

# VISUAL ARTS

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## A modern encounter

Olga Cironis' CoverUp, at the Heathcote Museum and Gallery, is an exhibition of similar tonal hues and equally concerned with humanist values but of a different style and synthesis. CoverUp is work

of a site-specific nature.

The reading of the sculptures is embedded in the space they are exhibited in. In utilising familiar objects which have been covered up — or wrapped — with cloth, Cironis has skilfully revealed the uncanny nature of our memory to take over when confused by the negation of our immediate surrounds. The uncanny is a Freudian thing and Heathcote is an old residential psychiatric hospital so Cironis has cleverly brought together a major concern of 20th century art with the site her work is infiltrating.

Haunting, scary and ghostly are words that come to mind when viewing a wooden dresser wrapped in a blanket or wooden

chairs, likewise wrapped, around the edge of the gallery as if emerging through time from an old waiting room or dance hall. Haunting, scary and ghostly though, as descriptions, are themselves wrapped up in this idea of the uncanny.

Equally, I think Cironis plays with the idea of concealment, allowing the object to reveal only what we remember of it by covering it up. By immediately calling into play our memory Cironis corrals the viewer into a dialogue with their memory which then, through the words, machine-stitched into the blankets, starts to break down our perceptions of who we are. A line like "help me be like you" stitched into a bedhead makes us question who we think we

are and by what standards we measure ourselves.

The rocking horse in the back room concludes Cironis' ability to move the viewer through a series of narrative subplots, nailing home that we all exist in our own minds. In My Mind is a rocking horse, again wrapped in a blanket, with electronic senses which, when you stroke the horse's back, sends sounds to the speakers around the room.

I enjoyed CoverUp, Cironis has played on the edge of theatre and in doing so provided a rewarding experience.

**CoverUp is at Heathcote Museum and Gallery until November 2.**



Olga Cironis' rocking horse from her CoverUp exhibition.