



Get creative for the Friends of Pātaka Art Awards 2026

Get those creative juices flowing for the 2026 Friends Art Awards. Our biennial Art Awards is open to artists living, working or studying in Porirua. We welcome works in various media such as ceramics, photography, painting, sculpture, mixed media, etc.

The record 94 entries we received in 2024 was wonderful, but proved challenging for Pātaka's space and resources to mount the quality exhibition we want for our artists. So for 2026 we are limiting the number of artworks exhibited to 60.

This will require a selection process before acceptance of your artwork, which will be based on digital images of your work. Your application fee will not be refunded if your work is not selected. This aligns with similar awards processes at other regional galleries.

Online application for the Awards opens on 28 May. Awards will be made at the launch on 21 August, with the exhibition at Pātaka running from Saturday 22 August to Sunday 18 October. More information will be posted on our website over the next two months.

For inspiration check out the reports of the 2024 exhibition opening and all the past Awards winners and their entries on our [website](#).

2024 OPEN AWARD WINNER EMMA HERCUS & 'LISTENING TO THE SEA'

FRIENDS EVENT

A VISIT TO THE NATIONAL LIBRARY'S 'FUTURE PROOF: PAINTINGS IN PERPETUITY'

Friends are organising a visit and talk to the exhibition **Future Proof: Paintings in Perpetuity** on at Te Puna Foundation Gallery, National Library, Wellington.

This fascinating talk will combine history, art history, artworks, and preservation to maintain the historical record for research – and will appeal to both history lovers and appreciators of historical artworks.

The Library has a collection of over 130,000 artworks – this exhibition gathers a small handful, most on display for the first time, which have been recently conserved. From Charles Blomfield's 1888 oil painting of The White Terraces, to Toss Woollaston's 1987 portrait of Michael King, these provide a glimpse into part of the history of Aotearoa New Zealand.



PĀTAKA EXHIBITIONS

Pātaka's summer season ends on 8 March when two shows in the Main Galleries will close but there is still time to catch them:

- + 'Tipurepure 'Au Vaine', the Cook Islands tivaivai exhibition – come and watch the video of women speaking of the importance and cultural meaning

of the art of tivaivai and their mission to retain and pass the knowledge on to the next generations.

- + Fred Graham's show '**Whakaata/Reflections**' demonstrates the development over 70 years of world-renowned Maori artist and carver Graham's distinctive visual language, which intersects Māori and European art traditions and combines wood, stone and stainless steel.

The second of Fred Graham's shows will remain until May: '**Katohia He Wai Moou, Katohia He Wai Mooku**' is an in-depth look at his body of work made about the Waikato River.

BOTTLE CREEK GALLERY



ConFluent | Porirua Community Arts

On until 12 April 2026

Porirua Community Arts invited visual artists and poets to work together to create pairings of original works in their respective disciplines. The results of these collaborative partnerships are presented in 'ConFluent'.

Porirua Community Arts is an incorporated Society that was founded to provide a pathway for arts organisations in the Porirua area, to access support, promotion and funding through grants. It is recognised by Porirua City Council but not financially supported by it, except to provide access to Pātaka for meetings and venues for exhibitions.

Other organisations and events that have benefited from the Porirua Community Arts umbrella have been the Writers Sculpture Walk on the harbour front, Festival of the Elements, and the bi-annual Porirua Arts Trail.

GALLERIES IN OUR REGION

THE DOWSE ART MUSEUM

'SOFTY: Textiles from the Dowse Collection'

On until 15 March

SOFTY brings together artists from the Dowse's textile collection who use fabric and fibre to unpick ideas of masculinity, labour and identity.

PĀTAKA STAFF PROFILE



MARLENE SIU

PUBLIC PROGRAMMES AND EVENT COORDINATOR

Marlene has recently joined the Pātaka team and is full of great ideas. Friends work closely with the Event Coordinator when we organise events at Pātaka and we're looking forward to collaborating with her.

"I'm originally from Hawai'i and moved to Aotearoa in 2023 with my kiwi husband and three dogs. Throughout my life, I have always been involved in the arts. I have spent most of my professional career in galleries and museums.

"Some career highlights include, co-founding two gallery spaces, 5th Wall Gallery and Project Space Gallery, in Las Vegas; Artist in Residence at Lied Children's Museum; Arts and Humanities Programme Manager at Discovery Children's Museum; and Co-Curator and Exhibitions Manager at the Honolulu Museum of Art.

"When I'm not focused on mahi, I am also a practising artist. I have a background in photography and sculpture but tend to create work in mixed media. I am extremely excited and honoured to join the Pātaka team.

"Pātaka is such an amazing space. I am looking forward to collaborating with the team to offer inspiring and engaging public programmes for our community".



DETAIL OF AREEZ KATKI, CARAFE PARADE, 2019. COLLECTION OF THE DOWSE ART MUSEUM, PURCHASED 2020.

Once used to belittle sensitivity, here the term 'softy' has been reclaimed to celebrate the generosity and tenderness of these textile practices. Artists in this show connect to their family histories, creating works that reflect on identity and remembrance, and challenge hierarchies that devalue textile practices.

NEW ZEALAND PORTRAIT GALLERY

Yuki Kihara: 'Salome: An Angel of History'

On until 26 May 2026



YUKI KIHARA, AFTER TSUNAMI GALU AFI, LALOMANU, 2013. COURTESY UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND.

Inspired by the 1886 photograph "Samoan Half Caste", Yuki Kihara uses photography, video and sculpture-like costumes to portray herself as a fictitious Sāmoan woman resurrected from the 19th century.

Set in New Zealand and Sāmoa, her art re-frames dominant histories and gives voice to untold narratives that challenge cultural stereotypes and gender norms".



TOI STORE PROFILE

KAREN KENNEDY

Karen has been sculpting with clay for 30 years and is largely self-taught. She has won numerous art awards and accolades, and has work in the Auckland Museum collection. Karen has three large public sculptures exhibited in Onehunga, as well as a large Dragon Seat in Devonport.



Karen has added larger work to her repertoire, using traditionally glazed sculptural clay for large dogs, cats, boars and birds. The bodies are press moulded and the details are added as the clay firms. These have been successful works but her real love is with intricate figurines of people, animals and birds; brightly painted and every one an original.

Most of Karen's intricate work is in white earthenware or porcelain - painted, clear glazed, and fired mid-range to 1175°. Due to her extensive production, Kennedy has worn out two electric kilns over the years.

Karen likes to be part of local group exhibitions and deals with over a dozen galleries around the country. She says "I feel lucky to be able to pursue my passion for so long and to have such a great lifestyle."

She lives in the beautiful upper Henderson Valley with her husband and Joey the Bichon.

