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Media Release
Thursday 21 January 2016

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Fiona Pardington, *Still Life with albatross feathers, pounamu and coral hearts* 2014, archival inkjet print, gesso and acrylic polymer on canvas. Courtesy of the artist and Starkwhite.

Pause for effect – *Fiona Pardington: A Beautiful Hesitation* comes to Auckland Art Gallery

The power and potency of photography is revealed in *Fiona Pardington: A Beautiful Hesitation* which opens at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki on Saturday 5 March.

A Beautiful Hesitation is the first comprehensive survey of works by artist Fiona Pardington, one of New Zealand's leading contemporary photographers.

Complex, rich and darkly romantic, the free exhibition spans 30 years of Pardington's practice in a collection of more than 100 photographs. It conveys key concerns that have shaped the artist's celebrated work.

Pardington uses the phrase 'a beautiful hesitation' to describe photography's power to pause time and transcend the conditions of the material world. Her practice breathes life into the objects she encounters.

Auckland Art Gallery Director Rhana Devenport says *A Beautiful Hesitation* will give visitors a deep insight into Pardington's arresting photography.

'This exquisite exhibition offers a unique opportunity to explore Fiona's multi-layered and fascinating body of work,' she says.

Pardington's early works, including intimate family portraits, through to her photographs of hei tiki (pendants), life casts and historical specimens from museum collections, and her notable still-life images are all shown in *A Beautiful Hesitation*.

The exhibition's curator Aaron Lister from City Gallery Wellington has divided the exhibition into four themes: Flesh, Becoming, A Language of Skulls and Still Life.

'The exhibition is divided thematically rather than chronologically to play on the ways that Fiona's work upsets and arrests the experience of time. No previous exhibition has attempted to work across her practice in this way,' he says.

Pardington's recent still life photographs include objects salvaged from beaches, riverbeds second-hand stores and the side of the road, all with deep personal and cultural meanings. This re-claiming of objects and images runs throughout her work

– the *One Night of Love* series re-presents photographs of female nudes taken from proof sheets destined for soft-core magazines and the medical suite series re-photographs images of disease from medical textbooks. In all of her works, the personal and political are forcefully intertwined.

‘This exhibition continues Auckland Art Gallery’s focus on in-depth projects by New Zealand contemporary artists,’ says Devenport.

A Beautiful Hesitation is an exhibition partnership between City Gallery Wellington and Auckland Art Gallery and in association with Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu. It will be accompanied by a book bringing together new and classic writings on the artist’s work, published by Victoria University Press.

Auckland Art Gallery is pleased to present *A Beautiful Hesitation* in association with Auckland Arts Festival.

(ends)

About the artist:

Fiona Pardington (b. 1961) is of Scottish (Clan Cameron of Erracht) and Māori (Kai Tahu, Kati Mamoe, Ngati Kahungunu) descent. She has a Doctorate in Fine Arts, University of Auckland. In 2011, the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery hosted her solo exhibition, *The Pressure of Sunlight Falling*. That year, Pardington became an Arts Foundation Laureate and completed a Laureate Artistic Creations Project with Musée du Quai Branly, Paris. Residencies include the Moët et Chandon Fellowship (Epernay, 1991–92), Frances Hodgkins Fellowship (Dunedin, 1996 and 1997) and Ngai Tahu Artist in Residence at the Otago Polytechnic (Dunedin, 2006). Pardington’s work has featured in many Auckland Art Gallery exhibitions, including *The Social Life of Things* 2015, *Whano Ke: Calibrating the modern and contemporary* 2015, *Toi Aotearoa New Zealand Art* 2013, *Partner Dance: Gifts from the Patrons of the Gallery* 2012, *Hei konei mai: We'll meet again* 2006, *Tei He Tiki* 2005, *Ka Kino To Pounamu He Pounamu Onamata your greenstone is awesome and it comes from a tradition* 2004 and *Self and Other* 2003. International shows include *Fragments of Empires Momentum* (Berlin, 2014), the Ukraine Biennale (2012) and the Biennale of Sydney (2010).

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Exhibition Details:

Fiona Pardington: A Beautiful Hesitation

**AUCKLAND
ART GALLERY
TOI O TĀMAKI**

When: Saturday 5 March to Sunday 19 June 2016
10am to 5pm daily

Where: Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki
Corner Kitchener and Wellesley Streets
Auckland, New Zealand

Admission: Free