or curator. And if something's not going to work, we have to come up with new ideas and solutions.'

Graphic designer Emma Vial works closely with the exhibition designers to create the visual look of a show – including entrance and wall signage, as well as external marketing material to make sure there's a consistent feel to the exhibition.

Technicians Simon Lawrence and Scott Jackson have the hands-on job of getting the show up – building and painting walls, hanging the works, lighting and any audio-visual requirements. 'Simon and Scott – and Nathan, too – are artists,' says Sean. 'They have that sensibility and awareness that helps them realise other artists' visions.'

'It's a great team – we all know our roles, and what we have to achieve. And between us we have nearly fifty years of experience!'

Welcome



It was about a year ago I found myself wondering why I had accepted nomination to be president of the Friends, then all of a sudden I'm

tumbling through an engulfing year of meetings, openings, studio visits, art lectures and, of course, more meetings. The next thing I know, we're preparing for another AGM, and it's about to begin all over again.

You might think that the visual arts are only about seeing, but to really see leads us to feel and think – which in turn leads to growth and wanting to share our experience. Thus stimulated, we look for ways to support and add value to others' experiences of art. Like you, your committee is keen to learn and grow, and in turn to encourage others to be more involved in these exciting developments.

'Tis an odd path I tread, as president and an artist, into this strange world of art experts, academics, patrons and devotees, which is quite alien to my own private, soul-searching, self-absorbed life of bringing artworks into being. I do struggle to span the two. However, in my view, the Gallery is set to move into an era of being truly influential in our city's (and our country's) artistic development – why wouldn't I want to be involved? Why wouldn't any artist?

PAUL DEANS
President

To become a Friend, or for information on benefits and programmes, please visit www.christchurchartgallery.org.nz/friends or contact:

Friends of Christchurch Art Gallery
PO Box 2626, Christchurch

Tel: (+64 3) 941 7356

Fax: (+64 3) 941 7301

Email: friends@ccc.govt.nz

Annual General Meeting

31 March 2008, 7 pm

Our 26th AGM will be followed by Darryl Robertson speaking about **Form and Fire**, the NZ Potters exhibition, which will be open for viewing.

For more information see the enclosed notice and nomination form.

Morris & Co. Opening

Thursday 13 March, 6 pm

Friends will be invited to the opening of this major exhibition. Members will receive an invitation by mail.

Arts and Crafts of Canterbury Tour

This trip includes a guided tour of **Morris & Co.**, as well as some of the notable examples of arts and crafts architecture in Christchurch and surrounding areas. Open to Friends and non-members and allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

For more information see the enclosed flier.

Private Viewings

Friends previews will now be Private Viewings, held in the first week of an exhibition, from 5.15 pm. Enjoy a glass of wine and hear the curator give a short floortalk at 5.30 pm. Free for members, please show your membership card for entry.

Colin McCahon / Darryn George: Pulse

Tuesday 11 March, 5.15 – 6.30 pm

MEMBERSHIPS

New Members: Julie Adam, Keith & Julia Anderson, Virginia Armour, Kristina Barker, Julie Bartlett, Nicola Best & Greg Bloomer, David & Brigit Blair, Patricia Blik, Geoff & Christine Bradley, Brunton Family, Anne Bryant, Kristi Calder, Mrs P. J. Carr, Rose Collogan, Nicki Dabner, James Dann, Caro Davidson, Francesca Davies, Timothy Davies, Ann Dickson, Annie & Richard Doell, William & Elizabeth Dudding, Sam Elworthy, Lianne Ferguson, Tony Ferner, Rachael Fittal, Sarah Garland, Sidney & Annabel Graham, Bernice Gregan, Gregory Family, Marcia Gualter, Peter Guerin, Jack Hadley, Sue Hadley, Gina Haines, Mrs J. G. Harper, Martine Hearfield, Rachel Huston, Russell & Vonnie Lambert, John Leuthart, Glenda Lorimer, Kathryn Lynskey, Rob MacDuff, Christopher Mance & Marra Freire, Leigh Mason, Sharon McBride, Judith McGregor, Sue & Don McKenzie, Michael McLean, Lois Morgan, Jacqui Nevell, Jen Ovens, Pam Pope, Andrew & Christine Porteous, Alexandra Porter, Jill Richardson, Leigh Rodgers, Monica Ryan, Biddy & Ian Satherthwaite, Ulli Schwertheim, Lesley Shand, Joan Simpson, L. Studholme, Keith Tannock & Katherine Bonner, Bronwyn Taylor, Fiona Taylor, Chua Sien Tee, David Trerise and Sally Blundell, Diana Thomson, Megan Wells, Rob Zonneveld

Life Members: Janet Ensor, Ian & Alison O'Connell, Suzanne Shand

Calendar of Events

March

- 11 Private Viewing**
Colin McCahon / Darryn George: Pulse
- 13 Exhibition Opening**
Morris & Co.
- 14 LocArt**
Doc Ross
- 19 Speaker of the Month**
Penny Orme

22 Art in the Morning
Morris: Love and Work

22 LocArt
Lizzy Moyle and Samuel Harrison

31 Friends AGM

April

12 Art in the Morning
Form and Fire

15 LocArt
Paul Deans

16 Speaker of the Month
Ian Lochhead

26 LocArt
Ross Gray

May

15 LocArt
Kate Rivers

17 Art in the Morning
Jonathan Mane-Wheoki on Colin McCahon

21 Speaker of the Month
Justin Paton

24 LocArt
Stephen Gleeson

Art in the Morning

Join us on Saturday mornings for light breakfast in Alchemy from 8.30–9 am, followed by a private viewing at the Gallery with a guest speaker. Except where noted, Friends \$15, non-members \$25. Register using the enclosed form.

Morris: Love and Work

Peter Vangioni

Saturday 22 March

William Morris said, 'Give me love and work – these two only.' Join Gallery curator Peter Vangioni to learn about the work of this extraordinary designer and some of his loves, including traditional craftsmanship, his writings and socialism.

Friends \$20, non-members \$35 (includes breakfast and discounted exhibition entry)

Form and Fire

Margaret Ryley

Saturday 12 April

Margaret Ryley will guide you around the NZ Potters' national exhibition, **Form and Fire**, and talk about the latest developments in pottery and ceramics. Margaret is a ceramic artist and one of the exhibition's selectors.

Colin McCahon

Jonathan Mane-Wheoki

Saturday 17 May

Jonathan Mane-Wheoki, Director of Art and Collection Services at Te Papa, has studied Colin McCahon's work for many years. He will talk about major works in the exhibition and put them in context with McCahon's life and work.

Speaker of the Month

Philip Carter Family Auditorium, 10.30 am. No booking required. Friends \$2, non-members \$5, students with ID free. Coffee and tea served in Alchemy Café from 10 am, \$2.50.

Visit www.christchurchartgallery.org.nz/Friends/SpeakerOfTheMonth for more information about the speakers.

Penny Orme

Beautiful Books by William Morris

Wednesday 19 March

Cultural commentator Penny Orme will give an illustrated talk on William Morris and his beautiful books. Morris set up his Kelmscott Press in 1891 with the aim of producing fine printed material, as he felt contemporary books had been degraded by industrial production. In typical arts and crafts fashion, he designed and produced books based on his admiration for medieval craft.



The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer 1896 The Kelmscott Press. Wood-engraving by Sir Edward Burne-Jones

Ian Lochhead

William Morris and Anti-Scrape: The Victorian Debate on Heritage Conservation

Wednesday 16 April

William Morris played a key role in establishing modern attitudes towards architectural heritage conservation. He founded the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (or Anti-Scrape, as it is popularly known) in 1877, marking the beginning of the modern heritage protection movement in Britain. The lecture will examine Victorian attitudes towards architectural restoration and discuss the relevance of his views in the twenty-first century.



Tomorrow will be the same but not as this is 1958/59 Colin McCahon. Solpah and sand on board. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery, presented by A Group of Subscribers, 1962. Reproduced courtesy of the Colin McCahon Research and Publication Trust

Justin Paton

Tomorrow, Today

Wednesday 21 May

A close look at one of the most renowned paintings in the Gallery's collection. Fifty years since Colin McCahon began *Tomorrow will be the same but not as this is*, senior curator Justin Paton gives an illustrated discussion of the painting's controversial reception, its place in McCahon's career, its evolving meanings and its many 'afterlives' in the work of other artists.

See page 30 for more on this work.

LocArt

LocArt visits are for members of the Friends only and cost \$5. Register by using the enclosed form.

Visit www.christchurchartgallery.org.nz/Friends/LocArt for more information about the artists.

Weekday Events

STUDIO VISIT: Doc Ross

Friday 14 March

Doc Ross is a self-taught photographer represented in important collections such as the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney and the Dr Robert Slutsky Photography Collection in New York. He is currently working on a series that includes large-scale sea and urban landscapes.

Maximum 15 members. Meet Margaret Duncan at 464 Colombo Street, Sydenham at 10.20 am.



Doc Ross

STUDIO VISIT: Paul Deans

Tuesday 15 April

Before becoming president of the Friends, Paul Deans carved out a career as a sculptor of wood. Initial study in industrial design eventually gave way to his natural artistic talent. He finds that carving, the process of peeling away outer layers to find an inner essence, relates to the human search to know our more beautiful selves.

Maximum 30 members. Meet Paul at 68 Port Hills Road, Heathcote Valley at 10.20 am.

STUDIO VISIT: Kate Rivers

Thursday 15 May

Artist Kate Rivers specialises in printmaking, including lithography, drypoint and monoprint. She has an MFA from the Canterbury School of Fine Arts, and gained a post-graduate diploma in New York and honours at the University of Tasmania. A special interest in women's traditional arts such as patchwork and embroidery informs Rivers' artistic practice.

Maximum 15 members. Meet Margaret Duncan at 78 Corson Avenue, Beckenham at 10.20 am.

Weekend Events

STUDIO VISIT: Lizzy Moyle and Samuel Harrison

Saturday 22 March

Emerging artists Lizzy Moyle and Samuel Harrison were both recipients of Friends scholarships, and each has since won several prestigious awards. They have participated in group shows and enjoyed great success, with their first respective solos shows both near sell-outs. Lizzy is a printmaker and sculptor, and her work is an investigation into animal sentience and animal/human relationships. Sam is a printmaker, sculptor and painter who creates representational, figurative and abstract works in both portraiture and landscapes.

Maximum 15 members. Meet Melissa Reimer outside ChristChurch Cathedral at 10.20 am.



Above: Cow 2007 Elizabeth Moyle. Woodblock print on paper

Left: Man 2007 Samuel Harrison. Woodblock print on paper

STUDIO VISIT: Ross Gray

Saturday 26 April

Established Christchurch artist Ross Gray teaches drawing at CPIT. He trained at the Canterbury School of Fine Arts in the 1960s and recently completed his MFA (Dist.) in painting. Ross has exhibited regularly throughout New Zealand and has upcoming solo shows in Christchurch and Wellington this year. His new works explore modular configurations, painting processes and ideas about the city – structures, spaces, memory.

Maximum 20 members. Meet Melissa Reimer at 135 Gloucester St (above Harry's Bar) at 10.20 am.



Happy Town 2007 Ross Gray. Acrylic on modular canvases

STUDIO VISIT: Stephen Gleeson

Saturday 24 May

Established Christchurch sculptor Stephen Gleeson works in bronze, producing both historical bronze portraits/busts and contemporary works that grace private collections and public spaces throughout New Zealand and abroad. In addition to undertaking commissions, Gleeson collaborates with other artists, such as with David Marshall to produce the corgis on High Street.

Maximum 20 members. Meet Melissa Reimer at The Limeworks, 249 Moorhouse Avenue at 10.20 am.

Coming Soon

Laurence Aberhart

'Since the 1970s Aberhart has been the essential visual poet of New Zealand's past.'

Justin Paton



Laurence Aberhart has been at the forefront of New Zealand photography since the late 1970s, and is increasingly recognised as a major international figure. In July, Laurence Aberhart, a landmark exhibition in New Zealand photography, will open at Christchurch Art Gallery. Featuring more than 200 iconic photographs, this will be the most comprehensive overview of Laurence Aberhart's work to date.

Aberhart's photographs of church interiors, marae, monuments and Masonic Lodges are not only an essential part of the nation's visual art, they offer a journey through the heart and soul of New Zealand.



Laurence Aberhart **Tiger Tea, Christchurch, April 1983.** Courtesy of the artist

Laurence Aberhart **Midway Beach, Gisborne, 13 June 1986.** Courtesy of the artist



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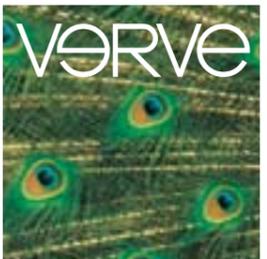
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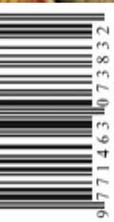
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