



Image: Fiona Pardington, *Still Life Albatross feathers with pounamu and coral hearts (Ripiro beach)*, archival inks on substrate, 2014.

WHAT IS A STILL LIFE?

Who made it?

Fiona Pardington is a leading New Zealand photographer. The image above is one of her still life photographs called *Albatross feathers with pounamu and coral hearts, Ripiro beach*, from her exhibition *Soft Paradise: Ka Rongo Te Pō, Ka Rongo Te Ao* (to feel the darkness, to feel the light). Pardington has a deep connection to nature and her Māoritanga (Māori culture). Living and working by the coast, many of the objects in her still life photographs have been gathered during her walks along the beach. The objects found in her still life photographs are full of symbolism and through them she makes meaningful connections to people, places and ideas.

Useful words:

Still life: an artwork showing a group of arranged objects. Still life objects are inanimate, they cannot move, e.g. a vase of flowers, a bowl of fruit, a shell.

Symbolic objects: objects that represent an idea or concept. For example: a rose could symbolise love, a toy could symbolise fun.

Composition: where and how objects are arranged in an artwork.

Interesting fact!

People have been creating still life artworks for thousands of years! The very first were painted by the ancient Greeks and Romans. Still life paintings tell us a great deal about what people ate, how they lived and the objects they valued long ago.

Get ready to create a still life photograph!

Step 1

COLLECT objects from around your home that are interesting, mean something to you, and tell a story about your home, your whānau (family) and what you love. Include one object that reminds you of someone special in your life - a symbol of that person!



Step 2

COMPOSITION: think about where and how are you going to arrange your objects? Do they have a plain background or do they have fabric draped behind them? Are they on a table or arranged inside a large box? Look online at other still life artworks for ideas.



Step 3

LIGHTING: think about how the light is falling on your objects. Do you want to have natural light and photograph your objects as they are, or maybe the objects are set up with light shining on them from one direction, to create interesting shadows? Experiment and see what sorts of moods you can create with light.



Step 4

LET'S PHOTOGRAPH! Think about where you take your photograph from (the angle) e.g. photographing at eye level or from above. Think about how you frame your objects. Is there lots of space around them? Experiment & have fun! Go to Tauranga Art Gallery's Instagram account to join our special *Beyond the Bubble Still Life Project*.



WE'D LOVE TO SEE YOUR MASTERPIECE! Ask an adult to help you take a picture and tag @taurangaartgallery, or send it for us to see at education@artgallery.org.nz

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