The in and the out of it
A symposium transcript
9 March, 2024

ISBN 978-1-7385852-2-9

The in and the out of it symposium was a Chartwell 50th Anniversary Project, the event took place within the framework of the exhibition *Priorities,* Charlotte Posenenske, Peter Robinson.

Across 2024, Artspace Aotearoa explores the question “do I need territory?” As an artist-forward organisation, we began our exploration of this question by examining the many art worlds. We considered the economies and processes that produce these worlds, and in which ways have artists and artworks contributed to discussions of self-determination, agency, and participation in modern and late capitalist paradigms. What is the in and the out of it? The symposium sought to explore this question through lectures and conversations between artists, art historians, curators, gallerists, and our wider community.

This document is an edited transcript of the symposium’s core presentations.

Artspace Aotearoa is a non-profit contemporary art gallery founded in 1987 by artists and arts workers, it continues to be artist-led. We work within a specific city context, and spiral out into national and international conversations that promote practices that present emancipatory world views.

Artspace Aotearoa
292 Karangahape Road
Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland

artspace-aotearoa.nz
+64 9 303 4965

Contents

Introduction

Ruth Buchanan and Sue Gardiner

[Karakia and words of welcome]

Ruth Buchanan: *The in and the out of it* is a symposium that responds to and expands on the exhibition *Priorities*, a presentation of work by Charlotte Posenenske and Peter Robinson as part of our 2024 programme “do I need territory?” We are thrilled to be joined by Peter, other artists, colleagues, and are especially pleased to be joined by Sue Gardiner on behalf of the Chartwell Trust, who are supporting this programme as part of their 50th anniversary. Offering forum for reflective and projective debate centred on contemporary art is at the heart of the work that Artspace Aotearoa has done since its founding in 1987 and the wide-ranging activities undertaken by the Chartwell Trust since it emerged in Hamilton in 1974, so it’s only fitting we work together on this juicy and textured day.

So, what is the in and the out of it? What are we asking today? I’ll begin with our 2024 question, “do I need territory?” In many ways what we are exploring this year is scale. Zoom in: how do I as an individual relate to, but also create, the worlds in which I live, or the world in which I’m asked to live? What would it take to feel not only part of a community but also full as an individual, a boundless participant?

Zoom out: this complex but necessary question, “do I need territory?” has taken on sharpened bearing with material urgencies in the geo-political terrain of our time, throwing it into intensified focus. These urgencies include but are not limited to the irreparable harm being done to human dignity in occupied Gaza, and here in Aotearoa the threats made to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the Fast-Track Approval Bill which sets the production of cash surplus as the value to trump all other considerations of resources and sustainability. While these instances seem to defy scale, they also make use of tools from the practice of scaling. That is to say, how do I relate? What this underlines for me is the necessity to continually consider from what an otherwise can be constituted, and, to explore this through our work and the worlds where this work interacts.

Zooming in again to the exhibition *Priorities*, the question of how to relate is at the foreground for both Posenenske and Robinson. As a leading voice in the European context of the 1960s, Posenenske (1930-1985) has had a profound impact on generations of artists and the potential held within contemporary art. Initially trained in theatre, she exhibited

with peers including, Hanne Darboven, Donald Judd, Sol Le Witt, etc, before beginning to phase out her engagement with the artworld in 1968, and turning her attention to the sociology of labour. Her doctoral thesis focused on the Volvo factory in Sweden, the first factory to reject the Ford assembly line methodology and instead work collectively. Meanwhile, Robinson has continually worked with edges and limits as material, whether by placing metal through a vice, toiling at swathes of felt, wrestling with cultural conventions, or co-building whare with his first-year students.

Posenenske and Robinson stridently test the ability to produce and sustain relationships. Like all relationships, the healthy and the dysfunctional, the boundless and the limiting, timing and tension can be everything. What is the best way to connect? Both artists answer this question by pulling open the fundamental mechanisms that make the artworld part of the world and express a deep commitment to the creative and political potential of the imagination, whichever world you are in. Across the symposium, we explore some of these worlds.

Today's sessions bounce between the life of an artwork, and an artist too perhaps, the questions artworks ask of us, and in this instance, the work of Posenenske and Robinson.

We will begin with a discussion between artists Ngahuia Harrison and Peter Robinson which explores the in and out of the studio, artistic practice, and the delicate shepherding of work into the public realm while considering multiple priorities including whānau and hapu.

Tina Barton explores the way in which the production of art history interacts with the artwork and artist posthumously, prompted by the handover of Posenenske's estate to a commercial gallery following the death of the executor which resulted in a large portion of the work switching from unlimited to limited editions.

Practices like Posenenske's and Robinson's have at times presented challenges to standards of collecting, both for public institutions and private collectors. What do we do with fragility, liveness, uniqueness and their opposites? Debates around the how, what, and if to collect are constantly evolving. Jumping off from this, curator Natasha Conland and gallerist Sarah Hopkinson will draw on their varied experiences to discuss the many threads involved in creating curiosity and openness for complex contemporary practice in collections. Gathering all of these many considerations together—studio life, home life, whānau structures, the public realm, the invited, the not, the necessary relationships—

Melanie Tangere Baldwin will talk us through the emergence of HOEA! a contemporary art gallery established in 2021 that pushes at many of the standard parameters by setting up opportunities for interaction defined by, for, and with the community.

We will finish the day with, *Do I want to stay?*, a panel discussion prompted by Posenenske's choice to leave the artworld with speakers, Tina Barton, Melanie Tangaere Baldwin, Judy Darragh, and Shiraz Sadikeen.*

I'm now pleased to hand over to Sue Gardiner who will provide some insight into the work of the Chartwell Trust.

Sue Gardiner: I bring warm wishes from my father Rob Gardiner and the Chartwell Trustees and I want to acknowledge and thank Ruth, the artists and speakers here, and the Artspace Aotearoa team, as we celebrate Chartwell's 50th anniversary with this kōrero today. Over those years, Rob, as the founding Trustee and an inventive creative thinker, has been attentive in his rigorous examination of the nature of the creative human being and so this has led the Chartwell Project (1974 – present) into a world of evolving, fluid states of questioning, with each question posed launching a series of new beginnings. This has enabled Chartwell to hold the visual arts at the centre of an in-depth contemplative enquiry based around four key concepts of knowing: Being, Seeing, Making and Thinking.

In my role as chair of the Chartwell charitable trust and co-director of the Chartwell Collection Trust, and along with our great team, we seek to continue this need for a greater understanding about the ideation processes involved in both making and viewing art, as this is what has driven all that has been achieved over the past 50 years, with each step along the way taking the Project deeper into new avenues of expanding imaginative enquiry. The deep impulse to make and create defines us as human beings. For Chartwell (and a lot of what I do), there has always been a sense of urgency to grow an audience for the visual arts and the creative process, while acknowledging that it is a process in constant flux. Throughout Chartwell's history, we have known there has not been enough general communal understandings about contemporary art, its nature and its role in building a culture with its potential for fulfillment, for a nation and its citizens.

So the core of the Project has been the belief that the sense-activated imagination needs to be more widely valued. As Rob has noted, "everybody would be rewarded if they had a better understanding of each

*Due to the format of this discussion, it is not included in this transcription.

other.” So in 1974 the Chartwell Collection was developed. It was and still is a privately managed collection with a public mission that celebrates not only the power of creativity but champions the importance of artists’ ideas in contemporary society. So the collection can be seen as a collection of ideas, an accumulation of creative acts, as curator William McAloon once said. With over 2000 works cared for by the hard working team at Toi o Tāmaki, the Collection demonstrates a strong focus on abstraction and on revealing the thinking involved in the creative process.

Working as a bridge between artist and audience, Chartwell from day one has always believed in the role of public art galleries, and this is something we have articulated in different contexts in recent years, publishing a book to support the role of public galleries, investing in research and working to bring audiences into galleries, knowing they can work to ensure the social and cultural wellbeing of communities which identify with, respect and support its creative artists.

If the domain of art is an exercise space for the senses and the imagination, then it follows that the public art gallery offers access to explorations of the creative mind and a developing culture. Much as we are provided, by a city’s leadership, with public sports stadiums, swimming pools and parks to exercise the body, communities also benefit from provision of public art galleries, which act as active gymnasiums for the exercise of the creative mind.

Chartwell ran its own public gallery The Centre for Contemporary Art, in Kirikiriroa Hamilton, opening in 1982, just five years before Artspace opened in 1987. It had over 130 contemporary art exhibitions and after closing in 1994, the Collection eventually moved to the Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki in 1997 with the first work to enter the collection in Auckland being Ralph Hotere’s 17 panel Godwit/Kuaka mural, made in 1977 and restored in 1996.

Chartwell has been connected to Artspace since Robert Leonard was director and my father and I came here to eat ginger crunch and talk about art and exhibitions. We have always known Artspace as a place/a stimulus for important cultural conversations, enabling the art community to traverse an expanded cultural enquiry, explore new aesthetic experiences, engage with a communal resource and creative stimulus, and have diverse and unexpected encounters with the works of artists. Chartwell has supported exhibitions here over the years and been a part of many conversations. I was on the board here for 12 years, so it is meaningful for me to have a few moments with you all to mark Chartwell’s 50th.

So by placing the visual arts at the centre of everything we do, our four main pillars of activity are: The Collection, Research support at the University of Auckland through CAST – the Centre for the Arts and Social Transformation, Chartwell's philanthropy project which focuses primarily on the public art gallery and its audiences, and finally Outreach, with Squiggla as our participatory outreach project encouraging more people to experience and benefit from art making, with the intention to grow the audience for the visual arts. Our hope is that these four pillars weave together in the common goal of knowledge, love, and commitment to our creative humanity.

Presentation Economies

A conversation between Peter Robinson and Ngahuia Harrison

[Whaikōrero, mihi, waiata]

Peter Robinson: We don't actually know how to start, but I thought I'd just say that the whaikorero, the mihi I've presented today I've said it many times recently, repeated. Probably 50 times over the last three or four months. I'm following the lead of the Prime Minister, of course. It's on trend at the moment to repeat speeches. But I do mine not through laziness or to avoid contentious issues, but because I was brought up without te reo and it's something that makes me sad that we didn't have that opportunity. And so I have to repeat it over and over and over again to improve and get it right. So that's my first comment of the day.

But how should we start? We've got some questions scripted.

Ngahuia Harrison: Well, that does lead into one of the questions that we had. I could start there. It's kind of a heavy one off the bat. We had some gentler questions that might ease us into that, but we'll just go there straight off the bat.

So I put a question to Peter around this idea of the studio as a private space, or ideas of privacy around your studio space, or the sort of aspects of privacy in terms of a studio. I was thinking about this idea of whakama. So whakama is a concept that often people might translate as an embarrassment or shame, but it's a very profound feeling of shame. People like Joan Metge have described it as a consciousness of being at a disadvantage. So it's a shame that really hits at the core of you. I think back to when I started at Takiura (Te Wānanga Takiura), and Nanny Kaa came to welcome everybody, all the new tauira, and she said to everybody "We will fill that hole inside of you." It was the first day, everybody's nervous, and it was like a collective sigh of relief but also everybody's wiping away tears quietly. You don't know anybody there, really, and so you don't want to have this outpouring of emotion. But it really hit at that feeling, that consciousness of being at a disadvantage that an overwhelming number of Māori people feel a sense of disconnection or loss, whether it's, as Peter said, language, whether it's to your land, whether it's to whakapapa, there is a dislocation.

For me, I have used the studio space or what I think of as the behind the scenes of my practice, as a space to privately fix some of those gaps, those holes that I carry around. Because as much as it is a taumaha,

it's this burden of whakama to carry. Like in many cultures, shame is a compelling feeling, it can be a corrective. So you're compelled to do something about whatever this hara has been done to you, or that you have done perhaps. It's not an aspect that ends up in my practice, part of my studio, it ends up in the public realm because it's collective. It's often a shared feeling or a shared anger. So it's not just mine. But I had put this question to Peter, about whether you relate to this notion of using whakama in a productive way, in a corrective way. Or what are the types of learnings in that sense that you might have had behind the scenes that don't move into the public arena or the public side of your practice?

PR: So when I do mihi and pepeha, it gives my brain a real workout. It turns it inside out to the extent that I'm sometimes completely exhausted at the end of it. So I'm going to be a little easier on myself and refer to the script that I wrote for myself, just to ease my way into this, just to give my brain a little bit of a rest. But thank you for the question. Just in short, I think whakama, even though I may not have quite identified that as a motivating force or a driving force, I think it's been a very strong part of my practice as an artist when I began self identifying as Māori as far back as 1989. So I'll just read what I wrote and hopefully I can get loosened up a little bit later on.

So I relate strongly to the disconnection that you speak of in terms of land, language, family, and whakapapa. It would be no exaggeration to say that when I grew up, I was part of a 99% assimilated family. The residual 1% took form in the knowledge that we knew there was Māori ancestry, but what that was or where it was located we had little clue except for a hunch that it was South Island Māori. We did do a few things that were Māori activities, but we didn't recognize them as such. For example, we would have holidays when I was a child, to the Kaikoura Coast. We would collect paua and put pots out for crayfish, and in doing so, we were most likely following the trails of our tipuna. I mean that very literally.

It was not until after art school that I and Shane Cotton decided to try to connect to our respective heritages. My education at Ilam at the University of Canterbury followed the course of my primary and secondary education where there was nothing taha Māori taught at all. We were initially inspired to look into Te Ao Māori because of the international models of contemporary practice that we were confronted with at the time, by non Western artists looking into their origins and ancestry. For example, Anish Kapoor and Shirazeh Houshiary. I don't remember feeling embittered or resentful for having never encountered anything Māori in my education or upbringing, it just seemed normal, which is a sad thing in itself. However, once I started my journey, all I

felt was excitement and fulfilment. I feel a lot of whakama today when I look back on the early days of my practice. Despite not being conscious of feelings of whakama, riri, or mamae, I think these feelings were the driving force behind the work. Hot headed feelings don't make for the best decision making or understanding.

One of the things I really didn't get back in those days was the importance of community as a Māori value. I was still thinking very individualistically. My career ascended very rapidly after I left art school and on reflection, I was too young and disconnected to understand the hurt my work would cause for many Māori. I think it caused upset and concern, which to some extent I regret. On the other hand, I had numerous hoamahi, colleagues and friends tell me how much they appreciated my very coarse work, especially the ones that raised concerns about white supremacy and fascism in Australia and Aotearoa.

I guess the takeaway is, like today, Māori don't all think the same way. I guess, though, to answer your question, there's a lot of stuff that I dealt with in the early days of my career that, if I had the chance again, I would think more carefully about leaving behind the scenes. In fact, there were many issues related to personal whakama that I deal with, which I won't discuss here and have never transformed into artworks. There are things that I process quietly in the background. If there is an issue that I want to pursue as art, that I might feel will cause upset to Māori, I discuss it with many more friends and artists than I used to today.

Kia ora.

Should I ask you something? I'm gonna go for a real hard one first up too.

NH: [Laughs] Your comments led us there.

PR: I think it might be useful, firstly, to simply ask you what form does your studio take? Or where do you make your work?

NH: Well, I don't consider myself to have a studio practice in that traditional sense of having a studio. But there are a lot of places that for me constitute a studio, where I do my thinking and research and also making. A really obvious studio is just my computer and I can set that up anywhere. That's really helpful because my other ideas of studio or my other places that I consider my studio are all around. So, I travel to archives here in Auckland and Wellington, also in the north, Māori Land Court, like all those kinds of places you think of as an archive, libraries. But I also go to a lot of community meetings and also hui for our hapu and

marae. And all of those for me, at different points, constitute a studio. The space of a hui-a-iwi or hui-a-hapu doesn't always constitute a studio for me, because sometimes I'm there just as me, as a person that's part of that community. But sometimes I'm in that space because the kaupapa relates to one of my projects. So in that sense, I think of those hui in that time as a sort of pseudo-studio. So those are the places I think of as a studio because I don't have a place or a room of my own that I go to and that's where I work. Which you have, but do you have those other places as well that are studio like?

PR: Yeah, I do. Actually, the art school is a very important site for me. Obviously there's workshops and things like that, but I actually mean the studio with the students. I get a lot from that. In recent years, there's been a blurring of distinctions between my teaching activity and my art activity, and the teaching activity becomes very much an art activity. Particularly a lot of the group work that I do with students, of which I think there's a couple of examples in the slideshow. There's some cardboard boxes and a whole array of materials from the surrounds of Elam that are on the ground. And then those workshops that I do with my students for whanaungatanga purposes are starting to go into the public domain as well, working with groups of people and suddenly making exhibitions with people. So yes, the distinction between my studio and the art school is getting blurred in terms of creative activity.

Paemanu, a Ngāi Tahu artist collective, are very important to me. It's not all easy going. In fact, it's really stressful and makes me very anxious. But that gives me the community because we are all artists, we are all Ngai Tahu. And it takes me away from that individual model. It makes me think differently. The social space, actually, of being with you, being with Lisa Crowley, Luke Willis Thompson, Sarah [Hopkinson], the gallery artists in Coastal Signs. Coastal Signs in a sense is a creative space for me as a studio space. Although the studio is very important to me, and the studio has tentacles that reach way beyond Samoa House, which is just across the road. That's where my studio is. I have a window that looks out on to Michael Lett Gallery and Artspace and others and I get to survey most of the art world in an afternoon. I'm watching you. [Laughs]

NH: I did have a question for you around that, how you think your practice might have differed not having the space that you have in Samoa House or other spaces you've had like at those studios. When I think of even the art school, in the time that I've gone through art school, the squeeze on real estate, on the footprint of the art school is quite strong. The size of the art school has shrunk drastically and that seems like a trend, and so students are losing studio space. Also, in the small time that I taught with

you guys, there was also a struggle to get students to use their studio space. Maybe it's a bit of a chicken and an egg thing, trying to encourage students to use their studio space, because then the university would take more space, trying to get students to value the studio space, but maybe they just don't. Maybe it's changing, they work in different ways. So do you think your practice would be drastically different or a little bit different if you didn't have that studio space or that habit of a studio culture?

PR: Yes, I do. Just to address the shrinkage of space and the art school. We have these people who walk around the studios from the central administration at the university called the Space Usage… Peter, what are they called? Space Usage Survey People. And I've told students, the days they are arriving, do you think I can get the students to come in and save the studios? No I can't. But also having said that, the art school role has been dropping as well, just to be defensive of the institution. It has dropped quite a bit over the years and that's not because, as everyone would like to think, we are going downhill as far as teaching, and we're all going to hell. It's a demographic thing that the population is going [gestures downward] like that. It's going through all departments of the university.

But to answer your other question, I've had times when I haven't had a studio, and it hasn't been much fun. I really like going to the studio, sometimes just to be away from everything and everyone. It's just a space I get to be by myself, I value it for that more than anything else.

One of my favourite shows was a show called *After Party*, which I had at Coastal Signs. Sarah just allowed me to use the studio for the summer. So I just inhabited the studio and sort of cobbled things together from drawers and cupboards at home and bent bits of wire, and before I knew it I had a show. So I can be quite nomadic and not fixed. When I lived in Germany, we had an apartment which was about a sixth of the size of this room. And that was our living space and my studio.

I guess I reflect on COVID as well, not being able to get to a studio during COVID. I always think that limitations create opportunities. You might be going down a certain path and then all of a sudden the circumstances have changed and you start doing things that you wouldn't possibly have done had you had everything at your disposal like you usually do. That's very exciting for me. Actually, I get a little bit upset when I hear students talk about how they don't have a studio, they don't have this or whatever. But it's like, grab that. Use that limitation and create an opportunity. That's all very well for someone who is salaried to say. I understand that, but interesting things do happen out of those spaces.

NH: You didn't break your bubble and go to your studio during COVID?

PR: I'm a bit of a square. COVID scared me. It terrified me that I might cause someone else to get it. But there was a point where there was a grey area and you didn't quite know whether you could go out or not. And I did, but I think it was okay to go out. You just couldn't be in contact with people. And actually, I had a marvellous time in the studio that time. I got really messy. Some of the more messy slides, the crazy installations, that was all during COVID.

NH: You answered this a little bit, but I was wondering how much the gallery space turns into a studio for you. For me, there's not much playing around or mucking around once the work is made and it's in the gallery space. I sort of know where it's going to go. Working with photographs that are printed and framed, there's not much leeway. Of course, there's always a bit of shuffling, but it usually is how I expect it going into installation. But for you, that might be a bit different. Does the gallery become a studio for you?

PR: Yeah. Are you just asking me questions so you avoid me asking you questions? You know the tough one's coming up.

What's similar about my practice is I try to predict what's a show. I try to have some kind of game plan before I get to the gallery. But I also try to keep things very open as well and be responsive. Because no matter how many maquettes or sketch-ups or sometimes even one-to-one trials in a studio space you do, when you get in the gallery space something might change or you might have a better solution. In fact, that happened in the current show. Ruth, Robbie and I were putting up the brown grid and it was just going to hang vertically. We actually made it on the floor and then we were dragging it up, and then I think Ruth and I agreed probably pretty much at the same moment that actually, this is really interesting, this swooping thing. And we didn't anticipate that. That wasn't something we were going to do. But we just left it like that. And a really nice thing happened, because I hadn't seen this before, the way that when you do that [gestures] the horizontals that go across, they all do a different thing. The ones at the top were quite tense, so I started seeing maunga there. And then the next one was slightly more gentle, and I saw awa , and then there was the waka. So I was able to use the grid—or I guess you could call it a tukutuku—as a form for pepeha.

We also made the pink grid much smaller, didn't we? Ruth made me make the pink grid much smaller than what it was going to be.
[Laughter]

In fact, I didn't even touch it, did I? I passed over control to you guys to make a link with [Charlotte] Posenenske, in a way, with her method of having gallery staff or teams of people make decisions about how the components would be put together.

Okay, back to you. Now, where was the hard one?

So ambivalence. Ruth mentions ambivalence in the preamble for this conference. Ambivalence for me means having mixed or contradictory feelings about something, like loving ice cream because it's delicious, but hating it because it's unhealthy. The provocation to us from Ruth suggests that the process of moving from the studio, or the creative side, into the public realm involves ambivalence. Do you agree with this? And if so, can you talk about examples from your practice that illustrate it? If not, what is your experience of moving your artworks into the public realm?

NH: When I was thinking about this question, I realised it's actually been a while since I've taken new work into the public. The project that I've been working on for the last five or so years, *Coastal Cannibals*, I first showed that about four years ago or a bit longer. So it's been a while. All the work since has been work from that project. At the time, there was a particular uncertainty for me. I think there's always the love and hate, push and pull of an artwork that you've spent too long on, or you're always your harshest critic so you're always thinking of how you could better it. There's always that, but this project for me had a lot of uncertainty because I was working in an area—so the project looks at the Whangārei Harbour, but mostly at the mouth of that harbour. And so my iwi, Ngātiwai, we affiliate to the harbour, and I whakapapa to Ngāti Kahu o Torongare, who are in the inner harbour, but the hapu that are there at the mouth, Patuharakeke, I don't whakapapa to them. We affiliate to the same iwi. I have a lot of whanau members who are Patuharakeke, but I myself don't whakapapa to them.

For me this project was like, the closer you get to something—the closer you are but there's also a distance, that's where it's hard. Sometimes I think it is a lot easier to be an outsider and work in Māori communities. And this is a really hard zone because you're related but not related. So we're part of the same iwi but we're not—everybody who's Patuharakeke is Ngātiwai, but not everyone who is Ngātiwai is Patuharakeke. I have this understanding that it's not my whenua and I do whakapapa to the other hapu in that area, Te Parawhau, but I didn't grow up affiliated that strongly. So again, it's not enough to just have whakapapa and say I do actually whakapapa to this group, because I don't have a lot to do with them in my day to day life. It's kind of this tension of a closeness and a distance.

For this project, it was a huge uncertainty for me how the people were going to receive it because they're not my people—even though I don't have this whakapapa to Patuharakeke, we do have whakapapa to each other, so they're never going to be people I can get away from. So if they were going to be angry, I was a bit screwed. They knew what I was doing, they knew the project. And then there were aunties saying this like "Why do you want to take photos of the oil refinery? We have such beautiful scenery." So there was also that. Taking photos of industry that those people there have really had to deal with, that sits on top of land that is their land, it's heartbreaking for them. That was the last time I've moved work from studio or from private to the public and it was really nerve wracking.

The first time I showed it was at *Toi Tu Toi Ora* and there were lots of Ngātiwai artists in that show, so a contingent came from home. There were a lot from Patuharakeke there and I've never been so nervous. Of course they want to go around and see everybody's works, so I was like "Well, here's Star's. Here's Auntie Shona's. I don't really know where mine is on this map." But then when we found it, one of my cousins, she was really angry. And she wasn't angry about me doing the work, she was angry because that's how they feel about that industry. She was kind of angry/happy, if that makes sense, that people could see what they have to put up with. So I felt like okay, cool. Whew. That could have just been anger at me. But yeah, that's the uncertainty I feel.

PR: I think ambivalence often features in your work. When I look at it, I think about your love for your iwi, hapu and takiwa. But at the same time, I'm conscious of the riri and mamae caused by the impact of colonisation. For example, you've told me about the Marsden Point oil refinery, how it has polluted waters and changed the ecosystems in unanticipated ways. But on the other hand, it was a source of employment for generations of whanaunga. The film you made for your doctorate of the last ship sailing into the refinery, for me, was full of pathos. It documents the end of an era, transforming an industrial site into something homely and tender. I admire the complexities of history and the stories that you tell, but I also enjoy the detachment in the work, and though motivated by love it conceals pain. This to me entails care and manaaki for the audience. Care and sensitivity is directed both towards the content of your work and the audience. Manaakitanga as a value is obviously important to you. One could say you and I are opposites. I'm wondering what it's like for you when you see a lack of manaaki or care from other artists and what things rile you and how do you deal with them?

NH: I think for me that idea of manaaki is quite strategic in the sense

that you catch more flies with honey. Whatever you're trying to catch, you get more of it if you're being sweeter. I think I learned this from my mum, because—no, I definitely learned it from mum. Other people in our family described mum as a table clearer. So my mum could be pretty ruthless when it comes to demonstrating her pukuriri in terms of what has happened to Māori people. She's just like classic Northland. We're from Northland. She's a pretty archetypal Northland woman, I would say. So it's not that out of the ordinary. But when we were growing up, she would always say she would clear these tables with her riri and it never worked. All it ended up doing was making her feel isolated. So I really tried to heed that, because it's not to say I don't feel angry, but for me I don't think it's helpful to get people to engage in a conversation if that's the first thing you present. I think it can come out. It's a bit of a strategy. I want to also talk about things that don't just affect Māori people, they affect everybody that lives in Aotearoa. It's trying to be inclusive.

In saying that, I do think that anger, like whakama, is a really helpful, compelling emotion to have. I often think that sometimes Māori are too wed to these cultural values like manaaki. I think of Waitangi this year. The wero from the haukainga there was to just really manaaki the manuhiri and show grace, but sometimes I think it's actually important to show anger. I don't think that our tupuna would have behaved that kindly to people like David Seymour and what they're about turning up. So I think, yes, we have this cultural value of manaaki, but we're also not doormats. Sometimes you have to push back. Also, for me when I think of manaaki, it's not really a strategy, but manaaki is your mana going somewhere. Mana aki. It's mana heading somewhere. When I'm making work that represents the areas that we come from, it's mana coming from all of my people, so I have to behave in a way that is respectful of our and their mana that we are extending. That's why I consciously employ that idea or strategy perhaps of manaaki, mana aki.

PR: But be careful what you say about David Seymour. I feel quite bonded to him.

NH: I'm alright if that's recorded and that goes out. [Laughter]

PR: We share something in common, David Seymour and I. His great, great grandmother and my great, great grandmother both married Pākeha. So we have the same generational sort of thing. That's where the buck stops. [Laughter]

[Questions and discussion with the audience]

The Long Game
(Art without artists: The doing of art history)

A lecture by Christina Barton

[Introduction and mihi]

I've called this lecture 'The Long Game (Art without Artists: The Doing of Art History)' because I was asked to talk about the artist's estate: that's what you artists will leave behind after you've died. This will likely consist of art works – paintings, sculptures, drawings, photographs, prints, whatever it is you were known for in your working life that is still in your possession – and the ephemera that went into their making and reception: the notes, correspondence, images, instructions, printed matter, newspaper clippings, articles, catalogues, books, etc., that gathers around your practice. Even if your practice is entirely digital, unless you think about this and make a plan, this may be left in the hands of people who know little about art or don't know or understand your wishes for the future of your work. Unless you are explicit, all you've worked for can become a burden, a liability, so many redundant files, or merely an asset to be indiscriminately dispersed or cashed in. The long life of your work is your legacy. It will or should outlive you. We art historians rely on the survival of art works and archives. Without these, knowledge of the past is lost. This is the basic rock bottom of doing art history without artists.

I've only made two exhibitions from the artist's estate. A reprise in 2022 of Billy Apple's 1965 exhibition of *Neon Rainbows* presented in London at The Mayor Gallery only nine months after Billy died, and the show I curated with Gregory Burke last year, *In Relation*, documenting the performance works of Peter Roche & Linda Buis, which was my last curatorial project as director of Te Pātaka Toi Adam Art Gallery. This was drawn almost entirely from what has survived in boxes stored at the Ambassador, the old theatre in Point Chevalier where Peter lived and worked. With this show, I think we bought a body of work back from the brink. On the strength of it and at the eleventh hour, we were asked to write a chapter for an edited anthology of texts on performance art in Aotearoa; we have been able to find a home for Peter's archive in the E.H. McCormick Research Library at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, and Greg and I are hoping to pull all the documentation together for a book. Whether we should have done this, whether it was worth it, how well we did it, is of course open to debate.

I am also involved in assisting Mary Morrison, Billy Apple's widow, and

which, for Billy, we are only just beginning to imagine what opportunities there are to honour his contention that ‘the artist will live forever’.

Billy Apple, *The Artist Will Live Forever (Blue)*, 2016, UV-impregnated ink on canvas, courtesy of Mary Apple

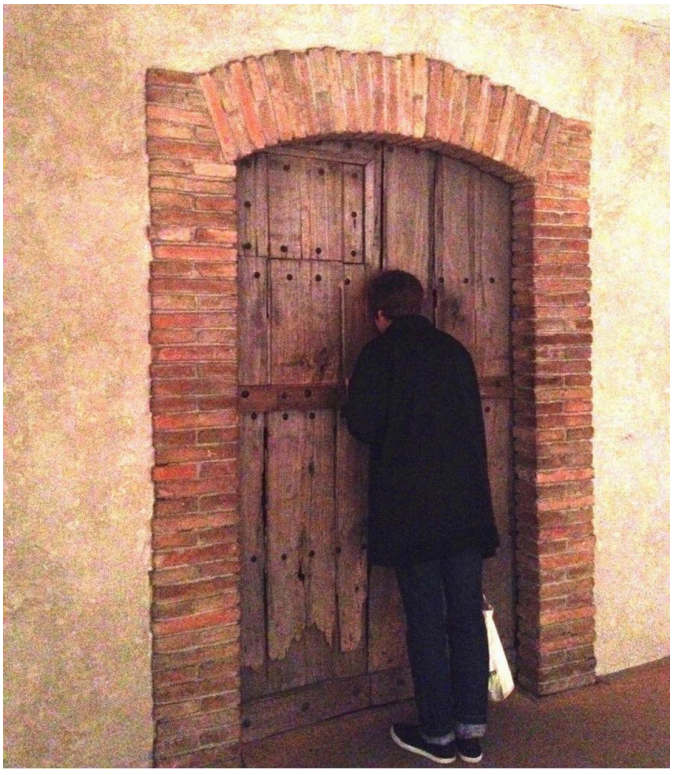
I’m calling this ‘The Long Game’, because that’s the one I’m playing. It’s becoming ever clearer to me that the longer one is around the stronger the likelihood of having to come to terms with the fact that we all pass away. And we need to address the issues this inevitable fact raises. But I’m also aware that over time the ideas, motivations, beliefs, drives, concepts, forms and contexts that we thought we understood as central to our cultural milieu also shift and change. And I’m wondering how we contend with that. I’m not just talking about our ‘15 minutes of fame’. I’m thinking rather of the deep structural shifts that allow some things to come in and others to go out of focus. I’m thinking too of the long haul, of staying true to the vocation, of riding out the waves of attention and inattention, of adapting to new conditions, learning and forgetting as we go.

To me, the big questions that I’m facing at my life stage are: What should I hold on to and what should I let go? What responsibility do I have to the past, and how am I to make history out of it? Does any of this old stuff matter if the artist is not there to animate it? Does my old thinking carry any weight, and how do I stay relevant? Can art history play a deeper role than simply documenting what has been done? Can it provide insights that explore and explain just what is going on, now? I guess these are my versions of ‘the in and the out of it’.

The subtitle assigned to this talk, ‘Art without Artists: The Doing of Art History’, might suggest that people like me aren’t interested in artists, that what matters to us are the products artists make: the art works that can be categorised, interpreted, contextualised, and ultimately treasured,

and the histories we manufacture, which to many of you may seem pontificating, exclusive, strait-jacketing, etc. For me, that is absolutely not the case.The work I do is always motivated by a deep respect for artists and over my 40-year career I've developed many friendships and sustaining professional relationships. Working still on Billy and Vivian, I know my respect and care are undiminished, even though they have passed away.

But in the end, I don't think my role is to be the artist's spokesperson. I can be your advocate, champion, collaborator, but I also need the autonomy to be your critic and exegete. Where am I when I do this? Am I 'in' or 'out'? In thinking about this question and what I might say today I've decided it might be helpful, instructive even, to provide some personal insights into what it means to be 'me': to be on the outside looking in. What I mean is to *not* be an artist, but to be what Joseph Kosuth famously defined as a 'secondary producer', and to make a case for the value of what I – and people like me – bring to this place we call the art world. I want to do this in a way that not only argues my case but enacts it, through my choice and analysis of words and images and through my telling of certain stories. In other words, treat this Powerpoint as *my* 'work', as specific, material, and codified as the exhibition upstairs. This is me trying to map 'my' territory. I thank Ruth and her team for inviting me to address your knotty questions and hope that my comments are useful and not merely self-indulgent.



The author with Marcel Duchamp's *Étants Donnés*, 1946-66, mixed media, Philadelphia Museum of Art (photo: James Fenton)

Okay, here is a photograph of me looking through the peephole in the doors of Marcel Duchamp's famous final work, *Étants Donnés* (1946–66) permanently installed in the Philadelphia Museum of Art. This is in 2012. I'm with one of art history's most notorious artefacts, a work made in secret (in Duchamp's West 14th St studio in New York City) by an artist who said he had stopped making art to play chess. You will all know what I'm looking at (Google it if you don't) but for the purposes of my talk, look more closely at those slightly darker areas around the two holes where every visitor has pressed their face into the timber of the old doors Duchamp chose as the work's threshold. That is the smear/mark/rub of the observer's presence, an indexical trace that proves (like thousands of others) I was there. I had my private moment, enabled by Duchamp's own words to make what I wanted of the occasion:

> All in all, the creative act is not performed by the artist alone: the spectator brings the work in contact with the external world by deciphering and interpreting its inner qualifications and thus adds his [sic] contribution to the creative act.
>
> —Marcel Duchamp, 1957

For me it is especially telling that I'm so definitely on the outside, so closed out of the tableau these doors hide. This is the conundrum every viewer faces when confronted by a work of art and it is the challenge of the art historian to make something of this encounter.

I thought about this when Ruth first asked me to contribute to this symposium, as I encountered the *Priorities* exhibition upstairs and read the accompanying handout. Being a stickler for language I found the grammatical glitch in the first sentence of the exhibition blurb, which shifts us from 'the work' (singular) to the (plural) artists (through the plural form of the verb to 'establish') as a telling reminder of where Ruth's 'priorities' lie, that is *with* the artist, who is the central focus of the current Artspace Aotearoa programme.

But for me, coming into the show, neither Charlotte Posenenske nor Peter Robinson are present. Only their works are here. I am in fact abandoned by the artists to the images, texts, objects that surround me. This moment of encounter, which can be bewildering, alienating, boring and of course exhilarating is what I expect and love. On seeing the show, my work begins. I don't want Peter or Charlotte in my ear. I have my own resources to bring: my knowledge of art history, my experience of witnessing many, many exhibitions. This is my territory, I am at home in this moment and this place.

So I see, for example, a historical difference between Posenenske's utilitarian ducts and Robinson's tortured, drooping and ersatz forms. I see an earnest socially-engaged proposition in one, and hope, doubt and dislocation masked by irony in the other. I see this as exemplifying two moments: the earnest 1960s in industrialised Germany and the long tail of the 1990s in Aotearoa New Zealand. I see the 'post-modern' in two distinct, even unrelated guises. And I wonder what it means for them to be together here, now. I'm not so much interested in unlocking the secrets of the artists' intentions (can they even articulate these?) as I am keen to see *through* them to the artistic, cultural, social, political, and historical conditions they so ably, eloquently, personally channel. I think of the artist as a conduit, a medium, rather than an agent. It is only in this sense that I can do without them.

So how did I get here? I suspect I naturally prefer, am biographically destined to be an outsider. The only child of immigrant English parents who grew up in rural New Zealand I spent a lot of my childhood on my own. I studied art history at the University of Auckland in the early-to-mid 1980s but I had not grown up in the city nor did I do my undergraduate degree here. I remember feeling so awkward when I went to the Elam Library. Not sharing the camaraderie of art school, I was an un-cool interloper from up the hill on the main campus. But, once there, usually at one of the desks looking out through a screen of trees towards the motorway, scanning the pages of *Artforum*, searching out books on the artists that interested me, I was utterly at home, a feeling that has never left me.

Right from the start I was attracted to work that gestured towards the viewer, that roped me in mentally or physically. Strangely, I was drawn to European art of the seventeenth century, which I learnt about whilst tutoring Michael Dunn's course on the Baroque. Take for example Vermeer's *Art of Painting* (1662–68). Of course I was seduced by the sheer skill of the artist to so memorably describe his world, but in this, and many works like it by Dutch and Italian artists of those times, what intrigued me was the partially drawn curtain that turned the act of looking into a conceptual conundrum: would the scene disappear if the curtain was fully drawn? Was this pulling back a clue to the purpose of painting as a revelatory act, an illusion on top of an illusion that referenced the famous competition between Zeuxis and Parrhasius, two classical painters keen to out-manoeuvre each other by proving the life-likeness of their canvases? How difficult it was to not reach out to do that very pulling!

This married well with my fascination for the art of the 1960s and 1970s: Minimalism, Post-minimalism and Conceptual art. Here is Wystan

Curnow literally inside one of Robert Morris's floor pieces (*Untitled*, 1965) at the *Some Recent American Art* exhibition when it came to Auckland in 1974. He is performing the role of 'phenomenological viewer', as Morris once put it. Minimalism might seem a far cry from the pyrotechnics and bombast of Baroque art, but like that earlier moment, it involves the spectator, turning their attention to real rather than illusory space. Its tactics are very similar to those of the seventeenth century: they are manifestly designed to engage, lure the viewer, this time not as an inquisitive eye or star-struck believer but as an embodied subject, caught in the 'fabric of the world'. Both works and all the subsequent ones I have deeply, madly fallen in love with – like Luke Willis Thompson's, *inthisholeonthisislandwhereiam*, 2010-12, or Kate Newby's *YES, TOMORROW* exhibition at Te Pātaka Toi Adam Art Gallery in 2021 – have required this mental and physical engagement.

I learnt about close reading and embodied engagement from mentors Tony Green and Wystan Curnow. I developed a commitment to feminist practices and to championing women artists with Elizabeth Eastmond and Cheryll Sotheran, I worked alongside Ron Brownson and Roger Blackley to gain a certain sensitivity to queer perspectives, and a sense of how to operate within the gallery system with one's own agenda intact. Through these connections and my own explorations, I found purpose in documenting a history of experimental practices that emerged in the 1960s and which are now loosely gathered under the umbrella term, 'post-object art'. I now like to consider myself a 'critical art historian', that is, as a writer, scholar, curator who understands there are norms, a mainstream, sets of conventions and clichés, power dynamics that structure the art world and have led to exclusions and inequalities that I seek to draw attention to, resist, and work around. You might say I'm an 'outsider' on the inside of the system.

I see my role as bringing alternative, subaltern, disruptive practices into view, but I'm not imagining some kind of utopian outside. I see the power of the art I have championed – in its rubbing up against, leaking out into, speaking out and back – as working within a discursive system. My alternative canon still functions inside the parameters of Art: yes Art with a capital A. It unfolds as an irritant, a conscience, a counter, adding to a field of practices, a network of relations in multitudinous, divergent, sometimes conflictual ways. In other words, I seek to champion certain practices *inside* the art world, but, and this is an important but, with a firm belief that this can and must have relevance beyond it.

This is why it is exciting to me to see Vivian Lynn's work presented at Phillida Reid in London (*Spin*, 2023) early last year or Jim Allen's

environmental sculptures from 1969 reconstructed for presentation at Michael Lett in 2010. These works by Allen were subsequently purchased by Te Papa and presented at the Adam Art Gallery in a show that brought his work together with Len Lye and Hélio Oiticica in *Points of Contact* in 2011. The point here is that these artists were in danger of being overlooked and forgotten, they were *out* and now they are *in*…still, I hope with the critical lessons their practices teach us intact. Though both artists aren't here their legacy lives on. And this is because people have cared for the material resources they created when they were alive, and they are continuing to look after them since they have died.

In the final section of this lecture I would like to offer insights into two very different examples of the 'doing' of art history without or in spite of the artist. Both provide models that I think are at the heart of today's topic.

When I read about Charlotte Posenenske or Lee Lozano or Marcel Duchamp or our own Malcolm Ross (1948–2003) I don't buy the idea that they gave up on art. I believe they left us timebombs that have gone off later. You'll all know the international artists I've mentioned, but perhaps not Malcolm Ross. He was a super-smart student at Elam whose honours' year submission (in 1971) was deemed by his teachers to be outstanding, who enjoyed a legendary status among a small inner circle of friends and peers, who never publicly exhibited his work after art school, though he continued to draw, paint, and research (serving, for example, as record keeper and historian for the NZ Society of Sculptors & Painters), who, despite his lack of profile, was convinced by Ron Brownson to deposit his archive with in the E.H. McCormick Research Library at Toi o Tāmaki.

Decades later, an art history student of mine, Matt Plummer, sought out this material and made it the subject of his Master's thesis, arguing convincingly that Ross's archive was his ultimate art work, a resource that refused so much of the art world's expectations, but which was consciously put into a public repository to be discovered and made something of later. Matt gave a remarkable account of this mysterious figure (who I completely missed when I formulated my thesis in the mid 1980s). In mounting his argument he drew a strong connection to Marcel Duchamp, suggesting, for example, that Duchamp's *Boîte en Valise/Box in a Suitcase* (that ingenious compilation of miniature handmade replicas of 67 of Duchamp's works) was a model for Ross's decision to box up his archive and deposit it in the Library.

Artist and art historian Marcus Moore subsequently made visible this connection by including Ross in his survey exhibition, *Peripheral Relations: Marcel Duchamp in New Zealand* 1960–2011 staged at Te

Pātaka Toi Adam Art Gallery in 2012. This exhibition, the outcome of his doctoral research, contained several timebombs, including the 1961 copy of Duchamp's *Boîte-en-valise* and *[Betty's] Waistcoat*, 1967, that were given to the National Art Gallery in 1983 (as part of the Judge Julius and Betty Isaacs Bequest). To my knowledge Marcus's exhibition was their first substantial presentation since the bequest was made.

Malcolm Ross, *Untitled [Duchamp Foundation]*, 1980, digital copy of original photograph, Malcolm Ross Archive, E.H. McCormick Research Library, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

In addition to Ross's photograph (*Untitled [Duchamp Foundation]*, 1980), which was the first work visitors encountered when they arrived at the exhibition, Marcus included Ross's row of coat hooks, lovingly recast for the occasion. These are an obvious nod to Duchamp's *Hat Rack*, a 1917 readymade that is hung upside down from the ceiling, which Duchamp relished for the shadows it cast, replicas of which he allowed to be remade in 1964. Ross called his hooks, made only a few years after the reissue of Duchamp's readymade, 'maltreated furniture' in that they too are hung upside down and therefore rendered useless. They too cast multiple shadows. After Marcus's show, Douglas Wright, the choreographer and dancer and Malcolm Ross's once-partner and long-time friend, donated the remade coat hooks to Auckland Art Gallery, moving the artist out of the archive and into the collection where they

finally found their way onto display in Natasha Conland's *Groundswell* exhibition in 2018.

This scholarly retrieval of artists legendary for their ambivalence towards the art system is something for which I'm immensely grateful. Without such assiduous research into the buried artefacts and material traces of these two artists we would not know this fascinating chapter in the international reception of Marcel Duchamp, the granddad of all critical practice, nor would we have knowledge of a conceptual precursor to the likes of Michael Parekowhai, Fiona Connor, g. bridle and Zac Langdon Pole.

Te Papa still doesn't appear to know what to do with Duchamp's work in their collection. As far as I can remember prior to Marcus's show, I'd only seen the *Box* once, in a collection show, organised by Natasha Conland, when she was curator of contemporary art there in the early 2000s. In fact *[Betty's] Waistcoat* is listed as missing in Arturo Schwarz's catalogue raisonné and Te Papa's collection catalogue still has no photograph to identify it (even though the *Waistcoat* and the *Box* were included in William McAloon's 2009 collection publication *Art at Te Papa*). It was not until 2018 when an artist, Michael Parekowhai, brought Duchamp's works out again, in his *Détour* installation, marking the opening of the new Toi Art spaces. This, I think, tells you something of the challenges this alternative history still faces, its ongoing subversiveness, perhaps.

Malcolm Ross died before Matt started his research. We will never know if he would have agreed to the recreation and presentation of his work, but to me these objects in their latent and manifest states perform a crucial role to instantiate a conceptual legacy to which New Zealand and New Zealand artists have contributed, knitting artists here into a wider history that stretches back to Duchamp and forward to yet uncharted territories. This proves we as a culture are not as isolated and belated as some commentators have suggested, that our boundaries are porous and that artistic legacy can leapfrog from generation to generation through subtle and subterranean channels that are all the stronger for their secret dialogue.

I've brought Malcolm Ross up because he would not be remembered unless he had left us something: a material repository full of latent potential. The work Matt Plummer did to interpret this gesture is a good example of doing art history without the artist. But of course the consequences of this work has the effect of bringing the elusive figure of Malcolm Ross into our consciousness. In this case Matt has invented an artistic persona for the private person Ross was driven to remain. Is this

ethically sound? I don't know, but I believe knowing these stories enriches and complicates the mainstream narratives that are in circulation, providing an important counter to an ascendent local art market and a conventional art history that still privileges painting and clichés of the expressive artist.

I feel driven to work on such subjects because, despite our efforts, these alternatives seem perpetually in danger of slipping yet again into oblivion (whether this is due to the power of the market, the conservatism of popular taste, or the reorientations of decolonisation). There is still no mainstream publication that canvasses the alternative histories of which Ross is one particularly unknown part; there is still no deep enquiry into the queer scene that lies latent in accounts of Elam and art in Auckland through the late 1970s and early 1980s. You might be interested to know that despite his talents as a researcher and a writer Matt did not pursue a career in the art system. He works in IT at Victoria University in Wellington.

So I shall finish with a few words about the artist with whom I have been especially closely associated: Billy Apple (1935–2021), who I wrote about in my thesis, met in 1990 and began working with in earnest around 2002. Billy is the polar opposite to Malcolm Ross in that he has led a very public life as an artist and is widely recognised as an important contributor to the histories of Pop and Conceptual art. Since changing his name (from Barrie Bates) and adjusting his appearance in 1962, he has made his whole life a work of art. As such, he presents a peculiar version of the artistic subject for public consumption, one that does not allow us 'in', who is all outside, relentlessly present in the mundane and material world we occupy. I argue in my book on the artist, *Life/Work*, that this outward turning to the world is his special value: he is an exemplary conduit.

As I say in my conclusion, Apple's finest achievement is to have sustained his commitment to his original decision, to live his life as 'Billy Apple', always and forever. It is as disciplined a decision, as challenging a task as it is to stop being an artist (while leaving things in place so that others can take up where they left off).

Unlike Matt and Marcus, I have had the good fortune of largely working with the artist, and together we worked on many projects, most notably his retrospective at Toi o Tāmaki Auckland Art Gallery in 2015, and my monograph, which was published by Auckland University Press in 2020. I remember Billy when he was alive, at his yellow table in his dining room, with his iPad open and phone stuck to his ear. As Mary will attest, nothing much has changed since he died, except he's not here. But now the

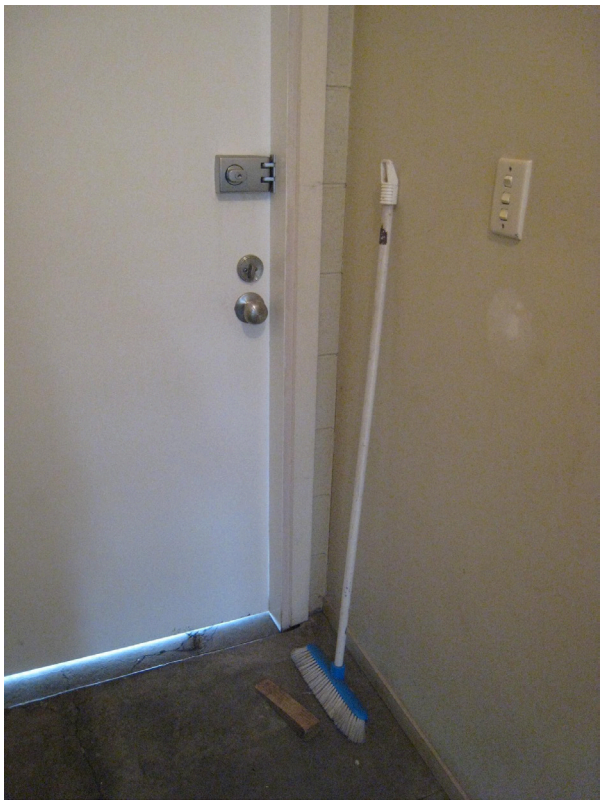
closest way of being with Billy is to spend time in his warehouse, and this is where I hope to continue to work as we decide what will happen next to its contents.

But what I want to point to in describing my working relationship with the artist is not what I learnt from him, but what I came to myself, without him. In discussing my monograph I always said to Billy that the book was 'mine', and indeed, while I promised to tell his story as best I could, my purposes in doing so were more and different. In a sense I wanted to use Billy to tell a variant story of both local and international art history, and thus to intervene in the discourses I had inherited, in ways that were critical of and complementary to the accounts produced thus far by my discipline.

To me, Billy's trajectory offered a unique and intriguing path to follow, that took me from Auckland to London to New York and back to Auckland, and thus had me dipping into and out of three distinct cosmopolitan centres and inserting Billy into three national art histories (British, American and New Zealand). This allowed me to navigate the power dynamics of centre and periphery in ways that complicated how the history of post-1960s art has mostly been told. I saw my book as contributing to new Post-nationalist art histories. I also saw it adding an eccentric spin to the conventional sources of conceptualism: one that allowed advertising a place as a precedent for a head-on, hands-off way of working and which blurred distinctions between art, design and commerce. I wanted Billy's story to be noticed and taken seriously, specifically because of these larger objectives.

I'm not sure this has entirely worked, except for those few who have done the hard mahi and actually read the book! I don't know if this has been taken up by an international readership (as yet there are no serious reviews outside of New Zealand).

Writing from here it is still hard to be noticed, at least within the sphere of art publishing. When Billy died it was still American art historian Thomas Crow who *Artforum* asked to write an obituary; it was his book on British art of the 1950s and 1960s they reviewed not mine nor Anthony Byrt's. Aotearoa, in terms of this bastion of the legacy media, is still a dead-zone (you can't get good reception). Or maybe as a woman I simply did not push hard enough. But perhaps, over time, the book will function like those other timebombs…as something people will stumble on, return to, rediscover. Or maybe none of this matters as we reinvent ourselves as a bicultural nation focused on honouring the Treaty. Maybe my kind of art history has done its dash.



Door to the Billy Apple ® Archive, Auckland (photo: Christina Barton)

But before I throw in the towel, let me end with a brief description of a moment I'm really proud of, a glimpse of art history at its most granular. Let me turn to the prologue of my book and talk about the bit that sits outside the main narrative, the effort I made at the outset to 'read' Billy's warehouse and its contents as a clue to the artist and his modus operandi. Among other aspects of that space, I dutifully unpacked, described and used the contents of one box in Billy's archive to discern exactly how the artist went about his work. Here, without seeking Billy's advice or permission, I used the full range of tools available to the art historian to draw my conclusions: (1) close reading of visual and material artefacts; (2) careful examination of the role context plays in shaping meaning; (3) attention to the rules of chronology and what it means to disrupt them; (4) the use of 'compare and contrast' to pinpoint the nature of Billy's repository and his practice in relation to others, and finally, (5) the use of relevant theoretical writings to decipher Billy's project. While I'll leave you to read what I came up with for yourselves, what I want to say by way of conclusion is that I shall always be immensely grateful to Billy because he gave me complete freedom to use my tools and draw my own conclusions. In giving me the keys to the warehouse, I think he unlocked the door to his being.

[Questions and discussion with the audience]

Pathways between contemporary practice and collecting

A conversation between Natasha Conland and Sarah Hopkinson

Natasha Conland: Tēnā koutou katoa and thank you Ruth, for the invitation. After Ruth invited us to talk about this subject of the pathway between contemporary practice and collecting, I called her up and said "Are you sure you want us to talk about this?" I've done a lot of talks about collecting, but I haven't done one with Sarah and I felt like there's any way this talk could go. But we've had a pre-chat and we're going to start by talking about an acquisition into the Chartwell Collection. It's on long term loan at the Auckland Art Gallery and an interesting case study. So, we'll start with Daniel Malone's *Black Market Next to my Name* and talk about how that collection of items evolved into an exhibition, and then evolved into a collection, and then evolved into a kind of treatise by Daniel, and another exhibition.

So, for those of you who don't know, Daniel Malone's work *Black Market* was a work exhibited at artist-run space Gambia Castle in 2007. Sarah, this is when you and I first met, not at this actual exhibition but during the lead up to the start of Gambia. For context, Sarah wasn't a gallerist then. She was a member of Gambia Castle and I had been at the Auckland Art Gallery for one year. I think you do the honours and talk about Daniel's project and how it began.

Sarah Hopkinson: Kia ora, everyone. Just before we do, I just want to reciprocate and say I'm really pleased to be talking about this topic with you because we have worked together on a lot of different kinds of acquisitions and I don't always think that it would be that interesting to many people, but let's go.

Gambia Castle was founded in 2007 in an old space above what would then become Golden Dawn a little bit later. It was an artist-run initiative. There were 10 of us in the collective, one of whom was Daniel. I was really young. I was 22. I had no idea what I was doing, had just finished at art school and had made a show with Daniel at Window, where I was the curator. I made a show with Daniel and I made a show with Simon Denny at Window, and then that somehow just started this—you know when you feel like you're both on the train and driving the train, that is what it felt like. This exhibition was obviously very memorable because it was a project that Daniel had been thinking about for a long time, but he was presented with this opportunity where he was going to move to Poland

for a residency. He was living in a building above what is now Rose's dining room, in one of the spaces upstairs at 279 or 468 K' Rd. It was two smallish rooms, and they were just absolutely chock-a-block full of his things. He was a collector, some would say hoarder, but he had made it part of his practice. It was a living, breathing work.

It transpired that Gambia Castle would move to Daniel's apartment and Daniel in his final leaving gesture would move the entire contents of his apartment into Gambia Castle. The show was called *Black Market Next to my Name* and it was this encyclopaedic exhibition of everything Daniel owned, except for his actual performance archive. So, his slides and anything that could be considered actual work was removed and he took it with him, but everything else…

NC: [Speaking to the slide] Here's just an example of it at Gambia. The relationship between Teststrip, which was originally the house of Gambia Castle and the new architectural structure at Golden Dawn, was super important for Daniel because in making the work there, and exercising this project, he used the architecture of Gambia to also sort his collection into the shape of the domestic architecture, which was pretty much the shape of that space. So, he arrived at a kind of sorting mechanism – of dining room, bathroom, music room… and so on.

SH: The bathroom was full of toilet rolls that had been painted Rastafarian colours, traffic light colours. Also, in this kind of enfant terribles style that Daniel has, it was also this incredibly efficient way of answering the question of what the hell he was going to do with all of his stuff when he moved to Poland to start a new life. So, it allowed him to sort it, but we didn't really have an answer of what we would actually do with it afterwards?

NC: That's right. And the proposition, of course, was that it would go back into storage. But in the process of sorting through it, Daniel had returned his hoarded items into individual archives. The show was bombastic. It definitely had an impact on audiences who were there. I don't know how you would define the quantity of people, but the mood in the community at the time was that something had to be done about Daniel's material. So an approach was made to Chartwell to think about acquiring it. Then Chartwell came to me and said "How can we do this?" Which is pretty much the sequence of events. So then I began a conversation with Daniel and back in turn to Sarah about how are we going to do this?

I think one of the interesting points here, first of all, is that not only is the scale of this artwork overwhelming, but it wasn't designed for the market.

It wasn't actually produced to be collected. It was almost a challenge by its proposition that it could not be collected. It had no value. It was just stuff. And not a tiny amount of stuff, hundreds and hundreds of items of not just low value status, but some of them even quite abject. The bathroom scene was rolls and rolls of toilet paper.

SH: A lot of them stained red.

NC: What really interests me about this and talking about navigating it, and thinking also as a continuation of the themes in your talk, Tina, was that while Daniel was the author of this archive who was going to author its transition into the museum? We worked on this for months and months, to try and refine how it could live permanently and I recently found this note that Daniel wrote about his proposition for the work. Something that I often do when working on a collection is ask an artist first to frame how they might imagine its future life. He wrote a piece called *Imagining the Future of Black Market Next to my Name*. You would have seen it some years ago when he talked about useful models for the work's future. Of course, some of them were obvious, like the archive, or the frozen studio, or the Gestalt Werk installation, or a museological model, which would draw out different characteristics. And they in turn were ways or mechanisms for us to think and make a case for backing the idea of its future use as a collectible item.

SH: It's interesting, because one of the questions Ruth posed to us is how do we support the artist in this conversation? I would say that in my experience as a gallerist, I actually often don't end up having that much to do with the conversation after the acquisition has been approved. And I would say it's testament to you, Natasha, and to other curators that work in this country, that you often have really good working relationships with those artists. And I end up becoming like a third wheel. That maybe the artist would get in touch with me only if something goes awry. But often, I don't actually have that much insight into what happens after I've done my sales pitch. You talking about the process, I found it really fascinating because I feel like I got off pretty lightly. It was such a huge, huge thing to register or create an inventory or whatever the language is.

NC: Right. So it certainly was.

[Speaking to the slide] So this is an example of the work when it finally came to its exhibition at the gallery. The mind boggles in thinking that a registrar has had to catalogue this entire collection and artwork. I know we're oftentimes quite used to thinking about the strictures of museums, but if I think about that concept of caretaking that goes into this sort of

activity, it's enormous. It's likely to stop a work being acquired. But Daniel, I think, protected the processes well by developing this concept of being in a kind of philosophic mindset as he was about to head off to Poland and leave all this material to someone else's care. He developed quite a flexible concept, thinking along the lines of [Walter] Benjamin's idea of how an artwork's storage in a museum into a ghost of the artwork but rather to make it a living presence. His models for imagining it in the future were targeted at use and sharing. An impossibility, because this is almost the most unshareable work we could acquire.

[Speaking to slide] This is an image of the registrars packaging up the artwork after it was displayed in 2012.

SH: Just a section of it. The other thing to say is that it was one of Daniel's stipulations that it always had to be the whole thing.

NC: Yes, it was the whole or nothing.

SH: So that was the initiation. That was probably the first time we worked together on a major acquisition.

NC: Yes, and I think it was an interesting test also for Chartwells passage and dialogue with the museum as well, because the Chartwell Collection has a process where there's a right of refusal for acquisitions. That hasn't actually been exercised to date, but if there was going to be an example, this was potentially it. Which is why we did so much labour into what it would look like to acquire this work. Literally, the gallery had to acquire another storage site to house this work. It was a massive extension of our capacity to deal with it, which is interesting on a number of levels.

Audience member: The work is shaming the act of collecting, isn't it?

SH: Could be seen that way.

Audience member: An embarrassment. The discussion of that earlier seemed really interesting to me.

SH: You mean that the artist's intention was to critique?

Audience member: Well, "You want to collect?... Try this"... A challenge.

NC: A challenge. In hindsight I thought about that, but Daniel had a line on that really early on. For him to reform the work as a collection item was much more connected to its art historical precedents, which is interesting.

Audience Member: Vito Acconci

NC: …. Beuys' *Tram-Stop*, Warhol's *Time Capsules*, Jason Rhodes' *Honest Engine Work*, Dieter Roth's *Schimmelmuseum*, Hirschhorn's monumental DIY *Monuments*. So he was putting in place examples of how the artist's archive was already live in discussion, which was easy to do. But the point is at this time could a New Zealand artist's work be of such value that could require this amount of space.

SH: Just to jump in there, I think the ethos of Gambia Castle and Daniel's practice was, it's such an overused word, but it was quite punky. A lot of the artists were engaged in 'institutional critique', neo institutional critique, maybe. I can't believe I'm doing this, but I really would like to defend the Auckland Art Gallery in this moment, because I think the Auckland Art Gallery people often–not only the Auckland Art Gallery, all institutions in this country, I think are often criticised for being conservative.

But reflecting on the things that I have managed to place with the collection, a lot of them have been extremely challenging. If we zoom out and think about it globally, this was a groundbreaking acquisition, and there are many others that we could also point to that actually make us feel quite progressive and cool.

Audience Member: I'm wondering if you could buy Billy Apple's warehouse?

SH: Too late!

NC: The ever-expanding museum.

Audience Member: It could be shaming and to your credit at the same time. That's a type of maturity, being both at once.

SH: Yes

NC: I also think that in the course of this period the way museums are thinking about collecting is also changing, particularly the need to shift the mentality from the collection of treasures, to collecting a diverse set of materials. That they don't so much own or possess [these materials] but share them, is the challenge for museums today. These changes and their flexibility or otherwise were already acknowledged in the process.

But we are here to talk about our dual roles as persons who work both in the private sector and the public sector. They're very different facilities.

We can come back to those points around public collecting, but the way Sarah and I thought we would bridge this one example to talking about others was to talk about some sort of sentiments of the activity rather than the outcome. One of the things I thought to ask Sarah is that, as long as I've worked with public collections, which is now a long time, it's become more and more apparent to me how important it is for artists to have their work equally acquired into private collections and the different value that has, and how special that transition actually is when someone makes that critical decision to live with their work.

I wanted to ask Sarah, because I probably won't get another chance, what insights she has into that transition and whether it does have that kind of value attached to it? And if there's an example you want to share, Sarah?

SH: There are several ways to answer this one. I think I'm lucky that - well, I don't know if it's luck, obviously some of it is by design, but I feel that programs that I've run, the exhibition programs that I've run, include artists and work which appeals probably to a very small portion of the collecting world, or the market. For the most part, the people that buy work from me are people who are very invested and very engaged in what they're collecting. I don't get very many people walking in off the street and randomly buying work. I think because of that it is quite a special transaction.

When we were chatting in advance of this, you asked me about how artists feel about it, and that you've noticed that often it feels quite special when someone wants to buy and live with one of their works. I think that that is true, in my experience. I think it comes down to intimacy. When a work goes into a public collection, there's incredible value in that and benefits in that, in the more cultural care, this idea that it'll be publicly exhibited into the future. But when it goes into a private collection, it's going into someone's home. They're going to have this intimate relationship with it and that can be very gratifying for the artists to feel that that work is being seen and loved and lived with and hopefully cared for.

I think what happens with the private market is that they also sometimes just disappear. There's a sadness with artists, especially someone who doesn't have their work in their studio for very long - I remember Milli saying to me one time that she was just wanted to go to a collector's house just to see this painting again because she had painted and it finished it and, as Milli does, she was working so close up to a deadline it basically shipped the next day. And then it sold. She literally had it in the studio for two days. She said "I haven't spent any time with that painting, and then the collector has it for the rest of their life." As much as

they're happy that it has gone to hopefully a loving home, I think there's a sense that their children are all out there in foster care and you don't know the parents. I know the parents for the most part. I don't know if that answered your question at all.

NC: It does. And also the transverse, what happens when it goes wrong?

SH: Well, touch wood, it doesn't go wrong too many times with me. Again, I think just because of the collectors that I work with, they usually have a fairly good understanding of how the market works and often are really dedicated to a particular artist. I mean, what can go wrong? Work can get damaged. That happens from time to time. A collector can fall out of love with a work and they can sell it on the secondary market. That doesn't happen very often yet, but it will.

Of course, things change in collectors' lives, you know. We've been in situations where we've thought—I certainly have—do I need to sell something to buy a house? Or maybe I've had a divorce, and suddenly we have to split everything. The artworks just become assets in some life equations. But most of the time I think they end up coming back to me one way or another in that situation. There's only been a few times I've sold something and had a bad feeling afterwards. Then I've just made a note to myself and tried to not repeat that experience. Usually it goes okay. Usually it goes well.

It's been nice to reflect on my processes in advance of this conversation. I think the way I think about selling work to private collectors and the way I think about offering work to museums is really quite different. Because I don't send Natasha or Tina or Megan everything that comes up for sale at Coastal Signs, I send things that, using my sort of understanding of whether the work is the work that best represents the artist's current mode of practice. And then I would think about what the museums have or don't have already. And then I also think about what I know of what you, the curator or collector, like. Or, the kinds of things that you might be interested in, more or less. I guess this is one of your challenges, is how do you put aside or do you even need to put aside your own taste or your own agenda, to use the word that Tina used before? Because in your job, you have to take into consideration so many other factors when you're thinking about what to acquire for the museum.

NC: Yes. It's a difficult question. There's a lot of different ways to answer it, publicly and privately.

SH: Maybe it is just, 'what are the conditions that you have to [consider]?'

NC: There's a couple of points here. Not every curator is interested in collections. I have a similar sort of background to Tina. I have an art history background. I have that training, but also training at a very particular time, in which we learned to think about the context within which we're working in particular. But also, more importantly, two chapters of my master's thesis (there were only five) were really focused on how collecting influences art. So how an artist who develops their own collection cultivates a secondary articulation of their practice, that is a kind of practice in itself. And the other part to that was how their imprint, if you like, in their own archive has another narrative that feeds back into their work.

So when I started working with collections, I was already stimulated by the idea that collections were, of course, not totalities but, in my view at the time, a kind of narrative construction of one sort with multiple subjectivities at play. And I thought this was the most fascinating idea, dealing with history, with the historical field. That doesn't deny the goal for working with art history's interest in facts and in the object of terrains. It's working between those two things which is stimulating. I very rarely think about my own taste, I have to say. I do have a strong interest in where those narratives lie in the collection, and where their gaps and weaknesses are, and they are bothering in a way that's immense and not always solvable, and not solvable in my lifetime, which is a huge strain. But, of course, experiences and contexts that you are put in front of lay the ground for what you do.

Thinking about Daniel's work, for example, since this is our case study, I was particularly interested in that work and how Daniel's life's practice, more or less as a performance artist, had left this material residue that actually had almost no trace of his performative life. And yet, it was a performance of objects in themselves. So getting into the objects and reading into them was a really stimulating part of that process. Across my time at the gallery, one of the extensions or sidebars to my work has been trying to dig into where the material residue is of performance art history. The fact that Daniel didn't have his performance records in this work was actually surprising. It was actually Judy [Darragh] who said to me 'he's still got that stuff'. That's not the story of the work. The work was supposed to have everything.

I haven't really answered your question. I know where you want me to go with that, Sarah, but I think that there's real stimulus in both cases. I still believe in trying to trace out an art history. A concept of multiple histories has extraordinary value for a collection. A couple of years ago we worked with Maureen Lander to get some support, to get funding to digitise her

archive that now is slowly making its way into the gallery. We had a really important handing over in that period. You could say that my subjectivity was in that. It was wholly in that. I spent an enormous amount of my time on it, but it was also a key piece of the puzzle that was missing from our body of work in the ‘80s. There are other gaps. I could go on, but this is a shared conversation.

It was interesting. I read something recently by Francis Morris who reiterated that how we value archives is a huge subject area. At the Auckland Art Gallery we don’t pay for archives. It’s a really important principle, but it also impinges our work at various times. But it is important to keep what they offer in a particular place. So, for example, you think of Maureen and she has that archive, what’s the point in which she trusts us to hand that over? That’s enormous. Part of it may be as simple as the fact that we have somebody who’s going to sit there with tissue paper and go through every single page and put non-acidic paper in between every single leaf of every item she has. That’s quite seductive. Part of it is that we work with her on the funding of the digitisation project. Part of it is that we want to have an exhibition in the future. But certainly the quality of how we can make live those materials is crucial to all conversations, just as it was to Daniel.

I was going to mention a comment by Francis Morris, director of the Tate, who said that the greatest purpose of collecting for a public museum is in taking works of art out of the exchange economy. So when they enter the museum collection, they’re no longer in the economy of exchange. I mean, it’s an arguable point, but her point is that once it’s in the museum, it activates a social and intellectual economy, which has a new value that feeds back into the artists.

SH: And also underwrites their value in the market.

NC: Maybe. Not always. I know this has been the subject of a lot of conversation, particularly with archives, but it has actually not come to pass that ephemera has reached enormous values of say other artistic material.

SH: Less so with archives, for sure. But artworks?

NC: It’s still a moot point. I just think about all those artists with little pieces of paper, I’m not seeing a lot of them floating around on the secondary market here for hundreds and thousands of dollars. But yes, there’ll be some instances but not a lot.

SH: I think we are somewhat insulated here from the extremely fraught connection that museums have to the market?

NC: Well, they still exist, even if it's just by a thread, in the public system. Whereas in the States, they don't have that system. Their museums are financed independently and so they have a different set of associations with private wealth. So yes, of course, the Rauschenberg estate are going to say we want X amount of money and put a value on that, because that is the value system that they're operating in. Whereas here, as in other cases, we still have an opportunity to make a case for the public need and the public good.

SH: Absolutely. I've just come home from America and every time I go there I learn more about how the American market works and I'm more exposed to various parts of it because I have two artists who are doing well in the US. It's always shocking to me how tightly connected the museums are to the market. So much so that the museums have very little budget for their collections. They acquire work by wealthy donors buying work on their behalf. Then that wealthy donor, their value as a collector in the marketplace is also enhanced by them having a close relationship to a museum. We have that here to an extent, but it's like on steroids over there. It's the American example.

One of the questions I was asking myself when I was thinking about this on the plane, I was reflecting on how my attitude to placing works into the institution has changed so much in my 15-17 years of being a gallerist. I was thinking back to the Gambia Castle days, and it was a thrill, and it was fun, and we all got paid heaps, because the museum paid full price - this being very small amounts of money in hindsight, but at the time for Gambia Castle it was heaps. We sold a group of Nick Austin's works to the Auckland Art Gallery from his first show with Gambia Castle. *The Odd Socks*. Iconic work. It was $2,500 or something for the whole...

NC: $11,500.

SH: No! 11? That's so much more than I remember. I wanted to say just quickly I didn't really have a concept of the long game, as you said, Tina. As I get older, now I understand that really the amazing thing about selling works to institutions is that that work will be cared for. Forever. Probably. And that brings up so many other questions.

NC: The acquisition of Nick's, too, was quite controversial internally.

SH: I'm sure it was.

NC: Because he was considered to be too close to emerging. There was a course of multiple conversations. But my feeling was even then that if you collect somebody, you don't just get the one sock, right? You have to get something that is suggestive of a field if you're going to go there. This is how you can tell a story, not through one sock.

[Questions and discussion with the audience]

Manaakitanga as baseline

A lecture by Melanie Tangaere Baldwin

Tēnā koutou.

This is not a transcript of my lecture. Just some main points and reflections.

As I mentioned to the roopu on the day, it felt quite vulnerable to speak about what we have accomplished and are trying to achieve at HOEA! Because spaces and ideas in the traditional/mainstream Aotearoa ‘art world’ haven’t always felt accessible or welcoming to Māori/Indigenous or even regional audiences.

It is easy to feel unconsidered and unimportant. Or to feel patronised. Or to feel novel.

That is how I started my kōrero. Acknowledging my own feelings of vulnerability and that I had seen most of the Māori participants in the room cry throughout the day.

I talked about how I was wearing numerous taonga, including a fresh tattoo, that represented everyone in my whānau to make me feel safe. I jangled as I walked and my wrist was swollen.

I was thinking about imposter syndrome and how this is not how I feel.

But I was worried about whether I would be understood.

And I was conscious that there was a huge march for the freedom of Palestine about to take place and I would not be able to take part.

I felt unsure.

Then I remembered that the last time I had been in that room was with Alanis Obomsawin. It had been life affirming and empowering and I am grateful and forever indebted to Ruth and Artspace for that opportunity.

And the other speakers had been generous and sincere. And the audience keen and respectful. The conversation between Ngahuia Harrison and Peter Robinson that started the day was both hard and soft and made me feel more relevant and at ease in the roopu.

I started with a mihi that my grandfather Ngahiwi Tangaere would say.

I started with that because

A. It acknowledges everything and everyone that it is important to acknowledge, and

B. My mother's parents, my nanny and papa, taught me everything I know about manaakitanga. Even if I learn from my mum, I know it comes from them.

HOEA! is a contemporary art gallery, studio and education space in Tūranganui-a-Kia Gisborne.

Numerous people were involved in the creation of the space. All wahine Māori. Most of us were graduates of Toihoukura School of Māori Visual Arts and Design.

Ngaire Tuhua, Kaa Te Mihi Puketapu, Sjionel Timu, Rangimarie Makowharemahihi Pahi, Nikora Te Kahu, Michelle Kerr and me, Melanie Tangaere Baldwin.

Of course we had and continue to have incredible support from our whānau, community and other artists as well.

We named it HOEA! because hoea means to row – to push forward – to encourage perpetual future thinking and action – in a Māori/Indigenous context.

It is also named for the saying 'Hoea tō waka!' – to do your thing, to do you, to forge your own path – but to bear and own the consequences of that, good or bad.

So, it was always a commitment taken very seriously.

We are about maximum consideration and maximum effort.

We spent a long time trying to figure out what was missing, what was needed in our local and national arts communities. What we wished existed. What we could contribute.

We had to think about what it was that we were trying to achieve, who did we want to serve, why, and how did we hope to go about it.

We have tried to carve out a specific space, not in opposition to anything but a parallel thing, an engineered ideal.

With Māori and indigenous artists at the forefront.

With Matauranga Māori at the forefront.

With engagement with our community as priority.

With nationally and internationally relevant high standards of creative delivery as a necessity.

We wanted to make a point – to show what we could do from our small town and to be respected for our labour.

We were also conscious that we were a group of women, of Māori women, and how we needed to acknowledge that.

When I called this lecture *Manaakitanga as Baseline* – I meant it. Manaakitanga is the foundation for everything we have done and continue to do.

It's in our trust deed, in our job descriptions.

It is how we guide ourselves in conflict.

It's a broad and beautiful concept that encompasses so much of what it means to be Māori and how to treat one another.

To be caring, to be supportive, to be welcoming, to be respectful, to be kind, to be generous. To be sincere. It is all the beautiful things.

It requires us to advocate for people, to speak up when we can.

So of course, that is how we should approach relationships with artists and with our communities.

Artists

HOEA! has only ever shown the work of Māori and other indigenous artists.

HOEA! is a non-commercial space. We don't want to sell work. We want artists to have the opportunity to share ideas, to be radical, if necessary, to be experimental.

It is our job as a gallery, to make that work accessible to our community.

We intend to form lasting and significant relationships with artists. Once we welcome artists into our space/exhibitions we feel obligated to treat them as whānau, to hold space for them long term and to find and develop further opportunities for them.

We think about how we can create creative and culturally beneficial groupings of artists that enable the artists to learn from and with each other throughout the exhibition or collaboration… and forever after that. We always consider the tuakana/teina relationship and how it can be reciprocal, and that each actor can perform both roles simultaneously.

We aim to create an environment of support, generosity and aroha for artists – to set a standard of care that they should expect from other galleries going forward.

When we invite artists from outside of Gisborne to come and deliver workshops or collaborate, we aim to immerse them in the manaakitanga of our community as much as possible. We want to be able to give back to them as they are giving to us and ours.

We see ourselves as kaitiaki of artwork. It is our job to keep the whare warm for the works, to care for them in the artists' absence, whether there is an audience or not. We are always conscious that we have been entrusted with taonga, of how many generations of knowledge and survivance go into the creation and exhibition of indigenous mahi.

The Gallery and the Community

We consider the gallery a whare, our house.

All curation begins with the position of the seating, of the lounge, of the place to gather and talk. We then think of where the cup of tea, where the kai will be.

The lighting is often soft, colourful. As are the walls. There is always fabric, there is always texture.

There is an overstocked bookshelf in the heart of the space. The library is

full of resistance, of defiance.

Creating a home-like space enables us/requires us to become hosts, and to act within the bounds of manaakitanga.

It breaks down barriers when you consider that you are inviting people into your home, there is an intention to act with care and to ensure that your guests feel comfortable and acknowledged.

Whenever we deliver exhibitions outside of our own gallery – the Aotearoa Art Fair, Māngere Arts Centre, Wairoa Museum – these same considerations are taken.

We aim always to make every effort to ensure that our visitors are given all the information they need to understand the intention of the artists. We encourage people to respond and spend time.

We have often used mural as a form of connection between the gallery and the community. For the first two years of exhibitions we painted a new street front mural inspired by the artists or content of the concurrent show.

We used rear projection to exhibit video works nightly onto the street facing windows.

We wanted to make sure that entering the gallery wasn't the only way that audiences could experience high level Māori and indigenous artwork.

We aim to contribute positively and sincerely to our local community and do this through delivery of a range of public programmes and exhibitions. We also work consistently with kura kaupapa Māori and kohanga reo and have delivered numerous large mural projects in Ruatoria and Gisborne. We have worked with local writers groups and justice groups to deliver workshops and have delivered large art projects for marae.

It is incredibly important to us to maintain earnest relationships with our community and to deliver exhibitions that are accessible and inviting, that bring new and significant knowledge to our people.

……..

The Future?

HOEA! is an attempt at creating an ideal. But of course, ideals are complicated. It has been three years. It has been hard work. We have

made mistakes, we have burnt bridges, we have burnt out. And it never feels as though we are doing enough. But we have ultimately been successful and achieved what we set out to.

The art world is precarious, and I am unsure what the future holds beyond funding windows. But I am proud of what we have accomplished. I am humbled that our community calls on us to contribute and that artists continue to work with us.

I hope that there is something in this that will encourage other indigenous collectives to create their own spaces.

We are here to help if anyone needs it.

Arohanui

Mel

Melanie Tangaere Baldwin of Ngāti Porou is a mother, artist, curator, educator, and co-founder and current director of HOEA! Gallery founded in 2021 and located in Tūranganui-a-Kiwa Gisborne. She works to create models of engagement and presentation that enhance equity and accessibility for the Māori and Indigenous arts community.

Christina Barton (DLitt, MNZM) is an art historian, writer, curator and editor based in Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington. Since leaving her role as Director of Te Pātaka Toi Adam Art Gallery at Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington in 2023 – a position she held for 17 years – she is embarking on independent projects that will enable her to work with art and artists, add to the scholarship on art history in Aotearoa New Zealand, and delve into the complex question of how past and present mutually inform each other. She is currently providing advice and support to the Vivian Lynn Estate and the Billy Apple® Archive, whilst also evolving various publication projects.

Natasha Conland is senior curator of global contemporary art at the Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki. Natasha Conland has over twenty years experience developing collections and exhibitions of contemporary art, and has written for a number of contemporary arts journals and catalogues in the Asia Pacific region, including co-editing Reading Room, a peer-reviewed journal of contemporary art published annually by the E.H. McCormick Research Library, Auckland Art Gallery from 2006-2018. She has a long interest in performance, art in public space and the dissemination of the historic avant-garde.

Ngahuia Harrison is an artist and researcher of Ngātiwai, Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Pukenga. As a lens-based artist she works with analogue and digital photography, as well as moving image. *Coastal Cannibals* is a major suite of work made in and around Whangārei Te Rerenga Parāoa, and was recently shown at Objectspace and Te Whare Toi City Gallery Wellington. She is currently Te Tomokanga Postdoctoral Fellow in Te Kura Tangata Arts, Waipapa Taumata Rau University of Auckland.

Sarah Hopkinson has a Bachelor of Fine Arts and a Bachelor of Art (Art History) from the University of Auckland (2005). Since graduating, Sarah has worked in the expanded field of contemporary art, initially in academic institutions, as a curator of artist-run spaces, and more recently in leadership roles in commercial galleries. Sarah was a founding director of Gambia Castle (2007-2010) and Hopkinson Mossman (2010-2019), and is the current director of Coastal Signs in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. Sarah also works as an independent advisor, and is a trustee of the Auckland Art Gallery Foundation and the Jan Warburton Charitable Trust.

Peter Robinson is an artist of Ngāi Tahu living in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. With a strong focus on studio practice, Robinson has exhibited consistently since the mid 1990s both in Aotearoa and abroad. He has participated in numerous internationally significant exhibitions including the 9th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (2018), the Jakarta Biennial (2015), 13th Istanbul Biennale (2013), 11th and 18th Biennale of Sydney (1998 and 2012), and he was New Zealand's representative at the 49th Venice Biennale (2001). In 2008 he was the winner of the Walters Prize, Aotearoa New Zealand's preeminent contemporary art award. He is a committed arts educator and is an associate professor and Dean Māori at Te Waka Tūhura Elam School of Fine Arts and Design.

Acknowledgements

The in and the out of it
A symposium transcript

Published by Artspace Aotearoa, 2024

ISBN 978-1-7385852-2-9

Authors: Melanie Tangaere Baldwin, Christina Barton, Ruth Buchanan, Natasha Conland, Ngahuia Harrison, Sarah Hopkinson, Peter Robinson
Design: HIT Berlin, Felixe Laing, Eva Ngamanu
Transcription: Robbie Handcock
Editing and proofreading: Robbie Handcock, Felixe Laing, Eva Ngamanu, Bridget Riggir-Cuddy

Artspace Aotearoa would like to thank the speakers from the day: Melanie Tangaere Baldwin, Christina Barton, Natasha Conland, Judy Darragh, Ngahuia Harrison, Sarah Hopkinson, Peter Robinson, and Shiraz Sadikeen for their thought-provoking and lively contributions. Thanks also to those who attended and contributed.

The in and the out of it symposium was a Chartwell 50th Anniversary Project. The symposium and its transcription were made possible through the generous support of the Chartwell Trust.

Thanks to our lead partners, Creative New Zealand Toi Aotearoa, Auckland Council, and Foundation North.

Each year we orbit one question in the company of artists through exhibitions and other events. Across the year we explore what this question offers us and what artworks and their authors can weave together. In 2024 we ask “do I need territory?” You can think of this as one exhibition in four parts, as a score played across a calendar, or maybe even as a forest. Join us.

2024
Do I need territory?