



Te Adam
Pātaka Art
Toi Gallery

Opening the door to Wellington's private collections

Behind the doors of Wellington homes are art collections that could rival any show a museum could put together—and the latest exhibition at the Adam Art Gallery takes these works out of people's personal spaces and on to the gallery walls.

'Behind Closed Doors' showcases works from private Wellington collections from 1946 to the present day, with pieces ranging from paintings by renowned artists Toss Wollaston and Colin McCahon, to seldom-seen works by Michael Smither and Rita Angus, to provocative multimedia artworks by Peter Robinson and Ronnie van Hout.

The exhibition is the result of six months' 'detective work' by curator and Gallery Director Christina Barton, who visited the homes of collectors from a wide range of age groups and personal means.

"It's been a great privilege to go into people's homes and have them very generously show me their work," says Ms Barton.

"It's not often a complete stranger comes to your home—and I've ended up in some quite intimate spaces.

"I have learnt that everyone lives with their collection differently—in a sense a person's private collection is a reflection of them as a person.

"I've been to places where pieces are hung floor to ceiling on every available space—collecting becomes an obsession for many people."

Ms Barton says she was surprised at the scale of many of the pieces people had in their homes.

"I had assumed that private collections would be inherently conservative, but I found some incredibly adventurous collectors who were buying art at the cutting edge of practice—pieces that are not necessarily easily accommodated."

The exhibition will be complemented by a book documenting a selection of the works as they appear at home, to be launched in August, with photographs by leading New Zealand photographer Neil Pardington and text by art historian Lara Strongman.

"The book is an intimate alternative to the exhibition—which is a conventional, institutional hang of New Zealand art, where the owners will not be acknowledged—and highlights how differently the same work can appear in different contexts."

Alongside 'Behind Closed Doors' the Gallery is staging a changing programme of projects titled 'in camera: a project series around and about collecting', which will explore other personal acts of collecting.

What: *Behind Closed Doors: New Zealand Art from Private Collections in Wellington*

Accompanied by: *in camera: a project series around and about collecting*

Where: Adam Art Gallery, Victoria University of Wellington, Gate 3, Kelburn Parade

When: 4 June – 18 December 2011

Tuesday – Sunday, 11am - 5pm (closed only on Monday)

FREE ENTRY

Opening event (media welcome): Friday 3 June, 6pm

Special media previews of the exhibition will be available during the day on Friday 3 June by appointment only. Selected images from the forthcoming book are available on request.

To make an appointment for a preview of the exhibition or to arrange interviews please contact Laura Preston on laura.preston@vuw.ac.nz or phone (04) 463 5229.

Adam Art Gallery

Victoria University of Wellington

Gate 3, Kelburn Parade

PO Box 600, Wellington 6140

New Zealand

+ 64 4 463 5229

adamartgallery@vuw.ac.nz

www.adamartgallery.org.nz

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