B.159

Bulletin B.159
Christchurch Art Gallery
Te Puna o Waiwhetu

Summer
December 2009—
February 2010

BULLETIN EDITOR
DAVID SIMPSON

GALLERY CONTRIBUTORS
DIRECTOR: JENNY HARPER
CURATORIAL TEAM: KEN HALL, JENNIFER HAY, JUSTIN PATON, PETER VANGIONI
PUBLIC PROGRAMMES: SARAH AMAZINNIA, LANA COLES
REGISTRATION: GINA IRISH
PHOTOGRAPHERS: JOHN COLLIE, DAVID WATKINS

OTHER CONTRIBUTORS
GRANT BANBURY, ELLIOT COLLINS, COURTNEY JOHNSTON, DAVID KILGOUR, MEGAN TAMATI-QUENNELL

TEL: (+64 3) 941 7300
FAX: (+64 3) 941 7301
EMAIL: BULLETIN@CCC.GOVT.NZ, INFO@CHRISTCHURCHARTGALLERY.ORG.NZ

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DESIGN AND PRODUCTION
ART DIRECTOR: GUY PASK
EDITORIAL DESIGN: JEFFREY DOCHERTY
HAMISH CHILDS, JUSTINE HOLMES, MARTIN ANSLEY
PRODUCTION MANAGER: DAYLE DIREEN
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TE PUNA O WAIWHETU
CHRISTCHURCH
ART GALLERY

Steve Carr **A Shot in the Dark (The Bachelor)** (detail) 2008. C-type print mounted on dibond. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 2008. Reproduced courtesy of the artist and Michael Lett, Auckland

Contents

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I CAN BARELY CONTAIN MY great personal pleasure at **Brought to Light: A New View of the Collection**. For any gallery, the opportunity to rethink the exhibition spaces in both architectural and conceptual terms is a wonderful challenge. Needless to say, such a major overhaul of the collection galleries has been a considerable task, but one which the wonderful staff here have committed themselves to willingly.

When the Gallery first opened in 2003, Ernest Gillick's *Ex tenebris lux* (1937) was placed at the top of the stairs to symbolise a connection with our former manifestation, the Robert McDougall Art Gallery. The Latin title of this sculpture, a gift to the people of Christchurch from our founding funder in 1938 and now located in the foyer, means 'Out of darkness, light'. Its extraordinary resonance with the title of our new collection display shows how we at the Gallery really have taken on the same professional responsibilities as our predecessors.

Indeed, reading the exhibition labels before they went to print reinforced for me how generous so many of our forebears and current supporters have been—building this collection over the years has been a source of considerable collective and civic pride. **Brought to Light** completes the refreshment of the Gallery's exhibition spaces and public programmes, and once again we are able to demonstrate our commitment to your art collection. It's a pity that we cannot show all of it all of the time.

The reconfigured galleries give us the opportunity to display works that until now we have been unable to exhibit, such as Bill Culbert's huge floor sculpture *Pacific flotsam* (2007). We can focus on specific artists, genres and ideas, while maintaining a loosely chronological progression through the collection. And components can be changed more regularly without disrupting the whole. As you see the first iteration of **Brought to Light**, we will be planning what's next; we're keen for you to return often—and to let us know what you think.

Although the nude is a fairly conventional subject for artists trained in the western tradition, it is also a potential source of controversy when shown in public. A new exhibition in our downstairs touring galleries, **The Naked and the Nude**, examines the nude as it is represented in the Gallery's collection—from Jean Pierron's late eighteenth-century engraving *Adam and Eve* to the contemporary imagery of artists like Steve Carr.

Also downstairs is the rare opportunity to see what happens to works of art when they are not on display. **The Vault: Neil Pardington** shines a light on collection storage spaces in museums and galleries throughout New Zealand (including this one). Pardington's meticulously composed photographs are fascinating investigations into what we value, and how we store and preserve our treasures for safekeeping into the future.

Blue Planet is the third in a series of exhibitions that investigates and explains colour for younger audiences. It is filled with family-friendly exhibits and imaginative art and completed by a children's activity book.

Opening in early December, **Talisman** is an exhibition that focuses on the role of the talisman in different cultures. Featuring work by twelve contemporary New Zealand jewellers alongside twelve historic talismans from the oceanic collection at Canterbury Museum, it examines objects with an enduring power, and indicates generative cross-cultural resonances.

The Gallery is pleased to be the only New Zealand venue for the University of Queensland Art Museum touring exhibition, **Ricky Swallow: Watercolours**. Swallow is a young artist who represented Australia at the 2005 Venice Biennale. His reputation is largely built upon his meticulously detailed still-life sculpture, but there is a quieter side to his art in the watercolours he produces.

'Pagework' this quarter was made by Auckland-based artist Elliot Collins, a painting graduate of AUT University, who was recently featured in the Gallery's **Cloud9** exhibition. Also contributing to the magazine are Christchurch gallerist Grant Banbury; Megan Tamati-Quennell, curator of indigenous art at Te Papa; and Courtney Johnston, web editor at the National Library of New Zealand. Banbury writes on the art of life drawing, Tamati-Quennell examines the cultural hegemony of western museums in relation to their collections of the art of non-western cultures, while Johnston delves into the increasingly murky world of copyright, and the changes being forced by the Internet.

The last few months have seen great alterations in the Gallery, and now it is finally time to share these with you, our visitors. We hope that you will take the opportunity to come and see for yourselves as soon as possible—and that you and your family and friends enjoy the forthcoming summer break.

Jenny Harper
Director
November 2009

DECEMBER, JANUARY, FEBRUARY 2009/2010

THE VAULT: NEIL PARDINGTON
William A. Sutton and Ravenscar Galleries
Until 14 March 2010
Working behind the scenes in museums and galleries throughout New Zealand with his large-format camera, Neil Pardington brings to light the hidden collection storage spaces that are normally closed to the public. His gathered results hold a strong natural fascination as storehouses of memory or places filled with mystifying treasure.
Exhibition publication and iPod video tour available

BLUE PLANET
Burdon Family Gallery
Until 7 November 2010
Blue is a feeling, a place to dream and the colour of our amazing planet as seen from space. Looking at the ways artists have used the colour blue, **Blue Planet** celebrates imaginative art making and thinking, as well as different cultural and global perspectives. Shaped with younger audiences in mind.

TALISMAN
Monica Richards Gallery
5 December 2009 – 14 February 2010
Talismans are found in many cultures throughout the world. In this exhibition, twelve contemporary New Zealand jewellery artists have made new work responding to the enduring power of the talisman. The inclusion of twelve rare historic talismans from Canterbury Museum's oceanic collection highlights an exchange across times and cultures.

THE NAKED AND THE NUDE
Touring Galleries A and B
18 December 2009 – 18 April 2010
The unclothed human figure is one of art's oldest subjects, yet it still ignites debate. Bringing together dozens of bodies from the collection, this exhibition charts the tension between the nude and the naked—between works of art that idealise the body and those that try to tell it like it is.
iPod audio tour available

RICKY SWALLOW: WATERCOLOURS
Touring Gallery C
12 December 2009 – 21 February 2010
Australian artist Ricky Swallow is best known for his meticulous still-life sculptures, but he is also a maker of playful and atmospheric watercolours. This exhibition surveys Swallow's works on paper, from early sci-fi scenarios through to haunting recent portraits.
A UQ Art Museum touring exhibition
Exhibition publication available

CHRIS HEAPHY: UNTITLED (BLEU)
Tait Electronics Gallery
21 November 2009 – 14 February 2010
This video work turns the rich blue waterscape of Lake Taupo on its side to create an enigmatic image suggesting ghostly figures.

THE COLLECTIONS
Almost seven years since Christchurch Art Gallery opened, the collection display has undergone a complete refreshment. Spectacularly reconfigured exhibition spaces feature a dynamic mix of new and seldom-seen works, as well as new conversations among old favourites. For any art institution charged with conserving the past, registering the present and offering suggestions for the future, the challenge to 'bring to light' is at once daunting and inspiring. **Brought to Light: A New View of the Collection** is our response to that challenge.
Collections catalogue and iPod audio tour available

OUTER SPACES
A programme featuring works of art in spaces beyond the traditional exhibition galleries. Featuring *The prow of the Charlotte Jane* by Fiona Pardington on Worcester Boulevard and *A wall, and other thoughts* by Fiona Jack on the carpark bunker.

TWINSET
A rapid-fire programme of new video art on the twin screens in the foyer. This season featuring video by Gabriella and Silvana Mangano.

SUBSONIC
The summer **Subsonic** programme features a variety of sounds from Brian Crook and Clinton Watkins.

BROUGHT TO *light*

{ OPEN NOW }

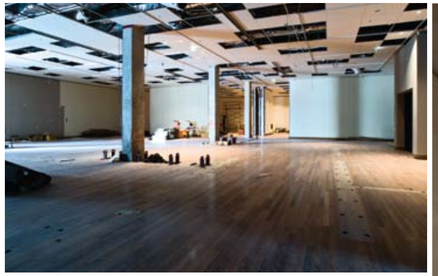
FINALLY, IT'S FINISHED! It is now four months since we closed the doors on the previous incarnation of Christchurch Art Gallery's collection exhibition, and the intervening period has been a very busy time for all our staff. When Christchurch Art Gallery opened in 2003, the plan, reiterated in the *Paradigm Shift* document of 2006, was to refresh the hang of the collection galleries after five years. Since then the display has of course not remained entirely static, and visitors will have noticed regular changes as new works entered the collection, light-sensitive works were changed and small focus exhibitions created. But **Brought to Light: A New View of the Collection** is something altogether more—a refreshment of our entire collection display (not just what, but why) and a re-evaluation of the physical space of the galleries themselves.

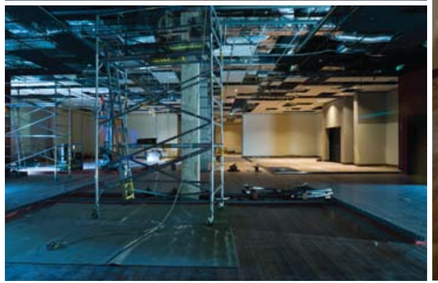
It was with mounting excitement that we watched the construction of the new spaces. We've made the process public, sharing images and personal responses from the staff involved on our **Brought to Light** blog (check it out at http://broughttolight.wordpress.com). Gone are the series of staggered walls that previously determined the visitor's journey through the collection; in their place are a series of spaces designed to encourage a sense of flow, drama and anticipation. We've pored over the diagrams and the scale models, but it's not until you stand in the middle of the huge new central arcade that you begin to truly appreciate the new space.

"GONE ARE THE SERIES OF STAGGERED WALLS THAT PREVIOUSLY DETERMINED THE VISITOR'S JOURNEY THROUGH THE COLLECTION..."

However, the structural changes are only part of the story; it's on the gallery walls, and indeed floors, that things really start to get interesting. Well before the first painting came down in July, the curators were already re-imagining the collection. What stories do we want to tell, and how do we want to tell them? In many ways **Brought to Light** is, with the exception of all the label writing and logistical problems it generates, a curator's dream—start from scratch and create a bespoke gallery.

And this new gallery is designed around conversations. At its heart is the constant conversation, alluded to in the exhibition's title, between light and dark that characterises any large collection—which works will be brought forth



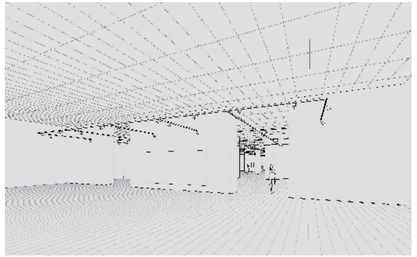


into the light of the public eye, and which will rest in the comparative dark of the collection storerooms, plan chests and Solander boxes? With over 6,000 works in the collection, this presents hard choices, but also exciting opportunities. Also important are the conversations between contemporary and historical art, and between Māori and Pākehā art, carried out across the spine of the central arcade and through the series of themed rooms that lead off it. This more thematic model is a big leap forward from the previous, linear approach. As senior curator Justin Paton says: 'Stretching from the historical spaces at one end to the contemporary spaces at the other, this arcade is a palpable expression of our belief that art's past and its present should be in live conversation with each other.'

The doors are open again, and **Brought to Light** is open to visitors. This is your invitation to come in and explore. Many of the collection stalwarts are still on display, but we hope that within this show you'll also find new favourites, and see the collection in a whole new light.

EVENT

SATURDAY 12 DECEMBER
Art in the Morning: The New Hang—Brought to Light
Join the Gallery's curators as they discuss the transformation of the collection galleries and highlight some of its jewels.
8.30am / collection galleries / Friends $20 / public $30
Book by 9 Dec: (03) 941 7356



Walking through the Robert McDougall Art Gallery as a twenty-one-year-old tourist from Turkey I could not have imagined the future relationship I was to have with Petrus van der Velden's grand, haunting *Otira Gorge* or the enchanting lines on the portraits by Goldie that were forming my first impressions of a foreign cultural landscape.

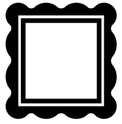
Since moving to Christchurch I have regularly visited the new Gallery, to walk among the reflections of light in the grand foyer and let the exhibitions carry me to places that provoked thought and emotion. Turning right at the top of the stairs to revisit my old friends in the Gallery's collection has always been a treat, although I often had the feeling that I might have been missing out on some of the exhibition as I tried to find my way through the maze of alcoves.

How serendipitous it was then to be given the chance to participate in the redesign of the collection spaces as one of the architects. Our objective was to simplify the layout and deliver on the promise of the main entry foyer by creating grand spaces that give the collections plenty of room to breathe. I hope you enjoy the resulting experience as much as we have enjoyed the process.

Ekin Sakin, *registered architect, Capital Programme Delivery Group*

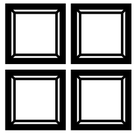
VOX POP

Bulletin *asked seven people from the New Zealand artworld to tell us about their favourite collection hang.*



My own favourite permanent collection hangs are inevitably tempered by the quality of the exhibits, my familiarity with them (having seen them in the flesh before or through reproduction), and not least, the architecture within which they are located. So I can't go past the Reina Sofia in Madrid where Tàpies has a room devoted to his large-scale assemblages of street and industrial materials and other Spanish artists under the umbrella term 'Informalism'. It is also the home of Picasso's *Guernica*, which is hung with preliminary oil sketches and drawings. I could spend a full day at this art museum (reopened after a facelift in 1990) without feeling drained by endless corridors and staircases. Just the thought of it makes me want to plan another trip there!

Anne Kirker
Art consultant, curator and writer



I first discovered the remarkable Musée des Moulages in the early 1990s when I lived in France for a year. I have always been fascinated by the pre-photographic practices eclipsed by the invention and the subsequent commercialisation of photography. Throughout history one finds the *moulage sur nature* (life cast) as a dark precursor to photographic practices in the world today. At the Hôpital Saint-Louis we are witness to the life's work of Jules Baretta. It's hard not to be overwhelmed by the sheer number of the displays. Corralled neatly into beautifully painted likenesses of the afflictions of living, breathing people, they are discretely and gently displayed with fine white cloth folded demurely around the diseased body parts. Baretta's models are technically stunning, even though they show an alarming array of diseases of the skin.

What I love about life casts is they are about life—our lives, our frailness in the face of the contingencies of the world, our aspirations for knowledge. Our shared humanity is portrayed in life casts, even when, as in the wax moulages of this museum, they are examples of disease and sickness.

I'm not sure if it's easy to get in there… but at the time I asked, explaining I was a photographer from New Zealand, and providing a context for my interest, I was allowed back by appointment. This is something you can do too, if you have good reason.

Fiona Pardington
Artist

I felt a real sense of pride and achievement with the opening of *Treasures and Landmarks*, the long-term collection exhibition at the former National Art Gallery in its Buckle Street location. I was a new director then and what we were doing felt ground-breaking. It was a simple basic premise, but this display of the development of New Zealand art was organised in the early 1990s in the wake of the sesquicentenary of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. We were exploring working with the idea of a single national collection prior to the establishment of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and including items from the National Museum's collection which at this time existed in relative isolation downstairs. It seemed fresh and exciting to include furniture and historical paintings, prints and photographs which had been collected for reasons other than their aesthetic value, but which made visual points as well. It was the first time to my knowledge that a good proportion of Māori art was included and there were a range of great new acquisitions in it as well. Those were the days!

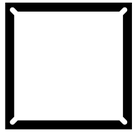
Jenny Harper
Director, Christchurch Art Gallery

I love the *Block Beuys*, which is installed in seven interconnected rooms at Hessisches Landesmuseum in Darmstadt, Germany. I visited it again in 2007, just before it closed for the controversial refurbishment that aficionados feared would destroy its authenticity. Joseph Beuys installed this comprehensive collection of his works back in 1970. He did not distinguish individual works with labels, so it reads as a whole; its groupings, pathways, and thresholds expressing his philosophy. In later years, he returned, adding bits and pieces, and tweaking the display. Although Beuys generally preferred white walls, the rooms were already lined in brown jute, which he left. The jute has become part of the *Block's* ambience and now seems deeply Beuysian. The *Block* is widely considered to be the most authoritative display of his work, having been left just as he intended. It has certainly taken on a cultish ambience, like a reliquary. One feels like an archaeologist entering an Egyptian tomb. Mysterious and arcane, it's unclear whether the objects have a practical or religious function. Despite being allergic to the romantic-heroic idea of the artist, with the *Block Beuys* I make an exception.

Robert Leonard
Director, Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane

Permanent collections are all about favourites, repeating experiences with loved things. Disconcerting for me then that last year the two collections I know best and visit most often were ready for a shake up. With a new director taking control, the Marx Collection in the Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin was ready for a remix; so too the collection of the Kunsthaus Zurich. Really though, not too much has changed in either place. In Zurich the great group of Giacomettis are sitting right where they always were, none of the Munch paintings has been banished and there's a new Polke to see. In Berlin the incredible group of works by Beuys has been left as it was, Warhol's big *Mao* is still there to cast its spell over you and Twombly's *Orpheus* has been joined by a group of Greek sculptures. Both collections as great as always.

Judy Millar
Artist



If you were to ask me to choose one museum, one artist, one room, I would take you to the large octagonal ellipse in the Prado where hangs, along with paintings of dwarfs, kings, buffoons and gods, the most famous work by Diego Velázquez—*Las Meninas*. The scale of this work demands a respectful distance: little can be seen up close but stand back and see how it holds together. In contrast you can step in to examine the smaller works flanking it: the exquisitely gentle features of the dwarf Francisco Lezcano and the strange sunken eyes of the buffoon Calabacillas, mistakenly known as the Idiot of Coria. Nearby hangs the *Triumph of Bacchus*, where the luminous god of wine crowns an initiate in rowdy company.

The composition weaves a complex set of exchanges circulating around the rough faces that meet your eye above a porcelain wine bowl. On the opposite wall an aging Mars looks inward, leaving the stage to jester, Paolo de Valladolid, who strikes a dramatic pose in basic black. Each canvas (and there are many more) reveals an extraordinary integrity of heart and mind which adds up to a sort of 'truth' in the work of Velázquez that has confounded analysis for centuries. The Prado has most of the paintings of this unique Spanish master, but look further and you will find the great Titian, Goya, Rubens, Ribera, Zurbaran, Bosch, Van der Weyden and many more. But of course I forget, I am only allowed one room…

Jude Rae
Artist

When I visited the Guggenheim Bilbao in 2002, my first view of Frank Gehry's famous building filled me with wonder and trepidation: it was so spectacular it seemed determined to upstage the art inside. In some parts of the building this was indeed the case, but under the rib-like rafters of the long 'Fish' gallery I found a part of the permanent collection that would never be lesser than its setting: Richard Serra's *Snake* (1994–7)—three enormous, brooding ribbons of rusted steel that twisted majestically towards the gallery's edge. As I walked the winding paths through the work, its hulking, undulating forms loomed overhead, seeming immense and weightless at the same time. It was an amazing experience, a work that minimised sound and light, and shut out the theatrics of the building. For those few moments, it was as if the rest of the world had disappeared.

Jeremy Hansen
Editor, HOME New Zealand

George Baloghy **Antipodean Olympia** 1981. Enamel on canvas. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, reproduced courtesy of the artist

THE NAKED AND THE NUDE

Bulletin *talks to the Gallery's senior curator Justin Paton about this new exhibition.*

18 December 2009 – 18 April 2010

Naked... nude... be honest now—is this a show for the dirty mac brigade?
Sorry to disappoint. If the show raises any complaints it might be because it's not nude enough. Christchurch Art Gallery's collection doesn't contain anything equivalent to *Made in heaven* (1989–91), Jeff Koons's photographs of himself up close and extremely personal with his then wife, Italian politician and porn star Ilona Staller. Obviously one reason people are interested in looking at nudes is that we're creatures who walk around clothed most of the time, so curiosity is natural. But this isn't just a show of art that tells you about nudity. It's also a show of nudes that tells you a lot about art—about the allure of images, the power of suggestion, and how art has changed over the last century and a half. I think that's the point

of George Baloghy's *Antipodean Olympia* (1981), which quotes the most famous nude in modern art, Edouard Manet's *Olympia* (1863). He presents this nude as one familiar item amongst a stack of props and conventions. He's reminding us that the bodies we encounter in works of art are always made of other art.

What was the starting point of this show for you? Was there a key work?
Steve Carr's *A Shot in the Dark (The Bachelor)* (2008). It's a portrait of a hairy and none-too-trim male belly. Very much naked, rather than nude. The owner of the belly has lifted his shirt and arranged his hands so that he resembles a moose. It's a play on the idea of the trophy nude, as seen on *The Bachelor*—a reality TV show in which ten girls fight for the right to win one guy. Except that Carr's *Bachelor* doesn't look like much of a catch. Anyway, at the time we acquired it, Leonard Booth's *The awakening* or *Vanity* (c.1927) was on show in the collection galleries. It's a body painting in the old mould. Very much nude, rather than naked. The collision made me curious enough to start looking for related things, and there turned out to be a power of them. Not surprising, given that the Robert McDougall Art Gallery's collection was largely formed during a period when drawing from the nude was considered an indispensable part of art training.

In an earlier edition of *Bulletin* Peter Wells wrote about what he described as a 'paucity of erotic art' in New Zealand. Would you agree with that sentiment?
Definitely. A history of erotic art made in New Zealand would be a really thin book. That has a lot to do with the puritanism that is part of Pākehā New Zealand's cultural genetic code—a powerful sense of propriety about bodies that co-exists with a giggling fascination. You saw this recently when the mass media tut-tutted about the Boobs on Bikes parade in Auckland and elsewhere, while at the same time running endless footage of the event. There are plenty of contemporary artists who aim to kick down the old sense of propriety, but sometimes their attacks on prudishness can seem as anxious about bodies as the conventions they're trying to topple. What's rare is art that celebrates the life of the body in a way that's casually confident—confident enough even to make a joke or two. Anne Noble's *Night Hawk* (1982), a portrait of male genitals embellished with plumage, is unusual because it suggests that art can be both sexy and funny, and at the same time reverse the old man-looks-at-woman formula.

"This isn't just a show of art that tells you about nudity. It's also a show of nudes that tells you a lot about art."

But isn't eroticism like beauty, something in the eye of the beholder?
I think the best artists of the body allow for that by not spelling things out too laboriously. The writer Gore Vidal says the key is to leave something to the viewer's or reader's imagination. And if you think about it, the power of suggestion is one of the few things left to artists—when it comes to bodies portrayed explicitly, most contemporary art is pretty mild compared with what's regular fare on television or on the Internet.

(left) Joanna Braithwaite **Little monkey** 1997. Oil on canvas. Long-term loan from the Olivia Spencer Bower Foundation Award Collection. Reproduced courtesy of the artist

(Above) Steve Carr **A Shot in the Dark (The Bachelor)** 2008. C-type print mounted on dibond. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 2008. Reproduced courtesy of the artist and Michael Lett, Auckland

It's definitely true that people are pretty hard to shock these days, but surely a show with a title like this must contain its fair share of controversy. Are there any good stories associated with the works?
You can track a mini-history of controversies through the show. Barry Cleavin's etchings of women in compromised positions were hotly debated in the early 1980s when feminist artists and theorists argued that women's bodies weren't free to be rearranged. Then there's a work by Norman Lindsay, the Australian painter played by Sam Neill in the not-very-good film *Sirens,* whose bizarrely fanciful and pneumatically enhanced nudes outraged authorities in the 1910s and 1920s. There's a diptych by Christine Webster, whose huge frieze of gender-bending bodies, *Black carnival*, provoked calls for censorship in Hamilton in 1994. And there's Evelyn Page's *Summer morn* (1929). It might be the sunniest, least guilt-ridden

“These artists want to know who is looking, and what that gaze gives to or takes from the person being looked at.”

(Left) Christine Webster **Blood** 1992. C-type photograph. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 1996. Reproduced courtesy of the artist

(Right) Evelyn Page **Summer morn** 1929. Oil on canvas. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, E. Rosa Sawtell Bequest 1940

nude ever painted in New Zealand—an antidote to all the stark empty landscapes that New Zealand artists were starting to paint in the 1930s—but the model in the painting wouldn't permit it to be shown publicly during her lifetime.

With the opening of *The Naked and the Nude* and *Brought to Light* this summer there seems to be a real focus on the Gallery's collection at the moment. Why do you think this is?
The obvious answer is that a recession is a very good moment to look into your own collection. But the truth is, any moment is a good moment to look into the collection. And—although I haven't actually crunched the numbers—I'm sure there will be far more of the collection on display than ever before over the summer months. The other thing worth noting about collection shows is the freedom that comes with them. As a curator it's wonderful to do big monograph shows of artists you love. But collections also allow you to delve into material you may feel more distant from or even ambivalent about—like the Lindsay work, say. A show doesn't have to be full of things you personally like to be interesting. I'm off on a tangent here, but sometimes I wonder what would happen if a curator organised a survey show that wasn't totally on-side, that was critical of the artists it surveyed. It's unthinkable, in practical terms. But it's interesting to think about.

In the final room of the exhibition a number of works don't even contain figures—or am I missing something?
Well, missing something is a useful first step. And then with luck that absence makes you look closer. Feminism shook up everyone's thoughts about the naked and the nude. As this show demonstrates, up till the mid-twentieth century the story was almost solely one of men looking at women. But with feminist works like Di ffrench's *The life-drawing class* (1990) and Richard Killeen's *About drawing a woman in the centre* (1984), looking at nudes turns into a loaded act. These artists want to know who is looking, and what that gaze gives to or takes from the person being looked at. And the effects of that are evident even in the work of contemporary artists who aren't themselves feminists. You see it above all in the many works that show the body in pieces—in partial, incomplete or fragmentary form. On one hand, this is a really practical artistic strategy, because it makes us do some imaginative work. But it's also an expression of scepticism and dissatisfaction with the available conventions for portraying bodies. So in the last room, bodies are concealed as much as revealed. They turn away, they hide behind draperies; they're glimpsed in part rather than being pinned to the page.

***The Naked and the Nude** is in the Touring Galleries A and B from 18 December 2009 until 18 April 2010.*

EVENTS

WEDNESDAY 6 JANUARY
Art Bite: Picasso
Explore Pablo Picasso's etching *Minotaur Attacking an Amazon*, which uses symbols from Greek mythology to evoke the political upheaval and civil disorder of 1930s Spain.
6pm / meet at the front desk / free

The Mystery of Picasso
Watch Picasso paintings take shape, stroke by stroke, in a documentary that allows a unique insight into his creative process. Picasso destroyed the works after filming so they exist only in this movie.
6.20pm / Philip Carter Family Auditorium / 35 mins / PG / free
Sponsored by The Press

WEDNESDAY 3 FEBRUARY
Art Bite: Paul Johns
Paul Johns's provocative contribution to **The Naked and the Nude** draws on the modern fascination with sexuality and religion.
5.15pm / meet at the front desk / free

Gross Indecency?
Richard Gross's sculptures unwittingly stirred up ferociously conservative, puritanical and evangelical passions from an outraged New Zealand. Presented by Mark Stocker.
6pm / Philip Carter Family Auditorium / R20: contains nudity / free
Sponsored by The Press

WEDNESDAY 10 FEBRUARY
Art Bite: Bill Sutton
Pat Unger takes a look at figure studies by Canterbury's best-loved regionalist landscape painter, Bill Sutton.
5.15pm / meet at the front desk / free

WEDNESDAY 17 FEBRUARY
Art Bite: George Baloghy
Antipodean Olympia features George Baloghy's trademark blend of iconic European imagery with images of New Zealand culture.
5.15pm / meet at the front desk / free

Peeping Tom Goes to the Art Gallery
The validity of the tradition of the nude was brought into question by feminism. Thirty years later, Professor Pamela Gerrish-Nunn asks just what is the difference between art and pornography, and in the twenty-first century does it matter?
6pm / Philip Carter Family Auditorium / free
Sponsored by The Press

THE ACT OF LIFE DRAWING

Leonard Booth
The awakening or **Vanity**
c.1927. Oil on canvas.
Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 1974

FOR CENTURIES THE NUDE has inspired artists. These days representations of the nude are varied and diverse, and images of the partially naked body flood popular culture. Legendary stories of artist/model relationships abound throughout art history, and remarkable images of naked and semi-clothed figures rest in galleries, museums and churches worldwide.

Culturally, the nude in art raises issues associated with the human condition: status, sexuality, eroticism and desire, feminism, objectification and, at times, voyeurism. Context is all important. Constantly the nude comes into conflict with social mores, although thankfully, these days the level of acceptance of the nude is vastly different to that of, say, a hundred years ago. Ever-changing social attitudes to its representation in art continue to generate lively dialogue. However, the nude remains contentious.

No one who has experienced the process first-hand—here I refer to the act of drawing, painting, or photographing a nude—could deny the challenges it presents. Drawing the nude is difficult and demanding. Respect for the model is paramount in the life-drawing classes I run. At best the atmosphere is one of relaxed concentration. For the student the experience can be intense, often humbling, but always supportive. Time evaporates. Chat is kept to a minimum, although during breaks the model and students often talk and discuss the drawings.

Any drawing is about looking and problem solving. Understanding the complexities of the figure in relation to life drawing is an ongoing process—an eye, mind and body activity. Body activity? Yes; a drawing is not just using one's hands. To stand and draw allows greater physical freedom and, I believe, yields better results. An understanding of skeletal and muscular structure, anatomy, an awareness of form, volume and mass, perspective and foreshortening are addressed. Each student works at their own pace, building on existing knowledge and skills—a process that goes beyond mere external physical appearances. Traditional drawing materials are employed: charcoal, Conté, graphite and large quantities of newsprint are consumed. Models range from youthful to middle-aged and any suggestion of idealised beauty is misplaced. Students are exposed to various drawing methods, yet great care is taken to extend each student's own approach. Moving off too quickly into areas of abstraction is discouraged. Personally, I believe life drawing generates a greater understanding of proportion and the key issue of perspective—tools that are useful in many spheres of creativity, way beyond the confines of a life-drawing classroom.

The very act of creating any work of art is contentious, and what could be more contentious than the relationship of naked model to student or artist and, ultimately, the exposure of the final work? Does life drawing still have currency? Are there issues around gender and exploitation in relation to life-drawing practices? These days life drawing appears to have lost favour in many of our tertiary institutions, viewed as outmoded. I am sure photography has had a part to play in this. The act of drawing itself—often referred to as visual research—is perceived much more broadly today and many consider conventional study of the nude irrelevant. For example, students at the University of Canterbury School of Fine Arts currently have to arrange their own life-drawing sessions, despite the fact many are incorporating the figure in their art practice. The life-drawing room I attended thirty years ago at Ilam School of Fine Arts is now taken over for studio practice—divided into small spaces, each occupied by a single student. Pressure for space maybe, but also clearly an indication of changing attitudes and changing conventions.

Let's face it, drawing a nude is challenging, but surely it is more interesting than drawing an inanimate object such as a cup! Although the act of life drawing and the issues associated with representation of the nude may never go away, I cannot envisage a time when the nude won't attract serious scrutiny, reflecting the diversity of contemporary art practice. Surely **The Naked and the Nude** is testament to that belief.

Grant Banbury
Art consultant

THE ACT OF BEING DRAWN

MY FIRST EXPERIENCE OF LIFE MODELLING was as a seventeen-year-old high school student. A friend had signed up for life-drawing classes and was feeling nervous about attending her first class; would I be her chaperone?

I agreed and, under the expert tuition of Alan Gunn, discovered a love for drawing the figure. A few years and numerous life classes later, I had opened my studio and gallery and decided to run life-drawing classes of my own. I wanted to offer something edgier, to experiment with the figure and move towards a more avant-garde and less academic approach to the setting of the life class.

I began as both tutor and model in one, giving instructions on grasping the form in a sequence of rapid strokes as befits a thirty-second warm-up pose from my plinth. A number of years later, in conversation with one of the artists who was a regular attendee, I discovered that it was the first life class she had attended where the model was the tutor. But to me it seemed entirely logical. As an artist I was familiar with drawing the figure, and as a model I knew exactly which pose could achieve a particular drawing technique; being conscious of the historically silent and idealised view of the female model, if I was going to be naked I would dictate the terms.

On Tuesday evenings up to thirty artists would arrive at the gallery, and enjoy a glass or two of wine while working through poses of varying lengths and complexity. Classes would begin with a short sequence of warm-up poses, gradually extending out to two, five and ten minutes. After a short break classes resumed, with either three twenty-minute poses or two thirty-minute poses to finish.

The only time I ever felt nervous was at the moment of undressing. The anxiety seemed to be more in the transition, the becoming naked in front of others. The naked female has always been political property and the life model occupies the tenuous space of both the watched and the watcher. As the model gazing back I was fascinated by the quirks of the artists in attendance: the Christian who could only make eye contact once I was clothed again; the students who would stretch out on the floor as close as politely possible, obsessed with finding the most obscure and unflattering angle; the senior artists who would work with devotion on a single pose for weeks on end, capturing and recapturing a fading bruise on my leg; and perhaps most hilarious, the fall-in-love-with-a-model forty-something artist club that is yet to die a timely death. These strange eclectic gatherings provided a snapshot of the wheat and chaff of the arts scene at any one time.

Pregnant with my first child I continued modelling, and an array of artists documented my changing figure with the familiarity of protective parents. By this time the life class had grown to include an interesting array of models acquired by word of mouth and special invitation. From the trapeze artist and contortionist to the committed nudist, I still frequently recognise them in the men and women who anonymously occupy many an artist's studio or gallery wall.

ADVICE FOR THE PROSPECTIVE MODEL:

- **The Chills:** a fortifying whisky on the very cold nights, and a discreetly filled hot-water bottle inside one's cushion.
- **Remaining Motionless:** attributed to a gruelling routine of church on Sunday from age five to fifteen. Front row.
- **The Uncontrollable Itch:** an itch has a distinctive life cycle. If left to its own devices it peaks and dissipates leaving an unusually Zen-like euphoria, the reward and true mark of one's ability to remain motionless regardless of physical fripperies.
- **The Amorous Artist:** avoid over indulging in Anaïs Nin and maintain one's professional—all be it naked—distance.

Sarah Amazinnia
Public programmes officer

ILLUMINATING THE ARCHIVES

EVERY PAINTING THAT HANGS on a gallery wall has at least two stories to tell. One is the front-facing story of whatever it is the artist has created or depicted—the subject matter about which curators write and critics argue. But this traditional intellectual story is complemented by the story of how the artist came to create that work, where they were, what they were doing and how it came to be on that particular wall. Both narratives combine to give the complete picture of the item that gallery visitors see before them.

At Christchurch Art Gallery, the Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives collection has been used to help tell this second, background story. As an archivist, it is always a pleasure for me to see its treasures deployed in this way. For this, my thanks must go to previous Gallery collectors, who saw the value in preserving such material, and to curator Peter Vangioni who saw the value in presenting it as part of the **Brought to Light** exhibition.

One painting about which we know an almost indecent amount is Olivia Spencer Bower's watercolour *La Piccola Marina* (1931), because her papers, diaries and photograph albums were deposited with the Gallery by the Olivia Spencer Bower Trust after her death. The artist visited Italy in 1931, and from her diary for that year we know she visited Capri and sketched the 'wonderful seas—the best so far' at Piccola Marina on 19 and 20 February.

We also have a photograph album of this trip, which includes a series of pictures of the bay in question. The painting is not a direct representation of any of the photographs, but rather an amalgamation of several of them, with features such as the rocky foreshore, the fat pigeons and the network of supports for a grapevine combined to form a wonderfully integrated composition. The photographs are of course in black and white, and the diary entries are simply text, but both leap from their respective pages into glorious life when seen alongside the painting itself.

Also in the archive are letters from Raymond McIntyre that provide a marvellously vivid picture of him and a sitter at work in his London studio in 1910.

Cora Wilding, an activist on numerous social improvement fronts as well as an artist whose work is in the Gallery's collection, is represented by an autograph book, which tells us exactly who her associates were, and when she met them. Each page bears a signed painting or drawing, some by familiar names such as Owen Merton and Margaret Stoddart, others by artists whose reputation has sunk without trace. Some remain tantalisingly unidentified but the book as a whole breathes life into our knowledge and understanding of Wilding herself.

We always welcome donations of archival material that casts light on the works of art in our collection, and we especially welcome items that help us to tell the fascinating back-story that so many of those works have.

Tim Jones
Librarian

Pages from Olivia Spencer Bower photograph album. Collection of the Robert and Barbara Stewart Library and Archives, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu

Ricky Swallow *is one of Australia's most renowned artists. As a sculptor he represented Australia at the 2005 Venice Biennale, and many of his carved wooden works are currently the subject of a survey exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne. However, works on paper have always been a part of Swallow's art practice, and a new exhibition at Christchurch Art Gallery brings together a broad range of these playful and atmospheric works. Here senior curator Justin Paton considers Swallow's early interest in evolution and science fiction, and delves into the artist's more recent studies of musicians 'on the edge of dissolution'.*

RICKY SWALLOW: WATERCOLOURS
12 December 2009 – 21 February 2010
A UQ Art Museum touring exhibition

Ricky Swallow **Ned/Mick** 2007. Watercolour on paper. Proclaim Collection, Melbourne. Reproduced courtesy of the artist, Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney, Stuart Shave/Modern Art, London, Marc Foxx Gallery, Los Angeles, and Hamish McKay Gallery, Wellington

THE MAIN ACTORS IN RICKY SWALLOW'S early watercolours are intelligent and faintly menacing monkeys. They read books, operate laptops, listen through headphones, pilot spaceships towards other worlds, and generally run the show. Swallow records their actions and antics with all the enthusiasm of a field researcher with notebook flipped open: here they are reading books; there they are fondling guns. It's zoology shaded by comedy, a kind of diary of evolutionary downfall.

However, like William Hogarth's many eighteenth-century paintings and engravings featuring preening and puffed-up monkeys, Swallow's watercolours of this type are not about monkeys at all, but rather us humans. They are about our flailing and preposterous attempts to make progress, get ahead, extend ourselves in space and time. Whether they are tinkering with gadgets, steering spacecraft, spraying graffiti on walls or creating fresh versions of themselves in the lab, Swallow's monkeys might all be considered surrogate artists, using whatever is at their disposal to reach beyond themselves. The resulting watercolours are science fictions of a comic and wistful kind, gently dwelling on the absurdity of our efforts to make ourselves known in a limitless universe.

Leaf through Swallow's recent watercolours, however, and the monkeys in their sci-fi settings fade completely from view. In their place come human faces and figures of a much more certain vintage. These watercolours are based on photographs—though 'based' sounds too solid for what happens in them. It is as if each portrait were placed in the opposite of developing fluid, a substance that softens the certainty of the photographic record and takes it to the edge of dissolution. The face seen close up in *When you were gone* is almost lost in the pooling pigment. The paired faces in *False true lovers* look at once stunned and accused by our interest in them. The faces of members of the legendary Kelly Gang are rendered in bruised blacks and blues, and look by turns malevolent (*Ned*), wretched (*James Kelly*), and too far gone to care (*Hanging Joe Byrne*). And the same faces receive an unexpected second life in watercolours that portray the outlaw Ned as played by rock star Mick Jagger in the 1970 film *Ned Kelly*—pop cultural memory bleeding back across colonial history.

Of all the faces Swallow portrays, none haunt his watercolours as persistently as those of musicians. From John Fahey and Nick Drake through to the reedy, melancholy figure of 'Papa John' Phillips, co-writer of *California dreamin'*, musicians form a kind of shadow community within Swallow's art—half-hip and half-haunted, an unlikely aristocracy of shaggy man-boys, wistful skinnies and finger-picking daddy-os.

Swallow is known to be an obsessive listener, someone whose art is motivated as much by music as by the work of other visual artists. Since moving to Los Angeles he has immersed himself in Californian music of the 1960s and 1970s. On that count, these watercolours might be considered the notes of a fan, Swallow transferring these faces from album covers into the scrapbook of his own enthusiasms. If this is fandom, though, it's fandom of a peculiar kind, tender and yet thoroughly distanced. In the photos that he selects, the musicians adopt the role of reluctant prophets, modern-day troubadours, staring past or through the camera towards some horizon of possibility. Like Francis Upritchard, Damiano Bertoli and David Noonan, to name just three artists of Swallow's generation who are also reaching into the archive of this period, Swallow seems obscurely attracted to the mixture of hope and melancholy in these images—the way they sit on the fault line between 1960s idealism and the disenchantments of the 1970s. The closer he goes to these faces, the more puzzling their presence becomes. No longer joined together in hippy solidarity, the faces in *The hangman's beautiful portraits* (based on a photograph of an Incredible String Band album cover) turn solemn, strange and old. The musicians in *One nation underground* seem to pass from currency before our eyes, presented like fragments peeled from a fan's album, or busts in a museum of antiquities. By turning this period's pop stars into figments and monuments, Swallow does justice to an odd aspect of memory, which is the way faces and events from the recent past often feel further away from us than those from centuries past. We walk through our lives buoyed by the illusion that the crucial details are right there—that we can reach into the filing cabinet of memory and find just what we need. But, as anyone can discover for themselves when rummaging back through old boxes of photos or papers, even your self of five or ten years ago can feel like someone unfamiliar. Thirty-odd years since their heyday, Swallow's musicians waver on the brink of unfamiliarity. They're halfway between going and gone.

So is Swallow farewelling these figures or bringing them back? Reclaiming them or letting them go? In the end I think the watercolours must be counted as acts of commemoration—modest, indistinct and partial, certainly, but commemorative acts nonetheless. The evidence for this lies in the simple fact that he made them in the first place. Having listened to their music and looked at their photos, he set to work with paper and brush. And what led him to do so, I suspect, was not the looking so much as the listening. Songs bring the past vividly into the present because voices are such intimate things. Push play on a recording and the voice of someone long-gone is right there with you all of a sudden. Little wonder that Edison's phonograph recordings were once thought to offer the chance to listen in on the dead.

Justin Paton
Senior curator

Ricky Swallow **When you were gone** 2007. Watercolour on paper. Private collection, Melbourne. Reproduced courtesy of the artist, Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney, Stuart Shave/Modern Art, London, Marc Foxx Gallery, Los Angeles, and Hamish McKay Gallery, Wellington

Ricky Swallow **The hangman's beautiful portraits** 2006. Watercolour on paper. Burger Collection, Hong Kong. Reproduced courtesy of the artist, Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney, Stuart Shave/Modern Art, London, Marc Foxx Gallery, Los Angeles, and Hamish McKay Gallery, Wellington

This essay is an extract from 'The Weight of Paper', first published in Ricky Swallow: Watercolours, *University of Queensland Art Museum, 2009.*
***Ricky Swallow: Watercolours** is in Touring Gallery C from 12 December 2009 until 21 February 2010.*

EVENT

WEDNESDAY 13 JANUARY
Art Bite: Ricky Swallow
Take a closer look at Ricky Swallow's *Ned/Mick* from the series inspired by the 1970 film *Ned Kelly* starring Mick Jagger.
5.15pm / meet at the front desk / free

An invitation to become a supporter

MAKE A DONATION, MAKE A DIFFERENCE

At Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu we pride ourselves on being home to one of New Zealand's foremost public art collections, and on the important role we play in the cultural landscape of our city.

CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY TRUST

As a public gallery we are heavily reliant on funding grants and donations for our existence. The Christchurch Art Gallery Trust plays a vital role in sustaining our success through the collection of donations and the provision of funds for the ongoing development of the Gallery.

We invite you to become a supporter of the Christchurch Art Gallery Trust. Your support will help to ensure our continued growth as an internationally recognised centre of excellence, providing a stimulating and culturally enriching experience for all who visit now and in the future.

ABOUT THE CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY TRUST

The Christchurch Art Gallery Trust was formed in 1991 by the Friends of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery. It was established as a vehicle to raise and hold funds for acquisitions and to ensure that the Gallery's collection remained one of New Zealand's foremost public collections. The Trust also undertook the management of fundraising and receipt of funds for the building of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu.

The Trust continues to play an important role in cultivating relationships between Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu and its generous supporters. As a not-for-profit organisation its primary objective is to provide ongoing, practical support to the Gallery by making funds available for collection development, collection-related and other special projects—including the development of international exhibitions—and senior staff development.

To further its support of the Gallery, the Trust has created an avenue for individuals and groups to make financial contributions to the Gallery. This innovation supports the foundation of a more sustainable income stream for the Trust and the Gallery.

WAYS YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY TRUST

Our future is dependent on the generosity of the many individuals and organisations who donate to the Christchurch Art Gallery Trust each year.

By making a donation to the Christchurch Art Gallery Trust you will be assisting in helping the Gallery to:

- Improve the overall quality of the collections
- Continue to build a nationally significant collection
- Maintain and market a lively programme of quality exhibitions
- Increase our ability to attract specific major international loans and exhibitions

WAYS YOU CAN MAKE A DONATION

The Christchurch Art Gallery Trust welcomes all contributions and offers a number of different ways you can make a donation.

- Annual Giving

Our three-tiered programme for making annual donations allows you to choose the level that best suits your circumstances. Choose from the Patrons' Circle ($10,000 and above), Ambassadors' Circle ($5,000 – $10,000) and Benefactors' Circle ($1,000 – $5,000). Each level of giving confers a number of exclusive benefits, including private dinners and cocktail functions, personal invitations and viewings and back-of-house access to collections.

- Collection Development

The Challenge Grant and Challenge Grant Response Fund
The Challenge Grant is a ten-year commitment by Christchurch City Council to supplement the collection development budget by matching dollar for dollar any amount raised by the Trust in a year up to $190,000.

Donations to the Challenge Grant Response Fund are used specifically for the purchase of works of art for the collection.

- Special Donations

Making a special donation means you can stipulate what you would like your contribution to be used for.

- Bequests

This is your opportunity to leave an inspirational legacy for the future by including the Gallery in your will.

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

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Please contact the Gallery's development manager.
Tel: (+64) 3 941 7348; email: paul.doughty@ccc.govt.nz

The Hegemony of the Museum

Megan Tamati-Quennell

Neil Pardington **Pacific Store #1 (Samoan Clubs), Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa** 2006. Lambda / C-print. Reproduced courtesy Jonathan Smart Gallery, Christchurch

I. **AN EXHIBITION SHOWN AT THE** Barbican Art Gallery in London last year—*Martian Museum of Terrestrial Art*—presented contemporary works of art as a fictional museum collection. Inspired in part by the first chapter of Belgian art theorist Thierry de Duve's book, *Kant after Duchamp*, in which an imaginary anthropologist from outer space creates an inventory of 'all that is called art by humans',[1] *Martian Museum of Terrestrial Art* used outlandish classifications for the works and parodied the way that western anthropologists have interpreted non-western cultures through foreign eyes.

Adopting a pseudo-anthropological approach and using the idea of viewing contemporary art as if from outer space, the exhibition turned the prevailing Euro-American art tradition into the 'other'. The 'other' is, of course, the marginal place in which Māori and other non-western cultures collected by Museums have historically been positioned within such institutions.

Museums are collections of objects that have been assembled over time. Cabinets of curiosities, or wunderkammers, were the precursors to museums. They contained encyclopaedic collections of types of objects including natural history specimens (sometimes faked), geological and archaeological artefacts, ethnographic items from exotic places, religious or historical relics, works of art and antiquities.

Ethnographic museums consist of objects the explorers, missionaries, merchants, anthropologists or other curious individuals obtained through gift, barter, purchase or seizure because they were beautiful, odd, difficult to get or were available.[2]

Museums and their role in the collecting of non-western cultural artefacts have been contested in the past two decades or so, most explicitly by the descendants of the

'collected' cultures. Criticism has been directed not only at the collecting—usually undertaken by colonial men, who in New Zealand included figures such as George Grey, twice governor of New Zealand; Gilbert Mair, known for his role in the Land Wars; and Augustus Hamilton, who in 1903 was appointed as director of the Colonial Museum, now Te Papa—but also at the taxonomic definitions applied to non-western art and artefacts and the absence of the collected cultures' authority and voice in their representation.

The museum is not only a place of conservation and presentation of historic objects, documents and images. In fact, its main function is to provide a certain authority of knowledge through its internal activities such as collecting, selecting, categorising, framing, presenting and propagating objects, texts and images … This process is supposed to demonstrate the 'authenticity' of historic materials. However, it's by no means a neutral one. Instead, it represents directly and indirectly certain ideologies and historic conditions and legitimates the dominance of cultural and political powers.[3]

In New Zealand, the issues related to Māori art, taonga and institutions reached their zenith in the 1980s following the exhibition *Te Māori*, which opened at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in 1984 and was the first collection of Māori taonga to have left New Zealand with the approval of Māori.

Professor Hirini Moko Mead credits *Te Māori* with the transformation of Māori art and the redefinition of Māori artefacts as taonga—first written about as such by him in the *Te Māori* exhibition catalogue. *Te Māori* he said, 'freed Māori art from the history and intellectual context in which it had been imprisoned' and increased the mana of Māori art by taking it out of 'misty obscurity' and 'launching it into the consciousness of the art world'.[4]

… the power society imposes such a mesh of controls upon the indigenous society that it virtually manipulates how the subject people are to think about themselves and most aspects of their culture. In fact members of that society set out the rules, determine whether to give funds or not, and speak and write on behalf of the indigenous group.[5]

The return of *Te Māori* to New Zealand, and the subsequent nationwide tour in 1986, under the name of *Te Māori, Te Hokinga Mai*, saw a dramatic and essential shift in the relationship between art galleries and museums and Māori. Through the exhibition, Māori art was redefined as a 'great art that could take its place alongside other great art traditions', but more importantly the 'magnificence' of Māori art was recognised as being related to 'the mana of the Maori people who created it.'[6]

… Before Te Māori (1984) the study, the protection, the care and the speaking about Māori art was largely the province of and domain of the dominant culture. Māori art was a captured art and museums could be regarded as repositories of the trophies of capture.

… there were no Māori curators or cultural officers employed at museums and art galleries. All the staff were Pākehā and there was a tradition of this dating back to Augustus Hamilton.[7]

One way Mead believed Māori could regain authority of their art and culture was to 'take control of the language of definitions and descriptions and to have members of the culture speak for themselves.'[8]

In the past two decades, many artists have used the museum and the value judgments encoded in what and how museums preserve and present, as the subject of their work. A significant example was Native American installation/performance artist James Luna's 1987 *Artifact Piece*, in which Luna used his own body as a site of introspection as he lay on a bed of sand in a glass museum cabinet in the American Indian Gallery at the San Diego Museum of Man. Beside the 'cased Luna' were other museum cabinets featuring objects of significance to the artist's everyday life—sacred medicine objects associated with his native La Jolla Luiseno culture,

(Above) Neil Pardington **Polynesian Spear Storage, Otago Museum** 2008. LED / C-print. Reproduced courtesy Jonathan Smart Gallery, Christchurch

(Right) Neil Pardington **Taonga Māori Store #2, Whanganui Regional Museum** 2006. LED / C-print. Reproduced courtesy Jonathan Smart Gallery, Christchurch

albums by Jimi Hendrix and Miles Davis, his master's degree, comics, tubes of paint. *Artifact Piece* critiqued American museum displays which presented Native American cultures as extinct, with no involvement or position within contemporary or popular culture. Viewers who happened upon Luna's unannounced exhibition were shocked by his living, breathing and absolutely 'undead' presence.

Another potent example was the 1992 intervention by Afro-American installation artist Fred Wilson, staged at the Maryland Historical Society in Baltimore, which addressed the issue of how museums reflexively reinforce racist beliefs and behaviour. Entitled *Mining the Museum*, the project included the placement by Wilson of a series of silver goblets, urns and decanters from the collection next to a pair of rusty slave shackles found hidden deep in the storerooms at the Historical Society. These were displayed in a standard exhibition case labelled 'Metalwork, 1723–1880'.

I placed them together because normally you have one museum for beautiful things and one museum for horrific things. Actually, they had a lot to do with one another; the production of one was made possible by the subjection enforced by the other.[9]

Native American artist Jimmie Durham has also challenged the hegemony of the museum within his work. One project included him turning an abandoned paper factory into a *Museum of Paper*—paper being 'the very incarnation of civilisation'.[10] For the installation, Durham collected all kinds of found papers, from books to wallpaper to handwritten notes, works of art to rubbish, and created a 'chaotic representation' which ran counter to ideas of order and authority as embodied by the museum.

Contemporary Māori artists, the New Zealand indigenous 'other', have also used the museum as site and subject—Māori jeweller Areta Wilkinson among them. Her first 'museum work' was her 1996 *03 Series*. Made up of replica Māori objects created from bone and stone, Wilkinson commented on museum taxonomies and classification systems by appropriating the museum registration numbers and labelling each of her imitation taonga jewellery pieces with an accession number. The series commented on the dislocative practice of ordering systems and made a comparison between the acculturation of museum-held taonga and the difficulty of maintaining a Māori identity in a western setting.

Lisa Reihana, with her 1997 work *Native Portraits n.19897*, presented a revised view of tourism's depiction of the 'other' and of photographic museum and ethnographic practices related to Māori people and culture. Featuring a monitor-stack waharoa (or gateway) and silent laserdisc recordings replicating a range of historical photographic styles, *Native Portraits n.19897* scrutinised the power relationships between Māori and European in Victorian New Zealand and censured the capturing and containing of indigenous cultures. Her title with its number sequence, like Wilkinson's *03 Series*, underscored the perversity of the museum practice of reducing people and culture to data.

Neil Pardington's *The Vault* is another project that fixes its gaze on museum and art gallery collections. Despite its title—which can be defined using loaded terms such as crypt, tomb, catacomb or mausoleum—Pardington appears to take a less interceding position than artists like Reihana and Wilkinson. Using large-format photographs Pardington's exhibition provides a rare view into the 'back of house' working spaces—mostly closed to the public—where art, taonga and natural history specimens are preserved and stored.

Megan Tamati-Quennell
Curator of indigenous art, Te Papa

NOTES

1. *www.barbican.org.uk*
2. Kaeppler, Adrienne L., *Taonga Māori and the Representation of 'Other'*, Taonga Māori Conference, New Zealand, 18–27 November 1990, p.11
3. Durham, Jimmie, 'Über das Sammeln', *Das Museum als Arena*, p.94
4. Staples, Robert, *Māoris and Black Americans: Members of the Fourth World*, Tu Tangata, 17 April/May 1984, p.24
5. Mead, Hirini Moko, *The Nature of Taonga*, Taonga Māori Conference, New Zealand 18–27 November 1990, p.164
6. ibid.
7. ibid.
8. ibid.
9. Fred Wilson, 'Constructing the Spectacle of Culture in Museums', Christian Kravagna (ed.), *The Museum as Arena. Artists on Institutional Critique*, Cologne 2001, p.98
10. Durham, Jimmie, 'Über das Sammeln', *Das Museum als Arena*, p.94

EVENTS

WEDNESDAY 2 DECEMBER
Opening the Vault
Exhibition curator Ken Hall examines **The Vault: Neil Pardington** in relation to earlier bodies of work, influences and the work of others who have entered similar conceptual or thematic terrain.
6pm / Philip Carter Family Auditorium / free
Sponsored by The Press

WEDNESDAY 16 DECEMBER
Behind the Scenes at Christchurch Art Gallery
A rare opportunity to take a tour of usually off-limits areas such as conservation laboratories, storerooms, library archives and the carpentry workshop.
5pm / meet at the front desk / numbers limited / bookings tel: (03) 941 7342 / free
Sponsored by The Press

SATURDAY 30 JANUARY
Exploring The Vault: Neil Pardington
Exhibition curator Ken Hall discusses Neil Pardington's photographs of elusive collection storage spaces.
8.30am / Alchemy / Friends $20 / public $30 / book by 27 Jan: (03) 941 7356

Back of House to Front

Gina Irish

II. **CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY'S MANY** storage spaces accommodate close to 6,000 collection works, as well as a number of items belonging to other institutions and private lenders. For a variety of reasons, these zones are designated restricted entry, and accessed only by the staff responsible for the care and maintenance of the Gallery's collections.

However, from time to time the Gallery's registration team receives requests to view works in back-of-house collection stores from third parties (researchers, general interest groups and artists among others). Access is granted on a case by case basis, but in 2007 we received a somewhat unusual request: Neil Pardington did not only want to visit the storerooms; he wanted to photograph these generally off-limits spaces with the expectation that they would appear in his series, *The Vault*. An exciting proposal, but one which required careful consideration.

In the weeks preceding Pardington's visit, risks were assessed and plans put in place that would ensure that safety of the collection was not compromised by the artist's project. Given that Pardington wanted to document areas where valuable assets—both in a monetary and a cultural sense—were housed it very quickly became evident that some aspects of collection storage could not be photographed; a condition Pardington happily agreed to. Once this was established it was all systems go. Each storage area was risk assessed, and any works in copyright that we thought Pardington might want to photograph, be it incidentally or otherwise, were cleared ahead of time.

Given back-of-house areas are working spaces where accessioning, research and the preparation of works for exhibition takes place, visits must be scheduled in advance and works moved accordingly. During Pardington's visit staff relocated to alternative spaces, and while *The Vault* is devoid of people, the multitude of crates, Tyvek (a conservation fabric) covered rolls and boxes are testament to the registrars, conservators and technicians who normally inhabit these spaces.

As orderly and static Pardington's images may seem, collections are often in a state of flux. *In Art Store #3, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu* (2007) Julian Dashper's deinstalled *Big Bang Theory* (1992) awaits crating, and in *Art Store #2, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu* (2007), a trolley loaded with photographs awaits deframing. Works remain in crates and boxes, revealing little of the contents inside. In the Land and Marine Mammal store at Te Papa, we see objects waiting expectantly for the next move, supported on cushions, in tubs and on benches, or hovering ghostlike under their Tyvek coverings. After all, collections are borrowed and lent, moved between storage and display areas, and continually expanding.

In the registration team, we had been second guessing what aspects of collection storage Pardington would document. Would he share our enthusiasm for the orderly arrangement of blue archival card boxes in the small objects store, or admire our systematic grouping of crates, or would his focus be on the collection works themselves? To our delight, seemingly mundane but necessary equipment such as ladders, disaster salvage bins and trolleys all make an appearance in Pardington's photographs. Straps used to secure works in storage remain in place, regardless of the disruption or partial concealment they impose when viewing the objects they protect. The time and energy invested in storage is not only evident, but presented as a craft in itself, on par with the objects that find rest in crates, tubs, shelves and boxes.

(Left) Neil Pardington **Land and Marine Mammal Store #3, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa** 2006. Lambda / C-print. Reproduced courtesy Suite, Wellington

(Above) Neil Pardington **Art Store #3, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu** 2007. LED / C-print. Reproduced courtesy Suite, Wellington

(Right) Neil Pardington **Art Store #2, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu** 2007. LED / C-print. Reproduced courtesy McNamara Gallery Photography, Whanganui

Pardington makes the most inaccessible areas within galleries and museums accessible. For those of us who work in back-of-house areas with collections, *The Vault* is viewed with pride, sentiment and admiration. The series references how other institutions house and preserve collections, and what materials and methods they apply to this task. The photographs reveal the mechanics of registration and conservation, and for those of us working in these specialist fields, *The Vault* is an expression of collection management ethics and philosophies.

In February 2010 the Gallery will host the Australasian Registrars' Committee Conference. Pardington will be in attendance, and will be reunited with the gallery and museum professionals who accommodated his many visits to a range of New Zealand institutions over a period of several years. I can say without a doubt that delegates will respond to *The Vault* with the same level of enthusiasm we experienced during the facilitation of Pardington's project; while these spaces are everyday for many of us, they are no less alluring for that. So, if when you visit Pardington's exhibition you are witness to someone marvelling over a well-built crate or retractable racks, please forgive them—chances are they are a registrar.

Gina Irish
Registrar

***The Vault: Neil Pardington** is in the Sutton and Ravenscar Galleries until 14 March 2010 and is accompanied by a beautifully illustrated book.*

BIG FINGER

Sean Kerr's Digitus impudicus *(2008) installed in the Gallery's foyer as part of the* ***Glasshouse*** *series.* ***Outer Spaces*** *is a programme of artworks in spaces beyond the traditional exhibition galleries.*

Sean Kerr **Digitus impudicus** 2008. Inflatable, computer and electronics. Reproduced courtesy of the artist and Michael Lett

Reuben Paterson
A shadow born from three dreams
2008–9. Glitter and acrylic on canvas. Private collection, Christchurch. Reproduced courtesy of the artist

Blue Planet

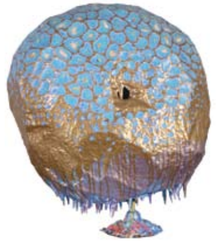
21 November 2009—7 November 2010

WHEN SEEN FROM SPACE, our amazing planet is a luminous, glowing blue. And blue is also the hue that we are most surrounded by in sea and sky. But the colour occurs infrequently in the animal and plant kingdoms, and is even more scarce in the mineral world; rocks and minerals such as sapphire, lapis lazuli, turquoise and azurite have been valued for their rare beauty for thousands of years. In a vast range of cultures, the exotic attraction of blue materials and pigments to artists and artisans has resulted in the creation of objects of endless variety and design. Some of these have dropped into **Blue Planet**—the exciting finale in a series of three colour-themed exhibitions shaped largely for younger audiences. Presenting an eclectic gathering of extraordinary works of art, pieces from the collection have been supplemented by a number of blue works generously lent by other public and private collections.

Reinforcing the idea of blue as a place to dream is a mesmerising DVD projection by Vietnam-based Jun Nguyen-Hatsushiba, *Memorial Project Nha Trang, Vietnam—towards the complex—for the courageous, the curious and the cowards* (2001). Nguyen-Hatsushiba has created an underwater world of impossible labour

‘At a few hundred kilometres altitude, the Earth fills half your sky, and the band of blue that stretches from Mindanao to Bombay, which your eye encompasses in a single glance, can break your heart with its beauty. Home you think. Home. This is my world. This is where I come from. Everyone I know, everyone I ever heard of, grew up down there, under that relentless and exquisite blue.’—Carl Sagan*

**Contact*, Century, London, 1986



Rohan Wealleans **Blue brain** 2005. Paint and polystyrene. Private collection, Auckland. Reproduced courtesy of the artist

Jun Nguyen-Hatsushiba **Memorial project Nha Trang, Vietnam—towards the complex—for the courageous, the curious and the cowards** 2001. Digital video, single channel projection, 13 min. Commissioned by Yokohama Triennale, 2001. Courtesy Mizuma Art Gallery Tokyo, Lehmann Maupin Gallery, New York. © Jun Nguyen-Hatsushiba

Artist unknown
Children playing on bamboo horses
c.1868–9. Woodcut on paper. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, donated by William E. Smith 2003

in the small flotilla of slow-motion cyclo-taxis being pedalled or pulled across the ocean floor. Further mysteries of the deep are apprehended in *Romance: New York (jellyfish)* (2006), an astonishing photograph taken by Gavin Hipkins during a family visit to an aquarium in New York. This fantastical creature set against a backdrop of deep blue makes a compelling companion to the enigmatic *Blue brain* (2005) by Rohan Wealleans, an organic floating entity sculpted from multiple layers of predominantly blue paint.

Also emerging from the fantasy zone is Jae Hoon Lee's *One of these days* (2007), a digitally altered photographic image that shapes clouds into an impossible aeroplane-window view. Further impossibilities are offered in senior Australian painter William Robinson's *Puddle landscape III* (1986), a landscape that, in capturing multiple views, seems to absorb and reconfigure concepts of the Aboriginal dreamtime, with reflecting puddles also pictured as broken pieces of bright sky. Another blue treasure combining simple landscape elements with abstraction and flattened perspective is Colin McCahon's *The curtain of Solomon* [panels 2 and 4] (1962), a pair of word paintings that make an exquisite introduction to one of New Zealand's most important and original painters. From a work originally comprising four panels, these two surviving panels are like an evening desert sky, encrusted with jewel-like stars and dancing words; tantalising archaeological fragments from a 3,000-year-old Middle Eastern love poem. Other works that carry such a sense of immensity and timelessness are Max Gimblett's *Cerulean blue—to Len Lye* (1981) and Len Castle's radiant sky-blue glazed stoneware *Blossom vase* (1991).

The show also contains new, commissioned works by Christchurch-based Helen Calder and Aucklander Peter Madden—two artists whose painstakingly meticulous approach yields dramatically different results. From something new to something old: the earliest works in **Blue Planet** are three 1860s Japanese prints by an unknown artist, exuberant childhood images with a serious tale to tell. Another pleasurable inclusion is a startling late nineteenth-century Nigerian (Yoruba) sculpture (also artist unknown), a ceremonial mask not unlike those that inspired early European modernists such as Picasso, Giacometti and Brancusi. Alongside these are works by a group of New Zealand-based artists working at full strength, with arresting works by Reuben Paterson, Megan Jenkinson and Richard Maloy, as well as the sorrowfully blue-faced *Wife* (2006) by Francis Upritchard, in which blue is a feeling as much as a physical fact. Completing the set is *Takahe* (1976), a work by Eileen Mayo that was an original design for Gregg's Jelly collectors' cards, *Rare and Endangered Birds of New Zealand*. An exhibition about wonder, dreaming and looking, **Blue Planet** will leave younger visitors (and the young at heart) truly 'blue-brained'.

Ken Hall
Assistant curator

***Blue Planet** is in the Burdon Family Gallery from 21 November 2009 until 7 November 2010.*

***Blue Planet** will include an interactive 'I Spy Blue' wall, a children's activity booklet, and a portable giveaway work designed by Peter Madden.*
*B**lue Planet** is generously supported by Chartwell Trust.*

Gavin Hipkins **Romance: New York (jellyfish)** 2006. C-type print. Private collection, Christchurch. Reproduced courtesy of the artist, Hamish McKay Gallery and Starkwhite

Courtney Johnston

Copyright or *Copyleft?*

The rights and wrongs of copyright

FIRST, I SHOULD MAKE IT CLEAR that I'm not a copyright expert, or a lawyer. Instead, I'm somewhere between an interested bystander and a participant: consideration of copyright is part of my day job at the National Library of New Zealand, an important issue in my interest in open data and the digitisation of cultural heritage materials, and something that often crops up in my blogging (*http://best-of-3.blogspot.com*).

In this essay, I'd like to look at how copyright forms part of the day-to-day running of an art gallery. But first, some copyright basics.

Copyright was first recognised in England in 1709 with the Statute of Anne, which gave authors rather than printers control over the reproduction of their works. It is a legal concept that gives the creator of an original work rights over if and how that work is copied, distributed, exhibited, performed, communicated or adapted, for a set period of time.

Today, copyright applies to a wide variety of creative works, from screenplays to maps. In New Zealand, the Copyright Act 1994 applies to original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic works, sound recordings, films, communication works and the typographical arrangement of published editions. Under the Act, copyright in literary, dramatic, musical and artistic works lasts for the life of the author plus fifty years.

Perhaps one of the most widespread confusions around copyright is whether as a creator you need to register your work to assert copyright. You don't. The minute you press stop on your digital recorder, take the brush from the canvas, or stop typing, you gain copyright over what you've just made.

The copyright owner is almost always the first creator of the work. There are two main exceptions. When you make a work as part of your job, your employer is the copyright owner. And when someone commissions and pays, or agrees to pay, for a work (other than a written work) the commissioner is the default copyright owner.

And now to copyright in action. There is a difference between owning a work of art and owning the copyright on it. While artists can bequeath or assign copyright control to a gallery, or licence a gallery to use their work, this is relatively rare.[1] By and large, whenever a gallery wants to reproduce a work from their collection or a work from a temporary exhibition that is still in copyright—to put in a book, on a poster or postcard, on their website, in their magazine or annual report—they must seek the artist's permission to do so. (A provision is made in the Act for reproduction for the purpose of criticism and review, with credit to the creator.)

This is entirely fair, but it's also very time-consuming. This is particularly the case when digitising artworks to make them available online.

Copyright is a significant consideration in the digitisation of collections, such as the work undertaken by Christchurch Art Gallery to make their collection available online. Searchable collections like this are invaluable resources for researchers, be they art historians, students, or bloggers like me. They are also labours of love and perseverance for collecting institutions. Before a work can be digitised and displayed online, its copyright status must be ascertained

Generally, if a work is out of copyright, it can be copied without permission. If it is still in copyright, its creator (or creator's descendants) must be contacted and asked for permission—and sometimes there's a fee involved. Sometimes, searching for the copyright holder can be a lengthy and ultimately unsuccessful process. Spend some time in Christchurch Art Gallery's online collection and occasionally you'll see a notice saying, 'Sorry, image not available due to copyright restrictions'. The Gallery's registrar, Gina Irish, says that 'usually this is due to either not being able to track down the copyright holder, or, very rarely, permission being declined by the artist or holder'.

Earlier this year, staff at Te Papa blogged about copyright clearance for their Collections Online. Adrian Kingston noted:

> *Sometimes we have images for things we don't have rights clearances for; sometimes we have rights clearances for objects not imaged. Sometimes we have permission from an artist or estate for one work, but not others. We try to align our digitisation projects with rights clearances, but the overlap doesn't always happen straight away.*[2]

And, as Te Papa's rights manager Victoria Leachman observed, sometimes artists and copyright holders are simply not comfortable with having their works reproduced online.[3]

Personally, I find it both frustrating and saddening when an artist refuses permission. Frustrating because the Internet is now the first place I go with questions, and saddening because these refusals limit the audience for an artist's work. I was discussing this with a colleague recently, who said she wasn't surprised I felt this way because I'm an optimist about the web. However, it can't be denied that allowing images of their works to be available online reduces an artist's control over the context in which their work is seen, and knowledge of who is seeing or using it.

In recent years, and largely in response to the opportunities and risks the Internet poses, a new movement in copyright has emerged. Copyleft describes the practise of removing some restrictions on copyrighted works, so that copies and derivations can be easily made and shared.

The Creative Commons organisation is at the forefront of the copyleft movement. In the words of founder Lawrence Lessig, Creative Commons aims to make it easy for 'people to build on other people's work, by making it simple for creators to express the freedom for others to take and build upon their work'.[4]

Creative Commons has done this by developing a set of licences that are freely available for creators to take and apply to their own work. The licences are recognised in over fifty jurisdictions, including New Zealand. As Lessig writes, if content is given the CC mark this 'does not mean that copyright is waived, but that certain freedoms are granted'.[5] The licences are basically a pre-emptive granting of certain uses of a creator's work.

The most restrictive licence, Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works (BY-NC-ND), allows redistribution of a work, denies alterations to the work, permits only non-commercial uses and requires the copyright owner be credited. By applying this licence to their website, the artist collective et al. made it okay for me to reproduce installation shots of the exhibition **that's obvious! that's right! that's true** at Christchurch Art Gallery on my blog. I followed the requirements of the licence and used the images as et al. permitted; et al. didn't have to spend time approving a clearance request from me. It's worth noting that using this licence on their website does not prevent et al. from issuing another licence under different conditions—for example, to a commercial publisher.

In my own opinion, et al. is ahead of the curve here. A series of posts on the Collection Australia Network blog in September this year revealed significant philosophical and practical differences between the Australian arm of Creative Commons and the Australian copyright collecting agency Viscopy over the ways artists might licence their work for use and reproduction.[6] I'm not suggesting that artists should be forced to rescind control (or royalties) as a consequence of the rise of the Internet. I do believe, however, that now is a good time for artists and collecting organisations alike to look at how they can make use of copyright and licensing agreements to help bring more New Zealand art to the world.

***Courtney Johnston** lives in Wellington and works on web projects at the National Library of New Zealand. She completed a masters in art history at Victoria University of Wellington in 2004, and in her spare time writes about New Zealand art, most regularly on her blog http://best-of-3.blogspot.com.*

NOTES

1. Unless explicitly stated otherwise, copyright in unpublished works automatically transfers in a will. This would apply in situations such as when an artist leaves their archives (sketches, correspondence etc) to a gallery.
2. Adrian Kingston, 'Te Papa's collections and digitisation', 11 June 2009, *http://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/2009/06/11/te-papas-collections-and-digitisation/* accessed 27 September 2009.
3. Victoria Leachman, 'Digitisation, Copyright and Collections Online', 10 June 2009, *http://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/2009/06/10/digitisation-copyright-and-collections-online/* accessed 27 September 2009.
4. Lawrence Lessig, *Free culture: The nature and future of creativity,* London, Penguin Books, 2004, p.282.
5. op. cit., p.283.
6. Copyright series, Collections Australia Network, September 2009:

   PART 1
   http://keystone.collectionsaustralia.net/publisher/Outreach/?p=2736

   PART 2
   http://keystone.collectionsaustralia.net/publisher/Outreach/?p=2738

   PART 3
   http://keystone.collectionsaustralia.net/publisher/Outreach/?p=2741

MORE INFORMATION

Creative Commons Aotearoa New Zealand
http://creativecommons.org.nz
Information about choosing and applying CC licences.

Creative Freedom NZ
http://creativefreedom.org.nz
A forum for New Zealand artists' views on issues that have the potential to influence their collective creativity.

Make it Digital
http://makeit.digitalnz.org
A one-stop shop for information and questions about creating digital content, including digitisation and copyright.

Copyright Council of New Zealand
http://www.copyright.org.nz
A non-profit society providing copyright and cultural based industries with a range of services.

Talisman

5 December 2009—
14 February 2010

Rei miro, Rapa Nui (Easter Island) early to mid-nineteenth century. Oldman collection, Canterbury Museum E150.1124

EXAMPLES OF TALISMANS and charms can be found in many cultures throughout the world, from prehistoric times to Egyptian, Celtic, Asian and Polynesian cultures. Talismans were created to confer benefits upon the wearer, to assist in the performance of religious or magical initiation ceremonies and sometimes used as payment. Early talismans were often circular and were engraved with astrological figures or with magical formulae. Charms, fetish objects and amulets, although closely related to talismans, are more often associated with the warding off of evil spirits. These objects take many forms and materials, from metal, bone, stone, parchment, faience ware and animal parts to the medieval practice of placing shoes in the rafters of a house for good luck and even tattooing, revealing the capacity of the body itself to become artefact.

New works exploring the theme of the talisman have been created especially for this exhibition (the first of its kind at the Gallery) by twelve contemporary jewellers, and these are accompanied by a selection of twelve rare objects from the Canterbury Museum's oceanic collection. This collision of cultures and eras opens up pertinent questions about the purpose and importance of jewellery today. Throughout the past year, I have been lucky enough to enjoy many visits to the Museum to examine their oceanic collection. Materials as diverse as shell, human hair, flying-fox fur and whale bone are used in the construction of ornaments that decorate the chest, forehead, hair and neck. These historic ornaments are breathtaking in their diversity and craftsmanship.

Animal body parts were frequently used by Polynesian cultures in order to bestow the wearer with the attributes or life forces of the animal—the fox's cunning and agility or the whale's prowess at obtaining food. *Lei niho paloa* is an imposing necklace from Hawaii made from 409 cords of braided human hair with a central hook shape carved from a whale tooth. Animal forms were also used as intercessors between this life and the next, as seen in a forehead ornament from the Solomon Islands. Carved from a disk of clam shell and etched with frigate bird designs, infilled with black dye, the birds are representatives of the spirits of ancestors.

> **“This collision of cultures and eras opens up pertinent questions about the purpose and importance of jewellery today.”**

Craig McIntosh **Memento mori (bolt)** 2009. Wood, paint, sterling silver, waxed cord. Reproduced courtesy of the artist

Body adornments were also frequently used to confer status or power upon the wearer. A necklace from the Cook Islands is a rare example with three ivory phallic pendants, four stools, one dog and one notched pendant all mounted on a sennit cord that includes closely plaited human hair. This chiefly necklace provided the wearer with everything he needed to communicate and heighten his status, fertility and wealth. Also worn by men to denote high rank, the acacia wood *rei miro* from Rapa Nui (Easter Island) shows signs of much wear. This crescent-shaped chest ornament with carved point-headed masks on each end would have been worn around the neck during rituals.

All of these historic objects are taonga, resonant with past genealogies and still associated today with living cultures. As talismans they attract and impart energy, magic and power. Undoubtedly personal and social, their meaning is accrued through use; they have important symbolic value and they communicate with the invisible and transcendental world. Through their place in the Museum's collections they help to provide greater understanding of cultural systems in the Pacific islands.

Julia de Ville **Widow's amulet (silver raven skull with black sapphires)** 2009. Sterling silver, black rhodium, black sapphires. Collection of the artist. Photograph by Terence Bogue

John Edgar **When the chips are down** (detail) 2009. Metabasalt, glass. Reproduced courtesy of the artist

Barry Clarke **Homage to Alfred Wallis, boat and chain** 2009. Silver and 18ct gold. Reproduced courtesy of the artist and Form Gallery

The twelve contemporary jewellers included in this exhibition have all approached the task of making new work with a respect for the historic role of the talisman and its intrinsic connection to jewellery. John Edgar's *When the chips are down* reflects a game of chance in the contemporary scenario of global financial crisis. Made from basalt and glass, the stacks of poker chips play with the fleeting and unfathomable aspects of destiny and luck. Three wooden pendants by Craig McIntosh, *Memento mori (bolt, bottle cap, toothbrush)*, each hand painted, are like remnants of a now lost contemporary western existence or reminders of how necessary (and beautiful) man-made utilitarian items are.

Barry Clarke's necklace, *Homage to Alfred Wallis, boat and chain*, is a tribute to Wallis—a fisherman and self-taught artist who lived and worked in St Ives during the 1920s and 1930s. Clarke himself is a self-taught jeweller who was once a seaman in the Merchant Navy and, with its abstracted silver and gold boat and expressive chain suggesting the movement of the sea, this necklace captures Clarke's connection with a kindred spirit from the past. *Widow's amulet* by Julia de Ville is a technically and conceptually exquisite piece of jewellery that delivers its symbolism through the carefully considered use of media. A cast-silver raven's skull is suggestive of the Celtic or pagan use of the raven as a conduit between the living and the dead, while protection is offered by the embedded black sapphires.

Like the best of sculptural practice, these objects reveal something of the artist while allowing the interaction between the maker and wearer or observer to remain open. The object becomes something other than the jeweller in an act of generosity that allows the individual to impart their own meaning. If these contemporary treasures—talismans made anew—are to be held, worn or carried in the future, their talismanic aura will be embodied by private ritual, something that was once a part of ancestral everyday life, but now seemingly lost in a contemporary society.

The contemporary New Zealand jewellers are: Barry Clarke, Peter Deckers, Julia de Ville, Jane Dodd, John Edgar, Jason Hall, Rangi Kipa, Craig McIntosh, Koji Miyazaki, Frances Stachl, Lisa Walker and Anna Ward.

Jennifer Hay
Assistant curator

***Talisman** is sponsored by Creative New Zealand and is in the Monica Richards Gallery from 5 December 2009 until 14 February 2010.*

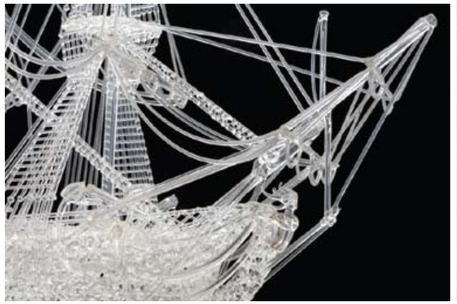
EVENTS

WEDNESDAY 20 JANUARY
Floortalk: Talisman
Exhibition curator Jennifer Hay discusses the twelve contemporary New Zealand jewellery artists who have created new works for **Talisman**. Canterbury Museum's Roger Fyfe highlights the inclusion of rare and important historic talismans from the Museum's oceanic collection.
6pm / Monica Richards Gallery / free
Sponsored by The Press

WEDNESDAY 27 JANUARY
The Hole, the Cap and the Claw: Contemporary Jewellery in Aotearoa
An illustrated talk by art historian and curator Dr Damian Skinner, who explores the history and practices of adornment in Aotearoa during the past forty years.
6pm / Philip Carter Family Auditorium /free
Sponsored by The Press

Canterbury Museum

outer spaces



Fiona Pardington
The prow of the Charlotte Jane 2009. Digital print. Reproduced courtesy of the artist

Silvana and Gabriella Mangano **if...so...then** 2006. Single channel video. Courtesy of the artists and Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne and Sydney

outer spaces

THERE'S BEEN A LOT OF action inside the building lately as **Brought to Light** has been brought to completion. But the big rehang of the Gallery's collection has also made its presence felt outside, with a brand-new work related to the show appearing—where better?—on the giant lightbox on Worcester Boulevard. This summer, as you head towards the Gallery from Cathedral Square, you'll see Fiona Pardington's work *The prow of the Charlotte Jane* (2009) floating towards you.

Pardington's special talent is for photographing objects in a way that makes them seem to glow with untold stories, and in this new work of hers the story is especially rich. In September 1850 more than 150 settlers left England for Canterbury, New Zealand, aboard the *Charlotte Jane*. A century later John Rowe, a Christchurch glass-blower and descendant of one of those passengers, recreated the ship as a scale model in glass. When this model was lost, Rowe made another, which now resides in the collection of Canterbury Museum. And this is where it was photographed by Pardington. Enlarged to billboard scale, Rowe's fine threads of glass become as thick and imposing as a real ship's rigging. But the velvety-black void in which it floats and the glow of the glass turn the *Charlotte Jane* into a ghost ship—an exquisite souvenir of colonial endeavour that also alludes to the precarious nature of all human voyages.

A second, gallery-scale photograph by Pardington of the *Charlotte Jane* has just been acquired for the collection, and is one of the works to be found at the very heart of **Brought to Light**. Pardington's works highlight the nautical imagery that threads its way through the collection rehang, from the bustle of boats in John Gibb's 1886 view of Lyttelton harbour, to the boat in bottle in Bill Hammond's *Living Large 6* (1995), to the creaking and swaying ships in Nathan Pohio's video work *Spectre echo landfall* (2007).

DOWNSTAIRS ON THE Twinset screens, we're breaking our one-work-a-month rule to make room for a three-month showing. But the number that matters here is not three but two. The three videos playing are made by Australian twins Gabriella and Silvana Mangano, and two-ness and twinning lie at the heart of each work they make. The first of the videos to be screened is also the work that brought the Manganos to renown in Australia. Called *if...so...then* (2006), it might be described as dance plus drawing times two. In a tight space, each sister reaches out to draw on a piece of paper behind the other: Gabriella's right arm over Silvana's left shoulder, Silvana's right over Gabriella's left. And so the double drawing grows, each twin yielding to or intruding on the other, giving and taking space, ducking down or moving aside, lost in the effort of mirroring. We think of drawing as the most distinctive kind of mark-making there is—the place an artist's personality is most directly declared, the physical trace of one person's thoughts. But the Manganos playfully unpick this idea by literally drawing together. And while their twinness is crucial to the video, what emerges is a broader meditation on the joys of the 'joint effort'—the way the richest creative outcomes emerge not in splendid isolation but through a push-and-pull with other humans. The Manganos' *if...so...then* is funny, tense, engrossing, complicated and beautifully simple. All you need, they suggest, is pen, paper and camera—and a little help from your double.

Justin Paton
Senior curator

Staff Profile
The Public Programmes Team

IMMERSE is Christchurch Art Gallery's invitation to 'sink yourself into art'. The Gallery's rebranded public programme contains a huge and diverse range of events for individuals and families alike—from lectures and artist-led floortalks to contemporary performance, music and dance. As well as one-off events, there are continuing features, such as the Cinema Classics, which profile great cinematic moments in history; the popular Conservation and Restoration series; and the International Showcase, which has featured subjects as diverse as Iranian new wave cinema, a modelled presentation on the history of the Kimono and the French-led Cartooning for Peace event.

The Gallery's Public Programmes team is Lana Coles (education and public programmes team leader) and Sarah Amazinnia (public programmes officer). Lana's background is in teaching and management, and Sarah previously ran the SPACE Contemporary Art Gallery in Christchurch. Together they have a wealth of experience in the organisation and delivery of complex and multi-faceted events programmes.

The two main threads of the programme are exhibition specific events, which aim to provide a deeper understanding of the art on show, often by taking unexpected tangents, and events and activities that provide insights into the wider world of art, be it local, national or international.

The programme aims to engage the audience on many different levels and in many different ways. Artist- or curator-led floortalks provide a human face for more challenging exhibitions, and the regular *Press* sponsored Wednesday night slots provide a social forum for discussions and presentations around the exhibitions programme. A glass of wine helps too.

Proposals for events can come from anywhere, and there are certainly some interesting ideas out there: many bees have emerged from unexpected bonnets. From the performer who sat in the foyer for two months, slowly sewing together the blue silk dress that transformed her into William Morris's wife Jane Burden, to the recent performance by Greek sound artist Ilios, which accompanied an image of a decapitated body at an accident scene with organ-massaging music capable of inducing diarrhoea or visions of ghosts. Challenging indeed. And for a moment of inspiration, how about the Starfish Heirloom fashion show inspired by Rita Angus's unique palette and interpretation of New Zealand landscape?

For Lana and Sarah each week brings a new highlight. Over the next six months these range from the events around the opening weekend of **Brought To Light** to a whole series of invited speakers on intriguing topics from around the world. So why not immerse yourself—it's sure to be a rewarding experience.

From left:
Sarah Amazinnia
and **Lana Coles**

PAGEWORK #5

ELLIOT COLLINS

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

Elliot Collins's practice is based on the observations of the human condition in all its many guises. As he says 'I seek sincerity in my practice that celebrates human qualities and failures and does not mock or debase them. I am interested in the value systems we place on experiences and the way we edit our lives.' Collins frequently uses text in his work—either 'found' in plays, poems and music or composed by the artist himself—which he carefully stencils onto intense colour fields in an attempt to beguile the viewer into an alternative way of thinking about painting. His paintings explore the visual and conceptual conundrums between success and failure, text and form, imagination and physical presence in a playful, self-deprecating way. *Untitled (To The Unknown Artist)* 2009 is intended as a homage to the late Julian Dashper. As Collins says: 'I was particularly interested in inserting text into the landscape. The poetics of the sign are rather clunky and not particularly romantic, but it addresses an Artist who is Unknown and gives little else—as in Dashper's work, the art happens elsewhere.'

Elliot Collins graduated with an MFA in painting from AUT University in 2007. He has exhibited throughout New Zealand, and was recently featured in the Gallery's **Cloud9** exhibition.

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

Over page:
Elliot Collins **Untitled (To The Unknown Artist)** 2009. Photograph. Courtesy of the artist and Tim Melville Gallery


TO THE
UNKNOWN
ARTIST.

Laurence Aberhart
Kamala and Charlotte in the grounds of the lodge, Tawera, Oxford 1981. Photograph. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, gifted by Laurence Aberhart 1982. Reproduced courtesy of the artist

My Favourite

David Kilgour

David Kilgour is a songwriter and musician based in Dunedin. His new solo album, a collaboration with Sam Hunt called Falling Debris *was launched in April 2009.* Mister Pop *by The Clean was released in August 2009.*

I've always been attracted to Laurence's photographs, and I've always enjoyed looking at them. I feel familiar with his images. Like I may have passed by there some time, or 'I must look for out that next time I'm through that way'. Perhaps some remind me of my childhood in rural New Zealand. With my parents and brother we lived on or near farms. Old churches, old paddocks, old earth. People carrying on. He gets New Zealand. We don't really know what that means yet but—like James K. Baxter, Peter Peryer, John Clarke, Hone Tuwhare, Vincent Ward, Flight of the Conchords etc.—he catches it. Is it important to 'get it'? Possibly not. These people probably aren't looking for 'it' anyway. As soon as you look you aren't looking anymore, right? It's the same with music—if I think about it too much it runs away from me. I reckon all great art is about people anyway, forget about these ideas with borders. A photograph can be as important as a manifesto for a better world. And it can just as easily be some paper to light a fire. This photograph reminds me of myself and where I live, for better and for worse. There can be a certain stillness in small rural towns and very much so out on the farms. I guess it's the ghost of MAN ALONE, but it can also be as uplifting as a stream to swim in on a hot black-and-white day a week out from Christmas. Good work Larry!

Awards successes

On 16 October the Gallery was delighted to note the three awards won by its partners in the annual BeST Design Awards. These awards are the national award programme of the Designers Institute of New Zealand, and recognise New Zealand's best graphic, product and spatial design. Base Two & Minty Architecture won a bronze award in the Spatial / Exhibition/Installation/Temporary Structures category for the design of the Gallery's **Miles: a life in architecture** exhibition. The Gallery's partner Strategy Design & Advertising won a bronze award in the Graphic / Identity Development (small scale) category for their work on the Gallery's recent identity refresh, and a silver award in the Graphic / Editorial and Books category for *Bulletin*, issues *B.155*, *B.156* and *B.157*.

Neil Pardington **Film Archive #4, The New Zealand Film Archive Ngā Kaitiaki o Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua** 2006. Lambda / C-print. Reproduced courtesy Suite, Wellington

Australasian Registrars' Committee Conference 2010 to be held at the Gallery

Fundamentals Now: collection ownership, access and care

In an environment of increasing scrutiny about the provenance and ownership of museum collections, when behind-the-scenes activity of the museum is being brought increasingly into the public realm, getting the fundamentals of collection ownership, access and duty of care is a high priority.

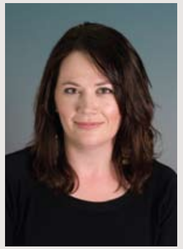
This conference aims to identify some of the issues currently facing those responsible for managing public collections. Expect some frank and pragmatic discussion from a range of national and international speakers. Confirmed speakers to date include arts law expert Norman Palmer and Gallery director Jenny Harper along with a host of Australian and New Zealand registrars, industry professionals, art lawyers and insurance specialists.

25–6 February / Philip Carter Family Auditorium / for more information visit www.registrars.org.au

Art loans and immunity from seizure

Across the world there is a mounting demand from lenders and museums for the introduction of anti-seizure legislation, by which museums are granted immunity from legal claims to recover cultural objects held for temporary exhibition or similar purposes. Many countries have now passed such legislation and urgent questions are being asked as to whether others should follow suit. This preliminary event to the Australasian Registrars' Committee Conference will seek to inform the debate by examining the role and function of immunity statutes, the various models that countries have adopted, the perils and pitfalls involved, and the legal, ethical and professional arguments for and against their adoption. The convenor is Professor Norman Palmer, a leading cultural property lawyer. Being designed as a practical introduction to the subject, the seminar will assume no previous legal knowledge.

Held in conjunction with the ARC Conference / 24 February / Philip Carter Family Auditorium / www.registrars.org.au



New staff at the Gallery

The Gallery was pleased to welcome a number of new staff to the team over the preceding quarter. John Collie is the Gallery's new photographer, and joins us from Auckland University. Kirsty Mathieson joins us from Telecom, and will fill the role of administration and business support leader, and Rachelle Stroud joins us from Harcourts International as our new reception and administration assistant.

Art For Families School Holidays

SUMMER SAND ART FUN

5–23 January / weekdays only
Transform sand into colourful works of art by creating your own super summer sand picture to take home. Wear old clothes. Materials supplied.
Two sessions:
10–11.30am
1–2.30pm
Education Centre / $5 / bookings tel (03) 941 7382

EXPLORE AND DRAW

27 December – 24 January
Explore the new collection exhibition **Brought to Light** with this fun activity. Enter the draw to win a set of art materials.
10am–4pm / collect from the front desk / free

OH BABY, IT'S ART

Free guided tours for parents with babies. Buggies welcome. First Thursday of the month, excluding January.
9.30–10.15am / enquiries tel: (03) 941 7347

Waitangi Day

The whole family can enjoy our fun and free line-up of live music, performance and film. See our website for full programme details. www.christchurchartgallery.org.nz
6 February

Conservation and Restoration: restoring *Jacksons, Otira*

An evening of microscopes and the occasional storm. Join conservator Edward Sakowski and curator Peter Vangioni as they take a close look at Petrus van der Velden's oil painting *Jacksons, Otira*, which recently underwent extensive conservation treatment.

10 February / 6pm / Philip Carter Family Auditorium / free
Sponsored by The Press

A conversation about New Zealand photography

Christchurch-based photographers Margaret Dawson and Paul Johns join Paul McNamara, of Wanganui's McNamara Gallery Photography, to discuss contemporary photographic practice in New Zealand.

24 February / 6pm / Philip Carter Family Auditorium / free
Sponsored by The Press

Pleasure and play: popular art in Edo, Japan

Richard Bullen discusses art from Japan's Edo period, 1615–1867. Despite its popularity and mass-produced nature, the art of Japan's Floating World is surprisingly complex, full of references and associations to the country's cultural past.
9 December / 6pm / Philip Carter Family Auditorium / free
Sponsored by The Press

Toyokuni III (Kunisada I) **Autumn Moon at Genji's Villa** (detail) 1854. Collection of Canterbury Museum, 1939.118.6 Joseph Kinsey Collection

Open 10am—5pm daily
Late night every Wednesday
until 9pm. Admission free.

CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY
TE PUNA O WAIWHETU
Cnr Worcester Boulevard and
Montreal Street, PO Box 2626,
Christchurch 8140, New Zealand
Tel: (+64 3) 941 7300
Fax: (+64 3) 941 7301
www.christchurchartgallery.org.nz
Email: info@christchurchartgallery.org.nz

GALLERY SHOP
Tel: (+64 3) 941 7370

FORM GALLERY
Tel: (+64 3) 377 1211

ALCHEMY CAFÉ & WINE BAR
Tel: (+64 3) 941 7311

EDUCATION BOOKING LINE
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ART GALLERY CARPARK
Tel: (+64 3) 941 7350

FRIENDS OF CHRISTCHURCH
ART GALLERY
Tel: (+64 3) 941 7356

CHRISTCHURCH ART
GALLERY TRUST
Tel: (+64 3) 353 4352

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