

# Her Stories ...

***Karen Seccombe***  
(previously McIntyre)



## Janus NGO Research Award 2016

Having the support of the Janus NGO Research award has offered Karen Seccombe (previously McIntyre) much needed support to work towards the completion of a very hands-on, community based PhD in Creative Arts, through Te Putahi a Toi, College of Creative Arts, at Massey University. Karen's research has involved developing a model of practice and member's guidebooks which represent the Women's Art Initiative (WAI) collective approach to art making as a social justice, anti-oppressive, response to women's experiences of violence. Karen has facilitated the Palmerston North WAI collective since she instigated it in 2013 as part of her Masters in Maori Visual Art.

The financial backing of the Janus NGO Research award has enabled the production of full colour bound WAI collective members, facilitators, and agency guide books. The women who have received these guides have found them very useful, as they have allowed a clear method of transmitting information that is often unspoken and difficult to share in a studio setting. Offering this model of practice in the guidebooks has also meant that other regions are now able to set up their own WAI collectives. A successful WAI trial was undertaken in Wellington, and a new collective is now up and running in Blenheim. This award has allowed Karen to travel to assist with the set up of these collectives, and has also offered support to the other component of Karen's PhD – a body of artworks in stained glass which represents the research findings.

Walking such a difficult and personally demanding research path has required tenacity and determination. Receiving this award has offered Karen a sense of respite from the personal financial investment involved in this type of living research, but more importantly extended to her the belief that others have in the validity and importance of what she has undertaken.

— **New Horizons for Women**  
Hine Kahukura