

MEDIA RELEASE

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***GLISTEN* by Lisa Reihana bedazzles with art activated by nature at
National Gallery Singapore's Ng Teng Fong Roof Garden**

*Leading Aotearoa New Zealander¹ contemporary artist Lisa Reihana makes her Southeast Asia solo debut with *GLISTEN*, a large-scale kinetic sculpture that playfully responds to the surrounding environment.*



*Artist Lisa Reihana pictured with her artwork *GLISTEN*, National Gallery Singapore, 2024.*

SINGAPORE, 13 June 2024 – Be dazzled by the shimmers and soundscape of Aotearoa New Zealander contemporary artist Lisa Reihana's *GLISTEN*, a striking kinetic large-scale outdoor installation, adorned with patterns inspired by the rich traditions of Southeast Asian Songket and Māori Tāniko weaving. National Gallery Singapore presents Reihana's first solo presentation in Southeast Asia for the seventh edition of the Gallery's annual Ng Teng Fong Roof Garden Commission Series.

GLISTEN presents a vibrant tapestry with intricate patterns that pay homage to the traditions and craft of Indigenous women weavers from Māori and Southeast Asian cultures, with the intertwining of art and nature. The three-sided sculpture reacts and responds playfully to its surrounding natural environment. With over 114,000 shimmer discs beautifully reflecting light, and with the accompanying soundscape of a wind chime, *GLISTEN* orchestrates a

¹ Aotearoa refers to the Māori-language name for New Zealand.

multi-sensory encounter with the artwork. Visitors of all ages are welcome to experience the celebratory and joyful nature of the artwork, inspiring a deeper appreciation of the respective cultures, while prompting them to explore the connections between Southeast Asia and Aotearoa New Zealand which have existed since pre-colonial times.



Installation view, GLISTEN by Lisa Reihana, National Gallery Singapore, 2024.

Lisa Reihana (Ngā Puhi, Ngāti Hine, Ngāi Tūteauru, Ngāi Tūpoto; b. 1964, Aotearoa New Zealand) is a multi-disciplinary artist whose diverse practice spans film, sculpture, costume, and body adornment, text and photography. Being a woman of Māori and Welsh-English descent, Reihana has endeavoured to expand representations of Pacific and Māori identities, knowledge, and culture, significantly influencing the development of contemporary art and Māori art in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Drawing from her longstanding research into Māori ancestral knowledge, materials, and costumes, Reihana also extended her research into Songket weaving for this unique commission. Reihana dives into the pre-colonial connections between the regions through the incorporation of Tāniko weaving from Aotearoa New Zealand, and Malaysian Songket motifs which are found mostly in Kelantan and Terengganu. The artwork honours the traditions, labour, and pivotal roles of Songket and Tāniko's women weavers as makers, communicators, knowledge bearers, and mediators prior to Asia and Pacific regions' first contact with Western culture. *GLISTEN* points toward the plurality of feminisms that existed in pre-colonial societies and continue to persist in Asia and Pacific regions where women provided sustenance not just for their immediate family, but for their community.

GLISTEN beckons visitors with a uniquely mesmerising experience that celebrates cultures as it responds to the surrounding natural environment. The interpretation and innovative creation of the Tāniko and Malaysian Songket woven motifs by Reihana were plotted digitally in a precise manner where 114,000 shimmer discs were meticulously placed by hand to bring the patterns to life. The wind chime was handmade by collaborator Gary Hunt and the artist from repurposed materials. The shimmer discs allude to LED technology, pixels in digital images and screens, which points to Reihana's video works and her New Media practice. More information about the weaving patterns can be found in Annex B.

Installation views of *GLISTEN*'s three sides and wind chime



*Installation view of *GLISTEN* wall with Tāniko patterns, National Gallery Singapore, 2024.*



*Installation view of *GLISTEN* wall with Tāniko and Songket patterns, National Gallery Singapore, 2024.*



Installation view of GLISTEN wall with Songket patterns, National Gallery Singapore, 2024.



Installation view of GLISTEN wind chime, National Gallery Singapore, 2024.

Lisa Reihana says, “It’s a privilege to work with National Gallery Singapore, a leading institution for Southeast Asian art and art history. Our shared focus is on deepening the understanding and expanding the representation of extraordinary textiles from both our regions. The patterns adorning *GLISTEN* are inspired by women weavers, I honour their stories and intricate skills. I hope visitors will be dazzled by its beauty, and to join me in celebrating the enduring legacy of Songket and Tāniko weaving.”

Qinyi Lim, Curator at National Gallery Singapore, says, “It has been a pleasure working with Lisa Reihana and her collaborator, James Pinker, to present *GLISTEN* for this year’s Ng Teng Fong Roof Garden Commission. At the Gallery, we strive to connect Southeast Asian art with broader global narratives, fostering a deeper understanding of Southeast Asia’s heritage amidst current and prescient concerns. *GLISTEN* beautifully embodies this mission

by providing an avenue for visitors to explore the old and new exchanges on gendered labour and traditions between Southeast Asia, Aotearoa New Zealand and further.”

The Ng Teng Fong Roof Garden Commission series invites one leading artist each year to present site-specific works at the Gallery. Previous commissioned artists include Cao Fei, Sir Antony Gormley, Shilpa Gupta, Rirkrit Tiravanija and Danh Võ. The Ng Teng Fong Roof Garden Commission is made possible through a generous gift by Far East Organization.

GLISTEN by Lisa Reihana will be on display at the Ng Teng Fong Roof Garden Gallery, Level 5, City Hall Wing at National Gallery Singapore from 14 June 2024 to 30 March 2025. Admission is free.

More information can be found in the following annexes, or you may visit nationalgallery.sg/GLISTEN. Media assets are available via bit.ly/NGS-GLISTEN.

- [Annex A](#): Biography of Lisa Reihana
- [Annex B](#): *GLISTEN* Artwork Details
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About National Gallery Singapore

National Gallery Singapore is a leading visual arts institution that oversees the world's largest public collection of Singapore and Southeast Asian modern art. Situated at the birthplace of modern Singapore, in the heart of the Civic District, the Gallery is housed in two national monuments - City Hall and former Supreme Court - that have been beautifully restored and transformed into this exciting 64,000 square metre venue. Reflecting Singapore's unique heritage and geographical location, the Gallery aims to be a progressive museum that creates dialogues between the art of Singapore, Southeast Asia and the world to foster and inspire a creative and inclusive society. This is reflected in our collaborative research, education, long-term and special exhibitions, and innovative programming. The Gallery also works with international museums such as Centre Pompidou, Musée d'Orsay, Tate Britain, National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (MOMAT) and National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea (MMCA), to jointly present Southeast Asian art in the global context, positioning Singapore as a key node in the global visual arts scene.

In 2020, the Gallery was the only museum in Southeast Asia that received a ranking in The Art Newspaper's annual global survey of attendance at art museums, taking 20th place. It was the first museum in Asia to receive the Children in Museums Award by the European Museum Academy and Hands On! International Association of Children in Museums in 2018. The Gallery also won the awards for "Best Theme Attraction" at TTG Travel Awards 2017, "Best Attraction Experience", "Breakthrough Contribution to Tourism" and "Best Customer Service (Attractions)" at the prestigious Singapore Tourism Awards in 2016 for its role in adding to the vibrancy of Singapore's tourism landscape. As a registered Charity and an Institute of Public Character, National Gallery Singapore relies on the support of the public to build collections, engage in research, develop programmes and bring art to everyone.

ANNEX A: BIOGRAPHY OF LISA REIHANA



Lisa Reihana (Ngā Puhi, Ngāti Hine, Ngāi Tāteauru, Ngāi Tāpoto; b. 1964, Aotearoa New Zealand) is a multi-disciplinary artist whose practice spans large scale video, digital art, sculpture, costume and body adornment, and photography. Being a woman of Māori and Welsh-English descent, Reihana has worked towards expanded representations of Pacific and Māori identities, knowledge, and cultures. Since the 1990s, she has claimed digital technologies and virtual space as realms where innovation meets ancestral knowledge. Lisa Reihana is a member of the Pacific Sisters, a Tāgata Moana art collective that emerged from the fringes of mainstream arts and culture in Aotearoa New Zealand in 1991.

ANNEX B: *GLISTEN* ARTWORK DETAILS

GLISTEN is the seventh iteration of the Ng Teng Fong Roof Garden Commission series. This kinetic sculpture draws from Reihana's longstanding research into Māori ancestral knowledge, materials, and costume, and Reihana extended her research into Songket weaving for this unique commission. Drawing from Indigenous handwoven disciplines such as Southeast Asia's Songket and Māori Tāniko weaving, Reihana innovatively integrates contemporary designs and materials to craft a mural of playful, shimmering colours activated by its surroundings. This sculpture honours the traditions, labour, and pivotal roles of Songket and Tāniko's women weavers as makers, communicators, knowledge bearers, and mediators prior to Asia Pacific region's first contact with Western culture.

Tāniko and Songket Weaving Patterns featured in *GLISTEN*

Tāniko



Installation view of GLISTEN wall with Tāniko patterns, National Gallery Singapore, 2024.

Tāniko is a traditional Māori style of finger weaving. Tāniko patterns are often woven around the borders of korowai (cloaks) and relay Māori stories, histories, and values. Māori weavers' designs consisted of triangles, diamonds, diagonal bars and stepped patterns. These designs were usually worked in black, red, and white.

The featured patterns include the pātikitiki and kaokao patterns. The pātikitiki pattern is usually represented as a repetitive diamond or geometric pattern. Pātikitiki is the word for flounder, symbolising abundance, hospitality and providing for your people. The kaokao pattern refers to protection and resembles a repetitive 'M' shape and is said to represent the rib cage and arms of warriors (haka stance).

Songket



Installation view of GLISTEN wall with Songket patterns, National Gallery Singapore, 2024.

Songket is a textile handwoven in silk or cotton and patterned with gold or silver threads, and Lisa Reihana looked into Malaysian Songket weave patterns for *GLISTEN*, referencing materials such as Malaysian artist Grace Selvanayagam's book, *Songket: Malaysia's Woven Treasure*. Songket is traditionally worn during ceremonial occasions including weddings and religious ceremonies where the colour and grandeur of Songket adds to the occasion, and in the early centuries, Songket was only worn by Malay royalty. The motifs featured in the patterns include the Pucuk Rebung Gigi Yu which fuses the Rebung (bamboo shoot) and shark motifs, the Teratai (lotus) which is associated with Malay culture and religions, and the mangosteen which symbolises the reflection of one's feelings or one's inner self as related to human spiritual state (Dawa, 1997).

ANNEX C: GLISTEN PROGRAMMES

Programmes	
Opening Programme: <i>GLISTEN</i>: ARTIST TALK BY LISA REIHANA	
Date and Time:	14 June, Friday 7 - 8.30pm
Venue:	National Gallery Singapore, Supreme Court Wing, Level 5, Glass Room
Admission Details:	Free, registration is required. Register online via National Gallery Singapore's website .
Description:	Join in for an evening with Aotearoa New Zealander artist Lisa Reihana as she shares about her practice and the manifestation of the newly commissioned work, <i>GLISTEN</i> . Moderated by curator Qinyi Lim, the conversation will delve into how living traditions and indigenous knowledge act as a counterpart to narratives perpetuated by a singular Western modernity.
Activity Sheets for Children and Youth inspired by <i>GLISTEN</i>	
Admission Details:	For free guided tours with a self-guided exploration to <i>GLISTEN</i> , school groups can place bookings on BookMuseums@SG for the following programmes; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [2024] Self-guided Tour for Sec and Post-sec School Groups to Special Exhibitions • [2024] Self-guided Tour for Primary School Groups to DBS SG Gallery and UOB SEA Gallery Activity sheets are also available while stocks last at the Keppel Centre for Art Education (KCAE) at the Gallery. Email school.bookings@nationalgallery.sg to find out more.
Description:	Be inspired by the intricate beauty of Southeast Asia's Songket and Māori's Tāniko in Lisa Reihana's <i>GLISTEN</i> and ignite your creativity with activity sheets specially designed for students of different age groups. These activity sheets encourage students to develop visual literacy and critical thinking through close observation and mindful drawing exercises that forge meaningful connections with the artwork and the world around them.
Weaving Sundays	
Date and Time:	Ongoing, from July 2024 onwards
Admission Details:	Free, registration via National Gallery Singapore's website
Description:	Don't miss Weaving Sundays, a series of hands-on weaving workshops where you can have a try at making your own woven creations or participate in a communal weaving session to create a tapestry of memories and stories. Through these artist-led sessions, learn more about the different techniques of weaving and the patterns used.