

# AUCKLAND ART GALLERY TOI O TĀMAKI

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See contemporary painting with links to the past in *Five Māori Painters*

Supporting partner:

**JBWere**

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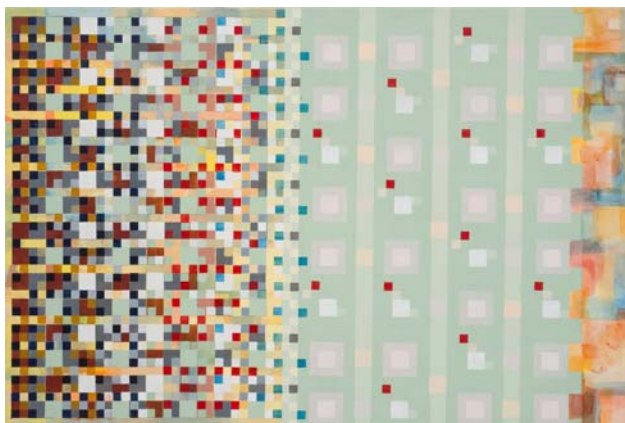


Image credit: Kura Te Waru Rewiri, *Front* 2003, acrylic on canvas— full credit below

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Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki presents a comprehensive overview of current contemporary practice through the eyes of five artists in upcoming exhibition, *Five Māori Painters*, opening on 22 February 2014.

Senior artists Kura Te Waru Rewiri, Robyn Kahukiwa and Emily Karaka, along with next-generation painters Saffronn Te Ratana and Star Gossage, present vital and fundamental approaches to contemporary Māori art. From Kahukiwa's symbol-rich landscape murals to the bold brushwork of Karaka focused on Treaty of Waitangi claims, the artists share their perspectives on Māori art and contemporary times. Through the work of Te Waru Rewiri visitors will see a new take on traditional kōwhaiwhai painting, while Gossage incorporates the use of natural pigments to paint her ethereal figures and Te Ratana expands painting from the canvas into the third dimension with a commissioned installation.

Included in the exhibition 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. Taonga and historic prints create a traditional context for the contemporary works. When examining historical examples, visitors can see the foundations on which contemporary Māori painting is based – pattern, symbol, colour, line and metaphor.

Auckland Art Gallery Director Rhana Devenport says, 'New Zealand is a multicultural nation with a unique Māori heritage that we acknowledge through this exhibition and in celebrating past and present Māori art.'

'*Five Māori Painters* is part of a thematic approach that will see the Gallery present multiple exhibitions dedicated to indigenous works over the autumn months. As well as a tribute exhibition featuring sculptures and paintings by Māori artist Arnold Manaaki Wilson, we will be hosting the largest exhibition of Indigenous Australian art ever seen in New Zealand with *My Country: Contemporary Art from Black Australia*. Together, with the significant display of

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Māori art within our collection exhibition, *Toi Aotearoa*, these events bring indigenous art to the fore.'

Auckland Art Gallery Curator Indigenous Art, Ngahiraka Mason, says, 'Māori painting practice is continually evolving, and we're seeing changes in the way relationships to land and culture are represented and reflected in subject matter and use of medium.'

'While these artists are forward-thinking, we also see reflection on traditional forms and techniques. Through these works the artists share personal experiences and perspectives, and as a unique grouping, this exhibition presents a energetic survey of Māori painting today.'

Supporting the exhibition is a full public programme, including artist talks, workshops and a late night event. In addition, a new publication, *Five Māori Painters*, and symposium offer a comprehensive insight into the history of Māori painting in the late 19th and early 20th-century, as well as extending the discussion of the work of the five contemporary artists featured in the exhibition, in an exploration of the creative, social and political changes that have been a context for creative practices across this period.

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

The exhibition will run from 22 February to 15 June. Entry is free.

- ENDS -

Image credit:

### **Kura Te Waru Rewiri**

*Front* 2003

acrylic on canvas

1050 x 1560 mm

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

purchased 2012

image courtesy of the artist

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