



2021 NATIONAL
CONTEMPORARY
ART AWARD

Acknowledgements | Ngaa Mihi

Waikato Museum Te Whare Taonga o Waikato is grateful for the generosity of our major sponsors, Tompkins Wake, one of New Zealand's leading law firms, and nationally-renowned architects, Chow: Hill, who have supported the award since 2014 and 2015 respectively. We also thank our other sponsors, the Hugo Charitable Trust, Random Art Group, Friends of Waikato Museum and the family of Campbell Smith, for their continued patronage.

Congratulations to the winner and to all the finalists in this, our 21st iteration of the National Contemporary Art Award. A special thanks to our judge for 2021, Karl Chitham, for the unenviable task of picking the award-winning entry.

Sale of artworks

If you are interested in purchasing any of the works on display, please contact Waikato Museum during opening hours (10am-5pm daily).

Ph 07 838 6606

E museum@hcc.govt.nz

Artwork images

All images of artwork are details for reference purposes only and may not accurately represent the full works.

Note

- This exhibition contains artworks that some people may find offensive. Opinions expressed in Artists' statements belong solely to the artists.
- Waikato Museum uses double vowels in te reo Maaori to represent a long vowel sound as it is the preference of Waikato-Tainui. Artists' titles and statements are shown in their original form.

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A Word from Waikato Museum

What was missing from 2020? The National Contemporary Art Award! COVID-19 cast a long shadow, with restrictions impacting museums and galleries across the country. Now with Aotearoa New Zealand's returning sense of normalcy and relative freedoms, Waikato Museum Te Whare Taonga o Waikato is proud to present to you the 2021 National Contemporary Art Award.

Karl Chitham, Director of The Dowse Art Museum as well as prominent artist, curator and art writer, offers us the most current and contemporary art in Aotearoa. We are grateful to Karl for his expertise and for agreeing to judge this year's award. We also extend our deep gratitude to our nationally renowned sponsors – law firm Tompkins Wake and Chow: Hill Architects.

Lastly and most importantly, we thank the entrants to the award and offer our sincere congratulations to the finalists. Your artworks make this award.

Waikato Museum Te Whare Taonga o Waikato



From the Judge

Karl Chitham (Ngā Puhi, Te Urioroi)
Director
The Dowse Art Museum

It is always a privilege to be asked to judge an award. You are deftly aware of how much each entrant has put into their submission and the incredible expectation and anticipation that accompanies the outcome. However, as a judge you can only endeavour to do your best and stand by your selection made with integrity and the experience of many years in the sector.

This year's entries explored many themes, but the primary thread was the immense impact of COVID-19 on communities, environmental awareness and socio-political dynamics. While some entries were explicit in their references there were a number that reflected these shifting impressions in more subtle ways.

The finalists, while obviously representing degrees of skill and conceptual and visual rigour, reveal a more microscopic investigation of our place in the world at a time when the local has taken on more significance, and globalism has become an impossibility. They include small gestures, tricks of the eye and case studies in the human condition, all framed within planet-wide upheaval. With this in mind all of the works share something, they highlight the unique moments, communicated through the eyes of an artist that echo what it means to live in Aotearoa at this particular time in history.



From the Sponsors

Brian Squair
Director and Chair
Chow:Hill Architects Ltd

On this 22nd Anniversary of the National Contemporary Art Award, it is our great pleasure to join with Tompkins Wake once again in providing sponsorship. We trust our continued involvement in this award strongly signals our support for artistic expression and excellence, Waikato Museum and our great city of Hamilton.

The business of Chow:Hill is design and delivery of projects that not only serve a functional purpose but enrich the lives of those who experience the environments we design. We therefore sense a strong connection with the realms of art and design, and we wish all the finalists well in this award. We also acknowledge the other artists who did not make the cut this year, and genuinely encourage them to continue in their passionate pursuit of creative expression.



From the Sponsors

Jon Calder
Chief Executive
Tompkins Wake

The connection between an established law firm and a contemporary art award is both interesting and exciting and Tompkins Wake is proud to continue our support of the National Contemporary Art Award now in its 21st year.

As a leading New Zealand law firm, we develop the highest quality strategic and legal service through the generation of new ideas and thinking, creating opportunities and solutions for our clients on the matters most important to them.

Not unlike contemporary artists, who often use established practice to present new ideas to this award, and frequently challenge the criteria for art. Being future-focused requires us to present fresh thinking using the knowledge and the laws of our practice as an enduring foundation.

2021 FINALISTS



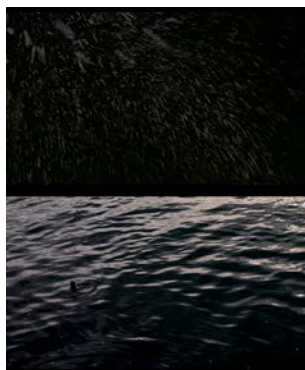
01. Rua Kēnana and Pinepine Te Rika's descent from Mt. Maungapōhatu

Brett a'Court

Oil on prepared woollen blanket with canvas support

\$1,481

Over the last two years I have been working on woollen blankets stretched on canvas supports. The blankets are the connection and metaphor between colonisation, Christianity and the Māori prophets. This work documents the Māori prophet Rua Kēnana's experience that he underwent on Maungapōhatu, the sacred mountain of Tūhoe.



02. Nexus

Denise Batchelor

2 channel video

\$5,000

Drop by drop the sky cries enough tears to fill an ocean, but in the flood messages go unread.



03. Palmolive

Caryline Boreham

Single channel video

\$2,222

There is a performativity to maintaining a household and the relationships within it. Home is the setting for the most intimate, celebratory, ritualistic and also unresolved, mundane and repetitive parts of our lives. *Palmolive* is a recreation of one of these moments.



04. Gaze

D Milton Browne

Photography

\$2,500

What makes this image different? Is it different because it is black and white? Is it different because we can see the reaction of some of those around to the subject's genuine emotion? We watch those who are watching, and we are becoming aware.



05. The Killing Chain

Brit Bunkley

Animation, single channel video

\$7,407

Ruins define the edge between nature and culture. Ruins are romantic tropes that remind us of mortality. New Zealand's freezing works (the "killing chains") were once the nation's primary industry in a monoculture that processed meat, dairy and animal by-products.



06. Fruit Bowl IIII

Oliver Cain

Ceramic

\$6,000

This playful work draws attention to many experiences encountered by homosexual males. Revealing elements of personal experience yet refusing to give details, holding onto the anonymity of each encounter. Openly questioning social constructions of shame, anonymity and sexuality, in a way that can be viewed as whimsical and light-hearted.



07. Equanimity (2021)

Trish Campbell

TruLED acrylic, LED, gel

\$48,000

Equanimity (2021) – four light and colour field boxes depicting the seasons as the backdrop to living through a pandemic and coping with anxiety.



08. untitled

Alex Chalmers

Oil paint on metal sphere

\$3,704

Approximately the size of a human head, affixed to the wall and painted with emoji pictographic emotions. The sphere is highly reflective and seductive, and the viewer's fisheye appearance in the mirrored surfaces is like noticing oneself in the domed super wide-angle view of a security camera.



09. Aletheia

Julia Christey

Oil on paper

\$6,500

Aletheia is the partial revealing of truth, as the whole truth is unattainable to perception. As one aspect is revealed, another is hidden or concealed. In this context, my painting is an inquiry into the assumption of human exceptionality and a realisation of our limitations.



10. Concrete 2

Ruth Cleland

Graphite on bristol board

\$4,500

I am interested in how the intense scrutiny of everyday surfaces can develop a strangeness so that they are no longer ordinary, and how the recording of such details can take on an anthropological role of describing who we are and how we live in the world today.



11. Joy Mountain

Natasha Cousens

Ceramic, plaster, resin, fibreglass, wood, steel rod, artificial foliage, nikau flower, paint

\$4,444

Joy Mountain depicts a rabbit on a hill. The rabbit is a metaphor for nostalgia and unwillingness to let go. Gaining additional meaning after difficulties of a Covid-19 last visit to my father in the UK. A tribute to my father who recently died from a terminal illness.



12. Maelstrom

David Cowlard

HD Video with stereo sound

2'15" (looped)

\$3,704

One quarter of a mile. 1320 feet or 402 metres. It's actually 428 metres but the meaning rests with the imperial measurement. The quarter mile was the distance of a block. Red light to red light, that was the challenge. Legalised it became the strip. Then the oval. The speedway.



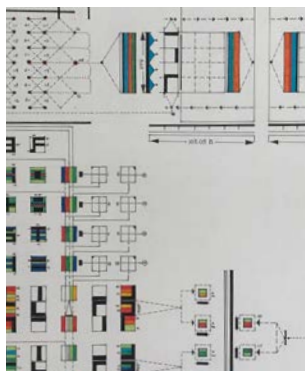
13. C6.2021

Antony Densham

Acrylic on canvas

\$6,000

I want my painting to reference the landscape in a way that is ephemeral, implied and malleable. This painting encapsulates a palimpsest of decisions over time. The aim is to give the viewer a sense of an ever-changing psychological landscape.



14. lab 20-10AB

Leslie Falls

Pencil and ink on paper

\$5,556

In this work I attempt to understand my father's creative obsession that caused him to spend every evening and each weekend at 'the lab'.



15. Hikoi rā - walk there

Fraser Findlay

Graphite print on stretched canvas with corrugated Kraft twin cushion stencil print, 75mm custom tape

\$4,359

The delivery and exhibition of my artwork within its packaging allows me to explore the concepts of identity, human connection and response.

The artwork is a multimedia experience inviting the viewer to engage by scanning the package, sharing ideas that embody multilayered concepts linked to identity, culture, and representation.



16. ART

Stuart Forsyth

Inkjet photographic print on archival galerie paper

\$1,019

In an effort to live a more conscious existence and better understand the world around me, I document the ordinary, overlooked and mundane that make up my everyday in the hope I can live a more honest and meaningful life in the process.



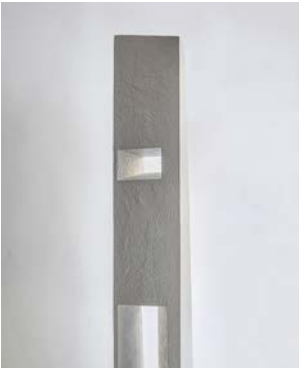
17. No Meat And All Vege

Jacquely Greenbank

Carved wood and cabbage tree leaves on yellow melamine plinth

\$3,148

Food is often used as a thematic vehicle, as it can assimilate and alienate cultures. We use food in many different ways within culture. What we eat sheds light on our lives, holds values, keeps strong ties to our communities, while preserving culture and expressing cultural identity.



18. the genius loci of the chapel

Natalie Guy

Fibreglass

\$27,778

Presented as a fragment of architecture, this sculptural interpretation translates the genius loci or spirit of place inherent in two related buildings – Le Corbusier's *Ronchamp Chapel* (France) and John Scott and Jim Allen's *Futuna Chapel* (Wellington).



19. Solv No. 4

Levi Hawken

Cast concrete

\$667

Solv No. 4 sits in quiet consideration of opposing views as to how public space might be engaged, or enacted upon. The work allows for a discussion of what is acceptable within shared public space; what is perceived as vandalism and, conversely, what might be perceived as ornamentation and commemoration.



20. The Art of Value

John Guy Johnston

Acrylic paint and wax pastel on unstretched pinstripe suit material, bull clips

\$2,500

This work is part of the artist's research-based project focusing on analysing publicly listed companies. To prepare, the artist completed a Columbia Business School investing programme. The central element is the School's visual identity and the icon of the Greek god Hermes, which is strongly associated with trade and commerce.



21. Anatomy of a Stream

Paul V Johnston

Acrylic on Fabriano paper

\$5,000

Rocks and pebbles of the Karekare stream bed tumble and nestle into complexities that suggest organs within the silhouetted crouching figure and overhanging trees. *Anatomy of a Stream* signifies a threatened stream's ecosystem through this association of rocky stream bed with body systems and looming figure.



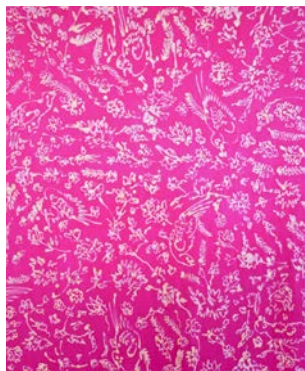
22. Sol 956

Yoon Tae Kim

Archival photographic inkjet print

\$3,500

On Sol 956, April 15, 2015, NASA's Mars rover *Curiosity* recorded the red planet's blue sunset.



23. Hope is the Thing with Feathers 2

Rozana Lee

Melted beeswax and paraffin wax hand-drawing on hand-dyed silk satin, on pine wood standing frame

\$5,000

This work draws on ideas around identity, migration, closeness and distance. The fabric signifies a pattern of multicultural home, interwoven with migrating birds as a motif. The mobile standing frame speaks to the idea of unsettlement. Together with the fabric, it denotes partition, bringing out the polarities of intimacy and distance.



24. Flagstaff Hill, April 2021

Thomas Lord

Inkjet photographic print

\$1,444

Informed by the three verities of landscape photography that Robert Adams offers us in his essay "Truth in Landscape", geography, autobiography and metaphor. I visit historically important spaces as inspiration. By looking at the natural surroundings I unpack and reimagine them giving some clues to their past.



25. The Incredible Lightness of Being

Kaye McGarva

Acrylic on canvas

\$14,815

The title is a nod to the classic novel by Milan Kundera which examines ideas of truth and reality. Some characters choose to take on life's burdens, while in contrast others allow them to wash over them. In essence it reveals we are directly responsible for constructing how we experience reality.



26. la teu le vā

Leanne Morrison

Acrylic and enamel on canvas

\$4,074

Unpainted areas reveal the canvas as three painted forms cross over and under to emerge and travel to the very edges of the canvas.

Light plays across the surface revealing the shallow depths and forms beneath, adjacent and above. Cherish and respect all relationships.



27. Late Model Mazda

Mark Purdom

Giclée photographic print

\$2,500

The project *SLT* (Sustained Loss of Traction) focuses on the phenomenon known as 'burnouts', implicit within the photographs is a link to the subculture of "Boy Racers". Sustained Loss of Traction is the name of the criminal offence that police charge drivers with who are caught doing burnouts.



28. Solo Exercise

Naomi Roche

Stone

\$833

Through the *Solo Exercise* of learning to carve, the pebbles found during solo socially distanced exercise, these pebbles represent us - they remind us that like our people, each pebble is capable of being our taonga/treasure in a time of hardship.



29. Malaga

Raymond Sagapolutele

C-type digital photograph

\$5,000

Malaga, pronounced 'Malanga', it is the Samoan term for journey. The term also frames the context as it relates to the movement of people of the Pacific and their diasporic communities away from their homelands. This work pays homage to our evolution on the whenua of our cousins in Aotearoa.



30. Has it Ever Been More Tense Than Now: The Post Covid Apocalypse

Kyle Sattler

Multi-monitor video and sound installation

\$14,815

Has It Ever Been More Tense Than Now simulates the immediate and intuitive parameters of the real present. The looped, semi-autonomous video and audio sets use synchresis incommensurably to enable a perpetual rhythm of unique combinations. This action mimics the aleatoric nature of our privileged human instant(s).



31. rorrim lartnec

Mark Soltero

Acrylic on hessian

\$5,600

An image space comes together as a result of two independent functions – the way we see objects and events in our surroundings, and how we think about these objects and events. Thinking connects us to images through memory, thus engaging us in time and history.



32. Companion Pieces

Natalie Tozer

Archival paper

\$3,260

For *Companion Pieces*, I offered paper to a snail farm. These experiments and proposals seek to observe the ground as a source of knowledge.



33. The Misunderstanding

May Trubuhovich

Cotton hand embroidery, acrylic ink on
found fabric placemat

\$2,500

"I am very annoyed."

This self-portrait is based on a recent incident in which I misinterpreted a text message from a friend. She wasn't actually annoyed at me, but I so fully absorbed that interpretation, that it took quite some time before I could truly believe that she wasn't.



34. Diaspora's Children:

- a) Dancers of Tongpop
- b) Seated Figure 1 with aka tau (war club)
- c) Seated Figure 2 with akau tau (war club)
- d) Seated Figure 3 with ili (fan)
- e) Seated Figure 4 with ili (fan)

Telly Tuita

Digital prints

\$18,889

Performative self portraits transports the viewer to my fictional universe of Tongpop. Blending representations of ancestral art from home and contemporary art references and popular culture. Not to mourn loss of cultural knowledge or connection but share a love and One'ing with deity figures such as Hikuele'o and Superman.



35. Blue Hours

Haihui Wang

Oil on linen

\$10,185

When I am painting, I am obsessed with conversation between light and pottery surface, I am obsessed with their presence in empty silence space.

After many days and hours staring at the objects and meditating in the space, the painting become a process of discovering a mystery behind the surface.



36. Wishing Well

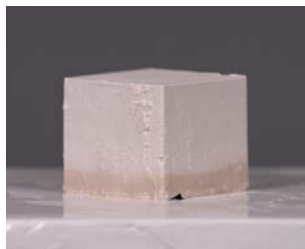
Cora-Allan Wickliffe

Hiapo (Niuean barkcloth)

\$55,556

We have learnt through multiple lockdowns about what is essential and important in our lives. In this moment I offer a space for you to choose hope and think about what you would ask for in this moment.

Please make a wish.



37. Progress

Alex Wilkinson and Ben Wilson

Video work – porcelain, water

\$2,222

We move forward, constantly with an unrelenting view to advancement.

How often do we glimpse backwards?

What do we lose when we move forward?

Is there an opportunity cost to inflexible expansion?

Can we undo progress?



38. AhoTāniko (connection)

Sheree Willman

Acrylic on board

\$18,148

AhoTāniko was created from the waharua kōpito tāniko pattern from the kākahu (cloak) that was beautifully woven by my Ngāti Kahungunu tūpuna in the early to mid-19th century and possibly worn by rangatira from my iwi. This actual kākahu is stored at Te Papa in the kākahu storeroom “Te Whare Pora o Hine-te-iwaiwa”.

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