

# Mural adds splash of colour to Oriental Bay

Justin Wong

A mural immortalising the stories of Oriental Bay now adorns the front wall of a villa in the prominent suburb.

The mural at 186 Oriental Parade was painted by artists Anna Proc and Gabriel Heimler for the house's owner.

"We think murals are not for the artist but for the people," Heimler said. "It's a form of respect, what we give to Wellingtonians."

The mural depicts all nine houses that were designed and constructed by leading architect Joshua Charlesworth between 1906 and 1909. It includes the seven smaller villas commonly known as the Seven Sisters and the two larger houses at their side from 186 to 202 Oriental Parade.

On the left of the mural, Charlesworth is shown standing in front of 202 Oriental Parade, one of the larger houses he built for himself. It has since been demolished and replaced by the Clifton Towers apartment block. Its cousin at No 186 remains.

On the right, there's a man with a bicycle in front of two of the Seven Sisters. He was chosen by the artists because he was

photographed there in the 1900s.

"He was exactly just like that, with the bicycle next to this house," Proc said.

Further to the right, there are girls rolling a hoop. The artists included a red tram to highlight that electric trams were already in the area when the first of the Seven Sisters was built in 1906.

The sign on the tram, Dewsbury Terrace, was an earlier street name in the area.

The man getting off the tram was journalist Herbert Bridge, the first occupant of 186 Oriental Parade. He wrote for *The Evening Post* before becoming one of the first journalists at *The Dominion* newspaper when the latter was founded in 1907.

On the other side, the man getting on the tram was No 186's previous owner, Peter Cullen, who lived in the house for 23 years before selling it in February 2020.

The mural also connects the past and present by having the nine houses appear in their modern day colours so the public can recognise them.

The mural was "longer and bigger" than the pair's previous work in Wellington. "It's nice that we can do something for the city," Heimler said.



Joshua Charlesworth, the architect behind the Seven Sisters and the two larger homes beside them, is shown standing in front of 202 Oriental Parade, which he designed for himself.

The mural has been painted by Anna Proc and Gabriel Heimler. SOURCE: ROCKMARCHESINI STUFF

**Kupu o te Rā** Hunga means group of people.

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