BULLETIN 131 OF THE CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY - TE PUNA O WAIWHETU SUMMER special edition 2002 - 2003

TE PUNA O WAI HIDISTCHILLIN ARTGALLEN



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#### TE PUNA O WAIWHETU

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## **BULLETIN 131 OF THE** CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY TE PUNA O WAIWHETU

summer special edition december 2002 – february 2003

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Cover Photography: Diederik VanHeyningen

Please Note: The opinions put forward in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu.



WELCOME TO THIS VERY SPECIAL EDITION OF THE BULLETIN, WHICH HAS BEEN DESIGNED AS A CELEBRATION OF THE NEW GALLERY PROJECT.

The many arguments over many years for a new Gallery were underpinned by the fact that the McDougall building was compromised in terms of public facilities even before it opened – it had no public toilets, auditorium or café and inadequate exhibition and educational spaces. The adjudicators chose not to anticipate future needs and there was already a shortage of exhibition and storage space acknowledged in 1940, (only eight years after opening).

In the 1920's when the former Gallery was designed, the importance of educational activities and the educational role of museums in the community was already internationally acknowledged, but there were no spaces dedicated for these needs, nor for the movement of works of art, either for loans or temporary exhibitions.

In effect, the building was a compromised design for a static collection on permanent display and that critical physical restraint remained for seventy years.

For twenty eight years and through the terms of eight different City Councils, the inadequacies of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery as an art museum facility were communicated vigorously by numerous reports prepared by four directors, many Council officers and national and international museum consultants.

Right: Tony Preston. Director, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu. Photography: Diederik VanHeyningen





Left: Graphic impression of what the interior of the new Gallery will look like.

Below: The glass sculpture wall still under construction.



Recognition of the need for a new Christchurch Art Gallery has undergone much media coverage and community debate since 1969, when an international museum consultant, invited by the Council, recommended a new building as a matter of urgency! He considered that the permanent collections, and their role and function, were housed in an aging, cramped and awkwardly placed facility that was neither in keeping with the aspirations of the City, nor adequately reflective of the strength of cultural life in Christchurch.

As local residents will attest, work on the site is rapidly approaching completion, and in this issue we have taken the opportunity to familiarise our readers further afield with several significant features of the new building. With the growth of our physical presence in the heart of the City's cultural precinct, we have also been involved in the development of a distinct visual identity for Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu. This has been created with the expertise and support of the Christchurch-based firm Strategy Advertising and Design who, as Gold Corporate Sponsors of the Gallery are familiar to our readers through their national and international award-winning work with our Bulletin. We are delighted to be able to include an article in this issue on the identity project, from the design of a distinctive Christchurch Art Gallery font to the development of branding for our publications, signage, advertising and merchandise.

As we begin to occupy the new building and make preparations for our public opening next May, it seems appropriate to acknowledge those who have helped us on our way. Particularly deserving of recognition are those who have contributed to our ongoing fundraising efforts, raising the spectacular amount of over \$14.84 million thus far! For this reason, our regular fundraising report includes a special feature on Monica Richards, without whose bequest the new Gallery may have remained a distant dream.

On the eve of occupation, it is also timely to reflect again upon the reasons for a new, purpose-built Gallery to replace the elegant, but increasingly inadequate Robert McDougall Art Gallery.



Until it closed on 16 June 2001, the Robert McDougall Art Gallery attracted the highest public art museum attendance in the country, yet was able to show only a fraction of our permanent collection, with the vast majority confined to storage. In addition, the storage areas had reached capacity for safely housing new acquisitions and were especially problematic for storing large sculptures.

In comparison, the new Gallery combines far greater exhibition spaces with larger and much improved storage facilities, allowing us to keep more works on display and add to the Collection, as appropriate. Large touring galleries on the ground floor will accommodate significant overseas exhibitions, especially trans-Tasman shows on the touring circuit - the new Gallery will allow us to show the community and our visitors some of the best and most exciting exhibitions on offer. Complementing these larger spaces, the William A. Sutton Gallery and the Ravenscar Gallery will present temporary exhibitions of art from Canterbury and New Zealand.

On the first floor, the Permanent Collection galleries will present historical and contemporary works by local, national and international artists, with a particular emphasis on the development of Canterbury art. In addition, the Monica Richards Gallery and the Burdon Family Gallery for Works on Paper will provide the opportunity to mount focused shows from our Collection. Also upstairs, the Tait Electronics Antarctica Gallery celebrates Christchurch's important role as "Gateway to the Ice", featuring regularly changing exhibitions inspired by the Antarctic regions.



Above: Ruth, Undated. Raymond McIntyre. Oil on panel. Collection: Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu. Presented by the Mcintyre Family, 1938.

op: The atrium of the Robert McDougall Gallery.

"THE OPPORTUNITY TO INTEGRATE INTERIOR SPACES WITH A SCULPTURE GARDEN AND PARK EXTERIORS IS SOMETHING THAT WILL BE UNIQUE TO CHRISTCHURCH."



#### ANOUTDOORGALLERY

An especially exciting feature of the new Gallery is The Community Trust Sculpture Garden. This area, combining landscaped garden areas with open paving, occupies nearly 40% of the Gallery site. On opening day, sculptures by internationally admired artists (*Nikau*, by Chris Booth, *Target* - a kinetic work by Randall Watson- and Graham Bennett's monumental *Reasons for Voyaging*) will already be in place, with room for further temporary and commissioned works in the future. We also intend that these spaces will become sites for performances and community events. The opportunity to integrate interior spaces with a sculpture garden and park exteriors is something that will be unique to Christchurch.

# REFERENCE LIBRARY, ARCHIVES & PHOTOGRAPHIC STUDIO

The Robert and Barbara Stewart Reference and Study Library will store art-related books, journals, archival documents, art catalogues and electronic material and will be open by appointment, making it a key educational resource for art scholars. Behind the scenes, the Margaret Austin Photographic Studio is specially designated for the digitisation and photographic recording of the Collection.

Above left: Nikau, 1995. Chris Booth. Stone. Christchurch City Council Art in Public Places Collectio

#### LEARNING ABOUT ART

The new 180 seat Philip Carter Family Auditorium will be a prime resource for public programmes and a venue for experimental film, video and multi-media presentations, as well as the many activities of the Friends of the Gallery. The constrained circumstances under which the former Gallery tried to support exhibitions with lectures, seminars and study days will change dramatically with the new building's purpose-built facilities. In addition, the specially designed Sir Neil and Lady Isaac Education Centre will enable us to offer valuable creative workshops, with an emphasis on practical, hands-on activities.

#### LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

The city's unique cultural precinct is a compelling reason for our many visitors to enhance and extend their experience of Canterbury. The new Gallery's location means that other key attractions, such as the Canterbury Museum, the Christchurch Botanic Gardens and the Christchurch Arts Centre all remain within easy strolling distance from the Gallery, as are a wide variety of theatres, restaurants, boutique stores and cafes. The Gallery itself will house a bistro, a more casual café and exciting merchandising outlets, with convenient parking beneath the building. Below: Rain in the Paradise Garden. 1979. Leo Bensemann. Oil on hardboard. Collection: Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu Purchased with assistance from a group of Canterbury artists, 1991.





Above: New Art Gallery Montreal Street: West Elevation



Above: New Art Gallery Worcester Boulevard: South Elevation

# THE HISTORY OF THE

The site in which the new Christchurch Art Gallery is being built has many stories to tell. Here are a number of interesting insights which give the section its colourful history.

## 1000 - 1850

The earliest occupants of inner Christchurch west of the Avon River were Māori. Puari was the name of an early Waitaha settlement that stretched from the banks of Otakaro (Avon River) at Victoria Square out to Bealey Avenue in the years between 1000 and 1500. The loop in the river that encompassed the site was an important mahinga kai (food gathering area). At its height the pa would have been home to about 800 Waitaha people. Many areas in this vicinity were used as urupa, or places of burial. Following the Waitaha tribes were Ngati Mamoe (end of the seventeenth century) and Ngai Tahu (end of the eighteenth century).

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Pictorial Collections, Canterbury Museum.

# GALLERY SITE

# 1871

In 1871, two town sections on the corner of Montreal and Gloucester Streets were acquired by George and Sibella Ross as the site for their Preparatory Boy's Day and Boarding School. The two storey corrugated iron house with its distinctive three storey tower became known variously as the 'tin house', the 'tin castle' and the 'tin prison'. After the closure of the school in 1877, the property was purchased by Canterbury College as a potential site for a new art school. This development never came to pass, due to the Depression, the Second World War and finally the decision to move the University out of the central city to Ilam.



Above: Mrs Ross' School, Montreal Street, October 1872. Dr A.C. Barker Photograph Canterbury Museum.

## 1883

The Reverend Charles Turrell, (1828 – 1906) who established a boarding school for boys on the site in 1883. It closed shortly after his retirement in 1890.



Rev. C. M. Turrell Canterbury Museum. Ironically, the first melody they had ever played in Christchurch was "On earth peace and goodwill to all men".



# 1892

Frederick Strouts, an Englishborn architect who arrived in Canterbury in 1859 and purchased a family home at 58 Gloucester Street in 1892. Strouts was important to the development of professional architecture in Christchurch and, with Alexander Lean, B.W. Mountfort and W.E. Armson formed the Canterbury Society of Architects in 1872.



Left: Frederick Strouts. Courtesy of Canterbury Museum

## 1870s - 1918

A German church was erected on the site in the early 1870s, with a peal of bells that had been presented by the German Government. The bells were (wrongly) said to have been cast from French gunmetal captured during the Franco-Prussian war. Following the outbreak of war with Germany in 1914, the church was confiscated by the New Zealand Government and in 1918 the bells were removed with ministerial blessing in the name of cultural sensitivity' and ceremonially broken up at a local foundry. Ironically, the first melody they had ever played in Christchurch was "On earth peace and goodwill to all men".



Above: The breaking up of the German Church bells in W.H. Price & Sons yard in 1918. Weekly Press photograph, 14 August 1918, p.32 Canterbury Museum.

Top: Deutsche Kirche (German Church) Christchurch, c. 1895. F. Bradley & Co. Photograph. Canterbury Museum

## 1901

Several individual residences also occupied the new Gallery site, one of the most notable of which was Mrs Ann J (Jennie) Tipler. Mrs Tipler was highly regarded as a mezzo-soprano and a teacher of singing and voice production. She and her second husband Walter moved into a house at 49 Worcester Street in 1901, where she quickly attracted an extensive circle of pupils. Mrs Tipler was also in demand as a performer in light opera and a review in *The Press* of 1895 claimed that the great charm of her singing was "the ease with which she gets all the effects".



Left: A. J. Tipler. Courtesy of Canterbury Museum.



1945

After it became clear the site would not be used for an Art School the Minister of Education instructed the University Council to hand over the property for other education uses. The rough ground was levelled and asphalted to create a tennis court for the students of Christchurch Girls' High School. As the historian T. E. Carter wrote in 1973: "in terms of real estate they were the most expensive as well as the most ugly tennis courts in Christchurch".



The Art Gallery site in 1955. Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu archives.

## 1912

In 1912, the eastern section of the Gallery site facing Worcester Boulevard was purchased by Dexter & Crozier Ltd and cleared to make way for their new show room and motor garage. The company had become the New Zealand agents for Cadillac in the early 1900s and within two years were able to advertise that there were more Cadillacs in New Zealand than any other make of car. In 1915, the company imported the first V type 8 cylinder vehicles and two years later they brought in the Cletrac – the first caterpillar farm tractor to arrive in New Zealand.



David Crozier Limited, Worcester Street c. 1955. Courtesy of D. N. Nicholls.

## 2002

In early 2002, the Māori name Te Puna o Waiwhetu was formally gifted to the Christchurch Art Gallery by Dr Te Maire Tau, Chair of Nga Tuahuriru Runanga. The name 'Te Puna' honours the Waipuna, or artesian wellspring on the Gallery site, while 'Waiwhetu' refers to one of the nearby tributaries of the Otakaro (Avon) River and can be literally translated as 'water in which stars are reflected'.



## "THIS SUPERB NEW FACILITY REPRESENTS THE MOST REMARKABLE VALUE FOR THE CULTURAL DOLLAR IN NEW ZEALAND..."

Tony Preston - Director, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu



"THE DESIGN WILL MAKE A STUNNING CONTRIBUTION TO THE CITY'S ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE, AND WILL CERTAINLY RANK AS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT MODERN PUBLIC BUILDINGS IN NEW ZEALAND."

Mayor Garry Moore – Christchurch City Council Media Statement, 5 Jan 1999

"OVER THE PAST ALMOST QUARTER OF A CENTURY AT THE GALLERY THERE HAVE BEEN MANY OCCASIONS WHEN I DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THERE WOULD BE A NEW GALLERY BUILT DURING MY LIFETIME."

Neil Roberts - Collections Manager and Senior Curator, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu



Photography: Hedwig Photography

"I'VE WATCHED THE MOSAIC OF GLASS TILES ON THE SCULPTURE WALL GROW DAILY. TO ME EACH NEW ONE REPRESENTS A NEW OPPORTUNITY THAT WILL BE AVAILABLE WITHIN THE NEW BUILDING. WHAT A STUNNING PROSPECT!"

Marianne Hargreaves - President Friends of the Gallery

## Christchurch Art Gallery Ground Level



## Christchurch Art Gallery Level One



#### Christchurch Art Gallery Level Two



#### Ground Level

- A National & International Travelling Exhibition Galleries
- B William A. Sutton Gallery for Travelling Temporary Exhibitions.
- C Ravenscar Gallery for New Zealand Temporary Exhibitions.
- D Philip Carter Family Auditorium
- E Sir Neil & Lady Isaac Education Centre
- F Cafe and Restaurant
- G Retail Outlet
- H Work areas for Gallery Staff
- 3 Community Trust Sculpture Garden
- J Gallery Shop

## Level One

- A New Zealand Permanent Collections Galleries
- B Gabrielle Tasman Lounge
- C Dame Louise Henderson Gallery for Canterbury Art from the Permanent Collections
- D Tait Electronics Antarctica Gallery
- E Monica Richards Gallery for New Zealand Temporary Exhibitions
- F Burdon Family Gallery for New Zealand Works on Paper
- G International Works on Paper
- H Robert & Barbara Stewart Reference Library
- I Collection Storage
- J Administration & Staff Rooms
- K Adriaan Tasman Boardroom

#### Level Two

- A Exhibition Design
- B Margaret Austin Photography Studio
- C Collection Storage
- D Laboratories for exhibition preparation and conservation

## 1 Sculpture Wall

The undulating glass façade was designed by Architect David Cole to suggest the winding path the Avon River takes through Christchurch. It is comprised of 2,184 individual panels of mica-impregnated glass.



## 3 Sculpture Garden

Occupying just over a third of the site, this garden provides a tranquil landscaped setting for sculptures and outdoor performances.



### 2 Grand Staircase

One of the more dramatic interior features of the building, the Grand Staircase leads visitors up to the Permanent Collection areas on the first floor. Ernest George Gillick's bronze sculpture Ex Tenebris Lux (1937) is located at the top of the stairs.



Left: Ex Tenebris Lux. 1934. Ernest Gillick. Bronze. Collection: Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu. Presented by R. E. McDougall.

#### 4 Reasons for Voyaging

Created by Canterbury artist Graham Bennett, this monumental entrance sculpture was specially commissioned by the Christchurch City Council as an integrated part of the building and is designed to create a welcoming path towards the Gallery.



Far left: **Nikau.** 1995. Chris Booth. Stone. Christchurch City Council Art in Public Places Collection

Left & Middle: Images from Bennett workshop. 2001, Brendan Lee.

#### A Permanent Collection

The Permanent Collection Galleries contain a selection of historical, twentieth century and contemporary works, with a special focus on the history of art in Canterbury. An audioguide tour will be available for a modest fee.







Left: Skittle. 1994. Margaret Dawson. Mixed media. Collection: Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu. Purchased 1995. Reproduced courtesy of the artist.

Middle: Nor'western Sky. Undated. Petrus van der Velden. Oil on canvas. Collection: Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu. Purchased 1995. Presented by Miss Van Asch. 1938.

Far Left: Summer Morn. 1929. Evelyn Page. Oil on canvas. Collection: Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu. E. Rosa Sawtell Bequest. "IN MY VIEW, THE GALLERY'S COLLECTION AND STANDARD OF DISPLAY IS SIMPLY OUTSTANDING AND A NATIONAL TREASURE. THE NEW GALLERY BUILDING WILL PROVIDE A STATE OF THE ART FACILITY TO ACCOMMODATE, CARE FOR AND PRESENT THE CITY'S COLLECTIONS AS WELL AS EXHIBITIONS FROM AROUND NEW ZEALAND AND OVERSEAS."

Hon. Helen Clark - Prime Minister of New Zealand - Prime Ministerial Press Release, 18 May 2000

## "CERTAINLY DIFFERENT! WILL BRING PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD TO GAZE WITH WONDERMENT."

New Gallery Display Visitors Book

#### A FEW STATISTICS...

OVER 5,500 ARTWORKS WILL BE HOUSED IN THE GALLERY. 1,000 PAIRS OF WHITE COTTON GLOVES PER YEAR - AN EXTRA 500 HAVE BEEN ORDERED [THEY WON'T BE WHITE BY THE END OF THE MOVE!]. 50,000 METRES OF BUBBLE WRAP WILL BE USED. A CRANE HAD TO BE HIRED SO ONE OF THE BRONZE SCULPTURES COULD BE WEIGHED. 18,000 SCHOOL CHILDREN ARE EXPECTED TO COME TO THE NEW GALLERY EACH YEAR FOR CLASSES. WE ANTICIPATE 14,000 PRE-BOOKED PUBLIC PROGRAMME ATTENDEES.









## "IT'S GOING TO BE A BEAUTY. ALL THE ARGUMENTS PUT FORWARD FOR A NEW GALLERY HAVE PREVAILED. AFTER MANY, MANY YEARS, NEXT YEAR'S OPENING CEREMONY WILL BE AN EMOTIONAL EVENT."

John Coley – Former Director – Robert McDougall Art Gallery – The Press, 27 April 2002

### "I BELIEVE IT WILL OFFER ONE OF THE BEST GALLERY EXPERIENCES IN AUSTRALASIA."

Hubert Klaassens - Manager of Public Programmes, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu



Photography: Hedwig Photography

APPROXIMATELY 2,000 SCREWS WILL BE USED IN HANGING THE WORKS IN THE NEW GALLERY. ONE LARGE FRAME WAS IN SUCH A SORRY STATE IT TOOK A WHOLE YEAR TO RESTORE. 130 SHEETS OF PLYWOOD, 240 METRES OF PINE, 16 LITRES OF GLUE, 120 METRES OF INSULATING FOIL IS USED IN CRATE MAKING. 500 LABELS RESEARCHED AND WRITTEN. 10 EXHIBITIONS BEING PLANNED AT ONCE AND UP TO 18 MONTHS IN ADVANCE.



An identity is not just a visual device or a 'mark' (often called a logo), a single colour or one element of a graphic style. A true identity is much more...

# TE PUNA O WAIWHETU CHRISTCHURCH ARTGALLERY



Christchurch Gallery Font designed by Jeremy Tankard in conjunction with Strategy Advertising & Design

A visual identity is the public expression of the characteristics to be conveyed. It is the epitome of a personality and a type of shorthand for a set of values. It brands and distinguishes one organisation or product or service from another. It communicates and describes. And, when done well, it excites and motivates.

The identity for the new Christchurch Art Gallery has been a challenge because of the careful balance that needs to be struck between the Gallery itself having its own image, being a strongly recognised local landmark, while needing to also play a secondary and supportive role to the actual work it houses and exhibits.

The Gallery identity has to be able to sit alongside any of a wide variety of styles of art, from the traditional to the outlandish, from the subtle to bold and colourful... but never overpowering the work with its own 'branding'.

Yet, by the same token, the Christchurch Art Gallery still requires a strong identity befitting a project of this size and scope, so it doesn't merely fade into the landscape without a personality of its own.

This task has been one of finding a style for the Christchurch Art Gallery that would portray the best aspects of the Gallery, would welcome and invite locals and visitors with its look, would appear both professional yet creatively-focussed in its approach – and that would be instantly recognisable and memorable.

To achieve this a different approach was taken to that of many visual identities. Where a lot of organizations have a symbol and rendering of their name combined into a standard'logotype', this was felt to be too restricting and conventional.

As part of a successful ongoing sponsorship, Strategy Advertising & Design began working on a complete visual wardrobe for the Christchurch Art Gallery over two years ago. "When we started looking at the requirements, we realised we needed to broaden our thinking," says Guy Pask, Strategy Creative Director and Partner," The best simile that we could come up with was that our branding elements had to be the equivalent of a well cut suit - one that you could 'wear with anything'. So you could effectively dress it up with a white shirt and tie for formal occasions or dress it down for a casual look. In the widest sense, that's what the identity has to do. It has to sit beside historic oil paintings one moment and a vibrantly coloured, modern, sculpture the next. That's a huge ask of a single graphic element and almost impossible to achieve with a symbol or visual device." So, after much discussion and workshopping, the breakthrough decision was made to base the new identity for the Christchurch Art Gallery around a specifically designed typeface.



"THE COLOURS CHOSEN FOR THE IDENTITY ARE RED, DARK GREY & WHITE. THEY ECHO CANTERBURY'S PROUD COLOURS & ARE SIGNIFICANT COLOURS IN THE WORLD OF THE MAORI. THEY ALSO CORRESPOND WITH THE INTERIOR OF THE BUILDING, WHERE THE SAME POHUTOKAWA RED IS USED ON THE WALLS." This opened up a huge breadth of opportunities for use in and around the Gallery itself, while offering a neat solution to the restrictions that existed. In itself it is a bold and innovative move, reflecting the style of the new Gallery. This is the first time that such a typeface has been used as the anchor for an identity of this size. Of course, it couldn't just be any typeface because so much was reliant upon it and expected as a result.

Strategy Advertising & Design arranged a collaboration with London-based Jeremy Tankard, who is one of the most respected type-designers in the world.

Taking references from sources as disparate as Maori carvings and celtic symbols, old English letterforms and the initial sketches of the Art Gallery building itself, the outline of an exclusive typeface began to take shape.

One of the things that is the most special about this typeface is that it has what are called "alternate characters". Instead of just one version of a letter there are often several. Some combinations of letters have a variety of options too. This means that in its most conservative version, the typeface is sophisticated and modern, yet with a few letter changes it soon takes on an added twist and becomes playful, fun and creative.

This is essential if the Christchurch Art Gallery font is to be used on official invitations to the Governor General or Prime Minister one day, solidify the impression of a major art gallery dealing with international exhibitions worth millions of dollars the next, and still be able to catch the eye and make an impression with a street poster, or educational items for young children.

Beyond the expression of the name of the Art Gallery there is a huge range of uses for the typeface. The individual letters themselves have also been used to create a series of 'patterns' which will be used on wrapping papers, greeting cards, posters, as background textures and as the endpapers of some of the Gallery's own books.

It is a style that will be seen everywhere and become distinctive as that of the new Christchurch Art Gallery.

#### TE PUNA O WAIWHETU CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY

Literally hundreds of variations of the Christchurch Art Gallery name were tried before the final rendering was chosen. It is a happy combination of curves and corners, quite serious at first glance but a little quirky on the second look. The curve of the 'R' mirrors the shape of the sculpture wall, while the double 'L' is reminiscent of a picture frame.









Developmental drawings by Jeremy Tankard for the gallery typeface

Jeremy Tankard is based in London creating typographic design for a wide range of creative disciplines including advertising, corporate, graphic, publishing, television, digital, signage, environmental and architecture. Jeremy has worked with many companies around the world, coordinating, consulting and creating typographic images. He believes that the myriad qualities of typography are becoming more important as companies diversify across the increasing technologies.

He has designed several typefaces for FontShop International, Agfa Monotype and Adobe.

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Looking back on the fundraising campaign

# The Monica Richards Bequest



Monica Richards. Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu archives. Reproduced courtesy of the Richards family. The path to the new Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu has been paved with the exceptional generosity of many public and private donors. The first major contribution towards the new building fund was the Monica Richards Bequest of 1988. Senior Curator Neil Roberts describes how this exceptional gift came to fruition...

Early in 1984 I took a call from Monica Richards who remarked that she was making a new will and was seeking advice on how she should word a clause concerning a bequest to the Gallery. The conversation went something like this...

"It will not be a large bequest," she said, "but I would like to know how it might be used as it will not be for the purchase of art works."

"Well", I said, "a bequest to the Gallery could be used for a number of things, but the new Art Gallery is my personal suggestion."

"Do you think one will be built?"

"Yes", I replied, "but it may be some years away, perhaps not in your lifetime or mine, but one day there will be a new Gallery and your bequest could form the nucleus for future fund-raising".

"I like the idea of a new Gallery, it is better than extending into the Botanic Gardens, I do not agree with that" she said. The idea of contributing towards the new Gallery appealed to her and when we ended the conversation I was confident that she had accepted my suggestion. However, a week or so later she rang me again, this time quite perplexed. She told me that following our conversation she had been advised by a prominent Christchurch citizen to seek further advice from Christchurch City Council management about the idea, as a new art gallery was 'not a reality in the foreseeable future'. City Council management had endorsed this view, advising her that "the McDougall is always in need of additional funds and an unspecified bequest would be useful for them to have". "...one day there will be a new Gallery and your bequest could form the nucleus for future fund-raising".

"What do I do?" she said, "I would like Christchurch to have a new Gallery but if I left it as a general bequest what would it be used for?"

"Anything from furniture in the staff room to overseas travel costs," I replied. I must say I did my level best to discourage her from this course of action.

"But if I left it as a bequest for a new gallery how could I be certain that it would be used just for this purpose?"

I suggested that she discuss the matter further with her solicitor and stress that this bequest was for one purpose only – a new Art Gallery for Christchurch.

I did not hear from Monica Richards after that, although when John Coley (the then Director) returned from leave I told him of our conversation and he subsequently met with her. I never knew whether or not she had taken the advice I had given but I had hopes. Occasionally I would run across Monica when she would come in for Friends Coffee Morning functions and she would ask: any hope of a new gallery yet? Unfortunately I was never able to meet this with a positive reply because in the mid 1980s a new art gallery was not a Council priority.

On 15 February, 1988, Monica Richards died and soon afterwards her solicitors advised the Council that in the terms of her Will a share of the residue of her estate in stock and share investment was to be paid to the Christchurch City Council to be used to 'found a building fund for a new art gallery for the city of Christchurch'. The Will specifically required that the funds had to be retained as an investment until a commitment to a new gallery was made. The investment stock comprised 15 parcels of Australian shares at a value of \$268,527 and 9 parcels of New Zealand shares valued at \$91,821. The complete portfolio totalled \$360,348. By 1995 the value had risen to \$663,000 and today is close to \$1,000,000

Who, then, was Monica Richards? She was born in the Waikao Downs near Waimate in 1904 and graduated from Canterbury College with a Master of Arts degree. In 1931, she joined the Canterbury Branch of the NZ Federation of University Women. Monica Richards furthered her studies at the Sorbonne in Paris and later taught at a boarding school nearby in the 1930s. On her return to New Zealand she taught at secondary schools in Ashburton, Christchurch and Napier, retiring from teaching in 1968. Monica Richards was a member of the Christchurch Botanical Society, the Dante Society and took part in teaching courses at the WEA and the University of Canterbury Department of Extension Studies. As well as being a long-time supporter of the Gallery she was also a keen supporter of Canterbury Museum.

Monica Richards should be commended for the courage and the faith she had in the prospect of a new gallery for Christchurch. As a result, she has the distinction of not only being the first donor but the most significant major donor on value for the new gallery. In acknowledgment of this, a gallery on the first floor, intended for the display of focused exhibitions from the Collection, has been named after her.

NEIL ROBERTS

Update on the fundraising campaign

Congratulations go to all members of the Community Gifts Fundraising Committee who have raised over \$1 million, more than double their original target! This staggering amount has been the culmination of four years of enterprising projects, serious networking, sheer hard work, and a lot of fun. Hilary Langer, Chair, said that she was relieved that her task is nearly over, but that she has thoroughly enjoyed the challenge and has met many delightful people along the way.



You still have the chance to see your name, or the name of a loved one, inscribed on one of the new Gallery Auditorium chairs. The Auditorium will be one of the Gallery's busiest spaces, with lectures, exhibition-related events, films, shows and Friends' activities, seven days a week. Just \$750 will secure your chair. Telephone for a leaflet on 326 5768 or collect one from the Art Gallery Information Pavilion in the Botanic Gardens.



#### Fundraising Event for the Christchurch Art Gallery and the Centre of Contemporary Art.

Thursday 20 February 2003 6.00pm.

Centre of Contemporary Art 66 Gloucester Street.

As the opening of the Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu approaches, the Centre of Contemporary Art and the Community Gifts Fundraising Committee are pleased to announce a unique fundraising event.

An auction is to be held at the Centre of Contemporary Art 20 February 2003 with 50 art works of quality by leading New Zealand artists are to be placed under the hammer alongside prizes encompassing:

- tickets for dining at the Gallery's café/bistro;
- a special tour of the new Gallery with director Tony Preston;
- admission to an exclusive black tie function with selected guests the evening prior to the opening of the Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu.

All funds raised will contribute to the education programme at the Christchurch Art Gallery, and a lift for the Centre of Contemporary Art allowing access to all levels of the building for the whole community.

Left: Construction view, New Gallery 2002.

Update on the fundraising campaign

#### **The Community Trust Grant**

Even after Monica Richards' major contribution to the new Art Gallery project, the Christchurch City Council still did not have agreement on a suitable site, with several existing buildings being considered, as was the proposal to construct a new building in Hagley Park. Crucially, in 1996, the Trust Bank Community Trust (now the Community Trust) made a substantial grant to allow the City Council to purchase the former Sheraton site, a prime 7796 sq m location in the central city. The Trust donated \$3.8 million dollars towards the total purchase price of \$9.5 million, a magnificent gift that also included the provision for a Sculpture Garden on the site.

#### **Naming Rights**

Several Gallery spaces have been named after private and corporate donors in recognition of their generosity. These include:

William A. Sutton Gallery, Ravenscar Gallery, Dame Louise Henderson Gallery, Tait Electronics Antarctica Gallery, Burdon Family Gallery, Monica Richards Gallery, Robert & Barbara Stewart Reference Library, Philip Carter Family Auditorium, Sir Neil and Lady Isaac Education Centre, Margaret Austin Photography Studio, Gabrielle Tasman Lounge, Adriaan Tasman Boardroom.

# We acknowledge with great gratitude the generosity of the following supporters:

In the category of Gold Foundation Donor Keath Lee & Sandy Liao

In the category of Foundation Donor Kim Acland Roger & Helen Ballantyne Canterbury Branch, N.Z. Federation of Graduate Women Dalenex Ltd P. J. Davies Marianne & Guy Hargreaves Valerie Heinz The Hercus Family Paul & Mary Jo Murphy Jill & Graham Nuthall Helen & Peter Wily



Right: Construction views, New Gallery 2002.

Construction Progress Timelapse November 2000 – September 2002





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