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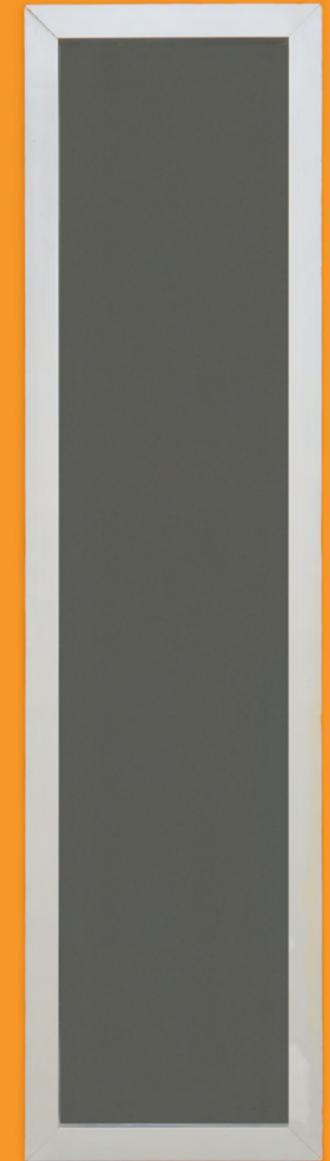
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# B.166

**Bulletin**  
Christchurch Art Gallery  
Te Puna o Waiwhetu

Summer  
December 2011—  
February 2012



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Cover:  
 Michael Parekowhai **Cosmo** 2006.  
 Woven nylon substrate, pigment,  
 electrical components. Collection  
 of Christchurch Art Gallery  
 Te Puna o Waiwhetu, the Jim Barr  
 and Mary Barr Gift 2011

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## Director's Foreword

OUR LAST ISSUE OF *BULLETIN* was dubbed the 'earthquake issue' by staff. We were pleased to have it printed, to achieve the usual quality of production, to be communicating again in print to friends and colleagues and to be in touch with our key networks. But I'm sad to say that we're likely to term this *Bulletin* the 'limbo issue'.

There are a few ways you could take that statement. Those seeking a weak joke might say we're being bent over backwards, but—painful though this period may be—we're certainly not dancing under a lowering horizontal pole. Or maybe we're in Dante's first circle of hell with Homer and Virgil? (Although I think our new landlord may be less than delighted to hear the apartment from which a number of us are now operating described in quite such terms.) However, in reality we're in the disappointingly prosaic third option offered in the Concise Oxford Dictionary—'an awkward period awaiting a decision or resolution'.

We've moved out of the great gallery that's been our home since 2003. This is to allow the neighbouring apartments to be demolished and our own building to be carefully assessed, so that any remedial engineering work can be done to bring it back up to code. We know that this work needs to be done, and done now; we want to be able to borrow works and show exhibitions with confidence well into the future. But, of course, the harder you look, the more you find, which means that the picture that emerges is taking longer than is ideal to come into focus.

As this *Bulletin* goes to print the sad truth is that all news is breaking news. We just can't tell you when the Gallery will reopen. We will reopen—that is not in any doubt—but it's too early to tell when that might be with any degree

of accuracy. So, where you might normally look in this publication for our exhibition programme, our coming soon features and a host of other programme dates, in this issue we can't provide them. And for that we're sorry.

As the prognosis for us becomes clearer, we're continuing to work hard on back-of-house tasks and projects for our reopening, but we're also looking at other arrangements for this interim period. We're searching for alternative spaces that we can use, sizing up walls and empty sites that we can repurpose, working out ways to provide access to some of the collection and dreaming up schemes. In short, thinking outside the box—the big comfy solid box within which we've been operating for the past seven years.

Fortunately, that's something that this Gallery does very well. So watch our website and the press for more details over the coming weeks and months.

**Jenny Harper**

Director

*November 2011*

PS. My visitor is *Cosmo*. We'll explain on page 19.

Michael Parekowhai *Cosmo*  
2006. Woven nylon substrate,  
pigment, electrical components.  
Collection of Christchurch Art  
Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, the  
Jim Barr and Mary Barr Gift 2011

# DRAWING CIRCLES INSIDE THE SQUARE

Looking broadly at the topic of local architectural heritage and urban design, the exhibition **Reconstruction: conversations on a city** will be a major feature of the Gallery's programme when we reopen. Here, through a selected group of artworks, curator Ken Hall takes a brief historical visual tour of Cathedral Square, one of the city's best-known spaces, and finds himself in a landscape rendered barely recognisable.

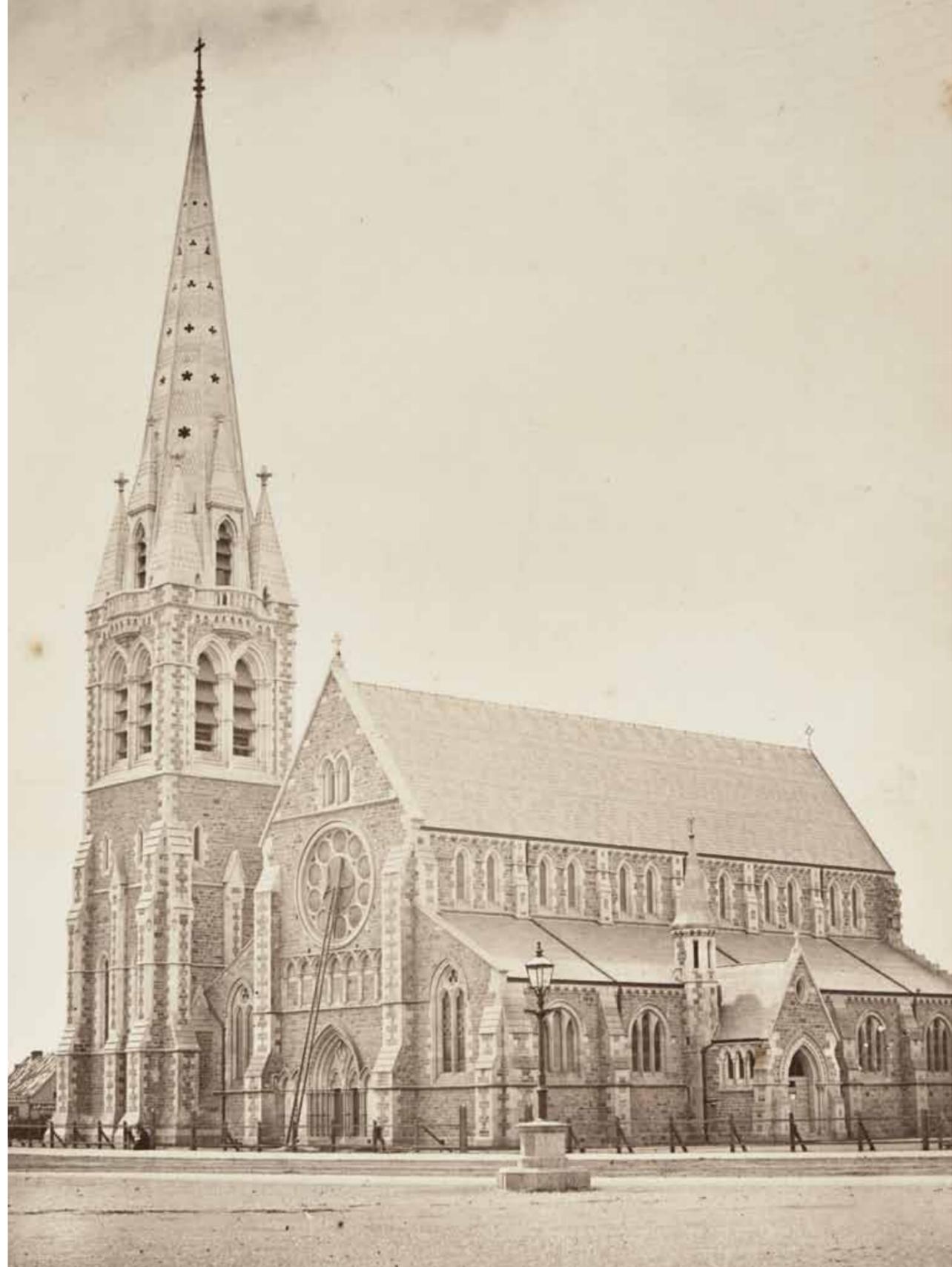
B.W. Mountfort **The Lamb of God and the Hierarchy of Angels (Rose Window, Christ Church Cathedral)**. Stained glass window by Clayton and Bell c.1881-2.  
Photo: Stephen Estall, 1998. Collection of Stephen Estall





Above and detail:  
Edward Wheeler Bishop Julius  
being hoisted to lay the  
coping stone on Christ Church  
Cathedral spire, 5 August 1891.  
Albumen photograph. Smith's  
Bookshop Archive

Right:  
Unknown photographer Christ  
Church Cathedral, Christchurch  
Cathedral Square, architects  
G.G. Scott and B.W. Mountfort  
c.1882. Albumen photograph.  
Smith's Bookshop Archive



## ‘Christ Church Cathedral existed as a bold idea long before it was raised.’

Right:  
Murray Hedwig Christ Church  
Cathedral with rubble and  
steel, July 2011. C-type print.  
2011. Photograph. Collection  
of the artist

IN HIS SHORT STORY *CATHEDRAL*, the American writer Raymond Carver describes a meeting between two strangers, one of whom, a recently arrived house guest and friend of the narrator's wife, is blind. Inspired or impaired by several glasses of Scotch, some smoked weed and a randomly discovered documentary on late-night television, the men enter a hazy conversation about cathedrals, with hypothetical musings about gargoyles, flying buttresses, and the faith of past days. 'In those olden times, when they built cathedrals, men wanted to be close to God ... You could tell this from their cathedral-building.' No major further conclusions are reached. The tale ends with the blind man asking the narrator to describe a cathedral for him in as much detail as he can, then convincing him to close his eyes and make a drawing, which he wishes to follow by placing his hand across the active, pencil-clutching hand. It's an unusually moving tale, and one that lingers. It stirs up many thoughts, one of which is that a traditional European cathedral is indeed a strange and extraordinary idea.

Christ Church Cathedral existed as a bold idea long before it was raised. And although Cathedral Square was known by this name from 1850—the Canterbury settlement's earliest days—beyond words, there was no sign of the defining structure for an awkward while. Designs prepared in England by George Gilbert Scott in 1862 were followed by the laying of a foundation stone on 16 December 1864. Eight years later in 1872, the visiting British novelist Anthony Trollope was able to lament the 'large waste space in which £7,000 have been buried in laying the foundations of a cathedral,' with 'not a single stone or a single brick above the level of the ground. The idea of building the cathedral is now abandoned ... I could not but be melancholy as I learned that the honest high-toned idea of the honest high-toned founders of the colony would probably not be carried out...' Was this goading useful?

Building of the cathedral recommenced properly in 1873, with Scott's original design modified by the supervising local architect Benjamin Mountfort: the originally planned wooden spire was replaced with a





Far left:  
Eleanor Hughes **Chancery Lane** c.1906. Ink. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 2001

Centre left:  
James Fitzgerald **Chancery Lane, Christchurch from Gloucester Street** 1925. Etching. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 2011

Left:  
Rhona Haszard **Untitled (looking through Strand Lane from Hereford Street, Christchurch)** 1921. Oil on canvas on board. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 2002



James Fitzgerald **View of Cathedral Square from Hereford Street** 1935. Watercolour. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 1997

**‘Jaded pioneers, children of a more sceptical age, we find it more difficult than our forebears to think in visionary terms...’**

towering spire of stone. The cathedral was consecrated on 1 November 1881. And just over a month later, it was shaken: on 5 December 1881 an earthquake dislodged a stone from near the top of the spire and cast it to the ground. Significant repairs and adjustments were made but the cathedral spire was to receive further, greater damage in the earthquakes of 1 September 1888 and 16 November 1901.

Although now a great distance removed from the notional benefits of Victorian medievalism or utopian colonising dreams, we are at least thoroughly refamiliarised with the ongoing challenge of shaking earth and fallen spires. Jaded pioneers, children of a more sceptical age, we find it more difficult than our forebears to think in visionary terms; to look heavenward, or possibly to look very far ahead. Add trauma, and the destruction apparently dealt to nearly

everything that was beautiful or old in this city and the challenge set forth by the pioneering Mountfort to value historically inspired architectural beauty becomes increasingly apt:

*It is a great drawback of our colonial life that the land in which we live has for us [the settlers] no history, no appeals from the past in names, customs, or monuments; no struggles, disappointments, or triumphs; no mute but eloquent witnesses confront us to bear testimony to the stirring deeds of other times ... we lack those ties to the past, without which we shall be too apt to concentrate too much of our thoughts and aspirations on the mere immediate present; and thus narrowing our field, we shall miss the broad outlook over the past, which like a grand picture serves to refresh us for endurance...<sup>2</sup>*

Many artists and photographers are now joined to the brief history of this place; something to which

Eileen Mayo *Homage to Pierre Finch Martineau Burrows 1842–1920* 1977. Screenprint and relief print. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 2011



Right:  
Doc Ross *Untitled* 2001 (printed 2011). Silver gelatin photograph. Collection of the artist

Far right:  
David Cook *Statue of J.R. Godley, Founder of Canterbury, Cathedral Square* 1984. Photograph. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 1987. Reproduced with permission



William Dunning *Reflection* 1979. Egg tempera on board. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, presented by the artist 2011



their work now bears mute but eloquent witness. Along with evidence of changing aspirations and preoccupations, the visual record reveals changing technological capabilities; a Christchurch that exists in archaeological layers. Open, empty spaces (often part swamp) gradually found simple wooden structures willing to fill the gaps; next came more ambitious, handsome structures, first in wood, then stone or brick; later towering walls of concrete, glass and steel, with demolitions occurring throughout the timeline. It may be observed that there are many ways for a city to change, and many different ways for destruction to be wrought upon architectural heritage. Is there comfort in the thought that Cathedral Square, like the city, has been many different places? Or that many of its individual architectural gems had already, continuously, and even recently, gone, often with barely a murmur of public dissent?

Against this kind of evidence it is difficult to believe that we have ever felt thoroughly at home here, or been completely satisfied with this place (if we had, we might have cared more; if we were, that

time has long passed). Tempering this prognosis, it should be said that Christchurch before the earthquakes was a pleasant enough place in which to live, with many fine surviving elements in its historical architecture and aspects of public space. Cathedral Square, however, remained a regularly debated space. Although (like the city itself) it may never have been a huge magnet to artists and photographers, the work of those who did record or portray its spaces can tell us many things. Each belonging to their own time and to their own individual ways, such diverse practitioners as A.C. Barker, Edward Wheeler, R.P. Moore, Rhona Haszard, James Fitzgerald, Eileen Mayo, William Dunning, David Cook, Doc Ross and Murray Hedwig have each found things in this space that invited a response. In gathering their works together, we find there are many interconnecting lines to be drawn.

**Ken Hall**  
*Curator*

#### NOTES

1. Anthony Trollope, *Australia and New Zealand*, 1873, pp.570 and 577.
2. Benjamin Mountfort, *Other Times*, 1885, quoted in Ian Lochhead, *A Dream of Spires: Benjamin Mountfort and the Gothic Revival*, Canterbury University Press, 1999, p.44.



Bill Sutton *Te Tihi o Kahukura and Sky VIII (The Citadel of the Rainbow God)* 1979. Oil on canvas. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 1980

# An Unquiet Earth

HAVING GROWN UP IN WELLINGTON and the Manawatu I was accustomed to the earth shaking every now and then, or at least I thought I was. But nothing I had experienced could have prepared me for the violent awakening we received in the middle of that frosty September night in 2010, or the aftershocks that have followed.

For me, the power and scale of the tectonic forces at play in the depths of the Canterbury Plains and Banks Peninsula over the past year or more are best summed up by one word: awe. I'll admit that I may have overused that word in the past—my editor would rap me over the knuckles with a ruler every time I used it when writing my essay for the *Van der Velden: Otira* catalogue—but in three simple letters it encapsulates the feeling of reverential fear combined with wonder that I feel every time a large shockwave comes rumbling through this town.

This is an unquiet earth. Below us the Pacific and Indo-Australian tectonic plates wrestle it out with each other, leaving us insignificant and powerless in the midst of all the upheaval. One of the most fascinating moments is that split second just before a quake strikes, the fraction of a second when you can hear the subterranean seismic waves racing across the plains towards the city, occasionally accompanied by what appears to be a sonic boom. It's a moment of flight, fight or fright as the old ticker begins working overtime and the adrenalin starts pumping.

Christchurch is now filled with ruined buildings, but the surrounding natural landscape has also been altered and changed. This is particularly noticeable around the Port Hills, parts of which lifted a staggering half metre on 22 February 2011. Two major Christchurch landmarks

were altered forever—Rapanui (Shag Rock), the rock pillar at the Opawaho–Otakaroro (Heathcote–Avon) estuary mouth, and Te Tihi o Kahukura (Castle Rock), one of the prominent outcrops on the Port Hills overlooking Christchurch. Rapanui is one of the ancient landmarks of Te Wai Pounamu. Its name means ‘the great sternpost’ and the pillar provided the landmark for the entrance to the estuary.<sup>1</sup> But it was shaken to its very core and is now reduced to a pile of volcanic rocks, its form radically altered. Te Tihi o Kahukura, the grand outcrop whose Māori name means ‘citadel of the rainbow god’, also suffered immense losses, leaving large trails of rocks and slips of rubble scattered on the slopes of the Heathcote and Horotane valleys below.

The Port Hills are one of the defining features of life in Christchurch; rising to the south-east of the city, they dramatically signal the end of the Canterbury Plains and the beginning of Banks Peninsula. The volcanic landforms create an impressive backdrop to Christchurch, and the ease with which these hills can be accessed has made them highly important for recreational activities such as

walking, cycling, rock climbing, paragliding and driving. The Port Hills are literally an uplifting experience for visitors, providing dramatic vistas of the surrounding landscape.

In the Gallery’s collection, three works in particular have an added poignancy since the Canterbury earthquakes—Doris Lusk’s panoramic view, *Canterbury Plains from Cashmere Hills* (1952), Bill Sutton’s *Te Tihi o Kahukura and Sky VIII (The Citadel of the Rainbow God)* (1979) and Mark Adams’s *Rapanui (Shag Rock), Opawaho–Otakaroro / Heathcote–Avon Rivers Estuary severely damaged in the quake of 2011. Feb 22* (1988). These works, which will all be on display in the Gallery when we reopen, emphasise the landscape surrounding Christchurch and the geological features that help to define this place, from the vast sweeping Canterbury Plains and the broad expanse of the Opawaho–Otakaroro / Heathcote–Avon estuary mouth to the lofty peaks of the Port Hills.

**Peter Vangioni**  
Curator

**NOTES**

1. Harry Evison and Mark Adams, ‘Rapanui (Shag Rock), and Opawaho–Otakaroro estuary mouth’ in *Land of Memories*, Auckland, 1993 (unpaginated).



Left:  
Doris Lusk *Canterbury Plains from Cashmere Hills* 1952. Oil on board. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 1974. Reproduced with permission

Right:  
Mark Adams *Rapanui (Shag Rock), Opawaho–Otakaroro / Heathcote–Avon Rivers Estuary severely damaged in the quake of 2011. Feb 22* 1988. Photograph. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 2011



# SEVEN GREAT GIFTS... AND HOW IT FELT TO RECEIVE THEM

*‘The art that matters to us— which moves the heart, or revives the soul, or delights the senses, or offers courage for living, however we choose to describe the experience— that work is received by us as a gift is received.’*

Lewis Hyde, *The Gift: Imagination and the Erotic Life of Property*, Vintage Books, New York, 1979, p.xii

In *The Gift*, Lewis Hyde examines the idea of the gift, and the work of art as a commodity. He draws a connection between the assertion that the creation of a work (the talent that creates it and the inspiration that drives it) is a gift, and the idea that after it has left the artist’s hands it can still be experienced as a gift—‘when we are touched by a work of art something comes to us which has nothing to do with the price.’

Articles about gifts to the Gallery are usually pretty standard. They talk about ‘our’ gratitude, and ‘magnificent additions to the collection’. Which is fine. But what they don’t usually do is talk about how it feels to receive that gift—the excitement of unwrapping it, the surprise. They usually dwell more upon where the work takes the collection than where it might take the soul.

In the last few years, the Gallery has been the recipient of a number of acts of truly extraordinary generosity. What follows is by no means an exhaustive roundup of these, and more acts of generosity will be celebrated in subsequent issues. But here, Gallery staff talk about how it felt to get some of their favourite presents of recent years.



Michael Parekowhai  
*Cosmo* 2006. Woven nylon substrate, pigment, electrical components. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, the Jim Barr and Mary Barr Gift 2011

*Justin Paton*

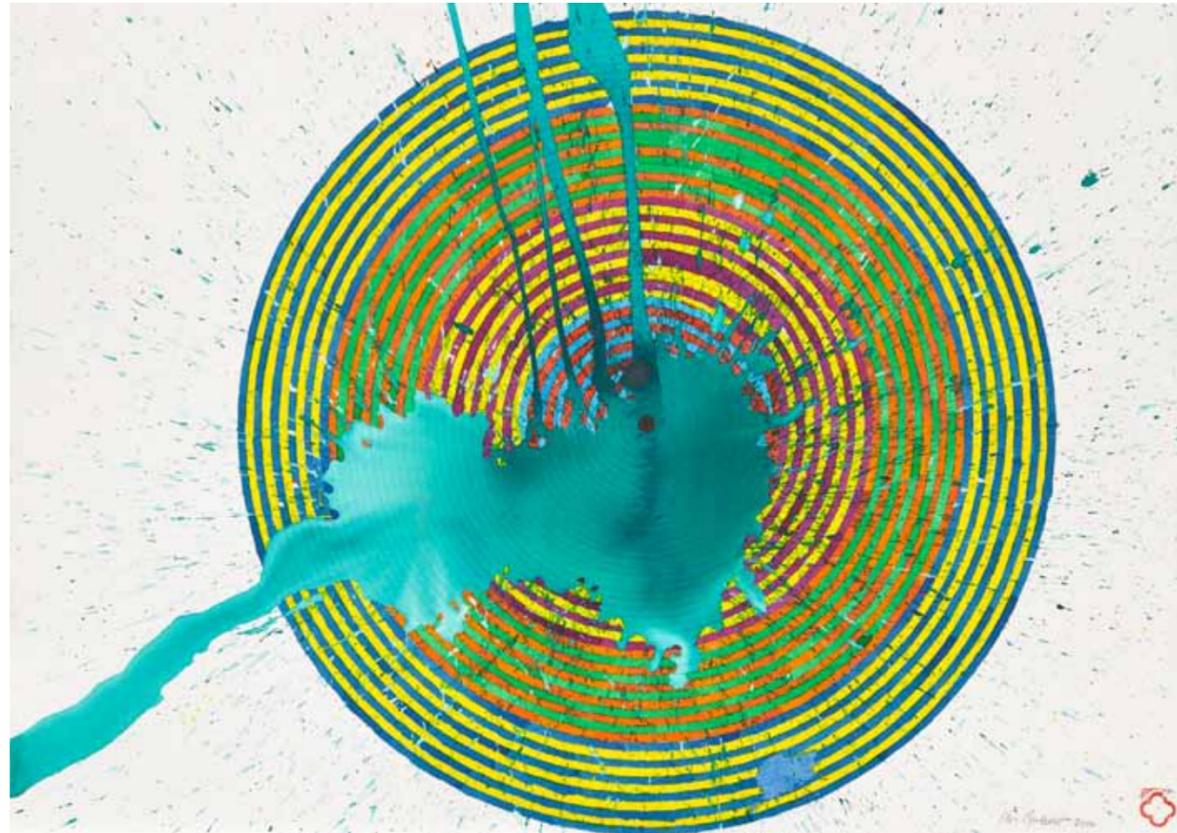
***Cosmo is Michael Parekowhai’s three-metre high inflatable bunny—we’ve had him on display in the Gallery before, but we were surprised to find him in a care package this last winter...***

One of the best-timed gifts my family and I have ever received arrived at our home on Mt Pleasant in May. This was about three months after the quake, and we’d just come back from a stay in Sydney. I think we were secretly hoping to discover that the whole city had been cleaned up, or indeed that the quake never happened. But the twenty tonnes of bricks that the quake shook off our house were lying exactly where we’d left them, and the rooms still looked freshly shredded. You could have seen our Sydney afterglow fading.

Just then—and I really do mean just then: it was about forty seconds since we’d entered the house—there was a woman standing at the front door with a gift basket, sent by family in Wellington. I’ve got to admit to being a former sceptic when it comes to the gift basket cult: ye olde hampers filled with gourmet chutneys aren’t exactly my idea of fun. But this one was full of good stuff, and above all came at a very good time. To put it in a corny but heartfelt way, it

was simply nice to know someone was thinking of us. I mention all this because a few months later that feeling kicked in once again, when the Wellington art collectors Jim Barr and Mary Barr sent a post-quake care package to the Gallery, in the form of a big black plastic box. What came out of the box was Michael Parekowhai’s *Cosmo*, the monstrously cute inflatable rabbit that peers out through the cover of this *Bulletin*. Commentators, myself included, have had a lot to say about Parekowhai’s rabbits, connecting them—often all too tenuously—to colonialism, settler politics, and more. Having spent a memorable recent morning with colleagues inflating *Cosmo* in the Gallery’s offices and corridors, I’d say his main reason for being is simpler and more sublime. Call it the gift-basket effect: what he does is make you smile.

That said, I’m glad he wasn’t delivered to the family doorstep. The kids would never have given him back.



Max Gimblett *Self-Liberation by Knowing the Signs of Death* 2010. Pencil, ink / Arches 555 lb Rough Watercolour Paper, France. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, the Max Gimblett and Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett Gift

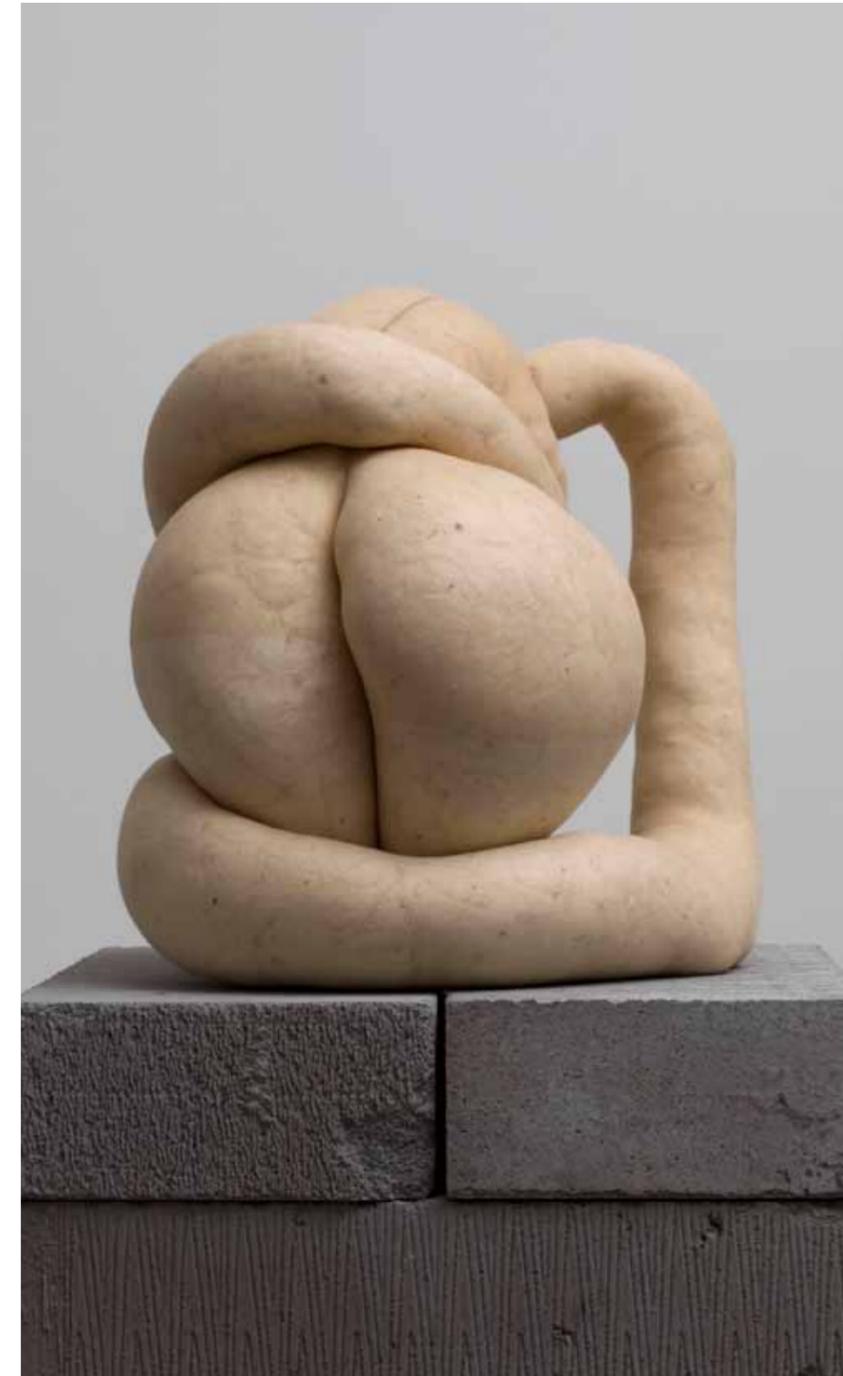
Peter Vangioni

**In early 2010 Max Gimblett announced his intention to give the Gallery a substantial gift of works on paper. The only complication was that someone had to go and select them...**

It's now been fourteen months since Jenny Harper and I visited Max's studio in New York to make a selection of works on paper to be presented to the Gallery by Max and his wife Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett. One of the strongest impressions I have of the visit is of Max's incredibly generous spirit, not only in making a truly exceptional gift to the citizens of Christchurch, but in the way he welcomed Jenny and me into his studio, made us feel at home, provided excellent meals and endless coffee and not least, opened his archive of works on paper to us to make a selection from.

I was blown away by his warm-hearted nature and sense of humour, which he balances extremely well with an exceptional work ethic.

New York was hot and humid and the task we completed in the studio was intense, as we worked our way through hundreds upon hundreds of drawings to make the final selection. It was an exhilarating experience for me—Max is an artist I have long admired, but he so rarely exhibits here in Christchurch that I hadn't experienced many of his works at first hand. It was awesome to view so much of his work in his presence.



Jenny Harper

**In the direct aftermath of the earthquake, the Sarah Lucas gift was a major boon to the Gallery, in a surprising number of ways...**

English artist Sarah Lucas was installing her show in Two Rooms, Auckland, when the 22 February earthquake struck. She was quite upset by what she saw and insisted that the proceeds of whatever was sold should go to Christchurch and supporting the arts in the recovery. She persuaded both gallerists, Two Rooms and Sadie Coles HQ in London, to follow suit with their commission. And then collectors Andrew and Jenny Smith from Auckland responded with equal generosity. I had taken Andrew around our collection exhibition some time in 2010 and he recognised that it lacks some of the depth of Auckland's, particularly in our international holdings. So he and Jenny were interested in doing something

to help us at some point. They offered to pay the full value of one of Lucas's works, if Christchurch Art Gallery would be interested in taking it. Well absolutely we would.

*NUD CYCLADIC 1* is an intriguing work. I had seen it twice, once before the Smiths decided to match the artist's generosity, and later when selecting the work from the show. It's most obviously a backside, but I was also reminded of the arm of Rodin's *The Thinker* when I walked around it.

It was a wonderful sequence of events. The generosity of an international artist, two dealers and two collectors combined to enable the addition of a superb new work to our collection. And we're all richer for it.

Sarah Lucas *NUD CYCLADIC 1* 2009. Tights, fluff, wire, concrete blocks, MDF. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchase enabled by a gift from Andrew and Jenny Smith, made in response to the generosity of Sarah Lucas, Sadie Coles, London and Two Rooms, Auckland to the people of Christchurch on the occasion of the Canterbury Earthquake, February 2011



Rita Angus *Akaroa Hills*  
1943. Watercolour.  
Collection of  
Christchurch Art  
Gallery Te Puna o  
Waiwhetu, N. Barrett  
Bequest Collection,  
purchased 2010.  
Courtesy of the Estate  
of Rita Angus

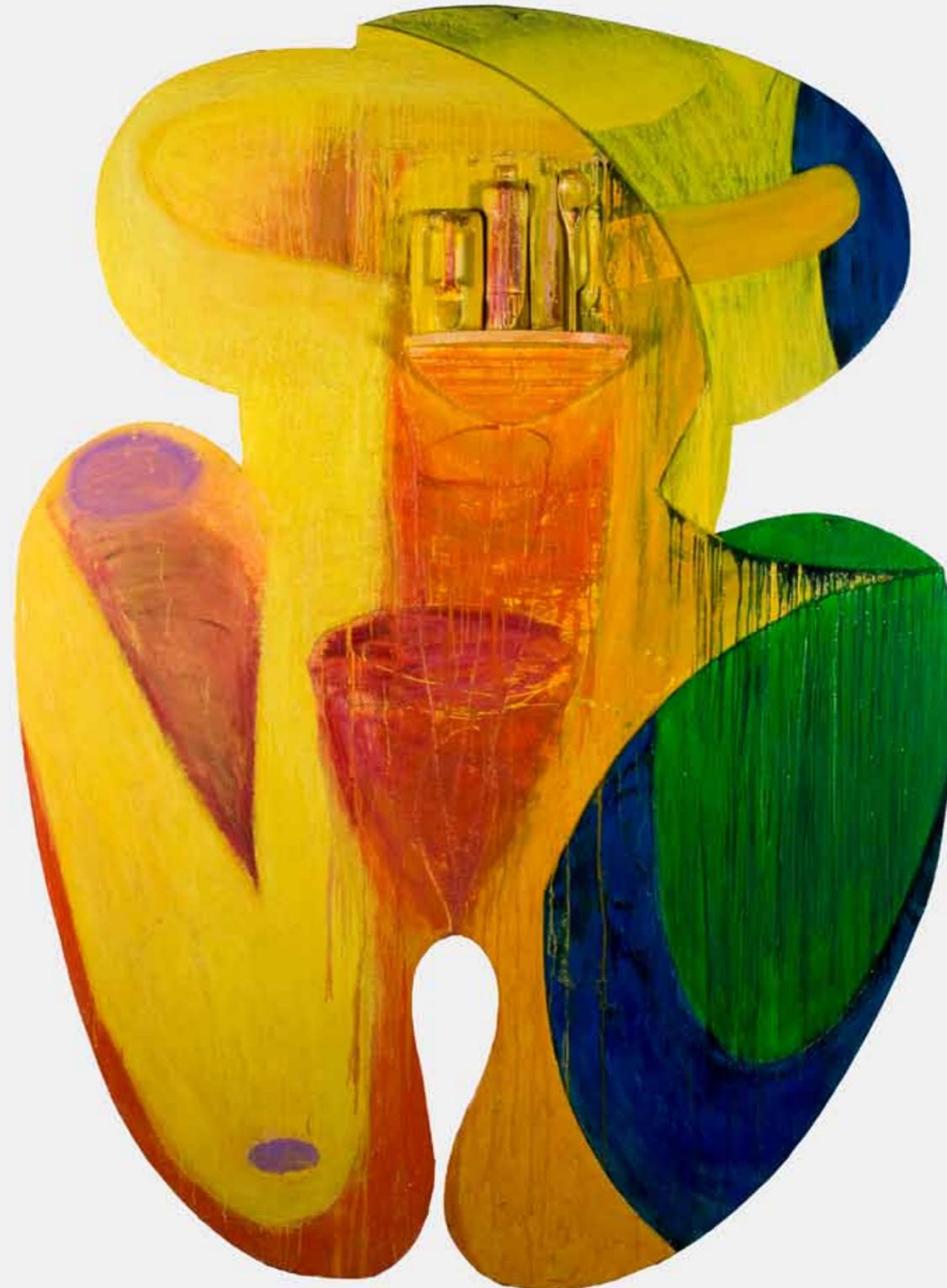
Jenny Harper

**At a staggering \$1.8 million, the Barrett Bequest is the biggest financial gift we've received since the Gallery opened in 2003. And we had no idea it was coming...**

In January last year I was at the preview of *Ron Mueck* at the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne with Justin Paton. Blair Jackson rang from the foyer of Christchurch Art Gallery, where the announcement of Norman Barrett's bequest had just been made by his lawyer and executor of his will, Brian Kinley. I'm usually very careful to turn my cellphone off when attending previews, but I'm very pleased that I forgot in Melbourne.

Blair remembered Norman from his days at what was then the CSA, but I'd only met him a couple of times. I do, however, recall his pleasure at our **Rita Angus** opening in March 2009. Norman wanted us to buy significant works by artists with significance to Canterbury and Christchurch made from 1940 to 1980. These artists were his friends; he'd enjoyed their company and gone to their openings.

I recall a real sense of elation, almost light-headedness, and excitement at the possibilities for growing our collection with this remarkable gift. This is an art museum and building our collection and continuing its interpretation by display and publication is at the heart of what we do. This gift will keep on giving—so far, we've bought works by Rita Angus, Leo Bensemann, Russell Clark, Tony Fomison and Douglas MacDiarmid and we have another wonderful treasure in the wings.



Felicity Milburn

**Sometimes gifts are unmissable...**

I saw my first painting by Robert McLeod in the basement of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery. From the back of a densely-hung, dimly-lit collection rack, a square canvas coated in brilliant yellow gleamed out an exhilarating vote of faith in the power of paint, the power of colour. Ever since then, I've been a fan of McLeod's fearless, no-nonsense approach to paint-handling, which has evolved over the years from the staunch monochromes of the 1980s to the grotesquely mutated, cartoon-like forms of his later 'cut out' works.

So it was with a sense of anticipation that I walked into the stockroom of Campbell Grant Galleries in February 2009. In many ways it was a sad occasion, brought about because the dealer gallery was closing down after eleven years in the art business. McLeod, along with fellow artists Jennifer Matheson, Kazu Nakagawa and Bill Riley had, with the support of director Grant Banbury, offered to mark the gallery's closure by giving examples of their works to

Christchurch Art Gallery, and I was there to make a selection to be considered by the Gallery's acquisitions committee.

As Grant unwrapped, pulled out and propped up each of the McLeod works he had in storage, the well-organised stockroom began to fill with colour and energy. In every direction, curvaceous plywood shapes jostled each other for space, tartan gourds ballooned, cartoon eyes boggled and tongues lolled. It was sensory overload by oil paint, made all the headier by the images I was trying to retain in my mind's eye of the works already held in the Gallery collection—that first, dazzling beauty (*Yellow*, 1982), the tenacious purple swipes of *Mudswatch* (another, earlier gift from McLeod) and the bounding extravagance of *Monkey Business* (1996). The trio that ended up on my wishlist (*Yellow*, *Two Tongues*, *Ringmaster*) represented three distinct aspects of McLeod's practice, but all shared that confidence in the worth of paint and painting that took my breath away all those years ago.

Robert McLeod *Yellow*  
1999. Oil on plywood with  
objects. Collection of  
Christchurch Art Gallery  
Te Puna o Waiwhetu, gift  
of the artist and Campbell  
Grant Galleries 2009

Justin Paton

## And sometimes, it's the subtlety that makes them so engaging...

We've all heard the stories about confusions occurring on the edge where art meets life. The London cleaning lady, for instance, who threw out hundreds of cigarette butts that turned out to be a Damien Hirst. Naturally, no self-respecting gallery professional wants to see their favourite artworks confused with mere stuff. But then again, when it comes to Glen Hayward's recent gift to the Gallery, there's a part of me that does. Amongst the three sculptures that Glen recently gifted to the Gallery,

my favourite is the security camera—or rather, the piece of carved and painted wood that looks eye-foolingly like a security camera. When we reopen the Gallery I'd love to see this boxy object installed high on a wall, looking down on all the undisguised artworks in its line of view like a spy hiding in plain sight. I don't mean to diminish Glen's great gift in any way when I say there's a strong hint of mischief in it—a sense that, by smuggling this object into the collection, he's keeping an eye on us.

Glen Hayward Closed circuit 2010. Rimu and acrylic paint. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, gifted 2011



Ken Hall

## ...but all reward closer inspection.

R.P. Moore Christchurch NZ 1923. No.1 (view of Christchurch city from the cathedral tower) 1923. Silver gelatin photographic print (contact print from the Cirkut camera negative). Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, presented by Mark Strange and Lucy Alcock 2011



Mark Strange, an old friend, rang me in May to discuss a gift that he and his partner Lucy Alcock wished to make to the Gallery. I have long admired the photographs of R.P. Moore—panoramic images, typically oak framed, dating from the 1920s. Mark has also been closely involved with Moore's work in his role as photograph conservator at the

National Library. The Alexander Turnbull Library has a substantial holding of Moore's negatives, which Mark had worked on devotedly in preparation for a touring exhibition that opened at the National Library Gallery in 1995. This gift, a 1923 vintage print, is a beauty: a comprehensive view of the west side of Christchurch's Cathedral Square

from the cathedral spire balcony. A poignant record of lost Christchurch architectural heritage, it also contains many fascinating details up close and at street level, which can be studied in super close-up at [www.christchurchartgallery.org.nz/collection/objects/c1000/](http://www.christchurchartgallery.org.nz/collection/objects/c1000/).

The online result is spectacular. To Mark and Lucy—thank you.

# MAKE A DONATION, MAKE A DIFFERENCE

*Following the Canterbury earthquakes, Christchurch Art Gallery needs your support more than ever. By becoming a supporter of the Christchurch Art Gallery Trust you can help the Gallery continue to grow as an internationally recognised centre of excellence, providing a stimulating and culturally enriching experience for all who visit in the future.*

## WAYS YOU CAN MAKE A DONATION

The Christchurch Art Gallery Trust welcomes all contributions and offers a number of 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. Each level of giving confers a number of exclusive benefits, including private dinners and cocktail functions, personal invitations and special viewings of the collection.

*Patrons' Circle* (\$10,000 and above)

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*Benefactors' Circle* (\$1,000 – \$5,000)

### 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 up to a set amount per annum.

*Target 2010–11: \$197,000*

*Total raised by 30 June 2011: \$197,000*

*Target 2011–12: \$204,000 to be raised by 30 June 2012*

### 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.

*Christchurch Art Gallery formally acknowledges the major donors who contributed to the building of the Gallery.*

Hon. Margaret Austin, Kiri Borg and Brian Henry, Hon. Philip and Mrs Ros Burdon, Philip Carter, Ben Danis, Sir Neil and Lady Isaac, Neil and Diane McKegg, Monica Richards, Robert and Barbara Stewart, Sir Robertson and Lady Stewart, Stout Trust, W.A. Sutton Trust, Sir Angus and Lady Tait, Adriaan and Gabrielle Tasman, Jim and Susan Wakefield. Many continue to support the Gallery and we thank them.

## RECENT CONTRIBUTIONS AND GIFTS

### Annual Donors

#### *Patrons' Circle*

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Andrew and Jenny Smith  
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## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please contact the Gallery's development manager.  
Tel: (+64) 27 2160904; email: [cagtrust@ccc.govt.nz](mailto:cagtrust@ccc.govt.nz)

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.

**CHRISTCHURCH  
ART GALLERY  
TRUST**

# Here and Gone

PUBLIC SCULPTURE, THE ART OF MEMORY AND THE GHOST SHIP OF FERRY ROAD

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IN THE LAST ISSUE OF *BULLETIN*, SENIOR CURATOR JUSTIN PATON WROTE ABOUT THE WAY THE CHRISTCHURCH EARTHQUAKES ‘GAZUMPED’ THE EXHIBITIONS ON DISPLAY AT THE GALLERY—OVERSHADOWING THEM AND SHIFTING THEIR MEANINGS. IN THIS ISSUE, WITH THE GALLERY STILL CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC, HE CONSIDERS THE PLACE OF ART IN THE WIDER POST-QUAKE CITY—AND DISCOVERS A MONUMENT IN AN UNLIKELY PLACE.

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IT WAS THE BEST PUBLIC SCULPTURE Christchurch never knew it had. Kids peered out the car window to see it. Adults told stories about how long it had been there. Commuters measured their journeys by it. Quite a few locals simply hated it. But even if you were indifferent to its charms, it was impossible not to wonder how it got there—and whether it would ever get out.

I am talking about the big black boat that sat on the corner of Ferry Road and Ensors Road in the suburb of Woolston. It had been up on blocks there, with its paintwork roasting in the glare, for as long as most people can remember; I came to Christchurch as a kid in the late 1970s and can't recall it ever not being there. A big tub of a thing, eighteen metres long and built from ferrocement (a favoured material for amateur boatbuilders), the boat would have made a sizeable object in anyone's back yard. It looked even bigger on Ferry Road because it was parked in such a small and improbable space—backed right in behind a long corrugated iron fence, just metres from the swoosh of traffic. My earliest views of it would have been on the way back from weekend trips to the beach at Sumner, sitting with my sisters on the scalding back-seat vinyl of the Mazda 929. With its cabin windows peering out over the fence, the boat looked as if it was floating in a corrugated iron sea. Just as hundreds of other kids must have over the years, I'd stare at the boat and imagine it finally escaping its compound—raising its sails, ponderously angling out into the traffic, and gliding away.

When I moved back to Christchurch with my family in 2007, after twelve years away from the city, the boat came into view again. Along with the noble old Woolston Library and the doggily restored mural on Bronski's dairy, it was a marker I'd tick off half-consciously on the daily bike ride from Mt Pleasant to the Gallery—something old and interesting to look at on a road whose eastern reaches have been eaten up by tilt-slab sameness. (Should the Ferrymead shopping centre ever require a motto, how about 'Where urban planning goes to die'?) After the big earthquake of 4 September, however, the morning bike ride became more eventful. There was a lot more to look at—or, depending how you come at the problem, a lot less. The first local demolition I saw up close occurred in the block just west of the big black boat, where a dairy and lawnmower repair outfit came down in a matter of days. I remember having a hard time deciding which was more shocking: how fast the buildings disappeared, how pathetically small the vacant lots looked, or how quickly I forgot what had been there. And then, after the colossal shake of 22 February, empty lots grew so plentiful that I stopped even trying to remember what went where. Bronski's came down and so did the library—each new gap a glum rejoinder to the billboard further along Ferry Road that perkily announced 'The Christchurch I love is still here' (just begging for a sarcastic 'yeah, right').

And then, one day in July, the boat was gone too.



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For a while there I thought I was alone in wondering about the big black boat. No one was calling talkback radio and lamenting the subtraction from our heritage fabric. And, as far as I knew, the city's post-quake archaeologists weren't scouring the now-vacant property for evidence.

The most I could find in the newspapers was a short and not exactly fact-filled article in *The Star* for 14 July, describing the 'removal' of the yacht and the demolition of the red-stickered building on the same property. The article also told how police had escorted a man from the property for illegally beginning demolition work himself, but left it unclear whether the boat itself had been demolished. An email to the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority brought clarification of a kind: yes, the building had been demolished under S39, and the boat had been demolished too with the owner's consent, although he 'wasn't terribly happy about this'. A very different account had been posted on a message board on the TradeMe website, asserting that the demolition was high-handed and hasty; reportedly, the boat had been damaged during demolition of the adjacent building, leaving the owner no option but to assent to its destruction. But even if the boat was destroyed with good reason and full consent—and it seems clear, at least, that some tact and diplomacy were lacking—I found myself feeling strangely cheated by its disappearance. I wanted to keep on wondering indefinitely how the boat's story would unfold. The demolition brought that story to a premature end.

Reading further in the online discussions, I discovered I was far from alone in lamenting the boat's demise. An early post on a classic car website set the prevailing tone: 'OMG

chch peeps! The big black boat is gone!' What fascinated me in these forums was the number of people with stories and memories to share—the way a portrait of the boat began to grow through rumour, hearsay and recollection. One person heard the boat was made by shaping a hole in the ground and lining it with ferrocement. Another heard that the wrong cement was used and the boat wouldn't float. Someone else said it had been bought for a dollar a few years ago by someone who installed a bar and a coal range onboard. Still another reckoned that the Transport Authority had refused a request to tow the boat through the tunnel to Lyttelton. Apparently there was once a website devoted to its restoration. The trustiest of these reminiscences came from a contributor to the Lyttelton Naval Club's e-newsletter, who recalled that the boat had been the dream project of a young English immigrant in the 1960s, who sold it on at a bargain price in the early 1970s. But I have to confess that, the looser and blurrier the stories became, the more I liked them. Someone recalled thinking it was the Ark, another that it predated European settlers. My favourite was the one about Peter Jackson having purchased the film rights to the story—a rumour that really ought to be true. And though a few people condemned the boat as an eyesore (it was, one correspondent hilariously suggested, lowering property values in the area), mostly the comments were affectionate and sane. It was as if, having begun as a piece of private property parked on its corner for whatever reason, the boat had been adopted, you might even say commandeered, by people whose visual space it overlooked. The boat seemed to have achieved the secret dream of all public artworks: it was everyone's.





Top:  
Paul McCarthy **Ship of Fools, Ship Adrift 2** 2010. Rigid urethane foam, steel, wood and carpet. Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth, London



Centre:  
Mark Bradford **Mithra** 2008. Sculptural installation. Courtesy of Mark Bradford and Prospect New Orleans. Photo: John d'Addario



Bottom:  
James Oram **Sea change** 2008. Cranmer Square, commissioned for SCAPE 2008

When it comes to public sculpture, the Where matters as much as the What. It's not enough just to have an interesting object, it has to be put in a place that enlarges its meanings. The problem with most public artworks is the absolutely predictable way in which the What and Where come together: things that look pretty much like public sculptures are planted pretty much where you'd expect them to go, and no one's heart beats any faster. Look around Christchurch and you'll find plenty of examples. Call them placeholder objects, middling monuments, the sculptural equivalent of screen-savers—works that fit in to their settings all too meekly and well.

The boat was a great work of accidental sculpture because it messed around with that formula. It was the right object in the wrong place. After all, a boat on its own is an evocative image: it suggests enterprise, the slow conquest of distance, the human ability to survive far from home. And boats carry all kinds of mythic and symbolic freight, from the *Argo* of Greek myth all the way through to the boat in which Max, from *Where the wild things are*, sails 'through night and day and in and out of weeks'. But when a real boat is beached in an unlikely place it becomes something more than a traditional symbol. It becomes a riddle or puzzle—a peculiar physical fact that demands, and maybe defies, explanation. Scrolling back through my own wholly personal list of memorable sculptural sights for the last half-decade or so, I'm surprised to find that beached and halted boats occupy a prominent place; I think especially of Mark Bradford's vast makeshift ark in the flood-wrecked ninth ward of New Orleans. Then there was Paul McCarthy's brilliant *Ship of Fools* in the 17th Biennale of Sydney, marooned inside one of the Walsh Bay piers like a mad fusion of convict ship and Christmas

parade float. And then, locally, there was James Oram's *Sea change* in the 2008 SCAPE urban art biennial—a delicate yacht hoisted high by a crane above Cranmer Square, as if diagramming sea-levels in some globally warmed future. What all three examples shared with the big black boat was a tremendous sense of *arrest*. Boats move, it's what they're made to do, you can see it in their shape; yet in each of the examples just mentioned all that implied momentum had been suspended or brought to a stop. In its absence what built up was a kind of poetic energy, a productive confusion about where these vessels came from and where they were meant to take us.

As well as being out of place, the big black boat was wonderfully out of time. In an urban setting where the emphasis is overwhelmingly on 'development' and 'going forward', and where even small-time enterprises have adopted the corporate language of 'updating' and 're-branding', the boat just sat there getting stubbornly older. By rights it shouldn't have been there, but somehow it always was, and when objects stick around like that they become markers in our own lives: we measure time against them and they remind us who we were. Hence those affectionate memories in the online discussions—adults recalling their childhood awe. We don't feel the same affection for most public sculptures, because they're so clearly custom-built to outlast us—armour-plated against the efforts of vandals and the effects of time. By contrast the boat had a winning absurdity and vulnerability. It was a holdout, a rock in the stream, a ridiculous survivor. It was a reminder of the heyday of hobbyists and amateurs, when there were simply fewer products available to buy in this country. And it was also a reminder, much more distantly, of the city's maritime beginnings, when settlers fresh from the

port of Lyttelton caught a boat across Heathcote River before making their way into the city along Ferry Road—so named for this very reason. To see the big black boat during rush hour, with cars pouring past, you could almost imagine it had been abandoned there long ago by some exasperated sailor and that the city had just grown up around it. As a public sculpture, the message it sent wasn't one of maritime success or human achievement. Instead it seemed to memorialise that other great human talent—for making big plans, discovering you can't fulfil them, and then getting distracted by something else. It was a slowboat, an ark of inertia, a monument to unfinished projects. (And a weirdly apt image for Christchurch in its current limbo state, as we peer into the city's future and think, *Will this thing actually float?*)

Am I claiming the boat as a major historic loss, akin to the loss of all those amazing old heritage buildings in the inner city? Not at all. It wasn't an 'icon' of Christchurch, it was just a part of it—one of the odd, eccentric and half-way intriguing sights that made travelling through the city more interesting. The point is not to play the minor sights off against the grand ones, but to recognise that they need each other—that the atmosphere of a city derives not just from its showcase buildings but all the textures and structures and minor-key sights that sit in the spaces between. As the city lurches between hard-core demolition on one hand (another day, another disappearance) and dreamy speculation on the other (the computer-rendered fantasyland of the *Draft City Plan*), now more than ever we need to remember the frictions and disjunctions, the accretions and juxtapositions, the collisions of materials and timescales, that make cities interesting places to be. Without them, I'm not sure a city is a city any more. I suspect it might just be a mall.



How is this going so far, do you think? Is it a little strange to be reading a homage to a ruined old yacht in pages usually reserved for important artworks? Maybe, but then these are truly strange days for art in Christchurch, and for public art especially. With so much demolition occurring all around us, and with so many normal art venues out of action, there's a powerful wish—it sometimes feels deeper than that: a need—to see art play its part in the so-called 'transitional city'. How might art show the way to a better future? How might it help to revitalise and revive? At times it has felt like sitting through one long and arduous brainstorm session, where the mood see-saws constantly between wide-eyed optimism and fits of the glums while Post-its flutter hopefully on every wall. There's talk of culture districts, mobile galleries and rivers of art; of monuments, memorials and more. And already there are things to see. The brilliant Gapfiller project demonstrates how well things might go; the dreadful 'lights of hope' show how badly (note to whoever is swinging the lights around like that: please stop—it makes the city look like an apocalyptic disco).

But it will be a very long time before anything resembling monuments or memorials makes sense in Christchurch. For public art of that kind to do its thing, it has to have a steady backdrop to stand out from. But steady ground is the last thing you'll find in Christchurch at the moment, because the ground has moved—and is still moving. The catharsis and 'closure' implied by monuments are all wrong for this moment, when the prevailing emotion city-wide—at least as I feel it—is not sober retrospection but some persistent mix of resignation, irritation, grief and ever-so-tentative hope. And then there's a strange but simple physical fact to contend with, which is that the city as it currently stands is its own memorial. The usual function of a memorial is to commemorate what's not there. But physical evidence of what we want to remember is still spectacularly with us; it is exactly what all those people walking the edge of the red zone have come in to the city to witness. There's not an art object out there that can compete in eloquence with all the instant ruins on view in the city—the walls, columns and other remnants left standing at the end of one day's work, and often gone before the next day is done.

The most telling monuments in Christchurch at this time are found, accidental, and emphatically temporary. They haven't been put there in response to the earthquakes and demolitions, but revealed or somehow brought to prominence by them. I'm thinking of the extraordinary relics and remainders that have been exposed in the process of demolition, like the hand-painted optometrist's sign my colleague Ken Hall photographed one morning on Ferry Road, staring out at the new gaps all around it. I'm thinking of the shell of the old Dowson's shoe store, again on Ferry Road, where demolition has revealed an incredible collage of colours, materials and textures. I'm thinking of the single stone doorway that was left standing, like a portal to nowhere, on the Carlton Mill site one night, and was no longer there a few days later. And of course, I'm thinking of the boat—yet another landmark I'd always expected to be there, and which has been turned into a memory, a ghost ship, by the quake.

Art gives us new things to look at—that's why we visit galleries. But in the process it also gives us new ways to look at things that are not art. With so many galleries closed and the city itself 'under destruction', perhaps the urgent task in Christchurch is not to find new art to look at, but to use art as a way of paying closer attention to what's going or already gone. Art as a frame or a viewfinder, an angle of approach, a way of exploring Christchurch off the grid and against the grain. Art as eccentric archaeology, a means of noticing and collecting, a way of remembering and recording what's *not* iconic. These moments of discovery and recognition will necessarily be personal and idiosyncratic; they might involve nothing more than a look, a pause, in the course of an ordinary day. What I like to imagine emerging, alongside the real memorials and monuments that will inevitably arrive, is a kind of museum without walls, a collection in the air, built on nothing more than rumours and strange affections, and containing as many rooms and spaces as there are people who care to remember.

One of those rooms will need to be big. I have a boat to store.



***'The most telling monuments in Christchurch at this time are found, accidental, and emphatically temporary. They haven't been put there in response to the earthquakes and demolitions, but revealed or somehow brought to prominence by them.'***





Michael Parekowhai  
Chapman's Homer (standing  
bull) (detail) 2011. Bronze,  
stainless steel. Photo:  
Jennifer French

On Touring

# Chapman's Homer

MICHAEL PAREKOWHAI'S EXTRAORDINARY sculptural installation *On first looking into Chapman's Homer*, New Zealand's official presentation at this year's Venice Biennale, is now in Paris. After a triumphal presence at the world's longest-running and most prestigious international art biennial, three key components of the work, including *He Kōrero Purākau mo Te Awanui o Te Motu: story of a New Zealand river* (the intricately-carved and fully playable Steinway piano) are on show at musée du quai Branly. From November both bronze bulls, on top of full-sized bronze grand pianos, have been visible to all who pass by on their way to the nearby Eiffel Tower; the carved piano will complete the Paris version of Parekowhai's installation in the museum's foyer during March and April 2012.

Prior to this latest manifestation, the installation has been seen in two quite antithetical locations and contexts. Firmly insistent that the work be launched at home, Parekowhai arranged for it to be shown in March 2011 in and around a cleaned-up light industrial space near the artist's studio in Henderson, Auckland. As young locals revved up to do 'doughnuts' on the road outside, they gawked briefly at the intrusive bronze manifestations.

And then from June to October it was installed in a privately-owned fifteenth-century Gothic Renaissance palazzo in Venice,

where the passing traffic was vaporetti on the Grand Canal and most visitors arrived on foot. The city and the Biennale are both remarkable in their own right, and the calm and luxury of the installation and the walled back garden a palpable contrast for those of us lucky enough to have seen the work both there and in Auckland.

Now, Paris adds a third and unusual layer of meaning to *Chapman's Homer*. Unafraid of venturing into a new scenario, Parekowhai's monstrously assertive bulls are on display in the ethnographic museum's external enclosures—some of which are used for display, some for performance and entertainment.

Performance is key to *Chapman's Homer*. In Henderson when it was first shown to the artist's family, friends and supporters, the 2011 Venice patrons heard Michael Houston and a duo of Parekowhai's Auckland University teaching colleagues play the (at that point, black) Steinway piano. It was a remarkable event. But the artist's interventions were not yet over. In a few short weeks, the Steinway was sanded back, dramatically repainted red, packed and air-freighted to Venice for its next outing; here it was played in the Palazzo Loredan dell'Ambasciatore during the Vernissage (opening few days) by young New Zealand pianists. Some became longer-term venue attendants, playing the piano



Michael Parekowhai  
Chapman's Homer  
(standing bull) 2011  
bronze, stainless steel.  
Photo: Michael Hall

for extended periods each day, as Parekowhai stepped out of the limelight and enabled others to match his skill and virtuosity with their talent.

When the playable piano is placed in musée du quai Branly's foyer it will be linked visually with the layers of stored ethnographic musical instruments in the museum, behind a circular glass core indicative of riches beyond. Students from a nearby music academy will ensure the performative element is continued and ensure visitors hear as well as see this amazing masterpiece.

With its distinctive mix of Māori and European signifiers, *Chapman's Homer* touches on themes of distance, travel, translation and discovery, resonating in different strengths in differing places and spaces. The Gallery is pleased to have been involved in managing this part of the tour and we thank projects manager Neil Semple for his oversight of this. We hope that on our reopening this gallery will provide another context for Parekowhai's masterful work when the installation returns to New Zealand after its appearances in Venice and Paris.

**Jenny Harper**  
Director

*The Venice presentation of On first looking into Chapman's Homer was supported by Creative New Zealand, the Venice Patrons' group, and the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Te Papa subsequently purchased He Kōrero Purākau mo Te Awanui o Te Motu: story of a New Zealand river for their collection. The presentation at musée du quai Branly has been managed by Christchurch Art Gallery with further support from CNZ.*

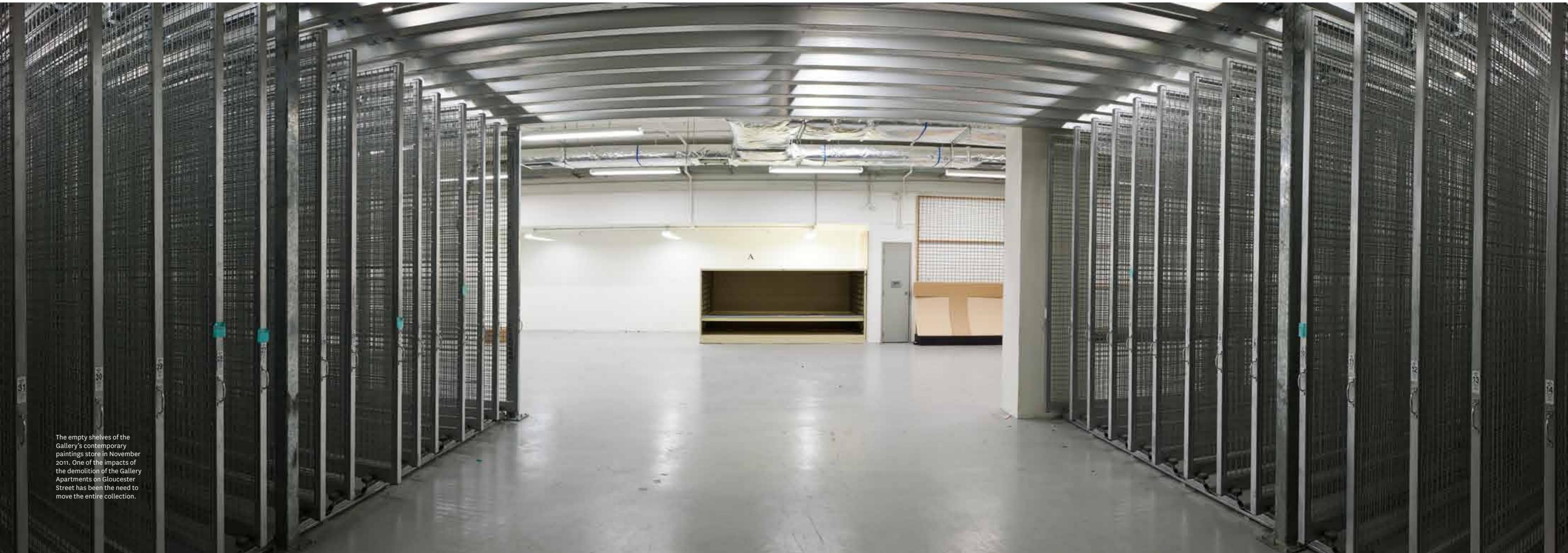
*Jenny Harper was commissioner for New Zealand at Venice in 2011, and has been appointed by the Arts Board of CNZ to the same position for 2013.*

*Michael Parekowhai was awarded an Arts Foundation New Zealand Laureate Award in 2001 and is associate professor at the University of Auckland's Elam School of Fine Arts. He has an extensive exhibition history and his work features in most public and many private collections in New Zealand and Australia as well as further afield.*



**‘... Parekowhai stepped out of the limelight and enabled others to match his skill and virtuosity with their talent.’**

Michael Parekowhai He Kōrero Purākau mo Te Awanui o Te Motu: story of a New Zealand river 2011. Wood, brass, automotive paint, mother of pearl, paua, upholstery. Collection of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Photo: Michael Hall



The empty shelves of the Gallery's contemporary paintings store in November 2011. One of the impacts of the demolition of the Gallery Apartments on Gloucester Street has been the need to move the entire collection.

**Staff Profile**  
Project Manager, RCP

We've talked a lot recently about how it feels for us to be closed, and how much we're looking forward to our reopening. But sadly the date for that reopening is now very much out of our control, not least because here in the Gallery our specialities lie mostly outside the building trade: for the most part, the exhibitions and events that we organise and project manage take place in functional buildings with complete services. So we needed a little help in getting our building back to its pre-earthquake self—enter the catchily titled Resource Coordination Partnership Ltd and Matthew Noyes.

Matt is a Welshman, and a relatively new import to this country. He has worked for RCP since April 2011, and in property and construction professionally since 2002. He describes his job as 'advising clients on their risks and ambitions and helping them find a suitable way through quite complex problems.' Well we certainly have complex problems...

Matt is our project manager, and although not technically part of the Gallery's staff, he spends a good portion of his working day in and around the building. His role is to guide the decisions and issues in front of the Gallery, enabling us to plan for our reoccupation with an improved appreciation of the risks and tasks in front of us. Right now, that means working with the Gallery and our commissioned engineers to better understand what repairs are required, and what they mean in terms of our programme.

To our rear, the impending demolition of the Gallery Apartments literally hangs over us, setting the timeframes around what we can and cannot do. And within the Gallery itself, assessments of our building's structural integrity are set to continue for some time. It's these challenges that Matt will be helping us to steer through over the coming months. Bear with us, we'll get there.



Matthew Noyes

B.166

# PAGEWORK #12

## CHRISTIAN CAPURRO

*The following double-page spread is given over to the twelfth 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.*

Christian Capurro is an artist from Melbourne who works a lot with magazines. But 'works with' isn't quite accurate. Better to say he works *on* them. Capurro's best-known projects have been heroic acts of erasure—projects in which he and collaborators bend to the task of rubbing out every page of certain glossy magazines. The results are highly ambivalent commentaries on photography, commerce and desire. On the one hand, Capurro's erasures seem to express a straightforwardly critical impulse—the artist systematically eradicating all those glossy come-ons and hollow seductions. On the other hand, the sheer quantity of time Capurro spends on these erasures suggests an odd and even excessive attachment to the magazines and the images within them. Add to that the fact that the 'erased' magazines themselves become unusually charged and seductive objects.

Capurro's pagework for this issue belongs to a related body of work, in which correction fluid blooms and flows on mirrored and printed surfaces. Far from eradicating the style-icons that appear on the two magazine pages overleaf,

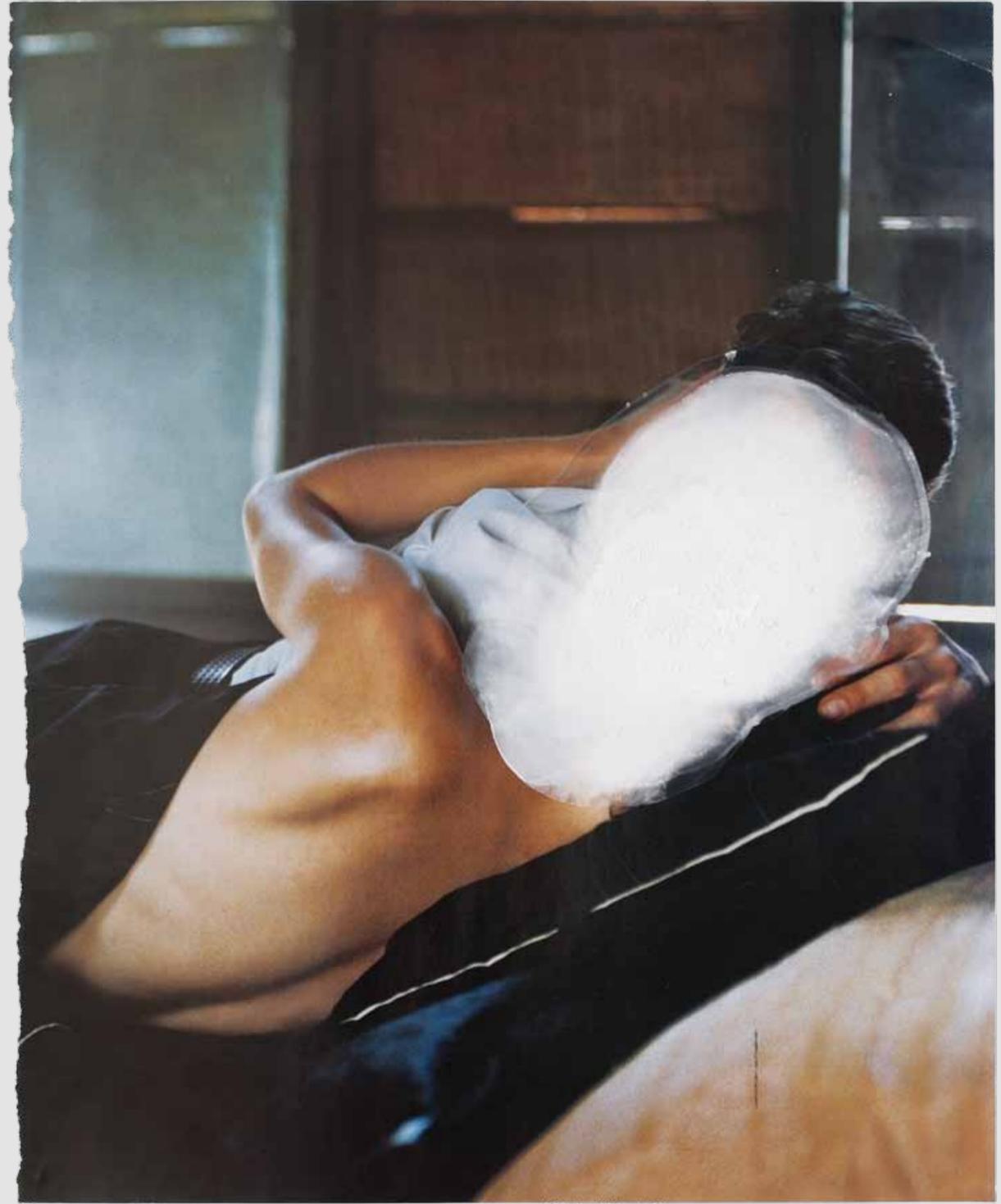
Capurro's corrections lend them a strange new presence—as if their heads are glowing with some excessive internal energy. Even as they comment upon the contemporary traffic in images, the results hark back to nineteenth-century 'spirit photography'—photographs doctored so that the people within them seemed to be surrounded by supernatural fields or disgorging streams of ectoplasm. Ghosts in the photographic machine.

Justin Paton

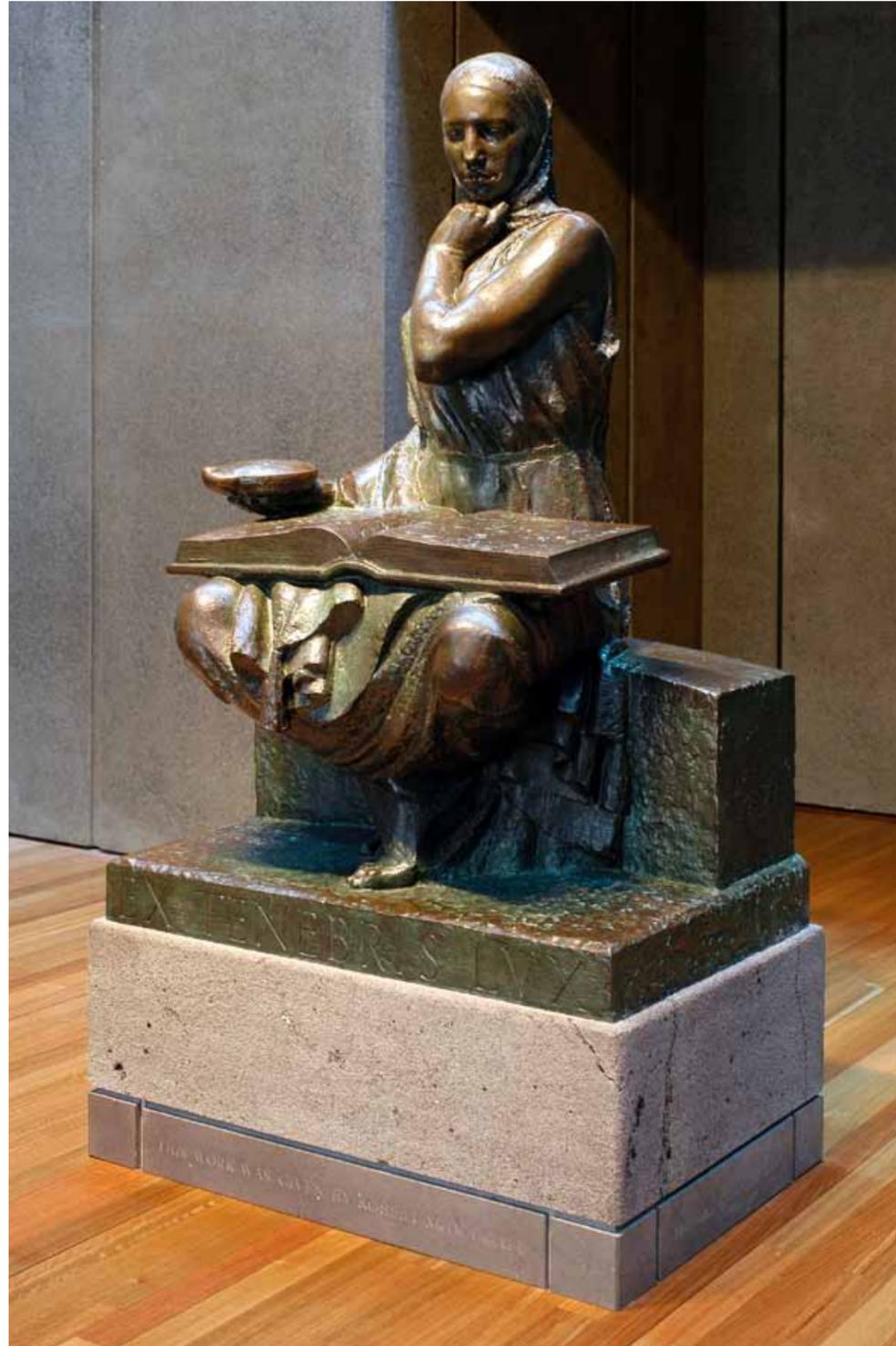
*'Pagework' has been generously supported by an anonymous donor.*



Over page:  
Christian Capurro **Studies**  
for 'The Waste of Breath'  
2010. Correction fluid  
on magazine page.  
Reproduced courtesy  
of the artist



Ernest George Gillick  
Ex Tenebris Lux 1937.  
Bronze. Collection  
of Christchurch Art  
Gallery Te Puna o  
Waiwhetu, presented  
by R.E. McDougall.  
Reproduced courtesy  
of Norah B. Landells



Just being in Christchurch Art Gallery has always been incredibly inspirational for me. I still remember right back in September when the quake happened at 4.35am. My wife Jo and I were at the Council building by 5am, but there was obviously damage so our next call was the Gallery. During that subsequent stint at the Gallery there was still art around in some galleries and it was wonderful to work in those surroundings.

Then during the very dark days after the 22 February earthquake, I remember walking into a space where elements of the Van der Velden exhibition were still hanging. It was such a beautiful contrast. The Gallery was full of hundreds of people from so many different organisations involved in the Civil Defence operation—USAR, St John, the NZ Army, our own Council staff to name just a few—and then there were these incredible paintings. They captured the essence of New Zealand; you could almost smell the bush and the scenery. It was such beauty in the midst of such darkness.

Of all the pieces of art in the Gallery, however, there is one that has become a kind of friend to me—the bronze figure in the Gallery foyer which I now know is called *Ex Tenebris Lux* (From Darkness, Light).

I stood next to her when we were talking to people who had lost their loved ones and their homes. I also stood next to her when I was doing media interviews or when I was talking to the Prime Minister or Prince William when they visited Christchurch. She was there during moments of great generosity when people turned up with food for the rescue teams. And during all of this, she sat quietly and contemplatively.

I would not say she was my only favourite piece but I think she provides something very spiritual—something about her just made me feel supported. She has a very strong presence and there is an element of the guardian angel about her.

I would like to say a huge thank you to director Jenny Harper and all the Gallery staff for their understanding over the past year; I know that it has been tough for them to see the Gallery taken over by Civil Defence and the recovery effort. The Gallery has earned a place in history, not only as the home of wonderful art, but also as the place where so much great work has been done around the recovery of our city.

Bob Parker



Bob Parker was born in Christchurch and grew up in the Heathcote Valley. He was elected Mayor of Christchurch City Council in 2007, and was re-elected for a second term in October 2010.

# MY FAVOURITE

## Noteworthy

### My Gallery is live

Have you noticed the small + sign that now appears across our website?

That little sign tells you that you are looking at a page you can add to My Gallery—a new feature that allows you to collect all your favourite bits of our website into one place. As well as that you can upload your own photos or text, and move all these elements around on the screen to tell your own story. This means you could pick your favourite works from our collection, write about them yourself, add your own photos and arrange all of this any way you like.

You can keep what you create to yourself, share it with friends, or it can be featured on the Gallery's website for everyone to enjoy. We have already created a few sets ourselves, but the sky's the limit and we would love to see your ideas. So when you're next online, look out for the plus sign and start collecting.



### Guides and tours

In November, the Gallery launched a new initiative called Outer Spaces Tours—a series of guided tours which will take place at 12 noon on weekend days until the end of February. Led by our volunteer guides, these free 45 minute tours take visitors on an informative walk around the Gallery to look at works including Jae Hoon Lee's *Annapurna* billboard on Worcester Boulevard, Julia Morison's *Aibohphobia* on the carpark bunker, a newly installed work on the forecourt titled *You Are Here* by local artist Matt Akehurst and a new lightbox project on the forecourt related to the forthcoming **Reconstruction: conversations on a city** exhibition. Other works on the tour include the Gallery's gateway sculpture *Reasons for Voyaging* by Graham Bennett and Fayne Robinson's powhenua *Te Pou Herenga Waka* outside the Worcester Boulevard entrance of the Christchurch City Council building.

Artist Julia Morison led the Saturday 26 November tour with a discussion on her work *Aibohphobia* and we plan to involve other artists as guest speakers on a monthly basis. Artist Matt Akehurst will speak about his work as part of the tour on Saturday 10 December. See the website for details.

A short walk along the boulevard from the Gallery, Canterbury Museum has reopened its doors to the public. One of their opening exhibitions was *Brian Brake: Lens on the world*, developed and toured by the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and presented in partnership with Christchurch Art Gallery. And our friendly and informative volunteer guides were on hand to lead daily free guided tours of the exhibition at the Museum.

Above:  
Matt Akehurst *You Are Here* 2011.  
Aluminium, steel, paint, vinyl.  
Reproduced courtesy of the artist

### Recent awards

The Gallery has been very successful in the 2011 rounds of design and publishing awards.

First came the BeST awards, in which our seriously awesome web designers Sons & Co scored a gold award in the interactive category for our new mobile web version of the Gallery's site. We're keeping the mobile site under wraps for now, so this is the closest you'll get to seeing it. But keep an eye on your mobile device of choice for some big changes in the near future. Also at the BeST awards, Neil Pardington scooped a silver award for the *Andrew Drummond: Observation/Action/Reflection* publication, and our design partners Strategy Design and Advertising grabbed bronze awards for their work on *Bulletin* and the Ron Mueck advertising campaign. All in all a good night for the Gallery, and our thanks to everyone involved in all the projects.

And then in November *Bulletin* won the magazine category of the 2011 MAPDA awards, and the Gallery website was highly commended in the website category. Both were up against pretty tough competition, so we're really pleased with the results.



### Facebook

Over the past few months we've been pouring our attentions into anything that allows us to communicate with our audience. And that's included a lot of online activity. We've revamped our homepage and blogs and, as of late October, we finally took the plunge and joined Facebook. That's right, we now spell Friend with a capital F. So if you already like us, then go and Like us. It's a great way to keep up with what's happening behind the scenes here at the Gallery.



### 2011 Arts Foundation Award for Patronage

We'd like to offer our heartfelt congratulations to Chartwell Trust, who recently received the 2011 Arts Foundation of New Zealand Award for Patronage. Chartwell is the sixth annual recipient of this great award and joins previously honoured philanthropists Denis and Verna Adam, Dame Jenny Gibbs, Roderick and Gillian Deane, Adrienne, Lady Stewart and Gus and Irene Fisher. We were also delighted that the Gallery was singled out as a recipient of Chartwell's extended largesse, in recognition of our outreach work while the Gallery has been closed.

It's now over forty years since Rob Gardiner established the Chartwell Trust in Hamilton to assist visual arts in New Zealand, and the Trust has provided substantial funding to galleries, individual projects and artists. Over the last three years, Chartwell has supported the Gallery's distinctive and popular exhibitions designed for family audiences, including **White on White** and **Blue Planet**. Our forthcoming exhibition **Bad Hair Day**—which will be installed when we reopen—has also benefited from Chartwell support.

Kia kaha and thanks, Rob and Sue Gardiner.

### Shop sale

As you will know, the shop is currently the one part of the Gallery that is open to the public. It's full of great new stock, including lots of brilliant ideas for Christmas gifts. And, in January we will be having a monster sale—think of all those lovely books and gifts, all at great prices. Make sure you come in for a browse.

The shop is open seven days a week from 10am to 4pm.



### Outer Spaces Explore and Draw Family Fun Trail

While the Gallery doors remain closed to the public, there's still plenty to see and do outside with **Outer Spaces**—an ongoing programme of artworks 'outside the box'.

Every day until the end of February, families can pick up a free Explore and Draw activity from the Gallery Shop. Children can have fun answering questions, completing drawings and finding out interesting facts.

Clipboards and pencils are supplied and at the end all children will receive a cool sticker of Julia Morison's *Aibohphobia*.

### FEATURED EVENT

#### Outer Spaces guided tour with senior curator Justin Paton

**SATURDAY 18 FEBRUARY**

**12PM / FORECOURT / FREE**

Enjoy a free guided tour of the **Outer Spaces** with one of our volunteer guides who will take you for an informative walk around the Gallery. The Gallery's senior curator Justin Paton will begin the tour to discuss the place of public art in post-quake Christchurch.

# UNCAGED

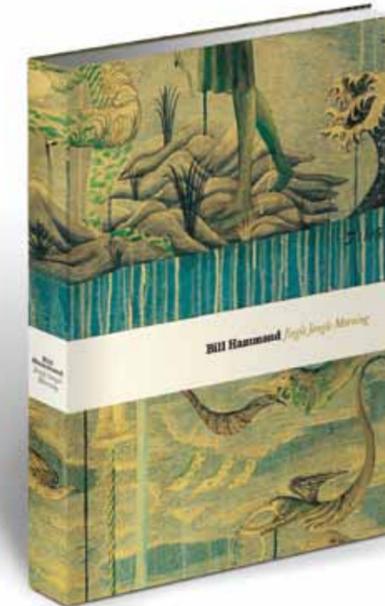
CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY  
TE PUNA O WAIWHETU

## SHOP

The Christchurch Art Gallery Shop  
is now open with a huge range of  
unique and exciting gifts, stationery,  
books, prints and cards.

Stockists of: Jill Main merino and jewellery, Upoko Design jewellery,  
Spoonful design, Acme pens, Moleskine journals and diaries, Nando  
Home, Selma Rainey, Erupt prints, Third Drawer Down and much more.

OPEN 7 DAYS / 10AM - 4PM [CHRISTCHURCHARTGALLERY.ORG.NZ](http://CHRISTCHURCHARTGALLERY.ORG.NZ)



Bill Hammond: Jingle Jangle Morning  
Winner: Illustrative Section, Montana Book Awards  
BPANZ Book Design award winner

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