

MEDIA RELEASE

6 May 2019

New photography exhibition a first for Edith Amituanai and Adam Art Gallery

Adam Art Gallery Te Pātaka Toi at Victoria University of Wellington is proud to present the first survey exhibition dedicated to the work of artist Edith Amituanai.

Amituanai came to attention in the early 2000s for her largescale colour photographs of her family, friends, and wider Pacific community, bringing an insider's view to the nuances of social custom and complexities of migrant life.

She was singled out in 2007 for the inaugural Marti Friedlander Photography Award, and the following year she was nominated as a finalist for the Walters Prize for her series *Déjeuner*, which documented a new generation of professional rugby players of Pacific descent who were pursuing careers far from home in Italy and France.



Edith Amituanai, *After school feed* 2018, pigment inkjet print. Courtesy of the artist

Adam Art Gallery director Christina Barton says “Since those early successes Amituanai has deepened her engagement with migrant communities in New Zealand and across the world to produce perhaps the most engaging and perspicacious account of the impact of globalisation in the South Pacific and the changes this is effecting to the face of her hometown of Auckland.

“This exhibition canvasses almost all the major bodies of her work. The overwhelming effect of seeing these works together is to sense and celebrate the diversity and dynamism of the new Aotearoa. Whether this is the souped-up cars of the Switchhittaz siren crew, the scrubbed faces of children in their best White Sunday attire, or the athleticism of young bodies, Amituanai shows us ‘her’ people.”

Curator Ane Tonga says “As a woman of Pacific descent, I’m honoured to have been invited to curate this exhibition which looks closely at the work of one of our most celebrated artists

who has had a profound impact on contemporary art in Aotearoa. This is an auspicious moment, for her, for me, and for the many communities represented in the show.”

The exhibition is accompanied by a lively public programme, beginning with a tour of the exhibition with the artist and curator on Saturday 11 May at 11am.

A major publication on the artist will also be launched during the exhibition, with the first in-depth analysis of Amituanai’s practice and a large selection of images laid out by the artist and designer Kelvin Soh.

Barton encourages audiences to visit the show: “This is a first for the Adam Art Gallery to dedicate our spaces to a single photographer. Edith’s work brings a different energy to the building that gives us pause to reflect on the creative ways in which her community responds to their circumstances.”

For further information and media opportunities with the curator and artist, please contact Stephen Cleland at stephen.cleland@vuw.ac.nz or on 022 264 7996.

Exhibition: *Edith Amituanai: Double Take*

When: 11 May – 14 July 2019

Opening: Friday 10 May, 6pm

Where: Adam Art Gallery Te Pātaka Toi, Victoria University of Wellington, Gate 3, Kelburn Parade, Wellington

Cost: Free

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