ST PAUL St Symposium 2017
Ipu ki uta, ihu ki tai

17–19 August 2017

Mawhai (native cucumber), Ihumātao. Photo: Rebecca Ann Hobbs.

"The agenda of colonisation has been the constant presence of a philosophical colonisation between the self and things in the world, accomplished by educational practices which [...] ideally suit the freezing of things in the world so that they yield information."[1]

1 Carl Mika, 'Overcoming 'Being' in Favour of Knowledge: The fixing effect of 'mātauranga'.' *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 44:10, 2012. 1080.

Knowledge is often associated with order: with structure, taxonomy, a system for what is able to be known. In this it aligns with a will to affirm the status quo, to translate difference, to make meaning tidy. This symposium looks for possibilities in resistance to this model. We ask: What does it mean to recognise that knowing can also be something physical, a state of being, collectively held rather than a solely intellectual or individual experience? What does it mean to acknowledge the unknowable? Mystery and 'being'—how can they exist, even flourish, within institutional contexts where hegemonic knowledge is given pre-eminence?

We ask these questions specifically in relation to contemporary practices here in Aotearoa, and alongside curators, artists and researchers who work from within fundamentally distinct cultural

uta
1 (location) the shore, ashore, land (from a sea or water perspective), inland (from a coastal perspective), interior (of a country or island)—a location word, or locative, which follows immediately after particles such as *ki*, *i*, *hei* and *kei* or is preceded by *a* when used as the subject of the sentence.
Nā, ka hoe mai rātou, ā, ka tae mai ki uta. / They paddled and reached the shore.
(Te Kākano Textbook (Ed. 2): 15–16)

tai
1 (location) the sea, coast (as opposed to uta when referring to the hinterland)—a location word, or locative, which follows immediately after particles such as *ki*, *i*, *hei* and *kei*.
He waka ki tai, he hōiho ki uta. / A canoe at sea, a horse on the land.
(Te Kākano Textbook (Ed. 2): 15–16, 29)
2 (noun) tide, sea—used as a noun.
E timu ana te tai. / The tide is going out.

concepts of knowledge, while seeking to manaaki difference, and remain accountable to each other from within that difference. In this respect, the question around who produces and transmits knowledge is underpinned by another: How do 'we', as non-indigenous, Māori and Pākehā, as tangata whenua and tauiwi, navigate our respective positions in relation to each other, and with the recognition that the effects of colonisation are ongoing? As curator Emma Ng has written, "Our questions of cultural belonging are relational ones."[2] Knowing is also, and always, about how we come to know each other.

2 Emma Ng, 'It's gonna hurt, at least a little', *Reflections on The Asia-Pacific Century* (online publication), 2016.

As a university gallery, ST PAUL St is attentive to approaches to education, research and knowledges that are not governed by dominant paradigms. In the context of Aotearoa, we are particularly concerned with critique of the colonising logic of much institutionalised curatorial discourse, and for this reason, continue to initiate and participate in discussions around local curatorial practices, ways of working, and knowledges that are formed and reformed relationally. As non-indigenous co-organisers of this wānanga, we are thinking through the responsibility to educate ourselves, and what it means to listen.

In the sixth year of the symposium, we turn to Dr Carl Mika's work as a foundation for the discussion of working practices that acknowledge mystery and being, in resistance to the ways conventional education and curatorial practices often constitute the "freezing of things so that they yield information". Mika's essay, 'Overcoming Being in Favour of Knowledge', offers a starting point for a presentation troubling a reductive translation of matauranga as 'knowledge', and the corresponding idea that things may be known definitely. The keynote, 'Dealing with the indivisible: A Māori philosophy of mystery', raises the counter-colonial potential of mystery and being in relation to the concepts of wellbeing, self-sovereignty and the sovereignty of things in the world. In his paper Mika refers to Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal: "[m]ā te Ao te tangata e tohu e oho ai tōna ngākau, tōna wairua e mārama ai ia ki ētahi mea,"[3] which he reads: "the world discloses itself so that the heart and spirit are awoken. Some understanding is arrived at in the process." We return to this here, in anticipation of a discussion which engages more than our intellectual selves.

3 Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal, *Te ngākau*. Te Whanganui-a-Tara, Aotearoa New Zealand: Mauriora Ki Te Ao Living Universe Ltd, 2008. 37.

Following the keynote, we will share a meal in *lei-pā*, ST PAUL St exhibition curated by Lana Lopesi and Ahilapalapa Rands, which focuses on food and labour to open up conversations of cultural exchange across Moana-nui-a-kiwa. The next day and night will be

spent at Makaurau Marae in Māngere. The wānanga here is developed in collaboration with Qiane Matata-Sipu, Desna Whaanga-Schollum and Rebecca Ann Hobbs, in relation to the place—Ihumātao—with workshops, hīkoi and structured discussions. It includes speakers from within the Gallery's 2017 programme, Lana Lopesi and Natalie Robertson, with their respective projects offering specific propositions for approaches to working with knowledge, knowing and learning in this cultural context. Our stay at Ihumātao continues a dialogue from the 2016 ST PAUL St project Te Ihu o Mataoho, supported by SOUL (soulstopsha.org).

The title, *Ipu ki uta, ihu ki tai*,[4] holds within it two places: the city where ST PAUL St Gallery sits, and Ihumātao where the wānanga takes place. The wānanga, and the two sites of the symposium, emphasise movement in our discussion, and take us back to themes of guest and host obligation[5] that have underpinned these symposia as a series, and to the assertion that knowledge is formed in relation and through relationships.

Ngā mihi manaakitanga
Abby Cunnane and Balamohan Shingade
ST PAUL St Gallery

4 The title, *Ipu ki uta, ihu ki tai*, was given by Dr Valance Smith. Te Ipu o Mataoho is the bowl of Mataoho (Mt Eden); Te Ihu o Mataoho is the Nose of Mataoho (Ihumātao). Mataoho is the deity who created many of the volcanic cones, lakes and mountains in Tāmaki Makaurau.

5 Jon Bywater from Local Time has articulated it like this, "The difference between thinking of yourself as an in-between guest and host and oscillating between them is this question of taking responsibility for even being a guest, instead of [just] being a passive guest." See 'Cause to visit', *The Asia-Pacific Century* (online publication), an interview with Danny Butt, Alex Monteith and Jon Bywater, 2016.

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Dr Carl Mika

Dealing with the indivisible: A Māori philosophy of mystery

Abstract

Māori thought about origins places emphasis on the complete interconnection between things in the world.[1] There are huge consequences for that philosophy in all areas of Māori life, especially where colonised approaches strongly encourage its opposite—a view of things in the world as separate from each other. The Māori academic, as one agent of representation, then has to grapple with both possibilities, ethically making sure that he or she depicts something as interrelated whilst the text forces him or her to fragment that thing from its relations ('whanaunga').

We would probably think that 'mystery'—which I understand as a limit on what we know about an object, related to its ability to withhold part of itself from our view—is undermined by that fragmentary thinking. Fragmentary thinking certainly aims to demystify something, to bring it into pure clarity. But in this paper, I extend the notion of 'mystery' to include what happens when fragmentary thinking is itself part of a whole. It becomes contingent on holistic thinking.[2] In other words, fragmenting thinking is deliberately made part of its opposite and becomes part of the whole.

What, then, happens to the object that fragmentary thinking is trying to clarify—is that also made mysterious? I explore these issues of obscurity (pōuri) through a Māori lens. Where I have in the past avoided the phrase 'mātauranga Māori',[3] now I consider a Māori philosophy of mystery as a key aspect of it. Rather than speaking about the issue of 'knowledge', though, I am more interested in a deep Māori holistic, subjective experience that lies within common concepts such as 'whakapapa' and 'ira'. These concepts, I suggest, actively speak to the Māori representer of things in the world, insisting that he or she carry on beyond a fragmented representation of those things.

1 Māori Marsden, *The woven universe: Selected writings of Rev. Māori Marsden*. Ōtaki, Aotearoa New Zealand: Estate of Rev. Māori Marsden, 2003.

2 Carl Mika, *Indigenous education and the metaphysics of presence: A worlded philosophy*. Oxon, England: Routledge, 2017.

3 See, for instance, Mika, 'Overcoming 'Being' in favour of knowledge: The fixing effect of 'mātauranga'', *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 44:10, 2012. 1080–1092.

Where dominant Western philosophy is too scared to go, is where Māori philosophy naturally orients towards. Or, more precisely, a certain brand of Māori philosophy, and so, as always, we are in an act of rebellion. In this presentation, I want to consider where speculative Māori philosophy goes, but always with an eye to what dominant Western philosophy wants to cordon off. From a Māori vantage point, this immediate rush on the part of the West to discourage certain types of thinking isn't necessarily conscious; it acts on the basis of an immediate revulsion at the unknown. Yet, Māori speculative philosophy is entirely indebted to the unknown for its method and for its declarations. It still holds the premises of mystery.

It's customary for Māori to start with a genealogical account of one's origins, and I do want to signal here that that is extremely important to me—briefly, I am from the Tuhourangi and Ngāti Whanaunga iwi, and from Ngāti Hinemihi—but for this presentation I particularly want to acknowledge that my thinking and my origins are indistinguishable. I can't prove it, but in Māori metaphysics, whakaaro or 'thought' is also an entity. I have a perception of the world, and can make tentative declarations about it, because the world and its things have permitted me to do that. I orient towards the world in certain ways because the world has arranged itself with its own, unknowable commitment to all other things. Broadly, my own view here resonates with Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal's, when he states that "[m]ā te Ao te tangata e tohu e oho ai tōna ngākau, tōna wairua e mārama ai ia ki ētahi mea."[4] I translate this, at this stage, to "the world discloses itself so that the heart and spirit are awoken. Some understanding is arrived at in that process". This runs directly counter to what Māori are constantly taught through colonisation as the source of thinking; we are always taught that thinking originates from the self. This is not the case in Māori philosophy, which moderates the centrality of the self in perception. Our disciplining that we are the source of our thinking is both erroneous and colonising.

I'll start here with outlining some of my background experiences that sit in synchronicity with the first part of Royal's proposition—that the world is an active, holistic phenomenon that discloses itself in particular, unforeseen ways. I grew up in Taupō and also Wellington, but it is probably my teenage years in Taupō that were the most formative for me. I was extremely lucky to have been deeply influenced by several kaumatua during those years, and I would say, along with my natural tendency to draw inwards and think, that these experiences are most formative in my research and teaching. In particular, I was taught the importance of contemplating the 'world'

4 Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal, *Te ngākau*. Te Whanganui-a-Tara, Aotearoa New Zealand: Mauriora Ki Te Ao Living Universe Ltd., 2008. 37.

whilst making any assertion about it. This wasn't done overtly—and this is a key instance of Māori pedagogy, where quite often the old people would set the scene for you to eventually draw your own conclusions—this is a form of ako in my research—but it was done. I had to have respect for what Royal does call the 'world' even as I was attempting to represent it through speculation. These things could in fact only be done through speculation. That teaching has stayed with me throughout the years and I am indebted to the old people for what they set in train for me in terms of my thinking.

I also remember a sense of excitement—the excitement that comes with what the Early German Romantic poet and philosopher Novalis understands as that which "grasps a handful of darkness"[5]—a quote of his I love and use quite often. This is similar to what Royal says. At all stages of making any assertion, as I have just identified, I was charged with the not unformidable task of accounting for how things in the world have allowed me to make statements about them in the first instance, at all. This pedagogical complexity asked me to reflect on my own subjectivity as if it were constituted by all things. Thus, for teaching and learning in a Māori sense, there appears to be a requirement that one think about the incursion of that world at all points.

5 Novalis, 'Philosophische Studien der Jahre 1795/96: Fichte-Studien', *Schriften: Das philosophische Werk I*, ed. P. Kluckhohn & R. Samuel. Vol. 2. Stuttgart, Deutschland: W. Kohlhammer, 1960. 106.

But what is the nature of this 'disclosure' or 'signification' ('tohu') that Royal speaks of? I have always found it interesting that my wharenui, Hinemihi, is in England, in Clarendon Park. It survived the eruption of Mt Tarawera and indeed a number of people took sanctuary in it. My partner and I went to see it some years ago, but what is perhaps most fascinating for me is that, while it lies at a distance, it is thought of by us as being utterly present. Of course, it's 19,000 km away, but its influence is the same as if it were in Te Wairoa or directly in front of me, seeable and touchable. This phenomenon reminds me of Novalis' insistence that

> … in the distance, everything becomes poesy-poem. *Actio in distans*. Distant mountains, distant human beings, distant events etc. all become romantic, *quod idem est*—hence our archetypal poetic nature is a result of this.[6]

6 Novalis, 'Das allgemeine Brouillon', Schriften: *Das philosophische Werk II*, ed. P. Kluckhohn & R. Samuel. Vol. 3. Stuttgart, Deutschland: W. Kohlhammer, 1960. 302.

and puts me in mind of the possibility that Māori collapse the idea of geometric distance. Quite what this metaphysics looks like in a theoretical sense, is up for some speculation. But if something makes itself known, or discloses itself, across the miles, then it resonates with my thinking no more or less than anything local. When I talk about this phenomenon with students, many of them recount the 'butterfly effect', and I think it's quite valid, but we are not talking

here about a physical influence. A Māori word for what I mean here is 'wana', one explanation for which is the inexplicable devolving of the ineffable to other things. With 'wana', a thing moves from its usual, complacent space and is rearranged towards a state of mystery. In fact, there are various names in Māori for this event, which is indeed a continual, ubiquitous event.

When I started formalising all this—starting on this journey of directly articulating a Māori philosophy of mystery—I quickly became aware of how difficult it is to articulate it, whether in Māori or English. For a start, what might be mysterious to one group, may not to another, and if I take the perspective of one group—Māori—a Māori philosophy of mystery is not necessarily what Māori would find mysterious. I add here that it could be becoming mysterious if we are not attending to the fact that we are being subtly yet surely influenced by a banal view of the world, where what was previously unmysterious is now quickly becoming off limits (and is thus now becoming mysterious). But more than this, describing a Māori philosophy of mystery encourages the writer to step outside of the very thing they are advocating: mystery. In my work, I have had to look down on mystery as if it doesn't affect me and my act of thinking or writing. I've found that the attempt to thrust myself back into the thing I am writing about—not just conceptually, but materially—comprises a sort of philosophy on its own that is itself characterised by mystery. It's a kind of Māori existentialism. It is one's brush with the world as one discusses it, and I like to think that endlessly reflecting on how one articulates the world because of the world would resonate with those earlier teachings I had.

So there has always been a plague on my work, coming from the text we are all forced to operate on—it can be called rationalism. In that sense, whatever is presented to us from the world has to be described as if it is separate from our essence that we try to bring forth in our writing. Why do we try to bring forth our essence in our writing? Because we adhere to a maxim of holism. In order to really try and circumvent this colonising nature of what appears to be the fault of language but actually lies beyond or before it, we'd have to be very inventive, and even then I'm not convinced we can completely undermine it. But let's give it a go, returning to Royal's saying:

> [m]ā te Ao te tangata e tohu e oho ai tōna ngākau,
> tōna wairua e mārama ai ia ki ētahi mea.

Earlier I gave the translation of "the world discloses itself so that the heart and spirit are awoken. Some understanding is arrived at in that process". But my accounting of those few important words, which attempt to explain the interplay of world, self and other things, is prescriptive; it is one-directional, with the world causing something. Certainly the world does indeed cause the self to be awoken. Another interpretation that is much more long-winded but more accurately describes what I think is going on, though, is the following:

> The world sets the limits of the self; thus the self is disclosed, in an act of excitement, for the world. In that act of commission by the world, where the self is joyfully disclosed as bounded by the world, some things are excitedly brought into relief for the self. These things are agents of the world and they announce themselves, rise up and disclose themselves in commission with the world. Both self and thing are worlded.

Now, this is not strictly speaking an orthodox translation of those Māori words, but surely as philosophers we are intent on reconfiguring the way things are currently set up so that they can be described differently? For the Māori individual engaging with speculative philosophy, the challenge is to disturb the orderliness imposed by colonisation so that the world is presented as a whole. This challenge—and, ironically, its creative possibilities—is brought to us by the underlying problem of philosophical colonisation, which is not to do with how we've had a foreign land system, health system or justice system foisted on us (although those are colonising), but it's much more to do with how we've been brought to understand that things have an orderly arrangement, and our language is meant to reflect that. Things are put in line, and spoken of in that way in the name of Western logicality. We are taught in that act to apprehend language as a medium of ordering things and representing them as if they have no internal self-organisation. Language is independent of any of the things to which it refers (apart from through meaning). In that act, both world and language are inert. Also, I would add, the self is deprived of its true involvement with the world and its things.

Now, we are certainly discussing 'things' here, but not as if they are inert things, there for our conceptual framework. I have referred to my wharenui, and have therefore singled out a phenomenon to be discussed, but in Māori thought we have to acknowledge something subsequent to a focus: the thematising of the thing that was initially our focus. It is as if the world has disclosed itself, as with Royal, and our reaction to that disclosure is as important as the object of our thinking. In that way, our propositions about a thing themselves become things. Our act of making propositions, also becomes a

thing. This co-instantaneous and eternal 'thinging' is all facets of disclosure and thought, and that I have expressed it as a verb is on purpose, because the Māori term 'mea' is also a verb that means at once 'thing' and 'to say'. This suggests that any one thing commits itself to the rest of the world as the world. We might want to say it 'resonates' but its act of expression is deeper than that word allows. In relation to 'mea': as the thing that our focus settles on (one's marae, how one got to work and so on) participates with all other things, it joins with the very concepts that we have drawn around it as the overall theme of our discussion about it.

We could say that the thing acts as delegate of the world in our focus. It is commissioned by the world as the world. I have a fascination with the various turns on the term 'commit' at the moment in relation to this whole discussion, perhaps because at base I am still optimistic there is a word in English that can—with some elaborating from a Māori philosophical perspective—express what we in Māori have always thought of as the entire world-process within a thing. I have been influenced by my work with Heidegger in the past, and because I have a love of language I am open to reflecting on the possibilities of a term, as Heidegger also was. In a way that echoes Heidegger to a certain extent, I'm quite keen to consider the term 'commit' and its various cognates; although there are definitely facets to Heidegger I don't appreciate, I can respect his excavation into terms in the hope of finding some original sense. With the word 'commit', we have 'com' or 'with, and 'mittere' or put or send. I consider that the world is sent through a thing. The totality of the world, the thing that happens to be its emissary, and the human self are all co-commissioned.

Now, I'm not the most concrete of thinkers, but I'll try and give an example here. It's fairly well known, as I noted in my introduction, that Māori strive to acknowledge where they're from. This is achieved in many ways, but the most direct of these is to say "I am from (Tuhourangi). Where are you from?" In Māori, one uses the particle 'no' in both these instances ' "NO Tuhourangi ahau. NO hea koe?" One beautiful characteristic of the Māori language is that it forces to the surface the reason for one's existence even in the use of one term. Thus, although it is true that NO means 'from', at the same time it carries with it the sense of 'because of' or 'in true indebtedness to'. So, I am not only from Tuhourangi: I am simultaneously that which Tuhourangi brings about, so that I can then speak of being from there. My speaking about my origins is not dislocated with the fact

that I am because of that original phenomenon; moreover, I am a speaker on it because it has constituted me. Similarly, when asking where you are from, I ask after whatever constitutes you. I'm not simply asking where you're from.

In other words, one is saying that he or she is that which Tuhourangi constitutes, or has commissioned. This is an intimate aspect of one's origins, and it implies that the question dives into how the world is arranged so that you were brought into being. A more precise (from a Māori philosophical perspective) way of putting it is that Tuhourangi and I co-constitute each other, just as anyone and their origins co-constitute each other. They are co-commissioning. Here the word 'origin' is deceptive because it is not a solid beginning: it is both ancient and currently evolving. This sits well with the oft-cited collapse of time that Māori discuss. In other words—and, confusingly for us who work mainly with ideas of linearity—our origins are indeed original but are constituted by all that have arisen from them. To return to "No Tuhourangi ahau": I am committed to Tuhourangi as much as it has evolved me.

The problem with simply saying "I am from Tuhourangi" or wherever one is from, is that it threatens to make one's origins one-dimensional. It suggest that one's origins are 'over there'; if one is 'from' somewhere, there is an element of conceptual remove happening. This is one fragmentary force of not simply language but ontology in general, because 'from' could suggest a continuing link if it wanted to. It just isn't implied within its use. I will return to this general theme later, but hopefully you are coming to understand that, for the Māori person who wants to incorporate several layers of meaning at once within an utterance, there are limited options and indeed there are various forces at work that make it difficult to make such an utterance. It then becomes one of our responsibilities to reframe language to make this possible.

How possible all this is, is up for some speculation, but I'd add that the Māori language does have a particular fondness of collapsing phenomena so that they are not so clear as they would be in the English language (but then again, as Derrida noted and as I have just suggested, all this might find its voice in language but clarity or collapse have been decided on quite separately from language). Let's take just one Māori term, speculate on how it tries to keep things together rather than apart, and see where it takes us.

Many of you will be familiar with the term 'whenua'. Janinka Greenwood and Arnold Wilson argue that whenua provides a prompt of sorts: they say that land "proclaims its wonder."[7] Here, language for Māori is eruptive: whenua is one example, where one of its forms is highlighted but its others break through the surface of the discussion or the text to join in with what you intended. We are clearly not talking about meaning here, but the force of the phenomenon that the word relates to. While we appear to be talking about whenua, its full materiality comes to the fore. In relation to its apparently separate forms: although I might want to refer to 'land' with the term whenua, what also inseparably insinuates itself into the discussion is 'placenta'. Just as 'mea' brought with it both thing and say, so whenua commissions the duality of land and placenta. Perhaps, then, a dictionary with a Māori philosophy of the thing as its premise would suggest 'originating vigour' as its meaning, to draw both the apparently separate phenomena of land and placenta together but also to indicate its commissioning determination—it devolves to us that originating vigour.

I think whenua was the first term I grappled with in its written, conventional form, where it was referred to as an either/or clarifier (that is, strictly either land or placenta) and where it most certainly was not seen to be its own eruptive force into our words or thoughts. This happened when I was working as a lawyer—I have discussed this elsewhere but it has proven formative for me—and was representing clients at the Waitangi Tribunal while I was in practice. There was something that irked me about the process even though it was conducted in te reo Māori. I had this deep suspicion, based entirely on a gut feeling, that language itself was a victim in the hearings. This gut feeling, incidentally, is hugely important to Māori philosophy, but that is a theme for another day. So the use of te reo Māori wasn't a useful antidote to whatever was at work in the proceedings. I got back to the office and for some reason completely unknown to me, googled 'Heidegger'. That is also for another day, but it did introduce me to the prospect of another role and substance of language, and then I started to philosophise about the problem of how whenua was being reduced to a topic talked about, predominantly as land not as placenta, having no particular vigour within our words apart from its contestability. Not only was the term 'whenua' a problem, but the way in which responses were meant to logically match was, also. It showed that language had to be tamed: a fragmenter of the world rather than having its own materiality that naturally connected things as things. In this view of language, the speaker is not committed to more than one phenomenon at once. This organisational ontology of Western disciplines is its mainstay.

7 Janinka Greenwood, & Arnold Wilson, *Te mauri pakeaka: A journey into the third space*. Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand: Auckland University Press, 2006. 89.

The totality of the world—for which whenua is one signifier—is commissioned to the speaker or thinker, and it is up to him or her to honour that indebtedness. Just as land is meant to be cared for, so is its presence as an adhering force. Adam Arola puts it this way:

> The first hallmark of American Indian philosophy is the commitment to the belief that all things are related—and this belief is not simply an ontological claim, but rather an intellectual and ethical maxim.[8]

8 Adam Arola, 'Native American Philosophy', *The Oxford Handbook of World Philosophy*, ed. W. Edelglass & J. Garfield. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. 563.

Quite how we would do that in our practice—whether through art or academia—remains to be explored. If the world is indeed commissioned to us, how do we ethically present that in our work, keeping in mind that we are indebted to the world or committed to it? As far as I'm aware—and it showed itself when I was involved in that Waitangi Tribunal work—nothing is set up for Māori to ethically commit to the belief that all things are related. To make a plug for the political here: it's no wonder Māori tend to do badly in current education, health and justice statistics. As one of my ex-students put it: it's as if we've gone onto the basketball court, only to discover that the game's suddenly netball.

One term for the totality of the world is Papatūānuku, the material presence of which is whenua. Māori Marsden insists of Papatūānuku that "the earth is not simply Papa (rock foundation) but Papa-tua-nuku (rock foundation beyond expanse, the infinite)"[9]: it is one definition that I return to often in my work. The 'beyond' in it, through the term 'tua', is perhaps the most tantalising part of it, because it suggests that Papatūānuku—which is also thought of as primordial ground or substance—is a thing that always connects with its own vitality whilst forming us: to be literal, it extends beyond everything, across time and space. What strikes me about Papatūānuku is its suggestion that we act within any concept, rather than extrinsic to it. It is the ultimate text or language. Western epistemology argues that we stand upon a solid ground in order to make utterances of certainty: from the Māori notion of ground, there is no such escape. We commit the cardinal sin that philosophers such as Bakhtin and Cassirer accuse us of: we are in danger of not taking them seriously, of not trying to escape the very thing we are discussing.

9 Māori Marsden, *The woven universe: Selected writings of Rev. Māori Marsden*. Otaki, Aotearoa New Zealand: Estate of Rev. Māori Marsden, 2003. 22.

Entities such as whenua stay around us even when not mentioned. Because we act within them, I suggest we have an obligation to present them in their interconnection as far as possible, without pretending we know them. Here I return to my slightly earlier problem that most of us dealing with Māori material are faced with: how do we do this? How do we present entities even when we're not

presenting them? Rather than singling an entity out for clarity, how do we leave open the space for other things that are not the singular aim of our discussion or our art? There are various ideas from Western philosophers about this, which I won't go into here. From a Māori perspective, the solution may be a counter-colonial one. What I mean here is that we have to place more significance than perhaps we want to, on the problem, which has to do with strict definition and logical argument. We have to be mindful of the problem of clarity that our academic work calls for, and disrupt it. We've had to interfere with problems arising from land loss, racist ideas around the primitivism of the Māori language: now we have to disrupt the colonial idea that our phenomena must be represented with as much clarity as possible. The answer here does not lie in staying away from our academic or artistic work—too much is at stake to do that, with most Māori currently embroiled in this constant drive to be logical and clear, from Western directives, in everyday life anyway. The disruption I think of here is not a permanent one but it may destabilise certainty and preserve mystery in a negative way (by negative, I mean by attending to a problem).

Confronting the problem of hardened thinking, banality, the fragmentation of things in the world, could take several forms. Heidegger (and Novalis before him) thinks of poetry not simply as a tool to present the thing itself but also as an implicitly philosophical yet political method of disclosure. I agree with this, and think that poetry can take several forms, including the sudden incursion of a completely different voice into text. I can't speak for artists here, and it may indeed be I'm preaching to the converted. But in credible academic work, it's quite rare to see a sudden change in register—for instance, the sudden introduction of irrational text into normal academic writing, so that it has a palpable effect. Or the use of humour or bad taste in academic writing—again, resulting in a shock to the straightforward text. Or, indeed, the use of a method that creatively takes off from data or established text, rather than simply sticking with it by neatly interlocking with it.

I wrote in the abstract for this presentation that the fragmented, banal or hardened view of the world is itself part of the wider world and so is made mysterious. This comes from my interpretation of 'thingness' that I talked about earlier—that all possibilities are entitised in Māori philosophy. This might be true, and so we might be tempted to leave it at that and think that 'mystery exists anyway even in our banalising of things, so that's OK'. I suspect this reasoning underlies what I perceive to be a justification towards 'playing the game' through strategic essentialism. But I think we have to go

further than that, and actively open up the potential for the fullness of the world in our work. I have written elsewhere that our existential potential lies in both countering the colonisation of our bodies, minds and works whilst also proposing a new philosophy that is really quite old, to the extent that it tries to account for the All whilst making a statement or producing some work. The Māori term 'ira', I think, can be interpreted as that existential encounter. Like many of our terms, it has become hardened, referring in a certain Māori way to phenomena that have permanent, set characteristics: it quite often means 'genetic material'. But there is another meaning to 'ira' which is 'look!' The over-thereness of ira signifies several things: the rising up of a thing at a distance that shocks the self; the ability of that thing to rise up, on its own account; the promise of mystery that the thing holds for the self; the fact that a thing has its there-ness, its own undeniable selfhood that is established by the world as a whole and that constitutes the self by its whakapapa to us; and, importantly for this part of my discussion, the limits imposed on the self by a thing, meaning that we cannot fully cognitively capture it. This last point urges the self to move forward into decolonising without being fully able to. This inability to get around the reality of colonisation is a limit that we need to explore, both because this vulnerability forms the horizon of our thinking through ira, and also because this reflection on our limits on knowing the fullness of colonisation and its various agents is quite possibly another form of destabilisation.

What would this be called in a university? Uncertainty Studies? I'm not sure, but I don't for a moment expect that a university would seriously entertain it. I'm not even sure a university is ready for a Māori discussion on how the All impinges on the self and how the self cannot fully capture that phenomenon, and then how the self reflects on that un-get-around-ability, and then how the limits of that reflection are to be reflected on, and so on. I'm not even sure I'm ready for it. But I've made a start on this exploration, and although I do have reservations about labels, I have tentatively called it 'whakaaro Māori'. It differs from mātauranga Māori to the extent that it stresses speculative thinking more. Some years ago, I wrote an article titled 'Overcoming Being'[10]. My major focus there was on the fact that mātauranga Māori was defaulting to knowing—and unconsciously expecting that knowing is our chief concern—without retaining the potential for a lack of complete knowledge, or at least not making that inability to completely know, explicit. If it's not made explicit, then it's assumed that a cognitive enterprise with the world is the valid one. I still believe this is a shortcoming of mātauranga Māori, but do think that it's not too late for it to push that epistemic focus into the background somewhat so that the

10 Carl Mika, 'Overcoming 'Being' in favour of knowledge: the fixing effect of 'mātauranga'', *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 44:10, 2012. 1080–1092.

speculative one is on an equal footing. Maybe in the Māori academic world we are enacting, in our own language and way, that oft-cited argument between analytic and continental philosophy. If so, I am excited because it shows we are diversifying and are identifying schools of thought or tendencies within our own literature.

Conclusion

My talking about art is probably like a certain and current American celebrity discussing inclusion: outrageous. But despite my limitations there, I think I can see the value of art: it seems to be one of those modes of presentation, like music and verse, that has the potential to link a thing to its context of interconnection. I'm not sure of this, though, and wonder if artists face a similar dilemma to the academic, where we are aware of the world's claim on us even as we are forced to write that phenomenon out of existence.

Be that as it may, I do get the feeling we are on the verge of an exciting time in terms of Māori speculative philosophy that is also sustainedly aware of colonisation. I lay down a challenge here also for Pākehā, who may think that Māori are the only ones who are colonised. I suggest that we're not the only colonised ones, but we are unique in that we're acutely aware we are colonised. While I acknowledge we as Māori have plenty to do yet in order to build a significant tome of work that is at once counter-colonial, phenomenological, existential and holistic, I also encourage Pākehā artists and academics to consider how the thing of the world is also a thing with the world—a worlded thing that is utterly inseparable from the self. How you write about or present that is up to you, but as a Māori writer I would say that one's wellbeing depends on reconnecting—theoretically in the first instance—with the commissioning force of the world. If that sounds preachy, then so be it, because although we still look across a certain divide at the West, some of us do have a certain concern for its wellbeing. Despite our appalling health, justice and education statistics, our worry is that the West has unmoored itself so thoroughly that it's become almost concussed—knocked off its origins. It seems, then, that our overall challenge of trying to present the All, whilst dealing with its unmysterious opposite, confronts us both and will call for our attention for quite some time.

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Image: Qiane Matata-Sipu, from the collection *Ihumātao – Taku Tangata, Taku Whenua*, 2013.

Qiane Matata-Sipu
Opening kōrero, and hīkoi to Ōruarangi Awa and Ōtuataua Stonefields

ST PAUL St Symposium 2017
Ipu ki uta, ihu ki tai

Photos: Raymond Sagapolutele

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Photos: Raymond Sagapolutele

Lana Lopesi
Earnestly labouring

On the occasion of the 2017 ST PAUL St Symposium, *Ipu ki uta, ihu ki tai*, Ahilapalapa Rands and I were invited to speak to the exhibition *lei-pā* (4 August–8 September 2017) which we had just co-curated also for ST PAUL St. Unfortunately, Ahilapalapa was unable to join me, so I spoke from my experience of working on the exhibition and shared key moments of learning and in that same vein, I present key moments of learning here.

As a research project and exhibition, *lei-pā* has been and continues to be purposefully messy. The project traverses a plethora of social and political issues, and dives in and out of a wide range of disparate worldviews, but at its centre remain food and people. Through the connectedness of these two things, *lei-pā* is mostly about relationships. There is something quaint about making art about food, or having a show based on food, but it is one thing that all people share. In the context of this project, food provides a way of humanising the often reductive, abstract or dehumanising discourse on our histories of labour and migration in the Asia Pacific.

In 2015, I became obsessive about keke pua'a. Keke pua'a is a common food in Samoa—sold at the local dairy or market place, or made by your grandmother. My cousins make them every night in their village to sell in Apia the next morning. It's a symbol of pride in Samoa, but it's also kind of Chinese. The more I thought about keke pua'a, the more I realised just how much Samoan food is Chinese: alaisa, lialia, sapasui, with some foods even having the word Chinese in them, like keke saina and masi saina.

I started tracing connections between Samoa and China. The most prominent exchange between the two countries was in the late 1880s and early 1900s when Chinese labourers left the southern regions of China, from Guangzhou and Fujian, to work in Samoa on German, and subsequently British, plantations.

It was at this point I realised that despite Chinese and Samoan people being connected through colonial rule, the value systems of both cultures are so similar that a meaningful and long-lasting/enduring connection was formed. Whether it was 'because of' or 'in spite of', this cultural exchange was there, visible, edible.

8 FEBRUARY 2016
SHANGHAI, CHINA

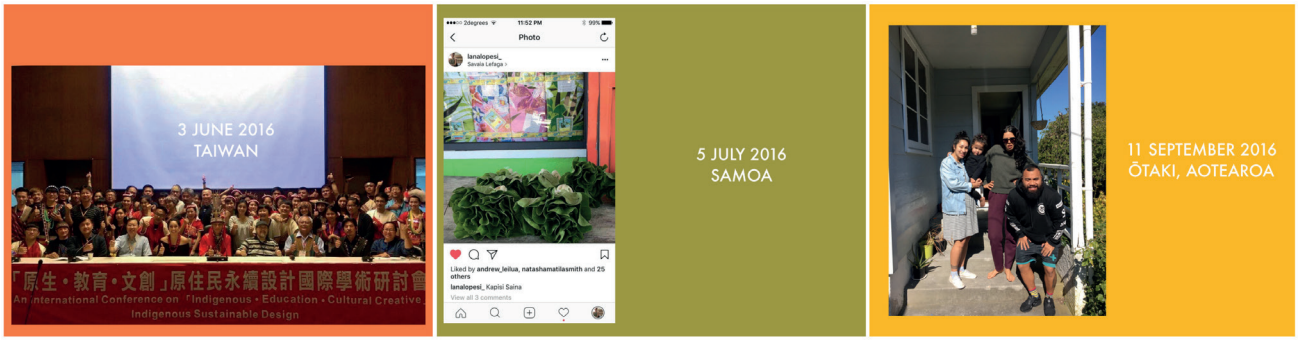
Ahilapalapa Rands and I have been working toward lei-pā over the last two years. In that time, the most profound journeys for each of us have been personal ones, which are not necessarily visible or accessible to audiences in the public 'outcome' of the project. We've both ventured home to our whenua, and examined our own relationship to this one, Aotearoa. It is this embodied knowledge which has provided the curatorial frame for *lei-pā*. This learning has placed an emphasis on our ancestors and whanaunga, on oratory, on manaakitanga and on indigenous practices. It has been about strengthening our own positions as moananui women, and handing over the agency to those who hold the knowledge on other regions and subjects.

Ahi and I had probably hung out only about three or four times previously, and yet there we were, at the Auckland International Airport, ready to go on a research trip to China. That's when she saw me cry for the first time, saying goodbye to my baby girl, Arpi. Their names rhyme—Arpi, Ahi—and for the first few days I accidentally kept calling Ahi Arpi, and would then have to correct myself. A research trip with a colleague is one thing, but a research trip, on a tight budget, where you have to share beds with a colleague is another. We ate, we drank, we cried, we talked and talked and talked. We learned from each other. We asked the hard questions and answered them, or didn't. More importantly, we became friends from a place of deep enquiry.

*

China was a bit of a whirlwind, filled with strange moments, which maybe in themselves don't mean much, but collectively and retrospectively were influential on various levels. On one of our last days over tea, a wildlife photographer pulled out a calendar of monkeys he had made. 2016 was the year of the monkey—my year, the water monkey. Being in China on my zodiac year was a strange sort of homecoming. I felt a sense of belonging. There were monkey displays everywhere. How can you feel a connection to a whenua you don't yet understand? Through a monkey?

On a bus ride from 东莞市 (Dongguan) to 广州市 (Guangzhou), I was suddenly struck by a forgotten piece of my family's history. My Samoan grandmother always told me she was Chinese. I hadn't ever thought much about it. Suddenly I wasn't just a Samoan woman in China trying to piece together these histories on a research trip. I was home.



From the beginning, I thought of Taiwan not as Asia but as Moana-nui-a-kiwa, a Pacific Island, THE Pacific Island. My Austronesian homeland. I was going home. Again. It quickly became apparent that that's not how many Taiwanese understand Taiwan.

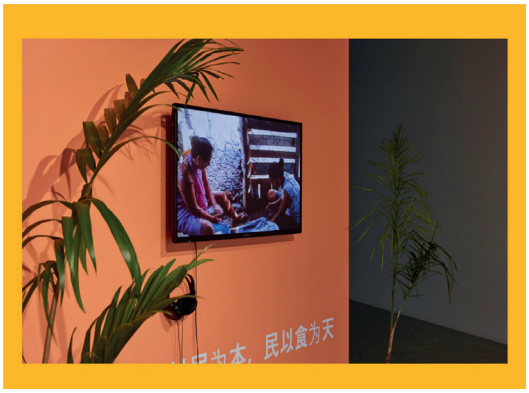
We find ourselves constantly asking, is Taiwan Asia or the Pacific? Is the Philippines Asia or the Pacific? But maybe coming up with an answer is not very interesting, or important. What matters is the breaking down of these borders, and the false concepts of regionalism that have stopped people from talking to each other, and reinventing them based on self-determined identities.

I went to Samoa with my family: my parents, brother, and my sister and her family. Driving through the villages, you see smoke coming up from the umu pits, the pua'a running across the road with its babies following, the taro patches. You see the ability for people to live off their land in a sustainable way. Coconut water fresh from the tree.

Ponsonby housewives are quick to buy the packaged version of organic products from Samoa—coconut oil, breadfruit flour, you name it—but real food sovereignty, how I understand it, is not glamorous, academic or something that is self-congratulatory, and it sure as hell isn't whitewashed permaculture. It's hard for me to reconcile what I see—families living and eating organic, nurturing their families and the land—as food sovereignty, when it may also be called a form of poverty.

It is at this point I must raise an inherent contradiction which I am myself yet to reconcile: what does it mean to work with indigenous worldviews, ideologies and practices within the Western tradition of art and academia, in spaces such as ST PAUL St Gallery? Can indigenous people, and therefore our work, ever hold full sovereignty in these spaces? What does it mean to work through, within or in response to a decolonial framework, that is, to be in constant reaction to colonisation?

Understanding myself outside of Aotearoa became an understanding of myself as Indigenous. A term which always felt uncomfortable because of my tauiwi status. But only in Aotearoa do I make sense, as a product of a settler nation. I am a daughter of the diaspora, the daughter of migrants. My father's family migrated to Auckland from Samoa to work as labourers in 1970. They came from the villages of Satapuala and Siumu. Before them, their ancestors migrated to Samoa from Niue and China, also as labourers. My mother's Pākehā family migrated to New Zealand from Vancouver, Canada, and England.



It is this clash of worlds, teamed with mine and Ahilapalapa's refusal to squeeze the wide and multi-layered remit of *lei-pā* into a tidy exhibition frame, which makes the 'mess'. The other option would be to make ourselves fit. There will always be tensions between indigenous sovereignty and art institutions that weren't designed for us. Unfortunately, it is often the artists who are expected to be the ones responsible for the decolonising, but the institutional responsibility shouldn't just end at programming.

Last year was dedicated to the search for similarities, a search for connections that I could potentially have read about or googled. There is something about going through a Western education system, and now working within a Western arts ecology, that tells us that we can know all these things, and likewise, that we should have access to all knowledge now. But is that anything more than just anthropology and ethnography? You might understand something, but do you really know? It's incredibly difficult for me to articulate the learning journey I have been on in the last year and a half in a way which is meaningful to people other than myself. My experience of Taiwan, especially, is still something I am yet to articulate completely. But maybe that's the point? We are expected to always present outcomes, proof of learning, proof of intelligence, proof of something that's bigger than just you.

In all the mess, the chaos, and the gaping holes of my knowledge, this earnest learning journey is a product not of a singular thing, but of everything and everyone.

*

At the foundation of *lei-pā* has been a moananui or collectivist approach to resource distribution. It has been about enabling artists to go home; to collaborate with whanau in the islands and valuing them as equal collaborators; it's been about bringing artists to Aotearoa for the first time and hosting them properly; it's been about using this project and our research to enable further opportunities for those involved; it is about making institutions, funding and resources fit around us, not the other way around; it is about enabling art to create opportunities bigger than itself.

lei-pā has a been a process of earnestly labouring, and earnestly enquiring into ourselves, our communities, our ancestors and our food. It's about the creation and practical application of agency, trust and responsibility.

Image: Natalie Robertson, detail from *Rangitukia where the Waiapu River meets Te Moana Nui a Kiwa* (video still), 2017.

Natalie Robertson
Ngā kōrero mō te wai
Talking about water

Ko te ngutu awa kei runga!
The river mouth rises!

Waiapu Koka Huhua koina te ingoa o te awa tapu o Ngāti Porou.
Waiapu Koka Huhua—Waiapu of Many Mothers is the river sacred to Ngāti Porou.

In 2014, Ngāti Porou signed a one-hundred-year plan to restore the river with the Crown.
I te tau e rua mano me te tekau ma wha, (2014) i haina a Ngāti Porou i tetahi mahere a hapori ki te whakarauora i te awa hei hoa pumau tahi me te karauna i raro i te tikanga a ture.

The vision for the 100-year programme is "Healthy land, healthy rivers, healthy people".
Ko te aronga whakamua mo te rautau e kī pēnei ana: Ko te mana: "Ko te Hauora o te whenua, Ko te Hauora o nga awa, Ko te Hauora o te iwi".

What actions are we as Ngāti Porou undertaking to collectively and individually honour our mother?
E aha ana mātou hei tangata Ngāti Porou?
Kei te whakawhaiti mātou kia whakatopu mai, kia motuhake nei te whakanui atu, te whai koha atu ki to matou awa tapu—A Waiapu Koka Huhua?

Kia tika ra Ngāti Porou!

> We need to remember that we have always had an integral relationship with the whenua, moana and awa.

Me whakamatauria tatou i a tatou ano kia tika te tautiaki i te taiao, kia tika a matou tikanga whakarite i nga rapihi kia hangaruatia a tatou para tangata.

> Restoring the mauri of our awa will assist in restoring the mauri of our people.

Ki te kore
Ka hemo te mauri o te awa,
Ka hemo ano te mauri o te iwi.

Mai tuawhakarere i noho taina, tuakana atu mātou ki te whenua, ki te moana—kua warea hoki mātou ko wai mātou, me to mātou whanaungatanga atu ki te Taiao.

Pōkokohua ma! E oho!

Kei nga tikanga tawhito te rongoa me ngā tikanga hou o te ao o inaianei hei tauawhi kia ora ai ano a tātou wai. No reira, ma hea koe e āwhina atu!

> "Water for you, Papatūānuku, water for us, humankind, for the wellbeing of the heart of Ngāti Porou."

He wai mou! He wai mau! Hei whakaora i te ngakau o Porou.
He ringa i tū, he kanohi kitea, he hokinga whakaaro.

Tīmatanga
Introduction

From a high, flat plateau at Tīkapa, south of the Waiapu River, look towards the mouth where it meets the sea. It is distant but you can just see a white line where waves break on the river bar. Inland is Hikurangi, our ancestral mountain. I stand on the plateau, in front of Tīkapa-a-Hinekōpeka Marae, the whare tīpuna (meeting house) Pokai and the wharekai (dining-hall) Pohatu. Across the river is another marae, Ō Hine Waiapu, named for the feminine spirit of the river. These marae are part of a network of interconnected relationships, named for people of an extended family, including our non-human kin. Approaching Pokai, I step onto the porch, pushing open the unlocked door. Moving into the dark room, I pause, allowing my eyes to adjust. I approach the central figure in the middle of the room and

crouch down to hongi him. I push my nose against his, breathe in, then exhale slowly. "Tēna koe e Te Rangatira." His carved wooden face is neither warm nor cool. I turn to the walls and address the people, then walk slowly around the house, greeting each face. Descended from Pokai and Pohatu, we are all related, one way or another. Each face in the photographs looks back at me. Some are over one hundred years old, others more recent. This is a house of images. Once my greetings are concluded, I feel the energy of the house more enlivened, as if the conversations have woken them from slumber.

I walk across the grass to a gate. I unhitch the chain and walk through into Hinekopeka Urupa, a small cemetery. One day, I expect to lie here, next to my great-great-grandmother, Riria Kawhena. There is no photograph of Riria in our meeting-house. Just one of her husband, Scotsman George Gillespie Boyd, and her niece, Te Pare Huihui, wearing a fur around her shoulders. On leaving the cemetery, I pour water over my hands and flick it over my head.

He wai mou! He wai mau! Hei whakaora i te ngakau o Porou.
Water for you, Papatūānuku, water for us, humankind, for the wellbeing of the heart of Ngāti Porou.

A Lament for Pahoe

Beginning with a mōteatea, a chanted lament, I will introduce you to the story of Pahoe, a young man who as far as I know was never photographed. I believe he lived and died in the times before photography. Mōteatea is an art form that lives on today, and when sung, brings into the temporal moment of the present, ancestral wairua, spirits. 'A Lament for Pahoe' contains indicators of the spiritual realm of Māori philosophy and cosmogony specific to the Waiapu River.

He Tangi Mo Pahoe, composed by Hone Rongomaitu of Ngāti Porou, is a remaining fragment of a longer mōteatea, a chant in which all the dangers signs of the Waiapu are evoked. This nineteenth-century chant provides pointers to Ngāti Porou thinking on the Waiapu River, on locally important fish species, and on humans-turned-nonhumans who dwell in the river. Mōteatea are customary chants, laments and songs that convey tribal lore, geographies and significant events. They contain cosmogonies, philosophies, geographic boundaries, ecological information, and lessons, told in a poetic form for oral transmission. He Tangi Mo Pahoe laments a young chief who did not heed warnings, deciding to travel on a raft down the Waiapu River in

post-flood conditions. The composer tells of Pahoe being overtaken by rushing waters, dragged down to the rocky bed, strangled by the swirling current, emerging at the river mouth. When Pahoe is discovered, he is likened to a mottled mackerel, a stranded fish, hidden amongst the driftwood. The mōteatea narrates his demise, noting the fish species that are part of the mahinga kai, the food source, and economy of the river. The mōteatea then issues a warning:

> Ka tere te koheri, ka tere ra te kahawai.
> Potaea ra ki te kupenga na Titiwha,
> Ka u kai tohou one, kai Whekenui, e.
> Kāore rā ia te para i a Taho
> E hoki ki te hukinga.
>
> Look, there are shoals of koheri and kahawai,
> All may be caught in the net of Titiwha,
> Some are stranded on the beach at Whekenui.
> But alas, nought of the portion for Taho
> Will ever return up the river.[1]

1 *He Tangi Mo Pahoe* (Ngāti-Porou), composed by Hone Rongomaitu, in *Ngā Mōteatea: The Songs*, compiled by Sir Apirana Turupa Ngata. Tāmaki Makaurau: Auckland University Press, 2004. 138–139.

This small fragment intertwines operations of the epistemologies and ontologies of Ngāti Porou. It was no doubt composed not just to lament this particular young chief, but to remind others not to enter the river after floods. The warning encapsulates the matter of fact manner in which Māori create no binary differentiation between past and present, nor between human and nonhuman persons. In this instance Taho is a human-turned-nonhuman. This characterisation of Taho exemplifies the role of taniwha and the river as a life force, a person, an embodied place. The river is a being. Taniwha are caretakers of the mauri of the river. This type of mauri can be categorised as Taiao.

Māori Marsden defines mauri as a key element in the "genealogical table of the birth and evolution of the various stages of the cosmic process."[2] He maintains that mauri is a form of energy that originates in Tua-Uri, "the real world of the complex series of rhythmical patterns of energy which operate behind this world of sense perception."[3] Marsden illuminates the connection between whakapapa and patterns of energy, saying that mauri radiates outwards from Tua-Uri into Te Aro-Nui, the world before us, the one apprehended by our senses.[4] Comprehending mauri as a radiating energy clarifies how it might come to reside in inanimate objects, such as photographs. Kōrero (oratory) calls mauri across the bridge from Tua-Uri to Te Aro-Nui.

2 Rev. Māori Marsden, *Kaitiakitanga: A definitive introduction te the worldview of Māori*. Wellington: Ministry for the Environment, 1992. 8.

3 Ibid., 8.

4 See Marsden for a more detailed outline of the three-world view of Māori. According to Marsden, Tane's pursuit of the three baskets of knowledge obtained by Tane were named Tua-uri, Aro-Nui, and Tua-Atea. Ibid., 7–10.

Taiao mauri
Environmental and ecosystem wellbeing

As a body of water, the river is an ancestral mother. Like a whare whakairo, a carved meeting house, the river is both a singular ancestor, and a body that contains complex communities of other ancestors within, and other species. In the notes Apirana Ngata wrote to accompany He Tangi Mo Pahoe, he states that:

> Whenever a body was cast ashore there, it was eaten by Taho, an ancestor of Ngatipuai, who lived on the south side of the river mouth. This gave rise to the saying "Nought of the portion for Taho will ever return up the river."[5]

5 Ngāta, 2004. 138–139.

Ngāti Puai are my tribe, although the name is rarely used nowadays. The people of the region are collectively known as Ngāti Porou, with many sub-tribal names according to specific geographies. Taho is described as living in a cave at the mouth of the river, Te Ana a Mataura.[6] He is described as both an ancestor (once living in the human sense) and a taniwha. A taniwha is not readily translated into English, as there a few equivalencies. To find an analogous term is fraught with hazards. The translation provided by the Māori Dictionary demonstrates the range of constructs that cover the concept:

6 Orally transmitted stories on the marae also refer to Te Ana a Mataura. R.N. McConnell, *Olive Branches*. Te Araroa, 1980. 125.

> 1. (noun) water spirit, monster, dangerous water creature, powerful creature, chief, powerful leader, something or someone awesome—taniwha take many forms from logs to reptiles and whales and often live in lakes, rivers or the sea. They are often regarded as guardians by the people who live in their territory, but may also have a malign influence on human beings.[7]

7 See http://maoridictionary.co.nz/earch?idiom=&phrase=&proverb=&loan=&histLoanWords=&keywords=taniwha

Taniwha as guardians are also often considered kaitieki[8], the unseen forces that protect a place or people of a place. The malign influence of the definition above refers to the role taniwha have in warning humans of unstable grounds or dangerous waters. Their transmutable natures, shapeshifting into tohu, visible signs, are legendary. However, their role in tribal lore is not just as cautionary threats, but as powerful forces to be respected. In Māori thought, the once-human can transform after death into an entity such as a taniwha, which has agency and can act with intention. Temporality is non-linear and therefore Taho (chief, ancestor, taniwha) is spoken of as living now, with his own unseen life-force.

8 Ngāti Porou dialect for kaitiaki.

Insight into what or who Taho is, and how the Waiapu River also has mauri, provides an entry into understanding how for Ngāti Porou, photography of people and places require an ethics of care.

This arises from epistemological thought that treats nonhuman, or human-turned-human energies, vitality, life-essence, spirit-of-life, as being intertwined human worlds. These occur in time–space continuities that are in constant communion. Within a relational epistemology, a photograph of a person or place is not separated from the real-world referent. They are forever entwined. Therefore, considering ethics is not only in order to be respectful of other humans, but also to be attentive to vitalities, energies and spiritual agencies. Within the knowledge space[9] of Ngāti Porou, the live-ness of photographs and film requires thinking about human-turned-nonhuman and nonhuman agential forces, properties and qualities.

There is no known recording of *He Tangi Mo Pahoe*. In 2016, working with Rhonda Tibble, we recorded her bringing forth the ancestral sounds of the mōteatea. There is no doubt in my mind, that there were unseen spiritual agents in the new recording. Rhonda's great-grandmother Materoa Reedy recorded many mōteatea. Rhonda's genealogies, my genealogies, those of the composer, those of Pahoe, those of Ngāti Puai, of the Waiapu River, of the mōteatea itself, all allowed us to proceed, as three recordings were made. The three versions created a soundscape for *Nought for the portion of Taho*, a presentation of photographs of the Waiapu River mouth, at ST PAUL St Gallery in 2016. They are also the driving sound for *He Wai Mou! He Wai Mau!* The mōteatea brought itself to my attention and 'asked' to be heard once again.

When a person dies in a waterway, local Māori will impose what is called a rāhui. It is a symbolic as well as pragmatic restriction placed on any gathering of food from the location where the person died. When Pahoe drowned, a rāhui would have been placed on fishing at the Waiapu River mouth. His wairua, his spirit, would have been considered present in that location for a period of time after his death. Pahoe's body, eaten in part by Taho, is also an indication that sharks and other predators might be present. His mauri, his life-essence, however, died when he did. Taho's mana, his reputation, would have been enhanced as he made his presence known, through awe and dread. The mauri of the river would remain constant, as the death would not have irreversibly altered the river's hau-ora, or well-being. If a photograph of Pahoe had existed, it would have been displayed, along with his body, at his tangi (funeral). The photograph is deemed to hold an essential 'something' about the person now deceased. What exactly that something is, cannot be determined, but it always treated with regard and care. This regard

9 Karen Barad's term 'ethico-onto-epistemologies' also encompasses the knowledge space refered to. See for example Karen Barad (interview), 'Matter feels, converses, suffers, desires, yearns and remembers' in *New Materialism: Interviews & Cartographies*, ed. Rick Dolphijn and Iris van der Tuin. Open Humanities Press, 2012.

for the photograph, as the material object, might be considered human-turned-nonhuman. It now has mana and its own vitality. If a photograph of Pahoe had been displayed alongside his body, it likely would then have been taken inside to hang alongside other people of the tribe who had passed away.

The River

One morning at dawn, I go to the Waiapu Ngutu Awa, the mouth of the river, seeking permission to photograph. She is Waiapu Kōkā Huhua, Waiapu of Many Mothers. In voicing my proposal, I begin to tangi—to weep. When acknowledging death or loss, it is appropriate etiquette in Te Ao Māori to weep and wail. The excretion of tears and mucus to express inner grief is one of the roles of Māori women: Te roimata i heke (the tears which fall), Te hūpē i whiua ki te marae (the mucus which is cast on the marae), Ke ea Aitua (avenge death).[10] The hūpē, or mucus from the nose, can be considered a cord that creates a circuit of connection between the human body and the ground.[11] In this moment, my salty tears join briny water where river meets ocean. I acknowledge the protracted injury caused to the whenua and awa. I look for affirmative signs.

Since 1890, mass agricultural deforestation has led to irreversible changes to the Waiapu Valley and river. It no longer has the rich diversity of species it once had. Thirty-five million tonnes of soil flow out annually from the Waiapu to the sea, making it one of the most silt-laden rivers in the world.[12] Since I began photographing and videoing on my ancestral homelands, the river has continued to widen. So too have the beaches on both sides of the river mouth, resulting from sediment dumping on the shore. The driftwood from deforestation is knee-deep at times. As an environment, it is constantly changing, season to season, or flood to flood. The river mouth shifts and swings, some years to the south, sometimes towards the north. My photographs and videos respond directly to the resultant eco-crises. Visualising the slow catastrophe[13] seems such a slight gesture towards healing the mauri of the river, a place that has had its entire ecosystem massively disrupted. I make the images with the intention of creating a visual repository to be handed on to tribal descendants, so we have a record of the river for the future. The feminine taniwha (water spirit) of the river is Ō Hine Waiapu. Her response is quiet, but without resistance. The outpouring of unexpected tears is my small kōha (offering).

10 See Te Rangi Hīroa, *The coming of the Māori*. Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1950. 418.

11 See Courtney Sullivan (citing Anthony A. Voykovic, 1981): "During mourning, hūpē is shed and when this reaches the ground, it is said that this 'circuit was complete.'" (Courtney Leone Taumata Sullivan, *Te Okiokinga Mutunga Kore–The Eternal Rest*, MA Thesis, University of Otago, 2012, 133).

12 See Waiapu River Catchment Study – Final Report 2012 which states: 'The suspended sediment yield of the Waiapu River is 20,520 t/km2/yr, which is equivalent to an annual sediment load of 35 million tons of sediment being delivered to the ocean every year (Hicks et al., 2000).' 2012. 4.

13 See Rob Nixon, for related use of the term 'slow violence' in his book *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*. Massachusetts: Harvard, 2013.

Kōkā Keri Kaa advises me to collect water from the river, to take to Pāpā Morehu Boycie Te Maro for blessing. “Be careful where you walk”, she says. “Use the water for you and your photographic equipment”. Pāpā Boycie tells me many stories about the river, eels and the land that has gone, consumed by the waters. Pāpā John Manuel, Pāpā Wiremu and Kōkā Jossie Kaa all remind me not to go near Te Ana-a-Mataura where Taho the chiefly taniwha lives, to respect the taniwha and the beings who dwell in the river’s perilous places. When I review my photographs and video footage, I scan for hints of their presence. Each elder gently instils in me Tikanga Waiapu—a series of protocols and practices specific to Waiapu, to be aware of when photographing, and that the images produced must also be treated respectfully. Made in a precarious environment replete with taniwha and other beings of the unseen realms, the images may hold a spiritual ‘something’ that the elders allude to in their guidance. Just as the mucus that falls to the ground is a cord that completes a circuit, it could be that there are other cords that create or complete pathways between visible and invisible worlds in the photographic image. What I have proposed is not offered with any certainty that the mysteriousness of cords, circuits and energies can, or should, be apprehended.

He wai mou! He wai mau! Hei whakaora i te ngakau o Porou.
Water for you, Papatūānuku, water for us, humankind, for the wellbeing of the heart of Ngāti Porou.

Natalie Robertson
Tararata Creek volunteer planting day

THE LOVE ZONE

TARARATA CREEK IN MĀNGERE NEEDS YOU!

Tararata Creek volunteer planting day
Saturday 19 August, 12pm–4pm
All welcome!

Meet at Elmdon Culvert, Māngere. Food and tools provided. Please bring a spade (named) if you are able to, and rugged clothing and gumboots.

māngere arts centre
ngā tohu o uenuku

Māngere-Ōtāhuhu Local Board
Auckland Council

Images: Cat Ruka

Tosh Ahkit, Rebecca Ann Hobbs and Cat Ruka, under the guidance of Brendan Corbett, Maiti Tamaariki, Raureti Korako and the Ruka whānau with Kiara Ruka and Lucia-Bluebell Kahukōwhai Davison

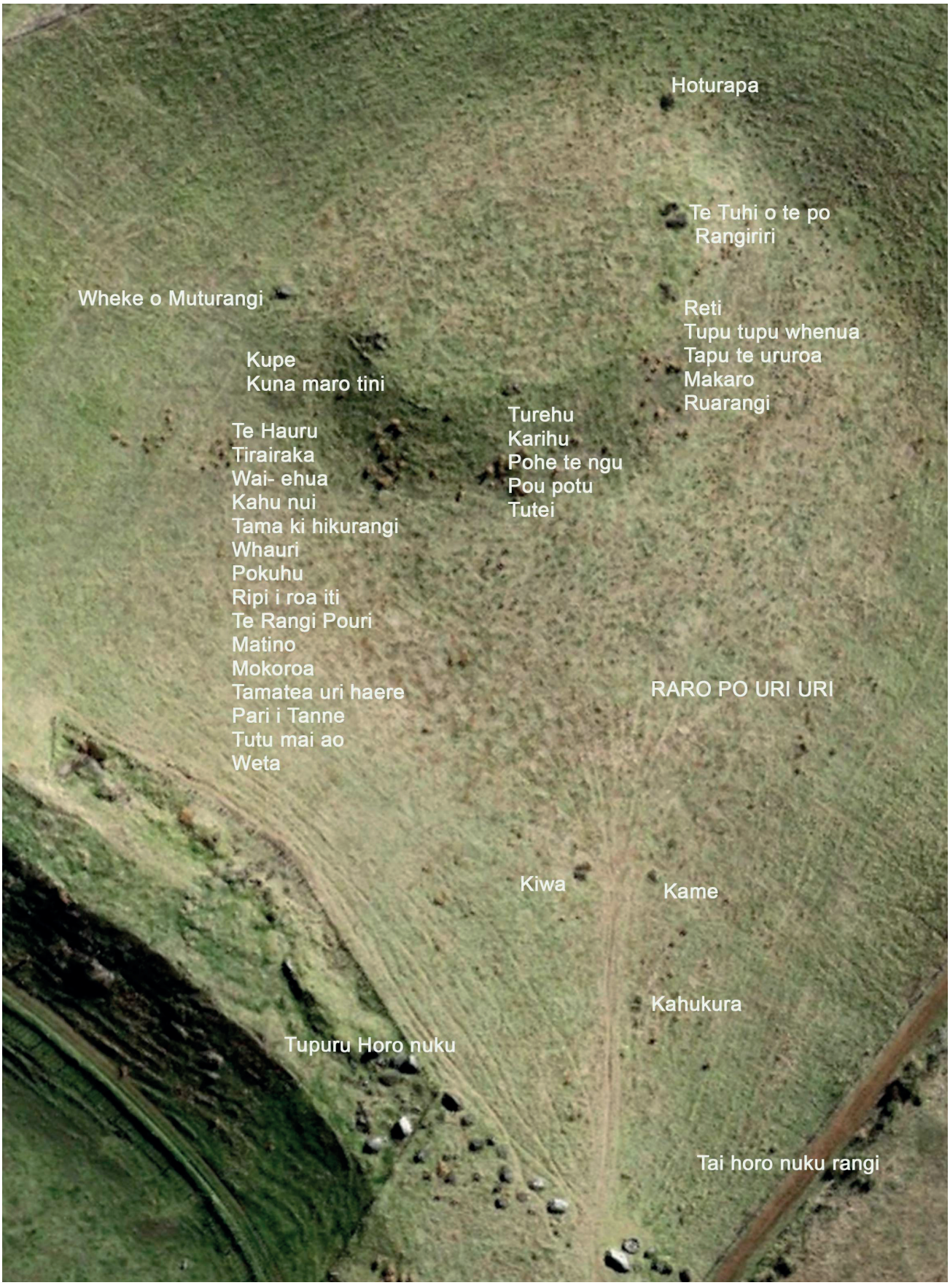
Ōtuataua

Talismans from Ōtuataua carry namesakes of tūpuna who voyaged from Hawaiki to Aotearoa on the Matahourua waka. These talismans have inspired an investigation into new ways of teaching, learning and embodying whakapapa. The artists choreograph and teach a series of accessible power-moves; each one having a particular tūpuna of Matahourua encoded within its physicality. It is hoped that all people including our young children will have fun learning and performing the power-moves, thus breathing life into our ancestors.

ST PAUL St Symposium 2017
Ipu ki uta, ihu ki tai

Image: *Standing stones of Ōtuataua crates*. Courtesy of Rebecca Ann Hobbs.

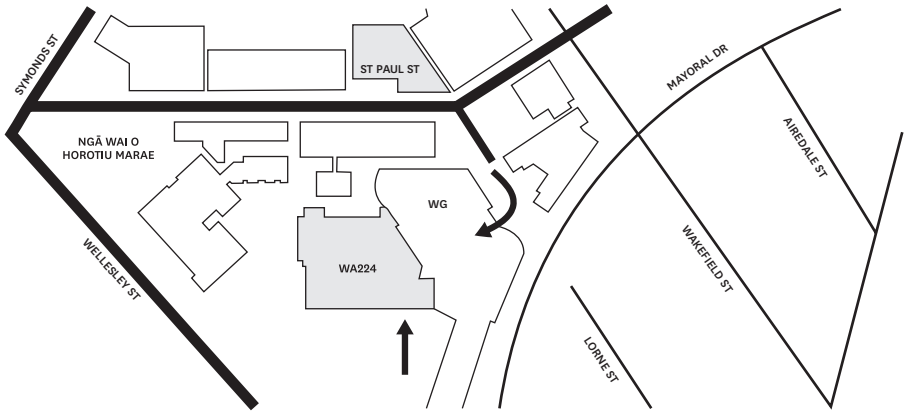
Tosh Ahkit, Rebecca Ann Hobbs and Cat Ruka, under the guidance of Brendan Corbett, Maiti Tamaariki, Raureti Korako and the Ruka whānau with Kiara Ruka and Lucia-Bluebell Kahukōwhai Davison
Ōtuataua



Programme

Thursday 17 August	17:30		Registration
WA Building, Room 224	17:45	Dr Valance Smith	Mihi whakatau
AUT University	18:00	Abby Cunnane	Introduction
55 Wellesley Street	18:15	Dr Carl Mika	Keynote lecture *Dealing with the indivisible: A Māori philosophy of mystery*
	19:30		Refreshments at *lei-pā*, exhibition at ST PAUL St Gallery
Friday 18 August	9:00		Pōwhiri
Makaurau Marae	9:30		Breakfast
8 Ruaiti Road	10:00		Opening kōrero
Ihumātao, Māngere	11:00	Qiane Matata-Sipu	Whakawhanaungatanga session
	12:00		Lunch
	13:30	Qiane Matata-Sipu	Hīkoi to Ōruarangi Awa
	14:30	Lana Lopesi	*Earnestly labouring*
	15:30	Natalie Robertson	*Ngā kōrero mō te wai*
	16:30		*Talking about water*
	17:30	Cat Ruka and Tosh Ahkit	Movement workshop
	18:00		Discussion
	19:00		Dinner
	20:30	Brendan Corbett and Maiti Tamaariki	Standing stones of Ōtuataua crater
Saturday 19 August	8:00		Breakfast and pack-up
Makaurau Marae	10:00	Qiane Matata-Sipu	Hīkoi to Ōtuataua Stonefields
	12:00		Closing lunch
Optional	13:00	Natalie Robertson	*The Love Zone*, Tararata Creek volunteer planting day
	18:00	Curated by Louisa Afoa	*Social Matter* exhibition opening at RM Gallery with Public Share, Valasi Leota-Seiuli, Janet Lilo, Lana Lopesi and Sione Monu

WA Building, Room 224
AUT University
55 Wellesley Street



Makaurau Marae
8 Ruaiti Road
Ihumātao Māngere

To get to Makaurau Marae from ST PAUL St Gallery, AUT University

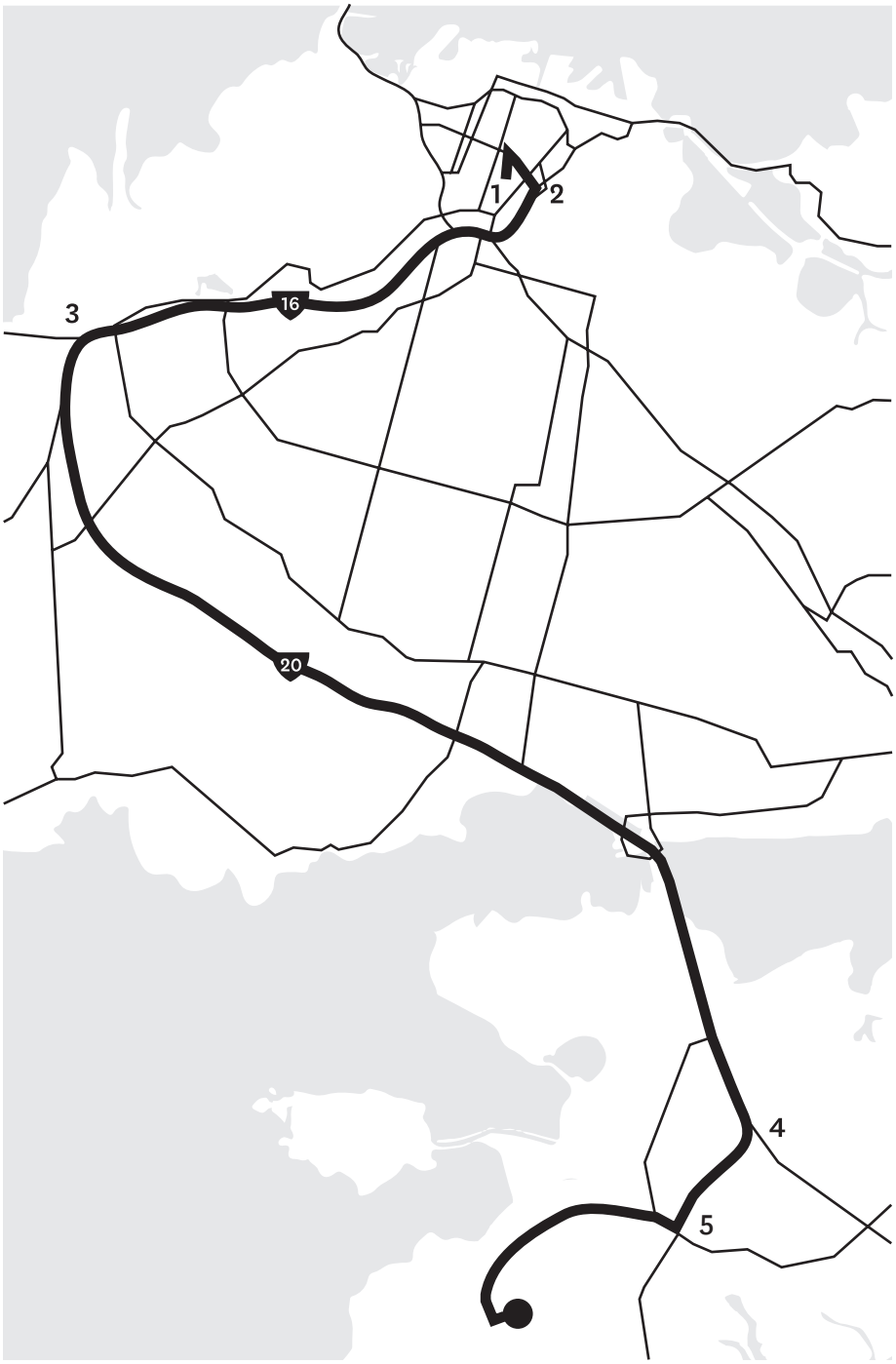
1 Head west on St Paul St turn right onto Wakefield St turn right at the 1st cross street onto Mayoral Dr, then turn right onto Wellesley St East

2 Turn right onto the ramp for SH16 Motorway, and keep left at the fork to continue toward South Western Motorway

3 Merge onto State Highway 20

4 Take exit 9 on the right for Route 20A

5 Turn right onto Kirkbride Rd, slight left onto Ascot Rd, then at the roundabout, take the 2nd exit onto Ōruarangi Rd, then turn left onto Ruaiti Rd



Contributors' Biographies

Tosh Ahkit's work is experience-based, relying on participation and subsequent documentation. Her practice is developed through active listening and conversation, with projects built around key themes of belonging, inclusion in public spaces, and empowerment through the transference of skills. She attempts to encourage agency amongst people excluded from the so-called public sphere through supporting them to be the authority on their own lived experiences.

Rebecca Ann Hobbs is from Black River in far north Queensland Australia, which is Wulgurukaba country. She currently maintains her art practice through a DocFA candidateship at The University of Auckland in Aotearoa. Hobbs focuses on collaboration in an attempt to create performative artworks that mostly celebrate dynamic bodies and their relationship with specific sites.

Lana Lopesi is a critic of art and culture based in Tāmaki Makaurau, Aotearoa. Lana's writing has featured in a number of publications in print and online. Lana is the Editor-in-Chief for The Pantograph Punch and was Founding Editor of #500words. She also writes a monthly column for Design Assembly called Graphic Matters where she is also a Contributing Editor looking after the Aotearoa Design Thinking series.

Qiane Matata-Sipu is of Māori (Te Wai ō Hua, Waikato-Tainui, Nga Puhi, Te Arawa) and Cook Islands (Rarotonga, Mangaia) descent. She is a storyteller and social commentator using journalism, photography and activism in both her career and art practice. Proudly born, raised and schooled in Māngere, she is a staunch advocate for South Auckland and the retention of our unique culture and environments. Living in the historic papakāinga of Ihumātao, Qiane has a whakapapa connection to one of the oldest Māori settlements in Aotearoa, and is a founding member of Save Our Unique Landscape (SOUL), a mana whenua-led group working to stop further desecration of historic lands by urban development. Qiane has spent years documenting Pacific and Māori communities, and more intimately, the Ihumātao papakāinga, surrounding historical landscapes and the people of Makaurau Marae.

Dr Carl Mika is an Associate Professor in Te Whiringa School of Educational Leadership and Policy in the Faculty of Education, University of Waikato, Aotearoa. He is of the Tūhourangi and Ngāti Whanaunga iwi. He has a background in law practice and legal theory, indigenous and Māori studies, and indigenous and Western philosophy. His current areas of research focus on indigenous and Western metaphysics, as well as philosophical research methods.

Natalie Robertson (Ngāti Porou, Clann Dhònnchaidh) is a photographic and moving image artist and Senior Lecturer at AUT University, Tāmaki Makaurau. Robertson's practice is founded in Te Tai Rawhiti, her East Coast Ngāti Porou home. Here, her focus is on the Waiapu River and the impacts of colonisation, deforestation and agriculture. As an iwi member, Robertson sees it as a responsibility to protect the mauri of the river. Drawing on archives and oral records, her research and art practice engages with indigenous relationships to land and place, exploring Māori knowledge practices, environmental issues and cultural landscapes. Robertson's exhibition *He wau mou! He wai mau!* was exhibited at Māngere Art Centre, and her work was also included in *lei-pā* at ST PAUL St Gallery.

Cat Ruka (Ngapuhi, Waitaha) is an interdisciplinary artist and alternative creative arts educator based in Tāmaki Makaurau. Alongside extensive teaching experience in the mainstream tertiary arts sector, Cat initiates creative workshops and mentoring relationships throughout Auckland to assist creative discovery for children and rangatahi. Cat's own creative practice utilises performance and political activism as a tool to give voice to the experience of being an indigenous person in Auckland. Cat is currently Lecturer of Creative Practice at Manukau Institute of Technology's Faculty of Creative Arts, and a PhD candidate at the University of Auckland's Dance Studies programme.

SOUL, Save Our Unique Landscape campaign, is led by a group of whānau residents in Ihumātao and is inclusive of residents, ratepayers, community members and interested parties. As whānau members, SOUL are also mana whenua whose families have lived in Ihumātao for many generations. SOUL believes that having a Special Housing Area in Ihumātao will not contribute to making Auckland a livable city, but destroy one of the few significant and unique historical, cultural, spiritual, social and environmental spaces left. soulstopsha.org

Desna Whaanga-Schollum's (Ngāti Rongomaiwahine, Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Pāhauwera) work is connected through the exploration and articulation of cultural identity. Projects see her collaborating with a wide variety of communities, business and design professionals, artists and academics to achieve results which effect change in people, practice and place. Desna serves on several arts and design governance boards and is actively involved in Māori identity discourse in Aotearoa via research, exhibitions, wānanga, hui and speaking engagements.

ST PAUL ST

AUT
TE WĀNANGA ARONUI
O TĀMAKI MAKAU RAU

ST PAUL St Gallery is a non-collecting gallery based within the School of Art + Design, Auckland University of Technology. The Gallery is dedicated to the development of contemporary art and design through an international programme of exhibitions, events, symposia and publications. ST PAUL St Gallery takes up one of the primary instructions for universities in the New Zealand Education Act (1989), that they "accept a role as critic and conscience of society." We take up the proposition that the arts have a particular capacity to speak critically about society.

Presented in partnership with:

creative nz
Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa

TE PAPA
OUR PLACE
NATIONAL SERVICES TE PAERANGI

Convenors:
Abby Cunnane and Balamohan Shingade

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ST PAUL St Gallery are:
Abby Cunnane, Acting Director
Balamohan Shingade, Assistant Director
Louisa Afoa, Curatorial Assistant
Eddie Clemens, Gallery Technician

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