

'Takeaways' for cup visitors

Auckland's multicultural mix goes on show in a 'cash-and-carry' print exhibition that Rowena Orejana finds is wooing Aucklanders and visitors to town.

THE grey wet day outside the historic former Grey Lynn police barracks on Ponsonby Rd gives the hallway a kind of gloom. Up on the second floor, the gloom gives way to the bright Art Station gallery.

On the wall, 75 horizontal and 168 vertical prints are arranged in a poutama step pattern, also known as the "Stairway to Heaven" or the "Steps to Enlightenment".

Dan Mace, a graphic designer and animator, is displaying three of his works: *Whaea*, *Papakainga* and *Toto*, all of which feature stylised enigmatic statements. "Words," he says, "I find them beautiful. Art is about communicating."

The work of Mr Mace and 19 other print artists features in the gallery's *Kia Ora Koutou* exhibition. The show's aim is to explain the diversity of art in New Zealand to overseas visitors who've come for the Rugby World Cup.

"This," curator Alexis Neal says of



For contributing artist Dan Mace, who is relatively new to printmaking, art is a conversation.

KELLIE BLIZARD

the Rugby World Cup, "isn't really my first inspiration. But I do accept that we'll have a bigger audience to show off to."

Co-curator Janneen Love explains the show is not confined to attracting RWC visitors.

"It's not like we have to produce wonderful souvenirs for these people who are coming in but produce something first for ourselves," says Ms

Love, who likens the exhibition to a series of conversations.

"It's a conversation with yourself and a conversation with others. The secondary conversation is with the 40,000 people out there. There's not really a chance to talk to them."

The exhibition will show visitors a "non-edited" and unframed version of print and art in New Zealand.

"The idea is for the public to come

in and carry away any works that interest them. As they take the work off, it will alter the look of the poutama pattern. The installation is an art in itself," says Ms Neal. "It's a little bit experimental. I've spent most of last week worrying about it."

Also a printmaker, the idea of a print installation came naturally to her.

"There is not always a lot of big public exhibitions celebrating print.

CARRY OUT

Kia Ora Koutou is open until October 22. About 300 prints will be sold in the tradition of cash and carry. Prices range from \$75 to \$350.

Works on paper, whether drawings, paintings or edition prints would really be a nice medium to showcase, not just from a Maori perspective, but from the wider community. We've got such a rich printmaking community in New Zealand. I don't think it's celebrated enough in those big institutions."

The artists are varied, not just from a cultural perspective but also in terms of experience with the medium. Mr Mace, for example, is new to the printmaking process.

The exhibition also features works by Sheyne Tuffery, a respected Samoan-Maori printmaker. He is also the only contributor whose works are inspired by rugby.

Ms Neal says the prints are reasonably priced.

"We're trying to meet the market in turbulent times and get the works off the wall," she says.

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