

Sarjeant Quarterly 79

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Newsletter of the
Sarjeant Gallery
Te Whare o Rehua
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FRONT COVER: 2021 Pattillo Whanganui Arts Review Open Award winner **Andrea Gardner** *Now I Have Your Attention* (2021) inkjet print on Ilford Smooth Pearl

BELOW: Dalgleish Architects Excellence Award: **Leigh Anderton Hall** *Cloud Guardian*, ceramic



From the Director

Alert Level 1 or Alert Level 2? Moving between these is a sizeable challenge for our public programmes scheduling, but we've now developed a few work-arounds so that we can stay in touch with our supporters and do our best to provide you with an engaging online art experience. Thankfully we didn't find ourselves in Level 3, but we did need to 'pivot' like everyone else and cancel or postpone our on-site events in favour of the digital medium. Nowhere was this more evident than in the hosting of our annual *Pattillo Whanganui Arts Review*. At the eleventh hour we had to make the difficult decision to call off the mammoth opening event, in order to comply with restrictions in gatherings and physical distancing. With the support of our sponsor Anne Pattillo we have developed an Arts Review Hub accessible through our website and via Facebook and here everyone will find details of the various award winners, previous award winners and links to our various sponsors. More information as well as video and image content will be included on the Hub as it comes to hand and in due course, once all of the works from the show have been photographed and measured, most will be available for purchase via the Sarjeant's online shop.

Covid wasn't the only challenge that we have faced in recent times. Significant tremors always cause us anxiety, but even more so now that our building in Pukenuamu Queen's Park is being renovated and strengthened. In its current state the building is vulnerable, however we're pleased to report that our engineer's interim buttressing solution on the east and west walls, as well as a concrete retaining structure at the base to the north, ensured that the structure has remained stable despite the seismic activity.

It has been a challenging start to 2021 but our current exhibitions: *Pattillo Whanganui Arts Review*; *Pattillo Project: Tracy Byatt, An Impossible Bouquet*; and the soon to open *Tender Brick: The Material Epiphanies of Peter Hawkesby* are essential viewing for Autumn.

GREG ANDERSON

Education News

Embarking on a project to brighten up two large sections of fence surrounding the Redevelopment Project at Pukenuamu Queen's Park was a fun and creative challenge, and a great opportunity to involve our community. We had a large variety of both children and adults respond to our call to join us in the gallery classroom and paint a board. Participants embraced the theme of birds, insects, plants and flowers and created a diverse range of imagery. Putting all the works together to form two large murals was like playing a giant game of Tetris where not only the shapes had to fit together, but the images and colours on each board needed to work alongside each other too.

I would like to thank everyone who took part, who had fun and were brave in sharing their creative side with us. Thank you to the kindergartens, playcentres and all the members of our community who participated in this project, you have enlivened the redevelopment walls with community spirit.

SIETSKE JANSMA, *Education Officer*



The community mural installed at Pukenuamu Queen's Park



Tylee News

We are very pleased to welcome painter Graham Fletcher to Whanganui as our new artist-in-residence at Tylee Cottage for five months from February–June. Fletcher lives in Dunedin and is Principal Lecturer at the Dunedin School of Art. He has been a practicing artist since 1997 and his work to date as a New Zealand born Samoan has explored complex cultural issues within a post-colonial context. These ideas formed the basis for further research and in February 2010 he completed his Doctorate of Fine Arts at The University of Auckland.

Fletcher has exhibited nationally and internationally and over the last decade exhibitions have included *ATA: An Exhibition of Contemporary Samoan Art*, Harris Gallery—University of La Verne, California (2012); *Home AKL*, Auckland Art Gallery (2012); *The Seventh Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art*, Queensland Art Gallery—Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, Australia (2012); *Future Primitive*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, Australia (2013); and *Time of Others*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo (2015), travelling to The National Museum of Art, Osaka (2015), Singapore Art Museum (2015–2016) and the Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane (2016). In 2018 a retrospective of his work entitled *The Third Space: Ambiguity in the Art of Graham Fletcher* (2018) was exhibited at the Gus Fisher Gallery in Auckland and curated by Linda Tyler and Hannah Burgoyne.

Fletcher is also the recipient of the Lilian Ida Smith Award for 2021, congratulations Graham and we look forward to seeing what comes of your time in Whanganui.

Redevelopment Update

After a number of earthquakes shook the Whanganui and Central North Island region recently, we wanted to provide our supporters with reassurance that everything is being done to ensure the stability of the existing Sarjeant Galley building during the redevelopment works.

To prevent any movement due to subsidence during the construction of te Pataka o Sir Te Atawhai Archie John Tairora (the new wing) we have installed a concrete retaining wall, held in place with 10 metre steel anchors driven deep into the ground. It's an impressive structure and will become an integral part of the connecting elements between the new and old buildings. In addition two A-frame structures have been installed to support the exterior stone walls during strengthening work inside the Sarjeant.

To test and ensure the efficacy of the above, several simple surveying or measuring methods to indicate any movement of the 100 year old building have been introduced. These include using pencil markings, dazzle paint or fragile glass plates across existing cracks inside and outside the building which are visually checked by the contractor, and local surveyor Harrison & O'Sullivan takes measurements on a weekly basis to compare to reference points located on the Sarjeant and on neighbouring buildings. Taking into account measurement accuracy, I am pleased to report that their survey monitoring shows no detectable movements have occurred on the existing building from the construction activities carried out to-date or from the recent seismic activity.

With the retaining wall in place, all limitations on work close to the existing building have been lifted and it's full steam ahead with construction of the basement level of the new wing, with the contractor completing the lift pit and sections of the basement floor during March.

Earthquake strengthening of the Sarjeant's interior walls is also making steady progress with the drilling of vertical core holes for the insertion of the post tension strands or rods, at the half way mark. Once placed, the rods will be held in tension by concrete diaphragms at the basement and roof levels.

An aerial photo of the site was taken in March as part of construction monitoring.

GAYE BATTY, *Sarjeant Gallery Redevelopment Project Director*



TOP: Aerial view of the redevelopment site, taken in March 2021

BOTTOM: Kym Fell, Whanganui District Council Chief Executive, and Gaye Batty inside the Sarjeant

2021 Pattillo Whanganui Arts Review

6 MARCH–16 MAY, 2021

On Arts Review receiving day, Sarjeant on the Quay is full to the brim with artworks from the Whanganui Region. This year saw 184 entries, which demonstrates the depth of artistic talent we have in our local community. The range of works entered this year included traditional oil and acrylic paintings, drawings, prints, sculpture in a variety of media and video works.

Now in its 33rd year, the 2021 Arts Review has continued support from our principal sponsor Pattillo, a Wellington based consultancy co-directed by Anne Pattillo and Maree Maddock. In addition to generously sponsoring the Review's Open Award, Pattillo have continued with their support of the Pattillo Project, a solo artist showcase exhibition with mentoring from Sarjeant curators the following year. This year the Open Award winner also receives a website designed and hosted by Two Monkeys and the 'Making It' artists and creatives workshops, developed by Whanganui & Partners.

This year's recipient of the Open Award and Pattillo Project is Andrea Gardner, who's work *Now I Have Your Attention* as can be seen on the cover of this quarterly, was described by this year's judge Reuben Friend (Director at Pataka Art + Museum) as "visually greedy, one of those works that when you walk into the space the colour really pops... it's hard to walk past it, but on closer inspection there are narratives around climate change and sustainability." We look forward to working with Andrea on her 2022 exhibition which will run alongside next year's Arts Review. The Dalglish Architects Excellence Award went to Leigh Anderton-Hall for her ceramic work *Cloud Guardian*, and the Article & Money Poppins Excellence Award went to Tia Ranginui for her photographic work *Taniwha*—from the series *Tua o Tāwauwau*. Both of these prizes also include the 'Making It' professional development course courtesy of Whanganui & Partners.

Our Youth Recognition Award and 8 Merit Awards were awarded as follows:

WDC Youth Committee Youth Recognition Award:

Zoe Bracegirdle, *Living Dead*, photographic inkjet print

Barnicoat & Healy Merit Award sponsor:

Wendy Watson, *On the Margins: Late Summer*, mixed media (found metal, silk, cyanotype)

Friends of the Sarjeant Gallery Merit Award:

Emma Camden, *Untitled*, cast glass

River City Picture Framers Ltd Merit Award:

Kaye Coombs, *Senescence*, acrylic on Perspex

Recaffeinate Merit Award:

Aaron Scythe, *Syncrony*, mixed media, giclee print and ceramic

Renata's Art & Framing Merit Award:

Wendy-ann Molijn, *Ara*, watercolour

Whanganui Garden Services Ltd Merit Award:

Andre Bronnimann, *Christie*, acrylic and oil on linen

The Whanganui River Markets Trust Merit Award:

Gail Imhoff, *Kōrero Ki Te Awa*, digital photograph on satin paper

Edith Collier Trust Merit Award:

Keiran Donnelly, *The Optimist*, acrylic on board

The Gallery would like to thank each of our sponsors and everyone who entered this year's Review for their continued support, and congratulate all of our prize winners.

JESSICA KIDD, *Assistant Curator*



LEFT: **Article & Money Poppins Excellence Award:** Tia Ranginui, *Taniwha*—from the series *Tua o Tāwauwau*, archival print on Hahnemühle photorag

Pattillo Project: Tracy Byatt

An Impossible Bouquet

20 FEBRUARY–9 MAY, 2021

The second annual Pattillo Project, Tracy Byatt's *An Impossible Bouquet*, is an installation which defies categorisation. At first glance, these works might appear to be artificial flowers, but they are actually sculpted in an unlikely medium—sugar. Byatt's work is at once familiar yet enigmatic; occupying a fascinating space between medieval sugar art and the rich tradition of historical still life painting. *An Impossible Bouquet* is a year-long project that is the culmination of a lifelong fascination with the natural world and is the artist's most ambitious work to date.

In paste form sugar is soft and malleable, making it an ideal sculptural medium, but once set it becomes hard and fragile. Sugar is used to preserve, yet it can also cause decay. It is the push and pull of these contradictions that make Byatt's work so arresting. But due to sugar's ephemeral nature, the bittersweet reality of sculpting from her chosen medium is that the finished pieces have a limited lifespan, eventually deteriorating much like the blooms she recreates.

Byatt draws inspiration from the extensive garden at her rural home near Turakina. What makes this remarkable work 'impossible' is that the specimens featured in the bouquet are from different seasons throughout the year. Many of the flowers hold personal meaning for the artist; some reference historical artists while others are a reminder of home and her childhood in the UK. Others are included as tributes to the cuttings, seedlings and gardening advice given to her by family and friends. These include poppies for her mother, and tulips which were a favourite of both her grandmother and great grandmother.

Featured in the arrangement is a single yellow rose—a nod to Dutch Renaissance painter Jan van Huysum (1682–1748), who famously made a client wait for an entire year until a particular variety came back into bloom before finishing a commission. Byatt won the Open Award of the 2020 Pattillo Whanganui Arts Review, which made her the recipient of the Pattillo Project 2021 and led her to commence work on this bouquet almost exactly a year ago. Synchronicity which did not go unnoticed by the discerning artist.

JESSICA KIDD, *Assistant Curator*

LEFT: Tracy Byatt *An Impossible Bouquet* 2021, sugar, pigment and resin



Shannon Novak

Symplegma

For Pride Week 2021 the Sarjeant Gallery commissioned Tāmaki Makaurau-based artist Shannon Novak to create one of his distinctive site-specific works for the shop window of Sarjeant on the Quay. The work is titled *Fuse: Vision I* and marks the start of a journey to create a network of safe spaces around Whanganui as part of the Safe Space Alliance. Novak is the founder and director of the Alliance, an LGBTQI+* led non-profit organisation that aims to help people identify, navigate and create safe spaces for the LGBTQI+ community worldwide. A safe space is a space where the LGBTQI+ community can freely express themselves without fear. It is a space that does not tolerate violence, bullying, or hate speech towards the LGBTQI+ community. It began as an artwork installed on the front window of the Suter Art Gallery in Nelson in 2019. The idea then spread to the surrounding community in Nelson, including the Nelson City Council. Since then the idea has extended to other cities in New Zealand and has now been picked up internationally. The Sarjeant is proud to be on board with this initiative and that we're the first 'venue' to be starting the Whanganui District Council on this journey to be part of the Safe Space Alliance.

Novak came to Whanganui for Pride Week and he sees *Fuse: Vision I* as part of an ongoing dialogue with the community in Whanganui, broadly titled *Symplegma*. Novak's work was in part inspired by one of the Sarjeant's most beloved artworks—*The Wrestlers*, a three-quarter marble copy of the Greek original from the 3rd Century BC, purchased from the studio of Raffaello Romanelli in 1914 in Florence. In 2002 Peter Peryer photographed *The Wrestlers* and this image alongside other photographs from the Gallery's collection are on view with five photographic works of roses that Novak captured in various states of bloom while in Whanganui last year. This selection of works and companion text was a collaborative project between the artist Shannon Novak and independent Whanganui-based curator Milly Mitchell-Anyon and will be on view until 16 May.

*LGBTQIA+ stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Agender / Asexual + other queer identifying communities

RIGHT: Shannon Novak 'Identity Hue I—V' [detail] 2021, c-type prints, courtesy of the artist



Tender Brick: The Material Epiphanies of Peter Hawkesby

24 APRIL–12 SEPTEMBER, 2021

A pair of far-flung moments in history set the conditions for this exhibition. The first was when Picasso used glue to make constructions that irrevocably altered the conception of sculpture as a form of ‘carving’ or ‘modelling’ of a singular form. The second is the audacious choice Hawkesby made during the mid-1970s to entirely dispense with the potter’s wheel and make ceramics by any other means.

In seeking sudden relief from the wheel’s tyranny of symmetry, Hawkesby gave credence to clay as a means of expression, rather than ceramics as a discipline. From here, the artist has consistently defied the strictures prescribing his medium, and in doing so has fashioned an individual approach to the making of craft within the context of Aotearoa, unlike anything encountered previously.

The exhibition’s title salutes Gertrude Stein’s 1914 publication, *Tender Buttons*, a work considered a triumph of unorthodox Modernist experiment on one hand and decried as pretentious posturing on the other. Academic roadkill or scholarly redemption, the polarisation around Stein’s achievement compares to the reception Hawkesby’s ceramic art has received over the years. Stein’s insistence on the primacy of ‘looking’ unencumbered by the preconceptions of language is consistent with Hawkesby’s insistence on the incomparability of ‘touch’. The exhibition *Tender Brick* tracks the range and depth of Hawkesby’s ceramic production since his return to full-time making in 2016.

Peter Hawkesby’s ceramic career dates to the 1970s where he taught himself pottery north of Auckland. In 1977 he moved to Auckland to work with Dennis O’Connor on Waiheke Island. Work from this period was acquired by Auckland Museum, the Dowse Art Museum and many private collections. In 1980, Hawkesby was included in Denis Cohn Gallery’s *Five by Five* exhibition along with the work of Denis O’Connor, Warren Tippett, Bronwynne Cornish and John Parker. From the mid-1980s, Hawkesby lived in Tokyo. Upon

returning to Auckland in 1994 he spent two decades as proprietor of the iconic café, Alleluja in St Kevin’s Arcade. In 2015 Hawkesby resumed working full-time in ceramics. His solo exhibition, *Scratch a Cenotaph* opened at Anna Miles Gallery in May 2018, followed by *MNVWZ ANTICKS*, in October 2019. Hawkesby’s work was included in *Dirty Ceramics*, Dowse Art Museum October 2019–March 2020.

Tender Brick: The Material Epiphanies of Peter Hawkesby was developed by our friends at Objectspace where it was on view from 21 November, 2020–21 February, 2021. The exhibition was curated by Richard Fahey and generously supported by Creative NZ.



OBJECTSPACE



Peter Hawkesby *Demo Ticks* 2019, ceramics

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

Shannon Novak *Fuse: Vision I*
2021, transparent coloured
vinyl, Commissioned for the
front window of Sarjeant on
the Quay by the Sarjeant
Gallery Te Whare o Rehua
Whanganui, February 2021



**Sarjeant Gallery
Te Whare o Rehua
Whanganui**

Sarjeant On the Quay

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Sarjeant Gallery is a cultural facility of the Whanganui District Council