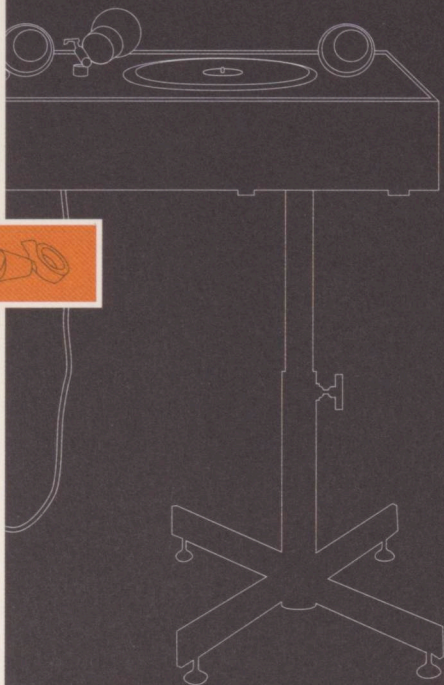


MULTISTYLUS PROGRAMME

RECENT CHARTWELL ACQUISITIONS

16 JUNE - 16 AUGUST 2001







MULTISTYLUS PROGRAMME

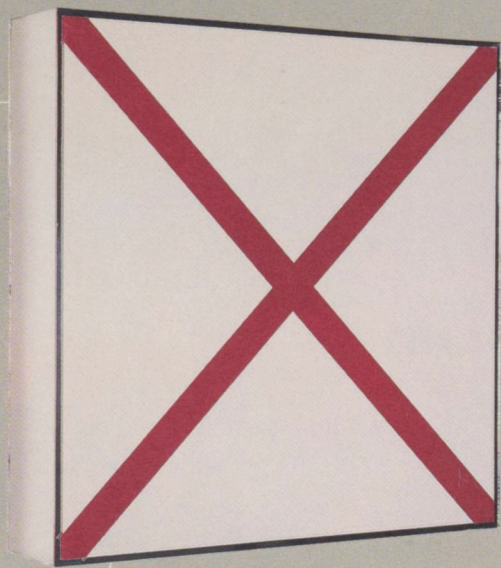
RECENT CHARTWELL ACQUISITIONS 16 JUNE - 16 AUGUST 2001

Multistylus Programme is the fourth annual exhibition of recent additions to the Chartwell Collection of contemporary Australian and New Zealand art since the Collection came to the Auckland Art Gallery in 1997.

To some extent all group exhibitions are multistylus, multi-tracked programmes. With exhibitions such as the Gallery's annual sampling from the on-going Chartwell project, this is particularly true. The primary rationale for these exhibitions is not to construct a curatorial argument from all available work, but to introduce a selection of new arrivals in a collection from the last year or so. Numerous themes, variations, refrains and repetitions can be heard in the multiplicity of new content which augments the Collection each year, but it does not form one coherent whole. As a dj samples, improvises on, and refreshes existing tracks, so collection exhibitions allow us to try out a temporary combination of particular works. And just as each night's performance by a dj does not bring all the records from his box, no selective collection exhibition goes anyway toward exhausting all possible combinations and meanings of the works shown on that occasion. To switch metaphors, we could say that collection exhibitions offer both curator and audience something like the pleasurable problem facing professional and amateur cooks on those TV kitchen shows when participants have to design an appetising meal from a random assortment of ingredients.

Born in Kalabo, Zambia, 1970. Lives in Auckland

Jim Speers



Jim Speers' lightboxes and simply designed objects of interior décor are theatrical props for the imaginary world of the nocturnal stroller or the lonely inhabitant of the all-night bar. They look best in low light and evoke the twilight time in the city of signs. The uncanny urban scene which Speers' work assumes is one of coolly seductive facades, mirrors and screens with open-all-hours haloes of light. Both luminous and opaque his modular theatre of illusions simultaneously triggers and satirises the utopian desire to crack an urban code or two. Speers' aesthetic of chill city glamour recalls Manet's *Le Bar aux Folies-Bergère*, together with Edward Hopper's *Night Windows* and Sugimoto's photographs of glowing drive-in movie screens.

Bill Culbert

Born in Port Chalmers, 1935. Lives in London and Croagnes, France

*Light produces space, distance, orientation, calm contemplation;
it is the gift that makes no demands, the illumination capable of
conquering without force.*

HANS BLUMENBERG "Light as a Metaphor for Truth"

Bill Culbert's phenomenology of the observable world depends on a type of pragmatic romanticism or secular numinism. His photographs and installations bring the archaic and metaphysical associations of illumination into abrupt juxtaposition with the modernist impulse to exactly measure and describe reality.

Plain of Jars is named after a plateau in Laos which Culbert visited on his way out to New Zealand in 1996 when he made this work. Several hundred large stone jars 2, 3, and 4 metres high, had been discovered on the plain by the French in the 19th century. In the 1960s the Plain of Jars was a major battlefield in the Vietnam war and subjected to heavy American bombing. In Culbert's work a host of old glass jars are either left clear or masked out in varying proportions of white and black paint ranging through 1/4; 1/2; 3/4 to full coverage. Half the jars have electric bulbs in them. Culbert has created a workshop demonstration of cosmological order; a temporary model of the solar cycle as storage system for the kitchen table.

two / three

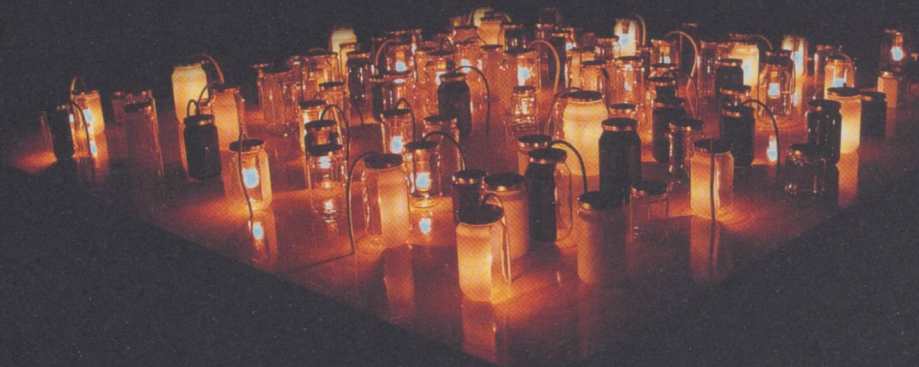


Photo: Michael Roth, courtesy City Gallery, Wellington



Michael Parekowhai

Born in Porirua, 1968. Nga-Ariki, Te Aitanga-a-Mahaki, Rongowhakaata. Lives in Auckland

To print a photograph of a sparrow so large that it looks like a big bird of prey is like making an image of a killer sheep. To make a sparrow look like a scary regal eagle leaves us less comfortable with what we thought were harmless, cute little birds feeding off the crumbs from our table.

Michael Parekowhai's series of taxidermied and photographed sparrows were produced at the same time as his work with rabbits. Is the artist using introduced species of birds and animals to speak allegorically about the return of a repressed indigeneity? All of Parekowhai's sparrows and rabbits are named after card-carrying members of the Beverley Hills Gun Club in California. Is this a little scary?

Ronnie van Hout

Born in Christchurch, 1962. Lives in Melbourne

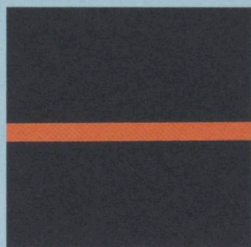
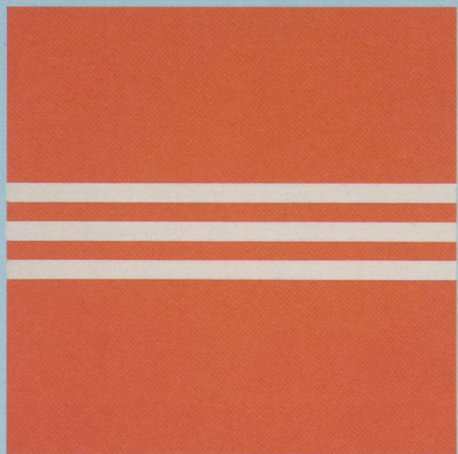
four / five

Ronnie van Hout's work *Psycho* is based on a commercial model kitset of the infamous house in Alfred Hitchcock's film *Psycho*. As the miniaturisation effect inevitably triggers memories of childhood's view of the world, Hout likes the way this process is compounded with the model of the *Psycho* house in which a murderously dysfunctional Oedipal drama was played out between mother and son. Through the top storey window of van Hout's model a video can be seen of an oddly scaled figure of the artist moving about inside the house with a knife. Van Hout has said he has an abiding interest in the stock landscape, monster and house imagery of the gothic genre in film and literature that deal with hidden, repressed and unresolved feelings coming to the surface of the normal world. For a plastic kitset novelty item on a cardboard box, it's a big load to bear.

Your graduation from innocence to experience occurs when the feverish business of imagining begins, and for me, this raid on a forbidden knowledge will always be associated with Psycho. During my first under-age exposure to the film, the images that thrilled me were those of trespass and guilty surveillance. This, surely, was why the cinema existed: to depict what you were not supposed to be looking at. ...I may not have understood all I saw but I knew that taboos were being breached.

PETER CONRAD
The Hitchcock Murders





Photos: courtesy Sarah Cottier Gallery, Sydney

Ricky Swallow

Born in San Remo, Australia, 1974. Lives in Melbourne



Photo: courtesy Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney



John Nixon

Born in Sydney, 1949. Lives in Sydney

These four paintings are from John Nixon's *EPW: Orange* series which is a subset of his *Experimental Painting Workshop* project begun in the late 1970s. Nixon's art is algebraic in its reliance on abstract tokens to investigate the relational properties of paintings and ideas; and arithmetical in its adding, combining and recombining of discrete elements. Every painting or series of works is formed from a set of clearly identifiable component parts - support, medium, format, texture, colour, title, etc. Arrayed here in a row, which affirms the set-like logic of the works' evolution, Nixon's iconic abstractions point to the typological basis of their production as well as to the graphic and chromatic punch of their heraldic clarity.

six / seven



Ricky Swallow has made several groups of work in which miniaturised comic and sci-fi dramas are set up on old-fashioned portable record players. *Multistylus Console (Functional Prototype)* is part of another project dubbed *Multistylus Programme* which comprises a 1 to 1 scale version of a dj's turntable deck and a demonstration video of the deck in action. As the title suggests the materials and schematic assembly of Swallow's *Console* from a plywood box, polystyrene cups, and sewing needles, immediately transforms the original dj equipment into something prototypical and metaphorical. It is beautiful as a slightly absurd object and as an idea. Swallow's turntabilism declares the 'aesthetic' to be a performative experience; an act of transformative imagination; a temporal reality rather than a category definition.

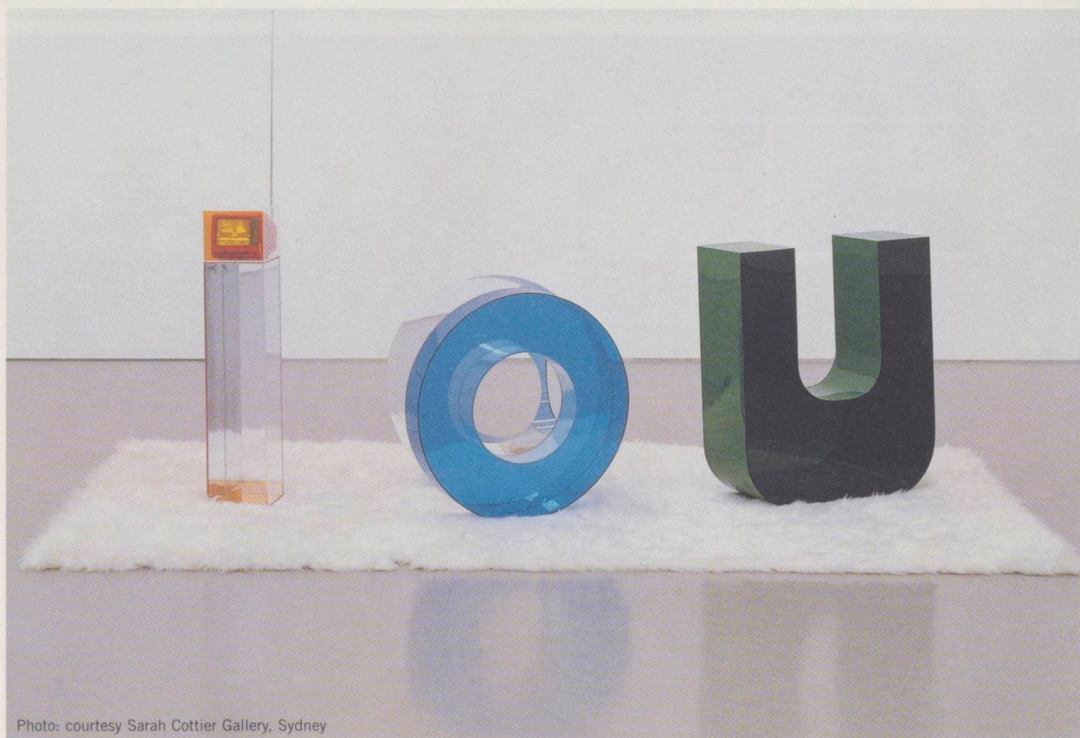
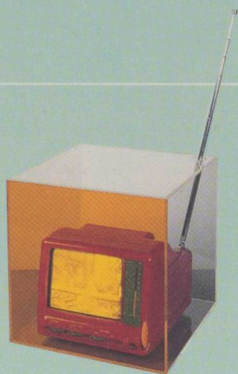
Multistylus Programme 1999 is reminiscent of the common mobile disco hire package (dj included) magnified and condensed. Open to all that are prepared to be fascinated by the high pitched sound emitted from the foam cups attached to the record arms. These amplifiers drive out a sound that makes me think of a million marching insects. An amazing macrocosm is created, an imaginary world where every Saturday night a dance party around the globe happens all at once. These elements are variable and, dependent on the obscurity of the coloured vinyl, often made available from the 'worn out' section of a dubious local dj's collection.

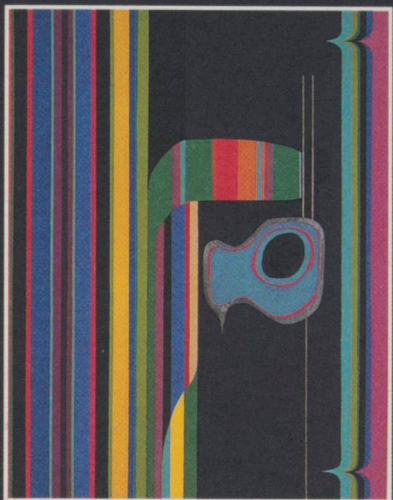
DAVID JOLLY
"It's slower than it is fast"

Mikala Dwyer

Born in Sydney, 1959. Lives in Sydney

I.O.U. a good time. This must be one of the promises made by Mikala Dwyer's designer-chic party furniture. The glossy, clear and coloured perspex letters sitting on a white flokati rug look like a fashion boutique window display in Italy or Sweden. Dwyer's sculptural promissory note seems so animated, so waiting for us, sexily on its fluffy rug. The letters reflect us, allow us to see through them, they colour our view of things inside and behind them, and their little pink TV tunes into local channels. *I.O.U.* has a slinky materiality to it, though the work is less polymorphous in its form language, less dominated by perversely arbitrary detailing than much of Dwyer's signature installation work. Nevertheless, it still leaves us happily puzzled as to who owes what to who. Dwyer's ambiguous declaration may be referring to money, sensuality or aesthetic pleasure or, more likely, acknowledging the intimate links between all three and their continual deferral in a world of cosmetic fantasy.





Dale Frank

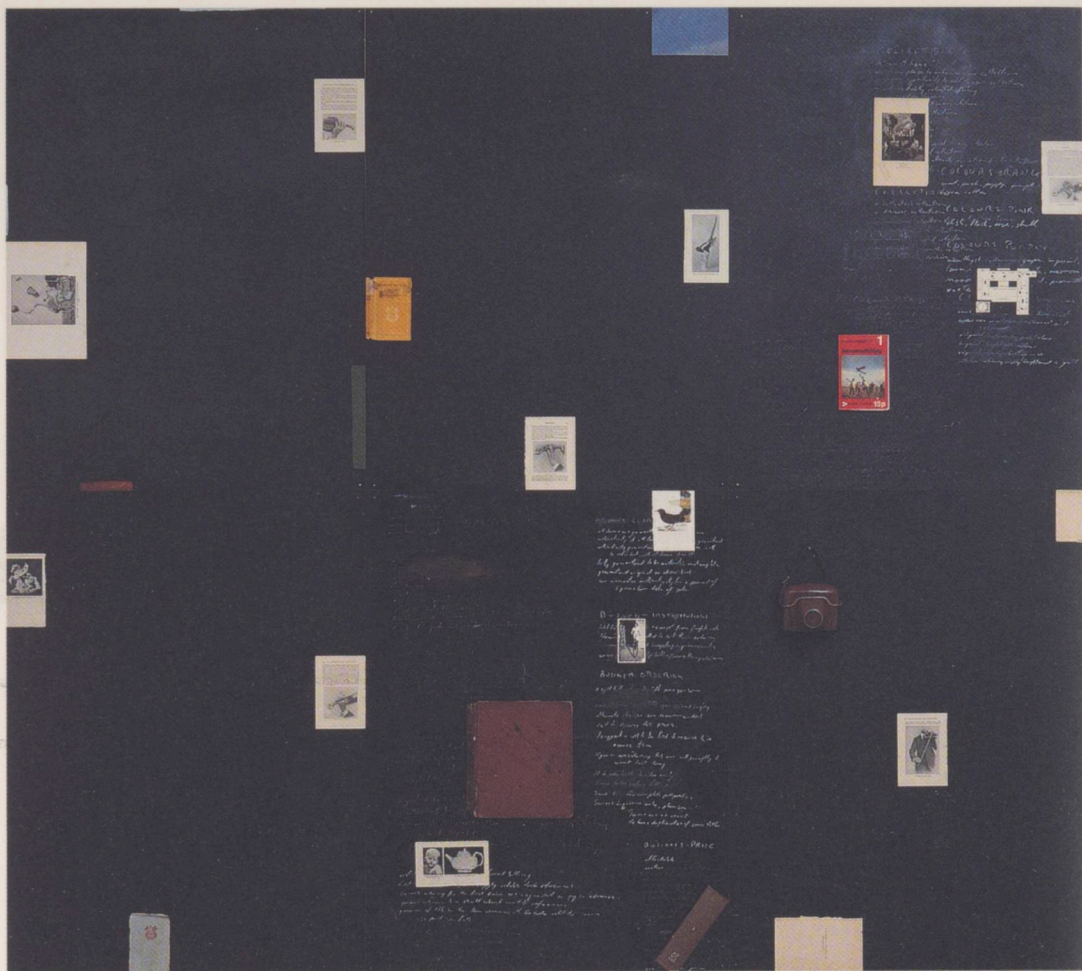
Born in Singleton, Australia, 1959. Lives in Queensland

Kitschy turgid sublime meets manic exuberance with roccoco cartoon embellishments. Hypnotic, optical streamlined striping, immiscible pourings of sci-fi chromatics. Perhaps the best critical language for the restless hyperreality of Dale Frank's art would be an endless stream of exaggerated, overreaching phraseology striving to mix and match with Frank's nifty night-club intensities of material and stylistic histrionics. Such a criticism would follow the roller coaster ups and downs of some serious bathos, yet leave you with a floating sense of elegance, polish and delighted incomprehension. Or, one could take courage from what the artist himself once said:

It is in the hole representation of the hole in this - painting of art and its shadows cast, that the words, talk and theories of the future will come to welcome his work.

"Trusting in the pipe-dream"

eight / nine



Patrick Pound is a recidivist collector who trades in the comprehensive futility of every storage and retrieval system he employs to sort the world into something manageable. *Systematic, towards the theory of everything* appends to its blackboard-like grid of panels a book of model aircraft plans; a floor plan of the Hermitage Museum; a page from a porcelain manual; an instruction manual on

playing the violin; an old-fashioned leather camera case, assorted photos and other fragments of books. Amidst this rag-picker's bibliomaniacal detritus, the scrivening annotations of the obsessive diarist records a nomenclature for the sale of old books. The spaces in between are filled with fumbling chalky smears and erasures; the penitenti of a toiling archivist.



Yuk King Tan

ten / eleven

Born in Townsville, Australia, 1971. Lives in Auckland

The new sensibility engaged the physicality of the observer, challenging her ability to take in space, more space, a mobilized space.

GIULIANA BRUNO "Haptic Journeys"

One of the key things which has defined experience in the modern world has been a continual appetite for new ways of exploring and inhabiting space. From microscopy to moon landings, from ocean floor cartography to sky diving and bungee jumping - the launch into space, whether ascending or descending, stratospheric, molecular or psychic, has been about the exhilaration of crossing a threshold and a grasp at transcendence. A potted history might include: Mongolfier's democratic balloon flight; Nadar's balloon photography of Paris; Malevich's aerial pictures of the non-objective world; Colin McCahon's *Jump* paintings; secret service satellite dish digital photography in the film *Enemy of the State*; and Yuk King Tan's recent series of New Zealand solo and accompanied parachute jumps recorded through photographs and video.

Séraphine Pick

Born in Kawakawa, 1964. Lives in Dunedin



Séraphine Pick's illustrated TV is a whimsical and melancholy object. As with most of Pick's art it looks like the work of a child-woman - of an artist who hovers between juvenile seer and world weary adult. Painting and drawing on the TV to 'make it work', Pick enacts the child's dawning realisation that the world doesn't talk back to us as it does in books and make believe. Pick's careful and obsessive decoration of the TV, however, also credits art and aesthetic transformation with the continuance of the child's optimism. The TV as the magic box of image generation becomes the exact spot where loss becomes a new type of gain, where childish dreams are augmented as creative individuation.

Works in the Exhibition

JIM SPEERS

Racing Times 2000
mirror and enamel
450 x 450 x 95

The Cup 2000

vinyl, acrylic and
fluorescent light
1100 x 2000 x 220
[not illustrated]

BILL CULBERT

Plain of Jars 1996
jars, lightbulbs and
fittings, wood table
overall 870 x 2000 x 2000

MICHAEL PAREKOWHAI

Elmer Keith 2000 [detail]
colour photograph
1070 x 1265

RONNIE VAN HOUT

Psycho 1999 [detail]
mixed media
variable dimensions

JOHN NIXON

Orange Monochrome 1999
enamel on masonite
560 x 560

Orange Monochrome
(for Peter Halley) 1993
perspex on wood
305 x 305

Orange Monochrome with
White 1997
enamel and acrylic
on canvasboard
225 x 185

Orange Monochrome 1999
enamel on customwood
445 x 380

Orange Monochrome 1999
enamel on baked enamel
425 x 385
[not illustrated]

RICKY SWALLOW

The Multistylus Programme
1999
mixed media
variable dimensions

MIKALA DWYER

I.O.U 1998
perspex, Flokati, TV
variable dimensions

DALE FRANK

An Arse In The Dark Universe
Under The Flannelette Sheets
2001
acrylic on canvas
2600 x 2000

- <http://www.free-nude-male-celebs.com/johnnydepp/johnnydepp003.html> 2001
acrylic and varnish on canvas
2000 x 2000
[not illustrated]

PATRICK POUND

Systematic, Towards the
Theory of Everything 1999
mixed media on board
2400 x 2700 x 90

YUK KING TAN

Closer - Mercer 2001
[selected images]
laminated colour photographs
on perspex
2000 x 1650

Great Expectations 2001
video
[not illustrated]

SÉRAPHINE PICK

Grey Slacks 2000 [detail]
oil on enamel on TV, on stool
variable dimensions

The Chartwell Collection is a very significant collection of contemporary New Zealand and Australian art. It is a New Zealand-based collection, administered by the Chartwell Trust, and is on long-term loan to the Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki.

The Chartwell Collection is a comprehensive collection of works that reflect the history and changing nature of art and art practice in New Zealand and Australia in the late 20th Century. Given this cross-Tasman focus, the Collection is rich in opportunities for examining the similarities and differences between these geographically close cultures. Two major exhibitions have been curated from the Chartwell Collection that explore this topic: *Cross Currents* at the Waikato Museum of Art and History in 1991, and the national touring exhibition *Home and Away* at the Auckland Art Gallery in 1999.

Initiated by founding trustee Rob Gardiner, the first purchase for the Collection was made in 1974. The Collection continues to grow and now includes over 600 works of art. The Chartwell Collection is distinctive as a major collection that was always intended for public use. It's placement on long-term loan to a public art institution ensures that a wide audience has access to it through regular exhibitions, publications, and the temporary loan of works to other public art galleries.

twelve /



Published on the occasion of the exhibition
Multistylus Programme - Recent Chartwell Acquisitions 16 June - 16 August 2001
Exhibition Curator: Allan Smith
Chartwell Registrar: Andrea Dornauf
Photography: Jennifer French, John McIver (unless otherwise stated)
Publication Design: www.inhousedesign.co.nz

ISBN 0-86463-242-8

