Across Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa (Pacific Ocean), people and moana (ocean) have an intrinsic and enduring relationship. The ocean carries traces of those who have crossed it, holding mātauranga (knowledge) of tides and currents, and memory of departure and return. *E lē galo le tai // The tide is never forgotten* positions the moana as a vessel for memory, holding haerenga (journeys) and histories moving within us.

Our connection to the moana is an elemental understanding of who we are. It shapes connection to whakapapa (genealogy), movement, belonging, and home. Like the tide, our understanding of these things are never fixed. They ebb and flow, returning in new forms, and finding expression through art, story-telling, and creative practice.

This exhibition brings together artists from across the motu (country), responding to the kaupapa (theme) in their own ways. Distinct in form and feeling, the work reflects the many meanings held within the moana, and the eternal pull of the waters that continue to shape and guide us.

Brown Town is both a collective of creatives and a Charitable Trust in Ōtautahi, passionate about weaving Tagata Moana (people of the ocean) together through connection, creativity and celebration. Realising the need for Pacific centred third spaces, Brown Town essentials are to kata (laugh) with community through wānanga (workshops), fono (gatherings) and club space to exercise joy in kanikani (dance). This exhibition and accompanying publication is also an annual project collaborating with Tagata Moana across Te Moana nui a Kiwa (Pacific Ocean).

Brown Town humbly began in the safety of our own fale (home) with core members Darlene Jones, Devyn Moar, Grace Colcord, Shea Wātene, and other tagata (people). As a humble hui (meeting) to safely gather authentically in a city that could feel unwelcoming, this regulated environment gave time and space for Brown Town to grow into what it is now, and where we aspire to be.

COCA

E lē galo le tai // The tide is never forgotten

Curated by Brown Town

COCA
TOI MOROKI
—
CENTRE OF
CONTEMPORARY
ART

11 Jul —
16 Aug

List of Works

1. **Evelina Lolesi**
Faʻatoia, Sāmoa
Intertidal Drawing #6
Sea water and ink drawings
430mm x 297mm
2026

2. **Tui Emma Gillies**
Vavaʻu Tonga,
New Zealand
The Sea is Home
Tongo, umea, acrylic paint, ink & Falevai, Vava'u kupesi
1000mm x 800mm
2026

3. **Abigail Hau**
Ngātiwai, Ngāpuhi
e taupunga ana ki tai
Ōtautahi salt water, silver nitrate, te rā, 300gsm cold-pressed watercolour paper
390mm x 395mm
2026

4. **Pounamu Rurawhe**
Ngaati Tukorehe,
Te Rarawa, Ngaapuhi,
Ngaati Raukawa
Whakamahu
Experimental, sculptural and sensual video work
Raakau tauiwi: Papyrus (Cyperus papyrus), Radiata pine (Pinus radiate), Banana Passionfruit (Passiflora tarminiana), Asparagus fern (Asparagus setaceus), Bamboo (Arundinariinae)
Raakau Maaori: Harakeke (Phormium tenax), Rimu (Dacrydium cupressinum), Silver Fern (Cyathea dealbata), Maanuka (Leptospermum scoparium), Niikau (Rhopalostylis sapida)
5:57 minutes
2023

5. **Bri Leone-Rhea Lawrence**
Ngāti Kahungunu
ki te Wairoa
Want a cuppa, bub?
Audio installation
9:25 minutes
2026

6. **Noa Hāmana**
Ngāti Kura, Ngāpuhi,
Ngāti Toa, Ingarangi
mākutu
Acrylic and oil stick on canvas
500mm x 500mm
2026

Manu
Acrylic and oil stick on canvas
900mm x 900mm
2026

7. **Niko Talamahina**
Niue (Alofi Tokelau,
Avatele) and Sāmoa
(Vaimoso, Vaialua,
Utulei, Tutuila)
Can you hear me brother?
Sound installation with field recordings
20 minutes
2026

8. **Darlene Jones**
Not Ours To Carry:
Responds to the Moon,
Not a Captain
Digital illustration
420mm x 297mm
2026

Not Ours To Carry:
Tongue Tied
Digital illustration
420mm x 297mm
2026

Not Ours To Carry:
Collective Current
Digital illustration
420mm x 297mm
2026

9. **Ana Hislop**
Kāi Tahu, Kāti Māmoe,
Waitaha
Te Taha Wairua
Installation voile fabric, thread, kererū feathers
Single channel, digital video and sound
16:59 minutes
1053mm x 1500mm x 4000mm
2024

E lē galo le tai // The tide is never forgotten is presented with support from:

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Contributing Writers

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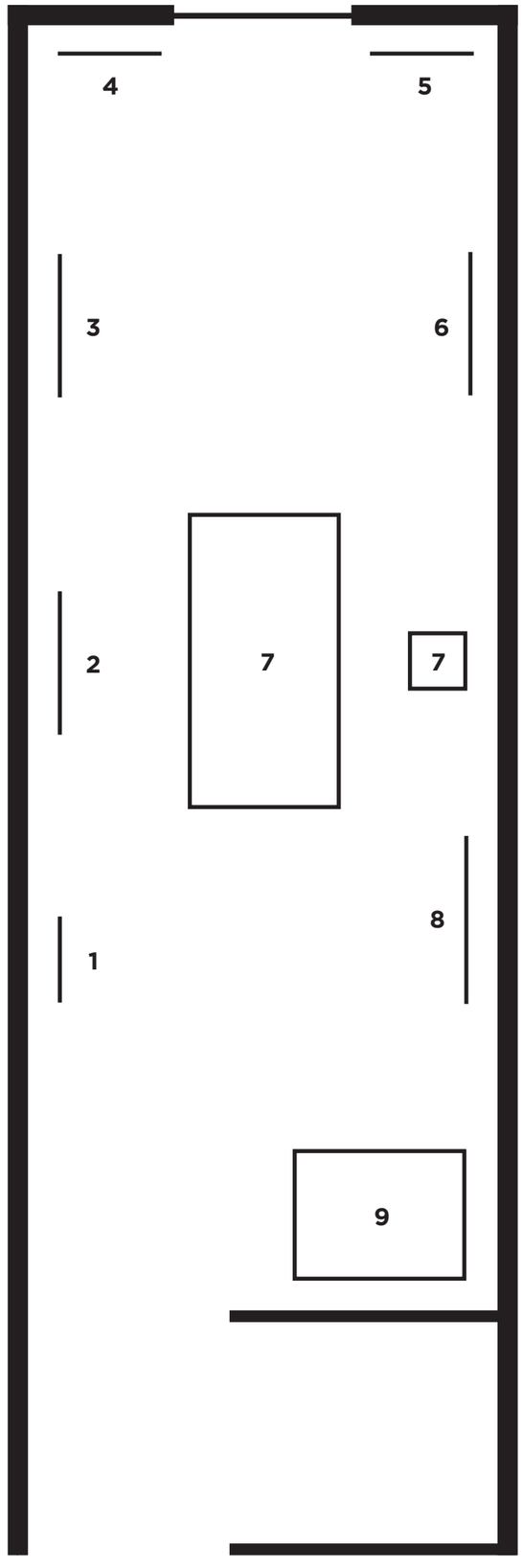
Sāmoa (Faleapuna,
Mulifanua, Leulumoega)
Bodies of Water
Personal essay

Alyx Devlin
Te Ātiawa ki Taranaki,
Ngāti Rāhiri whakanoa
Poem

Luz-Eliana Folau-Brown
Sāmoa (Vaimoso, Leauʻvaʻa),
Niue (Hakupu), and Britain
(Swindon)
Keige Leaga
Poem

Roman Lytollis
Sāmoa, Pākehā
Embrace of the Ocean
Short story

Ana Mulipola
Sāmoa (Manono, Lealatele,
Safotu, Lalomanu, Lefaga)
Tonga
Pese ma le Masina
Song