

CLAUDIA POND EYLEY

[b.1946 Aotearoa New Zealand]

Earth Shield 1984

Acrylic and photo silkscreen in collage on canvas

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Purchased 1987 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society.

Claudia Pond Eyley began developing her *Shield* paintings in 1983, after re-evaluating the direction of her practice. Lived experience and female heritage had emerged as salient concerns. She moved away from a vibrant colour palette to construct web-like grids in darker tones, with compartments to house disparate imagery. She drew upon her domestic surroundings, her immediate and distant family, well known women artists, and elements associated with fertility (the cowrie shell and the moon for example). Like an 'incantation', as Christina Barton put it, the words *earth, blood, fire, stone* are often repeated within sections of her 'shield' compositions.¹ Each work is a web of associations that celebrate a connection between women and herstory, affirming 'the elemental, biological, intellectual and spiritual strengths of women alongside the power of earth and nature.'²

In *Earth Shield* (1984) several renditions of the cowrie shell frame the grid. The top sections of the grid contain a drawing of a maze that blurs the boundary between pre-history and children's art, a generational family portrait, a conch shell, and a facsimile model of the birthing process. In the lower sections of the painting sit the artist's palm, a butterfly, and a Paleolithic goddess figure, the Venus of Laussel.³ In this work, the Venus forms part of a network of associations, marking Eyley's overarching concern with the deep 'continuity of human life'.⁴

1. Christina Barton, 'Claudia Pond Eyley: A Question of Representation', *Art New Zealand* 36, 48.

2. Aleya Giles Peterson, 'Myth, Magic and Mystery: Recent Work by Claudia Pond Eyley', *Art New Zealand* 74, 64.

3. The Venus of Laussel or the 'La Femme à la corne' ('Woman with a Horn'), was discovered in 1911 in a limestone block in Laussel cave, Dordogne, France. The 46 cm Venus bas-relief is dated in conjunction with Upper Paleolithic sites across Europe which makes it approximately 20,000 years old. One hand of the Venus of Laussel rests on a (possible pregnant) belly, and the other holds a crescent form with 13 cuts. For a general introduction see K. Kris Hirst, 'Venus of Laussel: 20,000 Year Old Goddess', ThoughtCo, Aug. 27, 2020, thoughtco.com/laussel-venus-upper-paleolithic-goddess-173069

4. See Claudia Pond Eyley: <http://www.claudiapondeyley.com/shields.htm>

MARTÉ SZIRMAY

[b.1946 Aotearoa New Zealand]

Series B (10) 1984

Cast polyester resin and marble dust

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Purchased 1981 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society.

Marté Szirmay's *Series B (10)* (1981) works on a continuum between nature and the human body. Szirmay has long maintained an interest in archetypal forms that link conceptual and spiritual concerns: creativity, life cycles, spiral forms, shell forms, and spiritual and physical growth have been continual themes in her practice, along with an environmental consciousness.

The thought that I have been working with ever since I really decided to do sculpture, has been... in some way to concentrate, to focus in on, to understand what I personally call the earth spirit.¹

Rather than defining her work as abstract sculpture, Szirmay once described her aesthetic as 'a summary of an essence'². Her formative influences included the Russian Constructivists' dynamic view of the universe and a subsequent link with early 20th century physics. She was inspired by Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth, and the philosophy of Constantin Brâncuși (how artworks have the capacity to heal and nourish). Szirmay has also maintained an interest in Buddhist philosophy. While not directly associated with second-wave feminisms, she was contemporaneous with the women's art movement and her references to the feminine principle sometimes drew her into this context.

Series B (10) belongs to a series shown in the exhibition *Sculpture 81* at the Hocken Library Gallery in 1981. Her use of cast-polyester marble was influenced by its physical and malleable possibilities and its symbolic significance. Szirmay states: 'I wanted earth in there, and the closest I could get was stone. I wanted water, and the closest I could get to that was the liquid – so I ended up with the stone particles in liquid resin.'³

1. From Auckland Education Department cassette tape of talk given by Marté Szirmay to the New Zealand Society of Sculptors, Painters and Associates (NZSSPA), 1983. Barbara Maré, 'Marté Szirmay: Paying Homage to the Organic', *Woman's Art Journal*, Autumn, 1989, Vol. 10, No. 2 (Autumn, 1989-Winter, 1990), 19-22, 21.

2. NZSSPA talk, in Maré, 'Marté Szirmay: Paying Homage to the Organic', 20.

3. Szirmay in conversation with Priscilla Pitts, 'Marté Szirmay: An Interview', *Art New Zealand* 39, 33.

CHRISTINE WEBSTER

[b.1958 Aotearoa New Zealand]

Post-Crucifixion 1988

Cibachrome

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Purchased 1991 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society.

Christine Webster's *Post-Crucifixion* (1988) originally formed part of her *New Myths* series. The work opens up a range of interpretations through the juxtaposition of image and text. Reinhold Misselbeck writes of this series:

Christine Webster's large-format works deal with myths and traditions that have defined the image of women and the relationship of the sexes throughout history. By setting picture and word ambiguously opposite each other, she alludes to handed-down meanings while at the same time questioning them in order to suggest new meanings.¹

Dressed in her birthday suit, the woman in the work holds a candle-lit cake. Can she be named? In the biblical text, the first person to visit Christ's tomb post-crucifixion, was Mary Magdalene, the archetypal repentant woman. Mary Magdalene has been depicted across the centuries as the reformed prostitute, the mystic, the feminist icon, and more recently revived as the matriarch of Christ's lineage (think Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code*).

Meaning disrupts traditional narratives in this work as the nude body also comes under theoretical consideration at a semiotic / symbolic conjunction. Webster's work has often been interpreted through the lens of French feminist theory of the 1980s and 1990s, that saw the convergence of semiotic theory and psychoanalysis. This work shifts the markers of the definition of the sacred in relation to the body – where ultimately meaning is left up to the viewer.

1. Reinhold Misselbeck, 'Christine Webster' in *20th Century Photography*, Museum Ludwig Cologne (Koln: Taschen, 2005), 720.

MARGARET DAWSON

[b.1950 Aotearoa New Zealand]

Kea. *Nestor notabilis* 1990

C type print mounted and laminated on hessian

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Purchased 1991 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society.

Margaret Dawson's *Kea. Nestor notabilis* (1990) is fashioned after Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper* (1495-1498). It also recalls Mary Beth Edelson's iconic *Some Living American Women Artists/Last Supper* (1972). Like Edelson, Dawson's work seems to ask Linda Nochlin's question: why have there been no great women artists?¹ In the work, Dawson takes on the role of Christ in research mode, describing herself as 'the very honourable Doctor Dawson and training Doctors searching for traces of feminism in turn of the century NZ literature.'²

Unlike Edelson's photomontage of artists as disciples – with Georgia O'Keeffe in the place of Christ – the figures in *Kea. Nestor notabilis* are masked, bird-like, and dressed in white lab coats. Within a theatrical painterly backdrop sits an allusive image of the extinct Moa. Primarily concerned with reappraising representational codes of the feminine, Dawson works in the postmodern register, drawing on humour and pastiche. Here she seems to playfully reiterate Nochlin's interrogation of the ideological structures of the arts and the visibility of historical women artists or writers.

1. See Linda Nochlin's 1971 essay of the same name, which was formative for feminist art history and theory.

2. Printed in *Antic* no. 7, June 1990. In this edition, *Kea. Nestor notabilis* (1990) sits alongside reproductions of Leonardo Da Vinci's *The Last Supper* engraved by R. Morghen after a drawing by Matteini, and the oil painting *The Meeting of the Artist and the Wounded Chief Hongi, at the Bay of Islands, November 1827* (c.1832) by Augustus Earle.

KURA TE WARU REWIRI

[b.1950 Ngāti Kahu, Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Kauwhata, Ngāti Rangī, Aotearoa New Zealand]

Untitled 1991

Acrylic on plywood

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Purchased 1991 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society.

Kura Te Waru Rewiri's *Untitled* (1991) is an example of her theoretical practice that redefines and aligns abstraction with the concept of wāhi ngaro (unseen or lost spaces).¹ In her work, Māori knowledge systems inform the shape and meaning of her visual explorations: 'Objects, colour and form become imbued with Māori spiritual and cultural encoding that requires the viewer to decipher elements of a visual language that is specifically centred in an appreciation of Māori knowledge systems.'² In this way, Te Waru Rewiri's paintings navigate sacred spaces (tapu), and whenua is central: 'whenua is the fundamental basis for her journey as a painter [and] in all her work she represents the land below the surface where the memory is stored and the placenta is buried.'³

Te Waru Rewiri's concept of wāhi ngaro has informed her abstraction since the 1980s when she began to draw more directly upon te ao Māori. For her, wairuatanga (spirituality) became important.

I used to feel the earth, the mud, the sand, the stones, the water, the sea, the sun, those sorts of things and get lost in the silence of the tactile being of those elements. Much of my experiences in life has made me feel and reflect on the potential of wairua, mauri ora, kaitiakitanga in Te Kore, Te Po and Te Waahi Ngaro.⁴

Te Waru Rewiri's *Untitled* imparts a sense of the sacred through colour and symbolic form. The sacred colour red (whero; kura) forms a ground upon which is placed an arc of life. In the black above a bordering slice of white light, sits a double spiral koru embossed upon the surface, carrying the meaning of growth, new life, and deep connection with whenua.

Untitled can be understood as deeply cosmological: the world of light Te Ao Mārama emerging from Te Kore (the realm of becoming) and Te Pō (the realm of night and darkness) with a wash of life.

1. Nigel Borell, *Kura Te Waru Rewiri Ngā Momo Whakaaro in Five Maori Painters* (Auckland: Auckland Art Gallery, 2014), 65. 'Wāhi ngaro combines two words – wāhi (noun), meaning place, location, or an allocation; and ngaro (verb), to be hidden, out of sight, or absent (Moorfield, 2011). Wāhi ngaro then may mean 'lost place', referring to a place that is unseen and unknown. For this reason it may be interpreted as a place of supernatural and spiritual mystique; a 'world of gods and spirits, divine intervention, a place out of sight' (Moorfield, 2011). Belinda Borell and Kura Te Waru Rewiri et al., 'Beyond the veil: Kaupapa Māori gaze on the non-Māori subject', *Journal of Sociology, Special Issue - Indigenous Sociology: Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives*, Volume: 56 issue: 2 (197-212) <https://doi.org/10.1177/1440783319893503> Citations include J. C. Moorfield, Te aka: Maori-English, English-Maori dictionary and Index, new expanded edn (Auckland: Pearson, 2011) in Ibid.

2. Nigel Borell and Mangere Arts Centre (eds) *Kura: Story of a Maori Woman Artist* (Auckland: Mangere Arts Centre, 2011), 20 in Borell et al., 'Beyond the veil'.

3. See Camilla Highfield, *Kura Te Waru Rewiri: A Maori Woman Artist* (Wellington: Gilt Edge Publishing, 1999), 15. [Whenua, the word for land, is the same word for placenta. Meaning derives from Papatūānuku (mother earth) who gave birth to all life.]

4. Kura Te Waru Rewiri in Huhana Smith, 'Kura Te Waru Rewiri' in *New Zealand Art at Te Papa*, ed. Mark Stocker (Te Papa Press, 2018), 239. Retrieved from <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/36517>

RACHAEL RAKENA

[b.1969 Ngāi Tahu, Ngā Puhi, Aotearoa New Zealand]

Iwidotnz 008 2003

Digital photograph on aluminium

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Given 2010 anonymously.

Rachael Rakena's *Iwidotnz 008* (2003) connects to the series *Our Water – Our Space* (2003) and *Rerehiko* (2003). The title *Iwidotnz 008* refers to the email platform that the Kāi Tahu community, Te Whānau o Kāi Tahu ki Araiteuru (KTW), employed as conduit for communication.¹ Rakena became interested in 'thinking about the idea of a digital whare' and the processes of collective decision making in that space.² Occupying a digital space had a sense of fluidity about it, without a fixed and physical place to stand. Her references to water contained an analogous link to fluid identities.³

Around this time Rakena was developing the notion of Toi Rerehiko, 'as Māori-based practice and discipline' that enfolded sensibilities of fluid space, immersion, movement, and the idea of a continuum. (The word rerehiko is word play on rorohiko, for the word computer, which translates as 'electric brain' from te reo Māori).

A cosmological dimension can be interpreted in Rakena's work, with one example being a reference to 'the journey back to Hawaiki through the water.'⁴ Johnathan Mane-Wheoki, writing on her practice, recalls an ancient whakataukī or proverb:

E taku pōtiki, kua puta mai rā koe i te toi i Hawaiki.

My child, you are born from the source, which is at Hawaiki.⁵

Iwidotnz 008 embodies a community of voices. It contains three repeated lines of the email address associated with the Kāi Tahu Whānau. The text dissolves in places, absorbing or being absorbed by water. A single immersed figure draws together close associations of connectedness and identity. Her image is captured in a mid-flight dive beneath the surface, ripples of which are seen on the vertical axis of the work, altering and expanding the viewer's perception of the underwater space and alluding, perhaps, to the individual's journey to a collective source.

1. The Kāi Tahu Whānau was a University of Otago student and community group based in Māori Studies, of which Rakena was a founding member. The Kāi Tahu Whānau's form of social media was email based and made use of the cc. (carbon copy) function to keep everyone in the loop.

2. Rachael Rakena in conversation with Bridget Reweti, *Uiuinga #3: a conversation with Rachael Rakena*. Viewed at <https://www.circuit.org.nz/blog/uiuinga-3-a-conversation-with-rachael-rakena> (08/10/2020).

3. Rakena: 'By then I wanted to push the idea of Māori identity being solely founded on your tūrangā on where you stand on the land. Actually, it's also where you float in the water. And as soon as you take us to water, we start talking about our migration narratives, our creation narratives, you know, that's a really informed site, our food gathering places. An acknowledgement of our whakapapa. And that we still live in a big ocean.' Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Cited in Jonathan Mane-Wheoki, 'WAKAS ON THE GRAND CANAL!' CONTEMPORARY NEW ZEALAND MĀORI ARTISTS IN VENICE', in *ANIWANIWA Brett Graham and Rachael Rakena Aotearoa New Zealand*, 7, [5-11]. Published on the occasion of the 52nd International Art Exhibition La Biennale di Venezia, 2007. Curators: Alice Hutchison / Milovan Farronato, Vifarini, Milan / Camilla Seibezzi, Plug Non-Profit, Venice.

ROBYN KAHUKIWA

[b.1938 Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Hau, Ngāti Konohi, Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti
Aotearoa New Zealand]

Te Hā 1999

Oil on board

Purchased with assistance from the Willi Fels Memorial Trust of \$750
and Hocken Library Endowment Funds, Hocken Collections, Uare
Taoka o Hākena, University of Otago, 99/19.

Breathe

*in all my efforts I am locked in the embrace
of Hineteiwaiwa*

Breathe

*an unsullied moon
wraps itself around us.¹*

Robyn Kahukiwa's *Te Hā* (c.1999) is from her *Oriori* (lullaby) series of works that were reproduced in book form with accompanying text by poet Roma Potiki (1958-). *Oriori* chronicles the birth of a child, from conception to birth, drawing upon traditional waiata and narratives associated with the different stages of development and becoming. *Te Hā* 'refers to the mother's breath' in the process of giving birth, as well as the baby's 'first breath in the world of light.'² The figure surrounding the woman is the ancestor and atua Hineteiwaiwa.

Hineteiwaiwa is 'regarded as the exemplary figure of a wife and mother.'³ This atua, or deity, is associated with the domain of women; child birth (prominently featuring in traditional karakia); and the house of weaving (Te Whare Pora) as an art form that is traditionally associated with women's work. She is also sometimes referred to as Hina – the female personification of the moon (Te Marama). In *Te Hā*, Hineteiwaiwa, is framed by the moon in three cycles – full, waxing and waning.

Kahukiwa is renowned for her vibrant and powerful paintings of mana wahine. The *Oriori* series incorporates female ancestral figures from Māori mythology that link with the process of human life and reproduction. *Oriori* also enfolds the desire to share and teach through poetry and imagery, imparting treasured knowledge for generations of young people.

1. Roma Potiki in Robyn Kahukiwa (Paintings) and Roma Potiki (Poems), *Oriori: A Maori Child is Born – From Conception to Birth* (Tandem Press, 1999), 56.

2. *Ibid.*, 92.

3. Māori Dictionary: Hineteiwaiwa <https://maoridictionary.co.nz/search?idiom=&phrase=&proverb=&loan=&histLoanWords=&keywords=iwaiwa>

ALICIA FRANKOVICH

[b.1980 Aotearoa New Zealand]

Rapture 2010

Neon, cord, plugs, t-shirt and string

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Purchased 2010 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society.

Alicia Frankovich's *Rapture* (2010) was first shown in *Effigies* (2010) at the Dunedin Public Art Gallery, as part of the Gallery's Visiting Artist's Programme.

Rapture is a non-literal representation of the body that extends interpretation beyond form. Through a process of erasure or omission, Frankovich has stripped representation of the body back to its bare bones. Bone has become light, and flesh is the stretch of a white t-shirt turned inside-out. *Rapture's* vaulting form is ethereal in its physical, aesthetic, and conceptual reading – alluding also perhaps to mystical or extreme emotional experience.

This meeting point between arching light and a basic piece of clothing creates a confluence of the sacred and profane. The elements of the sculpture are transfigured and illuminated, while also carrying interpretive traces of the body's residue, skin or sweat. Frankovich trained as a gymnast in her childhood, which became integrated with the formal language of her earlier art practice. This work carries something of that vocabulary, encapsulating a 'human presence...energy...aliveness...'¹ as it dances in space.

1. See Charmian Smith, 'Sculpture of the mind', *Otago Daily Times* Thursday 3 June 2010. Viewed at <https://www.odt.co.nz/entertainment/arts/sculpture-mind>

SRIWHANA SPONG

[b.1979 Aotearoa New Zealand]

a hook but no fish 2017; 2020

Digitalized 16 mm film and HD video: 24 min 50 sec.

Sound design Frances Duncan

Courtesy the artist and Michael Lett, Auckland.

Sriwhana Spong's *a hook but no fish* (2017; 2020) is a five-part meditation on language and the body and its relationship to place, through the lens of the 12th Century mystic Hildegard of Bingen. The film opens on the present-day grounds of Disibodenberg, a convent in Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany, where Hildegard was first interned and where she wrote her *Lingua Ignota* (unknown language).¹

With a focus on Hildegard's unknown language, *a hook but no fish* evokes an equivalence between external and internal landscapes – where the personal and political intertwine. Spong draws on Hildegard's language to inform the content. *Zamzia* (land: of one's own, or owned; and basement) from the *Lingua Ignota*, corresponds to Hildegard's convent, her own piece of literal and figurative real-estate within a wider patriarchal orthodoxy. This idea of a land of one's own recalls the politics of writer Virginia Woolf, who called for both a literal and figurative 'room of one's own' in which to work and find agency as a professional writer or artist.

In Hildegard's world, the word *viriditas* is for 'greenness' – for God, for woman, for the natural world and creative life.² The *Lingua Ignota* is a language that encompasses the notion of *viriditas*, threading through Spong's film: 'Is this a prophetic language? A language for an arid land.' For the artist, the word *Ariditas* (Latin for dryness, drought, scanty food) frames the conclusion to the film, reading as a kind of epilogue on the state of our natural world as herons pick at rubbish in a London back alley, looking for fish.

a hook but no fish threads a thematic line that submerges the viewer into herstory and raises questions for the present moment in turn: Spong calls forth the presence of Hildegard, enfolds the idea of body sovereignty and personal reclamation, and concludes with the consideration of Hildegard's writing for a contemporary situation. In this work, Hildegard is someone to think along with rather than historically analyse. In Spong's words, she 'wanted to speculate on the *Lingua Ignota* and use it to think about the relationship of the body to its environment and how renaming and thus re-remembering might help us write new futures.'³

1. The title of the film *a hook but no fish* directly relates to the mystique of Hildegard's linguistics, as apparently, she had invented a word for fishhook, but not one for fish.

2. Sarah L. Higley summarises the word as a metaphor 'with which [Hildegard] describes not only God's natural world, but all that is spiritually creative and filled with sap, the *sudor* of divine life, as opposed to the aridity of human sin'. Sarah L. Higley, *Hildegard of Bingen's Unknown Language: An Edition, Translation, and Discussion* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 3.

3. Spong in conversation with Louise Lever 'Feminist Hieroglyphics: I write from my stomach', *Contemporary Hum*, 2018. Viewed at <https://www.contemporaryhum.com/sriwhana-spong-conversation>

SHIGEYUKI KIHARA

[b.1975 Samoa]

Roman Catholic Church, Apia 2013

C type print

Purchased 2013 with Hocken Library Endowment Funds, Hocken Collections, Uare Taoka o Hākena, University of Otago, V2013-029-001

GUIDOCCIO COZZARELLI

[1450-1516 Italy (Siena)]

Dance of Salome 2013

Oil on panel

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Purchased 1967 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society.

Shigeyuki (Yuki) Kihara's *Roman Catholic Church, Apia* (2013) is a work of mourning and critique. The artist stands as Salome (for Kihara, a biblical figure whose dancing altered the course of politics). Kihara is an Aotearoa New Zealand artist of Samoan and Japanese descent. She is Fa'afafine, 'a transgender person of the Pacific experience' or third-gender, that has a long held a place in Samoan society. The Victorian mourning dress worn by Salome/Kihara comes to represent colonial oppression and the bondage of the body on both personal and collective levels. This work acknowledges the colonial history of Samoa in connection with Christianity and both the fraught histories of oppression and the artist's cherished heritage. *Roman Catholic Church, Apia* also directly depicts the impact of climate change upon the land as she stands in the wake of cyclone Evan in 2012.

To accompany Kihara's work is Guidoccio Cozzarelli's (1450-1516) *Dance of Salome* – a depiction of the biblical narrative referred to by Kihara. In the biblical text the unnamed Salome charms King Herod with a dance and is offered an oath to receive anything she asked for, 'even half of [the] kingdom.' Salome goes to her mother for advice and is told to request the death of John the Baptist with his head on a platter.

What does this painting tell us of Cozzarelli's interpretation of the text? The artist does not directly depict Salome's dance, but seems to summarise the plot. Caught in the gaze of the court's black dog, Herod is distraught. To his left, Salome's mother makes a triumphant gesture. Salome smiles. Is Salome an archetypal *femme fatale* or an innocent victim in a devious plot?

Kihara seems to take Salome out of these textual bounds. The artist makes Salome her own elegant and active witness to the present moment – 'a young ancient who stands at the interstices of the past, present and future.'¹

1. N. Seja, 'The Past is a Foreign Climate: Shigeyuki Kihara Meets the Anthropocene', *Art Monthly Australia* 285, 28-32. See <https://hdl.handle.net/10652/4044>

KUSHANA BUSH

[b.1983 Aotearoa New Zealand]

The Assembly 2011

Gouache on paper

Purchased from Brett McDowell Gallery Dunedin, 2012, with Hocken Library Endowment Funds, Hocken Collections, Uare Taoka o Hākena, University of Otago, 2012/03.

Kushana Bush's *The Assembly* (2011) depicts devotion. A diverse group gather around a bust in quiet contemplation or fervent adoration. One of the characters ceremoniously carries a white cloth, in the process of covering or having just uncovered a hallowed object.

The Assembly originally formed part of the exhibition *All Things to All Men* (2012), a title derived from 1 Corinthians 9:22. A defining sensibility of this exhibition was an anthropological and syncretic enquiry into notions of ritual. In these works, the daily tasks and the intimate or collective sensibilities and constructed activities that make up societies, are explored in tight figurative arrangements. Pockets of communities, multicultural, diverse, and ranging in size, play out shared experiences.

All Things to All Men was partly informed by the artist's visit to Giotto's Scrovegni Chapel (1303-1305) in Padua. We can also see the influence of Stanley Spencer (with an eye for his religious transpositions within the realm of the everyday), as well as Persian miniature painting and Japanese ukiyo-e.

In the context of IN HER IMAGE, this work speaks to the idea of religious devotion in art. Members of this assembly sit or stand in various states of rapture. *The Assembly* draws forth a religious sensibility of the kind that has encompassed centuries of devotion to the Madonna. The representation of the bust in this work resembles a woman – self-reflexively alluding to European histories of women's representation in art.

BENVENUTO TISI called GAROFALO

[1481-1559 Italy]

Madonna and Child Enthroned c.post 1513

Oil on wood

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Bequeathed 1967 by Mrs Doris Monheimer.

.....
Garofalo's *Madonna and Child Enthroned* (c. post 1513) is representative of Italian Renaissance symbolism and convention. The work oozes sentimentality and pathos designed to foster devotion. With careful symmetry, the painting follows established iconographies. The Madonna and Christ child share a golden apple representing redemption, harking back to Eve's apple as a symbol of original sin. Putti (cherubs) – a particular innovation of the Renaissance – serve to anchor the image to the divine realm.

Madonna and Child Enthroned reveals something of the cultural and political context of its time. Garofalo was predominantly based in the Province of Ferrara, at one point described as the 'Ferrarese Raphael'. Integral to the composition are two soldier figures, arguably demonstrating a relationship between church and state: the men carry military standards that also serve to frame and protect the Madonna, with symmetrical billowing drapery being a defining feature.¹

Garofalo collaborated with the artist Dosso Dossi on a large polyptych in circa 1513, commissioned by Antonio Costabili (c. 1450-1527; the chief magistrate of the Dodici Savi of Ferrara) for the high altar of Sant'Andrea in Ferrara.² The polyptych has a strong relationship with this Dunedin Public Art Gallery work: Garofalo's soldier is almost identical to the design and pose of Dossi's St George in the polyptych, down to the angle and colour of the red standard flag. Given the seemingly original execution of the design and the fact that the composition of St George was revised during production, one might then assume that Garofalo's *Madonna and Child Enthroned* is likely dated after the polyptych was completed.³

Could Garofalo's Madonna echo the Costabili polyptych in relation to the civic and historical context of Ferrara's connection to the Cambrai Wars (1508-1516)?⁴ Regardless of its mysteries, the composition marks a sacred space for devotion or adoration: to give thanks for the Madonna's protection and intercession on one's behalf.

.....
1. Specific defining elements (a dead dragon for example), are absent from the image. St. George is co-patron of Ferrara, and St. Michael, protector of the castle of the House of Este, the ruling family of the Duchy of Ferrara at the time, so there is room to consider Garofalo's figures as soldier saints.

2. Now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale of Ferrara.

3. Infrared photography reveals a change in compositional design, with a clear shift in the placement of the figure's face. Scholars also argue that the two side panels produced by Dossi, were made at a later date to 1514, even as payment records indicate that they worked closely together. See Giancarlo Fiorenza, Dosso Dossi, 'Garofalo, and the Costabili Polyptych: Imaging Spiritual Authority', *The Art Bulletin*, 82:2, 252-279. See also Jadranka Bentini 'Dosso's Work in the Galleria Estense, Modena, and the Pinacoteca Nazionale, Ferrara' in *Dosso Dossi: Court Painter in Renaissance Ferrara*, Peter Humfrey and Mauro Lucco, edited by Andrea Bayer (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1998), 65-71.

4. The Cambrai Wars were part of the Italian Wars (1494-1559). See Giancarlo Fiorenza, Dosso Dossi, 'Garofalo, and the Costabili Polyptych: Imaging Spiritual Authority', *The Art Bulletin*, 82:2, 252-279.