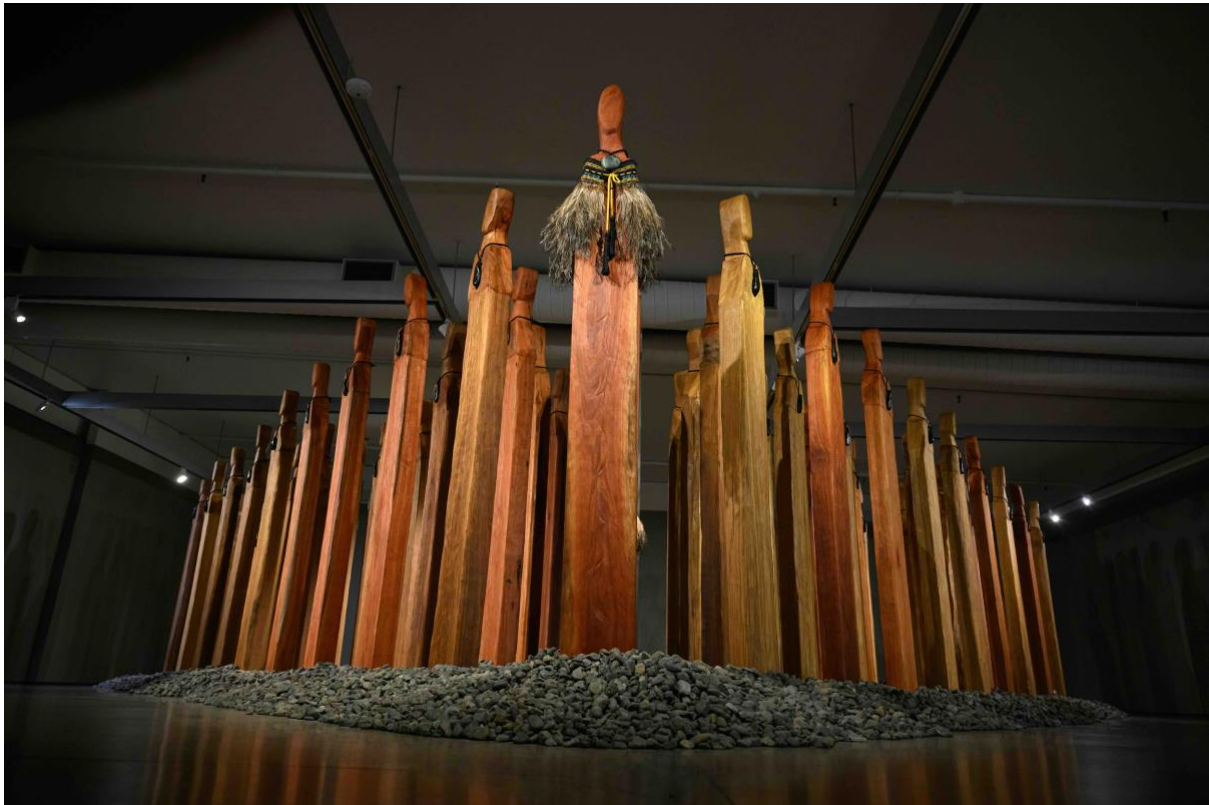


SAINSBURY CENTRE

Living Art Sharing Stories

Press Release

Tiaki Ora ∞ Protecting Life: Anton Forde



Anton Forde with Shiree Reihana, *Papare Eighty.one*, 2024, at Pātaka Art + Museum.
Photo: Mark Tantrum

2 August 2025 – 19 April 2026
Sainsbury Centre, Norwich

The Sainsbury Centre presents *Tiaki Ora ∞ Protecting Life: Anton Forde*, a new exhibition by Aotearoa/New Zealand artist Anton Forde (Taranaki Māori, Gaelic, Gaeltacht, English). The exhibition features the first UK presentation of monumental installation *Papare Eighty.one* (2024), with Shiree Reihana (Ngāpuhi, Ngāi Tūteauru), consisting of 81 over-life-size figures, shown in a new site-specific configuration and incorporating one of the earliest surviving wooden Māori figures in Europe cared for in the Sainsbury Centre collection. This will be accompanied by a new work for the Sainsbury Centre Sculpture Park.

Papare Eighty.one is comprised of 81 wooden figures (pou), hand carved by Forde, presented in a defensive V-shaped formation inspired by migratory birds' united flying formation. They wear Kākahu/cloaks woven by kaiwhatu (traditional Māori weaver) Shiree Reihana – which elevate the honour of the individual pou as well as the collective work – and a Pounamu/nephrite teardrop necklace, seen as a token of sympathy and shared emotion.

One of the inspirations for *Papare Eighty.one* is the peaceful actions of the pacifist Māori community at Parihaka, New Zealand in November 1881. In the face of a violent British colonial invasion, the people of Parihaka remained peaceful, greeting the attackers with Waiata/song, Poi/dance and Kai/food. Many scholars credit this act as the reason no one was killed during the attack, unlike the killing en masse that occurred in many other areas of Aotearoa/ New Zealand. The strong peaceful actions of this community went on to inspire international peace leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. Forde's work is a call for kotahitanga: unity, togetherness and solidarity. It shows that collective action can safeguard the future of our communities for generations to come, without need for killing – both physically and culturally.

Anton Forde is an artist and sculptor whose work explores a deep connection with land, nature, and themes universal across 'first nations' cultures – the lens through which he approaches environmental concerns. Carving from intentionally sourced materials, such as recycled hardwood and stone, Forde works across small-scale sculptures and large site-specific installations, with techniques which draw on ancient art histories and an appreciation for the narratives embedded in these natural materials. Forde's practice of tāraitanga / sculpture is a means of engaging with ancestral knowledge, while forming new connections with Indigenous cultures around the world.

In addition, Anton Forde has carved a new outdoor work, carved especially for the Sainsbury Centre, which will remain on display for a period of three years. *Tokiwai / Water Adze* is inspired by the first tools that were used by man to cut, create, build, weave, skin and dig water trenches that allow water to flow which is crucial for humanity's survival and wellbeing. The work recognises the importance of ancient wisdom and knowledge that is often lost. The patterning is inspired by Māori, Gaeltacht, Gaelic and English carving traditions.

Tiaki Ora ∞ Protecting Life: Anton Forde is a precursor to a new season of exhibitions opening in the autumn exploring the fundamental question *Can We Stop Killing Each Other?* (20 September 2025 – 17 May 2026), which brings together works to address critical contemporary issues around humanity's relationship with violence, and the culture that wrestles with this notion.

Anton Forde said: "I have always struggled with the fact that humans kill each other, and I consider each day that I don't have to stare death in the face as a blessing. If we cannot shift our thinking to create rather than destroy, humanity will continue to face each other with fear. Our children deserve better."

Director of the Sainsbury Centre, Jago Cooper, said: "We are hugely privileged to be hosting such an inspiring and powerful work by Anton here at the Sainsbury Centre. *Tiaki Ora ∞ Protecting Life* both physically and emotionally engages visitors with the

most powerful of human emotions and enables them to explore their personal responses in their own way.”

The new season will be accompanied by a book, published by Kulturalis in September 2025, which features commissioned texts by British historian and academic Joanna Bourke and Michael Steedman, deputy pro vice-chancellor Māori | Kaiarataki at Waipapa Taumata Rau/University of Auckland.

NOTES TO EDITORS

[HIGH RESOLUTION IMAGES FOR MEDIA USE CAN BE DOWNLOADED HERE](#)

For more information, interviews and images:

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Exhibition details

Tiaki Ora ∞ Protecting Life: Anton Forde

2 August 2025 – 19 April 2026

Sainsbury Centre, University of East Anglia,

Norfolk Road,

Norwich NR4 7TJ

Opening times

Tuesday – Friday 9am-6pm (exhibitions open 9.30am)

Saturday – Sunday 10am-5pm

Closed Mondays, including bank holidays

Entry

Tickets operate on a ‘Pay Only If and What You Want’ basis, so you can choose the price from free through to full membership. A Universal Ticket grants access to the permanent collection, Lower and Mezzanine Galleries, and Sculpture Park.

The Sainsbury Centre is a world-class art museum with a unique perspective on how art can foster cultural dialogue and exchange. Following a radical relaunch in 2023 the Sainsbury Centre is the first museum in the world to formally recognise the living lifeforce of art, enabling people to build relationships across an arts landscape.

The art of the Sainsbury Centre can help reframe and answer the most important questions people have in their lives. It is not a museum to only learn more about artists, cultures or

movements like Francis Bacon, the Tang Dynasty or Modernism, it is a place of experience, where collections are animate, and visitors are emotionally connected.

One of the first museums in the world to display art from all around the globe and from all time periods equally and collectively, Sir Robert and Lady Lisa Sainsbury created one of the most sought after yet non-conformist art collections. In 1973 they donated their collection, which transcended traditional barriers between art, architecture, archaeology and anthropology, to the University of East Anglia, and created an entirely new type of museum. Housed in Sir Norman Foster's revolutionary first ever public building, the space aimed for an interactive relationship between people, object and landscape, where art was placed within an open yet intimate 'living area'.

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Visit www.fordegallery.com and follow @forde.gallery and @antonfordeart on Instagram.