Aotearoa Reviews its Official Participation in the Venice Biennale

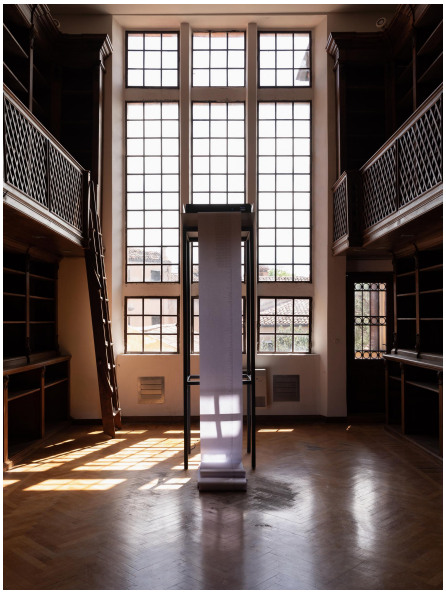
Special Feature with comments from the Arts Sector

by Anna Brown, Bruce Barber, Heather Galbraith, Hutch Wilco, James Goggin, Jennifer Flay, Jhana Millers, Julia Holderness, Laura Preston, Michael Stevenson, Ron Hanson, Sophie Thorn, Tessa Giblin, Tessa Laird

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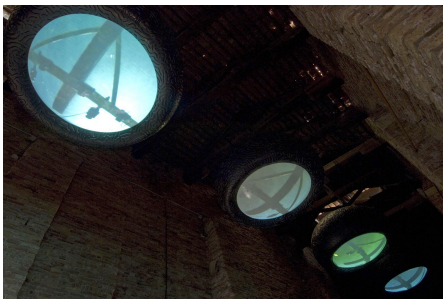
Judy Millar, *Giraffe – Bottle – Gun*, installation view, Venice, 2009. Photo: Judy Millar.



Dane Mitchell, *Post hoc*, Palazzina Canonica, Venice, 2019. Photo: David Straight.



Lisa Reihana, *in Pursuit of Venus* [*infected*], 2015–17. *Lisa Reihana: Emissaries*, installation view, Venice, 2017. Photo: Contemporary HUM.



Brett Graham and Rachael Rakena, *Aniwaniwa*, installation view, Venice, 2007.



Abseilers installing the New Zealand sign for the 2003 Venice Biennale. Courtesy Michael Stevenson.



Michael Stevenson, *This is the Trekka*, installation view, Venice, 2003. Courtesy of the artist.



Yuki Kihara, *Paradise Camp*, installation view, Venice Biennale Arte 2022. Photo: Luke Walker.



Michael Parekowhai, *Chapman's Homer*, 2011. Installation view, Venice, 2011. Photo: Michael Hall.

At HUM*, we are very concerned that the current review instigated by the Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa could result in a pause of Aotearoa New Zealand's 'official' presence at the Venice Biennale in 2024, or even cessation of participation in future years.*

In partnership with Art News New Zealand*'s substantial coverage in their Spring edition,* HUM *invited responses from New Zealanders on- and off-shore who have visited or been involved in 'New Zealand at Venice' projects, as artists, pavilion attendants, exhibition installers or designers, to enable insights into how involvement in (or experience of) our previous national pavilions and other projects mounted within Collateral Events have influenced people's own careers, and the profile of contemporary art from Aotearoa.*

Heather Galbraith, Chair of the Contemporary HUM Arts Trust

In June 2022, Creative New Zealand (CNZ) announced an independent review of our official presentation within La Biennale di Venezia. A review was last commissioned in 2006 and involved a delegation of Aotearoa arts professionals visiting the Biennale in 2007 (with New Zealand pavilion participation paused). While we

agree any review process needs to be rigorous, the idea of missing a year again in 2024 seems a serious lost opportunity.

Aotearoa has been participating since 2001 and we have been learning and iterating as we go, adapting to socio-political, cultural and environmental developments. The Biennale is a complicated space, with a long, rich, bumpy history that reflects aspects of the evolution of capital markets, and waves of colonisation. Yet it remains the largest gathering of contemporary art, with the broadest reach of geopolitical participation.

Covid-19 has forced major rethinks of how we achieve a healthier arts ecology within Aotearoa, as well as our thinking around international arts projects and investment, which is reflected in revised priorities for CNZ and Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture and Heritage, focusing strongly on resilience and regeneration in a domestic frame. This is a tough balance, but ultimately shouldn't be an either/or decision about onshore/offshore. Aotearoa will always be a relatively small-scale context for contemporary art practices. Global markets, audiences and collaborations are vital for growth, and for us to sustain important conversations and collaborations with international peers.

The raised awareness and connections formed through our participation in the Venice Biennale have fuelled and propelled careers of artists, curators, writers, commissioners and broader networks of creative professionals. There are regular critical provocations that rightly interrogate and offer alternative structures to a market-led art world, yet it is important to recognise that the Biennale still presents an extraordinary opportunity for seeing, meeting, connecting and exchanging for a wide range of professions, and to note that for many artists participating, their work operates within commodified markets, and these are systems that they are directly engaged with for their livelihood.

In order for Aotearoa to achieve sustained visibility within this context, ongoing participation is essential. As a seven-month-long exhibition, it *is* a significant undertaking to present in one of the more expensive cities in Europe.

A question frequently asked is are there appropriate returns on public-purse investment? In considering this, it is important to note that, throughout our participation, public funds have been joined by patronage (private and corporate), artist contributions (well beyond the allocation for the artist fee and production costs met by CNZ), gallerist contributions, and in-kind support from galleries and museums all around Aotearoa (through staff time, specialist skills, resources, etc.). Benefits also extend well beyond the participating artist in a given year, and keep playing out for years after participation. The intensification of international interest in the broader Aotearoa visual arts scene has been fuelled directly by participation in La Biennale di Venezia.

In terms of artist/project selection, different modes have been used, including an open call for artists and/or artist/curator teams, and a direct approach to an artist (both involving a selection panel of specialised arts-sector representatives, including artists, many of whom have been prior exhibitors at Venice). Now is the right time for a direct invitation, to maintain participation in 2024. There are artists with projects that are ambitious in scale and 'Venice ready', and organisations keen to partner.

> — Heather Galbraith, Chair of Contemporary HUM Arts Trust and Professor of Fine Art at Whiti o Rehua School of Art, Toi Rauwhārangi College of Creative Arts, Massey University, Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington. Co-curator of *Francis Upritchard: Save Yourself* and Deputy Commissioner for the New Zealand at Venice presentation in 2009 (including the partner project *Judy Millar: Giraffe Bottle Gun*), Deputy Commissioner for *Bill Culbert: Front Door Out Back* in 2013, and Commissioner for *Simon Denny: Secret Power* in 2015.



Tavola Aperta with Paulo Bruscky and Francis Upritchard, 11 May 2017, *Viva Arte Viva*, The 57th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia. Photo: Contemporary HUM.

Comments from the arts sector

Bruce Barber

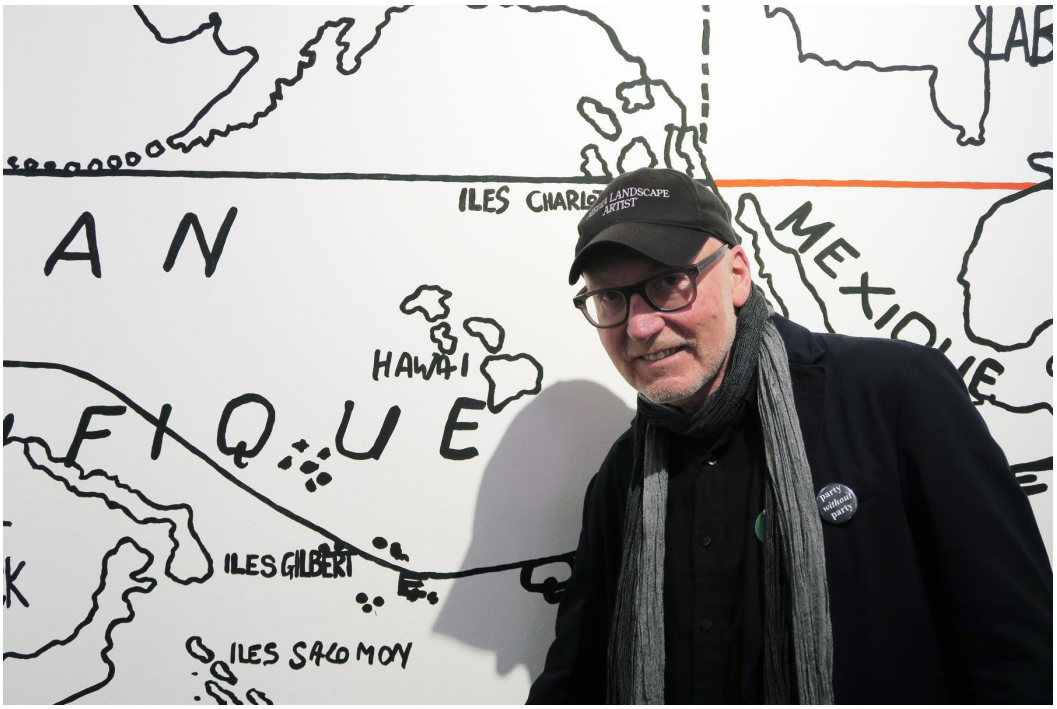
As an impressionable young Aotearoa artist I was fortunate to be invited to participate in the Paris (1977) and Sydney (1979) biennales. I had important early experiences and met several international artists and curators during these events, which provided me with evidence of subsequent career benefits (both visible and invisible) of such international exhibitions, which as we all know have not been without their active supporters and increasing numbers of detractors.

More recently, I was invited to be a participant in the European Cultural Centre's curated exhibition, running in parallel to the Venice Biennale in 2015 and 2017, which enabled me to subsequently receive invitations to other exhibitions, including the 2020 Florence Biennale for which I was awarded a video prize for a short piece titled *We Are not Terrorists*. It could be argued that many of these opportunities would not have been possible without the early invitation/nomination to represent my country of origin, Aotearoa, at an international Biennale. I have also been a member of a local Nova Scotia committee which has been investigating long-held opportunities to establish an international exhibition modelled on a biennale, triennale or documenta, which several other Canadian cities have already instituted.

I have been very pleased to witness Aotearoa's continued participation at the Venice Biennale and have been very fortunate to visit all of these exhibitions in person—one of the benefits of

living in Canada. These visits have enabled me to view and experience powerful installations by fellow Kiwi artists such as Michael Parekōwhai, Francis Upritchard, Judy Millar, et.al., Lisa Reihana and Simon Denny, and I look forward to seeing Aotearoa's representation this year with the work of Yuki Kihara in the company of artists representing many other countries.

— PhD, Professor Emeritus at NSCAD University, Halifax, Canada.



Anna Brown

The Venice Biennale is an extraordinary platform for contemporary artists from Aotearoa. It provides visibility and significant value to participating artists—however, these outcomes are not limited to the artists alone. It is also an immensely stimulating and career-boosting experience for all the associated members of the artistic entourage.

As a practising designer and academic, the commission to design the vernissage and book publication for *Bill Culbert: Front Door Out Back* in 2013 provided me with an international and national platform that has furthered my design career. The design process and engagement with the curatorial team provided me with

invaluable professional experience. Designing and overseeing the printing at Graphicom in Verona for one of the premier international art events of the world is a career highlight.

I was also fortunate enough to attend the Biennale in person and experience the transformational power of art. From the connections and varied perspectives through to the fierce political narratives and pure joy, the experience was remarkable and showed the deep and important work that artists do in our world. Let's keep these opportunities alive for the many benefits they bring to our artists and wider art community.

> — Anna Brown, Director of Toi Āria, and Professor of Design and Public Good, Toi Rauwhārangi College of Creative Arts, Massey University, Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington. Designer for the 2013 New Zealand Pavilion in Venice, *Bill Culbert: Front Door Out Back*.



Jennifer Flay

The absence of an official Aotearoa New Zealand participation at the Venice Biennale would be perceived as an incomprehensible sign of the lack of government support for contemporary creation

and effectively dismiss the possibility for Aotearoa artists of being considered alongside their peers.

In 2005 I was struck by a publication mysteriously titled *The New Zealand Altruism Review*. Part of the presentation of et al., it is still treasured and proudly conserved in my collection of artists' books and ephemera. The title still rings true, and I have faith that it always will.

Aotearoa's presence at the Venice Biennale, with artists including Simon Denny, Francis Upritchard and Lisa Reihana, has successfully revealed new talents and confirmed the significance of others, through memorable pavilions that rocked the art world during, and subsequent to, the event. It likewise honoured artists of historical weight such as Bill Culbert, who, like many, ultimately achieved recognition at the cost of life as an expatriate.

Having worked in the international art world in different capacities for 40 years, I can confidently state that the sporadic presence of Aotearoa artists in institutional exhibitions at home and overseas is insufficient to effectively promote their work on the global stage, as is their representation in a scattering of private galleries across the world. Indeed, the market context, essential to their survival and wellbeing, is difficult, if not impossible, to infiltrate if they are seen to have little or no backing from official sources. Physical distance and budgetary considerations should not mean that artists in Aotearoa are excluded from the international dialogue in the field of contemporary visual arts.

> — Jennifer Flay, former gallerist (1990 - 2003) and Director of FIAC (Foire Internationale d'Art Contemporain, Paris) from 2003 to 2021.



Tessa Giblin

Of course Aotearoa New Zealand should continue to be brilliant in Venice—but this review should happen. We need to keep evaluating, asking ourselves whether we're making the right choices for the right contexts, and always considering how we're taking the public at home on that journey with us. Even though it is easier to work with a known known—and certainly to present that through the press to the public—the dynamic, risk-taking, edgy, intelligent and enormously resourceful domain of contemporary art is not always a known quantity, which New Zealand at Venice must continue to seek out and value.

Looking back (and having moved away and represented another country at Venice) I can still remember the incredible impact that et al. had back in 2005—when I was honoured with the job of looking after the exhibition for a few months as a fledgling curator.

To me it is still unsurpassed as a pavilion—and yet, what an uproar it created in Aotearoa, the effects of which can still be felt. This is where we need to evolve—stay with the trouble, believe in artists' visions, but learn from our failed press approaches, briefing packages, cultural engagement strategies. And perhaps don't try to achieve every cultural goal at one Biennale.

— Professor Tessa Giblin, Director, Talbot Rice Gallery, University of Edinburgh, Scotland. Exhibition attendant at the 2005 New Zealand Pavilion in Venice, *et al.: the fundamental practice*. Commissioner and Curator of the 2017 Pavilion of Ireland in Venice, *Jesse Jones: Tremble Tremble*.



James Goggin

I was excited and honoured to develop the visual identity for New Zealand at Venice in 2009, featuring the artists Francis Upritchard and Judy Millar, in collaboration with CNZ and curatorial colleagues. It was a joy to help draw attention to Aotearoa NZ artists and their work in the crowded biennale context and also online. I'm deliberately saying "Aotearoa NZ artists" in a broad

sense, meaning beyond just the two artists chosen to represent this country. Because no matter how small or humble or selective our country's presence is, its participation acts like an arrow, simultaneously drawing attention to other Aotearoa artists, and the nation's art scenes, cultural productions and critical debates. It makes people stop and think about our islands in the southwest Pacific and our people.

Physical presence is very important, with the crucial responsibility for all levels of participant to bring more than just their own work with them (their knowledge, their community, their colleagues), and to then bring more than just themselves back from Venice (connections, reports on other artists, works, nations, communities, ideas, approaches) and to share, act on and disseminate these experiences locally (and then again, back out into the world—in a cycle).

Onsite presence in Venice could be humble, agile and inventive, if needed. Publishing can be approached in equally resourceful ways, perhaps digital first, with print-on-demand or small-edition print versions for various situations. Different approaches can reach different (and sometimes, usefully, overlapping) audiences. Ideally, the work shown in Venice can also be shown in Aotearoa too, to make the experience more accessible.

> — James Goggin, Founder and Creative Director, Practise, Tāmaki Makaurau. Designer for New Zealand at Venice, 2009.



Ron Hanson

I've never been to the Venice Biennale but writing about et al.'s Venice representation in 2005 was a big deal for us. It's a crystalising event that can significantly lift an artist's profile and significantly expand a country's art networks. For Aotearoa New Zealand to maximise its return on investment it really needs to stay the course. The benefits build from a consistent engagement. Venice is a unique opportunity for a country to put its artists on a global stage. I really hope Aotearoa continues to have a pavilion at every Venice Biennale.

— Ron Hanson, Editor, *White Fungus*, Taichung City, Taiwan.



Julia Holderness

In 2009, I was in Venice for six weeks as a venue attendant for *Fran cis Upritchard: Save Yourself* and *Judy Millar: Giraffe-Bottle-Gun*. This experience helped me to scope out my various modes of creative practice: writing, research and exhibition making. I remember the large visitor numbers; a stream of curious art lovers from all over the world. They were keen to engage in conversations about the work, the artists, Aotearoa and our recent history at the Biennale.

As well as managing the day-to-day flow of visitors across the two venues, a palazzo overlooking the Grand Canal and the circular church La Maddalena, we blogged about the experience on CNZ's New Zealand at Venice website. I enjoyed this role of 'dispatch', the opportunity to shape my thoughts and images into reflections on what it meant for Aotearoa to have a presence at this global event. As well as chatting to visitors in Venice, I felt I could share thoughts with those back home. I posted captioned pictures of the diverse audiences, wrote about the glamour and clamour of the vernissage, Venetian food and drink, new ideas for marketing at City Gallery Wellington (which was my day job at the time), other exhibitions and national pavilions, meeting venue attendants from

other countries. For CNZ, it was a way they could offer a platform for a range of perspectives, and offer insights into the daily life of the pavilions and their visitors, and for this content to reach broad audiences.

> — Dr Julia Holderness, artist and researcher, Ōtautahi Christchurch. Exhibition attendant at the 2009 New Zealand Pavilion in Venice, *Francis Upritchard: Save Yourself* and *Judy Millar: Giraffe-Bottle-Gun*.



Tessa Laird

I have only been to the Venice Biennale once—because I believe in supporting local and regional, because Europe gets so much airtime in the cultural imaginary of the global contemporary art world, and because of the carbon emissions such trips entail.

However, I did go in 2017, the year that the New Zealand Pavilion featured Lisa Reihana's *in Pursuit of Venus* [*Infected*]. I have never been so proud to see Aotearoa New Zealand on the world stage as at that moment. It was one of the best Pavilions by far, I had no hesitancy in recommending it to everyone I met while in Venice. I

also witnessed an overwhelmingly positive reception from every viewer I observed, and even today, years later, it comes up as a Venice highlight with multiple people. This was such an important work to be seen in the heart of Europe, by an international audience. All the money and all the personnel that had made it happen were clearly so worth it. Probably not every New Zealand Pavilion will be as successful, or as brilliant, as Reihana's, but I do believe it's important that we keep showing up, kanohi ki te kanohi, to the global art world at Venice.

> — Dr Tessa Laird, Lecturer in Critical and Theoretical Studies, School of Art, Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne, Australia.

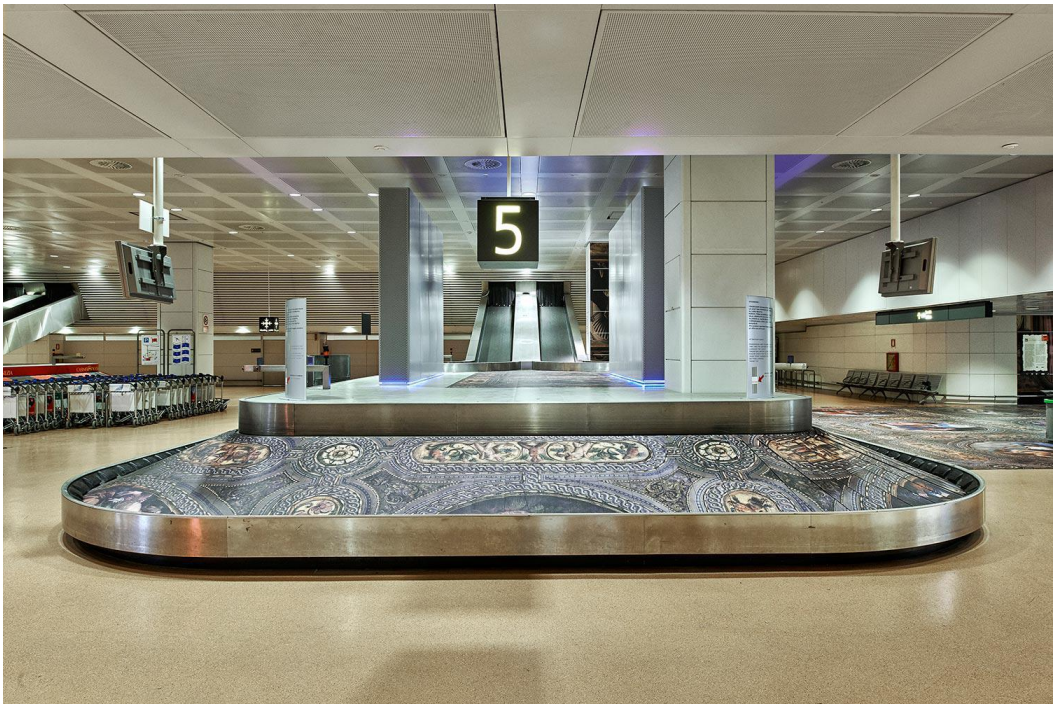


Jhana Millers

It is important for artists living and working in Aotearoa to have opportunities to exhibit overseas, at events like the Venice Biennale, and be seen to be operating on a global level, alongside artists from Australia, the USA, Europe, etc. Our artists make work that is of an equal quality and relevance to that showing and

selling in the large international institutions and fetching international art-market prices. Venice offers our artists an opportunity to enter into this arena that might otherwise not be available to them. I believe that our presentation at Venice should focus more on supporting artists living within Aotearoa, who contribute to our local arts ecosystem and who are already faced with the difficulties inherent in living in such an isolated part of the world. It's important for artists to know that it is possible to have international success, and opportunities, while basing themselves in Aotearoa.

> — Jhana Millers, owner of Jhana Millers Gallery, Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington. Exhibition attendant at the 2015 New Zealand Pavilion in Venice, *Simon Denny: Secret Power*.



Laura Preston

It has been many years since I have lived in Aotearoa New Zealand and although I have occasionally visited, it is different, of course, to living in the place and understanding in an embodied sense what is necessary, what the community needs.

Over the days of lockdown, I was part of the online art collective Town Hall, initiated by gallerist Sarah Hopkinson. It was a supportive, intergenerational conversation. What I learned from the experience is that my position, living and working from Germany, from Europe, is not so relevant to the conversation about art and its community in Aotearoa, where the discussion is already very rich and dynamic, and has been for a long time. This is not to be weary of an isolation of ideas, but it is an appreciation of the complexity and the problematics of internationalism, such as the Venice Biennale founded on colonial interests, carried forth as a front for the art market.

And yet, paradoxically, I believe it is important for artists to participate in such exhibitions of considered world-stage excellence and elitism. Why? Because other artists present there, and artists and cultural workers are an important audience; they come to be inspired, together and alone they think critically about art and its potential. So to say, that despite the undeniable expectations on the representative, there is still space for art in Venice.

It is important to take a pause and reassess from time to time, but without such continual doubt. My suggestion for the next iteration would be to invest in a 'pavilion' for Aotearoa's ongoing contribution. This could be considered quite laterally. It could be, for example—and this is where I do bring in what I have learned from living here—modelled on a kunstverein, intelligently managed and politically determined by artists: an artist collective that would truly be inclusive, collaborative, with room to evolve; trusted and financially well-supported with artist fees; and exhibiting works confident in their own knowledge systems and visual languages.

— Laura Preston, art writer and editor, Berlin, Germany. Curatorial assistant of the 2007 German Pavilion in Venice and part of the editorial team of *Speculation*, a book as pavilion for New Zealand's presence that same year.



Michael Stevenson

Venice is a challenging space to operate in but it's also the only large global stage structured around national representation, and so in terms of statecraft, what alternatives are there? Nowhere else can Aotearoa New Zealand couple with such a broad spectrum of the industry and engage this level of experience, exposure and maturity.

Since its inception in 2001, New Zealand at Venice has had a distinct long-term positive impact for the artists represented—including myself in 2003—and for other expertise: curatorial, logistics, project management, exhibition management, etc.

The review of our participation in Venice is therefore a critical moment to consider the broader picture of artistic production. Since 2001 there's been an enormous uptick in the visibility of Aotearoa practitioners and Aotearoa art in general. Venice is not the only factor in this equation but it plays an outsized role and so, when measuring the impact and financial commitment, its 'multiplier effect' needs to be recognised.

Looking forward, there's of course no such thing as automatic branding for success, but we should by now work from a position of experience and plan for the longer term—maintain presence and develop a sustainable delivery model. It may be useful to look to

other countries, such as Lithuania, for example, who have successfully managed their pavilion off-site from the main Biennale venues over multiple presentations.

— Michael Stevenson, artist, Berlin, Germany. His project *This Is the Trekka* was presented in the 2003 New Zealand Pavilion in Venice.



Sophie Thorn

Without the participation of Aotearoa New Zealand in the Venice Biennale I wouldn't be where I am today. It has shaped my career. I wrote my MA thesis on a work I saw at the 52nd Biennale. For eight wonderful weeks of the 56th Biennale I worked there as an attendant. I visited in 2007, 2009, 2011, 2015 and 2017. Venice is a magnet. It is sinking, it has its own slow time. Simple things are more difficult than they should be, and inventive solutions are found. The internet jams daily, then comes back as crowds vacate in the evening. There is something about the place that resonates with the Aotearoa psyche. Working on *Simon Denny: Secret Power* was electrifying. I stood in a room painted by Titian, Tintoretto and Veronese, and spoke to people about contemporary art, and about Aotearoa. Tens of thousands came through the exhibition while I was there; Hito Steyerl brought her class back twice; the patrons of New York's New Museum came late for a guided tour. I know I will return to Venice, to the Biennale, and I hope I will find our people and our presence there, too.

— Sophie Thorn, Curator Collections, Te Pātaka Toi Adam Art Gallery, Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington.



Hutch Wilco

I've been involved in the New Zealand Pavilion at the Venice Biennale since 2009, either working to bring artwork back to Aotearoa or working in Venice on *Bill Culbert: Front Door Out Back* in 2013.

There's something about actually being in Venice that cannot be captured in a summative evaluation. Generally, reports focus on two aspects: the project and visitation—numbers through the door being used as evidence of European audiences' interest when reporting to the government.

Less time, however, is spent following up on the impact on those who have had the opportunity to work on one of our Venice projects, or the ripples that ensue through their careers and the careers of those they touch. My time in Venice connected me to other venue workers, curators, project managers, and artists from across the globe, resulting in residencies, exhibitions, projects and friendships.

The experience of working in Venice propelled me to seek other international opportunities, firstly returning to Venice in 2015 to work on several collateral events, including the Pavilion of San Marino, and eventually, in 2016, to take up the directorship of one of Shanghai's leading local commercial galleries. This in turn led to seven years working across China and founding my own exhibition development company which resulted in numerous Aotearoa artists exhibiting or undertaking residencies there: Veronica Green at Cospace Shanghai and Richard Stratton in Dehua, in 2016; Jess Johnson and Simon Ward, and Lisa Reihana at Hubei Museum of Art, and Seung Yul Oh in Shanghai, in 2017; John Reynolds in Wenzhou, in 2019; Lisa Reihana, Christopher Ulutupu, Jasmine Togo-Brisby, Robert George, Lucy Aukafolau, Cathy Carter, Gavin Hipkins and Lara Lindsay-Parker across two exhibitions at the Shanghai Duolun Museum of Modern Art, in 2020 and 2021.

While the impact of the Venice Biennale on the selected artists cannot be overstated, it is equally profound for the careers of arts workers who have supported Aotearoa's contribution. Several are now managers and curators, project managers and registrars, at

some of the country's leading arts institutions, while others are now leading artists and writers internationally. We are the future of the arts that CNZ and our Venice participation were designed to foster, the impact of which is yet to be measured.

— Hutch Wilco, curator, writer, artist and project manager, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. Attendant at the 2013 New Zealand Pavilion in Venice, *Bill Culbert: Front Door Out Back*.



Biographies



Anna Brown is the founder and research lead of Toi Āria: Design for Public Good in the College of Creative Arts. The team at Toi Āria believe that design has a role to play in delivering public good and are interested in how conversations and community engagement can drive social change. Their impact research seeks to connect organisations, government and communities with the views and needs of the 'people most affected'.

Anna is a Principal Investigator at Te Punaha Mātatini, a Centre of Research Excellence hosted by the University of Auckland, an Associate Investigator at QuakeCore, and Special Advisor (Research) to the Digital Council for Aotearoa.

Anna is an award-winning practicing designer. She has completed commissions nationally and internationally with visual artists, curators, editors and musicians. She is chair of Massey University Press and enjoys supervising postgraduate students across the MDes, MFA and PhD programmes.



Bruce Barber is an interdisciplinary media artist, cultural historian and curator whose research and writing explores the representation of art, artists and art history in film and television and literature, performance art, public and littoral art. He is best known for his performance work, neo-conceptual reading and writing rooms, Squat projects and his theoretical writing and practice with littoral art, cultural intervention and other relational art practices.

Born in New Zealand, Barber is based in Canada where he teaches courses in media arts and film history at NSCAD University. He holds a BFA (1973), and MFA in Sculpture and Art History from Auckland University (1975); an MFA (Intermedia), NSCAD (1978), and PhD (2005), Media and Communications, European Graduate School Leuk Stadt, Switzerland.

Barber's interdisciplinary artwork has been exhibited internationally at the Paris Biennale, Sydney Biennale, 49th Parallel Gallery, the New Museum of Contemporary Art, the Whatcom Museum, Walter Phillips Gallery, London Regional Gallery, Auckland City Art Gallery, National Gallery of N.Z., Casula Powerhouse, Te Tuhi Gallery, Artspace, Sydney and Auckland and is represented in various private and public collections. Barber's interdisciplinary art practice is documented in the publications Reading Rooms and Bruce Barber Work 1970-2008.



Heather Galbraith is a curator, writer and art educator. She is a Professor of Fine Art at Whiti o Rehua School of Art, Toi Rauwharangi College of Creative Arts, Massey University in Wellington. She was recently Managing Curator for SCAPE Public Art in Ōtautahi, Christchurch for three iterations (of a 6-week art in public space season) in 2016, 2017 and 2018. She was commissioner for the 2015 NZ pavilion at the Venice Biennale, *Simon Denny: Secret Power*, deputy commissioner for *Bill Culbert: Front Door Out Back*, in 2013, and co-curator for *Francis Upritchard: Save Yourself*, and deputy commissioner in 2009. Heather has a BFA from Elam School of Fine Arts, University of Auckland and an MA in Curating and Arts Administration from Goldsmith's College, London. She worked for seven years as Exhibitions Organiser at Camden Arts Centre, London. Currently she supervises Masters and PhD candidates at Massey University, writes about art, undertakes curatorial projects and commissions and is Mum to a very active young daughter.



Hutch Wilco is a curator, writer, artist and project manager, currently based at Auckland War Memorial Museum, Tāmaki Makaurau. Wilco lived and worked in Shanghai 2016-2022, was previously a project manager with the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, and has worked on several projects for the Venice Biennale since 2013.



James Goggin is a designer and educator. He is the founder and creative director of Practise, an international graphic design practice in Tāmaki Makaurau. Practise designed the graphic identity, marketing collateral, and website for NZ at Venice's 2009 presentation.



Born in Auckland, Jennifer Flay studied Art History and French before moving to France in 1980, where she worked in several galleries (Galerie Catherine Issert, Daniel Templon et Ghislaine Hussenot). In 1990, she opened the Galerie Jennifer Flay (1990-2003) representing artists Claude Closky, John Currin, Willie Doherty, Michel François, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Karen Kilimnik, Sean Landers, Liz Larner, Zoe Leonard, Christian Marclay, Rei Naito, Anselm Reyle and Xavier Veilhan. As a gallerist, Jennifer Flay also works as an editor, publishing books that became major references, such as *Christian Boltanski, Catalogue – Books*, *Printed Matter*, *Ephemera – 1966-1991*, in 1992.

In 2003, she was invited to become the Artistic Director of FIAC, the international contemporary art fair of Paris, then General Director of FIAC from 2010 until 2021, leading major restructures and new developments such as the addition of a section for emerging galleries and another for modern and contemporary design, as well as projects off-site, including monumental presentations in renown public sites of Paris. From its major difficulties in 2003, FIAC became known as one of the most prestigious events of its kind in the world, attracting major galleries from over 30 countries at its peak.

Jennifer Flay received several French distinctions, including the Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur in 2014. In March 2023, she will begin a new role as President of the Consultation Committee for Paris + by Art Basel.



Jhana Millers is the owner of Jhana Millers Gallery, which opened in July 2018 in Pōneke, Te Whanganui-a-Tara, Wellington and works with emerging and mid-late career artists from around Aotearoa and Australia. When working as an artist, Jhana exhibited nationally and internationally, including in Australia, Munich and New York. Jhana has a range of experience in management, curation and administration of galleries and arts-related projects, and recently helped organise the Face to Face Portrait Festival and Fired Up Festival of Ceramics. Before starting Jhana Millers Gallery, Jhana worked at Toi Rauwhārangi Massey University College of Creative Arts, Wellington, managed the non-profit gallery 30upstairs and worked at the Wellington Sculpture Trust, running projects and events such as Parking Day Wellington. Jhana has been on the Board of Enjoy Gallery and was a founding member of the artist run space, The See Here. Jhana worked as an exhibition attendant at the 2015 Venice Biennale on Simon Denny's project Secret Power.



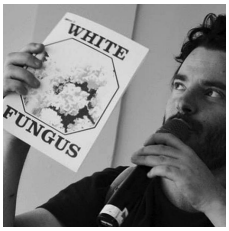
Julia Holderness has just completed a Visual Arts PhD at AUT University. Titled *Ever Present Archiving: methodologies for art histories through invention, fabrication and social practice*, Julia explores archives and their construction of art-historical narratives. Her practice and outputs are often collaborative and she works alongside both historic and current artists. She exhibits nationally with recent exhibitions presented at Sanderson Contemporary, The National and Dunedin Public Art Gallery.



Laura Preston is an art writer and editor from Aotearoa New Zealand, who lives in Berlin. Among other projects, she is writing her doctorate with Sabeth Buchmann at the Institute of Art Theory and Cultural Studies, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. An associate editor of documenta 14, she lived in Athens from spring 2016 to autumn 2017. Her role as the inaugural curator-at-large for the Adam Art Gallery Te Pātaka Toi, Victoria University of Wellington from 2013–15 followed on from her time as in-house curator from 2008–12. In 2012, Preston was a guest curator at Portikus, Frankfurt am Main. Her edited books include the ongoing series *Next Spring: An Occasional Series of Reviews* (Atlas Projectos, Berlin / Adam Art Gallery Te Pātaka Toi, 2014–).



Michael Stevenson is a New Zealand artist born in 1964, who has been living and working in Berlin since 2000. In 2002 he was awarded the New Zealand residency programme at the Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin and in 2006 he was the Capp St. resident artist at the Wattis Institute CCA in San Francisco. In 2003 he was selected to represent New Zealand at the Venice Biennale. In 2005 he was awarded a work grant by the Senatsverwaltung für Wissenschaft, Forschung und Kultur, Berlin. Since 2011 he has undertaken a full-time teaching professorship at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Nürnberg.



Ron Hanson is a writer and the founding editor of the international arts magazine *White Fungus*. Hanson founded the publication in 2004 with his brother Mark in Wellington, New Zealand. Since 2009, *White Fungus* has been based in Taichung City, Taiwan. In 2017, the Hansons received the inaugural Special Achievement Award for Contribution to the New Zealand-Taiwan Relationship at the ANZCHAM Business Awards in Taipei.



Sophie Thorn holds a Master of Arts in Art History and Theory from the University of Canterbury and a Diploma in Law and Collections Management through the London Institute of Art Law. She studied Heritage Materials Science through the Physical Sciences department at Te Herenga Waka-–Victoria University of Wellington and at the Chemical Institute of Technology in Prague, Czech Republic. She has held positions at the Canterbury Museum, Experience Wellington, and Te Manawa Museums Trust and has been Curator Collections at Te Pātaka Toi Adam Art Gallery, Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University Wellington since 2014.



Tessa Giblin is Director of Talbot Rice Gallery at the University of Edinburgh, a position she assumed in November 2016. She is also Commissioner and Curator of Ireland at the Venice Biennale 2017, with the artist Jesse Jones. From 2006-2016 Giblin was Curator of Visual Arts at Project Arts Centre, Dublin, where she curated and led the visual arts program within a busy multidisciplinary arts centre, consisting of two theatres and a gallery. At Project Arts Centre she curated numerous solo and group exhibitions, including *Riddle of the Burial Grounds* which toured to Extra City Kunsthal, Antwerp in 2016, and she made commissioning new work a hallmark of her exhibitions. In 2015 she was Guest Curator of the steirischer herbst festival exhibition in Graz, Austria, where she presented the group exhibition *Hall of Half-Life* over four venues. Giblin was raised in Christchurch, New Zealand, where she attended the Canterbury University School of Fine Arts, and began her curatorial formation through the network of artist-run spaces across Aotearoa. She lives and works in Edinburgh with her family.



Tessa Laird is a Pākehā writer and artist and Lecturer in Critical and Theoretical Studies at VCA Art, Victorian College of the Arts, Faculty of Fine Arts and Music, University of Melbourne. Tessa was an art critic in New Zealand for over twenty years, writing for numerous magazines, journals, and catalogues and editing *Monica Reviews Art and Log Illustrated*. Her books include fictocritical responses to colour: *A Rainbow Reader* (Clouds, 2013), and a cultural history of bats: *Bat* (Reaktion, 2018). She was the editor of *Art + Australia Online* from 2016-2019, and in 2021 she edited a special issue of the *Art + Australia* journal with the theme "Multinaturalism".

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