

## AUCKLAND FESTIVAL OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Aotearoa’s largest photography festival is set to kick off its 16th year at the end of May. We take a look at what to expect from the festival this year and highlight some of its unmissable shows

The Auckland Festival of Photography aims to reflect the diversity of the population and make photography as accessible as possible to both its creators and its consumers. So, alongside some of New Zealand’s top photographers and the internationally renowned photographers who the festival brings to our shores, you’ll also find exhibitions with a more local focus in galleries and public spaces scattered throughout the city. This year, the festival’s theme is Fissure. Director of the Angkor Photo Festival and guest curator for the Auckland Festival

of Photography Jessica Lim says of the theme, “The notion of a divide or a chasm, no matter how narrow, has a tendency for negative connotations.

“In exploring Fissure, I’ve looked at the gaps and spaces that concern us, both within and without, some real but mostly imaginary. I’ve done so with the understanding that light emanates from darkness, and the very same thing that can swallow you can also be the thing that you emerge from.”

The theme presents itself in variable ways, whether it’s a political fissure, as seen in

*Living with the Hugo Chávez Legacy* by Venezuelan photojournalist Alejandro Cegarra; the fissure between experience and memory, as seen in *The Storm in the Morning* by Su Jiehao of China; its nuclear connotations, as in *Fukushima Dolls* by Rob Gilhooly; or the real geographical fissures present in Mark Purdom’s *Whakaari / White Island*.

The festival runs from 31 May through to 16 June. See the full programme by visiting [photographyfestival.org.nz](http://photographyfestival.org.nz), or pick up a physical copy from one of the 70 festival venues.



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## D-Photo's Picks

### 1. Yvonne Shaw, *The Residual*

Silo 6, Silo Park,  
30 May–16 June

Yvonne Shaw, recipient of this year's Annual Commission, has explored how photography can capture the tiny unconscious gestures that betray one's inner life. She will exhibit new work created for the festival exploring the psychological fissure that can arise between individuals in close proximity. (See our feature on Yvonne's work on page 30 of this issue.)

### 2. Yoko Ishii, *Deer Planet*

Outside Ellen Melville Centre,  
29 May–18 June

In the Japanese city of Nara, deer are protected and revered, but, in nearby cities, they are treated as pests. Presented on light boxes outdoors, *Deer Planet* explores the divide between built areas and wilderness, as well as the arbitrary boundaries created by humans that can affect unknowing wildlife. Join photographer Yoko Ishii on Saturday, 1 June as she explains her work at the exhibition site.

### 3. Alejandro Cegarra, *Living with the Hugo Chávez Legacy*

Central City Library,  
31 May–2 June

After the death of long-time leader Hugo Chávez in 2013, Venezuela descended into chaos. Four years later, photojournalist Alejandro Cegarra was in his home country to document the turmoil. As part of the Digital Screens

initiative, the work will be shown as a projection at Auckland's central library. You will also have the opportunity to hear from Alejandro himself at his Talking Culture event on 2 June, 3pm, at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki.

### 4. Shahidul Alam, *Embracing the Other*

Studio One Toi Tū,  
1 June–8 June

In *Embracing the Other*, Shahidul Alam aims to remind the viewer that Islam endorses a more inclusive culture than what is often practised. The set of works was first exhibited in Bangladesh at the very mosque that the work focuses on. Opening up the mosque for all to visit was one way in which the photographer aimed to combat Islamophobia and extremism, a theme reflected in the exhibition itself.

### 5. Roger Grasas, *Inshallah*

GridAKL, Lysaght Building,  
4–7 June

Spanish photographer Roger Grasas' latest series *Inshallah* simultaneously probes the effect of westernization on Persian Gulf countries, and the alienation and exile experienced by human beings in a post-modern digital society. Depicting landscapes and cityscapes often composed in surreal juxtapositions of old and new, the series explores globalization and alienation. The series will also be presented at the Ellen Melville Centre over 11–17 June.



### 6. Sim Chi Yin, *Most People Were Silent*

Silo 6, Silo Park,  
30 May–16 June

Presented as a video diptych, *Most People Were Silent* pairs the Cascade Mountains in the US with Mount Paektu, the volcano that spans North Korea and China. The former was the water source for the world's first nuclear test, and the latter looks over North Korea, which has conducted six nuclear tests since 2006. Singaporean photographer Sim Chi Yin invites viewers to draw parallels and suspend their sense of place as they watch the series of US and North Korean nuclear landscapes.



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