

**ENDLESS  
LOVE:  
BLUEPRINT  
FOR  
AN  
ARI**

# INTRODUCTION

**We are two members of a club known as people that used to run spaces.**

- Hana ran Fresh and Fruity gallery as a physical site for two years in Ōtepoti. It now functions as a collective with Mya Morrison-Middleton.
- Callum ran MEANWHILE, an ARI<sup>1</sup> still in existence in Te Whanganui-a-tara. It is now run by Sean Burn, Jesse Bowling and Jordana Bragg

In the making of this document we are wanting to be as transparent as possible about our processes and to share knowledge through reading, archival research and kōrero. This document is intended to share information as to what an ARI can be by looking at a huge variety of different models across Aotearoa. We wanted to write this document to create a healthier art ecology that promotes sharing knowledge, histories and transparency. This document and research is not finished; it is ongoing.

**This project began life as two questions:**

1. Are artist run initiatives (ARI's) important? If so, why?
2. If you were to start an ARI, how would it function?

**Other questions arose for us and we structured this text around them:**

1. Why?
2. The kaupapa/intention of the space/models
3. The working relationships
4. Money
5. Narrative/ What happened?
6. Visual identity
7. Legacy

We then decided to interview as many people that we knew who'd either run or been involved with running an

ARI as possible. It was a way for us to try and piece together the very extensive histories of ARIs in Aotearoa.

We would like to extend our gratitude to the people we interviewed for this project including, Emma Budgen (The Honeymoon Suite, Black Cube, Te Wai Pōunamu), Robert Fraser (Ferari, Tāmaki Makaurau), Sophie Davis (North Projects, Ōtautahi), Chloe Geoghegan (Dog Park art project space, Ōtautahi), Ted Whitaker (BRUCE, Ōtepoti), Melanie Oliver (Blue Oyster art project space, The Physics Room, Te Wai Pōunamu), Megan Dunn (Fiat Lux, Tāmaki Makaurau), Juliet Carpenter (Gloria Knight, Tāmaki Makaurau), Nick Spratt (Rm gallery, Tāmaki Makaurau), Jana Hawkins-Andersen, Katie Winten, the board at firstdraft and Dawn Marble (Personal Best),

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini

Thanks so much to all of you for your time, generosity, mahi and aroha. Thanks also to firstdraft gallery and lots of friends of Twitter for alerting us to the ever growing list of ARIs that have existed in Aotearoa.

We look forward to this project developing further and informing new projects.

1. An acronym for Artist Run Initiative

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## PART ONE: WHAT IS AN ARI? / WHY ARE ARIS IMPORTANT?

An ARI can exist in many forms and acts as an umbrella name to describe lots of kinds of artist generated activity. Most frequently this activity involves a physical location and takes the shape of a whare whakairi toi or an art gallery. In theory they function in opposition to more institutional frameworks. ARIs are not necessarily bound to a physical location, though most are. For the purpose of our research we have also included collectives both *iri*<sup>2</sup> and *url*.<sup>3</sup>

ARIs first emerged in Aotearoa in the mid 1970s with the the Artists Co-Op<sup>4</sup> in Te Whanganui-a-tara. Since then, by our count, approximately 107 other spaces across Aotearoa have emerged, primarily in the Te Wai Pōunamu and Tāmaki Makaurau. Many of these spaces, including Test Strip were deeply influenced by spaces in the US and Canada.

Perhaps it is best to first question whether ARI is the appropriate word to describe these spaces. By emphasising that the work is being done by ‘artists’, there is a suggestion as to whether this terminology is purporting the hierarchy that this kind of energy is trying to disrupt. When interviewing one of the co-founders of Rm gallery, Nick Spratt, he referred to them as “self-organised initiatives” which we believe best describes these kinds of frameworks. For the purpose of clarity we will however continue to refer to them as ARIs.

An ARI can be a dealer gallery, a project space, in someone’s home, in someone’s garage, a publishing venture, a website or spaceless. The scope for creating spaces in constantly evolving.

The outcome of our research is to design a heterotopia.<sup>5</sup> How do we create spaces which reflect the conditions for making that we are living in using collaborative means and by engaging in a truly multidisciplinary approach to making? We first need to understand what a community is and how to bring people together, but also reimagine the space in which to host that community. “Community

never refers to a collection of bodies conceived independently of their world. It refers to the nature of the relations between bodies and between these bodies and their world.”<sup>6</sup> In Michel Foucault seminal essay, *Of other spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias* (1967) Foucault proposes the idea of the heterotopia as another ‘space’, which is both cultural and material and is an attempt at describing what a utopia could mean, although he outlines that utopias are a fantasy. Foucault describes heterotopias using six principles: that they are present in every culture; they can have one, multiple or changing functions; they can bring together several incompatible spaces or things; they are capable of juxtaposing time across space; they manifest a system of apertures that is both accessible and exclusive from other spaces; and lastly they are relational to all other spaces. Heterotopias are escapes, they can never be utopian in a strict sense, rather they can be utopian in function. Foucault gives a number of examples such as the garden or an event like a honeymoon. “... the heterotopias obviously take quite varied forms, and perhaps no one absolutely universal form of heterotopia would be found....”<sup>7</sup>

How could artists create a heterotopia in which to produce work in a colonial environment, which centers tino rangatiratanga.<sup>8</sup>

2. In real life or in person (*kanohi ki te kanohi*)

3. A Uniform Resource Locator or digital

4. This is the first (to our knowledge) recorded ARI

5. In his essay, *Des espaces autres* (1967) philosopher Michel Foucault used this term to describe spaces or places that function in non-hegemonic conditions, where the technologies and/or disciplines of social order are out of sequence or suspended fleetingly. These can be reconstructed to generate new spaces where new branches of society are transformed and developed.

6. Tiqqun, *Introduction to civil war.*, trans Alexander R Galloway & Jason E Smith (Semiotext(e): Los Angeles, CA), 2010, 41

7. Michel Foucault, *Des Espace Autres* (March 1967), Trans. Jay Miskowiec. (Architecture /Mouvement/ Continuité:October),1984, <http://web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/foucault1.pdf>

8. Although it doesn’t really have a transliteration, ‘Tino rangatiratanga’ is often described as meaning ‘absolute sovereignty’. Its appears in both He Whakaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tireni (1835) and the Treaty of Waitangi (1840).It is also described as meaning self-determination, autonomy, or Māori independence.

**“Usually, if you are going to start an ARI you’ve found that the voice in your head isn’t being represented anyway, or your vision of what a space should be isn’t quite there.”<sup>9</sup>**

This project emerged out of numerous conversations we had together around our own experiences of running spaces, particularly how we problem solved issues, things we could’ve done better and how we worked with other people. Both of us talked extensively about the challenges in running and maintaining a space and the histories of our separate spaces. For instance a shared commonality we had between us was that we both had almost fallen into it, or become involved in running ARIs through opportunity. This idea of collaborative practice is what spurred much of our discussion. It seems that within the context of a lot of western institutional frameworks, particularly art schools, that collaboration is discouraged or requires a rigorous process of demarcating that labour of each person. The individualism of the art world encourages and pushes people to work together to imagine other spaces where they might show their own work or the work of others.

Running an ARI is a lot of emotional labour. It’s a huge financial burden. Its draining and mostly unsustainable. This is why so many ARIs end or last a maximum of 2.5-3 years. ARIs are incredibly important for young artists, curators and writers. It helps them build and maintain relationships. It helps you assert yourself within a community and to grow, make mistakes and develop a broad set of skills you otherwise wouldn’t have. It challenges you to think critically, trial new things and most importantly work together. This isn’t always peachy, but it’s critical to understanding how you work, what your strengths are and who you can work with. Unsurprisingly, it’s not always ur BFF from art school. Soz boo.

## PART TWO: WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE? / WHY START AN ARI?

### SCENARIO NUMBER ONE

*You are afraid.*

You are in your final months of an undergraduate degree. In no time at all you will be quietly asked to leave and you don't have any plans after than. Pretty soon you won't have a studio, you won't have any access to resources, you won't have any walls or rooms to put your work into. You are considering if your peers are your friends or not and maybe they just hang around you because they're forced to.

You need somewhere to show your work

Or perhaps you planned it together. Maybe art school isn't providing you with the space you need to begin showing your work. Perhaps you are still at school and you are finding it increasingly frustrating to try and develop a practice. You want to experiment maybe? Or maybe you want to professionalise? Maybe you're a hustler? Maybe you are interested in the relationship between being a ARI and a dealer? Maybe you just want to show your friends or build connections with other artists. Maybe your community lacks something and you feel you can create a space to fill the void.

Maybe even it's that you see the opportunity. You want to provide space or be different

### SCENARIO NUMBER TWO

*You know exactly what you are doing.*

You have been told that you'll do fine. Playing the game, legacy, hot shot group of artists, gallery as a collaborative art project. You have the nikes frees you and you are ready to run. Maybe you aren't an artist. Maybe you are a art history grad gravitating towards artists. You want to find your place in the ecology. You've worked in big galleries and you find them dry or at least you want a place

to upskill. Maybe you are a designer and you're bored at the thought of commercial design. You want to push yourself. Create a hot brand that's funny and relates well to the proto-digital age. You are smart, sexy and have great all black looks.

### SCENARIO NUMBER THREE

*You are experienced.*

You are interested in experimentation with curatorial practice. You may have an understanding of your place in the arts ecosystem; you had the support and excitement of an ARI when you were coming through as a recent graduate and you want to give that to the next generation.

### SCENARIO NUMBER FOUR

*You feel overlooked and you aren't alone.*

Perhaps you paused to have children or perhaps life just got in the way. Maybe you finished art school and watched as only a few of your peers continued to be artists. You couldn't centre your practice because of the conditions of living and making under late capitalism. It just wasn't sustainable. You find a studio and think there's room for a gallery here, or perhaps you just you want to create your own opportunities, your own platform.

You have no place in the arts ecology you find yourself in. You see a space and see the work but no one is paying any attention. You see the urgency in the work and you know if you're not going to do anything about it, no one will.

### SCENARIO NUMBER FIVE

*You're game.*

The opportunity presented itself to you. It was an easy decision. It just fell into place. Perhaps someone offered you a space or perhaps there was room in your studio. Maybe the space was cheap or free. You have the space, so why not. Just give it a burl.

## PART THREE: MONEY / MODELS

There's no better way to destroy a friendship than through money. Money is the most boring, but most important part about running a space. It is vital that all parties are equally invested financially. If you don't have the money, how will you fund it? There are many horror stories of people signing commercial leases or getting credit cards and it ending in significant financial debt. Be smart and have a plan before you get in over your head. This is the most important thing you need to consider. In terms of amenities (power, internet, rent etc) make sure that you have an evenly distributed financial stake in the space. It is a good idea to set up a joint bank account or kitty.

### FUNDING AGENCIES/BODIES

There are many funding option routes you could take. You could for instance get money from a funding body like a local council or for instance Creative New Zealand. If you decide to go this route we would recommend having discussions with the appropriate funding advisors. Also ask for advice from bigger or more established institutions who can support your funding applications or who already receive funding. This is an ideal model for functioning as a project space or non-commercial space. If you receive this kind of funding it is integral (in our opinion) that you pay your artists, even if it's a small fee, it's an acknowledgement of their work.<sup>10</sup> You don't need to get funding either. You can try and fund this yourself and this would allow more freedom creatively, but perhaps less options financially.

*You could always hustle a sugar daddy via seekingarrangement.com*

You could also set up a board of trustees, as an organisation structure this is useful in the resolution of conflict, to have a group impartial to the financial and creative responsibilities of the space. Another option, in regard to funding, could be to acquire a private benefactor(s). The creative arts sector is largely funded by wealthy people and gambling, so what's the shame in a lil' hustling?

Art is a scam. Be a scammer.<sup>11</sup>

*You could always set up a board and just become another institution*

### STUDIO SYSTEM

Another way you could fund the space could be by dividing the space into studios. This is a good option if you like an open studio system and being around other creative people. It can be similar to a studio environment in art school. You need someone to manage this or you need to work out a good system for managing these relationships between a group of you. If you do this you need to be completely transparent with the studio artists you are working with about what is happening with the space.

**Transparency is integral.** They are what keeps a roof over your head so they need to and deserve to be treated with respect and consistently consulted. They are the basis of your community and you need to include them in all major decisions. We would recommend having fortnightly meetings with the studio artists, setting up a facebook group/email chain/Loomio and making them sign a contract upon entering the studio. We would recommend writing a document that outlines how much the rent is and what it covers, what facilities you offer, information about the space and access information. It is also important to write down what is acceptable/tolerated behaviour.

Before you decide to set up a studio system it's important you work out a rigorous kaupapa. The word 'kaupapa' comes from the word Papatūānuku (Earth mother) who is 'papa', which means base and foundation. Kaupapa means principles and ideas which act as a base or foundation for action. A kaupapa is a set of values, principles and plans which people have agreed on as a foundation for their actions that informs behaviour and customs. A kaupapa is not a manifesto. These things are vastly different, but are often conflated.

10. Emma Bugden, in conversation

11. C.R.E.A.M., get the money ;)

A written kaupapa can be kept as a working document for you to show studio artists who might want to suggest new clauses or amend things. Show the studio artists these processes and be transparent about these kinds of documents you are working with/on. This is also important if say for instance a studio artist exhibits toxic or harmful behaviour they have broken the terms of using the studio space and can be asked to leave. It protects you and also establishes a healthy working relationship between you in terms of managing expectations.

You need to make sure the studio artists feel invested and supported in the space. They will feel invested in the space if you are invested in your relationships with them and are actively building a community around this space, rather than just using these people as cash cows. They are not profits they are assets.

#### CALL FOR PROPOSALS VS INTERNALLY ORGANISED SHOWS

A call for proposals can be a great way to connect to a broader peer group. However they are incredibly taxing to go through and read. **However it is important to be courteous and reply to every single person who puts in a proposal, even though sending rejection letters makes you feel like a fucking asshole.** Having a proposal system can structure your programme. On the other hand, by far the most supported strategy was to not do a call for proposals and to keep a more open schedule, so to keep the space more dynamic and experimental, rather than it merely mimicking the workings of a more established institutional framework.

#### CHARGING ARTISTS FOR HIRE OF SPACE / DEALER MODEL

**It's expensive to run a space.** Sometimes an artist must invest in their own practice and pay to use the space.<sup>12</sup>

This is not ideal, but this is the reality of living under late capitalism. Most artists don't have a lot of money, but unfortunately due to the conditions we are living and making in you may have to charge a fee for them to access and use the space. We would recommend charging them a

lump weekly rate, for instance if you each paid \$80 each per week between three people (the directors/facilitators) (240) and the rent is \$500, charge them only \$260. It is an egregious exploitation to charge artists fees like \$500, \$700 or even upwards of \$1000. This limits the kind of artists who can show in your space.

If you just want to make money or need to in order to sustain yourself it is vital that you work hard to maintain good relationships with the artists. You need to think about what you are providing beyond just a 'space'. We would also recommend having group shows, so that the costs can be divided between a group of people and you can show more artists. Its is a good idea to find alcohol sponsorship or food sponsorship in order to host them, but you may need to perhaps just go halves with them on food and drink for openings. You also don't need to serve alcohol. If you make an non alcoholic punch, most people will assume it has alcohol in it anyway.<sup>13</sup>

We would also recommend dumpster diving, or making, finding or stealing food. If you charge artists money to use your space you need to host them. Trying to hustle a good deal with your local paint company who do deals for other galleries is a good idea. Ask bigger institutions how they fund supplies.

Functioning as a dealer gallery is a good way to sustain and alleviate costs. This also can teach you important skills in terms of liaising between artists and collectors and the how the art market functions within your wider community. We would recommend giving the bulk of the sale to the artists and keeping a maximum of 20% for the maintenance of the space.

**If your charging artists to use your space at least throw them a party**

#### DEALER VERSUS PROJECT SPACE

Many people who initially started ARIs now work in or have started their own dealer galleries. This is evident

12. Megan Dunn, paraphrased from conversation 17/09/2017, 2pm

13. Trust me ;)



in the history of spaces such as Gambia Castle (Tāmaki Makaurau) co-run by Sarah Hopkinson who now co-runs Hopkinson Mossman with Danae Mossman (former director of The Physics Room). Dealer galleries in many ways resemble ARIs more than being spaces dedicated for commerce. They operate with a stable or a community of artists. They are often invested in building long term relationships with their artists and often they function as project spaces, especially spaces such as Hopkinson Mossman and Michael Lett galleries. **There is a clearer and more obvious relationship between dealers and ARIs than ever before.**

### ONLINE/ COLLECTIVE BASED SPACELESS GALLERY

Running an ARI does not mean you necessarily need to have a physical location. Having a physical location is not a sustainable model. Don't be limited by a physical space. You don't need one or maybe you just want to add an online component to your gallery. The lifespan of most ARIs that have physical locations is a maximum of three years if that.

Many people are now utilising the internet as a site for the production and dissemination of work. Using an online platform means that you can alleviate geographical restrictions and bring a broader assortment of artists together. The internet is affordable and if you have someone who you can work with who can code then it's a great model for you. It can be as little as around \$25 a year (or even less) to host a website. In saying this, there are often ongoing costs with designing and developing a website, especially if you are working with a web developer. Consider their labour, and be transparent about your expectations with them.

The other model is to facilitate shows is by finding spaces to host work in spaces not usually occupied by contemporary art. One model could be that of Hapori, a collective based in Tāmaki Makaurau made up of artists Sorawit Songstaya and Ayesha Green, who do two projects a year in a non art specific space, such as Songstaya's home or the Grey Lynn women's centre. Their model is

as follows:

*"Hapori roams; is light-footed, peripatetic. Lying at its core is the aim to connect emerging arts practitioners in an informal and growing structure in order to facilitate conversation and artistic presentation."<sup>14</sup>*

### YOUR HOME/GARAGE

This is a great way to cut down significant costs. This can however be very taxing though in terms of feeling like the gallery would take precedent over your private space. It is important to develop specific boundaries in order for this kind of model to work, especially if you live with other people. We would recommend considering this carefully before undertaking it, because it's nice to have a boundary between work/home. A good model for considering how to do this could be Ferari gallery an ARI formerly based in Tāmaki Makaurau which operated out of a garage. Or you could find a space downstairs and live above it, such as spaces like Fiat Lux (Tāmaki Makaurau), Personal Best (Tāmaki Makaurau) or Show gallery (Te Whanganui-a-tara)

### VOLUNTEERS

A great thing you can do for your community is to offer them the opportunity to meet artists and to gain experience working in a gallery by installing, deinstalling, curating, writing and/or gallery minding. A volunteer is free labour that is not to be exploited. A volunteer should be getting something out of this exchange, so it's important you make them feel respected by having regular meetings with them and asking them what they are interested in and how they might like to contribute to the dialogues you are facilitating. It is vital to maintain a full understanding of their labour, for instance if a designer volunteers their time and mahi for you, ask them what they are comfortable doing, and the hours they are willing to volunteer. Working with designers, fabricators or anyone in a trained technical skill, it can be difficult to know how long a seemingly simple project may take. Consider this blind spot,

14. About on <http://www.haporiproject.com/about-hapori/>

especially with volunteer labour.

Always make sure you have some snacks and tea or coffee available to them. Keep all your volunteers up to date with what is happening with the gallery, in terms of exhibitions, public programming etc so they can feel valued and engaged in the gallery's community.

To professionalise or to not professionalise

Starting an ARI is likely a pretty good move for your career, tbh it looks really good on a funding application. It shows you are invested in the art ecology of your community, that you have an interest in providing opportunities for art and artists, that you have taste, you have an understanding of the labour involved in gallery practice, and you know how to work. But if recognition and personal reward is the only reason you're in the game, you're going to need to find a better reason. The costs of running an ARI will consistently outweigh the benefits.

### **It takes a lot of energy and nothing can or will stay the same.<sup>15</sup>**

You don't have to be a professional installer or know what you are doing. You don't have to be concerned with the 'art game'. The idealised view of what a space can do is that it can allow others to develop and/or refine their practice without having to worry about the constraints of commercial incentives or institutional influence. Ideally you want to work with artists who are responsive to the space that they are occupying rather than bending the space around it.

At the same time don't be afraid of professionalisation or of being framed in this way. Often it's the most logical step. It's really hard to sustain a space. You may want to set up a board or a charitable trust, like an incorporated society. Registering as a trust enables you to develop protocols around how you function in a more official way. This can allow for you to leave the space and hand it over to someone else, acquire more funding or simply just have more structure.

Our own perspective is to say:

**DEATH TO THE AESTHETE. DON'T KISS ASS. ONLY TALK TO PPL WHO YOU WANT TO TALK TO. FUCK THE BIG SHOT CURATORS LOOKING FOR HOT YOUNG THINGS. FAIL. BE UNPROFESSIONAL. SEND MARIAH CAREY GIFS ON MAILCHIMP. LET THE GALLERY DIE. FAIL AGAIN. PAINT YOUR WALLS RED INSTEAD OF WHITE. DON'T HANG ANYTHING THAT'S FRAMED. FUCK LEVEL HANGS. DON'T BECOME AN INSTITUTION. FAIL SOME MORE.**

### THE UNKNOWN

It's okay to not know what the fuck you are doing, but try and connect with the histories available to you. You're not incompetent, and you can't really get away with hiding behind your naivete too long. Talk to other people who have run spaces. Ask them about how they funded their space, how they organised their programmes, how they worked together and why it ended. This is emotional labour though, so make sure you buy them a drink ;)

An ARI can be a 'heterotopia'. What does a space that addresses the intersections of class, race, gender, accessibility and sexuality look like? How can your space promote inclusivity and safety? When we say safety we don't just mean in terms of a 'safe space' for say one particular group of people, we mean for everyone. A 'safe space' is a utopian ideal, but it's important to strive towards this and to remain rigorous in trying. This safety could be a space where your artists and community don't have to deal with someone who has hurt them, for instance someone who has been racially abusive or sexually violent. Back your artists, back your community. If you feel out of your depth, approach professionals or a tuakana who is impartial. Don't approach anyone who is bias, especially anyone wholly connected to the person who has caused hurt. That just makes things messier. These kinds of behaviours can't be tolerated and it's so fucking important to have strategies in place for protecting your community, your artists and yourselves. If you are committed to making a heterotopia you need to ensure the cultural safety of non-Pākehā artists. For instance asking

15. Interview with Megan Dunn

non-Pākehā artists how to correctly say and pronounce their names goes a long way in terms of showing you respect them.

Accountability for when you fuck up is also important. Responding to criticism by saying, 'Sorry, we accept critical feedback' is not acceptable. It is integral that you reach to people who feel hurt or excluded or marginalised by your programming and apologise in person and rethink your strategy. For instance working with a person with a history of sexual violence potentially endangers your community and even yourselves. Having empathy, believing and listening to people who are hurt, scared or angry is vital to maintaining the mana of your space.

### **Titiro, whakarongo, kōrero<sup>16</sup>**

It's important to imagine spaces not only for yourself to show work, but also your community and to expand your community. Don't promise anything if you don't deliver, for instance simply stating '\_\_\_\_ acknowledges the people of the \_\_\_\_ as the traditional custodians of the land, recognising their connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to their Elders; past, present and future' if you don't actively engage with those communities. That's bullshit and incredibly disingenuous if you programme doesn't engage with indigenous people. Acknowledging their sovereignty is only one step. For instance we are based in Te Whanganui-a-tara where there are two local mana whenua, Ngāti Toa Rangatira and Taranaki Whānui, these iwis have specific tikanga and kaupapa that is different from other iwi groups. Not all experiences of difference are the same. Titiro, whakarongo, kōrero. Living in a settler colony it is vital that you do more than merely acknowledge the Mana whenua of the local area. To merely write this as an acknowledgement is bullshit if you do not incorporate indigenous voices and indigenous knowledges and modes of being into your kaupapa. Mana whenua (authority in the land) is achieved when a person's inward kaupapa is aligned with the outward land. Kaupapa is the land within. When the relationship with the land is lost, people's inner sense of security and foundation may be lost too.

An ARI needs to have an expansive community. What's the point of having a space if you aren't providing and holding space for those who are excluded? It's important to make sure your space is accessible for everyone and either challenging or acknowledging the socio-political context you are living in. The same problems that exist in our broader society exist inside the art world. Just because the art world seems inclusive, doesn't mean it is. You should implement strategies to combat this in a meaningful way. There is no point working for instance with a group of artists of colour once and never reconnecting with them again. That does nothing to promote a healthier art ecology. If you are a group of men for instance, it's okay to acknowledge that and seek support or advice from others, but it's not okay to put emotional labour on people you are seeking support from. Setting up a curatorial board in this instance might seem like a good idea. The reality is if you aren't actively engaging in manaakitanga or a process by which you can share, host and be generous in creating and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships than it isn't going to work in a sustainable way. If you aren't doing this than how are you supporting a collaborative practice of learning and evaluating the flow of knowledge both ways? Own your privilege and use it to give a voice and space to others. Finally Having a gallery space or a collaboration is a huge privilege. It's okay to make mistakes, as long as you are accountable or learn from them. It's okay to have 'bad' shows. It's okay to be experimental. Play! Look after yourself! Learn! Take time to take it all in. When a project finishes it's hard to appreciate the amount of work and learning you've undergone.

*Oh it always seems to go  
that you don't know what you've got till it's gone!*

16. Linda Tuhiwai Smith uses these terms when working within a kaupapa Māori research context. It means to look, listen and then speak. It's important to look and listen in order to develop an understanding (empathy) and find out where to speak from.

## PART FOUR: WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

**All parties need to equally contribute financially, as well as in terms of emotional and physical labour.**

However, as in any collaboration you need to work out what are each other's strengths. This happens over time. Ideally there is a person who is *good with money* (bookkeeping), an *administrator* (emails, social media), a designer/fabricator (who is invested in created a visual identity), a *hustler* (someone who finds alcohol sponsorship, paint sponsorship or just finds food and materials), a *host* (welcoming, thanking, an effortless communicator) and an *installer* (a handy person or someone who knows or who can help build things). Sometimes these roles overlap. These are some of the skills required to run a space. Pay attention, and be sure to acknowledge the strengths you and your collaborators have or have shown, and reward their efforts. If someone is struggling or dropping the ball address it immediately and be kind, because all these relationships only work if you respect each other. Honesty is always the best policy

It is important you have regular meetings so everyone is up to date. You don't have to meet in person, you can have skype conversations or google hangouts. It's important to have someone who writes everything down and also that you delegate tasks evenly. We would recommend rotating each person so they can both chair (asking for agenda items etc) the meeting and someone writing the minutes (by hand and then either typing up and/or emailing everyone). Rotating respective roles enables everyone to feel included in decision making processes and doesn't put that labour on one person. It ensures everyone's voice is heard and everyone gets a turn at leading the discussion. Constant, open and clear communication is vital to make sure everyone is equally invested in the project. Make a rough schedule of when people are available to chat for instance, after a 9-5 workday, but before 9pm. Make sure to look after yourselves and each other. You could do this by writing up a document of when people might be busy with say their jobs/university/other

projects, how the money works (how and when to pay rent, power, internet), what all the passwords are to social media (Instagram, Twitter, gmail, mailchimp), so that everyone has access and can feel empowered to access and use each of these things.

Look after each other and establish clear boundaries and give clear notice for when you need space. Be mindful of how all of you are feeling emotionally and allow for people to focus on other things in their lives. Signal when possible time when you need a break or you are going to be busy. Don't have too many cooks in the kitchen to begin with. ;) Get a meal or beer together, get away from the gallery. It's important to have space from the project and this offers a good chance to have a meeting or just to hang out as friends.

*Just DO YOU babe.*

### EMOTION TIME<sup>17</sup>

Operating an ARI comes with a lot of moving parts. Money, logistics, creative anxiety, ego: all elements negotiated through a collective of generally under experienced volunteers. It can be hard to keep a check on each other, or know where everyone's at. Emotion Time is a simple addition to meetings that encourages open communication, self-reflection, and care. Either at the beginning or end of a meeting or work-oriented conversation, go around the group one at a time and ask each other how you're feeling. Each person gets a turn to be heard, and should take their time to consider how they feel, with full attention from the group. No comments are necessary, but the contribution is noted in the minutes, and distributed later. Through frequent use of Emotion Time, the notated contributions can be useful for self-analysis, to see patterns emerge or consistent deflections, anxieties, or concerns. Be as honest as you need to be, but take the opportunity to engage with your present state.

<sup>17</sup>. *Emotion Time*, in this usage, began life in 2014 as a collective comprising Louisa Beatty, Jordana Bragg and Callum Devlin.

## IDENTITY

### *Pick a good name.*

We wrote about 200 names on sheets of paper before we came up with *MEANWHILE*. It was very nearly “Max Key”. Occupying an office floor that had been empty for four years,<sup>18</sup> there was a group who was going to do a more permanent gallery but while they got their shit together we were allowed to programme art for the window space. So it fit. We were very serious about documentation, wrote everything down and took a lot of photos. We knew we were here for now, and then we wouldn’t be (well, that was the plan). Art spaces aren’t supposed to last forever you know.

*“Name: Bernadette Corporation. Current Number of Members: 3. Founded in 1994. SONY CORPORATION, DISNEY CORPORATION. TIME WARNER CORPORATION, BEATRICE CORPORATION, BERNADETTE CORPORATION. We call ourselves a corporation because corporations are everywhere, and it impresses people... pretending we are business people while we sleep like cats. Our work is like the one street lamp out of 100 that flickers on and off. How did we manage this? We started a fashion magazine yesterday....”<sup>19</sup>*

### *A good name happens by accident.*

For instance, *Fresh and Fruity* came from the yoghurt brand ‘Fresh ‘n’ Fruity’. This was a yoghurt that the directors and co-founders (Zach Williams and I) were eating out of the dumpster and served at their first show called ‘Fresh and Fruity: opulence’. *Fresh and Fruity* was picked because it was sexy, autumnal and seemed gleaned from Vogue, but was actually from a dumpster. Officially we are ‘Fresh and Fruity’, but you can call us *Fresh ‘n’ Fruity* as long as we don’t get sued ;) )

*“We were probably driving around drunk and figuring out what were going to call our garage space. And we were thinking about the most ridiculous thing that could be in there and it was a Ferrari. And there was all those culture jamming labels where they’d like, remove a*

*letter and I think they influenced us to do the one ‘R’ Ferrari. But also one of the guys was quite terrible at spelling so that could also be one of the reasons.”<sup>20</sup>*

Both spaces intentionally appropriated names from different businesses. As a side effect, both spaces benefitted from confused Facebook users confusing them for the real thing.

18. We were only there for about 6 months before the place got leased out. Landlords take note, this is after four years of being vacant. Pretty serious example of the swift power of art-space gentrification - CD

19. Bernadette Corporation, “Surfaces Are for Slipping Up: Made in USA. Made in USA, no.1, 1999” in *The Magazine.*, Gwen Allen (ed). (London: The MIT Press, 2016), 213

20. Robert Fraser discussing *Ferari* ARI

# PART FIVE: HOW TO WORK WITH ARTISTS /HOSTING

*Be a good host.*

Every artist's needs are different.

Some artists may want considered attention, some may wish to be left to it.

It's difficult to improvise a way of working each time around, but it's necessary.

Respond to emails as soon as you can. If you can't respond immediately, send an email saying you have read their message and give them a time when you will get back to them.

Collaboration is conversation, but this can take different forms. If you can have meetings in person, and that works for you, that's great. Some artists may prefer communicating through emails, skype, or in a google doc. Be sensitive to their needs, but make sure you work in a way that suits you too.

Every artist's needs are different.

Practice whanaugatanga in all of your relationships.<sup>241</sup>

Expectations are helpful. Pressure is negotiable.

Make sure your artist has a place to stay.

Be patient.

Be mindful of the labour of artistic practice.

Every artist's needs are different.

Whenever you work with artists, whether or not you are selling their work, they are paying to use your space or they have been invited by you to do any other kind of project it's important you give them a document that outlines what you are providing and establishes professional boundaries.

**Public programming is important, but make these weirdly formal events much nicer by having snacks and allow more informal modes of discussion and dissemination. Eating food with people is really**

**important. Try and think 'beyond' 'artist talks', which often feel colonial and uncomfortable. Workshops are another way of bringing different people into your space.**

## ARCHIVE/WEBSITE

There are two big trends that we have found amongst ARI's during our research which we will take a moment to consider: the first is that they are temporary. The second, is they are often terribly documented (which is the primary reason the bulk of the research for this project has been interviews). You have a responsibility to the artists you work with that their efforts are noted, and that their project is accessible and able to be engaged with in the future. Consider strategies of documentation and dissemination, and make sure this is a conversation that happens with the artist, and nothing is ever assumed. For instance, there may be sensitive elements to work that the artist may wish to mediate access to, or an artist may request that no videos are to be taken during an event or performance. **Documentation for the space and the back of house archives are critical, but talk to your artists about whether they feel comfortable posting photos of their work on social media.** There is a fine line between considered dissemination, and flagrant promotion.

In terms of archiving, we recommend establishing some form of physical collection of ephemera and printed material. Research archival techniques, or the best way to print something if you want it to last. For instance, newsprint, inkjet and risograph printing all have different shelf lives. As a collection, you can send this printed material to National Library or an archival library whose job it is to conserve ephemera such as this. On the other

21. Whanaugatanga is a Māori concept which refers to the building and maintenance of relationships. It's a process of establishing meaningful, reciprocal and whānau or family-like relationships through cultural respect, connectedness and engagement.

end of the spectrum, do not assume that if something is on the internet it's there forever. Digital storage can also be expensive, so consider how you are going to maintain access as technologies develop. **An ARI should be developing a conversation, making a case for the kinds of work that they wish to see more of.** Respect that, and respect your artists. It would be a great disservice to the work being done if it isn't able to be engaged with further down the line.

Engage with writers, especially young writers. **Bridge the gaps between artists and writers. While both roles are often blurred professionally inside university structures art history and fine arts or design students are very segregated. Bring them together.** Talk to lecturers at universities. Also go and talk to students about what you are doing. If you cannot pay them always offer them in kind support such a food, letters of recommendation, connecting them with people in their peer group, durries, bottles of wine or any kind of koha you could offer them to show aroha for their mahi.

# PART SIX: HOW TO MITIGATE CONFLICT / EXIT STRATEGY

*How do you know when you're finished?*

An exit strategy is pretty straightforward. Ask yourself this: what are you setting out to achieve, and how are you going to know when you've achieved it? Markers of success are complicated and sort of arbitrary, so be specific. Maybe it's as simple as you'll keep doing it until it stops being fun. And that's fine, just be transparent about it (and that means publicly).

In talking to those who had run spaces in the past, we asked them all if they could start a new space, how would it function differently. The most common answer (besides not having considered it at all) was a change in structure away from a collective model and towards an autonomous, dictatorial way of operating. The feeling was this: if I were to do it again, I want to do it my way.

In negotiating the wishes of many people in running an ARI, a certain amount of conflict is almost unavoidable. Whether that is due to interpersonal disagreements, promises held or broken, professional responsibilities not adhered to, or threatened safety of those in your space, the simplest solution is mitigating the conflict before it starts. Strategies for mitigating conflict usually come back to a written code of conduct, or kaupapa to support the expectations for behaviour in your space. Strategies of mitigation usually involve a certain amount of compromise, a mutual agreement to listen and be patient, and most importantly, an understanding of the consequences if any of these agreements are broken.

In it's purest form, an ARI is closer to a romantic relationship than a business. There is no rulebook. No one needs to tell you how to do any of this. But no one should be telling you not to. Remember, those closest to you are probably going to recommend whatever's going to be keeping you safe, and starting an ARI is not a good idea if you're after emotional stability, financial security, and total creative freedom. Not to say it can't involve that, but generally speaking. If you are seriously thinking about

starting an ARI, ask yourself why? If it's a short, obvious answer, do it. If it's a long, uncertain answer, do it anyway, but keep asking yourself until you know.

*"I don't think there is any specific show that will be talked about in the annals of history. There were some pretty crazy times and some work definitely got broken. Sometimes I feel like we were just another artist run initiative. And to be honest, that's completely fine. I'm not too worried about the glory of it all. We were just providing a service to the scene at the time. And a counterpoint to a few other things as well."<sup>22</sup>*

22. Robert Fraser discussing Ferari.



# AN ALMOST COMPLETE LIST OF ARIS IN AOTEAROA

## AUCKLAND

- Jar Space (active?)
- 100m<sup>2</sup>
- 23a gallery
- Test Strip (1992-97)
- Fiat Lux
- Rm (Still active)
- Special?
- Gambia Castle
- Personal Best
- Snake Pit
- Gloria Knight
- Window (Still active)
- Fuzzy Vibes
- Ferrari
- Glove box
- Rockies
- Canape Canopy
- Split / Fountain
- Terror International / Joy Bong.
- Canary Projects
- Alterations.
- Captcha. (active)
- Mokopōpaki (active)
- Closets artists gallery?
- Hapori (active)
- Second Storey
- Plaza
- LOFTjervois gallery
- Club Mirage (active?)
- Whau the people (active)
- 448 gallery
- A centre for art.

## HAMILTON

- Casbah gallery
- Platform 01
- Pilot
- Ramp. (Still active)
- Skinroom (active)
- New Friends gallery
- Ariki gallery

## WELLINGTON

- Ouse project
- JPEG2000 (active)
- The Artists Co-op
- Women's gallery
- Cupboard Space
- Enjoy (still active)
- Show project space
- Russian Frost Farmers
- Cubewell house?
- Spot?
- Elbow room.
- Spacething
- Meanwhile (active)
- Shift.
- Mygalaxi gallery
- 19 / IZTORY
- Pyramid Club
- Playstation (active)

## CHRISTCHURCH

- The Avicla
- Next gallery? (active)
- Man Friday
- Cuckoo
- South Island art projects
- Room 4
- High Street Projects
- CASKO
- The Physics Room (still active)
- Gridlocked
- ABC
- The Otira project
- S\*W\*A\*B presents
- Black Cube
- Thoroughfare
- Dog Park
- North Projects. gallery gallery
- b4zero3
- Cube or object space
- Glove or idle bone
- 183 Milton Street.
- Gilt
- Where? (active)
- Aftermath (active)
- Ōtautahi Kōrerotia (active)
- In situ photo project

## DUNEDIN

- Chippendale House
- Stupid Street
- Supa 8
- Honeymoon suite
- Blue Oyster (still active)
- Everything Incorporated
- None gallery (still active)
- (Lanyop) Lagniappe small art gallery
- Rice & Beans
- Olive gallery
- A gallery
- BRUCE
- Galerie Dressford Vogel
- Dowling Street Studios
- Bond St Studios
- Fresh & Fruity (still active)
- State of Princes.
- The Anteroom (active)
- DVD Comics
- XXX / YYY (active)
- The Mahor
- As is
- SAVOIE de LACY
- DIRT (online/active)