

Media Advisory
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Auckland Art Gallery appoints new Head of Public Engagement from The Met, New York

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki is pleased to announce that Neal Stimler has been appointed as its inaugural Head of Public Engagement.

Stimler comes from more than a decade of professional service at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (The Met), most recently as Program Manager for Content Partnerships, to lead the newly created Public Engagement team at the Gallery.

The new team will provide greater emphasis on inter-disciplinary public programming, will refresh attention on learning, access and outreach initiatives, and will provide a framework for delivery of an integrated digital experience for audiences throughout the Gallery.

Gallery Director Rhana Devenport says she is thrilled to have appointed such a highly skilled and talented leader to help shape the Gallery's new focus on its public engagement strategy.

'Stimler describes himself as a creative strategist with experience in collaborative leadership, content management, metadata standards, product demonstration, project management, trend forecasting, user training and workflow design.'

'Stimler is highly proactive in the American museum community in the area of digital humanities, technologies and advocacy having consulted and published extensively. His proven track record in art museum leadership will point the Gallery's engagement team in a fresh, new direction with a particularly strong digital focus,' she says.

Among many accomplishments, Stimler project managed The Metropolitan Museum of Art's #MetOpenAccess initiative which launched in early 2017 and transformed access to the Museum's collection, making more than 375,000 images of artworks publicly available with Creative Commons Zero. Stimler also managed the development and delivery of The Met's content for major international collaborations with partners such as Google Cultural Institute, including *Bruegel/Unseen Masterpieces*, which launched in 2016. Stimler comes from a curatorial background, researching and cataloguing in the Department of Drawings and Prints.

The Gallery has also created two further new roles reporting to the Head of Public Engagement: Public Programmes Manager and Learning & Outreach Manager. These have been filled respectively by Johnny Hui, previously a Family and Early Years Programmer at Auckland War Memorial Museum, and Ioka Magale-Suamasi, who formerly led the Gallery's Outreach programme.

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