

Te Uru Waitakere Contemporary Gallery

Exhibition and programme policy

Background

Lopdell House Society (trading as Te Uru Waitakere Contemporary Gallery) has a mission that states that we aim “to provide contemporary visual art and design experiences in Waitakere that inspire, engage and challenge. We recognise Maori as Tangata Whenua and foster the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi internally and externally to enhance and develop our programmes.” Recognising our key values of manaakitanga, innovation, collaboration, responsiveness, inclusiveness and sustainability, we aim to present a contemporary exhibition programme that reflects and strengthens the full diversity of cultural identities, interests and potential of our community.

Lopdell House Society is principally funded through the Waitakere Ranges Local Board of Auckland Council and is committed to working with the local board to help it meet the objectives of its annual and long-term plan, not only in the area of arts and culture but also with regard to objectives including; built and natural environment, particularly the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area; supporting communities through education activities at libraries, schools and public events; working in collaboration with local community groups and events; promoting sustainable living and working; and to integrate arts and culture into our everyday lives.

Te Uru is part of the Lopdell Precinct and works as part of a creative cluster with other operators in the precinct and area to complement and support their programmes, including the McCahon House Artist in Residence programme, the Titirangi Festival of Music, the Going West Books & Writers Festival, programming in the theatre and the activities of Upstairs Art Gallery. We support the vision of the Lopdell Precinct as a destination “regional arts and culture facility based in Titirangi and providing programmes and experiences for Titirangi, Waitakere Ranges, and Auckland communities.”

Exhibition priorities

Through the presentation of a diverse and stimulating range of exhibitions we hope to encourage dialogue, foster creativity and explore new ideas and modes of practice, including digital and interactive art. In doing so, we promote the value of creative practitioners as a key resource contributing to a successful and innovative city. We strive to present a balanced and relevant programme of curated contemporary exhibitions in a professional manner that engages and inspires both local and wider Auckland communities.

Te Uru is an institution locally rooted in West Auckland but globally minded. We have a distinctive West Auckland focus but a national and international perspective. Through our programmes, we create a world stage for art that is relevant to West Aucklanders, to put local art, artists and ideas in conversation and context with national and international developments in contemporary practice. As one of the largest facilities of its kind in the region, we are committed to offering an international-standard programme that will attract visitors to the local area from throughout the city, country and abroad.

Exhibitions and projects are encouraged that support significant artists living in, working from, or related to the Waitakere Ranges area, as well as the wider surrounding areas of West Auckland. Although not exclusively locally sourced, programmes will also respond to contexts, issues and interests pertinent to the Waitakere Ranges and West Auckland. Therefore, priority will be given to present projects that explore the following contexts:

- creative practice that engages with current discourses in contemporary art and related fields, demonstrating the best in national and international work.

- providing a voice for tangata whenua, particularly local iwi Te Kawerau a Maki, and working to share and celebrate culture and stories together, including the celebration of Matariki and the fostering of emerging Maori artists.
- exploring the kaupapa of 'Te Uru' as the wind from the west.
- promoting diversity and inclusivity in culture, gender and race, including celebrating those based in the local communities, as well as equal access.
- craft and design, recognising the rich history of ceramics, architecture and other related activities in the area, as well as the gallery's long-standing commitment to ceramics through the Portage Ceramic Awards and close association with iconic potter, Len Castle.
- projects (including national and international) that are informed by or respond to the local area's distinctive engagement in environmental, ecological and social activism.
- the creativity, independent spirit and alternative lifestyles that are characteristic of many who have actively chosen to live or work in the outlying suburbs of Auckland, often in small settlements amidst bush or beach settings.
- work that connects with the distinctive characteristics of the local area's built and natural environment.
- promoting the interests of McCahon House in French Bay, including profiling their residency artists.
- partnering with local groups to engage them with the process or presentation of a project that may activate local sites of significance.
- identifies Titirangi as an arts hub that also activates the surrounding region.
- exploring specific local histories, including the WW100 anniversary (West Auckland has the largest military cemetery in the Southern Hemisphere).

Selection procedure

The exhibition programme is developed and curated by Te Uru's Director and curatorial team, in consultation with management, education and public programmes staff. Exhibitions are generated either by invitation from Te Uru, or by formally submitted proposals. Proposals are accepted at any time from individuals, groups or touring exhibition organisers and are assessed by the team on their merits, relevance to our overall exhibition programme; and budgets. Proposals are prioritised on the basis of how well they fit our stated interests (or other relevant issues), and on the quality and profile of the work and artist. Exhibitions will also be developed in partnership with other organisations and, where possible, will be toured to or from other institutions. Generally, exhibitions are scheduled at least a year in advance.

Funding and Sponsorship

The gallery will seek external funding through governmental, civic or charitable funding bodies or through sponsorships as appropriate for specific exhibitions, publications or displays that require more than our standard exhibitions budget.

Adopted 19 June 2014