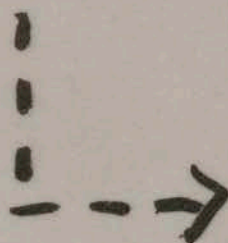


HARRY HUMAN HEIGHTS

JOHN REYNOLDS

ARTSPACE

SUMMWHR



K RD TO KINGDOM COME

JOHN REYNOLDS

PAINTING PROJECTS 1995 - 2001

COVENTRY-BREWSTER ART GALLERY

HARRY HUMAN HEIGHTS

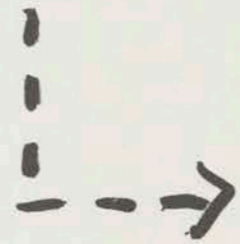
JOHN REYNOLDS
ARTSPACE

SUMWHR

K RD TO KINGDOM COME

JOHN REYNOLDS
PAINTING PROJECTS 1995 - 2001
COVETT-BREWSTER ART GALLERY

SUMWHR



HARRY HUMAN HEIGHTS

JOHN REYNOLDS
ARTSPACE

S U M W H R

K RD TO KINGDOM COME

JOHN REYNOLDS
PAINTING PROJECTS 1995 - 2001
GOVETT-BREWSTER ART GALLERY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

SUMWHR is a joint project between Govett-Brewster Art Gallery and Artspace.

Principal funders: New Plymouth District Council and Creative New Zealand

Supporters: Buddle Findlay, Sue Crockford Gallery, Jenny Todd and Stella Artois

Lenders: Sue Crockford Gallery, Leigh and Susan Davis, Eric Liu and Christopher Swasbrook

Curators: Gregory Burke and Robert Leonard

Registration: Catherine Anderson, Vikki Henderson and Sonja Korohina

Research: Gillian Irving and Hanna Scott

General thanks: John McCormack, Mike Radich, Barbara Valentine and Johanne Cuthbert

On behalf of John Reynolds: Sue Crockford Gallery, Leigh and Susan Davis, Robert Leonard, Gregory Burke, Francis Pound, Cyril Wright, Isha Welsh, Claire McIntock, Markman Ellis, Eric Liu, Jenny Todd, Christopher Swasbrook, Patrick Reynolds, Tony Reid and Simon McIntyre

John Reynolds is represented by Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland and Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington.

Published 2002 by Govett-Brewster Art Gallery and Artspace, in association with the exhibitions Harry Human Heights, Artspace, 12 June – 28 July 2001 and K Rd to Kingdom Come, John Reynolds, Painting Projects, 1995 – 2001, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, 13 October – 2 December 2001.

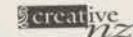
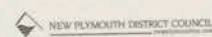


Copyright: The publishers, the artist and authors. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study, research, criticism or review as permitted under the Copyright Act, no part may be reproduced without the prior written permission of the publishers.

Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, P.O. Box 647, New Plymouth, New Zealand
Artspace, P.O. Box 68 418, Newton, Auckland, New Zealand

ISBN: 0-908848-44-7

Editor: Gregory Burke
Designer: Luke Wood, Eyework Design, Wellington
Photographer: Bryan James, unless otherwise specified
Proof reader: Foolproof, Wellington
Printer: Format, Wellington



BUDDLEFINDLAY

SUE CROCKFORD

GALLERY

JENNY TODD

CONTENTS



INTERSECTIONS 7
Gregory Burke

A WALK THROUGH THE EPISTOMADOLOGIES 13
Markman Ellis

SIGNPOSTS TO NOWHERE 21
Francis Pound

PLATES 31

A CITY STREET. A SIGN. DUSK. 51
John Reynolds talks to Robert Leonard

BIOGRAPHY 58

LIST OF WORKS 62



Untitled photograph
2001
photograph: John Reynolds

INTERSECTIONS GREGORY BURKE



Pulling in multiple directions, John Reynolds' recent works are frequently both everyday and epic in their references. Characterised by laminations, intersections and ruptures, they brim with literary, liturgical and art-historical allusions, yet exude a notational quality and thereby a fragility. Taken as a whole, his recent exhibitions and projects meditate on the meaning of passage. They also deploy signs, materials and images as matter of fact, and as directional devices which signal or point to a specific idea of place, while alluding to someplace else. This amalgam of sign, image and material activates a meta-space that is punctured but profound, one that joyfully rampages through art's history, while boundary-riding between its internal categories.

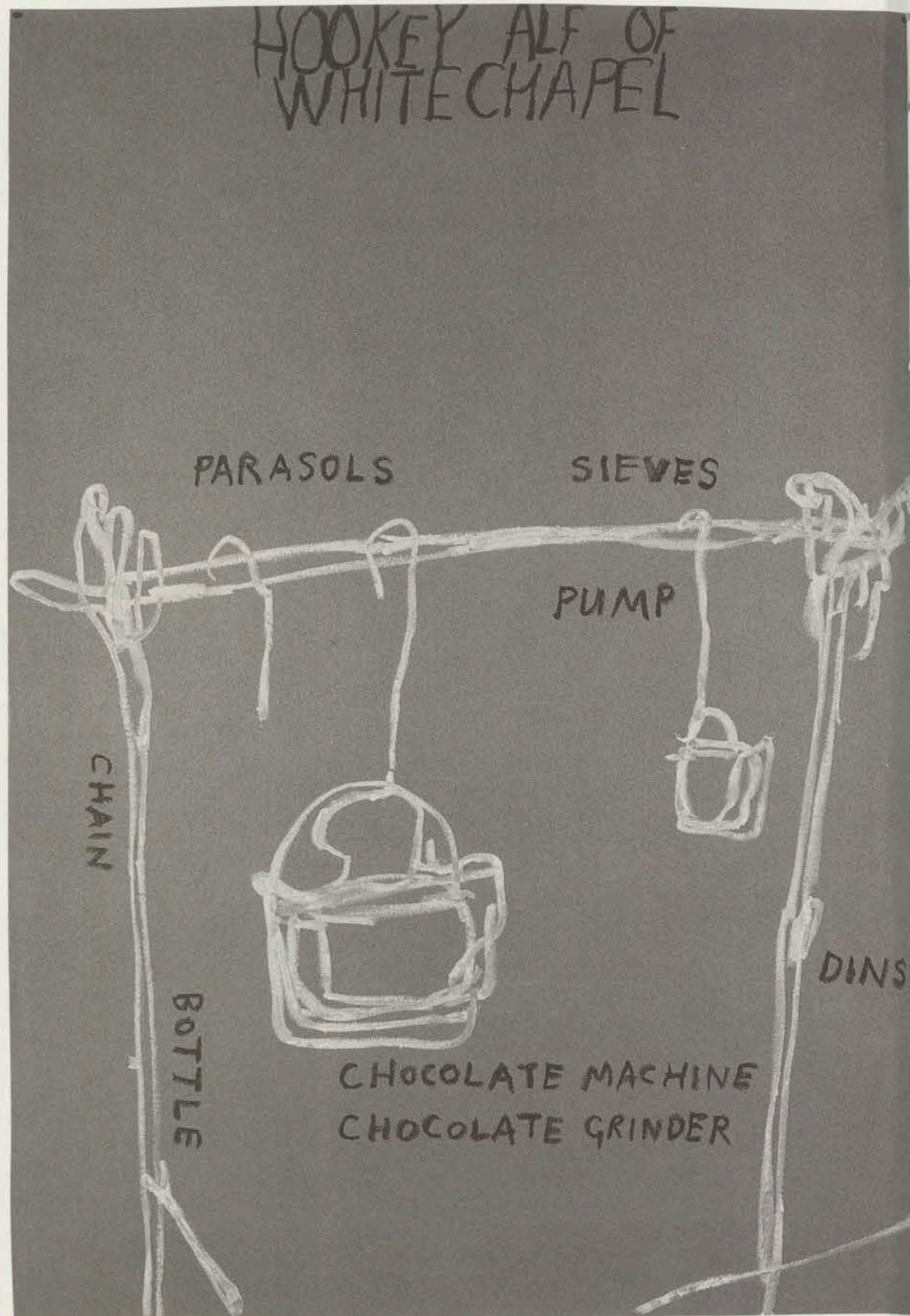
For even though he is often described as a painter, Reynolds' references to art history are not restricted to painting. His sense of installation and his use of material seem as much aligned to recent sculptural practice. Furthermore, Reynolds does not paint so much as use the devices and languages of painting; stretched and un-stretched canvas, drawing paper, oil stick and references to painterly concerns such as figure-ground relationship and composition. His mark making is just that, marks made with oil stick that may at times involve representational drawing, but taken together read as diagrammatic assemblages of notations, schemas, writings, plans, repetitions and cancellations. The elegance of these assemblages is frequently manifested not through the marks themselves but through their conjunction or array.

Take Trading hours and various materials 2001, one of two large 'paintings' included in the project Harry Human Heights 2001. Rather than graceful or expressive, the crossed marks seem crudely controlled and their repetition, to the extent of

filling an expansive field, appears compulsive, or to quote Reynolds from a work in his related series Epistomadologies 2001, it suggests "the obsession of LASTNESS apropos of everything, The LAST as category, as constitutive form of the mind, as original deformity, even as revelation . . .". So we have a blandness that turns inside out in its surprises. Standing at a distance from the work, the field of marks is mesmerising, activated not by the marks themselves, but by the changing tone of the abutted stretched canvas sections. Compared with the probity and purity of abstract painters such as Piet Mondrian, the alternating tones of the unbleached canvas appear contaminated, thereby drawing attention to the stretchers as material and object. Yet it is the materiality of the canvas and not the overlaid marks that gives the work much of its chromatic tension. The canvas ground simultaneously offers and denies the work its painterly attribute.

The sense that the viewer is being invited to engage with the work as an object within an installation is supported by the series of Epistomadologies that circumnavigate an adjacent room. Made up of pillaged motifs, maxims, directional signs and signposts, grids and co-ordinates, collectively these works convey a knowingly futile quest to define place, in all its material, poetic and ideological configurations. Again the chromatic shift of the paper grounds highlights a materiality and matter of fact-ness to the series, which loops back to the entrance, thereby leading the viewer back into the adjacent room, while also suggesting the series could be never-ending. In any painterly sense the intersection between the two massive paintings in one room and the cul-de-sac of works on paper in the other is disconcerting. Their relationship appears defined not by overt subject matter but by the way they collectively force an engagement with space, movement, rhythm and materiality.

Epistemadologies #76-91 (detail)
2001
oil stick on metallic paper



Untitled photograph
2001
photograph: John Reynolds

1. Interview with the author, February 2002.

The positioning of painting as installation is not new. Colin McCahon made paintings to walk by, while Cy Twombly installed works to simultaneously highlight the processes of painting, viewing and reading. These artists nevertheless depend largely on the neutrality of the grounds they inscribe. Conversely, Reynolds highlights the partiality of ground and its significance as object. Examples of figuration and abstraction mingle with text and diagram, but they are rarely privileged from the grounds on which they are overlaid. At times ground as object dominates, as with the exhibition *K Rd to Kingdom Come* and the work *Western springs/bloody angle* 1998, which features a large, but cumbersome looking, double-sided chalkboard. In its well-worn appearance, this object alludes to years of material history as an instrument for the inculcation of knowledge. Thoughts are immediately evoked of classrooms and academies, and countless erasures of explanations, cultural and religious maxims, dissertations, translations, mathematical and scientific formulae and mappings, reinforced by the grid that emerges from within the weave of the fabric surface. The object, through its chalkboard fabric and its varnished and chipped wooden support, exudes a residue of human contact that so completely conditions Reynolds' own overlaid marks.

In its 'readymade-ness' the board recalls Marcel Duchamp's repositioning of functional objects as art, denied in part by the addition of Reynolds' marks. Nevertheless, these marks could be intrinsic to the object itself and are certainly difficult to read in isolation from the board as ground. They also represent schemas borrowed from another context, overlaid maps of a suburban New Zealand park and of a Turkish terrain, where New Zealand soldiers died in numbers. Their presentation might suggest that they are phantoms of someone else's

previous attempts to represent place. It is as if Reynolds has highlighted the trace of two previous erasures of the blackboard, thereby compressing two maps into one. They read as evidence and are as much a conceptual as a painterly device, recalling Joseph Beuys's literal use of blackboards as much as McCahon's metaphorical referencing of them.

As well, in their superimposition, the two maps appear frozen together, not unlike the schemas or 'delays' that appear in Duchamp's *The large glass* 1923, a work that is also referenced in the *Epistemadologies*, in a drawing that features a 'billy boiling'. This work includes the words 'Chocolate Grinder', a direct reference to *The large glass*. Reynolds derived the image of the billy from a newspaper photograph of refugees in Kosovo boiling water in a tin pot. Reynolds was, like Duchamp, "interested in the idea of an everyday event being elevated to describe a mystery of existence".¹ This sense of the elemental and transformational is echoed in the atavistic qualities of the blackboard, the idea that in its materiality and its traces of the past, the board is more than a sign and might also be an instrument of transformation. Set on wheels, this brawny but solemn device is also potentially peripatetic. Reynolds metaphorically links the unwieldy mobility of the object with the elision that is implicit in the diagrammatic compression of two vastly removed locales.

This amalgam of sign, materiality and instrument recalls the way artists like Beuys and Louise Bourgeois work with object and substance to evoke intangible states and hidden forces. Reynolds adds further semiotic layers. With *Western springs/bloody angle* there is an invasive incongruence implied in the forging together of two distant locales,

once a upon a time
Dear wais a Cat
and this cat didnt
Chase mice and
bird one time
a god once came to

Chase the cat
the cat ran and the
god ran after
the cat ran

·T·H·E·E·V·I·d

A WALK THROUGH THE EPISTOMADOLOGIES

MARKMAN ELLIS



EPISTOMADOLOGIES

A hidden lunacy announces itself in the title: epistemology with a little madness. To be mad is to be insane, but the expression comes tinged with contempt. The word mad comes from the Old English, but little else here does. A parasynthetic derivative, as the lexicographers say, the term epistemadologies combines and envelops the madness in classical elements. Investigation is called for. A nearby term is episteme, meaning 'scientific knowledge' or 'a system of knowledge', recalling Foucault's term for the body of ideas that shape the perception of knowledge at a particular period.¹ Another relevant term might be epistemology, which refers to the theory of the grounds of knowledge. Epistemology is a science that asks, rather self-referentially, 'What is knowledge?'. Epistemadology, we might as well say, would put the mad (back) into epistemology. But this is epistomadology, with an o not an e, suggesting the beginning element is epistolary, making a reference to the art of letter-writing, correspondence, epistles. George Seymour, writing in 1763, argued "A fine letter does not consist in saying fine things, but expressing ordinary ones in an uncommon manner. It is the propria communia dicere, the art of giving grace and elegance to familiar occurrences that constitutes the merit of this kind of writing."² Epistemology, then, is the science of conversational communication. The terminal derivative, -ology, is also worth noting. Adapted from Greek (the earliest examples include theology), the terminal element is derived from logos, meaning word, discourse, or to speak (of something). The -ology ending denotes that the department of knowledge is proper to the person who is described ('one who speaks in (a certain way)' or 'one who treats of a certain subject'). The various derivatives of -ology refer to names of sciences or departments of study. Sciences with this ending

1. Foucault, Michel, *Les mots et choses*, Paris, 1966, p.13.
2. Seymour, George, *The instructive letter-writer, and entertaining companion*, London, 1763, p.8.
3. Henri Misson de Valberg, trans. Ozell, *Memoirs and Observations in his Travels over England*, London, 1719.

are thus very common (astrology, geology, zoology, psychology, nomadology). But the suffix -ology has also been freely used in the formation of humorous nonce words (hatology, or the science of hats). From this we make a new word, an ologist, who is a student or professor of an 'ology'. Epistomadology: a student of insane letters.

THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SIGNS

A history of road signs might begin with the simple mileposts that counted off the distance between major cities. In England, examples of milliare posts built by Roman engineers are still extant, as are other later way-marks placed by royal authority on the King's highway. As well as recording distance, such milestones pointed the way not to the next place but to some distant city. To locals, who in times past perhaps never made the journey, the milestone lent its name to the roadway itself: the road to the city became the City Road. In the medieval city, although streets had names, signs naming streets were superfluous as the common people were unable to read. Instead, the people navigated by reference to the major public monuments and landmarks: a church, a gate, a statue, a standpipe. Houses and shops were not numbered, and in consequence sign-boards were the chief means of distinguishing houses. In the city, such signs filled the street from side to side; a French traveller Henri Misson de Valberg observed in 1698 that in London the signs "are commonly very large, and jut out so far, that in some narrow Streets they touch one another; nay, and run cross almost quite to the other side."³ In a satirical essay in *The Spectator* Joseph Addison complained about the "daily Absurdities hung out upon the Sign-posts of this City". "Our streets are filled with blue Boars, black Swans, and red Lions; not to mention flying Pigs,

and Hogs in Armour." Faced with such monsters, Addison ironically proposes a Superintendent or Inspector of Signs, "with full powers to rectify or expunge" whatever is found to be "irregular or defective".⁴

SINGULAR IMPLICIT GRAPHIC NOTICE

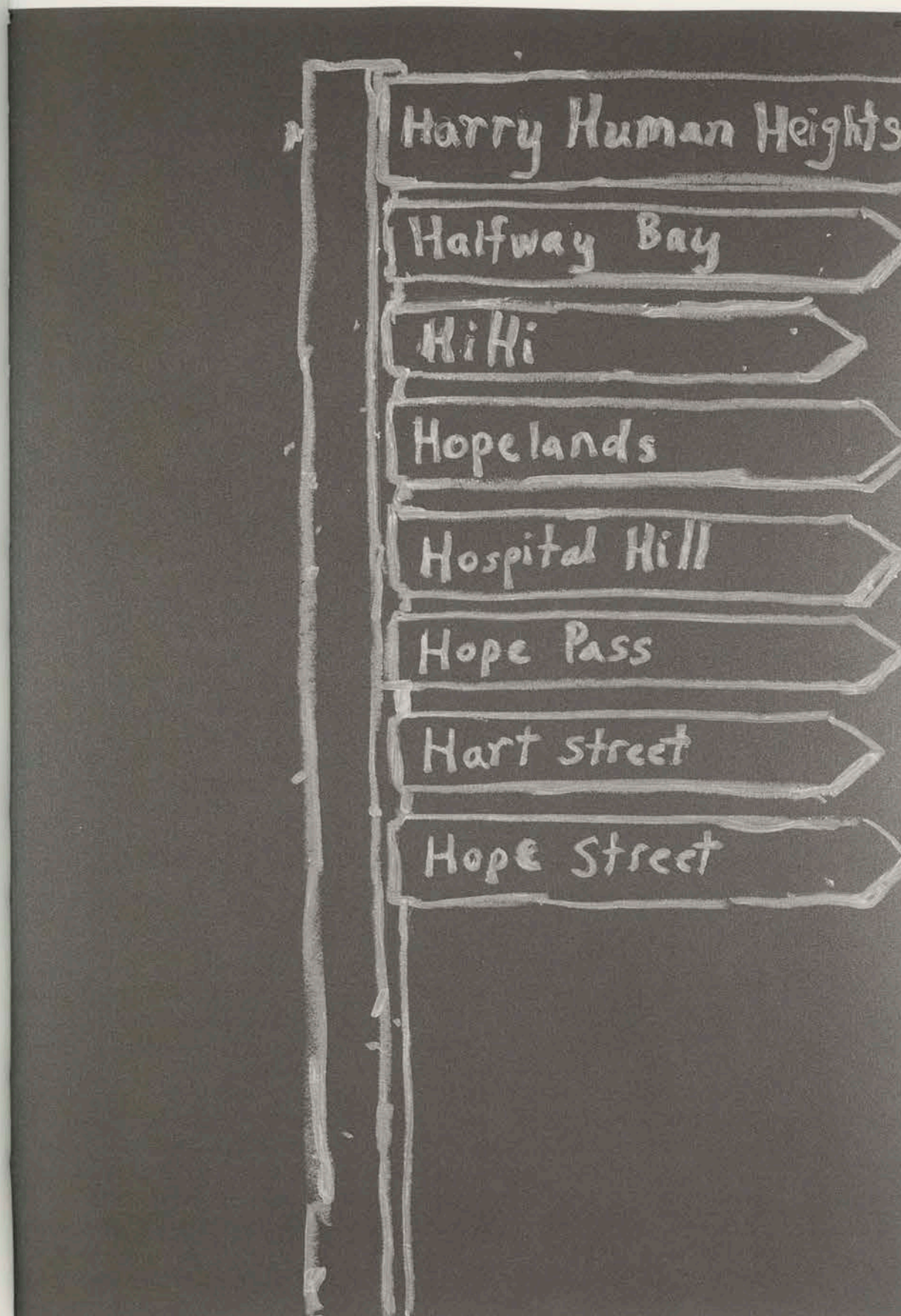
As directions, these signposts give cause for concern. A journey from Cape Turnagain to Current Basin, by way of Chew Tobacco Point and Cloudy Bay, tortuously twists between coasts and islands. The trip across Auckland that makes its way from Harry Human Heights to Hope Street goes from nowhere to nowhere else. Though these places are for real, the signposts are iconic. The signposts have a straightforward yet totemic significance, an everyday architecture that has rarely seemed so fanciful, ironic, poetic. As constructions themselves, the signs and their signposts seem almost a dead metaphor in the landscape, a given rightly overlooked. Road signs are marked by their uniformity and standardisation, not only in New Zealand but also around the world. From an unregulated plethora of milestones, notice-boards and direction indicators bequeathed by history, signage reformers promulgated plans for the international standardisation of road signs in the years after World War I, responding to the increase in long-distance independent travel afforded by the motor car. The League of Nations Permanent Committee on Road Signalling, which established protocols in 1928, set a standard in Europe that was later elaborated by the Vienna Convention on Road Signs concluded in 1973. The global standardisation of the road sign was accomplished by a modern graphic signage system, with its endlessly repeatable components, using internationally compatible specifications, a ubiquitous grid layout and modular symbol-signs.⁵ These reforms exist at the

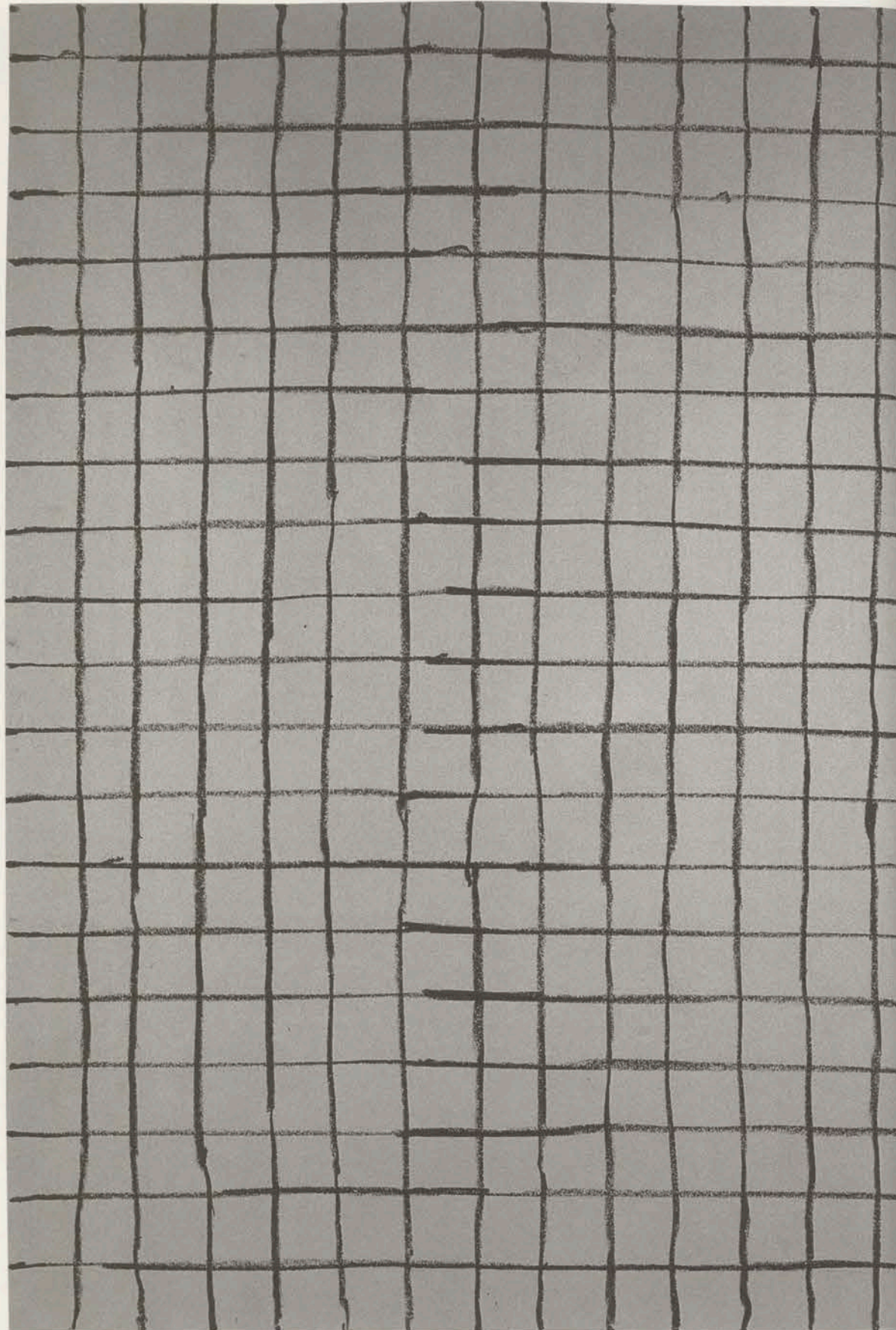
4. Addison, Joseph, *The Spectator*, No. 28, 2 April 1711.
5. McLendon, Charles and Blackstone, Mick, *Signage: Graphic Communications in the Built World*, New York: McGraw Hill, 1982, p.9.
6. Frink, Hannah, 'That sidling sight: wondering about the art of Rosalie Gascoigne', in *Art & Australia*, 37: 4, 1997.
7. Bernstein, Charles, 'Inventing wordness: Gertrude Stein's philosophical investigations', in *Gertrude Stein Advanced* (ed. Richard Kostelanetz), London: McFarland, 1990, p.59.

intersection between the artistic interests of Modernist high culture and the practical utilitarianism of road users, and remain proximate to the scene of imagination. The creative potential of the standardised road sign has been realised in the word and number paintings of Colin McCahon from the 1950s and 1960s, or the parquetry constructions that recycle fragmented road signs of the Australian sculptor Rosalie Gascoigne in the 1990s.⁶

THE CODE OF URBAN SUBDIVISION

Road signs, recording the simple vernacular of place names, suggest a concrete poetry, akin to what Charles Bernstein has called a "poetics of wordness".⁷ In Auckland, names for new roads are decided by an elegant regulatory framework, the Code for Urban Subdivision. The chief artisan of the machinery of naming is the Administrative Officer (Street Naming and Numbering). The statutory power behind this arrangement is section 319A of the Local Government Act of 1974, although some of the powers named there have been delegated to Community Boards. The procedure for naming new roads is outlined in Section 2.7 ('Names for New Roads') and elaborated in Appendix C. The guidelines for names suggest anxieties about the processes of creative production. That names must not duplicate any existing road name provides a powerful motor of originality. That homophones (weta/wetter) are to be avoided suggests a distrust of punning and other forms of bohemian and subversive humour. That names should have an appropriate meaning identifies the friction of moral propriety. That names should be "distinctive and/or attractive" suggests that imagination or fancy might be invoked, but the requirement that the "interest value" should not be fleeting suggests that the weight of enduring history is thought to be heavy and stifling.





ENIGMA OF CARTOGRAPHY

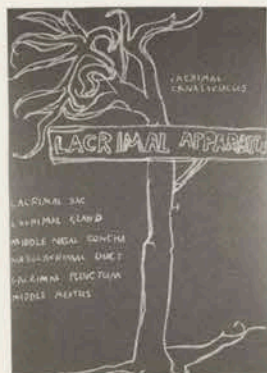
In the 1970s I lived on the borders of Remuera and Meadowbank in my parents' 1930s stucco bungalow. This was a period of urban infill as large sections were subdivided, and new Scando-Californian houses were built amongst the genteel colonial villas that predominated in the area. French doors gave way to ranch-sliders. Over the hill and across the main road, there was a large stretch of swampy scrubland (Waatarua), on part of which the Remuera Golf Club had been built in 1933. Hanging around there we would help the golfers find their lost balls in the long grass, or go searching for sunken balls in the frog-pond. This urban pastoral was disturbed when a new housing development was planned on the land, which was owned by a nearby Anglican theological college, St John's College. Over the course of a few months, large machines contoured the gorse-covered land into pleasingly smooth bumps. Drainage pipes were laid, and a long series of gently curving streets laid out, each complete with footpaths and street signs. For some years afterwards, many of these remained undeveloped, as if the land had sprouted a graceful spaghetti of roads and intersections amongst the scrub and long grasses. When we were young, these curving, empty roads were ideal for cycling or for contests of skateboarding prowess. A few years later, once we were at high school, their unpopulated quiet made them ideal locations for assignations and park-ups. The first area to be built upon was a main road, which had been given the sublimely confident name of Grand Drive, perhaps in echo of the golfers on the fairway across the fence. The continuation of this road, still largely undeveloped when we moved away at the end of the 1970s, was called — with a curious diminuendo — Norman Lesser Drive. Harry Human Heights curved gently off on the right.

THE CO-ORDINATES OF A GRID

A grid is a pattern of repetition. Twentieth-century art history is full of grids. The grid has been discovered in cubism, De Stijl, and minimalism; and by artists from Malevich to Jasper Johns, from Sol Le Witt to Donald Judd. As Rosalind Krauss concludes in her essay in *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (1985) the grid has been "emblematic of the modernist ambition within the visual arts", announcing modern art's "will to silence, its hostility to literature, to narrative, to discourse".⁸ To Krauss, the grid lowers a barrier between the arts of vision and those of language, immuring the visual arts into the prison-house of visuality. The grid proposes the modern artwork as flattened, geometricised, ordered and antimimetic. A grid, as a pattern of repetition, makes itself resistant to repetition, as one grid is much like any other. In this sense, Krauss suggests, grids don't progress, grids don't have history. Yet, here: grids made up of the patterns seen in reinforced glass (refracted by dimpled light), the panes of a window, the latitude and longitude marks of a topographical atlas, the northings and eastings of the ordnance survey, floor-plan diagrams, the grids suggested by chicken wire, by parquetry, tessellations and floor tiles, by wooden floorboards, from Mondrian, from a dishcloth, a child's exercise book, of a city seen from an economy class seat heading for LAX (Mangere, Apia), a spider's web.

SIGNS TAKEN FOR WONDERS

The signs, they all point in the same direction (ominously, to the right). There is here none of the indecision of crossroads. I'm reminded of those signposts of a different order, such as direction pointers (as at Cape Reinga or Lands End), pointing



Epistomadologies #1-75 (detail)
2001
oil stick on metallic paper

18 mournfully to places far away (Tokyo 14,000 miles, Sydney 1,500 miles, or whatever). Amsterdam, Antarctica, Cape Town, London. Distance is made a levelling nonsense, travel merely the potential of direction. Such signposts point only the way to the shortest distance. Anyone would have to go another way to get there. In the signposts of *Epistomadologies*, you travel in one direction to get there, which is as good a way as many others, though not always the most direct.

RECURRENCE AND EXCEPTIONALS

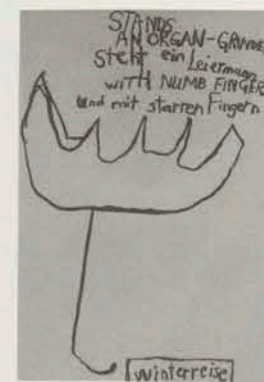
A cumulus of dotted line rectangles; a tree torso derived from a Spanish fresco in the Prado; a billy boiling; child's writing practice; an accident shaped like an umbrella; a poor description of a broken spider web; a title derived from a 19th century photograph; a Texas night club called the Crystal Bar; constellations of haze; anagrams; extracts from unwritten dictionaries; quotations from Gertrude Stein's *Tender Buttons* (1914); the Glass Fountain at the Crystal Palace; a hurdy-gurdy man; notes from a journey to Donald Judd's art foundation at Marfa, Mystery Lights, Texas; a diagram for walking round a gallery; extracts from a doctor's copy of *Pathology Today*; what happens when a bat meets a whale; biological specimens glimpsed in a museum closed for renovations; a background shaped like Richmond Road.

THE ROUGH MUSIC OF REMEMBERING

The series, vastly elongated, suggests pedestrian action: a walk past some works on paper, a circuit around the gallery. It is suggested that the sequence of the works is not critical, but poised: it matters that you see them in order, but the order doesn't matter. There are many ways

9. Kightly, Charles, *The Customs and Ceremonies of Britain*, London: Thames & Hudson, 1986, pp.48-51.
10. Wendell Holmes, Oliver, 'The Physiology of Walking', in *Pages from an Old Volume of Life*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1889, p.124.
11. de Certeau, Michel, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984, p.97.

to walk around a room or other bounded space. A useful example is given by the medieval practice of 'beating the bounds', practised on Rogation-Tide three days before Ascension Day. Clergy traditionally led this perambulation, in which the members of a parish were said to 'beat the bounds' by processioning around the perimeter of the parish, re-establishing boundary markers, and breaking down fences and walls erected across rights of way. Customarily, this was accompanied by ritualised ceremonies, including dressing up, arcane drinking games and rough music. Participants reinforced a sense of belonging by establishing the edges of their community. To remember such vital knowledge, children were 'remembered' of the parish boundary by being up-ended or thrown into nettle beds at key points where the borderline changed direction.⁹ Your perimeter here is the walls of the gallery, and your visit defines the bounds that need beating. The specific physical process produces the effects that you see, as it is unlikely that all walks will be alike. Your walk provides the sequence. Even though the walking remains unread, your walk makes its own narration, giving the series a plot and structure, creating metaphors and connections between disparate parts of the series. The peripatetic tradition of Western philosophy recalls not only the practice of thinking while walking, but walking as a form of thinking. In 'The Physiology of Walking' (1889) Oliver Wendell Holmes argued that walking is "a perpetual falling with a perpetual self-recovery".¹⁰ In *The Practice of Everyday Life* Michel de Certeau derives from the practices of walking a series of "pedestrian speech acts" that pronounce the space that is the city.¹¹ Wandering, window shopping, walking to work are all real systems whose existence in fact makes up the city, whether their paths are well trodden or very faint.



Epistomadologies #1-75 (detail)
2001
oil stick on metallic paper

WALKING AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN REACH

Walking past works on paper, arranged on a grid just one module deep. Narrative emerges by a collationary systematics: repetition, augmentation, development. The movement between individual units of meaning is accompanied by semantic drift (slowly morphing forms, vaguely remembered quotations, found images). Sources are revealed and concealed by allusion and footnoting: a child's drawing, an architect's diagram, the poetry of Gertrude Stein. The *Epistomadologies* emerge as a cloud of knowledge, half remembered, half recalled: fleeting glimpses of an order that can only be gestured towards. The series, suggesting an endless augmentation, is predicated upon a logic of the sublime (it presages more than it depicts). The last offers an ellipsis, not an end but a rest-point. Reference might be made to the ideal of the writerly text that Roland Barthes describes in *S/Z* composed of blocks of words or images linked by multiple paths, chains, or trails in an open-ended, perpetually unfinished textuality described by the terms link, node, network, web, and path. "In this ideal text," says Barthes, "the networks are many and interact, without any one of them being able to surpass the rest; this text is a galaxy of signifiers, not a structure of signifieds; it has no beginning; it is reversible; we gain access to it by several entrances, none of which can be authoritatively declared to be the main one; the codes it mobilises extend as far as the eye can reach, they are indeterminable [. . .]; the systems of meaning can take over this absolutely plural text, but their number is never closed, based as it is on the infinity of language".¹² Traversing such a text, reading creates in each meaning a flourishing incompleteness. Lyrical fragments add up, but not to robust wholes. In the serial structure, meaning accumulates, motifs recur. Narrative emerges by repetition, rather than by the causal arrangements of plot.

12. Barthes, Roland, *S/Z* trans. Richard Miller, London: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1974, pp.5-6.

A procession of re-workings and re-visitations 'remember' meanings up-ended at key points where the direction changes. Without causation, organisation emerges on an ephemeral organic principle that might be called drift-work.



Pagework, John Reynolds

SIGNPOSTS TO NOWHERE FRANCIS POUND



John Reynolds' signposts arrive most numerous in several series of drawings made between 2000 and 2001. Unbelievably, the bizarre names lettered on the signs of one of the series – the itself bizarrely named *Epistomadologies 1–75* 2001 and *76–91* 2001 – are taken from New Zealand street maps. Taken from maps they may be, but they are not much help in finding a way. As Reynolds himself admits: "They all point right, they signal meaningfulness and direction, and yet their destination is never arrived at."¹ No wonder, with names of such a manic elevation as Sky High Road, Eulogy Place and Universal Drive. Or is it that the traveller is forever frozen by melancholy – mania's downside – overwhelmed by 'Mt. Solitary', 'Mt. Misery' and 'Mt. Hopeless';² sunk in the weariness of living, in the face of 'Doubtful River', 'Torpor', 'BACKWATER', 'Small Beer' and 'Folly'?

Reynolds perfectly describes the general tone: "I've used odd New Zealand street names. They have an allegorical, liturgical quality. Harry Human Heights through to Hope Street. Those names are august and portentous, and yet there's a buffoonery – something laughable and calamitous about them."³ *August and portentous?* Styx River Place, Shades Arcade, Hopeland, Mt. Aspiring. *Calamitous?* Anxiety Point, Escape Reef, Dark Summit. *Laughable?* All are laughable, just as all are calamitous, but some more obviously so. Excellent Street, Nobs Lane, Shaggery Road, Duffers Saddle, Apes Road. *Liturgical?* Ascension Place, Faith Grove, Christian Road, Cross Street, Pulpit Rock Road. Nothing arcane about *that* symbolism: this is Christian country.

A related group of drawings made for *Landfall* 200, November 2000, bears the marvellously resonant title *Paradise Road*. Paradise, in this context, means not a cubic city in the sky,

1. John Reynolds, in Matthews Philip, 'John will be your guide: searching for the whereabouts of John Reynolds', *NZ Listener*, 14 July 2001, p.51.
2. This group of mountain names comes from Reynolds' *Epistomadologies 76–91*, 2001.
3. John Reynolds, op. cit., p.51.
4. The name Glenorchy appears, split in two, in Reynolds' frontispiece to *Landfall* 200, directly below a sign saying 'Folly'.

pink and fluttering with flags, as painted by some Quattrocento Master, but a small town somewhere near Glenorchy in the southern half of the South Island.⁴ Early last century, you could take a tourist bus there via Paradise Road. The word 'Paradise' was lettered on the bus's brow – a remarkably Reynolds-like conjunction of the mundane and the transcendent.

Throughout the *Paradise Road* series, there is a tendency to the deflationary, as with the case of Paradise township, where we smile at the disparity between the grandeur of the name and the modesty of the named in the case of the Paradise bus. At other times, the disparity (the sheer, mad oddity) comes from the conjunction of the likely and the unlikely in a road sign's referents. 'The Unfordable Stretch of Water', 'Ohope', 'Tolaga Bay', 'Thin Air', one sign reads, with a wonky pointer to each destination. Here, surely, 'The Unfordable Stretch of Water' and 'Thin Air' are unlikely road signs, useful warnings though they might be, while 'Ohope' and 'Tolaga Bay' are perfectly plausible. Our delight is in the way all these weirdly mixed names rub together, creating a novel poetic object. Language itself is allowed to speak. Reynolds' art, here as elsewhere, displays a distinctly literary sensibility.

However, not all is literature in *Paradise Road*. A multitude of art references appears, mostly to McCahon: 'Tolaga Bay', '90 Mile Beach', 'French Bay', 'I–XIV', 'DRY Bones', and 'The Comet', for instance, all of which are McCahon inscriptions and titles. Elsewhere, we get: 'Sfumato' – Leonardo's blurring technique, cause of a fertile uncertainty of expression and edge; and 'Marfa Lights' – a reference to American sculptor Donald Judd's vast museum to himself at Marfa in the Texas desert. In these cases, even when a place *is* named, it is



Rita Angus
Cass 1936
oil on canvas on board
courtesy of the Robert McDougall
Art Gallery and the artist's estate

place as already transmuted by art, or, as in the Marfa example, it is place as brought to our attention by the presence there of art. Before Judd, who had heard of Marfa? Just as today far more people know Rita Angus's Cass 1936, with its station sign saying 'Cass', than know the place of that name. Place, or plausibility of place, seems to be disintegrating, as art replaces the world it had once hoped to describe.

Clearly, these Reynolds signs are some way from the station sign in Angus's Cass.⁵ There, the name of the place, 'Cass', is literally inscribed as the work's largest signature. It is a potent legend. A more perfect answer may hardly be imagined to the belief of the New Zealand poet, and theorist of Regionalism, Allen Curnow, that: "the signature of a region, like that of a witness written below the poet's, can attest value in the work."⁶ In fact, with Cass, the painting goes even further than Curnow requires, since the signature of the region is written above the signature of the painter, and written much larger, and written twice — it gets top billing.⁷

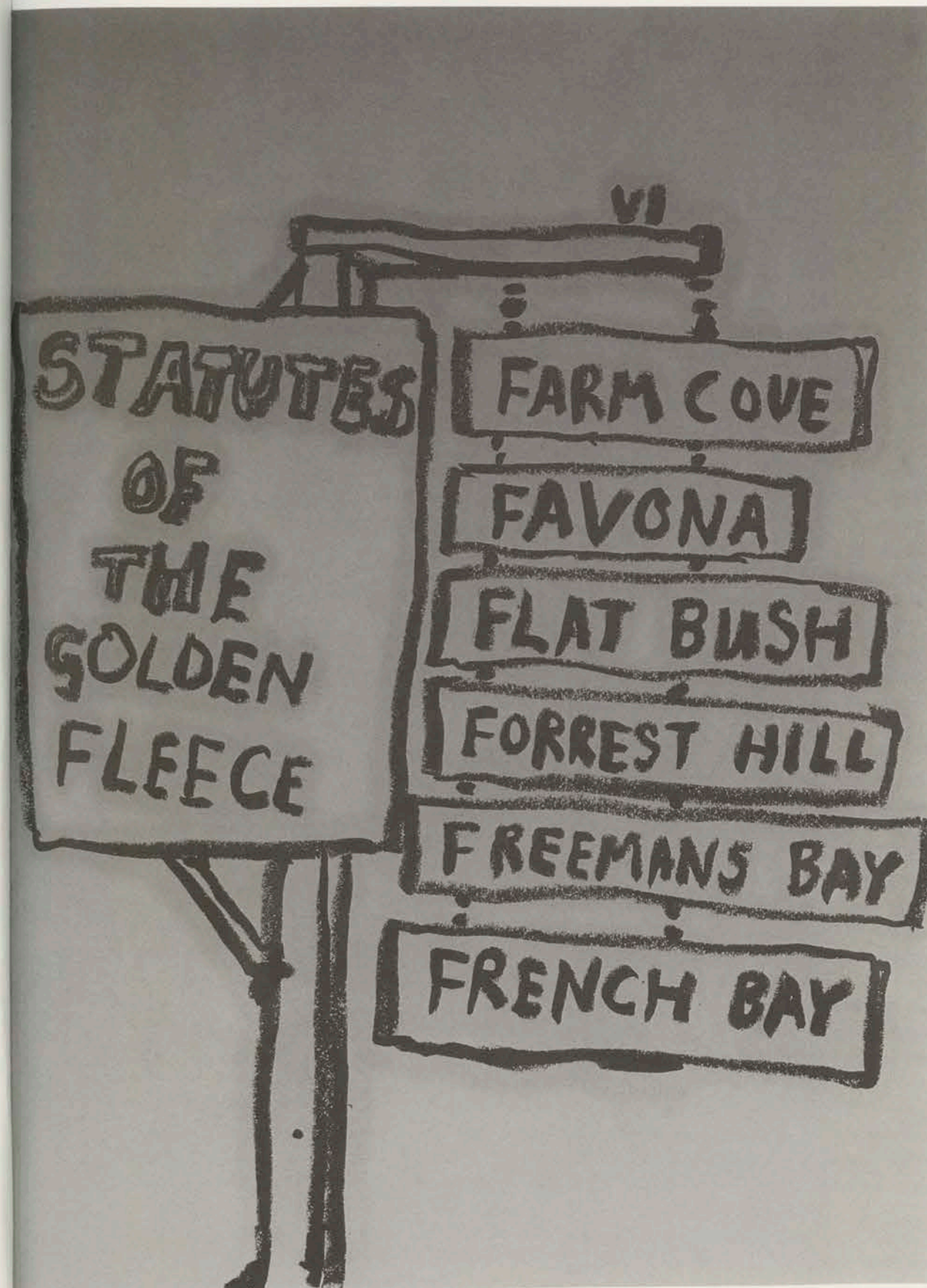
With Reynolds, we still have the 'signature' of place, but no longer the place; and we never will have it, only a perpetual pointing towards. Symptomatically, one Reynolds signpost points twice to Happy Valley — but in exactly opposite directions. How then to find this place where we will be happy at last? And how to find the Regionalists' much-vaunted New Zealand real? As Reynolds remarks: "There's a constant sense of refusal. The signposts refusing to describe a destination."⁸ There is everywhere, in the words of an Epistomadologies inscription: "A taste for . . . whatever has least relation to reality". Least relation!

5. For a much fuller account of place-name inscriptions in 20th century New Zealand art, see my *Signatures of Place*, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, 1991.
6. Curnow, Allen, "Introduction", *The Penguin Book of New Zealand Verse*, 1960, p.51. The passage is prefaced in its original place by the remark: "Regionalism is not much respected in criticism today", so adding a faintly querulous note to the generally admonitory tone. Perhaps the pungency of the passage derives in part from its questioning and agonistic relation to the Internationalism of the Centre. That is to say, the force of Regionalism is a counter-force, and gets its energy from being so.
7. Closely akin to the station sign of Angus's Cass is the 'Titahi Bay Club' inscription on the hotel sign of Harry Linley Richardson's *Mrs Thornley, Titahi Bay* c. 1931-32; the 'Fish and Chips to Take Away' and 'Maketu Fisheries' of Robin White's *Fish and Chips, Maketu* 1975; the place-name prominently lettered on the door of the foreground truck of White's *Mangaweka* 1973; and the closest correlative of all to the station sign of Angus's Cass, the station sign of White's *Mana Railway Station* 1970. It is exactly this to which the Regionalist signature of place seeks access: a power for which there is no equivalent English term, the *mana* inhering in New Zealand place.

We could hardly be further from Curnow's injunction to the New Zealand poet to "seek forms as immediate in experience as the island soil under his feet."⁹ Nothing is immediate here, there is nothing under one's feet. Instead, in the words of a particularly perverse Reynolds epigraph: "Every landscape is located nowhere".¹⁰ Everything is sliding away.

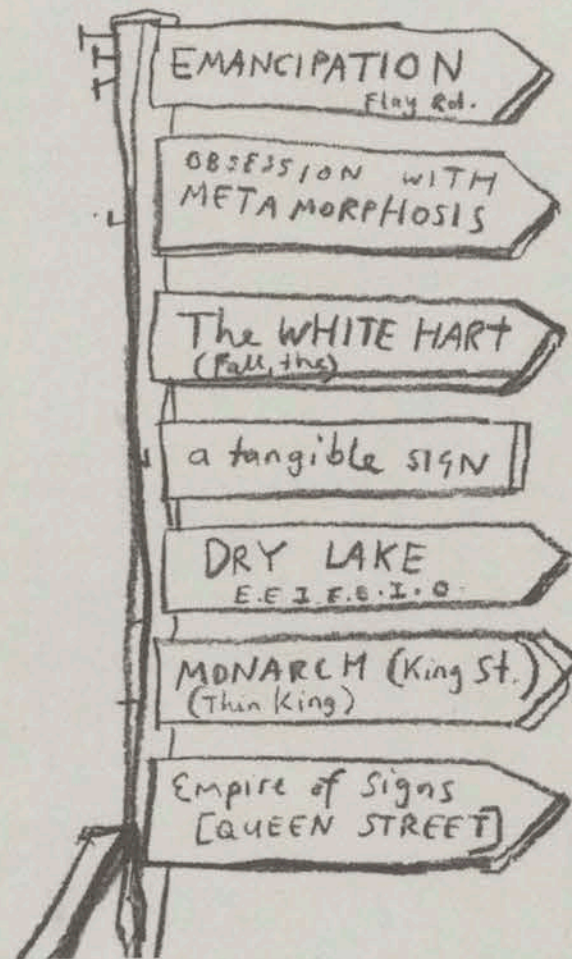
Other signs point less to place than to emotional states, or, rather, to such states as place. One sign cluster announces to a suitably grey paper sky: 'Angst', 'Ennuï', 'Weltschmerz', 'Cafard', 'Taedium Vitae', 'Anomie'. It is as if the road sign, having offered religious instruction in the McCahonian manner, and a lesson in art history, with a special emphasis on McCahon, is now giving Nature a lesson in human sadness. To the traveller's question, 'Where should we go to feel less sad?', it answers: 'There is nowhere else. Though you can, thanks to me, have your sadness in the language of other places'. Things are so hopeless it is funny.

As if to add insult to injury, the fictionality and the provisionality of Reynolds' enterprise are everywhere marked. 'Make Do, Make It Up, Make Light Of, Make Over, Make One's Mark, Make Tracks', one sign strangely reads, as if instructing us how to make the works before our eyes. This is not what we expect from road signs. So, is to 'Make Over' merely to inscribe the Regionalists' signatures of place anew? Not at all. The differences between Reynolds' inscriptions and theirs are more striking than the continuities. Instead of the place-name sign dissimulated as a real detail of a real landscape, as with Angus, with Reynolds we get the sign and nothing but. What ends up being stressed is the very sign-ness of signs.



Statutes of the Golden Fleece
2000
from the *Paradise road signs*
oil pastel on paper

vital



John Reynolds *Vital signs* 2001

hothouse spring schedule 2001

Hothouse Spring Schedule 2001
Govett-Brewster Art Gallery

Exacerbating this – here, as everywhere in Reynolds' *oeuvre* – is the way the act of drawing makes no attempt to hide itself, engaging us instead with its spasmodic and somehow dextrous wobble and dash, stepping out before the footlights, as if to perform itself into being before our eyes, before falling back into nothingness. Stressed, too, is the play of *verbal* language. It draws attention to itself by behaving so absurdly, or by talking dirty (Shaggery Road); or, unabashedly, it points to its own parts, as with the two *Paradise Road* signs that direct us, against the flush of a paper sunset, towards 'Saxon Syllables' and 'TROUBLED SYNTAX'. Every Reynolds sign is – in the helpful phrase of the signpost in the drawing *Vital Signs* 2001 – 'a tangible sign'. *Tangible*. Material. Not to be seen through. Nothing here is transparent to place.

*

The literary theorist J. Hillis Miller once wrote: "You can get to the place by the way of its name."¹¹ The place-name, in this way of thinking, is a kind of signpost assuring us that there is indeed a place and a direction in which one might find one's way – that one's country is *not*, after all, as was so often feared by its Regionalist observers, an unmappable, unplaceable, unwritable, unspeakable, unpaintable terrain. Reynolds puts paid to all such hope. Admittedly, at first sight, he might seem with his manic signage to obey that further Curnow injunction: "to learn, one way or another, to name those 'nameless native hills', that loom across [our] inward or outward vision".¹² He might seem to respond to the complaint of New Zealand poet and *Landfall* editor Charles Brasch, that: "The plains are nameless and the cities cry for meaning . . .".¹³

8. John Reynolds, op. cit., p.51.
9. Curnow, Allen, 'Introduction', *A Book of New Zealand Verse: 1925-45*, Christchurch: Caxton Press, 1945, p.17.
10. Epigraph from Fernando Pessoa, inscription by John Reynolds, *Eureka School: John Reynolds*, Manukau City (Auckland): Te Tuhi, the mark, 2001.
11. Miller, J. Hillis, *Topographies*, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1995, p.4.
12. Curnow, Allen, *The Penguin Book of New Zealand Verse*, op. cit., p.66.
13. Brasch, Charles, 'The Silent Land', in Allen Curnow, *A Book of New Zealand Verse: 1925-1945*, 1945, p.149.
14. Curnow, Allen, *The Penguin Book of New Zealand Verse*, op. cit., p.17.

But when Reynolds names, or when he reiterates the already given names of the named, offering them as found objects nailed to his posts, he does no more than bring to our consciousness the sheer arbitrariness of all naming acts. Names, we see, reveal nothing about Nature – let alone about the New Zealand Nature whose essence the Regionalists sought, and everything about the Culture doing the naming. We are shown, for instance, how lugubriously 'liturgical' New Zealand used to be, as if nearly everything here had been named in the monotonous harping on through the centuries of a single Christian voice.

"Reality must be local and special at the point where we pick up the traces," Curnow famously says, "as manifold as the signs we follow, and the routes we take."¹⁴ With Reynolds, the signs are certainly manifold enough, but there is no reality left to which they might point, and no routes to take to it. If anything 'local and special' *does* appear, it can only be in the signs themselves, in all their pleasing grotesqueness and pathetic hopes. Admittedly, one of Reynolds' signs does claim to point to a 'Local Object' – a sign every Regionalist painting needs. But, in fact, with that sign, as with all these signs, *nothing* is pointed to, or – it amounts to the same thing – *everything* is. Outside the sign there is nothing but empty paper, plain white, or commercially printed in a technicolour orange, yellow or pink, smoothly gradated from pale at the base to dense at the zenith, and thus readable as a sky at sunset or dawn. As if to encourage this reading, one sign declares 'ORANGE SUNSET,' while one of its peers points to 'The Violet Hour'.

We have come, as another sign wittily says, to 'A Pretty Pass' (how nice this mixture of a geographical term for a narrow

right hand page: *K Rd* (detail)
1995
oil and acrylic on canvas

26

passage through mountains with a saying for a bad state of affairs!). Representation is 'Fiasco' — to use yet another sign's word. Or rather, since we cannot know what that or any sign points to, all is fiasco, life, death, the arrangement of the stars, everything.

It needs to be said, too, that in Reynolds' toponymy¹⁵, what is named may be 'special,' as Curnow would say, but not much of it is particularly 'local'. This is so both in the case of the signs Reynolds invents, and in the case of those he finds on a map. One of the invented kind names the Argentine writer (Jorge Luis) 'Borges'; another alludes to works by the French conceptual artist Marcel Duchamp ('Chocolate Grinder' and 'Occulist Witnesses'); while another conjures up French writer and theorist of signs Roland Barthes, by giving the title of one of his books in the first half of the sign: 'Empire of Signs (QUEEN STREET)'. In Reynolds' dispensation, as seldom under the Regionalist regime, a signpost may freely point to places and persons outside New Zealand — and this even at the same moment as uttering the street address (QUEEN STREET) of the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, itself an 'Empire of Signs', and the host of the exhibition *K Rd to Kingdom Come*, an exhibition of Reynolds' own 'Empire of Signs'.¹⁶

Such is the truth of a cultural and intellectual space without borders: a place inhabited by Joyce, Borges, Pessoa, Nietzsche, Duchamp, Judd, as well as by McCahon — and this is just to mention the names named or alluded to in the works treated here. In the same breath, Reynolds' art can pronounce, as the *Epistomadologies* and *Paradise Road* works do, such New Zealand place-names as 'Anawhata', 'Aramoana', or 'Three Knights Islands', 'The Mists of North Piha', '90 Mile Beach', 'Lion Rock' and 'Young Nick's Head'; plus the already

15. Toponymy: the study of the place-names of a region.

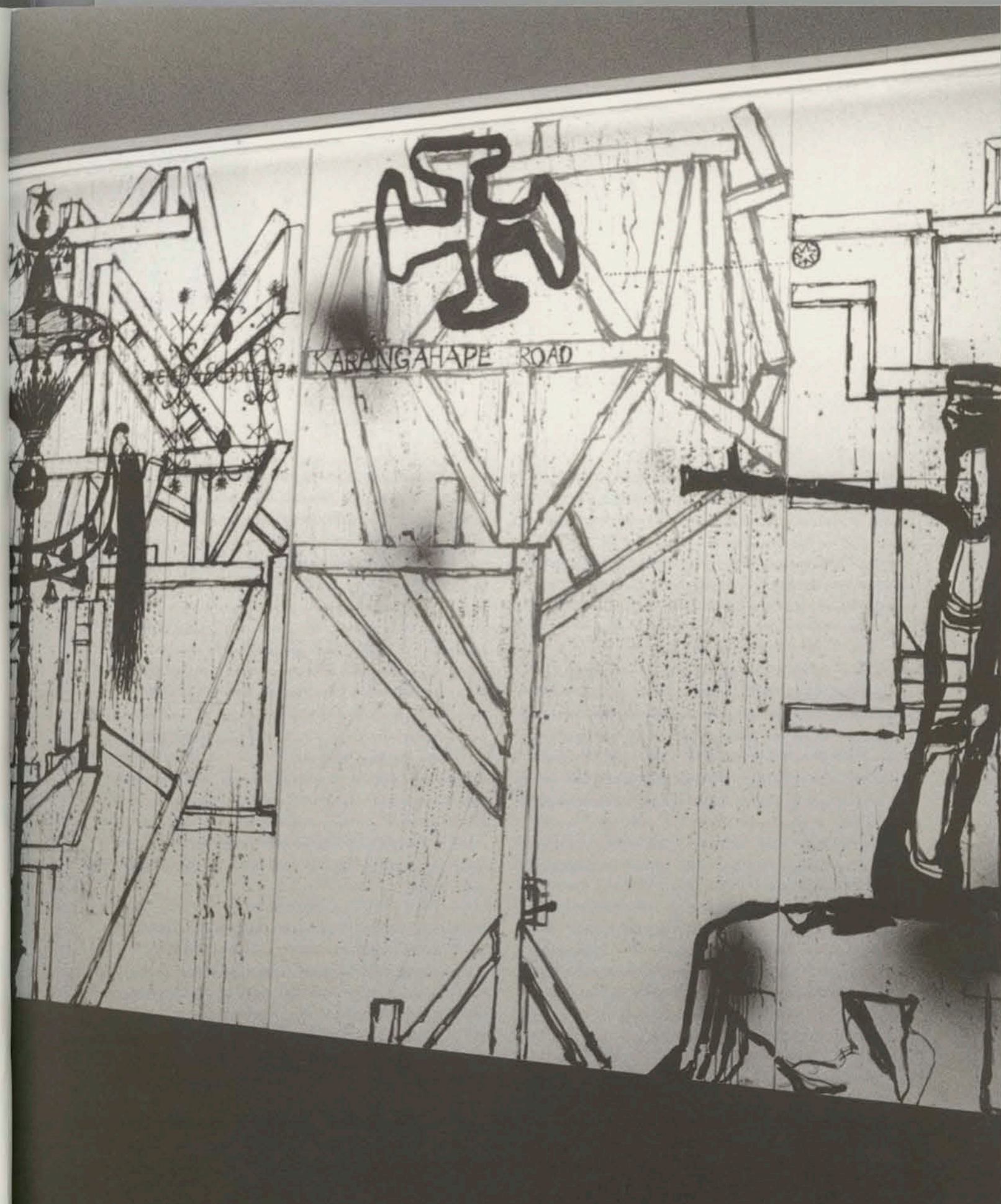
16. The drawing *Vital Signs* was made specifically for the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery newsletter. 'QUEEN STREET' may also be taken to refer to the main street of Auckland, where Reynolds lives, or to any of the many Queen Streets in New Zealand, and throughout the remnants of what was the British Empire.

mentioned 'Tolaga Bay', 'Ohope', and 'French Bay'. It is not, then, a matter simply of reversing the Regionalist argument, and erecting a counter-aesthetic that celebrates the foreign and special as opposed to Curnow's 'local and special'. Rather, attention has simply shifted somewhere else. It has turned to the sign, to the very gesture of its pointing to place, though place itself is not to be found.

*

Now that his current work has made place-naming so unavoidable a topic, we are more likely to notice earlier instances of Reynolds' place-name titles. As is always the case, an artist's later work changes the earlier work; or, what is perhaps the same thing, it teaches us to read it differently. The new work, that is to say, creates its own antecedents. Let us glance, then, at the oldest work in the *K Rd to Kingdom Come* exhibition. *K. Rd.* 1995 uses the standard vernacular diminutive form for Karangahape Road, Auckland. *K. Rd.* is a place of prostitutes; drag queens; porn shops; strip joints; massage parlours; as well as ethnic food and clothes shops; coffee bars and art galleries, including Artspace, the host of the *Harry Human Heights* exhibition. Attempts to gentrify the road have failed. Its shabbiness seems irreparable. Every Aucklander knows where it is.

In *K. Rd.*, the whole pictured construction seems to have been cobbled together out of what used to be called 2" x 1" pine, and by someone with a minimal acquaintance with carpentry. It holds, but only for the moment. On one of its precarious horizontals is the painting's single inscription: 'KARANGAHAPE ROAD'. Architecture has always been a big theme for Reynolds, but the rickety chaos of the structure here could hardly be



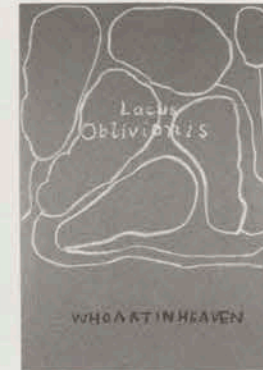
28 further from the harmonious order of the temple and palace ground plans he commonly includes in his paintings – the Mosque of Cordoba, the Temple of Knossos, Chartres Cathedral, the Villa of the Mysteries, Pompeii – as the trace of fallen but once splendid civilisations. This civilisation, to judge by its present monument, can hardly be called splendid; it is a botched job; and it seems about to fall before even fully begun.

Of the other six large paintings in the exhibition, Western springs/bloody angle 1998, recalls an Auckland suburb and an offshore military catastrophe. One side of this cumbersome double-sided chalkboard shows a rough plan of Auckland's Western Springs Park over the top of which is an inverted map of the ANZAC disaster on Gallipoli peninsula in Turkey, with the names of places where New Zealand soldiers fought, and the name of the battlefield, Bloody Angle, that gives the painting half of its title. The reverse side reveals a trinity of linear Xs – angles, in other words. Here, then, the title refers both to the local and the foreign. Similarly, the grandly titled Nietzsche on Whites Beach 1996 refers to a West Coast Auckland beach, as well as to the German philosopher. Irreparably, it seems, the local is contaminated by the foreign – and vice versa. It is as if in this wild place of the New Zealand local, the great negating figure in the philosophy of the West might be seen, striding across the blue-black iron sands, their bright mica grains scattering about him like stars. Reynolds is right, of course: all of Western thought comes to Whites Beach – with Reynolds, as with every Western visitor.

Let us amuse ourselves with some simple statistics. In K Rd to Kingdom Come there are but four place-name titles out of

12, a deplorable proportion by Regionalist standards. We get even worse results, from the Regionalist point of view, if we count the foreigners as against the New Zealanders named or alluded to by the inscriptions in Reynolds' paintings and drawings. On the New Zealand side, in the works discussed here (a random enough sample), we have seen McCahon alluded to. That comes to one New Zealander. As for references to foreigners: the series title Epistomadologies alludes to the Irish writer James Joyce; the Argentinian writer Borges is named and pointed to by a sign; the American writer Gertrude Stein is quoted; the Portuguese writer Fernando Pessoa is quoted from and named by inscription, as is the Romanian writer E. M. Cioran (Drawn and Quartered); the German Nietzsche is named in a title; the Frenchman Duchamp is alluded to by naming his works; and the American Judd is alluded to also. Finally, the sign 'Young Nick's Head', though it refers to a New Zealand place-name, also recalls the sharp eyes of a young English sailor exploring New Zealand's coasts with Captain Cook. The final score is foreigners eight, citizens one.

This relative paucity of local signature should be compared with Reynolds' Regionalist predecessors like Angus or Woollaston, whose titles almost invariably pronounce the name of a New Zealand place or person, and whose untitled works can almost always be identified as representing a New Zealand site or citizen. If titles may be taken as a convenient indicator of content, it must seem that for Reynolds the depiction of place is no longer the central artistic concern. Paradoxically, this remains so, even despite the innumerable place-names that Reynolds is now inscribing all over the faces of his works.



Lacus Oblivionis
2001
from the *Mare Insularum* series
oil stick on metallic paper

Amongst the signpost drawings of Epistomadologies 76–91 2001, another series in the exhibition, the opening drawing intones a litany of New Zealand mountains.

Mt. Aspiring
Mt. D'Archaic
Mt. Hopeless
Mt. Longsight
Mt. Misery
Mt. Patriarch
Mt. Solitary
Mt. Technical
Mt. Tinline
Mangles River
Memory Rock
Mid Dome

However, the next drawing names Scottish distilleries of single malt whiskey.

Another drawing of Epistomadologies 76–91 is inscribed with the place-name, Vincennes Asylum: The Kitchen, from the title of a 19th century French photograph; another takes its title, Hookey Alf of Whitechapel, from that of a 19th century English photograph of a rag and bone man from the London suburb of Whitechapel. In another drawing, a signpost points to 'Church Road' and 'Reynolds Street': the first the name and address of a winery and the second a barely disguised signature (or 'SIGNATR', as another pointing sign here has it) in the guise of an innocent street name – the artist's signature, that is to say, feigned as the signature of a place. The signpost of this drawing points also to 'DON QUIJOTE', the huge name of a Swedish ship the artist once saw looming through the windows

17. Burke, Edmond, *A Philosophical Enquiry Into Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*, London, 1757, Menston: Scolar Press, 1970.

29 of his Auckland gallerist; and to two more destinations even more distant than Sweden, or the Spain of Don Quixote, 'Kingdom Come' and 'Milky Way'.

Finally, with the 20-sheet drawing Mare Insularum 2001, not only are we not in New Zealand, we are no longer on the earth at all. Reynolds is 'off the planet', as they say. He has gone to the moon. With appropriate lunacy, the Lord's Prayer appears in caption-length fragments at the base of each vertical panel, with an attendant name of a lunar feature (Lakes, bays, promontories) floated above, and overlaid upon a cartographic grid. Among these names the old Latin names have extraordinary beauty and melancholy: Lacus Oblivionis/Lake of Oblivion; Mare Vaporum/Sea of Vapour; Mare Cogitarum/Sea of Thought; Marsh of Sleep (no Latin given); Marsh of Decay . . .

Beauty, says Edmund Burke, the great 18th century theorist of the Beautiful and the Sublime, affects the observer like a warm bath, "by relaxing the solids of the whole system into melting and languor".¹⁷ In Mare Insularum, however, lest we should too much relax our solids, there is a sharp contrary tendency. Just as we are sliding into melting and languor we are jerked awake by the disparity between the beauty of the old and the poverty of the new. The contrast is between sublimity and mundanity: between the transcendent imagination of the Latin and its translations, and the bureaucratic numbness – or at best the brusque and wry vernacular – of the names applied in our time. Thus: 'Shorty' compared with 'Marsh of Decay', or 'Lacus Oblivionis' (Lake of Oblivion) as opposed to 'North Complex'. It is a disturbingly anti-picturesque mix. This too is typical of Reynolds: he gives only to take away. If he offers beauty, it is always a beauty undone.

PLATES

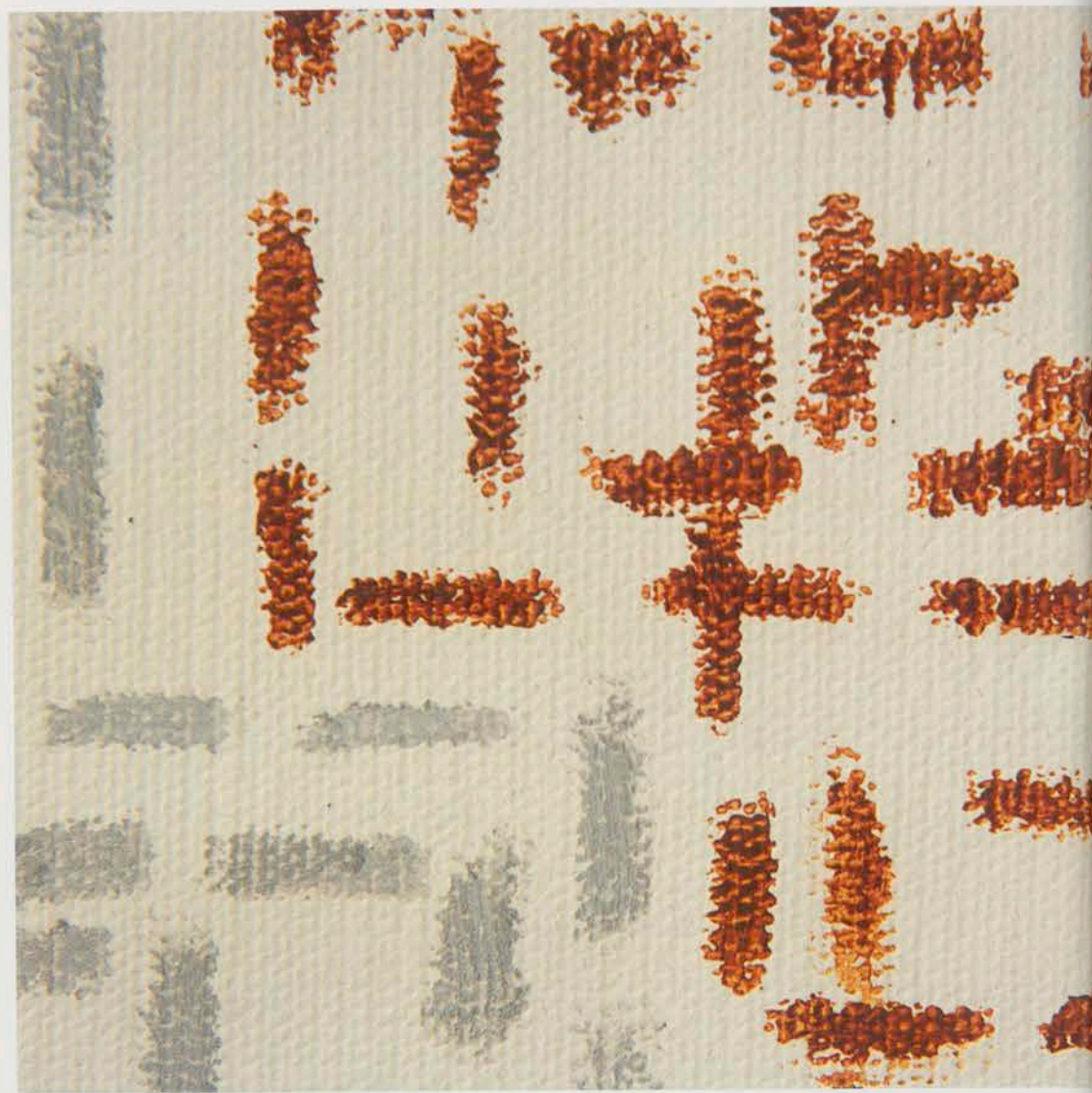


previous page: *Trading hours and various materials* (detail)
2001
photograph: Patrick Reynolds

right: *Epistemologies #1-75*
(installation detail)
2001
Harry Human Heights
Artspace
photograph: Patrick Reynolds



right: *King for a thin day* (detail)
2001
oil stick on canvas
photograph: Patrick Reynolds

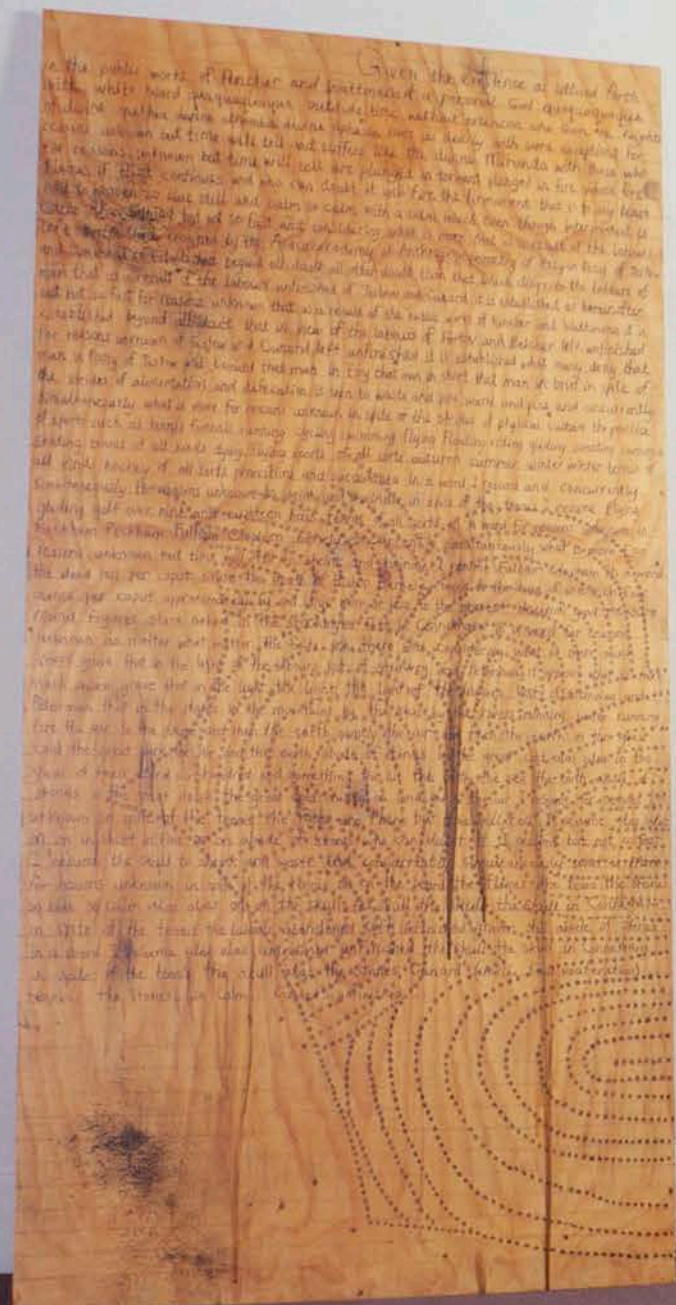


right hand page: *K Rd to Kingdom Come*
Govett-Brewster Art Gallery



King for a thin day (installation detail)
2001
Harry Human Heights
Artspace
oil stick on canvas
photograph: Patrick Reynolds



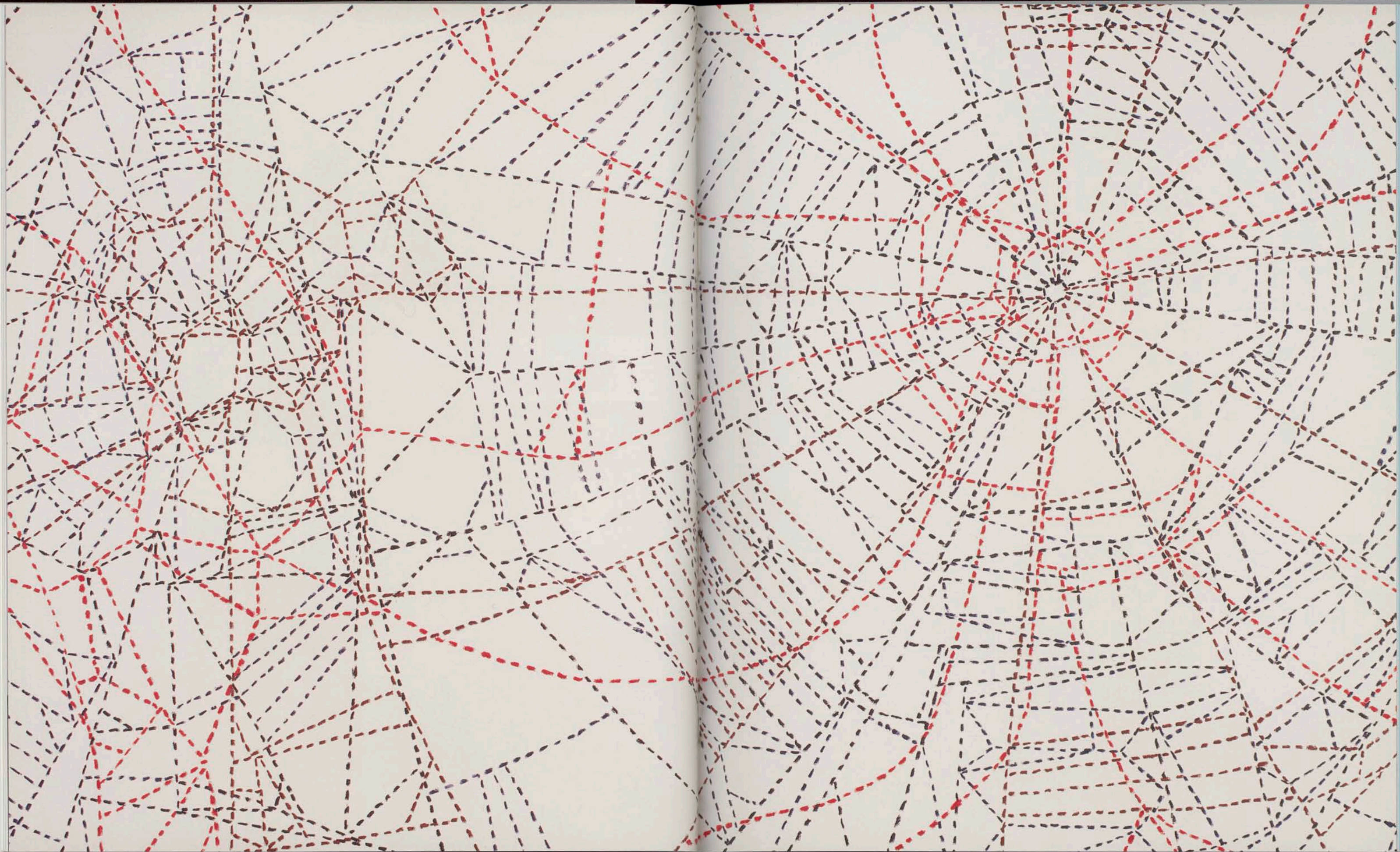


left hand page:
Acacacademy of anthropopometry
1995
mixed media on wood

left: *Nietzsche on Whites Beach*
(installation detail)
1996
Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
acrylic on hessian
photograph: Patrick Reynolds



K Rd to Kingdom Come
(installation detail)
Govett-Brewster Art Gallery



previous spread:

History and the making of history (detail)

2000

oil on canvas

right: *Western springs / bloody angle*

1998

oilstick on movable chalk board

photographs: Patrick Reynolds

right hand page: *Office of the dead*

(installation detail)

2001

K Rd to Kingdom Come

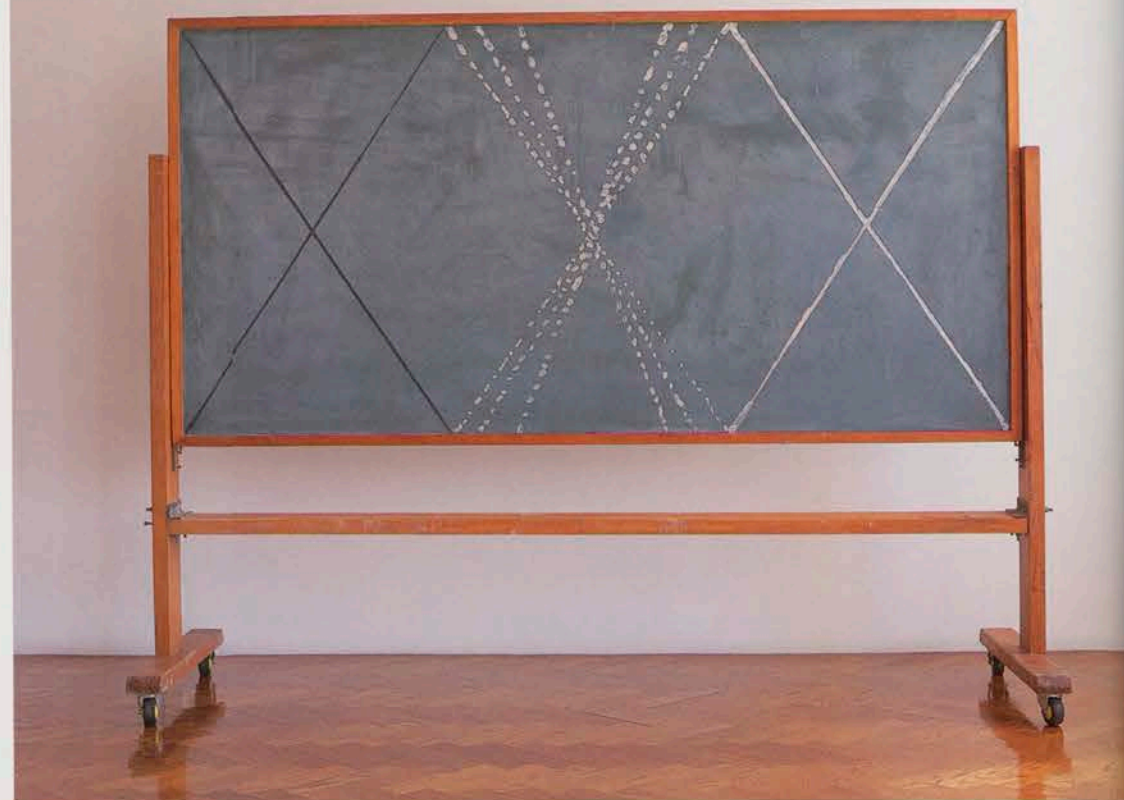
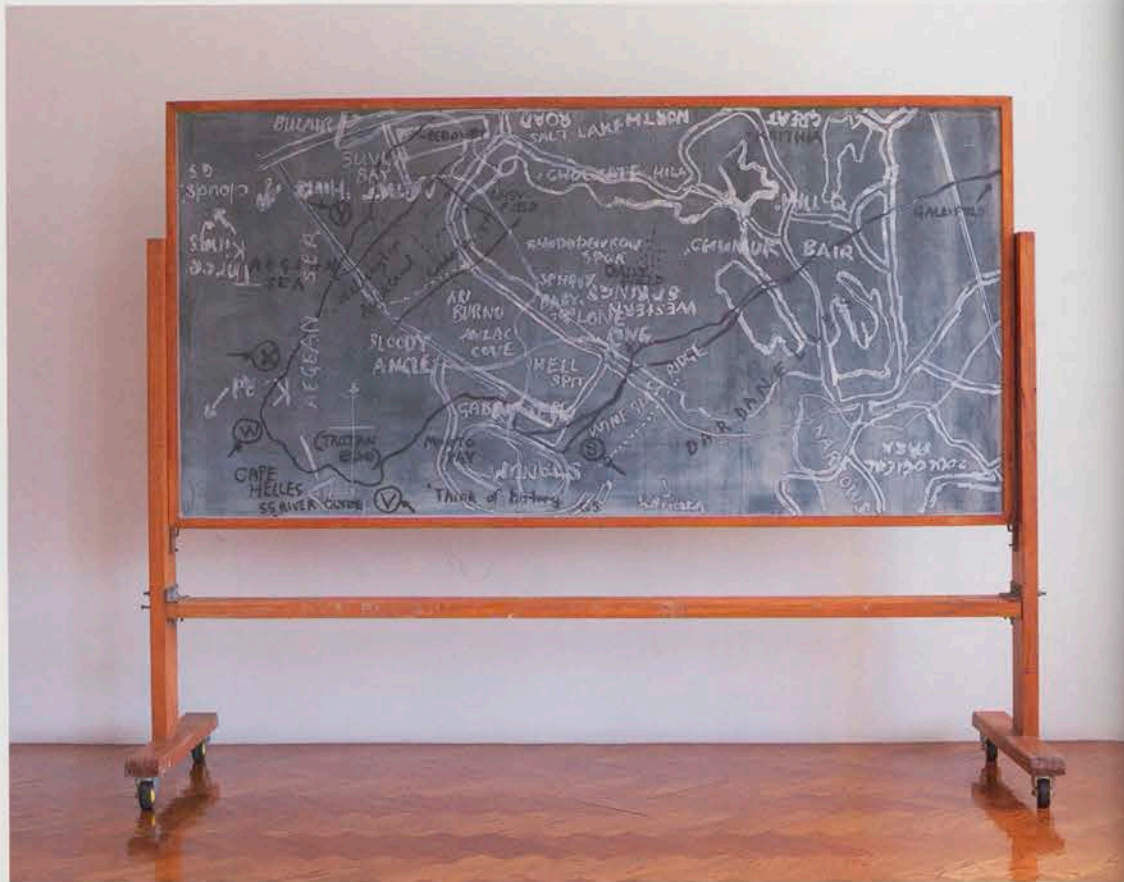
Govett-Brewster Art Gallery

following spread: *Office of the dead*

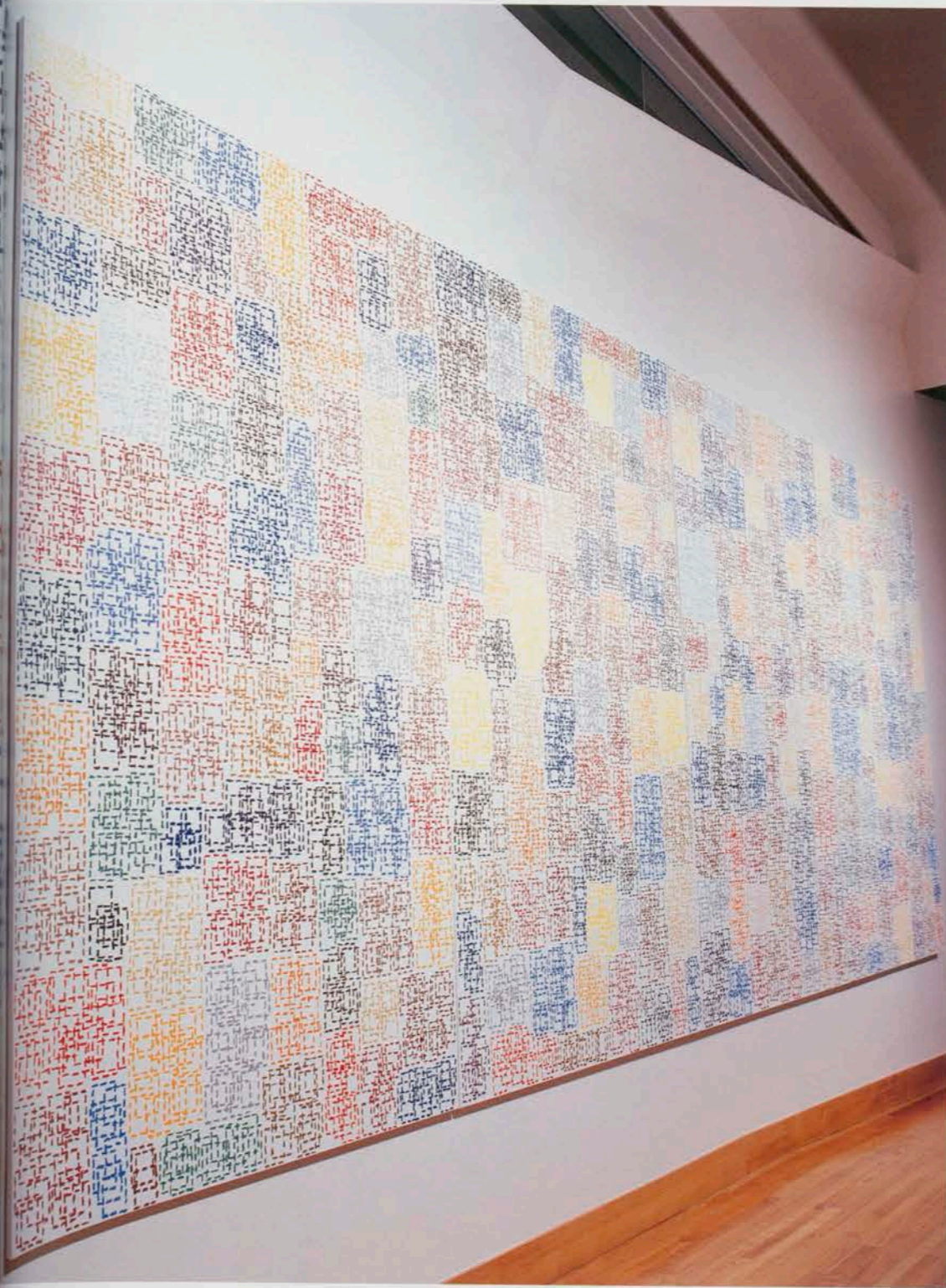
(detail)

2001

vinyl on aluminium







left hand page: *Kingdom Come*
(detail)
2001
oil on canvas

left: *Kingdom Come*
(installation detail)
2001
K Rd to Kingdom Come
Govett-Brewster Art Gallery

following page:
Epistemologies #76-92
(installation detail)
K Rd to Kingdom Come
Govett-Brewster Art Gallery

KINGDOM COME

SIGNATR

MILKY WAY

ALFABET

CHURCH ROAD

SUNNY JIM

REYNOLDS STREET

DON QUIJOTE

SUMWHR

He says. Haze of you
dassie that staves yonder,
and so leaped off the gallows.

By most accounts
the tramp travels and doesn't
for work; the hobo travels looking
travels nor works, and the bum neither.

A CITY STREET.
A SIGN.
DUSK.

JOHN REYNOLDS TALKS TO ROBERT LEONARD

Artspace's show is called Harry Human Heights. How did you arrive at the title?

It's a street in Meadowbank. I imagine Harry Human was some worthy burgher or local councillor who perhaps had a passion for drains or traffic and they decided to name a street after him. Someone in the council had a rush of blood to the head and a dose of alliteration and proposed 'Harry Human Heights'. The name has a Shakespearean echo, but a conventional suburban location. The street arcs around and overlooks a golf course. It offers elevation, a view, but goes nowhere. You get pedestrian vista. I may be overly drawing this out but that's what I intended with the show. It's in two sections and one provides a platform from which to view the other.

Let's start with the two huge works in the main room.

Well, I had a sort of cantankerous drive to exhaust the possibilities of the interlocking, dotted rectangle motif I'd already explored in big works like Y2K from 1999. In that one you have large rectangles with smaller ones inside them, then smaller ones that cross through both. You get this sense of recession through the composition; it's a pictorial effect. But in the new works the marks are evenly dispersed, and the space, the recession, is caused by the use of different colours in different areas. It's a bit like a shag-pile carpet, where some areas have been flattened and others raised. The paintings have that textile or dot-screen continuousness. They're atmospheric, inflated. I like that sense of something ambitious in terms of scale, yet made up of fragments, small things. Huge but not heroic.

Why are the titles so obtuse?

Both titles are lines from Leigh Davis's poem The Book of hours. Trading hours and various materials is the white iridescent one, and King for a thin day the bronze/brown one. For me there's a connection with some of the first works I ever

showed, which had titles like Haulage and general practice and Protocol for an odalisque. Even then there was a real unhooking going on with the titling.

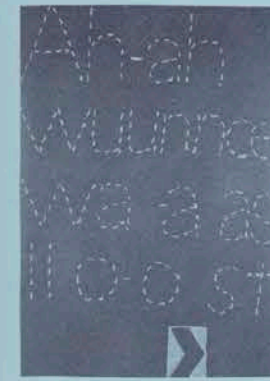
Trading hours is atomised, like a mist of perfume.

There is a story I like. The winemaker Michael Brajkovich was in France drinking champagne. He would have it as an aperitif in the morning, then at lunch, then in the evening with his meal. It surprised him that there was so little fruit in it. He observed that it's a thin wine; it's by putting the bubbles in that they give it essential volume — 'mouthfeel'. There's a connection with King and Trading hours. They're big works, without much paint on them. They're bubbly.

King and Trading hours remind me of Emily Kngawarreye.

Rex Butler said while indigenous Australian artists are generally famed for making work with secret content, in Kngawarreye's late paintings her content is that very idea — 'secret content'.

Diane Arbus once described her art as "a secret about a secret". I do see a connection with Kngawarreye. Do you know that massive painting Big yam dreaming? It's about proximity. Looking at it, you get a real sense of the physical space between the artist and the work when she made it. And that has a huge bearing on where viewers stand and how they engage. I remember seeing a photo of her painting it. She's sitting on the ground, in the middle of the canvas, layering up that web of ghosting lines, a brush in each hand — she was ambidextrous. That painting is claustrophobic. There's a kind of blindness involved in the way it was painted. Kngawarreye couldn't stand back, couldn't see what she was doing, couldn't consider the work as a whole to edit it. Her field of operations was an arm's length. It was like she was feeling her way across. The painting lacks finesse; it's callous and eloquent at once.



Epistomadologies #1-75 (detail)
2001
oil stick on metallic paper

left hand page: Untitled photograph
2002
photograph: Patrick Reynolds

How does that connect with what you're doing in your big paintings at Artspace?

I'm also repeating my mark close up, at a standard distance from the surface. The works are a product of a mind-numbingly simple process. I'm watching something emerge out of repeating a simple gesture over a large expanse. I know if I make a mark hundreds of times, this way and that, something will happen. I'm interested in what that something is. Oil sticks are a big part of it. They don't allow that painterly fluency. I need the crudity; that burnt stick quality. The label on my ivory black oil sticks says 'carbon from charred bone with oil and waxes'. There's something about that, something basic.

In the smaller galleries you're running Epistomadologies, a frieze of 75 works on paper.

I wanted to polarise the experience. The layout of the spaces at Artspace invited this. I wanted a central issue in the main room and then voices off — the text that berates it, nags it — rattling on to the side. The show's a two-way thing. In the main room you can hear the creak of scaffolding. I'm trying to position something wall-sized, something unwieldy. Some kind of siege machinery's been wheeled up and it's cumbersome. The Epistomadologies on the other hand are a tunnelling. A kind of grandstanding occurs with the big works, a self-importance that gets deflated or complicated with the works on paper. They don't support the big paintings in any way. They toil on the edges.

But the big paintings seem light, devoid of moral import, while the Epistomadologies . . . they're fraught with it.

The Epistomadologies were done at the same time, but they're off on a tangent. They're like broadsheets, tracts, complaints, arguments propelled against the throw of the big works. They're a series of letters, attempted communications, niggles. The title, of course, is from James Joyce. It's one of his

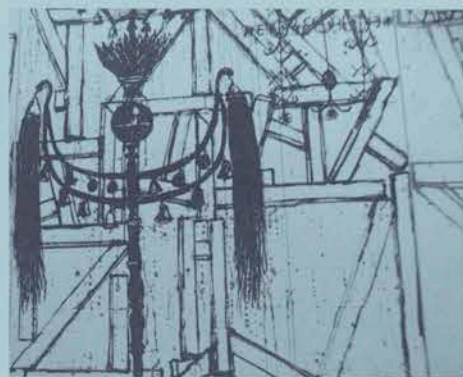
mangled words, and there's a genuflection there too. "Ta ra ra boom decay." The works are oil stick again, but this time on galvanised, anodised and pearlescent papers rather than the inert support of primed canvas. It's dirty drawing on lustrous metallic grounds.

The title implies epistemology, the branch of philosophy addressing the conditions of certain knowledge.

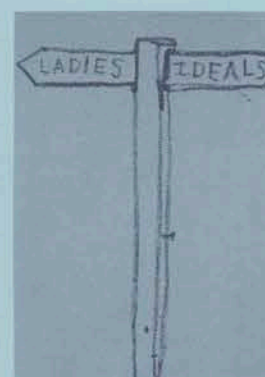
My project deals more with uncertainty, botched attempts to know. In the Epistomadologies the road signs all point right, right out of the frame. It's one page after another after another, with a desire building for some destination or resolution, but this expectation isn't met. The piece lurches forward, directed by those signs pointing the way. Coherence may be on offer, but it ain't there. The whole thing disperses or flickers into something else. It's all bogged down in a "syntax of weakness", to borrow a phrase from Beckett. It's like some monumental mason's backyard, littered with broken or unfinished markers, all of a heap.

In several works in the Epistomadologies you quote 'Amazing Grace', a spiritual about finding coherence, even as you shrug it off.

I got the 'Amazing Grace' lines from Leigh Davis, from one of the drafts for his Book of hours. Leigh rewrites the lyrics as they're sung, all warbly — "Buu-ut no-oww a am foww-wnndd" — and I run his lines in these crazy Braille dots that suggest a Broadway sign, names in lights. It's a Chinese whispers/bush telegraph kind of thing. I have a long interest in how images can percolate and garner references with time — or, better, atrophy. Like that gnarled tree motif I use in the Epistomadologies. It comes from a 12th century Spanish fresco I saw in the Prado in 1992, a tree of life. It's a rich image. But, in my use of it, where it's shambolically described, a certain insufficiency kicks in. Viewers won't pick up the



K Rd (detail)
1995
oil and acrylic on canvas



Untitled drawing
2001
John Reynolds

54 original reference, and I wouldn't want them to. But I'm interested in leaving them with a sense of my having tinkered with something, disassembling its possibility; a sense of decline.

Why all the grids?

Sometimes I think of them as being like the markings on a view camera's ground glass, as something to look through. I can tell you how they came about. I was flying from Mangere to LAX, on the way to see the Donald Judds at the Foundation in Marfa. I was bored and staring at that little screen where they put up the information: -10° outside, 33,000 feet up. And they show this map: a grid with a stick plane and a big shape that's the States. At one stage the only text on it was 'Santa Barbara'. I suppose that's where the radio tower is. Anyway, it was on that flight that I started drawing grids in my notebook, grids with place-names. So they came from charting tedious longitudes and latitudes, and on the way to a desert.

What did you get out of the trip to Marfa?

Dan Flavin . . . Flavin more than Judd. I had gone to see the Judds, but they'd just opened this big posthumous Flavin installation at Chinati, and that's what really impressed me. Judd and Flavin are both minimalists of course, but they're totally different. I like Flavin's sensibility more than Judd's theatre. No one talks about Flavin's colours, but they're hypnotic, they're sick. If Judd is daylight, Flavin is twilight. He makes me think of Eliot's 'violet hour' and Baudelaire's 'green shadows'. I'll side with the fuzzy of Flavin over the prescription of Judd. My grids have nothing to do with Juddian minimalism. The important thing is that their abstraction doesn't exist in isolation, it relates to the other images in the frieze. How can I explain? I remember a talk Keri Hulme gave at the Auckland Art Gallery years back. Someone asked her about her working method, and she mentioned ghost nets,

those old fishing nets that get cut loose at sea. These nets, kilometres of them, drift through the ocean collecting and killing things. I like that image. My grids are like that, and they have different densities, like a series of sieves.

The signposts are like trawls of names.

The way the road names are stacked in alphabetical order satirises the whole cataloguing imperative. The signposts are wobbly accumulations, graveyards of signs. The names all have this allegorical, liturgical quality: Harry Human Heights through to Hope Street. They're august and portentous, but there's a buffoonery — something laughable and calamitous — about them. Names like Anxiety Point and Ash Pit Road I'm exploiting for their humour or their leverage. All Day Bay! I want to look at how we name things for its banality and its genuinely loopy poetry.

You've also been making signposts with anagrams.

I fancy anagrams as a tool for unravelling, with a basis in arbitrariness. I've used some to punctuate the Govett-Brewster show as hysterical museum labels. The signs point left and right, but the words aren't opposites. LADIES/IDEALS. They all link up in some hard-to-specify way. ADORING/ROADING.

Why did you call the show *K Road to Kingdom Come*?

It's titled after the first and last works you come across, which also just happen to be the earliest and most recent works in the show. Climbing the stairs *K Rd* is the first thing you hit. Queen Street is Auckland's spine; Karangahape Road runs at odds with it. Similarly the big painting makes a T with the gallery staircase. *K Rd* is large scale, but pantomime, slapstick: cardboard and string, pomp and paucity. In the background, there's a clunky gantry with components suggesting a boat prow — the Argo! — a gibbet, lampposts, scaffolding and props. All this creaky carpentry supports a 'Karangahape Road' sign, and, far right, a little empty Gustonesque picture

frame. That sets the stage. Then in the foreground you've got these three protagonists. There's a 'Jingling Johnnie', one of those 19th century Turkish military standards: it's got a Muslim crescent moon, horse hair and bells. During the Crimean War, the victorious British forces seized them as trophies, cruelly parading them as their own. There's a corpulent Maltese Cross, like a nativity star, suspended, dangling. Finally, stage left, there's a grounded Beckett/Dr Seuss thing, a leering tree trunk with a single pointing branch. I think of *Waiting for Godot*. Beckett's pared back opening lines: "A country road. A tree. Evening".

Does it have anything to do with Karangahape Road?

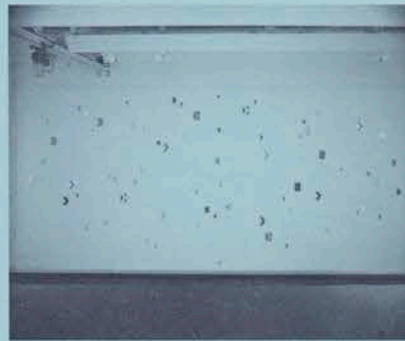
It does and it doesn't. Throughout the show there's this fierce directing going on, but it's all misplaced and conflicted, like those street signs, pointing somewhere else, beyond the frame, nowhere. That's a big part of *Western Springs/bloody angle*, where you have two geographies overlaid. That's the work on the blackboard. There's a map of Western Springs, Auckland's picturesque reserve, with signs pointing to 'Three Kings' and 'Saint Lukes', and then inverted and overlaid upon it, a map of Gallipoli from the time of the ANZAC fiasco. I'm interested in how both places point elsewhere: Western Springs evokes the cradle of European civilisation while the Gallipoli campaign was the bloody crucible for nationalism at home. In my upside-down Gallipoli map the names of the New Zealand contingents — 'Auckland', 'Wellington', 'Canterbury' — are superimposed on the ancient Mediterranean landscape. 'Lone Pine', 'Bloody Angle' and 'the Daisy Fields' also appear. ANZAC names for Turkish killing fields. It's an ongoing fascination for me, that slippage between destinations and within place names, the ways geography and history get smudged.

There are lots of big paintings in the show. How does the bigness work?

K Rd is the beginning of the show, but it's also the end of something for me, the end of the road for big composition. Something unravels. I keep scale but get rid of foreground/background, figure/ground. You get works like *Nietzsche on Whites Beach* and *The temptation of Saint Anthony*. You get shallow Byzantine pictorial space — planiverse. These big paintings aren't exactly abstract, aren't exactly figurative. They're diagrammatic, calligraphic: hieroglyph and pattern, sign and grid at once. I think of the hypnotic repetitive forms in Moorish art. Muslims consider images graven. Instead they have this repertoire of abstract motifs, conflating vegetal forms, writing and pattern. In multiplying and expanding, these forms direct the viewer's mind to bigger structures. These ornamental patterns embody Islamic principles of interconnection and integration. I think of tukutuku. ***Nietzsche on Whites Beach* is encrypted, obscure. You want to read it, but you can't.**

It's New Zealand's largest finger-painting. One of my favourite Nietzsche quips is from *Will to Power*: "It is easier to be titanic than to be beautiful". The painting was done in 1996, but now it reminds me of those vertically cascading numbers on the computer screens in *The Matrix*. In the film, those numbers are at once a code and a veil; they're hypnotic. People learn to read them, to break in. Numbers are what their world is made of, and appearances merely effects, but their world is also a lie, a projection. *The Matrix* is technological and primal; science and mysticism, Face of God stuff. The painting's like that too. How to read it? I see bar codes and DNA typing strips too. On the other hand, there's also this 'un-ambition' at work. The scale is grand, but the motifs could be inconsequential or contingent. That's part of its provocation.

What's Nietzsche doing at Whites Beach?



Office of the dead
(installation detail)
2001
K Rd to Kingdom Come
Govett-Brewster Art Gallery

56 The idea is an opera, and slightly absurd. Whites Beach is minor, a small stretch of sand between North Piha and Anawhata on the West Coast; while Nietzsche is major, one of philosophy's heavy hitters. There's a displacement or inversion there. A little while ago I was reading Patrick White's autobiography *Flaws in the glass*, and he describes being a novelist in Australia in the 1950s and 1960s. He talks of growing up in a country where the gospels floated and blew in the wind and didn't quite meet the landscape. They slid off it. With White, you get the Australian interior, a desert, but alongside it another dryness, the dryness of the tradition, the gospel, not connecting. And I immediately thought of Colin McCahon, where you have this tension between a cultural inheritance and the bare facts of a new landscape: Moby Dick, an apparition, sighted off Muriwai. I also think of a postcard I've got of Joseph Beuys with a branch, drawing a skeleton on the wet sand.

Density seems crucial. You get vertical compression in *Nietzsche . . .* and dispersal in the new one, *Office of the dead*.

Dispersal, sure. There's a story behind *Office of the dead*. On that trip to Marfa with Leigh Davis, we had to drive through 200 miles of Texas desert. Every now and again there'd be this isolated little post with a chevron pointing the way, just like they do at home, and I'd just have time to grab the camera and get a blurry photograph. There was this nice theatre with these simple signs punctuating the desolate landscape. Heading for the Rio Grande, you're in a geography layered with American and Mexican history, but those chevrons were a connection for me. With this work, I wanted to do something with the chevron that drew on its life as a familiar sign while freighting it with something else. I took that central image of the yacht race from Leigh's poem *Office of the dead*, the

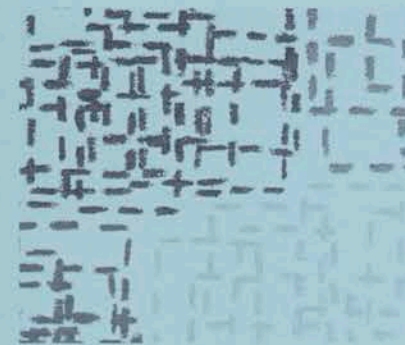
Coastal Classic. They sail from Auckland up past the Poor Knights to the Bay of Islands and back. In his book Leigh pictures the regatta using letters. I drew on that in my work.

You left your oil sticks behind this time.

This one's hard edge. There's a flight of chevrons in reflective vinyl on aluminium, different sizes, colour variations, all pointing right, on a wall seven metres high. There's a lot in Leigh's poem about the space between things, and the gearing of that space. He considers energy and dissipation. He's got lines like: "Slow work of compression and slow work of expansion / Cessation of Labour Weekends marking time / Here in the regatta of differences, regatta of constants on the water . . .". My work rolls with this contemplation of passage. On the one hand, the work is terribly static, like butterflies pinned to the wall. On the other, it has this flickering, flaring quality; a swarming vitality. It also moves the viewer on, picking up on all the other signpost imagery in the show. The arrows resignedly point the viewer to *Kingdom come*.

In other words the viewer is delivered.

Kingdom come is all the colours in the rainbow. It's a dispersion of bright patches, a diagram of dissolutions. At first glance, there's no particular order. Actually there's a quiet shift in the spectrum through the four panels. Your eyes glide across it without its offering traction. It doesn't shape or arrest attention, but stimulates a busy kind of searching for shape. Some people would see it as being like a 1950s Formica design. Again I think of tukutuku panels. There's a great word that describes how tukutuku works: 'skeumorphic'. That means the decorative aspect develops out of the process. In tukutuku, the pattern is a function of the binding that secures the panel. I like how tukutuku panels in meeting houses operate like codas, pauses between the big stories, rests. In *Kingdom come*, it's like the primary event is



Kingdom come (detail)
2001
oil on canvas

in abeyance in some way. I think the painting is like the ceiling of the Auckland's Civic Theatre, those stars, those constellations, distracting you, holding your attention before the curtains part.

So is *Kingdom come* the end of the show?

It's not 'the end', more a delay or a cul-de-sac. It's hung in that odd corridor space that links back into all the other rooms. That space is a drive-by, a flyover, not a resting place. So at the supposed endpoint, the conclusion, you get routed back into the show. Another thing, you can't get a proper distance on the work. Any way you come at it, it's hard to take in the whole thing, you're too close. It's like being in the front row of the cinema with a bent neck. The prospect is compromised. *Kingdom come* may be advertised as destination, but it's deliquescence.

You satirise the big themes, but provide occasions to think big. Is the unpicking part of the thinking big?

That's what I want with *Kingdom come*. And it may be a house of cards or a Royal Flush. The title promises some sweeping sense of conclusion, but the work demonstrates a blandly repetitive procedure, a paucity of means. It's like McCahon in works like *Hifi* signalling an ambitious purpose while employing a pointedly inadequate, semantically weak language to effect it. It's an arte povera thing. It's almost as if you have to drive a big wedge between the ambitions of the work and the nuts and bolts of it. Is it coalescing into intelligence, or blindly unravelling?

JOHN REYNOLDS BIOGRAPHY

58 John Reynolds was born in Auckland in 1956. He received a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Auckland in 1978 and held his first exhibition in 1980.

MAJOR AWARDS

- 1988 Montana Lindauer Art Award
- 1993 Visa Gold Award
- 1993 QEII Arts Council Fellowship

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2001 K Rd to Kingdom Come, John Reynolds, Painting Projects, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth
- 2001 Antipodes, Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 2001 Harry Human Heights, Artspace, Auckland
- 2000 History and the making of history, Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 2000 Histrionics, an exhibition of recent work by John Reynolds, Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington
- 1999 Imprint, Muka Gallery, Auckland
- 1999 Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 1998 Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 1998 Western springs/bloody angle, Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 1997 Twelve hours of daylight, Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 1997 John Reynolds, Centre of Contemporary Art, Christchurch
- 1997 Temptation of Saint Anthony, Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington
- 1996 Nietzsche on Whites Beach, Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 1995 John Reynolds, Seven paintings around a Beckett soliloquy, Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington

- 1995 John Reynolds Recent works, Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington
- 1995 Karangahape Rd, Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 1994 Rain-petitioning paintings, Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 1993 Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 1993 Eureka school, Fisher Gallery, Pakuranga (with Derrick Cherrie and Barry Lett)
- 1993 Two large recent paintings, Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington
- 1993 John Reynolds, Recent work, Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington
- 1992 John Reynolds, Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 1992 Ritual flowers, Centre for Contemporary Art, Hamilton
- 1992 The twilight of the idols and the raft of the medusa: two paintings by John Reynolds, Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 1991 John Reynolds, Of the shadow cast by a man at night with a light, Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington
- 1991 Recent paintings by John Reynolds, Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington
- 1991 Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 1990 John Reynolds New works, Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington
- 1990 Heaven, Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 1989 An exhibition of recent paintings, Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington
- 1989 Impalpable wings, Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 1988 Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 1988 Recent work, Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington
- 1987 Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 1987 John Reynolds, A rough geography, North Gallery, Whangarei

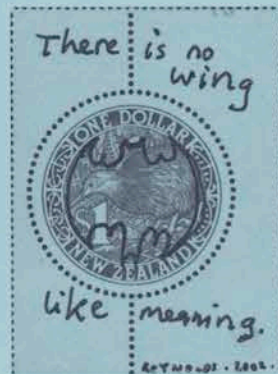


Bird of paradise
1991
ink on stamp

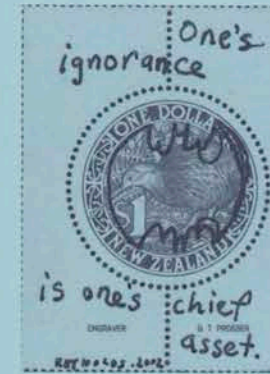
- 1987 Pyrotechnics, cibachromes, Real Pictures Gallery, Auckland
- 1987 New works, Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington
- 1986 Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington
- 1986 Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington
- 1986 Big drawings 1981 - 1986, Centre for Contemporary Art, Hamilton
- 1986 John Reynolds, Paintings, Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 1985 John Reynolds, Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 1984 Cibachromes, Real Pictures Gallery, Auckland
- 1984 Mezzanines, Space Gallery, Auckland
- 1981 Big paintings, 100m² Gallery, Auckland
- 1980 Swell drawings, 100m² Gallery, Auckland

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2001 After Killeen, Artspace, Auckland
- 2001 Prospect, City Gallery, Wellington
- 2001 Tall Poppies, Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland (with Caroline Rothwell)
- 2001 It will be ok, Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington
- 2001 Black and white, Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 2000 New work, Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 2000 Think colour (Art is never just black and white), Pataka, Porirua; Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hamilton
- 2000 Home and away, Auckland Art Gallery; Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth; Dunedin Public Art Gallery; Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hamilton; City Gallery, Wellington
- 1999 What I photographed this summer, Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington
- 1998 New Zealand on paper, Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington
- 1996 Millennium: a general theory of tears, The McDougall Art Annex, Christchurch (with Marian Maguire)
- 1996 Big, Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hamilton
- 1996 No. 5 Gallery, Dunedin (with Ralph Hotere and Kathryn Madill)
- 1995 A very peculiar practice: aspects of recent New Zealand painting, City Gallery, Wellington
- 1995 Shiny things, Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington
- 1995 Salamander Gallery, Christchurch
- 1995 The Irish connection, Auckland City Art Gallery
- 1994 Sugar lift, Canterbury School of Fine Arts Gallery, Christchurch (with Giovanni Intra and Grant Lingard)
- 1994 Station to station: the way of the cross, Auckland City Art Gallery
- 1994 Two major works, Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington (with Jacqueline Fraser)
- 1993 The right stuff, Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington
- 1993 After (after) McCahon, Cubewell House, Wellington
- 1993 Unleaded '93, ASA Gallery, Auckland
- 1993 The studio ceramics dinner service show, Fisher Gallery, Pakuranga
- 1992 Distance looks our way: 10 artists from New Zealand, Seville Expo, Spain and City Gallery, Wellington
- 1992 Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland (with Gretchen Albrecht and Jacqueline Fraser)
- 1992 New works 1992, five New Zealand artists, National Art Gallery, Wellington
- 1992 Headlands: thinking through New Zealand art, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney; National Art Gallery, Wellington
- 1992 The selective eye, Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington



There is no wing like meaning
2002
ink on stamp



One's ignorance is one's chief asset
2002
ink on stamp

- 60
- 1991 Muka Gallery, Auckland
- 1991 Catholic taste, Artspace, at the George Fraser Gallery, Auckland
- 1991 Wild west 91, Lopdell House, Waitakere City
- 1991 ASA Gallery, Auckland
- 1991 No. 5 Gallery, Dunedin (with Ralph Hotere)
- 1991 Cross-pollination, Artspace, Auckland
- 1990 Portrait, Star Art Gallery, Auckland
- 1990 100m²: A ten year survey, Artspace, Auckland
- 1990 Twenty photographers, Newton Gallery, Auckland
- 1989 After McCahon: some recent configurations in art, Auckland City Art Gallery
- 1989 United collection, Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 1989 The photography show, Fisher Gallery, Pakuranga
- 1989 Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 1988 Demolition exhibition, Artspace, Auckland
- 1988 Second annual artiture exhibition, Fisher Gallery, Pakuranga
- 1988 Lindauer Art Award, Auckland Society of the Arts Gallery, Auckland (winner)
- 1987 Drawing analogies: recent dimensions in New Zealand drawing, City Gallery, Wellington
- 1987 R18 Erotica, Works on Paper Gallery, Auckland
- 1987 Black eye, white lies, Potter Blair and Associates, Auckland
- 1987 Albrecht/Reynolds, Sue Crockford Gallery (with Gretchen Albrecht)
- 1987 The folding image, an exhibition of screens by contemporary New Zealand artists, Fisher Gallery, Pakuranga
- 1986 Someone's scheming, Real Pictures Gallery, Auckland
- 1986 Group show, Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland

- 1986 Omaha beach, Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington (with Julian Dashper)
- 1986 Drawings, Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 1985 Opening show, Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland
- 1985 John Reynolds/Ralph Hotere, No. 5 Gallery, Dunedin
- 1985 Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington (with Julian Dashper)
- 1985 Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington
- 1985 Chartwell Collection, Centre for Contemporary Art, Hamilton
- 1984 Peter McLeavey Gallery, Wellington (with Julian Dashper)
- 1983 Durham House, Auckland (with Julian Dashper)

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Barr, Mary (ed.), Headlands: thinking through New Zealand art, Sydney: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1992
- Barrie, Lita, 'Beyond aesthetics: readings in cultural intervention', in Art New Zealand no.46, Autumn 1998, pp.98-102
- Burke, Gregory, Drawing analogies, Wellington City Gallery, 1988
- Barton, Christina, After McCahon. Some recent configurations in art, Auckland: Auckland City Art Gallery, 1989
- Brown, Warwick, 100 New Zealand paintings, Auckland: Godwit Publishing, 1995
- Cain, Stephen, 'Reynolds gives a performance of many layers', in The Evening Post, 14 October 1993
- Clement, Shelley, 'Offbeat artistry', in Onfilm no. 5, August/September 1988, pp.57-58
- Foster, Hugh, 'John Reynolds', in Art New Zealand no.19, Autumn 1981, p.17
- Houlahan, Mike, 'Artist hopes "cave" will draw in crowd', in The Evening Post, 9 May p.29

- Matthews, Philip, 'John will be your guide, searching for the whereabouts of John Reynolds', in NZ Listener, 14 July 2001
- McLeod, Rosemary, 'The state of New Zealand art', in North and South, November 1986, pp.46-57
- McNamara, T.J., 'This way if you care', in The New Zealand Herald, 8 June 2001
- Pitts, Priscilla, 'John Reynolds, Derek Cowie, Photography in Auckland', in Art New Zealand no.49, Summer 1988-9 pp.32-3
- Reynolds, John, 'Pare down, build up', in NZ Listener, 3 September 1988, p.89
- Reynolds, John, 'Winter chrysanthemums', in Ralph Hotere, Black Light, Wellington: Te Papa Press, 2000
- Reynolds, Patrick and Stewart, Keith, The Art Award 15: The Montana Lindauer Art Award, Auckland: Greengage, 1988
- Reynolds, John, 'Paradise Road', in Landfall, no.200, 2000
- Simpson, Peter, 'Reviews', in Sunday Star Times, 1 July 2001
- Smith, Allan, 'To sketch the echo: the art of John Reynolds', in Art New Zealand no.59, Winter 1991, pp.64-7, 106-7
- Smith, Allan, A very peculiar practice, Wellington: City Gallery, 1995
- Smith, Allan, 'John Reynolds, A multitude of dreams', in Distance looks our way: 10 artists from New Zealand Auckland: Distance Looks Our Way Trust, 1992
- Smith, Allan, John Reynolds, Eureka School Pakuranga: Te Tuhi - the mark, 2001
- Smith, Allan, 'John Reynolds', in Home and away, contemporary Australian and New Zealand art from the Chartwell Collection, Auckland: David Bateman Limited and Auckland Art Gallery, 1999, pp.98-9

- Smith, Patrick, 'Home is where the art is', in Auckland Star, 9 August 1988
- Stewart, Keith, 'Hope springs eternal beyond Te Papa's glorious grandstanding', in Sunday Star Times, 22 February 1998
- Stewart, Keith, 'This light load is a big ask', in Sunday Star Times, 27 July 1997
- Stewart, Keith, 'Picking at the edge of art', in Quote unquote, no.44, 1997, pp.20-3
- Taylor, Rob, 'John Reynolds' swipings with Spanish art leave one guessing', in The Dominion, 3 May 1989
- Taylor, Rob, 'Action painters show Midas touch', in The Dominion, 18 December 1986
- Wedde, Ian, 'John Reynolds: Toying with convention', in The Evening Post, 14 October 1987
- Were, Virginia, 'John Reynolds/Julian Dashper', in Art New Zealand no.34, Autumn 1985, pp.16-17

All works are courtesy of the artist and Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland,
unless stated otherwise.
All works measured in millimetres, height before width, before depth.

LIST OF WORKS HARRY HUMAN HEIGHTS

ARTSPACE, 12 JUNE – 28 JULY 2001

Epistemadologies #1-75 2001

oil stick on metallic paper
75 parts, each 700 x 1000

King for a thin day 2001

oil stick on canvas
four parts, each 3100 x 2250

Trading hours and various materials 2001

oil stick on canvas
four parts, each 3100 x 2250

62

LIST OF WORKS K RD TO KINGDOM COME JOHN REYNOLDS, PAINTING PROJECTS 1995 – 2001

GOVETT-BREWSTER ART GALLERY, 13 OCTOBER – 2 DECEMBER 2001

K. Rd. 1995

oil and acrylic on canvas
four parts, each 3000 x 1800
collection of Leigh and Susan Davis, Auckland

Acacacademy of anthropopometry 1995

mixed media on wood
two parts, 1800 x 860, 1500 x 800

Epistemadologies #76-91 2001

oil stick on metallic paper
16 parts, each 700 x 1000

Nietzsche on Whites Beach 1996

acrylic on hessian
2800 x 8000

The temptation of Saint Anthony 1997

oil on canvas
3000 x 5500

The road to Damascus 1998

mixed media on wood
triptych: three parts, each 2800 x 1800
collection of Eric Liu, Auckland

Western springs/bloody angle 1998

oil stick on movable chalkboard
2400 x 1800 x 500
collection of Govett-Brewster Art Gallery

History and the making of history 2000

oil on canvas
2000 x 7000

History is this #1 2000

oil on canvas
1500 x 1000
collection of Christopher Swasbrook, Auckland

History is this #6 2000

oil on canvas
1500 x 1000
collection of Christopher Swasbrook, Auckland

Ask me 'bout nothing 2001

oil on metallic paper
12 parts, each 700 x 1000

A religion, almost a religion 2001

oil on canvas
diptych: two parts, each 1500 x 2000

A window has another spelling 2001

oil on canvas
1500 x 2000

Office of the dead 2001

vinyl on aluminium
80 parts, dimensions variable
collection of Govett-Brewster Art Gallery

Untitled (Merrilands) 2001

wax oil crayon wall drawing on right-angled wall
4000 x 3600 x 400

Kingdom come 2001

oil on canvas
four parts, each 3000 x 1800

63

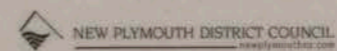
NOTES ON THE CONTRIBUTORS

Gregory Burke, editor of SUMWHR, is Director of the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery. Recent curatorial and catalogue projects include Feature: art, life and cinema and Christopher Williams Poetry must be made by all! Transform the world!.

Markman Ellis teaches English literature at Queen Mary University of London. He is currently writing a cultural history of the coffee-house.

Robert Leonard is Director of Artspace. In 2002 he is J.D. Stout Research Fellow of New Zealand studies at Victoria University of Wellington.

Francis Pound teaches Art History at the University of Auckland. He is the author of several books including The space between and Stories we tell ourselves.

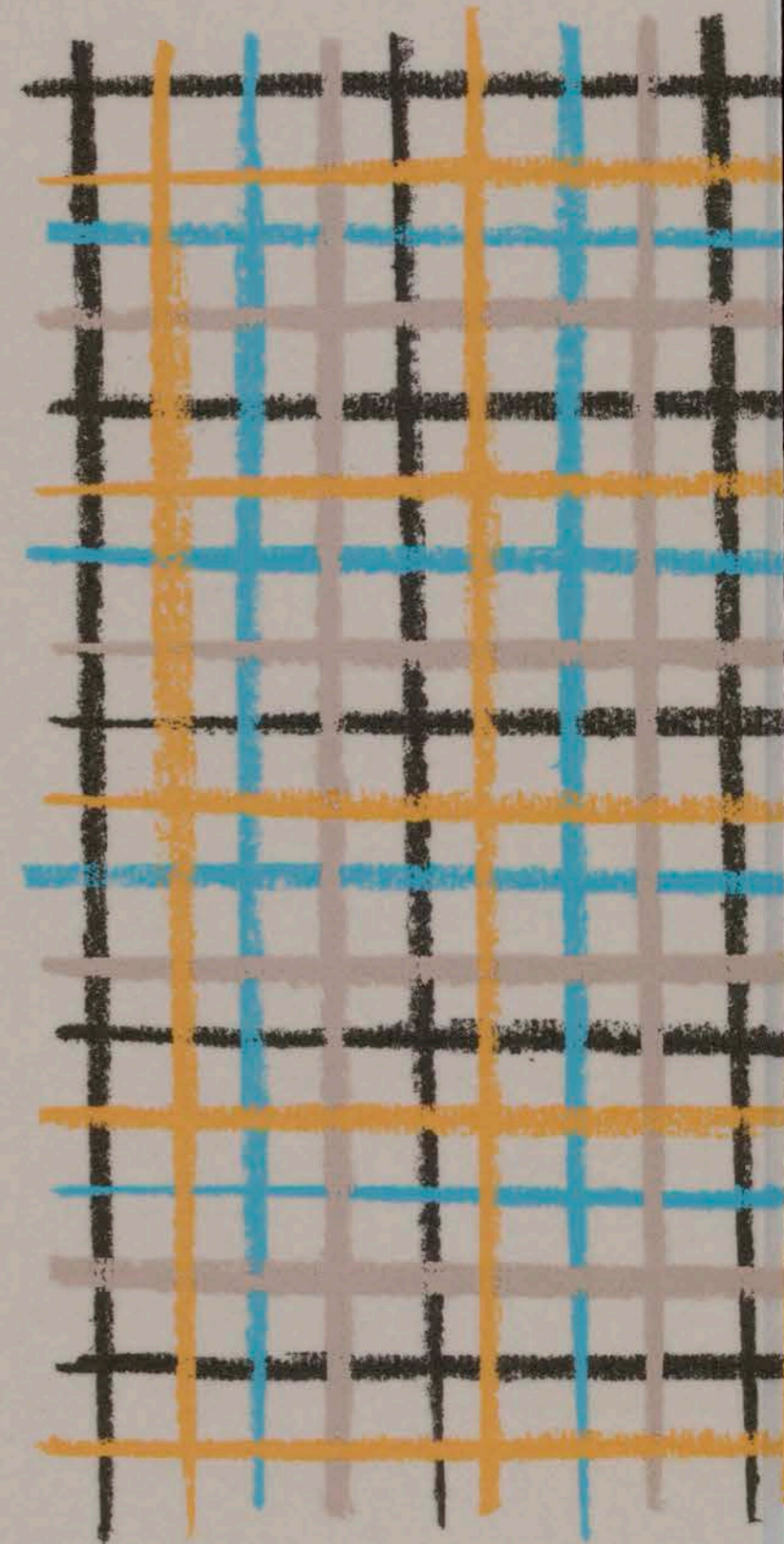


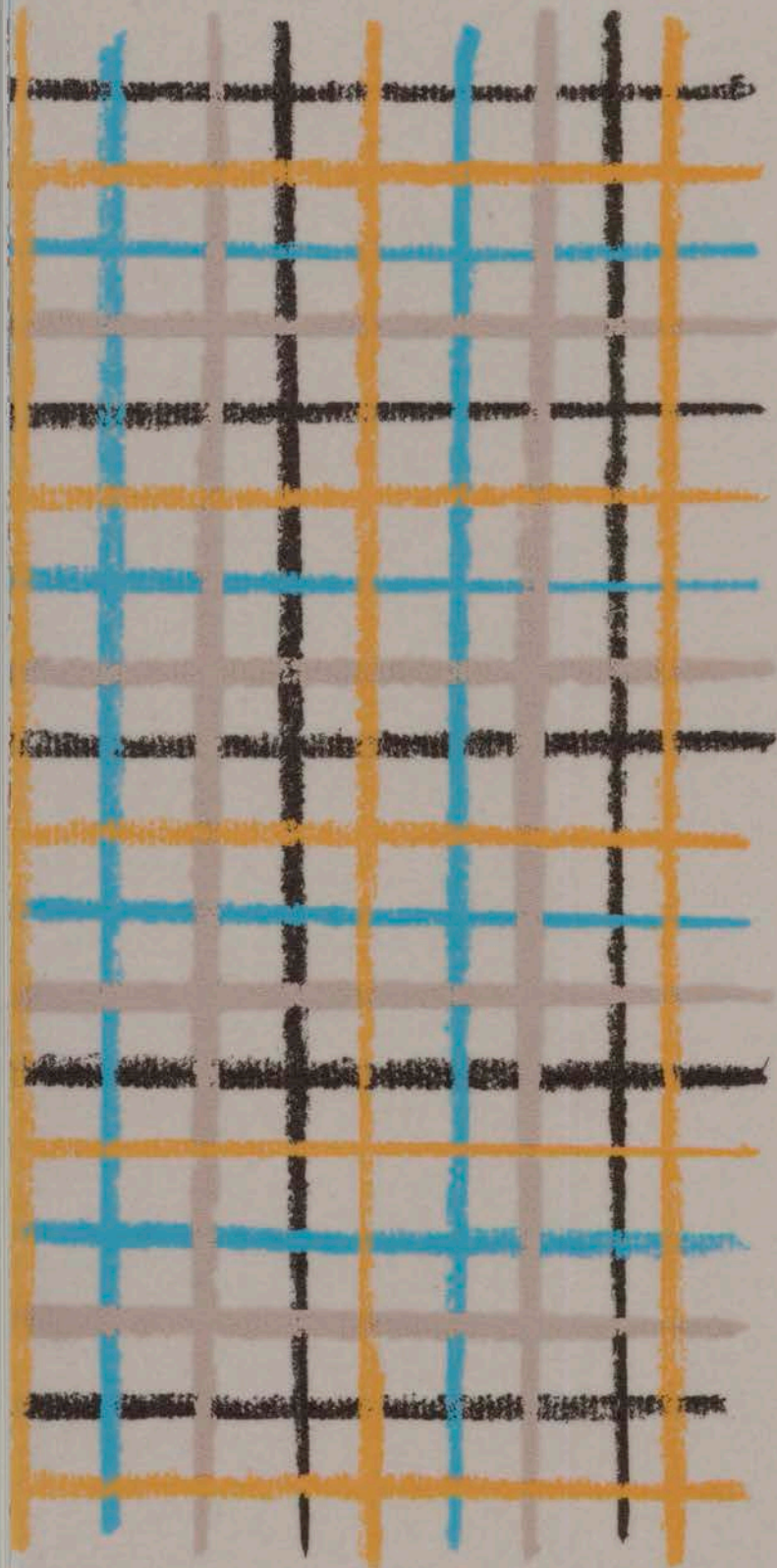
SUE CROCKFORD

GALLERY

BUDDLEFINDLAY

JENNY TODD





PUBLICATIONS **GOVETT-
ART GALLERY
BREWSTER**

ARTSPACE

ISBN 0-908848-44-7



9 780908 848447