

**ARTS DIARY**

- April 11: The Water Project exhibition opens at the Ashburton Art Gallery.
- April 14: Ashburton Society of Arts oils workshop with Susie Millichamp at Short Street Studio (until April 15).
- April 14: Ashburton Musical Club "Let the Music Begin" at the Sinclair Centre, Park St from 7.30pm. Visitors welcome, \$5 at the door including supper.
- April 15: Ashburton Society of Arts Autumn Show opens at the Short Street Studio (until May 13).
- April 19: Olive Copperbottom - Arts on Tour NZ at Ashburton Trust Event Centre.
- April 20 - 22: One Man, Two Guvnors at Ashburton Trust Event Centre.
- April 27: Foster & Alan Golden Years at Ashburton Trust Event Centre.
- May 4: Hopetoun Brown & the Genius of Finn Scholes at Ashburton Trust Event Centre.
- May 5: Ashburton Society of Arts acrylics and mixed media class with Galena Kim at Short Street Studio.
- May 18: Mamma Mia at the Ashburton Trust Event Centre (until May 26).
- June 6: The Ten Tenors at Ashburton Trust Event Centre.
- August 18: No Holds Bard at the Ashburton Trust Event Centre.
- September 22: Adam McGrath & the Roaring Days at Ashburton Trust Event Centre.
- October 10: The Cat in the Hat by Dr Seuss at the Ashburton Trust Event Centre.



**Sculptor Bing Dawe installing his work Downstream under Aoraki-Tuna with Barrier last week for the Water Project. Dawe has dedicated his work to the tireless work of Hinds man John Wilkie, who transports mature tuna to below the dams and tunariki (baby tuna) to above the dams on the Waitaki River.** PHOTO SUPPLIED

**THE WATER PROJECT**

# Giving water a voice

By **KATIE TODD**  
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It took more than a year meticulously dissecting one of the most topical Canterbury issues, and it's described by the Ashburton Art Gallery as their "biggest undertaking to date."

Now, after months in the pipeline and days of closed-door preparations, the gallery is ready to show the world The Water Project.

Bringing together the differing ideas, disciplines and works of 13 notable New Zealand artists, the exhibition is designed to "give a voice to water - and open discussion about it", said Ashburton Art Gallery's Nicole Bourke.

"It's a conversation starter, and we think it will sit really well with the local community."

The Water Project - occupying all three exhibition rooms of the gallery - presents varying medium of arts exploring the cultural, conceptual and imaginative qualities of rivers, lakes, wetlands and freshwater systems of Aotearoa.

Eleven of the artists took part in a seminar and four-day exploratory trip in Canterbury last March, drawing inspiration from site visits and consultations with NIWA scientists, conservationists and iwi representatives.

The works which resulted, and arrived at the gallery for installation last week, are "far reaching", Bourke said.

One artist who has opted to take a scientific approach is Bruce Foster from Wellington. His video installations show wa-

ter samples from lakes going under the microscope to reveal the bacteria content.

Another artist, Christchurch-born Euan Macleod, imagines the "rain man" in paintings set above Ashburton District, and Wellington artist Kate Woods puts a twist on historic paintings of water bodies from Te Papa and Wellington artist Jacqui Colley draws palette inspiration from Waitake's Maori Rock Drawings for her large scale pieces, set at the "intersection between human activity and nature".

"The Water Project is all about opening discussion - what better way to do that, than through the medium of art?" Bourke said.

The Water Project will be on show for three months during which Bourke hopes it will evoke

a range of conversation and provide educational opportunities to children during the school holidays.

"I really hope everyone will come and see it ... and respond to it," Bourke said.

"Water is such a major issue and I think this will really highlight it."

The gallery hopes The Water Project will tour other parts of the country after, and invite water-related conversation from other regions.

The Water Project will officially open on Wednesday night, and all thirteen contributing artists will deliver a free, public floor talk on Thursday morning at 10.30am.

More information is available on the Ashburton Art Gallery website or at thewaterproject.org

**MID CANTERBURY CHOIR**

# Mid Canterbury Choir holding open night

By **KATIE TODD**  
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Always yearned to sing with a choir? A chance to do so is coming next Monday night.

Hot off the heels of their show with blues legend Paul Ubana Jones, the Mid Canterbury Choir

is holding an open night for anyone interested in joining their group.

Choir Manager Carol Gunn said it is a chance "to find out if choral singing is for you".

"Just come along and you will share the music of a current

member to sing along for the evening," she said.

"We will be just starting our preparation for our Tribute to War Heroes concert on Sunday July 1 at 2pm at the Sinclair Centre, so there is a good chance you will know some of the songs,"

she said. The choir currently has around 60 members, and performs at local events throughout the year.

Their open night will be held in the Bradford Room at the Ashburton Trust Event Centre, from 7.15pm on Monday, April 16.

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Let us know what's happening in the world of art and we'll make sure your information goes into our Arts Diary

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