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Irving Smith Jack Architects were commissioned in 2002 to transform an existing central Nelson commercial shell into an exhibition and education centre for the region's nationally significant collections, which were previously housed in outdated facilities away from the city.

Externally a restrained approach to materiality, detail and colour simplify the aesthetic of the building. A bold double height copper entry, graphics and signage are used to enliven this neutral palette. Resene systems have been selected throughout, specifically Resene X-200 waterproofing membrane to finish reused panels of concrete blockwork overcoated with Resene Uracryl to provide anti-graffiti protection. Special colour matches were created in keeping with the existing colour scheme and heritage nature of the project and renamed after the architectural firm to ensure easy access to colour formulations for future painting projects.

The exterior colour palette is replicated within the public spaces. The museum exhibition team has selected a broader range of colours in the gallery spaces coated in Resene Zylone Sheen waterborne low sheen and Resene Lumbersider waterborne satin, gaining maximum impact against the black background, a device to conceal building services and increase perception of space. Hues of Resene Napa (smoky grey beige), Resene Tapa (grey neutral), Resene Gravel (urban grey) and Resene Black White (calcite grey white) are a neutral frame to the diverse exhibits on show.

The relocated museum has drawn wide praise. With the return to its original site in the heart of the city, Town Acre 445, the Tasman Bays Heritage Trust has succeeded in raising the profile of the Nelson Provincial Museum Pupiri Taonga O Te Tai Ao.



Architect: Andrew Irving, Irving Smith Jack Architects Ltd
Building Contractor: Wilkes Construction
Painting Contractor: Ray McKenzie and Sons Ltd
Photographer: Grant Stirling, Stirling Images
Resene: Philip Thompson, Nelson Marlborough Branch Manager