

REFLECTING SKIN: Preview 5 February 5.30pm
(exhibition thru 23 February, 2008)

Opening the sweaty season at City Art Rooms, a group of New Zealand and overseas artists explore the sensations of flesh, veneers, and skin using a variety of materials. The *skin* of these works articulate ideas and identities through personal, cultural, political, and formal perspectives. An emphasis in visual and textural layers implies that meanings and intents are carefully hidden beneath a seductive surface.

Participating artists: Cat Auburn (NZ), Clare Barone (NZ/US), Assaf Ezra (Israel), Gill Gatfield (NZ), Imogen Kerr (NZ), Young Sun Han (NZ/US), Owen Leong (Aus), Jason Lingard (Aus), Maryann Pennington (NZ), Clinton Phillips (NZ)

Cat Auburn employs highly skilled carving techniques in her creation of vulnerable rejects and mutations of nature. The slick appeal of the sculptures questions the use of refinement in object-based art.

Clare Barone's body serves as a template for abstract installations which fold and undulate like a protective skin. Composed of natural materials, scent and texture invite viewers to use multiple senses.

The soaring mountain altitudes affect the faces of Nepalese children in **Assaf Ezra's** intimate portraits. Photographed in a local village, his subjects are at ease and share a natural rapport with the camera.

Gill Gatfield's wall installation of patterned nappies reveals the bare elements of painting by shifting the use of an everyday material. Previously exhibited in the Auckland Art Gallery's *Off the Wall* show, Gatfield will present the work in a completely new format.

Fashion icons star in the watercolour portraits of National Waikato Art Awards finalist, **Imogen Kerr**. Embracing the quick, bleeding, and rascally nature of the medium, her emotive faces are deftly painted.

Young Sun Han presents evidence of how an innocent trip to the studio turned him into a sordid ghost. Through photography and personal performance, the artist explores boundaries of shame and desire.

Breakthrough artist **Owen Leong** has widely exhibited his work in Australia, Asia, and Europe. Video performances focusing on race, his body, and the limits of transformation will feature in Room Two.

Editor **Jason Lingard** (of the Australian-based online magazine, *Nothing*), presents collages from his series "What Little Boys are Made of." The images examine youth obsession and mortality with disturbing humour.

Auckland-based artist **Maryann Pennington**, stretches vinyl across geometric forms in her fetish-like sculptures. The reflective material conjures images of sensual objects while relating to the body and personal identity.

City Art Rooms artist, **Clinton Phillips**, will present new sculptures composed of layered silhouettes to explore the basic forms that inspire awe and fear. Phillips will also draw directly onto the gallery floor – a schematic echo of his iconic shark sculpture.

