



# THE LIGHTSHIP

## SINŌ LAUNCHES NEW WORK AT 'THE LIGHTSHIP'

*13 December 2021*

### PRESS RELEASE

- The Lightship is pleased to present *Whakakiwi*, a new work by SINŌ.
- The commissioned site-specific artwork which will be displayed from 13 December 2021 – 25 January 2022.
- The Lightship is a 110-metre-long, 13-metre-high light wall that Ports of Auckland built into the western façade of their new car handling building. It can be viewed from Quay Street, city wharves, local buildings and the water.



The dragon stood on the shore of the ocean. And I saw a beast #coming #out of the Moana. It had seven heads and ten horns, ten crowns for each horn and a blasphemous name for each of the seven heads. The beast I saw resembled a horse, but had the eyes of a guyliner and feet like those of a kuri and a mouth like that of a sovereign.

The dragon gave the beast its power and its throne and great authority. One of the heads of the beast seemed to have a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. Filled with wonder, the whole world followed this beast. People worshipped the dragon because it had given authority to the beast, and they also worshipped the beast and asked, "Who is like her? Who can wage war against HER????"

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The shoreline is a prototypical meeting point. A boundary line and site of potential as much cultural as it is geological. In the colonial context, the place where land meets water is symbolically bound up with histories of arrival and first encounters. It was on, from, or near the shore where the first exchanges between English forces and Māori took place. It was from the shoreline that a bicultural Aotearoa, nyoo zeelan emerged.

The shore holds specific value within the bicultural imaginary of n#w z#aland - playing out in continued contention over its access and ownership, the love of our many beaches, and an art history that records the shore as the liminal space that gave way to our contemporary way of life.

For SINŌ, the identity emerging from this archetypal encounter on the shore is 'Kiwi'. Whakakiwi can be interpreted as 'how to become a New Zealander' or, 'the making of the New Zealander'. The usage of 'Kiwi' to name a person who lives in newzooland signals a belonging to a specific ideological new zmiddlearthland - one that has overcome its colonial beginnings of forceful nation building and control over indigenous life.

Today, such ideas of an untroubled national identity are blazoned in places and rituals of arrival and departure. Airports are filled with Kiwi vernacular—in decor, souvenirs—as if to remind those arriving and departing how to be and belong in place. Recognizing the Lightship's context as a contemporary point of arrival, SINŌ treats the lightscreen as a site for the advertising of a harmonious national identity: 'Welcome Home'.

Simulating a systems failure or invasion, this space of ideological advertising is then compromised by something quite contrary. Who or what makes this playful trouble is not entirely clear. An ambivalent hacking spells messages not easily placed within pleasantries of the 'Kiwi' imaginary.

*Whakakiwi* makes new myths out of old. The work's fantastical hacking of ideas of home question the security of fixed and happy notions of national identity, while also making apparent the ways in which stories and understanding of 'us' are made.

The dragon saw a beast emerge from the ocean. Bicultural *nyoo zeelan* emerged from encounters on the shore. *Whakakiwi* antagonizes the myth of a finished bicultural encounter, to offer instead the idea that identity remains ever open to new encounters, hybridities and transfers of power.

## About SINŌ

Breeding and birthing in Tāmaki Makaurau, this practice falls along the failures of a necropolitical factory of transgenderist-homoheterosexualising-monstrous-dissident-taniwha-of-the-western-binary-of-sexual-difference-and-an-enemy-of-the-country-colony-and-crown.

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The Lightship, is a new site for contemporary art, which was launched by the Ports 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 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's inaugural commission was a new artwork by Janet Lilo entitled ISLOVE which was live from 8 October – 3 December, 2020.

This was followed by;

1. *Come Up For Air*  
Sorawit Songsataya  
10 December, 2020 – 4 February, 2021
2. *Skylined*  
Tyson Campbell  
11 February – 8 April, 2021
3. *Broken Embraces*  
Sione Tuívailala Monū  
15 April – 17 June, 2021
4. *Pūtahitanga kura*  
Abigail Aroha Jensen & Georgina Watson  
17 June – 18 July, 2021
5. *Onepanea*  
Natalie & Sam Tozer  
22 July – 3 November, 2021
6. *Kupesi Sisi Huelo 'oe Taulanga Waitematā moe Funga Tāmaki Makaurau*  
Sione Faletau  
3 November – 13 December, 2021

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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IG [@the\\_light\\_ship](https://www.instagram.com/the_light_ship)

## About the Car Handling Building

The car handling building was developed by Plus Architecture as part of Ports 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 and a public park is currently being designed for the roof, giving Aucklanders a beautiful new green space with outstanding views of the harbour, the central city and their port at work.

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. There is nothing like it anywhere else on earth.

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