

## Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki takes Māori art to the world with release of new virtual tour in English, simplified Chinese and te reo Māori



Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki today releases a multi-sensory and immersive virtual tour of *Toi Tū Toi Ora: Contemporary Māori Art* enabling people everywhere to enjoy highlights of the groundbreaking exhibition.

Using panoramic photography, 360-degree video and virtual reality software, the digital tour showcases the heart of one of the most significant exhibitions presented in Auckland Art Gallery's history.

Gallery Director Kirsten Lacy says the virtual tour offers people around New Zealand and across the world the opportunity to experience the exhibition in digital form.

'In a time when international tours for major exhibitions are not commonplace, virtual tours enable audiences to continue to experience art from afar. Auckland Art Gallery is leading the way with this experience, which makes *Toi Tū Toi Ora* accessible to anyone with a mobile phone or computer,' she says.

The opportunities for storytelling and learning provided by *Toi Tū Toi Ora: Contemporary Māori Art* are rich, nuanced and diverse, and are the primary catalyst for the virtual tour project.

'Audiences can discover in ultra-hi-res detail artworks that relate to the Māori creation narrative. Importantly, the project will keep the core of the physical exhibition alive as an experience long after the artworks have come down from the walls,' says Lacy.

*Toi Tū Toi Ora* reflects the bicultural nature of Aotearoa with te reo Māori and English-language content displayed throughout the virtual tour. It reveals to audiences around the world both the wairua (spirit) and the whakaako (teachings) of the Māori creation story as articulated in the work of contemporary Māori artists.

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The digital experience is also available in simplified Chinese text with Mandarin audio. By offering three language selections, the Gallery hopes the virtual tour will reflect and become accessible to the diverse communities of Tamaki Makaurau.

Options within the virtual experience allow users to select a curator tour with insights to the exhibition or to take a family tour that ensures the whole whānau can enjoy the experience, no matter where they are in the world.

Acting as a precursor to a visit to the full exhibition – open at the Gallery until Sunday 9 May – or as a post-visit memento, the virtual tour allows users to visit and re-visit artworks in their own time with the added benefits of audio guides, videos and high-res imagery. Virtual visitors can expect to find well-known, unknown and many more hidden details not normally visible to the naked eye.

The Gallery's virtual tour collaborators, Post Mag and Break the Fourth, were challenged with optimising the physical exhibition for an online experience. Supported by Keegan Fepulea'i of Post Mag, the in-house project team brought focus to the section of the physical exhibition in which the *Toi Tū Toi Ora*'s curatorial frame – the Māori creation narrative – unfolds.

'With the help of an external UX designer, Benek Lisefski, we have created an experience that mimics the feeling you get in the opening exhibition spaces, but with additional layers of insight and interpretation usually only available those walking through the Gallery with a curator,' says Keegan.

Find the digital tour at [virtual.aucklandartgallery.com](https://virtual.aucklandartgallery.com).

## Key Features

Available in three languages: English, te reo Māori and simplified Chinese with Mandarin audio

- Curator tour with audio guides
- Family tour that highlights works for tamariki
- Panoramic photography, 360-degree video and virtual reality software.

## About the exhibition

In the largest exhibition ever presented by Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, *Toi Tū Toi Ora: Contemporary Māori Art* offers insights to the development of Māori art from the 1950s to the present day. The first major exhibition of its kind in nearly 20 years, *Toi Tū Toi Ora* is informed by a Māori worldview, and includes more than 300 artworks exploring cultural histories, Māori knowledge, identity and place.

Spanning 70 years with work by 111 artists, *Toi Tū Toi Ora* presents both an aspiration and a challenge to realise a future in which contemporary Māori art continues to stand tall – toi tū – and healthy – toi ora – while reinforcing the wisdom and ideas that empower Māori and Indigenous ways of knowing.

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**Exhibition details**

*Toi Tū Toi Ora: Contemporary Māori Art*

**When:**

Saturday 5 December 2020 to  
Sunday 9 May 2021

10am–5pm daily

**Where:**

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

**Admission:**

FREE

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**For more information, high-res images  
and interview requests contact:**

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