

# Spike Island

PRESS RELEASE  
SRIWHANA SPONG  
*IDA-IDA*  
6 April to 16 June 2019  
Preview: Friday 5 April, 6–9pm



Spike Island presents Sriwhana Spong's largest exhibition to date outside of her native New Zealand. The exhibition includes a series of sculptures based on the traditional Balinese gamelan and a new film, shot in and around the artist's ancestral home in Bali, Indonesia.

Her new film, titled *The painter-tailor* (2019), constructs a family portrait from 16mm film and HD video footage collected by the artist, her relatives, and the family dog. The hook to which the film repeatedly returns is an untitled painting by Spong's grandfather, I Gusti Made Rundu (1918–1993), which hangs in the ancestral home in Sanur, Bali. This painting, the intimate surroundings of the family compound, and her father's memories weave a net in which fragments relating to the effects of colonisation, invasion, and tourism on image-making in Bali gather.

Alongside the film, Spike Island presents a series of sculptures that form part of Spong's ongoing project (initiated in 2016), an evolving personal orchestra based on the Balinese gamelan (a traditional ensemble music made up mainly of percussion instruments). Existing instruments made in Berlin, Singapore and New Zealand are joined by a new instrument based on a 'bell tree' and made with the assistance of Bristol-based bronze foundry Ore and Ingot. A large silk banner dyed in tea — a nod to Spike Island's history as a warehouse for processing tea from India and China — will hang in the central gallery. This continues a series of works dyed with Coca-Cola and Fanta, inspired by American musician and writer Ian F. Svenonius's essay *The Bloody Latte: Vampirism as Mass Movement* (2006) which tells the history of beverages and describes their movement across continents as acts of colonial bloodsucking, whereby colonisers develop a voracious taste for drinks derived from the produce of the lands and



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peoples they colonise. The dyed banners also relate to the daily offerings of flowers and everyday foodstuffs, made by the Balinese as a form of gratitude and self-sacrifice.

Image: Sriwhana Spong *The painter-tailor* (2019) 16mm and HD video. Courtesy the artist and Michael Lett

– Ends –

For further information and high-resolution images please contact Jane Faram, Communications Manager at Spike Island on jane.faram@spikeisland.org.uk or +44 (0)117 9292266.

Notes for editors:

- Sriwhana Spong is a New Zealand artist currently living in London, UK. In 2012 she was nominated for the Walters Prize, New Zealand's largest contemporary art prize. Recent solo exhibitions include: *A hook but no fish*, Pump House Gallery, London; and the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth (2018); *having–seen–snake*, Michael Lett, Auckland (2017); *Im Wintergarten*, daadgalerie, Berlin (2016); *Oceanic Feeling* (with Maria Taniguchi), ICA, Singapore (2016).
- Recent group exhibitions include: *Great Movements of Feeling*, Gertrude Contemporary, Melbourne; *If These Stones Could Sing*, KADIST, San Francisco; *Can Tame Anything*, Dowse Art Museum, Lower Hutt (2018); *The Score*, Ian Potter Museum of Art, Melbourne (2017); *Inhabiting Space*, Adam Art Gallery, Wellington (2016).
- She has undertaken residencies including: Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth (2018); Gasworks, London (2016); DAAD, Berlin (2015); ISCP, New York (2008).
- Sriwhana Spong's exhibition is supported by Henry Moore Foundation, Creative New Zealand and Jan Warburton Charitable Trust.
- Spike Island is an international centre for the development of contemporary art and design, located close to Bristol's harbourside. It is a place where artists and the public can meet, enabling audiences to engage with artists' research and production. Within the 80,000 square foot building, Spike Island offers visitors a year-round programme of exhibitions, events and activities in the central gallery spaces, as well as providing working space for artists, designers and creative businesses.
- Spike Island is a partner of Tate as part of the Plus Tate network.
- The gallery is open Tuesday to Sunday, 12–5pm. Entrance is free.



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