

anzjat

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Exhibition review

So much there is – Māpura Studios

Studio One Toi Tū, Auckland

24 August – 15 September 2016

Reviewed by Asha Munn and Wendy Lawson

Introduction

A unique collaboration between artists and staff at Auckland's Māpura Studios created a multimedia installation at Studio One Toi Tū. Through soundscape, sensory exploration of surface, fluidity of paint, and the written word, artists revealed their deep concerns, joy, hopes, and fears. They articulated what they care for and why they make art, and considered the shared human experience. This review is written by two of the Māpura Studios staff who worked on the project.

Māpura Studios

Māpura Studios is an innovative space specialising in art therapy and creative projects. Māpura offers people from diverse backgrounds, including those living with complex disabilities, the opportunity to have a voice through creative expression. It is often full to the brim with people making art, thinking about art, and finding new ways to be creative.

Māpura Studios is built on years of experience and offers a distinct fusion of fine art, creative education, and art therapy. Its policy is one of inclusion: any person of any background and life experience who is interested in developing their creativity is welcome. Māpura values and encourages individuals, and acknowledges the therapeutic qualities inherent in the use of art materials. Its work is carried out by a collaborative team of professional artists and arts therapists.

Our roles with Māpura

Asha Munn: *I am the senior art therapist at Māpura Studios. I support art therapists and art therapy at Māpura, as well as seeking out and establishing new opportunities for providing art therapy and building partnerships with organisations that share our aims. Along with three art tutors/facilitators, I am part of the Māpura creative team. Together we take a broad overview of Māpura's activities, and find ways to work with management towards achieving the organisation's aspirations.*

Wendy Lawson: *I am an arts facilitator and arts therapist at Māpura and have worked in a range of the arts programmes. I am also the student liaison coordinator, a role that has allowed me to get to know the artists and their families better, and to appreciate more fully the support people and organisations who champion the work we do.*

Our involvement in the exhibition

Initially, the *So much there is* project was led by a single internal curator, in conjunction with Studio One Toi Tū, so neither of us was on the curatorial team. But as preparations for the show progressed, staff took opportunities to collaborate and contribute behind the scenes. In this review we reflect on that process as it unfolded.