



THE ATTINGHAM TRUST
FOR THE STUDY OF COUNTRY HOUSES AND COLLECTIONS



MEDIA RELEASE

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OTAGO HERITAGE TO BENEFIT FROM PRESTIGIOUS SCHOLARSHIP

Otago and New Zealand heritage is about to benefit from a prestigious scholarship and unique opportunity for hands on experience right at the heart of British arts and heritage.

Robyn Notman, Dunedin Public Art Gallery's (DPAG) Visitor Programmes Coordinator, winner of this year's Clark Collection/Creative New Zealand Scholarship will leave Dunedin next week for an eight week study tour of the UK. She will attend the Attingham Trust Summer School, a highly sought-after international arts and heritage course, then spend time as an intern with English Heritage, The Royal Collection at Buckingham Palace, the Victoria & Albert Museum and the National Trust while in England.

The Scholarship, made possible through the support of the Clark Collection, Creative New Zealand, the NZ-UK Link Foundation and facilitated by Museums Aotearoa, will enable Robyn to study the cultural and historical context of the objects in the collections of both the Dunedin Public Art Gallery and its sister institution, the Otago Settlers Museum. As curator of a forthcoming exhibition focusing on the 18th century, Robyn is keen to study the ways in which such objects are exhibited and interpreted in the UK. Robyn's ongoing project of cataloguing and research into collection objects will be informed by her Scholarship experience, and will contribute to the development of future programmes for the Gallery.

In her fifteen years at DPAG, Robyn has curated a number of exhibitions, devised and delivered public programmes and undertaken research and collection development work. Her interests and expertise lie especially in the gallery's historical collection, with its internationally significant works of decorative art, including ceramics, silver, textiles and furniture, as well as paintings and works on paper. Robyn is also a champion of the restoration and preservation of Otago's built heritage, with hands-on experience in her own historic home.

Robyn is in an ideal position to share the benefits in terms of public programmes and exhibitions in coming years, Priscilla Pitts, Director of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery says, adding that she is in no doubt that Robyn will make the most of the opportunities the Scholarship offers: "All she learns will be to the benefit of the Gallery, its visitors and those who are interested in the understanding and development of its collections."

The Gallery will be encouraging opportunities for Robyn to share the knowledge she gains at Attingham with other museums and colleagues elsewhere in New Zealand.

The 8-week study tour has been made possible by the support of The Clark Collection, Creative NZ and the NZ-UK Link Foundation and facilitated by Museums Aotearoa. Donor and chairman of the selection panel, Errol Clark, says that he is delighted to see the scholarship continue into its fourth year. “These scholars are mid-career built heritage and decorative arts specialists who bring back a wealth of new knowledge and understanding to the profession in New Zealand as a result of their travels.”

Mr Clark is a New Zealand financier, art connoisseur and heritage advocate. His generous gift towards The Clark Collection/Creative NZ Scholarship provides an opportunity for New Zealand professionals in the built heritage and decorative arts field to expand their knowledge through attending the prestigious Attingham Trust Summer School and a number of short internships in England.

Now also receiving funding from Creative New Zealand for the next three years, the scholarship is filling a need by allowing our experts to learn and interact in much wider contexts, and advancing the body of expertise on the decorative arts and built heritage in this country. The three previous Scholars are building on their Attingham and UK experiences, and making significant contributions in their fields: David Reynolds (2003) is Auckland Area Office Coordinator for the NZ Historic Places Trust; Louis le Vaillant (2004) is Curator, Applied Arts at Auckland Museum; and Angela Lassig (2005) is Senior Curator, History at Te Papa.

ENDS



Angela Lassig, Robyn Notman and Errol Clark

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Robyn will be available for interviews on return from her study tour (after 6 September)