

Gallery Visit Review – James Wallace Trust Collection in the Pah homestead Auckland

Peter Madden's work creates sculptural installations that begin life as flat imagery, he then refashions them into spiralling three-dimensional objects. He gathers images from books, magazines and encyclopaedias of which National Geographic magazines are a favourite. Madden slices out the illustrations and reassembles them in fantastical constructions.



This work strikes me as gloomy due to the dark foundations and frequently recurring images of skulls, people with no heads and fighting animals. But within the work there is also graceful images of birds and butterflies adding a strong contrast. In reality this opulent and elaborate construction of the butterflies swarming amongst flowers, birds and skulls shows a connection between them. The butterflies are a symbol of fragility and the transience of life whereas the skull symbolises both death and rebirth. Together they form the cycle which every human endures. It highlights how life is fleeting but also how birth and death are a normal repeating part of life.

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These works exemplify the diverse range of New Zealand art and its expression of appropriate themes, issues and cultures. It shows the strong array of work that is available for viewing at the centre and multiple viewpoints of different artists. These three works show the richness of innovation of the New Zealand artists Ellwood, Foley and Madden as they all express elements never seen before in art.

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The use of projection in *Intersection. Serpentine Ave and Canongate Rd*, the found images in *The Unbuilt Return of Interminateopolis* and juxtaposition of objects in *Little Hanz* showed the different ways that important ideas can be portrayed convincingly in art.