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contemporary artists | valuable ideas

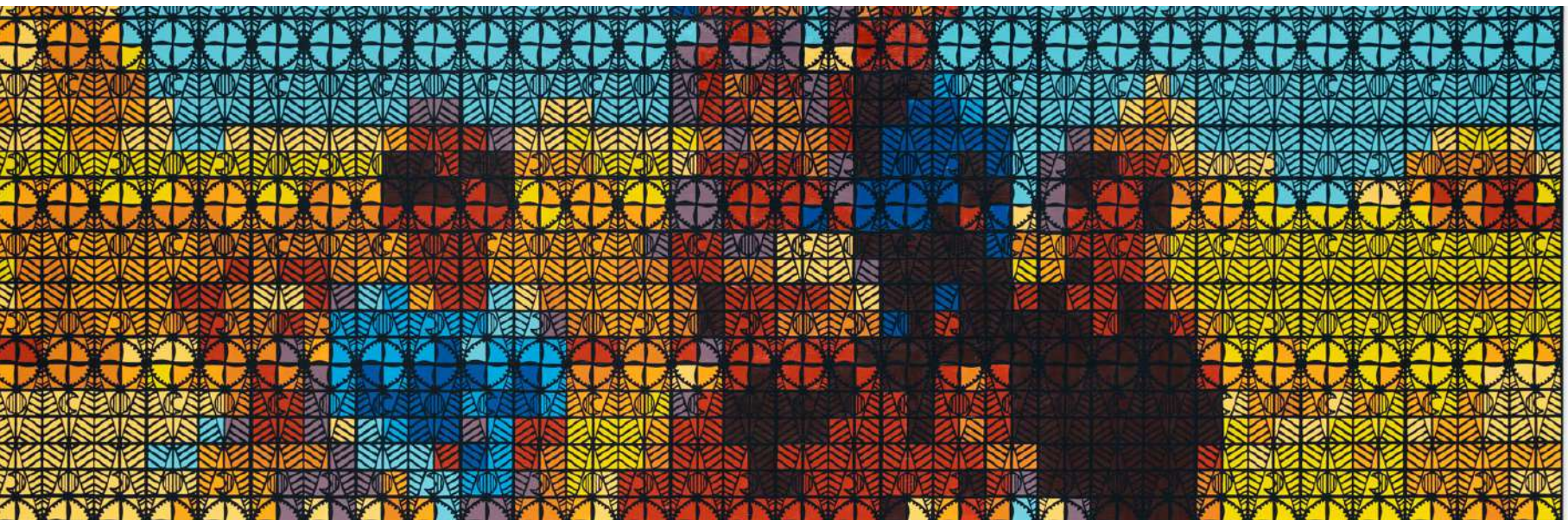
CATALOGUE OF WORKS

Samuel Tupou *LOW RESOLUTION DREAMZ*

29 April - 4 June 2022

4/349 Montague Road
West End, QLD, 4101

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ABOUT THE ARTIST

Samuel Tupou is a Brisbane based artist specialising in screen-printing. He creates artworks that respond to his Tongan and Polynesian heritage, incorporating patterns derived from and inspired by traditional Pacific Island Tapa cloth design. His recent works draw inspiration from mathematical geometry and 80's video game imagery as well as Pacific Island Tapa cloth design and fine mat weaving.

He often uses colour photographs from family photo albums as a starting point to evoke a strong sense of time and place. Colour segments act as oversized pixels that combine to form a recurring pattern and an overall image which is shrouded by pixilation. The photograph's original details and subtleties are removed leaving the viewer with a series of colour structures which when pieced together allude to the original image. The works use proximity and distance to alter the viewers perception. Up close, the works appear to be an abstract assemblage of geometric shapes and colours, whilst at a distance an 8-bit halftone image takes shape.

Significant Exhibitions

- *Observing Patterns*, Logan Art Gallery (2021)
- *Duplexor: Beyond the Double Island*, Kick Arts (now Northsite) (2017)
- *Duplikator*, Pine Rivers Regional Gallery (2016)
- *Future Landscapes*, Cairns Art Gallery (2014)

Major Collections

- Artbank (Sydney, NSW)
- National Gallery of Australia (Canberra)
- Print Council of Australia
- State Library of Victoria
- Artspace Mackay (Qld)
- Cairns Art Gallery (Qld)
- City of Yarra (Victoria)
- Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre (Murwillumbah, NSW)
- Wagga Wagga Art Gallery (NSW)
- NorthSite Contemporary Arts (Cairns, Qld)
- Southern Cross University (Lismore, NSW)
- BKK, Melbourne
- Cairns Base Hospital (Cairns)
- Christ Church Grammar (Perth)
- KPMG (Brisbane)
- Little Creatures (Fremantle, WA)
- Mater Hospital (Brisbane, Qld)
- St. Kevins College



Photo: Haze Alieu. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace Gallery.

Samuel Tupou, *LOW RESOLUTIONZ DREAMZ*

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When considering Sam Tupou's work, I am reminded of Susan Sontag's assertion in *On Photography* that photographs are "not so much an instrument of memory as an invention of it, or a replacement"¹. Tupou transforms photographs: he digitally manipulates original images², overlays the with patterns, reinterpreting them using pixels, colour, emotion and memory. Finally, he screen-prints them onto canvas. When viewed up close, the surface of his paintings is abstract; as you move back, the image may resolve into a blurry approximation that can be traced back to the original. Through the process, Tupou captures much of what Sontag describes about the integral qualities of photography.

It is through making art that Tupou makes connections—a process he has likened to being "a time traveller"³—to his Tongan and Polynesian heritage, to his family history over generations, to his Pop and vintage influences, and to the avalanche of photographic memory that we are all increasingly subjected to through the ubiquity of mobile phones. The emotion, memory, and association caught in the colour range of the original photograph is distilled with an energy that emanates from the painting. The dynamic intensity that characterises the works in this exhibition also speaks to the rapid change shaping our global environment and the technology that drives it.

One of the works on paper included in Tupou's 2021 Logan Art Gallery exhibition is titled *It's Time* (2021). In its rendition Tupou uses vintage font, dot-screened over a pattern that speaks to his Pacific heritage. While its aesthetic is abstract and subtle, the title takes anyone of a certain age straight to the 1972 Whitlam election campaign, memorable for a catchy jingle and the historic importance of the Labor victory to Australia. However, it also speaks to the way that time informs the new works for this Onespace exhibition, emphasised by the recent pandemic experience that seems to have warped the linearity of memory. Tupou observes that, "Particularly at the beginning of COVID in 2020, the year became really disjointed and gave everyone a sense of stepping back, away from the everyday cycle."⁴

However, it was after a trip to Poland early this year where Tupou visited family that he produced four of the five new paintings around "the idea of time and even recent memory—what you remember clearly, and what fades and blurs and morphs into a feeling".⁵

New Year's Eve (2022) is celebratory, a concentration of red radiating from a central form, a smaller shape connected, shadowy, extending into an aura of yellows and blues and greens, crystallising a moment all the more poignant for its preciousness after years of isolation. As Tupou recounts, the original photograph recorded "My son and his grandfather out near the house in Poland, the connection of those generations in the moment of the changing of the year."⁶ *Mountain BBQ, Mt Mogielica* (2022) is drawn from a day trip up a local mountain. "My partner's brother was cooking sausages on a campfire in the snow. It struck me that the BBQ sausage lunch is universal. The colours of that day are very vivid in my mind—and smells are strong."⁷ There is a sense of the muted light, subtle graduations of blues, violets, white and grey, a dark shape of a central figure, and horizontal reflect of red.

The way that these images continue to shift captures Tupou's memories, which are extended into the viewer's own experience. Reproductions of these works (taken on digital media) continue to morph, moving restlessly on—dizzying contrasts in their form and construction. These works shrug off any sense of constraint; as Sontag so aptly captured, the photograph is only a point at which to start. For Tupou and the visual extension of these works, there is no end.

Dr. Louise Martin-Chew

¹ Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (London: Penguin, 1977), 165.

² Tupou uses both found images from his family archive, and others he has taken more recently himself.

³ Tupou quoted in Simon Bridgen, "Colour and Pattern/Diaspora and Memory", SITE SEER - Samuel Tupou, Onespace, 2017.

⁴ Tupou, telephone interview with the author, 20 April 2022.

⁵ Tupou, telephone interview with the author, 20 April 2022.

⁶ Tupou, telephone interview with the author, 20 April 2022.

⁷ Tupou, telephone interview with the author, 20 April 2022.

Samuel Tupou, *LOW RESOLUTIONZ DREAMZ*

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Samuel Tupou, *Road Trip 1979, 2021*
Serigraph and acrylic on board, 120cm x 180cm
\$5500

Photo: Joe Ruckli. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace Gallery.

Samuel Tupou, *LOW RESOLUTIONZ DREAMZ*

29 April - 4 June 2022



Samuel Tupou, *1998, 2021*

Serigraph and acrylic on board, 120cm x 180cm

\$5500

Photo: Joe Ruckli. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace Gallery.

Samuel Tupou, *LOW RESOLUTIONZ DREAMZ*

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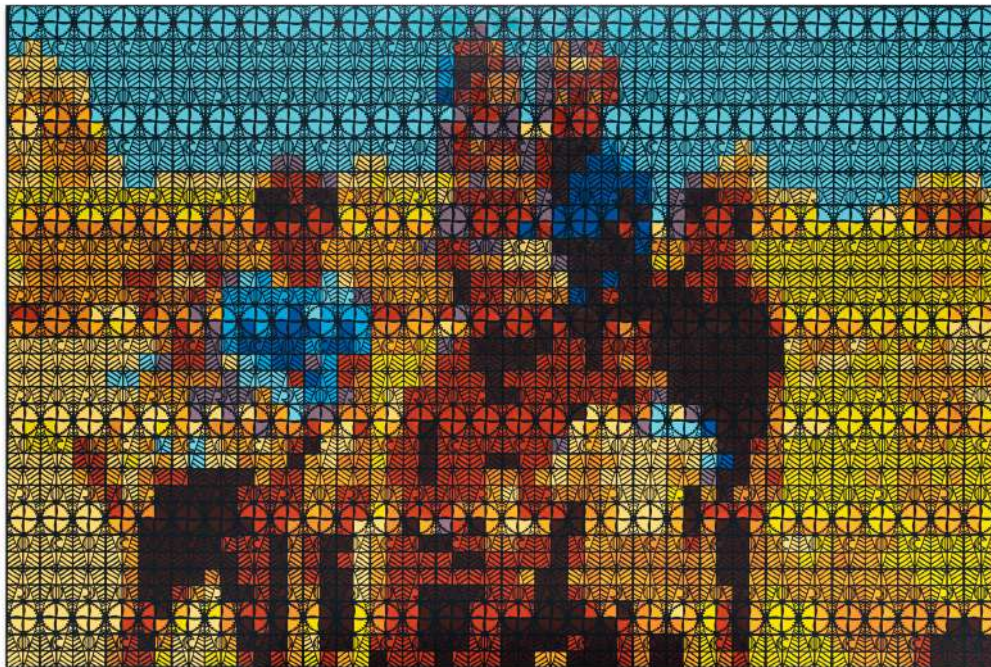


Samuel Tupou, *The Black Sheep*, 2021
Serigraph and acrylic on board, 120cm x 180cm
\$5500

Photo: Joe Ruckli. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace Gallery.

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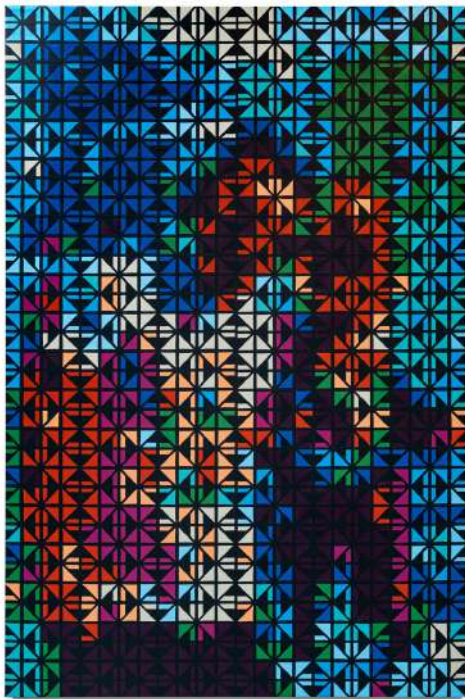


Samuel Tupou, *Yirkala* 1984, 2021
Serigraph and acrylic on board, 120cm x 180cm
\$5500

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace Gallery.

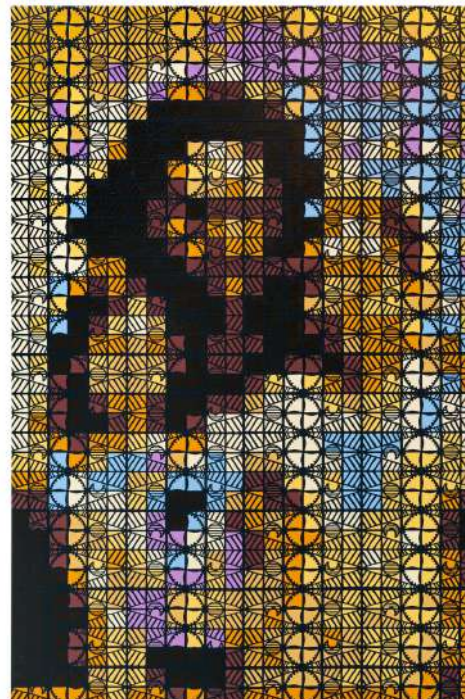
Samuel Tupou, *LOW RESOLUTIONZ DREAMZ*

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Samuel Tupou, *Silver Day Trip*, 2022
Serigraph and acrylic on board, 107cm x 71.5cm
\$3000

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace Gallery.

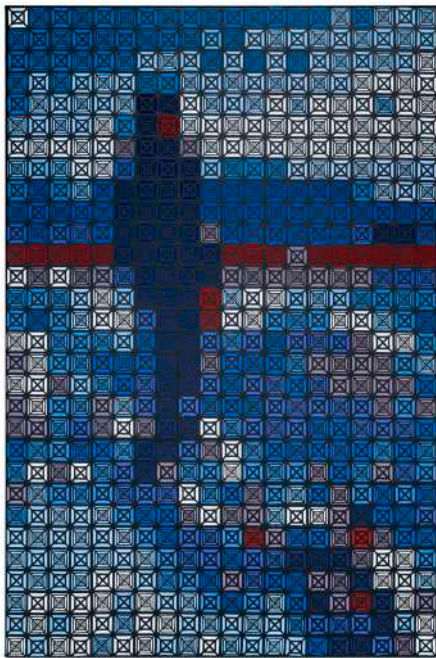


Samuel Tupou, *Daughters*, 2022
Serigraph and acrylic on board, 107cm x 71.5cm
\$3000

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace Gallery.

Samuel Tupou, *LOW RESOLUTIONZ DREAMZ*

29 April - 4 June 2022



Samuel Tupou, *Mountain BBQ, Mt. Mogielica*, 2022

Serigraph and acrylic on canvas, 90 x 60cm

\$2000

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace Gallery.



Samuel Tupou, *Batwan, Gliwice*, 2022

Serigraph and acrylic on canvas, 90 x 60cm

\$2000

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace Gallery.

Samuel Tupou, *LOW RESOLUTIONZ DREAMZ*

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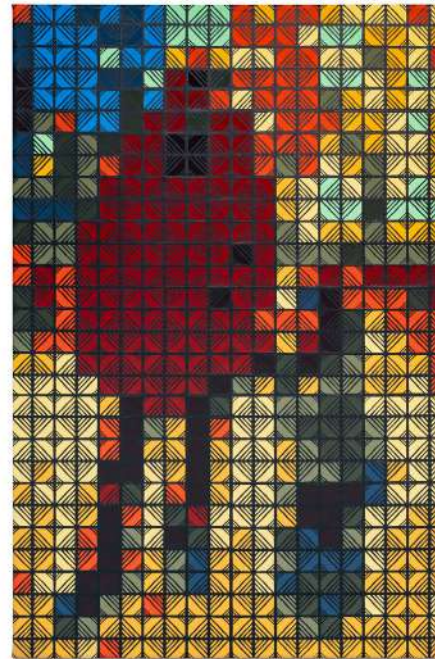


Samuel Tupou, *Snowfight, Pólrzczki, 2022*

Serigraph and acrylic on canvas, 90 x 60cm

\$2000

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace Gallery.



Samuel Tupou, *New Years Eve, 2022*

Serigraph and acrylic on canvas, 90 x 60cm

\$2000

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace Gallery.

Samuel Tupou, *LOW RESOLUTIONZ DREAMZ*

29 April - 4 June 2022



Samuel Tupou, *Atamai and the expanding multiverse*, 2020

Serigraph and acrylic on paper, 50 x 40cm (paper size)

2AP + Edition of 4-10 of 10 available

\$550 (unframed) | \$850 (framed)

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace Gallery.



Samuel Tupou, *Flowers for Zofia*, 2020

Serigraph and acrylic on paper, 50 x 40cm (paper size)

2AP + Edition of 1-10 of 10 available

\$550 (unframed) | \$850 (framed)

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace Gallery.

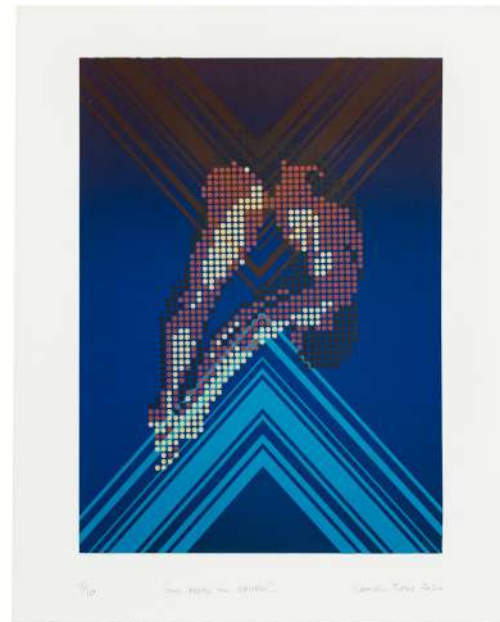
Samuel Tupou, *LOW RESOLUTIONZ DREAMZ*

29 April - 4 June 2022



Samuel Tupou, *Saturday night snail*, 2020
Serigraph and acrylic on paper, 40 x 50cm (paper size)
2AP + Edition of 1-10 of 10 available
\$550 (unframed) | \$850 (framed)

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace Gallery.



Samuel Tupou, *Time keeps on drippin'*, 2020
Serigraph and acrylic on paper, 50 x 40cm (paper size)
2AP + Edition of 1-10 of 10 available
\$550 (unframed) | \$850 (framed)

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace Gallery.

Samuel Tupou, *LOW RESOLUTIONZ DREAMZ*

29 April - 4 June 2022



Samuel Tupou, *It's Time*, 2020
Serigraph and acrylic on paper, 39.5 x 59cm
(50 x 70cm – paper size), 2AP + Edition of 1-10 of 10 available
\$750 (unframed) | \$1100 (framed)

Photo: Louis Lim. Courtesy of the artist and Onespace Gallery.

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Samuel Tupou

Low Resolution Dreamz, 2022

Wall Installation – Spray paint, serigraph and glitter on board, 600 panels, 200 x 300cm (each 'pixel' 10 x 10cm)
\$8800

Live Forever (Time Machine), 2019-22

Arcade Game Cabinet – serigraph on Perspex and board, led lights, 140 x 60 x 56cm, Edition of 3
\$9900

Image: courtesy of the artist.



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Tues to Fri: 10am – 6pm, Sat: 11am – 5pm

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