



ARCA ARCADE

ROUND ONE

RETRO 🎮 ARCADE 🎮 GAMING 🎮 RELOADED

9 PLAYABLE ARCADE CABINETS
FEATURING TOP NZ ARTISTS

Artist talk

DIY Joystick Workshop

Street Fighter II Tournament

ARCA ARCADE: ROUND ONE

Arca Arcade is a convergence of nostalgic technology and contemporary artistic sensibilities. Under the direction of designer Preston McNeil, playable arcade machines take on a transformative role as wall mounted installations that are adorned with te ao Māori influences and styles of Aotearoa New Zealand's eminent artists.

McNeil explores mātauranga Māori by weaving its stories, patterns, and values into the design of each cabinet. Rather than applying motifs as decoration, these references are thoughtfully integrated through material choices and surface treatments. The result is work that acknowledges whakapapa (cultural heritage) while presenting it through a contemporary, playable form.

This collection stands as a poignant homage to the enduring allure and cultural significance of arcade gaming. Don't mistake Arca Arcade for just a throwback to yesteryear; this modern take on arcade cabinet design becomes a canvas to explore the intertwining of inspiration and fabrication, to create the unexpected.

McNeil's multifaceted expertise, forged by a longstanding passion for arcade gaming, a curiosity for arcade machine tinkering, and a seasoned background in digital design, forms the bedrock of this ambitious venture. By collaborating with talents Gina Kiel, Flox, Otis Frizzell, Joe Sheehan, and Otis Chamberlain, Arca Arcade "Round One" emits a distinctive flavour that is uniquely Aotearoa New Zealand.

At its core, Arca Arcade aims to navigate the intersection of nostalgia, contemporary design principles, and artistic expression. Through this interdisciplinary approach, the project seeks to offer viewers an engaging gallery experience that transcends traditional boundaries, inviting them to reconsider the role of arcade cabinets within the context of modern art.

PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

GEEK SPEAK - Artist talk Q&A (60 mins)

Preston McNeil charts four decades of arcade culture, design evolution, and personal influence that has shaped the creative processes behind the Arca Arcade: Round One exhibition. Drawing on a lifelong relationship with arcade gaming, McNeil unpacks the design methodologies, technical experimentation, and nostalgic touchpoints that informed the project's development. This exploration not only reflects on the experiences that sparked Arca Arcade's materialisation, but also offers insight into the next steps of an ongoing creative journey.

CONTROL FREAK - DIY Joystick Building Workshop (3 hours)

Preston McNeil gets down and nerdy about all the technical aspects of building an arcade machine. Each DIY (do it yourself) joystick kit comes with all the components needed to build a classic arcade-style game controller, which are compatible with modern PCs. After assembling the controller, attendees get a quick intro to DIY arcade software and then test their build before taking it home.

STREET FIGHTER II - HYPER FIGHTING Tournament (3 hours)

Gamers are invited to test their Street Fighter skills and compete head-to-head with leading players from across the region. The programme recalls the fiercely competitive arcade culture of the 1990s while also creating an accessible, supportive environment for newcomers to experience tournament play. These events have proven particularly popular with older Māori and Pacific peoples, and often mark a first visit to a local gallery or museum, expanding the exhibition's reach beyond traditional art audiences.







CONTACT INFORMATION

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Exhibition Creator

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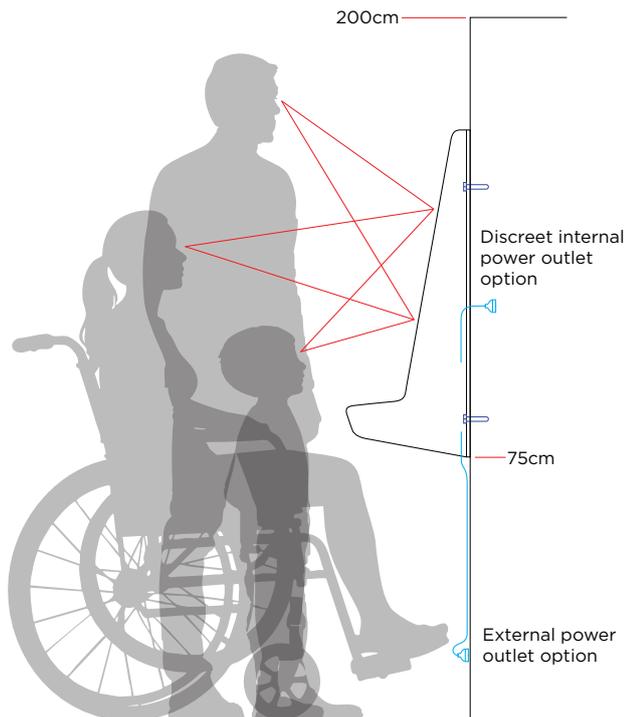
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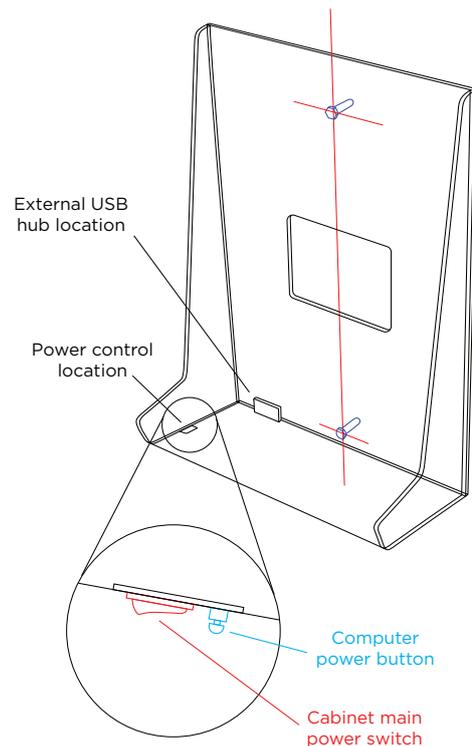
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ACCESSIBILITY



MOUNTING SYSTEM



ARTIST BIOGRAPHY



Preston McNeil (Ngāti Whakaue, Tainui) is a designer, animator, and creative producer working across interactive art, digital content, and toi Māori. With over two decades in animation and screen media, he creates projects that fuse fabrication, technology, and cultural narratives. As founder of Arca Arcade, his touring exhibition reimagines arcade machines as playable art, engaging global audiences through innovation, collaboration, and storytelling.

COLLABORATING ARTISTS



Flox is a leading stencil artist celebrated for vibrant depictions of Aotearoa's flora and fauna. Emerging in the early 2000s street art scene, she has since expanded into murals, exhibitions, collaborations, and residencies worldwide. Her bold, layered style transforms spaces into celebrations of biodiversity and cultural identity, while her workshops and community projects connect audiences with conservation and creativity. www.flox.co.nz



Gina Kiel is a Wellington-based artist and illustrator known for bold colour, flowing forms, and symbolic imagery. Her work spans murals, digital illustration, and public art, exploring themes of feminine power, spirituality, and connection. Seen at festivals, in publications, and across urban spaces nationwide, her projects combine accessibility with visual storytelling, inspiring audiences through beauty, empowerment, and imagination. www.ginakiel.com



Otis Frizzell is a multidisciplinary artist recognised for bold graphic works that blend pop culture, politics, and Māori motifs. Emerging from Aotearoa's 1990s hip hop scene, his career spans murals, fine art, design, and broadcasting. Exhibited nationally and internationally, his projects range from gallery shows to public art, while his cross-disciplinary practice continues to challenge, entertain, and connect diverse communities. www.instagram.com/otis.frizzell



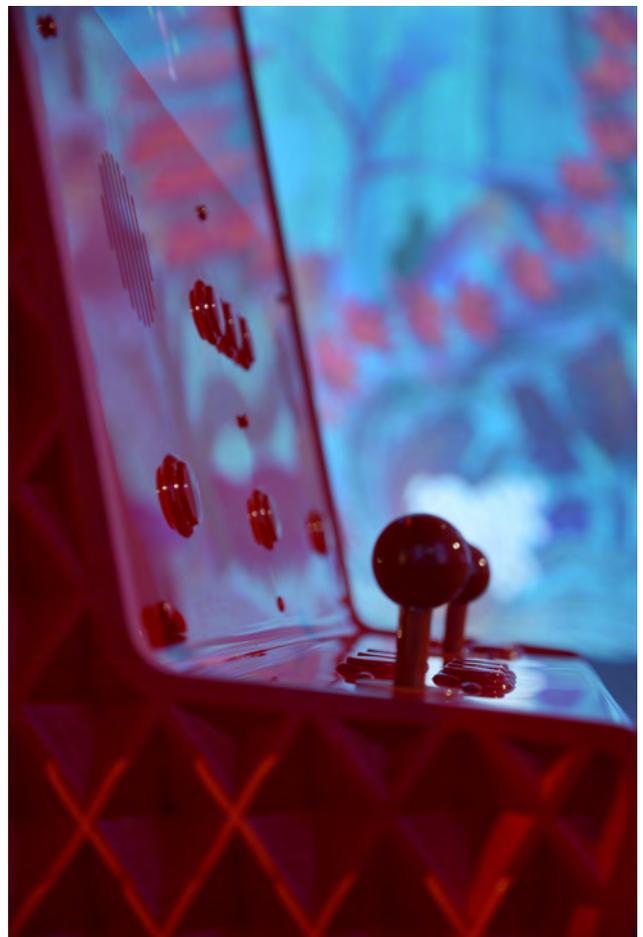
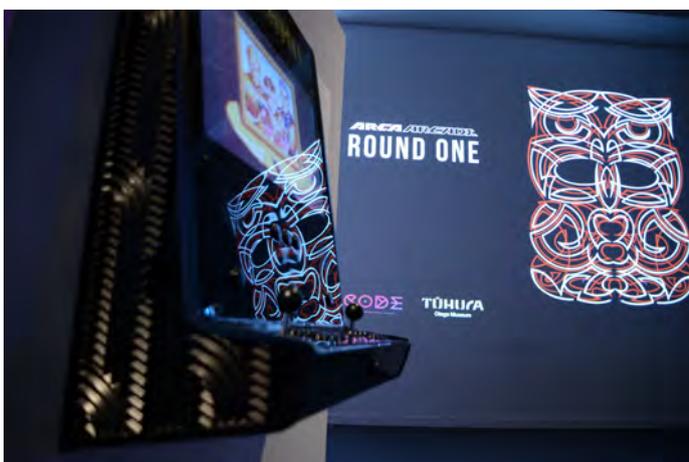
Otis Chamberlain is a Wellington-based painter, street artist, and musician whose work merges fine art, graffiti, and sound. Inspired by imagined realms, his paintings, illustrations, and performances explore rhythm, identity, and urban life. Chamberlain has exhibited in galleries, created large-scale murals, and collaborated across music, fashion, and community projects, transforming spaces into portals of creativity and cultural exchange. www.instagram.com/otischamberlain_



Joe Sheehan is an acclaimed New Zealand artist transforming stone into contemporary art. Trained as a jeweller, his practice reimagines everyday objects—cassette tapes, light bulbs, digital devices—carved from pounamu, jade, and other stones, blending cultural and geological narratives. Exhibited nationally and internationally, his works prompt reflection on memory, value, and materiality, pushing stone carving into new artistic conversations. www.instagram.com/joesheehanart

ARTWORK ANIMATIONS

Preston McNeil brings more than twenty years of animation experience to the exhibition, seizing the opportunity to breathe life into these collaborative artworks. His animations allow the exhibition to “paint” the walls with colour, whether projected across the space or showcased on screens and monitors, extending the experience well beyond the arcade cabinets themselves.



GEEK SPEAK - Artist talk Q&A (60 mins)

Archival images of arcade parlours, close studies of hardware configurations, and workshop photographs of cabinets under construction reveal how research, engineering, and fabrication converged in the making of Arca Arcade: Round One. Together, these moments trace the path from cultural memory to physical object, highlighting the practical decisions, trial-and-error testing, and material problem-solving that transformed an idea into a playable work ready for the gallery wall.



CONTROL FREAK - DIY Joystick Building Workshop (3 hours)

Preston McNeil walks participants through the nuts and bolts of cabinet construction, demystifying wiring, control layouts, and component selection along the way. Hands-on sessions encourage experimentation and troubleshooting, giving attendees confidence to customise their setup, understand maintenance basics, and leave with both a working controller and the knowledge to keep building at home.



STREET FIGHTER II - HYPER FIGHTING Tournament (3 hours)

Friendly rivalries, shared memories, and the familiar rhythm of coin-op play bring new energy into the gallery, turning spectators into participants. Casual matches and finals played side-by-side create space for mentorship, storytelling, and connection across generations, showing how competitive gaming can open doors to cultural exchange and make contemporary art spaces feel welcoming and alive.





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