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Turning the tables in Adam Art Gallery's latest exhibition

Adam Art Gallery's newest exhibition overturns the popular assumption that art galleries provide a neutral backdrop for art. Art works from the Gallery's *Inhabiting Space* exhibition are carefully placed throughout the gallery to draw attention to its architectural design and activate visitors' spatial awareness.

At the centre of the exhibition is a three-storey-high sculpture by the late American minimalist artist Fred Sandback, renowned for creating works entirely from coloured acrylic yarn. The yarn sculpture, which stretches from floor to ceiling in the Gallery's atrium, is the largest Sandback sculpture ever to be seen in New Zealand.



An image from Sriwhana Spong's video installation *The Fourth Notebook*.

To celebrate the exhibition's official opening on 13 May, a conceptual drawing will be installed live by the Gallery's technicians. The drawing by the late-New Zealand contemporary artist Julian Dashper pays homage to Sandback and the minimalism movement.

Victoria University of Wellington's Adam Art Gallery Curator Stephen Cleland says *Inhabiting Space* was spurred by the dynamic architecture of the gallery, designed by acclaimed architect the late Sir Ian Athfield.

"I chose artworks for this exhibition that set up situations and enable viewers to question what it means to inhabit space. The works cause the viewer to become intensely aware of their surroundings and enable visitors to have a range of concentrated experiences as they move through the building.

"In this respect, the art in this exhibition playfully interacts with Athfield's design of the Gallery in an attempt to bring his visionary spaces into the experience of the exhibition.

"With Sandback's installation, the shapes created by the yarn generate the sense of a virtual plane within the room. Viewers discover more about the artwork as they go through the gallery and see how it intersects with the building's unique spaces and reacts to its lighting," he says.

Stephen says each of the works also has a performance element with which the viewer can engage as they move around the gallery.

“For example in video installations by Sriwhana Spong, Campbell Patterson, and Juliet Carpenter and Evangeline Riddiford Graham, actors and dancers react to their surroundings and sound permeates through the gallery. While renowned Australian performance artist Mike Parr’s text piece, written directly on the walls, prompts the viewer to pay attention to what is around them. We all become actors in this exhibition experience.”

What: *Inhabiting Space*

When: Opening night: 6pm, Friday 13 May

Exhibition dates: 14 May – 17 July

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

www.adamartgallery.org.nz

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