



THE LIGHTSHIP

FIONA JACK LAUNCHES
NEW WORK AT 'THE LIGHTSHIP'

9 February 2022

PRESS RELEASE

- The Lightship is pleased to present *Everything*, a new work by Fiona Jack.
- The commissioned site-specific artwork which will be displayed from 9 February – 30 March, 2022.
- Responding to her first major public artwork in 1997, Jack's new work reflects on global change in the 25 years between *Nothing*[™] and *Everything*.
- *Everything*, the single static word on The Lightship's LED screen, is accompanied by a podcast – a prompt for public conversation with Fiona and friends.



Nothing™, 1997

Fiona Jack's first major public artwork *Nothing™* (1997) convincingly promoted 'nothing' as a product available to purchase.

Nothing™ was brought to the public's attention through a campaign of 33 billboards across Auckland City. To promote *Nothing™* Jack satirically replicated advertising language in a series of billboards: "Nothing – for the person with everything". So realistic in its codes and scale, the campaign prompted enquiries as to where to purchase *Nothing™* - artwork turned advertisement, advertisement turned artwork.

As an undergraduate student in the years leading up to the *Nothing™* billboards, Jack had made street poster projects, taking advantage of the walls of discarded city districts. A time of growth and globalisation through the 1990s saw a swift commercialization of properties and public space, and challenged the lively and unstructured creative use of the city's spaces and walls.

In this period of rapid development dedicated billboard space was a new kind of real estate in Auckland's central city. Owned and controlled by advertising companies who rented out space for the promotion of ideas and products, billboards were a rapidly increasing feature of public space.

Jack pitched the concept of *Nothing™* to billboard company OGGI, who saw an opportunity and took the project to the *Outdoor Advertising Association of New Zealand (OAANZ)*. Jack was offered 33 billboard sites across Auckland in return for using the artwork as the basis for market research.

For Jack, the artwork was an ironic critique of coercive advertising practices and their encroachment on public space and our collective psyche. For OAANZ, it delivered compelling data on the effectiveness of billboard advertising which they used to market their new medium to the market. An irony not lost on Jack, rather, part of the point - economic purpose underpins almost everything.



Everything, 2022

Twenty-five years since *Nothing*[™], Jack's new work on The Lightship's LED screen references the 1997 campaign in its typography and imagery, but instead of many 'nothings' throughout the city, she offers one 'everything'.

Where *Nothing*[™] was a foil for the desire and the consumerist tendencies at the heart of modern economies, *Everything* is an alert – a silent siren that reminds of us what we all know – that everything must change. Jack cites a parallel with author Naomi Klein's thinking path over the same 25-year period.

Two years after the *Nothing*[™] billboards, Klein released *No Logo* – “the first book to put the new grassroots resistance to corporate manipulation into clear perspective.” Her latest book, *How to Change Everything*, published off the back of *This Changes Everything*, is a guide for young humans to protect the planet and each other.

Podcast

As part of *Everything*, The Lightship presents a stand-alone podcast, which can be enjoyed wherever the listener is, or activated as a self-guided audio tour for a walk from Karangahape Road – where *Nothing*[™] was once installed – to *Everything* on Bledisloe Wharf.

A multi-voiced audio call to action alongside Jack's huge, one-word visible statement, the podcast acts as a listening map with Fiona Jack and friends; the layered voices of people who strive daily not to let the overwhelming everything result in doing nothing, and who are driven by the collective power of many people doing something.

About Fiona Jack

Fiona Jack is an artist and educator based in Auckland, Aotearoa (New Zealand). Working in ceramics, textiles and social practice, her projects are driven by engagement with local communities and sociopolitical issues.

Through dialogue, observation, collecting and digressive historical research Fiona pieces together a fabric of references that inform the development of each body of work.

In Riverbed (2018-19) Fiona worked with prominent activist Sue Bradford and the Kotare Educational Trust to generate a large collaborative sculptural work that emerged out of a series of facilitated political discussions.

A key work in the exhibition *Our Red Aunt* was *In the hands of the proletariat* which offered thousands of engraved cobbles to gallery visitors in reference to the artist's great aunt's militant suffrage activities.

The Heraldry of Presence (2014) and *The Will of the People* (2016) studied banners and their long service as identifiers and gathering devices for groups of people.

Portworkers (2012), *The Trees* (2013) and other ongoing projects all pay attention to the tenacity and labour of those who have taken a stand in a public setting.

The series *In time I will see things a little differently* (2010 - ongoing) engages with the close examination of historical photographs, and two projects with Ngarimu Blair and Ngati Whatua O Orakei – *Palisade* (2008) and *Kohimaramara* (2008) – have drawn attention to historical acts of violent colonisation through re-enactment and re-presentation.

Living Halls (2010) examined New Zealand's radical commitment to building hundreds of social halls as war memorials after the World Wars.

Fiona has an MFA from CalArts Los Angeles and is Acting Head of School at the Elam School of Fine Art at The University of Auckland.

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 – 16 June, 2021
4. *Pūtahitanga kura* – Abigail Aroha Jensen & Georgina Watson
17 June – 18 July, 2021
5. *Onepanea* – Natalie & Sam Tozer
22 July – 2 November, 2021
6. *Kupesi Sisi Huelo 'oe Taulanga Waitematā moe Funga Tāmaki Makaurau* – Sione Faletau
3 November – 13 December, 2021
7. *Whakakiwi* – SINŌ
14 December, 2021 - 2 February, 2022

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 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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