
REPORT 3
1215/52/IM

BUILDING CREATIVE WELLINGTON, INNOVATION CAPITAL: ISSUES AND OPTIONS FOR A WELLINGTON CITY ART COLLECTION POLICY

1. Purpose of Report

This paper presents a Wellington City Art Collection Policy for the Committee's consideration and adoption.

2. Executive Summary

A key feature of the *Creative Wellington Innovation Capital* vision is an active creative community in Wellington. This paper is concerned with the display and collection of visual arts to support Council's creative vision and Wellington's position as Arts and Cultural Capital.

Key art displays that Council supports are in City Gallery Wellington, Te Papa Tongarewa and Council's own buildings. Given the size of Wellington it is important that these displays and the development of any new collections are complementary rather than competitive.

Current Council policies can be refined to better respond to offers of collections or loans to the city, improve accessibility to Council owned artworks and develop a city art collection that has a strong relationship to Wellington City. It is proposed to adapt and rename the Furnishings Art Collection Policy (2001) as the Wellington City Arts Collection Policy to better meet these needs.

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 1. Receive the information.*
- 2. Agree to the draft Wellington City Art Collection Policy, attached as Appendix One to the officer's report, to provide a clear and focused direction for Council to respond to offers of collections and bequests, and to focus the city's collection so it is consistent with Wellington's creative vision.*
- 3. Agree to transfer \$20,000 allocated to the Furnishings Art Collection Policy (2001) in the LTCCP from 2005/06, to implement the Wellington City Art Collection Policy (2005) and allow the Art Collection Advisory Group to respond to their extended role.*

4. *Agree to invest the Hancock Bequest (approximately \$1,478,000) and use a proportion of the interest generated to:
 - a) *Purchase new works each year from emerging and mid-career artists that live in, or have a significant connection to Wellington City, to be included in the civic art collection displayed in publicly accessible spaces in Council buildings and facilities.*
 - b) *Develop a bi-annual exhibition of works acquired for the civic art collection from the Hancock Bequest to be installed at the Wellington Arts Centre Gallery.**
5. *Agree to retain the capital amount of the Hancock Bequest for future potential cultural amenity development in Wellington City (referred to in recommendation 7).*
6. *Agree to display the civic art collection in publicly accessible locations in Council buildings and facilities such as libraries and recreation and service centres in central city and suburban Wellington.*
7. *Agree to maintain a non-collection policy at City Gallery Wellington but allow officers to explore the potential to develop the gallery in the future to allow Wellington to respond proactively to any significant art collections offered to the city.*
8. *Note that a report on works acquired for or deaccessioned from the Art Collection will be presented to the Strategy and Policy Committee each year.*

4. Background

Council currently spends between \$7 million and \$12 million per annum supporting arts and cultural activities in Wellington. The majority (75%) of this funding is allocated to the Wellington Museums Trust, Te Papa and Wellington Convention Centre. Other key spending includes Arts and Culture community grants, the New Zealand International Arts Festival and the Wellington Arts Centre.

These institutions provide important infrastructure for arts and culture in Wellington but there is a need to ensure that current and future arts policy and activities consider the needs of all members of the local arts community and potential connections between arts initiatives across the city, to provide the greatest benefits and opportunities for Wellington.

The development and display of a civic art collection needs to sit within the wider context of the development, promotion and retention of Wellington's arts and cultural sector – as a primary source of the city's creativity and innovation. Artists and arts professionals (producers, curators, conservators, writers, lecturers, arts administrators) working and living in Wellington need to be supported and celebrated by the city.

A proposal to investigate developing a new art gallery and civic art collection was made in October 2003 in response to a number of concerns including:

- Wellington being the only major centre in New Zealand that does not have a civic art collection
- Major corporate and private collections leaving Wellington due to a perceived lack of appropriate venues that would accept and display art works
- Requests for greater access to the national collection held at Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa
- The lack of public accessibility to Council's existing art collection
- A desire to maintain and build on the city's reputation as an Arts Capital and embed the *Creative Wellington, Innovation Capital* vision.

In the context of those concerns, meetings were held with stakeholders in Wellington's visual art community in May and September 2004. At those meetings there was little support for the development of a civic art collection that could duplicate existing collections or to build a new stand alone gallery in Wellington.

Stakeholders did, however, support a detailed investigation of options for improving art gallery provision and the display of art (especially works in the national art collection) in Wellington. There was interest in building on the existing successful institutions of Te Papa and the City Gallery Wellington.

5. Discussion

5.1 Council's current art collections

Council currently supports the development and maintenance of two art collections:

- a) Heritage and contemporary artworks used to furnish Council spaces including works acquired or accepted by Council since 1882 and those purchased under the Furnishings Art Collection Policy (2001); and
- b) Public artworks used to increase the quality and distinctiveness of Wellington's built environment under the Public Art Policy (2003).

Council's Furnishings Art Collection currently includes around 400 items that are displayed in Council buildings. The collection is a mix of heritage and contemporary artworks that range in quality and value. Approximately half of the collection acquired prior to the adoption of the Furnishings Art Collection Policy (2001) should be reviewed and either removed or deaccessioned. Any monies acquired from the sale of deaccessioned works will be used for the benefit of the collection, that is, to purchase new works and/or support the maintenance and promotion of the collection.

New works for the collection are currently selected by the Furnishings Art Collections Advisory Group that includes a Council officer, a representative of City Gallery Wellington, the Councillor spokesperson for Arts and Culture and one external artistic advisor.

Since its adoption in 2001, the Furnishings Art Collection Policy has been successfully implemented by the Advisory Group. With strategic deaccessioning and an acquisition programme, the collection has the potential to grow into a body of work that tells the story of Wellington City and celebrates New Zealand visual artists that either live in, or are strongly connected to Wellington.

Wellington receives a number of offers of private art collections and bequests each year. Most offered collections contain a range of works of variable artistic quality and value. Without an Art Collections Policy that provides clear direction, the city has responded to offers of collections on a case by case basis with no clear rationale or criteria to determine whether the city should accept the collection and why.

The Furnishings Art Collection Policy (2001) provides a foundation that can be expanded upon to provide criteria for the acceptance or decline of collection donations. It is an 'active' policy¹ with a focus on collecting and displaying the works of Wellington artists with a particular emphasis on emerging artists. The policy provides a basic process for the acquisition and deaccession of works and infrastructure to implement the policy.

The quality of the Furnishings Art Collection will be improved through a strategic acquisition and deaccessioning programme. The display of the collection will be extended to publicly accessible spaces in Council buildings and facilities such as Council service centres, libraries and recreation centres across central city and suburban Wellington.

It is proposed to adapt the Furnishings Art Collection Policy (2001) and rename it the Wellington City Art Collection Policy (attached at Appendix One).

Under the Wellington City Art Collection Policy the City will only collect works:

- a) Of high artistic quality – all works offered to the city will be assessed by the Art Collection Advisory Group and only accepted if they are of high artistic standard
- b) Created by Wellington based artists or nationally/internationally recognised New Zealand artists with a significant relationship to Wellington. There will be an emphasis on supporting and promoting emerging and mid career artists and ensuring the exposure of artists from the range of ethnic communities in Wellington
- c) That can be displayed in Council facilities and buildings – as a general rule, any work that cannot be installed in public areas because it is too valuable and can not be appropriately cared for by Council without incurring unreasonable cost

¹ Art Collection Policies can be either 'active' or 'passive'. A passive collection is one where the institution accepts artwork or collections with minimal control over the shape, direction and quality of the collection. Significant financial and staff resources can be required to care for such a collection which is, by its nature difficult to focus and can be of uneven and mediocre quality. 'Active' art collections are shaped by the institution and have determined parameters of quality and type of works to be included in the collection.

will not be collected by Council as part of its art collection, but could be referred by the Art Collection Advisory Group to other institutions such as Wellington's Museum of City and Sea, Te Papa Tongarewa, Dowse Art Museum or Pataka Porirua if they are interested in the work.

In response to growing demand for a space to show a range of collections based in Wellington, it is recommended that officers explore the development of a suitable space to allow the city to capitalise on opportunities that may arise from significant collections offered to the city. The Hancock bequest provides around \$1.5 million for this purpose, and officers recommend that this fund remain intact, to allow the city to fund the development of an exhibition space should the opportunity arise.

Council processes for the acquisition, management and deaccession of public artworks² in outdoor spaces are contained in the Public Art Policy (2003) and implementation paper (March 2005) and are complementary to the Wellington City Art Collection Policy.

It is recommended the Committee agrees to and adopts the Wellington City Art Collection Policy.

5.2 Accessibility of the national art collection at Te Papa Tongarewa

The national art collection held at Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa is over 130 years old and contains some 11,000 central works by approximately 2500 artists. The collection contains international art, including significant holdings of British and American art, historical and contemporary Maori, Pacific and New Zealand art, photography and applied and decorative arts, and encompasses major contemporary commissions through to works from emerging artists.

There has been ongoing debate about whether Te Papa provides appropriate public access to and display of the national art collection since collections of the National Museum and Art Gallery were integrated under the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa Act 1992³. Specific concerns raised include:

- a) The lack of public access and opportunities to see the national art collection
- b) The majority of the collection remaining in storage
- c) The collection not being well displayed when exhibited.

Although Council has a special relationship with Te Papa because of the museum's location in Wellington and the city's annual provision of funds⁴ to support Te Papa's

² Public art is defined in the Public Art Policy (2003) as being all art forms permanent or temporary, which are location in, part of or associated with a public space, environment or facility that is highly accessible to member of the public. These works are usually found outdoors. Examples include sculptures, murals, functional art, forms of landscaping, sound, light works, water or glass features.

³ *New Vision – a critical view of New Zealand's visual art infrastructure*, 1998 commissioned by Creative New Zealand and the Chartwell Trust provided a critique of Te Papa. While many of the key points raised in the document may have been resolved in 2005, concerns about access to the National Art Collection, especially for students and members of the public interested in the development of New Zealand art are still strong.

⁴ Council provides an annual grant of approximately \$2 million to Te Papa.

touring exhibitions, the primary responsibility to address concerns of access to the national art collection lies with central government.

With its national focus, Te Papa needs to balance regional initiatives with its work across New Zealand, however in 2005/06 the following exhibition programmes and activities are planned to provide additional access to the collection for Wellingtonians and visitors to the city.

Toi Te Papa: Art of the Nation

Toi Te Papa: Art of the Nation: 1940 - today opened in October 2004 and is stage one of a two stage programme to exhibit works from the national collection.

Toi Te Papa: Art of the Nation focuses on New Zealand art and its development from 1940 to 2004. The second stage of the exhibition entitled *From the cave to the temple* will open in 2006 and will feature some of the oldest items of the national collection including European heritage art, art from the period of European-Maori colonial encounter, European modern art and New Zealand art up to 1939.

Toi Te Papa is a long-term exhibition that will run until 2009.

Contemporary works from the National Art Collection at City Gallery Wellington

In June 2005 City Gallery Wellington and Te Papa will open a landmark partnership exhibition promoting contemporary New Zealand art. The show will include iconic works from the national collection and some of Te Papa's recent acquisitions which have not been on public display before.

The exhibition will be co-curated by curators from both institutions and staged at City Gallery Wellington until October 2005. The exhibition will complement *Toi Te Papa: Art of the Nation* and be accompanied by an extensive programme of public and education events celebrating contemporary New Zealand art and culture.

Future collaborations of this type are not currently planned but could be explored to allow contemporary New Zealand works and new acquisitions in the national collection to be publicly displayed on a more regular basis.

Transition Building

Te Papa is currently investigating the potential of using one floor of the proposed Transition Building on Waitangi Park to develop a contemporary art space that promotes contemporary New Zealand art, design and innovation.

Council provided \$25,000⁵ to Te Papa in November 2004 to support a feasibility study of Transition Building as an additional exhibition space in Wellington. Funding has been used to survey the area and complete a study of the potential space in partnership with Wellington Waterfront Limited. The next stage of development, an architectural competition to design Transition Building, is expected to be complete by July 2005.

⁵ The \$25,000 provided to Te Papa was part of the total \$50,000 allocated in the 2004/05 Annual Plan to investigate additional art gallery provision in Wellington.

Te Papa is continuing to examine how the capital and operational costs associated with developing Transition Building will be funded, however if funding is secured it is expected that the facility could be functional around 2007/08.

Potential collaborative projects for the future

The idea of establishing a national Arts Research Centre to train art professionals such as gallery directors, curators, conservators, and to provide facilities for art history research was originally proposed by Professor Jenny Harper from Victoria University.

Representatives of Te Papa, Victoria and Massey Universities met in late 2003 to discuss the idea as a way to promote collaboration between the institutions and support the development of arts professionals and students in Wellington.

Te Papa is interested in continuing discussion with Victoria, Massey and City Gallery Wellington on the creation of a national Arts Research Centre. It is recommended that Council stay informed of discussions regarding the feasibility of the centre to support development of the *Creative Wellington Innovation Capital* vision, but not become directly involved at this time.

5.3 The potential role of City Gallery Wellington in housing collections

One of the options that stakeholders supported in the April 2004 meeting was the strengthening and potential redesigning of City Gallery Wellington to allow for more exhibition space and capacity for partnerships with Te Papa and other collectors in Wellington.

A change in collection policy for City Gallery Wellington was generally not supported by stakeholders unless the gallery could be adequately funded to care for a collection of significance *and* continue its exhibition programme.

City Gallery Wellington opened in its current location in Civic Square in August 1993. It was established as a metropolitan gallery with a non-collection policy to present modern and contemporary art/culture exhibitions of local, national and international importance and positioned in a complementary rather than competitive relationship to Te Papa and the national art collection⁶.

Without the financial constraints of a collection, the gallery has established itself as one of New Zealand's leading arts institutions by:

- securing significant international contemporary art exhibitions
- staging landmark exhibitions of New Zealand art
- producing quality arts publications that are distributed extensively in New Zealand and internationally.

City Gallery Wellington is an important asset to the city and a major contributor to Wellington's arts capital status.

⁶ *A New Future for City Gallery Wellington*, January 2004, Paula Savage, Director of City Gallery Wellington

A change in the role of City Gallery Wellington from a non-collecting organisation to collecting gallery would be a major conceptual shift from the original purpose of City Gallery and require an estimated \$447,000 increase in annual operational funding with significant capital expenditure to provide additional storage, conservation, office and potential exhibition space to meet the needs of maintaining and displaying a collection⁷.

Many stakeholders interviewed for the development of this paper thought a change in City Gallery Wellington's collection policy would be detrimental to Wellington and diminish the potential of the gallery, especially if adequate resources were not provided to maintain current programming and the collection. The view of many stakeholders was that if additional funding could be found to support City Gallery Wellington, it should be used to strengthen staff resources and the exhibition programme of the Gallery.

If Wellington was to pursue the development of a significant museum quality public art collection, City Gallery Wellington would be in all likelihood the most appropriate location to house such a collection. It is therefore recommended that Council maintain the gallery's non-collection policy at this time, but ask officers to explore the potential to develop the gallery in the future to allow Wellington to respond proactively to any significant art collections offered to the city.

5.4 Use of Hancock Bequest and other such cash/art collection bequests

Mr (John) Russell Hancock died in November 1994. In his will he bequeathed the bulk of his estate to Wellington City "for the purpose of providing, or assisting to provide, cultural amenities for the benefit of the citizens of, and visitors to, the city and the inhabitants of its environs".

Council received the bequest, approximately \$1,478,000 in funds and twenty four artworks⁸ after the death of Mrs Kathleen Hancock in 2004.

The prime motivation of Mr Hancock in leaving his bequest was to enable the city to house a collection of fine arts and for such a collection to be accessible to all Wellingtonians.

In keeping with the Hancock family's wishes it is recommended that Council invest funds included in the bequest and save the capital for future potential cultural amenity development.

A proportion of interest less inflation generated from the funds each year will be used to:

- a) purchase works from recognised Wellington emerging and mid career artists to be displayed in prominent publicly accessible Council areas; and

⁷ An estimate budget of funds required for City Gallery Wellington to store, maintain and exhibit a collection is attached at Appendix 2.

⁸ The 24 works were given a valuation for insurance indemnity of \$161,0000 in December 2004.

- b) develop a bi-annual exhibition of new works acquired with support from the Hancock Bequest, to be curated by a leading local curator and installed at the Wellington Arts Centre Gallery.

Mr Hancock's generous gift to the city will be noted in interpretive material for all works purchased and exhibitions developed with funds from the bequest.

Under the Wellington City Art Collection Policy, all future bequests will be reviewed by the Art Collection Advisory Group in the first instance and then referred with the group's advice to Council's Senior Management Team for approval.

5.5 Mechanisms to support Wellington's creativity and innovation

Council's art collection will be developed and displayed as one way Council will support and promote Wellington artists and build an awareness and appreciation of local and recognised New Zealand artists in the general public.

The collection and display of art must be seen within the context of the range of initiatives being undertaken by Council to uphold Wellington as an Arts and Cultural Capital. It is important that Council maintains momentum by:

a) Engaging with and involving all levels of Wellington's creative sector in the development of new arts and cultural spaces and events

The development of new arts spaces and events supported by Council should involve artists and arts workers from all levels of Wellington's creative sector to ensure that new facilities/activities benefit emerging and mid career artists and arts professionals in addition to institutions. This approach will ensure that spaces such as the proposed School of Music and events such as the World of Wearable Arts become appropriately embedded in the Wellington arts and cultural scene and support and promote Wellington's distinctive arts style.

b) Investing in people

Facilitate professional development opportunities for the creative sector working with arts institutions such as City Gallery Wellington and Te Papa to promote arts conferences, symposia, training seminars and workshops, domestic and international residency opportunities for Wellington artists and arts professionals.

c) Promoting local artists work

Profile local artists in Council publications, especially publications that will promote the city nationally or internationally – hire local photographers, writers, graphic designers for major publications that will be distributed internationally and promote these artists by providing detailed credits in the publications.

- Work in collaboration with local artists to develop and promote the *Creative Wellington Innovation Capital* brand

- Support Wellington musicians and bands including them in Council events and where possible incorporating their music in Wellington promotional campaigns
- Purchase high quality local artworks as gifts for international trips and sister city visits.

6. Conclusion

The Wellington City Art Collection Policy has been developed considering the wider context of Wellington's position as an Arts and Cultural Capital, the city's vision of *Creative Wellington Innovation Capital* and ways Council can continue to support the local creative sector in a cost efficient and strategically valuable manner.

The Wellington City Art Collection Policy adapts the Furnishings Art Collection Policy (2001) and will replace this policy on its adoption.

Contact Officer: *Aroha Rangi, Senior Policy Advisor – Arts and Culture*