



**OTAGO**

**POLYTECHNIC**

Te Kura Matatini ki Otago

**DUNEDIN  
SCHOOL  
OF ART**

# Postgraduate Programmes

[www.op.ac.nz/art](http://www.op.ac.nz/art)  
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0800 762 786

We are New Zealand's first art school, established in 1870. Our innovative and expert tuition will foster your pursuit of excellence in visual arts and culture, and encourage you to develop versatility and self-sufficiency as an artist.

# Kia ora Welcome

Artists are essential to society; they enhance our understanding of the world by creating objects and situations that are new, interesting and challenging.

At Otago Polytechnic, we believe art education is about creating strong individuals who can make their own way in the world – not only in art, but within many other fields of visual culture. Our programmes are available for part-time and full-time study allowing our students to earn qualifications in their own time and at their own pace.

We extend our greetings to Kai Tahu, Kati Mamoe, and Waitaha as the mana whenua of this area.

Ka waiwai kā rikatoi ki te porihaka; ka whakanikoniko kā rikatoi o mātou marama o te ao i kā mea, ikā tūāhua hou, whakamere whakapātari hōki.

Kei Te Kura Matatini ki Otago, e whakaponono mātou ko te matauraka o te mahi toi ki te auaha kā takata kaha e haere ana ki roto i te ao – kei roto i te mahi toi, kei roto i era atu akoraka ā whatu hoki. Ka wātea a mātou whakahaereka mo te wā kikī, mo te wā haurua ranei, hei whakaaroaro kā akoka ki te mau o rātou tohu kei āna wā kei āna whakamātau.

Ka tukua kā mihi ki te mana whenua o tēnei whenua ko Kai Tahu, Kati Mamoe Waitaha, Rapuwai hoki.

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# The Dunedin School of Art

**The Dunedin School of Art has played a part in visual arts education since its establishment in 1870.**

It was the first school of art in New Zealand and the world's southernmost school of art. Under the helm of Con Hutton, followed by Gordon Tovey, it developed a legacy of academic excellence and artistic individuality. Over the years the school has attracted such students as Colin McCahon, Anne Hamblett, Doris Lusk and Lisa Walker; more recent graduates include Kushana Bush, recipient of the Arts Foundation New Zealand New Generation Award in 2013; MFA graduates Pamela Brown and Kerry McKay who established 'theartdept' offering community programmes for children and arts educators; Kristin O'Sullivan Peren whose community work encompasses ecological concerns; and Becky Cameron, a recipient of the Caselberg Trust residency.

Students choose the Dunedin School of Art at Otago Polytechnic for its resource competitiveness, quality of teaching and supervision and its sense of community. Our points of difference are our interest in an integrated theory/studio learning environment and our ability to retain well-equipped workshops in all technical areas with appropriate technical support. Our position within a supportive Polytechnic enables this and allows us a community focus.

Our graduates work in all fields of art, often complementing their own practice with curatorial work, teaching, public art projects, design projects or work in the arts access field. The skills they learn are transferable to a wide variety of employment situations. Our lecturers have national and international profiles and represent a diverse range of approaches and understandings in the fine arts and design.



# Postgraduate Studies

**Postgraduate programmes at the Dunedin School of Art offer candidates a space in which ideas can be manufactured through processes of making and writing undertaken in close conversation. It is a space in which candidates can test themselves against a rigorous community of peers and supervisors and reach out to the wider national and international community towards professional opportunities for their futures.**

Postgraduate candidates may evolve unexpected relationships between traditional subjects or create new syntheses from them. As the organisation of postgraduate programmes is shaped by their own proposal and desired end result, qualifications may be completed in one, or across several disciplines. The Dunedin School of Art offers eight areas of studio practice: Ceramics, Electronic Arts, Jewellery and Metalsmithing, Painting, Photography, Printmaking, Sculpture and Textiles. These are supported by Art History & Theory and Drawing. The Dunedin School of Art offers a low residency option with flexible supervision off-site for postgraduate programmes.

## Supervision and Mentorship:

A research-active studio supervisor and a theory supervisor are appointed for each postgraduate candidate. The Postgraduate Coordinator assists candidates to interface with staff and other students and the arts community within Dunedin and elsewhere. Regular studio critiques, research workshops and more formal presentation of work during seminars provide opportunity for feedback, discussion and debate.

## Studio space and facilities:

Each candidate is allocated a studio space and has access to project related facilities. The Dunedin School of Art has consistently focused on the development of excellence in the material aspects of art-making and is one of the best-equipped art schools in New Zealand, fully supported by experienced technical staff. Facilities include bronze-casting, a carpentry workshop, clay mixing and glazing workshops, darkroom and digital photography, digital embroidery, electric, gas and wood-fired kilns, etching, screenprinting and lithography workshops, a gold- and silver-smithing workshop, a life drawing studio, metal and engineering workshops, a painting workshop, plaster-casting, plastic vacuum forming, stone cutting, textile dye and print workshops and video and animation studios. Other capabilities include pre-production prototyping, rapid tooling and short-run sampling through a wide range of state-of-the-art equipment, interaction design capabilities, large format to small scale graphic production and designed project management, all through Workspace Otago Polytechnic.

## A vibrant artistic and academic community:

The Dunedin School of Art is a community of several hundred people united by an abiding interest in material making and related theoretical research. As artists, designers and scholars we represent differing backgrounds, languages and cultural contexts. Our environment is critical and engaging, supporting a rich dialogue of ideas and art-making. Our school also maintains a website and a number of online communities to support artistic connection and dialogue:

[www.otagopolytechnic.ac.nz/art](http://www.otagopolytechnic.ac.nz/art).



“The arts are entering the space outside themselves, looking hard to the future.”

(Molly Nesbit, Utopia Station Project, Venice, 2003)



### Exhibition and career opportunities:

Dunedin is a city with many exhibition facilities ranging from small informal galleries to large, public spaces such as the Dunedin Public Art Gallery. A number of fine experimental spaces and regional galleries offer choices for candidates who typically exhibit a number of times before their final work is shown.

### Gallery:

The Dunedin School of Art Gallery is a professional exhibition space open to the public. Located in an award-winning building within the Art School precinct, the Gallery was opened in 2009 and has hosted a continuous programme of events showcasing a wide variety of work from undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, past students, academic staff and community groups.

The Gallery operates as a teaching space for the Dunedin School of Art students, giving them the opportunity to present their work professionally as well as engage with the work of other artists and groups.

### Visiting and adjunct artist:

A visiting and adjunct artist programme feeds postgraduate learning and contributes to a community of practice, currency of ideas and contacts for candidates.

### Seminar series:

The Dunedin School of Art coordinates an annual seminar series consisting of around sixty lectures and workshops which include presentations from visiting speakers, staff and postgraduate students. This series provides postgraduate students and members of the public with regular opportunities to engage with leading contemporary art research.

### Research culture:

All postgraduate staff at the Dunedin School of Art are research-active and the School enjoys a reputation for academic excellence. The most recent round of the

Performance Based Research Fund (PBRF), through which the New Zealand Government recognises quality research within tertiary institutions, has ranked the Dunedin School of Art highly. This performance is reinforced by reports from external monitors.

Research-active staff members contribute widely to peer-reviewed publications and regularly participate in international festivals, residencies and exhibitions. *Scope* (Art and Design), published annually by Otago Polytechnic, aims to engage discussion on contemporary research in the visual arts. In 2003, Otago Polytechnic founded the multidisciplinary academic journal *Junctures* with the aim of engaging discussion across boundaries, whether these be disciplinary, geographic, cultural, social or economic. Each issue of this publication is organised around a single thematic focus and proposals are welcome from individuals or groups, including postgraduate students.

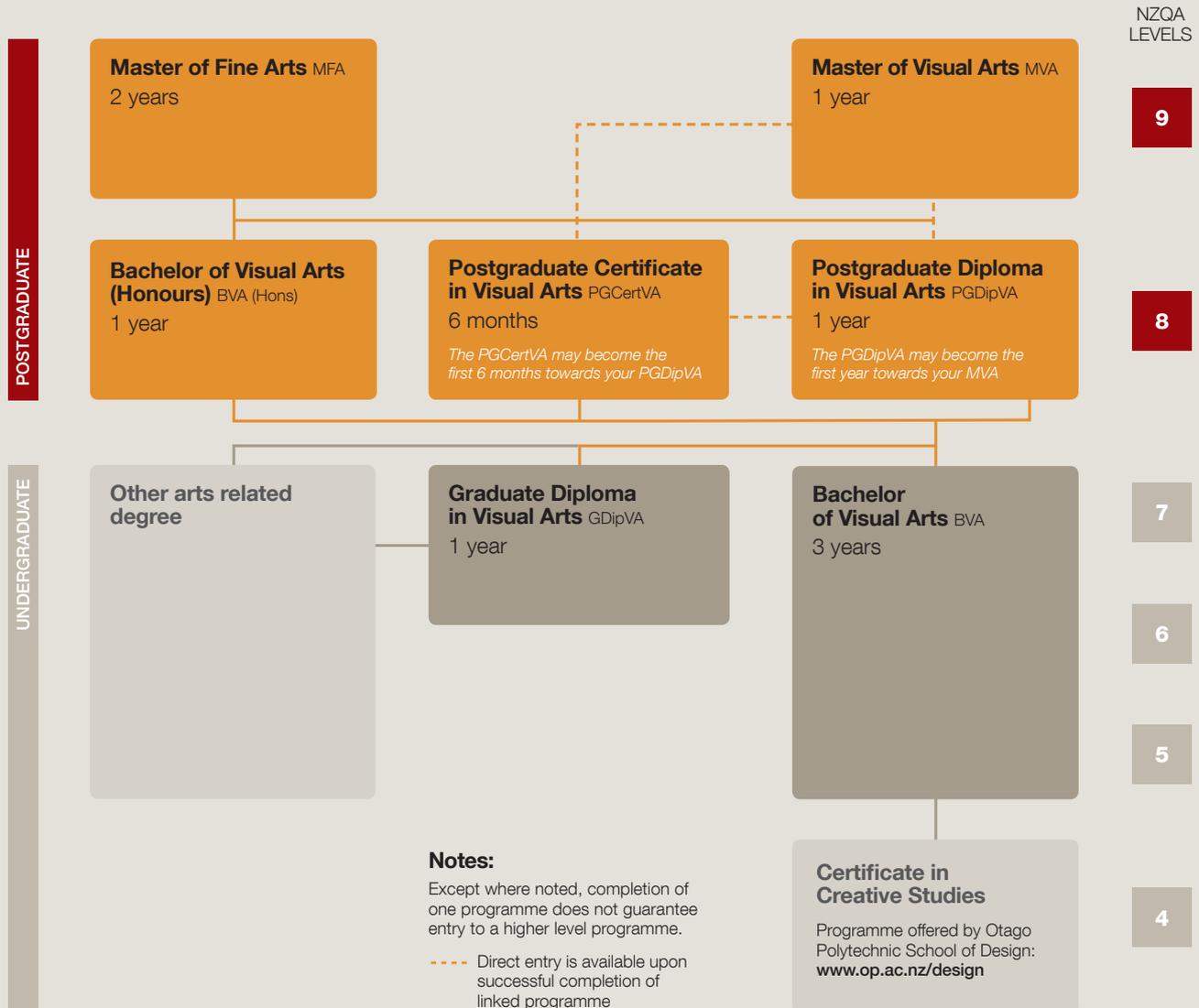
### Symposia:

The Dunedin School of Art regularly hosts symposia that encourage exploration of the relationships between art and other fields in conjunction with faculties from other institutions. In 2009 the School hosted the Art and Science Symposium and in 2010, Art and Law. In 2011, a symposium explored the relationships between Art and Medicine. In 2012, Art and Food followed, with Art and Money in 2013, Art and Book in 2014, Art and Design in 2015, with Art and Future planned for 2016.

### The Dunedin School of Art and Kai Tahu:

The Dunedin School of Art values its relationship with Kai Tahu, the principal Māori iwi (tribe) of the southern region of New Zealand, and actively works towards parity of achievement in educational status within Otago of Kai Tahu and other Māori, as guaranteed by the Treaty of Waitangi.

# Programme Pathways:



# Professor Leoni Schmidt

Head of School  
Postgraduate Theory Supervisor



“Today’s artists are expected to be able to articulate the standpoint they are coming from, the concepts they are exploring through their work and how they fit into a larger community of practice.”

# Clive Humphreys

## Principal Studio Supervisor

**In the four decades Clive Humphreys has practised as a professional artist, he's been called a lot of things. He's a painter, a drawing artist, a printmaker, a multi-media artist. His work – regularly exhibited throughout New Zealand and overseas and honoured in national awards and collections – has embraced history, abstraction and popular culture.**

He is a Principal Lecturer in the Dunedin School of Art's painting, printmaking and textiles studios and a specialist postgraduate studio supervisor.

But you'd have been hard-pressed to call Clive a pencil-wielding landscape artist. Until he went for a walk recently. "I wanted to walk as much of Waiheke Island as I could," he explains. His aim was to document plants and nature, in the spirit of the botanical artists who rendered close observations of the worlds around them, and develop themes that had recently emerged in his paintings.

"But the act of drawing became so compelling, it took over," says Clive. Now, his latest works are very large landscape drawings, capturing the Island's wind-gnarled pohutukawa and dramatic bluffs.

"I had a choice really: to go back to the original idea, or to relax into where my interests were taking me. It was a wonderful feeling when I just allowed myself to go with it." The result is a new series of works, soon to be shown in various venues.

It was a crossroads, he says, he recognises well. "As a studio supervisor, students will begin with a project proposal, but this will inevitably change and morph. The process of exploring these possibilities, making decisions about what you really want to focus on, and evaluating it as you go is the challenge and joy of master's study."



Clive says he loves going along to students' graduation exhibitions, and pulling out the original proposal they began with. "It's fascinating to see not just the differences but also the threads that have remained strong. I tell my students that if things don't change, they may not have learned much." Indeed, after 40 years as an artist, it's a philosophy Clive still seems to be living by.



# Michele Beevors

## Postgraduate Supervisor

**Michele Beevors supervises postgraduate students in the theory and practice of art. She is also the studio coordinator for Sculpture and lectures in the undergraduate programme specialising in the history of Modernist sculpture. Michele holds Master's degrees from the Canberra School of Art (Australian National University) and Columbia University (New York).**

Her exhibition, *The Wreck of Hope*, 2014, features life-size, anatomically structured skeletons of individually hand-knitted bones assembled to reflect the fragility of loss. The skeletons are supported by the flotsam of domestic ruins in the gallery as if adrift at sea.

Michele explains, "Sir David Attenborough has described human life as 'a plague on the planet'. He has spent his entire life showing us the amazing things in nature that we as petulant children despise and destroy or at best take for granted. These works describe our imminent self-extinction and that of our fellow creatures that we seem so determined to take with us."

"Knitting carries with it the legacy of care, for it takes time to knit by hand. Patterns were passed down through generations, one to the next. The history of knitting here represents the history of the human race."

# Fine Arts

## Master of Fine Arts

**The Master of Fine Arts at the Dunedin School of Art is an applied research degree benchmarked against national and international standards with a distinct emphasis on making and writing.**

From application onwards, candidates are expected to accomplish a high level of studio and theoretical research stemming from project proposals developed personally and in conjunction with supervisors. The particular strength of the MFA programme lies in the integration of theoretical and studio components. Therefore students will not only extend the boundaries of their studio work, but also become enabled to clearly articulate their theoretical and historical position in relation to their international community of practice in a major written dissertation.

Postgraduate candidates may evolve unexpected relationships between traditional subjects or create new syntheses from them. As the organisation of an individual candidate's programme is shaped by their own proposal and desired end result, this qualification may be completed in one, or across several disciplines. From application onwards, candidates work towards four integrated goals: a public exhibition, a related dissertation, documentation of work over the period of the candidacy, and an oral presentation of work in the exhibition.

This programme is distinguished by individual supervision and an attentive focus on each student's project and therefore admission to the MFA is competitive. Applications from eligible candidates will be considered on their own merit. An annotated portfolio and research project proposal outlining studio and written components, and the articulation of links between these, are central to selection for admission.

Kevin Miles, *Aramoana #1* (MFA candidate)



“The programme’s strength is the people you choose as supervisors. They gave positive feedback and were able to keep me on track.”

## Lifelong learning

**After graduating with an arts degree in 1984, Blair Kennedy undertook a successful career in high school arts education and is currently Head of Department at King’s High School in Dunedin.**

He was recently drawn to the Master of Fine Arts programme with a desire to contemporise his academic qualification. His project, dedicated to painting and moving image, engaged the use of technological frameworks in support of the high school arts curriculum. Enrolling in the programme gave Blair the opportunity to revisit the experience of the learner, enabling him to empathise with his students and to engage in conversations with them as a practitioner about the pressures of time and strategies for driving a project forward. He was supported by King’s High School with a study grant allowing one day per week in his final year for studio time, and the use of the school’s equipment.

His Dunedin School of Art supervisors gave him flexibility in recognising the demands of his job commitments, at times meeting at his studio for consultations. He praised his supervisors stating, “The programme’s strength is the people you choose as supervisors. They gave positive feedback and were able to keep me on track.”

Blair graduated with an MFA in 2013. His project titled *Toitu and Detritus – Traces, Ripples, Echoes* investigates layered and temporal discourse around the site now known as Queen’s Gardens, Dunedin. His moving image work has been subsequently exhibited at Toitū, Early Settlers Museum, Dunedin.

Blair Kennedy, *Toitū and Detritus – Traces, Ripples, Echoes*, 2013

# From artisan to educator

**Grant Thompson can be described as a man of many trades. The Master of Fine Arts graduate has a background in contemporary jewellery and experience as a researcher, writer, curator and more recently, as an academic leader and lecturer.**

Now Head of the Visual Arts School at Manukau Institute of Technology (MIT) in Auckland, Grant was in the first cohort of candidates for the MFA at Otago Polytechnic.

“I entered the programme wanting to undertake the production of a creative text. My final exhibition was at the Dunedin Public Art Gallery and would be best described as an installation that referenced the structure and form of the writing in my dissertation,” says Grant.

“I had three supervisors for the programme and there was constant support and guidance from the staff who were very available and helpful. There was also a high degree of rigour and leadership that came from the postgraduate coordinator, which I think was to the benefit of our projects.”

Graduating in 2001, Grant used his MFA as a stepping stone to the tertiary sector. “My qualification allowed me to apply for a position as a lecturer,” says Grant. “It helped give shape to my thinking and that in turn has influenced the content and delivery of my courses at MIT.”

With a well-established creative hub for artists and designers, Grant described living in Dunedin as “very enjoyable and exciting. I lived on the Otago Peninsula while I was studying and this allowed an urban/rural mix in terms of lifestyle. There were a bunch of local galleries back then, and the beginnings of an interesting artist-driven exhibitions programme that has developed into a strong presence in Dunedin today.”

Photography: Mark McLean



“I had three supervisors for the programme and there was constant support and guidance from the staff who were very available and helpful.”

## A trans- experience

**“It was a very big event in my life to move from Korea to New Zealand; from a traditional lifestyle to one of freedom and individuality. The Dunedin School of Art was the perfect place for me to learn, live and create.”**

NamSook Chang is a successful ceramic artist, teacher and curator. Originally from Korea, she graduated with a Master of Fine Arts in 2002 and has since been immersed in the international art world.

“I wanted to study in New Zealand, so I searched for a school with the best ceramics programme and found it at the Dunedin School of Art.” Subsequently, her dissertation and artwork were based on the exploration of her identity as a traveller between her inherited Korean culture and New Zealand.

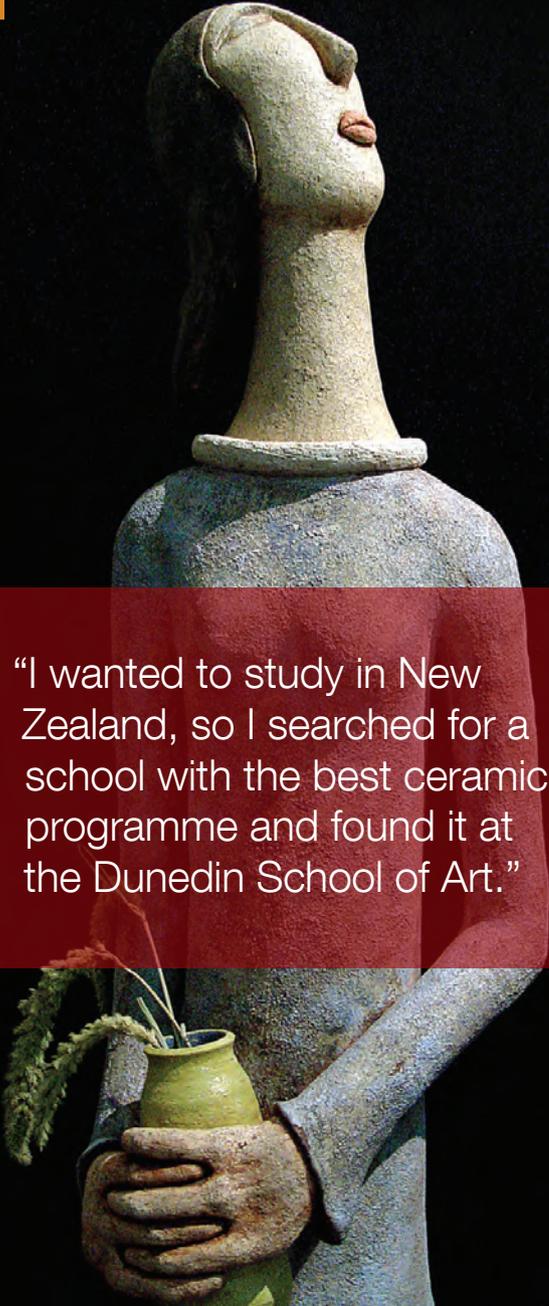
“As an international student, I had some wonderful support. This included my two supervisors for theory and studio work, who provided great leadership and artistic direction. I’m still in contact with them today.”

“I also learnt a lot from the other creative students, seeing their different ideas and what materials they used. I especially enjoyed attending the weekly MFA seminar where we would go to discuss our work.”

NamSook is currently the owner and art director of ‘The Cup Story’, a gallery and café in Seoul Korea, and has held positions as exhibition director and curator along with academic appointments as lecturer and associate professor. Namsook has undertaken a number of artist residencies overseas, including China, Hawaii, Turkey and Singapore, and continues to exhibit in solo and group shows both locally and internationally.

Artwork: *Whistle from the Bird*

“I wanted to study in New Zealand, so I searched for a school with the best ceramics programme and found it at the Dunedin School of Art.”



# Toi Rerehiko: art that moves

**Rachael Rakena is a successful digital artist, whose work has proved both culturally significant and groundbreaking on an international level.**

Of Māori and Pākehā descent, her background means she draws inspiration from close family ties, combined with contemporary technology, to create richly-layered performative installations and digital stills. Now a lecturer at Massey University's School of Māori Visual Arts, Rachael graduated with a Master of Fine Arts in 2003, and has gone on to exhibit her work around the world including the 2006 Sydney, 2007 Venice and 2008 Busan Biennales. *Haka Peep Show* was shown in Dunedin as part of the 2011 Rugby World Cup and in 2012 was exhibited with *Contact: Artists from Aotearoa/New Zealand*, in the Frankfurter Kunstverein, Germany.

"I felt fortunate to have studied at the Dunedin School of Art because the quality of the programme was so high. The whole process of my Masters was quite rigorous. My research, written and practical work provided a solid foundation and reinforced my emerging career as an artist."

"My supervisors and the postgraduate coordinator also worked very hard to understand me. They had a broad knowledge base and offered a lot of moral and experiential support. This gave me a better appreciation of my own processes and ideas. The community of practitioners around the school meant the combined experience and knowledge available for problem solving was extensive."

Residing in Dunedin for fourteen years, Rachael says she loved living and studying in a city well known as a creative precinct for aspiring artists. Engagement is at the heart of Rachael's work, drawing on inspiration from issues that affect her community and whanau.

Artwork: *One Man is an Island* – (still), DVD, 6:40, 2009



"I particularly like to collaborate with other artists because the outcome is always something I can't fully anticipate or control."



# Opportunity abroad

**Exchange report from Ted Whitaker, MFA candidate. Ted graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in 2010 and worked as a technician before deciding to study for his Master of Fine Arts:**

The Czech Republic is a culturally and historically rich place to study. Coexisting with tourists and cobble stoned alleys is a tight knit art community. With nightly participation in multiple gallery events and sampling of prestigious Czech beer, studying in Prague offered an accessible place to realign my New Zealand art practice. The study exchange at the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design was amazing due to its location in the centre of Prague, overlooking the Castle, Concert Hall and the river. Entering the school directly off the streets you can feel the architectural history, being confronted by grand stonework and high ceilings. All the studios are intertwined and there are plenty of opportunities to cross over with Architecture and Design students.

I was studying within the Super Media studio. The supervisors were encouraging, supportive and multilingual to cater for me, who at times was the only non-Czech speaker in the room. We engaged in gallery visits as a studio, partaking in lively, post-gallery discussions. Many classes are taught in English such as Bookbinding, Lithography, Czech Language, Digital Culture and a very contemporary approach to Ancient Philosophy.

## What is a Student Exchange programme?

A student exchange programme allows a Dunedin School of Art student to study for one semester or up to one year at a university overseas. As an exchange student, you will pay your regular Otago Polytechnic tuition fees, receive your student loan and/or allowance, and with some planning, be able to credit your overseas programme of study back to your Otago Polytechnic degree.

Photography: Ted Whitaker

# Community spirit

**Aroha Novak graduated from the Dunedin School of Art with a Master of Fine Arts in 2013 following her Bachelor of Fine Arts in 2007.**

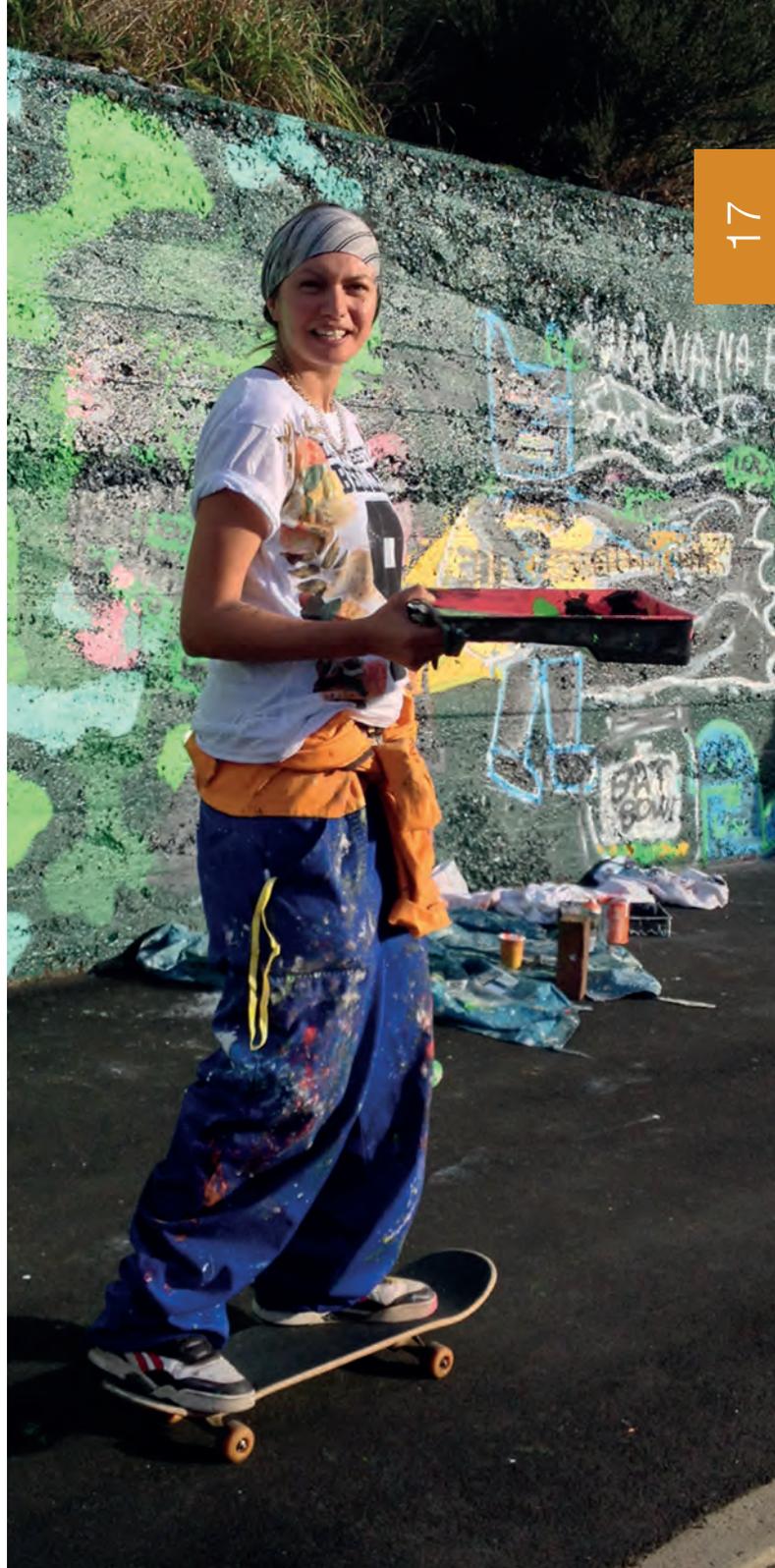
Living and working in Dunedin, Aroha uses a variety of media to interrogate issues of escapism as well as the social, political and economic inequality prevalent in contemporary society. Her work encompasses sculpture, installation art, painting, sound, drawing and video.

Aroha is associated with STICKUM, an Art Collective who work together on local projects in both public, community projects and private commissions. Both *The Wilkie Road Art Project* and *Bathgate Park Project* inspired youth to engage in their local surroundings during New Zealand's annual 'Youth Week'. *Reaching for the Stars*, a Caversham mural completed in 2014, involved intense community consultation gaining favourable support from the locals and a sense of pride in the final outcome.

Aroha recently exhibited in Invercargill, with local school children participating in her workshops that encouraged children to think about their environment. Her latest venture is 'Geoffs Studio' – an art space in the Allbell Chambers, a hub of art studios in central Dunedin.

These projects demonstrate Aroha's tenacious spirit and confidence to tackle the challenges of public works and collaboration alongside her dynamic independent practice.

Aroha Novak on Wilkie Road. Photography: Victoria Gilliland.



## A world in a wardrobe

**Few women in the world get to open their closet door in the morning and legitimately call it research.**

For Master of Fine Arts (Fashion Design) graduate Rekha Rana however, the collection in her wardrobe maps the transformations in her life through garments; from her birth country of India, through her work in Taiwan and her new life in her chosen home of New Zealand. Her exploration has culminated in the design of a collection of pieces which aim to reflect and contextualise the unique multicultural identity she has developed over time.

“This project is about how, over a period of time, various influences have shaped my thinking about self and my fashion design practice” says Rekha. “Clothing, dress and fashion, over the past two decades have slowly changed my personal life.”

Rekha arrived in New Zealand with a Masters degree in Commerce, however fashion was something that had always interested her.

When she arrived in Dunedin in the mid-1990s, the opportunity arose to pursue her passion. Rekha was able to claim credit

for her experience as a fashion merchandiser and complete a Diploma in Fashion Design at Otago Polytechnic. Later, as a lecturer in fashion design, she upgraded her qualification to a Bachelors degree and began her Masters – the first person at the Polytechnic to undertake a Master of Fine Arts in a design-related discipline.

Her current work both challenges and integrates the flat-pattern method of constructing garments learned in New Zealand with the draping, embroidery and use of geometric shapes more common in Indian society. Originally drawn to the diverse colour palette of Indian garments, she has also seen her work develop around the more muted colours used in Western clothing.

“Fashion celebrates transformation, movement and novelty” explains Rekha. “Living in New Zealand I am naturally transformed as part of the process of displacement of values and identities, by coming in and experiencing another culture.”



# Visual Arts

## Master of Visual Arts

The Master of Visual Arts provides a coursework alternative to the research Master of Fine Arts and is a more studio focused study. By the end of this programme, students will be able to produce a proposal-based body of critically engaged studio work and present this work in a public space. Students will write an extended essay as a conceptual research paper contextualising the above body of work and deliver an oral seminar.

This programme aims to provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the professional, conceptual and technical skills relevant to their chosen field in the production of an independently developed and original exhibition and written text. Better understanding and higher level learning, including research skills in studio and theory characterised by integration between the material and the conceptual, will provide them with opportunities towards higher level employment in the arts sector.

## Bachelor of Visual Arts (Honours)

This programme aims, through guidance, to enable students who have already reached excellence in their undergraduate degree with the opportunity to extend their ability to work within the visual arts in a way that demonstrates a systematic engagement with contemporary thinking in their chosen field. The Bachelor of Visual Arts (Honours) provides a one year full-time postgraduate focus to supplement undergraduate studies, leading to an exhibition and related written text that demonstrates intellectual rigour and professional expertise. It presents a more research focused stage for those higher achieving students, who intend to pursue further postgraduate studies.

## Postgraduate Diploma in Visual Arts

This one year full-time programme provides graduates with opportunities to further develop their undergraduate skills, knowledge and experience of the history and contemporary conventions of their field within appropriate learning contexts at a postgraduate level. It presents students with the guided opportunity to create a structured, systematic and professional exhibited body of work supported by written texts which demonstrate intellectual rigour and contemporary relevance.

Students will write a set essay on an aspect of research methodology related to the above body of work and a further essay based on their participatory learning within a seminar series on contemporary practices. The Master of Visual Arts would provide a logical extension to this programme and is ideal for those that would like to have a slightly longer timeframe for Master's completion.

## Postgraduate Certificate in Visual Arts

This one semester full-time programme is aimed towards applicants seeking an initial engagement in study and research at postgraduate level. Students produce a body of critically engaged studio work and write a set essay on an aspect of research methodology related to the above body of work.

This programme aims to provide students with the opportunity to develop, in a guided programme, the ability to create a systematic proposal supported by studio evidence that forecasts the form and content of a further exhibition. Successful completion of the Postgraduate Certificate in Visual Arts will give students direct and guaranteed entry into the Master of Visual Arts.

# A tale of two cultures

“There is such freedom to explore in the postgraduate programme... It’s incredibly open and inspiring; you never stop learning.”



**It has been said that history is created by those who tell the best stories, and Karen Taiaroa is a natural storyteller. In her evocative textile-based artworks, elements of her own personal history merge and compete for attention with elements of political history, natural history and myth, painting a complex picture of how she came to be where she is today.**

Karen says a major part of her practice is exploring her own history and identity as a woman of mixed Māori and Pākehā descent. “It’s about making connections between the two cultures; to see, value and understand their worlds within the limitations of their ways of life.” In her artwork, Karen tells the story of European colonization in New Zealand and how the two cultures interrelated during this time. For example, figures are standing “as one with the

earth, as land is family in Māori culture.” Pākehā cloaked in tartan refer to the European migration, and tree stumps signify new beginnings.

Originally a high school art teacher, Karen decided to pursue postgraduate studies and focus on colonisation in New Zealand culture before rejoining the secondary school system. “There is such freedom to explore in the postgraduate programme. We have big discussion days where students meet up and discuss ideas, relationships, issues, and people’s work. It’s incredibly open and inspiring; you never stop learning.”

# Unity and order

**Mutahir Ariff worked as a commercial animator in his home country of Malaysia before taking up postgraduate study in the Dunedin School of Art.**

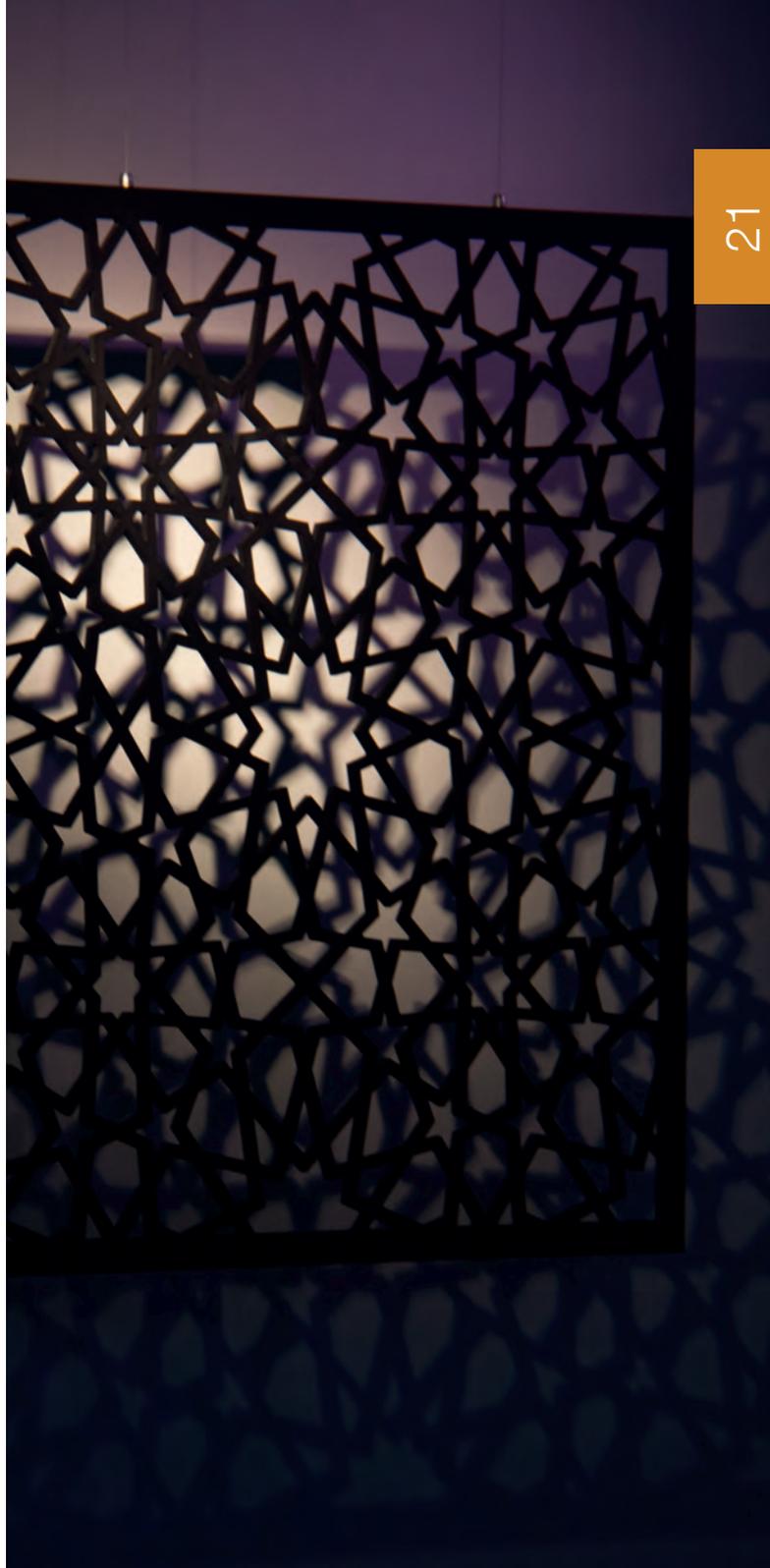
His figurative work in animation was superseded with research into Islamic geometrical patterns. He does however still feel a strong attraction to animation, acknowledging the network of friends he left behind who shared the same artistic goals and vision as he did.

Three video works completed during his first year of postgraduate study are an indication of his passion for the moving image but instead of figuration he turned introspectively to nature and the Islamic geometric patterns of non-representational art, abstraction and tiling.

Islamic art is underpinned by three distinct disciplines of decoration: Arabesque or Vegetal; Calligraphy; and Geometry. Geometric designs stress the importance of unity and order. They use interlaced circles, squares, stars and polygons in countless complex arrangements. Research on Islamic art forms led Mutahir to the task of drawing 'parquet deformations'; abstract geometric designs that slowly evolve in space.

Mutahir's final postgraduate exhibition, a combination of three-dimensional wall works and moving image, gave the audience an insight into contemporary applications that combined his past work experience with Islamic culture.

Mutahir Ariff, *Hijab*, 2014



# Inspiration from the fringe

**A postgraduate alumnus of the Dunedin School of Art who specialised in painting and drawing, Flynn Morris-Clarke is fascinated by the construction of human identity. Drawing from the imagery that inspires him, he is able to explore the public identity his subjects – most dwelling on the fringes of popular culture – have created for themselves.**

“I have always been interested in people who need to construct and re-construct their identity; as if their transformations are (at least for them) a necessary strategy through which they can release themselves from the ordinary so-called ‘truths’ forced upon them”, explains Flynn. “I’m not necessarily interested in how the media constructs their identity – more how we could construct our own identities and where those influences come from. Muses are much more interesting when they’re risking it, I guess that’s what’s intriguing about (transgender movie star) Candy Darling.”

Flynn’s work can be a very solitary pursuit and he readily acknowledges he’ll think for many days about a project and then execute it very quickly. His challenge has been to organise his thoughts into a cohesive enough concept to produce a consistent body of work. It is this challenge that his supervisors at the Dunedin School of Art have really helped him address through conversation and direction.

“The ‘work’ is largely a result of conversations I have with my supervisors. I couldn’t ask for much more from my theory supervisor. She’s been so honest with my work – if she likes it she tells me, if she doesn’t she tells me. She took my lexicon of ideas and attempted to refocus me in order to write something coherent, in what I could only describe as a straightforward way, at least in my mind.”

“I also had a strong relationship with my studio supervisor

who really seemed to get me and the direction I wanted to take my project. His guidance was more casual – we’ll have coffee, sit in front of work and discuss ideas.”

“It’s allowed me to develop in a way that makes my work more coherent and interesting. This is so beneficial in terms of practice – it’s given me more confidence.”

Flynn has since become the co-founder of Brick Brothers Art Gallery in Dunedin.



Flynn Morris-Clarke, *Untitled*, watercolour on paper, 35 x 28 cm, 2011.

# Where art and science meet

## ART AND LIGHT PROJECT

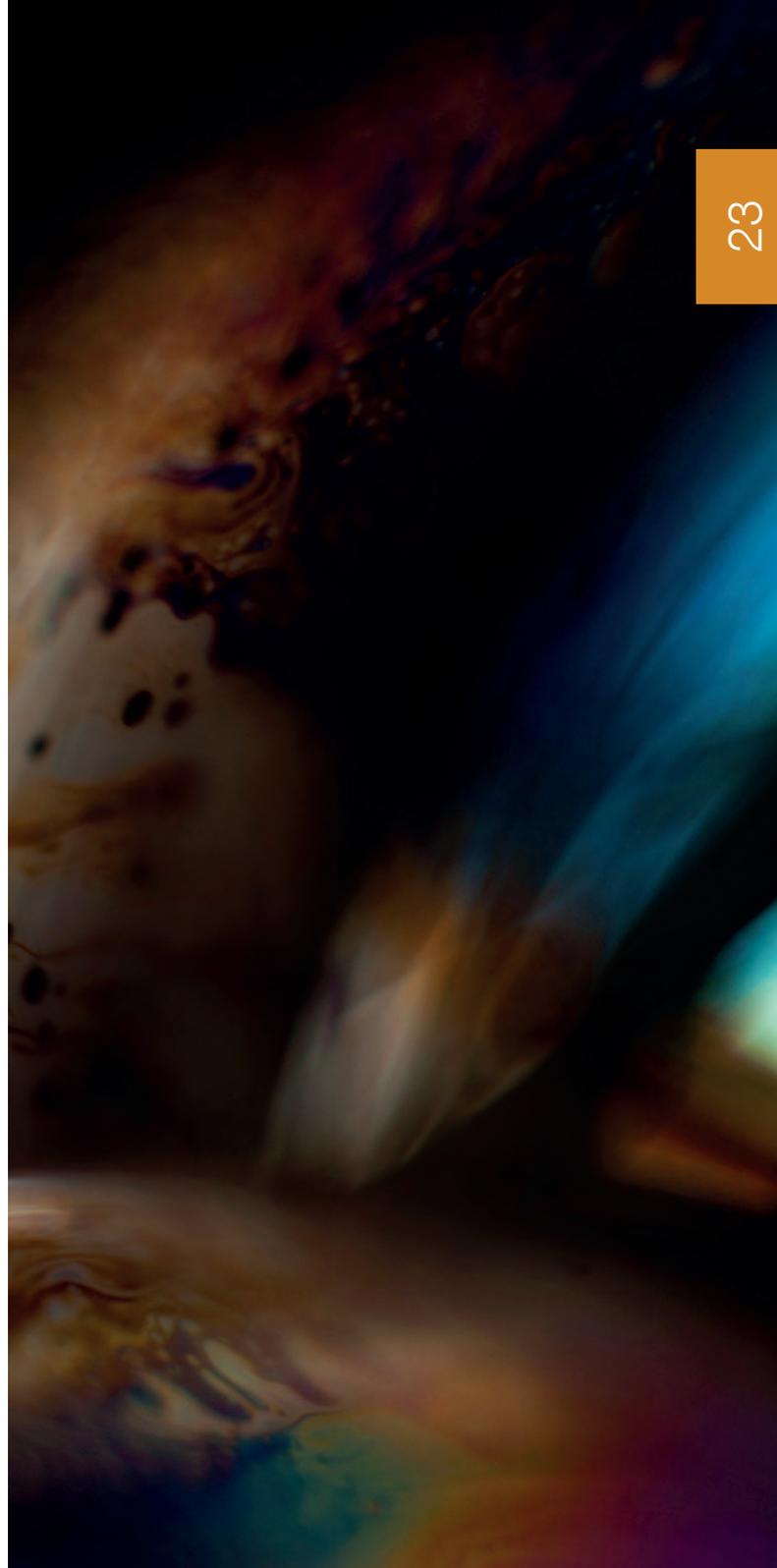
Declared by UNESCO, 2015 is the International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies (IYL 2015) with the aim to “promote sustainable development and provide solutions to global challenges in energy, education, agriculture and health.”

Celebrating the UNESCO International Year of Light, the Art and Light Exhibition is an exciting collaboration between the Dunedin School of Art and the University of Otago Departments of Physics, Botany, Anatomy, Physiology and Computer Science, hosted by the Otago Museum.

Students, graduates and staff from the Dunedin School of Art, as well as other artists associated in one way or another with the Dunedin School of Art, were invited to volunteer to work with PhD and Post-Doctoral members of the University of Otago. This follows the very successful Art and Neuroscience and Art and Anatomy Projects that ran in the previous two years.

Artists and researchers work together over a nine month period, individually or in small groups, to develop visual material that relates to research topics. The result is a diverse yet cohesive exhibition by seventeen artists and twelve scientists incorporating everything from traditional media to experimental technologies and immersive environments.

Sarah McKay, from the series *Within the Outside*, 2015.



# Language no barrier

“It is a really good feeling when you accidentally meet a person on the street asking you how are you today? It is something very valuable and very rare today. The same kind of familiarity I noticed in the Dunedin School of Art. I have had a very positive experience of studying and I felt like I was at home.”



**Zivka Suvic Petrovic, from Serbia, enrolled in the Postgraduate Certificate in Visual Arts, part-time for a period of one year.**

Regardless of the linguistic barrier, she enjoyed the social interaction of seminars, workshops and symposia and felt she made progress in the English language. She considered the flexibility and openness to dialogue with respect for opinions of others as a positive characteristic of review classes and appreciated the support and experience of her time at the school.

## International students

Art is an international language understood by people who immerse themselves in the making of art and in responding to art. At the Dunedin School of Art we welcome international students for the diversity and quality of their cultural histories, and for the range of arts-based work they contribute to our community of artists and writers.

Each international student enriches our lives and enables us to better understand another culture. In a gesture of reciprocity, we aim to make each and every international student feel welcome and supported within our school community.

# In the field

## **The Dunedin School of Art offers postgraduate and undergraduate students opportunities to undertake work experience while they study.**

Obtaining formal qualifications is a significant foundation for a career in the Visual Arts and work experience during the period of study allows students to gain a sense of the breadth of career possibilities available, and it contributes to becoming work ready. Students gain skills and experience that improves future employability and can graduate with a valuable addition to their CV. Potential employers also look favourably on those who have made a commitment to their own development through putting themselves forward for this real world experience as they study.

Work experience develops so called 'soft skills' such as communication, team work, problem solving and taking initiative in a professional environment. It differentiates

a candidate for a potential employer, enhances a CV for applications and interviews, gives one a sense of whether a pathway meets expectations and can lead to further opportunities, including employment.

Students on a recent work placement at the Blue Oyster Art Project Space had this to say of their experience:

*"It's one thing being in the studio and another to exhibit yourself. You need to know how galleries work."* (Kimi Rindell)

*"You develop relationships with people working in the industry."* (Jasmine Rule)

Their work experience *"demystifies the art gallery. Lots of work goes into installing and de-installing. It connects you with the art you want to make yourself."* (Rachel Oon)



BVA (Hons) student Tara James on work placement at the Dunedin Public Art Gallery.



# Living in Dunedin

**As one of the country's premier centres of learning, Dunedin is home to a large student population and a distinctive, creative culture.**

Dunedin is the largest city in the lower part of New Zealand's South Island. It is characterised by beautiful scenery and wildlife, heritage buildings and a vibrant, lively café culture. Students give Dunedin a special charm and over the last 100 years, students from around New Zealand and the globe have left their mark on the city's distinctive culture. Dunedin boasts innovation in the fields of education and research, art, design, health, fashion, music, and technology. Many of New Zealand's most notable poets, writers, artists, musicians and sportspeople have come from Dunedin.

Otago Polytechnic's campus is in the heart of Dunedin's student district with close links to transport, accommodation and the centre of town. Most students live in the area and most of the resources required for study (including libraries and museums), technical facilities and support services are also located nearby. Health services, gym facilities, student entertainment and freely accessible parks, gardens, beaches, lakes and mountains are all within easy reach.

Many international students have already discovered that New Zealand is the perfect place to study and live. The affordable lifestyle, relaxed and safe atmosphere, comfortable climate and a reputation for high quality education make New Zealand a sought-after study destination.

# Being an artist in Dunedin

**Dunedin's rich artistic, musical and architectural past has laid a strong foundation for today's creative population.**

The city is home to a small but tightly-knit community of creative people who support each other's exhibitions, performances and events. The Dunedin School of Art acts as a hub for emerging artists and is a place where life-long friendships begin and collaborations emerge.

Dunedin is home to a number of iconic cultural institutions, including the Dunedin Public Art Gallery situated in the heart of the city. It has long offered world class contemporary and historical art exhibitions, and its public programmes are regularly attended by Dunedin's artistic community.

Gallery spaces such as the Blue Oyster Art Project Space, Brick Brothers and None give emerging artists the opportunity to produce and exhibit work – here you can submit proposals for exhibitions that extend boundaries and are experimental in nature. Students and graduates of the Dunedin School of Art feature consistently on these exhibition calendars.

Dunedin boasts a large number of dealer galleries which also offer high quality exhibitions of local and national artists, and spaces such as the Dowling Street Studios frequently open their doors to the public, while the University of Otago's Hocken Library hosts an extensive pictorial collection and gallery only metres from the Dunedin School of Art.

Complementing Dunedin's visual arts are other cultural landmarks including the Allen Hall and Fortune Theatres, the biennial Otago Arts Festival and annual Fringe Festival and Dunedin's iconic music and sound scene which reverberates throughout the city's many music venues.



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