**ISIC 15: “Island Festivals and Music Tourism”**

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***“A changing face for island festivals: a case study from Waiheke Island”***

**Abstract**

This case study explores island festivals and related forms of public culture as performance events which construct and negotiate meaning for the island community that hosts them and the visitors. Waiheke Islands is the third most populated island in Aotearoa New Zealand. Situated in the Hauraki Gulf near the most populated city, Auckland, the island has been a food basket pre colonisation, a forest to plunder, a holiday and retirement community, and a bohemian retreat now catapulted through international recognition as a playground of the rich and famous. The island’s vineyards and art studios, pleasant micro-climate and many beaches attract weekend visitors throughout the year. Festivals have always been an important and integral part of Waiheke’s community life, its island identity and economy and contribute to the tourism product of the Auckland City. In recent years there has been an increase in cultural tourism events organized by the Auckland Tourism Events & Economic Development (ATEED), which has resulted in some events taken over from their local island focus to a regional, national and event global cultural festival tourism market, including the Sculptures in the Gulf annual festival and the Jazz Art and Music Festival that attract thousands of visitors annually. In this presentation, we map the island’s festival ecology through a temporal dimension – past, established and emergent festivals - and look at factors influencing longevity; we discuss the contribution of the island’s festival culture to its identity and community organization; and explore the concept of “festival reclamation”, as a uniquely local celebration after a larger festival has become a tourist attraction.