

MAKING WITH: HYBRID PRACTICES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW FORMS OF INTRA-ACTIVE DRESS

Project led by: Miranda Smitheram & Frances Joseph
Collaborators: Ironsand/ Karekare beach/ The Tasman Sea/ Wind/ Ocean/ Magnetic rocks/ The ancient volcanoes of Karioi, Pirongia and Taranaki



Karakia

Kia hora te marino
Kia whakapapa pounamu te moana
Hei huarahi mā tātou te rāngi nei
Aroha atu aroha mai
Tātou i a tātou katoa
Hui ē! Tāiki ē!

*May peace be widespread.
May the sea be like greenstone;
a pathway for all of us this day.
Let us show respect for each
other, for one another.
Bind us all together.*

This karakia (prayer, in te reo Māori) is a opening blessing that is said during the field trips, activating the space, connecting the collaborators and asking for blessing for the work. This is a contemporary karakia, an adaptation of an older whakatauki (proverb) that originates with the tribes of Ngāti Maniapoto/Ngāti Rereahu.

The project *Phenomenal Dress* explores posthuman notions of dress as particular, dynamic surfaces and forms that enfold with different situations through physical and metaphysical forces. The project draws from perspectives and methods from fashion, art, science, technology, ecology and indigenous frameworks, to develop intra-active forms of dress that engage with and are activated through localised phenomena including human, biological and material agents.

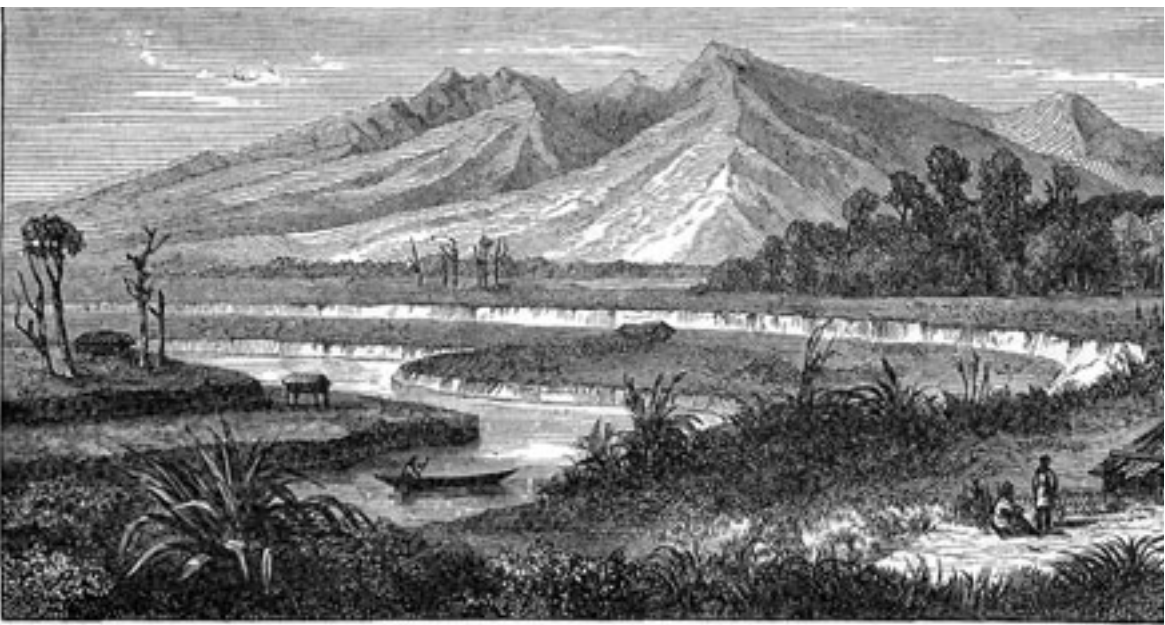
This hybridisation of dress as a nexus of technological, physiological, material, and cultural perspectives recognises matter as history and narrative and place as having both physical and metaphysical dimensions. The different modes of working through these complex relationships, engaging a team of collaborators from diverse disciplinary and cultural positions, foreground the project. This shifts it beyond a response to material properties or location as site, to an engagement with matter, media, place and forms of being, and the agential and aesthetic potential of these entanglements.

The first iteration of this project is based in Karekare, a west coast black sand beach in the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park, 50 kilometres from Auckland, New Zealand.

Can the material, technical and embodied dimensions of dress be utilised to activate a deeply localised engagement with phenomena and place that is both physical and metaphysical?



The Journey of Sand
From volcanic eruptions 2.5 million years ago,
Washing down streams and rivers
Ironsand was formed on the west coast of New Zealand



Macro to Micro Shift in Scale

Design Iterations: Shifts in state

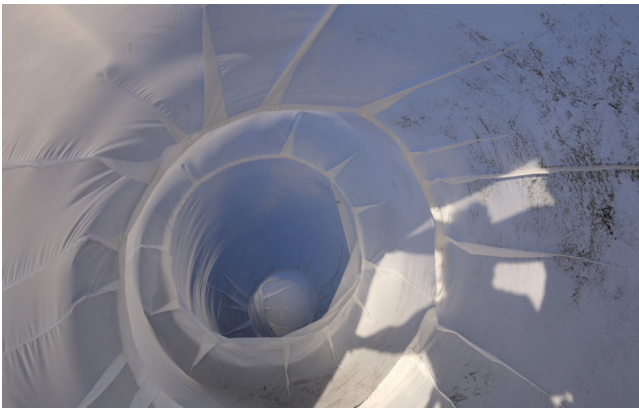
SALT/Crust/ Evaporation



IRONSAND/ Magnetic Attraction



WIND/Foam/Spray



Making with: Sea salt, ironsand, textiles, time & temporality
Action: wet to dry, granular to solid, crystal formations
Outcome: Garments are put into salt baths for 5 months, forming crystals on edges of garments

Making with: Ironsand, magnets, seaweed
Action: Combining magnetic properties with textiles; attract and deflect; 4D shape forming
Outcome: Prototypes include magnets embedded in cloth; electro-magnetic coils; and ferrous suspended in agar gel textiles

Making with: Wind, pockets, tunnels, ocean
Action: Inflate, inhabit, experience, interact
Outcome: Prototypes that combine dress elements such as darts, pockets, gathers etc. These are scaled to the beach rather than human form.

Methodology Statement

This project is an experimental, creative inquiry that takes an interdisciplinary approach drawing from the fields of fashion and textile design, embodied interaction and digital design, kaupapa Māori and the sciences, through intra-active engagements with localised matter and phenomena. The project is built on collaboration with people from diverse disciplinary and cultural backgrounds, with non-human agents and particular places.

Outcomes & future directions

Performative material artefacts:
Wind/hinaki (eel trap) littoral zone dress;
Weighted/sand dune/dress;
Puff/water to land/ ihumoana (portugese man of war jellyfish) dress;
Reconfigurable/ magnetic/ sand and rock cape;
Salt/crust/crystal/evaporation dress

Live Performances
Videos and photographs documenting experiments and performances
Digital artifacts using 3D media developed from material artefacts and documentation
Material and digital iterations as exhibitions/installations
Writing about the Karekare work in papers and a book
Future collaborations with other places

