



Matthew Galloway *Watch History*

SUMER, TĀMAKI MAKĀURAU AUCKLAND
16 OCTOBER – 15 NOVEMBER 2025

Sumer is pleased to present *Watch History*, the first solo exhibition at the gallery by Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington-based artist Matthew Galloway.

The exhibition, a sculptural installation, comprises some seventy iPhone 16 handsets arranged across a large modular sofa—Mario Bellini’s *Camaleonda* (1970) for B&B Italia. Like the furniture upon which they rest, each handset is showroom new.

The various components of Bellini’s furniture system occupy the main area of the gallery floor, obliging visitors to move amongst them. Their lozenge-like upholstered forms echo Jony Ive’s Apple design language—equally iconic, though far more ubiquitous. While the furniture is arranged neatly, the phones are scattered seemingly at random, as if dropped in haste, abandoned, forgotten.

Each phone displays a short engraved line of text: closed captions lifted from television and film. Some are dialogue; others, bracketed audio descriptions. The screens are otherwise blank, black and mirror-like. This effect results from the anti-piracy controls built into Netflix’s iOS app, which allow only captions to appear when screenshots are taken. The fragments’ original sources have been deliberately left unidentified; even the artist admits he has forgotten many. While he notes they are drawn from a diverse range of genres—drama, comedy, action, documentary, reality TV—reflecting the everyday viewing habits of his family, their specific provenance is largely beside the point.

Stripped of their original contexts, the captions accumulate into a loose, Dada-like script that veers between the banal, comic and poetic. Pathos and bathos intertwine. This incongruous chorus emerges from objects typically designed for a single user—the personal device, bonded to one hand, one gaze. Here, their massed presence—dark, inert, numbering in the dozens—suggests excess, obsolescence and alienation.

Galloway is best known for his socially engaged, research-driven practice spanning sculpture, print, video and installation. His projects often interrogate narratives surrounding extractive economies—activities promoted by governments and big business as economic necessities yet widely critiqued for their environmental and social impacts.

Developed during his 2025 McCahon House Parehuia residency, *Watch History* marks a subtle but significant shift. Rather than examining primary industries, Galloway turns his attention to the everyday technologies of mass consumerism and the hidden infrastructures—of energy, control and mediation—that underpin them. By reframing the devices and textual residue of streaming culture, he exposes the systems that shape and govern how we encounter media.

The work’s staging further complicates these dynamics. By pairing these devices with objects that are conspicuously luxurious—‘objects of desire’ that signal both financial and cultural status—Galloway invokes questions of value, authenticity and distribution. The



Camaleonda sofa is a modern design icon often encountered not in its original form (as seen here), but through replicas produced in lesser materials at a fraction of the cost. Meanwhile, the phones are in fact non-functional dummies: display models intended for retail environments. These choices layer the installation with ironies that extend beyond media culture, inviting broader reflections on how we construct and assign value, and on the relationship between the one and the many, the unique and the ubiquitous, the individual and the crowd.

Acknowledgements

Sumer warmly thanks Matisse for their generous support and collaboration on this project.

We also acknowledge both McCahon House and the Office of Contemporary Art Aotearoa (OCAA) for their recent support of Matthew's practice through significant opportunities and residencies.

Artist Bio

Matthew Galloway (b. 1985, Ōtautahi Christchurch, New Zealand) lives and works in Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington. He holds a Doctor of Fine Arts from Elam School of Fine Arts, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland (2025). In 2025 he was a McCahon House Parehuia resident and was selected as the Aotearoa participant for *Revolutionary Roads* across Slovenia, Serbia and Montenegro in association with the Office for Contemporary Art Aotearoa. In 2024 his work *Empty Vessels* was a finalist for the International Circa Art Prize, showing on public screens in London, Berlin and Milan.

He has exhibited widely at many of Aotearoa New Zealand's leading contemporary art institutions, including Christchurch Art Gallery, Adam Art Gallery, Hastings Art Gallery, Te Tuhi, Artspace Aotearoa, The Dowse Art Museum and Dunedin Public Art Gallery. His work has also been included in a number of significant international exhibitions, including *ei numeroa*, Museum of Technology, Finland (2025); *Provincia 53. Art, Territory & Decolonization*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León; and *Melfas Línea orgánica*, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo del Sur, Buenos Aires (both 2017). He was a selected participant in the Cripta747 Studio Program, Turin (2019), and *ART Tifariti: After the Future*, Art and Human Rights Meeting in the Sahrawi Refugee Camps, Tindouf, Algeria (2016).



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Works are available either as individual handsets, priced at NZD \$1,499.00 each—or as shown: in grouped arrangements with *B&B Italia Camaleonda* sofa modules, or various off-the-shelf accessories, with wall-mounted or wearable options. For pricing on specific arrangements, please contact the gallery.

All works are produced as an edition of 1+1AP.

MAIN GALLERY



Matthew Galloway
Watch History (Camaleonda Enia Olive Green, Gli Scacchi Queen Kanu White), 2025
Engraved replica iPhone 16 handsets, B&B Italia Camaleonda sofa modules
(MG-000027)



Matthew Galloway
Watch History (Camaleonda Enia Olive Green, Gli Scacchi Knight Kanu White), 2025
Engraved replica iPhone 16 handsets, B&B Italia Camaleonda sofa modules
(MG-000024)



Matthew Galloway
Watch History (Camaleonda Enia Olive Green, Gli Scacchi Rook Kanu White), 2025
Engraved replica iPhone 16 handsets, B&B Italia Camaleonda sofa modules
(MG-000026)



Matthew Galloway
Watch History (Camaleonda Enia Ivory), 2025
Engraved replica iPhone 16 handsets, B&B Italia Camaleonda ottoman
(MG-000025)



WINDOW SPACE



Matthew Galloway
Watch History (rain pattering, children playing), 2025
Engraved replica iPhone 16 handset, Quad Lock Mag case and mount
(MG-000023)



Matthew Galloway
Watch History (idiot, idiot), 2025
Engraved replica iPhone 16 handset (broken), Quad Lock case
(MG-000022)

IN THE OFFICE

Matthew Galloway
Watch History (What are you drinking?), 2025
Engraved replica iPhone 16 handset, Quad Lock Mag case and mount
(MG-000028)

Matthew Galloway
Watch History (It is by definition "art"), 2025
Engraved replica iPhone 16 handset, Spigen Crystal Clear case case, Topologie
Bungee strap, Topologie Phone Strap Adaptor, Martino Gamper Hookalotti hook
(MG-000029)



Matthew Galloway
Watch History (Camaleonda Enia Olive Green, Gli Scacchi Queen Kanu White), 2025
Engraved replica iPhone 16 handsets, B&B Italia Camaleonda sofa modules
(MG-000027)



Matthew Galloway
Watch History (Camaleonda Enia Olive Green, Gli Scacchi Rook Kanu White), 2025
Engraved replica iPhone 16 handsets, B&B Italia Camaleonda sofa modules
(MG-000026)



Matthew Galloway
Watch History (Camaleonda Enia Ivory), 2025
Engraved replica iPhone 16 handsets, B&B Italia Camaleonda ottoman
(MG-000025)



Matthew Galloway
Watch History (Camaleonda Enia Olive Green, Gli Scacchi Knight Kanu White), 2025
Engraved replica iPhone 16 handsets, B&B Italia Camaleonda sofa modules
(MG-000024)



Matthew Galloway
Watch History (rain pattering, children playing), 2025
Engraved replica iPhone 16 handset, Quad Lock Mag case and mount
(MG-000023)



Matthew Galloway
Watch History (idiot, idiot), 2025
Engraved replica iPhone 16 handset (broken), Quad Lock case
(MG-00002)