

*Media Release*

# *'Sweet As' – More than Looking* *a Disabilityart@ccess Exhibition*

**3rd November- 6th December 2009**



Image **Sweet As** installation by **Madeleine Child** (pictured), courtesy of Whitespace Gallery.

View **Visit and Experience** this sound 'popping' - sweet smelling and multi-sensory installation of luscious confectionary colours and an accompanying collections-based exhibition designed for sight-affected and disabled art enthusiasts. Come smell the spring roses in the Rose Gardens and view the art museum collection, including the recently returned C. F. Goldie painting, and learn about some 'new ways of seeing'.

An exhibition designed to celebrate those with disabilities in our community and a more inclusive way of 'seeing'.

*Exhibition concept in collaboration with Tiaho Trust Whangarei and DPA Northland.*

The Whangarei Art Museum is a participant in the Whangarei District Council **Access Whangarei** – a guide to accessible facilities in the district initiative.



DPA Northland

*Curated by Scott Pothan*

**Sweet As** an installation by **Madeleine Child**

*An installation reconfigured to reflect a more diverse audience with popping sounds and strawberry aromatics – and a trolley load of humour !*

**More than Looking** an installation by **Glenn Heenan** –

*New Zealand's first photographic and poetry exhibition created for both a blind and visually impaired audience.*

In October 2009 artist Madeleine Child was announced the joint winner of the Premier Award at the prestigious Portage Ceramic Awards (together with Kerikeri based ceramic artist Jim Cooper) – these awards for the past decade have come to be considered a national barometer of contemporary ceramics.

On 2 November her installation '**Sweet As**' opens at the Whangarei Art Museum as part of the Disabilityart@ccess exhibition.

This exhibition is both challenging and inclusive; it deliberately challenges the regular gallery audience by offering new ways of seeing art and it includes disabled people who can be disadvantaged when it comes to art appreciation due to various impairments. Too often the needs of our disabled communities are neglected when it comes to access to art and design exhibitions. '**Sweet As**' - **More than Looking** Disabilityart@ccess is designed and curated specifically for persons with disabilities and coincides with The International Day of Disabled Persons on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2009.

Glenn Heenan creates an installation of unique photographic art which explores the senses of sight, touch and language to expand our definition of 'seeing' art – and in the process re-defines the art museum as a predominately sight-based institution ! The images are overlaid by glass embossing in a special process following the contours of the image with the poems in Braille nestled within the work, making a sensual experience for all – not just the sight impaired.

There will be public programs and events over the course of the exhibition and the opening, to be announced later including an eclectic performance on 3 December by renowned comedian **Philip Patston**. (details to be announced separately)

All the artworks will be hung throughout at heights suitable for wheelchair-based viewing including the highly tactile and multi-sensory exhibit *Sweet As* ceramic installation by Madeleine Child and *More than Looking* by Glenn Heenan.  
The "Please do not touch" signs will be banished !

*The 'popcorn' started after giving in to my kids hankering to buy coloured popcorn and given the opportunity to inspect it closely I (annoyingly) became excited and fascinated by its fleshy gorgeousness, organic fecundity and forbidden fruitiness ... purity and decadence, white, gold, sugary ... This mixed in with lots of messages and information on food politics, additives etc and how loaded, how big food is now ... Discomfort food or eye candy. Also, it seems to have some inherent funniness ... wayward and formless. Making it is something like drawing a tangle of string*

### **Madeleine Child**

*I did not wish to produce just another photography show. I instead set myself a goal of creating an interactive show that a broad range of the community outside the immediate art world could also be drawn to and experience....after selecting the photos I approached some fantastic local poets to write about the scenes depicted with special consideration for a blind audience.*

### **Glenn Heenan**

Works from the Whangarei Art Museum Collection  
and loans from the Artists

Glenn Heenan and Madeleine Child

Special thanks to Whitespace Gallery, Auckland the artists and Jonny Wilkinson Tiaho Trust Whangarei

For further information or images please contact:

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