

Sally Burton is a well-respected and established Nelson-based artist. She studied at the Canterbury School of Fine Art, graduating in 1969 and after 25 years of teaching, is now painting full time. Sally has a strong reputation as a narrative painter with a focus on historical and colonial subjects. Her work is represented in national and international collections, and her three pieces in the collection of The Suter Art Gallery are regarded by the public as some of the most popular and enduring art works.

Sally moved to the Waimea Plains three decades ago when her partner David Morley was working for Roddy and Fergus O'Connor, milking cows and working the Clydesdale horse team. Sally's rural lifestyle on the Waimea Plains has been a constant source of inspiration and features strongly in her work over the decades. Sally's motivation to draw attention to the history of cows was, however, inspired by her 2006-7 artist residency in Sanskriti, India. The completely different place of cows in Indian culture and the use of milk in religious ceremony as the 'essence of life' was the starting point for this major installation.

Floortalks:

Sunday 15 February 2pm: Teresa O'Connor will talk about her family's long involvement with the farm which is the inspiration for this exhibition.

Wednesday 4 March 12.10pm: Join Sally Burton and Suter staff for a walk through the exhibition.

Event:

Friday 27 March 5.30pm. David Burton food writer and restaurant critic, will talk about the importance of milk and dairy products in our lives and Arvind Pujji will discuss the rituals involved with milk from an Indian perspective. Wine and cuisine with a dairy theme will be served in The Suter Café. Tickets available at The Suter in March.

THE SUTER TE ARATOI O WHAKATŪ

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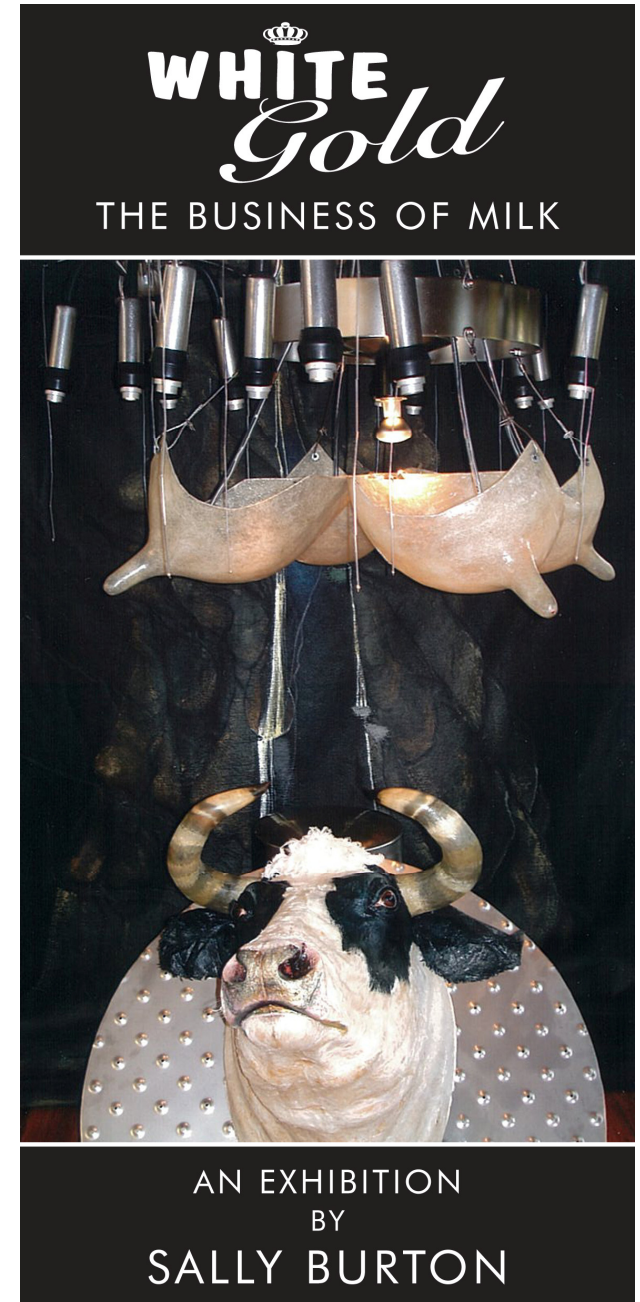
White Gold is a portrait of the New Zealand dairy industry as seen from the Waimea Plains studio of the artist, Sally Burton.
















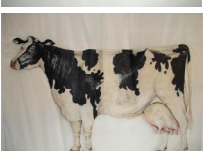
Sally lives adjacent to one of the oldest dairy farms in the Nelson region, established by John and Bridget O'Connor in 1853. The bull paddock and daily parade of the cows to the dairy shed can be seen directly from her studio.

Inspired by this constant ritual and the history of her surrounds, *White Gold* features a 'dream herd of dairy queens'; life sized portraits of Friesian cows adapted from the herd records of the O'Connor family farm and incorporating brands and industries relating to dairying. A time line on the back wall of the gallery tells the lineage of the O'Connor herd and incorporates copies from actual herd records and archival material relating to the first dairy companies in the region.

The exhibition centrepiece is a grand chandelier made from milking machine components, stainless steel and state of the art lighting devices. This light reflects the technological edge of dairying and bestows the installation with a grandeur befitting this industry as our countries economic backbone. It was made in collaboration with dairy engineers, Gary Reilly and Dave Milne, and with help from Jake Yocum from Izzat Design in Wellington who made the deconstructed udder and bull form. The intricate wiring for the lighting was created by Malcolm Fell-Smith.

Exhibition sponsored by:
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The O'Connor herd, February 2009

The Waimea Plains has a long history of agricultural and pastoral farming. Soil studies have revealed evidence of Māori gardens covering an area of 400 hectares. This fertile 'Māori soil' and expansive flat land made the Waimea Plains an attractive settlement area to colonialists who arrived from the mid-1800s.

They had left County Kerry, Ireland in 1847 for London to escape the ravages of famine in their country. While in London Anne became a wet nurse and suckled the third child of the founder of Lloyds Insurance. The Lloyd's first two children died in infancy and they were so grateful for their third child's survival, they gave Patrick (who was working as a navvy) and Ann the money to go to New Zealand and purchase land. It is with great pride that this gift was repaid to the Lloyds in full. Patrick and Ann later sent money to their respective brother and sister, John and Bridget O'Connor. John and Bridget settled on land now known as Donnybrook which is still owned and farmed by O'Connor descendants.

The lineage of the O'Connor farm is an important example of this region's history, particularly given the impact of changing agricultural interests, urban sprawl and conversion to lifestyle blocks in the area. Sally Burton would like to thank the O'Connor family for their support, in particular, Teresa and Fergus O'Connor for family and herd history.