

Eight thousand layers of moments

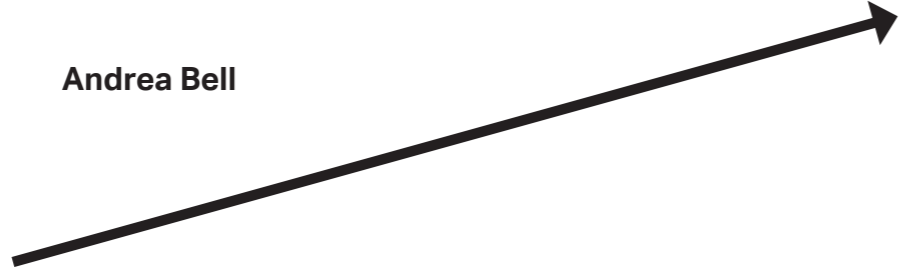
Roma Anderson
Katrina Beekhuis
Matthew Cowan
Paul Cullen
Miklos Gaál
Matthew Galloway
Henna-Riikka Halonen
Sean Kerr
Yukari 海堀 Kaihori
Louise Menzies
Ilya Orlov
Mirimari Väyrynen
Denise Ziegler

Eight thousand layers of moments is a group exhibition that considers luck from a range of artists' perspectives. Spanning multiple geographies and cultural positions, the artworks touch on aspects of chance, unpredictability, agency and control, and explore how these operate within artistic production. By asking the viewer to consider different interpretations of luck, the exhibition attempts to complicate an understanding of how luck intersects with place, privilege, history and language.

The exhibition title is borrowed from a line in Celine Song's 2023 film *Past Lives*, in which the notion of isolated existence is challenged through a narrative informed by 'inyeon'. In Korean Buddhism, inyeon ('in' (인/因) meaning "direct cause" and 'yeon' (연/緣) meaning "indirect cause") provides an explanation as to why certain beings meet in certain places and times, and touches on notions of providence or fate. In the context of the exhibition, inyeon provides a way to talk about how multiple geographies and cultural framings meet, and how luck, as a human experience, is one way of making sense of chance events and consequences.

Eight thousand layers of moments is a collaboration between Doctoral students and alumni from the Academy of Fine Arts, Uniarts Helsinki, and Elam School of Fine Arts at Waipapa Taumata Rau | The University of Auckland. The exhibition is one element of a wider exchange between the participating artists, which includes an experimental publication, and a reciprocal forthcoming exhibition in Helsinki.

Andrea Bell



On the evening of Saturday the 1st of August 1987, New Zealand's inaugural Lotto draw was broadcast live from Auckland, with a first division prize of \$360,000. Television co-presenters Doug Harvey and Ann Wilson announced the winning numbers on balls ejected from an automated machine¹ under the supervision of three men in suits from the Audit Office, Department of Internal Affairs, and New Zealand Lotteries Commission. The scrutineers' attendance, explained by Harvey, was 'just to make sure all is proper.'²

Lotto is an institution many have grown up with—a family friendly, televised entry into gambling. Established in 1987 as a Crown Entity, and replacing earlier national lotteries (such as the Art Union³ and Golden Kiwi⁴) Te Puna Tahua the New Zealand Lotteries Commission (trading as Lotto New Zealand since 2013) operates under the Gambling Act 2003, administered by Te Tari Taiwhenua The Department of Internal Affairs. Despite a direct link between gambling and social harm, Lotto NZ promotes itself somewhat altruistically, as a state-owned enterprise 'created with the purpose of giving back to the community.'⁵ Indeed Lotto's profits generated by sales of Instant Kiwi scratchcards, Lotto tickets, Keno, Powerball, Bullseye, and Strike are distributed far and wide; to charities, community groups, and under section 279 of the Gambling Act,⁶ statutory bodies Creative New Zealand Toi Aotearoa, the New Zealand Film Commission Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga and Sport New Zealand Ihi Aotearoa.

Our nation's belief in luck plays a major role in the funding of arts and culture. The 2022-23 financial year saw the Lottery Grants Board report a record profit, with total sales of \$1,520,000,000 (one billion, five hundred and twenty million dollars).⁷ Of that, Creative New Zealand received \$54.6 million.⁸ Though not a minor amount, a relatively modest sum given the large number of artists, galleries and practitioners served by the Arts Council. Demand for funding continues to increase and unsurprisingly it follows

that the odds of winning an arts grant are comparable to that of a lottery in itself. Until recently, the Lottery Grants Board's distributions have fluctuated in line with ticket sales and profits.⁹ Following a decline in Lotto revenue back in 2016, New Zealanders were urged by the Chief Executive of the Arts Council to buy a lotto ticket, in support of the arts.¹⁰ Change is again on the cards for CNZ with the recent announcement that Lotto's funding calculations are to be revised from a percentage of profits (formerly 15%)¹¹ to a fixed amount.¹² This shift follows a review of the lottery grants and advisory support system undertaken by Te Tari Taiwhenua, moving towards a model that is, in their words 'more responsive, flexible, inclusive, strategic and recognises Te Tiriti o Waitangi.'¹³ It also proposes to make the application process 'easier and fairer for communities, hapū and iwi to access funding.'¹⁴

In addition to Lotto, (bad) luck and misfortune at the pokies finances thousands of arts, community, education and sports ventures each year. Under the regulation of Te Tari Taiwhenua, electronic gaming machines in pubs and clubs belong to a category known as 'Class 4 gambling', due to being 'high-risk high-turnover'¹⁵ by design. Strict guidelines advise that the operation of these machines 'may only be conducted by a corporate society and only to raise money for an authorised (e.g. community and non-commercial) purpose.'¹⁶ Nationwide gaming societies such as the Aotearoa Gaming Trust, Lion Foundation, Pub Charity and New Zealand Community Trust (NZCT) amongst others, redistribute billions of dollars to these causes each year. According to the NZCT, this redirection of profits is uncommon elsewhere in the world: 'In most countries, gambling is purely for commercial gain, but New Zealand has a unique, community-focused model for pub gaming, where the net proceeds are returned to the community instead of the private sector.'¹⁷ In 2022 approximately \$330 million was paid out to nearly 10,000 community groups (including art organisations) around the country.¹⁸

The gambler's fallacy is the mistaken belief that an accumulated series of chance events (such as winning or losing) can be balanced out over time. The more losses incurred, the greater the chance of a future win. This cognitive bias is typical of problem gamblers. Those who attribute (good) luck as a personal trait or disposition, are likely to have an irrational anticipation of winning, and over-generalise their subjective sense of control. In gambling, magical thinking imagines connections between unrelated events; for example, crediting luck

to a particular day of the week following a big win.¹⁹ Tricked by machine algorithms into the feeling of a near miss, counterfactual thinking and the tendency to obsess over alternative scenarios only serves to fuel the addiction. As if needing further psychological torment, gamblers have also reported waking in the middle of the night with flashbacks; ringing bells and flashing lights luring their return to the machines.²⁰

But who are the real winners and losers? The Ministry of Health Manatū Hauora has identified Māori and Pasifika as 'priority groups'²¹ that 'bear a disproportionate burden of harm from gambling when compared to the wider population.'²² In addition to ethnicity, a national gambling study undertaken by Auckland University of Technology reported that most socio-demographic risk factors (e.g. young age, low income, lack of formal qualifications and large household)²³ are interrelated. Since 2014, the gambling industry has undergone regulatory and legislative reform in an attempt to minimise social harm. Operators of electronic gaming machines must pay a Gambling Levy (1.08% excluding GST) passed on to agencies that provide harm reduction services.²⁴ According to the Ministry's 2013 Gambling Resource for Local Government, one of the major risk factors associated with increased prevalence of problem gambling is 'location and/or density of gambling venues and machines.'²⁵ More specifically, the risk of problem gambling is 'significantly associated with living closer to gambling venues.'²⁶ Unsurprisingly, policy proposing the relocation of machines away from high risk areas 'is understood to be more effective in reducing problem gambling than simply reducing gaming machine numbers.'²⁷ Gaming societies are mandated to make a minimum percentage return of 40% towards community grants.²⁸ As a result, those unable to deliver on these performance measures (typically in rural and provincial areas) have been forced to remove their pokie machines.²⁹ Plans are underway requiring operators 'to return at least 80% of their net proceeds to the region where the funds were raised.'³⁰ While this may benefit local communities by keeping funds in the region, those in areas without gaming machines will be unlikely to qualify for grants, resulting in a significant reduction in community funding for regional New Zealand.³¹ Effectively, this model supports a scenario whereby a small town may be awarded an arts grant courtesy of fellow community members afflicted by gambling addiction. Meanwhile those living nearby without gaming machines miss out on funding but are protected from gambling harm.

im
bing
feels
lucky

Funding the arts ought not be a moral dilemma. However, the redistribution of gambling proceeds is clearly at odds with the former government’s supposed commitment to wellbeing outcomes. In a recent roundtable on arts policy,³² Greens MP Chlöe Swarbrick spoke out on this issue: ‘Having funding from Lotteries that is ring-fenced for arts and culture is an anomaly inside our funding system at present. The fact that we are upholding it is a perversity and it could disappear relatively overnight if there was the political willpower...All that funding otherwise would just go into the pot.’³³ National spokesperson Jonathan Young agreed on the need ‘to shift away from funding models based on doing harm.’³⁴ Though this is unlikely to be a priority for the new coalition.

More likely to be a priority for the current coalition is the prevailing belief in individual freedom, civil liberties and personal responsibility. Due to these commonly shared political persuasions, the continued funding of arts (culture, sport and community causes), via gambling profits, remains largely unquestioned. Gambling is egalitarian in the sense that anyone can win. It’s an attractive option for those on a low income when the odds are otherwise stacked against them. According to Salvation Army Oasis Director Lisa Campbell, ‘Every day we see people who have turned to pokie machines in a desperate attempt to claw their way out of poverty. These people are not playing the pokies for fun; they see it as the only way out for themselves.’³⁵

On the other side of the coin, affluent New Zealanders are more likely to place emphasis on hard work, thereby minimising the role of luck as a contributing factor to their financial success. Under Neoliberalism, this narrative of entitlement acts to obscure structural inequalities that condition access to wealth, education, housing, and healthcare, while disregarding existing privilege, and historical disadvantage. It also fails to recognise class structure and the birth lottery: ‘a life condition that exists outside of individual choice, talent or drive, but defines so much of what we are able to do in our lifetime.’³⁶

Funding the arts via gambling proceeds is essentially a wealth transfer, from predominantly low income households to largely middle class artists, arts workers and audiences. And although offering arts funding targeted towards identified priority groups (from which a large portion of the money may have originated) comes with best intentions, this does nothing to address the basic needs of these communities. Furthermore, no amount of blue

washing (overstating a commitment to responsible social practices) or harm minimisation policies can reconcile the truth that the gaming products responsible for funding such initiatives, are the root cause of the problem.

Neoliberalism relies on the mythology of making one’s own luck. What might this look like for a career in the arts? Despite mounting levels of student debt, the proliferation of Masters and PhD art programs have contributed to an oversupply of highly educated people. This is an expected trend given the rise of the knowledge economy and the financial pressures facing universities. In addition to a prestigious education, socioeconomic status and/or powerful personal connections (getting the right dealer/representation) can make a significant difference to one’s “luck” in the arts. The precarity of the arts economy leads those that do succeed as artists to count themselves lucky to have a job that they love. Thanks to the emergence and domination of the professional-managerial class in art galleries (even those formerly identifying as ‘artist-run’) expenses associated with bureaucratic processes leave little in the way of remuneration for artists, with fees largely symbolic. And an absence of collective bargaining power for artists maintains these less-than-ideal working conditions. Though the median annual income for creative work by artists in Aotearoa has been described as ‘grim’³⁷ (\$19,500 per annum based on a report released in 2022),³⁸ the role of inherited wealth is less acknowledged as a determinant of artistic success. For those without independent funds, life as an artist is by and large unsustainable. And while the price of artistic labour falls below the poverty line, luck under late capitalism favours auction houses and investors returning spectacular profits on the secondary market. Incredibly, those with extreme wealth and influence in the commercial sector can afford terms of trade based on luck and superstition. In 2005 Sotheby’s and Christie’s played rock, paper, scissors at the behest of a Japanese collector, contesting the opportunity to sell an Impressionist and Modern Art Collection worth \$20 million dollars (spoiler: Christie’s won, with scissors).³⁹

Perceptions of meritocracy can be contentious, yet for a lucky few, art awards can bring fame and fortune. The concept of merit was challenged by artist from the “lucky country” Richard Bell (Kamilaroi, Kooma, Jiman and Gurang Gurang) in his role as judge of Australia’s 2011 Sulman Art Prize, worth AU \$20,000. Overshadowing the winning artist, Bell drew media attention upon confessing that his decision was based on a coin toss. In judging the award, Bell

wrote the names of eight artists (four whose work he liked, and four he didn’t) on separate pieces of paper. He then scattered the names across the table and tossed a coin.⁴⁰ According to Bell, the winner ‘was the artist whose name was written on the piece of paper that the coin landed on.’⁴¹

Though much of the media coverage, according to arts commentator Marisa Georgiou, regarded Bell’s actions as ‘a disrespectful stunt’⁴² they ‘missed that it was a reveal.’⁴³ Subjective opinions, curatorial preferences, nepotism, friendships and matters of taste are rarely spoken of in these settings. And although the winning artist would have preferred to have been selected based on merit, Bell phrased it somewhat more cynically, ‘like every prize, it’s a lottery.’⁴⁴ This view is echoed by Georgiou: ‘Choices are never made on merit alone when there are aesthetic subjectivities and social capital at play.’⁴⁵ Meritocracy is a myth because it presents as a fair, accessible system awarding upward mobility to those who work hard. However under Neoliberalism, wealth and social inequities remain widespread, regardless of individual work ethic. In the context of art, meritocracy persists, ‘as a way to uphold inequality, by having all people compete from birth in a system suited to just a few.’⁴⁶ Such is the luck of the draw.

Safer Gambling Aotearoa calculates the odds of winning first division Lotto with a standard ticket to be the same as picking one correct star out of the 4,548 visible in New Zealand’s night sky...over nearly three months. The odds of winning with Powerball increase to more than two years of star gazing.⁴⁷ If I could wish upon a star, the creation of one person’s luck and good fortune would not result from the loss of another’s.

Disclaimer: In the interests of transparency, I have benefited from luck and the misfortune of others via privilege and gambling losses, many times over.

1 Referred to as ‘The Barrel, cited by ‘Lotto - First Broadcast (1 August 1987)’, (NZ on Screen Iwi Whitiāhua), <https://www.nzonscreen.com/title/lotto-first-broadcast-1987/overview> (accessed 1 March 2024)
2 Ibid.
3 Refer ‘Art Unions’, from An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand, edited by A. H. McLintock, originally published in 1966. (Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand), <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/1966/lotteries/page-2> (accessed 4 March 2024)
4 See ‘First Golden Kiwi draw’, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/first-golden-kiwi-lottery-draw>, updated 14 December 2021 (accessed 4 March 2024)
5 Lotto New Zealand Integrated Report 2022-23, <https://assets.mylotto.co.nz/assets/uploads/97054b86-8738-11ee-878a-005056af723d.pdf> (accessed 20 February 2024)
6 Gambling Act 2003, New Zealand Legislation, (Parliamentary Counsel Office Te Tari Tohutohu Pāremata), https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2003/0051/latest/DLM209799.html?search=sw_096be8ed81cede9a_section+279_25_se&p=1 (accessed 23 February 2024)
7 Lotto New Zealand Integrated Report 2022-23, <https://assets.mylotto.co.nz/assets/uploads/97054b86-8738-11ee-878a-005056af723d.pdf> (accessed 20 February 2024)
8 Annual Report for 2022/23 of the Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa, Corporate Documents, Creative New Zealand, <https://creativevz.govt.nz/about-creative-nz/corporate-documents> (accessed 4 March 2024)
9 ‘Lotto goes on sale for first time’, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/lotto-goes-on-sale-for-the-first-time>, updated 17 July 2023 (accessed 1 February 2024)
10 ‘Decline in Lotto revenue to affect the arts’, 5 April 2016 (Creative New Zealand), <https://creativevz.govt.nz/news-and-blog/2022/06/15/02/25/55/decline-in-lotto-revenue-to-affect-the-arts> (accessed 4 March 2024)
11 Ibid.
12 ‘Giving you a view of our financial picture’, 26 October 2023 (Creative New Zealand), <https://creativevz.govt.nz/news-and-blog/2023/10/25/22/06/41/giving-you-a-view-of-our-financial-picture> (accessed 4 March 2024)
13 ‘Kia Tipu. He Tipua - Evolving the lottery grants system’, (Te Tari Taiwhenua, Department of Internal Affairs), <https://www.community-matters.govt.nz/ask-us/view/1836> (accessed 29 February 2024)
14 Ibid.
15 ‘Gambling in Pubs and Clubs (Class 4)’, (Te Tari Taiwhenua, Department of Internal Affairs), [https://www.dia.govt.nz/Services-Casino-and-Non-Casino-Gaming-Gambling-in-Pubs-and-Clubs-\(Class-4\)](https://www.dia.govt.nz/Services-Casino-and-Non-Casino-Gaming-Gambling-in-Pubs-and-Clubs-(Class-4)) (accessed 4 March 2024)
16 Ibid.
17 ‘New Zealand’s unique fundraising model’, (New Zealand Community Trust), <https://www.nzct.org.nz/gaming/raising-funds/> (accessed 20 February 2024)
18 ‘About GMANZ’ (Gaming Machine Association New Zealand), <https://www.gmanz.org.nz/about> (accessed 2 March 2024)
19 ‘Magical Thinking: Get Gambling Facts’, (Addictions Foundation of Manitoba), <http://getgamblingfacts.ca/psychology-of-gambling/magical-thinking/> (accessed 1 March 2024)
20 Angus Thomson and the Visual Stories Team, ‘The Science of Pokies and How They’re Designed to Keep You Hooked’ Sydney Morning Herald, March 22, 2023, <https://www.smh.com.au/interactive/2023/why-pokies-are-addictive/index.html?collection=p5c69g&gb=1> (accessed 16 February 2024)
21 Lotto New Zealand Integrated Report 2022-23, <https://assets.mylotto.co.nz/assets/uploads/97054b86-8738-11ee-878a-005056af723d.pdf> (accessed 20 February 2024)
22 Ibid.

23 ‘National Gambling Study: Gambling harm and problem gambling: Report number 2’ (Gambling and Addictions Research Centre, National Institute for Public Health and Mental Health Research, School of Public Health and Psychosocial Studies, Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences, Auckland University of Technology), via Ministry of Health New Zealand, <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rc=t&q=8es-rc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwihjb-2b69GEAxVpkIYBHRRLC1sQFn0ECCcQA-Q&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.health.govt.nz%2Fsystem%2Ffiles%2Fdocuments%2F-publications%2Fnational-gambling-study-report-2.docx&usq=AOvVaw2VFT3926n8MT88ZL-gFqJhY&opi=89978449> (accessed 5 February 2024)
24 ‘Problem gambling levy’, (Inland Revenue Te Tari Taake), <https://www.ird.govt.nz/duties/problem-gambling-levy> (accessed 3 March 2024)
25 ‘Ministry of Health Gambling Resource for Local Government’, 2013 as cited by New Zealand Community Trust Pub Gaming Fact Sheet, https://media.nzct.org.nz/documents/NZCT_Pub_Gaming_Fact_Sheet_2023.pdf (accessed 1 March 2024)
26 New Zealand Community Trust Pub Gaming Fact Sheet, *ibid.*
27 Ibid.
28 ‘New Zealand’s unique fundraising model’, (New Zealand Community Trust), <https://www.nzct.org.nz/gaming/raising-funds/> (accessed 20 February 2024)
29 New Zealand Community Trust Pub Gaming Fact Sheet, *ibid.*
30 Ibid.
31 Ibid.
32 Mark Amery, ‘Lowdown on Arts Policy’, 29 September 2020, (The Big Idea Te Ariā Nui) 29 September 2020, <https://thebigidea.nz/stories/lowdown-on-arts-policy> (accessed 20 February 2024)
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid.
35 ‘Pokie machine harm hits hardest in our poorest towns’, 30 September 2021, (The Salvation Army), <https://www.salvationarmy.org.nz/news/pokie-machine-harm-hits-hardest-our-poorest-towns> (accessed 1 March 2024)
36 Marisa Georgiou, ‘Why is the art world still married to meritocracy?’, (Arts Hub AU) <https://www.artshub.com.au/news/features/why-is-the-art-world-still-married-to-meritocracy-2688285/> (accessed 27 February 2024)
37 André Chumko, ‘Calls for overhaul of NZ’s arts policies after ‘grim’ data on artists’ pay’, 24 May 2023, (The Post Te Upoko O Te Ika), <https://www.thepost.co.nz/culture/350014233/calls-overhaul-nzs-arts-policies-after-grim-data-artists-pay> (accessed 1 March 2024)
38 Kantar Public, Profile of Creative Professionals, November 2022, https://d3r9t6niqlb7tz.cloudfront.net/media/documents/FINAL_Full_Report_-_Profile_Creative_Professionals_2022.pdf (accessed 3 March 2024)
39 Alina Cohen, ‘When A Game of Rock, Paper, Scissors Decided a \$20-Million Auction Consignment’ 8 August 2019, (Artsy), <https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-christies-sothebys-played-rock-paper-scissors-20-million-consignment> (accessed 18 February 2024)
40 Andrew Taylor, ‘Confessions of an art judge: I tossed a coin to decide’, 24 April 2011, (Sydney Morning Herald), <https://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/art-and-design/confessions-of-an-art-judge-i-tossed-a-coin-to-decide-20110423-1ds4l.html> (accessed 15 February 2024)
41 Ibid.
42 Marisa Georgiou, *ibid.*
43 Ibid.
44 Ibid.
45 Ibid.
46 Marisa Georgiou, *ibid.*
47 ‘How does the lotto draw work?’ (Safer Gambling Aotearoa) <https://www.safergambling.org.nz/know-your-odds/how-lotto-works> (accessed 2 February 2024)

Work Details

Sean Kerr (Aotearoa)

Ground-truth transcriptions: sonic re-enactments of Paul Cullen’s one-meter reduced ruler series 2024 Eleven sound compositions, various duration

In *Ground-truth transcriptions*, Sean Kerr has created a new artwork which responds to Paul Cullen’s *Reductions* (series) on display nearby. Kerr has responded to each of Cullen’s eleven ruler works by translating the drill holes in the rulers into Musical Instrument Digital Interface notes resulting in eleven sonic compositions. The final audio arrangements are unable to be predicted and by embracing the unknown and unexpected, humorous moments may occur in the compositions structure. The artist states that ‘If certain sections sound discordant, they will remain so; if others seem awkward or funny, they will embrace that quality too.’

Courtesy of the artist

Matthew Galloway (Aotearoa)

Tuesday 2024 Archives New Zealand cardboard boxes, carbon copy facsimile, 1975 MkII Ford Cortina windshield, vinyl sticker sheet, various sizes

Tuesday uses archival material and research objects to examine Car-less Days – a petrol demand reduction scheme introduced by the Third National Government in Aotearoa during the 1979 oil crisis. The scheme required vehicle owners to self-designate a day of the week when they would not drive and attach a government-mandated day of the week sticker to their windshield. Those in certain professions or who needed to use their vehicles on carless days could apply for a temporary exemption sticker. Imitation stickers began to be produced on the black market and weakened the effectiveness of the scheme. Car-less days ran from July 1979 to May 1980 resulting in an estimated 3.5% drop in petrol consumption during that time.

Courtesy of the artist

Denise Ziegler (Finland)

Mecki the traveller 2024 photographic print, plywood

Mecki is a German cartoon character that originated from The Brothers Grimm fairytale The Hare and the Hedgehog. Mecki the traveller is influenced by a series of postcards from the 1950s that show him wishing luck and joy to everyone by re-enacting scenes of entanglements in everyday life. In the German language, the word for lucky is glücklich which also means happy and the happiness of living a carefree life was associated with the figure of a hiker or wanderer with an unknown future. Mecki became synonymous with the figure of a traveller that brings news and new things from other places. As stated by the artist, ‘By meeting Mecki, you take your chances.’

Courtesy of the artist

Henna Riikka Halonen (Finland) *CRYPTO* 2023-2024 Two-channel video, sound, duration 12 minutes

CRYPTO uses speculative fiction and the metaphor of the gold bug to entangle ecology, wealth, and the logic of value. The image of the gold bug works as a crystal of both ownership and dispossession. The title intertwines the similar but differently meaning words; crypto-currency and cryptography (a process of coding or hiding information). In African mythology, the golden beetle symbolises the rising of the sun, whilst in a financial context a “gold bug” is an individual who advocates for a fervent belief in gold as a stable asset.

Halonen has been informed by Edgar Allan Poe’s short story *The Gold Bug* (1843) which tells of a wealth-obsessed protagonist whose discovery of a gold-coloured beetle and cryptic secret message leads him on a pursuit of buried treasure. Part of Halonen’s work was shot within a gold mine in Northern Finland.

Courtesy of the artist

Yukari 海堀 **Kaihori** (Japan/Aotearoa New Zealand)

Title work from two sides of the moon 2024 Aquarium, plant-based plastic, black sand, water, floor tiles, weeds collected from outside Gus Fisher Gallery

One of the methodologies Yukari Kaihori uses is informed by the idea of a chance encounter, and the word en (縁), which in the Japanese

Katrina Beekhuis (Aotearoa)

(Research images) 2024 Melmaine, MDF, digital prints

This work presents a selection of research images taken on a mobile phone over decades of the artist’s life. Often pinned to the studio wall as reference points for the fabrication of artworks, here they are printed onto rectangular melamine panel – a material commonly used for institutional furniture or residential kitchens. The photographs document chance encounters and in-situ moments, recording ubiquitous yet commonly disregarded objects.

Kaihori’s material-led inquiry considers the more-than-human-world by exploring the intersection between the natural and human-made. The ratio of water and sand in the aquarium reflects the world’s existing ratio of water and sand, whilst its position in the gallery refers to the original shoreline of the Waitemata harbour.

Courtesy of the artist. *Two sides of the moon* was originally commissioned by Te Tuhi 2023

Mirimari Väyrynen (Finland)

Evil Eye 2024 Oil painting on wooden board, reflective strips and tape, steel brackets, fan and LED light

Traditionally a talisman is a magical object, consecrated either to bring good luck or to protect against evil or illness. Talismans are often made for a specific purpose and usually take the form of portable objects that can be carried or worn as charms.

In *Evil Eye*, Mirimari Väyrynen has created her own version of a talisman, using materials from objects that have resonance for her. The artist has imitated the wooden sinews on boards from furniture in her former home to create photo-realistic paintings, and has used strips from a reflective vest from a gift given to her by her mother to frame them. An LED light and a fan activate the work, enacting their power as talismans.

Courtesy of the artist

Roma Anderson (Aotearoa) *Glimmer* 2023 Acrylic face-mounted super film photographs on Fujiflex

Glimmer shows the watery reflection of a mangrove root during high tide in Tāmaki Bay. Changes in the environment have their own way of affecting media and individuals, and for Roma Anderson, film photography can be conceived as the culmination of the conditions of the artist and the environment at a given moment. Working in an intuitive way, Anderson notes much that occurs between the opening and closing of a camera shutter and the recording of light cannot always be explained. At the advent of photography, material artefacts arising from the unpredictability of film were attributed to the hand or interference of spirits or other agencies.

Roma Anderson (Aotearoa) *Your Bright and Tiny Spark* 2020 Acrylic face-mounted digital photograph on Fujiflex

Your Bright and Tiny Spark emerged from a process of wandering through the Waiaatarua wetlands, the country’s biggest urban wetland restoration project. Roma Anderson recalls that heavy rain had flooded the grass plains of the wetland reserve and sunlight illuminated the blades of grass breaching the water’s surface.

Anderson works intuitively and is interested in how the most unnoticed or mundane of subjects has the potential to become something otherworldly if it is engaged with genuine curiosity and care. She is particularly drawn to moments when light is at its most intense and becomes an agent in the environment, appearing as sunspots or stars.

All works courtesy of the artist

Katrina Beekhuis (Aotearoa)

Feeling my way 2024 Lifetime table, workshop sawdust, wax

In *Feeling my way* Katrina Beekhuis has worked with the material and form of a mass-produced table like those she encountered leaning against walls in the university studios.

The artist has applied a series of attentive processes to reveal and bury the structure of the table legs. Sawdust and melted wax were pressed into the compartments formed by the legs and plastic top, and heat and a smoothing tool were used to excavate sections of the built-up material. The care and time taken by the artist is at odds with the value placed on the table in economic terms. The title *Feeling my way* alludes to a reliance on sensing, looking and feeling as part of the artistic process.

Katrina Beekhuis (Aotearoa)

(Research images) 2024 Melmaine, MDF, digital prints

This work presents a selection of research images taken on a mobile phone over decades of the artist’s life. Often pinned to the studio wall as reference points for the fabrication of artworks, here they are printed onto rectangular melamine panel – a material commonly used for institutional furniture or residential kitchens. The photographs document chance encounters and in-situ moments, recording ubiquitous yet commonly disregarded objects.

Katrina Beekhuis (Aotearoa)

gaze from within 2024 Doormat, clay, microcrystalline wax

Gaze from within takes a conventional doormat and renders it fragile by using clay and wax to transform its surface and texture. The artist has filled the negative space of the rubber recesses of the doormat with clay to create a flush surface and coated it with microcrystalline wax (museum wax), which embalms the usually crumbly surface and seals it to the floor.

The artwork title is taken from Boris Groy’s text ‘Curating in the Post-Internet Age’ (2018). Its in-situ placement on the floor contrasts with Groy’s discussion of how an artwork viewed on screen is disconnected from its original context in space and time.

All works courtesy of the artist

Miklos Gaál (Finland)

Funny is both Ha-Ha and Peculiar 2024 Projection of animated words, outtakes from Oxford Dictionary and Oxford Thesaurus (Oxford University Press, 2017) in reference to writer Ian Hay (1936). Duration: 10 minutes, 10 seconds, silent.

Funny is both Ha-Ha and Peculiar is a text-based video that explores definitions of the word ‘funny’ and ‘peculiar.’ Throughout the changing slides, Miklos Gaál brings both words into focus, exploring their meaning and connotations as singular words and as words that relate to one another.

Gaál probes the role of a dictionary to come up with a singular definition of a word when one word can imply a variety of things. He notes how words can be elusive and fleeting rather than a fixed entity. As stated by the artist, “two things at once, simultaneously, inhabiting the world in two different ways. It is not either-or, but both-and.”

Courtesy of the artist

Louise Menzies (Aotearoa)

Just so you know 2022 Yellow border, text/emojis

March 2022 Brown border, blue marks, leaves 2022

November 2023 Purple border, sand, digital marks

Digital prints, silk, wood

For Louise Menzies, forms of machine learning underpin much of our digital experience and can produce instances where things may seem either coincidental (by chance) or convenient (possibly by luck). Yet many digital interactions are guided by forms of advanced probability, such as the mathematical modelling and neural machine learning used in digital applications such as OpenAI’s Chat GPT.

The artworks on display gesture towards processes of language formation and writing. In one artwork the graphic marks of a child learning to write are featured, alongside another piece with AI-generated language. These fragments are collaged with photography suggestive of the physical world, of moments captured while walking or of chance encounters that have originated in online and offline experiences during periods of lockdown.

Menzies highlights the ephemeral nature of these digital documents by printing them as silk scarves, their form referencing the intimacies of the digital and material worlds and the proximities of a scarf and smartphone to the body. In Menzies’ artworks, the connection of weaving to early forms of computing, and to language as code, morphs in digital form.

Courtesy of the artist

Matthew Cowan (Germany, Finland, Aotearoa)

Butterthief 2018 Butter wrappers, waterproof overalls, thread, boots, mannequin, mask

Butterthief alludes to secretive butter stealing and vomiting figures from Nordic folklore called para. In Finnish folklore, a para was a spirit or elf-like creature that attempted to help a person increase their material resources. Paras stole milk from other households’ cows, reflecting a belief that good fortune was a limited commodity in society and was obtained in balance to misfortune.

The costume for *Butterthief* is constructed from an assortment of butter wrappers from various locations to create a carnival-type figure dressed in used packaging. As an artwork, the use of everyday materials mirrors folk practices that similarly employ found materials in the making of costumes and clothing. In an exhibition context, *Butterthief* operates as a dairy-based, international talisman.

Matthew Cowan (Germany, Finland, Aotearoa)

Planet of the Lucky Charms 2024 Digital adhesive wall print

Planet of the Lucky Charms combines an image from the cover of a 1980s German science fiction novella and personal and studio artefacts from the artist’s luck archive. *Planet der Glücksbringer* (Planet of the Lucky Charms) is part of the popular science fiction series about space hero Perry Rhodan.

For the artist, the artwork’s title hints that we all live on a planet of lucky charms where any object, however ordinary, has the potential to generate memory, emotion and meaning, depending on our relationship to it and its connection to ourselves and others.

List of objects:

The Eggs I Pickled with Andy Smith, Berlin, July, 2019 Framed digital print, 40 x 30cm. 2024

Wisdom Tooth, 2023 Digital print mounted on museum board, 30 x 20cm. 2024

Chimney Sweeps Brush with Plastic Bristles, Berlin, 2023 Framed digital print, 35 x 25. 2024

Toad on the Doorstep When I Got Back From Auckland, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2006 Digital print 20 x 15cm. 2024

Shed Snake Skins, Mynämäki, 2017 Framed digital print, 40 x 27cm. 2024

Bleigiessen (Molybdomancy), Luckenwalde, 2023 Framed digital print, 21 x 15cm. 2024

Nidnod, from Grandma’s Cabinet, Howick, 2012 Digital video loop, 11min 9sec, 2024

Crystal Ball with Claw Stand from (Grandmother) Ettie’s Table, Papatoetoe 2010

Chimney Sweeps Brush with Metal Bristles, Berlin, 2023

Sweeps Talisman, Berlin, 2023

Four Leaf Clover Coin, Berlin, 2023

Chimney Sweeps Jacket Button with Saint Florian, Berlin, 2023

Hemp Doll, Braunschweig, 2015

The Byker Mummies, Badge, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2004

Two Cans of Cognac Sardines, London, 2010

Safety Pin and Amor Condoms, from the Courier Costume, Braunschweig, 2015

Two Losing Wild Cash Scratch Lottery Cards, Berlin, 2023

Backwards Clock, London, 2009

Handbell, London, 2010

Set of Keys, Berlin, 2022

Work Details continued

Paul Cullen (Aotearoa)

Reductions (series)

2009

Eleven one-metre rulers, paint on wood

Reductions (series) are a set of rulers with perforated holes that may be read as forms of notation or annotation. Paul Cullen made many works at different scales that involved holes, punctures or small cut openings or inserts, with some comprising furniture fragments inserted with pencils and books pierced by pencil stubs. Cullen's rulers connect to those of Robert Morris' who in the 1960s produced a series of rulers from memory.

As part of the exhibition, Cullen's work informs a response by Sean Kerr who has created sonic compositions by translating the drill holes in the rulers into Musical Instrument Digital Interface notes.

Courtesy of Paul Cullen Archive

Ilya Orlov (Finland)

Avos' Machina I

Avos Machina II

2024

Found materials, clamps

The artist states:

"There is a tradition of artwork-as-machine in art history. These are not so much literally mechanical, as instead of gears and flywheels, they are rather comprised of words and fantasies as in H. G. Wells' *The Time Machine*; broken glass, lead foil, and dust as in Duchamp's *Le Grand Verre*; or plywood, revolutionary slogans, and red stripes, like Gustav Klutsis' *Radio Orators*. The material for *Avos' Machina(s)* is similar and different at the same time, comprising physical elements – plywood, sticks, plexiglass and clamps that make them stand as floor sculptures, and also social interaction which is collegial support, with a touch of luck and chance. The word *avos'* (авось) is a Russian expression that is hard to translate, referring to "certain uncertainty" or "endeavouring a risk relying on one's luck."

With thanks to Yukari 海堀 Kaihori and Oleg Polounine.

Floor Map — Left Gallery

1. Matthew Cowan

Planet of the Lucky Charms

2024

Digital adhesive wall print & mixed media

2. Matthew Cowan

Butterthief

2018

Butter wrappers, waterproof overalls, thread, boots, mannequin, mask

3. Matthew Galloway

Tuesday

2024

Archives New Zealand cardboard boxes, carbon copy facsimile, 1975 MkII Ford Cortina windshield, vinyl sticker sheet

4. Paul Cullen

Reductions (series)

2009

Eleven one-metre rulers, paint on wood

5. Sean Kerr

Ground-truth transcriptions: sonic re-enactments of

Paul Cullen's one-meter reduced ruler series

2024

Eleven sound compositions, various duration

6. Denise Ziegler

Mecki the traveller

2024

Photographic print, plywood

7. Ilya Orlov

Avos' Machina I

2024

Found materials, clamp

8. Ilya Orlov

Avos Machina II

2024

Found materials, clamp

9. Mirimari Väyrynen

Evil Eye

2024

Oil painting on wooden board, reflective strip and tape, metal holder, fan and LED light

10. Roma Anderson

Your Bright and Tiny Spark

2020

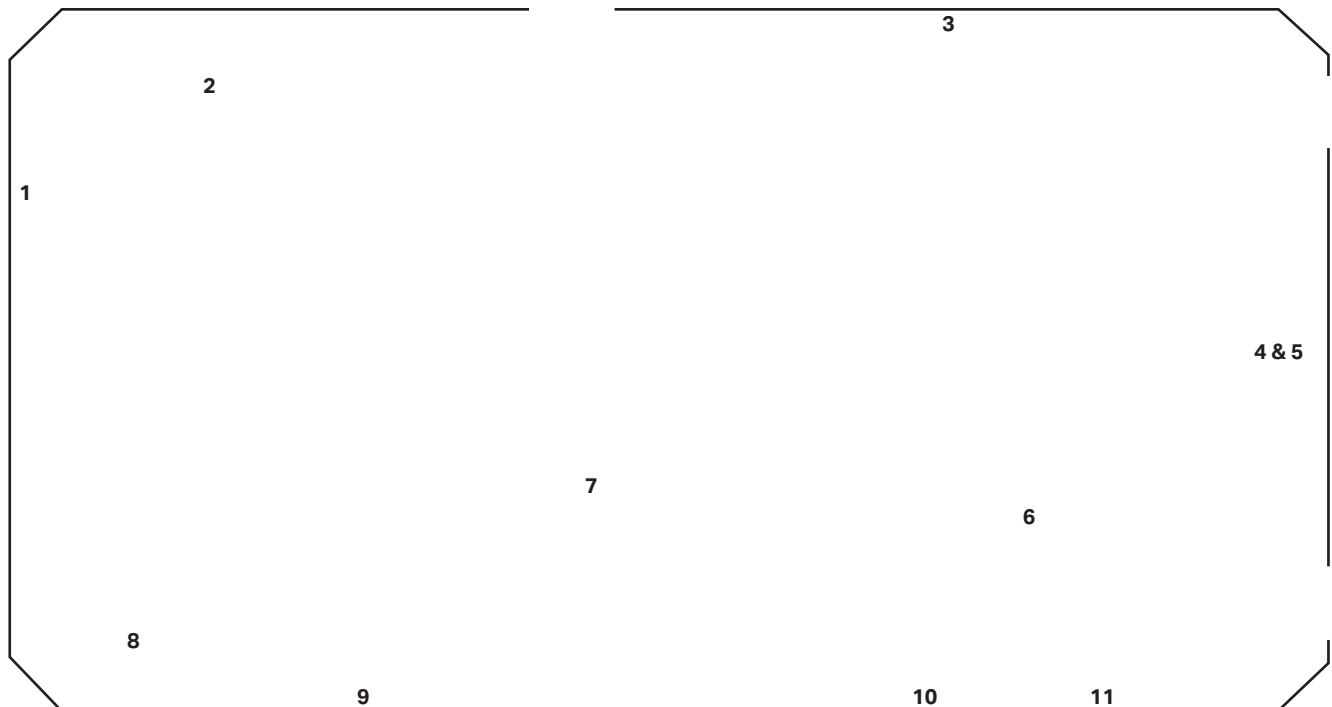
Acrylic face-mounted digital photograph on Fujiflex

11. Roma Anderson

Glimmer

2023

Acrylic face-mounted film photographs on Fujiflex



Floor Map — Dome Gallery & Screening Gallery

12. Miklos Gaál

Funny is both Ha-Ha and Peculiar

2024

Projection of animated words, outtakes from Oxford Dictionary and Oxford Thesaurus (Oxford University Press, 2017) in reference to writer Ian Hay (1936). Duration: 10 minutes, 10 seconds, silent.

13. Katrina Beekhuis

Feeling my way

2024

Lifetime table, workshop sawdust, wax

14. Louise Menzies

November

2023

Digital print, silk, wood

15. Louise Menzies

March

2022

Digital print, silk, wood

16. Louise Menzies

Just so you know

2022

Digital print, silk, wood

17. Yukari 海堀 Kaihori

Title work from two sides of the moon

2024

Aquarium, plant-based plastic, black sand, water, floor tiles, weeds collected from outside Gus Fisher Gallery

18. Katrina Beekhuis

(Research images)

2024

Melamine, MDF, digital prints

19. Katrina Beekhuis

gaze from within

2024

Doormat, clay, microcrystalline wax

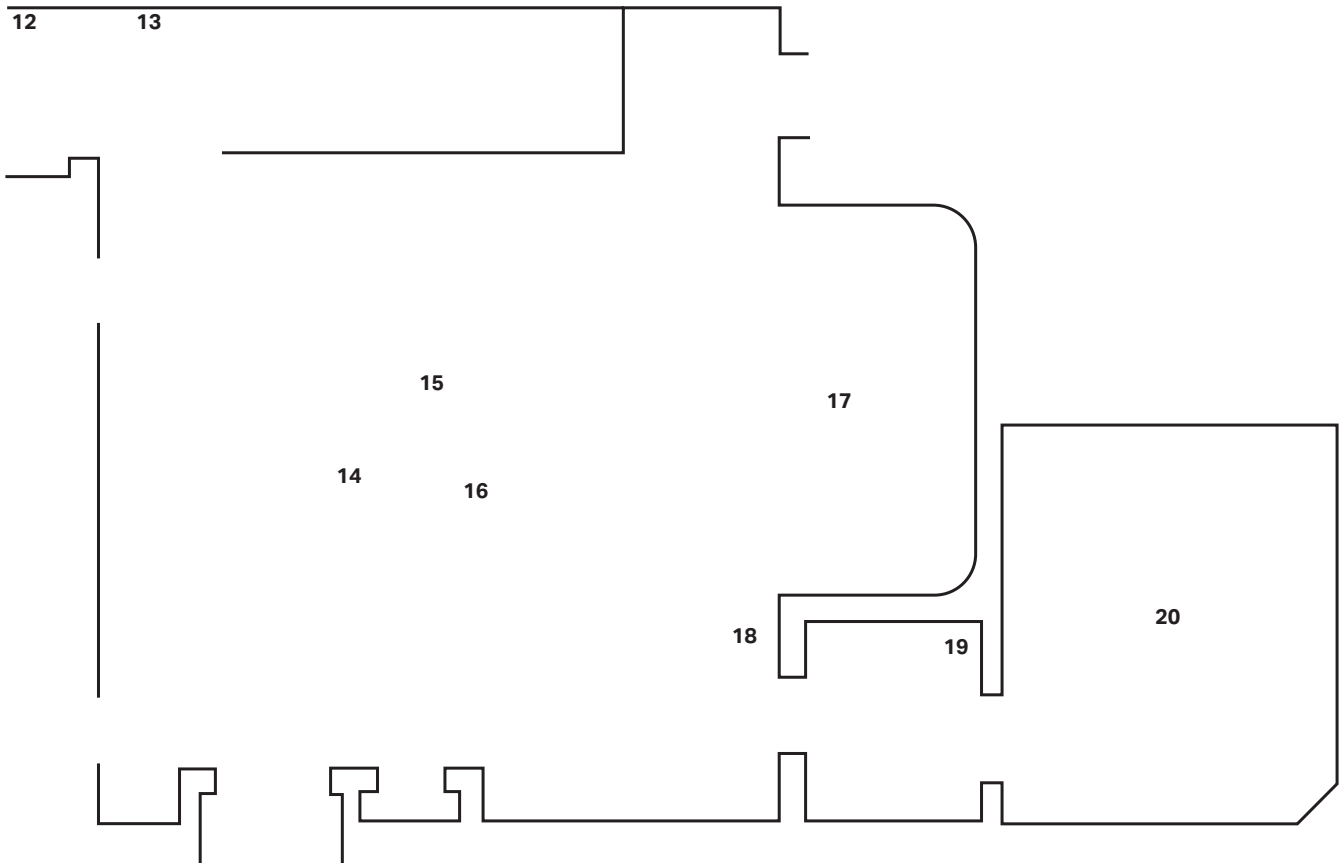
20. Henna Riikka Halonen

CRYPTO

2023-2024

Two-channel video, sound

Duration: 12 minutes



Artist Biographies

Denise Ziegler (Finland) is a visual artist and researcher of public space. In her artistic practice and research, she questions concepts of urban space and public art. She currently works as a professor of artistic research at the Academy of Fine Arts, Uniarts Helsinki and as a university lecturer at Transdisciplinary Art Studies (TAITE) at Aalto University in Espoo, Finland. She graduated in 2010 from the doctoral program at the Academy of Fine Arts, Uniarts Helsinki.

Henna Riikka Halonen (Finland) is a visual artist who draws from a wide range of artistic techniques and historical and cultural references, including theatre, literature, and cinema. Her works are often responses to a specific context or site, aiming to highlight our need to structure experiences as fiction to gain an understanding of them. By creating speculative systems or worlds, her work explores our relationship to materials, objects, words, and living and non-living beings. She has worked on and produced many collaborative and large-scale projects and commissions in Israel, Ireland, France, Finland, Sweden, and the UK, and has shown her work widely in international exhibitions and festivals. Halonen graduated with an MFA in Fine Art from Goldsmiths College, London in 2006. She completed a doctorate at the Academy of Fine Arts, Uniarts Helsinki in 2020 and is currently working as a post-doctoral researcher at the Academy of Fine Arts, Uniarts Helsinki and a Lecturer of Contemporary Art at Turku University of Applied Sciences. www.hennahalonen.com

Ilya Orlov (Finland) is a psychedelic conceptualist whose style is informed by Everythingism, Zaum, Neo-Nihilism, Vorticism, metafiction, Conceptual Art, Baroque Stereoscopia, Accadian Cinema, Mesopotamian Diascopy, Neanderthal Jewellery, Leningrad Futurist Television, and Finnish Dada. He is currently a doctoral candidate at the Academy of Fine Arts, Uniarts Helsinki. www.ilya-orlov.com

Katrina Beekhuis (Aotearoa New Zealand) is an artist and educator based in Tāmaki Makaurau. She works across a range of media, including sculpture, photography, painting, printmaking and drawing, often noting the porous nature between these categories. She is concerned with visible and invisible structures that shape perceptions and interpretations in reductive ways, limiting complex ecologies to banal iconographies. She is currently a doctoral student at the Elam School of Fine Arts.

Louise Menzies' (Aotearoa New Zealand) current work draws on forms of biography, concepts of care, fiction, language learning, the archive, and the nature of creative work. Her cross-media practice often includes a range of materials presented within installed environments, as well as the use of other public platforms beyond that of the exhibition. They are currently a doctoral candidate at the Elam School of Fine Arts.

Matthew Cowan (Aotearoa New Zealand) works in the realm of European traditional customs. His works are photographs, videos and sculptural installations that observe the continued popularity of long-established folk customs in a contemporary world. He is currently a doctoral candidate at the Academy of Fine Arts, Uniarts Helsinki. www.matthewcowan.net

Matthew Galloway (Aotearoa New Zealand) employs the tools and methodologies of design in an editorial way, and within a gallery context. This way of working emphasises design and publishing as an inherently political exercise and involves an interdisciplinary approach to producing publications and art objects. He is currently a doctoral candidate at the Elam School of Fine Arts. www.matthew-galloway.co.nz

Miklos Gaál (Finland) is a visual artist living in Amsterdam. Working with changing formats of photography, film, text and printed matter, Gaál's artistic practice is an inquiry into habitual distinctions of nature, culture and language. He is a doctoral candidate at the Academy of Fine Arts, Uniarts Helsinki.

Mirimari Väyrynen explores human relationships with nature and the world, approaching the environment as a process, and embodiment of cultural and societal values. She departs from painting and is intrigued by searching for possibilities of form and material. She is currently a doctoral candidate at the Academy of Fine Arts, Uniarts Helsinki. Väyrynen has shown her works individually at Gallery Sculptor (FI), Gallery Hippolyte Studio (FI), Gallery Forum Box (FI) and Gallery Blanca Soto, Madrid, (ES). She has also participated in group exhibitions, including at Kunsthall Charlottenborg, Copenhagen (DK), Helsinki Kunstahalle (FI) and CAC Contemporary Art Museum, Málaga (ES).

Roma Anderson (Aotearoa New Zealand), grew up alongside the Tāmaki River and is interested in marginalized environmental spaces. Anderson draws from theories of spirit photography, vibratory modernism, and agential realism to reconceive photographic encounters as exchanges with sentient ecologies. She is currently a doctoral candidate at the Elam School of Fine Arts.

Sean Kerr (Aotearoa New Zealand) is an artist specialising in emergent technologies and installation practices. He is an Associate Professor at Te Waka Tuhura, Elam School of Fine Arts, Waipapa Taumata Rau, University of Auckland, where he is the Programme Leader for the Fine Arts Doctoral Programmes, and where he completed his own doctoral degree in 2016. For un/luck, Kerr is our conduit for the practice of Paul Cullen. The images included here are of Cullen's support structures that embrace chance and enable the "paradox of play".

Yukari 海堀 Kaihori's work concerns the more-than-human-world and immediacy of mundane places, drawing on practices located in Japanese folk animism to consider where the essence of materiality begins and ends. She is currently a doctoral candidate at the Elam School of Fine Arts.

Paul Cullen (1949–2017) (Aotearoa New Zealand) studied various disciplines, all of which informed his artistic practice and methodology. He graduated from the University of Auckland with a Bachelor of Science in 1971, a Diploma of Fine Arts (Hons) in 1975, a Master of Arts in 2000 and a PhD at the Elam School of Fine Arts in 2007. Cullen was a sculptor and installation artist. His celebrated career has seen his work exhibited nationally and internationally and he was the recipient of several awards and residencies including the Mot et Chandon Artist Fellowship, France (1996) and a Senior Fulbright Award at Auburn University, Alabama (2012). Cullen's career spanned 40 years and he exhibited across Australasia. In the last two decades of his career he pursued exhibition and itinerant projects in numerous international centres including Manchester, London, Halifax, Stockholm, Sydney, Melbourne, Seoul, Chung-Buk, São Paulo, Cheongu, Alabama, Los Angeles, Marfa, Munich and Berlin. Cullen taught at the Manukau Institute of Technology between 1996 and 2008, and from 2008 to 2016 at Auckland University of Technology, where he became an Associate Professor and Head of Department of Visual Arts in 2014.

