

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 25 November 2019**



*Vivien Atkinson, Reminding Myself to Remember, 2019. Photo by Harry Culy*

### **Ten contemporary jewellers claim space in Titirangi**

Te Uru Waitakere Contemporary Gallery is pleased to present *HANDSHAKE 5: in site*, an exhibition that brings together ten jewellers from the first four rounds of *HANDSHAKE* to explore the potential of jewellery in large-scale spaces. The artists come from across Aotearoa and their work will be on display at Te Uru in Titirangi from 7 December 2019 – 16 February 2020.

While jewellers commonly dress the body as an intimate, typically small-scale process, the artists in *HANDSHAKE 5* work with the dynamic architectural spaces of Te Uru's purpose-built gallery as a springboard for ideas, testing the spatial qualities of jewellery; how it interacts within its own surroundings, affects our movements through a room and involves us in contemporary dialogue.

"It is fascinating how jewellery goes beyond just its physical or commercial appearance," says artist, teacher and curator, Peter Deckers, who initiated the *HANDSHAKE* programme in 2011.

### **About HANDSHAKE:**

HANDSHAKE was created by Wellington-based jewellery sparkplug, artist, curator, writer and tutor, Peter Deckers. The idea was born out of recognition of the need for ongoing support for talented New Zealand graduates after completing their jewellery art study.

HANDSHAKE reverses the old apprentice model, whereby a mentor works for a mentee to allow the Handshaker to develop their work and ideas as an independent practicing artist. Each new HANDSHAKE group receives professional development opportunities and an exhibition programme alongside mentor sessions; therefore, no HANDSHAKE exhibition ever looks the same. Each project is recorded and presented on the HANDSHAKE website, which also includes current and past developments. Blog posts, documented exhibitions, publications and exhibition catalogues form a solid archival package that can be shared around the world.

The HANDSHAKE project could only succeed thanks to the continued funding of Creative New Zealand and support from Makers 101 and all others involved.

[handshakeproject.com](http://handshakeproject.com)

### **About Te Uru:**

Te Uru is a regional gallery based in scenic Titirangi, gateway to the Waitakere rain forest and en route to Auckland's famous west coast beaches. We are locally rooted in West Auckland but globally minded. As a destination gallery, Te Uru operates from an award-winning purpose-built building, which opened in November 2014 as part of the redeveloped Lopdell Precinct. The gallery originally began in 1986 in the historic Lopdell House building as the Waitemata City Arts and Cultural centre, later known as Lopdell House Gallery. Now sited next-door, we continue to present a diverse programme of contemporary exhibitions, events and activities, complemented by exceptional architecture and spectacular views of the surrounding area. Te Uru receives core funding from the Waitakere Ranges Local Board of Auckland Council.

For more information, contact:

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## Notes to Editors

### About the artists:

**Vivien Atkinson** was born in Melbourne, Australia but is now based in Wellington, New Zealand. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Massey University, a Master of Fine Arts from RMIT, Melbourne and Bachelor of Applied Arts from Whitireia New Zealand. Her practice is informed by both jewellery and Fine Arts practices, and an interest in research. Her projects often involve memory, identity, social history and relational aesthetics, and are resolved through a variety of media including installation, video, sound work, jewellery and performance.

**Becky Bliss** is a contemporary Wellington-based jeweller. Since graduating from Whitireia New Zealand in 2010, she has taken part in HANDSHAKE 1, 3 and 5 projects, as well as alumni exhibitions in Australia, Germany, Thailand and Sweden. Her work has been selected for *Schmuck*, Munich, in both 2015 and 2020. Bliss is also a graphic designer and has worked on jewellery publications for HANDSHAKE, *Wunderrama*, Karl Fritsch and Lisa Walker.

Auckland-based artist **Nadene Carr** completed a Degree in Visual Arts from the University of Auckland in 2009. She has shown work both nationally and internationally, including the exhibition *Neckware* at Masterworks, Auckland, 2013, *HANDSHAKE 3*, Handwerk & Design Fair, Munich, 2013, *HANDSHAKE 3* at The Dowse Art Museum, Wellington, 2017 and *Oceania* at the Royal Academy, London, 2018.

Wellington-based jeweller **Nik Hanton** revisits the age-old techniques of woodwork, reshaping and reframing the material within a modern context. After studying Sociology and Psychology Nik worked for a number of years in a variety of media industries before following her passion for jewellery. Her background in social sciences is evident in her work, which explores themes associated with these disciplines.

**Kelly McDonald** completed a Bachelor of Visual Arts at Sydney College of the Arts in the late 90s. Following concurrent careers working in nursing and within the art department for film and children's television, she moved to Wellington, New Zealand. Kelly is a member of the collective *Occupation: Artist* and a participant in the HANDSHAKE Project. She was a jewellery tutor at Whitireia New Zealand for twelve years and has recently completed a Master of Fine Arts from Massey University.

**Neke Moa** (Ngati Kahungunu ki Ahuriri, Kai Tahu, Ngati Porou, Tuwharetoa) was born in Devonport, Auckland, Aotearoa. Moa is a contemporary jeweller who predominantly works with stone, pounamu and locally sourced materials. In 2000, she gained a Diploma of Design & Art at Te Waananga-o-Raukawa, and furthered her studies at Whitireia New Zealand, completing a Bachelor of Applied Arts in 2007.

Moa has exhibited widely throughout Aotearoa and internationally as part of; *HANDSHAKE*, 2010-2020 (Aotearoa, Australia, Holland, Munich, Prague, Thailand), *Wunderrama: New Zealand Jewellery* 2014-2015 (Auckland, Wellington, Munich) and the Festival of the Pacific Arts, Guam, 2016. She has also shown in *Schmuck*, Munich, 2015, *Te Ao Hurihuri*, Crypt Gallery, London, 2018 and has recently been chosen to attend the 13<sup>th</sup> Festival of the Pacific Arts in Hawaii, 2020. For the last three years, Moa has taught shell craft in Fiji and Tonga and continues to teach and learn as part of her art practice.

**Brendon Monson** is a Dunedin-based artist who has exhibited nationally and internationally. He completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 2013 at the Dunedin School of Art, where he currently works as a technical teacher and night class tutor.

Having immigrated to New Zealand in 2006, concepts of belonging and identity are a constant presence in **Sandra Schmid**'s work, explored through various endemic materials and techniques. Schmid completed a Bachelor of Applied Arts majoring in Contemporary Jewellery from Whitireia New Zealand in 2014. She has also received the Fingers Gallery Graduate Award, won the Australian and New Zealand Graduate Metal Award XIV, and the ECC/Dowse student Craft/Design Award for Jewellery from The Village Goldsmith. Schmid's work has been selected for the Galerie Marzee International Graduate exhibition and has shown in contemporary jewellery exhibitions in Italy, China, Holland, Australia and throughout New Zealand. She was part of *HANDSHAKE 4*, in which she was mentored by Estonian Jeweller Tanel Veenre.

**Caroline Thomas** was born in London, England to New Zealand parents who travelled to the UK in the 1960s and didn't find their way home until forty-odd years later. Caroline studied History of Art at Edinburgh University and Jewellery Design at Whitireia New Zealand. Before discovering the contemporary jewellery drug, Caroline worked for twenty years as an image researcher in the publishing industry, employed by many and varied clients including Penguin Books and Guinness World Records. Caroline now lives and works in Wellington, New Zealand.

**Sarah Walker Holt** completed a Bachelor of Visual Arts from the University of Auckland in 2010. She has received numerous prizes including the Fingers Graduating Students Award, 2010 and the New Zealand Contemporary Jewellery Award, 2011. Sarah has exhibited nationally and internationally and was an exhibitor in The Dowse Art Museum's touring exhibition, *Wunderrama: New Zealand Jewellery* (Wellington, Auckland, Munich 2014-15).

"Contemporary jewellery is a media where complex forces simultaneously are at work on multiple levels. It connects the body, the object, and materials with forces of thoughts and stories, infused by its long history, and artists' signatures. How the people have responded to of all this goes back to prehistoric days."

HANDSHAKE is a project where emerging jewellers were given the opportunity to work alongside established practitioners for the development of ideas, techniques and exhibitions, facilitating the passing of knowledge, from one to another - mentor to mentee.



Sarah Walker-Holt, *Eclipse* (front and back), 2019

After four previous iterations, *HANDSHAKE 5* gathers artists from each past *HANDSHAKE* project for a showcase that is independent of mentors; no longer emerging, these are now established artists. With materials spanning wood, metal, found object, video projection and virtual reality, *HANDSHAKE 5: in site* presents the culmination of almost ten years of learning through the *HANDSHAKE* programme, which has provided a platform for individual growth and a broader experience of cultural and artistic exchange.

"It's a big challenge for jewellers to work to room-size scale, and there have been extremely varied and imaginative responses to the top floor gallery spaces here at Te Uru," says Gallery Assistant, James Anderson, who has overseen this edition of *HANDSHAKE* for Te Uru. "I'm really excited by the range of materials and processes that come from having ten distinct contemporary jewellers together in one exhibition."



Sandra Schmid, *LAVD*, 2019

Featuring artists Vivien Atkinson, Becky Bliss, Nadene Carr, Nik Hanton, Kelly McDonald, Neke Moa, Brandon Monson, Sandra Schmid, Caroline Thomas and Sarah Walker-Holt, *HANDSHAKE 5: in site* will run at Te Uru from 7 December 2019 - 16 February 2020.

The exhibition opening function is on Saturday 7 December from 4-6pm. Join us from 3pm, before the official opening, for *HANDSHAKE 5: Artists' Walk and Talk*.

*HANDSHAKE 5* appreciates generous support from *HANDSHAKE* founder, Peter Deckers, online coach, Roseanne Bartley, studio visit coach, Sian van Dyk, technical support coach, Vernon Bowden, as well as continued funding from Creative New Zealand and support from Makers 101.

Hours: 10am – 4.30pm daily  
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Website: [www.teuru.org.nz](http://www.teuru.org.nz)

For interviews with the artists, high-resolution images or for further information, please contact: James Anderson, 021 144 9608, [james@teuru.org.nz](mailto:james@teuru.org.nz)

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