

From: [Ian Hunter](#)
To: [REDACTED]@nzherald.co.nz
Subject: Request for information relating to City Artworks (Ref: IRC-3857)
Date: Wednesday, 19 October 2022 1:56:00 pm
Attachments: [Native Eye Complaint_Redacted.pdf](#)
[Water Whirler Graffiti.pdf](#)
[Water Whirler Graffiti Logged.pdf](#)
[Culturally offensive_Redacted.pdf](#)

Dear Melissa,

Further to my email dated 6 October 2022 I am now able to provide you with the information requested in respect of City Artworks.

Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding.

Your patience whilst this information has been collated is greatly appreciated.

As you asked a number of questions I will address these in the order of your request.

1) How many complaints have been received about the city's artworks/sculptures/installations in the past five years broken down by year?

Year	Artwork	Complaint
2018 February - May	Courtenay Place Light Box Exhibition "Native Eye" by Susan Tamaki	Alleged use of racist imagery
2019	Len Lye Water Whirler	Graffiti regarding Water Whirler not working
2020		No complaints recorded
2021 February - May	Courtenay Place Light Box Exhibition "Ho Sun Nian" by Stan Chan & Kerry Ann Lee	Objection to Chinese Art on display
2022		No complaints recorded

2) How much money has been spent on the artworks in question broken down by purchase costs/installation/and ongoing maintenance?

Year	Artwork	Purchase Cost	Installation Cost	Maintenance Costs
2018	Courtenay Place Light Box Exhibition "Native Eye" by Susan Tamaki	The curator was awarded a Public Art Fund grant of \$13,500 to manage and cover		The annual cleaning cost of the eight double sided light boxes (16 art panels) is

		all exhibition costs including curator/artist fees, printing and installation.		\$900 – four cleans at \$225 per clean.
2019	Len Lye Water Whirler	Wellington Sculpture Trust paid the Len Lye Foundation \$280,000 Lambton Harbour Management Ltd paid a \$100,000 contribution to the Wellington Sculpture Trust	We have been unable to locate any information relating to the costs of installing the artwork.	2017/18 \$9,863.48 2018/19 \$6,6573.12 2019/20 \$23,732.54 2020/21 \$27,321.68 2021/22 \$3,811.50 Please Note: A significant portion of the 2019 Costs related to the whirler being broken by a member of the public.
2021	Courtenay Place Light Box Exhibition “Ho Sun Nian” by Stan Chan & Kerry Ann Lee	The curator was awarded a Public Art Fund grant of \$17,000 to manage and cover all exhibition costs including curator/artist fees, printing and installation.		The annual cleaning cost of the eight double sided light boxes (16 art panels) is \$900 – four cleans at \$225 per clean.

3) I would like copies of complaints (if privacy is an issue please redact identifying information

Please find copies of this information attached (Native Eye complaint, Water Whirler Graffiti, Water Whirler Graffiti, and Culturally Offensive).

Under section 7(2)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, some information has been redacted as it contains personal information about private individuals.

If you disagree with the decision to redact the documents, you can apply in writing to the Ombudsman to have the decision investigated and reviewed under section 27(3) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

4) I would like copies of correspondence/emails relating to these complaints

Please refer to the information provided in respect of question 3 above.

5) I would like correspondence/emails relating to issues/problems with the artworks/sculptures/installations

Whilst we have received no complaints in respect of the context of the artwork "Waimapihi", the ceramic installation by Shona Rapira Davies in Te Aro Park, concerns have been raised in respect of the surface of the ceramic tiles being slippery and hazardous and two complaints were received in March and April 2021 respectively.

Copies of the information relating to these two issues is contained in a dropbox folder which can be accessed via the following link: <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/u09n394nj0jzikeiobd2a/h?dl=0&rlkey=9xquu8d6vikyjwuktpxstkjs1>

Again, under section 7(2)(a) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, some information has been redacted as it contains personal information about private individuals.

If you disagree with the decision to redact the documents, you can apply in writing to the Ombudsman to have the decision investigated and reviewed under section 27(3) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

Should you have any further questions please contact me.

Kind regards,
Ian

Ian Hunter

Senior Advisor | Official Information Team | Wellington City Council

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E ian.hunter@wcc.govt.nz | W Wellington.govt.nz

The information contained in this email is privileged and confidential and intended for the addressee only.

If you are not the intended recipient, you are asked to respect that confidentiality and not disclose, copy or make use of its contents.

If received in error you are asked to destroy this email and contact the sender immediately. Your assistance is appreciated.

**Absolutely Positively
Wellington City Council**

Me Heke Ki Pōneke

Wellington City Council, I saw something which you have placed in the public view which disgusted me so much, I have created a reverse symmetric of the image. It is sure to create discussion and bring some uncomfortable feelings to the surface - but I felt so offended as a white person who speaks Maori to see this that I had to do something.

What you put out there wasn't just ugly, it is truly racist and heartbreaking for me to see. No wai to mana?



✓ 4 years ago 🙄 📄 🚩 ⚠️ 🗑️ 🌐



✓ 4 years ago 😊

Hi [REDACTED] Thanks for taking the time to share your feedback. The work is not intended to suggest that Pākehā are subservient to Māori. But, the artwork is intended to confront a difficult subject matter for many New Zealanders, not only looking at the historical subjugation of Māori through military and economic force, but an apparent depiction of Māori in the media as second class citizens. Both models are Māori - it's part of the story of the image and we see the value in challenging cultural norms. ^Heather.



🌐 🗑️ 📄 4 years ago ✓

Thank you for your feedback on the perception the photograph is intended to convey. It is an interesting fact that both models are both Maori - however, with one of the models having pale skin, far more pale than even many Pakeha this is indeed impossible to tell. Ri te tonu .

This makes the fact that the whiter skinned model being maori as irrelevant, because he appears to be Nz-European.

I would be very interested to hear of where in our relatively short history Maori were subjugated by the Military, I am only aware of tribes that in fact joined with the crown to fight other tribes in order to attain weapons and attack their enemies. This has been covered in tribunal decisions.

What this did for me as an individual, is bring up feelings of anger that it is acceptable to put one race over another in nz - and yes, standing over anyone with a gun is a direct perception of force. How do people you show the second image to without explaining react to it? They would no doubt be disgusted, because it is racist. And so is the first. Your white skinned Maori male model being stood over by a browner skinned Male male is a direct depiction of force by one group over another. It is threatening to me as a white skinned New Zealander.



✓ 4 years ago 🗑️ 📄 🚩 ⚠️ 🗑️ 🔄

Thanks for your reply. We acknowledge your feelings regarding the artwork – and you are of course entitled to your opinion. We acknowledge Native Eye is an evocative exhibition and open to interpretation. The artist draws inspiration from a range of sources including history and fashion – the artworks present her interpretation and perspective on these issues and themes. We welcome debate and discussion about Native Eye. There have been many responses to the artwork (as with all artworks) – while you have felt offended, others have shared positive feedback. The artwork in question is one of 16 panels in the exhibition. This particular image is not shown in isolation. It is part of a wider story and exhibited in relation to other imagery by the artist - women, children, whanau - the artist's expression of a Māori perspective.



🔄 🗑️ 📄 4 years ago ✓

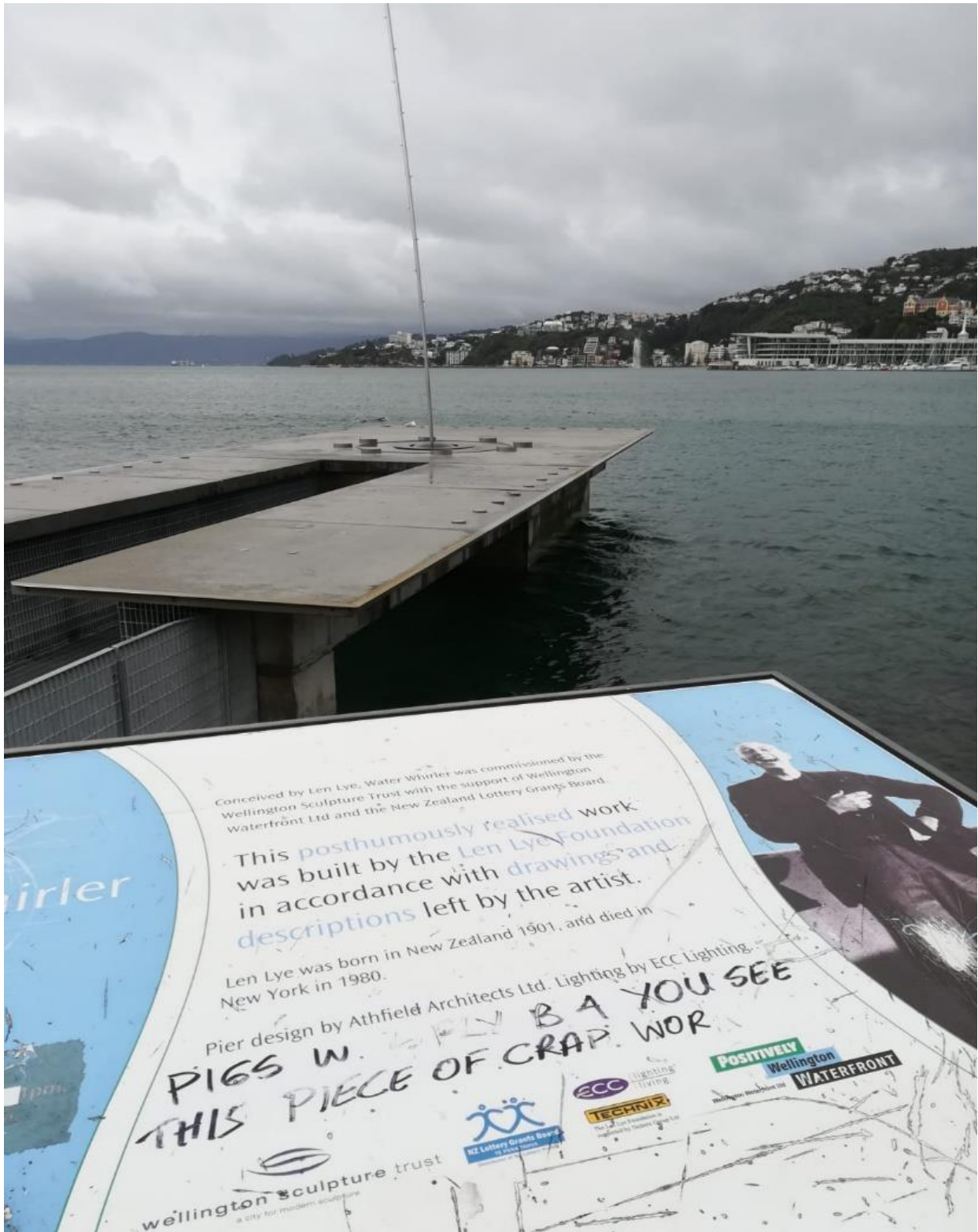
Thank you for openly accepting reverse racism and promoting it within the community. I am sure that pieces like this will engage with the community and foster conflict, distrust and stereotypes for years to come. As a rate payer I am disgusted at your refusal to accept fact, hiding behind minor details to attempt to hide the reality of the piece as a single image - I agree, the other photos are amazing and I was proud to see them. Which is why as tangata whenua o aotearoa 2018 I was disgusted to see such a decisive racist piece among the works.

I wonder how long it will take the Wellington City Council to wake up and start serving it's constituents as a whole (I note you did not mention men in the last message, but mentioned women and children) - this includes a white majority population (fact), a native maori population on Marae, a Maori population forgotten and disjointed from the Marae, and a growing migrant population. I have to say that as a council, with exception to the Rodney district council when it existed, you are perhaps the most disliked Council in the country - because you are so out of touch with your constituents and refuse to accept reality or listen to those same constituents. Because I have met open refusal to act on this racism, and a flat out refusal to accept fact, I will just go directly to the media next time, and you can read about it and defend yourselves in the newspaper. You have not made a friend with me today.

Best of luck embracing young minds.



✓ 4 years ago 😞



Conceived by Len Lye, Water Whirler was commissioned by the Wellington Sculpture Trust with the support of Wellington Waterfront Ltd and the New Zealand Lottery Grants Board.

This posthumously realised work was built by the Len Lye Foundation in accordance with drawings and descriptions left by the artist.

Len Lye was born in New Zealand 1901, and died in New York in 1980.

Pier design by Athfield Architects Ltd. Lighting by ECC Lighting.

PIGS W. COPY BA YOU SEE
THIS PIECE OF CRAP. WOR

wellington sculpture trust
a city for modern sculpture



Wellington Waterfront Ltd

Confirm Tickets

01/01/2017 15/10/2020



Service: All | Subject: All | Status: All | Outstanding: All

Enquiry Number

2832788

Address

Site

Customer

Created by

Action Officer

Description

Enquiries

ID	Created	Address	Site	Description	Customer	Status	Outstanding	Service and Subject	User	Action Officer
2832788	06/09/2019 12:46:51	107 Cable St Te Aro Wgtn	Wellington Water Front	Near the windwheeler sculpture. Graffiti is written on the sign saying "this piece of crap work" is written in black spray paint. Please assess.	Johnathan . 0220649233 107 Cable St	Work Completed - Contractor	N	Graffiti - LOG IN FRESH Sculpture & Memorials	SB MAINTENANCE SBMAINT	SB Maintenance Ltd B084

Notes

ID	Logged	Status	Text
2832788	06/09/2019 12:46:51	Request Logged	
2832788	13/09/2019 09:25:59	Work Completed - Contractor	completed 9.09.19

Attachments

ID	Column
2832788	\\wcc(dfs)office(CONFIRM Document Links)2019\020190906-WA0007.jpg

Culturally offensive

██████████ reported 2 years ago (Tue, 23 Mar, 2021 10:31 AM) via Email

Request for : Self

[To:info@gw.govt.nz](mailto:info@gw.govt.nz), info@wcc.govt.nz

Hi Council,

It was Chinese New Year in Feb & I'm Kiwi/Maori & seriously annoyed & offended that in Courtney Place, Wgtn the Chinese art is still being displayed. Fair enough if it's up for a few weeks before & after the celebration. We are NOT an asian country. It offends Maori culture that a different country is honoured with pride of place. Why isn't Maori art & artists displayed or Kiwi art & artists work?

Please remove it & replace it with Kiwi & Maori photos or art. Just get rid of the art that honours another country & race. OMG you wouldn't believe how many of Us in the public hate seeing A HIGH PROFILE area invaded by another country's photos, art & the artist are being promoted. Total rubbish. Show NZ some RESPECT & HONOUR US IN THIS AREA.

Thanks,

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Love NZ

Kia ora ██████████

Thank you for your email about the Courtenay Place Park Light Boxes. Council programmes three exhibitions a year in the light boxes with each exhibition lasting approximately 4 months. Artists and curators have an opportunity to submit proposals once a year and Council's Public Art Panel recommends proposals to support for exhibitions. We have shown over 35 exhibitions by a wide range of artists since the light boxes began in 2007.

You can find out more about our previous exhibitions here: <https://wellington.govt.nz/arts-and-culture/arts/public-art/light-boxes/courtenay-place-park/past-exhibits> These have included exhibitions that coincide with events such as Matariki, the New Zealand Arts Festival and Wellington Heritage Week. A key aspect of each exhibition is to respond to the location of Courtenay Place. Artists have reflected on the area in different ways including transforming the light boxes into pou-tāhuhu support pillars (Johnson Witehira, *The Land of Tara*, 2014); bringing plant life into the urban location (Kemi Niko & Co, *Huts of Welling town*, 2015) and capturing some of the city's people through portraiture (Chevron Hassett, *A Place TŪ Be*, 2019).

The exhibition you refer to is called Ho Sun Nian (Celebrating New Year) by Wellington artists Stan Chan and Kerry Ann Lee. You can find out more about the exhibition and artists here:

<https://wellington.govt.nz/arts-and-culture/arts/public-art/light-boxes/courtenay-place-park>

The next exhibition opening in June is by local artist Keri-Mei Zagrobelna. The exhibition has been commissioned for Matariki 2021 and responds to the Maramataka calendar.

Thank you again for your interest in the light box programme.

Ngā mihi,

Eve Armstrong

Eve Armstrong

Senior Arts Advisor | Arts, Culture & Community Services | Wellington City Council

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Eeve.armstrong@wcc.govt.nz | WWellington.govt.nz | |