



Sarjeant Quarterly



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June, July, August 2012

From the Senior Curator

by Greg Anderson

The Sarjeant and our Curator/Public Programmes Manager Greg Donson had some good news recently when Greg was announced as The Clark Collection/Creative New Zealand Scholar for 2012. The award was made at the 2012 Museums Aotearoa Conference in Wellington and provides an opportunity for New Zealand professionals in the built heritage and decorative arts field to expand their knowledge through attending the prestigious Attingham Trust Summer School in England. The Scholarship also offers the recipients a number of short internships with organisations such as English Heritage, The National Trust, the Victoria & Albert Museum and The Royal Collection. This will provide Greg and the Gallery with an excellent opportunity to make the most of the decorative arts items within the Sarjeant's Collections as well as a much enhanced understanding of the potentialities of our fine historic building. This outstanding opportunity will also provide the Gallery with an unparalleled occasion to make contacts at a variety of UK museums as well as with a group of esteemed international arts professionals, as many of those who are fortunate enough to attend this programme are leaders in their field from around the world.

Andrea Gardner, one of our two Education Officers, has a two month artist residency in Medellin, Colombia. She will be staying at Casa Tres Patios, a contemporary arts centre and residency program which hosts artists from Colombia and around the world to do projects in Medellin. As well as teaching several workshops on staged photography at the National Museum of Colombia and curating a show of the resulting student artwork, Andrea will also be focusing on her own art practise. The residency culminates with a solo exhibition which will consist of staged photography and a related sculptural installation.

As I mentioned in the last newsletter the Sarjeant Gallery has been designated as an earthquake-prone building. Our staff are continuing to work closely with Wanganui District Council property officers to develop a set of workable options which will ensure the continuity of our programmes, operations and the safety of our Collections, should we have to leave the current building. While the Council assesses the Gallery's future operation in this building we have had to review much of our scheduled exhibitions programme. Sadly the 2012 Whanganui Arts Review has had to be cancelled this year, but we promise that when our operations normalise we will reschedule the Arts Review as soon as is practicable.

In the meantime we have developed two new Collections-based exhibitions for the enjoyment of all. In the West Wing we have a show that entitled *Hibernation* celebrates all things wintry; while the East Wing shows a number of new acquisitions – each in conversation with other Collection items in a show called *Thisbe, Pheasbin and the Tall Tahitians*. This will prove to be a feast of abstraction, sculpture, portraiture, glass work and photography among many other media – testament to the breadth and depth of over 100 years of collecting. We hope you will find the time to come and visit us and very much look forward to welcoming you in out of the cold.

Education News

by Sietske Jansma
and Andrea Gardner

Hairy Maclary and his friends have been enormously popular at the Gallery this term! It was amazing to hear how many children knew the stories written and illustrated by Lynley Dodd. We are pleased to say that Lynley's other books that were not related to Hairy Maclary were also well loved. The common themes that seemed to capture children's hearts were Lynley's beautiful illustrations, the characters (with Scar Face Claw being very popular) and her use of rhyme. Over the length of the exhibition we have had over 600 students come for a Hairy Maclary based programme with a number of schools from outside of Wanganui travelling to see him. In our education art room we have made walking springy legged cats and dogs, 3D cone animals, paintings, drawings, masks, collage, and fancy dressed mixed media animals!

We had a successful day with Auckland artist Alexis Neal making stars with students from Wanganui High School and Te Kura Kaupapa Maori o Tupoho. Some of these stars adorn the back of the entrance into the North Bay where Neal's artwork in *Whare Toanga* is exhibited.

Ben Pearce, a nationally recognized sculptor, came from Hawke's Bay to work with a group of students from Wanganui Intermediate School. They created wonderful sculptures using bits of recycled wood and old broken pieces of furniture. Their assemblages titled *Furniture Gone Wild* are now on display in the gallery.

We have just put up a new display of student artwork at the Wanganui Hospital. Students from Okoia School have created a large colourful painting of flowers with smiling faces. It is very lively and certainly brightens the waiting area of the Outpatient Department.

We have started utilising the foyer of Wanganui's I-site building (Taupo Quay entrance) to display student work. Our first show consisted of paintings made by junior students from St Anthony's School who came to see Hairy Maclary. Each made a delightful and unique painting of a fancy-dressed animal. The current exhibition is the result of a student workshop with writer and performer Tessa Priest. Year 9 English students from Wanganui Collegiate School explored various creative writing exercises and also produced charcoal drawings which were then assembled together to create a "talking wall" using speech bubbles.

Photography has also been a hot topic this term! Four classes from Wanganui High School have come to participate in a special workshop on staged photography led by Leigh Mitchell-Anyon and Andrea Gardner. Students were able to experience two different lighting set-ups in which they photographed expressive portraits and diorama-like miniature set-ups.

We are looking forward to a winter term filled with exciting programmes that tie in with our new exhibitions: *Hibernation* and *Thisbe, Pheasbin and the Tall Tahitians*.

Cover: Edward Burne-Jones (England, b.1833, d. 1898), *Thisbe*, oil on canvas
Collection of Sarjeant Gallery / Te Whare O Rehua / Whanganui, 1924/1/6.

Members' News

by Raewyne Johnson



■ *Furniture Gone Wild*, Wanganui Intermediate School with Ben Pearce



■ Okoia School, Hospital project.

Tylee Cottage News

Alexis Neal, the new Tylee Cottage artist-in-residence, arrived at the end of June to take up a four month residency. She has strong connections to Wanganui, having taught classes and workshops for the UCOL arts programme over a number of years. Her work refers to issues of cultural identity and predominately looks at the duality of artefacts in terms of personal adornment and material culture. Her studio practice is interdisciplinary, combining components of print, sewn feather canvases, weaving and installation, to address Tikanga Maori and Taonga within a contemporary context. Her work is currently on exhibition at the Sarjeant Gallery in *Whare Taonga*, with Rona Ngahuia Osborne, and we are excited to see what she creates while in Wanganui.

A warm welcome to new Corporate Member **Mary-Ann Dickie** and Patron Members **Karen Lithgow** and **Beryl & Peter Warnock**.

Welcome also to new Gallery Members **Peter & Helen Cook, Michael & Jessie Coleman, Harry Hing Siu Kwok, Tejomani Earl, Wilf & Lyndal Layburn, Elizabeth Gray, Jo Melville, Marion Evans, Lucy & Peter Dunlop, Rosemary Jane Norman, Mrs Shirley Wilson, David & Laura Carter, Tanya & Christopher Hayton**.

The Gallery is pleased to acknowledge the following as Corporate Members:

ASB Bank, Carey Smith & Co Ltd – Chartered Accountants, Central City Pharmacy, ComputerCare NZ Ltd, Doyle + Associates – Chartered Accountants, Energy Direct NZ., GDM Group Ltd., Mars Pet Care, Mary-Ann Dickie, Meteor Design & Print and OPD, Richard Millward & Associates, Nicola Williams, Pamela Williams Family Trust, pattillo Ltd., Seresin Estate, Te Reo Iirangi O Wanganui – AWA FM, The Radio Network Wanganui, Pak'n Save, Wanganui Branch – New Zealand Institute of Chartered Accountants, Wanganui Chronicle, Whanganui UCOL – Creative Programmes.

We value the support of our Corporate Members and would encourage you to utilise their services whenever possible.

Blue Smoke to Blue Beat was the title of a most informative and enjoyable musical conversation with Chris Bourke & Nick Bollinger held at the Gallery in May, New Zealand Music Month. This was well attended by Gallery Members.



■ *Chris Bourke & Nick Bollinger*, Albert Sword

Members of the Sarjeant Gallery

Thank you to those members who wrote in support of the redevelopment funding application. A large number of you did so and these expressions of support added considerable weight to the Application.

We have been receiving updates on progress with the application for funding for the Sarjeant redevelopment and on the potential impact of the Earthquake Prone Buildings considerations currently facing the District Council. The Members Executive awaits with interest the outcome of these deliberations.

The Executive was able to confirm that it will make \$7000 available for the acquisition of an addition(s) to the collection. We are awaiting a recommendation from the Gallery Staff of a suitable item(s).

The Executive was pleased to support the “Cup of Tea with Henry” and was delighted to see the level of support it got. A number of membership application forms were taken away that day and filled out, thus swelling our ranks.

We have also met with recently arrived Curator of Collections Sian Van Dyk and discussed ways that members can assist with the management of the collection. Sian has a number of ideas and already some of our members are assisting her to bring collection information up to date. There will be further opportunities for wider involvement as other tasks are identified.

The Executive has decided to take the management of the Membership Database back from the District Council from the beginning of the next subscription year (the 1st July). In future all subscriptions will be paid through the Gallery or by electronic payment. Hopefully this will ease some of the issues we have had with delays in getting subscription notices out on time and getting our database updated promptly when new members join.

Ian McGowan
President



■ Christine Hellyar (New Zealand, b.1947), *Tall Tahitians* (Detail), 2005, cloth and cane
Collection of Sarjeant Gallery / Te Whare O Rehua / Whanganui

■ Mark Braunias (New Zealand, b.1955), *London Town*, 2008, ink and acrylic on canvas
Collection of Sarjeant Gallery / Te Whare O Rehua / Whanganui, 2009/1/1



Thisbe, Pheasbin and the Tall Tahitians

Collection Conversations

16 June – 2 September

The Sarjeant Gallery's permanent collection consists of over five and a half thousand artworks, spanning four centuries of European and New Zealand art history. As with any collection, this one has grown organically and is rich, varied and eclectic, comprised of gifts and acquisitions. Each work in the collection has its own narrative, subject, provenance and often silence.

This exhibition takes as its starting point some recent acquisitions that have come into the collection, mostly as a result of the Gallery's artist-in-residence programme at Tylee Cottage. Established in 1986, this programme has hosted over thirty artists, all of whom have contributed to the Gallery's collection via work or works offered in exchange for a monthly stipend during the residency. This exchange has provided a vital and lively thread to the Gallery's holdings and each new work has sparked new conversations with others. The exhibition on offer here doesn't aim to give visitors a comprehensive view of the Gallery's collection but rather glimpses of the many chapters on offer.

The title is taken from the names of three Collection works which up until now couldn't be more disparate: the ghostly *Thisbe* by Edward Burne-Jones; a surreal feathered dog entitled *Pheasbin* by Australian artist Emily Valentine and the tall and elegant figures of the *Tall Tahitians*, hand stitched by Auckland-based artist Christine Hellyar. Although these works have never been shown in the same Gallery space before and are probably not likely to be again, this exhibition allows them to be momentarily connected through that strange inventory called time. All three have been gifted to the Gallery and add to the rich scope of this collection. We hope you enjoy this eclectic selection of works.

Greg Donson
Curator and Public Programmes Manager

Hibernation

Winter works from the Collection

23 June – 2 September

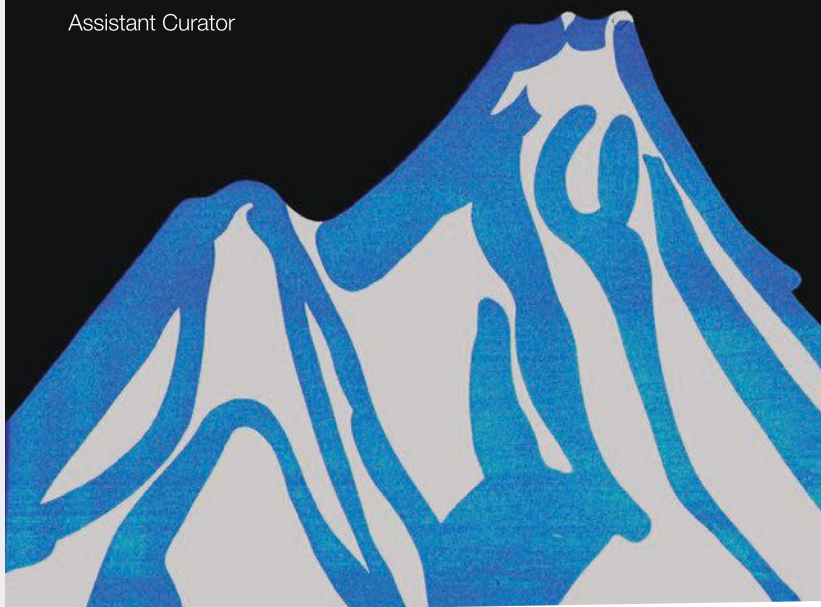
When it is grey, cold, dark and damp nothing seems more attractive than staying inside, keeping warm and hibernating. Like bears denning for the winter, we humans often withdraw - into houses, our thick coats and ourselves. This exhibition explores the feeling, colour and idea of winter.

Winter is a rich source of material and metaphor used often in art and literature. Poets and writers such as William Shakespeare, Emily Dickinson, William Blake and Robert Frost have all used winter in their work to express death, pain, melancholy, loneliness and endings. In the visual arts these themes are similarly entwined. We imagine winter as desolate and colourless and in *Gate 16* Colin McCahon used his signature black and white composition to explore winter as the end of all things - nuclear war and nuclear winter. Several of the extended labels in this exhibition use quotes from poems, songs, plays and books to further exemplify the place winter has in the arts as a source of inspiration.

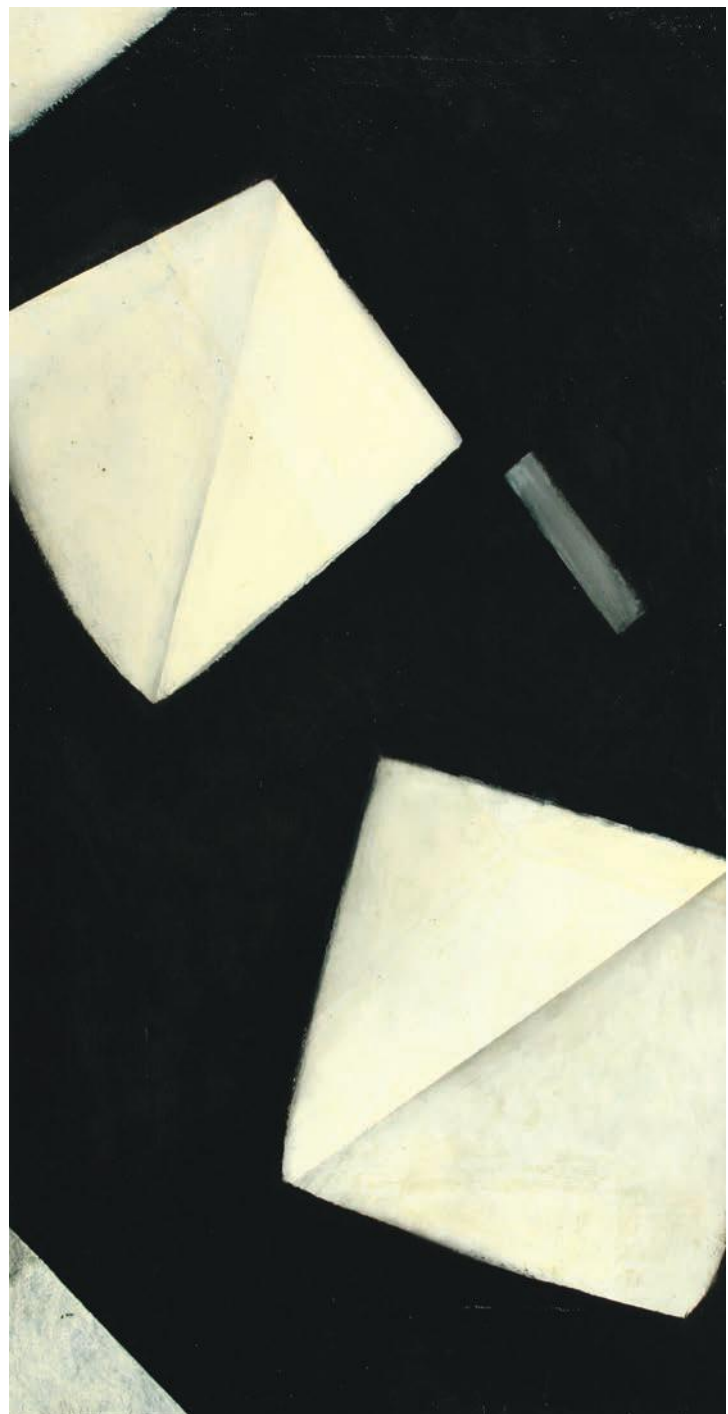
Winter can be very sad, but if we take the time to emerge from hibernation we can see it is also a time of great splendour. Michael Smither's *Mount Egmont* and William Barraud's *Dawn on Aorangi* show us the beauty of a New Zealand winter. The mountains are clothed in the pristine white blanket of snow which makes the landscapes of New Zealand so entrancing during the winter months. Colour is incredibly emotive and each carries meaning and connotations - yellow is the sun, blue the sky and red is danger. The colours we associate with winter are those which dominate this exhibition - black, white, grey and a splash of icy blue. In these colours we see the long dark nights, snow covered mountains, cloudy skies and icy mornings of winter.

The paintings and prints in this exhibition spend much of their life tucked away from harsh light and extreme temperatures to ensure they are safe. They live in their own state of hibernation until they are put on public display.

Sarah McClintock
Assistant Curator



■ Colin McCahon (New Zealand, b.1919, d.1987)
Gate 16, 1961, enamel paint on hardboard
Collection of the Sarjeant Gallery / Te Whare O Rehua / Whanganui, 1974/4/1



■ Michael Smither (New Zealand, b.1939), *Mount Egmont*, screenprint.
Collection of the Sarjeant Gallery / Te Whare O Rehua / Whanganui, 1972/10/1

Norm Heke OMGs

Māori Gods in the
21st Century

12 May – 29 July

Digital Artist / Photographer Norm Heke (Ngā Puhi, Ngati Kahu, Te Arawa, Welsh & English) is one of New Zealand's most prolific Museum photographers. He has recently produced several large-scale portraits depicting pivotal characters in the foundational stories that underpin Māori and New Zealand culture as they have never been seen before. Using 3D and flip effect (lenticular) technology narratives are presented simultaneously in the past and the present day.

"I wanted to give Māori Gods a renewed presence in contemporary culture, by modernising the characters and contextualising the stories, in order for them to remain alive and vibrant in our society. I chose Photorealism as the medium to build each of the Atua a stage as grand as any of the Greek Gods. These are our indigenous super heroes and they deserve to be celebrated." Norm Heke.

Māui, one of the better known characters, notorious for his ingenuity, leadership and daring, is shown fishing up the North Island; the contemporary version leads to the steps of parliament buildings, where Maui and his brothers take political centre stage. Assuming the name 'The Māui Party, this same group similarly gets 'hooked' into present day issues.

Other Atua featured include Papatūānuku (Earth Mother and Sky Father), Tāne (God of Forests), Hinetiāma / Hinenuitepō (Dawn Goddess / Goddess of the Night), Tūmataunga (God of War) and Māui (Demi God). An original sound-scape incorporating sounds of an old world and new worlds, add to an immersive experience.



Richard Parker: Master of Craft

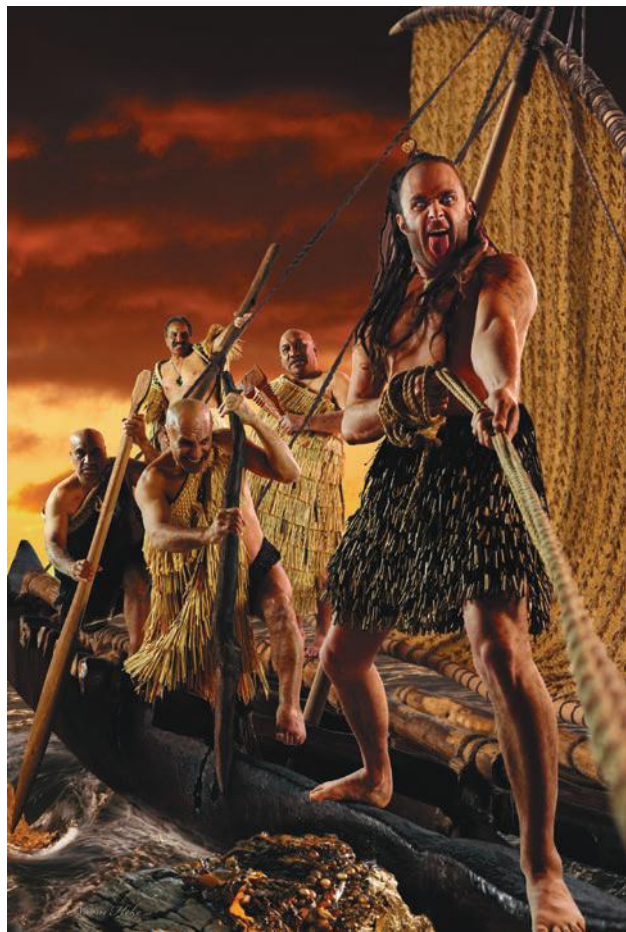
16 June - 2 September

Richard Parker: Master of Craft surveys the career and practice of this defining figure within New Zealand ceramics, with works loaned from leading public and private collections around the country. The curator, Richard Fahey, says "Parker had his own picture of what a pot should look like", and that although Parker's practice is grounded within the traditions of studio ceramics, "As an artist, his innovative approach seeks to redefine for us new ways we may understand the decorative object."

At a pivotal moment in his career Richard Parker abandoned the known in terms of how to make a pot and what it should look like and developed his own unique ceramics vocabulary. This singular vision has sustained his career for over 30 years and produced works that are uniquely recognisable. Parker is noted for a variety of distinctive decorative forms frequently embellished with dashes, dots and dribbles in luscious glazes of red and green, black and cream, and his signature green and gold.

Accompanying the exhibition is a lavishly illustrated 120 page publication written by Richard Fahey. It's available at the Gallery shop.

■ Richard Parker, Northland Craft Trust, 1987. Photograph: Rod Davies.



■ Norm Heke, *Māui and His Brothers*, 2011, Digital Photography, Lenticular Print



■ Alexis Neal, *Tōi Whenua* (detail), 2009-2011, printed and woven hahnemühle paper whariki

Whare Taonga

Alexis Neal + Rona Ngahuia Osborne

16 June – 2 September

Whare Taonga (House of Treasures) is a collaborative exhibition by Alexis Neal and Rona Ngahuia Osborne that explores the whare nui (meeting house). Moving beyond the aesthetic structure of the whare nui, the exhibition is an investigation of the human presence within this extraordinary space. The exhibition consists of a series of whariki (woven mats) by Alexis Neal which adorn the walls and echo the tukutuku panels of a whare nui. Known for her work as a printmaker, these works push the boundaries of the medium of print by taking it into three dimensions, referencing the weaves of Raranga Whakairo. Her work refers to traditional Maori material culture but maintains a universal quality in its reference to European tapestry, reflecting a fusion of cultures.

Rona Ngahuia Osborne's practice is based around two central ideas – Diversity and Trade. She has become well known for the hand stitched blankets that feature in this exhibition. Her work primarily references themes relating to a cultural/historical context in Aotearoa. Her imagery has a strong Maori component and incorporates colonial symbols and iconography, which reflect Osborne's own family heritage. Working with blankets evolved from the idea of the colonial trade value of European objects for Maori land. The exhibition features twelve of these beautifully hand crafted quilts which are laid out on mattresses on the floor of the Gallery space.

Together the work of Alexis and Rona is a rich celebration of their ideas of the whare nui as a whole, exploring cultural identity and representation and society in transition. The essence of the whare nui structure is key to the project and the exhibition pays homage to their cultural heritage and the importance of the whare nui in contemporary society.



12

Head in Winter

Jeffrey Harris 1999

■ Jeffrey Harris (New Zealand, b.1949), *Head in Winter*, 1999, print
Collection of the Sarjeant Gallery / Te Whare O Rehua / Whanganui
1999/24/1.1

Hibernation

Winter works from the Collection

23 June – 2 September