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BEST IN SHOW 2012

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designers/makers

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BEST IN SHOW 2012

Best in Show is an important ongoing Objectspace project that showcases outstanding new applied arts graduates from tertiary institutions around New Zealand. Best in Show 2012 is the eighth exhibition in this series, and features 18 emerging practitioners on the cusp of exciting creative careers. Areas of practice in Best in Show 2012 include graphic design, ceramics, product design, textiles, video art, contemporary jewellery and furniture.

The works of these bachelor-level graduates consistently display a level of polish. These works entail few compromises when it comes to materials, aesthetic decisions and other artistic concerns as they engage, spark curiosity or even surprise the viewer. Some of the issues addressed by Best in Show 2012 include: the dominance of the computer; digital versus hand production; sustainability and upcycling; attachment to objects and collecting; and the relationship between production and consumption. While the concepts addressed by these makers are varied, a common thread is the passing of time, expressed through a sense of redundancy and loss, and the dilemma of obsolescence.

As well as offering the opportunity of what is for many their first public gallery exhibition following soon after their end of year graduate showcase exhibitions, Best in Show 2012 provides a valuable professional development opportunity for these young makers, and an exhilarating exhibition of fresh new talent for the public to enjoy. Best in Show can be a launching pad for outstanding new

makers and designers. Objectspace is delighted that a number of previous Best in Show exhibitors have gone on to achieve national and international success. On show simultaneously in the Window Gallery is Talente: One Year On which presents the new work of five exhibitors invited to attend Talente 2011 in Munich, Germany, most of whom have also been past Best in Show exhibitors.

Objectspace congratulates all the exhibitors featured in Best in Show 2012 and wishes them great success in their creative careers. We also acknowledge the following institutions and their staff for supporting this important ongoing exhibition project and without whom Best in Show 2012 would not have been possible: AUT University (Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makau Rau); College of Creative Arts, Massey University (Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa); Elam School of Fine Arts, The University of Auckland; Hungry Creek Art and Craft School; Otago Polytechnic (Te Kura Matatini ki Otago); School of Visual Arts, Manukau Institute of Technology (Te Whare Takiura o Manukau); Unitec Department of Design & Visual Arts (Te Whare Wānanga o Wairaka); Whitecliffe College of Arts and Design (Te Whare Takiura O Wikiriwhi) and Whitireia (Te Kura Matatini o Whitireia). Thanks also to the School of Visual Arts, Manukau Institute of Technology and Nadene Carr for their assistance, and Alan Deare of Area Design for another superb publication.

Laura Howard

OBJECTSPACE PROGRAMME MANAGER



Saba Aghahasan

WHITECLIFFE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND DESIGN GRADUATE

The literal meaning of many common sayings and expressions varies greatly in different contexts. A common expression of Persian doubtfulness can literally be translated into English as 'My eyes don't drink'. Saba Aghahasan's Persian Experiment rugs aim to explore the gaps between the literal statement,

its meaning and its translation. This slippage is explored visually and typographically by Aghahasan through the vocabulary of graphic design.

Persian Experiment communicates traditional Persian adages through a confluence of traditional Persian typography and contemporary Western design. Using modes of visual and

linguistic communication from both cultures, Aghahasan has composed three Persian rug designs in the style of Kufic script. Western symbols have been incorporated into a traditional Persian design of geometric patterns.

Saba Aghahasan
Persian Experiment 2011
digital print
Courtesy of the artist
f.aghahasan@gmail.com

Vanessa Arthur
Shelflife 2011
refreshed objects, faux wood
laminated, plywood, brass, wood,
dowel, 925 silver, bronze, paint
Courtesy of the artist
jewel.design.va@gmail.com
www.vanessaarthurjewel.blogspot.com



"We are a culture trapped in an eternal present, one in which everything is brand new, squeaky clean, packaged in Styrofoam peanuts and shrink wrapped. No sooner do our possessions begin to deteriorate, becoming scuffed and dented, dulled by grime and corroded by rust than they are duly discarded for ever more advanced models of the same product, ever more gleaming and untarnished." Daniel Harris' telling

description of our times in Cute, Quaint, Hungry And Romantic: The Aesthetics Of Consumerism resonates in the contemporary jewellery of Vanessa Arthur, who examines the act of renewal in her jewellery.

Shelflife explores and blurs the lines between the old and worn, the shiny and new and the spaces in between of 'urban un-planning'. On daily travels throughout the city, the constantly evolving urban landscape inspires Arthur's work and suits her attention span. Transforming and re-assembling

obsolete and discarded materials, the Shelflife suite of jewellery invites the viewer to think about what we choose to restore and renew, maintain, update, revive, cover, replace or repair; and what we demolish and throw away, leaving to decay, destruct, erode, fade, wear and crumble.

Arthur has been selected as the DEBLYN artist in residence for 2012 at Toi Poneke Arts Centre, Wellington.

Andrew Cheung

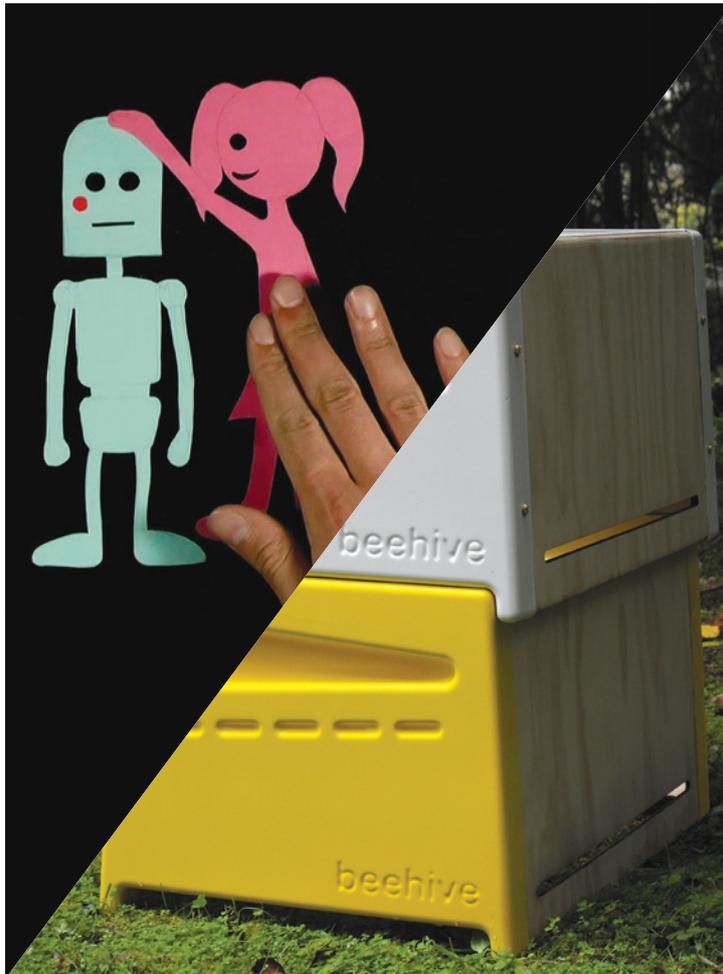
SCHOOL OF VISUAL ARTS, MANUKAU INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY GRADUATE

In this digital age, the role of the hand can sometimes seem obsolete. Andrew Cheung's short film Spot is a playful reflection of the ideas in science fiction and artificial intelligence films. Cheung's elaborate world of Science Kingdom (or Sci-Dom) is played out, utilizing colourful paper cut-outs which are always controlled by a prominent pair of outwardly human hands.

Influenced by artificial intelligence forerunners HAL9000 (2001: A Space Odyssey), Roy Batty (Bladerunner) and Andrew Martin (The Bicentennial Man), Spot is a manifestation of these characters which blur man and machine. Cheung's film explores Spot's role as a helper robot created to serve humans who exists specifically to keep a child company as part of Sci-Dom's Surrogate Siblings scheme. An identity

chip positioned on the face marks the robot.

While for some the presence of the human hands may represent human control over everything or even a higher power, they place Cheung as the creator within his own work, allowing him to assert his presence. Sometimes a mere symbol is enough.



Andrew Cheung
Spot 2011
moving image
Courtesy of the artist
andrew_copper_cheung
@hotmail.com

Rowan Dunford
Urban Beehive 2011
styrene and pine ply
Courtesy of the artist
rowan.dunford@gmail.com

Rowan Dunford's Urban Beehive is a story of numbers - the global population decline of the humble honey bee and the growing number of people that have contributed to this decline through habitat and biodiversity losses. Critical for our continued existence, bees are critical for our continued existence as they pollinate one third of the food we eat.

Dunford created Urban Beehive to develop a product which would help more people in suburban environments engage in the act of beekeeping. Identifying barriers to initiating beekeeping such as complexity, fear or intimidation, cost and aesthetics, Dunford used these to drive the design process.

Urban Beehive seeks to eliminate these obstacles to provide an engaging flat-pack assembly beginner experience for first-time beekeeping as a rewarding and environmentally beneficial hobby.

Aesthetically, Urban Beehive represents a sleek modern take on a traditional hive - understated and simple to maintain, with a design that references the benchmark stackable Langstroth Hive and Top Bar Hive.

Dunford has been invited to exhibit Urban Beehive at Auckland's Better by Design CEO Summit 2012.

Mike Furniss

UNITEC DEPARTMENT OF DESIGN & VISUAL ARTS GRADUATE

As a universal symbol of communication, the pen holds a prominent place in history as the conduit for innumerable forms of writing such as records, correspondence, poetry and prose. In the twenty-first century pens along with watches, clocks and books may seem to be redundant historical products

slowly decreasing in value as technology expands and the analogue is replaced with the digital, and email and instant messaging have reduced the stature of the handwriting instrument.

Where once such objects were handed down from generation to generation, many contemporary products such as disposable pens have a lesser value and a quicker lifespan than their historical

counterparts, reaching their use-by date before any emotional attachments are formed. Furniss' INK fountain pens seek to bring the nostalgia of value back to the writing instrument, elevating the art of calligraphy and penmanship once more.



Mike Furniss
INK 2011

stainless steel, brass
Courtesy of the artist
Photograph: Nisha Ravji
furnmike@gmail.com
www.furnmike.tumblr.com

Russell Goodman
Nails 2011
wood, bronze

Courtesy of the artist
Photograph: Caryline Boreham
russell.j.goodman@gmail.com

At first glance Russell Goodman's typology of nails may seem to be a collection of found relics, where various nails have been lined up in an indexical continuum. Focusing on the concept of handmade versus machine made, Goodman has crafted a selection of nails from wood, reversing the materiality of the original object and challenged

himself to make objects by hand that look like they are machine made. In exploring the functionality and structure of his chosen material, Goodman is influenced by sculptors Ricky Swallow and Joe Sheehan.

Harking back to the roots of woodworking, and the craft tools used to create objects, these objects are the subject matter Goodman recreates in wood. Choosing the humble nail – the basis of the wood trade – Goodman's

deliberate selection of material ironically renders his objects unusable. Punctuated by the occasional metal nail and presented in his custom made museum-like display cases, his typology considers concepts of labour and time and how these affect the value of objects, whether made by hand or machine.

SCHOOL OF VISUAL ARTS, MANUKAU INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY GRADUATE

Russell Goodman

Janetta Hayden

AUT UNIVERSITY GRADUATE

There are moments when attachment is questioned; when transience is confronted. Where are these moments located? Everyday life holds them, yet reflection competes against fleeting encounters with a material world; either discarded through a need for function or distracted by an attachment to memory.

Janetta Hayden's Shelves for Objects aim to contain this moment for the viewer: to actualise the idealised

objects that hang before the eyes of the imagination. In our increasingly urbanised and material-driven society, we orient ourselves in the home by way of familiar objects. Yet society is also one of transition and of mobility of space and place.

Influenced by theorists such as Barthes, Baudrillard, Buber and Schwenger and artists Martino Gamper, Joseph Kosuth and David Noonan, Hayden explores concepts of containment and display in her work, elevating the status of domestic objects and

redistributing their function by isolating them behind plywood and acrylic. Ironically, this act of veneration evokes separation, rather than the enduring attachment which is sought. Probing the formation of self through material culture, Hayden sees herself as an observer of collective and individual meaning, the public and the private, challenging the viewer to recognise the intricacy of their relationship to familiar material things.

Janetta Hayden
Shelves for Objects 2011
plywood, acrylic glass, lamp,
armchair, nesting tables
Courtesy of the artist
contactjanetta@gmail.com
www.janettahayden.tumblr.com

Lisa Higgins
Holding on... 2011
rubber, sterling silver, copper,
paint, brass, steel, synthetic
cord, silk thread, seeds,
polyurethane
Courtesy of the artist
Photograph: Tineke Jansen
lisahiggins.vent@yahoo.com



Lisa Higgins' contemporary jewellery series Holding on... explores connections with the past, our human desire to ensnare and preserve memory and keep close those which we hold dear. Historically, jewellery has been passed down as heirlooms between generations or worn in remembrance of loved ones, carrying with it memory and sentiment that remains personal to the wearer.

Investigating form and material contrast, Higgins' jewellery is influenced by Victorian mourning jewellery and street art. Longing to hold on to what is inevitably lost, through material choice and mark making these works explore visual and emotional tension and serve as a reference to what has been before. The brash juxtaposition of references to tagging and Victorian lace are brought together in these pieces. Higgins coats the metal

armature with heat shrink wrap and uses a stencil and spray paint to apply the delicate lace designs. Evoking memories and giving strength to the wearer by association, these works talk about holding on to another time, of not forgetting or being forgotten.

HUNGRY CREEK ART AND CRAFT SCHOOL GRADUATE

Lisa Higgins

Megan Lundberg

UNITEC DEPARTMENT OF DESIGN & VISUAL ARTS GRADUATE

American artist Mark Dion has stated, "The realisation of the passage of time is somehow made concrete through objects, which outlive us." Megan Lundberg explores this concept of the passing of time in her work. Collecting, field study and the found object are the basis of Lundberg's ceramic installation Re-Imagining. Engaging in a field-based study of the Oakley Creek (Te Auaunga)

area, near Unitec, she discovered a myriad of discarded objects from a variety of time periods. Considering the creek as a museum with a collection that dates back to pre-European times and is continually in flux, Lundberg has amassed a range of fragments invested with possibilities and providing few clues to their identity which she has used in Re-imagining.

Rather than following a traditional archaeological approach to taxonomy, Lundberg has translated these artefacts into re-imagined new objects through the ceramic medium. Displayed in a manner which references museum crating and storage systems, Re-Imagining is a series of fantastical, imaginative ceramic objects referencing the Oakley Creek fragments.

Megan Lundberg
Re-Imagining 2011
ceramic, found objects, wood,
gold powder
Courtesy of the artist
Photograph: Emma Bass
meganlundberg@gmail.com

Gabrielle MacDonald
Iron Butterfly 2011
leather, industrial felt
Courtesy of the artist
Photograph:
Laura Ridley Photography
gabrielle.macdonald@gmail.com



Textiles designer Gabrielle MacDonald's wearable leather collection Iron Butterfly brings a creative approach to sustainability in clothing. Made from laser cut leather and industrial felt, these objects of body adornment dress the neck and shoulders of the wearer, acting as accessories which sit somewhere between jewellery and apparel.

Focusing on bringing together multiple pieces to create a cohesive piece, MacDonald works laser cut leather and felt pieces to create a statement piece, manipulating and cutting away sections from the fabric to create these objects. The title of her collection, Iron Butterfly, refers to the delicacy of design combined with her selection of tough and heavy leather as the material of choice. Informed by her farming background and

inspired by textile designer Kapow wow, who uses recycled materials to create statement fashion neckwear pieces, all leather used by MacDonald is purchased from the New Zealand cowhide market with sustainability in mind.

AUT UNIVERSITY GRADUATE

Gabrielle MacDonald

Lynda McNamara

OTAGO POLYTECHNIC GRADUATE

Challenging perceptions of ceramics, Lynda McNamara's works move beyond domestic ware to explore the breakdown of the human form. Her works The Curve and Orthopod's Challenge investigate the human spine and the challenges that old age, disease and injury offer to the ability to stay vertical.

With knowledge of bodily disfiguration and deformities gained through twenty years of working in the fields of orthotics and prosthetics, McNamara has developed a deep understanding of conditions which display slumping, curvatures, warping, fusing and shrinkage of the body. These same bodily characteristics have become evident in the challenging processes of working with clay. She has created a series of vertebrae with varying degrees of deterioration and decay, stacking the

sculptural forms to engage with ideas of slumping, twisting, curvature, decay and misalignment of the vertebrae. McNamara accentuates a spinal curve in her ceramic work indicative of the inability to stay cohesive as these spinal conditions worsen.

McNamara was a finalist in the Portage Ceramic Awards 2011.



Lynda McNamara
Orthopod's Challenge 2011
glazed stoneware
Courtesy of the artist
lynda_mcnamara@hotmail.com

Claire McSweeney
Harakeke, Flax,
Phormium tenax 2011
sterling silver, 18ct gold,
plant material, steel pin
Courtesy of the artist
claire_mcsweeney@hotmail.com
www.clairemcs.blogspot.com

Seldom does a jeweller take loss to an extreme – to the point where ultimately only a remnant of the original piece of jewellery remains. McSweeney focuses on exploring her strong connection with the natural environment through an experimentation with form, combining various natural materials and jewellery processes. She creates work that references nature directly, expressing

an experience of place and love for the New Zealand environment.

McSweeney's jewellery project embarks on a journey involving a wearer and a brooch that is made of fragile plant material, inserted into a durable silver cast of the lower part of the same plant. It's inherent fragility means that once worn, the aesthetic of the jewellery piece will change over time as pieces break away during the wearer's daily activities, revealing golden points where the branches once 'grew'. The

memory of this journey is captured in the remaining lower part of the plant in silver. McSweeney's project intends to make an audience think about ideas surrounding loss and change by referencing Earth's fragile environment and the impact of humans, while still celebrating its beauty.

OTAGO POLYTECHNIC GRADUATE

Claire McSweeney

Briar Mark

AUT UNIVERSITY GRADUATE

The computer's dominance in almost every aspect of our lives has in recent years led to a revival of craft as a gesture of resistance. The hallmarks of craft make it in many ways the complete antithesis to what graphic design has become. Briar Mark is interested in examining this dichotomy and the time consuming nature of craft:

it's inability to be mass-produced, and the ever-present potential for mistakes. Yet it appears there will always be an appreciation for the tactility of a physical design.

Mark's series of large scale hand embroidered posters entitled iCraft explore the idea of hand making versus digital production within the field of graphic design in the twenty-first century with particular emphasis on the processes

of each. With titles such as I could have done this on my mac, This would have taken eight seconds to type, and Craft can be design / design can be craft – each meticulously stitched with embroidery thread on watercolour paper – Mark utilises catchy slogans to state her case, which suggest a continuum between hand production and digital production.



Briar Mark
iCraft 2011

350gsm Fabriano watercolour paper and embroidery thread
Courtesy of the artist
briar.mark@gmail.com
www.briarmark.tumblr.com

Jacqueline Reid
22083.57 2011
mixed media

Courtesy of the artist
jacquelenereid@clear.net.nz

Behind an artist's work are layers of time, talent and tenacity which are seldom acknowledged within the price. This work represents the work behind the work. Three years of experimentation converge in one neckpiece, titled with the cost of becoming an artist: 22083.57.

A summation of Jacqueline Reid's experimentation over her three years of study, the individual pieces in her giant necklace titled 22083.57 may hold little value on their own, but were all stepping stones for many of her final pieces. 22083.57 represents three years of conversations with materials; a single necklace which includes the concept development of all Reid's experimentation explored through ideas of value, scale and humour. Influenced by

workshops with New Zealand jewellers Renee Bevan, Octavia Cook and Lisa Walker, Reid's amalgamated experiments have travelled with her over three years, and are the pieces which were not thrown out because she considered they still had a story to tell. In contrast to the typical scale of jewellery, the magnitude of 22083.57 dwarfs the viewer and alters the way they relate to it.

WHITIREIA GRADUATE

Jacqueline Reid

Sophie Rzepecky

COLLEGE OF CREATIVE ARTS, MASSEY UNIVERSITY GRADUATE

Sophie Rzepecky's project Presence in absence is a continuing meditation on the relationship between light and textiles. Influenced by Le Corbusier's statement that "Light creates ambiance and feel of a place, as well as the expression of structure", Rzepecky posits that a diffusion of light enables an enhanced life in our built environments. By allowing natural light to be filtered through a space, her hand woven textiles Diffused Wall,

Refracted Wall and Fractured Wall create an ephemeral mood which is always changing, enabling the viewer to be constantly engaging with their surroundings.

While boundaries in interior architecture are often thought of as physical, manifesting themselves in the form of walls or immovable structures, Rzepecky questions the idea of permanent interior walls, creating woven walls from a range of diverse materials that rely on light to define them and therefore define space. She uses textiles as

a mechanism for the unique diffusion and filtering of light into a room or as a mechanism of refraction, bouncing back preexisting light to alter the mood of a dark space, affecting the atmosphere and provoking an emotive response. The colour of each piece reflects her research into therapeutic colour. While these woven fabrics are intended as ideas for screens or room divisions, they can also be used as couture fashion fabrics.



Sophie Rzepecky
Presence in Absence 2011
hand woven and felted weaves
Silver weave: weft – felted wool yarn, merino silver, reflecta yarn, cotton; warp – monofilament, mercerized cotton.
Courtesy of the artist
sophrz@gmail.com

Leah Shao
Exploring 3D Typography 2011
laser cut acrylic, 3D printing
Courtesy of the artist
cshao1@gmail.com
www.behance.net/leahshao

Influenced by the changing needs of people and their surroundings, graphic design is always progressing and renewing. Dimensional typography is a rapidly emerging innovation providing new areas of exploration in depth, time and palpability which is used by Leah Shao in her work Exploring 3D Typography. Fascinated by Leonardo da Vinci's Roman Church floor plans and picturing forms of letters emerging from these, Shao's interest in the relationship of architecture and typography led her

to apply the principles of other creative disciplines such as architecture, sculpture, and spatial design to her graphic design thinking. Exploring 3D Typography shows Shao's experimentation with 3D type, using different processes such as 3D printing, laser cutting and 3D software such as Rhino to examine the potential creative assets the third dimension can bring to the typographic form.

Beginning by adapting an existing typographical form with a vivid calligraphic style – Cloister Black – into three-dimensional shapes, Shao

created the outlines of the individual letters by tracing the original typeface. Each letter was then divided into pieces according to the different pen strokes of the forms. Using a laser cutter, Shao cut each segment of the letter "A" from white acrylic board, then manually assembled these into the complete letter which she photographed. Her work presents this experimentation with light, shadow and exposure and how the typeface changes form when viewed from varying perspectives.

AUT UNIVERSITY GRADUATE

Leah Shao

Marcel Watson

UNITEC DEPARTMENT OF DESIGN & VISUAL ARTS GRADUATE

Reinterpreting the soft toy form, Marcel Watson's work aims to communicate the notion of pathos; providing an experience where the audience can exercise a relationship with the objects and their surrounding space, while experiencing feelings of pity and sympathy. Exploring the relationships between object, space and the viewer, Watson elicits a sense of unease by presenting his work in forgotten corners of the gallery space.

His uncanny soft toy forms made from colour-drained blankets evoke a sense of abandonment.

Researching the psychology of the uncanny and the work of German artist Joseph Beuys and French/American artist Louise Bourgeois, Watson explores a definition of the uncanny as what American artist Mike Kelley has described as a "tremor that catches the unawares". As a substitute for the human subject, the soft toy form is innocent, vulnerable and dumb. It is

also familiar, reminiscent, and evokes sentimentality, so that when acts of expression are inflicted upon it, they are of greater effect and the viewer is more intimately and emotionally engaged. Examining how the manipulation of a space can provoke a response from the audience, Watson observes how narratives may unfold within these spaces and create situations of viewer and object confrontation.



Marcel Watson
Pathos 2011

wool blanket, hobby fill,
polyester thread, milk
Courtesy of the artist

mruu88@hotmail.com

www.cargocollective.com/mw_art

Susan Wells

All the Love Hours
Repaid in Full 2011

aida cloth, thread
Courtesy of the artist
suenkidz@extra.co.nz

Drawing on her knowledge of geometric abstract painting and interest in the history of craft methodologies including her involvement with the Knitterati group, Susan Wells' All the Love Hours Repaid in Full explores the idea of collaboration through a collaborative stitching project. Using her own paintings as a starting point for composition and colour choice, Wells re-works these with needle and thread into cross stitch.

Following the principle, 'Taking something old and making something new', Wells' use of existing compositions and colours as inspiration allows her to concentrate on the process of making as something experienced over time. The craft methodologies she has employed address issues of labour, domesticity and the feminine.

The first piece created for this project, the Collaborative stitching project 001-100 involved 78 different people from dozens of North Island stitching groups who cross stitched 100 squares

based on fragments of Wells' paintings, which she then combined into one large cross stitch. This piece is designed to be seen from both sides, with the reverse revealing the individual stitched signatures of each collaborator. Wells is interested in exploring the possibilities of craft as a way of 'thinking through making', and in future opportunities for community oriented collaborative stitching projects.

ELAM SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS, THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND GRADUATE

Susan Wells