

Where Angels Fear to Tread

***Nine Lives*, the 2003 Chartwell Exhibition, Auckland Art Gallery, Toi o Tamaki, 13 September – 23 November**

Art openings are mix of wine, personalities and expectations. The opening night of *Nine Lives* was a rich mix. The show is a collection of eight artists works from the Chartwell Collection, the ninth artist was Giovanni Intra who died December last year. Most of Giovanni's work had come from private collectors and one installation work was re-made for the show. This work, *How Doctors See* (1995), consisted of thirty cameras smashed into many pieces and strewn around the gallery floor.

Gavin Hipkins, a friend of Giovanni's and photographer, bravely replicated the work for the gallery. The original installation as I remember was a forceful aggressive piece, but in the space it seemed the life had been sucked out of the work.

'It just wasn't right!,' Ava Seymour sensed and did what we all wanted to do – she walked through the middle of the camera pieces scattering them across the floor. The atmosphere was palpable. The spirit of Giovanni had kicked life back into the work. As the evening continued many more of the audience continued the process, kicking and smashing pieces with their feet. I was sure the work would have been swept back into shape for the next morning.

Judy Darragh is an artist living in Auckland.



Ava Seymour adjusting the installation of Giovanni Intra's *How Doctors See* (1995) in *Nine Lives* at the Auckland Art Gallery. Photo: Ann Shelton.
