

**MEDIA RELEASE**

whangarei | **art museum**

TE WHARETAONGA O WHANGAREI

**INTERNATIONAL MUSEUMS DAY 18 MAY 2009**



**TO CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL MUSEUMS DAY  
WHANGAREI ART MUSEUM WILL OPEN MONDAY 18th MAY  
WITH FREE ENTRY - FREE COFFEE AND MUFFINS AND ALL WAM CATALOGUES  
AVAILABLE FREE TO VISITORS TO OUR ACCLAIMED 'PLUMB LINES' EXHIBITION.**

***"As museums across the globe from their international headquarters of ICOM (International Council of Museums) at UNESCO in Paris to Te Papa in Wellington, Whangarei too celebrates a special day.***

***This is a time not only to revel in successes, but to reflect on the special status museums have from the smallest of communities - to nations across the world, as the guardians of cultural memory - the stories of human endeavour told through the tangible objects of our past and present.***

***Museums too often come under threat from human or natural disaster. From Baghdad to Afghanistan and now in Gaza museums are victims of conflict. International humanitarian law protects cultural property but too often this is ignored and collections looted, dispersed and appropriated, as spoils of war.***

***In our own communities here in New Zealand, museums are frequently placed in a contestable place and their values questioned. They invariably become among the first victims of economic retrenchment - as is the case now. New Zealand museums have for the first time in their history enjoyed a decade of 'golden weather' – of strategic and sustainable growth. More importantly, they have been acknowledged as flagships of our collective 'sense of self' and nationhood - from Te Papa Tongarewa to the smallest of regional museums such as the Whangarei district's eclectic wealth of museum collections.***

***As an international community museums are a brotherhood of shared values which cross political boundaries.***

***Wherever museums are, they are led by dedicated teams and altruistic values in a sometimes avaricious world.***

***Museums need patronage – not patronizing.***

***Celebrate the work of the museums in OUR community on Monday 18 May!"***

***Scott Pothan  
Director  
Whangarei Art Museum.***

***Further information can be obtained by contacting: Whangarei Art Museum  
Phone 430.4240 or email to whangareiartmuseum@wdc.govt.nz***