

www.trishclark.co.nz
trish@trishclark.co.nz
T +64 9 360 0840
C +64 21 378940

142 Great Nth Rd
Grey Lynn
Auckland 1021
New Zealand

TCG
TRISH CLARK GALLERY



CHRISTINE WEBSTER | *Divinations*

23 February – 1 April 2023

Press Release



Trish Clark Gallery is delighted to present the first solo exhibition by UK-based artist Christine Webster in Aotearoa New Zealand since 2014's *Therapies* at Gus Fisher Gallery. *Divinations* is a significant new body of work comprising 14 photographic works and 4 videos, arising from Webster's collaboration with New Zealand cultural treasure Douglas Wright before his death in 2018, that holds in tension the body's earthly flesh (as well as its desires) with lofty themes of religious ecstasy, transcendence, and death alongside quotidian details of daily life. Accompanying *Divinations* is *Skeleton* (1997/2015), an earlier collaboration between Webster and Wright, which sits in poignant relationship with these recent works.

Christine Webster made her mark as one of the first of a new generation of artists who confronted the reigning regionalism of New Zealand art in the 1980s, actively engaging in the international arena. Her work was touted with the ground-breaking solo exhibition *Neue Mythen* at Museum Ludwig, Cologne, in 1989, and in 1997 her defining series *Black Carnival* was shown in New Zealand; Rencontres de la Photo in France; Fotofeis, Scotland; Queensland Art Gallery; and MACBA in Barcelona, the same year her photographs appeared alongside work by Andres Serrano and Christian Boltanski. Webster's demonstrable prescience is notable in *Black Carnival* and other series dealing openly with notions of gender, sexuality, and identity that have risen to the fore of mainstream discourse only in the past decade, speaking to what is now culturally understood as an expansive and highly nuanced spectrum of personal identification.

Webster continues to make works that are studied considerations of behaviours and impulses that sit at the periphery of acceptability, as well as the disciplinary structures that suppress – or indeed produce – them. In the past, Webster has often used her own body in addition to models, engaging multiple modes of representation to examine themes of identity, desire and meaning as they relate to broader currents of power. Her works occupy the murky space in between the known and the transgressive, and are often uncompromising in their confrontation of social mores: role play, religious iconography, and consistent reference to mortality muddle together in a practice invested in shedding light on the otherwise hidden underbelly of societal strictures, resulting in highly charged, psychosexual images that draw deeply from the wells of the subconscious.

Webster was awarded the prestigious Frances Hodgkins Fellowship in 1991, and after time spent lecturing and exhibiting in New Zealand, completed her MFA at the University of Glasgow in 2004. Living permanently in the UK since 1997, Webster's work has been exhibited widely in New Zealand and internationally. Her work is held in the collections of Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, France; LA County Museum, USA; The International Museum of Photography, Rochester, New York; Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany; MCA, Sydney, Australia; Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia; and all major public collections in New Zealand.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND IMAGES PLEASE CONTACT THE GALLERY

info@trishclark.co.nz

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Divination (v), 2022
Archival pigment print on Hahnemühle photo rag
800 x 1200 mm
Edition of 5

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Divination (ix), 2022
Archival pigment print on Hahnemühle photo rag
593 x 1250 mm
Edition of 5

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Divination (xiii), 2022
Archival pigment print on Hahnemühle photo rag
900 x 1233 mm
Edition of 5

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Divination (x), 2022
Archival pigment print on Hahnemühle photo rag
850 x 2045 mm
Edition of 5

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Divination (iv), 2022
Archival pigment print on Hahnemühle photo rag
800 x 1200 mm
Edition of 5

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Divination (iii), 2022
Archival pigment print on Hahnemühle photo rag
900 x 617 mm
Edition of 5

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Divination (xi), 2022
Archival pigment print on Hahnemühle photo rag
750 x 1500 mm
Edition of 5

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Divination (vii), 2022
Archival pigment print on Hahnemühle photo rag
517 x 1450 mm
Edition of 5

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Divination (xiv), 2022
Archival pigment print on Hahnemühle photo rag
600 x 900 mm
Edition of 5

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Divination (ii), 2022
Archival pigment print on Hahnemühle photo rag
650 x 389 mm
Edition of 5

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The Skeleton, 1997/2015
Archival pigment print
1180 x 1500 mm
Edition of 3

CHRISTINE WEBSTER
b. 1958



EDUCATION

2002-4 MFA, Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow, Scotland

AWARDS

2010 Individual Grant for the Arts, Arts East, Arts Council England, UK

2007 Individual Grant for the Arts, Arts East, Arts Council England, UK

1997 Creative NZ Arts Council Aotearoa, Arts Development Grant,
New Zealand

1991 Frances Hodgkins Fellowship, Otago University, Dunedin,
New Zealand

1988 QE II Arts Council Award, New Zealand

1984 QE II Arts Council Award, New Zealand

1982 QE II Arts Council Award, New Zealand

SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany

LA County Museum, Los Angeles, USA

Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, Australia

Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris, France

International Museum of Photography, George Eastman House, Rochester,
New York

International Polaroid Collection, Offenbach am Main, Germany

Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, New Zealand

Hocken Library, Dunedin, New Zealand

Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, New Zealand

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki, Auckland, New Zealand

Te Papa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand, Wellington, New Zealand

Victoria University, Wellington, New Zealand

Sarjeant Art Gallery, Whanganui, New Zealand



SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2014 *Therapies*, The University of Auckland's Gus Fisher Gallery, New Zealand
- 2013 *Therapies*, Milford Galleries, Dunedin, NZ;; OCP Queensland Centre for Photography, Brisbane, Australia.
- 2011 *Transitions*, Ruskin Gallery, Cambridge School of Art, Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge, UK
- 2010 *Provocations: The Work of Christine Webster*, Christchurch Art Gallery, Christchurch, NZ
Transitions, The Lab, San Francisco, USA
- 2009 *Transitions*, Artspace 501 Chongqing, China
- 2008 *Vigil, le Dossier and Blindfield*, Moving Image Center (MIC), Auckland, NZ
- 2007 *Blindfield* - multi-screen installation: Ruskin Gallery, Cambridge School of Art, Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge, UK; Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, NZ
- 2006 *le Dossier*, Queensland Centre for Photography, Brisbane, Australia
- 2004 *Quiet*, Adam Art Gallery, Wellington; Sarjeant Art Gallery, Wanganui, NZ
-05
- 2000 *Black Carnival*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, NZ
A Serious Doll House, Galerie Focus, Cologne, Germany
- 1999 *Circus of Angels*, Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney, Australia;
Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hamilton, NZ
The Hunt, the Seduction & the Kill, Gow/Langford Gallery, Auckland, NZ
- 1997 *Black Carnival, Mascara* | Miral, Museu d'Art Contemporani, Barcelona;
Fotofeis, Aberdeen Art Gallery, Scotland
Circus of Angels, Sarjeant Art Gallery, Wanganui, NZ
- 1996 *The Hunt, the Seduction, & the Kill*, Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne, Australia
Black Carnival, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia
- 1995 *Black Carnival*, Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Christchurch; The New Gallery, Auckland Art Gallery, Auckland
Can Can, Vavasour/Godkin Gallery, Auckland, NZ
- 1994 *Black Carnival*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin; City Gallery, Wellington; Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hamilton; Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, NZ
- 1992 *Possession & Mirth*, Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney, Australia; Artspace, Auckland, NZ; Hocken Library, Dunedin, NZ



1991 *The Players*, Suzanne Biederberg Gallery, Amsterdam; Artis Gallery, Auckland, NZ; Hocken Library, Dunedin, NZ; Centre for Contemporary Art, Hamilton, NZ

1989 Tiannamen Square, Ernesto & Kripps, Cologne, Germany; Le Cadre Gallery, -90 Hong Kong; Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney, Australia; Artis Gallery, Auckland, NZ

1987 Neue Mythen, Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany; Studio 666, Paris, -88 France; Cambridge Darkroom, Cambridge, UK; Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney, Australia; Artis Gallery, Auckland, NZ; Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, NZ

SCREENINGS

2009 *Blindfield*, Athens Video Art Festival; Split 14th International Film Festival (Jurors' special mention for creativity)

2010 *Blindfield and Rapport* as part of solo show, *Provocations: The Work of Christine Webster*, Christchurch Art Gallery, Christchurch, NZ

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2016 *THE XX FACTOR*, Trish Clark Gallery, Auckland, NZ

2015 *TRUTH + FICTION*, Trish Clark Gallery, Auckland, NZ

2010 *Examining the Body*, Christchurch Art Gallery, Christchurch, NZ
Art of the Nude, Albury Gallery, New South Wales, Australia
Human/Nature, Artis Gallery, Auckland, NZ

2007 *In View: Works from the VUW Art Collection*, Adam Art Gallery, Wellington, NZ

2005 *Seduction: Shedding Light on Dark Desires*, Queensland Centre for Photography, Brisbane, Australia
Shadowland, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, NZ

2002 *The Collections*, Christchurch City Art Gallery, Christchurch, NZ
Truth's Mirror, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, NZ

2000 *Parts: Selected Works from the Permanent Collection*, Christchurch City Art Gallery, Christchurch, NZ

1999 *Observed and Contrived: Recent International Photography*, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia

1997 *New Acquisitions*, LA County Museum, USA
Exquisite Tenderness, Galeria Estrany/De La Mota, Barcelona, Spain

1996 *La Masque et le Miroir*, Rencontres Internationales de la Photographie, Arles, France



1995 *Out of the Void: Mad and Bad Women*, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia

1994 *Station to Station: The Way of the Cross*, Auckland Art Gallery, Auckland, NZ
Persona Cognita, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, Australia

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Angus, Alice, (Re)visions of Sex, A companion to the third biennial of international photo-based art, Fotofeis '97, Catalogue pg v, Fotofeis Ltd, 1997

Calcutt John, Quiet, Adam Art Gallery, Wellington and Sarjeant Art Gallery, Wanganui, NZ, 2004

Caughey, Elizabeth, 'Contemporary New Zealand Art' Vol 4, David Bateman, 2005

Cook, Ray, Seduction: Shedding light on dark desires, Queensland Centre for Photography, for the exhibition, Brisbane, Australia 2005

Seja, Nina, Refuge and Ritual Trust, Art New Zealand Number 150, Winter 2014, pg 72

Earley, Laura, Power Games: Christine Webster's Blindfield, for the exhibition, Blindfield, Dunedin Public Art Gallery 2007

Engberg, Juliana, The Museum of Selves, an essay for the catalogue, Persona Cognita, Museum of Modern Art at Heide, Melbourne, 1994, pp16-17

Eggleton, David, Into the Light, Craig Potten, Nelson, NZ, pg 157-158, 2006

Harper, Jenny 'Museum as provocateur: Art museums and controversy', University of Victoria, Wellington (2004)

Gibson, Sarah, Circus of Angels – Recent Work by Christine Webster, Art New Zealand, no 83, pp 50-53, 1997

Hay, Jennifer, The Collections, Christchurch Art gallery, Spectrum Print, 2003

Zabalbeascoa, Anatxu, Mascara I Mirall, Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA), Lunberg, 1997

Hofmann, Barbara, The Players and Allegory, from the book, Pleasures and Dangers: Artists of the 90s, Moet et Chandon Art Foundation and Longman Paul, Auckland, 1992, pp 112-113

Kirker, Anne, Recurring Undercurrents for the exhibition, Provocations: The work of Christine Webster, Christchurch Art Gallery, Christchurch 2010 (catalogue)

Kirker, Anne, The Camera Creates a Stage, Queensland Centre for Photography, for the exhibition, le Dossier, Brisbane 2006

Misselbeck, Reinhold, Photographie des 20 Jahrhunderts, Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Taschen, 1996



Misselbeck, Reinhold, Neue Mythen, Museum Ludwig, Cologne, 1988, for the exhibition, Neue Mythen

Paton, Justin, Flash Art Vol. XXVII no 176 May/June 1994, review Black Carnival, pg 79

Sutherland, Bridget, Psychoanalysis and the Art of Christine Webster, Antic 7, June 1990, pp 60-74

Vaigro, Wendy, Strip-tease – Christine Webster's Can Can by Gloria Zelenka, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney, 1994

Wilton, Louise, Dreaming the Players, for the exhibition, The Players, 1991, ibid

Zabalbeascoa, Anaxu, Le Masque et le Miroir, Rencontres Internationales de la Photographie, Arles, Actes Sud, 1996

Zahm, Olivier, Uncertainties, an excerpt from Fatal Song, Suzanne Biederberg Gallery, Amsterdam and Centre for Contemporary Art, Hamilton, 1991, for the exhibition, The Players

Zahm, Olivier, Fatal Song, from the book, Pleasures and Dangers: Artists of the 90s, ibid, pp 100-104