



COLONIAL  
GOOSE



Pauline Bern



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A  
GOOSE  
 BY ANY  
 OTHER  
 NAME...

**Bronwyn Lloyd**

*A name codes recognition,  
 but does not make identity,  
 nor signify lightly<sup>[1]</sup>*

A name is no simple thing, according to the Rev. Leicester Kyle, in this excerpt from his book-length poem about fourteen orchids discovered in the Hawke's Bay region in the 1880s by missionary, printer and pioneering botanist, William Colenso (1811-1899). Writing here about the orchid *Gastrodia leucopetala*, Kyle's six-part poem argues that, despite its love of dark places, our impression of this orchid should not be diminished because of the evil and danger that we associate with the dark. We must not bring our narrow preconceptions to bear on this flower. It chooses dark places, Kyle writes, simply 'because the food is there, / And there is room,' and the poet asserts that we should regard darkness, just as we do light, as a 'soothing parent' to the 'life / She grows.'<sup>[2]</sup>

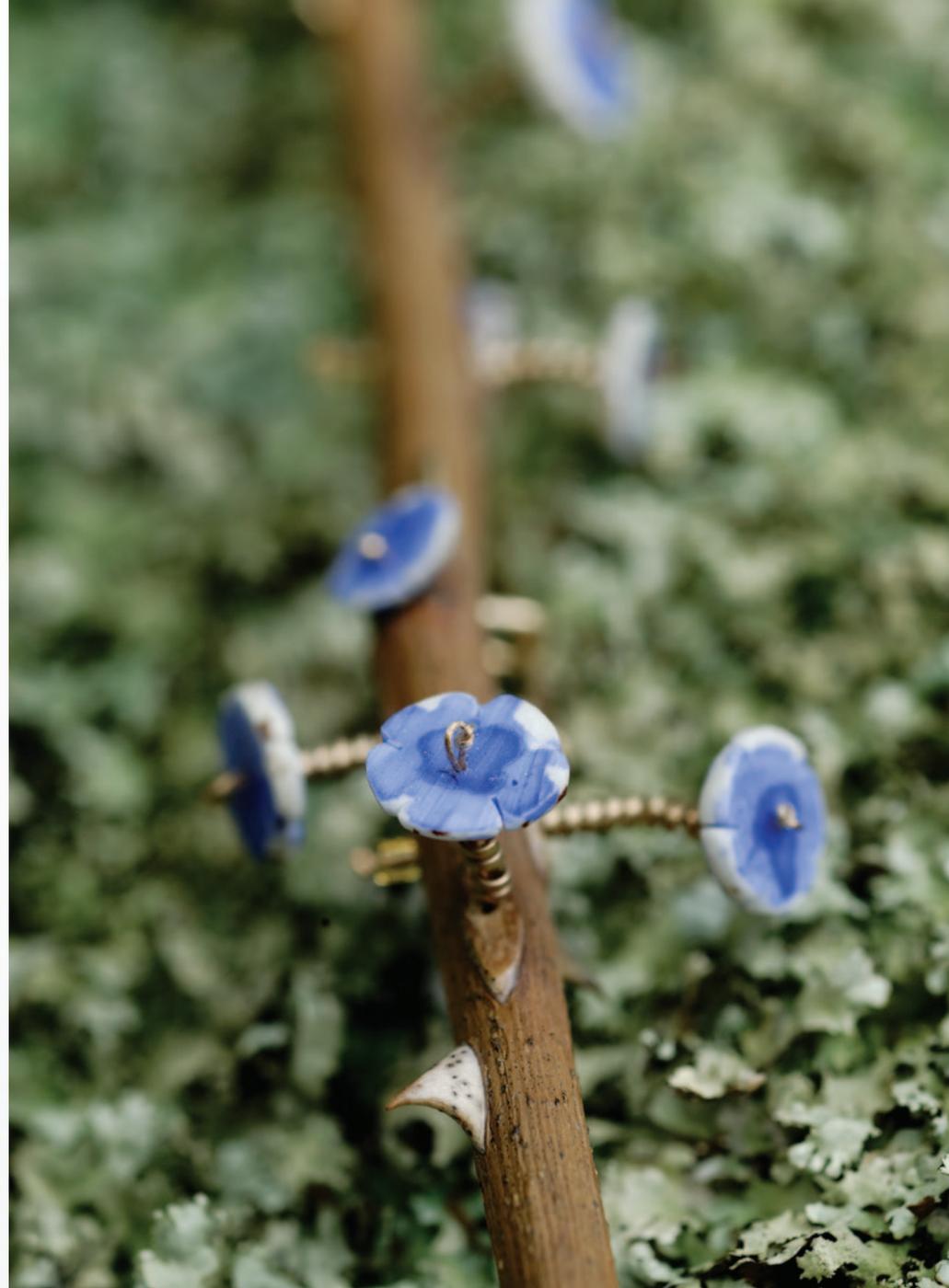
*Colonial Goose*, the collective title for Pauline Bern's new body of botanical jewellery, is a name chosen with care, like those of Colenso's orchids, and it is also a name that does not wear its signification lightly. While the connection between an old recipe from the colonial era and a group of botanical brooches and neck pieces might not seem immediately apparent, let the title simmer slowly for a while and you will discover that it provides an enticing clue to understanding the works.

The dish known as Colonial Goose harks back to the early pioneering tradition in New Zealand of making do with what's on hand. In this case, owing to a scarcity of geese, the traditional English Christmas fare of roast goose was substituted for a stuffed leg of lamb or mutton, prepared in such a way that the completed dish resembled a goose, even though it wasn't. The recipe involved the careful boning out of a leg of lamb, after which the meat was stuffed with a mixture of honey and dried apricots, as well as the traditional stuffing of breadcrumbs, onion, parsley and sage. The mutton was then left to soak in a red wine marinade, which apparently contributed to its appearance as a goose when cooked.<sup>[3]</sup>

The colonial and wartime necessity of making do with what's available is a fitting analogy for Bern's jewellery practice, which always involves using locally sourced









### Awards and Grants

2011 Creative New Zealand Grant  
 2007 Whiteboard National Jewellery  
 Competition – Highly Commended  
 2003 Creative New Zealand Craft /  
 Object International Residency Grant  
 2000 David Thomas Foundation Gold  
 Award in association with The Dowse  
 Art Museum  
 1999 Creative New Zealand Grant  
 1997 Cleveland Art Awards –  
 Highly Commended  
 1994 QEII Arts Council Study Grant

### Collections

The NewDowse, Lower Hutt  
 Auckland Museum

### Publications

Damian Skinner – *Pocket Guide To New  
 Zealand Jewellery*, Velvet da Vinci, Society  
 of Arts and Crafts, 2010, p54, 60,103

Andy Lim – *The Compendium Finale of  
 Contemporary Jewellers 2008*, Darling  
 Publications, 2009, p233,

Kathy Armstrong, Nigel Borell –  
*Te Tetaitanga / Bind Together*, Southwest  
 School of Art and Craft, 2008, p12

Rose Griffin – *Handycrafts, te tuhi –  
 the mark*, 2003, p12

Anna Miles – *Close To Home*, Unitec,  
 2002, p5

Deborah Crowe – *Grammar: Subjects and  
 Objects*, Dowse Art Museum, 2002, p24

Douglas Lloyd-Jenkins – *Strain, Grate,  
 Whisk, Scrub, jewellery by Pauline Bern*,  
 DOT, 2000

Kobi Bosshard – *The Second New Zealand  
 Jewellery Biennial*, Dowse Art Museum,  
 1996, p15

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