

Schooling Kiwi students in the art of philanthropy

A WANAKA philanthropist has gathered up her extensive collection of New Zealand art and is taking it on the road to every secondary school in the country.

Fiona Campbell has spent millions of dollars of her own money creating the Real Art Roadshow.

She has kitted out two custom-made trucks, worth \$460,000 each, with pieces of art created by a variety of Kiwi artists, including Toss Woollaston, Shane Cotton and Ralph Hotere.



Fiona Campbell

The graphic designer, who has worked in various Wellington art galleries, was an early investor in Trade Me and became “extremely wealthy” overnight after selling her shares in the online auction site.

“Although I live comfortably, I don’t get off on spending money on myself. There’s only so many pairs of shoes a woman needs and then it gets boring,” she said.

After seeing a shortage of real art available to New Zealand teenagers because their schools were isolated



In the eye of the beholder: Alistair Knewstubb and Cyrilla Eade, both 16, study a Toss Woollaston painting during the Real Art Roadshow’s visit to Linwood College in Christchurch.

Photo: THE PRESS

either physically or culturally from art galleries, she decided to take art to the schools for free.

She hired two art curators and bought more than 100 pieces of art, ranging from paintings, sculpture and photographs, specifically for the project. “It’s just a lot easier buying the art, then I’m the only one who’ll shed tears if anything goes wrong with it.”

She would not reveal how much

money she spent on art but said it was “lots”.

She had gained hugely from the project after seeing pupils’ enthusiasm.

The roadshow will call on all the country’s 694 secondary schools in the next four years and has already visited about 245. The truck drivers live in a separate compartment on board to keep an eye on the art.

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