

# ARTSPACE<sup>NZ</sup>

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## Artist Works With Local Iwi

Auckland artist **Fiona Jack** has worked on a unique collaborative project with **Ngarimu Blair**, the Heritage Manager of Ngati Whatua, to create a new work specifically for the ARTSPACE billboard project. The billboard is located on the corner of Karangahape Road and Symonds Street. This is the fourth in a series of projects in partnership with the Langham Hotel. Fiona and Ngarimu's project, titled *Kohimaramara* investigates the history of a former part of the Auckland landscape, the rock called *Kohimaramara*, which originally stood on the headland below Bastion Point.



This rock was physically removed in 1908 to make way for development of the area. The work deals with its symbolic return, through photographic reconstruction. *Kohimaramara* is a place that has significant cultural meaning for Maori:

“The rock is connected with the peace settlement ceremonies of the tribes of Auckland over the ages. It's a symbol of resolution and peace.” Says Ngarimu Blair

In another recent collaboration with Ngati Whatua o Orakei, Fiona Jack and volunteers reconstructed a palisade fence along Auckland's waterfront. This palisade refers to a historical palisade which was built in 1943 by volunteers around the Ngati Whatua O Orakei papakainga (the traditional Maori village of the Ngati Whatua people of Orakei) in Okahu Bay on Auckland's waterfront. The fence was an attempt to regain some privacy and maintain a sense of community in the face of encroaching colonial urbanisation, which was exacerbated by the construction of a major roadway through the village that separated the main living areas from the sea.

Her collaborative works are noteworthy says ARTSPACE Director Emma Bugden;

“Fiona Jack is one of the most engaging artists practicing in New Zealand today. Her collaborative works with the Ngati Whatua are exciting, they are opening up cultural knowledge and questioning ideas of public space.”

Fiona has recently returned to New Zealand, she graduated with an MFA from CalArts in Los Angeles in 2005 and has exhibited widely internationally. She lives in New Zealand where she is a Lecturer at the Elam School of Fine Arts at the University of Auckland.

ARTSPACE uses the Langham Hotel's billboard for contemporary art projects. The space provides an opportunity for the invited artist to work on a massive scale, measuring 22.5 x 4 metres. We would like to acknowledge the generous support of the Langham Hotel, Omnigraphics, Billboard Solutions and Karangahape Road Business Association.

Photos by Haruhiko Sameshima, 2008 and James D Richardson (courtesy Special Collections, Auckland City Libraries), 1901.

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