

Aotearoa, New Zealand artist Sarah Hudson announced as selected artist for Naoshima
Artist Residency 2025

EMBARGOED Media Release:

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Together with founding partners; STILL and Asia New Zealand Foundation Te Whītau Tūhono, we proudly announce Sarah Hudson (Ngāti Awa, Ngāi Tūhoe, Ngāti Pūkeko) as the first artist invited to undertake the Naoshima Artist Residency, to coincide with the prestigious Setouchi Triennale in Japan.

Sarah Hudson, an artist based in Whakatāne, has exhibited widely in her individual practice and with the highly-acclaimed Mataaho Collective. Hudson's solo practice explores tino rangatiritanga (sovereignty), play, whenua (land), reciprocity, and relationships through painting, performance, video and sculpture. Completing her Masters in Fine Arts with distinction through Massey University in Wellington in 2010, Hudson has exhibited nationally and internationally with Mata Aho. She is also a founding member of the Kauae Raro Research Collective - an organisation dedicated to the promotion and retention of Māori paint-making technologies.

"I am humbled and honoured to receive this incredible opportunity to participate in the Naoshima Artist Residency. I'm looking forward to furthering my practice, which is grounded in my Māori heritage, in the land of the rising sun. Ngā mihi maioha, heartfelt gratitude to McCahon House, the Fukutake Family and Asia New Zealand Foundation for recognizing the power of indigenous voices and perspectives. I'm ready to make meaningful connections through art." Sarah Hudson.

For the last five years McCahon House Trust and the Fukutake family have been exploring the possibility of a New Zealand artist residency in Japan. Alongside the McCahon House Museum, the Trust offers a programme that supports the development of our visual arts community, including one of the most prestigious artists' residencies in Aotearoa with alumni including Venice Biennale recipients, Walters Prize winners and some of our best practicing artists. With support from The Tomorrow Group and Creative New Zealand Toi Aotearoa, McCahon House is now extending its support to artists through new international partnerships.

The month-long residency at the Benesse Art Site Naoshima will provide Sarah with the opportunity to explore, research and develop new work which will be exhibited in the Setouchi Triennale. *"This is a perfectly timed opportunity for Sarah to focus on her individual practice through a residency located in such a fascinating environment. Creating a new work and exhibiting in Art Setouchi 2025 will expand and extend her networks and share Aotearoa's unique art and culture with audiences internationally. We are excited to walk alongside and support Sarah as we forge these new international pathways for our artists"*.
Jude Chambers, Executive Director McCahon House.

The Benesse Art Site Naoshima encompasses art-related efforts in the Seto Inland Sea region. The contemporary art and architecture of the Benesse Art Site Naoshima exist within the pristine nature and sceneries of the islands, filled with site-specific artworks created by world-renowned contemporary artists in a landscape with rich cultural and historical fabric. The Fukutake family have strong connections to New Zealand, having resided here since 2009 and family member, Hideaki Fukutake, founded STILL in 2020, an Aotearoa based business that espouses a unique worldview focused on the development of art, culture and nature.

“In my work in both Japan and New Zealand I am looking to develop projects that can endure for centuries, and have a strong heritage and reputation that future generations can be proud of. There are a lot of shared values between Japan and New Zealand and I am pleased we can develop new arts projects and relationships between the two countries I consider home”. says Hideaki Fukutake, Chief Executive STILL.

“Forming long-term partnerships with first class practitioners means we can develop really substantial opportunities for New Zealand artists to participate in projects and form new networks in Asia,” says Craig Cooper, Director Arts at Asia New Zealand Foundation. The Foundation provides experiences and resources to help New Zealanders build their knowledge, skills and confidence to thrive in Asia. They do this through partnerships with influential individuals and organisations in both New Zealand and Asia, offering opportunities for international collaborations and professional development.

The Setouchi Triennale was established in 2010 to focus on artistic endeavours that highlight local communities and make use of existing spaces and ecological features of the region. Notable permanent projects in past Triennale editions include the series of museums and galleries designed by architect Tadao Ando. The festival has played a significant role in the growth and redevelopment of the region and is revered in the art world – Sarah will be the first artist from Aotearoa to be commissioned to create new work for the Triennale.

Artistic Director, Mr Fram Kitagawa had the challenging task of selecting one artist from those nominated by a selection panel convened by McCahon House. He reflects *“The artist’s interest in the community leads her to observe the subtleness of the earth, which is a seemingly unnoticed feature. She then extracts the unique character of the soil and expresses it in her artwork, which aligns with the core values of Art Setouchi”.*

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About the selection process:

The selection process for the residency was unique in that it was an invitation process. A list of 10 artists were nominated by McCahon House International Selection Panel: Judy Millar, Ruth Buchanan and Nigel Borell. A short list of 4 artists were selected by the panel, Mami

Kataoka, Director Mori Art Museum and Jude Chambers. The final selection was made by Mr Fram Kitagawa, Artistic Director, Setouchi Triennale.

Founding partners:

McCahon House Trust was established to preserve and protect cultural legacy and contemporary art practice, and to share it with all New Zealanders. Alongside the McCahon House Museum, the Trust has been hosting artist residencies since 2006 and has demonstrated competence in the necessary infrastructure and pastoral care around ensuring a successful residency experience. The Trust has recently established two international partnerships offering sought-after opportunities for New Zealand artists. The McCahon House team will manage this new initiative and lead the fundraising campaign through the generous McCahon House Trust donor group.

STILL is a community of businesses, projects and social enterprises, founded by Hideaki Fukutake in 2020. STILL is based in Aotearoa New Zealand, and the business espouses a unique worldview focused on the development of art, culture and nature. The Fukutake family have lived here since 2009. As founders and guardians of the Benesse Art Site Naoshima, they are pleased to be able to facilitate connections between Japan and New Zealand. In addition to various business responsibilities including Director of Benesse Holdings, Hideaki assumes the roles of Chairman of the Fukutake Foundation.

Asia New Zealand Foundation Te Whītau Tūhono is New Zealand's leading authority on Asia. They provide experiences and resources to help New Zealanders build their knowledge, skills and confidence to thrive in Asia. The Foundation's activities cover more than 20 countries in Asia and are delivered through nine core programmes: arts, business, education, entrepreneurship, leadership, media, research, Track II diplomacy and sports.

The Foundation's arts programme aims to bring Asia into the mainstream of New Zealand arts by inspiring New Zealand arts professionals to grow their connections and knowledge of Asia. They help New Zealanders build their knowledge of Asia through partnerships with influential individuals and organisations in both New Zealand and Asia, offering opportunities for international collaborations and professional development.

More about McCahon House Trust:

The McCahon House Trust was established in 2003 to preserve and protect cultural legacy and contemporary art practice, and to share it with all New Zealanders. In the first instance, this involved restoring the cottage in Titirangi where McCahon and his family lived in the 1950s (and where he painted a significant number of Aotearoa New Zealand's national treasures), and opening it to visitors as a House Museum.

Alongside this, the Trust built a residence and artist studio next door and put in place a residency programme offering three residencies a year to mid-career NZ artists. The Trust has since established two new international residencies, a biannual exchange with Bundanon in Australia and the residency at Benesse Art Site Naoshima in 2025.

Our residencies support artists at critical points in their careers by eliminating day-to-day commitments and providing the space and time to fully immerse in their practice.

Working towards our mission of connecting cultural legacy and contemporary art practice, we create opportunities for engagement through events and education programmes that engage with and contribute to Aotearoa New Zealand's diverse art and culture, and our reputation as a leading arts producer in a global context.

We champion the ongoing involvement of our Alumni in our activities, along with a commitment of showcasing/supporting their practice because, like McCahon, we believe that education and collaboration is key to growing resilience and sustainability for Aotearoa NZ's contemporary arts sector.

[Benesse Art Site Naoshima, Japan](#)

“Benesse Art Site Naoshima” is the collective name for all art-related activities conducted by Benesse Holdings, Inc. and Fukutake Foundation on the islands of Naoshima and Teshima in Kagawa Prefecture and on Inujima island in Okayama Prefecture. Their fundamental aim is to create significant spaces by bringing contemporary art and architecture in resonance with the pristine nature of the Seto Inland Sea, a landscape with a rich cultural and historical fabric. Through contacts with art and nature, sceneries and inhabitants of the Seto Inland Sea region, they seek to inspire visitors to reflect on the meaning of Benesse’s motto - Well-Being. In all their ongoing activities, they are committed to fostering a relationship of mutual growth between art and the region, aiming to make a positive contribution to the local communities.

[Setouchi Triennale](#)

An internationally regarded contemporary art event in Japan’s Seto Inland Sea with typically over 150 artists participating and attracting 1.2 million visitors throughout the 9 months of its duration. The Seto Inland Sea has been a vital transportation route since ancient times. Ships plying its waters stopped at different islands where their crew passed along the latest cultural and lifestyle trends. The distinctive local cultures that emerged through such interactions can still be found today. The islands’ unique identities, however, are being eroded by the shrinking and ageing of their populations and the region’s diminishing vitality which have accompanied the acceleration of globalisation, optimization and homogenization. Through the Setouchi Triennale, we aim to revitalise island communities that once thrived within the spectacular setting of the Seto Inland Sea, a nexus of trade and cultural exchange, and transform this region into a Sea of Hope for the world.

Setouchi Triennale Executive Committee President: Toyohito Ikeda (Governor of Kagawa Prefecture),
General Producer: Soichiro Fukutake (Honourable Chairman of the Board, Fukutake Foundation),
General Director: Fram Kitagawa (Art Director)