

## **Leading the Library up the Garden Path – creating a sculpture trail in the UC Library**

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In 2008 the UC Library embarked on the development of a sculpture trail, which featured 20 works from the University of Canterbury's art collection. The trail encompasses an online guide, offering interpretation for sculptures on display in five of our branch libraries, as well as in several other locations across our two campuses, which are now regularly visited by tour groups. The trail was not envisaged as a static display, but rather as both an active means to make this collection more accessible to a wider audience, and as a bridge to building an enriched relationship with our local community. In addition, the trail has the potential to be one starting point for encouraging the use of artworks in teaching and learning in the library. I believe that the resulting trail not only acknowledges the importance of Canterbury's artistic heritage, but also embraces more of the collections full potential, and will be part of ensuring the collection continues to have relevance to the University in the future.

Setting up the sculpture trail was of course not without its challenges, particularly as its creation involved the input and investment of a number of groups from across the University. I am hopeful that by learning from this process, we will be able to successfully expand on the resource in the future, and develop similar paintings and architectural trails on campus. Meantime the sculpture trail has brought out into open a number of philosophical issues which the UC Library will no doubt continue to debate as the trail evolves. Questions have arisen such as whether a potentially noisy sculpture trail can or even should co-exist with spaces designed for quiet study; how can we cater for our wider community audiences without affecting the services we offer to our staff and students, and how can a sculpture trail of non-textual resources support the teaching and learning aims of the library? Such issues are not specific to just UC Library, but are of relevance to the wider library field as we investigate the numerous ways in which we can make our collections relevant, and connect with our communities. This talk will outline the processes involved in the creation of the UC Sculpture trail, and consider the opportunities and benefits of this experience as they relate to the wider library field in New Zealand.