

### 50th Venice Biennale

This year marked the second time ever that New Zealand has taken part in this prestigious international art forum and City Gallery Wellington was proud to be involved with its success.

The New Zealand exhibition *This is the Trekka*, by Inglewood-born artist Michael Stevenson, was an initiative of Creative New Zealand, working in partnership with City Gallery Wellington. Gallery staff managed the development of the art project, the catalogue publication and the video programme and worked in partnership with Creative New Zealand on the marketing and sponsorship. City Gallery Wellington Director Paula Savage was involved in the Vernissage and the official opening of New Zealand's exhibition, which received critical acclaim from the international media and the art world.

Established in 1895, the Venice Biennale is the world's oldest international critical forum for contemporary visual art. It attracts thousands of the world's most influential artists, curators, critics, gallery directors and collectors. This year's 50th Venice Biennale, which was hailed as the biggest yet, marked New Zealand's return after its successful debut in 2001.

The Gallery will show the exhibition *This is the Trekka* in 2004 in New Zealand, after the Biennale concludes in November.

### Len Lye films in Civic Square

In late November, City Gallery marked the closing of its *Len Lye* exhibition by screening Lye's films outside in Civic Square. Some 1,100 people turned out to view the films, which were projected onto a huge screen in front of the Gallery entrance.

This event was a resounding success, attracting some very enthusiastic feedback from the public. It also illustrated the value of special partnerships to the work of the Gallery. An event of this size would not have been possible without the support given through partnerships and without the enormous goodwill and respect shown between partnering organisations.

### Joint Open Day February 2003

This year, our three museums – the Wellington Cable Car Museum, Colonial Cottage Museum and Museum of Wellington City & Sea – teamed up for the first time to provide a special family day out for more than 2,000 people.

While the Cable Car and Colonial Cottage museums had held a successful open day together the previous year, the inclusion of a third museum certainly broadened the appeal. Free entry, entertainment and activities were complemented by a free bus service to take people between facilities.

The New Zealand exhibition at the 50th Venice Biennale was based at La Maddalena, an 18th Century church

Image courtesy of Creative New Zealand  
Photographer: Jennifer French





## THE YEAR'S HIGHLIGHTS | EVENTS

- › Staging a hugely popular free outdoor concert for children and families, showcasing Hoani Waititi Kapa Haka (national secondary schools champions) and the chart-topping New Zealand band Nesian Mystik
- › Revealing the wonders of Wellington's Town Hall organ to children through a fun, contemporary multi-media concert
- › Transforming Civic Square into a children's space with an innovative art installation for the duration of the festival
- › A comprehensive schools programme that offered seven one-hour performances daily (from which a class could choose three)

Hoani Waititi Kapa Haka perform at *Bounce 2003!*

### Wahine Day commemoration

On April 10, the Museum of Wellington City & Sea commemorated the 35th anniversary of the Wahine disaster with free entry and a special programme. This included talks, a book launch, a wreath-laying ceremony in the Museum's Wahine Gallery and a commemorative concert by the Wellington Cathedral Choir together with members from the Central Band of the Royal New Zealand Air Force.

The Wellington Cathedral Choir in front of the Museum of Wellington City & Sea's tall screen



## THE YEAR'S HIGHLIGHTS | EXHIBITIONS

### City Gallery: New Zealand art to the fore

The Gallery staged a varied programme of visual art, architecture and design, with New Zealand art strongly to the fore. A number of landmark exhibitions reinforced the Gallery's reputation as the leading contemporary art gallery.

Exhibition highlights included:

#### *Len Lye*

**August 24 - November 24 2002**

The Gallery was the first New Zealand venue for this exhibition, which was developed by the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery in partnership with the Art Gallery of New South Wales. It comprised a large selection of Lye's ground-breaking experimental films, his impressive photograms and the kinetic sculpture for which he is internationally renowned.

*Len Lye* was held at a time when interest in the artist's work was high: the first major exhibition of his work in Australia had opened in 2001 to commemorate the centennial year of his birth; Roger Horrocks' recent biography on Len Lye was a finalist in the 2002 Montana Book Awards; and a Len Lye sculpture was commissioned for Wellington's waterfront.

#### *Colin McCahon: A Question of Faith*

**December 7 2002 - March 9 2003**

The most significant art event of the New Zealand summer, *Colin McCahon: A Question of Faith*, revealed new dimensions in McCahon's work through a fresh international curatorial perspective. The largest touring exhibition of McCahon's work, it was the first major survey of his work in the Northern Hemisphere.

City Gallery was the first New Zealand venue on the Australasian tour for this exhibition, which was curated and organised by the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam with the organisational support of the Auckland Art Gallery. The exhibition attracted nearly 30,000 visitors at the Gallery, an average of more than 300 a day. People came from throughout the country to view the exhibition and it also attracted significant numbers of overseas tourists.



Visitors enjoy the prestigious exhibition  
*Colin McCahon: A Question of Faith*

Photographer: David Lewis



Woman and Lizard, Wellington Zoo (1984) Photographer: Peter Black

***John Parker - Ceramics***

**October 12 - December 1 2002**

This exhibition, initiated by the Gallery, surveyed the 35-year career of New Zealand's foremost ceramicist. It featured 350 works, including 150 new works created especially for the exhibition.

John Parker's new White Ware works were displayed in a dynamic, theatrical installation that showcased his continued emphasis on the striking presentation of his work and demonstrated his skills as a lighting, exhibition and theatre designer.

***Peter Black – Real Fiction***

**March 22 - June 22 2003**

One of a generation of photo-artists that includes Laurence Aberhart, Bruce Foster, Anne Noble and Fiona Clark, mid-career artist Peter Black has lived most of his life in the Wellington region.

This exhibition, curated by Gregory O'Brien, surveyed Black's career from his first "street photograph" taken in Brisbane in 1973 to his 2002 series *Streetworks*, images taken "from the hip" while walking along city pavements. It marked the first time his photographs had been presented in a solo exhibition since the early 1990s.

### Michael Hirschfeld Gallery: focus on Wellington art and design

The 360 exhibitions programme at the Michael Hirschfeld Gallery continued to reflect the excellence and diversity of Wellington art and design through monthly exhibitions of painting, photography, sculpture, installation and video work. Its solely Wellington focus and dynamic exhibition programme were responsible for an outstanding 79% increase in attendance over the year to more than 16,000 visitors.

One of the most popular of the 11 exhibitions held during the year was *Dream House*, which presented six dream dwellings by Wellington architects. This was the second exhibition to include architecture at the Michael Hirschfeld Gallery and made public the private visions of the participating architects.

### Broader horizons for Museum of Wellington City & Sea

The Museum held three popular temporary exhibitions and also redesigned the ground floor layout during March to extend the exhibition space forward.

- › *Our Harbour - get into it!* used a range of computer simulations, interactive displays and other visual exhibits to tell the story of Wellington Harbour's marine life, climate, geology and recreational activities. The exhibition opened in May 2002 and ran until October.
- › *A Catch of Characters: Lives of Wellington Fishermen* was based on the *Nets, Lines & Pots* books written by Emmanuel Makarios. This extremely successful exhibition explored the unique blend of cultural traditions and work practices these men brought with them from places as diverse as the Shetland Islands, Italy, France and England. *A Catch of Characters* examined the lives of 12 fishermen in depth and also looked at individuals from later generations, who experienced the impact of major advances in fishing techniques and technology.
- › *Living Treasures* featured Wellington personalities, objects they treasured and objects they chose from the Museum's collection. This will be held as a series of three exhibitions, each featuring six well-known Wellingtonians and people with strong connections to the region. The first six to participate were chef and city missionary Des Britten; educator Susan Baragwanath; acclaimed writer Patricia

Grace; world mountain-running champion Melissa Moon; poet and academic Bill Manhire; and artist Michel Tuffery.

- › More than 250 Wellington school students also worked with the Museum, teachers, families and friends on the research and exhibition project, *Family Treasures*. A popular extension to *Living Treasures*, this will also involve a series of three separate exhibitions. The first of these opened in June and displayed family treasures chosen and described by students at Clyde Quay and Clifton Terrace schools.

Children working on the fish quiz at the exhibition *Our Harbour - get into it!*  
Photographer: Craig Simcox



## Innovation at Capital E

Capital E hosted seven well-attended exhibitions/events on its main exhibition floor during the year. These were:

- › *Massive DMV* concerts: a debut series of “Dance Music Video” concerts showcasing young talent discovered through SoundHouse New Zealand
- › BG Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2001
- › LEGO Imagination Show: a world-touring, interactive show of LEGO creations complemented by workshops and holiday programmes
- › Urban Drift: Wellington’s own circus show presented as part of the Fringe Festival
- › *Bounce 2003!*, Wellington’s debut arts festival for children
- › The Science Roadshow: a touring, interactive science show

Capital E’s creative technology facilities also continued to provide young people with exciting new opportunities to develop their creative potential. One of the highlights was SoundHouse New Zealand’s scholarship programme, which generated the new young talent showcased at *Bounce 2003!*, and the *Massive DMV* concerts. This programme also led to the commercial release of CDs.

In April, Capital E hosted the international SoundHouse conference, impressing delegates with its unique and innovative range of activities. Meanwhile, the American exchange programme People 2 People included SoundHouse New Zealand and Capital E’s ONTV studio as a regular part of their activities.

Performers at the *Massive DMV* concerts Photographer: John Nicholson



## THE YEAR'S HIGHLIGHTS | EDUCATION

The Trust gives a high priority to providing education experiences for children and teenagers linked to their formal school education. We seek to enhance students' learning opportunities through a range of specialist programmes linked to the national curriculum.

At four of the Trust's five facilities, we offer a comprehensive range of educational experiences. Capital E's National Theatre for Children also undertakes an extensive national touring programme.

During the year, more than 35,000 students attended our education programmes in Wellington and a further 35,000 nationally.

### Exhibition-based programme at City Gallery

At the City Gallery, education staff developed a series of educational activities and materials around a number of its main exhibitions. Highlights were:

#### ***Len Lye***

This exhibition was enhanced and interpreted for visiting school and tertiary groups by a comprehensive, cross-curricular education programme. More than 1,300 education visitors in 95 class groups participated in the gallery-based

programmes, which included guided gallery tours tailored to suit the needs of the visiting class, and exhibition worksheets and gallery-based activities.

Gallery staff also joined forces with Capital E to run the *Len Lye* music video workshops in the September holiday break. Children taking part in the programme learned about Len Lye's sculptures and films at the Gallery, and then headed over to SoundHouse New Zealand to compose their own soundtrack to Lye's 1938 film *Colour Flight*.

The workshops, which synthesised the art of Len Lye, music production and music video technology, set out to be a fun and engaging learning experience for children and were a great success.

#### ***Colin McCahon: A Question of Faith***

Over the first six weeks of the student year, more than 1,300 education visitors in 65 class groups participated in programmes relating to this exhibition. These included guided gallery tours tailored to suit the needs of the visiting class, exhibition worksheets and gallery-based activities. The visual and physical presence of McCahon's work produced an overwhelming response from visiting classes.

#### ***Peter Black - Real Fiction***

During the April school holidays, the Gallery ran a series of sell-out workshops titled *Snap Happy!* inspired by Peter Black's work. Participants studied his photographs and techniques before taking to the streets with education staff and their own cameras to shoot their own photo assignment of life in Wellington. The results were fantastic.

Students on an education visit to City Gallery Wellington



### Museum of Wellington City & Sea well above target

The Museum of Wellington City & Sea also had a very full year, exceeding its Ministry of Education: LEOTC (Learning Experiences Outside The Classroom) annual target of 6,000 by more than 2,000 visitors. Staff formed links with other educators in the Wellington region and consolidated work practices and opportunities with other Trust facilities. The education coordinator also updated and reformatted the Museum's education resources, as well as developing a new teaching unit based on Plimmer's Ark.

#### **Family Treasures**

A research and exhibition project linked with the Museum's temporary exhibition series *Living Treasures, Family Treasures* was an education service initiative to form links with local schools and their communities. It is now being considered by the Ministry of Education as a case in its Exemplar project, as a model of best practice for Social Studies in an LEOTC setting.

### Strong education focus at Capital E

Capital E maintained its strong education focus throughout the year, providing daily sessions for schools at SoundHouse New Zealand and ONTV as well as regular holiday programmes, to enable students to make full use of the creative technology facilities.

Capital E's National Theatre for Children provided an outstanding line-up of productions (see Productions and Tours), which were performed for a large number of Wellington schools. The theatre also toured some productions to schools nationwide, providing a major medium for teachers to meet their ongoing LEOTC curriculum requirements.



### Colonial Cottage and Cable Car museums prove popular

The Colonial Cottage Museum continued to attract a number of school groups during the year. The production of a comprehensive Teacher's Guide prompted an increase in the number of hands-on activities offered to students, with spinning and additional domestic handcrafts such as quilt-making added to the list. Students were also able to try their hand at creating images using a process called "daylight printing".

Although the Wellington Cable Car Museum has no specific education programme and limited resources, with just two full-time staff, school groups have visited ever since the Museum opened. Over the year, a growing number of students came with a specific transport/cable car focus, with some teachers even coming in beforehand to plan the visit. The Museum Manager spent additional time with teachers and school groups, so that children could make the most of their trip to the Museum.

Students designed paper costumes during a visit to the Museum of Wellington City & Sea

## THE YEAR'S HIGHLIGHTS | PUBLIC PROGRAMMES AND VISITS

### Gallery programmes action-packed

Action-packed public programmes at City Gallery Wellington were linked to some of the Gallery's keynote exhibitions. Highlights were:

#### **Len Lye**

Public events surrounding the *Len Lye* exhibition included the performance by Wellington dance collective Strident of two striking, work-in-progress showings of their dance theatre piece *Asleep in Mid-Air*, inspired by Len Lye's *Art of motion*. Meanwhile, CL Bob's multimedia show *SCRATCH* paid homage to Lye's love affair with jazz. This enormously popular show (both performances sold out and an extra was staged to cope with demand) fused a selection of Len Lye's extraordinary jazz films with new live soundtracks.

A very successful keynote lecture series, *The Business of Energy and a Feeling of Zizz*, was held in partnership with Continuing Education, Victoria University of Wellington. Speakers were Roger Horrocks (Lye's friend, assistant and biographer), Dame Cheryll Sotheran (former CEO of Te Papa and past Director of the Govett-Brewster Art gallery), Frank Stark (CEO of the New Zealand Film Archive) and John Matthews (Chair of the Len Lye Foundation).

The major closing weekend event of the exhibition, Len Lye films in Civic Square, was also an outstanding success (see Events).

#### **Colin McCahon – A Question of Faith**

Highlights of the highly successful programme accompanying this exhibition included actor Sam Neill's talk in front of *Victory Over Death 2*, choreographer Michael Parmenter's inspiring talk about McCahon's influence over his dancing career, and a presentation by senior contemporary artist Richard Killeen, who was taught by McCahon at Elam in the 1960s. The literary community came out in force to hear writer, poet and curator Gregory O'Brien discuss the words in McCahon's paintings and for the historic re-staging of McCahon's own programme of poetry and writing influential to his work, read by Wellington literary personalities Jenny Bornholdt and Jo Randerson and actor Waimihi Hotere.

The Gallery continued its valuable partnership with Continuing Education, Victoria University of Wellington with a seminar that featured papers by Professor Lloyd Geering and art historian Jonathan Mané-Wheoki. This seminar, which was chaired by film-maker and collector Stuart McKenzie, was so popular it had to be moved from the City Gallery cinema to the Town Hall's Illott Concert Chamber.

Visiting curator Dr Marja Bloem from the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam also gave three extremely well-attended and enjoyable tours of the exhibition.



## THE YEAR'S HIGHLIGHTS | PUBLIC PROGRAMMES AND VISITS



### ***Peter Black – Real Fiction***

Programmes around this exhibition included *Moving Along*, a foot journey through Peter Black territory by Luit Bieringa (curator, art historian and former Director of the National Art Gallery) and a photography panel discussion, *Getting Better*, chaired by curator Gregory O'Brien with prominent Wellington photographers Anne Noble, Gavin Hipkins, Les Cleveland, Janet Bayly, Bruce Connew and Neil Pardington.

Wellington literary magazine *Sport* has now dedicated two issues to Peter Black's photographs and writing inspired by them. On the final day of the exhibition, contributors to *Sport 15: White Horse Black Dog* and *Sport 30: Peter Black—Real Fiction* (including Bill Manhire, Jenny Bornholdt and Gregory O'Brien) read their poems in the company of the photographs that inspired them.

### ***Dream House***

A very successful event associated with the *Dream House* exhibition in the Michael Hirschfeld Gallery was a panel discussion chaired by renowned New Zealand architect Ian Athfield. This attracted a full house of people eager to hear the participating architects discuss their practice and themes in the exhibition.

Actor Sam Neill's talk in front of *Victory over Death 2* was a highlight of the public programme accompanying *Colin McCahon – A Question of Faith*  
Photographer: Kevin Stent

### **Extensive programme at City & Sea**

The Museum of Wellington City & Sea also ran an extensive public programme for the year, either to complement its temporary exhibitions or in association with other organisations including the Maritime Friends of the Museum of Wellington City & Sea, Wellington Historical and Early Settlers Association, the New Zealand Centre for Photography and The Architectural Centre.

A series of talks ran alongside *A Catch of Characters* on modern fishing concerns, the issues surrounding marine reserves and old fishing practices carried out by Maori. Captain's Cook's Birthday was celebrated and a book by American author Tony Horowitz, *Into the Blue boldly going where Captain Cook has gone before*, was presented in association with the New Zealand Book Council.

The Museum also opened its Collection Store in Ngauranga Gorge to a series of visits and talks during the year, as the area of collection management is of particular interest to the public. Members of the Museum's Foundation Club, Maritime Friends of the Museum of Wellington City & Sea and members of the Wellington Branch of the New Zealand Historic Places Trust were among the visiting groups.

A campaign to attract groups of older visitors to the Museum was also launched, with a free tour as an incentive. The success of this campaign was evident, not only from the numbers of local groups locally visiting the Museum but from the media coverage generated nationwide.