

# b.148

BULLETIN OF CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY TE PUNA O WAIWHETU **autumn** march – may 2007



# Exhibitions Programme

## March, April, May

### CRAIG POTTON: FLOATING ON ICE

Craig Potton, one of New Zealand's most successful nature photographers, displays for the first time his photography of Antarctica's sublime Ross Ice Shelf.

*Tait Electronics  
Antarctica Gallery  
• until 15 April*

### TOI MĀORI: THE ETERNAL THREAD

The Gallery is privileged to host the homecoming of this major international touring exhibition celebrating the changing art of Māori weaving, featuring traditional and contemporary work by more than forty leading Māori weavers.

*Developed and toured by Pataka Museum in partnership with Toi Māori Aotearoa and Te Roopu Raranga Whatu o Aotearoa, and with support from Te Waka Toi, the Māori Arts Board of Creative New Zealand.*

*William A. Sutton &  
Ravenscar Galleries  
• until 27 May  
• publication available*

### REBOOT

An energetic multimedia exhibition of contemporary art from the Jim Barr and Mary Barr Collection, showcasing acclaimed young New Zealand artists alongside international luminaries.

*Exhibition organised by Dunedin Public Art Gallery.*

*Touring Exhibition Galleries  
A, C & Borg Henry Gallery  
• 17 March – 1 July  
• publication available*

### SISTER CITIES YOUNG ARTISTS COMPETITION

An annual exhibition of work by young Christchurch artists organised by the International Christchurch Youth group.

*Balconies  
• 20 March – 15 April*

### KELCYTARATOA: MYSPACE

Populated with self-portraits, action toys and superheroes, the large-scale urban scapes of Kelyc Taratoa introduce an arresting new presence in New Zealand art.

*Touring Exhibition Gallery B  
• 23 March – 24 June*

### STELLA BRENNAN: WHITE WALL / BLACK HOLE

Stella Brennan's evocative audiovisual work explores the 1979 Erebus disaster, drawing from original film taken onboard the plane minutes before it crashed.

*Tait Electronics  
Antarctica Gallery  
• 21 April – 29 July*

## From the Gallery Collections

### THE COLLECTIONS

Divided into Historical, Twentieth Century and Contemporary Collections, this installation displays a rotating selection of treasures from the Gallery's permanent collections.

*Collection Galleries  
• catalogue available*

### QUADRANT: FOUR THEMES OF VAN DER VELDEN

Petrus van der Velden's key themes – the Dutch funeral, the Otira Gorge, rural workers and portraits – are explored through his dramatic and sensitive preparatory drawings, sketches, watercolours and oil paintings.

*Burdon Family Gallery  
• until 15 April*

### ART DETECTIVES

From the collections comes this delightful interactive exhibition for children of all ages, encouraging younger visitors to explore and connect with artworks.

*Monica Richards Gallery  
• ongoing*

### PICTURING THE PENINSULA

A selection of works by some of New Zealand's most significant historical and contemporary artists responding to the unique landscapes of Banks Peninsula Te Pataka o Rakaihautu.

*Burdon Family Gallery  
• 21 April – 22 July*

## TE PUNA O WAIWHETU CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY

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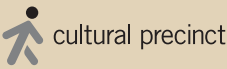
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Cover: **Kākahu Korowai** c. 1985 Dame Rangimarie Hetet (Ngāti Maniapoto). Muka, feathers from weka and pheasant, kārure, dye. Hetet Collection and Kahutoi Te Kanawa Collection. Courtesy of Waikato Museum of Art and History. Photograph: Norman Heke. Image courtesy of Toi Māori Aotearoa

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## Director's Foreword

JENNY HARPER



I recall well the Wellington homecoming of the internationally successful **Te Māori** some twenty years ago, for I had just returned from working in Australian galleries. This homecoming indicated that a remarkable cultural shift had and was taking place. Many of you will remember its extraordinary installation and reception at the Robert McDougall Art Gallery here in Christchurch in 1987. The significance of Māori art was made clear at this time, and galleries and museums around the country became aware of the need to adopt a bicultural approach to collecting and exhibiting. **Te Māori** consisted entirely of carving – historically a male-dominated artform – and there was discussion at the time of staging a new international exhibition that showed Māori art created by women. With the return of **Toi Māori: The Eternal Thread – Te Aho Mutunga Kore**, we have the privilege of seeing this come to pass.

**Toi Māori: The Eternal Thread** provides the only opportunity for South Island audiences to see this selection of rare and precious cloaks from weaving dynasties such as the Hetet and Te Kanawa families. Many of the artists will demonstrate weaving and talk about their work, and the exhibition is accompanied by an extensive public programme of events, lectures, panel discussions and performances. It has been a pleasure working with Pataka Museum, Toi Māori Aotearoa and Te Roopu Raranga Whatu o Aotearoa. I want to acknowledge their great generosity in sharing their time and knowledge with staff as we have prepared for the exhibition.

Our other major temporary show for the period is **Reboot: The Jim Barr and Mary Barr Collection**, a stellar selection of works from significant New Zealand and international artists. This is an excellent chance to sample the recent multimedia acquisitions of one of this country's foremost privately owned art collections, and to reflect on the excitement of collecting, both privately and on behalf of the public. This issue also features an interview with up and coming artist, Kelcy Taratoa, whose paintings in **kelcytaratoa: myspace** explore popular culture, and his urban lifestyle and identity. Stella Brennan is another young artist with a distinctive style – her audiovisual work **White Wall / Black Hole** on the 1979 plane crash on Mount Erebus is this quarter's exhibition in the Tait Electronics Antarctica Gallery.

The beginning of any year is a good moment to consider priorities and re-commit resources, staff and financial, to key projects and strategies. Christchurch Art Gallery staff are intent on furthering the Paradigm Shift plan announced in 2006. In particular, we want to assess and finalise an optimum staff structure for the gallery at this moment; to consider policies and operating processes; and to build first-rate relationships with a range of our stakeholders – public and professional – all the while developing and carefully honing a wide-ranging and adventurous public programme.

Like those who worked on the Paradigm Shift, our new management team recognises the need to review a range of opportunities for the Gallery's foyer and forecourt. Signage and the immediacy of the art experience are high on our agenda as well as providing for more consistent visitor feedback. Staff will be increasingly innovative in our practice, as we find new and varied ways to ensure the Gallery remains an exciting and surprising place for the wide range of visitors we want to attract. I am delighted, then, that during this quarter we have made such a strong commitment to showing Māori art, both traditional and contemporary. The Māori artists whose work features in **Reboot** and Kelcy Taratoa's paintings will provide a lively urban alternative to the weaving on display in **Toi Māori: The Eternal Thread**. Collectively, we will be exposed to the spiritual depth and the contemporary engagement of Māori art practice.

JENNY HARPER  
Director  
February 2007

## My Favourite

RANUI NGARIMU



*'Its dignified authority silently welcomes weaving artists to participate in the continuation of the eternal thread.'*

I have been privileged to view **Toi Māori: The Eternal Thread** at every venue where it has been exhibited, and each time I am moved by all of these beautiful creations of art fashioned from nature's offerings. I marvel at and acknowledge the innovation, development and skill of participating weavers who have, through their work, lifted Māori weaving and plaiting into this vibrant artform.

The piece from the exhibition that always takes my breath away is Dame Rangimarie Hetet's beautiful **Kākahu Korowai**, with approximately 180 spiralling black tassels, each made of three separate strands of fibre extracted from the harakeke plant (*Phormium tenax*) and individually plied using traditional techniques, then dyed. These strands are known as *kāture* and have been woven into the body of the cloak in a way that creates their synchronised movement when the garment is worn. The *kāture* are set out in a diagonal pattern and interspersed with tiny clumps of weka feathers which, along with pheasant feathers, also make up the border framing the main body of the cloak.

This *kākahu* (cloak) has been started from the bottom row of feathers and woven down to the top! This allows the feathers and other adornments to be attached without hindrance from preceding rows. The main body of the cloak is woven from harakeke fibre that has been prepared and rolled by hand into thread of various ply for *whenu* (warp) and *aho* (weft) material. The ornamental *tāniko* (woven pattern) at the bottom of the cloak is then applied once the main adornments have been completed. I particularly like the colours gained from the mud (black) and tree barks (tan and yellow) that create the intricate *tāniko* pattern. The perfect tension of this particular *tāniko* border inspires me to improve my (somewhat limited by comparison) *tāniko* application skills!



**Kākahu Korowai** c. 1985 Dame Rangimarie Hetet (Ngāti Maniapoto). Muka, feathers from weka and pheasant, *kāture*, dye. Hetet Collection and Kahutoi Te Kanawa Collection. Courtesy of Waikato Museum of Art and History. Photograph: Norman Heke. Image courtesy of Toi Māori Aotearoa

Dame Rangimarie Hetet's work spans most of the twentieth century, and she is acknowledged as one of the key weavers who led and supported the survival of Māori weaving as an artform.

Her *kākahu* is my favourite not only because of its visual appeal and its technical excellence, but also for its dignified authority that silently welcomes weaving artists to participate in the continuation of the eternal thread.

*Ranui Ngarimu (Ngāi Tahu and Ngāti Mutunga) is a Christchurch-based weaver. She uses traditional Māori technology and is active in revitalising Ngāi Tahu weaving techniques. She is the immediate past Chair of Te Roopu Raranga Whatu o Aotearoa, the National Māori Weavers Collective of New Zealand.*



## Toi Māori: The Eternal Thread Programme of Events

The stunning exhibition **Toi Māori: The Eternal Thread** includes a major programme of presentations and performances celebrating Māori art and artists. See page 15 for a full list of what's on.



**Tui Cloak** 2004 Kohai Grace (Ngāti Toarangatira, Ngāti Raukawa, Te Ahiawa, Ngāti Porou). Muka, dye, copper wire, feathers. Collection of the artist. Photograph: Norman Heke. Image courtesy of Toi Māori Aotearoa

## Around the World

Christchurch Art Gallery together with Canterbury Museum present *Around the World*, an exciting array of events celebrating cultural diversity in New Zealand. From March to May, the Gallery will host *Around the World in Three Discussions*, a series of major public debates considering the themes of multiculturalism, migration and national identity, followed by *Around the World in Five Workshops* from June to October, designed to be interactive, informative and fun. From 3 March to 6 May, Canterbury Museum will display *Around the World in Thirty Lounges*, an exhibition exploring cultural diversity within the domestic environment.

### Around the World in Three Discussions

A panel of prominent New Zealanders will present the following:

**15 March:**

*The Changing Face of New Zealand*

**19 April:**

*National Identity*

**17 May:**

*Migration and the Global Society*

Each session will involve short presentations from each panel member, questions and comments from the audience, refreshments and conclude with a general discussion between the panel members.

*Events are free and will be held in the Foyer and Philip Carter Family Auditorium. Doors open at 6.30 pm, panel discussions commence at 7 pm. For information on speakers and topics telephone 941 7342 or 941 7382.*

*Around the World is funded by the Todd Foundation Centenary Fund 2006, and has been produced with the assistance of the Office of Ethnic Affairs and the Ministry of Social Development.*

[www.christchurchartgallery.org.nz](http://www.christchurchartgallery.org.nz)

Register online to receive a monthly newsletter with information on current exhibitions and events at the Gallery.



Departing senior curator Neil Roberts (centre) at his official farewell, with former directors of the Gallery (from left to right) Rodney Wilson, John Coley and Tony Preston, and director Jenny Harper, 28 November 2006

## Art Appreciation Course

Another of our popular **Insight** art appreciation courses begins in March, offering a deeper understanding of modern art. An experienced tutor will work with a small group to take an in-depth look at developments in portraiture, landscape, abstraction and contemporary styles. The course is offered in four two-hour sessions – either on Tuesday mornings starting 13 March, or Saturday mornings starting 17 March.

*Course fees apply and enrolments are necessary. To enrol or for further information telephone 941 7342.*

## Creative Christchurch

Funding applications are now invited for community-based arts activities in Christchurch as part of the Creative New Zealand Creative Communities scheme. The aim of the scheme is to help fund participation in the arts at a local level, and increase the range and diversity of arts available to communities. The scheme is a partnership between Creative New Zealand and Christchurch City Council.

*For information, guidelines and application form visit [www.ccc.govt.nz](http://www.ccc.govt.nz) and search for Creative Communities, or contact the Arts Adviser on (03) 941 7391 or Māori Arts Adviser on (03) 941 7351. Applications (for projects commencing after 1 June) close Friday 30 March.*

## Sister Cities Young Artists Competition

There is still time for young Christchurch artists aged between 13 and 18 years to submit entries to this annual competition organised by the International Christchurch Youth (ICY) group. All entered artworks will be exhibited on the Gallery balconies from 20 March – 15 April, and the winning entry will be couriered to Washington DC to compete in the Sister Cities International Showcase of Young Artists.

*Entry deadline is 15 March. For more information contact Suzy Garnett at [smg86@student.canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:smg86@student.canterbury.ac.nz).*

## Behind the Scenes at the Gallery Special Gallery Tour

As part of the Cultural Precinct Discovery Day, on Saturday 24 March the Gallery will be offering behind-the-scenes tours into its working spaces.

*Tours start at 11 am, 1 pm, 2 pm and 3 pm, with groups limited to twelve people. Bookings can be made on the day at the Information Desk in the foyer. For more information telephone 941 7342.*



cultural precinct

## ART FOR FAMILIES

*For more information on children's programmes at the Gallery telephone 941 7302.*

## ARTists in the making Sunday Art Workshops

Interactive arts and crafts studio for children and young adults aged 7–15 years. Bring your parent or caregiver and come and create an exciting new art project each week at the Gallery's Education Centre.

*Every Sunday during the school term, 4 March – 1 April, and 22 April – 24 June, 10 am – 1 pm. Workshop fee of \$2 per child to cover materials. For more information telephone 941 7342.*

## Art Detectives UPDATE!

This hugely popular exhibition for children and families is being extended, and will include a new updated area and special activity worksheet!

## April Holiday Quiz

**Talking Colour** is the latest holiday quiz helping children to explore the Gallery's collection while learning about the techniques and themes employed by artists. The quiz is aimed at family groups and children aged 4–12 years, and each completed quiz receives an arty 'tattoo'.

*7–15 April, 10 am – 4 pm. Free from the Information Desk.*

## Kids in Town

Every Thursday during the school term from 12 noon – 1 pm the Gallery hosts **Kids in Town** – free performances by children from schools around Canterbury.

**Toi Māori:**  
**The Eternal Thread**

Te Aho Mutunga Kore /  
The Changing Art of Māori Weaving

The Gallery is privileged to host the homecoming of this major international touring exhibition celebrating the art of Māori weaving. This is a unique opportunity to see a selection of some of the finest Māori weaving from throughout New Zealand. Rare and precious cloaks from the collections of weaving dynasties such as the Hetet and Te Kanawa families are exhibited for the first time alongside the best of contemporary weaving.



In this article, Professor Rebecca Dobkins from the Hallie Ford Museum of Art in Oregon, where **The Eternal Thread** first opened on its United States tour, introduces the exhibition, and senior Māori artists Diggeress Te Kanawa and Te Aue Davis contribute their thoughts on the practice and traditions of weaving. Our thanks to Rebecca, Diggeress and Te Aue, and to Ranui Ngarimu for her guidance.



“The kākahu are part of us and we of them. Together we can enter new and exciting spaces. Our ancestors walk with us as we travel with them – that is what this exhibition is about.” (Waana Davis, Chair, Toi Māori Aotearoa)

At the entrance to the exhibition, Catherine Elizabeth Brown’s open-mouthed clay figure *Karanga Ngāi Tahu* calls out in honour

of those ancestors and in invitation to the world to enter the spiritually vibrant spaces of **Toi Māori: The Eternal Thread**. Here, at the beginning, the eternal thread of the weaver’s work links the first ray of light revealed at the separation of sky and earth with the present and future and has, through its overseas travels, connected Māori with the rest of the world.

With nearly 100 objects and over forty artists represented, this exhibition’s complexities unfold in layer after layer of fibre, feather, metal and more, animated by the hands of Māori weavers in turn guided by those of their ancestors. In paying homage to ancestral achievements, the multi-dimensional works in **The Eternal Thread** move decisively beyond the well-worn dichotomy of the categories of ‘contemporary’ and ‘traditional’, and eloquently sing of living beauty and power.

I am a curator of Native American art at the Hallie Ford Museum of Art at Willamette University in Oregon, and was introduced to **The Eternal Thread** at its premiere at Wellington’s Pataka Museum in 2004. The Ford Museum was one of four venues for the exhibition in North America in 2005/06, where it was met with exuberant acclaim. **The Eternal Thread** and its accompanying teams of Toi Māori weavers, carvers, Ta Moko artists and others found its way into the hearts of Northwest native communities. Many in those communities feel these new bonds so strongly that they will attend the homecoming of **The Eternal Thread** at Christchurch Art Gallery in 2007.

Beginning with the curatorial process, this project has been one of collaboration across institutional and international boundaries. Organised by the staff of Pataka Museum under the guidance of director Darcy Nicholas and curator Helen Kedgley in partnership with Toi Māori and Te Roopu Raranga Whatu o Aotearoa (the national Māori weavers collective), **The Eternal Thread** presents work considered to be the best of Māori weaving by both weavers themselves and by the professional museum team. But the exhibition is only partially about the work within the gallery walls – **The Eternal Thread** is an *experience* of connection across time and place, an affirmation of the power of human relationships. Those of us fortunate enough to host the United States tour found ourselves becoming part of the whānau of weavers and creating closer degrees of kinship with our neighbours at home as well.

Above: **Karanga Ngāi Tahu** 2003 Cath Brown (Ngāi Tahu, Kati Mamoe, Waitaha). Ceramic, feather, fibre, shell. Collection of Te Runanga o Ngāi Tahu

Facing page: **Kaitaka** 1999 Te Aue Davis (Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Maru), assisted by Bill Solomon (Ngāi Tahu). Muka; dye from tānekaha, raurēkau. Collection of the Solomon whānau





## The Eternal Thread is an experience of connection across time and place, an affirmation of the power of human relationships.

The works in the show have been created through (or are inspired by) two basic weaving techniques, *whatu* (finger-weaving) and *raranga* (plaiting). A number of forms or genres are represented: *kete* (baskets), *kākahu* (cloaks), *piupiu* (waist mats or capes), *maro* (aprons) and *whariki* (mats). Within each form are many variations that in turn reveal the complexity of Māori weaving. Aotearoa's natural resources, the harakeke flax plant with its many varieties primary among them, offer exceptional raw materials for weaving. As one newly introduced to Māori weaving but familiar with Northwest Native American weaving, I approach the exhibition with deep appreciation for the artistry involved and humbly aware of how partial my knowledge remains.

The *kākahu* are the core of the exhibition. Photographs of ancestors adorned in cloaks accompany them, bringing the presence of ancestors visually into the room. An extraordinary *kākahu korowai* by Kahutoi Te Kanawa, *Ngā Taonga Tuku Iho* (Treasures from Earlier Generations, 1989), honours the work of her teachers (particularly Te Kanawa's grandmother Dame Rangimarie Hetet and mother Diggeress Te Kanawa). The distinctive diagonal pattern of native and exotic feathers is framed by the *tāniko* (a geometric finger-woven pattern) based on traditional design elements. In this instance, the term *korowai* refers to a type of cloak made from muka (harakeke fibre) and partially decorated with feathers. Another such *korowai* in the exhibition is that by Diggeress Te Kanawa, *Kohikohinga Rau Manu Me Nga Tāniko* (2002), which combines distinctively placed *tāniko* diamond-shaped patterns with columns of feathers.

Centre: **Tui Cloak** (detail) 2004 Kohai Grace (Ngāti Toarangatira, Ngāti Raukawa, Te Ahiawa, Ngāti Porou). Muka, dye, copper wire, feathers. Collection of the artist

Far right: **Kākahu: Ngā Here o te Ao** 2000 Cath Brown (Ngāi Tahu), Te Aue Davis (Ngāti Maniapoto), Kahutoi Te Kanawa (Ngāti Maniapoto), Diggeress Te Kanawa (Ngāti Maniapoto), Clowdy Ngatai (Ngāti Maniapoto), Reihana Parata (Ngāi Tahu), Te Muri Turner (Ngāti Maniapoto), Katerina Waiari (Mataatua). Muka; feathers from kiwi, kererū, weka, kākā and kea. Collection of Te Roopu Raranga Whatu o Aotearoa



### Te Aue Davis

Weaving has always been a part of Māori culture – it was part of the life of our ancestors. They had to learn to weave with the materials they found here in New Zealand in order to survive the colder climate of this country. You had to know how to weave to know how to work. Only later, after we didn't need to make cloaks and baskets, we started making them and treasuring them for different reasons. But our ancestors certainly appreciated beautiful things. Some things they wove were just useful, practical. Others were made to be shown off. Kaitaka in particular were worn by chiefs – the women who wove them wove with pride. The same as women do today. I wove a Kaitaka for a Chief from Kaikoura – the patterns on it are important, they indicate the Kaikoura mountain range, and the sea water coming into the beach [see page 9].

When the British arrived here with wool and cotton and string, the women took to them, as you can imagine! Then even these materials lost their usefulness when they began to buy clothes – that's when our cloaks became like works of art. It's a part of history too. We weave them to impress ourselves and to hold the knowledge of it in order to pass on that knowledge. You still have to know your plants, and how to care for them. There are sixty different kinds of flax – you have to know which is used for cloaks, for kete, or for mats and ropes. For me, it is important that the younger generation carry on the knowledge of these old traditions. A lot of our young weavers do it because it's a living for them – but there's a lot more to learning how to weave than just the weaving.

The cloaks in museums are hardly ever displayed. They're kept in drawers and not taken out in case they fall apart. But they're made to be used and worn. They're made of natural fibres so they're going to disintegrate – it's a natural process. I have a cloak of kiwi and kaka feathers that my great grandmother made over a hundred years ago. I've needed to replace a few kiwi feathers, and I'll keep on replacing them till it can't be used anymore. Then my grandchildren can bury it. A lot of older women weaving cloaks are weaving now to replace the ones that are falling apart.





The Eternal Thread  
is, at its heart, a  
celebration of weaving  
and of the women who  
have been central to  
the continuation of  
the art for centuries.

The term korowai can also refer to cloaks whose outer surface is decorated with long dark tassels (kārure) made from hand-rolled muka. An example of this type of korowai in the exhibition is by Dame Rangimarie Hetet herself, made in 1985 when she was well into her eighties (see page 3). A vital twentieth-century connection with the historical legacy of Māori weaving, Dame Hetet introduced innovations such as the drawstring now found at the top of many modern cloaks. Together, these three kākahu – made by three generations of weavers – illuminate historical interconnections and the impossibility of artificially dividing what is contemporary from what is traditional.

From the foundation of teaching and learning that forms the heart of Māori weaving, artists working in new media launch their work. Lisa Reihana's video work *Tauira* (Apprentice, 1991) animates the multiple meanings of weaving through pulsating patterns of image and sound. Christina Wirihana extends the boundaries of weaving with Plexiglas and wire in her work entitled *Whakapaatari* (Challenges, 2002). Diane Prince, in her copper wire sculpture *Nga Pūhihi o Nga Whetū* (The Rays of the Stars, 2004) uses whatu to create a glistening homage to that technique.

Legendary weaver Erenora Puketapu Hetet's *He Kākahu mō Tangaroa* (A Cloak for Tangaroa, God of the Sea, 2004), a shimmering installation of silver wire, pāua and turquoise-dyed toroa feathers, compellingly communicates the deepest meaning of cloaks – their mana, their power – in very contemporary form. Making this connection visceral, it drew North American viewers like a magnet. Many visitors were then surprised to learn that Hetet also made one of the finest traditionally styled kākahu huruhuru (see page 16) in the exhibit. This kākahu, with its full complement of kiwi and pukeko feathers, has features linking it with nineteenth-century designs. These two works by one artist affirm a central message of the exhibition – that the richness of Māori weaving makes possible ongoing transformations in individual artistry.



### Diggeress Te Kanawa

There's a move back to using traditional materials now – even among the young people. Wool and cotton were popular for a while because they took a lot less time to prepare and were more colourful – you didn't need to dye them. Nowadays people are looking back at their old treasures and bringing back the old materials and techniques. It's difficult, though, to get hold of the right tree bark for dyes. The knowledge is fading – which tree to use, what process to extract the dye and so on. For me it was alright because my Mum (Dame Rangimarie Hetet) was a real traditional person, and I found I've got that way too. My kids do too.

One tradition we don't keep is the old belief that if you teach anyone older than you, or from outside your tribal area, you will lose your knowledge. I'll teach anyone, no matter where they come from. Mum decided that the art would be lost if we stuck to those rules. She always said if you feel like teaching just teach, but say a prayer first. So I do that.

I've made cloaks for eleven of my twelve children – Mum made one for one of my sons, so that's a special one. I couldn't tell you how long it takes to make a cloak. It's a mood thing – there's no use doing it if you don't feel like it. The weaving part is easy; preparation is the biggest thing. You take the fibre from the flax, size the threads, then you roll them on your leg to get warp and weaving thread – they all have to be the right length. You have to soak then beat the fibre on a smooth stone, then rub it to soften the threads. It's a long process. My granddaughter is working on a cloak. She brought it out today to work on and said, Grandma, how long will this take me to do? And I said, it's a mood thing – if you don't feel like doing it, best leave it alone.

Facing page: **Ngā Karu o te Ao** (detail) 2002 Donna Campbell (Ngā Puhi, Ngāti Ruanui). Harakeke, commercial dye, fabric, feathers. Collection of the artist

Above: **Tāniko Korowai: Kohikohinga Rau Manu Me Ngā Tāniko** 2002 Diggeress Te Kanawa (Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Apakura, Rora, Kinohaku). Muka; feathers from kererū, kākā, pukeko; dye. Hetet Collection and Kahutoi Te Kanawa Collection. Courtesy of Waikato Museum of Art and History





## Māori weaving affirms the creativity all people require to walk boldly into the future.

Employing traditional weaving techniques with decidedly contemporary materials, Kohai Grace uses copper wire and black-dyed harakeke along with paua and feathers to create her *Seabird Cloak* and *Tui Cloak* (both 2004, see page 4). Offering a meditation upon weaving itself is Maureen Lander's *Wai o Te Marama* (Moonlit Water, 2004), an illuminated installation of fibres in the shape of a maro, or apron. While the title reflects the artist's memory of moonlight hitting a stream and waterfall in Hokianga, the work can be read as a tribute to the ethereal beauty of fibre.

The kete in the exhibition demonstrate how the genre allows for almost infinite variation upon a template of traditional techniques (both whatu and raranga) and forms (different kinds of kete were traditionally designed for different functions). From the design work inspired by traditional patterns in Sonia Snowden's kete to the experimentation with commercial dyes seen in the chic kete of Judy Hohaia, Veranoa Hetet and Riria Maria Smith, the kete included in the exhibition testify to the improvisational virtuosity of Māori weavers.

Native New Zealand materials stand as the star features of most kete. Kelly King's *Honouring the Fabric* (2003) showcases hohere (lacebark tree) fibre in a nearly weightless, almost sculptural kete. Equally delicate, Christina Wirihana's *Kete hohere* (2003) seemingly floats without being subject to gravity. Heeni Kerekere's kete *The Seeds of Niwareka – Ngā Kakano o Niwareka* (2004) incorporates harakeke seed pods to create a piece that bursts with energy.

Above: *Kete: The Seeds of Niwareka – Ngā Kakano o Niwareka* 2004 Heeni Kerekere (Te Aitanga a Mahaki, Te Whānau a Apanui, Ngāi Tahu, Ngāti Kahungunu). Muka, harakeke seed pods, kiekie, dye. Collection of the artist

Facing page: *Kete Koeaea* (detail) 2004 Judy Hohaia (Te Rarawa). Harakeke, muka, commercial dye. Collection of the artist

Photographs: Norman Heke. Images courtesy of Toi Māori Aotearoa

**The Eternal Thread** is, at its heart, a celebration of weaving and of the women who have been central to the continuation of the art for centuries. Donna Campbell's wearable ensemble *Ngā Karu o te Ao* (Eyes of the World, 2002) encapsulates this message in a work of contemporary Māori haute couture. Under the gaze of the world, the work announces women's self-possession, sensuality and power. In a very different way, the collaboratively made *kākahu Ngā Here o te Ao* (The Tie that Binds the World, 2000), a millennium project of Te Roopu Raranga Whatu o Aotearoa, is a work that in its creation and fruition embodies the knowledge and respect necessary to extend the power of weaving into the next generations. The women involved in its creation include Cath Brown, Te Aue Davis, Kahutoi Te Kanawa, Diggeress Te Kanawa, Ranui Ngarimu, Clowdy Ngatai, Reihana Parata, Te Muri Turner and Katerina Waiari.

Far beyond what might have been imagined when this project was first conceived, Cath Brown's karanga has reverberated across the Pacific. The response has been a chorus of affirmation. **The Eternal Thread** has achieved great things not only for Toi Māori but for indigenous arts more broadly. Breaking through the dichotomies of traditional/contemporary, functional/non-functional and global/local, Māori weaving affirms the creativity all people require to walk boldly into the future.

REBECCA DOBKINS

Rebecca Dobkins is Curator of Native American art at the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, and Associate Professor of Anthropology at Willamette University in Oregon.

**Toi Māori: The Eternal Thread** is in the William A. Sutton and Ravenscar galleries until 27 May. Developed and toured by Pataka Museum in partnership with Toi Māori Aotearoa and Te Roopu Raranga Whatu o Aotearoa, and with support from Te Waka Toi, the Māori Arts Board of Creative New Zealand.

### Events

All events are free and will be held in the Philip Carter Family Auditorium unless otherwise noted.

#### March

- 10 2 pm **Mokihi Installation**  
Joe and Marakiwi Wakefield install and discuss the traditional Māori Raupo raft.  
Venue: Foyer
- 11 11 am **Waka and Navigation**  
A discussion of waka skills with Hekenukumai Busby.
- 12 noon **Waka Skills**  
A demonstration with Te Tohu O Tu.
- 2 pm **The Ways of Waka**  
A panel discussion about waka with Hekenukumai Busby, Doug Huria and Joe Wakefield.
- 14 6 pm **Women on Waka (M)**  
A group of women talk about their journeys on waka.
- 21 10.30 am **Ranui Ngarimu: Nurturing, Preserving and Conserving Ngāi Tahu Weaving and Weaving Resources**  
Former Chair of the National Māori Weavers Collective of New Zealand Te Roopu Raranga Whatu o Aotearoa and co-author of *The Eternal Thread: The Art of Māori Weaving*. Ranui Ngarimu speaks about her weaving and love of restoration of Māori cloaks.  
*Friends \$2, public \$5*
- 6 pm **Floortalk**  
With weaver Ranui Ngarimu.  
Venue: William A. Sutton Gallery
- 25 11 am – 4 pm **Harakeke Flowers**  
A weaving demonstration on how to make flowers from harakeke.  
Venue: Foyer

- 28 6 pm **An Evening with Keri Hulme (M)**  
Come and listen to New Zealand novelist, short-story writer and poet Keri Hulme, who gained international recognition for her award-winning book *The Bone People*.

- 30 **On the Bus**  
Selected Māori writers present extracts from their work. Please check times at the Information Desk.

#### April

- 8 11 am **A Whānau of Weavers**  
Diggeress Rangituatahi Te Kanawa and her daughters Rangī and Kahu give an insight into their weaving worlds.
- 2 pm **Titi Poha**  
A presentation by Taini Metzger on the making of titi poha, special kelp kete for mutton birds.
- 11 6 pm **Aku Mahi Whatu Māori: My Art of Maori Weaving (M)**  
The late Dame Rangimarie Hetet and her daughter Diggeress Rangituatahi Te Kanawa talk to Tilly Reedy and demonstrate their skills in this 1978 film courtesy of the New Zealand Film Archive.  
(Duration 30 minutes)
- 22 11 am **A Whānau of Artists**  
Writers Patricia Grace and Briar Grace-Smith, and weaver Kohai Grace discuss their artistry.
- 12 noon **Kapahaka**  
A performance by Tumatakura/ Mareikuna.  
Venue: Foyer
- 2 pm **Meet the Artist: Kohai Grace**  
Kohai Grace talks about her weaving pieces in the exhibition.
- 25 6 pm **Te Ahi Kaa – Keeping the Home Fires Burning (M)**  
For Anzac Day, Ranui Ngarimu talks about Māori women's support for their men during the war. Followed by a video performance by St Michael's School.

#### May

- 5 11 am **Ta Moko**  
Derek Lardelli and Mark Kopua of the National Ta Moko and Whakaio committees discuss Ta Moko and the contemporary applications of traditional Māori designs.
- 2pm **Whakaio**  
A discussion on Māori carving.
- 9 6 pm **Kahui Whiritoi Film Programme (M)**  
From the New Zealand Film Archive: *Whakarewarewa* – a demonstration by Te Arawa iwi involving weaving, carving and hand and stick games. Weaver Emily Schuster explains the importance of flax, and weavers of Aotearoa give an insight into the relationship between weaving, natural resources and tradition.
- 20 11 am **Weaving Patterns in a Whare**  
A presentation by Rapaki weavers about tukutuku and decorating a whare.
- 12 noon **Kapahaka**  
A performance by Te Ahikaaroa.  
Venue: Foyer
- 2 pm **Weavers of Te Waipounamu**  
A group of South Island weavers demonstrate weaving and answer questions from the public.  
Venue: Foyer
- 23 6 pm **Meet the Artist: Te Aue Davis (M)**  
Meet Māori weaver Te Aue Davis from the exhibition.



(M) = Montana Wednesday Evening programme







# Kākahu

BY ERENORA PUKETAPU HETET

*Paula Rigby, Christchurch City Council's Māori Arts Adviser, takes a closer look at one of the kākahu (cloaks) in Toi Māori: The Eternal Thread.*

This beautiful kākahu made by Erenora Puketapu Hetet is a wonderful example of a fully feathered cloak made with traditional fibres (muka) and native bird feathers from kiwi and pūkeko. The garment is set off by the tāniko (decorative) border at the bottom.

The muka is extracted from harakeke (phormium tenax), commonly known as

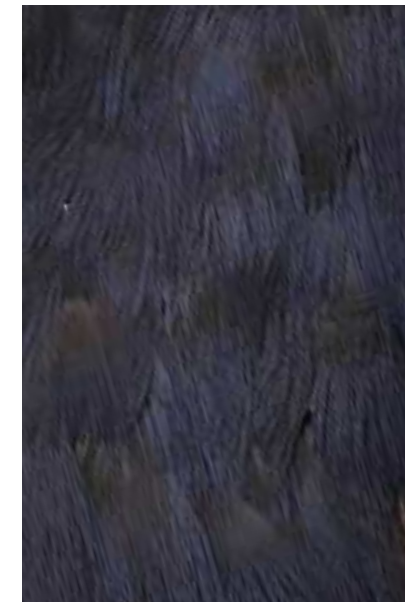
New Zealand flax. This process alone takes many hours of work. Following this, feathers are gathered. The feathers are sorted by size and colour, and then bound together using the sap-like substance found in the base of the harakeke plant.

Kākahu of this type are not commonly made because of the volume

of feathers required and the rarity of being able to collect enough to make this style of cloak. The feathers from at least twelve birds would have been used for this cloak.

The tāniko border on the bottom of this kākahu uses muka that has been dyed with vegetable dyes.

*This example shows feathers that are bound together on top of each other face up. It is thought that this represents the bird preening, showing off the full wonder of the colour of the feather.*



*Here, feathers are bound facing each other with the back side of the feather facing out. This is said to represent birds mating.*

*This close-up of the border pattern shows how intricate the work is. There is no set border pattern for this type of garment and the look of the design is entirely up to the weaver. Some of the influences that may determine the look of the design are Iwi (tribe), or the intended wearer of the garment.*



## Further Reading

Miriama Evans and Ranui Ngarimu, *The Art of Maori Weaving*, Huia Publishers.

S. M. Mead, *The Art of Taaniko Weaving*, Reed Publishers.

Diggeress Te Kanawa, *Weaving a Kākahu*, Bridget Williams Books.

Mick Pendergrast, *Te Aho Tapu*, Reed Publishers.

**Kākahu** 2003 Erenora Puketapu Hetet (Te Atiawa). Muka, kiwi feathers, pūkeko feathers, vegetable dyes. Collection of the artist. Photograph: Norman Heke. Image courtesy of Toi Maori Aotearoa





# kelcytaratoa myspace

23 March – 24 June 2007

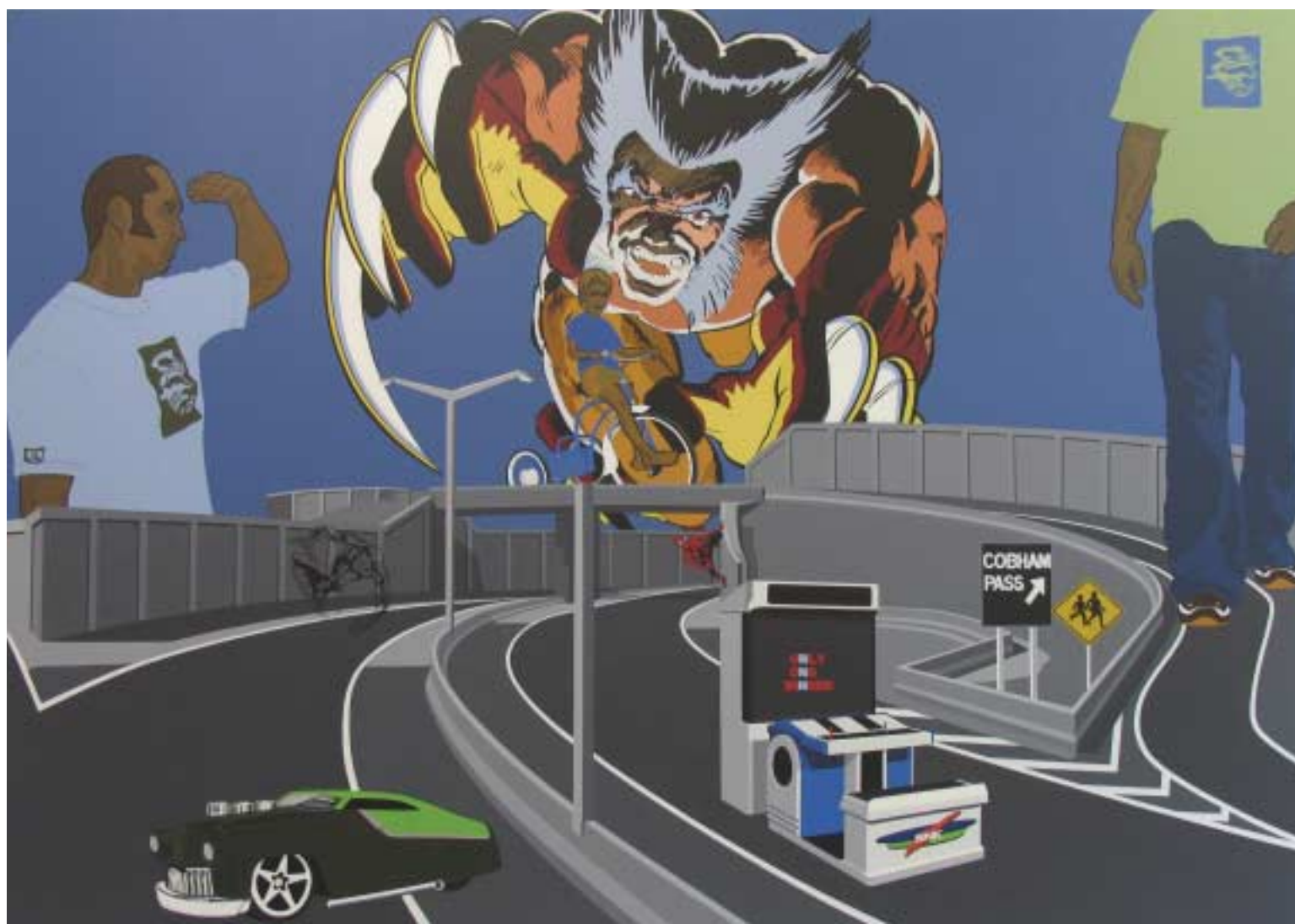
*At 34, Kelcy Taratoa (Ngaiterangi and Ngāti Raukawa) may be considered young for an artist who has already had solo exhibitions at public galleries including The Dowse, Te Manawa, and City Gallery Wellington. Having studied under Robert Jahnke and Shane Cotton, whose influence and input Taratoa honours, he brings a new presence to New Zealand art, and appears destined to go places. The Gallery's Assistant Curator Ken Hall meets Taratoa to find out what makes his work tick.*

Large-scale, hard-edged and intensely coloured, Kelcy Taratoa's paintings demand attention. Populated with comic book superheroes, action toys and self-portraits that are either recent (digitally posterised and bitmapped) or sourced from childhood photo albums, the works can be quietly confrontational. Multi-layered in both composition and possibilities for interpretation, they convey a psychological landscape and contain a voice and story that is both recognisable and unexpectedly revelatory.

Surveying his work, I note the appearance of Che Guevara on one of his self-portrait's T-shirts. In response, Taratoa recalls his childhood home, where his mother had Cuban poster art prominently displayed, a discernible presence. While something of Che's archetypal 1970s poster style may be seen to have worked its way into his art, numerous other formative graphic influences are evident and admitted. As a child he was asthmatic and missed quite a lot of school. With plenty of time on his hands, he also saw plenty of graphic novels pass through his hands, and in their super-heroic central characters – figures typically marginalised within their own societies, such as Bruce Banner/The Incredible Hulk – found mythologies with which he could identify. His superheroes came from Marvel Comics, Japanese manga comics and anime – Japanese animation – on TV.

Top: **Episode 0010** 2005 Kelcy Taratoa. Acrylic on canvas. Collection of Tony Balfour and Sarah Bultitude, Australia. Courtesy of Nadene Milne Gallery

Bottom: **Episode 007** 2004 Kelcy Taratoa. Acrylic on canvas. Collection of Shane and Teri Ta'ala, Auckland







Standing back to square up and consider the evidence of a Māori child growing up in a detribalised, typical urban New Zealand setting, Taratoa acknowledges his having been cut off from any positive sense of identification with his Māori ancestry. The landscapes in which his self-portraits dwell are strictly urban, and capture the debilitating sense of soullessness – even menace – that may be experienced in many New Zealand cities and towns. While examining aspects of his own past and identity in these works, Taratoa is aware that this story is one that many others – Māori and non-Māori – can recognise and share. At the same time, he is fully cognisant that as a Māori his self-image and life experience have been specifically, and to differing degrees adversely, affected by the ongoing legacy of colonisation.

Above: **Episode 003** 2003 Kelcy Taratoa.  
Acrylic on canvas. Collection of Barry Pilcher, Feilding

Facing page: **Episode 0018** 2006 Kelcy Taratoa.  
Acrylic on canvas. Collection of Peggy Scott and David Teplitzky, Bangkok, Thailand

In these works, Taratoa recognises his turangawaewae – the place to stand that was specific to him – as having been an environment with its own distinctive territoriality, with neighbourhoods delineated by street signs and highway shopping strips, median barriers and traffic lights, and emblazoned with signs of warning or the enticements of western commercial culture. His ability to find a more internal sense of home ground was increased greatly through studies in Māori Visual Arts at Massey University, completed in 2005, during which the study of New Zealand history played an important role. There, under the tutelage of leading artists such as Robert Jahnke, Shane Cotton and Kura Te Waru Rewiri, he also came to assertively appreciate the value of his own individual story and path. Thus, the locus of his investigation became the iconography of the real and inner worlds in which he had lived.

For some, however, his chosen route was problematic. “When Māori meet, they want to know where the person is from, or who they are from. What is their waka? How do we relate? How are we connected? Many Māori artists are exploring or drawing upon the stories and events of the past, of their ancestors, and the visual iconography connected with their iwi. That’s their way of finding an identity, but I’m looking at this in a different way – and in many ways challenging Māori values.” Owning that his work looks at the experience of the individual, while “for Māori everything is about feeding back into the collective,” yet he feels strongly that the uniqueness and perspective of the individual is worth acknowledging and respecting. Due to his own journey of investigation so far, he is also happy to admit that he is no longer uncomfortable with who he is, and no longer feels the need to apologise for what he thinks or does, or for being Māori, or not being Māori enough.

Taratoa’s *The Who Am I? Episodes* were shown to critical acclaim at The Dowse Art Museum in Lower Hutt and at Te Manawa Public Art Gallery in Palmerston North in 2005. *Back to Mine: Urban Realities* at City Gallery Wellington in 2006 received a similarly positive response. With works from these two shows joining new works and a projected digital installation, **kelcytaratoa: myspace** introduces local audiences to an arresting new presence in contemporary New Zealand art.

**kelcytaratoa: myspace** is in Touring Exhibition Gallery B from 23 March – 24 June.

#### Events

**Meet the Artist**  
*Montana Wednesday Evening, 18 April, 6 pm*  
Kelcy Taratoa discusses the works in his exhibition.

**Hip Hop and Contemporary Culture: Genius and Artistry**  
*Montana Wednesday Evening, 16 May, 6 pm*  
With Dr Vernon Andrews from the University of Canterbury Cultural Studies Department.





## Lonnie Hutchinson

Lonnie Hutchinson's performances, installations, animations, building paper cut-outs and augmented reality works offer a rich interpretation of the term 'multi-media artist', co-opting any available means to consider the social, cultural and physical spaces that surround us. Her practice is increasingly international in reach, with recent and forthcoming exhibitions in England, France, Chile, Canada, China, New Caledonia and New York.

Lonnie's work features in **Toi Māori: The Eternal Thread** (until 27 May) and **Picturing the Peninsula** (21 April – 22 July).

Photograph: Guy Pask





# Reboot

## The Jim Barr and Mary Barr Collection

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PATRICK REYNOLDS

For Jim Barr and Mary Barr, collecting art is an activity that ought to be 'partisan, passionate and political'. Ten years ago the well-known art collectors and commentators placed more than 120 New Zealand artworks on long-term loan at Dunedin Public Art Gallery, and in 2006 gifted thirty works to the gallery. This new exhibition 'reboots' the loan collection by connecting well-known artworks with an array of vivid and idiosyncratic recent purchases. The curator of the exhibition, Justin Paton, spoke to Jim and Mary in the seventh-floor space in central Wellington where they live amongst their collection.

**Justin:** You moved into this new space two years ago, after almost three decades in a turn-of-the-century house at the base of Mount Victoria in Wellington. The view from up here is great. How has being here changed your view of art?

**Jim:** It's a bit like the change in dealer gallery spaces recently. It's the change from rooms that could have a fireplace in them to rooms that would never have one. When we were in the Mount Victoria villa, it was very obvious what you did with the art, because it was very obviously a domestic space. There were walls that you hung things on. You couldn't really display sculpture because there was furniture in the way. Here, though, there's a lot of – well, they're either restrictions or opportunities depending on your point of view. There are lots of windows, so we can't hang many paintings.

**Mary:** And there aren't many walls.

**Jim:** So when we got this place we weren't thinking about the art. We were very anxious to live in an open space and then the art had to sort of make do. But in actual fact we'd been buying a lot of small sculptural objects, and those were perfect for this space with its concrete floors. We'd always wanted the opportunity to put sculpture on the floor, because up until then we'd always had carpet.

The Barrs' Wellington home, with (from left to right) wall painting by Rose Nolan, works by Hany Armanious and Simon Denny (table and wall, both partially obscured), *Cosmo*, 2006, by Michael Parekowhai, and works from the series *Call Me Immendorf*, 2000, by Michael Stevenson (leaning against wall).



That kind of 'loving art' is not really the emotion that I'm after. I'm after provocation, or wondering, or not being sure. In the work I like there's always something I haven't 'got' about it.

**Tell me about your most recent purchase. Does it fall into that category – sculpture?**

Jim: Yep. It's Ronnie van Hout's portrait of himself as a little drummer boy, which is a work we would have bought no matter where we were living.

**How do you usually buy a new work? Do you tend to walk in and say 'I have to have that'? Do dealers get in touch, or do you like to 'blind taste' new shows?**

Jim: There are two ways. One, we've got a number of people who look out for us. They're not scouts or anything but...

Mary: A number of people whose tastes we respect who will sometimes give us a call and say, gosh, I've seen something you should see.

Jim: They're all artists. That's one way. The other way is that we keep in touch with a lot of the people we're interested in. We were certainly a lot more active last year, getting around and trying to meet new people, and we'll keep that up. Because as you get older the peer group thing vanishes, of course, and artists you might be interested in are not going to appear in your social life. So you've got to make an effort to see them, and when you do see them, they're really young, so you've got to be careful about not barging in, like the elephant over the tulips. It's surprisingly delicate.

Mary: And we hear from dealers. But you really have to get around.

Jim: It doesn't fall in your lap.

**Would you say that you collect strategically – that you say 'here's a gap, we have to fill it'?**

Mary: No, never.

Jim: I think every collector could say that occasionally you buy something because you feel that you should, and it's always a mistake.

Mary: I think that's the huge difference between a private collection and a public collection. The public collection is seen as an entity with the possibility of perfection, and a private collection acknowledges how organic the whole process is. A public collection is often based on an ideal representation across the decades and styles and so on, and I don't think that art's like that. It seems to me that the public model is totally misaligned with how art is made, whereas the private model is following what people do – people come, people go, things happen, things don't, work looks good, work doesn't. One of the risks you run with a public collection is that because there is this idea of 'filling gaps', you end up collecting to validate previous purchases. You have to prove that you were right then, by doing this now. And so you can diverge from what is really going on – suddenly, everything's moving in a particular direction and you're moving off over here instead because of a decision made way back.

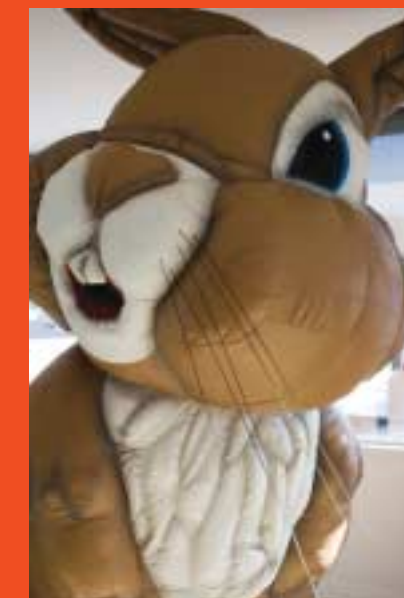


**So as a private collector you reserve the right to admit you might have been wrong about a purchase.**

Jim: Yeah, there's that quote isn't there: There's no point in being an expert at the wrong thing. I think the other thing is that all these decisions, when you're purchasing things, they're all emotional decisions. The public galleries have to argue as if they're rational decisions, but reason isn't the main thing at work in most human decisions.

**Especially when you're talking about objects of desire.**

Mary: And the rational evidence you use to support your purchase is always marshalled after the fact, and often totally irrelevant to the quality of the artwork.



**Notwithstanding what you say about it being an emotional and intuitive response, could we line up some words that describe what you like in art – the qualities you like?**

Jim: I like intrusiveness. I do like works that are not just going to merge into the background. I do like works that you are going to have to think about. I really like, for instance, the little Hany Armanious sculpture we've just bought over there, which is a little chrome-plated alien staring at a chromed tea-towel rail. I like the way you've got to be careful when you walk into a room with that, because it looks like it could be knocked over. I like the way it glints and refuses to blend in. You can feel it over there demanding your attention. I think a lot of the work we've got is in that realm – it's artists that are trying to take some space, often invade space. With most of the work that we've got, there's a constant relationship with it. And that's the thing about collecting. That's what you buy – you buy the ability to have a constant relationship with the work, which you can't have any other way. Apart from a couple of dealers, we live in a contemporary art desert here in Wellington.

Centre: Gillian Wearing, *Sleeping Mask*, 2004, with partial view of works by Michael Stevenson from the series *Call Me Immendorf*, 2000.

Left: Detail of Michael Parekowhai's *Cosmo*, 2006.



## How about you Mary?

Mary: I'm really keen on lightness of touch, which I find surprising. We don't focus on abstraction or this or that style. It's more that sometimes you'll see something and it seems to capture an idea in a way that feels right. And one work which I think does do that is the Simon Denny we've got, the one called *Spread* which is an olive-drab blanket with a scattering of small silver balls across it. To me it's almost more a gesture than an artwork, and I really like that kind of casualness and clarity. I don't like it when someone seems to have really laboured.

Organising the exhibition, I was surprised that one of the qualities shared by many of the works is vulnerability – there are a lot of things that are fragile and fragmentary, that come in pieces and require time and especially close attention when they're being hung. With a few exceptions, there's nothing especially slick or shiny.

Jim: I like to think that all the work we collect would have to have a Te Papa barrier in front of it. That is part of it. The privilege of owning this stuff is that you can have it without barriers. You can touch it, move it round, test it in different places.

And collecting fragile and vulnerable and materially poor things dramatises the play of value in art all the more vividly – the way bits of worthless stuff gather all this value and meaning.

Jim: Exactly.

Mary: And it's all those paradoxes that make it so much fun.

When you hear stories of collectors' great purchases they're often told as if they were sudden and intense romances – a love at first sight thing. Do you think you need to like or love something in that way to collect it? I think the best advice I've ever read for a curator was from Robert Storr who said 'find the best example of the thing you don't like', so that you can be sure that your prejudices and aversions are well earned. Do you find yourselves collecting against the grain of your own established taste sometimes?

Mary: We don't have a fixed picture of what we like, you see. We go in, and we don't know what's going to happen. That kind of 'loving art' is not really the emotion that I'm after. I'm after provocation, or wondering, or not being sure. In the work I like there's always something I haven't 'got' about it.

So collecting, for you, involves keeping your ambiguity-radar up and tingling?

Mary: Yeah, and that's the huge advantage of having two people. Because if you're both getting that signal, the object's probably going to be pretty strong. We've bought things that we 'loved' but weren't kept guessing by, and they died on their feet.

Studio visits have always been important to you. You've valued that close relationship with artists. Tell me why?

Jim: Because the work looks so sexy in the studio.

Mary: It looks great in the studio, and in fact so seductive you have to be cautious about buying it there. In the studio you're on the artist's territory. I'm a great believer in hearing people in a place where they feel they belong and can speak in particular ways. So the studio gives more authority to the artist, and you get a different kind of conversation...

Jim: And some of those studios are the greatest spaces.

The Barrs' Wellington home, with (from left to right) Michael Parekowhai's *Thief*, 1996, Francis Upritchard's *Orrery II*, 2004, Stephen Birch's sculpture *Dave*, 2004, and further works by Glen Hayward (on floor) and et al. (wall).

And from all those conversations you've had with artists, do you feel you can make any generalisations about the kinds of qualities in a person that make for an impressive artist?

Jim: They do share things. I think quite a lot of them are quite prickly. A lot of them are uneasy. I think people that are very even and socially comfortable are not the sort of people that become artists. Because most of them struggle. It's not something that comes easily. I mean, being able to get up each day and do what you like – it's like a kid thing. It sounds great until the third day of the holidays, and then it's hard work. And that's really the studio experience, isn't it?

Mary: I really admire courage as a virtue. And that's what you really see when you go to a studio. The courage to make something out of nothing.

*This is an edited version of a longer interview that appears in the forthcoming catalogue of **Reboot**. Visit the Barrs' blog at [www.overthenet.blogspot.com](http://www.overthenet.blogspot.com).*

**Reboot** is in Touring Exhibition Galleries A, C and Borg Henry Gallery from 17 March – 1 July. Exhibition organised by Dunedin Public Art Gallery.

## Events

**The Art of Collecting**  
*Montana Wednesday Evening, 4 April, 6 pm*  
Jim Barr discusses collecting.

**Floortalk**  
*Montana Wednesday Evening, 2 May, 6 pm*  
With Justin Paton, curator of the exhibition.



STELLA BRENNAN 21 April – 29 July

# White Wall / Black Hole

Jennifer Hay, Assistant Curator of Contemporary Art, talks with Stella Brennan about her evocative audiovisual work centred around the 1979 crash of an Air New Zealand DC10 on Mount Erebus, Antarctica.

*White Wall / Black Hole* by Auckland artist Stella Brennan is a disturbing and powerful video that intimately reveals the tragedy of New Zealand's worst air crash – the 1979 Erebus disaster that killed all 257 people on board. It combines film footage taken by one of the ill-fated passengers on the flight with imagery from Stella's own trip to the site of the crash. The last moments of the passengers' lives unfold before us as they talk amongst themselves, enjoy a drink and look out of the airplane windows.

Facing page: *White Wall/Black Hole* 2005  
Stella Brennan. Installation view at Gallery 4a, Sydney,  
2006. DVD projection. Collection of the artist

JH: Was it difficult to get permission to use this footage?

SB: It's from a documentary made by Gordon Vette, who was an Air New Zealand pilot at the time of the crash. He wrote a book called *Impact Erebus*, detailing his theories about what had happened. My understanding is that it was his agitation that helped get the Royal Inquiry underway – originally the accident was blamed on pilot error. The pilots were workmates of his, and he didn't believe that they could have made the errors they were originally accused of. Vette made the documentary following the book. I found it at the Auckland Public Library and got permission from him.

JH: It's quite awful to think when watching the passengers that these are their last moments – how did you deal with the sensitivity of this potentially voyeuristic material?

SB: I am always mindful about the context in which the work appears. I've worked very hard to use this material in a respectful way, and the piece itself is dedicated to those who died in the crash.

The footage is presented with no commentary. The identity of those shown is protected by those odd black boxes over the eyes that are used to anonymise people. The degraded VHS transfer adds a layer of noise and distortion that kind of veils things over too. It is a very brief sequence, and the rest of the work is a kind of unpacking of the intensity of those images, of trying to understand what that event was, what it means. It is awful, but it is also very ordinary: people walking around, talking, taking photographs. It is our knowledge that gives it the impact it has.



The disaster was a personal tragedy for those who lost friends and family, but it's also a very important cultural moment, it had a huge impact for many, many people, and it seemed necessary to think and to speak about.

JH: *White Wall/Black Hole* reveals the knife-edge between life and death, the split second between here and now – emphasised through your use of this footage. Is this something you see as a universal awareness?

SB: A jet is a strange object – incredibly intricate, but nowadays, utterly mundane. I went through a period where I was very afraid of flying, and so I got to thinking about what I was afraid of – of malfunction, powerlessness, but most of all death. That's pretty universal.

JH: Did you set out to revisit this tragic event perhaps as a way of understanding the significance culturally and politically that the Erebus disaster has had upon New Zealand?

SB: People who've seen the piece often come up to me and tell me where they were, what they were doing at the time they heard about the crash. It's like the Kennedy assassination – a freeze-frame, a marker in time.

JH: Digital text runs across the screen – does this serve to emphasise the role of technology, the failure of technological systems and perhaps the de-humanising effect it has on people?

SB: Plane crashes are complex events – very rarely does a plane go down for one reason alone. The final assessment of the Erebus crash blamed a sequence of technical and human errors. The words appear a little like the text fed out by a teletype machine – nowadays a very obsolete piece of equipment. The dot matrix font resembles that used for the computer-printed flight-plans used at the time. Automatic writing has a long history, however, and technology has historically been thought of as a way

to bridge the divide between the living and the dead – Thomas Edison spent years trying to construct a machine, the 'psychic telephone', to communicate with the spirit world. Ghosts only began to communicate through 'one knock for yes, two for no' after the invention of Morse code.

JH: Did you want to explore in some way the wider obsession that we have with Antarctica – both as an ill-fated tourist destination and a continent for adventure, discovery and ownership?

SB: Yes, that's what started my research off – that and the half-memory I had of the event. I was five at the time, and really didn't understand what was going on.

**Stella Brennan: *White Wall/Black Hole*** is in the Tait Electronics Antarctica Gallery from 21 April to 29 July.



### Andrew Drummond



Left: **Falling Water** 2006 Andrew Drummond. Photographic print on cotton rag paper, 1200 x 1400 mm. Collection of the Gallery, purchased 2006

Below: **Device for shadows and reflection** 2005 Andrew Drummond. Electric motors, brass, steel, 300 x 2400 mm variable. Collection of the Gallery, purchased 2006. Photograph: Murray Hedwig



The Gallery has recently purchased two works by Christchurch-based sculptor Andrew Drummond, **Device for shadows and reflection** and **Falling Water**.

Andrew Drummond's sculptures seem to magically shift our assumptions of how machines should look and behave. *Device for shadows and reflection*, a suspended brass cylinder, creates through mechanical counter-rotations of perforated brass sheets an ever-changing environment of shadow and light. Like beams of sunlight moving across water, musical notation or pieces of film, this kinetic device encircles and immerses the viewer as it projects its message in space.

Drummond alters our understanding of the nature of machines by relating them to bodily and psychological experiences. Recurring motifs of circles, and allusions to veins, nerves, sight and touch, exemplify his attuned sense of an organic entity provocatively integrated with technology and kinetics. His fascination with the extraction of coal and its transformative power has informed much of his recent practice, drawing in particular upon the grinding and transportation of coal using various kinetic systems.

Photography has played an important part in Drummond's practice since the 1970s, as have themes of location and relationships between the body, the land and ecological systems. *Falling Water* is part of an ongoing series of landscape imagery photographed on numerous research trips to the West Coast over the last five years. The veiled cascade of a waterfall and glistening rocks recall traditional landscape painting in New Zealand, such as

can be seen in the sublime work of Petrus van der Velden. Here, its lush play of light and dark with accents of magenta and yellow is achieved through an unusual application of digital six-colour photographic printing, evoking a sense of the past with the present. Thus Drummond delights in the technology of a ready-made machine that in essence is a sophisticated twenty-first-century tool for drawing.

Both of these works are important additions to the Gallery's contemporary collections by one of New Zealand's most significant sculptors.

Drummond was recently appointed a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for his services to sculpture.

**These works are not currently on display.**

JENNIFER HAY  
Jennifer Hay is Assistant Curator of Contemporary Art at the Gallery.



### President's Letter

Last year ended with our enjoyable Christmas party at which we farewelled Neil Roberts and presented him with an Honorary Life Membership in recognition of his huge contribution to the Gallery and to the Friends.

We start this year with something which I am sure will be of interest to you all. At the December meeting of the executive committee, motions were passed to make two gifts of money from the Friends to the Gallery.

One is to be used for purchasing or commissioning a contemporary artwork, and will be funded from Friends Art Event profits. Thank you to all who have supported these special fund-raising events, especially to Marianne Hargreaves who has organised them for eight years.

A second artwork is to be purchased using money from the Friends Acquisition Fund, for which the Friends will be acknowledged as the donors. This gift has been made possible by your loyal support over the years, and special thanks must go to those who have made specified contributions to the acquisitions fund. It is good to be able to support the Gallery in this tangible way.

We look forward to being able to give details of the gifts at the Annual General Meeting on Thursday 29 March.

Looking forward to another artistically stimulating and successful year.

*Helen Peate*

HELEN PEATE  
President

### Friends Annual General Meeting

**THURSDAY 27 MARCH, 7 PM**

The Friends AGM will be held on Thursday 27 March in the Philip Carter Family Auditorium at the Gallery. We are pleased to have as our guest speaker Elric Hooper, former director of the Court Theatre and one of Christchurch's most entertaining speakers. He will present a talk titled 'Scene Stealers'.

We will also be presenting our two Friends scholarships for 2007 to two art students from the University of Canterbury and the Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology.

Nominations for positions on the executive committee are welcome; a nomination form is enclosed. We are pleased that interest has been expressed by several younger members of the Friends in serving on the committee.

Do come to vote, hear the news about our gifts to the Gallery, meet the scholarship winners and hear Elric Hooper.

### Previews

Friends are invited to preview new exhibitions before they open to the public. Where possible, a curator or other expert will introduce the exhibitions between 4.15 and 4.45 pm. For entry, please present your Friends membership card. Friends are invited to meet at 3.30 pm in the upstairs reception room for a social coffee or tea before the preview.

#### Reboot

Friday 16 March, 4–5 pm  
Touring Exhibition Galleries A, C and Borg Henry Gallery

#### kelcytaratoa: myspace

Thursday 22 March, 4–5 pm  
Touring Exhibition Gallery B

#### Picturing the Peninsula

Friday 20 April, 4–5 pm  
Burdon Family Gallery

**FRIENDS**  
TE PUNA O WAIWHEHU  
CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY



LocArt

LocArt visits are for members only and cost \$5 unless stated otherwise. Please book by sending your name, address, phone number, the event and date you wish to attend and your payment to FOCAG, PO Box 2626, Christchurch.

Weekday Events

Studio visit: Simon Edwards

**WEDNESDAY 14 MARCH, 10.30 AM**  
Simon Edwards has exhibited regularly throughout New Zealand since completing his Bachelor of Fine Arts at the University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts in 1997. He lives and works in Christchurch, and is represented in numerous New Zealand collections, including Christchurch Art Gallery. Simon's landscapes translate imagery from his local surroundings into oil paint and charcoal drawings.

*Maximum 20 members. Meet Corallyn Newman outside 125 Gloucester Street at 10.20 am.*



Drift 2006 Simon Edwards. Oil on canvas

Studio visit: Malcolm McNeill

**WEDNESDAY 11 APRIL, 10.30 AM**  
Over many years Malcolm McNeill has developed a specialist interest in New Zealand, Australian and Pacific art. He continues to develop this interest through his art business, Artsource (www.artsource.co.nz), which offers advice on buying and selling art of historical importance, and work from established and emerging artists. Paralleling Malcolm's interest in fine art, he has enjoyed a forty-year career as New Zealand's foremost jazz singer.

*Maximum 20 members. Meet Paul Deans outside 23 Wiggins Street, Sumner at 10.20 am.*

Studio visit: Don McAra

**WEDNESDAY 30 MAY, 10.30 AM**  
After a successful career as an English teacher, Don McAra has pursued his dream to paint full-time. His land and seascapes of local and Mediterranean scenes show his technical skill and virtuosity. Don has recently written and illustrated a book about the cable cars of Dunedin in the war and post-war period, and with the completion of this labour of love will turn his art practice in new directions.

*Maximum 20 members. Meet Corallyn Newman outside 17 Dyers Pass Road, Cashmere at 10.20 am.*



The Alcantara Bridge, Toledo 1999 Don McAra. Oil on canvas



The Trial 2005 Linda James. Oil on canvas

Weekend Events

Studio visit: Margaret Ryley and Michael Michaels

**SATURDAY 24 APRIL, 10 AM**  
Two professionally trained full-time ceramic artists of national and international standing, Margaret Ryley and son Michael Michaels are known to ceramic lovers for their distinctly different styles. Margaret explores 'landscape as metaphor' with stunning ash glazes, and has recently been creating work with porcelain forms and line decorations. Michael is developing his award-winning, elegantly sculptured Cycladic-inspired forms.

*Maximum 15 members. Meet Terry Bennett outside 15 Brick Kiln Road, Rangiora at 9.45 am.*



The Acrobat 2005 Michael Michaels. Paper clay with terra sigillata surface

Studio visit: Linda James

**SATURDAY 12 MAY, 10 AM**  
Linda James has been a practicing artist for thirty years and has received much critical acclaim since graduating from the University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts in 1980. Her work considers the relationships between time, place and identity. New Zealand as a place is an important component of her work. Linda will show us her latest body of work and talk on how she creates such powerful images.

*Maximum 20 members. Meet Terry Bennett outside Jefkins Road, Southbrook, Rangiora at 9.45 am.*

TO BECOME A FRIEND, OR FOR INFORMATION ON BENEFITS AND PROGRAMMES, PLEASE CONTACT:

Friends of Christchurch Art Gallery: PO Box 2626, Christchurch  
Tel: (+64 3) 941 7356, Fax: (+64 3) 941 7301, Email: friends@ccc.govt.nz

Speaker of the Month

**PHILIP CARTER FAMILY AUDITORIUM, 10.30 AM**

No booking required.  
Friends \$2, guests \$5.

Coffee and tea will be served in Alchemy Café from 10 am, \$2.50

Ranui Ngarimu  
Nurturing, Preserving and  
Conserving Ngai Tahu Weaving  
and Weaving Resources

**WEDNESDAY 21 MARCH**

Ranui Ngarimu is a weaver of contemporary Māori art. She specialises in the restoration of cloaks for whānau, hapu and iwi. Ranui is project convenor for **Toi Māori: The Eternal Thread**, the exhibition of weaving that recently toured North West America and has its final showing here at the Gallery. With her sister, Miriama Evans, Ranui co-authored the book *The Eternal Thread: The Art of Māori Weaving*. This beautiful book was a finalist in the R. L. Shep Book Award – New York 2006 and the New Zealand Montana Book Awards 2006.



Ranui Ngarimu

Jeannette DeNicolis Meyer  
The Narrative Thread

**WEDNESDAY 18 APRIL**

Jeanette DeNicolis Meyer is an American quilt maker who will be Artist in Residence at The Arts Centre of Christchurch in April. Jeanette writes, "My art is woven from the narrative threads that run through my life. Each quilt is the result of my life experience, the way I see the world. In this talk I'll explore how following those narrative threads lead to making quilts, how one quilt leads to a series, and one series leads to another." Her quilts have been shown in solo and group shows around the world, and her work is represented in public and private collections.



Geography of the Spirit 2004 Jeanette DeNicolis Meyer. Hand-dyed cotton with rayon, metallic, silk and cotton threads

John Coley: The Armaghrians

**WEDNESDAY 16 MAY**

John Coley recalls the group of students who lived at 22 Armagh Street in the 1950s and their circle, many of whom went on to be leading artists and influential in the visual arts, among them Pat and Gil Hanley, Ted Bracey, Quentin Macfarlane, Trevor Moffitt, Bill Culbert, John Jones, Tim Garrity, Dick and Phyllis Ross, Denis Rose and Barry Millar. John will discuss their interaction and the context in which this band of young people flourished.



John Coley

Memberships

**New Members:** Veronica & Nigel Anderson, John Bain, Chris & Janine Bayley, Caroline Boyd-Clark, Mrs J. N. K. Chamberlain, Oga Cho & Carsten Marsch, Sue Clark, Kristen Cooper, Andrew & Stephanie Couper, Jennifer Coutts, Richard & Janice Dellaca, Chris & Katherine Harrington, Jeremy Head & Roseann Cameron, Manfred & Ulrike Herzhoff, John & Judy Hughes, Laura Jardine-Coom, Ann & Murray McNaughton, K. D. Milne, Diana Moir, Helen Moore, Ian & Alison O'Connell, Mary Lou Osborne, Rosa Park, Tui Patel, Eric Pawson, Joe Potter-Butler, Stephen and Alison Rice, Anna V. Rogers, Nancy M. Rudkin, Jane Smith, Jane Swift, Emma Symon, Georgina & Michael Tarren-Sweeney, Sue Upritchard, Simon van der Sluijs, Nerida Verrall, Mrs P. M. Watherston, Noel Woods, Jan Wortley

**Honorary Life Member:** Neil Roberts



Coming Soon

## Handboek Ans Westra Photographs

13 JULY –  
21 OCTOBER 2007

*A 45-year  
photographic journey  
documenting the  
lives and cultures of  
New Zealanders  
during a period of  
cultural, social and  
generational change.*



Opening of meeting house, 'Arohanui Ki Te Tangata', Waiwhetu Marae September 1960 Ans Westra

The comfortable conformity of late 1940s and 1950s New Zealand was forever changed with the post-war arrival of European migrants and the urban shift of Māori. It was a time when Māori and Pākehā had to interact widely for the first time. As a society, New Zealand and its citizens were far from prepared to accommodate the difficulties accompanying such a challenge to their homogenous cultural, social and institutional frameworks.

Ans Westra's arrival in New Zealand in 1957 coincided with that shift, and her life-long record of photographs show how the resultant changes and tensions have continued to characterise our nation's social and cultural evolution.

**Handboek** comprises a gallery of Ans Westra's most revealing and challenging documentary images, taking us on a remarkable photographic journey of the growth of a nation.

Handboek: Ans Westra Photographs is based on the Alexander Turnbull Library collections and has been organised by BWX (Blair Wakefield Exhibitions) in association with the National Library Gallery.

Bill Hammond: *Jingle Jangle Morning*

20 JULY – 21 OCTOBER 2007

Spectrum – practising the art of printing



Spectrum Print

Spectrum Print, 134 Antigua Street, Christchurch, phone 03 365 0946, facsimile 03 365 0947

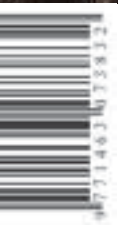
Pride in Print gold medal winners 1993, 1995, 1996, 1997, 2000



the technology between imagination and reality







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