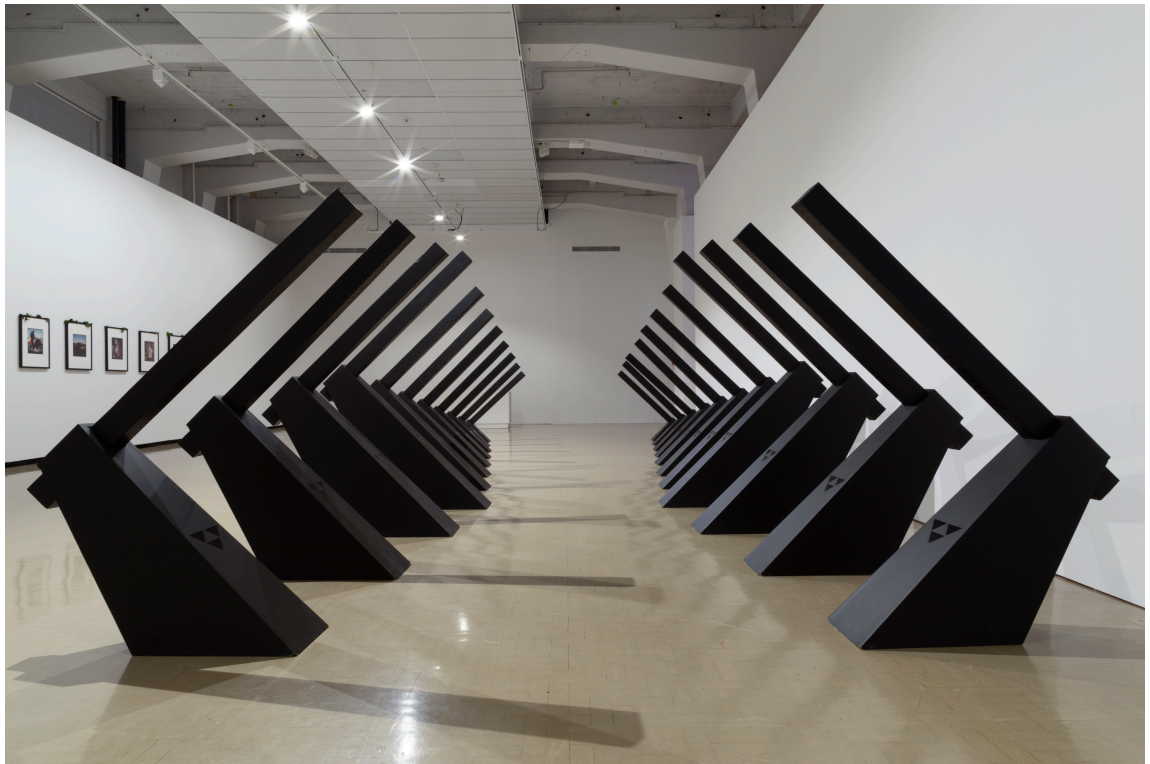


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HŌHUA THOMPSON | Tuku / Transfer
October 18 — November 16, 2024

Press Release



Hōhua Thompson (Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti, Ngāti Kahu, Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Rangiwewehi) graduated with an MFA from Whitecliffe School of Fine Arts in 2021 and has realised projects with City Gallery Wellington, The Dowse Art Museum, Enjoy Contemporary Art Space, Blue Oyster Art Project Space, Aotearoa Art Fair, Toi Māori Gallery and Tairāwhiti Museum.

Working at scale, Thompson's work reflects on intergenerational knowledge transmission, storytelling and kaitiakitanga. His practice combines traditional Māori art forms such as whakairo and tukutuku with modern materials and processes to communicate stories from his own whakapapa, and to examine how these stories may apply to wider Māori communities.

*He has stated, *The way I have had it explained to me, in Te Ao Māori we have two kinds of stories, purakau and pakiwaitara. The simplest way to describe the distinction between the two is that purakau are stories about gods: think the separation of Rangī and Papa, Tane's ascension through the heavens. While pakiwaitara deal with the exploits of our tupuna: think the migration stories and all of the stories since then.**

What both kinds of stories have in common is that they connect us through space and time to our ancestors.

One of the most important aspects of both pakiwaitara and purakau is the art of storytelling. It is typical that stories would be told in order to teach a desired lesson, sometimes posed more as open-ended questions rather than giving any straight answers, in order to inspire introspective thought and contemplation. In this way, Storytelling is an integral part of my artistic practice. It has become a way for me to interrogate the position we, as Māori, occupy in contemporary New Zealand society.

This is all to say that stories of my ancestors' exploits have greatly influenced the work that I make, and the stories I choose to share. For the last few years, the works that I have created have all stemmed from an older story, or rather, a series of intertwined stories.

Alongside newly created works, his first dealer gallery exhibition in Tāmaki Makaurau will introduce local audiences to significant artworks previously exhibited in major public galleries in Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington: The Dowse Art Museum and City Gallery Wellington.

Thompson has worked as Curator of Community Exhibitions at Pātaka Art + Museum, Collections Assistant at Museums Wellington, and Toi Māori Education and Audience Intern at Enjoy Contemporary Art Space. Based in Rotoiti, he also has a background in youth and social work, and is currently a youth coach in Rotorua.

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