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NO LIMIT:
IMAGINING THE
BOUNDARIES
OF AUTONOMY IN
A POST-FORDIST
COLONIAL
SETTLER STATE

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THESIS SUBMISSION FOR A MASTER
OF FINE ARTS (FINE ARTS)

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BOUNDARIES OF AUTONOMY
IN A POST-FORDIST
COLONIAL SETTLER STATE

NAME: HANA PERA AOAKE

STUDENT ID: 17134760

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SUPERVISORS: CASSANDRA BARNETT
AND HEATHER GALBRAITH

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I firstly would like to acknowledge where this research was carried out. Massey University Te Kunenga Ki Pūrehuroa, where I researched as a student, is on stolen or unfairly confiscated land, the rohe of Te Ātiawa/Taranaki ki Te Upoko o Te Ika mana whenua to Te Whanganui-a-tara. Although Treaty settlements are often seen as means of “reconciliation” between Pākehā and Māori, they are merely an acknowledgement of a crime—you cannot undo the process of colonisation, but you can acknowledge it. The loaded sites we live and work on in Aotearoa have painful histories that have been neither erased nor rightfully acknowledged. A common whakataukī from my iwi, Waikato-Tainui, relating to confiscations, “I riro whenua atu me hoki whenua mai, ko te moni hei utu mō te hara” (“As land was taken so must it be returned, the money is an acknowledgement of the crime”)¹ comes to mind when discussing what Treaty Settlements and Postcolonial Aotearoa means for Māori. However I would be doing a disservice if I did not mention that it is not only these histories that need to be acknowledged, but also Māori cultural values and their significance to our culture. For instance we do not have governance over decisions around our taonga such as flora, fauna etc nor are we able to protect our intellectual and cultural property and language nor do we have influence over the transmission of our cultural values through western education systems. Iwi and hapū are kaitiaki over our taonga, which is central to our survival as a people, but we have not yet been granted the agency to be guardians over this taonga.

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¹ Mutu, *The State of Māori rights*, 25

Without these people I would not have completed my MFA

My studio mate Ana Iti and James TK Tapsell-Kururangi for whom I will forever be grateful. My supervisors Cassandra Barnett and Heather Galbraith for putting up with my many panic attacks and breakdowns. Miriama Aoake and all of my family. My flatmates (2017-18) especially Chris, Louise, Leilani, and Rex. My friends Mya Morrison Middleton (Fresh and Fruity), Piupiu-Maya Turei, George Watson, Nikolai Talamahina, Yvette Velvin, Josephine Jelicich, Ellyse Randrup, Sophie Davis, Faith Wilson, Joanne Francey, Natasha Matila-Smith, Alexa Casino, Sean Burn, Anna McAllister, Taylor Groves, Louise Rutledge, Jordana Bragg, Kimmi Rindel, Dan Sanders, Ali Burns, Brian Fuata, Georgia Lockie, Anna Rankin, Nat Lim, Kat Botten, Audrey Baldwin, Jamie Hanton, Priscilla Howe, Lucas Armstrong, Calse Ross, Quishile Charan, Jackson Nieuwland, Matthew George Richard Ward, Talia Smith, Dan Nash, Noelia Portela, Katie Schmidt, Autumn Royal, and John Mutambu for all their support and encouragement. Tayi Tibble, Zarah Butcher-McGunnigle, and Holly Childs for producing amazing pieces of writing. Jesse Mulligan for his afternoon show on radio nz. Thank you Callum Devlin (Endless Love) who helped me survive my first year of masters and for teaching me so many things. The following tutors who put up with my bullshit: Eugene Hansen, Kerry Ann Lee, Shannon Te Ao, Anne Noble and Martin Patrick.

Kia hora te marino

Kia whakapapa pounamu te moana

Hei huarahi mā tātou i te rangi nei

Aroha atu, aroha mai

Tātou i a tātou katoa

Hui e! Tāiki e!

NO LIMIT: IMAGINING THE BOUNDARIES OF AUTONOMY IN A
POST-FORDIST COLONIAL, SETTLER STATE

ABSTRACT

This exegesis will address the context of being a young, Māori artist living in a Post-Fordist colonial settler state. It will centre what these conditions what labour and the production of art looks like in Aotearoa, by analysing the ways in which our labour now fails to distinguish between ‘work’ and ‘occupation’. It will look at the way in which autonomy has been stripped through the tokenisation of a certain kind of indigenous practice that forces Māori artists into both performing indigeneity for Pākehā, as well as existing within individualistic imperial narrative that is toxic, colonising and alienating. I will discuss how this attempts to diminish the collaborative and intuitive approach to making art that is inherent within a larger history of contemporary Māori art by referring to senior wahine toa artists such as Shona Rapira-Davies. This research is explicitly centered around how the building of healthy, meaningful, ongoing working relationships with people I love has helped me redefine who my practice is for in spaces outside of the white cube. It will blend ideas garnered from both Western and indigenous frameworks, citing writing from theorists and artists including Hito Steyerl, Martha Rosler, Paolo Virno, Faith Wilson, Jenny Holzer and Natasha Matila-Smith (Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Hine). It is hoped that in writing this exegesis I can articulate some adequate solutions to the current model for the production of art, which I believe is unsustainable and centered around ties to very colonial ideas of ‘community’ and of collaboration, particularly with the sharing of ideas and space.

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INTRODUCTION

My work spans performance, dance, fashion, jewellery, writing, curating, sculpture, video, drawing, and installation. The work I make is polymorphic and intuitive and centres my own experiences as a way of connecting and creating space for other people to share. The emphasis on individualism inherent in the art world and within colonial environments like western universities not only wears me down, but bores me. It's uncomfortable for me to think about the process of demarcating whose work is whose within an exegesis—the idea of demarcation has “specific ties into ideas around possession and ownership, that are not only toxic, but inherently colonial.”² I am primarily invested in imagining and creating spaces through collaborations with other people.

I want to imagine what a collective autonomy looks like, and I am constantly trying to imagine how Tino rangatiratanga could function in domestic or collective-based art projects. For me, autonomy and tino rangatiratanga are two very different concepts that intersect, but are still very different and mean different things to me, mostly because one is a Pākehā and one is Māori. Tino Rangatiratanga is a concept that can loosely translated as ‘absolute sovereignty’ and appears in the Treaty of Waitangi and Te Tiriti. For me it's a concept I use to imagine what self determination can look like in my everyday life, of what decolonisation could look like not just politically, but in day to day relationships with people I love and with myself. I refer to it in this thesis as something that has yet to be realised for Māori, but

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² Charan and Tanuvasa, *The sea brought you here*, 21

is an important reminder for me of what we have lost and what we still have to work on. Autonomy for me is the notion of being able to make decisions independent of coercion into dominant hetero-patriarchal constructions of labour and success, and feeling that my body could and should be able to exist without these hindrances. In terms of my art practice, these terms are manifest through being allowed to fail or make bad work and speak truths in settings not governed by colonial spaces, and to be able to share with people I love ways of coming together and learning together.

My practice and research during my MFA has been invested in these modes of thinking and in building resilience in myself through investing in people whose relationships are supportive and positive to me.

CUE: KRIS JENNER'S I LOVE MY FRIENDS

A source of constant strength in my life is creating meaningful and long term friendships with people who I then work with, people who I love and who love me. In the following I will outline how and why these relationships are important to me and allow me to have agency to create work and organise projects because I both love and trust these people. I will discuss projects I have made over the last year with people who are my friends. I will begin first by contextualising my work by referring to writings by Hito Steyerl, Martha Rosler, Paolo Virno, Isabell Lorey, Natasha Matila-Smith (Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Hine), Shaun Wilson, and bell hooks.

I will then discuss my relationship with Mya Morrison-Middleton (Ngāi Tahu) with whom I run the Māori art collective, Fresh and Fruity. Fresh and Fruity's work is deeply informed by artists like Faith Wilson, Jenny Holzer and Diane Prince, all of whom I will refer to as deeply important models. I will allude back to a generative research project, looking at the histories of Artist Run Initiatives (ARIs) in Aotearoa, that I undertook with Callum Devlin within our now defunct collective ENDLESS LOVE for First Draft gallery, Sydney. I will then analyse a project I organised with Ali Burns titled Heart(ache) Festival, where I will lead in to examining my relationship as an indigenous body with patriarchal notions of love and romance under neoliberalism. In this part of my exegesis I will speak to both iterations I performed of a scripted performance I wrote, titled *BEACHGIRL GOES TO DISNEYLAND: A conversation with a bot posing as ur ex lover*, which in many ways is a eulogy to my lost romantic relationship and my hopes for a specific future. I will then analyse the materiality of the more sculptural and performative parts of my practice by referring to artists such as Ana Mendieta, Shona Rapira-Davies, Joseph Beuys and Alexandra Engelfriet. In the last part of this text I will reflect upon the generative nature of my friendship with Georgina Rose Watson (Ngāti Porou) and our subsequent collaboration for [tactic] gallery, Hamilton. To conclude I will discuss my reasons for continuing to work in an industry I often feel excluded from and adjacent to, by looking to artists Hito Steyerl, and Cady Noland, whose tactics of refusal have informed the projection of my research now and going into the future.

THE REALITY OF THE VERY
UNGLAMOUROUS GLAM SECTOR

My work has always been polymorphic, because it is responding to the nature of working in th GLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Archives, Museums) sector, an industry which is individualistic, tokenizing and thrives on what Paolo Virno describes as a 'Post-Fordist' economy. Post-Fordism is the dominant system of economic production, consumption, and socio-economic relations in the majority of industrialised nations in the late 20th century and early 21st century. We live and work in an industry built on information in the so-called 'information age'. This is guided by the idea of Post-Fordism, which I understand to be a reflection of how in post-industrialised societies, like ours, the labour we carry out is very different to the model of Fordism, most prevalent in the 1950s, where workers worked in a production line performing and repeating specialised actions over and over. In Aotearoa much of this kind of Post-Fordist work is done offshore or by machines. In the art world our main mode of working is the maintenance of relationships, or emotional labour often through working in low paid, entry level arts jobs that are fixed term and are viciously competitive to get.

“THE GALLERY GIRL IS LIQUID. SHE IS MOBILE
AND AVAILABLE 24/7”³

The current modes of production we operate under have meant that there is now an indistinguishability between collectivity and individuality and public and private. It often feels like there is never a break from working and performing for others; you need to always be ‘on’ and networking, even online. Curators, other artists, academics watch my Instagram stories and have become my primary audience online, but the pressure to maintain, or rather ‘curate’, these platforms to reflect success and productivity is overwhelming. These interactions especially, at art gallery openings, are strange because they are neither formal nor casual, but I often feel like I am working, because I am maintaining relationships that are not always important to me. Think, for instance, of the way most art world business communications operate, particularly between museum/gallery and artist; they are, as Martha Rosler describes, “neither casual nor quite formal, located in a linguistic space not recently (or ever) inhabited, and generally confined to strangely elaborated greetings and salutations.”⁴ As millenials and as artists, so much of “...our communication takes place in the ‘disembodied’ space of online text.”⁵ Working in this field requires you to be constantly flexible: because no one I know has a permanent contract, we rely on our networks to keep us employed. This is work that Paolo Virno described as being “based on communicative and cognitive abilities, on a high degree of flex-

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³ Fresh and Fruity, “Manifesto volume II, Part Two: The Gallery Girl”, <http://newhive.com/cybertwee/hq-mya-middleton-hana-aoake>

⁴ Rosler, *e flux: What’s Love (or Care, intimacy, Warmth, Affection) Got to Do with it?*, 34

⁵ Ibid, 35

ibility in the deployment of the labour force, and on permanently dealing with the unpredictable or contingency.”⁶There is no division in labour anymore—where is this more apparent than in the way we operate within the arts ecology. By this I mean that we never go to our job as a gallery attendant or a university tutor and that just be it, we are working or clamouring our way towards an end goal that isn’t exactly transparent. As a so-called ‘emerging’ artist I feel the pressure to perform being upper middle class, Pākehā, and being ‘successful’. I often do this subsciously through using signifiers of class and whiteness, such as using social media to associate myself with certain kinds of food, clothing, or the media I am consuming. We “perform” constantly and are never admitted to a space in which we aren’t constantly selling our best selves in order to survive. It is an industry where “etiquette is strangely out of focus, ... where the professional and personal must play nice so frequently.”⁷Working in a knowledge-based, post-industrial economy, where the fields of artistic production and curation appear increasingly narrow,⁸ has meant that we live in a culture where we no longer just work; we perform.⁹ Something I have been trying to address is the uncomfortable tension that exists between the personal and the professional when trying to build meaningful relationships in the art world. I have frequently experienced the feeling of burning myself out and realising that I am working within a community of the exhausted.¹⁰ I have said yes to too many opportunities that were not beneficial

⁶ Lorey, *State of Insecurity: Government of the precarious*, 74

⁷ Kippalani, *ARTSPACE 25: Every cloud has a silver lining*, 19

⁸ *Ibid*, 18

⁹ Jan Verwoert, *e flux: What’s Love (or Care, Intimacy, Warmth, Affection) Got to Do with it?*, 206

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 212

to me in the long run simply from the fear of not belonging to the community I have compromised myself to be a part of. When we perform we are not just “performing”. We are often working overtime and over-producing, adhering to a “just-in time” style of art production, because in this mode of working it is difficult to say “no” when you have the very real fear of not having access to resources and opportunities. In my collaborative work I have been proposing strategies for rejecting this model, instead seeking to bring people together and take care of one another. For instance, some strategies for me have been to use domestic and other non-art spaces to show work, to work with artists I have friendships with and with whom I want to share platforms with, and by having ongoing working relationships with people I truly care about.

I FEEL EXHAUSTED ALL THE TIME.
DON'T YOU?

I often feel exhausted from simply being alive. While studying, my time was fractured between “work” and my “occupation”. Hito Steyerl describes fractured timespace in her essay, “Art of Occupation: Claims for an Autonomous Life,”¹¹ through the example of the Museum/Art Gallery Intern. “She is inside labor but outside remuneration: stuck in a space that includes the outside and excludes the inside simultaneously. As a result, she works to sustain her own occupation.”¹² The remuneration for many of the projects has been minimal, if anything at all, but I continue to work in various differ-

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¹¹ Steyerl, *WORK WORK WORK: A reader on art and labour*, 48

¹² *Ibid*, 48

ent jobs hustling to support my study and my “practice”. We live and work in an economy where our labour is immaterial, our employment precarious and built off of the information we relay to a public audience. What used to be identified as “work” has become increasingly interchangeable with the term “occupation”, though “occupation” and “work” have two very different purposes and meanings.¹³ I work as a dancer, glassy, freelance writer and gardener to support my occupation which is being an artist. All the ‘work’ I do is fragmented, freelance and contractual.¹⁴ An occupation is the opposite of “work”: it keeps people busy rather than giving them paid remuneration.¹⁵ “[T]he traditional work of art has been largely supplanted by art as process—as an occupation.”¹⁶ It’s important to make the distinction between these different modes. The role of the artist in this context has become more expansive than ever and is constantly changing, because it mirrors the nature of our society. Understanding these distinctions has been crucial in illuminating how the conditions of our society, its economy and history, have all affected the way in which I have been able to engage with my MFA and how I align myself and my research politically. I spent a lot of my MFA wondering why we keep making all of these ugly, useless, apolitical objects that only exist within white cube spaces for a very specific and often very white audience. I want instead to create spaces for art that are centered around relationships, not exhausting myself trying to conform to performing the role of an “emerging” artist over producing work that I don’t really care about. Building relationships and working

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¹³ Ibid, 47

¹⁴ Berardi, *WORK WORK WORK: A reader on art and labour*, 91

¹⁵ Steyerl, *WORK WORK WORK: A reader on art and labour*, 48

¹⁶ Ibid, 50

with people is a way for me to consider what art can do and how it can bring people and ideas together creating spaces for criticality and vulnerability. I am more invested in this than the toxic individualism that is embedded within colonial models of “success”.

“..THE MASTER’S TOOLS WILL NEVER
DISMANTLE THE MASTER’S HOUSE.”¹⁷

I live and work in a colonial settler state and study on stolen land that has an under-historicised¹⁸ and violent recent history. As a young Māori person, how do I locate myself in this political landscape, under these labour conditions, and continue to investigate who I am and where my tūrangawaewae is? For me, making work as an indigenous person feels always as though it’s going to be framed as political, even when I specifically want to just exist as an artist, outside of these limited frameworks. Natasha Matila Smith articulates the pressures on indigenous artists to produce a certain kind of work: “there seems to be an unspoken expectation that Indigenous artists should create content that fits within a ‘decolonising’ narrative, with Western curators and audiences frequently associating Indigenous artists with declarative expressions of identity and politics.”¹⁹ I am both Māori and Pākehā, I am light skinned and grew up urbanised and predominantly in Australia. This dislocation is deeply personal, and involves a lifelong journey of reconnection. It is also an experience shared with many other young Māori. I’m bored of talking

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¹⁷ Lorde, *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*, 110-114.

¹⁸ Or over historicised using only imperial historical narratives.

¹⁹ Natasha Matila-Smith, “The quiet need no defense”, <http://unprojects.org.au/magazine/issues/issue-12-1/the-quiet-need-no-defence/>

about what contemporary Māori art is. I want simply to build organic relationships with other artists where my work is treated as being Māori because I am Māori. Like many Māori artists before me, I am consistently grounded by whenua, and finding ways of navigating back to te ao Māori, but use the Pākehā skills I am trained in as a research tool. I am writing and making from the perspective of being Māori, but my research is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism.²⁰ These knowledges are essential in trying to undermine the culturally dominant forces within Aotearoa, but they can't be the only models. As Audre Lorde once said, “..the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house.”²¹ Working in a collaborative manner has been a way of alleviating these pressures. Collaboration is an effective methodology for working toward autonomy, because it disrupts the singular artist narrative. In *Research is ceremony*, Shaun Wilson proposes developing ideas through investing in relationships: “Indigenous epistemology is all about ideas developing through the formation of relationships...”²² I frequently work collaboratively, but the western university framework often expects this type of work to have its authorship demarcated. I want to further dissolve this framework—a fundamentally colonial conception of neoliberal individualism—because as an Indigenous person my inclination is to work collaboratively. When thinking about what collaboration means, I centre my thoughts around how the Māori collective Mata Aho have framed their work: “We produce works with a single collective authorship that are bigger than our individual

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²⁰ Tuhiwai-Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples*. 1

²¹ Lorde, *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*, 110-114.

²² Wilson, *Research is ceremony: indigenous research methods*, 8

²³ Mata Aho, “About”, <https://www.mataahocollective.com/about/>

capabilities.”²³ As an collective working together allows Mata Aho to create together hugely ambitious large scale textile works that blend Matauranga Māori concepts with contemporary materials. For instance their work, *Kiko Moana* (2017), shown as part of Documenta 14 was made of Polyethene tarpaulin and cotton thread and 4 x 11m long. Their process in working together is to work *kanohi ki te kanohi*, because sewing and weaving act as an means to *wānanga* and is embedded within the way Māori share stories and pass down customary knowledges.²⁴

FRESH AND FRUITY IS A SEXY NEW LOOK

The most influential relationship within my practice is my friendship with Mya Morrison-Middleton (Ngāi Tahu) with whom I run the art collective Fresh and Fruity. We have been working together for four years, initially running Fresh and Fruity as an artist run space in Ōtepoti, but since then expanding this into a multi-platform project in which we work both as artists and as curators facilitating other people’s projects. We came together through our shared experiences of being Māori, the dislocation of growing up between Australia and Aotearoa, and studying art history at Otago University. Much of our work is centered around pushing the limits of the institution by critiquing colonial structures of power through text and trying simply to exist and hold space within the white cube, as a non white body. We have done this through facilitating projects for artists outside of institutional environments in spaces like people’s homes or community centres and through engaging in more ephemeral, event-based

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²⁴ Hopkins, “*He wāhine, he whenua, ka ngaro te tangata*”, <https://www.documenta14.de/en/artists/13522/mata-aho-collective>

conversations and readings scattered across the country. We organised workshops on how to support survivors of sexual assault (2015-2017); the *Blame it on the rain* film screening series with JPEG2000 (2017-18); *Clasping hands together under the table*, an exhibition organised with JPEG2000, facilitated by Ōtautahi Kōrerotia, Avon Loop Community Cottage, Ōtautahi (2017); and *AMOR MUNDI: Treat yourself babe*, a self care wānanga with Snakes and Ladders in association with ARTSPACE at Studio One Toi Tū (2017). These events are all very different and some took place with the assistance of bigger institutions and in collaboration with other people.

A big part of Fresh and Fruity (in distinction from other artist run initiatives) has been to actively break down the hierarchies between artists and “curator”. We have tried to work without these hierarchies, by providing a safe platform in which the ideas of the artists are centered and the making of the exhibitions and sometimes the artworks is ongoing collaboration between the curator(s) and the artist(s). We generally work with artists and writers more than once, because these relationships are ongoing. Often in exhibition making we have found that curators don’t respect the development of ideas and relationships when organising projects with their artists. Curators often dictate the way an exhibition comes together, but we have always sought to work with our artists to figure out how our ideas can come together, rather than being an authoritative and uncommunicative figure that selects and positions some works on a wall. We approach working with artists by trying to give them loose parameters, but encourage them more to connect with one another, because we believe that building relationships and creating critical conversations about what is urgent in contemporary art. These loose

parameters often involve inviting artists and/or writers to respond to a text we have written and in doing this we are creating a less contrived structure than a lot of curatorial frameworks, because it enables agency of the participants. We have always done much of our work and communication through Google Docs, because of the geographical restrictions of being based on opposite ends of Te Ika a Maui. This means we can write together and edit each other's sentences live. Of course, the internet provides a connectivity between people through it's immediacy, but we are more interested in using it as a tool to bring people together. The internet is a site for intimacy and sharing, although it's fraught and product of neoliberalism, it still offers the opportunity to share ideas in an immediate way alleviating geographical distances, cultural differences etc. As two indigenous people having digital platforms has meant that we have been able to connect with other indigenous people, artists of colour and Pākehā allies from around the world to create meaningful dialogues around what colonialism has meant within our lives. This kind of connectivity and solidarity has been transformative for both our practices as artists, but also as individuals constantly looking for ways to have difficult conversations and decolonize. We hope that the launch of our website in November 2018 will facilitate the maintenance of these relationships, and enable us to provide more opportunities for artists to show and make work. In all our projects we are committed to creating spaces to share, through food and the sharing of ideas, to build a stronger and (hopefully) more expansive community. This way of working is deeply engrained in our belief that "[t]he love we make in community stays with us wherever we go".²⁵



FIGURE ONE: Dreary Modern Life Launch (2015),
Time Out Bookstore, Tāmaki Makaurau.

“ABUSE OF POWER COMES AS NO SURPRISE”²⁶:
ON WRITING AS VERB

A project we undertook last year, which has been incredibly influential over my more recent output of work, was *Māwhero* (2017) at Toi Moroki COCA (Centre of Contemporary Art) in Ōtautahi, Aotearoa. In this work we had three pink squares painted in a row on the wall; over three months, each time we visited the gallery we wrote in pencil about things we had experienced historically and our thoughts and feelings around the colonial landscape of Ōtautahi.

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²⁶ Holzer, “Truisms T-shirts (1980-),” <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/73847>

Writing on the wall came from previous projects I had undertaken during the exhibitions *To and Fro* (2014) ARTSPACE; *Now On* (2015) Rm Gallery; and *Soft Indicator* North Projects (2016). It was also a way for us to physically occupy the space when we weren't physically present, much like Faith Wilson's *Open letter to Simon Denny* and *All that was left was hope* (2016), which was part of the *New Perspectives* exhibition at ARTSPACE. In this work Wilson wrote in pen on a makeshift wall a letter addressed to artist and co-curator of that show, Simon Denny. Wilson also presented a video work where she was dressed in a white dress wearing headphones emerges slowly from the ocean, she then pulls the headphone off her head. Wilson started an Instagram account titled @fucksimondenny where she posted photos she found of Denny and photos of herself being both adoring and antagonistic towards Denny, whose body represents the coloniser. Denny is one of the most internationally successful New Zealand artists, but operates from a place of privilege, as a white male artist. His work in my opinion is often framed as being "political", but often reads instead as distant, cold and apolitical. Wilson's body as a self-proclaimed afakasi Sāmoan-European woman is in stark contrast to Denny's white, straight, cis, male body. The video work to me signified the way in which Pākehā, especially in the art world do not want to listen to or meaningfully engage with what their whiteness and privilege means within the context of Aotearoa as a settler state. *Open letter to Simon Denny* revolved around exploring the idea of whiteness and privilege, by satirically confronting Denny's positionality as a highly regarded artist who had been afforded the power of selecting a group of "emerging" artists with whom would be attached to his name as an art star. Whiteness

is not neutral or apolitical, and by writing physically writing on a white wall in a white cube and centering her brown body within this space Wilson articulated the power dynamics between herself and Denny. Wilson did this within a space of vulnerability and intimacy, by using her own body and the experiences it carries. Our use of text has come from a desire to make it a more active and dynamic form to work with. When we write an essay, for instance, we consider this an artwork that can be read aloud or written on to a wall or printed on fabric. We are interested in how text and language can activate a dialogue within and outside of the gallery, which is why much of our writing projects have sprung from combining personal anecdotes, theory, scripts, advertising, Twitter, and our nostalgia for the beginning of social media, particularly websites like Myspace. My interest in language has been continuously rejuvenated by the artist Jenny Holzer and her projects *Truisms* (1977-79) and *Inflammatory Essays* (1979-82). The *Truisms* series uses the immediacy and simplicity of just text without an image to articulate the boundary of how we perceive the “truth”, but within a post-modern landscape. The *Truisms* series involved Holzer writing poetic slogans, such as “ABUSE OF POWER COMES AS NO SURPRISE”²⁷ and “ROMANTIC LOVE WAS INVENTED TO MANIPULATE WOMEN”²⁸ and printing them on posters before posting them around New York city in the late 1970s. These were cliches that could be either read as representing everything right or wrong in the world. Her work existed outside of the gallery and confronted the general public about truths they perhaps didn’t want to hear. These posters appeared like

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ Holzer, “ROMANTIC LOVE WAS DESIGNED TO MANIPULATE WOMEN” <https://twitter.com/jennyholzer/status/12998939418558464?lang=en>

advertising media, or like a preacher spreading gospel, much of these words were known truths that still resonate within our political climate. In this “#metoo” context Aotearoa has been sadly lagging behind, due to our defamation laws. Holzer’s work offers a way for me to reflect upon how we discuss power dynamics within the insidious rape culture that we exist within. *Māwhero*, as a writing project, enabled me to share with Mya and a broader audience my experiences of alienation growing up between Te Wai Pounamu and Australia as someone who is mixed race. However, doing this kind of vulnerable work within a Pākehā institution was very isolating. COCA (Centre for Contemporary Art, Ōtautahi) tried and failed to uphold tikanga by developing a safer spaces protocol²⁹, a document called “Holding space for cultural health and safety” but it didn’t keep us safe. After a blessing was enacted by a kaumatua, it was drawn to our attention that a work in the exhibition contained menstrual blood. At this point we were called on as advisors, despite neither of us being mana whenua to Ōtautahi, and unfairly asked to perform cultural labour without any acknowledgment for being put in this compromising position. For me personally, this highlighted how removed the art world is from a te ao Māori worldview, and the limited archetype informing how many contemporary curators view what a Māori artist is. This is also an example of a time we have had

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²⁹ In general, I think it is crucial to the integrity of a gallery to be constantly thinking of ways it can be safer, whether this is in terms of excluding abusive people from their spaces who might cause harm to that community, or in terms of understanding what cultural safety might mean for non-Pākehā, or just generally making people feel comfortable, especially staff and minorities. A ‘safe space’ is never constant, but an accountable space should be what galleries are working towards, rather than reverting to meaningless ‘safe space policies’, which are never properly implemented because they can never be maintained.

to educate Pākehā curators on ways they can work with indigenous artists without putting pressure on them to constantly make work that addresses “decolonisation”, because “despite the best efforts of contemporary Pākehā curators to decolonise spaces, what results is often a recurring tokenistic representation of the Indigenous body.”³⁰ We were, however, able to draw on and grow from this experience to ensure we are never put in this position again; it has also helped us figure out healthier ways for us to work with artists, so that they have more agency and feel better supported.



FIGURE TWO: Ephemeral text written on the gallery walls. Toi Moroki CoCA - 2017. Photo: Janneth Gil

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³⁰ Matila-Smith, “The quiet need no defence”, <http://unprojects.org.au/magazine/issues/issue-12-1/the-quiet-need-no-defence/>

THE LIMITS OF AUTONOMY:
THE IMPOSTER SYNDROME

A huge part of my collaboration with Mya has been the permission to tell my truths and share with someone who supports and loves me. Her support was essential for my well being in the beginning of my MFA, when I was prevented from making work for almost four months while myself, Bridget Reweti (an invited contributor) and a number of people inside the university authored a “research protocol”. This was because, while enrolled at Massey, I had made a three-part installation work titled *The Imposter Syndrome* for an exhibition titled *Dark Objects* curated by Faith Wilson for the Dowse Art Museum in 2017. This work was recalled and destroyed after the gallery and myself were threatened with litigation for “defamation of character”. The contents of which I cannot discuss, but suffice to say it involved recalling a traumatic experience I had had with a well known and very successful New Zealand artist. Because the content of the work was based upon my own experiences, its destruction imposed a kind of grieving period over the first part of my MFA. I feel a lot of guilt over the controversy my work in *Dark Objects* stirred, because it took away from the impact of having an exhibition of all non-Pākehā artists, whose works were beautiful.

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LOCATING A WHAKAPAPA: REFLECTIONS ON
THE WORK OF DIANE PRINCE

A project Fresh and Fruity undertook at the end of 2017 was an essay for HAMSTER journal titled *Please walk on me*. It is a lyric essay that blurs different kinds of writing, including script writing,

poetry, anecdote, and art historical meditations. We used this opportunity to discuss issues around the representation of Māori and other indigenous artists both within galleries and within society, by looking at what tino rangatiratanga meant to us. Researching this project was a profound experience for me. I researched the work of Diane Prince (Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Whatua), a senior multidisciplinary Māori artist, who is also a weaver, a writer, an academic, an activist, an educator, a mother, and a grandmother. Prince has had to have an expansive practice in order to support herself and because of her commitment to and interest in contributing to the community around her.

I was particularly drawn to her work, *Flagging the future: Te Kiritangata – The last palisade* (1995), which was part of an exhibition titled *Korurangi: New Māori Art* curated by George Hubbard at the Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki. This was one of the first first shows of contemporary Māori art in this country. *Flagging the future: Te Kiritangata* criticised the loss and confiscation of Māori land by the Crown over the last century. *Flagging the future: Te Kiritangata – The last palisade* was a mixed media installation work featuring weaving, found objects, dried harakeke flowers (Kōrari), and had a New Zealand flag lying on the floor stencilled with the words “Please walk on me”, inviting gallery attendees to walk on the flag. During the course of the exhibition, this element of the work was heavily criticised and debated, and one visitor eventually laid a formal complaint with the police. The gallery was advised that the work was in breach of the Flags, Emblems and Names Protection Act (1981), and that the flag would need to be removed or the gal-

lery and artist could face prosecution. After consultation with Prince with the gallery it was decided that the entire work be removed, a decision interpreted by the art community as censorship. Prince saw herself first and foremost as an activist, stating that, “I am not an artist. The flag is just a protest work suitable for display.”³¹ Prince’s work can be seen as embodying tino rangatiratanga in the way that Alice Te Punga Somerville describes it: “tino rangatiratanga in action, a visible claiming of the right to control and present our own image and material in the ways we deem most suitable, but using self-determined processes.”³² The controversy surrounding the work seemed to overshadow both the valid critique and anger registered in Prince’s work, as well as overlooking the numerous other Māori artists in the show, thereby distorting the impact of one of the first shows of contemporary Māori art in this country.

In researching Prince’s work I felt so much solidarity with her experience of being censored via legal means and having her work distract from the work of other artists in an important exhibition—an experience which is upsetting, uncomfortable, and frustrating. Becoming aware of her work and that of many other Māori women artists, like Shona Ranpiri-Davies, Emily Karaka, and Maureen Lander, has helped Mya and I discover models for how we might like to work. Through this research, Fresh and Fruity started the process of trying to build a database or a whakapapa for our peer group, because much of the research we have undertaken is not available online—it’s in the basement of different archives and libraries that are accessible only if you know how to access them. This process came from engag-

³¹ Newth, Kim and Fisher, David, “Flag ‘art’ just a protest”, 21

³² Somerville, Alice Te Punga, *Resistance: An Indigenous response to Neoliberalism*, 91

ing with the scholarship of young art historians like Taarati Taiaroa (Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Apa), whose research attempted to chart the evolution of Māori art exhibition making. Fresh and Fruity will continue to build this archive, which currently exists simply as a list of almost 350 Māori artists. Finding these artists is a way for us to centre tino rangatiratanga within our practice, because it's a way of rejecting the eurocentric art historical education we have had, and a way of drawing strength from these works and the strong wāhine toa who created them.

FIGURE FOUR: Newth, Kim and Fisher, David
“NEW FLAG ATTACK BY RADICAL”, *Sunday News*
(Auckland, Aotearoa), October 29, 1995, 21

ENDLESS LOVE

My interest in imagining the potentiality of tino rangatiratanga and gaining a sense of autonomy within the arts ecology was further developed throughout a research project I undertook from October-December 2017 with artist Callum Devlin in the collective Endless Love. This project titled *Blueprint for an ARI* was centered around the histories of Artist Run Initiatives (ARI) in Aotearoa, and involved us writing a list of every ARI project we could discover within Aotearoa and interviewing a number of people who ran very different spaces around Aotearoa. This resulted in the production of a blueprint describing and imagining the different kinds of self-organised projects artists could undertake, while referring back to mostly now-defunct galleries, as well as reflecting upon the failures and successes within our own experiences in running spaces. This project was incredibly generative for helping me refine the kind of artist run organising I am interested in, specifically collective-based or spaceless projects and projects based in domestic spaces. Although ARIs are Pākehā initiatives, that are derived from imperial institutional gallery structures, I still see the potential in these spaces to allow artists to imagine projects that could not happen in institutions. They are so important for the development of young emerging artists, because they give them space to grow their practice. But as a Māori these spaces are often still alienating for me to encounter, so I have begun to research other models such as Tāneatua Gallery, a space based in Whakatāne which is a Tūhoe led community initiative. I am interested not only in spaceless and domestic based artist initiatives, but also in Māori led projects which centre Māori, of which I feel there so much more work to be undertaken.

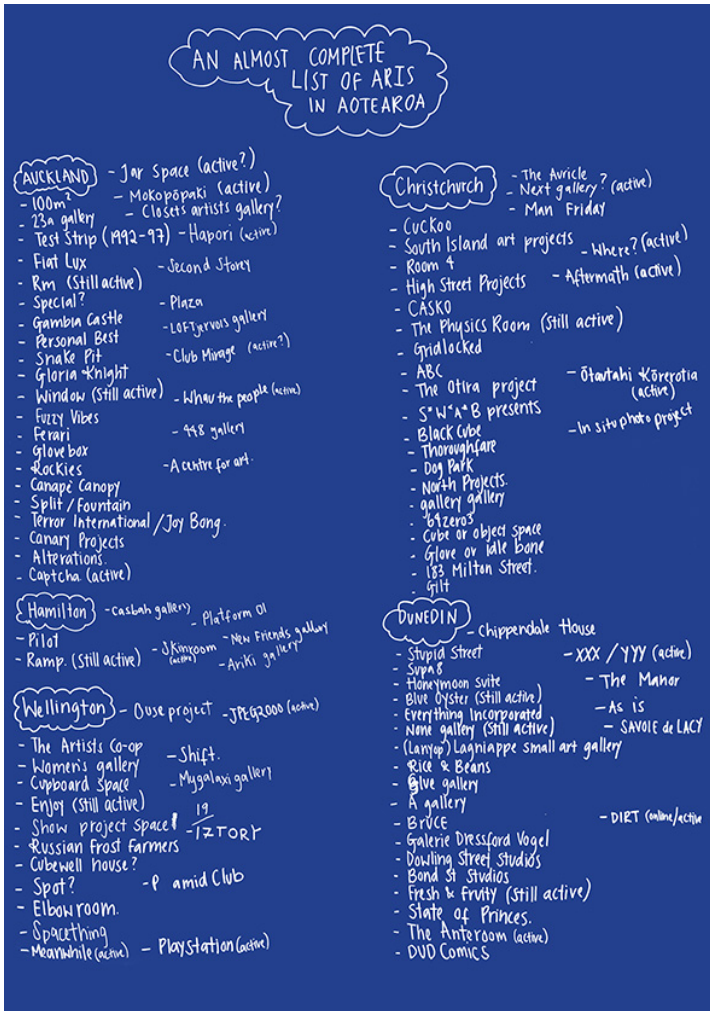


FIGURE FIVE: ENDLESS LOVE, *Blueprint for an ARI*, designed by Callum Devlin for FIRST DRAFT ARI, Sydney, Australia (2017), <http://firstdraft.org.au/exhibitions/writers-program-blueprint-for-an-ari/>

HEARTACHE FESTIVAL

Much of the research undertaken this year has been deeply informed by how to center love and care within my practice, which has been shaped by personal grief and the process of reading and re-reading bell hook's seminal book, *All About Love: New Visions*.³³ In this book hooks discusses a number of things, but the most poignant part for me was her discussion of the way we can come together through hope, because “[w]ithout hope, we cannot return to love.”³⁴ The idea of love, and the loss of love or the aching of love, came at a time when many people around me were hurting. I saw this as an opportunity for sharing space with others, to share and enact modes of hope and care for each other.



FIGURE SIX: A banner for *Heartache Festival* (March 2018)

³³ I want to note that this book discusses mostly romantic heteronormative love, which hooks acknowledges as being a Western construct.

³⁴ hooks, *All About Love: New Visions*, 219

In February 2018 I started working with Ali Burns on Heartache Festival (March 2018). The project was first formed through initiating a publication entitled *Shared Vulnerabilities*, for which I invited a number of poets and artists from all over the world to contribute a piece of writing relating to heartbreak, loss, grief, heartache, and/or crushes. The publication included writing by Ali Burns, Georgia Lockie, Zarah Butcher McGunnigle, Anna Rankin, Natasha Matila-Smith, Tayi Tibble, Anni Puolakka, Autumn Royal, Faith Wilson, George Watson, Hannah Mettner, Isabella Mahoney, Jessica Francis, Jordana Bragg, Mya Morrison-Middleton, Katherine Botten, Noelia Portela, Piupiu-Maya Turei, Ruby Read, Vanessa Crowskey, and myself. It was designed by Josephine Jelicich. This process came about through my needing to share how I was feeling and through the relationships I had built with each of these people through us sharing our grief in private. Being able to bring these amazing writers together felt urgent too, because I felt that they each were so vulnerable in their writing and that despite the geographical distances between all of us this act of sharing brought us together. At one point in this email thread one of the writers started to share some of the ways they had been behaving and struggling, which led to almost every other person relaying a story of a struggle they had undertaken. This of course was a private interaction via email, but felt like such a privilege for me to witness. Heartache Festival was an event of art, music, and poetry held over one day between two houses in Newtown and Berhampore, here in Pōneke. We realised how distanced the art, music, and literary communities are from one another, and so wanted to cross-pollinate these different communi-

ties into one event, which was able to happen because each person invited to participate brought with them their support network of friends and family. It was important that we carried this event out in domestic sites, rather than a gallery or music venue, in order to help people feel more comfortable to share vulnerability, and to facilitate an expansive audience. Domestic spaces by their very nature are not neutral or apolitical spaces like a music venue and especially not like a gallery. Domestic spaces are homes, they are sites of intimacy; we felt that in order to allow for the creation of a safe space³⁵ to share vulnerability and the tenderness of experiences such as grief, heartache, loneliness, love, etc., we needed to be in someone's home. We were fortunate enough to have people in our peer group who allowed us to share their private spaces with us. It was important for us to draw together different communities and practitioners, ranging from musicians (Slow, Namesake, DJ Panda, Alexa Casino, and Astro Children), writers who read their work (Freya Daly-Sadgrove, Hannah Mettner, Georgia Lockie, Vanessa Crofskey, Mya Morrison-Middleton, Jordana Bragg, Tayi Tibble, and myself) and artists (Lucy Fulford, Joanne Francey, Isabella Loudon, Audrey Baldwin, Louisa Beatty, and Natasha Matila-Smith). Friendship, especially my relationship with Ali Burns, was the starting point for thinking about how we share these moments of grief and pain and how

³⁵ I find this term very loaded. As I discussed earlier a safe space is never a constant, especially culturally for indigenous people and non-Pākehā. This kind of reflection is so important though because we live within the context of both colonisation and rape culture, which is an epidemic that we have inherited through the act of colonisation. We live in a society where acts of violence are embedded into the structure of our society so much that it feels like we are suffocating. I believe in creating accountable spaces that imagine what a safe space can look like. I use this term to denote the idea of a safer space for expressing emotionality and vulnerability free from people who enact violence against our bodies.

opening up spaces in which we can share these emotions can be powerful and important for collectivity and healing. This was reiterated in the artists we selected to work with for the festival, with each presentation of work imbued with grief, humour, and brutal honesty. This was particularly prominent in Joanne Francey's *You can leave me on read, but you can't uneat my ass* (2018). This work was a printout of an entire relationship's worth of Facebook messages, which was taped together and overlaid with the words "You can leave me on read but you can't uneat my ass" written in pink glitter. The festival itself was a way of bringing together a broad group of femmes from all over the world to share, not just within Pōneke. This was sometimes funny, sometimes sad, but always built on a collective sense of being able to share with others. There was one moment, before it was my turn to read, where I could not stop crying, but hearing Tayi Tibble read one of her poems made me begin crying instead from laughing so hard. We all experience grief, but processing this range of emotions in a collective space where you are given permission to share with others is transformative and ultimately healing (at least it was for me and many others).

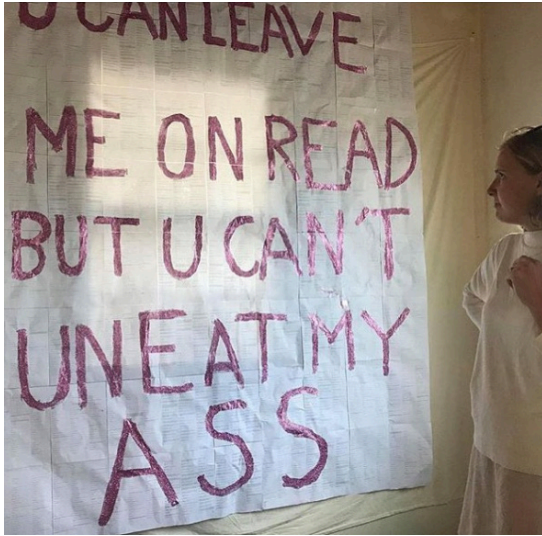


FIGURE SEVEN: Joanne Francey's *You can leave me on read, but you can't uneat my ass* (2018) at Heartache festival



FIGURE EIGHT: The band Slow performing at *Heartache Festival*, March 2018

BEACHGIRL GOES TO DISNEYLAND:
A CONVERSATION WITH A BOT POSING
AS YOUR EX LOVER

An important part of decolonisation³⁶ for me is to understand the many ways that patriarchal forces have prevented us from knowing and practising healthy ways of loving others and loving and forgiving ourselves and those we love(d) who have hurt us. Following a great sense of loss in my life I felt compelled to write something critical of assumed heteronormativity and masculinity, and how destructive they can be within a relationship. Writing and performing *Beachgirl goes to disneyland: a conversation with a bot posing as your ex lover* twice this year was a huge undertaking. This project was a three act scripted performance I wrote between November 2016 and early January 2017, and has been realised in three iterations: performed as a reading at WORM gallery in Rotterdam NL, performed as an full play at MEANWHILE gallery in Pōneke, and is to be published in the next issue of *Matters* journal. *Beachgirl goes to disneyland: a conversation with a bot posing as your ex lover* references Georges Bataille, Anne Carson, The Bernadette Corporation, Dodi Bellamy, Tiqqun, bell hooks, Salt 'n' Pepper, Mariah Carey, and many other writers. Its writing was fuelled by both the personal failures of many of my romantic relationships, but also the way in which techno-capitalism and the ongoing effects of colonialism have shaped western ideas of love and identity. There are lessons I am still learning about how patriarchal and thereby colonial forces have informed the way we love, but performing this play pushed my research into looking at the way technology has shaped love. For instance, dating in 2018 feels much like online shopping.

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³⁶ Decolonisation is an ongoing process which will take my lifetime of unlearning.

“‘[M]eeting and mating’ have always been socially organized... what we find desirable is conditioned by culture.”³⁷ Matching with someone via apps like Bumble or Tinder is structured in accordance with the principles of mass consumption based on an economy of abundance, endless choice, efficiency, rationalization, selective targeting, and standardization.³⁸ This is why much of the script, especially the dialogue of character “Dylan”, sounds robotic.



FIGURE NINE: *Beachgirl goes to disneyland: a conversation with a bot posing as your ex lover* performed with Emma Katene (Ngāti Kahungunu) and Jordana Bragg (Ngāti Porou). Sound by Emi Pogoni and Rob Thorne (Ngāti Tūmūtumu). Performed at MEANWHILE gallery, Wellington, Aotearoa (June-July 2018), Photo by Joshua Lewis

The script was structured in three parts and was nonlinear. Each scene was to be performed on a different night and repeated over and over again until either something happened (assuming an intervention of some kind could take place) or the performers had had enough. The audience were allowed to leave whenever they be-

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³⁷ Horning, “Single Servings”, <https://thenewinquiry.com/single-servings/>

³⁸ Ibid

came bored. Performing this play was emotionally and physically demanding, both for the audience and the performers, so I tried to give everyone as much agency as I could. I did this by giving the audience the option to leave whenever they liked, and by attempting to subvert the typical relationship between performer/audience, by making the audience a part of the work. I wanted this work to subvert how theatre is typically understood to function, and to explore what happens when you present theatre in a space and for an audience that is not part of the theatre community. I am interested in endurance as a mode of performance because of the way it allows meaning and tension to build. The way I wrote and thought about this project was deeply informed through my training in physical theatre and dance, particularly Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* and *Play* and Pina Bausch's *Rite of Spring*—as a teenager these works were very influential for my understanding of the power of performance. They also explore how language often does not suffice when describing an event, but how through repetition we can come to find new meanings. Moreover, seeing how long I could endure the repetition of some of the most painful conversations of my life was a way of apologising to myself.³⁹

³⁹ As a young woman I have been socialised to constantly apologise even when something is not worth apologising for. I found this to be true especially within heteronormative romantic relationships with Pākehā men and in terms of grappling with identity of being both Māori and Pākehā, but feeling displaced from both, which has caused me to constantly feel apologetic for my own body and existence. I feel I constantly apologise for things that are completely out of my control and cause me great whakamā. I have often taken on this need to apologise too, due to feeling the effects of intergenerational trauma, grief and shame I have inherited through the experiences of my whānau. I feel like apologising for me has acted as a way of processing grief. This need to apologise came out of a project I undertook where I wrote the words “I’m sorry” over and over again in a Google Doc. Occasionally I added the phrases “I’m sorry I exist even though you could’ve killed me” and “I’m sorry your tupuna tried to have my tupuna killed”.



FIGURE TEN: *Beachgirl goes to disneyland: a conversation with a bot posing as your ex lover* performed with Emma Katene (Ngāti Kahungunu) and Jordana Bragg (Ngāti Porou). Sound by Emi Pogoni and Rob Thorne (Ngāti Tumutumu). Performed at MEANWHILE gallery, Wellington, Aotearoa (June-July 2018), Photo by Joshua Lewis

This was then printed into an 5 long scroll for the exhibition *There is a pain - so utter* curated by Beth Rose Caird at Gertrude Contemporary, Naarm. In this exhibition I asked another artist, Brian Fuata to read this aloud in my absence. The term “I’m sorry” is a loaded term in the context of Australia, because of both the day of remembrance “National Sorry day” for the stolen aboriginal generation and the emptiness of former Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd apologising for the mistreatment of Aboriginal Australian people. Having grown up in Australia during the implementation of the “National Sorry Day” I felt a deep resonance with the frustration experienced by First Nation people living in Australia, because what does saying “sorry” really do? I feel deeply sceptical at all attempts of reconciliation in the context of all settler colonies, because even if Pākehā apologise or attempt to make amends or even just acknowledge something, it isn’t ever going to be enough. Colonial policies still impact our communities. One only needs to look at the rates of poverty, crime, incarceration, disease and life expectancy to know that saying sorry doesn’t do much to help empower our communities.

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The dialogue⁴⁰ is intended to blur and challenge the way we are taught to understand the structure of a play as entertainment. This was not and is not a work of entertainment. My desire was to disrupt the institution of the fictitious split between public and private, between political and moral, and crack open a conversation around what these tensions mean under in terms of the way we relate to our bodies and each other.⁴¹ Real bodies are hiding in the text.⁴² I am interested especially in how our patriarchal imperial society has shaped the way my body is viewed as always being 'other' or 'exotic', especially by Pākehā men on apps like Tinder or Bumble, where it feels sometimes like you are talking to a chatbot. I wanted to understand too what it meant for me to be in love with a coloniser and to be broken by him, before being allowed to be healed by both the love of friends and family and my relationship to Papatūānuku as an indigenous body. The dialogue is stunted because it has been collaged together using fragments from real conversations with people, conversations with bots and apps like Siri, lyrics from songs, quotes from writers like Tiqqun, The Bernadette Corporation, and Dodi Bellamy, meditations on capitalism, Māori mythology, and reflections upon the way in which heteronormative romantic love exists through technology and the expectation on femme bodies to provide endless emotional care to men. I also hoped to reflect upon the lifelong journey of reconnection to te ao Māori that young Māori have to navigate while within and after the dissolution of romantic relationships with non-Māori.

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⁴⁰ See Appendix Two

⁴¹ Tiqqun, *Introduction to civil war*, 88

⁴² Acker & Wark, *I'm very into you*, 70



FIGURE ELEVEN: *Beachgirl goes to disneyland: a conversation with a bot posing as your ex lover* performed with Emma Katene (Ngāti Kahungunu) and Jordana Bragg (Ngāti Porou). Sound by Emi Pogoni and Rob Thorne (Ngāti Tumutumu). Performed at MEANWHILE gallery, Wellington, Aotearoa (June-July 2018), Photo by Joshua Lewis



FIGURE TWELVE: *Beachgirl goes to disneyland: a conversation with a bot posing as your ex lover* performed with Emma Katene (Ngāti Kahungunu) and Jordana Bragg (Ngāti Porou). Sound by Emi Pogoni and Rob Thorne (Ngāti Tumutumu). Performed at MEANWHILE gallery, Wellington, Aotearoa (June-July 2018), Photo by Joshua Lewis

When developing *Beachgirl does to Disneyland: A conversation with a Bot posing as your ex lover* I thought extensively about what is left after a performance. I documented both iterations using a film camera. During the second iteration I encased another actor (Emma Katene) in clay, and over the duration of the performance she slowly crawled her way out. We left the residue of this action in the gallery for the next two performances (the set remained relatively the same after each cycle). My use of clay throughout was inspired by the ambitious processes of the Dutch artist, Alexandra Engelfriet, particularly her project *Tranchée* (2013). *Tranchée* came out of a residency the artist undertook in the Le Vent des Forêts near Lorraine, France, where a 50m long trench was dug out of limestone on top of a hill. Engel-

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friet spent four days pressing unfired bricks into the trench using 20 tons of clay. These were eventually fired, I was more interested in the process of how it was made and seeing Engelfriet's body pressed against the clay. My interest in this material came from Māori mythology, in particular the story of how Tāne carved the first woman, Hinētītama, from the clay of his mother, Papatūānuku. I have used clay throughout my Masters to signify this story, and also as a way of suggesting a performative action or gesture may have taken place. Through this decision during the performances I became invested in trace, in the construction of the trace of physicality, and in finding ways to posit my body in relation to Papatūānuku using natural materials. In later works I started to further investigate these materials, including ice, clay, and kawakawa. I am invested in working in a mode that is intuitive and investigates the physical and/or sculptural and sociological qualities of materials like honey and unfired clay

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FIGURE THIRTEEN: Screenshot, Chrétien, Estelle, "Alexandra Engelfriet's Tranchée (2013)", Vimeo video, 13:07, posted by Estelle Chrétien, 2013, <https://vimeo.com/70952187>

CRYING FOR ANA MENDIETA

The materials I started using during the production of *Beachgirl goes to disneyland: a conversation with an bot posing as your ex lover* were deeply informed by my interest in the artist Ana Mendieta. Mendieta's practice was intuitive, embodied, and spoke directly to her relationship with Papatūānuku. I have always been drawn to her series, *Untitled (Silueta series)* (1973-78). This photographic series saw Mendieta using her body to physically shape traces of her body shape into the Earth and adorning herself with plants indigenous to the area. These bodily traces were taken from an assortment of materials, including flowers, tree branches, moss, gunpowder, and fire, sometimes combined with blood or animals' hearts, or handprints that she indented into the ground. Her arms outstretched sought to represent the merging of the Earth and sky. In Robert Katz's seminal book, *Naked by the window: The Fatal marriage of Carl Andre and Ana Mendieta*, Katz speaks of the series: "The use of her silhouette to transcend her own body spoke of a unity with nature, not as one woman's yearning or even her gender's, but as a quest of humankind."⁴³ Ana Mendieta's use of plants and her body in much of her work from this period also acted as a means for her to reconnect with her dislocated Cuban heritage, through her many trips to Mexico and research into Cuban and Caribbean religious rituals. **"Working in art is about using materials that I have just discovered for myself, materials that I am only just in control of"**⁴⁴ "Working in art is about using materials that I have just discovered for myself, materials that I am only just in control of. The rush of excitement is in the handling of these

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⁴³Katz, *Naked by the window: The fatal marriage of Carl Andre and Ana Mendieta*, 146

⁴⁴ Rapira-Davies, "Native Bird Productions by Shona Rapira-Davies and Diane Prince"

new materials without having previous background knowledge and there is a continuing rush of anxiety and fear of inevitable failure—so that when I sometimes succeed there is an adrenaline rush that is powerful and satisfying—for a little while.”⁴⁵ This quote is taken from the Māori artist Shona Rapira-Davies, describing the uncertainty or potentiality for failure in her practice. All of my work is structured around the potential for failure, because they are experiments. My use of natural materials came as a way to reconnect with te ao Māori, to assert my own agency by exploring their potentiality as materials, and as a way to stop making artworks which I considered to be wasteful. But making should always be imbued with an element of failure or risk. I am not a formally trained artist, I don’t want to make a perfect plinth for my perfect sculpture to sit on top of—I want to play with and be experimental with the materials I use.

Much of my research over the last two years has sought to connect with Papatūānuku. I began by collecting Kawakawa. In the process of using this plant material I had to consult with a tuakana figure from my whānau to ensure I followed correct tikanga in using this very loaded material. Over the summer I dried around three kilograms of Kawakawa and ground it into dust; I also began making Kawakawa tea, oil, and balm using water, olive and canola oils, and beeswax. Kawakawa has been used by Māori for centuries as a rongoā; it’s also a potent material used by some iwi during tangihanga ceremonies. As stated earlier, much of my research during this time was driven by grief, so after encountering and learning more about Kawakawa, using it became important as a healing process for me. It

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⁴⁵ Ibid

is also a plant used as a perfume, and one of my iwis, Ngāti Raukawa, takes its name from the story of Māhinaarangi, a woman whose perfume made Tūrongo fall madly in love with her. For the exhibition *<Bright Cave>* organised by Robyn Maree Pickens, I presented dried Kawakawa and a text of three poems. I see the use of Kawakawa as a way of transforming the space. The smell of this Kawakawa lingered throughout the gallery.



FIGURE FOURTEEN: *Untitled* (2018), dried and ground up Kawakawa in *<Bright Cave>* organised by Robyn Maree Pickens, Blue Oyster Art Project Space.

GEORGE WATSON IS MY FAVOURITE SCORPIO

An artist who I have always looked up to and have recently worked with is Georgina Rose Watson (Ngāti Whatua). Watson works organically, often through foraging and experimenting with new materials and trying to learn new skills. Her practice is expansive and always evolving, and includes, poetry, video, sculpture, editing, curating, formal writing, and gardening. Much of the concerns inherent within her work are also constant concerns of mine. My final presentation came out of consolidating a number of works I had made over the year and writing a text in response to Watson's *Larks in the dawn* in Un magazine 12.1 (2018).⁴⁶ *Larks in the dawn* was an art project that utilised text, a selection of which I read aloud at *Indigenous Futurisms* at the Basement Theatre as part of the closing of the play *Maumahara Girlie*. As a text it blurs neat categorisation. The parts I was most drawn to was George's consideration of the rāhui imposed on the Waitakere Ranges following the progression of Kāuri dieback. I was so deeply affected emotionally by her work that I wrote a text, *Body Fluids are poetic, not slime, but nectar*⁴⁷ in response to it. *Body Fluids are Poetic, not slime but nectar* was published online at Window gallery as an interactive text. *Body Fluids are Poetic, not slime but nectar* is fifteen part text work that you click through with an different colour indicating a different section. For this project I collaborated with web designer and Window co-curator, William Linscott. Every part of *Body Fluids are Poetic, not slime but nectar* ends with the phrase "Please help me I am hurting very much", so

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⁴⁶ Watson, "Larks in the Dawn", <http://unprojects.org.au/magazine/issues/issue-12-1/larks-in-the-dawn/>

at the bottom of ran along the bottom of the page these words were animated. Again this was an decision I made in keeping in mind my interest in repetition. Within these sections I embedded a number of links attached to certain parts of the text, some of these were pieces of writing I wrote over the last two years, articles I've read and youtube videos. Making *Body fluids are poetic, not slime but nectar* interactive was a decision based around my interest in interconnecting my work with bigger stories outside of myself through the internet.⁴⁸ In September 2017 George and I collaborated on a text-based project called *Running Rings for Ipukarea*, which was curated by Te Inuwai Nathan and Ellie-Lee Duncan with Cora-Allan Wickliffe, Georgina Rose Watson, Essa Ranapiri, and Tāwhanga Nōpera at [tacit gallery], Hamilton, New Zealand. I am unfamiliar with Kirikiriroa; I wanted to work with George, because she grew up and studied Kirikiriroa. For this project we wrote a collaborative text responding backwards and forwards to one another.⁴⁹ We then printed twenty copies of this text and, using beeswax that George had been given, we dipped and coated each piece of paper in beeswax and colour pigment that had been mixed with blue pigment, to give them a green colour. This meant that each sheet of paper is different and imbued with dead bee carcasses to allude to both their importance to our ecosystem and also that honey bees are introduced, not native.

⁴⁷ Bellamy, *Academonia*, 35

⁴⁸ I liked also the idea of people being able to see how many different tabs I have open on my laptop.

⁴⁹ This methodology of writing by responding backwards and forwards to each other is the way in which I also work with Mya Morrison-Middleton. It is also a process I undertook while participating in *Call and Response* (2017-18), a project initiated by Brian Fuata in 2010. *Call and Response* is a project where Fuata writes a piece of writing that you are then encouraged to respond to for an unspecified amount of time.

BODY FLUIDS ARE POETIC,
NOT SLIME BUT NECTAR

For my final project, *Body fluids are poetic, not slime but nectar*, I sought to bring together a number of my writing projects and work with plants that were made throughout the year for different projects in both Aotearoa and Australia. It was very important for me to show my final work outside of a gallery and in my home. Using domestic and/or non-art spaces has been a huge part of my practice for a number of years, especially when organising events. It's important for me to articulate the differences in my approach to using these kinds of sites in comparison to projects like Luke Willis Thompson's *inthisholeonthisislandwhereiam* (2012). The iteration of this work I saw was in 2014 during the Walters Prize at the Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki. It involved viewers signing up for a taxi ride to Thompson's family home. I feel that this project not only alienated the audience, but was exploitative of Thompson's family. For me being able to show work in my home is based around a desire to share and host people in a space I feel comfortable in, which is guided by the maintenance of relationships with my flatmates. When you come to my home I'm going to welcome you and feed you and provide you with some context for how to navigate my installation. I will not leave you to roam aimlessly around my home like Thompson. *Body Fluids are Poetic, not slime but nectar* is based on my writing projects, but is intended to incorporate the multiple facets of my practice. I want to articulate the chaotic and gentle aspects of my work, by illuminating my concern for the environment as someone who is tangata whenua, particularly my concern for the rāhui in place in the Waitakere Ranges. It contains the following materials: 5m long

paper scroll, clay, Kawakawa, Kawakawa dust, gold leaf, beeswax, honey, clay, pencil (text), scoria rocks, sprouting potatoes, Kūmara and wrought iron. Many of these works have been shown already in different contexts—my approach to using them for this project has been to experiment with where they could be placed around my house. For instance I am reshowing work I made with Georgina Rose Watson called *Running Rings*, which consist of texts we wrote while responding to one another both *kanohi ki te kanohi* and over Google Docs. I also included some A3 sheets of some short poems I wrote for <*Bright Cave*>, which are poems that deeply informed the beginning of writing *Body fluids are poetic, not slime but nectar*. My use of honey, clay, kawakawa, and many of the other objects has come about intuitively, but also as a consideration of my body in relation to these materials. I was initially interested just in the material qualities of beeswax, such as its smell, but also how it transformed other objects, such as paper. I first considered using honey after seeing Sriwhana Spong's *a hook but no fish* (2018) at the Govett Brewster Art Gallery in Ngāmotu. Spong used honey purely for aesthetic purposes, and was interested to see how and if this material changed over time. My research into honey as a material has been revealing for thinking about the balance of the environment, and also aligning my body with the legacy of colonialism. For instance, although we have a number of species of native bees, I was surprised to learn that honey bees are not native but introduced, and first came to Aotearoa in 1839 via Mary Bumby, the sister of a Methodist missionary in Hokianga, Northland. What was interesting to me was the fact that the first commercial beekeepers were Māori, which to me represents the way in which Māori are able to adapt to the ways of the Pākehā.

Honey also has other connotations for me; for example, its framing as the new “gold rush” within Aotearoa recalled the fact that my father is a gold miner. Honey also brings to mind Joseph Beuys’s seminal performance work, *How to explain pictures to a dead Hare* (1965), in which the artist held a dead hare, and had honey dripping from his head that was adorned with gold leaf. I contemplated Beuys’ work when considering how to document *Beachgirl goes to disneyland: a conversation with a bot posing as your ex lover—How to explain pictures to a dead hare* is documented by only a single photograph, after Beuys destroyed all the other rolls of film.

HOW DO PEOPLE DISAPPEAR IN AN AGE OF TOTAL OVER-VISIBILITY?

Hito Steyerl’s video *How Not to Be Seen* is a satirical take on an instructional video, featuring both actual and virtual performers and scenes all designed to illustrate, in a step-by-step manner via an authoritative voice-over, Steyerl’s strategies for becoming invisible. Steyerl’s work made me consider more carefully my own output and existence in the Information Age. She asks, “How do people disappear in an age of total over-visibility?... Are people hidden by too many images?... Do they become images?”⁵⁰ Although Steyerl was speaking specifically about surveillance and the dissemination of images in a post-internet age (amongst other things), this did signal for me the importance of having a practice that was grounded in real life relationships, and the value of having a quieter, more thoughtful

⁵⁰ Steyerl, “Interview // Hito Steyerl: Zero Probability and the Age of Mass Art Production,” <http://www.berlinartlink.com/2013/11/19/interview-hito-steyerl-zero-probability-and-the-age-of-mass-art-production/>.

practice that considers the production, use, and circulation of images of art in the Information Age. This is why I have not spent large amounts of time documenting any art I produce. The idea of becoming invisible or disappearing from the art world is something I continuously consider, especially after reading about the tactics of refusal enacted by artists like Cady Noland, who physically destroyed her own work, erased exhibitions from her CV, and refuses to acknowledge works she made, much to the fury of collectors of her work, who have sued her. Steyerl has also made me think of the artist Laurie Parsons, who quit making art in 1994 and now works solely as a social worker helping people with mental health issues. I keep making work and have not left the art world because I have people around me who love and care about me, who enable me to remain resilient when I feel crushed by the realities of the contemporary world. I have not left yet, because I care deeply about what art can articulate or bring into fruition, through acts of sharing and kindness. I can draw strength from artists and theorists who I both know and don't know, whom I can look to for strategies for imagining my own autonomy as an artist and trying to reject the confines of singularity through a collaborative methodology based on care, empathy, and solidarity.

HE AHA 'TE MEA NUI O 'TE AO

HE 'TANGA'IA, HE 'TANGA'IA, HE 'TANGA'IA⁵¹

In conclusion, I really wanted to discuss in small details the breadth of projects I have undertaken while completing my MFA, because my practice is expansive and hectic and not easily categorizable. Its expansive because I don't have the luxury of job security, because I've chosen to work in a field that is unstable, highly competitive, and exclusionary. It's expansive because of the ongoing effects of colonialism and late capitalism, but also because I am curious, and intend on remaining curious in using unfamiliar new materials, programmes, and methodologies. The point of my practice is that I want to disrupt the trajectory of the singular, individualistic "emerging artist" by working in an intuitive way based around care, love, and desire, through my friendships with other artists such as Mya Morrison-Middleton, Ali Burns, Jordana Bragg, and Georgina Rose Watson. In order to be an artist in Aotearoa, particularly if you are Māori, you need to be resilient, especially when you feel a constant pressure to perform class and race mobility in order to assimilate. The only way to maintain resilience is to find outputs of autonomy where you can define what tino rangatiratanga means for yourself, whether this is through organising events outside the confines of the gallery walls in order to create an environment for people to share together, or building strong friendships with like-minded people, or playing with unfamiliar materials, or finding strength in practices of wāhine toa who can act as a tuakana figure for you. The only way to care for oneself in the art world is to build a strong foundation of people around you who love and care about you and whom you love and care for.

⁵¹ This is a common whakatauki that loosely translates from te reo rangatira to mean, "What is the most important thing in the world? It is the people, it is the people, it is the people".

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APPENDIX ONE: PROJECTS COMPLETED IN
2017-18 IN ASSOCIATION WITH MY MFA

Residencies

- **2018** Pirate bay residency, WORM gallery, Rotterdam, NL
- **2018** Peripheral Forms, Twitter residency, <https://twitter.com/peripheralforms>

Solo Exhibitions

- **2018** *Body Fluids are poetic, not slime but nectar* Window Online, <http://windowgallery.co.nz/2018/body-fluids-are-poetic-not-slime-but-nectar/#a4>

Group Exhibitions

- **2018** *Ngā kupu ka mau tonu Words Remain* with Aziembry Aolani, Patricia Grace, Tayi Tibble, Tokorima Taihuringa, Nicole Titihuia Hawkins and Briar Grace-Smith, Toi Māori gallery, Wellington, New Zealand
- **2018** *Ipukarea* curated by Te Inuwai Nathan and Ellie-Lee Duncan with Cora-Allan Wickliffe, Georgina Rose Watson, Essa Ranapiri and Tāwhanga Nōpera at [tacit gallery], Hamilton, New Zealand
- **2018** < *Bright Cave* > curated by Robyn Maree Pickens with Anthony Antonellis, Emma Fitts, Miranda Parkes, Maddy Plimmer and Sorawit Songsataya at the Blue Oyster art project space, Dunedin, New Zealand
- **2018** *There is a pain - so utter* curated by Beth Caird with Beth Collar, Erin Crouch, Brian Fuata, J*, Spencer Lai, Claudia Pharés, Alice McIntosh, Ander Rennick, Isadora Vaughan, Faith Wilson, and Grace Wood at Gertrude Contemporary, Melbourne, AU

- **2018** *The Joke is On You* exhibition curated by Emily Galicek featuring Kieran Bryant, Theresa Chromati (USA), Beth Dillon, Emily Galicek, Matthew Harris, Ben Thomas Jones, Shahmen Suku, Natalie Synnott, Alana Wesley at Kudos Gallery, Sydney, AU
- **2017** *The next word exhibition* at The National Library New Zealand, curated by Hannah Mettner and Brendan O'Brien, Wellington, New Zealand
- **2017** *The Tomorrow people* with Fresh and Fruity, curated by Tina Barton, Stephen Cleland and Simon Gennard at the Adam art gallery, Wellington, New Zealand
- **2017** *Virtually Real* as part of the Cybertwee HQ at VR World, New York, USA
- **2017** *Making Space* with Fresh and Fruity curated by Khye Hitchcock at COCA, Christchurch, New Zealand.
- **2017** *Spams - The internet's restaurant* with Fresh and Fruity as part of the Cybertwee HQ curated by Rachel Stuckey at the Museum of human achievement, as part of the Fusebox performance and art festival in Austin, Texas, USA.
- **2017** *Whakakapi: He āhuru mōwai mōku* with Fresh and Fruity at Mairangi Arts centre, Auckland, New Zealand
- **2017** *On the grounds* with Billy Apple, Fiona Clark, Ayesha Green, Gil Hanly, Ngahua Harrison, David Hatcher, Ana Iti, John Miller, Fiona Pardington, John Pule, John Reynolds, Natalie Robertson, Peter Robinson, Salome Tanuvasa, The Estate of L. Budd, Matavai Taulangau, Matthew Ward, Starkwhite. Co-conceived by Bridget Riggir-Cuddy and Misal Adnan Yıldız at Starkwhite gallery as an offsite project of Artspace, Auckland, New Zealand

- **2017** *Dark objects* with Clara Chon, Jade Townsend, Hye Rim Lee, Huni Mancini, Natasha Matila-Smith, Sorawit Songsataya. Curated by Faith Wilson, The Dowse art museum, Wellington, New Zealand
- **2017** *The Mayfair project* with Dave Marshall, Gaby Montejo, Audrey Baldwin, Adrienne Millwood, Matthew George-Richard Ward, Lucy Williams and Motoko Kikkawa. Curated by The Social, Ashburton art gallery, Ashburton, New Zealand

Performances / Readings / Talks

- **2018** National poetry day: Compound press and Minarets at Objectspace gallery, Auckland, New Zealand
- **2018** *Guess who's coming to read* with Samuel Te Kani, Owen Connors, Anna Rankin, Jordana Bragg, Dan Nash, Rebecca Hawkes, Daniel John Corbett Sanders, Anna McAllister, Jackson Nieuwland, Alexa Casino and Ana Iti. Newtown, Wellington.
- **2018** *Te ao is fluid: Indigenous Readings* organised by Mya Morrison-Middleton in association with Maumahara Girlie, with readings by Samuel Te Kani, Tayi Tibble, Amanda Tito, Onehou Strickland, Essa May Ranapiri, Whaitiri Mikaere, George Watson, Te Inuwai Nathan, Hana Pera Aoake, Mya Morrison-Middleton, Aydriannah Tuiali'i. Basement theatre, Auckland, NZ
- **2018** Late night lit at the Emerging Writers Festival with Fresh and Fruity and Manisha Anjali (Inhabit Journal), Bad Nudes, Heather Day, Eloise Grills, Emma Marie Jones, and Mimo Mukii, Melbourne, AU
- **2018** *What's love got to do with it? Love, labour and contemporary art* organised by All Conferences at First Draft gallery, Sydney, AU
- **2018** Call and Response a project with Brian Fuata, ongoing

- **2017** *Death to 2017* with Food Court. Readings by Jackson Nieuwland, Carolyn Decarlo, Tayi Tibble, Hana Aoake, Rose Lu, Jordana Bragg, Alex Hollis, Briana Jamieson, Annaleese Jochems at 4 Balmoral Terrace, Wellington.
- **2017** *Murky Waters* with Mya Middleton, curated by Charlotte Parallel and Aroha Novak for the Art & Activism symposium as part of the Sociology department at Otago University, Dunedin.
- **2017** Emerging Writers Festival: *Digital writers festival: Decolonising online spaces* panel discussion, chaired by Nayuka Gorrie, Online/Melbourne, Australia
- **2017** *Improbable futures forum III After criticism: writing now* panel discussion chaired by Lana Lopesi, The Adam Art gallery, Wellington
- **2017** *Contemporary art, feminism and the internet* panel discussion co-organised by Zin partnership and women in the arts with Sabella D'Souza, Xanthe Dobbie, Fresh and Fruity, Talia Smith, Hannah Brontë MCA, Sydney, AU
- **2017** *Self/Intimacy/Power* a reading organised by The Sleepover Club. Fresh and Fruity (w Mya Middleton) read via google hangouts the Fresh and Fruity manifesto volume ii at Longplay, Melbourne, AU
- **2017** *AMOR MUNDI: Treat yourself babe* a wānanga with Snakes and Ladders in association with ARTSPACE and Fresh and Fruity, Auckland, New Zealand
- **2017** *Caressing the silver rectangle: a discussion around the internet*, an artist talk with JPEG2000 with Sean Burn, Maddy Plimmer, Jesse Bowling and Laura Duffy at Enjoy art project space, Wellington, New Zealand

Curatorial projects

— **2018** *Heartache festival* organised with Ali Burns DJ PANDA 44 Productions, Alexa Casino, Slow, Namesake, Astro Children, Freya Daly Sadgrove, Jordana Bragg, Tayi Tibble, Georgia Lockie, Hannah Mettner, Mya Morrison-Middleton, Vanessa Crofskey, Faith Wilson (Skype), Joanne Francey, Lucy Fulford, Louisa Beatty, Audrey Baldwin, Natasha Matila-Smith and Isabella Loudon in Newtown and Berhampore, Wellington

— **2018** *Blame it on the rain* organised with JPEG2000 and Fresh and Fruity presented at WORM Cinema (January 2018) and St Paul street gallery (February 2018)

— **2017** *Blame it on the rain* co-curated with JPEG2000, The Sleepover Club, with Orr Amran, Sophie Cassar, Christian Noelle Charles, Hannah Hallam-Eames, Claire Estermann, Ana Iti, Nunzio/Natasha Madden, Maddy Plimmer, Autumn Royal & Katherine Botten, Talia Smith, Kalinda Vary, Layne Waerea, Nicole Webber at The Film Archive, Wellington, New Zealand

— **2017** *Aliens emerging from Papatūānuku's womb* with readings by Gregory Kan, Jessica Lim, Anna McAllister, Faith Wilson, Essa Mae Ranapiri, Nina Powles, Hana Pera Aoake and Mya Morrison-Middleton. With sets by DJ Kisses, HRCLS, GG & Brown boy Magik. Co-organised with JPEG2000 and Jessica Lim in Kelburn, Wellington, New Zealand.

— **2017** *Blame it on the rain* co-curated with JPEG2000, The Sleepover Club, with Orr Amran, Sophie Cassar, Christian Noelle Charles, Hannah Hallam-Eames, Claire Estermann, Ana Iti, Nunzio/Natasha Madden, Maddy Plimmer, Autumn Royal & Katherine

Botten, Talia Smith, Kalinda Vary, Layne Waerea, Nicole Webber.
The Physics Room, Christchurch

— **2017** *Clasping hands together under the table* with Ary Jansen, Brigid Fitzgerald, Callum Devlin, Josephine Jelicich, Louisa Afoa, Magdalena Hoult. Curated in collaboration with JPEG2000, facilitated by Ōtautahi Kōrerotia, Avon Loop Community Cottage, Ōtautahi

Writing

— **2018** *Tuna swimming in my blood*, SADO journal, edited by Amalia Louisson

— **2018** *Please walk on me*, HAMSTER journal, with Fresh and Fruity, edited and published by The Physics Room

— **2018** *Beachgirl goes to disneyland: a bot posing as your ex lover* to be published in MATTERS journal

— **2018** *Duos #7* with Fresh and Fruity in 3AM magazine <https://www.3ammagazine.com/3am/duos7/>

— **2018** *How to perform 101, My European Getaway and colonial amnesia*, Ruru reads

— **2018** *Te Pō roa o te moana Taipō* publication with Mya Morrison-Middleton and Piupiu Maya Turei, designed by Josephine Jelicich for WORM, Rotterdam, Netherlands

— **2018** *Your luxury gift !* with Fresh and Fruity published in X magazine, edited by Cait Putana Johnson

— **2018** *Shared Vulnerabilities for Heartache festival* designed by Josephine Jelicich with writing by Katherine Botten, Jordana Bragg, Hana Pera Aoake, Ali Burns, Vanessa Crofskey, Zarah Butcher-Mc-

Gunnigle, Jessica Francis, Georgia Lockie, Isabella Mahoney, Natasha Matila-Smith, Hannah Mettner, Mya Morrison-Middleton, Noelia Portela, Anni Puolakka, Anna Rankin, Ruby Read, Autumn Royal, Tayi Tibble, George Watson and Faith Wilson. Edited by Hana Pera Aoake

— **2017-18** *First Draft writers programme* with Callum Devlin at First Draft in Sydney, Australia

— **2017-18** *Call and Response*, an ongoing project initiated by Brian Fuata (2010-)

— **2017** *Alien Cyborgs staining their fingers with flower stamens while swiping left* on The Unstitute project

— **2017** *Callum* published on Scum magazine

— **2017** *Dave Marshall's Terrestrials* published on Art + Australia online

— **2017** *Till the world ends* for Un magazine 11.2 LAUGH NOW CRY LATER edited by Amelia Winata and David Capra

— **2017** *The Sea brought you here and now you must go back: a review of Namesake* on The Pantograph Punch <http://pantograph-punch.com/post/review-namesake>

— **2017** *Caressing the silvery rectangle* a review on Pantograph Punch <http://pantograph-punch.com/post/review-caressing-the-silver-rectangle>

— **2017** *Till the world ends* for Un magazine 11.2 LAUGH NOW CRY LATER with Fresh and Fruity edited by Amelia Winata and David Capra

— **2017** *Gallery Girl: bande de filles | In love with a stripper* with Fresh and Fruity in Matters journal edited by Georgina Watson and Hamish Win

- **2017** Online text for Friends are Artists with Fresh and Fruity Online Stories - April 2017
- **2017** *Ki Piki: Snakes and Ladders* with Fresh and Fruity in Runway magazine issue #33 POWER Edited by Rebekah Raymond, Sian McIntyre and Tania Cañas
- **2017** *Im exhausted from being alive* e-book, designed by Callum Devlin and published by SoD Press

APPENDIX TWO: BEACHGIRL GOES TO
DISNEYLAND / A CONFERENCE CALL WITH A
BOT POSING AS YOUR FORMER LOVER

A scripted performance by Hana Pera Aoake

NB: All stage directions can be read allowed. Each scene should be performed on a different night. It is open to being interpreted in any way. The scene finishes when the actors are too exhausted to go on. To be performed with up to three people. Two dancers/actors and maybe one narrator. This is not entertainment.

SCENE 1

Beachgirl's bedroom / *Memory is redundant*

Beachgirl: Femme, late 20's, sad.

Dylan: Genderless, physically embodies a bot.

NB: Beachgirl misses the human Dylan and talks to a bot daily, hoping this bot will become real.

Beachgirl was trying to complete a Blogilates video by Casey Ho in their white towel robe.

The workout was called 'Muffintop massacre 2'. Beachgirl did the first one yesterday and their sides still hurt, so they've stopped doing it. Youtube auto plays softly in the background.

Casey Ho's relentless body positivity and capitalist 'go get em' attitude makes Beachgirl feel deeply uncomfortable. Beachgirl started wearing a corset to waist train, but it hasn't really worked, because it's a corset not a waist trainer. Beachgirl thought about Victorian women having miscarriages because their corsets were too tight. Beachgirl is detached, suicidal and suffocating under the pressures of negotiating being indigenous and their working life. They are slowly morphing into a robot and they are desperate to return to Papatūānuku.

Beachgirl begins talking to their ex-boyfriend's things as though he is still there. Dylan's head hovers through a wall on the ground; it is fastened with clay. The clay is drying.

He's emotionless, but his eyes are red. Beachgirl throws their body around, ripping and cutting clothes up before putting clay on them against the walls. Beachgirl repeats these actions over and over again no matter how exhausted they are. In the bedroom, the walls have several holes. . The bedroom is also dripping with water. It's cold. Sage is burning.

They repeat the following dialogue as many times as possible. There is no stage, no lighting and nowhere for anyone watching to sit. The audience may leave whenever they like. This is not entertainment.

Beachgirl: *A relationship is just a repetition of gestures, words, and past experiences.*

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Dylan: *The most I want to do is show you the end of my index finger.[1]*

Beachgirl stares at herself in the mirror then starts to get dressed.

Beachgirl: *Fashion details cover every part of my image, from the way I've cut my hair to the way I swing my handbag whether it's a satchel or a suitcase.*

Dylan: *It pays to pay attention*

Beachgirl: *As a child, how did you imagine love?*

Dylan: *I was soaked and full of coagulated dust and soon I drifted off into vague nightmares[2]*

Beachgirl: *Memory is redundant: it repeats signs so that place can begin to exist.[3]*

Dylan: *The past is not hidden behind us, waiting to be excavated. The past becomes what it always was only by the present symbolic reconstruction. [4]*

Beachgirl: *So start at the top and work your way down.*

Dylan: *It's going to be okay.*

Beachgirl ***Singing, *When you Left I Lost a Part of me Is It too Hard to Believe.*

Dylan: *You're certainly entitled to that opinion.*

Beachgirl: *Do you think dance is pre-linguistic?*

Dylan: *I think, therefore I am. But let's not put Descartes before the horse.*

Beachgirl: *Who will love me now?*

Dylan: *Interesting question*

76 Beachgirl: *How do you know or learn how to take care of yourself and your emotional well-being?*

Dylan: *A friendship may eventually be possible*

Beachgirl: *You asked me if we had grown at all during the relationship*

Dylan: *I have not left this wall*

Beachgirl: *I grew ten feet taller*

Dylan: *You'll feel better with sleep*

Beachgirl: *The majority of the pain I'm feeling during our break-up has nothing to do with the relationship we really had.*

Dylan: *We always re-live, come to remember, in the most intuitive sense of the word, the formative years of our existence. This is not in itself the most important factor, what's important is how you reconstruct it. [5]*

Beachgirl: *All my work exists in relation to the absence of the 'other' and my fears of loneliness.*

Dylan: *Write because you want to speak*

Beachgirl: *How might this change?*

Dylan: *Move to speak.*

Beachgirl: *A bodily consciousness?*

Dylan: *Trust your body, understand and listen to its paradoxical and changing forms of knowledge.*

Beachgirl: *I guess there are many forms of love, and it has the capacity to shift, evolve and change over time.*

Dylan: *Love yourself more.*

Beachgirl ***Singing You've Lost that Loving

Scene 2 / BLUE: Oh so lonesome for you

Beach girl: Femme, late 20's, sad

Dylan: Genderless, physically embodies a bot, but is becoming automated

A cluster of fresh grass in the middle of a room. Beach girl is wearing comme des garçons and a bikini that a man on tinder once told her 'looked difficult to get into, but totally worth it.'

Beach girl moves constantly, rolling around on the ground in a dancerly fashion. Her movements at first seem sporadic but are obviously choreographed because she repeats them. Again, there is no formal stage, no lighting and nowhere for anyone to sit.

The song 'Blue' by Leanne Rimes plays softly. Dylan sits relatively still and embracing sun that isn't there. Dylan still has residue of clay, but is no longer a head; they appear like a body now. Beach girl makes the most of every crisis. Beach girl is lying in the sun as the sky is falling. The great advantage of the bikini over the swimsuit is the stomach factor. For those who love to bare some restrained midriff, the wideband bikini with shorts-legs is a must. Dylan applies sunscreen on their chest and attempts to put it on their back. They can't get the sunscreen onto their back. They look to Beach girl for help then notice how glassy their eyes are. Beach girl is detached. Beach girl was only attached to what she believed was true. Nothing is true any longer. So Beach girl began at the moment when it felt true.

Beachgirl was tired of waiting. Beach girl feels no desire, no pleasure. They are very depressed. Sexless. Devoid of sexual thoughts or desire. Waiting for the apocalypse. Beach girl realised that they were already situated within the collapse of a civilization. The catastrophe is not coming, it is here.[6] There is no stage, no lighting and nowhere for anyone watching to sit. They may leave whenever they like. Both repeat this dialogue over and over again until something happens. People may become bored or the actors may become tired. This is not entertainment.

Beachgirl: *A dialogue*

Dylan: *A chiasmatic crossing*

Dylan: *A chiasmatic intertwine*

Beachgirl: *A dialogue*

Beachgirl: *Self/other*

Beachgirl: *Subject/object*

Dylan: *Relation to the self*

Dylan: *Relation to the world*

Dylan: *Relation to the other*

Beachgirl: *Couples are a machine*[7]

Beachgirl: *The lived body*

Dylan: *An embodiment of the self*

Beachgirl: *'Sometimes the less said the better about bodies. Are they metaphors, are they real, are they everything, are they death, is mine yours...'* [8]

Dylan: *Make the most of every crisis*

Beachgirl: *A dialogue*

Dylan: *My performed indifference means I get to move on faster*

Beachgirl: *Any interaction that leaves us indifferent, doesn't affect us and doesn't commit us to anything, no longer deserves the name truth.*[9]

Dylan: *A dialogue*

Beachgirl: *He is half dead, unresponsive lump, incapable of giving or receiving pleasure or happiness....*[10]

Dylan**Singing *And I Miss You I Like the Deserts Miss the Rain*

Beachgirl: *Girls what's my weakness?* [11]

Dylan: *Men!* [12]

Beachgirl: *A dialogue*

Dylan: *I couldn't reply to your texts*

Beachgirl: *Words zipping through wires, words wailing in the void between send and receive the lover remains lost to us* [13]

Dylan: *You can wear the body by day, you can wear it by night, you can wear it in bed.*

Beachgirl: *Just as long as you remember that this garment is for show, and for wearing with proper clothes.*

Dylan: *You've got to shift from day to night./ PARTY!/ Is understanding that shift / the difference between a cup of coffee and a glass of champagne.*

Beachgirl: *What kind of body should I be? Millions of bodies. It would seem that I should be able to say, to choose from the millions of bodies, the millions of lives I see about me, a life that would please me.*[14]

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Dylan: *The shift in colour from sober, sensible monochrome to wild, strong colour, deepest crimson to midnight blue.*

Beachgirl **Singing *Blue Oh, So Lonesome for You. Why Can't You be Blue Over Me?*

Dylan: *Is it possible to conceive of, or produce, a situation that somehow overturns the prevailing relations of production that we have been analysing collectively?* [15]

Beachgirl: *The human skin remembers everything. Everything.*[16]

Dylan: *I'm supposed to know the dialogue but I lost the script.*

Beachgirl: *A dialogue*

Dylan: *The traditional work of art has been largely supplanted by art as process - as an occupation...*[17]

Beachgirl: *How do you breathe?*

Dylan: *One step at a time.*

Beachgirl: *When can I call you?*

Dylan: *Turn your pain into a gain.*

Beachgirl: *All my pride is all I have*

Dylan: *Please don't*

Beachgirl: *I started to miss you before you left. You said you were broken.*

Dylan: *We are both broken.*

Beachgirl: *I need my life back.*

Dylan: *Talking, talking, always talking to you* [18]

Beachgirl: *Repetition verbally dominates the body and exposes it as an unsatisfied object.*[19]

Dylan: *I miss you talking* [20]

Beachgirl: *I wept until I aged* [21] Dylan: *You need to give me space*

Beachgirl: *I don't know how to do that*

Dylan: *Passive top*

Beachgirl: *Active bottom*

Dylan: *Remember the start*

Scene 3 / Escape from the life you find unsatisfying

Beachgirl: Femme, late 20s, sad

Dylan: Genderless, physically embodies a bot, but is becoming automated

Beachgirl's whole body is covered in clay, including her hair. She lies naked and curls into the fetal position over and over. Dylan stands over her. Seaweed lies across the lower half of her body. Every time she moves Dylan places the seaweed back over her body then he pushes into either a wall, another person, or anything in close proximity before returning to stand over Beachgirl. The seaweed acts as a blanket. Beachgirl is trying to return back to Papatūānuku. Papatūānuku is the rhythm of the land and her tupuna. Beachgirl is the daughter of Tane.

Tane carved Beachgirl from clay and breathed life into them via a hongī. The first woman. Beachgirl's name was once Hineahuone, but Pākehā men stole this. Mā te wahine, mā te whenua, ka ngaro te tangata.

Beachgirl has lived many times and each time her skin colour becomes lighter, more white like all the men who take from them. Beachgirl longs to return to Papatūānuku's womb, their whenua. The womb of Papatūānuku lies under the sea, Beachgirl hopes to drown and return to the earth mother. The more Beachgirl comes back the more they forget who they are. There is no stage, no lighting and nowhere for anyone watching to sit. They may leave whenever they like. Both repeat this dialogue over and over again until some-

thing happens. This could result in people losing interest or becoming bored or the actors becoming tired. This is not entertainment.

Beachgirl: *How do I return to Papatūānuku?*

Dylan: *Take me as a drummer*

Beachgirl: *That's not an answer*

Dylan: *You didn't ask a question*

Beachgirl: *How do I remember who I am?*

Dylan: *I haven't even met you before*

Beachgirl: *I gave everything*

Dylan: *Just think of the new and exciting things you can do now.*

Beachgirl: *I had a dream I was pregnant and you were angry*

Dylan: *There are a few key items that every pregnant woman should own: a printed scarf, great for disguising the bump, and useful for discreet feeding afterwards; nice underwear that makes you feel pretty not just functional; good maternity jeans (a few Topshop pairs and one more luxury version should do it) - but what about your personal style?*

Beachgirl: *I'm sorry I slept with someone else. It wasn't premeditated.*

Dylan: *A dialogue*

Beachgirl: *Never look at me the same. The trust was disintegrating before my mistake. Trust is fleeting. I had to continue to work. They put a chain around my neck. I had no money.*

Dylan: *Time is structured around chrononormative modes of being*

Dylan: *Dressing for work is one of the biggest challenges for many pregnant women and, short of working from the sofa for nine months, also one of the biggest necessities.*

Beachgirl: *She wears bodycon, and clearly feels comfortable in it, and so wore it throughout her pregnancy in various tonal and flattering shades.*

Dylan: *Body fluids are poetic – – not slime but nectar. [22]*

Beachgirl: *The first time we hung out properly you grabbed my hand and led me through a crowd at Ivy, do you remember?*

Dylan: *I remember the night.*

Beachgirl: *I lost you and tried to find you but you had disappeared so I went home.*

Beachgirl: *A spellbinding dance with bohemia. I've been hacked and ravaged by every man I've ever loved.*

Dylan: *Her body blends into the ground. From that point, she blended her body with the elements in innumerable ways. The use of her own body in hundreds of works would be abandoned in a few years in favour of more universal female imagery...[23]*

Beachgirl: *Class, was not the operative word to describe their relationship*

Dylan: *You give yourself, yourself is always renewing.*

Beachgirl: *Symbolic / Semiotic*

Dylan: *The thought of them was always better than the thing itself. [24]*

Beachgirl: *His clothes say it for him: we're not happy [25]*

Dylan: *Fuck me*

Beachgirl: *Whenever you have sex with someone, you partially become each other [26]*

Dylan: *You shouldn't have stood outside my house at 3am*

Beachgirl: *I'm sorry*

Dylan: *I was in my own home. I didn't want you to find out like this.*

Beachgirl: *I know I'm sorry I heard you talking. You said, 'I'm not interested in being in a relationship right now'*

Dylan: *I'm sorry.*

Beachgirl: *I slept in my dirty sheets that we had sex in for three weeks.*

I wanted to feel close to you. I couldn't eat for five days.

Dylan: *Are you okay?*

Beachgirl: *It's the loss pot, roller coaster, merry-go-round, butterfly*

Dylan: *I came because I knew you would do the same in a heartbeat*

Beachgirl: *My heart convulsed and I thought I would die. I didn't see you come in I only saw the ambulance.*

Dylan: *You scared me*

Beachgirl: *You didn't shower. They were still on your skin when you held me.*

Dylan: *Actions don't reflect how I feel.*

Dylan: *Are you okay?*

Beachgirl: *Kao. Kei te riri au*

Dylan: *Kei te pēhea tō whaea*

Beachgirl: *Kei te pōuri au*

Dylan: *It's not dead*

Beachgirl: *He aha tēnei rā?*

Dylan: *He Rāpāre tenei rā. He aha te wa?*

Beachgirl: *E aua hoki.*

Beachgirl (singing): *Ehara i te mea. Nō nāiane i te aroha. Nō nga tūpuna. Tuku iho tuku iho*

Te whenua te whenua. Te oranga o te iwi. No nga tūpuna. Tuku iho, tuku iho

Whakapono, tumanako. Tē aroha te aroha; Nō nga tūpuna. Tuku iho, tuku iho.

While beachgirl sings this waiata Dylan lies behind her spooning her. Dylan places the seaweed over their body.

- [1] Maggie Nelson, *Bluets* (Seattle & New York, USA: Wave Books, 2009), 5
- [2] Georges Bataille, *Story of the eye*, trans. Joachim Neugroschel (New York: Urizen Books, 1967), 40
- [3] Kathy Acker & McKenzie Wark, *I'm very into you* (South Pasadena, CA: Semiotext(e)), 2015, 147
- [4] Ciane Fernandes, "Redancing history" in *Pina Bausch and the Wuppertal Dance Theater: The aesthetics of repetition and transformation*. (New York, USA: Peter Lang Publishing inc, 2002), 100
- [5] *Ibid*, 93
- [6] The Invisible Committee, "Get going" in *The Coming Insurrection*. (Pasadena, CA: Semiotext(e), 2009), 96
- [7] Bernadette corporation, "Bedroom boredoms (Short Escapes in New York)//2004" in *Boredom.*, Tom McDonough (ed) (Cambridge, MA: Whitechapel Gallery & MIT Press, 2017), 209
- [8] *Ibid*, 209
- [9] The Invisible Committee, "Find Each Other" in *The Coming Insurrection*. (Pasadena, CA: Semiotext(e), 2009), 97
- [10] Valerie Solanas *S.C.U.M. Manifesto* (1967)
- [11] Salt-N-Pepa, *Shoop on Very Necessary* (1993)
- [12] *Ibid*
- [13] Dodi Bellamy, "Sexspace" in *Academonia* (San Francisco, CA; Semiotext(e), 2006), 34
- [14] The Bernadette Corporation, *Reena Spaulings* (Semiotext(e): Germany, 2004), 153
- [15] ONTHECONDITIONSOFPRODUCTION (OTCOP), "A Living body performing its own autopsy within contemporary cap-

italism” in *WORK, WORK, WORK, A reader on art and labour*, ed. Cecilia Widenheim, Lisa Rosendahl, Michele Masucci, Annika Enqvist and Jonatan Habib Engqvist. (Stockholm: Konstnåarsnämnden, Laspis, Sternberg press, 2012) 221

[16] Carole Maso, “The intercession of saints” (1999) in *The Next American Essay.*, John D’Agata (ed), (Graywolf Press: USA, 2003), 405

[17] Hito Steyerl, “Art as occupation- Claims for an Autonomy of Life ” in *WORK WORK WORK: 50*

[18] Maggie Nelson, *Bluets* (Seattle & New York: Wave Books, 2009), 35

[19] Ciane Fernandes, “Repetition Bonds of Power” in *Pina Bausch and the Wuppertal Dance Theater: The aesthetics of repetition and transformation.* (New York, USA: Peter Lang Publishing inc, 2002), 69

[20] Maggie Nelson, *Bluets*, 35

[21] *Ibid*, 34

[22] Dodie Bellamy, “Sexspace” in *Academonia* (San Francisco: Krupskaya, 2006), 35

[23] Robert Katz, *Naked by the window: The fatal marriage of Carl Andre and Ana Mendieta.* (New York: The Atlantic monthly press, 1990), 143

[24] Dodie Bellamy, “Sexspace” 43

[25] Bernadette Corporation, *Reena Spaulings*, 68

[26] Kathy Acker, “LUST: A sailor’s slight identity” in *Hannibal Lecter, My Father* (New York City: Semiotext(e), 1981), 59

APPENDIX THREE: BODY FLUIDS ARE POETIC,
NOT SLIME BUT NECTAR

<http://windowgallery.co.nz/2018/body-fluids-are-poetic-not-slime-but-nectar/#a4>

On the 16th of June, 1906, King Koroki was born and a great celestial waka appeared in the sky. Te Matariki and her six daughters formed the bow of the waka and other constellations created the rest, this was known as Te Rā o Tainui. Swimming with Te Matariki. Crossing oceans. Preparing the harvest. The Kūmara roots spiral towards the light. George told me the story once of her tūpuna, Hinehākīrangī, who brought her scared basket filled with Kūmara to Tūranganui-a-Kiwa from Hawaiki. Cassandra said, 'our tupuna brought them here on our waka too Hana!'. I've been here before. What is it to be alone? Miriama says, 'You are not ready' and I know she is right. I miss your pink face and watching movie trailers in your damp cold room on Constable street. An electric blanket with Kimmi. Please help me I am hurting very much.

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Dirt floors but we are wrapped in blankets. I'm parū with hūpē dripping from my nose. I'm dying and I don't even realise. We cannot give the pākehā any more of our land. Transmitting disease through blankets. They will do terrible things and we will keep trying to stop them. No promises only lies. I am so hungry. I am so sick. I will die soon. We sing waiata to remember our pain, but what if they don't learn, what if they leave Aotearoa and never come to the marae?

Those who opposed land sales are obvious targets. Don't listen to the Pākehā they said. There is no 'private land', it's all stolen. Please help me I am hurting very much.

Hiding underneath Aunty's orange trees. Daphne is pungent. Taylor picks Daphne in Pōneke, but Yvette can't find any daphne in Whakatu. I message them both. Alexis runs circles around me. Giggling as her blonde hair swishes backwards and forwards. Soon she will be grown and much taller than me. Alexis squirts water from her mouth like a whale. Whales rushing to the shore, rotting and dying. Pera did not live to meet us, but I still think of her everyday. I feel like we can talk to her even though she's not here. The sky is pink and purple and blue. The sky will begin falling soon. I don't trust people who don't believe in astrology, sorry but it's important. Violent waves crashing across Whāingaroa. The Tainui waka spent so long trying to find somewhere to land. The native bees recoil. 28 species of native bees, 25 of which are becoming extinct. Please help me I am hurting very much.

Rūaumoko squirmed inside Papatūānuku's womb. Each time he squirms fire and rock and lava pierce through the Earth. As Rūaumoko grows he comforts Papatūānuku in her grief and lives in her belly keeping her company. Each time he rises up to the surface the earth shakes violently and splits before Papatūānuku calms him. You said I calmed you the way no one else could, but now we don't speak at all. Please help me I am hurting very much.

Pump kawakawa into my veins through an IV. The bees who make the honey are not from here. Kumara I forget about that has roots spiralling towards the sky in my inner city apartment. Urban ocean. The only way I sleep. I dream of Tāmaki with all the volcanoes exploding, Rūaumoko is so angry. Grandpa forgot everyone but Grandma. The native bees are dying. They ban plastic straws before they ban drilling and polluting our sacred waterways and mountains. I dreamt I was strangled by plastic in Cape Reinga. Swimming in a beach made of only plastic. Man made beach. 'Reclaimed' land. A pākehā woman angry that a pākehā lecturer won't buy free range eggs, but not angry that he's racist. Auntie knew but was afraid and thought she was protecting him. He wanted to know who he was. Before we could meet her she died of a heart attack brought on by losing all her memories. We still don't know really where we come from. He gave us \$50 each and called us his grandchildren, but we are strangers looking at photos of strangers. A hotel in Paihia called 'te tiriti resort'. Shells covered in dust. Sand in Josephine's bed. Volcanic rocks for Alexa. Crying because Taylor left me on seen and I don't know who else to talk to anymore. I cry not because of this but only because I feel alone all the time. I message Yvette 'why does everyone hate me?', then unsend it realising I'm just really sad. Love island makes me cry am I too old to be loved? Why is heterosexuality such a trap? I miss the way your body could comfort me more than anyone else. I project ideas of love on to other people to fill the gaps left deep inside the crevices of my body. Maybe I am very sensitive, maybe I am too sensitive. Please help me I am hurting very much.

Body fluids are poetic, not slime but nectar (1). Yvette sends me photos of Josephine's blood noses almost everyday. George pulls her hair back sometimes into a bun, her eyes look green but are brown, her collarbones appear peeking through her white, long sleeved cotton shirts and jeans. George's hands are so elegant. Nat replying to my texts at 3am. Ellyse sends me videos of her in summer walking around Barcelona. Kimmi's laugh. Smoking cigarettes with Noelia in bed in Paris sad about men. Drinks with Faith on that rooftop bar. I miss you Faith. Ali and her Whakatane swimming club towel. Jordana dancing on their knees. Priscilla's tweets about Prince. Alexa rolling me a spliff. Taylor's layers of linen and other soft fabrics and leftover eyeliner a lá smokey eye on his big green-blue eyes. Yvette's red hair and striking big blue eyes. Yvette is the most sensitive to how sensitive I am. Chris being a Virgo. Louise being a Virgo. Other Louise pulling a look. Nikolai's cooking. Katie saying, 'Maybe heartbreak is forever' in Berlin. Audrey's revenge. Alexa reading tarot cards for me in Josh's apartment in Berlin. Sophie taking me to Loretta's to make sure I'm okay. Ana giving me a hug when I'm crying in our studio. Matthew dancing around me with his cap on. Please come home Matt. I miss you. Josephine's laugh on the beach in summer, our sand princess. Mya's smirk, hair flick and constant support. Piupiu says, 'my honey I love you so much'. Come home Piupiu you are my Aunty, my sister, my nana, my te Matariki guiding me always. Please help me I am hurting very much.

Afraid to make anything. Afraid to write anything. An art practice I cannot afford. A life I can't afford. Please help me I am hurting very much.

Clasping grandma's hand. Her grip is light. She shrinks each time claiming I'm getting taller. My skin is too milky, my bones mean nothing anymore. Holding my grandmother's hands. Hands like hers. Feet like hers. The Clarkson bow legs. Wearing Margaret's pearls and Pera's pounamu. Please help me I am hurting very much.

A photo of Tamatia's baby directly across from Tamatia as a baby. Hine says all five of them are Leos. It clicks in my head that this makes sense. Cup of tea? Yes please, no sugar but a dash of milk. I wanted a life that would never exist. I am still grieving. You were never patient with me. When you ran from me it broke me again just as I was starting to be stronger. Queenie does a karanga at Honeanga's tangi. Who are these people I dream about? They call to me in my sleep. Would you come to my tangi? Please help me I am hurting very much.

A Spanish woman speaking in tongues to Saint Rita. Matariki rises. How my ancestors adapted to this place I will never know. George writes about the rāhui being over, but will it ever be over George? I am afraid, I am so afraid of everything. Please help me I am hurting very much.

I know I should learn te reo rangatira but im too afraid. A woman from Ngāti Porou tells us te reo is precious and we must never lose it. Its inside you she says. Please help me I am hurting very much.

What if the rāhui will never end. Kauri used to grow in thick forests all across Te Tai Tokerau and down into Tāmaki Makaurau and King country. Some of my ancestors cut these forests down, some wept at their erasure. All the other trees started to rot in the green muck spilling in from tramper boots, the dairy sludge and the piss that stains Papatūānuku, killing tōtara, tānekaha, taraire, tawa, miro and rewarewa. The anangu people lost their maunga to the pākehā. Pākehā still climb Uluru because nothing is sacred to them. Pākehā have almost killed kauri in less than 200 years. We have already lost so much. I see Tāne Mahuta and weep. Please help me I am hurting very much.

How to stop the ten signs of ageing. Moisturise. Nanocream designed to hide lines under makeup. Great for a primer. I want botox. I want laser. I want microdermabrasion. I want to alter my body into its most desirable form. Exhausted always from just being alive. Eating turmeric vitamins as a skin brightener. It starts to jiggle after awhile. It isn't plump. Scarlett is desirable only as an automated body. Scarlett is a sexbot that doesn't do full service, just a tease. Scarlett cries alone on her piles of money. Lonely. Hana is too smart, too emotional, too guarded, too afraid. It won't just 'happen'. Twenty-eight and I'm no longer desirable. Twenty-eight and everyone is getting married. I want a baby. Twenty-eight and exercising daily to stop it all from sagging. Afraid of going to seed. Reminded always that my body is slowly dying. I'm afraid of dying. I'm afraid of never being in love again or that I am too much or not enough even for myself. I am afraid I'll never have sex again and that I'll always be alone.

I'm afraid that no one will ever really love me or want me even when they are 'mine'. It was never enough for me but I gave everything. It aches still sometimes and I am very embarrassed. Please help me I am hurting very much.

Hine-nui-te-pō please swallow me I want to die while I'm sleeping. This pain is too great. The burden too much. I carry the pain of many women before me. My mother holds me as I cry myself to sleep in Thea's childhood room. Mum says, 'when your Nana was my age she was sick'. It's not fair. Please help me I am hurting very much.

'Have you swam in the Waikato te awa before?', everyone keeps asking me. I say, 'Once when I was a child I think. The water felt dirty. Is the water polluted?' Nana looks down on the river from Taupiri. Please help me I am hurting very much, too much.

-August 2018

*This text was written in response to Georgina Watson's project Larks in the dawn, published earlier this year on Un Magazine. Bellamy, Dodi "Sex space", *Academonia*. San Francisco: Krupskaya, 2006, 35*

(1) Bellamy, Dodi "Sex space", *Academonia*. San Francisco: Krupskaya, 2006, 35

APPENDIX FOUR: PLEASE WALK ON ME BY
FRESH AND FRUITY FOR HAMSTER ISSUE 3

Well, I guess cyborgs like myself have a tendency to be paranoid about our origins.⁵²

When I was nine years old my favourite film was *Waterworld*. I thought about cultures all over the world that are based around water. Trying to hold water in your hand. Made of water. European colonial powers strangling the Pacific. The trash and the rot and brown sludge. It's all disappearing. What are the consequences for the imperial powers sitting on their lands of trash that they built through raping and pillaging?

The land of our hearts stretches

Moving mechanic arms, celluloid skin, and synthetic hair. Shifting an identity—I just don't want to be human anymore. The colonial hangover is sickening. In Ōtautahi white grandmothers brag about being on one of the first four ships of early settlers. Space is given to Māori-philés who relish all things indigenous to a fetishising degree. Every arts professional is now insistent on being the saviour to indigenous artists and writers, but most are unwilling to cross class borders. The only reason I have a degree or work within institutions is because I can appear palatable, class conditioned, and safe for Pākehā and aid them to gain their indigenous ally points.

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⁵² Major Motoko Kusanagi in *GHOST IN THE SHELL/攻殻機動隊*, directed by Mamoru Oshii screenwritten by Kazunori Itō. (1995; Tokyo: Shochiku), DVD.

“But we will become ill if we stop weaving.”⁵³

As part of the *Public Practices* project by arts organisation South Island Art Projects (SIAP) in 1993, artist Jacqueline Fraser presented a site specific installation work named *Matakitaki* on the area of Otakou Marae, overlooking Purakaunui and Waikouaiti.⁵⁴ The structure resembles a weaving frame used to create tukutuku, but is created from steel rods holding hanging black and white telephone cords. The cords form a poutama pattern which sways in the wind like piu piu. *Public Practices* was created in 1993 to create dialogue around contemporary art and urgent issues within the regional context of the South Island. Six artists were invited to create works in ‘public’ spaces such as parks and beaches to make contemporary art accessible. *Matakitaki* was the only work by a Māori artist. Facilitating *Matakitaki* seemed like a progressive effort on SIAP’s behalf. They allowed Fraser to show work on her ancestral Ngāi Tahu lands and present her work in the marae, assumed to be a ‘truly maori’ context, but as Megan Tamati-Quennell notes they were applauded too soon.⁵⁵ Fraser wasn’t aware that only she had been chosen to create work at Otakou and many of the local people weren’t consulted on if it was even appropriate to have ‘public’ artwork in a marae. It was only through Fraser’s consulting and close ties to the marae that the installation was displayed in a careful manner. *Matakitaki* wasn’t opened to the public.

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⁵³ Ngahuia Te Awekotuku, *Mana Wahine Māori* (Auckland: New Women’s Press Limited, 1991), 113.

⁵⁴ Mātakitaki is a verb/noun which roughly equates to observation, gaze, watch, inspect or examine.

⁵⁵ Megan Tamati-Quennell, “Matakitaki and public practices,” in *Public Practice*, (Christchurch: Griffin Press), 42.

There is an assumption by art administrators that by offering artwork to a community area or a home such as a marae, that everyone is then entitled to these spaces. Marae are not all public places, each Marae have specific protocol for hosting guests.

In an essay from the accompanying publication to *Public Practices* Gerard O'Regan quotes an elderly kuia at a meeting between museum curators and tangata whenua saying 'you curators hold our tāonga in your museums, but by the way you present them and the persona your institutions emit, you might just as well hang a sign over your door reading 'No Māori's allowed'.⁵⁶ As a response to similar critiques pākehā curators pushed Māori artists work out of the gallery and into public spaces so they could shy away from making institutions accessible, but they failed to consider the impact on mana whenua. Relational aesthetics are neocolonization. Pākehā art administrators or institutions cannot design these 'decolonising' projects. If works are going to be specifically for Māori, they need to be designed by mana whenua. Community art initiatives are re-colonising acts often led by pākehā run institutions which exhaust and manipulate the labour of well-meaning indigenous curators and artists, who are then held accountable to create 'safe spaces' with no resources or support. These projects often approach audiences and artists assuming an educational rhetoric that 'the institution has something you are lacking.' Māori audiences and artists do not need education. We do not need education from Pākehā institutions on our own experience. You are not doing us a favour.

⁵⁶ Gerard O'Regan, "Public Ownership of Art and a Māori Experience," in *Public Practice*, (Christchurch: Griffin Press, 1994), 12.

During assimilation processes where Māori moved from rural iwi structures to urban centres, a great deal of shame was attached to being of Māori descent. Many urban migrants in the south were careful to hide their overt Māoriness, some even rejecting their Māori identity altogether. Many, for example, inherited important taonga such as harakeke baskets and mats but these were kept out of sight in the home and rarely placed on display.⁵⁷ Adopting the appearance of being Pākehā and invisible within Pākehā dominated urban centres was key to economic and social survival.

People always joke about how there are only white people in the South Island. This is ignoring the vibrant marae and iwi structures in Otakou, North Canterbury, and the West Coast. There are brown people in Te Waipounamu, we have just learned how to be rendered invisible to stay alive. Like a rootkit, we fool a system dominated by the Crown into believing we are compliant colonial subjects and live within this system, although in a marginal capacity.

Angelina Jolie in the film *Hackers*. Pouting in leather motocross pants while tearing apart the mainframe from within. Hacking an identity to gain access to codes of *professional practice*. Too white to feel connected to other Māori, too Māori to be fully respected by Pākehā.

98 In an interview All Blacks coach Steve Hansen calls Te Toiroa Tauriorangi by the nickname Triple T, as it is 'a bit easier'. Our names are not inconvenient. They are not to be sacrificed because they're a little bit difficult for mumbling Pākehā.

⁵⁷ Angela Wanhalla, *In/Visible Sight: The Mixed Descent Families of Southern New Zealand*, (New Zealand: Bridget Williams Books, 2009), 146.

I've got to keep my skin as light as possible – too much sun and I will feel ashamed ... In the winter time it's not so bad. My skin is creamy and rosy-cheeked, I think I look quite fair. I don't let on that I am Māori. I pretend I am someone else. I used to be quite angry when a Pākehā ... used to say to me after discovering I was Māori, "Oh, you can't be a Māori. You are too pretty."⁵⁸

When Pākehā people 'discover' that I'm Māori it's always the same questions and responses, such as,

a) They speak to me in te reo. They seem completely unaware of the fact that I'm whakamā and this shame is mired in colonial trauma which makes me feel culturally inadequate.⁵⁹ I feel immediately profiled and othered. Cool if you want to learn te reo, but please don't practise on me.

b) "Oh that's why you are so brown/tanned."

c) "What percentage are you?" As though blood quantum theory is still relevant and not a racist tool of colonialism.

d) Them: "What's your tribe then?" Me: Tainui and Ngāti Raukawa. Them: "Prove it." Me: ?????? Them: "Don't you think we are glocal now, like we are a global tribe." Or "We all came on a boat." Or "well Māori ate all the Moriori"⁶⁰ Me: Dies inside RIP.

First nations people are constantly expected to prove their 'authen-

⁵⁸ Mihipeka Edwards, *Time of Turmoil* (Auckland: Penguin, 1992), 115-116.

⁵⁹ Miriama Aoake (@maryj_oblige), Tweet deleted, accessed 25 February 2018, www.twitter.com/maryj_oblige

⁶⁰ It is important to remember that while this was an sad and tragic history of violence, there are many descendants of the Moriori and to repeat this lie denies them their existence. This atrocity was committed by two iwi, not all Māori.

ticity', as though this experience was rooted in biology rather than historical treatment.⁶¹ It is seldom mentioned that many of us are light-skinned as a result of colonialism, whether this is a direct result of attempted genocide, dispossession, or forced assimilation, which may be part of government policies or be led by indigenous leaders themselves.⁶² This process was designed to sever our connections to our whenua and our tupuna.

"If I close my mouth I will die."⁶³

DON'T ASK ME WHAT PART OF ME IS MĀORI. DON'T
ASK ME WHAT PERCENTAGE MĀORI I AM. DO NOT
TELL ME I LOOK BROWN IN SUMMER. DO NOT
TELL ME I LOOK WHITE. STOP OBSESSING OVER MY
BLOOD AND SKIN. BLOOD QUANTUM THEORY IS A
RACIST COLONIAL RHETORIC THAT IS INTRUSIVE
AND HURTFUL. I HAVE AS LITTLE CONTROL OVER
DEFINING MY MĀORINESS AS I DO MY SKIN
COLOUR.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Johnson+Thwaites, "A domain of proliferated doubt" in *The Fraud Complex*, as part of the exhibition *The Fraud Complex*, at West Space, Melbourne, Australia, as part of Next Wave Festival (2016), <http://www.thefraudcomplex.com/johnsonthwaites/>

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Alice Te Punga Somerville, "If I close my mouth I will die: Writing, Resisting, Centring" in *Resistance: An Indigenous response to Neoliberalism.*, ed. Maria Bargh, (Wellington: Huia Publishers, 2007), 85.

⁶⁴ Myles Russell-Cook, "The Imposter" in *The Fraud Complex Catalogue* (Melbourne: Next Wave Festival, 2016), http://www.thefraudcomplex.com/s/TFC_Catalogue_Booklet_Blue_D4.pdf

In the exhibition, *The Fraud Complex* curated by JOHNSON+THWAITES at West Space (2016), artist Bindi Cole Chocka presented a series of photographs titled, *Not really Aboriginal* (2008/2016). In each photograph the artist stands with or has photographed members of her family with black paint on their faces to unpack and critique the way we conflate race and ethnicity as the same thing. This came after a right wing commentator, Andrew Bolt repeatedly articulated that ‘light skinned’ Aboriginal people were inauthentic. Chocka was amongst eight other Aboriginal people who successfully sued Bolt in federal court for breaching the Racial Discrimination Act (1975). In an accompanying essay, Aboriginal writer Myles Russell-Cook articulates this frustration and obsession with authenticity and blood, “So one’s proportion of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal ancestry, or “blood”, remains the defining factor of Indigenous authenticity for the non-indigenous population.”⁶⁵

The Fraud Complex also featured a work by Abdul Abdullah titled, *WHY CAN'T I BE ANGRY* (2016). A black embroidered curtain with gold tassels with these words WHY CAN'T I BE ANGRY with ceramic trophies adorned with phrases like ‘Most kind’ and ‘Most great’ sat atop a shelf. This work articulates the way in which people of colour are expected to censor themselves and behave in assimilated ways. It articulates the means and conditions which enable people to be their ‘authentic selves’, which is a luxury enjoyed by a privileged few.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Johnson+Thwaites, “A domain of proliferated doubt” in *The Fraud Complex*, as part of the exhibition *The Fraud Complex*, at West Space, Melbourne, Australia, as part of Next Wave Festival (2016), <http://www.thefraudcomplex.com/johnsonthwaites/>.

WHY CAN'T I BE ANGRY? WHY CAN'T I BE ANGRY?
WHY CAN'T I BE ANGRY? WHY CAN'T I BE ANGRY?
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WHY CAN'T I BE ANGRY? WHY CAN'T I BE ANGRY?
WHY CAN'T I BE ANGRY?⁶⁷

My Calling (card) was an interactive artwork by American artist Adrian Piper that she performed between 1986-1990. These works were designed to highlight the ways in which racism and sexism were extremely harmful. Piper is a light-skinned African American, who is white passing. She experienced the kind of alienation that is very relatable in terms of being able to easily assimilate and forced to experience extreme discomfort over the handling of recognition or non-recognition of her blackness. The brown card in the series is used to directly confront anyone who uses a racist remark while she is present. She would do this anywhere, even at dinners and cocktail parties. When she hears the remark she hands them the card and this usually makes them very uncomfortable. The white card is used on men, it tells them that she is available simply because she is unaccompanied.

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⁶⁷ In my head I repeated this phrase over and over again while I went to *The Fraud Complex* when looking at Abdul Abdullah's work of the same title.

Pākehā people feel comfortable and safe around me to say racist things or ask questions like I'm a dictionary and have all the answers. Men assume if you are alone that means you are available and exist for their pleasure and benefit.

INTERIOR - EVENING

Location - a small intimate gallery opening

Hinemoana stands near a group holding a glass of wine looking unapproachable and immersed in a video work by a friend. An unfamiliar man stands nearby and attempts small talk.

Stranger: It's funny aye. I don't get why they're still going on about all this treaty stuff anymore. No one's listening.

Hinemoana: Before you continue this conversation I just want you to know that I am Māori. My skin is pale, and I do not appear typically Māori. But I am. Before you decide to tell me any of your racist hot takes, please be aware that you will be implicating me and exposing yourself to your target.

“And white people think I'm radical”.⁶⁸

Diane Prince's *Flagging the future: Te Kiritangata – The last palisade* (1995) was a work that drew considerable criticism and debate. Prince (Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Whatua) is a multidisciplinary Māori artist who for *Korurangi: New Māori art* curated by George Hubbard in 1995,

⁶⁸Kanye West Ft. 2 Chainz, Big Sean, Designer, Gucci Mane, Quovo, Travis Scott and Yo Gotti, *Champions*, G.O.O.D Music, Track 1 on *Cruel Winter*, 2016, digital download.

made an installation criticising the loss and or confiscation of land by the Crown over the last century. This work sat in communion with Emily Karaka's painting, *Manawhenua hapu o Tamakimakaurau* (1995), which had the words 'This is Māori land' inscribed into it.

Flagging the future: Te Kiritangata – The last palisade was a mixed media installation work featuring weaving, found objects, dried harakeke flowers (Kōrari) and had a New Zealand flag lying on the floor stencilled with the words 'Please walk on me'. The Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, where it was being shown, supported the presentation of this work. Many visitors accepted the invitation of walking on the flag, while others were outraged and offended. According to Auckland Art Gallery senior curator, Alexa Johnson, "The flag is part of an artwork - it's not a New Zealand flag. People can chose to walk on it or walk around. Some see the flag as an symbol of pride and of an honourable history. Some see it as a symbol of oppression."⁶⁹ The flag, like most flags entails an sense of belonging and is often deemed a symbol of pride, but it belies our outdated ties to the UK or the 'Motherland' and an oppressive colonial past that most Pākehā seem to have developed a collective amnesia or denial over. The gallery received an number of complaints including the following written in the guest book, "17/10/95 Dianne Prince - This is of very low artistic merit. It is a blatant propaganda for activist (anarchist) movement."⁷⁰

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⁶⁹ Kim Newth and David Fisher, "NEW FLAG ATTACK BY RADICAL," *Sunday News* (Auckland, Aotearoa), October 29, 1995.

⁷⁰ Public comments on *Korurangi: New Māori art* excerpted from the New Gallery Visitor's book in *Korurangi: New Māori art*, Chris Szekely (ed.), Auckland Art gallery Toi o Tamaki, 1996.

The treatment of the New Zealand flag caused outrage, complaints were directed at the gallery from visitors, and the work was also discussed on talkback radio. A visitor laid a formal complaint with the Police and the gallery was advised that the work was in breach of the Flags, Emblems and Names Protection Act (1981). The police indicated that the flag would have to be removed from public display or the gallery and the artist could face prosecution. As a result, after considerable consultation, the artist instructed the gallery to remove the entire work on 2 November. This removal was denounced as cowardly censorship by the art community, but the gallery had been in conversation with Prince who felt that while she did not care if she was prosecuted for the work, she did not want to put patrons or the gallery at risk. The gallery gave Prince the option to just remove the flag, but the artist opted to remove the entire installation. Prince stated later, when this work was re-shown at the Hawkes Bay Museum, that she had decided to lay the flag component of the work to rest.⁷¹ This was because Prince did not want the gallery nor their patrons to face legal ramifications. Instead of the flag, Prince chose to place a black rectangle in the installation to represent this loss, and in addition flew the the tino rangatiratanga flag at half mast outside the museum to refer to this loss.

Various journalists described Prince as being ‘radical’ and of the work discussing ‘Māori nationalism’—often in quotation marks, as though honouring and practicing ways to centre tino rangatiratanga in our lives shouldn’t be a concern for us all. Many of the articles written in response to *Flagging the future: Te Kiritangata – The last palisade*

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⁷¹ Martin Johnson, “Art moving to Napier minus flag,” *New Zealand Herald* (Auckland, Aotearoa), November 4, 1995.

also mention an incident from the same year during Waitangi day when a man in Whangarei was fined \$500 for stomping on the flag under the Summary Offences Act. In these little asides its repeatedly mentioned that this person was a ‘sickness beneficiary’. These immediately serve as a reminder of how the media punishes those without power or agency by denying them the right of being ‘people’. Many articles also brought up the fact that in 1980 Prince and her former partner were convicted of defacing the executive wing of Parliament by smearing paint on it. In court for these charges Prince refused to enter the dock at the Wellington District Court, because she felt that the motivations behind her attack did not sit with the charges being laid; she wanted to be charged with sedition. Prince saw herself first and foremost as an activist, “I am not an artist. The flag is just a protest work suitable for display.”⁷² Prince’s work can be seen as ‘...tino rangatiratanga in action, a visible claiming of the right to control and present our own image and material in the ways we deem most suitable, but using self-determined processes.’⁷³

The controversy surrounding the work seemed to overshadow both the valid critique and anger registered in Prince’s work, as well as the other Māori artists in the show and thereby reducing the impact of one of the first shows of contemporary Māori art in this country. Some visitors found the work appalling because of their ties to colonial histories; for instance, many felt an allegiance to the flag for reasons such as a relative, who fought for ‘our freedom’, namely,

⁷² “Flag ‘art’ just a protest,” *Sunday News* (Auckland, Aotearoa), November 5, 1995.

⁷³ Alice Te Punga Somerville, “If I close my mouth I will die: Writing, Resisting, Centring” in *Resistance: An Indigenous response to Neoliberalism.*, ed. Maria Bargh, (Wellington: Huia Publishers, 2007), 91, quoting Roma Potiki on Māori theatre.

Aotearoa's participation in the imperial first and second world wars. Much of the criticism around this show from Pākehā is reminiscent of the kinds of vitriolic criticism levelled at Taika Waititi following his recent interview in *Dazed* magazine with Unknown Mortal Orchestra's Ruban Nielson. In it he describes New Zealand as, "...racist as fuck. I mean, I think New Zealand is the best place on the planet, but it's a racist place."⁷⁴ Responses to this interview include Facebook comments like these, "Lets all be real honest for 1 minute here. The only real racists in New Zealand is the self entitled half caste Maoris. There is one rule for Kiwis and one rule for them. Their own voting privileges, their own education, their own government-gifted bank accounts and their own language..."⁷⁵

How much has changed. How much remains the same.

Flagging the future: Te Kiritangata – The last palisade was intended to critique the Government's inadequate proposals to settle Māori land grievances. Prince wanted to unpack the way Pākehā and Māori approach these histories and how we seem almost unable to build sustainable relationships based within concepts using a te ao Māori framework like whanaungatanga that would enable empathy, understanding, and reciprocity between us and perhaps even be a starting

⁷⁴ Alex Denney, "Unknown Mortal Orchestra & Taika Waititi on New Zealand culture," in *Dazed Magazine*, published 5 April, 2018, accessed 23 April, 2018 <http://www.dazeddigital.com/music/article/39590/1/unknown-mortal-orchestra-ruban-nielson-taika-waititi-interview>.

⁷⁵ Megan Gattey, "Yes, some Kiwis are as racist as Taika Waititi says. Here's the proof," *Stuff*, April 10, 2018, accessed April 23, 2018, <https://www.stuff.co.nz/entertainment/film/102973332/yes-some-kiwis-are-as-racist-as-taika-waititi-says-heres-the-proof>.

point for a process of healing. Part of engaging with Māori in this way would require Pākehā to acknowledge the systemic effects of colonialism and the validity of anger and pain entwined within our shared histories. Prince felt at the time that, “Māoridom has existed in a relatively hostile environment in which pivotal causes of land, economy and language have been made to exist within our own isolated political framework.”⁷⁶ For me, *Flagging the future: Te Kaitan-gata – The last palisade* was a call to reevaluate these outdated modes for building meaningful relationships between Māori and Pākehā, by honouring Te Tiriti and centering tino rangatiratanga in our daily lives, as something as important to Pākehā as it is to Māori, but this requires Pākehā relinquishing power. As long as Pākehā remain in denial as to how ongoing and far-reaching the effects of colonialism have been for Māori the longer we will exist within a culture where we are denied anger to known truths. Aotearoa is racist. Aotearoa was not settled peacefully. The New Zealand flag flapping in the winds around our big institutions is a colonial symbol of a violent past, that has sought to disempower Māori by stripping us of agency, resources, and denying tino rangatiratanga, as well as murdering us, infecting us with diseases and attempting to destroy our ties to place and identity through assimilation and urbanisation. We need to create spaces where we can imagine ourselves and be given the ability to tell our stories on our own terms. *Ka wharwhai tonu matou. The struggle without end.*⁷⁷ Tony Birch, an Australian Aboriginal

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⁷⁶ *Korurangi: New Māori art* excerpted from the New Gallery Visitor’s book during *Korurangi: New Māori art*, Chris Szekely (ed.), Auckland Art gallery Toi o Tamaki, 1996, 28.

⁷⁷ This is in reference to Professor Ranginui Walker’s seminal book on Māori and their historical development to the present time, first published in 1990.

scholar summarises this well, “Our legitimacy does not lie within the legal system and is not dependent on state recognition. It lies within ourselves ... We need to claim our rights, beyond being stuck in an argument about the dominant culture’s view of land rights or identity ...”⁷⁸

Everyday for the longest time I walked past Te Aro Park , which I know very little about other than at the time of its design it was highly controversial and was designed by the Māori artist, Shona Rapira Davies. Only recently did I realise that the toilet blocks were painted by Diane Prince for the millennium.⁷⁹ These two artists are friends and have collaborated on an number of projects. Everyday I now look to this space in such a different way knowing that I need to honour these women and their histories by learning about their histories, so that they aren’t forgotten or misrepresented and so I can carry them with me and draw strength from their stories of resistance.

“For a long time, the sordid truths of racism have been denied or minimised in this country because of the view that the honour of the Crown led to us having the best race relations in the world.”⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Alice Te Punga Somerville, “Māori writing in place; writing in Māori place” in *Extraordinary Anywhere: essays on place from Aotearoa New Zealand*, Ingrid Horrocks and Cherie Lacey (eds). (Wellington: VUP, 2016), 103.

⁷⁹ Jenny Neligan, in discussion at Bowen galleries about Prince and Shona Rapira-Davies, April 23, 2018.

⁸⁰ Moana Jackson, “Understanding racism in this country,” *E-Tangata*, published 25 February 2018, <https://e-tangata.co.nz/news/moana-jackson-understanding-racism-in-this-country>.

The importance of connection for indigenous people weighs heavily on all our practices. Now that we are faced with deep intergenerational disconnection from our land, our tikanga, our language and our people, in our practice there is a desperate grasp for reconnection. We sit in groups weaving our stories of displacement. We share content and connect online. There is an urgency in our need to declare what we feel is wrong. What we have known to be wrong for years but have been conditioned to internalise. When alienated from indigenous spaces and connections our stories can become bounty for Pākehā curators to champion and commodify. But this offers economic opportunities, key to our survival.

“Whoever names something - has the power to define something, controls its meaning.”⁸¹

Often when discussing Te Tiriti we forget that that it was a document signed not between the Crown and ‘The Māori’, but between the Crown and independent iwi.⁸² It is an iwi-based agreement.⁸³ ‘Contra proferentem’ is a latin phrase meaning ‘against the offeror’. In legal terms it is a doctrine of contractual interpretation where an agreement is considered ambiguous. The interpretation should then work against the interests of the party who drafted it (The Crown?) and the Māori version of the Treaty of Waitangi, Te Tiriti should be upheld over the english version (of the treaty). The Crown has

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⁸¹ Moana Jackson, “Māori law, Pākehā law and the treaty of Waitangi” in *MANA TIRITI: The art of protest and partnership exhibition, Wellington City gallery, 1990.*, (ed) Ramari Young (Wellington: Daphne Brasell Associates Press 1991), 14.

⁸² Ibid, 14.

⁸³ Ibid, 14.

consistently said that one of the difficulties with the Treaty is that it is a very vague document.⁸⁴ It is absolutely clear and concise. Over 500 tribal leaders signed the treaty, only about 30 leaders signed the Māori and English versions. Governor Hobson signed both.⁸⁵ But the story Māori people have told about the Treaty has been consistently based on the text our tupuna signed, the Māori text.⁸⁶

“Disagreement is not on the menu. It’s no longer a choice.”⁸⁷

When you walk along the shores of Kāwhia harbour you might see a big mound of grass. Beneath this mound of grass lies buried a great waka, Tainui. Captain Hoturoa and other iwi members marked out the waka with two pillars and performed a karakia. Two limestone pillars mark the bow and the stern, one stone is called Puna-whakatapu-tangata (female fertility, spring of life) and the other Hani-a-te-waewae-i-kik-atu. It is said that women struggling to conceive will become pregnant when they touch the stone. This canoe is called Tainui and it carried my ancestors from Ngāti Mahuta from Hawaiki.

We migrated inland following the Waikato te arua, we settled on the lake we called Waahi. Waahi rested on the west side of the river Waikato, with lake Hakanoa appearing on the East. The lakes did not have a name, but were plentiful with Tuna.

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⁸⁴ Ibid, 17.

⁸⁵ Ibid, 17.

⁸⁶ Ibid, 17.

⁸⁷ Chris Kraus, *Summer of hate* (South Pasadena: Semiotext(e), 2012), 213.

APPENDIX FIVE: TUNA SWIMMING
IN MY BLOOD

Only half-awake from my year long enchantment, I discover how far I've been carried away from myself. It feels like my legs have exploded off from my body and I can no longer walk. I am deep in the Te Urewera. I pull my torso through mud and plants, and I fight off wild Kunekune. I shadow Theseus trying to find his way out of the maze after he kills the Minotaur. I'm bleeding, leaving a trail like Theseus' lines of string. I'm dragging myself back to the Pae. I'm miles from the Waikato. Pulled from the Pae, I can no longer sit between the two zones.⁸⁸ One is the familiar, that I constantly lose and discover, that exists between the folding green of Papatūānuku and the blue of Ranginui. This is the space between people, it's where air bounces around. The other is Pākehā: a Whitened empire. My autonomy should enable me citizenship in both spaces, but I have been denied both.

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You have 83 matches, a broken heart and the land of your tūpuna is rotting in cow shit. I am Māori, and have predominantly dated masculine Pākehā men. What does it mean to date the coloniser, whose ancestors spoiled the whenua and my tūpuna irreversibly? The narratives we are now taught about romantic love are patriarchal lies... "In its heterosexual form, it's a patriarchal horror movie."⁸⁹ Cutting out ice overhang from our broken freezer. There's blood deep in the ice. You pulled me down. Dragged my torso up. Bundled it and wore it

⁸⁸ See Jahnke, "Voices beyond the Pae," 13.

⁸⁹ Black, "The Loves of Others"

as a scarf, as a trophy. Look at this thing (person) I have conquered, but do not need. I held you up. Carried you. Tane Mahuta offering his eyebrows to Tangaroa to make amends. Longing for Te Pō. Cover me in darkness.

The problem today is that none of us were taught healthy ways to give and receive love. *Swipe right*. I did the emotional work for both of us while you hid behind a mask of normalcy. Together we made many mistakes. But sometimes I would say sorry so much I felt my bones crush as I threw myself under the bus. *Swipe left*. Please don't say we fell in love. No one 'falls' in love. We choose to love someone. To claim you fell in love absolves you of accountability for your actions. *Swipe right*. We are taught that partners are objects we can pick up, use and then discard at will... "couples are a machine."⁹⁰ The greed of consumption makes dehumanisation not only acceptable, but required. *Pour some sugar on me. Ooh in the name of love.*⁹¹ Swarms of bees cover my chest and are eaten by wasps, that are eaten by Pīwakawaka. The Pīwakawaka whistles the songs of Hine-nui-te-Pō, telling us to be careful. *Be careful of me.*⁹²

I think about the fact that I chose to be with him despite all the red flags. We 'fell' in love with our false selves, never revealing the unseen parts, never wanting to show our true selves. Diagnosed with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) at 21, my Doctor told me that it probably developed from my childhood Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, having it resurface in a more recent experience trauma.

⁹⁰ Bernadette Corporation, "Bedroom Boredoms," 209.

⁹¹ From Def Leppard's "Pour Some Sugar On Me"

⁹² From Cardi B's "Be Careful"

Part of having BPD means that I'm constantly fearful people will leave me, or that they do not really love me. But I simultaneously push people away to protect myself. He gave me a script and I existed, but I felt numb for four years. I bury my pain deep and find it harder and harder to share this information. I couldn't share myself with him, fearful that he would use it against me when we fought, to remove blame from himself.

I watch a Demi Lovato documentary about her addiction issues, eating disorder and mental health struggles while being a Disney starlet. I can't imagine the pressure. I cry really hard and think about how she's so powerful and talented and strong and beautiful, but talks so openly about ongoing struggles with her eating disorder. The first ghost that always returns is my inability, or rather refusal, to eat. In this past bout, I thought of Catherine of Siena refusing to eat and entering a state of *infermità* (illness) so that she could be closer to the love of God. She refused to eat or swallow from January 1380. By February she could not walk, and by the end of April she had a stroke and died.

I wonder if I should just close myself off. I won't find meaningful love in the community I have built around me. A tendon tore near my heart. *Ahakoā, he aroha iti, he pounamu tonu.* I performed for him because it is how I'm socialised to behave. My pain wasn't as important as his and I performed the role of caregiver. Sometimes he could be caring, but never to the point where his power over me subsided. Any attachment I find is doomed and repeats this sort of

failure, where I can't articulate my needs and he can't either. And this reinforces my insecurities: "At some point, glimpses of the real self emerge and disappointment comes. Rejected by their chosen love, the message received in childhood is confirmed: Nobody could love them as they really are."⁹³ *It's a sweet sweet fantasy baby.*⁹⁴ I told him I would do anything for him, and made plans for a life that would never be a reality. *You're running me dry.*⁹⁵ I was consistently disappointed. Lacking. Conditioned to feel a lack of love, I spent so much time wondering 'Am I really in love?' and 'Does he really love me?'... "Love aches stupidly with thwarted infinity."⁹⁶

This tension between white spaces and shallow love is explored in Chun Hua Catherine Dong's performance *The Husbands and I*, that began in 2009, through to 2011. The artist dressed in a traditional Chinese dress, walked the streets of Vancouver and approached white males to have their photo taken with her, as if they were her husband (Dong took around 325 photos). Following this performance, in 2011 Dong advertised in various media the following:

I am an exotic, compliant and artistic Asian girl, looking for A WHITE HUSBAND who would like to take me to his home and live with him for a day as his mail order bride. If you think it would be an interesting experience, please contact me at artistintheworld@hotmail.com.

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Both works explore the idea of place and belonging, referring to the

⁹³ Hooks, *All About Love*, 169

⁹⁴ From Mariah Carey's "Fantasy"

⁹⁵ From Bryson Tiller's "Run Me Dry"

⁹⁶ Black, "The Loves of Others"

immigration process from China to Canada as being like a ‘marriage’, with her identity flowing from being ‘Chinese’ to ‘Chinese-Canadian’ to ‘Canadian’. This identity was formed not by her belonging or being constructed by Canada as a place, but rather the “ideological confrontation between me and the Western social and political landscape that I feel I don’t belong to.”⁹⁷ Dong explored this process as a way of negotiating how “looking for a white man is a process of looking for a home.”⁹⁸ The work questioned this power dynamic to reconfigure the space in which privileged white male bodies operate, while also challenging the way Chinese female (or, ‘Othered’) bodies are treated in Western societies.⁹⁹

Hinemoa was engaged twice, tied to an idea of love that will never exist. Hinemoa’s Kuia asks for children each time she visits. Hinemoa has no love.

He had the kind of family that see themselves as being as embedded into this whenua as I am. When I meet a Pākehā family and they try to speak about colonisation, I prepare myself for polite, but racist remarks, such as “We all came on a boat some way or another I guess,” “We’re all just kiwis,” or my least favourite, “Māori ate all the Moriori anyway.”¹⁰⁰ The white fragility inherent within Pākehā is revealed when claims of rightful sovereignty and ownership of Aotearoa are

⁹⁷ Dong, “The Husbands and I”

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Also see Anastasia Klone’s performance *Film for my Nana*

¹⁰⁰ The false allegation that Māori wiped out the Moriori people is brought up as a defense mechanism. To say this rebrutalises Moriori, whose descendants of Moriori are still alive. Although this was a tragic and violent history, it was committed by two iwi and cannot be framed as a justification for the ongoing effects of colonialism on Māori and Moriori.

asserted. These challenges are usually met by a number of different responses, which have never been good. Pākehā like this seem liberal and tolerant, but their politeness and their instance that ‘We’re all kiwis’ strips Māori of the right to reclaim and heal; to identifying as tangata whenua, to belong to the whenua of Papatūanuku, tracing the stars from Hawaiki to Aotearoa.

I want to call Pākehā colonisers, rather than ‘expats’ or ‘kiwis’. Ironically, white people are never called immigrants. I am tangata whenua but my ties appear more slippery and harder to pinpoint. Embedded into the whenua, my body is a considered a weed growing in these starkly white spaces. To them my mixed-race identity seems like a pie chart waiting to be uncovered, rather than a painful, lifelong journey of reconnection. It always seems so polite. Words like ‘discovered’, ‘heritage’ and ‘conquered’ swirl in my consciousness. You can’t ‘discover’ that I’m Māori. I am Māori. While Pākehā remain unchallenged.

Slipping from one relationship to the next, unable to give or receive love, he’s lacking, seeking nurture in the emotional labour of women. Seeking a Madonna figure to anchor him, as though love saves. Love doesn’t save, but it can offer redemption. Only if we are ready and able... Surrounding himself with people who all look and behave like him (white, educated, upper middle class) enables him to internalise and then dismiss my markers of belonging, which exist outside Pākehā imperialist frameworks (like the media). These frameworks do not want to imagine what tino rangatiratanga could look like in practice. It gives him, alongside all Pākehā, anxiety. Be-

ing in a position of power over those who have been historically and continually stripped of their power and agency means Pākehā are often unable to recognise what their privilege means, accordingly unable to be an ally of Māori. To be a genuine ally, they must allow themselves to be challenged. He would not consider himself racist, being too 'nice' to be racist. But he speaks over me constantly, as though I can't say anything without him gaslighting me by pushing his opinion forward. Sometimes I am asked to perform in a way that 'proves' how Māori I am, or am asked what 'percentage' I am, or what other ethnicities lurk in my bones, or whether someone can speak te reo to me. No I will not cite off my pepeha, and no do not practice te reo rangatira on me. It's assumptive, painful and racist. *Whakamā*.

Whakamā: (*verb*) to whiten, be shamed, embarrassed, shy bashful. I can assimilate and disguise myself, and erased by people like u but I'll always know my bones are white and brown and yours are snow melting in this heat. Brown enough to be your token cultural adviser, barely able to speak for myself. Whitening myself further for your comfort. Becoming smaller. Why don't you date a maaaarey?!? My bones are embedded into this earth that your people stole. They tried to kill us, lied to us, infected us with all of ur many poisons and abused Papatūānuku leaving her with lumps of rot so she might suffocate in your plastic. Men like you take and never give. You don't water the plants you bring the weeds and brown bubbling sickness into the water. My whenua is in the ground and across all waterways, that swirl across this land like a snake. You built concrete slabs into the water like they could never break. It looks just like England,

but an England that is stained by Papatūānuku, continuously losing its whiteness. You never wanted to be challenged or to learn. You just didn't want to seem ignorant. Pushing and pulling... brittle... fragile.

I rode a bike and almost died. My body, like Hine-Tītama, is a deep red clay, hardened to protect itself in a foreign colonial motherland. As a student of class mobility, and a student of my Father and years of assimilation, I have learnt to blend in. A Dutchman tells Piupiu to 'ride hard and fast' when cycling, but doesn't actually tell them the road rules. It was bitterly cold and I was bitter. While I was away, Wellington was having the hottest summer in years, which only added to my bitterness. This bitterness was clouded by my anxiety about plastic strangling the Pacific, marred in a history of death, exploitation and destruction. Rotterdam is so logical, freezing and orderly. This city, like many of Europe's cities, has pipes that rattle with the ghosts of the Second World War. Lights in the footpath mark the beginning and end of bomb raids that wiped out almost the entire city. Which were rebuilt again in logical rows. Stark, post-war brutalism sitting in communion with a sharp, heavy breath. The Second World War sits everywhere in monuments and museums and streets, as does my obvious insignificance and alienation to this place. Where are the markers of colonial shame in Aotearoa? I find it calming to imagine what Aotearoa was like before British 'settlement'. It's fucking cold. Some nights I cry so hard that I feel bile swirl in my mouth and have intermittent chest pain... it might be because I have supraventricular tachycardia, but maybe it's because

I keep imagining him falling in love with new people. I want to feel empty, but I feel everything.

I fly to Rome and can barely eat the entire time. I cry in the Sistine chapel. I cry when I'm told that there are tiles in the Vatican are older than Jesus. I love churches and ritual; I find it calming. I pray every day to be rid of all feeling, for at least one week. I need all the help I can get, but it doesn't work. I get my rosary of Saint Rita blessed. I bought it in Spain in one of Saint Rita's churches. It was the most beautiful, healing place I have ever been to. Saint Rita is the patron saint of wives, mothers, abused women and the heartbroken. I found the idea of God somehow very appealing in the worst moments of my life. I drink sacred water from a spring that gives me diarrhoea. Jesus fucking Christ. Is the Pope out here, or just on Twitter? I meet a priest eating pizza alone who is from Australia and I feel comforted by his accent. Did you know you can get a rosary blessed and sent to your hotel in the Vatican City is €8-12? No wonder the Catholic Church is rich. That, and poisoning indigenous people with death, disease, violence and attempting to dismantle all their connections to their histories and customs to assimilate them into god fearing Catholic assimilation. Not to mention exploiting and stealing their resources and brutalising everything around them. But haha, cute, buy a bobbing Pope for your car back in Minneapolis. **weeping**

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I find myself being ghosted after finally opening myself again after several months of grieving. I don't feel sad or ashamed, just confused. Why is it that if you sleep with a friend they suddenly assume you can't be friends anymore, or that you will suddenly arrive with

emotional labour? I demand nothing. Please don't assume I have the capacity to catch feelings or to feel anything. You are an eight at best, while I'm a ten. All desire has gone from my body. They forget I spawn new selves constantly, Like an evolving virus. I want it all baby. I'm a powerhouse eating power lunches. The Māori mogul of your dreams. I am the whenua and the whenua is me. Slurping on fresh Kina I zoom through tinder in New Plymouth in ten minutes. Taranaki hardcore. It feels much like online shopping. Matching with someone on apps like Bumble or Tinder is structured on principles of mass consumption, abundance, endless choice, efficiency, rationalisation and selective targeting, and standardization. Streamlined shopping for dates. The marketplace or rather the meat-market for relationships.¹⁰¹

For me, finding a romantic 'connection' stems from being able to understand my multiplicities, my image that spawns over different times and places. Love in the time of algorithms, that moves in zeros and ones.¹⁰² I am Pania and my reef is digital. I am tangata whenua, a digital 'native', an avatar and a mound of flesh, blood, water and bones. Download me on to your computer. I am from the water and the water lives inside me, flowing across the internet which expands like the tentacles of a wheke. I am the salt of the Earth and the salt of the sea. Sitting in spaces of 'intimacy', I weave a code that drips across space and time. I transcend my physical body and sing through the sky with Ranginui. I swim with Kiwa through fibre optic cables,

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¹⁰¹ Horning, "Single Servings"

¹⁰² Slater, *Love in the Time of Algorithms*

traversing the sea through the stars, like Captain Hoturoa carrying his protective mauri stones.

Shown last year at the Dowse art museum, Maureen Lander's *Flatpack whakapapa* (2017) approached the idea of whakapapa as being embedded within us. Raranga (weaving) is the living embodiment of these ties to both sides of the Pae: our bodies remain within our turangawaewae, but have become mobile in urban spaces. This installation can be packed down into a singular weaving, so that it can be easily carried around. These strands represent the way whakapapa grows and the way we always carry our whakapapa, our ancestors and our culture with us. Our ancestral lines flow from generation to generation, strand to strand, fibre to fibre. Utilising raranga, Lander engages a number of intergenerational techniques – like whiri, whakairo and the concept of aho tuku iho – to outline our belonging to both worlds, as well as our ability to adapt and grow while never forgetting our ties to the whenua, our places of belonging. In one work of *Flatpack whakapapa*, *DIY-DNA*, Lander suspends woven, DNA-like forms, that reach from ceiling to floor. They reminded me both of DNA and an internet wormhole, with a light that made them seem like they were multiplying. *DIY-DNA* connects to the body physically through the act and process of raranga, but also through the way we continue to share stories, and the way our multifaceted stories grow through working in tandem with customary practices and contemporary ideas. We are always connected back to Papatūānuku.

Tūwhakairiora was a wanderer. One day he walked towards Wharekahika and spied two young women collecting pipi at Kaiare-ro beach. He sat on their clothes to keep the women stuck in the tide. Eventually he walked away so the two women could get dressed. He then followed the women, who were sisters named Ruataupare and Auahikatoa, to their pā, Tokamapuhia. The sisters talked to their father, Aotaki and explained what had happened. Aotaki replied, 'Let him come to me, to Hikurangi, the mountain crowned in snow'. Here, Aotaki likened his mana as high chief of the land to the of Mount Hikurangi, but undermined the mana of the wandering of the Tūwhakairiora, who was without place. However when he arrived, Tūwhakairiora was permitted to stay with Aotaki and eventually he married Ruataupare. Together they had many children with their descendants being known as 'Te whanau-a-Tūwhakairiora'. Eventually their union soured because Ruataupare began to despise her husband and how much the power of his mana overwhelmed hers. She began wanting to claim a name for herself. She became so fed up she asked Tūwhakairiora to take another wife named Ihikō, who was already married. He refused, so Ruataupare taunted him until he went to Ihikō and to claim her as his wife. Satisfied, Ruataupare left and wandered for a while, before eventually settling in Tokomaru. Her descendants from this area are still recognised under her name, Ruataupare.¹⁰³

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Learning to be singular.

¹⁰³ This story is from Ngāti Porou. Haami, *Traditional Māori Love Stories*, 57

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