

PRACTICE BASED  
DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH

# THE BRIDGE ACROSS THE OCEAN

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*Figure 1:1. "The Bridge Across The Ocean" the opening animation, 2019.*

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# Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma from a university or other institution of higher learning, except where due acknowledgement is made in the acknowledgements.

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. H.' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal stroke.

Date 09.09.2019

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## Abstract



Figure 1:2. "The Bridge Across The Ocean" Prince Tui Teka's archive photo (Audioculture.co.nz, 1983).

***"I learned a lot from the elephants...they provided to me that you  
could be overweight and still be the star of the show."***

***- Prince Tui Teka.***

"Prince Tui Teka. The Bridge Across the Ocean" explores my preconceptions on music as they relate to the process of acculturation by engaging in the production of a documentary on legendary Māori performer Prince Tui Teka. I wanted to identify personal and societal connections between my home country and my new home here in Aotearoa, using this documentary as a way of bridging the gap and testing the idea of my adaptation and the universal threads (in this case music) that are crucial factors. A heuristic technique as the primary method of reflecting self-discovery will be tested in this study through the process of creating a documentary film.



# Introduction I

## ***The Prince and I***

Music is my greatest passion in life, but also it is my biggest regret as I cannot play or sing. I am always amazed at what drives musicians to create, and what is the power of music that can touch people's hearts.

I was born in Russia (at that time, the Soviet Union) and music has allowed me to become closer to my new home in New Zealand. My interest in the subject of acculturation caused me to consider possible ways of examining this process. Initially, I looked at theories of acculturation. I examine some of these theories in the literature review of this exegesis. Eventually, I chose to use the documentary form to examine my relationship with New Zealand via Prince Tui Teka and his music.

This is the way I framed the story of how I stepped into the research project in the opening voice-over of the film:

"My connection with Prince Tui Teka happened a long time ago when I bought his album from a flea market. There was something different in Tui's music, something that took me away from the ice and snow. The dreamland in his songs seeped into my world, and since then it has held a special place in my heart. One day I knew I'd have to visit Tokomaru Bay to pay respect to him at the urupa next to Pakirikiri Marae where he is buried alongside his wife, Missy. It's the very same graveyard where his mentor Ngoi Ngoi Pēwhairangi also lay. This isolated and beautiful bay became the first milestone of my journey to discover amazing people and their memories of Prince Tui."

I would also add that I have been a fan of his for many years, even before I moved to Aotearoa from North-East Russia in 2016. Almost three years ago, New Zealand became my new home. Also, being prepared for the most significant change in my life, I did not comprehend how difficult it can be to swap from one culture to another. When I settled down here, everything that was familiar to me in my home country disappeared, and I was a little perplexed by Kiwi culture. Making the film became a response to this. As my own research project related to the role of music in this process, I needed more clearly understand the relationship between music and acculturation. This has also formed part of the literature review.

In the chapter that follows, *Methodology*, I sought to respond to key questions that arose as I considered the design, content and final form of this research project. I situate this research project as one which prioritises a heuristic approach. I use Moustakas's conceptualization of heuristic methodology. He describes it as "... a way of engaging in scientific search through methods and processes aimed at discovery; a way of self-inquiry and dialogue with others aimed at finding the underlying meanings of important human experiences" (Moustakas, 1990). This seemed an ideal framework, one that could examine a personal research journey, placing it against some of my own personal fears and restrictions (both imposed and self-imposed).

My approach, the way I engaged with this topic, also depended on close work with Māori communities in addition to research that was more informational. I needed to find a way of engaging with Te Ao Māori in a respectful and culturally appropriate way. Although my first steps into the Māori world began with learning basic Te Reo, The Treaty of Waitangi, and Māori Leadership and taking classes at Ngā Wai o Horotiu marae on AUT City Campus, this project would require a deeper immersion into this world. I also discuss the ideas that guided this process in the Methodology chapter.

Here, though, it is important that I background some of the initial research that centres on bicultural issues. Despite growing ethnic and cultural diversity (according to Stats NZ (2019) 27.5% of the country's population in 2018 is overseas-born) historically Aotearoa New Zealand was formed as a bicultural nation based on The Treaty of Waitangi. The Treaty is a partnership between the Crown and Māori, developed on the basic principles of *kawanatanga* (governorship by the Crown), *rangatiratanga* (tribal self-management) (Byrnes, 2005). Although there has been a demand for a Multiculturalism Act from the country's ethnic lobbyists, the government has responded with improving the protection of practising one's language, religion, and culture. As a result, biculturalism in New Zealand is still the fundamental principle with no official laws that relate to multiculturalism (Sibley & Ward, 2013).

As a newcomer, I have gone through an arduous odyssey of understanding what Kiwi culture stands for and how I would identify myself soon: Ngāti Pākehā, European, East European, or a Russian New Zealander. In which ethnic or social group could I find common ground? During this process of self-discovery (most interestingly) I have not encountered any ethnic-based rejections, but I felt that I was more welcomed in the Māori environment than in any other communities. Similarly, Sibley and Ward (2013) find that more exceptional support for multiculturalism in New Zealand is articulated in Māori and Pacific groups rather than in Asian or European. Plaut, Garnett, Buffari, & Sanchez-Burks point out that "... the greater support found in Māori and Pacific communities is not surprising as international research shows that in general multiculturalism enjoys greater support from minority groups..." (Plaut, Garnett, Buffari, & Sanchez-Burks, 2011. as cited in Sibley, C. G., & Ward, C. [International Journal of Intercultural Relations], 2013,37(6), 700-713).

Lastly, in this methodology section, I needed to examine the filmmaking strategies involved in the process of 'making' and I discuss a variety of these approaches as they relate to theories and to the construction of the film.

In the following chapter, 'Immersion', I break down the steps that I took to immerse myself in this world. While the feeling of acceptance and my admiration for Tui's music motivated me to start doing this study, the Immersion section of the exegesis describes the 'process' of production and speaks to this specific part of the heuristic method. The purpose of my documentary research is to look at how Prince Tui Teka's music can act as a bridge that connects me to the culture of my new host country. The first step was to find out who Prince Tui was by finding people connected to the legend, including his family and fans. This served as a framework for this documentary project and also dictated the structure and the form of the film to come.

Further stages of immersion involved immersing myself into what I describe as "Tui's World", trying to find an intangible connection that flows between my expectations and the real Tumanako Teka. It was also important to analyze what elements made the most emotional impact on me as I was doing this study.

If acculturation is a complex process which includes not only social and cultural adaptation but also relates to the psychological analysis of an individual, then the heuristic method becomes an appropriate way to track diverse problems, as well as to assist in understanding how intuition and creativity work (Gigerenzer, 2008). This Immersion chapter dissects some of the personal changes I had to make in adapting to a new cultural environment. It allowed me to fix and reflect my thoughts; in order to compare, relate and build an emotional bridge between the main documentary subject and myself.

## ***The Protagonist***

While Prince Tui is known to many New Zealanders the following section contains a summary of his life and his achievements taken from my initial research into the man himself:

Tumanako Teka was born on March 8, 1937, in Ruatahuna, a remote town in the middle of Tūhoe country, the northwest of New Zealand's North Island. Teka's parents were musicians, and it possibly predetermined his future career. Since the early childhood years, he learnt to play guitar and saxophone; later, he developed skills in playing on numerous musical instruments.

In 1952, Tumakano moved to Sydney without permission from his whānau. At age 15, he had his first job as a circus hand but was able to develop comedic and musical talents useful for his future profession.

In 1958, Tumanako Teka took the stage name Prince Tui Latui and founded 'The Royal Samoans and Māoris', then retitled to 'The Māori Troubadours'. The Troubadours' line-up regularly changed, but Tui always was the lead vocalist. Peters and George (2005) write that Tui's success as a frontman brought him not only popularity but healthy financial dividends. They surmise that if Teka had followed his partner Bob Parker's advice to invest money in property in Surfers Paradise, he would have been a rich man in a few decades. Nevertheless, Tui preferred to buy new cars rather than long term investments. Despite this unique and idiosyncratic financial planning "Tui left this world with something more than material wealth, which was the respect of his peers and a multitude of fans who will love him and his music forever" (Peters & George, 2005, p. 45).

In 1966, Tui Teka left the Troubadours and then joined 'The Māori Volcanics', created by Nuki Waaka. Now, Tumanako Teka had to change his stage pseudonym again and re-named himself PRINCE TUI TEKA. Tui Teka grew his skills while working with 'The Māori Volcanics'. He learnt how to be an entertainer, how to reveal his

natural talents, and how to work hard. Most importantly, he created a brand-new world around which was based on his individual qualities; as a result, people accepted Prince Tui Teka's stage image as the real one.

In 1972, Prince Tui Teka left The Māori Volcanics, formed his band, and spent the next decade performing in Australia and the Pacific but regularly visiting New Zealand. While touring in the homeland, Tui met Missy Kururangi, and it was a turning point in his life. In 1976, Missy joined Teka's band and the couple married.

The number one jewel in Prince Tui Teka's crown is 'E Ipo' written by him and Ngoi Pēwhairangi in 1982. Kai (2008) notes that 'Aunty Ngoi' was one of the influential leaders during the Māori renaissance. Her work as an educator, a songwriter, an advocate for Māori language, and a spiritual leader, helped many to reconnect to their history and culture. Missy Teka was a niece of Ngoi Pēwhairangi, and it helped to develop not only family connections but a professional collaboration between Prince Tui and Aunty Ngoi. The idea of creating 'E Ipo' came to Tui when he wanted to write a love song for Missy. It did not take a long time for Ngoi to compose the song because she was familiar with the melody. More interesting is the fact that the theme was adapted from the famous Indonesian love ballade 'Mimpi Sedih' by Aloysius Riyanto. Sweetman (2016) writes that 'E Ipo' became New Zealand's first platinum album in Te Reo and English, a folk song and a part of Kiwi identity. It made Tui the number one artist not only in Aotearoa but in the Pacific as well. Prince Tui was even cast in several films. Dix (2014) mentions that despite his popularity, Prince Tui Teka never stopped working, developing his skills and teaching his band's members to improve professionally. He artfully orchestrated his shows combining 'dry' humour, sensitive ballads, lyrical songs, and guitar boogie-woogie rhythms. On January 23, 1985, during the late concert at the Ruawai Tavern, in a small town in Northland, Prince Tui Teka passed away from a heart attack. He was 47 years old.

Overall, there are gaps in our knowledge of Tui's life and personal qualities, however, it is clearly understood that Tui Teka had extraordinary music talents, the ability to work hard, and outstanding leadership characteristics. His collaboration with Ngōi Pēwhairangi brought Māori music to a new level and opened doors for the next generations to create songs in Te Reo. Consequently, my journey is a chance to discover more about Prince Tui as a human being and a musician.

# Literature Review II

## ***Introduction***

Considering ideas of my own journey to become a New Zealander has required me to explore the idea of acculturation. Acculturation is a procedure in which an individual or group from one culture comes to accept the practices and standards of another culture, whereas still connected to their own ethos. Ruesch et al. (1948) define culture as a complex process which includes different aspects of human beings such as visible artefacts and behaviours, fundamental beliefs and values. Matsumoto (2006) finds that the understanding of a whole culture is almost impossible for the individual; even in the same society, cultural standards may differ widely between social classes, genders, and age groups. Music is an inalienable part of the culture and people's identity.

This practice is regularly debated regarding a minority culture adopting the fundamentals of the majority culture and it usually happens in situations with immigrant groups (Cole, 2019).

Kondrat (2014) writes that music is an exact clarification of culture. "Music is an expressive language of culture. It often tells a story, expresses emotion, or shares ideas with society. Before the written word music was used as a form of historic record" (Kondrat, 2014, para. 3). Music can keep people connected, even though it is rapidly changeable; and through music, people can communicate and share aspects of each other's culture. Baily and Collyer (2006) suggest that music may connect a person to past cultural experiences causing one to remember their place of origin. They go on to state that it can also help people cope with new changes in life when one decides to migrate. Music aids the acceptance of these alterations and helps one to articulate one's new identity.

"...the relationship between music and identity, the nature of the musical



transformations that have occurred through migration, the nature of the audience, the effects of performance in terms of social cohesion or division, and the possibilities of using music to ease some of the more painful results of migration". (Baily & Collyer, 2006, p.180)

The following section will analyse the connection between the music the adoption of a different culture.

### ***Acculturation, Assimilation, or Integration***

Crossing cultural boundaries is not easy as acculturation and adaptation are interlinked with many social and personal factors. Berry (1997) identifies three key concepts influencing acculturation and adaptation. He categorises them as; psychological, socio-cultural, and economical meaning that all these issues demonstrate an effect on individuals trying to re-establish their lives by shifting from one society to another. For instance, the psychological outcomes of acculturation are changeable and depend on personal, social, and economic factors in the country of origin.

All of these are intrinsic to how cultures function and vary, depending on deeper aspects associated with the culture of a new settlement. In 1997, Berry found the following:

In sharp contrast, marginalisation involves rejection by the dominant society, combined with own-culture loss; this means the presence of hostility and much reduced social support. Assimilation involves own-culture shedding (even though it may be voluntary), and separation involves a rejection of the dominant culture (perhaps reciprocated by them). (Berry, 1997, p. 24)

In addition, in a previous study, he found that successful integration is when non-dominant groups freely choose to amalgamate with a larger dominant society, which is open and concerned with cultural diversity (Berry, 1991). This approach demands from the non-predominant ethnic groups an acceptance of the primary values of the host society. He finds that with a dominant group who are hosting immigrants that they must be willing to change. These modifications must be done for the institutions such as health, education, and labour; otherwise, without it, any integration strategy would not be sufficient.

On the other hand, marginalisation, including rejection by the dominant culture, comes with the loss of own-culture; often resulting in aggression and a low level of social support. In this situation, the psychological discomfort and devastation that an individual experiences from the acculturation process sometimes causes separation. Involving oneself in cultural processes in the absence of learning culture is also the reason for marginalisation.

Therefore, a mutual adaptation is needed for integration, including the recognition by both groups, to exist as culturally diverse people.

Nevertheless, social support, acculturation strategies, and national immigration rules are other factors that have also been recognised as a considerable contribution to assimilation. In societies where these assimilation policies are promoted, different ethnocultural groups and immigrants prefer to integrate rather than stay isolated. Moreover, Berry (1997) concludes that “in societies that tend towards assimilation policies, there was evidence that immigrants and ethnocultural group members generally prefer integration, and when they do, they tend to make more positive adaptations” (p. 27). Lastly, acculturation transition is not an easy process always shared and often can be a risk; however, the risk of failure is not still an inevitable fate (Beiser et al., 1988).

Equally, individual cultural principles are changing when one is exposed to an alien culture. Though, in the first ten years, the value of acculturation is insignificant even if an immigrant easily speaks the local language, is employed, becomes familiar with local food, has preferences in local music and fashion, and engages in local media. Results suggest that a settler's cultural values and acculturation values also have to change. Similarly, a minimum of interactions with the host culture may slow the integration and development processes, and even cause a move. According to Taras, Rowney, and Steel (2013), less than 15% of the locals in immigrants' neighbourhoods, working networks, or communities become the critical point when only negative acculturation experiences exist. For instance, the immigrant group from an over-represented country is more likely to acculturate slowly. The need for contact with local culture has been minimised. However, the frequency of these interactions does not significantly relate to the immigrant group size. Thereby, an individual with an educational and professional qualification who does not heartily wish to acculturate will find that acculturation problematic if contacts with the host culture are limited (Taras et al., 2013).

Schaefer and Simon (2017) identify three strategies used by an immigrant to assimilate into the host society. Firstly, the "assimilation strategy" is accompanied by those who are willing to wave affinity with ethnocultural heritage, whereas fully contributing to the life of the larger group. Contrary to this, the "separation strategy" is chosen by people who desire to keep their ethnocultural identity, stay together in one group, and prefer fewer interactions with others. Nevertheless, those who are following an "integrational strategy" decide to live in both worlds, connected to their ethnic background and involved in the life of the host society. Also, both authors define the following:

However, even when immigrants have integrated values and practices from different groups harmoniously, it does not necessarily follow that these individuals also describe themselves as belonging equally to their

ethnocultural group and to the larger society. National self-definition does not automatically follow from the integration of values and practices, indicating the importance to consider the adoption conceptualization as well as the identification conceptualization of acculturation (Schaefer & Simon, 2017, p. 967).

Hence, if the host country aims to establish a harmonious society and avoid cultural conflicts – multicultural policy is the only pragmatic choice.

To conclude, learning other cultures without stigmatising is reciprocal cooperation where not only a minority group is involved. The individuals engaged in cultural learning can be the aggregators for smaller groups, such as families or minor communities (Rudmin, 2009). The process of acculturation into the new society has a socio-psychological outcome. One who chooses to learn local cultures as an assimilation strategy integrates faster and even generates new cultural values. Consequently, assimilation and integration methods stimulate changes from smaller groups to a broader community. Therefore, through the documentary making process, I will try to find an answer to which way an assimilation strategy works for me, and how it helps to discover new cultural horizons connecting me to the new society. Looking at Tui's work through this context now, I find that the process of my acculturation began as an emotional response to music. It was clear that I needed to explore the idea of music being a motivational force for the broader process.

### ***Which role does popular music play in acculturation?***

Today, as borders become more fluid and millions of people traverse continents, countries and oceans, one of the most profound challenges faced by societies has become the successful integration of migrants within settler societies (Frankenberg, Fries, Kamala et al., 2014). However, according to Bayazitova (2012), an increasingly globalised world does not need countries to expand their territories continuously,

but requires people to exchange ideas, traditions, culture, and comprehend how other nations live. Music can traverse frontiers, perceptions and barriers created by language, and has a significant impact on acculturation. Nonetheless, Smith (2014) finds that the strong connection between music and place has been identified with Māori culture. He described the following:

In this way, some waiata are intimately interwoven with our landscape potent with tribal histories, whakapapa, historical personages and exclamations of tūrangawaewae. Waiata kinaki often manifest “constructions of individual and group identity”. They are selected for their relevance to the kaupapa of the hui, and imbued with metaphors, idioms and local sayings that speak specifically to the regions associated with the tangata whenua and manuhiri. (Smith, 2014, p. 198)

Smith’s research is significant because he situates the importance of local specificity. But the arts are also an essential instrument in people’s communication processes, allowing everyone to articulate their thoughts through art, film; and naturally, music.

Kuzyakina (2007) describes the art of music as a sociocultural phenomenon where transmitting musical sounds is no longer carried out by coding-decoding information but through the assimilation and connection with other areas of social consciousness and activity, including ways to integrate artistic and life experiences. Her suggestions speak to something more universal and less local.

Moreover, communication technologies have speeded up the process of cultural globalisation, thus culturally shrinking the planet. As a result, within global cultural integration, popular music has increased the opportunities to support the “bridge-building” process between countries by reflecting on people’s cultural values and understanding.

As has been previously reported in the literature, even local artists or performers with a strong local identity or those who can be classified in the world music (international music) genre, cannot escape the influence of global trends. This impact can be found in lyrics, styles, ideology, or in production technologies that force traditional practices to change (Guilbault, 2001). But, paradoxically, continuous transformations and innovations preserve musical traditions. Frith (2000) suggests that, as in popular music, world music has never been isolated from global processes; at the same time, it has amplified a sense of locality and cultural uniqueness. Tui took up a unique place in New Zealand's musical landscape. He borrowed, localised and adapted material while maintaining his own unique musical persona. He built bridges between various musical traditions.

Seeing Tui in this way, as a bridge-builder, helped me see him as a cross-cultural connector, connecting through music. This bridge metaphor is one that helped me plan and develop the documentary itself.

On the question of enculturation and music, Ball (2010) states that all traditional cultures during history created music; however, we have no idea what a practical reason was; obviously, making music is not as functional as cooking or speech communication. Music can serve as a universal model of human communication, which transcends cultural boundaries or language barriers. Wong, Roy, and Margulis (2009) hypothesise that one of the well-known global examples of massive cross-cultural exchange is bilingualism and that music is similar to our ability to speak other languages. A hypothesis of bimusicalism claims that the musicality of people allows listeners to live in a bicultural environment and experience the same functions of music in different cultural conditions. This interpretation is different from that of previous research by Demorest, Morrison, Jungbluth, and Beken (2008) who argue that individuals coming from outside a host society cannot similarly comprehend specific musical practices as they are the outsiders. By way of illustration, Smith (2013) shows that haka - the traditional Māori way to perform

songs was described as repetitious and disagreeable by the French navigator Duperry during his visit to New Zealand in 1824. The Māori, on the other hand, were not impressed by European music even when the French explorers sang them back, in their eyes, the most delightful and exciting songs. It demonstrates that music could be defined as another method to communicate, but it is not the universal language for everyone as “different cultures give music different meanings” (Smith, 2013, p. 23). Although it is not the purpose of the current research to outline all aspects of an exploration of the music as a communicative language, I believe it is important to emphasise that the universality of music has a tight connection to social, historical, and cultural contexts of human beings and the way it could be interpreted.

While my initial motivation to begin this project was my interest in Prince Tui’s music and an opportunity to learn about his life from the inside. Also, I believed that music could help me to connect to my future participants, a shared connection with people I never met. What this research into music and culture has confirmed is that there is a paradox between local and global connections. Music provides a possible bridge on which one can approach a culture however the risk is that the cultural gap, Smith’s idea of local specificity, can result in misinterpretation. My ‘instinct’ told me that music also worked in a less logical way. Kuzaykina’s contentions also back this up.

In addition, the previous findings confirmed my intuitive experience of crossing cultural bridges by listening to music. Even being divided by languages we speak, music has always provided a chance to understand each other. Although my general knowledge of the music history of New Zealand was limited, as well as understanding the country’s core values, I decided to choose the topic on music and acculturation. The motives behind this decision were my interest in Prince Tui’s music and an opportunity to learn about his life from inside. Also, I believed that music could help me to connect to my future participants by finding something in

common with people I never met. The outcomes in this literature review point to the universalism of music but also how it may work in terms of emotional reactions to a new culture. Baily and Collyer (2006) believe that music is a powerful instrument evoking one's memories, capturing emotions, and creating possible situations which allow looking inside of someone's life.

What this section of research has also revealed is that the process of engaging with music has risks. This is part of the paradox I referred to previously - the risk of misinterpretation. While this study would involve intuitively crossing cultural bridges by using music, it was essential to identify potential harms and benefits of this approach. Resnik (2017) describes the risks and advantages of employing intuitive methods in human subject research as a complex process that depends on many factors. These considerations of negative impact are psychological harms, such as over-emotional reactions, a risk of discrimination by breaching one's confidentiality, prejudice and preconception; economic harms, such as the risk for a participant of losing a job or cut salary; and empirical harms, such as physical pain or discomfort. By contrast, a positive effect can be found in improving one's self-esteem; informational benefits, when the participant can obtain vital information during the research; and the rest of society may gain valuable knowledge. To minimize the risks, the AUTECH principals in obtaining and analyzing collected data will be applied for this study.

Additionally, music can help immigrants who move around the world and understand their new society. An example of this is the study carried out by Baily and Collyer (2006) in which connection between music and identity could be found as a remedy to reduce adverse outcomes of migration; as well as the possibilities of establishing new social relationships in a new country. Also, the potential is the ability of music to involve immigrants in cross-cultural creation rather than to be focused on their communities.



From an aesthetic perspective, migration and music (even separated from the lyrical content) are fruitful areas for further studies. Both can highlight social and ethnic discords. Music can travel across countries and generate new cultural experiences with migrants' involvement. Tui's music became a vehicle of a journey towards my acculturation, sometimes accelerating the integration at an emotional level, a level where words can often be insufficient to describe feelings.

On the other hand, acculturation has a powerful influence on recognising and dealing with new musical information. If music is the way to communicate differently, acculturation generates a deeper level of understanding. Yakupov (2016) writes that communication through music is the "Universum" and suggests that it is a unique form of connecting people with all cultures, even though the interpretation of meanings depends on the context. Another example of the universality of music described by Ovrutskiy (2004) as a specific language that has unlimited possibilities in expressing the gamut of human emotions, and is also able to depict phenomena of the surrounding reality, mainly the realities of nature. The specificity of music lies in the fact that it "informs" mainly at the level of moods, emotions and associative images that arise.

This process may take in the highest ideals of beauty and perfection, moral motives, personal thoughts and deep feelings, and even unrealistic fantasies. The "music Universum" is based on the creative activity of the composer inventing a new imagined reality that is invisible, intangible, but audible.

The musician provides new information that resonates in human souls. In Smith's Doctoral thesis titled 'Ka tangi te tītī, ka tangi te kākā, ka tangi hoki ahau – The role of contemporary Māori music in promoting te reo Māori', he defines the meaning of the word waiata as – te wai i ataata – the waters that reflect the soul of the person' arguing that any waiata or song must be a true expression of feelings used by the composer (Smith, 2014). Musical communication, therefore, operates not only with sounds, but it is associated with other materials. This method of

commutation requires the mechanism of encoding and decoding the meanings of the composer's work; however, it contains hidden communicative structures connected with cultural traditions, norms of music perception, ethnic and other characteristics of art. Contemporary Maori music has also developed and hybridised significantly since Duperry's first encounters with the haka. Both Maori and Pakeha culture now share melodic and harmonic scales making shared appreciation of the communicative musical act much more tightly interwoven. However, this music does operate on a different communicative model, one that seemingly lies beyond 'logic'.

Another purpose of my journey as a filmmaker was to find the nature of the popularity of Prince Tui Teka as a composer and a performer. What was his 'secret formula' to attract people? Is it in his musicality or sense of humour? Thus, acculturating through music is a reciprocal process which lets people communicate on different levels and integrates their private experience into art and social practice. Similarly, this documentary study was the chance to interact with participants around the country where everyone had a story about Prince Tui Teka. They also allowed me to get into their world, to hear their opinions, and to observe the way they live.

To conclude this section, the literature identifies that musicality supports different groups to communicate better by using music and also there is the suggestion that music also is the universal language of sorts. Communicating through music is not only making sounds, but effectively interpreting information from a range of sources, creating new meanings, and enriching cultural standards.

# Methodology III

## ***Introduction***

I want to begin this chapter by looking at the filmmaker's process of immersion in the documentary story. Many documentary films, particularly those whose story depends on careful and structured informational exposition, follow a prewritten script as well as a carefully planned filming procedure. However, Rosenthal and Eckhardt (2016) suggest that a considerable number of documentaries require another method of work, such as an immersion in the subject of a story. For the filmmaker, the immersion can open new possibilities. The unpredictability of the evolving film can yield unexpected results. Participants may disclose hidden information, conflicts that were previously unseen may surface. It might also be argued that an 'immersed' documentarian might have the ability to react with greater flexibility, to film in a more natural way, reacting to what he/she sees on a much more personal level. In this kind of scenario, the story may need to be found in the edit, essentially complicating the post-production workflow. The choice to immerse myself in Tui's world was deliberate. Although I wanted to explore Tui's story by interviewing people that knew him I also realised that the 'I' of this documentary, Dmitry the filmmaker, would have to be present. I needed to engage in two main methodological approaches that I believed could run in parallel. Firstly, a heuristic methodology was used, one that prioritized immersion and self-discovery, together with documentary filmmaking techniques.

Additionally, I engaged with specific documentary practices thus framing my research pathway in terms of documentary as creative practice/research.

Kerrigan (2018) finds the following:

Creative practice methodologies are preferred in screen production because they reveal research insights into how audio-visual meaning is made from

the perspective of the creator/s of a screen work. Shedding light on the range of methodological choices available to a screen production researcher provides a deeper understanding of the assumed philosophical choices, as well as providing a necessary defence of the subjective position taken by a screen production researcher. ( pp.11 - 12)

Kerrigan's quotation does highlight the importance of maintaining and defending a more subjective position as a researcher, a key tenet of heuristic methodology. She also highlights the importance of considering how 'audio-visual meaning' is made. Amidst the heuristic process of immersion, this meaning-making idea was also central to my research practice.

An examination of both methods also reveals similarities and differences. Heuristic and documentary modes use similar steps, such as planning, research, involvements, self-analysis, and implementation. However, these methods work differently for a research topic. A research-as-practice approach can focus on the specific task of the production; whereas heuristics allow observing a more extensive process as it relates to the idea of 'discovery'. In this project, there were elements of both types of approaches that I wanted to explore.

### ***My Fears and Restrictions***

Starting any research project in unfamiliar territory is a big challenge. My concerns were how to address people, start a conversation, interview, and follow all cultural norms in a bicultural society that I was adapting to as an immigrant. As a filmmaker, I did not know which tactic was best to encourage respondents to talk on camera as the world of this documentary was different from any that I was familiar with. Understanding the basic principles of Tikanga Māori became a road map for the journey that sought to involve a group of people as participants in this project. I had to bear in mind that myself, as an immigrant, would be entering into the

sometimes-fragile realm of Māori Pākehā relationships. What is Mātauranga Māori, and where is the invisible boundary between the Māori and Western Pākehā worlds?

Furthermore, my subjects belong to Ngāi Tūhoe and Ngāti Porou; iwi with a strong sense of identity. This exaggerated my anxiety because I did not know how they would accept people from outside of their community. Furthermore, which socio-cultural group did I belong to from a Māori perspective?

Presumed to be a Pākehā, I am not a typical white European having a Russian accent, and Soviet background that disconnected me from the Anglo-Saxon group.

Similarly, AUTECH's ethical principles of research put a limit on interacting with participants and asking them to take part in a documentary film. For instance, one limitation was in communication with possible subjects and considering respondents' privacy and psychological comfort while trying to obtain information from respondents. Also, special attention is given to social and cultural sensitivity of the subject of my research that targets Māori participants. It required additional consultation with an advisor focusing on locally specific practices to enhance Māori values and ethics.

Again, these restrictions are designed to respect people's rights to privacy and confidentiality, combined with the principles of partnership, participation, and protection derived from The Treaty of Waitangi. Finally, the first stage of research started with a need to find something in common in three different worlds. Indeed, it was one of the stages of self-research described in the heuristic methodology:

The power of heuristic inquiry lies in its potential for disclosing the truth. Through exhaustive self-research, dialogues with others, and creative depictions of experience, a comprehensive knowledge is generated, beginning as a series of objectives using and developing into a systematic and definitive exposition. (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985, p. 40)

## ***Heuristic Research Method***

A leading expert in heuristic research Carl Moustakas (1990) defines the meaning of the method as a way to find or discover. It relates to an internal procedure of searching for the nature of experience and cultivating techniques required for further studies. The heuristic method focuses on creative self-processes and self-discoveries; where a researcher goes through the process of investigation and also faces growing self-awareness and self-knowledge. The finding process guides a researcher to a deeper understanding of human phenomena together with the comprehensions of related experience in life. From the beginning of the study, the method includes self-search, self-dialogue, and self-findings; whereas, inner awareness, signification, and inspiration aim to frame the research question. The heuristic research method cannot be hastened or timed by schedule or calendar. This process claims the total honesty, responsibility, immersion, and concentration of the researcher on one central question; moreover, there is a chance of hurting yourself emotionally as well as a personal transformation that occurs as a probability in every heuristic journey.

Additionally, the heuristic engagement is autobiographical as heuristic research starts with a question that the researcher aspires to clarify or answer; plus, every personal inquiry also has social or even universal importance. Discovery, self-inquiry, and dialogue with others are ways to find the intrinsic meanings of human experience in this scientific examination. The quality of a search requires the deeper involvement of an investigator in one's feelings, beliefs, and opinions. Another significant aspect of Moustakas' suggested research guideline is to situate the study around six phases of the heuristic method. These stages involve the initial engagement, immersion into the topic and question, incubation, illumination, explication, and culmination of the research in a creative synthesis.

## **Initial Engagement**

The function of initial engagement is to uncover an intense curiosity and to make the examiner seriously consider the topic of study. During the initial engagement phase, the researcher licences him/herself to employ intuition freely and define the framework of the question, which is arisen in the investigation and its importance.

## **Immersion**

The immersion procedure permits the investigator to become closer with the question - to live in it and this method lets knowledge cultivate. Essential ideas for the immersion compromise of impulsive self-dialogues and self-searching and following intuition.

## **Incubation**

For the period of incubation, the researcher ends up absorbing information about the topic; however, the inner expansion of knowledge may reach its full potential.

## **Illumination**

This phase may stimulate the growth of new elements of experience, therefore enhancing other dimensions of knowledge. Alternatively, the illumination process may include modifications of partial understanding or hidden values.

## **Explication**

The process of explication requires the researchers to concentrate on thoughts, beliefs, senses, and even on details obtained from conversations with others. During this stage, the examiner elucidates the significant findings of the research topic and places them into the entire experience.

## **Creative Synthesis**

In this last phase, all components of the previous stages become familiar to the examiner. This more profound understanding of accumulated data and time spent on the research topic is vital as it allows one to achieve the best results. The

researchers must think outside of any limitations of collected information and authorise an inner life of the question to develop.

To sum up, the heuristic research is an enormously challenging process that not only requires questioning one's experience but also it is the way of thinking and creating. In addition, self-dialogue and honesty are required to understand the meanings of the human subject (Moustakas, 1990). This study, then, would need to examine how the heuristic method benefits the filmmaking process by sharing a personal experience of acculturation. Alongside this, it would also be an attempt to explore if the heuristic method and documentary filmmaking methods have a parallel structure.

However, approaches of this kind carry with them various well-known limitations. According to Djuraskovic and Arthur (2010), the heuristic methodology can be highly subjective in the outcomes of the research as it concentrates on the feelings and experience of one investigator. Consequently, the researcher's bias may reduce the participation of respondents and co-examiners. Accuracy of the collected data is another concern in the heuristic approach as it is a qualitative method that requires additional checking and consideration with the interpretation of meanings. My contention was that a series of checks and balances with the supervisory team would mitigate some of the shortcomings of this method.

### ***The Concept of Aroha***

One of my concerns, as already stated, was how I might operate inside a Maori world. I was worried that my approach, one that prioritised self-discovery, might clash with Māoritanga and Māori concepts of creation and the dissemination of knowledge and of art. During the first meeting with my secondary supervisor Dr Valance Smith, I was asked to describe what drove me to research Prince Tui Teka. For a few minutes, Dr Valance listened to my wordy explanation. But when I finished, he quickly summarised my intentions with one word - Aroha.



Since then, tracing Aroha became a necessary tool of the journey to explore my emotional connection to Tui's music. Often, the most direct translation of Aroha is 'love' which has a similar meaning in the English language. Though, the definition of Aroha can vary with synonyms of empathy, concern, care, compassion, affection, and pity; and it can change in speech or writing (Moorfield, 2016). The complexity of understating Aroha was clarified by Cleve Barlow:

Aroha in a person is an all-encompassing quality of goodness, expressed by love for people, land, birds and animals, fish, and all living things. A person who has Aroha for another expresses genuine concern towards them and acts with their welfare in mind, no matter what their state of health or wealth. It is the act of love that adds quality and meaning to life. (Barlow, 1991, p.8)

Aroha is one of the essential values in the Māori world that has a complex meaning and requires a more in-depth comprehension. 'Giving with no expectation of return' - one of the definitions of Aroha became a non-Western way of tracking my emotional journey. Rather than impeding a heuristic approach, it served to ground my interactions with subjects and the emotional journey to find the 'real' Tui, my subjective understanding of who he was.

In this documentary study, I have attempted to define exactly what the nature of my Aroha for Prince Tui is and to compare this the Aroha for Tui that I saw in others.

### ***Documentary as a Creative Research***

To use documentary as the method of screen production research is to examine how audio-visual work is created and also involves understanding how documentary theory relates to the practice of 'making'. Batty and Kerrigan (2018) find that combining research and screen production is an innovative method of enquiry. The complexity and diversity of this mode of investigation may be found in the process of creating a story. One of the difficulties of this procedure is in

interdisciplinary and multiple research practices. For example, subjects such as performance, art, design, or creative writing have already outlined the principles of creative practice research; whereas, in screen production, the approach is more experimental and requires one to develop larger examinational standards and varied forms of practices. Creative practices in screen production seek to disclose how a researcher understands their findings and how this is transferred to a screen.

Furthermore, using a heuristic approach in tandem with documentary-as-practice centred research filmmaking can allow an investigator to combine a more formal examination of elements of filmmaking technique with an emotional journey of self-discovery (sometimes underestimated in traditional academic studies). Jacobs (2016) suggests that the emotional characteristics of audiovisuality should be considered in research that involves filmmaking instead of being limited by the documenting of 'actuality'. Emotional qualities can be explained as feelings that can be hard to deal with, to see, or to describe. In films, for example, visual information could be obtained or interpreted in a myriad of ways, could push beyond the verbal landscape of more traditional interview-based films and highlight aspects of films that are 'felt' or that may remain inexpressible. Thus, emotional characteristics can be employed as a chance to work and uncover the deeper significance of a research question.

Essentially, I was approaching a project where I had to recognise, embrace and decide on varied techniques and "filmmaking practice" approaches (often based on a factually-based research enquiry) while acknowledging and even concentrating on a seemingly irrational process where emotions might influence and tailor my personal interpretation of reality. Also, creating a story is always an emotional experience as it is a place where an artist can find inspiration. My own goal for the documentary was to produce a work that transcended the conventions of a traditional interview-based documentary and that explored territory and emotional

space in a more poetic way. Before I discuss these poetic aspects of the documentary story I would like to look at some of the theory that has grounded research in the documentary.

# Theoretical Consideration of 'Practice' IV

## ***What is the purpose of the documentary?***

Michael Renov (1993), whose work has grounded much documentary theory over the last decades, effectively breaks down four tendencies that are useful in identifying the impulses that cause a documentary maker to make a work of non-fiction. He identifies them thus:

### **1. *to record, reveal or preserve:***

Documentary functions as an instrument to fixate moments in life and keep them for the future. It stops these moments from being vanished, and consequently, this fixing reconstructs real historical events staying outside of that actuality.

### **2. *to persuade or promote.***

In this mode, the documentary genre serves as propaganda exploiting a mixture of different techniques, including interviews, vivid images, and statistical facts. It is important to mention that this tendency is also seen as the product of particular periods in history.

### **3. *to analyze or interrogate.***

This trend focuses on the connection between image and actuality. The film becomes a vehicle which allows analysis and the interrogation of a subject or an event. For the audience, it is a possibility to examine and even act on what it observes from a screen.

### **4. *to express.***

Artistic interpretation in this mode contradicts with the typical representation of actuality. Nevertheless, Renov's findings suggest that expressions and representations can benefit mutually: the expressive tendency doesn't necessarily exclude the possibility that this approach denies 'truth' or the 'real'. Renov's work

was a good starting point that allowed me to consider my own 'impulses' in creating this work.

Overall, each one is a result of cultural, historical, and technological circumstances. These tendencies function as a way to see the dissimilarity in the representation of the image and provide opportunities for aesthetic and political analysis (Renov, 1993). Using Renov's analytical model, I found that the idea of recording, preserving but also expressing were essential parts of my documentary journey. *The Bridge Across the Ocean* is an interview-based documentary, a record of people's memories. These reminiscences are also the representation of real events. However, I also wanted this documentary to move beyond an interview-based format to allow my own artistic self-expression. Renov's categories helped to define a tendency, but my emotional reaction was at the core of described events without denying their realness.

His identification of the 'expressive' tendency of non-fiction work had a particular interest to me. He writes that expressiveness in documentary film aids to keep the audience engaged. In a more 'expressive' work, the details of a topic covered in the documentary may be represented and emphasised symbolically. Also, the expressiveness can have an aesthetic function in the story.

In addition to Renov, Bill Nichols' work has had a seminal influence on documentary theory. He outlines (2001) six modes of documentary storytelling, almost seeing them as sub-genres. These six modes are: poetic, expository, participatory, observational, reflexive, performative. The approaches are not static or focused on one standard. Nichols explains the following:

Each mode may arise partly as a response to perceived limitations in previous modes, partly as a response to technological possibilities, and partly as a response to a changing social context. Once established, though, modes overlap and intermingle. Individual films can be characterized by the mode that seems most influential to their organization, but individual films can also

“mix and match” modes as the occasion demands.  
(Nichols, 2001, p. 34)

I considered these modes before starting the production phase of my documentary. They helped me identify elements that I wanted to emphasise during filming. I knew there would be interviews but my hope was to transcend television-style interview situations and their over-reliance on ‘talking heads’. Considering Nichols’ ideas on the poetic mode opened up new territory for me. I wanted to employ a more poetic style of filmmaking that could improve the dynamics of an interview-based film. And then there was Tui’s story and the exposition that is required. Consequently, I related my methods to three of Nichols’ modes: expository, poetic, participatory. Nichols (2001) defines these modes as:

### ***The Expository Mode***

The expository method is one that normally directly addresses the audience, often, with voice-over or graphic elements that offer or advance an argument or narrate a story. Expository documentaries depend on the expository content that can be delivered in the voice-over or interviews and visual information normally plays a supporting role. The expository method often adopts a voice-of-God manner to comment.

Nichols concludes: ‘Expository documentary is an ideal mode for conveying information or mobilising support within a framework that pre-exists the film’ (Nichols, 2001, p.109). Also, the edit often concerns itself with the exposition of a story but does not always provide the opportunity to affect deeper narrative rhythms as may occur in a more poetic rendering of the ‘truth’ (his ‘poetic mode’).

On the surface, considering Nichols’ ideas on the expository mode emphasized how important exposition would be in guiding an audience through Tui’s life. However, thinking in these terms also constrained my vision of the film. I wanted it to be a

work that could transcend more orthodox structures. Were Nichols' ideas on direct address coherent with what I believed my narration might add to the overall structure of the film? Would consider voice-over solely as a tool that would aid an expositional approach to voice over curtail the potentials of using it as an emotional response to what played out on screen? Following Nichols' ideas, I looked at other modes that he outlined.

### ***The Poetic Mode***

This mode emphasises feelings and atmosphere. Its influence is more emotional than informational or pertaining to knowledge of the story. Nichols (2001) hypothesises following:

The poetic mode is particularly adept at opening up the possibility of alternative forms of knowledge to the straightforward transfer of information, the prosecution of a particular argument or point of view, or the presentation of reasoned propositions about problems in need of solution. This mode stresses mood, tone, and affect much more than displays of knowledge or acts of persuasion. The rhetorical element remains underdeveloped. (p. 103)

In this model, facts or logic are not as important as an aesthetic experience In some ways, I found Nichols' analysis to be less clear here and he favoured (in his examples) older 'symphony of a city' approaches to what he terms the 'poetic'.

But considering poetic approaches allowed me to think about how I might work more lyrically, interpreting past events, expressing myself non-verbally and playing with the idea of expressive possibilities in voice over.

## ***The Participatory Mode***

A participatory documentary can underscore the actuality by prioritizing interactions between filmmaker and subject. In this mode, the documentarian intervenes in the story, his/her influence is felt and noticed by the audience. This method can be limiting in that our observation and participation of events are limited to experiences that the filmmaker has but it does give the sense of being in a situation that is evolving one that may feel more like 'real-life'. After all, the filmmaker's role is being acknowledged and, in real terms, the filmmaker is always present (Nichols, 2001). In addition, relationships are emphasised over factual information.

Nichols ideas on the participatory mode were helpful. After all, the film was a voyage to discover Tui through his fans. This direct experience and a way of organically situating my position as researcher/filmmaker was one of the important aspects of this film. Despite some contradictory elements in Nichols modes and the simplicity of Renov's approach, it was helpful to consider both of these theoreticians. They both opened the door for some deeper thinking about the way this story could be told.

## ***The Creative Treatment of Actuality***

Rather than engage with notions of what is 'real' or 'factual' I wanted to look beyond these concepts and see Tui's journey within my own (as both a documentary maker and someone testing the idea of acculturation by making a film). Here it may be useful to return to another idea that grounds our idea of the documentary story. Nichols considers the idea of documentary 'voice' and the idea of 'invention'.

More pertinent to our discussion of how documentaries speak or acquire a voice of their own is the idea of artistic or artificial evidence or proof. These



are the techniques used to generate the impression of conclusiveness or proof. They are a product of the orator or filmmaker's inventiveness rather than something found elsewhere and introduced intact. (Nichols, 2001, p.50)

Kerrigan and McIntyre (2010) introduce Grierson's early definition of documentary as 'the creative treatment of actuality' as being a foundation of the genre.

Documentary, or the creative treatment of actuality, is a new art with no such background in the story and the stage as the studio product so glibly possesses. (Grierson 1933: 8)

Although Grierson did not fully clarify the meaning of this phrase above, the term 'creative treatment' can be taken to mean a systematic collaborative procedure in documentary practice which aids to confirm the rational links between individuals, art and creativity. This is a useful touchstone that can allow filmmakers to consider and periodically rethink 'creativity' as a rational process, one which can allow them to make progress in production.

While I have outlined some of the traditional ways and theoretical approaches that underpin documentary method and practice the main creative concern was how I could expand an interview-based documentary into territory that included (in Nichols' terms) a more poetic consideration of story.

Building on Nichols' ideas Biesterfeld (2019) describes the poetic mode in the documentary as an aspiration to make an emotional impact rather than construct logical arguments. Moreover, documentary filmmakers tend to employ the poetic mode to accentuate cinematic and aesthetic meanings over content, searching perhaps for visual poetry and allowing the story to articulate itself visually instead of expressing itself in traditional narrative form. Visca (2017) believes that the creation of a poetic documentary provides the filmmaker more freedom to experiment visually to discover their veracity even though the audience comprehends it differently.

## ***The Fiction Inspires Documentary***

One of my concerns was to develop a specific visual style for this film. The importance of aesthetics and cinematography to the documentary story has been discussed by Russian documentarian Eugeniy Solomin. He states that cinematography is a form of art where how to shoot is essential, as the viewer must be satisfied, involved aesthetically, and the presentation of the material must be structured. On the contrary, the documentary movie is a reality that needs to be shown as it is seen by an ordinary person, while the form is of secondary importance (Solomin, 2016).

Conversely to Solomin, Ranum (2019) argues that the visuals are an essential part of the documentary story providing the audience with the opportunity to observe the beauty of the landscape and the natural environment.

In the following section, I want to discuss the aesthetics of my approach and then relate some of my aesthetic choices to the work of Japanese filmmaker Yasujiro Ozu (1903-1963). The post-war Japanese cinema has had a profound impact on me, particularly its unique visual style and its engagement with the philosophical concept of emptiness, void, and silence. When I explored Ozu's work in detail, I was introduced to concepts that seemed appropriate for the story I wanted to tell. Geist (1983) writes that the Zen ideas affected Ozu's style through the concept of Mu, symbolising the emptiness, void, and silence.

These elements have a positive connotation for the traditional Japanese artist and can be found in the haiku, music and the traditional flower arrangement. The principle of Mu allows the director to build an emotional connection to the viewers where one shot can transition to another with no clear logical link.



Figure 1:3. A scene from "Floating Weeds" (Ozu, 1959).

Therefore, Ozu's films comprise various long scenes; also, the director does not hasten to omit dialogue or action, leaving space for *Mu*. The emptiness and silence are in static, non-dramatic shots of landscape and architecture. To emphasise, in the inspirational Ozu's chef-d'oeuvre *Late Autumn* (1960) the idea of emptiness and void showed through the reiteration of opening and closing scenes. Notably, the subjects of all scenes are architectural objects such as bridges signifying different chapters of the story. *Late Autumn* motivated me to implement the idea of reiteration and give a voice to architecture, which serves as a visual metaphor of places and spaces connected to my protagonist.

Another one of Ozu's masterpieces is a lyric comedy *Good Morning (Ohayo)* (1959). This movie impressed me by excellently constructed compositions and a sense of visual harmony between light and colour. Later, I tried to follow Ozu's principle of symmetry in framing interviews and landscape shots; besides, I aimed to imitate an old school touch in a documentary story by using his slow and thoughtful manner (Bingham, 2017; Bradshaw, 2010).



*Figure 1:4. A scene from " Good Morning" (Ohayo) (Ozu, 1959).*

To summarise, classic cinematography can be a source of inspiration for a modern visual artist or a filmmaker. Yasujiro Ozu showed that simplicity together with mathematical analysis and structure wholly matched with the idea of empty spaces; which I attempted to apply in my documentary. According to Richie (1963), Ozu's indirect poetic method follows formality:

He does not confront emotion, he surprises it; he restricts himself precisely in order to achieve profundity, in order to transcend these limitations; his formality is that of poetry, a context which surprises and hence destroys habit and familiarity, returning to each word, to each image, a freshness which was its originality. (p.16)

Despite the formality of his approach the way he frames his world allows transcendence of these limitations. Thus, there is the potential for documentaries to enrich the overall story by implementing a range of techniques that can come from fiction films. Understanding these concepts considerably deepened my

exploration of the potential of what might be called 'poetic'. This was something that felt underdeveloped in the work of Nichols.

### ***A Truth-Telling Toll***

As previously discussed earlier in this *Methodology* chapter, documentary filmmaking as the method of screen production research can be used to discover new meanings. Batty and Kerrigan (2018) suggest that employing screen production and research as a creative practice study is not only a reasonable but pioneering mode of investigation. Throughout different forms and genres such as video performances, television films, online works, and screenplays, screen production enquiry should and can make a distinctive influence on the discipline.

In a sense, documentary filmmaking research is equal to the use of private or public archive materials. In another sense, this methodology creates cultural artefacts via artistic presentation or portrayal of real events by using motion pictures and sound. The documentary research methodology combines the contradictory technique of managing and determining pieces of evidence, as considered in the traditional sciences, but it creates and formulates aesthetic performances as comprehended in the art and humanities (Kridel, 2019).

Creative screen production practices are reciprocally connected to the heuristic method as they can focus on the emotional component and, in addition, both techniques do require a deeper immersion of the researcher in the study. The production of a documentary film operates within the real-life experience of creating the practical elements that will form the documentary story, interviews, actuality and archive footage and other material. The balance between creativity and objectivity hinges on the relationship between all of these elements. While it is not the purpose of this exegesis to specifically comment on objectivity and subjectivity, it is useful to delineate the relationship between the 'real' and the

'creatively' enhanced elements and the idea of 'truth' in a documentary story. Walley (2011) describes the accurate representation of reality and objectivity in documentaries as a complicated philosophical matter that demands to represent actual events truthfully. This difficulty is in the core of cinematography which intrinsically is an illusion. Arneson (2012) confirms that even though documentary films have some qualities as a truth-telling tool, its representation of real-life experience will remain subjective.

However, award-winning Russian documentarian Victor Kosakovsky (2013) defines the genre as a unique moment in life, shot uniquely. Kosakovsky sees the film director as one who concentrates on recording emotions that the viewer then experiences during the watching rather than the story itself. For a director, planning the film is the most crucial part of the job. In the past, when using real film stocks financially constrained production filmmakers thought twice about how they filmed and on the limitations of the material that would be used in the edit. Kosakovsky also points out the following:

"...for me, there is no cinema based on fact without an art form - as well as on fiction without content, and strictly speaking, it is absurd. In the movie, the camera captures reality in one way or another. Although what it captures is more real, more than what you see later...There is no replica of reality in its purest form. The abundance of reality devalues reality..."

(Kosakovsky, 2013)

Although Kosakovsky may be contradictory and iconoclastic in this statement he points to a deeper motivation that I share from my position as a filmmaker and researcher, I couldn't ignore that I was working in a format that could also be considered an art form.

To summarise, in this section, I wanted to briefly explore the aims and forms of documentary practices as they relate to my documentary. Furthermore, how the visual and aesthetic ideas of fiction cinematography inspired my creative approach to producing a documentary film. Previous analysis, also, has reported how screen production research can be paralleled with heuristic methodology. Lastly, Kosokovsky's contentions, extreme in some senses, pointed me to attempt to discover a more artistic way of representing the factual story.



## Production Immersion V

In the following chapter are a description of the filming process and also a record of the emotional journey of the shoot. I look at this phase of the project as an 'immersion' following Moustakas' (1993) definition of the process.

### ***One Man Band***

*"The Bridge Across the Ocean"* was produced with no crew, and I had solid arguments for that. First of all, the educational purpose was to brush up on all my filming and editing skills that I had not used as a practising filmmaker for a while.



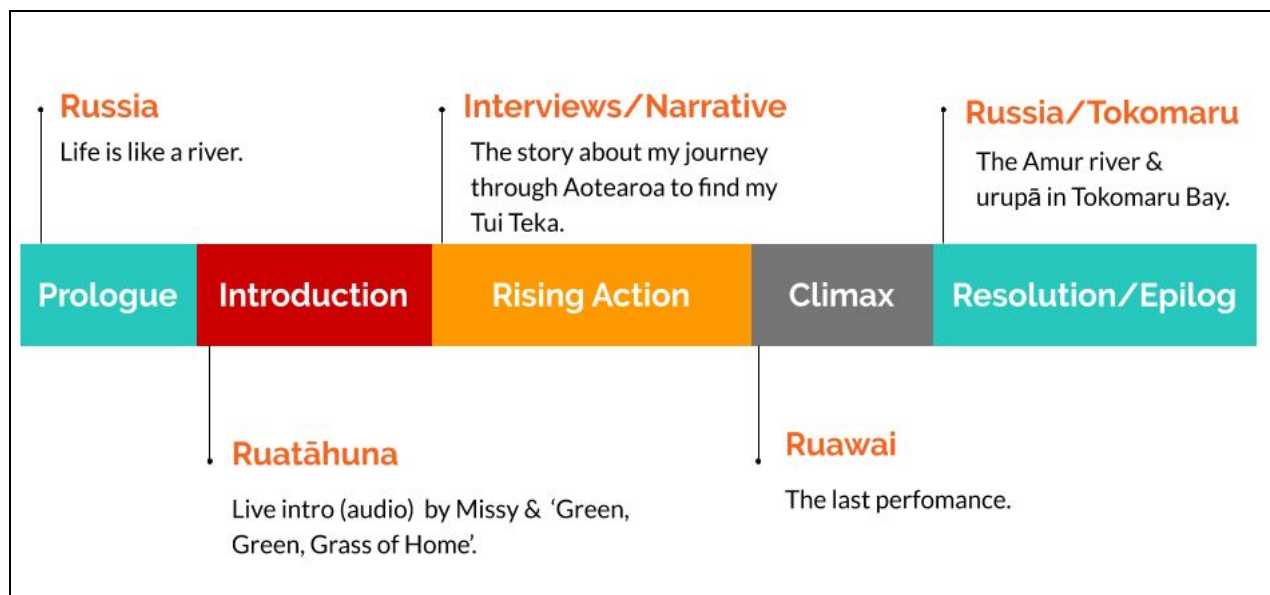
Figure 1:5. *"The Bridge Across The Ocean"* shooting an interview as a one-man band, 2019.

Also, I was doing practice-based research to engage my emotions and thoughts. I did acknowledge that it might be stressful working solo and did realise that collaboration with someone who specialises in a particular field can produce a better result. However, a firm intention to immerse myself in this study dictated that I become a 'one-man-band'. Sometimes being a one-person crew has a



beneficial effect when you enter someone's life during the filming process. Another reason for the 'one-man-band' approach was the spontaneous aspect of it. It gave freedom in dealing with interviewees, filming landscape scenes, organising a production schedule, and correcting mistakes, which is usual practice in this approach. In contrast, working alone was personally an entirely uncommon condition as my previous television experience was based on cooperation with a team. Thus, being a solo filmmaker was a necessary part of my discovery of Prince Tui Teka and it became an incredible challenge to work in an unfamiliar cultural environment.

### ***The Ideal Scenario***



*Figure 1:6. "The Bridge Across The Ocean" the mind map of film structure, 2018.*

Initially, my future film should have been a documentary based on the biography of Prince Tui Teka. The story that I constructed in my notebook starts in Ruatāhuna, where my hero was born and ended up in Ruawai, where he passed away. I wanted to get a more accurate portrayal of Tui's life by including interviews where people can talk directly on camera about their experiences and feelings about working with the legend or meeting him in real life. I also realised that there access to any archive

materials was limited; so, I had hoped to use the family's photo archive (a common practice in a documentary ). One serious consideration in making a biographical documentary about a musician is the music copyright issue; in my ideal plan, Tui's songs would be used from the opening shot to the closing titles. I contacted the APRA office in Auckland a few months before the ethics approval date, and I hoped that professional advice might have helped me to sort this problem out.

Ruatāhuna was a starting point of my journey where I planned to film around the town with a purpose to examine who Tumanako Teka was before he left the country and became a professional musician. I wanted to discover how the environment where he grew up affected him, where his musicality came from; and, of course, to make contact with Teka's whānau. I wanted to reach the family, reach people in Ruatāhuna and in Tokomaru Bay, and also some of his fans in small towns. In retrospect, these expectations now seem a little naive but I only realised this a few months down the track. I believe that my assumption was that I had the right and privilege to make this documentary as I was still, in some senses, 'a foreigner' and that this might allow me to sidestep some of the Tikanga Māori. I should add that I had no commercial interests in the project and, of course, I love Prince Tui Teka's music. This was a 'fan's' journey. Who would want to stop me from this?

### ***The First Contacts to The Real Life of Māori***

Living in multicultural Auckland as an immigrant is like being on another planet. You mistakenly accept the city as a representation of all New Zealand thinking perhaps that everywhere else is part of the same melting pot. The indigenous people of this land are somewhere around; they are part of folklore or associated with a negative representation in local media. Many of us seemed to accept these negative stereotypes as the truth. And many immigrants that I knew were confused about the concept of a bi-cultural Aotearoa. Therefore, my trips outside of Tāmaki

Makaurau were not only out of the necessity to make the film but also served as trips that allowed me to personally discover of my new home.

### ***Ruatāhuna***

The process of AUTEC approval made it impossible to contact Teka's family prior to commencing production. The production phase only began a few months after the ethics application was submitted and approved. By chance, I was given contact details of Teka's family members. Keeping the ideal scenario in mind, I went to Ruatāhuna, where at that time everyone was busy in preparation for the Te Matatini Kapa Haka Festival. My off-camera meeting began with warm conversation, and unexpectedly, I was introduced to the iwi kaumātua. We agreed that I would come to Ruatāhuna when the family and the tribe decided to participate in my research. My last humble request to film around without pointing the camera at people was declined with a reason that it required iwi's collective consideration. For the first time, I experienced and could compare tribal democracy in action to my country of origin; a place where a small group of people can make similar decisions without any additional consultation. Later, I learned that the Tuhoe people have a strong sense of sovereignty and take their autonomy privilege seriously. It was another cultural experience of the understanding of a fact that a small group can fight for their right to be who they are.

Nevertheless, I left the town trying to adopt my ideal scenario to what I had seen and gone through. I was sure that the first contact might have helped me to have Teka's whānau on board, and they almost agreed to participate. What I needed was to wait a couple of weeks: another idyllic scenario that was far from reality.

### ***'Then I'm Walking in Gizzy'***

In Gisborne, I found Tui's big fan and radio DJ Walter Walsh (The Wiz) who hosts the Prince Tui Teka memorial tribute show on Tūranga FM every year. On January 23<sup>rd</sup>

Prince Tui passed away, so the radio show was an opportunity to witness how people share their memories about a legendary musician with Walter. The Wiz is also a delightful person to talk and work with, his participation in the research helped to connect me to people in the East Coast and around the country. Interestingly, this part of Aotearoa made a significant impact on my perception of the Māori world; I found something had been hidden from me while living in Auckland. I saw the life of Māori communities: tamariki talking to each other in Te Reo, ladies with moko on their faces, poverty, hope, pride and respect to their culture and traditions.

During the radio show, Walter found out that his colleague Dougie Tamatea was a drummer in a band that supported Tui and Missy on the last tour in Northland. Of course, Walter and Dougie agreed to take part in my research, and it was another 'miracle' of how music can connect people.



*Figure 1:7. "The Bridge Across The Ocean" DJ Walter Walsh during the memorial tribute show, 2019.*

It was 'a lucky find' for my documentary as I got a person who worked with Tui and witnessed his final days. Afterwards, Walter's interview served as a comparison of

understanding Tui's music by his generation to the youngsters. Dougie's story became a very emotional part of the film uncovering the details of Tui's death.

After interviewing Walter and Dougie, I headed up to Tokomaru Bay, an area where the Ngāti Porou iwi are strongly represented. The urupā close to Pakirikiri Marae was another significant location of my documentary study. This is the place where Tui and Missy Teka are buried together and the very same graveyard where Ngoi Pēwhairangi also lies.

### ***An Atheist meets Wairuatanga***

My initial idea of showing graveyards at the end of the documentary should have symbolised the circle of life and death. Furthermore, my motive to visit the cemetery was to lay flowers and pay respect to the Māori icons. I grew up in a society where atheism was an integral part of the system. Graveyards did not play such a sacred role in the life of Soviet people; consequently, I did not see the problem of filming at the cemetery. However, entering Māori urupā without invitation or permission, and shooting there is strictly unacceptable. What seemed like a common practice in my culture turned out to be a severe obstacle to my plans. Of course, I had learnt about this restriction, but I did not realise the significance of wairua or the link to the spiritual world. According to Whareaitu (2019), wairua does not necessarily have a connection to religious beliefs; as it is a link between people, the environment, and wellbeing.

### ***The Urupā***

I arrived in Tokomaru Bay in the early morning after having organised some contacts to meet me there and guide me to the cemetery. When I arrived they were not there, the Pakirikiri marae was closed, and no locals were in the streets due to the rainy weather. Two hours later, a big bus stopped at the marae, bringing a group of teachers for the workshop. Through a bus driver, I was able to call a Kuia,

explain to her the purpose of my visit, and without any additional questions, she took me to the graveyards and began a ceremony. It was one of the most vivid and touching moments of a whole journey to discover Prince Tui Teka.



*Figure 1:8. "The Bridge Across The Ocean" the urupā shot from distance, 2019.*

After addressing the spirits of the dead and asking for permission to enter, the Kuia prayed then stepped back and let me lay flowers on Tui, Missy, and Ngoi's headstones. Even being a nonbeliever, I discovered that the Māori spiritual world is 'real' and fragile. Understanding this frailty meant to respect whatever you are or do. Nevertheless, I still wanted to get permission to film at the urupā from Teka and Pēwhairangi's whānau. The rest of the day I spent shooting around the bay and the burial site from a long distance. Meeting with Kuia from the Pakirikiri marae connected me to Professor Tania Ka'ai, who became my interviewee later on.

### ***Approachability and Manaakitanga***

In Auckland, I interviewed David Hartnell and Bernie Allen; both worked with Prince Tui Teka at TVNZ in the '70<sup>s</sup> and '80<sup>s</sup>. Although I knew David before the project

started, interviewing someone who has spent years in the film and television industry was quite thrilling.

As David Hartnell is a journalist and gossip columnist, I planned to talk about Tui as a celebrity and the 'Prince of New Zealand entertainment'. David has met and worked with many international and local stars, but according to him, not many of them can be compared to Tui. His modesty and self-effacing nature were quite disarming. During the interview, he pointed out :

“ I think of his respect and his down to earth approachability. People could just go and talk to him, and I think that's the essence of it...yes he had respect, and he didn't think he was anything. Being on television, so what? It was like 'whatever'. You know, which is great.” (Hartnell, 2019)

David also gave the best representation of New Zealand television and the music industry back in the day: remoteness, a small market, and the near impossibility for Māori artists to reach the top of the charts.

In contrast, Bernie Allen commented “getting to the top of the charts was not easy for a New Zealander. The charts were dominated by what was successful overseas”. He also added “New Zealand was not a railway station. New Zealand was a terminus” (Allen, 2019). The implication being that New Zealand was ‘the end of the road’ for performers. As a TVNZ musical director Bernie Allen worked with Prince Tui Teka on the variety shows. He described Tui as a serious professional musician that probably contrasts with the image of an easy-going guy. I asked Bernie if Tui's music was unique because of his ethnic background, or he had a natural gift for music as Māori culture is more performative than European. Bernie's explanation was categorically clear: Tui Teka was the 'pro' not because of his ethnicity, but his talent and his attitude to working hard for success. Prince Tui accepted what he was doing was a job. Bernie concluded that Teka was humble enough to say that he worked for his audience; he played what people liked.



It came as a revelation to me to discover that Tui Teka took care of his audience first and then probably thought how to express himself. This position contradicts the idea of personal expression that many artists put forth. Perhaps Tui's approach was dictated by the reality of the New Zealand market as performing in small pubs, town halls, or marae was a usual practice and close contact with the audience was a necessary commercial imperative. However, it was also a vital and essential part of Tui's shows. From a Māori perspective, Tui's focus on people can be explained by understanding the concept of Manaakitanga. The essence of manaakitanga is "...the idea of caring about others, uplift them, support them, make them feel at home and loved is one of my dearest values" Manakitanga is an expression of Aroha. (Te Ao Māori, 2019).

### ***He was a Genius!***

In 1979, Caii Michelle (Kaye Gordon) was a member of Ngōi Pēwhairangi's Kapa Haka group in Tokomaru Bay when Tui and Missy came to find someone to join their band. Unexpectedly for Caii, Auntie Ngōi pointed her out to them and she talked about how it changed the life of a teenage girl from a remote town on the East Coast. Caii spent a few years touring with Tui and Missy, mostly in Australia, and during these years she learnt how to be a performer. For my study, an interview with Caii Michelle was the chance to know what it meant for her to work with Prince Tui. She said: "he was a genius...he had this ability to create and put these harmonies together in different songs...he was a perfectionist ... you can not really be taught to do this...he just had a natural gift." (Michelle, 2019)

But who was Tui on and off stage? Caii does not remember that Tui behaved differently when he performed on stage or interacted with others in real life. He probably joked more about himself onstage, she remembered and used his sense of humour to connect to the audience. Caii Michelle also surprised me by uncovering Tui's professional principles such as no drugs or alcohol, Tui did not



drink or take any narcotics, never 'party sang', and tried to look after his voice. She concluded that Prince Tui and Ngoi Pēwhairangi had the talent to pick up people and help them to develop their skills, and she was the blessed one to have spent time working with the legends.

### ***Tautoko means Support***

In 2012, a hip-hop artist from Hastings Tipene Harmer released a song called 'Tautoko' featuring Prince Tui Teka's hit 'For the Life of Me'. It took four months for me to organise an interview with Tipene, even though when I asked him, he immediately decided to participate.

In my documentary film, a story of creating 'Tautoko' is a cross-generational bridge between old-school and modern music. I wondered what Tui Teka meant for him, and wondered if Tipene was afraid of producing a hip-hop tune based on a well-known super hit. He began with his childhood memories:

"My mom and dad used to play Tui Teka all the time. It was the only CD we had in the house. It was not a CD; it was record, tapes....Prince Tui Teka was a hero for us. He was like Elvis to us... His music resonated with all of us." (Harmer, 2019)

The idea of 'Tautoko' came to Tipene when he set up 'For the Life of Me' as a ringtone on his phone; later, a friend wrote the beats. Thus, a love song from the romantic past inspired the hip-hop artist to make a modern tune with a social meaning.

Tipene believes that the young generation knows Prince Tui Teka because of 'Tautoko'; the song about the support that everybody needs in life. According to Tipene, Tui was an innovator; he showed the young generation how to combine different styles and mixed English and Te Reo; 'he gave us hope'.

I did not plan to ask Tipene if he had a chance to show the song to Teka's whānau to deal with copyright. But the unplanned question became an amusing story of how serious issues are solved in the Māori society "...come and play your song to our people, and if they like it, you can use it" (Harmer, 2019).

I am not a big fan of the hip-hop genre; however, in 'Tautoko' Tipene was able to build the bridge between mine and his own childhood memories. I was also someone who needed support in my life. I placed his music video in the final cut of the film. I felt it was like an 'archived reality show', real people who lived rather than playing roles. It was another discovery of real Aotearoa New Zealand through immersion into Tui's world and into the music of those who admired him.

### ***With Music Everything is Possible***

Bizarrely, to uncover the story of 'E Ipo', Tui's most significant hit, I had to visit the Indonesian Embassy in Wellington. 'E Ipo' is based on the melody from a famous Indonesian song 'Mimpi Sedih' written by Aloysius Riyanto in 1972. I realised that exposing this fact in my film can benefit the story. There were a few unsuccessful attempts to contact the Indonesian community in Auckland to find someone who remembers 'Mimpi Sedih'. Fortunately, I discovered that Indonesian Ambassador Tantowi Yahaya is not only a diplomat but used to be a TV presenter and country music superstar. I wrote a letter to the ambassador without expectation of a reply. In a few days, I had a response from the Embassy telling me that His Excellency Tantowi Yahaya would like to participate; so I got an expert. Tui's music was actually opening doors for me. It was an unbelievable and confirmation of sorts that music can make everything possible. His Excellency uncovered the story of 'Mimpi Sedih' and amazed me by the fact that the 'Māori version' 'E Ipo' is incredibly popular in the Pacific as people know the song because of Prince Tui Teka. Moreover, in some countries, the song was adopted as their own.

## ***A Human Bridge***

The groundwork in Tokomaru bay also opened the possibility of an interview with Professor Tania Ka'ai, an expert on the life and work of Ngoi Pēwhairangi. We talked about the creation of 'E Ipo'. Professor Ka'ai wrote a fantastic book 'Ngoi Ngoi Pēwhairangi: A remarkable life', and she also witnessed many events described in the book.

Reading this book helped me to understand the significant role of Aunty Ngoi in Māori renaissance; most important is to comprehend many socio-cultural factors through the biography of one person. Professor Ka'ai said:

"So, speaking of bridges and the name of this thesis, she was a bridge. A human bridge between her community and the Crown, and vice versa. She was a human bridge between the Crown and her community. And, so, there was this travelling between, and she helped to achieve that she was that bridge. So, your title is very appropriate in my view ". (Ka'ai, 2019)

## ***Who does not love 'E Ipo'?***

According to Professor Ka'ai, Tui Teka fell in love with Missy Kururangi and wanted to dedicate a song to her. This song is about Aroha. Of course, it would not be possible without the participation of Ngoi Pēwhairangi. The song became a part of Kiwi identity, and I believed that it served to build a bridge between Māori and Pākēha worlds. The goal of my interview with Professor Tania was to reveal a story of 'E Ipo', but it transformed into a heart to heart conversation with tears and smiles. Her passion for Ngoi and Māori culture evoked a deep emotional response in me. Later, I realised that this encounter could also be described in purely Māori terms: we were talking about *Aroha*.



*Figure 1:9. "The Bridge Across The Ocean" Tui Teka, Missy and Ngoi Pēwhairangi after presenting 'E Ipo' with the gold disc for writing the Te Reo lyrics, (TVNZ), 1982.*

## ***The Last Stand***

My journey to Ruawai in Northland was the final destination to discover Prince Tui Teka and experience real Aotearoa New Zealand. The Ruawai Tavern is a place where the legendary performer passed away. Some sources say that Tui died during the gig, others say that it happened after. Dougie Tamatea confirmed, in his interview, that Prince Tui Teka passed away peacefully in his sleep after the concert. I proposed to visit the tavern and talk to people who might remember the event; furthermore, I needed footage to support Dougie's story.

For a few months, I tried to find any connections with the local communities in Northland. My requests, e-mails, and phone calls were still unanswered and social media platforms were the only chance to communicate.

The 'Ruawai Buy, Sell & Trade & Grapevine' Facebook group looked like the last possibility. All requests to join the Ruawai group were ignored until May 2019. At the same time, I posted information about my study in a few different groups in remote towns around the North Island. The reaction in these communities was

more than anticipated. Facebook users started to comment and share my post, as well as send me private messages. These messages were about their memories and Aroha of Prince Tui. Some of them told me that the tavern had been closed for many years and nobody knew what was going on there now.

One day I received a message from the new owner of the Ruawai Tavern telling me to come and do my research. As soon as I arrived in Ruawai, there was no one waiting for me, and all the phones were off. However, after waiting for a few hours, I decided to film around the town. The locals told me that the tavern had a bad reputation and they expected it to be sold soon. In the afternoon, I finally met the owner, a Māori man in his forties. He was trying to bring the tavern back to life. Despite his rough appearance, this man was more than welcoming and helpful; he showed me around and allowed me to film where ever I wanted.

The most heartbreaking moment was when I found the portraits of Tui and Missy on the walls as the owner had carefully kept them. The footage from The Ruawai Tavern aided me to reconstruct Tui's last stand at the end of my documentary.



*Figure 2:0. "The Bridge Across The Ocean" a portrait of Tui and Missy, is inside The Ruawai Tavern, 2019.*

To conclude, this section has described my contacts with people in different communities while making the documentary film. The visits to Ruatāhuna, Gisborne, Tokomaru Bay, Ngaruawāhia, and Ruawai were absolutely key and I feel that they directly parallel the process of immersion as is set up in the heuristic model. The experiences I have outlined in this section were both cultural and emotional. Making a documentary film as a practice-based study allowed me to develop a deeper understanding of the idea of research enquiry; it connected me to people from diverse parts of the country. In this process, there were distinct parallels between the process of acculturation and immersing myself in this heuristic research model. It is worth noting, however, that the specific process of making a documentary involves the kind of workflow where immersion (the filming) happens concurrently with a process where synthesis is also happening (evaluation of filmed material, pre-edit). In the following chapter, I will examine the process of edit more closely and consider it in terms of the heuristic model, a creative synthesis of the material collected during the immersion process (both the filmed material and the more personal reactions of the immersion itself).

# Editing as Creative Synthesis VI

## ***Introduction***

One of the significant challenges that I have aimed for in this study has been to comprehend how the various techniques of documentary storytelling would allow me to move beyond the television model that requires a focus on facts and details.

I felt my previous television experience limited me in terms of filmmaking skills. First of all, my decision to work solo let me concentrate and immerse myself deeply into the topic of the research; while my earlier practice always required collective efforts. In the same way, the documentary genre, in my perspective, is designed for the thoughtful process of watching, whereas television needs more simplified forms. Television broadcasting standards often eliminate essential techniques that I chose to employ: long shots or more complex sequences that strengthened the idea of my journey. However, I realised that both types of documentaries could apply similar methods. Thereby, restrictions on filming, for example, were countered by using a more 'poetic' approach, as described by Nichols and others in the methodology section of this exegesis. Thinking through elements in this poetic approach allowed me to consider a wide variety of styles and forms, it unlocked possibilities. Therefore, my task was to 'synthesise' the collected materials, and find the techniques that could aid to transcend the limitations and represent my own personal journey, the emotional roadmap of the story, much more closely.

## ***Creative Insights***

I could not persuade Prince Tui's whānau to take part in my documentary research. I was limited by AUTECH's restrictions on limited follow-up and less active pursuit of subjects (unlike the working journalist or documentary maker). In addition, my respect for Tikanga Māori did not allow me to ignore the iwi hierarchy or try to find

another way to film in Tūhoi country or Tokomaru Bay. Seven months after production began I was still awaiting Teka's whānua reply to my request. Progress was, seemingly, stopped.

Then I decided to watch more material on Prince Tui Teka and discovered the programme *Unsung Heroes of Māori*, Series 3, Episode 14 (2011) on Māori TV on Demand. This is a brilliant television documentary based on a biography of Prince Tui, with lots of interviews and TVNZ's archival footage. A quick (and probably the last) interview with Missy was included but no one from Teka's family fronted. The archive video showed Tui back in the 1970s – 80s and included short fragments in Ruatāhuna. After watching the *Unsung Heroes of Māori*, I realised that my role as a storyteller should be changed as I did not have innate rights to tell the story of Tui's life. In this synthesis phase, I wanted to focus on my journey and memories of people who were affected by the great artist. This was a moment when I questioned my own role as a storyteller. What is it that gave me the right to tell the story of Prince Tui's life? My insight was sparked by understanding that my story could be told without following the standard pattern birth-to-death biopic. It will be my narrative, the story about Aroha for Tui told by other people and me.

### ***What is creative synthesis?***

Moustakas (1990) writes that synthesis is the examination and integration of collected information into the research inquiry. These discoveries should inspire an understanding of the research that allows the expression of the observed essences established by the study. This perfectly aligns with the process of editing a documentary film, the final filmic creative synthesis of this heuristic research journey.

Djuraskovic and Arthur (2010) describe the synthesis stage as a portrayal of human experience that is introduced in various art forms. In my case, more specifically, the editing of my documentary film was also the combination of art and technical



methods which transfer accumulated data into a consistent story. I had to work with limited material that was collected during the previous production stages. In the main, there were eight interviews and material following my journey. I wondered how I could unite other creative ideas to develop my documentary story.

### ***Narrative and Voice-Over***

Exploring the narrative technique of storytelling is a crucial aspect that has the potential to unite different elements of the film, one that can also help augment ideas of poetic expression that could help my documentary. Nichols (2001) notes:

In narrative storytelling, style (from individual preferences to common approaches such as expressionism, neo-realism, or surrealism) coupled with the construction of a plot to tell a story that revealed, through the unique combination of style and plot, the voice or perspective of filmmakers on the world they created, and, obliquely, through this imaginary world, on the historical world, they shared with others. (p. 91)

Bill Nichols also finds that the structured narrative is commonly used in the expository mode of documentary filmmaking as there is a reliance on information as a story driver and on a rhetorical structure to convey story progression. Thus, voice-over could, as a primary driver of the narrative, allow me to guide the viewers through the story. It could also allow me to express my emotional reflections on the events being described in the film. With missing elements in the footage (no whanau participation and no footage on Tūhoe lands or in the cemetery) it was an element that could enhance the story and explain omissions or steer audiences down a more personal narrative trajectory.

Laughman (2019) explains that the presence of a voice-over in a movie is an effective way to deliver information to the audience and make it easy to

comprehend. In the documentary genre, a voice-over is often used throughout a film, combining with the necessary visual support such as footage, still images, or graphic elements.

In 'The Bridge Across the Ocean' voice over brings people into the story divides interviews into chapters or emphasises prominent points of the narrative. The tone of the voice-over is essential in terms of manaakitanga meaning to take care of my viewers and respect the subjects of my documentary study. Te Ao Māori (2019) describes manaakitanga as the principle that provides "...food for the soul if it is needed." ("The concept of manaakitanga", para. 5).

### ***The Power of a Metaphor***



*Figure 2:1. "The Bridge Across The Ocean" the opening scene of the Amur River, 2018.*

The opening part of the documentary begins with a long shot of the Amur River with the ice-drift slowly moving on the horizon. The following scene shows a landscape where I was brought up, and it also serves as a metaphor for life itself. The voice-over, together with the 'E Ipo' theme being played on a Russian national

instrument, starts a dialogue with the audience highlighting who I am and what my story is about. As a film director, I wanted to hook the viewers by creating a contrast between a Kiwi romantic ballade and harsh Russian winter footage. The documentary introduction finished with another visual symbol – the Amur Bridge. The bridge is a real object that is connected to the events from my life, but at the same time, it is the metaphor representing my journey to New Zealand as well as the bridge that connects people. This powerful metaphor became the only visual sign, implicitly or explicitly, being presented in almost every sequence. Voice-over supports this symbolism accentuated in the comments in addition to the interviews. Professor Tania Ka'ai accurately compared Ngōi Pēwharangi with 'a human bridge' that linked her community to the Crown and vice versa. Perhaps, it was one of the most vivid comparisons in the documentary.



*Figure 2:2. "The Bridge Across The Ocean" the final scene of the bridge across the Amur River, 2018.*

The final part of the documentary describes how Prince Tui Teka passed away during his last tour in Ruwai. This segment is the culmination of the story that combines all expressive elements such as footage, images, music and sound effects, voice-over, and animation. In this synthesis section, finding the appropriate tone of my voice over and putting all parts together are described by Nichols (as

already outlined) as the poetic mode of documentary filmmaking. Thinking in these terms allowed me to mix disparate elements such as voice-over, music, footage, graphic features, interviews, and animation. For instance, the scene at The Ruawai Tavern is linked to the footage of a snowfall where a group photo of Tui, Missy, and Ngoi appears on the screen. The dramatic effect reaches the highest point; then, falling snow, which is the symbol of death, is morphing into the footage of the Amur River with the bridge in the final shot.

Voice-over not only acts as a story summariser but also reflects my own emotions. All final scenes go with the accompaniment of the piano version of 'E Ipo'.

Probably, it is the end; however, I let the piano play until the last note and finish the sequence with the black background and the sound of the wind. For a few seconds, there is nothing on the screen, but we hear the wind; and it is a non-visual metaphor of void and emptiness — the world without Prince Tui Teka.

Unpredictably, Prince Tui tells us: 'not finished yet', and animation begins.



*Figure 2:3 "The Bridge Across The Ocean" the epilogue with Prince Tui Teka's image and voice in the background, 2019.*

A short animation based on the audio from his album where the artist interacts with the audience. This part mimics the original opening of “Prince Tui Teka – Variety Show” on TVNZ in 1983, and it is kind of a continuation of Tui’s show that I decided to create. It actually never happened on the screen but it was a method that I discovered that would illuminate the end of the film and leave an audience smiling alongside (rather than mourning) Prince Tui Teka.

### ***Graphics and Animation***

Documentary films often use graphic or animated inserts. It can be maps, stylised photographs and paintings, some kind of graphs or digital statistics. Even though graphic or animated elements can improve the dynamics and visualise additional data, the abundance of graphic information can quickly fatigue viewers (Sorokin, 2019). In my documentary, I used three forms of motion and animated graphics. The opening reel combines titles, video of an old film projector, and animated photographs of Prince Tui Teka.

During the interviews, short graphic-inserts show the old photos of my subjects continuing the idea of watching family archives through the use of an old film projector. And, as described above, two minutes of animated Tui serves as a bridge between his television show back in the day and the present.

### ***Visual Style***

Creating a distinctive visual style of ‘The Bridge Across the Ocean’ helped to reflect my impressions, vision, and my manner to tell the story. Alpert (2013) suggests that the visual aesthetic in the documentary always assists in the delivery of a specific message. Modern documentary filmmaking tends to show more spectacular

images and accurate messages. However, Ellis and McLane (2005) note that "...In fact, documentaries have long been a victim to being judged solely for their content rather than for their skilful use of film techniques" (p. 329). My creative intents during the filming were both to improve a visual style and let images tell the story itself. For this purpose, I wanted to use techniques that can be seen on Ozu's work. The idea of emptiness and time in his fiction movies assisted my documentary story to accentuate a poetic mode. Other visual tools to make the atmosphere in the interview-based film were framing and using tilt-shift lenses for the interviews and architectural shots; it aided to create a vintage look and focus on some details. This technique was also a useful instrument to isolate interviewees from the backgrounds. Having an idea of this visual concept of my film assisted greatly in some sections.

The visual explorations of Tokomaru Bay, Gisborne and Ruawai benefited from this consistent technique. Other parts were more difficult. There was no actual footage in Ruatahuna, and I sought other methods to set up different locations and participants. For instance, to continue with the 'bridge' as the key metaphor, I found a hip-hop track from Tipene Harmer whose role in the documentary was to show that Tui's music is still remembered. Tipene's single 'Tautoko' is the bridge between the nostalgic past and urban hip-hop music; furthermore, the 'Tautoko' music video became visual support for what Tipene was saying. Another example is the interview with Caii Michelle. I could not film any actuality footage to accompany her interview due to severe time constraints. Because of this I decided to focus on Ngaruawahia (the place of the interview) and represented my impressions of the town and further developed the idea of bridges and empty spaces by filming besides the Waikato River.

Editing the work allowed me to reflect on some of the strengths and weaknesses of this creative approach. In the same way, the symmetry method helped to improve the visual power of the film. Symmetry is defined by Professor Louis Thonsgaard



(2003) as "... a powerful visual aid capable of communicating complex meanings that cannot otherwise be conveyed visually." (p. 209); he also adds to this definition "...symmetry refers to the material being organised in such a way that it conveys a sense of unity through the repetition of one or more elements." (p. 210). Also, the symmetry technique helps me to mix different elements into one visual story.



*Figure 2:4. "The Bridge Across The Ocean" Ngaruawahia town centre, 2019.*



*Figure 2:5. "The Bridge Across The Ocean" Gisborne city centre in the morning, 2019.*

Thus, having the visual concept of my future film assisted in creating the image structure, the method of shooting, that later affected the style of my edit and created additional information to the main storyline.

## **Montage**

The voice-over in documentaries supports the idea of montage by linking words with images; it visually presents the development of ideas on a screen. In Nichols' first analyses of documentary modes, he sees the voice over in its most basic terms. Generally, editing, he says, maintains the continuity of the voice-over giving the audience the "...sense of coherency" (p. 91); so, it mostly serves "...the smooth flow of one image to another by matching movement, action, eyeline, or scale from one shot to another." (p.91). This was a valid consideration for me as I was editing the film. Voice-over was an essential tool that allowed me to balance story development and the more 'poetic' strategies and approaches that I took. It is also important to note that voice-over in the films of someone like Werner Herzog allows both exposition, opinion, judgement and Herzog's own feelings to emerge. He sees his voice-over driven work not so much as informational but as work that seeks an 'ecstatic' truth. Herzog declares that "there are deeper strata of truth in cinema, and there is such a thing as poetic, ecstatic truth. It is mysterious and elusive and can be reached only through fabrication and imagination and stylization" ( Herzog, 1999).

In 'The Bridge Across the Ocean' a series of different montage sequences serve to link the interviews to the narrative storyline.

Most of these sequences are not directly connected to the information in voice-over, but they implicitly emphasise the atmosphere of the places I visited. Prince Tui's songs in the background boosted the mood and influenced the rhythm of editing. Some sequences were produced in music video style symbolising not only the places and spaces but the time. The process of editing included several



stages, various techniques such as interview intercut, and many versions of the rough-cut versions helped organise the structure of the film more effectively. Thus, the editing process helped me to put together voice-over, footage, music and sound effects into one story and to reach aesthetic goals.

### ***Cut to Connect***

Another result of creative synthesis is in a proper analysis of eight interviews with an attempt to link them to each other logically and emotionally. I tried a few rough cuts and showed it to my primary supervisor Jim Marbrook. We both intuitively understood that the connection between different parts, especially with the interviews of Bernie Allen and David Hartnell, needed rethinking and restructuring. Then Jim suggested that I experiment with an intercut technique. This gave me the freedom to unite two interviews. It was a great result and an exciting professional discovery, something I had never done before by myself from scratch.

Then I continued with this method and made a teaser with all participants of the research in one reel at the beginning of the documentary. It brought not only the dynamics but an overall sense of unity. Although I used this as a teaser that I had originally intended to only send to the Teka whanau as a way of updating them on my progress, I found that this section fitted in nicely at the beginning of my film, a form of foreshadowing what was to come. In test screenings, it improved the pacing of the opening of the movie.

In essence, I believe that the variety of techniques I employed for this documentary allowed me to transcend a purely interview-based film. Also, I learned that understanding basic theoretical ideas assisted me in analysing these methods and also helped me experiment more freely with different elements of the film.

## Conclusion VII

The goal of the current study was to determine how my music preferences affect the process of acculturation by producing a documentary film on a Māori artist, Prince Tui Teka. The heuristic research method was examined as the primary technique to reflect a procedure of self-discovery.

The heuristic inquiry allowed me to recognise how all stages of this process can help to derive the core meanings from the emotional journey to discover Prince Tui Teka and my new home Aotearoa New Zealand. Immersion was the first stage of heuristic examination that allowed me to be open to the latest information.

Douglass and Moustakas (1985) suggest that openness is freedom in the discovery of new meanings, and it is an essential characteristic of the heuristic method.

Consequently, the immersion phase required from me a total involvement and focusing on the subject of my study, at the same time, learning to identify the nature of feelings. This process was not stable and predictable as suggested by Douglass and Moustakas: "Immersion of this kind is more impulsive than deliberate, more wandering than a goal, more a way of being than a method of doing" (p. 41). Similarly to the heuristic model, filmmaking has parallel procedures for creating and developing a story that is outlined in theory.

In terms of acculturation and integration, creating 'The Bridge Across the Ocean' opened entirely new cultural perspectives. First of all, the importance of understating Tikanga Māori and its influence on all socio-cultural processes in Aotearoa New Zealand, namely in documentary making. According to Hayward (2012), the role of Māori customs in bicultural society is still a highly discussed topic, in addition to the idea of multiculturalism. Correspondingly, music is a vital function of living in a bicultural society; as listeners can freely travel between cultures and experience dual acculturation; this process can be described as bimusicalism (Wong, Roy, & Margulis, 2009). This definition relates to what Professor Tania Ka'ai

and His Excellency Tantowi Yahya commented on in my documentary. The melody of 'Mimpi Sedih' inspired Prince Tui and Ngōi Pēwhairangi to create 'E Ipo' which was later translated across the Pacific countries and accepted as their song. It also shows that music can go beyond language or cultural barriers.

Apart from discovering Prince Tui Teka, I found a fundamental similarity between Russian and Māori cultures that relates to a strong sense of collectivism. Brougham and Haar (2013) describe Māori as a group of people living by collectivistic values in the predominantly individualistic society. The idea of collectivity did not need to be defined or require an additional explanation for me.

In contrast, making a documentary in this country on this subject was a complicated job. On the one hand, Māori customs needed to be understood and the concept of Tikanga taken into account and on the other hand, there was a more general obsession with privacy. Even coming from a country with a totalitarian background, I realised that filming in Russia is more accessible because these processes are less regulated. However, after experiencing the Kiwi approach, my attitude toward this issue has changed. I now feel a greater sense of responsibility for what I do, and how I do it.

In the same fashion, due to complex copyright issues, 'The Bridge Across the Ocean' has an embargo on using Prince Tui Teka's music and images. I hope that this documentary will play in public, but first I have sought to show this film to Teka's whanau and wait for their comment. Then I can start the complicated copyright process for archive materials and music and seek further finance for this.

Next, my integrational strategy helped me to produce a new cultural product in the form of an audio-visual story which is my documentary research. Berry (1997) emphasises that assimilation can be creative and motivates to generate new artistic forms that do not exist. Consequently, documentary filmmaking made me feel part of the culture in my new host country.

Lastly, the editing of the documentary film is similar to the creative synthesis of the heuristic research method theorised by Carl Moustakas. Both processes have the same function to incorporate collected data, or footage, into the art form, such as in this case, the documentary. Eight interviews were analysed and integrated into the story by using voice-over, unique visual manner, montage, and additional graphic elements.

The main limitation of this study is in the subjectivity of the documentary making process in general. There is a tension between what I was looking for aesthetically and the facts which were derived from interviews. The editing process sought to balance my emotional reflections and experience alongside a representation of historical events. However, my creative interpretation of real facts does have a personal 'truth' and the techniques I have described in the previous chapter do seek to extend notions of realism and objectivity and balance them against a personal and 'artistic' approach. Capdevila (2015) argues that the different art forms of mimicking reality in documentaries serve as a language that aids to articulate people's knowledge of the world. This process occurs through documentary images, our memories and view of reality when it can satisfy our thirst for the outside world.

Selection bias is another potential concern because heuristic inquiry, as one of the methods of this research, is focused on my own reflections pushed, supposedly, to a deeper level. It was a very demanding procedure (but I guess all films are). It took all my thoughts and feelings into Tui's world and did form my own idyllic image of the subject. Djuraskovic and Arthur (2010) suggest that heuristic methodology is typically categorised as a process with a limited control or restraint, one that might lead to undeveloped study. Indeed, during the first interviews, it was hard for me to stay objective and accept information that contradicted with my vision of Prince Tui Teka as an artist. However, this did change in later interviews. Interestingly enough, I found that engaging in this process helped my objectivity.

Overall, making a documentary was personally perhaps the best way of engaging and considering the idea of my own acculturation in my new cultural environment in Aotearoa. Music was an ideal framework with which to share my experiences with both interview subjects but also in the synthesis of my research, the documentary itself. The details and approaches of my creative methods have been summarised in this exegesis but they are not always visible on the screen. They remain key aspects of my practice-based research project and the core of my emotional experience making this documentary.

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