

Sarjeant Quarterly 66

Summer 2017–2018



Newsletter of the
Sarjeant Gallery
Te Whare o Rehua
Whanganui
ISSN 1171-3275

Contents

From the Director	2
Sarjeant News	4
Gallery Friends	5
Wendy Fairclough	6
Richard Stratton	8
Riddle: <i>Enigmatic Works from the Collection</i>	10
Sarjeant Gallery online	12
Exhibitions	14
Talks & Events	15

FRONT COVER: **Wendy Fairclough** *Yield* 2017, lead crystal and concrete. Photo: Grant Hancock.

From the Director

On 27 October the Whanganui District Council made a significant step towards beginning the Sarjeant Gallery Redevelopment Project. On that day councillors voted to act as guarantors for the Project and, in so doing, fulfilled its part in meeting the conditions required by the Ministry for Culture and Heritage to release its \$10 million commitment. The remaining conditions are being worked through with the Sarjeant Gallery Trust and once the Ministry is happy that its requirements have been met, the Project can move quickly into its next phase. Meanwhile, fundraising will continue unabated until the construction process is completed.

Our curators are busying themselves with planning for the return journey to Queens Park and going through options for opening and post-opening exhibitions and events. After so many years of hard and slow going it's wonderful to now be in a position where new phases of the Redevelopment present themselves and staff, particularly our newcomers, can show their expertise.

While we make all of these efforts at moving forward and looking towards the Sarjeant's bright future, it's timely to take a moment to reflect on our past. Most notably the contribution, one hundred years ago, of Donald Hosie. Hosie was the young architect from Dunedin whose drawings won the design competition for the new Sarjeant Gallery back in 1916. Like most men, the 21 year old had soon joined the army and was destined to fight in Europe. Charles Mackay, then mayor of Whanganui, arranged for him to have leave from the army in order to finish his drawings and in September of 1917 the foundation stone of the Gallery was laid. Sadly, Hosie was never able to see his drawings become reality as he was killed in action at Passchendaele just three weeks later on 12 October 1917. Thanks to this visionary young architect we have a most wonderful legacy building and one which we intend to see strengthened and made fit for purpose again for another century, if not longer.

With strong progress on the Redevelopment front, an exciting array of exhibitions in place for the summer season and an innovative new collections search function now available on the Gallery's website, there have never been more ways to get involved with the Sarjeant. The Gallery shop is stocked with diverse artisan-made items that will make unique Christmas gifts (10% discount for Friends of the Sarjeant and Thousand Stars members) and the exhibition spaces are arrayed with any number of delights—we look forward to welcoming you in this summer!—**GREG ANDERSON**



THIRD FROM RIGHT: Donald Hosie, architect of Sarjeant Gallery



Sarjeant News

In mid-October I relocated with my family from Sydney to join the Sarjeant Gallery team in the capacity of Relationships Officer; a role which encompasses working with Friends, donors and our many stakeholders as well as communications, PR and promotion in all its varied forms. As you well know, the Sarjeant Gallery is a beautiful space, the exhibitions are terrific and how lucky we are to have such an interesting programme of events. The work of the Gallery, the Trust and in fact the whole community around fundraising and making the move ‘back up the hill’ a reality, is so inspirational. I feel very lucky to have joined at such an exciting moment

in the Sarjeant’s history. I look forward to meeting and working with the wider Sarjeant family which I know is spread throughout Whanganui and New Zealand.—**JAKI ARTHUR**, *Relationships Officer*

Gallery Friends

The Friends of the Sarjeant Gallery are delighted by the energy and excitement that has ignited after the Whanganui District Council passed the important resolutions that now allow the Sarjeant Redevelopment to progress to the next exciting stage, construction. We have been working for many years in the hope that it would one day happen and now it really is. We support the Sarjeant Trust in all its endeavours and are so impressed and grateful for the commitment so many have shown to the Sarjeant. Recently the Friends gifted a lemon tree to the Chair of the Sarjeant Trust Nicola Williams who has worked so tirelessly to generate national attention for the project. The Friends would also like to mention Director Greg Anderson as well as the staff and further endorse their efforts and commitment, they are a truly impressive bunch. The Friends have had a working bee at Tylee Cottage which was well attended and means the cottage continues to be a beautifully maintained asset for artists to access and to create within.—**IAN GLENNY**, *President of the Friends of the Sarjeant Gallery Inc.*

Friends President Ian Glenney presents Nicola Williams with a living gift in appreciation of her tremendous support of the Gallery's Redevelopment Project in her role as Chair of the Sarjeant Gallery Trust



A warm welcome to new Members Ian O'Brien, Jason Todd, Hera Smith, Marian Barclay & Joan Comrie-Smith, Kathleen Ann Henderson, Louisa Craig, Mary & John Rowan, Nick Flaws, Veronica Maxey, Margot & Brian Walden and Mandy Cresswell.

The Gallery is pleased to acknowledge the following as Corporate Members and Corporate Sponsors: ASB Bank, Belton, Smith & Associates Ltd., Central City Pharmacy, ComputerCare NZ Ltd, Forbo Flooring Systems, Kensington Swan, Mars Pet Care, Meteor Office Products Depot, NZME, Moore Stephens Markhams Wanganui, Nicola Williams, Pamela M J Williams, pattillo Ltd., PR & AB Warnock, Te Reo Irirangi O Whanganui – AWA FM, Wanganui Chronicle and Whanganui UCOL – Creative Programmes

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

Wendy Fairclough

Common Ground

*Selected works 2007–2014 and
Tylee Cottage residency works 2016–2017*

25 November 2017–11 February 2018

As a child Wendy Fairclough remembers visiting the Whanganui Regional Museum and being fascinated by displays that housed objects associated with hunting and gathering for European and Māori. Amongst these were hīnaki—eel pots, an important component of pā tuna (eel weirs) which were fences placed in the water used to guide eels into a net and then into the hīnaki. Fairclough comments “I now understand that I was recognising and appreciating the ingenuity and creativity of the human mind and hand.” It was this enduring memory of visiting the museum that provided inspiration for Fairclough to make a new body of work while she was artist-in-residence at Tylee Cottage. These works expand on her ongoing interest in the common and necessary experiences (ie gathering food and objects) that shape our everyday lives.

During her time in Whanganui and subsequently over the last year Fairclough has made three major new works, *Rain at night...* featuring twelve eels cast in pale and dark grey glass that shimmer towards viewers upon entry to the gallery. The second work takes its title from a Māori proverb *Nā tō rourou, nā taku rourou ka ora ai te iwi* (With your food basket, and my food basket, we will sustain the people). This work was a collaborative effort with Fairclough’s sister-in-law Trina Taurua, a traditional Māori weaver and tutor at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa and Ross Wilson—a bronze-caster based in Marton. Taurua wove three kete that were specifically identified with carrying kumara and the rarer small Māori potatoes. The third work, *Yield* (as pictured on the cover of this Quarterly) is a table top still life with a cornucopia of fruits and vegetables made from cast glass alongside objects cast in concrete.

Whanganui is Fairclough’s home town and she left for a ‘wander around’ Australia at the age of eighteen and has since made Australia home. She settled in Adelaide where she completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree in



Wendy Fairclough *Rain at Night* 2017, cast lead crystal. Photo: Grant Hancock

printmaking and sculpture at the South Australian School of Art in the early 1990s. Subsequently she followed up with adult education and undertook a glassblowing workshop with Nick Mount which motivated a return to Art School to study glass, and from which she graduated with an Applied Arts degree in 2000. Since then Fairclough has gone on to establish an impressive track record of exhibiting in Australia and overseas and her work is included in many private and public collections, including the national art museums of Australia and New Zealand.

To accompany Fairclough's residency project, we have brought together a selection of her best works produced between 2007 and 2014, including elegant blown glass still life works and two impressive floor-based installations made from cast glass and concrete. This is the first time that Fairclough's work has been seen enmasse in a New Zealand public gallery and the Sarjeant is delighted to be bringing her work home to Whanganui.

GREG DONSON, *Curator & Public Programmes Manager*

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Richard Stratton

Living Histories

9 December 2017–11 March 2018

Fifteen enigmatic new works by well-known New Zealand ceramicist Richard Stratton make up The Dowse Art Museum touring exhibition *Richard Stratton: Living Histories*. The Sarjeant is delighted to host these works in our object-based gallery at 31 Taupō Quay, above the i-SITE from December, 2017 to March, 2018. In addition to the touring exhibition, we also have an added selection of works for the Whanganui showing of *Living History*, made by Stratton in 2017. Rounding out a prolific and successful year, Richard was recently announced as the winner of the Premier Award at the Portage Ceramic Awards 2017. The Sarjeant would like to sincerely congratulate him on this achievement.

Visitors to *Living Histories* can expect to see a shift in Stratton's practice. His latest works remain elusive as to their true function; produced as sculptural pieces in their own right instead of functional household objects. References to modernist architectural movements such as brutalism are visible throughout, and can be attributed to Stratton's time immersed for three months in the Portage Ceramic Awards residency in Guldagergaard, Denmark in 2015.

Techniques used for his new works are based on early ceramics Stratton found while mudlarking on the Thames in a harsh London Winter during his time in Europe. Scavenging for sherds (fragments) from the mud of the river, Stratton cites this influence as the “processes our ceramic predecessors were influenced by [which] became the backbone of early New Zealand Pottery.” The influence of European industrial production can be seen in his works such as *Balanced Burden*, *Legs* and *Lost Page*, with their strong angles and earthy colour palette harkening back to the early 20th century art movements such as cubism and constructivism.

Stratton has developed an innovative method to create the signature finish to his pieces. He begins his elaborate process by decorating pre-prepared clay slabs before he builds a work, which is then bisque fired, sandblasted,

glazed and sandblasted again before it is finally waxed. This process creates a slightly worn-looking patina and gives his works an appearance of age. For this body of work Stratton acquired a Shimpo Pugmill, a clay processing machine, which enabled him to work faster in his small studio at home and re-create historical European clay. It will be interesting to see what this new freedom in material evolves into next.

Handmade limited edition tokens made by the artist are available for purchase from Sarjeant on the Quay from 9 December.

JESSICA KIDD, *Assistant Curator*



Richard Stratton *Balanced Burden* 2016.
Courtesy of Anna Miles Gallery, Auckland

Richard Stratton *Lost Page* 2016. Courtesy of the
James Wallace Arts Trust



Exhibition developed
and toured by



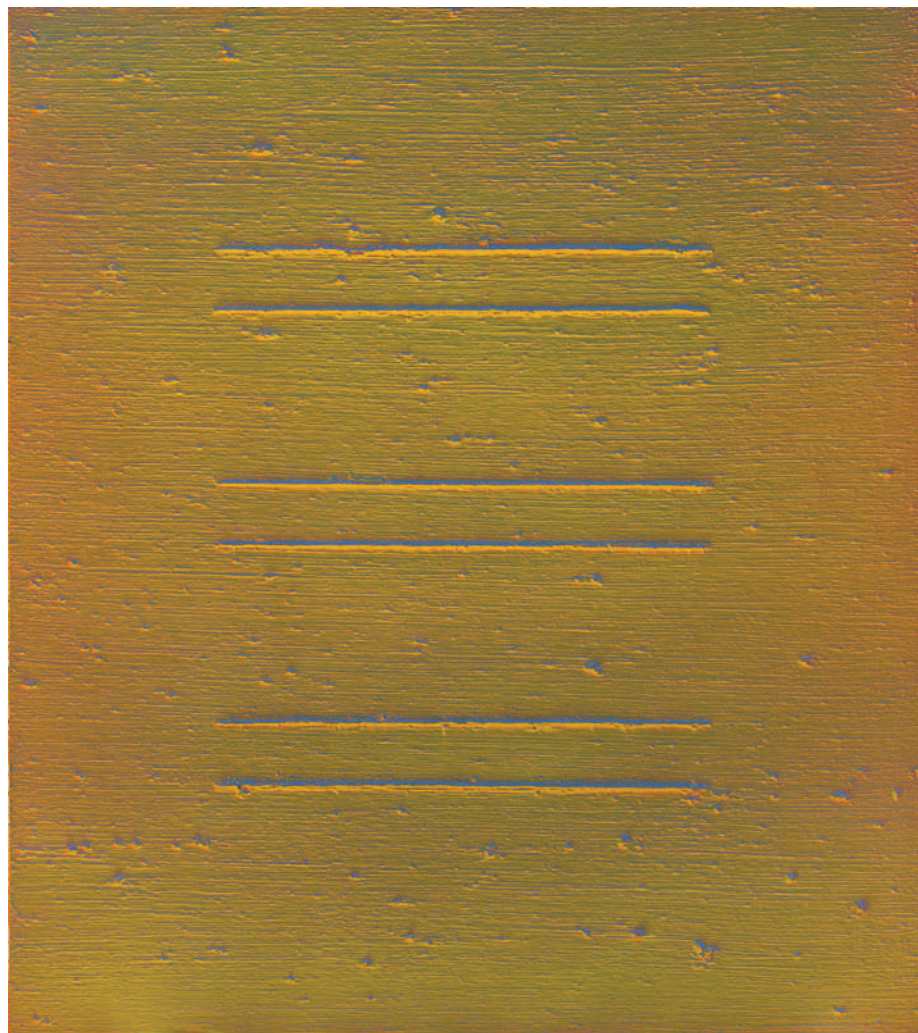
Supported by



Riddle

Enigmatic works from the Collection

2 December 2017–25 February 2018



The Sarjeant Gallery's collection has for nearly a century been enriched by many generous gifts from both artists and patrons. This makes for a rich and varied collection that spans many different media and subject matter. This exhibition brings together a selection of recent additions to the collection and includes works that are intriguing and elusive in their use of materials, technique or subject matter. As its starting point are two generous gifts by Andrew Drummond and Mervyn Williams both of whom were former artists-in-residence at Tylee Cottage in 1987 and 1988 respectively. Both artists went on to become established names in New Zealand art history and thirty years later they both have an impressive track record of exhibiting, with their works included in public and private collections in New Zealand and abroad.

For Mervyn Williams, his time in Whanganui at Tylee Cottage was a game-changer in terms of his practice and in 2016 Williams commented "All my preconceptions about what I might do here... were completely tipped upside down when I discovered what it was like to get out of an urban area and actually work in a very open space." Sourcing driftwood from the mouth of the Whanganui River and Castlecliff Beach, Williams created a series of wooden constructions that were a radical shift from his paintings, but still possessed the same formalist concerns.

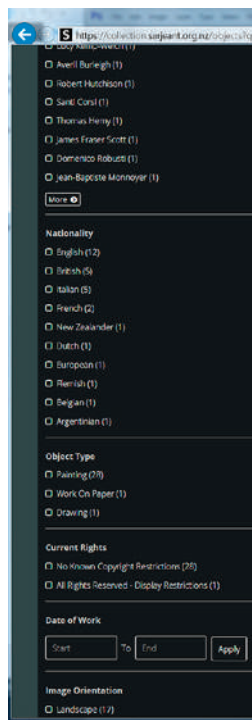
Alongside works that the artist has just gifted to the gallery is *Six Blue Bars* painted in the year of his residency, which the gallery subsequently purchased. At the time the purchase was somewhat controversial with the Midweek newspaper calling for opinions, and one citizen writing "Whilst in all fairness, it may be technically perfect, I cannot imagine the good people of our fair city deriving any pleasure from it at all" and another from 'Shirley' which uncannily references the curatorial approach for this current exhibition "*Six Blue Bars*! I'm seeing stars! My thoughts are unprintable. A visual conundrum? My dictionary defines "conundrum" as a riddle turning on some odd or fanciful resemblance between things quite unlike; any puzzling question." Readers were largely basing their opinions on a poor quality black & white photograph which certainly didn't reveal the work's extraordinary surface utilising Williams' chiaroscuro painting technique which gives the illusion of three dimensionality.

We're not quite sure if Shirley would approve of this exhibition given that it's a book of riddles but it includes some beautifully enigmatic works that are crying out to be encountered in the flesh.

GREG DONSON, *Curator & Public Programmes Manager*

Search the entire Sarjeant Gallery collection online

An 'Explore the Collection' web page showing a group of object records with their colour swatches. To the left is a panel that allows you to further refine the group of objects you are viewing. Clicking on one of the thumbnail images allows you to view detailed information about the object.

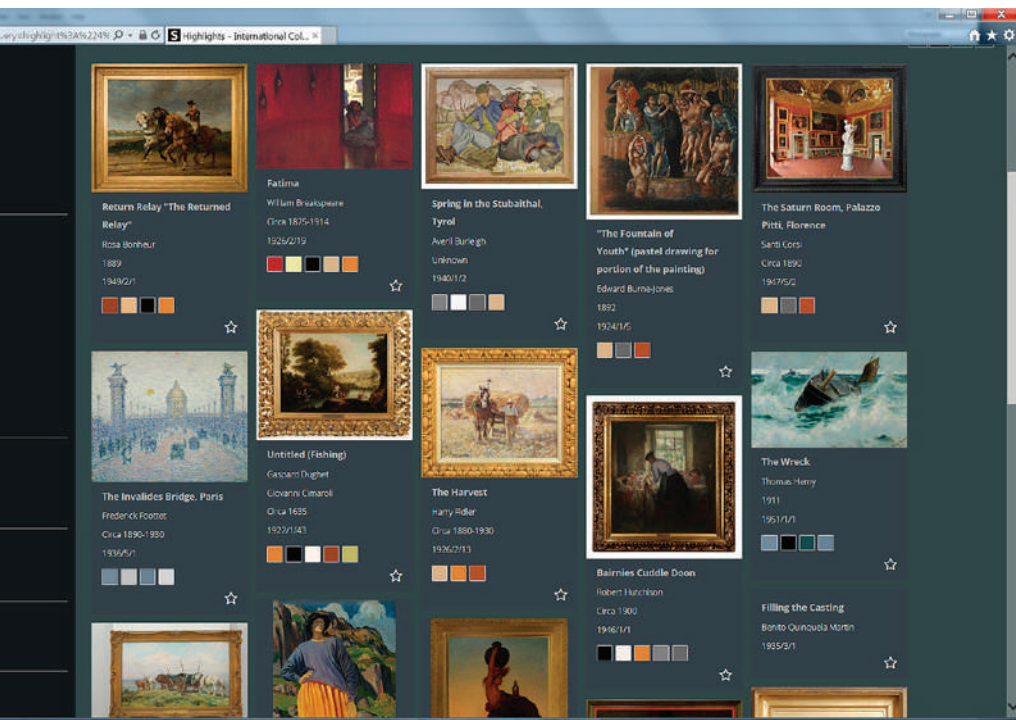


Following the successful redesign of the Sarjeant Gallery website in 2016 we are delighted to announce that, for the first time, our long awaited collections online facility on the website 'Explore the Collection' is now live.

The past few months we have been working closely with Vernon Systems Ltd, the supplier of our computerised collection management system, to develop the new facility which enables public and researchers to access information about our collection from anywhere in the world at any time.

Not only does it allow access to the collection but it also utilises clever new features which maximise accessibility for visitors who have no prior knowledge of our collection. These features enable innovative ways to browse the collection which will encourage visitors to spend more time on the site and make unexpected discoveries whilst exploring.

One of the most interesting features is automated colour recognition of the dominant colours contained within collection images. This automatically creates a grouping of colour swatches for each image which, once selected, allow the visitor to browse other collection items that also feature the same colour. Another feature is automatically generated subject tags, so visitors can browse using terms such as 'tree' or 'wave'. A left hand panel enables you to refine the results you are viewing by various parameters including artist name, artist



nationality, by object type such as painting, and even by image orientation.

‘Explore the Collection’ links into other data sources seamlessly including Wikipedia and Digital NZ. When the visitor clicks on the artist’s name to view biographical information, they can also click through to view more information about the artist on Wikipedia (if there is a Wikipedia page available).

The use of automatically generated content has enabled us to present a far greater range of exploration to the virtual visitor than would have been possible had we been reliant on manual data entry to add these details. The automation has also allowed us to present a world class search capability at a very low cost.

Vernon Systems Ltd and the Sarjeant Gallery co-authored a paper showcasing ‘Explore the Collection’. Very excitingly the proposal has been accepted for presentation at the upcoming Museums & the Web conference in April 2018 in Vancouver, Canada—an unprecedented opportunity for us to share the Sarjeant Gallery story and its collection on an international stage. Please visit ‘Explore the Collection’ at <https://collection.sarjeant.org.nz/explore> I encourage you to try it out!

JENNIFER TAYLOR MOORE, *Curator of Collections*

EXHIBITIONS

Current—summer season

AT 38 TAUPŌ QUAY

25 NOVEMBER 2017–11 FEBRUARY 2018

Wendy Fairclough: *Common Ground*
Selected works 2007–2014 and *Tylee Cottage*
works 2016–2017

Australian-based, Whanganui born glass artist Wendy Fairclough was artist-in-residence at Tylee Cottage in 2016. *Common Ground* features new cast glass and bronze works exploring Māori and European food sources. Running alongside this is a selection of the artist's work from 2007–2014. Generously supported by



2 DECEMBER 2017–25 FEBRUARY 2018

Riddle

Enigmatic Works from the Collection

Inspired by a selection of recent additions to the Sarjeant collection, this exhibition features works that are intriguing and elusive in their use of materials, technique or subject matter.

2 DECEMBER 2017–25 FEBRUARY 2018

On the Hill

A Century of Depicting the Sarjeant

A small selection of works from the Sarjeant Gallery's collection inspired by the architecture of the Gallery building on Queens Park.

 www.facebook.com/SarjeantGallery

 [sarjeantgallery](https://twitter.com/sarjeantgallery)

 [@sarjeantgallery](https://www.instagram.com/sarjeantgallery)

For more information & to keep up to date with news & events visit:
sarjeant.org.nz

19 DECEMBER 2017–7 JANUARY 2018

Motorbikes

A display of classic bikes from local collectors to coincide with Whanganui's annual Boxing Day Cemetery Circuit.

UPSTAIRS AT THE i-SITE, 31 TAUPŌ QUAY

9 DECEMBER 2017–11 MARCH 2018

Richard Stratton: *Living History*

In *Living History*, Wellington artist Richard Stratton presents a series of new work that continues his interest in bringing together ceramic decoration and production techniques, art histories and social narratives. This exhibition is toured by the Dowse Art Museum and supported by Creative New Zealand.



Upcoming—Autumn 2018 season

10 MARCH–13 MAY 2018

Whanganui Arts Review 2018



Richard Stratton *Legs* 2016.

Courtesy of Anna Miles Gallery, Auckland

TALKS & EVENTS

All events are free and are at 38 Taupō Quay unless otherwise stated.

FRIDAY 8 DECEMBER, 7.30PM
(at *The Musician's Club, 65 Drews Ave*)

The Danberrys

The Danberrys are led by Tennessee-born couple Ben DeBerry and Dorothy Daniel - a truly unique pair of artists. Dorothy's luxuriously smoky voice and Ben's intricate acoustic guitar flatpicking, creates a sound drawing influences from Bluegrass, Country, Blues, and the Funk/Soul traditions. Performing as a trio with Vanessa McGowan (Tattletale Saints) on upright bass. Tickets \$20, Gallery Friends & Stars \$18; purchase from Sarjeant on the Quay or by phoning 349 0506. *Cash bar available 7 to 7.30pm & during the interval.*

SATURDAY 9 DECEMBER, 11AM

Floor Talk: Wendy Fairclough

Wendy Fairclough will discuss her new exhibition *Common Ground* in conversation with Greg Donson, Curator & Public Programmes Manager.

SATURDAY 9 DECEMBER, 2PM
(at *31 Taupō Quay above the i-SITE*)

Floor Talk: Richard Stratton

Richard Stratton will reveal tales about mudlarking on the banks of the river Thames and the labour intensive processes that go into making his intricate works in *Living History*.

SATURDAY 9 DECEMBER, 5.30PM-7PM

Summer Exhibition season opening

SATURDAY 30 DECEMBER, 5PM

Floor Talk: Classic Bike Display

Local classic bike enthusiasts Andrew Kidd, Bill James and Gregory Williamson will discuss their bikes on display at Sarjeant on the Quay to coincide with the Cemetery Circuit 2018, in conversation with Operations Manager Teresa Toy.

THURSDAY 18 JANUARY, 2PM

Art Fix with Greg Donson

Join Curator & Public Programmes Manager Greg Donson for a walk through the Wendy Fairclough exhibition *Common Ground* featuring work made as a result of her 2016 residency, alongside selected works from 2007-2014.

TUESDAY 6 FEBRUARY, 7.30PM

Talk: Brit Bunkley & Andrea Gardner

Brit and Andrea will give an illustrated talk on their recent visit to *documenta* - an exhibition of contemporary art which takes place every five years in Kassel, Germany. They will also discuss the Sculpture Projects Münster and the Venice Biennale 2017.

SUNDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2018, 4.30PM

Speaker for the Sarjeant: Athol Steward

Athol Steward will discuss his recent coastal walk from Raglan to Whanganui to raise awareness of the planned deep seabed mining off the West Coast of New Zealand.

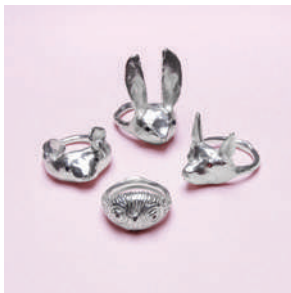
THURSDAY 22 FEBRUARY, 2PM

Art Fix with Tom Turner

Join Tom Turner for a friendly chat about the exhibition *Riddle: Enigmatic Works from the Collection*. You are encouraged to bring a pen and pad. This will be followed by a cup of tea at Mud Ducks.

GALLERY SHOP

Open 7 days
10.30am–4.30pm



**Sarjeant Gallery
Te Whare o Rehua
Whanganui**

38 Taupō Quay
Whanganui 4500
New Zealand

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www.sarjeant.org.nz

Sarjeant Gallery is a cultural facility of the Whanganui District Council