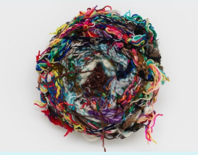
HUMcard



Notes from an artist

Kia ora koutou and welcome to the fourth **HUMcard** ***for 2021.*** *We're pleased to keep bringing you these special mailouts every couple of months, highlighting international projects featuring artists and arts practitioners from Aotearoa New Zealand. We hope you've been enjoying them.*

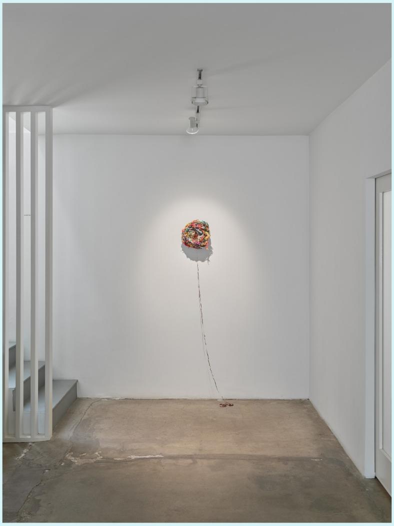
Our last HUMcard *featured Yota Ayaan and his project* Plant Data *at the Museum of Natural History in Porto, Portugal. For this edition, we're focussing on a project on the other side of the Atlantic: the group exhibition* **Dreaming, after all, is a form of planning.*****, at 1301PE in Los Angeles,*** *which includes New Zealand / Cook Islands-based artist* ***Ani O'Neill.***

Running from 17 July - 11 September 2021, the show brings together four artists from across the Pacific, combining formal experimentation, indigenous knowledge systems, as well as performative investigations into political issues such as value and economy.

To coincide with the last few weeks of Dreaming, after all*, Ani shares some thoughts on her work, looking back to its creation 20 years ago and recounting some of the events that have lead to its current iteration. Scroll down to read more!*

From Ani O'Neill
exhibiting at 1301PE in Los Angeles

Doodles / Rewound (2001 - 2021)

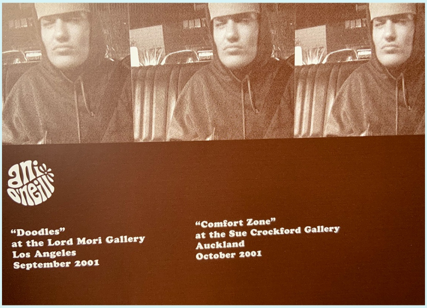


Doodles / Rewound (2001-2021), artefact from *Doodles (2001)*. Yarn, cassette tape. Installation view, *Dreaming, after all, is a form of planning.*, 1301PE, Los Angeles, 2021. All images courtesy of 1301PE, Los Angeles.

"My work *Doodles / Rewound* (2001 - 2021) is shown at 1301PE gallery alongside works by Rebecca Baumann, Yuk King Tan and Jonny Niesche, in *Dreaming, after all, is a form of planning*.

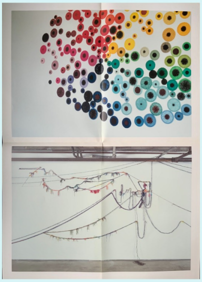
Doodles (2001), was originally a site-specific work made for the Lord Mori Gallery (aka The Happy Lion), which sat in Chung King Road, LA's Chinatown. Until this year it had been stored, laying dormant in my personal collection.

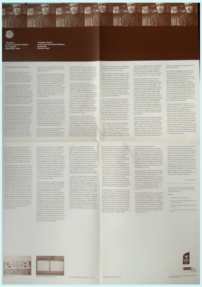
The opportunity to present work in LA came up in March of this year, through Starkwhite (AKL) and 1301PE (LA). When asked if I would like to participate, I knew it was the perfect space to show *Doodles* again. I also knew I would not travel to install it, and there was no way I could provide complex directions to hang the work as it had been seen in 2001. Instead, I made a time-lapse video re-winding up the work on a 'wool winder' to make a solid bundle of 'story-string' that could travel and punctuate space on any wall. It was highly condensed, but still held the memory of its previous life. This work had come full circle. Time-travel is real."


ani o'neill

"Doodles"
at the Lord Mori Gallery
Los Angeles
September 2001

"Comfort Zone"
at the Sue Crockford Gallery
Auckland
October 2001



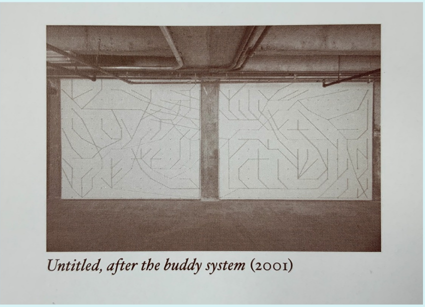


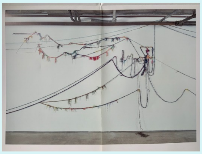
Top (#1): detail of *Doodles / Comfort Zone catalogue (2002)*; **bottom (#2 & #3):** two sides of the single-page catalogue: **Left, at top:** *Rainbow Country (2000)* exhibited at Sue Crockford Gallery in *Comfort Zone*, October 2001, Auckland, New Zealand; **left, at bottom:** *Doodles (2001)*, Lord Mori Gallery, 8 September 2001, Los Angeles, U.S.A; **right:** catalogue text by Gwynneth Porter, design by Warren Olds. Images courtesy of the artist.

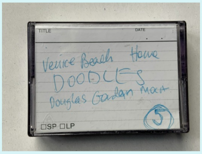
"The Lord Mori Gallery was created to show Australian and NZ artists in LA, and in 2001 I was invited by gallerist Stephen Mori to have a solo show alongside artist Susan Norrie. My work was made for the basement space, and Susan's work on the main floor above me. The opening was held on September 8, 2001.

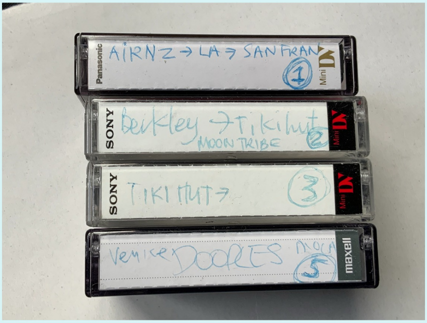
At the time I was 29 years old and had been making installations of crocheted circle 'paintings', beginning with *Cottage Industry* (1997), *There's No Place Like Home* (1998), *monoPoly* (1999), *Rainbow Country* (2000). I had also spent an intense three months working in *The Buddy System* (2000), my first major interactive crochet installation at the Auckland Art Gallery. I was looking forward to having a month in sunny California, a BIG O.E! I would make artwork that was less tense, more fun, and included an overseas adventure with a great friend.

Doodles (2001) was made in motion. Technically this was a working holiday, and my work began to take shape on the overnight flight from Auckland to LA. I started by unpicking my Air New Zealand blanket, knotting the lengths together, strand by strand. Once on the ground, I used wool I had packed in my luggage to begin to record the 'chain of events' in a long, crocheted continuous chain that I would add to each day for the duration of the two weeks leading up to the exhibition. My loose plan was to eventually make a big, woollen, wall drawing - a 'doodle' - in the gallery space."


Untitled, after the buddy system (2001)





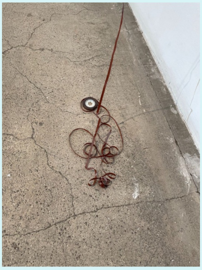


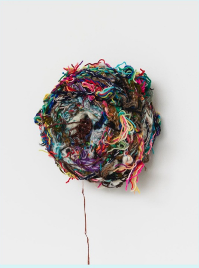
Top & middle L: details from *Doodles / Comfort Zone* catalogue (2002); **Middle R & bottom:** a set of mini DV tapes that were used to document the artist's trip to California in 2001. Images courtesy of the artist.

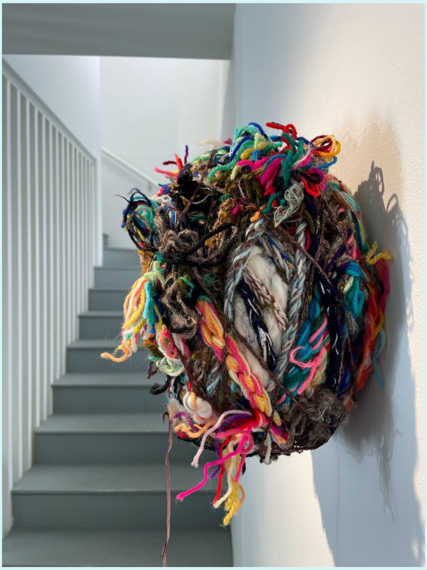
"Gwyneth Porter was my companion, friend and support person, driver, and writer. She had been to America before and was full of tips of who to see, what we could do, and importantly how to avoid trouble! I had also asked Gwynn to write 2001 words for a catalogue that would be produced partly as a record of this show. There were 2000 copies printed, and some are available to read in the gallery today.

My chain-stitch grew, using colour, texture, tufts and flourishes to describe the passing landscape, memorable meals, people we met, changes from one place and day to the next. We went to galleries and museums, visited homes, the mountains, beaches along winding highways, followed straight-line highways that ran alongside miles of cows. We visited San Francisco via Monterey, CAL Arts, partied at a full moon rave in the desert, and of course, went to Disneyland!

I installed the work with loud music the night before the opening, and it felt great. Opening night was in sync with the Chinatown galleries. It was festive, and I really felt that I had helped in a small way to light up the world by bringing everyone onto the same crusty base with a big dollop of humour. The trip had been fun. The final thread I'd incorporated into the chain was a reel of cassette tape that I'd found fluttering in the gutter. The remaining reel is intact, the recording we've never listened to. For me it represented both the past and the future. The perfect end. The everything unknown. The mystery of the future hit us on September 11. This party had come to a terrifying end. Tension held, tightly coiled. A little bit stuck. Frozen in the lights. What comes next? I had the clearest vision of NZ, protected in a bubble, as we waited, weeping in America for 5 more days, hoping for a plane to take us home."







Doodles / Rewound (2001-2021), artefact from *Doodles (2001)*. Yarn, cassette tape. Installation view, *Dreaming, after all, is a form of planning.*, 1301PE, Los Angeles, 2021. Images courtesy of 1301PE, Los Angeles.

"Fast-forward almost twenty years, 'Doodles' sits in LA as a compact artefact. It is bound to itself, a soft-reel of history and herstory. To send this artwork on an international art holiday along with other 'friends' from Starkwhite Gallery, to re-visit its birthplace, is pretty exciting, incredibly privileged, and like a successful lockdown or quarantine, worth the long wait. My artworks are having milestone birthdays, and it feels like this is Doodles' big party. I know that without me, my art lives on. We come back on ourselves even when we move forward.

I'd like to mention and thank some of the key people of the time and events in the story that helped inform and support this work: Stephen Mori and Susan Norrie, Tessa Laird, Giovanni Intra, Joyce Campbell, Shirley Tse, Chris Kraus and Sylvère Lotringer, Bernida Webb, Vincent Weiner. Thanks also to Brian Butler of 1301PE and Dominic Feuchs, John McCormack and Kelly Carmichael of Starkwhite gallery. Sue and Isha of the Crockford Gallery. Meitaki to the artists that I show alongside. Biggest thanks to the wonderful Gwyneth Porter (who wrote), and Warren Olds (who designed) the *Doodles (2001)* catalogue, and Manukau School of Visual Arts and Creative New Zealand for funding it."

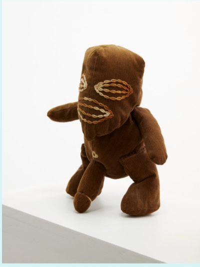
More on the artist

Ani O'Neill is an artist of Cook Island Māori (Ngati Makea, Ngati Te Tika) and

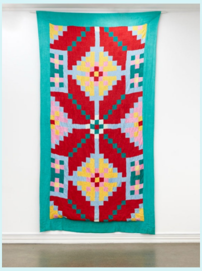
Irish descent. Her art practice is rooted in techniques and perspectives from both her traditional homeland of Rarotonga and her birthplace within the Pacific Diaspora of Auckland, New Zealand. The techniques that form the foundations of A. O'Neill's practice are inspired by her grandmother's traditions based on Cook Island material and ceremonial culture and span the use of craft, installation, object making and performance.

As a solo artist O'Neill has participated in numerous exhibitions and residencies nationally, and in 1997 received the Rita Angus Residency where she produced the work *Cottage Industry*, exhibited at City Gallery Wellington. Her work has been included in International exhibitions such as *Latitudes* at the Hôtel de Ville, Paris (2005), *Pasifika Styles* at the University of Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (2006), and *Le Folouga* at the Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts in Taiwan (2009). Her inclusion in such major exhibitions such as *The Nervous System* (1995), *Telecom Prospect* (2001), *Bottled Ocean* (1995), the Second Asia Pacific Triennial (1996), and the Biennale of Sydney (1998) contributed to the meteoric rise in her international profile and status as one of New Zealand's bright art talents.

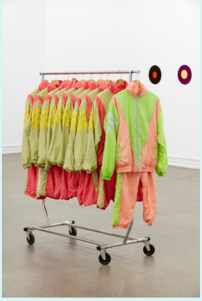
Learn more about the artist here...



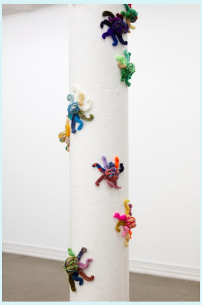
Ani O'Neill, *Tangaroa Tripdych*, 1992, corduroy embroidery thread, dacron stuffing. Courtesy Ani O'Neill & Starkwhite



Ani O'Neill, *Tivaevae (For A Bottled Ocean)*, 1994, towling, thread, dowl. Courtesy Ani O'Neill & Starkwhite



Ani O'Neill, *Squad Suits*, 2002, collection of found Shell tracksuits, rack, hangers. Courtesy Ani O'Neill & Starkwhite



Ani O'Neill, *Baby 'Eke*, 2005 (detail), acrylic and wool, velcro. Courtesy Ani O'Neill & Starkwhite

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Once again, we hope you've enjoyed this edition of HUMcard*. In a few weeks, we will be sending out our next exclusive look at an international project by an artist or curator from Aotearoa.*

Until then, we want to give a big thanks to all of you who continue to support HUM. We think what HUM does, sharing art and creativity within communities, is essential - now more than ever - and we wouldn't be able to keep doing what we do without your generosity and encouragement. So, thank you and ka kite anō!

HUM

Launched in 2016, Contemporary HUM is a forum generating critical discussion of Aotearoa New Zealand visual arts presented overseas. HUM is the only platform dedicated to the international activity of creative practitioners from New Zealand who are working or living abroad.

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Banner images: Entrance to 1301PE, Los Angeles with exhibition poster for *Dreaming, after all, is a form of planning; Doodles / Rewound (2001-2021)*, artefact from *Doodles (2001)* (detail), 1301PE, Los Angeles. Courtesy of the artist and 1301PE, Los Angeles.