



Media release – 29 June 2015

i-Site theft a blow to Whanganui artist and Sarjeant Gallery

Sarjeant Gallery and i-Site staff are devastated at the theft of five artworks by a local artist from the i-Site gallery on Taupo Quay.

The Sarjeant team was alerted on Saturday afternoon, June 20 that important works by renowned artist Rick Rudd had been removed from their locked cases in the 24 hours before the flood. Police were immediately contacted and investigations began straight away.

The Sarjeant Gallery team are very experienced in successfully managing challenging issues. They've recently moved out of their significantly earthquake prone building into temporary premises on Taupo Quay, shifting 8000 artworks with outstanding care, in a very short space of time. And now, along with other businesses along Taupo Quay, they've been flooded.

“Having our temporary gallery and collection store being located near the river, a serious flood was obviously a risk we planned for. Our collections of national significance are housed away from the threat of flooding and are very safe,” Senior Curator Greg Anderson said.

However, a theft of artwork from an otherwise secure display at the i-Site, was unexpected.

“After five years of business as usual and approximately 50,000 visitors to the i-Site Gallery such an event is completely unprecedented. My team are devastated: particularly for Rick Rudd, who has for so long supported the Gallery and whose work forms a major part of our ceramic collection,” Mr Anderson says.

“There are some particularly unusual factors relating to this theft. Our security procedures have been more than sufficient up until now. However, in light of this we're reviewing them. We want to see this matter resolved as soon as possible, and give reassurance to our lenders that our stewardship processes are very sound.”

If anyone has information leading to the recovery of these artworks please contact Whanganui Police on 06 349 0600.

The stolen items are listed below.



Jug, 2008, 350 x 250 x 230mm
earthenware (ceramic)



Talking Heads, 2011, 480 x 400mm
earthenware (ceramic)



**Poison Chalice, 2014, 470 x 330 x 190mm
earthenware (ceramic)**



Teapot, 2014 (approx. 200 x 200 x 200mm)
earthenware (ceramic)



Tea in the "Garden" (teapot), 2014 (approx 250 x 250 x 250mm)
earthenware (ceramic)

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