

ART

A person is depicted floating in a dark, starry night sky. They are wearing a dark, textured, hooded garment that resembles a traditional Māori cloak (haka). Their face is partially obscured by a dark, woven mask. Their arms are outstretched, and they appear to be holding onto a large, white, crystalline object at the bottom of the frame. The overall mood is ethereal and mysterious.

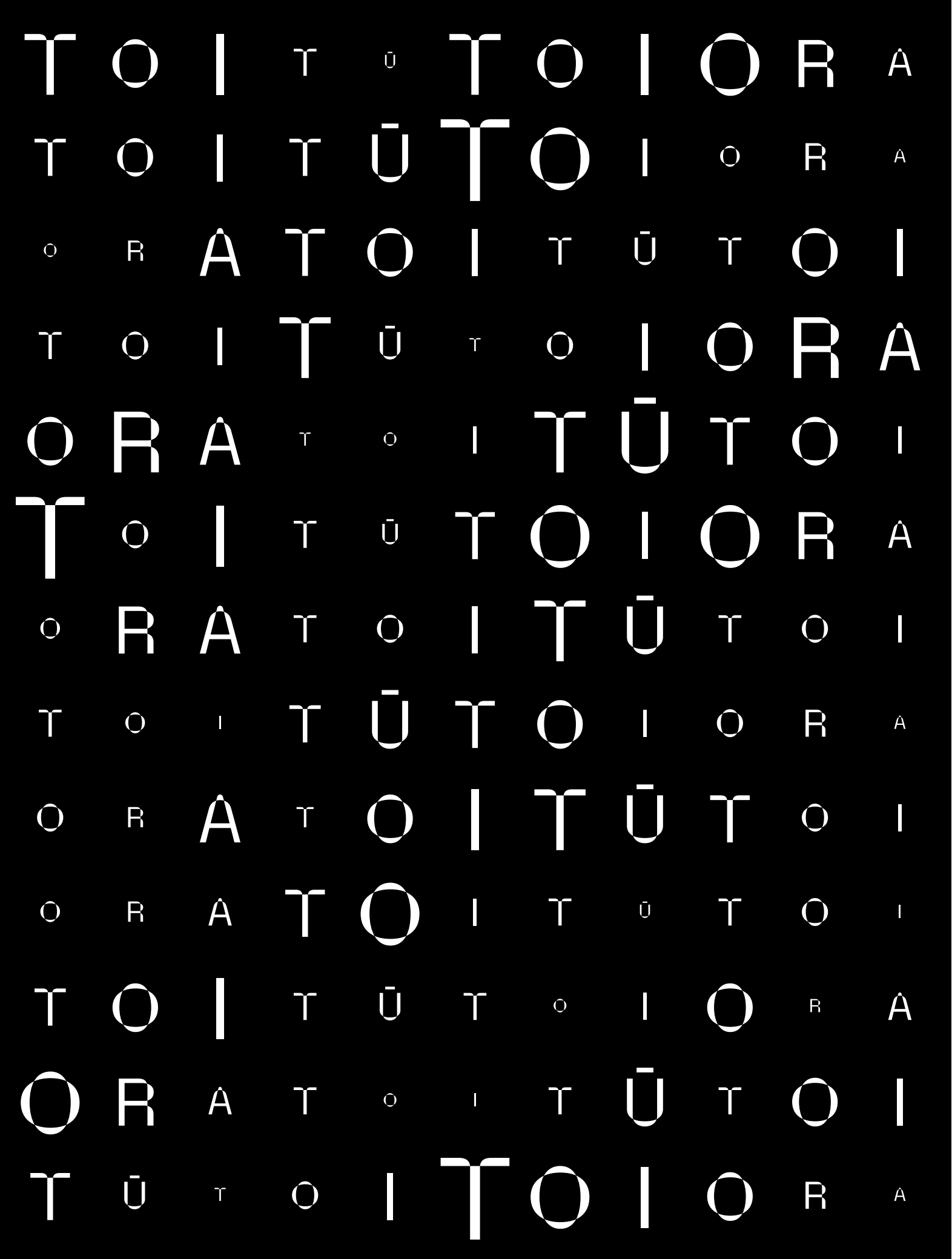
Number 2 / November 2020

Auckland Art Gallery
Toi o Tāmaki

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The Director's Desk

Kirsten Lacy



Everything has changed. At least everything that can change has. And continues to. But the natural law is the same. The wind blows. Where needed, the rains are still not enough. Fire season looms and with it a recession and deep disadvantage. There is in all probability an asteroid hurtling towards us across some outer realm of the universe we've paid no attention to. At the Gallery, the artworks – as if on timers – come to life at the beginning of the day and at the end stop their constant singing to the slowly growing number of visitors in the bubble of Aotearoa New Zealand.

The law of human nature is also unchanged. We find new friends – and lose them. We worry endlessly about children, parents, grandparents, money and self-actualisation. We seek better selves, in better and worse ways. We tend to our thinking/feeling selves by trying not to think too hard. The planet is sick, after all. We do what we can by treading more lightly.

There has been organisational change. This month, the new Auckland Council-controlled entity, Auckland Unlimited, was born, headed by CEO Nick Hill. We look forward to working together, to working some things out and others upwards and onwards. New is exciting. Auckland Tourism Events and Economic Development (ATEED) and Regional Facilities Auckland (RFA) are gone. The new Auckland Unlimited acronym, AU, a little nod to hopes for trans-Tasman travel when we are freed from the constraints of our New Zealand bubble. (Thank you, Jacinda, you kept us safe. Can we talk about the arts soon, please?) Auckland Unlimited brings together the arts sector, our cultural (including sporting) visitor destinations, tourism and economic development. 'Is tourism dead?', I asked Mark Franklin, chair of the new board, on one of my recent Cultured Conversations podcasts. He didn't say no. Perhaps – just a little bit.

In the Māori language 'au' means cloud, mist, fog, a current of water. It can mean the wake of a waka (canoe) on the water. While Auckland Unlimited's Māori name is yet to be decided, the thing I'm wondering about is whether Auckland *is* unlimited. As individuals most of us are limited – our superpowers just aren't that formidable. In the arts, limitations are critical for creativity and key in creative practice. A blank canvas is confined by its dimensions. I might proffer that Auckland is limited by the capacity to develop its extraordinary assets to reinforce, shape and grow the shared culture of its people. Yet in this purpose, the possibilities are boundless.

Professor Ian Williamson, pro-vice-chancellor and dean of commerce at Victoria University of Wellington's School of Business and Government, observes in another Cultured Conversations episode that the purpose of all economic activity is to reinforce the culture of communities of people. Community and enriching lives through culture is what inspired our outgoing CEO Chris Brooks. I salute you, Chris – a much-loved leader. Now in the au (fog) of a merger, in the wake of the emergent organisation, will we apply a cultural lens, a filter, a discretionary assessment to the investments we encourage in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland? We will need to if we seek to work, as artist and cultural leader Graham Tipene has suggested we should, 'for our children's children' – to live, think, plan beyond this moment.

If Covid-19 itself is a tier-one issue, tier two confronts us everywhere – instability, social dislocation, unemployment, homelessness, poor health outcomes are all wreaking havoc upon the city and its people. Added to this, the CBD is cluttered with construction that's limiting access. We need leadership

now. Nick Hill has expressed to me that the new organisation seeks to be unlimited in its aspiration, in the creation of hope and the steady rise toward materialising social good and a sustained economic bounce. We need to build communities of resilience, connecting through kindness, activity, and, at the Gallery, through art.

Nick's mother, Cherry Hill, was a formidable leader – chair of the Natal Coastal Region's Black Sash, in South Africa. Nick remembers making anti-Apartheid posters on their living-room floor, colouring in the designs with black, felt-tipped markers. Moving to New Zealand, she sought for him a better world. When I asked Nick if her fight for Indigenous and women's rights still informs his thinking as he embarks upon leading the growth of a truly bicultural city, sharing the successes and failures of its function, he replied, 'It does.' The next day Nick extrapolated, 'We will put biculturalism at the very heart of the organisation we create.'

In another recent conversation Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whātua Chair Dame Naida Glavish recalled her grandmother's voice saying, 'Nui ake tēnei take, ia koe': This is far greater than just you. It brought to mind the following questions: What is there that you are connected to, that you live in service of? What is there of unlimited value for Auckland that you can contribute? This year the Gallery established a dedicated Advisory Committee which will seek to answer these questions and to drive forward an ambitious new vision for Toi o Tāmaki – one framed boldly, thoughtfully within the tikanga (customs, ethics) of this place. Inaugural Chair Hon Kit Toogood greets you in this issue of *Art Toi* and introduces the committee members – a formidable and diverse group

‘We need to build communities of resilience, connecting through kindness, activity and, at the Gallery, through art.’

of supporters who will steward our conversations in the au, the beautiful mist, the gentle folds on ocean surface tensioned by the wake of many different waka voyaging forward together.

This year our relationships with Aotearoa’s tangata whenua (people of the land) are strengthened. Māori artists share their work, stories, whakapapa (genealogies) with us through the exhibition *Toi Tū Toi Ora: Contemporary Māori Art*. It is the largest exhibition in the Gallery’s history and the most comprehensive survey of contemporary Māori art ever staged. More than 20 years have passed since the Gallery’s last contemporary Māori art survey. It is a defining moment for Aotearoa, and the world beyond our borders will be watching via our online presentations. This exhibition is the work of a leading national art gallery, and you can read perspectives from some of the Māori staff who have steered and contributed to the project in the pages that follow. We honour the artists, celebrate their vision, and invite everyone to share in it when the doors open in early December.

Also in this issue you will see expressed our deep gratitude to the Friends of the Auckland Art Gallery, who have supported our bold, renewed commitment to contemporary international art. The Friends funded the acquisition of four major works, which we have begun sharing with you and will continue to throughout 2021. The international contemporary programme goes from strength to strength and I look forward to announcing the next suite of major works to come into the collection through the Gallery’s Imagine fundraising campaign.

Our Members and our supporters – thank you. Thank you for understanding all the changes to our

programme, for coming back, for continuing in your love of art and Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki. What I ask of you again is that you return and bring your whānau (family), your young people, friends and elders to visit the Gallery over the summer months. What I promise to you in return is that you will have an enriching experience, you will be moved and you will remember what you see and how it makes you feel – that it will be transformative.

Advisory Committee

Hon Kit Toogood QC, Chair

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki is a national treasure – a true taonga – and the members of the newly established Advisory Committee are honoured to have been asked to provide support and assistance to its leadership team and staff.

Before I say something about the committee members, I want to mihi the former chair of the former Regional Facilities Auckland Board, Andrew Barnes, and former RFA Chief Executive Chris Brooks. They deserve great credit and our thanks for their support of the Gallery through difficult times, and for their initiative in establishing the Advisory Committee. We are grateful to them.

I am, frankly, intimidated by the skill and experience brought to the table by my fellow committee members. Most if not all of them are well known for their support of the Gallery in other capacities.

Rt Hon Helen Clark, about whom not much can be adequately said in under 5000 words, brings serious gravitas to the Committee. Among her many achievements, Helen was a superb Minister for the Arts, Culture and Heritage during her time as prime minister. It is a testament to the esteem of the Gallery that a person chosen by the World Health Organization to head the global inquiry into the world’s response to the Covid-19 crisis has also accepted a role that, among other things, will help the Gallery manage its pandemic-related challenges.

Dame Jenny Gibbs is an extraordinarily generous patron of the visual and performing arts and is widely experienced in commercial and cultural governance roles. Dame Jenny was founding chair of the Patrons of Auckland Art Gallery and for many years served on the International Council of the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Elizabeth Ellis is an important member of the Gallery whānau in roles including chair of Haerewa, the Gallery’s Māori advisory group. Elizabeth’s experience will ensure the committee’s work strengthens the Gallery’s biculturalism and builds enduring connections with Māori throughout Aotearoa New Zealand.

A highly regarded lawyer and Gallery sponsor, Royal Reed also has an important role as the Gallery’s Asian liaison network adviser.

Christopher Swasbrook, founder and managing director of Elevation Capital Management Ltd, is, with his wife Charlotte, a major benefactor and enthusiastic supporter of the Gallery.

Andrew Grant is a senior advisor at McKinsey & Company with global responsibilities, including as an advisor to the highest levels of government worldwide. Among other things, he has relevant experience in advising art museums around the world.

I am a lawyer with over 30 years’ governance experience in not-for-profit organisations. My wife, Pip, and I are supporters of the visual and performing arts and we are keen to learn more about the Gallery and to get to know the team creating its world-class programme.

The Advisory Committee has the advantage of being entrusted with all care and no responsibility – like tipuna or grandparents – not having to worry about budgets and building maintenance, but providing advice and advocacy, and helping to promote the Gallery’s best interests in its dealings with stakeholders. These are difficult times, but opportunities will come out of the challenges we face, and we all look forward to working with the Gallery team on the journey ahead.

Māori Art Standing Tall

Sarah Farrar & Nigel Borell

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki will open the largest exhibition in its 132-year history this December – *Toi Tū Toi Ora: Contemporary Māori Art*. Dr Sarah Farrar sat down with the exhibition’s curator, Nigel Borell, to talk about this ambitious survey exhibition and the thinking that’s shaped it.



Nigel Borell, curator of *Toi Tū Toi Ora: Contemporary Māori Art*

SARAH FARRAR: *The entire contemporary Māori art world – and Aotearoa New Zealand’s art world more generally – will be interested to see how you tackle the ‘story’ of contemporary Māori art in this exhibition. What approach have you taken with Toi Tū Toi Ora: Contemporary Māori Art?*

NIGEL BORELL: I essentially wanted to present the show that I would want to see – the type of exhibition framing that would speak to Māori understandings of knowledge, art and cultural beliefs. With a large survey show of contemporary Māori art I also considered what ‘one thing’ the four generations of artists have in common. What is it that they share and what is culturally true to how they see the world? For me, Māori creation stories and the cultural beliefs that extend from them are still recalled, revered and observed as central ways of understanding the world today. All creation narratives unlock ways in which people understand place and being. This is a distinctly Māori episteme – the first, in fact, in this country.

SF: *As you mention, you’ve chosen to centralise Māori creation narratives. Why is this so important to you as a curator? What does it offer as a framework for experiencing contemporary Māori art?*

NB: Māori creation stories offer a way to enter into a conversation about contemporary Māori art that centres Māori knowledge and Māori cultural understandings. That places those at the heart of Māori art. Often surveys and art histories adhere to a chronology shaped by Western understandings of time, knowledge and art traditions. I want to intersect that dominant paradigm, to decentre that framework. I want to privilege a Māori worldview as the first conversation or proposition in relation to encountering Māori art. This Māori framework allows artists to be paired across generations, united by the Māori themes and concepts that they are exploring or expressing in their art, by what they share in common. Beyond this, it’s an approach that allows for new readings into artists’ practices while suspending a reliance on

Western frameworks. We're offered other possibilities for how we might understand the cultural paradigms and knowledge that are specific to this country. But, it's not just a theoretical conversation. It's actually also about allowing Māori to see themselves reflected in the art and in the presentation of art in institutions like Auckland Art Gallery.

SF: Toi Tū Toi Ora *is the largest single exhibition ever staged at the Gallery. What does this mean to you? What does it signal to the wider community?*

NB: I think it's exciting to be working on the largest single show in the 132-year history of the Gallery, and I feel the entire institution is behind this one project. Covid-19 has presented everyone with numerous challenges and I've been really heartened and supported by the resilience of the Gallery staff in continuing to push to present the most ambitious exhibition in our history, even under such circumstances. It really does feel like we are all working on a special moment in the life of the Gallery and its aspirations for presenting New Zealand art.

It's been a really long time since we have investigated contemporary Māori art in a show of this scale, and it's a conversation that artists, curators, arts commentators, teachers, students and art lovers have been desperately wanting to engage in. I hope the show will initiate wider conversations about the state of New Zealand art at this moment in time and position Māori art in its rightful place as the distinctive art practice of this country. Māori art and culture are unique to these shores, to this land.

Curating such an ambitious exhibition feels daunting and a bit stressful at times, but a lot of managing that is in how you carry it (or not). All exhibition making starts with an exciting or interesting proposition. It starts by offering a set of ideas that you'd like people to ponder and investigate. Those questions need to be ones that you yourself would like to investigate before we ask others to – that's a premise I try to apply to all my exhibition making. When I think about this show in those terms, I'm not so self-conscious about its scale and the 'magnitude' of what's at stake. It's more about the qualities of exhibition making.

SF: *What do you hope the exhibition will achieve?*

NB: Quite simply, I hope Māori come to the show and

feel they see themselves represented in the concepts, ideas and the art they experience. I hope that all people come away with a sense of pride and a sense of being anchored to place, and understanding what that might mean. I hope that the exhibition illuminates the breadth, diversity and depth of contemporary Māori art. I hope it gives people a new way to think about Māori art and culture as a living culture. I hope that the most recent generations of contemporary Māori artists start to be registered in the New Zealand art canon and begin to have their work collected by institutions. I hope that the exhibition is the catalyst for more conversations about contemporary Māori art and its place within New Zealand's art discourse.

SF: *What does this exhibition mean for you personally?*

NB: This project has been like a marathon for me. It is relentless and it always seems like there are more tasks to do! I've invested a lot of myself in the project. In bringing the exhibition together I've been reminded of the relationships I've been lucky enough to foster within the Māori arts community. The genesis of this show was an idea I presented when I interviewed for the role of Curator, Māori Art at the Gallery in 2015. I have been working away on consolidating it ever since. So to be at this stage of the project, where we are about to share it with the public, is extremely special and rewarding.

SF: *One novel way Toi Tū Toi Ora will be shared is through the documentary that Māori filmmaker Chelsea Winstanley is creating, which follows the making of the exhibition. People will see what goes into making an exhibition of this scale and ambition. How do you feel about your behind-the-scenes working process becoming so visible?*

NB: I think the documentary is an opportunity to tell the story of the exhibition. It's healthy for people to see the behind-the-scenes work that goes into staging an exhibition – all that energy and decision making. Most people don't get the chance to see what's involved. Working in these project environments we forget that not everyone's had the chance to glimpse behind the Gallery walls and see the many moving parts across the various departments. I still find it fascinating seeing everyone coming together to work with a single focus, so I'm sure it will be interesting to others. And the longer we continue filming the better I am at forgetting the film crew are here capturing for perpetuity our work and aspirations.



Sandy Adsett, *Nikau*, 1981, acrylic on board, courtesy of the artist

SF: According to visitor data, Māori typically make up only 3 per cent of the Gallery’s annual audience. This number has been higher – for example, when The Māori Portraits: Gottfried Lindauer’s New Zealand was on show. What’s your view on this? How do you think an exhibition like Toi Tū Toi Ora will impact Māori visitation?

NB: One side of this is simple pragmatics – if you programme Māori arts projects and content that speaks to Māori, then they will come to the Gallery. The 2016 Gottfried Lindauer exhibition broke all our attendance records during its rather humble four-month run. It was more popular than the international show *Degas to Dali* in 2012, which had until then held the attendance record. So it tells us that Māori audiences are not only interested in local/New Zealand art histories, but they also know where the Gallery is! The key is to present programming that speaks to them and to their interests. I hope that we do that once again with *Toi Tū Toi Ora*. The challenge then will be to retain those visitors and that momentum after this project.

SF: So how might the Gallery maintain – and continue to grow – Māori engagement and visitation in the future, after we close Toi Tū Toi Ora?

NB: I feel we have been mindful and learned a lot along the way to achieving this exhibition and we, as a Gallery, are reflecting upon best practice and reviewing



Chelsea Winstanley at work on the *Toi Tū Toi Ora* documentary

this as we go. That’s admirable but also needed if we want to grow and deepen Māori engagement. *Toi Tū Toi Ora* is very much a starting point – a blueprint and the launching pad – for a range of objectives in that area. We did a trial run in delivering te reo Māori tours last year and will offer this again while *Toi Tū Toi Ora* is on, so that is now in hand. The goal is that te reo Māori tours for school groups become business as usual when the show finishes in mid-2021. A commitment to bicultural interpretative text will be visible throughout the exhibition, and another aim is to adopt this moving forward.

SF: You and I have discussed the different kinds of impact we hope Toi Tū Toi Ora will have, including supporting career pathways for young Māori arts professionals. What does this mean for the sector?

NB: I think it’s really important to see the work of this exhibition beyond just ‘presenting a show’. How can we maximise a moment like this to gain future wins and forge more for Māori arts development? What can this focus and momentum we have now create? For me, helping support the development of young Māori curators, interns, writers and gallery assistants needs to be in our purview and a focus. And I know the Gallery also sees this as important. I’m excited that we have been able to maintain the roles of Māori curatorial intern and assistant curator, Māori art for an entire year of this project. That has been a rewarding and important win for the Gallery, for the project and for the development of Māori art – and of course for the people in those roles! I’m proud of what we are achieving and continuing to develop in that capacity-building space for Māori arts as an organisation. In the context of public programmes there’s a focus on how we can support the Māori arts sector with specialist workshops and forums while the exhibition is up.

SF: We also agreed that Toi Tū Toi Ora needed to create opportunities for artists to realise new work and ambitious projects. I know most of these works are still in production, but can you share some highlights so far?

NB: *Toi Tū Toi Ora* is supporting a number of Māori artists to create dynamic new



Zena Elliott, *Current*, 2017, acrylic on board, private collection

site-specific commissions. We have nine of these in production, which will be presented across the Gallery. One is Maureen Lander collaborating with Mata Aho Collective. Maureen is very much a mentor to Mata Aho, so with this project we have been able to present an opportunity for them to collaborate on a large work. Two others are those by senior artists Sandy Adsett and Emily Karaka, whose works will be shown, respectively, in the Gallery’s beautiful South and North atriums. A highlight for me in these commissions is that we can provide an opportunity for artists with long-standing practices to create something unique and ambitious, but we have also offered commission opportunities across the generations. For example, mother and daughter weavers Matekino Lawless and Christina Wirihana have collaborated on a new woven whāriki (fine woven mat) installation using old and new techniques. Shona Rapira-Davies has created a stunning new body of work, and so has kōwhaiwhai artist Ngataiharuru Taepa.

SF: We originally anticipated a large international audience would experience Toi Tū Toi Ora at the Gallery,



Tangimoe Clay, *Taonga o Te Ariki*, 2020, harakeke, pingao, kiekie, whītau, tī kōuka, maize, hoheria, collection of the artist



Claudine Muru, *Ko Nga Hua o Rongomaraeroa*, 2003, blown glass, collection of Charlotte Graham, Auckland City Council Art Collection

in addition to strong local and national visitation. Due to Covid-19 and the uncertainty around our borders reopening, it seems that the focus will be on New Zealand audiences. Has this changed the way you've developed the exhibition in any way?

NB: To be honest it hasn't changed the thinking of the show, only the structure, timing and logistics! We had ambitions of hosting and sharing conversations with numerous audiences before Covid-19 took hold, but that forced a reset in presentation modes, including offering an online virtual tour experience in English and te reo Māori. We'll emphasise local stories and local content and I feel that in some respects the change

in expected audience has worked perfectly given the nature of this show.

Toi Tū Toi Ora presents both an aspiration and a challenge to realise a future in which contemporary Māori art continues to stand tall – toi tū – and healthy – toi ora – while reinforcing the wisdom that empowers Māori and Indigenous ways of knowing.

Experience *Toi Tū Toi Ora* from Saturday 5 December 2020 at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki.



Ngataiharuru Taepa, *Tane Mahuta – Manos Nathan Legacy*, 2015 various timbers, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 2016

Making Māori Art History

Taarati Taiaroa



Robert Jahnke, *Ripeka Whero*, 2015,
Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of the Patrons of the Auckland Art Gallery, 2018

When *Toi Tū Toi Ora: Contemporary Māori Art* opens in December, it will have been almost 20 years since the last survey exhibition of contemporary Māori art, *Pūrangiaho: Seeing Clearly* (2001), was staged at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki.

Assistant Curator, Māori Art,
Taarati Taiaroa



This two-decade gap might seem the obvious reason why another exhibition is happening now – quite simply, ‘It’s about time!’ However, as an exhibition historian, I see the timeliness of *Toi Tū Toi Ora* for 2020 – how its curatorial framing and kaupapa (principles) sit in relationship to recent Māori art scholarship and exhibition making.

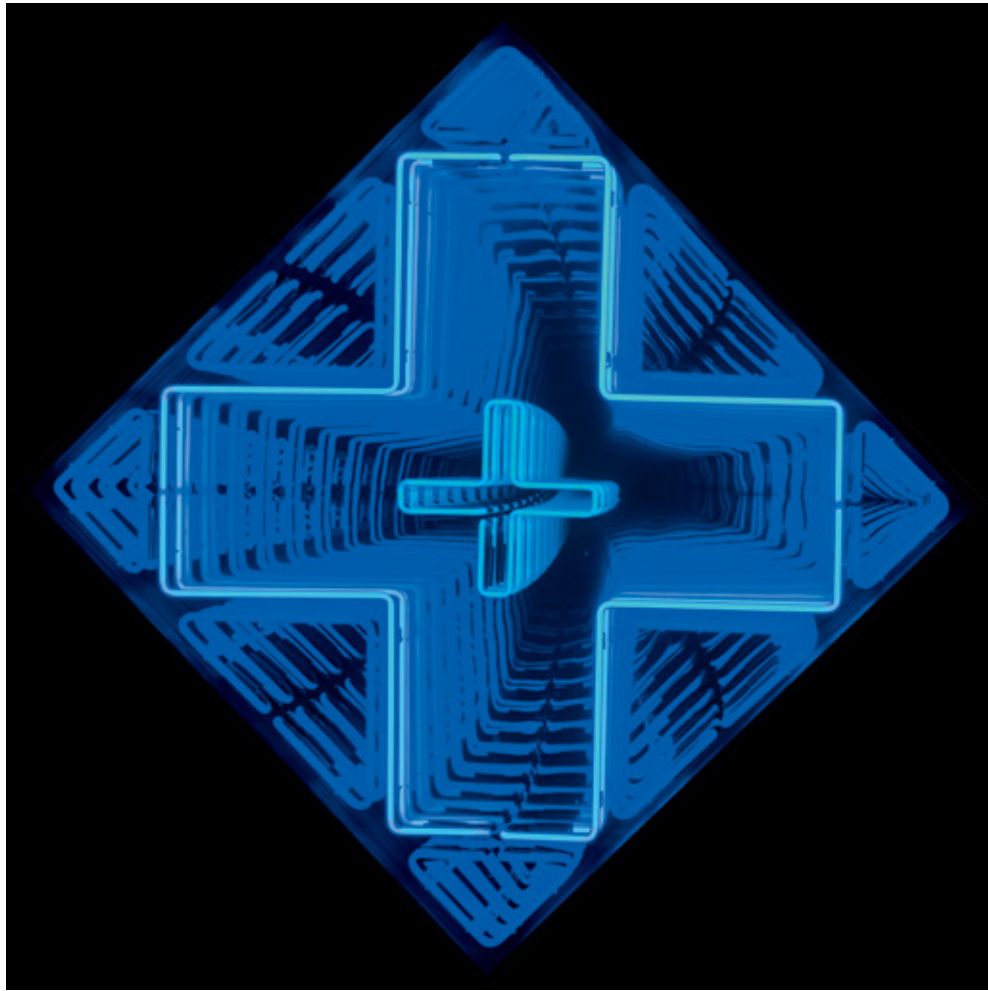
The turn of the millennium marked the emergence of a new impetus in the field of Māori art scholarship. This sea change was the result of positions being created within institutions for Māori to lead the thinking around how Māori art is presented, interpreted, and, consequently, historicised. Its practitioners, both art historians and curators,¹ embraced a more explicit articulation of a Māori worldview. They turned their focus away from the dominant conceptual framework of the western fine art tradition, in which a linear timeline separated ‘contemporary’ and supposed ‘customary’ practices. Instead, they looked to Māori cultural concepts to inform the whakapapa (genealogy) of Māori art they were developing. This included a reassertion of the Māori perspective on time and restoring the relationships between customary and contemporary practice, and between different generations of practitioners.

Rather than being concerned solely with identifying the next generation of artists, this direction in Māori art scholarship was equally focused on articulating how artists working in the present draw on the past. Indeed, the new curators saw themselves as actively writing Māori art history through their exhibition making, as seen in *Pūrangiaho: Seeing Clearly* at Auckland Art Gallery, *Techno Māori: Māori*

Art in the Digital Age (2001) at City Gallery Wellington and Pātaka Art + Museum, and *Taiāwhio: Continuity and Change* (2002) at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. These exhibitions explored the enduring relationship between taonga (ancestral treasures) and the contemporary arts. Both *Pūrangiaho* and *Taiāwhio* positioned taonga at the entrance of their exhibitions to demonstrate a cultural tradition that stretches back hundreds of years beyond the emergence of contemporary Māori art in the 1950s. Through these exhibitions, it is now widely understood that Māori art exists in a multifaceted continuum and is the distinct artistic tradition of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Exhibitions create art histories comprising specific significant ‘moments’ through their selection and arrangement of artists and artworks. The selection in *Pūrangiaho* expanded the view of contemporary Māori art beyond the ‘Young Guns’ who had come to prominence in the early 1990s (Peter Robinson, Michael Parekōwhai, Lisa Reihana and Brett Graham) to include the generation that preceded them and emerging artists from different schools of Māori art. These then emerging artists, such as Natalie Robertson, Reuben Paterson, Saffronn Te Ratana and Ngataiharuru Taepa, among others, have gone on to receive national and international attention. Twenty years on, *Toi Tū Toi Ora* will include artists from the generations that have emerged since *Pūrangiaho*. Particular attention has been paid to ensuring a selection of artists connected to the Māori-centred art schools, Toi Houkura and Toi Hou ki Āpiti, which were established in the last 25 years.

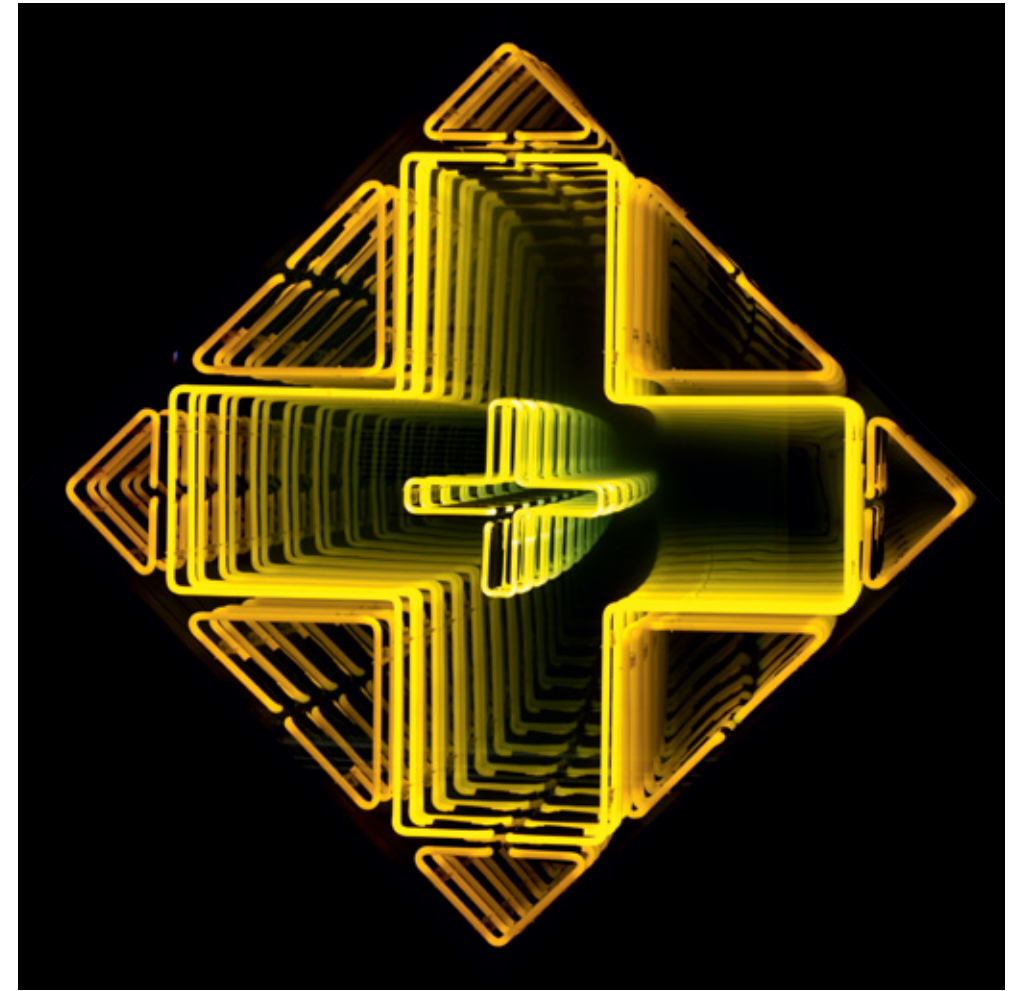
What sets *Toi Tū Toi Ora* apart from the survey exhibitions of 20 years ago is that it will include work produced between 1948 and 2020. It will revisit



Robert Jahnke, *Ripeka Kahurangi*, 2015,
Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of the Patrons of the Auckland Art Gallery, 2018

the creation story of contemporary Māori art and acknowledge the artists of the 1950s for the way they forged a new direction for Māori art distinct from anything that existed prior. The last large-scale attempt at telling the story of contemporary Māori art occurred 30 years ago at the National Art Gallery, Wellington. *Kohia ko Taikaka Anake* (meaning ‘gather only the heartwood’) included 163 artists and occupied all of the 14 first-floor galleries. The exhibition was realised by the two national Māori arts bodies – Te Ātinga visual arts committee and Ngā Puna Waihanga – in partnership with the National Art Gallery. Their aim was to celebrate the generational and regional development of the contemporary Māori art movement since the 1950s. *Kohia ko Taikaka Anake* would be the culminative achievement of Ngā Puna Waihanga, a society of artists and writers who had been the driving force for Māori art exhibition making and advocacy since its formation in 1973.

While *Kohia ko Taikaka Anake* looked at 30 years of development, recent Māori art scholarship has been concerned with articulating a longer view. In 2013 Ngarino Ellis teamed up with Deidre Brown and Jonathan Mane-Wheoki (the curators of *Techno Māori*) to undertake the Marsden-funded Toi Te Mana project, which set out to write a history of Māori art from arrival to today. In a 2013 lecture ‘Does Māori Art History Matter?’ they argued: ‘One of the greatest impediments in developing a story of Māori art is the fixation on time sequences, or chronology, as a means and measure of “development”.’ The limitations of the developmental framing of *Kohia ko Taikaka Anake* was the way it positioned the artists from the 1950s as the genesis of all that followed. This framing was a reflection of the structure and history of the artistic network Ngā Puna Waihanga. *Kohia ko Taikaka Anake* did not attempt to articulate the whakapapa of Māori art itself. This is again what sets *Toi Tū Toi Ora* apart.



Robert Jahnke, *Ripeka Kōwhai*, 2015,
Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of the Patrons of the Auckland Art Gallery, 2018

Toi Tū Toi Ora uses the Māori creation narrative as its interpretative frame to organise and articulate a whakapapa of contemporary Māori art. In doing so, it positions an engagement with mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) as the basis of art making. The exhibition, like *Kohia ko Taikaka Anake*, is a reflection of the curator’s network. However, what is important here is the framework of the creation narrative, which is the basis of whakapapa and a worldview that is larger than the works in the exhibition itself. In ‘A Brief Essay on the History of Māori Art in New Zealand’, John Bevan Ford articulates the central importance of whakapapa to Māori culture, spirituality, being and identity:²

... genealogy does not just indicate a line of ancestors but goes up beyond them through the land, the Tupuna (gods) and abstract states of matter and mind to the beginnings of understandings. In those beginnings

are contained the essential ingredient, contradiction, as the basis for creation. The nothing and the not nothing that all subsequent things flow from.

It is this expansive understanding of whakapapa that lies at the heart of *Toi Tū Toi Ora*. The exhibition embraces a narrative of multiplicity, contradiction and the complexity of numerous individual and collective identities. It offers many different temporal vantage points from which to appreciate artworks and the relationships between them in new ways. *Toi Tū Toi Ora* is Māori art history.

1. In Auckland there were then Assistant Curator, Kaitiaki Māori Ngahiraka Mason and art historians Ngarino Ellis and Rangihira Panoho; at the University of Canterbury, Christchurch there were art historians Jonathan Mane-Wheoki and Deidre Brown; and at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa there were curators John Walsh, Megan Tamati-Quenell and Huhana Smith, among others.

2. John Bevan Ford, ‘A Brief Essay on the History of Māori Art in New Zealand’ in *History of Maori Art: A Brief Essay*, Te Waka Toi: Council for Maori and South Pacific Arts (NZ), Wellington, 1992, p 6.

Gallery Membership

Do you love art and want to get the most out of New Zealand's largest visual arts experience? Become a Member of Auckland Art Gallery and support our work.

Members form a like-minded community – together we discover great works of art through special events and exclusive access. Join us and our team will connect you with the artists, curators, conservators and other art lovers who make up our world.

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*Community Services Card holders, full-time students and seniors (65 years and over)

Artwork by
Ngataiharuru Taepa
Taketake Whenua 2019

Alicia Frankovich AQ/2020

Natasha Conland



Alicia Frankovich, *AQ/2020*, 2020 (performance documentation), Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, commissioned 2020.
Supported by the Contemporary Benefactors of Auckland Art Gallery

In this time of mandatory social distancing and when public galleries and artists are refocused towards online experiences, the conditions for 'live performance' have become precarious. This uncertainty makes us acutely aware of what performance offers. Performance, the most 'unfixed' of time-based art forms, is precisely appealing for its ability to combine audiences, performers and a script in a live environment – one that is open to chance, the unexpected and immediate human-to-human response and interpretation. Performance art provides a unique mechanism to respond to human crises because it seldom seeks to make a direct representation. By nature, choreographing people through a given space and time models existing social dynamics and proposes new ones.

Alicia Frankovich's proposal for this commissioned performance work included images, news media and personal experiences of the bushfires

that burned across Australia in the summer of 2019–2020. People gathered together in states of emergency, on shores or in traffic, with their possessions packed, made refugees by an environmental disaster. The work's title reads like a catalogue record, borrowing the acronym for Air Quality Index (AQI), which quantifies and communicates the level of pollution in air. In Canberra, where Frankovich was on 1 January 2020, the AQI dramatically exceeded safe levels. People were performing in an emergency.

Frankovich belongs to a generation of New Zealand artists that emerged in the early 2000s, in her case in Melbourne and Berlin, renowned for their sophisticated integration of installation, film, sculpture and performance. From 2009–2012 she made highly affecting performance works which challenged the viewer's relationship to and behaviour in exhibition spaces, working across theatres and exhibition conventions. In early performances like *A Plane for*



Behaviours, Artspace Auckland, 2009 and *Bisons*, Self Service Open Art Space, Stuttgart, 2010 she skilfully challenged audiences’ passivity towards the artist and her work. Frankovich herself performed in these works, in overtly passive and active roles, upsetting the normal boundaries of artistic encounter. During the Walters Prize in 2012, she remarked on performance art’s ability to decentre our attention from the performance to ourselves: ‘When we enter a gallery we are also performing, we behave in certain ways, some of which are prompted by architecture, or by museum or social conventions.’¹

In times of human emergency, the accepted conventions of behaviour change. ‘Scripts’ in the form of images, media and anecdotal stories quickly develop and, increasingly, circulate widely. Of her intention for *AQI2020* Frankovich comments:²

The work stems from my first-hand experience of sustained severe smoke levels infiltrating my apartment, which rose to an alarming level on New Year’s Eve 2020. The Canberra region was surrounded by smoke from the Orroral Valley and Currowan fires which burned out of control and smoke in the region lingered for more than 60 days. On the evening of 31 December 2019 into 1 January 2020, the Air Quality Index (AQI) in Canberra where I was living peaked at levels 26 times what is deemed hazardous. Images of the fires on the coast were circulating on social media and the news as smoke entered our apartment. You could see the smoke hanging thickly inside the house and we were sleeping with P2 masks while a large domestic smoke filter remained on turbo day and night. Meanwhile friends were sending messages as they were evacuating from towns a couple of hours drive away. Smoke was travelling to us from where they were.

Frankovich now performs less often herself, instead creating situations that bring together professional, amateur and accidental participants to create new communities and express different forms of collectivity. Recent works have involved larger groups, from five to 70 participants, within museums, public spaces or installations, both engaged in their ‘normal’ occupations and interpreting a scripted action.³ In these instances, Frankovich has worked on choreography with participants who share found imagery, personal stories and anecdotes, interpreted

and represented through the collective as a composite of interchangeable actions that are determined by her in sequences, speed settings, rotations.

Her work has a long history of engagement with sculptural form, drawing sculptural props into the performance and likewise attributing performative qualities to inanimate forms. In a unique extension of this interest, *AQI2020* houses performers inside a large transparent orange box, its colour echoing the apocalyptic smoke in the skies during the 2019–2020 summer months. The box is at once set and sculptural form, activated by the performers’ bodies as they are contained in a dislocated otherworldly ‘normal’ – a normal of another time. For Frankovich, a work such as *AQI2020* doesn’t attempt to ‘share’ or depict the scene of catastrophe; instead, it’s a means for shifting the experience towards another time, to a new experience:⁴

In my performance work I am producing situations that derive from ‘real-world’ or lived scenarios, in the same way that, say, fiction derives from experience and speculation. There is a blurring here that art or culture allows for, it’s a quasi-fiction that produces or creates something new. This work is situated in a new time, with new conditions to hand: here it is in another country, with different participants, with a choreography etc. It is a lived experience that embodies a series of occurrences. It can be viewed from multiple platforms and felt across sound, movement and objects rather than be viewed as an image external to oneself that may be read in a cerebral way. It evolves in time.

1. Email correspondence with the author, June 2012.
 2. Email correspondence with the author, September 2020.
 3. *The Work*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 2019; *Twins and Lovers*, Klöntal Triennale, Glarus, 2017; *Atlas of the Living World*, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, 2017; *World is Home Planet*, the 12th Performance Project of LISTE Art Fair, Basel, 2016; *Defending Plural Experiences*, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA), Melbourne, 2014; *Free Time*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, and Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2013.
 4. Email correspondence with the author, September 2020.



John Bratby, *Windows*, 1957, oil on hardboard, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of the Friends of the Auckland Art Gallery, 1958

Firm Friends

Caroline McBride

It's July 1963 and Peter Tomory, Auckland City Art Gallery's director, is under attack for daring to suggest that the Gallery purchase Barbara Hepworth's *Torso II (Torcello)*, made just five years prior. The response of the Auckland Gallery Associates was swift – and public. A motion affirming confidence in Tomory was passed unanimously and a statement made deploring 'the suggestion that a special committee be appointed to control his recommendations for major additions to the gallery's permanent collection'.¹

Established in the 1950s, the Gallery 'Associates' (then 'Friends' and now 'Members') were once again demonstrating their founding mission, 'to support the Gallery' and 'encourage interest in the visual arts'. Over six decades their advocacy has never faltered. The Gallery continues to recognise this contribution and their partnership in our aim to be a catalyst for art and ideas. With a proud history of commitment and a collective purpose, this voluntary independent group has supported the Gallery in all aspects of its operation.

Having convened a group of interested people in April 1954, at its first formal get together in December that year, director Eric Westbrook applied for this community of independent supporters to become an incorporated society under the name of the Auckland Gallery Associates. At this inaugural meeting, other signatories to the application included Colin McCahon, then deputy director, Vernon Brown, prominent architect and Jean Horsley, artist and subsequent life member. Initially with the assistance of 'picture buyers' within their network and more recently through collaboration with curators, our

collection has benefited immensely from the donation of considered, iconic artworks.

As believers in our role as a source of inspiration for the public, Friends/Members make up a singularly important group of passionate and invested visitors who can be relied upon to promote and add liveliness to the Gallery.

Generous Gifting

The 'Rules of the Society' drafted at the time of incorporation, included 'to undertake, support and encourage the acquisition by purchase or otherwise . . . of works of art and craft of all kinds.' To date this objective has been very generously realised with over 100 works in the Gallery's collection being credited in part or full to the Friends.

From the first gift in 1958, an oil by British painter John Bratby, to this year's suite of audio-visual works (see pp 27–39),² the Friends have shown their outward focus, pursuing recently created significant works of contemporary international art. Similarly, the magnificent *Angels and bed no. 4: Hi-fi*



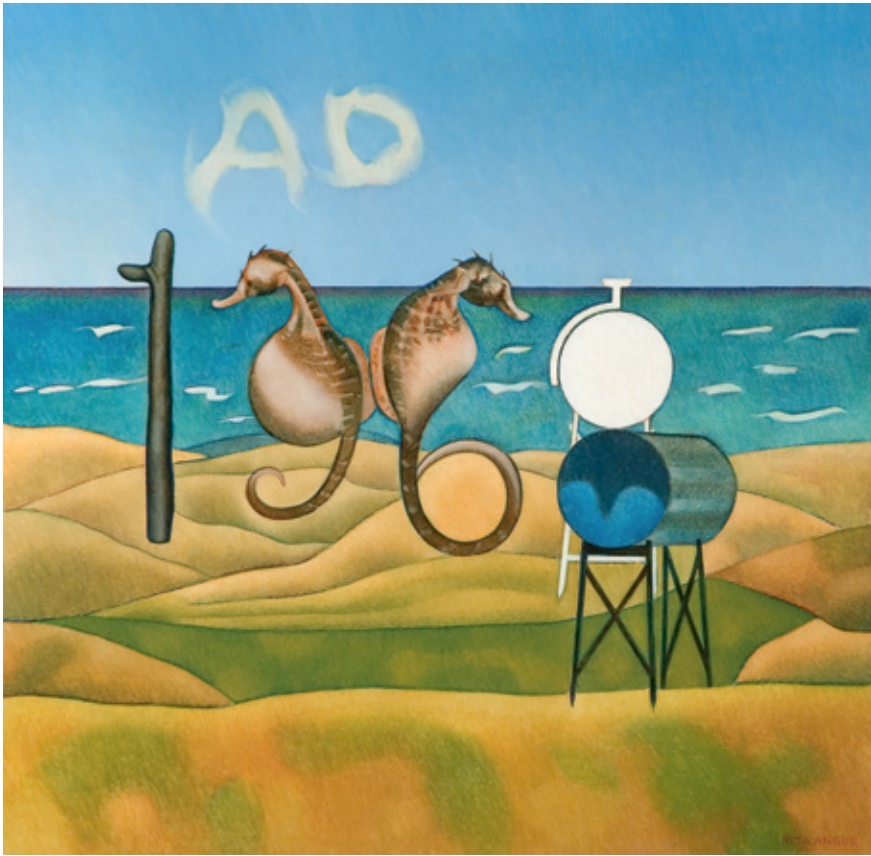
Colin McCahon, *Angels and bed no. 4: Hi-fi*, 1976–77, acrylic on canvas, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased with assistance from the Friends of the Auckland Art Gallery, 1977
Reproduced courtesy of the Colin McCahon Research and Publication Trust

by Colin McCahon was purchased the same year it was produced, 1977. This and other works by key New Zealand artists have been judiciously gifted to the Gallery’s collection. For example, *AD 1968*, 1968 by Rita Angus commemorated their golden anniversary and art by Frances Hodgkins has been consistently selected over the decades. The Friends celebrated the reopening of the Gallery in 2011 by gifting two powerful and poignant Fiona Pardington photographs of historic life casts of Sāmoan chief Tou Taloa.³ And on the occasion to mark their 60 years, they donated Robert Ellis’s monumental *Turangawaewae Maehe*, 1983.

As well as gifting art, the Associates/Friends commissioned a work, Tony Fomison’s *Not Just A Picnic*, 1980–82, supported exhibitions, for example 1972’s *Medieval Arts in France*, and contributed to the funding of publications, such as *The Guide* (2001), an introduction to the Gallery’s collection. More recently, the donation of an organisational archive of the Associates to the Gallery’s E H McCormick Research Library was received, and when the Auckland Art Gallery redevelopment project was announced, the organisation tirelessly raised funds, resulting in a significant monetary contribution.



Fiona Pardington, *Portrait of a Life Cast of Tou Taloa (left profile, painted)*, Samoa 2010, pigment inks on 308gsm Hahnemühle photo rag, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of the Friends of the Auckland Art Gallery, 2011



Rita Angus, *AD 1968*, 1968, oil on board, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of the Friends of the Auckland Art Gallery to celebrate their 50th anniversary, 2004

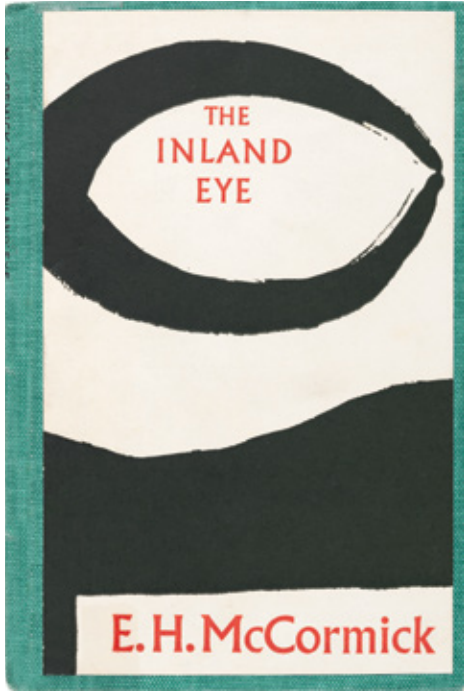


Flyer for Frank Sargeson’s *A Time for Sowing*, 1961

Lectures for the People

It must have been exciting to be an art-interested Aucklander in the 1950s. As well as a controversial 1956 Henry Moore exhibition and the Hepworth acquisition that provided stimulation and debate, the Associates embarked on an annual lecture series aiming to promote and inform the public on contemporary New Zealand art. Commencing with noted art historian Dr Eric Hall McCormick’s ‘The Inland Eye’⁴ delivered in 1957, speakers over the next 10 years included writers Ngaio Marsh and Charles Brasch, architect Ernst Plischke and painter Toss Woollaston.

In 1983 the lecture series recommenced. Planned to occur every two years and named the Walter Auburn Memorial Lecture series, they acknowledged the contribution of Dr Auburn, both an honorary buyer and a major donor of old master prints.⁵ Continuing until 2014, the lectures engaged audiences on topics as wide-ranging as Sir Hirini Moko Mead’s notable ‘*Te Maori Comes Home*’ on the groundbreaking international exhibition of Māori art, and Mme Yaya, a staff member presenting on the history of her institution, the Louvre.



E H McCormick, *The Inland Eye* (1957) with cover designed by Colin McCahon

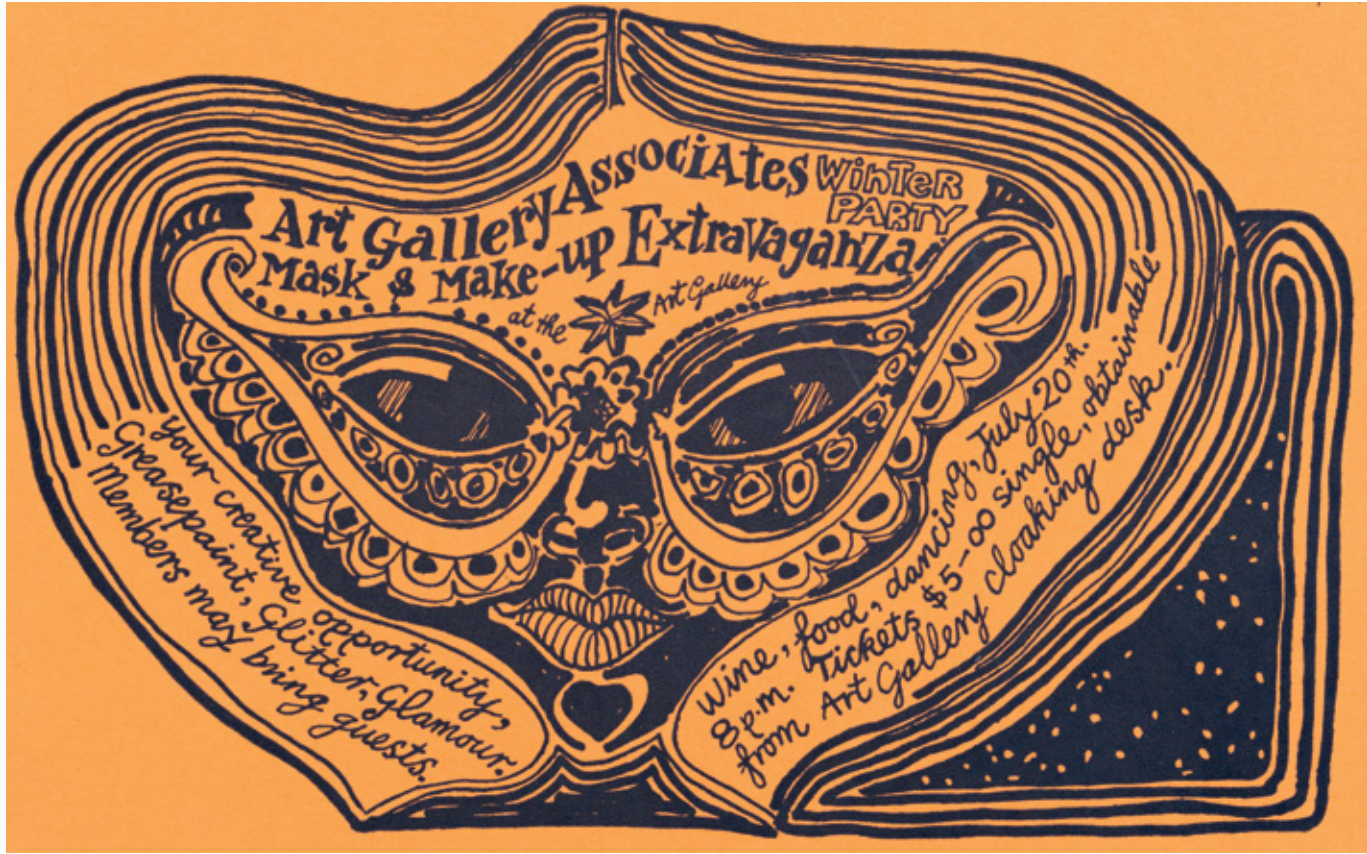
Memorable Events

To balance the gravitas of the lectures, the Associates and, later, Friends organised many social, light-hearted activities. Christmas parties were usually themed, fancy dress affairs and Friends aided the Gallery by organising exhibition openings that more often than not involved sherry and, later, wine and cheese. Celebrating the Gallery’s centenary in 1988, members were invited to join the then mayor, Dame Catherine Tizard, as she cut an enormous cake to mark the occasion.

In the early days, the Associates supported the wider arts by including plays, concerts and films in



Mayor Catherine Tizard cutting centennial cake, 1988



Invitation to Art Gallery Associates 'Mask and Make-up Extravaganza', circa 1982

their offering, such as the 1961 Frank Sargeson drama *A Time for Sowing*, produced by Chris Cathcart.

A review of the regular newsletters reveals engaging events such as coach trips, visits to artist studios, exhibition tours (including to Australia), art auctions and raffles. Your prize for the latter in 2011 was to share a steakhouse lunch and guided tour of the redeveloped Gallery with then director Chris Saines.

The Friends have demonstrated a long history of respect for local artists and this is evidenced in the Pat Hanly Student Membership Award. The award honoured Hanly's contribution to New Zealand art and was set up to 'help establish contact with the next generation of art lovers'. Beginning in 2002, the Friends, collaborating with others, including Tautai Contemporary Pacific Arts Trust, asked Auckland secondary schools to nominate deserving Year 13 students. Each year around 50 nominees received a two-year Friends membership as well as art supplies.

Continuing Contributions

On 6 November 2015 at a Special General Meeting the Friends graciously agreed to transition over a two-year period to Auckland Art Gallery's new membership

programme. Contributing over 700 Founding Members, the Gallery was now positively positioned to continue the legacy. For well over 60 years the Friends encouraged debate, assisted behind the scenes, gifted wisely and generously, and were genuine advocates. Now as Members, we acknowledge their important role in our history and thank them for their continuing and unceasing support and engagement in the life and work of the Gallery.

1. *The Dominion*, 18 July 1963 in Auckland Art Gallery Scrapbook 1963–67, E H McCormick Research Library Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki.
2. Angelica Mesiti, *Mother Tongue*, 2017; Candice Breitz, *I'm Your Man (A Portrait of Leonard Cohen)*, 2017; Goshka Macuga, *From Gondwana to Endangered, Who is the Devil Now?*, 2020; and Susan Philipsz, *War Damaged Musical Instruments*, 2015.
3. Fiona Pardington, *Portrait of a Life Cast of Tou Taloa (Painted)*, Samoa, 2010 and *Portrait of a Life Cast of Tou Taloa (Left Profile, Painted)*, Samoa, 2010.
4. Published as follows: E H McCormick, *The Inland Eye: A Sketch in Visual Autobiography*, Auckland Art Gallery Associates Inc, Auckland, 1957.
5. Auburn gifted through the Friends William Hogarth's *A Harlot's Progress*, 1732, in 1979, for example.

Across seven decades the Friends of Auckland Art Gallery have purchased over 100 artworks. In 1954 the Friends acquired their first work for the Gallery, a painting by contemporary British artist John Bratby. The last four works acquired this year renew the Gallery's commitment to collecting ambitious examples of contemporary international art. Our director and contemporary curators discuss the Friends' last gifts.

Full Circle



Candice Breitz, *I'm Your Man (A Portrait of Leonard Cohen)*, 2017 (installation views), Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of the Friends of the Auckland Art Gallery, 2020

Candice Breitz, *I'm Your Man (A Portrait of Leonard Cohen)*

Kirsten Lacy

When Leonard Cohen sang he closed his eyes – an intensely personal and public performance. Cupping the microphone like a lover's face, he sometimes whispered his lyrics as if they were an intimate secret. Many of his songs are love poems – private declarations of desire, ambivalence and the frightful truths shared between deeply connected people. Often his songs lament that the end of love is the end of life. Death and love are the central subjects of his music.

When I first experienced the Candice Breitz's artwork *I'm Your Man (A Portrait of Leonard Cohen)*,

2017, I'd flown to Melbourne to see my stepfather Frank, who, at that time, was journeying towards death. I guessed this from the sound of my mother's voice. Frank adored his 'girlfriend' and he often expressed his devotion in fitful renditions of old love songs, while my reticent, very English mother protested with clear enjoyment.

I'm Your Man (A Portrait of Leonard Cohen) was commissioned by the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal (MAC) for an exhibition devoted to Cohen's legacy and as a way of celebrating the city's



375th anniversary. I imagine Cohen was excited by the prospect of Breitz's work; perhaps intrigued by a portrait of himself in which he does not appear, a work focused on his fans and their interpretation of his words. He met with Breitz, agreed to her approach and things started to come together for the artwork's making. The exhibition opened at MAC after Cohen's death and the work grew from portrait to memorial.

When Covid-19 arrived this year it brought with it an era of forcefully restrained, isolated grief. Our elders were vulnerable, some sequestered and lonely. Many of us have experienced months of family separation. Mortality and loss are constants. During the first New Zealand lockdown, I considered what artworks we could share at this time. *I'm Your Man (A Portrait of Leonard Cohen)* came to mind: strong, brave elders sharing their intimate selves with the world. I reached out to acquire it for Auckland and here it now plays.

The work is a multi-channel video installation presented in two spaces. In the first room on a single screen the all-male Shaar Hashomayim Synagogue

Choir sings the back-up vocals to all the tracks on Cohen's 1988 album *I'm Your Man*. The choir is from Cohen's Westmount synagogue, where he was a congregation member all his life. The second room presents a group of 18 devoted Cohen fans on single screens singing their own individual renditions of the same album – separately but digitally ensembled, an a cappella choir. The men were selected after a newspaper advertisement in Montreal called for male Cohen fans who had been listening to his music for five decades – the period that Cohen had been recording. Together, the two components – assembled choir and 18 solo men – are harmonious, but each man's stumbling diction, off-key notes and choked emotion are also audible as we stand inside their circle listening.

Cohen's music has been a soundtrack to the lives of these 18 men through conflict, admiration, humiliation and devotion and love. They have lived with Cohen's voice in their ears and as they sing they relive memories through his lyrics. Their longing, lost selves, dreams and loved ones are laid bare. They

remake their promises in front of us, succumb to love again, offer anything and everything to their unseen lovers. Their proclamations and pain, their admissions, errors and assertions are expressed through Cohen’s words. They are his subject, his audience and now also his memorial.

On Father’s Day this year people queued out the door to experience the work. Perhaps they recognised themselves or their own fathers in the men. But in them we also recognise our future selves and the futures of our lovers, sons, brothers. We’re reminded that the cycle of love, loss, remorse and longing is inevitable. We read the human condition in these men.

Breitz’s work is ultimately a symbolic portrait of love and death and late masculinity. We don’t see images of masculinity defined by heroic figures, characterised by strength, charisma and decisiveness of action. Ideas of assertiveness, hierarchy and power are not present. Instead, Cohen’s lyrics position the

male lover as offering himself up, asking to be led, to be made a willing victim. It’s because of this alternative presentation of masculinity that this work can produce discomfort for some viewers, who are challenged by the destabilising effect of less restrictive characterisations, or an equalising of hierarchy in the male–female relationship.

The categories of fame and fandom are also collapsed by the work. Cohen, one of the most celebrated musicians of the 20th century, blends with his fan base, his ‘portrait’ is rendered through them while his own self and voice are absent. His presence here exists only in the lyrics and melodies he once wrote. Leaving the room of Cohen’s men, we encounter again the pitch-perfect choir, a stark difference that accentuates the exceptional intimacy we have witnessed.



Susan Philipsz, *War Damaged Musical Instruments*, 2015 (installation detail), multi-channel (6) sound, speakers, supports, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of the Friends of the Auckland Art Gallery, 2020

Susan Philipsz, *War Damaged Musical Instruments*

Juliana Engberg

In 1973, American art critic and writer Lucy Lippard described conceptual art as that ‘in which the idea is paramount and the material form is secondary, lightweight, ephemeral, cheap, unpretentious and/or “dematerialized”’.¹ In many ways she was gathering her notion around works that emerged during the late 1950s and 1960s – movements we have come to know as Fluxus, Situationism, Happenings, Performance and, in particular, ‘the Immaterial’, which had floated across from France. In America, these ideas-based idioms had, to some extent, been inspired by the concepts of composer John Cage, whose use of silence, chance and improvisation gained followers and opened up possibilities for a different material approach in art making. Cage’s visit to the Black Mountain College

in North Carolina, overseen by émigré Bauhaus artists Josef and Anni Albers, intersected with the experimental research being undertaken by artists who worked outside the strict boundaries of painting, sculpture and drawing, seeking instead other ways of expressing their phenomenological concepts. From this research grew minimalism as well as Lippard’s ephemeral approach.

Susan Philipsz trained in sculpture in Scotland and Northern Ireland and decided to use sound as her medium. In this respect she is an artist who represents a re-engagement with the attitudes and ideas just mentioned, as well as an artist who has expanded the field of sound sculptural work by intersecting it with space and place to produce sculptural, architectural,

social happenings that live in the ephemerality of chance sound encounters.

Where Philipsz extends beyond Cage et al’s earlier works is in the very deliberate way she assumes and permits feelings to enter into her ephemeral realm. Her projects, which have used the untrained human voice and song (usually her own, sometimes accompanied by her sisters) as well as instrumentations and architecture situations, are made with an intention that they provoke cognitive responses in the audience. As she has said, ‘The reason why I use [sound] is because it defines space and triggers memory. My intent is to adopt its psychological effect in order to make people aware of the place they’re in.’²

For instance, wandering through the wind-swept streets, down the alleyways and cul-de-sacs of London’s business district on a bleak, deserted weekend and to come upon one of Philipsz self-sung song hauntings – a tumbling rondo of voices singing ‘New Oysters’ by Elizabethan composer Thomas Ravenscroft – is to conjure an image of another era of bustling fish markets and fisherfolk shouting their selling calls in polyphonic tumbles.³ Philipsz has made many such sonic inhabitations. Under bridges, up stairwells, on train platforms, along a boardwalk and in a supermarket, to name but a few.

Asked to create a commission for Tate Britain’s series commemorating World War I, Philipsz devised an instrumental response which was first heard in the neo-classical architecture of the Tate’s Duveen Hall – *War Damaged Musical Instruments*, 2015. In this work is the image of battlefields. Of soldiers and their sacrifice. Of shattered and battered bodies and fragmentations. And of collective memory.

To make this commemorative work Philipsz gathered instruments from military museums in Britain and Germany representing 200 years of conflict. The several bugles, trumpets and coronets she gathered are battered, crumpled, shot through, twisted and squashed. Philipsz asked musicians to resuscitate them. Play them to the best of their ability and instrumental capacity. Recording each instrument as if a solo participant, asking each to play the basic bugle notes C–G–C–E–G.

From these recordings Philipsz then constructed an ensemble playing. Rasping, halting, failing, the little musical bodies crack and falter with effort and yet fulfil their mission. A fractured rendition of ‘The Last Post’ lives in the haunting music in which

we hear the effort of both player and instrument. She was drawn to explore these instruments because of their close relationship to the body. As she explains: ‘There’s always a physicality requirement. Let’s consider the brass instruments, you can hear the player breathing; I assume breath as a metaphor for life and mortality.’⁴

Philipsz has breathed life back into these tubular things and set free memories and commemorations which will be encountered by generations to come. Here in Auckland, which is now home to *War Damaged Musical Instruments*, the legacies that are recounted and recalled during ANZAC ceremonies will be remembered by those who recognise the sad yet welcome callings, and by some who can only imagine. When listening to Susan Philipsz’s wonderful sculpture many might recite the words of the New Zealand poet M Nalder:⁵

Go, ask the men who watched them,
What time the bugle blew!
No! When the bugle blew
They did what they could do;
Zealandia’s sons were ’mid the guns
What time the bugle blew.

1. Lucy R Lippard (ed), *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972*, Praeger, New York, 1973; reprinted, with a new introduction, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1997, p vii.

2. Interview with Susan Philipsz in *Artissima Live*, 2 January 2019.

3. Susan Philipsz, *Surround Me – A Song Cycle for the City of London* produced by Artangel, various locations, London, 2010.

4. As above, n 2.

5. M Nalder, ‘What Time the Bugle Blew’ in *Battle-smoke Ballads, or, Poems of the Transvaal War* (1899), <https://bit.ly/2Fzoejj>.



War Damaged Musical Instruments, Altsaxophon (ruin), 2015, Collection Musikinstrumenten Museum Berlin. Courtesy the artist



Angelica Mesiti, *Mother Tongue*, 2017 (stills), two-channel high definition, colour video installation and surround sound, 17:54 min, gift of the Friends of the Auckland Art Gallery, 2020. Photography: Bonnie Elliot. Courtesy of the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery

Angelica Mesiti, *Mother Tongue*

Ane Tonga

For some of us, language is a homeland brought close through performances of song, ritual and ceremony. As I write this, we are midway through a national celebration of Uike Kātoanga'i'o e Lea Faka-Tonga (Tongan Language Week) and will soon enter Te Wiki o te Reo Māori (Māori Language Week), the latter a celebration of te reo Māori as the indigenous language of Aotearoa New Zealand. As annual events, language week celebrations remind us that embracing, speaking and thinking in another language – sometimes someone else's mother tongue – can work to strengthen the many communities that contribute to the social and cultural fabric of Aotearoa.

The Gallery recently acquired *Mother Tongue*, 2017 by acclaimed Australian artist Angelica Mesiti, a video installation that celebrates and examines the ways in which diverse communities learn to live

together. The work was produced in Aarhus, Denmark, with the participation of school children, employees of Aarhus Kommune, the Ramallah Boy Scouts troop, the Jaffra Dancers, Gellerup Circus School and residents of the Gellerupparken housing development.¹ Mesiti explains the thinking behind her work:²

I am interested in the social role of performance and music, the way they can act as binding agents within collective structures. Often the performances I'm documenting are not consciously political acts but they can be powerful efforts to retain or translate cultural connections.

In an arrangement of two screens that resembles a kind of open book, Mesiti structures *Mother Tongue* like a musical score, drawing on tropes such as synchronicity,

harmony, dissonance and discordant associations to generate an image of juxtaposed realities. Urban, civic, learning and residential spaces of Aarhus were the setting for multiple performances – from popular radio hits to traditional folk songs, Somali blues, marching drills and wedding dances.

The conceptual starting point of the work was the songs in the *Højskolesangbogen* (The National Folk High School Songbook), which despite its name is used by Danish citizens of all ages. Updated every seven years, this blue songbook comprises traditional Danish songs from the 19th century to the present – a paean to Danish landscape and seasons. It's the foundational anchor of the Danish tradition of *fællessang* (communal singing) which originated in the socialist movements of the late 1800s as a form of protest and is today a symbol of national identity and togetherness.

To adhere to *fællessang* is to perform the vernacular of a collective 'mother tongue'. In Mesiti's *Mother Tongue*, children assemble inside a school for *morgensang* – communal morning singing. They give an exuberant performance of 'Joanna', a song written in 1973 by Danish rock musician Kim Larsen, which speaks of being taken away to a utopian place where everyone can swim in the ocean and live in freedom. The ritualistic nature of communal singing extends

into workplaces, as demonstrated by city council employees who assemble for a meeting which begins with singing from the blue songbook. Although somber in its tone, the lyrics of this song recall and celebrate the beautiful Danish winter landscape.

These Danish aspirations of Utopia are punctuated with performances by inhabitants of Gellurupparken, an Aarhus apartment complex built in 1967, and often set in ad-hoc spaces that express a persistence of culture at all costs. The Le Corbusier-style towers are located on the city's periphery and, in recent years, have been described by Danish authorities as a 'ghetto' due to the high density of newly arrived groups, rising crime rates and social issues. Unsettled by the troubling framing of the neighbourhood Gellerup as a ghetto, Mesiti offers an alternative view of a city enriched by the multicultural performances of its residents.

A precarious balance between individual and collective symbols of belonging are presented as a bodily tension that is introduced in the beginning of the film. Roha Ibrahim, a young Syrian girl recently arrived in Denmark with her family, enters the screen and reaches out her hands which are met by adult members of the Gellerup Circus School. They shift one by one to form a human bridge, allowing Ibrahim to walk on



their shoulders and move safely through the space. In doing so, they conjure the metaphor of ‘standing on the shoulders of giants’. Movement is heightened by non-diegetic sounds of percussive drills played by the Gellerup-based Ramallah Boy Scout troop of Palestinian and Lebanese heritage. We are left to wonder what the future holds for a younger generation of migrants who translate their parents’ lives as they enter new countries and construct unknown futures.

This tension is echoed by trained acrobat Rahmi Mohamed as he performs handstands in the city council chambers in the Aarhus Town Hall, designed by renowned modernists Arne Jacobsen and Erik Møller. The heart of civic decision making becomes a stage for Mohamed as he moves around the circular chambers and conducts poses on the polished desks. The ability to hold power in spaces that were not built for you is an idea shared and juxtaposed by Simona Abdullah, who performs an improvised piece on a frame drum in the modern architectural interior of Dokkl, Aarhus’s public library. Lauded as the first Arab female percussionist, at age 15 Abdallah took up the traditionally masculine tabla drum as her instrument and went on to excel in the male-dominated world of *darbouka*.

The final performance takes us into the Gellerpparken complex where Maryam Mursal, Somalia’s first female pop star, is accompanied by

two musicians on guitar and keyboard. Mursal’s resettlement story is both harrowing and triumphant: one of her songs criticising the Somalian government led to a national ban on her music, forcing her into working as a taxi driver. During the civil war she fled with her children across the Horn of Africa to Djibouti, where she claimed asylum in the consulate of Denmark, and subsequently moved to Denmark. She sings ‘Lei Lei (I Feel Alone)’, a lament from her 1998 album *The Journey*, at times in a near-sob, as she declares ‘we miss home’.

Mother Tongue reveals the assortment of languages, sounds and rhythms that pulsate through Aarhus. Oscillating between the individual and collective, nostalgic longing and optimism, the work reflects a contemporary society in which individuals make new places home while maintaining their own cultural values as they integrate. *Mother Tongue’s* performances appear like dreams or flashbacks, cast in the light of Nordic winter, and urge us to rethink the assumptions we bring to people, places and languages.

1. Originally commissioned by The European Capital of Culture Aarhus, 2017.
2. Angelica Mesiti, Palais de Tokyo, <https://bit.ly/33rtYVE>.



Goshka Macuga, *From Gondwana to Endangered, Who Is the Devil Now?*, 2020, woven tapestry (3D), wool, cotton and synthetic fibres, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, Image courtesy of the artist and Kate MacGarry, London

Goshka Macuga, *From Gondwana to Endangered, Who Is the Devil Now?*

Natasha Conland

Before the pandemic, there were the fires. We woke up in the third decade of the 21st century to a red sun, filtered and enlarged by a thick, smoke-laden sky. *Red sky in the morning, shepherd’s warning*. The heralds of social media used words like ‘apocalyptic’ and ‘unprecedented’. But news has shifted quickly in 2020.

Goshka Macuga is a Polish-born artist who has been based in London since 1989, where she graduated from Central Saint Martins. In 2008 she was one of four nominees for the acclaimed Turner Prize and has delivered a series of high-profile commissions

and solo exhibitions.¹ On visiting Macuga’s studio in late January 2020, I found her constructing the second of two large mural-sized tapestries about global environmental issues. I was surprised at how well-informed she was about the Australian bushfires. I shouldn’t have been. She’s known for her forensic-like site research, typically on the institution she will exhibit with. She was in the process of planning an exhibition in New Zealand, but in this case ‘the site’ was less an art institution than the dominant story of the natural environment of old Gondwanaland.



Goshka Macuga, *From Gondwana to Endangered, Who Is the Devil Now?*, 2020 (detail)

By the end of February, media was already reporting scientific assessments of the damage: ‘More than 20% of Australia’s forests burned during the summer’s bushfire catastrophe, a proportion scientists believe is unprecedented globally’;² followed by such chilling analysis as ‘there is no doubt that the record temperatures of the past year would not be possible without anthropogenic influence’, and adding ‘under a scenario where emissions continue to grow, such a year would be average by 2040 and exceptionally cool by 2060.’³ For many, the emotional entry point into the disaster was the scenes of affected animals – hundreds of images of burned koalas and other native Australian animals fleeing the fire were beamed around the world, with an estimated 3 billion of these animals killed.⁴

In the startlingly large, almost 3 x 4 metre tapestry, *From Gondwana to Endangered, Who Is the Devil Now?*, 2020, Macuga uses a very old form of image making to produce a scene that is of the present – a present that feels closer to science fiction. Her tapestries, which she began making in 2009, are woven in a mill in Flanders, home of the art since the Middle Ages. Macuga uses a variety of sources to make her images, building them digitally and in the case of *From Gondwana to Endangered* using the 19th-century technique of stereoscopic image making to create the illusion of depth – or 3D photography. The tapestry can be viewed with 3D glasses, those popularised in the 1950s, to bring alive the finely woven scene.

The action’s backdrop is a burning eucalypt forest, just like those circulating in social media over the new year. In the foreground Macuga positions protesters dressed in animal costumes, gathering in support of each other, carrying their placards. A bear wields a sign with the words echoing the artwork’s title, ‘*From Gondwana to Endangered, Who Is the Devil Now?*’ Another simply implores ‘Save our forests’. The central character – dressed in a rabbit costume – holds a piece of paper with a symbol suggestive of occult activity. None of the protesters dress as native animals. They are generic furry friends – bears, ducks and rabbits. Macuga writes:⁵

The animals reference a long tradition of depicting animals to represent or symbolise human characteristics. In the 19th century, cartoons published in magazine editorials featured animals as political symbols to influence voters by distilling complex ideas into humorous illustrations. The animal protesters in my piece can also be seen in relation to

the ‘furry fandom’ movement – a subculture interested in fictional animal characters with human personalities and characteristics. Furry fandom originated at a science fiction convention in 1980, where some likeminded people gathered and found a place of belonging.

While adult protesters dressed in animal costumes may appear absurd or even comical amid the harrowing documentation of a very real crisis, Macuga deploys them to illuminate another kind of truth. Here was a moment when humanity’s simple empathy for the plight of animals cut through the complex bipartisan political terrain to engage care and empathy for the natural environment. In another kind of crisis in our ‘Bad New Days’ (to use Hal Foster’s phrase) we may need furry creatures to help us see devastation and not run a mile.

Like many artists of her generation, Macuga uses the compositional technique of collage to weave together images both existing and speculative in nature, to make us understand that the evidence of the world around is more extraordinary and unbelievable than can seem possible. A place where different values and systems of knowledge collide and align. Into this space Macuga rides, in her own words, as ‘a curator, a historian, a history-teller, a critic, archivist, exhibition designer, architect, composer, gallerist, sociologist, biologist, filmmaker, collector, photographer, performer, magician, etc.’ Between the real and the extraordinary, Macuga’s art provides a greatly tangible and arresting account of contemporary life and its contradictions.

1. These include: Whitechapel Gallery, London (2009); the 53rd Venice Biennale (2009); The Walker Art Centre, Minneapolis (2012), documenta 13, Kassel (2012), New Museum, New York (2016), Fondazione Prada, Milan (2016), Witte de With, Rotterdam (2017), Museum of Modern Art, New York (2019).

2. *The Guardian*, <https://bit.ly/340WlJs>, accessed 9/10/2020.

3 As above.

4. *The Guardian*, <https://bit.ly/3leERQM>, accessed 9/10/2020.

5. Correspondence with the author, June 2020.



Brook Konia in front of Brett Graham's *Turangawaewae*, 1998

Curatorial Internship Brook Konia

E ngā mana e ngā reo, e ngā pātaka taonga tuku iho, e ngā uri o ngā mātua tīpuna. Tēnā koutou katoa.

These words were the opening to my cover letter when I applied for the Marylyn Mayo Internship at Auckland Art Gallery last year. Within them I share my career and life aspirations: to work together in remembering our history and sharing this knowledge with future generations.

Beginning in December 2019, under the kaupapa (principle) ‘Tūākana tēina – supported mentorship’, I first had the amazing opportunity of working with Nigel Borell, curator Māori art at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, as the Marylyn Mayo intern, and now as curatorial intern for *Toi Tū Toi Ora: Contemporary Māori Art*.

Working on all aspects of the exhibition, I have gained a glimpse into the complex machine that is Auckland Art Gallery. I am part of the curatorial team and work closely with all the other departments, refining *Toi Tū Toi Ora*’s final list of works, helping organise loans and commissions, undertaking writing and, like everyone, gearing up for the installation of an exhibition that will be seen on every floor of the building and in almost all its gallery spaces.

Writing biographies and artwork object labels meant being assigned to research artists’ lives, practices and individual artworks. This has been my favourite part of the project – spending time with

artists in person, conversing over the phone, via Zoom and email. Learning previously unknown details of the artists’ histories, parallels with their peers, influential moments, and where they were taught what they know, are invaluable whakaaro (ideas) in shaping my praxis as a curator on this exhibition and beyond.

At the media launch for *Toi Tū Toi Ora*, Ngataiharuru Taepa represented the exhibition’s artists and used the term ‘te tira hōu’, referring to new voices and leaders – a reflection of the new Māori artists coming forward and prospering. He indicated the energy of this exhibition to be about the legacy of Māori art and the next generation of artists and teachers. Nigel’s steering of this project, bringing together the voices of many artists like Taepa, reflecting mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge and understanding) and taonga tuku iho (treasures passed down), are the valued elements I want to see in the display of Māori art, and I’m happy to be listening and sharing ideas in this colossal endeavour.

Toi Tū Toi Ora includes numerous commissions and new, previously unseen artworks which are being made up and down the country, alongside those coming from artists’ personal and family collections, loans from other public institutions and private lenders. These will all be presented on the walls of this landmark exhibition. The coming together of artworks is also a coming together of people, which

encapsulates the ethos of *Toi Tū Toi Ora*, a Māori kaupapa of ka mua ka muri – walking backwards into the future, with our vision fixed on our history, learning from those who have gone before us as we forge new paths.

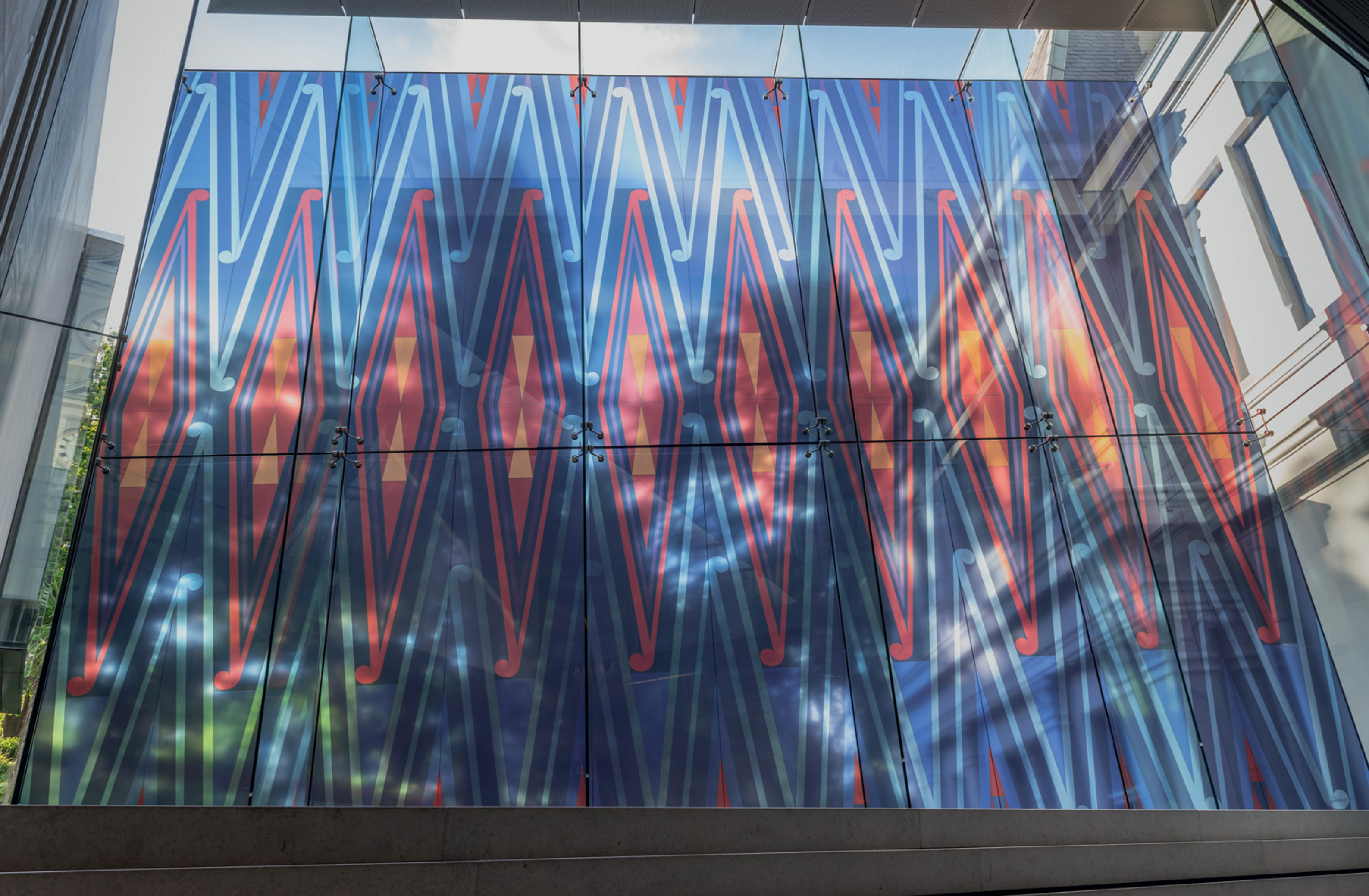
I want to see the research and education programming of *Toi Tū Toi Ora* sustained in the Gallery, highlighting the stepping stones artists and previous exhibition makers have crossed to establish pathways that create, teach and celebrate Māori art history. We need to be as daring and innovative as the artists themselves, like those in our permanent collection – Pauline Yearbury, Arnold Manaaki Wilson, Selwyn Te Ngareatua Wilson and Buck Nin – who shared their hearts and minds through practical skills and stories of te ao Māori (the Māori world) in their art

and education careers. We grow as a community when we recognise Māori legends, cultural narratives, and history with the same vigour as we are revitalising the Māori language. My enduring hope is for the Gallery, along with other public art institutions, to reach out and share the story of Māori art as Aotearoatanga – our stories.

This year has been pivotal in my art and curatorial work – being supported to grow in a field that I am passionate about. I am indebted to the Marylyn Mayo Foundation, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, Haerewa Māori advisory board, the artists, families and collections involved in *Toi Tū Toi Ora*, Taarati Taiaroa and Nigel Borell. Ahakoa ko wai, ahakoa nō hea, nau mai haere mai ki *Toi Tū Toi Ora*. Kia kaha, kia toa, kia manawanui! Nō reira, tēnā koutou katoa.



Buck Nin, *This Land Is Ours*, circa 1978, acrylic and fluorescent paint on board, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 2013





ART
LOVERS
LOVE
LOCAL

Twenty-twenty has been a year of cacophonous crises that have ruptured the patterns and structures of our lives. Yet in the middle of this upheaval – perhaps as a response – there’s been a quiet turning inwards here in Aotearoa New Zealand, a narrowing down of focus to the here and now, to the confines of our proximate parameters. Isolated from the rest of the world by travel restrictions, we have become a ‘bubble’ defined by our border.

Landscapes of Estrangement

Emma Jameson



John Hoyte, *View of Auckland Harbour from Mt Hobson, Remuera*, date unknown watercolour, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of Mr J M Smith, 1971

Some commentators say New Zealand has become excessively isolationist; others see us as an attractive utopian refuge offering the hope of some semblance of calm and normalcy at a time of global uncertainty. President Trump’s bizarre criticism of New Zealand’s Covid-19 approach brought these two attitudes into collision: idyllic photographs of the New Zealand landscape shared across social media with the satirically mocking hashtag #NZHELLHOLE.

This pandemic, and its related presidential rebarbative rebranding, made me think about the early colonial perceptions and depictions of the New Zealand landscape. How did these depictions reflect and shape our national identity? What were the reasons for this? How do we work as active participants in interpreting, perpetuating and enacting these narratives?

Representations of landscapes are never objective or neutral. Products of invention, they convey symbolic meanings that reflect and reinforce the creator’s viewpoint. This is more so the case when a landscape is appraised and shaped by an occupying



Albin Martin, *An Italian Landscape*, 1842, oil on canvas on board, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

foreign power rather than, in the case of New Zealand, by tangata whenua (people of the land). The paintings, photographs and literature produced by European settlers in the late 19th and early 20th centuries entrenched a colonial approach to describing and visualising the New Zealand landscape – an approach that persists today.

Seeming both familiar and unnervingly different, the New Zealand landscape occupied an uncertain, ambiguous place in the Victorian colonial psyche. Eliciting awe and fear, the terrain was envisaged both as a utopian escape from industrial Britain and as the mysterious ‘Antipodes’ – an abstract landmass that was a distorted mirror of Britain in its remoteness and perceived strangeness. The terrain was a focus of the colonial project and consequently a locus upon which colonial identity centred. It reflected settlers’ fears and aspirations in the face of a new environment – their sense of dislocation and their desire to overcome that feeling by moulding the foreign landscape into a new home. Physically detached from

one hemisphere and mentally estranged from the other, colonial settlers occupied a hazy third space in the near beyond, where imperialist determination was muddled with longing nostalgia.

Depictions of the landscape sought to find a form that would give meaning to what was out there in the ‘space of the beyond’, responding to and articulating colonial aspirations to know and possess the land by enabling people to visually ‘traverse’ terrain reframed by a decidedly European gaze. Painters, photographers and writers harnessed a mélange of visual references to find a form that could make familiar the strange, while translocating Eurocentric ideals and expectations onto a landscape breathing and humming with the whakapapa (lineage) of tangata whenua.

In the hands of artists like Albin Martin and John Hoyte the maunga (mountains) of Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland were re-envisaged as a pastoral idyll, borrowing heavily from the Italian Renaissance and the sun-drenched 18th-century landscapes of



Albin Martin, *Pakuranga Ranges*, 19th century, watercolour and gouache, Mackelvie Trust Collection, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, bequest of James Tannock Mackelvie, 1885

Claude Lorrain. This is evident, too, in artworks by Alfred Sharpe, who vehemently asserted the need of a local style grounded in ‘literal truth’ to convey the ‘salient features of an entirely new country’. From his brush the contours of the land were transformed into tidy rhythmic expanses of colour and line that shimmer underneath a sun-drenched sky. This visual language asserted perceived similarities between the new colony and Europe – ‘taming’ the landscape and reassuring viewers that while they may be geographically far removed from their homeland, intrinsically their new environment was not too dissimilar, and it was their domain.

On the other hand, the landscape was sometimes positioned as being unnervingly disparate to those of England and Europe. This was an attempt to understand and define the newest site of empire through difference. Edmund Burke and John Ruskin’s reverence for a sublime landscape which fascinated and repelled, overwhelmed and ignited the imagination, was adopted with zeal by writers and artists in the

colony. New Zealand’s irregularities – its geomorphic and biotic forms, its monumental peaks and its hissing geysers were emphasised, framing a ‘weird, sinister, eerie, uncanny’ Antipodes with ‘its suggestion of magic, of monstrosity’.¹ Abstracted and disoriented through cropped compositions and flattened forms, made monumental through dramatic sweeps of light and shade and aggrandised scale, the landscape represented in this pictorial vocabulary seems inscrutable, unknowable, untameable.

Writers, too, adopted a remarkably pictorial, romantic vocabulary to construct a sublime ideal of New Zealand to understand the land, and perhaps even tame it through colonial enterprise. In describing ‘Our Antipodes’, Godfrey Charles Mundy writes in awe of the ‘luxuriant beauty of the wilderness traversed by this monument of a young colony’s energy and industry, the gigantic size of the timber . . . the dark, tangled and absolutely impervious glens, rock and ravine’.² For Blanche Baughan the terrain was unpredictable, eerie and sinister with its ‘Bristles against the sky, all the



Alfred Sharpe, *View of Taupiri Village and Plain from the Top of Little Taupiri Hill. Sunset*, 1876, watercolour painting, paper manuscript, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of the Rev Charles Palmer, 1951

tawny, tumultuous landscape / Is stuck, and prickled, and spiked with the standing black and grey splinters’.³ Katherine Mansfield’s *The Urewera Notebook* – edited notes she made during a 1907 camping tour of the North Island – describes an enchanted, mysterious landscape: ‘I hear always the whispering of the water – I am alone – I am hidden – Life seems to have passed



D L Mundy, *Hokianga, A Geological Study on the Beach*, circa 1869, albumen photograph, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 1987

away drifted – drifted miles and worlds so beyond this fairy sight.’⁴ Written far from Aotearoa New Zealand, Charlotte Brontë’s novel *Shirley*, based on the life of her friend Mary Taylor who had emigrated to the colony in 1845, evocatively encapsulates the Victorian vision of an Antipodes that,⁵

is indeed far from England; remote must be the shores which wear that luxuriant aspect. This is some virgin solitude: unknown birds flutter around the skirts of that forest; no European river this, on whose banks Rose sits thinking. The little quiet Yorkshire girl is a lonely emigrant in some region of the southern hemisphere. Will she never come back?

Mostly devoid of people other than the narrator or observer, a profound sense of distance and isolation exudes from such pictorial and literary portrayals, perhaps expressing colonial subjects’ hesitancy, fear and detachment within a landscape that fascinated at a distance but up close repelled with its wildness;



George Valentine, *Boars Head, White Terrace*, circa 1898, gelatin silver print, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, The Ilene and Laurence Dakin Bequest purchased 1999



Enos Pegler, *Fairy Bath, Okoroire*, 1893, gelatin silver print, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 1990

a land that while physically occupied was not emotionally, spiritually or historically theirs.

Feeling unsettled and imprinted upon rather than at one with the land, for many colonials the remedy was travel – physical or visual. Guidebooks proliferated, for which artists and photographers provided illustrations. Photographic albums compiled a vast itinerary of visual journeys across wild, remote terrain. Novels, diaries, poetry and promotional books about the colonies created written topographies of the land that were distinctly visual, mapping it with plenitudes of hyperbole, metaphor, simile. Whereas in England and then America, where it has been argued there was a distinctly philosophical romanticism of nature at play, it seems that the colonial New Zealand world was seen through an emotive, pictorial lens, perhaps because of an overriding sense of estrangement and being out of place.

This year, cut off from the rest of the world, travel once taken for granted is now desired and extolled as a way to keep the economy afloat, as a source of solace and entertainment and hope, and as a proud proclamation of being in ‘the team of 5 million’. The spatial contractions experienced through lockdowns around the world have invested landscapes and natural environments with particular symbolic import. The Instagrammed photographs of sun-dappled forests, panoramic mountains and glass-like lakes speak either of a flagrant disregard for the ‘stay-at-home’ orders or proclaim a rare, once-taken-for-granted freedom to roam, a privileged access to a utopia beyond the temporal and spatial realities of 2020. Feeding wanderlust, eliciting envy, providing a moment of vicarious escape, the multitudinous social media images are for some an antidote against Covid estrangement, for others an obnoxious FOMO inducer. So, in a time of unsettling change and alienating isolation, travel is, once again, perceived as a way to conquer our feelings of remoteness and stagnancy; the landscape is once again a locus for our hopes and fears.

1. Blanche Baughan, ‘Uncanny Country’, in *Studies in New Zealand Scenery*, Whitcombe & Tombs, Auckland, 1916, p 105.
2. Godfrey Charles Mundy, *Our Antipodes, Or, Residence and Rambles in the Australasian Colonies with a Glimpse of the Gold Fields*, Richard Bentley, London, 1852, p 380.
- 3 Blanche Baughan, ‘A Bush Section’, 1908, in Jane Stafford and Mark Williams (eds), *The Auckland University Press Anthology of New Zealand Literature*, Auckland University Press, Auckland, 2012, p 103.
4. Katherine Mansfield, *The Urewera Notebook*, Ian Gordon (ed), Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1978, p 84.
5. Charlotte Brontë, *Shirley*, Smith, Elder & Co, London, 1849, p 122.



Charles Blomfield, *Rotomahana after the Eruption*, 1887, oil on canvas, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, The Ilene and Laurence Dakin Bequest, purchased 2019

From Coast to Camber

Juliana Engberg

Landscape – a stylised setting for Christian stories in frescos by Giotto and his followers; a theatre in which Ovidian gods and mortals frolicked in works by artists such as Titian; sometimes the brooding backdrop for diminutive humanity’s affirmation of a demanding, Protestant God in cloud-filled Dutch views – made its way to the foreground as a subject in its own right.



Eugène von Guérard, *Lake Wakatipu with Mount Earnslaw, Middle Island, New Zealand*, 1877–79, oil on canvas, Mackelvie Trust Collection, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 1971

By the time European powers decided to colonise far-flung parts of the globe, the landscape genre was not only pictorial but topographical, with high levels of scientific detailing, including miniaturised ‘decorative’ Indigenous human inhabitants, or leisure-seeking adventurers and amorous parties perched on cliffs and in scenic spots – frequently a blow-hole, but that’s another story.

In the colonial era, landscape depiction played its part in claiming land, in disregarding First Nation peoples through scopic means, as has been brilliantly demonstrated and animated by Lisa Reihana in her video work, *in Pursuit of Venus [infected]*, 2015. Surveyors took part in a Cartesian carving up of land. Reihana’s scrolling, looping panorama subverts this western perspective for a story that is without end, still unfurling, ever folding upon itself in an historical pleating.

As well as scientific prospective records, the painting of artistic landscapes in newly discovered, frontier lands saw immigrant European artists creating scenographic interpretations, utilising a sublime menu of mountains, waterfalls, lakes and vistas; still inferring the presence of God in rainbows, mists and sunbursts, but also showing that the wild country had been traversed and tamed by settlers, and that pastoral views could convert to productive paddocks – that ‘civilisation’ was cultivating the land.

Landscape painting is, therefore, not neutral or without agenda, not merely decorative or picturesque, and never was. It progressively tells the story of a movement from the contemplation of heavens, nature and God, the teaching of the gospel, to the sequestering of the land by occupation.

I can well appreciate the excitement a ‘new’ place provides to the artistic eye. It’s still thrilling to step into a freshly encountered landscape. And after spending time in the Auckland Art Gallery stacks looking at the impressive collection of early artistic vistas that will feature in our forthcoming *Romancing the Collection* hang, I’ve been itching to get out and see the real thing.

I recently had the chance to head down to the South Island and weave a path up and down and back and forth across its length and breadth, which prompted me to ponder the shift in aesthetic translations that occur between early European-inspired picturing and the emergence of the unique New Zealand regional modernism at the beginning and middle of the 20th century. I now understand why,

for instance, journeying artist, Eugène von Guérard – Austrian in heart, mind and artistic training, even while he was mainly active in Australia – wrote of New Zealand’s ‘inexhaustible richness of natural beauty in these wonderful islands’ and thought that it was a ‘wonderland for a landscape painter’.¹ There can be no argument about that – it’s beautiful!

As an artist trained to think about the landscape as a potential sublime encounter, von Guérard’s approach was firmly focused on a lofty alpine and glacial lake scene, as we can see from his sketchbook in which he recorded impressions of the fjords and snow-capped mountains of Milford Sound and Lake Wakatipu. From this sketching evidence we can also note that von Guérard ignored or could not ‘see’ the bundled hills that come to predominate the modernists’ visions of place. It’s easy to grasp why he was so drawn to an alpine scene resembling his fatherland of Austria, one prescribed in the inherited perspectival schema of painted representations nurtured by the concepts of the theoretical sublime and German romanticism. But his alpine attitude and that of others is also, in part, and perhaps somewhat more prosaically, about the way in which early artists first accessed their encounters with New Zealand’s land-profile, I think.

The 19th-century visitor, immigrant, settler, prospector arrived by boat. If you were part of the great Scottish exodus to New Zealand, for example, as so many of the early European artists were, you journeyed to the transplanted Scottish-named towns Invercargill, Dunedin and so forth on boats that sailed from Wellington to the South Island and along its coastline. Tantalising glimpses of awesome mountain ranges – frosted, glinting, pink and grey, shadow-played by light, mist and weather effects – drew the eye and jogged the memory of Highland scenes and the European views of neo-classical artists. Artistic gold.

Wild weather and heroic efforts made for stirring glimpses of a small colony nation forging its way forward. Images such as John Gully’s imaginary depiction of Cook’s voyage along the South Island coast – *Captain Cook’s Ship ‘Endeavour’ off the West Coast, Mt Cook in the Background*, 1887, or *Running for Milford Sound*, 1880 – capitalised on the naturally rugged mountain scenery combined with tempestuous marine work to emphasise the age of intrepid discovery, dogged determinism and the uncanny, yet *heimlich*, European alpine doppelgänger. (Well, Gully was Scottish, so he might have said ‘Bonnie’.)



John Gully, *Captain Cook's Ship 'Endeavour' off the West Coast, Mt Cook in the Background*, 1887, watercolour, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of Sir Cecil Leys, 1933



John Gully, *Running for Milford Sound*, 1880, watercolour, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 1918

These transplanted artists, once on terra firma, set about finding ever more scenes to create for the establishing local patrons and curious international market who were hungry for images of this mysterious southern land. They found the lure of lakes and their reflective possibilities of water, mountains and extravagant skies utterly irresistible.

One artist stands out for me in seeing and pursuing the unusual colour of his adopted country. John Perrett, Scottish-born, Glasgow-trained and settled in New Zealand, created a number of vivid scenes, especially lake nocturns, in which he dialled up the hues to produce a weird, melancholy palette of pinks, mint blues, steel greys, blue blacks and yellow greens – an almost surreal vision and one that was nudging towards modernism. When I first looked at Perrett's works I thought them fantasies. Imaginary fin-de-siècle lands, Valhallas of his own invention. Imagine my shock when I drove around a curve of

perfect camber to get my first glimpse of Lake Tekapo – turquoise green, framed by dusk blackened mountains with just a hint of white snow still visible. A truly extraordinary sight. 'Perrett!' I shouted.

Driving gives you opportunities to see the landscape and think about the way it has been activated artistically. Just as earlier works indicate the sea voyaging of artists, so the 20th century had its mobilities. It took the arrival of inland transport, train and automobile, and the cultivation of land for agriculture and industry, perhaps even the psychological comfort provided by the pastoral after the awful dramatics of World War I, for artists to look more to the interior and to the stratum of small-large hills with mountains in the distance, which became a subject of the special regional modernism that emerged in New Zealand in the late 1920s.

As I drove past farmland, volcanically formed masses, through passes and along ridges, the South Island's always-changing landscape, with its formula of cloud-hugged hills, extreme shadowing and bright verdancy, the inevitability of a New Zealand modernism that obtained a crisp, delineated quality was reinforced for me. The idea that all New Zealand postcards are photoshopped creations was also laid to rest. No – they are true representations of an extraordinary natural landscape collage of forms and colours.

Having mountains pressed upon me – an abundance of the romantic – I also comprehend the need to retreat from the sublime, uncultivable and insurmountable peaks and alps. As the second settlement of New Zealand formed itself into a reliable trade partner, a provider of produce and primary products for world consumption, so too did the country's vision of itself change. Images of the pastoral worked in partnership with the economics of an era in which land-based trade was the road to prosperity for the countries of the British Empire. This is especially true from the 1930s when Britain and its dominions provided preferential trade transactions between themselves under the Ottawa Agreement. Whether deliberately or by a kind of agreed pact formed by cultural osmosis, artists were picturing a New Zealand that had become a vision of reliable, bountiful plenitude and production.

Of course, there was also artistic fashion. I guess a formalist impetus might have been the teaching provided under the La Trobe scheme which brought two influential British artists into the middle of the



John Perrett, *A Southern Lake*, date unknown, oil on canvas, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of Mrs A Ball, 1960

emerging modernist milieu in Dunedin. The oddly appropriate name Robert Nettleton Field crops up frequently in artists' letters, interviews and secondary commentaries, and his work as a pioneering teacher is much praised and acknowledged. But no less important, I think, was W H Allen, whose stay in New Zealand was much shorter than Field's, but whose skills in drawing, wood-block printing and stained-glass design seem to lurk in the scalpel-like patterning of hill bundles, outlined coves and volcanic peninsulas that exemplify New Zealand regional picturing. This thought was reinforced for me when I saw Allen's painting *Lake Hawea*, 1930, recently at Dunedin Public Art Gallery and then nearby a painting by Doris Lusk. When later I happened on other paintings by Toss Woollaston, and of course the works of Rita Angus and Louise Henderson, the graphic influence was consolidated.

The modernists (earlier and later) must have known that the advent of photography would render the painted landscape somewhat redundant, if all you wanted was a representation. This news did come a little late to New Zealand art, which waited until one-third of the 20th century had exhausted itself to really grasp the possibility of painting in an era of photographic reproduction. But when they

emerged from the doldrums of the 1910s and 20s the New Zealand painters of the modern landscape got it pretty right by realising that artifice could be pursued and should. By manipulating the scene and over-emphasising shapes, colours and lines, they restated the efficacy of remaining a little while longer with the landscape genre, even while urbanism, the Bauhausian mechanical era and Euro-American abstraction shouted for more plastic and abstracted forms.

By permitting the decomposition of real scenes, for instance the licence Rita Angus takes with her large hills in the iconic painting *Cass*, circa 1936, bringing them closer together in order to form two major triangles, and their sky inversion, and the pines crafted into another triangle – a view impossible to actually capture photographically and even by eye – she delivers a scene which is absolutely correct. So much so that it replaces the reality. At least that's what I found sitting in front of the Cass station. (Though I was not the photographer, obviously.)

Cass has become lodged in the national psyche, a simulacrum, but Louise Henderson's image of Arthur's Pass, commenced as a sketch around the same time when she and Angus were on their field trip to Cass, is equally vivacious and inventively constructed. She too made a compression of things in order to



W H Allen, *Lake Hawea*, 1930, oil on canvas, Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery, given 1970 by Francis and Elizabeth Shurrock

emphasise the tiny hamlet of red and white buildings that huddle against the background of soaring, impinging masses – mountains and billowing clouds, reiterating the foreground of agitated clumped grasses and all cut through with the verticality of telegraph poles and lines. More community than iconic in format, it is perhaps less a ‘portrait’ of the tiny, isolated New Zealand that Angus wanted to emphasise, but its movement and pastel palette is more invigorating. Henderson was, of course, bringing her own imported aesthetic, one formed in France and in her design training.

It doesn’t look quite like that now. Driving through Arthur’s Pass is a thrilling event. Though the tiny huts are gone, the sheer immensity of the surrounding landscape and the constant views of hills and mountains jammed right up against the roadside, reaching suddenly to sky, with the weather constantly tumbling in, sent my mind endlessly back to Henderson’s interpretation.

It took Colin McCahon to progressively eliminate the sculptured, modulated delineation and flatten the scene to bold blocks of colour, after releasing himself from the grip of a clear

religiosity. In his tremendous, boldly abstracted 1960s Otago works, with their dense forest greens, McCahon’s is a front-loaded view. No fanciful clouds standing in for the heavens or God (shoved away by mass), no mystic mists or spirit-sent light (no lofty Nietzschean traveller). No scene through which one can gaze, squint or scopically traverse. McCahon’s vision, hovering between landscape and the field of monochromatic minimalism, pushes contemplation back onto and



The author contemplating the impossible triangles of Angus. Photo: Kay Campbell



Louise Henderson, *Arthur's Pass*, circa 1936–40, oil on canvas, Collection of Alexander Turnbull Library

into the viewer – now earthed, secular and engulfed by a modernism that has detached them from belief. Simultaneously, McCahon’s works from this time announce a land unclaimable, thickly indigenous, too heavy for the fleetingness of the merely pictorial. This is never clearer than in the Otago series, after which the land’s overwhelming, ancient geomorphic bulk was overwritten by the ‘Word’ to establish a new connection to who speaks within.

I’ve come to love a lot about the New Zealand modernists, even as I still enjoy the European eyes and their translations. I crave to be out in the landscape

again. Given that none of us will get to the ski slopes of St Moritz or a villa on Lake Como this year (or any time soon!), it might be just the time to go see for yourself the magnificence of Aotearoa New Zealand, and to pop into galleries and become reacquainted with the artists who shaped and reshaped a vision of this marvellous wonderland of visions.

1. Thomas A Darragh and Ruth Pullin, *Lieber Freund!: Letters from Eugen [sic] von Guérard to Julius von Haast*, Art Gallery of Ballarat, Ballarat, 2018, pp 28, 32.



Colin McCahon, *North Otago Landscape 4*, 1967, synthetic polymer paint on hardboard, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of the artist, 1979
Reproduced courtesy of the Colin McCahon Research and Publication Trust

Dayle, Lady Mace, MNZM

Rachael Russ

Dayle Mace shows no signs of letting up on her long-standing, energetic support and patronage of Aotearoa New Zealand’s visual arts and theatre. Her passion for the arts has seen her take the lead in many projects as well as work in advisory and governance roles.

Dayle had a two-term tenure on the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa Board (2013–19) and she has been the chair of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa Foundation since 2016. She has also been a member of the Auckland Art Gallery Foundation for 16 years and was chair of the Patrons of Auckland Art Gallery from 2002 to 2018. She is a major donor to the Walters Prize, the country’s leading contemporary art award, which, since 2002, has been staged biannually at the Gallery.

In addition to those activities, Dayle was head of the Patrons for New Zealand at Venice Biennale from 2005 to 2013, has been a member of the Edmiston Trust since 2010, which she currently chairs, and is co-chair of the Auckland Theatre Company Patrons.

What drives Dayle to volunteer her energy and time to these initiatives? She says she enjoys working with people to make projects come to life and has a real sense of the value of bringing arts and culture to the broadest range of people. For her, one highlight in years of dedicated work was the capital raise campaign for the Auckland Art Gallery Foundation, which enabled construction of an award-winning building befitting the Gallery’s extensive collection and international touring exhibitions.

Dayle is also proud of the Gallery’s Patrons group, which has contributed a significant number of important New Zealand artworks to the Gallery’s collection over the last 33 years, something she says is ‘an exceptional affirmation of private philanthropy in operation’. She feels privileged to have worked with so many talented New Zealand artists, particularly through the Venice Biennale, saying ‘New Zealand art really punches above its weight.’ With the country’s artists



exhibiting at galleries worldwide, Dayle finds it ‘truly inspiring’ working alongside them and seeing their practices maturing.

The invigoration of public spaces by art is another of Dayle’s passions. A special project along this line is underway at present with funding from the Edmiston Trust to create a piece of public art at the Gallery, which will be unveiled in 2021. The commissioned work, created by Reuben Paterson, is a spectacular waka pītau (ornately carved canoe) that will be erected in the Gallery’s forecourt. Transparent and adorned with glass crystals,

the waka pītau will rise out of the forecourt pool, appearing to travel up the side of the building, leaving Papatūānuku (earth mother) behind as it journeys towards the open skies of Ranginui (sky father). The realisation of this ambitious work has presented unique challenges, not least of which stem from the complexities presented by Covid-19. It is testament to Dayle and the Edmiston Trust’s ongoing support for the artist’s vision that this major work will be delivered as planned.

The importance of art in fostering natural curiosity and creativity in children has long been an inspiration for Dayle. She believes that people do not need to ‘understand’ art in order to take inspiration from it – in fact, she notes, there is potentially more joy derived from observing and connecting with art than in analysing its meaning. This can begin at childhood and continue on throughout an entire lifetime.

Inspiring others interested in the arts to give back through their ‘time, treasure or talent’ is a driver for Dayle, who was encouraged to get involved at a more meaningful level over three decades ago and wants others to take the plunge, roll up their sleeves and participate in any way they can. Dayle says that philanthropy is not just about giving money – ‘you get so much back when you are involved at a deeper level’.

Cultured Conversations



Exploring issues and ideas from the cultural sector in Aotearoa New Zealand, Cultured Conversations is hosted by Gallery Director, Kirsten Lacy, and invites leaders from arts, philanthropy, economics and politics to outline their visions for the future.

Visit aucklandartgallery.com/culturedconversations to watch or listen.



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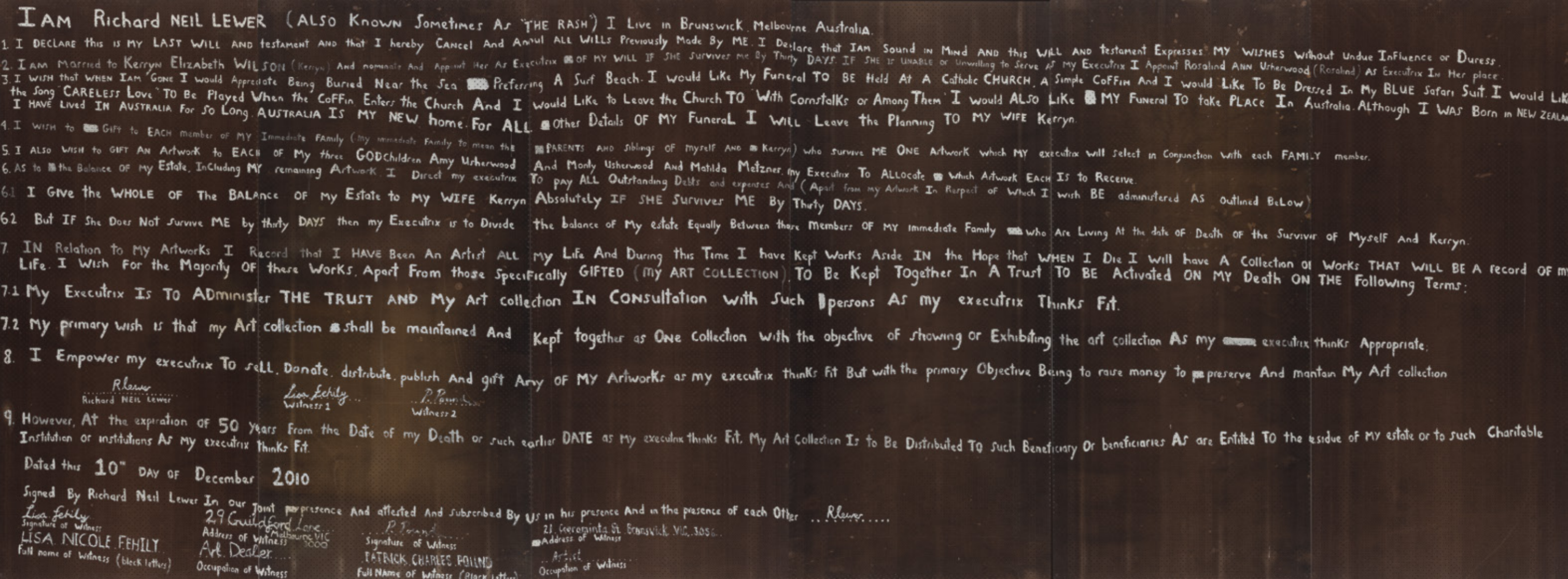


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Lisa Reihana *Ihi* (still) 2020, Commissioned by Regional Facilities Auckland.

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Richard Lewer, *Last Will & Testament*, 2010, acrylic on pegboard, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 2020

What Do We Show the World?

Emily Cormack

Richard Lewer's prolific practice has been an exercise in exposure. How much do we show and of what? In a world of coded practices, what glimmer of self do we expose to the world's prying eyes?

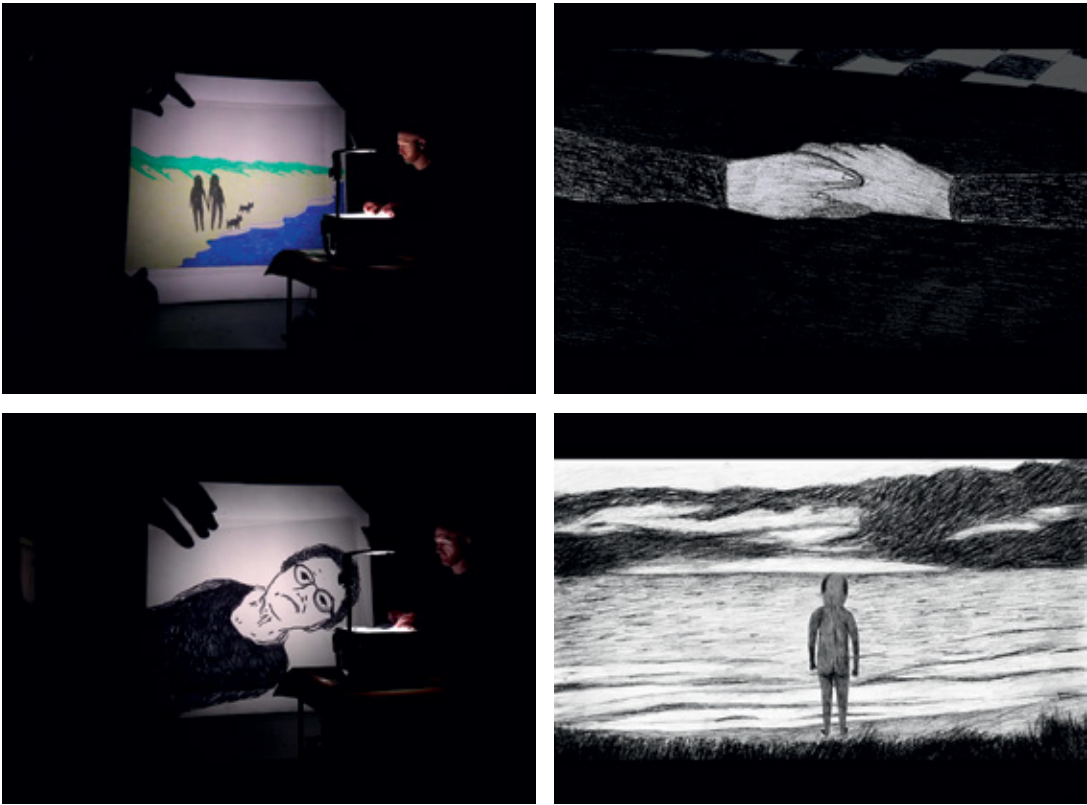
Throughout his 30-year career Lewer has dwelt, without judgement, in the dark and often morally complex domain of human nature, dealing with topics spanning sadness, violence, sadism, corruption and embarrassment. In these spaces how do we decide, on a sliding scale of exposure, what is revealed, and what is not? How much is given?

Early in the Melbourne-based New Zealand artist’s practice he began etching into and corroding texture onto brittle metallic painted surfaces. Rendering form painfully, it was as if he were seeking a kind of transmission between his own broken eczema-prone skin and the tormented surfaces of his paintings. Lewer’s work has, then, always revealed an oscillation in focus between his own self and his subject, with varying degrees of self-exposure offered across different series.

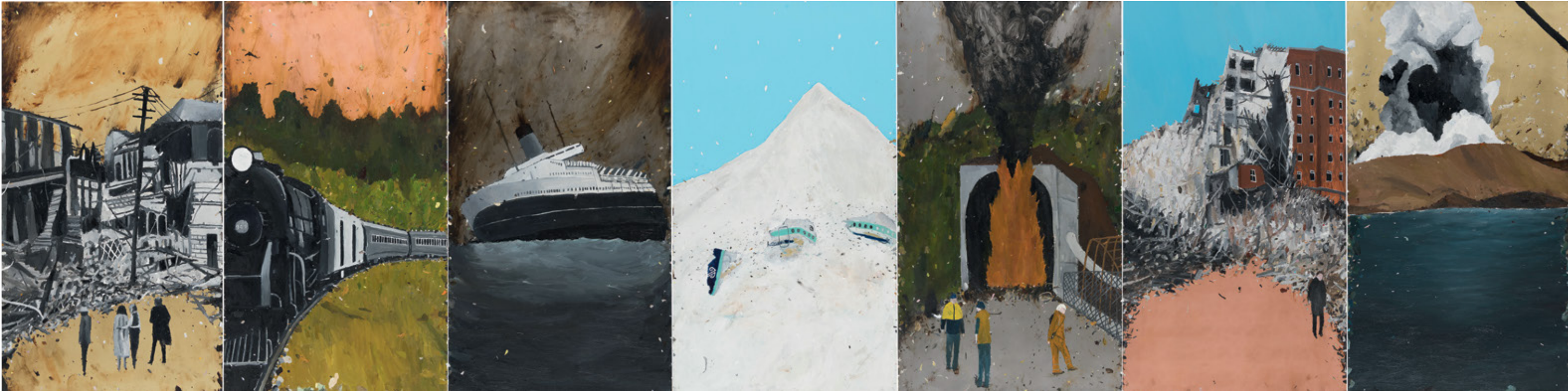
While the early steel works were a direct expression of a fraught inner world, he later turned to the turbulent lives of others, finding in their stories parables for human experience. Over the past 15 years Lewer’s work has seen him become embedded in the personal lives of serial killers, Melbourne’s infamously staunch Federated Ship Painters and Dockers Union,

exorcist priests, gangsters, and even the haunting undead. It’s as if he is seeking in this subject matter a darkness that gives shape to form, with his practice becoming a kind of conceptual chiaroscuro rendering of the human condition. We are being drawn into being – our evils, our fears and our embarrassments laid bare.

The oscillation between self and subject has changed in recent years, with the cast of tragic characters being replaced at times by representations of Lewer’s own experiences and connections. Perhaps the key pivot in his practice came about in the creation of *Last Will & Testament*, 2010 – one of a suite of works recently acquired for Auckland Art Gallery’s collection. Originally installed in Fehily Contemporary, Melbourne, the work is Lewer’s legally binding will, hand-painted on large peg boards attached to the gallery wall, witnessed by his lawyer, and still in force today. The work deftly breaches unspoken social codes surrounding the disbursement of worldly possessions, disrupting taboos related to death and money. I clearly remember feeling a curious mix of discomfort and freedom when seeing the work, as Lewer irreverently blew apart the enigma of a will and the power it wields.



Richard Lewer, *Worse Luck I Am Still Here*, 2014 (stills), HD Blu-ray animation, 4.50 min, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of the artist and (Suite) Gallery, 2020



Richard Lewer, *New Zealand Disasters*, 2020, oil and epoxy coated steel, copper, and brass, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 2020

The *Last Will & Testament* freed up Lewer to reveal more of himself in his work. Rather than choosing subjects as characters, in his next phase he chose subjects empathetically, generating points of connection. This sympathetic approach is typified in the heart-breaking animation work *Worst Luck I Am Still Here*, 2014. This beautifully articulated story is told using the antiquated visual poetry of an overhead projector, and is an example of Lewer’s extraordinary ability to capture emotion in his abbreviated drawing style. Using DIY stop-frame animation techniques, he shapes the true tragic love story of an elderly couple whose failed suicide pact left the man alive, having already killed his wife and their dogs. The work’s title is taken from a statement the bereft man made ‘I’m still here, worst luck’. In the voiceover Lewer’s emotion is clearly audible, lending the work an awkward tenderness that is telling of his humanity as an artist.

The desire to connect with others through his own misfortune or discomfiture has been a constant throughout Lewer’s practice. *Richard’s Disasters* series began in 2005 with an annotated map of New Zealand, now in a private collection in Melbourne, which indicated the sites of a range of calamities from the artist’s life story. A near drowning, a ‘broken’ penis and a house fire are just some. The series has expanded now – featuring scores of disasters rendered in small oil paintings or lithographs. Across a succession of works, scenes swing from hilarious to heart-rending, told with the same snapshot style that captures the key event, and often from Lewer’s own point of view. This ongoing series is like the turning out of Lewer’s most concealed selves, a complete disclosure between himself and the world, a measure of the full shape of him.

The full shape of him. How much of a place remains in us, is carried with us? Expat New Zealanders in Australia often find the seemingly subtle differences between the two countries become chasms as we seek to connect with or comprehend the place we live in. Orthodox psychotherapy suggests that we are defined by our traumas; that the indelible marks they carve into us determine our lives with unalterable certainty. Our dark outlines give us shape, and similarly a country must reckon with its history to understand its present. The psychic residue persists beyond the event.

Lewer’s lens again expanded in the late 2010s when he began to examine the construction of cultural identity through its traumas. *The History of Australia*, 2018 – now in the Art Gallery of South Australia’s collection – is a brutal retelling of key events in

Australia’s history across nine panels, including pre-colonial time, the First Fleet, the Great Depression, the Stolen Generation, asylum seekers and the Cronulla riots. While the events that feature in *The History of Australia* are characterised by conflict and unrest, for the companion piece, *New Zealand Disasters*, 2020, Lewer’s gaze slightly shifted.

This new series does not share the criticality implicit in *The History of Australia*. Instead, *New Zealand Disasters* is almost wistful in its revisitation of some of New Zealand’s psyche-defining moments of catastrophe. In these paintings, Lewer’s notions of ‘home’ have become defined by moments that bring ‘New Zealand’ to the top of internet search results, that set the country’s name above the fold in red headlines, that see it track across the TV as breaking news. Here, Lewer offers us New Zealand as ripple-inducing traumas – the Napier earthquake, the Tangiwai train derailling, the sinking of the *Wahine*, Flight 901’s crash into Mount Erebus, the Pike River Mine explosion, the Christchurch earthquake, and the Whakaari/White Island eruption. New Zealand rendered a turbulent place, shaken by the violent wilful forces of its ever-forming, hyperactive geology, its wild weather, its mistakes of judgement. Lewer’s New Zealanders are pictured from behind, with shoulders slumped, defeated by the enormity of the forces around them. *New Zealand Disasters* captures the moments when nature ultimately wins, because nature always wins. And perhaps it’s in those moments when the human subject dissolves into disaster, when the codes of our collective norms are done away with, that we are fully exposed, and that the whole story is told.



Art for Always

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki exists thanks to the generous gifts of Sir George Grey, Governor of New Zealand and James Tannock Mackelvie, who donated works of art as well as funds to build the Gallery.

Today, legacies and bequests continue to make their mark – helping us to acquire new works for the collection; enabling the conservation team to preserve precious works; and for making art accessible to everyone in the community through programmes and education. All of this work contributes to New Zealand’s cultural story.

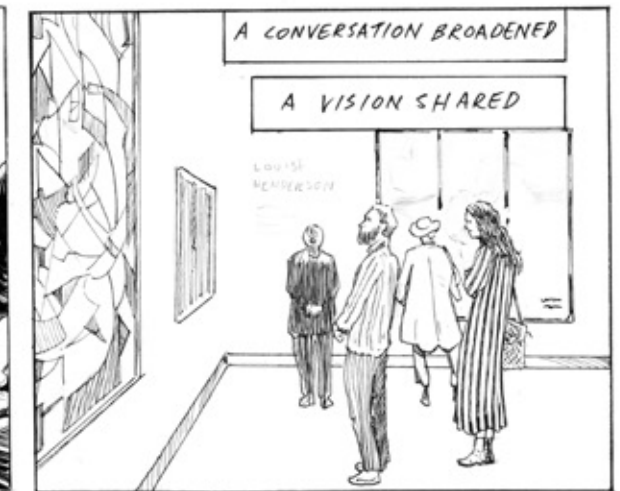
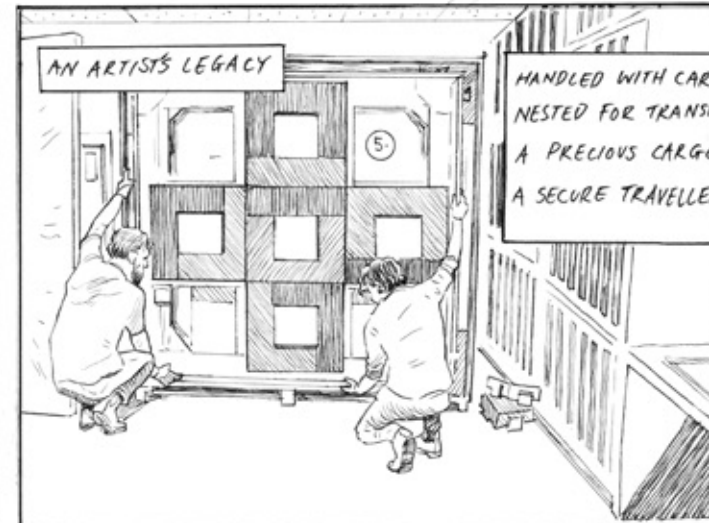
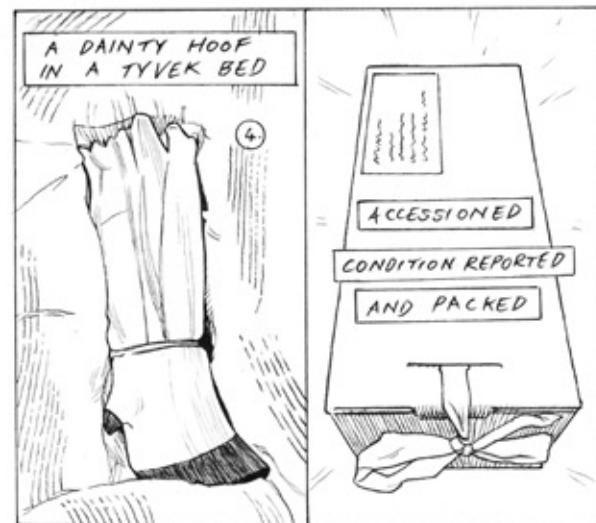
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Rita Angus *Mother and Child* (detail) 1945, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased with assistance of The Ilene and Laurence Dakin Bequest, 2015. Reproduced courtesy of the Rita Angus Estate.

HANDLE WITH CARE

MY NAME IS DARREN SHEEHAN. I'M A REGISTRATION TECHNICIAN AT TOI O TĀMAKI. WHEN I'M NOT PUTTING ARTWORKS INTO CRATES, I'M PUTTING WORDS AND PICTURES INTO BOXES AS A CARTOONIST. THIS IS A REFLECTION ON MY GALLERY JOB THROUGH MY COMICS WORK.



1. John Pule, Kehe tauhauaaga faou (To all new arrivals), 2007, on loan to Royal Academy of Arts, 2018
2. Rita Angus, Head of a Maori Boy, circa 1938, on loan to Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 2008, and the New Zealand Portrait Gallery, 2016
3. Billy Apple, Self-portraits (Apple Sees Red on Green), 1962-63, on loan MTG Hawke's Bay, 2020
4. Jane Dodd, Venus des vaches, 2019, part of 19 Gallery Relocating Frances Hodgkins, 2019, on loan Adam Art Gallery, 2020
5. Ralph Hotere, Long Red Line, 2007, on loan to Dunedin Public Art Gallery and Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, 2020-21
6. Rita Angus, Fog, Hawke's Bay, 1968-69, on loan to Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 2009
7. Louise Henderson, Plain and Hills, 1936, on loan from Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, 2019-20
8. Louise Henderson, Samoan Woman in Yellow, 1954, on loan to Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, 2020

Contributors

Nigel Borell (Pirirakau, Ngāti Ranginui, Ngāi Te Rangi, Te Whakatōhea) is curator, Māori art at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki where his research in both customary and contemporary Māori art is produced for publication and exhibitions. He holds a Bachelor of Māori Visual Art (Hons) from Massey University (2001) and a Master of Fine Art (Hons) from the University of Auckland (2003). Recent curatorial projects include: co-curating with Zara Stanhope *The Moa Hunters* by Areta Wilkinson, for 9th Asia Pacific Triennial, QAGOMA, Brisbane (2018) and *The Māori Portraits: Gottfried Lindauer's New Zealand*, at the Auckland Art Gallery (2016) and de Young Fine Arts Museum, San Francisco (2017).

Natasha Conland is curator, contemporary art at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki. She has diverse interests which have focused over the past two decades on commissioning art in public spaces, and the dissemination of the historic avant-garde among others. Selected exhibitions at the Gallery include *Mystic Truths* (2007), *Last Ride in a Hot Air Balloon: the 4th Auckland Triennial* (2010), *Made Active: The Chartwell Show* (2012), *Necessary Distraction: A Painting Show* (2015), *Shout Whisper Wail* (2017), *Groundswell: Avant Garde Auckland: 1971–79* (2018).

Emily Cormack is a curator and writer based in Auckland and Melbourne and has curated over 30 exhibitions throughout Australia, New Zealand, Asia and Europe. She is currently artistic director, Melbourne Art Fair, co-director of Coupland Cormack Projects in Auckland and is completing a PhD at Monash University.

Juliana Engberg is senior curator, global contemporary art at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, a writer and cultural producer. She was curator of *Angelica Mesiti: ASSEMBLY*, the Australian representation at the

Venice Biennale (2019), programme director of the European Capital of Culture Aarhus (2017), and artistic director of the 19th Biennale of Sydney (2014). She has been artistic director and curator of various festivals and biennales, including Edinburgh, Melbourne and Adelaide, and she was the artistic director of the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art.

Dr Sarah Farrar is head of curatorial and learning at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki. In addition to leading the Gallery's curatorial team, she is responsible for the Gallery's research library and educational programmes. She is a curator and art writer whose doctoral research focused on contemporary art, curatorial activism and the complexities of cross-cultural exchange. Recent curatorial projects include *Tūrangawaewae: Art and New Zealand* and *Kaleidoscope: Abstract Aotearoa* (both 2018, Te Papa).

Emma Jameson is assistant curator, international and New Zealand historic art at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki. A lover of historic art, she is particularly passionate about 17th-century European painting and prints. In her time at the Gallery exhibitions she has curated include *The Discerning Eye: Collecting Della Bella and Callot* (2017); *Uncanny Country* (2018); *Guerrilla Girls: Reinventing the 'F' Word – Feminism!* (2019) and was most recently assistant co-ordinating curator for *Enchanted Worlds: Hokusai, Hiroshige and the Art of Edo Japan* (2020).

Brook Konia (Ngāti Porou) is the curatorial intern for *Toi Tū Toi Ora: Contemporary Māori Art*. Passionate about contemporary Māori art and te reo Māori, Konia has woven himself into various art projects including Marylyn Mayo intern at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki (2019–2020), Creative New Zealand attendant for *Dane Mitchell: Post Hoc* at the 2019 Venice Biennale, freelance art writing, and as an Artweek public art guide for *Pā Rongorongo* (2018).

Kirsten Lacy is director of Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki. Prior to joining the Gallery in 2019 she was deputy director of National Gallery Australia and director of Shepparton Art Museum, where she led a large-scale building expansion project. She has a Bachelor of Fine Arts, a Master of Art Curatorship and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Melbourne.

Caroline McBride is librarian/archivist at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki's E H McCormick Research Library. She has been involved in many Gallery projects including as joint manager of the website Whakamīharo Lindauer Online and as part of a team that produced the Gallery's first children's book. She works with a growing and significant collection of art archives that are made available to researchers and regularly exhibited, and she has published on archives, curatorial research and iwi consultation.

Rachael Russ is advancement executive at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, where she manages the bequest programme and oversees grant applications. For many years she was a practising lawyer, working in both the private and public spheres.

Darren Sheehan is a registration technician at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki. His role involves preparing collection works for loan as well as larger touring shows including *Gottfried Lindauer* (2014) *Gordon Walters: New Vision* (2018), *Louise Henderson: From Life* (2019) and *Frances Hodgkins: European Journeys* (2019). In partnership with his brother Kelly, working under the Sheehan Brothers moniker, he produces small press comics. Some titles include: *The Longman #1–6* (1997–2002), *The Inhabitants #1–4* (2003–08), *Travesty with Mike Johnson* (2010) and *Into the Dark Woods* (2011–ongoing).

Taarati Taiaroa (Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Apa, Te Ātiawa) is assistant curator, Māori art at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki. Her research interests are focused on Māori art exhibition histories, curatorial practice and place-sourced practices. She has a background in sculpture and arts education. Recently she co-convened the ST PAUL St Curatorial Symposium 2019, 'It's as if we were made for each other', and contributed as a faculty member to the ICI Curatorial Intensive Auckland 2019 at Artspace Aotearoa.

Ane Tonga is the curator, Pacific art at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki. Her research interests are focused on contemporary Pacific art and curatorial practice, lens-based practices and Indigenous feminisms. Recent curatorial projects include: *Kereama Taepa: Transmission* (2020, Objectspace) *Edith Amituanai: Double Take* (2019, Adam Art Gallery Te Pātaka Toi) and *Ani O'Neill: Promise me/Trust me* (2019, Objectspace).

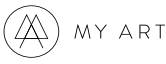
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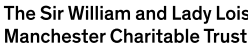
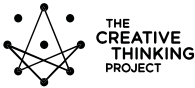
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Front cover: Lisa Reihana, *Ihi*, 2020 (still), two-channel UHD video, stereo sound, commissioned by Regional Facilities Auckland, and displayed in the Aotea Centre in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand, Papatūānuku: Nancy Wijohn

Back cover: Angelica Mesiti, *Mother Tongue*, 2017 (detail of still), two-channel high definition, colour video installation and surround sound, gift of the Friends of the Auckland Art Gallery, 2020. Photography: Bonnie Elliot. Courtesy of the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery

Pages 42–43: Sandy Adsett, *Puhuro*, 2020, digital print on vinyl, commissioned by Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, 2020, supported by the Auckland Contemporary Art Trust

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