

Media Release
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New video series offers a Pacific perspective on the nude



Still from *Pacific Bodies* Episode 1, featuring Rosanna Raymond

A new video series *Pacific Bodies* offers an alternative perspective on the story of the nude as presented in *The Body Laid Bare: Masterpieces from Tate*, currently exhibited at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki.

Pacific Bodies is a collaborative project between Auckland Art Gallery and the British Council. Five videos present responses from ten contemporary artists of Pacific heritage who explore and discuss themes in *The Body Laid Bare*.

Auckland Art Gallery Director Rhana Devenport says this project aims to connect a wider audience with these inspiring artists, the breadth of art from Tate in the exhibition and the wider work of Auckland Art Gallery.

‘Generally speaking, *The Body Laid Bare* offers a Western view of the nude through art, from the 18th century onwards. Given that New Zealand possesses such a richly diverse population, we are conscious there are vastly different perspectives on the human form, so we have worked with these artists to speak from their experience,’ she says.

British Council Director of Arts Graham Sheffield says the *Pacific Bodies* series provides an excellent opportunity to engage with 10 New Zealand artists and share their rich variety of practices.

‘Art has a unique ability to help people understand each other and we’re excited to harness that through these wonderful videos,’ he says.

Artists taking part in the series include Rosanna Raymond, Ioane Ioane, Leilani Kake and Ema Tavola who are filmed together, Tanu Gago, and Tolovae Nanai Junior, Te Iwihoko Te Rangihirawea, Jimmy Veā, Michel Mulipola and Ali Cowley who are also filmed together.

The videos are being released throughout the duration of the exhibition. Rosanna Raymond's video response was the first made live to the public, and within three weeks has enjoyed more than 34,000 views on Facebook.

In Rosanna's interview she says the Pacific way of looking at the body was altered with the arrival of Westerners.

'The Pacific notion of the nude was completely framed through the west and it has completely altered our own ways of looking at our bodies,' she says.

'As I started to develop as an artist I started to push back at what I felt was a pale, stale, male environment that was not fully understanding that there were many other ways of looking at a body.'

'I hope that my work will keep reaching out and keep teaching, not just myself, but the people around me,' she says.

The videos can be seen at www.aucklandartgallery.com/bodylaidbare, the [British Council website](#) and on the Gallery's [YouTube channel](#).

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Exhibition details:

The Body Laid Bare: Masterpieces from Tate

When: Until Sunday 16 July 2017

10am – 5pm daily

Where: Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

Corner Kitchener and Wellesley Streets

Auckland, New Zealand

Pricing:

General admission: \$23

Concession: \$18

Children 12 and under: Free

Auckland Art Gallery Members: Free