

Sarjeant Quarterly 83

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Newsletter of the
Sarjeant Gallery
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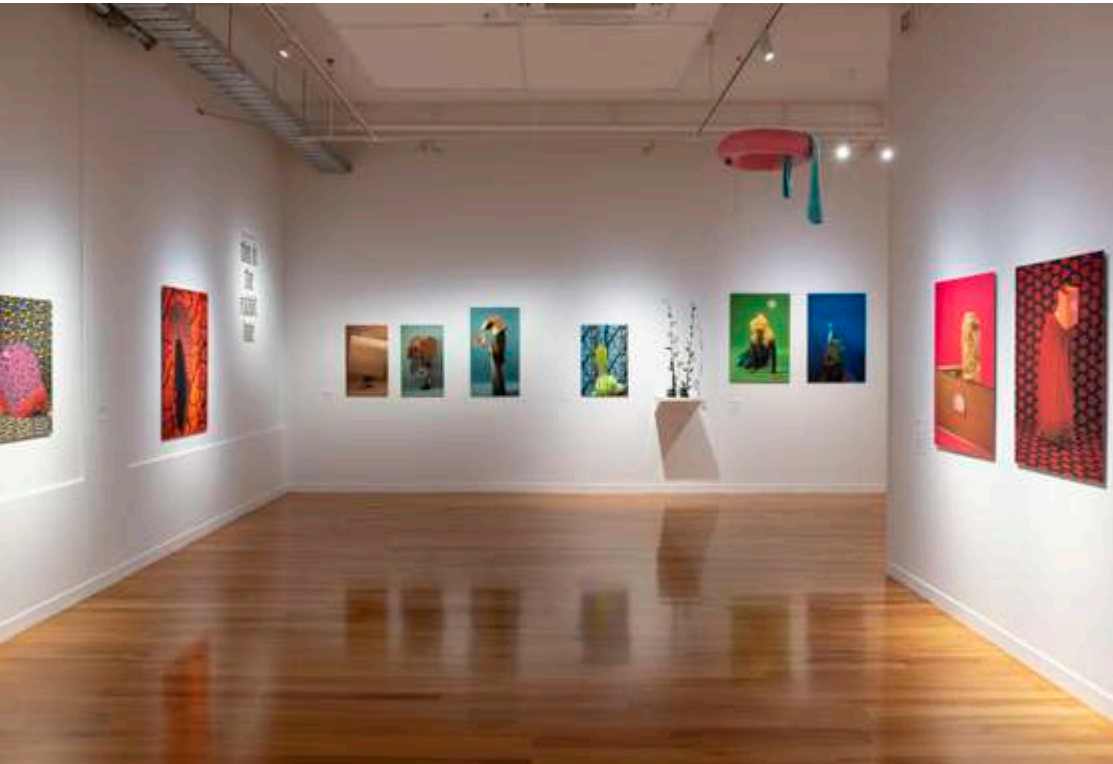
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FRONT COVER: **Annie Mackenzie** *Untitled I* (after Mrs Ponui, Kawhia) 2020, hand woven twill blocks in cotton.

Courtesy of the artist

BELOW: **Andrea Gardner** *This is the Rabbit Hole* at Sarjeant on the Quay



From the Director

As we learn to adapt to quickly changing situations, so the Sarjeant has new plans for doing business under the red and orange “traffic lights”.

With a diverse array of new exhibitions coming this autumn season, featuring an enormous range of differing media, we are exploring new ways to engage with our public. Sadly, the traditional celebratory exhibition openings are on hold for the foreseeable future, but we have come up with a variety of safe and compliant on-site curator-led activities, as well as a number of online innovations to make sure everyone gets to see what we have coming up.

The forthcoming show *Whanganui Arts in Review: A Survey of Past Award Winners 2011–2021* will see the Pattillo Whanganui Arts Review Online Hub reinvigorated with updated content celebrating past winners along with new work; and the *Pattillo Project: Andrea Gardner* will also feature strongly as Andrea Gardner presents a whole body of new work supported generously by Pattillo.

Contrasting with the Arts Review winners’ survey and the Pattillo Project, is an exhibition by former Tylee Cottage artist-in-residence Annie Mackenzie, called *Genuine Article*. Blending traditional weaving techniques with content inspired by the work of artists Edith Collier and Joanna Margaret Paul, Mackenzie’s work will appear both familiar in technique and an unexpected delight in person.

Finally a word about the Sarjeant’s Education Programme. The various COVID-19 Alert Level changes and subsequent COVID-19 Protection Framework traffic lights have provided numerous challenges to our educational offering. This year, thanks to our Educator Sietske’s ability to tackle all issues with creative flair, much of our content has gone online; and a new framework that allows for measured onsite learning, has been developed. We look forward to working with schools to deliver art learning, as well as looking at other ways we can serve our community through lifelong learning.

Welcome to 2022 everyone—come and visit us in person or via our virtual presence, either way there’s a lot to see this season.

GREG ANDERSON

Tylee and Publication News

At the end of November photographer Solomon Mortimer and choreographic artist Zahra Killeen-Chance returned to Auckland with their daughter and have recently welcomed a new baby girl into the world. During their time at Tylee Cottage Solomon and Zahra produced a self-published book titled *A Room in Whanganui*. The photographs featured explore the possibilities of the downstairs studio room at the cottage, playing with light, shadow and the artists own bodies to create compositions that become abstract. The publication is innovative in that it was designed as a duplicate receipt book in the characteristic forest green and cream of the cottage. The book was produced by H&A Print in Whanganui, with each of the pages manually perforated to allow the images to be easily removed. We are absolutely thrilled for Solomon and Zahra that the book is a finalist for the Aotearoa Photobook Award at the Photobook / NZ Festival 2022.

More news on the publication front is that we are about to publish well illustrated and beautifully designed catalogues to accompany two new exhibitions—Annie Mackenzie's *Genuine Article* and Andrea Gardner's *This is the Rabbit Hole*. Both feature essays by the Sarjeant curatorial team and some exciting contributions from guest writers. Look out for these forthcoming publications in the Gallery Shop.

We're also keeping our fingers crossed, that the publication 'Joanna Margaret Paul: Imagined in the Context of a Room' that accompanies the exhibition of the same name that was a partnership between the Dunedin Public Art Gallery and the Sarjeant Gallery will make it from the Long List to the Short List for the Booksellers Aotearoa NZ Award for Illustrated Non-Fiction at the Ockham New Zealand Book Awards.



Two upcoming catalogues for our autumn season of exhibitions, designed by Alice Bonifant and Joe Salmon respectively

Friends Update

The newly expanded Friends Executive Committee is delighted to welcome four new Friends who joined over the Christmas, New Year period. Welcome to Laura Atiga, Malcolm Collier, Miki-Su Hall and John Maguire. We also wish to make special mention of Simon Stubbs Legal Services who are our newest Corporate Sponsors who are supporting the gallery as we move onwards with two publications: one about Edith Collier and the other about the Sarjeant Gallery itself.



In December we farewelled Ian McGowan who passed away, and had been a firm friend and supporter of the Sarjeant Gallery for many years, most recently sitting on the Friends Executive as Secretary. Many charities and organisations in Whanganui have benefited from Ian's wise counsel and steering and he leaves a

big hole in our community. We are very sad that he will not see the Sarjeant Gallery Redevelopment Project that he supported and campaigned for, completed. The Sarjeant Gallery had a true friend in Ian McGowan and we miss him.

IAN GLENNY, President Friends Executive

IMAGE: Ian McGowan and Libby Wood toast Henry Sarjeant on his birthday in 2014

Message from the Sarjeant Gallery Trust

Over a century of Sarjeant stories has certainly all the components of human behaviour to make very riveting opera. In the eight years I have served on the Sarjeant Gallery Trust the greatest joy has to been to learn of this and meet such an eclectic and wonderful group of people with fascinating stories to tell. Some have had long standing connections to the Gallery through generations before. These have included Henry Sarjeant's great niece, Judith Anderson who resides in England and Ellen Sarjeant's nephew, Philip Stewart, sadly now deceased, who was 2 years old when the Gallery opened its doors in 1919.

Back in the present we are delighted to announce that Dame Patsy Reddy and Sir David Gascoigne have agreed to come on board as patrons of the Sarjeant Gallery. Their extensive connections and true love and knowledge of the arts will be of huge benefit to us. They will join our current patrons, Sir Jerry and Lady Mateparae. We are indeed blessed!

NICOLA WILLIAMS, MNZM, Chairman

Redevelopment Update

Despite encountering COVID-19 related resourcing issues in the last quarter of 2021, strengthening works in the existing heritage building have made steady progress. In the west and east quadrants, ground beams have been installed and basement foundation works are near completion with new suspended concrete floors visible throughout the building. The concrete will be topped off by the original matai floorboards nearer the end of the programme.

The contractor has moved sequentially into the southern quadrant where the foundation works are advancing and areas of suspended floor have been placed, enabling the contractor to commence work under the dome starting with the demolition and removal of old concrete and laying of underground services, see top image.

On the outside of the building, the roof tent has now been installed, forming an impressive structure against the skyline. This will provide a secure, dry environment so the contractor can have all weather access to complete sensitive components of the project without being subject to the effects of weather.

One such component is the restoration of the dome. The idea is to bring it back to as close a condition as when new, so people's memories won't change. The dome is mainly made from concrete with panels of glass, finished off on the exterior by flourishes of decorative plaster. Though the dome won't be removed or disconnected from the roof at any point, it will be strengthened using a concrete collar that will sit neatly around the hemispherical form. When finished the dome will appear no different and the collar will be covered by decorative plaster elements to replicate the existing. Once the restoration works are complete and the dome has been thoroughly cleaned, a protective membrane will be applied to the concrete and plaster surfaces.

As far as we can tell, the inside of the dome is in good condition with no damage to the glass panels and just a light clean and paint has been planned.

Working our way across the site, the basement walls and floors of the new collection store and ground floor of the three level tower block are complete for the Pataka o Sir Te Atawhai Archie John Taiaroa, marking a key milestone for the project.

GAYE BATTY, *Sarjeant Gallery Redevelopment Project Director*



TOP: Demolition of old concrete and laying of drains is complete under the dome with newly completed suspended floors in the south wing visible in the distance

BELOW: The roof tent is now installed over the heritage building and will remain in place during seismic strengthening works on the roof and restoration of the dome. Artwork by Cracked Ink can be seen on the construction fence

Genuine Article

Annie Mackenzie

12 FEBRUARY–22 MAY, 2022

Artist Annie Mackenzie spent four months in Whanganui as the Sarjeant Gallery's artist-in-residence at Tylee Cottage, from February to June, 2019. During this time, she investigated the textiles in the works of Edith Collier (1885–1964) and Joanna Margaret Paul (1945–2003), and photographs taken for promotional purposes at the Wanganui Woollen Mills. Sarjeant Gallery Assistant Curator Jessica Kidd interviewed the artist about her post-residency exhibition at Sarjeant on the Quay.



LEFT: **Annie Mackenzie** *Edith* 2019, hand woven double weave in wool. Courtesy of the artist

RIGHT: **Edith Collier** *Girl sitting on a bed* 1917–1918, oil on canvas, 1/14. Collection of the Edith Collier Trust, in the permanent care of the Sarjeant Gallery Te Whare o Rehua Whanganui

JK: *How did the time you spent in Whanganui inform this new body of work?*

AM: I knew about Edith Collier long before I came to Whanganui because we used to have a postcard above the kitchen sink at my parents' house which was *Peasant Woman of Bonmahon*. Years later I was coming back through and you had that painting on display again, which made me start thinking about the Tylee Residency. So I was thinking about connecting in with something that is present there, but something I could do with weaving. At the same time I was interested in the Wanganui Woollen Mills too, so it all fell into place.

JK: *While you were in Whanganui how did your original aim from your proposal change or develop?*

AM: When I got here I could actually see the collection works, and decided I'd be guided by the textiles in the works. I had a whole lot of wool, so that was another thing I'd decided I really wanted to try working more in wool. Wool has a softness to it that is a bit more "painterly" rather than

linen or cotton which is a bit more "graphic". So equally that tied into the Woollen Mills side of things too.

JK: *Did you find looking at Edith's work was a good place to start looking at the wider textile industry in Whanganui?*

AM: It was good for me as a weaver, because it's quite a challenge to have something to respond to. It forced me to make up my own patterns. I was guided by her in terms of the colours which was nice, to have that guide to then think how am I going to make this with some reference to what she's done, but also interesting for me to create? It's almost like friends holding hands, because there's a connection back to the original thing... I've almost liberated them out of the painting and made them real again.

JK: *Could you look at a work and know which technique you were going to use?*

AM: I spent a lot of time thinking about it and doing samples and things, to figure out what the best weave structure to get across the *feeling* of the thing, rather than being a direct copy, that's not really what it was about. *Peasant Woman of Bonmahon* is all hand spun, because I wanted to give it the feel of an older textile. The Wanganui Woollen Mills inspired work was all ex-commercial wool yarn. The hand spun is more rustic, it's totally hand touched every part of it.

JK: *Have you been inspired from textiles you've seen in paintings or other artworks in the past, or was this idea specific to this residency?*

AM: Not so much really, now it has just become part of what I'm interested in and I look at those references a bit more, but three years ago it was quite new. I've been weaving for a while but not a huge amount of time, there's a lot of pattern books out there and it is a bit of a trap to be looking at other weaving, and you're not really opening your mind to creating something. You can't really ever create something completely original, because you're working with a set of rules which is what the loom gives you, but you can do a hell of a lot with colour and your own patterns. Which I think is quite important, it's more challenging but it's way more fun.



Whanganui Arts in Review

A Survey of Past Award Winners 2011–2021

26 FEBRUARY–5 JUNE, 2022



ABOVE: *Whanganui Arts in Review* features the work of prize winners from the the last decade of the Arts Review

The *Whanganui Arts Review* has been showcasing the diverse works of talented artists from the Whanganui region for the last thirty four years. As the longest running public arts review in New Zealand, we value this exhibition as a highlight of our annual programme. We also enjoy recognising artists that have made an outstanding contribution to the Review with an array of awards, sponsored by local businesses and our principal sponsor Pattillo. *Whanganui Arts in Review* is a survey of award winners from the past ten years, 2011–2021.

This year we have moved the Arts Review to November due to programme rescheduling caused by the uncertainties surrounding Covid 19. In its usual place in the calendar, we wanted to offer a glimpse into the current practice of artists who have won either the Open Award of the Review, a Highly Commended or an Excellence Award from the last decade. The resulting selection brings together works by twenty three distinctive artists, and reflects their practice since winning an award.

We have last year's Open Award winner and *Pattillo Project* recipient Andrea Gardner represented with her characteristic staged photography, alongside recent photographic works by Tia Ranginui, Brydee Rood and a video and 3D printed sculpture by Brit Bunkley. The local ceramic community is present in the vastly different works of Leigh Anderton-Hall, Andrea du Chatenier, Rick Rudd, and Angela Tier, displaying the versatility of this wonderful medium. The skilled art of jewellery can be found in a new body of work by Frances Stachl.

Whanganui's glass community is exhibited with beautiful works by David Murray and Dr Kathryn Wightman, with sculptural and installation works by Tracy Byatt, Glen Hayward, Lee Morgan, Kirk Nicholls and Penni Wyse. Drawing and painting are also well covered with the varied works of Amy Blackburn, André Brönnimann, Katherine Claypole, Catherine Macdonald, Prakash Patel, Mark Rayner and Paul Rayner.

We hope you will enjoy discovering the work of the many accomplished and thoughtful artists who call Whanganui home, and look forward to welcoming you to our annual Pattillo Whanganui Arts Review when we open this ever-popular exhibition later this year.

JESSICA KIDD, Assistant Curator



The Pattillo Project

Andrea Gardner *This is the Rabbit Hole*

19 FEBRUARY–18 MAY, 2022

In 2021 Andrea Gardner was the third recipient of the Pattillo Project. Her photographic work *Now I Have Your Attention* won the Open Award of the Sarjeant's annual Pattillo Whanganui Arts Review. As well as a monetary prize, the Pattillo Project gives the recipient the opportunity to develop a solo exhibition for the following year with the support of the Gallery's curatorial team.

Gardner's striking winning work featured the artist with a paper bag over her head, perched behind a cardboard box with a small reproduction of a painting by the American miniaturist Sarah Goodridge from 1828. This tiny self-portrait featuring Goodridge's bare breasts and painted on ivory was sent to the United States Senator Daniel Webster who, upon his death, had the painting donated to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. The collision of this tiny and at the time risqué painting with Gardner's self-portrait in a hot pink echo chamber with nothing but a cardboard screen for defence, was one of a group of images that were the genesis of Gardner's exhibition *This is the Rabbit Hole*.

Gardner's project brings together a dynamic grouping of self-portraits that explore concepts around identity, selfhood, and the psychological tension found in the female experience. Through staged photography Gardner juxtaposes the familiar with the unexpected and creates what she terms "truthful fictions", the resulting enigmatic images demonstrate a wonderful tension between the playful and absurd, colour and form. In each of the images Gardner has inserted herself into the scene but always in disguise—clothing, wigs, onerous cardboard and paper shapes play a vital role in skewing the view, with the artist's body becoming another shape, a sculptural element. Each image is staged in the studio, with the artist taking time to consider how the scenario might play out.

When talking about the title for the exhibition Gardner cites her process as being akin to going down a rabbit hole "a metaphor for being transported into a wonderfully strange or troubling surreal state or situation". Having worked in a variety of media over the years—from found objects to polystyrene meat trays and clay it seems that Gardner has found the almost perfect symbiotic blend of media to create a family of portraits that sit deliberately askew in a world awash with selfies.

The Pattillo Project would not be possible without the generous support of Anne Pattillo and Marie Maddock of Pattillo. Their support of this initiative, our annual Whanganui Arts Review and the Sarjeant Gallery's endeavours is very much appreciated. We believe that the quality of Gardner's exhibition alongside those of previous recipients Tracy Byatt and Dr Kathryn Wightman is testament to their commitment to supporting the work of the many wonderful artists that call Whanganui home.

GREG DONSON, Curator & Public Programmes Manager

Edith Collier Trust archive now available online

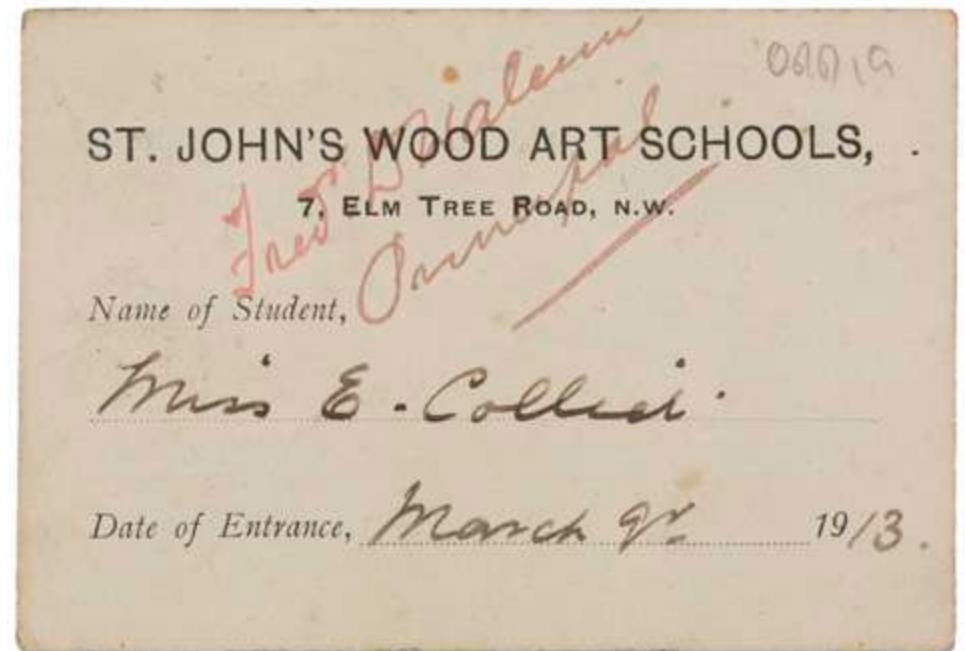
We are delighted to announce completion of a project to catalogue the entire contents of the Edith Collier Trust (ECT) archive, comprising of 658 catalogue records with 3,000 images. This project took over two years to complete and involved hours of work by volunteers Rose Collier and Sarah Pickering, as well as the Gallery's curatorial team.

The archive consists of items that were collected by and are connected to Whanganui's early NZ Modernist painter Edith Marion Collier (b.1885, d.1964). Owned by the Edith Collier Trust and in the permanent care of the Sarjeant Gallery, the archive sits alongside the Gallery's 461 paintings, drawings and prints by Edith Collier that comprise the largest publicly accessible collection of her work. The majority of these items are in the Edith Collier Trust collection.

Members of the public can access the ECT archive on Explore the Collection, the collection portal on the Sarjeant Gallery website. Available to view are photographs of the Collier family; ephemera such as menu cards from Edith's journeys by ship; catalogues and entry tickets for exhibitions Edith visited whilst studying in Europe from 1914–1922; and Edith's ration cards from wartime London. Transcripts are available for the correspondence between Edith and her friends and family. Of particular note are the letters between Edith and her brothers during World War I, when Edith provided them with a London base between their tours of duty.

The ECT archive is of interest to researchers in New Zealand as well as in Europe, from whom we receive regular enquiries. These records also provide an invaluable basis for the research currently underway in preparation for a new book about Edith Collier (funded by the Edith Collier Trust) and an exhibition to be shown when the Sarjeant Gallery re-opens at Pukenua Queen's Park.

JENNIFER TAYLOR MOORE, *Curator of Collections*



TOP: Edith Collier's student card for St John's Wood Art Schools, London, 1913

LEFT: Portrait of Edith Collier by an unknown photographer, circa 1921

ABOVE: Jennifer Taylor Moore (Curator of Collections) with Rose Collier (Edith Collier's great, great niece). Rose catalogued the ECT archive for several weeks in 2020 as a volunteer intern

The Pattillo
Project

**Andrea
Gardner**
*This
is the
Rabbit
Hole*

19 FEBRUARY–
18 MAY, 2022

IMAGE: **Andrea Gardner** *Pink
Forest* 2021. Image courtesy of
the artist



the
pattillo
project

Presented by the
Whanganui Arts Review



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

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