

# ST PAUL St Symposium 2018

24 - 25 August 2018

**Ko au te au**  
I am the ocean

# Charlotte Huddleston with Balamohan Shingade

## Conveners' Introduction

*Ko au te au / I am the ocean* is a two-day Symposium which begins a collective enquiry that will continue into 2019 through all ST PAUL St programmes. This collective enquiry is shaped by three interrelated kaupapa: knowledge, language, and love.<sup>1</sup> The kaupapa relate to, are conditioned by, and exist within each other.

Now in its seventh year, the annual Symposium has consistently focused on knowledges and questions of knowing – of how we come to know, and cultural conceptions within which knowledge is defined. Knowledge is embedded in practice, language and culture; it cannot be decontextualized. In addressing this we attend to lawyer Moana Jackson's reminder that "if knowledge is power then we need to be clear about whose knowledge we are using or defining..."<sup>2</sup> With a focus on artistic and curatorial practices, we ask questions such as: what is the relationship between knowledge, knowing and understanding?

Language too is a significant ground of power relations. Language is culture; world-views are expressed in language, in its words and structures, its forms and limits. In thinking about language we consider the annihilating effects of suppression as per Ngūgĩ wa Thiong'o's 'cultural bomb' as a weapon of imperialism, asking who speaks and who is heard, what stories are told, who is telling them, and what do we ask with the language we have?<sup>3</sup>

Love most clearly expresses being in relation to and with; "knowing something is bound to how we develop a *relationship* with it."<sup>4</sup> The way we understand, view, engage with, deploy and value concepts and practices of language and knowledge reveals our attitude. An attitude of love values the interconnectedness of ourselves to each other and to a bigger universal presence, making possible "an epistemology of spirit" as described by scholar Manulani Aluli Meyer.<sup>5</sup>

*Ko au te au / I am the ocean* begins with a mihi whakatau by Dr Valance Smith followed by short presentations on each kaupapa by three invited conversation partners: Ioana Gordon-Smith on

knowledge, Cameron Ah Loo-Matamua with Ara Ariki Houkamau on language, and Bruce E. Phillips with Jordana Bragg on love. Local historian, storyteller and orator Pita Turei will lead a hīkoi focusing on the now hidden waterways and springs around central Auckland. Facilitator and art educator Iokapeta Magele-Suamasi will lead a group session to discuss and decide the protocols to guide the following day's enquiry into the kaupapa. The evening ends with a screening of *TERROR NULLIUS* by Soda\_Jerk, followed by a shared meal.

The 2018 Symposium is the first public phase of the collective enquiry titled *Two Oceans at Once* – named from a story by Eduardo Galeano, where he retells the commonly known history of the world in 600 short episodes.<sup>6</sup> *Two Oceans at Once* takes on the impetus of retelling within the cultural context of Aotearoa New Zealand, where 2018 is the 125th anniversary of women's suffrage, and 2019 is the 250th anniversary of the arrival of Captain James Cook. The Symposium and the collective enquiry reflect our constant state of becoming, and 'coming into relationship with' our context. In this enquiry, attending to both local and global contexts and questioning established thinking and practices, the intention is to activate structural and programmatic change within dominant institutionalised attitudes and their manifest inequity.

<sup>2</sup> Moana Jackson, 'He Manawa Whenua', *He Manawa Conference Proceedings: Inaugural Issue*, eds. Leonie Pihema, Herarora Skipper and Jillian Tipene. Hamilton: Te Korahi Research Institute, University of Waikato, 2015, 62. Accessed 5 April 2018. <https://goo.gl/U4w4ZNI>.

<sup>3</sup> Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*. London: J. Currey: Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann, 1986.

<sup>4</sup> Manulani Aluli Meyer, 'Indigenous and authentic: Hawaiian epistemology and the triangulation of meaning', *Handbook of Critical and Indigenous Methodologies*. Sage Publications (online), 2008/2014, 11. Accessed 22 March 2018. <https://goo.gl/mv9VdZ>.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>6</sup> Eduardo Galeano, 'Americans', *Mirrors: Stories of almost everyone*, trans. Mark Fried. New York: Nation Books, 2009.

FRIDAY 24 AUGUST  
PIONEER WOMEN'S HALL

2.00PM	Arrival and registration
2.15PM	Mihi whakatau by Dr Valance Smith and introduction by co-convenor Charlotte Huddleston
2.30PM	15-minute presentations by three conversation partners on three kaupapa: <i>Knowledge</i> : Ioana Gordon-Smith; <i>Language</i> : Cameron Ah Loo-Matamua with Ara Ariki Houkamau; <i>Love</i> : Bruce E. Phillips with Jordana Bragg
3.30PM	Hīkoi around Auckland CBD with Pita Turei
4.30PM	Discussion facilitated by Iokapeta Magele-Suamasi to agree on and set the kaupapa and tikanga for guiding and grounding discussion on Saturday
5.30PM	30-minute break with light refreshments
6.00PM	Screening: <i>TERROR NULLIUS</i> by Soda_Jerk
7.00PM	Dinner and conversation
9.30PM	Exit

SATURDAY 25 AUGUST  
PIONEER WOMEN'S HALL

11.00AM	Arrive
11.15AM	Introduction by co-convenor Balamohan Shingade
11.30AM	Session one, three groups: <i>Knowledge, Language, Love</i> led by conversation partners
12.30PM	Lunch provided
1.30PM	Session two, three groups: <i>Knowledge, Language, Love</i> led by conversation partners
2.30PM	15-minute break with light refreshments
2.45PM	Session three, three groups: <i>Knowledge, Language, Love</i> led by conversation partners
3.45PM	30-min wrap up: Brief feedback from conversation partners, last comments
4.30PM	Exit
5.00PM	Optional: Conversations continued at Vivace

*Expanded Contexts*

Māori sculptor Arnold Wilson once observed, “When taken from its proper place which is the meeting-house, traditional carving loses its life spirit, its ‘guts’ as it were.”<sup>1</sup> Working from the position of a curator in a contemporary gallery, Wilson’s statement brings into relationship twin concerns that rub against each other like tectonic plates: a sincere desire to redress the limited inclusion of Indigenous artists from contemporary art spaces, and a concern to protect Indigenous artists and the integrity of Indigenous knowledge.

As contemporary galleries diversify their programming, institutions are increasingly interested in a range of Indigenous practices that have varying interest in and relationships to the white cube. Wilson’s observation acts as a useful starting point for considering what types of knowledge (and practices) the gallery as context both supports and attracts. It opens out, on the one hand, room to consider what it might mean for a gallery to operate as a ‘proper place’; what are some supportive contextual conditions and how would we come to learn of them? What reciprocal obligations are imparted in receiving Indigenous knowledge? If Indigenous knowledge has a ‘life spirit’ and internal rules, how does that challenge how we approach curating? Wilson’s proposition, however, also implicitly challenges galleries to consider sites of knowledge that exist outside of themselves. How, in practical terms, might a gallery acknowledge a spectrum of practice and knowledge that extends beyond its walls? How tethered are we to the notion of the gallery as a fiduciary of knowledges?

Though broad, the questions are asked here to consider the implicit effects of a gallery’s context and social character on a process of selection and self-selection. Putting artists and Indigenous knowledges at the centre, the questions open out a consideration of how the gallery can engage with the transmission of Indigenous knowledges on its own terms, when the gallery might confront its limits, and how to understand the difference between the two.

# Cameron Ah Loo-Matamua

## Language

Deleuze and Guattari tell me that because I am a *minority* writing in a major language I am the producer of a *minor literature*. To them, my writing is imbued with the “deterritorialization of language, the connection of the individual to a political immediacy, and the collective assemblage of enunciation.”<sup>1</sup> To them, I am a conduit for not merely my own thoughts but also the thoughts of my people, my race, and more profoundly, our collective entanglement in the dominating structures that prevail. In actuality, I feel highly underqualified to speak from anyone’s position other than my own. Yes it is true that when I walk into the room I walk with the spirit of my ancestors in front of me, but that is beside the point.

In a Western framework, ‘voice’ is typically what follows through language, but in fa’a Samoa, this notion dissolves quickly. In a political sense, only Matai, or Chiefs, have voices. Those in our family esteemed to have titles bestowed on them hold the right to publically, politically, and collectively enunciate for *us*. This is an important difference, one that has always edged its tail into the processing of my own subjectivity. It manifests simply in that my writing will always pass through the hands of many senior members of my family before it is published. They tell me when I am speaking out of place or sharing too much. This removes any anxieties I might have around what it is that I am saying and who it is that I am saying it for.

Teresia Teaiwa and her thoughts on Pacific Studies comes to mind,

One of my deepest ambivalences about Pacific Studies is the occasional attempt by well-meaning conference conveners to frame academic work as somehow sacred in a native context... I shudder at any implication that the work we do is rarefied or *tapu*. Pacific Studies, I firmly believe, must be *noa*-available to challenge, criticism, connection to all.<sup>2</sup>

There is fa’a Samoa, tikanga Māori, countless other foundational structures within Moana nui a Kiwa, and then there is everything else. The difference is crudely obvious to some, and tragic to others.

Like Teaiwa's Pacific Studies, most institutional work must be noa too. It must remain keenly self-conscious of its context and birthplace within the Institution. In the air of benevolent liberalism, many would have us believe that there are quite easy ways to allow for two worlds—two oceans—to become one. Becoming one is the easy goal to have, living as two distinct wholes is the radical outcome. And in this same vein, I disavow the idea that my language is enshrined (or enshrines) with the impact of a *minor literature*. Do not take my words here as the invocation of any grand narrative or precious knowledge, but rather as a testimony of this indigenous cultural worker and their problems with Language.

Yes, it is true that when I walk into the *room* I walk with the spirit of my ancestors in front of me, but that is beside the point.

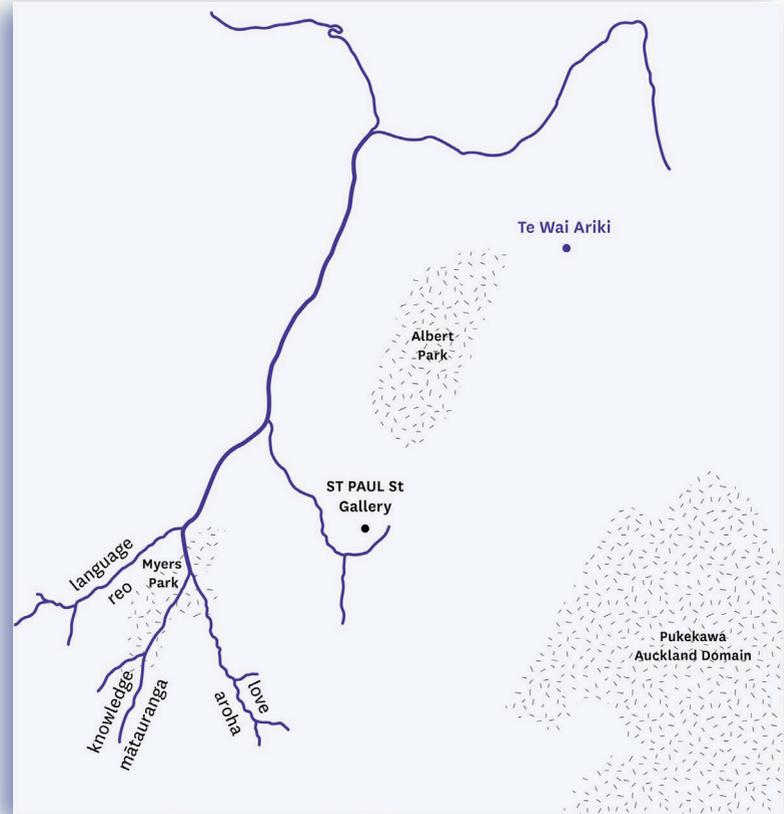
Love most clearly expresses being in relation to and with; “knowing something is bound to how we develop a *relationship* with it.”<sup>1</sup> The way we understand, view, engage with, deploy and value concepts and practices of language and knowledge reveals our attitude. An attitude of love values the interconnectedness of ourselves to each other and to a bigger universal presence, making possible “an epistemology of spirit” as described by scholar Manulani Aluli Meyer.<sup>2</sup>

As a relational concept, an attitude of love enables empathetic energy to flow within a social system, and can lead us to understand our collective responsibility, shared conditions of vulnerability and individual duty of self-care. If we accept this proposition, how then might an attitude of love be practiced by creative professionals to guide the way in which we engage and work together? To initiate further discussion, this presentation will focus on two cornerstones of the contemporary art world – criticality and selection. It questions how an attitude of love might challenge how we understand, practice and value these two things.

Criticality is a core aspect of how artworks are developed and received, and is a central aspect to writing, curation and art education. We can sharpen each other through critique but this sharpness can also wound and intimidate, or it can become blunt through ubiquity and strategies of sublimation. Selection is the tool for discernment and is vital to any creative practitioner in maintaining quality or specificity. Since selection not only aims to include but by default must to some extent exclude, it is inevitable that certain artforms, cultures, modes of thought and actual people can become dismissed, ostracized and even dehumanised. And yet, perhaps there are particular contexts in which deliberate exclusion via selection is necessary to maintain social cohesion and a sense of physical or emotional safety. The ethical concerns of criticality and selection are, therefore, relational issues in which an attitude of love might be applied to enable us to create new social and political realities within the art world and beyond.



# Two Oceans at Once



# Soda\_Jerk

## *TERROR NULLIUS, 2018*

SCREENING



Soda\_Jerk's *TERROR NULLIUS* is a political revenge fable which offers an un-writing of Australian national mythology.

This experimental sample-based film works entirely within and against the official archive to achieve a queering and othering of Australian cinema. Part political satire, eco-horror and road movie, *TERROR NULLIUS* is a world in which minorities and animals conspire, and not-so-nice white guys finish last. Where idyllic beaches host race-riots, governments poll love-rights, and the perils of hypermasculinity are overshadowed only by the enduring horror of Australia's colonising myth of terra nullius.

Cameron Ah Loo-Matamua

Cameron Ah Loo-Matamua (Sa Matamua, Sa Muagututi'a) is an independent curator, writer, artist and educator currently based in Tāmaki Makaurau. As a creative practitioner, they are interested in the cultural lineage of settler colonialism within the Pacific, and more recently, the problem of identity formation within the era of globalisation. As a cultural practitioner, they are interested in working through institutions and institutional thinking, privileging the collective when imagining what a 'radical praxis' might look like. In 2017, they were selected as the Artspace/Tautai Education Intern where they provided educational and curatorial support to the gallery, running the *Snakes and Ladders* programme of reading and writing groups, and working with curator Bridget Riggir-Cuddy to position the gallery during its transition period. They are currently working on a year-long collaborative project with artist Juliet Carpenter that will have the artists present new work while in residence at I:Project Space, Beijing.

Jordana Bragg

Jordana Bragg is a multi-disciplinary artist currently based in Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand. Bragg's

practice spans writing, live performance, still and moving image. Concentrating on the metaphysics of love and loss to expose the prosaic drama of everyday life, their practice discloses a characteristically dangerous personal and universal sense of vulnerability, informed by adventurous research methodologies surrounding issues of representation, identity and gender fluidity. Bragg is co-founder of the artist run initiatives Meanwhile (NZ) and Friends are Artists/Freunde sind Künstler (DE).

Ioana Gordon-Smith

Ioana Gordon-Smith is Curator | Kaitiaki Whakaaturanga at Te Uru Waitakere Contemporary Gallery. Prior to this role, she was Curator at Objectspace and the inaugural Education Intern for Artspace, New Zealand. Ioana contributes regularly to a number of catalogues, magazines and journals. She was the New Zealand-based project manager for the inaugural Honolulu Biennial 2017 and has been a regular Pasifika correspondent for Radio New Zealand. Though her areas of interest span a broad range of disciplines, consistent throughout is a curatorial process that prioritises a close working relationship with artists.

Ara Ariki Houkamau

E reo noku na toku ui tupuna Avaiki e, Avaiki e, Avaiki tere taku vaka na te Moana Nui o Kiva ki toku ipukarea, rakeiia toku enua ki te meitaki ko koe e Tumu te Varovaro, ko toku nei reo kapiki, iririia toku toto mei te pa enua katoa. E vaine toa no Puaikura mai, rangatira no te Ariki Tinomana tatakina, ueueia!

Ko Patangata me Whetumatarau ngā tūparehua o ōku wai kaukau e kīa nei ko Wharekahika me Awatere. Ko Hinemaurea me Hinerupe ngā marae nukunuku ātea a Tū te ihiihi, a Tū te wanawana, ngā papa e tāraia ai te kupu kōrero, e tatakina ai ngā tangi apakura, a nunui mā, a roroa. Ko Horouta te waka tawhito i tōia mai i Hawaiki rānō. Ko au tēnei ko Ngāti Porou, he wiwi, he nāti, he whano kē!

*He mihi aroha ki taku teina, ki a Michaella Houkamau me tana hoa, a Tamarua Marsters, i takoha mai i tenei tatai pepeha hei reo maku.*

Charlotte Huddleston

Charlotte Huddleston is the Director of ST PAUL St Gallery, AUT, Aotearoa New Zealand. As director/curator at ST PAUL St, Charlotte's current research and practice is informed by this educational context and engages with how to take on a

role "of critic and conscience of society" as per the New Zealand Education Act (1989) – which effectively opens the door to challenges to the institution itself.

Recent projects at and with ST PAUL St include: *Local Time: Horotiu* (2012), *Assembly* co-curated with Melissa Laing and Vera Mey (2012); *FIELDS: an itinerant inquiry across the Kingdom of Cambodia* (2013). Charlotte initiated the Gallery's Research Fellowship that began in 2014 with Sakiko Sugawa, and in 2016 continued with Irwan Ahmett and Tita Salina. Along with Sugawa and artist/activist Ella Grace McPherson-Newton ST PAUL St realised the exhibition *This Home is Occupied* (2014), and the publication *Co-Revolutionary Praxis: Accompaniment as a strategy for working together* (2016); with Ahmett and Salina the exhibition *The Flame of the Pacific* (2016), and the web platform [www.theflameofthepacific.com](http://www.theflameofthepacific.com) as a living publication to record their ongoing research into the geopolitics around the region of the Pacific Ring of Fire. Between 2014-2016 Charlotte co-convened with Abby Cunnane the annual ST PAUL St Symposium.

Bruce E. Phillips

Bruce E. Phillips is a Wellington-based writer and curator. From 2011-16 he was the Senior Curator at Te Tuhi, Auckland, continuing as Curator at Large in 2017. He is currently lecturing part-time at Massey and Victoria Universities in Wellington plus undertaking a PhD, freelance writing and curating. Phillips has curated many exhibitions featuring over 200 artists such as Jonathas de Andrade, Tania Bruguera, Ruth Ewan, Newell Harry, Amanda Heng, Rangituhia Hollis, Tehching Hsieh, Maddie Leach, William Pope.L, Santiago Sierra, Peter Robinson, Shannon Te Ao, Luke Willis Thompson, Kalisolaite 'Uhila, Ruth Watson and The Otolith Group. Selected group exhibitions include: *Close Encounters* at the Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago (2008–2010); *What do you mean, we?* (2012), *Between Memory and Trace* (2012), *Unstuck in Time* (2014), *THE HIVE HUMS WITH MANY MINDS* (2016) Te Tuhi, Auckland; and *Share/Cheat/Unite* (2016–17) at Te Tuhi and The Physics Room, Christchurch. With Sorcha Carey he curated *With the sun aglow, I have my pensive moods* by artist Shannon Te Ao for the 2017 Edinburgh Art Festival, commissioned by Te Tuhi and the Edinburgh Art Festival. As a writer he has contributed reviews and articles for art magazines and journals

including ArtAsiaPacific, ArtLink Australia, Art News New Zealand, Eyecontact, Hue & Cry and Le Roy; and has contributed essays to publications for organisations such as Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, Enjoy Gallery, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, Letting Space and Te Tuhi.

Balamohan Shingade

Balamohan Shingade is a curator and Assistant Director of ST PAUL St Gallery, AUT. He is an MFA graduate of Elam School of Fine Arts, where he was employed as a Professional Teaching Fellow (2012–15). During the redevelopment of Uxbridge Arts and Culture, he was the inaugural Manager/ Curator of Malcolm Smith Gallery (2015–16). His research focuses on theories of community, and he has recently contributed to the Journal of Asia-Pacific Pop Culture, Artlink Australia, Pantograph Punch, and Christchurch Art Gallery's Bulletin. As a curator, he has contributed to *Field Recordings* (2018) and *Alex Monteith: Coastal Flows/Coastal Incursions* (2017) at ST PAUL St Gallery, *Isobel Thom: ILK* (2016) and *Soft Architecture* (2016) at Malcolm Smith Gallery, *Joyce Campbell: Te Taniwha and the Thread* (2015) at Uxbridge, and *Thirty-six Views of Mount Taranaki* (2013) for the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery's Open Window.

Soda\_Jerk

Formed in Sydney in 2002, Soda\_Jerk is a two-person art collective who work at the intersection of documentary and speculative fiction. They are fundamentally interested in the politics of images: how they circulate, whom they benefit, and how they can be undone. Their sample-based practice takes the form of films, video installations, cut-up texts and lecture performances. Based in New York since 2012, they have exhibited in museums, galleries, cinemas and torrent sites.

Iokapeta Magele-Suamasi

Iokapeta (Samoa) is a proud Ōtarian, and alumna of Whitecliffe College and Art and Design, with an MA in Arts Management and an undergraduate degree in Art and Design. She is the Manager of Learning (Education) and Outreach Programmes at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki overseeing all art education and outreach programming. She supports the constructivist approach to art education where dialogical teaching and learning with artworks is encouraged. She manages a team of five art educators who design and deliver programming that supports the NZ curriculum and quality art museum education

pedagogy. Previously, Iokapeta developed the Outreach Programme for Auckland Art Gallery working onsite and offsite. She is project manager for the 'Visible Voices' Research Project funded by Creative New Zealand Diversity Fund researching Moana Oceania programming in Auckland Art Gallery.

Her worldview and practice is framed by a Moana Oceania lens with networks as an international coach in training with RISE2025. She is also a member of *iYau Tabu Tolu* an independent collective of Moana Oceania advisors in the institutional historic collections space alongside Kolokesa Uafā Mahina-Tuai, Barbara Afitu and Daren Kamali. This year, she was also selected by the US Consulate NZ for their Pacific Women Leaders blog.

RISE2025

Run by Rachel Petero and Jeanine Bailey RISE2025 is a ten-year global strategy to positively impact 100,000 indigenous women and girls by 2025. It began in Aotearoa, New Zealand in 2015 with 100 Māori, Pacific Island and Asian Women. The programme is committed to developing indigenous women as world-class leaders and coaches by 2025. <http://www.rachelpetero.com/rise2025/>

# ◀ST PAUL ST



ST PAUL St Symposium 2018

*Ko au te au / I am the ocean*

Conveners:

Charlotte Huddleston and Balamohan Shingade

ST PAUL St Gallery:

Charlotte Huddleston, Kaiurungi/Director

Balamohan Shingade, Kaituki/Assistant Director

Eddie Clemens, Kaiwhakairo/Gallery Technician

We would like to thank:

Cameron Ah Loo-Matamua, Jordana Bragg, Ioana Gordon-Smith, Ara Arika Houkamau, Local Time, Iokapeta Magele-Suamasi, Bruce E. Phillips, RISE2025, Valance Smith, Pita Turei and our volunteers Lindsey De Roos, Tim Restieaux and Bareeka Vrede.

ST PAUL St Gallery is the gallery for Auckland University of Technology. Located in the School of Art + Design, we are a non-collecting gallery dedicated to the development of contemporary art and design through an international programme of exhibitions, events, symposia and publications. ST PAUL St Gallery takes up one of the primary instructions for universities in the New Zealand Education Act (1989), that they "accept a role as critic and conscience of society." We also interrogate the longstanding proposition that the arts have a particular capacity to speak critically about society.



Presented in partnership with: