

Necessary Threat

Hikalu Clarke

Wednesday 22 November – Friday 15 December 2017.

Artist Talk: Wednesday 22 November, 12pm.

According to Joseph Schumpeter (1883–1950), the “gale of creative destruction” describes the “process of industrial mutation that incessantly revolutionises the economic structure from within, incessantly destroying the old one, incessantly creating a new one.”¹ This process of reconfiguration can be witnessed through the perpetual redevelopment of urban space within cities. Previously dilapidated neighborhoods are gentrified and repackaged by developers, homogenized to suit a new financially mobile demographic.

In November this year, American painter, Laura Owens, opened a retrospective exhibition at the Whitney Museum, New York. Anti-gentrification group, BHAAAD (Boyle Heights Alliance Against Artwashing and Displacement) staged a protest at the opening. The group claim that Owens’ exhibition space, Mission 356 Rd, operates as a proxy for wealthy investors to colonise Boyle Heights, a predominantly Latino working-class neighbourhood in Los Angeles.

Proponents of gentrification argue a narrative of inevitability—the ‘Greater Good’ for society. However, this offers the minority as a sacrificial lamb for the majority; their culture, history and needs ignored for the weak promises of a ‘better future’.

Hikalu Clarke was born in Japan and grew up in Palmerston North. He graduated with an MFA from Whitecliffe College of Arts and Design in 2016 and was one of the co-developers of Whitecliffe’s DEMO project space. Recent exhibitions include; *ITS A POND NOT A MOAT*, MEANWHILE, Wellington (2017); *The Tomorrow People*, Adam Art Gallery, Wellington (2017); *Hotel Devon Island*, Collaborative exhibition with Rainer Weston, DEMO, Auckland (2016) and *New Perspectives*, Artspace, Auckland (2016).

Many thanks to Bruce Harvey and Bramwell Scaffolding for supplying the scaffolding for this exhibition, without which, the exhibition would not exist.

¹Schumpeter. Joseph, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (USA: Harpers and Brothers, 1942) p. 83.