



Wahine Māori: The Art of Resistance

Curated by Tracey Tawhiao and Robyn Kahukiwa

Artist Biographies

13th March - 15th May 2022

The works exhibited in Wahine Māori: The Art of Resistance reflects the views of the individual artists.

Suzanne Tamaki

Suzanne Tamaki (Ngāti Maniapoto, Tūhoe) is an artist and social provocateur. Working across fashion, photography and moving image, she creates visual narratives that respond to cultural-politics in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Her works often investigate the nature of indigenous feminisms in the South Pacific, challenging the colonial gaze. Likewise, her works also critique Western ideas of nationhood within a bi-cultural nation.

Suzanne is a member of the collectives Pacific Sisters and SaVAge K'lub. Her work is held in museum collections in Aotearoa and worldwide at institutions including Te Papa Tongarewa National Museum of New Zealand (with Pacific Sisters); Casula Museum, Sydney, Australia; The British Museum, UK; University of Cambridge Museum of Archeology and Anthropology, UK; Dowse Art Museum, Lower Hutt, Aotearoa.

Robyn Kahukiwa

Robyn Kahukiwa is one of Aotearoa New Zealand's pre-eminent female Māori painters. Kahukiwa's rediscovery of her Māori heritage, on moving from Sydney to New Zealand in 1955, has formed the crux of her painting practice, which passionately articulates and affirms her identity as a Māori wahine.

Since her first solo exhibition in 1971, Kahukiwa has been engaged in representing Māori and Pacific cultures as a way of reclaiming tino rangatiratanga (self-determination), and earned recognition and greater prominence as a professional artist in the seminal exhibition *Wahine Toa: Women of Māori Myth*, which toured New Zealand in 1983.

Kahukiwa's paintings investigate the diversity of urban Māori and Pacific communities, and often represent her personal search for cultural identity. Her mural-scale paintings are populated with ancestral figures, native birds, plants and trees, and their commentary relates to the realities and struggles of Māori.

Tracey Tawhiao - Artist Statement

A historical formation traditional to Māori Art, in red, black and white. Woven into patterns like taniko in lines of deep thought. Patterns in formations of endless questions. Allowed to exist with flaws and all. A korowai of personal investigation.

The colours of the crosses are the Rainbow Light channels that emanate from our body. Each colour depicting our organs in a light system of vibrational connection. They are the 7 colours of the rainbow, red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet. These light points in us are the start of our transcendental awakening. As if seeing the Magic of earth for the first time.

Black and white the binary of the entire colour system that we inherited from our Skyfather, RANGINUI and Earthmother, PAPATUANUKU. Polar opposites that attract one another.

The words themselves are messages of a disintegrated reality and separation by governmental measures with a "laboured" intent to save us. The cost not accounted for. The pain caused unadvertised. Repressed by our nation's shifting mono narrative. One shoe fits all, though we know it certainly doesn't. The lack of mitigation of harm on all sides leaves so many vulnerable. One size fits all is dividing and harming in its effect.

While tradition is constantly being made in a living culture, a dying culture keeps the people held in a glorified past. The reality is colonisation has severed our ties, severed our tongue, severed our philosophies, severed our connection. And vaccine mandates severs our right to choose free of disadvantage. Forced to take a medical procedure is colonisation 101 implemented with suffocating paternalism.

Māori activism is the result of injustice. All activism and protest is in reaction to a perceived threat real or not. The stereotype of the angry Māori woman is universally used to minimise her voice. To reduce her opinion and point of view. To make her anger a genre, a label, a category is reductive. We are all whole and we are diverse. This is our strength. These are our voices. Some are roaring, some are crying, some are teaching. But we are all saying something important to ourselves whether anyone else wants to hear it or not.

Kura Te Waru Rewiri - Artist Statement

Whatungarongaro te tangata

Toitu te whenua.

My works for the exhibition Mana Wahine - Art of resistance to open at the North Art Gallery in Northcote, Tamaki Makaurau 13th March 2022 has certainly been challenging to say the least.

My responses to the kaupapa reflects on where I am at now! I stopped painting pre-2010 in response to the unequitable status of Wahine Maori within the Aotearoa artworld and the control of my productivity as an artist. Now I just want to paint. To be visibly responding to the kaupapa has been difficult. I have had 50 years+ in this arena and reviving the anger and frustration of where Aotearoa is at now is best expressed by others. 'Me kii te raru o te ao' Ngarongaro te tangata addresses past thematic approaches to 'I te taha wairua' and the potential in 'te kore, te po, te ao Marama' concepts.

After the body of my old friend Marilyn Webb left her rambling home and garden I went for a walk through her overgrown garden. From Aug 18th, 2021, I have wanted to paint from that experience. Remembering her commitment and leadership from the beginning of the Contemporary Maori art movement.

The order of her garden was still there from the early 1990s'. Ngarongaro te tangata is a response to her life and garden. The doorways open to the many creatives Marilyn influenced. Mounds of terracotta colours the whenua, the minimal use of gestural marks harken to the natural undergrowth in her garden. Marilyn was Ngapuhi and Te Roroa and she was one of the Mareikura of our movement. The white is the enormity of her wairua and aroha. The light blue that came through the canopy of her garden was healing and reminded me of the fragility of life itself. How we respond and have responded as Maori to our work and what's in front of us has evolved, spiraled in, and spiraled out. Covert and overt. Let me challenge you and where you are at with your work.

Toitu te whenua works are in response to the dieback Kauri project in Te Taitokerau. The rata vines form a shield of protection around the trunk of the Kauri.

These are unprecedent times and many have suffered like ourselves through all of it. I have had 50+ years in this arena as an activist, artist wahine Maori and don't take that legacy lightly.

I challenge myself, I resist myself, I express myself.

Linda Munn

Ngapuhi nui tonu - Ngati Manu Ngai te Rangi - Nga Potiki Te Atiawa ki Ngai Tahu

Linda Munn has an arts practice which spans 25 plus years which as a young artist became interested in Uku (clay), stone and wood and so began in her early career as a carver and sculptor. Munn has always been fascinated by all art forms and added paint to her practice and so describes herself as a multi-faceted artist.

Being part of the Māori Land Movement, the Māori Women's Refuge and one of the designers who created the Tino Rangatiratanga Māori Flag are definitely key highlights of a career and more recently in the Toi Tu Toi Ora Contemporary Māori Exhibition. Linda is part of an International Indigenous Artists movement and was invited to attend the International Indigenous Artist Gathering in 2017 that was held at the Evergreen College, Seattle and was invited to the International Indigenous Artist Gathering in 2019 held on Turangawaewae Marae. She is also involved with Te Tuhi Mareikura Trust which bring First Nation Taa Moko Artists to gather at the Indigenous Tatau Wananga 2019 and 2020 held on Whareroa Marae Tauranga.

The main themes which underpin her work are political and cultural. "There is no line down the middle, being Indigenous is political, whakapapa (genealogy) defends our right to the land of our Tupuna (Ancestors)"

Andrea Hopkins

Andrea Eve Hopkins is a painter known nationally and internationally for her work which blends cultural semiotics with surreal dreamscapes.

Senior clay artist Manos Nathan sent her to Toihoukura Contemporary Maori Arts School in Gisborne to study under senior painter and educator, Sandy Adsett. As a group, Toihoukura students traveled the world. “My appreciation for Aotearoa intensified by traveling overseas. After i came back i had a stronger sense of what i wanted to paint.” - AEH

Since then she has continued to curate and exhibit nationally and internationally being part of a large network of Indigenous artists from around the world. Her piece *Karanga Mai - Hoki Mai* was acquired for the Waikato Museum Collection. Her last showing was with the Whangarei Art Museum as part of their show *Legend!*

Previously represented by some of New Zealand's leading galleries, Hopkins now chooses to represent herself and be the first voice in the ongoing conversation between artist and audience. Of Maori, New Zealand and Welsh decent - Andrea is completely influenced by the Maori concepts of Wairua (Spiritual), Hinengaro (Emotional), Whanau (Family) and Tangata (the Physical Being) Her work is a testament to living as a multi-cultural antipodean woman in contemporary Aotearoa | New Zealand.

Dianne Prince - Artist Statement

To Māori, conflict continues to shape our existence. It is the umbilical cord which ensures continuing patterns of resistance.

Wahine Māori has consistently been at the forefront of resistance to create change, to establishing new parameters of understanding and to ensure the continuity of our womens knowledge system.

This drawing is a tribute to those women, to the Ahi Kā that resides unrelentingly within their hearts.

Firstly to my kuia Waima Watene (Nathan) of Ngāti Whātua and Ngāpuhi, who, when my nana Erana Snowden died of TB, it was her mother Waima who stepped in to raise my mothers brothers and sisters in Kaipara. It is also a tribute to the many Wahine Māori who have worked tirelessly for their whānau and their community.

In this drawing the central figure is of a woman performing a ritual karanga in front of a car/whare, the new papakainga, the new reality for many. To her left is a figure of a young woman sitting on a car weaving a ra (a sail) a symbol for navigating the pathway for the future.

But first I'll go back to the 1970's- It was then that I was part of the occupation at Bastion Point. In actual fact it's real name is Takaparawhau. Didi Hawke (Joe Hawke's mother) and Rene Hawke (Joe's wife) were courageous leaders in their own right during that occupation. The camp was situated right on the edge of the city. It straddled both the wealthiest of Auckland and a significant working class enclave.

The wealthy communities surrounding Bastion point had a highly developed sense of grievance about having a Māori land occupation within their sight lines. This visual interaction meant they found themselves re-involved in a history with a people they thought would accept their 'defeat' and hopefully remain silent.

Historically the establishment of tribal boundaries was determined among other things by the organised planting of the kumara, taro and the building of whare. The building of the whareniui is the ultimate mark of tribal identity but in this instance, it was the mark of a politically inspired collective identity.

On the roof of the car is a small reminder of the triangular trig station on Takaparawhau - Bastion point. Trig stations stand in strategic places throughout the country and each one acts as a talisman of territorial conquest.

Arohanui (the whareniui on Bastion Point) and the trig station stranded together on that piece of contested territory/both architectural sentinels of two ancient traditions and opposing world views, standing within the fragile border of a protest camp and both linked by a divisive narrative.

In front of the women are images of the harakeke which I continue to use in my exploration of weaving and the taro leaf like the harakeke is one of the plants connecting our tupuna's discovery to the occupation and sovereignty of the land.

And it is the woman's two moko standing on either side of her, who, like the young girl weaving the ra and who wear the puawai a potent symbol of connection to our past and the blossoming of our future.

Charlotte Graham - Artist Statement

This works entitled Kaitiakitanga and Wai are primarily constructed using text, land, tiki mouths, haehae and Graham's unique pakati style. The title kaitiakitanga which translates as guardianship becomes the backbone of the work. All words within this landscape work are made up using letters re-formatted to make other words.

For the wai series, wai translated as water stores many water terms together.

In this manner, the words resonate and re-inforce the very nature of kaitiakitanga. The many tiki mouths/ waha seen within the landscape lay reference to the many political viewpoints that are carried in the voices of people. The paintings are a reminder of our connection of people to land and cast a light towards the health benefits within.

When it comes to composition, Graham's use of multi- directional text layout looks as though the four winds have cut up the land in anger. The sharp angles that the text lie on bear resemblance to the earths destructive nature caused by man.

She employs her unique cursive pakati based on the koru and flanked in haehae with no numerical order whatsoever. These dark haehae valleys cut into the land. A dark mass converges with the land and text to become one. The work cautions us to take stock of life, its importance to us and how we best caretake that in our life. Its lines, remind us of our deep connection to the environment and the power in this knowing.

Ngahina Hohaia

Parihaka, Ngāti Haupoto hapū, Ngāti Moeahu hapū, Taranaki Iwi, Kāhui Maunga.

Ngahina Hohaia is an interdisciplinary artist, that moves between installation and fiber sculpture, body adornment, and multi-media. Hohaia employs customary weaving knowledge and methodologies as a basis for her contemporary conceptual practice. The influence of her upbringing within her tribal papakāinga of Parihaka and it's iconic history of non-violent resistance to colonial invasion is often evident in the politically charged narratives of her work, which seek to disrupt the dominance of colonial narratives and reassert self-determining indigenous voice, space, and identity.

Hohaia has a Masters of Māori Visual Arts from Massey University, Palmerston North. Her work has been exhibited throughout New Zealand and internationally for over fifteen years. Her works are in numerous public art gallery collections, including the permanent collection of the Govett Brewster Art Gallery, Te Papa Tongarewa, Te Manawa Museum of Art, Science & History, Pataka Art & Museum, and Puke Ariki Museum. In 2007 Hohaia was the recipient of a Te Waka Toi Creative New Zealand Maori Arts Award. In 2010, she received an Arts Foundation of New Zealand New Generation Award. And in 2019, Hohaia was the artist in residence at the Bishop Museum, Hawai'i, for the inaugural Sir Peter Buck Te Rangihiroa Wānanga/Wanana Research Residency, funded by Creative New Zealand.

Tracey Tawhiao

Born in 1967, of Ngāi Te Rangi, Tuwharetoa and Whakatōhea descent. Mataatua te waka. She lives in Piha, Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Education: Bachelor of Arts (BA) Classical Studies major: Otago University, Dunedin, and Bachelor of Laws (LLB) Otago University and Auckland University. Master of Philosophy (MPHIL) AUT.

Tracey is a contemporary artist who has studied and works in a variety of creative fields. A writer, poet, moving image maker, qualified lawyer and a unique contemporary artist. She is a published poet and has exhibited her paintings and installations nationally and internationally including, New York, Los Angeles, Washington DC, Paris, Le Havre, London, Tahiti, Taipei, Beijing. Her artworks respond to her place as a Māori woman in a colonised society, often using both universal and Māori symbols to over-inscript the colonial erasure of her identity. She has been a full time Artist for over 20 years.

Tawhiao is the Director of Tawhiao Limited, a Company for creating exhibitions, projects and shows. She is the Director of House of Taonga Salon, “a house of natural flow for artists to create and share”.

Tāwera Tahuri

Ko Maungahaumia Te Maunga Ko Mangatu Te Awa Ko Te Ngāwari Te Wharenuī Ko Tamanui Te Tīpuna Ko Ngā Ariki Kaipūtahi Te Iwi.

Tīhei mauriora!

Tāwera Tahuri is a mother of six children, grandmother to four, wife to Henare Tahuri (Tūhoe, Ngāti Kahungunu) and a mixed media artist covering a wide range of mediums and techniques. Influenced by the work of both Māori, European and Caribbean artists alike She is actively involved in her community as a teacher, artist and performer. She has travelled extensively and represents her peoples at a range of Indigenous events including the GIWC and the UNPFII. Her work as an activist for indigenous issues has seen Tāwera stand for numerous causes and more often than not, art is her weapon of choice!

Emily Karaka

Emily Karaka was born in 1952 in Tāmaki Makaurau, where she continues to live and work. She is of Ngāti Hine (Ngāpuhi), Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki, Te Kawerau ā Maki, Ngāti Tamaoho, Te Ākitai Waiohua, Te Ahiwaru, Ngāti Mahuta, and Ngāti Tahinga (Waikato) affiliations, and has been exhibiting for more than 40 years.

Her paintings draw on diverse art-making traditions, including toi whakairo, or carving, and abstract expressionism. Characterised by dazzling colour and emotional intensity, they frequently incorporate text and tie into the artist’s long standing work advocating for tino rangatiratanga, self-determination.

Important Aotearoa institutions, such as Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, and the Sarjeant Gallery Te Whare o Rehua hold her works. She recently produced major paintings for the 22nd Biennale of Sydney, NIRIN (2020), and the landmark exhibition Toi Tū Toi Ora: Contemporary Māori Art (2020-21).

Dianne Prince

Prince was born in Wellington in 1952. She obtained tertiary education from Wellington Teachers College and Auckland University. In the 1970s Prince was part of the Bastion Point protests including as a researcher, the protests and occupation resulted in the New Zealand Government returning the land to Ngāti Whātua in the 1980s.

Prince has been exhibiting artwork since 1986 nationally and internationally, much of her art revolves around Māori rights especially Māori women's rights. She is often described as a multimedia artist as she creates installations, she weaves and she paints. In 1995 an installation artwork of Prince's bringing attention to New Zealand identity raised controversy leading to protests and the eventual removal of the artwork.

A solo exhibition of Prince's at the City Gallery in Wellington in 2001 is called *Veiled Legacy*. It was about the loss of legal status Māori women experienced once laws from Britain were imposed after the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. The curator said of the work: 'Veiled Legacy are images of loss and alienation, but the paintings also speak of Māori women's ongoing strength and resilience'.

A number of Prince's works are in the collections at Te Papa Tongarewa The Museum of New Zealand.

Natalie Robertson

Natalie Robertson (Ngāti Porou, Clann Dhònnchaidh) born Kawerau, Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Natalie Robertson was born and raised in Kawerau, Bay of Plenty. After graduating with a Bachelor of Social Sciences in 1986, she travelled to England to work as a photographic assistant and freelance photographer. In 1997, she completed a Master of Fine Arts (First Class Honours) at the University of Auckland.

Robertson uses photography and moving image to explore Māori knowledge practices, and to advocate for ecologies and cultural landscapes. Through archival research and oral histories, her works reconnect narratives to their geographical marker. These works and the narratives that inform them acknowledge the land as a repository of ancestral memory.

Natalie Robertson is a photographic and moving image artist and scholar of Ngāti Porou and Clann Dhònnchaidh iwi/bones/tribes/clans. Natalie's research terrain and artistic practice draws on Māori knowledge practices, Ngāti Porou oral customs, cultural landscapes, and historic archives to engage with indigenous relationships to land and place. Centering Waiapu—the ancestral river of Ngāti Porou—world-famous for its erosion, her work responds to tribal aspirations for environmental reinvigoration. Natalie advances Māori counter-narratives to landscape photography, exploring how photofilmic images might contribute to environmental justice and revitalisation.

Kura Te Waru Rewiri

(born in Kaeo, 1950) is a New Zealand artist, academic and educator of Ngāti Kahu, Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Kauwhata, Ngāti Rangī descent. In Te Puna, Māori Art from Te Tai Tokerau Northland, Deidre Brown writes, "Kura Te Waru Rewiri is one of Aotearoa, New Zealand's most celebrated Māori women artists."

Kura has exhibited extensively in New Zealand and internationally since 1985. Her work is held in both private and public collections such as the Auckland Art Gallery and Te Papa Tongarewa.

During the mid 1980s Kura and her contemporaries such as Shona Rapira Davies, Robyn Kahukiwa and Emily Karaka gave voice to the concerns surrounding Māori women's sovereignty. Megan Tamati-Quennell writes, "The space Te Waru Rewiri and her contemporaries occupied was really that of mana Wahine Māori".

Influenced by the Ratana religious and political movement, her expressive paintings explore the effects of colonisation and portray the significance of taonga Māori. As curator Nigel Borell writes, "*Kura Te Waru Rewiri's painting practice has forged new ways to understand and appreciate the scope of contemporary painting informed by Māori realities, beliefs and paradigms.*"

Charlotte Graham

Charlotte Graham is one of New Zealand's interdisciplinary artist's. Known as a conceptual Māori artist, she is mana whenua mandated by her iwi. Graham confidently tests different materials to engage in indigenous dialogue. Her work has addressed social, cultural and political issues for more than twenty years now. This consistent concern for the social, political and Anthropocene are often the spring for new work.

Graham's recent installation exhibition Te Hau Whakaora 2020, part of the satellite exhibition Toi Tu, Toi Ora paid homage to the winds and healing. She was also commissioned by Toi O Tamaki to design the Creative Learning Centre for the Toi Tu, Toi Ora exhibition. In 2018, she produced a mammoth ground installation series of droplets for multi-scale vinyl reproduction. The work received a print award.

In 2015, Graham's Solo's Waikawa and Kaitiaki thrust a microscopic lens onto issues and the impacts that ocean acidification have on her tribal waters, lands and sea's. Her experience and expertise in the arts see her speak regularly at public/ private art events, conferences, environmental panels, attending multiple indigenous artists gatherings and leading workshops nationally and internationally.

She has featured in numerous exhibitions throughout New Zealand with venues including the Sarjeant Gallery, Manawatu Museum and the Dowse Museum. She has also exhibited internationally including Te Tataitanga at the Southwest School of Art and Craft, San Antonio, Texas and APT8 with the Savage Klub at the Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane and travelled to Waimea, Hawaii to exhibit and participate in the Indigenous Artists Gathering.

On top of Graham's personal commitment as an artist advocate for environmental issues, she is also an artist advocate for the Kauri Project. Her teaching background affords her the skills to develop artworks that are educational and collaboratively driven to help raise awareness to the subject. The Kauri project addresses Kauri dieback and she works alongside scientists, educators and other artist's to raise public awareness of this deadly disease. Thus, adding to a strong body of work that proves that art is important to our society.

Graham's works can be found in many public and private collections, including The Auckland Art Gallery, The Chartwell Collection, The James Wallace Arts Trust, Rt Jim Anderton Collection, The Auckland City Council Collection and numerous universities nationally and abroad. She has worked with the council on numerous projects and was awarded a Creative Communities award for the Onehunga Library mural. Graham is currently an arts educator in a Maori forensic psychiatric unit. She has four children and lives in Auckland.