

Dr Fiona Pardington was born in Auckland. She is of Maori (Ngāi Tahu, Kati Mamoe and Ngāti Kahungunu) and Scottish (Clan Cameron of Erracht) descent. She holds a Doctorate in Fine Arts from the University of Auckland.

At the heart of Fiona Pardington's photographic practice is an abiding concern with emotion and affect. A practitioner with over three decades experience as an exhibiting artist, she has explored the on-going capacities of photography by attending to that which is hidden or unseen in the photograph as much as what it may represent. In the late 1980s she was amongst a group of women artists who challenged photography's social documentary aesthetic, prevalent in the previous decade. She went on to focus on the still-life format, recording Museum taonga (Māori ancestral treasures) and other historic objects such as hei tiki (greenstone pendants) and the now extinct huia bird. In these works, she brings to a contemporary audience an awareness of traditional and forgotten objects. Pardington is renowned for her ability to breathe life force back into these objects and to raise global awareness of the importance of conservation. She interrogates death and celebrates collecting and preservation.

Pardington, who last year was made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit, was in 2016 named a *Knight (Chevalier)* in the Order of Arts and Letters (*Chevalier de l'ordre des Arts et des Lettres*) by the French Prime Minister. Pardington is the first New Zealand visual artist to receive this honour.

Fiona has received many fellowships, residencies, awards and grants including the Moët et Chandon Fellowship (France) in 1991-92, the Frances Hodgkins Fellowship in both 1996 and 1997, the Ngai Tahu residency at Otago Polytechnic in 2006 and both the Quai Branly Laureate award, La Résidence de Photoquai, and the Arts Foundation Laureate Award in 2011. Pardington has created staggering works as a result of these opportunities.

Her work has been included in several important group exhibitions and biennales including: *Middle of Now | Here*, Honolulu Biennial 2017; *lux et tenebris Momentum Worldwide*, Berlin 2014; *The Best of Times, The Worst of Times. Rebirth and Apocalypse in Contemporary Art*, Ukraine Biennale Arsénale 2012; *Ahua: A beautiful hesitation*, 17th Biennale of Sydney 2010, Museum of Contemporary Art; *Imposing Narratives: Beyond the Documentary in Recent New Zealand Photography*, 1989, *Constructed Intimacies*, 1989 and *NowSeeHear* 1990. *Prospect 2001: New Art New Zealand*, all at the City Art Gallery, Wellington, *Slow Release: Recent Photography from New Zealand*, Heide Museum of Modern Art Melbourne, Australia and the Adam Gallery, Wellington, 2002; *Te Puawai O Ngai Tahu*,

Christchurch Art Gallery and *Pressing Flesh, Skin, Touch Intimacy*, Auckland Art Gallery Toi O Tamaki in 2003 and *Contemporary New Zealand Photographers*, Pataka's International Arts Festival, Porirua, 2006.

In 2008 the New Zealand Government gifted a suite of her heitiki prints to the Musée du Quai Branly, Paris. A similar work auctioned in Auckland realised the highest price in New Zealand for a photographic work at auction.

Fiona returned from Paris where she completed a Laureate Artistic Creations Project with the Musée du Quai Branly in 2011. In the same year the Govett-Brewster Gallery and the Dunedin Public Art Gallery presented *The Pressure of Sunlight Falling*, a series of photographs of life casts made by medical scientist and phrenologist Pierre Dumoutier during one of French explorer Jules Dumont d'Urville's South Pacific voyages from 1837 to 1840. An accompanying catalogue was published by Otago University Press. This series has continued to be exhibited and discussed by academics and curators from all over the world and will be featured in *Oceania* at the Royal Academy of Arts later this year. Susan Best, in her book *Reparative aesthetics*, argues that art has the capacity to heal shameful histories, closely examining the work of four female photographers, including Fiona.

Fiona Pardington's survey exhibition *A Beautiful Hesitation*, profiling 30 years of practice, opened at City Gallery Wellington in 2015. It then traveled to Auckland Art Gallery and Christchurch Art Gallery in 2016. An accompanying book of the same name, bringing together new and classic writings on the artist's work, was published by Victoria University Press.

Fiona's most recent project, *Nabokov's Blues: The Charmed Circle* (completed with support from the world's leading Nabokov scholar, Professor Brian Boyd) documents Vladimir Nabokov's archives held in European and American museums. Pardington photographed only butterflies Nabokov caught and killed, words or diagrams in his hand, butterfly images on printed pages he marked. This series was launched at Honolulu Biennial in March 2017, and has since traveled to London Art Fair. A new presentation will be exhibited at Art Basel Hong Kong, March 2018.

Fiona lives and works in New Zealand.