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Ngā Pari Tai Rua



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

Masters of Māori Visual Arts

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Abstract

This exhibition report traces the progression of my two-year exploration in the Master of Māori Visual Arts program and frames its impact on the development of my painting practice.

It navigates the history of Māori visual culture, and discusses the effect of European contact and colonisation on indigenous art practices. The exploration encompasses customary carvings, the history of painting in Aotearoa and the transmigration of Māori visual concepts. Within this context, contemporary Māori Artists exploring customary visual culture and figurative painting from the nineteenth century, are referenced. Their work is then contextualised against my own practice from 2022 and 2023, providing an understanding of both continuity and transformation of Māori visual arts. The culmination of this exploration is embodied in my latest body of work, the thesis exhibition Ngā Pari Tai Rua. This exhibition invites viewers to engage with a visual representation of the ao Māori, navigating through stories of kaitiaki, tūpuna and the enduring mana of pūrākau.

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Introduction

“He kapiti hono, he tatai hono”

“That which is joined together becomes an unbroken line”

The living are guided by the sayings and examples of their ancestors

The whakataukī above refers to the guidance of our ancestors, it reflects on my practice of research and exploration of taonga tuku iho, the treasure passed down to us from our tūpuna for generations.

The focus of this exhibition report is my thesis exhibition Ngā Pari Tai Rua, that was shown at Pātaka Art + Museum in Porirua from the 27th of November to the 3rd of December 2023.

This title refers to the two tides that flow within me, representing my iwi and hapū. This title becomes evident as the foundation of my practice and the creation of this exhibition which is a representation of mātauranga-a-iwi and mātauranga-a-hapū.

Chapter one follows the historical events that have shaped Māori visual culture, post and pre settlers colonialism. I begin with an exploration of the origin narrative of carving, and then discuss the idea of transmigration of Māori visual concepts from their place of origin to present day carvings. The second part of this chapter extends the concept of transmigration of forms and visual concepts from carvings to painted figures found in whareniui from the 1900s century. It also explores the historical events that led to the development of painted forms based on the drastic changes occurring in Aotearoa after European contact.

Chapter two reviews Māori artists whose practices have not only been influential to me but also share visual and conceptual connections to my own work. Drawing inspiration from carvings, local knowledge or whakapapa, artists such as Kura Te Waru Rewiri, Shane Cotton, Johnson Witehira and Zena Elliot have helped me to reflect on my own practice and my relationship with customary and contemporary forms.

Chapter three explores the way I approach my artistic practice and the methods I used to create this body of work for my thesis exhibition. I critically discuss the evolution and the development of my works from my first year show at Te Matatau 2022 through to the creation of the works for my exhibition thesis. This chapter reveals my commitment in my research of customary forms and patterns, and my engagement with studying mātauranga-a-iwi and mātauranga-a-hapū.

Chapter four focuses on the thesis exhibition. It addresses the cultural importance and the significance of Porirua as the location for my exhibition, the title of my body of work Ngā Pari Tai Rua is then explained. Finally each work is catalogued, complemented by relevant historical and whakapapa information.

Chapter 1: Customary Carvings and Painted Panels of Carved Figures

Part 1: Customary Carvings

Introduction

This chapter outlines the history of Māori carving before and after European influences, focusing on its impact on whareniui. It begins by tracing the origin of carving and the transmigration over time of carved forms, patterns and ideas within Māori symbolism, emphasising waka, pātaka and finally whareniui. It also explores the effects of colonisation on Māori art, particularly after European settler arrival. This period, starting around 1800, witnessed significant shifts in visual culture, and saw the emergence of painted whareniui.

The purpose of my exploration and research into Toi Māori through time and history is to gain more insight. In my artistic practice I strive to honor our visual past by incorporating concepts from explored carving forms and painted panels.

‘The genius of the old masters, ngā tohunga whakairo, will be seen and acknowledged and the artists of the past will live again in the minds of the modern Māori.’ (Mead, 1999)

Origins

Like many Māori pūrākau the origin of whakairo begins in the realm of the gods. Though many versions are known, the narratives from Ngāti Porou on the East Coast of Ruatepupuke and Manuruhi, is the most common.

This narrative begins when the art of carving was discovered by Ruatepupuke, the grandson of Tangaroa, the ocean God. Ruatepupuke fashioned a stone into an exquisite fishing hook named Te Whatukura-o-Tangaroa. First Tangaroa was offended that his name had been used without permission, secondly, he felt outraged when faced with the power of this hook and feared for his ocean grandchildren, angry Tangaroa sought utu.

One day when Ruatepupuke's son, Manuruhi went fishing, he didn't follow tikanga of offering the first fish back to Tangaroa, further angering the sea god. Tangaroa decided to punish his great-grandson by pulling him down to the depths of the ocean, where Manuruhi was transformed into a birdlike tekoteko on the top of Tangaroa's whare, Huiteananui. Noticing that his son was missing, Ruatepupuke dived into the water, there he found Tangaroa's underwater pā and house Huiteananui. To his surprise, the whare was covered in carvings that spoke and sang to each other. He asked the talking Poupou about his son's whereabouts, that's when amongst all the carvings, Ruatepupuke recognized his son Manuruhi in his bird-shaped tekoteko. Furious Ruatepupuke hid in the house and waited for its residents, the fish people, to fall asleep, in order to set the house ablaze. (Graham, 2014). Ruatepupuke rescued his son and four nonspeaking poupou from the mahua, consequently despite bringing the first carving into the world, speaking poupou were lost forever. Myth entered the realm of human tradition when the silent poupou became the model for carved panels and the tekoteko of Manuruhi probably became the example used for manaia forms. (Mead, 1986).

Drawing from this narrative, serves to connect me to my cultural traditions. It guides me in cultivating a stronger understanding of te ao Māori, which allows for the reinterpretation of cultural symbols, narratives and artistic forms. This process helps me to create a meaningful link between the past and the present.

Transmigration of Forms

The transmigration of forms and patterns refers to the transfer overtime of the visual convention of carving, from its place of origin to present day. This journey unfolds through waka, pātaka and ultimately whareniui.

Beginning with waka, a representation of iwi power and strength, its carved forms and kōwhahai patterns signify cosmological narratives being translated onto object (Janhke, 2023). This representation of cultural traditions continues with pātaka, where narratives depicted connects people with Atua and tūpuna. These concepts came to their apogee with the creation of the whareniui where both carving and kōwhaiwhai elements taken from waka and pātaka evolved, portraying the complexity and beauty of whareniui in te ao Māori today.



Figure 1 Waka, pātaka and whareniui at the National Museum, ROSE EVANS, OBJECTLAB

Examining historical tauihu, reveals artistry of old masters which embody Māori narratives and showcases the roots of visual concepts present in our landscape. This tauihu (figure 2) from Tolaga Bay recorded by James Cook and Joseph Bank is the earliest recording of tauihu by European settlers (Mead, 1986).

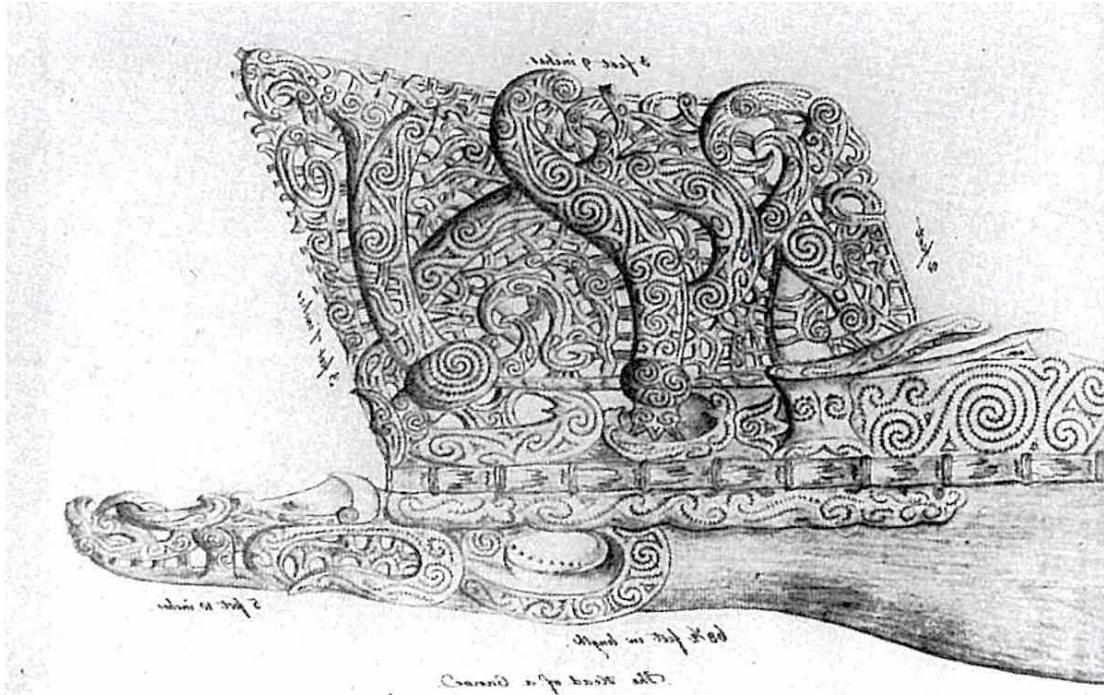


Figure 2 Waka prow drawing, Mead, S.M. (1986) *Te Toi Whakairo, The Art of Maori Carving*, Reed Methuen Publishers Ltd., Auckland

The waka taua Teremoe which is currently on display in the Te Papa o Tongarewa museum collection, once belonged to Te Reimana Te Kaporere and Matene Rangitauira, leaders from the upper Whanganui River. In 1930 Thomas Heberley of Te Atiawa added a tauihu from Matata in the Bay of Plenty, and a taurapa from



Figure 3 Prow of waka taua at Te Papa Museum, DP Review

Papaitonga in the Horowhenua. (Teremoe waka object description: Te Papa collection). Teremoe's added tauihu (figure 3) is an example of how these carvings can reflect on customary narratives (Janhke, 2023). The front figure represents Tūmatauenga, the god of war, the tiki form at the bottom is divided into two figures which is a reintroduction of the traditional male/female interaction. The spiral patterns running through the tauihu are known as takarangi

which tells of the creation narrative of Te Ao Marama in which Tāne separated Ranginui and Papatūānuku to create a world of light and life. Tāne is represented in the figure between the spiral pattern.

Now more than ever, reflecting on our narratives and history plays a crucial part in the development of my artistic practice where stories of kaitiaki connects us to our natural world and tells us of ancient way of protecting both people and the environment.

The notable Te Tākinga pātaka, taonga of Ngāti Pikiao currently residing in the Mana Whenua exhibition at Te Papa o Tongarewa is a great example of the transmigration of patterns. As with many taonga from its era, its past contexts have been diverse, reflective of the perceptions and cultural ideals of colonial New Zealand. (Te Tākinga pātaka object description: Te Papa collection).



Figure 5 Pātaka Te Tākinga at Lake Papaitonga, near Levin, National Library, Wellington.



Figure 4 Te Tākinga pātaka at Te Papa Museum, ROSE EVANS, OBJECTLAB

This pātaka entered the collections of the National Museum in 1911 (Evans, 2018). In the early 1930's master carver Thomas Heberley, of Te Atiawa, alongside Ngāti Pikiao representative worked on the sides, back and supporting piles of the pātaka.

Te Tākinga and its magnificent carved elements, is the quintessence example of the transfer of forms and patterns previously observed on carved waka. Similarly, to Teremoe's tauihu, the design takarangi can be seen on the maihi. There the design transforms to create a new pattern, known as pakake. The pakake form consists of a large scroll-like shape representing a whale's

head. Behind it, is the familiar shape of the whale's body alternating with tiki and manaia forms, tapering toward the tail.

The origins of this design lie in the narrative of chief Tinirau and his pet whale Tutunui, Tinirau offers Tutunui as transport for a guest, Kae, who in turn kills and eats the whale. This narrative illustrates aspects of the complex relationship we had with whales, commonly seen as friends, kaitiaki and food source (Royal, 2006).

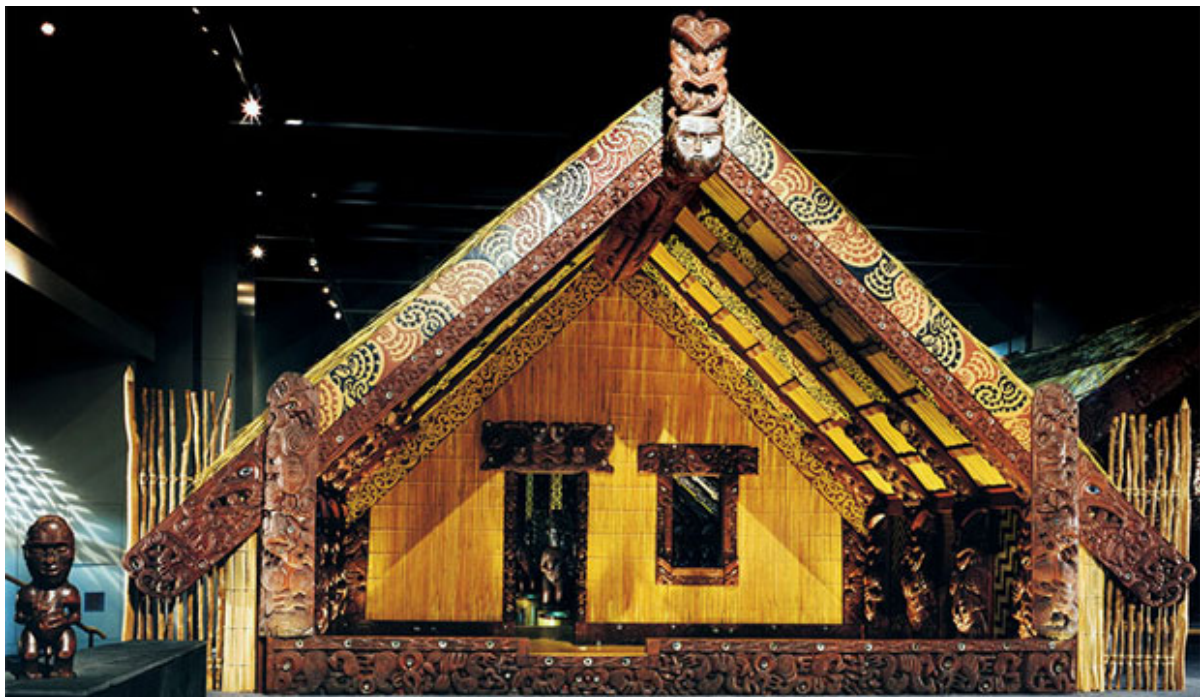


Figure 6 Te Hau Ki Tauranga housed at Te Papa Museum, Te Upoko o Te Ika

The whare whakairo currently housed at Te Papa o Tongarewa named Te Hau Ki Turanga, symbolizes ongoing development post European colonisation.

Thought to have been constructed in pre-European Aotearoa (Groube, 1964), this whare is considered to be one of the oldest extant meeting houses in Aotearoa.

Constructed by master carver Raharuhi Rukupo in the early 1840s and its renovation by Apirana Ngata in the 1930s marks a pivotal period of Māori development, this whare became the prototype for Ngata's 'traditional' Māori meeting house revival. This house was built during a period of rapid technological, religious, political and economic development for

Māori. These changes influenced the form and function of an emerging meeting house architecture.

George French Angas's sketches from his travels around the North Island in 1844, helps us understand the history of post/pre-European whare whakairo.

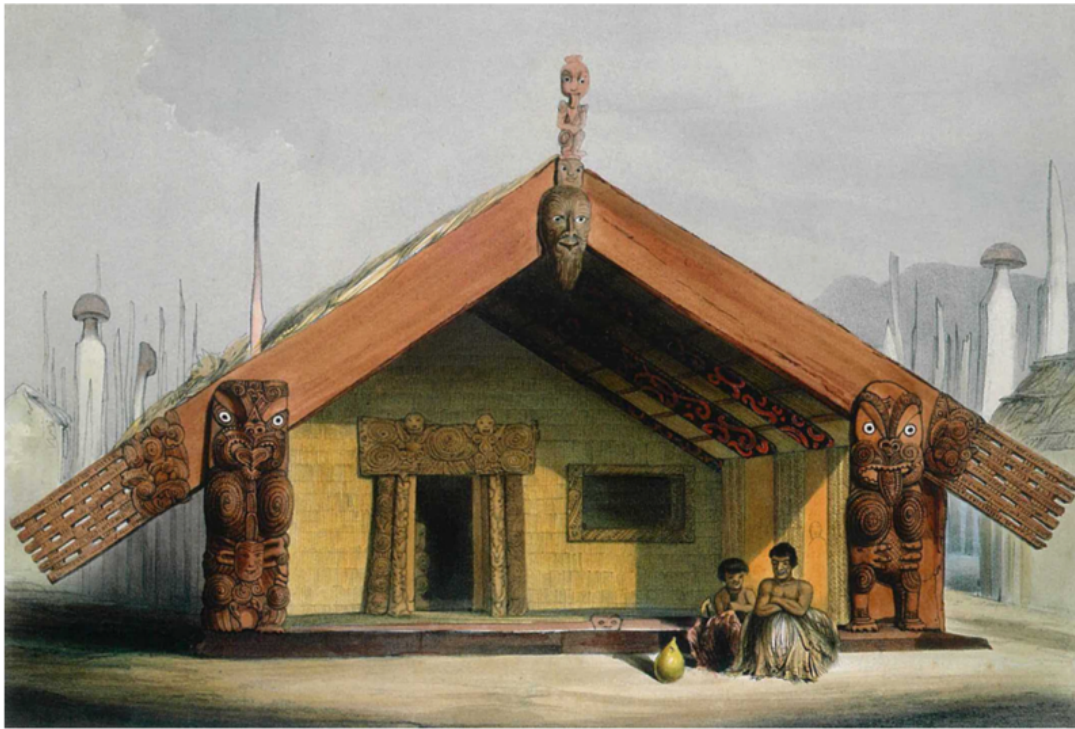


Figure 7 Te Rangihaeata whare on Mana island, Skipper, Damian, (2016). *The Maori Meeting House - Introducing the Whare Whakairo*. Te Papa Press, PO Box 467, Wellington, New Zealand

An example of this is his visual description of Kaitangata, the house of Ngāti Toa Rangatira's chief Te Rangihaeata situated on Mana Island. Despite possessing all the visual information similar to our concept of a whare whakairo, this house is different in two important respects.

“the whakapapa (genealogy) of the whare whakairo isn't yet the main subject of the art, the building is not yet a community resource that point to their prestige and power of the whole group rather than the chief. This house is clearly the property of an individual, the chief Te Rangihaeata, who Angas says is represented in the pou tokomanawa (actually a kind of self-portrait, if Te Rangihaeata is the subject and also the one who carved the figure).” (Skinner, 2016, p.37)

To understand the transformation of the whare whakairo and its use by Māori, as mentioned above, it is important to consider the nineteenth century as a period of rapid and drastic changes in Māori culture and society (Neich, 1994). The arrival of Europeans, followed by the land wars starting in 1843, saw Māori being taken away from their pā, resources and cultural landmarks. To express their power and identity, Māori communities transformed and evolved, using the cultural patterns and visual concepts of a chief's house into the whareniui we are familiar with now. It is important to mention not all Māori communities had carved houses belonging to chiefs. To represent their historical identity and power, these new houses became the main vehicle of group pride (Neich, 1994). Waka and pātaka symbolism and visual concepts were then transferred onto the whare whakairo, in order to strengthen sense of self and empower whakapapa.

Many whare whakairo are named after important tūpuna. The building is the representation of the ancestor body. The koruru is the face of the ancestor, the maihi the arms, the kūwaha the mouth, the tāhuhu the spine, and the heke the ribs. Carvings at the front of the house often represent dominant descendants of the main tupuna of the house. The carvings and paintings primarily found on the porch of the whare in the nineteenth century, gradually found their way inside the whare whakairo, thus creating a complete carved house with its walls covered in whakapapa and narratives demonstrating and empowering the mana of Māori communities. The whare whakairo evolving beyond a meeting house, hold significance for Māori identity and culture, a symbol of whakapapa and Māori cosmology (Rangi, 1998). Understanding this transmigration is vital for insights into Māori art's historical and cultural evolution, serving as a visual link between past and present. This exploration honors Māori visual culture, ensuring its continuity and relevance in my practice.

Part 2: Figurative Paintings

Kōwhaiwhai Origins

Māori painted art forms at the time of early European contact and continuing for decades, had not been regarded as a major art-form. Shadowed by oratory and oral literature, song poetry, music, dance, weaving, tattoo, woodcarving and sculpture in stone and bone (Neich, 1994). However, the practice of painting in Aotearoa dates back from the earliest period of Polynesian occupation, with rock drawing and rock painting. The gathering and preparing of whenua to create various colours unique to land and place evolve to being used as body paint which was apparently a widespread practice, with colour combination of blue and white, yellow and black, and white and red (Paama-Pengely, 2010). Black was made by using charcoal, red ochre created the most used pallet in Māori paintings which is kōkōwai, burned taioma produce a white tone, decayed wood help to create yellow and Moa bones generated a variety of shades of blues (Neich, 1994).

Māori practices evolved quickly as Māori visual cultures developed, being isolated from the rest of its Polynesian roots. The most recognised of this development is the painted scroll design know as, kōwhaiwhai. Under the kōwhaiwhai umbrella exist a multitude of designs, each symbolising and named after a natural form, indicative of the design origins.

Customarily kōwhaiwhai was commonly found on a variety of monuments, water vessels, paddles, storehouse and both inside and outside whare, amongst others. This art form which developed in every part of Aotearoa gave us some of the most spectacular examples of regional cultural identity, Te Rauparaha's mother's papa tūpāpaku (figure 8) erected using carving and painting is the quintessence example of Tainui's visual culture using white dots alongside kōwhaiwhai patterns.



Figure 8 Angas drawing of papa tūpāpaku, two portions of waka whakamaumaharatanga, carved figure and a monument for three children, Paama-Pengelly, J. (2010). Māori Art and Design, Weaving, painting, carving and architecture. New Holland Publisher(NZ)ltd

The origin of kōwhaiwhai seems to relate to ideas of genealogy and descent (Neich, 1990) a common theme in Māori visual culture, especially found in the placement of kōwhaiwhai in the whareniui. Regularly painted along the tahu and down the heke showcasing the connection to whakapapa through tūpuna.

Following the idea of transmigration of patterns previously discussed, painted hoe with kōwhaiwhai patterns and design were stolen for Western museum and are considered as the precedent for those painted on whare from the 19th century (Neich, 1994).

Painted Whare

The nineteenth century was the most challenging time with drastic changes in Māori culture and society. The arrival of European and Western belief systems and visual cultures, created massive reversal amongst Māori peoples and settlers. The historical time frame of these changes have to consider the effect of European religious belief system on Māori culture. The arrival of settlers in Aotearoa and its colonisation effect led to conflict over sovereignty and land between government forces and some iwi Māori (Keenan, 2012) known as the Land Wars. The action of the Land Wars saw in the period of the early 1870s an intense political and religious realignment (Neich, 1990).

What led to the drastic change of the visual concepts of the wharenuī between 1860 and 1910 is largely attributed to the influence of the prophet Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Turuki and his religious movement known as Ringatū (Paama-Pengely, 2010, p.70). David explains:

“In establishing the Ringatū faith, Te Kooti achieved more than any other single individual in bringing the Christian faith and Māoritanga together, in a complementary relationship. He used the church he founded to preserve and foster the arts of poetry, song and oratory, and to revitalise the communities wherein he resided. More than anyone else at that time, he promoted the continuation of carving, tukutuku and kōwhaiwhai, and was directly responsible for the building of several fully carved and decorated meeting houses. He was instrumental in the initiation of many other such building projects throughout the Bay of Plenty, Urewera and East Coast areas.” (David, 1976, p.26).

Te Kooti's actions reinforced, reconfirmed the positionality of Māori people's status as Tangata whenua, people of the land.

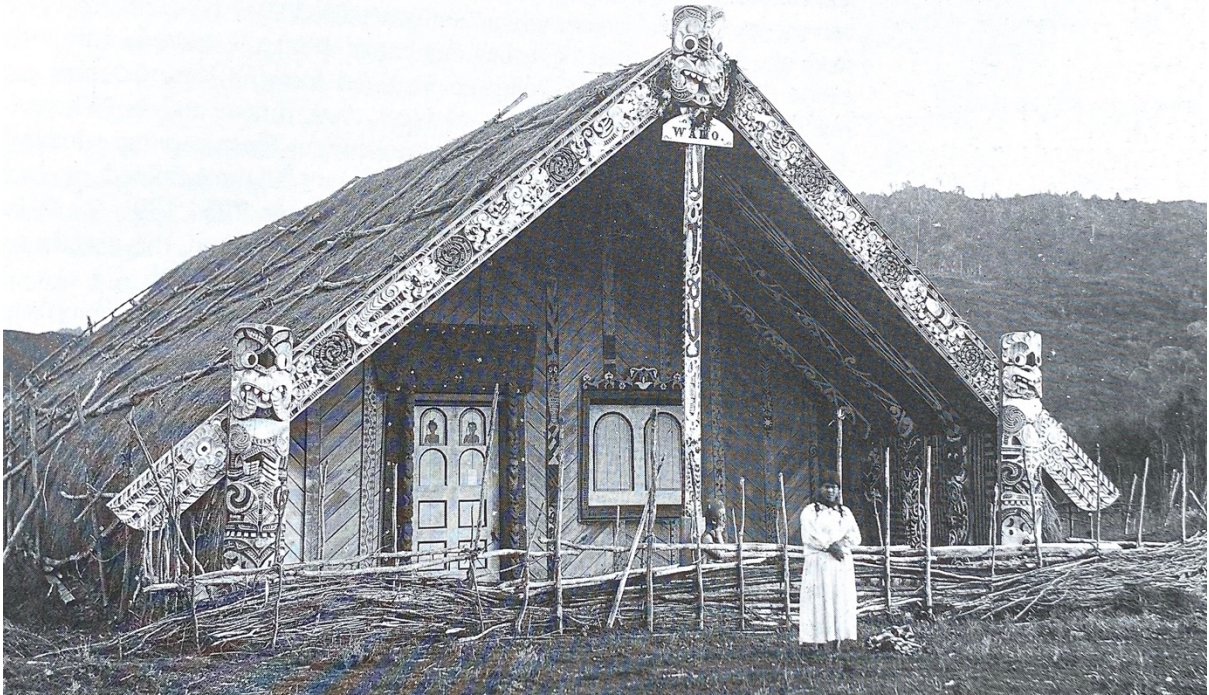


Figure 9 Burton Brothers photograph of Te Tokanganui-a-Noho around 1885, Neich, R. (1994). *Painted Histories: Early Māori figurative paintings*. Auckland University Press.

The whare in figure 9, Te Tokanganui-a-Noho, not only represents the first house where the first naturalistic paintings appeared, but also where figurative paintings developed, adapting and adopting decorative traditions already accepted as integral components of whareniui (Neich, 1994).

The practice of using naturalistic paintings can be seen as the development, influenced by western art of representing kōwhaiwhai patterns in whareniui. The calculated and symmetrical, paintings of naturalistic plant forms similar to kōwhaiwhai, became a distinctive Māori approach to representing nature (Neich, 1994).

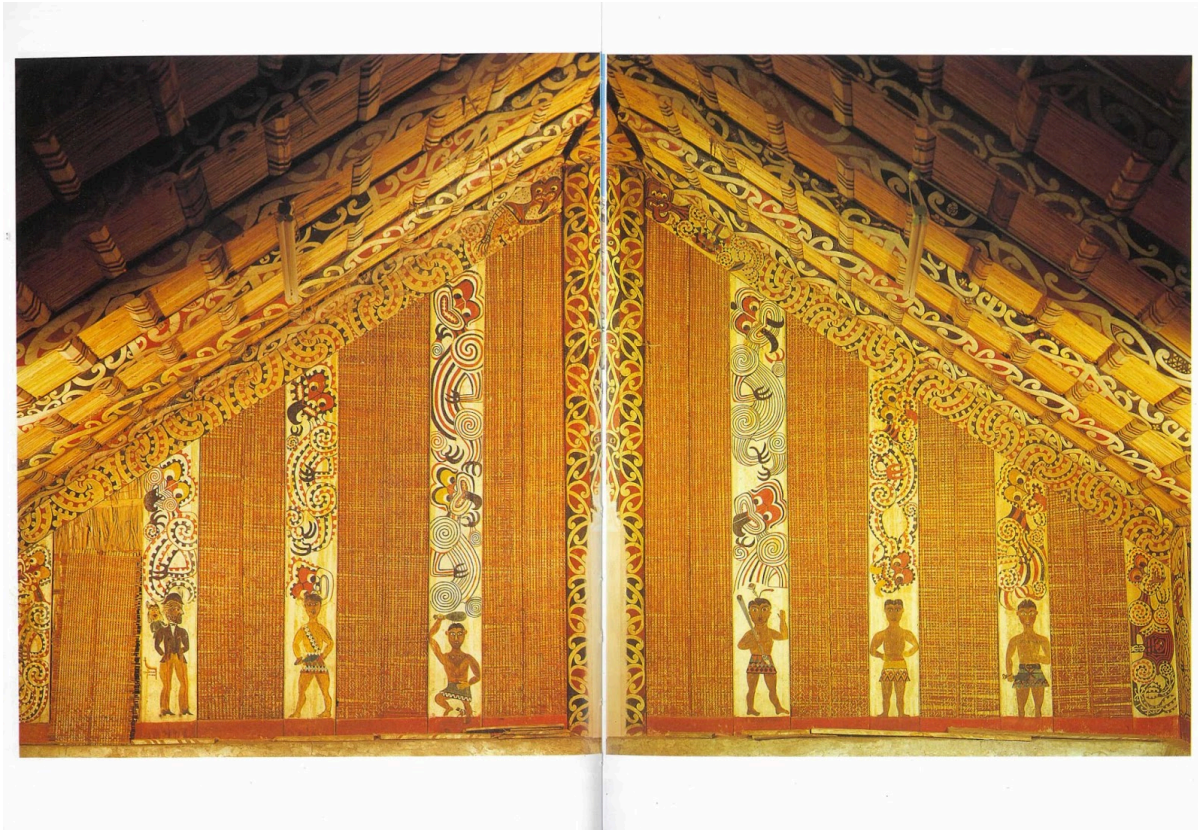


Figure 10 Painted epa inside Rongopai whare, Neich, R. (1994). *Painted Histories: Early Māori figurative paintings*. Auckland University Press.

The diffusion of figurative paintings ideas in the 1880s led to a new painted tradition. This phase saw, in particular, kōwhaiwhai style figurative painting undergoing a very rapid development. The most significant painted figure visual development and taking its origin from carved figures are the design referred as Te Pitau-a-Tiki (figure 10) and Te Pitau -a Manaia, Neich explains that “the design was probably suggested by the experimentation with manaia forms in woodcarving, and that may be a better explanation of its name than any reference to “mythological” associations. He goes on to suggest that “the innovation of this design set a precedent for much of the later figurative painting”(Neich, 1990, p.173).

Similar to carvings, figurative paintings were used to make a statement about the identity of the people who owned the house and used the house.

The rapid rise and decline of Māori figurative painting can be explained by an ever changing political, ideology and cultural mindset. A revitalization of Māori art practice first started in the early 1920’s under the Rotorua School of Māori Arts and Crafts created by Apirana Ngata. Established in 1926 “The school was intended to foster the then-dying art of carving by training artists who would spread out across the country, carving whare whakairo for Māori

communities and in turn training new carvers” (Skinner, 2008). This recovery of tradition led to the renovation of many whare, and consequently the disappearance of figurative paintings. Despite our difficult past I agree when Panoho suggest that “the nineteenth century is being looked to by a number of contemporary Māori artist, as an important resource, an existing early period of Māori adaptation to and assimilation of Western culture” (Panoho, 1989, p.11)

To conclude, both the evolution of Māori visual culture from customary carvings to painted panels of carved figures, is the visual representation of Māori indigeneity through time, showcasing Māori strength in times of hardship. This evolution forms the basis of my practice. Examining carved and painted representations of figures inspires narratives of kaitiaki from my iwi and hapū. My practice investigates specifically manaia and tiki forms found in customary carvings and painted panels, using elements of both artistic movements allowed me to reflect and connect with the past to create work that speaks of the importance of our visual and narrative history.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter examines the works of four Māori artists: Kura Te Waru Rewiri, Shane Cotton, Johnson Witihira, and Zane Elliot. Despite employing distinct aesthetics and techniques, I explore how each artist, in their practice, references and explores the influence of customary carvings and painted panels of carved figures from the nineteenth century.

The purpose of this literature review is to enable me to place my work in the contemporary Māori art context, and to locate my positionality amongst indigenous artists, whose work expands from the same source of inspiration as mine, in this case customary carvings and painted panels of carved ancestors.

Contemporary Māori Artists

As a founding member of the activist group Ngā Tamatoa, who promoted Māori rights, fighting racial discrimination and the injustices faced by Māori after the violation of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Kura Te Waru Rewiri explored in her works her own response to the arrival of settlers and faces down the missionaries with their colonial ideologies and its repercussion on mātauranga a iwi and mātauranga a hapū.

Her personal response in Te Rīpeka (Crucifix), 1985 is the quintessence of the conflict between Māori belief systems and Christianity. In this work Kura exposes the most common and prominent colonial image (the cross) and covers it with Māori visual concepts.

In this response to colonisation and the massive social changes of its aftermath, she reflects on the act of destruction on Te Taitokerau art traditions, she considers and replaces Christian imagery with reimagined Māori ancestral carvings. Through these paintings, Kura has also challenged the customary idea of whakairo being restricted to men. She essentially became a female “carver” using the medium of paint to shape and author her own narratives and to express her concerns. (Borell, 2021).



Figure 11 Kura Te Waru Rewiri, Te Ripeka [Crucifix], (1985), Archives of Women Artists, Research & Exhibitions

In her own words “using multiple layers of paint on the surface, people thought I was carving the surface” (Kura, 2022), this inspired me create a similar idea of depth in my own work by painting with multiple layers of varnish, thus creating different wood tones strengthening the idea of a three-dimensional panel.



Figure 12 Shane Cotton, Tiki & Maunga: New Painting (2022), GOW LANGSFORD.

Similarly, through his painting practice Shane Cotton shows his knowledge of the power of paint in its ability to transform an original image and transcribed it with his own originality and talent.

In his response to his own identity and the cultural identity of Aotearoa, Shane Cotton has visually reminded us of our confronting history through time and space. In *Tiki & Maunga: New Painting*, 2022, Cotton affirms his research and understanding of his te ao Māori, and mātauranga Māori.

These panels recall a time inspired by painted panels in wharenui from the nineteenth century, using symbols from a time of rapid religious, political and cultural change (Cotton, 2022).

With this we are able to yet again see the resilience and the durability of our customary traditions. His painted panels inspired by customary whakairo has allowed Cotton to create works which represent past and present and talk of Māori spirituality and our relationship to Christianity, colonialism, land ownership and the implications of cross-cultural exchange (Paton, 2011).



Figure 13 Shane Cotton, POUĒRUA, (2022), GOW LANGSFORD **Figure 14** Shane Cotton, TARARUA, (2022), GOW LANGSFORD

Continuing the theme of painted panels, Cotton produced a series of painted pots that contemplate the conceptual origins of objects. When infused with Māori symbolism, these containers enable a unique interpretation of Cotton's work. By including Māori ancestral and customary elements, it transforms them from being an object of colonisation, with settlers violently taking power over one's resources, into the idea of kaitiakitanga, the power to protect the land.

In an interview about Toi Tū Toi Ora: Contemporary Māori Art satellite exhibition at Britomart, Cotton explains how art was seen as the perfect vehicle to maintain Māoritanga despite fast changing times.

“Many Māori leaders understood that change and adaptation were essential if Māori were to survive as a people in a future New Zealand. I think the art forms of this time record and reference these shifts with incredible clarity and beauty. They're art forms that are challenging for Māori and European” (Cotton, 2021).

Symbolism in Cotton's work significantly influences understanding and interpretation, contributing to a deeper appreciation of the complexity inherent in identity and history. His exploration of painted panels of carved figures from the nineteenth century, mirrors my own desire to create this aesthetic in my work. Transcribed differently and moving away from its religious connotation, my work focuses on interpretation of Māori narratives, whilst paying homage to the arrival and the history of painting in Aotearoa.

For his commissioned installation by the Wellington City Council, Johnson Witihira, featured digital representations in a light box exhibition that told the story of tūpuna linked to iwi of the Wellington region (Te Ahi Kaa, 2014). This body of work included Kupe, Toi, Kuaramarotini, Whatonga, Hotuwaipara, Reretua, Tautoki and Tara (after whom Wellington harbour, Te Whanganui-a Tara, is named).

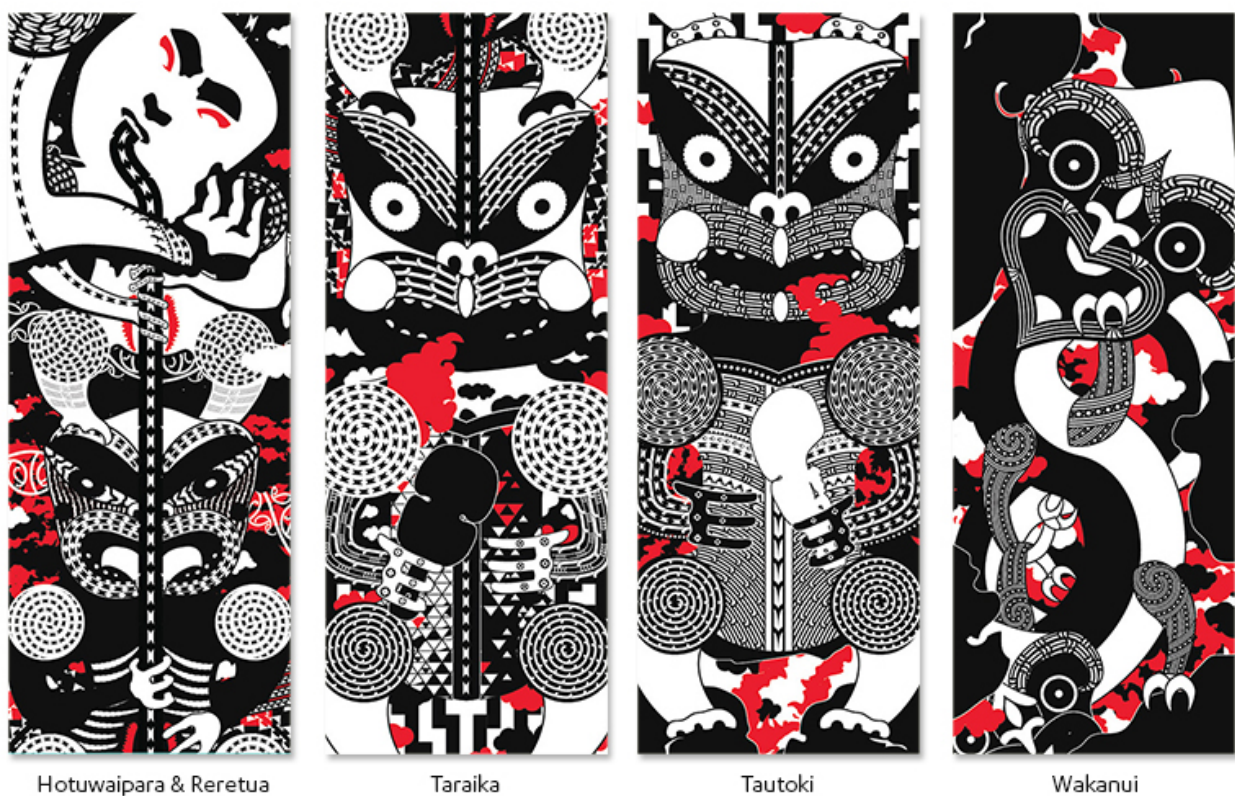


Figure 15 Johnson Witihira, *The Land of Tara*, (2014), Johnson Witihira Studio

His original planning saw a mixture of Māori and Pākehā ancestors being represented, however, after consideration and the realisation of the pākehā visual landscape of Wellington, he decided to focus on the whakapapa of the tūpuna of the place, a way to show the world that

yes, we are still here and our history is well and truly alive, it asserts our cultural history of important local Māori ancestors (Katie, 2014).



Figure 16 Johnson Witehira, Nga Kakano, Johnson Witehira Studio.

“My kaupapa as both an artist and designer is to bring Māori visual culture back into the lives of all Māori. This is done through careful consideration of how indigenous culture, design and technology intersect.” (Johnson Witehira).

To achieve his work, Witehira has gone through many stages of research, respecting tikanga and an obsession with finding the deeper meaning of toi. His journey led him to Professor Robert Jahnke, who deeply inspired him to follow the same high standards of making and engaging with Māori design, after it had been so badly appropriated, used and abused. His study of symbolism, imagery and meaning has led him to attain works that bridge the gap between traditional and contemporary. His understanding of whakairo, their designs and the kōrero attached to them, allowed him to follow his concepts and create transgressive works supported by research.

This body of work by Johnson Witehira demonstrates customary ideas and reference patterns using new or contemporary materials. It also resonates with my intention of remaining

grounded and connected to my origins. By creating artworks that tell and retell narratives through the visual conceptualisation of te ao Māori, I aim to emphasise the significance of localised narratives associated with my iwi and hapū.



Figure 17 Zena Elliot, Koha, (2017), The Kauri Project.

Another artist who lives between the customary and contemporary world is vibrant painter and carver Zena Elliot. She fights to stand against gender roles by using carving instead of weaving. Her works are the perfect examples of balancing and incorporating elements of contemporary pop culture, whilst paying homage to the graffiti culture and its electric colours. She balances the fine line that exists between Western influences and her Māori heritage. She explores traditional symbolism and modern technology and challenges ideas from both past and present, thus allowing her to create a wild aesthetic. An example of this is her work Koha, 2017, in this work Zena was inspired to research the pūrākau of the Northland legend of Kauri and Tohora. This

narrative tells of the relationship between the kauri tree and whales. Tohorā the whale gifts part of his skin to his brother Kauri, which creates a protective cloak against the corrosive powers of the ocean, thus making Kauri Timber perfect to build our Waka.

“The motifs, figures, colours and forms used in the work reference this legend, with particular focus on the form of waka - niho and the tekoteko which represents the voyager. The whale and puhoro inspired designs portray the speed and agility of a waka cutting through the ocean. The colours refer to the shades of green evident on the leaves of the Kauri and the blues of the ocean. The natural colours of the land and wood-grain timber texture help to enhance the overall narrative of the work.”

(Elliot, 2016)

In creating this piece, Zena highlights the power of our stories and our relationship with the environment, she strengthens and showcases ideas of Māori perspectives and mātauranga ā iwi. This work also raises awareness and confronts viewers of the fragile state of our environment, in particular the spread of disease, causing Kauri trees to disappear from our landscape.

Her determination in rangahau is visually striking in her work; Lines, lines and more lines, 2011. Here you can clearly see her understanding of haehae lines, this was her first step towards incorporating Māori motifs, heritage and whakapapa in her work. In this painting her understanding of colour and perspective creates a three-dimensional effect, creating the shape of a tekoteko figure (Waikato Museum, 2011).

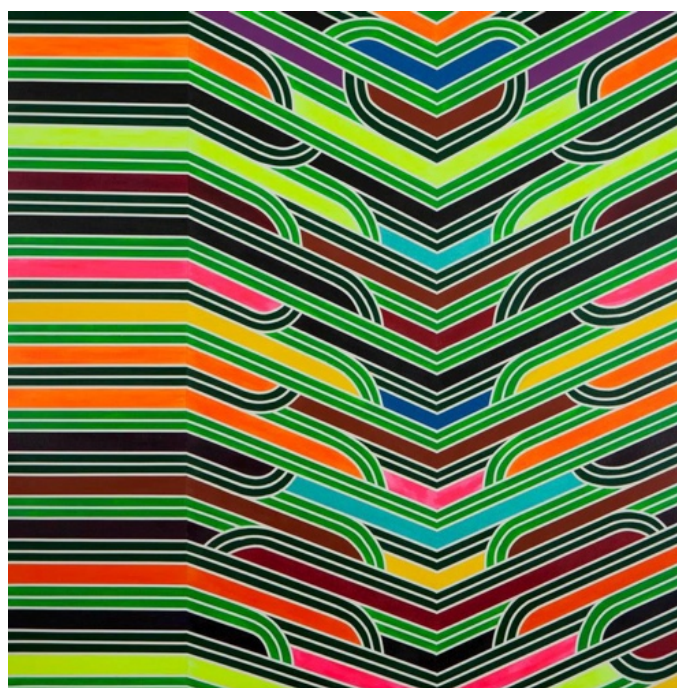


Figure 18 Zena Elliott, Lines, lines and more lines, (2011), The Big Idea NZ.

The contemporary reimagining of traditional carved ancestors, demonstrates her practice of introducing identity and influences which are built in her work. Her painting techniques takes shape from carving but are applied in the opposite way, instead of taking away layers, she builds up her work by filling layers with pigments and paint instead of using carving tools. These vibrant colours enhance the forms and patterns to demonstrates the importance of the tupuna or the story she is showcasing.

Overall, I think her work encapsulates perfectly the intricacy of Māori visual concepts and narratives. Her dedication to research traditional patterns and their meanings, corresponds with my own practice of applying customary patterns. Māori symbolism and imagery to my painted panels.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Part 1: First Year MMVA

Introduction

This chapter explains my methodologies and steps undertaken to finalise my body of work for the masters exhibition. It showcases my development from the works created during my postgraduate degree which were exhibited at Matatau 2022: Toioho ki Āpiti in 2022. My methodology is subsequently examined to understand the techniques used and the research incorporated into my paintings.

“Ka mua, Ka muri” Matatau 2022, Toioho ki Āpiti, First Year MMVA

The works produced during the initial year of my MMVA represent my first journey into Toi Māori, marking both a personal and artistic journey. These works were strongly influenced and inspired by research focusing on customary carvings traditionally found in whareniui and painted panels of carved figures from the nineteenth century. Additionally, they incorporated whānau portraiture.



Figure 19 Body of work, (2022), Personal Archives.

To create these painted panels I wanted to focus on my Tainui whakapapa and pay homage to the tradition of my iwi and hapū. Originally my plan was to create a body of work inspired by many different pūrākau starting from Te Kore to the present day, however I decided to focus on narratives from Ngāti Toa Rangatira, specifically stories of local kaitiaki.

I also delved into the history of painting in Aotearoa, focusing on figurative paintings found in whareniui after the nineteenth century. These painted pou often featured imagery of Marakihau.

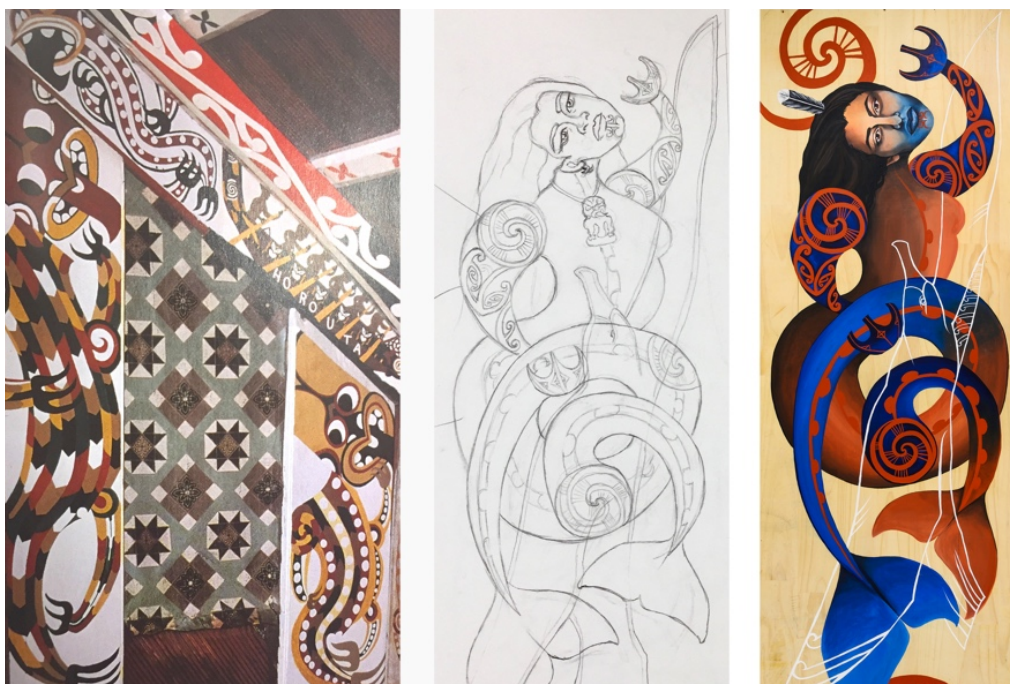


Figure 20 Progress of Awarua o Parirua & Rereroa , Neich, R. (1994). Painted Histories: Early Māori figurative paintings. Auckland University Press & Personal Archives.

This montage (figure 20) illustrates my research process. Taking inspiration from figurative painting found in whareniui, I then move on to sketching the different ideas.

The colours were inspired by the traditional colour used pre-colonisation, such as kōkōwai traditionally made from red ochre, contrasting with more vibrant colours such as shades of blue to strengthen the narrative of my subjects being ocean guardians.

This body of work was titled “Ka mua, Ka muri” (Explore the past, Shape the future) reflecting on my ambition to bring traditional customs to the front, in the modern world, by taking inspiration from past. The works served as traditional pou inside whareniui, each revealing

specific stories of whakapapa, tūpuna, whenua and pūrākau to explore the concept of tūrangawaewae.



Figure 21 “Ka mua, Ka muri” Matatau 22, Toioho ki Āpiti, First Year MMVA, Personal Archive.

Using portraits of my whānau to depict these narratives enabled me to create a link and a connection between my whakapapa and my mahi, thus strengthening the relationship of Ka mua, Ka muri.

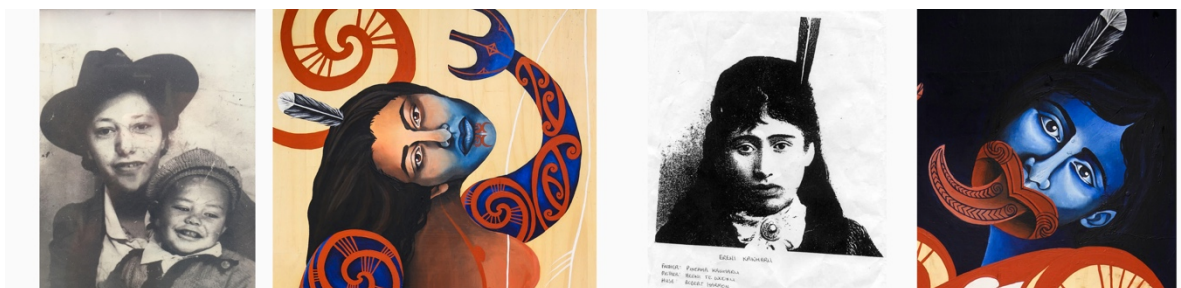


Figure 22 Exploration of whānau portraiture- Great Grand Mother Hinewairoro Parai and Ereni Kawharu, 5th Great Grand Mother, Personal Archives.

As mentioned above, in order to create this body of work I relied on using a mixture of portraits from my whānau, and forms inspired by the marakihau carving in my whareniui. This motivation was influenced by the shifts of the 1900s, where figurative references in Māori whareniui were influenced by European portraiture as a technique of representing historically important figures (Paama -Pengelly, 2010).

As an integral part of our rangatiratanga, to reclaim our knowledge, culture and heritage, whakapapa plays a crucial role. The emphasis on concepts such as whakapapa, mātauranga-a-iwi and mātauranga-a-hapū to enrich Māori visual concepts and narratives has remained a consistent focal point in my work. As described by King (1981) “In keeping with Māori traditions, whakapapa becomes the most fundamental aspect of the way Māori think about and come to know the world”. This concept continued to be a source of inspiration and development as I embarked on creating my body of work for the final thesis exhibition.

Part 2: Second Year MMVA

Methodology



Figure 23 Sketch for Paneereere, Personal Archive.

After conducting research and visiting my whareniui, my creative process begins with sketching and planning the patterns and forms I intend to incorporate. Initially I intended to use portraiture of whānau, similar to my approach in the first year of my MMVA. However, to immerse myself in the research of customary carvings and taonga tuku iho from my iwi and hapū, I needed to focus my study on the carvings at Takapūwāhia marae and Whakatū marae both of which follow the Tainui art tradition of my people. I decided to concentrate on

exploring customary tiki and manaia forms and narratives originating from my hapū, Ngāti Koata. This project enabled me to deepen my understanding of my broader whākapapa, as Ngāti Koata maintains strong connections with multiple iwi and hapū (figure 24).



Figure 24 Kaakati connections, Ngāti Koata Archives..

It is described by Julie Paama-Pengelly, as being rare for tiki form to appear in woodcarving without flanking manaia, this dual presentation represents the interaction of the spiritual world with the human. (Paama-Pengelly, 2010).

Frequent in cave paintings (figure 26) but also in figurative kōwhaiwhai known as pītau-a-manaia. Manaia are symbolic of spiritual mana, and are explained by Paki Harrison as being derived from the word ‘mana’ which means prestige, with the

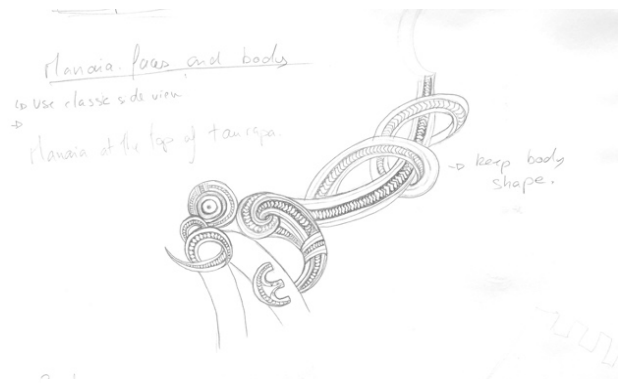


Figure 25 Exploration of Manaia forms, Personal Archive.



Figure 26 Māori Rock Art Centre in Timaru, Arowhenua

addition of the suffix -ia, becomes 'manaia', causing something to have mana (Ranginui Walker, 2008).



Figure 27 Close up detail of manaia form, Personal Archive



Figure 28 Close up detail of tiki form, Personal Archive

To emphasise the visual concepts embedded in the narratives within my body of work, I have chosen to represent both tupuna and kaitiaki. Departing from my previous use of marakihau forms, I have instead switched to use manaia forms (figure 27) to symbolise the notion of guardianship and protection offered by kaitiaki. The tiki form (figure 28) is therefore the representation of the tupuna in their human form prior to becoming kaitiaki. This strategic shift in my approach has enabled a more thorough exploration of forms and a nuanced visual integration of the intricate layers within the narratives.

Prior to transferring any drawing onto the panels, I systematically go through stages of exploration of different compositions on paper (figure 29 & 30). This method enables me to create a design that integrates all the elements researched and investigated into a cohesive final design. Once the final drawing is completed, I proceed with applying it onto the wood panel.



Figure 29 Final drawing of Panciraira, Personal Archive.



Figure 30 Final drawing of Te Ātaiorongo, Personal Archive.

Working on Wood

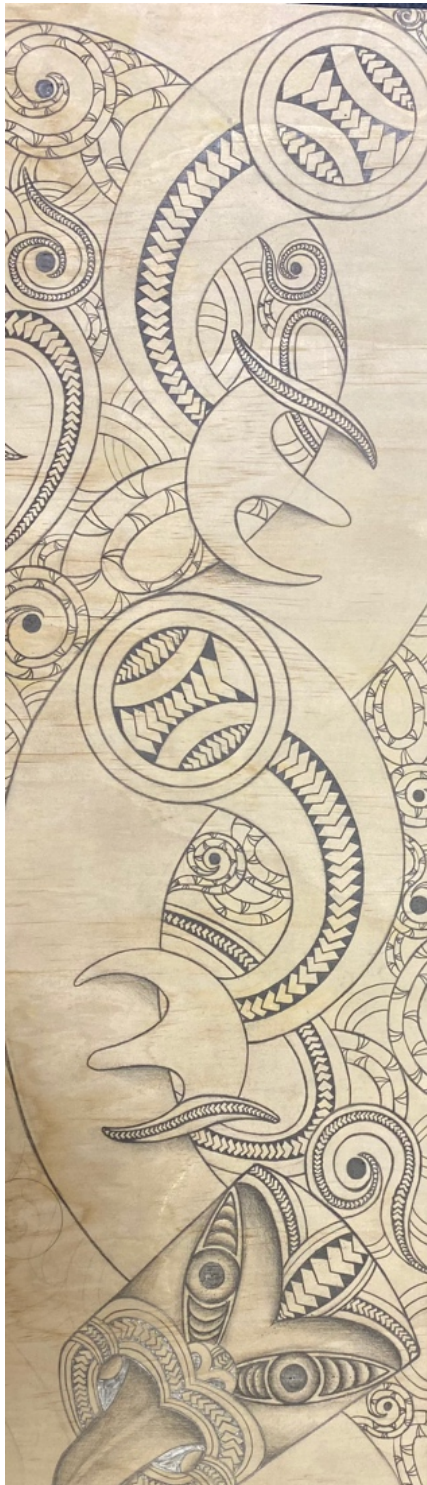


Figure 31 Drawing stage for Awarua painted panel, Personal Archive.

Wood had always been the foundation material of Māori culture, fused or both cultural ritual to functional items. The innovation of carved figures and painted kōwhaiwhai on waka formed the focus of tribal pride (Neich, 1994). This pride extended to whareniui, where wood carvings stood proud and strong. Inspired by this practice, I draw from the importance of wood in shaping visual culture. I aim to incorporate ancestral practices, using wood as the foundational material, echoing the significance it held in the creation of art.

My process of working with wood starts by using light coloured plywood panels as the foundation tone to draw on (figure 31). I began painting around the main figures using wood varnish (figure 32) adding depth to the works but also introducing a soft three-dimensional element reminiscent of customary carvings. I wanted the wood to have a natural finish, revealing cracks and grain, imparting a sense of the passage of time. This choice aims to reflect on the enduring relevance of our narratives today and their timeless importance. The presence of wood grain is a dominant element on the painted panels, allowing Tāne Matua to shine through the cracks.



Figure 32 varnishing process on Te Ātaiorongo panel, Personal Archive.

Every panel has at least four layers of varnish. The initial layer serves to darken the wood, providing a backdrop which allows the second layer to reveal the natural stains and cracks, aiding in the strategic placement of my final design. This process ensures a harmonious integration of the natural forms and shades of the wood and my drawing (figure 33). The third and fourth layers of varnish are painted around the main figures, contributing to the end creation of depth and separation between figures and the background. Varnishing the background instead of painting it allowed for consistency throughout the whole panel.

Throughout this body of work I used a very limited colour pallet reflecting on customary colours. I used kōkōwai showed in figure 33, to replicate colour placement on painted carvings in my whareniui, usually found where patterns had been carved on the figures' bodies (figure 34). This technique allowed for the main figures on my panels to have an element of colour in

order to differentiate them from the background and not get too lost within the whole composition.



Figure 33 Close up details of Paneoraira panel, Personal Archive.



Figure 34 Porch carvings at Toa Rangatira whareniui, Porirua, Personal Archive

To reinforce the narratives explored on the panels, I used a blend of colours to emphasise the mana of the areas depicted in the panels. Applying a thin layer of green over the pencil work (figure 33), I aimed to visually highlight the importance of the harakeke in this narrative and it's connection to Ngāti Koata. While acknowledging its place in the realm of Tāne Matua, I still intentionally allowed the wood to remain visible, in order to create a connection between Atua and the flax.

In figure 35, the same shade of green is present to generate a flow and a connection between the panels, but also, it was used to create a resemblance with pipi, which are relevant to the narrative depicted in this panel.

The application of the blue paint followed the already existing raw textures of the wood, resembling wave patterns and enhancing the narrative and the outline of the log depicted in this panel.

Each layer of varnish and paint was added after the drawing elements were finished and dry, which allowed the original pencil work to still be seen through all the different layers.

Applying consistent methods and colour pallet created a cohesive visual relationship and a flow in the narratives between all the work.



Figure 35 Close up details of Mukakai panel, Personal Archive.

Chapter 4: Ngā Pari Tai Rua

Introduction

This chapter focuses on my thesis exhibition. The first section talks about the personal cultural significance of Pātaka in relation to me and my work. Following this the exhibition setup is discussed and an explanation of the title “Ngā Pari Tai Rua” as the foundation for this exhibition is explained. Each work is then described separately referencing the narratives present in each panel and their historical and whakapapa significance.

Pātaka Art + Museum

After contacting Pātaka and meeting with Director Ana Sciascia, I was able to secure the Toi Gallery space for December 2023 to showcase my Master of Māori Visual Arts thesis exhibition. The building is named Te Marae O Te Umu Kai O Hau, the new museum and gallery was officially opened in September 1998. Pātaka is located in the heart of Porirua City and is situated near my tūrangawaewae, that is my Marae, Takapūwāhia.



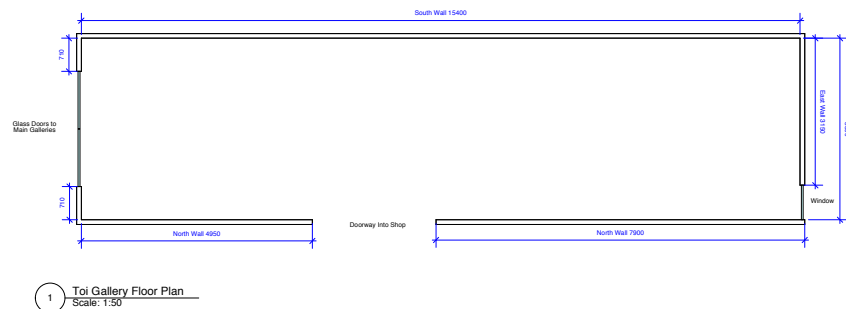
Figure 36 A frontal view of the meeting house "Toa Rangatira", at Takapūwāhia, Porirua, National Library Wellington.



Figure 37 Frontal view of new Toa Rangatira meeting house, Takapūwāhia, Porirua, 2022, Personal Archive.

In 1901, the first whare tupuna, Toa Rangatira, was built, and it is from that ancestor that all of us descend (Elkington). A new whare opened on May 15th 1982, replacing the original house that had deteriorated. The rebuild and adornment of the new whare was placed in the hands of three Ngāti Toa Rangatira Masters, Kohe Webster, Puhanga Tu Paea and Te Puoho Katene. In addition of celebrating Ngāti Toa Rangatira whakapapa, the whare celebrates the

peoples of Te Ati Awa, Ngāti Raukawa and Ngāti Koata. These three iwi joined Ngāti Toa Rangatira in the migration to Te Moana-o-Raukawa. Together they stand as the Tangata Whenua on Takapūwāhia Marae to welcome manuhiri (Te Puoho Katene, 1982).



Toi Gallery Floor Plan



Figure 38 Toi Gallery Floor plan, Pātaka, Personal Archive.

Toi Gallery is Pātaka’s commercial gallery, easily accessed from the Toi Store and from the main exhibition galleries. It features 32 metres of linear wall space and 60 square meters of floor space.

My main source of inspiration for arranging my artwork and shaping the visitors experience of the space draws from the interior of my whareniui. Upon entering, you are immediately struck with awe and emotion, surrounded by the intricate carvings and the powerful and spiritual presence of our tupuna. While aspiring to recreate a similar atmosphere, the narrowness of the space allowed for only two options. My original plan was to have the panels wall hung, similar to the poupou in my whareniui. Working alongside my curator, two initial ideas took form. The first option (figure 40) was to have the four panel works free standing in the centre of the gallery, the second option was to display the panel with their back to the wall but freestanding about half a metre out from the wall. (figure 41)

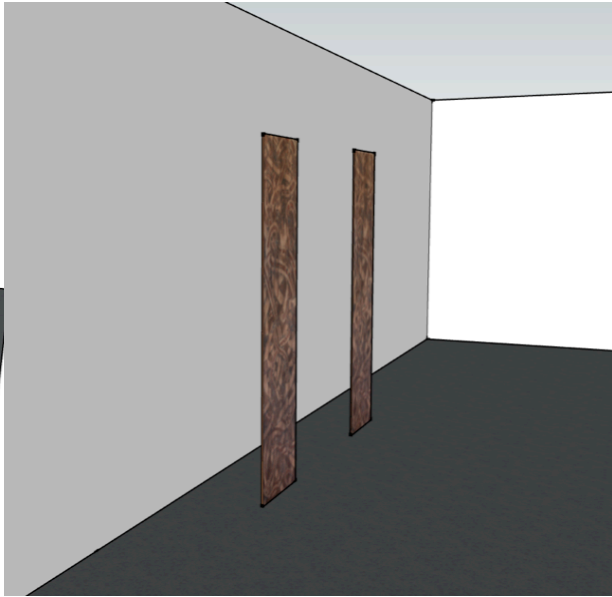
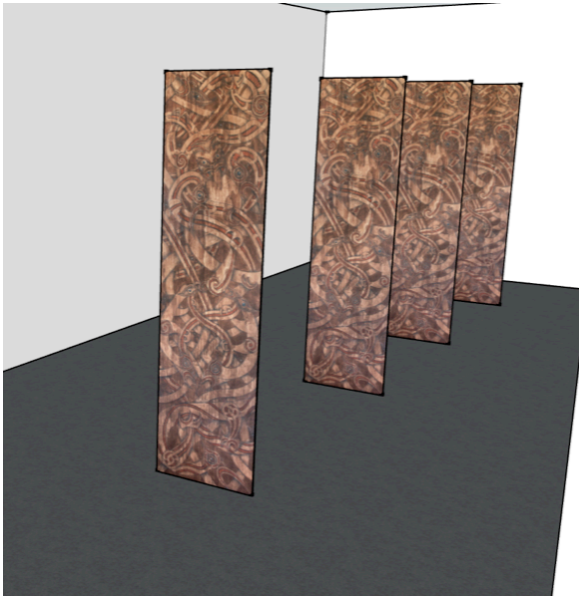


Figure 39 Wall Installation planning for Ngā Pari Tai Rua exhibition. **Figure 40** Installation planning for Ngā Pari Tai Rua exhibition.

Both options, however turned out to be technically difficult due to the scale of the panels and the height of the exhibition space ceiling. Following my decision to replicate the environment of the inside of a whare, where carvings can be viewed sideways, we installed all panels attached at an angle to the wall (figure 42), allowing the viewers to see all works and following the idea of three-dimensional carvings seen from all angles.



Figure 41 Side view of Ngā Pari Tai Rua exhibition, Toi Gallery, Pātaka, Porirua, Personal Archive.

With Pātaka being situated within my tūrangawaewae, I thought it appropriate to have a statement piece to welcome people in. Being in Parirua who better to welcome you in than its well-known kaitiaki, Awarua-o-Parirua. A specific section of the wall was allocated for showcasing my work representing the kaitiaki. Notably, for the first time in this gallery a portion of that wall was painted. This not only enhances the significance of Awarua but also establishes a cohesive flow with the overall space. Whether entering through the glass doors of the main galleries or the doorway access from the Toi store, visitors will be faced with Awarua, before going on a journey through waters and narratives.



Figure 42 Entrance view of Ngā Pari Tai Rua exhibition, Toi Gallery, Pātaka, Porirua, Personal Archive.

When bringing together with the concept of this show, I really wanted to immerse the visitors in the narratives present in the space. In order to do that, I recorded an audio element and created a sound scape to be played on loop. This recording was a compilation of sounds from the natural world in harmony with the ocean, wind, waves, whales and birds, thus creating a calming atmosphere and connection to the works back to te taiao. This recording also includes a karakia and a performance of the Ka Mate Haka by my students from Wellington High School, it serves to bless the visitors and immerse them in the history of my whakapapa and iwi through the ancestral sounds of Ka Mate, composed by my tupuna, Te Rauparaha.

The opening was held on Friday 27th of November 2023, and was attended by whānau members, friends and students. An emotional and surreal event starting with a karakia to open the exhibition followed by the waiata Tērā Ia Ngā Tai O Honipaka and a whaikorero, all performed by my Kaumatua, Callum Katene and Pātaka director Ana Sciascia. This exhibition was the realisation of the end of a journey, but the beginning of a lifelong journey of discovery guided by kaitiaki and whakapapa.

Ngā Pari Tai Rua

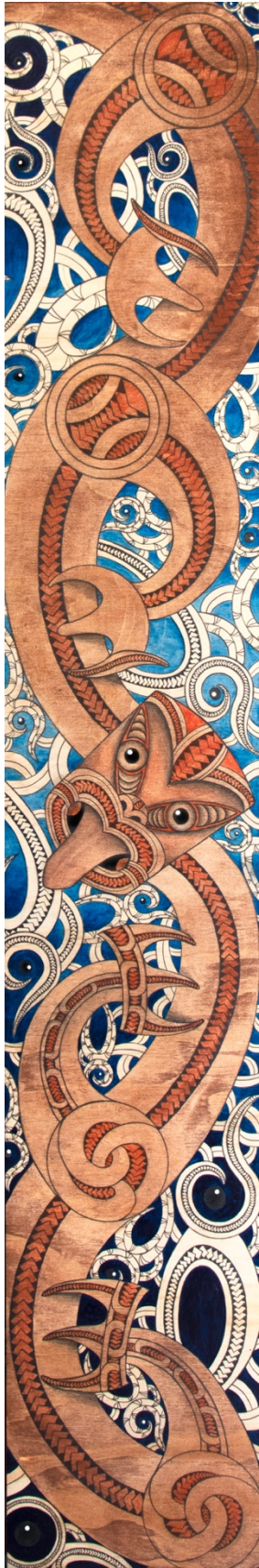
The title of my body of work considers the flow of the tides, which represent the flow of our stories and their migration from place to place and iwi to iwi. In particular this title reflects the two tides that flow within me, the tides of Parirua and the tides of Whakatū, representing my iwi and hapū. Ngā Pari Tai Rua also considers the two tides that have shaped me throughout my life, being Māori and French I grew up influenced by Māori Taonga and Western Art.

This body of work extends beyond the waters of my iwi, Ngāti Toa Rangatira in Porirua through Te Moana o Raukawa to reach the final destination of my hapū, Ngāti Koata in Whakatū.

Based on taonga tuku iho, pūrākau and whākapapa, my kaupapa relies on mātauranga-a-iwi and mātauranga-a-hapū to enhance Māori visual concepts and narratives in my work.

These works are inspired by customary carvings traditionally found in wharehau and painted panels of carved figures from the nineteenth century, my work recalls stories of kaitiaki and tūpuna from Ngāti Koata and Ngāti Toa Rangatira. I use Māori symbolism and imagery, such as manaia forms to enhance the deeper meanings of our stories, whākapapa and our connection with tūpuna, I hope to engage our people with a visual conceptualization of te ao Māori and reflect on the importance of localised narratives and the mana of our pūrākau, whenua, moana, awa, iwi, hapū and tūpuna.

Catalogue of works



Awarua o Porirua

Pencil and Acrylic on wood panel

L: 120cm

W: 20cm

29/07/2023

The powerful Awarua, the kaitiaki of Parirua, welcomes you in this space, to take part in a journey through currents and tides to celebrate iwi and hapū narratives.

Many narratives celebrate Awarua, the most well-known is the story of Awarua and Rereroa the albatross.

Awarua o Porirua became friends with a visiting albatross who would not stop flying around Porirua Harbour. Jealous of her bird friend, Awarua decided to learn how to fly. She tried many times and in the process created many landscapes still visible today. She leapt from the water and crashed on Mana island giving the island its flat surface. A second time whilst flying she caused a huge gully when she collided with Whitireia maunga.

In this panel, Awarua guards the ngā pari, the two tides of Parirua and its peoples.



Ngā Taniwha o Te Moana o Raukawa

Pencil and Acrylic on wood panel

L: 220cm

W: 60cm

07/06/2023

This Painted Pou tells the story of the two known kaitiaki of Te Moana o Raukawa, Paneereere and Ngātaratū.

The coloniser version of this story would like us to believe in a good creature and an evil fish monster with horns. It is true that some kaitiaki were seen as signs of death but to understand them, we must reconceptualise how Māori viewed the world. They were described in many different ways, usually seen as sea and/or land creatures, occasionally tūpuna, but also as part of the natural world such as waves, river currents, or even logs. To better understanding their surroundings and their place in the world, some Māori ancestors would associate both good and bad omens to the kaitiaki. Therefore I represented the two guardians of the Te Moana o Raukawa as kaitiaki and guides of ngā waka crossing the Cook Strait.

Consequently they are both depicted wrapping the taurapa of the waka to protect it from stormy weather and fatal accidents.



Te Ātaiorongo

Pencil and Acrylic on wood panel

L: 220cm

W: 60cm

27/06/2023

Te Ātaiorongo refers to a kaitiaki and a living tupuna kaitiaki that plays a very important part in Tainui history, the surrounding seas of Kawhia and its Tainui peoples, Ngāti Toa Rangatira and Ngāti Koata amongst others. Te Ātaiorongo comes forward in the form of a large dolphin or when in Whakatū as two waves that overlap onto the shore.

Te Ātaiorongo in his human life, lived in Kawhia at the pā of Tokatapu in Te Maika. He married Rangiwera from Tairuta where he lived with her, until a fatal fishing trip where he was murdered by his wife's uncles. The very same night, he appeared in Rangiwera's dreams, telling her to flee to his people and seek refuge to protect herself and their unborn son. Years passed and their son Kaihu, brought up by his koro Uetapu, who taught him the skills of a Tohunga and Toa, went to seek utu for the death of his Father. Leading a taua he defeated his uncles and his mother's people.

Another version tells us of Kaihu taking revenge on a chief called Rakapawhare. After defeating Rakapawhare, Kaihu became the leader of the hapū and led his people south away from trouble guided by his father, Te Ātaiorongo (G. Kelly, Lesley).



Mukakai

Pencil and Acrylic on wood panel

L: 220cm

W: 60cm

21/07/2023

Seen around the waters of Whakatū and Te Moana o Raukawa, Mukakai recalls the story of a kaitiaki taking the shape of a log floating against the tides.

Although he is a guardian, it is best not to touch him if you ever cross his path anywhere around the motu, to keep yourself, your whānau, iwi and hapū safe. This is an example of the transmigration of stories between places and peoples.



Paneiraira

Pencil and Acrylic on wood panel

L: 220cm

W: 60cm

12/07/2023

Paneiraira takes the shape of a sunfish and a stingray kaitiaki. When seen, it is a warning not to venture to far out to sea, an indication of danger ahead.

Closely affiliated with the great tupuna and rangatira of Ngāti Koata, Te Whetū, who signed Te Tiriti o Waitangi on Rongitoto (D'Urville Island). Te Whetū was so tapu, he would bury his hair, fingernails and toenails at the foot of harakeke on Te Marua on Rongitoto. A red fibre runs through this special harakeke, caused by his red hair, resting at their roots. Being so precious only Ngāti Koata descendants of Te Whetū can gather this flax.

A well-known story amongst Ngāti Koata people recalls the lived experience of being confronted by Paneiraira if Tikanga is not respected. The story recounts children at Te Marua chopping some harakeke to make toy sail boats. Upon leaving the island with their great-grand father, the massive shadow of a sunfish or stingray appeared next to the boat and would not let them leave. The shadow of the animal was Paneiraira protecting the harakeke. In order to respect Tikanga, if the harakeke is harvested, the off-cuts should be placed at the bottom of the flax and a karakia should be performed to pay respect to Te Whetū. "Our Tūpuna lived in a wairua (spirit) world, tapu was a form of restriction for children, manifested in kaitiaki." (Marangai Angus Kinongia Elkington, 1999).

Conclusion

This year, my kaupapa encouraged me to delve deeper within myself, surpassing any previous exploration. It proved to be a challenging journey, encompassing both emotional and spiritual facets. This journey enabled me to extend my knowledge and deepen my understanding of mātauranga- a-iwi and mātauranga-a-hapū. Through conversations with whānau members who shared narratives, I came to view this as a crucial kaupapa for reclaiming my Māoritanga and developing a stronger connection and comprehension of my whakapapa.

In this exhibition report I aimed to showcase that my thesis exhibition is grounded in my history, knowledge and whakapapa. I endeavoured to achieve this by exploring the transmigration of visual concepts and practices from customary art forms prior to colonisation through the arrival of western influences. I discussed the consequent shift in visual representation and its presence in the work of other contemporary Māori Artists. This observation highlights similarities between their practice and mine.

Throughout this exhibition report and the development of my work for Ngā Pari Tai Rua, I wanted to emphasise the importance of understanding local knowledge and exploring narratives of kaitiaki and tūpuna that specifically recall our history and connection to the land, ocean and the natural world. Researching and reflecting on my whakapapa reinforced the importance of continuing to share iwi and hapū knowledge, keeping the practices of our ancestors alive to better navigate Māori futures.

Mauri Ora

Ahi Kā

“Keeping the home fires burning”

PĀTAKA EXHIBITIONS OPENING

The Director of Pātaka Art+Museum Ana Sciascia warmly invites you to the opening of:

NGĀ PARI TAI RUA

SHANNON TE RANGIHAEATA CLAMP NGĀTI KOATA AND
NGĀTI TOA RANGATIRA



**FRIDAY
27 OCTOBER
6.30PM**

Ngā Pari Tai Rua considers the flow of the tides, which represent the flow of narratives and their migration from place to place and iwi to iwi. This title reflects the two tides that flow within the artist, Shannon Te Rangihaeata Clamp, the tides of *Parirua* and the tides of *Whakatū*, representing his iwi and hapū. Ngāti Koata in Whakatū and Ngāti Toa Rangatira in Parirua

Based on taonga tuku iho, pūrākau and whākapapa, Shannon's kaupapa relies on mātauranga-a-iwi and mātauranga-a-hapū (iwi and hapū knowledge systems) to enhance Māori visual concepts and stories.

**EXHIBITION RUNS FROM:
27 OCTOBER – 3 DECEMBER**

TOI
GALLERY

PĀTAKA
ART + MUSEUM

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www.pataka.org.nz

Image: Shannon Te Rangihaeata Clamp
Awarua o Parirua, (Detail)
Pencil and acrylic on wood panel.

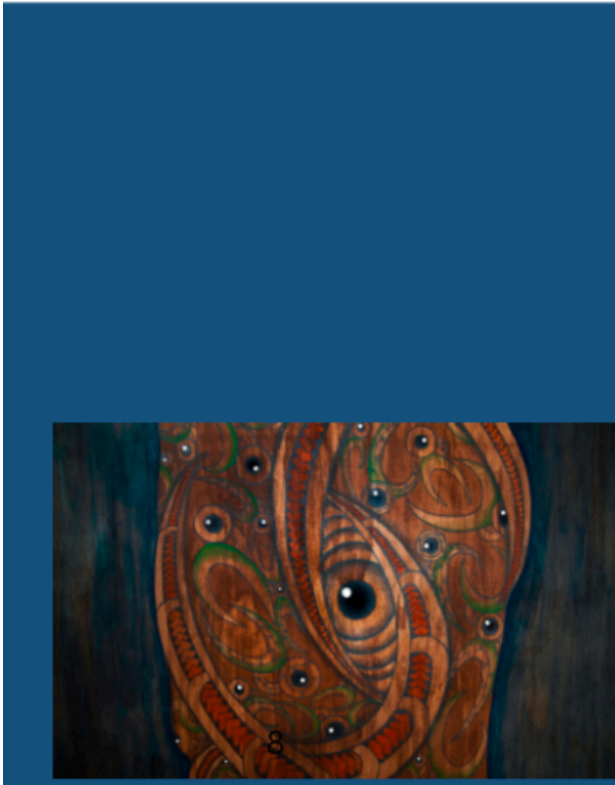


Ngā Pari Tai Rua

Shannon Te Rangihaeata Clamp
Ngāti Toa Rangatira and Ngāti Koata



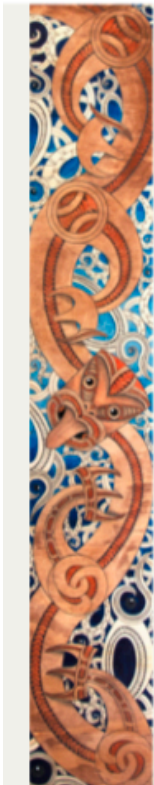
inside back cover



Ngā Pari Tai Rua considers the flow of the tides, which represent the flow of narratives and their migration from place to place and iwi to iwi. This exhibition reflects the two tides that flow within the artist, Shannon Te Rangihaeata Clamp, the tides of Parirua and Whakatū, representing his iwi and hapū. This body of work extends beyond the waters of Shannon's iwi, Ngāti Toa Rangatira in Porirua, through Te Moana o Raukawa to reach the final destination of his hapū, Ngāti Koata in Whakatū.

Based on taonga tuku iho, pūrākau and whākapapa, Shannon's kaupapa relies on mātauranga-a-iwi and mātauranga-a-hapū (iwi and hapū knowledge systems) to enhance Māori visual concepts and stories. The works are inspired by customary carvings traditionally found in whareniui and painted panels of carved figures from the 1900s. Shannon's work recalls stories of kaitiaki and tūpuna from Ngāti Koata and Ngāti Toa Rangatira. He uses Māori symbolism and imagery, such as manaia forms, to explore the deeper meanings of Māori narratives, whākapapa and connection with tūpuna, and reflect on the importance of localised narratives and the mana of pūrākau, whenua, moana, awa, iwi, hapū and tūpuna.

1



Awarua o Porirua, 2023
pencil and acrylic on wood panel
\$2800

The powerful Awarua, the kaitiaki of Parirua, welcomes you in this space, to take part in a journey through currents and tides celebrating iwi and hapū narratives.

Many stories honour the taniwha Awarua, the most well-known being the story of Awarua and Rereroa the albatross. Awarua became friends with Rereroa, and she delighted in watching the albatross flying around Porirua Harbour.

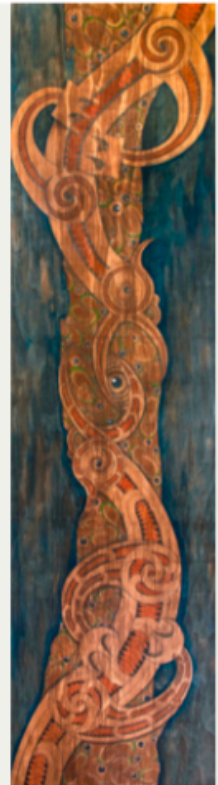
Awarua longed to fly like Rereroa and enlisted the help of her friend to teach her. Learning to fly was not easy, and Awarua made many crash landings – the results of which formed the landscape around the Harbour. Once, she leapt out of the water, crashing down on Mana Island and giving the island its flat surface. During another attempt, she smashed into the maunga Whitireia, causing the huge gully where Onepoto park is today.

Paneiraira, 2023
pencil and acrylic on wood panel
\$2800

Paneiraira takes the shape of a sunfish or stingray. When seen, it is an indication of danger laying ahead, and a warning not to venture too far out to sea.

On Rongitoto grows a special harakeke closely affiliated with Te Whetū, the great tūpuna and rangatira of Ngāti Koata who signed Te Tiriti o Waitangi on Rongitoto. Te Whetū was so tapu that he would bury his hair and fingernails at the foot of a harakeke. A red fibre runs through the leaves of this harakeke, caused by his red hair, buried at their roots. Following tikanga, only Ngāti Koata descendants of Te Whetū can gather this flax.

One day children at Te Marua were cutting harakeke to make toy sail boats. Upon leaving the island with some of the flax, the massive shadow of a sunfish or stingray appeared next to the boat and would not let them leave. This was Paneiraira protecting the harakeke.





Mukakai, 2023
pencil and acrylic on wood panel
\$5500

Mukakai recalls the story of a kaitiaki taking the shape of a log floating against the tides in the waters of Whakatū and Te Moana o Raukawa. Well known amongst the people of Ōtaki, their recollection of Mukakai tells of a kaitiaki of kai moana. It is said that when sighted at sea he will bring food with him, indicating of a good time for fishing or pipi gathering.

Mukakai came into being in the Tararua Ranges, where a single rākau (tree) stood next a puna (pool of water). On a stormy day, Tawhirimatea (god of the winds), blew its strong winds and with it the rākau of Mukakai into the puna. The tree travelled down the rivers of Tararua and ended his journey in the ocean⁶

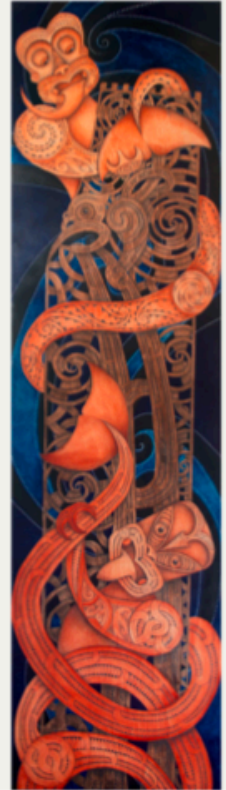
Although he is a guardian, it is best not to touch him if you ever cross his path anywhere around the motu, to keep yourself, your whānau, iwi and hapū safe

Ngā Taniwha o Te Moana o Raukawa, 2023
pencil and acrylic on wood panel
\$5500

This painted pou tells the story of the two ngā kaitiaki of the Raukawa Moana (Cook Strait), Paneereere and Ngātaratū

Paneereere and Ngātaratū can be described in many ways. Often seen as sea or land creatures, or occasionally a tūpuna, they are also part of the natural world: waves; river currents; logs. They could represent both good and bad omens.

Shannon has represented the two guardians of Te Moana o Raukawa as kaitiaki and guides of ngā waka crossing the Raukawa Moana. Paneereere and Ngātaratū can be seen wrapping the taurapa (stem) of the waka to protect it from stormy weathers and fatal accidents. ³



Te Ātaiorongo, 2023
pencil and acrylic on wood panel
\$5500

Te Ātaiorongo refers to a kaitiaki and living tūpuna that plays an important role in Tainuiwhakapapa and history. He is kaitiaki of the surrounding seas of Kawhia and its Tainui peoples, Ngāti Toa Rangatira and Ngāti Koata among others. Te Ātaiorongo takes the form of a large dolphin or, when in Whakatū, as two waves.

The story of Te Ātaiorongo began when he, as a human, lived in Kawhia at the pā of Tokatapu in Te Maika. He married Rangiwera from Tairuta and went to live with her there, until a fatal fishing trip where he was murdered by his wife's uncles. Years passed and their son Kaihu, brought up by his koro Uetapu, who taught him the skills of a Tohunga and Toā, went to seek utu (revenge, justice) for the death of his father. Kaihu lead a taua (war party) on his mother's people, where he finally defeated his uncles, securing utu for his father. ⁴



Glossary

Aotearoa	New Zealand
atua	god
awa	river, stream, creek, canal,
harakeke	New Zealand flax
hoe	paddle, oa
hapū	kinship group, clan, tribe, subtribe
iwi	extended kinship group, tribe
kai	food, meal
kaitiaki	guardian
kaitiakitanga	guardianship
karakia	prayer
kaupapa	topic, plan, purpose
kauri	largest forest tree
kōkōwai	red ochre
koro	grandfather
koruru	carved face on the gable of a meeting house
kōwhaiwhai	painted scroll
kūwaha	door, entrance,
Māoritanga	Māori culture, Māori practices and beliefs
maihi	bargeboards of meeting house
mana	prestige, power, authority, control, spiritual power
manaia	stylised figure used in carving
manuhi	visitor, guest
marae	courtyard, the open area in front of the wharenui

marakihau	carving in the form of the sea creature
mātauranga	knowledge, wisdom, understanding, skill
mātauranga-a-hapū	subtribe, tribe based knowledge
mātauranga-a-iwi	tribe based knowledge
moa	large extinct flightless bird
moana	sea, ocean, large lake
motu	island, country, land, nation
pā	fortified village, village
puna	spring (of water), well, pool.
Pākehā	foreign, European, of European descent
Papatūānuku	Earth, Earth mother and wife of Ranginui
pātaka	storehouse raised upon posts
poupou	carved wall figures
puhoro	customary kōwhaiwhai pattern, stormy weather
pūrākau	ancient narratives
rākau	tree, stick, timber, wood
rangahau	research, investigate
rangatira	leader, chief
Ranginui	sky father, god of the sky, husband of Papa-tū-ā-nuku
ringatū	Māori- Christian faith founded by Te Kooti
tāhū	ridge pole of a house
taioa	white clay
tangata whenua	people of the land
taonga tuku iho	passed down treasure through generation
takarangi	carved form

Tāne Matua	separated Rangi-nui and Papa-tū-ā-nuku so the sun would shine on their children.
tapu	sacred, prohibited, restricted
taurapa	stern-post of a canoe
taniwha	sea guardian, water spirit
taua	war party, army
tauihu	figurehead of a canoe
te Ao Māori	Māori world
te Kore	realm of potential being, The Void
tekoteko	carved figure on the gable of a meeting house
Te Moana o Raukawa	the sea of Raukawa, the Cook Strait
te pitau a manaia	kōwhaiwhai pattern based on manaia carved figures
te reo Māori	Māori language
te taiao	natural world
Te Tiriti o Waitangi	the Treaty of Waitangi
tiki	carved figure, carved in an abstract form of a human.
tohora	whale
toi	art, knowledge
tukutuku	weaving, used particularly between carvings around the walls of meeting houses
tūpuna	ancestors
tūrangawaewae	place where one has rights of residence and belonging through kinship and whakapapa.
utu	revenge
wairua	spirit, soul - spirit of a person existing after death

wahi tāpu	sacred place, sacred site
waiata	song
waka	canoes
whaikorero	to make a formal speech
whakairo	carving
whakapapa	genealogy, lineage, descent
Whakatū	Nelson
whānau	family group, extended family, give birth, born
whare	house
wharenui	meeting house
whare whakairo	carved house
whenua	land, ground, territory, domain, placenta, afterbirth

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