

# Enter the ETHER

A new public artwork is *making waves* in Wellington and highlights an *exciting way forward* for how we enjoy art. If you're *visiting the capital* or are a Wellingtonian, WOMAN has the details on how you can see the *future of art* for yourself.


The latest work from celebrated New Zealand artist Gill Gatfield is unlike anything we've seen on our shores and if you didn't know it existed you wouldn't be able to see it at all. HALO is Aotearoa's first digital public sculpture which can be viewed at three locations on Wellington's scenic waterfront when people scan the QR code on the HALO signs and download the free Gatfield XR App on their phones. As of mid-January, more than 14,500 people have viewed HALO in the capital.

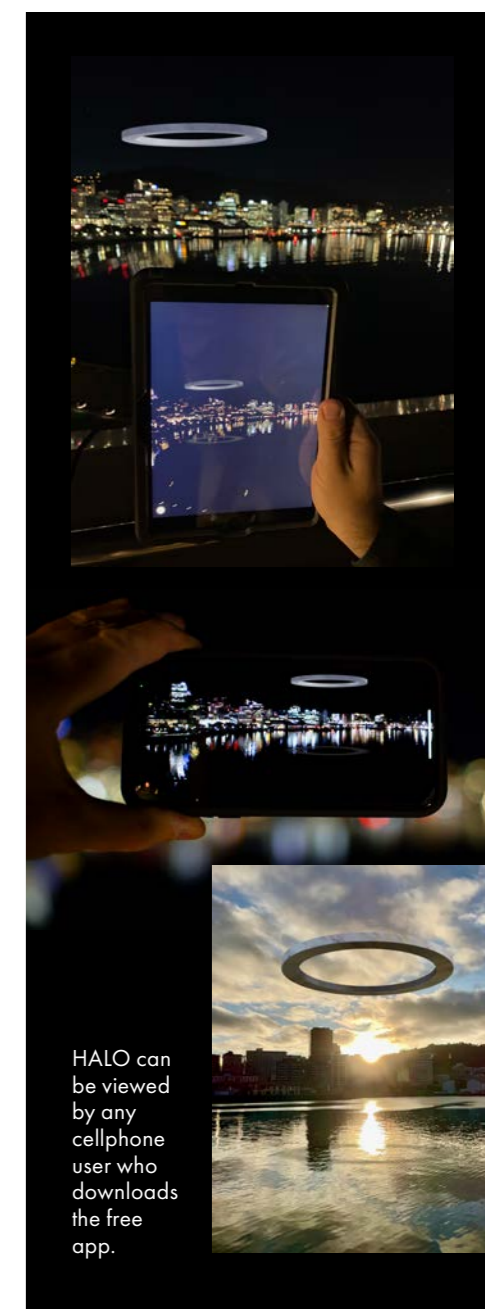
Commissioned by the Wellington Sculpture Trust, HALO has been created in the Metaverse and is a brilliant example of how artists are exploring AI, VR, and AR to create unique experiences for viewers. Gill Gatfield is a leader in this field and her large-scale augmented reality sculpture is a fitting celebration of Wellington Sculpture Trust's fortieth anniversary and a nod to the trust's future.

Suspended 25 metres above the harbour, HALO appears as a giant stone circle, designed to connect earth, sky and sea. HALO's primordial stone form is carved from codified Tākaka marble, which Gatfield closely studied and translated into pixels for the artwork.

"Defying gravity, HALO appears out of the ether, an ancient stone circle and futurist monument. Its crystalline stone and ephemeral form evokes optical phenomena as well as celestial haloes," says Gill Gatfield.

The extraordinary work is gathering interest not just locally but also internationally, as digital art enters the lexicon of more institutions and public collections as well as the imagination of the general population. For Gatfield, whose work has been shown in numerous prestigious galleries and won many awards, it continues a fascinating experimentation of new technologies of which the possibilities for art are endless.

HALO will be part of The Aotearoa Art Festival from late February and is available to view for free until 17 March 2024. 



HALO can be viewed by any cellphone user who downloads the free app.