

## Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki announces the 2022 Michèle Whitecliffe Art Writing Prize

# MICHÈLE WHITECLIFFE

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## ART WRITING PRIZE

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki announces 'Freedom' as the theme of the Michèle Whitecliffe Art Writing Prize 2022.

Presenting writers with the opportunity to explore a topical and far-reaching right and privilege, the theme opens the way for this year's entrants to the Prize to explore freedom's meanings and expressions in the art of Aotearoa.

The Michèle Whitecliffe Art Writing Prize is aimed at encouraging high-quality writing about the art of Aotearoa and was developed in 2021 by Auckland Art Gallery and Michèle Whitecliffe, in memory of her late husband, Greg Whitecliffe, who was passionate about writing and seeing the arts celebrated in print.

Auckland Art Gallery Director Kirsten Lacy says that the role of a Gallery is to encourage critical thinking and support new voices. The annual Prize – along with this year's theme – provides a space for this.

'A Gallery's role is more than exhibitions and associated events. We have a responsibility to provide space for new voices and critical thinking and to act as a catalyst for art and ideas. The Prize is an excellent way to do this, and this year's theme can be interpreted in many ways,' says Lacy.

'The pandemic has had global implications, affecting our freedoms to move, socialise and travel. Freedom has never been more relevant – nationally and internationally – than in these current moments.'

The Prize's winner and runners-up will be chosen by this year's international judge, Chris Kraus. A writer and critic, Kraus has been described as 'one of our smartest and most original writers on contemporary art and culture' by *New York Times* art critic, Holland Cotter.

Kraus is a co-editor of the independent press *Semiotexte*, a former Guggenheim Fellow, and recipient of the College Art Association's Frank Jewett Mather Award in Art Criticism and a Warhol Foundation Art Writing grant. Kraus currently lives in Los Angeles and teaches writing at ArtCenter College of Design.

The winner will receive \$2500 and have their text published in the October issue of Auckland Art Gallery's magazine, *Art Toi*. The runners-up see their texts published on the Gallery's website.

Any submitted text must be a work of non-fiction between 1500 and 3500 words in length, which addresses the theme for that year and an element of the New Zealand visual arts, including painting, sculpture, carving, photography, printmaking, illustration, installation, weaving, ceramics and video/film.

Entry is open now and submissions must be received by Sunday 31 July 2022.

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## About the Prize:

Greg Whitecliffe (Ngāti Pikiao) (1954–2001) was an artist, educator and co-founder of Whitecliffe Art School (now Whitecliffe College of Arts and Design) in Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand, an accredited degree-granting private college. He pursued an active career that varied from professional development in higher education management at Harvard University to stone lithographic workshops in Switzerland. He qualified with a Bachelor of Arts, two Masters degrees, a post-graduate course at Harvard and was working towards a PhD up until he died in 2001.

In the last years of his life, Greg had commentaries on New Zealand contemporary art and art history published internationally. He was a member of the International Council of Fine Arts Deans (ICFAD) and was working towards establishing a purpose-built campus for Whitecliffe College of Arts and Design.

Michèle continued to run Whitecliffe College of Arts & Design until late 2018 when she sold the college to a new enterprise.

## About the judge:

Chris Kraus is a writer and critic. Her eight books include the novels *I Love Dick* (1997) and *Summer of Hate* (2012), the essay collections *Where Art Belongs* (2011) and *Social Practices* (2018) and the literary biography of Kathy Acker. *I Love Dick* was adapted as a television series in 2016, and the director Eleanor Bishop and actor Karin McCracken have adapted her novel *Aliens & Anorexia* as a stage play that will debut in New Zealand soon.

Kraus grew up partly in New Zealand, where she attended Victoria University of Wellington and worked at the Evening Post before moving to New York at age 21. In 1994 she returned to New Zealand to make the feature film *Gravity & Grace* featuring Jennifer Ludlam, Kristin Seth and Alan Brunton. Kraus is a co-editor of the independent press *Semiotexte*, founded by the late Sylvere Lotringer, alongside Hedi El Kholti. She is a former Guggenheim Fellow, and recipient of the College Art Association's Frank Jewett Mather Award in Art Criticism and a Warhol Foundation Art Writing grant.

*New York Times* art critic Holland Cotter has described her as 'one of our smartest and most original writers on contemporary art and culture'. She lives in Los Angeles and teaches writing at ArtCenter College of Design.

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