

The business of making great art - Pasifika Internships announced

Pacific artists are producing some of New Zealand's most exciting art but some lack the arts management skills necessary to build audiences beyond their communities. Enabling artists to develop their potential as arts managers and leaders, is the aim of a new Creative New Zealand-funded Pasifika internship initiative.

Creative New Zealand has provided funding to support three internships during 2014 and, following a competitive tendering process, contracted Tautai Contemporary Pacific Arts Trust to deliver the 2014 internships. Tautai has just announced the project's first recipients - following a process of advertising for potential interns, short-listing and interviews: spoken word poet, **Grace Taylor**, community artist **Amiria Puia-Taylor**, and performer and administrator, **Paul Fagamalo** [see p2 for more details].

The internships were open to New Zealand resident artists of Pacific heritage with a tertiary qualification and/or at least three years continuous experience working as an artist, practitioner or administrator. Tautai will work with the successful interns to find the right host organisation and then mentor the artists as they prepare and complete the 20-week internships. The internships will give the artists access to organisations' knowledge and experience, and considerable professional development opportunities. These include being mentored by respected visual artist, Janet Lilo – who also co-chairs Tautai's trust board, teaches at Elam School of Fine Arts, and has experience working with Creative New Zealand.

"The internships will enable the artists to 'produce' artworks in both senses of the word," Janet Lilo says. "Developing arts management skills is an important thread. There's a boom of creative people, with many doing community style work. The internships are about bridging the gap between those audiences and operating at a higher industry level. How do you get funding and put on an event? Who can it involve and how can you find potential sponsors? As in any industry, it is the business side of things – the writing, promoting, the managing and organising - that often makes the difference. The artists who have been awarded these internships are people who relish the opportunity to develop this experience as well as developing quality work. Put simply, instead of being an artist on the bill of a festival or exhibition, the aim is for the artists to also understand the context, timing and planning needed to organise one."

The hope is that the first internees will gain, and spread, expertise gained in this realm, so the pilot project will continue beyond next year. "The internships are about finding the ideal host organisation, relative to the skills the internee would most like to enhance," Janet Lilo says. "The great thing is all three artists already have knowledge and experience within different parts of the community and what they're already doing has been filtering through to others, and their networks. "

Tautai won the tender to run the internships because of its proven track record of successfully developing and delivering internships and other professional development programmes in the arts and/or tertiary sectors across New Zealand, and the Trust's strong knowledge of, and networks within, New Zealand arts and cultural institutions. "Tautai occupies a unique niche in the Aotearoa/New Zealand arts world as an organisation facilitating the development of contemporary Pacific art and artists," says Tautai Manager Christina Jeffery. "This includes raising the profile of Pacific art and artists, and fulfilling their aspirations to manage and lead arts projects. We aim to provide leadership, and an infrastructure, in the development of Pacific art and artists. This includes raising the profile of Pacific art and artists nationally and internationally."

Grace Taylor, spoken word poet

Grace is a poet, producer of poetry productions, creative entrepreneur and teaching artist. She is recognised for co-founding and producing the Rising Voices Youth Movement, SUP (Stand Up Poetry) and recently published her first collection of poetry, *Afakasi Speaks*, with Ala Press, Hawaii.

“I believe in people being inspired and resourced to tell their own stories, through poetry. With this internship I plan to increase my skills as a producer and marketer of poetry productions and events in Aotearoa and the Pacific. I am interested in carving the next platform for Pacific voices in poetry to be spoken and heard. I am very aware that I am not one, I am of a people. This internship is meaningless unless it contributes directly to the people, communities, and the art form, poetry, that I am cultivated from. I see myself as an ambassador, student, artistic scientist and teacher. I am in direct mentorship roles constantly and have benefitted from past opportunities to improve my arts management skills. I see great opportunities in this internship to learn more about satisfying a huge need for high quality productions and theatre for our art form and our poets.”

<http://www.niunavigations.com/#!about1/cez7>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LivPMiYik9g>

<http://tvnz.co.nz/good-morning/extra-rising-voices-poetry-video-5580566>

Amiria Puia-Taylor, community artist

Amiria is a recent graduate of University of Auckland at Manukau [now known as MIT Faculty of Creative Arts], where she majored in design and public arts. She has set up her own projects to work as a community ambassador advocating for cultural understanding and social change through mural art, works as a facilitator for mural arts collective, Painting for the People, and has facilitated many projects in South Auckland building up entrepreneurial and managerial skills.

“Murals are where social change begin. I plan to establish an income-generating, sustainable mural arts initiative that provides an alternative education pathway, and workplace experience, for tertiary students. I see this internship as contributing to my objective to be someone who works equally effectively with grassroots communities and in boardroom environments, achieving positive results for both. I plan to make the most of this opportunity and learn, learn, learn. I would like to develop a directing/managerial skills set that can contribute to the Pacific arts and most importantly become a resource for our communities.”

www.paintingforthepeople.com

www.tumblr.com/paintingforthepeople

www.instagram.com/pftp

www.facebook.com/paintingforthepeople

<http://paintingforthepeople.tumblr.com/>

Paul Fagamalo, performer and administrator

Paul is a graduate of AUT, with a Bachelor of Communications, majoring in advertising. He gained a Diploma in Pacific Performing Arts at the Pacific Institute of Performing Arts (PIPA), where he currently works as an administrator. Paul has had many stage roles in theatre and musical theatre.

“Gaining this internship has help solidify the path that I wish to move forward in, in terms of attaining more experience in the producing side of the arts industry. I am grateful for the opportunity to not only gain knowledge from industry leaders, but to also apply and share this knowledge with other young and upcoming Pacific artists.”

<http://metroarts.co.nz/theatre/review-the-factory/>

<http://www.theatreview.org.nz/reviews/production.php?id=1566>

<http://www.theatrescenes.co.nz/review-forbidden-broadway-auckland-fringe/>

Tautai Contemporary Pacific Arts Trust

Since Tautai began in the 1980s, the charitable trust has facilitated opportunities to nurture, mentor and advocate for Pacific artists, and build recognition and networks of support for them.

Tautai operates on the understanding that artists remain independent of Tautai and come together through their Tautai connection to participate in art events. In this way it has helped assist to build the potential of Pacific artists in Aotearoa/New Zealand and the development of skills and art practice.

Since the 1980s, Tautai has – with significant funding from Creative New Zealand and the ASB Community Trust - supported the growing number of contemporary Pacific artists living in New Zealand. While Tautai's goals have remained consistent, how these goals are implemented has evolved to take account of the changing art world and widening art practices of participants.

As well as managing projects such as the Pasifika internships, Tautai supports the production of new and innovative work by practising artists, runs secondary and tertiary programmes for students of Pacific heritage, and maintains the country's most comprehensive website for information on Pacific art and artists, www.tautai.org

In 2013, Tautai's support of contemporary Pacific art has included:

- *More Than We Know Performance Series* (6-22 March),
- *More Than We Know* exhibition (Gus Fisher Gallery, 6 March-6 April)
- *Tautai Artist Residency (for an international artist)* (Jean Melesaine Leasiolagi, February-March)
- *Fly Me Up To Where You Are: Te Waharoa* exhibition (Artstation, 2-24 March)
- *Fresh Horizons* workshops (Dunedin, 22-24 April, Invercargill, 29 April- 1 May, Wellington, 24-26 July, and Gisborne, 18-20 September).
- *Return To Sender* exhibition (Papakura Art Gallery, 20 April-1 June)
- *Close to Home* exhibition (St Paul Street Gallery, 5 September-17 October)
- OFFSTAGE5 at Artspace (11 + 12 October)

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