

## BUNDANON UNVEILS NEW EXHIBITION SEASON

### ***THE POLYPHONIC SEA***

8 July – 8 October 2023

***Presenting the work of 12 multidisciplinary artists from Aotearoa New Zealand***



***Shoalhaven, NSW:*** Bundanon has unveiled its major new exhibition season, ***The Polyphonic Sea***, in the award winning Art Museum, open to the public until **8 October 2023**.

The exhibition explores the wealth of languages around us, from speech and writing, gesture, and music, to the flow of the natural environment. Curated by Sophie O'Brien, it showcases recent and new works by twelve leading artists from Aotearoa New Zealand: **Antonia Barnett-McIntosh, Andrew Beck, Ruth Buchanan, The Estate of L. Budd, Sione Faletau, Samuel Holloway et al., Sarah Hudson, Sonya Lacey, Nova Paul, Sriwhana Spong, and Shannon Te Ao.**

Arising from Ancient Greek, the word *polyphony* refers to 'many voices'; specifically, however, it refers to multiple melodies, all simultaneously maintaining their independence. *The Polyphonic Sea* prioritises sound, music and languages of many kinds (whether written or spoken, read by the eyes or experienced through the body).

The exhibition itself transforms into a kind of musical score. A choreography of both sound and silence will lead audiences through the gallery spaces as individual works are activated within the Art Museum. **Shannon Te Ao's** large-scale video, *la rā, ia rā (rere runga, rere raro) Everyday (I fly high, I fly low)*, presents an elegiac meeting of choreography and song (*waiata*). **Sriwhana Spong's** *Instrument H (Monster Chicken)* is both musical instrument and sculpture, played daily in the museum. **Sarah Hudson's** wrapped space presents her research into the language of ochre and the female body in traditional Māori culture, accompanied by the sounds of nature in *Ngāti Awa, Ngāi Tūhoe, Ngāti Pūkeko*. **Sonya Lacey's** infrared filming of chlorophyll looks to the life of plants, employing a technique that NASA uses to chart the greenness, and thereby health, of the planet Earth.

Spanning a range of artforms, including photography, design, documentary filmmaking, choreography, music composition and field recordings, weaving, painting and sculpture, each artist presents work that draws our attention to the languages we often overlook, celebrating a world of non-verbal cues rich with meaning. ***The Polyphonic Sea*** invites visitors to Bundanon to consider the transformational power of listening.

**Rachel Kent, CEO said:** "*This new exhibition season speaks to Arthur Boyd's vision for Bundanon, to support artists across disciplines in the creation of new works through the artistic residencies program, live performance and presentation onsite. Launched in 2022, the Art Museum, Bridge and wider infrastructure amplify this vision through new creative opportunities for artists and the engagement of diverse audiences. With its focus on languages, both spoken*

*and experienced through nature, The Polyphonic Sea builds connections between local and international practices, First Nations artists in Aotearoa New Zealand and south coast custodians.”*

**Sophie O’Brien, Head of Curatorial & Learning said:** *“Through my research into the work of artists living and working in Aotearoa New Zealand, I found a resonance with our ambitions at Bundanon: that is, to hold space for numerous creative and cultural practices, often in dialogue with the natural environment. These artists from Aotearoa respond to the multiplicity of languages around them in numerous ways, drawing on Māori and Pakeha heritage as well as the universal languages of sound and gesture. Beyond the exhibition itself, Bundanon is collaborating in new ways with First Nations custodians on a language forum, part of a bigger partnership, which visitors can experience as a part of the public programs”.*

A **public program** of artist and curatorial talks, family friendly workshops and performances runs alongside the exhibition season.

For more information visit [www.bundanon.com.au/thepolyphonicsea/](http://www.bundanon.com.au/thepolyphonicsea/)

**IMAGES AVAILABLE [HERE](#)**

*Ends*

## **The Polyphonic Sea**

8 July – 8 October 2023

Bundanon | [www.bundanon.com.au](http://www.bundanon.com.au)

**MEDIA CONTACTS:** To request interviews, further information or imagery please contact Articulate: Siân Davies [sian@articulatepr.com.au](mailto:sian@articulatepr.com.au) 0402 728 462 or Claire Martin [claire@articulatepr.com.au](mailto:claire@articulatepr.com.au), 0414 437 588

**ABOUT BUNDANON:** Established in 1993, Bundanon was gifted to the Australian people by Arthur and Yvonne Boyd, representing one of the most significant acts of philanthropy in the history of the arts in Australia. Bundanon is located on 1,000 hectares of bush and parkland overlooking the Shoalhaven River, on the South Coast of New South Wales, two and a half hours from Sydney.

Bundanon’s mission is to operate the property as a centre for creative arts and education, for scientific research and a place to explore landscape and engage with First Nations history and culture. Bundanon’s residency program for visual artists, writers, musicians, dancers, performers and scholars, and its learning programs, are an investment in Australia’s future. Bundanon is supported by the Australian Government through the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications’ Office for the Arts, Create NSW, the University of Wollongong, Landcare Australia, and a range of other foundation, bequest, and philanthropic contributions. The Collection features some 1,448 works by Arthur Boyd together with Boyd’s contemporaries such as Sidney Nolan, John Perceval, Joy Hester and Charles Blackman. In addition, Bundanon has an archive of artist books, scripts, compositions and working models related to artwork developed on the properties through the Artist in Residence program.

Bundanon’s Artist in Residence program is the largest program of its kind in Australia and spans a 30-year history. In 2023, over 150 multi-disciplinary artists and researchers will be in residence at Bundanon. Bundanon’s residency program is for visual and performing arts, literature, science, dance and music. It provides important career opportunities for artists and researchers to develop their work in an inspiring environment. Artists and researchers are hosted in purpose-built studios and rehearsal spaces on the organisation’s secluded Homestead Site.

For more information visit [www.bundanon.com.au](http://www.bundanon.com.au)

## **ABOUT THE ARTISTS:**

### **ANTONIA BARNETT-MCINTOSH**

Antonia Barnett-McIntosh (Kāi Tahu, Pākehā) is a composer-performer, sound artist, editor, and curator based in Tāmaki Makaurau, Aotearoa. She collaborates in cross arts spaces, gently tapping on the borders between speech/music, performance/rehearsal, composition/writing, and juxtaposing the formalities of presentation with the aesthetics of failure. Antonia's works investigate speech as music: the pitches, rhythms, intonations and conversational overlaps of our everyday. In varying formats, these speech works loosen expectations around 'final product': from text piece, transcription piece, installation, live approximation of performance, performance of an artist talk, to instrumental concert.

### **ANDREW BECK**

Andrew Beck's practice combines site-specific installation, photography and aspects of painting. He is particularly well-known for his photograms (camera less photography). As Christina Barton said in an article, 'despite the analogue nature of his practice, Beck is the product of our digital era. He is embedded in a system in which actual space and present time blur seamlessly with a screen-centric domain in which images swirl, where distances collapse and multiple temporalities coexist. In this new condition the call to medium specificity seems redundant, for now things and their representations merge and blur; place and non-place, past and present fluidly intermingle.'

### **RUTH BUCHANAN**

Ruth Buchanan is an artist of Taranaki, Te Atiawa and Pākehā decent living in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. She works across exhibition making, writing, design, and teaching. Her work draws out the contested and dynamic relationship between the body, power, language and the archive. This process of contesting often relates closely to the types of relationships that standardised infrastructures, such as archives, libraries, and museums create between our bodies and society at large and actively asks how these relationships could be otherwise.

### **THE ESTATE OF L. BUDD**

The Estate of L. Budd was formed in 2008 and exists as an archive of annotated/deducted interventions across multimedia as a multi-dimensional expression outside of AI and the Internet of Things. The materials are documented in the Estate of L. Budd Catalogue of Extant Works. Since its inception, The Estate has been interested in theories of the archive as a conceptual practice.

et al. has been operating since 2000. As it currently exists the archive offers elements that may be combined, adjusted and reconfigured forming a collaboration between the Estate and et al.

### **SIONE FALETAU**

Dr Sione Faletau describes his multidisciplinary art practice as the storying and narrating of Tongan and Moana concepts. Sione explores the Tongan concept of 'ongo, which has the dual meaning of 'sound' and 'to feel'. 'Ongo or lono and rongo in other Moana cultures describes the sensation of vibrating sounds caused by the environment, people and unseen presences that is often described as 'feeling'. Faletau utilises these elements of 'ongo to create site-specific work that responds to the fonua (land) and architecture.

### **SAMUEL HOLLOWAY**

Samuel Holloway is a composer, artist, and educator based in Tāmaki Makaurau. His creative work ranges from orchestral and chamber music to multi-modal installation work, and has been presented in Aotearoa, Asia, Europe and North America. Samuel's work is concerned with aspects of musical complexity, perception, and time; ambiguous affective states such as boredom; musical notation and its continuing potential as a site for exploration; and the conventions and expectations involved in shared performing and listening experiences. Samuel is strongly engaged with both music and visual arts communities and participates regularly in a range of advisory and assessment panels.

### **SARAH HUDSON**

Sarah Hudson is a Ngāti Awa, Ngāi Tūhoe, Ngāti Pūkeko artist, researcher and mum from Whakatāne, Aotearoa. As a founding member of Kauae Raro Research Collective, Sarah has spent the last three years promoting and protecting Māori earth pigment paint-making practices. She splits her time between home-educating her 7-year-old, implementing research projects for Kauae Raro, and creating works with her other art collaboration, Mata Aho Collective. Sarah's practice reconnects with her ancestral lands and practices through kinship, reciprocity, and responsibility. With works conceptually grounded in relationships with people and places, collectivity and collaboration are of utmost importance.

## **SONYA LACEY**

Sonya Lacey (b. 1976) is a Tauranga-based artist working with media including moving image, sculpture and language. Her practice focuses on forms of spoken, printed and online communication. Her recent work explores connections between the physiological needs of plants and those of humans; the overlapping chemical, metabolic, emotional and technological processes that collapse the distance between species. Alongside her studio practice, Lacey is also interested in curatorial, publishing, and collaborative methodologies.

## **NOVA PAUL**

Nova Paul (Te Uriroroi, Te Parawhau, and Te Māhurehure ki Whatitiri, Ngāpuhi) is an artist filmmaker using early cinematic film processes, experimental film practices, and weaving traditional stories and mātauranga Māori. Her technicolour films explore ways in which film could unravel time, picture wairua and layers of whakapapa to imagine decolonial thought. Her recent B&W 16mm films are hand-processed by plant-based developers, using the leaves of the trees filmed to create a film developer. The filmic outcomes are not so much about trees but by trees, exploring ways photosynthesis, filmmaking, and spirit are intertwined and where the mauri is revealed.

## **SRIWHANA SPONG**

The London-based artist Sriwhana Spong's practice moves between film, painting, performance and sculpture. Born in New Zealand and of Indonesian and Pākehā descent, Spong works with everyday materials and offers installations that encompass sculptural, musical, and performative dimensions that inspire moments of gathering, listening, and transformation. Her recent work has focussed on the relationship between the body, language and sound, as inspired by the practices of medieval female mystics. In parallel to this Spong's work continues to explore her long-standing interest in understanding her personal sense of displacement in reference to her Balinese heritage.

## **SHANNON TE AO**

Working predominantly with performance and film, the elegiac installations of Shannon Te Ao (Ngāti Tūwharetoa, 1978, Sydney) explore fraught dynamics of indigeneity, language, and loss. Te Ao draws on a range of existing literary material including Māori lyrical sources such as whakataukī and waiata, as well as poetic and lyrical texts from popular culture. Richly layered, Te Ao's works enact a compression wherein past and present co-exist, and daily life is inextricably linked to multifarious social, cultural, and philosophical Histories.

*Images left to right:*

1. *Sione Faletau, Fou ki moana / By way of the ocean, 2023, kupesi of audio recording of Shoalhaven River (5 mins). Photo: Zan Wimberley.*
2. *Shannon Te Ao, la rā, ia rā (rere runga, rere raro) Everyday (I fly high, I fly low), 2021, three channel video with sound (6:20 minutes). Photo: Zan Wimberley.*
3. *The Polyphonic Sea, works by (left to right) The Estate of L. Budd, Samuel Holloway, Sriwhana Spong and Ruth Buchanan. Photo: Zan Wimberley.*