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Te Maramataka

Ko wai koe?

The Life Cycle of Wai

An exhibition report presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the  
degree of

Masters

in

Māori Visual Arts

at Massey University, Manawatū, New Zealand.

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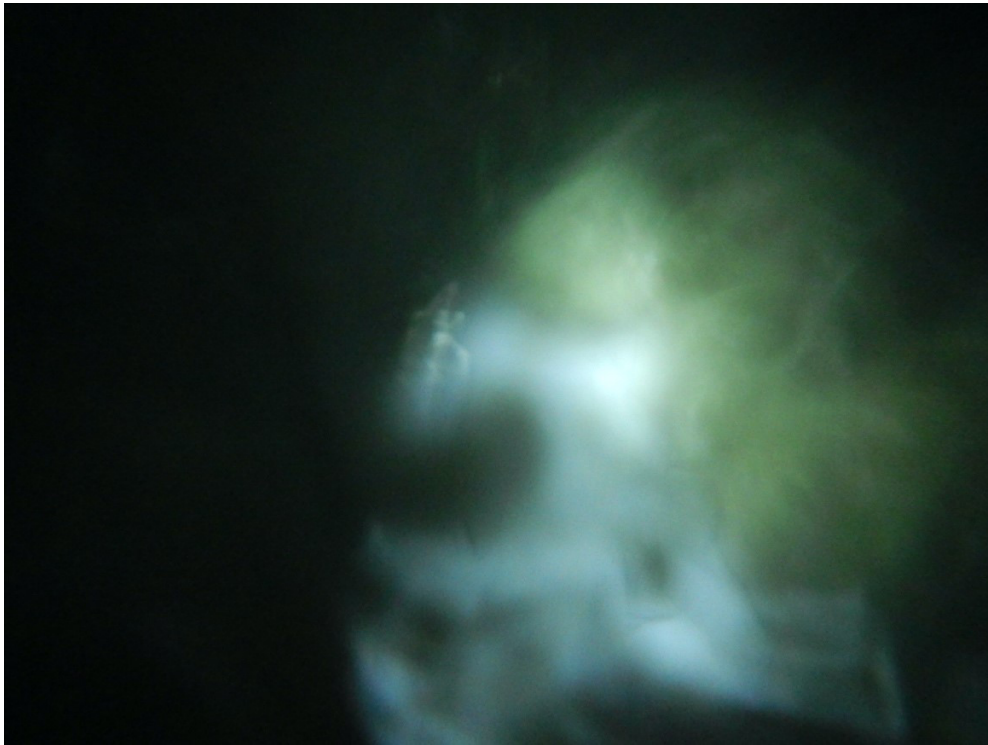
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## Abstract

As a Māori observational science Te Maramataka is a vast ‘knowledge-scape’ that has been accumulated over many generations. While one could spend a lifetime learning about it you may never fully come to know all of it. However, for the purpose of this Master’s work I will focus on Te Maramataka and its general observation of life cycles, in particular the life cycles of wai (water) within the context of human life. This exhibition will have a ‘*curiosity*’ and visual inquiry into the root word wā embedded in the word wai, referencing time and space and our individual place within the ongoing evolution of the human race on this planet.

Image 1: Wairua



## Acknowledgements

This entire research journey has been spent taking little trips (mainly in the Eastern Bay of Plenty) to gain new levels of understanding that are revealed with each encounter. As a Pākehā woman I have been humbled that both Ngāi Tūhoe and Ngāti Awa have been so gracious in sharing their old knowledge with me. I am reminded that this knowledge is not ‘common knowledge’ and it was at one time, only for Tohunga.

I grew up hearing stories of the ‘old people’ and their ways of life and being. I got to know them a little through this journey of learning and knowing. It has been a truly transformative journey for me. I would like to acknowledge the short time during my childhood where I listened to these stories and was guided in many ways by Jim Tawhara (Whakatōhea, Ngāti Ira and Ngāi Tūhoe, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui) Jim was my first teacher of Te Maramataka.

Thank you to Professor Robert Jahnke firstly for founding Toioho ki Āpiti in 1995. Without your vision I would not be engaging in this learning experience. I acknowledge your commitment and contribution to Māori Visual Art and the entire Visual Art community in Aotearoa, New Zealand.

Bob has pushed me to stick with Photography as a medium even though I wanted to shift into other ways of expressing my learning. As my love of the photographic medium has always been centred in visual storytelling through documentary and visual narrative, I admit, I have struggled with the brain gymnastics involved in visually representing the intangible and abstract dimensions of Te Maramataka.

The Photographic medium lends itself to realism through the very nature of its process, essentially capturing the reflection of light off something physical that is in front of the lens to create an image that resembles that physical and tangible ‘thing’. This exhibition work on the other hand is very conceptual in nature and attempts to embrace both the narratives and teachings of Te Ao Māori as well as the spiritual dimension to this body of knowledge.

A special thanks to Dr Agnes McFarland (Ngāi Tūhoe) for sharing your knowledge on this topic with me. You have played an important role in giving me access to this precious

knowledge. Your openness and willingness to educate this Pākehā researcher has been a humbling experience. I am extremely grateful for your ongoing help and support.

The two main foci of this Masters project are:

1. Learn more deeply about and observe Te Maramataka so I am able to discuss and illustrate it.
2. Figure out a way to photograph and represent the intangible!

During this research journey I experienced a wee ‘dance’ with Breast Cancer and this paused my study for a while until I was able to get back into it. This was also however, a part of my own personal Maramataka learning. It has helped me reconnect with my own internal rhythms that were out of balance. I have learned a lot while navigating this experience through the lens of Te Maramataka, especially and more specifically when considering the life cycle of wai (water).

Thank you to Tikirau Ata (Ngāi Tūhoe) to whom I was referred to from Hemana Eruera (Ngāti Awa) for his knowledge of Wairua and Te Ao Māori. Since our first meeting Tikirau has been a connection point and supporter of my own growth in this area and for that I am grateful. He has introduced me to people who have helped me gain a deeper understanding and awareness. Thanks to James Waiwai (Ngāi Tūhoe) for your time and knowledge around my own wairua practice. Thanks also to Pouroto Ngaropo (Ngāti Awa) for unpacking Jim’s original Maramataka for me as I began to navigate my way through this learning hikoi.

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Thank you to Kura Te Waru-Rewiri for your ongoing support and guidance through the process of these past few years. You are the glue that holds us all together.

In summary, I have been entrusted with the precious knowledge shared with me as a visitor to this place and time and as an outsider to this rich indigenous culture I have been privileged. Thank you to all of those who sat and talked with me and who shared your knowledge so that I could listen, learn and understand more deeply.

Lastly thank you to the administrators of the Edna Joyce Howe Scholarship Fund, without this funding it would not have been possible for me to embark on this journey at all.

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## Introduction

As a Pākehā growing up in a small community in the Eastern Bay of Plenty my family and I were very lucky to have experienced whanaungatanga with local Māori Kaumatua and Tohunga. One of whom called my mum his Pākehā daughter. Jim Tawhara (Whakatōhea, Ngāti Ira and Ngāi Tūhoe, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui), was the closest person I had to a grandfather figure and was a regular part of my life.

We picked puha together, I asked questions. then listened. I remember the times I asked him how he knew things. He talked about the *'old people'* and how they listened to the whispers on the wind, looking for tohu (signs) and how things came to be. He talked about how the *'old people'* would get a sign to begin a journey and travel in a particular direction.

He then went onto reveal that when they got to a certain place, there would be a tangi and they would be there in time to support loved ones and grieve. *"They didn't always know who or what it was, but they trusted it"*. Then after such a serious talk, he would announce in a matter of fact voice and a cheeky grin ... *"There were no telephones back then, so they had to really listen"* (Jim Tawhara, personal communication, 1973 – 1991).

Upon reflection, Jim predicted when I would be born. In our time together, I believe he was preparing me for my own life's journey because he *knew*, all of, who I am. As a child, I did not realise the value of this teaching, until later when I discovered my own inbuilt guidance system, then everything he had taught me became clear.

When I was young, Jim wrote down the days of Te Maramataka on a piece of paper for dad so he could plant and fish by the moon. As an adult, and knowing that Jim understood things on many levels, I knew there was more to learn and understand. This was the beginning of my personal journey of discovery into the deeper knowing of Te Ao Māori with Te Maramataka.

Image 2: Original Maramataka

30 - 1	Whiro	New moon
2	Tirea	No
3	Moata	Fair
4	uenuku	Till mid-day
5	akoto	Good - big Fish inside
6	Tamatea	" " "
7	Huna	No
8	Amiroa	Good Fish, eels, TROUT
9	Maure	1st Qtr Good " " " Planting
10	mawhara	Fish, Crays, white bait
11	Ohua	Best day of month.
12	Hotu	Bad
13	Atua Wera	Worst
14	Oturia	Good
15	Rakaunui - Full	EX. ALSO Kumara Taro
16	Rakau māohi	" "
17	Tikirau	" "
18	Oeke	Till mid day
19	Kore Kore	No
20	" " "	"
21	" " " LAST QTR	Imp
22	" " "	Good FROM midday
23	Tangaroa-amua	" "
24	" " " AROTO	" "
25	" " " KIO KIO	" "
26	Otane	" "
27	ORONGO HUI	" "
28	mauri	Till midday
29	Kore	No
B 1 - 30	" "	No
2	" "	No
		Fishing * planting Not recommended after moon-rise

**NOTE.** The original Maramataka given to my Dad by Jim Tawhara. Based on his local knowledge of our Eastern Bay of Plenty region with teachings from Whakatōhea, Ngāti Ira and Ngāi Tūhoe, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui.

The two greatest gifts Jim gave me were:

1. He gently introduced me to the concept of wairua (spirituality), so when I was older, I was able to identify it in my own life as a natural part of being human.
2. He gave my father the first piece, in a rather large jigsaw puzzle called life, when he wrote his version of Te Maramataka on a piece of paper. This was my very first encounter of Te Maramataka.

My experience of learning about Te Ao Māori as a young child from Jim and other local Māori elders, who were close family friends, has most had a profound influence on me, which in turn, has shaped the way I comprehend my place in the world. Equally as important, is the way in which these learnings have assisted me to navigate my own life's journey.

This method of spending time with elders and 'just being' with them, all the while, learning through osmosis via timely and relevant conversations is the way for Māori elders to transfer their knowledge to the next generation. While I am not Māori I have been fortunate to have had little windows into these experiences as a child.

One person who has received his ancestors knowledge on Te Maramataka through their direct whakapapa line is Professor Rangi Matamua. Today his life is dedicated to sharing this ancient knowledge. For instance, in his book *Matariki the star of the year*, Matamua (2019) states:

*It was widely recognised that Māori knew more about the night sky than their European counterparts in the late 1700s and early 1800s. He goes on to acknowledge that, colonisation and its many attributes infiltrated to the core of Māori society, affecting all cultural practices including Māori astronomy and by the start of the twentieth Century, many Māori customs were no longer practiced and only a few individuals with detailed knowledge remained (p.3).*

The main focus in Matamua's work (2020) has been to unpack and share the "empirical science embedded within traditional Māori knowledge" (Paragraph 8). Matamua also states that "Māori are scientists and astrologers" and he wishes to share with both Māori and non-Māori how "Māori took these scientific principles, encompassed within cultural narrative and practice and even embedded them in ceremony and religion" (2020). In his

book, *Living by the Moon*, Wiremu Tawhai (2013) has a wonderful kaupapa where he recorded his research on this topic, stating it was "*for those who care to know, to use, to celebrate and to keep it*" (p.3). His text appears in both Te Reo Māori and English. Hence, it is this spirit of sharing between Māori and non-Māori that I wish to build upon.

Academically speaking, there are many names for this type of study, when it is being conducted by an 'observer' looking into another cultural context. Ethnographic research would be the common way to define my approach to this inquiry. However, there are also elements and layers of epistemological, anthropological, and ontological research. For example, Levers (2013) states that "*Reality existing independent of human consciousness and experience, or reality existing within our consciousness and only through experience, is the eternal ontological debate*" (p. 2).

For the written component of this exegesis, I have approached the work a little differently, in that rather than holding 'western' academic methodology at the centre of my work process, I have instead created and followed a 'Te Maramataka', based kaupapa and subsequent methodology. This methodology reflects the four quarters of the moon's cycle within Te Maramataka and the natural rhythms of our life and development cycles as human beings.

I refer to each section of this exegesis as a 'phase' of understanding that mirrors our human journey to illumination and enlightenment as we begin to experience and understand Te Ao Mārama. Te Maramataka also has a name for the individual daily moon phases within the lunar month, each having its own unique characteristic. According to Pouroto Ngaropo (Ngāti Awa):

*Thus having a part to play in the overall cycle of life of every human being and living organism. Te Maramataka teaches us about our bodies both physical and spiritual along with our connections to all life and the precious eco-system we live within* (personal communication, April 2013).

The four phases for this exegesis are:

- Phase One: Observations & Learning
- Phase Two: Whakaaro (Your thoughts are in front of you.)
- Phase Three: Te Maramataka as a process.

- Phase Four: Te Maramataka as a Reflective Tool.

The list above presents the brief outline of the phases. However, the full record of notes can be found in Appendix 1.

As you read this report, view and hopefully ‘experience’ the work, I intend to lead you through each section as it ‘observes’ different states of being in each phase. When I speak of ‘experiencing’ the work I am acknowledging the spiritual dimension within this body of knowledge and subsequent work I have created in response to that. Geismar (2016) speaks about this in her article when she states: *“The wairua, or spiritual energies, channelled in Māori relationships as they are transmitted through important cultural treasures creates a profound experience of co-presence in which objects are understood as simultaneous links to the past, present and future”* (p.305). While this body of work I have created cannot be defined as a cultural treasure itself, the knowledge that it attempts to illustrate is most certainly a precious taonga. Geismar goes on to state: *“the recognition that image making and viewing are also intensely social activities, and that the image draws and holds together the subject and viewer across both time and space”* (p.306).

The goal is that the viewer is enriched by the experience and leaves the exhibition with a new perspective of Te Maramataka. I also hope the viewer might understand how Māori knowledge of our natural world can make a valuable contribution to our everyday lives, should we take the time to stop, look, listen, feel and learn.

As a Pākehā learning about a culture outside her own, I have found many common links to my own Celtic ancestry. This researcher believes that decolonisation of Māori culture for the betterment of all New Zealanders is possible and does not have to be a negative experience for Pākehā. Moving forward starts with individuals taking steps to learn about other cultures other than their own. This work is my humble attempt to raise awareness of indigenous Māori knowledge and its valuable contribution to a sustainable future for all of us who call Aotearoa home.

## Whakataukī

‘Whatungarongaro te tangata, toitū te whenua’  
‘As people, we come and go, but the land remains’

This whakataukī, *for me*, encapsulates the very essence of Te Maramataka, in that it acknowledges not only the human life cycle from birth through to death but also through time. As a single living being we, as individuals are here for only a limited time, however, as a species we continue to extend through generations, coming and going through the very fabric of space and time. In this way, humankind has accumulatively observed and studied our planet, time and space in what may be the longest running, albeit, ‘informal’, longitudinal study known to man. However, how often do we stop to think about this and truly comprehend it?

Te Maramataka is the ancient Māori observational science of nature's natural rhythms and cycles. It is the culmination of many generations of accumulative study of this whenua in Aotearoa, New Zealand. This is how Te Maramataka as a body of knowledge has been handed down through generations over time giving Māori a profound and accurate understanding of the ebb and flow of life on earth and the universe beyond. Furthermore, this way of being and understanding of life is interwoven throughout the teachings of Te Ao Māori – the Māori world view.

Marama refers to the moon and months, while Taka refers to the cycles in time – or to come around. This shows how this is intrinsically linked to the concept of Te Ao Mārama (Illumination/Understanding of all things in the Māori world.). As a non-Māori with a camera, an abstract visual representation of this intangible body of knowledge is a way I can offer insight into this complex and multi-layered indigenous understanding of our human ‘way of being’. The visual component of this Masters exhibition is from the perspective of someone who has experienced it as an ‘observer’, rather than being genetically connected to it as part of my own culture. As a Pākehā who has found herself in Aotearoa, New Zealand in this ‘space and time’, it is through my lens, both literally and figuratively, that I attempt to visually articulate my understanding of the unseen mechanisms of Te Maramataka.

# **Phase One: Observations**

## **Te Maramataka as an Observational Science**

In this section, I explore my personal learning, including research, as I discover the deeper meaning of what underpins the fundamental teachings of Te Maramataka. I also share my observations and experiences of a multi-layered inquiry before stepping back to gain perspective of my place in the larger cycle of life. The first step of the journey towards understanding Te Ao Mārama (Mārama meaning illumination/understanding) is learning how things work through observations and life experiences that then transform into knowledge, and on occasion, wisdom.

## **The Life Cycles of Wai - Ko wai koe?**

This question can be asked on many levels from a simple “Who are you?” to a more curious “Where is your awa (river)?” or maybe to the deeper question of your whakapapa, when one asks, “From what water do you spring from?” (referring to your mother’s womb as your first water, waitahi).

We can look closer at the word wā that is embedded into the word wai. “*Wā - is the time and space component in wai*” (water) says Dr Agnes McFarland (Ngāi Tūhoe). Referring back to the question Ko wai koe? Where is your wai (water) in this space and time? At what point in time did we enter this world? What gifts did we bring with us? She says “*This refers to our genealogical connection through our mother’s whakapapa line.*”

Here, Dr Agnes McFarland (Ngāi Tūhoe) argues that *without understanding the life cycles of wai, we cannot fully understand anything else about ourselves, including our spiritual selves as it is all interconnected* (personal communication, 2013 – 2020). Therefore, it is from this point we begin our journey of illumination.

## **Understanding the concept of time**

Concepts of time are understood in various ways. For instance, Dr Agnes McFarland (Ngāi Tūhoe) states:

*Māori understand the divisions of time. This is connected with the tides (the push and pull forces of the moon). Everything is in cycles of 8 hours and there are 6-8 hours between the tides – 4 hours to get to high or low tide and two hours to realise*

*the fullness of the tide. There are 3 sections of 8 hours within a 24-hour day* (personal communication, 2013 – 2020).

According to Dr Agnes McFarland (Ngāi Tūhoe), when considering the question of when we came into this world, there are particular times where a person is allocated certain traits within one of the three sections of time. People who are born at these times subsequently pick up traits and gifts that can be used within the physical world. She states that “*your life is already planned before you are born*” (personal communication, 2013 – 2020).

These are delineated by the following times according to Dr Agnes McFarland (Ngāi Tūhoe):

- Early in the morning from midnight – 8am is the time for creative people.
- 8am – 4pm – This is the time for workers and a productive day.
- 4pm – midnight – Is the time of the Seers – Matakite. This is a spiritual time when the world is at rest of physical activity and there is quiet time to reflect and connect (personal communication, 2013 – 2020).

It is said by Māori that water is in us and around us, it guides and transforms us from one state of existence to another. Wai is the key to all life. It is, by its very nature, cyclical and rhythmical. Wai is forever in motion until the end of its life, where it lies stagnant and void of its life-giving force – Mauri.

Below is an outline of the Life Cycle of Wai according to Dr Agnes McFarland (Ngāi Tūhoe). This helps us to understand why Māori have such a deep connection and oneness with wai (*water*) (personal communication, 2013 – 2020).

## **Waitahi**

Dr Agnes McFarland (Ngāi Tūhoe) defines Waitahi:

*... as your first (tahi) water (wai) – This is when you are in your mother’s womb. When and how you are born is impacted by time and space when you choose to arrive, this is when the mother’s ewe (placenta) ‘waters’ break. This is the role of wā in Waitahi. It is ‘time’ for the baby to arrive. Babies can stay in the Waitahi state until the fontanelle closes, until then, they are still open to receiving their life*

*purpose. Different stages of closure relate directly to different stages of Wairua traits a baby will receive. They can choose to stay or go (return to the cosmos) during this 'in-between' time.*

Dr Agnes McFarland (Ngāi Tūhoe) goes onto explain:

*Traditional Māori tikanga practices suggest that when the baby is born, the whenua (umbilical cord) is traditionally put in the ground (also called whenua), in a tree (rakau), in a cave, under a rock or under flax bushes down the boundary of a Marae. As such, the whenua (umbilical cord) marks the whenua boundaries so that baby is always connected to their ancestral land. The Pito (end of the umbilical cord closest to the baby) acts as a bridge from the cosmic universe of raw creation energy to the creation of our physical being and ultimate entry point into this physical life here on earth. The Rauru (end of umbilical cord closest to the mother) acts as a bridge between the conscious world and the generational maternal whakapapa line of ancestors who have gone before them (personal communication, 2013 – 2020).*

I reflected later that the umbilical cord has links not only to the baby's physical human mother, but also to Papatūānuku the earth mother. With this in mind, it is no mistake that both the word for umbilical cord and land have the same name of 'whenua' in Te Reo Māori. In this way we are quite literally part of the earth and interconnected with an ornate ecosystem that sustains all life on the planet.

### **Wairua: Your second water**

This is your birth into the physical world and your physical body becomes your second (rua) water (wai). According to Dr Agnes McFarland (Ngāi Tūhoe):

*This is when your spirit accepts and fully enters your human body. This only occurs when the fontanelle in the human skull closes. This seals the connection between the energy that has been feeding and developing the baby from the spiritual world as they transition into this physical earthly realm. The timing is different for everyone. Some babies are slow to develop, while others are quicker. She goes onto say, this is all linked to a child's behaviour and learning development. Tinana (body) wairua (spirit) – It's between you and the divine. You carry this with you everywhere you go. Your ancestors (death) follow you, death is your best friend, so*

*you've always got someone with you. Everybody has a different job to do* (personal communication, 2013 – 2020).

When considering the role of wā in the word Wairua, we can see how we are preceded by a long line of family members that have gone before us in their own time and space. Our individual lives therefore, become a time where we learn to interact with the physical world as we move through our own (life span) and individual life cycles of wai.

Hukarere Valentine, Natasha Tassell-Mataamua and Ross Flett (2017) state that:

*Etymologically, wairua is comprised of two separate words - wai meaning water and rua meaning two – implying the existence of two entities, which paradoxically may be oppositional, while at the same time complementary, thus hinting at the notion of a balanced wholeness* (p.65).

## **Waitakataka**

This is the phase in our lives we have had time to develop our natural abilities, gifts, talents and have discovered how best to use these. Waitakataka then is the stage in life where we find our stride and live our lives to their full potential. Dr Agnes McFarland (Ngāi Tūhoe) reflected that:

*This is when everything is as it's meant to be and you are living your divine purpose here on earth. Things fall into place easily. Energy and productivity levels are high when you are in a state of divine intelligence that is working to guide you in your life* (personal communication, 2013 – 2020).

Wai meaning water, wā considering the time in our lives when we are in our prime and living to our full potential as we move through, taka (Cycles in time – to come around). It is, in a way, the transition point, the mid way point in our life cycle. As we are living our lives to our fullest potential, we are becoming more aware of ourselves and our surroundings. Te Maramataka, as a whole, comes into its own as we begin to understand our bodies and how they function best in our local environments.

## **Waiora**

This then leads us to the state of Waiora. This concerns the phase of life when you need to look after yourself a bit more as your body begins to age and we move through the

‘more mature’ cycles of our life span here on earth. Dr Agnes McFarland (Ngāi Tūhoe) points out that:

*You have been in a heightened state of awareness and productivity in Waitakataka but this is not sustainable over time if you do not find balance. This phase is about managing your tinana (physical body) and finding inner well-being and wholeness. Kaitiakitanga in this phase of life is about looking after each individual organ as it supports your hauora - health as a whole. The moon not only influences your sense of well-being and way of being in the natural world, but it also controls the seasons, keeping your body’s natural rhythms in balance.*

Also, Dr Agnes McFarland (Ngāi Tūhoe) reflects that “*if one part is sick the rest of your body will also be effected. All is the one and one is the all*” (personal communication, 2013 – 2020).

Dr Agnes McFarland (Ngāi Tūhoe) emphasises that “*it is important to find your own rhythm and do things in your own space and time (wā)*” (personal communication, 2013 – 2020). She suggests you ask yourself:

*When do I feel like doing this? It is important to balance everything out. There should be time for iwi, time for your job, time for whanau and time for you. The ultimate is when you find your purpose in life and your work becomes in line with that purpose so there is not so much ‘work’ but more purposeful Waitakataka time. However, you still need to find and make time for you to find balance in your day-to-day life and have a rest. She states that, everything is interconnected to the Maramataka. It’s about organising your time and the time you are given. At a particular time you will be doing something. A te wā, Ma te wā. In time you will do something* (personal communication, 2013 – 2020).

## **Waimate**

Death comes to all living things and it is the end stage of the eternal cycle of life. Waimate is the end of our life cycle here on earth. Wai (water) mate (death). When a person’s mauri (life force) is weak and slowly fades to nothing, the end comes to us all eventually. You leave this physical world and transition back into the spiritual world. Dr Agnes McFarland (Ngāi Tūhoe) explains, “*You become koretake (of no more use), your time has passed*” (personal communication, 2013 – 2020).

## **Observations & Experiences – My Whakapapa**

*“You have to search through your whakapapa back five generations to find out who you are”* says James Waiwai (Ngāi Tūhoe), (personal communication, 2013).

Both Dr Agnes McFarland (personal communication, 2013 – 2020) and James Waiwai (personal communication, 2013) speak from a Ngāi Tūhoe perspective and explain that the 5<sup>th</sup> generation of the whakapapa cycle repeats in some way, where you get some aspect of that person coming through.

It may be a physical appearance, a spiritual gift or a characteristic, but always in that 5<sup>th</sup> generation (on your mother’s whakapapa line). Dr Agnes McFarland went on to discuss how it was always the mother’s whakapapa line that played a significant role in this context as only she provided the life-giving waters that surrounded you as you grew into a human. *“Her mother before her did the same, and so it goes through the generations”* she remarked. Hence, the life cycle of wai – *is* the cycle of human evolution.

Within the context of my own generational ancestry, I understand that although I was born in Whakatāne, I am a ‘visitor’ to this land and come from a long line of wanderers who have travelled and observed new cultures. The ‘more recent’ wandering began after the English Crown took away the ancestral lands of my Scottish and Irish ancestors, who were forced to flee their home countries in order to keep their traditional ways of life and belief systems alive. I have come to discover that my own Celtic indigenous ancestry has many similar beliefs to Te Ao Mārama, including our intrinsic links to our ecosystem here on earth and the respect of water and its life giving properties.

Each generation, on both sides of my parents, going back 5 generations back, have never stayed in one place any longer than one generation. I am no exception. In fact, my mother once told me as a teenager (and I remember it vividly as one of those moments in life where you know deep in your bones that you should be paying attention) that she would be very disappointed if I never left the area to explore all of what the world and life had to offer me. As ‘travellers’ we become observers of the new cultures we discover and explore new physical environments.

Although sadly, part of colonialization in both New Zealand and Australia, I realise my ancestors were in their own right fleeing colonisation by the English in their home

countries. On my father's side, there is a strong hatred for the English who 'took over' their Irish and Scottish homelands, cultures and languages. My great grandparents on my father's side were early European settlers here in New Zealand and they were fluent Te Reo Māori speakers. It is said that my great grandfather (*a surveyor for the crown*) refused to hire English settlers and translated the Treaty of Waitangi in the King Country sharing with local iwi what the English had done to them in their homelands. He advised local chiefs not to sign. My father as a young boy has vivid memories of his mother having full conversations with local kuia on the marae in te reo Māori in Uruti, Taranaki. They are buried in Raurimu.

Growing up I was taught to respect other cultures and ways of being. I was often reminded by my parents that I was the visitor and that if I watched and listened, I might learn something worthwhile.

When I look back in my own culture and heritage, there is also evidence of my own ancestors using the moon to guide their daily lives. I remember my mother telling me about her Scottish Grandmother in Australia, who used the moon cycles to breed chooks on her farm. This knowledge was handed down through the generations of her family from the old days in her Scottish homeland. For many of us who have wandered to other parts of the world, much of this kind of knowledge from our own cultures has been lost, especially through the use of modern technology and through the adoption of the 'western' world view.

As a photographer, I am by my very nature a curious observer and a reflexive thinker. On my mother's side, both my grandfather and great grandfather were both photographers, who documented their early travels and new experiences in Australia in the early settler days. I still have the glass plate negatives of some of these that were passed down to me as the only grandchild with an interest in photography.

Image 3: Great Grandmother arriving in New South Wales, Australia



Image 4: Great Grandfather Fishing early settlers to New South Wales, Australia (mid 1800s)



Photography has always provided me with a way to separate from, observe and reflect on the world around me. Through my lens I capture moments in time, express my thoughts and document and study things, both people and nature. I have always had a fascination with telling stories about the people and places I observe so that they can be seen and

understood by others. In this way, the camera becomes a bridge between the subject and the viewer. Hence, it is my way of offering insights to the world I see and understand.

## **Summary of my Observations & Experiences – Te Maramataka**

The whakataukī ‘Whatungarongaro te tangata, toitū te whenua’ suggests, should we stop to think about it, our role as Kaitiaki is for a greater purpose, that is to preserve and protect our precious eco-system to sustain and nurture future generations long beyond our individual life spans.

To do this, we first need to understand and work with the natural rhythms of Papatūānuku (mother earth) and not against her. In recent years, the global warming environmental crisis has caused the world to start waking up and begin to listen to our global indigenous community as they share more sustainable and symbiotic ways of being in the world. For example, Goodall (2019) explains how climate scientists have started turning to indigenous communities for advice, which is often due to the fact that these people have lived in these places for centuries and have a wealth of knowledge about life cycles and weather patterns within their local environments.

*Today, they continue to safeguard some of the most biodiverse areas on the planet. Almost 50% of the world’s land mass (minus Antarctica) is occupied, owned or managed by Indigenous peoples and local communities, with roughly 40% of those landscapes labelled as protected or ecologically sound. And though Indigenous peoples comprise only around 6% of the global population, they protect 80% of biodiversity left in the world. Preserving biodiversity is also key to turning around the climate crisis, as these areas are major carbon sinks (Guardian, 2021).*

This researcher believes that our global indigenous communities have a leadership role to play as the human race begins to navigate this time of ‘rescuing’ our planet. I believe that ‘we’, westerners, who have lost our way need a gentle reminder to reconnect to our past and our life sustaining planetary eco-system that we are collaboratively destroying Mother Earth on a daily basis.

Te Maramataka encapsulates all-natural rhythms of our day-to-day lives as they change and develop over time; the base of which is a deep connection and oneness with wai

(water). It is our personal mauri that acts as a conduit to the raw energy of creation that brings life to our bodies (our wairua). Marsden (2003) explains Mauri as:

*The life-force which generates, regenerates and upholds creation. It is the bonding element that knits all the diverse elements within the Universal 'Procession' giving creation its unity in diversity. It is the bonding element that holds the fabric of the universe together (p. 44).*

Marsden also goes on to discuss our evolution over time in his writings on Papa's consciousness:

*The process of cosmic change is discernible as natural and biological evolution in the natural world, rock – quartz – crystal, or in the biological mutations that can occur. Each stage of the change occurs in a timeframe which may be likened to a compartment. In the natural world, these compartments contain distinctive elements of particular orders of being: inanimate – animate – consciousness – spirit.*

*What is the goal of the cosmic process? In order to understand what a thing is, we do not go to the rock from which it was formed but to the crystal into which it is becoming. A ploughed field is understood when a shoot of corn appears in it. It is understood by the entry into it of something higher, of life itself (2003, p. 45).*

In his writings, Marsden (2003) illustrates the evolution of time and our place within it. We are indeed woven into the very fabric of the universe. As we (as a species) participate in a kind of 'slow motion time travel' – one generation at a time. He shares his deep understanding of the 'big picture', but also of each individual's place within that. He goes on to highlight our role as kaitiaki of the planet and argues that we are failing miserably in this role. Marsden (2003) also calls for action and change so that the human race might reach a stage of higher awareness to protect Papatūānuku, Mother Earth. In doing so, he speaks of eco-systems and traditional teachings that ensure sustainable use of natural resources. His discussion on the teachings of kaitiakitanga are extensive and continue to explore the concept of human beings coming and going through the fabric of time through generational evolution.

Sadly, many of these teachings are ignored today through ignorance, consumerism, commercial greed, and colonisation by the western world. Marsden (2003) sums this point up succinctly, stating:

*Until we relearn the lesson that man is an integral part of the natural order and that he has obligations not only to society but also to his environment..... To realise that he is a child of the Earth will help him in working to restore and maintain the harmony and balance which successive generations of humankind have arrogantly disturbed (unpaginated).*

Te Maramataka, according to James Waiwai (Ngāi Tūhoe), is about sustainability and timing to live in harmony with nature. Here, he states *“Timing is everything. There is a time and a place for things to happen. You can’t force it. It will happen when it is ready and when it is supposed to. It’s about balance (positive and negative)”* (personal communication, 2013).

It is widely known that Māori understand the concept of tohu and use these to navigate their daily lives. James Waiwai (Ngāi Tūhoe) points out that *“Nature will guide you if you take the time to reconnect and understand”* (personal communication, 2013). Some obvious and more well-known tohu are the fantail sitting still in front of you when someone is going to die (Ngāti Awa). In Waikaremoana James Waiwai (Ngāi Tūhoe) also spoke about the shining cuckoo, which has a particular call they listen for in late winter/early spring so they know when to plough the paddocks for successful summer planting of food crops (personal communication, 2013).

The process of ‘zooming out’ reflects the need to consider our place within the wider universe, with the intention of gaining a deeper understanding of one’s self. Whereas, ‘zooming in’ helps put our individual life spans into context and provide guidance to find our purpose. Te Maramataka, as I have come to understand, is a navigational road map, or set of guidelines that help us to discover ourselves and gain a deeper understanding of the world around us – both the tangible and intangible – physical and spiritual realms.

In today’s modern world, ‘we’ the human race, are becoming increasingly disconnected from who and what we are as sentient, physical and spiritual beings. In particular, the rapid development of technology that has become integral in our daily lives often distracts

and separates us from the natural world. If we do not act soon, 'we' may in a generation or so forget *all* that it is to be human!

Marsden (2003) summed this up by saying:

*Science and technology produce 'Know-How' but it is nothing without 'Know-Why'. 'Know-How' is a means without an end, a mere potentiality. The real problem is to turn 'Know-How' into 'Know-Why' – the potential into being (reality) in order to achieve authentic existence. This process is only possible if we can visualise and understand the meaning and purpose of life (p. 27).*

As society shifts its awareness to environmental issues and our endangered global ecosystem, western society is becoming more open to the teachings of our indigenous brothers and sisters. Consequently, awareness of the indigenous world view is becoming more common, and the word 'decolonisation' is now included in conversations, where once it was never uttered in mainstream society. It seems the world may just be waking up to itself, and not a moment too soon!

Te Maramataka has become more popular in recent years and has enjoyed somewhat of a renaissance. One can now read books about it, attend public lectures, wānanga and even use the calendar to plan everything from your vegetable garden plantings, to your own life journey. However, when I was young, much of this knowledge belonged to the 'old people'. As such, many of its mysteries remained in the minds of these caretakers until it was ready to be passed on to the next generation and even then, it was only to a chosen few. This method of sharing has in recent times become less effective and special knowledge was nearly lost due to younger generations becoming disconnected and at times not being ready to receive the information.

Elders like Tawhai (2013) acknowledged this in his writings, stating:

*Such knowledge would be reflected upon by them as they sat by themselves in the sun, on the paepae of the marae and in their private conversations and discussions. The disquieting thought, however, is that those people are becoming fewer and fewer, and the opportunities to sit and listen to them are becoming much rarer. Today's generations too are often so busy coping with the hectic pace of change that is happening in their present world that they have not the time, or the luxury,*

*and sometimes not the inclination, to seek out the few remaining elders and talk with and listen to them (p. 1).*

As a way of preserving knowledge, Tawhai decided to write it down so that it would not be lost. In this way the information was ready and safe so that when future generations were ready to receive this knowledge, it would be there waiting for them. When acknowledging how tribal areas have different knowledge specific to their geographical location, Tawhai (2013) states “*This information is written here to add to, and in support of, what is already in the Maramataka literature of Aotearoa*” (p. xii).

Similarly, Miki Roderick (Te Arawa, Te Rarawa, Ngāti Whātua) also spoke about traditional methods of the intergenerational transference of knowledge that traditionally happen on the marae. However, Roderick asserts that:

*Many of the younger generation no longer have the opportunity to spend quality time on the marae to listen and learn as was the case in the past. Moreover, the changing lifestyle and environments that Maori now find themselves living within has meant this type of access to traditional knowledge is no longer readily available.*

He also goes on to state:

*Traditional knowledge transfer was, in the main, provided through the use of narrative supported by examples through stories. The respondent’s position was that of listening and analysing the information being provided. Direct questions were not encouraged as it was generally considered an interrogation of the ‘mana’ of the person providing the information. In other words, a challenge to their integrity as an informed source. As such, clarification was explored by a means of repeating back what was being told by the informant to confirm an understanding relating to a topic or issue. As such knowledge transfer, learning and competency were generally advanced in an incremental way. Moreover, as you were given some knowledge it was expected that you would then analyse the information and interpret the examples of the stories provided as supporting or emphasising a point in the narrative, following which, you would then seek confirmation that you had indeed understood what was being said to and then had to figure it out in order to cement the learning. The length of time this took varied, but essentially it lasted*

*until you had an ‘a-ha’ moment and really comprehended what you were being taught as you applied it to your life or the ‘take’ (issue) you were exploring (personal communication, 2021).*

Miki Roderick (Te Arawa, Te Rarawa, Ngāti Whātua) went on to explain that using these methods of knowledge transfer allowed the teacher to effectively work within the space of the māuri of mātauranga: He further explains that:

*Mauri is an intrinsic energy source that influences the vitality and/or potential of a resource or phenomena and vice versa. As such, māuri interacts and embraces with all things and is ignited as well as transitioned through the conceptual mechanism encapsulated within the element of hau (your vital essence – experiencing the world through all of your senses). The hau is therefore the binary source that connects the intangible spiritual space with our tangible physical space (personal communication, 2021).*

The quote above is perspicacious as it explains and connects ideas to sustainable teaching methods such as Te Maramataka as a guide to live in harmony with the rhythm of life. Upon reflection, as an educator, I am painfully aware that one’s timing has to be right to share information with the next generation. They in turn, must be ready to receive information in a timely and relevant way.

Knowledge is rarely retained without accompanying the teaching with opportunities of meaningful application, and many of today’s learners, while having access to a plethora of information on the internet, simply skim through information at a surface level, and after using it, this information is often discarded. Hence, they miss applying their learning in a meaningful context and as a result knowledge that is shared can sometimes be lost.

Miki Roderick (Te Arawa, Te Rarawa, Ngāti Whatua) provides a poetic explanation of the concept of time, stating “*The fluidity of time allows for the tangible and intangible ‘thing’ to interact and come to life, adapt, revitalise and grow at its own pace*”. He also links this directly back to Marsden’s teachings, explaining:

*Time creates opportunity for balance. This is where the concept of rāhui comes from. It is where we gather to observe the natural environment, assess what is out of balance and then agree on a period of time for Papatūānuku to replenish herself*

*and revive her mauri. Usually this is governed by the cycles of the lunar phases. Celestial and terrestrial are intrinsically linked (personal communication, 2021).*

As Te Maramataka is an observational science, the recorded information acts as a cyclical record of our physical world's interaction with time. When studied and understood, we can learn more about the life cycles in our local environments, which in turn, help us to live more sustainable lives. Ultimately, this is our lesson to learn as the human race.

## **Phase Two: Whakaaro** (Your thoughts are in front of you)

Within the western research context, we tend to focus on the tangible. However, Mika (2015) provides an insightful discussion about the concept of thinking within Te Ao Māori. Mika (2015) argues:

*One clear area in which it may differ, though, is in how it attempts to acknowledge the presence of ‘things’, which we might call our ‘whanaunga’ (relations), even where these have been deemed by Western science to be inanimate. More importantly, philosophical research is risky because the thing continues to influence the researching self, despite the self’s eventual disengagement from the research. Philosophical research – the kind that seeks an unobtainable ground of thought – is at once aware of and tentative towards the thing. It also acts within the influence of the thing: this phenomenon for the author can be best felt when the bizarre is encountered in everyday observations (p. 56).*

As I reflect on my research during this inquiry, I cannot deny the many intangible knowledges that have been shared with me. Within a western research context, I would struggle to justify my learning and even more so, explain my thinking behind a creative series of work in response to what I have learned. Mika (2015) summarises this nicely by explaining:

*Space and time in Māori are both referred to in the same word – ‘wā’ – and cannot be known, but this does not preclude them from ‘coming to bear’ on the self. Indeed, they possess some sort of self-arranging and impactful resonance. Returning to the term ‘whakaaro’: a reciprocity between thing and self is established such that the thing, whether abstract or concrete, shows itself in some form to the self, who can then construct an idea about it (p. 57).*

For artists, the design process is often a little messy and unclear, especially at the inception of a body of work. This sense of ‘unknowing’ can continue until completion when the creative discovers that they have explored and synthesised their learning and experiences into a coherent body of work. In this section, I reflect and analyse the information I discovered during the inquiry process – Phase One: Observation. As my

paradigms shift, this new learning reveals a clearer path as I develop the scope of the project and its broader context.

Conceptual generation of new learning and creative ideas begin to emerge in this phase. The process of drawing meaning from my experiences and new knowledge to create imagery that represents my learning to share with others is a privilege, and one I do not take lightly.

As a photographer, I have always enjoyed the challenge of seeing the unseen. The late Tony Whincup was influential in developing my work relating to intangible images. Or as he used to call it, “capturing the intangible” (personal communication, 1999). Although, until now this has been done more through building a sense of ‘mood or feeling of empathy’ via the use of more tangible imagery such as landscape, portraiture and documentary photography as seen in Figure 1 below.

Image 5: Old Illustrative work depicting intangible concepts



The creation of more pictorial illustrative and abstract works for my Masters that attempt to visually articulate and communicate the sometimes seemingly abstract concepts of Te Maramataka has been challenging. In this body of work, in both the written and visual exhibition components, I attempt to reflect upon the ‘unseen’ ebb and flow of time and creation, as well as our place within that cosmic creation.

When creating my work for this Masters exhibition, I have attempted to keep my photographic art making practices linked to the wider kaupapa of the inquiry. That is, to record and observe Te Maramataka over time to gain ‘illumination and understanding’ of the Life Cycles of Wai (Water). I also decided to narrow my creative work focus to exploring and visually articulating the human life cycle, which attempts to capture the natural rhythms of each of our own individual human life spans in an attempt to draw the viewer into a reflective space.

Photography using the Greek words photos (light), and graphis (draw), was established in the 1830s as an image based medium. However, the ability to capture reflected light and project it (albeit upside-down and on an opposing wall) has been around (some say) for up to 2000 years (Rosenblum, Gernsheim, Newhall, & Gundberg, 2020). The camera obscura has been used since the 17<sup>th</sup> Century by artists to ‘trace’ drawings of projected images of reflected light through a hole in the wall and later, as technology developed, through a glass lens. Early chemistry from the 1800s saw the first printed photographic images come into existence (Rosenblum, Gernsheim, Newhall, & Gundberg, 2020).

However, photography as a ‘physical and tangible’ image-based art form, with its ability to capture and produce an actual image from reflected light particles reflecting off an object or subject, was established in the 1830s.

Étienne-Jules Marey and Georges Demeny (2021) were the first photographers to begin experimenting with recording light (known as light painting) with the photographic medium. *“In 1889 Demeny attached incandescent bulbs to the joints of an assistant and created the first known light painting photograph ‘Pathological Walk From in Front’”* (para. 3).

## Image 6: Light Painting Photography

DEMÉNY AND QUÉNU  
(Marey's laboratory),  
Pathological walk from in  
front, made visible by  
incandescent bulbs fixed to  
the joints,  
circa 1889.  
Archives  
of the Collège de France.



Note. Taken by Jason Page (2021). Graphic sourced from: <https://lightpaintingphotography.com/light-painting-history>

I have taken this 'light painting' approach with my work for this exhibition to represent the process of discovery through 'illumination' of Te Ao Mārama. Te Maramataka is the concept of gaining a deeper understanding through the process of observing and recording information over time. Specifically, the way the environment responds to the moon (marama) phases (taka) and how the moon subsequently pushes and pulls the natural world as it moves through its life cycle. As I have observed, listened and learned about the life cycles of wai (water) during my research and 'observation' phase, I have attempted to literally 'shine a light' on this learning and record it for others to consider, ponder on and become enlightened.

Kulvicki (2016) eloquently explains his understanding of the use of blur in photographic image making as:

*Some pictures, especially photographs, collapse the dimension of time too. Examples of this phenomenon are those streaked with motion marks. In those cases, the subject of the photo moves a good distance during its exposure time. Time*

*collapses in the sense that the photo exists fully formed at a given moment, even though it represents a scene as extended in time (p. 336).*

Each stage of the life cycle of wai is photographed using different techniques, timing and elements to record light. The process of recording a build-up of light over time emulates Te Maramataka in a metaphoric way as I attempt to bring ‘illumination and understanding’ to the viewer as they spend time in the gallery. Thus, building up their understanding during that time.

## **Phase Three: Te Maramataka as a process**

As an artist I can only make the work and put it out into the world to be viewed. How the viewer responds depends on their perception and openness to engaging with the work at a level they are comfortable with. Below is a brief description of how I have gone about creating the work for this exhibition.

Keeping the integrity of this kaupapa was paramount in the making of work for this exhibition. I attempted to use elements from my research to inform my practice so that the works were grounded in meaning and substance. Geismar (2016) states that *“By extending our awareness of digital imaging away from the ontologies of image-based interpretations we open up our interpretive toolkit.”* (p.318). Hence, while viewing the exhibition it is my intention to let the ‘intangible’ elements of the work resonate with the individual viewer and meet them where they are at during that particular space and time. Ultimately, this approach acknowledges that we all exist within different ‘places’ and levels of understanding and consciousness within our individual lifespan timelines.

The audio track in the projected moving image installation was written specifically for this project by my friend and fellow creative Huey Rurehe (Ngāi Tūhoe). The soundscape intentionally provides the viewer with some elements of life, such as the ha (breath) and some ocean tide sounds in the background that refer to the moon, as well as the ebb and flow of the tides as we travel through time. The addition of traditional Māori instruments bring a spiritual depth to the soundscape. Overall, the soundscape lets the images speak to the viewer as they experience the works in a multisensory way through a cyclical five-minute journey into the depths of the life cycles of wai and subsequently, Te Maramataka.

### **Waitahi**

I have taken the approach for this photographic series from the point of view of ‘the formation’ of wairua (your second water in physical form as a human being). Waitahi refers to your inception from your beginnings in the cosmos, to the development of the baby in the mother’s womb (being your first water). I took these images at night to represent the time before the dawn at the start of a new day. The nights were when the moon was absent from the sky and or just returning. These nights were Huna and Amiro.

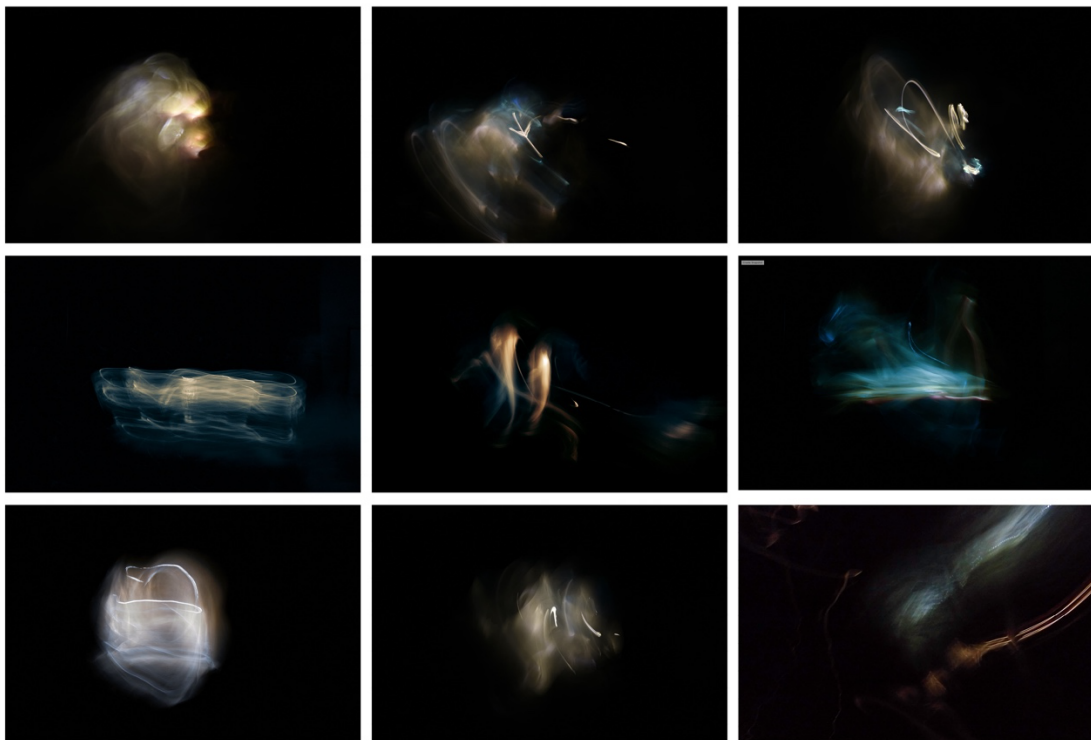
The individual moon phases below were provided by Pouroto Ngaropo (Ngāti Awa):

*Huna - When the moon hides and is concealed or lost from sight in the sky. This is the time when the power of the sun re-charges the moon. It is not a time to access or harvest kai as it will have no energy from the moon. Māori healers gather medicine from plants by night but only when the moon is out shining on them so they are woken up and given life and energy (personal communication, 2013).*

*Amiro - Ami(o) – traveling a great distance. When it is hidden and travelled a great distance it begins the process of re-emerging. This is a time of transition and restoration. This day is linked closely with Huna. One intrinsically linked to the other. You cannot have a transition without losing sight of what was. (personal communication, 2013).*

When making the work for the waitahi series I created images during these moon phases. The night was dark and I could go outside under the stars but not have my work impeded by a bright luminescent moon. I used a small dull torch light and a range of coverings to move my light source around within the camera's viewfinder.

Image 7: Waitahi series images



The camera was mounted on a tripod to keep it still. It was a very spiritual time during the making of these particular images (shown above), where it felt like I had ‘visitors’ to

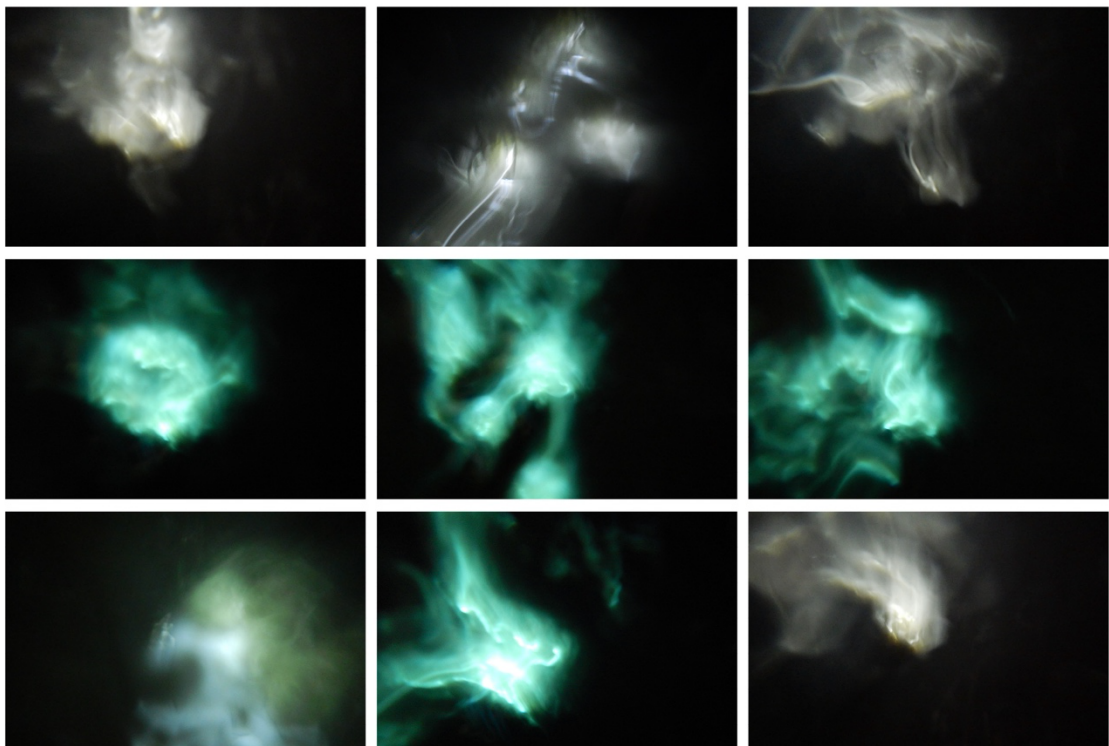
guide the inception of this body of work. I feel the images created in this series of work do indeed seem illustrative and in some cases, they could be seen to represent a ‘presence’ if you are that way inclined to see this.

## **Wairua**

Your second water (as your mother’s water breaks) is when you choose your time and place to come into this world as a physical but spiritual being. The time when you still have links to the ‘other world’, and you are still receiving guidance from your ancestors and the cosmos from which you came. This is a watery transition in both a spiritual and physical sense.

Some of these images were taken during the first lockdown at my home in the Manawatū (my current local environment) in rain water collected from my roof, while other images were taken in the Ōhiwa harbour on the Tangaroa moon phases during one of my visits home to interview local iwi. All images are taken with an underwater camera looking up, through the wai (water) to the moving light source above. This series has been created to reflect this phase of one’s life when we are moving through water to discover a new way of being, while being guided by our wairua in the deepest spiritual sense.

Image 8: Wairua Series Images



Tangaroa Moon Phases are considered to be high energy and very productive. As Pouroto Ngaropo (Ngāti Awa), pointed out, this time in your life when you are first coming into the world. These moon phases can be further described as follows:

***Tangaroa Amua** - This moon phase focuses on water. Water is the most precious thing in life. Amua from the beginning, the first thing you must have and understand is that you can't have life without water.*

***Tangaroa Aroto** - Understanding, respecting and appreciating the difference, between all the water that exists e.g. Lakes, Rivers, Ocean, Rain, Mist, Ice etc.*

***Tangaroa Kiokio** - Steam, Mist, evaporating water this is part of the life cycle of water as it rises up to the sky so that it can be cleansed and come back down energised to sustain life in the never ending cycle of perpetual life (personal communication, April 2013).*

## **Waitakataka**

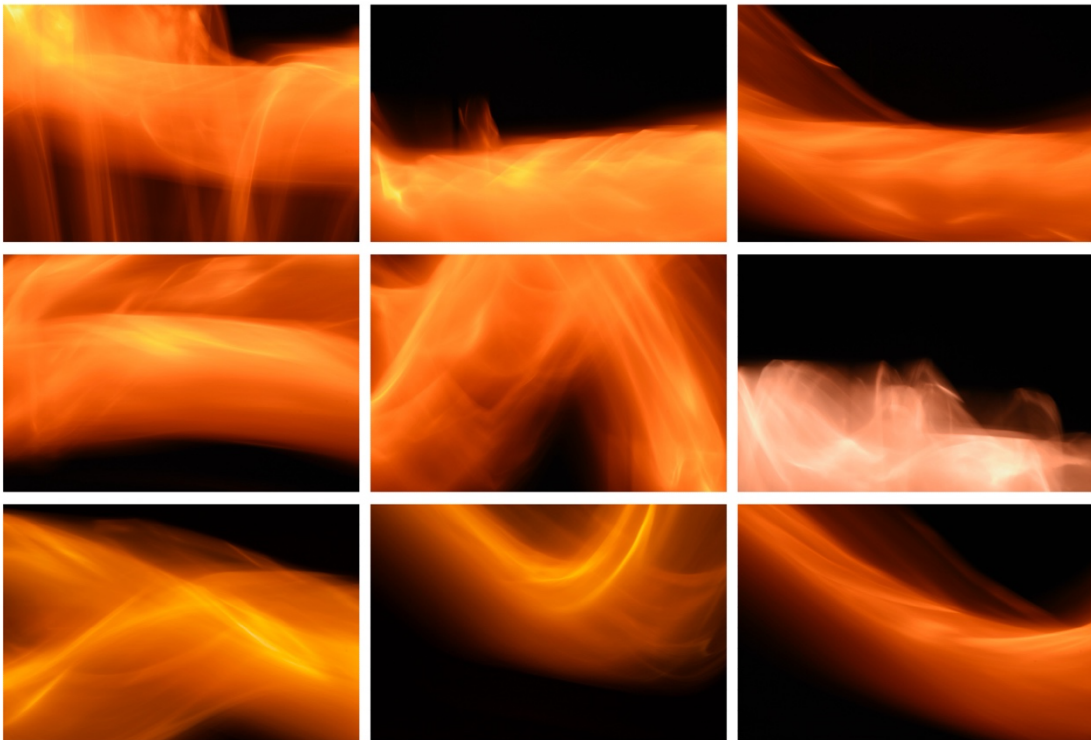
For the series of images (shown below), I found myself mid-winter and needing to illustrate full energy via living my life to its fullest potential. Living by Te Maramataka however, it is customary to live quietly and use the winter months as an opportunity to recharge one's energy, as well as get ready for the upcoming activity of the summer months. This follows the natural rhythms of life, when even our plants slowdown in the winter months and grow roots below the surface in order to sustain the growth that flourishes in the coming seasons of spring and summer when energy levels are high.

For this series I decided to photograph the ambient light from my fireplace. The light was soft yet powerful, and strong but steady in its ebb and flow as it burned up and down with new wood that was added over time. Again, my photographic process involved reflecting how human energy surges with new growth but then slows while we mature, and then cycles again through that growth cycle as we develop into our adult selves, discovering our life's purpose and living to our full potential.

For the purpose of communicating the life cycle of wai, I have made the exhibition prints for this work blue as I attempt to keep cool natural colours through my work to reflect the natural world (see images below). However, there are hints of warm tones if you look into this series as part of the audio-visual presentation. I have also attempted in the audio-

visual presentation to demonstrate the ebb and flow of this life stage through the ha (breath of life) as we move through our Waitakataka stage with the lightening and darkening of the images as the video proceeds through to Waiora a time of balance and calmness.

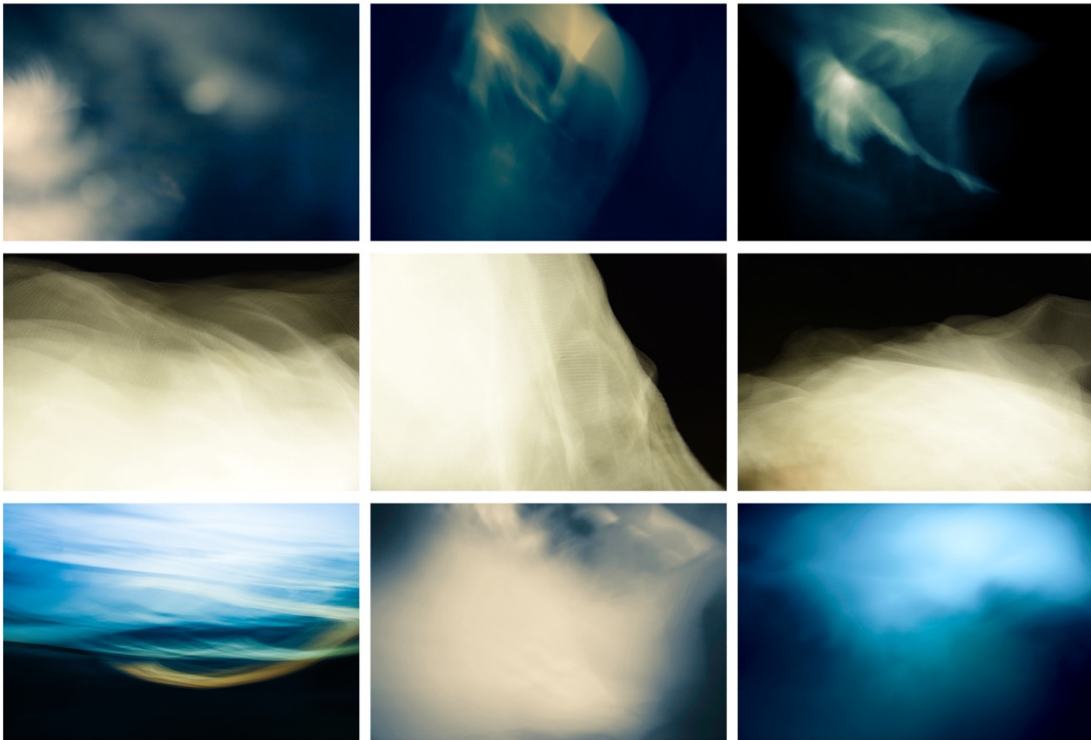
Image 9: Waitakataka Series Images



## **Waiora**

The stage of waiora moves from high energy representation to very calm visual images, some full screen and textured, almost painterly, while others still show movement but in a less energetic way. The below images were taken in the light of hīnātore, the phosphorous light of the in-between. That phase of life when you are in your mature years and are wise through your illumination and observations over time. You have learned life lessons and have slowed down to look after your overall well-being. You still know your purpose, but you are better at balancing it and living life in a more sustainable way, and you have discovered your own life rhythms. Hence, it is a time of a more restful pace in life and also one where we can share our light and 'illumination' (knowledge, Te Ao Mārama for Māori) with the younger generation.

Image 10: Waiora Series Images

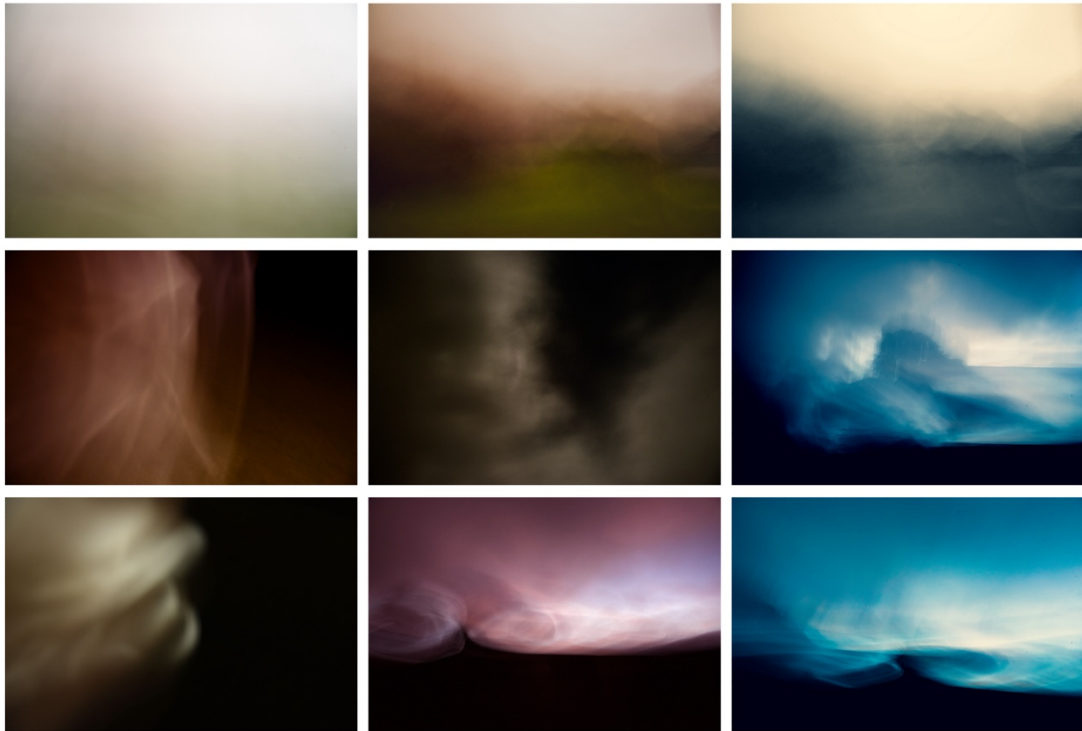


This section in the audio visual is completed with a *tohu* type image, where the calm imagery has a subtle change to it, and where a shimmery light emerges that represents the coming transition as we prepare to leave this world of light and illumination and return back to the spark of creation where our life started.

### **Waimate**

The stage of *waimate* is about our loss of our life force our *mauri*, and our transition back to the cosmos from which we came. It is our time to leave and return to ‘space’ where linear time ceases to exist. This completes our life cycle and our body decays and returns to the *whenua* where it is recycled and becomes physical matter for the next life cycle and generations to follow.

Image 11: Waimate Series Images



I have included some images (shown above depicted in Image 11) in the final stages of the Waimate series in the audio visual. In some of the images (middle and bottom left) I have used a ‘harakeke’ based woven material which has been photographed moving through the water (see also Image 12 below). To me, this represents another layer of understanding, where the korowai, a woven tapestry of ancestral lineage, transcends the barriers of time uniting the generations together. These particular images were taken in the Ōhiwa Harbour under the Tangaroa moon. They are used as a layer over some of the final timescape scenes to represent our connection to both the land (whenua) through our maternal (whenua) connection to our ancestors that spans across the generations over the great expanse of time.

In the remainder of the images I have attempted to create a land timescape themed imagery using the light of hīnātore at the end of the day, signifying the end of a life cycle. This is when we choose our time and space to leave this earth and return to the cosmos in which we begun. Image 13 (below) shows the moment we choose to pass through this time and space to the great beyond.

Image 12: Harakeke strands woven material



Image 13: Passing through the fabric of time



I have used a cross process type blend mode layer in Adobe Premier Pro to highlight the transformation from our physical existence and subsequent return to the spirit world. The timescape type images are my attempt to encapsulate the whakataukī that has been at the very essence of this inquiry.

“Whatungarongaro te tangata, toitū te whenua’

People may come and people may go, but the land remains.

In short, this whakataukī speaks to how we choose when we come into this physical world and when we leave, we pass through the very fabric of time and space. We are all part of the evolving cycle of life.

Once again, I have changed the colour from the original soft pinks from the sunset to a cool blue to represent the wai which is at the essence of my inquiry (see image 13 above). Although at the end of this visual cycle (see images 14 and 15) I have brought in some browns, pinks and yellows to represent the earth tones as our lifeless physical body

degrades as it returns to Papatūānuku and the whenua in readiness for the next cycle of physical life. Image 14 (below) shows the shimmery light represented in the top middle of this composition. It is a layer made of reflective light in the surface of Ōhiwa Harbour under the Tangaroa moon referencing back to my acknowledgement of the different types of life giving wai within Te Maramataka. This also visually hints to our spirit transcending our physical body at the end of our life as it returns to the cosmos, which is depicted by the ‘shimmering stars over the horizon’ effect captured within the scene.

Image 14: Shimmering Light

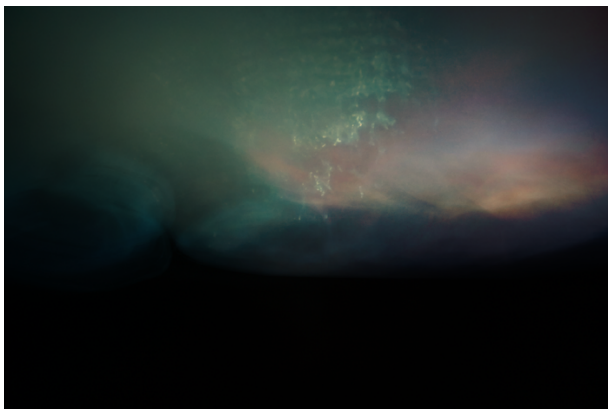
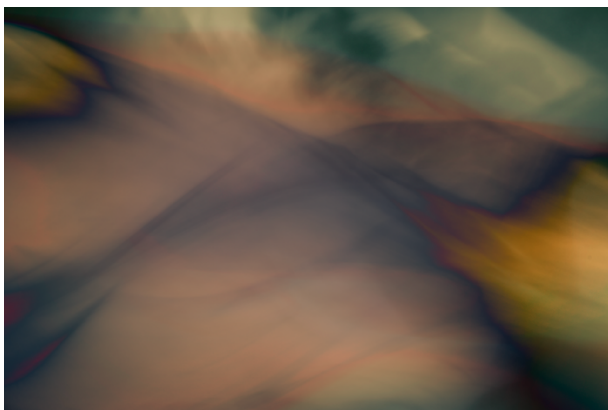


Image 15: The breakdown of the body



Above in image 15, I have used a cross processed style imagery that metaphorically represents when things go wrong. The colours offer a suggestion that our body is breaking down as we die. The audio visual at this point fades into bird song as at the end of the day, followed by the odd flicker of luminescent light as the day draws to an end, and once again darkness surrounds us.

All life cycles come to an end and it is here that this body of work concludes.



## **Phase Four: Te Maramataka as a Reflective Tool.**

In recent years medical case studies have “discovered” the following about how the full moon affects our sleep patterns. Cajochen, Munch, Frey, Knoblauch, and Wirz-Justice (2013) published in their research that *"Here, we show that subjective and objective measures of sleep vary according to lunar phase and thus may reflect circalunar rhythmicity in humans."* Also, they ‘prove’ that *"This is the first reliable evidence that a lunar rhythm can modulate sleep structure in humans when measured under the highly controlled conditions"* (para. 1).

Within the context of Te Maramataka, this is and always has been clearly understood and explained. Nothing new there! Clearly, we have a lot to learn from our indigenous brothers and sisters. It seems that western science is just discovering this knowledge and beginning to make connections to 'old European folklore' or ‘Paganism’ as it is sometimes referred to. They seem to be starting to discover ‘old’ ways of thinking, as it was in these past, when they too had a closer relationship with mother nature were more in tune with their personal well-being.

The work created in response to this learning journey is my own personal synthesis of the information I have learned during this time. It is my reflection on a very broad topic that is, life on earth. It is also an abstract body of work that is open for interpretation. More importantly, I have attempted to create a reflective experience for the viewer as they contemplate the imagery and the explanation that accompanies the exhibition, which adds some context.

I hope you enjoy observing and reflecting.

## Conclusion

As you can see, Te Maramataka is not only a set of guidelines of the monthly moon cycle. Rather, it represents an in-depth study and spiritual understanding of life, the universe and our place within it. It is the culmination of scientific, biological, philosophical and spiritual knowledge. I would describe it as a whole body of knowledge that can be practiced as a way of life in perfect synchronicity with all elements of nature (Te Ao Mārama). In the western world, we might refer to it as a belief system or religion, but for Māori, it is simply a natural way of being.

Once upon a time, learning about and applying Te Maramataka knowledge was both relevant and essential. The fact was that this knowledge was life sustaining and it meant that people could survive while living in and alongside nature. They were intrinsically part of the eco-system that supported their daily lives. In modern times however, we are not so reliant on a day-to-day connection with nature. Or so we think, as we are getting to a point in some places and locations where basic life sustaining things that we typically take for granted (like clean air, water and soil) are now becoming something that needs our urgent attention if the human race is to survive.

As an artist, I have attempted to create a visual body of work that attempts to challenge people, prompting them to stop and reflect on what is both seen and unseen in the physical and spiritual world. Ultimately, it has been my intention to provide people with a time and space that allows for a deeper reflection on their own life journey. As well as contemplate how they might choose to engage with the time and space they have been given to make the world a better place for those that come after us.

“Whatungarongaro te tangata, toitū te whenua”

People may come and people may go, but the land remains.

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# Appendices

Appendix 1: Te Maramataka unpacked – a full record of notes from Pouroto Ngaropo (Ngāti Awa), (personal communication, April 2013).

Early on in my research during my Post Grad Diploma I spoke with Pouroto Ngaropo, Ngāti Awa<sup>i</sup> at the Mataatua Marae in Whakatane. He shared his understanding of the days of Jim's Maramataka as he had it written down. I was sent to Pouroto because when I asked for it to be translated by our Te Reo Maori teacher who was also Ngati Awa he told me that it was the 'old' language and I had to go home and see someone more specialised about it as that wasn't common knowledge.

Whiro	New Moon. Discipline must be observed on this day. Whiro comes from chaos. The spark of life that created the cosmos. Anything can happen on a Whiro moon and often it is mischievous. Whiro is a state of knowing and unknowing. It can be considered as a right of passage.
Ti Rea - Tirea	New understanding - after things have settled down from Whiro things start to reveal themselves and you gain a new understanding. Tirea comes from the root words Ti Kouka – The Cabbage Tree from the forest representing sustainability and Rea – new growth and respect of that.
Hoata	Commencing of a new day. Applying it (fair) for fishing.
Uenuku	Rainbow. The pathway between the spiritual and physical world. It is the physical symbol of our creator on earth. Often linked to prayer and karakia. Acknowledgement of knowing our place in the universe.
Akoto	The inner emotions, senses, spiritual intuition. Listen to these today so you know when it is safe or not.
Tamatea	The physical energy that comes from space, place and time. Like the woman who craves for food when pregnant but needs to be careful what she eats and when to protect the baby. Tamatea is about reading the signs and knowing when to put Akoto into action.
Huna	When the moon hides and is concealed or lost from sight in the sky. This is the time when the power of the sun re-charges the moon. It is not a time to access or harvest kai as it will have no energy from the moon. Māori healers gather medicine from plants by night but only when the moon is out shining on them so they are woken up and given life and energy.

Amiro	Ami(o) – traveling a great distance. When it is hidden and travelled a great distance it begins the process of re-emerging. This is a time of transition and restoration. This day is linked closely with Huna. One intrinsically linked to the other. You can't have a transition without losing sight of what was.
Maure	When the food is plentiful. A time of procreation. Fully energised. Good time to gather food and for planting as energy levels are back up.
Mawhara	Pure energy. Whara – energy being dispersed through flora and forna. Everything is growing and in full stride.
Ōhua	All food sources are plentiful. O – Female element and Hua meaning plentiful.
Hotu	The heart strings are torn. When you harvest something you tear it from its home. So practice karakia and give back the first thing you take. Respect its mauri. Taking and giving back recognising again where it comes from and that it gives its life for us to sustain us. Hotu is the process of taking.
Atua Wera	(God) A – Ha the breath of life and Tua from beyond but is in all things. This moon is about the creator and creation. Wera / the heat of the energy of creation. Healing happens in this moon. If you take you must let it alone to replenish and heal. It is a time of healing so let your physical surroundings rest and regenerate. This is the worst day of the moon and you should rest it is dangerous out in creation.
Ōturia	O – The Circle of Life and Tiria meaning to place something. This moon is about understanding the time and place of things to happen and to take action. Everything has its season.
Rākaunui	(Full Moon) Rakau (mature tree) it has reached its full potential (nui). This is the moon when things come to fruition if they have been building up, emotions are full and high everything is heightened as it responds to the pull of the moon.
Rākau Mātohi	Matohi – decide which direction you need to take as you are free. Excellent day for both kai from land and sea – including planting. You can gift it away or share with your whanau.
Tikirau	Tiki (fertilisation) the seed of life. Procreation. Ra – energy and U – sustenance.

Oeke	Achieving balance. O sustainability and eke within the context when achieved equilibrium is obtained in what you are doing.
Korekore	The cosmos (nothingness). If you understand your purpose then access the knowing when and how to look after it and yourself. Resting and rejuvenation is part of that balance in life (oeke) and also there is a time and place to rest and focus on different parts of who you are. No fishing, planning or reaping of crops should happen during this time of rest. Everything sleeps the moon is low on energy and so are you.
Korekore Ohoho	Awaken (mind)
Korekore Matara	Be Aware (body)
Korekore Mohio	Know (soul)
Korekore Marama	Wisdom
	These Korekore moons represent the last quarter of the moons life cycle. On the last day when the moon is coming back into an energy phase it is good to resume fishing, planting and gathering crops from mid-day onwards.
	Tanagroa Moon Phases – High Energy and very productive.
Tangaroa Amua	This moon phase focuses on water. Water is the most precious thing in life. Amua from the beginning, the first thing you must have and understand is that you can't have life without water.
Tangaroa Aroto	Understanding, respecting and appreciating the difference, between all the water that exists eg. Lakes, Rivers, Ocean, Rain, Mist, Ice etc.
Tanagroa Kiokio	Steam, Mist, evaporating water this is part of the life cycle of water as it rises up to the sky so that it can be cleansed and come back down energised to sustain life in the never ending cycle of perpetual life.
Otāne	O – Sustenance and nourishment. A time to observe, nurture and be thankful for the nourishment that is provide from the forest. Medicine, birds, all resources from the land and forest and our connection to the forest.
Ōrongo	A time for harvest and sewing new crops to replace what you have taken. A great time for all cultivations on the land. (Kumera etc)

Mauri                    A combination and balance between Otane and Orongo making sure you take equally from land and water. Keep resources sustainable and only take what you need. Respect life and it will look after you.

Kore                    Stop and wait for the new moon it is low energy time everything is coming to an end. Every cycle must come to a natural end in order to make way for new life to come through.

This Maramataka not only applies to your daily life but also to your general health and wellbeing and your own life cycle over the years you are on the earth. It is a guide to life itself.

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