



# te tuhi

Summer 2018-19  
Exhibitions and Events

Free Entry



Christina Pataialii

*Two minutes to midnight*, 2018

acrylic, house paint, spray paint, and charcoal on drop sheet  
courtesy of the artist

IRIS FISHER GALLERY

## Christina Pataialii: Solid gold

1 November 2018–10 March 2019

A consistent backdrop to Christina Pataialii's formative years in working-class West Auckland, Solid Gold radio station delivered unforgettable hits of the 1950s to the 1970s, New Zealand's economic golden era. However, the radio catalogue was largely drawn from the United States, bearing with it ideological references both to romance and to the civil rights struggle active at the time on the other side of the Pacific Ocean.

It might be due to such early sonic experiences that Pataialii's approach to painting suggests a methodology close to DJing. Sampling from a rich set of historical and contemporary references, her paintings seamlessly connect time-space and collective-personal memory, resisting definitions. Likewise, because of her use of ordinary household materials and large formats, her paintings invite a physical relationship that echoes the experience of public space where the eye and body engage with mass-media images. Thus, her works might seem akin to street art, but, nestling on the canvas, they render a new voice to traditions of painting and the

politics of representation. The current exhibition of site-specific and canvas-based works at Te Tuhi expands Pataialii's visual language and repertoire.

### **codified imaginary**

Pataialii's palette is both exuberant and restrained. Colour attracts the eye, but unsettles the viewer with unexpected imagery: Bruce Lee's ghost hovers over her black paintings, for example, a decolonial echo freshly out of the global Kung Fu cult. Uncanny fragments of bodies, buildings and landscapes populate the surfaces of the works with codified iconography — as well as Lee, the tiger and the imperial eagle act as both pop culture and political subtexts. Quoting Stuart Hall, the artist proposes that we “go inside the image or go inside the stereotype and use it against itself”, or, in other words, she exposes and destabilises the hierarchy of the image.

To some of us, the forms on the black paintings may connect with Chicano velvet paintings from the American side of the Pacific, but these paintings are more than just political gestures – Pataialii's embrace of the particular visual play of light and shadow in the black mink blankets also pays homage to Ralph Hotere's *Black Paintings*.

### **sound bites**

The works make us ponder the physicality of music, and the experience we intuitively accept of its presence in space – as if sound leaked through the seams, out of the rhythmic patterns that flow from canvas to wall and back to unstretched drop sheets, like muffled radio frequencies. This relation to time and movement could also recall abstract expressionism; but, while acknowledging the legacy of action painting, Pataialii shies away from the masculine overtones of that movement and the weight of western art history. In response to the archetypal modern artist appropriating indigenous (aka 'primitive') art, borrowing from modernism here becomes a trick of reversed anthropology. Politicised and humorous at once, free gestures such as these dismantle the restrictions held around all traditions.

### **no more cowboys and indians**

In relation to the dichotomies imposed by western narratives of culture, the artist navigates the confines of popular and academic painting styles, taking a fluid position with uncompromising freedom and rigour. The intense fragmentation of her images echoes our perception of the past according to the narratives of power: either glorious or tragic, depending on which side of the socio-economic fence we stand. Similarly, identity is for Pataialii a collective notion occupying most of her field of vision, and including the ebbs and flows of diaspora that run through her. Concerned with the virus of separatism spreading around the world and the power structures contained in media representation and in any monolithic version of history, she embodies the words of Chimamanda Adichie when addressing “the danger of a single story”.

Gabriela Salgado, Artistic Director, Te Tuhi



**Deborah Rundle**  
*Optimism of the Will*,  
2018 (install view)  
two fluorescent tubes,  
battens, vinyl cut text  
courtesy of the artist

BEV SMAILL GALLERY & GALLERY ONE

## Deborah Rundle: Are We Not Ready?

1 December 2018–10 March 2019

Expanding upon research undertaken during her 2018 Wallace New Zealand Residency at The British School at Rome, and presented alongside new work, *Are We Not Ready?* is a solo exhibition by Deborah Rundle that draws upon the *Prison Notebooks* of Italian neo-Marxist Antonio Gramsci to create a suite of works that examine his notion of common sense.

'Communal sense', or *senso commune*, refers to ideas that are widely accepted in popular consciousness but do not serve the populace. Rundle explores this collective impulse through a series of transcriptions across political fields, including labour and civic life.

In *A dream seems like a dream*, Rundle uses a Studio 45 typewriter to type a passage extracted from the utopian writings of Adriano Olivetti, owner of the Olivetti manufacturing company and originator of The Community Movement. Cross-hatching the text is a 'net work' reminiscent of Gramsci, suggesting a pulling through of unresolved ideas from the past.

Seven starlings appear in *Auspices 1943-*, above a 1943 map of Rome produced by the British War Office. Just seven birds fly in harmony with any individual bird inside the swarm of thousands that comprises a murmuration of starlings. Here, the artist draws on the ancient practice of augury to ask 'what omens can we read today in the flight pattern of these birds?'

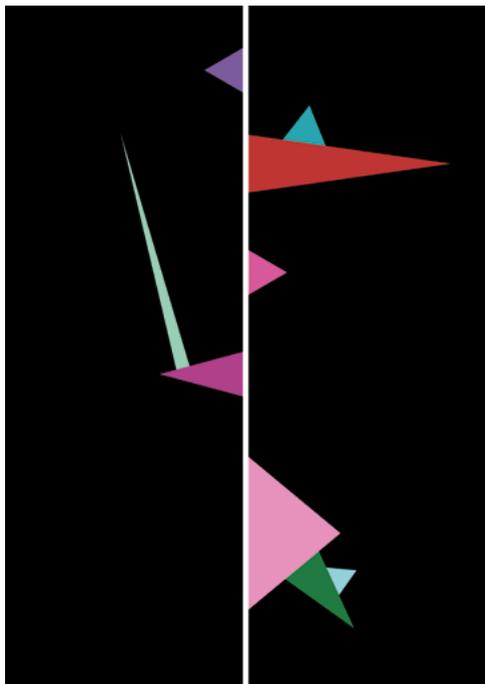
## SPEAKER SPACE

# Shannon Novak and Jeff Nusz: Flight of the Magnolia

1 December 2018–10 March 2019

Te Tuhi is a living, breathing organism; a seemingly inanimate object with life force. *Flight of the Magnolia* is a collaborative work between Shannon Novak and Jeff Nusz that uses code to catalogue this energy flowing through the body of the gallery. By means of monitoring visitors and staff activity through security cameras, movements will be visualised in real time on screen using a language of abstract forms and aural elements similar to how medical diagnostic equipment might scan a body to reveal hidden matter. The work extends beyond the screen at Te Tuhi into digital space, inviting online viewers to experience an ever-evolving composition.

**Shannon Novak and Jeff Nusz**  
study for *Flight of the Magnolia*  
courtesy of the artists



## Special offer.!



image courtesy of the artist

## PROJECT WALL

# Elisabeth Pointon: Special offer.

1 December 2018–10 March 2019

For Te Tuhi's Project Wall, Elisabeth Pointon's *Special offer.* features the installation of a custom-designed, two-metre wide, red, inflatable, advertorial blimp. Pointon draws on her experience working within the capitalist structure of a luxury car dealership, with the blimp operating as both advertisement and art object.

Self-identifying as a double-agent — occupying the role of Bookings Coordinator and artist — Pointon investigates the shared spaces of corporate life and the relationships inherent within them. Specifically, she is interested in the ways these spaces may contribute to what she calls a “collective isolation”. Pointon plays with and subverts language that is native to these environments, such as empty affirmations or promotional superlative, in order to redefine and re-imagine these cultural spaces.

# Respect the rāhui

**Robyn Maree Pickens**

*Respect the rāhui*, 2018  
commissioned by Te Tuhi, Auckland

## BILLBOARDS

### Robyn Maree Pickens: Respect the rāhui

1 December 2018–10 March 2019

In response to the threat of kauri dieback, mana whenua Te Kawerau ā Maki have issued a rāhui (ritual prohibition) over the Waitākere Ranges. *Respect the rāhui* is a text-based work by Robyn Maree Pickens that attempts to listen to, and support this closure through reiteration of the rāhui.

Each billboard will present one word of the prohibition: Respect | the | rāhui. The work acknowledges Mary-Louise Browne's 2010 Te Tuhi billboard work *Golden* by forming the words from one of Browne's inkjet prints of kauri gum. This iterative use of Browne's work acknowledges a historical and conceptual precedent, and signals the spatial and temporal distance between the work and the kauri trees under rāhui.

## VIDEO SPACE

### Trânsitos Improváveis (Unlikely Transits)

Videobrasil Historical Collection

1 December 2018–10 March 2019

Curated by Solange O. Farkas

Sharing a common geopolitical status, the artists selected for *Trânsitos Improváveis (Unlikely Transits)* show how personal and political allegiances act as contaminants, fueling practices and investigations which can give rise to renewed readings of visual culture and history.

Consisting of nine video works from across South America, China, Israel and USA, this exhibition aims to map out and comprehend the subjective, recasting personal memories and sensibilities within the public sphere, or questioning dominant histories, as in *Unforgettable Memory*, by Chinese artist Liu Wei, or *Machines for Living*, by the Polish-American duo Marek Ranis and Jonathan Case.

First shown during the 17th International Contemporary Art Festival SESC\_Videobrasil, as part of the Videobrasil Historical Collection, *Trânsitos Improváveis (Unlikely Transits)* demonstrates the unlikely transit of artists from the vast geopolitical South of the world.

**Jonathan Case and Marek Ranis**

*Machines for Living*, 2010 (video still)  
courtesy of Associação Cultural Videobrasil





UPCOMING

## Gayle Chong Kwan: Wastescape—weaving landscapes of politics, dairy and waste

Auckland Arts Festival  
9–24 March 2019  
Silo 6, Wynyard Quarter

*Wastescape* is an immersive installation by British artist Gayle Chong Kwan that explores New Zealand's relationship with food and dairy through pre-colonial agriculture, craft techniques and waste, and uses thousands of used plastic milk bottles and photography to create otherworldly landscapes.

Chong Kwan is a British artist whose photographs, sculptures, events and installations are exhibited internationally, both in galleries and in the public realm. Her work explores simulacra and the sublime through constructed environments, imagined futures, ritual experiences and sensory registers.

*Wastescape* is commissioned by Te Tuhi, Auckland, in partnership with art and environmental organisation Invisible Dust, UK, and the Humber Museums Partnership, UK.

Gayle Chong Kwan  
*Wastescape*, 2012  
Southbank Centre, London

Open Daily: 9am – 5pm  
(closed on public holidays)

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Te Tuhi is one of New Zealand's foremost contemporary art spaces and a leader in supporting experimental practice. Te Tuhi is committed to contemporary art that is locally engaged, regionally responsive and internationally ambitious.

Te Tuhi's primary focus is on research and commissioning ambitious new works, acting as a catalyst for new ways of thinking and engaging with communities. Te Tuhi has a growing international reputation for its innovative programme, one characterised by risk-taking with a strong awareness of social, political and environmental issues. Te Tuhi has a long history of working with nationally and internationally established artists such as Aernout Mik, Tom Nicholson, William Pope.L, Santiago Sierra, The Otolith Group, Tehching Hsieh, Artur Zmijewski, L. Budd, Phil Dadson, Julian Dashper, Darryn George, Maddie Leach, Alex Monteith, Kate Newby, Luke Willis Thompson, and Kalisolaite 'Uhila.

Te Tuhi presents exhibitions at its Pakuranga gallery and via its extensive offsite programme throughout Auckland and beyond. All Te Tuhi exhibitions are free, as are most of its public programme of events.

Cover image:

**Christina Pataialii**

*Pulusi Li (Bruce Lee), 2018 (detail)*

courtesy of the artist

### PRINCIPAL FUNDERS

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### SPONSORS AND PARTNERS

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