

## ***Robin White: Te Whanaketanga | Something is Happening Here* opens at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki this week**



Image credit: Robin White, March 2022. Photographed by Paul Chapman, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki.

A major retrospective exhibition of contemporary New Zealand artist Dame Robin White (b. 1946, Ngāti Awa, Pākehā) opens this Saturday at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki following its successful three-month display at Te Papa.

Featuring significant works from across White's 50-year career, the exhibition *Robin White: Te Whanaketanga | Something is Happening Here* profiles an artist whose imagery continues to shape the country's national identity and sense of place.

White has a special appreciation for Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland as the place where she grew up and completed a Diploma in Fine Arts at Elam School of Fine Arts, University of Auckland, in 1967.

'Auckland is the city where my art education began in a serious way, and visits to the Auckland City Art Gallery with my parents were a significant aspect of my early awakening to the importance of art. During these visits, I felt nurtured, nourished, and challenged,' says White. 'For my work to now be in the space that has been so important to me from when I was a child, is like a joyful homecoming. I hope that the exhibition of my work will support what the Gallery has to offer as a place for all to visit and enjoy.'

Accompanying the exhibition at Auckland Art Gallery is a series of free public programmes including professional learning days for primary and secondary school teachers, artist and curator talks, panel discussions, NZSL tours, and tours for blind and low vision visitors. A free bilingual Tamariki Guide to the exhibition is also available.

Gallery Director Kirsten Lacy says, 'We look forward to welcoming visitors this summer to see Robin White's remarkable works which are iconic images of the people and landscapes of Aotearoa and the Pacific. Bring the whole whānau, there's something for everyone to see and do.'

*Robin White: Te Whanaketanga | Something is Happening Here* has been developed by Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki in partnership with the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. The exhibition is generously supported by Auckland Art Gallery Foundation.

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Exhibition co-curators Dr Sarah Farrar, Head of Curatorial and Learning at Auckland Art Gallery, and Dr Nina Tonga, Curator Contemporary Art at Te Papa, say the exhibition provides timely recognition for an important New Zealand artist who responds to her local environment.

'Living, working and travelling across the Pacific and her experiences of working collaboratively with artists in Aotearoa, Fiji, Tonga and Japan, have transformed White's art practice' says Farrar.

Tonga says the exhibition aims to capture the intellectual curiosity and sense of purpose that has fueled White's work for the last fifty years.

'Across the exhibition we have charted the frequent innovations in her practice as she has responded to her changing environment, from her early wood-block prints to her most recent tapa works made in collaboration with Tongan artists, Ruha and Ebonie Fifita, and Fijian artist, Tamari Cabeikanacea.'

The exhibition also features work made in collaboration with Japanese artists Keiko Imura and Taeko Ogawa.

*Robin White: Te Whanaketanga | Something is Happening Here* builds on over a decade of research by art historian and writer Jill Trevelyan and exhibition co-curators Dr Sarah Farrar and Dr Nina Tonga.

The exhibition is supported by an accompanying publication, *Robin White: Something is Happening Here*, jointly published by Te Papa Press and Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki which was released in May. The book includes fresh perspectives by 24 writers and interviewees from Aotearoa, Australia and Te Moana-Nui-a-Kiwa, the Pacific.

### **Exhibition detail:**

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

**When:**

Saturday 29 October 2023 – Monday 30 January 2023  
10am – 5pm daily, except Christmas Day

**Where:**

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki  
Cnr Kitchener and Wellesley Streets  
Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland,  
Aotearoa New Zealand

**Admission:**

Free entry

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki has organised a series of free events to support *Robin White: Te Whanaketanga | Something is Happening Here*

### **Artist talk with Robin White and Dr Sarah Farrar**

Join us for an intimate kōrero between Robin White and Dr Sarah Farrar, co-curator of *Robin White: Te Whanaketanga | Something is Happening Here*. In this special conversation, White will share insights into her remarkable 50-year career and the people and places that have shaped her art.

**Date:**

Saturday 29 October 2022, 11.30am–12.30pm and 1.30–2.30pm.  
Free admission, booking essential.

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### Collaboration across the Pacific: talanoa with Robin White and artists

Hear stories of journeying, friendship and collaboration across the Pacific in this in-depth kōrero between Robin White and the artists she has collaborated with. Chaired by Dr Nina Tonga, co-curator of *Robin White: Te Whanaketanga | Something is Happening Here*, this conversation will explore artistic partnerships and the creative process of creating large-scale ngatu (barkcloth) together.

**Date:** Sunday 30 October 2022, 2–3pm.

Booking essential.

### Primary School and Kura Kaiako Professional Development

Robin White and Ebonie Fifita will host a kōrero in *Robin White: Te Whanaketanga | Something is Happening Here*; artist Grace Mirams will teach a print-making workshop; and the Gallery Schools and Learning team will run a series of workshops to develop skills and confidence in using art-making practices in teaching across the learning areas. We will finish the day by visiting *Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera: Art and Life in Modern Mexico*.

**Date:** Wednesday 2 November 2022, 9am–5pm. Free admission, booking essential.

This event is aimed at primary school teachers.

### Secondary School and Kura Kaiako Professional Development

Robin White and Ebonie Fifita will host a kōrero in *Robin White: Te Whanaketanga | Something is Happening Here*; art historian, fiction writer and maker, Dr Bronwyn Lloyd will run a workshop generating ideas and creative responses through imaginatively reconstructing room(s) they remember; and the Gallery Schools and Learning team will run workshops on how to use art and its contexts as starting points when teaching fiction and non-fiction writing. We will finish the day by visiting *Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera: Art and Life in Modern Mexico*.

**Date:** Tuesday 8 November 2022, 9am–5pm. Free admission, booking essential.

This event is aimed at secondary school teachers.

### Panel discussion - Seeing the self: women artists depict themselves

Artists Robin White, Claudia Kogachi, and Yvonne Todd sit down with Associate Professor Linda Tyler to foreground self-portraiture as an important subject for women artists, looking at their own practice and the exhibitions on show *Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera: Art and Life in Modern Mexico* and *Robin White: Te Whanaketanga | Something is Happening Here*.

**Date:** Tuesday 8 November 2022, 5.30pm–8pm.

This free talk begins at 6pm, with a pay bar and nibbles from 7pm. Please note this event is R18.

### Meet the Makers: Robin White with Ivi Projects

Celebrating the nature of Robin White's collaborative projects, we will host Robin White onsite with Ivi Projects in a week-long residency. Come and learn about the ngatu (barkcloth) process and talk to the artists.

**Date:** Tuesday 3 January – Sunday 8 January 2023, 11am–1pm daily.

Free admission.

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**Audio described curator's tour for blind and low vision visitors**

Join us for a Curator's tour led by Dr Sarah Farrar, Head of Curatorial and Learning, and audio described by Nicola Owen of Audio Described Aotearoa through *Robin White: Te Whanaketanga | Something is Happening Here*. The tour is limited to 15 people and is exclusively for blind and low vision visitors.

**Date:** Saturday 21 January 2023, 10.30am–12pm.

Free admission, booking essential.

**NZSL tour for deaf visitors**

Join us for an NZSL tour for deaf visitors through *Robin White: Te Whanaketanga | Something is Happening Here*. Led by deaf artist Abbie Twiss the tour is limited to 15 people. Twiss has worked as an artist, art teacher and interpreter in Melbourne and Aotearoa. Graduating from Elam School of Fine Arts, Twiss has regularly exhibited since 1994.

**Date:** Saturday 21 January 2023, 2pm–3.30pm.

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**For more information, images  
and interview requests contact:**

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