

AUCKLAND ART GALLERY TOI O TĀMAKI

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Five Māori Painters opens tomorrow with full weekend of events

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Image credit: Saffronn Te Ratana, *Whakarongo ki te karanga* 2014 (installation detail) - full credit below

Trace the evolution of Māori painting from the 19th century to the present day at *Five Māori Painters*, opening at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki this Saturday 22 February.

Leading artists Kura Te Waru Rewiri, Robyn Kahukiwa, Emily Karaka, Saffronn Te Ratana and Star Gossage present original approaches to Māori painting in an exhibition that examines Māori painting today, while providing insight to historic painting traditions. Their works share the artist's experience to tell the story of Māori culture through unique perspectives.

Sitting alongside the artworks are significant historic examples of painted hoe (canoe paddle) and heke (rafter) from Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira. Along with work by 19th-century artist George French Angas, these artefacts add depth to the exhibition, giving viewers a traditional context for the contemporary works on show.

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki Director Rhana Devenport says, '*Five Māori Painters* celebrates Māori culture and demonstrates a commitment to profiling New Zealand's indigenous art practice and offering a Māori world view. Through exhibitions dedicated to Māori art, we can enable greater learning and understanding, and can acknowledge the powerful work of these talented artists.'

Auckland Art Gallery Indigenous Curator Māori Art Ngahiraka Mason says, 'These artworks are Toi Piwari (beautiful art) and can be appreciated for the historic and contemporary ideas behind the works.'

'The energetic paintings of Emily Karaka and symbol-rich paintings of Robyn Kahukiwa are incredibly powerful. Star Gossage's reflections of atua and the third space invite contemplation. Kura Te Waru Rewiri expands the kowhaiwhai

tradition to new possibilities and Saffronn Te Ratana takes contemporary painting to a whole new dimension with her innovative installation.’

Highlights for opening weekend:

- Saturday 1pm: Curator’s Talk with Ngahiraka Mason
Gain an in-depth understanding of the themes explored in *Five Māori Painters* with Auckland Art Gallery’s Indigenous Curator Māori Art, Ngahiraka Mason
- Sunday 1pm: Artist Talk with Saffronn Te Ratana
Join artist Saffronn Te Ratana in conversation with artist and lecturer Ngataiharuru Taepa
- Sunday 3pm: Artist Talk with Kura Te Waru Rewiri
Join artist Kura Te Waru Rewiri in conversation with scriptwriter, actor and director Michael Rewiri-Thorsen

A full programme of events including movie screenings and music performance is available at www.aucklandartgallery.com. A new publication, *Five Māori Painters*, and symposium offer a comprehensive insight to the history of Māori painting as well as current practice.

Five Māori Painters is supported by funding from Te Waka Toi, the Māori Arts Board of Creative New Zealand, and JBWere.

In addition to *Five Māori Painters*, the Gallery recently opened a tribute exhibition recognising the work of late sculptor and painter Arnold Manaaki Wilson, *Arnold Manaaki Wilson Pou Ihi | Pou Whenua | Pou Tangata*. Wilson (1928-2012) remains a significant figure in contemporary Māori art – this exhibition runs until 31 August.

Five Māori Painters will run from 22 February to 15 June. Entry is free.

- ENDS –

Image credit:

Saffronn Te Ratana

Whakarongo ki te karanga 2014 (installation detail)
acrylic paint, fabric, wood, fibre, steel pins
collection of the artist

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