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Te Puna o Waiwhetū

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B.

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Cover: Judy Darragh *Pecking Order* (details) 2022.

Digital photographs. Courtesy of the artist.

Photo: Sam Hartnett

Left: Judy Darragh *Pecking Order* (detail) 2022.

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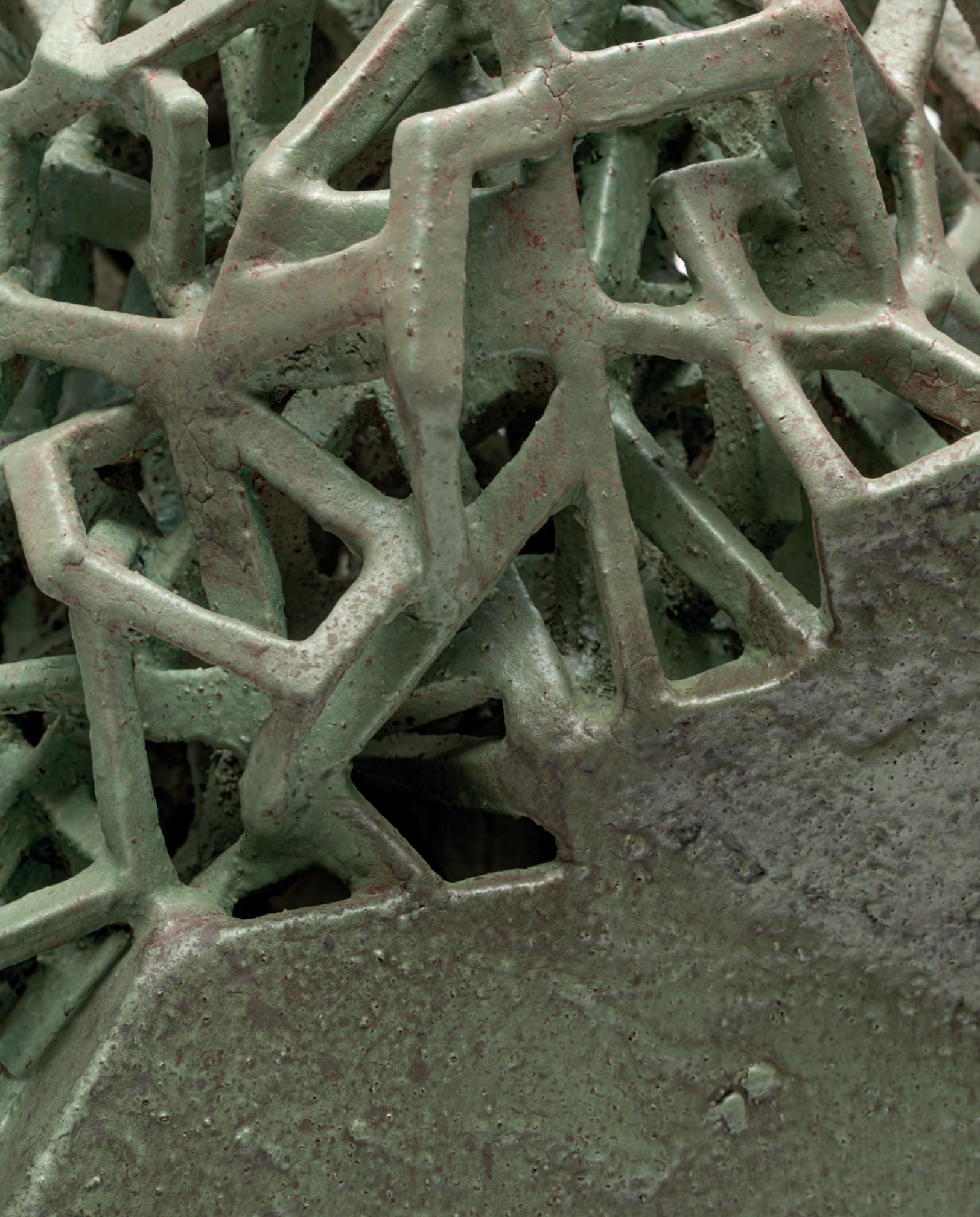
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ALTOGETHER BETTER



B.

04

Director's Foreword

A few words from director Blair Jackson.

FEATURES

06

Pecking Order

Felicity Milburn in conversation with Judy Darragh.

16

New Photographs in the Collection

Four photographers share their thoughts on photography with Melanie Oliver.

26

The Gift

Peter Vangioni on Jeffrey Harris and a major gift to the collection.

34

Improvising Protection

Gwynneth Porter explores Cheryl Lucas's *Subterfuge*.

44

Impasse after Impasse

Christina Barton examines Barbara Tuck's *Iris Gate*.

ENDNOTES

52

The Year in Review

A summary of the year in business at the Gallery.

54

My Favourite

Nathan Pōhio makes his choice.

57

Pagework no.54

Sam Towse.

60

Exhibitions

What's on at the Gallery this quarter.

Left: Cheryl Lucas *Subterfuge* 9 (detail) 2022. Ceramic. Courtesy of The National and McLeavey Gallery

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Director's Foreword

BLAIR JACKSON

August 2022

Welcome to the spring edition of *Bulletin*. In the Gallery at the moment, I am enjoying the buzz created by *Perilous*, our newly opened collection exhibition. In it we explore some of the unheard stories that our collection holds. The exhibition occupies the entire of the upstairs collection galleries, and will be on display until 2024. We'll be using this magazine to explore some of the themes and stories it contains across the duration of its display.

Over recent years we've been working hard to expand our holdings of contemporary photography from Aotearoa New Zealand in an attempt to reflect how this artform increasingly represents a wider range of experiences within our changing country. We've been generously supported in this endeavour by the Friends of Christchurch Art Gallery. In this issue of the magazine we asked a few of the artists whose photographs we're pleased to be able to share on our walls for their thoughts on the artform and their own practice. In a related feature, we hear from Judy Darragh, whose *Pecking Order* is on display on our balcony as part of *Perilous*. Judy's project was born out of lockdown and comprises large images of handwritten lists and bread partially eaten by birds. In conversation with curator Felicity Milburn, Judy talks about the work's origins and how it allowed her to reflect on human vulnerability and the reduced lives we led during lockdown.

Also on display in the Gallery is a major exhibition of work by Ōtautahi artist Cheryl Lucas. *Shaped by Schist and Scoria* features major ceramic installations from across her career, as well as a substantial new body of work that developed from a desire to balance the human need for protection with a wish to take risks and improvise. In this issue Gwynneth Porter reflects on a recent visit to Cheryl's studio to see the new works in progress.

Barbara Tuck: Delirium Crossing is a touring exhibition that samples paintings made by the artist between 1999 and the present, the works selected through a collaborative exchange with the writers of the accompanying publication produced by Te Pātaka Toi Adam Art Gallery, Wellington; Anna Miles Gallery, Auckland; and Ramp Gallery, Hamilton. In *Bulletin* we're pleased to be able to republish Christina Barton's essay on Barbara's *Iris Gate*, the earliest work in the show.

In 'The Gift', curator Peter Vangioni examines the result of a trip he and I made to Gore in winter 2019 at the invitation of Patricia Bosshard-Brown, who wanted to donate a number of works by Jeffrey Harris to the Gallery. Jeffrey is an artist with a strong connection to Canterbury, and it's wonderful to be able to honour Patricia's incredibly generous gesture by putting these works on display here in Ōtautahi.

Our Pagemwork this issue comes from Sam Towse, a recent graduate from Ilam School of Fine Arts, who offers a small selection of photographs that reveal something of the urban fabric of our city. And My Favourite comes from our former curator Nathan Pōhio, now senior curator, Māori art at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, who picks a work that speaks to him. We also include our annual Year in Review, which offers a brief wrap up of some key achievements in the Gallery over the last financial year.

We recently said farewell to three of our outstanding Christchurch Art Gallery Foundation trustees, whose tenures have sadly ended. My thanks to Mike Stenhouse, who steps down as board chair, and board members Gabrielle Tasman and Monica Ryan for their incredible generosity, hard work and long-term support for the Gallery. Charlotte Gray has taken on the role of chair and we recently welcomed two new members, Chris Anderson and Grant Anderson. We are deeply grateful for the support and guidance

we receive from all of our Foundation trustees, who are helping to shape a thoughtful, philanthropic community here in Ōtautahi. For a look at some of the great work of our Foundation please visit their website—www.christchurchartgalleryfoundation.org.nz

It is with much sadness that I acknowledge the passing in June of Luit Bieringa. Luit's impact on Aotearoa New Zealand's art history as a director, art historian, curator, and filmmaker was indeed considerable. Luit, thanks for your fantastic exhibitions, films, support, advice and many laughs over the years.

Finally, as this magazine was entering production we lost another great New Zealander, Ōtautahi Christchurch-born Sir Miles Warren (ONZ KBE FNZIA). Sir Miles was central to what became known as the 'Christchurch School' of architecture, an approach that combined the crisp clarity of Japanese and Scandinavian building traditions with the exposed structures of British Brutalism. One of our very finest architects, we loved working with him on his 2009 exhibition *Miles: a life in architecture*. The Christchurch Town Hall remains one of my favourite buildings, and is always a joy to be in.

PECK ING ORD ER





A Conversation With Judy Darragh

Felicity Milburn



“WHEN I HAVE MY BREAKFAST I CUT OFF A SLICE OF BREAD FOR MYSELF AND ONE FOR THE BIRDS. WE ARE ALL IN IT TOGETHER.”

BILL SUTTON, 1992

Felicity Milburn: *Judy, it's great to be working with you again, this time on a work for the entry wall leading into our new collection rehang, Perilous. It's made up of a frieze of photographic panels combining images of handwritten lists and pieces of bread that have been partially eaten away by birds, and you've called it Pecking Order. Can you tell us a little about how it came about?*

Judy Darragh: Thanks, it's great to have this new work included in *Perilous*, it was already in existence and fitted well with ideas in the show.

Life over lockdown became reduced—we were at home, everything was shut down and it became a surreal and shared experience for us all. While out walking I observed the flourishing of bird life, and I had time to hear and feed them in the back garden every day. Feeding the birds was very satisfying.

Pecking order is a behaviour seen in hens, where one hen strives for status and hierarchy over the others. The pandemic showed how vulnerable humans are, there was no knowing who would get ill... We could get pecked off at any time!

The lists are reminders discarded by people out shopping: the supermarket was one of the only places open. As we queued up outside, orderly and patient, I thought of this action as one giant relational artwork, a worldwide performance of keeping two metres away from each other.

FM: *Did the lockdowns affect or change the way you work?*

JD: Lockdowns weren't great for making work for me, there was too much underlying anxiety floating around as the world plunged into the pandemic. My material supply chains weren't available and online suppliers didn't really work. The supermarket became my default art material supplier.

Some people found it a very creative time, but I found it hard to extract myself from the world news updates, so I walked a lot and tried to read. I thought a lot about the impacts on our creative community and individual artists. The financial support from the government was a life saver.

Previous page: Judy Darragh *Bread Slippers* 2022.
Digital photograph. Courtesy of the artist

Pages 8 to 15: Judy Darragh *Pecking Order* (details) 2022.
Digital photographs. Courtesy of the artist.
Photo: Sam Hartnett

FM: *The lists are fascinating; they're such a mixture of wants and needs and convey something very human about the spirit of that time. Some are shopping lists, some 'to-dos'—others something else entirely! I particularly like the one that just says 'tea wine tissues'. Were there any you were especially surprised by, or charmed by? Any you found, but didn't include?*

JD: Yes, my favourite is 'tea wine tissues' too. I also like the 'exploding kittens' and 'rubbish Glad'. I picked up the discarded lists from around the trolley areas—I had to be quick as they were usually cleaned away. Written on scrappy pieces of paper and card, they are documentary evidence of what was being cooked and eaten. I selected the lists that had some humour, and those with crossing out marks that resembled drawings.

FM: *This work uses found material in the most literal sense. Do you like giving up control/agency?*

JD: My practice is based on the found object... the surrealists used this element of chance and I like the moment of 'the thing' finding you. Art and artmaking need to be surprising—it's joyous when you recognise some 'unexplainable sense' that has come from playing with ideas. I trust the instincts involved in this process.

FM: *Even though you've found the lists, and—for the crusts—outsourced some of the making to the birds, you've still made a lot of decisions affecting the result—when you removed the bread from the birds, which pieces/lists you selected, the scale of the images and the colour fields behind them. What guided those choices? Was there a lot of experimentation involved?*

JD: It started when the birds made me some crusty slippers. I then experimented with different breads—they went for the soft breads first, seeded bread lasted longer. The insides were eaten first, leaving various crust shapes. I could control the timing and bread texture; it was like a game. The backyard became my studio.

The fluorescent backgrounds take the crusts out of the everyday, the scaling up of the lists shifts them into non-human form, and the written text becomes more graphic. The seeds and grain are gigantic, resembling rocky landscapes with caves and caverns.

Bread was like a call to calm as everyone was baking and hoarding flour. Our daily bread became a comfort. I roamed the supermarket isles looking for a range of grains and softness; I was excited by bread, there are so many varieties, buns, grains, gluten, textures and colour. Tortillas worked well too, as the birds pecked from around the edges in a circular motion leaving their delicate beak marks.

Kumara
Potatoes

Bread

Thyme

Onions

Butter x 2

Sunni

shrimp

Ginger

Apricot Jam

Pineapple Rings

Brown Sugar

Tooth Picks

Cream

Cocoa

Berries

1 Strawberry

1 Blue Berries

1 Raspberries



tea
<
wine
tissues

FM: *Our exhibition Perilous is about what can happen when we widen our gaze beyond conventional art narratives. You've long been engaged with challenging hierarchies and ideas about what art should/could be. Was that a conscious part of your thinking when making this work, or does it just come naturally by now?*

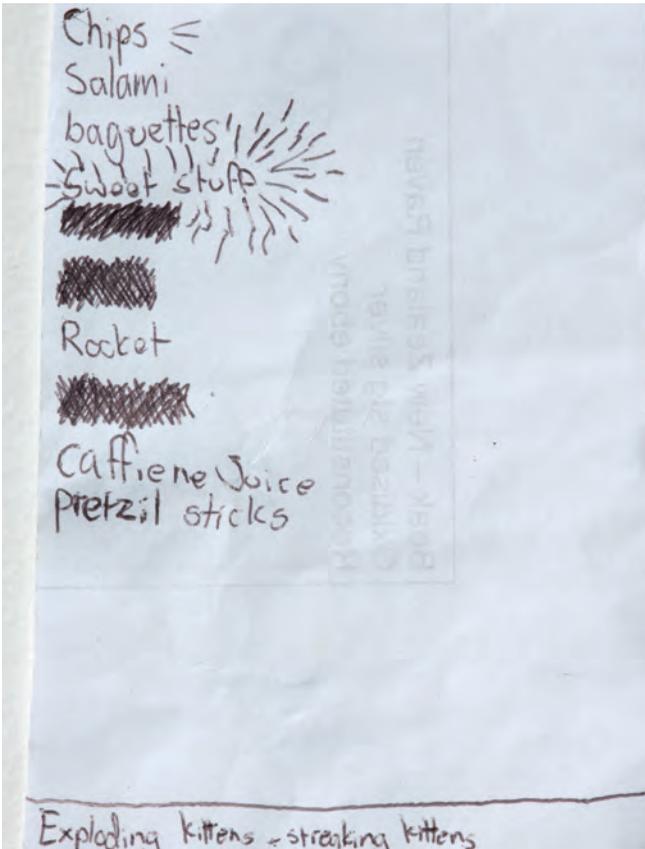
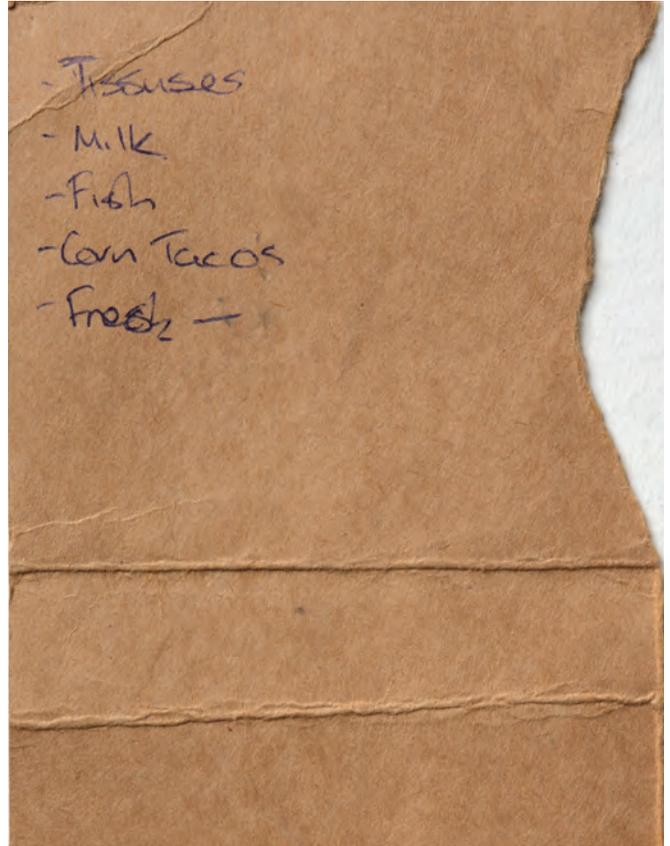
JD: I came to artmaking from a design school perspective not fine art, which has given me freedoms. Teaching has given me the confidence to challenge what art actually is, as I try to encourage students to take risks. I embrace risk—you either succeed or you fail, and we learn more from failing. I think this is embedded in my practice now, so I don't overthink it any more. I'm interested in the collective and advocacy; artists can be romanticised as the lone individual, but this doesn't serve the community. We need to support each other. Being involved in artist-run initiatives has taught me the strength there is in numbers.

FM: *The title of the larger show (Perilous) relates to the complexity of attempting to rebalance some of the traditional biases that have applied to art, and also acknowledges that many of the artists involved are making work that involves risk—either because it's very personal, or dealing with contentious issues, or saying things in a new way. What part does bravery play in your practice?*

JD: I was lucky to be in the slipstream of feminism, I saw brave women a generation ahead of me calling out the patriarchy. I was also at the tail end of punk and loved the freedom in challenging the establishment, which informed me politically and personally. Art should push the edges, challenge our thinking and present new ways of looking at ideas. As artists we have a 'practice', which suggests that if you keep working you get better, and hopefully you do get more confident and braver. Not only is the artist's life perilous, it is also precarious financially, as there is no regular income from art making. Making art is a brave thing.

Judy Darragh spoke to Felicity Milburn in June 2022. Pecking Order is on display as part of Perilous: Unheard Stories from the Collection.

**“ART SHOULD PUSH THE EDGES,
CHALLENGE OUR THINKING AND
PRESENT NEW WAYS OF LOOKING
AT IDEAS.”**



New Photographs in the Collection

Our new collection exhibition *Perilous: Unheard Stories from the Collection* features a number of newly acquired works from Aotearoa New Zealand artists that expand our contemporary photographic collection. Melanie Oliver asked a few of these artists to share their thoughts on photography and the works that have found a new home at Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū.

Louisa Afoa Aotearoa/Samoa

Both the history of art and the camera as a tool are important for your work. Are you able to share a bit about your relationship with the technology of photography and why you favour this medium?

When I was in art school I took a photograph of my younger cousin with a medium-format Hasselblad—I remember being so happy with that photograph. However when it was critiqued by my peers I was told that it looked like a mugshot. It was then that I truly discovered the power and politics of representation. And so photography became my chosen medium as I investigated how I could make images with a compassionate lens, without anyone calling my family images mugshots ever again.

There are some consistent narratives or areas of interest in your practice, in particular a focus on reflecting your community. When starting a new body of work, what inspires you or how do you approach this?

I work in a responsive way, so usually my work is inspired by my friends and family around me and how they navigate the daily grind.

In relation to the photograph that we have recently acquired for the collection, *Blue Clam*, is there anything that you'd like audiences to know when they see the work?

Blue Clam is from an ongoing series of work titled *A Pool is not the Ocean*. This series was begun as a response to my experiences in moving from my family home in Papakura to Torbay on Auckland's North Shore,

and the prejudice I experienced there. Now it continues as a vehicle to explore notions of the indigenous body as a political site. Moving from behind the lens to being in front of it was incredibly difficult for me as I struggled with the possibility of being a negative stereotype for my people—another bad health statistic that could be weaponised against myself and my family.

However, going back to the writing of Epeli Hau'ofa and the ideas of vastness and sovereignty in his text, 'Our Sea of Islands', the need to assert my autonomy in the world became more important to me than the potential for criticism.

*Oceania is vast, Oceania is expanding, Oceania is hospitable and generous, Oceania is humanity rising from the depths of brine and regions of fire deeper still, Oceania is us. We are the sea, we are the ocean, we must wake up to this ancient truth and together use it to overturn all hegemonic views that aim ultimately to confine us again, physically and psychologically, in the tiny spaces which we have resisted accepting as our sole appointed place, and from which we have recently liberated ourselves. We must not allow anyone to belittle us again, and take away our freedom.*¹

¹ Epeli Hau'ofa, 'Our Sea of Islands', in Vijay Naidu, Eric Waddell, and Epeli Hau'ofa (eds.), *A New Oceania: Rediscovering Our Sea of Islands*, Suva: School of Social and Economic Development, The University of the South Pacific, 1993.

Ngahuia Harrison

Ngātiwai, Ngāpuhi

Both the history of photography and the camera as a tool are important for your work. Are you able to share a bit about your relationship with the technology of photography and why you favour this medium?

My interest in large-format photography started when I took a course at art school taught by Haru Sameshima and Darren Glass. I remember Haru explaining that when using a large-format camera he might only have taken one or two photos after a day of shooting. I liked that the technology made you slow down, not only in the shooting, but also because as an analogue process you have to wait to develop the film. The development process itself takes time, and then you wait for the negatives to dry before you can scan or expose them. The whole process is slow and has particular steps you have to follow and I was drawn to this. Artmaking can contain a lot of insecurity or not-knowing, so I like that working in photography has a routine and a rhythm to it.

There are some consistent narratives or areas of interest in your practice, in particular a focus on your whānau and relationships to water. When starting a new body of work, what inspires you or how do you approach this?

My grandparents both whakapapa to coastal iwi in Northland. My Nan grew up on the Waikere Inlet, by Russell. My Grandad lived on Aotea (Great Barrier Island) and at the coastal settlement Whananaki, both kāinga of our hapū Ngāti Rehua. Whananaki is where they settled and brought their kids up near our marae. They both whakapapa to the coastal iwi Ngātiwai; the importance of water to the tribe is carried in our name. We have many pepeha, songs, proverbs that highlight the importance of water to who we are, such as ‘Ko ngā mana katoa o Ngātiwai kei te wai, i ngā taniwha me o ratou manawa’ (‘All the power of Ngātiwai comes from the sea, from its guardian taniwha and their spiritual force’). So this is where I start from when thinking about bodies

of water and our relationship to them. The centuries we have occupied our environment affect the way we see ourselves today and how we relate to our coast, which we call Te Akau Roa o Ngātiwai. Another whakataukī that exemplifies this was spoken by our tūpuna Manaia who said “Ahakoa e tū ana ki te whenua, e noho ana au ki te moana”—“though you stand on land, you also sit on the sea”. This proverb speaks to the fact that when you are in Ngātiwai territory you are never far from the sea, but also to the longing Manaia’s descendants would feel when they are away from their ocean.

In relation to the photographs that we have recently acquired for the collection, *Aunty Reo* and *Te Wairahi*, is there anything that you’d like audiences to know when they see the work?

Aunty Reo was made for an exhibition at the Adam Art Gallery, which included Ana Iti, Raukura Turei and Nova Paul. The exhibition coincided with Suffrage 125. It was the first time I had considered my work within a lens of intersectional feminism in any focused way. So it was an opportunity to make work in response to this. At the same time I had been working with one of our Aunties to pull together photos of our tūpuna that people might have had in their homes, so we could make copies and put them in our new whareniui. I realised as we were travelling around doing this that all the people that had these photo collections and were caring for them were all our kuia. So it started by wanting to photograph and document these kaitiaki at the same time they showed us through their photo collections. Of course the photos we were copying from their archives were of our dead, and the photos I was taking are of the living. So there are these two threads of living and dead in the project, two realms which at the same time as being very separate worlds, also co-exist. The work *Te Wairahi*, which depicts our awa in Whananaki is also echoing this idea of two worlds that co-exist.



Louisa Afoa *Blue Clam* 2018. Digital photograph. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, purchased 2021



Ngahua Harrison *Aunty Reo* 2018. Large-format photograph. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, purchased 2022

Bridget Reweti

Ngāti Ranginui, Ngāi Te Rangi

Both the history of photography and the camera as a tool are important for your work. Are you able to share a bit about your relationship with the technology of photography and why you favour this medium?

I've always loved the process of harnessing light to create an image. Like many things in life, it's a science that is wondrous with many different applications. Currently I'm interested in the camera technology that was used during the early 1900s in Aotearoa. The images made during this time are indicative of massive loss, often made under exploitative circumstances, but within the complexity of life they are now really treasured. I often like to think what images we would have from these times if someone like myself was behind the lens.

There are some consistent narratives or areas of interest in your practice, in particular a focus on land. When starting a new body of work, what inspires you or how do you approach this?

Projects are often ticking away in my mind and when I do get the opportunity to work on them, there's usually already a substantial amount of research. I'm often inspired to begin a body of work after talking with people but know it's really important to not tell narratives that are not mine to tell. I find this intersection of living away from my own rohe and working with land a good challenge. Forming a connection back to who and where I'm from is paramount and also exciting because it helps to reveal layers of histories and travel.

In relation to the photographs that we have recently acquired for the collection, from the *Summering on Lakes Te Anau and Manapouri* series, is there anything that you'd like audiences to know when they see the work?

I had so much fun making these photographs, spending the summer of 2020/21 staying at a friend's home in Te Anau and traveling with family and friends to different locations with my large-format camera. These photographs are hand-coloured using pigment collected from around the shores of the lakes. I want audiences to almost be able to feel the warmth of light that is contained within the photos and the range of colours within the lands we call home.

Edith Amituanai Aotearoa/Samoa

Both the history of photography and the camera as a tool are important for your work. Are you able to share a bit about your relationship with the technology of photography and why you favour this medium?

I have described on a few occasions my finding of the medium that best suited me through a process of art school elimination; I think the camera separates you, and I really need that distance to see what I'm trying to do. I heard a saying about photography, 'slow, slow, quick'—the making of a photograph can be very quick after the shutter is pushed but, for me especially, the before is very slow. Regarding the history, finding out what was made before your time and what's current now is crucial, I mean how can you not? I often say to my students, it's like saying you love music but you never listen to musicians and you can't name a song that is part of your life's soundtrack.

There are some consistent narratives or areas of interest in your practice, in particular a focus on communities and giving agency to your subjects. When starting a new body of work, what inspires you or how do you approach this?

I think I am consistently drawn to the unseen, overlooked and misunderstood, whether that is done in public or private, from living rooms to parks. In particular, things that we might think we know, have read about but lack a kind of clear visual language in our minds. That might mean making photographs of young people hanging out in public spaces, in front of train stations and shops on the suburban streets of

Auckland. Or it could mean photographing living rooms with a kind of Pacific migrant aesthetic or loud siren speakers stacked on top of cars. My aim is not really about agency—that might imply that I do not benefit from the relationship which is not true—but I do think about the duty of care once I decide to focus on something. Mostly I think it starts with asking, what do I want to focus on and how can I take care of that and at the same time push past what's easy?

In relation to the photographs that we have recently acquired for the collection, a couple of works from your *The End of my Driveway* series, is there anything that you'd like audiences to know when they see the work?

In this series, the camera vantage point moves around on the driveway. I remember standing on the driveway and physically I could not stay in one place—I was only allowing myself to photograph one frame per person but I just couldn't wait for the action to come to me and I had to move to it. The process of making work is so funny, these rules you make up for yourself and the things you do and won't do.



Bridget Reweti 4860 SATURATED IN SCENERY 2021. Whenua coloured silver gelatin print. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, purchased 2022



Edith Amituanai *Hendo* 2011. Digital photograph, mounted on diabond. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, purchased 2022

The Gift

Peter Vangioni

I was born in Akaroa and grew up on Banks Peninsula. My parents have a farm there. I went to high school in Rangiora, then worked in Christchurch for three years before going to Dunedin. I grew up in a fairly isolated environment. In my three years in Christchurch nothing really happened to me. There were no outward changes in my life. I had no friends there. I was quite alone—and I started to paint.¹

When painter Jeffrey Harris was asked to describe his artistic beginnings his response showed a strong connection to the Canterbury region, for both good and bad. So when Patricia Bosshard-Browne invited Gallery director Blair Jackson and me to visit Gore to look at a selection of art by Jeffrey that she wanted to gift to Christchurch Art Gallery we were excited, making the journey to the Eastern Southland Gallery to meet Patricia and Kobi Bosshard during a bitterly cold winter's day in 2019. The gift that Patricia made as a result was an incredibly generous gesture and one that we were delighted to accept.

Patricia has long been one of Jeffrey's most ardent supporters, both exhibiting his work in one of New Zealand's pioneering dealer galleries, the Bosshard Gallery, and purchasing works for her personal collection. Patricia, Kobi and their young family moved to Akaroa in 1967 and Kobi established his jewellery studio; in 1970 Patricia opened the first iteration of her gallery in Akaroa's disused powerhouse.



Jeffrey Harris *Untitled from the Judith series* 1979. Conté and ink on paper. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, gift of Patricia Bosshard-Browne, 2019



Jeffrey Harris *Untitled* 1970. Pastel and acrylic on paper. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, gift of Patricia Bosshard-Browne, 2019

Originally known as the Rue Pompallier Gallery, she set about establishing what was to become one of New Zealand's foremost dealer galleries in this sleepy rural town, known more for its commercial fishing and farming than as a cultural centre. Yet Akaroa Harbour drew numerous creatives and their families in the early to mid 1970s, including Philip Trusttun, Bill Hammond, Joanna Margaret Paul and Laurence Aberhart.

Considering its location in a rural South Island backwater, the Bosshard Gallery was ambitious from the start, and sought to be a gallery of national, rather than simply regional, importance. Patricia began exhibiting work by some of New Zealand's leading artists of the time, including Philip Trusttun, Ralph Hotere, Leo Bensemann, Doris Lusk, Trevor Moffitt, Bill Sutton and Tony Fomison. The late Quentin MacFarlane fondly remembered taking Tony over to Akaroa for his opening at the Gallery in 1971, recalling the artist's sense of anticipation as they drove over the Hilltop and the Long Harbour came into view. According to Quentin the Bosshard Gallery openings were some of the best, offering an opportunity for the Canterbury arts community to come together in a beautiful location away from the city. In 1976 the Bosshards relocated to Dunedin where Patricia initially opened the gallery on Princess Street before settling on the space on Dowling Street in 1978 where she remained until 1992. The first exhibition held at Dowling Street was fourteen of Jeffrey's extraordinary

Conté drawings from the *Judith* series, two of which are included in the gift and are Patricia's personal favourites. She initially attempted to sell these as one group to keep them together but, with no buyer willing to commit, she reluctantly had to sell them individually. Among the artists shown here along with Jeffrey were Marilyn Webb, Pat Hanly, Philip Trusttun, Gordon Walters, Milan Mrkusich, Joanna Margaret Paul, Neil Dawson and Billy Apple. It is interesting to note that her space on Dowling Street has continually operated as a dealer gallery from 1978 to this day, including as No. 5 Gallery and the Brett McDowell Gallery.

Jeffrey was first invited to hold an exhibition of paintings and drawings with Patricia at the Rue Pompallier Gallery in 1971. His father, Henry, who farmed across the harbour at French Farm, visited the gallery to see his son's art. His question to Patricia on this visit was "Is it any good?" to which he got a resounding "Yes". Jeffrey is an artist whose work Patricia has continued to respond to strongly since this time, and over forty-five years she has regularly acquired drawings and paintings from the artist. This, she says, was "not by following any plan or strategy but by trusting my own eyes and drawing on my intuitive response to each work."²

One of the earliest works in the gift, *Untitled* (1970), dates from the very beginning of Jeffrey's career. The human figure has been ever present in Jeffrey's work, here it is a lone woman standing in a rural landscape. It's a motif that he has returned to







Jeffrey Harris *Untitled from the Imogen's Grave series* 1977. Pastel and acrylic on paper. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, gift of Patricia Bosshard-Browne, 2019

Previous spread: Jeffrey Harris *Call It a Loan (detail)* 1981. Oil on canvas. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, gift of Patricia Bosshard-Browne, 2019

throughout his career and one that he continues to explore in his most recent work from his Dunedin studio. The trees, flowers and grass are evocatively naïve and highlight the largely self-taught nature of his art, where art books replaced art school tutors and he explored his own highly personal imagery and techniques. When interviewed in *Art New Zealand* in 1981 he stated “It’s never just a landscape. My landscapes are always populated. And it’s normally the people in it that give the picture its meaning.”³

The painting *Untitled from the Imogen’s Grave series* (1977) depicts the pristine white headstone of Jeffrey’s and Joanna Margaret Paul’s infant daughter Imogen Rose Harris at the Catholic cemetery in Akaroa. Imogen was born at Barrys Bay in February 1976, diagnosed with a heart condition, and tragically died before the year was out. The grief of a parent who has lost a baby daughter is expressed through the headstone in the centre of the work, which is enveloped within a bleeding heart balanced on a cup. It’s a work loaded with symbolism; the headstone and heart flanked by two trees set against the harbour landscape. This work is one of a number Jeffrey created in pastel and acrylic on paper in memory of his daughter that culminated in several large oil paintings. Jeffrey’s drawings and paintings, along with Joanna’s incredibly moving book of poems titled *Imogen* from 1978, display the deep sorrow of both parents at losing their daughter.

The major work in Patricia’s gift is the oil painting *Call It a Loan* (1981), which features several figures, their faces painted in detail but their bodies simply outlined. It’s a difficult painting to read let alone describe. It demands that the viewer spend time looking and leaves me questioning the intent or meaning behind it. A woman kneels over a fallen

man, dogs stand by—what do they symbolise? I come away with more questions than answers. It is painted in a beautiful combination of solid colours; blue, red, green; brown and red outlines; the faces are ‘finished’, the bodies not, parts of the painting are left blank. It is expressive and intense—a wonderful painting and an important addition to Christchurch Art Gallery’s collection.

Talking of Jeffrey’s art, Patricia stated, “I have now lived with these drawings and paintings for more than forty years. During this time they have always enriched my life and continue to do so. This to me is the measure of great art.”⁴

Jeffrey Harris: The Gift provides an opportunity for the Gallery to acknowledge with thanks this very generous gift of eight paintings and drawings from Patricia Bosshard-Browne and one drawing from Kobi Bosshard. They will be complemented by several paintings and etchings by Jeffrey already held in the Gallery’s collection, including two recently acquired paintings completed at Barrys Bay in 1975. Patricia’s gift has enabled the Gallery to more fully represent Jeffrey’s work as an artist and acknowledge his strong connections to the Canterbury region and the South Island.

Peter Vangioni

Curator

*Jeffrey Harris: The Gift is on display from
1 October 2022 until 12 March 2023.*

¹ ‘A Conversation with Jeffrey Harris’, *Art New Zealand* 18, summer 1981, p. 22.

² *Jeffrey Harris: Selected Works from the Bosshard-Browne Collection*, Eastern Southland Gallery, Gore, 2015, np.

³ ‘A Conversation with Jeffrey Harris’, p. 27.

⁴ *Jeffrey Harris: Selected Works from the Bosshard-Browne Collection*, np.

Improvising Protection: Cheryl Lucas's *Subterfuge*

GWYNNETH PORTER

Cheryl Lucas *Subterfuge 12* (detail) 2022. Ceramic.
Courtesy of The National and McLeavey Gallery



It is mid-winter, and Cheryl Lucas is making work right down to the wire. The survey *Shaped by Schist and Scoria* opens at the end of August, and she has been working without a break since being awarded the Creative New Zealand Craft/Object Fellowship in 2019. This timespan, which will be inevitably thought of as the start of the Covid years, saw Lucas develop a new body of work that responded to a deep need, personal and societal, for protection *while continuing to take risks*. Protection from contagions, from financial hardship, food insecurity, the cost of living, global warming, economic recession and the violence that invariably attends disasters, big and small. Protection from whatever is coming at you. But not to deflect it, to integrate it, to use it as fuel. Grist to the mill.

This new work was developed in tandem with the project of extending three earlier bodies of work that speak with a tough poetry of the tactics people employ to cope with unforgiving environments. They figure the forms and gestures of the back-country Central Otago station-life of Lucas's childhood and the privations of post-quake Ōtautahi Christchurch in objects dense with referents. Here, a jug can be a symbol of fecundity and plenty, but aesthetically point to a time when the land was being ripped apart by predators, and a china kitchen jug might be co-opted to mix poison. Pendulous forms can mimic food hung to cure and keep in a larder, and they can invent ghost food (or hoped-for food) bearing crackle glazes like veins, webs, maps and rivers.

Lucas's studio makes certain aspects of her process self-evident. She starts with a bag of clay and her process is different every time, adapted to make some new reality possible. It is dependent on what wants to be made—on what is called in—so she makes it up as she goes along: the process, the techniques, the tools, the equipment, the mud-building. One thing is constant though—the studio she has used since 1987, which is among the hill houses that look

out over the working port of Lyttelton like an audience looking to a stage to the south. At night, lit up, the houses look like birds, gulls, resting in a group, poised to take flight at a moment's notice. Sleeping with an eye open, standing on one leg.

The houses brooding above the port get a fine view of the light hitting the hills on the other side of the harbour—sometimes hot-metal orange, sometimes lavender or damp green, more often browned, the colour of an old lion, skin pulled over its bones. Inside the studio, it is abundantly clear that working with clay is hard physical work and requires constant improvisation. I am taken with the chopped-down wheelie-chair set-up onto which she works—the seats removed and replaced with circular plates from a potter's wheel. The piece underway (one of the last of an intended seventeen or eighteen) is the size of an adult torso, and she is building it in the round in front of a mirror, turning the work as she goes, drawing freely in space. Here she continues to apply something that she learned early on about drawing, that if you look at your work in a mirror you can instantly see what is wrong with it.

This new body of work, collectively called *Subterfuge*, comprises two groups of mostly large-scale objects, related but different in form and glazing. There is one crowd that involves complex head-like snares of lines drawn with clay and glazed in single colours; the others are tall planar vessels with complicating surfaces painted in multi-coloured glazes. It is said that growing up in the back country gives you an eye for form and texture, and looking at the three non-vase works in the studio—one red, one mustard, and another not yet fired—Lucas does seem to be working from memory, from something imprinted by the landscape and our flora, shaped as it is by fauna, weather and climate. In the branching angles of these works there is the definite spirit of the divaricating plant—a form particularly evident in Aotearoa New Zealand and Te Waipounamu.



Cheryl Lucas in her studio, 2022. Photo: John Collie



Cheryl Lucas *Subterfuge 8* 2022. Ceramic.
Courtesy of The National and McLeavey Gallery



Cheryl Lucas *Subterfuge* 12 2022. Ceramic.
Courtesy of The National and McLeavey Gallery

The South Island's central plateau is geologically older than the rest of Aotearoa. It is a place where the hillsides once moved with rabbits, and massed shoots took place that resulted in the pests being hung along barbed-wire fence lines by their ears as far as the eye could see. Where sheep's wool is snagged on matagouri, which is not as thorny as it looks but is still hard to penetrate. In open shrubland, divaricating plants grow in clumps and branch finely at wide angles to provide themselves with protection against grazing animals, extremes of dry and cold, prevailing winds—their habit makes the most of available light by self-sheltering. They form dense structures like a three-dimensional net in which their small confetti-like leaves grow: kōwhai, matagouri, muehlenbeckia, coprosma, kaikōmako, corokia, pittosporum, olearia...

A divaricating plant has no right angles, Lucas reports: they are all just off the median. By 'off the median' she is referring to something she explores, marvels at, in drawing. If the page is divided up into a grid, and a line is added that is 'off', an energy is set up within that instability. When something is drawn that deviates from a grid, the picture plane is directly, immediately energised by new angles. This is an energy that is established in this new body of work, which is all slab built. She has a great pile of these inch-thick (maybe thinner, the width of a finger) flat slabs of clay piled up, separated by sheets of plastic and hardboard, the result of the hard work it takes to get the clay kneaded and through the roller. It is like a great pile of fabric, or something through which an impossible princess might feel a pea.

To Lucas the divaricated form is a symbol of our little island, and the things done to adapt to climate and predation—things done for protection, to keep ourselves safe, like incantations that have taken physical form. A divaricating plant is growing this way and that all the time, and this whole body of work is about setting up that energy. And about always going back to the mud as a starting or branching point. The clay itself must be firm enough to stand

on its own, but not so firm it can't be joined. It is full of grog—or the ground-up bisque-fired clay that makes the body of the clay stronger—and it is tough on hands, but Lucas is used to it. Pieces are sliced off and built with, edges scored with improvised tools and joined with slurries, all without a roadmap as forms emerge from the making.

These new forms—or at least the three that sit in the studio on wheeled platters when I visit—feel like something alchemical, a fusing of plant and human aspiration, concern and desire. The divaricating forms are there, the no right-angles, the basket fungi-like attempt to spin the self some protection. They have the feeling of a snail's shell that light or radiant matter can pass through—light, warmth, love, safety, survival, inspiration. Protection as a definite substance is implied by block colours, as if the forms are lit up by the spirits of ox-blood coprosma berry, or an acid wasabi green picked off moss growing on a dull brick bubble-pocked scoria wall. There is the mustard of something that was once green and might yet be so again because it is able to weather dryness and heat. There is the pale milk-jade of lacy lichen, and the shocking yellow that can appear against a stone outcrop, one thing playing against another within a certain range.

In *Subterfuge* as a body of work there are the torso-like figures with their divaricated tangles, hiding some growing heart, but there are also vase forms with glaze-schemes that suggest the zig-zagging paths of an animal trying to avoid being shot. Theirs is the crookedness (or angular sophistication) that comes from trying to evade discovery, attention, capture or just to survive anything inhospitable for a long time. A snail can seal itself behind a dried mucus door that will keep it safe somewhere dry for months, even years. And artists developed WWI camouflage schemes not just to give the hardware and installations of warfare protective concealment, but to make the war disappear. Likewise, the cubist glazes of Lucas's new vase-form works act out their own aesthetic enchantments, changing realities one disturbed visual field at a time.

The patterned decoration of her vessel forms proposes alternative volumes and voids, rearticulating contrary shapes on the surfaces of things that might hold water. They become animated vases that might spit water and flowers back out. Extremely-dark-grey-but-not-black is criss-crossed with marine fluorescent blue and the gold of something escaping caught in an incandescent searchlight. All the *Subterfuge* works have one of the same two satin matt glazes, sprayed straight onto the raw dried pot—not onto a body that is already bisque-fired. Fragile, they are then slowly fired, the matt glazes chosen so the objects do not become so shiny they lose form. The risk is there that they become too dry; but then, she points out, you are not sticking any of these to your lips. The only shininess permitted is when she wants the sheen of a wet stone or the lick of a lake to appear later, after firing. And she might go back and paint on glazes anywhere up to ten times to resolve something for herself, courting surprise each time—devoted as she is to working in a way that is unpredictable.

Sorting out how something works within given limitations, and moving on to the next form, Lucas's work feeds off excitement and mysterious chemistry. *Subterfuge* shows us that it is the process of doing that is important. Flying by the seat of the pants is not safe, but we all put our guards out somehow. *Subterfuge* is a tactical activity: we move forward, concealing what we are doing by blanking, blinding, and distracting. As a plant might grow to make its own safety, Lucas improvises forms as she works—if she already knew what a thing would look like before she started, what would be the point? The object would be doomed to never ask a question, or to never provide a living answer to an actual problem.

Gwynneth Porter is a writer, educator and editor living peaceably in Ōtautahi Christchurch. The exhibition Cheryl Lucas: Shaped by Schist and Scoria is on display until 4 December 2022.



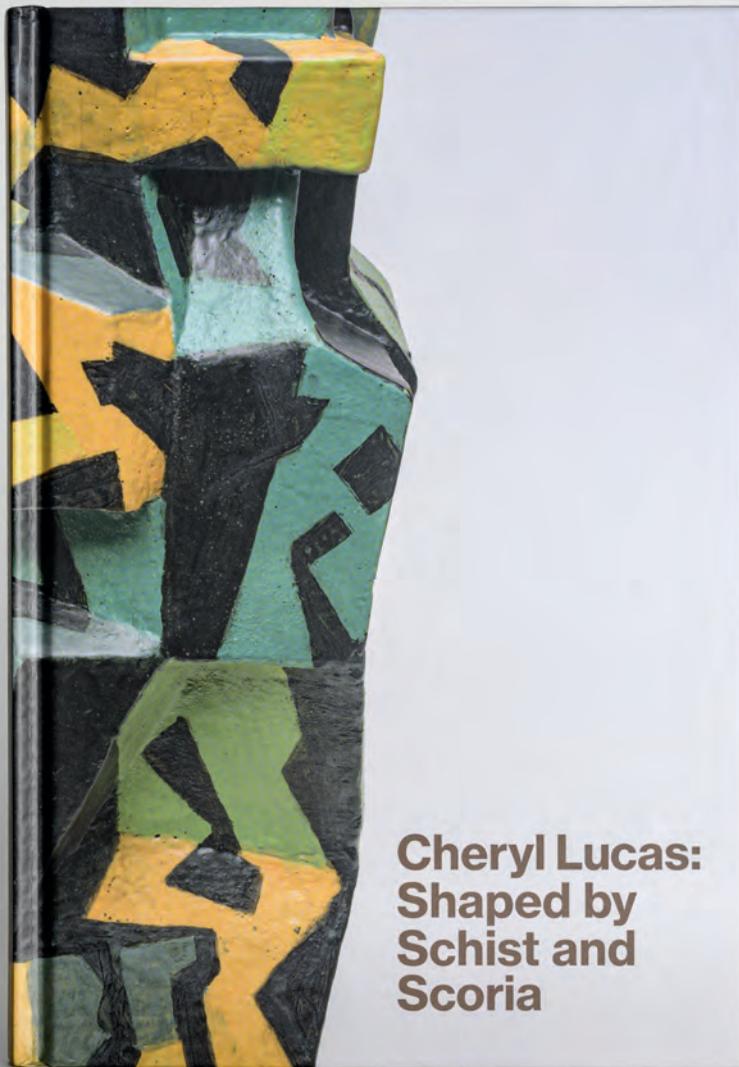
Cheryl Lucas *Subterfuge 5* 2022. Ceramic.
Courtesy of The National and McLeavey Gallery

Canterbury-based artist Cheryl Lucas pushes the physical and conceptual possibilities of the ceramic artform, describing it as “the perfect medium to convey even the most unpalatable truths”. The surfaces of her works may be seductive, but they tackle rough and relevant ground, often focusing on the intersections between the natural world and human intervention.

This richly illustrated book accompanies Lucas’s major solo exhibition at Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū. Featuring approachable essays from Felicity Milburn and Kim Paton, it examines highlights from her career to date and launches a major body of new work. *Hard cover, 56 pages*

Order now from the Design Store
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Impasse after impasse¹

Iris Gate, 1999

CHRISTINA BARTON

Reinventions can be local, low-key, small scale and subtle in their specific effects.

Allan Smith, 1995²

Among the selection of paintings that make up *Delirium Crossing*, Barbara Tuck's *Iris Gate* stands apart. Painted in 1999, it is the earliest work in the show. Rather than the single square paintings that follow, this is a set of six rectangular canvases. Though small in scale, they are notable for their gestural vigour and looseness, their coloured grounds looking stubbornly like painted surfaces upon which figural elements float like collage fragments. No airy atmospherics, vertiginous perspectives, intricate tracery: 'landscape' has yet to appear. Equally, recalling earlier works, *Iris Gate* departs from the shaped, multipart, laser-cut aluminium paintings for which the artist became known in the early 1990s. Against the flow of art history, it marks a return to convention, in both format and facture, a backwards move to rectilinearity and the brush.

Barbara Tuck *Iris Gate* (detail) 1999. Oil and encaustic on canvas, six panels.
Courtesy the artist and Anna Miles Gallery





Barbara Tuck *Iris Gate* 1999. Oil and encaustic on canvas, six panels.
 Courtesy the artist and Anna Miles Gallery

Iris Gate is transitional then; a pivot. Yet transitions are seldom seamless: a gate can be a barrier as well as a way through. The paintings were made during a lengthy break from the rhythm (or treadmill) of annual exhibitions, at a juncture when Tuck dropped out of view between 1997 and 2006. Furthermore, though made in 1999, these paintings weren't shown until 2014. Fifteen years is a long gestation. I wonder what caused this break? Did doubt produce a blockage? Did she lose her way? Struggle to escape a *cul de sac*? No need to ask: the painting's title proves the impediment, or at least gives shape to the threshold on which these works are perched.

Against the forward momentum of a progressive history of art—the kind that governs the retrospective exhibition as a summative exercise in describing an artist's 'development'—*Iris Gate* seems to reverse, elongate or even collapse time. Its hesitations are palpable. Onto a surface of brushed and coloured pigment, marks are laid evenly and at intervals. These form a calligraphy of dark or light, loosely drawn shapes that sometimes coalesce into things: a leaf here, a cylinder there, shadowy figures, a dog, a deer's head with antlers, flames, ripples, filigree, a punctuation mark or Chinese character. These marks gesture towards language but seem



to stumble or resist. They form a screen like falling rain outside a window.

Floating or half-submerged, larger shapes and figures get tangled in the marks, but also hang there emphatically. Bulbous forms occur along with carefully painted figures: a naked Adam and Eve in a cloud or speech-bubble, a recumbent man and seated woman at rest, literally, on the paintwork. The art historian in me knows these to be borrowed forms, copies of absent originals: her own reworked 'templates'; an early Flemish 'Expulsion'; the principal figures from Nicholas Poussin's *Echo and Narcissus* (c. 1627–28), a painting seen in the Louvre on the European trip she

undertook alone in 1998 that was the impetus for her 'return' to the traditional equipment of her medium. These seem both selected and random, fragments from Tuck's visual lexicon: half-remembered pictures, re-traced outlines of familiar shapes, the mumbled remains of looking closely. She brings these shards together as an a-temporal miscellany, ungrounded yet connected within the mesh of paint.

Tuck seems to be testing her own definition of what painting is, has been, or can be; feeling her way as much as seeing clearly. To me, her searching process tallies with its historical moment. Painters in the 1990s were working in the wake of powerful structuring

“There is a melancholy and anger and fear in this journey into darkness, but throughout it is charged with brilliant flashes of colour and light...”

narratives, beyond the avant-garde’s distrust of realism, past modernist formalism’s strictures, on the tail of postmodernism’s doubt, after painting’s 1960s’ end-games and 1980s’ returns. The medium had survived and was regrouping. There was a new pressure to find purpose beyond ironic quotation, to reinvest the sign with more than blunt materiality, the world was seeping back in to picture making.

Allan Smith captured the mood of the times well in his 1995 survey exhibition, *A Very Peculiar Practice*. Gathering together “aspects of recent New Zealand painting”, including Tuck’s, he called on artists to “allow the hidden laughters and redundancies of history to converge and mingle” and to cultivate “careless attentions and sweet disorders”,³ suggesting that the “end of painting is only a resumption ... a question of dismantling so as to construct it better”.⁴ Tuck must have absorbed these injunctions, but the next steps were still hard fought. Remember, Echo lost the power of speech, she could only repeat the words of others. Narcissus fell in love with his own reflection and died in thrall to a mirror image; Adam and Eve were banished from the Garden of Eden.

Another key to this body of work is the source for her title. ‘Iris gate’ is a phrase lifted from a poem by Michele Leggott, published that same year, in a collection titled *as far as I can see*.⁵ ‘A woman, a rose, and what has it to do with her or they with one another?’ is in seven searing parts, taking the reader through a series of ‘gates’ that track her descent into sightlessness. Facing the consequences of a degenerative eye condition, Leggott writes in the third stanza, “At the iris gate I leave the world above for the world below”.⁶ There is melancholy and anger and fear in this journey into darkness, but throughout it is charged with brilliant flashes of colour and light, a felt sense of the world: the sea, mountains, the sun and moon, her family. Early on she asks: “What is the sight of my eyes to the great oratory of the labyrinth?” and imagines herself on a mission to “open the eyes of the soul”.⁷ For Leggott vision is both sensation and memory, now rendered palpable through other senses: touch, smell, feeling. It is a state that must now be conjured with words.





“... perhaps the woman in a red dress approximates the figure conjured in this verse, who might double as the artist in the world at that moment.”

The ‘iris’ of *Iris Gate* is for Leggott: “I, a pupil, a taut aperture and nimble, distinguishing abundance in the field from a chaos in the world”.⁸ How beautifully this captures the feel of Tuck’s painting. There is no one-to-one relation between poem and picture, but perhaps the woman in a red dress approximates the figure conjured in this verse, who might double as the artist in the world at that moment. Clothed in modern garb her pictorial source is elusive. Perhaps she is a product of the artist’s inner eye. Barefoot on her painted ground she stands ready and attentive. Through her bare extremities she is in touch with her medium; head slightly tilted, her piercing look seems also to be a listening. The pause within which *Iris Gate* was made is here made palpable. This figure seems stalled, but also intensely alert, poised as Allan Smith would say between the “accepted codes of painting practice and messages from the world around [her]”.⁹

Christina Barton is a writer, curator and art historian. She is director of Te Pātaka Toi Adam Art Gallery. This essay was first published in *Christina Barton and Anna Miles* (eds.), *Barbara Tuck: Delirium Crossing, Te Pātaka Toi Adam Art Gallery, Wellington; Anna Miles Gallery, Auckland; and Ramp Gallery, Hamilton, 2022*. *Barbara Tuck: Delirium Crossing* is on display from 15 October 2022 until 26 March 2023.

- 1 “Impasse after impasse” is a phrase used by Anna Miles in her exhibition text for *Barbara Tuck: Iris Gate*, Anna Miles Gallery, Auckland, 2014.
- 2 Allan Smith, ‘A Very Peculiar Practice: A User’s Guide’, in *A Very Peculiar Practice: Aspects of Recent New Zealand Painting*, City Gallery Wellington, 1995, p. 7.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 7.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 8.
- 5 Michele Leggott, *as far as I can see*, Auckland University Press, Auckland, 1999.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p. 38.
- 7 *Ibid.*, p. 36.
- 8 *Ibid.*, p. 38.
- 9 Smith, 1995, p. 8.

1 July 2021 – 30 June 2022

The Year in Review

208,663

Number of visitors.*

11,791

Number of people who attended public programme events including lectures, talks and tours by Gallery staff, Gallery volunteers, invited experts and artists.

5,897

Number of students who attended Gallery-led lessons or tours.

2,586

Number of hours open to the public.

1,702

Number of volunteer hours of valued service given to the Gallery by our volunteer guides, who helped and informed approximately 9,500 visitors.

170

Number of hours closed due to Covid-19.

16

Number of exhibitions/artist projects held at the Gallery.

2

Number of Library Archives Displays.

Gallery Publications

In addition to a range of guides, fliers, posters and newsletters, Gallery staff contributed to eight publications:

B.205, Felicity Milburn and Melanie Oliver, spring 2021, 64 pages

B.206, Ken Hall, Felicity Milburn, Nathan Pōhio and Peter Vangioni, summer 2021/22, 64 pages

B.207, Melanie Oliver, Nathan Pōhio and Peter Vangioni, autumn 2022, 64 pages

B.208, Ken Hall, Felicity Milburn, Melanie Oliver and Peter Vangioni, winter 2022, 64 pages

Bill Hammond: Across the Evening Sky, Peter Vangioni et al., 2022, 240 pages

Te Puna Waiora: The Distinguished Weavers of Te Kāhui Whiritoi, Nathan Pōhio et al., 2022, 200 pages

Māori Moving Image, Melanie Oliver et al., 2022, 180 pages

HELLZAPOPPIN! The Art of Flying Nun, Peter Vangioni et al., 2022, 92 pages

Other Writing

Melanie Oliver

'Constant Variables: An Artist-Led Curatorial Methodology', PhD in Curatorial Practice, Monash University, Melbourne, March 2022

Gina Irish

'Running from the Wrecking Ball: Inventory in Response to Disaster', in Sandra Vanderwarf and Bethany Romanowski, *Inventorying Cultural Heritage Collections: A Guide for Museums and Historical Societies*, Rowman & Littlefield, 2022

Collection

Acquisitions: 196 (including 100 gifts)
Outward loans: 26
Inward loans: 688

Library

The collection of the Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives now comprises 14,035 items and 109 archival collections.

Invited Public Lectures and Industry Workshops

Ken Hall

Frances Hodgkins' Birthday Tour, Ravenscar House Museum, Christchurch, April 2022

Friends Speaker of the Month, with Felicity Milburn and Peter Vangioni, October 2021

Felicity Milburn

Friends Speaker of the Month, with Ken Hall and Peter Vangioni, October 2021

Melanie Oliver

Friends Speaker of the Month, 40th AGM, March 2022

Evolutions of Galaxies exhibition at MADA Gallery, Monash University Melbourne, April 2022

Eliza Penrose

'The Hitchhiker's Guide to Time-Based Art Conservation: Part 1', *NZCCM 2021: Risk*, October 2021

Carla Pike

'Natural Rubber in Art Collections: Case Study on the artworks of Francis Upritchard', *NZCCM 2021: Risk*, October 2021

Peter Vangioni

Friends Speaker of the Month, with Ken Hall and Felicity Milburn, October 2021

Professional Advice

Blair Jackson

Trustee, W. A. Sutton Trust
Trustee, Sutton Heritage House and Garden Trust
Selection Panel, McCahon House
Artist Residency

Felicity Milburn

Selector, 2021 Grace Butler Award
Selector, 2022 Sculpture on the Peninsula
Examiner, Master of Fine Arts, University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts, September 2021

Melanie Oliver

Member, ARA Institute of Canterbury Acquisitions Committee

Design Store

65,303 visitors to the Design Store bought 25,448 items (including 2,421 books and 11,753 Gallery-branded items, of which 2,267 were Gallery Publications).

In addition to a new range featuring works by Rita Angus, products were created in collaboration with the following artists: Alec Bathgate, Brian Crook, Xoë Hall, John Halvorsen, Ronnie van Hout, Lonnie Hutchinson, Chris Knox, Lesley Maclean, David Mitchell, Stuart Page, Martin Phillipps, Francis Upritchard.

Awards

Bill Hammond: Across the Evening Sky: Museums Australasia Multimedia and Publication Design Awards 2022 (winner, Best Book and Best in Show)

Te Puna Waiora: The Distinguished Weavers of Te Kāhui Whiritoi: Museums Australasia Multimedia and Publication Design Awards 2022 (winner, Best Major Exhibition Catalogue, Best Exhibition Branding Package)

Hidden Light: Early Canterbury and West Coast Photography: AAANZ Art Association of Australia and New Zealand 2021 Publication Awards (winner, Best Medium Sized Exhibition Catalogue)

HELLZAPOPPIN! The Art of Flying Nun: Museums Australasia Multimedia and Publication Design Awards 2022 (Highly Commended)

*Visitor numbers were impacted by the ongoing global pandemic.

My Favourite

Nathan Pōhio worked at Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū from 2002–21. He is now senior curator, Māori art at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki.

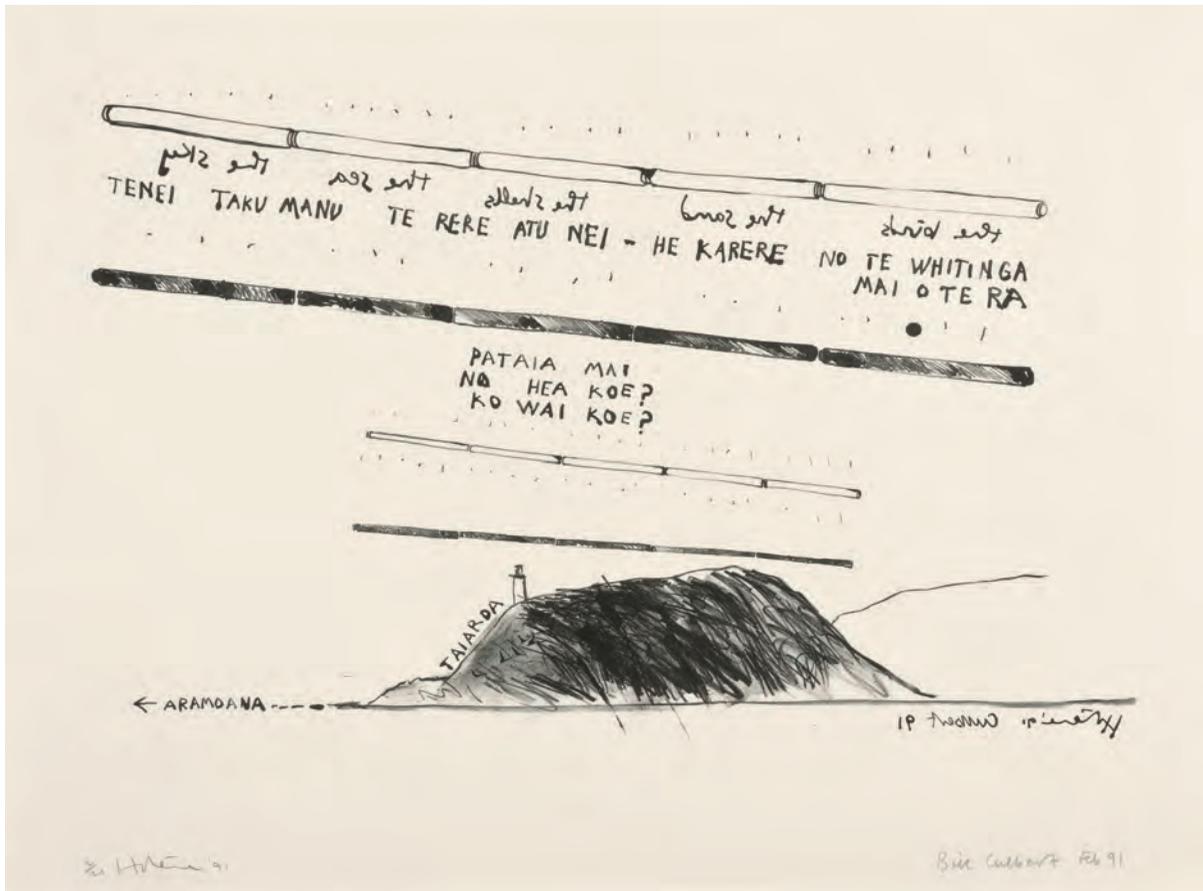
My time working at Te Puna o Waiwhetū was strewn with highlights, but key among these is the experience of hanging Ralph Hotere and Bill Culbert's *Pathway to the Sea—Aramoana* (1991), which was also my first experience of seeing this work up close and personal. Although not the *greatest* work or *most popular* work of art in the collection, this lithograph will always be special to me. I love the sparse aesthetic, the sense of a light touch. The bold decision to not occupy the whole page as the collaborators examine restraint, notations of the relevance of place and connections.

The landscape featured is Taiaroa Heads at Ōtākou, the north facing headland of Ōtepoti Dunedin. It anchors the composition, it is the element that satisfies the eye's need for something gritty, textured, something with weight. Taiaroa is directly opposite Aramoana, the two heads are visible from where Ralph's studio once sat, on Observation Point, a promontory at Koputai, Port Chalmers. And being named TAIAROA it recalls centuries of Kāi Tahu whakapapa, genealogical history.

The heads were named after Taiaroa (late 1790s – 1863; Ngāi Te Ruahikihiki, Ngāti Moki, both are Kāi Tahu hapū located at Taumutu, Birdlings Flat) who was Upoko at Ōtākou from the 1830s until the 1860s in association with his cousin Karetai (c. 1805–1860). He fought against Ngāti Toa under Te Rauparaha and was later involved with the placemaking that eventually followed. Like other Kāi Tahu rangatira, Taiaroa did not actually sign the Treaty of Waitangi, but his name appears on it. In 1856 he attended Hīnana ki uta, Hīnana ki Tai, the inter-tribal gathering at Pūkawa, Taupo, where Pōtatau Te Wherowhero was elected as the first Māori king.

Pathway to the Sea—Aramoana then, reminds me of many tūpuna who lived there or had significant connections to the place, and my immediate whānau, who continue to reside under Pukekura, the old pā site at Taiaroa Heads. It is where my mother has been living since 2000, with my sister and her family following the earthquakes. It is also where, in a little crib on Te Rauone Bay, my then partner Alexandra Porter and I cared for our newborn son Eli, with his grandmother and grandfather a few minutes' walk along the beach.

These things are present for me whenever I see this work and it is all bound there in that name, Taiaroa.



Bill Culbert and Ralph Hotere Pathway to the Sea—Aramoana 1991. Lithograph. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 1991. By permission of the Bill and Pip Culbert Trust and the Hotere Foundation Trust



In celebration of fifty years of the Friends of Christchurch Art Gallery, the Friends recently purchased twenty-five photographic works by women artists spanning the last three decades of the twentieth century.

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Margaret Dawson *Sword Lily (Gladiolus)* (detail) 1989. C-type print on canvas. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, gift of the Friends of Christchurch Art Gallery, 2022, in celebration of their 50th Anniversary 1971–2021

Sword Lily (gladiolus)

Friends

CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY
TE PUNA O WAIWHETŪ

Pagework

no.54

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.

Sam Towse *The ground feels softer here* 2022.
Digital photographs

Recent Ilam School of Fine Arts graduate Sam Towse took these photographs on the way to somewhere else. On the way to the studio, to work, to meet a friend; on the way to a sculpture or an installation. The images act as sketches, tracing her movement through the city, capturing intriguing aspects on familiar paths as a form of research for later works. Towse isolates these points of interest in the built environment to appreciate and focus attention on the anomalies of infrastructure and potential for formal elegance in our everyday surrounds. She encourages us to look more closely at the objects and patterns we might find on our own urban commutes, to see afresh the lines, colours and impressions we usually overlook.

The photographs map time as well as a place and, while tracking the artist's personal relationship to the streetscape, they have a rhythm. Like words brought together to form a sentence, as a group they describe what it means to be here, in this or that moment. They are images of marks on surfaces after all, a language of paint residue and dents on industrial forms, metal and concrete. One photograph shows the tell-tale grey overpainting of graffiti, the erasure of illicit personal expression from a city wall. Another, a spray-painted cross on the road, is an indication to dig or stop here.

With this small sample of photographs, Towse reveals the textures of our city as lived in, with purposeful and incidental alterations that have layered up over the years. Her observations suggest dormant narratives and memories for the many other walkers who pass by these details too, inviting us to consider how our urban fabric is experienced individually, but also as a collective space.

Melanie Oliver
Curator







Exhibitions

Opening this Quarter

Mata Aho Collective: Tikawe

From 17 September 2022

An ambitious installation that descends from the skylights to zing across the foyer.

Jeffrey Harris: The Gift

1 October 2022 – 12 March 2023

Paintings and drawings by one of New Zealand's most celebrated painters.

Barbara Tuck: Delirium Crossing

15 October 2022 – 26 March 2023

Ambiguous, floating picture worlds, a restless exploration of painting's promise.

Brett Graham: Tai Moana Tai Tangata

5 November 2022 – 19 February 2023

Shared colonial histories sound an urgent warning for the present.

James Oram: By Spectral Hands

10 November 2022 – 19 February 2023

New sculptural and video work tackling need, desire and consumer capitalism.

Closing this Quarter

The Moon and the Manor House

Until 18 September 2022

Aestheticism, Arts and Crafts, and the avid pursuit of beauty.

Leaving for Work

Until 2 October 2022

Exploring the exceptional art of everyday working life.

Māori Moving Image ki Te Puna o Waiwhetū

Until 16 October 2022

Contemporary Māori film, animation and video art.

Ongoing

Cheryl Lucas: Shaped by Schist and Scoria

Until 4 December 2022

Seductive surfaces and tough issues—these are ceramics made for the eyes and mind.

Perilous: Untold Stories from the Collection

Making room for fresh voices, untold narratives and disruptive ideas.

Xoë Hall: Kuini of the Worlds

A wild new mural from Kāi Tahu artist Xoë Hall celebrating atua wāhine.

Lonnie Hutchinson: Hoa Kohine (Girlfriend)

An intricately cut-out billboard celebrating supportive friendships between women.

Martin Creed: Everything is Going to be Alright

A completely unequivocal, but also pretty darn ambiguous, work for Christchurch.

Reuben Paterson: The End

A sparkling elevator installation providing an unexpected space for contemplation and connection.

Séraphine Pick: Untitled (Bathers)

Pick's lush watercolour offers a utopian vision in the carpark elevator.

Tomorrow Still Comes:

Natalia Saegusa

A fragmented, poetic temporary wall painting by Natalia Saegusa.

Kelcy Taratoa: Te Tāhū o ngā Maunga Tūmatakahuki

A vast painting about how we are bound together.

Coming Soon

Turumeke Harrington: Tātou tātou, nau mai rā

19 December 2022 – 29 January 2023

The Gallery reimaged as an ever-changing maze. Find your own path through!

Please note, these dates are correct at time of printing.

But, you know... Covid... Please check the Gallery website for dates before visiting. See the website for our events listings



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Christchurch Art Gallery Foundation

The Christchurch Art Gallery Foundation is committed to building an endowment and a collection that reflects a truly significant period in the history of our city. We have the chance to shape the culture of Christchurch by developing a collection that honours the past, reveals the present and helps us imagine the future. We began the TOGETHER programme in 2014 and are continuing to offer opportunities for businesses and individuals to help us realise our mission.

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Please see christchurchartgallery.org.nz/support/foundation for a full list.

Gallery Partner

Williams Cooperation

Christchurch Art Gallery Foundation's five great works:

Michael Parekowhai Chapman's Homer 2011
1,093 generous donations from Christchurch and beyond, along with proceeds from the first annual gala dinner.

Bill Culbert *Bebop* 2013

Purchased with assistance from Gabrielle Tasman and proceeds from the second annual gala dinner.

Martin Creed *Work No. 2314 [Everything is going to be alright]* 2015

Purchased with the generous support of Grumps, and installed with proceeds from the third annual gala dinner.

Bridget Riley *Cosmos* 2017

Purchased with the generous help of: Heather Boock; Ros Burdon; Kate Burt; Dame Jenny Gibbs; Ann de Lambert and daughters, Sarah, Elizabeth, Diana, and Rachel; Barbara, Lady Stewart; Gabrielle Tasman; Jenny Todd; Nicky Wagner; Wellington Women's Group (est. 1984); and installed with proceeds from the fourth annual gala dinner.

Ron Mueck *chicken / man* 2019

Purchased with the generous help of: Catherine and David Boyer; Friends of Christchurch Art Gallery; Ben Gough Family Foundation; Charlotte and Marcel Gray; Christchurch Art Gallery's London Club; Jenny and Andrew Smith; Gabrielle Tasman and Ken Lawn; proceeds from the fifth annual gala dinner; and 514 big-hearted individuals and companies.

Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū



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If you would like to discuss partnership opportunities, contact Jacq Mehrstens on (+64) 21 404042 or jacq@christchurchartgallery.org.nz

www.christchurchartgallery.org.nz/support

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