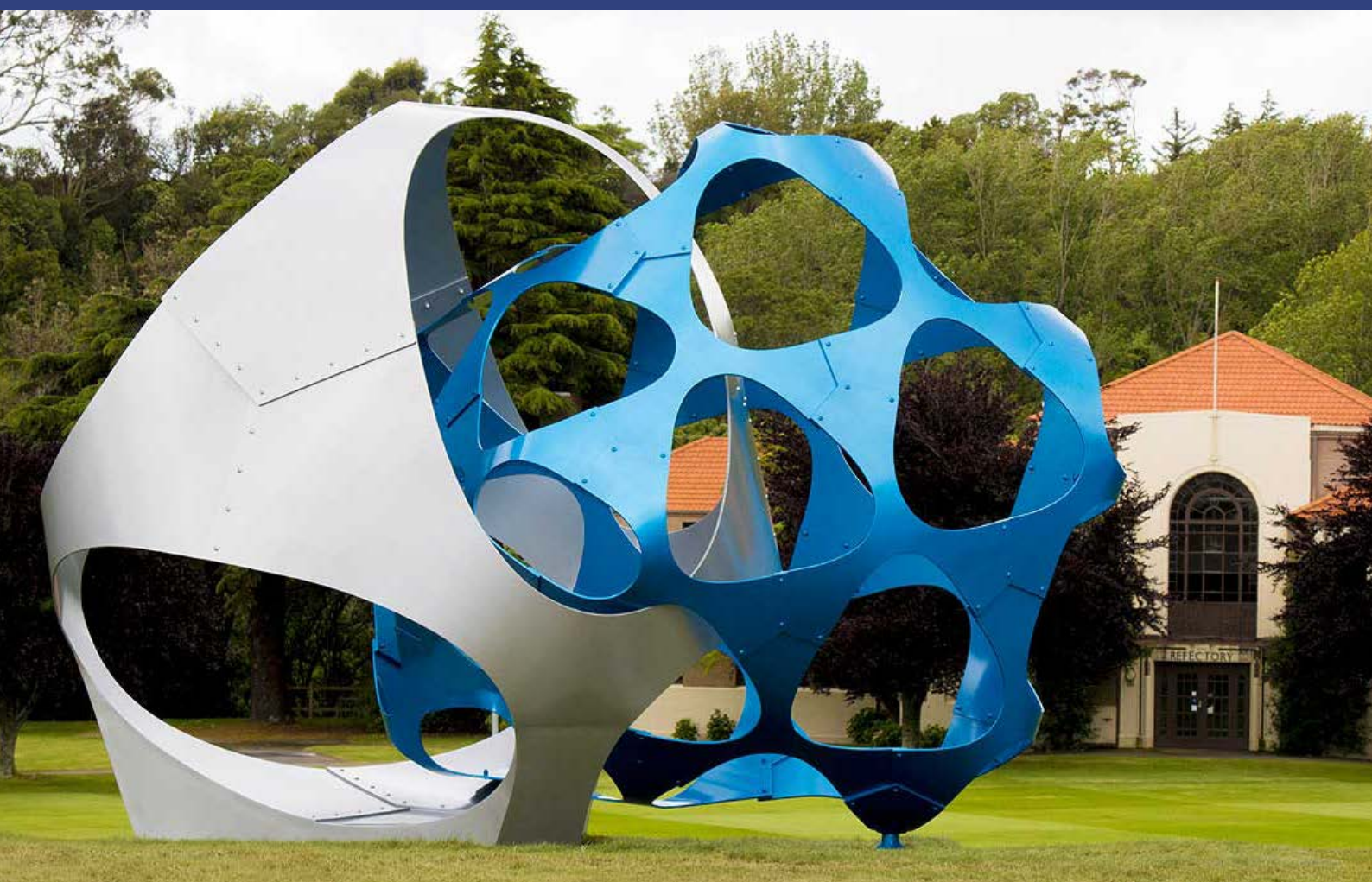




MASSEY
UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

MUSA MASSEY ART & HERITAGE SCOOTER TOUR 2022



[MASSEY.AC.NZ](https://massey.ac.nz)



MUSA MASSEY ART & HERITAGE SCOOTER TOUR

Wednesday 2nd March
Leaving from MUSA Lounge
11am – 12 noon and 1pm

Kia ora koutou

Welcome to the Art and Heritage Scooter Tour a collaboration between MUSA, Beam and Flamingo and Museum Studies.

Massey's Manawātū campus is renowned for its park-like setting. Perhaps less known, the campus also has a significant number of heritage buildings and sites, as well as visual arts and heritage collections.

This event is a novel way to introduce you to some of the highlights in the Turitea Historic Area precinct, located at the heart of the campus. The notes that follow, refer to the efforts of students and staff in developing the heritage collections and how sites have supported students' recreational and academic pursuits over many years.

Down-load information from the MUSA web site to plot your path. We anticipate that you will encounter some less well-known aspects of Massey University's heritage and find fresh perspectives and insights along the way. Above all, we hope that this short scoot through this part of the campus, offers you calm respite and recreation now and during a busy semester ahead. Come back often to look at the sculptures and see them in a different light each time.

We welcome you to Massey and hope you find your tūrangawaewae a safe place to stand.

VISIT THE MUSA ORIENTATION SITE [HERE](#)



START HERE

The majority of the sculptures that you will see are from the Hokowhitu Arts Trust Collection of the Palmerston North College of Education. The Collection was created between the late 1950s and early 2010s by staff, students, donors and visiting artists of the Teachers' College here in Palmerston North.

1. Bus terminus: plaza between Science Tower A and Science Tower B

Warren Viscoe (b. 1935).
Column Vernaculus (made in 1989).
Hokowhitu Arts Trust Collection

Warren Viscoe makes sculptures from found objects that show his canny command of materials. This sculpture features a tanalised wooden column into which tapering wooden planks are fitted. It is topped with four graces (not just three) standing arms entwined to survey the world from a great height, a bright red car jack at the ready below.



Photo credit, Massey University

Column Vernaculus is a spoof on classical architectural order. The Georgian era revived this form with minimal bracing and a basic platform to support figurines.

Viscoe directs us to an ironic examination of 'order', the 'graceful' and 'useful'. He reminds us that cultural transplants are not only a shift in place and time but involve restructuring of historical values. This is serious business.

While we contemplate a classical monument – we also realise solemnity has been subverted by the utilitarian principle – quite literally: "Jack is as good as his mistresses".

Initially commissioned by the Students' Association, Palmerston North Teachers College for the Hokowhitu site, it was re-installed on the Manawatū campus in 2018.

2. Embankment adjacent to the University Library

Jeff Thomson (b. 1957).
Cows (made in the 1990s).
Hokowhitu Arts Trust Collection

It's well known that a unique species of animals – *Thomson corrogatus* – has existed in New Zealand since the early 1980s. This ingenious breed with various species was pioneered by artist Jeff Thomson.

Massey's small herd of cows, Thomson *corrogatus vacci*, is a sub-species. Found in both urban and rural areas of New Zealand and Australia, *corrogatus vacci* – is characterised by three distinctive features: their hides, immovability, and disposition. Notably, their hides have deep corrugations that resemble recycled roofing iron. Rough treatment is evident: weathered by acid rain, patching, riveting, and soldering.

The Massey herd was seen from the mid-1990s on a grassy spot at the Palmerston North Teachers College, Hokowhitu, outside the library, surrounded by several sculptures. Former students, some currently staff members on the Manawatū campus, remember Thomson hammering them into shape, enjoying the spectacle of art made in situ.



Photo credit, Massey University

The *Cows* disappeared for some years. They languished in sheds on Massey land near the poultry farm and, eventually were trucked up north to be cared for by Jeff Thomson.

They returned to Massey in 2019 in good shape: robust, and with no signs of the leg and foot problems diagnosed some years earlier. They settled in well - content to be back in the company of *Column Vernaculus* and *Impossible Dialogue* - and near a Library once again.

3. Students' Centre

The original concept for the Centre called for an extremely large all-purpose building, containing sports facilities, meeting spaces for students and the Students' Association and a cafeteria. Plans were presented to College Council in 1946 but nothing eventuated.

The concept was revived in 1955 when K.A. Rose, then President of the Students' Association, resubmitted the architect's plans from 1946 to the College Council. Following the Council's endorsement, Rose, with the Students' Executive, began fund-raising. However, impetus dwindled when Rose and his team left Massey.



Students procession through the Square in Palmerston North to raise funds for the proposed Student Centre, 1961.

Photo credit: Tāmīro, Massey University Archives
<https://massey.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/320>

Efforts were renewed in 1960.

Students and alumni developed innovative schemes to fund-raise. For one scheme students marched in costume to the Bank of New Zealand to deposit 'bricks' for the Student Centre. This event in 1961 was part of *Procesh*, the annual capping parade.

The Palmerston North City Council also provided funds.



Student Centre, 1969.

Photo credit: Tāmīro, Massey University Archives
<https://massey.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/4772>

Miles Warren, of the Christchurch firm Warren and Mahoney, was commissioned to design the building. Its modernist aesthetic and fair-faced concrete, combined with pre-cast concrete, post-tensioned, produced an elegant, light structure. Part of the concept design was *The Great Hall* set to the East and extending towards the *University Oval*. Warren's watercolour shows his intention for a more refined aesthetic in keeping with the ceremonial purpose for large scale gatherings, including graduation.

Construction of the *Students' Centre* began in 1966 and was completed in 1969. In a cost-saving measure, the library also sited on concourse, was built simultaneously. The Sciences Towers were constructed in the same period, with the Social Science Tower following in the early 1970s.

These capital developments coincided with a major turning point. The Massey University Act proclaimed in 1964, saw the creation of Massey University of Manawātū conferring autonomy and degree-granting powers under the Act.



Miles Warren, the Great Hall, watercolour, c. 1965-66. Massey University Art Collection.

4. Garden Opposite Student Centre

Paul Dibble (b. 1943) *Impossible Dialogue*, (made 1988)
Plate steel, galvanised and painted.
Hokowhitu Arts Trust Collection

Impossible Dialogue is a monumental, painted, galvanised steel 'folding'. Created by Paul Dibble during his residency at the Dowse Art Museum in Lower Hutt, it was acquired that year for the Palmerston North Teachers College, Hokowhitu, where he was a lecturer.

The sculpture represents a bold human figure, of indeterminate sex, arms upraised, three sturdy thighs planted against the sharp Manawatū winds. The figure is accompanied by a parrot – an unlikely conversation partner.

The work references recognisable subjects and shapes, which are then abstracted to a point where the form takes precedence. The play between positive and negative space is important. The silhouette, formed by the darkness of the thin, flat steel, contrasts against the sky and the surrounding landscape. For Dibble, it is reminiscent of his childhood home, on farmland near Thames where "everything stands out on this flatness as a silhouette".



Dibble *Impossible Dream*

Impossible Dialogue marks a crucial point in Dibble's career. In the early 1990s, he dismissed 'foldings' in steel, turning instead to bronze. His works became integral to city landscapes and people within them – as can be seen in Palmerston North.

In 2018, this sculpture was installed on Massey's Manawatū campus, following the sale of the Hokowhitu site two years before.

5. Students' Centre

Stop outside the southern entrance to the Sir Geoffrey Peren Building.

Tiritea



Tiritea. Photo credit: Tāmiro, Massey University Archives
<https://massey.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/821>

The house at the end of University Avenue, directly ahead, began life in 1902 as part of a 24-room residence, *Tiritea*, set in 41 acres of grounds and bush, built for Richard Slingsby Abraham, a bank manager, and founder of the stock and station agency, Abraham and Williams Ltd.

Tiritea and its surrounding land was sold to Percy McHardy in 1920. Eight years later, McHardy sold the property to the Palmerston North Borough Council who gifted the homestead and 21 acres of land to the Massey Agricultural College, established just two years earlier.



Tiritea in the process of being split in two.
September 1928 – January 1929.
Photo credit: Tāmiro, Massey University Archives
<https://massey.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/821>



The Principal's residence, Tiritea, in the distance and the Registry in the foreground (right), October 1929.
Photo credit: J.S. Yeats. Tāmiro, Massey University Archives
<https://massey.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/1412>

Students were first accepted in 1928 and used the existing buildings on site. However, appropriate teaching facilities were needed urgently.

To make way for the College's main building, *Tiritea* was cut in two and shifted up the drive. One part became the residence for Geoffrey Peren, the College's first Principal. The other section became the Registry.

Tiritea was home to Professor Peren's successors up until 2008. In 2014, to mark the University's 50th Anniversary, *Tiritea* was partially renovated. The Class of '58 raised \$73,000 towards the project.

Old Main Building

The Agricultural Science Building, also known as Old Main Building, designed by Roy Lippincott, built by Fletcher Construction, and funded by Government, was opened in April 1931. It provided offices, the library, and the first purpose-built teaching spaces and laboratories for Massey Agricultural College.



Old Main Building c. 1931. Tāmīro, Massey University Archives
<https://massey.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/6708>

Lippincott's reputation was sound. He had already completed the Dairy Research Building for the College. His previous experience designing for Auckland University ensured that he was familiar with the needs of a teaching and research institution.

His influences originated with the Chicago School, a group of architects that included Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Walter Burley Griffin. They revitalised commercial buildings by designing functional, uninterrupted floor spaces, allowing light to be drawn into the centre of buildings. Sullivan was also interested in elaborate ornamentation.



Photo credit: Tāmīro, Massey University Archives
<https://massey.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/883>

His influences originated with the Chicago School, a group of architects that included Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Walter Burley Griffin. They revitalised commercial buildings by designing functional, uninterrupted floor spaces, allowing light to be drawn into the centre of buildings. Sullivan was also interested in elaborate ornamentation.

Lippincott expressed these influences in Old Main Building through strong line and form, with bands of glass windows and metal mullions, regular columns and internal light wells all contributing to the building's functionality. The embellishments he applied combine an eclectic blend of the vernacular and foreign: the capitals are flax flowers and the pinnacles, unfurling ponga fronds; stylised American eagles or perhaps morepork, are perched high above the windows and embellish the lobbies.

The metal doorways, emblazoned with the insignia "M" "C" (Massey College), framed by pendant lamps, are further expressions of ornamentation.



Photo credit: Tāmīro, Massey University Archives
<https://massey.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/6790>

Lippincott was also responsible for developing an elegant campus plan.



Old Main Building c. 1931; Old Registry, *Tiritea*, the Oval and Refectory, 1939. Tāmīro, Massey University Archives
<https://massey.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/6708>

In 2010 Massey renamed Old Main Building in honour of the first Principal, Sir Geoffrey Peren, who held that role for three decades.

Old Main Building underwent seismic strengthening between 2012 and 2015. This also provided an opportunity to restore many of the building's original features.

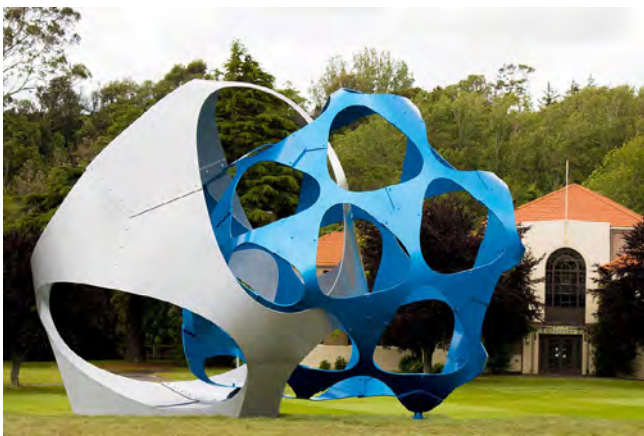
6. 50th Anniversary of Massey University - 2014

Chiara Corbelleto (b. 1956). *Binary* (made 2014)
Massey University Art Collection, Manawatū

Binary was commissioned by Massey Manawatū to mark the 50th Anniversary of it becoming an autonomous university.

Chiara Corbelleto's approach in creating this sculpture celebrates the many layers of relevance to disciplines from life sciences to genetics and biotechnology that are studied and researched at the Manawatū Campus.

Binary, made of plated aluminium, is a configuration of modular components assembled into two interconnecting forms.



Binary

This type of structure is informed by the notion of organized complexity. This concept emerges from environments when a single entity has the intrinsic nature to reproduce itself into a system.

Thus, it presents many associations with the self-replicating characteristics of life evolution at its fundamental level.

Considered philosophically, *Binary* offers a metaphor for the process of education where the assembling of units of knowledge and information achieves an incremental complexity and reaches a platform for new insights and innovation. Chiara Corbelleto's work has shown consistently high levels of intellectual enquiry, formal beauty, and technical experimentation. She works in different aspects of three-dimensional practice, notably with public art commissions throughout Aotearoa New Zealand.

Situating this work within the *Tiritea Heritage Area* is deliberate. The sculpture is surrounded by the earliest foundations of the University; it connects with the past and present and looks to the future.

7. The Refectory

The Refectory building, also designed by Roy Lippincott, was built at the same time as the Old Main Building but completed in 1930. It was originally the dining hall and lounge for students living on campus but later converted to teaching and office space.



The Refectory

The similarities to the Old Main Building are most evident from the exterior.

The Refectory follows the 'Spanish Mission' style expressly through its roof tiles, smooth plastered walls, and semi-circular headed windows.



Refectory Dining Hall, 1939.

Photo credit Tāmīro, Massey University Archives

<https://massey.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/840>

The interior features a refined simplicity with understated decorative details and occasional a-symmetrical elements disrupting more formal geometry.

Pressure for space for students on campus in the late 1930s saw the Refectory common room fitted out as a dormitory. At the instigation of Professor Peren, the New Zealand Army Staff College was domiciled at Massey between 1941 and 1943. Later, because space was required for teaching, building additions were created. The development of the Student Centre in 1969 made the Refectory redundant.

More teaching and administrative space became the dominant factor. These changes meant that the original purpose of the building was not only obscured but overrun with little respect for its integrity.

However, in 2021 the Refectory was re-opened after seismic strengthening and extensive restoration that has revitalised its form.

The University Foundation led successful fundraising initiatives totalling \$3.6 million. Major donations came from the Lottery Grants Board, Central Energy Trust and the Palmerston North City Council. 1599 individual donors, mostly alumni, also contributed generously. Students were enlisted to spearhead the 'phone appeal to alumni. No stone was left unturned to ensure the Refectory would be a central part of the future. Reviving the 1961 Students' Association concept of 'bricks for sale', the Foundation also sought support for flagstones for the garden, named for their donors.

8. University Oval

Located to the East of the Student Centre, framed by walking paths, encircled by mature trees and a harmoniously linked group of established buildings, the Oval is part sporting field and part village green. It has seen cricket matches, picnics, and garden parties. It has provided respite for solitary readers, sun-seekers, and sleepers.

Roy Lippincott recognised its aesthetic and amenity value when he drew up the campus plan in 1929.

Late last year, Massey announced that it is working with the Palmerston North City Council to secure protection for the site through an amendment to the District Plan. Further work has commenced with Heritage New Zealand towards listing.

If you have time, scoot down the walking path to the left of Tiritea and stop at the Refectory for a closer look. Then turn back to the Students' Centre for a vantage view of Binary before making your way back to concourse via Business Studies and Sir Geoffrey Peren.





MUSA THANKS:

Museum Studies, Dr. Susan Abasa,
Programme Co-ordinator – Art and Heritage tour information;

The Pasifika Students' Association, Manawatū;

Te Rau Tauawhi Māori Students Centre;

Campus Operations;

Lara Morgan, University Drama Society, and a PGDip. Museum Studies student 2022;

Charlotte Donovan PGDip. Museum Studies, Class of 2021;

Julia Powell, Museum Studies 2020-22.

IMAGES:

Massey University;

Massey University Archives;

Tāmīro, Massey University Library



