



And the Friends of Pātaka Art Awards 2026 winners are...

Open Award: Kylie Fyfe, *For decorative purposes only* (pencil on ukelele, flax)

Highly Commended Award: Ash Kahawatta, *The last witness* (acrylic on canvas)

Jane Hyder Painting Prize: Jill Scott, *In a little corner of the world* (acrylic on canvas)

First Time Entry Award: Hinemoa Robati, *Ruru* (watercolor and fine liner pen)

The Learning Connexion Creativity and Promise Scholarship: Bonita Huang, *Insomnia* (acrylic on board)

Profiles of each winning artist and their works can be found via the dropdown menu of the **Art Awards section** of our website.

The Friends 2026 Art Awards exhibition opened on Saturday 22 August, with the winners announced and prizes awarded on the previous night at an event to celebrate artists and their whanau and friends, in the presence of Mayor Anita Baker, sponsors and judges.

Ana Sciascia, Director of Pātaka opened the event with very positive and encouraging words about the awards and Friends.

Presenting the awards, Principal Judge Janet Bayly, Director of Toi Mahara and the other judges commented on the artworks they chose for awards. See more about our judges [here](#).

Our sponsors who have been loyal

supporters since the Awards began in 2013, were given a special acknowledgement for their ongoing commitment, – see box overleaf.

THE ART AWARDS EXHIBITION

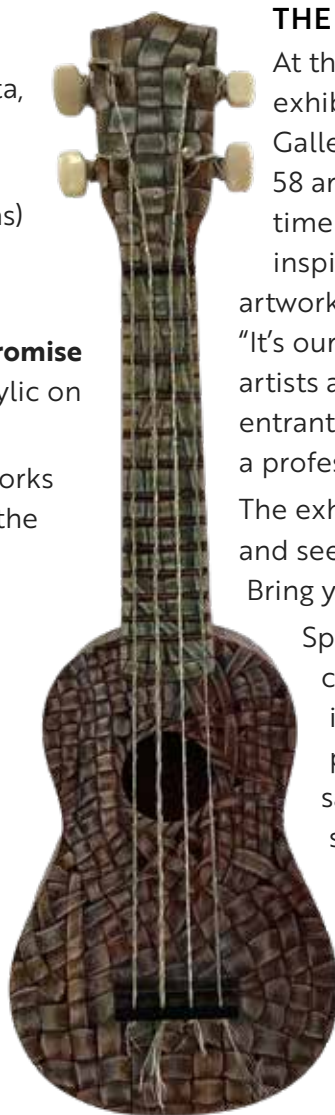
At the conclusion of the awards, the exhibition in Bottle Creek Community Gallery was officially opened. Altogether 58 artists are shown, 25 of whom are first time entrants. "The Art Awards are always inspiring, with the range and quality of artworks," says Friends President Frances. "It's our opportunity to foster our local artists and we love to encourage first-time entrants to experience showing their work in a professional gallery."

The exhibition is on until 18 October, so come and see the works entered by Porirua artists. Bring your friends and whanau.

Special thanks to Pātaka staff for collaborating with Friends on improvements to this year's awards process. "Friends manage the awards," says Frances, "but we rely on the systems and expertise of many Pātaka staff."

"This year, looking at how the awards are run and how to manage unsustainable numbers, we sought improved processes for Friends, Pātaka staff and for artists.

"We amended applications, introduced a selection process to manage numbers, and provided more helpful guidance and instructions to artists for



OPEN AWARD WINNER
FOR DECORATIVE PURPOSES
ONLY BY KYLIE FYFE

ART AWARDS SPONSORS

Friends of Pātaka are very grateful for the support and commitment of our sponsors of the Art Awards, which in most cases has been ongoing since 2013 when the Awards began.

THE SMITH FAMILY TRUST, represented by Ian Smith, honours his mother the late Helen Smith, who as a city councillor, was a strong supporter and advocate for the establishment of Pātaka and of Friends.

TOMMY'S REAL ESTATE MANA is represented by Euon Murrell who is also Chair of Pātaka Foundation and an Honorary Member of Friends of Pātaka, and formerly a City Councillor.

LEINA AISNO, a former Friends Committee member who sponsors the First Time Entry Award, retains her connection to Friends while working in health development in Vanuatu

JANE HYDER, painter and writer, a practising and exhibiting artist with a long 35-year professional career, has returned to sponsor her Jane Hyder Painting Prize again this year. ([See her judges profile](#))

THE LEARNING CONNEXION: SCHOOL OF CREATIVITY AND ART (TLC). Founder Jonathan Milne has sponsored the Creativity and Promise Scholarship to attend TLC since 2013. After his retirement last year, the School has committed to honouring his legacy by continuing to sponsor a scholarship, represented by Director Sharon Hall ([see her judges profile](#)).



FRIENDS PRESIDENT FRANCES AUSTIN SPEAKS AT THE ART AWARDS OPENING EVENT ON FRIDAY 21 AUGUST, WHICH WAS EXCEPTIONALLY WELL ATTENDED BY WHANAU AND FRIENDS

applying and showing work in a professional gallery. "All worked really well, ensuring the awards are sustainable. Artists were warmly congratulated for following guidance so well, meaning a smoother process for all, with their work shown to its best in the exhibition."

VIEWERS' CHOICE AWARD

The final prize, the Viewers' Choice Award of \$500, sponsored by Friends of Pātaka, will be awarded at the end of the exhibition, on 18 October. Folders of artist statements and voting forms are in the gallery so come and have a look, choose and vote for your favourite artwork.

WINTER MUSIC SERIES 2026

The Winter Music Series this year was yet again a great success. Ngā mihi nui to all the performers and audiences and for Pātaka staff support.

Our usual varied programme included classical, jazz and world folk performances: offering an eclectic and inspiring mix of music to entertain us on four winter Sunday afternoons from mid-July to mid-August that was enthusiastically received.

BISHOP VIARD COLLEGE NIU CHOIR

With much regret, we had to cancel this concert on Sunday 19 July. Our talented nationally acclaimed

multilingual local choir had just returned from performing at the Australian International Music Festival in Sydney, when many of them fell ill. We hope to invite them back to perform for us in the future.

TE HAU TRIO



On Sunday 26 July, our classical concert this year featured woodwind instruments played by Karen Batten, flute, Nick Walshe, clarinet and Preman Tilman, bassoon. We were treated to an intriguing and varied programme from Vivaldi and Mozart, to Poulenc, Heitor Villa-Lobos, and Robert Muczynski, and to Chloe Moon and Valerie Coleman playing as duos and trios to showcase each instrument.

NZ SWING QUARTET



On Sunday 9 August, our jazz concert of soulful, vibrant, joyous traditional and New Orleans music. Mat Enright, Patrick Blakeley, and Jeremy Desmond shared a relaxed and fun programme that lifted the audience's spirits and mood.

KLEZMER REBS



Sunday 16 August, saw the return of the ever-popular Klezmer Rebs with their high energy rollicking set of world/ethnic music and Yiddish/European folk. It was a great way to end our music series.

FRIENDS EVENTS

Closing event for Ongo exhibition with Vaka Tautua



On 16 July, Pātaka and Friends of Pātaka jointly hosted a public closing event in the gallery for the show Ongo: (Re)sounding the Vā, which brings ancient Tongan music traditions, instruments and sonic pathways into the present. Central to the exhibition is the fangufangu, the Tongan bamboo nose flute.

This was a lovely opportunity to introduce Pātaka and Friends to invited guests from Vaka Tautua, a local social service organisation for the Pasifika community, and encourage an ongoing relationship.

At the event, co-curator Dr Rachel Hall read a moving piece by Dr Adriana Māhanga Lear describing her contribution to the exhibition and Dr Rachel performed a short fangufangu work.

Regional Manager Anna Pasikale acknowledged the value of Pātaka and the arts in supporting wellbeing and identity within local communities.

www.vakatautua.co.nz

PĀTAKA EXHIBITIONS

The Winter season opened on 8 August, with the main galleries celebrating key features of Porirua's history.

UNWRAPPED: Whittaker's since 1896

8 August 2026–28 February 2027



This is a celebration of 130 years of the world-famous, made-in-Porirua chocolate company, Whittaker's. They are a world-class chocolate manufacturer, still proudly family-owned four

generations on and based in their original Porirua factory. Presented in partnership with Whittaker's, the **exhibition** includes nostalgic memorabilia and invites chocolate lovers behind the scenes to discover how a local maker became a global name.

Mata'AITU (voyeur) by Lindah Lepou™

8 August–8 November 2026



Award-winning multi-dimensional fa'afafine artist Lindah Lepou shares her world of Pacific couture, while exploring issues of colonisation, exploitation and voyeurism. She weaves her Samoan gafa (genealogy) into Pacific couture as a living fashion art archive. See an artist biography [here](#) and an interview with Porirua Pacific Radio 531 PIs on Facebook [here](#).

TOMORROW'S HISTORIES: Photographs by Neil Penman

8 August–8 November 2026



Neil Penman's photographs of Porirua mark significant moments in the city's history and honour the legacy of a photographer who believed that 'every photograph taken today becomes a vital record for the generations of tomorrow'.

Neil dedicated himself to documenting moments of rapid urban transformation in Porirua as they happened. In 2025, his daughters gifted to Pātaka

the majority of their father's photographic work, which form the basis of **this exhibition**.

Friends Committee members fondly remember Neil's late wife June Penman as a founding member of the Committee and Secretary then Treasurer for many years.

TAONGA FROM THE COLLECTION

Don Binney's painting, Mana Island IV, 1970, Oil on canvas, is currently hanging in the collection corner during this Pātaka winter season. Friends will soon be planning our next talk focusing on this artwork and its place in Pātaka's collection.

OTHER ARTS UPDATES

Arts Foundation honours Pātaka founder



In August, the Arts Foundation Te Tumu Toi welcomed four new artists into their living circle of 20 Icon Whakamana Hiranga, including painter and sculptor **Darcy Nicholas** QSO

Darcy's influence extends far beyond the canvas – he led the development of Pātaka Art+Museum in Porirua, established the Māori Art Market, and directed major touring exhibitions taking Māori art to the world.

"Darcy is both a distinguished artist and a visionary builder of institutions," said the Arts Foundation panel. "In founding Pātaka Art and Museum and the Māori Art Market, he created lasting platforms for Māori and Pacific artists to thrive, leaving an enduring legacy across Aotearoa New Zealand's rich cultural and artistic landscape."