

Ayesha Green (Ngāti Kahungunu, Kai Tahu)

Bouquet for Jameela (1-8)

2021

acrylic on canvas

Bouquet for Jameela is a series of eight paintings conceived as love letters to the artist's former partner. The series charts the path of their relationship from early feelings of fascination, desire and love, through to mourning, remembrance and thankfulness at the relationship's conclusion. Each painting depicts a bouquet of flowers and is accompanied by words expressing emotions felt at the time.

This series is inspired by a 19th century book called *The Language and Sentiment of Flowers*, a Victorian floral dictionary that attributed human emotions to individual plants. This coded language enabled people at the time to communicate by way of blooms. A bouquet of flowers could be an alternative means of communication and a secret way for friends and lovers to send messages to each other.

In *Bouquet for Jameela*, each flower is chosen for its associated meaning: angelica=inspiration, verbena=enchantment, birch=elegance, hawthorn=hope, and so on. Green connects a western codified language of flowers to the personifications of nature in mātauranga Māori. While the plants conveyed are all introduced species to Aotearoa, they remain available for reinterpretation, renaming and transplanting.

Green uses a grid layout to reference taxonomies and the desire to list and categorise through systems of classification. Within the context of queer ecologies, *Bouquet for Jameela* is emblematic of an interconnectedness between humans and plants and how this might lend itself to a reimagining of ecology through a queer lens.

On loan from private collections. Courtesy of the artist and Jhana Millers Gallery.

Archie Barry (Narrom/Melbourne)

Tatsache

2017

Single-channel video loop, sound

4 minutes, 24 seconds

Tatsache is a devotional poem that calls into question totalising systems of knowledge. The artist performs a range of movements in front of the camera while citing a series of verses including the repeated mantra "this body is not real, this body is not fake."¹ These verses have been informed by physicist Karen Barad's research into quantum theory that gives "permission to states of being that are incomprehensible."²

The word *tatsache* roughly translated from German means 'matter of fact' or 'something that exists', a playful paradox to Barry's work which denies easy comprehension. In this work, the conscious body is fluid, ever evolving and reimagined. Reverberating around questions of the authentic and inauthentic self, *Tatsache* poses existential questions about existence and consciousness and emphasises the biological make-up of atoms endemic to all lifeforms.

Barry's work echoes a resistance to define and categorise which is central to many queer and trans positions, acknowledging the space between and the importance of the unknown. In the context of the exhibition, *Tatsache* speaks to a fluid and intersectional way of viewing the world central to queer ecological thought.

Courtesy of the artist

¹ A Spoken line repeated in *Tatsache*, 2017.

² Article by Madé Spencer-Castle, 2021. <https://www.monash.edu/muma/collection/queer-readings-of-the-collection/queer-readings-of-the-collection/archie-barry>

Richard Orjis (Aotearoa New Zealand)

Jerusalem

2021

Single-channel video, sound

2 minutes, 52 seconds

Jerusalem comprises a series of short clips filmed on the artist's phone at Hiruhārama/Jerusalem on the Whanganui River. In 2017, the Whanganui River gained legal personhood at the signing of Te Awa Tipua which recognised the river's indivisible and living whole. Grounded in queer ecological thought, Richard Orjis' work reflects on intimacies, pleasure and control.

Filmed in black and white, *Jerusalem* is overlaid with a voiceover that acknowledges the body of the river and queer politics as multifarious and evolving. "Pain body, pleasure body, queer body, celebrated legal body." Referring to ecologically damaging histories of the river as a resource to be mined and distributed such as the impact of the Tongariro Power Scheme, the voiceover conjures the river's anger; "Yelling my body my rules. My body, my choice. You're not the boss of me."

Jerusalem weaves the story of the French Catholic nun Mother Aubert to the Ngāti Hau river settlement in 1883. Aubert was a nurse, herbalist and educator and was thought to have cultivated the first cannabis crop in Aotearoa. She used the income from her range of medicines to support a home for orphans and the under-privileged in Jerusalem. The religious order founded by Aubert, the Sisters of Compassion, was one of the first groups to assist those living with HIV AIDS in the 1980s.

Noting the different histories of settlement along the river, from Aubert in the late 1880s to the formation of a commune in the 1960s, Orjis' film emphasises the mana of the river as a site of cultural and spiritual significance and the legal and attitudinal shifts towards bodily autonomy and personal freedoms.

Courtesy of the artist

Alicia Frankovich (Aotearoa New Zealand/Narrm Melbourne)

Atlas of Anti-Taxonomies

2019-22

16 dye-sublimation prints on PVC backlit polyester; 3 SD videos, colour, vertical, duration 5 seconds

Atlas of Anti-Taxonomies depicts over 100 images of phenomena including plants, fungi, rock, bacteria, plastics and planetary space. The collection of images is wide-ranging in both content and form, each with their own lush vibrancy and intricate detail, and can be viewed in any order. The work is informed by German art historian Aby Warburg's *Mnemosyne Atlas* (1924-9), a project intended to map an expansive version of art history through non-hierarchical groupings of idiosyncratic images. *Mnemosyne Atlas* engages with First Peoples' knowledge systems as described by Māori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith and provides models for understanding research production in ways appropriate to the challenges of our present.

In *Atlas of Anti-Taxonomies* Alicia Frankovich questions dominant categorical systems that assume universalism and acknowledges that we exist in complex and dynamic relationships to non-humans. The Atlas's format resembles a digital workspace or computer desktop and combines medical and molecular imaging alongside those sourced from the internet and photographed by the artist. She describes the Atlas as a sort of "ephemeral or temporal binding of the moment" that provides reference points for the present time and space, the meaning of which will shift as they move into the future.¹

Informed by concepts of the *Zwischenräume*, the spaces in between, and the *Denkraum*, room for thought, Frankovich resists declaring a new fixed taxonomy. She echoes feminist theorist Donna Haraway's call of "staying with the trouble" as a framework for rethinking our relationship to other species amidst climactic disaster. *Atlas of Anti-Taxonomies* embraces wildness, disorder and desire through constantly shifting image worlds that speak to the porousness and intermingling of species, bodies and matter. As Frankovich claims, "There is an undoing of the question of whole earth and whole subject."²

Commissioned by Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū. Courtesy of the artist and Starkwhite.

¹ Frankovich A. *After Blue Marble: Affirmation, rhythm and pathos*, p.75. Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Monash University, 2022.

² Frankovich A. *Atlas of Anti-Taxonomies*, 2020-22.

arapeta (Ngāti Mahuta, Ngāti Whanaunga, Ngāti Porou, Muriwhenua)

Cupids Valentine
2022

Kuīni
Makawe Takatāpui ,Wig, 2022
Kiekie Muka, Fibre, Adhesive

Hine
Makawe Takatāpui, Wig, 2022
Houhere Muka, Fibre, Adhesive

Tāne
Makawe Takatāpui, Wig, 2022
Pingao, Harakeke Muka, Fibre

Pōkare
Contemporary Māori cloak, 2022
Satin fabric, Silk tassels

Cupid's Knee
Plinths, 2022
Plywood, Satin fabric

Cupid's Valentine
Collection of 50s and 60s music from Aotearoa and globally
Played between 11am and 1pm everyday
Curated by artists

Cupid's Valentine is an installation of makawe takatāpui (Māori wigs) fashioned by the artist. The makawe explore new horizons of Māori fibre practices and are made of kiekie muka, houhere muka, harakeke muka and the native plant pīngao. The makawe takatāpui are presented atop plinths covered in satin gold fabric that extends to the ceiling in the form of a contemporary Māori cloak. The installation playfully brings together different materials within the artist's kaupapa takatāpui combining native fibres with the glossy lustrous materials of satin and silk.

For a r a p e t a, the makawe are an expression of the artists indigenous queer identity and envisions wearers as takatāpui performers and storytellers. In making this work, a r a p e t a has been informed by the popular waiata Pōkarekare Ana as a queer love story that recognises the takatāpui relationship between Tūtānekai and his long-time friend Tiki.

The queer narrative of Pōkarekare Ana almost lost its meaning due to colonial assimilation which emphasised the heterosexual love story of Tūtānekai and Hinemoa, who swam across the lake to her forbidden lover. a r a p e t a's installation draws on the story's setting on Mokoia Island and the waters of Lake Rotorua which is reflected in the flowing gold satin that ebbs and flows around the sculptures. a r a p e t a's cloak speaks to mātauranga Māori through a queer lens that symbolises the fluid waters of Lake Rotorua and the passing down of takatāpui-tanga through the story of Pōkarekare Ana.

Titled *Cupid's Valentine*, the artist makes gentle reference to a collection of 1950s and 1960s music from Aotearoa and globally. These songs remind a r a p e t a of their upbringing and their understanding of takatāpuitanga as streams flowing like love songs. In the context of the exhibition, a r a p e t a reminds us of the importance of natural fibres and their ecological symbolism as part of a takatāpui centred practice.

Courtesy of the artist

Annie Sprinkle & Beth Stephens (USA)

Ecosex Manifesto 1.0

2011

Vinyl

Annie Sprinkle and Beth Stephens are a couple and artistic duo who have been creating projects about love, sex and queer ecologies together since 2002. They came out as ecosexuals after their Green Wedding to the Earth in 2008 and the following year they launched the ecosexual movement. They have since orchestrated 21 large-scale wedding performances that involved themselves and others making vows to nature entities such as the sea, sky, moon, sun and soil.

Ecosexual is an identity for a person that loves the Earth and enjoys and encourages sensual pleasure with the Earth. The ecosexual movement educates people about ecosex culture, community and practices. Sprinkle and Stephens spread the message through symposiums, workshops, performances, exhibitions and films. In their manifesto they state "in order to create a more mutual and sustainable relationship with the Earth, we collaborate with nature. We treat the Earth with kindness, respect and affection."¹

Key to ecosexuality is rethinking our relationship with Mother Earth and how ascribing a female gender to the Earth can impact how it is treated. For Stephens, "in a misogynistic society, when people imagine the Earth as a "she", they think she is less important than a he. So, the mostly male polluting corporate heads think they can treat the Earth badly."² Instead, Sprinkle and Stephens imagine the Earth as lover, and as all genders.

The work presented here is *Ecosex Manifesto 1.0* and is the first of three manifestos created by the artists. A second shorter version was penned for a performance in 2015 with artist Guillermo Gómez-Peña. In 2020, they released a third version to recognise the Covid-19 pandemic. The manifestos have been exhibited widely across the globe and the artists invite you to add your signature to the manifesto on display here.

Courtesy of the artists

¹ Sprinkle A, Stephens, E. *Ecosex Manifesto 1.0*. 2011.

² Stephens E. Nature is your lover, not your mother: meet ecosexual pioneer Annie Sprinkle. *The Guardian*; 2017.

Mary Maggic (USA/Austria)

Estrozine 1.0 with Byron Rich, Gaia Leandra, Paula Pin, Amanda Padilla and Carlos Gamez

Xeno Waters River Gynecology – Yes-Her Yeast Biosensors

Urine Hormone Extraction Action Materials and Methods

Schizozine with Rian Hammond and Paula Pin

Becoming with Fungi – Research and Workshop Manual

2017

paper

Mary Maggic is a nonbinary artist and researcher working at the intersection of hormones, body and gender politics and ecological alienations. They use bio-hacking (a do-it-yourself biology) to create new knowledge production around collective mutagenesis.

Since 2015, Maggic's research has focused on hormone biopolitics and environmental toxicity to address how human industrial activity has permanently altered the planet through the widespread presence of xenoestrogens (synthetic industrial chemicals). Xenoestrogens are harmful to human and animal health through their hormone-mimicking and displacing properties.

Maggic's fanzines and manuals combine research and recipes for hacking estrogen. These recipes serve as a kind of 'biotechnical civil disobedience' against ways that institutions pollute and regulate our bodies through hormones. In *Becoming with Fungi*, Maggic examines schizophyllan, a species of white-rot fungus that is known to break down toxicities such as endocrine-disrupting chemicals. The zine includes documentation of a workshop where participants perform their own scientific experiments of extraction and decolorization of schizophyllan from mushrooms. Other recipes look at different ways to detect and extract estrogen, including the workshop urine-hormone-extraction-action.

Through participatory workshops, performance, film and zine-making, Maggic draws on the notion of "fuzzy biological sabotage" as a way to demystify invisible systems of molecular biopower. As stated by the artist, "cross-contaminations are indeed needed to survive together. Purity does not exist!"¹

Courtesy of the artist

¹ Maggic, M. <https://maggic.ooo/About>

Laura Duffy (Aotearoa New Zealand)

From *Emergence of After*
2022

Single-channel video, sound
22 minutes 52 seconds

From Emergence of After grapples with two parallel contradictions: that queerness is the most natural thing, and that all bodies are no longer natural.

The video imagines the earth after humans have vanished, where new life blossoms in darkness and drinks from toxic waste. Duffy's work draws on fetishistic film devices such as food, cosmetics, fragrances, technology and commercials. She creates her videos in a lab-studio setting where decaying flowers and other detritus are left to ferment for lengthy periods. Filmed intuitively over multiple night-time sessions, Duffy creates a filming environment open to chance, unfamiliar materials and collaboration. In the video, surfaces glisten and perspire. Droplets reflect light back to the viewer, and objects appear in fragment. Gloopy, viscous substances drip onto tree branches, fuzzy edges and leggy fronds enmesh, flowers bloom and die in continuous motion, their lifecycle on loop. Each video frame is short, only allowing a glimpse of the image before it is usurped in darkness again. This darkness is also metaphorical in the way it relates to the erasure of queer histories. As stated by the artist, "I feel like I am looking into the darkness, trying to see, feel and hear."¹

For Duffy, nature has often been weaponised to enforce normative codes and queerness in relationship to nature cannot be untangled from culture, politics and power. She has been influenced by other artists in the exhibition - Mary Maggic's freak science methodology, and Richard Orjis' video *Jerusalem*. *From Emergence of After* seeks pleasure for impure and unnatural bodies, summoning up queer transmissions, to search for an unfindable ancestral body.

Courtesy of the artist

¹ Duffy, L. *Spawning Ecodeviance*, p. 42. Exegesis submitted to Massey University, Wellington, December 2022.