

ARTIS

G A L L E R Y

JIM WHEELER

b. USA

Born in Wadesboro North Carolina, the son of a professional forester, Jim Wheeler describes himself as an 'amateur botanist', studying both art and biology at university. His interest in plants and how plant communities evolve, continues to inform his sculptural practice today.

Jim Wheeler graduated BA with Honours at the University of North Carolina, before becoming an apprentice at the Johnson Atelier Technical Institute of Sculpture in the 1970s. In 1981 he immigrated to New Zealand to help set up the Art Works sculpture foundry.

A member of *Medal Artists New Zealand*, his reputation as one of the country's foremost bronze sculptors has led to many significant commissions - including the NZ Olympic Academy Leonard A. Cuff Medal, the Arts Foundation of NZ Governors' Medal and the America's Cup Medal.

Jim Wheeler's large-scale commissions are grounded in nature and exemplify both his skill as a sculptor and his passion for environmental issues.

A full-time art practitioner since 1989, Wheeler has been exhibiting for over thirty years. His work is held in The British Museum, London; The Weatherspoon Art Museum, USA; The Auckland Museum and The James Wallace Trust.

Wheeler has been included in major New Zealand sculpture exhibitions including *Sculpture in the Gardens, Auckland Botanic Gardens, Brick Bay Sculpture Park, Sculpture Onshore* and *Sculpture on the Gulf*, Waiheke Island, Auckland.

ACADEMIC HISTORY:

1980-1979 Johnson Atelier Technical Institute of Sculpture, Princeton, New Jersey, USA

1975-1973 University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Bachelor of Arts in Studio Art (cum laude)

1973-1971 University of the South Sewanee, Tennessee, USA

WORK HISTORY:

1999 Three Foot Six, Lord of the Rings, Wellington: Supervisor, Rock/Foam Dept.

1995-1996 Manukau Institute of Technology, Lecturer in Sculpture at the School of Art & Design

1981-1989 Art Works Studio Ltd, Auckland:
Helped establish and run this Fine Art, bronze casting foundry.

ARTIS

G A L L E R Y

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS:

- 2022 *Following Nature*, ARTIS Gallery Auckland
- 2015 *Nature as Metaphor*, ARTIS Gallery, Auckland
- 2010 *Stalking Nature' – ARTIS Gallery, Auckland*
- 1997 *The Presence of Trees*, Ferner Galleries, Auckland
Sacred Sights - The Drawings Gallery, Auckland
- 1990 *Pumphouse*, Auckland
- 1986 *Recent Bronzes*, RKS Art, Auckland
- 1982 *Landscapes, Monuments and Variations on a Torn Circle*, RKS Art, Auckland
- 1981 *Diametrical Bronzes*, RKS Art, Auckland

COMMISSIONS:

- 2003 New Zealand Olympic Academy, Leonard A. Cuff Medal
- 2002 Arts Foundation of New Zealand, Governors' Award designer
- 2000- 2001 *Kanuka Bonsai*, private commission
- 2000 America's Cup 2000 NZ, Winner & Contender's Medal
- 1998/97/95/94 PA Consulting Group. Annual Corporate gift
- 1997 Scott's College, Wellington, Information Technology Award
- 1996 *Genesis: Courtyard bronzes of volcanic islands and lava flows*, Hobson Gardens, Auckland
- 1995 *Battle for the Solomons*, commemorative WWII medal, Ferner Galleries, Auckland
- 1990 Craig Steele Trophy, Auckland Grammar School.

AWARDS/HONOURS:

- 1999 British Museum purchase of medallion, *Balanced Change*, for the exhibition *Size immaterial: hand-held sculptures of the 1990s*.
- 1996: Research grant from Manukau Institute of Technology / developing alternative bronze casting process.
- 1992: QEII Arts Council Grant to build a bronze casting studio.