

Holdings

John Reynolds b. 1956

Office of the Mayor 2001

vinyl on aluminium

Acquired 2002 Gift from the artist

Ralph Hotere b. 1931

Untitled 1981

mixed media on South African flag

Acquired 1981 Donated by the artist to the Paritaka Centennial Exhibition and Art Auction, September 1981, assistance from the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand

AM I Scared, Boy (EH)

**Collection works
from then and now**

28 March - 21 June 2009

Hallways

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Office of the dead 2001

vinyl on aluminium

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Both Ralph Hotere and John Reynolds play with the communicative power of the sign and the visual language of graphic emblems in these works.

In Reynolds' *The Office of the Dead*, the formal placement of the chevrons – used so often in heraldry, flag design, road signs, architecture and construction – seem distant to the artist's gestures with language that resonate in more recent works such as *Cloud*. However language still enters this work; the title is borrowed from a poem by New Zealand writer Leigh Davis in which letters on a page are arranged to mimic the positions of yachts racing at sea. Thus the apparently mute chevrons are orchestrated, allowing visual, spatial and linguistic vocabularies simultaneously to play.

Hone Papita Raukura (Ralph) Hotere's *Untitled* is a flag with a chequered history. The flag has been borrowed, defaced, appropriated and ultimately exhibited in the Parihaka Centennial Exhibition & Auction held at the Govett-Brewster in 1981 before being collected by the Gallery. Hotere's work features a South African flag with the poem *O Africa* by Maori poet Hone Tuwhare written across its symbolic face, it was part of a series and used in protests against the 1981 apartheid-era South African rugby union 'Springbok' tour of Aotearoa New Zealand. Hotere's political works have continued alongside his well known *Black Paintings* series. When Aramoana, a wetland near his Port Chalmers home, was proposed as the site for an aluminium smelter, Hotere was vocal in his opposition, and produced the *Aramoana* series of paintings. Similarly, the sinking of the Greenpeace flagship *Rainbow Warrior* produced works in 1985 and Middle-East politics have led to more recent works such as *Jerusalem, Jerusalem*. Indeed *Untitled* stands to signify a potent historical and political moment; and further references the unique relationship between political activism and art in this country.

Gallery 5

Octavia Cook b.1978

Mr & Mrs Cook 2005

acrylic, sterling silver and 18ct gold

Acquired 2008

Francis Upritchard b.1976

Untitled / 2002

velvet lined leather case containing 18 modelling putty combs

Acquired 2003

Both Cook and Upritchard examine our shifting relationship with history and take a trickster approach to notions of memory and meaning. *Mr & Mrs Cook*, from Octavia Cook's series called *The Family Jewels*, immortalises her family in cameo brooches. By inserting herself into her own highly subjective version of history, Cook plays a game with her genealogy and naming, and doubly-references the little-known domestic life of Captain Cook, one of the pivotal figures in the formation of this country's colonial past.

The fallibility of memory – personal, collective or archival – is a recurrent theme in Francis Upritchard's work. In *Tools* the New Plymouth born artist's imperfect fashioning of Maori-looking artefacts from memory, while living in London, articulates a personal relationship to ideas about history, objects, memory, cultural forms and authenticity. The presentation of *Tools* calls into question wider notions of an articulated 'collective memory' as embodied in museums, the institutions that some societies charge with the task of remembering.

Shaun Gladwell b.1972

Taranaki descent 2004

DVD – 8.13 minutes. Edition ¼

Acquired 2005 TSB Collection – purchased with funds donated by the TSB Community Trust to the Govett-Brewster Foundation

Christopher Williams b.1956

Erratum AGFA Color (oversaturated) Camera: Robertson Process Model 31 580 Serial #F97-116 Lens: Apo Nikkor 455 mm stopped down to f90 Lighting: 16.000 Watts Tungsten 3200 degrees kelvin Film: Kodak Plus-X Pan ASA 125 Kodak Pan Masking for contrast and colour correction Film developer: Kodak HC 110 Dilution B (1:7) used @ 68 degrees Fahrenheit Exposure and development times (in minutes): Exposure Development Red Filter Kodak Wratten PM25 2'30 4'40 Green Filter Kodak Wratten PM61 10'20 3'30 Blue Filter Kodak Wratten PM 47B 7'00 7'00 Paper: Fujicolor Crystal Archive Type C Glossy Chemistry: Kodak RA-4 Processor: Tray Exposure and development times (in seconds): Exposure Development Red Filter Kodak Wratten #29 8 Green Filter Kodak

Wratten #99 15'5 1'10 @ 92 degrees Fahrenheit Blue Filter Kodak Wratten #98 30'5 October 7, 2000

contact print

Acquired 2002

Model: 1964 Renault Dauphine-Four, R-1095. Body Type & Seating: 4-dr sedan - 4 to 5 persons Engine Type: 14/52 Weight: 1397 lbs Price: \$1495,00 USD (original) ENGINE DATA: Base four: inline, overhead-valve four-cylinder Cast iron block and aluminum head w/removable cylinder sleeves. Displacement: 51.5 cu. in (845 cc.) Bore and Stroke: 2.28 x 3.15 in. (58 x 80 mm) Compression Ratio: 7.25:1 Brake Horsepower: 32 (SAE) at 4200 rpm Torque: 50 lbs At 2000 rpm, Three main bearings. Solid valve lifters Single downdraft carburetor CHASSIS DATA: Wheelbase: 89 in. Overall length: 155 in. Height: 57 in. Width: 60 in. Front thread: 49 in. Rear thread: 48 in. Standard Tires: 5.50 x 15 in. TECHNICAL: Layout: rear engine, rear drive. Transmission: four speed manual Steering: rack and pinion. Suspension (front): independent with swing axles and coil springs. Brakes: front/rear disc. Body construction: steel unibody PRODUCTION DATA: Sales: 18,432 sold in U.S. in 1964 (all types) Manufacturer: Regie Nationale des Usines Renault, Billancourt, France Distributor: Renault Inc., New York, NY, U.S.A. Serial number: R-10950059799 Engine Number: Type 670-05 # 191 563 California License Plate number: UOU 087 Vehicle ID Number: 0059799 (For R.R.V.) Los Angeles, California January 15, 2000 (Nr. 5) 2000

contact print

Acquired 2002 Gift from the artist

Both Shaun Gladwell and Christopher Williams' works engage with and subvert urban and commercial worlds.

Gladwell's Taranaki descent was commissioned by the Govett-Brewster as part of the Gridlock: cities, spaces, structures exhibition in 2004 and shot on location in New Plymouth. In an act of picturesque, rolling movement, the skaters in Gladwell's video transform the vast yet mundane interior of New Plymouth's Centre City Car Park – sited ironically with a spectacular view of the foreshore – into a sublime tableau, reminiscent of 1960s surfing videos. The artist calls it "the most beautiful car park in the world". In spite of the superficially casual street culture style, Gladwell's work is carefully composed, using slow motion, framing and considered viewpoints to open a range of readings that push and play with art historical genres. Gladwell will be representing Australia in this year's Venice Biennale.

Borrowing from commercial photographic techniques, Williams focuses our gaze on the mundane and the material in *Erratum AGFA Color ...* and *Model: 1964 Renault Dauphine-Four ...* Williams amplifies these mass produced products to a level of idealised perfection that is accentuated by the domestic banality of the subjects, calling into question the reality of the image. What are we looking at

here? All technique and little substance, these hyper-real images expose the manufacture of commercial desire and its insidious yet effective superficiality.

Jacqueline Fraser b. 1956

Scud Warheads 2002

embroidered French furnishing fabric with oilstick

Acquired 2003 Gift from the artist

Octavia Cook b. 1978

The Tsarina c. 1905 Ceremonial Hand Mirror Pendant 2007

acrylic, plastic mirror, sterling silver with 'emerald-cut' bevelled glass mirror

Acquired 2008

The paired works of Fraser and Cook suggest unashamed opulence. Fraser's *Scud* is one of an extensive series of crudely drawn oil-stick silhouettes of high fashion footwear rendered over squares of Parisian fabric. In an ironic twist, the title of each work in the series alludes to off-hand or deliberate violence. The neo-expressionist defacement of the high-baroque-esque fabric remnant, combined with the violence implied in the title, implies a critique of luxury, fetishism, sexuality and longing. Violence and desire are enmeshed through this deliberately grotesque super-imposition.

Consciously assuming a role as a jeweller, Cook extends the parameters of the discipline to engage with conceptual ideas about identity and history. The *Tsarina c. 1905 Ceremonial Hand Mirror Pendant* is an ornate necklace-chain with a particularly ostentatious personality, on it hangs a miniature mirror, suspended upside down to allow the wearer to lift it and gaze upon their reflection. Cook humorously usurps this private moment of vanity by obscuring the mirror with a representation of herself as the 'Tsarina'. This work is part of a series in which Cook plays with her own name (see *Mr & Mrs Cook*), and inserts her profile into her work in the guise of various historical figures.

Ani O'Neill b. 1971

There's no place like home 1998

wool and steel

Acquired 2005 TSB Collection – purchased with funds donated by the TSB Community Trust to the Govett-Brewster Foundation

Reuben Paterson b. 1973

Time and Place 2007

sequins, pins, polyurethane foam

Acquired 2008

Adopting a vivid palette and flagrant love of material, these two works by O'Neill and Paterson revisit the forms and motifs of Pacific and Maori cultures respectively in the context of today's Aotearoa New Zealand.

O'Neill's work alludes to both artistic and cultural forms; for her it is colour field painting alongside the exceptional fibre work of women from the Cook Islands. O'Neill's works often use the traditional Raratongan crafts passed down to her from her grandmothers and frequently involve her community's and her family's participation in their making. Primary colours in this work are articulated not in paint but in circular formed crocheted wool. There's no place like home is one in a series of wool works, begun when the artist moved to Wellington. She explained that wool was the most readily available material for her needs, given it was so cold!

Reuben Paterson, an artist of Ngati Rangitahi/Ngai Tuhoe descent, does not see himself as part of the regeneration of matauranga Maori (Maori customary knowledge) and questions the categorising of art by ethnicity. Yet his work offers inflections on traditional Maori cultural forms alongside kitsch tourist imagery using overtly contemporary materials. His use of sequins – and in other works glitter and diamond dust – both recalls the popular culture that infiltrated his childhood, as well as referencing the use of light to signify illumination and aura in Western Renaissance religious painting. He says;

"I haven't chosen to do Maori work because there is some urban revival – what comes to me, and is part of me, is just my world and the world of many other people." The artist's influences are culturally and artistically broad; when asked who the most influential twentieth century artist was he replied; "Andy Warhol. He allowed us to transition from one condition to another, by bridging ideas of sexuality, popular culture and consumerism." (News from Island, Campbelltown Arts Centre) These are interests that penetrate Paterson's practice.

Colin McCahon 1919-1987

Blind III (Muriwai Beach) and Blind IV (Muriwai Beach) 1974

acrylic on unstretched canvas

Acquired 2002 Gift of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Wellington, 2002

Am I scared 1976

acrylic on steinbach paper

Acquired 1977 with assistance from the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand

Colin McCahon's extraordinary work from the 1960s onwards frequently reduces or eliminates the natural world within a monochrome tonality, where text often comprises both form and content within the work, as seen in this pairing of important works by the artist.

For Blind III and Blind IV the setting is Muriwai Beach, north of Auckland. In his now familiar abstract visual language, McCahon has created 'landscapes' with a solitary uneven horizontal line. The work is a companion piece to another major work by McCahon, *The song of the shining cuckoo* (1974). Metaphorically, 'blindness' references what McCahon understood as a national blindness to the land and the spirit, believing many New Zealanders to be unable to see beneath the surface appearance of things. Through his Blind series, McCahon is perhaps expressing both his condolence and pity for those who are blind to both the land and spirit, a theme that characterised much of his work. He believed that New Zealand was a landscape with too few lovers.

Blind III and Blind IV were offered as a gift to the Govett-Brewster in 2002 by the New Zealand Government as part of a decision to return artworks of major significance and value to New Zealand from its embassies overseas. Originally comprising five parts, these two panels were installed at the New Zealand Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York from the 1980s until 2002.

McCahon's *Am I scared* is part of a series of three works, all featuring the phrase "am I scared boy eh". These words refer to the reported reaction of Maori visitors when they entered Auckland Art Gallery, more broadly it raises questions about access to cultural forms, relevance and modes of inter-cultural communication. On another level the works are perhaps self-referential – an expression of spiritual anxiety and uncertainty. This work was proposed for purchase in 1976, the same year in which it was painted. The Gallery Director at the time, Ron O'Reilly, faced a storm of protest against its acquisition. He passionately defended the purchase of the work, finally persuading the New Plymouth City Council to agree to its purchase. The work remains today one of the Collection's most loved and widely admired works, having lost none of its radicalism of gesture, emotional power and minimalist strength with time.

Lisa Reihana b. 1964
Digital Marae: Maui 2007
 Colour digital print on aluminium

Tony Fomison 1939-1990
Blind Maori Unknown c. 1963
 Charcoal on paper

Reihana's Maui is depicted in a dynamic surfing stance on the waves of Hawai'i – its visual reference point being a 1970s National Geographic foldout. The image harnesses the polished language of cinema and offers the artist's contemporary take on Maori cosmology transposed through the current medium of fast-speed film photography. Maui is a component of Lisa Reihana's ongoing project *Digital Marae*, begun in the early 1990s, which includes large-scale photographic images and video that evoke Maori ancestral figures or atua. These images are a

contemporary incarnation of powhenua, the sacred wooden carvings that line marae. Her process involves a spirited yet respectful questioning of traditional cultural forms, she thinks of these works as carvings, their highly polished surfaces a reference to the burnished surfaces of timber powhenua.

The context of an art gallery can offer a space conscious of yet different to the traditions of marae protocol. It was with this opportunity in mind that Reihana was offered the choice of a work to accompany Maui in this exhibition; her choice was unquestionably a work by Tony Fomison.

Fomison possessed a sustained interest in ethnography and archaeology; indeed he worked for a time at the Canterbury Museum in Christchurch, however it was not until he left the museum that his career as an artist flourished. His practice developed as a kind of outsider anthropology, wherein a questioning respect for and engagement with Maori and Pacific Islander traditions was ever-present. *Blind Maori* was part of an early series from around 1963 by Fomison that explored Maoridom through an intensive meditation on the subtle textural and sculptural qualities of the face. These are quiet and potent abstractions on form.

Rohan Wealleans b. 1971
Disciple of the Pearl 2006
 paint, fibreglass, polystyrene and metal stand
 Acquired 2007

Francis Upritchard b. 1976
Horseman 2008
 modelling material, steel, synthetic polymer paint
 Acquired 2008

Rainwob Tree 2008
 macrocarpa, modelling material, synthetic polymer paint
 Acquired 2008

Artists of the same generation, Wealleans' painting practice and Upritchard's sculptural practice momentarily converge in a psychedelic colour stream.

Wealleans' *Disciple of the Pearl* extends painting on a provocative and energised level to the point where the materiality of paint is given visceral, almost animate form. *Disciple of the Pearl*, born of the artists' obsessive layering and scraping of paint, forms a dangling globular presence in space. The work distorts scale and conjures possible frozen moments from science fiction tales or hallucinogenic dream states.

Horseman and *Rainwob Tree* were developed by the artist for the Govett-Brewster during an Artist in Residence program in 2007-08 during which time the artist called New Plymouth the 'city of rainbows'. Upritchard's sculptural works may well inhabit a similar otherworld to Wealleans' fabulations. The awkwardly

scaled Horseman and Rainwob Tree seem to have materialised from a collective 1960s and 70s urban and rural mythology, a forgotten reminiscence of an imagined era. Her work articulates the futile optimism that fuelled the desire to realise a utopia that would never eventuate. The artist is representing New Zealand at this year's Venice Biennale with a catalogue co-published by the Gallery.

Kurabiyashi Takashi b. 1968
Washstand (detail) 2007
acrylic, neoprene, water
Under consideration as Gift from the artist

Fumio Yoshimura b. 1926-2002
Tomato Plant 1972
wood
Acquired 1974

These two works are each placed at the two entry points to Gallery 5. For Kurabiyashi Takashi wild imaginings proliferate beneath and between unassuming architectural surfaces. His work concerns the tension between natural forces and urban environments. Kurabiyashi's installation *Washstand*, commissioned by the Gallery for the 2007 exhibition *New Nature*, sited a lush submarine garden behind a bathroom 'mirror' through which the neoprene penguin exhibited here appeared 'floating' above on a watery surface.

The concept behind *New Nature* alluded to the impact of human habitation, nature as 'tamed', 'interpreted', 'framed' and as something infused with metaphorical meaning. Fumio Yoshimura is a sculptor of the everyday, apparent in this intricate rendering of a Tomato Plant in white unfinished linden wood. His work slips seamlessly into this conversation. In his carvings, the Tokyo educated, New York based artist examined the activities of daily life, and although implied, human figures never appeared. (Incidentally, his obituary in the New York Times in 2002 noted that he was once married to writer Kate Millett (who dedicated her book *Sexual Politics* to him.)

Edith Amituanai b. 1980
Line and Shiloh playing cards 2005
c-type print
Acquired 2008

Miss Amituanai 2005
c-type print
Acquired 2008

Jane Dove
Dorothy Lange, artist, Urenui 1987
cibachrome photograph
Acquired 1987

Store, Warea 1987
cibachrome photograph
Acquired 1987

Using the language of documentary photography, these works by Edith Amituanai and Jane Dove present carefully composed images of individuals in their own immediate environments. The viewer is invited to glean as much about the subjects from their faces, clothing and stance as from the architecture, interiors and objects that surround them.

Amituanai's modest and carefully considered photographs depict Samoan family life in Auckland. As a first generation New Zealand born Samoan artist, the artist documents her community within their own homes. She photographs her immediate and extended family yet assumes a distant gaze. This interplay between intimacy and formality create a quiet tension in these images. Amituanai won the inaugural Marti Friedlander Award for Photography in 2007.

Jane Dove's works share a similar social documentary aim. They present engaging images of Taranaki people and places from the late 1980s. These images were published in her book of photographs, *Taranaki*, published in 1987 with writers David Hill and Elizabeth Smither that was launched at the Govett-Brewster. Coincidentally the artist Dorothy Lange, the subject of one of the two images, is also the mother of another artist in the Govett-Brewster collection, photographer and video pioneer Darcy Lange.

Gallery 6

Laurence Aberhart b. 1949
A distant view of Taranaki and Taranaki, Wanganui, 12 May 2008, 2008
silver gelatin gold and selenium toned
Under consideration for acquisition

A distant view of Taranaki from the mouth of the Wanganui River; at dusk 3 February 1986, 1986
silver bromide gelatin print
Acquired 1986

Laurence Aberhart has photographed Mount Tananaki on many occasions from many views; his images reflect the symbolic and visual power of the mountain and the history that has unfolded beneath it. The mountain remains constant and unmarked by time, even though its appearance differs in each depiction. The works are always made as contact prints from the nineteenth century black and white plate camera Aberhart uses and have a brooding sense of darkness and light, achieved by long exposures of up to 12 hours. Aberhart often photographs deserted scenes, his film too slow to record human presence in the flesh. His photographic moment is elongated and stretched to become a steady purposeful passage of time, an event, and a mode of surveillance. Many of the sites in his photographs exude a sense of history and they are often sites of colonial imposition and resistance. Although taken twenty years apart these two photographs reflect the artist's sustained interest in the resonance of place and the intrinsic beauty contained in an analogue, hand printed photograph that traces the subtle inflections of light on landscape and the passages of time.

Ann Shelton b. 1967

Opus, The Norian (no right angles) Wall, Frankley Rd, New Plymouth, Part of the Edgar Roy Brewster House Originally at Sanders Ave 2004

C-type print (diptych)

Acquired 2008

Anne Noble b. 1954

Antarctica, Discovery Museum, Dundee, from the White Lantern series 2003, 2007

pigment print on Epsom semi-matt paper

Acquired 2007

Deception Island, Antarctica, from the White Lantern series 2005, 2007

pigment print on Epsom semi-matt paper

Acquired 2007

Working contemporaneously, both Ann Shelton and Anne Noble investigate the role of photography in presenting 'the truth' and conveying 'facts' through images as well as the doubling of images to create new perspectives.

Opus, The Norian (no right angles) Wall, ... is a diptych of two large-scale photographs that features the 'Norian (NO Right Angles)' wall, a remnant from the so-called honeycomb house, the brainchild of New Plymouth designer, bee-keeper, inventor, aviator and eccentric, Edgar Roy Brewster in the 1930s. Brewster developed an entire architectural philosophy, written in verse, on this thematic. Inverted on a vertical axis, one photograph mirrors the other in Shelton's work. This is a device used often by Shelton, and the doubling and reversing of the image has been compared to the interplay of fiction and reality in the creation of myth. The work was photographed while Shelton was New Zealand Artist in Residence with the Govett-Brewster in 2004.

Deception Island, Antarctica and *Antartica, Discovery Museum, Dundee* are both photographs from Noble's *White Lantern* series, that features real and simulated takes on Antarctica. The latter work is a photograph of a constructed Antarctica museum display in a Scottish museum while the former depicts the snow blown landscape of Deception Island in the South Shetland Islands off the Antarctic Peninsula. Although a safe harbour, it is home only to Argentinian and Spanish research bases given its volatile volcanic life. The works in *White Lantern* are both an investigation of beauty and an examination of the notion of 'Antarctica' as a place that exists in the imagination, formed through exposure to photographs, film, television, tales and the occasional encounter with crumbling polystyrene dioramas. In 2002 Noble participated in the Artists to Antarctica scheme, in 2003 she travelled to Antarctic museums and research centres worldwide and in 2005, travelled to Antarctica as part of a Creative New Zealand grant.

Ben Cauchi b. 1974

White Shroud 2006

tintype photograph

Acquired 2007 with funds from the Govett-Brewster Foundation

The Hermetic Seal (small) 2006

tintype photograph

Acquired 2007 with funds from the Govett-Brewster Foundation

Writer and filmmaker Susan Sontag discussed how the camera promotes nostalgia, especially in the industrialised world, while evoking "the sense of the unattainable". Ben Cauchi's photographs evoke the past, both in subject matter and technique. His visual language draws on nineteenth and early twentieth century photographs that acted as 'evidence', quietly declaring the existence of paranormal phenomena. In Cauchi's photographs objects levitate, smoke emanates and things disappear, and above all, the photographer is revealed as a magician and conjurer of tales. Using labour-intensive nineteenth century wet-plate photographic techniques of tintypes and ambrotypes, Wanganui based Cauchi explores the more chemical and physical aspects of constructing photographic prints. The photographs he creates rely on the viewer's ability to believe in 'the truth' of the photograph and its image, exposing both their own faith and gullibility.

White Shroud depicts a ghostly drape of fabric that mimics the form of a human body whilst the image remains devoid of any visible human presence. As such a mystic or semi-spiritual presence is implied. Its companion work, *The Hermetic Seal (small)*, depicts a scattering of spent matches inside a glass bell jar, the image suggests evidence of some quasi-scientific experiment gone wrong or perhaps some act of elemental transformation. Indeed, these photographs do

remain as evidence of an alchemic process, they are as much material object as photographic image.

Ralph Hotere b. 1931

Black Painting 1: Red on Black 1968-1969
brolite lacquer on hardboard

Black Painting 2: Orange on Black 1968-1969
brolite lacquer on hardboard

Black Painting 3: Yellow on Black 1968-1969
brolite lacquer on hardboard

Black Painting 4: Green on Black 1968-1969
brolite lacquer on hardboard

Black Painting 5: Blue on Black 1968-1969
brolite lacquer on hardboard

Black Painting 6: Indigo on Black 1968-1969
brolite lacquer on hardboard

Black Painting 7: Violet on Black 1968-1969
brolite lacquer on hardboard
Acquired 1968 with assistance from the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand

Jim Speers b. 1970

Fokker 1998
acrylic, fluorescent light (lightbox)
Acquired 1999

Three decades separate their practice, yet Ralph Hotere and Jim Speers have both taken the motifs of the twentieth century's high modernism, particularly the codes of Minimalism, and re-authored them to suit their own conceptual interests and sensibilities.

Hotere is of Te Aupouri descent and lives in Port Chalmers in Otago. Today he is widely considered one of this country's most important artists. Hotere's Black Paintings were the first works by the artist to be bought by a public institution in New Zealand when they were acquired by the Govett-Brewster in 1968, the year of their making. The series can be seen as tracing a lineage from the monochromes of American Frank Stella – whose black paintings greatly influenced the development of Minimalism in the 1960s – or Abstractionist painter Ad Reinhardt who after 1953 only made black canvases. Reinhardt called

these works 'ultimate' and 'last' paintings, he declared them "the last that anyone could paint". However unlike Reinhardt's matt works, the gloss finish of Hotere's works is intended to literally allow the audience and their surroundings into the work. The viewers' shadowy reflected gaze becomes incorporated into the experience of looking, while the reduced central cross motif in each work suggests a colour spectrum that transits across all seven works. Hotere was well aware of Modernism's mid century ascent given he studied at London's Central School of Art and in France during the early 1960s before returning to New Zealand in 1965. Yet these artistic influences were perhaps no more influential than a visit he made to his brother's grave in a war memorial in Italy around the same time.

While Speers' lightbox works seem loaded with quotes from colour field painting and the Minimalist concerns of mid twentieth century American artists Donald Judd or Dan Flavin, his works exist in a context much later. The motifs and visual language of Modernism have long since been swallowed whole by late consumer capitalism and are endlessly regurgitated leaving an after-image on our retina. In Fokker, Speers re-appropriates this Modernism as a problematic and through a ubiquitous tool of the consumerist landscape, the lightbox, quotes it and in the same moment extinguishes it. Speers adopts an ambiguous stance with Minimalism and Pop Art hovering over each shoulder. Speers has been producing lightboxes since the mid 1990s, which he described in 1988 as "neither ordinary objects passing themselves off as art, nor works of art passing themselves off as everyday things."

Len Lye b. 1901 - 1980

Fountain III 1976
stainless steel rods, steel base, with motor
Acquired 1977

Gordon Walters b. 1919 - 1995

Hiwi 1966
acrylic and canvas backed with hardboard
Acquired 1979

Part of the visual dynamic between *Hiwi* and *Fountain* relies on the destabilisation of the relationship between figure and ground. *Hiwi* is an archetypal Gordon Walters koru painting, where hard-edge American abstraction is combined with a Maori motif. Walters was one of the first Pakeha artists to experiment with Maori symbols using a 'European' art medium, consequently the artist is central to debates about the development of a unique New Zealand art iconography and remains a pivotal artist in this country's cultural identity. The curvilinear koru motif is transformed by the artist into horizontal bands with circular terminations toward the centre of the canvas. Within this format Walters explored a range of optical and formal effects, and was particularly interested in

the ambiguity between figure and ground; the black and white koru in *Hiwi* are interlocked, creating an optical illusion.

Fountain is a work by pioneer New Zealand kinetic artist and filmmaker Len Lye conceived while the artist was living in New York in 1959. It consists of a cluster of metal rods, powered by a motor; the rods gently sway and rotate. Evocative of a fountain's mobile jets of water or grasses moving in a breeze, *Fountain* is one of Lye's quieter kinetic sculptures. Lye made several variations of this work, envisaging ultimately for one to be made on a gigantic scale. The work was engineered in New Plymouth for the artist's inaugural New Zealand exhibition at the Govett-Brewster in 1977 which led to the gifting by the artist in 1980 of his Collection and Archive to the Len Lye Foundation to be housed at the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery. This version of *Fountain*, alongside *Trilogy (A Flip and Two Twisters)* 1977, were acquired by the Gallery after the 1977 exhibition for its own Collection.

Peter Peryer b. 1941

Tecomanthe 2006

selenium toned gelatin silver print

Acquired 2008

Throne 1999

black and white photograph, artist's proof

Acquired 1999 Gift from the artist

Peter Peryer's photographs often imply a double-entendre whereby ordinary objects and moments appear in extraordinary and intriguing ways. The works also hold personal resonance for the artist as he explains; "My photographs are self-portraits. The photographs are somehow related to my past." Intriguingly, the New Plymouth based photographer frequently toys with the illusion of scale in his photographs, subtly making small objects appear larger or vice versa. This quality is seen in both *Tecomanthe* and *Throne*. Peter Simpson calls this 'scalar ambiguity' and 'humorous trickery', he writes; "What at first seems real is revealed on closer inspection to be a model or copy. ... What am I looking at? How big is this? Is this real?" (*Peter Peryer Photographer*, AUP, Auckland, 2008, p.118).

Tecomanthe speciosa, the subject of Peryer's work *Tecomanthe*, was once one of the world's most endangered plants. A single specimen was found on New Zealand's Three Kings Islands in 1945. From this one plant it has become a popular variety in gardens around New Zealand given its creamy green flowers that emerge directly in clusters from the stem of the plant. Peryer's photograph hones in on the almost anamorphic form of the flower. In 2007 *Tecomanthe* was chosen by the Govett-Brewster for a public art project, Offsite Insight, and this modestly sized image was presented on a massive billboard scale in New Plymouth's main street, and later in Christchurch, thus inverting again the artist's

experimentation with scale. Both the billboard and the original photograph are now housed at the Gallery.

Joe Sheehan b. 1976

Spending Time 2006

South Australian black jade in marine plywood case, brass hinge

Acquired 2008

L. Budd et al.

Untitled (you will see from the above) 1991

installation: speaker, light fittings, wiring and electrics, paper, adhesive tape

Acquired 1994

In their work Joe Sheehan and L. Budd et al. both examine contemporary modes of production and codes of communication; in particular these two works allude to sound while remaining persistently silent.

Sheehan manipulates pounamu/greenstone in an examination of the social and cultural implications of this material. The artist creates exquisitely carved replicas of carefully considered objects from everyday life. He then presents them in a way that mimics the presentation/digestion of artefacts and specimens in museum cabinets. Traversing across cultures, local and international, historical and contemporary, he seeks out commonality, whilst maintaining respect for both customary and contemporary pounamu workers. Sheehan's work also serves as a critique of the tourism market and mass replication. Sheehan questions the idea of authenticity, as well as the quality, value and symbolic role of souvenirs. He suggests ubiquitous and mass-produced pieces made for tourist retail venues are perhaps as 'real' as other elements of Aotearoa New Zealand's 'clean green and beautiful' tourism image. Here a carved 'commercial CD' alludes to the time intensive traditions of craftsmanship and labour.

Et al. is a collective name for a network of artists, identities and collaborators including L. Budd, merit gröting, blanche ready-made, p. mule and c j [Arthur] craig and sons. Meaning or understanding is deliberately made unclear. Although there is a speaker, there is no sound element to *Untitled (you will see from the above)* while the fragment of text, with its pretences of "clear thinking and decisive action" becomes not a key to the work, but another component in an ensemble of elements drawn from urban life. Et al.'s work addresses recurring themes regarding language and identity, political structures, surveillance, oppression and power. The work often consists of ready-made elements combined with multiple remnants of text, images, ideas, objects and recordings.

Michael Stevenson b. 1964
Kissinger is the false prophet 1995
mixed media on paper
Acquired 1997

Billy Apple b. 1935
Neon accumulation 1968
neon tubes and electric flex. Broken neon tubing, plus 6 neon letters which light up: red letters S, O, F, T, O blue letter R
Acquired 1975 Gift from the artist

Michael Stevenson (born in Inglewood and based in Berlin) and Billy Apple (born and based in the Auckland with a significant stretch in the UK and US inbetween) are artists of different generations, yet both express a preoccupation with cultures outside their own. In these works these two highly acclaimed artists share an interest in American pop culture, its legacy and its fissures.

Michael Stevenson's *Kissinger is a false prophet* is immersed in a world in which art history (a nod to American artist Bruce Nauman's neon works) is appraised in light of political aggregation, American popular culture, conspiracy theory, religious fervour and the sticky politics of power. The realist charcoal drawing *Kissinger is the false prophet*, burrows in to reveal its prophecy. In 2002, seven years after its making, Kissinger and the CIA were implicated in the overthrow of the democratically elected government of Chile, which resulted in the murder of Salvadore Allende and his cabinet on 11 September 1973. This arose during the case for the extradition of General Pinochet from Britain to face trial in Spain. Through orchestration and razor edged double-take, Stevenson scours history and its detritus to reveal mishapen and disturbing truths about politics, economics and human volition.

Billy Apple's *Neon accumulations* were installed in galleries in the United States and Canada. Apple was associated with the Pop Art movement in 1960s New York and his work was exhibited in the 1964 *American Supermarket* exhibition, along with work by Andy Warhol. His work continues to offer a wry commentary on consumerist impulses and the highly mediated languages of late capitalism. *Neon accumulation* consists of six glowing neon letters and various pieces of glass from broken and crushed neon tubes. Initially installed in the fire-escape stairwell, the work was later removed by the New Plymouth Fire Department for safety reasons which led to spirited discussion in the local press.

Gordon Walters b. 1919 - 1995
Painting H 1975
oil on canvas
Acquired 1980

Colin McCahon b. 1919- 1987
Visible mysteries No.6 1968
oil on board
Acquired 1972 with funds from the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand

Gordon Walters and Colin McCahon, working in the second half of last century, are two artists who played powerful roles in the shaping of Aotearoa New Zealand's cultural imagination. Both were acquired very early in the Collection's formation, their works quickly becoming compass points for its future shaping. By 1966, when Walters exhibited the first of his 'koru' motif works, he had already been painting seriously for 26 years. His practice in its entirety owes at least as much to the traditions of European geometric abstraction as it does to the cultural context of New Zealand. In this light *Painting H* can be seen as an integral part of Walters' oeuvre rather than an exception and one which continues his investigations of binary form into the realm of pure abstraction and minimalist visual concerns.

In *Visible mysteries No.6* McCahon engages with a cultural code of an entirely different order. While McCahon also uses a minimal palette to render reduced forms, his symbols are potent with meaning. The *Visible mysteries* series reflects McCahon's interest in the 'mystery' surrounding the Eucharist within the Christian faith. The series of eight works contain heavily loaded symbols; the glowing white heart of Christ, a levitating altar, and the blood/wine filled chalice used in Communion, the former two of these appear in this work. McCahon's abiding interest in faith rested in it as a channel for human questioning, doubt, hope and despair. He had by the time he painted this work in 1968, long left his investigative handling of Christian imagery in a narrative representational style with the 1940s. The metaphysical idea revisited within the series is encapsulated in the inscription which appears within each of the works: 'Grant that we have received in visible mysteries we may receive in its invisible effects'. Although the artist's selection of symbolism is specific in intent, the work succeeds in a powerful way to communicate on other levels given the universal nature of the symbols used and the artist's uncompromising faith in, and handling of, abstract forms. His works were never illustrative; they remain as meditations on mystical forces and the human condition. McCahon once said, 'As a painter I may often be more worried about you than you are about me and if I wasn't concerned I'd not be doing my work properly as a painter. Painting can be a potent way of talking'.

Fiona Clark b. 1954
Tina Mojos Nightclub 1975
colour photograph

Geraldine at home 1975
colour photograph

Chrissy, Mojos Nightclub 1975
colour photograph

Belinda-Lee, Miss NZ Drag Queen 1975, at Mojos 1975
colour photograph
Acquired 1981

Yvonne Todd b. 1973
Female Study (Gold) 2007
lightjet print (diptych)
Acquired 2008 with funds from the Govett-Brewster Foundation

Both Fiona Clark and Yvonne Todd harness a deep knowledge of photographic processes and portraiture to formulate arresting images that both conceal and reveal the human condition.

Clark's candid yet compassionate photographs of the marginalised transgender community in Auckland's Karangahape Road during the mid 1970s are images alive with the theatre of the everyday in which the subjects are actors cast in the drama of their own lives. These photographs, shot on a Leica camera, are hand processed and printed by the artist in one of the first non-commercial colour darkrooms established in this country. This was a makeshift arrangement built by Clark and Ian MacDonald at Elam art school in Auckland. These analogue photographs were printed in a drum processor, the paper being the largest size available at the time was somewhat hit-and-miss in quality, hence their discolouration over time. New Plymouth based Clark remains a pioneer within New Zealand's documentary photographic tradition.

Likewise, Todd's diptych is part performance, albeit a fastidiously staged one. Todd was trained in commercial photography and now uses these techniques to construct images of suggestion and oblique psychic states. In *Female Study (Gold)*, Todd's poised and posed subject, perfectly groomed, eyes downcast, and looking away from the camera, sets a scene that is left to the audience's imagination to complete. B grade Hollywood films and TV daytime dramas are implied, yet we are left to guess the plot and the internal motivations of the character. Time falters in this nostalgic recreation, the gold dress – once owned by Whitney Houston and bought by the artist on eBay – is as much a protagonist in the drama as the model herself.

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