



# SARGEANT QUARTERLY

Newsletter of Te Whare o Rehua Sargeant Gallery | ISSN 2624-408X / Autumn 2026

98



2	3	From the Director
Autumn 2026	4	Jade Townsend: <i>From the Lion's Mouth</i>
	6	Isabella Loudon: <i>Everything might spill.</i>
	8	<i>Messengers</i>
	10	Lorene Taurerewa: <i>The Waking World</i>
	12	New Edith Collier acquisition
	13	Education News
	14	Tylee News
	16	Friends of the Sarjeant Gallery
	18	From Whanganui to the World



Cover: **Jade Townsend** *My Bird* 2025, acrylic on linen, hand-carved sapele frame. Image Sam Hartnett, courtesy of Season

Above: Jade Townsend's post Tylee residency exhibition *From the Lion's Mouth* opened in February

Nau mai,

Welcome to our first *Sarjeant Quarterly* newsletter for 2026. We're thrilled to be entering our second year in our new facilities and to continue welcoming visitors, whether it's a much-anticipated first-time visit or a return to share the experience with friends.

Over the coming months, we'll be presenting an impressive suite of solo exhibitions from major artists who live in or around Whanganui, have spent time here as part of our Tylee Cottage artist residency programme, or both. These include Tylee Cottage alumni Jade Townsend and Isabella Loudon, as well as a solo exhibition for local gallerist and renowned artist, Lorene Taurerewa. We're also pleased to be working with City Gallery Wellington to present their group exhibition, *Messengers*.

Alongside these exhibitions, we have a busy programme of talks and workshops, plus a full calendar of activities from our education team. Friends of the Sarjeant Gallery can also look forward to a number of special outings, so now is an excellent time to sign up. Our music programme is equally diverse, with performances from Heti & Hope, Campbell Kneale (aka Powers), and Shayne P. Carter. Keep an eye on our website and social media channels for announcements and ticket details.

We're currently reviewing the success of our first year and will soon be updating the economic impact predictions we've previously shared, with a full report based on a complete year of results. We're undertaking a deep dive into surveys and statistics and look forward to sharing insights into the positive impacts and opportunities the gallery brings to our region. We're also delighted to welcome the newest member of our team, Jessica O'Brien, who joined us in February as our gallery photographer.

Welcome to Whanganui, one and all—and here's to the year ahead!

Hei konā mai,  
**Andrew Clifford**  
Director

Jade Townsend

*From the Lion's Mouth*

22 February – 14 June 2026

4 Autumn 2026

Jade Townsend's (Ngāti Kahungunu, Te Āti Haunui-a-Pāpārangī) homecoming exhibition *From the Lion's Mouth* is a collection of finely detailed, exquisite paintings that are lush with iridescence and mystique. Viewers are taken on this biographical journey through a series of paintings, which are an exultant record of the artist's life and experiences to date.

Pattern and repetition reveal a true reverence for painting as a meditative process. Feather-light marks assiduously applied using a signwriter's brush evolve into metaphoric forms that carry stories from Townsend's rich heritage—her English and Māori whakapapa. These works are a recognition of her dual identity in a harmonious manner—not a bipartisan contest of wills where colonial legacies and Māori histories are continuously at odds. In this body of work, symbols of the British Empire such as the Queen's Park Lion monument, are subverted and diffused. The painting *He climbed onto the lion's back, to practice his Hāmama eyes* depicts Townsend's

son perched on the statue—an ode to the book 'Charlotte and the Lion' by Jane Maxey and a celebration of mana. There is a deeper reference to the rematriation of Te Hāmama, a carved tekoteko (apex figure) belonging to Ngāti Ruaka hapu at Rānana on the Whanganui River—Townsend's kainga tūturu (ancestral home). The carving was returned in 2025, having been ambiguously acquired by the Dominion Museum in 1912.

Intricate and arresting surface details reveal iconographies that are steeped in the histories of old Whanganui and, more recently, from Townsend's childhood. Elements emerge in the paintings, such as a symbol from the Liverpool flag which has evolved into a star-flower. They appear as a halo around the head of the Whanganui ancestress, Ruaka, in the work *Te Mana o te wahine Ruaka*, while simultaneously appearing as forms in *Te Awa Tupua*, representing Hinengākau, Tamaūpoko and Tūpoho (the children of Ruaka and Tamakehu). Fine lichen, delicate wisps of a veil, and translucent circular forms that echo the coins from the wishing well at the Rotokawau Virginia Lake's winter gardens—every detail culminating in an enchanting body of work.

In the work *Ukaipo*, a self-portrait where she is sharing breath with her son, Townsend intimates the closeness of her

own family. The sanctuary of home life is embedded via the symbolism of a spider's web—a metaphor for potent creativity. Spider's webs are a sign for rāranga whakairo (the woven arts) and connotes the importance of family relationships, acknowledging the work it takes to build and maintain a strong family structure. Divinity is articulated not through literal representation but in the abstractions of nature and the idea of the special love shared by whanau.

Townsend is interested in the space that is occupied by painting giants Robyn Kahukiwa, Sandy Adsett, Pauline Yearbury and John Hovell—acknowledging their contributions to the Aotearoa painting canon. Townsend's style flows with a river's rhythmic energy. With this new vibrant body of work, idiosyncratic and full of charm, she has honed her own visual dialect and now joins the painting conversation, with her Rānana and Liverpoolian accents merging into one.

Cecelia Kumeroa  
Curator—Programmes & Engagement

Te Whare o Rehua Sarjeant Gallery's Tylee Cottage residency is generously supported by the Toi Uru Kahikatea Programme



5 Autumn 2026

Opposite top: Jade Townsend *Te mana o te wahine Ruaka* 2025–26, acrylic on linen, hand-carved sapele frame. Photo Sam Hartnett, courtesy of Season

Opposite bottom: Jade Townsend *Ukaipo* 2025, acrylic on linen, hand-carved sapele frame. Photo Sam Hartnett, courtesy of Season

## Isabella Loudon

### *Everything might spill.*

11 April – 4 October 2026

6 Autumn 2026

Sculptor Isabella Loudon was artist-in-residence at Tylee Cottage from July–November 2025 and has been working towards a site-specific project that occupies the Sarjeant Gallery's impressive central dome gallery and an adjacent wing in the heritage building. The restoration of these neo-classical spaces during the gallery's redevelopment project was a painstaking process and Loudon made a site visit to view the building when it was stripped back to its raw surfaces.

The fragility of the building was something that appealed to Loudon so her project *Everything might spill.* seeks to explore the tension between the now fully restored spaces and how her structural and sculptural interventions and use of materials are both at odds and in conversation with the space. Conceptually, think beauty meets brutal, with the Sarjeant Gallery's symmetry and logical progression of spaces being interrupted by unclad timber-framed walls with disrupted views through. At the time of this Quarterly being published, this project is still pending, being planned and imagined. For both Loudon and the gallery team, this anticipation—the assemblage of the many components that will bring the project to physically occupy the space—are brimming with a nervous energy.

The importance of a physical space playing a key role in her making is an evolution of Loudon's project, *two years / one building*, that evolved from 2021–2023 in a now demolished commercial building in Marton. From initially just occupying a generous downstairs studio space and making free-standing and wall-based sculptures, Loudon infiltrated all of the building's empty rooms with existing sculptural work and site-specific works using materials recycled from the building. Many of the works that were part of this project were removed prior to the demolition of the building, not to exist as completed sculptures but as parts of an ever-expanding archive of materials to be revisited, reused, and choreographed in different ways.

On a recent studio visit, I spied a handwritten note on Loudon's wall with a single word—'impulsive', a brilliant word for the energy and rigour of this project. With an unpretty but generous palette of materials—twine and fabric drenched in liquid concrete; copper and discarded inner tubes from cars, trucks, tractors, bikes, and brittle crunchy plaster to name a few—*Everything might spill.*, and if it does we'll try really hard not to clean it up.

Greg Donson  
Senior Curator & Programmes Manager



Top: Artist Isabella Loudon in her studio

Bottom left and right: Work in Loudon's 2023 project *two years, one building*

# Messengers

14 March – 21 June 2026

8 Autumn 2026

*Te Whare o Rehua Sarjeant Gallery are pleased to be partnering with our friends at City Gallery Wellington Te Whare Toi to be hosting the exhibition Messengers, which was curated by Megan Dunn and shown at the gallery's temporary exhibition space at the National Library in late 2025.*

*Messengers* explores the enduring gaze shared between humans and other animals. The title is inspired by a line from John Berger's seminal 1977 essay 'Why Look at Animals?' Berger argued that the relationship between humans and animals—"our unspeaking companionship"—has been transformed by capitalism.

The exhibition brings together historical and contemporary ways of looking at animals in photography and art. It features archival photographs from the Alexander Turnbull Library collections, often taken by newspaper photographers in the mid twentieth century. These documentary images capture everything

from the polar bears once housed in Auckland and Wellington Zoos, to an elderly gentleman standing amongst the life-size concrete animal sculptures in his garden. They reveal our human tendency to anthropomorphise animals. These encounters are at once tender and loving, sentimental and silly, kind and indifferent, but also contradictory. We love animals, and often we kill them.

*Messengers* places these archival photographs in conversation with contemporary sculpture and moving image works by four Aotearoa-based artists: Denise Batchelor, Brit Bunkley, Jane Dodd, and John Ward Knox. From eerie AI and computer-generated animals to the hypnotic stare of a real live ruru; from carved wooden godwits you can hold in your hand to mythic 'hominoid' brooches, each artist's work speaks to the 'unspeaking companionship' between humanity and other animals.

Megan Dunn  
Curator

Exhibition developed and toured by

**City  
Gallery  
Wellington**  
Te Whare Toi

Part of Wheako Pōneke Experience Wellington. Principal Funder Wellington City Council. Strategic Partner City Gallery Wellington Foundation

Opposite top: Polar bear at Wellington Zoo (detail) 1950. Stuff/Evening Post collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Ref: 114/132/22-F

Opposite bottom: **Brit Bunkley** still from *Transit*, single channel video, 2025



9 Autumn 2026

Lorene Taurerewa  
*The Waking World*

14 March – 21 June 2026

10 Autumn 2026

Lorene Taurerewa is a master of intuitive mark-making where figures surface from a deeply cognitive process. For many years, almost every day, she occupied the same corner of the Riviera cafe in Brooklyn, New York—drawing. What emerged was a visual collection of thoughts and feelings, committed to paper in black ink. Even if they've been tucked away in a box for years, Taurerewa can recall the emotions elicited by each individual drawing. This daily ritual became a communion with the vastness of her inner world, converging long held, fragmented memories and emotions, reformed and summoned up again through the process of drawing. In her new exhibition, *The Waking World*, these almost subliminal pen-drawings are displayed in a moving-image presentation to accompany large-scale, hauntingly epic charcoal figurations.

Taurerewa's large drawings are also personal, biographical investigations. She uses charcoal to create inscrutable depth and murky shadow where darkness contrasts against light, unmarked surfaces. The sheer mass, physicality, scale and format of each work has been purposefully chosen so that people can feel a sense of being engulfed, captured and lured into a cosmos of Taurerewa's creation.

Compositions are dictated by colossal figures that feel as though they extend beyond the perimeter of the artwork. These works seem to be looming and watchful, like sentinels in a narrative series that must be seen in sequence to be immersed in their power. There is an implied stage upon which smaller figures feel like players in a drama beyond our knowing; suspended in a timeless state where peripheries are transgressed by otherworldly characters. People, animals, and strangely reanimated objects from childhood materialise on paper. Taurerewa's companion animals can be likened to manaia in ancestral carvings—as mediators between metaphysical and physical worlds. They are crucial parts of each composition, offering a counterpoint to the weight of the dominant figures.

Hypervigilant and perceptual in her studio practice, Taurerewa is a prolific artist, generating works in various media. She has experienced a multicultural, cosmopolitan lifestyle while living abroad in Brooklyn, New York for 15 years, and has many international art residencies on her résumé. With a rich cultural heritage of Chinese, Tongan and Samoan ancestry, her work weaves together worlds in a sophisticated manner using a visual language that is uniquely her own.

Cecelia Kumeroa  
Curator—Programmes & Engagement



Lorene Taurerewa *Untitled* (from the series—*Life in a Box*) 2025, pen on paper

11 Autumn 2026

## Exciting new Edith Collier acquisition for the collection



Lewanna McLean has generously gifted an early work by Edith Collier to the gallery. It is of lifelong friend, Marjory Sutherland, an artist in her own right, born and raised in Whanganui and known in her family as Aunt Marj.

Lewanna—the 99-year-old niece of Marjory Sutherland—and her daughter Cath Matthews (of Matthews Roses) have shared with the gallery the extraordinary life that has surrounded this painting, dated circa 1910.

Marjory and Edith were studying art together at Wanganui Technical College around 1903–1911. This painting is believed to be part of a group of three works created at the same time, including a work by their art teacher who painted Marjory and Edith together, and in which Marjory is wearing the same clothing as in this work by Collier. As far as we know, Marjory also painted Edith at the same time—although the whereabouts of these other two works remains unknown. When they graduated, Edith went to England to further study and develop her art practice. Marjory was invited to go to England with her but Marjory's

father didn't allow it. Despite having other commitments on the family farm, Aunt Marj continued painting throughout her life, maintaining her art practice around farm duties. Lewanna believes, had Aunt Marj been allowed to travel to England with Edith, she would've flourished as an artist alongside her friend.

This painting has actually come back to the gallery for a second time. It formed part of the exhibition *Edith Collier in Retrospect* in 1980 and was then returned to Marjory, where it was displayed once more at the end of the hallway of the family home. About 30 years ago, the painting survived a burglary and, following Marjory's death in 1982, it has been cared for by Lewanna at her home.

Lewanna was a nurse in her professional life and always enjoyed art herself, collecting works where she could afford to. She wishes for this painting to be exhibited and protected for generations to come—alongside the story of her aunt, another creative woman at a time when it was systemically difficult to pursue a career beyond the imposed duties of home and farm life.

*Do you know where the lost companion painting by Marjory Sutherland could be? Let us know, as we'd love to locate it!*

Whitney Nicholls-Potts

Above: Lewanna McLean alongside the portrait of her aunt, Marjory Sutherland, painted by Edith Collier circa 1910. This oil painting was recently gifted by McLean for the gallery collection.

## Education News



Thank you for your support over the last year. We certainly have achieved a lot, and seen a huge part of our community visit the gallery to participate in our many events. As we begin a new year, we have taken time to reflect on the highlights from last year whilst planning new initiatives. Although we opened our doors for three afternoons for our ever-popular Make-a-Space in January, the holiday period was quiet as we took stock and started putting plans into action for 2026.

Firstly, we are excited to welcome Nicola Van Weersel on board to facilitate the 'Afterschool Art Club' targeted at years 1–8 and held on Monday and Tuesday afternoons. It was no surprise that, although there is a cost for the term, these classes were quickly filled. We value the energy and ideas Nicola brings to the team.

Nicola says, "My goal is to create a welcoming learning environment where tamariki feel safe, joyful, and supported in their creative expression."

Another highlight we were pleased to present was titled *Taumata Pai*, a collective showcase of the top level three folio boards produced by Whanganui's regional secondary schools. Presented in association with the Whanganui Art Teachers Association, *Taumata Pai* provided a unique opportunity for our young creatives with a passion for the visual arts to have their emerging work seen by the public and to honour the exquisite work they have done alongside their amazing teachers and peers. Partnering with the Sarjeant Gallery elevates their work and demonstrates an ongoing commitment to our community and future artists.

Vanessa Edwards-Buerger  
Educator



Isabella Loudon completed her five-month residency in early December and is currently working towards a site-specific project in the Sarjeant Gallery's heritage building, which you can read more about in this Quarterly. In December we undertook some necessary upgrades at Tylee cottage including new flooring in the kitchen, bathroom and studio and the fitting of new bathroom and laundry facilities.

Our Tylee alumni resident for January–February 2026 is Wellington-based photographer Andrew Ross who was artist-in-residence in Whanganui for six months in 2009. During that time Ross produced an impressive body of work that resulted in the exhibition *Round and about Whanganui: 72 Photographic Studies*. The images captured Whanganui's built environment and its inhabitants. Like other photographic artists before him, his work has added to a rich visual archive recording the city. We're interested to see his take on Whanganui 17 years after his initial sojourn. We are sure there will be places he returns to and new ones he will discover.

In March we take a slight break from our usual programme supported by Creative New Zealand's Toi Uru Kahikatea Investment Programme and are excited that the cottage will host an international

---

Above: Photographer Andrew Ross, our Tylee alumni resident for January–February 2026

New Zealand-Scotland residency, supported by the Scottish Government and British Council's 'Connections through culture' programme. With a textile legacies focus, this will see Dundee designer Hannah Sabapathy coming to Whanganui and Tylee Cottage in March, and Whanganui designer Matthew McIntyre Wilson travelling to Dundee in April.

This programme, looking at ancestral textile practices, is the first formal creative exchange between the two cities of design since both achieved UNESCO City of Design status. Selected by international and local panellists, the designers will each spend a month learning and sharing with the local design community, bringing unique cultural perspectives that will broaden creative practices in both cities. The exchange reinforces both cities as leaders in heritage-led design innovation.

"This collaboration benefits both locations and demonstrates how smaller cities can lead in cultural diplomacy," says Emma Bugden, Focal Point at UNESCO City of Design Whanganui. "This is the value of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network offering knowledge transfer, collaborative projects, and international partnerships."

"At UNESCO City of Design Dundee, we believe in the power of design and the essential place of designers in the life of our city," says Lizzie Day, Project Coordinator at UNESCO City of Design Dundee. "We are very excited to welcome Matthew to Dundee in 2026 and for Dundee's own Hannah Sabapathy to journey to New Zealand—we anticipate this project will spark deeper connections and we hope that long-term collaboration with Whanganui will emerge from this initial exchange."

"Cultural exchange is at the heart of the British Council's Connections Through Culture programme," says Natasha Beckman, director at British Council New Zealand and the Pacific. "When designers share ancestral textile practices across cultures, they can preserve heritage while opening new creative possibilities. We hope this exchange between Matthew McIntyre Wilson and Hannah Sabapathy will create lasting connections between Whanganui and Dundee, help grow our creative industries, and enrich design practice in both UNESCO Cities of Design for years to come."

Greg Donson  
Senior Curator & Programmes Manager

## Friends of the Sarjeant Gallery

The Executive Committee for the Friends of the Sarjeant Gallery has launched into 2026 with a full programme of activities planned for the year ahead. Following the successful October 'Spring Day Out' to Stratford (see issue 97 for details), we're already working on plans for more art days out throughout the year. Members can expect a range of opportunities to connect, explore, and enjoy the arts together.

Another new initiative for 2026 reflects our commitment to being more visible in the community, with plans for an occasional Friends presence at the Riverside Market on selected Saturday mornings throughout the year. This initiative aims to strengthen our connection with the wider Whanganui community, share information about upcoming events, and welcome new supporters to the Friends.

We are planning a market stall during Artists Open Studios, offering an opportunity to engage with visitors and locals. This presence will help highlight the important role the Friends play in supporting the Sarjeant Gallery and celebrating the creativity of our region.

Some members have recently mentioned not receiving reminders about their membership renewals. After reviewing the process, we can confirm that renewal

notices are sent approximately two days before a membership expires. The sender is "PatronBase" and because the sender name may not be immediately recognisable, some messages may be overlooked or filtered into other folders. Members who are unsure about their renewal date or believe they may have missed a reminder are welcome to get in touch via [friends@sarjeant.org.nz](mailto:friends@sarjeant.org.nz)

A Friends of the Sarjeant Gallery membership is a unique gift for a wide range of special occasions. Friends receive: invitations to our exhibition openings, a subscription to the Sarjeant Quarterly magazine, 10 percent discount at the Sarjeant Gallery Shop, "What's On" emails keeping you in touch with the gallery, notification of special Friends fundraising and ticketed events, and discounted entry to the Whanganui Arts Review.

In this update, we would like to highlight Executive Member Lari Steward. Lari first attended a committee meeting on 2 July 2019 and brings to the committee the superpower of connecting with people through the hosting of events and stunning catering. As a thank you to Lari for her willingness to lend a hand in whatever way is necessary, Lari was the deserved recipient of the River City Press Bouquet of the Week in early February. A small gesture for such a big-hearted woman.

The Executive Committee looks forward to sharing more updates as the year progresses and to seeing you at events throughout 2026.

Margaret Samuels  
Friends of the Sarjeant Gallery,  
Executive Committee member



Above: Lari Steward, recipient of February's River City Press Bouquet of the Week

## From Whanganui to the world

Since we opened in November 2024, it has become increasingly clear just how vital Te Whare o Rehua Sarjeant Gallery is in connecting Whanganui with the wider world. With our expanded facilities and growing profile, we are now recognised as one of Aotearoa's key galleries—and an active participant in national and international cultural networks.

One exciting recent development comes through the UNESCO City of Design network. As noted in this Quarterly's Tylee News, in March we'll welcome Dundee-based artist Hannah Sabapathy to Tylee Cottage, and in return, Whanganui artist and former Tylee Cottage resident Matthew McIntyre Wilson will travel to Dundee in April. This creative exchange strengthens Whanganui's global artistic ties.

Also in March, Whanganui will feature prominently as a satellite city for New Zealand Design Week—the first time the event has extended beyond Auckland. Coordinated by our colleagues at Whanganui & Partners, with support from Air Chathams, more than 30 design professionals will visit to experience the places and people that define Whanganui as a centre of creative excellence. The gallery will be a key destination.

We're also pleased to be deepening our relationship with the Aotearoa Art Fair,



which this year is launching at the end of April. The art fair is the annual event where the country's art community, and many from abroad, can all be found in one place. In 2024 it was the perfect platform to introduce our new identity and begin the lead-in campaign for our opening. Earlier this year, we were delighted to host an Aotearoa Art Fair event here at the gallery—a clear signal that Whanganui is now firmly on the national art map. This April, as we did last year, we will again invite our supporters to join us in Auckland for a bespoke tour of the fair.

As a supporter of Te Whare o Rehua Sarjeant Gallery, you help keep Whanganui connected to the world—and you become part of that network with invitations to exclusive events and opportunities. To learn more about

becoming an Endowment Star, Donor, or supporting the gallery in other ways, please visit our website or contact the gallery.

Andrew Clifford  
Director

---

Above: The Friends and Stars Christmas party in 2025, photo Alanah Brown



Lorene Taurerewa  
*The Waking World*

14 March – 21 June 2026

For more info:  
[sarjeant.org.nz](http://sarjeant.org.nz)

Pukemamu  
Queen's Park  
Whanganui

TE WHARE O REHUA  
SARJEANT GALLERY



Lorene Taurerewa *Untitled* (from the series—*Life in a Box*) 2025, pen on paper