

The Gallery is currently closed to the public. Our off-site exhibition space is upstairs at 212 Madras Street and the Gallery Shop is now open at 40 Lichfield Street.

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TE PUNA O WAIWHETU
CHRISTCHURCH
ART GALLERY

Spring
September—November
2012

B.169



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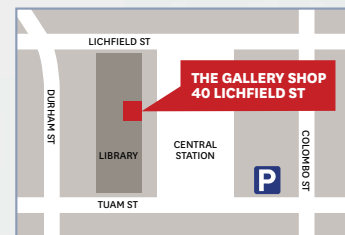
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Bulletin
Christchurch Art Gallery
Te Puna o Waiwhetu

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NEW SPACE, FRESH GIFTS



The Gallery Shop has now relocated to 40 Lichfield Street, with a huge range of exciting new gifts, stationery, books, prints and cards. See you there. Open 7 days / 10am – 4pm

christchurchartgallery.org.nz/shop

TE PUNA O WAIWHETU
CHRISTCHURCH
ART GALLERY

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Cover: Michael Parekowhai
Chapman's Homer (detail)
2011. Bronze, stainless steel.
Courtesy of the artist and Michael Lett, Auckland

Inside cover: Installation view of **Reconstruction: Conversations on a City**, July 2012

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AS YOU READ THIS, the public spaces of our Gallery building are largely abandoned and it all feels eerily empty—a fact that we could easily be downcast about. But since this edition of *Bulletin* comes at the end of our financial year and contains our annual ‘Year in Review’, it’s a good moment also to consider what *has* been achieved despite (or perhaps because of) our continued closure.

When we published our last review in September 2011, I wrote of the tumultuous year we had just experienced and wished the next year might be a little calmer. And, with a few sudden and unpleasant exceptions, it’s thankfully been seismically less active. But earthquakes, and our ability to recover from them and reopen to the public, have been our key focus. In 2011 we had no date in front of us for the return of our building, although as we adjusted schedules and postponed or withdrew regretfully from arrangements, we quietly hoped it would still be a matter of months. In all we planned three reopening programmes; sadly, all proved to be optimistic, and now we look back on a full eighteen months of closure.

In the context of the optimism around the city’s renewal generated by the recently announced CCDU plan, it’s disappointing to have to concede that our schedule has again slipped. We are still waiting for the beginning of our repairs and our reopening in mid-2013 (which only a short while ago seemed preposterously far away) will, through simple cause and effect, be delayed. On the positive side, during the 2012/13 annual planning process and subsequent

public consultation, Council agreed to fully base isolate the Gallery building as part of the repair schedule. There are two key reasons for this: to allow us to once more become a building which can attract loans from elsewhere; and to ensure less operational downtime if we were to suffer a similar major event in this region.

As our local readers will know, once we better understood the length of time it would take to reopen, Gallery staff quickly worked together to turn adversity into something positive and to become a ‘gallery without walls’, dramatically extending our concept of the **Outer Spaces**—a programme previously devised for the spaces around the Gallery itself. So, as it turns out, we’ve exhibited quite a lot of art, opening presentations of various sizes and scopes and working with artists of local and international repute to present work throughout the city.

Across the other side of the red zone from the Gallery, we’ve been using the upstairs exhibition space at NG as a Christchurch Art Gallery outpost to present the **Rolling Maul** project series, which will continue until early 2013. We interrupted this series in July to show Michael Parekowhai’s breathtaking **On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer**, which was a huge success. As in Venice, where it was New Zealand’s 2011 Biennale presentation, a large number of visitors stayed to simply sit and listen to the piano. And many more than the 11,388 we counted coming to see the upstairs component of the exhibition simply jumped out of their cars to look at the bronze bulls on Madras Street at all hours of the day and night. It was truly an emotional homecoming to New Zealand for this work, and we and the artist were thrilled to present it in such a remarkable, high-impact context.

My sense is that **Reconstruction: Conversations on a City**, another touching exhibition we mounted, is being read as something of a eulogy on the pasts (plural) of our city. We are grateful to Ngāi Tahu who provided an opening mihi and have the last word in an outdoor display that has caused many to look and linger and think. For in it we see that the recent earthquakes are the latest in multiple layers of, often city-sanctioned, destruction of the past. It’s been heartening to see the way the show has been received on Worcester Boulevard—every time I go by people are stopping, talking with each other, taking away memories and rich impressions of the past.

We have become increasingly active in cyberspace, attending to a lot of back-of-house work to enable a better and more authoritative web presence. We have made a number of substantial steps forward throughout the year, managing to get our entire collection online, forging on with the Getty Tagging project, launching our mobile website and, of course, creating My Gallery. We’ve expanded into social media, and can be found on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Flickr—all forms of communication that have allowed us to be more nimble and responsive in getting our message out.

You may already have seen our shop in its new location in the Rexel Building on Lichfield Street—if you haven’t been yet, make sure you visit soon. We’re there alongside the new Central Library Tuam. It’s another nice connection, as we’re also co-presenting a major work by Richard Killeen and our **Pressed Letters** exhibition at the Central Library Peterborough.

All-in-all, I’m extremely proud of the way that, as an institution, we have continued to approach what we do and proud also of the new and interesting ways that our staff have continued to present art. What I realise more fully now than a year ago, is how privileged we are to be in the position of doing what we do in this city at this time. It’s hard to imagine making any higher impact in any place anywhere than what’s possible here at present. So when I get a bit down (as I do occasionally) about the slower-than-I’d-like progress with our repairs, I think of this and am pleased with what Christchurch Art Gallery has achieved.

Jenny Harper

Director

August 2012

WAYNE YOULE: I SEEM TO HAVE TEMPORARILY MISPLACED MY SENSE OF HUMOUR

Ongoing

Stretching more than thirty-five metres across a wall at the gateway to the suburb of Sydenham in Christchurch, Wayne Youle’s gigantic shadowboard is a homage to all those involved in the rebuilding effort in Christchurch, and a remembrance of the many precious things that were lost in the earthquakes. Colombo Street, between Carlye and Byron streets

KAY ROSEN: HERE ARE THE PEOPLE AND THERE IS THE STEEPLE

Ongoing

A mural project for the Gallery’s east rear wall, inspired by the shape of the wall, by the words ‘people’ and ‘steeple’, by the recent and past history of the city and by the children’s finger game. The work hopes to send a large-scale message about rebuilding a city by, and upon the foundation of, its people. Christchurch Art Gallery Precinct

RICHARD KILLEEN: THE INNER BINDING

Ongoing

Laden with associations, but buoyant with possibility, this large-scale window commission by renowned New Zealand artist Richard Killeen features a richly layered composition that hints at systems of knowledge and classification. Central Library Peterborough

TJALLING IS INNOCENT

Ongoing

An ambitious paste-up project by local artist Tjalling de Vries. The large-scale work on CoCA’s back wall has been created using layers of printed paper, torn into and painted over, resulting in a collage-like surface. Christchurch Art Gallery precinct

PRESSED LETTERS: FINE PRINTING IN NEW ZEALAND SINCE 1975

Until 23 September

An exhibition presenting some of the finest examples of letterpress printing produced in New Zealand from 1975 to the present and highlighting the collaborative ethic that often exists between poets, artists and printers. Featuring Joanna Margaret Paul, Ian Wedde, Bill Manhire, Ralph Hotere, Alan Loney, Max Gimblett, Tara McLeod and Brendan O’Brien. Central Library Peterborough

SCOTT FLANAGAN: DO YOU REMEMBER ME LIKE I DO?

Until 23 September

Conceptual in origin, Scott Flanagan’s works are often produced using a methodical and labour-intensive approach. His latest installation includes a wishing well and mirror painstakingly woven from reflective black VHS tape and considers the surprisingly elusive nature of civic memory. NG, 212 Madras St

PHANTOM CITY: DOC ROSS’S CHRISTCHURCH 1998–2011

Until 30 September

Back projected large onto a Sydenham shop window, Doc Ross’s photographs create a haunting record of this city before its dramatic seismic demise. Screening on a continuous loop, this ghosted memory of an altered city can be seen from sundown. 464 Colombo Street

STEREOSCOPE: HELEN CALDER

Until 11 October

Located on the Montreal Street side of the Gallery Bunker, Helen Calder’s *Orange up*, with its pure abstract orange forms, provides a refreshing and vibrant contrast to the grey stone walls of the Bunker. Christchurch Art Gallery Precinct

RECONSTRUCTION: CONVERSATIONS ON A CITY

Until 14 October

Tracking the story of Christchurch / Ōtautahi from its earliest years, **Reconstruction** offers a compelling visual account of how this place came to be. In acknowledging loss, the exhibition also asks whether the city can be rebuilt as a place of genuine quality and interest if it undervalues the significance of its rich architectural heritage past.

Worcester Boulevard, between Durham and Montreal streets

JUSTENE WILLIAMS: SHE CAME OVER SINGING LIKE A DRAINPIPE SHAKING SPOON INFUSED MIXERS

Until 28 February

Embracing outmoded and obsolete video equipment in the production of her vibrantly theatrical video work, Australian artist Justene Williams uses performance and ephemeral materials to produce a sensory overload of shapes, patterns and colours. Here, her performance is projected into the window of an abandoned house on Worcester Boulevard. 56 Worcester Boulevard

RUTH WATSON: FROM WHITE DARKNESS

14 September – 14 October

Ruth Watson’s latest project, **from white darkness**, which is being presented by the Gallery as part of IceFest, incorporates historical footage and offers a poetic commentary on the intriguing similarities between art and science.

Christchurch Art Gallery Outer Spaces container, New Zealand IceFest, Hagley Park Ice Station

ANDRÉ HEMER

29 September – 21 October

André Hemer’s many-dimensional **Rolling Maul** project combines projection, installation and a range of secondary outputs to play with ideas of distance and deletion—with particular reference to one very special work from the Gallery’s collection.

NG, 212 Madras St

STEREOSCOPE: KRISTIN HOLLIS

12 October – 23 November

Christchurch-based artist Kristin Hollis provides the next instalment in the **Stereoscope** series. Christchurch Art Gallery Precinct

MIRANDA PARKES/ TJALLING DE VRIES

27 October – 18 November

Miranda Parkes and Tjalling de Vries share an interest in expanding of abstract painting beyond its traditional borders. They join forces in a new **Rolling Maul** show that explores the creative possibilities of the commercial billboard.

NG, 212 Madras St

ASH KEATING

November

Christchurch Art Gallery again joins forces with Gapfiller to present a high-impact wall work. Melbourne-based artist Ash Keating creates a huge, abstract painting on a central city wall by spraying and firing paint from weed sprayers and fire extinguishers.

Venue to be confirmed

As the Gallery remains closed, projects will happen at a range of locations throughout the city. Check the website for detailed maps and follow us on Facebook and Twitter to make sure you don’t miss anything.

Remembering *to forget* to remember



Michael Elmgreen and Ingar Dragset **Park für unerwünschte Skulpturen (Park for Unwanted Sculptures)** 2003. Lawn, wooden fence, light box sign. Sculptures in the park are: Uwe Schloen **Neptun Bunker** 2000; Horst Hellinger **Röhrentorso** 1988; Ludmilla Schalthoff **Spiegelinstallation** 2004; Gustav Reinhard o.T. 1983(?); Ulla Nentwig **Das steinerne Herz** 2007; Vito Acconci **Father's Garden** 1986. Reproduced courtesy of the artists, Kunstverein Springhornhof

The recently released Christchurch City Recovery Plan establishes the development of earthquake memorial of local, national and international significance as one of its 'anchor projects'. With no timeframe set for its completion, the discussion around the project will be measured, and is bound to generate interest across the city and farther afield. We asked Ralph Rugoff, director of the Hayward Gallery, London, and author of *Monuments for the USA* to add his voice to the conversation. Here, he looks at contemporary monumania worldwide, and asks what lessons we might learn from past failures.

IN 2003, THE SCANDINAVIAN ART DUO of Michael Elmgreen and Ingar Dragset opened what they described as a hospice or kennel for unpopular public sculptures. Located in a remote part of northern Germany, their sanctuary for exiled relics of public space consists of a parcel of land surrounded by a white fence and an illuminated sign that announces ‘Park for Unwanted Sculptures’. It is basically a cemetery for monuments, a memorial park for memorials. And its very existence should serve as a cautionary tale for any civic group that is considering building a public commemorative structure.

The impulse to respond to a major traumatic incident or disaster by commissioning a public monument has become a knee-jerk reflex in almost every part of the world. Whether it is an earthquake in Sichuan, a tsunami in the Indian Ocean, or an act of terrorism in New York, the memorialists among us begin thinking about how best to commemorate it even as rescue teams are still finishing their work. Grief, of course, must find its outlets, and constructing physical

symbols of remembrance and mourning can play a significant role in this process. But something in our contemporary monomania reeks of obsession. Despite all the evidence, it compulsively ignores that modern truism, formulated almost a century ago by Austrian novelist Robert Musil, that ‘there is nothing in this world as invisible as a monument’. As we are constantly re-learning, memorials and monuments, for all their commemorative intent, are themselves all too easily forgotten; indeed, whatever public significance they may claim seems preordained to a relatively brief

life. Sooner or later, our monuments end up as generic spatial markers in the bland geographies of our civic plazas and parks.

So who really wants another disaster memorial with a short shelf life? I suspect that many people in Christchurch have already asked this question. Yet today the idea of doing nothing in response to a destructive event like the 2011 earthquake may seem untenable; even tantamount to an admission of moral bankruptcy, something like withdrawing from a Geneva Convention of commemorative responsibility. There are several reasons for this state of affairs. Besides arguably assisting in the task of collective mourning, the making of memorials assuages our guilt as survivors, as well as our bad conscience at the prospect of someday forgetting those who died. One reason we continue to erect memorials, in other words, is to feel better about ourselves. On another level, the building of monuments has become an intensely competitive sphere of international cultural showmanship. In an era when star

architects and world-renowned artists are regularly commissioned to create memorials that garner international headlines, doing nothing could seem like a massive failure of civic vision.

Without assuming that an earthquake monument in Christchurch is a foregone conclusion, it is still worth considering what such a memorial might be able to achieve for the city’s citizens. Who or what should it commemorate? And how could we define its potential success or failure? Does ‘success’ necessarily mean that a memorial somehow helps to keep alive the public recollection of

‘Why not try to invent new ephemeral or immaterial modes of commemoration that draw on public participation?’

past trauma? This is one of the common—and seemingly impossible—criteria by which Holocaust memorials are often judged. Yet obviously no monument can guarantee the sustaining of historical memory. In fact, as German literary critic Andreas Huyssen has argued, the recent global proliferation of monuments and memorials may correspond to the very opposite: a waning of our tenuous capacity for remembrance.¹ Indeed, as contemporary sensibilities have come to be increasingly defined by mass media, predicated on incessant novelty and illusions of perpetual change, our temporal horizons have radically diminished.

Is it possible to find new forms of commemorative art that are capable of resisting facile consumption; that might be able to outwit or subvert our drive to instantly use up the value of any novel cultural product? Perhaps we do not really need to bother; perhaps we can think of memorials as being useful in a different way. Rather than serving as a bulwark against the decay of social memory, they might simply comprise a key step in the process of moving on from a disaster. Indeed, they may aid our forgetting in a positive fashion. A memorial that effectively focuses our attention as a society prompts us to link our individual experience of trauma to a collective experience. It affirms in us a sense of belonging, which in turn assists in mitigating our feelings of loss—of loved ones, of property, or even of our everyday sense of security. (One of the greatest shocks delivered by a disaster is the blow it strikes against our latent belief in the continuity of everyday existence.)

If monuments and memorials are bound up with forgetting in more ways than one, perhaps we should be taking this into account when designing and installing them. Why shouldn’t monuments, for example, come with an expiration date? Their unveiling could be accompanied by an announcement of the plans for their demise.

Since one of the most repellent aspects of conventional monuments is their stiff-necked claim to eternity, I can only imagine that we would appreciate a memorial far more keenly if it came equipped with a planned lifespan.

This has certainly been the case with the public reception of London’s Fourth Plinth project in Trafalgar Square, where, since the late 1990s, commissioned sculptures by contemporary artists have been presented for periods ranging between twelve and eighteen months. Originally intended for an equestrian monument, the plinth had previously remained empty for over a century and a half due to bickering over a series of competing sculptural proposals. That tradition of squabbling has continued—in a more fruitful and public fashion—through the vigorous debates that are triggered by the appearance of each successive project on the Fourth Plinth, and the manner in which it occupies and responds to its popular, and historically charged site. While it does not have to bear the responsibility of commemorating a disaster, the Fourth Plinth has effectively conjured a city’s capacity to continually rethink how it can address the needs of its citizens and pay homage to the fact that—like all urban areas today—it exists in a state of constant flux. A permanent monument, with an aesthetic that would soon seem dated in relationship to the changing environment around it, could never sustain the kind of lively discourse fostered year after year by the projects on the Fourth Plinth.

The possibilities for impermanent memorials are endless. It is tempting to imagine a type of mobile monument in Christchurch that could relocate every so often to different areas of the city, and periodically renew or reinvent its significance by making different kinds of connections with its changing surroundings. It could gradually move further and further out from the city centre as the

event it commemorates becomes a more distant memory. People could continue to visit it, of course—it would still be available to all those individuals whose sense of loss requires an extended period of mourning. And at the same time it would ensure that the memorial avoided the fate of becoming another public reliquary of our forgetfulness.

Our thinking about monuments might well borrow a page from some of the socially engaged art practices that have emerged over the past two decades. Why not try to invent new ephemeral or immaterial modes of commemoration that draw on public participation? This is a tradition, of course, that already exists: a well-known example being the poppies worn on Remembrance Day in Commonwealth countries to honour members of the armed services who died in the line of duty. It would be simple enough to commission artists to find novel forms of engaging the public in commemorative gestures. A work like Gabriel Orozco's 1993 *Home Run*, for which he persuaded residents of an apartment building behind New York's Museum of Modern Art to place oranges in their windows, suggests the kind of simple gesture that—if carried out across the entire city—might make for a powerful collective display of solidarity in remembrance. Alternatively, it would be interesting to solicit proposals for monuments from the public and to find a way of displaying these across the city; nocturnal projections on public buildings, for example, could feature animated or virtual models of proposed memorial designs. These could be curated by a civic committee, and the project could continue for at least as long as there remained enough interest to generate new proposals. If nothing else were achieved, this might at least be a

means of inserting into the city's public spaces an extra dimension of idiosyncratic thought and imagination.

In any case, I wonder if there might not be something deeply satisfying about a monument that reflects on mortality and the precariousness of existence, which is itself precarious and mortal by design. At the end of the day, the most significant social impact that any disaster monument can have is always going to be in the short term—namely, the benefit it offers as a focal point for a civic process of mourning. That process may take years, especially for those who were most directly affected. But there is no reason to demand that our monuments be eternal statements that continue to impose their remembrance of loss on posterity. The future will no doubt have its own disasters to commemorate.

Ralph Rugoff

Ralph Rugoff is director of the Hayward Gallery in London. Since his appointment in 2006, he has curated numerous acclaimed exhibitions including, Psycho Buildings: Artists Take On Architecture, The Painting of Modern Life and most recently, Invisible: Art about the Unseen, 1957–2012. His publications include monographs on George Condo, Mark Wallinger and Anya Gallacio, as well as Circus American, Scene of the Crime, and At the Threshold of the Visible.

NOTE

1. See Andreas Huyssen, *Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia*, New York and London: Routledge, 1995.



Gabriel Orozco *Home Run* 1993. Oranges. Dimensions variable. Installation views of *Projects 41: Gabriel Orozco*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1993

AUL ROLLING MAUL ROL



Katharina Jaeger **August Room** (detail)
2012. Textile, foam, wood, found object.
Reproduced courtesy of the artist

HERE AND NOW, we are more aware than ever of how complex our relationships with the structures that enclose and shape our lives can be. Using the built environment as a point of departure from which to explore less concrete ideas, the artists who featured in the Gallery's recent **Out of Place** exhibition all explored what could happen when the usual rules no longer apply—tilting a panoramic view until it threatened to dissolve, turning a room inside out, constructing the furnishings with which to tackle the new normal and revealing a city reinventing itself before our eyes.

Encountering Katharina Jaeger's makeshift, repurposed objects, you could have been forgiven for thinking you were in the workshop for some unusual and mysterious light industry. From suspended forms cut from sheets of synthetic foam to large calico constructions that bore more than a passing similarity to the seed trays used by domestic gardeners, Jaeger's works resembled prototypes for some definite, as-yet-undefined, purpose. Lightweight, modular and easily transportable, they were tools for uncertain times—offering a suggestion of usefulness, support and stability even as the ground shifted beneath our feet.

In a 2011 project, Charlotte Watson suggested the subjective and imprecise connections we have with our surroundings, and how they frame and colour our experience of the world, by fabricating a replica of her childhood home that included only those elements that had lodged in her memory. In **Out of Place**, Watson's revision of a former office space

Out of Place



Charlotte Watson **Büro** (detail) 2012. MDF.
Reproduced courtesy of the artist



Tim J. Veling *Carlton Mill Road, Christchurch, 2012*—from *Adaptation, 2011–12*
Chromira digital C-type print on Fuji Crystal Archive paper.
Reproduced courtesy of the artist

Chris Pole *Dumbstruck* (detail) 2011. Oil on canvas. Courtesy of Warwick Henderson Gallery

Generously supported by Creative New Zealand's Earthquake Emergency Assistance Grant



upstairs in the NG building assembled another imagined space, in which the room was filled with objects stripped out from the walls themselves.

In Chris Pole's epically scaled *Dumbstruck*, what first appeared to be closely-observed realism morphed into something less straightforward. By adopting an abruptly flattened perspective, Pole reframed a meticulously rendered cityscape as an oscillating wall of pattern and texture, with a high horizon-line that only added to the feeling of sensory overload. His painted city seemed ready to break apart into fragments of pure colour, forming a strangely dislocating threshold that had as much to do with imagination and memory as with visual fidelity.

The Christchurch recorded by Tim J. Veling in his post-quake photographs was a city in transition. Taken from a body of work titled *Adaptation*, they captured the unlikely arrangements and temporary accommodations that emerged as the urban landscape began to reset itself and find a new equilibrium. Suspended between the comfortable familiarity of the past and a new 'post-rebuild' identity, it's an environment ripe for reimagining—a world where the sealant used to weatherproof cracks on a supermarket wall starts to resemble an extreme form of street art and a car-park roof transforms into an eerily beautiful municipal water feature.

Felicity Milburn
Curator

Out of Place formed part of the Rolling Maul series and was displayed in the NG space from 4 to 26 August. Rolling Maul has been generously supported by Creative New Zealand.

‘Suspended between the comfortable familiarity of the past and a new ‘post-rebuild’ identity, it’s an environment ripe for reimagining..’





BORING & INTERESTING

Learning from everything

HAS THE IMPULSE TO SURVEY and record the here and now taken on a quickening urgency for photographers in post-earthquake Christchurch? The change that is happening around us is extraordinary and accelerating with a rapidity particular only to disaster and war. And the prevalence and ease of digital technology means that, now more than ever, photography is the tool to document the way things are today, weren't yesterday and won't be tomorrow. Yet a number of Christchurch artists whose primary medium is photography, have, by and large, sidestepped the obvious sense of historical obligation to snap

every swiftly altering vista for posterity. It's a charge best left to photo-journalists, memory institutions and every Joe Bloggs with an iPhone and a flickr account. Artists can give us something more than a visual document.

The American photographer Walker Evans made a distinction between the photographic document and what he identified as documentary style:

Documentary? That's a very sophisticated and misleading word. And not really clear... The term should be documentary style. An example of a literal document would be a police photograph of a murder scene. You see, a document

has a use, whereas art is really useless. Therefore art is never a document, though it certainly can adopt that style.'

The events of history, however, can turn an artist's photograph into a document because we can choose, or are even compelled, to interpret it as a useful record of a place and time long after it was made. Doc Ross didn't even intend his early photographs of Christchurch's central city to be art, as such. In the late 1990s, Ross was making seascapes and abstract images and the photographs he took of buildings and streets in Christchurch were the result of a more reflexive mechanism. By framing the city

Doc Ross Gravestones Building Sydenham Christchurch c.1999. Silver gelatin photograph

‘... recognising the wider, human element ... they seek to make photographs that encourage viewers to think beyond the surface of the picture.’

John Collie No 12 2012.
Digital photograph



through his lens, Ross used his camera to become familiar with, and generate a fondness for, his newly adopted home. The resulting negatives were stored unprinted and unvisited in his archive until March 2011; it wasn't until helping fellow artist Paul Johns retrieve his belongings from his studio and flat in the red zone, surrounded by collapsed and freshly demolished buildings, that Ross suddenly realised he had a collection of recent images of the city that formed an inadvertent historical record. In a similar way to the photographs of Dr A.C. Barker in the mid 1800s, Ross gives us access to a visual treasure trove that evokes the streets and buildings of a lost Christchurch, only this one is sharply familiar.

In the post-quake city, Ross, and fellow photographers John Collie (employed as Christchurch Art Gallery's photographer) and Tim J. Veling (lecturer in photography at the University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts) all consciously try to avoid making 'disaster porn'. They refuse to photograph the obvious and the gratuitous. Instead, recognising the wider, human element in these events they seek to make photographs that encourage viewers to think beyond the surface of the picture.

Ross's post-quake photographs are centred on personal experience and are

keenly subjective and emotionally saturated. In contrast, Collie and Veling strive for a more objective stance, a 'straighter' aesthetic in the tradition of American documentary style photography of the 1970s:

Detachment may seem like a perverse or impossible goal... the photographers of New Topographics were applying practical reasoning to produce unassailably objective images... [these photographs] reconcile beauty and ugliness, love and hatred, progress and degradation, and a host of other contradictions. They epitomize the paradox of indifference in being both boring and interesting.²

Collie, a recent inhabitant of Christchurch, confesses that he has little emotional attachment to the city. His cool gaze reflects an aesthetic interest in once hidden aspects of the built environment: a building elevation never designed to be seen; an abandoned graffiti-marked fridge. This urban decimation and bleakness is captured in atmospheric, almost cinematic, views. These photographs sustain themes Collie explored in an earlier landscape series that framed New Zealand as a green desert, but the environmental activism that motivated that series a decade ago is subtler in this current work, where the scenes of demolition and dumping signal another undisclosed environmental

disaster. Whether on an assignment for the Gallery or propelled solely by his own intent, Collie relates to the moral dilemma of a war photographer, pointing the camera at other people's misfortune. It requires, he says, grit and metal to do it. The exercise of that necessary grit and metal results in powerful, sobering yet unassuming photographs that find unusual textures and a disquieting silence in a desolate environment.

It is Tim J. Veling who sits most clearly within the tradition of the documentary style in the Evans/New Topographics photography lineage, embracing a landscape tradition that eschews the romantic concepts of the picturesque or the sublime. Oddly enough, it is because Veling is alive to both the human experience in this landscape as well as the distortions and easy seductions of the camera and the printed image that his photographs are both 'boring and interesting'. On the surface, there is a deliberate ordinariness to many of Veling's images that is disconcerting in the context of so much ready spectacle. Yet there is a definite poetry here, a lyricism in the carefully observed details, impeccable craftsmanship and sustained formal vocabulary, that allows him to flesh out the psychological landscape.

Before the earthquake Veling was investigating themes of belonging and



Tim J. Veling *Corner of Tuam and Durham Streets, Christchurch, 2011*—from *Adaptation, 2011–12*. Chromira digital C-type print on Fuji Crystal Archive paper. Reproduced courtesy of the artist

home in a series titled *A Place to Stand*. That project now lies unfinished, but it left him well positioned to acknowledge the anxiety of both an imposed withdrawal from a place we once knew well and occupied freely, as well as the slow process of reconciling ourselves to a razed city.

Veling thinks critically about the moment and the image, finding strategies to avoid superficiality, both for his own sake and his audience. To this end, he uses a laborious process and format to deliberately slow himself down. The expense of developing large-format colour film forces Veling to be far more methodical and deliberate in his image making. This supports his effort to understand and convey what is in front of him. He also enjoys a process whose outcome is a physical artefact. This thin, fragile, sensitive piece of celluloid stands in sharp contrast to the cultural and material loss of a significant portion of our architectural and urban history.

The shifting state of this city is too complicated, too dense, too emotionally raw and too important to leave to a single photographer. We need to encourage and nurture a climate of photographic pluralism in Christchurch and stimulate a new awareness of New Zealand contemporary photography. Those who are actively photographing Christchurch demonstrate

that, 'withholding judgement may be used as a tool to make later judgement more sensitive. This is a way of learning from everything.'³

Jessica Halliday

Jessica Halliday is a Christchurch-based architectural historian with a passion for providing opportunities for the public to learn about architecture and the built environment.

Phantom City: Doc Ross's Christchurch 1998–2011 is on display at 464 Colombo Street, Christchurch, between sunset and sunrise until 30 September.

Tim J. Veling's and John Collie's work can be seen in Reconstruction: Conversations on a City until 14 October.

NOTES

1. Evans interviewed by Leslie Katz in 1971, quoted in Britt Salvesen. 'New Topographics', *New Topographics*, Salvesen, Gottingen and Tucson (eds.), AZ: Steidl and Center for Creative Photography, 2010, p.16.
2. *Ibid.*, 2010, pp.36–7.
3. Robert Venturi, Denise Scott-Brown and Steven Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas: the forgotten symbolism of architectural form*, revised edition, Cambridge, MA and London, The MIT Press, 1977, p.3.

All your bringin' is down

IF YOU DROVE DOWN MONTREAL STREET between 18 July and 29 August you would have been confronted by the imposing dual portraits of Henry Jekyll MD and Mr Hyde on the Gallery's Bunker. The second instalment in the **Stereoscope** series, the larger-than-life portraits were taken from artist Jason Greig's 2010 series of monoprints illustrating Robert Louis Stevenson's classic novel, *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*.

First published in 1886, Stevenson's novel has captivated readers ever since; the term 'Jekyll and Hyde' is commonly used to describe a person's split personality. Set in Victorian London the story follows a lawyer named John Utterson, who witnesses the downfall of his old friend Dr Jekyll as he grapples with his demons. The good-natured Jekyll is a temperate character who conjures up his depraved, tormented inner darkness by drinking a potion that transforms him into the evil Mr Hyde.

Greig's image of Hyde in particular is fascinating. Hyde's hissing facial expression, brilliantly mirrored by the snake ornament atop his walking cane, illustrates the moment in the novel when Hyde, overcome with rage, bludgeons the unfortunate Sir

Danvers Carew to death in a London lane:

*He had in his hand a heavy cane, with which he was trifling; but he answered never a word, and seemed to listen with an ill-contained impatience. And then all of a sudden he broke out in a great flame of anger, stamping his foot, brandishing the cane, and carrying on ... like a madman. The old gentleman took a step back, with the air of one very much surprised and a trifle hurt; and at that Mr Hyde broke out of all bounds and clubbed him to the earth. And next moment, with ape-like fury, he was trampling his victim under foot and hailing down a storm of blows, under which the bones were audibly shattered and the body jumped upon the roadway.*¹

In striking contrast, Greig's illustration of Jekyll captures the melancholy mood that consumed the good doctor, Utterson's 'unworthy and unhappy friend'.² The mild-mannered Jekyll appears detached, resigned to his transformation into the evil Mr Hyde, the dominant of the two personalities.

Greig's art is often inspired by nineteenth-century classics such as Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and Edgar Allan Poe's *The Raven*. But also important are the influences of



Left: Jason Greig *Henry Jekyll MD* 2010. Monoprint. Courtesy of the artist and Brett McDowell Gallery

Far left: Jason Greig *Mr Hyde* 2010. Monoprint. Courtesy of the artist and Brett McDowell Gallery

contemporary musicians, such as Peter Green's 1970 lyrics for the Fleetwood Mac song 'Green Manalishi':

*Now, when the day goes to sleep and the full moon looks
The night is so black that the darkness cooks
Don't you come creepin' around—makin'
me do things I don't want to*

Eighty-four years separate Stevenson's *Jekyll and Hyde* and Green's 'Green Manalishi' but they both explore a similar theme—descending into the darker impulses of human nature. It's an impulse that Greig is also drawn to in his art, and one which he represents beautifully in his dual portraits of *Henry Jekyll MD* and *Mr Hyde*.

Peter Vangioni
Curator

NOTES

1. Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, illustrated by Jason Greig, Gumtree Press, Port Chalmers, 2010, pp.17–18.

2. *Ibid*, p.41.



Installation view of Kay Rosen's
**Here are the people and there
is the steeple**, June 2012

AUTHORISED
PARKING ONLY

UNAUTHORIZED VEHICLES WILL
BE TOWED OR CLAMPED BY
THE COLLEGE OFFICE

Telling Stories

From 29 June to 29 July, Madras Street was home to Michael Parekowhai's *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer*. The work, which had previously been seen in Venice and Paris, was visually arresting out on the street, but it was inside the NG space where the carved Steinway was played that the exhibition was at its most powerful. Here, Bulletin talks to two pianists who played Michael Parekowhai's red piano, He Kōrero Pūrākau mo Te Awanui o Te Motu: story of a New Zealand river, both in Venice and here in Christchurch, Rose Campbell and Flavio Villani.

Michael Parekowhai *He Kōrero Pūrākau mo Te Awanui o Te Motu: story of a New Zealand river* (detail) 2011. Wood, brass, automotive paint, mother of pearl, paua, upholstery. Collection of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa

BULLETIN: *How did you first become involved with Michael Parekowhai's project?*

ROSE CAMPBELL: I applied to Creative New Zealand to be one of the pianists in the roster at Venice. The project was advertised online and there was an audition and an interview process involved. Most of the attendants selected attended two-day training sessions in Auckland, which included a visit to Michael's studio in Henderson. We had the opportunity to discuss the work with him and that was a fascinating insight. **FLAVIO VILLANI:** During the end of my Honours Degree in Piano Performance in Auckland, my teacher Stephen De Pledge asked a number of students of the University if we wanted to play for a presentation of a work of art in Henderson that involved a carved piano. I didn't know at all what to expect. I met Michael the day of my performance and at the time I was playing a few Prokofiev and Liszt pieces which he loved so much that he asked me to come again another day; at the opening event I played as a warm-up before Michael Houstoun (quite an honour for me). At the time I didn't know about the proposal to go to Venice, but I looked for the information that same night and, even though it was one day after the deadline, applied to be part of it.

B: *How many pianists did Michael work with during the Biennale? How were your days scheduled?*

RC: There were up to ten pianists in total who played in Venice. Generally each shift lasted for four weeks and each pianist was expected to play for seven hours a day, 10am to 6pm, for five or six days a week. There were more pianists rostered on during the vernissage period as the exhibition was open for longer hours and there were various receptions and events scheduled in. Most came over from New Zealand (although one was already in London so he was able to travel from there). To cover the days when the rostered pianist had the day off, young Italian pianists came in and performed; they

also covered us for an hour each day at lunchtimes.

FV: I would play from Wednesday to Sunday, and as I have a few friends in Europe I decided to do a little something-different on Sundays and invited different musicians/artists to perform with me: one Sunday I had a choreographer from Spain, another one a tenor from Turin and even an occasional flautist from Kerikeri.

B: *How did you start to develop your repertoire for the Biennale? And did you find that the other pianists developed their performances in a similar direction, or did your own personalities come very much to the fore?*

RC: Each pianist developed their own repertoire in their own way. For example one was a jazz musician as well as classically trained, so he performed a range of styles. Some performed work that they already knew well, and others developed work that they knew they would love to play for long periods at a time and that audiences would respond well to. Most of us tried to find a repertoire that was interesting and varied. We also tried to take as much as we possibly could as we knew that we'd tire over a seven-hour period and that our energy would be low at times so we needed music to play that wasn't always too challenging or demanding.

The conditions in the palazzo were really challenging—the people that played at the height of summer were coping with a temperature of 38° during the day. There was no air conditioning and on days with no breeze it was stifling hot. The mosquitoes were atrocious and I had to repeatedly apply insect repellent during the course of the day and cover myself up as much as I could as they bit you through your clothes! I did the last shift and the weather suddenly changed two weeks into the job—the temperature dropped down to 12° overnight. When it got cold the venue was like a wind tunnel to play in and I nearly froze if I sat too long without moving around.



‘I was one element of the chorus, a piece of a big machine that involved two bulls, a carved piano, a bronze man, some olive trees, people, and the story of each of them.’

Installation view of Michael Parekowhai: *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer*, July 2012



FV: Part of it was my classical repertoire which has been growing from my studies on piano performance (Liszt, Prokofiev, Rachmaninoff, some Beethoven, some Bartók, some Bach and a few other composers studied over the years), part was my own interpretation of classical pieces (I found it very easy and beautiful to improvise on Chopin or some of the slow parts in Liszt pieces), and part was originals by me. Of course playing the piano for seven hours every day is a very big deal, so the best way to survive was to have these moments of creativity where I wouldn't tire my arms too much with demanding classical repertoire and could enjoy another side of making music.

B: *How did it feel to be such an active participant in the artwork? In many ways Parekowhai was making a very generous decision in handing such a large part in the reception of his work over to others—did it feel like a responsibility?*

FV: It was a unique experience, greatly influenced by the sight of the people arriving, their reactions, their smile

or sadness in their eyes; everything was ever-changing and nothing was really planned. I was one element of the chorus, a piece of a big machine that involved two bulls, a carved piano, a bronze man, some olive trees, people, and the story of each of them.

At first I was a little bit uncertain on how to proceed with the music, if people would enjoy it, if I would get too tired, and so on. But then I saw it as a privilege to give. I was part of an experience and it was beautiful to see the change in people, and that just gave me the energy to give more. A friend of mine who came to visit had told me I was too generous with my music, but I didn't mind, I didn't get too tired after all, although I would ease the music in the last hour of the day. But every time a group of people would enter, for me it wasn't fair that they might lose part of the experience, so in a way I felt responsible for their journey and I wouldn't hold back. It never overwhelmed me and I was always grateful for the experience.

RC: I understand that Michael's approach to his work is that



once it leaves his hands it takes on a life of its own, and he's not necessarily able to predict what that might be. I think he would have been delighted to know just what effect this work had on people who came through the exhibition as many of them had quite an emotional response. It was a big surprise for most to discover a live performer and a number of people just wanted to sit either inside or out in the garden and listen to the music. Quite a few visited more than once and brought back friends and family with them.

I knew that his concept was that the piano would be heard before it was seen, and you could in fact hear it being played out on the Grand Canal as well as quite a distance up the little alleyway in which our building was sited. So for that reason we pianists felt a responsibility to make sure to play the piano even though there didn't appear to be anyone in the exhibition space as you never knew who might be outside. Sometimes you would finish a piece and stop playing to stretch your shoulders thinking there was no one around, only to hear clapping from out in the garden.

B: *Parekowhai talks of the importance of storytelling in the work. Although it contains stories personal to his family, the piano also describes anyone's river, and the opportunity that it provides for the telling of many different stories is one that he appears to relish. What stories did you bring, and was the music you chose personal to you, or did you choose for other reasons? And did you find that you were required to, or wanted to, interact with the viewing public throughout your time at the keys?*

RC: It was a personal choice and I chose fabulous music that I would want to play for hours on end ranging for example from Bach, Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms, Chopin, Satie, Debussy, Messaien, Piazzolla etc through to a range of New Zealand composers. I always ended the day just before 6pm by playing a waiata to the piano—Dorothy Buchanan's arrangement of 'Hine e Hine'. Then we would shut the lid, cover the piano and close the exhibition.

Michael Parekowhai *He Kōrero Pūrākau mo Te Awanui o Te Motu: story of a New Zealand river* 2011. Wood, brass, automotive paint, mother of pearl, puaa, upholstery. Collection of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa

Prior to going to Venice I did as much preparation as I could including reading the novel *The Story of a New Zealand River* by Jane Mander to try and get an insight into the work. The more time I spent with the piano, the more I discovered in the intricacies of the carving, especially as I had the job of caring for and cleaning it each day. As the light in the room changed during the course of the day you noticed the way the carvings came alive in different ways, the way the mother-of-pearl gleamed and the light shone through the patterning on the lid.

The exhibition was very interactive, much more so than any of the others in this particular Biennale. I talked to a number of people who came through the exhibition and being able to discuss the work turned out to be an important aspect of the job. Some of the visitors were keen to talk about the music but many were just keen to discuss all the art works. We made a point of inviting people to play the piano if they wanted to. They were then asked to sign a special book with their name and the name of their river with any comments they wanted to leave. They were given a special little medal as well which went down really well. A number of children came through the exhibition and one of the most enjoyable performances was from two young German children who played the wedding march duet together. They had performed this for their teacher's wedding the week before.

FV: I would say with pride that not a few people described the installation in Venice as one of the best in the Biennale—and they were French, English, Italian... not just passionate Kiwis on holidays.

I enjoyed being part of a story. Not just my own story, not just the story of the installation itself, and the cross-cultural experience that it brought, but the one of each of the visitors. There were people who came every second day to sit for a few hours, eyes closed. I remember a girl sitting on the bench hugging her boyfriend and starting crying—I didn't know if I should go smoother on the piano or keep the passionate melody going. The same happened to many others, and it was similar in Christchurch. I think there is a powerful element in the whole installation that talks to the unconscious and makes it possible for people to truly stop a minute and reflect. In Venice it was an oasis from the chaos of an active walking city in its tourist peak; in Christchurch an oasis in the ruins left by the earthquake. But whatever the reason, everyone is allowed to speak to his or her own story with more sincerity than normally allowed.



Chris Reddington and Emma Johnston perform in Michael Parekowhai: *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer*, July 2012

'I enjoyed being part of a story. Not just my own story, not just the story of the installation itself... but the one of each of the visitors.'

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY TRUST

We're interrupting the layout of our usual Christchurch Art Gallery Trust page 'Make a donation, make a difference' in this Bulletin for two reasons:

- to summarise the Trust's activities over the last year; and
- to highlight the continuing value of the Challenge Grant to the Gallery's wellbeing and development.

The Trust recognises that 2011/12 has been a challenging year for Christchurch Art Gallery and warmly congratulates staff on their achievements outlined in the 'Year in Review'. It is due to their optimism and formidable spirit in the face of adversity—often at home as well as at work—that the Gallery has continued to achieve its **Outer Spaces** programme, to make great advances on the website and, importantly, to re-enforce its local and national profile over the past year.

We are fully behind the Gallery director in her efforts to ensure the Gallery is repaired and can once more be available to the public of Christchurch and, like her, we hope delays from now on are minimal.

One key function in the Gallery's life that does not come to a halt with the Gallery's temporary closure is collection development. We note that 77 new works have been acquired for the Gallery's collection and the Trust is proud to say that four major pieces were supported by the Challenge Grant, a 10-year

commitment by the City Council that offers a \$1:1 subsidy for donations made to the Trust expressly for the development of the collection.

Generous support from the Andrew and Jennifer Smith Family Trusts matched English artist Sarah Lucas's extraordinary donation of the proceeds of the sale of *Nud Cycladic 1* (2009). In addition, continuing contributions from the Estate of Norman Barrett and a range of other donations have helped the Trust make a difference to the Gallery we're here to support and help grow.

More specifically, donations in 2011/12 allowed the Trust to support the purchase of Colin McCahon's *There is only one direction* (1952); two paintings by Max Gimblett, *Christ in Majesty—after Fra Angelico* (2010) and *Dharma Moon* (2009), which beautifully complement his wonderful gift to the Gallery of 208 works on paper in February 2011; and a sculpture by Michael Parekowhai, *Poorman* (1996), from the series *Poorman, Beggarman, Thief*. The final payment on the Trust's purchase of Bill Hammond's *Living large 6* (1995) was also made and our collection, on permanent loan to the Gallery, is greatly enhanced by this. We all agree it will be marvellous when the Gallery is once more open and these works can be shown to the people of Christchurch, for whom they are held in trust.

The Challenge Grant target for 2012/13 is \$211,000 and we will keep you up-to-date with progress on this page in future *Bulletins*.

Thanks to my fellow trustees for their strong and continuing contributions of time and expertise during 2011–12.

Mike Stenhouse
Chair, CAG Trust

Christchurch Art Gallery Trustees
Chris Brockett, Garth Gallaway, Jenny Harper, Bruce Irvine, Stephen Montgomery, Guy Pask, Monica Ryan, Alexandra Stewart, Gabrielle Tasman

Christchurch Art Gallery Trust continues to stand alongside the Gallery's director and staff to acknowledge and thank the major donors who contributed to the Christchurch Art Gallery building:

Hon. Margaret Austin, Kiri Borg and Brian Henry, Hon. Philip and Mrs Ros Burdon, Philip Carter, Ben Danis, Sir Neil and Lady Isaac, Neil and Dianne McKegg, Monica Richards, Robert and Barbara Stewart, Sir Robertson and Adrienne, Lady Stewart, the Stout Trust, W.A. Sutton Trust, Sir Angus and Lady Tait, Adriaan and Gabrielle Tasman, Jim and Susan Wakefield.

Recent Contributions and Gifts

- Theo and Janet Giesen
- Gabrielle Tasman
- Chartwell Trust
- Andrew and Jenny Smith
- NZ Federation of Graduate Women (Inc), Canterbury Branch
- Worcester Trust
- W.A. Sutton Trust
- Dame Jenny Gibbs
- Thermostat Gallery and Karl Maughan
- Anonymous

Major Bequests
Norman Barrett

Artist Patron
Max Gimblett



Colin McCahon *There is only one direction* 1952. Oil on hardboard. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, N. Barrett Bequest Collection, purchased 2011. Purchase supported by Christchurch City Council's Challenge Grant to Christchurch Art Gallery Trust. Reproduced courtesy of the Colin McCahon Research and Publication Trust
Max Gimblett *Dharma Moon* 2009. Gesso, acrylic and vinyl polymers on canvas. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 2011. Purchase supported by Christchurch City Council's Challenge Grant to Christchurch Art Gallery Trust

CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY TRUST

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

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Please contact the Gallery's director.
Tel: (+64 3) 941 7374; email: cagtrust@ccc.govt.nz

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

A SUMMARY OF THE YEAR IN BUSINESS AT THE GALLERY

O

NUMBER OF HOURS THE GALLERY WAS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Normally more than 2,700 per annum. However, our **Outer Spaces** programme has resulted in 4,093 visitors to off-site exhibition spaces and 767 hours open, as well as countless art experiences throughout the city.



EXHIBITIONS

Despite our building being closed we organised eleven presentations and exhibitions:

Eight **Outer Spaces** projects (**Julia Morison: Aibohphobia**; **Matt Akehurst: You Are Here**; **Wayne Youle: I seem to have temporarily lost my sense of humour**; **Ronnie van Hout: The Creation of the World**; **Elliot Collins: For Those Who Stay Behind**; **Julia Morison: Meet me on the other side**; **Stereoscope: Robert Hood**; **Kay Rosen: Here are the people and there is the steeple**).

Three shows in the **Rolling Maul** project series (**Sam Harrison: Render**; **Georgie Hill and Zina Swanson: Breathing Space**; **Hannah and Aaron Beehre: Waters Above Waters Below**).

One touring exhibition (**The Vault: Neil Pardington**, opened at Rotorua Museum; Sarjeant Gallery, Whanganui; Te Manawa, Palmerston North).

GALLERY PUBLICATIONS

Four editions of *Bulletin* (*B.165*, *B.166*, *B.167*, *B.168*)

OTHER WRITING AND MEDIA PROJECTS

Ken Hall

‘Foy Brothers’ portrait of Ana Reupene Whetuki and child’, *Early New Zealand Photography, Images and Essays*, Angela Wanhalla and Erika Wolf (eds.), Otago University Press, 2011, pp.46–53

‘Ruinous Beauty’, *The Press*, 20 April 2012, GO section p.7

Jenny Harper

‘Art is not above the law’, *Junctures: the Journal for Thematic Dialogue*, no.14, July 2011, pp.27–36

‘Why the doors stay shut’, *The Press*, 19 August 2011, GO section, pp.7 and 9

‘Thoughts on a future for Christchurch: Interview with Richard McGowan’, *Ten Thoughts x Ten Leaders*, Christchurch: Warren & Mahoney, pp.30–7 (re-published in *B.165*, pp.42–7, with edited extract ‘Culture will drive city regeneration’ in *The Press*, 24 October 2011, p.19)

‘Pure magic: Gerrit Dou’s *The physician*’, *The Press*, 29 June 2012, GO section p.7

Gina Irish

‘On the Move’, *Australasian Registrars Committee Journal*, vol.63, December 2011, pp.10–11

Peter Vangioni

‘On view, Rita Angus’s *Wainui, Akaroa*’, *The Press*, 15 June 2012, GO section p.7

8,738

NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO ATTENDED ADVERTISED PUBLIC PROGRAMME EVENTS

PROFESSIONAL ADVICE

Ken Hall

Member, Board of Your Studio Trust

Jenny Harper

New Zealand Commissioner, Venice Biennale 2013Member, Public Art Advisory Group

Board Member, Museums Aotearoa

Editorial Board Member, *The Journal of New Zealand*

Art History

Adjunct Professor, University of Canterbury

PBRF Humanities and Law panel member, Tertiary Education Commission

Gina Irish

Council Member, Australasian Registrars’ Committee Advisor, Artworks Committee, Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology

Blair Jackson

Member, W.A. Sutton Trust

Felicity Milburn

Exhibition Selection Panel, Chambers@241, 2011/12

INVITED PUBLIC LECTURES AND INDUSTRY WORKSHOPS

Ken Hall

‘Portrait of a Slave Trader’, Bishopdale Genealogical Society, 27 October 2011, and Canterbury Genealogical Society, 12 April 2012

Jenny Harper

‘Getting to Venice and beyond’, U3A Arts Centre, 9 March 2012

‘Art Gallery to Emergency Response Centre: Our response to the Canterbury earthquakes’, National and State Libraries Australasia Disaster Preparedness Seminar, Brisbane, 21 March 2012

‘Disaster preparedness’, Museums Aotearoa Workshop, Wellington, 19 April and Rotorua Museum and Art Gallery, 4 and 5 May 2012

‘Taonga to taonga’ and ‘Lessons in collaboration’, Museums Aotearoa Conference, Wellington, 18–20 April 2012

‘The silver lining: what New Zealand can learn from Christchurch’, Creative New Zealand 21st Century Arts Conference, Wellington, 22 June 2012

Gina Irish

‘Documentation review and currency’ and ‘Usability and Maintenance of Priority Lists: A response to the Christchurch earthquakes’, Australasian Registrars Committee, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 9–10 February 2012

Lynley McDougall

‘Art Gallery to Emergency Operations Centre’, Facilities Management Conference: Lessons From the Coal Face, Intercontinental Hotel, Wellington, 6–8 March 2012

Felicity Milburn

‘When everything around us fell: How visual arts organisations in Canterbury responded to the earthquakes’, Contact: Art Association of Australia and New Zealand 2011 Annual Conference, Victoria University of Wellington, 7–9 December 2011

Peter Vangioni

‘Aftershocks: Collecting artist’s books at the Christchurch Art Gallery Library’, Adventure and Art—the Fine Press Book from 1450–2011 symposium, Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne, 9 March 2012

Blair Jackson, Neil Semple, Lynley McDougall

‘Security is not just that—it is also business continuity and disaster recovery’, Protection of Australasian Cultural Assets (PACA) Conference, Auckland War Memorial Museum, 22–4 August 2011

Tim Jones

‘The Advantages of Crowdsourcing: using volunteers to geo-tag an art collection’, Digital Strategies in Heritage, Rotterdam, 7–10 December 2011

COLLECTION

77 additions to the collection, comprising 42 gifts and bequests and 35 purchases

2,578 works copyright cleared

LOANS

8 outward loans travelled to other galleries and institutions

88 Inward loans came from private lenders and other galleries and institutions

LIBRARY

1,925 tags from the Getty Art and Architecture thesaurus created and added to 3,275 works

GALLERY SHOP

The top five best sellers were:

1. *From Mickey to Tiki Tu Meke*
2. *Bill Hammond: Jingle Jangle Morning*
3. *The Press: Earthquake*
4. Gallery cards
5. *Van der Velden: Otira*

FRIENDS

708 members

20 events to enjoy, attended by approximately 723 people

8,580

NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO ATTENDED EDUCATION EVENTS



AWARDS AND PRIZES

BeST Awards 2011

Gold, Interactive—for mobile web

Silver, Editorial and Books—*Andrew Drummond: Observation/Action/Reflection*

Bronze, Editorial and Books—*Bulletin (B.162)*

Bronze, Identity Development (Small scale)—**Ron Mueck** campaign

MAPDA 2011

Joint winner, Magazine and Newsletter—*Bulletin (B.160–163)*

Highly commended, Website—christchurchartgallery.org.nz

Museums Aotearoa Awards

Winner, Innovation and Use of Technology—My Gallery

Winner, Art and Design Exhibition—*De-Building*

WEBSITE

83,724 unique visits to the Gallery’s website. Of these 65% were from New Zealand.

NATURAL EVENTS

841 Aftershocks*

4 Snow days (25 and 26 July 2011, 6 and 7 June 2012)

1 Transit of Venus (5/6 June 2012)

1 Perigee moon (06 May 2012)

* Above magnitude 3, between Lat. -42.99841N -44.25093S; Long. 173.73510E 171.88079W. Source – GeoNet.org.nz

RESCUE AND SALVAGE ASSISTANCE

Gallery staff assisted the following artists and galleries to retrieve and relocate artworks from damaged or red-zoned studios and stores:

Tony Bond, Brooke Gifford Gallery, Eddie Clemens, CoCA, College House, Georgie Hill, André Hemer, Katharina Jaeger, Paul Johns, Tony de Lautour, Marie le Lievre, Robert Tellick, Philip Trusstum

In addition, Gallery staff assisted with: exhibition and storage redevelopment at Akaroa Museum; fitting out and AV gear loan, Chambers@241; transport and installation of *Rhyme nor Reason: Moving On* exhibition, Arts in Oxford; Physics Room renovations; Convention Centre artwork retrieval; checking condition of Pat Hanly’s Town Hall mural.

808.5

NUMBER OF HOURS OF VALUED SERVICE GIVEN TO GALLERY VISITORS BY OUR VOLUNTEER GUIDES

Get on the Property Ladder

Tony de Lautour's Unreal Estate

CROSSING VICTORIA SQUARE on my way home from the CBD on 22 February 2011 was my first encounter with liquefaction on a fairly decent scale. The square was awash with the watery grey silt; as I continued walking up Colombo Street with several hundred other people the liquefaction continued. In St Albans, patches of the grey stuff were rising—swelling up from the depths of the swamp upon which the suburb, and much of Christchurch, is built. This cold, dank, insipid layer of ooze eventually settled all over the eastern parts of the city, smothering streets and sections alike under a filthy layer of sediment.

City Dwellers Must View—it may just Change your Life!

Over the following week I spent many hours shovelling wheelbarrow after wheelbarrow of the stuff from my own section and that of my neighbours and the footpaths and grass verges of my street. Great mounds appeared up and down streets throughout Christchurch, to be dutifully collected by diggers and trucks and dumped on the outskirts of town. Then one day not long after the big shake a nor'wester picked up. I normally love these—a hot wind that will warm you to the bone, a dry heat that seemingly sharpens the senses and picks up the pace of life—but now it blew for a whole night and day, whipping up the liquefaction into an insidious pale dust that must have covered the entire city. The air was so thick with it you had to have a dust mask and glasses to go outside. It was the most apocalyptic vision of a city I have ever seen—a total grey out.

Brilliant Location, Often Admired

The new Christchurch that emerged from the waves of liquefaction and rockfalls was one that had been turned on its head—areas dissected into zones detailing the vulnerability of the land (red, orange, TC3 green/blue and white) and whole suburbs suddenly stigmatised by their susceptibility to land damage. The Christchurch property market suddenly looked doomed.

Very Difficult Decision to Sell

Enormous changes are currently taking place in Christchurch, not just the CBD but out in the suburbs; the surety and security of what was once considered a stable investment—owning your own house, something most Kiwis strive for—suddenly looks a little...

fragile. The CBD is being swept away, swathes of suburbs being abandoned or, worse still, left in zoning limbo-land. Tony de Lautour's *Unreal Estate* publication includes paintings made on found pages of local real-estate magazines that conjure up the physical mess that is Christchurch real estate at the present.

Australia Calls—Owner Answers

So does opportunity really still knock here in Christchurch after these devastating events? Going by real-estate marketing, it would appear so, and who would have believed it?

The Property with a Future: Yours!

De Lautour has long had an interest in the New Zealand landscape and the colonial land grab of the nineteenth century and accompanying surveying have often featured in his paintings: the *Landscaper series*, where landforms are reduced to commercial brands and marked with numerical notations; the use of found landscape paintings of the *Revisionist series*, which often depict boozy, war-mongering lions and kiwis looking for a scrap; the quieter powder-blue works where the New Zealand landscape floats precariously on plywood rafts. *Unreal Estate* follows by depicting the land, land ownership and the marketing of Christchurch's post-quake property market.

Must be Seen, Must be Sold

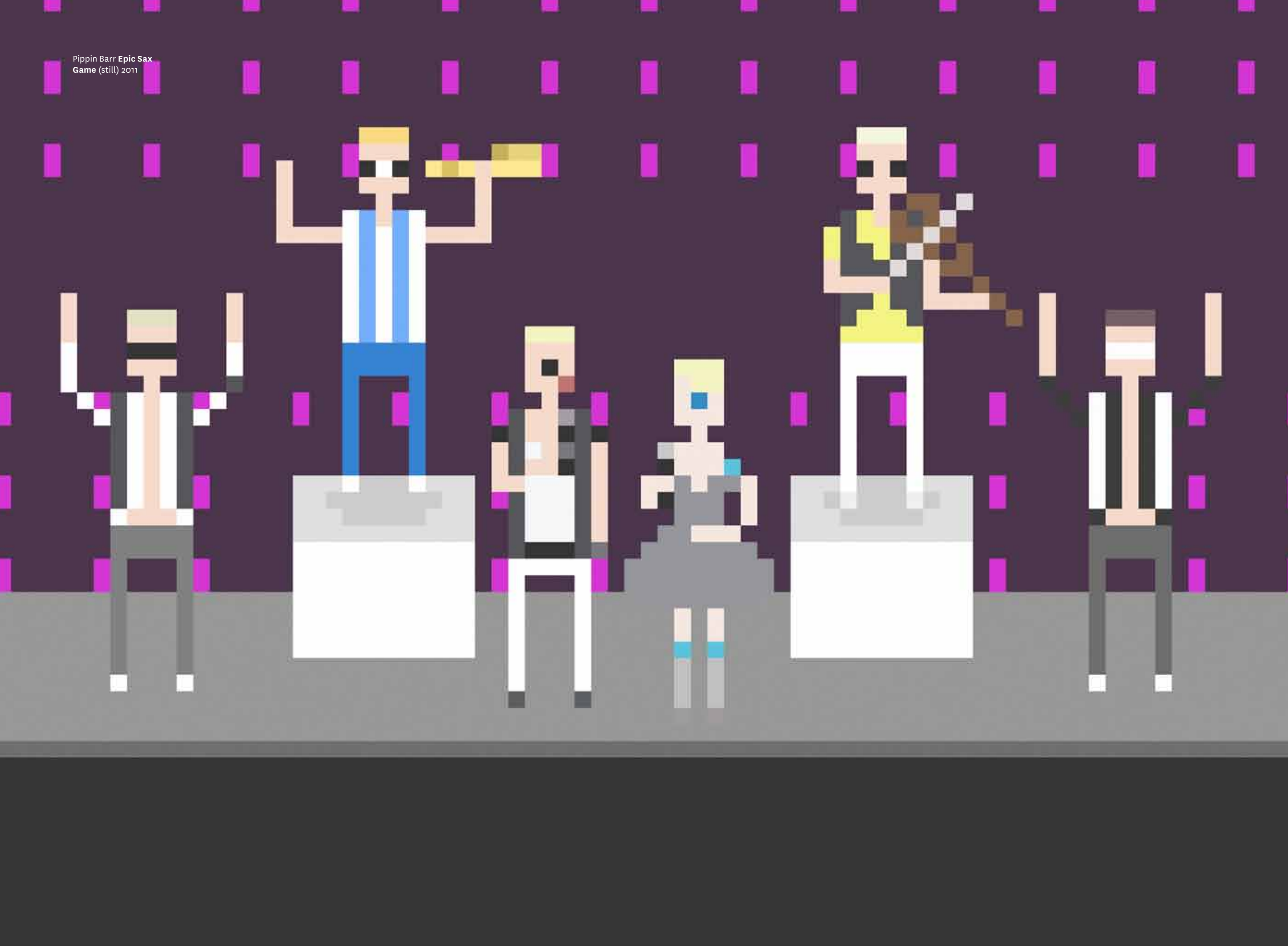
De Lautour also plays on his recent investigations into abstraction in the works. Geometric shapes are at times pre-determined by existing graphic features in his selected pages—design elements such as the colourful borders highlighting a property on offer or the silhouetted outline of a house. But for me the most significant features of these works are the thick washes of paint that cover the surfaces of his found pages, obliterating the properties underneath in very much the same manner that many of Christchurch's properties have been washed away by liquefaction.

Make this into your Lifestyle Dream

Peter Vangioni
Curator

The Gallery has been distributing Tony de Lautour's Unreal Estate publications free throughout the city since 13 August. Pick one up outside selected dairies while you can. For more information visit the website.





GOOD GAME BUT IS IT ART?

Like any young medium, video games increasingly find themselves the subject of that age old question: is it art? Play itself has a strong presence in the artworld, from Yoko Ono's all-white chess set *Play It By Trust* to the amusing interactions possible with Franz West's *Adaptives*, but video games are often regarded with suspicion. Aren't they all just shooting and looting? And even if they're not, how can you tell if they're art?

To the extent that context is king—this artwork is in a museum, that artwork is stuck to the refrigerator door with a magnet—we have some validation. Recently, the Smithsonian in Washington DC opened the *Art of Video Games* exhibition and the Museum of Modern Art in New York held a game-oriented conference called Contemporary Art Forum: Critical Play. And in fact at Critical Play there was never a whisper that digital games simply might not be art at all. Instead it was generally agreed that digital games are a medium of expression, an artform capable of yielding everything from the lame to the sublime.

True story: I was invited to the Critical Play event as an artist because last year I made a game called *The Artist Is Present* in which you attend a digital version of a performance of the same name by Marina Abramović. In the game, you enter the Museum of Modern Art, buy a ticket, and then walk through a series of gallery spaces until you reach the back of a long queue. Then you wait, potentially all day, for the chance to sit in a chair and look into digital Marina Abramović's eyes. When the game is shown in

European galleries the virtual museum is almost always closed because it operates on New York time. You can't get in, all you can do is stand outside the door and wonder what's going on in there.

When I thought up the game I chuckled to myself about the idea of a game in which you just stand around in a queue. But when I actually made and played the game it turned out to be more interesting than that. The act of waiting was surprisingly intense, and the correspondences between gallery rules and video game rules came to the forefront. 'Don't touch' becomes a literal inability to touch any of the art, symbolic tape indicators of a performance space become an uncrossable line, and celebrities cannot jump the queue. MoMA becomes a Platonic museum.

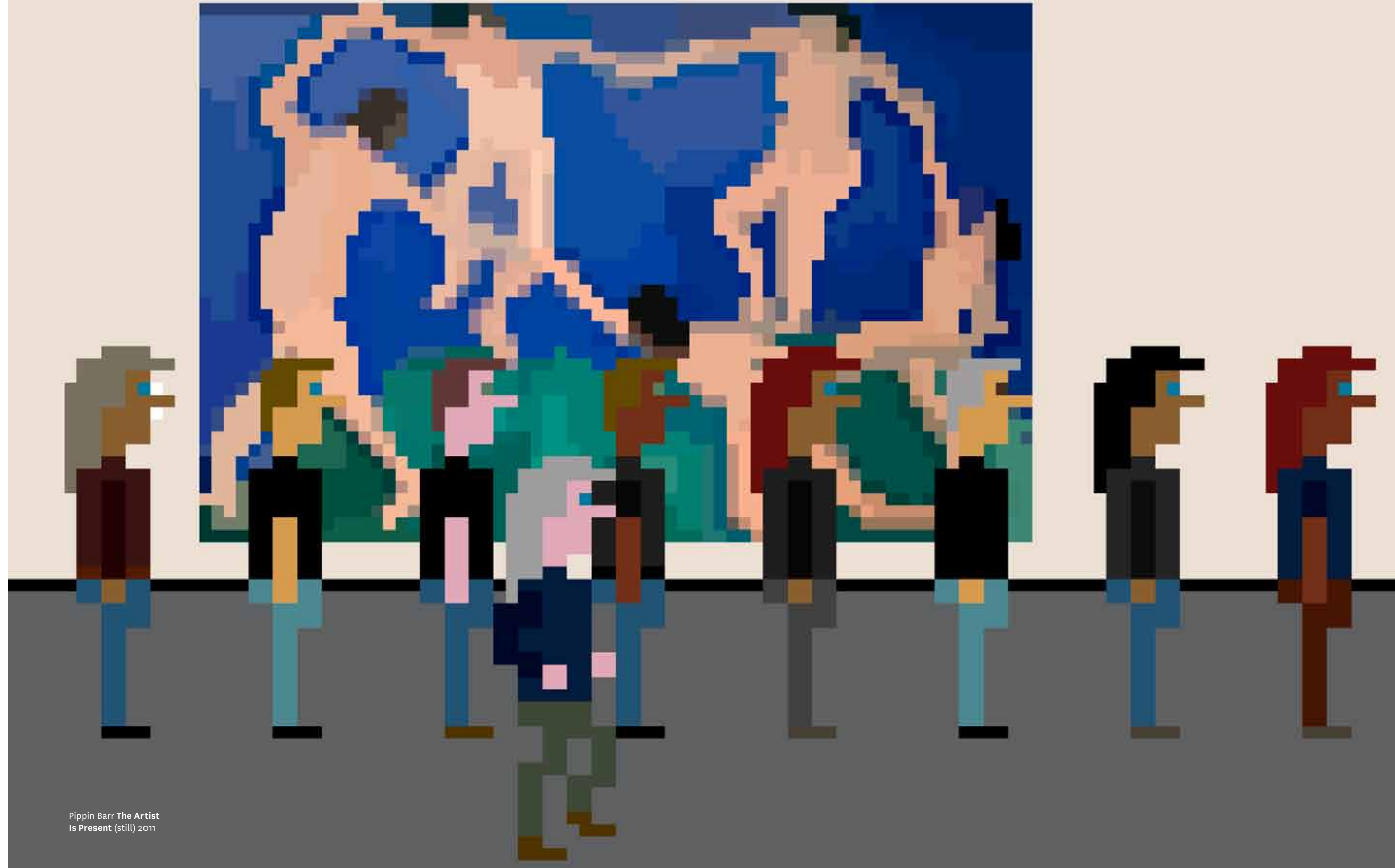
But although *The Artist Is Present* (the game) has been designated as art and is shown in galleries, most of my games haven't and aren't. For instance, I also made a game called *Epic Sax Game* in which you take on the role of a Moldovan saxophone player called Sergey Stepanov (known as Epic Sax Guy on YouTube), living the dream of getting to Eurovision. Trust me when I tell you that nobody called that one art, but a lot of people liked it anyway—even saxophonists.

When I made *Epic Sax Game* I wanted to allow people to have a small experience of musical performance. You can practice the little saxophone solo that the Epic Sax Guy played. Or you can ad lib and express yourself within the six notes available: A#, C#, D#, F, F#, G#. You can play most of the refrain from 'In The Hall of the Mountain King', for example. The virtual saxophone can even play chords.

For my money, it's that playfulness on the side of the player that's the most interesting and creative element of games. When we play games we're not always trying to score goals, shoot aliens, or fast-track our fictional careers. We don't always have to save the universe or rescue eggs from green pigs. We have other options. Sometimes we slip out of the mad rush to victory and find ourselves experimenting, playing, letting the universe go to hell while we dress up in a bright red space suit. These are things that aren't productive in any obvious way, but we want to do them anyway. They mean something to us.

We, the players, are making art in there. That's what should be art the heart of any 'games and art' debate.

'... DIGITAL GAMES ARE A MEDIUM OF EXPRESSION, AN ARTFORM CAPABLE OF YIELDING EVERYTHING FROM THE LAME TO THE SUBLIME.'



Pippin Barr *The Artist Is Present* (still) 2011



‘EACH TOWN YOU SET EYES ON, EACH RIVER YOU FORD, EACH ROCKY VISTA YOU FRAME AS YOU RIDE YOUR TRUSTY STEED CAN FORM PART OF A SELF-CURATED EXHIBITION.’

In *Skate 3* you’re technically supposed to be skateboarding around a city performing tricks for photographers and participating in competitions for fame and glory. But step back only a small distance and you can start to appreciate each movement for itself. You launch yourself into the air, skateboard spinning on all its axes, and float framed against blue skies before landing and swooping off. As you get better at this, you’re not so much skateboarding as dancing with a city.

In *Red Dead Redemption* you’re a cowboy in a receding Wild West who kicks ass and takes names in an exceptionally bloody, almost genocidal, tale of revenge. But you’re also living inside a surpassingly lovely series of landscape paintings created in a collaboration between your own choices and the game’s world. Each town you set eyes on, each river you ford, each rocky vista you frame as you ride your trusty steed can form part of a self-curated exhibition.

In *Minecraft* you can veer away from the more obvious activities of sword fighting with zombies and building castles to take on more personal challenges. It’s possible to replace a mountain with glass, for example, smelting sand into glass blocks and then painstakingly excavating the surface of the mountain and positioning the glass in its place. Then you can sit back and watch the sunset from inside your glass mountain while the zombies stumble and groan outside and know that it’s a beautiful thing.

In many games we find ourselves dancing via the movement controls, stopping to stare at and frame the beautifully rendered world around us, or making our own sculptures with the materials available. In fact, this is one of the best and most foolishly kept secrets of video games. It’s not so much that we should regard games themselves as stand-alone works of art to be placed in museums with game designers credited as artists, it’s that we, as players, collaborate with games to make our own artistic experiences and expressions. That’s what makes games special.

The art isn’t just in the game, it’s also, perhaps much more, in our play.

In *Art Game*, a game I haven’t made yet, you create sculptures with *Tetris* blocks, make performance art as Mario, and paint paintings with *Snake*. After you’ve created a number of these artworks, you have a big show at a gallery. You go to the opening to look at the digital people looking at your work. They ask you questions. They ask, ‘But is it art?’ And you can reply however you like.

Pippin Barr

Pippin Barr is a digital game-maker, critic, and teacher currently working at the Center for Computer Games Research at the IT University of Copenhagen.



Richard Killeen **The inner binding** 2012. Translucent vinyl. Courtesy of the artist. A Christchurch Art Gallery **Outer Spaces** project in association with Christchurch City Libraries

from white darkness

Ruth Watson from
white darkness (detail)
2012. Video installation.
Courtesy of the artist

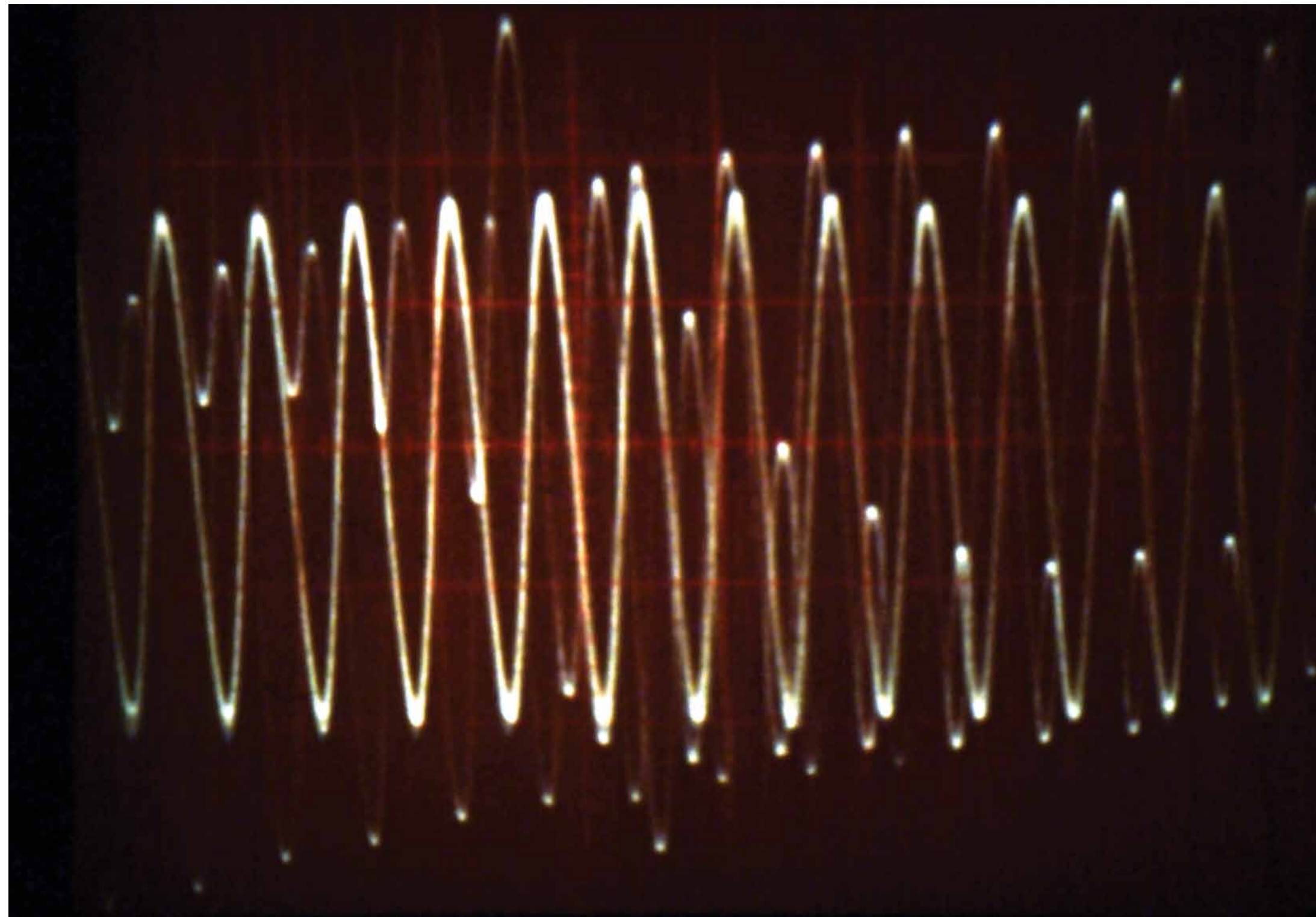
Since she graduated from the University of Canterbury in 1984, Ruth Watson has exhibited widely throughout New Zealand, Australia, Europe and the United States. Her latest project, **from white darkness**, will be presented by Christchurch Art Gallery as part of the IceFest event in September. She talks to curator Felicity Milburn.

FELICITY MILBURN: Since you began working in the mid 1980s, mapping and the history of cartography have been important elements in your practice. Over that time, the popular understanding of 'mapping' has expanded greatly to encompass not only traditional forms but other applications such as Google Earth and the Human Genome Project. Has this altered framework changed the way you work with the subject?

RUTH WATSON: Since all my work—whether with mapping or other topics such as games—tends to be questioning the language or systems used to make its claims, I would never be able to simply embrace a technology and use it for a purpose unconnected to its own systems. And since questioning digital media might mean getting into altering code, something I don't have a background in, that isn't likely to happen overnight. Until recently, when I took a full-time job, I was very poor and DIY technologies were my response to that situation. Today I can engage a bit more with new media, but I'm still in no big rush. Certainly the ubiquity of mapping, as well as maps, is opening up new opportunities, but again caveats may be useful—mapping has a long relationship with control and domination, as I think it tends to move ideas or information from a state of uncertainty towards certainty (or tries to, claims to). It can be fun to get in its way, trip up the process. I'm not sure I wish to become a mapper of new terrains or events, but to put maps and mapping activities under some pressure.

FM: In recent years, you have increasingly subverted the sense of ownership and authority traditionally accorded to maps by constructing your large-scale, floor-based installations from salt, seeds and even the tiny glass spheres used in road markings. What motivates your selection of these impermanent materials and processes?

RW: I think the kinds of materials, projections and distortions I have gotten into were generally undermining or 'playing up' in relation to the large scale, which is often associated with power, whether in cartography or fine arts for that matter—the glass road spheres in *Unsafe* (2007) certainly did that, as they were quite slippery on the concrete floor and therefore dangerous too. Usually each material chosen had either some relation to site or situation. For example, *The Reformed World* (2008) was a floor-based work made in the Viennese winter that used snow-melting salt, and followed from my use of large, crystalline salt for *Cry Me A River* (2002) in Adelaide, which is near areas of extreme desalination. The use of alternative materials was not limited to the floor-based installations, however; *The Real World* (1997) is a globe made from animal tissues in a formalin-based solution and *Take Heart* (1999) in Christchurch Art Gallery's collection used chocolate-wrapping paper. The impermanence had a certain amount to do with my poverty and the DIY methods that ensued, but in relation to the floor works I did like the idea of the map that was swept away, like some Buddhist sand mandala.



Ruth Watson *The Real World* 1997. Animal tissues in formalin-based solution, in perspex box. Courtesy of the artist



FM: You've also utilised projection as a medium—for example, in your 1997 installation *The Developing World at the Gallery's Art Annex*, and in *Swamp* (2011), a night-time projection project originally conceived for the 6th *SCAPE Biennial*, then reconfigured for a silo on Auckland's waterfront following the Canterbury earthquakes.

RW: Originally, back in emerging-artist-land, I loved it that the word projection could cover maps, mental states and moving images. That at the core of every claim to certainty was a mental state, one of desiring and attempting to create a particular outcome (and/or persuade others of those claims). *Planetarium* (1989) was the first time I attempted a moving image work. The potential in the notion of projection

explains what was for others a 'jump' into photography or moving image but for me was just following the scent of the map. More recently in works like *Swamp* I was interested in how a large scale, moving image could act as an irritant—not particularly entertaining, not giving comfort and security in interpretation. Just as well we didn't force it onto Christchurch after the quakes! What I can do in *from white darkness* is to place imagery from apparently different worlds into a state of fusion, perhaps even confusion, so that categorical certainties are again put into question.

FM: Last year, you completed the *Postgraduate Certificate in Antarctic Studies (PCAS)*—a fourteen-week immersion

course offered by the University of Canterbury and Antarctica New Zealand that includes a field trip to Antarctica. What preconceived notions about Antarctica did you take with you to the Ice, and how did they stand up once you were there?

RW: Many New Zealanders have a host of images and ideas based on long exposure to matters Antarctic, a state that is not shared by that many, internationally. I say this based on my experience of living in both Germany and Australia (Mawson's legacy or Australia's newfound zest for territorial matters Southern notwithstanding). What I found was that generalist notions of the deep South, and 'the Ice', dissolved a little and transformed into an appreciation for a

'Many New Zealanders have a host of images and ideas based on long exposure to matters Antarctic, a state that is not shared by that many, internationally.'

specific location, a particular place in a very large continent. So I don't claim to know Antarctica well after only a short visit to the Ross Ice Shelf, and a rather sheltered part of it, the Windless Bight. Speaking as an artist, going there gave me the licence to take some licence—to be able to play with the topic. Having said that, at times I almost wish I'd been braver and made works irrespective of going there, although it's hard to front up to others you wish to gain information from with that approach.

FM: The projection you are developing for *IceFest* explores real and apparent cross-overs between the disciplines of art and science. How did your experiences in Antarctica inform this new work?

RW: I mustn't go into the details of a two-hour argument inside a polar tent with a true blue, dyed-in-the-wool 'science is objective' believer—except to note that even in this post-postmodern world they still exist. But as fun as those arguments can be, I think both artists and scientists are in the business of making propositions about the world. Verifiability is only a part of the process of changing knowledge; perhaps artists then become what are often called blue-sky thinkers, making proposals that others might eventually debate or test. Art—visual, literary, musical—can alter the way people think, and that's a pretty good contribution. So I see similarities where others have sometimes seen great difference. I think attitudes are changing and we're getting into a situation that intriguingly is much more like that of the Renaissance, where disciplinary boundaries were much more blurred. In *from*

white darkness, you can see images that show objects or activities that belong in both worlds.

The title is derived from a complaint Edward A. Wilson (who died in the tent with Scott in 1912) made about not being able to see clearly in a blizzard. I'm using his words as a metaphor for perceiving the distinction between things, with all the resonance the word 'things' can mean today. My job as an artist isn't to tell you what they might be, but to put them in front of you; the final verdict may remain uncertain. So this work may even be a kind of anti-mapping operation...

Ruth Watson was born in Canterbury in 1962 and has a Masters in Visual Arts from Sydney College of the Arts and a PhD from the Australian National University. Recent exhibitions include *Myriad Worlds at Dunedin Public Art Gallery's Big Wall* (2011), *Unnerved: The New Zealand Project at Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane* (2010) and *Better Places at the Perth Institute of Contemporary Art* (2008). Having lived in Berlin, Germany and Australia for over a decade, she returned to New Zealand in 2006, to teach at the Elam School of Fine Arts at the University of Auckland.

from white darkness is on display from 14 September until 14 October, 10am to 10pm, at the Christchurch Art Gallery Outer Spaces container (located near the Tennis Courts), New Zealand IceFest, Hagley Park Ice Station.



EVENT

SUNDAY 23 SEPTEMBER
Artist Talk: Ruth Watson
Ruth Watson will talk about maps, objectivity and *from white darkness*.
7pm / Geo Dome, North Hagley Events Village / free

Ruth Watson *Unsafe* 2007. Road safety glass. Installation view, Two Rooms Gallery, Auckland. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Jennifer French

Justene Williams

SYDNEY-BASED ARTIST Justene Williams creates riotous, frenetic video installations that offer insightful commentary on contemporary media, technology and communication. Well known throughout Australia, her practice has gained prominence over the past few years, featuring in exhibitions at the Institute of Modern Art in Brisbane, the Museum of Contemporary Art and Artspace in Sydney, the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art in Melbourne and numerous other institutions. This August, she ventured across the Tasman to exhibit solo projects in both Auckland and Christchurch. Williams presents three recent works at Auckland University of Technology's St Paul St Gallery and shows a new video as part of Christchurch Art Gallery's **Outer Spaces** programme. Her work is dissimilar to much New Zealand arts and culture in that it is loud, excessive and somewhat influenced by the theatricality of the Sydney arts scene—the resulting audience experience is overwhelming and poses questions about how to make an image in a world already saturated with them.

Williams regurgitates the visual language of consumption, information and image overload to amplify the excesses and wastefulness of society. Her ad hoc performances are enacted for the camera within elaborate yet ephemeral sets. Although these backdrops appear spectacular, they are constructed from inexpensive materials—cardboard and magazines laboriously and inventively crafted to transform the everyday elements temporarily. The makeshift sets are required only to last long enough for the filming to take place and are subsequently repurposed or destroyed.

The materials and concepts in her works recycle high art, popular culture, retail and cabaret, as Williams digs back and incorporates images from art history and advertising alike, with specific references to modernism,

Dada and Futurism. She undertakes her performances disguised in a costume that replicates whatever the surrounding set is made from, literally animating the interplay between abstraction and figuration. Her use of digital collage and sound and video editing enhances the frenzied nature of the works, and this is pushed even further through their maximal installation. Projected larger than life or presented on stacks of television monitors, the bombardment of imagery makes encountering her work an absurd, challenging and delightful experience.

At St Paul St Gallery, the compounding effect of *Berlin burghers microwave Monet* (2010); *4 rock drop-pers and a cubist phone* (2011); and *My boat your scenic personality of space* (2012) being presented simultaneously in the gallery space could be over-the-top, even for Williams—the titles of the works are bamboozling enough. However, to see a range of her works presented together reveals her dynamic process, aesthetic and effect. In Christchurch, Williams is not contained within a gallery, but projected out into the street, competing with the urban environment and advertising that she so often references and incorporates. Keep your eyes peeled for the new **Outer Spaces** project on Worcester Boulevard.

Melanie Oliver

Melanie Oliver is curator at St Paul St Gallery, Auckland.

Justene Williams: *She Came Over Singing Like a Drainpipe Shaking Spoon Infused Mixer is on display at 56 Worcester Boulevard until 28 February 2013. Turnstile Heaped on Pour Down is at St Paul St Gallery until 7 September.*

Justene Williams *My boat your scenic personality of space* 2012. Courtesy Sarah Cottier Gallery, Sydney



Reconstruction: Conversations on a City Until 14 October

In acknowledging architectural heritage loss in this city's present and past, this visually rich outdoor exhibition unfolds the ways in which dreams and values have been given form in our built environment.

Tracking the story of Christchurch / Ōtautahi from its earliest years, **Reconstruction** gathers together a fascinating selection of digitised drawings, photographs, paintings, maps and plans to provide a compelling visual account of how this place came to be. In examining foundations, it also acknowledges loss and, in reconstructing aspects of this city's past, it demonstrates how different dreams and values have been given form in our built environment. Contributions from a range of thoughtful commentators raise questions: can this city be rebuilt as a place of genuine quality and interest if it undervalues the significance of its rich architectural heritage past?



STAFF PROFILE



Ray Welsh

Gallery Shop Manager

In February 2011 Ray Welsh was appointed manager of the Gallery Shop, but poor Ray didn't get to work a single day before the earthquake closed the Gallery. Since then, although the Shop has been the one area in the Gallery that we've been able to open to the public, it's hard to deny that without a functioning gallery, it's tough to be a gallery shop. Suffice to say it was a hard year.

So when the impending repair of our building forced the Shop out of its established

location, and closure loomed again, Ray decided to make a positive out of the situation and look for a new space. As Ray says:

The Gallery Shop should be as much a place for relaxation, enjoyment and inspiration as the Gallery itself, which has been extremely difficult due to the closure of the main attraction. However, we felt the Shop still had a lot to offer, and we have made great changes to reflect our city's new situation.

The Shop is now established in a fantastic new space next to Central Library Tuam at 40 Lichfield Street, and Ray and his team, Karen

Waine and Liz Garland, have made use of the change of scene to make major changes to the Shop's stock. With the loss of the Arts Centre and other key retail spaces, they have tried to bring more eclectic products for the benefit of both locals and visitors, sourcing products from Scandinavia, the US and of course New Zealand. New, exciting and quirky products are what they want to be known for as they write a new chapter for the Gallery Shop.

Pop in and see them. And don't forget you can also shop online at christchurchartgallery.org.nz/shop

PAGework

#15

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

SCOTT FLANAGAN

Known for a conceptually based practice that is often expressed through a methodical and labour-intensive approach, Scott Flanagan has long been interested in the structures and systems that underpin our everyday lives. With *Recombinant Field Data: Landscape, Portrait, Text*, he provides a concrete, if open-ended, form for an abstract idea from contemporary biotechnology.

The term 'recombinant' was coined during the mid-twentieth century to describe how known genetic sequences are spliced together and rearranged to create completely new genetic coding. Combining existing English words, prefixes and suffixes, it is a reminder of how language itself is constantly manipulated and engineered to fit new purposes.

Flanagan's collage elegantly demonstrates just how closely the artist's approach can resemble that of the geneticist or linguist. Recruiting materials—previously used for discrete 'real world' purposes—pages from the British *Artisan* magazine, illustrations from the *Condensed Reader's Digest* and papers salvaged from used cigarette butts—he fashions together the elemental building blocks of his artwork: the compositional ground, the landscape and the figure. Reassembled in a productive new configuration, these once-distinct and separately contextualised materials combine to create an object that is much more than the sum of its parts.

Felicity Milburn

Curator

Scott Flanagan: *Do You Remember Me Like I Do?* is presented by Christchurch Art Gallery at NG, 212 Madras Street, between 1 and 23 September as part of the Rolling Maul series

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

Scott Flanagan *Recombinant Field Data: Landscape, Portrait, Text* 2012. Found magazines, recycled cigarette paper. Reproduced courtesy of the artist



When I was asked if I'd like to write about my favourite work of art in this fine publication I was both honoured and daunted. I mean, other than passing School C Art twenty-mumble years ago and having a strong tendency to doodle during meetings I don't have much of an artistic background with which to form an opinion. So consider that an 'I don't know much about art but I know what I like' disclaimer, if you will.

Even so, I wasn't sure how to choose a favourite. In the end, I simply mulled over what I remembered from my visits to the Gallery and chose the artwork that stood out the most clearly, the one I could see in my mind's eye, and the one that left me with a lingering feeling of curiosity.

At first glance there's not much to *In the Wizard's Garden*, just a girl in a bright red dress standing in a walled garden with a shadowy figure in the background.

In my youth I was a big fan of the movie *Labyrinth* and I think this painting, with its fairy-tale princess and high wall, reminded me a little of that film. If you squint a bit that could be David Bowie coming through the door behind her, if David Bowie wore a hat

instead of a fright wig, perhaps. And like the girl in that film, has she been enchanted?

The thing I like about this painting is that there's a hanging question in the air. Who is this girl and what is she staring at past my shoulder? Why does she look so concerned? Why is the face of the man in the background hidden? What will happen when they meet? Will he tell her off for not finishing her homework? (This was another youthful theory of mine—he's carrying a book, so I thought he might be her teacher.)

I think the appeal of this painting for me lies in the unanswered questions and in the opportunity to fill in the gaps yourself, creating a back story for the subjects. As a writer I have a tendency to want to imaginatively fill these. It doesn't matter if it's the speculative occupation of the person sitting next to me at the bus stop or a work of art, and certainly this one leaves plenty of scope for the viewer to invent a narrative.

So in that respect it's much more than a painting of a girl in a red dress. But what a red dress it is.

Moata Tamaira

George Leslie *In The Wizard's Garden* c.1904. Oil on canvas. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, presented to the Canterbury Society of Arts by W. Harris 1907 and donated to the Gallery in 1932



Moata Tamaira works for the National Library of New Zealand as a web editor and writes a popular, award-winning, blog on Stuff.

MY FAVOURITE

BACK MATTER

A Big Hand (or Five, in Fact) for Simon

We were delighted to hear that Simon Denny had won the 14th Baloise Art Prize at Art 43 Basel. Simon, whose presciently-shaped work *Of course it was* was a gift to the Gallery in 2008, will receive a cash prize, and his Basel work will be acquired and donated to a European museum. He will also be invited to present a solo exhibition at MUMOK, Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, Vienna in 2013. Nice one.



Simon Denny *Of course it was* 2006. Softboard, balloons, rubber, plastic sheet, spray paint. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, gifted to the Gallery by Art Five O Trust 2008



Jason Greig leads a printmaking workshop at CPIT.

The Darker Side of Printing

At the end of July a group of lucky secondary students attended a printmaking demonstration and workshop presented by Jason Greig. If you saw his Jekyll and Hyde works on Montreal Street, you'll know that he is a master of monoprinting, so it was a rare chance to watch him closely as he worked. The students certainly made the most of the opportunity with lots of questions, photos and some intense note-making. In the afternoon the students got to make their own monoprints as Jason guided them through the process with lots of helpful advice and a sharp eye for detail.

Thanks to Jason for the great workshop and to the school of Art and Design at CPIT for providing the materials and allowing us to use their printing studio.

Queen's Birthday Honours

We'd like to offer our congratulations to John Pule and Shane Cotton, who were both awarded the ONZM in June.

We were very disappointed when circumstances (earthquakes) prevented us from hosting Pule's *Hauaga (Arrivals)* exhibition in 2011, so we're very pleased to see him recognised with this award for services as an author, poet and painter. And as this magazine goes to press we're in the process of organising a major show on Cotton, who was decorated for services to the visual arts. *The Hanging Sky* will open at the Institute of Modern Art in Brisbane in December. The exhibition will then tour to Campbelltown, NSW, before coming to Christchurch as a major element in our reopening programme.

Public Programmes Brave New World

James Nairn and the Plein Air Impressionist Movement

Wednesday 5 September

Guest Speaker

6pm, *Imagitech Theatre, CPIT*

Nairn was the father of New Zealand's impressionist movement and gathered avant-garde painters together to develop this unique style. Join art historian Jane Vial as she talks about their spectacularly spontaneous painting, emphasising the works in Christchurch Art Gallery.

Manet: The Inventor of Modern Art

Wednesday 12 September

Film

3pm, *DL Theatre CPIT*

Manet's full story, fascinating on so many levels, had not been told in a major documentary before passionate art lover, art critic and writer Waldemar Januszczak made this film for the BBC.

Suprematism in the Antipodes: Malevich in New Zealand

Wednesday 19 September

Guest Speaker

6pm, *Imagitech Theatre, CPIT*

Join Peter Stupples, senior lecturer in Art History and Theory at the Dunedin School of Art at Otago Polytechnic, as he tells the improbable story of the influence and ideas and images of Kazimir Malevich on the art of a country in another hemisphere, which does not possess a single copy of his work and where his impact was not felt until twenty years after his death.



New to the Collection

Two new acquisitions have been gratefully received recently. Margaret Stoddart's subdued wintery view of New Brighton beach from the sand dunes was presented to the Gallery by William Ainslee Reece in 2011. This is a wonderful example from Stoddart's mature period and complements

the Gallery's collection of works by one of Canterbury's favourite watercolourists. The other work is a landscape by Canterbury painter Archibald Nicoll which has recently been bequeathed by Osborne Alfred Taylor.

Margaret Stoddart *New Brighton* Watercolour. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, gift of William Ainslee Reece 2011

IceFest

The Gallery is pleased to be supporting the public programme around this year's IceFest. This will take the form of a series of insightful free talks by artists who have travelled to Antarctic and produced unique responses to its mysterious and spectacular landscape.

All talks start at 1pm unless otherwise stated. *Geo Dome, Hagley Park* / Free

5 September **Kirsten Haydon** (Jeweller/ Sculptor)

16 September **Jane Ussher** (Photographer)

23 September **Anne Noble** (Photographer)

23 September (7.30pm) **Ruth Watson: from white darkness**

30 September **David Trubridge** (Furniture/ Lighting Designer)

7 October **Megan Jenkinson** (Photographer)

13 October **Laurence Aberhart** (Photographer)

For more information see <http://nzicefest.co.nz/> Supported by Creative NZ

... And all that jazz

We offer warmest congratulations to our former colleague Janna van Hasselt who has been awarded a Fulbright New Zealand General Graduate Award to study at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She will complete a Master of Fine Art majoring in Printmedia. Curiously the fact that she used to work part-time in the Gallery Shop does not appear in the official Fulbright media release.

Of the SAIC Janna says: 'I chose it because it offers one of the top graduate fine art programmes in the US, and their printmaking facilities are extensive. They strongly encourage interdisciplinary study, so I will be able to continue integrating ceramics and painting in with my printmaking practice. I have to admit that Claes Oldenberg and Joan Mitchell being two of their alumni also helped to cement my decision!'

We wish her all the very best in Chicago.

Gap Golf

Gap Filler's mini-golf project is underway with a city-wide mini-golf course being developed by a wide range of locals across winter and spring in Sydenham and the central city. The first two holes have been built by Gap Filler. Each additional hole will be designed, built and maintained by a local group, organisation, business, or school, which will ensure an eclectic design and broad community participation.

This project aims to encourage people to explore the central city once again, with paper or smartphone maps to guide them from each hole to the next. Wherever possible, holes will be located near businesses struggling back to life as the cordon shrinks. Each hole will contain reference to what stood on the site pre-quake so that players can remember what has been lost. For tourists, this course will provide them with a uniquely Christchurch experience but also help them to understand, in a small way, what has happened here.

Putters and balls can be borrowed from various locations or you can bring your own.

There are still pieces of turf available, so if you want to design a hole, please get in touch. We'll give you the turf, some materials, advice and a gap site to work on. Please email trent@gapfiller.org.nz and for more information and locations see www.gapfiller.org.nz



Glad You Liked It

In June and July, Michael Parekowhai's **On First Looking into Chapman's Homer** was the talk of the town. Here's some of the feedback we received.

'Thank you @ChchArtGallery for the Bulls on Piano's. Just the lift that empty space needed.'

'If this is the new Christchurch I'm staying.'

'What a triumph! All the planning is mind boggling. I reckon Michael P could make Art a must do if more people could hear his enthusiasm, unpretentiousness and sheer exuberance, not to mention elegiac vision. Congratulations to all you hard workers who make these wonderful moment occur.'

'Utterly sublime and quite surreal—the beautiful piano gorgeously played and with cranes and destruction just out the windows. Wonderful.'

'Absolutely divine jazz piano played by a talented young woman—on Michael's majestic, stunning piano. And just outside my broken city. Yes please. This is what we need—beauty in the rubble. Thank you.'

'Wow! The photo is sensational! I saw this in Venice and it was fabulous there, even better in Christchurch.'

'Bloody incredible. Only in New Zealand Aotearoa. Christchurch, you can feel the healing as people come in to listen and survey the broken city of dreams. Kia kaha Kia a Kia Manawatu.'

'This has been such an overwhelming experience—the beauty amongst the desolation. Having a pianist and the view of the bulls outside has been, for me, one of the most restorative happenings. It is like seeing old friends, as I visited the exhibition in Venice.'

Gap Golf. Photo: Trent Hiles

Shane Cotton

The Hanging Sky

Since the early 1990s Shane Cotton (Ngāti Rangi, Ngāti Hine, Te Uri Taniwha) has been one of New Zealand's most acclaimed painters of landscape and memory. In the mid-2000s, however, his work headed in an unexpected direction—skywards. Employing a sombre new blue-black palette, Cotton painted the first in a major series of skyscapes—vast, nocturnal spaces where birds speed and plummet. Since then the series has become increasingly complex and ambitious, incorporating ragged red skywriting as well as ghostly 'marked heads'. Combining recent paintings with a spectacular body of new work, *The Hanging Sky* is a new Christchurch Art Gallery touring exhibition showcasing Cotton's faith in painting as a space of possibility and provocation—a place of leaps, freefalls and charged collisions between images.

Accompanied by a major publication with contributions by Christchurch Art Gallery senior curator Justin Paton, New York writer Eliot Weinberger, IMA director Robert Leonard and Monash University Museum of Art curator Geraldine Barlow.

Opens 8 December 2012 at the IMA, Brisbane.

TOURING AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND 2012-13

CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY TE PUNA O WAIWHETU

Shane Cotton *The painted bird* (detail) 2010. Acrylic on canvas. Private collection. Reproduced with permission



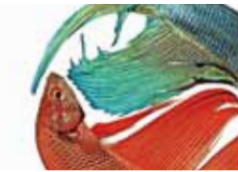
ORGANISED AND TOURED BY CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY
TE PUNA O WAIWHETU IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE INSTITUTE OF MODERN ART, BRISBANE

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: CHRISTCHURCHARTGALLERY.ORG.NZ
OR FIND US ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER

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