

## Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki announces international exhibition on cultural icon Frida Kahlo in spring exhibition schedule



Image credit: Frida Kahlo Self-Portrait with Monkeys 1943. The Jacques and Natasha Gelman Collection of 20th Century Mexican Art and the Vergel Foundation

Discover the rich and diverse histories behind modern art in Mexico and come face to face with one of the twentieth century's most recognisable cultural icons in an international exhibition touring to Auckland this spring – *Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera: Art and Life in Modern Mexico*. The exhibition is organised by the Vergel Foundation and MondoMostre in collaboration with the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes y Literatura.

*Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera: Art and Life in Modern Mexico* presents the art of many leading Mexican artists with paintings and drawings from across Kahlo's career. Alongside the work of the famous couple, Kahlo and Rivera, the exhibition features painting and photography by leading artists in their circle.

Also opening at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki this year is a new exhibition of contemporary art revealing life at home in *Walls to Live Beside, Rooms to Own*, as well as a retrospective of Aotearoa's *Robin White: Te Whanaketanga | Something is Happening Here*.

Auckland Art Gallery Director Kirsten Lacy is thrilled to be presenting these exhibitions, alongside international shows, *Heavenly Beings: Icons of the Christian Orthodox World*, currently on now, and *Gilbert & George: The Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland Exhibition 2022*, opening on Saturday 25 June.

'I couldn't be more excited that Toi o Tāmaki will soon become home to such prestigious international art,' says Lacy.

'Frida Kahlo and her husband, Diego Rivera, are internationally recognised for their contributions to twentieth-century art. Both artists, despite possessing completely different styles, became two of Mexico's most

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celebrated and inspiring personalities, representing Mexican identity through their work.'

*Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera: Art and Life in Modern Mexico* draws from the Jacques and Natasha Gelman collection, one of the preeminent private collections of Mexican modernism. Soon after their arrival in Mexico in the 1940s, the Gelmans began collecting, and commissioning art, including from such leading painters as David Siqueiros and Rufino Tamayo.

Discover over 150 artworks, including paintings by some of Mexico's leading figures, Carlos Mérida, María Izquierdo and Juan Soriano, and photographers Lola Álvarez Bravo, Manuel Álvarez Bravo and Nickolas Muray.

'Not only will the Gallery host *Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera: Art and Life in Modern Mexico*, but visitors will also be able to engage with contemporary art from closer to home in *Walls to Live Beside, Rooms to Own* and an exhibition of national importance in *Robin White: Te Whanaketanga | Something is Happening Here*,' adds Lacy.

Opening in early September, *Walls to Live Beside, Rooms to Own* draws from the artworks of the Chartwell Collection, a prominent collection of contemporary art, to respond to our relationship to life at home – one that has been significantly impacted during the global pandemic.

A broad range of artistic perspectives is explored, from those who adopt abstract scaffolding structures in their artworks to those for whom sculptural walls, domestic furniture and furnishings act as artistic materials. Often concerned with the psychology of interior space and the outdoors, the works in the exhibition include two commissioned new artworks by New Zealand artists Tim Wagg and Fiona Connor that speak to the home within real estate and the home as a site for art.

Jointly developed by Auckland Art Gallery and Te Papa, *Te Whanaketanga | Something is Happening Here* is a retrospective exhibition of work by contemporary Aotearoa artist Dame Robin White (Ngāti Awa, Pāhekā).

Opening at Auckland Art Gallery in late October, the exhibition will feature works from across White's 50-year career. Explore her celebrated portraits and landscapes from the 1970s, alongside her more recent, ambitious collaborative works made with artists from across the Pacific.

## Coming up at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki are:

### *Walls to Live Beside, Rooms to Own*

Opening Sat 3 Sep – FREE



Image credit: Fiona Connor, *Wallworks* (featuring Trevor Vickers, *Untitled Painting* 1968), installation view, Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne, 2014. Photo: Andrew Curtis

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Using the Chartwell Collection as a source, *Walls to Live Beside, Rooms to Own* is a response to our relationship to life at home – one that has been significantly impacted for many, if not all, of us during the global pandemic. Artists are no different, and this exhibition looks at how they have responded to the materials of home.

A broad range of artistic perspectives is taken into consideration, from those who adopt abstract scaffolding structures in their work to those for whom sculptural walls, domestic furniture and furnishings act as artistic materials. Often concerned with the psychology of interior space and the outdoors, the works in the exhibition include two commissioned new artworks that speak to the home within real estate and the home as a site for art.

The Chartwell Collection was initiated in 1974 at a time in which the social and domestic attitudes of the post-war period were rapidly changing. New Zealand artists were also making large-scale use of second-hand marketplaces and recycled domestic wares for artistic practice and inspiration. Since then, attitudes to the home have steadily changed. However, none of these changes have been so visible as now: a broad-scale housing crisis coupled with the 2020 and 2021 lockdowns prompted by COVID.

At the time, many called for renewed creativity in the home during a radical coupling of home and work life. In contrast, *Walls to Live Beside, Rooms to Own* focuses on how artists have viewed the home, giving greater context to the relationship between art and home-life. *Walls to Live Beside, Rooms to Own* is supported by the Chartwell Trust.

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## ***Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera: Art and Life in Modern Mexico***

**Opening Sat 15 Oct – Adults \$24.50, Members FREE**



Image credit: **Frida Kahlo** *Self-Portrait with Monkeys* 1943. The Jacques and Natasha Gelman Collection of 20th Century Mexican Art and the Vergel Foundation

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Discover the art of cultural icons Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera, come face-to-face with some of Kahlo's most arresting self-portraits, and learn about their shared drive to articulate a new Mexican art in the exhibition, *Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera: Art and Life in Modern Mexico*.

The exhibition comprises the Jacques and Natasha Gelman collection, one of the preeminent private collections of Mexican modernism. The Gelmans began collecting shortly after their arrival in Mexico in the early 1940s, and established friendships with the artists, often commissioning portraits of themselves for the walls of their home.

*Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera: Art and Life in Modern Mexico* includes over 150 artworks, including paintings and drawings by Kahlo, Rivera's oil paintings of Mexican customary life, and an array of work by other leading artists, including muralists David Siqueiros and Rufino Tamayo, and María Izquierdo, whose star rivalled Kahlo's during their lifetimes. Alongside paintings, the exhibition includes a large collection of photography, which introduces visitors to life through the modernist lenses of Lola Álvarez Bravo, Manuel Álvarez Bravo and Nickolas Muray.

Kahlo and Rivera are internationally recognised for their contributions to the evolution of modern twentieth-century art. Both artists, despite possessing completely different styles, became two of Mexico's most celebrated and inspiring personalities, and played a crucial role in defining a new art following the Mexican Revolution. While Rivera's art projected itself outwards, often on a vast scale, and concerned itself with the construction of a national identity, Kahlo's turned inwards and represented Mexicanidad – Mexican national identity – through an exploration of her personal identity.

*Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera: Art and Life in Modern Mexico* is organised by the Vergel Foundation and MondoMostre in collaboration with the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes y Literatura. The exhibition is proudly supported by Craigs Investment Partners and AUT, as well as Omnigraphics, with special thanks to the Auckland Art Gallery Foundation.

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## ***Robin White: Te Whanaketanga | Something is Happening Here***

**Opening Sat 29 Oct – FREE**



Image credit: Robin White, *Mere and Siulolovao, Otago Peninsula*, 1978, screenprint. Purchased 1978 with Harold Beauchamp Collection funds. Te Papa (1978-0024-5)

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Jointly developed by Auckland Art Gallery and Te Papa, *Robin White: Te Whanaketanga | Something is Happening Here* is a retrospective exhibition of work by contemporary Aotearoa artist Dame Robin White (Ngāti Awa, Pāhekā).

Opening at Auckland Art Gallery on 29 October 2022, following its presentation at Te Papa, the exhibition features works from across White's 50-year career. Explore her celebrated portraits and landscapes from the 1970s, alongside her more recent, ambitious collaborative works made with artists from across the Pacific.

A project of national importance, *Robin White: Te Whanaketanga | Something is Happening Here* builds on over a decade of research by art historian and writer Jill Trevelyan and the exhibition's co-curators Dr Sarah Farrar, Head of Curatorial and Learning at Auckland Art Gallery and Dr Nina Tonga, Curator Contemporary Art at Te Papa.

The exhibition is supported by an accompanying publication, *Robin White: Something is Happening Here*, jointly published by Auckland Art Gallery and Te Papa Press and available now. Edited by Sarah Farrar, Jill Trevelyan and Nina Tonga, the book includes fresh perspectives by 24 writers and interviewees from Aotearoa, Australia and Te-Moana-Nui-A-Kiwa, the Pacific.

*Robin White: Te Whanaketanga | Something is Happening Here* is supported by Auckland Art Gallery Foundation.

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