Group Admits Mistake
Lolani Dalosa, Ken Faber, Lily Greig
Ton Ray, Rangi White
10 October – 19 December 2026

After working with a demoralised, disorderly ward of neurotic soldiers at Northfield Hospital, Birmingham, during the Second World War, psychiatrist Wilfred Bion developed a theory of the group as an autonomous mentality with an unconscious of its own.[1] Groups, he found, are secretly organised by shared fantasies—the most telling being a longing not to work together, but to be saved.[2] On the threshold of becoming its true self, the group searches for a leader, an enemy or an exit, placing its authority anywhere but in the room.

Every work in this exhibition is built on a threshold. A permeable curtain, a bus stop, a portal, two extinction events and a group in a cabin who never quite form. Within them, characters step forward to test the frame, splitting themselves between the constructed world of the work and the structural reality of the gallery.

A trio flattened in an Auckland Transport bus stop reanimate a South Auckland waystation long watched by Lolani Dalosa. Shot, cut, and mounted like photo-object props, these are subjects in transition, wavering between freedom of choice and indifference to it. In this diorama the withheld arrival of a redemptive vehicle gives way to what Cady Noland saw as a pernicious game: an arena of synthesised tactics "where advantage can be gained in an oblique way."[3]

In a scene staged by Lily Greig, a free-standing door opens onto the Duat, the ancient Egyptian netherworld where the dead must pass through gates

1 Wilfred R. Bion, *Experiences in Groups and Other Papers* (London: Tavistock, 1961). A collection of papers written between 1943 and 1952, starting from the Northfield experiment with John Rickman, continuing with therapy groups at the Tavistock Clinic.

2 Ibid. 151. Bion argues that a group's efforts at its actual task are covertly steered by 'basic assumptions': dependency, fight-flight and pairing. In pairing, the group hopes that two of its members will produce a saviour, a hope that depends on the saviour never arriving: "Only by remaining a hope does hope persist."

3 Cady Noland, *Towards a Metalanguage of Evil*, ed. Roland Nachtigäller (Stuttgart: Edition Cantz, 1992). Noland argues that American social life is organised around sanctioned ways of treating people as objects, with the game as its model.

Artspace Aotearoa is a public contemporary art gallery, founded in 1987 by artists and arts workers. We platform contemporary art practice, develop discourse, provide resources for artists, and connect the Aotearoa context with international conversations. Our mission is to critically explore contemporary life, led by artists.

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guarded by demons who grant entry only when named correctly. Here, door and demon form a union, the image charges the object that carries it, together they invoke an idea of sculpture not as ornament but as apotropaic object—a functional vessel that might act, not merely depict. Curled at the door, the boy feigns sleep, perhaps to defer judgement, but his growing nose gives away his fate.

Rangi White's Rastafari metal chain curtain, remade in the vernacular of cool minimalist sculpture, delineates another threshold. One side draws on a history of cultural resistance sown on the East Coast—Ruatoria, Ngāti Dread, Aotearoa roots and the 1979 Bob Marley show at Western Springs that inspired them. The other enters a lineage of curtain-works staged in New Zealand art institutions, enveloping Ilse von Randow's 1957 loom-woven commission for the Auckland Art Gallery through the artistic vocabulary of Artspace Aotearoa Kaitohu Director Ruth Buchanan. If Babylon, in Rastafari, denotes the order that absorbs whatever rises against it, this work anticipates that conclusion by taking on the idiom of an art-Babylon that will inevitably aestheticise it.

A grammar for that inevitability—the prophetic perfect tense—is found in the Bible, where events yet to happen are phrased as already finished. The future told in the past. Ken Faber works in this grammar. Across rimu-veneered doors, found curtains and taxonomic sculptures of bird feathers, sea glass and alpaca wool, Faber imagines worlds where native birds are spliced with their dinosaur ancestors. These chimeras create a loop between the extinction event that closed the Cretaceous period and the one underway now, in the Capitalocene. They circle a catastrophe still arriving and already decided.

Prophecy comes by way of a riddler in a surreal docu-fiction psychodrama by Ton Ray. Four strangers appear in a cabin, confused, unable to connect, assembled for a reason none can name. The sudden arrival of a godhead in a question-mark suit reprises what Bion observed: when a group cannot bear to be one, it conjures a redeemer. This oracle promises hope, but his muffled, cryptic answers exacerbate the chaos. The group tries to reify him and discover their purpose, but as they fail, the camera turns on them. It reveals the apparatus of the film's own making and recasts the group as administrators of its meaning.

Bleeding into one another through narrative and matter, these planes produce a type of spectatorship, one that moves by metalepsis: in and out of fiction, between worlds and through the surreality of the institution they occupy. As each scene shuffles authority elsewhere—to the next bus, gate, institution or epoch—a spectator appears just in time: messiah, administrator of meaning.

Rangi White

1.

Platform, 2026

Wooden platform, office furniture and equipment, staff, plinth; 4500 x 4000 x 150 mm, office setting dimensions variable.

2.

Chains, 2026

Aluminium chain curtain, 2mm aluminium clips; 7200 x 2800 mm.

3.

Lolani Dalosa

Cruel Games, 2026

Bus shelter: anodised aluminium, inkjet print on three honeycomb panels; dimensions variable.

4.

Ton Ray

Finding Pencils, 2026

High def. single-channel video projection (colour, sound); 1:02:00 min. Thank you to all the contributors: Elijah Broughton, Vinnie Casey, James Fairmond Kelly, Chris Jackson, Miles Hendricks, Simon Lear, Sophia Laurie, Grant Priest, Bridget Riggir-Cuddy, Shiraz Sadikeen, Cameron Taylor, Anto Yeldezian, Batu Yazici.

Ken Faber

5.

(Weka Daspletosaurus), 2026

House paint, gifted curtain; 2800m x 6000 mm

6.

Less Than Human/More Than Human (Kōkako Troodon), 2026

Egg tempera on rabbit glue, gesso, rimu heartwood; 2000 x 1470 mm.

7.

Rebis (Microraptor), 2026

(Gift economy): rock pigeon/sparrow feathers (collected from pigeon flock living by the Symonds Street Methodist Church), sea glass (collected from Takapuna beaches), aluminium casted head and limbs (aluminium sourced from Tipping Point, Henderson), alpaca wool and wheat seed stuffing, sulfur crested cockatoo/Muscovy duck/Mallard duck/turkey/pheasant/Eastern rosella feathers (gifted by Taipua Kipa), possum fur scraps (gifted by Miles Clark), possum fur tufts (gifted by Joyce Campbell), aluminium amateur wire (gifted by Jaymin Patel), zinc coated aluminum wire (gifted by Avery McGeorge), polyester strip armature wrapping (gifted by Latamai Katoa); 950 x 920 mm.

8.

Ornithomimus, 2026

Egg tempera on rabbit glue gesso rimu heartwood; 134 x 130 mm.

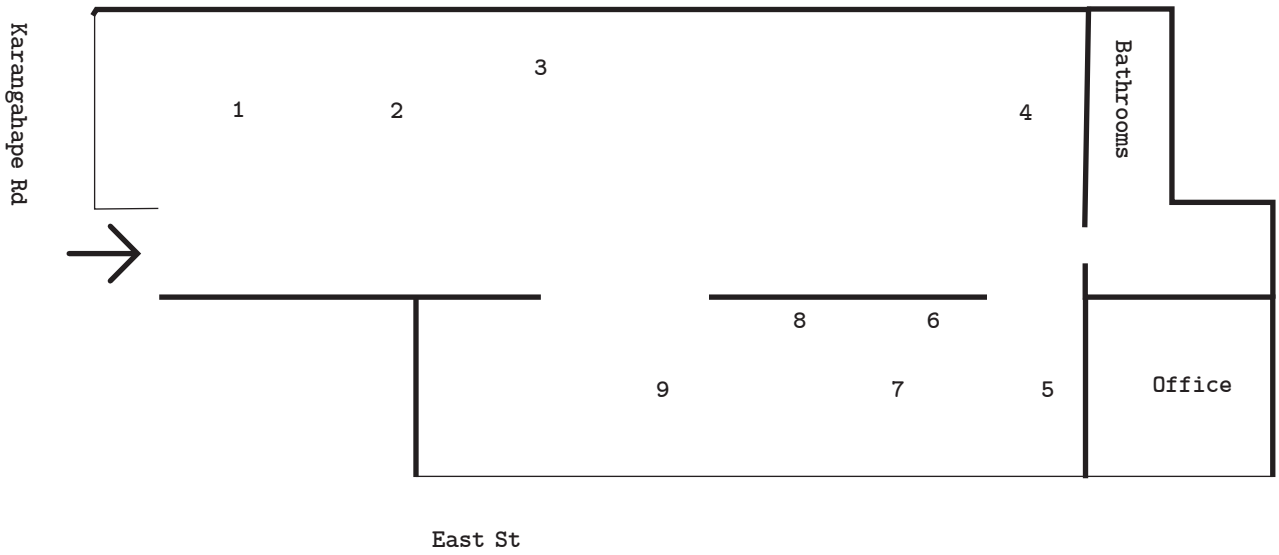
9.

Lily Greig

Doorscape (formula for not dying again), 2026

Wax, pigment, foam, wood, fabric, resin, wooden door, acrylic paint, steel, bronze, patina; door: 1900 x 760 x 42 mm, figure 1700 x 750 x 400 mm.

All art works courtesy the artists. Commissioned by Artspace Aotearoa.



Lolani Dalosa is a Samoan and Filipino artist based in Tāmaki Makaurau. Using CCTV material, online imagery, industrial and readymade objects, Dalosa produces films, sculptures, photographs, and installations drawn from urban life in South Auckland. These constitute an ongoing study of ambivalence, examining the underlying determinants of choice, engagement and participation within everyday structures and systems. Recent projects include *Spades*, 2026, Aotearoa Art Fair; *Slow Races Nowhere*, 2025, Nathan Homestead; *Dalosa, Lafo & Iva*, 2025, The Physics Room; and *Character Studies*, 2024, Te Tuhi.

Ken Faber is a painter and sculptor whose work draws on deep time, prehistory, and extinction to rethink present-day system collapse. In recent works, chimera avian species-native birds grafted with dinosaur ancestors-face impending meteors. Egg tempera is posited here as a 'non-binary' emulsion of oil and water, suggesting a genderqueer transcendence of the binaries underpinning the Capitalocene. Drawing on Biblical grammar, Faber reads unconscious fantasies of extinction in the 'prophetic perfect tense': a crisis at once arriving and already decided. They completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts and Anthropology at the University of Auckland in 2025 and are currently completing a Bachelor of Fine Arts Honours.

Lily Greig is an artist based in Tāmaki Makaurau, working across sculpture and installation. Her work draws on the way archetypes are used in psychoanalysis to understand and resolve defensive responses to trauma. Incorporating Egyptian magico-religious texts, the *Cult of the [decapitated] Head in Iron Age Europe*, and the tradition of bodily relics in Catholic material culture, Greig's practice recalls archaic modes of meaning-making through objects. She completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts at Elam School of Fine Arts in 2025.

Ton Ray is a filmmaker and visual artist based in Tāmaki Makaurau. His work tests the limits of non-teleological narrative and world-building in still and moving images. Using repetition, recursion, and micro-variation, he constructs worlds in which time is fragmented and events are connected not by causality but by recognition and memory. Alongside his moving-image work, Ray maintains a sculptural practice that uses found photographs and frames to reorganise borders and recontextualise them. He holds a Master of Fine Arts from Elam School of Fine Arts, 2023 and, in 2024, founded Strawhouse, an artist-run space in Mount Eden.

Rangi White of Rongomaiwahine is a sculptor and installation artist based in Tāmaki Makaurau. He has exhibited at Gus Fisher Gallery, Treadler, Ivan Anthony, and William Austin. He holds a Master of Māori Studies from Waipapa Taumata Rau, University of Auckland.

Events

Saturday 24 October, 2–3pm
Artists talk

Thursday 12 November, 6–7pm
Publication launch: The Purpose of the Space Is What It Does

Thursday 19 November, 6–7pm
What writing do we need? New Commissions Writers Launch

Thursday 26 November, 6pm
Deep Dive: Lecture by Kaiāwhina Whakaaturanga Assistant Curator Matthew Hanson

Thursday 3 December, 5:30pm
Lecture: Monuments with Hamza Walker
Toi o Tāmaki Auckland Art Gallery Auditorium

Monday 7 December, 1–5pm
In focus: A Curatorial workshop with Hamza Walker

Every Tuesday, 10am–12pm
Low-sensory hours

To learn more about these events, visit artspace-aotearoa.nz

To request a tour for your group contact info@artspace.org.nz

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To support our work and enjoy additional events consider joining a Supporters Circle. To learn more about this programme, visit artspace-aotearoa.nz/tautoko

The annual question
Which history?

Each year Artspace Aotearoa sets one question which our exhibitions and events orbit in the company of artists and audiences. Across the year, we explore what this question offers us and what artworks and their authors can weave together. In 2026, we ask "which history?"

In her essay "Twitch" Tina Makereti begins with an early childhood memory, where questions about "where do I come from?" lead her to go out into the dark night with her father and study the moon. Folding this memory into her now decades of lived experience she clarifies the consideration: "The internal world: the external world. How do we know our place in the universe?"[1] She answers this question with the word whakapapa. The essay goes on to unfold whakapapa as a practical, poetic, and embodied framework to consider and equally discover ourselves in the world. This unfolding of whakapapa enlivens a sense of time—and therefore also history—as something that does not happen to us, but something we are braided into as co-creators. In this paradigm we are both receptacles and actors who move within an arena. Whakapapa provides a dynamic and Aotearoa-specific lens to consider this toggling between actor and receptacle within society. This toggling activates the consideration: how can I act fully toward my place in time? How can I act in lively conversation with history?

1 Tina Makareti. "Twitch", *This Compulsion in Us.* (Te Herenga Waka Press, 2025), pg 57.

Being 'in time' in the embodied way that whakapapa encourages is also a way of describing context. That is to say, what are the circumstances that impact the environment in which I find myself and my capacity to understand that? As a leading forum and platform for contemporary art, Artspace Aoteaora must necessarily scrutinise its own context, the arena and the frameworks in which it operates. Since 2023 we have approached one question at a time to do this, drawing a line between the work we do, artists who inspire, artworks that catalyse, and the world in which we live. So far we have probed three areas of life: body, territory, and language. Each of these areas came with their own conventions and boundaries that encircle much of daily life: assumptions around private and public space, division of labour, and which words are used where. These very same conventions, established over time and through repetition, play a significant role in our individual capacity to participate in our context.

These conventions are deeply bound to and informed by history. They span the *what*, *how*, and *who* of documenting and sharing ritual, experiences, and lives. In asking "which history?" we test history as an open form, insisting—like many other forms—that it is malleable, with multiple versions, available for interrogation by artists, writers, critical thinkers, and indeed, our organisation. After all, nothing is ever really closed, not even history. Our programme approaches the paradox of history: the certain value of standardised operations and methods within Western frameworks

at the same time as exploring the friction, the jouissance, that the expanding of tones and tenors, bring to bear. In the 2026 programme we tackle Indigenous sovereignty and the colonial experience; so-called minor histories; art education—arguably the crucible of the contemporary art context and perspectives from emergent artists working in Tāmaki Makaurau today. Across 2026, we also consider the organisation's legacy and the metaphorical and physical ways we can reconsider our own standards of behaviour.

At the heart of Yolande Zola Zoli van der Heide's November 2025 lecture *That Time You Were Not There*[2] was that as artists, curators, writers, and other engaged society members it is essential to understand that "our horizon is not the institution. It is elsewhere, and otherwise." Implied in the consideration of "which history?" is a sister question that expands the horizon, bends it ever so slightly: "which future?" Through an intergenerational programme of activity that includes painting, performance, film, sculpture, workshops, tours, symposium, and much more, we scratch into both sides of the temporal coin, seeking out continuity rather than fragmentation.

If the Artspace Aotearoa mission is to explore contemporary life, led by artists, it feels timely in a world characterised by tumult and an ever flattening of nuance to look at how we got here. The 2026 programme invites audiences to engage through a holistic lens that includes the deep ungraspable time of spiralling whakapapa, that moon gazed at by a young child, our current moment, and where we see ourselves tomorrow and beyond. In asking "which history?" Artspace Aotearoa casts out a hopeful call to the endless possibility for the critical and creative imagination to play an essential role in shaping what comes next.

Kaitohu Director, Ruth Buchanan
January 2026

2 This lecture was held at Artspace Aotearoa as part of the Creative New Zealand Toi o Aotearoa Te Manu Ka Tau International Visitors Programme.

Bibliography

Rachel Buchanan. *Te Motonui Epa* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2022).

Annie Ernaux. *The Years* (London: Fitzcolorado, 2018).

Carl Mika. *Indigenous Education and the Metaphysics of Presence: A Worlded Philosophy* (Oxfordshire: Routeldge, 2017).

Diane di Prima. *Revolutionary Letters.* (London: Silver Press, 2021).

Each year Artspace Aotearoa asks one question. Across the year, this question is explored by artworks, artists, and audiences. In 2026, we ask, “which history?” You can think of our annual exhibition programme as a connected inquiry, in four parts and with many possible answers. Join us.

2026
Which history?