

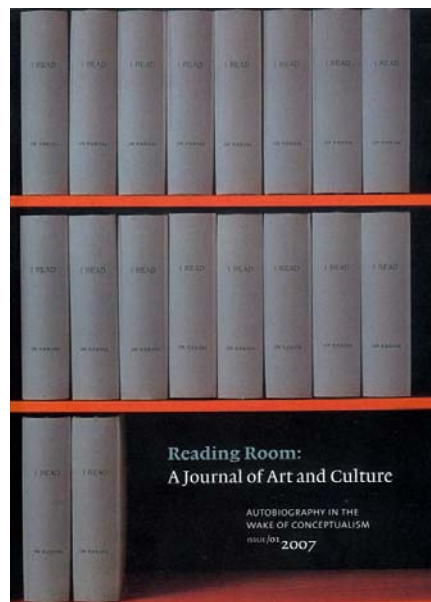


Media Release – 23 February 2007

Auckland Art Gallery is proud to launch *Reading Room*, a new journal of art and culture.

Gallery director Chris Saines says the ambitious new publication is a major contribution to contemporary art scholarship.

"*Reading Room* is intended to both stimulate new writing and provide an outlet for current research," he says.



Published annually by the gallery's E H McCormick Research Library, *Reading Room* is one of only a handful of refereed art journals in Australasia, and the only one international in scope.

Managing editor Catherine Hammond says that because the journal is peer-reviewed, it can attract the best art writers - and raise the bar for emerging writers.

The idea was conceived by the gallery's former contemporary curator Robert Leonard and came to fruition thanks the generosity of Dr John Mayo.

The Queensland academic has established *Reading Room* in memory of his wife Marylyn and her mother Mavis Mason, in recognition of their lifelong interest in the visual arts.

The first issue, edited by Tina Barton, Wystan Curnow and Robert Leonard, focuses on the theme "Autobiography in the Wake of Conceptualism".

The 184 page journal contains colour illustrations and eight essays from top writers including Mieke Bal (Holland), Susan Best (Australia) and Charles Reeve (Canada), writing about artists including Louise Bourgeois (France), On Kawara (Japan), Mike Parr (Australia) and Ricky Swallow (Australia/NZ).

Launched at the start of the academic year, *Reading Room* will be distributed to universities and galleries worldwide.



Copies can be ordered online at <http://www.aucklandartgallery.govt.nz/research/journal/subscribe.asp>

For more information contact:
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***Reading Room* editors**

Tina Barton is Victoria University's art history programme director. She has written extensively on contemporary New Zealand art. She has compiled a substantial history of post-object art in New Zealand and is currently working on a major retrospective on this country's leading conceptual artist, Billy Apple.

Wystan Curnow is a professor of English at the University of Auckland. He has published widely on modern and contemporary art and literature, and has curated many exhibitions. His projects include monographic shows on Colin McCahon (1984), Billy Apple (1991) and Max Gimblett (2004), and books on Imants Tillers (1998) and Stephen Bambury (2001). *Modern Colours* is the latest of his four books of poetry.

Robert Leonard is director of Brisbane's Institute of Modern Art. Before that, he was contemporary art curator at Auckland Art Gallery where his exhibitions included *Nine Lives*, *Pressing Flesh*, *Everyday Minimal* and *Mixed-Up Childhood*.

Natasha Conland is Auckland Art Gallery's contemporary art curator. She will join the editorial team for Issue 2.