

Sarjeant Quarterly 82

Summer 2021–22

Newsletter of the
Sarjeant Gallery
Te Whare o Rehua
Whanganui
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Contents

From the Director **3** / Tylee News **4** / Recent Acquisition **5** / Redevelopment Update **6** / Jae Hoon Lee: *Bridge of Now and Here* **8** / *Finders* **10** / Star Gossage: *He Tangata The People* **12** / Collection Focus **14** / Endowment Update **16** / Friends of the Sarjeant Update **17** / 2021–2022 Blumhardt Curator at the Sarjeant Gallery **18**

FRONT COVER: **Jae Hoon Lee** *Virginia Lake* 2021 (detail), digitally collaged photography. Image courtesy of the artist

BELOW: **Violet Whiteman** *The View from the Duncan Garden, Durie Hill, Whanganui* circa 1940, watercolour on paper, 2008.9.1. Collection of the Sarjeant Gallery Te Whare o Rehua Whanganui. Gift of Mrs Pam Williams, 2008



From the Director

Another complicated year is drawing to a close and we farewell two people who have had a significant impact on the Sarjeant's operation and its future wellbeing.

On 5 October the redoubtable Pam Williams QSO passed away, aged 88. Pam was an astute businesswoman founding a number of companies including *Wanganui Trawlers*, later *Wanganui Seafoods*, followed then by a move into aviation with *Air Wanganui*. A generous philanthropist, Mrs Williams not only supported the Sarjeant Gallery Redevelopment as a Foundation Donor, but she also contributed to Bushy Park and the Waimarie Riverboat Trust. It is fair to say that Pam was a pillar of the business community in Whanganui, but her influence also extended across New Zealand and overseas, such that she was inducted into the New Zealand Business Hall of Fame in 2017. Pam Williams will be very much missed in the Sarjeant's community—her contribution to us came at a pivotal moment, and it is true to say that without her generous support of our efforts, we would not have succeeded in leveraging the funds that we did. Vale Pam Williams.

October also saw the departure of another supporter of the Gallery. Kym Fell came to Whanganui District Council as Chief Executive in 2016. As a member of the Sarjeant Gallery Trust he offered strategic advice when it was required most and later took the much needed step of hiring the highly experienced Gaye Batty, as Project Director for the Sarjeant Gallery Redevelopment. From an operational standpoint, Kym's mantra was to empower his staff. Perhaps most significantly for the Gallery this meant a reinstatement of the Director's role that had been disestablished in 2005—this not only buoyed Sarjeant staff, but also signalled to the arts community across New Zealand that things were changing for the better in Whanganui. Kym Fell left the Whanganui District Council on Friday 29 October and took up his new role at Wellington City Council as Chief Customer & Community Officer on Monday 1 November. While he will be missed, the Gallery wishes Kym and his family well for their future.

The Sarjeant's summer season features an extraordinary suite of new photographic and video works by former Tylee Resident Jae Hoon Lee; an exhibition entitled *He Tangata: The People* by painter Star Gossage; and across the road our soon-to-reopen i-SITE object gallery will feature *Finders*, a new group show. Season's greetings from all of us at the Sarjeant and we look forward to seeing you here again soon.

GREG ANDERSON

Tylee News

In July we welcomed photographer Solomon Mortimer and choreographic artist Zahra Killeen-Chance and their daughter to Whanganui. The family had only been in residence for just over a month when the country once again entered lockdown. Although this meant opportunities for venturing into the city were curtailed, the pair collaborated to document their time, creating a photographic record of themselves and the cottage over the weeks of confinement. We look forward to seeing how these images will feed into their post residency show. In November, Zahra performed a solo dance performance titled *Nichework* to a captivated and engaged audience. First performed in 2019, the accompanying image shows the artist in her distinctive costume created specifically for the performance, designed and made in collaboration with Amanda Smith, Rachelle Moore and the Textile Design Lab at AUT in Auckland. We'll be sad to see Solomon and Zahra's time at Tylee finish at the end of November, but we hope to see them back in Whanganui in the near future.

Over summer Anne Noble and Matthew McIntyre Wilson will return to Whanganui in December and January respectively, to continue

work on their projects that they began during their residencies last year. The disruption and limitations of lockdowns has certainly meant that both the Sarjeant and artists are having to be nimble and adaptable to bring projects to fruition, so we're grateful to Creative New Zealand for their ongoing support of the residency at Tylee Cottage.



ABOVE: **Zahra Killeen-Chance** on the stairs of Tylee Cottage in a costume created for her solo dance performance *Nichework*. Image: Solomon Mortimer

Recent Acquisition

The Wild Bunch by multi-disciplinary artist Lauren Lysaght is a recent acquisition gifted to the Sarjeant Gallery collection by the artist. This vibrant and witty piece is a welcome addition to our current holdings of Lysaght's work in the collection, dating from her time here as artist-in-residence at Tylee Cottage in 2001-2002. While initially appearing to be a display of artificial flowers you might find at a dairy or dollar store, on closer inspection the mixed media work is made of cotton bandannas to reference youth gangs' use of similar bandannas to show their alliances. With individual names like "Nodding Truant" and "Habitual Staggerweed", the artist states that the names for each plant are a mixture of weeds and social commentary. The work was included in a group show *Corner Dairy* at the Sarjeant Gallery which ran from December 2020–April 2021, and we are thrilled to have the piece enter our permanent collection.



ABOVE: **Lauren Lysaght** *The Wild Bunch* 2010, mixed media. Collection of the Sarjeant Gallery Te Whare o Rehua Whanganui. Gift of the artist, 2021

Redevelopment Update



The basic principle of the Post Tension Strand method being used to seismically strengthen the Sarjeant Gallery is the formation of a rigid cage inside the walls of the building using steel rods inserted vertically, which are pulled and connected under tension to concrete diaphragms at the roof and basement levels.

With so much of the strengthening and restoration work hidden inside the walls or below ground in the basement, it is pleasing to see work begin on construction of the roof diaphragm that will span the roof and support the walls and vertical elements. A scaffolded roof-tent will soon envelop the heritage building to prevent water ingress to the interior during construction. This will remain in place for up to a year.

This year the team has dealt with a range of existing building and ground conditions that have required significant design changes, and work on the old building has had to be re-programmed sequentially to protect the fragile foundations slowing the progress of works.

In the new extension wing, Pataka o Sir Te Atawhai Archie John Taiaroa, ground conditions are less of an issue and the basement walls and floor slab are close to completion with construction of the floor for Level 0 well underway.

The current phase of construction is not reliant on general building supplies, so we have not experienced the significant supply chain issues reported nationally within the construction industry as a result of COVID-19. The team will continue to work to mitigate potential resource or material supply issues going forward.

GAYE BATTY, *Sarjeant Gallery Redevelopment Project Director*



LEFT TOP: The roof-tent is currently being erected to protect the interior gallery spaces from water damage

LEFT BOTTOM: Installation of the Level 0 floors of the new wing underway

Jae Hoon Lee: *Bridge of Now and Here*

20 NOVEMBER, 2021–30 JANUARY, 2022



From November 2019–January 2020, Auckland based artist Jae Hoon Lee was artist-in-residence at Tylee Cottage in Whanganui. Two years on the world is a vastly altered place as we still grapple with the global pandemic which has permanently altered the way we live and made us all question, for better or worse, our sense of place.

For Lee, much of the time spent on developing his post-residency exhibition has been in the confines of his own home, through two lockdowns. This has been in front of his computer screen creating his extraordinary works that continue his journeys through landscapes—real and imagined, as a cultural nomad. Fortunately he was able to gather his source material for the project while he was in residence and spent time visiting local sites such as Virginia Lake and Mowhanau Beach, as well as venturing further afield to the central plateau and the Mangapurua Valley, the site of the ‘Bridge to Nowhere’.

The bridge is also the inspiration for the title of the show. ‘Nowhere’ becomes ‘Now’ and ‘Here’, and the claustrophobia of the bush that swallowed the bridge after the settlement was abandoned in 1944 seems close to home for all of us. The normal bridges we can cross physically and mentally to get to somewhere else are currently leading into a different kind of wilderness.

A sense of isolation is conveyed in another work *Virginia Lake*, seen on the cover of this Sarjeant Quarterly, where Lee has digitally manipulated aerial footage of Virginia Lake to create a strangely familiar but unfamiliar image of a local site. Amongst the composite parts of the manicured lake, the artist has transplanted an aerial rooftop view of his Auckland home. Rather than being locked down in the suburbs, Lee has transported himself to another place, but one that is equally unsettling and placeless. He has bridged the 446.6 kilometres and six hour-plus geographical gap between Auckland and Whanganui. Time and space collapses.

Korean-born Lee arrived in New Zealand twenty two years ago. He’s travelled widely, across the globe and in New Zealand, but it is this country that has captured his imagination. He and his work have been described as culturally nomadic and as a stranger in a strange land. Although his source material is always from a particular place, his digital process means that a healthy dose of surrealism and alchemy is always close to hand. In conversation with art writer Dan Poynton in early 2020, Lee commented “My images are a kind of membrane between the real and the digital realm. The real and the unreal are intermingled. It’s a kind of confusion—a fantasy inner world.”

GREG DONSON, *Curator & Public Programmes Manager*

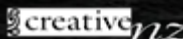
Jae Hoon Lee’s residency was generously supported by  **creative nz**

IMAGE: **Jae Hoon Lee**, still from ‘I’ [detail] 2021, single channel video, 4:03

Finders

4 DECEMBER, 2021–20 FEBRUARY, 2022

Using found objects and materials as inspiration for making art has been a strategy for a diverse range of artists and art movements throughout art history, including dada, surrealism and pop. Closer to home, New Zealand has a rich array of artists who use found materials in their practice, many of whom are featured in the Sarjeant's own collection, such as Don Driver, Judy Darragh and Lauren Lysaght. The exhibition *Finders* brings together a group of artists who utilise found objects and everyday materials in their practice. Ghosts of squashed boxes, refashioned sportswear, pencils, rulers, rope and vintage linoleum can all be found in the Sarjeant's object gallery over summer.

Included in the exhibition are works by Kirsty Lillico, made from deconstructed sportswear which are a departure from her slumping wall-based carpet constructions. Monique Lacey brings new beauty to the humble material of cardboard by combining plaster, resin and paint and literally crushing the work with her own body. Simon Ogden's chosen medium of vintage linoleum allows him to make beautiful composite interior landscapes of the imagination. Pencil and ruler works by the late Paul Cullen feature alongside rope vessels made by Finn Ferrier utilising nautical knot work.

The hand and labour of the artist is visible in many of the works featured in *Finders* and a meticulous attention to detail and order. There's a kind of celebration and acceptance of the flaws but also the merits of using everyday materials. As Finn Ferrier says of his slumping vessels made from hand knotted single lengths of rope "... these vessels are able to survive storms and earthquakes and in an emergency can be undone into lengths of rope again." Also included is a new large-scale work by Wesley John Fourie *and then, at once, a river*. This poetic work is a response to the Whanganui River made from found wool and fibres.

The title of Monique Lacey's sculptural work illustrating the show on these pages is apt for the year that we have all had. We're thankful that through the difficulties of living through lockdowns, creativity and occasionally humour are still alive and well in these uncertain times.

GREG DONSON, Curator & Public Programmes Manager



ABOVE: **Monique Lacey** *It's Like Pushing Shit Uphill*
2020, cardboard, plaster, resin, paint

Star Gossage: *He Tangata The People*

13 NOVEMBER, 2021–6 FEBRUARY, 2022



ABOVE: Star Gossage 'Marae' 2013, oil on board. Wallace Arts Collection Trust, Auckland

The exhibition, *Star Gossage: He Tangata The People*, developed by the New Zealand Portrait Gallery Te Pūkenga Whakaata showcases the immense contribution Star Gossage (Ngāti Wai / Ngāti Ruanui) has made to New Zealand figurative painting from a kaupapa Māori perspective.

NZ Portrait Gallery Director and co-curator of the exhibition, Jaenine Parkinson, said “Gossage works from a wahine (female) centred perspective, celebrating women’s ability to bring life and to weave and hold together the social fabric of community. Her paintings also express the excruciating beauty and colour of where Gossage is from, and of the people in her life.”

Showing 20-years of artistic practice, this complex and emotive exhibition illuminates the use of portrait and figure in the landscape to communicate themes of unity, grief, compassion and aroha (love). “Tamariki (children) are foregrounded in the paintings, supported and guided by ever-present kuia (female elder). Star Gossage’s paintings also communicate a wide and deep-seated grief,” Parkinson said.

Ngahiraka Mason, an independent curator and art historian, said the portraits have a clear whakapapa (genealogy) in the continuum of portrait-making from inside a community. “She paints living history— not the past — of a place and its community members,” Mason said.

Star Gossage lives and works, surrounded by whānau (extended family), on ancestral land at Pākiri, north of Auckland. “Depictions of Pākiri speak to the potency of place over time and space; it is an ancestral homeland, a kainga whānau. We might think we know, but we do not know the identity of those depicted in Gossage’s paintings unless she tells us,” Mason said.

Grant Hall is the co-curator of the exhibition and personal friend of Star Gossage. He also describes viewing the paintings as a rare, emotional experience. “New Zealanders may gain knowledge through her work particularly in relation to the importance of the land and its preservation, the importance of kindness, and support for others. It provides an opportunity to view paintings from a wahine (female) Māori painter on a scale and venue that is timely, rare, instructive, and richly rewarding,” Hall said.

Star Gossage spent a number of years painting pure abstract paintings before figuration emerged. “The works emotionally articulate the interconnectedness between the people and whenua (land). Her paintings paint her day-to-day reality but also can have a spiritual, mystical quality to them,” Grant Hall said.

Exhibition developed and toured by



Sponsored by



Collection Focus: *Sarjeant links with English art school*

We regularly receive requests for information about our collection from members of the public or researchers, and these often lead us to uncover additional information about the artworks and artists in our collection. A recent request regarding the artist Violet Whiteman has resulted in us making contact with Bushey Museum in Hertfordshire, England regarding Herkomer's Art School in Bushey, which was attended by several artists in the Sarjeant Gallery's collection.

Herkomer's Art School was established at Bushey in 1883 by Sir Hubert von Herkomer CVO RA (German, b.1849, d.1914) and specialised in teaching composition, landscape and portraiture. The school had a roll of thirty students per year and, while both sexes were admitted, the women had to be under 28 years of age and unmarried. Some well-known alumni include William Nicholson and Lucy Kemp-Welch. As a result of Herkomer's Art School success, Bushey was established as an art colony which continues today, and the Bushey Museum holds a significant collection of works by alumni.

Lucy Kemp-Welch (British, b.1869, d.1958) attended Herkomer's Art School from 1891 after which she took over the school from 1905 until 1926, when Herkomer retired, and it became known as the Bushey School of Painting, then the Kemp-Welch School of Animal Painting. Kemp-Welch's work was well-received during her lifetime and she exhibited regularly at the Royal Academy. The Sarjeant Gallery has one of her oil paintings in the collection called 'Crest of the Downs' circa 1900.

Violet Emily Whiteman, née Sells (British, b.1873, d.1952) was born in Guildford, Surrey and studied at the school prior to 1902. Violet married William Whiteman in 1905 and lived on a farm in Herefordshire. During this time she was awarded a scholarship at Kemp-Welch's School of Animal Painting. In 1926, at the age of 52, Violet and her husband moved to Whanganui, New Zealand and she regularly exhibited with the Wanganui Arts & Crafts Society. The Sarjeant Gallery holds nearly 20 of her paintings.

JENNIFER TAYLOR MOORE, *Curator of Collections*



LEFT: **Violet Whiteman** *Fox Hunting* circa 1920, oil on canvas, 1990/1/1. Collection of the Sarjeant Gallery Te Whare o Rehua Whanganui. Gift of Dr A.J. Patterson, 1990

BELOW: **Lucy Kemp-Welch** *Crest of the Downs* early 1900s, oil on canvas, 1940/1/1. Collection of the Sarjeant Gallery Te Whare o Rehua Whanganui. Purchased with T G McCarthy Trust Funds, 1940





Endowment Update

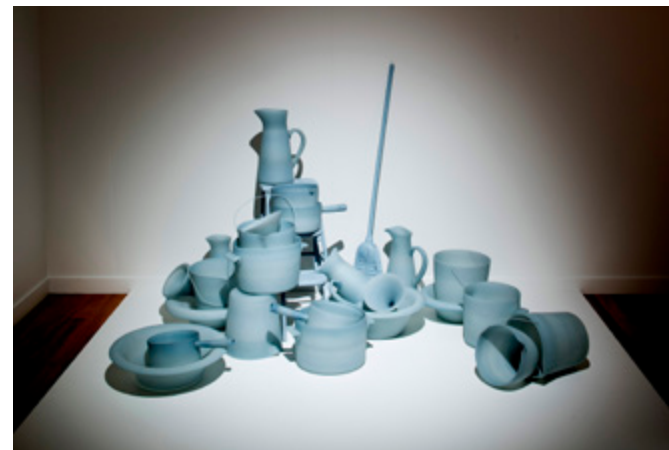
When the Sarjeant Gallery reopens at Pukenuamu Queen's Park in 2023, the recently launched Sarjeant Endowment Fund will ensure that not only will we have one of the finest gallery buildings in the country, but also a gallery that is able to deliver outstanding programmes and exhibitions to its audiences.

Since my last update, the Sarjeant Gallery Trust has developed its investment policy and objectives around the Endowment Fund and appointed Craig's Investment Partners as the Fund Managers. The Gallery team is currently in the process of creating a brochure which will detail the many benefits (both real and philosophical) that come with supporting the Sarjeant Endowment Fund through donations and bequests.

The Sarjeant Gallery Trust Board is made up of professional and experienced individuals who will ensure the integrity and long term growth of the fund to support the Gallery's vision. In addition, the Trust continues to pursue funding to further bolster the redevelopment contingency to protect the Whanganui District Council's investment.

We thank you for your continued support and hope that we will see you soon when conditions allow for the Sarjeant team to resume events and exhibition openings at Sarjeant on the Quay.

NICOLA WILLIAMS MNZM, *Chairman, Sarjeant Gallery Trust*



LEFT: **Wendy Fairclough**
Acquiescence 2009, hand
blown glass, sandblasted,
acrylic bucket handles,
found objects and acrylic
paint

Friends of the Sarjeant Update

Your Friends Executive Committee has had a busy year despite the lockdown in August. We continue to provide support to the Gallery staff through helping with volunteers at events and in other ways. The restrictions due to Covid will mean that future events will be affected for some time yet. During the year, we completed the purchase of the Wendy Fairclough glasswork *Acquiescence*, funded from the Friends of the Sarjeant Patron donations. We also supported the 2021 Pattillo Whanganui Arts Review by sponsoring one of the Merit Awards. In anticipation of the completion of the redeveloped gallery, the Executive is currently reviewing its role and how it will respond to new opportunities. We will report on that in a future newsletter.

We currently have 303 Friends of the Sarjeant with over 50 new members joining in the last year. We would like to formally welcome the following new members: Wigs Arathoon, Jade Bedel, Natalie Bradburn, Andrew Cameron, John & Janice Carson, Bobbie Cave, Kim Churchward, Liz Cresswell, Deborah Crowley, Rachel Douglas, Whetu Fala, Helen & Craig Garner, Nicola Hartfield, Lesa Hepburn, Adie & Hetty Higginson, Anique Jayasinghe, Susan Keates, David Kerridge, Michael Kerridge, Daniella Sasvari-La Roche, Chris Lord, Kevin Luff, Madori Madori, Zenica Mann, Cassidy Martell, Wendy Molijn-Berkhout, Oliver Morse, Christina & Whata Rangi Murry-Peelis, Alexzander Nightingale, Elizabeth Nitschke, Kristy Palleson, Mereana Sharon Pari, TaPiri Pirikahu, Beverly Rae, Michael Russo, Mayumi Sherburn, Joy Slattery, Carla & Rhys Standen, Jayne Staple, Angela Stratton, Lee Su'a, Fiona Thomas, Angela Turner, Sue Walkinton, Sue & Stuart White and Vivienne Wondergem.

IAN MCGOWAN, *Friends of the Sarjeant Secretary*

2021–2022 Blumhardt Curator at the Sarjeant Gallery

Independent curator and writer Milly Mitchell-Anyon will spend a year working with the Sarjeant Gallery after being announced as the Blumhardt Curator for 2021–2022.

Currently based in her hometown of Whanganui, Mitchell-Anyon has developed an impressive CV and portfolio of exhibitions and writing since graduating in 2018 with a Master of Arts in Art History from Victoria University of Wellington. In 2018 she was the Blumhardt Creative New Zealand Curatorial Intern at the Dowse Art Museum and in 2019 undertook the Creative New Zealand Curatorial Internship in Contemporary Art at the Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Mitchell-Anyon has also worked in collection management roles at Puke Ariki and the Whanganui Regional Museum.

We are honoured to be partnering with the Blumhardt Foundation and Creative New Zealand to facilitate the Blumhardt Curator opportunity for 2021–2022 at the Sarjeant Gallery. Mitchell-Anyon will be developing a group show for inclusion in the Sarjeant's exhibition programme for 2022. The project will survey the work of a selection of contemporary craft practitioners



Milly Mitchell-Anyon, 2021–2022 Blumhardt Curator at the Sarjeant Gallery

and offer viewers an opportunity to look at the realm of craft/object practice from new perspectives. The exhibition will also be accompanied by a publication.

Milly Mitchell-Anyon says “I’m incredibly excited to be taking up the mantle of Blumhardt Curator over the next year. It makes perfect sense to be based in Whanganui for a role like this—the Sarjeant Gallery is, and has historically been, committed to the advancement of craft and object art. The Blumhardt Foundation and Creative New Zealand’s investment in this opportunity is a testament to the foresight of the impact a programme like this will have on the sector long-term.”

Milly has recently curated an exhibition for the New Zealand Portrait Gallery titled *Face Time: Portraits from the 1980s*, which runs from 25 November, 2021–13 February, 2022 and features a

number of loaned works from the Sarjeant Gallery collection. Milly’s work on her exhibition as Blumhardt Curator is already well underway, and we look forward to seeing the final show in our winter season, 2022.



Currently showing in *Facetime: Portraits from the 1980s* at the New Zealand Portrait Gallery. Debra Bustin *Untitled* 1984, screenprint on paper. Collection of the Sarjeant Gallery Te Whare o Rehua Whanganui. Purchased, 1984





FINDERS

**4 December 2021 –
20 February 2022**

**A group exhibition featuring artists
utilising found materials. On view in our
object gallery at the i-Site, 31 Taupō Quay**

**Image: Finn Ferrier,
Hernia Vase (2020)
Photo: Sam Hartnett**


Sarjeant Gallery
Te Whare o Rehua
Whanganui

38 Taupō Quay
Whanganui 4500
New Zealand

Phone 06 349 0506
www.sarjeant.org.nz

Sarjeant Gallery is a cultural facility of the Whanganui District Council

Sarjeant
On the Quay