



THE LIGHTSHIP

INTRODUCING A NEW PLATFORM FOR CONTEMPORARY ART AT THE PORTS OF AUCKLAND

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PRESS RELEASE

- **The Lightship launches as part of Artweek 2020**
- **Janet Lilo commissioned to produce the first artwork which will be displayed from 8 October – 3 December 2020**

The Lightship, a new site for contemporary art, launches today at Ports of Auckland. The large-scale digital light wall on Quay Street provides Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland with a unique place for public art to be enjoyed.

The Lightship is a 110-metre-long, 13-metre-high light wall that wraps around the western façade of the port’s new car handling building. It is made up of seven panels with nearly 8,500 individually programmable LED lights and is visible from busy Quay Street, city wharves, local buildings and the water.

“The Lightship is our present to Auckland,” says Ports of Auckland CEO Tony Gibson, “and a thank you to Auckland’s artists for enriching our lives. It is designed to support artists and creative thinkers to produce ambitious new commissions and gives them a highly visible platform on which to display their work.”

The Lightship’s inaugural commission is a new artwork by Janet Lilo entitled *ISLOVE*. Lilo’s piece will be live from nightfall on Thursday 8 October until the first week of December 2020.

Janet Lilo works across digital video, photography, sculpture and installation. Her practice explores documentation as a conversational and social tool for recording time, people and place. Lilo often engages with forms of display common to global media and popular culture, such as neon signs and advertising billboards. She is a stalwart of public art, and her many interventions in the city space include the ever-popular banana lightboxes on Karangahape Road.

Lilo's work for The Lightship includes the phrase *ISLOVE* in multi-coloured block letters, spread across the seven giant light panels, interspersed with an evocative image of rippling waves.

Janet Lilo says: "Created for a future defined by the current global pandemic, BLM, social and political upheavals, and great loss, *ISLOVE* refocuses Auckland's harbour as a place of connection and light."

Janet Lilo's piece will be followed by a programme of three emerging artists starting in early December 2020, curated by Sarah Hopkinson and Bridget Riggir-Cuddy. Sarah Hopkinson says: "We are excited to see how artists will respond to this incredible piece of technology, the special character of the port, and rich social history of downtown."

The Lightship sits near another significant public artwork, 'The Lighthouse' by Michael Parekowhai on Queens Wharf, cementing the area as a destination for contemporary public art.

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Notes to editors:

Janet Lilo b.1982 (Te Rarawa, Samoa, Niue) lives and works in Tāmaki Makarau Auckland. Her work has been exhibited in Asia, Europe, America and Moana Pacific - with extensive shows throughout New Zealand - from Auckland Art Gallery, Te Papa Museum and Christchurch Art Gallery. <https://janetlilo.com>

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