

# scope

Contemporary Research Topics



art & design 22

September 2021

# SCOPE

*Contemporary Research Topics*

**art & design 22:**  
September 2021

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The series *Scope (Art & Design)* aims to engage discussion on contemporary research in the visual arts and design. It is concerned with views and critical debates surrounding issues of practice, theory, history and their relationships as manifested through the visual and related arts and activities, such as sound, performance, curation, tactile and immersive environments, digital scapes and methodological considerations. With New Zealand and its Pacific neighbours as a backdrop, but not its only stage, *Scope (Art & Design)* seeks to address the matters which concern contemporary artists and arts enquirers in their environments of practice.

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## TRYING TO GIVE ART A SPORTING CHANCE

Jane Venis

In a year when it has just been revealed that hosting the America's Cup has created a net loss of \$156m, to be borne by the taxpayer, I am once again frustrated at the culture that always prioritises sport over art funding. Culturally, we seem to adhere to the outdated binary of either sporty or arty. We could learn from Te Ao Māori where everything is interconnected, where creative and physical energies are integral to emotional, spiritual and cultural wellbeing.

For me, I am stuck in the binary. This is my third attempt at writing an editorial for this latest issue that 'sports' a bumper crop of articles that have resisted some of my attempts to corral them into themes. This is because, just as I come to grips with some serious writing ... my iPhone alarm goes off and I rush upstairs to watch the Black Sticks (oh ... almost), Black Ferns (Oh Ruby!), Oly Whites (oh dear), Lisa, Lisa, LISA!! (we are now on first-name terms), and Laurel Hubbard – damned if she does and damned if she doesn't win. So far, adrenaline (mainlined via live stream) is winning hands down over academic focus and the contemplation of art.

So, this is editorial number three. Even though the show jumping is on this evening, there is no horse and rider (however brave) that will deter me from my task of introducing you to *Scope* 22. The only horses in my focus are those painted by Mike Cooke that are positioned obediently nose-to-tail on the cover. In contrast to the hyper-controlled horses of Olympic dressage, Cooke's horses – as his painting titles suggest – amble. They wander along, carrying riders who are contemplative and appear to offer no resistance to the whim of their mounts. Cooke's writing is equally seductive – we are taken on a journey ...

A journey of another kind is Rachel Hope Allan's delightfully dark and delicious exploration of Tokyo. In stark contrast to the Olympic Tokyo, her exploration of the city is peppered with tales of her ongoing romance with the perfect *tamago sando* (egg sandwich). Her map is littered with locations of the best available from Konbini, the local convenience stores. She deftly leads us into the conundrum of Tokyo and Shinjuku in particular; fast-paced yet serene, at once dangerous and dodgy, yet her writing is often focused on the wonders of the banal. Back to the Tokyo of the present and the Kiwi rider has just knocked down several poles and has time faults, too – perhaps he channelled Mike Cooke's image on the front of *Scope*, "*Preoccupied on Amble*".

The next article was conceived at the Venice Biennale – the "Olympics of the art world" – where the flags top the permanent pavilions of the more established nations. Yet, although one can critique the Biennale for perpetuating a competitive and elitist system, there is also a history of interventionist practice in these events. Performance artists Allora and Calzadilla made explicit the link between nationalism of the sporting and art worlds when they positioned an exercycle on an upturned tank outside the United States pavilion in 2011. The clunky, lumbering machine was powered by a team of US Olympic athletes.

In her article from the 2019 Venice Biennale, "Ambiguous Intervention at Mocenigo: Brigitte Niedermair," Leoni Schmidt reminds us that art intervention is not a new practice. She leads us through some unexpected historical examples before bringing us into the twisting alleyways of Venice to the Palazzo Mocenigo, where we are delivered into the heart of the article. Here Brigitte Niedermair's contemporary photographs are placed among the Mocenigo family paintings. According to Schmidt, this is an intervention both ambiguous and troubling.

It is Monday 8 August and the Olympics are finally over, and I am released from my brief, yet intense, flirtation with sport. I no longer find myself trying to make links, however tenuous, between the worlds of arty and sporty. Yes, Art and Design, it's all about you now.

As I reflect on the overall flavour of this issue, several themes have emerged. A large grouping of articles relates to artists working in collaboration, responding to common themes and working within the community. It is fitting that the first article in this grouping is titled "Off the Ground." In her project report, Charlotte Parallel introduces a series of four performative and interactive projects funded through the Dunedin Dream Brokerage, who create opportunities for artists to use temporary spaces within the urban environment.

The theme of community continues with a pairing of related articles by Bridie Lonie and Lesley Brooks. In "Complexity and Entanglement in Exhibiting Climate Change," Bridie Lonie discusses the background and development of "The Complete Entanglement of Everything," a group exhibition of works responding to climate change held at the Dunedin School of Art Gallery at the end of 2020. This exhibition was used by Lesley Brook as the raw material for her Master of Professional Practice research project. She interviewed viewers of the exhibition about why they reacted emotionally to specific works. Brooks reports on these findings in her article "A Sense of Entanglement: Artworks Contributing to Connectedness."

A focus on our planet continues in the next grouping of articles from the Art + Science series of collaborative projects facilitated and curated by Pam McKinlay. Some of these works also respond to the era of the Anthropocene; conversely, other projects respond to geological changes and focus on how our planet has shaped us as a species. "Earth Caught in Stone" was held this year at the Dunedin Community Gallery. As in previous iterations of this collaborative series, artists joined with scientists, individually or in small groups, to develop and exhibit works responding to the theme of Earth Sciences.

To continue with the theme of collaboration and curation of events, in "Together: The Collaborative Curatorial Practices of a Museum Curator, Historian and Fashion Design Educator," Jane Malthus, Moira White and Margo Barton discuss their collaborative curatorial practices that span over 20 years. They write of their research approaches to some of these collaborative events, exhibitions and texts.

A second large grouping of articles is another longstanding group project, *Clink*. This contemporary jewellery intervention is now in its seventh year and took place in two venues in Wellington: The Dowse Gallery and St Peter's Anglican Church courtyard. Unlike the more formal collaborative process of the Art + Science projects, participants in *Clink* take the risk of having to quickly resolve a substantial project in collaboration with complete strangers. Also within the *Clink* ethos is a levelling of the playing field to facilitate a project where experienced contemporary jewellers work alongside senior students.

To continue with the theme of opportunities for students, I turn now to two projects developed within the communication design team at Otago Polytechnic. The first of these is a report from "Design Futures," a symposium for graduating students. The event showcased a variety of professional approaches to design practices experienced by our alumni – students who have completed our programme and are now working in the industry. In contrast to the symposium aimed at design graduates, a second article with a student focus describes a type design project for first-year students. In "Local Narrative in Type Design," Lucy Richardson and Denise Narciso outline how students respond to designing a typeface based on local narratives embedded in the histories of our built environment in Ōtepoti / Dunedin.

A second smaller grouping comprises two related articles on the complexities of art practice as research. Through a discussion of four art projects – two of them completed within institutions as a student and undertaking residencies – Mark Baskett questions if the pressure exerted by academic institutions to regard art practice as research does indeed help support creative artistic output. Edward Hanfling also writes of the complexities inherent in negotiating art projects as research within the institution, and the added “care” required to ensure that projects fit into the acceptable bounds required by organisational ethics committees. But how does such a careful approach affect the quality of contemporary art created within an institution? What happens when artists don't take risks or push boundaries?

Lastly, I return to my editorial theme of “give art a sporting chance.” I was talking to a friend a couple of days ago who speculated what kind of culture we would have in Aotearoa NZ if there was even five minutes of ‘art news’ each day rounding up the TVNZ news hour; instead of only the ‘sports news.’ Would we be shouting encouragement at the television to our key artists?

So, until that unlikely occurrence is upon us, here is the art news, all in one ‘bumper issue’ of *Scope*. We have articles and reports from Masters’ graduates and emerging writers in a volume alongside texts from established writers. With so many articles it is not possible to introduce them all, so please enjoy the surprises ahead as you read *Scope* 22.

## HOW'RE THINGS? SOME OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THINGS, NON – THINGS AND SERIAL THINGS

Michael D Cooke

### SITTING MATTERS

I've got ten minutes before work. There's a wooden bench there, outside the corner dairy. I sit on it. There's a bin there, stuffed full, beyond brimming, an empty beer bottle sits upright on the bin lid. On top of the hill across the way is a row of houses, the sun is merely a flint of light, shimmering over one of the rooftops. In two or three minutes it will shine in my face. I look at my phone, I've got eight minutes. The sun slowly swells. "Sunny-sun-sun, do you have a name?" I mumble. I sit, I look at my phone, I've got five minutes. I better go. I sit, and the sun finds my face. I wish this was my job, sitting on a bench, in the sun. I want to stay here, staring at the sun until I'm blind. I better go. I stay, but I close my eyes. I need my eyes. Sunlight flares through my eyelids. Dark black morphs into the brightest red.

### SLICE AFTER SLICE

Recently, I ran into a friend of mine on a street in New Plymouth. We hadn't seen each other for a few years, so we walked to the park and found a tree to sit under for a catch-up. He used to paint these amazing amorphous abstractions, so I asked him about those paintings and what he was painting these days. He told me he doesn't paint pictures any more, at least not in the material realm. "All the art I make these days remains in my mind," he said. "But it's beautiful, it's the most perfect art I've ever seen." It was the kind of thing people say to each other when they're sitting under trees in parks, and I probably should have just said something like, "Yeah, man," but I could tell he believed it, fervently. As far as he was concerned, he told me, the best art that he had ever accomplished was being created and exhibited purely in his own mind. So I attempted a response. I said that perhaps what he is achieving through this artistic exploit is like some sort of unadulterated abstraction, an abstraction that permanently resides in the place it is generated, within an abstract realm. I suggested to him that perhaps he is reluctant to desecrate his art, which could happen if he were to translate it into something of substance, something our limited senses could decipher. There, in his mind's eye, it is perfect, it is uncorrupted and unfettered, and perhaps that's the reason he keeps it up there, so it can remain uber-abstract, free in its transcendental realm. "At the risk of trivialising something sacred," I concluded, "perhaps you are an Abstract Ineffabilist?" There was a long silence, then he plucked a daisy and handed it to me. "No," he said, "I just ate one too many magic-mushroom pizzas back in 2012." I twirled the tiny flower between my fingers, thought about mushrooms growing in dark places, thought about trees falling unwitnessed in forests. "Yeah, man," I said.

## LOOK, THERE IT IS

Every now and then I replay that conversation with my old friend, beneath that old tree, and it always leads me to imagine exactly how the art that flourishes in his brilliant mind would manifest, were it to be transferred to material form. I want to see it! But I can only imagine it and, I guess, that is essentially what he is doing too, only imagining it. In theory he is making art, but only in theory. Is art redundant if it is exclusively theoretical? Because, for art to really exist, surely it must be communicated in some way, reduced to a defined time and space, somehow transformed into a material or an action?

The Ancient Greek tradition of *Theoria*, *Poiesis* and *Praxis* could offer a path through this rumination. From what I understand, deploying this concise triple-part concept initiates a vital inter-realm transferal process. It goes something like this: *Theoria* involves contemplating the nature of such perfect abstract Forms and Ideas that exist in a divine superlunary sphere; subsequently, *Poiesis* and *Praxis* employ material means and intentional, reflective action in response to this contemplation; what results is the formation of a new thing. A thing that simply wasn't here before, this new thing that originated from the contemplation of an expansive transcendent realm is now relegated to our limited temporal, spatial reality.

## LOOK, IT'S STILL THERE

Ancient woo-woo perhaps, although it is true, isn't it, that to reduce anything-and-everything into some *thing*, is always to acknowledge at least one thing; it is no longer anything-and-everything, as in it is no longer pure, unlimited potential, but something does now exist. For example, if an artist makes a bottle, wherever that bottle may be presented it takes up that space, it defines a gathering point, a space to galvanise discussion, interpretation and reflection, contemplation or critique. If the bottle exists, here and now, its existence has something in common with ours.

## LOOK, THERE'S ANOTHER ONE

I keep coming back to this idea: Art could be anything, as long as it is a thing, a here-and-now thing. I'll stop saying *thing* soon, I'll inevitably move on, but on to what? On to a different thing, or on to the same thing?

## THE THING IS, THING IS, THING IS ...

There's something about intentionally repeating a certain thing through the mechanisms of a series that really drills down into that thing's particular essence – its distinctive *thingness* is amplified. Elizabeth Helmuth Margulis's book, *On Repeat: How Music Plays the Mind*, closely examines the prevalence of repetition within music. Margulis coins the term "thingification" when describing how we can identify repeating elements; as she explains, this *thingification* is in fact the primary function for detecting repetition: "To hear something as repetition, a listener must first hear it as a something. In this way, repetition detection can be a useful methodology to investigate perceptual units: the segments of music that listeners treat as individual entities ... An individual note does not ordinarily rise to the level of 'thingification;' only special treatment can promote it to this status."<sup>1</sup>

*Thingification* is the process of extracting *something* discrete from a wider spectrum: "a particular frequency, for example, is heard as a better- or worse-tuned A, or a particular wavelength is viewed as a more- or less-representative shade of blue."<sup>2</sup> *Thingification* tends to highlight the hidden mechanism of repetition. The process emphasises the inherent arbitrary nature of any single thing which could be repeated; the substance of the thing doesn't matter, initially – what matters is that separate basic modules are predetermined by a unifying category. Only once a thing is categorised can it subsequently be recognised as repeating; and, as Margulis claims, to repeat the something is also to promote it: "Repetition tends to reify a passage – to set it apart from the surrounding context as a 'thing' to be mused on, abstractly considered, and conceptualized as a unit."<sup>3</sup>

## HERE WE GO AGAIN

Repeating units. Space repeating in time, time repeating in space, will it ever end? Time and space might be infinite, we don't know yet. The *Infinite* is another transcendental non-thing, merely immaterial potential going on and on (yawn) and, not unlike my friend's psychedelic-fungus visions, infinity refuses to be objectified. In reality, infinity can only be partially alluded to or imagined. This is to follow Briony Fer's statement regarding Agnes Martin's gridded drawings and paintings, works which are laboriously constructed with subtly imperfect, yet precise lines:<sup>4</sup>

The thing about infinity is that it is not a thing: It exists only in the imagination. The point is less what infinity is than the operation that it names, an operation that is always uncertain about its object, that calls infinite what exceeds representation and so has to be abandoned. Infinity, after all, is not an object, but something that exists in the mind as that which is beyond representation.<sup>5</sup>

It is from this stance that Fer imagines infinity in an Agnes Martin grid: "What Martin does is to isolate something precarious – like the infinite differences of her grids – and make of them something temporarily cohesive in a way that enables the loss of oneself in the infinite fabric of surface."<sup>6</sup>

In the same way, the concept of infinity – limitless potential – can be triggered in our minds when we consider any endlessly repeatable, endlessly differentiated format behind a series of paintings. Immaterial potential becomes material example in a repeatable format. Gretchen Albrecht's *Hemisphere* series works as an example:<sup>7</sup> generally, two territories of colour; sweeping up from opposite sides of an arch, through Albrecht's wingspan, to clash and merge in the centre. The multiple manifestations of the *Hemisphere* series format can set in train a consideration of infinity; we can start to imagine endlessly nuanced versions and variations of this irresistibly repeatable format.

Again, to refer to Elizabeth Helmuth Margulis, this relates to a certain occurrence evident in our experience of repetition in music, which Margulis describes essentially as a knowability: "Knowability creates a link between the sounds as they are occurring in the world and as they can be imagined internally in the mental soundscape."<sup>8</sup> Once the listener becomes familiar with a repeated passage in a piece of music, their participation moves from perception to something that seems more like production:

When a passage is repeated several times across the course of the piece, the listener gains an enhanced ability to think through that passage, to match an internal auditory image with the external sound increasingly well and with an intensified orientation toward the future across the course of each iteration. This process weaves the listener more and more into a sense of virtual participation across the piece.<sup>9</sup>

This idea of a *virtual participation* can perhaps be transferred to a similar approach to the painted series; as repetition makes a *knowability* possible, this creates a link between paintings in a series as they occur in the world and as they can be imagined in the mind's eye. Keeping with the example of Albrecht's *Hemispheres*, as the viewer begins to comprehend the repeatable template which is conceiving the *Hemispheres*, they may begin to participate on a different level from that of simply receiving the presentation of the imagery; they may begin to imagine for themselves unrealised iterations of the repeated formula relating each painting of the series. Endless colour combinations, for instance, shimmering, clashing, transforming and morphing where they meet.

Albrecht's *Hemispheres* appear to be an inevitable series of multiple variants; it is easier to imagine infinite versions than it is to imagine there only ever being one. But why is this? What if there were only ever one single *Hemisphere*? To end a recorded interview conducted by Kim Hill on the occasion of the release of Luke Smythe's 2019 book *Gretchen Albrecht: Between Gesture and Geometry*, Hill asks Albrecht a somewhat throwaway question and receives a somewhat throwaway answer:

**Hill:** Alright here's the question [...] It's a crass question, but I want to ask it ... You have [your] entire collection of works in a warehouse and a fire breaks out, you have the opportunity to rescue one, what is it?

**Albrecht:** It would have to be an *Annunciation*, I'm afraid.

**Hill:** Which one?

**Albrecht:** Oh g-, um, well, I guess ... I guess *Pacific Annunciation*<sup>10</sup> is as good a one as any.<sup>11</sup>

Of course, this crass exchange shouldn't be read into with too much earnestness; however, it is an interesting point from which to proceed. If one *Hemisphere* is as good as any other, why are there so many? Needless to say, Albrecht is no one-trick pony, but why has this artist returned to the format so often during her impressive 56-year (and counting) career? Does dedicating so much effort to such a restricted range come at the expense of versatility?

Larry Rivers and David Hockney take up a similar line of inquiry during a conversation published in the journal *Art and Literature* (1964),<sup>12</sup> where Rivers identifies an attitude that some of their contemporaries (Kenneth Noland, Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman) seem to maintain, one of dedication and concentration. As Rivers describes them: "Those dedicated types who spend years of their life refining one image until it becomes more and more beautiful like a polished jewel."<sup>13</sup> This dedication is held up as a credential that is perhaps the obverse of the qualities making for versatility within the studio; and the consequences of precluding versatility in exchange for dedication can perhaps have an unintended effect on the way an artist's oeuvre is received. Rivers uses Mark Rothko as an example of an artist whose unchangeable output seems to refuse any attempt to exceed expectations, the resulting artwork becoming perceived as a recognisable product, "a product we call a Mark Rothko."<sup>14</sup> Rivers then asks Hockney if he would feel self-conscious repeating the same ideas, leading to these implications of product branding his own practice:

**Hockney:** "Rothko's a painter whose subject matter is very small – tiny – and he obviously thinks he can do everything he wants within his range and I suppose it's O.K. But I, for one, couldn't work in a range that tiny..."<sup>15</sup>

Far from merely establishing a repeatable product, Briony Fer describes an alternative approach to Rothko's signature series in her book *The Infinite Line*: "Repetition is almost too capacious a term for thinking about Rothko's work, which, after all, would seem at all cost to resist repetition and subtly seeks out difference."<sup>16</sup>

Any demonstration of versatility in subject matter or style may indeed be lost when an artist works within such a tiny range; however, it is not at the cost of a certain versatility that can be demonstrated by the template itself. An example of this can be seen in Rothko's work; as Fer describes: "Rothko's template of an upright rectangular canvas, with a stack of rectangular forms, endlessly differentiated, endlessly nuanced, is both stringent and flexible. It invites a subtle discernment of the differences that occur, even as it repeats."<sup>17</sup> Fer also sees this effect highlighted in Agnes Martin's studio work: "Imposing strict limits on her format enabled her to increase the play of difference within it. Rather than constraining difference, repetition allows for maximum difference, exacerbating, even, the multiplication of variables."<sup>18</sup>

Fer's succinct insights suggest that versatility in the form of endless differentiation is not lost within a repetitive format or restricted range. In fact, what it seems to suggest is that our experience of any form of repetition of *exactly* the same – that is, repetition *without* difference – is a highly subjective experience at base level.

It is possible to imagine a format such as Albrecht's *Hemispheres* being repeated in endless variations, but obviously not probable. There's the entropy factor for a start – an artist's fatigue or simply a loss of interest could come into play and, in reality, there is an impending finality to every series. For example, it is with knowledge of its ultimate terminus that we approach Rothenberg's *Horse* series.<sup>19</sup> We know how it began, in an intuitive exploration, how it was sustained by a continuing fascination, and that it *does* end; the series ended when that fascination, along with the horse, just "ran out."<sup>20</sup> It is not necessary to work towards a conclusion in any given series, but it is somewhat of a relief to view a series with an ending. For better or worse, there is a resolution and the indeterminable becomes determined.

On Kawara's *Today* series<sup>21</sup> is another example, although the series relied on each component part being fully concluded each time; a final conclusion was strangely absent until its totality was resolved when Kawara died in June 2014. Until then, the *Today* series largely remained merely imminent.<sup>22</sup> Since Kawara's death there are obviously no more "Date" paintings which can be added to the *Today* series; and now that the artist who painted them is lost, along with the days the paintings refer to, the *Today* series can finally distinguish an era.

Stanley Cavell seems to value this type of certain resolution within a series of paintings when he declares in his book *The World Viewed* (1971): "Nothing but our acceptance of an instance determines whether its series is worth realizing, or how far it is worth going on generating its instances; when we find that a series is exhausted, it is absolutely past, over."<sup>23</sup> For Cavell, the task for the modernist painter was not merely to deploy the self-producing automatisms of an established tradition, but instead to create new branches of their art: "I characterized the task of the modern artist as one of creating not a new instance of his art but a new medium in it. One might think of this as the task of establishing a new automatism."<sup>24</sup>

It follows that for the modernist painter (Cavell mentions Pollock, Noland, Louis and Stella as examples), the series was a means to establish these new mediums, these newly discovered 'modes of achievement within the arts' through automatic instances:

My impulse to speak of an artistic medium as an "automatism" is, I judge, due first to the sense that when such a medium is discovered, it generates new instances: not merely makes them possible, but calls for them, as if to attest that what has been discovered is indeed something more than a single work could convey. Second, the notion of automatism codes the experience of the work of art as "happening of itself."<sup>25</sup>

This statement of Cavell's resonates with Albrecht's description of the initial discovery of the *Hemisphere* format in her studio in 1981, and may go some way to explain why there was never going to be only one:

"The first Hemisphere that I painted, of three, I called *Cardinal* [...] The other two paintings rushed out after that. One of them was called *Rapture* and one was called *Possess*. And those titles seemed to be also speaking for me about what I'd found. This was a revelation for me personally in my studio, this little mini-revelation of discovering the Hemisphere and the content rushing into it; so, everything that was important to me in the making and painting, that gave it meaning, had arrived, and I was on my way."<sup>26</sup>

However, far from being flawed by apparently happening of themselves, for Cavell, the fact that these instances rush out in automatic self-generation is a necessary and significant virtue within modernist painting. "It is true that their existence as instances is carried on their face; labor is not in them; they look as if they might as well have been made instantaneously, and that their use should take no longer."<sup>27</sup> What Cavell points out here though, is that, despite the fact that an instance projects such an inherent insignificance ("they declare the evanescence of existence in space and time"<sup>28</sup>), they can nevertheless pose a "permanent beauty."<sup>29</sup>

For Cavell, this is analogous to our experience of beauty in general. He makes a distinction between the momentary and the momentous, comparing the evanescence of these instances with more traditional art forms which display their labour; are therefore assured of their permanence, and can bear the "major importance we have attached to works of art."<sup>30</sup> However, the evident beauty found within any instance of a self-generating automatism shows Cavell that the presence of beauty is not necessarily achieved only after so much toil. Beauty, he says, "is momentary only the way time is, a regime of moments; and that no moment is to dictate its significance to us, if we are to claim autonomy, to become free. Acceptance of such objects achieves the absolute acceptance of the moment, by defeating the sway of the momentous."<sup>31</sup>

Rothenberg's *First Horse*, Kawara's *Jan. 4, 1966*, or Albrecht's *Cardinal* could all have remained single, stand-alone works, but due to the artist's unresolved intrigue, unresolved premise, or simply the discovery of a self-generating automatism, these paintings instead instigated the entire series of which they ultimately become single, intrinsic

examples. Cavell's insights highlight what a series of paintings can do that a single painting cannot; he describes how a series can run parallel to our experience of time in space as a series of beautiful temporary moments. A painted series can represent the momentary – moments repeating in endless variation, each as insignificant as the one forever lost in an established past, or as infinite as the possible future moments yet to be realised.

## THE EFFIN' INEFFABLE

Elizabeth Helmuth Margulis proposes that within Franz Schubert's use of repetition there is a certain invocation of the inexpressible, something that lies beyond our subjectivity: "As the music repeats, it casts my ear more and more in the direction of the unsayable thing beyond the notes." Within the temporal span of a piece of music, a repeated passage can be a way of lingering, a way of extending a moment to contemplate that inexpressible something that the music is on the verge of all-but-revealing. As Margulis puts it:

To me personally, repetition in Schubert always seems to point and re-point to the music as a kind of edge, or liminal entity. The refusal to modify and develop serves to reiterate the implication that the repeated passage is the furthest music can go toward the inexpressible thing it's butting up against; there can be no progress or advancement because the border has been reached.<sup>32</sup>

The mode of repetition is choosing to pend, it's choosing to loop rather than to resolve, to return rather than to abandon. Across the span of a series of paintings the painter adopts this intentional mode of repetition. Serially producing things is a ritual of reiteration, and of dedication perhaps; however, until the series is definitively terminated (or the artist is), it is a ritual without a telos. Perhaps, this too is an attempt to loiter at the border of the inexpressible. In theory, there could be anything beyond that border; there could be everything, but (at the risk of repeating myself) in reality, unless it's some thing, it's actually nothing.

## TIME DO YOU CALL THIS?<sup>33</sup>

My phone rings, my eyes flick open like a pair of Zippos. Look, there's a bin in the sun with a bottle on top, light shines through brown glass. The screen tells me *Work* is ringing, *slide to answer*. "In transit," I say.



Figure 1. Michael D Cooke, *So On And On We Go*, (twelve paintings from the *One Trick Pony* series), DSA Gallery, Installation view, 2020.

**Michael D Cooke** graduated from the Dunedin School of Art with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in 2004 and Master of Fine Arts (distinction) in 2020. His painting practice is currently centered on a series of equestrian portrait paintings. For more information see [michaeldcooke.com](http://michaeldcooke.com).

- 1 Elizabeth Hellmuth Margulis, *On Repeat: How Music Plays the Mind* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013), 39.
- 2 Ibid., 37.
- 3 Ibid., 43.
- 4 "Agnes Martin, Morning, 1965," Tate, <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/martin-morning-t01866> (accessed 18 June 2021).
- 5 Briony Fer, *The Infinite Line: Re-making Art after Modernism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004), 58.
- 6 Ibid., 58.
- 7 See <https://www.gretchenalbrecht.com/Paintings/sheba/Large/sheba.htm> (accessed 18 June 2021).
- 8 Margulis, *On Repeat*, 148.
- 9 Ibid., 149.
- 10 "Gretchen Albrecht, Luke Smythe: Between Gesture and Geometry," interview by Kim Hill, Saturday Morning, RNZ, 13 April 2019, audio, <https://www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/saturday/audio/2018690881/gretchen-albrecht-luke-smythe-between-gesture-and-geometry>\_See image gallery at foot of page (accessed 18 June 2021).
- 11 Ibid. (accessed 20 June 2021).
- 12 David Hockney and Larry Rivers, "Beautiful or Interesting," *Art and Literature*, 5 (Summer 1964), 94-117. Reprinted in *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art: A Sourcebook of Artists' Writings*, eds Kristine Stiles and Peter Selz (Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1996), 238-43.
- 13 Ibid., 242 (Rivers).
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 *ibid.*, 242 (Hockney).
- 16 Fer, *The Infinite Line*, 6.
- 17 Ibid., 6.
- 18 Ibid., 56.
- 19 "Susan Rothenberg, *Triphammer Bridge*, 1974," MoMA, <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/100307> (accessed 20 June 2021).
- 20 Rothenberg, interview by Joan Simon. See Joan Simon, *Susan Rothenberg* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1991), 88.
- 21 "On Kawara: Long-term View, Dia Beacon," Dia Art Foundation, <https://www.diaart.org/exhibition/exhibitions-projects/on-kawara-exhibition>, (accessed 18 June 2021).
- 22 See Pamela M Lee, *Chronophobia: On Time in the Art of the 1960s* (Cambridge, MA and London, UK: MIT Press, 2004).
- 23 Stanley Cavell, *The World Viewed: Reflections on the Ontology of Film* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), 116.
- 24 Ibid., 104.
- 25 Ibid., 107.
- 26 Gretchen Albrecht, in Karen Bates and John Bates, dir., *Reflections: Gretchen Albrecht*, 2006, television documentary, Bates Productions, <https://www.nzonscreen.com/title/reflections-gretchen-albrecht-2006> (accessed 9 July 2021).
- 27 Cavell, *The World Viewed*, 116.
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 Ibid.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 Margulis, *On Repeat*, 148.
- 33 And yes, I have been reading too much Matthew Collings lately.

## NOT JUST ANOTHER SHINJUKU LOVE HOTEL

Rachel Hope Allan



Figure 1. *SALARYMAN*, 2021,  
digital inkjet print on Hahnemühle paper, 300gsm, 100 x 100 cm.

I am good at airports. I have the uncanny ability to breeze through customs, and up until recently (thanks Air Fiji) my bags have always arrived on time and undamaged. Narita airport was no different. Light bounced off unfamiliar rescue vehicles and airport structures as a smoke-filled glass box beckoned me from afar. I inserted coins into a vending machine, then stepped inside the curious building. It was hot inside the glass box. The air was thick. Glazed passengers stood silently, inhaling tobacco and checking their phones.

I had been dreaming about this place since I was 14, and I chose Japanese (language) lessons over photography.

Narita airport is more than organised.

As I stood beneath the flashing Shinjuku light, gloved hands silently stowed my luggage into the belly of the bright orange limousine bus. As we drove into the megalopolis, images of *Blade Runner* melded with *Tokyo Drift*. I could see truck drivers watching porn on tiny TVs attached to their dashboards and salarymen squeezed into overstuffed trains. Empty fields and baseball parks were intermingled with mid-rises and clip-on roadways hugged apartment buildings. Highways and arterial roads meandered like afterthoughts between historical structures and neon signage. I have never seen anything like this before. The light begins to fade as we crossed the Rainbow Bridge. I rest my head against the heavily starched headrest and whispered to myself, "This is Tokyo."

Tokyo is broken up into 23 special wards, 26 cities, one district and four sub-prefectures. It was originally a fishing village called Edo, that became an important political centre when a Tokugawa shogunate seat was established there. This city was renamed Tokyo in 1868 after imperial rule was restored. The greater Tokyo area is the most populous metropolitan area in the world.<sup>1</sup> The metro area population of Tokyo in 2021 is 37,340,000, a 0.14 percent decline from 2020.<sup>2</sup> Tokyo is a megalopolis. A conundrum that is both fast-paced and serene. Traditional but convention-defying. High-rise buildings are constructed silently behind plastic white walls as pedestrians are swiftly escorted from harm's way by retired school teachers dressed in white overalls and white gloves.



Figure 2. Late night Lawsons, 2021,  
digital inkjet print on Hahnemühle paper; 300gsm, 100 x 200 cm.

*Konbini* are everywhere in Japan. They are an important cog in the machine that is Japan. At a *konbini* you can purchase grocery items, clean white business shirts and socks. You can find a fax machine, use the ATM, pay for tickets and bills, send letters and packages. There are over 7000 *konbini* in Tokyo. The major players are Lawson, Seven-Eleven and FamilyMart. *Konbini* are usually well lit, clean and well-organised. Shelves, bain-maries and refrigerators are constantly replenished with *onigiri*, bento sets, fried *karaage*, Mochifuwa, pancakes and sandwiches. Each chain of *konbini* has specialties; some are 'Premium' or 'Fresh' and some have to publicly apologise for unsanitary rat incidents.<sup>3</sup> In 2013, Anthony Bourdain tweeted about "The unnatural, inexplicable deliciousness of the Lawson's egg salad sandwich."<sup>4</sup> And I can concur that they are pretty decent.

A great *tamago sando* is all about the egg, so there are no pickles, celery or raw onions added. The egg salad is seasoned with a Japanese mayonnaise such as Kewpie, which has a mild sweetness and robust umami flavour. And then there is the bread. Japanese sandwich bread is called *shokupan* (食パン). It is fluffier than Western loaves, with a slightly chewy texture. It is like biting into clouds of air, only superior.

I love *tamago sando*. I have sampled every variety of *konbini* egg sandwich on offer (sans meat). I have taken trains and monorails, ventured up ropeways and mountain sides in search of them. Tested their instagrammed delights at *eggbaby*,<sup>5</sup> *Eggs 'n Things* and *Kayaba Coffee*. My Google map is so full of stars marking potential egg-sandwich delights that I feel like an egg-headed version of *Kantaro the Sweet Tooth Salaryman*.<sup>6</sup> *Reji bukuro wa iranai desu* (no plastic bag please) plays over and over in my head as I enter the convenience store.

Each morning I purchase a *sando* and a cold Boss coffee, couriering it back to bed in a cotton bag, but at night, I like to eat my *sando* while I sit in the gutter of the *konbini* carpark, next to the drunken 'boyfriends' and the ever-present crows.



Figure 3. *puppy, baby, monkey*, 2021,  
digital inkjet print on Hahnemühle paper, 300gsm, 100 x 200 cm.

Crows are a fixture of the Tokyo skyline, as looming as the Skytree. They stalk the temples and the backstreets. They pull treats and shiny things from neatly stacked rubbish. They cause blackouts and train delays, chase children and salarymen indiscriminately. The Tokyo Metropolitan Government estimates their population to be somewhere between 18,000 and 100,000.<sup>7</sup> Crows are special – they remember, manufacture tools and use psychological warfare. They employ bait-and-switch to trick, and a recent research study at the University of Washington discovered that crows can “recognize individual human faces.”<sup>8</sup> The researchers hypothesised that the corvids share the knowledge they gain with their young, as well as with the rest of the flock.

Records also show that crows ritualistically examine their dead.<sup>9</sup> Many an anthropomorphising armchair twitchee has hypothesised that the crows are performing some kind of funeral. According to corvid researcher Dr Kaeli Swift, they “respond to unfamiliar dead crows by alarm calling, followed by recruitment of other crows to the area to form a raucous group called a mob. Then they disperse after about 15-30min.”<sup>10</sup> Dr Swift deployed the non-invasive imaging technique FDG-PET to spy on the minds of crows.<sup>11</sup> FDG-PET exposes what parts of the brain the corvids were using, but not what they were actually *thinking* or *feeling*, leaving us, and Dr Swift, to speculate on the question of crows and grief. Swift does suggest, however, that this behaviour could be rationalised in a number of ways, including danger learning, a true sense of mourning or grief, as a foraging opportunity, or purely coincidence.<sup>12</sup> She concludes that “crow communication is quite complex and context dependent, therefore requiring a great deal of brain power to decipher and interpret.”<sup>13</sup>

The crows in Tokyo are quite literally murderous and, unlike the well-ordered place they choose as their home, the squadrons of jungle crows (*Corvus macrorhynchos*) can get a little out of hand. “Hungry crows have bloodied the faces of children while trying to steal candy from their hands. Crows have even carried away baby prairie dogs and ducklings from Tokyo zoos.”<sup>14</sup> Since 2001 the corvids’ unsatisfactory behavior has led to the deaths of more than 93,000 of their kin by way of meat traps full of poison gas.<sup>15</sup>

In Shibuya, after one or two too many, hotel desk clerks will tuck you in, unwrap your drunkenly requested *tamago sando*<sup>16</sup> and leave a note directing you to another one waiting in the fridge. Walking home in Shibuya, you can find salarymen slumped over in the streets with packages for their wives from boutiques at their side. Cellphone in one hand, wallet in the other. In Shibuya, one can sleep soundly in the knowledge that everything will be there when you wake from your alcohol-induced slumber. However; in Shinjuku, one has no such confidence in one’s fellow man.

Shinjuku is touted as the place where “Tokyo goes to have fun.”<sup>17</sup> It is brimming with karaoke bars, batting cages and love hotels. Shinjuku Station is the busiest train station in the world, with 3.6 million people using it every day.<sup>18</sup> In Shinjuku you can shop at the leading fashion houses of the world, eat the most fantastic food, see groundbreaking architecture and stroll through public gardens designed for a feudal lord in the Edo period.<sup>19</sup> Shinjuku is beautiful, it is grimy, it is traditional and modern. It has seedy gay bars, cat cafes, giggle clubs and themed sex dens. It is where *Hamakaze* construct cardboard houses outside the government buildings, where *rikishi* (Japanese: 力士), *sumōtori* (相撲取り) or, more colloquially, *osumōsan* (お相撲さん), shop for their lunch at the Isetan,<sup>20</sup> and where coiffed



Figure 4. *sundown sumotori*, 2021, digital inkjet print on Hahnemühle paper, 300gsm, 100 x 100 cm.

young men make serious bank at boyfriend clubs. At all hours of the day and night, guests and sounds of pleasure spill from love hotels, and riot police can be seen walking casually down the street.<sup>21</sup> Men in motorcycle helmets deliver large amounts of cash to banks and shops, armed only with sticks. Salarymen and giggle girls mingle with tourists and *gaijin* (foreigners) stagger from one hostess club to another, unaware of the possibility of losing their wallet or a kidney.<sup>22</sup> At 2am in Shinjuku, you will find smartly dressed *yakuza* depositing wads of cash into the ATMs at Lawsons,<sup>23</sup> as cooing couples purchase beer and egg sandwiches. The sound of aluminum hitting leather rings out from the batting cages and tone-deaf songstress inhale cigarettes in the street. Shinjuku is my kind of place. A little bit dirty and a little bit dangerous.



Figure 5. HONDA, 2021,  
digital inkjet print on Hahnemühle paper;  
300gsm, 100 × 100 cm.

I never meant to fall in love with Japan, with the order, the crows and the neatly piled up rubbish. I see the women who quietly weep on the trains, the inequity, the inbuilt misogyny, the size shaming and the excessive drinking. The animal rights abuse, elder and disabled abandonment issues and the excessive demands placed on salarymen who are literally worked to death.

As I write this, it has been ... days since I was last in Japan.

I closely guard my incense that was created for the Emperor; I dream of the ground floor of Takashimaya, the insanity of Don Quijote<sup>24</sup> and the ecstasy of finding the Higashi-Shinjuku exit at rush hour. I long for the taste of *tsukemono* and my Uniqlo cashmere sweater is getting a hole in the elbow.

I miss the light, the order, the extremes, the tradition, the innovations, the toilets, the trains, the ceremony, the smells, the precision, the honour and, of course, the egg sandwiches.



Figure 6. (*Sunlit Shimo Kitazawa*), 2021,  
digital inkjet print on Hahnemühle paper,  
300gsm, 100 x 100 cm.

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- 1 "Tokyo, Japan Metro Area Population 1950-2021," 2021, <https://www.macrotrends.net/cities/21671/tokyo/population>.
- 2 "Japan's Familymart Convenience Chain Apologises for Rats in Store," *BBC News*, 7 August 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-49260082>.
- 3 A Bourdain, *Twitter* update, 2.12pm, 4 November 2012, <https://twitter.com/bourdain/status/397169495506448384?lang=en>.
- 4 *Instagram*, [https://www.instagram.com/eggbabycafe/?utm\\_source=ig\\_embed](https://www.instagram.com/eggbabycafe/?utm_source=ig_embed).
- 5 *Wikipedia*, "Kantaro: The Sweet Tooth Salaryman," [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kantaro:\\_The\\_Sweet\\_Tooth\\_Salaryman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kantaro:_The_Sweet_Tooth_Salaryman).
- 6 Alec Jordan, "The Misunderstood Crows of Tokyo: Why They Don't Deserve Their 'Bad Boy' Image," *Tokyo Weekender*, 28 July 2017, <https://www.tokyoweekender.com/2017/07/the-misunderstood-crows-of-tokyo-why-they-dont-deserve-their-bad-boy-image/>.
- 7 Michelle Nijhuis, "Friend or Foe? Crows Never Forget a Face, it Seems," *The New York Times*, 25 August 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/26/science/26crow.html> (accessed 20 May 2021).
- 8 BirdNote, "A Funeral For Crows," *Audubon*, podcast, 6 February 2015, <https://www.audubon.org/news/a-funeral-crows>.
- 9 Kaeli Swift, "What are Crows Thinking When They See Death?," *Corvid Research*, blog post, 17 March 2020, <https://corvidresearch.blog/2020/03/17/what-are-crows-thinking-when-they-see-death/>.
- 10 PET (Positron emission tomography) is a very expensive scanner. According to the *Wikipedia* page devoted to this scientific imaging technique, it "uses radioactive substances known as radiotracers to visualize and measure changes in metabolic processes, and in other physiological activities including blood flow, regional chemical composition, and absorption. Different tracers are used for various imaging purposes, depending on the target process within the body." *Wikipedia*, "Positron Emission Tomography," [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Positron\\_emission\\_tomography#cite\\_note-1](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Positron_emission_tomography#cite_note-1). While I don't begin to understand the science behind this technology, what I have learnt is that while PET is a common imaging technique used in nuclear medicine, it can also be used by animal researchers – one of the upsides being the subject's survival.
- 11 Kaeli Swift, "Why Crows Gather Around Their Dead," *Corvid Research*, blog post, 26 September 2015, <https://corvidresearch.blog/2015/09/26/why-crows-gather-around-their-dead/>.
- 12 Swift, "What Are Crows Thinking." "Crows that saw a dead crow didn't show more activity in the regions associated with affect, social behaviors or fear learning. Instead, what we found is that, like when they see a familiar threat like a hawk, it's their executive center that shows the most difference."
- 13 Martin Fackler, "Japan Fights Crowds of Crows," *The New York Times*, 7 May 2008, [https://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/07/world/asia/07crows.html?\\_r=1&pagewanted=all](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/07/world/asia/07crows.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all).
- 14 *Ibid.*
- 15 They also refuse payment for said sandwich when you come to settle up the bill.
- 16 "Neon-filled Shinjuku is where Tokyo Goes to Have Fun," *Japan National Tourism Organization*, <https://www.japan.travel/en/destinations/kanto/tokyo/shinjuku/>.
- 17 "Shinjuku Railway Station, Tokyo," *Railway Technology*, <https://www.railway-technology.com/projects/shinjuku-railway/> (accessed 7 April 2021).
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- 19 "Isetan Shinjuku Store," <https://www.isetan.mistore.jp.ez.hp.transer.com/shinjuku.html>.
- 20 John Spacey, "7 Most Dangerous Neighborhoods In Japan," *Japan Talk*, 9 April 2009, <https://www.japan-talk.com/jt/new/7-most-dangerous-neighborhoods-in-japan>. Updated 31 August 2012.
- 21 Justin McCurry, "Tokyo Cracks Down On Red-light District Hawkers in Pre-Olympics Cleanup," *The Guardian*, 5 June 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/05/tokyo-kabukicho-red-light-district-hawkers-olympics>.
- 22 Cited from Sayaka Murata, *Convenience Store Woman*, trans. Ginny Tapley Takemori (London: Portobello Books, 2018). See also <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/38357895-convenience-store-woman>. "A convenience store is not merely a place where customers come to buy practical necessities," "It has to be somewhere they can enjoy and take pleasure in discovering things they like."
- 23 <https://www.donki.com/en/>.

## AMBIGUOUS INTERVENTION AT MOCENIGO: BRIGITTE NIEDERMAIR

Leoni Schmidt

Julie Perini writes in "Art as Intervention: A Guide to Today's Radical Art Practices" (2010) about some of those artists or groups of artists who "use creative energy to transform immediate social realities and construct meaningful experiences that happen in the streets, museums and galleries, domestic spaces, and any location where oppressive authoritarian forces reign."<sup>1</sup> According to her, they create alternate realities as rehearsal spaces or laboratories where "active imaginations, combined with active participation, become critical tools for co-creating social systems."<sup>2</sup>

Extant examples of art as intervention hail from previous ages; it is not just a recent phenomenon, despite the fact that the practice has gained an identity, a name and critical acclaim only in the last century or so. One could argue, for example, that Early Christian images of fish as a symbol of Christ were interventions on the walls of catacombs against the oppressive regime of the Roman Empire. Or, that sexualised images on the misericordia of medieval cathedrals were interventional devices intended to offset the rigid spiritual dogma of the church. Closer to our time, Gustave Courbet's private one-man exhibition of his own work staged during the 1855 Universal Exposition, thereby setting himself against the closed system of the Salon of the French Academy, might be interpreted as an interventional act of revolutionary impact.

Still closer in time, Dada artists, motivated early in the twentieth century by the chaos of the First World War, staged public interventions aimed at unmasking the rational tenets of the Enlightenment. Their 'heirs,' among whom were the Situationists of the 1960s, took to the streets of Paris in an effort to critique the alienation caused by advanced capitalism. They created 'situations' for expediting experiences outside of the capitalist system.

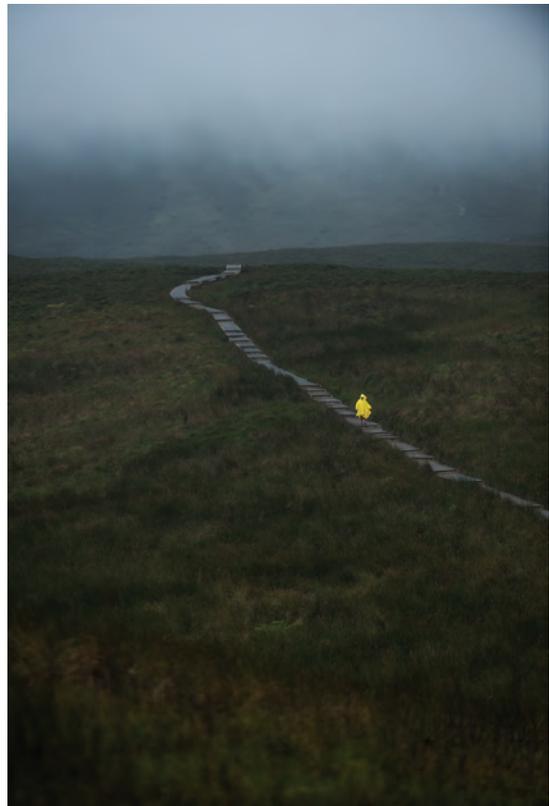


Figure 1. Suzanne Lacy, *Across and In-Between: The Yellow Line*, Cuilcagh Mountain, 2018.

Photograph: Helen Sloan SMPSP and Ross Mulhall.  
Image courtesy of the artist.



Figure 2. Fulton Street Mural, Brooklyn, New York.  
Documentation of the Black Lives Matter mural, 2020.  
Photograph: Angela Weiss/Getty Images.

More recently, artists such as Mierle Laderman Ukeles and Fred Wilson have staged interventions, respectively drawing attention to the 'invisible' labour needed to prop up public institutions like museums, and to the invisibility of the history of slavery in the United States of America. Laderman Ukeles performed an intervention in 1973 titled *Washing/Tracks/Maintenance Outside* on the steps of the Wadsworth Athenaeum in Hartford, Connecticut. She literally washed the steps leading into the main entrance of the museum, thereby drawing attention to those labours many take for granted and delegate to the hours of the night. African American Fred Wilson's "Mining the Museum" exhibition, held at the Maryland Historical Society in 1992-93, was a clear critique of colonisation through sets of juxtapositions. One of these showed ornate silverwork of obvious European provenance, with rusted slave shackles intervening among them in the same vitrine.

These are well-known examples; there are many more. What they have in common is a clear target and a clear message: critiquing authority and suggesting an alternative way of seeing or experiencing. In recent years, interventionist practices have included Suzanne Lacey's *Across and in-Between* (2018), about the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Participants explored a line as border and how this affected their lives, (Figure 1). Their painstaking efforts to remain on the thin line brought its real-life stressful effects into sharp focus.

During 2020, the Black Lives Matter movement led to many interventions in public spaces. In one of these, many people worked together to create a giant-sized horizontal painting on a street in New York. Nobody in the vicinity could ignore the work. It spoke loudly on a large scale of the outrage felt following the violent death of George Floyd and other African Americans before him.

Art as intervention also looms large at the Venice Biennale, where the whole city lends itself to this kind of practice. Venice has many museums, galleries, small buildings, street corners, alleyways and other public sites – such as palazzi

– that can be mined as potential spaces for interventionist tactics. The notion of “tactics” reminds one of Michel de Certeau’s distinction between this concept and the concept of “strategies.” In *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1988), de Certeau characterises “strategies” as actions deployed by institutions and governments to regulate the lives of citizens, while “tactics” suggest activities aimed at undermining, subverting or changing these regulatory moves.<sup>3</sup> Art interventions mostly fall within the scope of “tactics” as deployed in de Certeau’s vocabulary.

As suggested above, Venice is a city uniquely positioned for interventional tactics. In 2019, I visited the Venice Biennale and – following the example of the Situationists – practiced the art of the *dérive*,<sup>4</sup> walking through the urban environment in an unplanned way to encounter what it has to offer; relinquishing expectations and responding to the infiltration of this ancient city by contemporary arts practices, willing to be surprised and for assumptions to be questioned.

Walking through Venice during the Biennale, one becomes aware of the city as a stage for dialogue happening between two main characters: the old architecture and the new infiltrations into its very fabric – into spaces, up ceilings, through passageways, underneath walkways, poised on ledges, written on bridge stanchions, reflecting in the water of the canals. Some of the interventions are hidden from the casual glance behind heavy doors, seemingly impenetrable to the casual eye.

On my last day in Venice during 2019, I went for a short stroll to farewell the narrow alleys, canals, bridges and buildings of my beloved Santa Croce, the Sestiere where I have stayed so many times in my life. Walking around, I encountered a building that had escaped my notice after all this time: the Palazzo Mocenigo. In order to arrive at the crux of this article, I have to share information about this building.

The Palazzo Mocenigo’s official website<sup>5</sup> tells one that the building is of Gothic origin, and was extensively rebuilt at the beginning of the seventeenth century to become the residence of the San Stae branch of the Mocenigo family; seven members of the family were Venetian doges between 1414 and 1778. “The family also supplied the State with numerous procurati (administrators), ambassadors, sea and land captains, clergymen, and men of letters.”<sup>6</sup> The last descendent of the family bequeathed the palazzo to the city of Venice in 1945 to become a museum. It was opened to the public in 1985 and has since housed vast collections of fabric and costumes, displaying the expertise and luxury associated with these crafts in Venice over many centuries. Male dress dominates, with one room dedicated, for example, to the waistcoat, crafted from exquisite silk and embroidered fabrics. A relatively new section is devoted to perfume, “highlighting the key role the city played in the origins of this aesthetical, cosmetic and entrepreneurial custom.”<sup>7</sup>

Among these riches, the visitor is struck by paintings of the city, along with the many portraits of important male members of the Mocenigo family, often portayed in large scale and clothed in rich fabrics and other adornments, such as jewelry pieces and elaborate shoes. Wealth, status, entrepreneurship, trade in luxury items and an appeal to the visual, haptic and olfactory senses emanate from the paintings, brocade and satin wallpapers, dressed mannequins, objects in vitrines and perfume pipettes of the Palazzo Mocenigo. It is into this carefully curated manifestation of a strategic positioning of cultural capital<sup>8</sup> that artist Brigitte Niedermair chose to insert her interventionist tactics as part of the 2019 Venice Biennale.

Brigitte Niedermair was born and now lives in Italy after studying and working in Miami, New York and Los Angeles, often in the context of big-city fashion photography. She works with a 4x5 large-format camera to construct large-scale images that seem to hover between the world of fashion photography and critique of its effects – for example, female exploitation, the promotion of consumerism and body stereotypes. Charlotte Cotton, who curated Niedermair’s exhibition in the Palazzo Mocenigo for the Venice Biennale in 2019, wrote: “There is a cultural strength to her character ... She’s pro-women, and she is genuinely speaking to and for women. That remains a prized and underrated quality within fashion.”<sup>9</sup>

Niedermaier's exhibition in the Palazzo Mocenigo fulfilled no single interventionist agenda. Rather, a number of tactics were deployed. One of these involved removing some of the many historical paintings to create space for the contemporary photographs, similar in scale to the large paintings. A strong contemporary presence infused the rooms of the palazzo. Secondly, the differentiation between representational painting and painterly photography comes into play: two media vying for our attention, with reference to a now approximately two-centuries-old enmity and dialogue. Thirdly, the photographs with their strong *luxe* aesthetic hold their own within the highly wrought, sophisticated interior of the Mocenigo. One can only be impressed by the visual strength with which Niedermaier pulled these tactics off.

The tactic of inserting a strong feminine presence into the male gendered context of the Mocenigo is where Niedermaier's intervention becomes ambiguous and even troubling in some instances. In this regard, one can differentiate between three dimensions of the work: one focuses on the beauty and strength of the female body and its adornment; the second seems to play into the misogyny of extreme fashion demands; while a third dimension offers up the female body to the male gaze, thereby buying into the patriarchy it seemed intended to confront. Three sets of images make these distinctions clearer.

## CORSET

Niedermaier's large photograph in her exhibition titled *Fashion and Me* (2019) shows the torso of a woman clad in tight grey lace in the front of the picture plane.<sup>10</sup> It is a confronting image of strength and sophistication. The intricacies of lace embroidery echo the long history of fabric arts in the city of Venice and bring a sense of female resilience to the room. At the same time, it provides a contrast to the exhibition of male waistcoats just around the corner in the palazzo. As an exhibit of a garment, more than of a particular body in this context, the cut-off neck and face feel less of an indignity than might otherwise be the case. The exquisite beauty of the lace garment is offset by its rigid formality.

Niva Piran writes about practices of "physical corseting" and their impact on "mental corseting" in her book *Journeys of Embodiment at the Intersection of Body and Culture* (2017).<sup>11</sup> She explores the ways in which girls are expected to "rein in" their bodies and how this expectation continues into adulthood, being deeply entrenched in the world of fashion. The trope of the 'corset' lies at the heart of this process. Our garment at the Mocenigo functions both as a counterfoil for the male waistcoats and as an embodiment of a restraining aspect of European culture. However, the history of the corset enables a more complex reading. The Victoria and Albert Museum publication, *The Corset in Late Twentieth Century Fashion*, tells us that

"The corset is full of paradoxes ... [it] bears an everlasting sexual attraction: it glorifies, underlines, exacerbates and idealises the female form. It has evolved esthetically and symbolically ... from constriction to power; from lingerie to armour."<sup>12</sup>

## STILETTO

This work dwarfed the furniture at the Mocenigo. A pair of red stilettos were seen from behind to emphasise the heels. The men strolling past seemed to take them for granted – no big shock at seeing them so enlarged and in this place; just part of life for them, maybe.<sup>13</sup> However, the stiletto brings with it a loaded, often shocking, history. Maude Bass-Krueger and Alice Cary alert us to this in their *Vogue* article, "Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About the Stiletto" (2020). Before the high heel became exclusively associated with the female – and drag – domain, in the seventeenth century Louis XIV wore them to express his authority. Closer to our time, Marilyn Monroe wore stilettos to enable her sexy walk, a walk that prevented her from moving freely. No easy *dérive* for her through the streets. "Fetishistic aspects of the stiletto have gained the heel a reputation as a powerful tool of seduction ... [but also of] violence and power;" it can also "represent empowerment, liberation, and the playful side of fashion."<sup>14</sup>

Niedermaier's large photograph memorialises the stiletto. One could read it in many ways: as a monument to and a celebration of women's resilience, or as a sexual fetish; as empowerment or disempowerment of women; as exquisitely crafted objects of frivolity, or as the latest example of a very long history of women's bondage through shoes, stretching back to Chinese foot binding practices. Amanda Foreman's *Smithsonian* article, "Why Footbinding Persisted in China for a Millennium," suggests eerie similarities with what we know about the stiletto: "footbinding was imbued with erotic overtones ... every aspect of women's beauty was intimately bound up with pain ... social forces then subjugated women [who could hardly move]."<sup>15</sup>

## BOUDOIR

A large photographic nude intervenes in a Mocenigo space.<sup>16</sup> Wallpaper with its golden sheen, satin upholstery, a silk tablecloth and a splendid blue-and-white Chinese vase together signal opulence and luxury, enhanced by the subtle scent of perfume from adjacent rooms. The setting suggests the interior of a boudoir. Critsey Rowe's book *Boudoir Photography (2011)*<sup>17</sup> provides 'how to do' insights into this genre. We learn that this kind of photography is aimed at providing potential husbands with a portfolio of sexualised images in the intimate setting of a lounge or other domestic spaces.

Ilya Parkins adopts a more analytical stance in a chapter titled "Becoming in the Eyes of Others: The Relational Gaze in Boudoir Photography," included in editors Morna Laing and Jacki Wilson's *Revisiting the Gaze: The Fashioned Body and the Politics of Looking* (2020). Parkins argues that the genre should no longer be interpreted through the binary of powerless female and powerful male, but rather through a more complex understanding of identity formation. The female subject knowingly invites the gaze through which her sexual agency is confirmed. Parkins writes: "the subject comes to be, and is transformed, in visual relation."<sup>18</sup> In a part of her chapter she calls "Boudoir Photography and Confident Selfhood Narrative," Parkins quotes Angela McRobbie's dictum, "women have been endow[ed] with capacity."<sup>19</sup>

Niedermaier's nude was placed in a room within the Mocenigo, its very presence transforming the space into a boudoir context and figuring the genre of presentation as boudoir photography. The 'decapitated' and thus depersonalised nude seen from behind rings alarm bells for a viewer schooled in Laura Mulvey's feminist critique of the gaze.<sup>20</sup> Is Niedermaier playing into the long history of erotic nudes positioned for the lingering male gaze? Or, is she foregrounding the capacity and agency of women today to create their own transformative visual relationships, as Parkins and McRobbie might argue?

As in the case of CORSET and STILLETTO, the trope of BOUDOIR leaves the viewer with an experience of ambiguity, perhaps rightly so in our era wherein feminism is no longer predicated on binaries, but rather on complex perspectives that highlight context and point of view over essentialised and dogmatic categories. In *Reclaiming the F Word: Feminism Today* (2013), authors Catherine Redfern and Kristin Aune discuss the prospects for "liberated bodies" in our time.<sup>21</sup> One could read this as a counterfoil to Michel Foucault's famous focus on "docile bodies"<sup>22</sup> in the last century.

Finally, a detail from Niedermaier's nude intervened in my reflections at the time in Venice. She wears a body stocking that emphasises her erotic behind while simultaneously protecting and bringing her body right down to earth: a woman photographed after getting dressed in an everyday garment. The pantyhose acts as a disruption, its everyday banality interfering with the idealisation and sexualisation of the body. This small detail underscores the creative ambiguity of Niedermaier's intervention at the Mocenigo.

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- 2 Ibid., 196.
- 3 See Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980/2011).
- 4 See Guy Debord, "Theory of the Dérive," *Les Lèvres Nues*, 9 (November 1956), trans. Ken Knabb, <http://www.cddc.vt.edu/sionline/si/theory.html> (accessed 4 June 2021).
- 5 See Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia, *Palazzo Mocenigo*, <https://mocenigo.visitmuve.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Museum-of-Palazz-Mocenigo-short-ENG.pdf> (accessed 4 June 2021).
- 6 Ibid., 1.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron coined the phrase "cultural capital" in 1973 in a paper titled "Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction," further developed in Bourdieu's 1979 book *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979/84). According to Bourdieu, one type of cultural capital is embodied in objects that signify status, wealth and activity, such as educational pursuits under which one could class entrepreneurship.
- 9 Charlotte Cotton, quoted in Tom Seymour, "Brigitte Niedermair Puts Fashion in Focus at Venice Retrospective," *Wallpaper*, 9 May 2019, <https://www.wallpaper.com/fashion/brigitte-niedermair-profile>.
- 10 Brigitte Niedermair, *Fashion and Me*, Palazzo Mocenigo, Venice, 2019. See image at [https://www.wallpaper.com/fashion/brigitte-niedermair-profile#0\\_pic\\_5](https://www.wallpaper.com/fashion/brigitte-niedermair-profile#0_pic_5)
- 11 Niva Piran, *Journeys of Embodiment at the Intersection of Body and Culture: The Developmental Theory of Embodiment* (London: Elsevier Academic Press, 2017).
- 12 Victoria and Albert Museum, *The Corset in Late Twentieth Century Fashion* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2016), n.p.
- 13 Brigitte Niedermair, *Fashion and Me*, Palazzo Mocenigo, Venice, 2019. See image at [https://www.wallpaper.com/fashion/brigitte-niedermair-profile#0\\_pic\\_9](https://www.wallpaper.com/fashion/brigitte-niedermair-profile#0_pic_9) and in context at the Palazzo Mocenigo <http://contessanaly.blogspot.com/2019/06/venice-not-only-biennale-museo-di.html>
- 14 Maude Bass-Krueger and Alice Cary, "Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About the Stiletto," *Vogue*, 24 March 2020, 4 & 8.
- 15 Amanda Foreman, "Why Footbinding Persisted in China for a Millennium," *Smithsonian Magazine*, February 2015, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/why-footbinding-persisted-china-millennium-180953971/> (accessed 4 June 2021).
- 16 Brigitte Niedermair, *Fashion and Me*, Palazzo Mocenigo, Venice, 2019. See image at [https://www.wallpaper.com/fashion/brigitte-niedermair-profile#0\\_pic\\_7](https://www.wallpaper.com/fashion/brigitte-niedermair-profile#0_pic_7) and for context The Palazzo Mocenigo, the setting for the Brigitte Niedermair exhibition, features fabrics on the wall and the upholstery by Rubelli. Photo: Giacomo Santini at <https://www.architecturaldigest.com/story/rubelli-contemporary-artists-venice-biennale-projects>
- 17 Critsey Rowe, *Boudoir Photography* (London: Hachette, 2011).
- 18 Ilya Parkins, "Becoming in the Eyes of Others: The Relational Gaze in Boudoir Photography," in *Revisiting the Gaze: The Fashioned Body and the Politics of Looking*, eds Morna Laing and Jacki Wilson (London: Bloomsbury, 2020), 101-23, at 103.
- 19 Angela McRobbie, "'Top Girls?' Young Women and the Post-Feminist Sexual Contract," *Cultural Studies*, 21:4-5 (2007), 718-737, at 722.
- 20 See Laura Mulvey, *Visual and Other Pleasures* (New York: Palgrave, 1989).
- 21 Catherine Redfern and Kristin Aune, *Reclaiming the F Word: Feminism Today* (London: Zed Books, 2013). See Chapter One.
- 22 See Michel Foucault, "Docile Bodies," in *Discipline and Punish*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Pantheon, 1977).

## OFF THE GROUND

Charlotte Parallel

The Dunedin Dream Brokerage (DDB) brings life into empty urban and retail environments through brokering a lively programme of art project occupation. We work with property owners, artists, individuals and community groups to broker the use of space – be it public or commercial, empty or under-utilised – for the temporary occupation of creative projects.

*Off The Ground* was directly inspired by the DDB project *Bubbles* that connected the art community and businesses by asking artists to reflect on the 'upside of lockdown,' posing questions like, 'What makes our neighbourhoods vibrant?' The positive level of community engagement and collaboration between local business owners prompted the expansion of the idea into another DDB initiative called *Off The Ground*.

*Off The Ground* was funded by a Dunedin City Council Covid-19 Community Response Grant to help artists reinvigorate projects that had been put on hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic. These stalled art projects needed to have a collaborative focus on activating the places we live and work in. Following a call-out to the Ōtepoti/ Dunedin community, we were delighted to support four projects, starting with *Tūwhana*, a collaboration between Waiariki Parata-Taiapa (Kāi Tahu), Heramaahina Eketone (Ngāti Maniapoto me Waikato) and Alex Whitaker, held at 23 Princes Street. *The Commons* by Kate Fitzharris was next, at the Dunedin Botanic Garden, followed by *Caffenol Cafe 1. RDC Espresso*, at RDC Cafe by Chris Schmelz, and finally *Basking* with Madison Kelly (Kāi Tahu) at 17 George Street, Te Korowai o Mihiwaka Orokonui Ecosanctuary, and the North East Valley project community rooms.

### WAIARIKI PARATA-TAIAPA, HERAMAAHINA EKETONE AND ALEX WHITAKER – TŪWHANA

While each project was motivated by a different kaupapa, the artists were all working in a performative way where their artistic processes were visible and invited public participation. Working on site enables a shared conversation whereby, as soon as a member of the public enters the space, their interaction becomes part of the artwork. Reciprocity was a direct intention for *Tūwhana*, where, to quote the gallery text, the artists' "collaborative approach led to the question – what is a tūwhana for our daily lives?"

Tūwhana (noun), river-crossing pole – a pole held breast-high for linking people when crossing a river where the strongest people were positioned at each end of the pole, to prevent the smaller or weaker members of the party from being washed off their feet.



Figure 1. Waiariki Parata-Taiapa, Heramaahina Eketone and Alex Whitaker; *Tūwhana*, 2021. Installation view.  
Photograph: Justin Spiers.



Figure 2. Waiariki Parata-Taiapa, Heramaahina Eketone and Alex Whitaker; *Tūwhana*, 2021. Installation view. Photograph: Justin Spiers.



Figure 3. Waiariki Parata-Taiapa, Heramaahina Eketone and Alex Whitaker; *Tūwhana*, 2021. Installation view. Photograph: Justin Spiers.

*Tūwhana* started the *Off The Ground* series in a vacant shop in central-city Ōtepoti on Monday 1 March 2021. Waiariki Parata-Taiapa, Heramaahina Eketone and Alex Whitaker occupied the space for two weeks, where a solid process of making, kōrero, carving and painting took place. The *Tūwhana* kaupapa started with personal research and developed onsite in discussion with visitors to the space.

At the end of the fortnight there was a celebration and silent auction where the artworks were joyfully carried away by participants, whānau and friends; they continue to serve as anchor points in our local communities.

Text from the *Tūwhana* exhibition:

A collaborative approach led to the question – what is a tūwhana for our daily lives?

The porotiti is the central work, the two taura (cords) that make it spin reach up to Ranginui and down to Paptūānuku. All living things exist between the two. Our living art exists in the same way, bounded by Ranginui and Paptūānuku, and supported by our friends and whānau.



Figure 4. Waiariki Parata-Taiapa, Heramaahina Eketone and Alex Whitaker; *Tūwhana*, 2021. Installation view. Photograph: Justin Spiers.

## KATE FITZHARRIS – *THE COMMONS*

Kate Fitzharris partnered with the Dunedin Botanic Garden to realise her project, *The Commons*, a site-specific raw clay installation made from the earth and windfall of the garden. Working with caretakers at the Dunedin Botanic Garden, in particular Doug Thomson, curator of the Rhododendron Dell, Fitzharris was able to find the right location to make the work and locate a bank from which to gather raw clay and sticks to make the base that her form would sit on. Spending time walking around the Rhododendron Dell, Fitzharris gathered binding materials in the form of natural windfall, such as pine needles and leaves.

Fitzharris then dried and remixed her raw materials to make a “Botanic Garden raw clay” used to construct the form and interventions for *The Commons*.

During the first weekend of the making process, Kate invited the public along to share in the site-specific construction. Hand-building is a considered process, and the ongoing conversations fed into the clay, coil by coil, as *The Commons* came to be. The rightfully slow process triggers references to geological time as the material informs construction and, in turn, the responsiveness to activity.



Figure 5. Kate Fitzharris, *The Commons*, 2021. Work in progress. Photograph: Justin Spiers.



Figure 6. Kate Fitzharris, *The Commons*, 2021. Work in progress. Photograph: Justin Spiers.



Figure 7. Kate Fitzharris, *The Commons*, 2021. Work in progress. Photograph: Justin Spiers.

Figure 8. Kate Fitzharris, *The Commons*, 2012. Detail of tree. Photograph: Justin Spiers.

*The Commons* artist text:

*The Commons* explores the blurred lines between what we often think of as distinct spaces or perspectives: private/public, individual/collective, domestic/wild, human/nature, object/viewer. It reminds us that wild public places can be as intimate and homely as our domestic spaces, and that we have wild roots to our domestic lives. *The Commons* refers to places and resources not owned privately, but held in common and managed for the collective good. It also alludes to seeking out what we hold in common with each other and what we find around us, so we may have a more empathetic, connected world view.

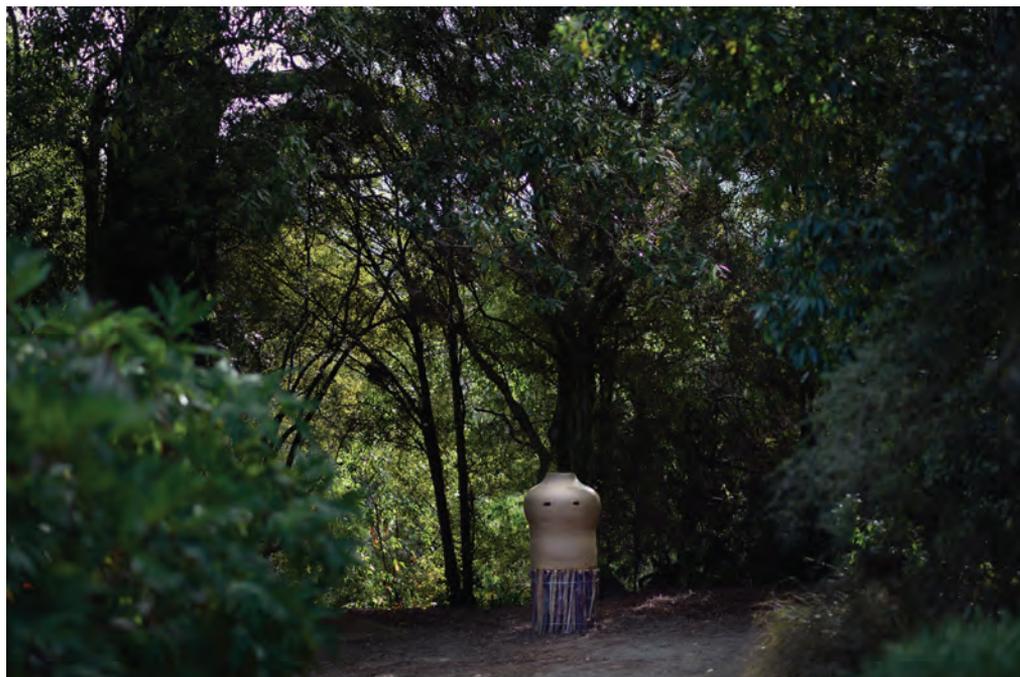


Figure 9. Kate Fitzharris, *The Commons*, 2021. Photograph: Justin Spiers.

### CHRIS SCHMELZ – CAFFENOL CAFE I. RDC ESPRESSO

Down the alley at RDC Cafe is where Chris Schmelz welcomed RDC regulars and curious people wanting to take part in his project *Caffenol Cafe I. RDC Espresso* – an analogue photography project using coffee as an ingredient to develop film within a café environment.

For a week, starting on Monday 12 April, Chris Schmelz invited people to have their portrait taken in and around RDC Cafe – which they could also take home at the end of the project. Once each 35mm film was finished, Schmelz removed the roll and placed it inside a developing tank. Chris merged into the café environment as he worked away on a small coffee table in the corner of RDC.



Figure 10, Chris Schmelz, *Caffenol Cafe I. RDC Espresso*, 2021. Work in progress. Photograph: Justin Spiers.



Figures 11 and 12. Chris Schmelz, *Caffenol Cafe I. RDC Espresso*, 2021. Photograph: Justin Spiers.

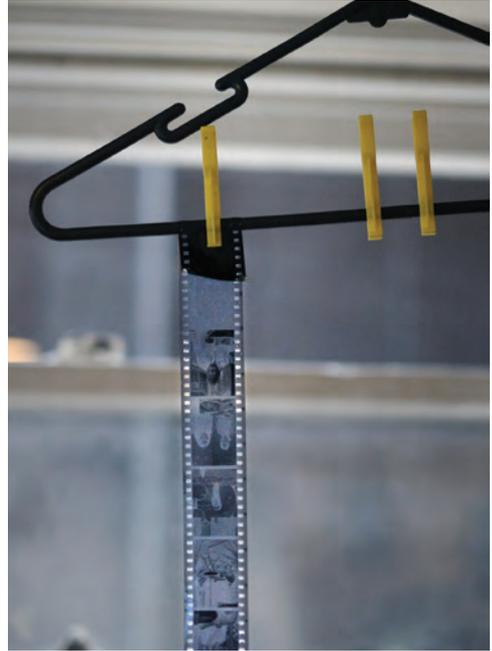


Figure 13. Chris Schmelz, *Caffenol Cafe I. RDC Espresso*, 2021. Photograph: Justin Spiers.

He strained the espresso coffee, unique to RDC, and measured up the rest of the ingredients required for his special Caffenol formula. Having filled the tank containing the 35mm film, Chris proceeded to turn it in timings that he had worked out from previous experiments and that he knew would produce the density of tone necessary for a quality black-and-white print.

The negatives were hung to dry in the café window, celebrating that moment of magic in analogue photography. From there, the negatives were digitally scanned, printed and installed. The black-and-white portraits adorned the café walls, accumulating as they were printed throughout the week and revealing the social architecture of RDC.



Figure 14. Madison Kelly, *Basking*, 2021. Photograph: Justin Spiers.



Figure 15. Madison Kelly, *Basking*, 2021. Photograph: Justin Spiers.

## MADISON KELLY – BASKING

*Basking* opened as an arts hub in a vacant space on 17 George Street that welcomed our communities to learn about local mokomoko (lizards). The hub was a place to talk, read, draw, watch, listen, observe and consider lizards in Ōtepoti through a contemporary art lens. In the street-facing window, a stack of terracotta tiles offered refuge to a clay skink. Other tiles, on the floor, held records of mokomoko movement and pebbles. The sounds of pencil against tile and the multi-species noise of Orokonui Ecosanctuary filled the space. Three groups of tiles grounded three monitors, where observational drawings referenced field studies collected at Te Korowai o Mihiwaka Orokonui Ecosanctuary.



Figures 16 and 17. Madison Kelly, *Basking* workshops. Photograph: Justin Spiers.

On Saturday 17 and Saturday 24 April 2021 Madison Kelly (Kāi Tahu, Pākehā) lead four one-hour workshops with up to 15 participants each at Te Korowai o Mihiwaka Orokonui Ecosanctuary. Madison posed questions and shared knowledge that invited participants to consider mokomoko in their multiplicities, both culturally and ecologically. What makes a lizard-friendly habitat? Where can they seek refuge? What plants do they rely on, and cohabitate with? How does mokomoko whakapapa in Te Ao Māori guide us through the dark, towards a multi-species future? Observations were realised on black and white paper, and donated terracotta tiles. Attendees who drew on the tiles were invited to take them home, for installation as “productive grounds” that could serve both functional and poetic roles in suburban conservation culture.

What can we learn from our native lizards, across science, culture and community? This question formed the final event – a mokomoko hui held at the Fred Hollows Room, a community space initiated by the Valley Project, based in Dunedin’s North East Valley. This pātai was addressed by four speakers: Orokonui educator Taylor Davies-Colley, artist Madison Kelly, herpetologist Ellen Richardson, and Clare Cross from the Open Valley Urban Ecosanctuary.

Thanks to the artists and host businesses which supported *Off The Ground*, our communities had the chance to come together and look a little deeper into our relationships with each other and the whenua, and to be an active part of the ecosystems that make up the places we live in.



Figure 18. Maddison Kelly, *Skink* at Orokonui Sanctuary. Photograph: Justin Spiers.

## Acknowledgements

Text by Charlotte Parallel, broker for *OffThe Ground*, in consultation with the participating artists.

Image credits: Justin Spiers.

**Heramaahina Eketone**, of Ngāti Tamainupō, Ngāti Maniapoto and Waikato descent, is a traditionally trained indigenous artist in raranga (weaving), whakairo (wood carving) and tā moko (tattooing). Heramaahina takes her knowledge of the meanings inherent in tohu māori (design) and applies them to both her traditional and contemporary work. She is currently an apprentice under Stu McDonald of Moana Moko.

**Alex Whitaker** is a carver at Te Whare Wānanga o Te Whanau Arohanui. He started learning carving from Allan Nopera in the mid-1990s. He has a Bachelor in Māori Traditional Art and a PG Dip in Māori Visual Art.

Ko **Waiariki Parata-Taiapa** tōhoku ikoa.

“Toitū te whenua, whatukarokaro te takata”

I am a descendant of the four winds. My roots are deep within our Araituru coastline. My community and people have shaped me and I maintain connection to our place and people.

“Tamaiti akona ki te kainga, tū ana ki te marae, tau ana”

I love everything about what encompasses life on the marae. The marae replenishes my wairua; my place of being. Tihei Mauri Ora!

**Christopher Schmelz** is an interdisciplinary artist from Koputai/Port Chalmers, Ōtepoti/Dunedin, predominantly working with analogue film and sound. Chris has performed nationally and internationally as part of the long-running experimental film/expanded cinema group, Rubbish Film Unit, and in collaboration with a number of other artists and musicians.

**Kate Fitzharris** completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts at the Dunedin School of Art, with a major in ceramics, in 1994. Her interests include the wild and domestic histories of clay and ceramics, and how the objects we live with partake in our daily lives. Kate has held a number of residencies, including: Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park (Japan), 2019; Tylee Cottage (Sarjeant Gallery, Whanganui), 2018; and Doris Lusk Residency (Risingholme Community Centre, Christchurch), 2017.

**Madison Kelly** (Kāi Tahu, Pākehā, b.1994) graduated from the Dunedin School of Art in 2017 with a BVA(Hons), majoring in drawing. Her Ōtepoti-based practice is concerned with contemporary 'nature-cultures' in an unstable era. Grounded in drawing and field-recording processes, she aims to reckon with the shared time-spaces of humans and nonhumans alike.

**Charlotte Parallel** completed her MFA at Dunedin School of Art in 2016. Based in Koputai/Port Chalmers, she works in the fields of sculpture, sound, performance and collaboration.

**Justin Spiers** is a New Zealand photographer who has a long-standing interest in documenting and exploring the relations between humans and their environment, especially, but not exclusively, with regards to the animals that share their planet.

## COMPLEXITY AND ENTANGLEMENT IN EXHIBITING CLIMATE CHANGE

Bridie Lonie

In September 2020 the Dunedin School of Art hosted two events: the exhibition “The Complete Entanglement of Everything,” and the symposium “Mapping the Anthropocene in Ōtepoti /Dunedin: Climate Change, Community and Research in the Creative Arts.”<sup>1</sup> The exhibition articulated the conclusions of my doctoral thesis, “Closer Relations: Art, Climate Change, Interdisciplinarity and the Anthropocene.”<sup>2</sup> In that study, which began with the convergence of cybernetic thinking, conceptual art and the onset of serious recognition that the planetary systems were heating because of the increase in greenhouses in our atmosphere, it became clear to me that there were some 50 years already of artworks engaging with climate change, but that they also anticipated and intersected with the attributes of the Anthropocene as articulated in the first decade of this century, and that they might demonstrate that such understandings were both emergent and necessarily interdisciplinary.

My seven case histories were designed to capture different approaches, though most in some way drew on conceptual art and each in its way was a collection of some kind. The first case study, *The Lagoon Cycle* (1985), exhibited at the Johnson Museum at Cornell University and the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, was an extensive sequence of images, maps diagrams and texts from a decade of experimentation by the two American artists Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison on the subject of the production of food from estuarine areas and the implications of sea-level rise.<sup>3</sup> The second chapter considered the breadth of activist and curator Lucy Lippard’s project *Weather Report: Art and Climate Change* (2007).<sup>4</sup> With 51 participating artists/artists groups, Lippard proposed that her exhibition would make intelligible the “vast” amount of data on climate change; the exhibition was held in Boulder, Colorado, in 2007, where, in 1965, the first forum on climate change was held. A chapter on the artists Andrea Polli, Natalie Jeremijenko and Frances Whitehead considered how the subject entailed practices that worked across disciplinary boundaries. Su Ballard and Aaron Kreisler’s curatorial project *Among the Machines* (Dunedin Public Art Gallery, 2013) was a study of contemporary art in Aotearoa/New Zealand that juxtaposed the impacts of colonisations and the technological era through the mechanism of Samuel Butler’s parody of the aspirations of technology in his book *Erewhon, or, Over the Range* (1872), set in the foothills of Canterbury at the time of their colonisation for sheep farming. My final chapter argued that the subjects of climate change and the Anthropocene were endemic in art here and had been for some time.

Doctoral theses are anxious projects and I had made an expansive argument that I felt needed further articulation. The next stage of that articulation took the approach that climate change and the Anthropocene were already existing, long-time emergent themes in the art of Ōtepoti/Dunedin, and I sought to demonstrate this by a selection of works that, to my mind, and for the most part to those of the artists, investigated the complex network of cause and unintended effect that is the Anthropocene.

Human transformation of the planet’s ecosystems is now generally accepted, but even when I began the thesis in 2013 this was not the case, and critical response to the earlier exhibitions I described had been cautious, seeing them either as too instrumental or didactic. Indeed, the first work on climate change that I could identify, Newton Harrison’s painstaking articulation of the likelihood, as seen from 1974, of either global warming with rising sea levels or a nuclear winter, was presented in the form of a map surrounded by text set out as a theorem, called *San Diego*

as the *Centre of the World* (1974), a copy of which is held at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney. Its syllogistic conclusion – that as the possibility for each existed, though the scales might tip either way, it was important to act now – was received as an example of an eccentric artist telling scientists that they did not know their own minds. Nothing could have been further from the case, and the Harrison Studio has gone on to work with governments on visualisations that demonstrate large-scale understandings of the interpenetration of political and geographical landscapes and the dangers of limited, nation-based thinking.

The Dunedin School of Art's Art+Science projects commenced in 2011, curated by Peter Stupples, an art historian who had worked at the University of Otago and the Dunedin School of Art and who saw the value of bringing together the two approaches to knowledge. While the University of Otago has a programme in science communication that has also led to rich interactions, the art+science approach is broader than that of communication. It can be seen rather as parallel play. Scientists explain their research and artists think about the broader implications, including the potential for emotional response, and contextualise and articulate these. In a nutshell, the sciences must demonstrate clearly the empirically robust evidence they have for their hypotheses, while artists receive that material as citizens invested with the need to absorb, assimilate and manage their lives on the basis of what the scientists propose.

When Lucy Lippard curated *Weather Report: Art and Climate Change*, she argued that the artform best suited to the presentation of data was conceptual art, a form she had herself 30 years before theorised. Conceptual art involves real-world materials re-assembled in the form of presentations, assemblages and installations, so that while concepts might be juxtaposed, they arrive in their own clothes, as it were, unmediated by the actions of the artists. At least, that is what seems to be the case, though any form of re-presentation necessarily re-contextualises the material. Conceptual art can seem impersonal, didactic and unfriendly to those who want their art to offer something that takes them out of the everyday. A favourite example of mine is Gabriel Manglano-Ovalle's *Iceberg (r11i01) Beyond the Irish Sea* (2005), a model of an iceberg placed on top of two containers. To some, the work appears mute, until the inevitable vanishing of the modelled iceberg, when the relationship between the production of greenhouse gases through international trade and the container emerge in the viewer's understanding, at which point the work becomes a monument to something that has passed.

However, more traditional artforms can also demonstrate the complexity of intersecting systems, and curatorial projects that juxtapose artworks can also perform those connections. The point is to enable the viewer to put those things together. My first curatorial project was an exhibition, "Women and the Environment," held at the Women's Gallery in Wellington in 1981, where we held a symposium on ecological issues – at that time very much around conservation and the reduction of waste – and held workshops throughout the time of the exhibition. That model was the basis of the Women's Gallery's feminist approach to the value of art as the property of all: not an exclusive zone for the market, or the professional artist, but an apparatus for investigating and experiencing the world both as maker and viewer.

Peter Stupples left the Dunedin School of Art in 2018 and Pam McKinlay took over his role. Pam is also an art historian, has a track history of work on sustainability and has been the co-ordinator of the regional organisation for electric vehicles. She was making artworks about the melting of the glaciers in association with scientists and researching the ways that the extractive petrochemical industries used major institutions of art to assist their marketing through sponsorship and collaborative projects. We began to talk, and the 2020 exhibition and symposium grew out of those conversations and drew on some of the works that had been exhibited in the art/science collaborations.

I had initially hoped to include a literal mapping project on climate change in Ōtepoti/Dunedin. I was aware of the focus on South Dunedin as New Zealand's 'postcard' for climate change, but even in Dunedin there were many other areas that were at risk from rising sea levels and meteorological changes. The Otago Regional Council's Hazard Identification presentations in 2016 had made this very clear;<sup>5</sup> and I had attended a meeting where an elderly woman spoke anxiously of the diminished value of her capital and the implications for her care when she

became unable to live independently. In 2014, at the meeting of the South Dunedin Action Group, I had presented visual material suggesting new wetlands be established in South Dunedin and was met with an angry growl. In 2021, such options have been socialised and seem even possible, while the scientific investigation has demonstrated the subtlety of the terrain throughout the city and the complexity of the solutions required.

When Newton Harrison showed the difficulties involved in predicting which was the most probable of two possible outcomes for the planet's climate, the complexity of earth systems was a relatively new concept. Today, such notions as tipping points and the variabilities involved in planetary systems are better understood. Debates around the notion of the Anthropocene have helped, as the stratigraphers who wish to demonstrate that the planetary systems have been impacted by human behaviours found increasing numbers of impacts and moved from simply speaking of the weather to including radionuclides, nitrogen, plastics and other more quantifiable constituents of the planet's crust. But complexity remains a problem, as the cognitive security afforded by the notion that the sciences can predict certainties, and that each discipline has definable boundaries, remains alive in the wider public. The problem here is not fake news, but the workings of predictability. However, they are too often aligned.

Yet the Anthropocene is already upon us and has been for millennia, according to some who see early agriculture or even human hunting as its initiator.

So what does it feel like, to be entangled in this new and uncomfortable era? The expression entanglement comes from Donna Haraway, whose work on interspecies and inter-category relations led to the term "cyborg," or cybernetic organism.<sup>6</sup> The term entanglement was originally used to reference the weirdness of quantum mechanics, a weirdness that has been transposed to our experience of the Anthropocene by many writers. Haraway asks us to embrace the messy entanglements that we currently experience, but she also points out that we must focus our minds: arguing that it is important which questions are asked. She points out that science fiction has already offered models for these scenarios. Her work intersects with many other philosophers and thinkers in this area – perhaps, in particular, Bruno Latour and Timothy Morton<sup>7</sup> – but she adds a liveliness and perhaps the hope that we need as the strange becomes stranger.

The symposium was designed to connect discourses and communities, in the context of this bicultural country. Its sessions were inclusive: "Land, waters and place;" "Backyards;" "Action in the Capitalocene;" "Wayfinding amongst the institutions;" and "Feeling the Anthropocene." Presentation subjects included education, art+science processes and architectural solutions. We were honoured to have initial presentations from Ron Bull on the first day, on Kai Tahu approaches to the lands of Kai Tahu in which the events were held; and on the second day, Professor Huhana Smith from Massey School of Art and Design spoke of regenerative practices for harakeke, the plant harvested for textiles in her own lands at Otaki, and also in the approach taken by her institution. We began and ended with different kinds of returns to the earth: Ranui Ryan spoke of "Pōuri Pai: good grief," offering alternative burial practices such as earth burials and shrouds woven of harakeke. The final session engaged with the grief experienced as we acknowledge extinctions and the difficulties of witnessing, documenting and making art about vanishing habitats.

The question of the value of art in this context is ongoing. Lesley Brook undertook an impact study that involved interviewing visitors to the exhibition. Her findings are currently in press, but in a recent presentation she quoted participants as acknowledging that the experience of the exhibition did contribute to a sense of connectedness. Some participants felt encouraged that there was such a large community of local artists addressing environmental issues, which they felt part of. The artworks succeeded in emotionally engaging participants and were able to represent the variety and complexity of people's thoughts and feelings about the Anthropocene.

Pam and I were joined by Marion Wassenaar for the final curation, which occurred through the opportunity to use a new building before it became classrooms. The exhibition opened just after a Covid-19 level change, but was designed to operate with social distancing.

Forty-nine artists exhibited across the Dunedin School of Art buildings. The breadth of their vision can be seen in the Instagram images and the catalogue documentation.<sup>8</sup> Works were grouped, not by similar subject matter, but rather by the connections that a viewer might make between them. Clearly it was necessary to signpost the relevance of each work for the main theme, and this was done in a catalogue essay that was deliberately made accessible, at the risk of over-simplifying more layered meanings.<sup>9</sup>

Audiences are mixed, and for many in this city art still means a painting, even though the city is home to a significant number of contemporary artists and a rich collection of conceptual art in its public gallery. If one wants art to fulfil its capacity to enable the negotiation of difficult questions, then the forms deployed can be those that most effectively reach their destination. Each artist had thought through the elements relevant to the exhibition in their own way and through their own practice. For some artists the issues were central to their practice, while for others they were the background to the new normal in which we all operate, but are also always discovering: an expression of grief, rage, comfort; or the entanglement of each. Artworks, commonly the index of culture's attempts to negotiate with the as yet undecided, are an ideal vehicle for the expression of, and research into, emergent understandings of the Anthropocene.

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- 1 Dunedin School of Art and Otago Polytechnic/Te Kura Matatini ki Otago, *Mapping the Anthropocene in Ōtepoti/Dunedin: Climate Change, Community and Research in the Creative Arts, Ōtepoti/Dunedin*, 26-27 September, 2020, <https://www.op.ac.nz/assets/Mapping-the-Anthropocene-2020-ABSTRACTS-FINAL-SEP-2020.pdf>. For the conference programme, see pp. [5]-[7].
- 2 Bridie Lonie "Closer Relations: Art, Climate Change, Interdisciplinarity and the Anthropocene" (PhD thesis, Department of History and Art History, University of Otago 2018).
- 3 Helen Meyer Harrison and Newton Harrison, *The Lagoon Cycle* (Ithaca, NY: Office of University Publications, Cornell University, 1985).
- 4 Lucy Lippard, "Weather Report: Expecting the Unexpected," in *Weather Report: Art and Climate Change*, ed. Marda Kim (Boulder, CO: Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art in collaboration with EcoArts, 2007), 4-11.
- 5 Michael Goldsmith and Alex Sims, *Coastal Hazards of the Dunedin City District. Review of Dunedin City District Plan – Natural Hazards* (Dunedin: Otago Regional Council, 2014), <https://www.orc.govt.nz/media/1664/dunedin-city-coastal-communities-hazard-summary.pdf>.
- 6 Donna Haraway, "Staying with the Trouble: Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Chthulucene," in *Anthropocene or Capitalocene? Nature, History, and the Crisis of Capitalism*, ed. Jason W Moore (Oakland, CA: PM Press 2016), 34-76.
- 7 Timothy Morton, *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World*, Posthumanities, Vol. 27, ed. Cary Wolf (Minneapolis, MN, and London, UK: University of Minnesota Press, 2013).
- 8 Dunedin School of Art, *The Complete Entanglement of Everything*, [https://issuu.com/dunedinschoolofart/docs/the\\_complete\\_entanglement\\_of\\_everything\\_exhibition](https://issuu.com/dunedinschoolofart/docs/the_complete_entanglement_of_everything_exhibition).
- 9 *Ibid.*, [2]-[6]. Bridie Lonie, catalogue essay.

## A SENSE OF ENTANGLEMENT: ARTWORKS CONTRIBUTING TO CONNECTEDNESS

Lesley Brook

### INTRODUCTION

In 2020, from 26 September to 2 October, the Dunedin School of Art was the venue for an exhibition called "The Complete Entanglement of Everything." Curators Bridie Lonie and Pam McKinlay selected artworks that addressed the causes, impacts and ways forward from the Anthropocene, an era in which the environment has been and is being changed by human behaviour.<sup>1</sup> What impact might such an exhibition have for its visitors?

Many social impacts are claimed for the arts and, increasingly, cultural organisations may be expected to demonstrate the value of what they do, in order to legitimise their existence and demonstrate accountability for their funding.<sup>2</sup> Vermeulen and Maas suggest a five-step process for cultural organisations looking to measure their social impact and their progress towards achieving their intended goal or organisational mission. I suggest that the same steps can usefully be applied to measure the social impact of one exhibition.

The first step in Vermeulen and Maas's process is to set up a clear mission and determine impact goals. As curator, Bridie Lonie's hope was that experiencing the artworks would engage exhibition visitors emotionally with environmental issues through the artists' different understandings of and responses to the changing environment. She also hoped that the exhibition would help people to process their feeling and thinking about the effects of human behaviours on the environment by providing "space and time to negotiate what we feel."<sup>3</sup> And, last but not least, it was her hope that the exhibition would build a sense of community for visitors, through finding a perspective they shared and through exposure to other equally valid perspectives on environmental issues in the artworks.<sup>4</sup>

The second step suggested for social impact measurement is development of a Theory of Change. I began working with Bridie in 2019, developing a draft logic model in July of that year. The first iteration was not limited to the exhibition; it included the symposium, which was held contemporaneously, and a proposed community event which did not eventuate due to COVID-19, and also considered the potential for impacts beyond exhibition visitors. In our experience, steps 1 and 2 of Vermeulen and Maas's process occurred in tandem. The Theory of Change was refined and simplified over subsequent months in discussions as we considered what impact it would be reasonable to expect (and hence measure) shortly after the exhibition.

Vermeulen and Maas's third step is to monitor direct results. The exhibition was held, a map and printed catalogue were available at the exhibition, and subsequently a fuller catalogue<sup>5</sup> and photographic record of the exhibition<sup>6</sup> have been published online with open access. It is estimated by the curator that at least 250 people visited the exhibition during the week it was open, as well as symposium attendees, staff and students, at the Dunedin School of Art.

The fourth step is development of a plan to measure mission-related effects and the implementation of that plan. For my Master of Professional Practice degree, I undertook to evaluate the emotional impact of the exhibition for visitors. This article considers in particular the impact of the exhibition on viewers' feelings of connectedness – between their thoughts and feelings, with the environment, and with other people. The fifth step in impact measurement, using the results, will be considered in my conclusion below.

## Theory of Change: *The Complete Entanglement of Everything*

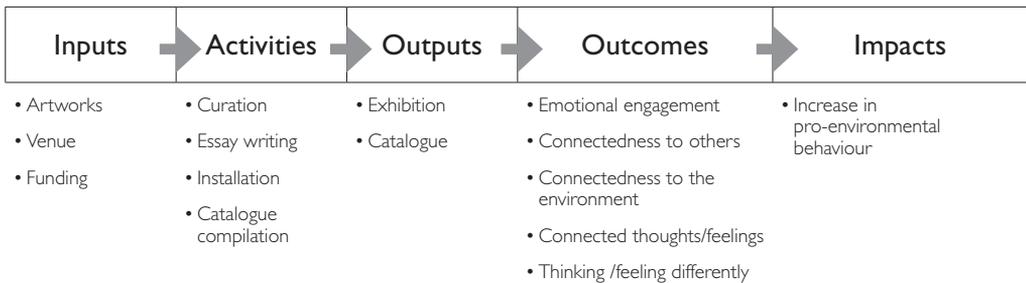


Figure 1. Theory of Change developed for impact assessment of “The Complete Entanglement of Everything” exhibition, Dunedin School of Art, 26 September–2 October 2020.

### ART AND CONNECTEDNESS

Emotional impact matters because emotion engages,<sup>7</sup> motivating viewers to resolve for themselves the meaning of the artwork.<sup>8</sup> As Minissale explains, generating that personalised interpretation of an artwork is itself a creative and emotionally rewarding experience.<sup>9</sup> This personal experience can help people feel more connected in some way to the issue addressed in the artwork.<sup>10</sup> Artworks therefore create opportunities for reflection and for disruption of previous patterns of thinking and feeling about an issue.<sup>11</sup>

How does this process occur? Cues in an artwork generate connections in a viewer between their current experience of the work and a range of past experiences – memories, feelings and what they know already,<sup>12</sup> for example about art, or about environmental issues. Minissale also acknowledges that context influences the interpretation of concepts contained in an artwork – so, for example, viewers who know that this is an exhibition of environmental art would factor that information into their consideration of the artworks. The arrangement of artworks by the curators in relation to each other and to the space they are shown in is also relevant.<sup>13</sup>

Minissale suggests that the experience of a contemporary artwork can be seen both as the viewer acting on the artwork, bringing the viewer's current and past experiences to bear upon it;<sup>14</sup> and as the artwork acting on the viewer; to bring about a change in the viewer's system of knowledge and resulting actions.<sup>15</sup> While it is not realistic to expect one exhibition alone to achieve a change in attitude, let alone lifestyle, the emotional and social experience of artworks can contribute to the cumulative effect on the viewer.<sup>16</sup> Artworks can help to address some of the barriers which prevent people engaging constructively with an environmental issue such as climate change.<sup>17</sup> These barriers include social norms, as well as the gap between knowing about climate change and feeling willing and able to do anything effective about it.<sup>18</sup> For example, art can create empathy towards the natural environment by connecting people to nature and increasing their appreciation of its intrinsic value.<sup>19</sup> Research by Merrick tells us that art can also acknowledge, and help people deal with, their emotions and feelings about the issues, and that by offering multiple perspectives art can help people to understand and appreciate others' points of view.<sup>20</sup>

## CASE STUDY – INTERVIEWS

Twenty-five exhibition viewers participated in this case study. Most were recruited at the exhibition. I saw two at the exhibition and approached them afterwards, and one approached me after seeing the exhibition and hearing of the study. I met with each participant individually within two weeks of the exhibition closing – that is, within three weeks of each person viewing the exhibition.

After giving informed consent to participate in the study, each interviewee was shown 54 photographs of the installed artworks which I had taken, as visual prompts. While participants were diverse in age and in their experience of contemporary art, 24 had strong negative feelings about the effects of human activity on the environment.

During semi-structured interviews, participants were asked three questions related to the curator's hopes for the exhibition: Did one or more of the artworks give you a sense of connectedness with other people? Did one or more of the artworks give you a sense of connectedness with the environment? Did one or more of the artworks help you to connect what you know or have heard with how you feel?

## CONNECTEDNESS WITH OTHERS

Twenty-three of the 25 participants identified at least one image that gave them a sense of connectedness with others. Together they selected 22 different artworks, giving seven different reasons for their selection/s.

Some participants also identified artworks which gave a sense of connectedness because the artist was personally known to them. That basis for connectedness is excluded from this analysis in order to focus on connectedness formed by the artwork, rather than for reasons attributable to a prior relationship.

### 1. Universal experience

Artworks which evoked a common or shared experience gave participants a sense of connectedness with others through feeling that "we are all in this together." This shared experience could be real – for example, using hand sanitiser or discussing an artwork with other viewers. The shared experience might also be imagined, such as the sense of being refugees from, or otherwise learning to live with, a damaged environment. "I felt like more than just me has experienced this."

### 2. Personal experience

Some artworks portrayed what was a highly relatable experience or perspective for participants, giving them a sense of connection either with those shown in the artwork or with the artist. These were real experiences by participants – picking up rubbish, knitting, hearing similar sounds and sharing the same way of seeing things as the artist. Prior personal experience of the artwork in either a public or social setting also gave a sense of connectedness with others.

### 3. Shared feelings

Some participants selected artworks because they felt connected with others through shared feelings. This could be either a sense that the participant's emotional state was shared by others, or gaining a sense of the pathos or dread that others feel. For other participants it was a feeling that we are not on our own, that we have a shared human condition, now and across time, that gives a sense of connectedness with others.

### 4. Collaboration

For some participants, collaboration gave a sense of connectedness with others. Some artworks which portrayed groups of people made participants think of people working together collaboratively and helping each other. Other artworks spoke to participants of collaboration in the making of the artwork – for example, the community associated with Māori carving.



Figure 2. Janet de Wagt, *The Plastic Gleaners – Macandrew Bay. After Millet* [“artwork 45”], acrylic on board, 59 × 53 cm. Photograph: Jodie Gibson.

5. Message

Another source of the sense of connectedness with others was the message. Some participants felt connected with others because artworks such as posters had a message for people. Others felt connected through identification with the artist’s message.

6. Human figure(s)

Seeing people or the human form portrayed in an artwork was enough in itself to give some participants a sense of connectedness with others.

7. Identification with artist

Some participants selected artworks because they felt connected with the artist in some way other than personally knowing them already. They identified with the artists through connection with and appreciation of their artwork. “I feel connected with the person who created the art, someone who thought to make these paintings that I feel connected with and so I feel connected with the person who created the art even though I don’t know them personally.”

## CONNECTEDNESS WITH THE ENVIRONMENT

Twenty-three of the 25 participants identified at least one artwork that gave them a sense of connectedness with the environment. Together they selected 34 different artworks, giving seven different reasons for their selection/s.

### 1. Local place

Some participants selected artworks that portrayed a place that was familiar to them. These artworks were effective at engaging viewers who recognised the place, because they drew on an existing connection between the viewer and the place, whether that was home for them and/or a place they had enjoyed spending time in. For two participants, an artwork that drew attention to what was local also contributed to a sense of connectedness with the environment.

### 2. Animals

Two participants chose artworks portraying animals, showing them at risk, because they placed a high value on animals.

### 3. Damage to the environment

For some participants, the sense of connectedness with the environment arose out of the damage being done to the environment by humankind – for example, digital waste and animal extinctions.

### 4. Materials

The materials used by the artists contributed to a sense of connectedness with the environment for some participants, especially natural materials, but they also appreciated a sense of materiality.

### 5. Immersion

Some artworks evoked a very positive experience for participants, such as being immersed in nature. Participants used words like “mesmerising,” “luscious,” “all-encompassing” and “sensual.” For another, “that sense of pausing and just really looking at nature was a good thing.”

### 6. Shared feelings

Some participants selected artworks that evoked a perspective on the environment which they shared. This could be positive if the participants identified with how the artist had shown the environment. Other participants felt connected with the environment through being reminded of negative feelings they had about what was happening to it.

### 7. Positive portrayal of the environment

Finally, the portrayal of the beauty of natural environments in the artworks also gave participants a sense of connectedness to the environment. Most of these artworks included landscapes or vegetation and gave pleasure and delight.



Figure 3. Janine Randerson, *Kāpia: Fossils and Remedies* [“artwork 9”], 2020, single-channel video on Hahnemule paper screen immersed in fallen kauri leaves and bark solution, thread, sound. Photograph: Jodie Gibson.

## CONNECTING THOUGHTS WITH FEELINGS

All but one of the 25 participants had strong negative feelings about the effects of human activity on the environment. In answer to my question about connecting thoughts with feelings, two participants said none of these artworks helped them connect what they knew with how they felt. Three others also said no, explaining that the artworks did not give them new knowledge and that they already had a good sense of their own emotions about what they knew.

There were 20 participants who identified one or more artworks which helped connect thoughts and feelings for them. Three of these did not add to their comments earlier in the interview about the same artworks. One felt able to connect information about underwater sounds with how an artwork made them feel. For another participant, how they felt about an artwork connected with their knowledge of New Zealand's history.

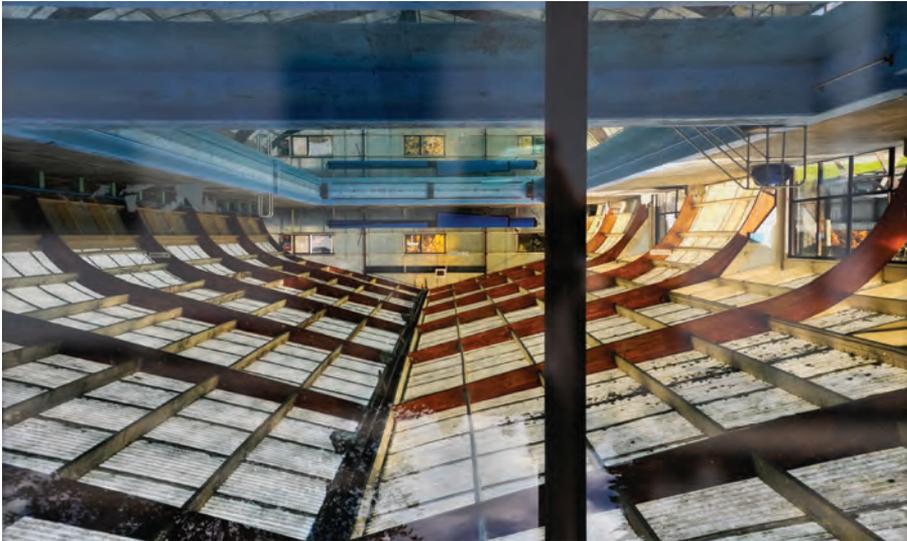


Figure 4. Mark Bolland, *Loop* ["artwork 40"], 2012, inkjet print on archival Epson matte paper; 75 x 50 cm. Photograph: Jodie Gibson.

Two participants each identified an artwork which helped connect the negative things they knew about what was happening to the environment with feelings that were positive:

*"For me it went from, like, 'I understand why she's looked at all of these plastics and how they're all connected, and the computers,' but then it was also, like, 'Oh, it's very overwhelming and also kind of, like, sublime,' because the colours are so saturated. So that was quite an interesting connection between the two."*

*"I don't know if it is an ark, but it certainly felt like an ark, like a religious hope, [a] hope boat-building thing and, and so ... it triggered this connection between we are at a time of floods, of biblical floods, and people are preparing even if I'm not. So that I guess what I know and what I feel – there was something in that boat shape that just said 'Oh look the floods are coming and there are people out there preparing.'"*

The remaining 13 participants identified artworks that they said connected what they knew about the damage to the environment with their negative feelings about that.

## CONNECTEDNESS WITH AND WITHIN ARTWORKS

In the earlier part of the interview, before they were asked the three explicit questions about connectedness, participants described their strongest positive and strongest negative emotional responses to the artworks. Eight participants mentioned connection in some way when talking about their emotions.

Connection between artwork and observer was one way of describing engagement. One participant said, "I would walk past things if I didn't, like, have an initial connection." Similarly, two other participants said of two different artworks, "it connected immediately" and, "I'm probably personally connected to it."

Connections within the artwork mattered. For one participant, the way that the materials and purpose of an artefact connected together evoked a positive emotional response for two different artworks. Conversely, three participants attributed their negative emotional responses in part to a lack of connection:

- between an artwork and its related text;
- between "the materials and the way it's presented"; and
- between an artwork and its genre.

Two participants anticipated the later question about connectedness with other people. One participant referred to "relatability to how [the artist] views landscape," and another said, "I just really related to that because ... it makes you feel not alone in your experience."

Connectedness with the environment was also anticipated in the earlier discussions about emotional responses. For example, one participant referred to nostalgia for "my relationship to land." One artwork connected a participant with "the impact that climate change has" on animals. The same participant felt that another artist used humour to make "connections with place." Another participant described their positive emotional response in these words: "a sense of connectedness, and just a little bit of nostalgia and possibly local pride and that sense of 'ah, I know this, I know this.'" Four participants described their familiarity with the places they could identify in four artworks – for three of them, that familiarity contributed to a positive emotional response, but for the fourth it was a negative influence because the two artworks showed negative things happening "right where I live."

While there were no explicit examples of people connecting thoughts with feelings in their explanations of their emotional responses, some participants did describe other kinds of connections that the artworks made for them and which contributed to positive emotional responses to artworks:

- "A lot of what I immediately connected to is marine and ocean tones, and it brought a lot of that connection up."
- "that made me feel connected ... from a perspective of ... the ancient through to now."
- "the idea of ... a connectedness with the past and the idea that we're all fossils."
- A connection between the negative effects of human activity on the environment and a positive response to that in the participant's own practice.

Participants spontaneously referred to connection or relatability in describing their emotional responses to the artworks. This revealed additional types of connections which artworks made for participants, as well as those explicitly explored in the questions asked later in the interviews.

## DISCUSSION

This qualitative study set out to evaluate the connections which the artworks in the exhibition “The Complete Entanglement of Everything” made for 25 viewers. By the time I asked study participants three explicit questions about connectedness, eight of them had already recognised some connections which artworks had made for them.

The first explicit question about connectedness explored connection with others. Six of the 22 artworks selected by participants in answer to this question portrayed one or more people, and one was in the form of a human figure. The remaining 15 artworks did not portray people. While the portrayal of people in artworks can contribute to emotional responses to art,<sup>21</sup> this study shows that portraying people or a human figure is not necessary for artworks to evoke feelings of connectedness with others. There are many other ways that art can connect a viewer with other people – such as shared feelings, shared personal or universal experiences, collaboration including participation in the making of the artwork, and identification with a message or with the artist.

The second question asked about connectedness with the environment. Artworks showing beauty, using natural materials, or evoking a positive immersive experience of nature gave participants a sense of connection with the environment. So did artworks that showed what people cared about, such as animals and waste; Minissale notes that empathy assists with the process of making sense of an artwork.<sup>22</sup> Artworks which depict a local environment are more meaningful to viewers, according to Merrick,<sup>23</sup> and that was borne out in this study, too.

Thirdly, I asked participants about whether any of the artworks helped them connect their thoughts and feelings. Eighty percent of participants were able to identify artworks which had this impact for them. Two participants in particular, who connected negative thoughts about the environment with positive feelings, illustrated Minissale’s assertion that in the process of viewing and making sense of what is viewed, viewers of artworks connect thoughts and feelings that are otherwise quite disparate.<sup>24</sup> For 13 other participants, connecting negative thoughts and feelings seemed to at least affirm their perspective, adding another layer to their accumulated experiences.

This study demonstrates that viewing artworks generates connections not only between viewers and the works, but also within the viewer; between the viewer and the artist or others, and between the viewer and the environment.

## CONCLUSION

The fifth and final step in Vermeulen and Maas’s process for measurement of social impact by cultural organisations is to expand the impact measurement and use the results for strategic purposes.<sup>25</sup> By asking 25 exhibition visitors about the emotional impact of the exhibition for them, this research explored what the exhibition achieved. The connections made by artworks in this exhibition for viewers participating in the study included increased connectedness between thoughts and feelings, with other people, and with the environment. Thus, the interviews with participants indicate that the exhibition fulfilled the curators’ vision and goals.

Measurement of social impact not only asks about what has been achieved for reporting purposes; it can also seek to improve understanding of “*what works* in order to contribute to social issues, *what is most effective* in solving these social issues, *how* these processes work” (emphasis in the original) and what can be learned.<sup>26</sup> It is hoped that these findings will be of interest to artists and curators by shedding more light on the various ways in which artworks make connections within and for viewers.

**Lesley Brook** (ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6678-5179>) is the research projects coordinator in the Research and Postgraduate Directorate at Otago Polytechnic. Her research interest is in ways of achieving and evidencing the impact of research, especially of art research.

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## A TALE OF TWO SENSORS: AIR QUALITY INDICATOR

Pam McKinlay with Henry Greenslade

### INTRODUCING THE RATIONALE AND IDEA TRANSLATION OF THE ICEBERG DEVICE

A small, innocuous object sits in the EPIC<sup>1</sup> office. It is about 5 cm tall, plugs into a computer and the numbers on the display quietly change. It is a carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) sensor made by Otago Polytechnic Energy Manager Neville Auton. It does its job in a quiet, utilitarian way and is quietly ignored by most, unless the number of people respiring near Neville's desk increases, causing the numbers to spike – at which point, we have our attention drawn to it.

The initial aim of the pilot sensor project was to produce a prototype CO<sub>2</sub> monitoring device by means of which room occupants could track CO<sub>2</sub> levels visually, based on a 'traffic lights' change-alert system. The visual indicator would allow room occupants to notice the status of their current air quality at a glance, and alert them to take responsibility for increasing ventilation and air movement if levels rose above acceptable levels. A separate prototype CO<sub>2</sub> display was built from scratch, designed as an LED panel and also linked to a sensor which displayed values in a readable form. This panel could be deployed inside or outside as part of a broader "New Zealand Environmental Indicator" (NZEI) pilot series, the CO<sub>2</sub> readout being the first off the line. The NZEI are envisaged as a realtime way of relating to RCPs<sup>2</sup> (Representative Concentration Pathways), scenarios which predict sea-level rise and climate-change tipping points.

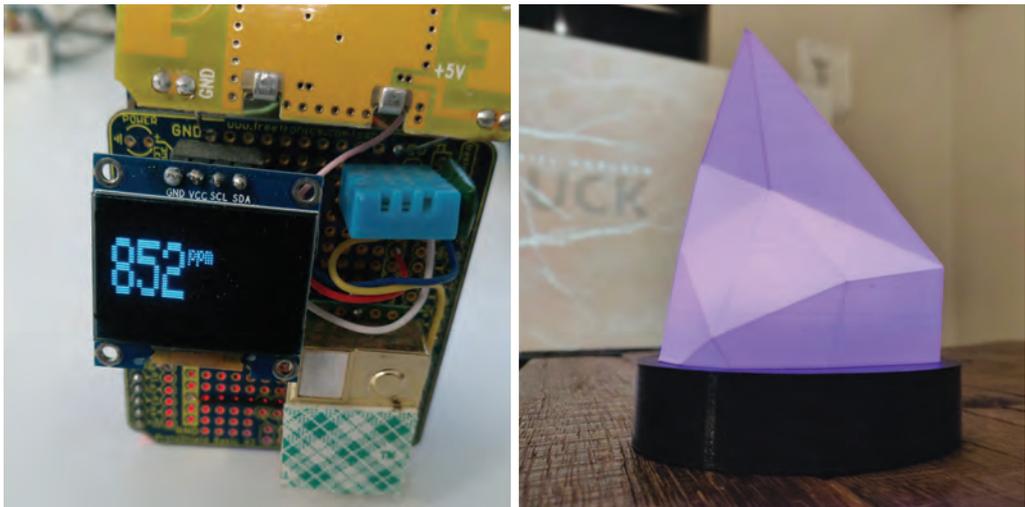


Figure 1. The two sensors. Left: CO<sub>2</sub> desktop sensor made by Neville Auton; right: CO<sub>2</sub> desktop sensor created by Henry Greenslade as a special topic project for Pam McKinlay, BIT, Otago Polytechnic.

## ICE IS COOL – CO<sub>2</sub> IS NOT COOL

What are RCPs? What do the numbers mean and how are they used to predict our future?

RCP (Representative Concentration Pathways) are models of greenhouse gas concentration used for climate modelling. Their primary purpose is to provide scenarios that will predict magnitudes of rising temperatures and sea-level rise.

For example, the lowest level or RCP2.6 scenario assumes that we can achieve net negative anthropogenic greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions after the year 2070 (meaning that we humans absorb more GHGs from the atmosphere than we release). At this lowest curve of the graph, RCP2.6 (green line) carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions must start declining by 2020 and go to zero by 2100.

At the highest curve, the RCP8.5 pathway (red line), CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations reach around 2000 ppm/v in 2250, with the corollary of **catastrophic** effects on food production and sea-level rise. This is the future of resource scarcity, mass migration, disease and severe weather events, many of which will be unsurvivable and well beyond technological salvation.

The RCPs are also used to predict global sea-level rise. The global mean surface air temperature is the basis of the projection of global mean sea level rise; this figure is projected to rise between 0.24 and 0.82 m by the late twenty-first century (resting sea level height).<sup>3</sup>

As early as 1873, John Tyndall identified carbon dioxide as having a greenhouse effect by trapping heat in the atmosphere – instead of reflecting it back to space – by closing a gap in the infrared spectrum and powerfully absorbing thermal radiation.<sup>4</sup> The heat trapped in the atmosphere transfers very easily and naturally to the oceans, assisted by water's unusually high capacity to hold and transport latent heat. The IPCC's monitoring of global sea-level rise also looks to paleo records of ice sheets to predict future "Meltwater Pulse" events. The IPCC reports: "Because climate variations during interglacial periods had different forcings from anthropogenic climate change ... we do not consider that they provide upper bounds for [sea-level rise] rise during the 21st century."<sup>5</sup> This salutary comment on past climate patterns informs their latest models based on RCP projections:

As discussed, ... there is medium confidence in the ability of coupled ice sheet–climate models to project sea level contributions from dynamic ice-sheet changes in Greenland and Antarctica for the 21st century. In Greenland, dynamic mass loss is limited by topographically defined outlets regions. ... By contrast, the bedrock topography of Antarctica is such that parts of the retreating ice sheet will remain in contact with the ocean. Due to topography that is sloping landward, especially in West Antarctica, enhanced rates of mass loss are expected as the ice retreats.<sup>6</sup>

Once the province of speculative fiction writers such as Kim Stanley Robinson, "Meltwater Pulses," as NASA and NOAA scientists agree, not only seem inevitable, but have already begun, and the retreating maxima of Antarctica's sea ice is a glaring warning of global warming and approaching disaster.<sup>7</sup>

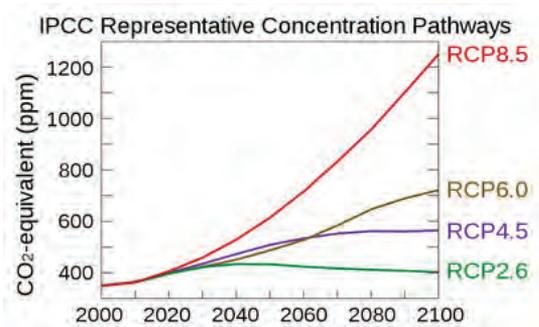


Figure 2. IPCC's AR5 Representative Concentration Pathways used for projecting climate change to 2100.

Source: Efbrazil, Wikicommons, CC-BY-SA.



In recent studies looking at integrated ice-sheet mass changes, glaciologist Ruth Mottram concludes that **every 1 kg of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions equates to 12 kg of glacial ice melt.**<sup>8</sup> It has been calculated that this is equivalent to a return trip from Mosgiel to Dunedin in a petrol-driven car.<sup>9</sup> All these graphs and numbers can be hard to take in. Rather than making it a scientific issue around carbon dioxide, we can get to the nub of the story by saying “ice is cool.” Conversely, we could say that CO<sub>2</sub> is not cool. When CO<sub>2</sub> emissions warm things up, ice is no longer a solid and becomes water. More water flowing into the oceans takes up more space and sea levels rise. For this reason, an iceberg shape was chosen as the 3D shape of our visual indicator – a constant reminder of what is at stake.<sup>10</sup>

We exhibited the electronic components of the CO<sub>2</sub> sensor as part of a Climate Change installation from the *Ice is Cool* series<sup>11</sup> in “The Complete Entanglement of Everything” exhibition in September 2020.<sup>12</sup>

“Transitional arts practice proposes how ‘macro’ challenges can be transformed creatively by a daily ‘micro’ personal practice.”<sup>13</sup> We hope that our learnings about awareness of our immediate environments will embed themselves in small, personal actions and translate to wider actions aimed at curbing human-induced CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations in the outer environment. We hope the the Iceberg sensor will encourage adaptive behaviour change in room occupants. When people take action to improve their immediate air quality, we hope to trigger thought and action about the broader implications of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions outside the room itself. While we can open windows and doors in a building to improve our immediate comfort levels, we all live in an open room when it comes to our planet. Carl Sagan is quoted as saying that “air does not carry a passport.”<sup>14</sup>

## DATA AND THE DEVICES

Both the LED and Iceberg sensor devices can be powered by regular phone chargers and have the capacity to log data when plugged into a computer. Early test data from both the Iceberg device and LED panel revealed that room levels of CO<sub>2</sub> were frequently above 2000 ppm (parts per million). Testing during the Covid-19 lockdown revealed that outside a bedroom window in Mornington, Dunedin, CO<sub>2</sub> levels were a resting 419 ppm. Keeping in mind that 350 ppm of carbon dioxide has been identified as the safe upper limit to avoid a climate tipping point, we found this result very revealing and rather disturbing. It brought the international readings right into our urban backyards. Global monitoring by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) at the Earth System Research Laboratories on Mauna Loa, Hawaii, confirm that international levels are frequently above 415 ppm.<sup>15</sup> These figures are published every week in the UK *Guardian's* weekly newsletter, “Green Light.”<sup>16</sup>

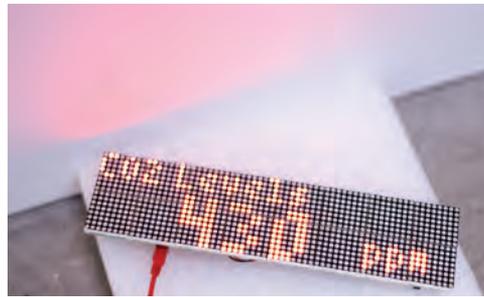


Figure 3 previous page. Pam McKinlay (weaving and photograph) and Henry Greenslade (electronics), Farewell – Tasman Glacier; 2019, hand-woven fine wool khata, electronics. From the *Ice is Cool* series.  
Figure 4. Detail electronics. Photographs: Pam McKinlay.

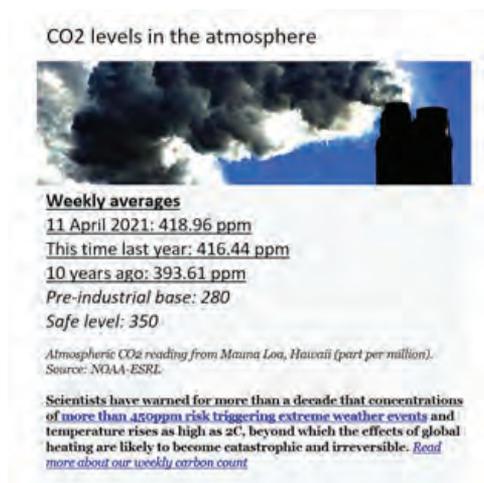


Figure 5 . Screenshot from the *Guardian's* newsletter “Green Light,” which is emailed free each week.

After lockdown and back in the classroom, we found that room-level peaks were also well above satisfactory, and the experiment which had started as an art project took on a new impetus as a student health and wellbeing project.

In rooms, CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations naturally fluctuate over the day depending on occupancy numbers, activities and time of year. In its *Designing Quality Learning Spaces Report*, the Ministry of Education outlines requirements for indoor air quality and thermal comfort:

Indoor air quality and thermal comfort have a direct impact on the usability of the space and on learning outcomes. ... Indoor air quality is dependent on the concentrations of CO<sub>2</sub> and other respiration derived pollutants, volatile organic compounds (VOC), particulate matter and other pollutants such as formaldehyde ... Occupied learning spaces are expected to have adequate ventilation and to provide a minimum indoor air quality range of 1000-1500 ppm CO<sub>2</sub> (or less) over the course of the school day [and] indoor air temperatures within occupied learning spaces are expected to be within a range of 18°C to 25°C for the majority of the year.<sup>17</sup>

CO<sub>2</sub> is recognised as a useful proxy for outdoor and indoor airborne pollutants. Indoors, it also serves as a proxy for airborne respiratory pathogens which would otherwise be invisible. This has become more topical in a Covid-19 world. Our aim to create a visual indicator that would alert room occupants to their internal air quality and encourage them to take responsibility for increasing ventilation and air movement, has been successful.

The Iceberg device debuted at the "Mapping the Anthropocene in Ōtepoti/Dunedin: Climate Change, Community and Research in the Creative Arts" symposium, sponsored by Otago Polytechnic.<sup>18</sup> As the image on the left in Figure 6 shows, by morning tea time of the first session, the iceberg was already glowing an angry red. Although for the remainder of the symposium readings fluctuated, our experimental cohort took responsibility for keeping the iceberg a cool green (see photo on the right from the closing of the symposium in Figure 6).



Figure 6. Speakers at the "Mapping the Anthropocene in Ōtepoti/Dunedin" symposium. Bridie Lonie (first day, 10 am); Ron Bull (second day, 3 pm).

## WHAT'S INSIDE THE BOX?

The technical components were created as a special student project by Henry Greenslade from the Information Technology Department, Otago Polytechnic. As part of his project, Henry documented the process with technical drawings, photographs, diagrams and README.md documents so that variations of the device could be made fairly easily in the future. Full technical information for this project, including README.md texts, are available at GitHub.<sup>19</sup>

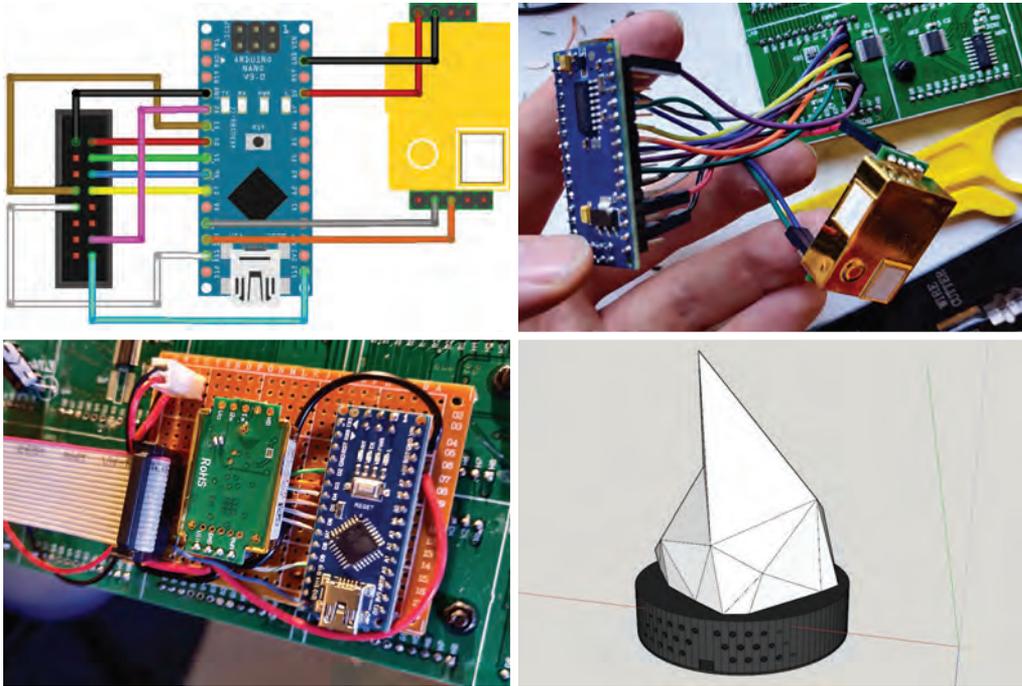


Figure 7: "Collection of device sketches, 3D models and other bits & bobs for special topic" – GreensladeNZ/specialproject at GitHub (<https://github.com/GreensladeNZ/specialproject>).

## RISING WATERS – EMERGENT SEAS

Rising waters are literally and metaphorically threatening our "islands of identity." Keeping with the sensors and monitoring work, and thinking about the effects of CO<sub>2</sub> on the cryosphere, we added a 'rising seas' scenario to the artworks displayed in the "Earth: Caught in Stone" Art+Science exhibition held in the Dunedin Community Gallery from 15-22 May 2021.<sup>20</sup>

As part of the Art+Earth (Art+Science) Project,<sup>21</sup> I worked with GNS Science cartographer Belinda Smith Lyttle. We considered what Antarctica might look like above RCP 2.6, minus part of its ice sheet, and the idea behind *Emergen(t) Seas* came about. This warranted a new LED panel, which went through various iterations of text and design changes, starting with:

EMERGENT  
SEA

EMERGE  
in sea

We finally settled on a play on words, with E / MER / GEN / SEA as in "emergency." At the exhibition, a gallery visitor also pointed out that "mer" also means "sea" in French.

This exhibit was completed as part of a light box triptych for the Art+Science Exhibition 2021. The centre-placed *Emergen(t) Seas* light box referred back to the traffic light system colourway of the original CO<sub>2</sub> sensor panel and iceberg device. The cover piece of the light box was a map of future Antarctica showing the continent with ice stripped back and revealing the bedrock of the Antarctic Plateau and submarine relief of the bathymetry of the Antarctic and adjoining continents Australia and Zealandia, all laser etched in "Ice Perspex."

With some of its ice covering stripped off, we could see how Antarctica might appear as a continent surrounded by a chain of outer islands. Beyond the outer Antarctic archipelago, we caught glimpses of the major rifts in the bathymetry of the sea floor and could track these towards the partly submerged continent of Zealandia and neighbouring Australia – all of which once made up the mighty continent of Gondwanaland. While the land mass of Antarctica was still largely recognisable, the disintegration of the shoreline of Aotearoa New Zealand was intended to give pause for thought about our future buoyancy as a country, with freshly melted waters from the southern sleeping giant lapping at our doorsteps.



Figure 8. Final LED arrangement for E / MER / GEN / SEA, part of the *Emergen(t) Seas* exhibit.

Adjoining the LED box were two underlit tapestries, which were woven responses to the landscapes around the Taylor Mountains inspired by photos from the GNS Antarctic Survey of Southern Victoria Land, Antarctica. As a tapestry weaver, this is how I draw (with thread). The white-on-white tapestry was an interpretation of the fields of snow and ice in the glacier sheets (up to 5 km thick) that flow and cascade around and over mountains from the Antarctic Plateau to the Southern Ocean. Each of the darker, backlit 'slubs' represents a buried mountain, sometimes a volcano and, closer to the ice-shelves, whole islands which have been completely captured in ice for millennia. The second, more figurative piece was an interpretation of Finger Mountain, an exposed escarpment of the Ferrar Dolerite and Beacon Supergroup in the Transantarctic Mountain range. It is a spectacularly dramatic feature in this part of the world, which I personally find awe-inspiring; its presence raises questions as to what it is and why it's there.

## ART AND SCIENCE – MAKING ART AS IF THE WORLD MATTERS

We are daily being asked to make changes to mitigate and adapt to a myriad of long-term changes from global warming that are starting to be visited upon us. According to Dan Miller of the clean-tech Roda Group, Berkeley, we need to more fully understand our approach to threat indicators and evolve a better response to the climate change crisis. As a species, we are programmed to react to visible (and audible) threats. If it's out of sight, it's out of mind and not perceived as an immediate personal threat. It's a kind of evolutionary mental blind spot or aporia ("not seeing"). There is, as Miller puts it, "no lion at the door." There is no single enemy – climate change is complex, it is unpredictable and non-linear and WE are all the cause or enemy. It is WE who constitute the threat and WE who need to act. In the pieces described above, we created works to stimulate thinking about acting locally, but thinking globally.

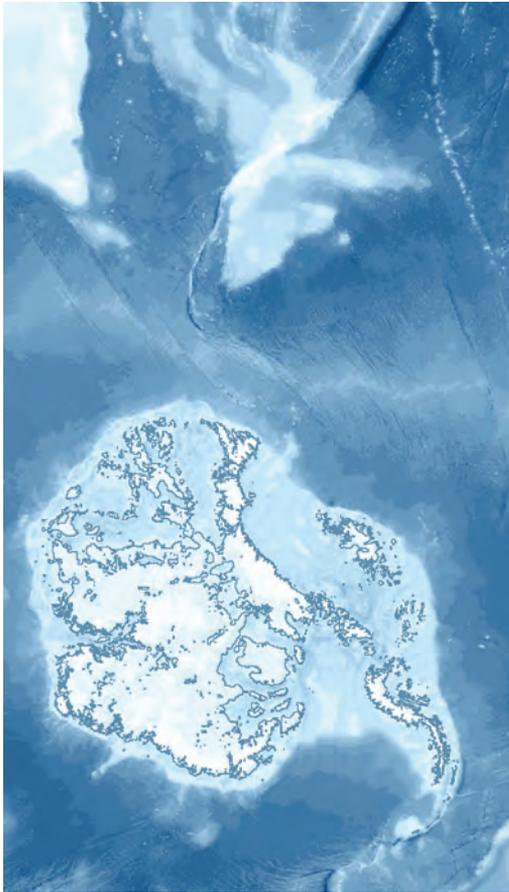


Figure 9. Map of the Southern Ocean. Compiled image, south of 60 degrees, showing Antarctic basement, proximity of Antarctica to NZ and Australia.

The image is stitched from data obtained from the British Oceanographic Data Centre and the GNS Antarctic Survey (Belinda Smith Lyttle).



Figure 10. Early-stage file for etching on perspex (Pam McKinlay).

In *Playing for Time: Making Art as if the World Mattered* (edited by Lucy Neal, 2015),<sup>22</sup> artists share their visions of how concepts of art and activism are merging around the climate crisis. We know what must be done and we find communities to share our practice, such as the Art+Science series. We take our thoughts and spirit forward in our works and connect to the public with our exhibitions and the participatory public programmes that run alongside our exhibitions. The artworks stimulate discussion and help visitors make a connection between the newly presented knowledge and actions they can take out of the gallery and into their lives.

The next nine years will constitute the crucial window of consciousness in deciding which RCP scenario pathway will be the most likely outcome. CO<sub>2</sub> does not have a voting agenda, nor does it have an agenda on a just transition. All of our futures depend on turning these carbon emission trajectories around. Amid all the sociopolitical side-show activity involved in decision-making, we cannot afford, in Kim Stanley Robinson's prescient phrase, to be *Homo sapiens oblivious*.<sup>23</sup>

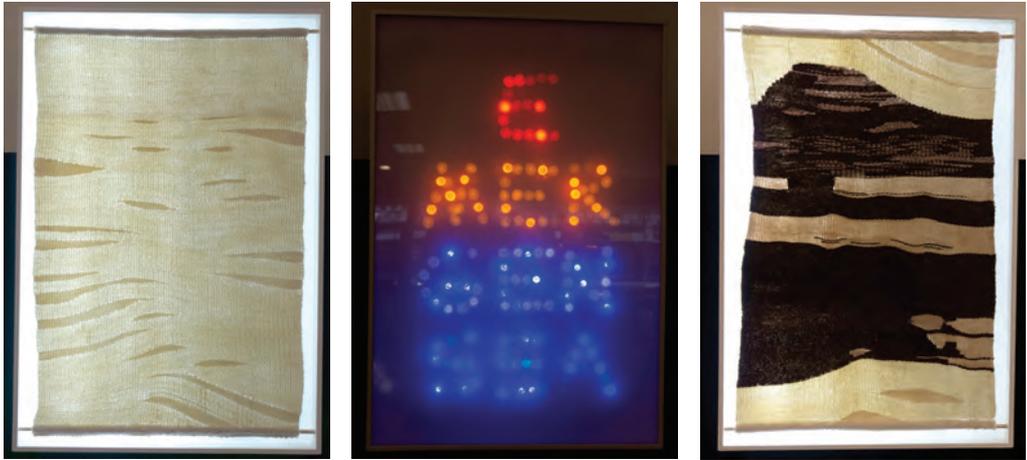


Figure 11. Down the Rabbit Hole Art Collective (Pam McKinlay, Henry Greenslade, Leonora DaVinci) with Belinda Smith-Lytle (scientist), *Emergen(t) Seas – The Bedrock of Antarctica*, 2021, triptych, light boxes, 680 x 1016 mm.

**Co-makers** in this work were: Pam McKinlay (weaving and laser etching) Henry Greenslade (electronics), Belinda Smith Lytle (cartography) and Leonora DaVinci (joinery).

**Acknowledgements** also go to Adon Mossal, Nevill Atuon, Ken Wyber, Keir Russell from Critter Design and Hannah Joynt.

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- 9 Environment and Energy Management Agency, *CO<sub>2</sub> Information for Transport Services: Application of Article L 1431-3 of the French Transport Code: Methodological Guide*, [https://thepep.unec.org/sites/default/files/2017-06/Info\\_CO2\\_Methodological\\_Guide.pdf](https://thepep.unec.org/sites/default/files/2017-06/Info_CO2_Methodological_Guide.pdf). Variable factors depend on type of vehicle, fuel type, load and topography.
- 10 Tyrdle, "Crystal Iceberg," 14 March 2017, <https://www.thingiverse.com/thing:2174030>. Crystal Iceberg by Tyrdle is licensed under the Creative Commons – Attribution – Non-Commercial license.
- 11 "The Complete Entanglement of Everything" exhibition, 28 September–2 October 2020, Dunedin School of Art, Dunedin, New Zealand. The exhibition was held in association with the symposium, "Mapping the Anthropocene in Ōtepoti/Dunedin: Climate Change, Community & Research in the Creative Arts," 26–27 September 2020. Photo documentation of the exhibition by Jodie Gibson. See [https://www.flickr.com/photos/dunedin\\_school\\_of\\_art/50515001912/in/album-72157716560772858/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/dunedin_school_of_art/50515001912/in/album-72157716560772858/).
- 12 For "The Complete Entanglement of Everything" exhibition catalogue, see [https://issuu.com/dunedinschoolofart/docs/the\\_complete\\_entanglement\\_of\\_everything\\_exhibition](https://issuu.com/dunedinschoolofart/docs/the_complete_entanglement_of_everything_exhibition).
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- 18 Otago Polytechnic, "Mapping the Anthropocene in Ōtepoti/Dunedin: Climate Change, Community and Research in the Creative Arts," <https://www.op.ac.nz/study/creative/art/research/symposia/tile?id=4412>.
- 19 GreensladeNZ, *Github*, <https://github.com/GreensladeNZ/specialproject>.
- 20 "Earth: Caught in Stone" exhibition, Dunedin Community Gallery, 15–22 May 2021. For the exhibition catalogue, see [https://issuu.com/dunedinschoolofart/docs/art\\_earth\\_catalogue\\_hq\\_complete](https://issuu.com/dunedinschoolofart/docs/art_earth_catalogue_hq_complete).
- 21 The Art+Science Project was initiated by Peter Stupples (Dunedin School of Art) and Ruth Napper (University of Otago) in 2013. Utilising an annual theme, artists and scientists from specific disciplines are brought together, encouraged to share their ideas and experience and produce an exhibition based on those collaborations. The artworks which result are inspired by their mutual interaction. Not all artists and scientists agree on where to draw the defining lines around collaboration, and no two partnerships are alike. They range from artists and scientists both working on the artwork, at one extreme, to the typical scenario of the artist finding inspiration in some aspect of the research. The last three Art+Science projects have been co-convened by Pam McKinlay.
- 22 Neal, *Playing For Time*.
- 23 Kim Stanley Robinson, *New York 2140* (New York: Orbit, 2017), 377.

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ART+SCIENCE  
EARTH: CAUGHT IN STONE

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14 Manu Berry, *Penguins Diving in Deep Time*.

## Art+Science Project Report: Part I

### OVERVIEW: “EARTH: CAUGHT IN STONE” ART+SCIENCE EXHIBITION, 15-22 MAY 2021, DUNEDIN COMMUNITY GALLERY

Curator: Pam McKinlay

This exhibition brought to a conclusion the eighth Art+Science project. After a false start (the exhibition was cancelled during the 2020 Covid-19 lockdown), the Art+Science team reconvened to bring the project to a successful conclusion in 2021. As in past years, artists joined with scientists, individually or in small groups, to develop artworks responding to the project theme, which in 2020 was “earth.” We were fortunate to work with some outstanding researchers from GNS Science, the University of Otago (from the Geology, Geography, Zoology and Marine Science departments) and the Otago Regional Council.

Earth sciences, as defined in *The Oxford Companion to the Earth*, encompass fields of enquiry ranging from “volcanoes to flood plains, diamonds to meteors, deserts to deep seas.”<sup>1</sup> The relevant disciplines include geology, climatology, mineralogy and oceanography, and extend from mapping the features of the third rock from the sun to journeys to the centre of the earth. Earth sciences explore the formation of rocks, as they are layered across geologic time, restless under pressures, ruptures and constant change. They engage with the macro and the micro, with chaos and order, and with the evolution of complex life forms to the extinction of species throughout deep time.

Then there is the situation of us humans and how our planet has made us. The interconnectedness of earth systems and our use of natural resources has changed the course of our histories and cultures. And what will earth horizons would look like from the next geological era, since people have become an earth-shaping force in the Anthropocene?<sup>2</sup>

The “Earth: Caught in Stone” exhibition was loosely curated into three groupings of work which explored ideas at the ‘macro’ and ‘micro’ scale and ‘evolution’ across time and place. Narrative themes explored in the ‘macro’ grouping included: Zealandia, the eighth continent of the world (GNS); geospatial data and bathymetry of Antarctica and Zealandia (GNS); coastal and river erosion (Geography); ecosystems soil bioengineering (Zoology and ecosystems consultants); iceberg debris in Antarctica (Geology); sedimentology and current ripples, modern and ancient (Geology); volcanology (Geology); “What lies beneath Dunedin?” – a shallow groundwater data-collection and core-sampling project (ORC); and geological mapping (GNS).

In the ‘micro’ grouping topics included: skeletal geochemistry and biomineralisation (Oceanography); diatom formations (Geology); rock fundamentals – zircons (GNS and Geology); and Earth’s ever-changing magnetic field (Otago Paleomagnetic Research Facility). The ‘evolution’ projects included Zealandia’s past biodiversity (paleobotany to paleoecology), and speciation and the phylogeny of Zealandia dolphins (palaeontology); petrified wood from Gondwana to Zealandia (Geology); and the non-linear evolution of *Kumimanu*, a genus of giant penguins (palaeontology).

“Earth: Caught in Stone” included a formal exhibition as well as a family-focussed public programme including “meet the scientist” talks, free art-making, games and other activities. The programme included “What’s that Rock?” with “Dr Rock”, who identified rocky treasures and found curiosities of a geological kind. A community artwork, facilitated by artist Debbie Fleming, was made from rocks decorated with words and pictures which were added to a 6-metre installation depicting a ‘river of thoughts’ running through the gallery. The Otago Rock and Mineral Club was on hand with a pop-up display of things to discover in your back yard or local swamps, including a table where children young and old could find a polished ‘pocket rock.’ Other activities included giant jigsaws (with guest artist Manu Berry) and tabletop games that could be played with pebbles – such as *mancala* (a table board made by Down the Rabbit Hole Art Collective).

Last but not least, the exhibition concluded with the “Great rock cake” bake-off. Taking the lead from the Geological Society of London’s Great Geobake-off Challenge,<sup>3</sup> categories included Sedimentary layer cakes, Unconformity and Subduction decorated cakes, Sinkhole or Geode cupcakes, Pancake Rock-cakes, Earth Globe Mantle cake, and favourite geological-era fossil cakes. Entries were judged by a panel of revered geology cake connoisseurs and “Dr Rock,” from a competition table and photographs of entries posted online. This last activity took our premise that art is an ideal way to communicate science in “digestible chunks” to a literal conclusion.

Artists and scientists alike use drawing and model-making as tools to understand how earth processes work. Discovery through observing and recording, in the lab or in the field, leads to visualisations of what goes on beneath our feet, above us and around us. In the eighth Art+Science project, “earth” was broadly interpreted as a project theme. The project was co-ordinated by the Art+Science Project 2020-2021 team led by Pam McKinlay from the Dunedin School of Art, Dr Bryce Peebles and Dr Jenny Rock. The exhibition was curated by Pam McKinlay.

The following pages capture conversations, research and encounters from several of the partnerships within the project.

With acknowledgements to Dr Jenny Rock and Dr Bryce Peebles, co-coordinators in 2019-2020.

**Pam McKinlay** (ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1731-6437>) is a writer and artist with a background in applied science and the history of art. She has been the convenor of the last three Art+Science project series at Dunedin School of Art. As an artist, she works in collaboration with other artists and scientists locally and nationally in community outreach and education projects on the themes of climate change, energy, the cryosphere and ocean acidification.

1 Paul L Hancock and Brian J Skinner, *The Oxford Companion to the Earth* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2000 and online 2003), <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780198540397.001.0001/acref-9780198540397> (accessed 25 April 2021).

2 J Zalasiewicz, C Waters and M Head, “Anthropocene: Its Stratigraphic Basis,” *Nature*, 541 (2017), 289, <https://doi.org/10.1038/541289b>. In this article, the proposition that the Anthropocene be considered a formal unit in the geological timescale is assessed with respect to the requirements of the International Commission on Stratigraphy (ICS).

3 Rose Want, “The Great Geobakeoff 2020 – The Results!,” *Geological Society of London blog*, blog post, 13 October 2020, <https://blog.geolsoc.org.uk/2020/10/13/the-great-geobakeoff-2020-the-results/> (accessed 22 March 2021).

## ARTISTS AND SCIENTISTS – EXHIBITION CAPTIONS

- 1 Belinda Smith Lyttle and Jenny Black (artists) with Nick Mortimer (scientist), *Te Riu-a-Māui / Zealandia*, triptych, printed fabric panels, 680 × 820 cm. Three panels showing different map depictions of the same area of the Te Riu-a-Māui / Zealandia continent. Left: land and ocean only; centre: seafloor plateaus, basins, ridges and trenches; right: detail of geology.
- 2 Down the Rabbit Hole Art Collective 2021 (Pam McKinlay, Henry Greenslade, Leonora DaVinci), with Belinda Smith-Lyttle (scientist), *Emergen(t) Seas – The Bedrock of Antarctica*, triptych, light boxes, 680 × 1016 mm. Two of the light boxes were woven interpretations of the Antarctic Plateau and an escarpment in the Transantarctic Mountains. The centre box contains an LED light-work with an overlay of a map of Antarctica, with sea-floor bathymetry showing the relationships of the three southern hemisphere continents.
- 3 Sarah Shackleton (artist) with Simon Cox (scientist), multi-media installation, *Tūrangawaewae* 118 × 168 cm, based on five large acrylic-on-canvas works (each 130 × 195 cm, currently on exhibition in Spain). An exploration of our connection to the land and empowerment by it, enhanced by an understanding of earth science. Five large paintings were created in response to a scientist's stream-of-consciousness and geological thoughts while 'reading' landscapes lying to the north, east, south and west of Warrington, Otago, during coastal walks. The dynamic process of painting, while online geology lectures were projected onto the canvas, was compiled into video recordings which were projected back onto the canvas.
- 4 Geoff Wyvill (artist) with Jasmine Mawson (scientist), *About Time*, wooden clockwork installation, 400 × 300 × 150 mm. Two images of a rock formation in its context now and 260 million years ago are engraved on opposite sides of a Jacob's Ladder. The images are displayed alternately, changing every five minutes or so.
- 5 (5A) Vivien Dwyer (artist) with Faye Nelson (scientist), *Seafloor Spread*, needlework tapestry, 830 × 590 mm. Stripes of normal polarity and reversed polarity alternate across the ocean bottom. These magnetic patterns in sea-floor spreading remain some of the strongest evidence for the theory of plate tectonics.  
(5B) Also: Faye Nelson (artist and scientist), *Paleomagnetist's Field Book*, machine stitching and appliqué on fabric; wool, cotton and acrylic paint, 240 × 190 mm (open). Portrays the nature and timing of Earth and ocean processes through magnetic minerals.
- 6 Jessica Ritchie and Craig Cook (artists) with Michael Palin (scientist), *Standing Still at Boatman's Harbour*, wall rubbing, cyanotype and painting on paper; 1520 × 1040 mm. Drawing and video created at Boatmans Harbour in Oamaru.
- 7 Christine Keller (artist) with Adam Martin (scientist), *Otago Schist*, two hand-dyed, hand-woven textile panels, 780 × 1950 mm and 740 × 2100 mm, using merino from Armidale in Central Otago and elsewhere, and linens and cottons as well as found yarns. The dyed warp is inspired by a microscope image of Otago schist rock from the Maniototo area under polarised light. The pink and purple stripes, which represent mica, are made from merino wool sourced from the Maniototo.



- 8 Katharine Allard (artist) with Sophie Briggs (scientist), *MacFarlane Ridge*, 2021, zircon ground with silverpoint drawing on paper and piqué, 420 x 594 mm (framed). Display of made and collected objects (rocks, paper, glass, clay), dimensions variable.

- 9 Vivien Dwyer (artist) with Daphne Lee (scientist), *Cosy Dell*, woven tapestry, embellished with small fossils from site dig, 600 x 970 mm. Cosy Dell Farm is situated at Waimumu in southern New Zealand. It was once a rocky shore ecosystem, but is now well inland. The excavation site is a rarely preserved fossil record of intertidal and shallow subtidal biota, which reveals the existence and extent of the maximum marine transgression during the Oligocene.

- 10 Katherine Steeds (artist) with Abby Smith (scientist), *Small Dreams of Grandeur*, slip-case book hand-made from cotton rag paper, accordion structure, printed then hand-worked using collage, watercolour, inks and graphite, 31 x 15 x 3 cm (closed in box), 31 cm x variable width (open). An exploration of bryozoan fossils.

- 11 Kate Elder (artist) with Bryce Peebles (scientist), *Biominaliser of the Year*, mixed media low relief sculpture, 800 x 300 x 70 mm. Giant cross-section of a shell, showing its make-up in many layers. The construction materials were taken from the artist's immediate environment, mimicking the way in which shells build themselves with minerals from the water around them.

- 12 Pam McKinlay (artist) with Mathew Vanner (scientist), *Petrified Sampler*, woven panel, single ply wool and rayon, silk, 500 x 2500 mm. Based on transparencies of microscope slides of fossil wood samples from the Araucariaceae, Casurinaceae and Myrtaceae families. The artist's woven and tapestry sampler panels were inspired by fine slivers of fossilised wood prepared for microscopic examination.

- 13 Stella Lange (designer) with Grace Duke (scientist), *Shadows Unfocussed*, design for a handknitted hat available free at Raverly.com. Finished hat on display, 290 cm diameter; posters of diatoms. Design based on the experience of viewing diatoms under magnification through a microscope.

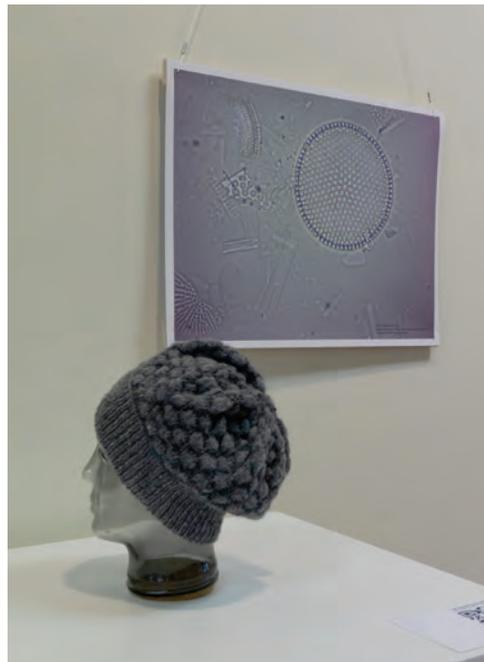
- 14 Manu Berry (artist) with Marcus Richards (scientist), *Penguins Diving in Deep Time*, three black-and-white woodcuts, 1010 x 1400 mm; three jigsaws, 1110 x 1500 mm. The woodcuts focus on the skeletal form of penguins from three different eras, with backgrounds consisting of other creatures from each era to suggest the link between evolution and environmental pressures. The blocks from these woodcuts have been cut into large jigsaw pieces to represent Marcus's process of reconstruction.



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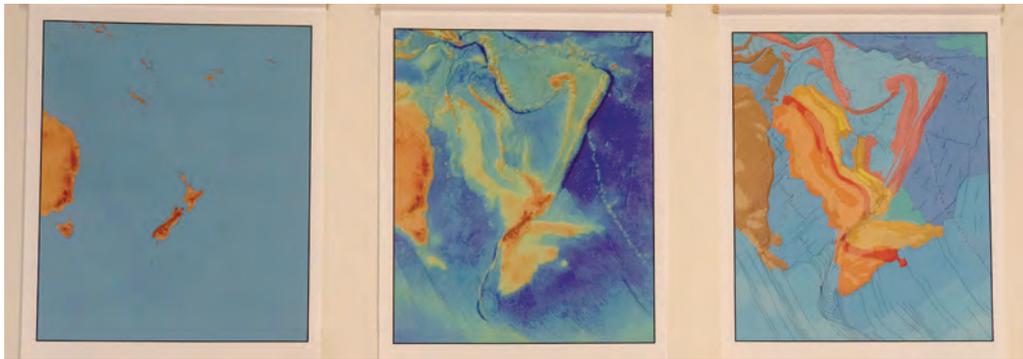


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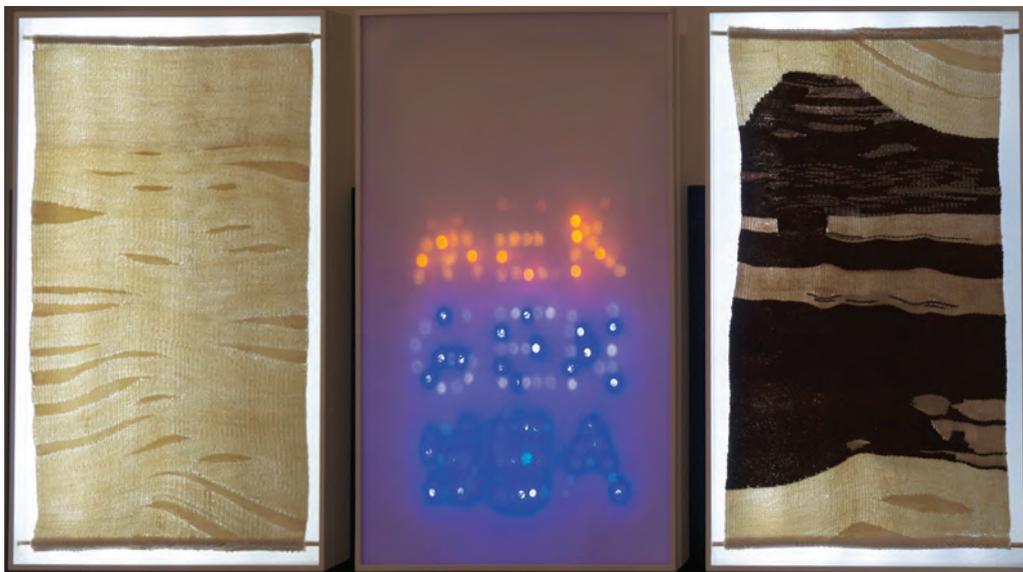
- 15 Desi Liversage (artist) with Katie Matts (scientist), *Unearthing*, embroidery, 800 x 500 mm. *Platydyptes* is an extinct genus of giant penguin, known chiefly from the Hakataramea Valley, North Otago.
- 16 Meg Brassel-Jones (artist) with Emma Curtin and Henrik Moller (scientists), *Connectivity/Reciprocity*, acrylic on ply, 700 x 700 mm. Dung beetles connect history, myth, science and economy. They symbolise regeneration and the restoration of life. They keep vital ecological cycles churning, build soil, disperse nutrients and play a role in protecting our streams. They improve soils to help feed people.
- 17 Heramaahina Eketone (artist) with Jon Linqvist (scientist), *Ripo effect*, ink on 300gsm paper and fired and glazed uku, A3 plus variable dimensions. Ancient ripples are a form of sedimentary structure in which gentle waves have left ripples across the sand and have later turned to rock, preserving the patterns of the gentle eddies made millennia ago.
- 18 Eden Smith (artist) with Sophie Horton (scientist), *Kaikoura Peninsula, sound work*. This piece is a response to charts showing the tidal cycles and wave intensity of an area in the Kaikoura Peninsula affected by the recent earthquakes.
- 19 Becky Cameron (artist) with Sharon Hornblow (scientist), *core values*, detail, monoprint and drawing on paper; 800 x 3000 mm.  
This work suggests that the future of South Dunedin lies in the intersection of its environmental and human histories. The column of prints echoes the core samples that Sharon Hornblow has been using to study the massive transitions between wooded river valleys, flax swamps and ocean that the area has undergone. This is overlapped by a representation of South Dunedin, with its history of community action and its vibrant and diverse communities – strengths that can be drawn on to move forward into a new relationship with the environment.
- 20 Fiona Clements | Senorita AweSUMO (artist) with Christian Ohneiser (scientist), *Antarctic Terror: A Screaming Symphony of Icebergs*, performance and installation, upcycled banner; thread, wheels, cover board, wood, human potential. Lower Octagon, Dunedin.  
An iceberg upcycled from local Dunedin waste materials forms the centrepiece of a chaotic performance, with audience participation. Performers and the public will come together to communicate their anxiety through vocalisation and movement, working together to acknowledge their fears and process the trauma of climate anxiety.
- 21 Debbie Fleming (artist) and Sophie Horton (scientist), *Travelling Stones Talk*, 'river' installation and interactive art piece, stones, paint, crayons, 1000 x 600 mm. Participants contribute to the artwork while building knowledge and ownership of their environment. Geomorphologist Sophie Horton and artist Debbie Fleming collaborate to provide a fun, interactive experience involving adults and children within a relaxed, creative learning environment.
- 22 Gallery activities.



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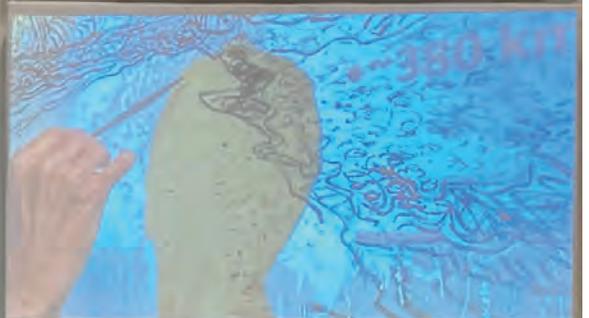
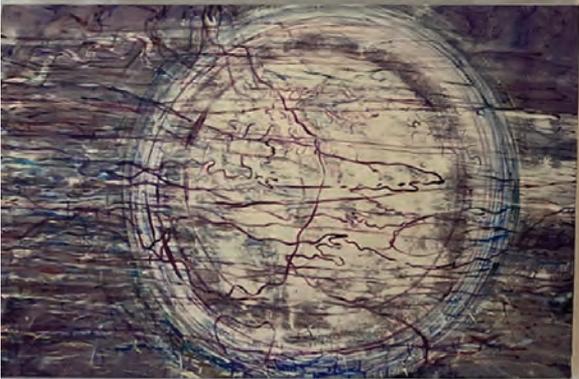


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Tūrangawaewae



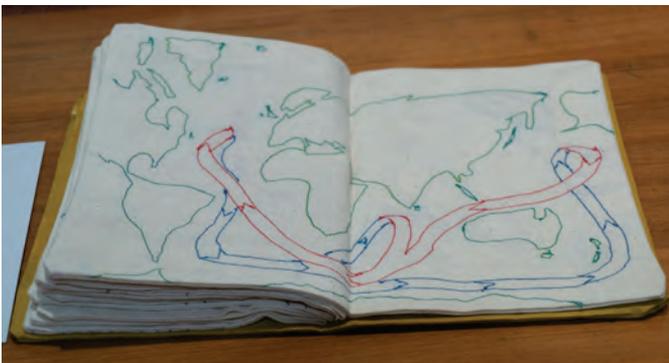
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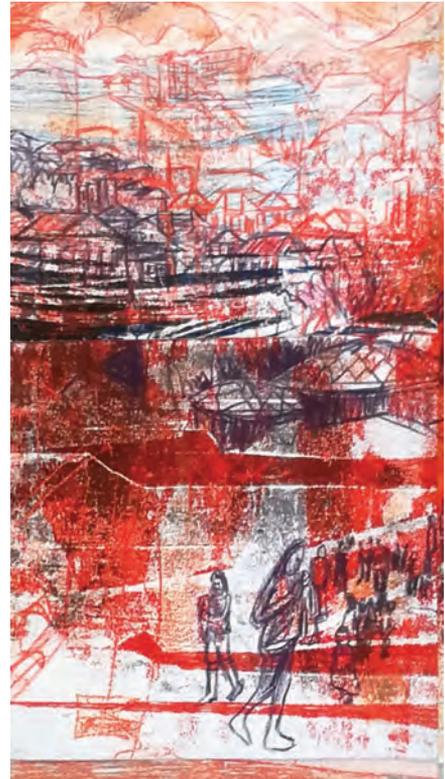
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## Art+Science Project Report: Part 2

# TŪRANGAWAEWAE: AN ART+SCIENCE PROJECT

**Scientist:** Simon Cox  
**Artist:** Sarah Shackleton

Tūrangawaewae is one of the most well-known and powerful Māori concepts.<sup>1</sup> As tūranga means “standing place,” and waewae “the feet,” it is most commonly translated as “a place to stand.”<sup>2</sup> But simple translation misses a deeper spiritual meaning. Tūrangawaewae are places where we feel connected and empowered.<sup>3</sup> They are our foundation, our place in the world, our home. Connection to place and the whenua (land) is fundamental to Māori identity, and not unfamiliar to Pākehā. It shapes our thinking, our way of being, our priorities and values.

Connection to the land is a familiar concept for earth scientists, as it forms a large part of their daily lives and is often a *raison d'être* for their work. After more than three decades mapping geology and observing landscapes, the way in which Simon Cox (Principal Scientist, GNS Science) understands and ‘reads’ the landscape has gradually evolved. While he was initially trained to see a static, old and ‘timeless land’ of hard rocks and deep geological time, New Zealand’s active tectonics and natural hazard events have shown Simon a more dynamic, lively and dramatic set of processes that continue to shape Papatūānuku (mother earth).

But how might the ‘spirituality’ of tūrangawaewae and this sense of connectedness be captured, quantified or represented? Is it possible that art can show some of the depth, complexity and layering of thought that enables scientists to feel empowered to provide recommendations and advice?

Over the past decade, science in New Zealand has also been changing and beginning to embrace a policy framework which seeks to unlock the innovation potential of Māori knowledge.<sup>4</sup> Vision Mātauranga,<sup>5</sup> a New Zealand government science policy initiative, seeks such opportunities by recognising and valuing cultural perspectives and expertise – for example, through the use of kawa (cultural practices) and tikanga (cultural principles) to examine, analyse and understand the world. Among the fundamental underlying principles of mātauranga Māori is the human element and the need to first understand the holistic interdependence between people and their environment (whanaungatanga),<sup>6</sup> in contrast to Western science, which typically begins the process of understanding through close observations of something, or someone, in isolation of wider systems. Among the places where whanaungatanga becomes most acutely important, deeply felt and easily explored are our tūrangawaewae.

Working at the interface of two world views should enable new ways of doing things, finding answers and problem solving.<sup>7</sup> The “Tūrangawaewae” exhibition explores a spiritual side of earth science and connectedness to the landscape, one that will not be found in technical scientific manuscripts and equations. As a collaboration between art and science, the concept behind it may have been complex, but its execution is relatively simple. Sarah Shackleton (visual artist) and Simon Cox (scientist) decided to use video as a way to create a combined artwork, which would tie together their shared Pākehā feeling for the land. While the world locked down and turned to online-only relationships during Covid, Simon recorded his immediate thoughts via a stream of consciousness as he looked at, and read, the landscape. Warrington Beach, where he lives near Dunedin city, provided the setting for physical walks and mental wanderings. A set of ‘online lectures’ were created from Simon’s views to the east, south, west and north of Warrington, exploring some of the science behind tectonics, earthquakes, sea-level rise and climate change across Te Waipounamu – the South Island of New Zealand. Using these recordings, Sarah tapped into her memories of Te Waipounamu, generating the series of artworks she called “Tūrangawaewae.”



Figure 1. Warrington Beach, where a number of 'stream of consciousness' lectures about the way an earth scientist views, reads and thinks about the landscape were recorded by Simon Cox. Photograph: Simon Cox, 2020.

"As a scientist, it's my job to try and observe things differently," says Simon in the introductory lecture. "I draw on the depth of time that I have learnt through geology, think about processes and rates of occurrence, and consider how these generate hazards and impact our lives." A sunrise (Figure 1) is a beautiful, simple example of this. People tend to look at the picture and immediately say, "Oh wow, that's a cool sunrise." But actually, it's not a sunrise at all – at least no more than the earth is flat. When beautiful things like a sunrise, or landscapes, dominate our view, it's very easy to forget that we're on a huge round planet orbiting the sun and simply slowly rotating into the path of the sun's rays.

In order to (re)discover that the earth is not flat, scientists must rethink and continually test how we think about our world. That is why there is such value in the juxtaposition of different world views through Vision Mātauranga. Since earth scientists are looking at earth processes over extreme depths of time, they also develop a unique perspective on our landscape and its changes, a process which creates a very strong sense of tūrangawaewae.

Although living in Spain, on the other side of the planet, Te Waipounamu is the birthplace of visual artist Sarah Shackleton. It is a place where she has stood, where she has family and is still very connected to. The land, the mountains and the power of Te Waipounamu are central to the development of Sarah's artwork.<sup>8</sup> Projecting Simon's videos onto canvas, Sarah dissected his lectures into a series of complex lines, shapes, colours and textures, reconstructing the science as a chaos of layers on the surface of each painting. In the manner of a scientific experiment, Simon teased Sarah with images and views with potential to evoke an old sense of belonging. As she painted the land of her birth and layers upon layers of the science behind it, Sarah's connectedness did indeed evolve. And all the while, the artistic side of the project was both projected and mirrored in video.



Figure 2. Sarah Shackleton, *Introduction*, 2020, acrylic on canvas, 130 x 195 cm.

Simon's video lectures were projected onto a wall and painted into five canvasses, with the evolution of each painting filmed as it was created. This work explores concepts of *tūrangawaewae* and connectedness with the land, our 'blue marble' and earth systems driven by the dissipation of energy.

The work *Introduction* (Figure 2) captures how many planetary-scale processes are driven by the dissipation of energy. With its incredibly thin atmospheric layer, our blue planet is delicate and vulnerable to even the slightest change. Stream-of-consciousness thought patterns follow along the lines of energy. The sun shines on the atmosphere, the atmosphere warms up, the air tries to move and takes water with it. The sea warms up, water expands, local sea levels rise, and ocean currents develop. The kinetic energy of waves and wind hit the coast and are absorbed by the land as it erodes. Earth's tectonic plates shift in response to dissipation of thermonuclear energy within the planet, causing landmasses to be uplifted, disturbing the ocean currents and atmosphere, which in turn causes rain, landslides and erosion. Aotearoa New Zealand is just a 'tiny rock' that pokes up out of the Southern Ocean into the full force of a westerly atmospheric circulation – which in turn shapes the way Te Waipounamu is eroded, deformed and uplifted, and controls our climate, the availability of fresh water, natural hazards and our ability to inhabit the land.

The works *East*, *South*, *North* and *West* (Figures 3-6) also reflect layers of geological processes and thoughts generated by the landscape and processes shaping Te Waipounamu. Keywords: blue planet, vulnerability, climate change, ice sheets, sea-level rise, groundwater; plate tectonics, volcanoes, earthquakes, rainfall, mountains, landslides, glaciers, erosion, landscape change, hazard, risk, society.

Represented by five large canvasses and digital recordings, "*Tūrangawaewae*" was an art and science collaboration that evolved through the heterogeneous stratification of geological processes, landscape evolution, scientific musings, online lectures, painting and drawing, digital editing and artistic expression. Transcripts of these earth science ponderings, online lectures, a compilation of the film projected in the Dunedin Art and Earth Science exhibition (17-22 May 2021) and reproductions of canvasses can all be viewed online.<sup>9</sup>

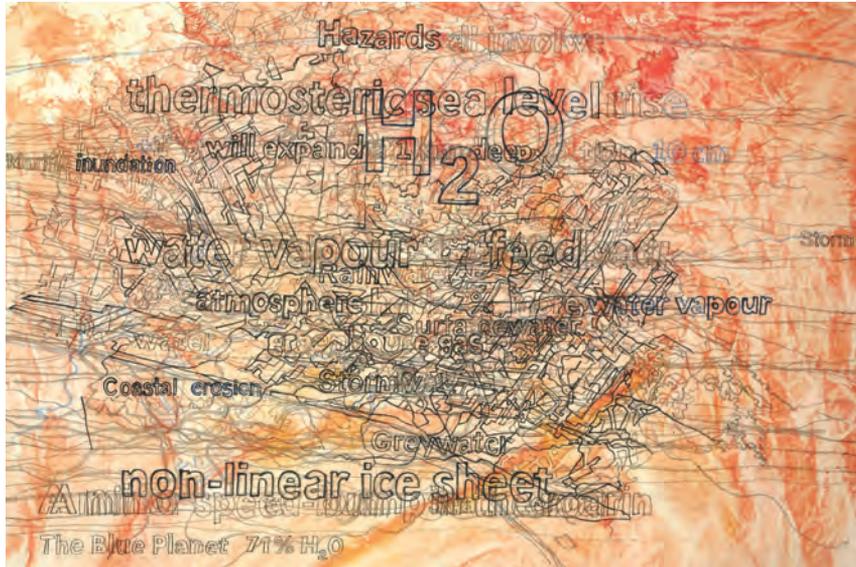


Figure 3.  
Sarah Shackleton,  
*East*, 2020,  
acrylic on canvas,  
130 x 195 cm.

*East* encompasses a view out across the vast, yet relatively unknown, Pacific Ocean at sunrise. The painting captures thoughts about earth's rotation, our delicate atmosphere, climate change, sea-level rise and the dissipation of wave energy by New Zealand's coastline. Looking out across the horizon generates a realisation of the incredible volume of seawater that is marching slowly towards us. There has been a massive change to the planet and we're now committed to putting up with it. You can't just run away!



Figure 4.  
Sarah Shackleton,  
*South*, 2020,  
acrylic on canvas,  
130 x 195 cm.

*South* is generated from a view of the hills of Dunedin and the neighbouring Miocene volcano, once the site of a violent eruption dissipating energy from earth's mantle. But do the volcanic rocks and Papatūānuku hide other secrets? Geologists have tended to think of the volcano as the main local land-forming event, but the rocks are disrupted by fault lines and there is very real potential for earthquakes beneath the city of Dunedin. Looking at the landscape, one should be concerned if the 'absence of evidence' is really 'evidence of absence'!



Figure 5.  
Sarah Shackleton,  
*West*, 2020,  
acrylic on canvas,  
130 x 195 cm.

*West* embraces a view of sunsets and the Southern Alps, where the geology of Te Waipounamu is shaped by the interaction between tectonic motion and atmospheric circulation. Uplift on the Alpine Fault creates our weather patterns, our clouds and rain and fundamental aspects of our climate and hydrological cycle. It has exposed schist bedrock, carries the pounamu and gold on which our country was built, and will be important for the future supply of water.



Figure 6.  
Sarah Shackleton,  
*North*, 2020,  
acrylic on canvas,  
130 x 195 cm.

*North* takes in a view of a rapidly shifting sand-spit, old marine terraces and landslides on which Otago coastal communities have been developed. The painting contains imagery of the former Seacliff Hospital, the Dunedin suburb of Abbotsford, a Warrington Beach house and a driftwood carving on the beach that is periodically exhumed by wind and shifted by waves and tide. The local sedimentary rocks are weak and slippery, causing mobility and interactions between the land and the sea.

**Sarah Shackleton** ([www.sarahshackleton.com](http://www.sarahshackleton.com)) is a visual artist who was born in Dunedin, but has been living and working in Zaragoza, Spain, since 1991. From early on, since the 1980s, Sarah has looked to the land and mountains for inspiration in her artwork. Already then, Sarah sought to uncover some of the energy lying under the surface of the land and capture the forces leading to the formation of the mountains in the Southern Alps of New Zealand in her series of large gestural landscapes, *Core of the Land*. Sarah's work, which explores the interaction of nature and culture, has been regularly exhibited in Spain. She completed an individual show, "Blue: The Way it Was," in Zaragoza on 15 May 2021. The "Tūrangawaewae" series of canvases and video formed part of the group show "¿S.A. de prójimos?" in Zaragoza in April 2021, an exhibition that brought together art and science. Sarah is an integral part of the local art community in Zaragoza, but still looks for connections to her homeland.

**Simon Cox** (ORCID ID 0000-0001-5899-8035) is a Principal Scientist at GNS Science in Dunedin. He has a deep interest in the outdoors, where his passions for climbing, skiing, surfing and exploration are regularly fulfilled. His geological career was initially dominated by interests in tectonics, the Southern Alps, Antarctica and mineral exploration. During the past decade he has been more focussed on geological hazards – landslides, the Alpine Fault, earthquake hydrology and shallow groundwater. A recipient of multiple national geoscience awards, Simon maintains close ties with local iwi/Māori, supervises research students, collaborates internationally and is cited globally. He is widely recognised as a public speaker and communicator of science, with a wide network of science end-users.

- 1 "Tūrangawaewae – A Place to Stand," *Te Ara: The Encyclopaedia of New Zealand*, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/papatuanuku-the-land/page-5> (accessed 21 June 2021).
- 2 *The Māori Dictionary*, s.v. tūrangawaewae, <https://maoridictionary.co.nz/> (accessed 21 June 2021).
- 3 *Te Ara*, "Tūrangawaewae."
- 4 Ministry of Research, Science and Technology, *Vision Mātauranga: Unlocking the Innovation Potential of Māori Knowledge, Resources and People*, 2007, <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/assets/9916d28d7b/vision-matauranga-booklet.pdf> (accessed 21 June 2021).
- 5 Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, "Vision Mātauranga," 2018, <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/science-and-technology/science-and-innovation/agencies-policies-and-budget-initiatives/vision-matauranga-policy/> (accessed 21 June 2021).
- 6 Rauika Māngai, *A Guide to Vision Mātauranga: Lessons from Māori Voices in the New Zealand Science Sector*, 2020, [http://www.maramatanga.co.nz/sites/default/files/Rauika%20Ma%CC%84ngai\\_A%20Guide%20to%20Vision%20Ma%CC%84tauranga\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.maramatanga.co.nz/sites/default/files/Rauika%20Ma%CC%84ngai_A%20Guide%20to%20Vision%20Ma%CC%84tauranga_FINAL.pdf) (accessed 21 June 2021). See the comments by Sir Mason Durie, p. 25.
- 7 Ministry of Research, Science and Technology, *Vision Mātauranga: Rauika Māngai, A Guide*.
- 8 <https://www.sarahshackleton.com>
- 9 <https://www.sarahshackleton.com/index.php/project/turangawaewae/>

## Art+Science Project Report: Part 3

### SMALL DREAMS OF GRANDEUR

**Scientist:** Abigail Smith  
**Artist:** Katherine Steeds

#### STONE, SEAWATER, SHELLS, STONE:

##### Abigail Smith

People ask, "and what do you do?" I could say I'm a carbonate geobiochemist, but that doesn't explain much. Often I just say "I study shells." But really, I study the journey from stone to seawater through shell back to stone. It takes some geology, a bit of chemistry and a fair understanding of marine biology to get at the guts of this process. I'm a jack-of-all-trades, as long as it involves calcium carbonate.

##### From Stones to Seawater

Chemicals get into the sea mostly from weathering – rocks wear down and dissolve; and elements like calcium find their way into waterways, and eventually the sea. After sodium and chloride (salt), calcium is one of the most common elements dissolved in seawater; usually hovering about 0.04 percent.<sup>1</sup> That doesn't seem like much, but there's a lot of seawater, so there's a lot of calcium. All living things need and use calcium. In fact, it's the most common mineral in people, in bones and teeth.<sup>2</sup>

##### From Seawater to Shells

If you combine calcium with a carbon and three oxygens, you get calcium carbonate ( $\text{CaCO}_3$ ). This common mineral is known by lots of names: lime, chalk, shell, limestone, calcite, onyx, marble. There's plenty of carbon and oxygen in the sea, so making calcium carbonate from seawater is something many creatures do. They make shells, skeletons, eggshells: in myriad forms, all complexly engineered, all beautiful.

Think about a delicately-pigmented snail shell, produced by a squishy mollusc for protection. Consider the thick ropy white castle of the barnacle, complete with doors that open and close. Imagine the iridescent glory of the inside of a pāua shell, or the elegant spines of an urchin. All calcium carbonate, all harvested from seawater and pressed into service (Figure 1).

##### Special Shells

It was during my PhD study in the early 1990s when I first encountered a very poorly known, but simply lovely group of critters – their delicate skeletons captured me with their versatility, their regularity and their beauty. Let me tell you about bryozoans.



Figure 1. Many amazing ways animals can make seawater into shells.

The name bryozoans means “moss animals,” because they are tiny animals who group together to make colonies that are vaguely plant-like. Another name for them is “lace corals,” because of their net-like forms and their colonial lifestyle – they are not really related to corals. They aren’t edible, they are very small and they often live in deep water or under rocks – so they aren’t known to every beachcomber.<sup>3</sup>

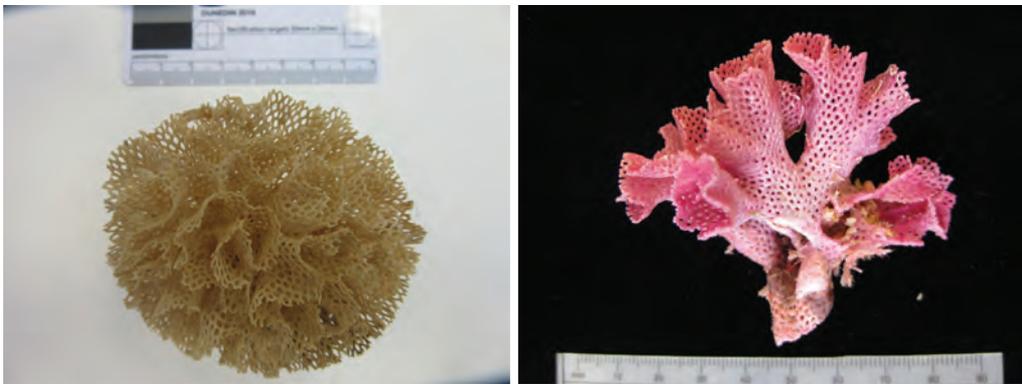


Figure 2. Examples of “lace coral” or a bryozoan colony – about 12cm across. Made of millions of tiny identical boxes, each with a single individual animal living inside.

Each tiny individual bryozoan is less than 1mm across, and each of them makes a little box of calcium carbonate, connected via tubes and pipes to their neighbours. They form a colony, like a tiny apartment building – or maybe more like a mitten, where each knitted stitch has its place and role to play (Figure 3). Inside each box is a tiny critter (a polypide), which emerges with tentacles waving to catch minute food particles. Some of them don't eat – they defend the colony, or they reproduce – and are supported by their neighbours.

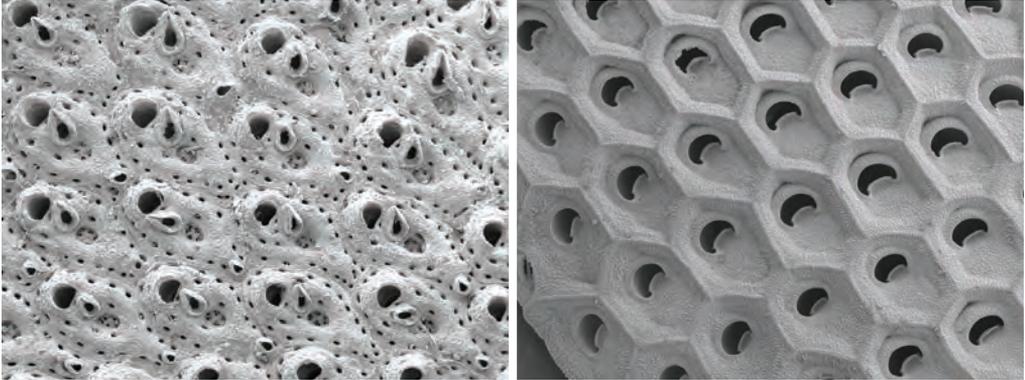


Figure 3. Close-ups of bryozoan skeletons. Each little oval box is about 0.5mm long, and each hole is the door for a tiny polypide to come out.

Bryozoans are not very large or abundant in the northern hemisphere where most textbooks are written, so they are classed as a “minor” group. But in Zealandia and Australasia they are abundant, large and diverse. Zealandia alone might have a thousand species of living bryozoans, making them the fifth-most diverse group in our seas.<sup>4</sup> And yet most people have never heard of them. You might call them marine biology's best-kept secret!



Figure 4. Left: Specimens of Oamaru stone in a museum collection. Right: St Luke's Church in Oamaru, made entirely of Oamaru stone, full of bryozoans.

## From Shells to Sand to Stone Again

When bryozoans die, the shell remains become sand. South and east of the South Island, in water about 60-100 metres deep, lie thick deposits of bryozoan-dominated sediments. They are loose at the top, but near the bottom they are compressed and cemented, becoming limestone.

Bryozoans have been producing shells from seawater for millions of years. They are common and abundant fossils around the world. We know them here as the major component of Oamaru stone, the white limestone used in Oamaru's historic buildings, the Dunedin railway station, Knox Church and the Otago University clocktower building.<sup>5</sup> If you look closely at this kind of stone, you will see the tiny tubes or branches of ancient bryozoans.

It's hard to imagine the amount of time it takes for animals smaller than 1 mm to make enough limestone for a whole city. About 35 million years ago, many kinds of bryozoans were thriving near a warm volcano – Oamaru stone is their legacy.

## Enthusiasm Inspires Art

As part of the Art + Earth project, I connected with artist Kate Steeds and we talked about bryozoans. I showed her photo after photo, enthused about various publications, called her up to mention some other wonderful thing about my favourite bugs. And she responded! Her interest in natural history informed her art, and the art reflects the inspiration of the science.

The folding book she has made illustrates what makes bryozoans fascinating – and allows the reader to find it for herself. The joy of discovery and enthusiasm I get from science comes through in the experience of exploring the panels and folds of the book.



Figure 5. Scientific discovery in action. Left: Abby Smith examining limestone at a beach. Right: Students examining the bryozoan book at the exhibition.

## SMALL DREAMS OF GRANDEUR

Katherine Steeds



Figure 6. Katherine Steeds, *Small Dreams of Grandeur*, 2020, accordion-structure book, cotton paper, collage, mixed media.

### The Small World

My usual focus is on the micro view and the details of the natural world. I am fascinated by fungi and lichen, flower and leaf. I have spent thousands of hours observing and photographing insects and other invertebrates all over the world. I am equally interested in their categorisation into species as I am in their forms, functions and behaviour. At times it has almost become an obsession. Recently, my imagination has been sparked by the knowledge I have gained in my partnership with Abby.

Learning a little about bryozoans has reminded me that the extraordinary complexity of a natural environment under the sea can exceed that of an ecologically rich land environment.

My resources include science graphics like graphs and maps, equipment catalogue illustrations, instruction manuals, diagrams, electron micrographs and photographs drawn from many diverse sources. In my work, I frequently like to use these kinds of image fragments as a code for my straddle stance between science and art. I am caught between my love for rational academic research of tiny elements of the natural world, on the one hand, and my drive to intuitively express the joy of my findings visually, on the other.

In this way, through a collation of drawings I have explored some of the richness of bryozoa species and their visual complexity.

However, the book I have created also explores the role of humans, their exploration and study of bryozoa, and their utilisation of their fossilised remains. The profusion and overlapping of imagery in the book points to the fascination and complexity of such an interaction. I have included references to discovery, magnification processes, identification, mapping, building, stone carving and stonemasonry.



**Professor Abby Smith**, (ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/000-0001-6468-9124>) Department of Marine Science, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand. Abby Smith comes from New England, where early experiences wading and poking around in tidepools sent her down a marine track right from the beginning. She double-majored in Biology and Geology at Colby College, Waterville, Maine, spending a semester at the Bermuda Biological Station, where she developed a fondness for marine carbonates. She studied for a Master's degree in the joint programme at Woods Hole and MIT. While she was there she made friends with some kiwis, one of whom she married. Later, they moved to Hamilton New Zealand, where Abby completed her DPhil at Waikato in 1991, just in time to shift to Dunedin (in southern NZ) so her husband could take up a lectureship in Zoology at the University of Otago. She has lectured and researched in the Department of Marine Science at the University of Otago since it was a Department (in 1992), serving a 4-year stint as Head of Department 2013-2017. Alongside her work at the University, she was appointed to a ministerial advisory committee on Oceans Policy and chaired the Otago Conservation Board for several years, as well as having served as the Treasurer of the International Bryozoology Association for more than two decades. She was the inaugural council chair of the New Zealand Ocean Acidification Community, and has been awarded the Miriam Dell award by the NZ Association of Women in Science. She likes to stay busy, and never lets her scientific career get in the way of her other hobbies: hanging out with her two sons, knitting, making jam, and enjoying cricket.

Tauranga-based artist **Katherine Steeds** works painstakingly in a variety of media, focussing on details of the natural world especially that of plant, bird and insect. She bases her work on careful research and observation during travels in New Zealand and further afield, as well as from museum collections all around the world. She has a science degree and postgraduate diploma in art and design. Becoming familiar with individual species has given her a great appreciation and sense of the special value of the teeming and astonishing variety of species on Earth, and she endeavours to share this view with others through her works.

- 1 MJ Kennish, *Practical Handbook of Marine Science* (Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press, 2020).
- 2 J Emsley, *An A-Z Guide to the Elements: Nature's Building Blocks*, new ed. (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2011).
- 3 See, however; DP Gordon and S Mills, *Bountiful Bryozoans: A Guide to the Bryozoans of New Zealand*, <https://niwa.co.nz/coasts-and-oceans/marine-identification-guides-and-fact-sheets/Bryozoans>.
- 4 DP Gordon, "Living Lace," *New Zealand Geographic*, 61 (2003), 80-95.
- 5 BW Hayward, *Granite and Marble: A Guide to Building Stones in New Zealand* (Lower Hutt, NZ: Geological Society of New Zealand, 1987).

## Art+Science Project Report: Part 4

### COSY DELL – ROCKY SHORE – INLAND SEA

**Scientists:** Daphne Lee and Zoe Henderson  
**Artist:** Vivien Dwyer

#### COSY DELL

Daphne Lee and Zoe Henderson

Cosy Dell seems an odd name for one of New Zealand's most intriguing fossil sites. Near Waimumu in Southland, it pays tribute to the name of the farm whose owners unearthed a fossil treasure trove in a small lime quarry. Since its discovery in 2009, they have made it possible for hundreds of scientists and students to study an amazing Oligocene rocky shore ecosystem far from the present coastline.



Figure 1. Fossil collectors at Cosy Dell, with the digger that first uncovered the fossil treasure trove in 2009.

At Cosy Dell, some 25 million years ago, subtropical seas lapped up against Jurassic-age basement rocks full of fossil seed ferns. The rocky boulders and the myriads of animals that grew on and around them were preserved by layers of sand and silt and buried beneath swamps that became the Gore Lignite Measures. Cosy Dell has yielded thousands of invertebrate fossils, many preserved in very hard, calcite-cemented concretions.

Molluscs, many with aragonitic shells and colour patterns preserved, are extremely diverse. They include chitons, 90 bivalves and 250 gastropods. Bivalves include oysters encrusting rocks and thick-shelled scallops.



Figure 2. Boulder with oysters in life position and huge scallop shells, with a geology hammer for scale.



Figure 3. Tiny pāua, about 3 mm across, and giant turret shell in a concretion.

Gastropods include pāua and giant turret shells.

In addition, there are intertidal and subtidal barnacles, 120 species of microscopic ostracods, brachiopods, echinoids and waterworn reef-corals.

The rich vertebrate fauna of thousands of otoliths (earbones) at Cosy Dell shows that the shallow, warm Chatton seas swarmed with fish, including sharks and rays. Large, middle-sized and small penguins nested on the shores. Drift seeds of a tropical legume, seagrass limpets, mangrove snails, petrified logs and the pollen flora testify to a diverse subtropical coastal rainforest with nearby mangroves and seagrass meadows.



Figure 4. Reef-coral from the ancient subtropical sea.



Figure 5. Cosy Dell concretions with petrified wood and shells.

## COSY DELL

Vivien Dwyer

My first experience of Cosy Dell was as part of a Rock and Mineral Club trip looking for shells, corals and other things of interest at the site of the University of Otago's dig. We knew that anything of interest to them would become part of their collection. There was a lot of fascinating stuff including all of the above, along with some exploration of an old coal mine which is also in the area. I took this as my starting point, taking sketches and photos, and then tried to imagine what the place had looked like when all these fossils were alive.

I chose the weaving loom as my workplace and, using a variety of threads, set out to create the feel of the place – not forgetting a small representation of the coal deposit. I also added some of the tusk shells from the site (although most of what I collected was either too small or overly fragile). I fashioned the weaving as a number of layers showing the stratification that occurs as time goes by.



Figure 6. (detail).



Figure 7. Vivien Dwyer; *Cosy Dell*, woven tapestry, embellished with small fossils from site dig, 600mm x 970mm.

**Daphne Lee** is an Honorary Associate Professor in the Department of Geology at the University of Otago, Dunedin. Her research interests encompass Cenozoic paleobotany and paleoclimate, Cenozoic invertebrate paleontology, Brachiopoda and Cenozoic stratigraphy.

**Zoe Henderson** is a Research Assistant in the Department of Geology at the University of Otago, Dunedin.

**Vivien Dwyer** is a graduate from the Otago Polytechnic where she completed her MVA. She has been an artist for most of her life and returned to Art School after her children grew up and became independent. She works in textile art with a special focus on printmaking and tapestry weaving.

## Art+Science Project Report: Part 5

# A PETRIFIED SAMPLER: FOREST TIMELINES CAUGHT IN STONE

Scientist: Mathew Vanner  
Artist: Pam McKinlay

### FOSSIL WOOD OF THE SOUTHERN SOUTH ISLAND

Mathew Vanner

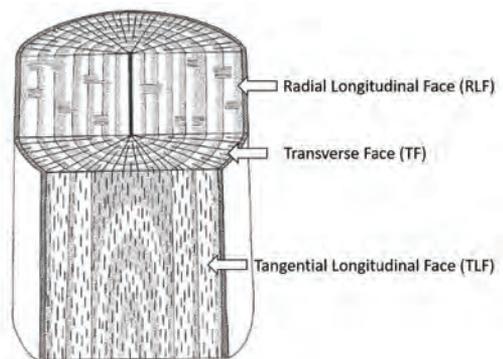
Ancient forests covered much of New Zealand's landscape. These persisted from the time of Gondwana into the modern era. On occasion, the trees forming these forests were buried, either by ash or within an anoxic bog, which protected them from decay, as the first step of fossilisation. Exposure to groundwater with high amounts of dissolved silica, calcite or other minerals was the second step. Over millions of years, this fluid flowed through the dead trunks, replacing the organic tissue with these dissolved minerals, turning them to stone.

Eventually, after millions of years, they have been brought back to the surface. Though much of the fossil wood is found within coal seams, some samples were collected from marine sediments, river gravels, silcrete or breccia.



Figure 1. A rooted stump at Mataura Coal Mine that looks much like a modern stump. Hand lens for scale.

Photograph: Mathew Vanner!

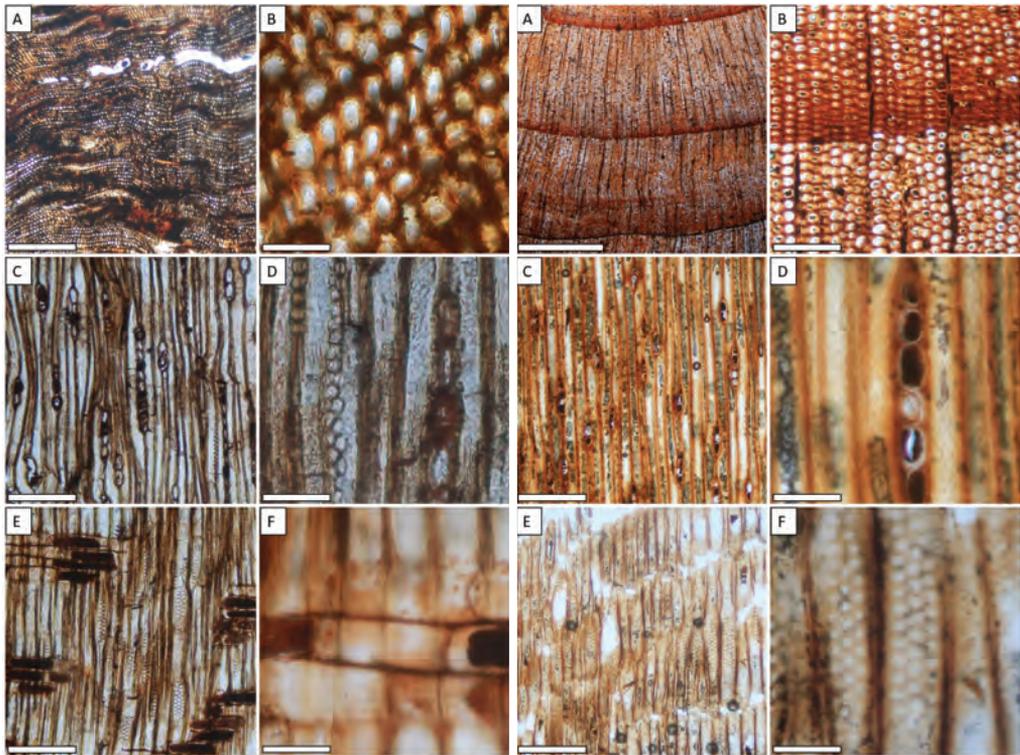


Figures 2. Block model of a trunk showing the three orientations used in wood anatomy.

Adapted from Wilson and White, *The Anatomy of Wood*, (1986: Figure 2).<sup>2</sup>

Once exposed, it is possible to study these ancient stone trees in order to discover which modern family or genera they were most closely related to. This is done by taking sections at different orientations – transverse, tangential and radial – which give three different views of the fossil cellular structure. These sections are carefully ground until they are less than a hair's width across. The structures revealed are compared to those of modern trees for identification. The identification of wood, both living and fossil, is based on the recognition of cellular features within the wood. It is easy to determine whether a sample is a gymnosperm or an angiosperm.<sup>3</sup>

In the South Island, there are many sites that yield fossil wood of different ages. It is possible to find a nearly complete record of wood from the Jurassic (200 mya) to the Quaternary (almost modern), but we find breaks in the continuity of certain genera. *Araucarioxylon*, ancient kauri, has been present in New Zealand for the entirety of that record. *Nothofagoxylon*, precursor of southern beech, has fossilised wood of Miocene age and is still present today. *Casuarinoxylon*- and Myrtaceae-like wood are also present in the Miocene, but died out before the end of the Pliocene.



Figures 3 & 4. The cellular structure of these specimens is gymnospermous, most likely Araucariaceae.<sup>4</sup> The boundary between the previous year's latewood and the next year's early wood may be indistinct or distinct. The width of a boundary can give information about the climate in which a tree grows – the wider it is, the better growing conditions the tree lived in.

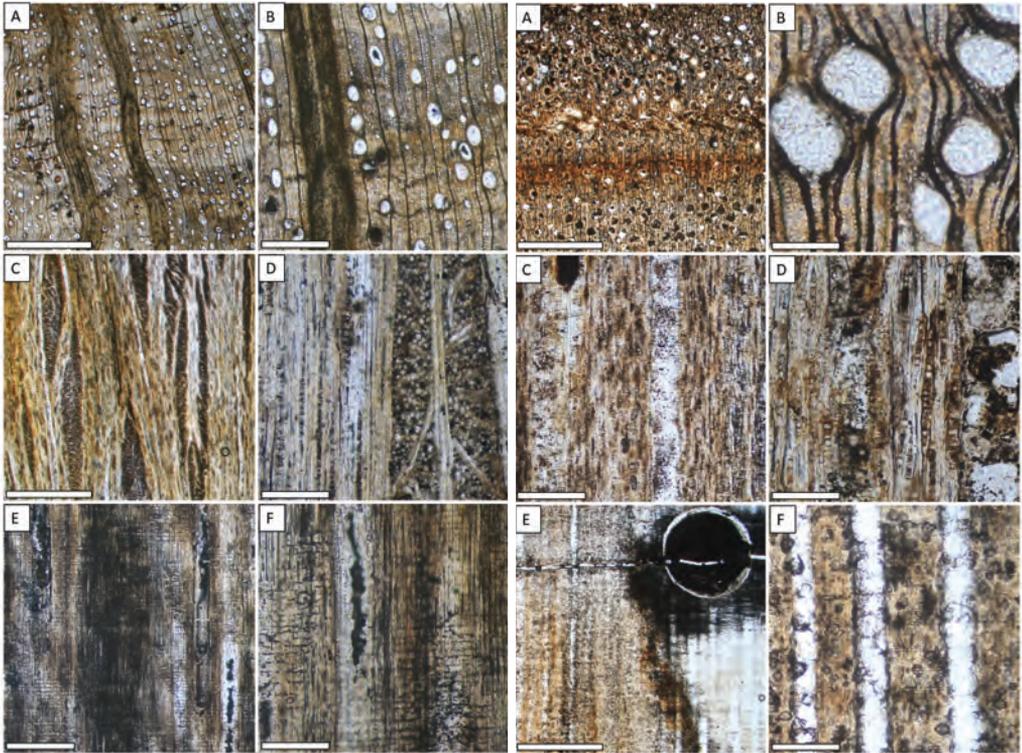


Figure 5. Casuarinaceae (left); Myrtaceae (right). The abundance of Casuarinaceae and non-New Zealand native Myrtaceae (e.g., *Eucalyptus*) in the samples was somewhat surprising, as was the low number of well-known New Zealand native genera, such as *Nothofagus*, given the dominance of southern beech pollen in both the fossil record and modern forests (Bill Lee, pers. comm.). *Nothofagus* wood readily decays, which may account for this.

## A PETRIFIED SAMPLER

Pam McKinlay

Artists make art out-of-hours in unusual spaces, and this was no more true than during the Covid-19 lockdown of 2020, when I spent a couple of hundred hours on a free-weaving response to the petrified wood samples from Mathew Vanner's research. I designed a weaving sampler using a series of experimental lifts, weft manipulation and tapestry techniques to interpret his microscope slides. The title of my work reflects both the scientific methodology involved in preparing fine slivers of petrified rock samples for microscopic examination and the weaving of short experimental blocks to depict the visual material in the slides.



Figure 6. Weaving in progress. With reference to Mathew's sample slides, this weaving sampler records (left to right): Araucariaceae (New Vale Mine Southland), Casuarinaceae (Landslip Hill, Southland) (she-oak) and Myrtaceae – possibly *Eucalyptus*.

“Geologists take it for granted that rock equals time ... I don't know of another experience that we all have in our daily lives where a solid substance represents time.”

Peter Brannen<sup>5</sup>

Petrified wood is rock that reveals something particular to the trees from the time and conditions when they were living. Somewhat miraculously, the textures and patterns of the live individual are captured in the fossil wood, and can be seen millennia later in the fossilised remains. Across the different species, the cumulative fragments reveal morphological similarities and distinctive characteristics at the cellular level.

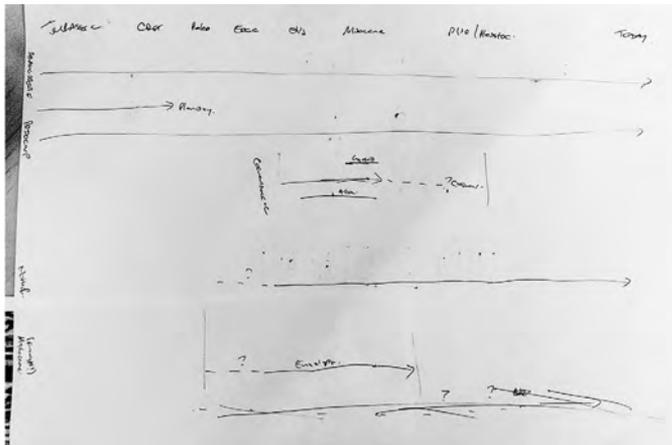


Figure 7.

When I first met Mathew, we discussed the fossil wood record in the South Island, which he sketched as a timeline.

Across the top:

Jurassic, Cretaceous, Palaeocene, Eocene, Oligocene, Miocene, Pliocene/Pleistocene (amalgamated, as much of the wood from these eras is difficult to date accurately), Today.

Along the side:

Araucariaceae, Podocarpaceae, Casuarinaceae, *Nothofagus* and Myrtaceae (*Eucalyptus*).



Figure 8. Colour palette derived from microscopic slides of fossil wood samples. Mathew's schema gave me the rationale and bare bones for the warp. The next step was to take the colours from the slides for the warp timeline, and the final stage was to create weft infill that would reflect the patterns in the slides.

To augment the woven panel, I also collected windfall from local monkey puzzle trees (from the Araucariaceae family), which I covered in paper clay and fired. Clay comes from areas where streams or rivers once flowed; it is made from broken-down mountains, minerals, plant life and animals from long ago. In a poetic gesture, the firing process accelerated the fossilisation process and (re)turned my windfall from living tree to rock.

In my limited time working with Mathew's research, he introduced me to the lineage of four different families that we are familiar with in our everyday lives. However, certain species within those families are under threat and face extinction events, as others have done in the past. This gave pause for thought on the fragility of the lineages I was weaving.

As we view the stops and starts in the artwork, we might reflect on the continuity of the remaining untampered line in the weaving, the Araucariaceae lineage, and ponder its future and conservation status in the new century: threatened by kauri die-back (New Zealand); facing the constant double threat of extinction and wildfire for the remaining stand of Wollemi pine (Australia); and appearing on the endangered list and CITES Appendix for monkey puzzle trees (Chile, Argentina).



Figure 9. Pam McKinlay, *Sampler: forest timelines caught in stone*, 2020-21, tapestry, single-ply and fine wool, wool silk, 510 x 2500 mm. Hand-woven on a 12-shaft table loom with a double warp beam, with fired clay forms representing *Araucaria araucana*.

Transparencies by Mathew Vanner.

Reading from top to bottom, the Araucariaceae, Casuriniaceae and Myrtaceae families traverse the Jurassic to Quaternary periods in a linear paleo-botanical timeline.

**Mathew Vanner** is a PhD candidate at the University of Otago. He has been interested in rocks since he was very young, collecting rocks until his pockets were full of bursting. Collecting any rock turned into a love of fossil wood after meeting a lapidarist in Southland, developing into a half-decade-long quest to identify fossil wood after meeting geologist Daphne Lee.

**Pam McKinlay** (ORCID ID 0000-0002-1731-6437) has a background in applied science and the history of art at the University of Otago. She collaborates with other artists in community outreach and art+science education projects on the themes of climate change, sustainability and biodiversity.

- 1 Mathew Vanner; "Cenozoic Fossil Wood of the Southern South Island, New Zealand," (MSc thesis, University of Otago, 2017).
- 2 K Wilson K and DJB White. *The Anatomy of Wood: its Diversity and Variability*, (London: Sobart and Son Ltd. 1986), Figure 2.
- 3 Ibid., p. 22. For gymnosperms, the comparison data for the New Zealand native species was taken from BA Meylan and BG Butterfield, *The structure of New Zealand woods*. New Zealand Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, 1978, Wellington. Data for other species was extracted from several publications, including RT Patton, "Anatomy of Australian Coniferous Timbers", *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Victoria*, 1927, 6(1): 1–16 and P Greguss, *Identification of Living Gymnosperms on the Basis of Xylotomy*, Akadémiai Kiadó Budapest, 1955 and P Greguss, *Xylotomy of the Living Conifers*, Akadémiai Kiadó Budapest, 1972. For angiosperms, the features noted are listed in the International Association of Wood Anatomists softwood catalogue (IAWA Committee, 1989) – Inside Wood website at <https://insidewood.lib.ncsu.edu/search?l>.
- 4 Vanner; "Cenozoic Fossil Wood." See discussion at 8.3.1: Araucariaceae, families and higher taxa including non-native *Araucaria* (Wollemi pine) a remnant population of which survives perilously in New South Wales, Australia.
- 5 Peter Brannen, "Glimpses of a Mass Extinction in Modern-day Western New York," in *The Best American Science and Nature Writing* 2019, ed. Sy Montgomery (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2019), 26.

## Art+Science Project Report: Part 6

# WOOL WEAVES AND ROCK FABRICS: AN ART+SCIENCE PROJECT PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN WEAVING AND GEOLOGY

**Scientist:** Adam P Martin  
**Artist:** Christine Keller

### THE MAKING OF 'OTAGO SCHIST'

*Common terminology in geology: fabric, texture, structure, ribbon, parameter, folding, stretching*

*Common terminology in weaving: fabric, texture, structure, ribbon, parameter, folding, stretching*

The iconic Central Otago landscape of tors (pillars of rock; Figure 1) are made of schist.<sup>1</sup> Schist is a type of rock that was deposited as mud- or sand-sized fragments in the ocean some 250 million years ago.<sup>2</sup> The fragments were buried and heated (metamorphosed) and squashed and stretched (deformed) on the long journey from ocean floor to onshore New Zealand.<sup>3</sup> This history is recorded in the rocks, as can be partly seen when looking at them under the microscope (Figure 2).



Figure 1. A photograph of the Otago Schist, taken near in the Maniototo, Central Otago, New Zealand. The tors in the foreground are 3-4 metres tall and the Rock and Pillar Range can be seen in the far distance.

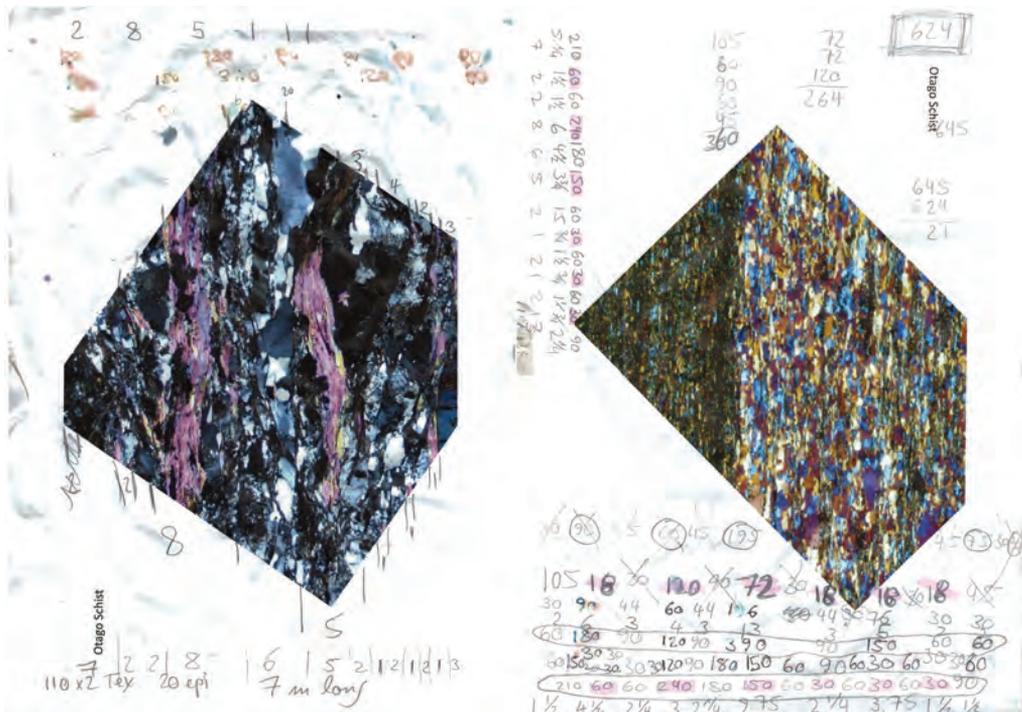


Figure 2. Otago Schist rock under the microscope. Each image represents a specimen 4 mm in width under the microscope, but has been enlarged and printed on A4 paper. The different colours represent individual minerals. The images show the effect of polarised light passing through minerals of differing composition and structure. Both samples are rock specimens from the most highly deformed parts of Otago. The handwritten notes were added by Christine Keller during the making of the work.

Here (Figure 2), schist rock has been polished to exactly 0.03 mm thick, which is so thin that light can shine through. Scientists use polarised light which highlights *ribbons* of the mineral mica as bright pinks, purples and yellows. This is juxtaposed against the greys, blues, blacks and whites of the minerals feldspar and quartz;<sup>4</sup> (Figure 2). This layering forms from different mineral proportions, reflecting variations in the original sediment, being sand-sized or mud-sized.<sup>5</sup> Other minerals present in the rock include epidote, chlorite, amphibole and stilpnomelane, with accessory amounts of titanite, garnet, zircon and pyrite.<sup>6</sup>

This specimen is from the most strongly metamorphosed and deformed areas of the Otago Schist, such as can be seen around the Maniototo in Otago (Figure 1). This represents the deepest parts of the schist rock now exposed at the surface in New Zealand through uplift and erosion.<sup>7</sup> Even more highly metamorphosed and deformed rocks are likely still buried beneath Otago.<sup>8</sup>

The layering of minerals defines a dominant *fabric*. The fabric records one of the important events that deformed this schist rock as it was lifted from deep in the Earth towards the surface.<sup>9</sup> The art of weaving beautifully represents the colours, layers and fabrics seen in schist rock from Otago.

## INSPIRATION

### *Christine Keller recalls:*

"... my father from my childhood who, as a teacher, spent a huge amount of time researching mineral and metal crystal structures. He wanted to be able to visualise the theory and to understand what the science told him. This was at a pre-internet time and without access to my go-to 'auntie google'. He turned to experiments instead. He searched for the right orb to represent carbon and other atoms, trying out ping-pong and swimming pool cover balls, and finally settling on small nylon balls. These experiments meant our house was full of spheres glued together to form conglomerates or crystal structures. Other memorable experiments included blowing dishwashing liquid through a thin hose onto the surface of the bathtub to understand the organisation of grain boundaries between different crystals. Life became even more exciting when my father gained access to an electron microscope and we could watch crystals grow and experiment with polarised light. With this background, I was primed to work with a geologist and, at the introductory sessions for the 2019 project, I found my match in Dr Adam Martin of GNS Science, who showed colourful pictures of rocks under the microscope. It was the Otago Schist rock that caught my eye."

### *Adam Martin writes:*

"I grew up surrounded by people interested in rocks and the world around them, and also grew up visiting art galleries and art exhibitions. During my undergraduate studies, I became fascinated with the practice of studying rocks under the microscope (petrology) and the world of spectacular colours and patterns this reveals. So I was excited and motivated when the opportunity arose to work with Christine to translate this into an art piece. I felt the colour and tactile nature of weaving was especially well suited to Otago Schist rocks as they look under the microscope."

## PROCESS

A bonus of the collaboration between artist and scientist was a field trip organised by Adam for Christine and her husband. The three of us visited the Maniototo district to see the rocks and the landscape that inspired the work (Figure 1).

### *Christine recalls:*

"Adam reminded me that the rock was from the Maniototo district in Otago and asked me if I had materials from that area – which I did. I used wool from sheep raised at Armidale in the Maniototo and spun in the now defunct Milton Mill. This local yarn I used to represent the mineral mica (bright colours; Figure 2) in the work. The other material used was a superfine merino yarn to represent the quartz and feldspar minerals in the work. This yarn originates either from Australia or New Zealand, is spun in Italy, purchased in Germany and brought back to New Zealand, and so has quite a carbon footprint 'yarn' to tell.

I prepared various warps that were dyed for different colour effects, based on the photographs taken under polarised light. The warps were 10m long. The loom used for this project was a 16-shaft compu-dobby with two warp beams, which gives one a choice to weave more than one layer under different warp tensions. The loom was warped with one predominantly anthracite in colour on one beam, and the other one dyed in greys and purples on the second beam.

During the weaving process, the serendipity with which a rock is pulled, stretched and cooked during its history inspired me. The exact outcome for a rock is not predetermined, even though the parameters of the process are somewhat clear, and I wanted to adopt a similar approach in my work. Weaving is

a complex technique, where the weaver typically plans where and how the two thread systems – warp and weft – intersect. I had a general idea in mind for the weaving (Figure 3), but not a strict threading or lift plan. For this work I took a more free-form approach. While maintaining the integrity of the fabric with a certain number of threads to hold the piece together; I could let the other threads float freely.

All was going very well, but then lockdown hit.

It was not until January 2021 that I restarted the weaving. I recalled the weaving parameters I had set, but not the exact threading. So, I wove intuitively, always responding to the last little bit, evolving the work with time.”



Figure 3. Fabric inspirations – some fabric samples I chose in order to roughly estimate a technique which I thought suitable for creating a response to the rock type and layered geological processes under consideration.

## OUTCOME



Figure 4. The three original panels to come out of the collaboration. Adam Martin holds the first, felted panel at the first viewing in Dunedin's LoomRoom.

### *Christine recalls:*

“Three panels emerged (Figure 4). The first one was felted, as is my normal process. However, I was surprised when panels two and three spoke to me, asking not to be felted (Figure 4). Panel two is a single-layer fabric with lots of floating threads. The third panel is a double weave (Figure 5), which I truly enjoyed as a new piece of work, the likes [of which] I have never done before. I was thinking of the women weavers at the Bauhaus and, training-wise, one could call me a grandchild of the Bauhaus school. This third panel has inspired me to want to push my work further than I have been doing for a long time. Recently, I have dedicated my time to set up and run a weaving studio (Figure 4) that works for many as a community workshop and has been very rewarding. But now I feel it is also time I give myself more space to research and create my own favourite weaving works. I am so thankful that Adam Martin has stayed alongside my work through all the steps of the process.”



Figure 5. Installation image of *Otago Schist* in Dunedin May 2021.

German-born, New Zealand-based artist **Christine Keller** holds an MFA from Concordia University (2004) in Montreal, Canada, and a Masters equivalent from Gesamthochschule Uni Kassel (1994), Germany. Christine has exhibited her award-winning work nationally and internationally since 1987. She was the academic leader of the Textile Section of Dunedin School of Art at Otago Polytechnic from 2005 to 2010. In late 2012 she founded the Dunedin-based weaving studio Weaving on Hillingdon, and in 2015 the community space known as Dunedin's LoomRoom. This is the fourth Art+Science project she has joined. As an immigrant to New Zealand, Christine took New Zealand Citizenship in 2016.

**Adam Martin** (ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4676-8344>) is a senior scientist working for GNS Science. As a geologist, his main interest is understanding how chemicals and minerals influence how the world works and how they interact with humans. Adam specialises in volcanoes, the deep Earth, Antarctica, soils and the Otago Schist. He studied his undergraduate degree at Monash University, Australia, before undertaking his doctorate at Otago University, New Zealand. This was followed by a three-year post-doc with the Natural Environment Research Council, UK, and a European Union Marie Curie Fellowship at the Bayerisches Geoinstitut in Germany. His research has been undertaken on every continent.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Steve Ting and Sam Patrick (of Dunedin's LoomRoom) for help with threading the floor loom. Adam Martin was supported through this project by funding from GNS Science.

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- 2 JD Campbell and G Warren, "Fossil Localities of the Torlesse Group in the South Island," *Transactions of the Royal Society of New Zealand*, 3 (1965), 99-137; CJ Adams, HJ Campbell and WL Griffin, "Provenance Comparisons of Permian to Jurassic Tectonostratigraphic Terranes in New Zealand: Perspectives from Detrital Zircon Age Patterns," *Geological Magazine*, 144:4 (2007), 701-29.
- 3 N Mortimer, "New Zealand's Geological Foundations," *Gondwana Research*, 7:1 (2004), 261-72.
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- 9 Mortimer, "Geological Foundations."



14 Manu Berry, *Penguins Diving in Deep Time*.

# TOGETHER: THE COLLABORATIVE CURATORIAL PRACTICES OF A MUSEUM CURATOR, DRESS HISTORIAN AND FASHION DESIGN EDUCATOR

Jane Malthus, Moira White and Margo Barton

## INTRODUCTION

The editors of *Fashion Curating: Critical Practice in the Museum and Beyond* argue that curatorial practice in dress and fashion changed in the later twentieth century, from a primarily custodial role in institutions where curators catalogued, archived and preserved works of art and fashion, to a wider exhibition role. While clearly museums have nearly always been sites of exhibition – of greatly varying focus, purpose and emphasis – in the fashion world, large retrospective exhibitions of designers' outputs have produced a higher public profile for their curators and brought new audiences flocking to museums. While fashion curators had traditionally been "anonymous labourers,"<sup>1</sup> a new type emerged following the example of Diana Vreeland, a special consultant at the Costume Institute, who had been a fashion journalist.<sup>2</sup> Although her exhibitions from 1973 onwards were controversial, she led the way for curators, changing display practices and educational possibilities for fashion in museums.<sup>3</sup>

For the last 20 years and more, in various configurations, Jane Malthus, Margo Barton and Moira White have collaborated on dress and fashion research projects, curating exhibitions, writing articles and presenting conference papers, alongside our own individual research, curation and other pursuits. This paper documents and discusses our curatorial and research approaches in some of these collaborations. Most of these curatorial projects have been in museums, but some have taken place in non-traditional exhibition spaces. Jane is a dress historian, educator and curator who has catalogued and stored historical fashionable dress in museums for many years; Margo curates fashion events, as well as being a fashion educator; and Moira is a curator at Otago Museum, where she researches and writes about artifacts including dress. (See Appendix 1 for fuller biographies.)

While our collaborations have not been on the scale of international blockbuster shows, we see our curating as a critical collaborative enquiry, involving us in "shared endeavours, practically and intellectually."<sup>4</sup> We aim to think imaginatively and critically, bring differing elements or viewpoints together, to spark conversations, ideas and viewers' own design dreams. In some of our collaborations, our primary aim is to support artists and designers to show their design outcomes to a wider audience. That audience is central to our endeavours. Our goal is always to allow people – be they fashion students and staff, anyone interested in clothes and, importantly, those who didn't know they were until they see them exhibited – to broaden and deepen their understanding of clothes and fashion. The 'how' and 'why' they were worn in the past, the social and cultural implications, design elements, textile variety and changes in manufacture, and issues of sustainability are all canvassed. Viewing a fashion exhibition may also spark a person's interest in fashion and contribute to how they may curate their fashioned selves in the future.

While we are constrained by the past collecting strategies of the Otago Museum – such as the bias towards female fashion and therefore consumerism – our experiences in exhibiting help inform policy changes for future acquisitions.<sup>5</sup> Contributing to topical debates through the exhibition of clothing involves us as curators not only collaborating with each other, but with conservators, designers, institutions and audiences. The public produce

meanings and create their own interpretations of the works.<sup>6</sup> “Critical fashion curating is a way of producing knowledge which can visualise, display, and popularise fashion research in an accessible, even an ‘edutaining,’ format while creating discourse.”<sup>7</sup>

Curating exhibitions, whatever form they might take, involves processes of theme development, team creation, finding exhibition space, selection of content, designing and preparing the space, preparing items for presentation – which in the case of garments involves deciding on the kinds of display forms to use – writing text for and creating labels and catalogues, installing, lighting, publicity, public programmes, then de-installing and assessing the exhibition and the process.<sup>8</sup> In large exhibitions in public venues, such as our current exhibition, “Fashion Forward: Disruption Through Design,” many people may collaborate on the work, but smaller exhibitions may see the curators doing it all. (See Appendix 2 for a list of the authors’ curatorial collaborations and related publications.)

## EXAMPLES OF OUR COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE

“Fashion Forward: Disruption Through Design” at Otago Museum started with a desire to show off the enormous creativity and design talent of emerging designers who had been finalists in the iD Dunedin International Emerging Designer Awards over the 17 years of its existence thus far. When Otago Museum approved the proposal for its exhibition schedule, the brief necessarily included artifacts from its large dress collection. We worked closely with the in-house design team on this exhibition, developing seven themes from the selected emerging designers’ conceptual statements that we could then use to choose museum pieces. Those themes were escapism, gender, illusion, reinterpretation, sculptural, transformation and wellbeing. Part of our aim was to show that these themes had historical resonance: designers and makers had thought about these issues in the past as well as the present. A woman’s going-away suit from the 1920s embodied an ‘escape’ from spinsterhood to married life; a late-nineteenth-century tea-gown allowed a woman to loosen her stays and relax for a time in the afternoon (this one also transformed a by-then out of fashion paisley shawl into a dress); and stiletto-heeled court shoes gave the illusion of longer, slimmer legs, or symmetrical feet!

Different kinds of display forms were used to differentiate museum objects from emerging designer outfits. Designers’ garments were mounted on black shop mannequins with heads, while museum garments hung on headless dress forms or Fosshape structures. Other themes and ideas emerged too, such as the value of creativity, the talent and skill of makers, and the range of textiles and materials available and the inventive ways these have been treated and used. Implicit in such an exhibition are also stories: about the emerging designers themselves and their subsequent careers; about the owners, wearers, and makers of the historical pieces; about consumption patterns, changes in fashion and aesthetics, and sustainability concerns. Viewers voice their own nostalgia and stories when they see particular artifacts.



Figure 1. Fashion FWD: Disruption through Design. Wellbeing section, showing the back of the tea-gown. Photograph: Jane Malthus.

“Re:Emerging” at Dunedin Airport and “A Darker Eden; Fashion from Dunedin” at Silo Six in Auckland, were in effect, prototypes for “Fashion Forward.” They were created in part to bring attention to the rich fashion design landscape of Dunedin, and to entice visitors to Dunedin to attend iD Dunedin Fashion Week events. Both exhibitions took place in spaces not traditionally used for fashion exhibits, a trend Vänskä and Clark highlighted and have practiced themselves: “As the practice of fashion curation extends into commercial galleries, public and retail spaces, and even to the individual self, professional concepts of ‘curating’ are undergoing rapid change.”<sup>9</sup>

“A Darker Eden” was curated by a team from the School of Design, Otago Polytechnic, and featured fashion by some of the yet-to-be-termed ‘godmothers’ included in “Fashion Forward:” high-profile, hard-working, then all Dunedin-based designers of NOM\*d, Mild Red and Tanya Carlson, with Company of Strangers and Charmaine Reveley included as Otago Polytechnic fashion graduates. Large backdrops emphasised Dunedin’s architecture and landscape.

“Re:Emerging” consisted of four cases with iD emerging designer finalists’ garments and related museum artifacts shown on a large touch screen. We could not display museum dress artifacts in the small space of the airport exhibition, which also did not meet conservation requirements such as specified light and humidity levels. Instead, we had examples and text on a touch screen. Digital presentation of fashion – a wonderful adjunct, if not a completely satisfactory alternative to real objects – allows close-ups of garment details that cannot be seen so easily in a gallery display, inclusion of other images showing related work in context, and provides space for expanded textual information. We used touch screens again in “Fashion Forward.”



Figure 2. A Darker Eden, NOM\*d garments and Dunedin buildings backdrop. Photograph: Jane Malthus.

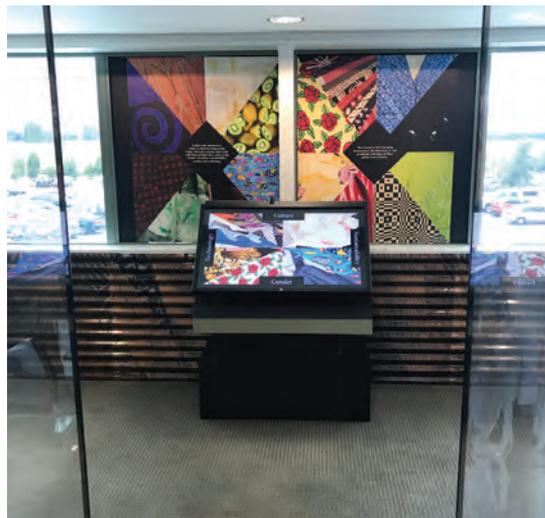


Figure 3. Re:Emerging. The touch screen in situ at Dunedin Airport. Photograph: Courtesy Otago Museum.

“Contemporary Fashion Practices: A Symposium Exhibition” started its life as a one-day symposium to be held in Dunedin, in conjunction with the 2020 iD International Emerging Designer Awards and iD Dunedin Fashion Week. Its theme was critical making, highlighting innovative and forward-thinking physical material practices in fashion and fashion-related areas. Having a physical exhibition and symposium was not possible after the arrival of Covid-19, so our strategy switched to creating an online version instead.<sup>10</sup> The second call for entries indicated that the submissions were to be digital, and attracted quite a number of proposals, which were assessed anonymously and independently, graded for their response to the criteria provided in the call, then collectively collated by Margo, Jane and Moira to make our final selection. We knew that curatorial practice by curator and artist collaborations had developed in the online world since the 1990s, both affiliated to and independent of museum institutions<sup>11</sup> so we had confidence that it could work, even though we knew it would also take a lot more work and probably cost more than a traditional show.

We asked our selected designers to prepare a 300-500 word abstract, create a short video explaining their rationale and processes of critical making, and provide between three and nine photographs showing their outcomes. In our exhibition (at [www.contemporaryfashionpractices.com](http://www.contemporaryfashionpractices.com)), the artifacts created by the selected designers are real objects, but they are seen by viewers only virtually, through the website. While many people are now used to shopping for fashion online, we know that experience is not the same thing as seeing textiles or garment details such as seams, prints and drape at first hand. However, there are some upsides: as curators, we can monitor statistics about viewers – for example, their geographical spread, and numbers of views in particular countries. This can be useful information for participants, and website publication of the symposium exhibition can count as a peer-reviewed publication. Additionally, the symposium, which usually only attracts submissions from New Zealand, attracted 35 submissions from 13 countries, giving a much wider view of contemporary fashion practices and critical making.

The curation of “Anything Could Happen: An Exhibition of Contemporary Art and Fashion from Dunedin, New Zealand,” which took place at the Yuyuan Gardens exhibition hall (Yu Gallery) in Shanghai, was a collaboration between Margo Barton and Jane Malthus, with Antony Deaker, facilitated through his role at the Dunedin City



Figure 4. Contemporary Fashion Practice homepage. Photograph: Jane Malthus.



Figure 5. Anything Could Happen. A large photograph of Mild Red fashion being installed. Photograph: Jane Malthus.

Council. Dunedin has an active sister-city relationship with Shanghai, which includes collaborations by Otago Polytechnic and Shanghai fashion schools, and through this the curators were able to secure the honour of a month at the Yuyuan Garden for this show.<sup>12</sup> The curators wanted to represent the diversity, quality and connectivity of the many fashion designers and artists who have connections with Dunedin, and were keen to include those who had or were developing a commercial track record and could potentially exhibit other work in China.<sup>13</sup> The call for entries from Dunedin and Otago artists and fashion designers received almost 200 responses. Five expert judges selected the final 33 works.<sup>14</sup>

At Otago Museum, Moira White and Jane Malthus have worked together on several short-term special exhibitions and other projects. For textiles and dress in museum collections, short-term displays are preferable for conservation reasons. Our collaborations include “Hem and Hair,” a 1960s fashion exhibition, in 1992; “Kimono: A Japanese Story,” featuring traditional dress gifted to Dunedin by another sister city, Otaru; and “Fashionable Gold,” an exhibition that responded to iD Dunedin’s “gold”-themed year in 2014. (See inventory for a more complete list). We worked with design and exhibition staff to create the ‘look’ of each exhibition.

“Hem and Hair” featured 1960s men’s and women’s dress and accessories from the Otago Museum collections in settings such as a wedding, a dance, a café and street scenes where we could use ‘shop windows’ to display some items. Partly to emphasise the slimness of fashionable bodies in that decade, and because we did not have enough forms or mannequins or budget to purchase more at the time, pipe fittings were used to create stylised anthropomorphic structures to carry the clothes.

“Kimono: A Japanese Story” was a large, crowded installation of the extensive gift that the people of Otaru had sent to Dunedin. It comprised just over 200 men’s, women’s and children’s *kimono*, *yukata*, *haori* and *hakama*, *obi* and other accessories that became part of this show. Members of Dunedin’s Japanese community helped enormously with identifications, translations and tasks such as pairing kimono and obi appropriately. “Kimono: A Japanese Story” included formal women’s *mon-tsuki*, *tomesode*, *furisode*, *uchikake*, *homongi* and mourning kimono, as well as less



Figure 6. Hem and Hair: We even included an iconic 1960s Mini with the miniskirts. Photograph: Jane Malthus.



Figure 7. Kimono: A Japanese Story. View of less formal kimono, and obi. Photograph: Courtesy Otago Museum.

formal *fudangi*, *komon* and *yukata*; men's formal *haori* and *hakama* and informal *kimono*; children's *kimono* worn for the *Shichigosan* festive day for three- and seven-year-old girls and five-year-old boys in November; and other festivals; various inner *kimono* and many gorgeous *obi* and other belts and accessories, thanks to the generosity of Otago citizens. We used T-shaped stands for many *kimono* and *obi*, although some complete ensembles were shown in the round. The extensive display allowed us to explain some of the detailed and subtle meanings of patterns and colour in Japanese dress.



Figure 8. Fashionable Gold. The variety of ways “gold” appears on women’s shoes. Photograph: Courtesy Otago Museum.

“Fashionable Gold” differed from our other exhibitions in that it was shown in spaces spread over three floors of Otago Museum. In the entrance foyer was a case of women’s gold-coloured shoes; on the first floor a stand-alone case with an 1882 wedding dress on a dress form; and on the top floor several garments on forms in cases at the entrance to the People of the World gallery. Higher light levels than museum textiles should be exposed to long term were an issue in two of the three spaces, so we had to choose artifacts and position cases carefully, as well as restrict the length of the exhibition.

## CONCLUSION

Our collaborative curatorial practice has been a form of consciousness raising, learning from one another as well as from the practices of others. We are aware that in some respects we share a similar demographic, yet we bring our particular herstories to what we do. And we are all passionate about the power of visual three-dimensional displays of clothes of the past and present to stimulate dialogue, imagination and creativity. Floor talks, question-and-answer sessions, lectures and other public programmes add to this stimulation for those who attend them.

We haven’t usually been able to survey exhibition audiences, but we do know that clothes and accessories shows are always popular and often bring in first-time visitors. While we have mostly had to work within constraints of institutions such as Otago Museum and Otago Polytechnic, we try to take different approaches in curating, appealing to diverse and widening audiences, and hopefully encouraging greater boldness in people’s own clothing choices and future interest in fashion-related exhibitions and events.

Our agenda also includes promoting discussion about the global fashion industry including its importance for employment, problems of resources and environmental sustainability, ethics and potential for change to slower production cycles. In “Fashion Forward,” for example, these subjects are addressed through explicit comments from the emerging designers on the touch screens, interviews with Dunedin designers and ‘the godmothers’ and through films screening during the tenure of the exhibition. Hopefully, through our exhibits and related talks we can create interfaces for solutions to emerge.

**Jane Malthus** is a dress historian and retired academic, specialising in nineteenth- and twentieth-century New Zealand dress history. She has been the honorary curator of the dress collection at Otago Museum since the 1980s. Combining material and social history and culture in her research with a New Zealand focus, she has published work, curated exhibitions and presented papers on topics such as dressmakers in nineteenth-century New Zealand, waterproof clothing, Otago Museum's lace collection, the Eden Hore Dress collection and Rosaria Hall. She also has a fine arts degree.

**Moira White** is Curator, Humanities at Otago Museum. She has published and presented papers on various aspects of the museum's collection, including dress and textiles, ceramics, the Antarctic collections, Melanesian material culture and its collectors, the technology collections and museum history. She has curated and co-curated exhibitions on these and other themes.

**Margo Barton** (ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8055-3630>) is a fashion educator; researcher and organiser of fashion events, and a curator of fashion in both traditional and non-traditional senses, most notably through her role as creative director of iD Dunedin Fashion Week, and through Citizen Stylist installations. She is committed to expanding the definition of "fashion" within learning and teaching at Otago Polytechnic, and to improving knowledge and interactions between emerging and independent designers and potential wearers. This occurs through various curatorial activities which acknowledge that we curate ourselves and our identities daily. Her curatorial practice occurs in traditional museum and gallery spaces, on the catwalk, online, through interactive installations and, like us all, via her wardrobe. She is also a milliner and fashion designer.

## APPENDIX I: OUR COLLABORATIVE EXHIBITIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

### Exhibitions

Barton, Margo, Jane Malthus, and Moira White, curators. "*Fashion Forward >> Disruption through Design.*" Otago Museum, 26 March – 17 October 2021.

Barton, Margo, Jane Malthus, and Moira White, curators. "Critical Making: Contemporary Fashion Practices" symposium exhibition, 2021. <https://www.contemporaryfashionpractices.com>,

Barton, Margo, Jane Malthus, and Moira White, curators. "Re: Emerging." Dunedin Airport, April – September 2019.

Barton, Margo, Jane Malthus, and Antony Deaker, curators. "Anything Could Happen: an Exhibition of Contemporary Art and Fashion from Dunedin New Zealand." YuYuan Garden Exhibition Hall, Shanghai, China, 8 May – 6 June 2017.

Barton, Margo, Jane Malthus, Caroline McCaw, and Leyton Glen, curators. "A Darker Eden: Fashion from Dunedin." Silo Six, Jellicoe St, Auckland, 17 February – 1 March 2015. (Exhibition created under the auspices of the NZ Fashion Museum.)

White, Moira, and Jane Malthus, curators. "Fashionable Gold!" Otago Museum, March – October 2014.

White, Moira, and Jane Malthus, curators. "Freestyle: Swimwear Fashion." Otago Museum, 2008.

Malthus, Jane, and Moira White, curators. "Kimono: A Japanese Story." Otago Museum, 24 September 2005 – 29 January 2006.

White, Moira, and Jane Malthus, curators. "Clothed in Roses." Otago Museum, People of the World Gallery, 18 December 2004 – 28 March 2005.

White, Moira, and Jane Malthus, curators. "Collared: The Story of Ties." Otago Museum, 24 February – 19 May 2002.

White, Moira, and Jane Malthus, curators. "Putting the Century to Bed." Otago Museum, October – December 1999.

White, Moira, and Jane Malthus, curators. "Hem and Hair: 1960s Fashions." Otago Museum, 1992.

### Related Publications

Barton, Margo, Jane Malthus, and Moira White. Various contributions to Fashion Fwd >> Disruption through Design. Dunedin: Otago Museum Trust Board and Otago Polytechnic, 2021.

White, Moira, Jane Malthus, and Margo Barton. "The COVID Sidestep." *Context: dress/fashion/textiles*, 41 (Summer 2020/21), 8-15.

Malthus, Jane, Margo Barton, and Moira White. "Escapism." *Otago Daily Times [The Mix]*, 18 April 2020.

Malthus, Jane, and Moira White. "The Business of Staying Dry: Designing Waterproof Textiles and Garments in Nineteenth-century New Zealand." *Scope: Contemporary Research Topics: Art and Design*, 17 (2019), 23-31.

Malthus, Jane, Antony Deaker, and Margo Barton. "Anything Did Happen when Dunedin Art and Fashion went to Shanghai." *Scope Contemporary Research Topics: Art and Design*, 16 (2018), 39-51.

Malthus, Jane, Margo Barton, Annette Cadogan, and Antony Deaker. "Anything Could, and Did, Happen on an Otago Polytechnic Design Trip to China." *Context: dress/fashion/textiles*, 35 (Summer 2017/18), 28-36.

Barton, Margo, Antony Deaker, and Jane Malthus. *Anything Could Happen Catalogue*. Dunedin: Otago Polytechnic and Dunedin City Council, 2017 (English and Chinese versions.)

Barton, Margo, Jane Malthus, Annette Cadogan, and Erin Broughton. "Anything Could Happen – A Prime Minister's Scholarship, Asia Fashion Study Tour." *Scope: Contemporary Research Topics: Art and Design*, 15 [Fashion] (2017), 13-23.

Malthus, Jane, Simon Swale, and Margo Barton, eds. *Scope: Contemporary Research Topics: Art and Design 15: Fashion* (2017).

Swale, Simon, Jane Malthus, and Margo Barton. "Fashion Today and Tomorrow: Considering an Interconnected Global System of Challenges and Promise." *Scope: Contemporary Research Topics: Art and Design*, 15 [Fashion] (2017), 6-7.

Malthus, Jane, Col Fay, Matthew Galloway, Megan Brasell-Jones, Margo Barton, Gavin O'Brien, and Caroline McCaw. "Art-educated Design Educators." In *Art and Design: History, Theory, Practice*, eds Peter Stupples and Jane Venis, 193-206 (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Scholars, 2017).

Malthus, Jane, Caroline McCaw, Leyton Glen, and Margo Barton. "Interplay and Interplace: A Collaborative Exhibition Addressing Place-based Identity in Fashion Design." In *IASDR 2015 Interplay Proceedings*, eds V Popovic, A Blackler, D-B Luh, N Nimkulrat, B Kraal and Y Nagai, 1396-1414 (Brisbane: Queensland University of Technology, 2015).

Barton, Margo, and Jane Malthus, eds. *A Darker Eden: Fashion from Dunedin*. Auckland: New Zealand Fashion Museum, 2015.

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Malthus, Jane. "iD Dunedin," and "Designer Profiles." In *A Darker Eden: Fashion from Dunedin*, eds Margo Barton and Jane Malthus, 10-27. Auckland: New Zealand Fashion Museum, 2015.

Malthus, Jane, and Moira White. "Making and Doing at Home: Patchwork and Other Sewing Crafts as Occupational Therapy." *Scope: Contemporary Research Topics: Health and Wellbeing*, 3 (2018), 21-30.

Malthus, Jane, and Moira White. "Fashionable Gold." *Context: dress/fashion/textiles*, 28 (2014), 53-56.

Malthus, Jane, and Moira White. "FURtive Gathering? Contextualizing the Furs in Otago Museum's Collection." *Context: dress/fashion/textiles*, 26 (Winter 2013), 41-51.

Malthus, Jane, and Moira White. "Celebrating the Lace Collection at Otago Museum." *Context: dress/fashion/textiles*, 23 (2011), 8-18.

White, Moira, and Jane Malthus. "Barker-Eames Collection." *Context: dress/fashion/textiles*, 17 (July-November 2008), 21.

## Calendars

White, Moira, and Jane Malthus, with Otago Museum designers. *Freestyle: Swimwear Fashion 2008 Wall Calendar*. Dunedin: Otago Museum, 2007.

White, Moira, and Jane Malthus, with Otago Museum designers. 2006 Wall Calendar featuring artifacts from "Kimono: A Japanese Story." Dunedin: Otago Museum, 2005.

White, Moira, and Jane Malthus, with Otago Museum designers. *Ties: 2002 Wall Calendar*. Dunedin: Otago Museum, 2001.

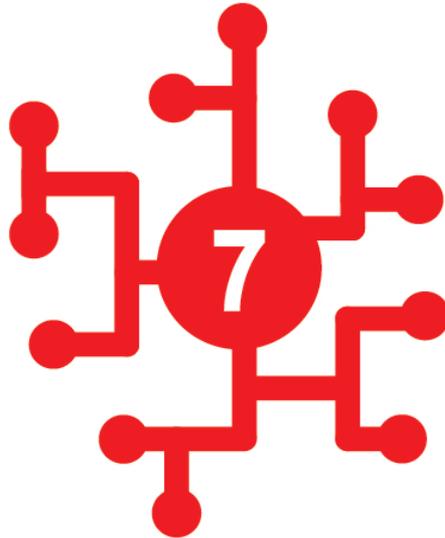
White, Moira, and Jane Malthus, with Otago Museum designers. *Putting the Century to Bed: 2000 Wall Calendar*. Dunedin: Otago Museum, 1999.

- 1 Hazel Clark and Annamari Vänskä, "Introduction: Fashion Curating in the Museum and Beyond," in *Fashion Curating: Critical Practice in the Museum and Beyond*, eds Annamari Vänskä and Hazel Clark (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), 1-15, at 5.
- 2 See <https://www.vanityfair.com/culture/1993/11/diana-vreeland-1993> for a brief biography of Vreeland.
- 3 Vänskä and Clark, "Introduction."
- 4 *Ibid.*, 1.
- 5 Julia Petrov, "Gender Considerations in Fashion History Exhibitions," in *Fashion and Museums: Theory and Practice*, eds Marie Riegels Melchior and Birgitta Svensson (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 77-90.
- 6 Annamari Vänskä, "Boutique – Where Art and Fashion Meet: Curation as Collaboration and Cultural Critique," in Vänskä and Clark, *Fashion Curating*, 119-135, at 131.
- 7 Vänskä and Clark, *Fashion Curating*, 2.
- 8 Pamela Harris Lawton, "Curate, Curate | Curator; Curator: Curatorial Practice in Art Education," *Visual Inquiry*, 6:1 (2017), 95-105.
- 9 Vänskä and Clark, *Fashion Curating*, back cover.
- 10 Moira White, Jane Malthus and Margo Barton, "The COVID Sidestep," *Context: dress/fashion/textiles*, 41 (Summer 2020/21), 8-15.
- 11 Christiane Paul, "Flexible Contexts, Democratic Filtering and Computer-aided Curating: Models for Online Curatorial Practice," in *Curating, Immateriality, Systems: On Curating Digital Media*, ed. Joasia Krysa (New York: Autonomedia Press, 2006), 85-105.
- 12 The exhibition was developed and managed through Enterprise Dunedin in partnership with staff from the Otago Polytechnic School of Fashion and School of Art. Project China and Export Education Project were also involved. Guidance and support were provided by staff at Creative New Zealand and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade in both New Zealand and Shanghai, as well as by staff at the Yu Yuan Garden, Huangpu District and Shanghai Municipal Government.
- 13 Jane Malthus, Antony Deaker and Margo Barton, "Anything Did Happen When Dunedin Art and Fashion Went to Shanghai," *Scope: Contemporary Research Topics: Art and Design*, 16 (2018), 39-51.
- 14 *Ibid.*, 41.

*CLINKPROJECT7:VIRAL*

Andrew Last

# CLINK PROJECT



CLINKProject is a contemporary jewellery collective that was jointly established in 2014 by Dunedin School of Art and Hungry Creek Art & Craft School, now part of the New Zealand School of Art and Fashion. The project manifests as an annual gathering for an intense week of brainstorming, planning, making and debate. In 2020 *CLINKProject7* 'went viral' in Wellington with an event day held on Sunday 20 September. *CLINKProject7* performed temporary exhibits at the Dowse Art Museum at 11.30am and then again at St Peter's Anglican Church's Willis Garden Room at 3.30pm.

CLINKProjects began with Shane Hartdegen (Hungry Creek) and Johanna Zellmer (Dunedin School of Art) meeting at a Wellington jewellery expo. Recognising that both their educational communities suffered from a sense of isolation, a resolution was made to collaborate, foster confidence through solidarity and create a presence in the small pond of contemporary jewellery in Aotearoa.

Throughout the seven-year history of CLINKProjects, disruption and intervention have been key strategies. The quotidian expectation of a curriculum calendar is put aside for a week or two and replaced with the energy and risk of being compelled to resolve a substantial project in collaboration with complete strangers.

Hierarchies are levelled, with second, third and fourth year students, postgraduates and lecturers all having equal representation and participation in project decisions.

The default visual arts gallery paradigm has been challenged, both as a destination for jewellery work and as an encounter for a jewellery audience. Work has been presented as street intervention (CLINKProjects one, two and five) and institutional interventions (CLINKProjects three, four and six). In the institutional sites, jewellery has infiltrated informal spaces – stairways and toilets (#3 at Te Uru), interspersed with permanent collection items (#6 at the Grainger Museum) and, for #4, in the foyer of the Auckland War Memorial Museum.

In all events, the presentation phase of the project existed initially as a pop-up exhibition of short-term duration. Two of the institutional hosts, Te Uru Gallery and Auckland War Memorial Museum, held onto work after the conclusion of the event. In all instances, the project has been given a more enduring record through publication.

*CLINKProject7* was presented to adventitious gallery/museum visitors (Dowse) and an invited audience in a semi-public space at the St Peter's Anglican Church courtyard. In all CLINKProjects jewellery appears in unexpected places, with makers and audiences simultaneously present. The directness of such real-world interactions qualifies academic understandings of how jewellery engages with that world.

Like other pre-planned events across the globe, *CLINKProject7* was a contingency response to the limitations imposed by Aotearoa's Covid-19 management strategies. The original location for the project was to have been Canberra, in conjunction with the Jewellery and Metalsmiths Group of Australia (JMGA) conference.

With the abandonment of the JMGA conference and the impossibility of international travel, the collective selected Wellington as a location – accessible, but not home ground to either of the participant groups. We reconfigured the theme and title of the project to "Viral," an obvious response to Covid-19 times, but also allowing possibilities of broader interpretation.

Unlike most previous CLINKProjects, we pre-made works and left the resolution of their presentation to be workshopped face-to-face and on-site.

At short notice, Toi Pōneke offered us a space to complete our on-location planning and preparation.

Similarly, Dowse Museum and St Peter's on Willis generously offered us spaces to present the work to public audiences.



Figure 2. *CLINKProject7* participants in transit.



Figure 3. Toi Pōneke Workspace, Wellington.



Figure 4. Dowse Museum courtyard.



Figure 5. St Peter's on Willis.

Presentation of the work was the same for each location. The first phase was performative; two participants elected to be hosts or models. They were wrapped head-to-toe in numerous windings extended from an 8-metre long bolt of grey cloth. Each successive winding concealed a jewellery work fixed to the cloth. A pair of long, narrow tables were pre-placed within the exhibition space.

The performance was heralded by a karakia tīmata, followed by an ambient sound-work prepared by Felix, Shane and Adair: The solemn and eerie hosts were led to the head of each table by two Covid-masked participants. The cloth wrap was carefully undone by the first participant as the hosts were slowly spun around on the spot. The revealed jewellery works were removed from the cloth and then worn by the participants. The free ends of the cloth were progressively laid out on the tables.



Figure 6. A "host" being wrapped and adorned.

For each successive unwrapping, another two participants emerged from the background and took the place of those preceding them. The final unwrapping revealed the hosts wearing their own works and with the cloth now stretching out to cover the entire length of the tables. As the sound-work ended, each participant removed their jewellery, placed it on the table and stepped back, inviting the audience to engage with the now static display and the makers.

The performance was intended as a mimesis of the mechanism of viral transmission – many being infected by each host and the 'virus' spread into the community.

Both exhibition locations had in common a semi-outdoor setting – each was unroofed, but bound by perimeter walls. Tawhirimatea, the atua of weather, bestowed remarkably benign weather on us – dry, warm and, for the windy city of Wellington, calm.

Three of the four perimeter walls in Dowse Museum's courtyard were glazed, with one opening to the entrance foyer. We had anticipated drawing an audience from Dowse's weekend visitors. Victoria McIntosh's coincident underwear embroidery workshop occupied the room behind another of the courtyard's glass walls and granted us an additional jewellery-focussed audience. The static display stayed up for two hours before karakia whakamutunga and a lightning bump-out to make the next gig at St Peter's two hours later.

The backdrop of the venerable timber structure of St Peter's was in contrast to Dowse courtyard's generic industrial architecture. The former's arched trefoil windows added to the sense that the space was a haven of sorts. In contrast to the Dowse, the audience was drawn to St Peter's via word of mouth and social media promotion. The positive reception the collective received at Dowse generated a more assured second installation and presentation.

Among the audience for the St Peter's event was Charlotte Davy, head of the Art team at Te Papa. Charlotte remarked that the quality of the work shown (and the event itself) exceeded several recent exhibitions she'd seen that similarly responded to the strictures of Covid-19.

In its seventh incarnation, CLINKProject had evolved to a standard of professionalism that contrasted with the chaotic experimentation of the first events. Seven of the 19 participants had previous CLINKProject experience, with co-instigator Johanna Zellmer a veteran of all seven events. The experience of those familiar with CLINK, as well as their clear choice to return, provided reassurance for those new to the experience. Pre-making works with a decent lead-in time before the actual event allowed space for development, care, professionalism and pride to be embedded in the work.

The breadth of responses to the "Viral" theme tempered the social and media fatigue associated with Covid-19. By September, participants were able to tap into positive aspects of the Covid-19 phenomenon including:

- our unity as a team of five million
- values of care and empathy
- recognising the ills produced by the frenetic pace of urban living
- the demonstrable ability for society to make rapid and profound changes in the face of disaster.



Figure 7. St Peter's courtyard from Willis Street.

As a strategy to communicate the depth of content and concept brought to the work, all participants had prepared artist statements to be compiled into a catalogue. During the four days of the event, this catalogue was edited and printed by a subcommittee of the CLINK crew. Copies were available to audiences at both Dowse and St Peter's venues. The catalogue information, as well as the ongoing visitor stream to the CLINKProject Facebook page, have lent a durability to the fleeting exhibition events. The catalogue contents are reproduced (in edited form) below this report.

On the Monday after the exhibition event the collective had the privilege of visiting Te Papa and the studios of Lisa Walker & Karl Fritsch as well as Joe Sheehan. Justine Ohlsen, curator & part of Te Papa's art team hosted the group for a behind-the-scenes engagement with some of Te Papa's contemporary jewellery collection. Justine explained some of the history & strategies behind Te Papa's jewellery acquisitions as well as walking us through her most recent curatorial project, a history of modernism in NZ architecture.

All three jewellers we visited were amazingly generous in sharing their workspaces and professional knowledge. Lisa and Karl opened their home, which included a table of give-away publications from their staggering exhibition lists. Visiting their studios in a converted house next door allowed us a candid insight into the way these artists integrate the demands of their domestic and professional lives.

Joe Sheehan demystified some of his prodigiously skilful stone carving work by explaining the gear and techniques he uses. His passion and curiosity for stone was infectious, motivating many participants to further this aspect of their own practices.

CLINKProject7 refined and built on the six-year history of collaborative events that explore diverse ways of embedding professional practice in contemporary jewellery curricula.

The intensity of the event and the effort taken in its preparation offer participants experiences not possible within the confines of educational institutions.

With the benefit of a six-year history, the organisational structure underlying critical project decisions has been refined to minimise anxiety and timed to stage satisfying resolutions for the finale of exhibition.

Being granted studio visits and insights into Te Papa's jewellery collection made contextual sense in terms of a professional trajectory after the achievement of a successful public exhibition.

With the project staged in the middle of the final academic semester, students gained huge confidence for their end-of-year exhibitions and assessments.

Although these events are hugely demanding of both participants and organisers, the legacy of their seven-year history will have a continuing resonance in the practices of the hundred or so artists involved. The recurring reality of participants choosing to be part of many CLINKProjects is a testament to the breadth and value of these experiences.



Figure 8. Justine Ohlsen at Te Papa.

## SHANE HARTDEGEN & JOHANNA ZELLMER

### *Symbiotic Interferences*

Hi Jo

It is a strange idea to collaborate when the world seems so isolated.....

Thanks for the pins! What a surprise to open the parcel and find to my delight, red headed pins with beautiful little discs that all at once tell me of another life and world..... It is Sunday and I need to return something to you tomorrow as we agreed.

Collaboration sounded like a good idea at the time I am not so sure now.... No, wait! I was wrong, it is great, I see little faces in the rubber bits you sent me, I know you worked so hard to thread them now I take some of them to pieces. I have put them into the silver object, looking for mutation. For me, the following words connected to CLINKProject7's theme *VIRAL* and to my experience of collaboration:



*Vernacular, Intervention, isolation,  
improvisation, authorship, pushing  
accountability, artist-genius, leaving  
language, limitations and loading.....*

*I love to see the way you think...*

*Thanks, my dear friend.*

Dear Shane

I am sitting here threading little rubber plugs onto a silver wire; can't help but think of Warwick Freeman's *face aches* brooches, love those! Funny, how we both inadvertently resolved to using rubber as a material: Your carved rubber tyres connected to personal narrative and national history, mine being minute seals used in the process of DNA sequencing.

One way or another our individual paths have brought us to this Island in the Pacific... I feel that the work that emerged over these 8 weeks reflects this sense of our own morphed identities; my words might be



*Recognition, passion, pushing*

*Staking a claim, marking the ground,*

*Stacking, re-enacting, intruding*

*Laughter, desperation, bewilderment, and trust*

In hope that our many small pins will be finding host bodies for many years to come.

Love, Jo

## BRENDON MONSON

### #Vial2020

Repurposed medical testing vials, painted resin 3D prints, cord.

Worn as pendants, #Vial2020 operates as contemporary memento mori – reminding us of the vulnerability of human existence. The jewellery offers a talismanic function to ward off known and unknowable evils emerging during Covid-19.

#Vial2020 is filled with 3-D printed miniatures inspired by microscopic imagery of viruses and bacteria. This imagery is sourced from the flood of online images representing viruses. The digital realm plays an important role in this project. By asking the audience to post an image on their social media in exchange for a pendant, Monson also explores the notion of something going viral online. During this uncertain time, an online presence is crucial. Varying phases of Covid-19 lockdown often entail cancellation of shows and events where a maker's work will engage its audience.



## ARIA STEELE-MACINTOSH

### Post Transmission

*Post Transmission* is a series of handmade postcards encased in pockets, displayed on a pink fabric hanging. The cards are painted, embroidered, scratched into and glued to create designs reminiscent of the coronavirus under a microscope.

The phrase “please leave something in exchange” is hidden behind each postcard. It is revealed when the participant removes a postcard, prompting them to leave something behind in the pocket – whatever they have on them at the time.

When it leaves the pocket, the postcard becomes a metaphor of the way a virus can spread. The postcard can be posted anywhere in the world; the participant decides whether it sits on the fridge, gets sent to family overseas, or even ends up at the rubbish tip. As the maker, I have no control over where my work or touch will travel, thus representing the lack of control inherent in the spread of a virus.



## JACK WOLF

### *Virus*

Series of 8: resin, tissue, ink, cotton, steel

VIRAL INVASION! VIRAL INVASION! VIRAL INVASION! The alarm system bleats out its alert, a siren droning through the night. Wolf leaps for his gloves, his mask, throws open the windows and doors to escape, but it's too late. It's too late. It's too late. Toxic fumes emitted from an uncontrolled resin virus rapidly proliferate before his horror-struck eyes. Nothing can be done now but to watch the sickly takeover: Where did it go wrong?

It began as an innocent puddle of goo, but somewhere deep inside a chemical reaction erupted between cells and infected colours spurt and spill through, crawling and mutating into diseased tissue, hunting for more flesh to infect. Dark spots appear and multiply, spatters from the inside, when will it rest?

The writhing mass of diseased tissue starts to grow limbs. A monstrous four arms and five legs, three eyes, swiveling in their sockets, boring holes into Wolf's soul. He cowers in the corner, but can't tear his eyes away. The room is inescapable. All he can do is watch, helplessly. The *thing* begins to rip its limbs off. Screeching, bubbling resin pours out of its mouth. Dividing, fragmenting and tearing itself apart. And dreadfully, each of its selves begins to grow and twist and deform, becoming creatures in their own right.

**Snap.** His growling, wolfish instincts awaken at last, deep down in his core. He leaps on the virus, risking his life for all. He rages and howls all through the long night. With courage and glee, he succeeds, he succeeds! There they now rest, frozen and solidified, strung up in the morning light. Strangely, in the light they almost sparkle, colourful and bright. Thank gods they were stopped, stilled; quite beautiful now really, in their own dangerous way.



## ZENA WALSH

### *Holster*

Brass, epi-pen, nylon cord

Aside from the obvious medical reference, the connection to the viral came in a roundabout way. I started thinking about computer viruses, in particular a type called a Trojan horse – something malicious hidden inside something seemingly innocuous.

Connecting this to jewellery led me to the idea of a poison ring, an ordinary piece of jewellery with a nasty secret. What if I made the opposite? An antidote ring, perhaps – a piece of jewellery with medicine inside.

My best friend has multiple allergies, always having to be wary of foods and carrying an adrenaline shot, so I immediately thought of an epi-pen.

I chose to leave the top and bottom open, so the pen is still usable. The blue top piece is designed to be pulled out, then the orange end pushed against the thigh, exposing the needle. I etched part of the instructions onto the brass casing, both to assist with use and mimic the outside of the epi-pen. The bright orange cord matches the orange end and also serves to draw attention to the device, acting as a sort of medical alert.



## FELIX MORRISON

### *Faith in Strangers*

*Faith in Strangers* is an interactive work exploring themes of 'viral' and synthesis. The concept was originally inspired by the two-way mirrors commonly put in interrogation rooms, drawing a comparison between these mirrors and our cell phones.

Not only do we submit to a blatant violation of privacy with the use of our data from companies such as Instagram, but we also offer these corporations our free labour as they monetise the data they collect.

In response to this, I have used devices and software from these same corporations to subvert the culture of surveillance capitalism, ubiquitous in all our pockets.



GLORIA PEREZ-CLARK

*Ring: Supplication, 2020*

Wood, brass, sterling silver, pearls.

The act of earnestly asking for something – humble request or prayer:

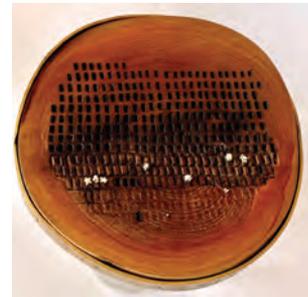


*Supplication* is a response to the theme “Viral” as part of *CLINKProject7*. The immense effect that the pandemic is having on our lives is clear to see. Daily we encounter images from around the world showing us what people are going through. This is a global event that we are enduring as a collective, and it is through the sheer numbers affected that we can appreciate the magnitude of it.

For me, there is no other image that can better represent this in a tangible way than aerial images of mass graves. It was looking through these eerie images that made me realise the fragility of life and our own mortality.

It was in reflecting on such images that *Supplication* was created. A offcut from a manuka tree was taken from my own land

and used as a base. While the tree’s growth rings subtly represent time, it is through the deliberate indentations made in the wood, replicating Covid-19 graves, that one can gather a hint of the extent of the global tragedy unfolding. Past, present and future. We are born, we live and we die – the reality is that inevitably one’s destiny is to pass. Death is the one universal, inescapable commonality that binds us all.



“DE TERRA VENIMUS, AD PULVEREM REFEREMUS, MMXX”

“From earth we came, to dust we shall return, 2020.”

The term ‘supplication’ also denotes petitioning, or a form of prayer. In Christianity, the prayer of supplication is made to restore health by, or on behalf of, the sick. Taking this meaning into consideration, eight strategically placed rings allow one to make the gesture of uniting one’s hands in prayer. Furthermore, as you lace your fingers through this armature there is an unavoidable feeling of obstruction of movement, a sense of helpless restraint that eventually succumbs to a humble acceptance.

By invoking multiple metaphors, the subtle nuances in this piece convey something of the rollercoaster of feelings that we are all experiencing right now.

*“Death is not the opposite of life, but a part of it.”*

Haruki Murakami

## KATARINA TIO

Sterling silver and blue silk thread

Responding to “Viral” was a challenge for me as, in such circumstances, I immediately go to a selfish place. I wanted to create a piece about other people and not just myself. Our Prime Minister is always reminding us to be kind and understanding towards friends and strangers in this uncertain time, and hearing her say this would always bring me back to my Christian upbringing. I would think of the verse from *1 Corinthians*: “Love is patient, love is kind ...”

I wanted to create something almost commercial when worn, something where you would not see the meaning unless you were ‘in the know.’

The blue thread is symbolic of the times – we are not perfect, we make mistakes and mend relationships, both with God and with the people we are around.



## CORINTHIANS

1 Corinthians 13:1-8

- 1 If I speak with the languages of men and of angels, but don't have love, I have become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal.
- 2 If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but don't have love, I am nothing.
- 3 If I dole out all my goods to feed the poor; and if I give my body to be burned, but don't have love, it profits me nothing.
- 4 Love is patient and is kind; love doesn't envy; Love doesn't brag, is not proud,
- 5 doesn't behave itself inappropriately, doesn't seek its own way, is not provoked, takes no account of evil;
- 6 doesn't rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth;
- 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.
- 8 Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will be done away with. Where there are various languages, they will cease. Where there is knowledge, it will be done away with.

## KELLY READ

### *Don't gamble with germs!*

Using found objects, I made a necklace with dices, each with a hole drilled into it.

I then 3-D printed the container; which contains soap and a plug to hold it in place.

The plug pulls out to reveal a small piece of soap and a warning about germs.



## MADDISON BARKER

### *Iterate, Tessellate, Mutate, Irritate*

Plywood, brass, nylon cord and wool

The pendants in this series of work are made from triangular units of plywood. The first is made of two units, the second of three, and the third of four. Each pendant has a lively, smoothed, outer face and a sharp angular side that rests on the body.

The fourth pendant is made from 21 triangles, and the points of the sharp side all rest on the surface of the wearer's chest. Like a virus, the work has multiplied and mutated, specifically targeting a vulnerable area of the body. The pendant is uncomfortable, making the person wearing it constantly aware of its presence.

Each pendant cord is made of five strands of wool, echoing the layering of the plywood and complementing its colour and grain.



## FIONA BUNN

### *In its Grasp*

Copper

This piece took shape through group discussions; research; investigating similarities and contrasts; playing with materials; and exploring forms, patinas, finishes, layers, connections and disconnections, weight and heft. In the process, the form mutated from a neckpiece to bangles.

In the "Viral" context, I am drawn to circular shapes suggesting bubbles, with no beginning and no end, along with the quiet, invisible and ongoing "new normal" and waves of contagion sweeping across the globe. The indefinite uncertainty we face.

The subtle colour changes and tarnishing of copper over time, the fingerprints left when touched, suggest an organic infectious agent.

The bangle controls movement, bestowing a second thought to everything before we touch; a loss of freedom; and the duality of being disconnected and connected. Working with scale brings to mind the growing weight of our current situation; the replication of form is drawn from the self-copying reproductive strategy of a virus.



## NONA SHACKLETON

### *Blue Wave Scroll* *Splitting Image Mirrors*

Drawn to ideas of phenomenon and sensation in relation to “Viral,” I have been exploring the sensory aspects of screen-based media, along with the notions of glorification and hero worship in relation to screen culture. *Blue Wave Scroll* represents the breakdown of these elements into their descriptive components, and *Splitting Image Mirrors*, a reflective reminder of the self, is projected within the rhizome.

Noticing the high sensitivity of my eyes post lockdown, resulting from increased screen usage and the contrasting effects of spending time in the bush, I was led to consider the elements of screen ‘sensation’ – the effect of bright lights on the eye, the capacity to take in increasing amounts of imagery at once, and how imagery becomes blurred or abstracted as a result.

This work utilises the blue, multi-purpose kitchen cloth, a familiar staple of a language of cleanliness we have become accustomed to – a roll to be wound up and then undone by the user; mirroring the cyclic notion of scrolling.

Having an interest in colour and the visible light spectrum, I have been responding through embroidery to the ability of ‘red,’ lower energy, visible light to counter HEV (High Energy Visible) or ‘blue’ light – drawing parallels between this and the supposed ability of anti-viral software to combat a computer virus versus the reality of a laggy, clogging program that is supposed to offer a ‘solution.’

Inspired both by the experimental art collective Random International and artist Rachel Whiteread, both works are iterations of the mould, using the rectangle format. Extending my investigations into “filling the gap” and “*objet petit a*,” or “the unattainable object of desire” in Lacanian theory, I am experimenting with the hollow surface in relation to the mould to explore its mass-productive, everyday characteristics. I am interested in devices as extensions of the body and the acceleration of information distributed through them, as well as the addictive nature and emotional emptiness that comes hand-in-hand with screen-mediated interaction.

The shimmering and reflective qualities of aluminum and mirrors, endearing for the user, require light for activation and distortion.



RACHAEL CHAPMAN

*The Mutation of the Mask*

Copper

For me, the adoption of mask-wearing in public was the most visible cultural change in this Covid-19 world. In Auckland, we have had to make peace with their use in everyday life.

*The Mutation of the Mask* is a large-scale construction that came about as part of a process of making and responding to DNA-inspired forms, coupled with tangential mask research. To begin, I looked into mask wearing for health protection, which grew to encompass the cultural and religious differences that affect perceptions of their benefits in the East and the West, as well as the rise of fashionable masks, Covid-19 masks and related mask poetry.

Choosing to make this piece out of copper reflects the plethora of questionable information on the internet about how we protect ourselves. There are companies promoting copper-infused masks for their antimicrobial properties; others refute these claims, saying they could cause allergic reactions. There is so much information available to us, yet the truth is hard to define.



The finished piece expresses the real-world discomfort of wearing a mask daily, as well as such masks' affinities with armour and the prison-like aspect of them.

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I have a background in music as a singer/songwriter, which I couple with a love of festivals and avant-garde fashion. This connective vein of inspiration runs through all my work and melds with a deep-rooted love of urban architecture and life.

For me the structures, doorways, windows, stairwells, hallways – these linear aesthetic repetitions that house life – hold so much opportunity. Also arresting are the tangle of motorways that carve up our cities – on a week-day rush-hour they are strangled and gnarled, yet become beautiful, free-flowing arteries of connectivity at other times. These dichotomies, the light and the dark of urban living, can be frustrating and, conversely, entralling and invigorating.

At the end of my making and research process I summed up the essence of my experience with the following poem, which was spoken as part of the *CLINKProject7* exhibition.

*The World is Wearing Masks*

Rachael Chapman

The world is wearing masks

Some are seen

Some are façades

Some are sinister

Some are kind

Some are protective

fabric armour

peace of mind

The world is wearing masks

We hide our anger

Hide our fears

While we face regrets and fend off death

They hide despair

They absorb our tears

Is Mother Nature flexing muscles?

Testing our resistance?

Damning our persistence?

Returning to us our pestilence?

Which mask do some leaders wear?

Taking poetic license, spinning lines

Is this virus something sinister?

Political posturing, turned to terrorising

Theories conspiring to place blame

Fingers pointing like blades of shame.

The world is wearing masks

Until we fill the gaps with truths

Until we overcome,

We live our lives in reclusion

Behind. The. Mask.

What's behind your mask?

## ANDREW LAST

### *Contact*

*Contact* is made from pounamu, carved into the ubiquitous form of a hand-sanitiser pump nozzle. Placed on a sanitiser bottle at the entrance to an exhibition venue, *Contact* performs its day-to-day function while metaphorically referencing a touchstone, absorbing mauri from all who touch the pump. This touch and subsequent cleansing invite reflection about states of restriction and normality (tapu and noa).

The pounamu utilised for *Contact* was a koha from a colleague. Alistair's father was a rockhound, and this material was passed to Alistair as part of his father's estate. The first work I made from it was a cabochon set in a silver ring. The ring was made in jeweller Kobi Bosshard's workshop and follows a traditional way of hand-working championed by Kobi. I offered to koha the ring back to Alistair, who received it gratefully, enacting a reciprocity that becomes a part of the stone's biography.

*Contact* also functions as a pendant, with the cord retracing the flow of sanitiser through the nozzle's interior channels. When worn, *Contact* offers a reminder of the body's susceptibility to the entry of virus via touch or inhalation. This awareness generated by the jewellery might be considered a talismanic function. Removing the nozzle from its usual context obscures immediate recognition, but it is somehow familiar.

A scrutiny of the pendant reveals the elegance of the intersecting surfaces and the careful transitions from top to side to base. Its elegant form pays tribute to the work of the industrial designers who invest time and creativity in humble, utilitarian objects, so often overlooked after their function has been performed. Transmutation from a mundane object into carved stone is a strategy that gives a nod to contemporary jewellers such as Joe Sheehan, Warwick Freeman and Craig McIntosh – a methodology that is particular to jewellery from Aotearoa.



## DENISE CALLAN

### *Grace*

I lie awake at night searching through what the word “viral” stirs in me.

How will I respond to it? What eventually becomes clear is that the infection among us is multi-faceted. It's the compounding effect of all these factors that consumes me in the dark. It is biological. It is chemical. It is environmental. It is political. It is social. It is financial. It is psychological. It is religious. It is spiritual. It is us.

Humanity.

It's a slow and reluctant revelation. One I cannot un-see. It seems the more we seek to save ourselves, the more we destroy each other. The more enlightened we become, the more unsatisfied we are. Is there any hope? Is the hope I have found pertinent to everyone? Or do they find it quite the opposite?

Grace is my panacea – Grace given freely that I may give.

Not because of me, but in spite of me.

This work has led me to an intimate understanding of Grace and all that it encompasses.

These amulets are a physical representation of something unseen. Thus, I have chosen to use pre-existing languages of form and texture referencing medication and the familiar lifesaver candy. The tactile properties of gypsum cement, from which these items are made, represent medicinal qualities. The red cord signifies connections, not only between us, but between us and our maker.

Through the process of experimentation, I have striven for each piece to be a perfect reflection of the purity of Grace. I have, however, had to learn to accept their imperfections.

They will never be perfect, nor do I want them to be. They each have their own markings and flaws, making them unique, yet the same. Now, as the maker, I see the beauty in that.

I can accept that they too are battle-scarred. I can see them through the eyes of Grace.

I offer them freely as a reflection and a reminder of the hope of Grace.



## GEORGIA CASTLE

### *Cordyceps Brooch*

Cast sterling silver, steel

*Cordyceps* is inspired by a type of fungi whose spores infect an insect host and begin to control its mind, sending the insect to the highest point, where the light shines, so the *Cordyceps* fungus can thrive and continue to release and spread its spores. I also learned from a biology teacher (during her evening jewellery class) that this design strongly resembles a multipolar neuron from the peripheral nervous system – an essential but unseen communication device within our bodies, similar to the spore within plants and fungi.



### *Twist Necklace*

Copper, aluminium, steel, nylon

Focusing on the notions of virality and the rhizome, I took the basket fungus (*Ileodictyon cibarium* or *tūtae kēhua*) as my inspiration for this necklace. I collected a specimen from the ground and allowed it to dry before cutting it into a few pieces. I then photocopied and enlarged them before cutting them out to create these flat forms. I had fun with the process and playing around with the arrangement so as to abstract it from its natural structure.



## JO BRADBEER

### *Viral Chain*

2020 will always be remembered for Covid-19. I have been particularly struck by the tragic number of deaths resulting from the global pandemic. There are so many deaths each day that the deceased are reduced to mere data. The statistics are chilling, particularly as limited testing and differing criteria for attributing the cause of death means that the data is undoubtedly inaccurate.

In New Zealand, each death as a result of the virus is reported as the loss of a loved one, a person highly valued by their family and community. The relatively small numbers infected in New Zealand means that it is still a virus with personal meaning – it infects us and it kills us. We are connected – the statistics are still people, not just numbers. However, the massive global impact of the virus makes it difficult to mitigate the disconnection between statistics and the reality of the lives affected.

Viral Chain is a record of 2020; each link shows the date and the cumulative number of deaths from Covid-19 globally. The chain starts with "Ring a Ring a Roses," an ominous reference to deadly pandemics of the past, like the soundtrack of a scary movie hinting at things to come. However, the data rapidly replaces the song, and the numbers increase exponentially.

The heavy brass chain lies on the chest and around the throat as a metaphorical and physical reminder of the weight of the tragedy of this pandemic. It also makes the wearer more aware of their breathing, a deliberate reference to the one of the main symptoms of the virus.

The chain is ongoing – a new link for every day that someone dies from Covid-19.



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## DESIGN FUTURES – A SYMPOSIUM THAT CONNECTED GRADUATES AND ALUMNI AROUND THE FUTURE OF WORK

Caro McCaw, Megan Brasell-Jones,  
Angela Lyon and Denise Narciso

At the end of a year full of Covid-fuelled change and upheaval, a team of Communication Design staff presented an inaugural symposium aimed at graduating students. The one-day event – “Design Futures” – assembled and presented a variety of professional design approaches to practices experienced by our alumni – students who have completed our programme and are now working in the industry.

Times have never been bleaker for our graduating communication designers. Unofficial attempts at monitoring graduate employment outcomes lead us to believe that over the past 12 years most of our graduates (over 80 percent) have found design-related work within 18 months of graduation. More formal surveys produced by Otago Polytechnic support these figures. However, in 2020 we acknowledged that the Covid-19 pandemic had reduced opportunities for travel, and had created an employment-averse industry.

With this problem at the forefront of our symposium plans, we drew on those design alumni with whom we have maintained regular contact. These are designers we frequently ask to support us with their current industry knowledge, and in peer review activities such as acting as external examiners or moderators and external industry advisors. In this community we receive critique and feedback, and a high degree of trust and understanding has developed, allowing our programme to continually develop and respond to changing industry trends and needs.

Design Futures took place over six hours, on 19 November 2020, the day of our end-of-year graduate exhibition opening (see <https://showcase.op.ac.nz/november-16/debrief/>). Our first Design Futures symposium gathered graduates and alumni for a day of presentations, panels and lightning portfolio presentations. Event branding and collateral were developed by a senior graduating student, Max Thompson. A number of student volunteers helped Max with the event production, including managing registration and event signage, audio and photographic recording of the event and ushering speakers and attendees.

Max had taken a retrospective design theme for his brand language, looking back to the technology of the past to help us see how far we have come. He employed Mac desktop icons from the 1990s, when computers first became used by designers, and included some iconic and familiar pixel art images. His use of two-colour ink and Risographic printing for the event programmes refer to techniques from another era and provoked us to consider what the upcoming era may hold. The red-and-black branding was used for the event programme, wayfinding, t-shirts for event volunteers and on-screen titles. Perhaps the most poignant reference in Max's branded work was the use of floppy disks as symposium lanyards, collected from a local e-waste facility. What, might we consider – in these rapidly changing conditions – were we leaving behind for others to reuse, or find as detritus of our time?



Figure 1. Design Futures lanyards, made from floppy disks sourced through local e-waste collectors. Design by Max Thompson, 2020.



Figure 2. Max Thompson and Tiahli Curran-Hogg welcome symposium attendees. Photograph: Angela Lyon, 2020.

The event programme included a keynote by Noel Brown, outgoing CE of Wellington-based design company DNA and active in the Design for Social Innovation network, two panel presentations and lightning portfolio meetings, where outgoing students could get portfolio advice from experienced designers. An afternoon open-floor conversation focused on how design education could better meet the needs of our graduates, and touched on both understanding work environments (including setting up as contractors in a job shortage context) and ways that graduates could access some of the people and equipment that they later realised they had taken for granted as students. The symposium also included an exhibition, where all presenters were invited to exhibit recent work.



Figure 3. The morning of the Design Futures symposium, an audience gathers. The Hub, Otago Polytechnic. Photograph: Angela Lyon, 2020.

In this paper we focus on the diversity of opinions and experiences expressed in our first panel, “Diverse Practices,” with designers Vincent Egan, Lynda Henderson and Craig Scott.

Their stories map three different directions that design education is leading our graduates and partners. Lynda Henderson has adopted a user-centred approach to creative problem finding (and solving) using design thinking. Lynda’s role as “mission commander” at Dunedin design agency Firebrand has seen the company diversify from a traditional web and print design focus to social innovation, marketing and business transformation (<https://firebrand.nz/portfolio/>). A recent example of this approach is the Youth Employment Success digital platform developed for the Ministry of Social Development to connect unemployed youth with local businesses for experience and employment opportunities.

Craig Scott's practice is found in a combination of roles, from his job at Otago Museum (head of Exhibitions and Creative Services) to his engagement in several Dunedin not-for-profit creative organisations outside of his job. Craig runs the Design Kids Dunedin chapter (<https://thedesignkids.org/tdktuesdays/>) and is chair of Dunedin Designed Inc, who run the Guild design store ([www.guilddunedin.co.nz/](http://www.guilddunedin.co.nz/)). Craig is also a steering group member of Dunedin Dream Brokerage ([www.dunedindreambrokerage.nz/](http://www.dunedindreambrokerage.nz/)) and runs his own business, Self-Destruct Studio (<https://selfdestructstudio.com/>).

Vincent Egan works in kaupapa Māori contexts in the emerging "taniwha economy." The taniwha economy is a term first used by then Māori Affairs Minister Hon Dr Pita Sharples, in relation to the Chinese "dragon economy" cited in *Kōkiri 27 – Powering the Taniwha Economy, Kōanga – Spring 2012*. His co-owned business, Māui Studios, combines a mix of web, film, animation, print and graphic, and more recently mixed reality storytelling projects for clients. They create their own narratives and graphic novels, and engage with blue-sky initiatives including Vincent's Masters project, *Mythic Tāne*, VR contemporary storytelling of traditional pūrākau. Māui Studios are "passionate about creating meaningful content in the te Ao Māori digital space" ([www.mauistudios.co.nz/about/](http://www.mauistudios.co.nz/about/)).



Figure 4. Craig Scott.  
Photograph: Angela Lyon, 2020.



Figure 5. Vincent Egan from Māui Studios, presents.  
Photograph: Angela Lyon, 2020.

After each presenter had showed examples of their work, the panel considered ways in which design education may need to adapt to meet the diverse needs of our learners – from the three different designers' perspectives. We considered ideas relating to both design work and the value of design in these changing times.

We asked three questions :

1. How is Covid-19 effecting your work practices, both during lockdown 2020 and in the future?
2. One of Otago Polytechnic's values is "Our people make a better world." How do you think your design practice/s contribute to designing positive futures?
3. What is your advice to learners and teachers of design, so that we may support these positive futures?

Three themes emerged from the panel, containing some useful advice for fresh graduates.

**With regard to Covid**, all three designers acknowledged big shifts in the way that they worked and where they worked. Along with the inability to complete work that required face-to-face connection, both the types of work (for example, film work on location) and personal connections with clients suffered. For Otago Museum this meant a major loss of income, particularly through the café and shop during lockdown and the museum's closure.

Consequently, the designers' business focus had to shift in response, but there were silver linings. Vincent described this as a time to look inward, both looking after each other and having time for personal upskilling. While Lynda

acknowledged that a number of projects were necessarily “put on hold,” Firebrand’s focus on digital services and products became highly valued and the company had had a busy year. For some of the developers at Firebrand, working from home has become preferred, with some of their team now only coming into the office for meetings. Otago Museum postponed the opening dates of upcoming exhibitions and, as a result, Craig found time to develop additional exhibition materials, such as video clips and a catalogue essay. While Guild design store saw a loss of tourists, the rise of the supportive Buy Local movement helped the store stay afloat.

**Our second question related to social drivers** and how the panel members considered their design practice/s in relation to and as contributing to, designing positive futures.

All three panellists felt strongly about their workplace having a positive social focus. For Vincent, Māui Studios is inherently about empowering young people. As emerging designers, they have received help and guidance from people with more experience and they see their role now as “opening doors for others.” Together, they are constantly “keeping an eye on emerging technologies” to be sure they can positively enable their clients, and young people, in this fast-changing world. Māui Studios’ focus at this time was on developing skills and services in virtual production. This emerging method in filmmaking uses software to combine live-action footage and computer graphics in real time. Filmmakers and animators work together in a digital space across multiple locations, where digital and physical environments merge on set.

Lynda considered Firebrand’s focus on social responsibility and the power of design to “influence people in a positive way.” She reflected on the YES (Youth Employment Service) and how their digital services have helped to connect young people with employment experiences around the country. Lynda commented on the changing nature of work, noting that in these times of intense digital – and at times remote – work, more effort was focussed on maintaining good relationships. There was a growing recognition of social responsibility and the need to give back, starting with local communities and businesses.

Craig identified the emerging role of museums to become a “safe space for unsafe conversations.” He suggested that we could expect the emergence of “ideas not normally seen in museums ... provocative experiences where people can make up their own mind rather than being told what to think.” This trend could be considered a democratisation of museums, with a shift in focus from objects to people. In Craig’s vision of a better world, designers will support a broad consultative process where people assemble to learn from each other in the context of museum collections, rather than didactically from experts who educate visitors. In this social space the museum has a role to play in supporting collaborative practices where we can all learn from each other, both through successes and mistakes.



Figure 6. The “Diverse Practices” Panel:  
Vincent Egan, Lynda Thompson and Craig Scott.  
Photograph: Angela Lyon, 2020.



Figure 7. (Left to right) Caro McCaw (panel chair),  
Vincent Egan (Maui Studios), Lynda Henderson (Firebrand)  
and Craig Scott (Otago Museum).  
Photograph: Angela Lyon, 2020.

**Our third question focused on advice for learners and teachers.** In line with much of the discourse around Covid-19, the designers all stressed the importance of a personal focus on wellbeing and making a very real effort to maintain a balance between work commitments and other parts of a person's life. We are all balancing busy lives, and the design industry is a high-pressure one that constantly changes.

Vinnie was candid about the initial freefall and "chaos" he experienced. His heart-felt counsel included a reminder to "surround yourself with the right people," folk who are both "supportive" but who can also inject a "dose of reality" when required. He offered concrete advice about learning to be more efficient, such as itemising each day and keeping to time slots. Short- and medium-term plans and goals help to maintain a hierarchy of tasks, and keep people from getting distracted from what is most important.

He also highlighted the importance of actively seeking projects that align with one's own values – "energising projects" – as they help to keep up momentum and positive energy.

This sentiment was echoed by Lynda who – also aware of unrealistic personal expectations by young designers – reiterated the importance of "being honest about time." Designers are eternal optimists and can promise too much. This can easily lead to losing out on sleep, and twice Lynda has had to take time out of work to reassess and avoid burnout. "Seeking balance can be hard when you work in a rewarding industry, but you need to find a balance between what you spend your time doing and what fills your cup." She also reflected on the benefits of individuals watching out for each other – to champion others, but also to speak up when behaviour is amiss.

Craig talked of music as his space of relaxation, away from work; he also often engages in his own creative projects to feel connected.

As well as giving practical advice to emerging designers entering the industry, there was also a challenge issued – Lynda prompted designers to diversify and consciously choreograph networks to their own advantage. She reminded us that it's "all about connections." And, as well as "keeping a finger on the pulse," Vinnie urged attendees to develop "PhD-level thinking" by taking the time to be aware of design experts and visionaries – to immerse ourselves in creative culture at the highest levels, which will then inform our own work.



Figure 8. Audience member Inge Andrew asks the panel a question. Photograph: Angela Lyon, 2020.



Figure 9. Lynda Thompson and Craig Scott. Photograph: Angela Lyon, 2020.

As parting advice, Craig and Lynda encouraged graduates to "ask questions, be brave and talk to others." This set the tone for the rest of the day, with students and graduates seeking advice from those more experienced than themselves about their next steps. As those present acknowledged, the future has never been more uncertain, and this is not just true for designers.

As teachers, this was our first effort to open professional conversations about design education and the world of work to students and alumni, beyond the formal external advisory events we negotiate as part of regular programme delivery. The symposium was enthusiastically received by our senior students and graduates, with helpful professional advice going beyond pointers as to 'how to make it as a designer.' Without doubt, design is a valuable and valued profession, as designers contribute to so many aspects of our personal and professional lives. However, in the symposium agility and connectedness emerged as common themes, along with a strong focus on personal time management and wellbeing, where work is not a designer's sole activity. The symposium's visual identity was also reflected in the panel discussion; the use of very old media only reinforced our industry's rapid pace of change and the need to constantly consider the forces of change at work, both digital and social.

This event and our subsequent reflections may be considered a mark in the sand, as we examined the design profession through the lens of some of our graduates in senior design positions, in this moment. We plan to organise new events and wonder – what will the future bring?



Figure 10. Attendees, alumni and organisers chat.  
Photograph: Katie Merrillees, 2020.



Figure 11. Alumni feedback session after the symposium.  
Photograph: Katie Merrillees, 2020.

**Dr Caro McCaw** (ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6775-7409>) investigates how we come to understand our landscapes, local knowledge, and regional cultures and contexts through collaborative creative practice. She asks how we may work around colonial ways of seeing to visualize and understand our shared histories and sites more socially. Caro is an Associate Professor and Academic Leader in Communication Design at Otago Polytechnic. She is involved in a wide range of local community and regional development projects often working with collaborative student-staff teams, and local community groups, including museums.

**Meg Brasell-Jones** (ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8065-3527>) is a senior visual communication lecturer at Te Maru Pūmanawa/College of Creative Practice and Enterprise at Otago Polytechnic/Te Kura Matatini ki Otago. Through practice and research, she blends her interests in education, design, biculturalism, and ecology to contribute to a more sustainable future.

**Angela Lyon** is a lecturer in Communication Design who teaches visual communication and photography. Angela graduated from Dunedin School of Art, Otago Polytechnic, with a Masters of Fine Arts in 2007.

**Denise Narciso** is a Lecturer at Te Maru Pūmanawa, College of Creative Practice and Enterprise. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Advertising Management and finished her Postgraduate Diploma in Design at OP. Denise has a passion for teaching graphic design, branding, advertising, and social media. Her research interest areas include developing a Project-Based Learning framework for the degree, enhancing learner experiences, and strengthening partnership internally within OP and external community partners. Denise also manages all the enquiries for projects and evaluates their suitability for student involvement.

## LOCAL NARRATIVE IN TYPE DESIGN – A STUDENT PROJECT IN ŌTEPOTI / DUNEDIN

Lucy Richardson and Denise Narciso

### OVERVIEW

The type design project for first-year design students enrolled in Otago Polytechnic's Communication Design programme is an opportunity to understand the anatomy, terminology and classification of type through designing a typeface based on the narratives embedded in our local built environment in Ōtepoti/Dunedin.

Dunedin residents live among, and highly value, the city's unique architectural heritage, its volcanic landscape and its variable climate. These things are the bedrock of Dunedin's culture – a quality that local design company BrandAid has identified and communicated well in the current Dunedin brand strategy for the Dunedin City Council, promoting the city as an authentic, intelligent, intriguing and creative place to be.<sup>1</sup> The gothic font used for the Dunedin brand reflects the city's personality – gritty, raw and individualist. We see ourselves as both traditional and rebellious. It is this communicative power and character that we ask the students to explore in designing their own type, drawing inspiration from their local environment and its distinctive culture.



Figure 1. Dunedin brand logo and marketing strategy, designed by BrandAid.

Typography and history are inextricably linked. Dunedin's Scottish connections and the influential design conventions of the nineteenth and twentieth century are displayed in the impressive architecture that locals walk among and look at every day. Most of us are unaware of the stories of prosperity, scandal, innovation and enterprise that occurred here. While the internet makes engaging with this social history accessible, a field trip into our local built environment makes for a more immersive class experience.

We asked students to photograph examples of historic buildings, their architectural features, vernacular signage and places of interest outside of the main retail precinct. These photographs began an exploration of local storytelling and how it might inform our own design language. This tangible heritage serves as an identifiable marker of time and place.<sup>2</sup> It reminds us of what has come before – often representing commercial enterprise, small local business, independent shops and people who served as community figures.

Buildings behave in much the same way as artefacts; they have an iconic impact within their landscape and they express technical and aesthetic innovations specific to their era or style. They also communicate stories of people and community – the architects, the occupiers, the tenants, the customers. These are stories that connect our past and present. Many of our students did not grow up in Dunedin, and embedding local history helps them to develop a shared sense of belonging.

According to Chenoa Pettrup of the Asia Pacific Design Library, “We often think of objects and artefacts as ephemera in the lives of people, but it could be said that the opposite is true – people are the ephemera in the lives of objects. The object continues to exist well after the people are gone.”<sup>13</sup> This insight reflects a shift in emphasis from the technical visual norms we are used to considering when looking at buildings to the social significance and historical relevance of the work, elevating the role narrative plays in design.

In his blog, local archivist and researcher David Murray captures the essence of how students might imagine these social histories, bringing the past to life: “It’s all very well looking at the Hallenstein’s building in Dowling Street as a good example of Renaissance Revival architecture, but it really comes to life when you imagine the sounds of 22 different brands of sewing machine whirring away, or the commotion as a couple of hundred workers rushed to lunch at precisely 1 pm.”<sup>14</sup>

## DESIGNING A TYPEFACE

Type is often invisible. In this project, we start the process of teaching our students to look at and critically analyse type that is all around them. Noticing type becomes addictive and some students complain that they can’t ‘not look’ at it anymore. The type design project was based on the premise that the more closely you observe, deconstruct and construct letterforms, the more you will learn about the visual logic and optical illusions at play.

The brief was divided into three parts – understanding type, creating type and telling type stories. Preparatory exercises involving letterforms and counterforms helped develop the student’s eye for type, learning what letters are inherently difficult or uncomfortable and what compensations need to be made. As designers, we learn the expression, tension and tone that is contained in the geometry of a letterform and how to embellish it with narrative and personality, giving students a hands-on experience of type anatomy and the emotive qualities of type. We question what makes a good typeface and how type is used in context and throughout history.

From this platform, students started designing their own typeface. They followed an analogue-to-digital process – sketching, scanning and redrawing letterforms. Starting with pencil on grid paper is a non-committal way to test what works. Students find the nuances involved unique to their typeface and work hard to problem-solve their way to produce a complete alphabet. They then scanned and redrew the letterforms in Illustrator, mastering bézier curves and the pen tool. Vector fonts give designers a lot of freedom to manipulate individual characters, add colour and textures, and include alternate characters such as ligatures and glyphs. In the final stage, students take their refined forms through a font-creation program and output an OpenType font and then test the proportion, balance and legibility of their font in use. Students learn about kerning type and the difference between the legibility of letters in isolation and as words and sentences – bringing to life type designer Matthew Carter’s famous quote, “A typeface is a beautiful collection of letters, not a collection of beautiful letters.”<sup>15</sup>

When new typefaces are created, type foundries often design ‘specimens’ to pitch them to the design community. As an initial step in user-focused design, we asked students to tell the story of their typeface in the form of a “typescape” – a hybrid term coined from the expressions “type specimen” and “brand stylescape.” We wanted students to communicate the unique character of their typeface and the story behind it through a curated collection of type explorations, images, textures and colour.

## LOCAL TYPE NARRATIVES

While Dunedin is not a big city, it was New Zealand's first city, and it quickly became a bustling commercial and industrial centre in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. While it contains many iconic buildings with well-known stories – Larnach Castle, Dunedin Railway Station, Speights Brewery, schools, museums and churches – students were urged to look beyond the well-trodden heritage tour to uncover some of the lesser-known stories or to explore the known in new ways.

We found that the most successful projects focused on either the typeface itself (based on the architectural features of the building chosen) or on the narrative told. Student outcomes were a mix of faithful restorations and free interpretations. Three projects illustrate the diversity of responses: one story derived from a visible landmark, another was buried in newspaper archives and the third drew on contemporary vernacular culture.

Emma Buchan based her typeface on the restored Cadbury Fry Hudson building on inner-city Castle Street. The renovation of the façade was the final act made by the company before exiting Dunedin. This building was one of few retained in the area as large-scale demolition got underway to make way for Dunedin's new hospital development.

After extensive research into the evolution of the Cadbury brand and chocolate wrapper design, Emma decided to explore her typeface in a sensual way. She created her original alphabet with melted chocolate, highlighting the ball serif used in the Cadbury logo which dated to the early 1900s. The resulting fluid, imperfect curves and ball serif are the repetitive elements and foundation of her alphabet. In her tactile exploration of her subject, Emma successfully captured the joy every child and visitor to Dunedin will remember when they signed up for a Cadbury tour and left with a bag of goodies clutched in their hand. She created her alphabet on foil, evoking the feel and smell of an unwrapped bar of chocolate.



Figure 2. Chocolate Swirl typeface, designed by Emma Buchan.

In contrast, Sophia Hunt explored her typeface in a more research-based, but equally playful manner; exposing a darker side of our local history. Drawing on online articles in *Papers Past* and the Otago Daily Times company archives,<sup>6</sup> Sophia discovered a significant patch of land next to the railway tunnel that runs alongside the Tunnel Hotel in Port Chalmers. Now covered in scrub, it was once the site of Messrs Clarke & Co., a ship's chandlery. Charles Clarke was captain and owner of the *SS Wainui*, a steamer associated with the Pacific slave trade which operated in the 1860s and 1870s. A larger vessel than most operating in the area, the *Wainui* offered a greater economy of scale in transporting human cargo.

Drawing on reports by naval officers and sailors, historian Scott Hamilton has brought to light the significant role Dunedin played in the Pacific slave trade.<sup>7</sup> One story recounts how the *Wainui* approached Nukapu Island in the Solomons on 20 September 1871. As the steamer came into view, the locals hurried to fill their canoes with food and other tradeable goods and paddled out to greet it. As the two parties met, the *Wainui* failed to slow, running down the canoes and scattering those aboard. The captain is reported to have directed his crew to pick up a number of the desperate islanders, leaving some to swim back to shore or drown, sailing away with the captives and depleting the already small population of Nukapu. This kidnapping became a defining moment in the Pacific Island slave trade, that provided labour for Peruvian plantations – a dark side of our history that has been largely overlooked.

An old pair of shackles, most likely sold by Clarke & Co's, formed the basis of Sophia's typeface, inspiring the distinctive curvature of her letterforms. She also played on the 'cowboy saloon' mentality she associated with the Tunnel Hotel to create Hinder, a typeface featuring a unique combination of shackles and spurs.

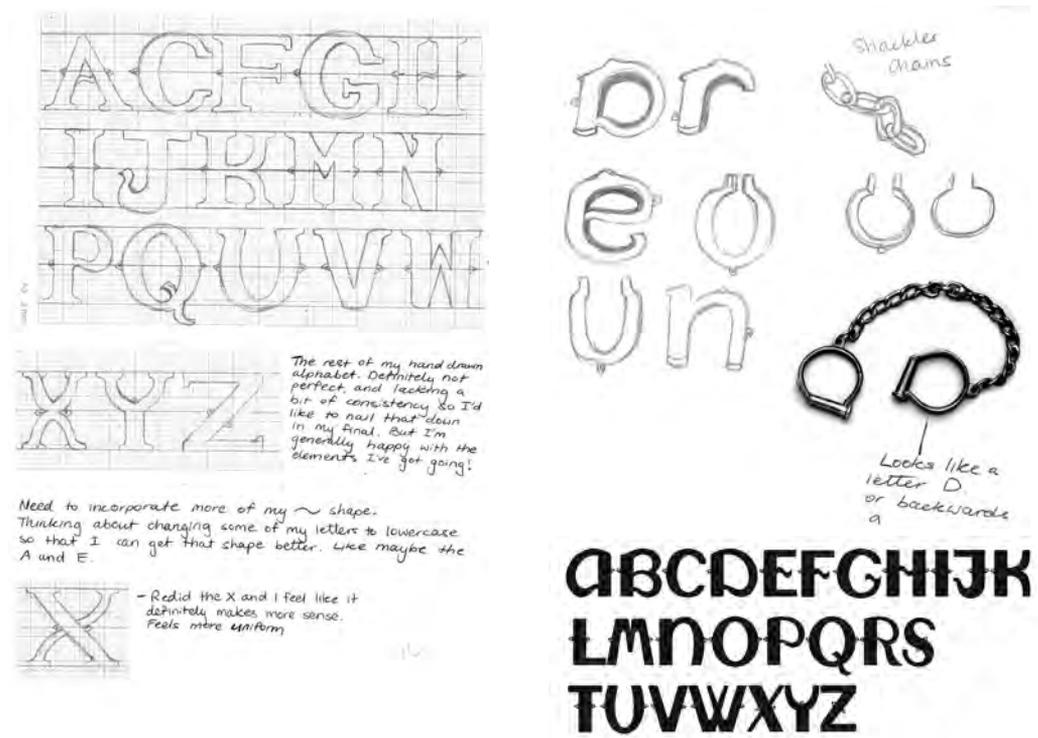


Figure 3. Hinder typeface, designed by Sophia Hunt.

THE COURT YARD HALF WAY HOUSE

HYDE OUT

P R H Y D E  
A B C F G I  
J K L M N O  
Q S T U V W  
X Z 1 2 3 4  
5 6 7 8 9 0

A B C D E F  
G H I J K L  
M N O P Q R  
S T U V W X  
Y Z 0 1 2 3  
4 5 6 7 8 9

Figure 4. Hyde typeface, designed by Caitlin Easson.

A third example draws on one student's personal experience of living in the tertiary campus precinct. Caitlin Easson chose a well-known story of student flats and student parties. The semiotics of flat signage and naming conventions has been explored extensively by Sarah Gallagher in her book *Scarfie Flats of Dunedin*.<sup>8</sup> While flat names come and go, they reflect the make-up of the student population and reference the current pop culture (for example, references to *The Simpsons*, Tolkien and Harry Potter). Flat names also speak to the state and quality of housing and living in the area, playing on irony and double entendre (*The Hilton*, *The Fridge*). Poets, authors, musicians and artists have long been inspired by the history and culture unique to the Otago student experience.

Caitlin focused on Hyde Street and its annual keg party, looking at the graffiti style of vernacular signage for flat names such as *Da Church*, *Phyde*, *Rehab* and *Hydeout* and the thick, hand-drawn lettering of *Mile Hyde*, *Wine at Nine* and *Hyde Seas*. She started out using Indian ink to capture the hand-drawn essence of these signs. Her workbook suggested that it was challenging to follow the rules of typography, given such organic forms, as she sought to find ways of making the contrasting strokes and features repeat.

For students new to typography, vector software and research, this project presented a major learning curve. However, with determined focus, all 45 students produced a useable font. The project helped everyone make the kind of productive connections that are useful for graphic designers, reflecting both on our environment and cultural context – from vernacular forms to hidden stories. Through the project, Dunedin was revealed as a settler city with inspirational material remnants and remarkable social histories.

While buildings are treasured and protected, type design by contrast has become a dispensable fashion. An influx of digital font software has produced a widespread enthusiasm for type-creation by designers, giving everyone access to the same tools and methods of production. Adobe plug-ins support the ability to turn shapes into fonts that can be embedded in any design project. What was once highly valued as a professional craft belonging to typographers has become easy and cheap for any digital creative to access – but with it comes a potential decline in quality and timelessness. In the words of New Zealand typographer Kris Sowersby, of Klim type foundry: "Producing a new typeface is almost trivial – it can be done in a day. But making it feel new in the wider sense, making it feel culturally relevant is the hard part."<sup>9</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Through juxtaposing old stories with new technologies, we discovered that we could find, preserve and transform our local stories into typefaces. Our new digital forms gave these stories a moment in the present, and potentially a future. According to Ellen Lupton, typefaces drawn from vernacular sources "build upon a taut yet permeable web of visual literacy, a common language in which elements move in and out of currency, their meaning open to continual revision. The best work transforms the meaning of the old and the ordinary while drawing energy from its tremendous power to communicate."<sup>10</sup> Teaching type design through local storytelling provided a deeper reflective design practice for our students.

As we continue to develop this project, more 'type narratives' will be discovered and interpreted into useable fonts. With this in mind we, as educators, feel the need to begin to digitally archive and share these stories. It is our vision to create a Dunedin online type foundry, primarily for the purpose of teaching and learning. Fonts will be made publicly available for our students to use and potentially for client projects, contributing to and committing to design that articulates and celebrates our local culture.

Through this project, we started students on a journey in which they began to understand the communicative power of design. By elevating the role of narrative, students learned to view and understand their city a little differently, and through a designer's eyes.

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## ON THE ECHINATE QUESTION OF WHAT MIGHT BE MEANT BY THE TERM 'RESEARCH' WHEN EVALUATING AND DISCUSSING VISUAL ART

Mark Baskett

Eighteen months ago, I was asked by two staff members from the Dunedin School of Art to develop a discussion around the role of research in my ongoing artistic practice. This article has been written following the presentation of that discussion – delivered on the 1st April 2021, within the time of my residency at the art school.

For me the term research is at once productive and problematic – a term whose usage today seems quite widespread and ubiquitous in much discourse in the area of visual arts. Interested in exploring ideas around art and research, I first provide some grounding remarks on the emergence of the term in the broader field of fine arts education and art practice. Next, some of the concerns found nesting in these grounding points will be threaded into four examples from my own artwork made over the last 20 years.

Obviously, I am not the first artmaker to have questioned the use of the term 'research' in arts institutions and in much of the discourse surrounding visual art today. Considering this, and when looking into the origins of the more recent use of the term, it is informative to bear in mind the rather matter-of-fact remark by the Chicago-based academic James Elkins: "the initial impetus behind the terms research and new knowledge is purely economic."<sup>1</sup> As Elkins goes on to note, it was during the 1980s, in the United Kingdom, Ireland and Australasia, that changing models for funding arts programmes made the inclusion of more lucrative higher degrees an attractive – even an essential – part of a school's offering for potential students.<sup>2</sup>

Beyond these financial concerns tied directly to academia and shifting models of state funding for arts institutions, other forces emerged in the 1980s that would further emphasise the idea that wider economic benefits could be gained through research-focussed, university-level arts education. Judith Mottram made these economically motivated ideas quite clear when she wrote in a 2009 article:

The mid-late 1980s saw design hailed as the possible saviour for UK manufacturing and trade. Interest in how design adds value to commodities contributed to the modelling of 'the creative industries.' Building upon the theorisation of design research at the Royal College of Art in the 1970s (Archer 1979), doctoral activity began to emerge across all art and design disciplines, encouraged by the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAAs).<sup>3</sup>

Mottram directly experienced the force of these ideas when she began her doctoral pathway in 1984. Funding for her fine arts-focussed PhD was justified by her principle supervisor, who argued that fine art's ability to influence design would help to inspire future designers as they worked to support the economic goals of these newly named "creative industries."<sup>4</sup>

Two decades on from this shift in the United Kingdom (if I can stay with the example of the UK for a moment), Professor Sir Christopher Frayling – then rector of the Royal College of Art in London – took time to reflect on the progress and presence of research in visual arts education. In his foreword to the 2006 book *Thinking Through Art: Reflections on Art as Research*, Frayling asserted that confusion exists around how academic research

might be applied to the area of fine arts.<sup>5</sup> Perhaps most urgent among the concerns expressed by Frayling is the selection of an appropriate methodological framework when making art that lays claims to being art-as-research. How might the tradition-based quantitative, qualitative or mixed-methods approaches be employed within the context of an art project? Added to this, questions remained for Frayling about the art project's ability to produce clearly communicable results that can be seen to produce new knowledge and understanding. The application of established research practices to the field of visual art might well help the viewer of an artwork to locate characteristics such as technical proficiency, the display of competency, or even a type of 'correctness' in approach – but does this, Frayling asks, help support and promote creative artistic output?<sup>6</sup>

Frayling was certainly not alone in having these concerns, for a year after making these remarks the Arts and Humanities Research Council of England conducted a review of practice-led research in art, design and architecture, noting that: "In particular we have come to the conclusion that conventional ideas of contribution to knowledge or understanding may not be serving us well. This is significant to fine artists but we believe that it is relevant across ADA [the fields of Arts, Design, and Architecture] and a shared effort to develop appropriate new models would be a constructive development."<sup>7</sup>

With these initial remarks in mind, I'd like to offer some examples from my own work as a maker of visual art. My interest here is in considering an individual working within this time of flux and change, where ideas around research are slowly entering into both the teaching and the making of visual art. My first example concerns an individual working at a small institute then titled the Quay School of the Arts. Tucked away in Whanganui, New Zealand, it was an educational facility based in the centre of a small city of around 60,000 residents, a city known for its high number of retirees and its relatively large Māori population. When I was attending, the school boasted a roll of around 130 students, all enrolled to do a BFA degree; unusually, most of the faculty were lecturers from the US, whose teaching provided a distinctly North American slant to course content and the degree's overall perspective.

Like many others entering tertiary arts education, I found that this course offered my first sustained and concentrated look into the question of what it might mean to produce contemporary visual art. Unlike BFA programmes offered in New Zealand today, the Quay School course spanned not three, but four years of full-time tuition. With this added time component, and following the legacy of the Bauhaus, the first year of study sent students through all the school's departments to undertake five-week block courses, focussed squarely on an engagement with the functional properties of materials – be they glass, clay, paint, plaster or print film, or the scratched lines in a copper etching plate.

To complete the final year of this intensive time of study, I submitted an installation around the size of a double garage – a work that can be seen in Figure 1. Housed within this artwork were a number of kinetic objects: a swivelling hairdryer tightly cloaked in bright green vinyl; a pendulous sculptural work powered by an old clock mechanism; and a smaller work vaguely resembling a piece of gym equipment that, when operating, powered a wheezing rubber bellows.



Figure 1. Mark Baskett, *Big Pink*, 2001, mixed media installation, 5.2 x 6.8 x 2.8 m. Whanganui, New Zealand.

At the centre of this installation stood a tall, painted sheet-steel object that encased "The Electro-Blitz 2000" – a recycled and repurposed fly zapper (Figure 2.). Five cast glass discs slowly rotated around this object, and each disc supported a tiny diorama made up of model vehicles and tiny plastic characters posing motionless beside small piles of multicoloured, rotting foodstuffs. Occasionally the quietness of this slowly moving work would be interrupted by a *zzziitt* and the fatal last light of an insect attracted to the artwork's rotten food.

Regarding the question of research and what research might have been conducted in relation to the artwork briefly described here, a number of things can be said to have occurred. Yes – the artwork was produced while investigating various artist models, learning about art history, and delving into a small selection of concepts, theories and socio-cultural ideas. When I was involved in these activities, the US perspective was certainly felt – at times perhaps, even at the expense of paying closer attention to the New Zealand context existing in and just outside the classroom door. In the sculpture department within which I was nestled, figures like Robert Gober, Ed Kienholz, David Lynch and Martin Puryer were prized and often referenced and discussed. A strong emphasis was also placed on a form of visual art that favours imaginative exposition and the exploration of certain internal states of mind. Yet if you wanted to delve more deeply into concepts and ideas – such as spatial practice as articulated by Henri Lefebvre, or theoretical reflections on the work of Len Lye, or the work of bell hooks or Judith Butler – then you were left much more readily on your own.

Looking back now, it seems reasonable to assert that specific notions and assumptions about the make-up, presence and place of creativity were present within the Whanganui-based BFA programme, and that these notions and assumptions share parallels with many other arts institutions. Mottram outlines these potential assumptions when surveying notions of creativity present in UK arts institutions, questioning how specific ideas about creativity might affect the practice research relating to art: "Some of the confusion about research and art practice stems from the high value accorded to creative drives and outputs, and the perception that they are also inexplicable. Livingston noted how the notion 'analysis leads to paralysis' was commonplace (Livingston 1989:13), and Boden described this as a mistaken belief that creativity should not be 'sullied by the tentacles of scientific explanation' (Boden 1990:14)."<sup>8</sup>

Four years on from completing a BFA qualification, I entered an MFA programme titled "Kunst im Öffentlichen Raum: Public Art and New Artistic Strategies," run through the Bauhaus-Universität in Weimar, Germany. This graduate programme was divided into four separate assessments, where within each semester it was expected that students successfully complete seminar work and produce a distinctive work or works for submission and evaluation. Additionally, it was required that in the fourth and final semester the production of an artwork would be accompanied by an MFA thesis.



Figure 2. Mark Baskett, *Big Pink*, 2001, mixed media installation, 5.2 x 6.8 x 2.8 m. Whanganui, New Zealand.

The first semester began with the development of work for public exhibition in the city of Leuven – a small, affluent town located in the heart of Flemish-speaking Belgium. MFA students from the Bauhaus Universität were teamed up with students from the University of Sint Lukas, Brussels, and were asked to respond to a very particular thematic – the relationship between the prison and transit camp of Breendonk in Nazi-occupied Belgium and the concentration camp of Buchenwald in Weimar, Germany, during the Second World War. For many involved in this public exhibition – some of whom were new to both Belgium, Germany and indeed the continent of Europe – the sheer weight and complexity of the exhibition's subject appeared quite unfathomable; whether spoken of or not, discussions that took place during the exhibit's preparation seemed to be made under the shadow of an unexperienced and ultimately unimaginable background of violence and catastrophe. As a result, the public artworks that came out of this process varied greatly in their preparedness or even interest to address the given theme.

In an effort to somehow limit the vastness and complexity of this subject, I tried to confine myself to contemporary Belgian society, focusing on the iconography of nationalism, the Belgian political party known as the *Vlaams Belang*,<sup>9</sup> and the increasing popular interest in Belgium in far-right political ideologies. The artwork that developed (see Figure 3) looked toward monuments: both as a distinct artistic genre and as a visual means through which political and ideological views can be captured, given form, and expressed.

Making this artwork involved time spent visiting a variety of sites relevant to the subject and the exhibition, where photos, notes and preparatory drawings were made. As with my undergraduate curriculum, artist models were found that relate to the work's subject matter and theme. Time was also spent looking more specifically into artistic strategies and visual language relating to the presentation of right-wing political ideologies. Artists affiliated with the Third Reich, such as Arno Breker, Heinrich Berann and Sepp Hiltz, were investigated in the development of this work. I examined Hiltz (Figures 4 and 5) for the way in which his work captured an obsessive sense of physical health, moral uprightness and the replacement of any image of political activity with, as Slavoj Žižek puts it, "a single ecstatic vision of a totalitarian family."<sup>11</sup> The obscene excess found in works by Arno Breker (see Figure 6) were also of interest, where Breker sought to return visual iconography to a nationally based, imaginary and, above all, heroic warrior past.

This artwork signalled a shift with regard to potential research and my engagement with the problem of making art, where, as Rae Earnshaw noted in his 2016 book, *Research and Development in Art, Design and Creativity*, "[t]he search for, and impact on, new knowledge currently places responsibilities on the artist-researcher; challenging them to theorise their practice to self, others and communities."<sup>14</sup> Working through the challenges of this art-making framework, it also became quite clear, as Earnshaw remarks, that "it is less and less tenable for artists working in academe to hide behind the role of the mute artist."<sup>15</sup> More generally, at the Bauhaus and during an exchange semester spent at a programme titled "Art in Context," run through the UdK (Universität der Künste Berlin), it was remarkable to observe how many students reacted to the challenges put forward within the MFA programme. The term 'research' was itself becoming more and more widely used, with students presenting themselves as "artist/researchers," "artist/activists," or the tripartite "artist/activist/researchers."



Figure 3. Mark Baskett, *Tijdelijk monument voor de nieuwe opkomst van rechts in België*,<sup>10</sup> 2006, temporary public artwork, fibreglass, steel, wood and tie-down ratchet straps. Leuven, Belgium.

Figures 4 & 5. Sepp Hiltz, *Die Mägde, die Knechte*, from his *Bäuerliche Trilogie*,<sup>12</sup> 1941, oil on canvas.  
bpk | Bayerische Staatsbibliothek | Archiv Heinrich Hoffmann.  
See <https://germanartgallery.eu/sepp-hiltz-junge-frau/>

Graduating with an MFA in 2007, I was fortunate over the next four years to undertake a variety of artistic projects, including two 12-month residencies in the region of Zurich, Switzerland, and a shorter but highly engaging residency in a programme titled “Pilotprojekt Gropiusstadt” in Gropiusstadt, Berlin. During this time I continued to investigate and produce artwork for temporary display in public space – a strategy that brought a deepening involvement in site-specific, site-investigative creative work. This resulted in art projects that sought to locate real-existing social phenomena and tie what was found – be it an object, a story or an event – to the present-day context within which the artwork would be shown.

An example of this approach comes from a residency undertaken in the small city of Uster in 2009-10. Though free to develop any type of work during the residency, I applied for this programme declaring my interest in making site-specific art and, when accepted, I quickly began to familiarise myself with both the history and the current makeup of the city. It did not take long to discover that by the early nineteenth century Uster was not only the most heavily industrialised area of Switzerland, but also in broader continental Europe. The river that runs through Uster was, for a time at least, the driving force behind this originally water-powered industrial development. By the 1970s, however, all but one of the city’s many cotton spinning factories had closed, leaving Uster to come to terms with its new post-industrial era.



Figure 6. Arno Breker, *Der Wächter*, from his *Die Große Deutsche Kunstausstellung*,<sup>13</sup> 1942. Munich.  
bpk | Deutsches Historisches Museum / Ernst Schlumberger;  
© Arno Breker.VG Bild-Kunst/Copyright Agency, 2021.

Over the last few decades, many attempts have been made in Uster to revitalise this once heavily industrialised space; in particular, I was struck by the so-named “cultural pathway” developed by the Swiss architect, Hans Baatschi. Titled “Industriepfad Uster;” his project involved placards placed along the riverway that courses through Uster; each placard and its associated information panel referring to a specific factory site and adjoining private land. It was an attempt (the first made in Switzerland) to musealise the former industrial sites of a town.

Other attempts to stimulate Uster’s economy have included a private/public partnership between the last surviving textile business, Zellweger AG, and the city’s technical training institute, the Berufsschule Uster. Here a new focus was placed on vocational training for making high-end products and high-tech textile production. Interested in these activities, I went to visit Herr Steinlin, a long-time teacher at Uster’s technical training institute. With a wry smile he led me into the basement of the school to show me a rather neglected and out-of-the-way display cabinet. In it sat a Dutch-made Philips P2000T – a 1982 Z80-based computer with a memory capacity of up to 48KB. Following its purchase by the Berufsschule Uster, in partnership with Zellweger AG, for an alleged purchase price of 15,000 Swiss francs, it was hoped that with proper training a new era in Swiss-led innovation and industry would now be launched and set into motion.

In the months leading up to the exhibition of this art project, the catchment pond attached to Zellweger AG was drained and extensively cleaned. Following the shift from water to electrical power, it had reportedly become standard practice for the company to dump disused machinery into the murk of its privately owned pond. At an estimated cost of over two million Swiss francs, a clean-up was now underway – a prerequisite for the sale of the pond and its surrounding land back to the city council of Uster:

Utilising the pre-existing display platform developed by the Industriepfad of Uster; the artwork (see Figure 8) went on display. It can be seen here at a depth of about half a metre under the surface of the pond, with Figure 9 showing a detail of the work.

My approach to artmaking changed direction again in late spring of 2011 with the unexpected announcement of impending fatherhood. Residencies and the time investment dedicated to making public art suddenly seemed unsustainable; I noticed, too, that when undertaking site-specific public art projects, the documentation of the work and creating a narrative around its themes was occupying more of my time and creative interest. With these considerations in mind, and with many other factors besides, I began to seriously reconfigure my approach to making visual art.

Some of the results of this reconfiguration can be seen in my exhibition, “The Neighbourhood – Selected Works 2017-2021,” shown during the period in which I undertook the Dunedin School of Art residency (see Figure 10). Blocks of text are presented along with imagery – yet rather than using the written word as I had done earlier; these new works marked a different approach to the use of text. Following a suggestion put forward by the acclaimed feminist theorist and scholar Peggy Phelan, language has been used here as a way to write *with* rather than *about* its



Figure 7. Hans Baatschi, *Industrie Pfad Uster, Station 7*. Uster; Zürich. Author’s photograph, 2010.



Figure 8. Mark Baskett, *DER PHILIPS P2000T: Zwei Versuche zur Wiedereinführung eines Objekts der Ustermer Avantgarde*,<sup>16</sup> 2010, temporary public artwork. Uster, Switzerland.



Figure 9. Mark Baskett, *DER PHILIPS P2000T: Zwei Versuche zur Wiedereinführung eines Objekts der Ustermer Avantgarde*, 2010, temporary public artwork (detail). Uster, Switzerland.

subject and, in this sense, words try to “gallop up” alongside a work.<sup>17</sup> Not to master; dominate or explain an image, but to seek instead to provide a sense of specificity, and create, if possible, a level of narrative intimacy as the text drives the viewer back towards the image.

And whether the subject matter is (as in Figure 10) a suburban name such as Maryhill; whether the focus lies on the radically different conceptions of land use and land ownership between Māori and Pākehā; or whether the theme is the influence of coal in shaping the cityscape of twentieth-century Dunedin: all these elements seek to put an imaginative pressure on the recognisable, and then ask how they might shape a vision of a place today.

So to conclude, for the moment, I would like to suggest that, on the one hand, research is for me quite a productive term, for I like the way it seems to imply a ‘careful search.’ The term also seems productive for the way it implies a constant questioning of one’s work in terms of its materiality and form – asking what art can physically be, how it might arise, and what it might (or might not) in some way seek to do. Like others, I too am interested in the idea that when investigating your topic, you develop what can be called a logic internal to the work. Henk Slager points to this in his article in the book *Artists with PhDs*: “Artistic research can never be characterized by a well-defined, rigid methodology [...] it entails a strong belief in a methodological articulable result founded by operational strategies that cannot be legitimized beforehand. Indeed, that is the essential characteristic of artistic research.”<sup>18</sup>

I am also, nonetheless, left with a number of questions and uncertainties, particularly with regard to artistic research and the production of new knowledge and clearly articulable forms of understanding. These questions and uncertainties echo the concerns of Sir Christopher Frayling outlined at the beginning of this article. Frayling’s concerns seem to centre on what might or might not be occurring when we encounter and experience a work of visual art. Do our encounters, for example, rely *not* on clearly articulable forms of understanding, but rather, on a shift away from any form of stable signification into an immersion in the work’s internal process? Is Adorno correct when claiming that the aesthetic experience of an artwork is in fact characterised by an interminable sense of processuality?<sup>19</sup> And if so, does it follow that an artwork defines itself by its ability to negate any rise to the level of clearly articulable understanding? And what might be the consequences if we accept the idea that the artwork only exists so long as it holds the viewer in state of undecidability, where not knowledge, but a relation of “configurative discontinuity”<sup>20</sup> gives the work its momentum and its drive?

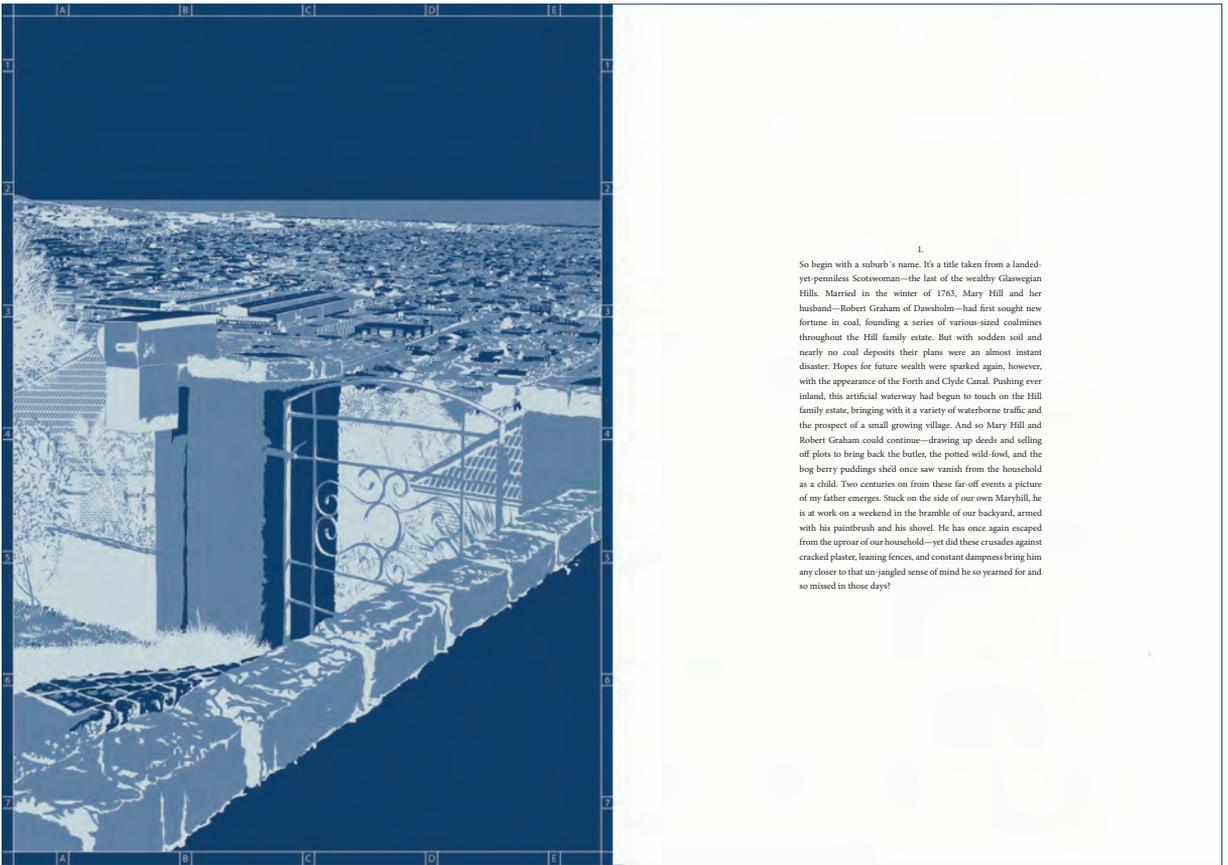


Figure 10. Mark Baskett, *The Neighbourhood*, 2017-21, inkjet print, 450 x 620 mm (exhibition detail).

1.  
So begin with a suburb's name. It's a title taken from a landed-  
yet-penniless Scotswoman—the last of the wealthy Glaswegian  
Hills. Married in the winter of 1763, Mary Hill and her  
husband—Robert Graham of Dawsholm—had first sought new  
fortune in coal, founding a series of various-sized coalmines  
throughout the Hill family estate. But with sodden soil and  
nearly no coal deposits their plans were an almost instant  
disaster. Hopes for future wealth were sparked again, however,  
with the appearance of the Forth and Clyde Canal. Pushing ever  
inland, this artificial waterway had begun to touch on the Hill  
family estate, bringing with it a variety of waterborne traffic and  
the prospect of a small growing village. And so Mary Hill and  
Robert Graham could continue—drawing up deeds and selling  
off plots to bring back the butler, the potted wild-fowl, and the  
bog berry puddings she'd once saw vanish from the household  
as a child. Two centuries on from these far-off events a picture  
of my father emerges. Stuck on the side of our own Maryhill, he  
is at work on a weekend in the bramble of our backyard, armed  
with his paintbrush and his shovel. He has once again escaped  
from the uproar of our household—yet did these crusades against  
cracked plaster, leaning fences, and constant dampness bring him  
any closer to that un-jangled sense of mind he so yearned for and  
so missed in those days?

Reflecting on these questions, and thinking about research and art, I now suspect that over the last 20 years I have extended my involvement into what I would call 'background research' in order to help deepen my engagement with what I'm doing. The role of research here – if indeed the term 'research' really fits at all – follows Mottram when she discusses a form of artmaking that involves the accumulation of diverse and various materials for the purpose of driving forward ongoing creativity.<sup>21</sup> As to epistemic questions of new knowledge or clearly articulatable understanding – at present, I still wonder whether these terms really apply when thinking through visual art. But perhaps this can be left for the viewer to decide.

**Mark Baskett** is a practicing visual artist, born in Dunedin, New Zealand. He holds a BFA from what was then The Quay School of Arts, in Whanganui, New Zealand, and an MFA from the Bauhaus Universität, in Weimar, Germany. To date his work has been shown in Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, the United States, and New Zealand. In addition to artmaking, he is currently employed part time as a teacher in the Arts and Media Department at the Nelson Polytechnic (NMIT).

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- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Judith Mottram, "Asking Questions of Art: Higher Education, Research and Creative Practice," in *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts*, eds Hazel Smith and Roger T Dean (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 229-51, at 233.
- 4 Ibid, 234.
- 5 Christopher Frayling, "Foreword," in MacLeod and Holdridge, *Thinking Through Art*, xii-xiv, at xiii.
- 6 Ibid, xiv.
- 7 Chris Rust, Judith Mottram and Jeremy Till, *AHRC Research Review, Practice-led Research in Art, Design and Architecture*, <http://shura.shu.ac.uk/7596/1/Pactice-ledReviewNov07.pdf>, 23.
- 8 Mottram, "Asking Questions," 230.
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- 14 Rae Earnshaw, *Research and Development in Art, Design and Creativity* (London: Springer, 2016), 24.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 "THE PHILIPS P2000T: Two attempts at the reintroduction of an object from Uster's avant-garde."
- 17 Peggy Phelan and Helena Reckitt, *Art and Feminism* (London: Phaidon Press, 2001), 38.
- 18 Henk Slager, "Art and Method," in *Artists with PhDs: On the New Doctoral Degree in Studio Art*, ed. James Elkins (Washington, DC: New Academia Publishing, 2009), 55.
- 19 Christoph Menke, *The Sovereignty of Art: Aesthetic Negativity in Adorno and Derrida*, trans. Neil Solomon (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1999), 49.
- 20 Ibid., 127.
- 21 Mottram, "Asking Questions," 248.

## THE 'ETHICAL TURN' IN CONTEMPORARY ART AS RESEARCH

Edward Hanfling

The histories of modernism and postmodernism are full of artists who used 'shock tactics' to make 'cutting edge' art, seemingly without care for what anyone else thought. Today, care is paramount. The contemporary 'practitioner' is obliged to take responsibility for the impacts and implications of their work, for what it does to people. The very term 'practitioner' is symptomatic of a context in which art-making overlaps with research and academia.

This article is based on the premise that there has been an 'ethical turn' in contemporary art, and that there is a connection between this 'turn' and the emergent recognition of art-making as a form of research – an activity with, so to speak, something to answer for, or to. It is not within my remit to express an opinion on the ethical turn itself (some may consider it a welcome departure from aggressive, alienating, macho, selfish individualism and irresponsibility, while for others it is a lily-livered, obsequious retreat from the artist's unique responsibility to be irresponsible and difficult, to make people uncomfortable). Rather, I will merely place before the reader both the continuities and tensions between the ethics of the contemporary art world, on the one hand, and the principles of research ethics to which artists working within academic institutions are expected to adhere, upheld usually by an ethics committee (such as the Otago Polytechnic Research Ethics Committee), on the other.

### RESEARCH ETHICS AND ART

The ethics committee is tasked with ensuring that principles of ethical research are respected, specifically where research conducted by academic staff or students involves human or animal participants. The researcher must demonstrate that people will participate in the research voluntarily, not under coercion or deception, and are able to give their informed consent; their privacy will be respected, along with the confidentiality or anonymity of their 'data.' Or, conversely, they are given due acknowledgement for their contribution should they desire it; and data will be stored securely during and after the project. The ethical researcher avoids any conflict of interest that could affect participants, and is aware of the cultural diversity and values of the people with whom they engage. Research ethics also considers the safety and rights of so-called 'vulnerable people', and the potential physical, emotional or reputational harm to participants, or to the researcher or their institution.

All these possibilities are addressed *before* a research project goes ahead, before potential human participants are approached (a simple and reasonable proviso, but one that can sit uneasily with the exploratory and unpredictable nature of art as research). Above all, the benefits of the research must outweigh the risks. It is not necessary for the researcher or the committee to completely *eliminate* risk – for there to be *no* potential for harm. In this case there is a sense in which the often inherently risky nature of contemporary art can be accommodated despite the preconceptions about the ethics process, sometimes held by artist-researchers. The task of the researcher is to minimise and mitigate risk, and demonstrate that the time and commitment of human participants is worthwhile. In evaluating these elements, an ethics committee scrutinises not just those parts of the proposed research that relate directly to the treatment of human participants, but the soundness and potential of the research itself: research questions and aims, methods and methodology, anticipated outcomes and benefits.

Research ethics can be traced back to the trial of Nazi doctors at Nuremberg in 1946-47 for their part in the 'research' conducted on Jewish concentration camp inmates – torture conducted in the name of medical science. The Nuremberg Code, a set of guidelines for ethical research, was the outcome. Later guidelines, again stemming from medical research, emerged with the Helsinki Declaration in 1964 and the Belmont Report of 1979, while the phenomenon of the university ethics committee became more widespread during the 1990s. These principles, along with case studies (studies in which things went badly wrong), inform the work of ethics committees today. Research ethics has been shaped, then, by some disciplines more than others, medical science especially, and for current researchers in those disciplines, applying for ethics approval is routine.

What about art? There are two interesting points of connection between contemporary art conventions and the framework of research ethics. Firstly, artworks generate all manner of complex ethical conundrums; ethics is central to the content of much contemporary art, not just the process by which it is carried out. Secondly, art almost always involves, or is intended to involve, human participants; it has an audience. This second point initially seems to suggest that artists working under the auspices of an academic institution will need ethics approval for any work they put on display. Historically, though, and still for the most part today, art audiences are not considered research participants. The Canadian Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans states: "Creative practice activities, in and of themselves, do not require REB review. However, research that employs creative practice to obtain responses from participants that will be analyzed to answer a research question is subject to REB review."<sup>1</sup>

There are two reasons for this "creative practice exemption."<sup>2</sup> One is that making art was not, until relatively recently, considered 'research' (more on this later). The second reason is that art audiences are typically self-selected. When people decide to visit an art gallery, for example, their expectations are different from when they are in other contexts; they know art to be a set of representational codes, and to be sometimes unusual and shocking. The Tri-Council Policy Statement does indicate that if an artist-researcher wants to study the responses of their audience, and explicitly use those responses in a project (practical or written), *then* the audience members become research participants.<sup>3</sup> Also, some artworks include, or represent, material that is potentially upsetting or harmful to certain audiences. In these cases, the sensitive nature of the subject overrides the technical question of whether audience members are participants, and the project might require ethical scrutiny.

A further complicating case is participatory art, including what Nicholas Bourriaud dubbed 'relational aesthetics,' where audiences are implicated as active protagonists.<sup>4</sup> Claire Bishop argues there is a 'feel good' factor to many such participatory works – a benevolent desire for cooperation or whimsical unsettling of social norms.<sup>5</sup> That is, participants are not usually placed in ethically compromising or challenging situations. But this *does* happen in certain instances of relational aesthetics, such as Gillian Wearing's confessional *Signs that say what you want them to say and not Signs that say what someone else wants you to say* (1992-93).

Some artists go further – Bishop describes their work as 'relational antagonism.' The Mexico-based Spanish artist Santiago Sierra recruits people from the margins of society, such as the homeless, paying them paltry sums to perform gruelling and humiliating tasks in an art gallery, such as standing for an hour or more facing the wall, without moving or talking, under the gaze of a typically privileged audience.<sup>6</sup> Sierra exploits his subjects (or objects) to point out entrenched systems of exploitation in capitalist societies, while also, as Bruce E Phillips notes, alluding to the historically alienated position of artists as "workers of precarious labour."<sup>7</sup>

A similarly calculated act of exploitation was evident in veteran performance artist Marina Abramovic's 2011 orchestration of an LA MoCA fundraising event, for which she auditioned performers to serve, or effectively be served. For instead of merely waiting on tables, they sprawled naked on the tables with skeletons lying on top of them, or had their heads poking through the table tops and rotating like lazy Susans, for a period of several hours. They were paid \$150 plus an annual MoCA membership.<sup>8</sup> Wealthy patrons invited to the event, for their part, dressed in white lab coats.

Like Sierra, Abramovic has her participants act out and thereby represent power relationships. Can the representation of exploitation be separated out, treated differently, from exploitation itself?<sup>9</sup> Again, we will return to this question. Suffice to say that were such a project proposed by an artist within an academic institution, the creative practice exemption would no longer apply, outweighed by the magnitude of the ethical issues involved: potential psychological harm for the people involved; reputational harm to the institution should the event gain media publicity. The contemporary artist is on some level a researcher and, in the case of artists such as Sierra and Abramovic, the inquiry is into the dubious ethics of the capitalist economy; their art is a mirror to the realities of labour exploitation. However, the artist as researcher, in the academic context, does not seem to have the same latitude to reflect ethical injustice.

## ART AS RESEARCH, ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY

Making art is now recognised as research within academia. Exhibitions are research outputs, by way of which academic institutions gain research funding. Artists employed at art schools teach the approved research methods, and assess the extent to which students successfully apply them. Tutors and students alike attain postgraduate qualifications, including doctorates. It has taken time and effort to convince the wider academic community that there is more rigour to practice-based research than a bunch of arty types wanting to make whatever they like and calling it 'research.' But while artists based in academia have jumped through hoops to show that what they do is comparable to what their peers in other disciplines do, there is one hoop some still baulk at: applying for ethics approval.

There are reasons for artists to be reluctant to submit a proposal to an ethics committee. Developing the application can take time. Add to that the review process, and formulating responses to the inevitable requests for more information or for more safeguards. Obtaining ethics approval can be an obstacle, delaying the project itself. Committee feedback can feel like nit-picking, and the strategies for ameliorating risk so inhibiting as to undermine the very substance of the project. The artist might also question the ability of committee members from other disciplines to make judgements about art. Above all, the ethics process could be construed as an exercise in censorship, stifling innovation and risk-taking, qualities held dear by artists.

Arguably, artists are well placed to consider critically the authority of ethics committees. While one of the tasks of such committees is to ease power imbalances between researchers and their participants, perhaps ethics systems themselves involve power imbalances that restrict individual, academic freedoms, and are complicit with what John Ambrosio has called the post-1970s accountability movement.<sup>10</sup> Education today operates on a corporate efficiency model, and the ethics committee serves as just another bureaucratic mechanism for protecting the image of the brand from 'potential harm.' Artists and art audiences alike might therefore ask of an art project, to quote Nato Thompson, "how does it resist instrumentalisation?"<sup>11</sup> That is, how does it resist co-option into neoliberal corporate systems? It is worth reiterating that the purpose of ethics review is not to put a stop to something that involves risk, but to ensure risk is minimised and outweighed by the benefits of the research. Nonetheless, there remains cause for the belief that in relation to ethics systems, the artist is at odds from the outset with what Barbara Bolt and her collaborators describe as "a research culture that is concerned with compliance and risk-aversion."<sup>12</sup>

Artists have the important social role of raising ethical questions, causing discomfort, unsettling beliefs and behaviour – a responsibility to be irresponsible. Yet there is also a sense in which the artist-researcher's resistance to the formal ethics process is in tension with a conspicuous tendency in the wider field of contemporary art extending outside academia – the very 'industry' from which are derived the methods and standards applied in art schools. Call it an ethos of care: a desire to treat both human and non-human beings and things with respect for their agency; embrace diverse and hitherto marginalised cultural values; point out problems with individualism and irresponsibility; adopt sustainable materials; decolonise art institutions. A contemporary artist's concept of risk might be less about confrontation than about striving for an ethical position beyond the injustices of past and prevailing systems and ideologies, beyond what is immediately comfortable or even attainable.

What relationships or overlaps can be drawn between the ethics of the academy and the ethics of the art world? How might artist–academics respond to ethical guidelines and structures, and make them as intrinsic to art as they are to other research disciplines?

## CONTEMPORARY ART-WORLD ETHICS

In most academic disciplines, ethical principles come from the 'real world' of practice – the ethical practice of medicine or therapy, or the various sciences. Bolt suggests that the problems artist–researchers have with ethics might stem from the fact that there are few formal ethical guidelines laid down in the art world.<sup>13</sup> But maybe this broader field of art practice is already governed by tacit ethical principles, which have not yet filtered through into academic systems, but nonetheless affect how artist–researchers operate. If so, asking them to make formal ethics applications might represent a duplication or excess of ethical regulation. Artists regulate themselves, in their relationships with the wider art world, which is, after all, the site of their practice. As Lois Klassen argues: "For artists, the execution of an artwork is inseparable from its socially situated emergence – a situation that is increasingly infected by ethical judgment from critics and institutions, as well as participants in the artwork's process of meaning Making."<sup>14</sup>

A brief survey of contemporary art spaces and forums reveals how they register the 'ethical turn.' Exhibitions at Dunedin's Blue Oyster Project Space over the past few years show a concerted effort to represent previously underrepresented issues and communities – to reimagine histories, resist discrimination, fulfil Treaty obligations, unsettle patriarchal, white, hetero norms. Louie Zalk-Neale and Connor Fitzgerald's 2021 exhibition, "GLOSSY LEAF kiss," exemplifies a widespread desire to create safe spaces for artists and audiences alike, in this case inclusive of both indigenous spirituality and queer identities.<sup>15</sup> A 2018 curatorial symposium at AUT in Auckland, "Ko au te au/I am the ocean," was grounded on the ethos of "collective enquiry," structured according to three 'kaupapa': 'knowledge,' 'language' and 'love.'<sup>16</sup>

Emma Bugden's doctoral research indicates a generational shift whereby some current artist-run spaces do not "facilitate and prioritise 'artistic risk' as a strategy" – and she, initially at least, thought that they *should* do so – instead fostering "safety."<sup>17</sup> The Wellington space, Meanwhile, has a policy that explicitly prohibits "[r]acist, sexist, classist, transphobic, ableist, fatphobic or religiously bigoted comments of any kind," or "[f]ailure to respect the physical and/or emotional safety of others."<sup>18</sup> The policy states: "We encourage innovative practice, but not at the cost of alienating or harming others."<sup>19</sup> Bugden sees this in the context of a heightened awareness of gender diversity, and about the safety of sexual encounters and the #MeToo movement.<sup>20</sup> We might add to this a consciousness of what was once known in some contexts as "cultural safety."<sup>21</sup>

## TREATY, TIKANGA AND FREE SPEECH

Connections between the ethics of art and of academic research can be found in responses to Treaty obligations. At Otago Polytechnic, the formal process for ethics approval includes consultation with the Kaitiōhutohu Office. Art institutions have similarly responded to progressive cultural shifts, from the 'idealised' concept of biculturalism of the 1980s<sup>22</sup> to the growing representation of young Māori artists in spaces such as Blue Oyster; and attempts to 'decolonise' the art gallery.

Tikanga, as Joe Williams and others have argued, is the first *law* of this land,<sup>23</sup> but it is also the first set of ethical principles – 'law' understood in a more holistic sense than Western disciplinary boundaries permit. Tikanga precede, and should therefore ideally inform, all current thinking about ethical research. One must also be conscious of what 'research' has historically meant in a colonial context – that is, appropriation, taking data where the word 'data' immediately has a dehumanising effect, as if it were not intimately connected with the people it came from. The discipline of research ethics has had to revise its own 'research' principles to encompass indigenous ethical

frameworks. Internationally, indigenous ethical principles are (re)gaining primacy, with an emphasis on the collective rather than the individual, relationships and reciprocity, and the vitality or spirit of non-living things and beings.<sup>24</sup> Again, there is an overlap with legal systems, and in Aotearoa New Zealand legislation has been passed that recognises the life or personhood of rivers and other features of the natural environment.<sup>25</sup>

Freedom of speech or expression is a principle to which artists and art writers sometimes turn in the belief that it is an overriding law that trumps everything else. Of course, it is not; it is a European Enlightenment construct, and even in Western legal systems does not constitute a 'natural' or 'absolute' law, a 'default state,' but is context-dependent.<sup>26</sup> In the context of Aotearoa New Zealand, the 'free speech' refrain needs to be reconciled with tikanga. Moana Jackson, for instance, writes about the kawa (or protocol) of the marae, where the marae ātea (the forecourt where speeches of welcome occur) offers a licence to speak freely and argumentatively.<sup>27</sup> "However," he cautions, "the freedom is always exercised with an awareness of the relationships that exist between the home people and their visitors as well as implicit understanding that ultimately those relationships are protected by the domain of peace."<sup>28</sup> The marae context maintains a fine equilibrium between lively debate and collective wellbeing.

In 1995, Diane Prince (Ngāti Whatua, Ngāpuhi) removed her installation *Flagging the Future: Te Kiritangata – The Last Palisade* (1995) from the Auckland Art Gallery, when the gallery bowed to pressure from the police, who advised that the inclusion of a New Zealand flag carrying the words "please walk on me" breached the Flags, Names and Emblems Protection Act.<sup>29</sup> Prince (or the gallery's director) could have resisted this pressure and let the legal debate play out, given that the Flags Act seems to contradict the legal right to freedom of speech.<sup>30</sup> Yet Prince expressly stated that what was truly powerful was the act of removing the work; she was not interested in making it a matter of free speech.<sup>31</sup> To do so would have been to submit her principles, and the fight for tino rangatiratanga, to a European legal construct that, as Jackson observes, has itself been an instrument of colonisation.<sup>32</sup>

The free speech issue came to a head with an exhibition in Auckland in 2020, "People of Colour," by the young artist-directors of the gallery Mercy Pictures. Images of many different flags, stretched on canvases, hung in a grid of clashing ideologies – national flags, rainbow flags, activist or protest flags and fascist flags, including Nazi and white power emblems. The presence of this last category created a backlash. Aside from the offence caused by the show itself, a review by John Hurrell on his website EyeContact fanned the flames by criticising those who, as he saw it, advocated "censorship."<sup>33</sup> This in turn generated a chain of comments, some from artists and writers requesting that Hurrell remove any reviews and images of their work from his website. In a subsequent text, titled "Is there a need for more humour in New Zealand art?," Hurrell deplores the "timidity," "piety," "earnestness" and "worthy" social agendas of the contemporary art scene: "the current political climate ... can be seen as miserabilist and dour, with its dominant emphasis on post-colonial activism, social [sic] change, the pandemic and eco catastrophe – and lack of variety in mood."<sup>34</sup>

Does Hurrell have a point? Is there a dearth of artists prepared to be irresponsible? Perhaps one should accept the hurt of individuals or groups as the price paid for a greater good, which might include freedom of expression, the right of the artist to be irresponsible. One might question too whether some of the reactions to Hurrell's review were justified. Did the snowballing demands that material be removed from the website reflect a mob mentality played out online, a petulant manifestation of 'cancel culture'? If Hurrell did have a point, however, he expressed it so insensitively that he undermined his own case. Tellingly, Hurrell, and other white male commentators, insisted on a need for rational argument, philosophical debate and the legal right to free speech, setting these in opposition to 'mere' trauma and emotive responses in a perpetuation of patriarchal, imperialist, binary rhetoric.<sup>35</sup> From this viewpoint, the flags in "People of Colour" were just representations, a bunch of signifiers, and viewers should have been able to distance themselves from what was represented, to recognise that the representation is something other than what it purports to represent – that it is, in this context, about racism, not inherently racist.

In Te Ao Māori, though, images are not mere representations, but embodiments of ancestors and of life forces such as wairua and mauri.<sup>36</sup> The emergence of speculative realism, vital materialism and various other versions of the idea that non-human things (including artworks) have agency or life suggests that Western theory is undergoing a shift with regard to representations and their 'content.' Representations *do* things and act upon us.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

I have endeavoured to make a start on thinking through the ethics of art as research, as it is carried out in the academy, and in relation to tacit ethical codes evolving in the wider art world. The focus here has been on a tension between the desire for risk – a certain productive irresponsibility – and an ethos of care, responsibility, community and tikanga. More thought remains to be given to some of the key 'problems' arising at the intersection of practice as research and ethical principles and processes. These include the fuzzy guidelines for ethics in creative practice. Art as research has a short history and, while there are case studies, our ability to evaluate them is less clear-cut than in other disciplines. The sheer scope of what counts as art, the constant pushing of (artistic and social) boundaries, also makes the ethical issues less predictable. Moreover, whereas completing an ethics application requires that methodology, research questions and intended outcomes are all known in advance, art as research is typically spontaneous, takes unpredictable turns 'in the moment,' responds to situations immediately at hand, and is not directed toward a known end-point or hypothesis.

Is it simply a reality that art as research is held to standards not generally applied outside academia? I hope to have demonstrated that those standards to some extent *come from* the art world, which is as it should be. We need to protect the ability of artists, inside the academy as well as outside, to make daring, provocative, uncomfortable, unsettling work. Maybe, occasionally, someone has a project that is not advisable to pursue within an academic institution. But if supervisors or tutors steer students away from projects that would require an ethics application, they, rather than the ethics committee, are responsible for restricting innovation and risk-taking.

Ultimately, consolidating the status of art as research means using the mechanisms put in place to ensure research value and rigour. It is possible that, with time, and a higher level of trust in the ethics approval process, artist-researchers might find they are not always trying to fit a square peg into a round hole, and that they share, with their ethicist colleagues, a willingness to embrace, as Sarah Banks puts it, "ethics as decision-making" and the "ethics of care," rather than "ethics as regulation."<sup>37</sup> Artists can themselves shape the ethics system by working with it, thereby building up precedents and case studies, and forming the language and principles to reflect the distinctive qualities of art as research.

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- 1 Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*, December 2018, <https://ethics.gc.ca/eng/documents/tcps2-2018-en-interactive-final.pdf>, 19.
- 2 See Lois Klassen, "Research by Artists: Critically Integrating Ethical Frameworks," in *Ethics and Visual Research Methods: Theory, Methodology and Practice*, ed. Deborah Warr et al. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 240. See also Barbara Bolt's discussion of the "aesthetic alibi" in "Whither the Aesthetic Alibi: Ethics and the Challenge of Art as Research in the Academy," in Warr et al., *Ethics and Visual Research Methods*, 187-99.
- 3 This means more than an artist simply observing how people respond to a work, and allowing that to implicitly inform subsequent works. Ethics comes into play when collecting data (for example, formally documenting audience responses) and explicitly analysing and reflecting upon it – perhaps to the extent that people's responses to an exhibition, and the people responsible for them, are given a public forum other than the initial exhibition itself.
- 4 See Nicholas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics* (Dijon: Les Presses du réel, 1998).
- 5 See Claire Bishop, "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics," *October*, 110 (Fall 2004), 51-79.
- 6 An example is Sierra's *Group of people facing the wall and person facing into a corner* (2002).
- 7 Bruce E Phillips, "The Sympathetic Agent," in *Public Good #2*, ed. Kim Paton (Hamilton, NZ: Ramp Press, 2014), 23.
- 8 EC Feiss, "Endurance Performance: Post-2008," *Afterall*, 23 May 2012, <https://www.afterall.org/article/endurance-performance-post-2008> (accessed 29 April 2021).
- 9 Legendary dancer and choreographer Yvonne Rainer got wind of Abramovic's project weeks before it took place, and vehemently condemned it. See Yvonne Rainer, Douglas Crimp and Taisha Paggett, letter to Jeffrey Deitch, reproduced in "Yvonne Rainer Accuses Marina Abramovic and LA MoCA of Exploiting Performers," *Artforum*, 11 November 2011, <https://www.artforum.com/news/yvonne-rainer-accuses-marina-abramovi-263-and-la-moca-of-exploiting-performers-29348> (accessed 29 April 2021).
- 10 John Ambrosio, "Changing the Subject: Neoliberalism and Accountability in Contemporary Education," *Educational Studies*, 49:4 (2013), 316-33, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00131946.2013.783835> (accessed 29 April 2021).
- 11 Nato Thompson, "Ethical Considerations in Public Art," in *Scandalous: A Reader on Art and Ethics*, ed. Nina Möntmann (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2013), 117.
- 12 Barbara Bolt et al., "iDARE Creative Arts Research Approaches to Ethics: New Ways to Address Situated Practices in Action," *Proceedings of the 12th Biennial Quality in Postgraduate Research Conference* (Melbourne: University of Melbourne, 2016), [https://www.academia.edu/29061375/Creative\\_Arts\\_Research\\_Approaches\\_to\\_Ethics\\_New\\_ways\\_to\\_address\\_situated\\_practices\\_in\\_action](https://www.academia.edu/29061375/Creative_Arts_Research_Approaches_to_Ethics_New_ways_to_address_situated_practices_in_action) (accessed 29 April 2021).
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Klassen, "Research by Artists," 238.
- 15 Louie Zalk-Neale and Connor Fitzgerald, "GLOSSY LEAF kiss," Blue Oyster Project Space, 3 March–10 April 2021. See Edward Hanfling, "Exhibitions: Dunedin," *Art New Zealand*, 179 (Winter 2021), 49.
- 16 "2018 Symposium: Ko au te au/ I am the ocean," <https://stpaulst.ac.nz/events/2018/symposium-2018> (accessed 29 April 2021).
- 17 Emma Bugden, "Testing Grounds and Launching Pads: Situating the Artist-run Space Today" (PhD thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 2020), 45. Bugden argues that, historically, artist-run and alternative/project spaces endorsed experimentation and risk, based on their having a "greater emphasis on artistic agency and less focus on audience development" (107). This might be taken to mean that such spaces felt free to upset or annoy people, not having a very big audience anyway and not being geared to selling. In observing a shift away from what she describes, with knowing paradox, as "traditional notions of artistic risk" (20), Bugden seems to intimate that contemporary art spaces encourage a different kind of risk. Perhaps it resides in artists putting themselves and their audiences in unfamiliar (though not shocking or affronting) situations, considering possible or imagined future worlds, or exploring affect-laden or difficult-to-grasp materialities ... but this is merely speculation.
- 18 Meanwhile, "Values and Guiding Principles," quoted in Bugden, "Testing Grounds," 112.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Bugden, "Testing Grounds," 113. This calls to mind a further expression of the caring ethos in the contemporary art world – Ayesha Green's letter to the editor in *Art New Zealand*, 177 (Autumn 2021), 112. David Eggleton's review of Green's 2020 exhibition at the Dunedin Public Art Gallery described two of the paintings as representing male and female couples in bed (David Eggleton, "The Psychogeographer's Dream: Recent Work by Ayesha Green," *Art New Zealand*, 176 (Summer 2020–21), 49.) Green puts him right, advising that one of the paintings in fact represents Green and her girlfriend, which she wants to make clear because of the erasure of queer histories and relationships, and her sense of responsibility to the LGBTQIA+ community. But she corrects Eggleton gently: "I write this letter with warm and caring feelings" reads quite differently from the typically aggressive letters to the editor of times past.

- 21 This phrase, then made current by media coverage of resistance to 'cultural safety' components in the training of nurses, was used as the title of a 1995-96 exhibition, "Cultural Safety: Contemporary Art From New Zealand," shown in galleries across New Zealand and Germany, initiated by Gregory Burke and Peter Weiermair.
- 22 See Martin Awa Clarke Langdon, "Since 1984: Heaha te Ahurea-rua?," in *Unfolding Kaitiakitanga: Shifting the Institutional Space Within Biculturalism*, eds Abby Cunnane and Charlotte Huddleston (Auckland: St Paul St Publishing, 2016), 12.
- 23 See Joe Williams, "Lex Aotearoa: An Heroic Attempt to Map the Maori Dimension in Modern New Zealand Law," *Waikato Law Review*, 21 (2013), 1-34, at 3. See also Jacinta Ruru, "First Laws: Tikanga Māori in/and the Law," *Māori Law Review* (September 2018), <http://maorilawreview.co.nz/2018/09/first-laws-tikanga-maori-in-and-the-law> (accessed 19 July 2019).
- 24 See Helen Kara, *Research Ethics in the Real World* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2018), 25-6.
- 25 See Katherine Sanders, "'Beyond Human Ownership'? Property, Power and Legal Personality for Nature in Aotearoa New Zealand," *Journal of Environmental Law*, 30:2 (July 2018), 207-34.
- 26 The context-based nature of free speech was famously argued for by Stanley Fish in *There's No Such Thing as Free Speech and it's a Good Thing, Too* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).
- 27 Moana Jackson, "Rethinking Free Speech," *E-Tangata*, 19 August 2018, <https://e-tangata.co.nz/comment-and-analysis/moana-jackson-rethinking-free-speech/> (accessed 29 April 2021).
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 See Edward Hanfling, "An Affect Alien in Aotearoa: Diane Prince and the Flag Controversy," *Third Text* (2021, forthcoming). See also Edward Hanfling, "Artist, Activist, Affect Alien: Diane Prince and the Flag Controversy," *Art New Zealand*, 159 (Spring 2016), 66-70, 127.
- 30 See Sigrid Brigitte Buschbacher, "Protection of Public Symbols in New Zealand and the United States of America: Flag Burning versus Freedom of Expression," *New Zealand Postgraduate Law E-Journal*, 2 (2005), 31. See also Richard Ekins and John Ip, "Flag-burning Law Restricts Free Speech," *New Zealand Herald*, 20 March 2003.
- 31 Diane Prince, unpublished notes, in email to author, 14 July 2016.
- 32 Jackson, "Rethinking Free Speech."
- 33 John Hurrell, "Hoist That Rag," *EyeContact*, 11 November 2020, [https://eyecontactmagazine.com/2020/11/hoist-that-rag - c2295](https://eyecontactmagazine.com/2020/11/hoist-that-rag-c2295) (accessed 19 April 2021).
- 34 John Hurrell, "Is There a Need for More Humour in New Zealand Art?," *EyeContact*, 3 March 2021, <https://eyecontactmagazine.com/2021/03/is-there-a-chronic-need-for-more-humour-in-new-zea> (accessed 19 April 2021).
- 35 Hurrell, "Hoist That Rag."
- 36 Mānukā Henare, "Tapu, Mana, Mauri, Hau, Wairua: A Māori Philosophy of Vitalism and Cosmos," in *Indigenous Traditions and Ecology: The Interbeing of Cosmology and Community*, ed. John A. Grim (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 197-221.
- 37 Sarah Banks et al., "Everyday Ethics in Community-based Participatory Research," *Contemporary Social Science*, 8:3 (2013), 263-77, at 266, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/21582041.2013.769618> (accessed 29 April 2021).

## PICTORIAL NARRATIVE AND THE JOURNEY OF CHANGE FOR MEN AT STOPPING VIOLENCE DUNEDIN

Inge Andrew

Communication design seeks to combine information and visual representations into a narrative which allows for the idea of change. A recent example of this is the Obama "Hope" poster designed by Shepard Fairey during the 2008 US presidential campaign. Fairey used constructivist propaganda techniques to create a portrait of the politician, but also to incorporate the idealist notions on which the Obama campaign was built.<sup>1</sup> Apart from the 2011 copyright infringement case with the Associated Press (and Fairey's counterattack), it could be argued that this, more than any other symbol, was responsible for the wave of Blue votes that ultimately led to Obama's victory. People needed hope. Anne Condit refers to the use of the word "hope" on the poster as "glittering generality" – an example of persuasive language which the Institute for Propaganda Analysis describes as "virtue" words which "seek to make us approve and accept without examining the evidence."<sup>2</sup> The red, white and blue image, with its subject looking to the future, irritated some, but it also captured the imagination of the world.

Communication design can also give a voice to social justice, allowing community-based and global issues to enter the current discourse. In the early twentieth century, Käthe Kollwitz used graphic expressionist art to explore the social injustice of war. The expressionists were generally keenly aware of social crises, especially during the years prior to the First World War.<sup>3</sup> The poor and social outcasts were often the subjects of Kollwitz's works; the poster reproduced here carries the slogan, "Free our Prisoners! Join the People's Alliance for the Protection of German Civilian and War Prisoners," communicating a tenacious sense of human empathy (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Käthe Kollwitz, *Free our Prisoners! Join the People's Alliance for the Protection of German Civilian and War Prisoners*, 1919, lithograph, colour; 71 x 95 cm.<sup>4</sup>

In a contemporary example, Canadian domestic abuse charity Interval House set up a Broken Bride Registry stall at the 2018 Toronto Bridal Show, displaying artefacts such as Cigarette-Burn Cream, Cried-All-Night Sunglasses, Jealous-Rage Bandages and a Don't-Talk-Back Arm Sling. Each item displayed a barcode which transported the viewer to a real-life story of the reality of marriage for some women. The barcode scanner deliberately mimicked one that might be found at a bridal registry, a strategy which not only raised awareness but also prompted viewers to donate or add Interval House to their own wedding registry.<sup>5</sup>

Over the last two years of my Masters project, I have been working with a group of people who don't generally have a voice in everyday discourse – perpetrators of domestic violence. I chose to work with a local agency, Stopping Violence Dunedin (SVD), who instead of placing blame on their clients, work to empower them with a sense of community and positive self-worth. These men, who are often victims of abuse themselves, are taught to appreciate and build on their own sense of worth.

Domestic violence is a complex issue and, by its very nature, is challenging to address. Aotearoa has one of the highest rates of reported violence towards women in the developed world. The wider community can have a skewed view of violent perpetrators, many believing that they should be locked up forever. While victims of domestic violence should absolutely continue to have a voice and a means to tell their stories, a punitive approach to perpetrators is problematic. Violence continues to dominate the national landscape and incarceration of violent perpetrators persists. Placing these men in the general prison system also assumes that they are a homogenous group.

The theory of intersectionality – which is usually used to refer to discrimination that women from different groups face – can also be used for men who choose to make a positive change in their lives. For civil rights activist Kimberlé Crenshaw, intersectionality can be seen as a traffic metaphor – cars at an intersection can come from different directions and cause a multitude of problems when they collide. If a black woman is harmed at the intersection, her injury could result from a multitude of discriminatory factors including race, gender, class, sexuality and ethnicity.<sup>6</sup> In other words, when considering people and their place in society, oppression and culpability can't be understood through a single lens.

Perpetrators of domestic violence may experience intersectional discrimination, especially if they seek better options for themselves. This discrimination may reside in societal views and people's unwillingness to see past their violence. MacDowell<sup>7</sup> has discussed using an intersectional framework for addressing domestic violence, extending the application of intersectionality to encompass the identities of both victims and perpetrators. She recognised that perpetrators (who she refers to as "perceivable perpetrators") are often shaped by stereotypes of race, gender, class, sexuality and ethnicity. SVD challenges these embedded societal notions that violent perpetrators are a homogenous group and are not redeemable by offering individual and group therapy, interventions which offer positive change. This process of change is often long and complicated and can involve consciousness-raising, relationship-building and the development of altruism. Many of the men who have become involved in SVD's programmes have achieved positive behavioural outcomes.<sup>8</sup>

It became clear to me early in this project that the men who attend SVD are given, often for the first time, an opportunity to tell their story. Manager Cinnamon Boreham told me that they ask new clients direct questions like, "What happened to you?," "How did you get to be this way?" and "Why do you use violence as a means to an end?" Boreham and the other SVD facilitators seek to build a community around these men, which in turn allows them to feel safe enough to tell their own stories.

Roguski and Gregory<sup>9</sup> gathered narratives of transformation from former violent perpetrators in Aotearoa to try to understand their motivation for change. They found that storytelling and listening to other stories (from men who had "been there, done that") was a vital component of change. One informant was quoted as saying, "My turning point was telling my story. That was a big eye-opener for me. Telling the class what I did."<sup>10</sup> As a research tool, narrative inquiry works to consider personal experience over time, incorporating the relationship between peoples' lives and their cultural context.<sup>11</sup>

Although I wasn't party to any stories from the men at SVD, I gained an understanding of how important this practice is to the journey of change from conversations and SVD facilitator interview data, as well as from the facilitators' own research. Men are both heard and listen to other men's stories, which help to establish empathy and close, authentic relationships with each other. I took the narrative enquiry in this project a step further; as the thematic content analysis of the facilitator interview data I analysed revealed seven themes associated with men's efforts to make a positive change in their lives. These themes included the importance of storytelling, undertaking a journey of transformation and the positive influence of mentors – other men who have attended SVD for some time and encourage newer participants to believe that the programme works if you stick to it. This approach is corroborated by another quotation from Roguski and Gregory's interview data: "Only those who have walked in my shoes can understand where I have been."<sup>12</sup>

With the identification of these themes, it became evident that the journey of change could be pictorialised in order to continue to contextualise the process. This "narrative mapping"<sup>13</sup> was combined with the concept of the Hero's Journey. In her book *Design is Storytelling*, Ellen Lupton<sup>14</sup> examines Joseph Campbell's ubiquitous concept of the circular journey, where the hero gets a call to adventure, initially refuses the call but, with the help of a sidekick (or mentor), embarks on a journey of tests and rewards, and returns home with a hero's story. This pattern is not only found in books and films, but can also be utilised in design, ensuring that the user of a product has some prior experience, if not a hero's experience per se.

In this project, the so-called hero (the new SVD member) and his mentor travel the journey of transformation together; a quest where the hero attempts to change the trajectory of his life. A mentor can show the way, acknowledging that trials and errors will be frequent along the way, but affirming that ultimately transformation will occur if there is a commitment to the mahi. The idea of the mentor and the journey also prompted reflection and the production of drawings of the gear the protagonists might carry with them in a kind of metaphorical first-aid kit.

Such a kit might contain:

1. The same shoes as the hero ("I have walked in your shoes")
2. Thread to bind the hero and the sidekick together
3. A mirror for the hero to reflect on his life and mirror the behaviour of his mentor
4. Oxygen mask to control breathing in stressful situations
5. A book of stories (from the hero and the mentor)
6. A hope stick or crutch to help along the journey
7. A Kabbalah bracelet (a Jewish folk custom where a red thread bracelet is worn to ward off evil spirits).

Figures 2 and 3 show a number of drawings prompted by the notion of the first-aid kit.

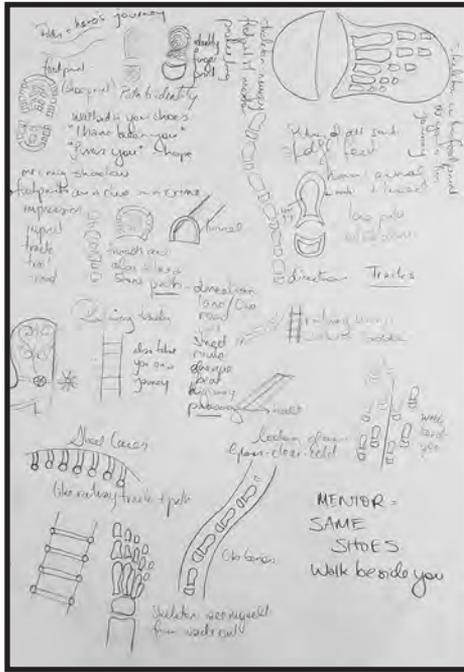


Figure 2. Inge Andrew, "I have walked in your shoes," 2020, workbook sketch. Photograph: Inge Andrew.

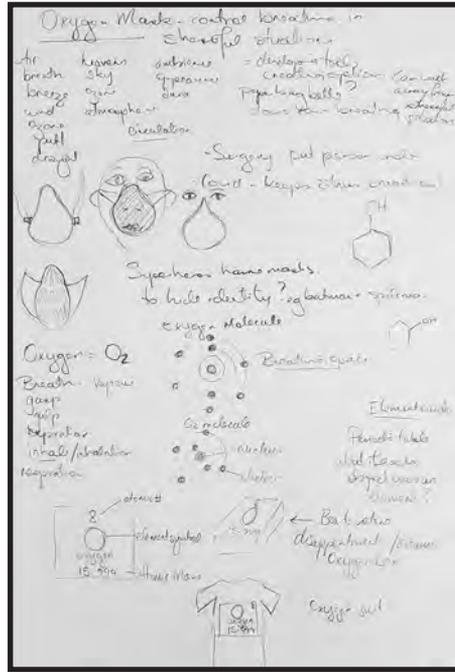


Figure 3. Inge Andrew, Oxygen mask, 2020, workbook sketch. Photograph: Inge Andrew.

This local interpretation of the hero's journey was further illustrated by combining the hero's journey with the first-aid kit drawings. As applied to customer mapping, Kaplin<sup>15</sup> refers to this as "narrative visualisation," where the map is a tool designed to share research findings and reveal critical moments as well as possible pain points. In my project, this concept helped to connect the ubiquitous notion of the hero's journey with the specific case of the men at SVD. They must go through a series of experiences, growth and changes to support their ongoing transition to a nonviolent lifestyle. Figure 4 (taken from my workbook) essentially offers a designed "pathway of support" for men as conceived by an outsider contemplating their journey of change.

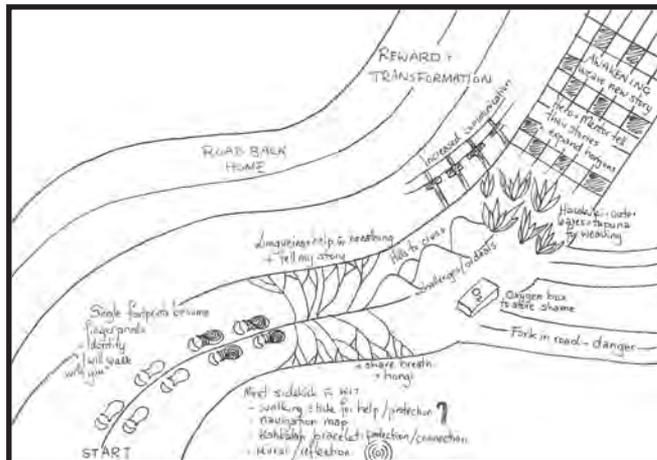


Figure 4. Inge Andrew, "Pathway of Support" for the so-called SVD hero and his mentor; 2020, workbook sketch. Photograph: Inge Andrew.

One of the key themes that arose from the research and facilitator interviews was the notion of cultural connectiveness and its role in the healing process. When interviewed, the SVD facilitators spoke about the importance of connecting with culture, whether it be Māori, Pasifika, or any other place where we feel connected through kinship (tūrangawaewae).

At some point in this metaphorical pilgrimage, the hero and his mentor pass through harakeke (flax) groves, which are eventually woven into new stories. Harakeke is an important element in this journey, as it can be used to represent whānau – the outer leaves are awhi rito (parents) and tūpuna (grandparents), and the inner leaves represent the rito (child). Only the outer tūpuna leaves are cut for use, so not to weaken the whole plant.<sup>16</sup> The mentor stands in the role of awhi rito and, together with the hero (rito), they cut the outer leaves of the harakeke to weave a new story of change. Raranga (weaving) can also embody connection as well as knowledge and stories in Te Ao Māori.<sup>17</sup>

In further reflection on the journey (see Figure 4), the metaphors associated with it as well as the themes of hope and transformation, I identified seven milestones for the participants, which were approved by the SVD facilitators who were part of a focus group. These milestones are:

1. Enter the door of SVD
2. Return to SVD
3. Tell your story
4. Make connections with peers
5. See your story from other perspectives (increasing consciousness of your own actions)
6. Take threads of other stories that apply to you
7. Accept hope/transformation.

The first two milestones, entering and returning to SVD, were important to recognise, as participants are often triggered by events at group sessions that result in them failing to return. One focus group member said he knew he needed to be there, and returned the next week. A second focus group member said it took years for him to return to SVD after his initial visit. Milestones also form an important element of the journey-mapping process in design, where a series of actions drives the client on a particular journey. According to Lupton, "Action drives stories and it also drives the design process."<sup>18</sup> She means that good design can build an unfolding story which works to create connections, images and memories for the user. Storytelling from different perspectives continues to be a strong focus in this project, both in terms my own investigations and the stories that the men form together at SVD.

My Masters' project investigated whether communication design can support the transformation of violent male offenders within Stopping Violence Dunedin. I used applied design methodologies, critical thinking and sketching, as well as reflection, to understand the journey of change towards nonviolence for men at SVD. I was able to add to the value process by creating themes, milestones and a pictorial narrative. Storytelling, cultural connectivity and whakawhanaungatanga (relationship building) were key components of this project, which followed a natural progression to a narrative inquiry, seeking to understand people within their own cultural and societal contexts. The resulting pictorial narrative map launched my own journey towards developing a design outcome aimed at contextualising the journey of change in order to walk alongside men who are changing the trajectory of their lives for the better.

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## HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT: THE DOUBLE STANDARD OF AGING

Coral Broughton

*Hidden in Plain Sight* is a body of self-portraiture works exploring my own aging within the concept of the invisibility of the aging woman in Western society. My interest in the concept of the veil, real and metaphorical, was the initial idea behind the 'veil of invisibility' as experienced by the aging woman. As a female artist, I am looking at the experiences of older women, with a focus on how women artists respond to the experience of their own aging within their practice.

I consider how the expression of a less visible body is achieved by the tension between figure and ground in the works of Edouard Vuillard, Yayoi Kusama, Kehinde Wiley, René Magritte and Michaël Borremans. Using the patterns of fabrics and wallpapers, these artists created figures that merge into the background in their work or create a textile barrier. I also ask why a work by Auguste Rodin that focused on an aging woman's body was so badly received when it was first exhibited. In contrast, works by Suzy Lake and Cindy Sherman deal with their own aging bodies through confronting images taken throughout their artistic careers.

Articles by feminist theorists Susan Sontag, Michelle Meagher, Griselda Pollock, Jeannette King and Germaine Greer help substantiate my ideas about the 'veil of invisibility.' In her essay "The Double Standard of Aging,"<sup>1</sup> Sontag discusses social conventions that enable aging men, but destroy women's confidence as they age. In her paper "Against the Invisibility of Old Age: Cindy Sherman, Suzy Lake, and Martha Wilson,"<sup>2</sup> Meagher discusses the attitudes of three female photographers as they have represented themselves throughout their lengthy careers. In "The Grace of Time: Narrativity, Sexuality and a Visual Encounter in the Virtual Feminist Museum,"<sup>3</sup> Pollock considers classical sculpture, where the body is represented as timeless, ideal form, compared to contemporary methods of observing the aging body.

King's book *Discourses of Ageing in Fiction and Feminism: The Invisible Woman*<sup>4</sup> proposes that the literature of gender studies contains discrimination toward an invisible generation – that of the post-menopausal woman in Western culture. In *The Whole Woman*,<sup>5</sup> Greer focuses on the feminist activists of the 1970s and 19780s who are now moving into old age.

In 2019 the *Christchurch Press* published an article, "Grey is the New Blonde, Black or Red,"<sup>6</sup> in which author Winnie Salamon concludes: "An unfortunate side-effect of a society that reveres thin, youthful female beauty, is that as women become more accomplished, confident and interesting as they age, qualities that should be a source of empowerment and pride are overshadowed by the one thing they no longer possess: youth." Salamon illuminates the dilemma of the aging woman who experiences shame for no longer retaining her youth, because youth is the currency by which a woman's value is acknowledged in our society. The dividing line between youth and age has generally been that between the reproductive and post-reproductive years.<sup>7</sup>

We are unable to talk about the double standard of aging without comparing the female struggle to the situation of our male equivalents. As Sontag notes in "The Double Standard of Aging," society is much more permissive about aging in men than in women, where men are allowed to age without penalty in ways that women are not.<sup>8</sup> As men age their social value depends more on what they do than how they look. In recent decades men have been

much more aware of taking care of their body and face, but it is less about disguising the body, as in the female reality. Men do not disguise their faces, apart from adjusting their facial hair. The male face is seen as something that doesn't need tampering with, where aging is taken as a sign of character; where scars and lines form a map of life experiences and boys look forward to manhood. By contrast, a woman must remain as much like a girl as she can throughout her adult life. Sontag says:

The single standard of aging for women dictates that they must go on having clear skin. Every wrinkle, every line, every gray hair is a defeat. No wonder that no boy minds becoming a man, while even the passage from girlhood to early womanhood is experienced by many women as their downfall, for all women are trained to continue wanting to look like girls.<sup>9</sup>

Greer concurs that women keeping their girlish looks as they age is an unobtainable goal, a goal for which women are set up to fail.<sup>10</sup> Here lies the difference between the sexes: it is totally unreasonable to expect women to keep the flawless body of a girl well into old age. The accepted definition of femininity includes a slim, unlined, hairless body with soft, smooth skin, where women have become illusionists, seeking to conserve and disguise their bodies to maintain this image for as long as possible. One can point to many beautiful older women – but their beauty is dependent on how long they can retain their appearance of youth, because what makes these women appear beautiful to us is that they do not look their real age!<sup>11</sup> Sontag's argument is that although both genders experience the ordeal of aging, for men the process is less judgemental and emotionally charged than it is for women, who feel immense pressure to maintain their appearance. As Sontag puts it:

The body of an old woman, unlike that of an old man, is always understood as a body that can no longer be shown, offered, and unveiled ... Aging in women is a process of becoming obscene sexually, for the flabby bosom, wrinkled neck, spotted hands, thinning white hair, waistless torso, and veined legs of an old woman are felt to be obscene.<sup>12</sup>

Although Sontag raised awareness of the double standard of aging, it was Meagher three decades later who first addressed the visible and invisibility argument. In "Against the Invisibility of Old Age," she argued that the invisibility of the aging woman has not been addressed, in terms of being taught or acknowledged within academic feminism, in order to understand the impact of power relations and social inequalities that women face as they age.<sup>13</sup> Although there have been many gains for women through feminism, the field of gender studies has largely ignored issues affecting older women. Meagher argues that the key concerns of the feminist movement have been structured around young women in terms of issues such as employment, child-care, birth control and abortion.<sup>14</sup>

One of the first questions I get asked when meeting new people is, "Do you have any grandchildren?" More often than not, my husband is asked, "What do you do?" I feel it is important for women to become aware of this double standard where such questions, which reflect unspoken societal rules, subtly change the power structures between men and women. Women are taught early on to keep old age at bay by investing emotional energy and money into cosmetics, clothes, fashion literature, personal grooming, diets, hairdressers and plastic surgeons. For Greer, women buy into this fakeness by acknowledging that the aging body needs work to keep it looking young, and as a result they put themselves at the mercy of the manufacturers.<sup>15</sup>

Nevertheless, as women work hard at staying youthful and eventually lose the ability to hold back aging, they are perceived as having less value. Meagher observes that in order to appeal to baby boomers, the 'old' people in advertising are actually not old at all – rather, they are young and vibrant. These actors are used as symbolic gestures in the representation of the elderly, having the markers of age, such as grey hair and crows-feet, but lacking the reality.<sup>16</sup> Consequently, such marketing gives the conflicted message that old age is okay, but it is not okay to look or act old.

Meagher references Marge Piercy's poem "I met a woman who wasn't there,"<sup>17</sup> where Piercy describes a common sensation experienced by midlife women, the transition from visibility to invisibility: "The CIA should hire as spies/

only women over fifty, because/we are the truly invisible." Piercy identifies not just the invisibility that the aging woman experiences, but the repulsion an old woman's body evokes. The poet broaches the idea of elderly women who have followed the procedures to keep old age at bay, and still become invisible anyway, noting cynically that women over 50 should be chosen as spies as they are truly invisible.

In contrast, in "The Grace of Time," Pollock argues that in the history of Western art, "old women are few and far between and those who are represented exist to terrify."<sup>18</sup> One of Pollock's witches and hags is Rodin's sculpture *She Who Was Once the Helmet-Maker's Beautiful Wife*.<sup>19</sup> Rodin was fascinated by the inevitable decline of the human body, perceiving the physical changes that occurred not as ugliness, but rather as adding character and personality. The sculpture caused consternation in Paris when it was exhibited there; it was considered that the markers of age were not desirable, nor should they be on public display. As "Petronius Arbiter" wrote in 1916:

this is a degenerate work of art because no woman is ever beautiful when in a state of decay. And in such decay as here represented, she is repellent. No single aesthetic or social excuse can be found for making of this art atrocity, doubly none for exhibiting it. ... this work by Rodin has shocked the normal public, still shocks it and always will shock it, because it is intellectually monstrous and spiritually degenerate ...<sup>20</sup>

The phrase "the male gaze" describes how women have been looked at throughout time through the eyes of the heterosexual male. Filmmaker Laura Mulvey coined the phrase in 1975 in her essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema."<sup>21</sup> Although its theoretical origins were in film, "the male gaze" refers more broadly to how women are depicted in the visual arts, film, television, advertising and literature. Women are regularly presented, from a masculine perspective, as sexual objects for the pleasure of the male viewer: "The male gaze" is a sexualised way of looking that empowers men and objectifies women. It positions the woman visually as an 'object' of heterosexual male desire, where her feelings, thoughts and her own sexual drives are less important than those of the male viewer. In terms of the aging woman, however, the gaze is absent as she is not an object nor even a subject – she is invisible.

Meagher cites Greer, who asserts that the freedom that comes from an older woman's invisibility is "a desirable condition" where she can live outside of the gaze.<sup>22</sup> There are no expectations of a sexual nature, as she is not even placed in the line of vision – she is visually passed over and not worth looking at. In "I met a woman who wasn't there," Piercy identifies elderly women as not even standing in the line of sight. In our culture, where beauty equals youth, it is understandable how the older woman is overlooked. One reads about this phenomenon, but when it is experienced first-hand it really is surprising, bewildering and also weirdly liberating.

With my current interest in patterns in juxtaposition to figures, I examined the work of artists Edouard Vuillard<sup>23</sup>, Yayoi Kusama<sup>24</sup> and Kehinde Wiley<sup>25</sup> with reference to women in domestic settings, with the emphasis on interiors and fabrics.<sup>26</sup> I focused on the placement of the figure in relation to her surroundings,<sup>27</sup> asking how much of the figure was visible in relation to the heavy patterning evident in the backgrounds. I was interested in the notion of the body being immersed into the ground, or being covered by it. I have referenced these explorations in my current body of work.

In Magritte's work, *The Lovers*,<sup>28</sup> a barrier of fabric prevents an intimate embrace between two lovers, transforming an act of passion into one of isolation and frustration.<sup>29</sup> The couple are unable to effectively communicate or touch, the cloth keeping the two figures apart and creating an air of mystery and intrigue. Michaël Borremans' work also conveys strange notions of attraction and intrigue in his staged portraits of females totally enshrouded in bodysuits.<sup>30</sup> Once again, I used these concepts and techniques in the early development of my own work.

In "The Invisible Woman," Janette King discusses the drawing of the demarcation line around fertility: "Since a woman's value has historically been determined by her ability to produce children, her beauty, sexuality and worth are all in direct correlation to her fertility, and therefore to her youth. The loss of youth in Western culture amounts to the loss of identity."<sup>31</sup>



Figure 1. Coral Broughton, *Lara*, 2019, oil on canvas.



Figure 2. Coral Broughton, *Hidden in Plain Sight*, 2019, oil on canvas.

I began to focus on painting self-portraits to bring the aging body into focus. When I look in the mirror I can see my aging in the lines, the sagging skin, the extra rolls of fat and the age spots. I feel it in my muscles and in my joints. I have given up shoes with heels, the effort to hold in my stomach, and I am working hard on not caring about how I appear to others. We live in a society in denial about aging; a denial fuelled by an obsession with image and style, with youth and physical beauty, and the illusion that we can keep making ourselves over to hold old age at bay.

I wanted to utilise my ageing body as one that reveals a history of childbearing and operations, a body which implies a narrative of time. Because photography can capture honest and raw images, I studied the work of contemporary photographers such as Suzy Lake and Cindy Sherman, who dare us to look and stare. It is acceptable to be fascinated by these photos – so, is there a female gaze? Mulvey argues that there is no direct female equivalent of the male gaze.<sup>32</sup> The male gaze creates a power imbalance and supports a patriarchal society. For this reason, the female gaze cannot be said to resemble the male gaze.

Sherman's images represent what could be called successful aging, but also represent women who have failed to measure up. What emerges from these photographs is the futility of the struggle to hold back the years. Even if you feel pity or embarrassment for her subjects, all women can probably relate to and empathise with them on some level.<sup>33</sup> These works are seeking to show the struggle that some women face in a culture that is obsessed with reversing the signs of time.

In 2014, at the age of 67, Suzy Lake produced a series titled *Beauty at a Proper Distance*, which takes an unflinching look at aging and the concept of beauty in a set of close-up shots. These cropped images of her own face display a total lack of vanity, showing wrinkles, blemishes, stained teeth and facial hair.<sup>34</sup>

Sherman and Lake, who are in their 60s and 70s respectively, are keenly aware of their own bodies' shifting relationship to a culture that objectifies youthful bodies. What makes these two artists relevant to my own work is their commitment to exploring self in relation to others, but also questions of gender and identity. Although we are not all obsessed with the desire to stay young, resistance is frequently interpreted as defiance or failure.

A pivotal moment arose in my practice when I picked up some large, square brushes and used turps-diluted paint to set up some sort of colour field on large supports. I was using old, pre-used canvas with a history that got accidentally caught up in my current work – a situation which I feel worked to my advantage by creating a history beneath my work. By thinning the paint with turps initially, then lean medium, I could work on multiple pieces simultaneously. With a fast-drying time of a day or two, I was able to build up the layers slowly, without my usual tendency to overwork the pieces (Figure 3). Once a layer had been applied, I often wiped it back with a cloth or blotted the paint with paper to achieve greater transparency. This was not done uniformly but only where I wanted to expose more of the substrate layers, creating an interesting play between figure and field (Figure 4).

I worked with multiple transparent layers to suggest a journey of time. These layers also referenced interior patterns, whether curtains and soft furnishing or venetian blinds, door frames or furniture or shadows, referring to perspective. Although I turned to the colour wheel to examine complementary colours for the paint chosen, in the end it was mainly a question of what sat well in terms of temperature and tone (Figure 5). I realised that the 'process of doing' effected my decisions in the studio in terms of the choices I made (Figure 6).

My visual diary, used as a chronological journal, was invaluable in revealing pivotal changes in direction. When reviewing hours of studio practice, documented in two or three A3 pages in my workbook,<sup>35</sup> it became obvious where the key moments were in the painting process. More often than not, these moments occurred after I proceeded to 'finish' the work, and found that in fact I had been overworking and losing some spontaneity in the work. In some respects, failure created a favourable environment which enabled me to achieve more successful outcomes that I had anticipated.



Figure 3. Coral Broughton, *Dust on the Wind*, 2020, oil on canvas on board, 1500 x 1200 mm.

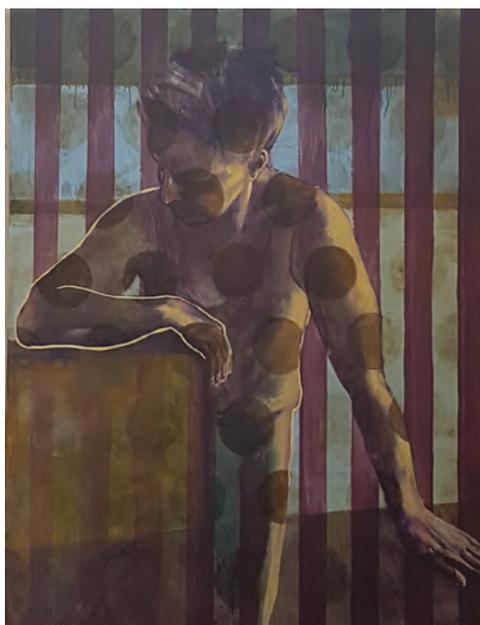


Figure 4. Coral Broughton, *Through Check Points*, 2020, oil on board, 1200 x 900 mm.



Figure 5. Coral Broughton, *Only Your Cats Will Listen*, 2020, oil on canvas on board, 1500 x 1200 mm.



Figure 6. Coral Broughton, *Through Spider Webs*, 2020, oil on canvas on board, 1200 x 900 mm.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the veil is lifting in terms of revealing some of the issues that older women face as they age in our Western culture. As a female artist, I am looking at how women have been represented, or not represented, in the art historical canon, and I am also considering historical and contemporary artists who have addressed the aging process and are continuing to do so. Female artists who are producing work that is raw and honest confront the aging issue and bring some awareness to the cultural anomalies between men and woman in terms of aging.

Sontag says women should tell the truth and allow their faces to age and show the experiences of lives lived, instead of grasping for youth well beyond its expiry date.<sup>36</sup> Meagher looks at the work of female artists who have documented their careers through self-representation, the results of which are viewed through a time perspective.<sup>37</sup> These artists have made advances in exposing our conventional cultural narrative through images that show the process of aging as a contemporary art form, offering not just images, but an invitation to view these images of aging women in a new way. They invite visual encounters that are reflective and have moved beyond the male gaze, but still acknowledging the need for looking and being looked at.<sup>38</sup> Meagher suggests that our relationship to the gaze is constantly changing and being re-evaluated.

In a culture where beauty and even feminism is tied to youth, there comes a time when no matter how healthy and well-groomed women are, they realise that they are being overlooked. Sometimes, this reaction is greeted with relief and a sense of freedom as the pressure to 'dress to impress' is removed. Greer sees aging as an opportunity for re-definition – a space where aging is a desirable condition marked by indifference, allowing for freedom to live outside the gaze.<sup>39</sup>

The core of female self-representational art is the artist's body. Her art represents the embodied experience of the artist – her family, sexuality, relationships, childhood experiences and personal traumas, plus the way her culture has shaped her and her response to its oppression. These women seek not only to be ambitious – and not just for themselves – through family or relationships, but to tell the truth through a face that tells a story of time.

My project *Hidden in Plain Sight* invites new ways of looking at older women, encouraging us to look in a more reflective manner. We must embrace aging as part of our visual culture and endeavour to pull older women out from under the veil of cultural invisibility.

**Coral Broughton** BFA (Ilam School of Art, University of Canterbury) MVA (Dunedin School of Art, Otago Polytechnic) DipTchg (University of Otago), is an artist who confronts the female aging process through her self-portraiture works. She currently runs an art school in Rangiora and exhibits regularly.

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## *screams like home*: A PHOTOBOK PROJECT

Thomas Lord



Figure 1. Kat and Naomi reuniting with Fuji-San from Lake Saiko. Photograph: Thomas Lord.

In February 2020 I travelled with my wife Kat and our nearly two-year-old daughter Naomi to Yamanashi, Japan. Yamanashi is a landlocked prefecture most famous for its national parks and as the home of Mt Fuji. It is an area often bypassed by tourists and most commonly viewed at speed from the Shinkansen (from Tokyo to Kyoto). Our three weeks in Yamanashi were a chance to see old friends and reconnect with a place Kat and I used to call home. A place that for two years captured our hearts, allowed for intense focus and grounded me in a way that I thought was impossible.

As well as enjoying a family holiday I intended to create a body of work that would eventually turn into a book project. I wanted to explore the notion of *déjà vécu* ("already lived"), a phenomena I experienced during my first six months in Japan. It was an everyday occurrence for me, sometimes lasting up to several minutes at a time. You could say that I wanted to reconcile the vagaries of memory in an effort to allow for new ones.

Travelling with a toddler has its challenges. Rather than planning a structured schedule with desired shoots and locations, I approached the project with some naivety and a general curiosity. This way, I hoped that the everyday would organically build into something more than a typology of Japanese playgrounds.



Figure 2. Stopping for unplanned naps even on busy street corners. Photograph: Kat Lord.

While Tokyo is an amazing city to start a holiday, for me it was always a weekend destination or transitional space. My initial feelings were frustration, in that I was wasting film on meaningless tourist images. I took comfort in something Paul Graham said in a conversation describing his process for shooting abroad in his *New Europe* series:

"I had to get the tourist out of my system; you have to get the sightseeing out the way, then get angry and frustrated with yourself. Photographs are everywhere and nowhere."<sup>1</sup>

Our opening weeks in the big city reintroduced familiar smells from neighbourhood *izakayas* and homely expressions of agreement and surprise. The sounds of pedestrian crossings, crows and trains passing meshed into a soundtrack I had been mourning for six years. The crows especially caught the interest of Naomi, who enjoyed mimicking them – sometimes directly back at them and sometimes to the surprise of the hotel receptionist.

Surrendering to the process and letting chance take control, I shot two films a day, 32 photographs, without trying to place them in any future context. Within my frame, naturally occurring orders began to reveal themselves. Enormous whale monuments (Figure 3) held up by poles evocative of the ancient trees scattered around temples; piles of discarded rubbish combined with fallen leaves that resemble the all-too-familiar shape of Fuji-san – a mountain worshipped from afar and seen by some as a female deity, with the chance to purify oneself and find happiness once climbed.<sup>2</sup>

Yamanashi provided a change of pace. Trains bursting at capacity were replaced by a small rental car, while empty villages superseded pedestrian crossings exceeding 2.4 million people a day.<sup>3</sup> Days were spent retracing our walks to work, exploring mountainous temples and reuniting with old friends and colleagues.

Decaying tool sheds, Minobu incense and, of course, the ever-present crows all reminded me of what makes up the fabric of this place. A moss-ridden padlocked door (Figure 5), attached only with wire to a nearby tree, caught my eye. Exploring this scene further, I noticed that someone had failed to remove a resting ladder before cleaning the wall. A scene that could have easily belonged to one of many childhood trips to the Catlins; potentially one of the reasons why I find this place so comforting.

Being removed from the big city also permitted Naomi to run around more and find her own curiosities (Figure 6). This invariably led to photo opportunities, including many of the images that are found in the final book. It became a collaboration of sorts, one that I was more willing to except now that the adjustment period was over. A period of giving up control to work closely with Naomi – whereas my practice before had been one of intention and sought solitude.

As well as following Naomi's intuition, I have to acknowledge the cats of Yamanashi. In Japanese folklore, cats sometimes appear as *yōkai* ("apparitions") and have protective powers while also symbolising good luck. I recall a moment of solitude within the hills that was interrupted by a feeling that something was watching me. A quick scout reveals nothing. However, casting my attention back to where I was photographing, a white cat now observes me. I'm frozen as we spend a few minutes looking at each other. I feel the urge to give a half-hearted bow, resulting in a quick nod; the cat responds with a slow blink. Effortlessly and in silence, the cat disappears behind an abandoned glasshouse. A few days later I've stopped to photograph a sign in the city. The sign depicts a bearded bear with glasses holding a toothbrush – a sign we used to joke about, as it vaguely resembled me. A snap on the phone and I'm about to leave – something is stopping me again. With one hand on the driver's door, I look up at the nearby apartments and spot a white cat watching me again. I smile, I nod and this time I ask to take its photo (Figure 9).

Less than a week after receiving my negatives back, I attended the PhotobookNZ masterclass at Massey University. Although I was going in fresh without a clear idea of the outcome, it was a great chance to speak with photographers, designers and publishers one-to-one about the trip and, more importantly, the images I came back with. The masterclass provided me with the time to handle books, think about layout and what kind of book I wanted my images to exist in. During an informal presentation, I was interrupted by a photographer who pointed out that I had described several images as "screaming like home." He was intrigued by this interpretation and so was I, as I couldn't recall using this explanation before. Using this phrase as a prospective title, I put several edits together and returned to Ōtepoti with multiple outcomes in mind.



Figure 3. From *screams like home* book.  
Photograph: Thomas Lord.



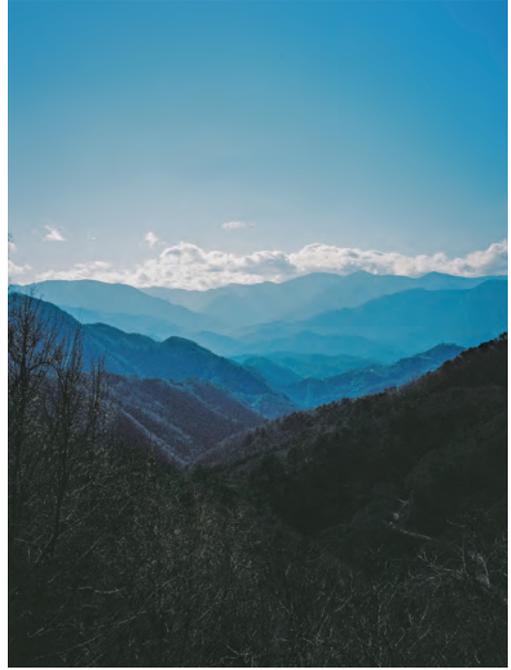
Figure 4. From *screams like home* book.  
Photograph: Thomas Lord.



A fortnight later New Zealand was in alert-level 4 lockdown. During this time of heightened uncertainty (and internal ruminations on whether or not I should proceed with the book), our quotidian routine of walks around the block were a highlight – observing the seasons change, watching the different fungi appear and, of course, seeing which houses had a new teddy display. Walking as a family and stopping at whatever caught Naomi's attention felt strangely like our time in Japan. At night I would work on the book. This sequencing acted as another exploration or extension of my neighbourhood bubble. This was a comforting and methodical process which kept my mind away from the thought of potentially having left Japan for the last time.

There are two pieces of writing in the book. The first is a short excerpt from my 2012 diary and the second is "Tokyo is yours,"<sup>4</sup> an essay by Rachel Hope Allan. Rachel's essay talks about her first impressions of Tokyo and the details which quickly made her fall in love with the city. This was a piece of writing about arriving in a new place – not about Yamanashi, but about Tokyo. At this point I decided on my layout and determined to split the book into halves, inverted at the centre with identical covers (Figure 13). I kept my original series of intimate, full-page-bleed Yamanashi images, while I generated a new sequence for Rachel's writing which consisted of smaller images from our initial days in Tokyo – a time when I was frustrated and confused about the project, a time when I was trying to find the familiar in the unfamiliar. Subtracting the lived experience, patterns began to emerge and I found a sequence that spoke directly to the emotions expressed in Rachel's writing, while also highlighting some of the contrasts inherent in my own experience.

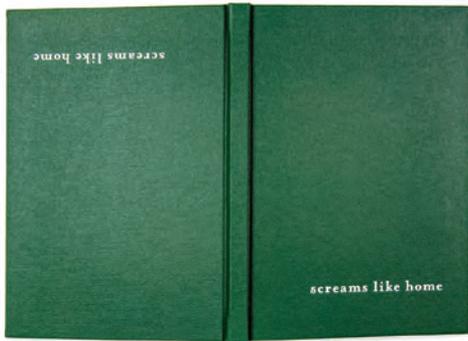
*screams like home* is roughly A5 in size, which speaks to its intimacy while travelling through the images. It also reflects the size of a book you would find people reading on trains or in a convenience store. It has been met with curiosity, confusion and a sense that if you take away the occasional sign, this could be a book about anywhere.



Previous page.  
Figure 6. Naomi exploring 1000 year old cedar tree.  
Photograph: Thomas Lord.

Figure 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 & 13. From *screams like home* book.  
Photographs: Thomas Lord.





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## FOUR POEMS ABOUT PAINTERS AND ONE ABOUT AN EXTRAORDINARY SCULPTOR

Peter Belton

### Realising Gislebertus' Eve (2019)

And so God created Adam and Gislebertus made his Eve.  
A naked Eve he saw in prostrated grief with head in hand.  
A tear from her eye rendered forever in cold stone facing  
away from the weird of her fate and lost children she will bear.  
Always another place another time as her arms reach behind.  
And she labours with her hands till fruit from the bough becomes  
a fruit from her womb withal the long naked shadow of sorrow.  
Aware of affect, we see how she lies with that judgement now.  
And always the need to cover her head, her paps, her cunt so so.  
And she must weave herself into a shadow and a reflection that  
another might ask who she really is and what pain she knows.  
And how the workings of her day are set in stone-faced law by  
Allman. Yet another man, Gislebertus, at least saw and recognised.  
And when attempting to carve a telling he somehow understood.



Figure 1. Attr. Gislebertus (worked: 1120-35), Eve, St Lazare Cathedral (north portal), Autun, France.

Gislebertus was the master carver working on Autun Cathedral, c.1120-35. The story or legend has it that he carved almost all the figures in the cathedral by himself, and they are truly remarkable as sympathetic portraits of human types. For me, the writer; the most remarkable piece is his depiction of Eve. It may be the earliest rendering of a naked woman in medieval Christian art and, in the judgement of this writer, only Rembrandt's depiction of Bathsheba might be its equal.

The guidebooks tell us the subject of this sculpture is *The Temptation of Eve*. What the myth does not properly unpack is explanation for the presence of the *One-Eyed Trousers Snake* and the *fecund promise of the apple*. "Paps:" *archaic Scandinavian/English term for breast or nipple. Modern definition: something soft, mushy, as with slops/food.*

Gislebertus' sculpture presents Eve as vulnerable and afraid: aware *before* the moment of "the fall", whereas the Book of Genesis tells us that awareness and the shame of being aware came only as a consequence of taking the forbidden fruit.

## Commedia dell'arte and Watteau's Folly (2020)

Gilles as Pierrot the consumptive clown regards us still withal his heavy immobility, apart yet poised, to be presented above his station as a limewashed statue so near yet so far from us, seeing over, through and beyond to when his moment becomes our moment. Around Pierrot's feet, beneath his plinth and beneath the wall, discover confused lovers Leandre and Isabelle who cannot answer to Harlequin and Columbine. No trickster and his wily-witted paramour here. They slip to exit stage left while the Doctor and his braying ass demand we pay heed to their dialogue, a hollowing of forms into pufferies of words to be parried by that buffoon Captain Saltimbanque on the gallant point of his word. And so, we read how substitution plays a frivolous game, apparently, to an unseen Rococo audience where a memorial to the genius of a dying man might be fashioned through and with insights arising from the converging states of the artist and the clown.



Figure 2. Jean-Antoine Watteau, *Gilles (or Pierrot) and Four Other Characters of the Commedia dell'arte*, c. 1718-19.

Picasso was merely stating a truism when he said that all painting is self-portrait. Watteau suffered from delicate health and died young from consumption (tuberculosis) at the age of 36 during the flowering of French Rococo culture. He has left us with a legacy of some of the most psychologically insightful drawing. His images have a sly kindness and understanding of how the most nuanced gesture can signal a story, with all its pathos and its irony.

## Rossetti, his Brotherhood and the spirit of no matter (2020)

Why do I write about Dante Gabrielle Rossetti, that bright shit who slipped his charming words in between her breasts, beneath her hair? Elizabeth, Sally or Jane, no matter.

Morris up to his elbows with aniline dyes and the seductions of diaphanous colour; blue, mauve, pale citrus green, and apricot pink. Not her breasts. Married to his work, she said.

While Dante-Gabrielle rubs saffron balms into her folding self and Elizabeth plays at Ophelia's floating suicide, and by playing-so-fully just finds that slip of becoming laudanum later. No matter.

And, Holman Hunt's newly discovered Sally Cornforth, she with the fiery golden hair, surrounded by signifiers and murmuring mirrors. *No Awakening Conscience* for her. To die abandoned and colourless.

And so, these obsessions of gentlemen will be pulled into the withdrawing rooms in which the lady ornaments may fret until displaced from the vessels of their being by younger flowers. No matter.

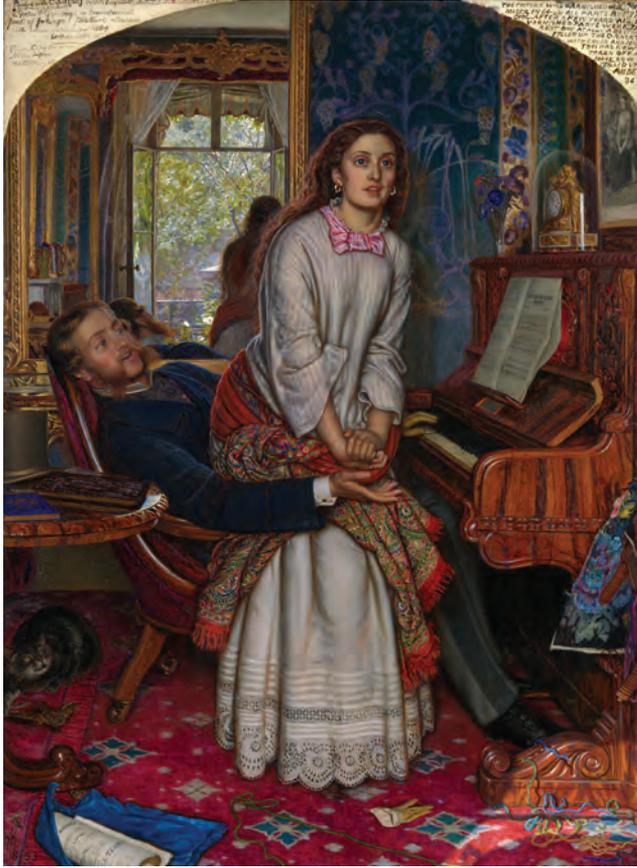


Figure 3. William Holman Hunt, *The Awakening Conscience*, 1853, oil on canvas, 76 x 56 cm.



Figure 4. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Proserpine*, 1874, oil on canvas, 125 x 61 cm.

The artists referred to here were members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood: mid-Victorian romantics who were obsessed with fidelity to natural appearances in their renderings, if not exactly so in their 'gallant' pursuits. These men were the products of comfortable middle-class wealth and entitlement and, being gallant, they pursued attractive working-class girls who became their models and paramours – as Jane Morris was to Rossetti. With the exception of Jane Burden, who remained married to William Morris, these women were all abandoned and returned to poverty at some later stage.

Proserpine was the Roman goddess associated with the cult and mysteries associated with the production of wine and was also linked to Ceres, goddess of cereals and grain. Her Greek predecessor was Persephone. The model was Jane Burden, wife of William Morris.

### Three Pastoral Moments (2020)

To start with a Crisp quote: "A Romantic is one who describes a World better than it is; a realist is a pessimist, but the one who describes the world as it is we call a satirist." Thanks Quentin.

It declaims; this depiction of *the Hireling Shepherd* by William Holman Hunt. Discover the heady intensity of summer colour and robust midday shadows. Pan the seducer has set alight corn-coloured hair, comfortable full-bellied sheep, meadow flowers and lush liverworts in which a muscular young man, ruddily warm, is reaching over from behind, into the woman. She leans back into him. Strong in body, this English Ceres is dressed in a loose fashion with bare feet touching naked into ponded water. Teasing. And so, she allures with apples and a spring lamb in her lap. And so, fascinated with their work; we might sit and watch for hours.

*Hay*. Is this real? Hey there, Jules Bastien-Lepage, what have we really got here? A depiction; the bitter end of summer where the mown hayfields register a grey mauve in the wobble of sweat and stubble. A roughly shaven tired face, taut and dry. Beside an empty pot, or billy, are the colours of poverty and hand-me-down people. Ragged man flat on his back resting with hat drawn across his eyes as if to deny the moment or any moment. A young woman sits splayed beside him. She is bent forward from carrying and is now staring out, weary and vacant as her aunts might look when admitting to their mending and toil; always over and under. And, we see there are splits and holes in the soles of her shoes. What's more ....

Certainly not bucolic, perhaps ironic, this *Dejeuner sur l'herbe* in a closed distance. Edouard Manet's almost undressed woman hovers in a pool of liquid pigment, and someone might remember Rembrandt's Bather. And, there are signs of a careless picnic which foregrounds another woman sitting stark naked beside and apart from two well-presented men. Their conversation is clubbish, insouciant and alcohol-fuelled. Having undressed her, they ignore her and so she must pass a level gaze over and out toward us, her audience. Nothing plein-air here and certainly no romance. It rains outside and so we might drink with the humours which are being staged in the artifice of somebody's studio.



Figure 5. William Holman Hunt, *The Hireling Shepherd*, 1851, oil on canvas, 76 x 110 cm.



Figure 6. Jules Bastien-Lepage, *Haymakers (Les Foins)*, 1877, oil on canvas, 160 x 195 cm.



Figure 7. Edouard Manet, *Le Dejeuner sur l'herbe* (*The Picnic on the Grass*), 1863, oil on canvas, 208 × 265 cm.

Holman Hunt drew censure from a Victorian public and critics for his depiction of a *Hireling Shepherd* who has been distracted from his work. In this instance, the model for this distraction was Emma Watkins, who followed the artist when Hunt returned to London from Ewell in rural Surrey. Hunt had been painting alongside fellow Pre-Raphaelite artist John Everett Millais, who was working at the same time on his painting of (the death of) 'Ophelia.' The two paintings could have not been more unlike in their project. The subject of Millais' painting, taken from *Hamlet*, one of the greatest plays in English literature, attracted widespread admiration, whereas Hunt's depiction of the shepherd and his paramour was attacked for its "vulgarity", its portrayal of indolence and its ruddy, rustic and uninhibited sexuality. *The Hireling Shepherd* was finished in London and first exhibited in 1851. It is now in the collection of the Manchester Art Gallery.

Jules Bastien-Lepage painted his *Haymakers* (*Les Foins*) in 1877. In his short life he had a meteoric rise to fame as a social realist painter; pushing away from the comfort of Impressionist subjects, which we now see as representative of the 1870s. It is too easy to overlook the empathetic depictions found in social realist art of this time in France, Germany and Holland. This painting is a fine example of that genre. It is now in the collection of the Museum d'Orsay, Paris.

*Le Dejeuner sur l'herbe*, painted by Edouard Manet and exhibited in the Salon des Refusés in 1863, is one of the most cited paintings in any discussion about the origins of modern art. At the time of its making, it was, like so many of Manet's works, castigated for its shocking affrontery. Manet's close friend Victorine Meurant, herself a painter of repute, was his model, and we might reflect on their complicity in taking a poke at bourgeois attitudes toward being seen to be proper. The entitlement of the two well-dressed men, their insouciance in the presence of two undressed women, set out to shock. Victorine was also the model for Manet's painting *Olympia*, another *cause de scandale* and at the same time a "succès de scandale." Both paintings can be found in the Museum d'Orsay, Paris.

## Poaching humour offline with Karl Hubbuch (2020)

Weimar, 1925, when humour is bitten into by  
hunger, so like the cutting edges of his paper to  
draw thin lines of blood beneath the nails.  
Sleeves rolled up for business, the shirted  
man points his knife. Somehow off-sider has deep  
pockets and deeper eyes and cold sharp hands.  
The way everything is drawn; so sharp and clear as  
cutting cold. The broken house becomes a ripped  
open carcass to reveal a thrust of wall, a pointed  
blade into the night with trappings of wire netting.  
Yet, in this setting hunted ducks somehow elude all.  
Nowhere in this scene to be seen at all at all.  
And so Karl's hungry line explores the page with  
recollection, anticipation and a growling belly.<sup>1</sup>

During the hungry years of the Weimar Republic in Germany, Karl Hubbuch was one of the artists associated with *Die Neue Sachlichkeit*, "The New Objectivity" movement. Artists associated with the movement included his close friend George Grosz, Max Beckmann, Otto Dix, Christian Schad and Rudolf Schlichter. Very often satirical in their practice, they came to the notice of the National Socialists and became targets. From 1933 these artists, including Hubbuch, were dismissed from teaching posts and forbidden to practice. Hubbuch died in 1978.

**Peter Belton** has been a teacher of art history, theory and studio practices. Recent poetry, about artists, published in *Landfall* 240 and 241 have been about Vincent Van Gogh's *Starry Night* and Ralph Hotere's mural for Auckland Airport, which was given the name *Kuaka*. *Scope Art&Design* 13, 2013 presented Peter's poems about Lorca (poet), Rembrandt, Schwitters, Ernst, Friedrich, Pearson, Piero della Francesca, Picasso and Frances Hodgkins.

<sup>1</sup> Karl Hubbuch, *Duck Poachers*, 1925, pencil and watercolour on paper; 43 × 43 cm. *Duck Poachers* is listed as *The Duck Robbers* in the collection of The Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart, graphic collection.