



THE LIGHTSHIP

NICOLA FARQUHAR LAUNCHES
NEW WORK ON 'THE LIGHTSHIP'

21 August, 2024

PRESS RELEASE

- The Lightship is pleased to present *Slow Fever*, a new piece by Nicola Farquhar.
- The commissioned site-specific artwork will be displayed from 17 August - 27 November 2024.
- In the piece, scrolling passages from Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* novel, in which the young Victor recounts the near-madness of his creative fervour, are accompanied by a cheerily rotating modernist colour wheel.



Slow Fever

Although it is among the most popular and famous works of English literature, the original text of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* has receded over the years behind the towering edifice of its pop cultural legacy. However, it remains a strange, revelatory text whose meditations on the nature of creation, parenthood and alienation place it somewhere between romanticism and a sort of proto-existentialism. In Nicola Farquhar's new work for the Lightship, *Slow Fever*, scrolling passages from Shelley's novel, in which the young Victor recounts the near-madness of his creative fervour, are accompanied by a cheerily rotating modernist colour wheel. For Farquhar, the most pertinent aspect of Shelley's text is the analogy between the creation of life and the creation of art, whereby the creative endeavour itself takes on the aspect of Shelley's new Adam. At work in the studio, alone with their own thoughts and emotions, artists may ultimately find themselves sympathising with the dying Victor Frankenstein, who, with his last words, advises his rescuer to find "happiness in tranquillity and avoid ambition."

About Nicola Farquhar

Nicola Farquhar was born 1972 in Hamilton, New Zealand and graduated from the Elam School of Fine Art in 2009 with an MFA. She is currently based in Auckland and is a painter that works primarily in oil on linen. Her paintings often use rich and vibrant colours and she explores traditional portraiture through experimentation with colour, space, and science fiction elements. Through her use of human and botanical forms her works question relationships to the natural world and draw on the conventions of portraiture to represent the human body as a dynamic and evolving ecosystem. Although women are usually the subjects of her paintings, they are not based on or named after real people.

Farquhar has exhibited in both solo and group shows in New Zealand, Australia, and Hong Kong. Notable exhibitions include *Discoveries*, Art Basel, Hong Kong (2014); *Method and Gesture*, Utopian Slumps, Melbourne (2013); *New Revised Edition*, City Gallery, Wellington (2013); *Porous Moonlight*, Papakura Art Gallery (2013); *Necessary Distraction: A Painting Show*, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki (2015), with Saskia Leek, Julian Hooper, Stella Corkery, Kirstin Carlin, and James Cousins.

About The Lightship

The Lightship, is a new site for contemporary art, which was launched by Port of Auckland in October 2020. 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 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's inaugural commission was a new artwork by Janet Lilo entitled *ISLOVE* which went live from 8 October, 2020.

This was followed by;

1. *Come Up For Air*: Sorawit Songsataya
2. *Skylined*: Tyson Campbell
3. *Broken Embraces*: Sione Tuívailala Monū
4. *Pūtahitanga kura*: Abigail Aroha Jensen & Georgina Watson
5. *Onepanea*: Natalie & Sam Tozer
6. *Kupesi Sisi Huelo 'oe Taulanga Waitematā moe Funga*
Tāmaki Makaurau: Sione Faletau
7. *Whakakiwi*: SINŌ
8. *EVERYTHING*: Fiona Jack
9. *Broken Sovereignty*: Parasite
10. *Emma's Rain*: Andrew Beck
11. *Heavy Frame (wairua)*: Turumeke Harrington
12. *The Long White Cloud*: Jae Hoon Lee
13. *Sky Sculpture*: Andre Hemer
14. *Frequency Colour*: Clinton Watkins

The site is programmed by curator Bridget Riggir-Cuddy, and 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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About the Car Handling Building

The car handling building was developed by Plus Architecture as part of Port of Auckland's 30-year master plan. It is designed to reduce the space taken up by imported vehicles and better integrate Auckland's port into the surrounding community.

The car handling building is no ordinary 'car park'. It is a harbour-saving building, which removes the need to take more of the Waitematā harbour for reclamation by stacking cars vertically. On its southern wall, facing Quay Street, it has the world's largest soil-based vertical garden, which was created by local company Hanging Gardens. The western wall, facing Queens Wharf, holds The Lightship.

It is a remarkable building, weaving the functional and the aesthetic together to create a building that works both for the port and the city.

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