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Part tree, part canoe.

An exegesis presented in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master
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Shannon Te Ao

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Abstract: Using Australian artist and writer Ross Gibson’s ‘wayfinder’ as a point of departure this essay discusses a range of recent moving image and performance works by Shannon Te Ao. *Follow the party of the whale* (2013), *two shoots that stretch far out* (2014), and *Untitled (epilogue)*, (2015) are among the works discussed in relation to Māori spatial and temporal conceptions such as *Te Kore* and whakapapa. These frameworks, alongside content referencing Māori lyrical traditions are implicated within a discussion exploring various aspects of the local, social and cultural significance of poetic forms found in waiata and whakataukī. Metaphor and ambiguity—as they are enacted in live performance, and lyrical modes—are identified as tools to promote a poetic sensibility.