Mana Māna

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Abstract

This exhibition report, *Mana Māna*, reflects a four-year journey of artistic exploration and research into *uku* as a medium for understanding both my identity and my transgender tama. We take a deep dive into the rangahau of mana wāhine theory to understand the oppression of wāhine and our cosmogony. The overlap of takatāpui and Māori rainbow within mana wāhine provides a solid foundation for why it is the platform for fighting discrimination.

Pūrākau, as a methodology is rationalised for its capacity to embed cultural codes, transmit mātauranga, and is utilised as a wellbeing approach by Māori clinicians. Takatāpui participant, Hariata Wilson, recalls their story of healing through the experience of mana atua wānanga. Woven throughout the report are Papatūānuku, Hineahuone, Hinehauone, Hinetītama, Hinenuitepō and Hinepūtehue. Each appearance is a reminder of their significance to this kaupapa.

Thinking is sculpted and marked into the uku, with the guidance of three toi māori practitioners, Reuban Paterson, Colleen Waata Urlich and Paerau Corneal. Key challenges and aha! moments are disclosed as turning points in both the making of the hue and the installation; Māori Marsden's philosophy moves the space into Te Pō. Finally, as this journey comes to an end, I look to me and my son, and I perceive an arrival.

Mihi

Mā whero, mā pango ka oti ai te mahi

The academics, writers, thinkers and artists that I have read, their rangahau, writing, advocacy and belief in shifting the patriarchy. Ngāhuia Te Awekōtuku, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Leonie Pihama, Ani Mikaere, Elizabeth Kerekere, Colleen Waata Urlich, Paerau Corneal, Witi Ihimaera and Māori Marsden.

My kaiako at the Toioho ki Apiti: Masters of Māori Visual Arts, Massey, Associate Professor Kura Te Waru Rewiri for her unwavering belief in my kaupapa and mahi toi. Hemi Macgregor for challenging me. Erene Arapere's honest and practical guidance, and Karangawai Marsh for gifting the title Mana Māna.

Tom Baker & Jamie Smith at Kiln, Potterbee, Melissa Banks, Sarah McClintock and the Ashburton gallery team. Stevei Houkāmau and Alix Ashworth. Nmit – Te Puna Manaaki team, Nicole Akuhata and Olivia Hall. Finally, Hariata Wilson, Bonnie and Whaea Angie, my Mum and Dad, my tamariki; Ray and Asha, and my ex-husband, Kimble.

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Introduction

> *We must not overlook the fact, that each of us is born with story, and each of us has responsibility to pass those stories on. To fortify our children and grandchildren, and help them cope with an increasingly material and technological world, we have to tell them the stories which re-enforce their identity, build their self-worth and self-esteem, and empower them with knowledge (Mita, 2000, as cited by Lee, 2009, p. 4).*

Mana to mean strength, authority, and determination. Māna is to refer to him/her, he/she. *Mana Māna* is the action of passing on, to give to, the mana. It could be understood as the thread that binds wāhine, intergenerationally, providing strength and guidance in challenging times.

My biological mother, Bonnie, has always been at the peripheral of my life. I was one of the first open adoptions in Aotearoa during the 1970's to an English family. We moved to England in 1989, and despite the distance Bonnie has always been with me. In 2021 I received my whakapapa, and the story of my birth whānau. It was a beautiful summers day on Mahia peninsuala, tamariki splashed in the surf and the local market hummed. Whaea Angie, Bonnie and I sat underneath a pōhutakawa tree. I asked what had happened...time slowed. Whaea calmly spoke of rape, poverty, alcoholism, mental illness, imprisonment and state care. Bonnie was unloved, and Angie vividly recalled the four siblings being separated, she was a pēpi. My adoptive parents always spoke of Bonnie with respect and admiration due to her determination, as a 16 year old, to find me a safe and loving home. I carry this kōrero with me every day, as it is my taonga, that Bonnie had enough aroha to break the intergenerational trauma.

I am now a mother of two tamariki. One day my eldest child came to me with fear and pain and said to me "I am not a kōtiro, I am a tama". I replied that he would need a name. Despite, my fear of the unknown, somehow, I knew that this was tīka. Over the last four years I have walked beside my son, Ray, in the darkest of spaces. In the LGBTQIA+ Youth Report, our rangatahi are four times more likely to experience depression suicide ideation and suicide (Thomas, 2018-present). It was the pūrākau *Hinemoa* by Dr Ngāhuia Te Awekōtuku that bought me to my tīpuna and this kaupapa. The strength that I drew from Bonnie's story

and my tīpuna culminated in a resilience I did not know I had. As a mother to takatāpui I look to our mana atua wāhine. What is within these ancient pūrākau? What were the sacrifices that were made? And how can our mana atua wāhine assist with our mental wellbeing in times of te pō?

Chapter one grounds this kaupapa theoretically. I look to our mana wāhine academics, a movement that seeks to reclaim and return balance to tāne and wāhine. Discussed is the importance of whakapapa, mana, Māori cosmogony and our maternal stories, ūkaipō. Dr Elizabeth Kerekere and Dr Ngāhuia Te Awekōtuku's rangahau introduces the term hoa takatāpui, and uncovers the historical and social oppression of gender and sexual identity. Furthermore, they highlight mana wāhine theory as the platform for fighting this discrimination. Key to this, is understanding the term motherhood within a western and indigenous perspective, and to recognise that the home and māmā is a space of resistance.

Chapter two unpacks pūrākau as a methodology, and the effects of christianity and anthropology on our oral narratives. Dr Jenny Lee provides a rationale for why pūrākau is so important for decolonisation and reclamation, and as a result, a directive is realised; to look to our contemporary Māori writers. Subsequently, there is a retelling of the creation of Hineahuone, Hinehauone. There is a weaving together of multiple authors and their varying perspectives, crossing many generations in an effort to include all voices. Supporting this, is the benefits of pūrākau as an approach for whānau and their wellbeing. To clarify, clinicians explain their process, and the various methods that are utilised within their practice. Finally, Hariata Wilson, rangatahi, takatāpui, and of Ngāti Kuia, Ngāpuhi and Ngāti Apa ki Te Rā Tō shares their whakaaro on mana atua wāhine. Particularly, the importance of wānanga, the duality of tāne and wāhine, and the choice to transform or project pain.

Chapter three transitions from the theoretical to considering the physical object, I look to the following three artists Reuban Paterson, Colleen Waata Urlich and Paerau Corneal. Paterson's *He Hue/Gourds: Kua tu te puehu* is entwined with Hinepūtehue's pūrākau. Thus, the myriad of form, use of the gourd and Paterson's playful use of materials are all briefly highlighted. A simple chronology of Urlich and Corneal's membership with Ngā Kaihanga Uku and their artistic practice is acknowledged. An interlude into Urlich's rangahau with the Lapita sherds, and her endeavours to provide a link to Aotearoa and our proto-polynesian tīpuna. In fact, the Lapita mark is proposed as a central aesthetic for my work moving forward. Corneal's reclamation of the wāhine form through oral narrative, is noted, it being the shape and size of her sculptures that inspire. All these considerations are taken into my uku practice.

Chapter Four provides reasons for why *Mana Māna* is shown at Ashburton gallery. Alternating, between pragmatics and theoretical logic there arises various arguments for this choice, these are all outlined. However, I also recognise there is an element of the unknown, and I also ask myself "why Ashburton"?

Chapter Five culminates the theory, personal reflections and the highs and lows of the making process into one cohesive journey. Synthesising, the many parts to make some sort of whole. Firstly, the narratives of our mana atua wāhine are aligned with the various concepts that have been discussed already. Within each pūrākau a transformation point is found and a personal insight is given. This refinement of thinking is bought together through Māori Marsden's philosophical teachings. Te pō; tua-uri; mauri; and hihiri are all posited as the motivation for why and how the works are installed. In addition, the decisions behind the shape, size, height, colour, material and positioning of the structure are explained.

In conclusion, details are given of the *Mana Māna* opening, including a written response about the exhibition by Kaumatua Tīpene Phillip. Finally, an indepth reflection on the theory and rangahau used, the aesthetic challenges, cultural significance, and questions that could potentially extend this whakaaro.

Chapter One: Literature Review

Mana Wāhine Māori: Imbalance Tāne and Wāhine

Whakapapa is the cultural blueprint for how Māori understand the interconnected relationships between descent and ancestral lines. Pihama (2019) describes whakapapa as the action of placing something upon layers, this layering is the connection to the individual, to whānau and is intergenerational. Within these relationships there are relational ways of being where mana is "embedded, and it is through our relational being with each other that mana is recognised, acknowledged, enhanced or diminished" (Pihama, 2019, p. 191). Mana can be perceived in all its simplicity and complexity: it is the relationship with others, with ourselves, how we be in the world, and how we treat others. Being Māori means we come into this world with mana, and it is innate to whakapapa.

Pihama (2019, as cited Pere, 1991, p. 192) reminds us that it is our direct association with our atua that is the source of mana, which confirms that all people are sacred. Furthermore, the saying "he atua, he tangata" highlights the intrinsic connection to our tīpuna and celestial beings. Thus, mana can be bestowed upon an individual for the purpose of fulfilling a specific role or function and can be enhanced by the collective in support of that person's social and political obligations. Mana is integrated within every aspect of Māori culture, inclusive of how we engage with a wide range of tīkanga contexts, relationships, rituals, and practices (Pihama, 2019). The interconnection of these protocols and practices are significant as it provides guidance in regard to what is tīka, what is correct. Therefore, whakapapa, mana and our relationship to our atua is vital to Māori society.

Another integral aspect for our tīpuna was Māori cosmogony. Mikaere (1995) states that this chartered life, and central to this was female sexuality and the capacity for reproduction. Within the cosmogonic accounts it is evident that the female power was mirrored in the everyday of whānau, hāpu and iwi. Wāhine and female sexuality was inherent to our cosmogony. This suggests that our society reflected and reinforced the value of wāhine. And central to Māori cosmogony was the balance of tāne and wāhine. This was inextricably part of creation, and these principles were honoured daily (Mikaere, 1995).

Gabel (2019) highlights the term ūkaipō within Māori cosmologies and the importance of the prominent "maternal figure in the creation of the world, in the creation of humankind and in the finality of death; all involve the reiteration of the power of the maternal body and the recurring theme of returning to the night-feeding breast" (Gabel, 2019, p. 170). Ūkaipō is conceptually profound and can be found consistently within our maternity stories. The literal meaning refers to the night feeding breast which talks to the eternal link with the maternal, this can be both in the spiritual and physical realm. The night feeding breast, the mother, will always draw a person back (Gabel, 2019). In life this happens with the physical manner in which mother and child relate to each other, whereas in death it is the return to the eternal mother, Papatūānuku, the mother of which all humankind originated from.

Due to colonisation Māori were thrown into a precarious state of imbalance, especially in relationship to each other, their atua, and the environment (Mikaere, 1995). With the arrival of early colonists came a set of cultural understandings around women's roles and status. The colonists perceived their religion and cultural beliefs as hierarchical which placed our belief systems as backward and primitive. Thus, the missionaries and subsequent arrivals enacted a conversion on the indigenous worldview that has been sustained to the present day.

The myth that Māori belief systems were simply replaced by christianity is too basic. It may have been assumed by missionaries that this was the aim. However, Māori belief systems are more complex and deeply embedded (Mikaere, 1995). What did happen was Māori took parts of christian teachings that aligned with their worldview which created a mixing of religious beliefs. From the missionary perspective this could have been seen as a failure. But it has been argued that over time the missionary campaign was perhaps victorious, in that the "very heart of Māori religion, cosmogony, was colonised" (Mikaere, 1995, p. 77). Mikaere (1995) emphasises the devastating effects for Māori cosmogony, but more so on wāhine. The colonising of our belief systems has been and is insidious. Resulting, in the degradation of our mana atua wāhine, wāhine, and takatāpui.

In Kerekere's (2017) thesis, she grounds her rangahau withn a Māori feminist framework, and there are two reasons for this. Firstly, that some of the key academics within mana wāhine are takatāpui, such as Dr Ngāhuia Te Awekōtuku and Dr Leonie Pihama. Secondly, it is necessary to first return the balance of power to wāhine, that is as equals, not subservient. This is before takatāpui can be provided with the full cultural support that is needed.

> *And no one can deny that in the last two centuries Māori women have lost, or been deprived of, economic, social, political, and spiritual power; and the loss, this erosion of power – or mana – or authority, invites a feminist analysis, or feminist view, of what has happened. So, Māori women are being put down for being female. Recognising that and working through it, is becoming a feminist. In a Māori way. There is no contradictions; for that is the message in the phrase, 'Mana Wāhine Māori' – reclaiming and celebrating what has been, and what we will become. It is not a re-action to males, and their violence against us; it is a pro-action, a determining of ourselves as Māori women, with authenticity and grace. And its ultimate aim is a rediscovery and renaming of that essential strength and harmony, that complementary relationship between genders, that may have occurred on these islands two centuries past (as cited by Kerekere, 2017, p. 44, Te Awekotuku, 1991).*

Being assimilated, growing up devoid of language, culture, and Māori perceptions of being. I find myself a pēpi; attempting to understand what being Māori is. Integral to our being is whakapapa and the intricate connections of our relationships to each other. I see in my mind's eye, whakapapa, the placing of something upon layers, and the layering of ourselves, upon whānau and of the generations. My every action is perceived as this layering of relationships, and how embedded within this is how we relate to each other, the mana. Through this way of being is our connection to the atua and this drives our society.

I begin to awaken to the importance of our cosmogony and how wāhine sexuality was honoured and revered prior to christianity and the colonial worldview. That our maternal stories, ūkaipō, were intimately connected and refer to both the physical and spiritual realm. As wāhine we have a special relationship with birth, death and our earthly mother Papatūānuku.

I realise the importance of the balance of tāne and wāhine energy, by recognising both, you can be vulnerable and strong, the emotional is powerful, to show and be with our feelings is accepted. Ultimately, that our mana atua wāhine and mana wāhine are critical to reinstating balance, for ourselves and takatāpui.

Takatāpui

Figure 1 *Dr Elizabeth Kerekere, 2017-2024*

Dr Elizabeth Kerekere's doctoral thesis *Part of the Whānau: The Emergence of Takatāpui Identity, He Whāriki* is a seminal piece of rangahau. Kerekere (2017) credits the term takatāpui as a gift to the Māori rainbow community by Ngāhuia Te Awekōtuku and Lee Smith. Hoa takatāpui translates as intimate special friend originally from Wiremu Maihi Te Rangikaheke's pūrākau *Hinemoa and Tutanekai* (Te Awekōtuku, 1991). After thirty years of advocating and working to build the Tīwhanawhana trust, Kerekere wanted to assist takatāpui, their whānau, hāpu, iwi, and community by creating a whāriki takatāpui, a mat that weaves together and lays down the groundwork for future advocacy and rangahau.

> *Takatāpui is an umbrella term that embraces all Māori with diverse gender identities, sexualities and sex characteristics including whakawāhine, tangata ira tāne, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and queer. Taktāpui identity is related to whakapapa, mana and inclusion. It emphasises Māori cultural and spiritual identity as equal to – or more important than – gender identity, sexuality or having diverse sex characteristics. Being takatāpui offers membership of a culturally-based national movement that honours our ancestors, respects our elders, works closely with our peers and looks after our young people (Kerekere, 2017, p. 25).*

Kerekere (2017) states that the term takatāpui is commonly seen as referring to a person's sexual identity and that it is inclusive of transgender people. She points out that the binary position of man and woman is an issue for two reasons. One being, that people who identify as intersex; this being the embodiment of female and male in exceptional ways, exposes them to unwanted surgery and discriminatory behaviours due to their sex characteristics (Kerekere, 2017). Another reason is that people may have a gender identity that is diverse and is not restricted to female or male. It is important that takatāpui identity is inclusive of everyone, and not limited to binary identities or a person's sex orientation. Therefore, inclusive language is foundational to the development of takatāpui identity and community.

Pihama et al., (2019) points out that early pākehā ethnographers and anthropologist's descriptions of Māori society were significant in the re-construction of gender relations. The dominant colonial perspective saw the mana of wāhine be redefined, and imposed ideas of sexuality, gender and sexual identity resulted in layers of oppression for our queer and takatāpui whānau. To resist the impacts of colonisation the author draws attention to the importance of mana motuhake and the part of mana wāhine to counter more than 170 years of colonial oppressive practices, see figure 2 and 3. Furthermore, mana wāhine is supportive of Māori women collectives who challenge the patriarchal system. Pihama et al., (2019) counters the perception that mana wāhine theory was a means to invalidate feminism. She highlights that it is important to recognise that mana wāhine is not a new concept, it is founded upon our understanding of mana and wāhine.

Figure 2 *Cover illustration, Mana Wāhine Reader I, 1987 - 1998*

Figure 3 *Cover illustration, Mana Wāhine Reader II, 1999 - 2019*

To understand the history of intersectional oppressions that takatāpui have had to deal with, it is important to first look at the hetero-patriarchal perspectives of British society, and the formation of the nuclear family that was imposed upon Māori. Not only did it undermine our culture and society, but ultimately degraded wāhine. Which disrupted traditional value systems of acceptance, and in turn pathologised and criminalised gender and sexual fluidity.

Kerekere (2017) states that takatāpui historical trauma is rooted in colonial misogyny and heterosexism which contributes to, even today, whānau denial of multiple gender identities, sex traits and sexualities. However, Kerekere (2017) acknowledges takatāpui acceptance in some areas, such as Tairāwhiti, where there resided a high number of wāhine leaders in the past. Thus, colonisation has had detrimental impacts on takatāpui. Until the imbalance of power for Māori wāhine is addressed, she foresees difficulties in resolving issues for gender and sexual diverse Māori. It is the authors belief that "...Mana Wāhine is the platform for fighting discrimination against takatāpui through the restoration of balance between genders in Māori culture" (Kerekere, 2017, p. 33).

Māmā

Gabel (2019) points out that the term motherhood as theorised by Adrienne Rich in her book *Of Woman Born* in 1976 placed mothering and mothers within a western context. Pinnacle to this theory was the concept that motherhood is a patriarchal construct which is and has been defined and controlled by the male. Gabel (2019) emphasises that this was a source of oppression and subordination and was foundational to early western maternal theory. Consequently, "...expectations of mothers to perform in a constructed self-sacrificing model are patriarchal in origin" (Gabel, 2019, p. 167).

Thus, women of colour seek their own idealogies and experiences which talk back to the dominate maternal narrative. Hooks (2007, as cited by Gabel, 2019) argues that the home is a site of resistance for black women, and motherhood is one interpersonal relationship where women are supported and valued. The realm of home is essential to the resistance of western societies oppressive and dominating ideology. Gabel (2019) also acknowledges that there is a diversity of indigenous experience in terms of motherhood. However, the colonisers persistent aim to impose their concept of motherhood and family structure is a recurring theme and is a shared experience of indigenous people due to colonisation, resistance, and intervention.

Figure 4 *Unidentified Māori mother with baby, 1930*

Interestingly, Lavall-Harvard and Corbiere Lavell (2006, as cited by Gabel 2019) believe that the sharing of indigenous and aboriginal stories of mothering is a source of empowerment.

> *This expression of our experiences as Aboriginal mothers is of great importance not only because it provides alternatives to the oppressive model of motherhood provided, and promoted by the dominant patriarchal culture, but also because it provides a position outside of the dominant culture from which to critique (Lavall-Harvard & Corbiere Lavell, 2006, as cited by Gabel 2019, p. 168).*

In summary it is important to understand the effects that hetero patriarchal thinking had on the whānau structure, takatāpui, our wāhine and the concept of mothering. The fragmentation of our people and our ways of being created a vacuum for those like myself who were disconnected from their whānau, iwi, and whenua. As a result, the concept of a nuclear family and the inferiority of women to man was and is internalised. It is ironic that the home from a western feminist perspective was seen as a site of oppression. But from the above mothering and home is where wāhine have always held space; and has become a foundation for critical resistance.

Chapter Two: Methodology

Pūrākau

Pūrākau is the tradition of Māori storytelling. Within this form, there are elements of philosophical thinking, epistemology, worldview, and cultural codes that are the foundation of how we perceive our identity as Māori. Pūrākau are collections of ancient oral narratives that should be protected, but also accepted as a means of pedagogy as this literature is still of relevance for us now (Lee, 2009).

Lee (2009) has reviewed how pūrākau evolved as a methodology, and is responsive to the broader societal, political and historical research contexts. Specifically, early Aotearoa research archived pūrākau as legends and myths. The emergence of Kaupapa Māori sees pūrākau as a means to researching back with our own "[i]ndigenous ontological and epistemological constructs" (Lee, 2009, p. 1). Pūrākau has been revived by indigenous researchers through approaches such as: life-method which ensures our contemporary stories and realities are heard; and the recovery of traditional methods of storytelling in new ways. It is not new that Māori express their experience through storytelling, often adapting it to fit the purpose or event.

Figure 5 *Dr Jenny Lee-Morgan, 2024*

Ngāhuia Te Awekōtuku's (2003) *Ruahine: Mythic Women* is a compilation of stories that retell traditional pūrākau. These narratives depart from being a direct translation, a child's story, or an interpreted rendition by non-Māori. Lee describes these pūrākau as having a depth of detail, the learnings are subtle but are also upfront and brazen. Her account of the events are an affirmation of wāhine and their place, strength and power within traditional society. Moreover, Te Awekotuku's retelling enchants, seduces, is fascinating and provocative (Lee, 2009).

As a methodology, pūrākau, is a powerful tool for reclamation and decolonisation. Nevertheless, it has

Figure 6 *Dr Ngāhuia Te Awekōtuku, 2024*

also been used as a tool by early anthropologists and ethnographers for colonisation. It was their mission to record our stories. Mikaere (1995) explains that this research, or rather the imaginative portrayal of our stories alongside the incorrect records were dangerous. Creating epistemological chaos that shook the foundation of Māori religious beliefs and imbalanced societal structures. Moreover, rendering pūrākau as mere fantasy (Lee, 2009). A common practice was the combining of different iwi narratives to create a composite image. The simplification of these stories reflected the Pākehā's inability to understand the complexities of tribal systems, and how these sustained our diverse histories, including pūrākau (Lee, 2009).

With the conquest of the missionaries to civilise Māori there was an ever-shifting hybridisation of christian teachings on our worldview. In regard to pūrākau there was a quiet but profound change that mirrored Pākehā perceptions, and often resembled christian narratives. This is evident in the writing out of tāne and wāhine genitals and sexual liaisons often replacing it with prudish victorian sensibilities. Ngāhuia Te Awekōtuku (as cited by Mikaere, 1995) characterises these writers as "inevitably eurocentric, and quite openly and tritely colonial" (p. 72).

In conclusion pūrākau could be perceived as an ancient method of transmitting our knowledge, codes, constructs and perceptions from one generation to another. Down through the eons of time these narratives retained cultural guidelines that speak to the retention of our identity and practices. Pūrākau are an opportunity for learning, adapting, reclaiming and decolonising. These oral narratives are just as relevant today as they were for our tīpuna.

However, it is important when using this methodology as a researcher that I am aware of the christian influence. Thus, I have chosen to include predominantly Māori writers, researchers and kōrero from participants who hold knowledge from their iwi or specialisation. I have attempted to steer clear of the writings from the 1900's.

Mana Atua Wāhine

Papatūānuku

Tāne laments to his mother Papatūānuku that despite mating with ira rākau and ira manu, and creating many wonderful tamariki, he feels something is missing. He seeks children that reflect his own physique and mind. "Mother, the ira wāhine of the gods still eludes me. Where can I find it to ensure the true successors to our world" (Ihimaera, 2020, p. 124). With this, his words fly back to the realm of Te Ao, Te Pō and to Te Kore. In Makereti's (2019) version Tāne's growing sexual frustration is the key motivator, and this leads to a sense of confusion which he eventually recognises as loneliness. Initially, Papatūānuku has no real idea where to find another for Tāne. However, happier memories of her time with Ranginui prevails "You may have to be creative, she told him, let your imagination guide you. Do you know of the place called Kurawaka?" (Makereti, 2019, p. 50).

In Ihimaera's (2020) retelling, Papatūānuku shivers as she recalls her separation from Ranginui, and Tū's words "Let us kill them" (p. 125). Papatūānuku confines in Tāne, "Tūmatauenga has already come to ask me the same question" (Ihimaera, 2020, p. 124). "You must go to Kurawaka and, there, you will find what you desire and do what has always been in you to do" (Ihimaera, 2020, p. 125).

Tāne travels at speed to Kurawaka, leaping the length of Papatūānuku and chanting karakia "Give me the power to reproduce innate godliness! Where is the race to whom I can leave my legacy? Let there be god children to inherit this bright sunlit strand between!" (Ihimaera, 2020, p. 125).

Hineahuone, Hinehauone

In some areas such as the east coast and the Urewera they believed that Tāne after seeking a human woman for an age, finally relented and made the decision to create one himself at Papatūānuku's mon vereneris (Orbell, 1995). This is evident when Tāne deep in the making "wanted the creation to be like him, his mirror, his equal" (Makereti, 2019, p. 50). As he moulded the various parts of the body, he recited karakia, and eventually blew life into the woman shaped from sand, she is known as Hineahuone or Hinehauone

(Orbell, 1995). In Mohi Ruatapu of Ngāti Porou's pūrākau, Tāne thrusts his penis in every orifice,

> *[in] her eyeballs, and that is how people acquired pupils in their eyes. He thrust against the nose, and that is why there is mucus. Then her mouth – saliva comes from that…Then he thrust against her front, and behold, he lived with a woman (Mohi Ruatapu, 1995 as cited in Orbell, 1995, p. 54).*

Ihimaera (2020) recalls his Nani Mini discrediting the assumption that Hineahuone was of lower status than her creator due to the materials that formed her. "Stuff and nonsense" argued Nani Mini "Wasn't Tāne himself, being the son of the Earth, Papa, made from similar material? Hineahuone was as sacred as he was" (Ihimaera, 2020, p. 127). The author imagines a gathering of female atua, a gender gathering, two kuia Māhorhora-nui-a-rangi and Papatūānuku filling the air with karanga,

> *Me aro ki te hā o Hine-ahu-one. Mai te tīmatanga, ko Papa-tū-ā-nuku te whaea whenua! Ko Hine-ahu-one te ira tangata, te tuatahi, he wahine!*
>
> *From the beginning of time was Papa-tū-ā-nuku the Earth Mother then Hine-ahu-one, you, the first human created a woman! You sneeze! Now live! All pay heed to the dignity of Māori women! (Ihimaera, 2020, p. 128).*

It is of interest that some versions of this pūrākau do not mention the sneeze. However, this moment is omnipresent within the language; Tihei mauri ora, is the life-giving force, and the breath of life. When tane speak on the marae, he will often start with "Tihei mauri ora, I sneeze and it is life" (Ihimaera, 2020, p. 128).

In Moihi Te Mātorohanga's (1995, as cited in Ihimaera, 2020, p. 128) pūrākau Tāne's brothers call down from Ranginui's back for him to gather the female element. Upon arrival at Kurawaka, they find the female element in formation. The brothers gift parts of her tinana, "The head was provided by Haematua, Roiho, Roake and Haepuru. The eyes were obtained by Uru-te-ngangana" (Ihimaera, 2020, p. 129).

Let's not forget that Hineahuone has a voice too, she is aware of her existence and the part that Tāne must play in finding her. Hineahuone confines that Papatūānuku kept the uha, the female of mankind a secret until all was ready for her arrival (Grace, 2019). Arguably, Tāne did create the form, but only with the gifting and guidance of Papatūānuku. Hineahuone was the formation of both sacred and earthly elements (Pihama, 2020). Afterall, she is the first human form to hold human life (Grace, 2019).

It would be easy to assume from some pūrākau that the creation of Hinehauone was entirely Tāne's doing, his forming and moulding of a desire for another. However, as Pihama (2020) expounds it is crucial that we do not fall into the reductionist trap of seeking only one truth when talking of traditional knowledge. There are many versions of pūrākau, and all must be considered as a means to understanding. This is not problematic for Māori, comparative to the Pākeha ethnographers' perspective. Furthermore, within each iwi story there is acceptance of the feminine and the crucial role of wāhine in the formation of the fabric of Māori society (Pihama, 2020).

Within this chapter I have culminated many pūrākau in an attempt to reveal the diversity of interpretations. To acknowledge the many voices, and to highlight how Māori do not find this difficult or contradictory. These pūrākau are only elements of each narrative, they are contemporary retellings that challenge the christian perspective. I am aware that I may also be creating a composite narrative, but I have rationalised this as each writer is referenced. I would also propose that this is presented as a discussion with a narrative format. It was an attempt at bringing in the wāhine perspective and to counter the whitewashing of our pūrākau that has historically been so prevalent.

Finally, the pūrākau of Papatūānuku and Hineahuone, Hinehauone are essential in that these speak to the beginnings, the first hā, the gathering of our female atua, and the karanga that bought in wāhine. I also look to Tāne, as his role, is just as vital, it is the doing, the making. His productivity sees the rise of the form; seeking another that is like him; a creation that is equal.

Pūrākau - Wellbeing

Figure 7 *Kawakawa, 2020, Stokes Valley, Lower Hutt*

Pūrākau as an indigenous method for mental wellbeing is now being acknowledged by some clinicians, the following will discuss why and how there is a need for new interventions. The Movement for Global Mental Health (MGMH) in the last 10 years has been looking to provide solutions for mental health (Kopua et al., 2020). Based upon western psychiatry, this movement is grounded in approaches that perceive insanity, anxiety and displacement as a state of physical disease and must be treated in a similar manner (Kopua et al., 2020).

The MGMH's strategy to train a worldwide workforce in evaluation, diagnostics and technologies of intervention comes from the concept that madness and distress should be seen as separate entities, and treated with a targeted approach (Kopua et al., 2020). There is a counter-discourse that questions the benefits of this approach and is alarmed at the monopoly of western psychiatry. These advocates state that globally we need less psychiatry, that there is a need to respect and acknowledge indigenous knowledge, insight and ancient restorative practices. In fact, there should be a reduction in the call for western psychiatry, not an increase (Kopua et al., 2020).

Through colonisation, Indigenous have seen their healing systems be oppressed and often outlawed. With the deterioration of these traditional systems came a weakening of Indigenous systems of belief, the meanings and formation of life, these being what sustain an individual when in strife or suffering (Kopua et al., 2020). It is clear that Māori are predominantly affected by mental health issues today. Research shows that 51% of Māori are likely to have experienced or developed a mental disorder within their lifetime.

These disorders can vary from anxiety (31%), substance abuse (27%) and mood disorder (24%) (Kopua et al., 2020). Furthermore, we have an increasing rate of suicide ideation and attempts (Kopua et al., 2020). Mason Durie (2011, as cited in Kopua et al., 2020) points out Māori health is interconnected to Māori identity. "Autonomy is closely linked with self-esteem and the earning of respect. Both are basic and linked. Low levels of autonomy and low self-esteem are likely to be related to worse health" (Durie, Milroy, & Hunter, as cited in Kopua et al., 2020, p. 377).

In Cherrington's (2003) paper, an overview is given for why and how pūrākau can be used for the therapeutic benefit of Māori wellbeing. Through kōrero of our pūrākau, there is a way to review and reconnect our behaviors of the present with the actions of our past tīpuna (Māori Women's Welfare League, 2002, as cited in Cherrington, 2003). The author's colleague Diana Rangihuna at Te Whare Marie (Māori Mental Health Service) describes her pūrākau practice as 'mahi a nga atua'. This is the re-telling of our atua's stories to tangata whaiora and whānau; to wānanga about the atua's adversities and to connect these to their present situation. Within this approach is te taha wairua, this being our innate kinship to tīpuna and our atua. Kopua et al., (2020) highlights the importance of wānanga and how it is a means to looking to the past whilst staying firmly in the present. It is believed this will bring clarity to the future. To wānanga with atua through pūrākau is how our tīpuna learned and made sense of the world (Kopua et al., 2020).

Figure 8 *My marae, Ngāti Moko of Tapuika, pūrākau atua and wānanga*

A pūrākau practice embeds the following attributes: affirmation of Māori identity, because these stories belong to us, no matter where we are on the identity journey; pūrākau have mana; they often portray a whānau in grief or loss which reminds us that no family is perfect; normalising our everyday experiences; a constant reminder that the atua are always around us, such as the wind, rain, trees, sea; we all have similarities and traits to the atua; personal strengths or weaknesses can be discussed; and finally solutions may be conceived (Cherrington, 2003).

Mental health clinicians find that it is essential when working in this space that they have an in-depth knowledge of the atua because this process needs to connect with the client's te taha wairua. What is highly beneficial is the re-telling of a story, but the method can vary from "waiata, haka, poetry, drama, sculpting, painting, drawing, storytelling, and/or writing" (Cherrington, 2003, p. 118). It is really up to tangata whaiora and the whānau.

The incorporation of methods such as pūrākau, that are not drug orientated or solely focused on mental wellbeing as a sickness, signals that our tīpuna did not perceive our mental state as something to deny. But rather to accept and work through; this being deeply embedded in pūrākau wānanga with our atua. It is with great sadness I recognise Bonnie's mental state, and dependancy on lifelong medication. Ultimately, pūrākau is a powerful intervention that addresses the whole person and the whānau, through the application of the arts; providing a means to reconnect with our atua, tīpuna and ourselves.

Hariata

Figure 9 *Hariata Wilson, 2024*

Hariata Wilson was born in 2001 and lives in Whakatū, their iwi are Ngāti Kuia, Ngāpuhi and Ngāti Apa ki Te Rā Tō. Hariata and I met at a time when my son Ray was coming out, and our relationship has been of understanding, learning and katakata. I feel very privileged to have met Hariata, and I mihi their strength, vulnerability, and wisdom.

I began with a karakia that I say in my studio. How fateful that this was a favourite of Hariatas and written by their uncle, Tipi Wehipeihana.

Ko te reo a ngā manu tērā
ko tangi nei i te ao
kua uru ko te rā
ki waenganui i a Ranginui
i a Papatūānuku

Ka noho ko Ranginui ki runga
ko Papatūānuku ki raro,
ka heke iho ko ngā roimata i a Ranginui,
ka hiki ake ko te kohu i ā Papatūānuku

Ko te tohu tērā
ka ora tāua i te ao, it te pō
Tūturu whakamaua kia tina! Tina!
Hui ē! Tāiki ē! (Learn Māori Abroad, 2022).

When asked, how has mana atua wāhine been important? Hariata paused...

I've been thinking a lot recently about womanhood, and because I've seen so many different kinds of manifestations of womanhood in my life. One thing that comes to mind is the difference between my two grandmothers. So, my grandmother on my Dad's side, gives this welcoming, calming, beautiful aura, that really embraces you. But also, she is that kind of stone-cold stoic person; within she is really rough. Whereas on my mother's side, my grandmother is very rough outwardly, the swearer, drinker, and chain smoker. Quite an intimidating woman from the outside perspective, but within she is this beautiful calm creature of wisdom. And the way that I feel that relates to mana atua wāhine is that they represent the diversity and manifestations of not only women, but just people as we all have either ira wāhine and ira tāne, and those mixed together to form ira tangata.

Until the age of nine, Hariata walked in te Ao Māori and then they made a decision to dis-engage due to difficulties with the language. “I sort of remember actively removing myself…which was around the time I lost my ability to speak te Reo Māori, where it started feeling wrong in my mouth”. Coming into their teens, Hariata was “internally hating [their] own culture”. It took a huge push from their parents and whānau for them to begin re-engaging with wānanga and te Reo Māori. Hariata reflects on it being one specific wānanga.

> *Where we truly took a deep dive into atua and tupuna and how they lived. They set us down in the whare at Omaka marae and taught us about the different sections of the whare, from Te Kore, Te Pō, Te Whaia to Te Marama. And it was this sort of spark of understanding, where I started to conceptualise myself in that situation, and where I was in my life. I remember asking myself what am I going to do with that? This wānanga was about our tupuna as well because it was about atua. And I was, like, what kind of tupuna do I want to be? Do I want to be the one that my mokopuna hear about me, or hear my name, and think that I was a profound tupuna who was a trailblaser. Who tried to understand things in a way that bought us back to ourselves. Or do I want to be the tupuna that when people think and talk about me, they feel pain or pity. I didn’t want to be that tupuna who transferred my pain onto my descendants.*

How do you transform pain, rather than project pain? I ask if it is perhaps holding it? Hariata has no delusions, it is difficult, and not an easy way to be. But ultimately, it is the practice of forgiveness that transforms. Through a recognition that despite the “harshness of people…there was also a seed of love…[and] people love the way they know how to”. Hariata clarifies,

> *...not to forgive them. But forgive the people who push that onto them. And then in turn forgiving that behaviour. And also forgiving myself for the way that I reacted to it. Has been such a huge part of coming to myself.*

When asked about Hinetītama and Hinenuitepō, Hariata playfully imagines these pūrākau as a book or TV show. Despite the hilarity, Hariata talks of Hinenuitepō looking to Whiro, as

> *a time of great sorrow…[he] is known to be the atua of outer darkness, and in my life when going through adversity, I have sort of leaned into the darkness of those times. To try and understand, both, the way that I was reacting to it and why it was happening to me. And what I found there was, the comfort of that darkness. And I also found there was a great transformation, and the realisation that we have the capacity for transformation. That aspect of the pūrākau, of finding comfort in that sorrow. And being able to transform it, rather than transfer that, is a huge influence on me.*

Our kōrero returns to the idea of duality and how this plays out in the pūrākau of Hinetītama and Hinenuitepō. Hariata states there is a side to everyone that is both of these atua.

> *Hinetītama, I used to think of her as sort of helpless before being violated by the world. And I’ve come to understand that conceptualising atua in a linear way is really difficult because it removes them from the essence of themselves in a way. Because they are supposed to be everything, at all times, because they can exist across the cosmos.*

I asked if they had much knowledge around Hineahuone, they pointed out that the pūrākau has many similarities to the christian story of Adam and Eve.

> *Eve being created by Adam, and Hineahuone being created from the efforts of Tāne. It’s always felt contradictory to our other understandings of the dynamic between tane and wahine. I came across a pūrākau where Hineahuone was actually created by Papatūānuku.*

Hariata states there are over seventy atua, and it was not until the 1960s and 1970s that the lack of knowledge about atua wāhine was questioned. A massive drive to seek out these pūrākau began.

> *In my whare, in Te Hora, there is a picture of Jesus Christ on the wall, and truly we only kept that because one of our kaumatua made the frames for the pictures and put them in the whare as a koha. But it is very rare that we practice christianity on the marae now. Because we have come to these understandings.*

In summary I find myself reflecting on this idea of duality, and that being within, not just ourselves but our atua. The duality of Hariata's grandmothers, Hinetītama and Hinenuitepō, tāne and wāhine. That the transformation of pain, can be a choice, to convert rather than project, through forgiveness of others and ourselves.

Chapter Three: Aesthetics

Hue

Figure 10 *Gourd growing, 2023*

The gourd was a familiar utilitarian object in our tīpuna's homes. Cultivated by humans over 10,000 years ago and an immensely productive plant, it was introduced in Aotearoa alongside the kumara with the Polynesian settlers. Moreover, it can be consumed when small and the flesh is soft. When large they can be dried and hollowed for domestic use such as bowls or water containers (Metzger, 2016). The hue was also decorated, this is evident globally, but in Aotearoa we see this with paint, carving or incisions on to the gourd (Metzger, 2016). We had many traditional uses of the hue, from floating devices to taonga puoro. In Ngāhuia Te Awekōtuku's (2003) contemporised pūrākau *Hinemoa* the gourd is a swimming aid for our heroine, to reach her intended lover Tūtānekai on Mokoia island. Moreover, taonga puoro are our traditional musical instruments, and in Hinepūtehue's whānau there are many that range from various sizes, creating many sounds from low to high vibrations (Metzger, 2016).

Hinepūtehue

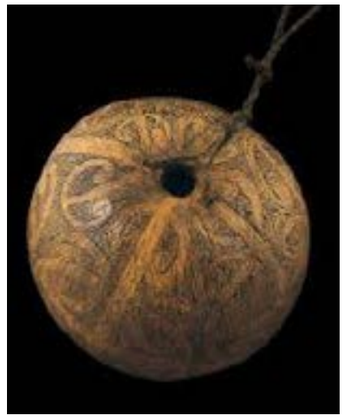

Figure 11 *Hue (calabash), 1800 - 1900*

Hinepūtehue was the youngest daughter to Tāne and Hine-rauamoa, she is seen as the personification of the gourd and the first musical instrument to appear in Māori creation (Metzger, 2016). As the story goes, after the separation of Ranginui and Papatūānuku, there was an enormous conflict between the children. Hinepūtehue felt the anger within the turbulent winds and caught it inside of her, the fury of the atua was captured in her gourds of love (Metzger, 2016). Hence the amazing and diverse shapes and sizes of the gourd.

Reuban Paterson

Ngāti Rangitihi, Ngāi Tūhoe, Tūhourongi, Scottish

The gourds myriad of form is also prevalent in the toi mahi of Reuban Paterson. Paterson was born in Tamaki Makarau in 1973. In 1997 after completing a postgraduate degree of fine arts at the University of Auckland, he then went on to win the NZ Moet et Chandon award, this resulted in a residency in France. He currently lives in New York (Gow Langsford, 2003).

Lister (as cited in Reuban Paterson, n.d.) describes Paterson's toi mahi as a kaleidescope of colour, harking back to his childhood memories of the city's west coastline. Paterson has been exhibiting his mahi toi for the last two and half decades and is thought to be one of New Zealand's most pre-eminent contemporary artists (Gow Lansford, 2003). His fascination with light, texture and form are hypnotic, and it is often these properties that Paterson utilises to reach beyond the light and to "...pry open the complex histories and tensions that sit just beneath the surface of all things" (Gow Langsford, 2003). Always a celebration that touches on the "exchange and encounter, hybridity and fluidity, spirituality and sexuality" and is particularly tuned into the vital interplay of whakapapa and queer identity. Paterson's multi-disciplinary practice is limitless from paint, animation, see figure 12, sculpture, to installation.

Figure 12 *Te Maiea, 2020, Reuben Paterson, 4:30 min animation*

He Hue/Gourds: Kua tu te puehu 2020 was inspired by Patersons visit to Greece in 2005 – 2006, where he made the uncanny link between the Māori and Greek use of the gourd (Auckland Art Gallery, n.d.). This cultural object was seen as quite a shift from Paterson's other works (Metzger, 2016). However, his trademark sequin is forever present, pinned meticulously, transforming these organic forms into mesmerising shapes that glisten and glimmer, see examples in figure 13.

Figure 13 *Ngā Hue, 2018-2019, Reuben Paterson, gourds, sequins and gold plated nickel pins*

The hue's diverse form and multiple functions is of particular interest, alongside its continual appearance in our tīpuna's pūrākau. With our takatāpui and Māori rainbow I think of how Hinepūtehue captures the anger within herself, transforming it into love. I liken this to the anger found in some parts of society and recognise the power to transcend. Paterson encapsulates this within his glorious hue/gourds, they are vibrant, playful and joyous. I take the hue's form, a vessel for our atua wāhine, and Paterson's joy. I hope that I can also create forms that emulate the hue's multiplicity, whilst also conveying an element of playfulness, much like Paterson.

Figure 14 *Ngā Tokorima, 2003. Left, Manos Nathan, Colleen Waata Urlich, Paerau Corneal, Baye Riddell and Wī Taepa*

Ngā Kaihange Uku Collective

Ngā Kaihanga Uku is a national Māori clay collective that was formed in 1986 by Manos Nathan, Colleen Waata Urlich, Paerau Corneal, Baye Riddell and Wī Taepa, see above figure 14 (Tamati-Quennell, 2015). In 2015 the collective lost two of their founding pou, Nathan and Urlich.

The group were, originally, drawn together to tautoko and manaaki each other and their work in an effort to establish a kaupapa and an identity grounded in uku as a medium (Tamati-Quennell, 2015). Ngā Kaihanga Uku has revitalised the art form with their deep commitment to embedding Indigenous concepts and Māori culture (Pātaka Art & Museum, 2013). Each artist has contributed in their own unique way to the movement. However, for the purpose of this kaupapa, mana wāhine and takatāpui, I have chosen to focus on Colleen Waata Urlich and Paerau Corneal.

Colleen Waata Urlich

Te Popoto o Ngapuhi ki Kaipara, Te Rarawa

Colleen Waata Urlich (1939 –2015) had many art influences but her first was Fred Graham who shared his aspiration of creating art works with modern materials that are grounded in the customary and traverse the contemporary (Pātaka Art & Museum, 2013). During the 1950's Urlich with the encouragement of Hillary Clarke at Auckland teachers' training college continued art classes with Colin McCahon and Hamish Keith. At the time Keith and his flatmate Barry Brickell were making domestic ware (Pātaka Art & Museum, 2013). Urlich began with wheel throwing and glazing pots for the home, but as her practice began to evolve, she looked towards a more low-tech approach. "You can make mugs...casseroles and lovely bowls but it wasn't a Māori art form for me. The naturalness of clay wasn't there" (Tamati-Quennell, 2015, para. 17). She began collecting and mixing clays from her papakāinga which connected Urlich to her ancestral landscape of Otago and Waipoua. Urlich like Nathan was intent on developing a cultural framework for Māori uku artists (Tamati-Quennell, 2015).

Urlich completed a Bachelor of Applied Arts at North Tec, and an MFA from Elam school of arts. In her thesis and practice she focused on Lapita ceramics, which established a connection between Māori and Polynesia, and the presence of a uku whakapapa (Pātaka Art & Museum, 2013, p. 19). Urlich's rangahau was presented and published in 2002 at the International Conference for the 50th Anniversary of the first Lapita Excavation in New Caledonia.

> *Those Proto-Polynesians, known generally as the Lapita peoples, introduced... an artistic legacy, originally in the form of distinctive patterns on ceramics. All Polynesians are inheritors of that legacy, and each Polynesian nation has contributed to the continuing evolution of that artistic heritage. In Aotearoa that design legacy is particularly evident in the women's art of weaving...as contemporary Māori clay workers we are repositioning ourselves, claiming that part of the Lapita legacy which relates to clay* (Tamati-Quennell, 2015, para. 20).

Furthermore, in the 1980's the late reverend Māori Marsden mentored Urlich along with the northern clay workers, on the Māori cosmogonic mythic cycle, connecting the pūrākau of creation to uku.

> *In the first Mythic Cycle it states: the first women was moulded from clay and infused with the breath of Life...[t]he fusion of the godly life force and the intense female essence permeating the sacred clay from Kura Waka allowed ira tangata* (Urlich, 2003, p. 390).

Finally, Urlich points to Hineukurangi who preceded Hineahuone, Hinehauone and is the deity of uku. After the separation of Ranginui and Papatūānuku, the blood that seeped into the earth was Pūtoto, and Parawhenuamea was the water that fell from the heavens. Thus, creating Hineukurangi as seen in the genealogy table in figure 15 (Urlich, 2003).

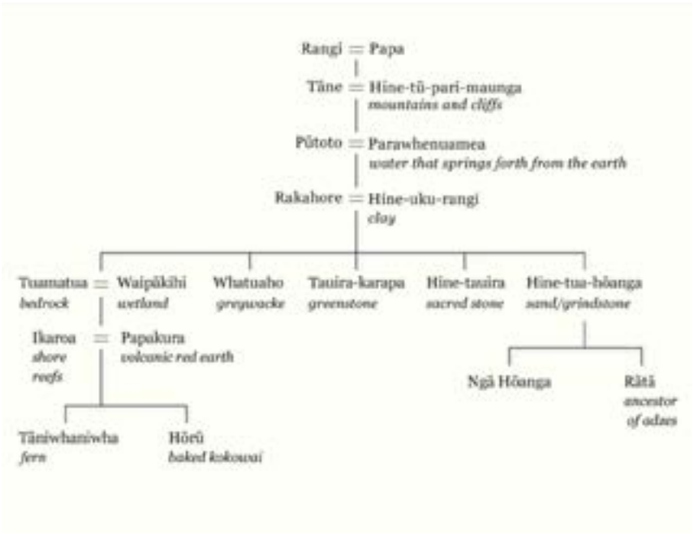

Figure 15 *Whakapapa o ngā kōhatu, encyclopedia entry, 2024*

Mark Making

Urlich's rangahau into Lapita and the development of a solid foundation from which Māori uku artists can work from is of primary interest. However, it is Urlich's use of Lapita patterns that resonates. The patterns on the Lapita sherds consist of the application of terra sigillata, a red slip, that is applied in geometric forms that hold a remarkable resemblance to tapa, tattau and taniko (Urlich, 2003, p. 391). With indepth experimentation Urlich produced large vessels that incorporated the application of slip in a nod to the Lapita sherds. The effect is refined with the use of masking, applied wax and the layering of red slip, creating dynamic lines that pull the eye around the vessel (Urlich, 2003). Perhaps Urlich looked to the forms found in Māori weaving and the Lapita artefacts, as a means to amalgamating a style that brings forth our ancestors. Even more fascinating is the symbolic nature of the vessels, being waka koiwi; ritualistic chests that hold the bones of the dead, see figure 16 (Urlich, 2003).

Figure 16 *Ipu (Lapita series), 2002, Colleen Waata Urlich, Northern Australian terracotta raku, wax resist*

In addition, Urlich investigated the Lapita detante stamp, where she replicated the engraving or mark making with a sharp tool over the surface, to create patterns that are then filled with white slip. It is visible the similarities with Lapita remnants and Urlich's works. Nevertheless, this method of mark making was abandoned for the technique of slip painting, as seen in works exhibited with Ngā Kaihanga Uku. Urlich developed her own distinctive uku language that could be seen to sit firmly within the customary, Toi Tuturu (Jahnke, n.d.).

Figure 17 *Nga kongakonga rere o tauira no tuku iho, 2004, Colleen Waata Urlich*

For me mark making has been a consistent practice, it is central to my thinking, and I still find myself circling this core visual language. Moving from 2D to 3D was a leap but has proven to be a positive one. I talk of this as it is important in relation to Urlich's rangahau and my own experimentation. Theoretically, Urlich is essential to grounding this kaupapa. But, in terms of application I am going to reflect back to *twenty-four.*

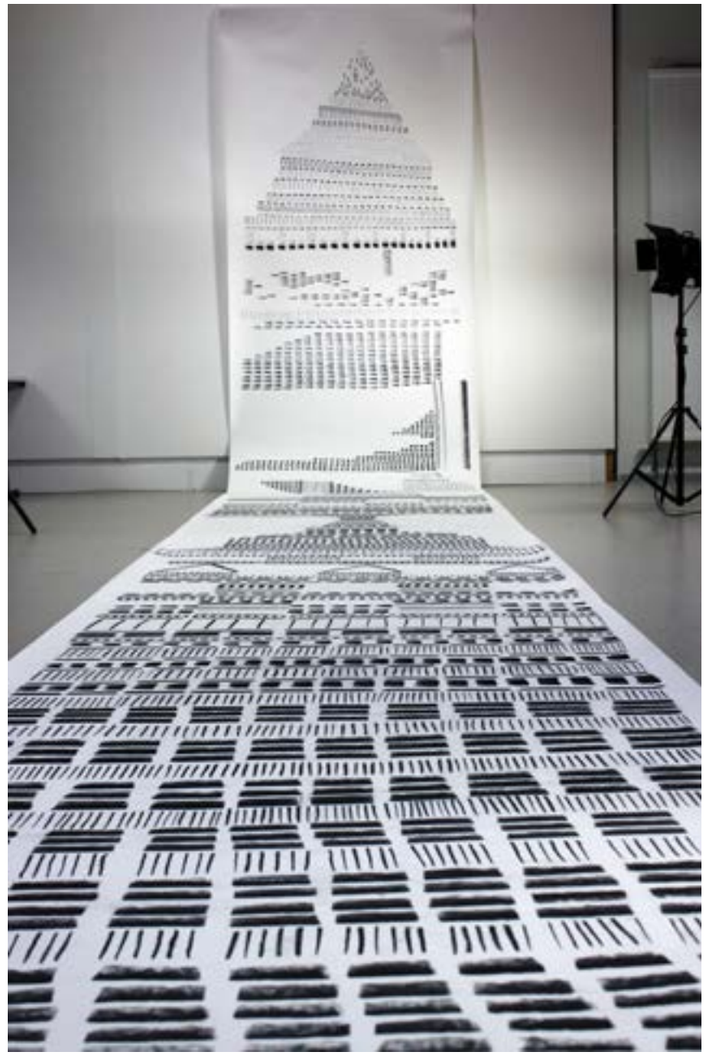

Figure 18 *twenty-four, 2018, Kim Ireland, charcoal and paper, 1.5 (w) x 10 (l) m*

This work came from mark making for twenty-four hours, a live performance for the Whakatū community at the Light Nelson Festival in 2018. These marks came from the need for the 12,000 viewers to be visually engaged. However, upon reflection the patterns echoed tapa or a graphic language that perhaps could have some resemblance to the mark making of my tīpuna evident in the Lapita sherds.

Figure 19 *Kei hea a Tiki?, 2022, Kim Ireland*

Figure 20 *Kei hea a Tiki?, 2022, Kim Ireland*

In *Kei hea Tiki?* these marks appear again, engraved, punctuated and painted onto thirty-four uku hue, merging Māori patterns, lineal marks and the kupu ia, kare and hoa.

A consistent period of mark making has existed within my practice, however, it is Urlich and the Lapita sherds that really clarified the meaning. We will leave the mark for now and look to another uku artist.

Paerau Corneal

Ngati Tuwharetoa, Te Atihaunui a Paparangi

In 1990 Paerau Corneal graduated with a Diploma in Craft Design Māori through the Waiariki polytechnic in Rotorua. At the time there were many tutors at Waiariki that were part of the Ngā Puna Waihanga, a collective that were politically and socially motivated for Māori arts in all its forms (Pātaka Art & Museum, 2013). Running parallel to this was Ngā Kaihanga Uku, and their kaupapa Māori ethos allowed Corneal the autonomy to push her practice experimentally, yet still stay sincere to her political and cultural sensibilities (Pātaka Art & Museum, 2013).

Figure 21 *Hinemoa and Hinemoa, 2011, Paerau Corneal*

Throughout Corneal's practice the central theme has been mana wāhine and her understanding of her place as a woman in the world. "I consciously moved away from the sexual gaze on the female form. The figures are symbolic...with exaggerated proportions and extensions. The work becomes about the form over the feminine" (Pātaka Art & Museum, 2013, p. 23). Drawing from her Tūwharetoa and Te Āti Haunui ā Pāpārangi connections, Corneal reinstates the position of wāhine through uku figures as warrior, mother, leader and matauranga expert (Smith et al., 2007). Always seeking to reveal the uha (female element) through the merging of uku and her weaving practice. She describes, as a student, her natural inclination towards clay,

the responsiveness of the material through layering and coiling. Unlike Urlich, Corneal sculpted with commercial clays (Smith et al., 2007).

During the 90's Corneal was exposed to Constantine Brancusi and Barbara Hepworth's work during her travels. Exposing her to a simplicity of form that is visible within Corneal's later works. In 1993 to 2003 her *Hine* series began to really synthesise her political stance. Prior to these foundational works Corneal had undergone a revelation (Smith et al., 2007).

> *[The] long process of deconstructing a [c]hristian or colonised view of Māori... has led me to reclaiming affirmations of mana wahine through Māori oral narratives...mana wahine is about taking a stand. My own perspective is from a position of being Māori and wahine takatāpui [intimate companion]. While I see myself as non-divisible, my political views and choice of intimate and sexual partner are interpreted by some Māori as subversive or, at worst, even un-Māori (Smith et al., 2007, p. 73).*

Corneal describes the female forms as having an upright stance, with large thighs, broad hips and round bellies in an effort to subvert the objectification of the body (Smith et al., 2007). Overall, there are minimal surface features, and it is through the facial structures and the magnificent shapes that the work speaks to Māori femininity.

Form

Again, much like Urlich there are theoretical aspects that overlap with this kaupapa. However, Corneal is less focused on the whakapapa of uku. She looks to the medium as a means to reclaim the wahine form, to disrupt the colonisers gaze (Smith et al., 2007). Powerful and potent forms that encapsulate the duality of wāhine, as fierce and gentle. For me Corneal's sculptures are a guide and a reminder of the importance of form as a language. In *Hinemoa and Hinemoa* the rounded thighs and puku are constructed with a modernist edge yet remind me visually of pou (Pātaka Art & Museum, 2013). The juxtaposition of the two wāhine creates a negative and positive spatial depth which has the eye roaming through and around.

With Urlich's rangahau and the Lapita sherds, I feel there is a connection with the marks made in *twenty-four* and *Kei hea a Tiki?* I will continue to experiment with punctuating and marking the surface, and like Urlich, apply thin layers of slip. Urlich guides me towards the surface texture, but Corneal reminds me of the importance of form to think about how shapes contain space. The contrast of pango and ma, and the largeness of the sculptures is what I will attempt to bring into my work.

Chapter Four: Why Ashburton?

In my PGMVA exhibition Kei hea a Tiki? 2022 the twenty-three uku sculptures were shown in two spaces, the Refinery for the Nelson Arts Festival, and Te Manawa Toi as part of Te Matatau, Palmerston North. Unfortunately, due to my lack of preparation, I found that I had compromised how the hue sat within the space, and with each other. This was at the forefront of my mind when proposing for *Mana Māna*.

I proposed to Pātaka and Ashburton gallery, eventually, deciding to go with Ashburton. The gallery was more flexible with dates, and I had heard from other artists that the team are highly supportive. Many people asked, “why Ashburton?”, and I sometimes wondered this too, but there are reasons beyond the practical.

Figure 22 *Ashburton gallery, 2024*

Ashburton has a population of 18,000 in the heart of Canterbury’s farming region (Ashburton District Council, n.d.). Positioned along state highway 1, it is a modern space that is dedicated to providing a creative hub, credited with the rainbow Safe Space Alliance, and a diversity of voice to a predominantly Pākehā community (Ashburton Gallery, n.d.).

Mana Māna is about the reclamation of our takatāpui, Māori rainbow and mana atua wāhine. Kaupapa Māori is to action with and for our community and inherent to this, is the concept that the struggle for ideas is framed within a “by-Māori-for-Māori paradigm” (Pihama et al., 2002, p. 32). From this struggle there is a motivation to critique and transform. Therefore, critique is at the crux, alongside playing a counter hegemonic role (Pihama et al., 2002).

Figure 23 *Safe space alliance, 2024, Ashburton*

I wanted to place the works in a space where they would counter the norms, to talk to, and disrupt a homogenous community, and more specifically to communicate to individuals that there are allies. In urban spaces it is normalised, but in regional areas it can be hidden. In March 2023, I visited Ashburton gallery to gain a feel of the space and introduce myself to the team. Ashburton has three galleries, and I was allocated gallery two. I was slightly apprehensive, as it is 10 x 8 m in diameter and 3.5 m in height. It felt like a cavernous space, square in shape, with no natural light, and a side walkway from reception through to gallery three.

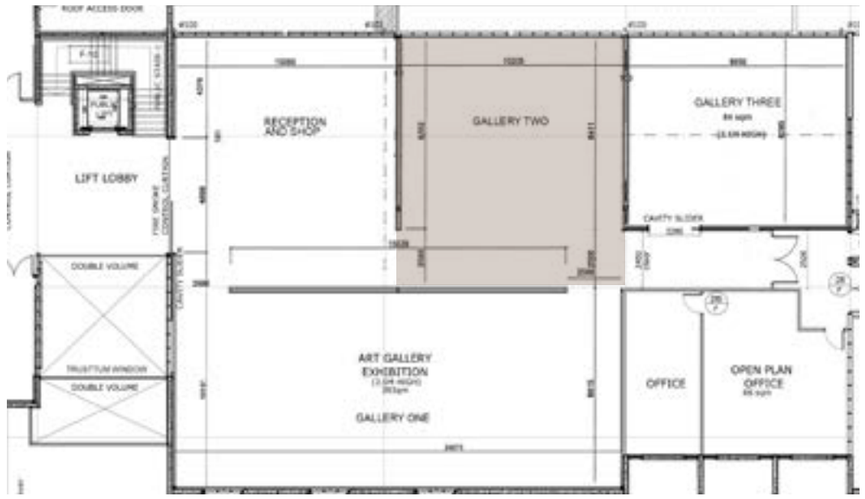

Figure 24 *Ashburton gallery layout, Mana Māna is in gallery two*

I met the curator James Hope and had an opportunity to kōrero with him about how the exhibition would be held, culturally. Prior to this I had been warned by another artist friend of Ngai Tahu descent that there had been no tīkanga. I asked James about the galleries cultural capability and was relieved to hear that there was a process held by the local marae, Hakatere.

Chapter Five: Mana Māna

Aha!

After researching the pūrākau of Papatūānuku, Hineahuone, Hinetītama, Hinenuitepō and Hinepūtēhue, I realised there is a point within the narratives that I would need to identify and isolate for the making process. With the guidance of the literature from chapter one and three, and Hariata's whakaaro, it dawned on me that this point would need to be the arc within the pūrākau; a transformation point.

Papatūānuku, Hineahuone, Hinehauone

In Papatūānuku's pūrākau, she is constant, guiding Tāne in his search for another. It is both Papatūānuku and Hineahuone who wait patiently for his arrival. I feel the anticipation when Tāne deep in the making "wanted the creation to be like him, his mirror, his equal" (Makereti, 2019, p. 50). This reminds me of the importance of the need for balance between tāne and wāhine energy, the honouring of wāhine sexuality within Māori cosmogony, the wāhine's intimate connection with Papatūānuku, and the cycle of birth and death. I reflect on my māmā and Whaea Angie, waiting patiently for the time to come when I would return to them. I think of them, as well as my adoptive parents as navigating the racial divide in Aotearoa; the drive being, aroha. Moreover, with aroha, māna wāhine, and understanding, there will be a reclamation of space for our wāhine, takatāpui and Māori rainbow.

Hinetītama; Hinenuitepō

Firstly, I acknowledge that Hinetītama and Hinenuitepō are the same atua. For this reason, it is their transformation that I feel is so important. In reflection I felt this was what Ray, Hariata and I had experienced. To choose between transforming pain, rather than projecting onto others. This is when Hinetītama upon hearing that her husband is her father, chooses to become Hinenuitepō. With anger and whakamā she utters a karakia that puts her tamariki to sleep, and withdraws Tāne's strength (Mikaere, 1995, p. 14). She runs to the entrance of Rarohenga, and proclaims,

Remain, oh Tāne, to father offspring for the world above. I shall lay down the path of Tāheke-roa, the path of death. The path will remain for all time. When my children die, they will come to me - in Rarohenga – I will divert them from Whiro, waiting in Au-tōia below (Ihimaera, 2020, p. 137).

In this instance she becomes a powerful atua, Hinenuitepō, who guides her tamariki to the underworld. It is said that "within her [is] the power of the renewal of life...the sun and moon always come back to life because they bathe in Tāne's waters of life (te wai-ora a Tāne)" (Orbell, 1995, p. 57). She ascends to Rarohenga becoming the "great mother of Te Pō. She became the kuia who welcomes us in death to her courtyard. It is aptly named Te Tatau-o-te-pō, the Door of Te Pō. It is an arrival, not a destination. It is a portal..." (Ihimaera, 2020, p. 137).

This concept of duality and transformation is vital to this kaupapa, it can be seen in Hinetītama and Hinenuitepō, in Hariata's kōrero about their two grandmothers, of tāne and wāhine; and Hariata and Ray's gender identity. I am particularly inspired by the above, that this transformation point, the door to Te Pō is not a destination but an arrival; transcendence to another realm.

Hinepūtehue

Another pūrākau that speaks to transformation is Hinepūtēhue who recognises the strife between her siblings and is prompted to inhale their anger. Thus, transforming their fury into melodic sounds, or what could be perceived as vibrations of calm and healing. It is with this in mind that I think of our takatāpui and Māori rainbow, who are themselves, despite the anger and rage that is directed at them. I reflect on the courage of both Hariata and Ray, how they internalise and transform the ignorance of others, mutating that energy into strength and resilience. I reflect again on the trauma of my māmā and birth whānau, and through this great pain there is still understanding and forgiveness. To forgive is to move through.

As I moulded and pushed the uku, I engaged in many thoughts about our mana atua wāhine. Of Hineahuone and Papatūānuku, I think about their quiet guidance of Tāne to Kurawaka, the place of our first wahine. With Hinetīama and Hinenuitepō, I mark and draw upon the uku, thinking of their transformation. As each lump is coiled, layered and formed, rising up from nothing. Becoming bulbous in shape, reminding me of Hinepūtēhue's form. I acknowledge her healing power, and I ponder each personality of the hue as they appear.

Early on I decided that the works needed to be of various sizes from small to large. In *Kei hea a Tiki?* the thirty-four hue were all the same size, due to it being the first time that I had worked with uku. So, in *Mana Māna* I was determined to push my learnings. Firstly, it was to make the hue as large as I technically could, without compromising the quality of the work. Thus, I chose to use the following clays; for Hineahuone, Hinehauone, Buff Raku BRT; Hinetītama, Mac's Speckled Buff; and Hinenuitepō, Dark Matter.

Figure 25 *Buff Raku BRT, Mac's Speckled Buff, Dark Matter, 2024*

Another aspect to these choices was the materials' grogginess, colour and texture. The thicker the grog, the easier it is to build large forms, as the uku retains its stability and is prone to a slower drying time. Additionally, the colours are rich and earthy, Buff Raku BRT, is a gritty reddish brown; Mac's Speckled Buff is a light sandy colour; and Dark Matter is a dark rich black/brown. This combination of colour I envisioned would create a play of contrast, and also speak of our atua wāhine. Each texture was a delight to work with, rough on the hands, but so solid and strong. I found strength building in my arms, as each making became a physical workout, or a working through.

Figure 26 *Hineahuone, medium, small to large, 2024*

The sculptures grew from 6 (H) x 5 (W) cm to 50 (H) x 27 (W) cm, each different in size and shape, yet similar. The various sizes speak to the important relationship between māmā and tamariki, and the whānau structure. I wanted to show the diversity of form, this being a visual representation of gender and sexual diversity. The hue was ideal for inspiration as it's unique shape also talked of wāhine and tāne. You can see this in the way the shape is rounded at the bottom, the hips, or womb; and at the top cylindrical, or almost phallic. In some forms it appears to lean more towards the feminine, in others the masculine, or there is an equal balance of both.

Figure 27 *Tendrils and drying time problems, resolution plastic bag and pegs*

This could also be seen in the way the tendril is popping out of the top or curling its way down the sculptures side. Specifically, this visual mechanism is the way in which the tendril references a ponytail or a pepī's new growth of hair. Each visual aid contributes to the hue's anthropomorphic qualities. Even so, the tendril was problematic, as the drying time was faster than the rest of the hue. Which in some cases there was an extreme difference due to size. After many experiments and failures, I was advised by a potter and friend, Bee. She covered her cup handles with plastic, placing them within a polystyrene box, the lid slightly ajar. Slowly drying over long lengths of time. I covered my tendrils with plastic, pegging, and fussing, like a māmā tending to her tamariki.

With a blind intuition I scraped the surface, allowing the texture to talk for itself, its bumps and gaps telling its own stories, see figure 27. Through Urlich's toi mahi and rangahau, I mark the hue, merging the Lapita patterns with my own intuitive mark making from *twenty-four* and *Kei hea a Tiki?*

Figure 28 *Surface, texture and mark making inspired by Lapita*

Experiments with painting upon the uku with slip provided another element that I drew together, pushing for a visual language that incorporated both.

Figure 29 *Slip painting experiments*

Merging lineal patterns creating a contrast with floating shapes. The integration of these aesthetics was a means to visually interpreting the transformation point. The arc of the pūrākau, of our mana atua wāhine, Hinehauone, Hinetītama and Hinenuitepō.

Figure 30 *Hineahuone, Hinehauone drawing*

Figure 31 *Hinetītama*

Hineahuone, Hinehauone

Tāne "wanted the creation to be like him, his mirror, his equal (Makereti, 2019, p. 50).

Hinetītama

With anger and whakamā Hinetītama utters a karakia that puts her tamariki to sleep, and withdraws Tāne's strength (Mikaere, 1995, p. 14-15). Hinetītama proclaims to Tāne, "I shall lay down the path of Tāheke-roa, the path of death. The path will remain for all time. When my children die, they will come to me – in Rarohenga..." (Ihimaera, 2020, p. 137).

Figure 32 *Hinenuitepō*

Hinenuitepō

"[W]ithin her [is] the power of the renewal of life...the sun and moon always come back to life because they bathe in Tāne's waters of life (te wai-ora a Tāne)" (Orbell, 1995, p. 57).

She ascends to become the great mother of Te Pō.

Inspired by the above drawings I marked and painted the 18 uku hue with white slip. Each time I drew the designs transformed, connecting the forms with each other much like a whānau. The patterns act as a mnemonic tool, and a reminder of our innate connection to our atua, specifically our mana atua wāhine.

Te Pō

The decisions made about why and how the works were installed came from purely aesthetics and pragmatism. However, it is as you bring forth the whole vision that you begin to see with clarity, that the works talk to you, and not you to them.

I darkened the gallery as the element of night, Te Pō, was a recurring theme in my kaupapa. Tāne attained the three baskets of knowledge, these being Tua-uri, Aro-nui and Tua-ātea. Tua-uri literally means "beyond in the world of darkness" (Marsden, 2003, p. 60). This being twenty-seven nights of Te Pō, and spanning an age of time. Marsden names this as the 'real world' that is beyond the realm of sense perception from the natural world (Marsden, 2003). Tua-uri is the bed of creation, where the seed is in gestation, evolving, and refined to be bought into the world of nature. It is the realm where "cosmic processes originated and continue to operate as a complex series of rhythmical patterns of energy to uphold, sustain and replenish the energies and life of the natural world" (Marsden, 2003, p. 60).

Tua-uri holds four key concepts that must be kept in balance, despite these being at different stages and divided by other birth and evolutionary elements within the genealogy of the cosmic process. These are, mauri, hihiri, mauri-ora and hau-ora:

> *Mauri occurs in the early stages of the genealogical table. It is that force that interpenetrates all things to bind and knit them together and as the various elements diversify, mauri acts as the bonding element creating unity in diversity.*
>
> *Hihiri is pure energy, a refined form of mauri and is manifested as a form of radiation or light, and aura that radiates from matter but is especially evident in living things.*
>
> *Mauri-ora is the life principle. As the word implies, it is that bonding force which is further refined beyond pure energy (hihiri) to make life possible.*
>
> *Hau-ora is the breath or wind of the spirit which was infused into the birthing process of birth to animate life (Marsden, 2003, p. 60).*

This speaks to the seed, and the growth of four years of learning, to bring forth the form of potential and understanding of both Ray and my identity. By darkening the space, I draw the audience in.

Figure 33 *James, curator, setting up the lights*

The 18 uku hue are held by the 2.7 x 2.7 m table, this is at a height of 0.85 m. Made of a fair blonde plywood which the light bounces off of; creating the illusion that the table is floating in the middle of the space. I had chosen the height and diameter of the table as I wanted the works to be elevated, and not lost. I positioned the table slightly off centre within the room, and at an angle to represent a triangle or diamond. Paaema-Pengelly (2010) refers to the double diamond shape as pātiki, this is the representation of the flounder during harvest and could also be interpreted as the symbol for abundance, it is a prominent design within raranga, tukutuku and tāniko. The table is a singular diamond shape thus it is a shadowing of this concept. Nevertheless, I feel the abundance talks to the hue grouping as a whānau and feeds the wairua.

Figure 34 *Mana Māna*

Returning to Marsden, hihiri and mauri, these really resonated with me. Hihiri, the radiating light that is within each being. As I positioned the lights into the darkened room it became almost wonderous to feel the space close in. Each hue began to glow and there was a luminous quality to the exhibition that I had hoped for but was surprised to see. Imagining and being with are two different experiences.

Mauri is described by Marsden (2003, p. 60) as an energetic force that is early on in the genealogy table of Tua-uri. This energy permeates all things thus binding and knitting everything together, as these elements expand and transform the mauri becomes the element that creates wholeness in difference. In *Mana Māna* 18 hue were shaped with uku, Papatūānuku, and each marked with the presence of our mana ātua wāhine, Hineahuone, Hinehauone, Hinetītama and Hinenuitepō.

Figure 35 *Mana Māna*

Figure 36 *Mana Māna*

Figure 37 *Mana Māna*

Figure 38 *Mana Māna*

Figure 39 *Mana Māna*

Figure 40 *Mana Māna*

Conclusion

The opening of *Mana Māna* was on Friday 9th August and I asked Hariata Wilson if they would do a kōrero with me about Hineahuone, Hinehauone, Hinetītama, Hinenuitepō and Hinepūtēhue. I felt that Hariata had guided me and Ray; and their whakaaro was integral to this mahi toi. I was full of anxiety on the day, mainly, I was wondering "why Ashburton?"

Kaumatua Tīpene Phillip and wahine Michelle with moko, opened the exhibition, they were from the local marae Hakatere. They opened the space with karakia and waiata. There was a moment when I knew "why Ashburton?" and I could rest in the knowing. Below is kaumatua Tīpene Phillip's response to *Mana Māna*.

> *The first thing I sensed when entering the space was the wairua present. The hue had a visual impact. There was a subtlety of light, yet the reflection was so bright in a dimly lit room. The reflection. And the hue stood there. They spoke" directly to me. Taonga, a reflection of your mauri, they needed karakia for protection.*
>
> *They were also a reminder of the connection of Tāne to the creation of wāhine, then in return a reminder to tāne of our creation. A reminder to myself as male of the power of wāhine. The respect owed, the mana atua wāhine. That was very evident to me.*
>
> *It instantly took me back to Te Kore (the nothing) and Te Ao Marama (the light). Hence the karakia - Ka hoki ahau ki te tīmatanga - the beginning, Io Matua, the parent atua of Ranginui and Papatūānuku, the sons, and then Te Ao Marama.*
>
> *The uku was strong and beguiling. It also took me to Kaiuku, a battle at Mahia where my own tīpuna had to eat uku to survive. I could feel wairua present. Hoki wairua mai - close to us. They had come to support so I welcomed them and asked for their protection.*
>
> *It was an honour to be called to be part of this exhibition. Outwardly such simple materials, but symbolically very deep. Te Ao Māori* (Ngāti Pahauwera, personal communication, August 31, 2024).

Phillip's kōrero affirmed my intuition for bringing this mahi toi to Ashburton. I felt my tīpuna were here with me. I realised I had come full circle, back to the beginning four years ago, sitting with Whaea Angie and my māmā Bonnie on Mahia peninsula that summer's day. Listening to my birth whānau's story, my story and my tamariki's story. Feeling the missing fragments falling into place, giving me a sense of comfort, assurance and affirming my grief.

It is a release to have these 18 uku hue be in the world, with a life of their own. After such a long period of learning, holding and struggle, it is a significant shift to feel their presence become themselves. I reflect upon the multiple layers of rangahau that bought me to this making process. Essentially, I was catching up on forty years of understanding the tools of colonisation, how a system of oppression was applied, through what means, and how it has been sustained. Decolonising my worldview began with recognising my own internalised bias, my conditioning of a British worldview, specifically my ideas of gender and sexual identity.

Women, wāhine, mothers, mamas were always who I looked to. Men, tāne, fathers, papas took time for me to trust; I had to be the good girl, behave in a certain way, obey and respect their every word. With mana wāhine theory, Elizabeth Kerekere's rangahau and Hariata Wilson's whakaaro I found my mind and heart shifted into a space of equilibrium. It was ever so slight, but it was there. I realised to be Māori is to accept and understand that we all have tāne and wāhine within us. That within our pūrākau there is a wealth of matauranga that will guide us. These learnings run so deep but are also so applicable to our everyday. The rangahau taught me to be flexible, to listen, to believe in my inner intuition, to stand in my turangawaewae; that being mana wāhine.

Decolonising was not the only challenge set forth in this kaupapa. Moving from a 2D to 3D practice was terrifying. I have drawn since I was eight years old, it was always an immediate form of communication for me, and a place where I could just be. Through the rangahau it became quickly apparent that I would need to be working with uku, Papatūānuku. In my post-graduate year, I had a steep learning curb, making small, learning and listening from others.

In *Mana Māna* I pushed my intentions further, to make the hue larger, and to replicate the tendril form of the hue. With each coil, I layered and moulded, the form becoming slightly larger every time. Nevertheless, my overly cautious approach was not what I needed to push through. It was immensely helpful when Kura told me to "Make it bigger!", a push and shove can be all that is needed. I smile thinking of this. Conversely, the tendril had me in a conundrum. It was a lengthy process to understand how to manipulate the drying times. Many trials and failures had me thinking of using another material, perhaps muka? But including another material, was in my mind, adding another layer of thinking. I did not think it would be beneficial to what I was trying to visually communicate. My perseverance paid off when I found a drying process that worked.

In such a personal kaupapa, it can be hard to know if you are contributing to the wider community. As a creative you live in hope that your intentions are realised. Despite this, there is a feeling that you are talking to yourself most of the time. Putting your mahi toi into the public domain can leave you feeling like you are standing naked in a room full of strangers. Even though this is a risk, we do it anyway. It is the push to learn, to connect and to question the status quo.

This is the mana that flows through the pūrākau of my māmā, my Ray, my tīpuna and mana atua wāhine. A relief to know that I am part of a collective consciousness. Bringing forth our tīpuna's acceptance of takatāpui because the hierarchical position of tāne over wāhine was not part of te Ao Māori. Thus, highlighting our primordial existence, and that we all come from Papatūānuku. We are all made of matter and energy, and the diversification of form all comes to one source. When you think in this way, there can be no othering.

There is that saying, when one door closes another opens. I am at the precipice of closure but feel this is only the beginning. Receiving kaumataua Phillip's response to *Mana Māna* feels tīka, as if I have been through a healing and learning process, finally coming to a place of peace. This feeling lightens my heart.

Nonetheless, I have been pondering the whakapapa of uku. It seems to be a kōrero I am having with many uku artists. Urlich's rangahau and mahi toi connected us to Lapita which whakapapa's back to Taiwan. I look to Asia, as my whakapapa is also South Korean, and I wonder what is beyond that horizon. What similarities or differences of making sit within the Māori and Indigenous space of South Korea? Would I by pure DNA, whakapapa, have innate qualities within my mahi toi that I will recognise? How could the making direct the rangahau? Would this making connect Asia, to Lapita, to Polynesia, to Aotearoa? What pūrākau lie in both cultures? And what are the similarities and differences?

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