



## WALLPAPER VERSUS SCREEN: TECHNOLOGIES IN ART-MAKING PRACTICE

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## OVERVIEW OF RESOURCE

The Venice Biennale Learning Resource is made up of five learning pathways exploring three interrelated and overarching themes.

### THEMES

#### 1. New Zealand Art on a Global Stage

This theme highlights the significance of La Biennale di Venezia (the Biennale) and a contemporary artist's participation within it. Students examine artist selection, past artist contributions, and Venice itself.

Students will consider the logistical elements of installation and exhibiting in Venice, why Lisa Reihana was selected for the Biennale, and how her work might 'read' in a European context.

#### 2. Representation and Difference

*Who we are and who others see when they see us.*

This theme focuses students on the subjective nature of representation – how values, attitudes, and beliefs impact on how identity is communicated to others.

There is a specific focus in this theme on the motivations and purpose of Lisa Reihana's work as a reaction to Joseph Dufour's wallpaper (1804-05). Students use comparison and contrast to explore the way Reihana has portrayed multiple cultures, narratives, histories, and peoples.

Students will also look at other examples of contemporary artists responding to, redressing, and retelling history – especially Māori, Pacific and women artists.

#### 3. Time and Change

*How things were and how things are.*

This theme requires students to examine time, continuity and change – not only through the differences in artist motivation, but also in the differences in art-making practice.

Dufour's wallpaper used techniques on paint and paper to create a panoramic experience. Similarly, Reihana's work creates a panoramic, immersive experience – but through completely different technologies.

Students will examine the impact of static vs. moving image as well as begin to understand some of the challenges and opportunities of creating art using time-based media.

Students will look at the collaborative art-making process and seek similarities and differences in the artists' motivations.

The pathways are linked to Art History, Visual Arts, and Social Sciences. That said, we've intentionally left achievement objectives within specific learning areas open-ended so that you can adapt these learning pathways to suit your context and your students.

Each pathway focuses students on critically engaging with Lisa Reihana's artwork and creating student response. As *Lisa Reihana: Emissaries* speaks of the importance of claiming identity, there is an emphasis in the activities on capturing authentic student experience and voice.

Prepare for using these inquiry-based learning pathways by reviewing the suggested activities and the discussion starters. Within each pathway, there are links for the extra-curious, should you or your students want to delve further into any one area.

The pathways are available to print off as PDF guides. Please be aware, however, that the guides are designed to be used in conjunction with the content on our website.

[Learning Pathway One – New Zealand at La Biennale di Venezia](#)

[Learning Pathway Two – Clothes maketh the \(wo\)man: Costuming, representation and identity](#)

[Learning Pathway Three – Back to a future: Reimagining Pacific encounters](#)

[Learning Pathway Four – Reimagining history through art: The power to retell stories](#)

[Learning Pathway Five – Wallpaper vs screen: Technologies in art-making practice](#)

# INTRODUCTION

In this pathway, students examine technologies in art-making practice. Joseph Dufour's wallpaper was made using woodblock prints, stencils, and hand colouring to create a panoramic experience. Similarly, Lisa Reihana's work creates a panoramic, immersive experience – but uses completely different technologies.

Students will examine the impact of scale in static and moving images as well as considering some of the challenges and opportunities of creating art using time-based media.



*in pursuit of Venus [infected]*, 2015-17, Lisa Reihana: *Emissaries*, Biennale Arte 2017. Photo: Michael Hall. Image courtesy of New Zealand at Venice.

Cover image: On the set at LOT23 Studio, Auckland *in Pursuit of Venus [infected]*, 2014. Photo: Kallan McLeod.

## CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

We've purposefully left achievement objectives within specific learning areas open-ended. This means that **teachers are free to adapt these learning pathways to suit their context** and their students.

That said, this section connects easily to the following subjects:

### TECHNOLOGY

- Technological Practice: Examine others' practice and undertake their own

### VISUAL ARTS

- Developing ideas: Generate, develop, and refine ideas in response to a variety of motivations, including the study of established practice
- Communicating and interpreting: Compare and contrast the ways in which ideas and art-making processes are used to communicate meaning in selected objects and images
- Understanding the arts in context: Investigate and consider the relationship between the production of art works and their contexts and influences

### ART HISTORY

- Activities in this pathway can be adapted for use with the following internal and external assessment standards:
  - **Level 1**
    - AS91015 Demonstrate understanding of formal elements of art works using art terminology
    - AS91018 Demonstrate knowledge of media and methods used to produce art works
  - **Level 2**
    - AS91180 Examine the effects of formal elements of art works
    - AS91183 Examine how media are used to create effects in art works
    - AS91184 Communicate understanding of an art history topic
  - **Level 3**
    - AS91482 Demonstrate understanding of style in art works
    - AS91485 Examine the impact of media and processes on art works
    - AS91486 Construct an argument based on interpretation of research

# A. TIME-BASED ART

## INTRODUCTION

Time-based technologies (video, film, computer, audio) have allowed Lisa Reihana to travel back in history and disrupt past understandings of the encounter histories of the Pacific, New Zealand, and Australia.

In *in Pursuit of Venus [infected]* (2015–17), Reihana uses technology to layer multiple histories from indigenous perspectives.

In this activity, students explore the opportunities and challenges of using time-based art.

By the end of these activities, students will have:

- explored the technical creation of *in Pursuit of Venus [infected]*
- communicated an understanding of time-based art, investigating some of Reihana's influences and her contemporaries



On the set at LOT23 Studio, Auckland in *Pursuit of Venus [infected]*, 2014. Photo: Kallan McLeod.

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

### 1 TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE

*In this activity, students explore the impact of media and processes on the creation of in Pursuit of Venus [infected], and consider the role of technology within the art work.*

Time-based art is contemporary art that includes technologies such as video, film, and audio. It is called time-based because the art works have duration as a dimension – the viewer experiences the art work over time. Reihana’s work fits into a larger oeuvre of international practice that includes such artists as Nam June Paik, Bill Viola, and the collective AES+F.

*Lisa Reihana: Emissaries*, Reihana’s 2017 exhibition at the Venice Biennale, has *in Pursuit of Venus [infected]* (2015–17) as its centrepiece. This is a time-based piece of art that comprises over 70 filmed vignettes that explore the interactions between European explorers and the peoples of the Pacific.

Divide the class into groups to research the following aspects of Reihana’s work. Students can use:

- [the education description](#)
- [the interviews with Lisa Reihana](#)
- [the panorama of the work of in Pursuit of Venus \[infected\]](#).

Further details can be found in [this talk by Lisa Reihana and James Pinker](#).

## 1 TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE (CONTINUED):

### ? DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

#### 1. POINT OF VIEW:

What perspective were the figures viewed from in Dufour's wallpaper? What are some of the differences and similarities between the ways *Les Sauvages de la Mer Pacifique* and *in Pursuit of Venus [infected]* view the figures in the works? Where is the horizon line? Why do you think Reihana wanted the viewer to be standing on the land as tangata whenua? What is the relevance of the title, when shortened, reading, iPOV? What else does the term 'point of view' refer to, and why is that relevant to this work?

#### 2. COLLABORATION:

What was Reihana's role as artist? How does it differ from painter or sculptor? Why do you think it was important for her to collaborate so closely with the community groups that contributed to the work? How does this change what is presented?

#### 3. GREEN-SCREEN:

How did Reihana use green-screen to create *in Pursuit of Venus [infected]*? What were the limitations of the technology, and considerations she had to have to use the technology successfully? How has this impacted on the art work, particularly in relation to the placement of figure and use of colour?

Look at the cast and crew <http://www.inpursuitofvenus.com/credits-2/> list for the production of *in Pursuit of Venus [infected]*. What roles do the different collaborators have in the production of the art work?

#### 4. EXHIBITION ELEMENTS:

How did Reihana design and install *in Pursuit of Venus [infected]*? How is it exhibited? Does it look the same in every gallery space? Why/why not? When it is not on display, how do you imagine it would be stored? Does it exist as an art work when it is not being shown? Why/why not?

Activity continues on p 8

## 1 TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE (CONTINUED):

Depending on class context and time available, groups could:

- present verbally back to the rest of the class, either live or by recording their thoughts in voice memos
- present a slideshow of relevant images with captions
- jigsaw the activity: reconstitute the groups so one expert from each previous group is in a new group (1, 2, 3, 4). The new group could then create a summary table by sharing their knowledge with each other.

### FURTHER QUESTIONS TO ASK:



What freedoms, opportunities, and complications are brought to the art-making process by digital practices?

Why do you think Reihana made the decision to be a time-based media artist?

Who are Reihana's contemporaries?

How does her and their work inter-relate?

What art influences do you read in her work and why?

What does it mean to re-imagine someone else's art work?

## B. GREEN-SCREEN AND ME

### PLAYING WITH SCALE

### INTRODUCTION

Made two hundred years apart from each other, Dufour's *Les Sauvages de la Mer Pacifique* and Reihana's in *Pursuit of Venus [infected]* both works seek to create immersive, panoramic experiences. Utilising technologies available to them at the time, the artists and artworks communicate entirely different messages, and both succeed in entirely different ways.

In these activities, students will investigate scale and panorama, and use some of the technological ideas inherent in Reihana's work.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of these activities, students will have:

- compared and contrasted the ways in which Dufour and Reihana used art-making processes to communicate meaning in their images
- analysed the physical and emotional impact of scale in works of art
- created their own response using some of the ideas evident in *in Pursuit of Venus [infected]*.



On the set at LOT23 Studio, Auckland in *Pursuit of Venus [infected]*, 2014. Photo: Kallan McLeod.

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

### 1 MY PLACE, IN MY HISTORY

Dufour produced a panoramic wallpaper that was a 19th century depiction of what lay beyond the horizon – the Pacific. The wallpaper is theatrical and depicts indigenous peoples as living as one with nature.

When Reihana saw Dufour's panels and 'couldn't recognise the Pacific it depicted', she decided to recreate her own version. In *in Pursuit of Venus [infected]*, Reihana retells the cultural stories of many Pacific groups through over 70 different scenes, or vignettes.

Communicating identity is important across much of Reihana's work. She sees herself as straddling cultures – Māori and Pākehā. Coming from West Auckland, for example, she sees herself as a Westie and as an urban Māori.

***Ask students to brainstorm who they are – not just where they are from, or who their ancestors are, but what music they like, what places they belong to, what suburb is theirs, what they like doing, and so on.***

Then, using Te Papa's [Collections Online](#), ask students to identify an historical scene, a textile, a photograph, or a landscape that provides a visual image for each of the things that speak of their history.

For example, a student may like hip-hop music. Search 'hip hop' in Te Papa's Collections Online and find [a turntable](#) from the 1990s. A student may feel an affinity with the Central Otago landscape. Look through Te Papa's Collections Online and find [a scenic photograph](#) of Central Otago. A student may have a connection to Japan and they may find something like [a Ningyo doll](#). They may have a memory of a tīvaevae at a grandparent's house, and find [a tīvaevae image](#). They may identify as Tūhoe and look through the Tūhoe tagged collection items.

# 1 MY PLACE, IN MY HISTORY (CONTINUED):

## 1. ZOOM INTO SOUND:

Choose just one of these images to zoom in on and create large scale. Students could project their image onto the wall and trace key elements of it onto large butcher's paper, and continue to develop it as a large-scale work. Students could also research an audio track that could be played alongside the image to create a whole, immersive experience.

For example: What sounds would play alongside a large-scale image of Central Otago? What sounds would expand on an image of a large-scale tīvaevae? How does audio contribute to the immersive experience?

## 2. CREATE A VISUAL STORM:

Use collage, photocopy, zoom techniques, transparency, and transfer to integrate these disparate images into one storm of who they are.

## 3. FAKE GREEN-SCREEN:

Students take portraits of themselves with blank backgrounds. Use stills of *in Pursuit of Venus [infected]* to inform the poses that might be effective. When uploaded to photo software, students can set the background as transparent and overlay themselves on the background (and possibly audio) they may have created. How does adding their portrait to the background expand the experience of describing who they are? What would *in Pursuit of Venus [infected]* be without the vignettes?

## 4. DIY GREEN-SCREEN:

Create [a DIY green-screen](#) in your own classroom, so that students can video themselves. They could read a poem or lines from a song, or perform something they adore, or simply recite the simple facts of who they are. They then drop themselves in front of a chosen historical scene, textile, photograph, or landscape that is relevant to their cultural history.

Activity continues on p 12

## 1 MY PLACE, IN MY HISTORY (CONTINUED):

### FURTHER QUESTIONS TO ASK:



How does technology assist in the storytelling of our own identity?

What freedoms does it allow?

What might be some of the challenges and responsibilities that exist in this space?

Consider the sources students use. How do their sources impact on what they think or see?

## LINKS FOR THE EXTRA CURIOUS

- Listen to Lisa Reihana talk about the digital gardening and repopulating of *in Pursuit of Venus [infected]* (from 26:11):  
<https://vimeo.com/138022794>
- Creating a green-screen, on the cheap:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JwZQq156MDM>
- Thirteen ways to use green-screen in your technology class:  
<http://www.serif.com/education/videos/movieplus/green-screen-ideas.pdf>
- These videos about Nam June Paik, video art founder, and an artist who has influenced Reihana:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5RE1ueYnSVc>  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0E2v\\_rbY7s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0E2v_rbY7s)
- Michael Hunter, a university student discovering the joy of time-based art as a vehicle for storytelling:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PiAJ2u4OXRm>
- Steven Wilkes, who sews together one photo out of many taken in the same spot over the course of the day. Carefully curated time-lapsing:  
<https://youtu.be/afev0ZjAhUA?t=12s>
- Michael Mansfield, Associate Curator of Film and Media Arts at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, talks about the challenges of preserving time-based art:  
<https://blogs.loc.gov/thesignal/2013/04/challenges-in-the-curation-of-time-based-media-art-an-interview-with-michael-mansfield/>
- AES+F are a Russian time-based collective and an influence on Lisa Reihana. View some of their work on this Vimeo channel:  
<https://vimeo.com/user14969588>

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