

# B. 208



Christchurch Art Gallery  
Te Puna o Waiwhetū

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# B.

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Please see the back cover for more details.

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Cover: Grant Lingard *Hutch and Lure* (detail).  
Cotton, soap. Collection of Christchurch Art  
Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, gift of the estates  
of Grant Lingard and Peter Lanini, 1998

Left: Grant Lingard *Swan Song*. 1995–96.  
White enamel-coated laundry drying racks,  
sheets, pillowcase and towels. Collection of  
Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū,  
gift of Trevor Fry, 2013

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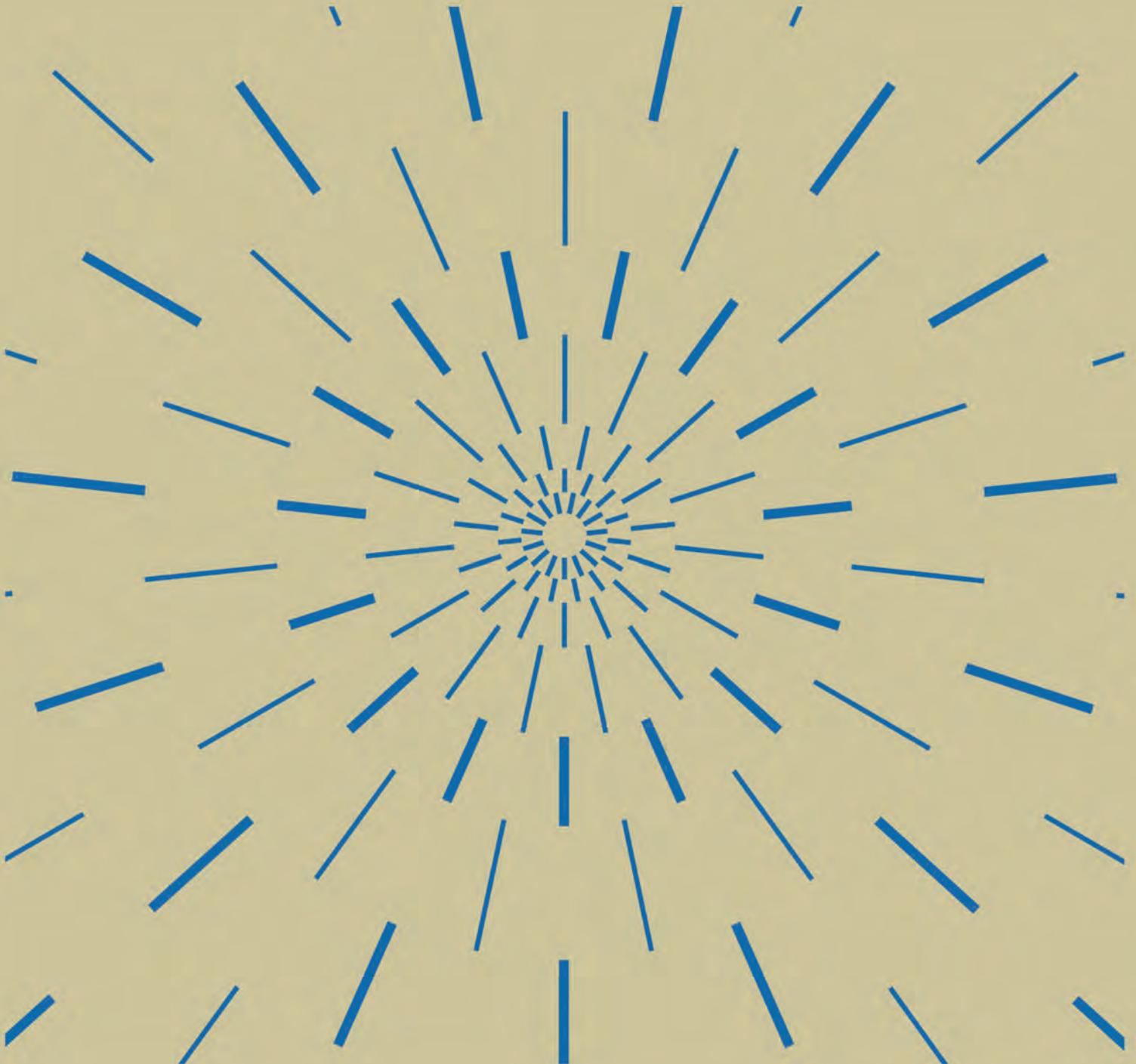
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# Director's *Foreword*

**BLAIR JACKSON**

June 2022

Welcome to the winter edition of *Bulletin*. It's been great to watch our visitors returning to the building over the past weeks despite the ongoing effects of Covid-19. This issue is coming to you regrettably late due to the pandemic; it's one of a few changes to our published schedules as we find our feet again. I urge you to keep in touch via our website and social media for updates on what's happening as we return to our full and vibrant programme of exhibitions and events.

At the start of June we were very pleased to open *Māori Moving Image ki Te Puna o Waiwhetū*, the second iteration of this important exhibition and a feast for eyes, ears and minds. *Māori Moving Image* champions film, animation and video art made by several generations of Māori artists, attempting to address the lack of representation these works have received in our art histories. It's accompanied by a fantastic new publication that really brings the subject to life.

For *Bulletin*, Physics Room director Abby Cunnane looks in depth at Jeremy Leatinu'u's *Te Whakawhitinga* —an eleven-minute film that follows the southward journey of a young Māori man as he travels from Northland to Te Waipounamu to begin his military service and enter World War II. And writer and curator Hanahiva Rose reflects on the exhibition as she draws a line between the international Event Horizon project's recently released photograph of the black hole at the centre of the Milky Way, and works from the exhibition that deal with the fluidity of digital space and the way that moving image can breathe new life into existing imagery.

I'm really excited to reveal that later this quarter, *Perilous: Unheard Stories from the Collection* opens its doors to visitors. *Perilous* replaces the phenomenal *Te Wheke*, which has been on display on the first floor

since May 2020. Art can tell stories about ourselves and the world around us. Conventional narratives allow only a narrow section of society to dominate our galleries—often male, Western and heterosexual. With a title that acknowledges the complexity of the task, *Perilous* is formed around the challenges and possibilities that emerge when we make space for fresh voices and disruptive ideas.

A key space in *Perilous* shines a light on the work of Canterbury artist Grant Lingard. Lingard addressed gay issues in his witty and poetic work, from the repression and confusion of New Zealand's macho rugby culture to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. For *Bulletin* we invited writer and curator Francis McWhannell to write on the work of this important artist, who is now beginning to get the respect he deserves. Another space within the exhibition takes as its title the Māori whakatauki 'Ka mua, ka muri', which many of you will know means 'walking backwards into the future'; we asked the exhibition's four curators to each select a work from the show that offers a different perspective on the intersection of the past and future. From Rita Angus's *Cass* to Ana Iti's *Treasures Left by our Ancestors*, they invite us to rethink how we commonly see our heritage.

Our Pagework is supplied by Amy Howden-Chapman, whose work focuses on the increasing urgency and ongoing complacency around our response to the climate crisis, and the weirdly persistent blind spot we seem to have for what is truly a global crisis. Lyttelton writer and poet Ben Brown selects Shane Cotton's *Takarangi* for our My Favourite—his response is lyrical and rather special.

It is with sadness that I mark here the passing of much-loved Canterbury potter and teacher Denise Meyrick. Denise began potting in Governors

Bay in the mid 1960s, and by 1972 she was working as a full-time ceramicist. She exhibited regularly and was a part of a core group of local potters—including her partner Rex Valentine, Michael Trumic, Margaret Ryley and Frederika Ersten—who established the Studio 393 space in central Christchurch.

We also farewell the incomparable Allie Eagle who was a key force in the development of feminist art practice in Aotearoa New Zealand. She had a strong connection with Christchurch, completing her Diploma of Fine Arts at the University of Canterbury in 1968 and becoming the exhibitions officer at the Robert McDougall Art Gallery (now Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū) in 1974. We are lucky to hold a terrific self-portrait by Allie in our collection, which will be on display from August as part of our *Perilous* exhibition.

Finally, I'd like to invite you to come and join us for Celebrate Te Wheke on 2 July. An event for all our communities, it will feature music, poetry, art and cultural performances by tangata whenua and Pasifika artists. Expect a perfect mid-winter pick-me-up, and a great opportunity to enjoy the final evening of this spectacular show. We'll have food and drink available to purchase from our pop-up bars and food trucks, so come and join us for a night to remember.

# A Gathering Gravity

*Anticipating Grant Lingard:  
Needs and Desires*

Francis McWhannell

Grant Lingard *Mummy's Boy—Smells Like Team Spirit* c. 1995.  
Soap. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū,  
gift of the estates of Grant Lingard and Peter Lanini, 2001



My encounters with Grant Lingard's works have been few and fleeting. My information derives largely from the archive. The show has yet to open and I know only the title. But I am deep in speculation about what it will bring. I envision multiplicity. Bewitching constructions of salvaged wood—things bashed together from things previously smashed apart. Effigies cloned using stencils and stamps, recalling branded boxes, home-made stationery, punk tattoos. Parades of hospital-white linen, the antithesis of dirty laundry. I anticipate sensitivity. Poetic reflections on the group and the self, on gender expression and sexuality, and on the ways these things flutter their wings and metamorphose. Whimsy and pathos in potent balance. A wit that traverses materials and words, trading in pure sensation.

What is certain is that *Needs and Desires* carries a weight of expectation. Its subject, Grant Lingard (1961–1995), was born and raised on the West Coast of Te Waipounamu and spent his adult life in Ōtautahi and Sydney. The last major retrospective of his work, *Desire and Derision* (1996), took place at the Jonathan Smart Gallery over a quarter of a century ago.<sup>1</sup> The gap is not entirely surprising. As Jeremiah Boniface—one of the artist's keenest champions, and an important contributor to the body of research on his work—has observed, Lingard faces special challenges when it comes to renewed attention.<sup>2</sup> Many of his pieces are fragile, and the question of remaking them is fraught, since both the artist and his partner, Peter Lanini, have passed away. Yet a retrospective now feels necessary, as well as desirable.

Interest in Lingard has been gathering of late. April 2021 saw the Ilam Campus Gallery present the group exhibition *TRUE LOVE: A Tribute to Grant Lingard*, which emphasised his lingering artistic and personal impact on the art communities of Aotearoa in general and Ōtautahi in particular. Shortly thereafter,

an important installation, *Swan Song* (1995–96), appeared in *Crossings* (a group show about intimacies and distances) at the Adam Art Gallery Te Pātaka Toi. Lingard is increasingly recognised as a seminal gay artist—that is, an artist who publicly self-identified as gay and addressed gay issues in his work. To make a show about him is to make a show about a queer ancestor, and one whose importance only grows as New Zealand moves further in the direction of acceptance and seeks to celebrate queer heritages and histories.

Lingard's status as a trailblazer is undeniable. His *Box of Birds* (1987)—with its connotations of the bravely chipper and insidiously squawky—was perhaps the earliest work by a local artist to respond to HIV/AIDS.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, as David Herkt has remarked, it was in the vanguard internationally, being contemporaneous with the first pieces on the subject by Americans Felix Gonzalez-Torres and Keith Haring.<sup>4</sup> Lingard was the driving force behind the landmark show *Homosexual*.<sup>5</sup> This was held at the CSA Gallery in 1988, and comprised works by Trevor Fry, Paul Johns, Paul Rayner and Lingard himself. According to Boniface, the exhibition was the first at a public gallery in Aotearoa to expressly centre homosexuality.<sup>6</sup> A Lingard solo of the same year, *Incident in the Park*, was likewise unabashed in its queerness, taking as its subject gay romance and the practice of cruising.

Having been born in the 1980s, I had my first meeting with Lingard's work only relatively recently, when I visited *Sleeping Arrangements* (2018) at the Dowse Art Museum. The exhibition was curated by the 2017 Blumhardt Foundation/Creative New Zealand curatorial intern, Simon Gennard, and included a single, grand piece by Lingard, *Flag* (1994). Composed of a network of white Y-front Jockey underpants, the work is one of the artist's best-known. It was widely shown as soon as it was made: as part of his solo

Grant Lingard *Flag* 1994. Mixed media. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, purchased 1996





Grant Lingard *Hutch and Lure* (detail). Cotton, soap. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, gift of the estates of Grant Lingard and Peter Lanini, 1998

*Coop* (1994) at the Jonathan Jensen Gallery; *Tales Untold* (1994), a multi-site public art exhibition organised by South Island Art Projects; and *Art Now* (1994), curated by Christina Barton, at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.<sup>7</sup>

*Flag* is an instance of Lingard working in a mode that is maximally bold, provocative, and—to use a rather freighted term—proud. White flags are, of course, associated with surrender; however, as Gennard has observed, Lingard described the work as “a small Up Yours, victory for me the artist.”<sup>8</sup> Writing in 1996, Brent Skerten referred to it as a “neo-Nazi flag”, suggesting that Lingard was teasingly condemning the white supremacist element within Christchurch by producing a holey, all-white flag made of underpants.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, Lingard linked white Y-fronts with gay fetish and sex, bending popular conceptions of the garment, a staple of blokes everywhere, and of the Jockey brand, which was plugged by rugby players in the past, just as it is today.

During *Tales Untold*, *Flag* flew outside the ur-institution of the Canterbury Museum. In the basement of the nearby Robert McDougall Art Annex, Lingard painted the walls a sticky-looking black, creating a space reminiscent of a crypt, sacristy, and sex dungeon—and perhaps, too, echoing works from *Coop* featuring tar and feathers. A bed and table adorned with cloths made of Y-fronts were installed. In the catalogue, Vivienne Stone and Giovanni Intra drew a connection with the ‘old boys’ network’ of Christchurch. No doubt, Lingard was also poking fun at the condemnation of non-heterosexual relationships by many within the Christian Church, and getting at the ritual and spiritual dimensions that can attend sex practices that outsiders might fear or abhor. The cloths were clean, but soiling—by sweat or other excretions—was obviously implicit.<sup>10</sup>

*Art Now* as a whole ruffled feathers, attracting sarcastic commentary. A writer for the *Evening Post* griped about the prevalence of everyday objects and insinuated that the show was pretentious.<sup>11</sup> Lingard’s *Hutch and Lure* (1993) proved especially divisive. It comprised ten white Y-fronts arranged in a circle on the floor. In the crotch of each was nestled a piece of fruit made of soap, a direct reference to the homosexual slur ‘fruit’. One visitor apparently grumbled, “My five-year-old grandson can do that.”<sup>12</sup> Another filed a complaint, claiming that her children had been “putting fruit down their underpants and running around with it”.<sup>13</sup> Perhaps the work was behaving as intended, tapping into common processes of experimentation and self-exploration, including the recreation of genitals and breasts using everyday entities.

Like much of Lingard’s later work, *Hutch and Lure* is outwardly simple but rich in associations. One might think of a messy bedroom or school locker into which gruds and old pieces of fruit have been tossed. One might think of the good-enough-to-eat scent of fruity soaps and the smell of bodies, washed or otherwise. The work was first exhibited as part of a Sydney Mardi Gras group show, *Crush* (1993), and later as part of an important solo, *Smells Like Team Spirit* (1993), at the Jonathan Jensen Gallery. In both contexts, Lingard placed an emphasis on the game of rugby, which has long been a focus of masculinist culture in Australia and New Zealand, marked by homophobia and—paradoxically—a site of discovery for gay boys via the changing room, field, billboard and screen.

The title *Smells Like Team Spirit*, which was also applied to Lingard’s overall contribution to *Art Now*, points to an important aspect of his practice: the use of puns. It alludes to the well-known Nirvana song *Smells Like Teen Spirit* (1991). By changing ‘teen’ to ‘team’, Lingard at once drew attention to teenage life—with all

its foul and heady smells, self-reflection and self-loathing—and emphasised the question of belonging. Other works created about the same time likewise get at the sense of being part of, or ostracised by, a group. *Sin Bin* (1993), a bench covered with rugby boot sprigs that featured in *Crush*, evokes rejection of the 'sinful' by religious groups, as well as those relegated to a bench during a match for misconduct.<sup>14</sup> Conversely, it might also be understood to suggest acceptance within bondage or punk circles.

*The Collector of Beauty, I-IV* (1991) employs word play and visual puns, and invokes further images of youth. Butterflies in jars—exquisite creatures quite literally collected—are presented alongside panels that mimic minimal abstract paintings but are in fact pigmented using cosmetics. I suspect that there are personal stories at play. Certainly, Lingard was an inveterate collector, including of magazines and records. The butterflies are toy-like fakes of enamelled tin. This enhances the tension between artifice and authenticity. There is a sense, too, of the beautiful and seemingly vulnerable constrained and under scrutiny. Those who make themselves up might seek liberation, through performance, or through the creation of outsides that better reflect insides. They also, very often, become trapped within suffocating structures of judgement.

Such structures can be seen to underlie *Somewhere Between Heaven and Earth Here and Now in the New Age Cosmos* (1988), which was originally included in the inaugural exhibition at the Robert McDougall Art Annex, *Here and Now: Twelve Young Canterbury Artists* (1988).<sup>15</sup> The work is, to my mind, typical of Lingard's practice, being pared back and textured, incisive and poignant. It features two identical white towels resting on flimsy rails. These are mounted beneath twin framed copies in silhouette of the forearms of Adam and God as

depicted by Michelangelo on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. The limbs peek through milky surrounds that recall clouds or steamed-up glass. The compact installation resembles other 1980s works by Lingard, which play with replication to suggest homosexuality but also conformity, or the expectation of the same.

As with pieces like *Mummy's Boy—Smells Like Team Spirit* (c. 1995)—a pair of footy boots made of Sunlight soap—and *Hutch and Lure*, there is an apparent emphasis on cleanliness. In *Somewhere Between Heaven and Earth Here and Now in the New Age Cosmos*, though, the logical context is not the washhouse. There is no soap to scrub clothing clean, or to wash out a filthy mouth. The work instead connects with the bathroom, or the toilet, and evokes moral purity. I think of images of the Virgin at her washbasin, immaculate, without sin. The implied opposite is the 'unclean' gay man, who finds Adonises in heaven, who imagines any pair of men as lovers, who lingers in the cheap motel, the sauna or the public convenience.

The picture frames within the work carry neat plaques. Etched with the expressions 'running hot' and 'running cold', they echo nameplates of the sort that nurses might wear, or labels found on paintings from centuries past. The phrases call to mind inconstant showers, emotions alternating between warmth and coldness, fluctuating body temperature, and, therefore, a person fighting disease. Perhaps because Lingard ultimately died from AIDS-related illness, I tend to focus on associations with HIV/AIDS, reading the installation as a reflection on the effects of the epidemic on queer people, and the phenomenon of attaching to the illness a moral judgement with ungodly consequences. Modest as it is, the work has become for me a powerful emblem of its moment and, indeed, of the queer art history of this part of the world.

Grant Lingard *Flower Bed For Sweet William* (detail) 1990. Mixed media. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, gift of the estates of Grant Lingard and Peter Lanini, 1998



The 'here and now' of Aotearoa in 2022 is the product of significant changes. Medications enable many who live with HIV to do so indefinitely, and support the curbing of transmission. All manner of stigmas pertaining to queer people have diminished. Lingard's works bear witness to a past that was often dark, and they helped to pave the way for a present that is in some ways brighter. At the same time, embracing sensuality and wit as they do, they stand as reminders not to overplay the gloom. The recent past was populated by capable, wise, exquisitely complex experimenters. Some, like Judy Darragh and Paul Johns, are with us still. Others, like Lingard and Julian Dashper are now cosmonauts. Yet their art and their influence endure. Their gravity pulls at us, and, as new audiences experience their works, the force gathers. It will only ever gather.

**Francis McWhannell** is a writer, gallerist, and exhibition-maker. He is co-director of *Season in central Tāmaki Makaurau*, and curator of the *Fletcher Trust Collection*. Grant Lingard: Needs and Desires is on display as part of *Perilous: Unheard Stories from the Collection from 6 August 2022*.

- 1 Jonathan Smart was not only Lingard's gallerist, via the Jonathan Smart Gallery and the Jonathan Jensen Gallery, he also wrote early and insightful commentaries on the artist's work.
- 2 Boniface runs a website, which is an invaluable source of information concerning Lingard. See <https://grantlingard.wordpress.com>.
- 3 The work was earlier titled *A Dozen Hail Marys*. Jeremiah Boniface, 'Grant Lingard, 1961–1995', Honours research essay, Victoria University of Wellington, 2006, p.15.
- 4 David Herkt, 'Box of Birds to Swan Song: HIV/AIDS and Mortality in Grant Lingard's Late Works', in *TRUE LOVE: A Tribute to Grant Lingard*, Ōtautahi: Ilam Campus Gallery, 2021, n.p.
- 5 It was also known as *Beyond Four Straight Sides*.
- 6 Boniface, 'Grant Lingard, 1961–1995', p.20. The Homosexual Law Reform Act, which decriminalised sex acts between men, was only passed in 1986.
- 7 It seems that several versions of *Flag* were produced.
- 8 Simon Gennard, *Sleeping Arrangements*, Te Awakairangi Lower Hutt: Dowse Art Museum, 2018, n.p.
- 9 Brent Skerten, *Desire and Derision: A Personal Take on the Art of Grant Lingard*, Ōtautahi: Jonathan Smart Gallery, 1996, n.p.
- 10 South Island Art Projects (ed.), *Tales Untold: Unearthing Christchurch Histories*, Ōtautahi: South Island Art Projects, 1994, pp.11, 16.
- 11 See, for instance, Karl du Fresne, 'But ... Is It Art?', *Evening Post*, 23 July 1994.
- 12 See, for example, Jane Bowron, 'Art for Art's Sake?', *Sunday Star-Times*, 11 September 1994.
- 13 Boniface, 'Grant Lingard, 1961–1995', p.50.
- 14 Jeremiah Boniface, "'Otherness" in a World of Kiwi Male Stereotypes: Grant Lingard's "Strange Bedfellows"', *LGBTQI+ Histories of Aotearoa New Zealand*, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, accessed 1 April 2022, <https://www.tepapa.govt.nz/discover-collections/read-watch-play/history/lgbtqi-histories-aotearoa-new-zealand/otherness-world>.
- 15 The work was recently exhibited as *Running hot, running cold as part of TRUE LOVE: A Tribute to Grant Lingard (2021)* at the Ilam Campus Gallery.



Grant Lingard with *Box of Birds*. From *The Press*, 22 October 1987.  
Photograph courtesy of Stuff Limited

# MEMORY PICTURES

Hanahiva Rose

*... it suits me to take pictures on celluloid that were formerly pictures of the mind, memory pictures, pictures of the imagination ...<sup>1</sup>*

In 1990, Barry Barclay described film-making and the act of “taking pictures” as a kind of robbery. With film, he says, an image leaves the place where it was made “and will probably never return”. In that process, film-makers “become custodians of other people’s spirits”. It was Barclay’s hope that new forms of engagement with the many records that have already been created—images, films, oral histories—underpinned by the “Māori knowledge of what spirit shines through” them could guide their return, to the people and places where the “held image” was taken from.<sup>2</sup>

As I was writing this, the first photograph of Sagittarius A\*, the black hole at the centre of our Milky Way galaxy, was published by the Event Horizon project, an international team of more than 300 scientists and thirteen institutions. I was struck by the image’s refusal to be ‘held’. The photograph, a burning orange circular glow reminiscent of the effect created by staring at a light and then squeezing your eyes tightly closed, is an impossible vision—pieced together by a global network of telescopes that compose one large telescope larger than Earth, the gaps in their vision filled in by computer algorithms. Perfectly still, it cannot describe the noise and turbulence that defines its subject: that is an understanding it leaves for us to account for. Seen by most of us on screens no larger than a television—but more likely a cell phone—a terrifying vastness we can hardly begin to understand is reduced trillions of times over. Looking at the image as I write this, I stretch my hand over the

screen, trying to cover it. It disappears behind my palm, only soft edges poking through.

In 2003, Rachael Rakena described digital space as “a new realm of the cosmos”. For Māori artists, it is “like the ocean our tupuna crossed”.

*It is specifically non-land-based. It is a fluid medium through which movement, both travel and floating occurs. This space allows for relationships across terrains where the issue of identity lies not so much in geography but in the development of communities in fluid spaces that are both resonant with mythologies, whakapapa and belonging, and responsive to contemporary technologies. And, indeed, produced by them.*<sup>3</sup>

The liquidity of digital media has been a key theme of the writing that surrounds Māori moving image artworks. Rakena’s term ‘toi rerehiko’ is a combination of rorohiko (the reo Māori word for computer, or electric brain) and rere (to flow). That flowing, or unifying, nature of water as a way of describing digital art is “not unexpected in our island nation”, argues Maree Mills in her 2009 essay ‘Pou Rewa: The Liquid Post, Māori Go Digital?’

*The traversing of cyberspace outside the limitations of time is also metaphoric of the soul’s journey to Hawaiiki (our homeland) or to the realms of Rangi (our sky father) where the departed may rest and sparkle as stars.*<sup>4</sup>



Rachael Rakana *Rerehiko* 2003. Multi-projection video environment. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, purchased 2004



Shannon Te Ao *la rā, ia rā (rere runga, rere raro)* 2021. 3-channel 4K video, black and white, sound; 6 mins, 20 secs. Featuring Zen Te Hira, Heremaia Tapiata Bright and Kurt Komene; photography by Harry Culy; production by Michael Bridgman. With Thanks to Kate Te Ao, Shaun Waugh, Creative New Zealand and Whiti o Rehua School of Art Massey University





Ana Iti *Trapped in a kiss* 2021. Single-channel HD video. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, purchased 2022

In part, it is the liveliness of moving image that connects it with those histories: a capacity for change and transformation. Moving image is defined by its relationship to time. What Māori artists seem to have found in it is a way of describing the passage of time that feels, paradoxically, uninhibited—stretching out beyond the linearity of the media and into an expression of time that can be “as long or short or broken or continuous” as the narrative that sustains it.<sup>5</sup>

Dr Shepard Doleman, from the Event Horizon project, described trying to see Sagittarius A\* through the blur created by ionized electrons and protons in interstellar space as like “looking through shower glass”. It’s a hazy recollection: since the image was taken, the black hole has transformed thousands of times over.

In Ana Iti’s *Trapped in a kiss* (2021), Iti’s warm breath collides with a cold pane of glass to form a foggy surface. Using her fingers, she writes directly on to it—the impermanent nature of her frosty page a reminder of the fickleness of memory. Talking about his work *Ia rā, ia rā (rere runga, rere raro) Everyday (I fly high, I fly low)* (2021) and the location where it was made—a valley that is “one of the places I call home”—Shannon Te Ao says that it sits between a real and a fictional place. Between what happens in the world and what happens in the film there are no points of convergence, where a viewer can say: this is real life. Of course, that feeling does not prevent them

from saying: this feels like my life. Both Iti and Te Ao’s work seem intimately personal in the same way that a memory is only your own.<sup>6</sup>

It was the absence of a record of Māori video art that drove *Māori Moving Image: An Open Archive* in its various iterations at the Dowse Art Museum, Christchurch Art Gallery and Te Uru Waitakere over 2019–2021. The exhibition set out to fill a silence with noise. This impulse is telling: the lack of a historic record does not mean there is not a history. What *Māori Moving Image* made clear was the enormity of that absence, particularly in light of the fact that two generations of Aotearoa’s most successful, prolific and innovative artists were represented in it.

It is exciting to see *Māori Moving Image* continue to change and take on new forms, as it journeys around the country again. Watching Terri Te Tau’s *Blue Smoke*, I am reminded of how much moving image can draw on—and give new life to—familiar and unfamiliar existing material. Te Tau’s karaoke video repurposes archival footage of women doing industrial work during WWII, the lyrics to Pixie Williams’s 1949 *Blue Smoke* cross-stitched along the bottom, in time to the song. Te Tau’s work seems to raise the question: how far back could Māori moving image stretch? Can we push it back towards the first representations of Māori on film—and perhaps even further again, taking into account the landscapes, people and traditions that place these artworks in a far longer history?



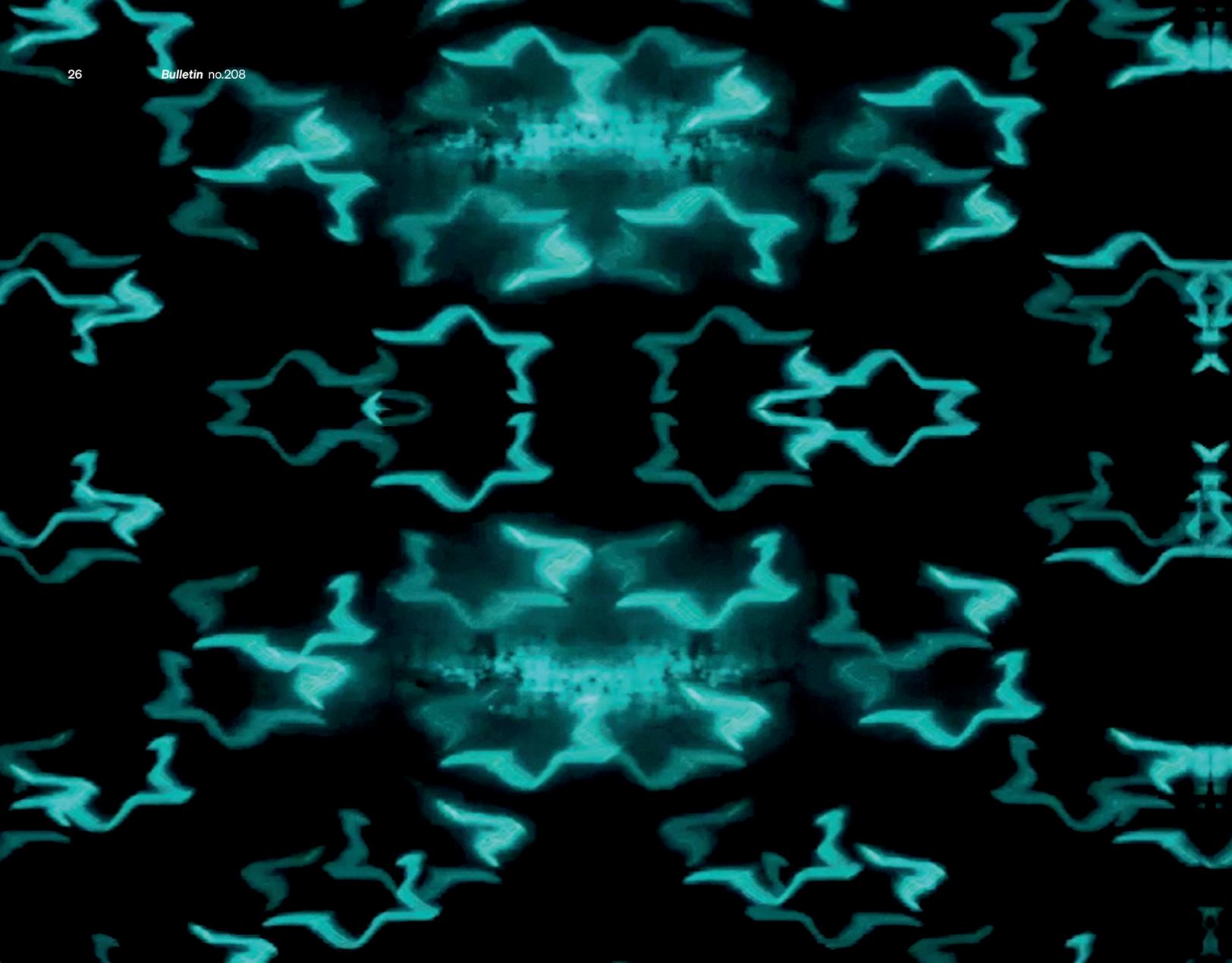
Terri Te Tau *Blue Smoke* 2021. Single-channel karaoke video; 5 mins, 1 sec.  
Written by Ruru Karaitiana; originally performed by Pixie Williams.  
Vocals by Kirsten Te Rito and Lisa Tomlins. Courtesy of the artist and  
Amelia Costello, daughter of Pixie Williams



E kore au e wāreware e



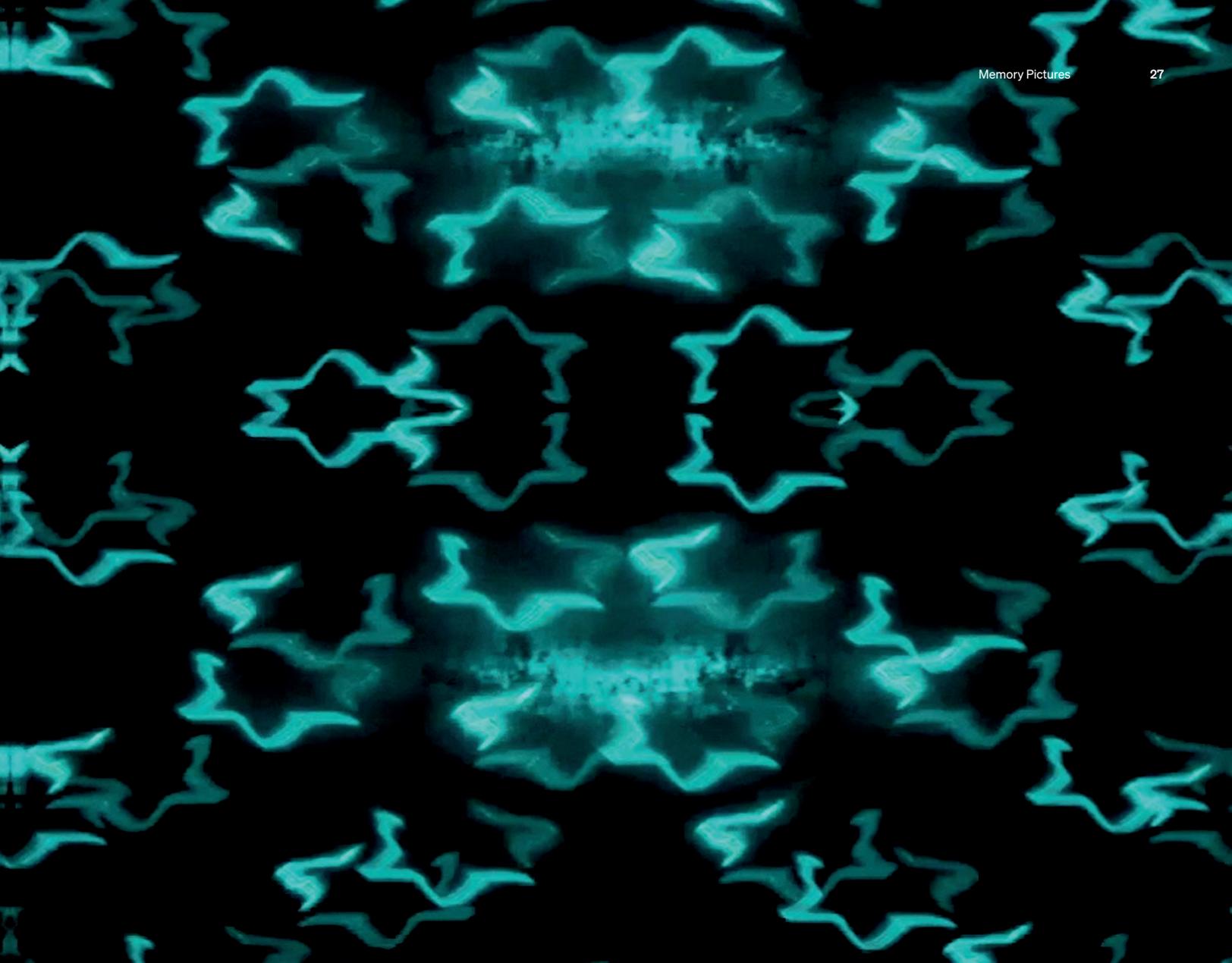
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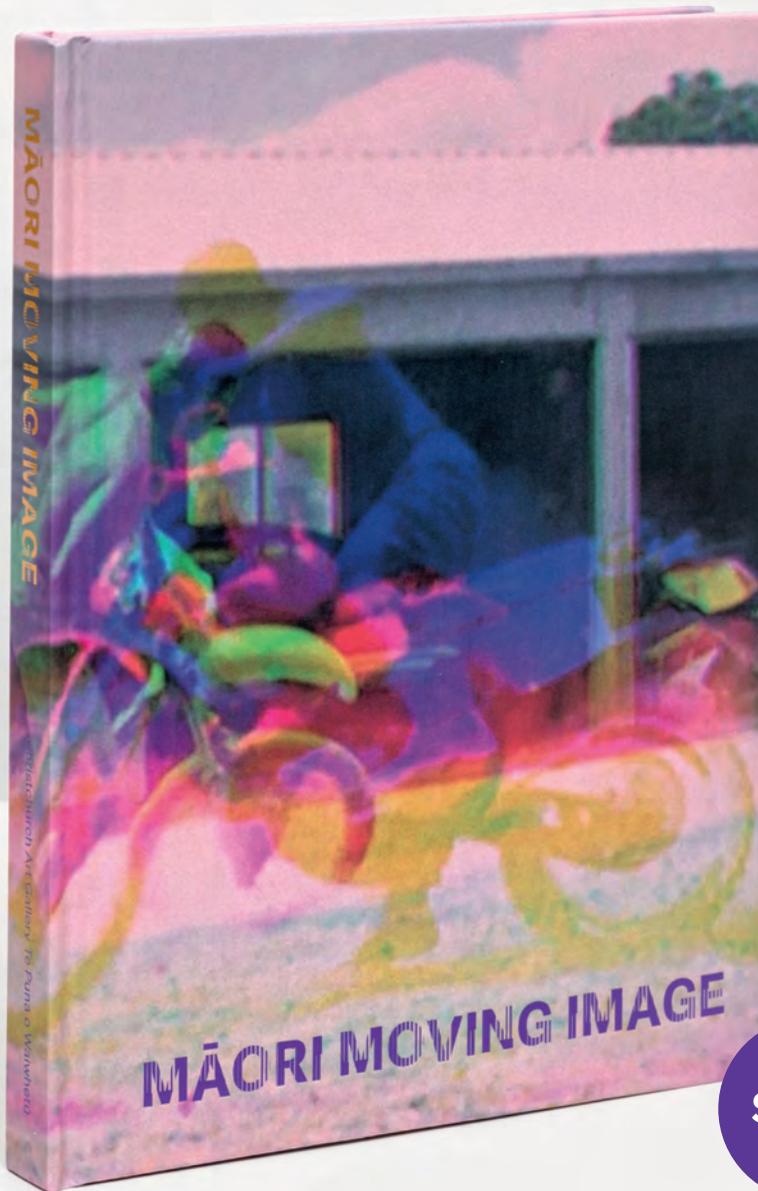
Kauri Wharewera *Te Kahui o Matariki* 2021. Digital animation; 7 mins, 56 secs. Commissioned by CIRCUIT Artist Film and Video Aotearoa New Zealand. Courtesy of the artist

Time changes as you approach a black hole—the closer you are, the slower it becomes. Inside, we don't know what happens. None of the usual laws apply. In Kauri Wharewera's *Te Kahui o Matariki* (2021), a series of undulating forms expand and contract to create shifting portraits of stars in the Matariki cluster: Ururangi, Matariki, Pohutakawa, Waitī, Waitā, Tupu-ā-nuku, Tupu-ā-rangi, Waipunarangi, Hiwa-i-te-rangi. They are in constant motion, morphing between one shape and another, refusing to be held in place.

**Hanahiva Rose** is a writer and curator based in Paekākāriki. *Māori Moving Image ki Te Puna o Waiwhetū* is on display from 4 June until 16 October 2022.



- 1 Pascale Lamache with Merata Mita, 'Interview with Merata Mita', *Framework* 25, Drake Stutesman; Wayne State University Press, 1984, p.3.
- 2 Barry Barclay, *Our Own Image*, Auckland: Longman Paul, 1990, pp.83, 84, 98.
- 3 Rachael Rakena quoted in Janine Randerson, 'Sampling Tradition: The Old in New Media', in *The Aotearoa Digital Arts Reader*, Stella Brennan and Su Ballard (eds.), Auckland: Aotearoa Digital Arts and Cloud, 2008, p.94.
- 4 Maree Mills, 'Pou Rewa: The Liquid Post, Māori Go Digital?', *Third Text*, vol. 23, no. 3, Routledge, 2009, pp.243–44.
- 5 Greg Dening, 'Performing on the Beaches of the Mind: An Essay,' *History and Theory*, vol. 41, no. 1, Wiley, February 2002, p.3.
- 6 Shannon Te Ao / *Asia Pacific Triennial (APT'10)*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dNYL5ua37IU>, 5 Dec 2021



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**Ka Mua Ka Muri:  
Walking Backwards  
into the Future**

Our histories are always with us, but who is telling the story? The Gallery's new collection hang, *Perilous: Unheard Stories from the Collection* offers up a range of different perspectives on how the past and future might intersect, and invites us to rethink how we commonly see our heritage. In the following pages, the exhibition's curators have each selected a work from the exhibition for a closer look.

# Glukupikron

Felicity Milburn, curator

Some stories are about things that happened; others are fabrications from start to finish. Perhaps the most compelling are a mixture of both. Kushana Bush's paintings, for example, weave together an intoxicating tangle of invention and illusion. What's true and what feels authentic are not always the same thing, and—as Bush knows well—even the most carefully plotted stories have a way of getting away on you, of deciding exactly how they want to be told.

*Glukupikron*, recently added to the Gallery's collection through the support of a generous donor, was born in strange, uncertain days. In late March 2020, as Aotearoa battened down the hatches for our first Covid lockdown, Bush hurriedly packed up her Dunedin studio and headed home with her easel. Once there, instead of looking for comfort in contrast, she doubled down; seeking out podcasts and paintings inspired by another pandemic—the bubonic Black Death that devastated parts of Asia, Europe and Africa in the fourteenth century. She saw this research, and the resulting drawings, as a natural way to process the events unfolding around her: “During wars and pandemics, artists throughout the ages have sublimated their fears and uncertainties into images.”<sup>1</sup> As an artist known for intense and psychologically fraught paintings, there may even have been a sense that world events were catching up with her: “I always saw the world in flames, now everyone else sees it that way, too.”<sup>2</sup>

Reminders of the turbulence bearing down outside reverberate across *Glukupikron*. Swirling waves and weirdly animate rocks offer perilous footing to an unruly assembly of animals and people. In the centre, two bulls thrash wildly as their human riders fight vainly for control, while other figures gather in pensive groups, clutching at ropes and each other. Set against twisting clouds that could be tornadoes, explosions or distant bushfires, the oppressive mood darkens still further when you notice the body bag, incongruously wrapped in chic Hermes.

Yet *Glukupikron* (taken from a Greek word that translates as ‘sweet-bitter’) isn't unrelentingly bleak. Bush leavens it with her usual deft humour, stashing items of relatable banality—loosely tethered essentials (spray bottle, toothbrush, banana), orange-handled scissors, a flash of undies—across its shimmering, elusive surface. And while signs abound that humanity's hold on power might be slipping away, the natural world—with its leaping fish, glossy kererū and wriggling frogs—appears newly rejuvenated. Belonging to the classical world as much as the contemporary, Bush's strangely out-of-time images convey a sense of overlapping histories, of hubris and self-delusion compounding across the centuries. As a species, we've often been slow to read the writing on the wall, but it's a skill needed now more urgently than ever.

1 Kushana Bush, email to the writer, April 2022.

2 Ibid.



Kushana Bush *Glukupikron* 2020. Gouache, watercolour, metallic gouache on paper. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, purchased 2020



Nova Paul *Still Light* (still) 2020. 16mm film transferred to digital video, colour, sound, duration 6 mins 35 secs.  
Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, purchased 2020

# Still Light

Peter Vangioni, curator

*My work is always rooted in the particular circumstances of my domestic life, the objects, clothes, toys, cups, flowers, that speak of myself, my child, my husband and the house, garden, land, that frames my life.*

So wrote Joanna Margaret Paul (1945–2003) in the catalogue for the exhibition *Woman's Art: An Exhibition of Six Women Artists* in 1975. This statement is apt when considering *Still Light*, a video work by Nova Paul (Ngāpuhi, Te Uriroi, Te Parawhau, Te Māhurehure ki Whatitiri) created four decades later that responds to a poem by Joanna Margaret Paul. Nova's *Still Light* and Joanna's painting *Barrys Bay: Interior with Bed and Doll* (1974) both focus on the domestic setting and resonate strongly with each other, something I'm looking forward to seeing when they are hung side by side in *Perilous: Unheard Stories from the Collection*.

The subtle, grainy effect of Nova's 16mm film has much in common with Joanna's 8mm films; not only the technical qualities inherent in film, but also the domestic environments they bring into focus. Light is a central theme for both artists, the way it infuses an interior from the outside, falling softly across a room. The interior becomes a duality of a space—the humble kitchen table with still life

becomes subject as well as metaphor for both artists. Nova's *Still Light* includes a beautifully crafted sound piece by her friend and collaborator Bic Runga. It's a tender song to accompany a tender artwork.

The kitchen table has a central presence in both artists' work. I've always enjoyed the idea of art being made around the kitchen table; it's the heart of the home where we come together to eat, drink, play cards, blow out birthday candles, display flowers from the garden in favourite vases and place bowls of fruit. Most recently, many of us have sat at our tables tapping away on our computers when working from home in these Covid times.

The table is also a place where an artist can work with ease in 'domestic mediums', particularly watercolour and drawing. The garden makes its way inside; flowers and fruit are arranged, connecting outside and inside spaces in both Nova's *Still Light* and the recent gift of a beautiful still-life drawing by Joanna from Roger Collins, a friend and supporter of the artist.

Made in direct response to an untitled poem by Joanna, Nova's *Still Light* also shares a domestic still-life tradition with the work of several generations of women artists in *Perilous*, including Joanna herself and the still-life drawings and paintings by earlier artists, Rita Angus, Frances Hodgkins and Margaret Stoddart.

# Treasures Left by Our Ancestors

Melanie Oliver, curator

Ana Iti (Te Rarawa) made *Treasures Left by Our Ancestors* in response to two permanent exhibitions at the Canterbury Museum: *Iwi Tawhito–Whenua Hou / Ancient People–New Land* and *Ngā Taonga Tuku Iho o Ngā Tupuna / The Treasures Left to us by our Ancestors*. In these life-size dioramas, instead of providing information on the complex history and lives of southern Māori, tangata whenua are depicted as primitive stereotypes, in particular as part of a simplified moa hunter narrative. Misrepresentative and lacking research, the exhibits fail to show the indigenous knowledges, advanced migration, art, architecture, tools and practices that were developed and flourished in pre-colonial Aotearoa.

Ana's video work captures the artist crouching in front of the controversial displays, positioning her contemporary body in relation to these constructed scenes, while museum visitors walk nonchalantly past. In an attempt to understand this version of history, she literally gets on the level of these tūpuna (ancestors), who are rarely shown standing. With this act, Ana critiques how public information about indigenous people and culture is created and disseminated through museums.

Displays such as these are often presented and perceived as factual even though museological narratives and histories are generated from Western knowledge systems and are not necessarily the whole story. Museums in Aotearoa were established from the mid-to-late nineteenth century and became a way of collecting Māori art and taonga (treasures) that were acquired by Pākehā through gifts, trade or theft.<sup>1</sup> Ethnological collecting was seen as a political tool of governorship. As art historian Roger Blackley states:

*At the same time as they annexed the actual Māori land, European settlers appropriated the distinctive history and culture of Māori, both for a ready-made ancient history of the islands and as a unique decorative signifier for an inchoate settler identity.*<sup>2</sup>

Acquired and presented in the context of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, *Treasures Left by Our Ancestors* reminds us that like museums, art galleries are also integral to the process of colonisation. From the late nineteenth century, art galleries operated in Aotearoa to exhibit European painting and sculpture as well as works from the settler coloniser art societies that had formed around the country from 1869. These institutions were introduced as part of the colonial project, as an assertion of European culture, and the collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū reflects this legacy.

This is not the first time the Canterbury Museum dioramas have been challenged. Ngāi Tahu leaders have refuted their presence for many years and members of the public have also voiced their concern. In 2020, a vinyl label was installed partly covering one of the displays, claiming that the museum has made a commitment to work with Ngāi Tahu to replace them. In *Treasures Left by Our Ancestors*, Ana crouches in front of the dioramas for as long as she can physically hold the pose, a test of endurance. Her persistence echoes the ongoing mahi being undertaken towards asserting sovereignty and a ReMāorification of institutions and collections.<sup>3</sup> *Treasures Left by Our Ancestors* demonstrates that we have a long way to go.

1 Historian Anne Salmond details how artefacts and taonga were dispersed to overseas collections from the point of contact, used as traded commodities or as strategic gifts intended to strengthen relationships. Anne Salmond, *Tears of Rangī: Experiments Across Worlds*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2017.

2 Roger Blackley, *Galleries of Māoriland: Artists, Collectors and the Māori World, 1880-1910*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2018, p. 14.

3 Puawai Cairns, 'Decolonise or indigenise: moving towards sovereign spaces and the Māorification of New Zealand museology', February 2020, Te Papa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand, <https://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/2020/02/10/decolonise-or-indigenise-moving-towards-sovereign-spaces-and-the-maorification-of-new-zealand-museology/>.



Ana Iti Treasures Left by Our Ancestors (still) 2016. Single-channel digital video, colour, sound, duration 4 mins 40 secs.  
Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, purchased 2019



Rita Angus *A Goddess of Mercy* 1945–47. Oil on canvas. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, purchased 1956

# A Goddess of Mercy

Ken Hall, curator

“I have taken stronger monastic, pacifist vows,” Rita Angus wrote in May 1945 to composer Douglas Lilburn, her close friend and support whose personal history was now inextricably linked to hers.<sup>1</sup> *A Goddess of Mercy*—the first started of her three goddess paintings—was already mapped out on 8 May, VE Day, celebrating Victory in Europe, the day after Germany’s formal surrender to Allied forces in Reims, France. As she later wrote to Leo Bensemann, “Most of the idea of this painting was blocked in, just before and during the week, peace was declared with Europe.”<sup>2</sup>

In June, Angus left her hillside cottage on Clifton Hill above Sumner Beach, to appear again in court before the Manpower Committee for refusing to enter war work. With global conflict winding down, however, and many servicemen returning home, Angus was fined one pound instead of the usual far heftier penalty. Forging ahead in July, she told Lilburn:

*As a full-time painter, I am proceeding with the various stages of my large canvases, the major works of my lifetime. I hope to complete these in the next three years. ... These canvases when painted, will not count much, if anything to an older, or my own generation. I paint for the next two generations. ... I hope now to work quietly and undisturbed.*<sup>3</sup>

In 1944 Angus had suggested to Lilburn that their future artistic productions and goddess portraits especially be seen as symbolic offspring of their relationship.<sup>4</sup> Following their brief love affair at the end of 1941 and her miscarriage in January 1942, Angus’s attempt to reconcile loss extended to the notion of their child’s spirit living through

their art. More accessible ambitions came with the work’s completion and reproduction in the 1947 *Year Book of the Arts in New Zealand*, including:

*To show to the present a peaceful way, and through devotion to visual art to sow some seeds for possible maturity in future generations. ... As a woman painter, I work to represent love of humanity and faith in mankind in a world, which is to me, richly variable and infinitely beautiful. ... My paintings express a desire to ... create a living freedom from the afflicting theme of death.*<sup>5</sup>

This she echoed in a letter to Bensemann, describing it as showing “the pull between life and death, with the triumph of the living, over the dead. ‘Ruth’ is the woman, and the painting ‘lives.’”<sup>6</sup> Being receptive to broad philosophical and cultural influences, Angus’s reference was the beloved Gentile woman who joined the Israelites to follow the Biblical Yahweh.

Reflecting what painter Douglas MacDiarmid later described to Angus biographer Jill Trevelyan as “The cosmic bouillabaisse of philosophic stew ... from a recipe exclusively Rita’s”, its title also shows her interest in Eastern thought, specifically in Kuan Yin (or Kannon), venerated in China (and Japan) as a goddess of mercy.<sup>7</sup>

Angus also explained this work as a memorial to her sister Edna, who had died of an asthma attack on Christmas Eve 1939, seven weeks after her marriage.<sup>8</sup> Wearing a Chinese-inspired fabric skirt based on Edna’s housecoat, she is part idealised everywoman and part self-portrait. The likeness, however, is more Edna’s than Rita’s.

1 Letter to Douglas Lilburn, undated [May 1945]. ATL, MS-Papers-7623-057.

2 Letter to Leo Bensemann, 25 March 1947, ATL, MS-Papers-8636-001.

3 Letter to Douglas Lilburn, 7 July 1945, ATL, MS-Papers-7623-058.

4 See ‘Live to Paint’, Jill Trevelyan, in Lizzie Bisley (ed.), *Rita Angus, New Zealand Modernist He Ringatoi Hou o Aotearoa*, 2021, p.39.

5 Harold Wadman (Editor), *Year Book of the Arts in New Zealand*, No.3, 1947, p.68.

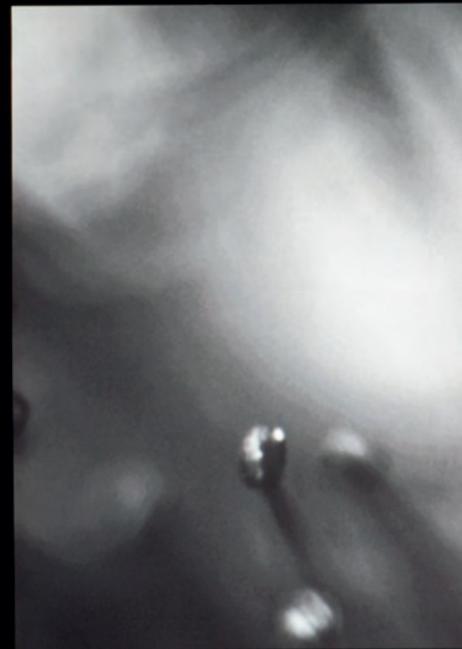
6 See ref. 2.

7 Jill Trevelyan, *Rita Angus, An Artist’s Life*, Te Papa Press, 2008, 2nd Edn. 2020, p.214. Another possible goddess reference is in the open, upturned hand, near identical to a hand of the Venus of Arles (1st century BCE, marble, Musée du Louvre), a plaster cast of which was available for study at Canterbury College School of Art, where Angus studied from 1927 to 1933.

8 See ref. 2.

# Te Whakawhitinga: Jeremy Leatinu'u

*Abby Cunnane*



Installation view of Jeremy Leatinu'u, *Te Whakawhitinga*, The Physics Room,  
Ōtautahi Christchurch, 2022. Photo: Janneth Gil



***Te Whakawhitinga* follows the narrative like a stone skimming across water: touching down at points, at others flying across space-time with the momentum of recall.**



they may not have been aware that the first World War had just ended

Jeremy Leatinu'u *Te Whakawhitinga* (still) 2022. Single-channel 16mm film transferred to digital HD video.  
Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, purchased 2022

*Te Whakawhitinga* is a haerenga, a journey. It is not a long film, approximately eleven minutes total, but the geography it covers stretches from Te Tai Tōkerau in the North to Ōtautahi in Te Waipounamu; from early adulthood to old age; and from the time of Te Pākanga Tuarua o te Ao, World War II, to the present. *Te Whakawhitinga* follows this narrative like a stone skimming across water: touching down at points, at others flying across space-time with the momentum of recall.

The work tells the story of a young man enlisting, leaving his family's farm in the Far North and taking the train south to begin military training. This is his first time away from home, and the film is underscored by the sense of awe you might experience at first seeing huge, unfamiliar mountains under snow, or the cold, grey coastline running alongside the train. While it stems from this historical account, *Te Whakawhitinga* also includes elements of fiction, or more universal experience. In this sense it reflects many other stories of people leaving home and familiar things, struggling to adapt to their new situation, making a life, and only returning home in their later years.

Commissioned by The Physics Room for a solo exhibition, work on this project began in early 2021. Since then, Leatinu'u and cinematographer Ian Powell have travelled from Tāmaki Makaurau where they both live, to Northland and down to Canterbury multiple times, recording the extensive footage of land, sea and rural life brought together in the final film. *Te Whakawhitinga* is also a road movie, tracing a long drive down Aotearoa.

One way to read this story is through the impulse to leave behind what is familiar, to chase the clean unknown of distance, and the unsettled yet comforting feeling of being on the move into an infinite horizon. The film is projected in anamorphic aspect ratio, low and wide, which allows for the almost overwhelming sense of Te Waipounamu's horizontality, with its layers of plains, mountain ranges, sky. As cinematographer Powell says, "that's how the landscape down here is."

Initially shooting both film and digital, during the course of the project Leatinu'u and Powell chose to work with black and white 16mm film only. The choice was a commitment to the tone of the story, and to CinemaScope format. It also meant moving into new territory as collaborators. Powell and Leatinu'u have collaborated for years, across a number of projects; this was the first time working together shooting analogue.

Black and white film has the capacity to hold infinite grades of light and inky depths of shadow in a way that coloured images do not. Further, I recognise when watching a short version of the work for the first time, the non-digital texture of the film asks our eyes for a different kind of focus. In turn, perhaps we listen differently. This slowed-down, watching-listening-thinking state makes space for the autonomous identity of the places pictured—these places hold their own whakapapa, and layers of their own stories, beyond this narrative.

Originating in an oral account, *Te Whakawhitinga* sustains the presence of the voice. While for the artist it remains important that the story is held in the images, rather than in extensive subtitling (the spoken narrative is all in te reo Māori), listening also is a fundamental part of this experience.

Jeremy Leatinu'u *Te Whakawhitinga* (still) 2022. Single-channel 16mm film transferred to digital HD video. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, purchased 2022







Jeremy Leatinu'u *Te Whakawhitinga* (still) 2022. Single-channel  
16mm film transferred to digital HD video. Collection of Christchurch  
Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, purchased 2022





Jeremy Leatinu'u *Te Whakawhitinga* (still) 2022. Single-channel 16mm film transferred to digital HD video.  
Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, purchased 2022

**In some ways it is a melancholy film,  
remembering loneliness; the pace,  
and black and white imagery leave spaces  
for us to fill with our own thoughts...**

Two speakers tell the story: Matua Hunaara Kaa of Ngāti Porou descent and Poata Alvie McKree of Ngā Puhi and Ngāti Kahu ki Whangaroa descent. Leatinu'u's work often brings multiple voices into the telling of a story, so that it's no longer an individual thing but rather unfolds in dialogue. An earlier film by Leatinu'u, *When the moon sees the sun* (2021, commissioned for the Honolulu Biennale), is based on a waiata written for the passing of his koroua; each verse takes the perspective of a different family member. In this way the artist opens up the idea of identity as collectively held, and recollection as something formed and reformed in the act of telling.

Past work by Leatinu'u—performance, sculpture and moving image—has a consistent relationship to the movement of people and of the land, to water and to language. *Mai i te kei o te waka ki te ihu o te waka* (2018, commissioned by CIRCUIT Artist Film and Video Aotearoa and shown at Berlin International Film Festival), is narrated in te reo Māori and English, and tells two interconnected stories of migration and arrival. A more recent major work, *Taonga tuku iho* (2021, commissioned by Winnipeg Art Gallery for the Indigenous Art Triennial), follows a series of studies on water: gushing down drain pipes, boiling in a jug, sustaining life.

*Queen Victoria* (2013) was the first work of Leatinu'u's that I saw. In this work, made across a series of cities in Aotearoa, the artist sits on top of a ladder, high enough to make eye contact with a statue of Queen Victoria. Here in Ōtautahi, he sits in Victoria Square beside the Ōtākaro river, a significant site of historical trade for local Māori, particularly for Ngāi Tūāhuriri from Kaiapoi. The square also contains a statue of James Cook. Nothing is spoken by Leatinu'u in this older work, but it becomes apparent to me as I watch that empire-building Queen Victoria will certainly be the first of the two to drop the eye contact. Across Leatinu'u's work, which is often called subtle, poetic or metaphorical, there is a line that is very direct, confronting even. It asks, what does it mean to live here in Aotearoa, in relationship to the past and present and to each other?

As much as it is a story about leaving, *Te Whakawhitinga* is also a record of returns. Many watching it may feel as though they have returned to particular sites they know intimately: the salty expanse of Birdlings Flat, the heavy shoulders of the mountains in Arthur's Pass. In some ways it is a melancholy film, remembering loneliness; the pace and black and white imagery leave spaces for us to fill with our own thoughts. I think of my own grandfather, who grew up in Temuka and went to war with his four brothers. I think of archival images I've seen of soldiers returned from war. I think of an image of the





Māori Battalion from 1946 in the Alexander Turnbull Library, in which men and women in uniform sit eating and drinking at a long table, home in Aotearoa. They look terrifyingly young and terrifyingly old at the same time. Newsreel footage from the same time registers a similar sense of fatigue and loss on the faces of soldiers returned. *Te Whakawhitinga* is a recognition that as much as leaving is hard, so too is the return: you are different, and so is what you return to.

The work's title, *Te Whakawhitinga*, holds this sense of a journey. More literally translated, a crossing. It includes room for spoken exchange too, the back and forth of whakawhitinga kōrero, which unfolds in the film through the voices of McKree and Kaa. Or, less literally, *te whakawhitinga* is a form of transition. This is at the core of the work. The film can never hold every detail of a journey, or remember it with precision, and this is not its intention or purpose. Rather, returning to the idea of recall as a skimming stone, what we watch in *Te Whakawhitinga* is fundamentally about transition. The film travels on a series of arcs, touching down at points like the stone to the water, each touch generating lift for the next arc. The stone that finally lands, sinks, rests, has been changed through the course of its flight.

**Abby Cunnane** is a curator and writer, currently the director of *The Physics Room Contemporary Art Space* in Ōtautahi. She is a co-editor of *The Distance Plan*, an online journal and exhibition platform that brings together contemporary artists, scientists and writers to discuss climate change. *Maori Moving Image ki Te Puna o Waiwhetū* is on display from 4 June to 16 October 2022.

# Xoë Hall

## *Kuīni of the Worlds*

This wild new mural from Kāi Tahu artist Xoë Hall celebrates atua wāhine. Dancing across the bunker are Hine-tītama, the flashing red dawn, who becomes Hine-nui-te-pō, the night queen and receiver of souls in the afterlife. Mahuika, atua of fire, appears with her flaming manicure, shining a light on the past, while being a torch for the future. The trickster Māui is shown in lizard form, referencing the time he tried to crawl through Hine-nui-te-pō to reverse the cycle of death and she awoke, slamming her thighs shut on that idea, and therefore bringing mortality to all mankind.

Xoë Hall *Kuīni of the Worlds* (installation view) 2022. Commissioned by Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū. Courtesy of the artist





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# My Favourite

**Ben Brown** is a writer, performance poet and public speaker. In May 2021 he was appointed inaugural Te Awhi Rito Reading Ambassador for New Zealand. He is also a father of two, which he considers his best work to date. He lives and works in Lyttelton.

## Grace in the Art of Falling

I grew up in the Motueka Valley at a place called Ngātimoti. The Peninsula Bridge crosses the Motueka river there. It carries one lane on a timber deck joining SH 61 to Peninsula Road and the west bank of the river. The bridge is 110 years old, still doing its job of daring every kid who grows up in its vicinity to climb the railing and take the leap one day—maybe thirty feet if the summer is hot and the river sedate and inviting. By the time I'm sixteen, I'm a veteran. Veterans don't jump. We dive, head first, eyes open, arms outstretched. There must be grace in the art of falling.

Late November, 1978. Warm spring rain. Muggy afternoon. The river is up and rising. Ten or twelve feet above summer's inclination. The colour of strong tea with a splash of milk. We call it a 'fresh', not a flood. But it approaches flood proportions. I'm on the bridge observing flow. The swirls and eddies, the swift moving currents. I watch denuded tree trunks, broken branches and lesser timbers sail off down the river to whatever fate nature's great cycles of death and renewal have in store for them. Their course is set as the river ordains. I'm drawn irresistibly to inquire. I take off my shirt and climb to the top of the railing. Sixteen is a dangerous age for a boy who thinks he's man enough to defy a river.

The first time I saw *Takarangi*, I felt drawn irresistibly to inquire. I wanted to dive right into it. From a certain aspect, flying and falling are the same. The wairua of a bird and the wairua of a boy who thinks he's man enough share a moment of commonality. An Icarus moment. Before the melting and the torrent. Sun and river. Fire and water. Elemental gods. If you believe the apocrypha, gods don't like defiance. Jaunty little Piwaiwakawaka doesn't care a jot. Why should he? He was there at the end. He'll be there at the beginning. Still laughing.

The great primordial edifice. Carbon black. Composed of every atom of every ancestor of every life form. The rawest epitome of mass, substance, density. Brutish beginnings. Blurred uncertainty. Dawning awareness. The riddle of light emerging from darkness. The riddle of nothing emerging from light. All understanding comes from nothing. The flit and fall of enigmatic birds like souls shut out of the Guf. A teenager perched on a rail.

*Takarangi*. The word is many things. Toi whakairo displays an intersecting spiral motif that uses space—and therefore light, or mārama—to define the open spiralled forms. Māramatanga is the light of understanding and knowledge. It reveals the graceful spiralling umbilicals that bind us to wairua and whakapapa—that bring us the past through all space and time, informing us as we require, preceding us as we go. And then there is *takarangi*; to stagger and stumble clumsily. To layer up the heavens. To fall down from the sky. Or the railing of an old suspension bridge.



Shane Cotton *Takarangi* 2007. Acrylic on canvas. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, purchased 2007

# Become a Friend and help us make a difference

As a Friend you become a part of our community of art lovers. Enjoy exclusive tours of studios and homes in Ōtautahi, weekend art exploration trips, talks by curators and artists, and much more. All while supporting our wonderful gallery. For all the benefits of being a Friend, head to [christchurchartgallery.org.nz/friends](http://christchurchartgallery.org.nz/friends).



## Julie King Memorial Lecture Taonga Māori and Christian Missions

Speaker: Deidre Brown  
Sunday 4 September, 2pm / Free  
Philip Carter Family Auditorium

Deidre Brown reveals the incredible journeys of Māori taonga and its role in shaping European opinions about Māori art and society. Bookings essential at [christchurchartgallery.org.nz/events](http://christchurchartgallery.org.nz/events).

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Clockwise from top left: Artists at Work with Darryn George, Artists at Work with Helen Calder, Coffee + Art, Talk + Morning Tea in Te Puna Waiora with Ranui Ngarimu

**Friends**  
CHRISTCHURCH ART GALLERY  
TE PUNA O WAIWHETŪ

# Pagework no.53

*Each quarter the Gallery commissions an artist to create a new work of art especially for Bulletin. It's about actively supporting the generation of new work.*

Amy Howden-Chapman *Coal Down Coal Out* 2022

Climate change is terrifying and imminent. It is devastating our planet and will continue to impact our lives beyond our comprehension. So why are we so reluctant to do anything about it? Artist Amy Howden-Chapman refuses to turn a blind eye, articulating in her work the need for actual change, more than words, while also emphasising the role that language plays in mediating and communicating the climate crisis.

This new pagework addresses our ongoing reliance on coal power despite its known pollution of the atmosphere, seen from both a global position and local perspective. The recent Labour government budget announcement has made significant financial commitment to climate action for Aotearoa and there is finally an Emissions Reduction Plan, but it is not simple to shift corporate and consumer behaviour. The issue of coal is a clear example of that, with slow and reluctant reductions in the use of coal even though there are alternatives.

An ongoing series that Amy makes in collaboration with writer Michael Gorin is *The Apologies*, audio and text works that imagine and commemorate apologies not yet given. Drawing on their research into the form of the public apology, they stress that there are people who are responsible for the inaction on climate change and they should be held accountable. We might all be trying our best as individuals, but fossil fuel companies and the governments that have supported them can assert much greater influence. One such apology is from British politician Alok Sharma, who served as president for COP26: "I now see that my behaviour was misguided, even reckless."

Amy gets that it can feel overwhelming and she has interviewed many climate scientists, activists and journalists about the exhaustion, sorrow and feelings of powerlessness experienced when facing climate change, in particular for her work *Have You Ever Felt Overwhelmed?* Yet she remains committed to voicing the imperative for tackling this crisis—and we all need to listen, rally and amplify that demand for change.

In November 2021, in the last hours of the last days of the COP26 conference of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, wording that called for the “phase out” of coal-fired power was dropped and replaced with “phase down”. Only after “out” was replaced with the weaker term “down” did key signatories, China and India, who collectively produce 60 percent of the world’s coal, concede to endorsing the agreement. The success of India, backed by China, other coal-dependent developing nations, and the USA, in forcing this less decisive language on coal, brought British COP26 President Alok Sharma to the brink of tears. Sharma is quoted as saying he was “deeply sorry” for how the gathering concluded with last-minute changes to the wording about coal.

**DOWN  
COAL**

# COAL

# OUT



On 3 December 2021, less than a month after the word "out" was replaced with the word "down", climate activists from Extinction Rebellion Aotearoa stopped a coal train in Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, by locking themselves to the train and climbing into the coal carriages. Extinction Rebellion said the coal had been mined in Nightcaps in Southland and was headed for use at Fonterra's processing plant in Clandeboye where it would be used to dehydrate milk for export. The activist also noted that KiwiRail carries 500 tonnes of low-grade thermal coal daily from Bathurst Resources' mine in Southland to Fonterra's Clandeboye factory in South Canterbury. The December 2021 action was followed by a May 2022 protest which succeeded in temporarily shutting down the Bathurst-owned Takitimu coal mine in Nightcaps. Fonterra, Aotearoa's largest dairy processing and export company, has stated that it is committed to getting out of coal by 2037. Bill McKibben, a prominent climate activist, has commented about the climate crisis that "winning slowly is the same as losing".



# Exhibitions

## Opening this Quarter

### **Māori Moving Image ki Te Puna o Waiwhetū**

4 June – 16 October 2022

Film, animation and video art made by Māori artists.

### **Perilous: Unheard Stories from the Collection**

From 6 August 2022

Making room for fresh voices, untold narratives and disruptive ideas.

### **Cheryl Lucas: Shaped by Schist and Scoria**

27 August – 4 December 2022

Seductive surfaces and tough issues—these are ceramics made for the eyes and mind.

## Closing this Quarter

### **Te Wheke: Pathways Across Oceania**

Until 3 July 2022

See, experience and rethink Aotearoa's art history from a Pacific perspective.

### **Francis Upritchard: Paper, Creature, Stone**

Until 7 August 2022

A major installation fired by collaboration and connection.

Kushana Bush *Glukupikron* (detail) 2020. Gouache, watercolour, metallic gouache on paper. Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, purchased 2020

## Ongoing

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### **Xoë Hall: Kuīni of the Worlds**

A wild new mural from Kāi Tahu artist Xoë Hall celebrating atua wāhine.

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### **Leaving for Work**

Exploring the exceptional art of everyday working life.

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### **The Moon and the Manor House**

Aestheticism, Arts and Crafts, and the avid pursuit of beauty.

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### **Lonnie Hutchinson: Hoa Kōhine (Girlfriend)**

An intricately cut-out billboard celebrating supportive friendships between women.

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### **Martin Creed: Everything is Going to be Alright**

A completely unequivocal, but also pretty darn ambiguous, work for Christchurch.

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### **Reuben Paterson: The End**

A sparkling elevator installation providing an unexpected space for contemplation and connection.

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### **Séraphine Pick: Untitled (Bathers)**

Pick's lush watercolour offers a utopian vision in the carpark elevator.

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### **Tomorrow Still Comes:**

#### **Natalia Saegusa**

A fragmented, poetic temporary wall painting by Natalia Saegusa.

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### **Kelcy Taratoa: Te Tāhū o ngā Maunga Tūmatakahuki**

A vast painting about how we are bound together.

## Coming Soon

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### **Jeffrey Harris: The Gift**

1 October 2022 – 12 March 2023

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### **Barbara Tuck: Delirium Crossing**

15 October 2022 – 26 March 2023

*Please note, these dates are correct at time of printing. But, you know... Covid... Please check the Gallery website for dates before visiting. See the website for our events listings*



sign

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Proud to collaborate with  
Ara Institute of Canterbury  
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### Christchurch Art Gallery Foundation

The Christchurch Art Gallery Foundation is committed to building an endowment and a collection that reflects a truly significant period in the history of our city. We have the chance to shape the culture of Christchurch by developing a collection that honours the past, reveals the present and helps us imagine the future. We began the TOGETHER programme in 2014 and are continuing to offer opportunities for businesses and individuals to help us realise our mission.

#### Level One TOGETHER Partners

Heather and Neville Brown  
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Grumps  
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Gabrielle Tasman  
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Thrival

#### Level Three Partners (100) and Hospitality Partners (5)

Please see [christchurchartgalleryfoundation.org.nz/together-partners](http://christchurchartgalleryfoundation.org.nz/together-partners) for a full list.

#### Gallery Partner

Williams Corporation

#### Christchurch Art Gallery Foundation's Five Great Works:

**Michael Parekowhai *Chapman's Homer* 2011**  
1,093 generous donations from Christchurch and beyond, along with proceeds from the first annual gala dinner.

#### Bill Culbert *Bebop* 2013

Purchased with assistance from Gabrielle Tasman and proceeds from the second annual gala dinner.

#### Martin Creed *Work No. 2314*

**[Everything is going to be alright] 2015**  
Purchased with the generous support of Grumps, and installed with proceeds from the third annual gala dinner.

#### Bridget Riley *Cosmos* 2017

Purchased with the generous help of: Heather Boock; Ros Burdon; Kate Burt; Dame Jenny Gibbs; Ann de Lambert and daughters, Sarah, Elizabeth, Diana, and Rachel; Barbara, Lady Stewart; Gabrielle Tasman; Jenny Todd; Nicky Wagner; Wellington Women's Group (est. 1984); and installed with proceeds from the fourth annual gala dinner.

#### Ron Mueck *chicken / man* 2019

Purchased with the generous help of: Catherine and David Boyer; Friends of Christchurch Art Gallery; Ben Gough Family Foundation; Charlotte and Marcel Gray; Christchurch Art Gallery's London Club; Jenny and Andrew Smith; Gabrielle Tasman and Ken Lawn; proceeds from the fifth annual gala dinner; and 514 big-hearted individuals and companies.

#### Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū



#### Strategic Partners



#### Product Partners



## Verum Group

Foundation Partner



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

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

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