

STORYTELLING AS KOHA

Identity is the theme of 2017's Auckland Festival of Photography being held across the region from June 1-24. VICTOR VAN WETERING introduces three artists committed to exploring identity and broadening understandings of communities.

Pati Solomon Tyrell is an interdisciplinary visual artist with a strong focus on performance.

Tyrell uses lens-based media to create imagery centred around ideas of urban Pacific queer identity, powerfully illustrated in *Fāgogo* at ST PAUL St Gallery, CBD, 8 June to 21 July.

"Fāgogo in Samoan refers to fables that are

told in a shared context. The receiver of a Fāgogo is vested with an expectation to share the story, making it their own and then passing it on."

Tyrell's work "unpacks the colonial gaze placed on queer brown bodies in an attempt to return gender and sexually diverse identities back to their oracle status".

In this project, 'Fāgogo' is situated as a

restorative practice, developed with other artists and collaborators from the Pasifika LGBTIQ space in Aotearoa.

Tyrell co-founded the arts collective FAFSWAG and is a recent graduate of the Bachelor of Creative Arts at Manukau Institute of Technology, Otara. Originally from Kirikiriroa, Waikato, he is now based in Maungarei, Tāmaki Makaurau.



Kelekele Niue (2016)



Eleele Samoa (2016)



Vai Cook Is (2016)

Tuafale Tanoa'i aka Linda T says her community-based practice is a life-long adventure.

When asked to describe herself in 30 words or less, she lists "complex, dedicated, generous, vulnerable, compassionate, activist, story sharer, intuitive, loyal, spontaneous, loner, friendly, aunty / daughter / sister, sincere, optimistic. I'm also a DJ that loves to dance."

"Life is challenging and working with cameras is my choice. It's about nurturing ideas born from inspiration, fueled by positive energy.

Producing creative works of the imagination, in any form available, is my artistic responsibility to all the communities I care about."

Tuafale Tanoa'i aka Linda T's work is featured in *Ata Te Tangata*, at Studio One Toi Tu, Ponsonby, 25 May - 15 June. The exhibition was curated by Rosanna Raymond, commissioned by the Auckland Festival of Photography and first shown at 2016's Pingyao International Photography Festival.

Other artists in *Ata Te Tangata's* roll call of photographers of Maori and Pacific descent

from Aotearoa New Zealand include: Grant Apiata, Terry Koloamatangi Klavenes, Emily Mafile'o, Natalie Robertson, Raymond Sagapolutele, Siliga Setoga, Pati Solomon Tyrell.

This year's festival is the first opportunity for audiences to see *Ata Te Tangata* in New Zealand - and the show also features images by Russ Flatt and Tanu Gago - previous recipients of the festival's Annual Commission, where an Auckland-based artist is commissioned to create a new body of work for exhibition.



2017's commissioned artist is Janet Lilo, with her new work on show at Silo 6, Wynyard Quarter, from June 1 to 20.

Janet Lilo's digital photography, video and installation work explores experimental documentary and drawing processes for exhibition, performance and archive.

"I am interested in documentation as a conversational and social tool for recording time, people and place - often with reference to popular culture."

Lilo's most recent projects include 2016's *Status Update* at Te Uru Gallery. She graduated from Auckland University of Technology with a Masters in Visual Arts in 2006 and is an active member of Whau the People community arts collective.

Lilo (Ngāpuhi, Samoan and Niuean) describes herself as a staunch supporter of the underdog and proud mother of Harry, Milo and Manaia.

