

WANDA GILLESPIE

Wanda Gillespie – Artist Biography

Wanda Gillespie is a contemporary artist based in Tāmaki Makaurau, Aotearoa New Zealand. A belief in the spiritual potency of physical objects drives her work. Through pairings or groupings, like the constellation of stars, a cause and effect occurs, an alchemy of form, material and space. Wood is chosen for its energetic qualities, a conduit connecting to whenua/place. A once living growing entity, now ripened for the sculptor's chisel, peeling back layers of seasons, to extract a truth in shape from the invisible worlds.

Gillespie has established a unique practice centred on the form of the abacus. With her bespoke interpretations of this ancient counting instrument, she explores systems of value and how, within them, the material and the sacred become entwined.

Over the past decade she has also refined her craft as a woodcarver through the creation of evocative portrait sculptures, combining detailed and abstracted, ancient and contemporary form. By using traditional craft techniques in contemporary ways, she questions known histories and the nature of reality.

Gillespie has established a significant practice with numerous solo exhibitions, awards and residencies. Her work has been included in several noteworthy museum exhibitions including An Alternative Economics at the Institute of Modern Art, Numinosity at Contemporary Art Tasmania, Future Inheritance: 20 Speculative Objects for a Time to Come for the National Gallery of Victoria Design Week, and several of her pieces are currently exhibiting in the Tel Aviv Craft and Design Biennale, Israel. She has been finalist and highly commended in many sculpture prizes including the Woollahra Small Sculpture Prize, Molly Morpeth Canada 3D Award, National Contemporary Art Award, Deakin University Contemporary Small Sculpture Award, Waiheke Small Sculpture Prize, John Fries Memorial Prize, the Blake Prize, and the National Sculpture Prize. She received the Art and Australia Credit Suisse Private Banking Contemporary Art Award in 2014. Her solo projects have been funded by the Australian Arts Council, City of Melbourne, Arts Victoria, Creative New Zealand, and Heart of the City (Auckland Council).

Solo exhibitions include the Portrait and the Abacus, Waiheke Art Gallery, the Ministry for Mystical Reckoning, Stockroom Gallery, Counting Frames for a Transient Era, Te Uru Gallery, Nests, Art Week Auckland, Higher Thinking, Vivian Gallery, Higher Thought Forms, Sanderson Contemporary, Levitation Practice, MARS Gallery, the Ceremonial Processions of Dreamers, Lindberg Galleries, the Antarctic Kingdom of Gondwanaland, Craft Victoria and Fehily Contemporary, Into the Void, Linden Contemporary Centre for the Arts, and Tana Swiwi, Westpace, Melbourne.

Wanda has taken several artist residencies in Indonesia through Asialink and arts Victoria and was artist in residence at the Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris, France, through the Art Gallery of New South Wales.