B.220

Christchurch Art Gallery
Te Puna o Waiwhetū

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B.

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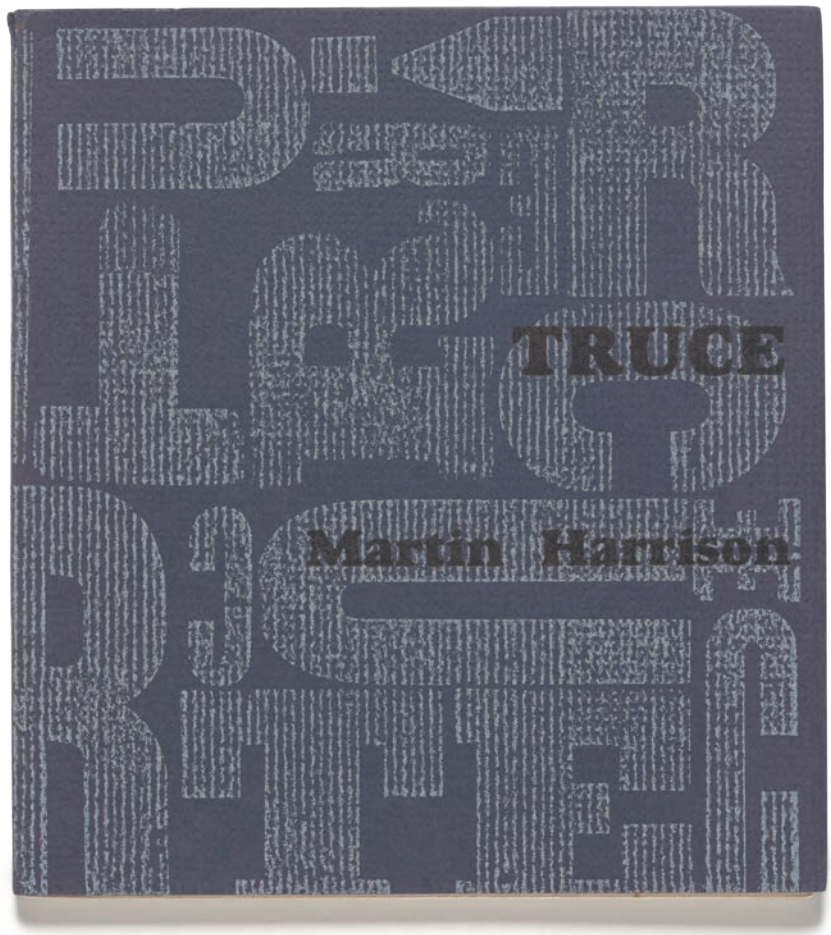
B.

Above: Installation view of *Peter Robinson: Charcoal Drawing*, Whangārei Art Museum, 2024. Photo: Nimmy Santhosh

Right: Martin Harrison *Truce: Poems* 1979. Hawk Press, Eastbourne (cover designed by Alison Loney). Alan Loney Collection, Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū



Director's Foreword

BLAIR JACKSON
May 2025

One of the undeniable perks of my job is the view: from my office I can look down across the Gallery foyer, with a bird's eye view on our activities. It's always great to see tour groups and schools coming through the door. The school holidays bring a fresh energy to our foyer and galleries, with lots of families, noise and an undeniable buzz.

Among the many things for visitors to see, a new focal point is *Ko te Kihikihi Taku Ingoa* by Shona Rapira Davies (Ngāti Wai ki Aotea), a work originally commissioned for the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery/Len Lye Centre. Taking the form of a tohorā, it forms a powerful memorial to the children of the New Zealand wars, particularly those killed or displaced by colonial forces in Waitara and at Parihaka in the late 1800s. The installation of this large-scale work was a complex affair and attracted plenty of attention from visitors as Shona and her team, in high-vis vests and hard hats, worked together in synergy and accompanied by the persistent safety beep of a cherry picker. The installation unfolded over several days, offering an engaging spectacle for our holiday visitors.

Of course, our school holiday guests are just one of many groups who regularly enrich our spaces. Lunchtime visitors often drop by for a quick art fix, while Friday guests eagerly join our weekly Friday Art Bite talks in front of featured works. Schools arrive for workshops and guided tours, and our Wednesday evening visitors relish the opportunity to explore the galleries with more time and a little less hustle and bustle.

In summer, our audience takes on a distinctly international flavour, with visitors from all over the globe. Cruise-ship passengers and organised tour groups are especially prevalent,

with many first-time gallery visitors enjoying our free daily guided tours. We conduct regular and detailed surveys to gauge visitor satisfaction, identifying areas for improvement, and collecting valuable demographic insights—allowing us to fine-tune our marketing and communication strategies. However, the information I most enjoy reading is straight from our visitors' book or via our Visitor Hosts' channel on Teams, where they document comments, visitor interactions and fresh responses. It's there that we really capture those first moments of engagement with an artwork. It's exciting to read and offers a glimpse into all the joy and emotion that a visit to Te Puna o Waiwhetū can offer. Do read the visitors' book next time you are in, and why not leave a comment too? It's a great way for us to stay connected.

Following the recent passing of senior Māori artist Fred Graham (Ngāti Korokī Kahukura, Tainui), we are deeply honoured to be hosting his final exhibition, *Fred Graham: Toi Whakaata / Reflections*. This exhibition featuring significant sculptures and relief works made between 1965 and 2013 was developed by Te Uru Contemporary Gallery. Graham's art will be familiar to many from his public commissions, which are on permanent display throughout Aotearoa. For this issue of *Bulletin*, Hester Rowan, assistant curator at Te Uru, relates key public sculptures in Tāmaki Makaurau to works that are on display in the exhibition.

We also acknowledge with great sadness the passing of another powerful figure in Māori and Aotearoa New Zealand art, Robyn Kahukiwa (Ngāti Porou, Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti, Ngāti Konohi, Te Whānau-a-Ruataupare). Like Fred, she changed our art history forever, and we extend our sympathy to both their whānau.

Hye Rim Lee: Swan Lake is an exciting new project by this Tāmakai Makaurau-based Korean New Zealand artist. As I write this, we've only seen tantalising glimpses of the work in progress, but here in *Bulletin* curator Ken Hall talks with Lee and finds in the developing piece an artist rediscovering her cultural and personal heritage. *Peter Robinson: Charcoal Drawing* comes to us from Whangārei Art Museum and sees the gallery space filled with what writer Andrew Clark describes as "quasi-sculptural superstructures": stark black aluminium works that are imposing investigations into materiality.

In 'As far as the hawk-eye can see' writer Francis McWhannell looks at the output of printer and poet Alan Loney's Hawk Press. Between 1975 and 1983, Loney produced some twenty-eight major publications under this imprint, focusing on printing work he believed to be important—often by politically progressive poets. Hawk Press is the focus of a small exhibition in our recently opened Archive Lounge and the works illustrated in *Bulletin* are taken from the printer's recent major gift.

We hear from Anne-Sophie Ninino, who has spent the last few months restoring and re-gilding the frame for Petrus van der Velden's *Burial in the Winter on the Island of Marken [The Dutch Funeral]*. This exciting project to once more give this taoka of our collection the frame it deserves was made possible by a fundraising campaign from the Gallery's Foundation. My Favourite comes from Ōtautahi Christchurch-based writer Alex Casey, who selects Ron Mueck's *chicken / man*—itself purchased using funds raised by the generosity of our Foundation's donors. And Pagework is supplied by Eleanor Cooper, who honours our relationship with water.

Rooted in the Land: *Toi Whakaata / Reflections* and Fred Graham's Public Sculptures

Hester Rowan

Fred Graham *Rangi me Papa* (detail [Papatūānuku]) 1987. Steel, stone, marble. Te Kopa Iti Ara Artwork Collection

This article was written prior to the passing of Fred Graham on 9 May 2025. The author, Te Uru Contemporary Gallery and Christchurch Art Gallery acknowledge this loss with deep sadness. Moe mai rā e te Rangatira.

In 2024 I was fortunate to work with senior Māori artist Fred Graham (Ngāti Korokī Kahukura, Tainui) and his whānau to present *Fred Graham: Toi Whakaata / Reflections* at Te Uru Contemporary Gallery in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. Reflecting on Graham's career, the exhibition brings together works made over the course of almost fifty years between 1965 and 2013. *Toi Whakaata / Reflections* emphasises the artist's smaller-scale sculptures, but also highlights his ability to move deftly between these more intimate pieces and large public sculptures. One such work is *Rangi me Papa* (1987) which is usually on display at Ara Institute of Canterbury's city campus in Ōtautahi Christchurch, but has been incorporated into the exhibition's second iteration at Te Puna o Waiwhetū Christchurch Art Gallery. This commanding relief sculpture anchors the exhibition to its new surroundings, evoking the braided rivers and snowy peaks of Waitaha Canterbury.

While most of Graham's public works are not physically present in *Toi Whakaata / Reflections*, they are on permanent display in buildings, parks and city streets throughout

"The positive public reception of this work led to further significant commissions, and meant that from 1990 Graham was able to sculpt full-time."

Aotearoa. They function as satellites to the exhibition, informing the understanding of Graham's more intimate sculptures and his practice as a whole. Major sculpture commissions have played an important role in the trajectory of Graham's career. His first large-scale commission was from the New Zealand Shipping Corporation and resulted in the eight-metre long *Four Winds and Seven Seas* (1985). A focal point of T*oi Whakaata / Reflections*, it consists of nine interlocking diamond-shaped panels with carved wooden koru representing different parts of the globe. The positive public reception of this work led to further significant commissions, and meant that from 1990 Graham was able to sculpt full-time.

Graham was born in 1928 and raised in Horahora, an ancestral papa kāinga at the centre of Ngāti Korokī Kahukura territory. He went to high school in Kirikiriroa Hamilton and began studying at Ardmore Teachers' Training College in 1948. In 1950 Graham spent a year at Dunedin Teachers' College specialising in art, having been selected to be part of Gordon Tovey's innovative programme of Māori arts and craft advisors in primary schools. He worked as an arts advisor in Rotorua and Te Tai Tokerau Northland before going on to teach art at secondary and tertiary levels throughout Te Ika-a-Māui North Island. Graham's interest in sculpture developed in addition to his drawing and painting practice while lecturing in art at Palmerston North Teachers' College between 1957 and 1962. During the 1960s he regularly met and exhibited with other Māori artists, including fellow arts advisors Ralph Hotere and Cliff Whiting, who shared his interest in contemporary Māori art. They were the first generation of Māori artists to formally engage with the conventions and styles of Western fine art, combining these with foundations of customary Māori art practice, such as simplicity of shape and form, and the relationship between positive and negative space.[1]

Fred Graham *Four Winds and Seven Seas* 1985. Acrylic and varnish on timber. Department of Internal Affairs Art Collection. Courtesy of the artist and Te Uru

Fred Graham *Te Waka Taumata o Horotiu* 2008. Steel on concrete base. Auckland Council Art Collection. Photo: Arabella Deane

Fred Graham *Tainui* 1998. Swamp kauri. Collection of Waikato Museum Te Whare Taonga o Waikato. Courtesy of the artist and Te Uru. Photo: Sam Hartnett

"I stood still and took in the work, while shoppers and office workers rushed around me."

Māori imagery, simplified organic forms, and references to Aotearoa's history are defining features of Graham's work, along with the use of a mix of traditional and contemporary materials.

People, place and history are key considerations across Graham's practice in both small and large-scale pieces. This is particularly evident in his public sculptures, where the history of a site often defines the work that is produced. Today there are over twenty of his public sculptures across Aotearoa, with the highest concentration in Tāmaki Makaurau. The works are prominently located throughout the city, including at the High Court, Pukekawa Auckland Domain, Queen Street and the entrance to the Botanic Gardens. In the early development stages of *Toi Whakaata / Reflections* I made a pilgrimage to three, wanting to stand in the presence of these works and feel their power in the context of their surroundings.

My first stop was *Te Waka Taumata o Horotiu* (2008) on the corner of Queen and Swanson streets in the heart of the city. I stood still and took in the work, while shoppers and office workers rushed around me. *Te Waka Taumata o Horotiu* marks the original foreshore and waka landing site for Ngāti Pāoa and Ngāti Whātua in the eighteenth century.[2] Graham's earlier wooden sculpture *Tainui* (1998) was the basis for this work, and features in *Toi Whakaata / Reflections*. Both sculptures combine the tauihu and taurapa of a waka taua. Wings on either side echo the hands-on-hips posture of the ancestral figures traditionally carved at the base of taurapa on waka taua.[3] The simplified metal birds encircling the taurapa of *Te Waka Taumata o Horotiu* have appeared in a number of Graham's works over the years. *Toi Whakaata / Reflections* highlights one of the earliest examples of this motif in *Untitled (Te Ika-a-Māui)* (c. 1965). The carved wooden relief evokes the story of Te-Ika-a-Maui North Island, with the life that now populates the island represented by the copper silhouette of a bird in flight.

Almost directly opposite *Te Waka Taumata o Horotiu*, on the corner of Queen and Shortland streets, is a second major commission acknowledging the historic foreshore. *Kaitiaki II* (2009) is a solid metal form with curved sides and a hole pierced through the top representing an anchor stone. It has many similarities to an earlier work, *Growth* (1968), included in *Toi Whakaata / Reflections*. This intimate sculpture is carved from tōtara and is only a tenth of the size of *Kaitiaki II* but has a similar rounded form with a hole at the apex. This space allows light to pass through the work, evoking Te Ao Mārama coming into

Fred Graham *Kaitiaki II* 2009. Steel.
Photo: Arabella Deane

Fred Graham *Growth* 1968. Tōtara. Private collection, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. Courtesy of the artist and Te Uru. Photo: Sam Hartnett

being through the separation of celestial parents Ranginui and Papatūānuku in Māori creation stories.

The third and final stop on my pilgrimage was *Kaitiaki* (2004) in Pukekawa Auckland Domain. It is a kāhu in flight reduced to its essential elements. Fabricated from steel and measuring almost twelve metres, the sculpture cuts a striking silhouette against the sky. The soaring black bird embodies descriptions of Ngāti Whātua chiefs as black hawks.[4] The name Pukekawa means 'hill of bitter memories' and refers to various hard-fought battles between Ngāti Whātua and Ngāpuhi.[5] Birds are a central motif in Graham's work and appear in numerous sculptures in *Toi Whakaata / Reflections*, speaking to the artist's Tainui whakapapa, the pursuit of knowledge, and his fascination with the aerodynamics and unfettered nature of birds. A small wooden sculpture, *Te Ata* (2011), shares the sleek black finish and bowed head of *Kaitiaiki*. *Te Ata* is an interpretation of a taonga, Korotangi, which is said to have come to Aotearoa aboard the Tainui waka. The title is a play on words, as this sculpture is both an ata, or reflection, of the original and a homage to Te Arikinui Te Atairangikaahu (1931–2006), the Māori Queen, who Graham knew from his teenage years.

Fred Graham's large-scale public sculptures are some of his best-known works and are seen by thousands of people every day. *Toi Whakaata / Reflections* acknowledges their importance to Graham's practice, creating a dialogue between the pieces in the exhibition and those in public spaces throughout Tāmaki Makaurau. The public sculptures highlight Graham's consistent attention to place when making work, and his consideration of the history of the

Fred Graham *Kaitiaki* 2004. Steel. Collection of the Edmiston Trust, Auckland Domain. Special thanks to Rex Erikson.
Produced with assistance from the New Zealand Lottery Grants Board Millennium Fund. Photo: Arabella Deane

Fred Graham *Te Ata* 2011. Kauri and stone.
Collection of the artist. Photo: Sam Hartnett

site and the wider environment.[6] When I asked Graham's son, prominent contemporary artist Brett Graham, about the lasting impact of his father's public works, he put it best:

Now when briefs go out for public sculptures in New Zealand there is often a requirement to consider the history of the site and the local iwi. This was never the case when most of his works were made. Māori contemporary artists made visible an indigenous landscape that was buried under layers of colonial infrastructure and buildings, and seldom acknowledged. For all of his works this is the first port of call, acknowledging this depth of history. This is his legacy.[7]

***Hester Rowan** is the kaiāwhina whakāturanga assistant curator at Te Uru Contemporary Gallery in Tāmaki Makaurau.* Fred Graham: Toi Whakaata / Reflections *is on display until 5 October 2025.*

1 Nigel Borell, *Toi Tū Toi Ora: Contemporary Māori Art*, Penguin NZ, 2022, pp. 10–11.

2 Robert Jahnke, 'A Journey with Fred Graham', in Maria de Jong (ed.), *Fred Graham: Creator of Forms Te Tohunga Auaha*, Huia, 2014, p. 118.

3 Mary N. Norris, 'Fred Graham and Brett Graham: Two Generations of Contemporary Māori Sculpture', master's thesis, The University of Auckland, 1999, p. 4.

4 Hester Rowan, 'Fred Graham: Toi Whakaata / Reflections: Interview with Brett Graham', Te Uru, 2024.

5 Jill Smith, 'Sharing Māori Knowledge', in Maria de Jong, *Fred Graham*, p. 112.

6 Maria de Jong, 'The Making of a Sculptor', in *Fred Graham*, p. 52–3.

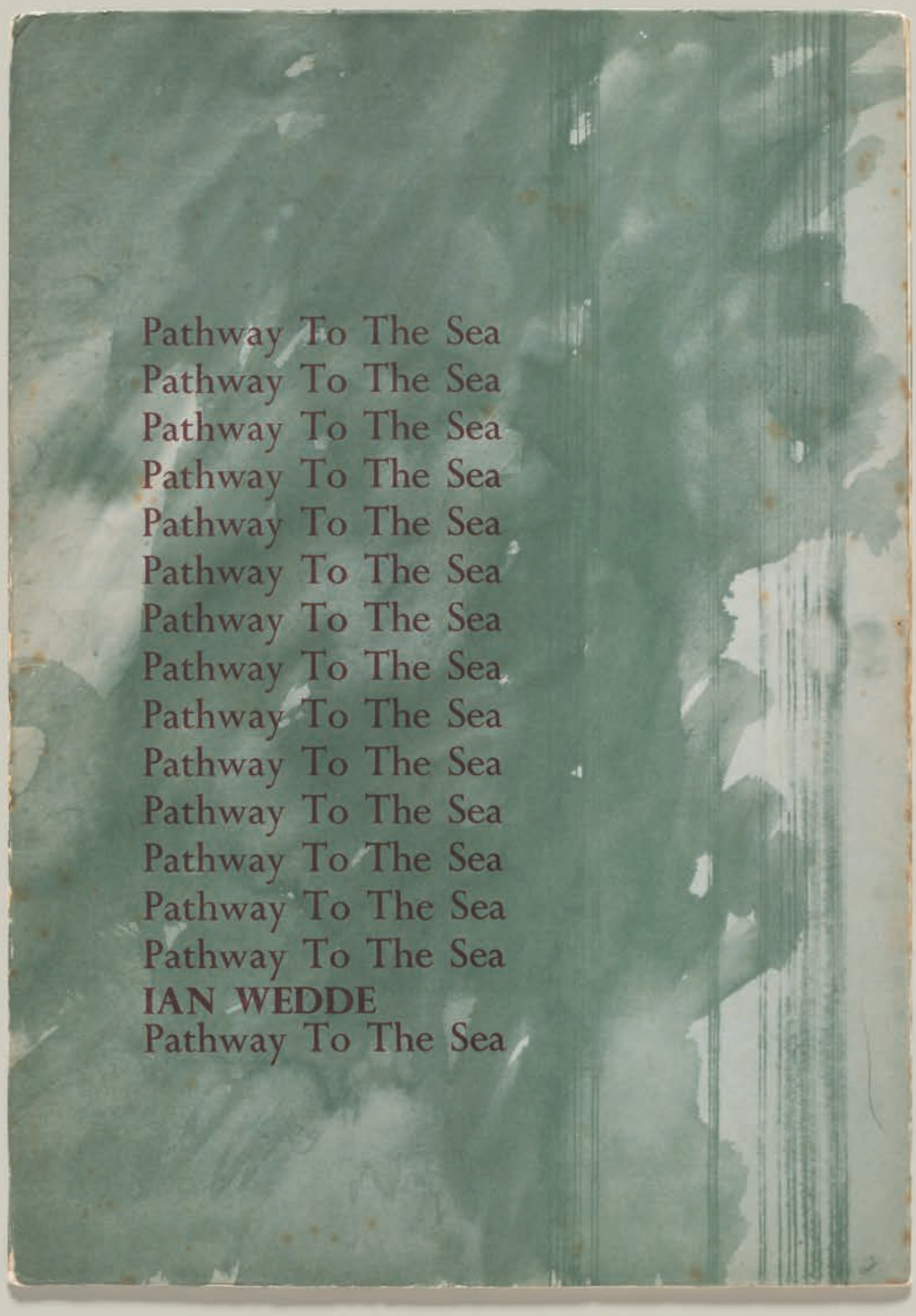
7 Hester Rowan, 'Fred Graham'.

Koru – spiral motif
Papa kāinga – home base
Ngāti Korokī Kahukura – tribal group of the Maungatautari area
Waka – canoe
Ngāti Pāoa – tribal group of area west of the Hauraki Gulf
Ngāti Whātua – tribal group of the area from Kaipara to Tāmaki Makaurau
Tauihu – bow figurehead
Taurapa – sternpost
Waka taua – war canoe
Te Ao Mārama - the world of light and life
Ranginui – sky father
Papatūānuku – earth, earth mother
Kāhu – hawk
Ngāpuhi – tribal group of much of Te Tai Tokerau Northland
Tainui – crew of this canoe from Hawaiki are claimed as ancestors by tribes of the Waikato, King Country and Tauranga areas
Whakapapa – genealogy, lineage, ancestry

As far as the hawk-eye can see

Alan Loney's Hawk Press

Francis McWhannell



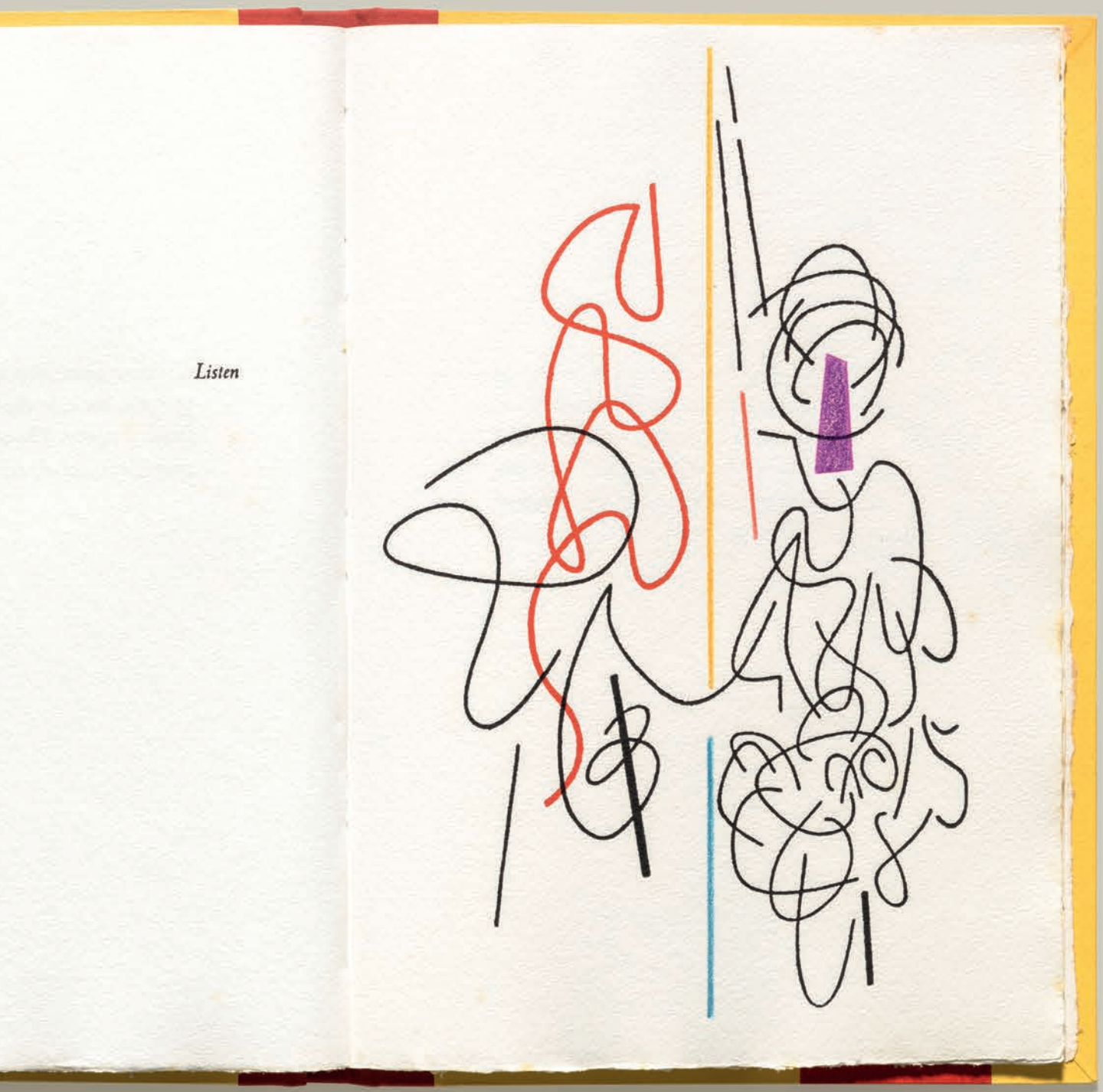
Ian Wedde *Pathway to the Sea* 1975. Hawk Press, Te Onepoto Taylors Mistake (cover designed by Ralph Hotere).
Alan Loney Collection, Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū.
Reproduced by permission of the Hotere Foundation Trust

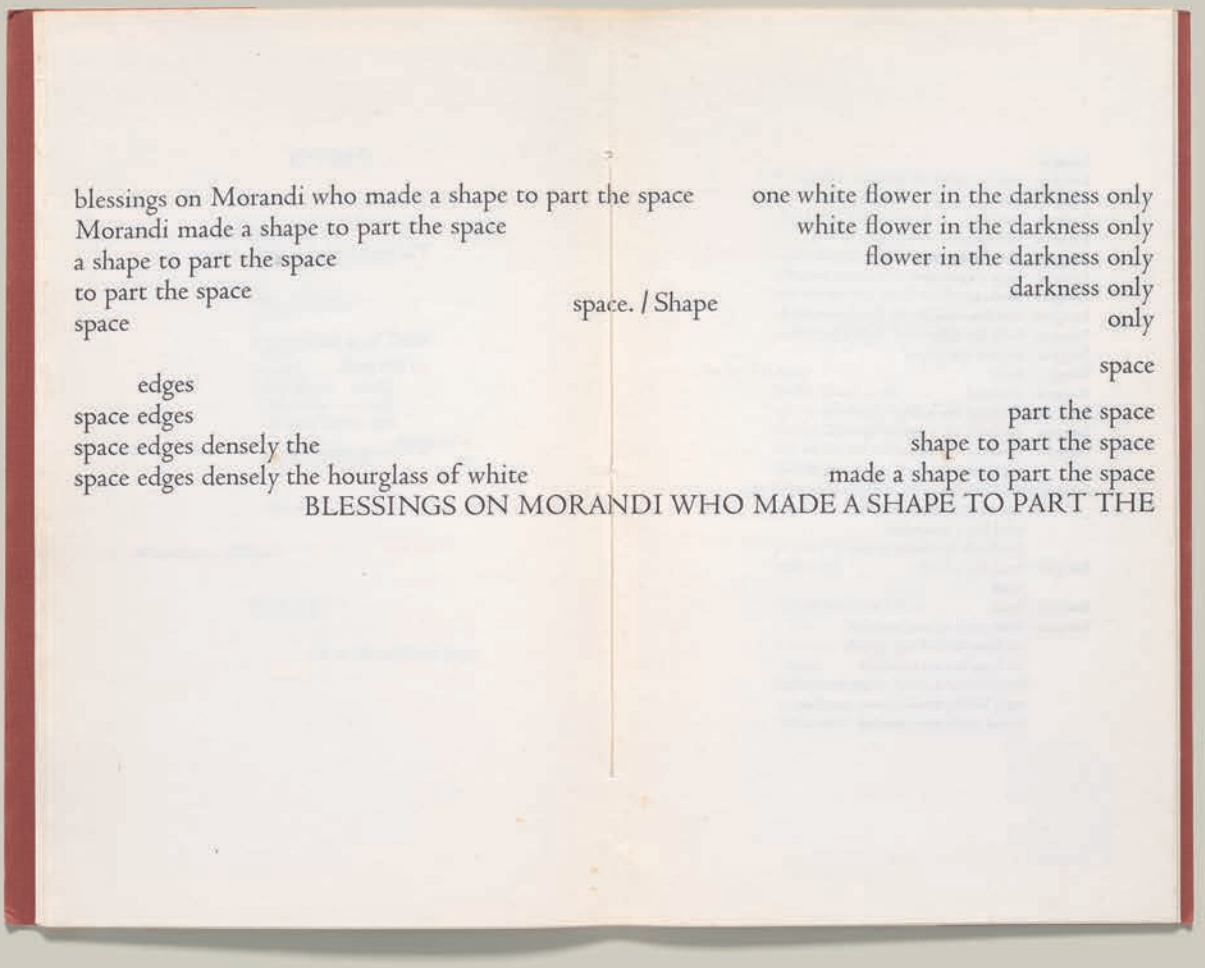
I doubt that any printer's first book has proved more wholly apposite than *Pathway To The Sea*, printed by Alan Loney in 1975 at his newly founded Hawk Press. There is propriety in the contributors. The writer, Ian Wedde, achieved prominence as a poet and critic, as Loney has; the cover artist, Ralph Hotere, believed strongly in the crosspollination of art and literature, as Loney does. And there is propriety in the title, which poetically evokes Loney's trajectory in Aotearoa New Zealand. Born in 1940 in Te Awakairangi Lower Hutt, he came to printing through poetry. In 1971, he typeset his first collection, *The Bare Remembrance,* at Trevor Reeves's Caveman Press in Ōtepoti Dunedin. Hawk Press was set up at Te Onepoto Taylors Mistake and later travelled with Loney from Ōtautahi Christchurch to the Kāpiti Coast and Ōkiwi Eastbourne. After its closure in 1983, he established further presses in Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington and Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. In 1998, he left Aotearoa, crossing Te Tai-o-Rehua Tasman Sea and alighting in Naarm Melbourne, where he settled permanently in 2001.

I imagine that the beginning of Hawk Press felt like hard going. The foundational Arab treadle platen press arrived at 199 Taylors Mistake Road broken. Loney later wrote, "It had not been adequately tied down, and did not survive, on the way to Taylors Mistake, the very sharp turn at the bottom of Scarborough hill."[1] Welded back together it worked all right. For the cover of *Pathway To The Sea*, Hotere provided a watercolour, rather than the line drawing that Loney had requested, and so reproduction of the image had to be outsourced to a commercial offset printer, entailing extra cost and a lost opportunity to explore the printing of images in-house. There was an issue with the binding thread—Loney had wanted to use a coloured thread, to harmonise with the coloured ink chosen, but the thick nylon he procured proved too slippery to hold a knot. An off-white linen thread was used instead, and this became the standard for Hawk Press books, most of which would be typeset and printed by hand, handsewn into card covers and issued in editions limited to a few hundred copies.

Pathway To The Sea bears no traces of its bumpy ride into the world, a fact made more impressive when one considers that it was not merely Loney's first book but his first effort at printing altogether. As an object, the book harmonises with its content. The core text takes the form of an extended poem exploring natural and built environments. A dedication opposite

Edgar Mansfield *11.2.80...On Creation* 1981. Hawk Press, Ōkiwi Eastbourne. Alan Loney Collection, Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū



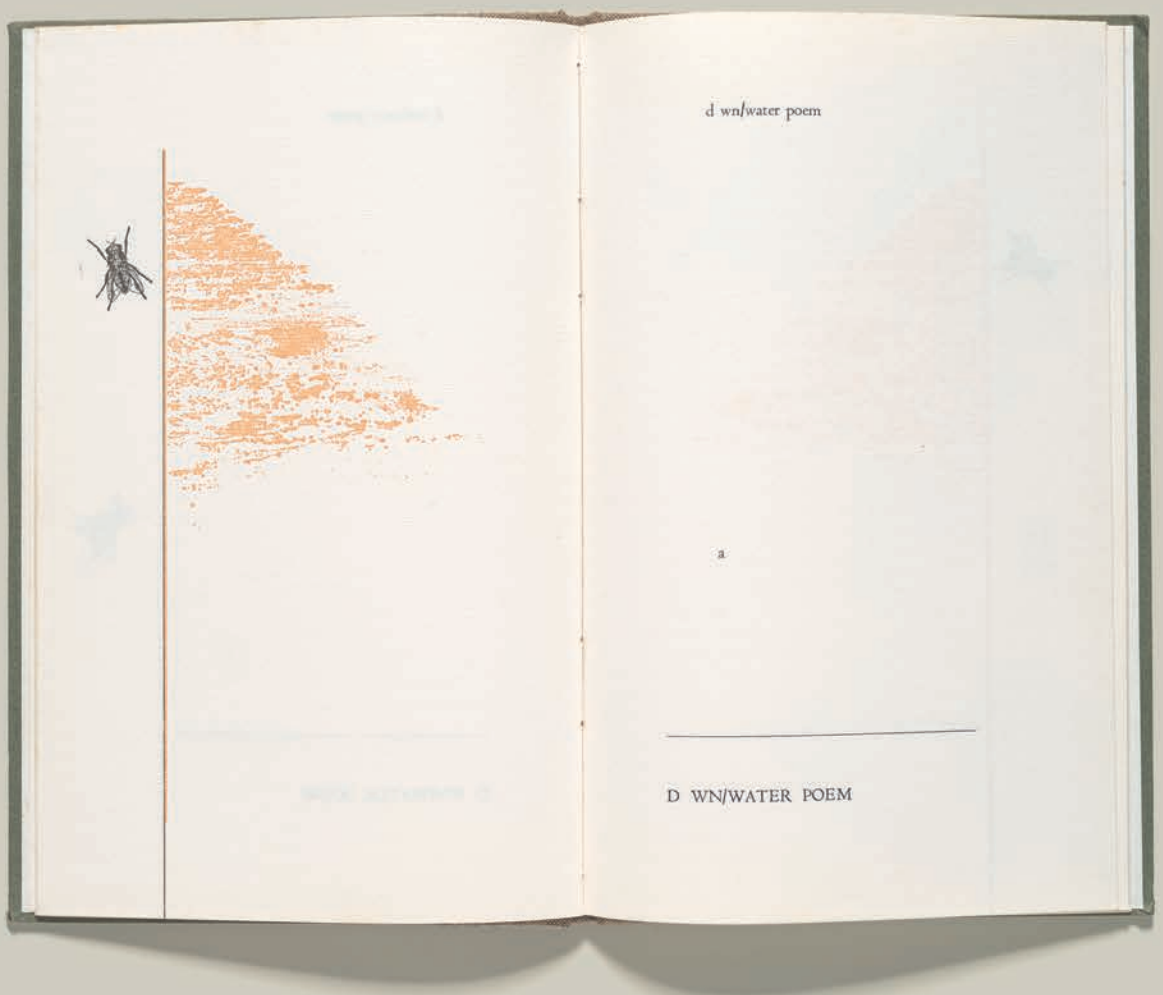


Joanna Margaret Paul *Imogen* 1978. Hawk Press, Oruamatoro Days Bay. Alan Loney Collection, Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū

the title page decries the development of an aluminium smelter at a settlement at the mouth of the Otago Harbour, Aramoana, the name of which is often translated as 'pathway to the sea'. The cover image is the deep green observed in the sea around Aotearoa. Titles and the dedication are printed in red ochre, evoking earth, excrement, timber and industrial structures in decay. *Pathway To The Sea* (with 'to' and 'the' thus capitalised, giving the words uncommon weight) cascades down the front cover, replicated fifteen times. The strategy turns the phrase into a chant, a mantra, and calls to mind the use of repetition, in place of elaborate display type, in certain nineteenth-century advertisements.

Initially, Loney worked with a limited stock of type at Hawk Press, partly out of necessity (not many typefaces suitable for hand-setting were available to him), and partly because he wished for the books that he printed to feel related. The first few contained only Eric Gill's Perpetua and its companion italic, Felicity. These faces had been much used in the first half of the twentieth century—especially for display—by fine presses, such as the Golden Cockerel Press of England, and literary publishers, such as Faber & Faber of England and the Caxton Press of Aotearoa. Loney made them his own by, for instance, placing an emphasis on asymmetry and using different colours of ink, font sizes and page sizes. Over time, he acquired a range of display types, which permitted considerable diversity of identity, while the text type (in Perpetua/Felicity and, later, Centaur) maintained the family resemblance. Loney played with rules and geometric shapes, and brought in significant artists like Robin Neate, Janet Paul and Andrew Drummond to serve as illustrators.

The literary works Loney chose to print also contributed to the development of a recognisable Hawk Press identity. Following in the footsteps of influential New Zealand typographer-publishers of the first half of the twentieth century, such as Denis Glover, co-founder of the Caxton Press, and Robert 'Bob' Lowry, Loney aimed to "print well what was worth



Ian Wedde *Pathway to the Sea* 1975. Hawk Press, Te Onepoto Taylors Mistake. Alan Loney Collection, Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū

"...a constant flow of new typographical challenges that kept the typographer on his toes."

printing" (to borrow a phrase associated with Glover).[2] That is, he wished to print work that he believed to be important. Hawk Press placed an emphasis on poets of the post-war generation, poets who tended to be progressive in their politics and in their experimentation with form, punctuation, spelling and tone, including Alan Brunton, Graham Lindsay, Murray Edmond, Joanna Margaret Paul, Bill Manhire, Elizabeth Smither and Michael Harlow. As a general rule, Loney would seek manuscripts from specific authors. Of Brunton's *Black & White Anthology* (1974), the fourth Hawk Press book, he has commented:

This work confirmed for me a process which served my whole printing life very well and which was started, almost inadvertently, with Ian Wedde's Pathway To The Sea*: most of the texts I ever printed, at least 80% of them, were solicited, and all of those which were sent to me by invitation were printed. The issue was that I wanted to print particular authors, and if I was going to put them to the trouble of preparing something for me,*


there wasn't time enough
for our talking
the more we talked
the less that mattered
what it came to was
'I love you'
'I love you'
"Hey, don't squeeze the bones"

Alan Loney *Squeezing the Bones* 1983. Hawk Press, Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington. Alan Loney Collection, Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū

then I had better be clear that the decision to publish was made before I received the material and not after. In all the years I did this, not one person abused this offer or treated it cheaply. It turned out to be simply the way I worked and liked to work.[3]

Like Glover and Lowry, Loney helped to shape, and reshape, the local literary canon. Some of the writers he championed remained marginal—by chance (some left New Zealand), choice, or the limited vision of the critical establishment, which Loney has frequently denounced in thoughtful writings. But many became leading voices from Aotearoa. It is important to note that Loney's interests were never parochial. His own poetry was heavily influenced by the work of American poets, especially Charles Olson and Louis Zukofsky, and his writing and printing both found purchase in an international network. His second collection of poetry, *dear Mondrian*, printed at Hawk Press in 1976, was enthusiastically reviewed by the well-known Black Mountain poet Robert Creeley, who met Loney in Aotearoa that same year.[4] Hawk Press subsequently published *Hello* (1976), a book of poems by Creeley concerning Aotearoa. Many of the copies were exported.

Loney's activities at Hawk Press were not confined to his own publishing projects. On occasion, he printed books and pamphlets for other publishers—for instance, Pat White's *Signposts* (1977) for Michael Harlow's Frontiers Press, and Clive Faust's *Metamorphosed from the Adjacent Cold* (1980) for Cid Corman's Origins Press in Boston. In 1982, he printed the text for *Taste Before Eating*, a portfolio of linocuts and recipes by artist Marilynn Webb produced to accompany a show of the same name at the Dowse Art Museum. He also took on 'jobbing work', particularly the printing of invitations to book launches and exhibition openings. These projects provided "a constant flow of new typographical challenges that kept the typographer on his toes".[5] Over time, Hawk Press books became noticeably more ambitious and experimental. Lavish bindings were introduced. Edgar Mansfield's *11.2.80: On Creation* (1981) was bound in quarter cloth with boldly printed, paper-covered boards; J. C. Beaglehole's *The New Zealand Scholar* (1982) was bound in quarter goatskin with cloth-covered boards.

The final Hawk Press book was Loney's own *Squeezing the Bones* (1983). Issued in an edition of just fifteen copies, it was the twenty-eighth major publication from the press. The design and printing exude confidence and freedom. Variegated words and shapes dance across the pages. The work formed a brilliant swansong for the press and represented the culmination of Loney's career as a printer to date. It confirmed his status as a book-maker with a distinctive, hawk-sharp eye and pointed to the future. Hawk Press was followed by Black Light Press and the Holloway Press (co-founded with Peter Simpson at the University of Auckland Waipapa Taumata Rau) in Aotearoa and Electio Editions in Australia. Loney's reputation as a printer and writer grew, especially abroad, his two practices reinforcing one another and increasingly intertwining. Today, his accumulated output exists as a kind of ocean. Vast, varied and of near-endless possibility, it sparkles with letterforms and images, and the spaces that define them, disperse them, wash meanings about them.[6]

Francis McWhannell *is a writer, gallerist and exhibition-maker. He is co-director of Season in central Tāmaki Makaurau, and curator of the Fletcher Trust Collection.* Hawk Press 1975–83 *is on display until 17 August 2025.*

1 Peter H. Hughes, 'The letterpress books of Alan Loney 1975–2014: An annotated bibliography', unpublished manuscript, 2022, p. 16.

2 *Book* 5, February 1942, n.p.

3 Peter H. Hughes, 'The letterpress books of Alan Loney 1975–2014, pp. 21–2.

3 Robert Creeley, 'Dear Alan Loney', *Islands 14*, summer 1975, pp. 467–9. The book went on to be a joint winner of the poetry prize at the 1977 New Zealand book awards, alongside Ruth Dallas's *Walking on the Snow* (Caxton Press, 1976).

5 Peter H. Hughes, 'The letterpress books of Alan Loney 1975–2014, p. 43.

6 With apologies to Hone Tuwhare.

Hye Rim Lee: Swan Lake

Ken Hall

Hye Rim Lee *Swan Lake* (still) 2025. 3D animation. 3D generalist: Steven Stringer. Courtesy of the artist

The laptop fires up and a dreamlike virtual world materialises. Exquisite peacocks—glassy black, ethereal white—emerge on a moonlit stage, framed by icy blue branching patterns. A cast of swans glide through a luminous, rippling lake in measured arcs, their movements both urgent and graceful. In other scenes, two royal lovers—bound by fate, divided by unseen forces—circle one another, mirroring gestures of longing and hesitation.

We pause over lunch at a bustling Grey Lynn café, reviewing excerpts of the work in progress. Hye Rim Lee notices the esteemed senior painter Jacqueline Fahey at a nearby table—this neighbourhood has long been known as a hub for artists. Our waiter glances at Lee's screen and pauses. "What's happening here? That looks interesting." Stopping to explain isn't practicable, so we leave it there. Lee's project takes me to unfamiliar places—one of which we've just visited. Te Wai Ōrea is a natural spring-fed lake widely known as Western Springs and is home to many bird species, including kakīānau—black swans. This is where the idea for the new work was sparked, during the first nationwide Level 4 lockdown in 2020 when she began studying, filming and photographing the swans in precious moments of retreat from the walled confines of her Grey Lynn studio. COVID-19 ushered in a radically unsociable time, but creative endeavour was not completely demolished.

Lee has just received draft material from her new animator and has refinements and interpretations to discuss. I'm lending eyes and ears. At this stage, her avian actors are still in rehearsal—appearing on screen as 'dolls' or animatics—testing sequences and movement on rippling, watery stage sets. These choreographed drafts will undergo major further refinement before they are ready for large-screen projection, transforming into something fully realised and immersive.

Lee has exhibited internationally for over two decades and is now experiencing renewed local recognition. She moved from Seoul to Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland in 1993, studying first at Unitec and later at Elam School of Fine Arts. By the early 2000s, she was one of Aotearoa New Zealand's pioneering digital artists. Five years in New York between 2007 and 2012 solidified her position as a leading intermedia artist, working across digital, sculptural and performance platforms.

From December 2024 until April 2025, Te Papa Tongarewa showcased two major new works, *Black Rose* (2012–21) and *White Rose* (2022), newly acquired and immaculately presented on vast, opposite-facing screens. Paired together as *Āke Tonu Atu* / *Eternity*, these

Hye Rim Lee *Glass Queen* 2021. *Black Rose* image series made from 3D animation *Black Rose*.
3D generalist: Greg Smith. Courtesy of the artist

works featured Lee's signature mass-media/cyber/anime-inspired character, TOKI. While her actions were mirrored, the narratives shifted, reflecting the passage of time and transformation in TOKI's identity. In *Black Rose*, TOKI embodies the struggle to overpower grief, darkness and death; in *White Rose*, she crosses a threshold into hope, light and eternity. Both works are boldly provocative, set in emotional and fantastical landscapes where TOKI's form embodies both self-avowal and self-protection, with thorns emerging from exposed, sinuous limbs and torso. Further surrealistic elements—dancing mushrooms, swirling gold or pink ice creams, inflated beach balls, flying duck swim rings and rabbits pooping diamonds—populate the screens, set to a coolly detached soundtrack by Ladyfish, commissioned by Lee.

In *Swan Lake*, Lee constructs a similarly immersive and dramatic spectacle, again following a trajectory of transformation from darkness to light. While likewise embedded with emotional and symbolic layers, the performing cast is now changed. TOKI is no longer onstage, and the swans are simply swans—no avatars, self-projections or humans enacting swans, as in the original ballet. At the same time, the work continues to enlarge Lee's foundational themes and imaginative worlds.

Much of her earlier work, as she explains, explored "Asian women living as immigrants in western society as well as sexuality and female identity." She describes this as being shaped in part by her experience as a Korean woman in the 1970s and 1990s—"a very dark and grey period" marked by political upheaval. "We had protests, dictators, coups, and always army tanks outside the university, gas guns." Alongside this overt repression, there was something more persistent and subtle in societal attitudes and expectations around women's appearance and roles. She describes her early work, leading into the creation of TOKI, as "more like the woman's twisted and idealized image—sexualized—made by [a] male dominant area of plastic surgery, computer games, and cyber culture. Hence, TOKI was born and evolved with those issues as a distorted body, highlighting this problematic area of contemporary culture."

Hye Rim Lee *Black Rose* (2012–21) in *Āke Tonu Atu | Eternity*, Te Papa Tongarewa, 2024–5. 3D generalist: Greg Smith. Sound: Ladyfish. Courtesy of Te Papa Tongarewa

From these many layers of the TOKI period, we now see a shift. *Swan Lake* takes creative risks in its apparent sweetness and sincerity. It owns its own space without any evident anxiety for how a more impassive audience might respond. In this, it feels like defiance—a renunciation of artistic constraint and a different kind of external control. Lee's interpretation draws inspiration from Tchaikovsky's ballet and references a recorded Nureyev choreography, but it reshapes the narrative, expanding the story with her own imaginative elements. "It's a complete twist," she explains. "Not the same as the ballet at all. A lot of components will be added and deleted from the original Acts." New elements so far include peacocks, glass insects, and a colossal, mirrored heavenly rose. As the project grows in scope and complexity, the story carries and conceals its own meanings.

Here, we also see the influence of Lee's upbringing, which she describes as deeply performative, and immersed in music, theatre and dance.

"I started singing at the age of three; I was a child prodigy and had an amazing voice and musicality. I could read complicated opera scores. At eight or nine, I regularly appeared on a TV programme called *Come and Sing* and once sang in front of 3,000 people. By fifteen, I was singing opera. I was a church soloist until I lost my voice at nineteen. I was a Mozart singer, especially coloratura—I could sing *The Queen of The Night* from *The Magic Flute*."

Her elder sister Hye Ju was similarly gifted, but as a pianist. Their parents had fled North Korea near the outbreak of the Korean War and became prominent figures in South Korean theatre and opera. Their father, Jin Soon Lee, was a key figure in the development of Korean theatre, founding his own company and coining the term *Changgeuk* (Korean opera). Elevating this to a grand scale, he also regularly directed for other companies and performed European opera, ballet and theatre, including experimental work and introducing Shakespeare and Chekov to Korean audiences. Their mother, Moon Sook Jeong, had escaped

Hye Rim Lee *White Rose* (2022) in *Āke Tonu Atu | Eternity*, Te Papa Tongarewa, 2024–5. 3D generalist: Greg Smith. Sound: Ladyfish. Courtesy of Te Papa Tongarewa

North Korea on foot and eventually became a leading soprano. Their deaths—his in 1981 while Lee was still at university, hers four years later—left a profound void, compounded greatly by the loss of her sister who was by then a concert pianist living with her family in Boston, in 2008, the year after Hye Rim Lee moved to New York.

Black Rose remains a powerful expression of and response to a period marked by loss and despairing escapism, as TOKI faces her own mortality. Yet, as seen in *Āke Tonu Atu | Eternity* at Te Papa and the semi-mirrored *White Rose*, this gives way to a sense of regeneration—birthed and sustained by Lee's redeveloping faith, and continued in her exploration around the construction of identity. Rather than imposing certainty, belief has evidently shaped Lee's vision, resilience and capacity for reinvention, fuelling her engagement with complexity and transformation.

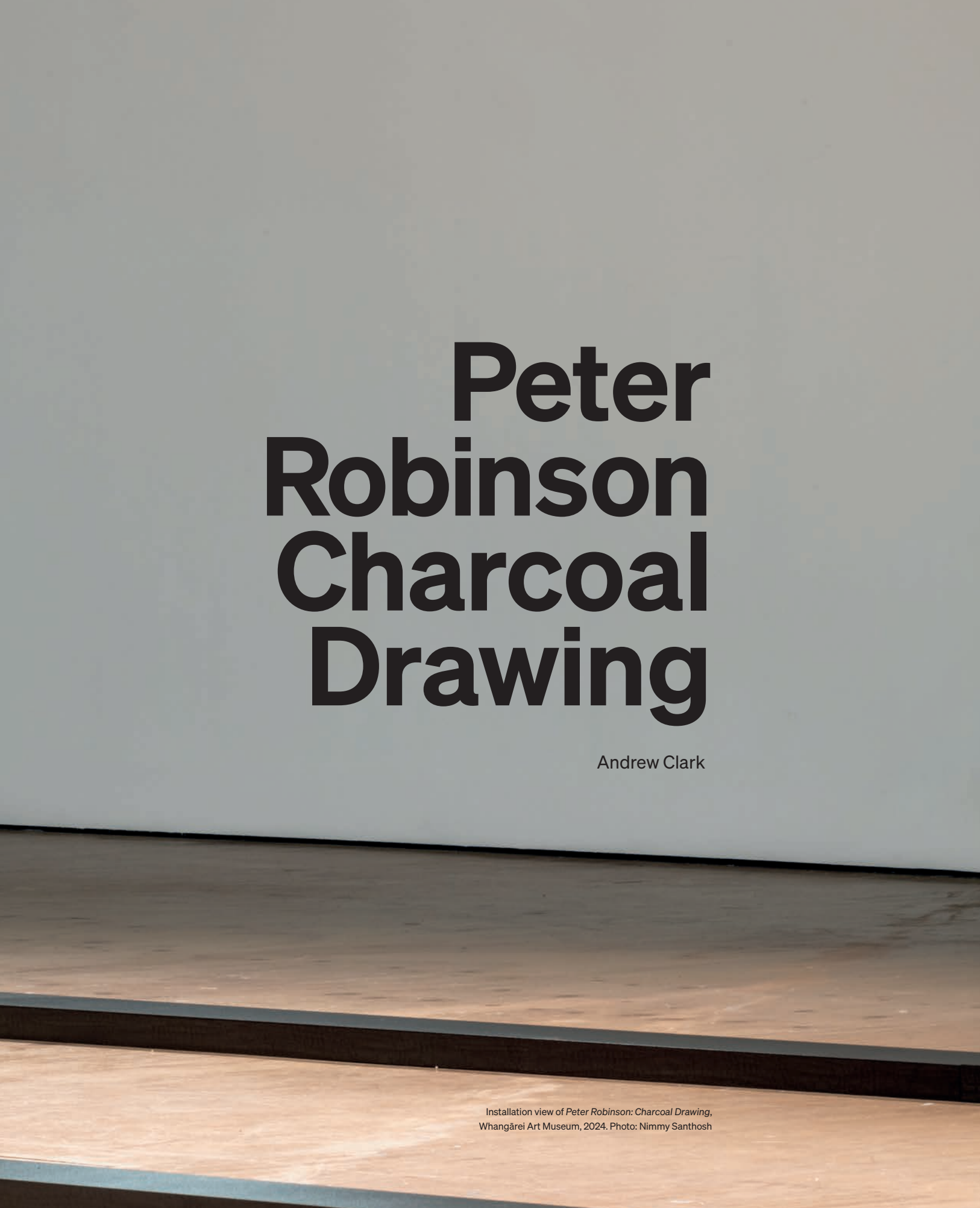
The creation of *Swan Lake* might then be seen as part of a broader process of healing and reclamation—not only a pull towards rediscovery of childhood innocence, hope and imagination, but also Lee's reconnection with her rich cultural and personal heritage. This process of artistic and spiritual renewal reveals the artist's deepening engagement with both past and present, shaping a path forward that is as reflective and inventive as it is boldly liberating.

Ken Hall
Curator

Hye Rim Lee: Swan Lake *is on display from 2 August until 23 November 2025.*

Peter Robinson Charcoal Drawing

Andrew Clark



Installation view of *Peter Robinson: Charcoal Drawing*, Whangārei Art Museum, 2024. Photo: Nimmy Santhosh

Physically imposing yet also vaguely laughable, the burnt-wood-veneer aluminium works in this exhibition call back to Robinson's previous engagements with obstinately artificial materials, such as polystyrene and felt. However, compared to the almost histrionic theatricality of some older works, these "charcoal drawings" are comically dour, although it would be a mistake to interpret this faux-minimalist posture as purely ironic.

The miserable artificiality of the materials on display here—grim, production-line facsimiles of a half-remembered natural world—does not negate their status as art objects; on the contrary, by building an exhibition entirely around these quasi-sculptural superstructures, Robinson encourages the viewer to really consider them, to focus on their qualities as objects and allow their implications to gradually unwind from there. Look, he seems to say, see how the veneer cracks and buckles when I fold the metal. See how quickly the illusion is dispelled, yet how flexible and resilient the underlying matter actually is.

A brief examination of Robinson's recent works helps to further untangle the journey that led to *Charcoal Drawing*. In the last handful of years, his long-standing concerns with, and criticisms of, the politics of identity have seemingly been channelled and directed—or, perhaps, incarnated—into the realm of materiality, while losing nothing of his characteristic iconoclasm. In 2020, his exhibitions *Rag Trade* and *Notations* took an aggressive, maximalist approach to the idea of material deconstruction, leading to galleries strewn with seemingly-discarded scraps of cloth and metal entangled with broken plastic furniture. In these shows the chaotic, frightening sociopolitical energies of the new decade were made blindingly manifest, sublimated into a jagged, raw-edged physicality.

As the 2020s wear on, Robinson's work has begun to address the decade's pervasive sense of continually accelerating material decay and social disruption differently. In 2023's *Kā Kaihōpara*, new structures began to emerge from the chaos, gangly, familiar spiralling forms created by bending rectangular-cross section aluminium beams. Crucially, however, these structures did not exist in a vacuum, but were contextualised (or, indeed, contested) by a cacophonous Greek chorus of other voices emanating from the works on the walls, some of which were Robinson's and some those of his friends and whānau. This element of community or multiplicity is perhaps crucial to understanding Robinson's new direction, in that it reintroduces elements of dialogue, uncertainty and reciprocity to the proceedings. However, this is an offline, tangible language, quite different from the kind of linguistic point-scoring that so often leads to frighteningly unpredictable real-world misery. An opportunity for kōrero, not debate.

As an artist whose reputation was built in part on works that commented on Pākehā anxieties about Māori and Māori anxieties about those anxieties, it is understandable that Robinson might seek to re-imagine his role in the contemporary political landscape. It seems that, rather than attempting to engage with the bottomless well of the online commentary vortex, which affords endless opportunities for outrage and psycho-social violence undreamt of in 1990s New Zealand, Robinson has wisely chosen to move the battle to a place of his own choosing, namely the physical gallery space, redolent of floor cleaner and bulk-bought white acrylic paint. In the present climate, perhaps the most constructive action one can take is to disconnect from cyclical, algorithmic modes of thought and instead focus on the physical world, which still exists as a discrete entity, separate from its digital nightmare-self.

***Andrew Clark** is an Auckland-based writer and editor with an interest in art, literature, comics, photography, film and material culture.*

This essay was originally published in 2024 by Whangārei Art Museum to accompany the exhibition Charcoal Drawing, *which is on display at Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū from 2 August until 23 November 2025.*

Installation view of *Peter Robinson: Charcoal Drawing*, Whangārei Art Museum, 2024. Photo: Nimmy Santhosh

“...see how the veneer cracks and buckles when I fold the metal. See how quickly the illusion is dispelled, yet how flexible and resilient the underlying matter actually is.”

“...me kitea he pēhea te pakē me te whekoki o te papaangi ka whakakopakopa au i te konganuku. Me kitea he pēhea te horo ka whakamaheatia te āhuahanga, engari he pēhea te ngāwari me te aumangea o te hangahanga tonu kei raro.”

Te kaiora āhuatanga ōkiko engari anō te hākirikiri katakata, ko ngā mahi konumohe papaangi—wahie—tahuna ki roto i tēnei whakaaturanga he mea karanga whakahoki ki ngā whakapāpātanga ki mua a Robinson ki ngā rawa tāwhaiwhai ngana pērā i te kōmama me te whītau. Engari kia whakaritea ki te tērā pea whakameremere hītōria o ētahi mahi tawhito ake, ko ēnei "tuhinga waro" he pukuhohe mōkinokino, ahakoa ka hē pea kia whakamāori i tēnei tū whakapū—whakatapeha hei pāraharaha tūturu.

Ko te tāwhaiwhai poururu o ngā rawa ka whakaatūhia ki konei—whakaahua mōkinokino, rārangi o te maumaharatanga haurua tai ao—ka kaua e whakakore i tā rātou tūnga hei taonga toi; engaringari, mā te hanganga whakaatūranga pōkeretia katoa ki ēnei tāraitanga - ūmanga whakatakotoranga nunui, ka whakahaua e Robinson te kaimātakitaki kia āta whakaaro ki a rātou, kia arotahi ki a rātou kounga hei taonga, ā, tuku i a rātou whakaritenga kia āta tākirikiri mai I reira. E titiro, hei ko tāna pea, me kitea he pēhea te pakē me te whekoki o te papaangi ka whakakopakopa au i te konganuku. Me kitea he pēhea te horo ka whakamaheatia te āhuahanga, engari he pēhea te ngāwari me te aumangea o te hangahanga tonu kei raro.

He whakamātautau poto o ngā mahi onāianei tonu ka āwhina kia mataara i te hikoinga ka hua mai a *Tuhinga Waro*. Ki ngā tau torutoru tata nei, ko ana raruraru roroa ki te, me ngā akiaki o, ngā tōrangapū tuakiri kua āhuanuitia te tawaka me te anga—rānei, tērā pea, ākahukahu—ki roto i te ao rawa, e kore nei e ngaro he aha i tōna tūāhua rangirua. I 2020, ki ana whakaatūranga Rag Trade me Notations ka tango i te āhua ririhau, kauawhi tōnuitanga ki te whakaaro o te whakahoro rawa, e puta ai he huarewa kūwawatia ki te hanga ruirui o ngā mara ngetangeta me te konganuku kua tauwhiwhitia ki ngā taonga whare kirihou pākarukaru. Ki roto o ēnei ka tītohutia te kūnakunaku hihiri whakamataku o te tekau tau hou i hanga whakatinanatia kāpōtia, akuakutia ki roto i tētahi whakakoikoi, hanganga taitapa māota.

Hei te wā e ngaro haere nei ngā tau 2020, ko ngā mahi a Robinson ka timata ki te whakautu i te tekau tau tūāhua rangiwhāwhā o te whakahorohoro haere noa tonu o te pirautanga rawa me te tihahu hāpori kia whano kē. I *Kā Kaihōpara* i ngā 2023, he pūnaha hou ka whiti ake i te tihahu, he pōrahurahu, he āhua taunga, he rauponga i hangaia mā te whakapiko tekihana whakawhiti—tapawhā paepae konumohe. Waiwai, heoi anō, ko ēnei whakatakotoranga horekau i tauora i roto i tētahi mārua, engari i whakawhirinaki (koia rānei i whakataetae) nā tetahi korihi Kariki wawā a ētahi ake reo enanga mai ana i ngā mahi ki ngā pātū, ētahi o ēnei nā Robinson, ā, ētahi nā āna hoa, ētahi nā tōna whānau.

Installation view of *Peter Robinson: Charcoal Drawing*, Whangārei Art Museum, 2024. Photo: Nimmy Santhosh

“Ki te huarere onāianei, tērā pea ko te hohenga tino whai hua ka taea e tētahi ko te whakamakere i ngā whakaauau, momo whakaaro pākiki...”

Ko tēnei huānga o te hāpori, o te whakarea, tērā pea he waiwai kia mārama ki te ara hou a Robinson, inā rā ka whakarauora huānga kōrerorero, te rangirua me te tauutuutu ki ngā whakahaerenga. Heoi anō, he mea motuhake, ko tēnei he reo kōhure, he tino rerekē i tērā o te mātauranga wetereo whiwhinga piro ka hura rawa ake ki te kumukumu whakamataku auhi ao tūturu. He whakapuakitanga mō te kōrero, ehara i te tautohetohe.

Hei tētahi ringa toi ko tāna rongo i hangaia kia whai wāhi ki ngā mahi ka kōrero mō ngā awangawanga a Pākehā e pā ana ki a Māori me ngā awangawanga a Māori ki ēnei awangawanga, ka mārama kia kimikimi a Robinson kia whakaaro anō ki tōna tūnga ki roto i te takotoranga tōrangapū onāianei. Te hanga nei, engaringari kia tarai kia whakapāpā ki te puna tākere kore o te waiōmiomio reo tuihono, ka whakauru whakapuakitanga haere noa mō te takariri me te taikaha mātai hinengaro, mātai hāpori Matakite koretia ki ngā 1990 ki Aotearoa, kua kōwhiritia matatautia e Robinson kia nekehia te pakanga ki tētahi wāhi o tōna ake kōwhitinga, koia ko te tinana takiwā huarewa, whakakakara ki te hopiwē puroa me te peita kiriaku mā i hokona kauteretia. Ki te huarere onāianei, tērā pea ko te hohenga tino whai hua ka taea e tētahi ko te whakamakere i ngā whakaauau, momo whakaaro pākiki, ā, me arotahi kē ki te ao kikokiko, e tauora tonu nei hei hinonga nahenahe, wātea mai i tōna kiritau moepapa matihiko.

Te reo Māori translation: Daniel Hauraki
I whakaputaina tuatahitia tēnei tuhika i te tau e 2024 e te Whangārei Art Museum mō te whakaaturaka, mō Charcoal Drawing. *Kua whakaputaina anō i konei hai tohu i tōna whakaaturaka ki Te Puna o Waiwhetū.*

Installation view of *Peter Robinson: Charcoal Drawing*, Whangārei Art Museum, 2024. Photo: Nimmy Santhosh

Gold, Chalk and Rabbit-Skin Glue

Every frame carries its own history

What is your background and how did you come to be involved in this project?
My journey in heritage conservation began in Paris, where I completed an MA in Heritage Conservation at the Écoles de Condé in 2011. After relocating to Ōtautahi Christchurch in 2012 I refined my skills in gilding and frame conservation at Lin Klenner Studio, contributing to numerous earthquake remediation projects, including the conservation of the Canterbury Museum's collections. Further studies in cultural and media policy and management have given me a deeper perspective on heritage conservation within wider cultural and institutional frameworks. I now run my own private practice in Ōtautahi, specialising in gilding and frame conservation.

My involvement with the Gallery began in 2021 when I was invited to restore the frame of *Father's Tea* by Elizabeth Chalmers, which was severely damaged and required complete regilding. Since then, I've worked with the Gallery as a contractor on various conservation and restoration projects. In 2024, I was asked to assess the frame of Petrus van der Velden's *Burial in the Winter on the Island of Marken [The Dutch Funeral]* to explore ways to restore its original beauty. The Christchurch Art Gallery Foundation supported the project by launching a fundraising campaign to finance the restoration and regilding work.

I was invited to carry out the work in the conservation lab at the Gallery, where conservators Eliza Penrose and Carla Pike kindly shared their space with me. It is always a pleasure to work with the conservation and exhibition team here at Te Puna o Waiwhetū.

How do you go about preparing a frame like this for conservation, and what is the process?
This particular frame is very large. At nearly three metres long and over one and a half metres high it's definitely the largest and heaviest frame I've worked on so far. Its scale brings unique challenges—not just in handling, but in how I physically approach the work. Rather than moving the frame, I move around it, adapting to its size and specific features. To make this possible a special working table was designed and built by the very talented Martin Young, the Gallery's workshop technician. The table was customised to the ideal height for my workflow, and even included an aperture so I could slide underneath and work from the inside of the frame (where the painting would normally sit).

One of the very first steps in any conservation project is to assess and document the condition of the object. In this case, the frame was originally gilded but had at some point been completely repainted with a thick layer of bronze paint. There were also numerous old repairs, including fillings and added ornamentation.

Because frame restoration can be a messy process, and because of the scale of the work required, the next step was to carefully remove the painting from the frame, at which point I could start cleaning it to remove surface dust and grime. I then removed some of the previous repairs, which I suspected were made with epoxy filler—a material unsuitable for this kind of work and identifiable by its very strong chemical smell. Epoxy can cause further deterioration over time, and is difficult to remove without damaging the underlying materials. Some areas, particularly along the bottom edge, also included added ornamentation that needed to be removed.

Anne-Sophie Ninino works on the frame of Petrus van der Velden's *Burial in the Winter on the Island of Marken [The Dutch Funeral]*.

What is the frame made of and how do you recreate the missing bits of it?
The frame is made of wood and coated with traditional gesso—a mixture of chalk and rabbit-skin glue that is applied as a liquid then hardens to form a smooth surface that can be carved. The decorative elements are made from composition, often referred to as 'compo'—a historical material composed of chalk, animal glue, resin and linseed oil. When heated, compo becomes pliable and can be pressed into moulds. Once it cools, it hardens and can be shaped, carved and sanded.

In restoring this frame, I used the same traditional materials and methods that would have been used when it was originally made. All areas of loss were filled with gilder's putty (a blend of animal glue and chalk), and any missing ornamentation was recreated using new composition. To do this, I took silicone moulds from sections of the original frame that had survived intact and used them to replicate the decorative details. I prepare all of these materials—composition, gesso and putty—myself using time-honoured recipes.

What are the major challenges you've hit with this one?
Every frame carries its own history, and part of the joy of my work is uncovering that story. Like archaeology or detective work, conservation involves close observation and interpretation: past repairs, materials and damage all reveal clues about the frame's journey through time. With this particular frame, many of the previous restorations weren't immediately visible due to the thick bronze paint covering the surface. It was only through close inspection—spotting uneven areas, inconsistencies in colour, or slightly off details in the ornamentation—that I began to uncover the extent of earlier interventions.

One of the more complex challenges was deciding whether to remove the paint. In some areas, the underlying gesso was extremely fragile, and the paint might have been holding it together. Removing it could have caused further damage, so each section had to be carefully considered on a case-by-case basis. In some places where I expected to find traditional gesso beneath the paint, I instead encountered an unusual white, plastic-like material—likely a modern intervention—that had to be removed and replaced with proper gesso to ensure a stable and authentic base for the gilding.

One of the key differences between paint and gold is that paint conceals flaws, while gold reveals them—it acts like a 'look at me' sign for every imperfection. For that reason, the surface preparation needs to be as smooth and flawless as possible. Where I found damaged areas, I either gently sanded them or removed the bronze paint to reach the layer beneath. I would then reapply gesso where needed and sand again to achieve a uniform surface. All of this careful preparation ensures that the final gilding will adhere properly and look its absolute best.

How is gold leaf applied?
There are several traditional methods for applying gold leaf, depending on the surface and the desired finish. One of the most refined is water gilding, which involves preparing the surface with multiple layers of sanded gesso, followed by coloured clay coatings known as *bole*—typically in ochre, red or black. These layers help the gold adhere and provide a warm undertone. A gilding liquor (a mix of water and alcohol) is brushed on, and the delicate gold leaf is laid onto the damp surface using a specialist brush. This technique produces a highly polished and luminous finish but requires ideal conditions and meticulous preparation.

For the van der Velden frame, oil gilding was the more suitable option, due to the painted surface beneath. In this process, a specially formulated gilding oil is applied over a smooth, sealed surface. Once the oil reaches the right level of tackiness the gold leaf is carefully laid onto the surface, where it adheres.

I use genuine 23.75-carat gold leaf—an expensive but beautiful material that offers a rich, warm shine. Given the scale of the frame, gilding takes several days to complete. But the process doesn't end there: freshly applied gold can appear too bright or pristine for a historic frame, so a patina is then applied to tone it down and integrate it more naturally with the painting.

The final appearance of the gilded surface—how aged or warm the gold looks—is determined in consultation with the curators. Their guidance ensures the frame complements the artwork and reflects the intended presentation in the gallery setting.

Anne-Sophie Ninino *is a French-trained conservator based in Ōtautahi Christchurch, with international experience in museum conservation and a specialisation in gilding, frame and heritage restoration.*

Anne-Sophie Ninino works on the frame of Petrus van der Velden's *Burial in the Winter on the Island of Marken [The Dutch Funeral]*.

My Favourite

***Alex Casey** is a senior writer at online magazine* The Spinoff *and lives in Ōtautahi with her husband, a cat and a dog.*

When I was growing up on our rural property in the South Wairarapa, my Dad was engaged in a constant war with his chickens. They would crap on the back deck, the side deck, and occasionally walk into the house and crap on the kitchen floor. He spent countless hours hosing down their muck and complaining about their every move, but still loved them enough to run a regular "name my chooks" competition on his Facebook page for a time.

"Audrey Hepburn has joined Fergie, Mario, Miss Grace Jones, Vivian and Henrietta in The Coop" he posted in 2009, accompanied by a photo of a black hen with a mullet (two likes).

When I saw Ron Mueck's *chicken / man*, I immediately thought of my Dad, along with Fergie, Mario and all his other feathered foes in The Coop. Not that Dad makes a habit of sitting around in his Y-fronts, but there's a similarity in the old man's incredulous stare at his unwelcome chicken guest across the table. His clenched knuckles drained white in frustration, mouth slightly open in dismay, shoulders hunched forward defensively. It's not a welcome guest—or is it?

Walk around the work a few times and you'll start to see different emotions reveal themselves like a Magic Eye—sometimes the man fears the chicken, sometimes the man gazes adoringly at the chicken like a long-lost love, sometimes he looks like he's about to showcase a very particular set of deadly skills on the chicken. All the while, the chicken just stands there, eyes locked in an eternal glassy gaze, more than likely poised to proudly unleash a crap on his Formica table.

Another gleeful part of *chicken/man* is the size. I had seen the work on billboards and in news articles for years before I was lucky enough to see it in real life, and was not prepared for the charming small scale of it. Rendering this tension-filled scene in shrunken proportions gives it even more novelty and absurdity—how odd and funny is it that so many of us humans share our lives with random animals, with all their impulses and fluids and demands?

My Dad doesn't have chickens at his place anymore (his last decrepit and club-footed rooster was put out of his misery a few years ago by a generous local farmer, who Dad gave some chocolate as a thank you). Still, when he comes down to visit us in Christchurch next, I'm looking forward to taking him to see *chicken / man*. Then I'm really, really looking forward to telling him that we need his help to build a chicken coop on our back lawn.

Ron Mueck *chicken / man* 2019. Mixed media. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, purchased 2019 by Christchurch Art Gallery Foundation with assistance from Catherine and David Boyer, Friends of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, Charlotte and Marcel Gray, Ben Gough Family Foundation, Jenny and Andrew Smith, Gabrielle Tasman and Ken Lawn, Christchurch Art Gallery Foundation's London Club along with 514 other generous individuals and companies. Courtesy Anthony d'Offay, London

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Ross Hemera *Ka moe te whaea i te wai* (detail) 2024. Aluminium, wood, ink, two-channel video. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, gift of the Friends of Christchurch Art Gallery, 2024

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TE PUNA O WAIWHETŪ

Pagework no.66

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.*

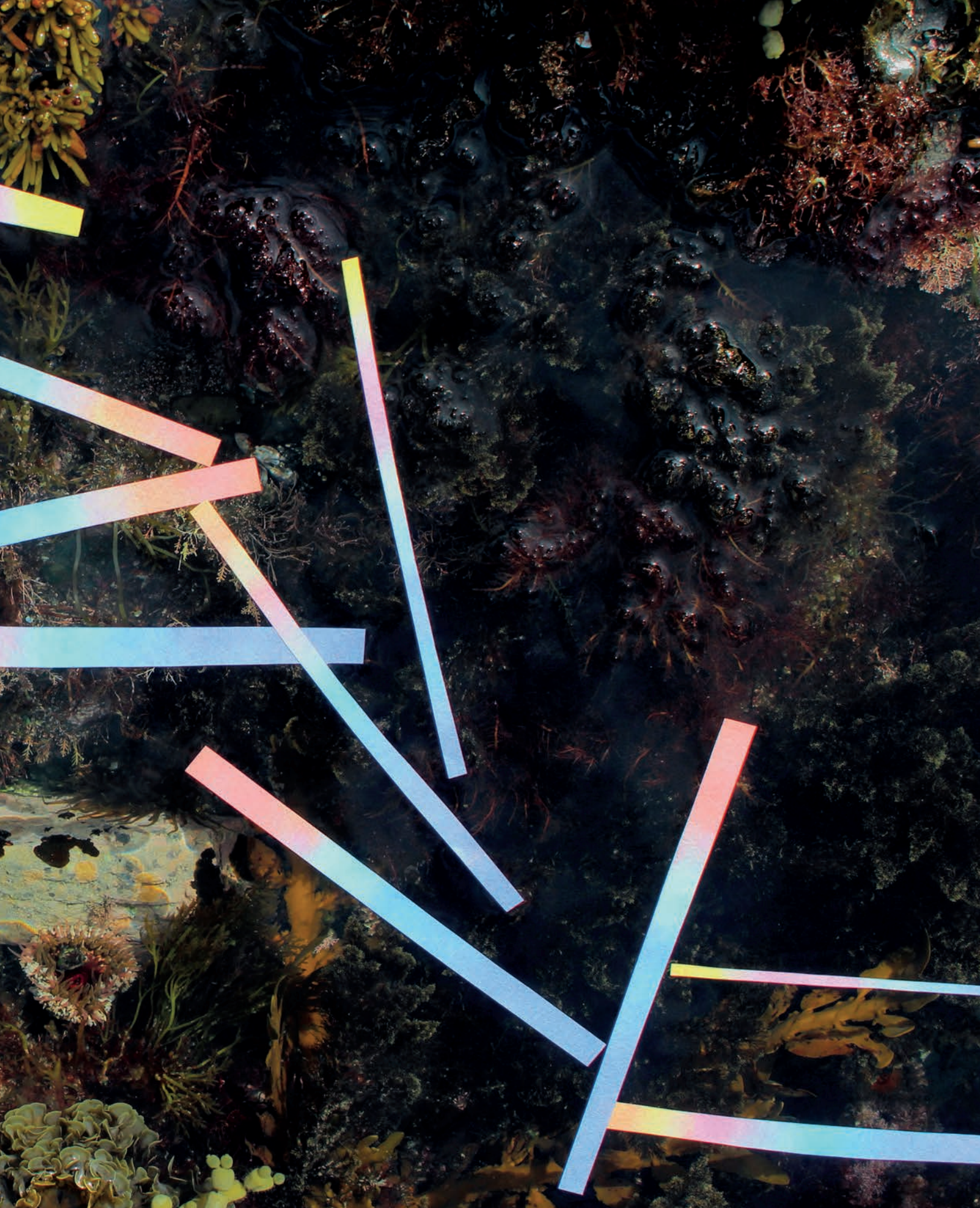
Eleanor Cooper is an artist who is keenly attentive to nature, and she often finds herself thinking about the relationships people hold with water. As a field ranger for the Department of Conservation, she spent time living and working on islands and more recently lived for several years on a small yacht. In 2021, this led to a joint project with Xin Cheng, *The rustling wind reminds me of life on Earth*, in which reclaimed sails were suspended in the foyer of Te Puna o Waiwhetū. Though Cooper now lives ashore, she is based in Tītahi Bay in Porirua, where the sea is still close by. Three kilometres to the west is Komanga Point, where the famed Polynesian navigator Kupe is believed to have landed, leaving behind a hefty anchor stone now held in the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

For this Pagework, Cooper wanted to create a drawing 'co-authored' with water, rather than imposing order or defining a meaning. She set thin strips of paper afloat in a coastal rock pool, and let them drift into their own configurations across its taut transparent plane, eddying over the rocks and plants beneath. There's a slowness here, and a kind of deep, unfolding noticing, coupled with a subtle relinquishing of control and perspective. In the words of one of Cooper's favourite writers and artists, Roni Horn, "When you look at water, you see what you think is your reflection. But it's not yours. (You are a reflection of water.)"[1]

Felicity Milburn
Lead curator

1 Roni Horn, 'Saying Water', transcript from performance at the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk, Denmark, May 2012.

Eleanor Cooper *Water drawing* 2025. Digital photograph



Opening this Quarter

Fred Graham: Toi Whakaata / Reflections
31 May – 5 October 2025
Significant sculptures by esteemed artist Fred Graham, revealing his close observations of nature.

Hye Rim Lee: / Swan Lake
2 August – 23 November 2025
A dreamlike digital reinvention of the Tchaikovsky ballet classic.

Peter Robinson: Charcoal Drawing
2 August – 23 November 2025
A roomful of industrial-scale beams folded into unexpected and compelling new forms.

Closing this Quarter

Dear Shurrie: Francis Shurrock and his Contemporaries
Until 13 July 2025
The art, influence and friendships of sculptor and teacher Francis Shurrock.

John Vea: Ini Mini Mani Mou
Until 13 July 2025
Powerful new work examining the complexities of Aotearoa New Zealand's immigration process.

Disruptive Landscapes: Contemporary Art from Japan
Until 24 August 2025
Quietly powerful and immersive video works revealing the politics behind our view of landscape.

Hawk Press 1975–83
Until 17 August 2025
A selection of beautifully designed and printed Hawk Press books presented to the Gallery by Alan Loney.

Coming Soon

Whāia te Taniwha
20 September 2025 – 15 February 2026
Māori artists consider the enduring relevance of taniwha in Aotearoa.

Exhib

Ongoing

Yona Lee: Fountain in Transit
Yona Lee's lively, restorative under-stairs sculpture for Te Puna o Waiwhetu.

He Kapuka Oneone—A Handful of Soil
Tākata and whenua, people and land, considered through Aotearoa New Zealand's art history.

Shona Rapira Davies: Ko te Kihikihi Taku Ingoa
A major installation remembering the peaceful resistance shown by the children of Waitara and Parihaka.

Lonnie Hutchinson: Hoa Kōhine (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 Ōtautahi 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.

Wendelien Bakker: Catching a Grid of Rain
The Gallery's bunker as a sculptural surface.

See the Gallery website and *What's On* guide for our events listings.

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The fund is ready. The acquisitions begin.

After years of collective support, the TOGETHER Endowment Fund is now fully established — and later this year we will be celebrating our very first milestone purchase.

Now is the perfect time to join TOGETHER and keep our momentum growing. Your annual donation helps the Gallery secure major works, commission new art, and continue to be Aotearoa New Zealand's best-loved gallery.

Become part of TOGETHER from $84/month.

cagf.org.nz/together

Join us on 29 August for *First* — a cocktail celebration of the fund's inaugural acquisition. Art, music, atmosphere, and our city's most engaged cultural supporters. 6.30pm - late. Tickets $150 pp.

Buy tickets at cagf.org.nz/events

Yona Lee *Fountain in Transit* 2024. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, commissioned by the Christchurch Art Gallery Foundation to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Gallery building; purchased with special thanks to Joanna Hickman, Charlotte and Marcel Gray, Janice Cowdy, Dame Adrienne Stewart and other generous individuals, 2024

CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY TE PUNA O WAIWHETŪ FOUNDATION

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Christchurch Art Gallery Foundation
In 2023, the Foundation was honoured to receive a significant bequest from the late Sir Miles Warren, a great supporter of the Gallery and himself the subject of a retrospective exhibition in 2009. The bequest helped us to reach the incredible milestone of $5m in our Endowment Fund for the Gallery's collection programme. The Foundation is incredibly grateful to Sir Miles for his generosity and foresight in making this gift.

Nothing gets accomplished without support. That's why we need the Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū Foundation. It's a solid base that helps ground the role of the Gallery and provides important funding to achieve our objectives. We collect, share and inspire, recognising where we've been, where we are now and where we're heading. We need people like you to join us.

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We wish to thank all of our TOGETHER partners, current and previous donors for your generosity and support over the years.

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

cagf.org.nz

CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY TE PUNA O WAIWHETŪ FOUNDATION

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