

# Ffuture Ffocused Art Prize 2017

## Finalists:

**Cabbage, Clarchat Scintal, Salvo Las Vegas, & Printo Moorth**

Organised by Riff Raff (the collaborative artist duo comprised of Li-Ming Hu and Daphne Simons) with Jamie Hanton and Hope Wilson

17 June – 16 July 2017

**THE  
PHYSICS  
ROOM** CONTEMPORARY ART SPACE



**Jamie Hanton, The Physics Room Director**  
*Lobster Three Ways*

A Deputy Director from a big Australian museum came in. I gave them the spiel. I told them that we had an artist-organised artist prize currently showing, which is true. They asked why I thought an art prize was important. I said it was beneficial for emerging artists to gain visibility, which I kind of believe. That 'kind-of-belief' manifested in a slight hesitation and a long glance up and away from their face to the ceiling. I continued with the spiel. We wanted to de-centralise the power structure of the art world, that's why we invited artists to organise the prize rather than curators. Both true and not true. I think. The judges are coming down in two weeks time; one is a construction manager for McDonalds, the other is a retired GP. So you see, this is another gesture towards a more democratic view of contemporary art, I said. Yes, they said, yes! This is the great thing about small institutions, something something freedom...

A visitor came in. They looked at the show and as they were on their way out I met them by the reception desk. Did you enjoy the show, I asked, what's your favourite work, I asked, have you voted in the People's Choice Award, I asked. Yes, I did, but I didn't understand it, they said. That's OK, I replied, which part did you enjoy the most? I liked the small circles, painted, they said. Oh, that's Printo Moorth's watercolour on recycled paper; they trained as a nurse and view art making as a healing therapeutic activity. A great way of dealing with the stresses they faced working in South Sudan. Oh yes, I can see that now, making paper is a kind of cathartic thing isn't it, pulping the paper, pressing it into shape. And how about the anemone...? ...Ahh yes Salvo Las Vegas...the zorb? Yes! Can you tell me about that? Well, Salvo is interested in the juncture between the hand-made and the industrial, the contrast between the serial and the original.

An artist came in. I walked around the exhibition with them. Room by room, artist by artist, work by work, I delivered the biographies, the summaries of artistic practices. Wow, just like real ones, the artist enthused. But I went further. I talked about Cabbage's pomander works (that the fur used to create them is from a beloved and now deceased doggo). I even revealed that Cabbage isn't ten years old, but closer to six months old, because who, really, could believe that a pupper could create such a coherent and poignant moving image installation? I discussed Clarchat's work in relation to a contemporary New Zealand artist that we both knew, albeit in a inferior and derivative way, and said that Salvo's work looked like a second year art school project. These were cheap shots, but it still felt like I was punching a heavy, swinging bag.

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## 2017 Judges



**Serene Hu**  
Retired General Practitioner

Serene qualified as a medical doctor in Singapore prior to moving to New Zealand to work at Palmerston North Hospital in the late 1970s. She ran her own medical practice for many years, and has delivered approximately 1000 babies.

Between 2009 and 2011 she completed two missions for Mediciens sans Frontieres: one at a tuberculosis clinic in Georgia and another at an AIDS hospital in Malawi.

Since retiring she is pursuing her interests in gardening, petanque, French, and studying the Bible.



**Roeland Simons**  
National Construction Manager, McDonalds, NZ

Roeland has overseen the new construction sites and re-imaging of McDonald's restaurants throughout NZ and the Pacific Islands, including Fiji, New Caledonia, Tahiti, Samoa and American Samoa.

Before he emigrated to New Zealand in 2000, Roeland worked at various companies including the European retail giant, C&A where he was responsible for the mechanical and electrical fit-outs. Before this he attended evening classes, studying heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) and project management. In 1975-1977 he was in the Dutch national service as a sergeant in Germany leading a reconnaissance unit.

## 2017 Finalists



**Cabbage**  
b. 2007, Pouto, Northland, NZ

The digital realm is simultaneously perplexing and enticing for Cabbage. What does it mean to be canine in a digital age? Cabbage's work deals with the alarming absence of odour in the advancement of digital technology. In canine society, objects without a scent are not considered real. Even inanimate objects carry smell-traces picked up through their lifetime of interactions. This dogged investigation into the digital naturally raises another issue: how are animals currently represented online? Cabbage opens the door to a multi-sensory, vital, and animistic environment, beyond our limited anthropocentric understanding.



**Salvo Las Vegas**  
b. 1975, Oamaru, NZ

Salvo Las Vegas' sculptural investigations explore the possibilities of replication and the interfaces between handmade and industrial processes. The incongruities revealed in these processes are integral to Las Vegas, who believes the imperfections foreshadow a kind of ultimate material strength that can only arise out of mutation and sheer quantity. Their consistent pairing of anatomical forms with mass produced recreational objects brings to mind questions around over-population, natural selection and the future of material industry and production.



**Clarchat Scintal**  
b. 2005, Palmerston North, NZ

Scintal's explorations of the paranormal, via custom made hardware built by their parents, offer an idiosyncratic attempt to introduce a fourth dimension into art making. Their visionary practice uses the body as a conduit for the future, inhabiting a tenuous artistic position between time-based media and psychic performance. The selection panel are unfazed about the controversy surrounding Scintal's work, stating that the questions it raises around authenticity, authorship, and the increasing prominence of technology in art, only increase the work's intrigue.



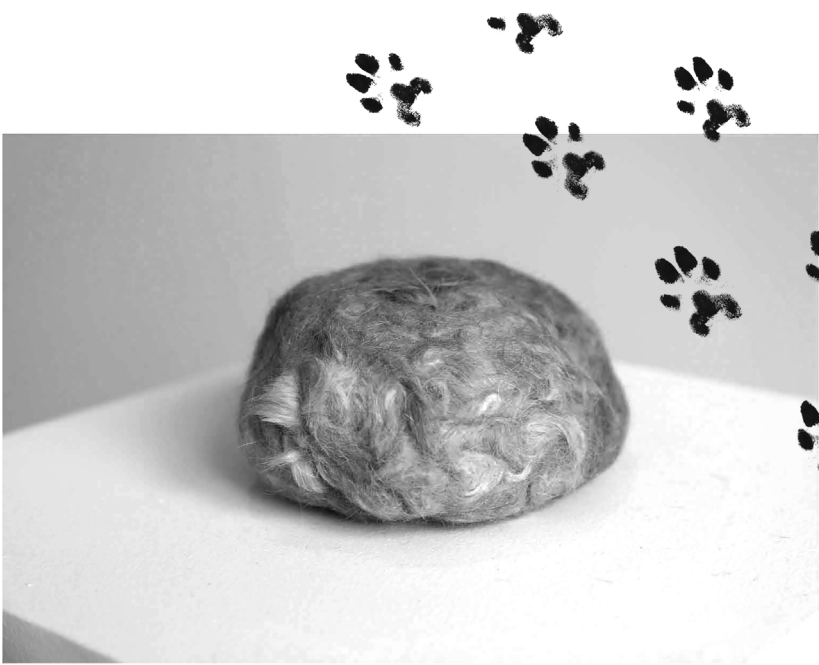
**Printo Moorth**  
b. 1959, Kerikeri, Northland, NZ

Moorth undertook nursing training at Northtec, Whangarei and went on to complete graduate studies at the University of Southampton, UK. It was during their many years of voluntary field work for Mediciens sans Frontieres that Moorth took an interest in painting and its healing potential. Given Moorth's intimate experiences with the human body in all its states; damaged, diseased, in repair, it's been recently suggested that Moorth's paintings have a way of communicating directly with the viewer's nervous systems rather than language-based systems of understanding. We know the human body reacts in unexpected ways to environmental factors and visceral imagery. But what is most keenly felt, when face-to-face with a Moorth painting, is resounding respite.





Courtesy of Clarchat Scintal



Courtesy of Cabbage

**Printo Moorth,**  
**excerpts from Artist Talk at The Physics Room, 17 June 2017**

(**PM:** Printo Moorth, **LM:** Li-Ming)

**LM:** What your thoughts are about painting today?

**PM:** Painting is a means to an end for me, I think I share common interests with other painters – I’m interested in light and colour and the way that those can combine in ways to physically affect the viewer. I think it’s a very powerful medium, there are not many other mediums where you can have such concentrated one on one time with something that only communicates with you visually, it’s pure vision.

**LM:** The words “therapy” and “healing” have been used in connection with your work, do you think your art is therapeutic?

**PM:** Absolutely, therapeutic in that sun-bathing is a therapeutic. “Atapa SnAna” phrase, and this idea of sunbathing science that you, physiologist and I like work is a bit. The sun is important to spend so much doors now that don’t get that and healing power know that sunlight disorders like Psoriasis, and it can disinfect and heal wounds, as demonstrated by winner Niels Finsen during World War One. As some people already know, I spend a long time working for Medicins sans Frontiers (Doctors without Borders), about 12 years in South Sudan and Yemen). It was a very intense experience to say the least. And during that time, I found a really nice way to unwind was through painting. I would adorn the walls of the hospitals with my paintings, and my patients found it very peaceful to be around my work! And I’m not just saying that, I’m saying that as a medical man, it’s just the symptom I observed.

**LM:** What does your work tell us about the future?

**PM:** Mother Theresa had a nice way of phrasing it;

“Yesterday is gone, tomorrow has not yet come, we have only today, let us begin.”

Courtesy of Printo Moorth

milky sap from flowering plant  
oh stable dispersion  
of polymer microparticles  
will you be my articulated laticifer?  
creamy exudate of injury

I’m not sure it’s the skin that interests me most  
it puts the lotion they always say...

I used to like to dress up pretending I was in the 18th century  
billowing gowns of rendered petrochemicals and  
regenerated cellulose

can we make and make and make and make  
and roll and walk on water water walking

Did you know that two Aucklanders invented the zorb,  
floated it on the stockmarket  
got bought out for a measly 450,000 dollars  
felt hard done by for years,  
and then reinvented to the OGO - now forty dollars a ride in Rotorua

I couldn’t tell you why mammaries,  
the forty who have given suck, the countless, my partner prefers the bums  
round, fun, squishy, inflatable, rotatable

perhaps there was some surplus material  
miraculous in its fecundity

because seriously, don’t lots of us yearn for some return  
some reintegration of the primal form

crawling and parting the curtains of desire,  
slipping out of our suspended stupefaction

Courtesy of Salvo Las Vegas