



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

NEW PLYMOUTH DISTRICT COUNCIL

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## MEETING AGENDA

# LEN LYE COMMITTEE

**Monday 20 February 2017  
at 3pm**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER  
LIARDET STREET  
NEW PLYMOUTH**

<b>Chairperson:</b>	Cr Marie	Pearce
<b>Members:</b>	Cr Harry	Duynhoven
	Cr Stacey	Hitchcock
	Mayor Neil	Holdom
	Dr John	Matthews
	Dr Wystan	Curnow
	Dr Roger	Horrocks
	Mr Evan	Webb

## **LEN LYE COMMITTEE PURPOSE**

To give formal structure to the relationship between the Council and the Len Lye Foundation as set out in the Deed of Relationship dated 24 June 2004.

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### **Addressing the committee**

Members of the public have an opportunity to address the committee during the public forum section or as a deputation.

*A public forum section* of up to 30 minutes precedes all committee meetings. Each speaker during the public forum section of a meeting may speak for up to 10 minutes. In the case of a group a maximum of 20 minutes will be allowed.

A request to make a *deputation* should be made to the secretariat within two working days before the meeting. The chairperson will decide whether your deputation is accepted. The chairperson may approve a shorter notice period. No more than four members of a deputation may address a meeting. A limit of 10 minutes is placed on a speaker making a presentation. In the case of a group a maximum of 20 minutes will be allowed.

### **Purpose of Local Government**

The reports contained in this agenda address the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 in relation to decision making. Unless otherwise stated, the recommended option outlined in each report meets the purpose of local government and:

- Will help meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses;
- Would not alter significantly the intended level of service provision for any significant activity undertaken by or on behalf of the Council, or transfer the ownership or control of a strategic asset to or from the Council.

END

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**Health and Safety Message**

In the event of an emergency, please follow the instructions of Council staff.

Please exit through the main entrance.

Once you reach the footpath please turn right and walk towards Pukekura Park, congregating outside the Spark building. Please do not block the footpath for other users.

Staff will guide you to an alternative route if necessary.

If there is an earthquake – drop, cover and hold where possible. Please be mindful of the glass overhead.

Please remain where you are until further instruction is given.

**PUBLIC FORUM**

None received

**DEPUTATIONS**

None received

## **COMMITTEE MINUTES**

### **Recommendation**

That the minutes of the Len Lye Committee Thursday 14 July 2016, and the proceedings of the said meeting, as previously circulated, be taken as read and confirmed as a true and correct record.

## **REPORTS**

## **ITEMS FOR DECISION BY COMMITTEE**

- 1 **LEN LYE COMMITTEE UPDATE**

END

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Item for Decision

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## **LEN LYE COMMITTEE UPDATE**

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### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on matters relating to the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery / Len Lye Centre.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That, having considered all matters raised in the report, the report be noted.**

### **SIGNIFICANCE AND ENGAGEMENT**

This report is provided for information purposes only, and has been assessed as being of some importance.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **RECENT ACTIVITIES**

##### **Management**

In December the Len Lye Centre Trust (LLCT) held a special general meeting to commence its formal winding-up. As the Trust has received its final GST refund (Tuesday 7 February) it is holding the final special meeting to close its accounts on Tuesday 14 February and instruct the OAG and Charities Commission to finalise its wind-up. Remaining funds, as per the Trust Deed, will be gifted to the Govett-Brewster Foundation. One LLCT trustee will take office on the Govett-Brewster Foundation and the Trust's databases and communications will be integrated into the activities of the Govett-Brewster Foundation.

The Christmas–New Year period was as busy as expected with an average of 900-visitors per day during the period December 26–January 8. The Govett-Brewster opened the two "Closed Tuesdays" falling in the period (Dec 27, Jan 3) and was visited by more than 1000-people on each day.

##### **Programs**

In December, and in the framework of the exhibition "Set in Motion," the Govett-Brewster hosted the New York based Lithuanian artist Zilvinas Kempinas – whose kinetic sculpture made from flying VHS-tape was one of the popular hits of the exhibition – for a well-attended artist talk. Kempinas also appeared on Radio NZ's "Standing Room Only".

Later in December the Govett-Brewster hosted Roland Wetzel and Andres Pardey the director and chief curator of the Tinguely Museum, Basel (CH). The museum is a solo artist museum dedicated to the work of Swiss kinetic sculptor and performance artist Jean Tinguely who was often in exhibitions and projects that also included Len Lye. Wetzel and Pardey were conducting research and meetings to develop a touring exhibition of Len Lye's work for Basel; and potentially Metz (FR) and Newcastle and

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Len Lye Committee ECM 7342914

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Leeds (both UK) for 2018–2019. Ideally, an exhibition of Tinguely's work will also be presented, in return, at the Govett-Brewster.

Simultaneously, the Govett-Brewster hosted Kazys Varnelis who is Professor of Network Architecture at Columbia University, New York, who started research on the Len Lye Centre architecture – for the forthcoming book on the building to be co-published by Upstart Press (NZ) and DelMonico/Prestel (US/DE). It is planned for release in December 2017.

The Govett-Brewster released the book framing "Set in Motion" in January, and is currently sending the book and touring proposals for the exhibition to institutions in Australia.

## CURRENT ACTIVITIES

### Programs

The exhibition "Experimental Moves" looks at Lye's transfer from experimental animation (film) and kinetics (sculpture) and their relationship. It recreates in some sense a one night performance of his sculptures that Lye made at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, in 1961 and includes five kinetics – included the newly recreated "Witch Dance" built by Len Lye Foundation director Evan Webb.

The Govett-Brewster publication "Emanations: the art of the cameraless photograph" that includes the shadowgrams of Len Lye was heavily promoted as a top Christmas gift title by a number of major international newspapers and magazines and has also been nominated for one of the most prestigious US book publishing awards.

Work by Len Lye is currently being exhibited internationally in the exhibitions:

- "The Origins of Art" at MONA, Hobart (AU);
- "Superorganism: the Avant-Garde and the experience of Nature" at MSL, Lodz (PL);
- "Shadows of Colour: distinct Visions of Otto Freundlich, Len Lye, Lygia Clark, and Blinky Palermo" at Israel Museum, Jerusalem (IL)

## FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

### Management

Director Simon Rees, Len Lye curator Paul Brobbel, and head of exhibitions and collections Sophie O'Brien, are currently re-programming the exhibitions for the remainder of the financial (until June 30) and calendar years (until December 31).

Simultaneously, Simon Rees and the head of business development Lisa Berndt are concentrating efforts on finalising the Govett-Brewster's new 'donations strategy' and activities and 'fundraising strategy' and activities. This will include consultation with the Len Lye Foundation and through the Len Lye Committee on Lye related fundraising opportunities and resourcing.

A first step in income generation for the Len Lye Foundation is the partnering with commercial gallery Starkwhite (former Govett-Brewster director John McCormack is

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co-presenting work by Len Lye at the Art Basel Hong Kong commercial art fair in March. The Govett-Brewster Foundation is financially resourcing (up to \$6,500) international print-and-promotion for the art fair – to help maximise exposure to potential sales income.

### **Programs**

Opening in April until August "On an Island: Len Lye, Robert Graves and Laura Riding", documents Len Lye's friendships and collaborations during the early years of his career, with a survey of works connected to Lye's stay on the Spanish Island of Mallorca in 1930. For several months following the completion of his first film 'Tusalava', Lye lived with the famed literary couple Robert Graves and Laura Riding in their new island home, experimenting with various ideas for his next film and producing book cover designs for the couple's Seizin Press – a wonderful study in modernist design and a rarely considered part of Lye's practice. It was a brief but productive episode for Lye with echoes of his childhood in coastal New Zealand.

The exhibition in the Len Lye Centre of the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery features well-known works by Lye from this period, including all book cover designs for the Seizin Press and a small survey of modernist literature and publishing from the Graves and Riding circle. Pride of place in On an Island is a rarely seen painting dedicated to Len Lye by Ben Nicholson, close friend, leading figure of the British art scene and one of Lye's correspondents during his island stay.

"On an Island" concludes with the manuscript of Lye's 1941 essay "A Definition of Common Purpose", co-written with Graves (encapsulating their theory of Individual Happiness Now) and once again a pertinent response to the rise of fascist ideology. Coinciding with the exhibition, this essay will be published for the first time accompanied with an introduction by Roger Horrocks.

The Govett-Brewster is currently negotiating with the Christchurch Art Gallery to tour a large-scale Len Lye survey exhibition from August–November (2017). As Christchurch is Lye's birthplace and the University of Canterbury's Engineering Dep't has an important role in developing a number of the large-scale kinetic sculptures it is a timely project. The Govett-Brewster is also partnering with the University of Canterbury Press to publish a new volume of critical essays about Lye's work (including on the engineering) to be released during the course of the exhibition.

To mark the 40th anniversary of Len Lye's "Kinetic Works" exhibition at the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery (in March 1977) the Govett-Brewster will be displaying "Fountain III" in the position in the ground-floor Govett-Brewster gallery it was originally exhibited. Supported by contextual and photographic material this will mark a watershed moment for the Govett-Brewster and New Zealand contemporary art. "Fountain" will be on show from Monday 27 March.



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### Challenges

Management of the conservation, running repair, and recreation/creation of Lye kinetics and their resourcing (both finance and labour) remains the principal challenge for the Govett-Brewster.

At this time the Govett-Brewster does not have a dedicated kinetics conservation budget nor staff resources, so is financing the activities through exhibition funds and external contractors adding to bottom line staff budgets. These directly curb contemporary art and public programming activities.

Principal amongst these challenges is "Trilogy" that had a fail-safe incident – breaking a 'twister' – on Thursday 15 December in front of an audience. The constant monitoring and maintenance of the sculpture has a weekly cost (though the life of the exhibition). And there is still no firm agreement between the Len Lye Foundation and the Govett-Brewster about the ideal/finished performance – achieving this is likely to add additional cost.

Secondly, one of Lye's most popular and well-known kinetics "Blade" is currently out-of-commission and has been requested for the exhibition at the Christchurch Art Gallery. The resourcing of the reconstruction is currently unresolved. (Audience demand is also high at the Govett-Brewster as "Blade" is yet to have been exhibited in the Len Lye Centre).

The Govett-Brewster will also need to develop a communication strategy for the exhibitions mounted from August when, because of the Christchurch Art Gallery project, kinetics will not take a pride-of-place in the exhibition program. They will be 'on tour'. And they will need to be rested upon their return at the end of the year, also, when the intention is to show all 12 of Lye's largescale paintings produced in Puerto Rico together for the first time.

### Media Coverage Dec–Feb

- Radio New Zealand – Insight programme 'Keeping NZ's heartland high streets healthy'. 'This year has been buoyant for many of New Zealand's shop owners and CBDs, with growth in sales and big international players such as Topshop and David Jones causing a buzz on the high street. Enter a new arts building, the Len Lye Centre, and destination shopping, and the sweeping wooden building was.
- Taranaki Daily News – A group of businesses near the Len Lye Centre rebranded as the West End Precinct
- Stuff – New Plymouth presents itself as the lifestyle capital of New Zealand.
- New York Times – Best art exhibitions of the year "Emanations"
- Jerusalem Post – Article about The Israel Museum's exhibition The Shadow of Colour which includes loaned Len Lye works.
- Jerusalem Post – Len Lye one of the Top 10 Things to see in Jerusalem this month.
- New Zealand Herald – 'The Best Summer Experiences NZ Has to Offer'
- Hollywood Reporter – Best corporate stocking fillers ("Emanations")

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- New York Times – best photographic exhibitions of the year “Emanations”
- Taranaki Daily News – Helen Clark starts her New Year in Taranaki walking the Pouakai Crossing and visiting the Len Lye Centre.
- Taranaki Daily News – Len Lye Centre proving a hit for summer tourists to NP
- Taranaki Daily News – Holiday-makers flock to see Trilogy
- Stuff – Most photogenic Instagram has gotta be the Len Lye Centre
- Taranaki Daily News – How to photograph the Len Lye Centre
- Radio NZ – Wind Wand a great local weather indicator

**Visitation and Revenue**

YTD Visitor numbers as at Sunday 6 February: **75,993**

YTD Retail revenue as at Sunday 6 February: **\$189, 325**

**FINANCIAL AND RESOURCING IMPLICATIONS**

This report provides an update for the Len Lye Committee and the Council. There are no financial and resourcing implications.

**IMPLICATIONS ASSESSMENT**

This report confirms that the matter concerned has no particular implications and has been dealt with in accordance with the Local Government Act 2002. Specifically:

- Council staff have delegated authority for any decisions made;
- Council staff have identified and assessed all reasonably practicable options for addressing the matter and considered the views and preferences of any interested or affected persons (including Māori), in proportion to the significance of the matter;
- Any decisions made will help meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses;
- Unless stated above, any decisions made can be addressed through current funding under the Long-Term Plan and Annual Plan;
- Any decisions made are consistent with the Council's plans and policies; and
- No decisions have been made that would alter significantly the intended level of service provision for any significant activity undertaken by or on behalf of the Council, or would transfer the ownership or control of a strategic asset to or from the Council.

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**Report Details**

Prepared By:	Simon Rees (Manager Govett-Brewster)
Team:	Recreation and Culture
Approved By:	Teresa Turner (Recreation and Culture Manager)
Ward/Community:	District Wide
Date:	9 February 2017
File Reference:	ECM 7342914

-----End of Report -----