



THE LIGHTSHIP

ESTHER STEWART'S NEW
WORK ON 'THE LIGHTSHIP'

1 Sep - 26 Oct, 2025

PRESS RELEASE

- The Lightship is pleased to present *Untitled* a new piece by Esther Stewart.
- The commissioned site-specific artwork will be displayed from 1 September - 26 October 2025.
- In reference to the history of Port of Auckland (having once been the location for a theme park), Esther Stewart has created a looping curtain form that animates to rotate endlessly, lending the work to the atmosphere of a carnival ride.



Untitled

Esther Stewart reimagines the Lightship's monumental screen with a looping curtain form drafted in AutoCAD and animated to rotate endlessly. The curtain repeats and unfurls with playful rhythm, lending the work to the atmosphere of a carnival ride. In Stewart's hands, the motif becomes both architectural and theatrical, transforming hard-edged geometry into a spectacle of colour and motion. Known for her bold abstractions that draw from architectural language and design systems, Stewart here pushes her practice into a new dimension, using digital tools to create a work of perpetual movement that wraps viewers in pattern, rhythm, and exuberant excess.

About Esther Stewart

Esther Stewart is an Australian artist based in Melbourne, known for her geometric abstract paintings and architectural collaborations that bridge art and design. She studied fine art at the Victorian College of the Arts, and her work is characterized by crisp geometric forms through which she explores space and perspective. Stewart has exhibited widely in Australia, including at the Heide Museum of Modern Art and the Art Gallery of New South Wales, and her paintings are held in major collections such as the National Gallery of Victoria and Artbank. In 2016 she won the Sir John Sulman Prize, underscoring her prominence in contemporary Australian art. She has also extended her vision beyond the gallery through design collaborations, including working with architects on site specific projects and collaborating with the Italian fashion house Valentino to translate her signature patterns into a fashion collection.

About The Lightship

The Lightship, is a new site for contemporary art, which was launched by Port 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 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 went live from 8 October, 2020.

This was followed by;

1. *Come Up For Air*: Sorawit Songsataya
2. *Skylined*: Tyson Campbell
3. *Broken Embraces*: Sione Tuívailala Monū
4. *Pūtahitanga kura*: Abigail Aroha Jensen & Georgina Watson
5. *Onepanea*: Natalie & Sam Tozer
6. *Kupesi Sisi Huelo 'oe Taulanga Waitematā moe Funga*
Tāmaki Makaurau: Sione Faletau
7. *Whakakiwi*: SINŌ
8. *EVERYTHING*: Fiona Jack
9. *Broken Sovereignty*: Parasite
10. *Emma's Rain*: Andrew Beck
11. *Heavy Frame (wairua)*: Turumeke Harrington
12. *The Long White Cloud*: Jae Hoon Lee
13. *Sky Sculpture*: Andre Hemer
14. *Frequency Colour*: Clinton Watkins
15. *Slow Fever*: Nicola Farquhar
16. *White Collar Eclipse*: Oscar Perry
17. *Cut Line*: Alex Chambers

The site is programmed by curator Simon Bowerbank, 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.

www.thelightship.co.nz

hello@thelightship.co.nz

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 Port 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.

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.

//

ENDS

For further information, contact:

Julie Wagener
General Manager Communications
Government & Community Relations
M: +64 27 421 6697
E: julie.wagener@poal.co.nz.