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Jewellery As Pepeha: Contemporary jewellery practice informed by Māori inquiry

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

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in
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Abstract

**Jewellery as Pepeha:** Contemporary jewellery practice informed by Māori inquiry

This thesis investigates and articulates an ethical Māori framework for New Zealand contemporary jewellery practice that represents a distinctive method of making, and thinking, unique to Te Waipounamu/Aotearoa New Zealand. Contemporary jewellery is an international applied art genre that self-consciously investigates the wearable object and the body as a site of reference, including related social contexts, such as ideas of preciousness, memento and heirloom. Currently a comprehensive analysis of contemporary jewellery practice embedded in whakapapa from Te Waipounamu/Aotearoa does not exist, and this thesis explores the implications of thinking about contemporary jewellery practice from a Kāi Tahu, and Māori perspective through a taoka methodology. The metaphor of pepeha allows contemporary jewellery to be located within a Māori social context and a uniquely Māori system of knowing, by contextualising taoka/contemporary jewellery alongside oral narrative as statements of collective identity anchored in Te Ao Kāi Tahu (a Kāi Tahu worldview). The thesis asks: How can a contemporary jewellery practice be informed by narratives of whakapapa, whenua, kaikā, and thus become taoka tuku iho?
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Takai atu rā, hī
Whakakarekare atu rā, hī
Tāwiri mai, Titakataka mai
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Whakakenakena atu

Ripiripia
Ripiripia
Ka maea
Ka ara
Hī, hā, aue

Kai kā taoka whakapaipai o Te Waipounamu, nā koutou i karaka, nā koutou i pōwhiri mai kia kitea anōtia e ngā aho e rama mai rā

Te kuruauhunga
Te kurutenga rerewa
Te tiki pounamu
Te tara mea
Te tikumu
Te Rau o titapu
Te piki kotuku
Te piki huia
Te riukura
Te pohoi tōroa
Te kuru rerewa
Te hei tara mea
Te tiki pounamu
Te hei matau

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---
“You have already been blessed, you have been given the gifts from your ancestors, you are on your journey so enjoy it”

Maruhaeremuri Mona Stirling, 8.7.1933-10.7.2012
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