

*We are all mineral beings. Our bodies,  
whether animal bodies, plant bodies or stony  
bodies, enfold minerals such as iron within.  
Acknowledging our collective minerality can  
shift our understanding of ourselves and the  
universe we live in. Minerals cross the binary  
that separates the living from the non-living,  
loosening the categories between entities in  
the world. Perhaps this recognition can foster  
a sense of kinship along the mineral pathways  
that connect us all.*

Shelley Simpson

In *Stonesense*, Simpson offers encounters with iron forged from onepū, the black magnetic sand of the West Coast beaches of Te Ika a Māui North Island. *Hand Held* are cast iron shapes, intended for touching and holding. Glass vessels hold electroforming systems in which onepū iron is transformed into self-organising iron crystals. Slag, the byproduct of iron making holds the door open and supports structures. Alongside these sculptural experiments, Simpson presents microscopic views of iron as prints and video, revealing a strikingly organic world that sits beneath the threshold of attention.

The exhibition *Stonesense* is not just thinking about stones, rocks, and minerals, it also works to extend our experience of the world, including the awareness of processes occurring in different temporal and scalar levels, sometimes below the threshold of attention. From the cellular mineral elements inside biological bodies to the vast and geologic, the lithic thinking of *Stonesense* invites an attentiveness to what might not be easily apparent.

How might mineral encounters open potential connections between our human bodies and the material world that we are embedded within? What lithic thoughts might we have?

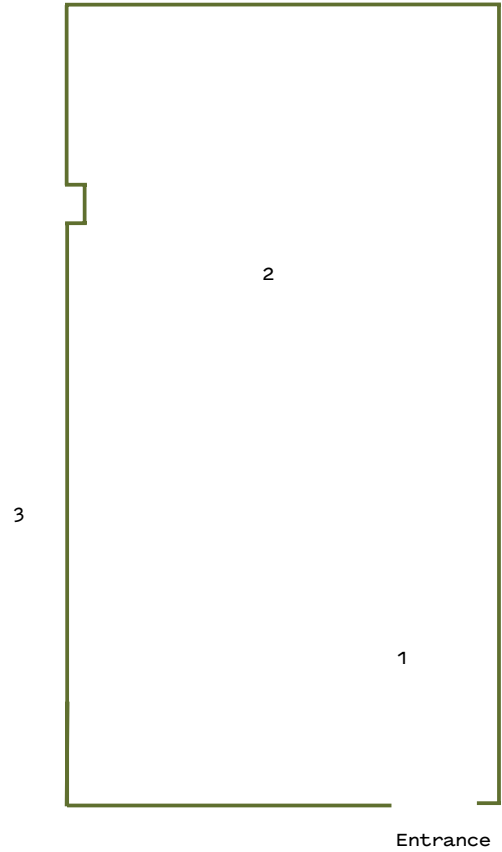
#### Artist's acknowledgements

Many thanks to my supervisors, Chris Braddock and Janine Randerson, to the technical staff at AUT- especially Angus Roberts, and to the Wai Ngutu Kākā Gallery team.

**Shelley Simpson (Pakeha, Ōtautahi Christchurch)** is an artist based in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. She holds a MFA (First Class Honours) from Te Waka Tūhura, Elam School of Fine Arts, University of Auckland. Simpson's sculptural and installation-based practice is underpinned by a new materialist framework and engages with lithic materials and their dynamic processes to consider how by attending closely to our cohabitants in the world, we may be able to unsettle dominant modes of anthropocentrism.

*Stonesense* is Shelley Simpson's PhD exhibition.

- 1 **Hand Held**, 2023-ongoing, iron forms cast from onepū (black magnetic sand), 3mm mild steel plate, beeswax, and square steel tubing table. *Hand Held* is an invitation to hold and carry these cast iron works.
  
- 2 **Stonesense**, 2023-ongoing, an installation including iron ore made from onepū (black magnetic sand), slag, 3mm mild steel plate, beeswax, square steel tubing, hand-blown recycled glass vessels, iron sulphate, electroforming systems, electricity transformers, electroformed iron crystals, newsprint SEM microscope images.
  
- 3 **SEM - Fe**, 2024, single channel digital video, 21.19 mins. Through out the exhibition the work is visible nightly on the Ngutu Kākā projection screen above St Paul St, WM building.



Exhibition Guide

Te Wai Ngutu Kākā Gallery  
 Auckland University of Technology  
 2024

Wāhi

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