

**Sculpture on the Gulf
Media release
Thursday 11 December 2025**

Artists announced for 2027 Sculpture on the Gulf's

Exhibition: *The Ocean Remembers the Shore*

11 December 2025 - Sculpture on the Gulf, the outdoor exhibition showcasing art and sculpture on Waiheke Island, has announced the first line-up of artists for the 2027 event.

Since its inception in 2003, Sculpture on the Gulf has become a much-loved and renowned outdoor sculpture exhibition, making a unique contribution to the cultural life of Aotearoa New Zealand. Nestled on a 2.5 km coastal walkway against the breathtaking backdrop of Matiatia Bay, the event harnesses the potential of contemporary sculpture to activate the environment, creating opportunities for audiences to experience the power and beauty of sculpture in the landscape.

Co-curators Heather Galbraith and Benjamin Work have created the curatorial framework *The Ocean Remembers the Shore*, inspired by Waiheke Island's long history of offering shelter to those seeking safety and connection, which is reflected in its original name, Te Motu Ārai Roa/ The long sheltering island.

Co-curators Heather Galbraith and Benjamin Work say, "We were motivated by the long, layered history of the island, its place within Tīkapa Moana, and the myriad of ways contemporary artists respond to site and context.

We want to provide a rich spectrum of encounters for audiences. Through the Expressions of Interest process, we shared four sub-themes artists were invited to respond to: *The Ocean and the Shore*, *Regeneration*, *Shelter* and *Connections/Connectedness*, and we were excited by the creative responses.

The ocean is not just a body; it is a memory keeper. Sculpture becomes a way of listening to the ocean's memory. The shore and the coast are where land and water, humans and non-humans, the past and the future come together in an ongoing dialogue."

Director of Sculpture on the Gulf, Fiona Blanchard, is thrilled to share the initial artist lineup.

"The event will be full of thought-provoking, playful, surprising, engaging, and inspiring works, which will culminate in a fun, stimulating and fulfilling day out for people of all ages," Blanchard adds.

With the artist line-up finalised, the meticulous planning by the SOTG team ramps up.

Perpetual Guardian Sculpture on the Gulf 2027 will open to the public on February 26 and will run until March 29, 2027. The exhibition will be accompanied by a series of events, including artist talks, workshops, and guided tours, providing visitors with the opportunity to delve deeper into the world of contemporary sculpture.

Waiheke is a 40-minute ferry trip from Auckland. It has vineyards, world-class hospitality, pristine beaches, and scenery that feeds the soul. Book ahead to eat, play and stay on this island paradise over several days.

Tickets will be on sale from early 2026.

For the full programme, to purchase tickets, and to become a Patron or volunteer, visit www.sotg.nz.

The first release of the artist line-up for *Perpetual Guardian Sculpture on the Gulf 2027* is:

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| <p>Chris Bailey b. 1965, New Zealand. Based on Waiheke Island, New Zealand.</p> | <p>Chris Bailey (b.1965) lives on Waiheke Island and is of Ngāti Paoa, Ngāti Hako, Ngāti Porou, descent. In the early 2000's he studied Māori material culture at Auckland University before becoming a full-time sculptor and carver. Much of his work is monumental public artwork which is informed by his heritage as he works to engage the public with Māori concepts and return his peoples voice to the physical landscape. Working in bronze, stone and timber his works are held in both public and private collections throughout New Zealand and globally. He was granted Te Ara Whakarei - lifetime Toi Iho status by Creative NZ in 2005, James Wallace Trust New Zealand Sculptor in 2014, and Creative Visionary Award / Ko te tohu whakanui mō te ringatoi by HMBA in 2025. He has exhibited in several <i>Sculpture on the Gulf</i> events.</p> |
| <p>SJ Blake b. 1983, England. Based on Waiheke Island, New Zealand.</p> | <p>SJ Blake (b.1983) is an experimental artist and performance designer based on Waiheke Island. After studying at the Motley Theatre Design Course in London in 2007, she has worked across experimental performance while steadily moving toward a fine arts practice. Blake explores mixed media, combining digital technologies with handmade processes to create new aesthetics, meanings, and emotional curiosities. Recent projects include <i>Nikau Superette</i> (Participating Artist)-New Lynn dairy, <i>Tinned Goods</i> - Anomalous Gallery / Studio One Toi Tū and <i>Night Flight</i> (a community site specific performance)-the culmination of a six-month Blake NZ artist residency. Her immersive performance <i>A Fantastical Journey by Boat</i>, which incorporated VR, was selected to represent Aotearoa at the 2021 ARS Electronica Festival. Environmental decline and the ocean remain central themes in her work.</p> |
| <p>Elliot Collins b. 1983, New Zealand. Based in Waitara, New Zealand.</p> | <p>Elliot Collins is an artist, researcher, and tutor who works across a range of media within the visual arts. He gained a practice-led Ph.D. from AUT University in 2019, researching <i>Memory Markers in the Landscape in Aotearoa New Zealand</i>. His interests focus on ideas of present/absent texts within 'memory markers' in Aotearoa New Zealand, alongside motifs that represent distinctive forms of meaning-making narratives. Collins' practice references poetry and language, the naming of things, as well as memorials, memory, and time. He aims to expand ways of recording and documenting silences in relation to the environment and cultural narratives, contributing to expanded knowledges. Born in Tāmaki Makaurau in 1983, he now lives and works in Waitara, North Taranaki with his wife, son, and dog, on the whenua</p> |

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| | of Te Ātiawa. |
| Sean Kerr, Judy Darragh, Qianye & Qianhe Lin | <p>Artist Collective: Judy Darragh, Qianye & Qianhe Lin, Sean Kerr Land Raft: Signals and Collectivity (working title) wood, metal, electronics, recycled materials.</p> <p>Judy Darragh ONZM (b. 1957 Christchurch, Aotearoa New Zealand) is an artist who makes brightly coloured sculptural assemblages, collage, video, and photography. Judy Darragh lives and works in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland where she has played a significant role in the development of ARTSPACE Aotearoa, artist-run spaces in Auckland Teststrip and Cuckoo. She was a co-editor of Femisphere a publication supporting women’s art practices in Aotearoa. Judy is a founder member of Arts Makers Aotearoa, an artist’s advocacy organisation.</p> <p>Qianye 林千葉 and Qianhe Lin 林千和 (Hailing Island, China; Aotearoa New Zealand) are siblings who work as a duo. They work with multi-channel video installation and publication with a focus on interdisciplinary practice and collaborative processes. They are interested in the material lineage of belief systems and collective understanding, and how disoriented positions make possible multiple truths and a poetics for relation and solidarity. They have exhibited at Auckland Art Gallery, Te Tuhi Contemporary Art Gallery, Coastal Signs, The Physics Room, and Papatūnga. In 2025, they received the Springboard Award in visual arts by the Arts Foundation Te Tumu Toi.</p> <p>Sean Kerr lives in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland, where he is Associate Professor at Te Waka Tūhura, Elam School of Fine Arts, University of Auckland. He specialises in real-time 3D, VR, and interactive technologies. Kerr’s practice spans interactive art, mixed realities, physical computing, installation, and sound, with a sustained engagement in emergent technologies documented through exhibitions and publications. His recent projects include <i>dudududududududududu-pssssshhhht!</i> (Whangārei Art Museum, 2024), <i>Ba Dum Tss</i> (Gertrude Contemporary, Melbourne, 2024), and <i>A random rant</i> (Lightship, Auckland, 2022). Collaborative works include <i>In Kahoots</i> with Judy Darragh (Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna O Waiwhetū, 2020–21).</p> |
| Sione Faletau | <p>Dr. Sione Faletau (b. 1991) is an Aotearoa-born Tongan artist based in Ōtara, South Auckland. His multidisciplinary practice spans performance, sculpture, installation, and digital art. Faletau completed a BFA (Hons) in 2013, MFA in 2015, and a Doctor of Fine Arts in 2022 at Elam School of Fine Arts, University of Auckland, where his research examined Tongan masculinity through Indigenous methodologies. Drawing on Moana knowledge systems, particularly ongo (sound, feeling, presence) and kupesi (patterns), his recent work explores sonic mark-making and projection mapping to create immersive environments. Faletau was part of the inaugural Creative Australia & Creative New Zealand Digital Fellowship (2022) and has undertaken residencies with Te Pūnaha Matatini and Tautai. His work has featured in major exhibitions including Hawai’i Triennial, Bundanon Art Museum, and</p> |

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| | Govett-Brewster Art Gallery. |
| Anton Forde b. 1973 | Forde (Taranaki, Gaeltacht, Gaelic, English) is widely celebrated both locally and internationally for his esteemed sculptural practice, which explores whakapapa, wairua, and our profound connection to the natural world. His work bridges tradition and contemporary form, honouring Māori worldviews while engaging universally with themes of identity, guardianship, and spirituality. Grounded in indigenous knowledge yet resonant across cultures, his sculptures invite reflection on our responsibilities to the whenua and to one another. Forde studied under Professor Robert Jahnke within the Māori Visual Arts programme, Toioho ki Āpiti, at Massey University, where he completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Māori Visual Arts with Distinction, followed by a Master of Māori Visual Arts with First-Class Honours. His academic grounding continues to inform a practice deeply committed to cultural continuity and artistic innovation. |
| Gill Gatfield b. 1963 | Gill Gatfield (b.1963) lives in Whangaparāoa. She completed Masters of Fine Arts (Hons) in 2004 and Bachelor of Laws in 1988 from University of Auckland. Her abstract sculptures and installations address ancestral intelligence and speculative futures, in real and virtual worlds. She was artist in residence at NARS Foundation New York 2025, Foreign Objekt 2024-25, Saas-Fee Art Institute NYC 2024, Poison Creek 2023-24, Ionion Center Greece 2023, Vermont Studio Centre USA 2019, and KØN Museum Denmark 2015. Her work is exhibited internationally, including at Sculpture by the Sea, Venice Art Biennale 2022 European Cultural Centre, Kunstverein Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz Berlin, UNESCO Geopark Ionion Islands, and Venice Architecture Biennale 2018. Gill has public sculptures in Auckland and Sydney. She created the virtual monument <i>HALO</i> for Wellington Sculpture Trust 40 th Anniversary, presented also at Waitangi and New York. |
| Sean Hill | Sean Hill is a multidisciplinary artist of Kiwi/Samoan descent based in Ngamotu, Taranaki. He completed an Honours degree in Visual Arts at Auckland University in 2016. Sean's practice focuses on conceptual exploration using movement, frequency, colour, texture, nature, and materials to express energy in a physical form creating a visual language, often through abstract representations. Sean has exhibited overseas with Scott Lawrie Gallery (Scotland), Alcaston Art Gallery (Naarm/Melbourne); <i>Synchrotopia</i> , in 2024 (solo) and 2026 (solo), Govett-Brewster window space; <i>Energtopia</i> , in 2024 (solo), received a CNZ emerging artist funding, in 2024, Govett Brewster artist residency in Tonga funded by CNZ, in 2024, exhibited at Govett-Brewster Art Gallery; <i>Lalaga</i> , in 2022 and 2024, a finalist NZPPA Awards and Molly Morpeth Canaday Awards, in 2025 and a commissioned sculptural artwork by Te Tuhi Art gallery; <i>Flowergy</i> , in 2025. |
| Stevei Houkamau b.1979, Ngāti Porou, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui | Stevei Houkāmau is a full-time uku artist based in Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington. Working with uku (clay) since 2011, her practice considers uku as both body and memory — a material that records touch, carries whakapapa, |

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| | and anchors the relationships between tāngata, tipuna, and whenua. Her work has been exhibited widely across Aotearoa and internationally, and she has undertaken residencies in the United States alongside Indigenous art gatherings throughout the Pacific. Houkāmau has represented Aotearoa at FESTPAC in Guahan and exhibited at Munich Jewellery Week in 2024. In 2023 she received the Kiingi Tūheitia Portraiture Award and held a solo exhibition at Objectspace, Tāmaki Makaurau. She has been invited to the BACA Biennale in Québec, Canada, in 2026. 2027 marks her first inclusion in Sculpture on the Gulf. |
| Ioane Ioane & Martin Loire | Ioane Ioane (Auckland based, born 1962) and Martin Loire (Auckland based, born Buenos Aires, 1976) collaborate across sculpture, installation, poetry, and performance. Ioane's three decades of mahi across Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa draw on Samoan heritage and the generative energies of vā, the relational space of becoming. Loire, a bilingual Argentinian installation artist poet whose books <i>Mother Tongue</i> and <i>Siesta</i> explore childhood's emotional architectures, brings a lyrical countercurrent shaped by early fantasies and survival instincts. Together, they weave material, language, and ritual into works that open connective spaces between cultures, memories, and the shifting thresholds of identity. |
| Fiona Jack | Fiona Jack is an artist based in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. She teaches at the Elam School of Fine Arts, Waipapa Taumata Rau University of Auckland. Fiona's artistic practice ranges from large-scale public commissions to social projects formed through dialogue and research. She draws on recognizable visual and textual languages to examine the systems, social movements, and politics of representation within forms that hold collective memory. Fiona has curated exhibitions including <i>Portage Ceramic Awards 2025</i> , Te Uru Contemporary Gallery (2025), <i>Emory Douglas: Minister of Culture, Black Panther Party</i> , Gus Fisher Gallery, Auckland (2009) (with Andrew Clifford), and her writing has been published in <i>Counterfutures</i> , <i>Femisphere</i> , and several artist books. She holds an MFA from CalArts and is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Westminster. |
| Emily Karaka, Reuben Kirkwood | Emily Karaka is a leading figure in contemporary Māori art and has been the recipient of The Tylee Cottage and McCahon House residencies with her works held in most major art institutions in Aotearoa and in a number of significant private collections. She has an extensive career, being included into the landmark (1992) <i>Te Waka Toi</i> exhibition which opened in San Diego, California to coincide with the America's Cup Race and touring throughout Canada (2014) <i>Five Māori Painters</i> , Auckland Art Gallery: Toi o Tāmaki, (2020) <i>NIRIN, 22nd Biennale of Sydney</i> , (2021) <i>Toi Tū Toi Ora: Contemporary Māori Art</i> , (2024) Solo Survey exhibition, <i>Ka Awatea, A New Dawn</i> , Sharjah Art Foundation UAE, and (2025) <i>Hawaii Triennale Aloha Nō</i> . For Sculpture on The Gulf 2027 Emily will collaborate with fellow Ngāi Tai Ki Tāmaki mandated mana whenua artist, Reuben Kirkwood , whose architectural sculptural works adorn Civic and Commercial buildings throughout Auckland and whose carved gateways and pou are installed on many sites of significance and on islands in the Hauraki Gulf, including Rangitoto and Motutapu. |

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| Virginia King | Virginia King was born in Kawakawa, Northland. She attended Wellington Polytechnic, then Elam School of Fine Arts, Auckland and while living in London in the 1970s, Chelsea Art School, Hammersmith. Sculpture became her preferred art form in the early 1980's. Over the past four decades King has created a portfolio of large-scale, site-specific works for public locations and private collectors. By magnifying and abstracting the scale of natural life forms, she draws attention to the beauty and vulnerability of our environment. Her vessel forms have evolved from symbols of exploration, migration, and nurturing to become symbols of life and survival. An Antarctic Artist Fellowship in 1999 was a pivotal experience. A visit to the spectacular Lake Vanda strengthened her commitment to the microsphere, marine protozoa, and foraminifera. Enduring themes in her practice include ecology and survival and the delicate balance between sustainability and progress. King continues to create works in her Auckland and Waiheke Island Studios. |
| Michelle Mayn | Michelle Mayn (b.1963) lives in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland where she completed a Masters of Visual Arts at AUT in 2019. She draws on skills and processes established through study of Māori weaving (Unitec, 2011), wānanga and mixed media instruction at Art Students League of New York (2016-2017). Her sculpture and installation practice explores ancient textile methods alongside intra-active phenomena. Site-specific installations include <i>Te Harakeke</i> , situated outdoors for CONTEXTILE – Contemporary Textile Art Biennial, Portugal (2022); <i>Te Harakeke, Te Kōrare</i> , harvested and exhibited for Sculpture in the Garden, Auckland Botanic Gardens (2021-2022) and the 35metre aerial installation <i>Harakeke Rope</i> , AUT (2019). She exhibits regularly in solo and group shows, including with mothermother artist collective in Unifying Threads, Te Atamira, Tāhuna/Queenstown (2025) and Onepū – shifting sands/shifting time, Franklin Arts Centre, Tamaki Makaurau/Auckland (2025). |
| Gabby O'Connor | Gabby O'Connor is an artist, transdisciplinary researcher, Antarctic, science communicator and educator. Her work operates across multiple disciplines and audiences– between contemporary art, science communication and community action and looks at different entry points to conversations to terrestrial and marine ecosystems connected to a changing climate. She frequently collaborates with different communities, scientists, other artists, audiences and primary school-aged students. O'Connor studied sculpture at VCA in Melbourne, 1995; has an MFA from COFA, UNSW, 2004; and earned a PhD, at UoA 2025 with a social art and social science research project about marine ecosystems in Aotearoa with 8000 participants and exhibitions across five sites. |
| Ben Pearce b. 1982, Palmerston North. | Ben Pearce completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts majoring in Sculpture at Wanganui Quay School of Fine Arts in 2003. Exhibiting regularly in New Zealand, Pearce has work held in the public collection of the Sargeant Gallery, Wanganui, and in prominent private collections throughout New Zealand, Australia, Germany, the U.K and the U.S.A. He is featured in Warwick Brown's book <i>Seen this Century</i> , featuring 100 contemporary New Zealand Artists. |

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| | Pearce's work has been exhibited at City Gallery, Wellington, Te Uru, Auckland, Suter Art Gallery, Nelson, Tauranga Art Gallery, MTG Hawkes Bay, Napier, and Hastings City Art Gallery. In 2022, he was the inaugural recipient of the \$30,000 ARA Art Award in Hawke's Bay and in the same year he created Paper Pals Aotearoa - a large scale four plinth public commission for the Wellington Sculpture Trust, exhibited in the forecourt of Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington. |
| Elisabeth Pointon b. 1992 | Elisabeth Pointon lives in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland and holds a BFA (2014) and MFA (2017) from Massey University. An artist of Indo-Fijian and Pākehā descent, Pointon works across sculpture, public intervention, video, and at one point, painting to interrogate systems of influence - political, social, institutional, and commercial - through the slippages within language. Some of her exhibitions include <i>BIG TIME.</i> , Champs, Granville City Art Centre, NSW (2023), <i>Thanks for all the fish.</i> , with Christopher Ulutupu, Pātaka Art + Museum (2021), <i>SOMETHING BIG.</i> , Tiffany & Co., Auckland Art Fair (2021), <i>WHERE TO FROM HERE</i> , Jhana Millers (2020), <i>BEST WISHES</i> . as part of Uncomfortable Silence, Christchurch Art Gallery (2020) <i>What Goes Up.</i> , City Gallery (2019); <i>WOULD YOU LOOK AT THAT.</i> , play_station, (2019); and <i>Special offer.</i> , Te Tuhi (2018). |
| Ngaroma Riley | Ngaroma Riley is an artist and people connector of Te Rarawa, Te Aupōuri, and Pākehā descent. A founder of Te Ana o Hine, a wahine-led carving shed based at Te Tuhi in Tāmaki Makaurau, Ngaroma began her carving journey making Buddhist statues while working in Japan. Since returning to Aotearoa in 2020, she has completed a Certificate in Whakairo at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa. Ngaroma's work and research centres on Māori narratives, with a focus on retelling whānau, hapū and iwi stories through a wahine Māori lens. In 2022, she built a storehouse for a public installation in Kaitiaki. She is known for her karetao (hand-carved puppets) and love of chainsaws. |
| Taarn Scott | Taarn Scott is an artist from Ōtepoti, based in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland. Their practice is multidisciplinary and often collaborative, creating tactile objects informed by ornamentation and jewellery. These explore ideas around habitat, environmental concerns and geographical histories. They are currently researching insect habitats and working with wax, clay and metal. Scott's recent projects include <i>Somewhere Between Abundance</i> exhibited in Naarm with West Space & in Ōtepoti with Slant Art Project Space in 2025, a project made possible with the support of CNZ. They exhibited <i>He tuna ora, he wai ora</i> with Hana Pera Aoake at CoCA, Ōtautahi. |
| Ann Shelton (b. NZ, 1967, Pākehā/Italian) | Ann Shelton identifies as queer. Her work engages questions around the disciplined body and how that discipline plays out through gender, sexuality, reproduction, misogyny, medicine, food, and crime, most recently in relation to plants and their impacts on the body. Shelton's work with plant materials is reviewed in Artforum, Hyperallergic, artnet news, and Evergreen Review. She is represented in collections throughout Aotearoa, Australia, and North America. Shelton's first institutional solo exhibition in the United States <i>i am an old phenomenon</i> was presented at Alice Austen House, New York in 2024. Alice Austen House Press also simultaneously published Shelton's award-winning book <i>worm, root, wort...& bane</i> . For more than a decade, Ann |

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| | Shelton has explored the micro, marginal, bleak and traumatic counter-histories of plants through her photographic and performance-based artwork. Linking gender politics and the climate crisis in a critical moment, 'i am an old phenomenon' bears even greater significance as she reinvestigates lost knowledge pertaining to plants and their relationship to female ontology through the figure of the witch. |
| Sally Smith (b. 1968) | Sally Smith lives on Waiheke Island. She studied Architecture at Auckland University before running her own practice for many years on Waiheke. This background has informed her art practice which she chose to follow full-time in 2010. Growing up on Waiheke she has seen the devastating loss to the Gulf's natural environment with species becoming technically extinct in her lifetime alone. Many of her works seek to highlight this fragility and raise awareness of the need to protect it. Working in bronze, cast glass and steel her works range from monumental public artworks, through to more delicate wall installations that have no boundaries – just like nature. She exhibits regularly both nationally and globally with representation in NZ, France and the USA. She has exhibited in several <i>Sculpture on the Gulf</i> events. |
| Evan Woodruffe (b. 1965) | For over 25 years, Evan Woodruffe has engaged with colour as a sensation and a material, extending his painting practice into a language that he applies to canvas, clothing, furniture, and even luxury cars. He has grown his audience from Aotearoa New Zealand out into the Asia-Pacific, with significant exhibitions including the 8th Beijing Biennale (2019), Hastings City Art Gallery (2023), and Sydney Contemporary (2024). Evan uses his deep sense of materials to develop abstract painting history into lively and fascinating passages of pictorial space. These paintings and painted objects are sites for active contemplation, where themes of wonder, joy, and hope are celebrated as an antidote to our everyday pathos. Evan is based in Tamaki Makaurau Auckland, and has his MFA (1st Class) from University of Auckland. |

A second artist's name release is scheduled for early 2026.

For more information, images and interviews, contact: Guy Annan, Marketing & Development Manager, Waiheke Art Gallery and Sculpture on the Gulf, guy@waihekeartgallery.org.nz