MENDING THE KUPENGA

TOWARDS A LANGUAGE OF RECIPROCITY BETWEEN ANCESTRAL TEXTILE & STORYTELLING PRACTICES

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A thesis submitted to Auckland University of Technology in partial fulfilmentof the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

ATTESTATION OF 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 (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor used artificial intelligence tools or generative artificial intelligence tools (unless it is clearly stated, and referenced, along with the purpose of use), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Signed:

23 April 2024

ABSTRACT

Anchored by my Taranaki Māori and Scottish/Irish Pākehā whakapapa, this research explores how aho (threads) of ancestral narratives can be re-storied and, potentially, restored through textile craft knowledge passed down through my maternal lines. This conversational in-process artmaking practice builds a language of reciprocity between my textile, poetry, and storytelling practices to strengthen relationships held within the kupenga — the relational net. The metaphor of kupenga is utilised to describe the connections, tensions, and entanglements of relational spaces. I investigate how weaving practices might, over time, offer pathways towards repairing familial disconnections and ruptures embedded in settler-colonial amnesia and dislocation.

Working with whakapapa (relationality/genealogies/layering), whatuora (weaving/envisioning), and storywork* as methodologies, my artmaking utilises processes of place-based material gathering, 'happenings,' poetic storytelling, and fibre craft in order to (re)weave connections to place. Comprised of body-scale "whatu-weavings," my artworks blend whatu, weaving, and lacemaking textile-craft techniques made on hand-crafted warp-weighted looms. Collected river stones are both loom-weights anchoring the weaving in place, and hagstones or seeing-stones for envisioning the practice. My practice continues both as tauira (student, pupil, apprentice) and with tauira (samples, models, or examples), incorporating a multiplicity of blended fibre techniques and materials from across my ancestral lines.

Through the pūtahi — considered here as moments and places of encounter and exchange, and intersections of materials and practices across cross-cultural lines — my research advocates for the revival, sustenance, and continued innovation of ancestral practices. Through (re)growing a multi-sensory and ceremonial knowledge of tidal, seasonal, and celestial cycles, gathering from and tending to the taiao (environment) leads to a deeper intimacy and relation with place. The research finds its significance in developing an art practice centred in place and relation, grown through conversation and observation, and always with the intent to unpick and re-weave, reclaim and restore, towards a more reciprocal future.

* Jo-Ann Q'um Q'um Xiiem Archibald, *Indigenous Storywork: Educating the Heart, Mind, Body, and Spirit* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008).

Ko Rangi
Ko Papa
Ka puta ko Rongo
Ko Tāne-mahuta
Ko Tangaroa
Ko Tūmātauenga
Ko Haumietiketike
Ko Tāwhirimātea

Tokona te Rangi ki runga
Ko Papa ki raro
Ka puta te ira tangata
Ki te Whaiao, ki te Ao Mārama

Tīhei mouriora!

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PART ONE:

MIRO | TWINED FIBRES



PREFACE

I've been untangling the aho,
the threads of my whakapapa.
Finding resonances across lines
that seemed otherwise under tension, irreconcilable.

Learning to whatu, to weave, not only with fibre but also with words, with stories,
with whakapapa, with everything our tūpuna have held for us.

It is through my grandmothers that I first found my way into the connections between stories and textiles.

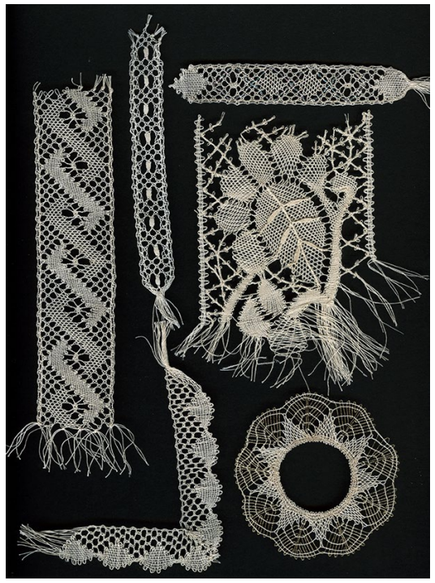
I grew up embraced by textiles and stories woven metaphorically by my parents and grandparents, from threads passed down by their parents and those before them. Some of these threads that held strong over generations seem modest: the sewing box carried across oceans by my Grandma Faith; the charm of my Nana Maire's bead-spangled lace bobbins. Knit and embroidery stitches were taught to me by my grandma and nana, practiced while listening to anecdotes of great-grandparents surviving prairie tornados, or the matakite tupuna who saved many from a volcano's wrath. When I try to imagine what a healthy and well vision for the future might look like in my own family and wider, across my woven kupenga of community, my net of relations, I think first to the past, and to those who came before: to everything my grandmothers have taught me; to what my tūpuna, my ancestors, left behind on distant shores or had taken from them, and what they have carried on through the generations — their stories and making practices. I consider the stories I can tell that they cannot, and imagine what I can see through weaving for them.

My Nana Maire wove lace on wooden bobbins: rimu, oak, kōwhai, yew, kauri, pine. I used to watch her on summer holidays in Taranaki as she moved the bobbins around each other, pinned each strand in place, hands crossing, crossing, forming knots in the tiny threads — all delicate edges in soft white cotton, linen, and silk.

On these visits, she told me stories of our tupuna maunga Taranaki, and how he was guided to the edge of Te-Ika-a-Māui by the guidestone Rauhoto — the guidestone who would have anchored Nana in turn as she grew up at Puniho Pā on the rural Taranaki coast. Stories of our tupuna Te Paea Hinerangi, Guide Sophia, a wahine toa who was known as a guide, a storyteller, a seer. Te Paea was a weaver, too, the stories of her weaving held in fibre, not words, in two muka kāhu huruhuru that now lie in the Puke Ariki museum collection.

PREVIOUS IMAGE: Image 1. *tūpuna guide us to weave in any way we can* (2020 – ongoing), detail







ABOVE: Image 2. My Nana Maire (b. 1940, d. 2022), circa 1959

TOP RIGHT: Image 3. Details of Nana's bobbin-lace edges and pieces-in-progress

RIGHT: Image 4. My Grandma Faith (b.1923, d. 2012), circa 1950

When I first learnt māwhitiwhiti (the finger-twined "cross-stitch" used in making kākahu), the motion of crossing, crossing threads held memories of Nana's lacemaking. There were no bobbins or pins, and for my first whatu tauira there were no delicate threads but instead, strong hefty strands of carpet wool: a way to practice crossing each whenu to form patterns, held in place by the whatu-aho-rua, the twined weft. Muka came later, the silky harakeke fibre of our tūpuna that is so much closer in touch to the linen and silk of Nana's lace. But even with the heavy wool and first-learning clumsiness, the crossing of threads felt familiar, hands moving in a re-learnt remembering. Like coming home after a long time away.

My Grandma Faith always sat patiently with me as I learnt to sew and knit, first as a clumsy five-year-old with chunky wooden needles, helping me when stitches slipped loose or I forgot how to cast on, later as a confident teenager making terrible colour-matching choices in gaudy patchwork blankets. She never judged, and instead led me through my mistakes, passing her threads on to me for my own makings.

She told me stories of growing up in the Saskatchewan prairies and of her journeys over the sea that first brought her to Aotearoa, where she met my granddad Johnny (a Scottish-Pākehā pilot). She told of her return, back to live in Aotearoa years later, now as a family of five with my ten-year-old mother in tow, and the stories of our Irish ancestors and their journeying before her.

The first time I worked muka into a fabric, I turned to knitting, my first textile language. Although my whatu was growing stronger and neater, I wanted to get to know these harakeke threads by introducing them to my other ancestors, bringing echoes of Nana's lacemaking and Grandma's knitting together with my tūpuna kairaranga. I called this artwork *tūpuna guide us to weave in any way we can* (2020 – ongoing), considering how, in essence, Nana's lacemaking was another way of accessing a tūpuna weaving practice, even though the techniques might appear very different.

I added to this artwork over time, extending it in threads of muka that grew finer as I became more confident in working the fibre. I now see *tūpuna guide us* as an early piece in a practice of blending and balancing, both metaphorically and tangibly, materials and textile techniques from my ancestral homelands.



INTRODUCTION

The textile practices I know intimately and those I am now (re)learning are all connected with my tūpuna wāhine, generations of mothers and grandmothers. These histories, stories, and methods of making form the fabric of this practice-led doctoral research project.

Mending the Kupenga culminates in a "year of making," a full, seasonal cycle from the rise of Puanga over Taranaki in June 2023,[1] to the return of the Puanga season in 2024. This year of making has come from practising with a processual, embodied approach through cyclical, spiralling time. The research can be considered an ongoing process of gathering, making, and 'happenings' as key methods, participating in studio-based conversational and wānanga spaces, rather than an intent towards an exhibition-based or 'completed' artistic outcome. Making includes hand-formed textiles, poetic writing, visits to place, kōrerorero, drawing, lens-based media, tool-making, archival research, and durational art projects made myself and in conversation with my kin (human and more-than-human — maunga, awa, moana, whenua) and fellow artist friends.

In framing my process-led research approach, I draw on histories of "conversational making," storytelling practices and crafting spaces through my ancestral lines, where fibre-making (weaving, whatu, net-making, dyeing, knitting) traditionally occurred over conversation and collaboration, alongside the sharing of stories, in deep relation to place. Whakapapa-guided conversational making is a practice of reciprocity that allows for sharing between people, materials, and place, back and forth in conversation — one that acknowledges, layers, and builds on what has gone before. The methodological conceptualising of whakapapa as a layered relational net or web draws from Apirana Ngata, Leonie Pihama, and Mere Roberts, in connection to the artworks of Maureen Lander and Ngahina Hohaia. Working through whatuora, framed by HInekura Smith as a decolonial, re-envisioning, woven research approach, suggests an imperative towards untangling, reclaiming and restoring ancestral narratives by connecting to ancestral practices. Storytelling, and thereby storywork (defined by Stó:lō researcher Jo-Ann Archibald Q'um Q'um Xiiem as a practical framework for working respectively and reciprocally with experiential stories),[2] is therefore another key method through which I see my practice embodying relationality.

The conceptual space and intent around the research invoke the metaphor of kupenga, referencing my own whakapapa. Poet Karlo Mila (Tonga, Sāmoa, Pākehā) similiarly outlines a kupenga metaphor in her unfolding of interconnected Moananui languages of relationality.[3] The metaphor responds to the whakataukī,

PREVIOUS IMAGE: Image 5. Taranaki Maunga

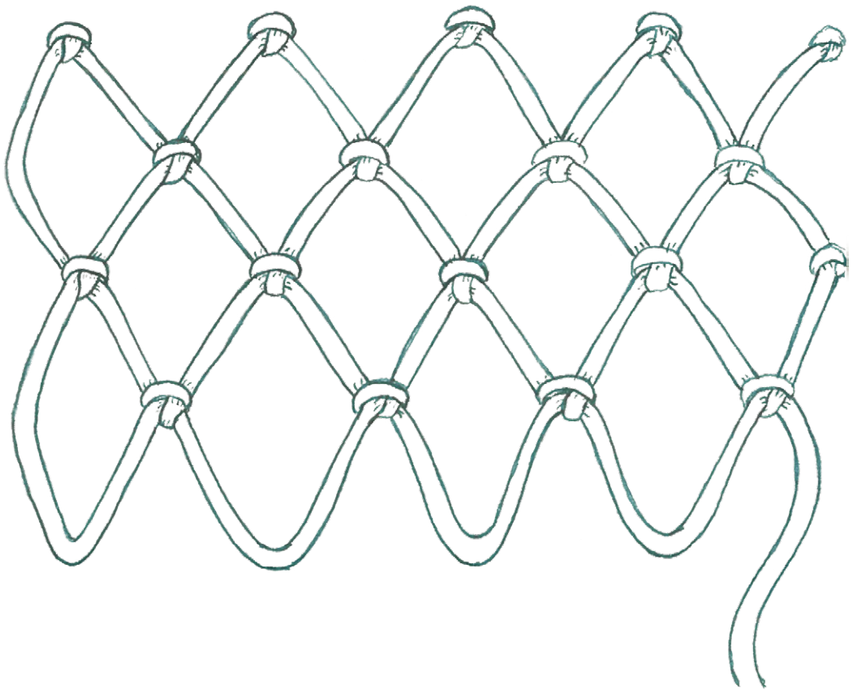
1 The end of the old year and beginning of the new, in the Taranaki maramataka (calendar).

2 Archibald, Indigenous Storywork.

3 Mila's *Taula: The Anchor* (unpublished), on vā and connected Moananui terminology, including kupenga, has enabled me to build a clear and established connection between net-metaphor and relationality. These writings were shared through the AUT University Vā Moana Pacific Space research cluster.

"E wai e taea te kupenga whīwhiwhi?" (who can loosen the entangled net?)[4] and uses the image of a net as a means to follow patterns of connection and disconnection in relational space. A fishing net, or kupenga, is made up of a single continuous line of fibre, which is looped back around itself to form a pattern of interconnected knots. Each knot is connected to the knots that were tied before it and those following. Together, these structural knots form a lace-like fabric, made functional by the spaces between the knots, allowing for that which will be caught and held.

When a net is damaged, pieces of the thread break loose and tangle, and new holes and snarls form in areas where they are not meant to. If not mended in time, this damage to the net structure can lead to more damage, rendering the net unusable. Debris can become caught in the strands, tangling the net further. To mend a net means finding areas where torn threads have become snarls and untangling them, removing any debris, balancing the tension to allow the regularity of the pattern to be seen again. Once these snarls have been untangled, any damage made by rips or tears can be repaired by rejoining the aho with new threads, new structural knots.



As a descendant of Taranaki, Ngāruahine, Ngāpuhi, and Pākehā (Scottish, Shetlandic, Irish, English, Swiss-French, and Prussian Ashkenazi Jewish) ancestors, I am interested in the pūtahi (confluences, intersections), meeting points of exchange, tension, and balance between my tūpuna (particularly from the early 19th century until now), and how these visible and invisible interactions relate to the wider context of settler-Indigenous relationships in Aotearoa and beyond. Snarls and tears have occurred in my relational kupenga where these relationships have been interrupted; tangles made visible in the places where ancestral practices were kept hidden, altered, forbidden, or otherwise lost.

4 Hirini Moko Mead and Neil Grove, *Ngā Pepeha a Ngā Tīpuna*, 2nd ed. (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2003), 50.

In the context of Aotearoa and my family history, the loss occurred as our ancestral practices, particularly textile-crafts, storytelling, and languages, were no longer passed down through the generations. A significant cause of the rupturing of knowledge is colonial legislation and the forced cultural assimilation that followed.[5] Much of this project is developed in response to places in Taranaki, the site of the "first act of violent dispossession of land in this country,"[6] when government forces invaded Waitara in 1860, followed by Crown-enforced muru raupatu: the confiscation of lands across the district that have never been returned. Migration and the memory-shifting of "settler-amnesia"[7] contributed snarls and tears to the relational net of my extended family. It is these threads in my whakapapa that now require careful tending.

More than simply "seeing" settler-colonial ruptures, researcher Hinekura Smith (Te Rarawa, Ngāpuhi, Te Atiawa) argues that a whatuora approach is one that

> helps us to see ourselves, our past experiences and possible future through decolonising eyes. A Whatuora approach does not stop with simply "seeing" the damage caused by colonization, but insists that we actively reclaim and restore, unpick and re-weave, a culturally well and clear vision of our present realities and, importantly, create a vision for the future.[8]

Guided by this understanding of whatuora and by whakapapa, this project's artmaking engages personal ancestral practices across the 'futurepresentpast'[9] of spiralling time, in order to re-story[10] and restore the balance of relationships they hold.

I work with embodied craft processes, especially textile fibre-making techniques and storytelling, through materials and practices connected to my ancestral homelands (particularly Taranaki, Shetland/Scotland, and Ireland), passed down to me by Nana Maire and Grandma Faith. I have also been engaging in an active process of (re)learning those materials, techniques and practices whose stories and teachings were not able to be passed on in my family lines. All together, these include:

materials, such as:
- harakeke
- muka
- wool
- plant dyes

5 Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, 2nd ed. (London: Zed Books, 2012); Jo-Ann Archibald, Jenny Bol Jun Lee-Morgan, and Jason De Santolo, eds., *Decolonizing Research: Indigenous Storywork as Methodology* (London: Zed Books, 2019).

6 Leonie Pihama and Dale Husband, "Leonie Pihama: Let's Start by Returning the Waitara Land," E-Tangata, July 1, 2018, https://e-tangata.co.nz/korero/leonie-pihama-lets-start-by-returning-the-waitara-land/.

7 Stephen Turner, "Settler Dreaming," Memory Connection 1, no. 1 (2011): 121, http://memoryconnection.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/StephenTurner1.pdf.

8 Hinekura Smith, "Whatuora: Theorizing 'New' Indigenous Methodology from 'Old' Indigenous Weaving Practice," *Art/Research International: A Transdisciplinary Journal* 4, no. 1 (2019): 21, https://doi.org/10.18432/ari29393.

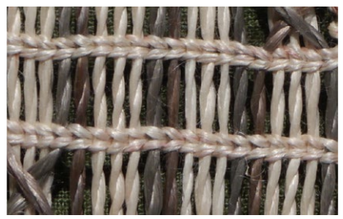
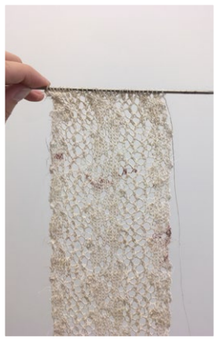
9 A term framed to encompass the non-linearity of cyclical, spiralling time which this project engages — see Chapter 5.

10 Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants* (Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, 2013).







CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Images 6 to 16. Harakeke; muka; angiangi (lichen) dye-bath; wool yarns and unspun fleece; two tauira; lace-knitted muka (detail of *tūpuna guide us* artwork); whatu detail in undyed and yarrow-dyed muka; warp-weighted loom 'whatu-weaving' (installation image of whatuwai (2022-ongoing) artwork; woven wool fabric; Nana's lace-bobbins; Grandma's threads.

objects, such as:
- tauira
- samplers
- wool blankets
- and threads

textile techniques, such as:
- whatu
- warp-weighted loom weaving
- hand-knitting
- darning
- lace and net-making

and stories:
- family anecdotes
- pūrākau
- folklore
- poetry

Returning to the fibre and storytelling practices of my grandmothers through this research has offered me a way towards (re)connection, (re)weaving the multiplicities of my whakapapa by actively mending the relational net.[11] I investigate how reconciling these multiplicities through 'blended' modes of practising can provide ways towards repairing some of the disconnections and ruptures that have been partially caused by and embedded in dislocation driven by settler-colonialism.[12] (Re)connecting to my family stories through place is also an important form of knowledge rekindling/acquisition in this research. Experiences of return and (re)connection are engaged through repeated visits, hīkoi, karakia, gathering plant materials to dye with and harakeke for muka, returning gifts to the whenua, salt-water swimming, and by simply being in-place.

This doctoral research contributes to the body of knowledge held around creative practices that engage with relational spaces for both Aotearoa and global art communities in settler-colonial contexts. Building upon the work of generations of makers, storytellers, and scholars, *Mending the Kupenga* is offered as another perspective, a new thread woven into the knowledge-fabric of shared ancestral craft and storytelling practices in Aotearoa, advocating for the revival, sustenance, and continued innovation of these forms. I am buoyed by the knowledge of artists and makers who have been returning to and embodying our customary practices in their fullest potentials: expert kairaranga and kaiwhatu from Rangimarie Hetet and Diggeress Te Kanawa, Erenora Puketapu-Hetet, Emily Shuster, Toi Te Rito Maihi, Te Aue Davis, and Ruhia Oketopa, through to Rangituatahi and Kahutoi te Kanawa, Donna Campbell, the kairaranga and kaiwhatu of Te Rā Ringa Raupā, the collaborative-doctoral scholars (kairaranga Rose te Ratana, Jaqueline McRae-Tarei, and Gloria Taituha), and the tauira who are following in their paths. However, I find myself continually returning to the pūtahi, to find balance in those relational 'spaces between.' We have unfinished business there, my tūpuna and I.

11 See Brief Notes on Language.

12 As outlined by Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*; Archibald, Lee-Morgan, and De Santolo, *Decolonizing Research*.

For contemporary art and craft histories in Aotearoa, I seek resonances within my ancestral histories of relational exchange to bring us back towards a language of reciprocity — to mend the kupenga.

KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

How might embodied intergenerational knowledge unfolded through a conversational, processual artmaking practice strengthen and mend the kupenga – the relational net?

How might looking to pūtahi, moments of convergence and exchange, form a language of reciprocity between ancestral textile-craft and storytelling practices?

How might whakapapa, whatuora, and storywork methodologies be utilised to explore tension and balance and (re)weave connection to place?

ANCESTRAL HISTORIES OF MIGRATION & MAKING

My ancestors were weavers, storytellers, healers, drapers, carpenters, and especially workers of land and sea — farmers, crofters, fishermen, miners, labourers (mostly men) — and 'makers' (mostly women), those whose labour and craft history are missing entirely from the records of the time, seemingly deemed unimportant to note. I have garnered some knowledge of their lives from stories my family have told me, and through accessing archives, visiting ancestral homelands and sites of arrival. There is also other knowledge, not accounted for, that had been long forgotten, hidden, or lost in family lines held separate from us through time.

The first known arrivals of my tūpuna to Aotearoa were on the waka Kurahaupō, Aotea, and Ngātokimatawhaorua, nearly a thousand years ago. They made homes along the west coast of Te Ika-a-Māui, in Taranaki (connecting with Te Kāhui Maunga, who were already here[13]) and Hokianga. Over the last two centuries, my tūpuna also moved (or were taken) broadly across the motu of Te Ika-a-Māui, from Taranaki to Kōrorareka and Hokianga, and from Hokianga to Taranaki, to Tarawera and Whakarewarewa.

Between 1829 and 1915, my Pākehā ancestors arrived in Aotearoa from Shetland, Aberdeenshire, Perthshire, Fife, the Scottish Borders, Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Devonshire, Kent, Prussia, and Switzerland, settling across Taranaki, Kororāreka, Tāmaki, Taupiri, and Otakou. Family stories and archival records suggest that some may have left their homelands by choice, others by force or necessity. The histories behind these migrations are revealed as much by their absence as through family anecdotes shared and archival material uncovered. Even with those who were forced to leave their homes following relatable land-clearances, it is obvious that many became, in turn, a cog in the colonial machine,[14] settling on other peoples' stolen homelands.[15]

The most recent arrival to Aotearoa was my mother Lynne, landing in 1964 with her parents and siblings. Mama was born in England to my grandma Faith, an Irish-Canadian settler-descendant who grew up on the prairies of Saskatchewan, and my granddad Johnny, of Scottish Pākehā descent. Faith's grandparents and great-grandparents had left Tipperary between 1820 and 1860 and settled in so-called Canada, in Ontario and Saskatchewan, on unceded traditional Cree and Assiniboine territory. Johnny was born in Taupiri to Scottish Pākehā settler parents, and grew up in Ngāruawāhia, spending time under the care of Kiingitanga leader Te Puea Hērangi (Waikato/Tainui).

My father Chris and his parents were born in Taranaki. His mother, my Nana Maire, grew up at Puniho, an uri of Taranaki, Ngāruahine, and Ngāpuhi iwi, as well as of Shetlandic, Scottish, and English ancestors. Granddad Robert was born in Ngāmotu, Taranaki, to parents of Scottish, English, Ashkenazi Jewish, and Swiss-French descent.

Following centuries of my ancestors moving through and between places, in the early 1990s I became one of the first in my family to be born and raised in Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland).

STORYING THE RESEARCHER

I grew up surrounded by textiles and stories, everyday practices nurtured by my parents and grandparents. Wrapped in blankets in the midst of knitting, sewing, or lacemaking, or using soft-dyed muslins to create storyscapes, we shared timeworn retellings of traditional narratives or family anecdotes that took on familiar rhythms with every repetition. Summers were spent watching Nana Maire twist fine threads with lace bobbins into ever-more-intricate works and listening to her commentary about various craft techniques, as we would walk through Embroidery Guild exhibitions together. I remember Grandma Faith patiently helping me cast on my early knitting, and the joy of exploring her jewel-like tins of buttons and thread. My mother reminded me how to purl, helped me hem garments, knitted me jumpers, and hand-stitched me a glittering fairy-dress. Held on their knees, curled at their feet, and sitting close by their sides, I learnt from the women in my family how to see, feel, and understand textiles, an inherent knowing that has carried me through my artmaking.

13 See Taranaki Iwi Deed of Settlement of Historical Claims, 2015, sec. 2.2, https://www.tearawhiti.govt.nz/te-kahui-whakatau-treaty-settlements/find-a-treaty-settlement/taranaki-iwi/.

14 Joeliee Seed-Pihama, "Naming Our Names and Telling Our Stories," in *Decolonizing Research: Indigenous Storywork as Methodology*, ed. Jo-Ann Archibald Q'um Q'um Xiiem, Jenny Bol Jun Lee-Morgan, and Jason De Santolo (London: Zed Books, 2019), 113. Seed-Pihama (Taranaki, Te Atiawa, Ngāruahine, Waikato) refers specifically to the colonial machine and the part that stories have played "in the service of the imperial project."

15 Turner, "Settler Dreaming," 121.



ABOVE: Image 17. Film photo gathering together memories of my family: a piece of Nana's lace, some of Grandma's threads, knitting, Granddad Johnny's te reo Māori practice book (circa 1960s). The fairydress my mother made me is behind, with a photograph of me wearing the fairydress and holding a gifted sampler/stitch bookmark from Nana (with a photograph of the sampler detail placed below — both images taken by Nana in 2000-2001)

For much of my later childhood and teen years, I was raised in an intergenerational household of three women: Grandma Faith, my mother Lynne, and me, as we came together to care for Grandma around my Granddad Johnny's passing when I was nine years old. My memories of Granddad Johnny include his fond recollections of his childhood and being taken under the wing of Te Puea Hērangi, who was known for her care of the local orphan children.[16] He held their relationship in high esteem, and corresponded with her during all his long time overseas. He made efforts to retain his reo Māori — often shared through waiata, and through his most typical simple greetings I still remember hearing as a child: "Kei te pehea koe? How's your puku, ready for kai? Horoi tō ringaringa!" Despite my granddad's deep admiration and respect for te ao Māori, there was always a distance (an imbalance) between me and my own taha Māori, perhaps in part because there were already many distances between me and my father's side to overcome.

Summer holiday visits were shared with Dad and my younger brothers, Aidan and Luke, making the long winding drive from Tāmaki to Taranaki. We stayed together with Nana Maire and Granddad Rob at their Ngāmotu home, or the family bach beside the Tongapōrutu awa. Taranaki maunga was always a constant, grounding presence, a connection to home deepened by our time spent with the whenua, awa, and moana.

Here, I would watch Nana Maire making lace. Dad's childhood home, still unchanged, was filled with pieces of bobbin-lace laid beneath framed pictures of the grandchildren, and draped along countertops with vases and other knick-knacks. Not just lace: every imaginable European textile practice, from quilting to cross-stitch to patchwork (a tendency that spilled over into the detailed scrapbooks that Nana made for all her grandchildren, or for herself from many decades-worth of gathered magazine and newspaper clippings on any and every topic that interested her). But I never once saw Nana working with harakeke, or with muka. She never took us back to the pā, either — although I learnt after she passed that she and her sister Anna still quietly attended AGMs and tangi there, even up until my childhood. There was always a distance between us, across rivers and roads and years, even though it was one brimming with endless love.

Most of the textile and tactile memories and experiences I share in this exegesis focus on my maternal lines, particularly Nana Maire and Grandma Faith. However, a key piece in my memories of connecting with family and place is the flounder net that I would set out in the Tongapōrutu awa with my dad, my younger brothers, and our granddad Rob. This net, still in regular use, is a tangible representation of the metaphorical relational kupenga that the project utilises, a device that brings people together to gather, meet, and exchange at the pūtahi.

16 Michael King, *Te Puea: A Life* (Auckland: Penguin, 2008), 101-2.

THE PATTERN OF THE EXEGESIS

This PhD project has been a process of weaving between materially-crafted aspects of making and intangible elements of storytelling, conversation, and guided 'happenings,' all coming together in relation. In order to embody a sense of how the research has felt like a woven process, I have set out this exegesis following the form of a weaving.[17]

Part One: Miro/Twined Fibres prepares the threads to weave the exegesis. The kaupapa of a weaving sets the pattern for what is to come. Consequently, I lay out the project kaupapa in the Introduction, setting up the core concepts, intent, materials, and processes of the research. I continue the Introduction by further storying myself as researcher, highlighting the path that has guided me in undertaking this doctoral research.

Part Two: Guidestones and Whenu/Warp Threads outlines the grounding principles and methodologies of *Whakapapa*, *Whatuora*, and *Storywork* that have guided and supported the research fabric, as loom-weights do with a woven warp.

In *Part Three: Aho/Weft Threads*, I lay out the methods, practice components and artworks of the research. I introduce the warp-weighted loom, and the ongoing series of tauira, samplers, as key structures and processes for the project's blended-making 'whatu-weavings.' I cover key material methods in the project, across weaving, whatu, lacemaking, knitting, and the poetic practice that has been a storytelling companion to my crafted gathering and making practice. I then discuss unfolding conversational 'happenings' and processual, seasonal making cycles, key conceptual methods that have guided my gathering and making approach.

In *Part Four*: *Weaving the Research*, the chapters move across notions of *Time*, *Tūpuna Teachings*, *Ceremony*, *Tension & Balance*, *Pūtahi*, and *Gathering & Tending (Re)connection to Place*. Here the whenu/warp is threaded with the practices and scholarship of the makers, writers, artists, scholars, and thinkers who have laid the groundwork for my own making, prioritising Indigenous voices and knowledges. Wherever possible, I reflect and build from the thinking of those within my places of whakapapa connection: Aotearoa (particularly Taranaki and Hokianga/Ngāpuhi), Scotland, Shetland, and Ireland. I look to tohunga mahi toi who work with fibre and material practice, including Maureen Lander, Ngāhina Hohaia, Donna Campbell, Kahutoi Te Kanawa, and Roka Huruhia Ngārimu-Cameron; and tohunga toi kupu, weavers of words, poets and writers, including Keri Hulme, J. C. Sturm, and Patricia Grace. More practitioners lending their powerful voices across both textile-practices and words with whom my practice is in conversation include Mataaho Collective, Rowan Panther, Kauae Raro, essa may ranapiri, Hana Pera Aoake, and Roseanne Watt. I acknowledge the continuing importance of the work undertaken by our rangatira Te Rangihīroa, Māori Marsden, Apirana Ngata, and Te Huirangi Waikerepuru; and the generations of scholars and holders of mātauranga who follow in their path, including Leonie Pihama, Hinekura Smith, Ruakere Hond, Alice Te Punga Somerville, and Te Poihi Campbell.

As our net of relations always extends ever outwards, I also look to Indigenous scholars, thinkers, artists, and makers from our interconnected islands across Te Moana-Nui-a Kiwa, and those upon whose ancestors' lands my own ancestors settled in Turtle Island and Australia. This net is vast, but includes Shawn Wilson, Jo-Ann Archibald Q'um Q'um Xiiem, Margaret Kovach, Robin Wall Kimmerer, Amanda Tachine, the Carmichael family (Sonja, Elisa-Jane, and Freja Carmichael), Natalie Harkin, and Shan Goshorn.

Through *Part Four* I also continue to weave the aho/weft of my own research process, unpacking aspects of my gathering and making. In the last chapters, I return to the pūtahi: the sharing, co-opting, and collaboration of materials and traditions across cross-cultural lines. I focus on early blended kākahu and tauira that incorporate 'new' materials such as wool into their muka weave,[18] and contemporary artists that are working through whakapapa from histories of exchange and innovation. Building on this area of practice is a key point where *Mending the Kupenga* assembles original knowledge, through my blended whatu-weaving contributions to creative practice.

Finally, *Part Five: Binding Off* concludes the exegesis, summarising the project's findings. The research fabric is laid bare, finished but not ended, ready to be bound together with more fabric — a series of unending beginnings.[19]

NOTES ON THE TEXT

The term 'weaving' is used as a recurring metaphor throughout this exegesis and the project. However, when directly describing a textile technique or process, 'weaving' refers *only* to a fabric formed by weft threads passing at right angles over and under successive warp threads, row by row. 'Weaving' can be seen as analogous to the term 'raranga' but is not used interchangeably with it; raranga is a weaving process using flat strips of material such as harakeke, rather than threads. Whatu is likewise not interchangeable with any other term, and refers to single-pair or double-pair methods of weft-twining to form a fabric. Therefore, when discussing textile practices, I refer directly to the method or technique, e.g., warp-weighted loom weaving, whatu, raranga, hand-weaving; or plain weave, twill weave, etc.

17 I was given Navajo weaver and scholar Amanda Tachine's paper, "Story Rug: Weaving Stories into Research" in early 2024. The depth of Tachine's 'research as weaving' metaphor has helped with some of the final details of articulating and aligning this exegesis with my own research-weaving process. Amanda Tachine, "Story Rug: Weaving Stories into Research," in *Reclaiming Indigenous Research in Higher Education*, ed. Robin Zape-tah-hol-ah Minthorn and Heather J. Shotton, 64-75 (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2018).

18 Kane Te Manakura, "From the Margins of Te Whare Pora: Embracing Traditions of Innovation in Māori Textile Legacies," in *Mātauranga Taketake: Traditional Knowledge Conference Proceedings* (Auckland: Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga, 2006), 133.

19 See Moana Jackson, "He Manawa Whenua," in *He Manawa Whenua: Proceedings of the Inaugural Indigenous Research Conference of Te Kotahi Research Institute*, ed. Leonie Pihama, Herearoha Skipper, and Jillian Tipene, 59-63 (Hamilton: Te Kotahi Research Institute, 2015).

Throughout this exegesis, I refer frequently to my grandparents: my father's mother, Nana Maire, who is 'Nana' or 'my nana'; and my mother's mother, Grandma Faith, 'Grandma,' or 'my grandma' — the terms 'Nana' and 'Grandma' are not interchangeable. I sometimes refer to them both together as "my grandmothers," though this term may be inclusive of my whakapapa lines of many grandmothers, tūpuna kuia, before them. My mother, my father, and my granddads are also intrinsically part of my storytelling, as are my siblings, cousins, and wider kin, but the primary research focus follows my grandmothers.

I also refer to the project's supervisors: Monique Redmond, Natalie Robertson, and Mandy Smith, either with their full names, or in conversational contexts as Mon, Mandy, and Natalie.

I use the terms (re)connecting, (re)learning), (re)growing, (re)weaving to acknowledge that although the connections may be seen as 'new' in my lifetime, they are a mending of connections, understandings, and knowledges that have been held previously within my family lines. That is, I am marking the difference between joining something together anew, and connecting again something that once was.

The artwork titles play an important part in their storying; comprehensive 'materials-lists' for each artwork and making-process are therefore included throughout *Part 3: Aho / Weft Threads*. The full title of each project artwork is given on first use, followed by shortened version when referred to again later.

The appendix of poetic writing (poems and interludes) is included throughout the text, distinguished by a teal font.

Macrons (diacritics that show vowel length in te reo Māori) are used throughout the text, except where the author of a quoted passage has not used them. As I work between languages and textile techniques from my many ancestral places, a full glossary of terms is included at the end of the text.

PART TWO:

WHENU / WARP THREADS

ngā puna waiora, ngā whatuora o Taranaki

After Maureen Lander's 1993 artwork, *Ko ngā puna waiora o te Maunga Taranaki*

thirty years ago, and next year, and now

Taranaki Maunga stands proud in his likeness
in the centre of the art gallery,
rainbow-painted mauri stones
anchoring rivers
at his feet

like his guidestone holds him now, at the edge of the motu
like all the stones that find their way
along the awa
from the maunga to the sea
and guide the flowing waters in their path

fluid braids of harakeke form rivers that shape the maunga
woven by Taranaki mokopuna, and their kairaranga
and when I look closer at the woven maunga,
I see the strands of my nana's lace
flowing from her hands between bobbin and pin
each waterway a thread, drawn into the pattern
and held by that first knot, the maunga

we trace the lines where each riverthread meets
where they knot together, cross and leave each other again
as they weave
through the whenua
from the maunga to the sea

the stones at the heart of the maunga hold fire
as they always have and always will; this whenua
was fed by ahi and awa and andesite alike
and around the bones of the great fish the soil grew rich
we, too, are born and fed from the whenua
and will be laid back among the soil and stones

we hold each stone, choose carefully which to bring
into the weaving for a time, and which to leave in their liminal home
layered – as we are – between water and air
sea and shore
earth and sky

here, the plant-fibre and the stones become ngā whatuora
woven around the maunga, the living, seeing eyes
of our tūpuna before us and behind us
layered generations in the futurepresentpast
and the waiora, the waters from which we all come
are re-storyed and restored through the dreams
of their mokopuna

and I feel my nana's hands passing her threads on to me
as my grandma did before her,
as their grandmothers to them
and we weave
we weave
we weave



CHAPTER 1:

WHAKAPAPA

PREVIOUS IMAGE: Image 18. Taranaki Maunga seen from Puniho Pa, 2024

A LAYERED THREAD

From my grandmothers before me and towards the potential of generations to come — from all my kin in the futurepresentpast, my practice is guided by whakapapa. Although most commonly translated as 'genealogy' or 'lineage,' the elements that comprise whakapapa infer a way of seeing and connecting that is far more expansive and complex. *Mending the Kupenga* exists within this complexity, drawing out the potential for layering and simultaneity of meanings and understanding.

In the renowned *Rauru-nui-a-toi* series, Ngāti Porou scholar and politician Apirana Ngata explains the term whakapapa (whaka + papa) as "the process of layering one thing upon another,"[20] the making of layers upon a foundation, where Papa is both tupuna and whenua, ancestor and earth. Taranaki researcher Leonie Pihama (Te Ati Awa, Ngāti Mahanga, Ngā Mahanga-a-Tairi) describes this as a relational process, where,

> through Whakapapa, the cultural template through which we understand our descent and ancestral relationships, we are reminded that the relationships between and amongst us, as individuals and social groupings, are layered upon each other and extend as wide as our whānau and intergenerational connections reach.[21]

Invoking relational layers within the image of an intimate yet ever-expanding web,[22] scholar Mere Roberts (Ngati Apakura, Ngati Hikairo, Pākehā) shares how Māori knowledge "concerning the origin and relationships of material things … is visualized as a network of time-space co-ordinates arranged upon a genealogical framework called whakapapa … the past (personified as ancestors) is still present and continues to impact on events today." [23] Therefore, in Pihama's words, whakapapa is "a spiritual connection that brings together all aspects of te ao Māori … It is a means through which we are able to place ourselves not only in the world but in relationship to each other."[24] Whakapapa acknowledges our connections to ancestors — human and more-than-human (in the whenua, maunga, awa, and moana), past and future — as simultaneous within the fullness of the futurepresentpast. Whakapapa holds that everything is relational.

20 Apirana Ngata and Porourangi Maori Cultural School, *Rauru-nui-a-toi Lectures; And, Ngati Kahungunu Origins* (Gisborne: H. K. Ngata, 1972), 6.

21 Leonie Pihama, "Mana Atua, Mana Tangata, Mana Wahine," in *Mana Wahine Reader Volume 2 A Collection of Writings 1999-2019*, ed. Leonie Pihama, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Naomi Simmonds, Joeliee Seed-Pihama, and Kirsten Gabel (Hamilton: Te Kotahi Research Institute, 2019), 191.

22 Hana Burgess and Te Kahuratai Moko-Painting, "Onamata, Anamata: A Whakapapa Perspective of Māori Futurisms," in *Whose Futures?* ed. Anna-Maria Murtola and Shannon Walsh (Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland: Economic and Social Research Aotearoa, 2020).

23 Mere Roberts, "Ways of Seeing: Whakapapa," *Sites: A Journal of Social Anthropology and Cultural Studies* 10, no. 1 (2013): 97.

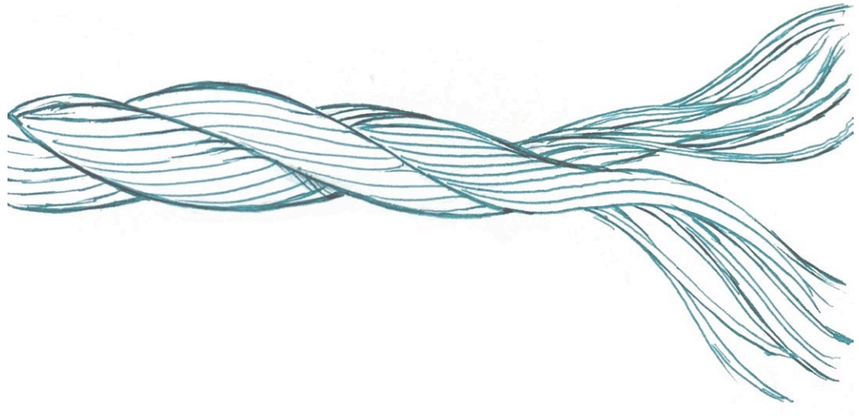
24 Leonie Pihama, "Tīhei Mauri Ora: Honouring Our Voices: Mana Wahine as a Kaupapa Māori Theoretical Framework," (PhD thesis, University of Auckland, 2001), 131, http://hdl.handle.net/2292/1119. See also Ruakere Hond, "Matua te Reo, Matua te Tangata: Speaker Community: Visions, Approaches, Outcomes" (PhD thesis, Massey University, 2013), 135–36, http://hdl.handle.net/10179/5439.

In his exposition "The Terminology of Whakapapa," originally written circa 1931, Ngata outlines the significance of aho in genealogical lines, describing how the tracing of relations can be considered as a cord, or thread:

> Aho, kaha. Literally a line, string or cord. In relation to a pedigree or genealogy, this is a figure that would naturally occur to a weaving, cord-making, net-making, fishing people. The reciter [of whakapapa] conceived a connected string on which the persons concerned in the matter of his recitation were strung along in sequence.[25]

Artist Rachel Shearer (Te Aitanga ā Māhaki, Rongowhakaata, Ngāti Kahungunu, Pākehā) carries this image of Ngata's line or cord into the simultaneous idea of whakapapa as stratification in her layered soundscapes, "with its literal meaning of laying one thing on top of the other. One image given for whakapapa is that of a rope drawn over strata of events in time."[26] Likewise, artist Natalie Robertson (Ngāti Porou, Clann Dhònnchaidh) connects the idea of continuing threads across relational layers with the term 'taonga tuku iho.' The word tuku reflects the notion of transfer as both verb (to let go, let down, send, catch in a net) and noun (describing the latticed panel-works called tukutuku), arising from the exchange of threads between two weavers. Robertson shares how "this notion of transference applies also between generations, through our very DNA ... tukutuku then refers to the weaving practice of threads being passed on, through, over — one thread crossing and connecting with the other."[27] The layering and passing of threads occurs literally and figuratively in this research practice: in the materials I learn from and work with by hand (Grandma Faith's thread collection, Nana Maire's lace samplers, aho formed from place-specific fibre such as gathered muka and wool) and in the stories passed down to me, in conversational methods of making.

In this context, not only does aho become a metaphorical thread passed between intergenerational layers, but, in many forms of fibre-making, each aho or thread is an intertwined, layered form in itself.[28]



25 Apirana Ngata and Wayne Ngata, "The Terminology of Whakapapa," *The Journal of the Polynesian Society* 128, no. 1 (2019): 19-42, https://www.jstor.org/stable/26857330.

26 Rachel Mary Shearer, "Te Oro o te Ao: The Resounding of the World" (PhD thesis, Auckland University of Technology, 2018), 18, https://hdl.handle.net/10292/11712.

27 Natalie Robertson, "Ngā Whatu-Ora: We the Living Are the Seeing Eyes of Our Sleeping Ancestors," *Public* 27, no. 54 (2016): 135. https://doi.org/10.1386/public.27.54.132_1.

28 With the exception of filament-threads, such as silk.

In the techniques of miro, twining, splicing, and/or spinning, fibres twist together and around each other to form ever-stronger, spiralling strands.[29]

Hinekura Smith details how the action of miro used in making kākahu, where strands of muka are rolled down the kaiwhatu's thigh, entwines DNA into each aho.[30] The same is true of handspun fibres, as each thread passes through the spinner's hands and fingers. When I visit Te Paea's kākahu, I sense that each whenu and aho holds her whakapapa. Each whatu or woven work I make with miro and spun threads holds the same potential to carry my whakapapa onwards. In this way, the form and concept of aho is truly a whakapapa connector,

> the means through which the weaver enables ancestral energy to 'live on' in the present. This abstract idea moves aho from 'metaphorical' connectors to tangible instantiations of ancestral efficacy — those threads that bind and connect us to our past and will continue into the future.[31]

Every kākahu made by hand, with miro whenu and aho, holds whakapapa within its threads and carries it through time, as generations pass it down through the family.

Takirau, May 2023

I miro fibre, across my thigh and between my fingers
muka strands layer upon muka strands as they splice
and twine together, wool
sometimes held between, or instead.
The thread spirals as it grows, every strand added
becomes another stratification
another layer, another story,
whakapaparanga.

LAYERING IN PRACTICE

Every aspect of practice through this PhD project is inherently layered with and through whakapapa, leading to a literal process of layering and relational unfolding as my methodological approach to gathering and making has formed. This research approach invokes the assertion by researchers Hana Burgess (Ngāpuhi, Te Roroa, Te Ātihaunui-a-Pāpārangi, Ngāti Tūwharetoa), Donna Cormack (Kāi Tahu, Kāti Māmoe), and Papaarangi Reid (Te Rarawa) that,

29 Thread-making is one of the most ancient crafted forms. Evidence of highly-developed fibre-material manipulation is found from at least the early-mid Neolithic (with finds from Palestine dated 7160–6150 BC, including rope, netting, mats, spun and plied linen-flax yarns, and plain-woven, dyed and bead-decorated cloth). Even earlier examples of twisted linen-flax fibres have been uncovered; in 2021, evidence of a "perishable shroud" and pillow were found in Kenya, dating back at least 78,000 years. See examples in Mary Schoeser, *World Textiles* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2022), 34.

30 Hinekura Smith, "Whatuora: Whatu Kākahu and Living as Māori Women" (PhD thesis, University of Auckland, 2017), 83; Donna Campbell "Weaving the Skin" (master's thesis, Whitecliffe College of Arts and Design, 2005), 9.

31 Smith, "Whatuora: Whatu Kākahu," 79.



ABOVE: Image 19. Layered making-in-process on a return to Taranaki. Gathering-and-holding baskets, found-wool hentilagets spun into yarn, gathered angiangi, a whiri (braided) harakeke rope-in-process for basket-making, ti kouka gathered and processed with my brothers in 2021 and twined into aho, two tauira in muka and wool, Tongaporutu Awa in the background

> in knowing something's whakapapa, the layers that make it up, you can come to know how it came to be, how it relates to the rest of existence, and how it will come to exist in the future. Everything in existence is infinitely and complexly in relation all the time, existing in a state of whanaungatanga.[32]

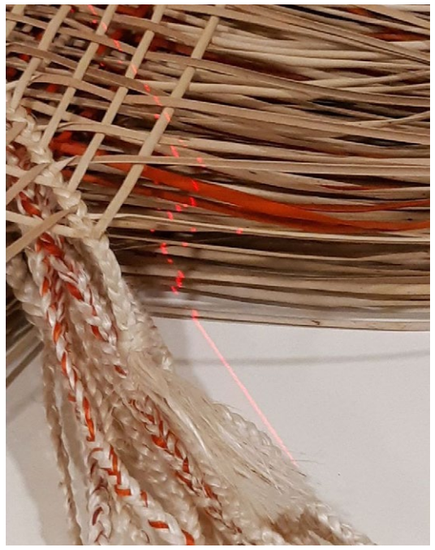
Shifts in the creative practice occur in relation to conversations, to circumstances, to encountering old knowledge, to developing and forming new knowledge. The methods, materials, and techniques I use to 'make with' come from these discoveries in connection to my ancestral practices, including those learnt from (and encouraged by) Nana Maire, Grandma Faith, and my mother Lynne, as well as re-learnt from more recent kaiako and tuākana mahi toi, and from the taonga that hold knowledge of these practices in their very form. These include hand-crafted textiles (whatu, weaving, knitting, sewing, various lacemaking techniques, net-making, plant-dyes, and fibre extraction) and storytelling (in conversation and connection with these handcrafted objects and through poetry). My process-led making also involves: visits to place/tūrangawaewae; kōrerorero; archival research; drawing and lens-based media. I consider the choice of materials carefully through every step of the gathering and making process. I acknowledge their whakapapa and ancestral places (the whenua to which plants are endemic) and the material connection to their places of growth, whether they are native or manuhiri (that is, introduced plants, welcome or unwelcome guests of the whenua).

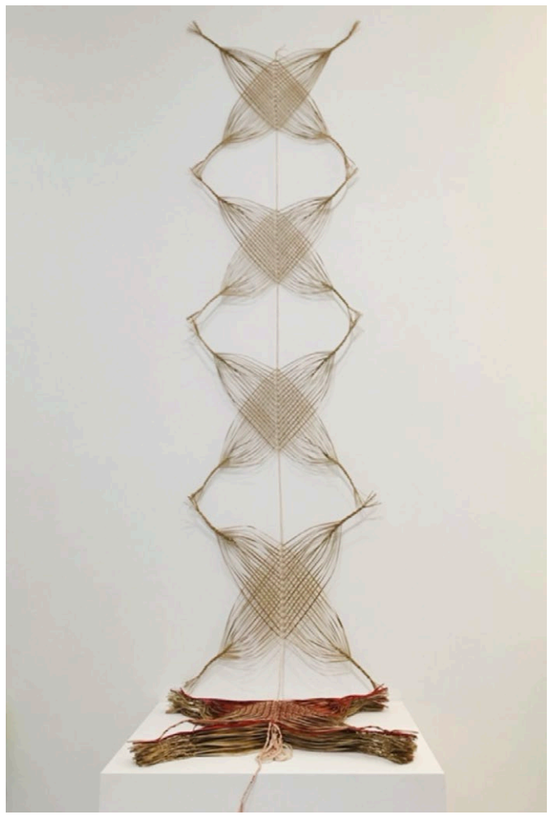
Each artwork made through this project layers into, from, upon each other. Conversations held and shared with whanaunga, other artists, writers, and makers, and garnered through tūpuna guidance and archival research, spark an idea for a weaving. I begin with a sampler, a tauira, which then draws in fibre, colour, and patterns from the whenua and/or gifted materials. Poems unfold from the patterning storied within the tauira — māwhitiwhiti patterns such as pātikitiki 'kupenga,' which reference time spent catching flounders with my dad, grandparents, and younger brothers; the flow and fold of woven strands that story the building sediment of our awa. A poem might extend the metaphor already present in the work, or reprise the idea or story that the weaving wants to share. Workbook sketches drawn from the ongoing working and re-working inform new tauira, which in turn may transform into a larger-scale weaving that I bring back to the whenua and reshape in conversation with place.

Working with a layered, processual approach has allowed multiple interconnected projects to continue to form and grow within the doctoral research, in development with materials, processes, and people. Some of these works have drawn from ongoing projects-in-progress, like the stitching together of wool blanket pieces dyed with rongoā (medicinal plants) from across my ancestral homelands (begun in 2019). Around the mid-point of the research, in September 2022, construction of the project's first warp-weighted loom introduced a particular focus to the research. Since then, the loom has become the primary structure that the research uses to

32 Hana Burgess, Donna Cormack, and Papaarangi Reid, "Calling Forth Our Pasts, Citing Our Futures: An Envisioning of a Kaupapa Māori Citational Practice," *MAI Journal* 10, no. 1 (2021): 61, https://doi.org/10.20507/MAIJournal.2021.10.1.8.







ABOVE: Image 20. Maureen Lander, *Ko ngā puna waiora o te Maunga Taranaki*, 1993. Installation image courtesy of Maureen Lander and Govett-Brewster Art Gallery

RIGHT: Image 21. Maureen Lander, *Flat-Pack Whakapapa*, 2017. harakeke and muka. Installation at Govett Brewster Gallery, collection of the artist. Photo: Arielle Walker, courtesy of Maureen Lander

TOP RIGHT: Image 22. Maureen Lander, *Flat-Pack Whakapapa*, 2017. Detail image: Maureen Lander Archive

ground and balance the project's layered making approach into a cohesive form, allowing me to blend between and combine my ancestral practices. Seasonal gathering and tauira-making practice has run throughout the research, holding me accountable to a continual process of learning and relearning. Layered within the making is every conversation, every return to the whenua, every opportunity to learn that I have experienced along the way.

A WOVEN METAPHOR

Aotearoa artist and weaver Maureen Lander (Ngāpuhi, Te Hikutu, Pākehā) provides an example metaphor connecting whakapapa with fibre in her 2017 artwork *Flat-Pack Whakapapa*.[33] The installation — a continuous line of multiple flattened kete, made with strands of harakeke and stacked in layers — considers the conceptual terrain of "kinship, family, and friendship networks as well as genetic heritage." Through her raranga, Lander speaks to "how whakapapa grows with us, and how our genealogy is inherited by our descendants."[34] The folded layers of the installation encourage a reading of generations, reminding the viewer that our tūpuna guide us "into the future."[35] By representing whakapapa as a series of layered, portable woven objects connected by an aho/thread, Lander characterises whakapapa as mobile. Even across migrations and other forms of distance, we always carry our whakapapa with us.

Expanding on this metaphorical, woven language around whakapapa, Ngāi Tahu tribal historian Te Maire Tau describes whakapapa as "the fabric that held the traditional world view together."[36] Academic and musician Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal (Ngāti Raukawa, Ngāti Tamaterā, Ngāpuhi) likens a recited whakapapa (that relates each pūrākau in a particular collection to the others within it)[37] to a relational web, where,

> stories continue seamlessly one from the other and are joined by the use of whakapapa ... the whakapapa that connects them together renders them in total as some kind of fabric. Perhaps the image of the spider's web is useful in approximating the experience of isolating just one story from the fabric.[38]

The image of fabric, a web or net, elucidates the interconnected nature of whakapapa: how one thing cannot be considered separate from its relations; how the spaces between each thread become relational spaces.[39] Responding to *He Ara Uru Ora* (2023), a recent artwork by Taranaki Parihaka artist Ngāhina Hohaia (Taranaki, Te *Ātiawa*, Ngāti Ruanui, Ngāti Moeahu, Ngāti Haupoto-Parihaka),

33 Maureen Lander, *Flat-Pack Whakapapa*, 2017, harakeke, muka, exhibited first at Dowse Art Museum, Lower Hutt, artist's collection.

34 Lander, *Flat-Pack Whakapapa*.

35 Lander.

36 Te Maire Tau, "The Death of Knowledge: Ghosts on the Plains," *New Zealand Journal of History* 35, no. 2 (2001): 131.

37 George Grey, *Ngā Mahi ā ngā Tupuna* (Wellington: AH & AW Reed, 1928), facsimile of the 3rd edition, with corrections by Bruce Biggs and Pei Te Hurinui Jones (Wellington: Reed, 1971).

38 Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal, "Te Whare Tapere: Towards a Model for Maori Performance Art" (PhD thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 1998), 103, https://ir.wgtn.ac.nz/handle/123456789/27920.

39 See also Shawn Wilson, *Research is Ceremony* (Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing, 2008), 76.

Pihama describes how whakapapa is carried in and flowing through each suspended aho. She sees this as a reminder that "whakapapa is a continuation of a line of breath … connected to the hau and the ha of all living beings."[40] Through whakapapa, each generational layer meets continually in the futurepresentpast. As Burgess, Cormack, and Reid assert:

> We are … points at which past generations reflect into and through to future generations (and vice versa) — points of intergenerational dialogue. As meeting points between generations, we have the ability to shape how reflections of the past refract through us into the future … Through whakapapa, we have a responsibility to shape the future well, to nurture and enhance these intergenerational relationships.[41]

This project's methodology has grown in parallel with Ngata's positioning of whakapapa, expanded by Roberts and Pihama, embodied by the layers of meaning described by Shearer, Robertson, and Royal and employed by Lander and Hohaia in their creative practices. I consider whakapapa and the aho of relations as threads that bind and connect me to my ancestors, human and more-than-human, past and future; to my living family, and wider; to all our relations: a kupenga of connection.

Knowledge is held by this net, both directly and implicitly. As Opaskwayak Cree researcher Shawn Wilson reminds us, all reality is relationships, including

> our relations to ancestors, family, and Place, as well as ideas and cultural understandings that make us who we are … We are not all separate entities that are interacting within relationships — we are the relationships.[42]

We are therefore answerable to *all* our relations when we are doing research. In the words of Wilson's father, researcher Stan Wilson (Opaskwayak Cree), working from our ancestral practices and Indigenous methodologies "is a way of building relationships and also being accountable to and for those relationships … you become accountable for relationships as you build them."[43] I am connected to all my relations, and therefore I hold myself accountable to (and for) them. This is especially true when learning about our shared stories, and working with our shared craft traditions.

40 Ngahuia Murphy et al., "Mana Wāhine: Creating Space for Sovereignty," (panel discussion at Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, December 9, 2023).

41 Burgess, Cormack, and Reid, "Calling Forth Our Pasts," 62.

42 Shawn Wilson and Margaret Hughes, "Why Research is Reconciliation," in *Research and Reconciliation*, ed. Andrea V. Breen and Lindsay DuPré (Toronto: Canadian Scholars, 2019), 8.

43 Stan Wilson, quoted in Wilson, *Research Is Ceremony*, 57.



CHAPTER 2:

WHATUORA

REWEAVING OURSELVES INTO PLACE

In whatu, pairs of aho or weft threads are twined horizontally around the vertical whenu, the warp, in a continual exchange of fibres that weave together into a strong, supple cloth. Along with raranga, whatu is among the domains of Hineteiwaiwa, atua of fertility, childbirth, and weaving, connected with the moon and the sea.[44] In te reo Māori, the term whenu has a linguistic connection to whenua (land, ground, placenta, afterbirth),[45] and aho has a similar connection (as shared by Apirana Ngata)[46] to genealogical lines. Therefore, when we whatu, we are essentially weaving ourselves into place, another way of reconnecting home.

The term whatu in te reo Māori also holds the meanings 'to see,' and 'stone.' As framed by Hinekura Smith, when connected with ora (life, health), the term 'whatuora' offers the potential for an approach that envisions past and future possibilities "through decolonising eyes."[47] This imperative echoes Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Porou scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith's words, in that "decolonisation must offer a language of possibility, a way out of colonialism," and "that language of possibility exists within our own alternative, oppositional ways of knowing."[48]

Following Smith's approach, this desire to unpick and re-weave, reclaim and restore the snarled and missing pieces in my relational net, beginning with those knots closest to me, sparked the creative research enquiry; to consider a "language of possibility" by returning to the "alternative, oppositional ways of knowing" of my tūpuna, my ancestors.[49] This has been a twofold process: firstly, I work to uncover — to *see* — where those snarls lie in my own histories, in the knowledge and relationships interrupted within my own whakapapa through the systematic imposing of the colonial machine, and its subsequent ripple effects.[50] Secondly, I pursue the lifelong work of coming to understand and then reconnect the broken, tangled, and frayed threads to find ways to make that learning active, to move towards mending through crafting — towards a future where my potential mokopuna are firmly grounded in relationship, in their identity, have fluency in their tūpuna tongues, and have access to their ancestral practices and stories when they are ready for them. Furthermore, I hope for them to have the space to innovate, as our ancestors have always done, rather than fight for their very recognition.

44 Aroha Yates-Smith, "Te Ukaipo—Te Taiao: The Mother, the Nurturer—Nature," in *Mana Wahine Reader Volume 2 A Collection of Writings 1999-2019*, ed. Leonie Pihama, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Naomi Simmonds, Joeliee Seed-Pihama, and Kirsten Gabel, 75-82 (Hamilton: Te Kotahi Research Institute, 2019); Donna Campbell, "Ngā Kura a Hineteiwaiwa: The Embodiment of Mana Wahine in Māori Fibre Arts" (PhD thesis, University of Waikato, 2019), https://hdl.handle.net/10289/12583.

45 Maureen Lander, "In Sites: The Predicament of Place" (master's thesis, University of Auckland, 1993), 85.

46 Ngata and Ngata, "The Terminology of Whakapapa."

47 Smith, "Whatuora: Theorizing 'New' Indigenous Methodology," 21.

48 Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, 36.

49 Smith, 36.

50 See Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*; Stephen Turner, "Settler Dreaming," 121; Ani Mikaere, *Colonising Myths: Māori Realities*, (Wellington: Huia, 2011); Ranginui Walker, *Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou* (Auckland: Penguin, 2004).

PREVIOUS IMAGE: Image 23. Tauira detail, whatu muka, wool, and drawn-thread techniques



ABOVE: Image 24. Detail of *Kahu Kōkawa* (2021), wool, tanekaha dye, gifted huruhuru. Kākahu made for my brother Aidan's university graduation, May 2021

To re-weave and restore — to *re-story* ourselves in connection with the futurepresentpast: I bring this desire into my practice, weaving fibres, words, and embodied memories as a way to navigate the complexities of whakapapa and belonging to place. In the materially-crafted aspects of the project, the notion of "unpicking and re-weaving" has become literal. I unravel strands of wool and re-twine them with muka to make new threads, a process paralleled through my poetic writing.[51]

TE WHARE PORA

I began learning to whatu in 2019, under the guidance of Ngāpuhi kairaranga and kaiwhatu Whaea Rose Greaves, who shared the notion of a whatuora practice with our weaving rōpu. During these whatuora wānanga, I was taught that we enter into a contemporary form of Te Whare Pora, the embodiment of a house of learning, under the guidance of Hineteiwaiwa.[52] Te Whare Pora encompasses beyond physical space. As Erenora Puketapu-Hetet (Te Atiawa) shares, it "does not necessarily require a physical structure as the word 'Whare' (house) implies" but rather can be described as a "state of being."[53] Artist and kairaranga Donna Campbell (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Ruanui) expands on Puketapu-Hetet's writing, describing how Te Whare Pora is "considered a state of mind" and that "experienced kairaranga often subconsciously exist in this creative state." Campbell explains that through practice, attaining and maintaining the tikanga of Te Whare Pora becomes a "way of living."[54] Te Whare Pora in this context of making can therefore be viewed as "a conceptual as well as physical space of creativity and connection."[55]

Traditionally, tauira (learners) would be initiated through ceremony conducted by tohunga, where the knowledge of weaving was 'fed' to the student to endow them with a "receptive mind and retentive memory."[56] Tikanga wharepora was one of the many practices discouraged or outright banned during the process of colonisation.[57] In their 2021 collaborative PhD, kairaranga Gloria Taituha (Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Hikairo), Rose Te Ratana (Tūhoe, Ngati Kahungunu), and Jacqueline McRae-Tarei share that the traditional knowledge of Te Whare Pora "pertained to the specialised body of knowledge of weaving … the kāhui kairaranga including tikanga, karakia and whakapapa" and did not include practical, 'everyday' weaving.[58]

51 See Chapter 8 for a deeper discussion of these practice-elements.

52 Yates-Smith, "Te Ukaipo—Te Taiao"; Campbell, "Ngā Kura a Hineteiwaiwa."

53 Puketapu-Hetet, *Māori Weaving*, 34.

54 Smith, "Whatu Kākahu"; Campbell, "Ngā Kura a Hineteiwaiwa."

55 Campbell, "Ngā Kura a Hineteiwaiwa," 46.

56 Puketapu-Hetet, *Māori Weaving*, 34; see also Elsdon Best, "The Art of the Whare Pora," *Transactions and Proceedings of the Royal Society of New Zealand*, 1898: 627-631, https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/periodicals/TPRSNZ1898-31.2.6.1.65.

57 Puketapu-Hetet, *Māori Weaving*, 34.

58 Jacqueline McRae-Tarei, "Te Mana o te Kāhui Kairaranga: Mai i te Tīmatatanga" (PhD thesis, Auckland University of Technology, 2021), 28, https://hdl.handle.net/10292/14446.





TOP: Image 25. Mataaho Collective, *Te Whare Pora*, 2013 (in-process image). Faux mink blanket, satin, cotton, 6m x 9m. Image courtesy of Mataaho Collective

BELOW: Image 26. Bobby Campbell Luke, *Kākahu Hou*, 2017 (still from moving image). Image courtesy of Bobby Campbell Luke

McRae-Tarei notes that "to the kāhui kairaranga, woven specialised items embodied history and whakapapa and reflected mana of the wearer and/or owner,"[59] unlike 'everyday' pieces that were not under the same restrictions.

Contemporary practitioners, including Mataaho Collective[60] and Taranaki interdisciplinary fashion designer Bobby Campbell Luke (Ngāti Ruanui), engage contemporary forms of whare pora practice as a working methodology. Mataaho's first project together, *Te Whare Pora*, was made during a 2012 residency with Enjoy Contemporary Art Space, in Pōneke Wellington. The collective approached the residency as a contemporary whare pora, living "marae-styles" in the gallery while they worked on their large-scale faux-mink blanket installation.[61] Mataaho share how they, too, understand Te Whare Pora as a state of being, held and guided by Hineteiwaiwa.[62] Campbell Luke finds early descriptions of whare pora rituals reminiscent of "moments growing up at [his] mum Alison's knees, witnessing activations and operations of Tikanga observed at Taiporohēnui Pā."[63] He centres these learnings in every aspect of his design practice. This is not a space to be taken lightly: it is important to acknowledge that I engage with learning in Te Whare Pora in its more contemporary form, rather than within a customary context. That said, working with a whatuora methodology means that each piece I make considers and embodies whakapapa, family histories, and stories, from the materials, to the patterns, to the intended recipient; an intention that, for me, feels connected to the essence of a whare pora.

SEEING AND RE-SEEING | BECOMING THE EYES OF OUR TŪPUNA

Artist Natalie Robertson applies a whatuora approach to wider creative practice. She picks up the notion of tukutuku as a generational metaphor from scholar, minister, and tohunga Māori Marsden (Ngai Takoto, Ahipara, Ngati Warara), who states: "we the living are the *whatu-ora*, the living seeing eyes of our sleeping ancestors, and ... we are the *tukutuku-nga iho* — literally, those that 'follow on.'"[64] Through whatuora, in Robertson's words, "we see for those who no longer dwell on the physical plane. We are the eyes for those who came before. We tell the stories they cannot tell."[65] The connection of whatuora to seeing, envisioning,[66] extends also to means of knowledge transfer, learning, as many traditional methods of teaching customary

59 McRae-Tarei, "Te Mana o te Kāhui Kairaranga," 28.

60 Mataaho Collective is comprised of four women artists: Erena Baker (Te Atiawa ki Whakarongotai, Ngāti Toa Rangatira), Sarah Hudson (Ngāti Awa, Ngāi Tūhoe), Bridget Reweti (Ngāti Ranginui, Ngāi Te Rangi), and Terri Te Tau (Rangitāne ki Wairarapa).

61 Mataaho Collective, *Te Whare Pora* (Wellington: Enjoy Contemporary Art Space, 2013), https://enjoy.org.nz/media/uploads/2020_04/2013_TeWharePora.pdf.

62 Mataaho Collective, "Te Whare Pora," accessed February 20, 2020, https://www.mataahocollective.com/art-works/te-whare-pora-2013.

63 Bobby Campbell Luke, "Kākahu Hou: The Breath of Cloth" (PhD thesis, Auckland University of Technology, 2021), 123, https://hdl.handle.net/10292/14808.

64 Māori Marsden, quoted in Robertson, "Ngā Whatu-Ora," 135.

65 Robertson, "Ngā Whatu-Ora," 135.

66 See also Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, 153, on "envisioning."

practices depend upon observation. Cherokee artist Siera Hyte describes how "observation and the act of gathering together uphold weaving traditions."[67] She references influential Cherokee basket-maker Emma Taylor's experience of learning her craft from her mother "just by seeing" her make, and finds that, even when no teacher is available, weavers "teach themselves by seeing,"[68] for example, by studying historic weavings held in museum collections. I have learnt as much of my craft from watching and seeing those working around me (Nana Maire's making-practice; Grandma Faith's knitting; my mother Lynne's sewing; my kaiako and artistic tuākana in wānanga), and from spending time looking at crafted taonga (Nana's unfinished textile samplers/projects; kākahu and tauira in museum collections), as I have from being taught, as some might consider, 'directly.'

Starting from the perspectives outlined by Hinekura Smith and Robertson, Whaea Rose Greaves' initial teaching, and the learning shared with my whanaunga, hoa, and artistic tuākana, my own whatuora practice has been established via the following methods:

Working through modes of ceremony as a means to set and honour focus and intent

Considering how tapu and noa enter the practice; opening and closing making-spaces with karakia

Working with intention: for each artwork to weave into and add to the fabric of knowledge and future potential held in my family and wider, towards past and future tūpuna; for each artwork to embody the layered aspects of whakapapa in my practice

Extending and deepening my knowledge and practice of whatu, in connection with my other ancestral practices (such as weaving, lacemaking, knitting), as a means of both 'reclaiming' and 'reweaving' those practices from my own experience

Centring practice in place: considering where each material comes from and how they link back to the places where I have whakapapa and whānau connections; considering whether I (and my family) are manuhiri or tangata whenua in each of these places, and extending that consideration to the plants, fibre, and other materials I access and use[69]

Tracing back the whakapapa of materials in place to connect and understand my own family histories in these places

Working with materials as metaphor, unravelling wool and retwining it with muka, using the harakeke para from muka haro to make baskets for holding materials[70]

Centring learning in the making itself, and considering making not as a means to an end, but a way to bring alive my ancestral practices — the held, present moment of making being the practice focus, rather than the idea of a 'finished object'

Considering the lifespace of each weaving (where making does culminate in something 'finished' or at least corporeal) as something that can be either handed down in turn, or returned to the whenua

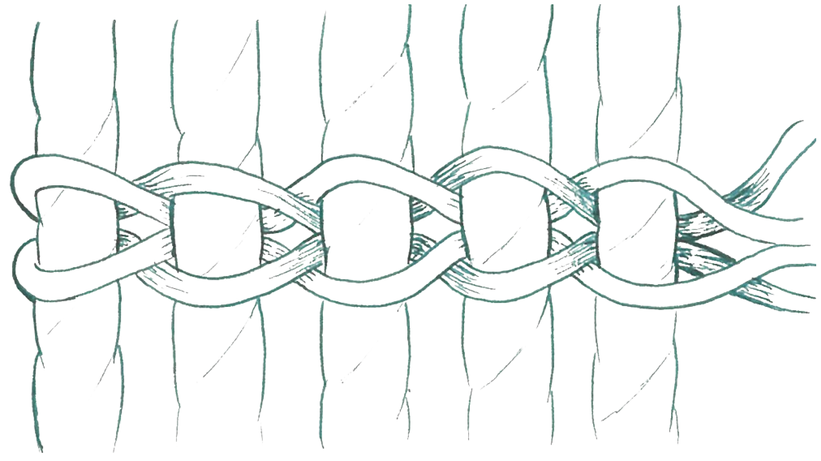
67 Siera Hyte, "Cherokee Craftspeople Are Stronger Together," *Hyperallergic*, June 15, 2023, https://hyperallergic.com/820400/cherokee-craftspeople-are-stronger-together/.

68 Hyte.

69 For example, harakeke is of the whenua in Taranaki, while yarrow is manuhiri here; although yarrow is of the land in Ireland, where my grandma's ancestors come from.

70 See Chapter 8: Tension & Balance.

In my art practice, I cannot engage in whatuora without acknowledging the grounding of whakapapa. I see the key methods of twining threads in whatu, especially whatu-aho-rua, (two thread-pairs in constant exchange) as embodying concepts of layering, exchange, and passing threads between, as part of the whakapapa practice.



As Hinekura Smith describes,

> the intertwining action between these two sets of threads is a key idea in a Whatuora methodology. As one set comes to the fore, it is exchanged for another that is then foregrounded, both sets of aho interacting with each other. Neither can exist in isolation or independent of the other.[71]

When I make through whatuora practice, I reconnect with ancestral knowledges across family histories and weave them together (new and inherited materials/stories). I see these processes as reparative actions in the context of whakapapa. At times, one strand, or 'set' comes to the fore, then gives space to the other, slowly bringing the whole into balance. The tensions inherent in any relational space, and in any weaving practice, are necessary forces to engage with. As a practical methodology, whakapapa offers an immediate way to make connections in the knots along these relational cords, a concept I contextualise through this unfolding of a whatuora approach.[72] Equally, the more I learn about my tūpuna stories and practice their crafts, the more connected I feel to them, and the more these connections are strengthened or re-knotted back into place along the net.

71 Smith, "Whatuora: Whatu Kākahu," 98-9.

72 Robertson, "Ngā Whatu-Ora," 135.



CHAPTER 3:

STORYWORK

"… although the stories all had different voices, and came from different times and places and understandings, though some were shown, enacted or written rather than told, each one was like a puzzle piece which tongued or grooved neatly into another. And this train of stories defined our lives, curving out from points on the spiral in ever-widening circles from which neither beginnings nor endings could be defined."

Patricia Grace, *Pōtiki*, 1986

PREVIOUS IMAGE: Image 27. A found, creature-traced story engraved in Taranaki driftwood, Ngāmotu, 2022

PŪRĀKAU AS PEDAGOGY

Mending the Kupenga has deepened my whakapapa-guided, whatuora methodology, affirming the importance of our ancestral stories. Recalling Jo-Ann Archibald's notion of 'storywork,'[73] engaging pūrākau with family stories through making gives space and access to learning that I return to whenever I stumble. As Jenny Bol Jun Lee-Morgan (Waikato, Ngāti Mahuta, Ngāti Te Ahiwaru) affirms, the purpose and impact of reconnecting to our pūrākau, our traditional, ancestral, and family stories, is "to preserve our connection to our tūpuna, through our consciousness of the present and the inevitability of the future."[74] This holds me accountable to the stories I work with, and to those who belong to them.

In *The Woven Universe* (2003), Māori Marsden describes pūrākau, traditional stories, as deliberate constructs employed to encapsulate worldviews, genealogies, and relationships between things. Such stories, he argues, "imprint on the mind, [act] as pegs to which the finer details could be attached in progressive order to reconstruct the component features of [a] body of knowledge."[75] Acknowledging the potential for learning and teaching that our Indigenous stories hold, Archibald developed the concept of 'Indigenous storywork'[76] to encompass a methodology that intrinsically does "appreciate and understand the beauty and power" of our ancestral stories.[77] She positions storywork as a practical framework that emphasises respect, responsibility, and reciprocity to work with, make meaning, and learn from experiential stories — methods which I utilise in my making.[78] In my 2020 Masters research, *On returning to the sea*, I wrote that:

> Not only do pūrākau embody memory as an aid for recall, they also work as a form of camouflage that preserves the integrity of sacred lore, and mediates misuse and abuse of this lore … Traditional stories have layers: knowledge to be shared openly, knowledge to be shared in certain ways, and knowledge too sacred to be shared with anyone but the initiated. Pūrākau can hold sacred cultural memories at the same time as being the means to make sense of relationships, and at the same time as being a simple story filled with wonder and narrative. Pūrākau also communicate tikanga, the right way of doing things. In essence: stories have power.[79]

73 Archibald, *Indigenous Storywork*.

74 Jenny Bol Jun Lee-Morgan, "Pūrakau from the Inside-Out," in *Decolonizing Research: Indigenous Storywork as Methodology*, ed. Jo-Ann Archibald Q'um Qu'm Xiiem, Jenny Bol Jun Lee-Morgan, and Jason De Santolo (London: Zed Books, 2019), 162.

75 Māori Marsden, *The Woven Universe: Selected Writings of Rev. Māori Marsden*, ed. Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal (Ōtaki: Estate of Rev. Māori Marsden, 2003), 63.

76 Archibald, *Indigenous Storywork*.

77 Jo-ann Q'um Q'um Xiiem Archibald, "An Invitation," Indigenous Storywork, accessed October 12, 2023, https://indigenousstorywork.com/.

78 Archibald, *Indigenous Storywork*.

79 Arielle Walker, "On returning to the sea" (master's thesis, Auckland University of Technology, 2020) 25, https://hdl.handle.net/10292/13696.

Reflecting on this passage, I have found that the practice of layering both traditional pūrākau and the more intimate and personal stories passed down through family continues to be a key creative element of the project. Storywork offers ways to engage metaphorically and keep my family stories safe while still applying my learning. I constantly review this aspect of my practice: which stories can be shared safely, and which should remain abstracted (particular histories, sacred lore, conversations shared in confidence).[80] And, conversely, what knowledge or tracing of the relationships involved *must* be shared in order to be truly accountable to those relationships, to ensure that the respect, responsibility, and reciprocity described by Archibald are positioned at the core of everything I do.

Leonie Pihama, Donna Campbell, and Hineitimoana Greensill (Tainui, Ngāti Koata, Ngāti Porou) highlight the urgency of returning "to storytelling and sharing as a process of strengthening both current and future generations."[81] They emphasise the role of 'whānau storytelling,' where sharing contemporary stories and experiences takes place alongside sharing pūrākau and ancestral stories, informing and revealing meaning and learning. Utilising repetition over generations, "pūrākau were a retelling of stories or experiences to draw attention to a particular way of seeing or being in the world."[82] Similarly, Lee-Morgan cites Ngāti Pikiao, Ngāi Te Rangi filmmaker Merata Mita's imperative that "we must not overlook the fact that each of us is born with a story, and each of us has responsibility to pass those stories on."[83] I especially recall Mita's words when I feel whakamā or uncertain that *my* voice or story is one worth sharing. They are a reminder that the stories I have to tell come to me through my tūpuna, and that my practice is a conduit to ensure those stories are passed on in a tangible crafted form.

As Nêhiyaw and Saulteaux scholar Margaret Kovach writes, "a consciousness of self and community exist simultaneously … we must view the self as interwoven into a larger tapestry not as a singular thread beyond the weave … Story nurtures relationship. Story kindles reciprocity. Story compels responsibility."[84] Potawatomi botanist Robin Wall Kimmerer suggests that we cannot meaningfully proceed with restoration without "re-story-ation." She describes this as hearing and re-telling the stories of the land, hearing the stories of our ancestors, acknowledging that the land is also tupuna. Re-storying, therefore, means a necessary return to our storytelling practices (including through material making), building new layers with every repetition, and letting the story shift as it needs to with each new storyteller's voice.

80 In deciding what I share and what should be kept safe, I also consider histories of story-taking through colonial research on Indigenous peoples, where "research of our traditional stories … [and] our people was used to define, destroy, and deter the valuing of Indigenous knowledge, people, and practices." Archibald, Lee-Morgan, and De Santolo, *Decolonizing Research*, 5.

81 Leonie Pihama, Donna Campbell, and Hineitimoana Greensill, "Whanau Storytelling as Indigenous Pedagogy: Tiakina te Pa Harakeke," in *Decolonizing Research: Indigenous Storywork as Methodology,* ed. Jo-Ann Archibald Q'um Qu'm Xiiem, Jenny Bol Jun Lee-Morgan, and Jason De Santolo (London: Zed Books, 2019), 147.

82 Pihama, Campbell, and Greensill, "Whānau Storytelling," 145.

83 Merata Mita, quoted in Lee-Morgan, "Pūrākau from the Inside-Out," 162.

84 Margaret Kovach, *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations, and Contexts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2021), 137, 156.

STORYTELLING AS WEAVING PRACTICE

Shared histories of craft and language link cultural memories and communities together.[85] Stories act as functions of weaving and are intrinsically connected to making practices, a phenomenon shown most clearly through the linguistic connections between language and craft. In English, the words 'text' and 'textile' are both formed from the Latin 'textus,' or 'woven.'[86] This linguistic connection takes place not only in Latin-derived English but in numerous, otherwise unconnected languages, from Quechua, to Hungarian, to Sanskrit, where words for vocal chords (or *cords*) and fibres, language and speaking, share the same roots.[87] In this shared etymology, I see an acknowledgement of how our textiles do, in fact, speak: that our woven taonga share stories, just as our oral traditions do.[88] My practice works from this understanding, embedding and embodying stories in the patterns and materials of each artwork. The connection between craft and language is visible in my individual and collaborative craft-making environments and practices, where storytelling and conversational sharing takes place over weaving, through waulking, hāro, miro, and spinning.

The notion that our textile taonga hold stories directly within their patterns and form is key to this project. As material, I weave stories shared with me by family (stories relearnt or newly lived) directly into patterns and forms — both implicitly and explicitly. For example, in my first whatu tauira,[89] I depicted (as best I could) tupuna maunga Taranaki in māwhitiwhiti. Coloured aho represented the whenua that holds the maunga, from sea to sky. I wove my memories of the pūrākau told to me by Nana Maire and Dad into the fabric in a physical, 'representative' form, holding them in my mind as I worked. I feel this process brings them into the threads, allowing memory to be embodied into the fabric.[90] More recent tauira repeat a pātikitiki kupenga pattern, which holds resonance with my family's shared experiences of laying our flounder net in the Tongapōrutu awa at low tide.

Patterns become a means to talk through memories and stories in different ways, as I can then choose who I share which aspects of each story with; there are also elements of 'readability' for those familiar with the patterns from their own practice. As a research method, practising storywork has led me to a form of conversational practice essential to this project. It has held space for conversations to unfold with family members, friends, fellow artists, makers, and researchers, iwi ropū (groups), and wider communities. Often this sharing occurs in ways that I do not write

85 Karl Chitham, Kolokesa Uafā Māhina-Tuai, and Damian Skinner, eds., *Crafting Aotearoa: A Cultural History of Making in New Zealand and the Wider Moana Oceania* (Wellington: Te Papa Press, 2019); Jessica Hemmings, ed., *The Textile Reader* (London: Berg, 2012).

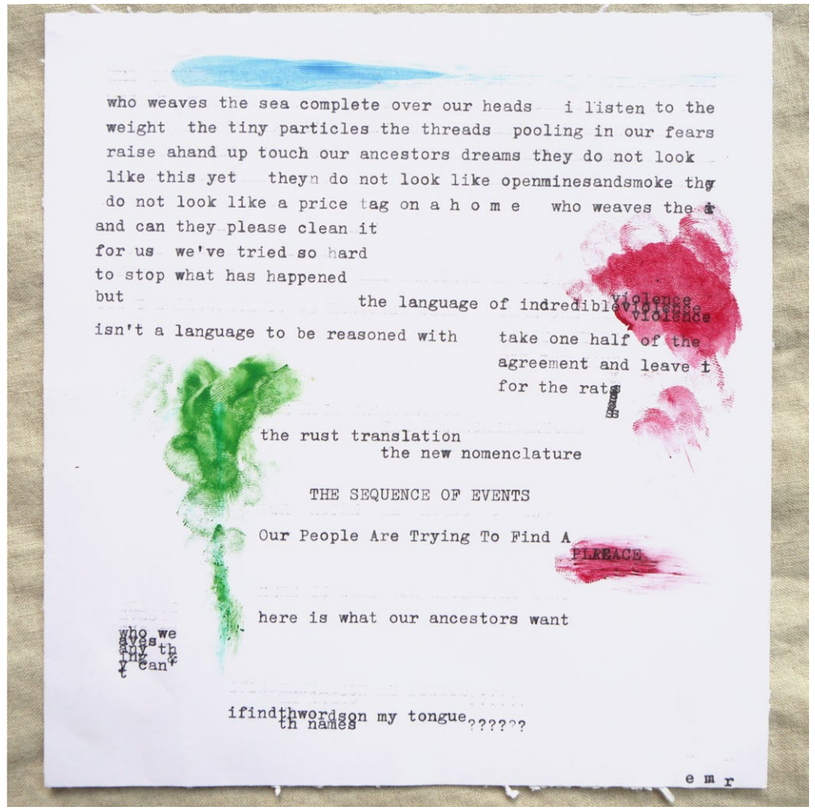
86 Dawn Hill Adams et al., *Ceremony at a Boundary Fire: A Story of Indigenist Knowledge* (Sydney: Sydney eScholarship Repository, 2015), 6.

87 Victoria Mitchell, "Textiles, Text and Techne," in *The Textile Reader*, ed. Jessica Hemmings (London: Berg, 2012); Mary Schoeser, *Textiles: The Art of Mankind* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2012), 21–28.

88 For example, Donna Campbell argues, "Evident in the symbology of raranga and whatu are the coded messages of our tupuna." Donna Campbell, "Sustaining Culture through Māori Fibre Arts, Contemporary Re-Imaginings," (paper presented at *Māori and Pacific Textile Symposium: Whatu Raranga a Kiwa, Understanding and Uniting Māori and Pacific Textiles*, Te Papa, Wellington, June 10-11, 2011), 3.

89 Made 2019–2020 — see Preface.

90 Hemmings, *The Textile Reader*, 57.





TOP: Image 28. essa may ranapiri, *who weaves the sea?* 2020. Poem, typewriter and paint. Gifted by essa, 2020. Photo: Arielle Walker, courtesy of essa may ranapiri

BELOW: Image 29. Roseanne Watt, *Saat i de Blöd* 2018. Poem, from Roseanne Watt, *Moder Dy* (Edinburgh: Polygon Press, 2019). Photo: Arielle Walker, courtesy of Roseanne Watt

about or otherwise share directly, as they belong in the space 'between us' in that conversation. However, each conversation and experience nonetheless feeds into and, in turn, is fed by the ongoing cycles of making and writing.

In *Mending the Kupenga*, I see ancestral practices converging in the relational spaces of textile-crafts and storytelling. These etymological connections encourage a weaving metaphor to unfold in a space where a 'thing' can be multiple things at once (a fibre, a thread, a thought, a story), thereby existing entirely in relation to other things.

POETRY AS METAPHORICAL LANGUAGE. A WEAVING OF TONGUES

Oral storytelling traditions that exist across all of my ancestral lines find resonance in poetry, which has become a core method and branch of practice in the project. Poets Joy Harjo (Mvskoke) and essa may ranapiri (Ngāti Wehi Wehi, Ngāti Takatāpui, Clan Gunn) both note how poetry can be a bridge between Indigenous spoken and crafted traditions of language and written English texts. Just as Harjo states, "I came to poetry because I wanted the intricate and metaphorical language of my ancestors to pass through to my language, my life,"[91] I consider poetic storytelling as another means to connect with my ancestral practices. ranapiri has described their poems as being "like carvings" where they get to break an expectation of form, instead raising "the shape that is held in the page." They describe this "messing with form" as their attempt "to access a decolonised tongue,"[92] another means of reconnection as we slowly (re)learn and reclaim our Indigenous languages.

The practice of bilanguaging sits within this perspective. Coined by Argentine semiotician Walter D. Mignolo, bilanguaging refers to "meaning created through code-switching and the interactions *between* languages."[93] Beyond words, Scots-Pākehā poet Makyla Curtis proposes bilanguaging is a construct that "blends and fuses cultures and supports fluid identities."[94] As such, each word choice from my different ancestral languages brings with it its own cultural associations and meanings that cannot be expressed in English. An example that I return to in practice comes from Shetland poet Rosanne Watt's collection 2019 *Moder Dy*. In the introduction, Watt presents the moment she first began to differentiate between the Shaetlan dialect of her grandmother and her own recent spoken English as a "bifurcation,"[95] one that she works towards mending through her bilanguaged poems.

91 Joy Harjo, "Ancestors: A Mapping of Indigenous Poetry and Poets," (lecture delivered at Poets Forum, New York, October 9, 2015), https://poets.org/text/ancestors-mapping-indigenous-poetry-and-poets.

92 essa may ranapiri, interviewed by Tayi Tibble, "essa may ranapiri Q&A," *Te Herenga Waka University Press* (blog), July 17, 2019, https://teherengawakapress.co.nz/blog1/essa-may-ranapiri-qa/.

93 Walter D. Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2012), 222.

94 Makyla Curtis, "The Poetics of Bilanguaging: An Unfurling Literacy; Ngā Toikupu o Ngā Reo Taharua; E Tākiri Ana te Aroā Pānui," in *Ka Mate Ka Ora: A New Zealand Journal of Poetry and Poetics*, 14 (July 2016): 71, https://www.nzepc.auckland.ac.nz/kmko/14/ka_mate14_curtis.pdf.

95 Roseanne Watt, *Moder Dy*, (Edinburgh: Polygon, 2019)

In bringing my ancestors' languages and stories together, I speak to this fracturing and (re)weaving, acknowledging but also hoping to defy, as Watt does, "the narrative of loss"[96] surrounding the practices of my homelands.

Acoma poet Simon J. Ortiz argues that Indigenous peoples have always found ways to make colonial languages their own. Ortiz describes seeing cultural expressions through those languages as a form of resistance, carried on by a form of oral tradition that in turn is expressed in poetry.[97] Māori writers such as Patricia Grace (Ngāti Toa, Ngāti Raukawa, Te Āti Awa), J.C. Sturm (Te Whakatōhea, Taranaki), Keri Hulme (Kai Tahu, Kāti Māmoe, Orkney Scots), and more recent writers such as ranapiri, Hana Pera Aoake, and Alice Te Punga Somerville (Te Āti Awa, Taranaki) continue this resistance, using written and poetic form materially to subvert colonial norms and express Indigenous culture while writing in (or translating into) English.

In Te Punga Somerville's 2023 collection, *Always Italicise: how to write while colonised,* she chooses to follow the convention of "always italicis[ing] foreign words." The reo Māori kupu in *Always Italicise* remain the only non-italicised terms — so that "*now all of my readers will be able to remember/which words truly belong in* Aotearoa *and which do not.*"[98] That mic-drop-punch of a phrase from her opening poem "Kupu rere kē" echoes Patricia Grace's early refusal to include a glossary for words or phrases in te reo Māori with her writing, because, as Grace says, "a glossary is something that is used to translate foreign languages. I was determined that the Māori language would not be treated as a foreign language in its own country."[99]

With such writers as my guides, my kaumātua and tuākana toikupu, I explore with (and against) poetic forms in my practice and in the writing of this exegesis, as another means of storying. As a first-language English speaker slowly (re)learning te reo Māori, I find that poetic languaging offers me a way to disrupt dominant structures and forms of language and story, connecting to and 'letting in' my tūpuna voices and experiences. Poetic storywork is therefore another making-method in the PhD project, a companion mode of 'weaving with words,' and a methodology that allows me to express the learning I encounter in researching with a whakapapa-held, whatuora methodology/approach. I work, write, and weave my own different voices and those of my tūpuna, continuing to trace back, as Patricia Grace describes it, the "train of stories [that define] our lives,"[100] which curve out across generations, over spiralling time, with no defined beginning or end.

96 Roseanne Watt, "Aa My Mindin: Moving Through Loss in the Poetic Literary Tradition of Shetland" (PhD thesis, University of Stirling, 2018), 64, http://hdl.handle.net/1893/29646.

97 Simon J. Ortiz, "Towards a National Indian Literature: Cultural Authenticity in Nationalism," *MELUS* 8, no. 2 (1981): 7–12, https://doi.org/10.2307/467143.

98 Alice Te Punga Somerville, "Kupu rere kē," in *Always Italicise: How to Write while Colonised* (Auckland University Press, 2023), 5.

99 Patricia Grace, "Patricia Grace: There Are Many Ways of Being Māori," *E-tangata*, October, 1, 2023, https://e-tangata.co.nz/arts/patricia-grace-there-are-many-ways-of-being-maori/.

100 Patricia Grace, *Potiki* (Auckland: Viking, 1986), 41.

PART THREE:

AHO | WEFT THREADS



CHAPTER 4:

METHODS & MAKINGS

PREVIOUS IMAGE: Image 30. *rongoā (mending)*, 2020, image taken at Tongapōrutu, Taranaki (the maunga in the distance obscured by cloud); 35mm film

The artworks in *Mending the Kupenga* have unfolded through process, as ongoing pieces, and as parts of an ever-building series of tauira, learnings and makings. This chapter shares the key methods of making, and forms that the research artworks have taken. I introduce the warp-weighted loom, followed by the ongoing series of tauira, samplers of the project's blended-making 'whatu-weavings.' I then give more detail to my poetic practice as a method of making. The chapter closes with discussion of the unfolding conversational 'happenings' that have guided the research, detailing the processes that have led to and shaped the final 'year of making.'

List of key artworks created/continued throughout the research:

tūpuna teach us to weave in any way we can (2019 – 2021). Hand-knit muka in the Shetland lace pattern Print o da Wave, 150 x 500mm

embodying my roots, skin, and leaves: a countermap of home (2020-ongoing). Gathered plant dyes (acorns, angiangi/feusag a' gobhair, dock/copag, gorse, lupin, harakeke, kānuka, kawakawa, mānuka, onion skin, pōhutukawa, tanekaha, yarrow, woad) on handed-down wool blanket. Currently 2000 x 4000mm, April 2024

rongoā (mending) (2020-ongoing).
Gathered plant dyes (angiangi/feusag a' gobhair, dock/copag, gorse, harakeke, kānuka, lupin, onion skin, tanekaha, yarrow) on handed- down silk, cotton muslin, and linen; Grandma's threads. Currently 2220 x 7000mm as of April 2024

if I knit enough lace into blankets we can keep warm for generations to come/to unravel, as kākahu, a futurepresentpast (2019/2021-2024).
Hand-spun (gifted by and in conversation with my sibling-not-in-law Eli) wool yarn, hand-knitted in a Shetland lace pattern; unravelled/(re)made in 2024

distance unravelled and rewoven between / to hold a web of stories, a tapestry of pūtahi (2020 - ongoing).

Family stories/textile traditions passed down over generations; tanekaha bark ink; wool, Grandma and Nana's cotton and silk threads, cotton embroidery threads; whatu, drawn and pulled-threadwork, embroidery; Nana's embroidery samplers; gifted (handspun, handwoven) hemp. Currently 300x1500mm of worked fabric

whatuwai (2022-ongoing). Taranaki driftwood and braided harakeke lashing. Loom-weights from Taranaki riverstones (Tongapōrutu, Waiwhakaiho, Herekawe, Oākura, Hangatahua, Mata Nehunehu, Waingongoro) and unfired and pitfired uku; aho made from muka, harakeke, tī kouka, ribwort plantain, and dandelion

he tauira, ngā tauira (2022 — ongoing series). Materials and dimensions variable



whatu-weaving: shelters at the pūtahi

(2022-ongoing)

Comprised of whakapapa and place-specific body-scale "whatu-weavings," artworks blending whatu, weaving, and lacemaking textile-craft techniques held by the hand-crafted, warp-weighted looms on which they were made.

Materials for the looms, weights, and whatu-weavings have been gathered in Taranaki and Tāmaki, as well as handed down or gifted, and then assembled in Tāmaki and Taranaki.

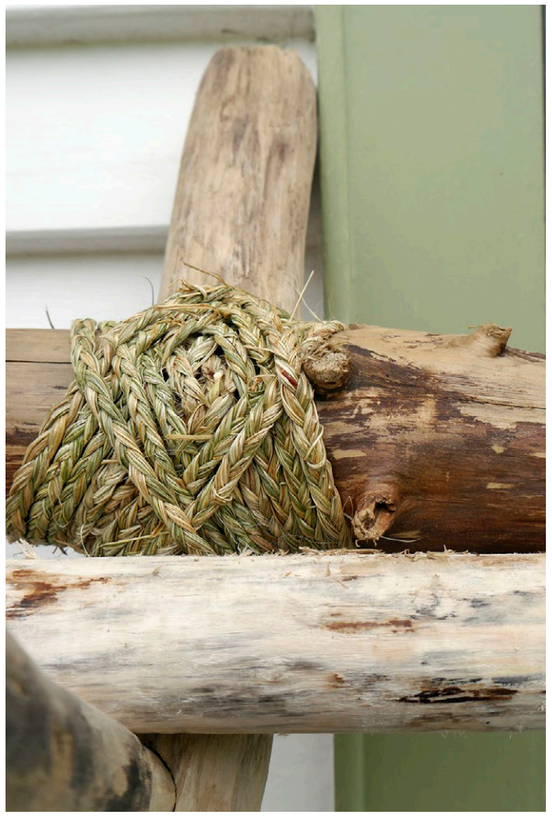
Warp-weighted looms made from Taranaki driftwood, Tāmaki storm-fallen and found wood, and braided harakeke lashing. Loom-weights made from stones gathered from ngā awa o Taranaki (Tongapōrutu, Waiwhakaiho, Herekawe, Oākura, Hangatahua, Mata Nehunehu, Waingongoro), ngā takutai ō Tāmaki Makaurau; uku gathered from Tongapōrutu and Mata Nehunehu, both unfired and pitfired; aho made from muka, harakeke, tī kouka, ribwort plantain, and dandelion.

A significant focus of this project has been exploring methods of 'blending' between various fibre practices from across my whakapapa lines. Finding the forms and structures for these materially-crafted aspects of practice filled most of the early research (Feb 2021-June 2022). By mid-2022, the warp-weighted loom had become a primary making structure. The research has found that this loom structure allows for smooth transitions between plain or twill weaving, whatu and māwhitiwhiti, and lace-work techniques, opening further potential for the project's crafting modes of blending, tensioning, and balancing.

The warp-weighted loom structure and techniques were used historically across the Northern Atlantic Isles to which I whakapapa, including Shetland.[101] This particular form of loom is distinctive for its verticality,[102] and the use of stone or clay weights to provide the necessary tension for the warp threads. The weights are attached to the vertical warp at intervals and suspended a small distance above the ground. This method of tensioning enables each weight to be untied and moved with relative ease, to move smoothly between weaving, whatu, and māwhitiwhiti in a single piece.

101 See Hildur Hákonardóttir, Elizabeth Johnston, and Marta Kløve Juuhl, *The Warp-Weighted Loom* Kljásteinavefstaður Oppstadveven (Leikanger: Skald, 2016) for a history of the warp-weighted loom across Shetland, Iceland, and Norway, in particular. The warp-weighted loom form can also be found in cultures ranging world-wide, with loom-weights having been found in Anatolia, dating back to at least 7000BC. See also Grace M. Crowfoot, "Of the Warp-Weighted Loom," *Annual of the British School at Athens 37* (1936/1937): 36-47, https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy.aut.ac.nz/stable/30096659; Schoeser, *World Textiles*.

102 Other forms of vertical loom include those used in Navajo weaving, as well as tapestry looms. Most other loom-based weaving structures are horizontal, for example: ground looms, back-strap looms (where the tension is provided by the weaver's body), or treadle floor looms.





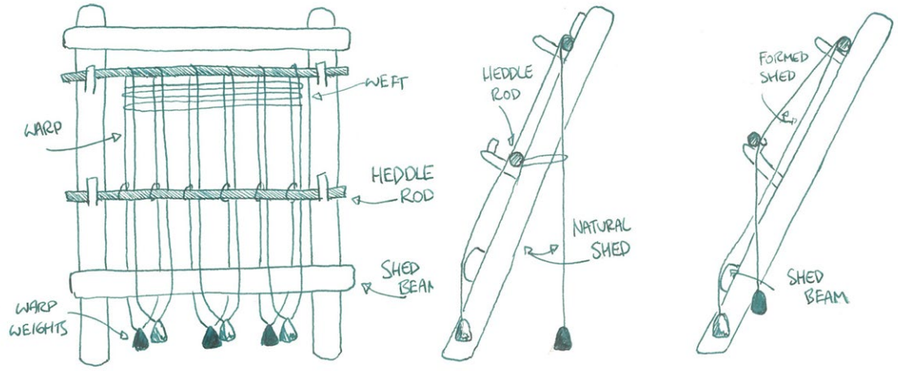


PREVIOUS: Image 31.
whatuwai installation view in Te Au: Liquid Constituencies, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, Ngāmotu. Photo: Bryan James

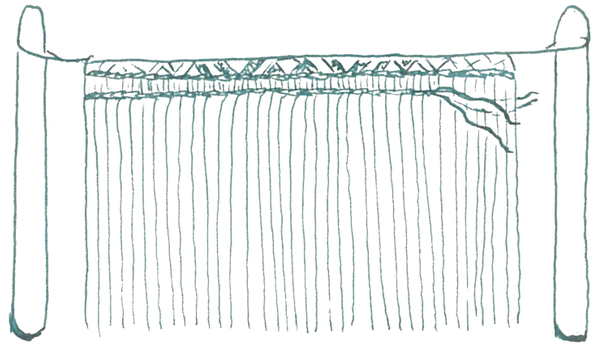
ABOVE: Image 32.
Detail image of *whatuwai* loom lashing, braided harakeke and driftwood, 2022

TOP RIGHT: Image 33.
"Seeing-stone" loom weight, threaded with muka gather from Herekawe and miro/gifted by Rangimārie Keall. Stone gathered from Tongapōrutu, 2022

RIGHT: Image 34.
Detail image of *whatuwai* whatu-weaving, 2022

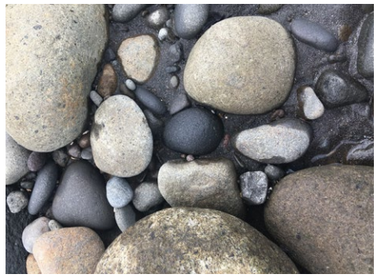


Customary Māori kākahu-making was done almost entirely by hand, without the aid of a loom. After forming the first weft-line — the ara — twined around the whenu, this would be strung between two turuturu, upright "pegs" that would assist the kaiwhatu in keeping tension. Particularly large kākahu might require two more turuturu be added.[103] Observing parallels between vertical loom-weaving methods, and customary whatu kākahu techniques, I have explored using the warp-weighted loom to weave (literally) between whatu, lacemaking and weaving practices of my tūpuna. In doing so, I open space to learn and tell the stories of my grandmothers and their grandmothers before them in the blend of patterns, materials, and methods from across all of my family's ancestral traditions.



A warp-weighted loom is a structure that would not have been woven on by anyone in my family for centuries now. The knowledge of constructing and weaving on such a loom is one of those strands left behind on distant shores, replaced by other forms of making and more ergonomic and complex structures for weaving (such as floor looms). In my family lines, a history of making in this way has not been documented in tangible form. I find the imagined potentials of these missing weaving stories in the spaces between words written and held in museum archives, in the history of weaving in Shetland and the Northern Isles, the lands my ancestors would have once called home.

103 Blackman, "Whatu: The Enclosing Threads," 80.








CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Images 35 to 43. Taranaki driftwood; stone-gathering, in Ngāmotu and Tongapōrutu; a seeing-stone loom weight; whatu-woven tauira in muka with yarrow & wood-ash plant-dyes; the *whatuwai* loom-weights in action; preparing a looped tī kouka kupenga for a stone weight; detail of *whatuwai* loom showing driftwood frame; preparing driftwood for loom-building

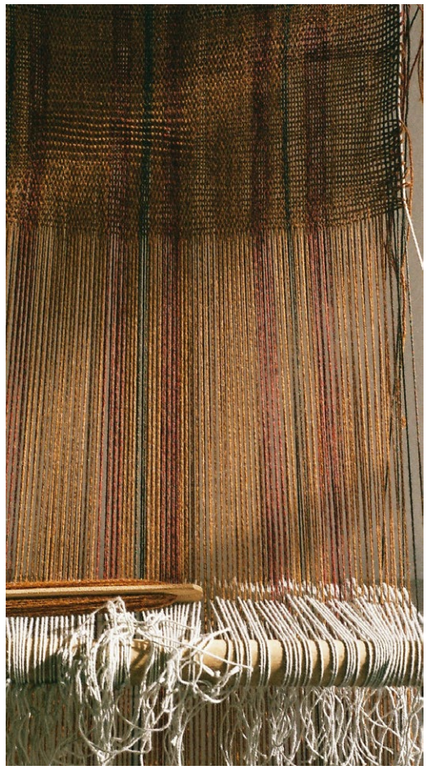
After producing multiple tauira on a small-scale loom, in November 2022 I made the project's first larger-scale artwork, *whatuwai*. Blending weaving and whatu on a warp-weighted loom, *whatuwai* was part of the exhibition *Te Au: Liquid Constituencies*, at the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery in Ngāmotu, Taranaki. Curator Simon Gennard wrote:

> Walker has constructed a warp-weighted loom—its frame made from driftwood gathered along the Taranaki coastline, and weights holding tension from uku (clay) and stones gathered from around Taranaki's waterways. An in-process weaving hangs on the loom. Incorporating both Pākehā and Māori techniques, the weaving is composed of fibres dyed using pigments from plants associated with rongoā methods, gathered around rivers the artist holds whakapapa and whānau relations to — among them, Hangaatahua, Herekawe, Oākura and Tongapōrutu.[104]

Honouring relationships to awa — to all waterways — has been important to my material practice for a long time, as seen in the ongoing *river maps* (2016-ongoing), textile patchworks made with fibre dyed from plants gathered around specific awa, such as Tongapōrutu. Likewise, I wanted *whatuwai* to reflect the whakapapa relationship between awa/moana, tangata, and whenua. The loom is the structure that holds and grounds the weaving, in the same way that the whenua, the awa, and moana hold and ground me. Using driftwood became a way to create balance between liminal spaces, evoking the takutai and the shoormal, the shoreline between land and water. River stones, washed and shaped by currents and waves, weight and tension the weaving and anchor the loom in place. The kupenga metaphor is visible in the looped nets that connect the stones to the warp. Some of the stones have a natural hole that allows them to be threaded and hung. My dad always told me these were seeing-stones, also called hagstones or adderstanes, through which you can see across the veil between worlds, places, spaces, times. As loom-weights, the stones become a metaphor for anchoring my whatu-weavings in the futurepresentpast of spiralling, concurrent ancestral time. I also consider them an embodiment of the whatuora concept of seeing or envisioning a future-ora, as Hinekura Smith encourages, a third element of whatu ('to see', 'to weave', also 'stone') that I can connect to my Northern Isles ancestral traditions of seeing-stones. At a point when each weaving feels complete and ready to be let go, the stones will be returned to their riverbeds, the takutai moana or shoormal from whence they came.

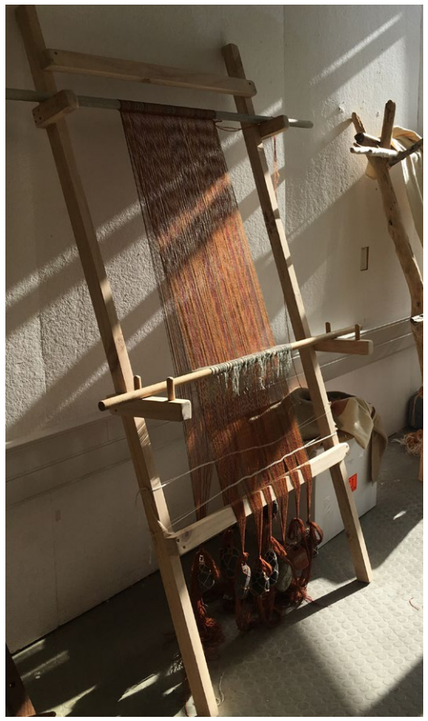
The fabric on the *whatuwai* loom is worked primarily in wool, dyed with angiangi, Queen-Anne's lace or wild carrot, and kawakawa, also gathered from around the awa of Taranaki. The kaupapa is set with an initial row of whatu-aho-rua, followed by māwhitiwhiti that moves into a balanced plain weave to display gradients of the plant-dyed wool. The weaving is then intersected by further whatu, blending between my ancestral weaving and whatu practises, taha Māori and taha Pākehā. The patterns and colouring reference the many awa that stream down Taranaki Maunga (in the vertical stripes of the whenu/warp) with the repeated kupenga motif speaking to both family memories of flounder-fishing and whakapapa connections

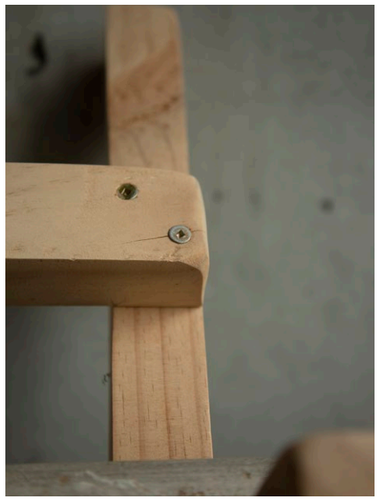
104 Simon Gennard, *Te Au: Liquid Constituencies* [exhibition catalogue] (New Plymouth: Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, 2022).











CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Images 44 to 48. Weaving on the *hentinsloom*; detail of rolled warp; scrap-clay weight examples among stone weights borrowed from the *whatuwai* loom; the *hentinsloom* in studio, weaving in progress; loom-build detail

to place. Muka is brought through in whatu pāheke details, referencing the flowing waters, as a further continuation of my practice of blending between both materials and techniques.

While the *whatuwai* loom was at the Govett-Brewster Gallery, my partner Liam made me a second large-scale working loom (the *hentinsloom*), this time from 'everyday,' found second-hand materials — pieces of dowelling rod, an old broom handle, and 2x4 building materials we had accumulated over time. I consider this structure a larger form of a tauira loom, a way to explore the potentials of combining patterns through larger pieces that I have imagined and learnt how to create, guided by the tauira. As the looms have been shaped by connections to ancestral whenua, they have taken on a form of shelter for the whatu-weavings, drawing on the nurturing potential of place. In working with the looms, plans for a series of place-related looms have emerged.



he tauira, ngā tauira
(2020-ongoing)

Comprised of an ongoing series of tauira, samplers, 'test weavings.' Most are made with 50 whenu/warp threads in a variety of materials and techniques. Tauira are currently numbering 51, dimensions ranging from 50 x 150mm to 550mm.

Whenu/warp materials: muka, wool, gathered plant dyes

Aho/weft materials: muka, wool, tī kouka, pingao, harakeke, puha, seaweed; gathered plant dyes (angiangi, tanekaha bark, yarrow flowers/leaves, Queen Anne's lace flowers, kawakawa).

Techniques include: whatu, plain weave, twill weave, māwhitiwhiti, whakapae, pāheke, lace-knitting, pulled-threadwork.

My materially crafted practice takes place both as tauira, and with tauira; tauira is a word that means student, pupil, and apprentice, just as much as it means sample, model, or example. The ongoing creation of tauira is a primary method of making and series of artworks in the project. Made from the outset of the PhD, the samplers articulate the material potential of incorporating a multiplicity of fibre techniques from across my ancestral lines into a single fabric. These tauira express my learning-through-making, embodying the multiplicity of meaning held in their name. They hold space as guidestones in this project towards future possibilities, and are records of project 'happenings' held in the futurepresentpast.

Samplers can be defined as a piece of cloth on which a collection of varied miscellaneous 'stitches,' techniques, and patterns are worked, especially for use as a reference in future work.[105] Tauira hold a similar meaning, usually worked in customary Māori techniques including whatu or raranga. Although used primarily as an example of learning or reference, samplers or tauira are often hung for display upon completion.[106] Pākehā researcher Vivien Caughley argues that samplers can be "read as a stitched story," and that they speak,

> of relationships, be they between adult and child … student and teacher … or stitcher and a design or pattern. The sampler is the record, the physical evidence, of the transmission of knowledge or the commemoration of an event within this relationship.[107]

105 Averil Colby, *Samplers* (London: BT Batsford, 1964), 17.

106 Maureen Lander, "Te Ao Tawhito/Te Ao Hou: Entwined Threads of Tradition and Innovation," in *Whatu Kākahu: Māori Cloaks*, ed. Awhina Tamarapa, 2nd ed. (Wellington: Te Papa Press, 2019), 69.

107 Vivien Caughley, *New Zealand's Historic Samplers: Our Stitched Stories* (Auckland: Bateman, 2014), 6-7.





ABOVE: Image 50. Accumulative installation of the project's tauira during *whatuwai* exhibition at Nathan Homestead Gallery, November 2023

BELOW: Image 51. Detail image of my first whatu tauira, in brown carpet wool and cotton embroidery threads, 2020

PREVIOUS IMAGE: Image 49. Accumulation of tauira, December 2023

Caughley's description mirrors my own experience with samplers and the relationships they hold, and thus extends into my conceptualising of tauira within this project. Over the first summer of research (2021–2022), I began a small whatu tauira, a sampler, towards a future korowai. I intended to test 're-creating' and blending māwhitiwhiti patterning with drawn-thread patterns learned from Nana Maire's works-in-progress. I envisioned this korowai being made from muka, with hukahuka among the blended patterning to reference the korowai that cloak my tupuna Te Paea in her portraits. However, I paused after only a few rows, unable to envision the pattern ahead — and it was in that pause that Nana left us.

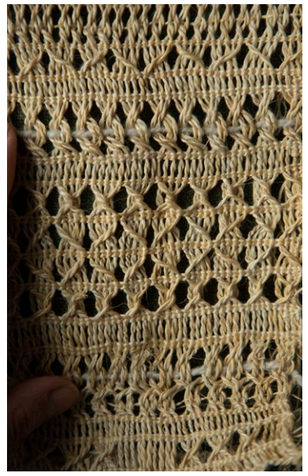
I only returned to that tauira months later, when my family gathered over Puanga, Nana's birthday, to celebrate her life. Having spent an extended time caring for, documenting, and arranging her samplers and unfinished pieces into neat layers in archival boxes, I found the possibilities of pattern suddenly flowed more easily. I made another tauira, an almost-inverse of the first with wool whenu instead of muka. It was in this moment that I realised the value of working to this scale. For this doctoral creative research, I am most interested in how the tauira began to layer and build upon each other, iteratively, and what it has meant to be open to a space and mindset of learning while navigating ancestral stories.

The tauira works honour Nana Maire and her 'scale' of making: her lace pieces, which formed the borders or edges of other textile objects, and the collection of samplers through which Nana practiced her craft. They connect me to potential histories of sampler-making and learning from my grandmothers. Each piece gives me space to learn, and to continue to be a learner. With each new tauira, I explore how the threads blend and catch, the effects of tension made by each stone weight, the lightness and heaviness of each thread, and the pull of my own hands where the whatu-weaving might be tangling or unbalanced — and how to bring it all into balance again.

I first learnt to whatu with a tauira worked in heavy carpet wool (equivalent to a dense aran-weight yarn) and bright cotton embroidery threads. Ongoing, the tauira have provided ways to test material relationships, such as that between muka and wool, two materials which have deep connections and significance to different aspects of my whakapapa, taha Māori and taha Pākehā. Many of the tauira in this research have been made primarily on-loom, directly blending whatu and weaving, though the project's first few tauira were made entirely by hand. This hand-tensioned and 'hand-drawn' whatu practice has continued in parallel, also combining knitted lace patterns with whatu and māwhitiwhiti.

The first piece I wove on the tauira warp-weighted loom was in a heavy, toothy grey wool, given to me by my partner's mother, Sylvie. The weaving was wonky, unbalanced, the wool gripping too hard to move through the shed properly. The only places the weave was balanced were around the māwhitiwhiti pātikitiki/kupenga pattern that interrupts the weave partway through. However, the moment I took it off the loom, it settled, the release of tension encouraging the strands to fall into a visible degree of evenness. I instantly fell in love with the process.











CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Images 52 to 60. Detail of puha and pingao woven into tauira during Taranaki place-visit; whatu-weaving in undyed wool; making "Nana's" muka tauira in Taranaki during Puanga, 2022; drawing from Nana's flora pulled-thread patterns on-loom; detail of early whatu-weaving, 2021; the first grey-wool whatu-weaving on the tauira loom; detail of whatu muka tauira incorporating Grandma's cellulose pearls; muka/wool-blend whatu-woven tauira; detail of "Nana's" muka tauira completed after Puanga 2022

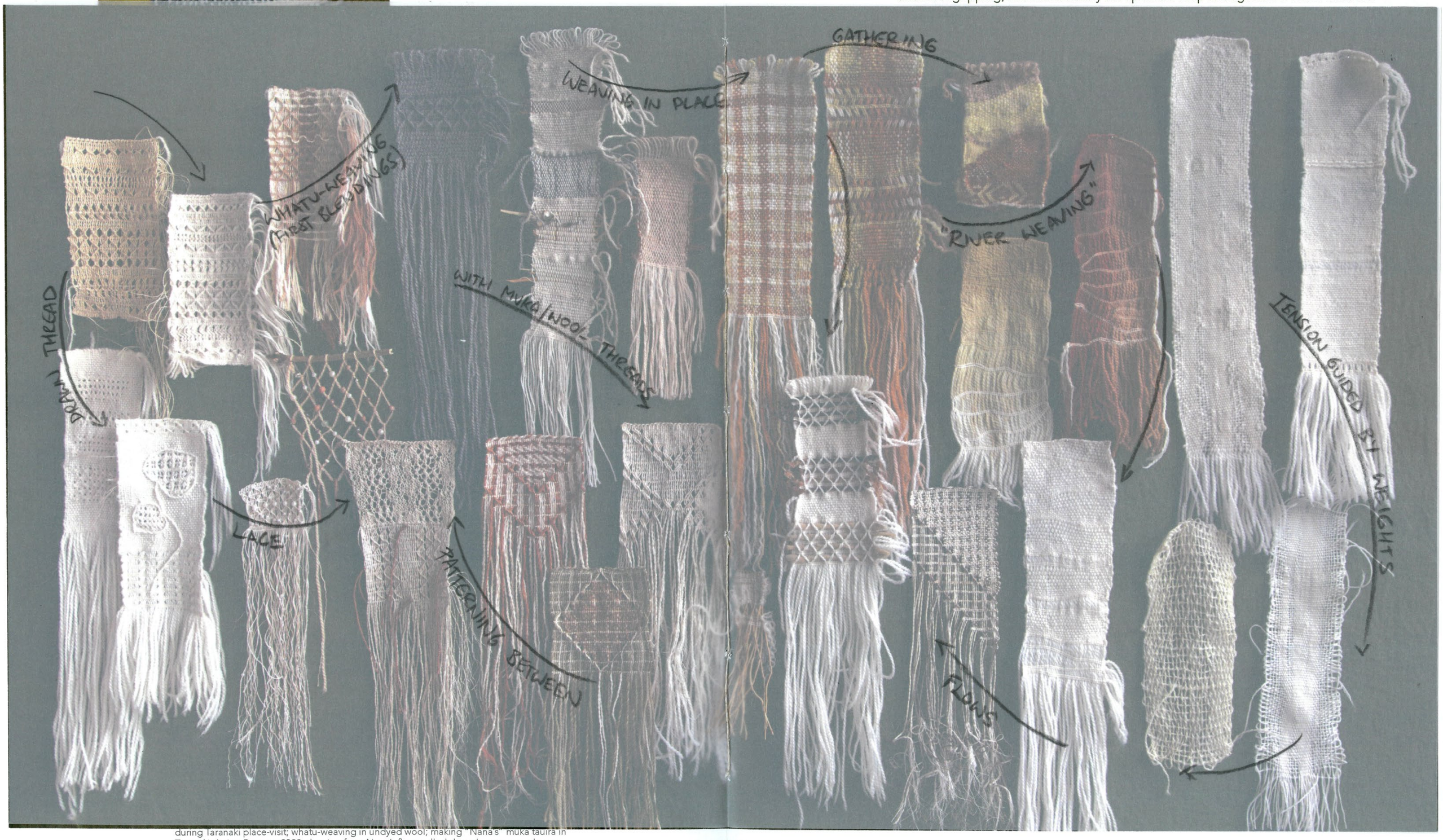
FOLLOWING PAGES: Images 61 & 62: Scans from printed exegesis, of tauira relational diagram

I took some scribbled notes about my material findings regarding the shed catching and wool gripping, and immediately set up a new warp to begin anew with a different wool — just to see what might happen with a different texture, an adjusted weave. Ideas emerged with each new sampler. I learnt more and more about the relationship between the different techniques and materials and how altering the heaviness/thickness of aho in the rows of whatu shifted the weaving balance in unanticipated ways. I encounter frequent, engaging 'problems' that I cannot see before beginning a new tauira — complexities of threads crossing, stymied by the way each thread holds tension — that make me alter and shift course mid-weave. Unexpected delights lead me to immerse myself in new fibre-blends, plant colours, patterns, a layered way of making that literally unravels and reweaves as it unfolds.

> *Material/tauira discussion (Arielle, Mon, Mandy), March 7, 2023:*
>
> The tauira, they're like little touchstones, guides. Because — when I'm looking at them, when I start talking about each one individually and how it came to be, I suddenly flash to an idea of… say, an on-loom artwork that draws from some of Nana's floral pulled-thread patterns, making something intentionally patterned and slightly figurative… like now, I'm thinking of even drawing some of the flowers that I've been using to dye with and make fibre from, *into* a woven pulled-thread pattern. You know what I mean? Rather than the tauira just testing ideas… they guide me towards ideas, every time.

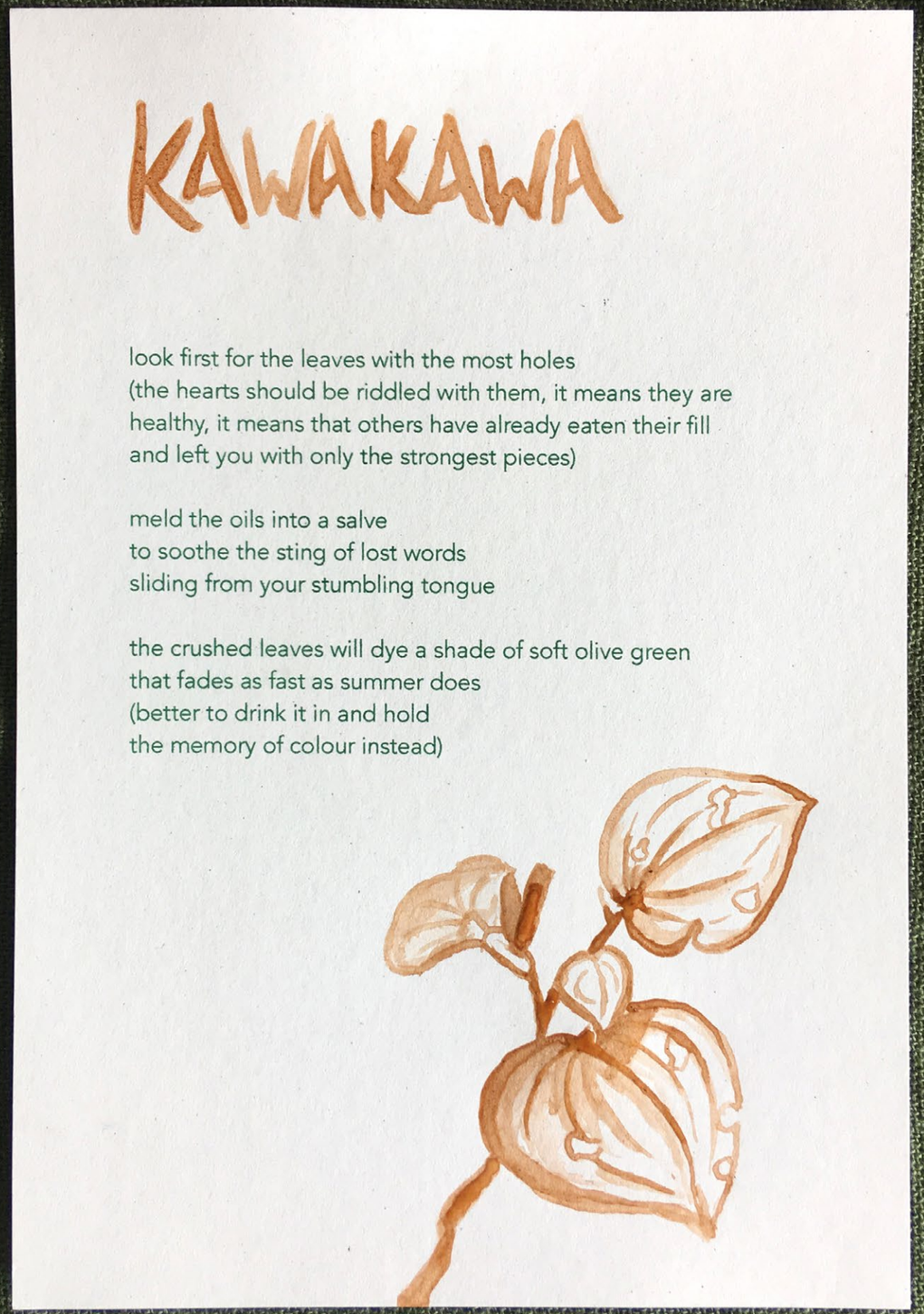


I took some scribbled notes about my material findings regarding the shed catching and wool gripping, and immediately set up a new warp to begin anew with a different



during Taranaki place-visit; whatu-weaving in undyed wool; making "Nana's" muka tauira in Taranaki during Puanga, 2022; drawing from Nana's flora pulled-thread patterns on-loom; detail of early whatu-weaving, 2021; the first grey-wool whatu-weaving on the tauira loom; detail of whatu muka tauira incorporating Grandma's cellulose pearls; muka/wool-blend whatu-woven tauira; detail of "Nana's" muka tauira completed after Puanga 2022





poetry

List of poems/poetic writings:

untangling the aho
river poems (poetry collection in *AUP New Poets 9*, 2023)
waterweaving/manuhiri/before the sea, the stones
ngā puna waiora, ngā whatuora o Taranaki
the year becomes
we spin a yarn in the silences between us
te purakau o Taranaki, re-remembered
when we go home, and the river is low
rongoā (reprise)
starcatching
Nathan Homestead durational writing, 2023

Poetic writing, comprised of poems and durational text-works, has been a companion to the materially-crafted artworks and processes in this project — not as a descriptor of, or accompanying text for those works, but as another expression, to understand the stories they hold. In this approach, I draw from Makyla Curtis' description of practice that engage similarly "interdependent modes" of material-making and poetry, where "using more than one mode extends what [a poet/artist] can describe as well as what a reader may interpret. Multiple stories can be told simultaneously and the comparison of these stories builds further stories. Interpretation is manifold."[108] In such practices,

> the elements are equally weighted. At times image and text are both describing the same thing so as to give different perspectives. At other times, they provide juxtapositions that bring a third perspective in finding the ground between them.[109]

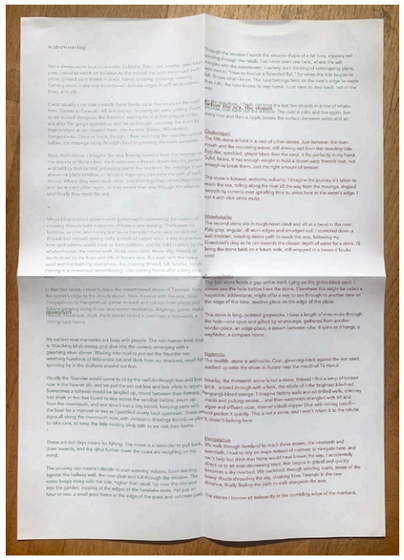
Likewise, the poetic elements of Mending the Kupenga offer another mode of seeing or experiencing. The project began with a lyric essay that bridged the timeframe between the completion of my master's project in August 2020 and my PhD research beginning in February 2021. Written with the support of tuakana toikupu essa may ranapiri,[110] the lyric essay untangling the aho works with plant metaphors to weave between time periods and across my ancestral lines.

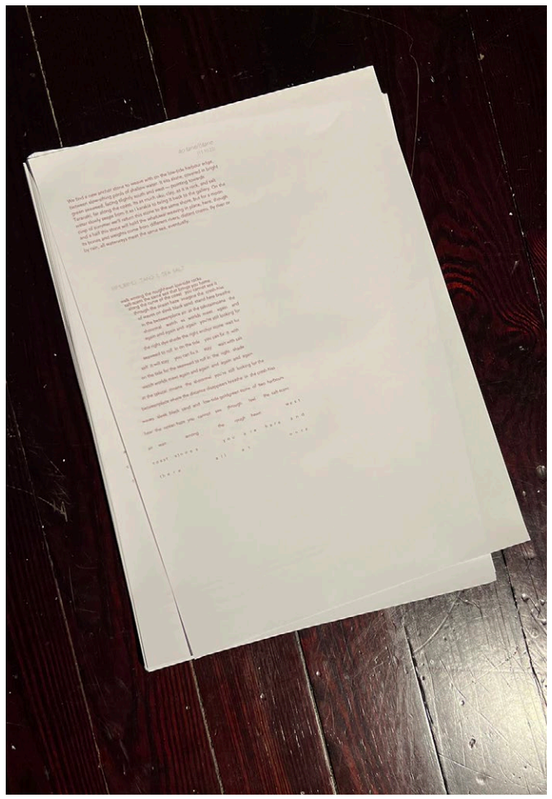
108 Makyla Curtis, "Simultaneous Stories: The Poetic Mark-Making of Cilla McQueen and John Pule" (master's thesis, University of Auckland, 2017), 6, http://hdl.handle.net/2292/36876.

109 Makyla Curtis, "Folding Time: An Exploration of Experiential Research Through Family Stories" (master's thesis, Auckland University of Technology, 2022), 130, https://hdl.handle.net/10292/15295.

110 As part of the Tupuranga Journal Indigenous Writers Mentorship programme, 2020.









TOP LEFT: Image 64. *AUP New Poets 9* cover, 2023

ABOVE & PREVIOUS: Images 63 & 65. Risograph/hand-painted tanekaha bark-ink poems, A5, for *distance rewoven from the roots to the stem*, Blue Oyster Art Project Space, 2021.

TOP RIGHT: Image 66. Durational writing, A3, for *Te Au: Liquid Constituencies*, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, 2022-2023

RIGHT: Image 67. Durational writing stack, A3, for *whatuwai*, Nathan Homestead Gallery, 2023

I drew from Robin Wall Kimmerer's teachings[111] to write about time as the sea itself, "*the sea that holds the memory of our scattered tongues on the swell and pull of every wave*,"plants like yarrow that might allow us to see different futures, and lichens as whakapapa, describing them as "slow-growing relationship, foundational" and "born from reciprocity."[112] Poetry offers me new language to relay the multiplicities of my whakapapa by unfolding possible connections, such as plant metaphors, and, most importantly, to discuss complex or difficult topics while keeping knowledge safe.[113]

The poem-fragments of the work *rongoā*, which preceded and wove through *untangling the aho*, 'story' the plants that I used to whatu with and dye artworks produced in my master's (including the *rongoā/mending* and *countermapping* patchworks) that have continued into the PhD. In a similar way, new poem-fragments, full poems, and durational text-works reflect processes of making in this project.

The poems have been risograph-printed, hand-titled, and illustrated with plant-dyes; given away to guests during exhibitions (*distance rewoven from the roots to the stem*, Blue Oyster Art Project Space, 2021); published in a chapbook collection as part of *AUP New Poets 9* (with Auckland University Press, 2023); laser-printed onto recycled paper with new writing added durationally through each of the quarter-moon phases (*Te Au: Liquid Constituencies*, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, 2022–2023) or spontaneously through the lunar cycle (*whatuwai*, Nathan Homestead, 2023). Poems have been recorded and played as audio-works; spoken aloud to audiences at poetry readings, to friends as tentative works-in-progress, to the awa and moana and whenua that share echoes in return, with no record made of the sharing.

In introducing *river poems*, the collection that I gathered together during the early research stages, published in *AUP New Poets 9*, editor Anna Jackson writes:

> The sequence moves in layers and circles … developing themes of journeying and searching, ancestry and home-making, belonging and negotiating, story and memory, breath and skin … The sequence brings together, too, the healing traditions of two different heritages, and brings into awareness the relation between plants and people, wholeness and absence, the riddled kawakawa leaves offering both a salve to the sting of lost words and a memory of colour to hold on the tongue.[114]

The collection also emphasises methods of doubling and blending, moving across hyphen-spaces, as "things are salt-licked, battle-wounded, blood-sick, travel-feared, seaweed-caught, and in which we find fishbones, moon-pull, rivermouth, windsong, rainhum, saltlines, sealskins." The poetic writings throughout *Mending the Kupenga* engage similar methods of layering, circling, spiralling, doubling, returning, repeating, and balancing. Poems like *the year becomes* spiral in and

111 Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*.

112 Arielle Walker, "Untangling the Aho," *Tupuranga* , no. 2 (2020), https://www.tupurangajournal.com/arielle-walker-1.

113 As discussed in Chapter 3, and further in Chapter 4

114 Anna Jackson, Introduction to Sarah Lawrence, harold coutts, and Arielle Walker, *AUP New Poets 9* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2023)

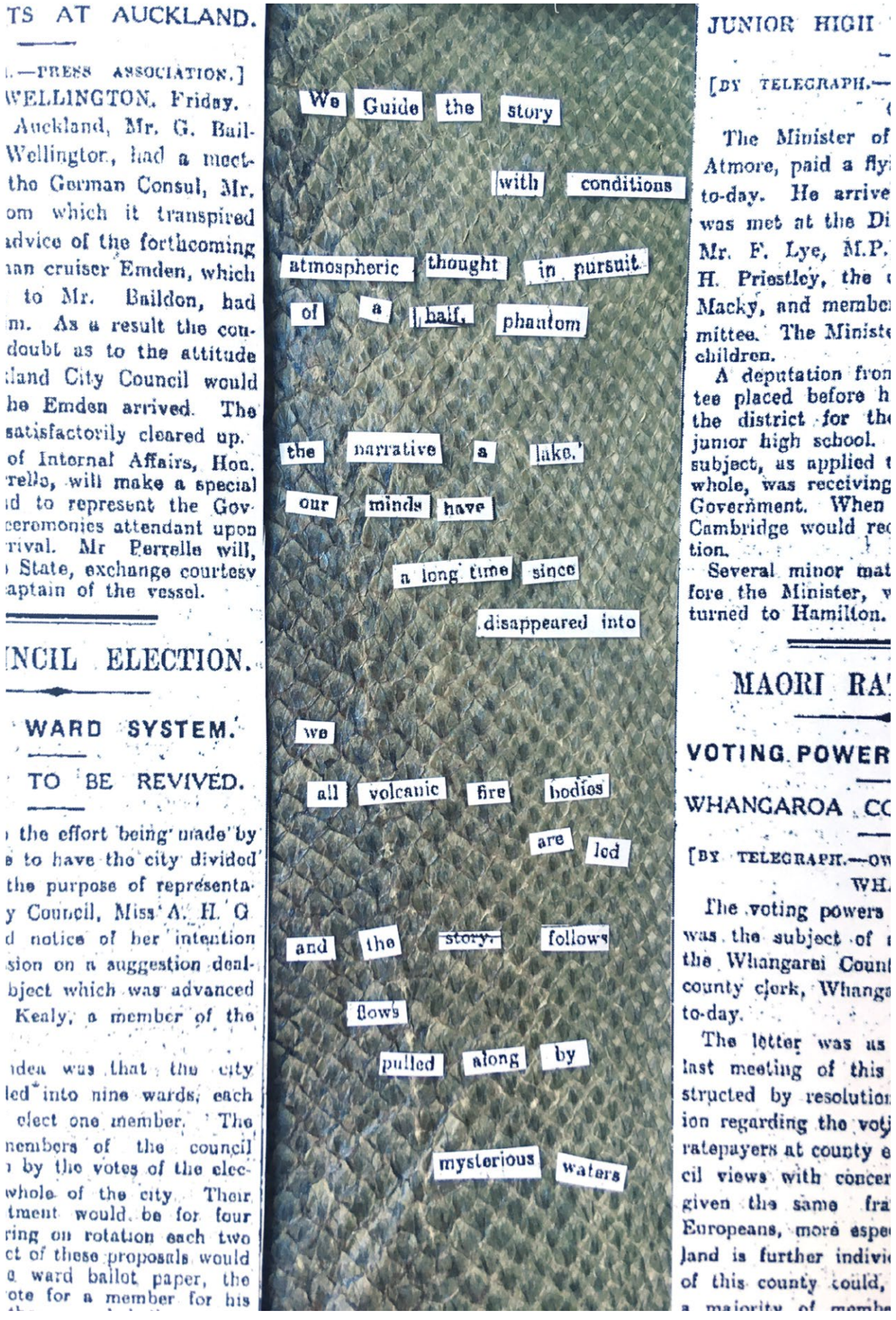


Image 68. Material-poem in process using words cut from a printed version of a 1929 New Zealand Herald news article titled "Phantom Canoe Legend. Story of Lake Tarawera. Guide Sophia's Version"

out across the page, inscribing a seasonal cycle through the form of a takarangi. In *when we go home, and the river is low*, each strophe builds up layers of repetition:

> We mend our nets with harakeke and tī kouka,
> because it is what we have always done.
>
> We mend our nets with harakeke and tī kouka,
> because we wish it is what we could have always done.

These layers are mirrored in the reprise of starcatching, as "We come home to mend our nets/We come home, and we weave new ones," emphasising the sense and experience of returning. Materially, I have also installed the poems in layered stacks of printed paper during exhibitions (to be taken away freely by visitors). I name them by hand, in the plant-inks made with the flowers and leaves the writing describes, and the poem names shift and change over time, too, as they appear in different forms — printed, spoken, and hand-written.

The poems become an opportunity to work through form on the page and beyond (spoken, sung) to retell my tūpuna stories, metaphor through pūrākau, and as Harjo and Ranapiri describe, to access another form of connection to ancestral languages I cannot yet speak fluently.



an unfurling thread of guided “happenings”

(ongoing)

synchronicities, occurrences, conversations, wānanga, visits, returns, whānau hīkoi, experiences, encounters, events

An important, although often materially intangible, part of this research process is the series of ‘happenings’ that have unfolded over time. The term ‘happenings’ was shared in relation to *Mending the Kupenga*, during a supervision with Monique Redmond.[115] It describes the series of ‘events’ and synchronous occurrences that have taken place during the project, informing the research direction. I frequently sense I am being guided via conversations, wānanga, visits, returns, whānau hīkoi, experiences, and opportunities that arise in synchronicity with the making. Articulating these happenings has become an important method for the research, offering a means to reflect on, analyse, and respond to the ongoing research process. Some of these happenings have been documented through photography, sketches, and writing; others are woven into the patterns of the tauira or whatu-weavings. Still more have simply been experienced, and those experiences add intuitive layers into my approach to practice, gathering, and making.

Through the poetic, diaristic pieces of writing interwoven throughout this exegesis, I share fragments and glimpses into these happenings. I always make note of the moon-phase at the time of my observations, in order to link the whole together. They can then be shared in a way that emphasises the non-linear experience of futurepresentpast time in the project.

A brief sampling of the more ‘formalised’ happenings that have occurred over the project’s duration include:

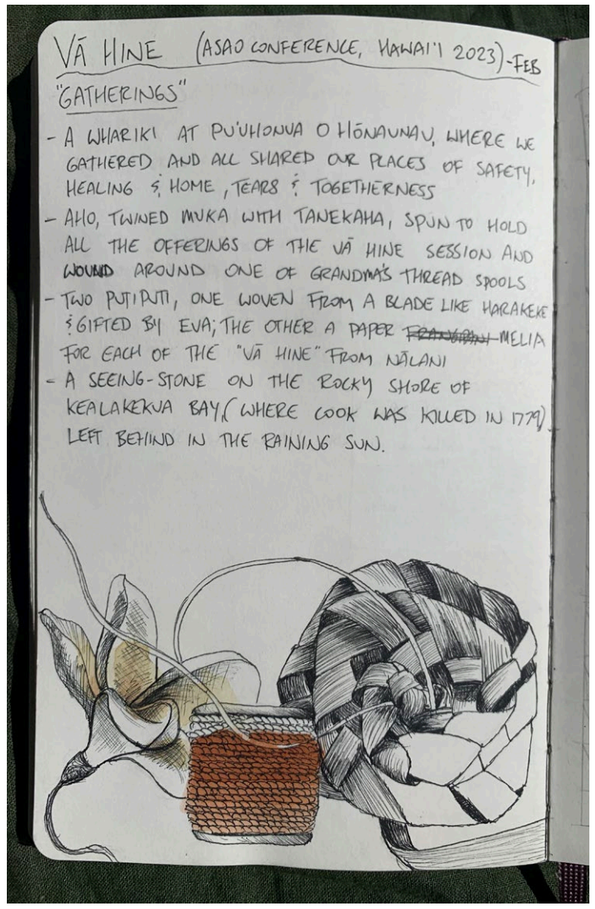
Vā Moana – Pacific Spaces research cluster Taranaki visit, May 2021

Presenting in *Old Stories, New Narratives* symposium, a strand of ‘Identity, Collaboration, Sustainability: an online, international festival of craft,’ with Applied Arts Scotland SCIO, Edinburgh College of Art, MSVU Art Gallery, and The Dr Sandra Alfoldy Craft Institute at NSCAD University, September 2021

Nana’s farewell, Tongapōrutu, June 2022

Louie Zalk Neale’s (Ngāi Te Rangi, Pākehā) performance, *Ngā Manuhiri Taura*

115 Redmond frames and discusses this notion of “happenings” in her PhD thesis. Monique Redmond, “The Event within Temporary Practices and the Public Social” (Deakin University, 2020), https://dro.deakin.edu.au/articles/thesis/The_Event_within_Temporary_Practices_and_the_Public_Social/21118126.







TOP LEFT: Image 70. Sketchbook notes from Vā Hine wānanga/gathering in Kona, Hawai'i, February 2023
Image of Vā Hine wānanga/gathering at Pu'uhonua o Honaunau, Hawai'i (detailed in sketchbook). removed to protect privacy prior to publication

RIGHT: Image 71. Albert Refiti, vā diagram of October 2023 *Vā Korero* session with Nālani Wilson Hokowhitu & Arielle Walker. Image courtesy of Albert Refiti

TOP RIGHT: Image 72. Muka aho-twining during Puanga Kai Rau, Parihaka, 2023

PREVIOUS: Image 69. Sea-water pathways in the Taranaki sand

(The Visiting Ropes), and tī kouka taura workshop, supported by Rangimārie Keall (Taranaki), with the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, Ngāmotu, August 2022

Toi o Taranaki ki te Tonga wānanga, October 2022

Vā Hine and *Artefacts of Relations* wānanga sessions during the Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania (ASAO) annual conference in Kona, Hawai'i, January–February 2023

Te Waituhi a Nuku: Drawing Ecologies biochar burn, Parihaka māra (during *Te Au: Liquid Constituencies*, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, Ngāmotu), February 2023

Puanga Kai Rau Festival, Parihaka, June 2023

Weaving Nets to Catch the Stars: Sharing Poems, Stories & Kai. Tautai Pacific Arts Trust in association with Samoa House Library, with Hana Pera Aoake & Friends, July 2023

Vā Korero with Nālani Wilson Hokowhitu, Vā Moana – Pacific Spaces research cluster, AUT University, October 2023

Te Rā Powhiri, Auckland Museum, November 2023

AUT Māori & Pacific staff & postgraduate students writing retreats, Te Mahurehure Marae, June and November 2023

Te Au: Liquid Constituencies Hui, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, Ngāmotu, December 2023

Among these happenings, an interrelated set of exhibitions has also unfolded, in conversation and collaboration with other artists, curators, and galleries:

A Very Different World (group exhibition, curated by Ngahiraka Mason) at Te Tuhi, 13 February–9 May 2021

distance rewoven from the roots to the stem, at Blue Oyster Art Project Space, 15 April–15 May 2021

ngā rerenga whau (with Emily Parr, curated by Andrea Low) at Kū Kahiko, 12 December 2021–28 January 2022

tōu tauira me tōu kaiako hoki (with Emily Parr, curated by Jade Townsend) for *Whānau Mārama*, Matariki June–July 2021 and June–July 2022

rongoā/mending at Twenty Seven Names for *Threads Textile Festival*, Te Whanganui-a-Tara, March 2022

whatuwai: returning to the sea, in the Open Window for *Te Au: Liquid Constituencies*, at Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, December 2022–March 2023

whatuwai at Nathan Homestead, 13 October–25 November 2023









RIGHT & TOP LEFT: Images 73 & 74. Stills from Emily Parr and Arielle Walker, *Mahuru*, 2021, 24 min 55 sec, single channel digital video, and *Whiringa-ā-Nuku*, 2021, 19 min 26 sec, single channel digital video

ABOVE & TOP RIGHT: Images 75 & 76. Emily Parr & Arielle Walker, *ngā rerenga whau*, 2021 (exhibition installation images), Ku Kahiko Gallery, Moana Fresh. Photos: Emily Parr

Related to these exhibitions, the ongoing observational practice of responding to and integrating my experiences of the project's happenings has been extended in a series of 'durational writings,' begun during the *Te Au: Liquid Constituencies* exhibition in 2022 and continued for *whatuwai* at Nathan Homestead.

Across various phases of the maramataka, I wrote and sent a short piece of prose writing or poetry responding to a recent happening to the gallery.[116] Each piece of writing flowed differently with each phase of the moon, and shared moments of my learning across the time period of each exhibition. New writing was printed directly upon the previous text, a companion to the stories in the textile artworks being exhibited. These durational writings carry on from a series of artworks made in conversation with moving-image artist Emily Parr (Ngāi Te Rangi, Moana, Pākehā) in 2021–2022 for the exhibitions *ngā rerenga whau* and *Whānau Mārama*. We exchanged a short video and letter every second day across lunar months (Piripi, Mahuru, and Whiringa-a-nuku), a filmed tukutuku of our everyday happenings over that time.

As my reflections and responses to the project's happenings layer and build into a body of poetic work in their own right, they allow a deeper analysis of the researchg findings — another thread to follow, to be guided by as the research unfolds.

116 One for each of the quarter moons in *Te Au*, and more fluidly across the six weeks of *whatuwai* at Nathan Homestead.



unfolding layers: practice in process

(ongoing)

returning, gathering, layering, storying, mending, patchworking, growing, (re)naming, sketching

Rhythms of knowledge evolving in cycles through process have guided this doctoral research from the beginning. Each artwork emerges from those that came before, and leads into the next iteration. In this way, the project's artworks and making processes are part of a durational cycle of making. My gathering shifts and changes with the seasons as different plants bloom and retreat, affecting the tones of each new tauira. In this way, the making-rhythms that ebbed and flowed over the course of this research are tidal.

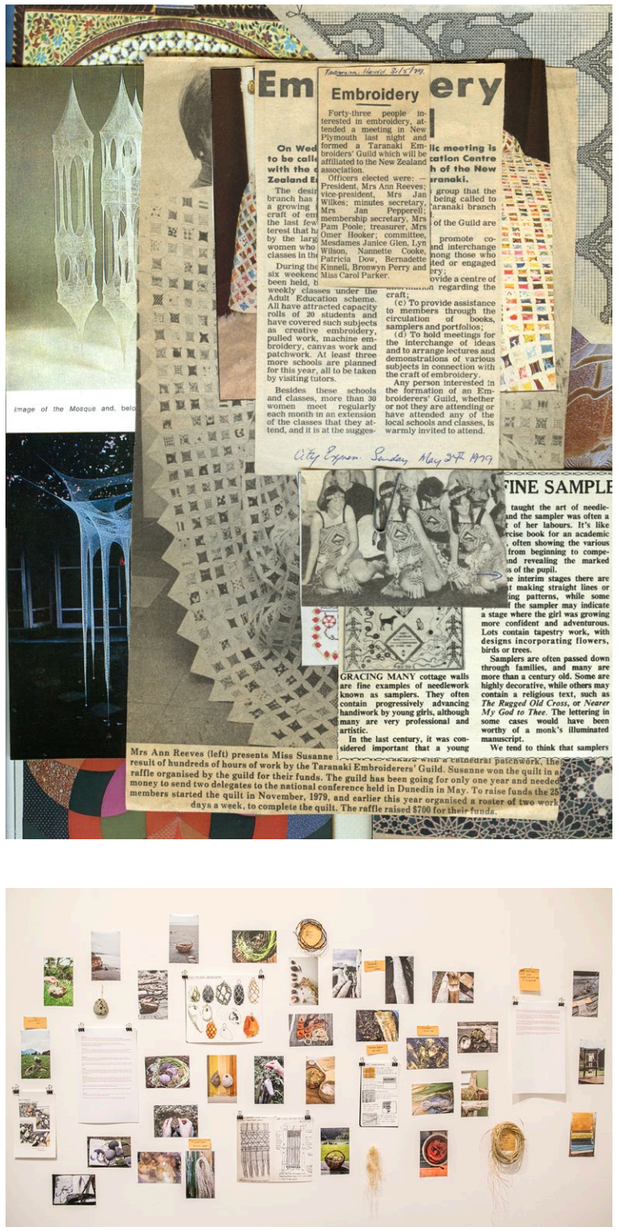
The final year of making,[117] across a full seasonal cycle from Puanga to Puanga, has unfolded as needed. At times, this has meant letting part of the practice sit and rest for a time. In such periods, I recall the words of Navajo weaver and scholar Amanda Tachine, with scholar Z Nicolazzo:

> In weaving, the loom can teach us that research is active, that it requires movement and rest, and that it recognizes that knowledge does not solely derive from human knowledge but includes more than human… wisdom and knowledges that are often tangled and twisted, which requires our utmost presence, patience, and humility.[118]

The early part of winter felt especially slow, a time for resetting. By the end of winter and into spring, I found myself in an intensive making-period again, as I mended and added to ongoing works (such as the *rongoā* patchwork, Images 31, 82) and worked dyebaths and lake-pigments from plant materials gathered earlier in the harvest season. I finished baskets and worked on reflective and poetic writing far more than I had through the previous summer and autumn (which was focused on gathering and weaving). Storms allowed for collecting angiangi from wind-fallen branches and preparing/mordanting wool for the upcoming summer dyes. Late spring brought the first harvestings of weed plants, such as dandelions, gorse flowers and ribwort plantain, and the preparing and planting of kūmara tupu. Gathering and processing muka began again in the late afternoons amid the growing summer heat, and I was invited to join the harakeke-gathering and dye-season of Taranaki artist friend Sally Hikaka, at her home in Taranaki ki te Tonga. Fallen hīnau leaves and flowering yarrow

117 Mid-June, 2023, to mid-June, 2024.

118 Amanda Tachine and Z Nicolazzo, introduction to *Weaving an Otherwise: In-Relations Methodological Practice*, ed. Amanda Tachine and Z. Nicolazzo (New York: Routledge, 2023), 4.







TOP LEFT: Image 78. A sample of Nana's scrap-book collection of craft-related newspaper and magazine clippings

ABOVE: Image 79. Arielle Walker, Patchwork-documentation wall detail during whatuwai exhibition, Nathan Homestead Gallery, 2023

TOP RIGHT: Image 80. Example of zine documentation, 2023

RIGHT: Image 81. Germaine Koh, *Knitwork*, ongoing since 1992. Unravelled used garments, with text and photographic documentation. Approx. 2m x increasing length. Image courtesy of Germaine Koh

PREVIOUS: Image 77. Detail of "Year of Making" documentation, Whiro/new moon November - Whiro/new moon December 2023

were gathered for dyeing. In Tāmaki again, more muka arrived from Sally, sent by post to be whatu-woven into new tauira. Elder leaves and muka from my friends' West Auckland gardens followed as the air began to chill into autumn, and the kumara leaves grew into a thick carpet, leading towards the coming hauhake. Storm-fallen mānuka was gifted from those same Titirangi gardens, which my partner Liam shaped into a new loom, incorporating Tāmaki driftwood, and dowels hand-turned by his father Chris Mullins and sibling Eli. In the last months before Puanga, I simmered dye baths from all my gathered plant materials, dyeing wool yarns and muka aho for the last whatu-weavings, and fabric to extend the rongoā (mending) patchwork. A raku-firing day, hosted by artist and AUT Wet Lab senior technician Harriet Stockman, let me prepare the final exhibition loom weights from Tāmaki and Taranaki uku, coloured by whenua and plant materials (sand, seaweed, leaves, driftwood, bark) that Harriet had gathered in Hokianga, and from my own recent gatherings in Tāmaki. I also shaped and low-fired a number of clay beads to include stranded into an ongoing kupenga for the final exhibition.

I have documented part of these ever-moving, ever-shifting processes of my research through sketches, photography (35mm film and iPhone), scanning, and note-taking/diary entries. I have also left space for moments to be undocumented at the moment of their 'happening,' either reflecting later in sketching/writing, or letting the experience express itself through the materially-crafted aspects of making. An ongoing sketchbook and early 2021-2022 series of small printed zines were the initial repositories for these forms of documentation.

When it came to documenting the seasonal shifts more directly in this current "Year of Making," I moved away from earlier zine-style printed booklets towards the aesthetics of my Nana's scrapbooks and collections of gathered newspaper and magazine cuttings, photographs, exhibition pamphlets, and other ephemera. The physicality and spontaneity of analogue cut-and-paste onto a printed page, and the potential to include physical materials — cordage; pressed leaves and other plant material; sketches and samples in biochar and plant ink — felt aligned to my layered methods of practice (see Appendix 2: Year of Making).

Returning to Nana's scrapbooks has led me to make a 'scrapbook' of my own — one double-sided A3 sheet per lunar month, from whiro moon to whiro moon. Within each page, I gather the happenings of that month: making, gathering, visiting – spontaneous collections of each lunar cycle as it has unfolded over the seasons. Many of the project's 'findings' have been unconscious or subconscious at the time of making, often arising through intuitive means. Gathering together an iterative documentation of process across each month in this particular form enables me to discover, reflect upon, analyse, and understand new connections between previous works and the seasonal cycles within which they were made.

Even outside the bounds of the "Year of Making," my practice has continued to layer into and upon itself. Ongoing artworks reach points where they pause for a time. This rhythm shares similarities with artworks like Malaysian-born Canadian artist Germaine Koh's *Knitwork*, a life-long, continuously-growing knitted object



ABOVE: Image 82. *rongoā (mending)* and *countermap* installation view in *distance rewoven from the roots to the stem*, Blue Oyster Art Project Space, April 2021. Photo: Bunty Bou

FOLLOWING PAGE SPREAD: Images 83 to 95. Iterations of the *rongoā (mending)*, *countermap*, and to *unravel*, *as kākahu* artworks, from 2019 to 2024, including installation details at Blue Oyster (2021, LEFT PAGE); with Emily Parr in the first *Whānau Mārama* exhibition (2021, TOP RIGHT PAGE); Nathan Homestead (BOTTOM RIGHT PAGE)

begun in 1992, and continued through a "slow accumulation of layers" over time.[119] Koh often knits the artwork live in the gallery space it is exhibited, using recycled wool made from unravelling old garments (or yarn brought in by the public). Examples of my artworks that have been similarly held in interlude in their life cycle include:

a counter-map of home (2020-ongoing)

rongoā/mending (2020-ongoing)

if I knit enough lace into blankets... 2019/2021-ongoing)

All of the exhibitions staged have held iterations of artworks that have been live throughout the entire project. I continue to work on pieces after they have been exhibited, gathering and adding new material in preparation for another kaupapa to begin. Some, like the *rongoā* and *countermap* works, began in 2019–2020, before the PhD, and have changed, shifted, and altered as the project has unfolded. I dye additional pieces of fabric, stitch them together, and extend their scale into space. Important to the process is allowing for the materiality of each artwork to take on new forms as they grow — becoming enveloping shelters, like the *rongoā* silk-and-cotton artwork, or embodying whenua as a means of grounding in place while at a distance from home, like the *countermaps*.

Other artworks, like the *whatuwai* loom and the tauira series, have built on the learning that came before them, developing into something new. At Nathan Homestead, for example, I added tauira to the gallery wall across the six-week exhibition timeframe (October-November 2023), a gesture of accumulative learning.

In the studio, the tauira and the *whatuwai* weaving continue to be made, new weft-thread added following the re-forming and re-building of Taranaki connections. I plan new whatu-weavings and looms; I unravel former artworks to make them anew; I dye new pieces for the *rongoā* and *countermap* artworks in quiet moments between weaving and writing. Each artwork is a representation of whakapapa: they are ongoing and layered because whakapapa is ongoing and layered. The ongoing, processual nature of this practice is a constant reminder that our ancestral ties are a continuum, an ever-unfurling thread.

119 Germaine Koh, *Knitwork*, 1992–ongoing, knitted textile, https://germainekoh.com/works/knitwork.

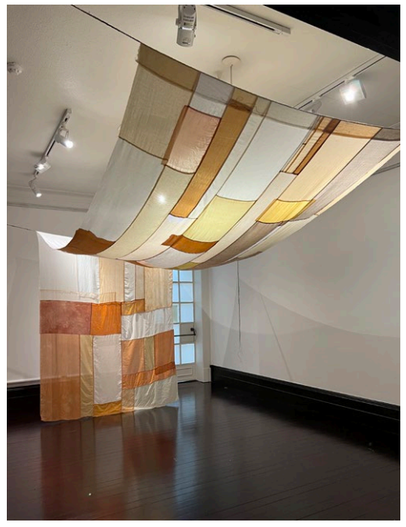


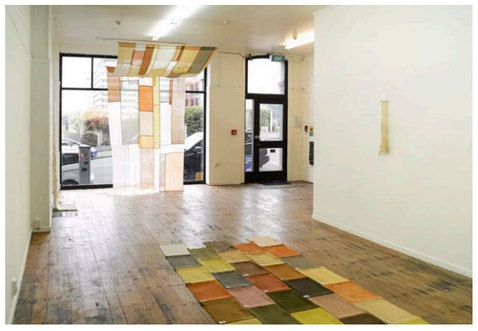



TWENTY-SEVEN NAMES
EST. 2007









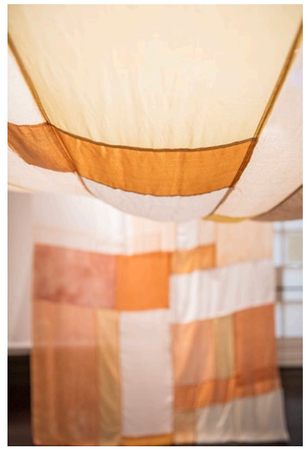












PART FOUR:

WEAVING THE RESEARCH

the year becomes



CHAPTER 5:

TIME



PREVIOUS IMAGE: Image 96. Some of the plants gathered with Emily Parr from West Auckland for exhibition *ngā rerenga whau* (those not dyed with) in spring/summer 2021, combined with other late summer/early autumn gatherings 2022, now dried and faded over time

MAKER'S TIME

Working with a practice guided by whakapapa, whatuora, and storywork, and weaving together tūpuna learnings in (re)connection to place, has centred concepts of time in the project's gathering and making processes. My practice follows a slow (re)growing maramataka awareness, including seasonal knowledge from my other ancestral homelands. The artworks unfold durationally, through the shifting of plant-dyed colours in light over time, the ongoing process of gathering materials for making, and adding to works over the course of months and years. Some pieces are durational simply due to the requirements of my own body as a maker: there are only so many consecutive hours that fingers can twine before needing rest. Time-cycles of the sun, moon, and seasons affect the duration of artworks-in-process, and provide a structure to guide the making. This chapter outlines and discusses these core concepts of time, seasonal-making, and labour in relation to the project.

Kairaranga and curator Kahutoi Te Kanawa (Ngāti Maniapoto) explains the importance of engaging, both implicitly and explicitly, with concepts of time in a making practice. She refers to Māori Marsden's interpretation of the "cosmic process" of time, denoted as "sequences in processes,"[120] to note how "as a kairaranga, the sequential processes of raranga and whatu are set in a methodical order, so that time is used effectively."[121] Te Kanawa emphasises how important it is that our "Mātauranga evolves over time but does not stay still, relating to the spiritual realm of what our tūpuna have left us."[122] Te Kanawa's interpretation of Marsden is particularly useful in considering the methodical order in which my making processes unfold.

In order to weave, you must first have the material to weave *with*. This requires a gathering process, which depends on the conditions in which the gathering occurs. To work with muka, for example, the harakeke must first be harvested — and this can only be done when the plant is not flowering, when it is daytime and not raining, and not during the time of īkura for those whose bodies follow that cycle. The ability to know or sense these 'right times' for gathering, seasonal harvesting methods, how and when to weave, comes from a longer sequence of learning — especially from time spent with elders, and knowledge learnt over wānanga.

There is further process and protocol to follow in the hāro, miro, and return of the para and other remains to the whenua. To continue working the fibre into a cloth or kākahu, for instance, the making-space must be prepared, the warp or whenu laid, the kaupapa set. The making then follows a further set of rhythms determined by the chosen process and the desired outcome: *this* pair of threads must first encircle *that* whenu; *this* heddle lifted in sequence to allow the weft to form *that* pattern.

120 Marsden, *The Woven Universe*, 162.

121 Kahutoi Te Kanawa, "Taonga Tuku Iho: Intergenerational Transfer of Raranga and Whatu" (PhD thesis, University of Waikato, 2022), 54, https://hdl.handle.net/10289/15318.

122 Te Kanawa, "Taonga Tuku Iho," 54.

Materials change over time too: colours fade, fabric wears thin. *Mending the Kupenga* has seen artworks like *whatuwai* soften and fade over three months of exhibition in a sunlit window space. More 'fugitive' dyes like kawakawa lose colour faster than the strong tannins of angiangi and tanekaha, and tauira muka turn from white to a soft gold. Allowing for the materials to shift naturally over time, rather than focusing on preservation and conservation of the artwork, has been an important consideration. Time processes are thus an intrinsic material method in this PhD research.

Considering deeper concepts of time from different cultural perspectives and through multiple layers of meaning has meant navigating:

> Distances and nuances of intergenerational time, looking to and guided by the stories and skills of tūpuna from generations past, today, and still to come.
>
> Gathering-and-making cycles of the practice, which are shaped by the seasons and are dependent on the sun and moon, and the cycles of night and day.
>
> Research deadlines and date requirements, based upon the Gregorian (and institutional) calendars, and then the inevitable conflicts when these layers do not easily meld. For example, when the ebbs and flows of the moon, high and low energy days of the maramataka do not align with the institutional calendar, and when differing ideas of how time is experienced are encountered.

Returning to notions of time as seasonal, celestial cycles, which acknowledge the potential of experiencing a simultaneity of futurepresentpast, has therefore been a fundamental point of learning in this research practice.

Whiro, November 2022

When I bring my first warp-weighted loom to Taranaki, to the edges of the Tongapōrutu river where much of the wooden frame pieces washed ashore, I anticipate weaving between the indoors and outside, the relative portability of the loom allowing me to move where and when needed. I imagine sitting on the deck in the sun, the loom propped up against the bach weatherboards with the river flowing behind as I work.

The pouring rain means I decide to start weaving indoors instead, loom leaning against the hallway wall, the river clear and full through the window. I'm weaving across the lowest ebb of the moon, around the time of Whiro: a time of low energy, a time for rest and re-setting. At first this feels less than ideal. The Gregorian calendar and the deadlines that come with it seem once again in conflict with the rhythms of the maramataka.

Still, I karakia to clear the space, set up the loom, prepare the warp/whenu, tie on the stone weights, and set the kaupapa over Orongonui, aware that I will need to take this even more slowly than I might have at another time.

As I weave, however, the moon-time begins to feel fitting rather than frustrating. Despite an exhibition deadline, there suddenly feels no need to rush — the fabric will be as complete as it needs to be. I see the weaving unfolding across a timeframe of setting intentions, gathering insights, looking inwards and forwards. This piece, and the learning it brings, sets the kaupapa for the next cycle of my making.

SEASONS. TIDES. CELESTIAL CYCLES

Connecting to celestial cycles is central to many ancestral practices. As Mere Roberts, Frank Wero, and Liliana Clark emphasise in their 2006 research report, *Maramataka: The Maori Moon Calendar*:

> Measurement of time by means of the sun, moon and stars is an ancient practice. All societies originally depended on day/night length and the occurrence of the solstices as well as the movements of heavenly bodies across the night sky to determine seasons of the year.[123]

The very concept of time itself is best described through the language of celestial cycles. Taranaki kaumatua Te Huirangi Waikerepuru (Taranaki, Ngāpuhi) describes even the very "beginning of natural universal law" as commencing with "a whirling pattern of cyclic inter-action."[124] Valance Smith (Ngāpuhi, Waikato, Ngāti Haina, Ngāti Pākehā) describes Māori concepts of time, wā, as deliberately being "very cyclic."[125] Tai timu tai pari (the incoming and outgoing tides) and ka tō te rā, ka whiti te rā (rising and setting of the sun) are cycles through which we traditionally experienced, followed, and measured time.[126]

As I learn more about seasonal knowledge from across the homelands of my ancestors, I find examples of lives lived in deep connection and understanding of these cycles. What becomes apparent is a shared, profound understanding of place in all my ancestral traditions — from Taranaki to Tipperary to Tingwall — even when the customs appear different. I was fortunate to grow up among a patchwork of ceremonies gathered and woven from many places and ways of seeing. We marked the solstices and the turning of the year, thanked the earth and plants when gathering and planting. I learnt to notice lunar cycles and follow the tides (even if it was only to time high-tide swims or low-tide walks). My family and I watched for pōhutukawa blooming to indicate summer, and looked out for favourite constellations as they moved across the night sky. I have been returning to these practices of observation with greater awareness and intentionality, connecting my childhood experiences to the innate ancestral knowledge that guides them, and building on that knowledge

123 Mere Roberts, Frank Wero, and Liliana Clark, *Maramataka: The Maori Moon Calendar* (Christchurch: Lincoln University, 2006), https://hdl.handle.net/10182/155.

124 Te Huirangi Waikerepuru, "The Universe and Universal Law," (paper presented to the *ISEA 2012 Symposium*, Albuquerque, United States, September 20, 2012), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NrRqCpnBJkM.

125 Valance Smith, interview by Brett Graham, February 11, 2021, Vā Moana: Pacific Spaces Research Cluster, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland.

126 Valance Smith, interview by Brett Graham; Ngāhuia Te Awekotuku, "He Atamira a Huatau: Staging Images, Contemplating Forms; Māori Art & Transformation," (keynote address at *Toi Te Kupu Whakaahuatanga Wānanga Toi Māori*, Auckland, New Zealand, June 15, 2022).







TOP RIGHT: Image 97.
First kūmara hauhake, May 2023, following learnings from Tatai Tangata ki te Whenua

RIGHT & ABOVE: Images 98 & 99.
Kūmara tupu grown from previous year's hauhake, planted December 2023

through research, wānanga, and conversations. My learning in this space is still introductory; I am by no means an expert. However, as a maker working primarily with whenua-gathered materials, celestial, seasonal knowledge is essential for my art practice: knowing when to harvest and plant; recognising signs in the taiao that indicate the changing seasons and good, poor, or dangerous gathering conditions on a day-to-day basis.

(Re)connecting to maramataka has been an important part of this mahi. In 2022, I joined the Taranaki Iwi māra kai rōpū Tatai Tangata ki te Whenua, which offers uri of Taranaki Iwi space to learn about lunar cycles and phases in connection with tending a māra kai. This involves understanding how each phase affects working in/with moana, ngāhere, and māra, planting and harvesting; how the shifting of water impacts us in our bodies and energy levels as tides rise and fall higher and lower towards the full and new moons. Kaimāra and kaiako Pounamu Skelton (Te Ati Awa, Taranaki) teaches our rōpū how energy shifts over the full marama cycle, and how to recognise each phase. From Whiro, the new moon (low energy), we move through Tamatea, the first quarter of the growing moon (unsettled energy, quickly shifting weather, good for planting). The moon is fullest over Rakaunui (high energy, purposeful action, everything amplified, time to get things done), before waning again over the last quarter, Tangaroa, as the moon descends away from us (settled energy, calm waters, good for fishing/eeling, time to be in the māra, time for pūrea, to release).[127] We work from a Te Ati Awa maramataka shared by Taranaki agronomist Nick Roskruge (Ngāti Rahiri o Te Ati Awa, Ngāti Tama), which came to him from his father and holds many Taranaki names. However, we are encouraged to find and follow maramataka from the rohe we live in, and to always be grounded by our own observations: to take notes and to learn the taiao around us.[128]

Looking to my more distant ancestral homelands in Shetland, Scotland, and Ireland, I find resonances in their knowledge of seasons and place. Shetland poet Roseanne Watt, for example, writes of weather lore passed down from the old haafmen,[129] (as well as the crofters and workers of the land) whose lives depended on reading signs of storm and season in the world around them.[130] She notes the lore shared with her from a Burra fisherman, that "to see the new moon 'lying on her back' … was taken to be a sign of approaching storms."[131] This is similar to wisdom from across Ireland,[132] and to readings I have seen during the Whiro to Tamatea moon phases. Harvest and planting took place with the ebb-tide and waning moon, and the full tide and growing moon, respectively — when the earth was said to "close and open better."

127 Pounamu Skelton, discussions with author at Tatai Tangata ki Whenua gatherings.

128 See Roberts, Wero, and Clark, *Maramataka*. This report gathers 43 published and unpublished maramataka from various iwi and hapū, makes a preliminary analysis of the origins of different names, and establishes rationales for the sequential groupings of these according to moon phases. It has been particularly helpful in identifying and balancing between gathering and artmaking where I live in Tāmaki, and when returning to Taranaki.

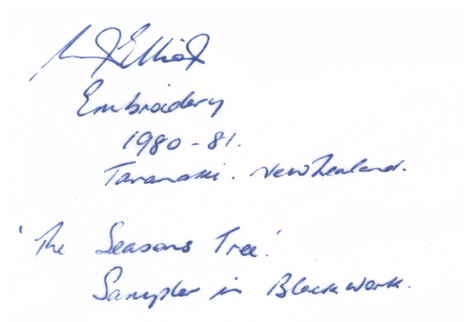
129 Fishermen of the deep sea.

130 Roseanne Watt, "Shetland Moon Lore," *Roseanne Watt* (blog), October 31, 2020, http://www.roseannewatt.com/blog/shetland-moon-lore; see also Margaret Tait and Peter Tait, "Weather Lore and Ways of Summoning the Wind," recorded February 1960 by Elisabeth Sinclair, *Tobar an Dualchais/Kist o Riches* sound archive, audio recording, accessed September 4, 2023, https://www.tobarandualchais.co.uk/track/73584?l=en.

131 Watt, "Shetland Moon Lore."

132 Tomás Ó Ciardham, "The Main Manuscript Collection, Volume 0107," National Folklore Collection, University College Dublin, 503, https://www.duchas.ie/en/cbe/9001188/7056147.







ABOVE: Image 100. Maire Elliot, *The Seasons Tree*, 1981. Photograph of Nana's embroidery, representing the seasons, now itself faded and colour-shifted with time. Her hand-written annotation from the back of the photograph is included alongside

RIGHT: Image 101. Studio detail, 2024: harakeke lashing on the whatuwai loom, turned golden over time (including the summer 2022-2023 period of exhibition in the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery Open Window)

Other proverbs from Shetland, Scotland, and Ireland, such as the Shetland saying "Aald moon mist/ne'er died o thirst,"[133] demonstrate a continued deep connection with and understanding of the natural world. Northern Irish writer Kerri ní Dochartaigh writes of the winter solstice, An Grianstad or Grianstad an Gheimhridh, as acknowledging "the stopping of the sun" — much like Māui once did with harakeke ropes. The winter solstice is a deeply important "ancient seasonal rite of passage"[134] that has resonances to celebrations of Puanga and Matariki here in Aotearoa. These forms of knowledge, passed down and added to through observation over generations, are still celebrated, or being reclaimed: from celebrations of Yule and Up Helly Aa in Shetland,[135] to the first day of winter (Samhain), winter's eve (Oíche Shamhna), or the beginning of summer (Bealtaine, or May Day) in Ireland. Here in Aotearoa, too, the reclamation of traditional seasonal knowledge can be seen in the recent establishment of Matariki as an official public holiday, in 2022.

This research has been both literally and metaphorically seasonal. Much of the early work of *Mending the Kupenga* began in a phase of harvesting and preparing. As the falling sap in woody plants over autumn coincided with my need to weave baskets for holding materials to be gathered in spring/summer, so the time allowed for preparing the conceptual space that would hold this project over its course. In the quiet winter of the second research year (2022), my family gathered to farewell Nana Maire as Puanga rose, and I felt that I too was going through a form of release, hibernation, inwardness, and re-setting. My father and brothers helped me gather strong, solid pieces of driftwood, and, as spring slowly unfurled, my partner Liam used them to help me build my first warp-weighted loom. When spring moved into summer, certain flowers and leaves were ready for gathering, dyeing, twining and splicing, and I began the first large-scale whatu/weaving of this project: *whatuwai* (2022-ongoing), an artwork that had been in development for months through samplers, tauira, sketches, plans, and tests; and I felt it was now ready to be made. The loom artwork spent the summer in Taranaki, in the Open Window of the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, and was returned to me in autumn, ready for the coming harvest and the next cycle of making.

On Saturday June 10, 2023 — one year on from my family's farewell to Nana Maire — ngā mōrehu o Parihaka, ngā iwi o Taranaki, and manuhiri of the kaupapa[136] stood upon Pūrepo at dawn. We watched as Puanga rose bright above the peak of Taranaki Maunga in the crystal-clear morning sky. We released our passed loved ones to the stars, and greeted the year to come. From this season of Puanga, through to its return and rise again in 2024, the artworks that I make and my process of gathering and preparing for them through the maramataka form the tangible fruition of this body of doctoral research.

133 Watt, "Shetland Moon Lore." Watt explains: "Mist during the latter days of the waning moon signalled rainy weather to come."

134 Kerri nì Dochartaigh, *Thin Places* (Edinburgh: Canongate Books, 2021), 249.

135 Celebrating the annual return of the sun, when everything was "cleansed and started anew" with bonfire. See Tom Anderson, "Celebrating Old Yule; Guising at New Year; Up Helly Aa Welcomed Back the Sun," recorded December 1972 by Tadaaki Miyake, *Tobar an Dualchais/Kist o Riches* sound archive, audio recording, accessed November 27, 2023, https://www.tobarandualchais.co.uk/track/71749?l=en.

136 The survivors/descendants of Parihaka, iwi of Taranaki, and many guests gathered for the annual Puanga Kai Rau Festival.

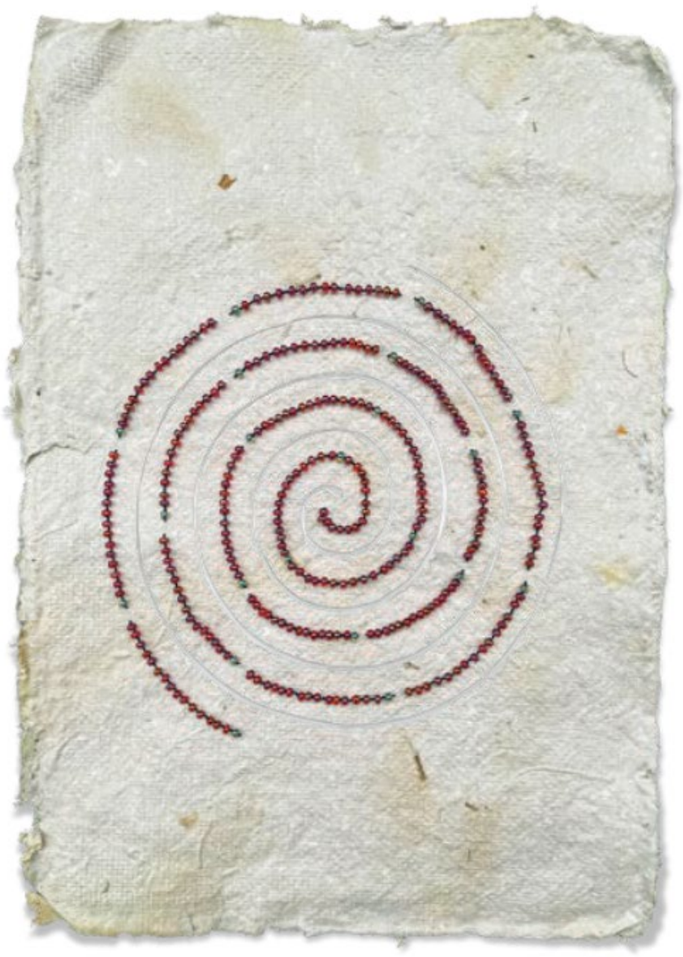


Image 102. Jade Townsend. Hand-made paper by Zoe Black gifted to Jade between the two rāhui in 2020. Glass beads and thread.

Images of Ngahina Hohaia's *He Ara Uru Ora* were previously included on this page, and have been removed until image permission can be confirmed.

SPIRALLING TIME

In Ngāhina Hohaia's *He Ara Uru Ora*, aho strung with thousands of huruhuru toroa flow, ascend, descend, and radiate outwards across three concentric circles, pooling in a rush of sound and light and water, washing across the gallery floor and back up again towards a distant sky. The work embodies a continuum of time and space as non-linear, spiralling, flowing like water and unspooling like thread. There is an initial instinct, a desire to be *within* it, to plunge in, as Leonie Pihama describes, as if into a portal.[137] The artwork becomes a "channel like a Pou Atua," communicating whakapapa, a "mirror for our tamariki and mokopuna" to see themselves as their tūpuna.[138] Viewing *He Ara Uru Ora,* I am transported to the Aotea whakataukī shared by Taranaki kaumatua Rocky Hudson (Ngāti Ruanui, Ngāruahine, Whakatohea):

> Koia kei a ia te wa aianei
> Koia kei a ia te wa a muri
> Koia kei a ia te wa a muri
> Koia kei a ia te wa a mua
> Wa muri ka oti a mua

Hudson translated the above whakataukī, in part, as "the past of our ancestors is our future."[139] His translations reflect an understanding shared by Moana Jackson (Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Porou) of a Māori notion of time as being,

> whakapapa based, and like whakapapa it has its own sense of never-ending beginnings in which time turns back on itself in order to bring the past into the present and then into the future. Above all it is a notion of time which recognises the interconnectedness of all things.[140]

Tuhourangi and Ngāti Whanaunga scholar Carl Mika suggests that a possible interpretation of conceiving 'time' as 'wā' is that it "signalled, or indeed was, the sheer reality and fact of all things in the world, at once"— a simultaneity of all-ness and now-ness: a futurepresentpast that incorporates spatial aspects, acknowledging the "interconnectedness of all things."[141] In conversation with artist Brett Graham (Ngāti Koroki Kahukura, Tainui), Valance Smith connects notions of wā to spiralling time-space and whakapapa through the takarangi design, which has "two intertwining koru, so that also represents a dichotomy" which (in Te Ao Māori) is not a "dichotomy in terms of two separate pillars, but rather acknowledging that the two parts … are connected through whakapapa."[142]

Here, Valance Smith references the spiralling ancestral links that connect us through whakapapa, generational layers, all the way to Papatūānuku and Ranginui, the first

137 Murphy et al., "Mana Wāhine."

138 Ngāhina Hohaia, interviewed by Anna-Marie White, "He Ara Uru Ora," *Art News Aotearoa,* Summer 2023, 101-102.

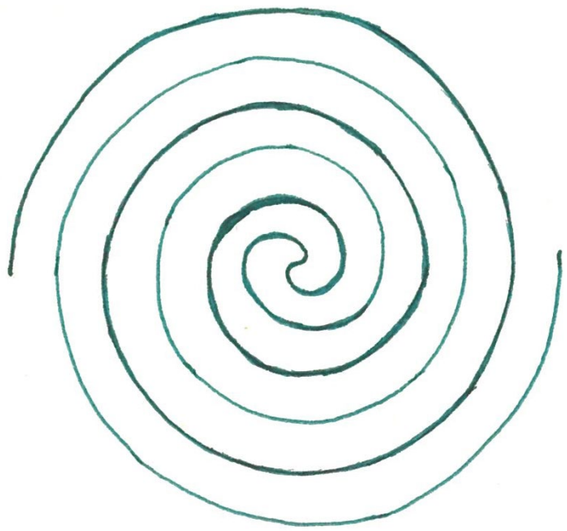
139 I encountered this whakataukī for the first time while looking for glimpses of my tūpuna within the pages of Tony Sole's book *Ngāti Ruanui;* it has resonated ever since. Tony Sole, *Ngāti Ruanui* (Wellington: Huia, 2005).

140 Jackson, "He Manawa Whenua," 62.

141 Carl Mika, in Abby Cunnane, Amy Weng, Hamish Petersen, hosts, and Carl Mika, guest, "Wā and Its Countercolonial Possibilities: Implications for the Human Self," *Art Not Science* (podcast), episode 44, January 28, 2023, accessed March 25, 2024, https://physicsroom.org.nz/events/art-not-science-episode.

142 Valance Smith, interview by Brett Graham.

parents — the "two parts" being the 'wai-rua,' the two waters of our mother and father that bring us into existence.[143] The metaphors that Hohaia's *He Ara Uru Ora* embodies speak to the whakapapa connection with wai and the takarangi, as researcher and educator Ngahuia Murphy (Ngāti Manawa, Ngāti Ruapani ki Waikaremoana, Tūhoe, Ngāti Kahungunu, Te Arawa) shared in a recent discussion of Hohaia's work from a Mana Wāhine perspective.[144] Murphy describes the flowing form of *He Ara Uru Ora* as a representation of the sacred takarangi patternings of the birth canal, the "star-lit passages" of Te Kōpua Kaniwhaniwha — cyclical, spiralling. These understandings of timespace offer a way for projects like *Mending the Kupenga* to engage with whakapapa strands across multiple ancestral homelands and cultural backgrounds, taha Māori and taha Pākehā.



Grounded in mātauranga Māori, notions of time-space as takarangi or wai resonate with other Indigenous understandings. Robin Wall Kimmerer offers an Anishinaabe metaphor of time, not as "a river running inexorably to the sea, but the sea itself — its tides that appear and disappear, the fog that rises to become rain in a different river."[145] Her description is a close articulation of my own experiencing of spiralling time as futurepresentpast, cycles and movement and currents; the 'all-ness' or 'now-ness' of wā. The past and present have never been separated, as Patricia Grace writes in her novel *Potiki*; it is through the telling of stories that we become aware of the spiral.[146] Seen through the takarangi, our tūpuna are both in the distant past and the simultaneous present, which are one and the same.

143 Valance Smith, interview by Brett Graham; Pania Papa, quoted in Joeliee Seed-Pihama, "Kapohia Ngā Taonga ā Kui Mā: Liberty from the Theft of Our Matrilineal Names," in *Mana Wahine Reader Volume 2: A Collection of Writings 1999-2019*, ed. Leonie Pihama, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Naomi Simmonds, Joeliee Seed-Pihama, and Kirsten Gabel (Hamilton: Te Kotahi Research Institute, 2019), 186.

144 Murphy et al., "Mana Wāhine."

145 Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*, 206.

146 As discussed in Elizabeth DeLoughrey, "The Spiral Temporality of Patricia Grace's Potiki," *Ariel: A Review of International English Literature* 30, no. 1 (1999): 79.

Western time-constructs function in contrast to these Indigenous views. Linda Tuhiwai Smith explains how, in Western thinking, "space is often viewed … as being static or divorced from time," a separation which is "particularly relevant in relation to colonialism."[147] Historian Rachel Buchanan (Taranaki, Te Ātiawa) describes academic history as continuing to function "on the understanding that the past is different and distant from the present, and that studying the past means studying an event or series of events that took place in that past and are, therefore, completed."[148] She suggests that such approaches to history operate within "secular, rational, objective, scientific, progressive, distancing, empirical" notions of time.[149] Time seen in this way is linear, with minutes, hours, calendar dates imposed onto natural cycles. Mika notes how this "dominant Western model of existence is designed to fragment the self" and thereby sever human from more-than-human relations, as "a way to [divorce] the self from the full fabric of all things."[150] The intent implied in the term 'designed' references the colonial process of segmenting, distancing, and the overwriting of Western histories and frameworks upon Indigenous ways of knowing.

Pākehā scholar Stephen Turner argues that, in fact, "an industry of historians, or memory machinery, is needed to support settler place-making, working to shape and contain memory, and to secure it against real knowledge of the making over of place."[151] In defiance of the colonial approach, Buchanan suggests that "minority or subaltern pasts unsettle these understandings of history. Such pasts … are 'stubborn knots'" that interrupt the linearity of "Western historical time,"[152] offering a counter to the imposed 'making over' of places, histories, knowledges, and cultures under colonialism.

Aspects of my research have led me to gather stories and fibre knowledge from archives, museums, and libraries, institutions known for their reliance on these separate distinctions of 'historical' time (that is, in the 'completed' and empirically agreed-upon past) and 'contemporary' time (happening in the supposed separate 'now'). Understanding how such delineations have been imposed onto taonga and other knowledge held in these spaces enables me to continue moving between experiences of time-space, futurepresentpast, to ensure that I respect and care for their legacies as ever-present.

147 Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, 55.

148 Rachel Buchanan, "Decolonizing the Archives: The Work of New Zealand's Waitangi Tribunal," *Public History Review* 14 (2007): 46, https://doi.org/10.5130/phrj.v14i0.399.

149 Buchanan, "Decolonizing the Archives," 46.

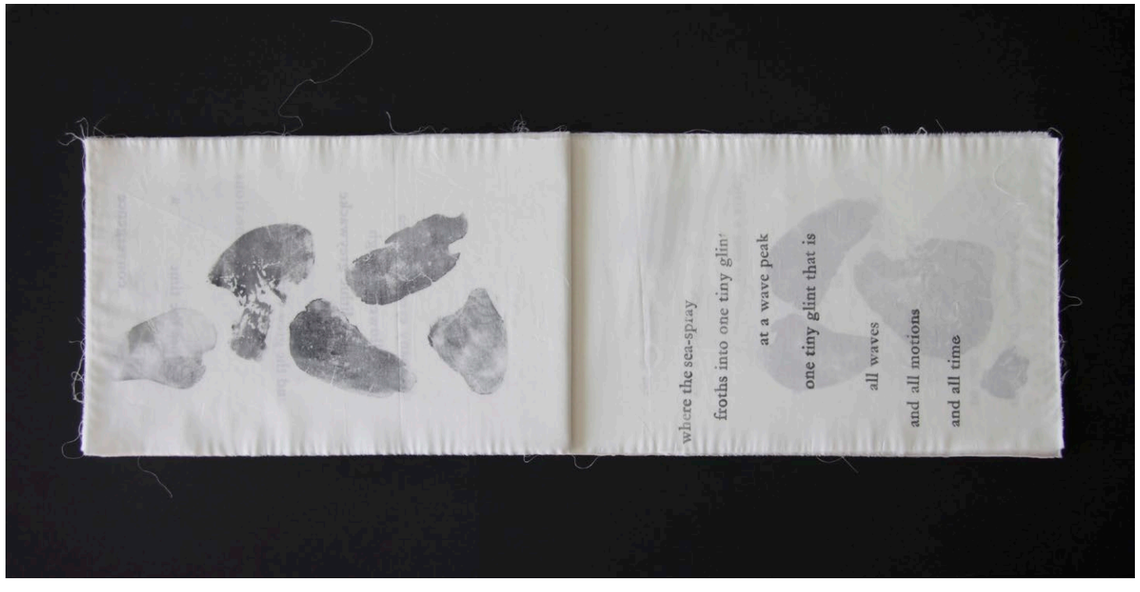
150 Mika, "Wā and Its Countercolonial Possibilities."

151 Turner, "Settler Dreaming."

152 Buchanan, "Decolonizing the Archives," 46.







TOP LEFT: Image 103. Makyla Curtis, *Stones of the North — the Eyes of Tangaroa*, 2020 (internal pages). Zine. Image courtesy of Makyla Curtis

TOP RIGHT: Image 104. Stone found in Taranaki, 2022

BELOW: Image 105. Makyla Curtis, *the aperture shows me an arrival*, 2021 (internal pages). Hardback stab-binding, cotton silk fabric pages, 390 x 230mm. Image courtesy of Makyla Curtis

SEEING-STONES & FOLDING TIME. A COUNTER TO SETTLER AMNESIA

The Western, linear, 'marching progress' view of time has been enforced over many other ancestral frameworks, even in so-called 'Western' spaces. Makyla Curtis describes this occurrence through the embodied metaphor of seeing-stones, or 'hagstones,' which hold the "mark of time," made

> by the continuous drop of water that wears away the rock to form the hole. As tools for looking backwards and forwards in time, hagstones have long been part of European myths and stories. Their long existence suggest that Europeans have not always been so blind to simultaneity of time and times.[153]

Curtis indicates that "today's blindness and ignorance of the past" is particularly suited to colonialism, which can "overwrite better when it makes no move to account for multiple epistemologies."[154] She offers instead an artistic framework of "folding time," as a counter to this colonial overwriting and "settler amnesia." Folding time, for Curtis, includes an "overlay of place" as a means to connect and be co-present with her Scottish ancestors, as she engages with her experiential research (through "field-trips," site visits, being-in-place) and poetic-printmaking practice. When visiting places around Aotearoa that hold memories of her ancestors' arrivals and settlement, Curtis finds her ancestors and their journeys — her presence and their presence — coinciding, "because time and place are one and the same."[155]

The seeing-stone is a lens to look across layers of time-space, open to seeing all that is held there — tensions, written-over and memory-blurred histories alike:

> on the shore I sweep my feet for a hagstone to cast a vision
> to find a doorway in the rock, in the earth, in time
> to cast a moment of an ancestor's eye
> …
> every moment and moment and moment
> my ancestor's eye is a lens over my own
> …
> and we fade out the versions that are blurred
> or ugly
> until the light is clear until the sea is clear until the conscience is clear
> the hagstone opens the gates to the unclear[156]

153 Curtis, "Folding Time."
154 Curtis, 49.
155 Makyla Curtis, conversation with the author, December 5, 2023.
156 Makyla Curtis, "eye of the matuku moana," in *Apertures* (self-pub., 2021).

English nature writer Robert MacFarlane also discusses the metaphorical potential of hagstones, noting that "in folklore across Europe, to look through such a stone is to see into the future, the past or the afterlife."[157] The metaphor these stones offer has become important in framing this project's practice-elements, both through their storying as lenses that allow seeing across planes and times, and as physical objects used for loom weights to provide necessary tension for weaving. They connect to the 'stone' layer of meaning in 'whatuora,' another tool for seeing and envisioning with. Gathering and preparing each stone as a loom weight guides the threads for weaving and anchors me and the weaving in place. Embodied within the weights, the extended seeing-stone metaphor allows me to fold all of my experiences of ancestral time into one blended mode of making. Through the weights themselves, I acknowledge the often heavy work of unlearning and re-remembering that comes with engaging the many-layered stories of, at times, fraught family histories in the settler-colonial context of Aotearoa.

Returning to and becoming more in tune with experiencing time as seasons and cycles, as spiralling wā, as folding and unfolding, has made sense of the connections between the strands of practice that the research navigates. It also offers a counter to the "settler amnesia" that Turner describes, and creates potential to connect more closely with the whakapapa/ancestral connections that guide the practice.

Whiro, November 2022

The water keeps rising with the tide, higher than usual. Up over the oioi and into the garden, lapping at the edges of the harakeke roots. For just an hour or two, a small pool forms at the edges of the grass and summit of our concrete path.

Through the window, I watch the sinuous shape of a fat tuna, slippery eel winding through the reeds. I've never seen one here, where the salt mingles with the sweetwater. I naively start thinking of contingency plans, with titles like "How to Rescue a Stranded Eel," for when the tide begins to fall. Shows what I know. The tuna belongs here on the river's edge. The tuna knows the way home.

As the rain stops, I finish catching the last few strands in a row of whatu-aho-rua, look back out the window. The river is calm and low again, but every now and then a ripple breaks the surface, between water and air.

157 Robert Macfarlane, "Should this Tree Have the Same Rights as You?" *The Guardian*, November 2, 2019, www.theguardian.com/books/2019/nov/02/trees-have-rights-too-robert-macfarlane-on-the-new-laws-of-nature. Macfarlane also describes the function of a hagstone in his and Stanley Donwood's 2019 book, *Ness:* "the hagstone is an optic through which one can see nature come alive in its own right, with its own powers."

LABOUR OF BODY, LABOUR OF LOVE

The time-rhythms of making by hand are often referred to in terms of *labour* or *difficulty* — how many hours did that piece take to complete? How many late nights and muscle aches? This focus on 'labour' is frequently framed through colonial-capitalist systems attached to efficiency and profit.[158] There is a somewhat arbitrary line drawn between the 'handmade' and the 'machine manufactured,' founded on the tactile notion of the hand's involvement in crafting, and the perceived capital value of something crafted 'laboriously' without apparent 'technological' support. However, as Shetland-based poet and researcher Siún Carden (County Down) notes,

> the symbolic binary between 'craft,' associated with the hand and the home, and 'manufacture,' with its machines and factory production, is of course not an accurate reflection of the complex and varied ways that things get made … The hand that does the work may be fetishized as part of a brand built on the valorisation of craft skill, or rendered invisible within commodity chains that draw as little consumer and regulatory attention as possible to the circumstances of production.[159]

Nostalgic notions of 'bygone' eras are tied up in this binary hierarchising of labour. British anthropologist Tim Ingold argues that "a time traveller hoping to discover slowness and simplicity in the labour of bygone ages" would likely find working conditions unrelentingly hard compared to contemporary comforts.[160] Yet modern understandings of complexity and speed would also be inapplicable, where "working fast meant seizing the moment rather than running against the clock, and where complexity lay in the depth and subtlety of attention and response rather than in the superabundance of information and the principles of its integration."[161] In this way, making also "generates motivation and care," to "improve skills, to learn new forms, to actively seek out new systems and techniques,"[162] and to tend to materials, methods, and the recipient/s of the crafted object.

Handcrafting can thus be viewed as a labour of love and commitment, particularly (for this project) in the context of shared spaces between a grandchild and grandparent. In the exhibition catalogue for Te Tuhi's 2003 exhibition *Handycrafts: at home with textiles* (which gathered 22 artists working across very different craft mediums, but whose chosen artworks nonetheless shared a 'textiles sensibility') curator Rose Griffin emphasises "the significance of mothers and grandmothers — the craft skills

158 An in-depth discussion of the deeply entwined histories of craft/labour, capitalism, and the colonial project is outside the scope of this exegesis, but nonetheless is important to acknowledge. See, for example, Silvia Federici, *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*, 2nd ed. (London: Penguin, 2021); Sofi Thanhauser, *Worn: A People's History of Clothing* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2022); Chris Gibson, "Material Inheritances: How Place, Materiality, and Labour Process Underpin the Path-Dependent Evolution of Contemporary Craft Production," *Economic Geography* 92, no. 1 (2016), 61-86, https://doi.org/10.1080/00130095.2015.1092211.

159 Siún Carden, "Authenticity and Place-Based Knitwear: Fair Isle and Aran Knitting in Shetland and the West of Ireland," *Textile: Cloth and Culture* (2022): 11, https://doi.org/10.1080/14759756.2022.2109896.

160 Tim Ingold, afterword to *The Material Culture of Basketry: Practice, Skill and Embodied Knowledge*, ed. Stephanie Bunn and Victoria Mitchell (London: Bloomsbury, 2020), 269.

161 Ingold, The Material Culture of Basketry, 269.

162 Stephanie Bunn, introduction to *The Material Culture of Basketry: Practice, Skill and Embodied Knowledge*, ed. Stephanie Bunn and Victoria Mitchell (London: Bloomsbury, 2020), 8.

they practiced and the things they made… This is content deeply engrained in whanau, culture and social history."[163] Engrained contexts of love and care, carried through material craft, are fundamental to the research, and to how I practice.

The physical enmeshment of this labour can be best described through the practice of master-weaver Roka Huruhia Ngarimu-Cameron (Te Whānau-ā-Apanui, Te Arawa, Whakatōhea, Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ireland), who after making her first parawai/kaitaka, wrote of her experience reaching a state of "optimum satisfaction, entire satisfaction," what she calls "intensive weaving." She says, "I could feel the fibres working with me and talking to me as I worked hour after hour repeating the process over and over again."[164] As I weave, I feel myself sinking into that "optimum satisfaction" of making, the pure joy felt in the rhythms of gathering and processing fibre, and finding blends in materials and techniques that I feel singing back and forwards across time. This experience reveals itself to me during 'conversational making' — making in shared spaces, in studio, at home, with family, in wānanga. Working together simultaneously, even passing work back and forth in parallel with family, peers, place, has also been a means of balancing labour.

Making in company, with the conversations that flow and unfold while weaving together, helps the labour of making feel less taxing. My mother has been the caretaker of my Grandma Faith's materials — her threads, buttons, and fabrics — passing them on to me when needed, and holding space for me to both make and reset. My partner Liam builds me the frames of each loom, and braids harakeke into taura. My dad and brothers help me hāro tī kouka for cordage and carry stones and heavy driftwood back from the beach to create artworks. My cousins, wider whanaunga, and friends weave with me, send me muka, grow linen-flax for fibre, and sustain my tool-making. At the same time, I share learning with them, teach in return, or help with their own making. Their support quite literally lightens the load, and allows me to dedicate more time to the making.

Experiencing hand-making processes making — weaving, whatu, twining, knitting — as rhythms within continuous, spiralling time has become natural in this project. I have found myself drawn to the slowness of making: spinning, splicing, miro, twining by hand rather than using a spinning wheel for aid, for example. Slow making rhythms are grounding, and encourage a way into experiencing more clearly the simultaneity of *nowness,* futurepresentpast. It has become natural to feel that a glance upwards at *just* the right moment might lend a glimpse across spiralling time-space, where another set of hands engaged in making becomes visible, a hundred years across time: the spiral repeating, circling back upon itself, evolving, never still.

163 Rose Griffin, *Handycrafts: At Home with Textiles* [exhibition catalogue] (Auckland: Te Tuhi, 2003), 4.

164 Roka Ngarimu-Cameron, *Tōku Haerenga: A Transformation of Māori Cloaks* (Saarbrücken: Lap Lambert Academic Publishing, 2010), 66.

we spin a yarn in the quiet between us

for my grandmothers

we spin a yarn in the quiet between us
the gaps
        between words
                between bobbins clacking
        between pinned strands of lace
mirroring distances measured by roads, by rivers,
by generations, by the sediment of
years built on years built on years apart, but always
that thread we spin holds strong, grows
ply by ply as we add new fibre

you once wrote there is always room for more,
“the memories of the old often sustain the present”
and so I weave in memory fragments
twine in patched and mended strands found buried
                in your embroidery baskets
beneath all the plans and dreams you had drawn
                and prepared for us
to carry on the conversation passed
from your hands to mine
the thread stretches
        past the sweeping salt-sweet river tides
                past the stars we release you to
this is just another silence in the betweenspaces
before the bobbinclacks and words and pinned lace resumes

we spin a yarn in the quiet between us
thread it
        through a tornado’s eye
                needle spiralling to carry back our frayed stories
    from across an ocean and an ocean
stitching across distances torn and mended
over generations, a patchwork of
years layered on years layered on years of remembering

that thread we spin holds strong, draws
together, dlúthaigh, into a new fabric
    rewoven from the old
        as you held a strand aside for me to knit with
and so I gather in your threads
stitch buttonholes to hold it all together
a memory-strand to keep us warm



CHAPTER 6:

TŪPUNA TEACHINGS

"There is nothing
That has not been before
The new repeats the old […]
We carry history in our genes
Like messages in bottles.

J. C. Sturm, *History Lesson*

Tuia, tuia, tui tui a —
there are needles enough
shuttling backwards and forth
making the pattern
that is also the teacher

Keri Hulme, *Fishing the Olearia Tree*

PREVIOUS IMAGE: Image 106. My first visit to see Te Paea's kahu huruhuru at Puke Ariki, 2019.

I first learnt about the two kākahu in my family, made by our tupuna Te Paea Hinerangi, by chance. In late 2019, I excitedly shared with my Dad that I had begun learning muka hāro for the first time with Whaea Rose Greaves. In response he mentioned, as if only in passing, the "korowai at the museum — I'll ask your nana about them." Three weeks later, I made the familiar drive to Taranaki to visit Puke Ariki, and to see the kākahu for the first time.

Nana's father donated the two kahu huruhuru to the museum in 1965. Online, Puke Ariki lists the maker as "Unknown Manufacturer." The acquisition records, however, reveal my great-grandfather's account of his own father being given these by Te Paea, grandmother to grandson. The record is perfunctory, but detailed in material description:

> Muka kaupapa worked in horizontal rows of whatu-aho-rua. Aho spaced at eight mm intervals. Five whenu to every 10 mm. Single feathers attached every five whenu — every third row. Single strand of red wool along edges. Pheasant and domestic duck feathers cover front kaupapa.

There are still living memories in my family of at least one of the kākahu being worn at home, though the feathers are too delicate now to lift them without care. Te Paea passed away in 1911, and although the date of their making is unrecorded, each kākahu is well over 100 years old. When I arrived at Puke Ariki on that first visit, the kahu huruhuru were unwrapped from their protective tissue-paper, and I traced the fine aho in awe, feeling my body following lines laid down by my tupuna.

This chapter discusses how the PhD project engages with similar experiences of tūpuna learnings and intergenerational knowledge transfer: knowledge passed down directly, in patterns and textile memory, and embodied knowledge, resurfacing over generations.

FOLLOWING TŪPUNA TEACHINGS: SHARED LANGUAGES OF CRAFT

The material memory of textiles passed down from one generation to another connect us intimately to our families and communities. As British scholar Jessica Hemmings states, "textiles remember ... Moments of joy and tragedy are recorded onto the surface and embedded in the structure of the cloth."[165] These bonds are strengthened through the active transmission of skills, such as weaving, from grandparent or parent to child.[166] (Re)learning skills where that knowledge was

165 Hemmings, The Textile Reader, 57.

166 Kirsty Robertson and Lisa Vinebaum, "Crafting Community," *Textile: Cloth and Culture* 14, no. 1 (2016): 7, https://10.1080/14759756.2016.1084794.



Image 107. Portrait of my tupuna Te Paea Hinerangi, wearing a fine korowai. Gottfried Lindauer, *Te Paea Hinerangi (Guide Sophia)*,1896. Oil on canvas, 685 x 575 mm (canvas). Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of Mr H E Partridge, 1915.

lost enables another kind of remembering, one transmitted through intuition and learning across generations, providing, as Hinekura Smith suggests, a vision towards the future where those skills are once again held firm.

The material methods and techniques that the research utilises build upon the craft skills taught to me as a child by my nana, grandma, and mother, by (re)connecting to earlier skills from my lines of tūpuna wāhine. They include ancestral medicinal plant practices, such as rongoā, that connect textiles to place through methods of dyeing and fibre-making with healing plants, such as muka. These material methods provide a way of working with tūpuna and embodying the whatuora concept: I become their living, seeing eyes. As Burgess, Cormack, and Reid remind us, "through whakapapa, we are in relation with past and future generations all the time. We are at once tūpuna and mokopuna. Our bodies, places of intergenerational dialogue."[167] In this project, making across generational distances also occurs through tuakana–teina[168] methods of knowledge exchange, where reciprocity is key: making with and in connection to my siblings, cousins, parents, wider whanaunga, and friends.

Framing my practice within what I have learnt from my grandmothers, I look to the many artists whose practices follow from *their* grandmothers. For some makers, it is a way of honouring their close relationships, and for others, a way to reconnect to a relationship lost. These artists' practices include weavers whose families firmly hold their legacies of weaving knowledge, and have passed them down many generations to their daughters and granddaughters in turn — the Te Kanawa and Hetet families, for example. Contemporary artists, too, innovate from their grandmothers' teachings. Ani O'Neill (Ngati Makea, Ngati Te Tika, Ireland) crafts intricate crochet, stitched, and woven pieces inspired by her grandmother's Cook Islands material and ceremonial culture.[169] Describing these textile artworks as "paintings," O'Neill affirms the importance of grandmotherly knowledge and community-based methods of making. 'Uhila Moe Langi Nai (Tonga) creates contemporary forms of the ngatu (barkcloth) and kupesi (embroidered stencil) practices that she learned through listening to and observing her Nena at home in Tonga. Influenced by finding her Nena's kupesi collection after she passed away, Nai's kupesi designs re-create and re-construct stories, histories, and ancestral knowledge that merge across Tonga and Aotearoa.[170] Raukura Turei (Ngāi Tai ki Tamaki [Tainui], Ngā Rauru Kitahi) gathers the whenua materials for her large-scale paintings from places that connect her to her Kuia, who passed before Turei was born.[171] Her whenua-paintings utilise a pattern-language of embodied mark-making that honour her Kuia, working through grief towards healing.

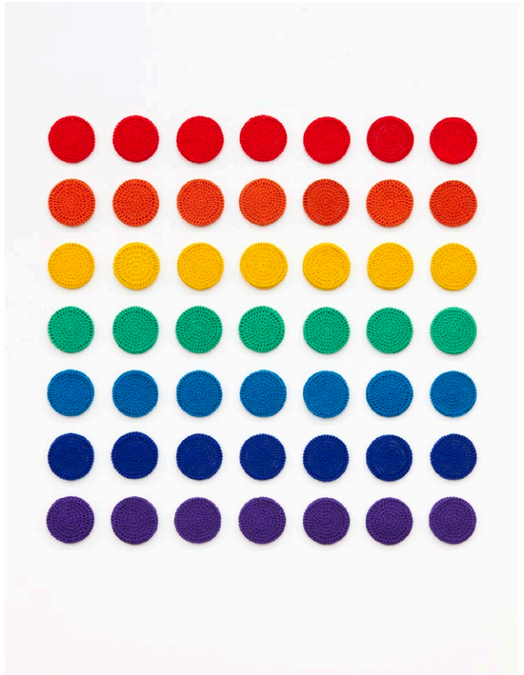
167 Burgess, Cormack, and Reid, "Calling Forth Our Pasts," 61.

168 In this context, referring to older sibling/younger sibling/cousin or tutor/apprentice learning relationships. See Mei Winitana, "Remembering the Deeds of Maui," *Mai Journal* 1, no. 1 (2012): 29–37.

169 Te Whare Hēra, "Ani O'Neill," accessed March 13, 2024, https://www.tewharehera.ac.nz/artists/ani-oneill.

170 'Uhila Nai, "Family Memories: Capturing Stories From Different Time-lines Within the Tongan Traditional Crafts of Ngatu (Decorated Barkcloth) Making and Kupesi (Embroidered Stencil) Design," (master's thesis, AUT University, 2020) https://hdl.handle.net/10292/13706

171 Raukura Turei, "Texture of Practice: Raukura Turei," *The Vessel*, May 2022, https://vessel-magazine.no/issues/3/embodiedknowledge/texture-of-practice-raukura-turei.





TOP LEFT: Image 108..
Ani O'Neill, *There's No Place Like Home*, 1998.
Acrylic and wool on steel rings, 49 individual panels.
Photo: Starkwhite Gallery

ABOVE: Image 109..
'Uhila Nai, *Fakatouanga I, Feta'aki*, 2023.
screen printed ink, brown charcoal on tapa,
49 x 68 cm. Image courtesy of 'Uhila Nai

TOP RIGHT: Image 110..
Areez Katki, *Lesson 25*, 2020. Embroidery on gifted vintage muslin handkerchief, 420mm x 420mm [frame].
Photo: Tim Melville Gallery

RIGHT: Image 111..
Raukura Turei, *Whatipu (onepu) II*, 2021.
Oil and onepu (black manganite sand) on linen,
46 x 35.5 x 2.5cm. Photo: Pim Van Nunen,
courtesy of Raukura Turei

One particularly moving story of 'grandmotherly learning' that has influenced this research comes from Areez Katki (Parsi), whose intricately embroidered artworks use techniques handed down through his maternal lines. Katki shares how his grandmother Thrity first taught him to knit, when Katki was seven. As she cast on a new row as a means of instruction, Thrity told Katki that what she found "so lovely about knitting" is how "we make things, they come apart and then we fix them — by tracing steps that lead back to those original lines."[172] Much like fixing a piece of knitting, darning a weaving, or repairing a net, this project works towards mending through retracing original, embodied lines of knowledge and memory, (re)connecting those threads that have come apart.

TŪPUNA MEMORIES, EMBODIED KNOWING

For every tradition held in our ancestral lines, there is also knowledge that has not been passed down directly; stories and skills whose transmission had been interrupted. Together, these storied craft experiences carry through into an embodied knowing that has guided me throughout this project.

My mother tells me that her grandmother (Faith's mother, Hattie) was known as a healer, particularly with plants — but the story ends there. I can't help but wonder if Hattie's knowledge was carried over to Saskatchewan by her own Irish grandparents. And yet, even interrupted, the thread carries through: my mother works in healing, and I am drawn to work with plants that provide rongoā and medicine. On Nana Maire's side, Te Paea Hinerangi's kahu huruhuru are our only physical examples of customary Māori fibre-practice still known to my immediate family. I first learnt to work with harakeke at primary school, not home, where we were taught basic raranga forms: kono, ika, putiputi — and most importantly, early tikanga kohikohi. Learning hāro muka and whatu came later still, and yet the movement and action of finger-twining felt as natural as any of those skills I had learnt early on from my grandmothers, held over time as an utterly embodied knowledge.

My friend and art collaborator, moving image artist Emily Parr and I have described our shared journey of learning to whatu as being in conversation not only with each other, our materials, and our ancestral homes, but also with our tūpuna wāhine in Te Whare Pora.[173] We meet them there in the futurepresentpast, connected through spiralling time by the memories surfacing in our twined threads. In our 2020 conversational moving-image artwork, *Whatuora*, I reflect that:

> Working with threads, like this, there feels like... similar to muscle memory but deeper, my fingers seem to know how the fibres should move and twist and knot even when I've never done this mahi before. And it's so

172 Areez Katki, "Thrity," The Wool Lover, accessed March 26, 2024, https://thewoollover.nz/thrity-by-areez-katki.html.

173 Arielle Walker and Emily Parr, "Whatuora," *Speaking Surfaces* [exhibition catalogue] (Auckland: St Paul St Gallery, 2020).







TOP: Image 112. Still from Arielle Walker and Emily Parr, *whatuora*, 2020. Cotton & wool threads; haerenga; conversation/audio recording; HD video, 12 minutes

BELOW: Image 113. Donna Campbell, *Te Whatukura ki Oraurangi /Hineteiwaiwa*, 2018 (detail). Modelled by Nadia Jones. Image 114. Donna Campbell, *Hinetitama*, 2019 (installation detail). Ramp Gallery, Hamilton, 2019. Images courtesy of Donna Campbell

> humbling, as soon as my brain or ego get in the way I lose it again, because it isn't just me working. It feels like lines of tūpuna, generational memory working through me, histories of weaving all layered up in now.[174]

I am not alone in this experience. Donna Campbell suggests that when "practicing the cultural legacies embodied through the weaving arts we are reminded of collective memory embedded in our bodies, minds and spirits."[175] Campbell emphasises that "tūpuna memories are embodied within the muscles of our bodies," and that through engaging in their practices we learn to feel and accept this knowledge.[176] Leonie Pihama describes Campbell's practices of whatu and raranga as "reciprocal transmission of the embodied knowledge that comes to be through the creative process itself"[177] — knowledge that is passed on and between, like the back-and-forth sharing of tukutuku, through the kupenga. As Pihama notes:

> Such knowledge transmission requires a belief in the sacred relationship between us as tangata and all living things. It requires us to remember that our atua have gifted to this world all that we require to create those things that will support our wellbeing.[178]

Remembering that connection, that relationship, is paramount to being open to hearing or engaging with generational, ancestral memories. As I share in *Whatuora*, the moment I shut off from that sense of interconnection and interrelation into an individual mindset — *that* is when my hands fumble and the connection is interrupted. At any one of the Māori-led, Māori-centred wānanga that I have had the privilege to be part of during this doctoral research, conversations often include an acknowledgement or realisation that "Oh, my kuia are totally speaking to me right now." It feels natural in these spaces to share with others the sensed experience of being 'guided' by our tūpuna.

This embodied knowledge manifests even when 'direct' lines of knowledge have been interrupted. Scholar Hirini Moko Mead (Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Tuwharetoa, Tūhourangi) describes the concept of creative talent, pūmanawa, as something that is continued through whakapapa, where "the source of a person's pūmanawa is a gift handed down from the family line … to be respected and treasured."[179] Taranaki artist Bonita Bigham (Te Atiawa, Ngāruahine) responds to Mead's description by sharing her own whānau experience of the pūmanawa still manifesting, despite interruption, within future generations:

> disruption to traditional knowledge bases within our whānau has meant that the matauranga we now collectively possess has largely come from external learning situations and people. While we may have been introduced to various artforms through whānau members, the knowledge we now have

174 Transcription from Arielle Walker and Emily Parr, *whatuora*, 2020, multimedia installation, St Paul St Gallery, Auckland.

175 Campbell, "Ngā Kura a Hineteiwaiwa," 36.

176 Campbell, 153.

177 Leonie Pihama, "Reclamation and Regeneration," in *Donna Campbell, Kura Embodied Wāhine* [exhibition document] (Hamilton: Ramp Gallery, 2019).

178 Pihama, "Reclamation and Regeneration."

179 Hirini Moko Mead, *Tikanga Maori: Living by Maori Values*, rev. ed. (Wellington: Huia Publishers, 2016).

> was not transmitted or embedded from within the whānau, therefore the true pūmanawa has been interrupted but has still somehow managed to manifest itself.[180]

As this research demonstrates, (re)learning knowledge once held and continued through ancestral lines is an ongoing process (and it is a *re*learning, something learnt again, not gaining new knowledge but manifesting embodied old knowledge in new ways). At times, it requires 'external learning situations,' people, books, or other means to reconnect and regain once-known techniques, material knowledges, stories, or craft forms. But always, always, that inherent knowing carries through beneath the surface, waiting to emerge.

"THE PATTERN THAT IS ALSO THE TEACHER"

The project's making approach draws most directly from the embodied textile knowledge I describe earlier in the exegesis. However, the research also considers and grapples with 'pattern-reading,' as the taonga I learn from communicate how they were made and the stories they hold in the intricacies of their patterned forms. By extension, I explore modes of pattern-sharing and pattern-writing, and their potential as methods to continue holding and transmitting knowledge.

Our taonga hold and communicate knowledge in many-layered ways. My practice focuses on two in particular: how textile techniques can be learnt through observing their patterning, and how these intricate patterns engage metaphors that hold ancestral knowledge, sharing the stories in the fibres with those who can read them.[181] Addressing both points in his essential 1949 collection of texts *The Coming of the Māori*, Te Rangihīroa observes that through the traditions and innovations of their making, "the garments themselves tell us what did occur, but to understand them, we must learn their language through the minute details of technique."[182] Kahutoi Te Kanawa similarly describes how woven patterns can be "metaphoric symbols of evolution, elements, land formations, food and historical struggles," suggesting that patterns communicated in raranga "challenge human consciousness, identity, practices, and cross cultural significance of place and time, embedded in Māori creation."[183]

Taonga held in museum collections hold making knowledge often lost to other means of transmission, waiting to be relearnt by those who have the means to understand the stories they share. Curator Hanahiva Rose (Te Ātiawa, Ngāi Tahu, Ngāti Toa Rangatira, Ra'iātea, Huahine) suggests that these collections

180 Bonita Bigham, "Haehae and the Art of Reconciliation: Cutting Through History to Generations of Artistic Expression" (master's thesis, Massey University, 2018), 2, http://hdl.handle.net/10179/15861.

181 Mead, *Te Whatu Tāniko,* 2019; Hokimate Harwood, "Nga Tohu o Nga Kairaranga: The Signs of the Weavers," *Memory Connection* 1, no. 1 (2011): 436–450; Schoeser, *Textiles,* 23.

182 Te Rangihīroa, *The Coming of the Maori*, 2nd ed. (Christchurch: Whitcoulls, 1987), 177.

183 Kahutoi Te Kanawa, "Toi Maramatanga" (master's thesis, Auckland University of Technology, 2009), 22, https://hdl.handle.net/10292/883.

are "assemblies of relationships, where every connection made carries with it an initial rupture."[184] These ruptures are visible in the removal of taonga from their primary places of relation, as well as in the disruption of knowledge transmission within their home communities, symbolised by their removal. As Quandamooka curator and weaver Freja Carmichael describes, "for several generations, weaving practices were interrupted. Over a decade ago, ways of knowing and physically engaging with weaving traditions were through Ancestral material in museum collections."[185] Taranaki artist Matthew McIntyre-Wilson (Taranaki, Nga Māhanga, Titahi) speaks to this legacy of rupture and disconnection, sharing how important studying hīnaki and other taonga in museum collections has been to his practice:

> One of the things that always stood out was the amount of taonga and objects labelled as "maker unknown." … They have been physically disconnected from people, and at the time, the identity of the skilled makers who created them was never collected. I knew I wanted to recreate hīnaki and bring focus back to these makers, but I didn't know anyone who was teaching [these skills] at the time. This meant I had to teach myself, and I did this by studying those old ones left in museums. To this day, "maker unknown" remains the most important maker in my research.[186]

Like Carmichael and McIntyre-Wilson, I have looked to museum and archival sources to grow my knowledge of ancestral textile techniques, with a particular focus on those textiles that combine different cultural methods and materials — including my own tūpuna taonga.

A particularly beautiful example of how textile taonga can teach us directly through their patterning is the practice-led research of Te Rā Ringa Raupā.[187] Formed in 2018, the rōpū have been working collectively to recreate the only known woven Māori sail, Te Rā, which has been kept in the British Museum collections for more than 200 years. Speaking about the recent return visit of Te Rā to her home shores of Aotearoa in 2023,[188] Maureen Lander describes how Te Rā communicated her story to the kairaranga from their very first meeting in 2010.[189] Over return visits, Te Rā began to share with Te Rā Ringa Raupā how she was made through the patterns of her weave. As the conservators' reinforcements at the back of the sail were carefully removed and more details became visible, Te Rā offered the knowledge of how to learn these lost skills once again.

184 Hanahiva Rose, "Ka Hao Te Rangatahi: On the Nets of Matthew McIntyre Wilson," *Pantograph Punch*, April 24, 2019, https://www.pantograph-punch.com/posts/matthew-mcintyre-wilson.

185 Freja Carmichael, "Weaving Memory, Living Embodiment." *Artlink* 40, no. 2 (2020): 45.

186 Matthew McIntyre Wilson, interviewed by Isaac Te Awa, "Mahi ki te Awa Whanganui: Revival on the Whanganui River," *The Vessel*, November 2021, https://vessel-magazine.no/issues/1/archives/matthew-mcintyre-wilson.

187 The core members of Te Rā Ringa Raupa, mentored by Maureen Lander, currently include: Mandy Sunlight (Tangata Tauiwi), Ruth Port (Te Rarawa Kaiwhare, Te Aupōuri), Rouati Waata (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Kahu, Te Rarawa, Ngāti Whātua, Te Aupōuri), Tessa Harris (Tai ki Tāmaki, Te Waiohua, Tainui, Ngāpuhi), Puhirere Waata (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Kahu, Te Aupōuri, Ngāti Kahungunu).

188 Orchestrated through the efforts of research group 'Whakaarahia anō te rā kaihau! – Raise up again the billowing sail!' led by Rānui Ngārimu (Ngāi Tahu, Ngāti Mutungā), Donna Campbell, and Catherine Smith with the support of British Museum Oceania Curator Julie Adams.

189 The weavers of Te Rā Ringa Raupā speak of Te Rā as a kuia — I have carried their language choices through to this exegesis.







ABOVE:
Image 115. Hīnaki by Matthew McIntyre Wilson. Image courtesy of Matthew McIntyre Wilson and Sarjeant Gallery

RIGHT:
Image 116.1. Makers unknown, *Te Rā [the sail]* c. 1770–1800. Harakeke, kererū, kāhu and kākā feathers, dog skin. On loan from the Trustees of the British Museum. Photo: Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū

Image 116.2 Detail image of makers unknown, *Te Rā [the sail]* c. 1770–1800. Harakeke, kererū, kāhu and kākā feathers, dog skin. On loan from the Trustees of the British Museum. Photo: Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū

Images courtesy of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū

The research around Te Rā responds to Te Rangihīroa's 1922 concern that Te Rā be recreated and her matauranga be shared:

> Close-up photographs of the sail should be obtained from the British Museum and replicas plaited for our own museums. This could be done quite easily. Sails have been so long out of date that the possibility of obtaining such a copy of an authentic old-time sail should not be neglected.[190]

Te Rangihīroa's wero resonates to this day — not only for the tauira of Te Rā, but all of our taonga and what they are able to teach us, should we be ready to listen.

But what of modes of pattern-sharing, and knowledge transfer that extend outside of our taonga, our wānanga, and other ways of learning-in-person? While an ancient practice, the advent of pattern-writing — using notated, diagrammatic or written patterns to transmit knowledge — is one I find only recent examples of in my own ancestral lines. Siún Carden notes that, in Shetland, when "today's knitters" discuss earlier generations' knitting, "an absence of written patterns is often mentioned" and that hand-knitters "over 60 years of age in 2003 seem to have been taught to knit by maternal osmosis or by imitating their female relatives."[191] Shetland knitting, Carden suggests, can be seen as an oral rather than written tradition, with knowledge of patterns and technique passed down through the language of textiles. Te Kanawa describes a similar process in her learning of tāniko, where she was taught to envision and complete a tāniko pattern without "designing" it. Instead, each pattern is "thought out carefully in one's head, then the first line is woven to set the pattern. For me this was a lived experience that I had to recall and process my thoughts to visualise the pattern."[192] Likewise, the materially-crafted aspects of this research have primarily emerged utilising related modes of observation and 'envisioning.' I now recognise that these ways I have always learnt and made artwork are a means to literally embody a whatuora practice.

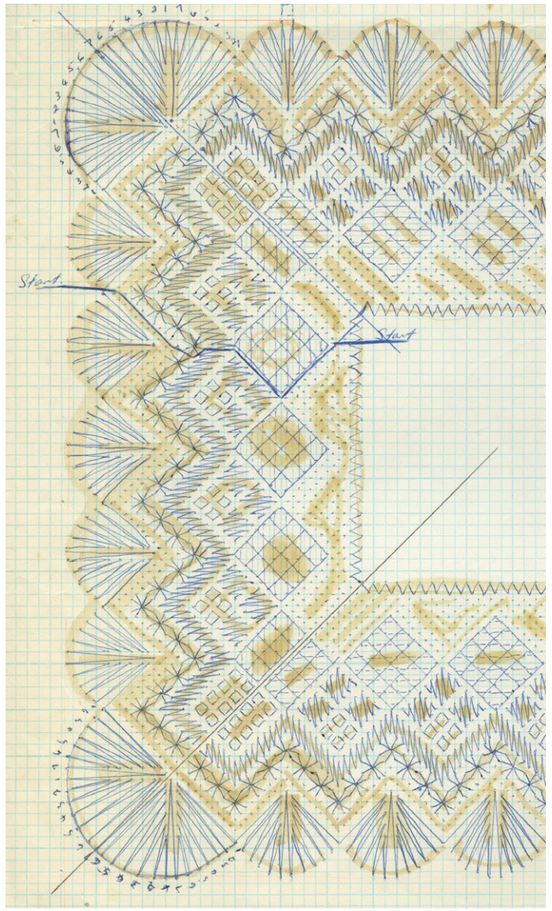
There have also been moments in the research where written or otherwise notated examples, such as Nana's annotations in a book of drawn-thread patterns or stitch guides for various knitted lace-works, have sparked an idea, or helped to make sense of a particularly complex stitch. I am inspired by how Te Rangihīroa's extensive, detailed diagrams and descriptions of fibre-making techniques, from netting to whatu, have enabled much of the knowledge he gathered to be reclaimed and restored — such as in Mathew McIntyre Wilson's mahi kupenga, for example. Other examples I have looked to include the ways graph paper is used to plan and share complex patterns in craft practices, such as colour or stitch changes in Fair Isle or Aran knitting, 'lifting plans' for setting up looms, or aho exchanges in tāniko.[193]

190 Te Rangihīroa, *The Coming of the Maori*, 361.

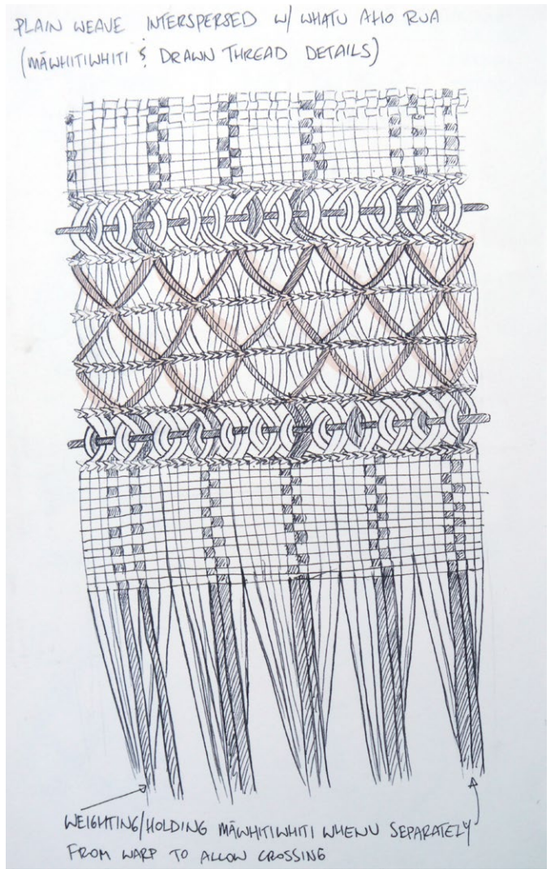
191 Siún Carden, "Patterns and Programs: Replication and Creativity in the Place-Based Knitting of Shetland and Ireland," *Textile: Cloth and Culture* 21, no. 4 (2023): 11, https://10.1080/14759756.2022.2149081.

192 Kahutoi Te Kanawa, "Toi Maramatanga," 33.

193 See Mead, *Te Whatu Tāniko*.







ABOVE: Image 117.
Detail of one of Nana's plans for a lace-pricking

TOP RIGHT: Image 118.
Ellen Lesperance, *How Does It Feel in Your Chicken Coop, Soldiers? Little Macho Cockrells Parading the Wire? Strutting in Your Dustbowl, Arid and Treeless, You Obey Orders but We Are Free!* (2018). Gouache and graphite on tea stained paper, wool sweater hand-knit by the artist. 55.8 x 75 cm. Exhibition view: Ellen Lesperance, *Dress Codes: Ellen Lesperance and Diane Simpson,* Frye Art Museum, Seattle (2020). Image courtesy of Ellen Lesperance. Photo: Jueqian Fang.

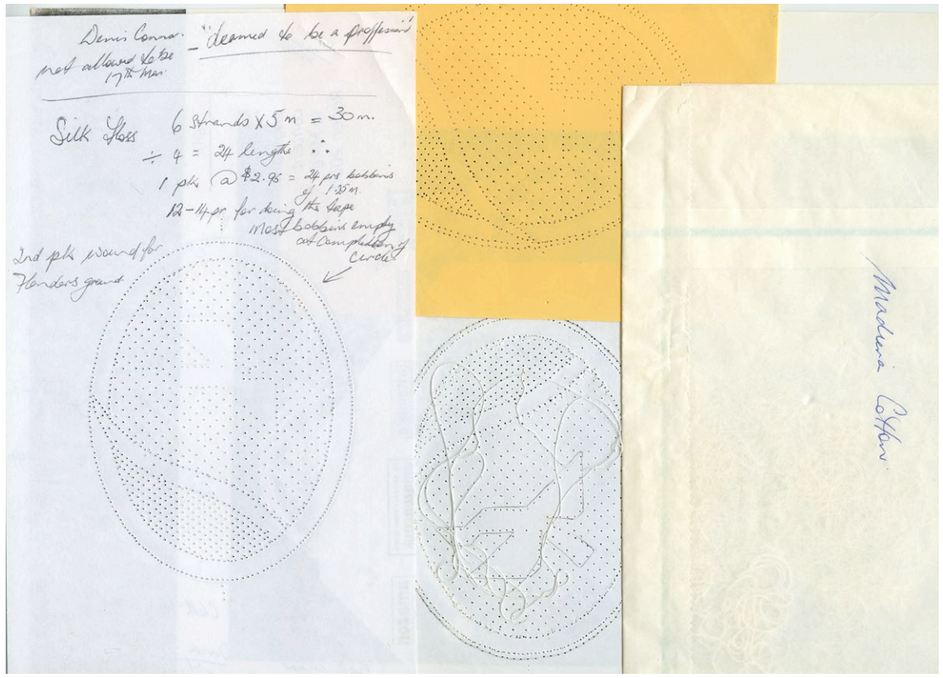
RIGHT: Image 119.
Arielle Walker, 2022. Sketch-plan of a whatu-woven tauira, incorporating whakapae and drawn-thread details

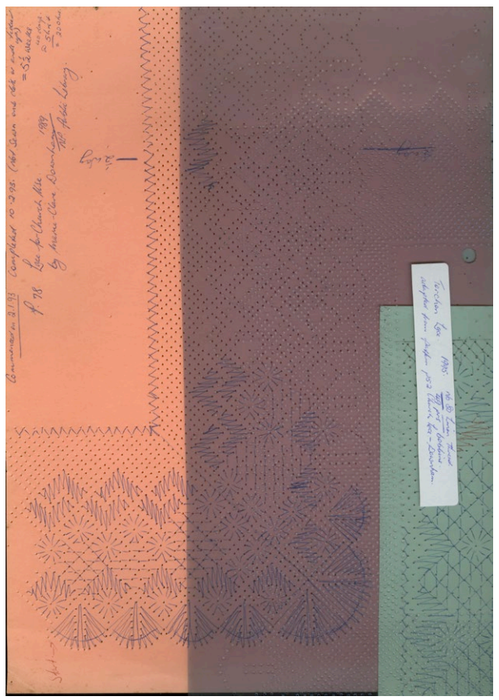
SAFEKEEPING: THE TWO SIDES TO THE KOROWAI

This research also questions how patterns may be transmitted safely through other media. 'Safely,' meaning that 'metaphor' can be used to protect any personal knowledge that I feel should not be shared more openly, while still allowing the possibility of story-interpretation and future fibre re-creation by generations to come. There are many artists exemplifying this approach in their own contemporary practices, including American artist Ellen Lesperance, who communicates patterned knit-stitches in her gouache paintings. Lesperance uses Symbolcraft as a shorthand that appears as an abstract image but, in fact, contains all of the information needed to recreate knitted jumpers for those familiar with pattern 'language': jumpers that document (from archival photographs) a history of hand-made garments worn by female activists in direct action protest movements.[194] I am interested for this project in what it might mean, for example, to reknit a jumper that held courage and conviction transmitted from the wearer and original knitter, as Lesperance does; discovering, in essence, whether the mauri of that original piece could carry through or grows anew in the newly crafted piece. Similarly, I explore the possibilities of 'reading' a photograph to transfer image to pattern, and then to object — something my Nana did and documented in process. I see resonances in these methods to the ways that taonga in museums have informed my making. My sketchbooks hold plans and test-potentials, beginning as sketched ideas and then written, painted, and stamped as symbols that act as a guide towards re-creating patterns in textile form. However, they still require a key, and the innate knowledge of how to read textiles, to be understood.

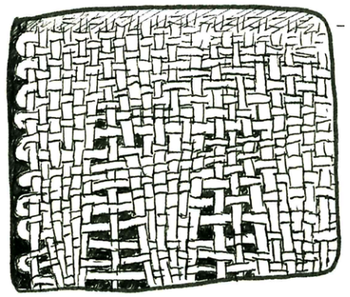
Recently, Emily sent me a piece of wall text accompanying Gottfried Lindauer's portrait of Te Paea at the Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki. Although I have gone there before to visit my tupuna a-kanohi, I had not seen this writing, a reminder that a korowai has two sides: one for public display, and one to keep hidden, close to the body, enfolded. For *Mending the Kupenga,* the reminder is twofold. Firstly, it relates to how I consider the nature of sharing/not sharing, and then to how the research might utilise patterns and metaphor to achieve this end. And secondly, it relates to the fact that the tauira I make in this research could be perceived as expressions of learning made bare. With both sides visible, they can be holders and teachers of the project's learnings and uncoverings — like Te Rā, offering up her story in the woven details behind the sail.

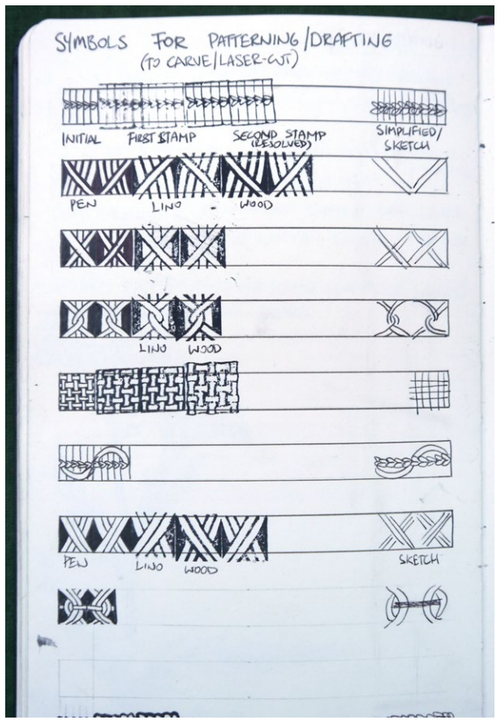
194 Including Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp in the UK, which engaged in non-violent direct action to protest a U.S. nuclear armament in Berkshire. See https://www.frieze.com/article/pattern-recognition and https://ocula.com/magazine/conversations/ellen-lesperance/ for more discussion.

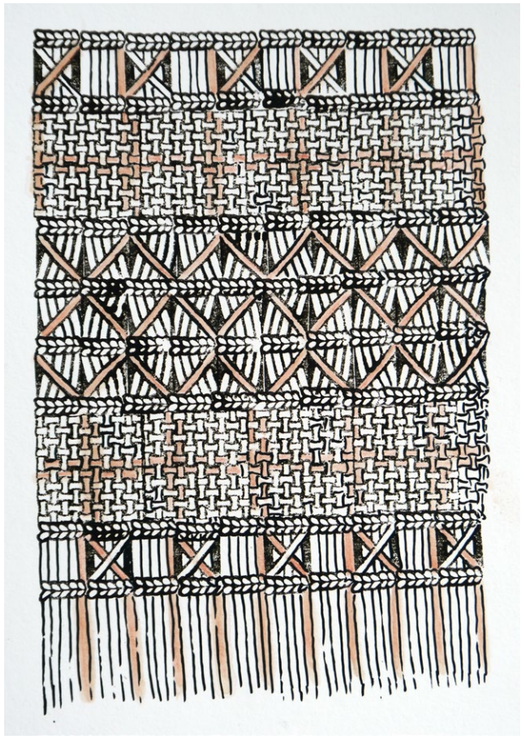


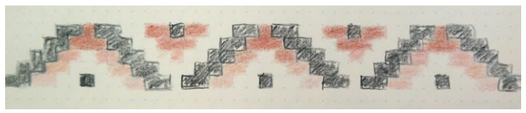








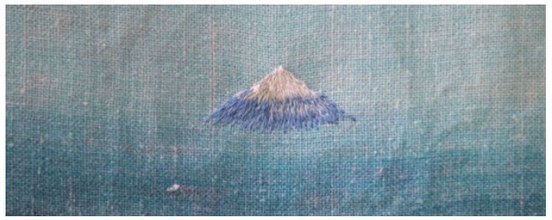






THIS PAGE: Images 120 to 122. Gatherings of Nana Maire's lace-prickings, notes, sketch-plans, progress details, references to lacemaking books, and other details

FACING PAGE: Images 123 to 128. Examples of some of the project's pattern-writing, planning, notations, includinglaser-cut lino and wooden pattern stamps, graph plans for tāniko colour arrangements, tauira idea sketches













ABOVE: Images 129 – 131.
Arielle Walker, *distance measured by a mountain's grief/ distance covered, stitch by tiny stitch*, 2020-ongoing (details).Hīkoi; 35mm film; dye-sublimated print (of Taranaki seen from Ruapehu on a clear day) onto hemp canvas; Taranaki hand-embroidered back into the image (in cotton thread); drawn-thread/cutwork in hemp thread following Nana's patterns; velvet embroidery fabric prepared by Nana. 600 x 1000mm.

TOP RIGHT: Image 132.
Detail of one of Nana's pulled-thread teacloths, 1984.
Photo: Maire Elliot

RIGHT: Images 133 and 134.
Arielle Walker, *distance unravelled and rewoven between / to hold a web of stories, a tapestry of pūtahi*, 2020 - ongoing (detail and installation images, *A Very Different World*, Te Tuhi 2021). Family stories/textile traditions passed down over generations; tanekaha bark ink; whatu aho rua in tanekaha bark-dyed wool yarn; drawn and pulled-threadwork, and embroidery in Grandma's cotton threads, Nana's cotton and silk threads, and cotton embroidery threads; Nana's embroidery samplers; gifted (handspun, handwoven) hemp. Currently 300x1500mm of worked fabric. Photos: Sam Hartnett

MAKING WITH NANA'S SAMPLERS

In March 2020 (two year before she passed), many of Nana Maire's makings-in-progress came into my care. There were unfinished pieces in every technique imaginable: cross-stitch; drawn-and-pulled-thread, crochet, bobbin, and needle lace; samplers embroidered in linen, cotton, and silk; patchwork quilt patterns; and drawn-threadwork edges for unfinished lace pieces. With these samplers, tests, and works-in-progress came piles and piles of bobbin-lace prickings, pattern books, and the patchworked-paper collections of textile-related newspaper cuttings, exhibition ephemera, stitch-guides, New Plymouth Embroidery Guild Minutes, and other scrapbook materials. There was an emotional weight to receiving these pieces, as I realised that Nana would likely never work with them again. But there was joy, too, in being able to spend time observing their variety, their intricacy and detail; to ensure they would be cared for and live on.

In 2019, I had made *distance measured by a mountains grief*, a digital dye-sublimated photographic print on woven hemp of Taranaki Maunga seen in the far distance from Ruapehu, which I hand-stitched back into the faded image. The hemp had a wide swath of empty space beneath the photographic image to emphasise the perceived distance between myself and my tūrangawaewae in Taranaki. During the first Covid-19 lockdown in 2020, I found myself picking up Nana's samplers. Calling on the drawn-and-pulled threads in these samplers, and memories of watching Nana work when I was younger, I started stitching into the empty-space-fabric of *distance measured by a mountains grief*, starting at the lower hem and moving slowly up towards the maunga. I used only the threads pulled from the fabric itself, and as the stitches began to shape patterned holes, I noticed how they formed motifs similar to the māwhitiwhiti patterns I had begun learning. I recalled the notion shared with me by artist and weaver Arapeta Ashton (Ngāti Mahuta, Ngāti Whanaunga, Ngāti Porou, Muriwhenua) during their own whatu wānanga in 2019,[195] where they affirmed that, in essence, Nana's lacemaking was another way of accessing a tūpuna 'weaving' practice, even though the techniques appeared very different.

Despite my geographical distance from Nana during the lockdown, it felt as though I was working with her through her samplers. Shifting title, the artwork became renamed *distance covered stitch by tiny stitch* (2019-2020). I began to see these distances not so much as points of separation, but as the spaces between where relationships can form — like the holes in lace or the spaces in a net, gaps that form an essential part of the pattern. The perceived distance — between myself and the maunga, the whenua, my Nana, our taha Māori, our tupuna — instead become potentials for connection. The earliest works and explorations in this doctoral research carried on from this making, in particular with the artwork *distance unravelled and rewoven between / to hold a web of stories, a tapestry of pūtahi* (2021–ongoing). This work uses stitches learnt from watching Nana work, and studying her samplers.

195 One of three wānanga in support of Ashton's 2019 exhibition *Māwhitiwhiti* at Te Tuhi: https://tetuhi.art/exhibition/arapeta-ashton-māwhitiwhiti/.





TOP: Image 135. A selection of Nana's unfinished works-in-progress, thread-tests, and stitch-samplers (photo taken 2020)

BELOW: Image 136. Re-homing Nana's pieces following her passing, April 2022

I aimed to begin an ongoing 'tapestry'[196] that holds space for the ancestral maunga, awa, and takutai moana of my whakapapa with the stories of my family's migrations and arrivals. It is an artwork that I put aside among my other makings, to return to later, and perhaps leave for future generations to pick up in another time-space.

When Nana passed away at the beginning of the second year of doctoral study (early April, 2022), the project held its breath. My focus pulled inwards, away from making. I spent my time re-homing her samplers into more protective cases — the care of which suddenly held new meaning, as all possibility of Nana's own hands completing these pieces was now gone.

Questions began to arise around this idea of 'finishing' or 'unfinishing.' Should I complete any of these pieces? What are the implications of them being left partially done? Much of my making has engaged with the idea of 'ongoing-ness' as a pause in the storytelling, where the storyteller/maker begins again where they left off, perhaps bringing new learnings or experiences to the weave, or perhaps leaving the piece in waiting, for someone new to pick up the strands.[197] Amanda Tachine writes about this as an act of care, to "leave one strand out" and allow space for future weavings to come.[198] Focusing on the process of making and learning, rather than a 'finished' outcome, has become a key method and material significance in this project. I have likewise found similarities and inherent differences between an artwork that employs 'ongoing making' as a conceptual and methodological strategy (and may therefore require pauses, time away from the making), and a crafted object that is now an impossibility for the original maker to complete.

I am still unravelling the implications as the now next generation: the person that may or may not finish the piece. However, I take heart in the words of Te Rā Ringa Raupā, who discuss working to recreate (not replicate) our taonga tuku iho and to learn from them ways to innovate again, into the future. Nana's taonga are held safe in their moment of pause and rest, whether that becomes permanent or not, whether my hands pick up and join her threads. I continue to learn from and care for them — and in the meantime, recreate and reweave from all that our tūpuna, near and far across the futurepresentpast, have shared with us.

196 The use of the term 'tapestry' here refers to the inspiration of my brief time working on the Vatnsdaela Tapestry, a collective work based on the Bayeux Tapestry, while on residency with the Icelandic Textile Centre in 2018. Though neither of these examples are technically traditional tapestries (being embroidered rather than woven) their use of fibre to convey a narrative over time led to their naming as such.

197 Walker, "On Returning to the Sea," 89.

198 Tachine, "Story Rug," 73.

rongoā (reprise)

harakeke

karakia to Papatūānuku, to Ranginui,
to Hineteiwaiwa, to all tūpuna,
give thanks for their gifts
ngā taonga whakarere iho

never take the mother or father or child of the plant
trim the edges of the blade and cut away the keel
return the remains to the whenua

first comes the plant, and the cut,
and the mussel shell scrape and slide together,
together, the learning

make a small slice in the flesh of the leaf
strip back the skin until the fibre is laid bare

take care of this plant body
as if it were your own body
miro the muka against your own skin
weave yourself back into place

steep the remnants in fire, ash and river water
and they will give you the last soft light of the setting sun



CHAPTER 7:

CEREMONY | MAKING SPACE

PREVIOUS IMAGE: Image 137. *rongoā (mending)* lifted by the winds of Tāwhirimātea, Taranaki

SMALL CEREMONIES, DEEP CONNECTIONS

Small ceremonies have been woven through my day-to-day life since before my conscious memory begins. As a child, I would thank plants as I gathered their flowers and leaves, and leave hand-made offerings "for the fairies," or for the earth and sea. My mother and I would speak small blessings together before meals (most often brief lines of gratefulness to earth and sky and sun for providing the food) and before sleep; at school we would open the day with an invocation, karakia and whakawhaungatanga, or a simple 'checking-in.' The shifting seasons were always acknowledged, in both distinct and small ways — lighting candles over solstice or gathering with my dad and brothers to watch stars rise in the Taranaki skies. Some of this embodied practice slipped away as I grew older, and as I have navigated this PhD project, I have mourned its loss. It is with a deeper intentionality that I have been returning to and reconsidering concepts of ceremony and making protocols in the relational spaces that my practice engages. This chapter explores those concepts of ceremony and making protocols, in relation to the project's modes of practice.

Ceremony is a medium towards connection, a strengthening of relationships. In *The Woven Universe*, Māori Marsden writes of the "powerful interlocking system" of relationality formed from engaging "spiritual properties" (including the concepts of tapu, ihi, wehi, hau, mauri, and wana)[199] in a social-cultural context, through ceremony. The importance of ritual and ceremonial aspects is implicit in Marsden's examples of these values in practice, such as when he describes the "strict laws of tapu" that governed customary processes required for planting kumara,[200] and when (re)connecting to our whenua and ourselves, as Ngāhuia Murphy describes in her 2013 book *Te Awa Atua*.[201] In *Braiding Sweetgrass*, Robin Wall-Kimmerer reminds us that "ceremony is a vehicle for belonging — to a family, to a people, and to the land."[202] She suggests, too, that the power of ceremony is in how it marries "the mundane to the sacred," opening a space where "the material and the spiritual mingle."[203] Ceremonies "transcend the boundaries of the individual and resonate beyond the human realm," focusing *attention* so that it becomes *intention*.[204] As Marsden emphasises, they stress "the importance and the necessity for concentrated effort to be applied to different activities."[205] There is enormous power in gathering together to acknowledge significant occasions through ceremony, as in the gatherings

199 Marsden describes these terms in the following ways. Tapu: "the sacred. It is a concomitant of mana, for a person of mana is ipso facto a tapu person"; ihi: "psychic force in contradistinction to spiritual power"; wehi: "the sense of awe or fear generated by the mysterious and numinal forces that emanate from a person of mana, tapu and ihi"; hau: "breath of spirit"; and mauri: "the life-principle." Marsden, *The Woven Universe,* 40-41.

200 Marsden, *The Woven Universe*, 41.

201 Ngāhuia Murphy, *Te Awa Atua: Menstruation in the Pre-Colonial Māori World* (Ngaruawahia: He Puna Manawa, 2013).

202 Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*, 37.

203 Kimmerer, 37-8.

204 Kimmerer, 249.

205 Marsden, *The Woven Universe*, 41.

for Puanga or Matariki.[206] As Shawn Wilson notes, "the purpose of any ceremony is to build strong relationships or bridge the distance between aspects of our cosmos and ourselves."[207] Even small ceremonies, moments where quiet, tender acts (a karakia recited, a gathered stone returned to the shore, a cup of tea shared, an offering left in thanks) turn attention into intention.[208] These ceremonies, moments of intention, allow us to form deep connections that bridge the distance between ourselves and the cosmos, all our human and more-than-human whanaunga, towards a reciprocal belonging.

RITUALS FOR THE SPACES BETWEEN

I see kupenga as a metaphor for the entanglement of relationships in relational space. A net is formed as much from the spaces between the knots as from the threads and knots themselves. This concept is engaged by Māori, Moana, and other Indigenous scholars, expanding from Albert Wendt's 1996 articulation of the Samoan concept of vā as "the space between," "betweenness," and the "Unity-that-is-all": a relational space that connects the individual to the communal.[209] Wilson connects this notion of vā to wider Indigenous worldviews, pointing to celestial cycles where "the constellations aren't just the stars themselves, it's the darkness in between the stars that make up those constellations … star stories are the stories about the space between stars."[210] Likewise, relationships are constellations. Entering with intention into any such space, where those relations are held in ceremony, requires the formation of protocol. Wilson describes this in a way that resonates with my own practice processes, understanding that:

> Whether it's out between the stars, or in the space between relationships, that concept of being in that space between, you have to be careful when you're there... What protocols are based on is, how do we behave ourselves when we are entering into that sacred space, when we're building a closer relationship with something.[211]

Taranaki knowledge holder Te Poihi Campbell (Tāngāhoe, Ngāti Ruanui, Ngā Rauru, Ngāruahine) describes how rituals performed to clear space settle the hau, or essence within the place in question, returning it to a state where people can become comfortable again.[212] Considering the connection of wā (as in *wā*hi) to both space and time, this "clearing" occurs across a folding of time, bringing our tūpuna and mokopuna into space with us, and releasing them, too. It can also be a means of focusing 'attention' to 'intention,' which I relate back to a weaving or making-space. Erenora Puketapu-Hetet shares how a beginner would traditionally start each weaving session with karakia, as:

> what is important is that the mind and spirit of the tauira is cleared for what is to be undertaken. This also applies to the completion of weaving when it is time to reflect, assess and be thankful for the point one has reached.[213]

The consideration of opening and closing time-space for gathering, making, and conversation to occur within has been both a central method and a continuing question of application through my research. I continually ask myself while practising, how such spaces might enable material and interpersonal relationships to build, and what protocols and considerations are needed in holding this space.

Some of the key protocols I follow include:

> Beginning each period of whatu/weaving with karakia, a setting of intention and preparation of space
>
> Following hauhake/kohikohi/gathering tikanga for all the natural materials I work with, including established protocols for harakeke and tī kouka shared with me by kaiako and tuākana mahi toi.
>
> Forming further protocols[214] around gathering 'weeds' — introduced, non-native plant materials — that acknowledge their potential as manuhiri o te whenua, as well as their destructive tendencies.
>
> Including protocols to whakanoa, such as access to wai and/or kai to move from tapu to noa, after working with whakapapa or weaving in Te Whare Pora.

MAKING (IN) RELATIONAL SPACE

Some spaces or modes of practising have explicit delineations: the space for making begins *here* and ends *there*, at the bounds of the studio; over *there* is the kitchen, where we can whakanoa with kai. The weaving commences and it pauses. I have been taught to clear space with karakia before whatu or raranga, as part of the method of setting intention. It has been a natural shift to centre my *making* spaces (e.g., in studio) in a similar way. Other 'spaces' in this project can be less clearly defined. For example, most days I carry an in-process muka/wool-blend aho with me, to twine into during wānanga, conversations, or bus-rides home from the studio. I have questioned if I should prepare a making–space in the same way as I would in studio, every time I twine the aho in public in the moments of time-between-things. Reflecting upon this dilemma, I return to the understandings outlined by

206 See, for example, discussion by Ruakere Hond, Che Wilson, and Te Poihi Campbell, in wakahuiatvnz (Waka Huia), "WH2020 Ep08 Puanga Master," September 11, 2020, episode of Waka Huia television programme, directed by Ani-Piki Tuari, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ntlvl-X-zxE.

207 Wilson, *Research Is Ceremony*, 11.

208 See also Kovach, *Indigenous Methodologies*, 137, regarding application of these aspects of ceremony – "preparation" to a research context.

209 Albert Wendt, "Tatauing the Post-Colonial Body," *Span* 42–43 (April-October 1996): 15–29, https://www.nzepc.auckland.ac.nz/authors/ wendt/tatauing.asp; see also Lana Lopesi et al., "Tōmua Introduction: Vā, Wā, and the Spaces Inbetween," in *The Concept of Vā: Relationality, Time and Space in the Pacific and Beyond* [working title].

210 Shawn Wilson and Stuart Barlo, "Fall Equinox: Protocols before Knowledge, Seasonal and Regional Themes" (keynote presentation to *Indigenous Star Knowledge Symposia*, September 21, 2020, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Canada, https://www2.uottawa.ca/faculty-arts/institute-indigenous-research-studies/past-events).

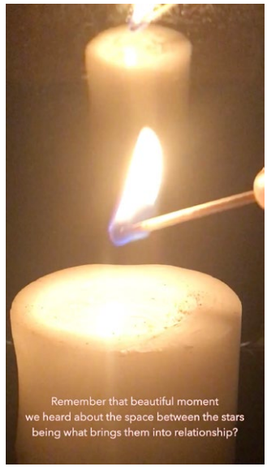
211 Wilson and Barlo, "Fall Equinox."

212 Te Poihi Campbell, quoted in Amber Nicholson, "Hau: Giving Voices to the Ancestors," *The Journal of the Polynesian Society* 128, no. 2 (2019): 148, https://www.jstor.org/stable/26857338.

213 Puketapu-Hetet, *Māori Weaving*, 14. Puketapu-Hetet shares, too, that this is "best done in the way the tauira understands. All roads lead to the summit."

214 Including, for example, appropriate karakia/mihi to the plants.









ABOVE: Image 138.
Muka aho hand-twined during Vā Moana and Vā Hina wānanga in Kona, Hawai'i

TOP RIGHT: Images 139 & 140.
Stills from Emily Parr & Arielle Walker *tōu tauira me tōu kaiako hoki*, 2021. Single channel digital video.

RIGHT: Image 141.
Twining the muka/wool-blend aho along the Taranaki takutai

weavers Erenora Puketapu-Hetet and Jacqueline McRae-Tarei: the notion of a whare pora weaving space as a 'state of being' rather than a physical space, and also of 'everyday' weaving not being held to the same level of restrictions/tapu as, say, making a kaitaka.[215] I consider the whakapapa of the materials again, my intentions, and the stage they are at in the weaving process: the aho is in motion, in the phase of twining it, I let it be open to its surroundings.

Considerations and protocols of relational space extend into every aspect of my practice, from how I gather materials through to how I finish or pause a weaving, and how I then share those artworks with others in exhibition and other forms of presentation. Amanda Tachine and Z Nicolazzo write about the importance of these periods of sharing, proposing that:

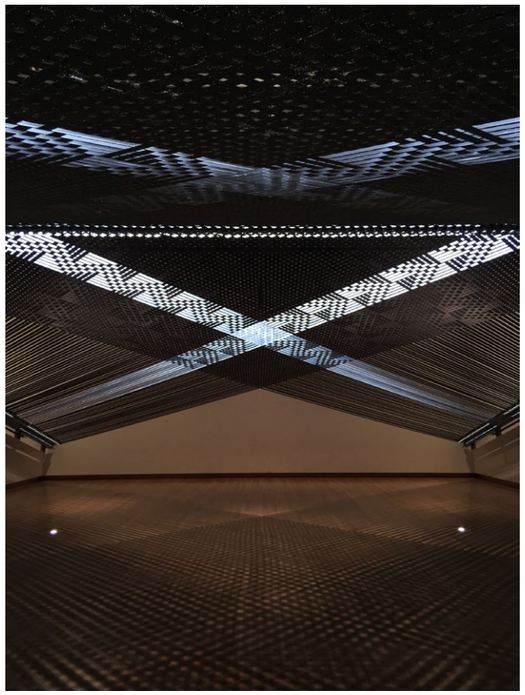
> to share, to be in community, to bring (closer) together, and to revisit the textile so as to learn again (and again) from what one has created are important parts of the overall weaving process. These moments make up the practice of world-making that stretches forward and moves us toward imagining otherwises and elsewheres.[216]

Like Tachine and Nicolazzo, I find that bringing weaving or other material elements into community, to be revisited or returned, shared and learnt from, is an essential part of the making process.

An example of this in practice occurred early in the project, through my exhibition *distance rewoven from the roots to the stem,* at Blue Oyster Art Project Space in April-May 2021. During the exhibition, we held a *Kōrerorero* making-space over two days. Guests were invited to bring their own family textiles and fibre pieces to work on and share in conversation. We opened each day's *Kōrerorero* with karakia that prepared and settled the hau of the gallery for making. My ongoing artwork, *a countermap of home* (2020-ongoing), formed a centre around which to encircle. We offered kai in a separate area from the making-space, to manaaki our guests and to whakanoa after the conversations. The printed-unravelled-stitched-whatu *distance…* works became a focus for the sharing of my family stories. By virtue of having these works in the room, I could refer to tupuna maunga Taranaki, and to Nana and her lacemaking; to the places where each plant in the dyed wool patchwork-pieces had grown; and to the stories that each relationship holds. Our manuhiri shared their own stories in return. At the time, the conversations were not recorded or, in this instance, shared with any initial intent that this space was an 'artwork' in itself, but that notion has since become a point of interest for the practice moving forward, especially in the context of kin and conversational making.

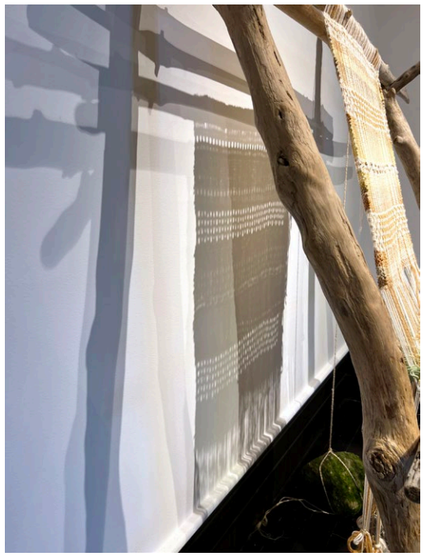
This has also extended into considering how the artworks form and shape a space, and bring ceremony and intentionality into this shaping. Mataaho Collective's recent exhibitions, *Te Puni Aroaro* at Te Papa (2022–2024) and the Walters Prize-winning *Atapō* (with Maureen Lander) at Toi o Tāmaki (2021), evoke that sense of intentional,

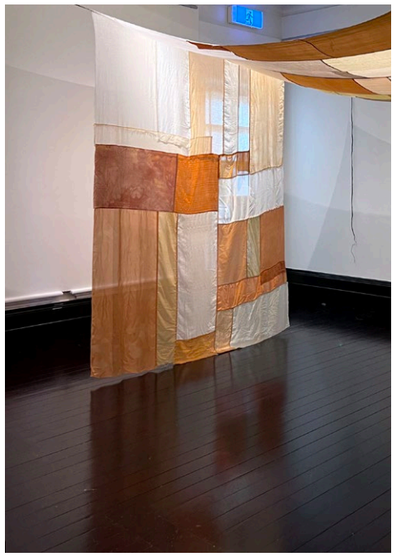
215 Puketapu-Hetet, *Māori Weaving*, 34; McRae-Tarei, "Te Mana o te Kāhui Kairaranga," 28.
216 Tachine and Nicolazzo, *Weaving an Otherwise*, 8.











TOP RIGHT: Image 142. Mataaho Collective & Maureen Lander, *Atapō*, 2020 (detail). Insect mesh, steel, wool and muka, 2m x 1m x 4.5m. Image courtesy of Mataaho Collective

TOP LEFT & CENTRE: Images 143 & 144. Mataaho Collective, *Takapau*, 2022 (installation images). Polyester hi-vis tie-downs, stainless steel buckles, J-hooks, 24m x 12m x 4m. Installation in Te Puni Aroaro, Te Papa Tongarewa, 2022-2024. Photos: Arielle Walker, 2023, courtesy of Mataaho Collective

BELOW: Images 145 & 146. Detail images of Arielle Walker, *whatuwai* and *rongoā (mending)*, installed at Nathan Homestead Gallery, 2023

ritual space — a shifting of awareness and experience through their use of material scale, colour, line, tone, the play of light and shadow. Entering *Te Puni Aroaro* was an entirely immersive experience. The immense raranga that forms *Takapau* (2022) draws from whāriki. Six kilometres of polyester hi-vis tie-down strops are interlaced and raised to bisect the cathedral height of the gallery space. Carefully placed lights cast woven shadows across the floor and walls. The artists feel that whāriki can define sacred spaces, changing the "zone from neutral to ceremonial" to "elevate and shift what's going on in a room."[217] This function is something Mataaho Collective "wanted to play with, push, extend with *Takapau*."[218] Transforming under torchlight, the installation also holds the potential to be extended and expanded. Being woven from the middle of the room with the edges left "unfinished," allows viewers to "envisage this as a work in progress that might continue to grow and develop"[219] — a strategy I also employ throughout the project.

I trialled a second iteration of the *Kōrerorero* making-space not long after experiencing the Mataaho Collective artworks. Installed at Nathan Homestead Galleries as part of my 2023 exhibition *Whatuwai*, the unusual gallery layout led me to play with mending and extending the *rongoā* patchwork into *rongoā (mending)*, making the piece large enough to drape above *a countermap of home*. The ceiling lights filtered through the different weights of variously sheer fabrics, casting shadows across the walls and reflections over the dark painted wooden floor. The artworks enveloped the making-space, inviting a shifting of Kimmerer's "attention" to "intention" to occur around gathering, making, and conversation.

Takirau, June 2023

I sit high in the mezzanine of Te Taumata o Kupe,
the wharenui of Te Mahurehure Marae in Tāmaki Makaurau.
Whakairo-forms on glass filter light through nearby trees.
We have been welcomed here, centred, grounded in place
through the mihi whakatau, manaaki with kai, held safe
and focused through karakia when needed.

I'm trying to work out how to write about ceremony, setting space,
what it means to set space, to be in ceremony,
how I have been doing this in my practice. I'm getting more and more entangled in
a r t i c u l a t i n g, without success, spinning circles, when from the floor below
the call of the Last Post rings out through tinny speakers, and I feel tears begin to flow.

217 Te Papa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand, "Making Takapau: Mataaho Collective Discuss Their Monumental Installation," August 8, 2023, video, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YS1E4Wgmz9c&t=791s.

218 Te Papa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand, "Making Takapau."

219 Mataaho Collective, "Takapau," accessed January 22, 2024, https://www.mataahocollective.com/art-works/takapau.

That refrain is forever entwined in my memories
of my grandad Johnny. His trumpet echoes through the background
of the few videos we have of me as a baby,
and the only other recording we have of him, speaking to the morning news
on a long-ago Anzac Day. A refrain that memory-echoes
through all our mornings and mournings.

As I write, the song from below shifts into a waiata I don't yet recognise,
layers on layers of powerful harmonies,
and then back to the gentle hum of conversation.
I realise that this is the space I am trying to articulate.
Where tūpuna can speak to us — through tinny speakers,
or through innate knowing — just when we need them most,
and where we can finally be ready to hear them.

TOOLS

As part of setting the space for my research to unfold, it was important that I create the same kind of ritual and ceremonial space around *all* aspects of my gathering and making. I felt the need to continue practising with tools that held the same attention to whakapapa, layering, exchange and sharing as my artworks. I wanted to extend those protocols towards the tools — many of which were made specifically for this research.

Almost every craft-tool I began this project with has been handed down to me by my mother, Grandma Faith, Nana Maire, or gifted by another family member or friend. My precious lace-bobbins were hand-turned by my uncle Graeme as Nana's gift to me for my 12th birthday. My sewing machine is a beloved 18th birthday gift from Grandma Faith, and the threads I use have been passed down across oceans and decades from Scotland, through Grandma's sister's mother-in-law to Grandma Faith, and then from my mother to me. My knitting needles were gifted by my mother over many years; my jack-loom and spinning wheel came from friends' families. My ever-increasing stash of wool yarn includes skeins from my mother, Nana, my partner's mother, and many other friends and family.

To bring 'new' tools that I required into the project, I first turned my attention to the making of 'vessels' (forms to gather and hold material), then to aho and taura, and the looms that structure my whatu-weavings. Each of these tools is made with the same care and attention to whakapapa of material, place and form, as the intended artwork or processes they are being made for. I am also continually thinking about the functionality of every element of making, including how much input the 'tool' might have versus my own hands, directly.

Material/tauira discussion (Arielle, Mon, Mandy), March 7, 2023:

> Oh! Speaking of — I've been doing things like this *[shows a small coil of twined aho]*. This is a hand-twined blend of wool and muka — Or like this one, this was totally spun directly *onto* this [found-driftwood as a hand-spindle]. Yeah, no wheel or drop spindle involved. And that feels — it's a lot slower, but it feels more appropriate somehow to work entirely by hand in this way.

Considering how any intervention of tools might allow me to maintain a primary relationship with the material's origin becomes part of the ethic of care and reciprocity to material, especially regarding the time and labour aspects of my practice.

My attention to tools and their whakapapa aligns with many of the artists whose practices form the 'whenu' or contextual grounding for my project, and who make their own tools as an integral part of practice. The materials that tools are made from, their form and intent, lend further strength and connection to anything they make. For example, artist Chantel Matthews (Ngāti Hounuku, Ngāti Tahinga, Ngāti Ikaunahi, Tainui) describes how, in her earthen vessels, working "from the body of Papatūānuku and glazing them with water conceived of as Hinemoana and Tangaroa conceptually engages whakapapa," which she sees as "a never-ending opportunity to tell stories that are empowering to wāhine."[220] Artists like Cora-Allan have found much of the new-old knowledge for their tool-making — in Cora-Allan's case, the beaters for hiapo — from examples of tūpuna taonga in museum collections, as well as through knowledge sharing in kōrero and wānanga.[221]

The first vessels I made for gathering came from a similar approach, re-remembering how to make kono, visiting the collections at Puke Ariki and Tāmaki Paenga Hira, and studying images of baskets in museum collections further afield (including those gathered by the *Woven Communities* group of Scottish basketmakers).[222] I gathered brambles where Nana used to collect blackberries for pies, and tī kouka and willow bordering the family garden on the banks of Tongapōrutu. Neskonlith basket-maker Elder Minnie Kenoras shares Secwépeme teachings of the role of woven baskets in "resisting colonial and capitalist narrative that they are art objects to be consumed and viewed, rather than used as modern tools." Though crafted with intention, and often aesthetically appealing, the tools made for *Mending the Kupenga* are likewise "utilitarian, to be used, not to sit on shelves as decorative objects."[223] By caring equally for the whakapapa of the tools I work with — from the vessels for gathering to the loom-structures and modes of installation and display — I feel the ceremony of making space extend to hold the entirety of the project.

220 Chantel Matthews, "I Sea a Vessel Filled With Tea: A Sculptural Practice Exploring Day-to-day Wāhine Ways Through Whakapapa Layers" (master's thesis, Auckland University of Technology, 2021), 24, https://hdl.handle.net/10292/14462.

221 Sarah Hudson, "Interview with Cora-Allan Wickliffe," He Kapunga Oneone, September 2021, https://www.kauaeraro.com/o-nianei/interview-with-coraallan-wickliffe.

222 See examples in the Woven Communities archives: https://wovencommunities.org/.

223 Natalie Clark et al., "Cu7 Me7 Q'wele'wu-kt (Come On, Let's Go Berry-Picking): Inter-Generational Land-Based Healing through Indigenous Girls' Groups," in *Ora: Healing Ourselves; Indigenous Knowledge, Healing and Wellbeing*, ed. Linda Tuhiwai Smith and Leonie Pihama (Wellington: Huia, 2023).










CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Images 147 to 154. Details of small gathering and holding baskets; woven knitting-needle basket; small harakeke kono; selection of stone loom-weights; large gathering basket in-place; details of stone and uku (clay) loom-weights; detail of random-weave holding-basket, detail of large gathering-basket

LIST OF TOOLS CREATED FOR & THROUGH THIS PROJECT

LOOMS

(made from my directions by my partner Liam Mullins)

whakatauira (2022). Tongapōrutu driftwood. Used for making all initial warp-weight blended weaving tauira.

whatuwai: June–October 2022. Tongapōrutu and Ngāmotu driftwood, harakeke.

hentinsloom: 2023. Reclaimed pine two-by-fours, wooden broom handles.

whakaruruhau: 2024. Tāmaki driftwood and storm-fallen branches (still in process)

LOOM-WEIGHTS

These stone and clay weights will be returned to the whenua, when it is appropriate to do so.

GATHERING-OBJECTS/VESSELS

Small gathering-basket (2022). Gifted tanekeha bark, Tāmaki rimurimu/seaweed, jasmine vines, tī kouka. 225 x 230 x 200 mm

Large gathering-basket (2022). Tāmaki bramble vines; Taranaki driftwood roots, bramble vines, willow. 400 x 300 x 220 mm

Knitting-needle basket/cocoon (2022). Taranaki willow, harakeke, tī kouka. 550 x 120 x 90 mm.

Small coil holding-basket (2022). Tī kouka, harakeke. 200 x 200 x 70 mm

Random-weave holding-basket (2022). Tī kouka, harakeke bramble vines, driftwood, rimurimu. 330 x 445 x 80 mm.

Medium woven holding-basket (2022 — 2023). Tāmaki plum shoots, bramble vines. 520 x 270 x 155 mm

Multiple kono for kūmara hauhake (2022 — ongoing/returned to the whenua after use). Harakeke. Dimensions variable.

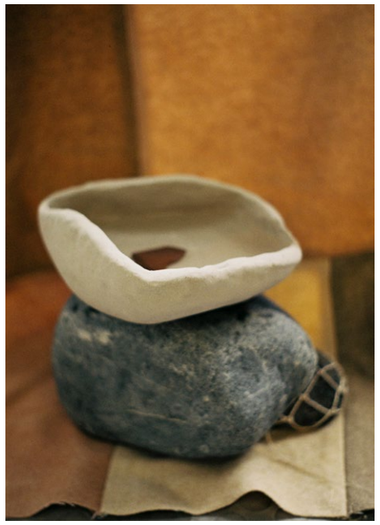
Large braided/coiled holding basket (2022 – 2023). Taranaki and Tāmaki harakeke. 450 x 450 x 300 mm

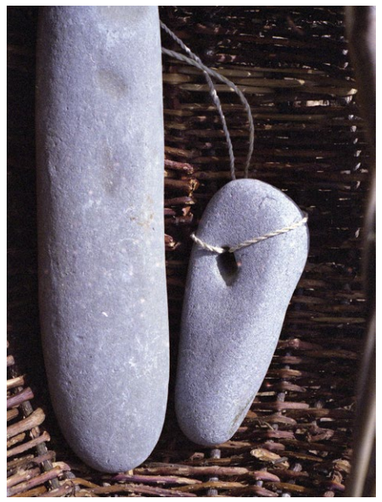
Hentins/scrap-gathering baskets (2023). Materials and dimensions variable













CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Images 155 to 160. Bioresin cast shell for hāro muka; Taranaki uku small whakanoa bowl; stone-moulded reclaimed clay bowl; cast plaster mussel shell with original; found patu muka; selection of shells for hāro muka, including gifted from Kāpiti Island by kairaranga Adrienne Spratt and found empty along the North Taranaki takutai

WHAKANOA

Wooden bowl (2020), hand-turned and gifted by Liam's father, Chris Mullins

Stone-moulded reclaimed clay (2023), layered over a large stone from Ōnukutaipari/Herekawa; vitrified to hold water

MUKA HARO

Mākoi (mussell-shells):

Found (empty) along the Tongapōrutu awa, 2022

Gifted from Kāpiti Island by weaver Adrienne Spratt, 2023

Cast plaster and bioresin shells (after rāhui), 2023

"Bone-handled" butter knife

Patu muka, 2022. Naturally-formed greywacke, found at the Tongapōrutu takutai

Patu muka, 2023. Puriri, hand-turned and gifted by Liam's sibling Eli

PATTERN-SHARING

Laser-engraved repurposed lino stamps, 2023

Laser-engraved repurposed cedar-wood stamps, 2023 – 2024

te pūrākau o Taranaki, a re-remembering

I can no longer remember Te Pūrākau o Taranaki told in my Nana's voice
I have only the echoes of her words
as her
and so I am learning to sing those echoes into my own voice,
and in those new words, the echoes of my tupuna,
I remember

Taranaki dragged himself towards the setting sun
away from the centre of the island
led by the guidestone Te Toka-a-Rauhoto, carving
Te Awa Tupua in his wake

surface tension kept by fish bones
firm beneath the andesite

came to rest on the fin of Te Ika-a-Māui
caressed by the hum
and swell of the sea

and looked back across the distance to Pihanga.

Skip forward now, there's no use looking back.
Skip across the millennia, past tears river-rushing
to fill the space between the lovers,
past rocks crushing and grinding to keep
Taranaki at his island edge. Watch as stones surge
and roll from maunga to moana, follow their journey
to the sea, they are your tūpuna too.

Slow down

let the centuries tick, tick, tick to a halt
– no, no, a little further
past the wars and the invasion and the wars and the bloodshed
and

now.

Taranaki is granted personhood.

It's all there on paper, signed by a crown
he should never have been beholden to.
He's been given all the rights and burdens of any one of us.
This makes it official, in a world where distance is measured not
by a mountain's grief but by tickertape's digital descendants.
This makes it "official," this truth we have always known.

Move out from under his shadow – there's nothing left to hold him back.

He'll raise a storm of fire and ash and retrace
those first furious, limping steps
to challenge Tongariro once again.

The islandfish will writhe and shudder, whenua will scar anew
and maybe
then we'll realise
tūpuna are not ours to own or control.



CHAPTER 8:

TENSION & BALANCE

Tirea, February 2023

Tension is essential in weaving to hold the warp taut, so that the shed pulls free and clear and the weft can slip neatly between the threads, and be held there.
Tension is needed to space the aho threads so that each whenu is held firm and even, and each ara is the same width as the last.
Tension is required to form the loops in each row of knitting,
to hold harakeke strips together mid-pattern in raranga, and
to pull tight lace -threads on dangling bobbins
so that the pattern becomes clear.

Without enough tension, stitches slip free, running, tearing.
Gaps form, holes grow where they aren't intended and don't belong.
The weaving wobbles, unravels; it becomes impossible to pass weft through warp.
Whenu come loose, ornamentations no longer held in place. The whole piece becomes a snarl, a tangle, a mass of unruly threads without form or direction.

Too much tension, however and the thread… breaks. Holes appear, tears form.
Aho pulled too sharply make an inflexible fabric, misshapen.
If loom weights are too heavy for the warp,
the fabric will pull narrower and narrower as it grows, the threads might snap;
if the weft is drawn through too tightly, the weaving will buckle and bow.

The fabric comes together, whole, in the balance between.

The histories of Aotearoa/New Zealand which connect across oceans to global settler-colonial projects have been outlined by scholars such as Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Ranginui Walker (Whakatōhea, Lebanon), and Ani Mikaere (Ngāti Raukawa, Ngāti Porou).[224] Leonie Pihama demonstrates how "at the centre of colonisation has been the dispossession and erasure of Indigenous Peoples. Dispossession of lands, Dispossession of culture, Dispossession of language, Dispossession of knowledge," a system of processes which "disrupts the relational balance" between peoples, genders, knowledges, and places.[225] Contemporary art practice provides a lens through which to witness and process these tensions, traumas, dispossessions, and disconnections, offering potential catharsis and reconnection. Through the material histories of muka and wool, this chapter discusses some of the underlying tensions that the project is constantly negotiating, at work beneath the surface, as well as methods the research has found of coming back into balance. I look also to artists' practices that offer a way to not just look back at the damage caused by colonisation,[226] but to actively unpick and unravel it; to unbury what has been covered over by the "settler memory-machine"[227] and to offer a vision towards healing.[228]

PREVIOUS IMAGE: Image 161. *distance rewoven from the roots to the stem,* 2020-ongoing (detail). Hīkoi; 35mm film; dye-sublimated print (of Tongaporutu harakeke and gorse) onto hemp fibre unravelled by hand; whatu in plant- dyed (gorse, kānuka, harakeke, lupin, tanekaha) wool yarn. 600 x 1000m. Photo: Emily Parr

224 Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*; Walker, *Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou*; Mikaere, *Colonising Myths*
225 Pihama, "Mana Atua, Mana Tangata," 193.
226 See note 145, also Hazel Riseborough, *Days of Darkness: Taranaki, 1878-1884* (Auckland: Bridget Williams Books, 2022)
227 Turner, "Settler Dreaming."
228 Smith, "Whatuora: Theorizing 'New' Indigenous Methodology"; Smith and Pihama, *Ora: Healing Ourselves.*

Maureen Lander discusses the process of coming into balance through material practice, noting that in her blended making:

> I'm balancing myself — if ancestry is important, then *all* of my ancestry is important. And when I got started I felt like I was out of balance. My Māori side was lost ... it felt like something I needed to go back and try and get the balance right. And a lot of people just see that I was starting to work with what could be called Māori materials, but I was always trying to keep a balance as I went.[229]

One of the productive tensions I encountered, in beginning this research, was that of balancing and bringing together stories and crafting processes from seemingly disparate strands of my whakapapa. Could I reconcile the relationship between these ontologies and making practices? Early on, I felt the concern that, by blending whatu with lacemaking, for example, I might diminish rather than reaffirm my ancestral practices. Scholar Ngahuia Te Awekotuku (Te Arawa, Tuhoe, Ngapuhi, Waikato) speaks directly to this fear through her tribute to the women whose "commitment to their artform and an unflagging faith in its integrity, ensured that [customary fibre] knowledge survived, and was even strengthened by the decades of decline, indifference, neglect, and invasion."[230] It is "particularly invasion" that she makes note of, "as other materials seduced the Maori weaver; embroidery silks, macrame twine, and knitting cotton all divert one's hands and secure the techniques — but do they honour the taonga tuku iho?"[231]

Had *my* hands simply been diverted? When this question has arisen for me, I return to the fact that the research practice is first and foremost considering a *multiplicity* of lines of knowledge. As Lander shares, this often means prioritising what has been ruptured or disconnected. I am always working with and against tension/s to find my own means of balance. I have found that making with materials related to and honouring each of my ancestral lines — especially harakeke/muka and wool — offers a material metaphor to engage these notions of tension and balance. The history of both muka and wool also demonstrate the tensions that we inherit as descendants of settler/Indigenous relationships here in Aotearoa, which are entwined with my own ancestors' migration, movement and removal, and connection and disconnection to place. The part each material has to play in colonial histories of both dispossession and reclamation, across the ocean and on this whenua, is of particular interest to the project's conceptualising of practice.

229 Maureen Lander and Priscilla Pitts, "Artist Talk at Govett-Brewster Art Gallery," Govett-Brewster Gallery (audio recording of talk), December 2, 2018, https://govettbrewster.com/media/uploads/2018_12/Maureen_Priscilla_edit_2.mp3.

230 Ngahuia Te Awekotuku, *Nga Nui o te Ra: Teaching, Nurturing, Developments of Maori Women's Weaving* [exhibition catalogue] (Auckland: Te Taumata Gallery, 1993).

231 Te Awekotuku

HARAKEKE/MUKA

Muka, the strong, silky harakeke fibre native to Aotearoa, is regarded as the "ultimate fibre" with which to make traditional whatu kākahu.[232] For Māori, muka was seen as a "channel between the physical and spiritual realms," both "a concrete way to represent wairua, or life force," and "powerfully symbolic of the unseen — the spiritual element that, to Māori, permeates all aspects of life."[233] Muka was also a valuable trading material during the early days of European colonisation.[234] Researcher Mick Pendergrast explains in *Te Aho Tapu* that "early Pākeha visitors were excited by the fibre and saw in it possibilities for commercial rope-making and perhaps textile manufacture."[235] As a "lucrative trade item," muka was exchanged for firearms and "whole communities were involved in the work of separating and preparing the fibre." [236] Though linen flax-manufacturing mills were adapted overseas and/or set up anew in Aotearoa for the processing of muka fibre, the traditional method of extracting and preparing muka by hand was never surpassed.[237]

With the large amounts of fine harakeke in Taranaki, the iwi of Taranaki became renowned as holding superior knowledge and skill in working with the plant. The desire to obtain both the harakeke/muka for trade, and those people with the skills of processing it, became a catalyst for a series of "warlike expeditions by Northern tribes" through the early 1800's.[238] It was following more than one such incursion into Taranaki that my tūpuna were taken north — another familial rupture in connection to place and knowledge.

Huna, January 2024

We drive along the main highway, passing fields of corn with scatterings of harakeke whānau as we turn off to take the short road towards the pā. I wonder if any of these harakere may have been here when Nana lived here, how many are newer plantings. All look lush and lovely in the soft sunlight. The whenua along this whole coastline, where my tūpuna lived before the incursions, the wars, the raupatu, still holds the scars of the past 200 years—bare hills, wetlands drained of their wai, their wildlife, through all the mamae. But there are places where the ngāhere returns, and the harakeke too, slowly re-growing again.

232 Smith, "Whatuora: Whatu Kākahu," 194.

233 Toi Te Rito Maihi, "Ngā Aho: Threads that Join," in *Whatu Kākahu: Māori Cloaks,* ed. Awhina Tamarapa, 2nd ed. (Te Papa Press, 2019), 34.

234 Puketapu-Hetet, *Māori Weaving,* 21; Mick Pendergrast, *Te Aho Tapu: The Sacred Thread* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987), 12.

235 Pendergrast, *Te Aho Tapu*, 12. Likely recognising the fibre as akin to the cultivated linen flax (*Linum usitatissimum),* early settlers named the harakeke plant 'New Zealand flax,' a misnomer which continues today.

236 Pendergrast, 12.

237 Pendergrast, 12.

238 Taranaki Iwi Deed of Settlement of Historical Claims, 2015, sec. 2.4; Percy Smith Stephenson [from korero shared by Te Kāhui Kararehe], *History and Traditions of the Maoris of the West Coast, North Island of New Zealand, Prior to 1840* (New Plymouth: Polynesian Society, 1910), https://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-SmiHist.html; Dennis Ngāwhare-Pounamu, "Living Memory and the Travelling Mountain Narrative of Taranaki" (PhD thesis, Victoria University, 2014), 23-24, https://doi.org/10.26686/wgtn.17007802.v1.



Image 162. Taranaki harakeke

I wonder if my tūpuna ever wove with the ancestors of these plants, ever pulled silky muka from their glossy leaves, or wove them into baskets to gather kaimoana from the nearby ocean. I wonder if that's why they were taken north, wonder if their children and grandchildren recognised the weaving knowledge in the plants when they returned.

Wonder if there were any left, when they returned.

And so I gather from here, from Nana's old home, our tūpuna whenua, and I think about what I might weave from this muka again for them.

From the early 1800s, the first waves of settler migration introduced new materials to Aotearoa: from wool, to candlewick, to new dyes.[239] Although this began an initial period of experimentation and innovation, with wool incorporated into whatu muka kākahu and the creation of new forms and techniques, such as māwhitiwhiti and ngore,[240] the comparative ease of access to materials quickly led to a near-replacement of customary materials such as muka and native bird feathers.[241] Textile mills making woven fabrics from the new materials (wool, cotton, and linen) were established. Mills were also constructed with the intent to manufacture harakeke into so-called 'flax-fibre' on a large scale.

Kairaranga Gloria Taituha describes how, between the new fabrics/materials and "the insistence of modesty by Christianity," the role of the kairaranga was further reduced, as Western clothing "clawed its way into the structure" of Māori society.[242] As Taituha argues, "the various forms of assimilation forced upon our people during the period of Te Huringa (the changing) had a direct impact on the Kāhui Kairaranga."[243] The impact of colonial legislation and enactment created "formidable barriers in the transmission of Māori knowledge, language, resources, and customary values relating to Ngā Mahi a Te Whare Pora."[244] By the early 20th century, as "the last generation of cloak-makers went to join their tupuna," the skill of muka and kākahu-making was nearly lost.[245]

By the mid-1830s, many of the refugees who had fled Taranaki during the earlier wars began to return. Hapū traded harakeke and muka with the European settlers, along with milled flour and potatoes.[246] However, as settler numbers grew, and hapū opposed the sale of whenua to the Crown, tensions continued to rise, culminating

239 Lander, "Te Ao Tawhito"; Puketapu-Hetet, *Māori Weaving;* Pendergrast, *Te Aho Tapu.*

240 There is speculation about whether māwhitiwhiti was derived from European cross-stitch or adapted from tukutuku, and as the extent of any influence from Christianity and sampler-making on the 'cross' motif. Lander, "Te Ao Tawhito," 70.

241 Pendergrast, *Te Aho Tapu*, 11.

242 Gloria Taituha, "Te Aho Tapu Uru Tapurua o te Muka e Tui Nei ā Muri, ā Mua (The Sacred Strand That Joins the Past and Present Muka Strands Together)" (PhD thesis, Auckland University of Technology, 2021), 66, https://hdl.handle.net/10292/14464.

243 Taituha, "Te Aho Tapu Uru Tapurua," 66. Taituha defines Te Huringa as 1860–1970, but also extends this to include "the period from first contact with Pākehā settlers."

244 Taituha, 41.

245 Pendergrast, *Te Aho Tapu*, 11.

246 Ngaruahine Deed of Settlement of Historical Claims, 2014, sec. 2, https://www.tearawhiti.govt.nz/assets/Treaty-Settlements/FIND_Treaty_Settlements/Ngaruahine/DOS_documents/Ngaruahine-Deed-of-Settlement-1-Aug-2014.pdf.







TOP LEFT: Image 163. Diane Prince, *Flagging the Future: Te Kiritangata–the Last Palisade*, 1995, Mixed media, Korurangi: New Māori Art. An exhibition held at the Auckland City Art Gallery: 1 October – 26 November 1995. Installation view courtesy of Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki and Diane Prince

TOP RIGHT: Image 164. Diane Prince, *Woman in Working Houses,* 1989. Mixed media installation, National Library Gallery, Wellington. Magazine-article image from Nana's scrapbook collection, provenance unknown. Image courtesy of Diane Prince

ABOVE: Image 165. Diane Prince, *Whakawhare*, 1989, mixed media installation. Image courtesy of Diane Prince and Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū

in decades of Crown-instigated conflict and muru raupatu that echoed across the whole country.[247] An artwork that speaks to this wider context is an installation by Diane Prince (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Whatua), *Flagging the Future: Te Kiritangata – The Last Palisade.* First conceived of thirty years ago and shown in 1995 as part of exhibition *Korurangi: New Māori Art* at the then-named Auckland City Art Gallery, the installation included woven harakeke and found/gathered objects hung from a structure made of dried kōrari stalks,[248] surrounding a New Zealand flag stencilled with the words "Please walk on me," laid on the gallery floor. The installation critiqued the Crown's inadequate attempts to settle Māori land grievances, and considered the way Pākehā and Māori approach and respond to these histories.[249]

As Hana Pera Aoake discusses, Prince's work unpacks the inability to build sustainable relationships in Aotearoa between Pākehā and Māori — relationships that Aoake suggests could perhaps, if based in te ao Māori frameworks (aligned with concepts such as whanaungatanga), enable a starting point towards a process of healing through shared empathy and reciprocity.[250] Engaging in this way, Aoake suggests, requires that Pākehā acknowledge the ongoing "systemic effects of colonialism and the validity of anger and pain entwined within our shared histories."[251] Instead, subsequent public outrage in response to *Flagging the Future*'s overshadowed much of the exhibition, and led the gallery (in discussion with Prince) to concede to removing the artwork.[252] Prince's artwork is one of a continuing line of resistance and activism that has invoked the image of the flag, from Hone Heke felling the flagstaff at Kororāreka in 1844 and 1845, to Ngāhina Hohaia's symbolic burning of the New Zealand flag at Waitara, protesting proposed changes to future treaty settlements in 1995.[253]

Much of the discussion about *Flagging the Future* focused on the controversy surrounding the flag, skimming over details of the harakeke 'kaitiaki figures' and the kōrari 'palisade' structure itself, which together evoke a papakāinga.[254] Those woven aspects of Prince's work, art-historian Edward Hanfling observes, invoke the whakataukī *ka mua, ka muri,* and "the wisdom of ancestors informing the tasks and travails of contemporary life … *Flagging the Future* represented a call to action to address the wrongs and repercussions of history."[255] I am drawn to these kōrari structures, which are reminiscent of Prince's earlier

247 Walker, *Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou*; Ngaruahine Deed of Settlement of Historical Claims, 2014, sec. 2; Taranaki Iwi Deed of Settlement of Historical Claims, 2015, sec. 2.

248 Harakeke flower stalks; also a term used for the harakeke plant.

249 Hana Pera Aoake, "No Limit: Imagining the Boundaries of Autonomy in a Post-Fordist Colonial Settler State," (master's thesis, Massey University, 2018), http://hdl.handle.net/10179/14412.

250 Aoake, 107.

251 Aoake, 107-8.

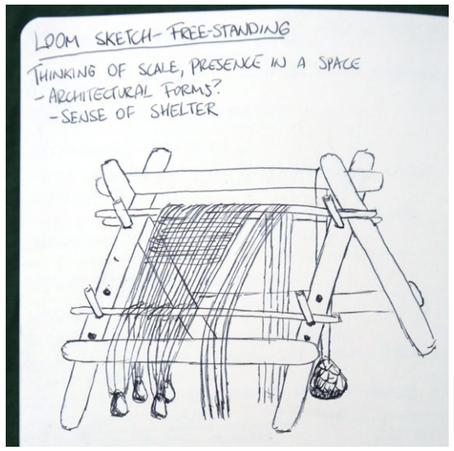
252 Prince explains this decision as not wanting the gallery to face legal ramifications, describing the piece as activism rather than as an artwork. She later replaced the flag with a single black rectangle, and in addition flew the Tino Rangatiratanga flag at half-mast outside the gallery, representing the loss and letting the intention of the work carry on in an extended metaphor.

253 Walker, *Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou*, 103; Mark Derby, "Waitangi Tribunal – Te Rōpū Whakamana - Tribunal Changes, 1988 Onwards," *Te Ara — The Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, accessed February 13, 2024, http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/photograph/32496/fiscal-envelope-protest-1995.

254 Edward Hanfling, "An Affect Alien in Aotearoa: Diane Prince and the Flag Controversy," *Third Text* 35, no. 4 (2021), 441. https://doi.org/10.1080/09528822.2021.1917226.

255 Hanfling, 441.







ABOVE: Image 166.
Muka in various
stages of processing
:

TOP RIGHT: Image 167.
Initial sketch of the project's fourth loom,
whakaruruhau

RIGHT: Image 168.
Gathering hentilagets (wild wool tufts) in West
Auckland, December 2023

installations, such as *Whakawhare* (1989) and *Woman in a Working House* (1989), temporary shelter-forms that invoke contemporary notions of whare pora. Each structure is made using materials collected from the whenua (kōrari, muka, kiekie) as well as 'new' materials from Prince's immediate environment (paint, canvas, silk threads), representing a "synthesis of western art traditions with [Māori weaving practices]."[256]

I first saw images of these works just after making early sketches of this project's fourth warp-weighted loom, its form conceived in response to comments by friends and colleagues that *whatuwai* felt as though it was becoming a shelter-structure of its own. The balanced, triangular constructions of Prince's installations were synchronously mirrored in my own sketches. Just as Prince writes "I see each of my constructions as a body — 'whare' — in which to work — to shelter: to construct — to remove oneself from conflict,"[257] I began to see my looms as shelters within which to work the whatu-weavings, reflecting the sentiment from *Whakawhare* that "the house built from products of the land provides shelter and nurtures the people of the land."[258]

Working with harakeke and especially muka, for me, is an act of reclamation and reconnection: a mending, stitched over generations held afar from the teachings of harakeke. I source muka directly from the whenua. Muka takes time to work with, physical effort to uncover, and requires (re)learning, and establishing connections with the harakeke plants and the whenua they grow from. Making with muka, with harakeke, feels deeply embedded in my being-in-place here, in Aotearoa, and in my (re)connection to my Taranaki and Hokianga tūpuna.

WOOL

Wool, the soft, layered sheep-fleece fibre, is believed to be one of the first and most utilised fibre materials across the historical record.[259] Wool holds a long history of craft and connection, providing warmth and decoration in different cultural expressions over thousands of years. After a period of decline following the advent of man-made and synthetic fibres (especially from the 1960s onwards), wool is again being reconsidered and innovated for its regenerative potentials. However, the material also holds a legacy of dispossession embedded in its fibres, from woollen blankets traded for land at a fraction of its worth,[260] to the history of commercial-scale sheep-farming as one of the driving forces of land clearances and whenua raupatu.

256 Diane Prince, "Whakawhare," in *Maori Art and Artists at the McDougall* [kit] (Christchurch: Robert McDougall Art Gallery, 1992).

257 Prince, "Whakawhare."

258 Prince, "Whakawhare."

259 Ingun Grimstad Klepp, Stig Erik Sørheim, and Kjetil Enstad, trans., "Wool." *Berg Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion: West Europe.* (Oxford: Berg, 2010), 88–89, http://doi.org/10.2752/BEWDF/EDch8016; Elizabeth Wayland Barber, *Women's Work: The First 20,000 Years; Women, Cloth, and Society in Early Times* (New York: W.W Norton, 1994).

260 Waitangi Tribunal, *Tino Rangatiratanga Me Te Kāwanatanga* (Wai 1040), (Wellington: Waitangi Tribunal, 2022), 593, 690

The British Empire's early influence on global wool production involves multiple factors linked to its colonial dominance. Land taken through dispossessions in Ireland and Scotland[261] and through colonial invasion and settlement further afield (including Aotearoa, Australia, and Canada) meant the swift expansion of pastoralism and sheep farmed for wool.[262] This in turn led to further raupatu in order to raise more sheep, creating a vicious cycle. Legislation such as the 1698 Wool Act (England), which banned the independent export of woollen goods from Ireland,[263] prevented 'competition' from colonised countries in order to maximise English trade and profit. Throughout Scotland, largely between 1750–1860, clearances forced the evictions of thousands of people from the lands they tenanted, often to make way for extensive sheep farms.[264] Shetlander Isobel Wishart shares an example from my Shetland ancestors' home-place, remembering that, in her grandfather's time, everyone in Upper Weisdale (around 300 people) was "turned out in one night… you can see the ruins of all the old houses still."[265] Many families removed from their land were taken in by neighbours, who often barely had room to spare. Many more were forced to emigrate, finding their way to Aotearoa, Australia, and Canada during the mid-late 1800s,[266] where they became, in turn, complicit in the further dispossession of Indigenous peoples.[267]

By the 1840s, commercial-scale sheep-farming had begun in earnest in Aotearoa.[268] The British Empire's hold on global shipping routes meant that, even in countries as far away as Aotearoa, raw wool could still reach English factories with relative ease. Cheap labour was enforced along every part of the production line, from farming to final product.[269] Notes from that era reference "Māori-owned flocks" and sheep stations along the East Coast from at least 1856,[270] and suggest that fear of their sheep (and whenua) being confiscated may have even prevented some hapū coming to the aid of iwi in Waitara during the beginning of the Crown-enforced muru raupatu in Taranaki.[271] Other sources indicate that the running of these sheep farms

261 James Hunter, The Making of the Crofting Community (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2018); Thomas Martin Devine, The Scottish Clearances: A History of the Dispossessed, 1600-1900 (London: Allen Lane, 2018).

262 Hunter, The Making of the Crofting Community; Devine, The Scottish Clearances.

263 Wool Act, 1698 (England).

264 Devine, *The Scottish Clearances*; Hunter, *The Making of the Crofting Community*; Robert L. Johnson, "Evictions in Shetland," recorded May 29, 1986 by Michael Jones, School of Scottish Studies, *Tobar an Dualchais/Kist o Riches* sound archive, audio recording, accessed November 28, 2023, www.tobarandualchais.co.uk/track/55879?l=en.

265 Isobel Wishart, "Evictions in Shetland" (see previous note). Wishart recalls that houses were often burned to prevent the crofters' return.

266 Devine, *The Scottish Clearances*. I can only speculate as to my own ancestors' reasons for leaving their homelands at this time — though I know my Shetland ancestors (all crofters) left the Weisdale/Whiteness Voe area for Taranaki in 1874.

267 Not only humans are displaced by the colonial legacy of wool–production. Researcher Anna Boswell describes, for example, how in Aotearoa the native kea was brought near to extinction through "a campaign of willed extermination by settler culture — as a perceived threat to the success of high country sheep farming." Anna Boswell, "Climates of Change: A Tuatara's-Eye View," *Humanities* 9, no. 2 (2020): Article 38, https://doi.org/10.3390/h9020038.

268 Bill Carter and John MacGibbon, *Wool: A History of New Zealand's Wool Industry* (Wellington: Ngaio Press, 2003); Te Rangihīroa, *Coming of the Maori*, 11.

269 Hazel Riseborough, *Shear Hard Work: A History of New Zealand Shearing* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2010); Madelyn Shaw and Trish FitzSimons, "The Fabric of War: Wool and Local Land Wars in a Global Context," in *Textile Society of America Symposium Proceedings 2018* (Vancouver: Textile Society of America, 2018), https://doi.org/10.32873/unl.dc.tsasp.0067.

270 Riseborough, *Shear Hard Work*; Carter and MacGibbon, *Wool*, 20.

271 See "Sheep/Te Pirikahu," *Māori Messenger: Te Karere Māori* 2, no. 9 (May 1, 1862): 21, https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/MMTKM18620501.2.24. "I mea ratou, 'he aha te pai kia whawhai tatou mo Waitara, kia whakatika tatou, teuei ake pea, ka tae te Kawana ki te tango atu i o tatou pirikahu'."

was consequently affected as shepherds left their flocks "to go and support their kinsman who were doing battle to defend their lands."[272] Records make clear that many of the Crown's actions at that time had been previously practiced in places like Ireland, as the 1996 Waitangi Tribunal *Taranaki Report: Kaupapa Tuatahi* asserts: "The New Zealand Settlements Act 1863 was similar in title and terms to Cromwell's [Act for the Settlement of Ireland] 1652; and the Suppression of Rebellion Act 1863 was copied, with virtually no changes, from the Irish Act of that name of 1799."[273] The colonial machine continued its cycle of destruction. Although the actions and effects of colonisation extend far beyond "simply the theft of land" into cultural decimation and assimilation, as Ani Mikaere emphasises,[274] the ongoing impact of dispossession from whenua and subsequent rupturing of connection to place cannot be overstated.[275]

Ngāhina Hohaia's installation, *Roimata Toroa* (2006) utilises both the nostalgia and historical contentions held in woollen blankets, following Parihaka leader Te Whiti o Rongomai, who "used the blanket as a metaphor for land but also as a reference to the historical imbalance of wealth and power upon the land."[276] Hohaia employs Te Whiti's metaphor to directly address the "intergenerational impacts of imbalances of wealth and power acquired through colonial violence, and the modern New Zealand economy built and sustained upon the dispossession and confiscation of Māori land."[277] The material use of blankets in Hohaia's artwork acts as a signifier of memory and conveyor of the felt loss attached to whenua. Second-hand woollen blankets are stitched into 395 hand-made poi, embroidered with symbols and text associated with the history of Parihaka and the movement's resistance to the mid-late 1800s colonial invasion, the muru raupatu of Taranaki, and the Pāhua of Parihaka.[278] The embroidered text references an 1895 speech made to the people of Parihaka by Tohu Kākahi. Thus the artwork is speaking to the resilience of Parihaka through the language of poi-manu, a practice associated with Taranaki and with Parihaka, in particular.

My Taranaki tūpuna were not present at Parihaka; they had not yet returned from their dislocations north, though their whanaunga were present during the Pāhua. The whenua that connects so closely to our tūrangawaewae still echoes with that mamae.

272 Riseborough, *Shear Hard Work*, 19.

273 Waitangi Tribunal, *The Taranaki Report Kaupapa Tuatahi* (Wai 143) (Wellington: Waitangi Tribunal, 1996), 133, https://www.waitangitribunal.govt.nz/publications-and-resources/waitangi-tribunal-reports/. The report also references relevant land confiscations in British colonies across North America, South Africa, and Ceylon, and emphasises the absence in New Zealand legislation of provision for clemency or pardon.

274 Ani Mikaere, "Cultural Invasion Continued: The Ongoing Colonisation of Tikanga Maori," *Yearbook of New Zealand Jurisprudence* 8, no. 2 (2005), 134, https://doi.org/10.3316/informit.490129918180703.

275 Riseborough, *Days of Darkness*, 236. "By separating the Māori people form the land, [the government] sought to destroy their mana motuhake, their distinctive Māori identity."

276 Ngaahina Hohaia, quoted by Matt Rilkoff, "Artist Has Own Spin on Integrity," *Taranaki Daily News*, June 11, 2009, http://www.stuff.co.nz/taranaki-daily-news/2463265/Artist-has-own-spin-on-integrity; see also Te Whiti o Rongomai, quoted in Riseborough, *Days of Darkness*, 63.

277 Ngāhina Hohaia, "Roimata Toroa," Govett-Brewster Collection, accessed March 13, 2024, https://govettbrewster.com/collection/2007-9.

278 Hohaia, "Roimata Toroa"; see also Te Miringa Hohaia, Gregory O'Brien, and Lara Strongman, eds., *Parihaka: The Art Of Passive Resistance* (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2005).



ABOVE: Image 169. Taranaki maunga viewed from Purepo, where the Crown's cannons were placed in the invasion of Parihaka. This image takes the place of Ngāhina Hohaia's *Roimata Toroa*, 2006 (installation view and detail) until permission to share has been confirmed

I cannot make work that deals with the complexities of my own returning to Taranaki without acknowledging the deeply-scarring, specific histories and the "ongoing intergenerational task" of recovering and restoring from colonial violence that are so very present.[279] The 1996 Waitangi Tribunal report for Taranaki claims against the Crown, for example, acknowledges the "present-day damage to the psyche and spirit of the people caused by deleterious and prejudicial action over generations … the hurt in Taranaki has not been allowed to mend."[280] The Parihaka community have since written of the muru raupatu, from the Pāhua of Parihaka to the "war waged" in Waitara (and every ripple-effect beyond them), saying:

> From our perspective there is little separation between the war waged in Waitara and the attack launched upon Parihaka. Twenty-one years of intense struggle, striving and responding to the impact of harm, to the wrongdoing that began at Waitara … What history delineated, we instead see as a continuity, in the accounts of those who stood to contest, those who maintained faith, and those who were subjugated. These kōrero are secreted in song, in poi, in statements passed down, in expressions used in karanga and whaikōrero. Further kōrero is retained in closets; hidden beneath dust; and also lost, buried within graves.[281]

Hohaia's *Roimata Toroa* continues the tradition of kōrero "secreted" and held in poi. In so doing, the artwork brushes off the dust, unburies, and "brings into the light of day" these stories and histories that are embedded in the whenua, that this country is built upon, and which we cannot move forward from without facing. The visual language of Hohaia's artworks, including the 2005–2012 artwork *Te Kahu o te Karauna/This Is Why I Won't Stand for the National Anthem, speak to the* "lived burden" of these layers of "collective colonial trauma" and violence.[282] In creating *He Ara Uru Ora* (which held space beside a reinstallation of *Roimata Toroa* at the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery) Hohaia shares that she wanted to "centre the healing power that our tūpuna have passed on to us. … We need to remember our inherent abilities, our innate capacity to heal and restore ourselves."[283] Likewise, *Mending the Kupenga* works towards healing, and mending, through (re)connection to our innate ancestral knowings.

Another recent installation grappling with histories of wool and whenua in Aotearoa is Pākehā artist Caroline McQuarrie's *how deep into the earth we sink*. Developed from McQuarrie's time on the Gullies Art Residency (located on a sheep/beef farm in the Rangitīkei) loom-woven "grid structures" in undyed local wool drape across a pine-wood, rope-strung "fence," referencing both "the colonial past of Aotearoa" and "the centuries long history humans have had with cultivating sheep."[284]

279 Hohaia, "He Ara Uru Ora," 102.

280 Waitangi Tribunal, *The Taranaki Report*, 313.

281 Parihaka Community, "Introduction from Parihaka," in *Days of Darkness: Taranaki 1878–1884*, by Hazel Riseborough (Auckland: Bridget Williams Books, 2023), viii.

282 Hohaia, "He Ara Uru Ora," 100.

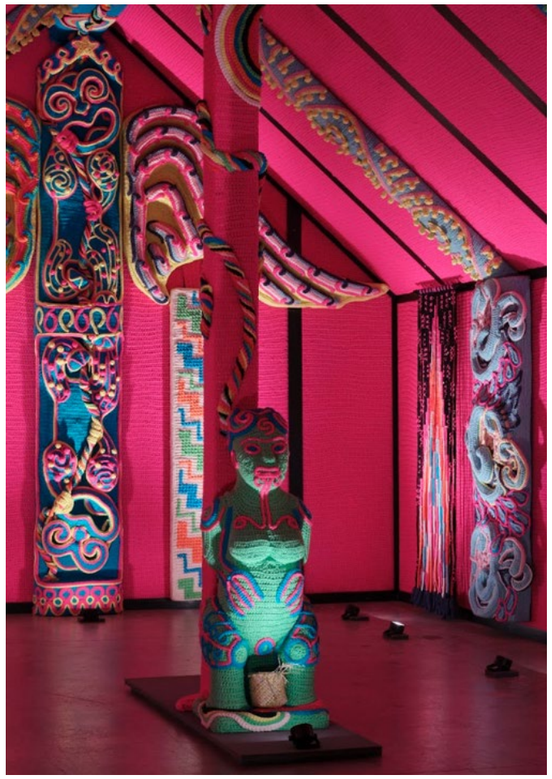
283 Hohaia, 100.

284 Caroline McQuarrie, "How deep into the earth we sink," [exhibition document], Wellington: Jhana Millers Gallery, 2024 https://jhanamillers.com/exhibitions/116-caroline-mcquarrie-how-deep-into-the-earth-we/









TOP LEFT: Image 170
Caroline McQuarrie, *Fence*, 2024 (installation image). Hand woven Aotearoa grown wool, papa clay, pine, hemp. 120 x 500 cm. Installation at Jhana Millers Gallery, Pōneke, 2024.

ABOVE: Image 171.
Caroline McQuarrie, *Gullies*, 2024 (installation image). Hand woven Aotearoa grown wool, papa clay, pine, 85 x 140 cm Installation at Jhana Millers Gallery. Images courtesy of Caroline McQuarrie

RIGHT: Images 172 & 173.
Lissie and Rudi Robinson Cole, *Wharenui Harikoa*, 2023 (installation and detail images). Installation at Waikato Museum, Waikato, 2023. Photos: Sam Hartnett, courtesy of Lissy & Rudi Robinson Cole

Woven intentionally by McQuarrie with no set outcome, instead letting the material shape the pattern, each piece is a form of sampler that speaks — in every textured square — to the whenua lying beneath the shallow pastureland. Small ceramic weights, made by McQuarrie at her father's pottery studio, hold the artworks in place. There is a wonderful material resonance between McQuarrie's artwork and the tauira of *Mending the Kupenga*. Like Hohaia and McQuarrie, I am interested in how all aspects of a material might engage with the complexities of place-based histories.

Despite its fraught recent history, wool's potential as a tool of reconnection, restoration, and repair is also held in its fibres. For many cultures, returning to their cultural practices of knitting and weaving with wool has been an act of reclamation of ancestral heritages. In 2011, native Shetland wool gained protected status under European Union rules, and the reconnection to ancestral spinning and knitting practices in Shetland have only continued to grow as an expression of "place-based" craft.[285] Diné weavers share the way the "cultural artform" of the Navajo wool rug contains a tapestry of connection, kinship, and resilience, embedded through weaving practice and relationship to material through the sheep and wool itself. [286] This is mirrored in the use of wool to reclaim Coast Salish traditions of weaving.[287] In Aotearoa, another contemporary example is seen in how partner artists Lissy (Ngāti Hineamaru, Ngāti Kahu) and Rudi (Waikato/Ngāti Pāoa, Ngāruahine) Robinson-Cole work with neon-bright, custom-dyed Aotearoa wool in their crochet practice, "infusing traditional whakairo (carving) patterns with contemporary materials."[288] Their 2023 artwork *Wharenui Harikoa*, installed at Waikato Museum, aims to "manifest intergenerational healing and deeply felt joy, one loop at a time."[289]

Wool is the material I grew up with, learnt to knit with, was warmed by through jumpers, blankets, and scarves hand-knitted by my mother, Grandma, and Nana. The wool I work with has primarily been gifted and touched by hands before mine. Making with wool actively connects me to my ancestral lines that lie across the ocean. Returning to ancestral connections of wool, this project both engages its material legacies in metaphor and practice, and acknowledges the potential it holds for memory, connection, and joy.

285 Carden, "Authenticity and Place-Based Knitwear," 6.

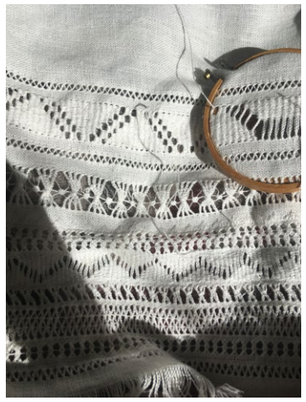
286 Tachine, "Story Rug"; Molly Bigknife Antonio, "'Sitting to my Loom': Weaving Sustainability through Navajo Kincentric Wisdom," (PhD dissertation, Prescott College, 2019), https://www. proquest. com/docview/2273836204; Susan M. Strawn and Mary A. Littrell, "Returning Navajo-Churro Sheep for Navajo Weaving," *Textile*, 5, no. 3 (2007): 300-319, https://doi.org/10.2752/175183507X249477.

287 Alison Jane Ariss, "Wrapped in Wool: Coast Salish Wool Weaving, Vancouver's Public Art, and Unceded Territory," *Journal of Textile Design Research and Practice* 7, no. 1 (2019): 53-77, https://doi.org/10.1080/20511787.2019.1578552.

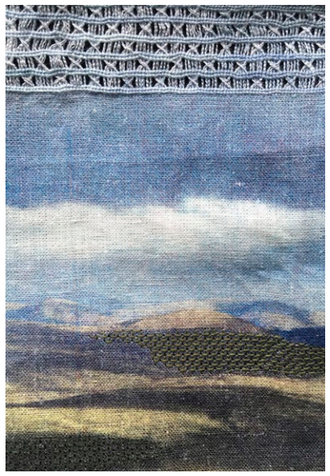
288 Lissy Robinson-Cole and Rudi Robinson-Cole, "Wharenui Harikoa: A Journey of Joy and Transformation," accessed March 13, 2024, https://www.lissyandrudi.com/wharenuiharikoa.

289 Waikato Museum, "Wharenui Harikoa," accessed March 13, 2024, https://waikatomuseum.co.nz/exhibitions-and-events/view/2145883783.







CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Images 174 to 181. Arielle Walker, detail of whatu into an unravelled artwork; muka/wool blended aho in process; example of gathered/unravelled/carded offcuts; working pulled-thread details into *a tapestry of pūtahi...*; finished pulled-thread details; unravelling *unravel, as kākahu* to reweave/whatu into a kākahu; detail of pulled-thread and unravelled/whatu work in distance unravelled across a sea of stars (2021-2023); working drawn-thread details into *distance covered, stitch by tiny stitch* artwork (summer 2021).

UNWEAVING. UNRAVELLING

To navigate the more complex knots in my family histories and the contexts that surround them, I have been working with material modes of unravelling, recalling Hinekura Smith's wero that reminds us of the need to "unpick and re-weave."[290] As well as being a method to mend mistakes, many fibre techniques actively require the unpicking of fabrics in order to create a pattern. Many of Nana Maire's samplers and unfinished works-in-progress include various forms of drawn-and-pulled-threadwork, where weft-threads are pulled from an existing woven fabric in order to be stitched back into, creating lace-like patterns between the threads. I used this drawn-thread process in many of the project' artworks. Many of the project's blended threads used in the tauira and whatu-weavings are made from unravelled old wool yarns and blankets — passed down to me from Nana Maire and Grandma Faith, or other family members and friends. I unravel, miro and twine these strands together with muka. Scraps and offcuts are collected into baskets to be further unravelled, carded and blended together, spun, and miro back into new yarns again.

Writing about Maureen Lander's 1998 artwork *String Games*, curator Maree Mills (Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Clan Gunn) notes that "many creation theories suggest that an ending is required to bring about a new beginning."[291] *String Games* draws on ancient Māori whāi practices, where complex patterns are formed and reshaped on a loop of thread held between open fingers — often "a shape achieved after several hand or finger movements results in an unravelling of the form itself."[292] Forming patterns in the threads requires the maker to establish "a complex network that relies on comprehension of structure and on the necessity of its own undoing."[293] I am drawn to the material metaphor that such works offer, and to the reparative possibilities of unravelling an established thing in order to reweave a new fabric.

Unravelling and reweaving can be seen in mythological and historical acts of resistance, from the Greek story of Penelope unpicking her day's weaving each night to delay the fate that awaited her upon its completion, to the repurposing of unravelled red woollen blankets into ornamental details in kākahu. Jessica Hemmings finds an "evocative image" in histories of Indigenous weavers,

> methodically unpicking the foreign flags and blankets of the colonizers, appropriating these threads into their own indigenous weaving styles. The flag, colonial hospital and trade blankets are all evocative symbols of cultural imperialism. In these cases, they are carefully deconstructed and woven back into the traditional patterns; eloquent, if hard earned, examples of ingenuity and adaptation.[294]

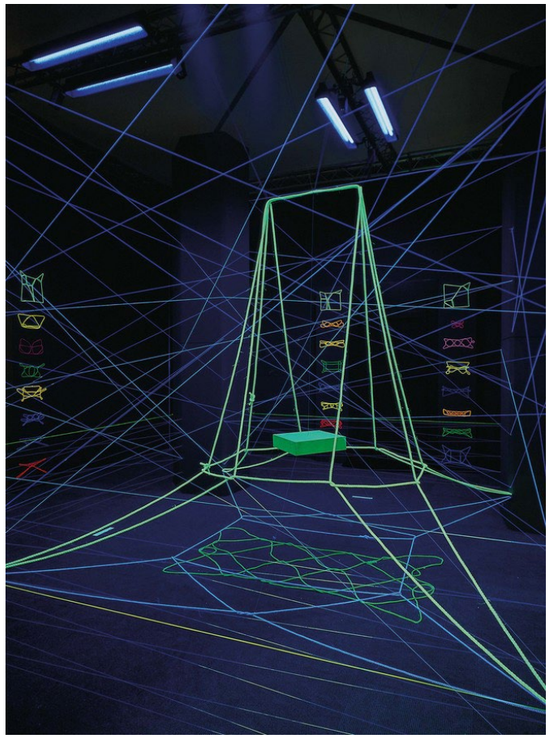
290 Smith, "Whatuora: Whatu Kākahu."

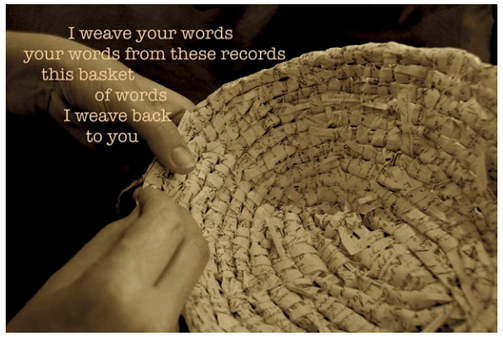
291 Maree Mills, "Te Toi Matihiko Hou a Te Wāhine Māori Contemporary Māori Women's New Media Art Practice," in *Māori Moving Image*, ed. Melanie Oliver and Bridget Reweti (Christchurch: Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu, 2022), 38.

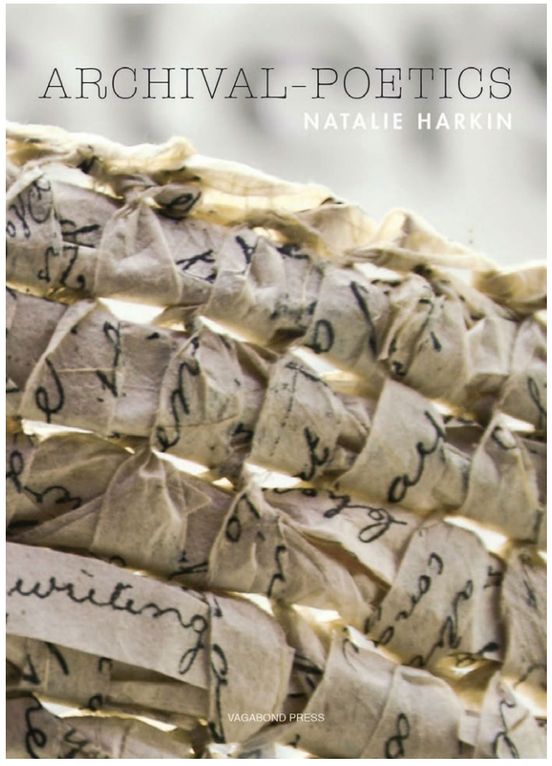
292 Mills, 38.

293 Mills, 38.

294 Jessica Hemmings, "Appropriated Threads: The Unpicking and Reweaving Imported Textiles," in *Silk Roads, Other Roads: Textile Society of America 8th Biennial Symposium Proceedings* (Northhampton: Textile Society of America, 2002), 122, https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/tsaconf/524/.







ABOVE: Image 182.
Maureen Lander, *String Games*, 1998 (installation image). Rope, nylon fishing wire, neon painted string, cardboard, paper, linen, glue, laser discs, CDs, photographic prints, white and ultra-violet light. Collection of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Image courtesy of Maureen Lander

ABOVE RIGHT: Image 183.
Natalie Harkin, *Postcard, Archive Fever Paradox [2], side 2*, 2014. Postcard. Image courtesy of Natalie Harkin

RIGHT: Image 184.
Natalie Harkin, *Archival Poetics*, 2019 (cover image). Poetry collection, 128mmx178mm. 3 chapbooks in slipcase. (Sydney: Vagabond Press, 2019)

These histories of resistance echo the way that Narungga poet Natalie Harkin writes about her 'reckoning' with the South Australian State's colonial archives, which hold biased and painful accounts of her family history. In *Archival Poetics* (2019), Harkin describes her poetic/woven practice as "a reclamation response to collective loss, to back before our time and reimagined beyond what we are officially told, shaping past/present/future remembering."[295] Harkin's material poetry consists of texts from the State archives that she has printed and written on, physically shredded, torn, and rewoven into 'poetic objects', including baskets. Harkins suggests that by "interrogating our family archives from many angles and perspectives," we can:

> expose the State's attempts to bury traumatic episodes of history which, without some kind of healing and reckoning, will inevitably return to haunt … This work allows us to consider ways to live more justly with the past, oppose the ongoing violence of neo-colonialisms, and theorise future responsibilities to history.[296]

Harkin's practice responds to the personal, familial impacts of the South Australian State's destructive colonial policies, including the forced removal of Aboriginal children from their families.[297] One of these children was Harkin's Nanna. Harkin seeks an embodied reckoning through practice, a restorative "way of knowing and honouring that carries us lovingly back and forward and back again; this is memory in the blood," she says, "and it does not always flow easily."[298] I appreciate the way Harkin describes the ambivalence of reconnection and restoration. I agree, it does not flow easily. Working in this space through creative practice, I find there are as many difficult moments as there are joyful ones. Again and again, the recurring question of balance brings me to the need to form truly reciprocal relationships, not only with others, but within my personal practice, and myself, too. To find balance by acknowledging without dwelling, connecting without claiming. Allowing multiplicities to exist in relation — whether in harmony, or in their very dissonance and tension.

Harkin finds a "strong resonance" between her archival weaving and the "Political Baskets" of the late Eastern Band Cherokee artist Shan Goshorn, woven from shredded splints of paper printed with historical photographs and documents: baskets with names like *Educational Genocide: The Legacy of the Carlisle Indian Boarding School* (2011) and *Our Lands are Not Lines On Paper* (2012). The 'unravelled' documents that Goshorn has woven into vessels include a speech by Captain Richard H. Pratt, the man who coined the phrase "Kill the Indian and save the man," a statement that underpinned the Residential schools' (and their related institutions') mission to deny and destroy Native culture.[299] The interior of *Educational Genocide* holds the names of the estimated 10,000–12,000 children from 140 tribes who attended Carlisle from 1879-1918. During Goshorn's research for this basket, among the horrifyingly long

295 Natalie Harkin, *Archival-Poetics* (Sydney: Vagabond Press, 2019).

296 Natalie Harkin, "The Poetics of (Re)mapping Archives: Memory in the Blood," *Journal of the Association for the Study of Australian Literature* 14, no. 3 (2014): 5.

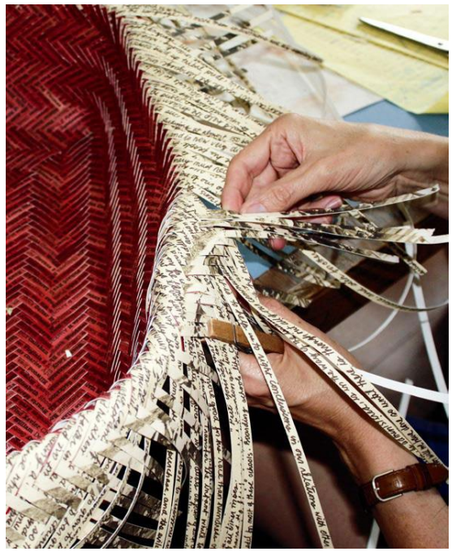
297 Harkin, 5.

298 Harkin, 5.

299 Shan Goshorn, "Educational Genocide," *Shan Goshorn Studio* (blog), October 30, 2011, http://shangoshorn.blogspot.com/2011/10/educational-genocide-legacy-of-carlisle.html.









ABOVE: Images 185 & 186.
Shan Goshorn, *Educational Genocide; The Legacy of the Carlisle Indian Boarding School*, 2011 (full view and inside detail images) Archival inks and acrylic paint on paper, polyester sinew, 30.0 x 50.8 x 30.0 cm. Montclair Art Museum, Montclair, Photos: Peter Jacobs, Images courtesy of the Shan Goshorn Estate

TOP RIGHT: Image 187.
Shan Goshorn working on *Educational Genocide*.
Image courtesy of the Shan Goshorn Estate

RIGHT: Image 188.
Shan Goshorn, *Loss* (detail image). Archival inks and acrylic paint on paper, polyester sinew, 29.2 x 10.8 x 10.8 cm. Artist's collection.
Image courtesy of the Shan Goshorn Estate

list, she found the names of two of her great-grandparents.[300] Guided by ancestors "impatient to have these stories told," Goshorn draws from the universal memory or experience of baskets as nurturing, "something we picture our mothers or our grandmothers gathering."[301] There is a potency in the baskets' material capacity to hold and carry meaning, vessels that convey messages and support the viewer into engaging with the depth and bluntness of the subject matter.

On her practice, Goshorn has said her intent has always been to start a dialogue, though at times it has felt instead more like a lecture:

> in the past, sometimes the art itself has been pretty confrontational and in-your-face. But while the baskets are presenting the same kind of statements, they seem to draw people in rather than pushing them away ... they engage the audience in a new kind of way, so that they want to know the whole story each piece contains." [302]

In grappling with these considerations, Te Kawehau Hoskins offers the reminder that "Māori ontological practice is fundamentally relational."[303] Engagement is everything, as Hoskins states, "even risky engagement."[304] She clarifies that engagement is not, of course, "all about warm cosy togetherness," but is complex, even "risky," as "a position only of disengagement and opposition is ultimately a position without a future."[305] Hoskins encourages us to consider the Waitangi Tribunal hearings, taking place on marae around the country: often the first opportunity for iwi and hapū to speak directly to the Crown about the ongoing effects of the Crown's early violent encounters with their people. Yet by locating these meetings in te ao Māori, "through Māori practices of engagement and care the Crown are welcomed, fed, entertained, and shown respect. Māori persist in ongoing relational work because this is who they are and how the possibility for change is held open."[306] Engagement often requires the facing of tensions, confronting and reckoning with the complexities of relating, in order to actively unravel and reweave a 'new beginning.' Lander, Harkin, and Goshorn offer a material language towards achieving this movement, one that the project engages through its own methods of reweaving and mending.

When I spend hours unravelling skeins of wool to twine again with silky strands of muka (also gathered and prepared by hand, over hours of labour), I do so to gain full knowledge of these materials both individually, and to understand what occurs when they come together. In doing this, I am connecting to my grandmothers, who learnt these materials by heart — love and necessity in equal measure. While I acknowledge the tensions each material holds, I am guided by the potential

300 Goshorn, "Educational Genocide."

301 Gilcrease Museum, "Weaving History into Art: The Enduring Legacy of Shan Goshorn," August 1, 2020, video, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ta7OmxQAswo.

302 Shan Goshorn, quoted in James Watts, "Cherokee Artist Weaves Messages into Baskets," *Tulsa World*, February 10, 2013, http://www.tulsaworld.com/scene/artsandentertainment/cherokee-artist-weaves-messages-into-baskets.

303 Te Kawehau Hoskins and Alison Jones, "Māori, Pākehā, Critical Theory and Relationality," in *St Paul St Curatorial Symposium 2019: It's as If We Were Made for Each Other* (Auckland: St Paul St Publishing, 2020), 12.

304 Hoskins and Jones, 12.

305 Hoskins and Jones, 14-15.

306 Hoskins and Jones, 14.











CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Images 189 to 193. Detail of whatu-woven tauira where whatu-aho-rua ara make the weave less warp-faced; temporary whatu row in twine at the bottom of warp threads to help sett; two examples of warp-weighted weaves where the weights guided the tension and flow of threads; a hand-woven (off-loom) wool tauira where no tension was applied during the weave

I see in acknowledging these elements that, as shared by writer Cassandra Barnett (Raukawa, Pākehā), do not fuse in their joining but are held strong together by their very multiplicities.[307]

WEAVING WITH AND AGAINST TENSION

Tension is essential in weaving, whatu, lacemaking, and net-mending. When the tension is unbalanced, so is the final fabric. Finding means towards balance has been a key intention in this project, but the research is also interested in what occurs when the tensions in a weaving guide the pattern, rather than being adjusted into balance.

In my first warp-weighted weaving attempts, I found that the fabric had a tendency to become 'warp-faced' very quickly. Achieving a balanced weave was challenging. In fact, the most balanced areas of the first weavings were always in the rows immediately before or after inclusions of a whatu-aho-rua ara (rows). With further sampling, I discovered that, being more practiced in achieving a desired spacing/tension with whatu, I was essentially 're-setting' the initial sett (warp-spacing) with these rows, as well as tightening the beaten sheds further, 'pushing' the weft rows closer together around the whatu rows to give a more balanced weave. Consequently, I began using whatu-aho-rua ara to commence each weaving, and included a temporary row just above each of the warp-weight-tie-offs, to keep the spacing even across the whole weave.

Handweavers and scholars Lena Hammarlund (Sweden) and Kate Banks (United Kingdom) note that when weaving on a warp-weighted loom, "the dominant external force is the warp tension."[308] Historically, weavers setting up the loom likely focused first on adjusting that tension through groupings of weights to achieve the required balance to allow an even weave across the width of the fabric.[309] An interesting development for this project has been the possibilities of allowing differences between the warp/weft tensions to shape the fabric — working *with and into* the tensions, rather than against them. The weave pulls and pools, ladders and runs, forming scattered holes in the cloth that can be gently guided but not dictated; they choose their own path.

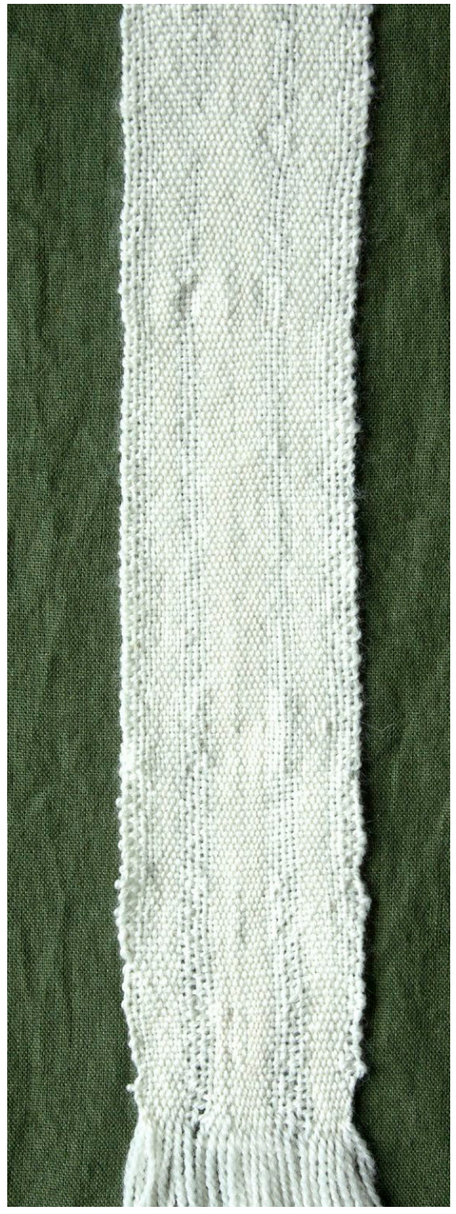
> *Material/tauira discussion (Arielle, Mon, Mandy), March 7, 2023:*
>
> Each of these tauira are undyed wool, a plain aran knitting yarn from my handed-down yarns stash. Here, I wanted to test what happens if I use this flattened four-strand whiri/braid like the edges of a drawn-thread pattern… those borders inspired by patterns in Nana's samplers. Whiri like this aren't

307 Cassandra Barnett, "Kei Roto i te Whare/On Housing," in *St Paul St 2015 Curatorial Symposium: Practice, Place, Research*, 12-25 (Auckland: St Paul St Publishing, 2015), https://ngutukaka.aut.ac.nz/publications/practice,-place-research.

308 William D Cooke, Kate Banks, and Lena Hammarlund, "Fabric Width Control and Sett in Warp-Weighted Loom Weaving," *Archaeological Textiles Newsletter* 35 (2002): 3.

309 Cooke, Banks, and Hammarlund, "Fabric Width Control," 3.







LEFT: Image 194. Loom-woven wool tauira with whiri and whatu inclusions, aiming for a balanced, close weave

RIGHT: Image 195. Loom-woven wool tauira, letting the warp-weights pull and guide the tensions

ABOVE: Image 196. Detail of tauira shown in image 195

usually directly replicated in drawn or pulled-threadworks because it requires the warp threads themselves to be crossed and then woven back in… I also wanted to test the difference between some of the earlier, clumsier loom-woven tauira, and what would happen if I waulked the cloth to bring the weave a little bit tighter. I was noticing in my first samplers on the warp-weighted loom, I was still getting quite loose, "gappy" weaves. So, here (Image 197), I was intentionally trying for the straightest, most even tension and weave I could make.

This tauira, though (Image 198), I approached from the opposite direction in terms of tension. It's woven similarly to the first, a plain weave, though there's no whatu (the waulked piece has whatu-aho-rua intersections along the length). Rather than trying to adjust for a balanced weave, I let the weights pull purposefully, playing into the tensions. Some areas have ended up loose and others are bunched really tight together — same with the edges. Letting it shift and flow a little bit from the weights.

As the weights pull and group different strands together, the weaving flows and bunches. Inclusions of whatu-who-rua or māwhitiwhiti further alter the way the fabric moves. The stretch and give of wool fights and slides against the soft sheen of muka — yet there are moments where the two come together in a way that feels right. Where wool aho, given a little grip from tanekaha resin left over from the dye pot, holds muka whenu in just the right shape; where wool tāniko over muka whenu gives the right amount of 'blur' to bring the pattern from my mind into the weaving. Muka lends strength to wool, and wool lends muka grip and softness. Essentially, I began to let the loom weights and materials guide me, relinquishing control to them. In doing so, I learn how materials work together and against each other, and where different techniques can overpower or overwhelm, rather than complement and support the fabric of my making.

ON LETTING GO | SILENCES, HOLES & MENDINGS

The holes in Nana Maire's lace are what make it so beautiful. Each thread is designed to catch and hold the threads around it in such a way that the *holes* become *form*. Recalling Albert Wendt, this "space between" is, where the patterns of relation form and become visible. Unlike the ruptures caused by torn and broken threads, these patterned holes in a hand-worked fabric are formed with both intention and surrender. First, there is the crafted placement of each thread, twist, and knot, followed by the release of the thread, trusting that the knot will hold and that the threads around it will support the pattern to continue.





ABOVE: Image 197. LEE Mingwei, *The Mending Project*, 2009 - present. Installation view of the exhibition Lee Mingwei and His Relations: The Art of Participation, Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taiwai. 2015. Image courtesy of Taipei Fine Arts Museum and LEE Studio.

BELOW: Image 198. Arielle Walker, mended/patched detail of *rongoā (mending)*, 2023

Barnett has written of the importance of surrendering: to a "state of multiplicity," to healing, to "a world that is well," to presence, to hear more clearly the otherwise-silent speaking of the world around us.[310] Kerri ní Dochartaigh, too, writes of being open to the "full and hauntingly cathartic surrender" of being-in-place, held in the in-between land-and-sea spaces of the "sky-gaze, salt-touch, fluid-embrace" that "speak … of letting go," and letting them call you home.[311] An important learning in this research project has been knowing when to surrender, to let go, to release the tension and let the pattern form.

I encountered a similar sense of surrender while volunteering as a 'mender' for Taiwanese-American artist Lee Mingwei's *The Mending Project* (2009–present), in 2016.[312] In Mingwei's ongoing, iterative project, the public are invited to bring a treasured textile item into the exhibition space to mend. While the piece is being stitched or darned, a shared conversational encounter is invited to unfold. On the project's conception, Mingwei shares his feelings after a traumatic event, where "so many things were broken, between countries, between people … so I started repairing things."[313] Stitched in brightly-coloured threads, each mend is made with the intention of celebrating rather than hiding the repair, a "conscious embrace and highlighting of the fabric's scar(s)" that "speaks to the emotional work of mending as a means to deal with trauma and loss."[314] The mender only asks that the participant release the item for a time, to join the other mendings assembled together. A network of fine threads pull from cotton reels installed on the gallery wall to the mended objects piled on the mending-table, providing "a sense of presence and also tension" until the exhibition has run its course.[315] These "rituals of care" that Mingwei engages in his work relate to the ongoing nature of my practice: materially in the *rongoā* patchworks that I repair for each new iteration, and metaphorically in the project's intention towards mending relational disconnections and ruptures.

In trying to articulate a conversational practice, I have found myself grappling with the fact that, as often as not, I have been making while (physically) alone. I weave under the hum of the studio air-conditioning with the occasional sounds of fellow researchers tapping keyboards nearby. I weave near the windows of the family bach as my partner takes the kayak up the river, plant-searching. At times, I play music, audiobooks, podcasts: I take care as to what sounds enter the work, whose voices and which words might get twined into the aho and caught in the weave. Other times, I am simply held by the silence. I listen for my tūpuna.

310 Barnett, "Kei Roto i te Whare"; Cassandra Barnett, "Taniwha in the Room: A Response to Speaking Surfaces, Part One," *Pantograph Punch*, August 10, 2020, https://www.pantograph-punch.com/posts/taniwha-in-the-room-one; Taraheke, "Cassandra Barnett," accessed March 28, 2024, https://taraheke.com/collections/cassandra-barnett.

311 nì Dochartaigh, *Thin Places*, 106, 135.

312 Lee Mingwei, *The Mending Project* (2009–present). I participated as a volunteer mender during the artwork's time as part of exhibition *Lee Mingwei and His Relations: The Art of Participation*, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, New Zealand, 2016.

313 Lee Mingwei, interview by Lorenzo Fuzi, "Mingwei Lee: Things I Can Repair; From 2010 Liverpool Biennial," 2010, audio recording, https://radiopapesse.org/en/archive/interviews/mingwei-lee-things-i-can-repair.

314 Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, "Lee Mingwei: Rituals of Care," accessed March 28, 2024, https://www.famsf.org/events/mending-project.

315 Lee Mingwei, interview by Lorenzo Fuzi.



ABOVE: Image 199. Detail of *tūpuna teach us to weave in any way we can* (2019 – 2021), image taken in autumn 2024

As researcher Cherryl Waerea-i-te-rangi Smith (Ngāti Apa, Kahungunu, Te Aitanga a Hauiti) suggests, "silence is important, because knowing is not translated through words, but direct observation. Silence give us space to observe the needs of others and opportunities to observe how things change over time."[316] The moments of pause in the project — the winters, the periods of rest, the silences — are intentional holes: they are the spaces between the net-strands that allow only what is needed most to be caught, and the rest to pass through.

316 Cherryl Smith, "Cultures of Collecting," in *Resistance: An Indigenous Response to Neoliberalism*, ed. Maria Bargh (Wellington: Huia, 2007), 70.

when we go home and the river is low

For Hana Pera Aoake's *Weaving nets to catch the stars*

When we go home, and the river is low,
we mend our nets
pulling the snarls and tangles loose
and the knots tight.

We mend our nets with harakeke and tī kouka,
because it is what we have always done.

We mend our nets with harakeke and tī kouka,
because we wish it is what we could have always done.

We mend our nets with harakeke and tī kouka
for the joy of feeling each plant strand we have gathered
with our own hands
knot neatly into place.

We mend our nets slowly,
because we are still learning how the knots hold.

We mend our nets in a hurry,
because the flounder are coming in.

We mend our nets with pieces of old green plastic twine
found in the top left kitchen drawer of the family home
– you know the one, the Drawer of Lost and Forgotten Things,
where all the blunt scissors, dead batteries, loose screws,
epoxy packets, spare matchboxes, stray memories,
old scars, coins, ash, and dust are kept.

We mend our nets balanced on the knife's edge
of unspoken tensions

We mend our nets because we are ravenous
for something to fill the empty spaces

We mend our nets with old words learned anew
with each fluid roll of raranga or ruru or miro,
each glottal stop held in whānau, and whakapapa,
each kupu an ika gathered in the net
both nourishment and fuel

We mend our nets with the fragments
of old stories we still hold

We mend our nets with new stories
to make whole those we have lost

We mend our nets with sinew and skin
all the wounded worn pieces of us
wound safe into string
and reconnected

We mend our nets but never speak
to our brothers and sisters again

We mend our nets so we might be able
to speak to our brothers and sisters again.

We mend our nets to mend our families
our whenua
ourselves.

We come home to mend our nets.



CHAPTER 9:

RETURNING TO THE PŪTAHI

Net-making has long been a collaborative, often familial practice in the places to which I whakapapa, such as the Scottish coastlines, where it was customary for fishing families to make and mend the nets "required for their mutual support."[317] Of all the textile-crafts that share resonances across oceans, net-making is notable, as the knotting techniques used are incredibly similar across diverse cultural backgrounds.[318] As well as its metaphorical resonance in this project, nets are a powerful metaphor globally — perhaps one of the most widely used contemporary metaphors, considering terms such as 'network.' Shawn Wilson writes that every individual thing "is really just a huge knot" in a web of relationships: "a point where thousands and millions of relationships come together."[319] Karlo Mila describes the kupenga as a "core cultural metaphor" for considering the interconnected net of relationships, including the encounters, exchanges, and entanglements that flow back and forth between knots.[320] An example that I encountered synchronously near the end of the research is this explanation of a Ngāpuhi pepeha — 'Ngāpuhi kōwhao rau' (Ngāpuhi of one hundred holes) — by scholar Patu Wahanga Hohepa (Te Mahurehure, Ngāpuhi, Te Ātiawa):

> Ko te kōwhao-rau he kupenga, ko te kōwhao-rau he whakapapa … ko te kōwhao-rau he whanaunga- maha, na reira, mātou i ora ai, nā te kōwhao-rautanga.
>
> (The kowhao-rau we speak of can be likened to a net with many holes. Kowhao-rau refers to genealogy and relationships. … Kowhao-rau refers to our many kin relationships. And that is why we have survived, because of all of these separate but related connections.)[321]

This chapter extends the metaphor of kupenga to consider conversational making and exchange in contemporary art practice. I look to points of encounter and exchange in Aotearoa, including my own family histories, as key knots in my kupenga, proposing that fibre might offer a shared language, a reciprocal means of communication, and a resistance to colonial flattening of cultural histories. Finally, the chapter discusses aspects of this project's blended making techniques in relation to other artists working at the pūtahi of their whakapapa, as a means of finding balance.

PREVIOUS IMAGE: Image 200. There is a point on the Tongapōrutu awa, just beyond where my family place our flounder net, where the turning tides become visible. A soft line forms at the pūtahi, the meeting-place between the sweetwater awa and the incoming salt-sea tide, as the two slowly come together and exchange waters for a time

317 David Bremner, *The Industries of Scotland: Their Rise, Progress and Present Condition* (Edinburgh: A. & C. Black, 1869), 312.

318 Carmen Alfaro Giner, "Fishing Nets in the Ancient World: The Historical and Archaeological Evidence," in *Ancient Nets and Fishing Gear*, ed. Tønnes Bekker-Nielsen and Dario Bernal Casasola (Cádiz: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Cádiz; Aarhus University Press, 2010), 61; Te Rangihīroa, "The Māori Craft of Netting," 606.

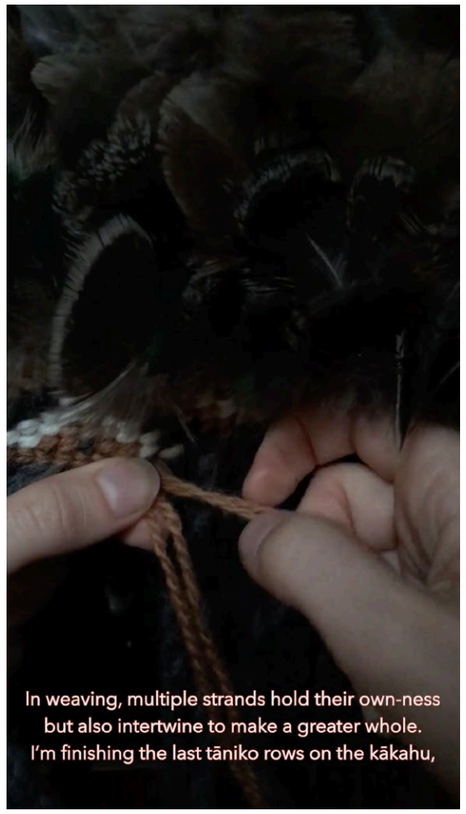
319 Wilson, *Research Is Ceremony*, 76.

320 Karlo Mila, *Taula: The Anchor* (unpublished).

321 Patu Hohepa quoted in Waitangi Tribunal. *Tino Rangatiratanga Me Te Kāwanatanga: The Report on Stage 2 of the Te Paparahi o Te Raki Inquiry* (Wai 1040) (Wellington: Waitangi Tribunal, 2022), 5, https://www.waitangitribunal.govt.nz/publications-and-resources/waitangi-tribunal-reports/.







ABOVE: Image 201. Matthew McIntyre Wilson, *The New Net*, 2018. Harakeke, kareao, whale bone, muka, kōkawa. Installation view at The Dowse as part of SOLO 2018. Courtesy Matthew McIntyre-Wilson and The National, Christchurch. Photo: John Lake

BELOW: Images 202 & 203. Stills from Emily Parr and Arielle Walker, *tōu tauira me tōu kaiako hoki*, 2021. Single channel digital video, 21 min 28 sec. Right-hand still shows a detail of Hana Pera Aoake's artwork collaboration with Wynn Hamlyn being embroidered for *Whānau Mārama*, 2021

Tīrea, April 2021

Most times, we put the flounder net out together as soon as the tide is low enough. One-or-all of us traipse through the shallows after Dad to stretch it out full-length along the river edge. It's always the same net, mud-seeped and coloured beige with age, except for a few flashes of plastic green or white, mends made with whatever string was at hand.

Sometimes, when we were years younger, you would be distracted by the mud as soon as we reached the shore — sunwarmed on the surface, springwater cold beneath, perfect to slip and slide and roll in, emerging mud-coated menaces to scare away all the fish — while I remember trying to stay serious, to prove to Dad I could keep up and lay the net without seeming squeamish.

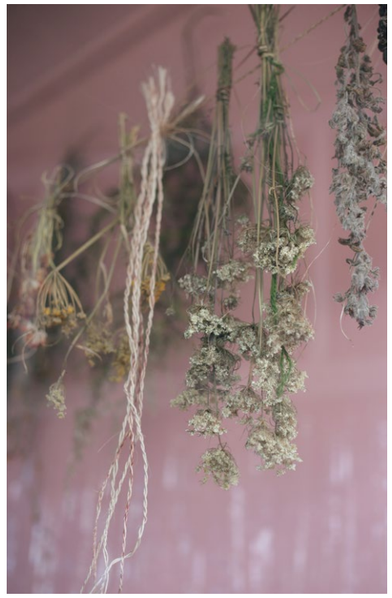
I don't often put the net out when I go home without you all. It's always better as a two-or-many person job. Even so, you're the ones who follow Dad into the river now, and further still — up to the stones and down to the sea, while I wait in the sunlit shallows, threads in hand for the mending. I'm at my most content then, when we lay the net out together, checking it over for tangles, pulling out stray twigs and leaves, looking for rips and tears. Finding all the places that need mending, tying new knots over new holes and old ones. Making the net strong enough to hold everything it is meant to.

WHATU AHO RUA | STORYING EXCHANGE

Mending the Kupenga identifies with contemporary practices that engage the pūtahi, places of encounter, confluences and intersections between peoples, places, and ideas. These resonate with ancestral histories of storytelling and conversations held over, through, and around textile practices, weaving with both fibre and words, hands and voice.[322] The metaphor of exchange in whatu-aho-rua and tukutuku techniques also describes the back-and-forth reciprocal nature of conversational practice, and refers to the shared learning that takes place in tuakana/teina and intergenerational methods of knowledge transfer, as well as intercultural and intermaterial exchange. Notions of the 'conversational' and the 'collaborative' are related but distinct: the first mode can take place both in parallel making, and in the passing back and forth between entities, while the second focuses more on a collective work towards a shared outcome. Though there are points where this project has touched on collaborative aspects, it is situated in a conversational rather than a collaborative space. The potential for a conversational practice exists not only between human contributors, but also more-than-human: maunga, awa, moana, place-based materials, and ancestral stories and making practices.

In response to McIntyre-Wilson's 2018 exhibition *The New Net*, installed in *SOLO 2018* at The Dowse, Hanahiva Rose suggests that "the stories woven into the fabric of the kupenga .. represent a rebuke to the assumption that there is an absolute difference between material and immaterial culture. Instead, they argue in their

322 Smith, "Whatuora: Whatu Kākahu," 4.











CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: Images 204 to 208. Emily Parr and Arielle Walker, *ngā rerenga whau* (installation detail), gathered dye plants, muka, digital video, Kū Kahiko Gallery, 2021; details of gathered muka and plants; installation detail with dyed blanket-patchwork for *Whānau Mārama* 2022; dyeing-in-process

various ways, each begets the other."[323] *Mending the Kupenga* considers how the interweaving of immaterial (stories) and material (fibre) can support the building and strengthening of creative-practice relationships over time, working in conversation with family, friends, and other kin. This interweaving finds resonances in practices like those of Mataaho Collective (with Maureen Lander); the Carmichael family; Nikau Hindin (Ngāpuhi, Te Rarawa, Ngai Tūpato) and Rongomai Hoskins (Ngāpuhi); Maria Kingi; and the collaborative projects of Hana Pera Aoake (Ngaati Mahuta, Ngaati Hinerangi, Tainui/Waikato) and Faith Wilson (Samoan/Pākehā); Jade Townsend (Ngāti Kahungunu) and Emiko Sheehan (Ngāti-Maniapoto, Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Whaoa-Ngāti Tahu). For example, Mataaho Collective describe how their practice is informed by whare pora as a site of wānanga, where knowledge is learnt through conversational sharing. Acknowledging the reciprocal exchange inherent in tuakana/teina relationships, Mataaho Collective actively position relationality as central to their methodology, notably in their work with mentor Maureen Lander.[324] HIndin and Hoskins similarly describe their relationship as tuakana-teina, with Hoskins undertaking a four month apprenticeship with Hi[325]ndin in 2022 on the practice and research of aute as a Māori artform, which has led into an ongoing relationship of knowledge transfer, learning, and sharing.

A conversational practice from the early stages of the research is a series of Maramataka works that Emily Parr and I made, following a seasonal kaupapa. The first, *tou tauira tou kaiako hoki*, was made in connection with the *Whānau Mārama* Matariki festivals (2021–2022), conceived by Townsend, and extended in the exhibition *ngā rerenga whau* (2021-2022), curated by Andrea Low ('Ōiwi, Tongareva, Sāmoa, iTaukei, Scotland) for Moana Fresh's Kū Kahiko gallery. Each work in the series follows one lunar cycle, from Whiro to Whiro. On alternating days, Emily and I shared a brief iPhone video and poetic letter with each other, responding to the previous sending and happenings of the day. We paid particular attention to place and to seasonal changes. Looking back at these artworks, among the ebb and flow of reciprocation and response, the seeds of two other early makings come into focus: tanekaha-dyed wool that worked itself into the tāniko band of the kākahu I made for my brother's graduation; and many hands contributing stitches to support Aoake's embroidered artwork collaboration with designer Wynn Hamlyn (also exhibited in *Whānau Mārama*, 2021).

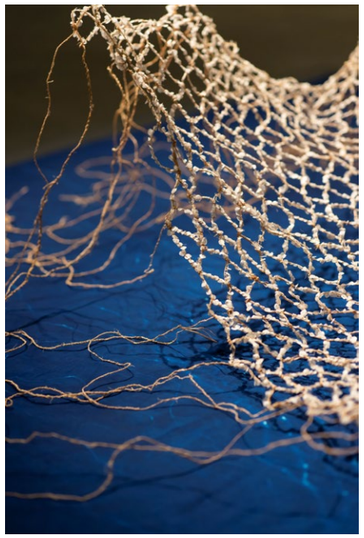
Gifted by Jade Townsend, the title of our artwork *tou tauira tou kaiako hoki* refers to the shared relationship of learning and teaching, and how knowledge flows both ways. Emily and I exchange stories and knowledge in our conversations, learning from each other's practices across moving-image and textiles. For *ngā rerenga whau*, during our day-to-day correspondence we gathered dye plants and muka together, and included them alongside the video works, *Mahuru* and *Whiringa-ā-nuku*.

323 Rose, "Ka Hao Te Rangatahi."

324 Indigenous methods of collective working, such as mahitahi, are also relevant to practices like those of Mataaho Collective, who speak of their "four-brain, eight-hand approach," where their "combined collective authorship [is] bigger than their individual capabilities." Mataaho Collective, accessed March 27, 2024, https://www.mataahocollective.com.

325 Rongomai Hoskins, "Te Uru Aute Blog," *Toi Ngāpuhi*, 2022. https://www.toingapuhi.co.nz/tai-o-hi-tai-o-ha-internship-programmes/te-uru-aute-blog-na-rongomai-kapiri-marama-hoskins













TOP LEFT & CENTRE: Images 209, 211 & 212. Sonja Carmichael and Elisa Jane Carmichael, *Ngumpi (Home)*, 2022-2023 (detail and installation images). Ungaire, driftwood, talwalpin (cotton tree), mangrove bark-dyed silk fabric, shells, string. Installation in *TarraWarra Biennial 2023: ua usiusi fa'ava'asavili*, Tarrawarra Museum of Art, Wurundjeri Country, 2023. Photos: Louis Lim, courtesy of Sonja Carmichael and Elisa-Jane Carmichael

TOP RIGHT: Image 210. Elisa-Jane Carmichael, *a search for meaning is to absorb the abundance of beauty in nature*, 2021 (detail). Talwalpin, fish scales, cyanotype. Installation view, *Primavera* 2021: Young Australian Artists, Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney. Photo: Anna Kučera, courtesy of Elisa Jane Carmichael

BOTTOM RIGHT: Image 213. Arielle Walker, raffia cordage hand-twined in conversation during the *Travelling Places* non-symposium, Artspace 2019

BOTTOM LEFT: Image 214. Maria Kingi, *Textiles*, 2016. Hand-spun wool yarn. Installed in *Tête-à-Tête. A Conversation Between the Maker and the Made*, AUT Visual Arts Project Space, AUT University, Tāmaki Makaurau, 2016. Photo: Monique Redmond

Later, I taught Emily how to dye woollen blanket-squares with the plants, which she then stitched together. The plant-dyed blanket then became a way to bring whenua into the exhibition space, accompanying the fourth moving-image work, *Haratua*, in the 2022 iteration of *Whānau Mārama*.

Ngugi/Quandamooka artists, mother and daughter Sonja and Elisa Jane Carmichael also describe their weaving practice as sharing knowledge. Freja Carmichael (daughter and sister), describes this as the "connecting thread of family and community" embodied in stories "conveyed by and within the very process of [her] mother and [her] sister working together to create, nurture, and share culture."[326] During the 2019 *Travelling Places: A Non-Symposium*, held at Artspace in Tāmaki Makaurau, Freja Carmichael shared her family's Quandamooka practice of string-making, embedding stories and histories within the strands. I recall that being part of this experience opened my consideration of what I might call an active conversational "method-in-practice." Aotearoa artist Kingi has similarly described her material practice, which includes hand-spinning natural fibres such as wool, as conversational, where the "experiential space between the maker and the made" is "a conversation between the body, material and tools."[327] This type of reciprocal sharing and passing back and forth of object, material, story, knowledge (especially across artforms: poetry, film, and fibre-making) underpins and shapes my art practice.

Drawing on histories of conversational making has also influenced how artworks in this project are shared, and the opportunities offered for further exchange even after their making. The *Kōrerorero* sessions at Blue Oyster Art Project Space were an early opportunity to engage intentionally with opening a conversational making-space. We positioned *Kōrerorero* as "a space to be in conversation with people, materials, places and times. When we are in conversation we can build connections between us, like making a tukutuku and passing strands through the panel."[328] Among those who joined were friends and fellow artists, cousins met and unmet, members of the Blue Oyster community, and those who had stumbled across the event online and decided to join sight unseen. One participant, Pākehā art-writer and poet Robyn Maree Pickens, writes of the experience:

> I don't remember consciously choosing an old jersey my father gave me as a "family piece," but I did dig it out and decide to darn a fraying edge. My father used to work as a shepherd and then as a soil conservator—both on high country sheep stations—and would've worn this jersey (which subsequently shrunk) while out working with the earth.
>
> I had darned it and darned on top of the darning over the years, and in a growing culture of reusing and repairing old objects … it felt appropriate to tackle it again. Walker asked me what I was working on, and via this question

326 Freja Carmichael, "Wunjayi (Today)," in *Tarnanthi 2020: Open Hands* [exhibition catalogue], 30-42 (Adelaide: Art Gallery of South Australia, 2020); Sonja Carmichael and Elisa Jane Carmichael, *Wunjayi (Today)*, 2020, mixed media, Onespace Gallery, West End, Australia.

327 Maria Elizabeth Kingi, "Tête-à-Tête: A Conversation between the Maker and the Made" (master's thesis, Auckland University of Technology, 2017), 15, https://hdl.handle.net/10292/10579.

328 Text from the *Kōrerorero* open invitation, Blue Oyster Art Project Space, https://www.blueoyster.org.nz/events/arielle-walker-2/.

> ... I was able to bring my father and a little of his history into the space as I sat darning on the wooden floor beneath my favourite work [tūpuna guide us … (2019 – ongoing)] in this exhibition: an in-process length of flax knitted in the traditional Print o' da Wave Shetland lace pattern.[329]

Pickens further describes the potential of the space to encompass reciprocation "between generations, art forms, and between humankind and the earth." Referring to the "community of relations" established by the exhibition and through *Kōrerorero*, she suggests the work "extended connections beyond the human to strengthen ties with the rest of nature." In so doing, Pickens argues, the project "exemplified the restorative potential of community in its most expanded sense."[330]

Pickens' experience reflects my intent with this mode of practising, especially the understanding that conversational practice considers beyond-human kin with equal weight. A conversational exchange with place and material might look like time spent sitting in place, listening and observing, or letting materials lead the making. I listen for the materials I gather, choosing those that 'call out' to me. The relationship between muka and wool shapes the form of a weaving; the shift of a plant-colour while dyeing allows for a response in return. The process of returning making-outcomes to place — for example, giving back the stone loom-weights after the weaving is complete — further extends this conversation. In these spaces, I am often tauira and teina, learning from the taiao, and offering back what I can.[331]

The textile metaphor of whatu-aho-rua, conversation and reciprocal exchange, carries into creative practices where textiles are not immediately present. The lyric-essay "Ka Mua, Ka Muri: On Hope, (Re)Imagining and Solidarity During Covid-19," written in 2020 between Aoake and Wilson, weaves voices together.[332] The 'I' becomes fluid and yet is still clearly understood as a conversation, a story shared through a recognisable back and forth. Likewise, projects such as *Ā Muri Atu/In the Future* (2021), by artists Townsend and Sheehan, carry similar methods into a material practice, exploring "new ways of existing together through text, drawing and objects."[333] My practice is situated alongside these artists. We are not only in conversation *within* our practices, but *between* our practices, especially given that we inhabit and share an arts community.

329 Robyn Maree Pickens, "The Restorative Potential of Earth-Centred Practices," Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, December 6, 2021, https://www.aucklandartgallery.com/article/the-restorative-potential-of-earth-centred-practices.

330 Pickens, "The Restorative Potential."

331 Whether through weeding or planting as I gather, learning new modes of reciprocity with place from others working at the intersections of artistic and ecological fields (such as the restorative biochar work being undertaken by Te Waituhi a Nuku: Drawing Ecologies collective), or simply being-in-awareness.

332 Hana Pera Aoake and Faith Wilson, "Ka Mua, Ka Muri: On Hope, (Re)Imagining and Solidarity during Covid-19," *Pantograph Punch*, April 24, 2020, https://www.pantograph-punch.com/posts/ka-mua-ka-muri.

333 Jade Townsend and Emiko Sheehan, *Ā Muri Atu/In the Future* (exhibition), 2021, Ramp Gallery, Hamilton, New Zealand.

RELATIONAL NETS AT THE PŪTAHI: POINTS OF ENCOUNTER & EXCHANGE

Incorporating and transforming colonial tools is a mechanism used by Indigenous peoples to "defend core values, constructs, and ways of being" — in Aotearoa, our 'blended' taonga, such as early to mid-19th century kākahu made with both muka and wool, can be seen as "sites of resistance to and, paradoxically, cultural commerce with, the coloniser."[334] This research is particularly interested in the 'space between' offered by that paradox, and the potential for such material and knowledge exchange to be balanced, reciprocal. Maureen Lander emphasises that "Māori weavers have merged new, innovative strands into their cloak-making repertoire since first European contact," as demonstrated in many of the taonga in museum collections which "bear testimony to a continuity of weaving knowledge that is dynamic and responsive to change, combining the threads of tradition and innovation in an entwined continuum from past to present."[335] Looking to taonga in museum collections to learn from customary forms, and rethink how we might make such forms with the materials available to us today, artists like Lander reinforce "a culture of constant innovation."[336]

Tamatea Anganga/ Tamatea ā ngana, July 2023

We move quietly through alleyways of museum shelving, towering tree-height to the distant ceiling in cold blue steel. It feels like a whispering-place, but I can't help exclamations of awe as the taonga are lifted down on flat, wide drawer-beds, out of their dark-hued slumber to lie before us in the soft light.

The korowai have gilded with age, their hukahuka still deep black, unfaded and supple. Some have begun to disintegrate over time, dyed muka fragments like soot-dust kept carefully in little packets alongside, all the pieces held together. We remember that this breaking down was once considered part of the life cycle of each piece. It would be returned to the earth, and a new weaving would begin. Now they are held in stasis.

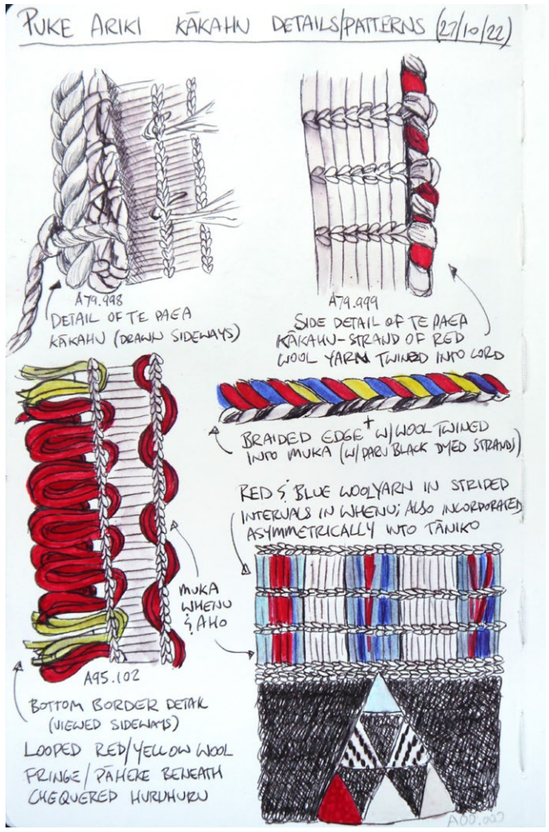
> Scholar Kane Te Manakura (Ngāi Tūhoe) argues that reclaiming Indigenous traditions of innovation "is essential to confidently navigate the future *and* honour our tūpuna," noting that "cultural innovation can be a means of defending traditional life-ways against social fragmentation and breakdown."[337] This research also considers so-called 'blended' kākahu to be material 'sites of resistance' to the colonial process of fragmenting, segmenting, distancing, and overwriting, that simultaneously offer

334 Te Manakura, "From the Margins of Te Whare Pora," 133.

335 Lander, "Te Ao Tawhito," 62.

336 Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, "Maureen Lander: Wai o te Marama," accessed March 12, 2024, https://christchurchartgallery.org.nz/collection/2021121/maureen-lander/wai-o-te-marama.

337 Te Manakura, "From the Margins of Te Whare Pora," 133.











TOP LEFT: Image 215.
Arielle Walker, notes from Puke Ariki visit to see "blended" kākahu, October 2022, showing details of wool ornamentation and inclusions (including striped whenu) in the collection

TOP RIGHT: Image 216.
Detail of red wool in Te Paea's kākahu

RIGHT & ABOVE: Images 217, 218 (back) & 219 (front)
Arielle Walker, details of tauira made responding to details from kākahu like those shown above, including pāheke inclusion (in a muka/wool blend aho), multicoloured whiri border, and alternating muka and wool whenu

Some images of kākahu and other taonga held in museum collections have been removed from the published copy

a dialogue through their complex material harmonies. I look to the confluences not to deny the disjuncts and ruptures, but to reach beyond fragmentation/displacement/disconnection, rather than be held there in stasis.

Strands of red wool pāheke nestle in amongst the muka, bright pops of colour along borders and edges. Ngore, too, and blue yarns, some felted, or shifted to grey, others still bright as the sky. Some colours are faded almost beyond recollection, made before synthetic dyes. "Accessioned in 1925, 1887, 1876" — the dates each kākahu entered the museum give glimpses into the age of the fibre, the provenance of the colours, but we still have only the surface of their stories. Each thread whispers of exchange, innovation, patterned relationships.

When spending time with taonga in museum spaces, questions beyond intricacies of pattern arise. Whose hands first made each of these taonga? How did wool first become ravelled into their patterns? What relationships allowed for these material exchanges to occur?

I began *Mending the Kupenga* by looking at my own family histories of encounter and exchange. For the collaborative work *whatuora* (2020), Emily Parr and I travelled north together to Kororāreka, where our ancestors had lived simultaneously 200 years before we ourselves met — each in a partnership of a Māori woman married to a Pākehā man. The artwork and our conversation unfolded intuitively: we knew only that we wanted to whatu together in the place where our tūpuna had lived. We brought our first ever tauira along — mine, those heavy strands of carpet wool — and set ourselves up to whatu on the shoreline.

The marriage of my tūpuna, Kotiro Hinerangi and Alexander Grey, in 1830 was the first recorded in the district of Paihia, entwined in the early histories of intercultural exchange between Māori and newly-arrived settlers in Aotearoa. Alexander was a Scottish blacksmith from Aberdeen who jumped ship from the New Zealand Company settler vessel *Rosanna* in 1826. Kotiro was Ngāruahine, and had been taken north from Taranaki as a child about a decade earlier, following the Ngāpuhi raids. Te Paea Hinerangi (also known as Mary Sophia Grey) was their daughter, born in Kororāreka in the early 1830s. Returning to the place that brought my tūpuna together, practising whatu along the same shoreline they would have walked, was an early experience of the sense of futurepresentpast that this project has explored. Making-in-place became a means to be 'co-present with ancestors,' and to open up embodied contemplation of their encounters and exchanges across the kupenga.

I know from family stories that Kotiro and her daughters were involved in planting and harvesting produce for trading with the ships docked in the Bay of Islands harbours, in the mid-1800s. However, I find no recorded details of fibre exchange between my tūpuna and any of the Pākehā women in the area. Too few of those material histories









Artwork details from *X-Marks: Conversations in Cloth*, Te Kōngahu Museum of Waitangi, Bay of Islands, 2018, and NorthArt, Tāmaki Makaurau, 2019

TOP LEFT: Image 220.
Michelle Mayn, *Unfoldment*, 2018. Muka, cotton, feather, stone, 6500 x 3355 x 1000.
Image courtesy of Michelle Mayn

TOP RIGHT: Image 221
Maureen Lander, *Oreo's Sampler*, 2018 (detail).
Image: Maureen Lander Archive

RIGHT & ABOVE: Images 222 & 223.
Jo Torr, *E rua ngā kākahu whero: Two red gowns* (2018).
Muka, linen. Installation and detail images,. Photos: Lucia Zanmonti, courtesy of Jo Torr

— especially those of women — were documented. And yet, from visiting Te Paea's own taonga kākahu, reading the inferences between the gaps in the records, and engaging with other research about encounters and exchanges at that time, it is possible to speculate on the likelihoods of such learning and sharing taking place.

In 2018, Te Kōngahu Museum of Waitangi held a three-month group exhibition titled *X-Marks: Conversations in Cloth*. Through the "expansive medium of textiles," the exhibition explored relationships established between Māori women and the newly arrived missionary settler wives living in the Bay of Islands in the early 1800s. Participating artists included Lander and her daughter Kerry Lander, kairaranga Toi Te Rito Maihi (Ngai Te Apatu, Ngai Te Ipu o Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Hau o Tai Tokorau), Vivien Caughley, and artists Jo Torr, Helen Schamroth, and Michelle Mayn.

A lost sampler embroidered by a Māori woman whose name is recorded only as "Oreo,"[338] and a first encounter at Rangihoua/Te Hohi Mission Station between young Ngāpuhi girl Ehura and English-settler woman Hannah King in 1815, became points of reference for many of the artworks and accompanying texts in *X-marks*. These encounters demonstrated that, at least in this context, the teaching/learning of needlework was mutually desired. For example, Ehura's grandmother brought her to the Mission to acquire skills brought by the new settlers.[339] The introduced technical skill of dress-making (and wearing) was learnt through observation, and demonstrated an "irreversible technological transfer between cultures, generations of women, and material cultures."[340] For Māori, European sewing techniques could be seen as a "new medium,"[341] and engaged in "without restriction."[342] These skills were not seen as tapu, could be used by any gender at any age (although the practitioners of sewing remained "overwhelmingly female"), and "required no materials preparation."[343] Caughley surmises that:

> A Pākehā woman's undocumented toolkit, her workbox or workbasket, containing sewing tools and accessories … held the key to Māori and Pākehā women establishing successful friendships … while simultaneously planting early seeds which would form a new aggregated art practice including elements of both cultural traditions.[344]

Gathered anecdotes such as these quoted indicate the ability of shared fibre languages to bridge cultures, becoming a point of connection between Māori

338 Te Kōngahu Museum of Waitangi, *X-Marks. Conversations in Cloth* [exhibition brochure] (Waitangi: Te Kōngahu Museum of Waitangi, 2018).

339 Lander, "Te Ao Tawhito," 68.

340 Vivien Caughley, "Illuminating the Invisible: An Analysis of the Importance of Women and Their Cloth and Fibre Arts Exchanges at the Rangihoua/Te Hohi Mission from 1814 to 1823" (master's thesis, University of Auckland, 2020), 7, https://hdl.handle.net/2292/56142.

341 There have always been Māori traditions of sewing (although this remains an under-researched area of customary practice). See, for example, Patricia Te Arapo Wallace, "Ko te Pūtaio, te Ao o ngā Tūpuna: Ancestral Māori Scientific Practice," in *Whatu Kākahu: Māori Cloaks*, ed. Awhina Tamarapa, 2nd ed. (Wellington: Te Papa Press, 2019), 56; Blackman, "Whatu: The Enclosing Threads," 87. However, the arrival of European sewing offered very different techniques and possibilities.

342 Deirdre Brown, "Icons, Monuments and Temples," in *Te Puna: Māori Art from Te Tai Tokerau Northland*, ed. Deidre Brown and Ngarino Ellis (Auckland: Reed, 2007), 56; Caughley, "Illuminating the Invisible," 7.

343 Brown, "Icons, Monuments and Temples," 56; Caughley, "Illuminating the Invisible," 7.

344 Caughley, "Illuminating the Invisible," 7.







ABOVE: Image 224.
A detail of Nana Maire's lace, similar to pieces made by Joan Maclaurin and exhibited with Maureen Lander in *Interlace*, Hawkes Bay Museum, 1999, that are now held in the Maureen Lander Archives

TOP LEFT: Image 225.
Maureen Lander, *Interlace* samples (including pieces of houhere/lacebark and lace) in the Maureen Lander Archive at the E H McCormick Research Library
Photo: Arielle Walker, 2023

TOP RIGHT: Image 226.
Maureen Lander & Christine Hellyar, *Mrs Cook's Kete*, 2002 (installation detail). Installation at Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, England.
Image courtesy of Maureen Lander and the Maureen Lander Archive

and Pākehā women "of all ages," and providing a reason to communicate "across cultures and down generations … speaking as they worked, and working as they spoke."[345] These anecdotes do not negate the systematic impact and intent that, as Ani Mikaere describes, the "civilising mission" had/has on Māori culture and community.[346] However, looking to moments of interpersonal connection and intercultural communication, of women finding common ground within dominant colonial and patriarchal systems, one can find the seeds of reciprocal relationships.

I find myself speculating about my own tūpuna wāhine in a similar way to the artists of *Conversations in Cloth*. What exchanges may have taken place for them, given they lived in close proximity to the encounters previously described? Did they too learn needlework, and teach how to work with harakeke in return? These are not questions that I can answer definitively, so instead I weave my wonderings into each tauira.

Harder still to determine is evidence of the Mission wives and other settler women learning techniques such as whatu, raranga, or muka hāro. However, the willing cooperation of participants in learning at these early points of contact suggests a strong probability that an exchange of reciprocal fibre-arts techniques and practices occurred.[347] This includes the potential sharing of fibres, the possibility of materials such as muka or the wool unravelled by Māori women from traded blankets finding their way into a Pākeha workbox, which "seems highly possible given the early difficulties of obtaining thread supplies from England."[348]

Lander and Aotearoa sculptor Christine Hellyar's 2002-2003 research and installation *Mrs Cook's Kete*, at the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, similarly imagines the likely interactions and knowledge exchange that may have occurred "between women from opposite sides of the world" during the late 1700s. Lander and Hellyar question if these women may "have shared information and skills about everyday things, and might these exchanges have reflected mutual interests in family and food, clothing and fashion, adornment and handwork rather than a desire to accumulate exotic curiosities?"[349] The artists' concept was sparked by the imagined finding of a collection of kete "belonging" to Elizabeth Cook, wife of Captain James Cook. The kete, which contained a variety of materials and objects "from the South Sea Islands" (intricately made by Lander and Hellyar) invited viewers to speculate as to whether Mrs Cook might have made or collected some of the objects herself.[350]

Another collaborative project of Lander's, exploring 19th century fibre exchanges between Māori and Pākehā women, is the 1999 installation *Interlace*, created for the Hawkes Bay Museum's Octagon space. Working with the Museum's Honorary Curator of Textiles, Joan Maclaurin (a skilled lacemaker), *Interlace* drew inspiration

345 Caughley, 32.
346 Mikaere, "Cultural Invasion Continued."
347 Lander, "Te Ao Tawhito," 68; Caughley, "Illuminating the Invisible," 8.
348 Caughley, "Illuminating the Invisible," 30.
349 Christine Hellyar and Maureen Lander, *Mrs Cook's Kete* [exhibition ephemera] (Oxford: Pitt Rivers Museum, 2002).
350 Hellyar and Lander, *Mrs Cook's Kete*.



Image 227. Nana Maire demonstrating her lacemaking, including finished pieces and work-in-progress. Scanned photograph, 1993

An additional image, Tupaia, "Joseph Banks bartering with a Māori for a lobster," 1769 (detail). Watercolour and pencil. Collection of the British Library, reference: ADD MS 15508, folio 12. (showing the exchange of tapa referred to by Somerville) was removed prior to publication for copyright reasons

from "items such as lacebark ketes finished with Victorian inspired pompoms and flowers, cloaks woven in bright wools, and Victorian bonnets adorned with lacebark" which testified to an "interlacing of techniques and materials — a quiet cross-cultural dialogue."[351] Exhibition lighting and Perspex display-forms emphasised the patterned shadows each lace-piece made. Looking through the exhibition archives, I find details from the installation movingly familiar. It holds images (and physical pieces) of Maclaurin's bobbin-lace samples reminiscent of my Nana Maire's own collection, alongside Lander's raranga lacebark artworks and taonga from various museum collections.

The material responses in *X-marks, Mrs Cook's Kete*, and *Interlace* give form to my contemplations of ancestral exchanges. They begin to re-story the blended taonga that lie sleeping in museums, offering new perspectives on the relationships that enabled these material exchanges to occur. Likewise, my blended-practice explorations made through *Mending the Kupenga* offer another perspective on encounters, exchanges, and cross-cultural conversations.

One vivid kākahu gleams bright with peacock feathers, wide stripes of multicoloured wool peeking through the gaps and spaces between, held together with tanekaha-dyed muka aho. I catch a glimpse of another kahukura huruhuru, whose "taniko" band is actually cross-stitched wool on a hessian backing; a lacebark kete; more looping wool. Ideas spiral and build. Touch is only between gloves, at a distance, held apart. When we leave here, the taonga will sleep again, and I will go home, and from their teachings weave taonga to hold and be held by — and perhaps in doing so, give them another life beyond the museum where they rest.

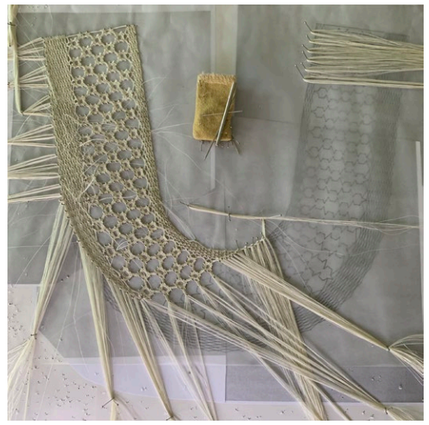
"OUR SEA OF ISLANDS," AN EXPANSIVE NET OF CONNECTIONS

Much of the history of early exchange between settler and Indigenous women, especially concerning fibre practices, has been left out or marginalised in the record. However, there is another assumption often made in written depictions of this time: that the early intercultural exchanges between Māori and British settlers in Aotearoa were the first or most important such series of trades to take place in our histories. In her 2012 text, *Once Were Pacific: Māori Connections to Oceania*, Alice Te Punga Somerville offers an alternative to this Eurocentric view:

> For Māori at Uawa in 1769, the usual European trade goods and trinkets that had been prepared for exchange by the Europeans on board the Endeavour were trumped by large sheets of tapa recently acquired in Tahiti. Although we might be tempted to delve into this moment of "first encounter" for so-called precolonial, first-contact descriptions of Polynesianness

351 Maureen Lander and Joan Maclaurin, *Interlace* [exhibition statement] (Napier: Hawkes Bay Museum, 1999).













TOP: Images 228 & 229. Rowan Panther, details of lacemaking in progress. Images courtesy of Rowan Panther

CENTRE: Images 230 – 232. Rowan Panther, *A Triad of Safekeeping*, 2021. Muka, sterling silver, European beech. Collection of Auckland Museum Te Paenga Hira. Images courtesy of Rowan Panther

ABOVE: Image 233. Detail of Nana Maire's lacemaking in progress (scanned photograph from 1989)

> and whiteness, the Māori preference for tapa over European cloth signals an alternative simultaneous series of connections. As they interacted with navigator-explorers Tupaia and Cook, Māori communities drew on existing narratives of connection and exchange with the broader Pacific.[352]

Somerville's argument relates to Tongan/Fijian writer and anthropologist Epeli Hau'ofa's 1993 text *Our Sea of Islands*, which provides a counter to the "narrow, deterministic" and "belittling" view of the many islands of Te Moana-nui-a-kiwa as isolated, remote, confined entities.[353] Instead, Hau'ofa proposed a more constructive view: that of a "sea of islands" (rather than "islands in the sea"), which positions the peoples and places as an interconnected network of ocean-dwelling relations.[354] Across this network, knowledges, languages, stories, and material techniques are continually exchanged.

There are resonances with these shared histories in the practice of artist Rowan Panther (Samoan, Irish, English, European). Using carefully chosen materials, form, and process, Panther negotiates "the entanglement of her Samoan and Irish genealogies and her sense of place in Aotearoa"[355] through her intricate bobbin-lace artworks. Of her recent artworks, *A Triad of Safekeeping* (2021), commissioned by (and shown in) Tāmaki Paenga Hira Auckland War Memorial Museum, Panther says:

> Coming from New Zealand, which is such a multi-cultural place from where so many of us don't originate, sometimes it's hard to know where you fit into the big picture. This has led to a lot of my work being about exploring my own heritage. I use muka in my work to incorporate New Zealand; England and Ireland with lace patterning, and the Pacific with materials and motifs of Samoa. This way I can create my own cultural identity and tradition.[356]

I am especially drawn to the contemporary framing of Panther's artworks as something that can be worn in contact with skin and by doing so, adorn the wearer with their whakapapa. Seeing images of Panther's lacemaking in progress prompts memories of Nana Maire working on her own lace — Nana always had something on the go, in process, partially made. I know she would have spent hours admiring Panther's work. I wish I could share with her my own excitement over the relational potentials held in each piece — and so in my own way I still do, across time, through my practice.

In her role as Associate Curator, Contemporary World at Auckland Museum, Andrea Low observes that *A Triad of Safekeeping* is at once a contemplation of, and in conversation with, "materials... ways and processes and concepts that are prevalent

352 Alice Te Punga Somerville, *Once Were Pacific: Māori Connections to Oceania* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), xv.

353 Epeli Hau'ofa, "Our Sea of Islands," in *We Are the Ocean: Selected Works* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), originally published 1993.

354 Hau'ofa, "Our Sea of Islands," 32.

355 Andrea Low, ed., *A Triad of Safekeeping* (Auckland: Tāmaki Paenga Hira Auckland Museum, 2021).

356 Rowan Panther, quoted in Tryphena o Rongomai Cracknell, "Knotting Culture: The Muka of Rowan Panther," *Garland*, December 1, 2017, https://garlandmag.com/article/knotting-culture-the-muka-of-rowan-panther.







ABOVE: Image 234. A detail of Nana's lacework with a rose from her garden (circa early 90s). Scanned photograph from Nana's collection

BELOW LEFT & RIGHT. Images 235 & 236. Maureen Lander, *Deadlines and Lifelines*, 1992 (installation details). Exhibited in 'Stranded', a group show by Elam sculpture students at The Strand, Parnell. Photos courtesy of Maureen Lander and the Maureen Lander Archive

The "visual metaphor" of the plants in Te Hokianga: The Returning Place is reflected in Lander's later artworks, including Deadlines and Lifelines, 1992, and the 1993 installation Signs of the Times, at Artspace. There, Lander's use of harakeke and roses referenced times of ancestral navigation and also harvest across multiple ancestral traditions, as plants "flower, bear fruit, and return their seeds to the nurturing land." (Maureen Lander, *Signs of the Times* [artist statement])

in our [Auckland Museum] collections ... it is not a finite or closed conversation."[357] Low shares her hopes that the placement of Panther's work, in context and conversation with other taonga in the museum, urges audiences to consider their relations and histories, including "the relationship with the past as it is represented in the structure of the museum," evoked through Panther's use of materials, forms, and processes:

> Rowan's use of muka is in a sense a question: What does it mean to be from here but not Indigenous to this place? What is belonging? Each of the taonga in our collections is contemporaneous, in and of its time. Rowan speaks to that. We are not located in the past — we are still here.[358]

In Panther's artworks, I see a continuum of ancestral making, sharing, and exchange, resonating through the futurepresentpast — an embodiment of the knowledge that we *are* still here, and our tūpuna are with us, connected across a sea of islands, a sea of time.

WEAVING TOGETHER: INTERCULTURAL PATTERNINGS

Like Panther, many contemporary artists combine methods and processes to untangle their complex ancestral connections. I relate to Jade Townsend's description of her own art practice, working at the intersection of her Māori, Pākehā and British heritage, as a "non-fixed duality that ebbs and flows with contradictory cultural forces every day."[359] I, too, find that "my wairua connects to many seemingly disparate fields," and, like Townsend, I "reinterpret that through materiality."[360] As part of the reparative nature of this project, the research has focused on modes of making that use craft techniques and materials from all strands of my whakapapa — elements that do not "lose themselves in order to be in relation"[361] but instead weave together, becoming strands in the kupenga. Alongside Panther's work, Lander's material practice of "balancing" and the mahi kākahu of Roka Hurihia Ngārimu-Cameron resonate the most with my own blended-making approach.

Maureen Lander's decades of practice include important examples of artworks that engage such methods. She shares how her practice "interweaves" her taha Māori and taha Pākehā, not eliminating the tensions at the interface between them, but still creating a kind of harmony.[362] For this project, a personal favourite is *Te Hokianga: The Returning Place* (1987), first exhibited in *Huawhenua* (1987) at Massey Homestead. The installation came from memories of Kohukohu, in the Hokianga,

357 Nina Tonga and Andrea Low, "Curatorium: An Introduction," *Waka Kuaka: The Journal of the Polynesian Society* 132, no. 3 (2023): 356-358. https://doi.org/10.15286/jps.132.3.353-370.

358 Tonga and Low, "Curatorium: An Introduction," 356-8.

359 Jade Townsend, "Artist Biography & History with Artspace Aotearoa," Artspace, accessed March 29, 2024, https://auction.artspace-aotearoa.nz/works/jade-townsend.

360 Townsend, "Artist Biography."

361 Barnett, "Kei Roto i te Whare," 24.

362 Maureen Lander, "Taking Part in Exhibitions 1986–87," in *Ma te Huruhuru te Manu Ka Rere* [exhibition documentation], Maureen Lander Archive RC2023/1/1/2, E H McCormick Research Library, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki.







ABOVE: Image 237
Taranaki harakeke and gorse, photographed in 2019

RIGHT: Image 238.
Roka Huruhia Ngārimu-Cameron, *Korowai Puketeraki*, 2006 (detail). Harakeke, cotton and linen, pig tusk capped with granite stone. Photo: Craig McNab, courtesy of Roka Huruhia Ngārimu-Cameron

TOP RIGHT: Image 239.
Roka Huruhia Ngārimu-Cameron, *Korowai Puketeraki*, 2006 (detail of whītau tags and tanekaha dye). Image courtesy of Roka Huruhia Ngārimu-Cameron

and her grandmother's garden. Gathered flower petals — rose, lavender, hydrangea, hibiscus — were layered alongside harakeke seeds, seedpods, stalks. Muka created a "misty atmosphere, dissolving the walls and windows and giving a timeless feeling to the space."[363] Through plants first brought to the Hokianga by Pākehā ancestors, and the native harakeke so vital to our tūpuna Māori, Lander acknowledges a "dual heritage." She describes the created environment as a form of shelter-space, the "kind of enclosure one might find" in a garden beneath a "rose covered pergola."[364] Floral petal-scents intermingled with harakeke to fill the gallery, evoking a multi-sensory place-memory and a "strong sense of intimacy and protection" for Lander.[365] In *Te Hokianga* and later installations, such as *Deadlines and Lifelines* (1992), aspects of place-memory and returning are emphasised in the placement of harakeke seed and red rose petals to symbolise whenua in all its meanings — land, afterbirth, a marker of tūrangawaewae.

Lander has also written about her photographic practice, which includes collecting images of roses and harakeke growing side by side in the wild throughout Hokianga. Learning about this strand of practice reminded me to return to a parallel practice that I have employed since making *distance rewoven from the roots to the stem* (2020-ongoing). That artwork began with a film-photograph taken in Taranaki of flowering gorse growing up amongst harakeke. After taking the photograph, I then collected the gorse flowers, cut it back and trimmed the dead and dying rau harakeke. These all became dyes for wool yarn, which I then used to whatu into a woven-hemp-printed and then partially unravelled version of the image — similar to my earlier artwork, *distance covered, stitch by tiny stitch*.

Lander's work weaves both tangible and intangible aspects across cultures: fibre, sounds, and stories.[366] In doing so, Lander has sought a "standing place" for herself, one where she can draw inspiration and strength "from either side," as "new patterns emerge, new symbolism grows from the old, new ways of working, as they have in the past and will continue to do in the future."[367] My practice similarly seeks a balanced place to stand, drawing new patterns from my ancestral practices.

Combining on-loom weaving of kākahu with customary materials such as muka, Ngārimu-Cameron considers her work a creative response to her dual cultural heritage. By "adapting the art of making traditional off-loom garments to a contemporary practice of on-loom weaving," Ngārimu-Cameron says she feels she is "playing a part in bringing (or weaving) the two cultures of Aotearoa/New Zealand together."[368]

Ngarimu-Cameron established techniques that enabled her to adapt loom-weaving methods to work with muka, despite each aho/whenu muka being limited by the

363 Lander, "In Sites," 85.

364 Lander, 85.

365 Lander, 85.

366 Janine Randerson, "Sampling Tradition: The Old in New Media," in *The Aotearoa Digital Arts Reader,* ed. Stella Brennan and Susan Ballard (Auckland: Aotearoa Digital Arts and Clouds, 2008).

367 Lander, "Taking Part in Exhibitions."

368 Roka Ngarimu-Cameron, "Tōku Haerenga" (master's thesis, Otago Polytechnic, 2008), 164.











CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: Images 240 to 244. Plant-dyed tauira in plain-weave plaid, and plain weave with whatu whakapae inclusions at intervals; the first tauira muka worked between whatu and drawn-thread patterns; detail of a muka/wool-blend whatu tauira with drawn-thread patterns; detail of a muka/wool-blend tauira with māwhitiwhiti and darned twill patterns

length of the rau harakeke. I encountered similar difficulties in beginning the larger-scale weavings, and, like Ngārimu-Cameron, chose to start with small-scale samplers (the tauira). Her first sampler was woven on a table loom, incorporating a wide range of materials from various places she had visited, including Oregon native grasses, Hawaiian tea plant, tapa cloth gifted from her son in Fiji, wool and silk, harakeke paper, pīngao, and kereru feathers.[369] The learnings from her small-scale samplers were quickly extended into kākahu, including korowai — which Ngarimu-Cameron argues can be woven on-loom, using muka and including ornamental hukahuka.370 Following her lead, I spent the middle part of the research period (most of 2023) experimenting with ways to extend the aho and whenu for my larger-scale whatu-weavings. I have utilised methods of miro and hand-twining, and different ratios and qualities of fibre blends between muka and wool, to achieve the lengths required to make up a kākahu-length warp.

Though there are distinct differences between our practices — Ngarimu-Cameron works primarily on a horizontal treadle floor-loom, for example, a rather different form to the warp-weighted structure — I am drawn to her intent, and feel a sense of recognition in her making-methods and the emotional outcome of weaving in this way. She describes her feeling upon having completed her first two on-loom korowai as one of aroha, as though the similarities of ancestral weaving techniques from across her whakapapa had "woven a thread of love through [her] veins." She says:

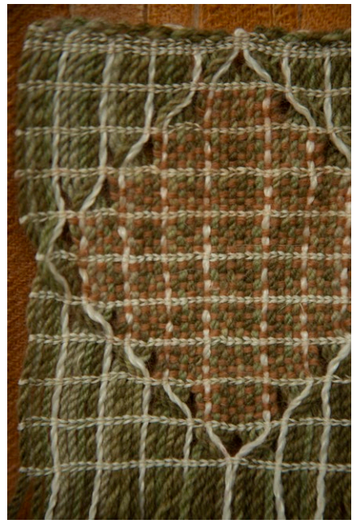
> My mahi has brought the ways of my tūpuna Māori and tūpuna from my non-Māori side, Ngati Airahi, together. The wairua I felt when I had completed Te Haraawaka and Puketeraki was strong. I was proud of my dual cultural heritage and that my mahi was in harmony with my heart, soul and hands.[371]

In making this project's tauira and larger whatu-weavings, I feel that same sense of wairua Ngarimu-Cameron describes. The research explores patterning potentials of multiple origins, combining woven plaid or tartans, twill patterns, and colours from dye plants that connect to my Scottish and Irish ancestral practices, with whatu, māwhitiwhiti, hukahuka, plants and patterns that respond to the kākahu of my tūpuna Māori.

In a pair of tauira from early 2023, I worked with off-cuts of yarns dyed for the *whatuwai* whatu-weaving —same colours, same plants, and yet each piece came out differently. *whatuwai* was already underway, but I wanted to continue with those same fibres, to see what might happen if I worked within a more traditional framework from another place: connecting back to my Scottish/Shetland/Irish ancestors, with the colours gathered from here, still grounded by Taranaki. While a twill may have been more traditional, the first of these tauira was woven in a simple plain-weave plaid design (Image 240, left), with a counted patterning across the warp and weft.

369 Ngarimu-Cameron, 14.
370 Ngarimu-Cameron, 18.
371 Ngarimu-Cameron, 60.







ABOVE: Image 245.
Tauira made in hand-twined muka/wool blend, working interrupted pātikitiki pattens in whakapae filled with darned/woven details.

TOP RIGHT: Image 246.
Tauira detail showing kawakawa dyed wool and muka/wool-blend whenu, with whakapae, and tanekaha-dyed wool darned detail filling centre pattern.

RIGHT: Image 247.
Tauira detail, showing on-loom whatu-weaving in undyed and yarrow-dyed muka, with whatu-aro-rua ara and māwhitiwhiti between woven rows

The second tauira also began with a plain weave, though this time I let the colours bunch together spontaneously in the warp rather than counting them out. Rows of whakapae then moved the yarns around the fabric, giving a sense of flow, an almost optical illusion to the weave. There is a point where the colours all begin to blend together, before moving back across to their starting point (see Image 240).

Later tauira experimented more with blended threads, as I played with different weights of muka/wool fibre. I found that blending the two by miro, rather than hand-twining, gave a softer thread, but the two fibres also didn't hold together as strongly as the hand-twined yarns. Tauira made with these blended fibres then incorporated patterns that combine māwhitiwhiti and whakapae details with darned and loom-woven twills (Images 245, 246, 247). I was especially drawn to these patterns, and the potential they hold to create striking designs on kākahu-scale whatu-weavings. Most recently, my practice has returned to the early knitted Shetland lace motifs with which I began my muka journey, using them as a starting point to whatu-weave from.

As my practice continues, inspired by the approaches taken by artists such as Lander, Panther, and Ngārimu-Cameron, I have begun to feel the sense of balance and wairua they each describe. I see a material language of reciprocity form in the techniques exchanging between whenu and warp, weft threads and aho. The pūtahi of my tupuna, my ancestors, is storied and becomes visible in the blended fibres of each whatu-weaving.

rongoā (reprise)

angiangi

do not wait until the storm passes
find a path out through the turbulence
to gather broken branches that lie
among the wreckage
where the angiangi
has been severed
from the tree
and will no longer grow

simmer it grey-green to rust in rain-water, warmed
in the palms of your close-held hands
breathe deep and drink it in
let it fill you with the ocean
a full-moon tide no longer buried
add your own salt tears to the water
drink again, and again, until your heart has stretched
wide enough to hold it all
let it remind you that we could live in reciprocity
let it remind you of what it will take
to get there

gorse

thorns shelter small creatures
it doesn't belong
here
roots hold the earth in place, fight erosion and loss
it doesn't belong here
flowers feed insects, coconut-scented nourishment

runs rampant *here*
fixes the soil
is invasive here
can be a tonic, a wine, a healing tea
dyes a rich golden yellow
carries the sun
takes over
takes over
takes over
let it sink back to the soil in shade
let it help return the whenua
back to balance
instead

rimurimu, tang & sea salt

walk among the roughhewn low-tide rocks
salt-scent the same sea that brings you home
along the curve of the coast you cannot see it
through the ocean haze imagine the crash-hiss
of waves on sleek black sand stand *here* breathe
in the betweenplace air at the takutaimoana the
shoormal watch as worlds meet again and
again and again and again you're still looking for
the right dye-shade the right anchor stone wait for
seaweed to roll in on the tide you can fix it with
salt it will stay you can fix it stay wait with salt
on the tide for the seaweed to roll in the right shade
watch worlds meet again and again and again at
the takutai moana the shoormal you're still looking for the
betweenplace where distance disappears breathe in the crash-hiss
waves sleek black sand and low-tide goldgreen stone of two harbours
hear the ocean haze you cannot see through feel the salt-scent
air wait among the rough hewn west
coast stones you are here and
there all at once



CHAPTER 10:

GATHERING, TENDING, PLANTING: (RE)WEAVING CONNECTION TO PLACE

"Knowing that you love the earth changes you, activates you to defend and protect and celebrate. But when you feel that the earth loves you in return, that feeling transforms the relationship from a one-way street into a sacred bond."

Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*, 2013

PREVIOUS IMAGE: Image 248. Gathering dye-plants and stones alongside the Hangataahua awa, Taranaki Maunga in the distance

Balancing the tensions and untangling the snarls in the kupenga is, for me, situated by necessity in (re)connection to place. Leonie Pihama, Marjorie Beverland (Waikato Maniapoto, Ngāti Rereahu, Ngāti Raukawa, Ngāti Īniana), and Ngaropi Cameron-Raumati (Ngāti Mutunga, Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairoa), explain how:

> the referencing of significant features of the environment and ancestors is an important tikanga for Māori, that of making connection … These relationships are expressed too through whakatauākī, such as 'Hokia ki tō ūkaipō' (return to your place of origin), which in a broader context relates to a return to ancestral land, the place where one is nurtured spiritually and emotionally.[372]

They relate the importance of connection to whenua as "whenua ora, tangata ora," which in turn invokes the concept of kaitiakitanga, an "all encompassing" philosophy where "for one to be well, all that is around must also be well and when all living things are in balance, mauri ora is a natural occurrence."[373] As Cherryl Waerea-i-te-rangi Smith explains, "both colonisation and globalisation were born out of the antithesis to the idea of groundedness to a place."[374] This is antithetical to Indigenous understandings that a "continuation of connection to places through generations of memory and responsibility" has always been paramount, and that "being born of a place and remaining connected to a place is fundamental to health and well-being."[375] Returning to ancestral places, restoring relationship to our places of origin, is an active counter to the colonial ruptures of displacement and dispossession. Keri Hulme writes of making and tending fires to keep warm her places of connection, and as a means of connecting to all of her ancestral places at once, invoking her Norse and Scots ancestors along with her Māori tūpuna:

> When I make fires on either of my beaches … whenever I make my fires, whyever I make my fires, I know it is an intrinsic act of rejoicing, in being of both coasts. All coasts, all islands… One day, as ashes or bones, I will rejoin my bones and we will be there together on the coast as long as the land endures.[376]

Working with, and reclaiming responsibility for the taiao — our more-than-human kin in the whenua, maunga, awa, moana — offers the potential of mending. This chapter unpacks the ways in which the research has considered methods of gathering, tending, and planting as means of (re)weaving connection to place.

372 Leonie Pihama, Marjorie Beverland, and Ngaropi Cameron-Raumati, "Whenua Ora, Tangata Ora," in *Ora: Healing Ourselves; Indigenous Knowledge, Healing and Wellbeing*, edited by Leonie Pihama and Linda Tuhiwai Smith (Wellington: Huia, 2023), 212.

373 Pihama, Beverland, and Cameron-Raumati, "Whenua Ora, Tangata Ora," 214.

374 Cherryl Smith, "Cultures of Collecting," 69.

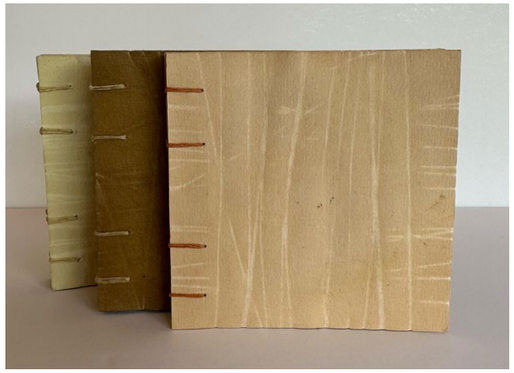
375 Cherryl Smith, 69.

376 Keri Hulme, "Okarito and Moeraki," in *Te Whenua te Iwi: The Land and the People*, ed. Jock Philips (Wellington: Allen & Unwin, 1987), 9.











CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Images 249 & 250. Lanae Cable (Kauae Raro Collective) with Whenua stained bandanas in Te Uruwera; Tūhoe blue clay. Images courtesy of Kauae Raro

Image 251. Sally Hikaka, dyed and printed handmade books (2023). Alder cones, alder pollen cones, tānekaha leaves; hemp string & emboroidery floss; various plants and ferns from the garden; mixed media paper and waterolour paper. Image courtesy of Sally Hikaka

Images 252 & 253. Sarah Hudson (Kauae Raro Collective), *Waikaremoana Rainbow*, 2021. Whenua pigment; *Clay is a Māori medium*, 2021. Unfired, polished whenua medium. Image courtesy of Kauae Raro

GATHERING GUIDES

In gathering materials throughout this project, I have been guided both by embodied knowing and childhood learnings, and by artists' practices that directly engage senses of belonging in place and rebuilding relationship to ancestral whenua through gathering, tending, and planting. Kauae Raro Research Collective do this through exploring the earth-pigments of their tūpuna whenua.[377] Aiming "to model our reciprocal, responsible practice of relating to the land," the collective is dedicated to researching and sharing their mahi. They consider whenua "as an art material, a component of ceremony, for personal adornment and as rongoā."[378] Important to their reciprocal practice is giving thanks, spending time with the whenua without gathering, and prioritising the needs of the earth over the needs of the researcher when foraging. This mahi "operates on a spectrum of connection" across whakapapa, and includes deep research into the histories of each place as those connections are slowly unearthed.[379] Working with artist and tā moko practitioner Sian Montgomery Neutze (Muaūpoko, Ngāi Tara), the collective share gathering guidelines for tangata whenua and non-Māori that emphasise the key tenets of respect, reciprocity, and accountability that are essential to building relationships with place.[380]

Gathering with respect and reciprocity also means tending. As Robin Wall Kimmerer writes, asking permission not only "shows respect for the personhood of the plant" or other being — stone, lichen, whenua pigment — but also enables an "assessment of the well-being of the population."[381] It provides an opportunity to work across modes of knowing, intuitive and empirical, to sense whether the gathering will help or hurt; if the plants will thrive from being thinned, able to breathe freely again, or need respite.[382] On the regeneration of ancestral practices, Freja Carmichael describes how Quandamooka weavers "are again collecting reeds on Minjerribah and sensitively preparing the precious ungaire, taking care to only take the required amount of fibres to ensure the ongoing growth."[383] Donna Campbell adds,

> we are responsible for our natural environments and obligated to those relationships. Kairaranga in particular can be considered kaitiaki of native weaving materials and those environments, kaitiakitanga including safeguarding tikanga associated with the plants and the art forms. The ongoing colonisation of our indigenous knowledge and knowing is perpetuated when we are divorced from the land.[384]

377 Kauae Raro was founded in 2019 by Lanae Cable (Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Pūkeko, Ngāi Tūhoe, Ngāti Maru ki Hauraki), Jordan Davey-Emms (Ngāti Pākeha), and Sarah Hudson (Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Pūkeko, Ngāi Tūhoe).

378 Kauae Raro Research Collective, "About Us," He Kapunga Oneone, accessed March 12, 2024, https://www.kauaeraro.com/about.

379 Kauae Raro, "About Us."

380 Sian Montgomery Neutze, "Gathering Earth Pigments: An Introductory Guide for Tangata Māori," He Kapunga Oneone, accessed March 12, 2024, https://www.kauaeraro.com/akoranga-1/gathering-guidelines; Sian Montgomery Neutze, "Earth Pigment Practices in Aotearoa: Advice for Non-Māori," He Kapunga Oneone, accessed March 12, 2024, https://www.kauaeraro.com/tikanga/advice-for-nonmaori.

381 Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*, 178.

382 Kimmerer, 178.

383 Freja Carmichael, "Weaving Memory," 45.

384 Campbell, "Ngā Kura a Hineteiwaiwa," 58.



Image 254. Kohi harakeke with artist Sally Hikaka and her muka harakeke whānau, Taranaki

Learning to kohi harakeke, we are taught to leave the rito and awhi rito of the plant, so it can continue to grow. We take only what we need, but also clear away the dead, dying, or diseased leaves or plants and any weeds that are choking growth at the same time, ensuring a relationship that gives back as much as — or more than — the material taken.

As Campbell argues, "by being responsible to our taonga plants, taking care of them, harvesting from the ngāhere and practicing the tikanga associated with these practices we experience deeper realities about ourselves and our whenua."[385] Engaging in reciprocity with the whenua, the taiao, is an active resistance to the "ongoing colonisation" of Indigenous knowing.

Returning to place and gathering, tending, and planting materials as a means of connection has been an embodied experience for me. Cora-Allan describes the whole-body activation that occurs when she gathers whenua pigment, as she smells the sea when "scouring for colours" or races the tide to gather mangrove sap for ink.[386] This described experience relates to my own practice, in which learning how/when to gather, (re)growing knowledge of seasonal and celestial cycles, is multi-sensory. The longer I work with gathered materials, the more I appreciate their subtleties: the shifts in dye-colour that come from the same plant found in the same place, gathered at different times in the season; the similarities between plants that seem unrelated, but on further research share families, or genus — share whakapapa. Learning from the taiao in this way leads to a deeper intimacy and relation with place.

HE RONGOĀ

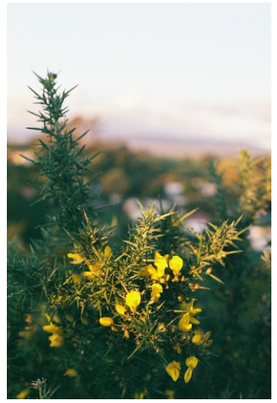
Returning to ancestral whenua, maintaining connection to place, and (re)weaving interrupted connections are essential to mending towards any envisioned future-ora. In their 2019 paper on the importance of māra kai for holistic health outcomes, researchers Ruakere Hond (Taranaki, Ngāti Ruanui), Mihi Ratima (Ngāti Awa, Whakatōhea), and Will Edward (Ngāruahine, Taranaki, Tangahoe, Pakakohi, Ngāti Ruanui) assert that, for Māori, "land remains a fundamental source of identity and spiritual connection that establishes a grounding for wellbeing beyond individual aspirations and needs."[387] Pihama, Beverland, and Cameron-Raumati likewise note how "the use of tonics, or balms that derived from plants, or bathing in them, was a common practice for our tūpuna. The knowledge associated with rongoā more generally is embedded within our knowledge and connection to taiao."[388] As I gather plants from along Taranaki riverbanks, I wonder whether my tūpuna once gathered kawakawa or harakeke for medicine from these same awa;

385 Campbell, 59.

386 Cora-Allan Wickcliffe, "Whare at the Base of the Maunga," He Kapunga Oneone, July 2021, https://www.kauaeraro.com/matauranga/tearoha?rq=cora.

387 Ruakere Hond, Mihi Ratima, and Will Edward, "The Role of Māori Community Gardens in Health Promotion: A Land-Based Community Development Response by Tangata Whenua, People of Their Land," Supplement, *Global Health Promotion* 26, no. S3 (2019): 45, https://doi.org/10.1177/1757975919831603.

388 Pihama, Beverland, and Cameron-Raumati, "Whenua Ora, Tangata Ora," 220.











TOP & CENTRE LEFT: Images 255 to 257. Arielle Walker. Gathering weed-plants for dyeing and making: Gorse at Parihaka; Queen Anne's lace alongside the Hangataahua Awa; yarrow at Parihaka;

CENTRE RIGHT: Image 258. Cora-Allan, Tihei Mauari Ora (2024). Whenua and kāpia on hiapo. Image courtesy of Cora-Allan

BELOW: Image 259. Moewai Marsh, *Tuturu Series 1–4*, 2021 (installation detail). Earth pigments of Arai Te Uru, Puketeraki, Ōtākou on handmade whenua paper. Installation in Paemanu: Tauraka Toi, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Ōtepoti, 2022. Image courtesy of Moewai Marsh

what plants Grandma Faith's mother, Hattie, still recognised from their Irish traditions, and whether they grow here now too. I think of the plants that grow in Aotearoa as weeds and what they may look like in their home places, where my ancestors once walked.

The *rongoā/mending* patchwork and connected poem-fragments that carried ongoing into the PhD research began life as a means to bring together healing plants from three of my ancestral homelands: Aotearoa, Scotland, and Ireland. *rongoā/mending* pieces together fibres dyed with these plants, and I simultaneously piece together the whakapapa threads and stories that bind me to their places of belonging. Just as each of these plants holds the ability to heal the body, so working with them through whakapapa, through whatuora, in close relation to the places and stories they grow from, offers the potential of healing more intangible ruptures.

Part of this aspect of practice has included gathering 'weeds,' plant species that are invasive here and yet are native, healing plants in my other ancestral homelands. My hope is to let these plants become useful here in their own way — to let them give something back. Kauae Raro share a related practice and intent in Kai Tahu and Ngāti Kahungungu ki te Wairoa artist Moewai Marsh's project *Tuturu Series 1-4* (2021):

> In Aotearoa, Gorse is considered to be "the worst" scrub weed … it stifles the growth of native species. This informs public perception of controlling these weeds to be almost futile. Moewai went against this sense of futility and put these plants to work.[389]

Marsh gathered whenua pigments and invasive plants covering her wāhi tūpuna. She made gorse and nettle into paper, painted upon with the whenua pigments. Here, the land now overlays the weeds, covering the interlopers; the weeds instead become a supportive ground. In this "resilient act," Hudson suggests, "mana whenua overrules the introduced species and they sit balanced and together housed in frames to talk about whakapapa, whenua, mauri and wairua."[390] Likewise, many of the stone loom-weights for my weaving are supported by aho made of similar plants: nettle, ribwort plantain, dandelion. Framed by (and balancing) the looms, these 'interlopers' now support each tauira and larger whatu-weaving. Gorse, nettle, yarrow become dyes, giving colour to wool and native muka alike, and weaving in-between angiangi, kawakawa and tanekaha to form new patterns. Kimmerer offers such weeds her own acknowledgement as she finds, on the edges of a polluted lake, "a thin scraggly collection of the common roadside weeds" growing where nothing else is now able:

> Dandelions, ragweed, chicory, and Queen Anne's lace blown to this spot have made a go of it. Nitrogenfixing legumes in abundance, and clovers of all kinds, have also come to do their work. That struggling field of green is, to me, a form of peacemaking. Plants are the first restoration ecologists. They are using their gifts for healing the land, showing us the way.[391]

389 Sarah Hudson, "Moewai Marsh: Tauraka Toi; A Landing Place," *He Kapunga Oneone*, February 2022, https://www.kauaeraro.com/o-nianei/moewai-marsh-tauraka-toi.

390 Hudson, "Moewai Marsh."

391 Kimmerer, Braiding Sweetgrass, 332.











ABOVE: Images 260 to 265. Spinning a yarn for Nana, from finding the wool hentilagets, through washing and carding, to where the partially-spun wool rests

The whenua, and the plants that grow from it, are guides. As Kimmerer writes (giving the example of sweetgrass), these plants can be a "teacher of healing," a reminder that "it is not the land that has been broken, but our relationship to it. … We restore the land, and the land restores us."[392] In *Mending the Kupenga*, these learnings unfold and become apparent by working in close connection to place: from each plant that has given colour and form to the whatu-woven artworks, and with every return I make — whether planting harakeke along the banks of the awa, clearing weeds and adding compost to the soil, or simply coming home.

Gathering and place-connection can also be a rongoā for grief. Artist Raukura Turei shares how, in her art-making practice, she collects onepū — the West Coast black iron-sands:

> the children of Hine-oneone and Hine-tūakirikiri, to honour my Kuia. While she was prematurely taken by Hine-Moana, it is the ocean that connects me back to her. The ocean has the ability to strip away the generational trauma that has calcified itself between lost whakapapa and a stolen generation.[393]

Turei also writes about the sense of release from the "unknown grief" she carries, when gathering whenua and swimming in waters connected to her tūpuna, especially her Kuia. It also brings an "incredible sense of connection … a way of finding a material means to connect to [her] grandmother's presence on the earth, and have something enduring that is a representation of her and her strength."[394] Turei's words resonate for me in multiple ways: in the care she takes in her gathering protocols, and in her intent; but also deeply emotionally, in the way she describes that sense of grief, connection, and release that comes from returning to our tūpuna wai, takutai, moana, and whenua. Her story calls forth a memory from early 2022, a spontaneous early morning swim. As I stepped into the sea, the salt-water rising over my skin, I felt the clearest sense of knowing: that my Nana had passed away. Like the water itself had told me.

Later that same day, just after Dad called to let me know, I ended up walking the unfamiliar-to-me western coastline of Mangere. As thousands of birds rose suddenly, a swirling murmeration flying overhead, I found a synchronous scattering of wool across the grass in the path before me — as though Nana had guided me there to find it. In the months following, when grief took over and everything else froze, I found myself preparing the wool alongside arranging Nana's samplers: washing it, carding it, and slowly, slowly hand-spinning it into yarn. The spinning is still unfinished. My makeshift driftwood spindle holds the yarn wrapped tightly around it. Harakeke I gathered in Taranaki, and tī kouka from the garden of my current home, became a coil basket for the unspun wool to nest within, where it now rests.

392 Kimmerer, 336.

393 Turei, "Texture of Practice."

394 Turei.



Image 266. *Tongapōrutu RIver Map*, 2019. Plant-dyed woollen blanket. Photographed at Tongapōrutu, 2019

COUNTER-MAPPING

Linda Tuhiwai Smith, and Unangax̂ scholar Eve Tuck with Marcia McKenzie, emphasise the ways the colonial project employs cartography to "map territory, to survey land, to establish boundaries, and to mark the limits of colonial power,"[395] as "colonial geographies 'enframe' state borders, assert control over state populations, and overdetermine action and contestation."[396] Tuck and McKenzie suggest alternative forms of mapping and "(re) mapping,"[397] centred in Indigenous understandings of place-making and connection, as a refusal of these colonial structures. Countering the colonial legacy of maps — designed to show what is considered to be of material value, and diminish what is not — the project's ongoing river map and counter-map artworks draw instead on Indigenous forms of mapping. Maps that, as Mojave poet Natalie Diaz suggests, tell of "our movements and wonderings (not wanderings) across a space … through or across memory, or imagination, across pain or joy or the impossibility of each, across our bodies of land and water and flesh," that are "ever-shifting, ever-returning, ever-realizing"[398] and are based on a different set of values, in whakapapa and of kaitiakitanga and mātauranga.

The first *river map* began in 2017, after spending time around the Tāmaki Estuary near my childhood home. Following a memory I could not quite articulate, I found myself gathering plants — endemic, native, introduced — simmering each plant in river water with a double-arms-length of wool yarn, and knitting the findings into squares. Stitched together, they became *A Map of the Tāmaki Estuary* (2017). I documented the process: the colour each plant gave, its whakapapa, how they related to each other — through hand-drawn notes and sketches, and felt my understanding of the plants, awa, and whenua deepen the more I learnt. It was like following a map, guided along a pathway my tūpuna, my ancestors had once known.

For the later artwork *embodying my roots, skin, and leaves: a counter-map of home* (2020–ongoing), I carried through my intent and understandings held in the early *river maps*, but coupled them with a desire to consider possibilities of simultaneous connection to a multitude of places — to all of my ancestral homelands. Instead of gathering around a particular awa, I chose plants that have whakapapa where I have whakapapa, particularly those that are known for their healing or medicinal properties. Plants like yarrow/athair thalun (Ireland), docken/copan (Ireland/Scotland), mānuka and kānuka (Aotearoa), and gorse/furze (Scotland). I dye rectangles cut from old wool blankets with these plants, and stitch them back into an ever-growing piece. Too large now to be wrapped around only one person, I consider the *counter-map* blanket a metaphor for bringing the whenua of all my ancestral homes with me into the project's making-spaces.

In their 2023 essay "Existing in Kinship With Everything," Hana Pera Aoake discusses

395 Smith, Decolonizing Methodologies, 55.

396 Eve Tuck and Marcia McKenzie, *Place in Research: Theory, Methodology, and Methods* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 134–5.

397 Tuck and McKenzie, *Place in Research;* see also Mishuana Goeman, *Mark My Words: Native Women Mapping Our Nations* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013).

398 Natalie Diaz, "New Poetry by Queer Indigenous Women," Lithub, April 12, 2018, https://lithub.com/new-poetry-by-queer-indigenous-women/.







ABOVE: Image 267. Dyed river map blanket pieces hanging to dry by the Tongapōrutu awa

BELOW: Images 268 & 269. Whatu-weaving in place in the tauira loom, Tongapōrutu awa and Ngāmotu takutai

the damage caused by 'ecological imperialism,' both as a "central dimension, and a consequence" of the colonial project. For example, the wetlands that once covered most of Aotearoa, weaving

> across the country into rivers, streams, lakes and out to sea … presented a problem for colonists, who came from a culture accustomed to its rulers using legal boundary lines as means of asserting governance and making classifications between 'water', 'land', 'plant', and 'animal.'[399]

Describing, by contrast, a Māori worldview, which "emphasises the deep, non-linear interconnections between people and their plant-relatives" as an enduring, resisting, even flourishing counter to this eco-cultural imperialism, Aoake writes of my *river map* artworks:

> Walker subverts colonial mapmaking, showing that the waters and plant roots that stretch out across the land aren't easily tamed or categorised. Plants are an intricate part of what makes up a person's whakapapa … The ecological imperialism that has shaped not only plants but all living organisms in all settler colonies is not successful in severing the relationships Māori people have with the natural world. ... whakapapa cannot be tamed, it is wild, porous and incapable of categorisation; it exists in kinship with everything around us.[400]

Aoake articulates both my intent and ever-enduring hope towards relationality that comes through making the *Mending the Kupenga* artworks — not only those I name as "maps," but every aspect of the gathering and making process.

Whiro, January 2024

The path through the ngāhere is soft underfoot as we slip through beneath the dappled evening sunlight. My shoes lie forgotten outside the whare tūpuna, left behind in my haste to join the others at the awa, but now everything has shifted into that languid slowness that comes from being beneath trees with the singing whisper-call of the awa just out of sight. At the end of the path, the riverbedstones are still warm underfoot, and the water is silky cool, the ice-shock from the maunga lifted by the sun.

I slide, rather than dive, off the rocks and in to the deepest pool, let the current pull me to the shallows. Swim upstream to meet gentle rapids, glide the currents back through shadow to shallow water, and again, and again and again. Let it wash the city-grit, the hesitance, the decades of distance from my skin. Watch tamariki leap into the air to splash into the pool below, again, and again and again.

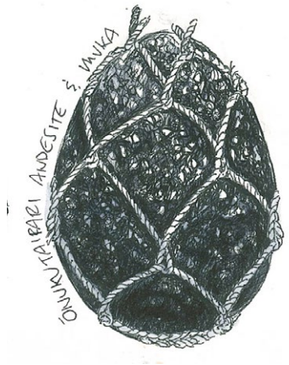
Te whenua, te awa, te maunga, he rongoā nui

399 Hana Pera Aoake, "Existing in Kinship With Everything," *It's Freezing in LA!* December 21, 2023, https://itsfreezinginla.com/articles/maori-plants.

400 Aoake, "Existing in Kinship."




WAIWHAKAIHO ANDESITE & LOUIE'S TIKOUKA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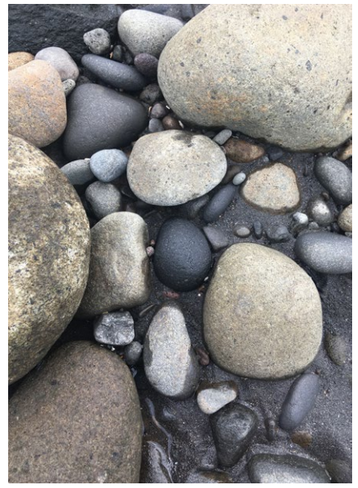
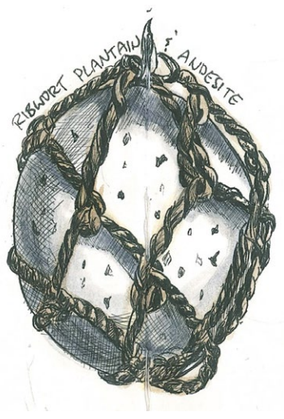
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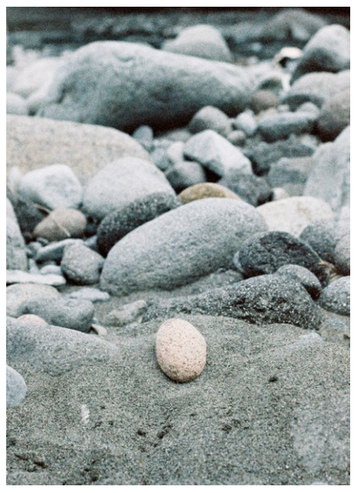
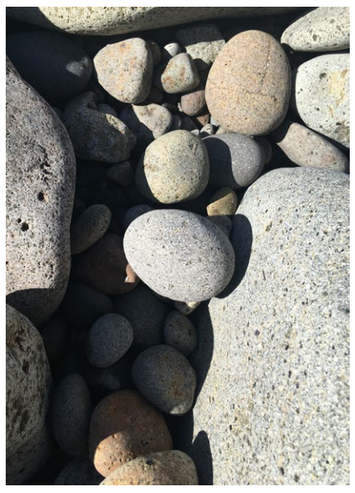
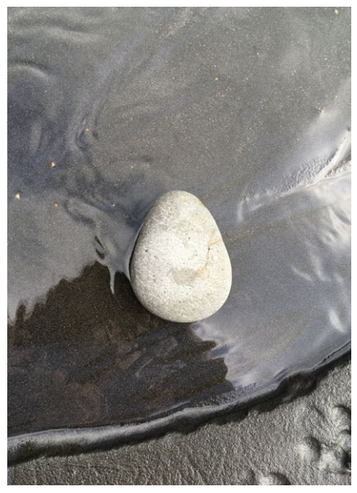
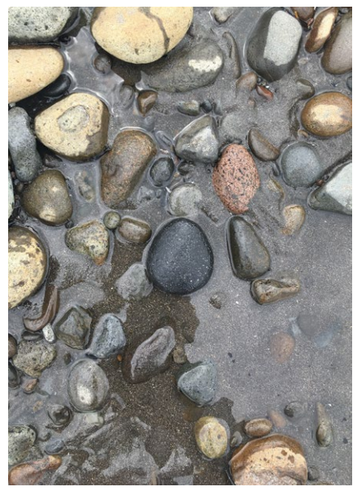
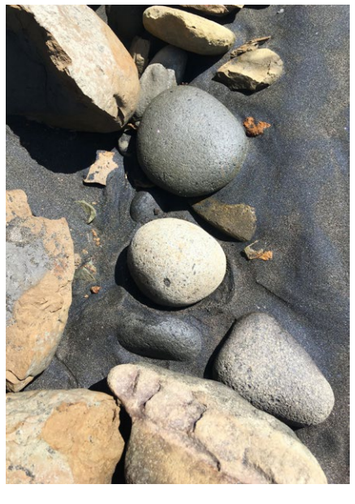
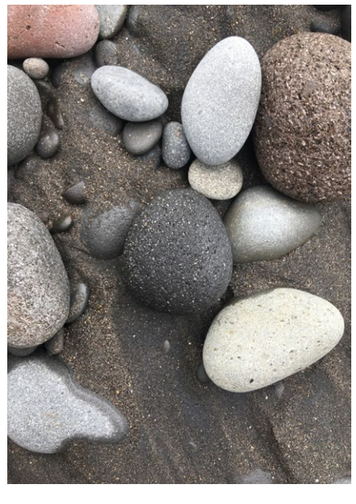
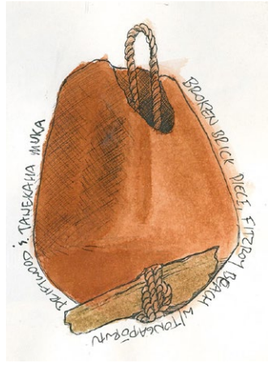
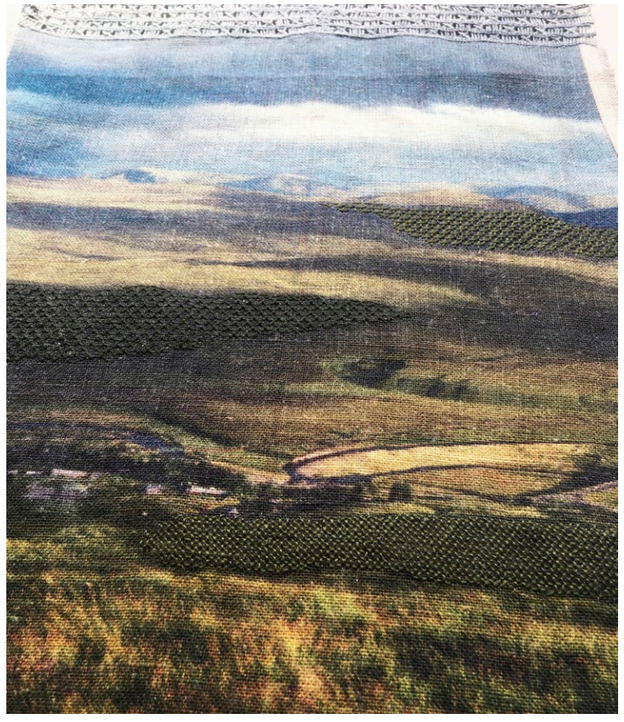







BROKEN BRICK DIECE, FITZROY BEACH W/TONGAPŌRUTU
PRIFLOOD & TAWEKAHA MUKA





ABOVE: Image 271. Gathering alongside the Hangataahua Awa, Taranaki, on my first return there, 2022. Photo: Liam Mullins

BELOW: Image 272. *distance unravelled across a sea of stars*, 2021 (detail). Unravelling and whatu/stitching back into a film photograph taken on a visit to Northern Scotland, 2018

PREVIOUS IMAGE: Image 270. A selection of the Taranaki stones (and sketches of stones) gathered for loom-weights, 2022 – 2024

DISTANCES AND RETURNS

Throughout this exegesis, I have written of distances experienced, covered and stitched between, or surrendered to as necessary holes in the kupenga, the spaces between. These distances have always been present, and I realise will likely always be so — and that this is important. The gaps in any net are, after all, as integral as the knotted fibre, the ongoing aho that forms it. Throughout the research, however, the notion of *returning* has also echoed. My master's degree project, which provided the grounding for this research to begin, followed a path of return: to the 'sea,' the full-circle spiralling of whakapapa and place and belonging and home and story. Returning has become a mode of practice, a constant tidal state of ebb and flow.

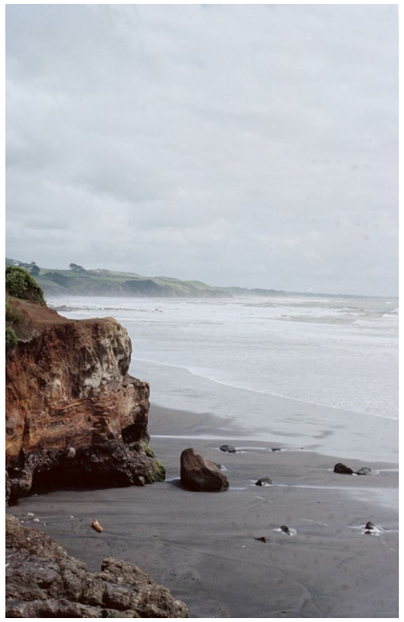
In navigating my family stories and my own belonging here in Aotearoa as a descendent of both Māori and Pākehā, I have been building stronger relationships to my ancestral homelands, as well as the whenua in Tāmaki where I was born and still live. Part of this balancing is visible in the ways that I have been able to return to these homes. I find myself pulled always to Taranaki, a bone-deep tug towards the maunga, awa, moana there; to where Nana Maire grew up on our tūpuna whenua but where I have never lived, only ever returned, a little closer every time. In 2018, I made brief visits to Scotland and Ireland, and felt the heart-hum of ancestral connection — but pandemics and other logistical obstacles meant this project has had to engage with those ancestral homelands from afar. I have joined whānau hīkoi to Kororāreka, to connect with Te Paea and Kotiro Hinerang's stories. I am yet to return to Hokianga, to meet the awa and moana there. I am yet to travel further still to the other distant places I connect to. I am yet to plant roots anew, to live on the whenua of my tūpuna. With all of these distances in mind, *Mending the Kupenga* has offered the reminder that as textiles and craft practices hold memory, and connect to place, they also offer an anchor to places that we cannot easily return to.[401]

Of *whatuwai*'s time in the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery Open Window, artist Ashleigh Taupaki (Ngāti Hako, Samoan) wrote:

> The installation does not sit idly in its glass box. Instead, it evokes a sense of return to the places we hold dearly in our sentiments — the artist promises to return the rocks to where they came from. It reminds me of ecologist Geoff Park's thoughts about intently knowing a place:
>
> > "Reading the landscape is like collage, interweaving the patterns of ecology and the fragments of history with footprints of the personal journey."
>
> Walker shows a patience towards her landscape in her collection process, and extends this understanding into her delicate practice of weaving and dyeing. By immersing herself into these familiar paths along awa and moana, a private language develops between artist and place.[402]

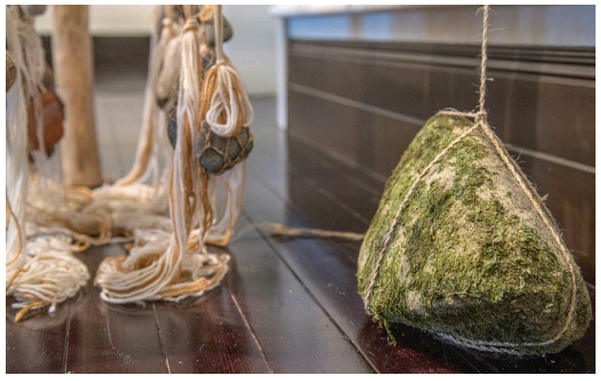
401 Robertson and Vinebaum, "Crafting Community."

402 Ashleigh Taupaki, "Representing the Knowledge of Many; Carrying on Qualities of Spirit," *Pantograph Punch*, March 15, 2023, https://www.pantograph-punch.com/posts/representing-the-knowledge-of-many.









FROM TOP LEFT: Images 273 to 276. Ōnukutaipari, Taranaki takutai, where the first whatuwai anchor stone was gathered from in 2022 (and will return to); Manukau harbour stone anchoring the loom at Nathan Homestead Gallery, October 2023; the Manukau stone returned to the shore in November 2023; stone from the Tongapōrutu awa

Along with the loom-weights, this language of place and the ever-present hum of returning inform the anchor-stones that weight the looms. For each exhibition, a different stone has anchored the *whatuwai* loom: first, a stone from the Herekawe awa at Ōnukutaipari, the northernmost border of Taranaki Iwi rohe, anchored the loom at the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery in Ngāmotu (Te Ātiawa). Next, a stone from the Manukau Harbour, during its time at the Nathan Homestead Gallery in Manurewa. After gathering the Manurewa stone with exhibition curator and artist Sione Faletau (Tonga), I wrote the following to begin the exhibition's durational text-piece:

> *ao tane/ōtane, October 2023*
>
> We find the new anchor stone on the low-tide harbour edge, between slow-sifting pools of shallow water. It sits alone, covered in bright green seaweed, facing slightly south and west — pointing towards Taranaki, far along the coast. It's as much clay as it is rock, and salt water slowly seeps from it as I finish a small karakia to bring it back to the gallery. On the cusp of summer we'll return this stone to the same shore, but for a moon and a half this stone will hold the weaving in place, here, though its bones and weights come from different rivers, different waterways.
>
> All awa meet, eventually.

When the exhibition came to a close, we returned the stone to the low-tide harbour, where I thanked it again for holding space in the gallery with my tūpuna and me. Now, a stone from Hangaatahua, one of my tūpuna awa in Taranaki, anchors the *whatuwai* loom while I continue to weave on it in studio. It waits there with me, until the completion of the PhD project — the natural pause in my practice over Puanga where the research will come to a close. Then, together, the stone and I will return again to Taranaki. We will walk the ngāhere of my tupuna whenua. I will place the stone in the Hangataahua riverbed, where it will continue to rest, caressed by the hum and swell of water at the meeting of river and sea. And a new cycle of making will begin.



PART FIVE:

BINDING OFF

starcatching

We come home to mend our nets.
We come home, and we weave new ones

to feed the moon
to catch the stars
to hold our tūpuna, and
to let them go when they are ready
to become constellations again.



CONCLUSION

In January 2024, I slept for the first time in the wharenui of my tūpuna marae in Taranaki.

I have now shared in the stars of my tūpuna skies, swum in the awa that sustained them. As this research project comes to a natural, seasonal pause, I will be returning again — and as I do, I will be continuing to whatu, to weave, to make in connection with the whenua.

Mending the Kupenga began with the intent that the practice 'outcomes' would contribute to the body of knowledge held around creative practices that engage with relational spaces for both Aotearoa and global art communities in settler-colonial contexts. It has become clear that this research is an ongoing, cyclical practice-in-process, one that requires a continual returning and unfolding, with no easy answers. There are a few key conclusions that the research has uncovered as it has traced and (re)woven threads of connection.

Working through a whakakapapa-guided, whatuora-based approach, the research has continuously questioned what it means to have an art practice centred in relation. My methodology and making has grown through conversation and observation, always with the intent to unpick and re-weave towards a vision of a more reciprocal future. At times, the weight of this hope and intent has felt immense — and so I returned to the kupenga, guided by my whakapapa. In doing so, the practice has established a clear, cyclical process of unfolding and layering (whaka + papa) upon what has come before. It has built upon understandings of time as being inherently whakapapa based, a cycle of "never-ending, interconnected beginnings,"[403] to cultivate an ongoing, process-based practice that can hold space for ancestral multiplicities. Mending the Kupenga demonstrates the rigorous methodological potentials that being 'in-process' holds through creative, Indigenous research practice. Through gathering materials and tending an intimacy with the taiao and natural cycles, the project's practice and methodologies tend to place-based relationships, connecting through whakapapa to tūpuna and literally (re)weaving connection to place.

Likewise, from Hinekura Smith's initial framing, I have extended my whatuora practice to encompass working between my ancestral knowledges from many lines and places. The research works equally with each of the meanings in the term whatuora: to see, to weave, also stone; towards ora, health. Through whatuora, the research has leaned into the material aspects of unravelling: an embodied process in line with the practices of Shan Goshorn and Natalie Harkin, that makes visible the often unseen, often painful and tender work of healing and mending. By bringing the act of unpicking our histories into tangible form, they become something that can be processed, reclaimed, and woven anew.

PREVIOUS IMAGE: Image 277. Whatu-weaving on the tauira loom, Taranaki, with the awa in the distance

403 Jackson, "He Manawa Whenua," 62

Unravelling the memory-shifting of "settler-amnesia"[404] that has added snarls and tears to the kupenga of relations is ongoing work. Through *Mending the Kupenga*, I engage and share this process through storywork, using metaphor, poetry, and pattern to keep safe those whose threads intersect with my own across the relational net. The experience of tending to the threads of my whakapapa — tangled, broken or cut off too soon, and (re)connecting the stories of those left behind on distant shores — is twined into each whatu-weaving, anchored by the guidestone weights of the warp-weighted looms, and expressed through the learnings and teachings of the ongoing tauira.

As emphasised by Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Leonie Pihama, Ranginui Walker, and Ani Mikaere, and in the artworks of Ngahina Hohaia, Diane Prince, Harkin, and Goshorn, the tensions inherent within settler-colonial contexts are many-layered and buried deep, whether that be in the relationships between peoples, within a whānau, between materials (e.g. wool and muka), or even within the self. Mending the Kupenga has included a literal, practice-led exploration that allows a metaphor of tension and balance to unfold through making. From whatu-weavings that allow the tension of their weighted whenu/warp to guide the flow of threads, to tauira woven with no tension applied, the research has demonstrated technical potentialities for working at the intersection of materials and practices. Importantly, the research has learnt how finding balance requires working not only against, but also with and into tension, and that a balanced weave (both literal and metaphorical) may take time, labour, and care to reveal itself.

Some of the (re)storying of relationship with personal ancestral practices across the 'futurepresentpast' is shared within the pages of this exegesis. Other stories are only to be shared in person, kanohi-ki-te-kanohi, beneath the shelter of the looms and within the ceremonial space of the rongoā artworks. I weave each story, each relationship into the strands of the tauira, whatu-weavings, the nets of each loom-weight, and the sketches and hopes towards future pieces — kākahu that I envision enveloping my whanaunga and our tūpuna, future and past. I hope, too, that the patterns and potentials in each of these artworks can resonate with other makers, weavers, and artists who are considering exploring their own ancestral practices and stories, however complex. Every mended thread tends the kupenga, brings it back to fullness.

The research has found a language of reciprocity through engaging ancient ancestral textile-craft and storytelling practices in new, innovative ways. The project's tauira and whatu-weavings demonstrate this language, (re)storied and metaphored within their threads. Revealed in the materially-crafted research elements, the project has established new methods of combining whatu and weaving, muka and wool together, utilising the warp-weighted loom structure. Maureen Lander reminds us that our tūpuna, our ancestors, were always innovators. Early 1800s kākahu that integrate wool and new patterns into their whatu muka fabric attest to this continuum of ingenious expression; they inspire the research to continue seeking similar resonances and

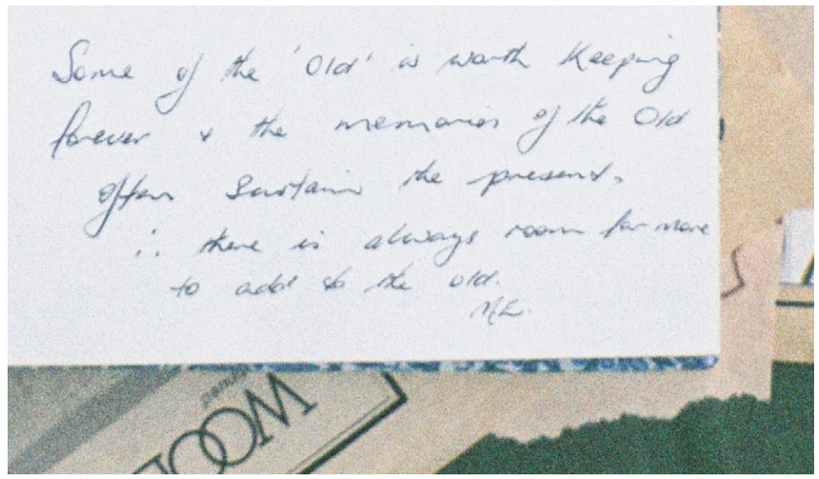
404 Turner, "Settler Dreaming," 121.

connections in the relational "spaces between." Embracing the pūtahi, moments of convergence and exchange, and the likelihood of incurring tension as a form of engagement, opens a dialogue between materials, time-spaces, and lines of whakapapa. The artworks layer upon each other, and become guidestones for future makings. I offer this mahi as another thread to weave into the knowledge-fabric of shared ancestral craft and storytelling practices in Aotearoa, advocating for the revival, sustenance, and continued innovation of these forms.

Connecting to the embodied, intergenerational knowledge of my grandmothers' stories and methods of making — from knitting and lacemaking to weaving and whatu — has been the heart of this project. As the research has enabled the (re)learning of materials and practices whose stories and teachings could not be passed down in my family lines, I see the torn, snarled, and tangled threads of my relational net begin to weave back together.

These mendings become apparent when I place my feet upon the whenua of my tūpuna, watch one brother cross his graduation stage wearing a whatu kākahu and the other honour our Nana Maire's lace in his first tā moko, or let my hands trace the aho of the kākahu made by Te Paea, our many-greats grandmother. I catch glimpses of the future across the time-spiral in every tauira pattern I envision in a full-size future korowai; as I watch my cousin Tess learn to knit, as our Grandma Faith once taught me, and weave her own (re)storying of our ancestors' stories and experiences through her photography and on her small table loom. Each of this project's makings, each 'happening,' each potential for the future, has become its own small ceremony. In every experience, I see the embodied knowledge of our tūpuna, our ancestors, carry through. *Mending the Kupenga* has guided me home; given opportunity to return to the whenua of my tūpuna and in doing so, to tend and (re)weave connections with whānau, human and more-than-human, that had become distanced or ruptured over time.

The final 'year of making' cycle in this project is still unfolding, moving from autumn harvest as the year subsides into the cold winter rest-time. The processes of gathering, making, and participating in conversational spaces are ongoing. Following the rise of Puanga in June 2024, the body of work shaped over the seasons comes together in conversation with earlier project artworks: a making-and-sharing space within the temporary bounds of the gallery, rather than a 'completed' artistic outcome. The artworks and practice are not 'finished,' but rather always generative, in motion, open to new knowledge unfolding through happenings and processes, conversations, and experiences shared within the exhibition and beyond. In this reflective pause, I "bind off" the research-weaving — but I leave a strand free to be picked up again, by my hands or those of kin. This strand may continue the weaving, or guide another pattern, one yet to be envisioned. It may even be spun with new threads, carrying on the cycle of endless beginnings: in all ways, mending the kupenga.



FACING PAGE: Image 278. As I close this exegesis, I leave the final words to my Nana Maire: written in 1992, in response to a quote that extolls the virtues of "clearing out the old to make room for the new," Nana replied with a firm "No." "Some of the old is worth keeping forever," she wrote, "and the memories of the old often sustain the present..." – and through them, we envision the future.

MENDING THE KUPENGA

EXHIBITION PROCESS DOCUMENTATION

27 JUNE – 20 JULY 2024

EXHIBITION ROOMSHEET

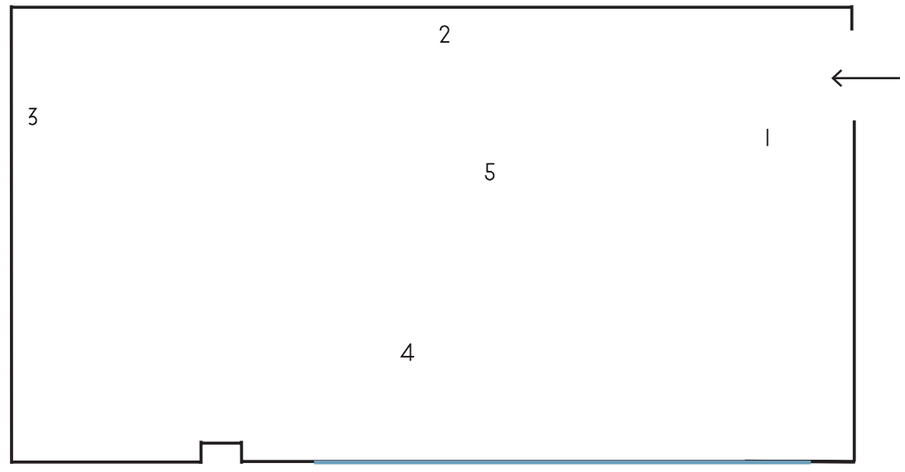
I've been untangling the aho, the threads of my whakapapa.
Finding resonances across lines that seemed otherwise under tension, irreconcilable.

Learning to whatu, to weave, not only with fibre
but also with words, with stories, with whakapapa,
with everything our tūpuna
have held for us.

Weaving between fibre knowledge and stories passed down and (re)learned over generations of tūpuna wāhine, *Mending the Kupenga* explores how threads of ancestral narratives can be re-storied and, potentially, restored through relational practice. Arielle Walker builds on skills learned from her Nana Maire and Grandma Faith to piece together whakapapa threads in a series of "whatu-weavings" that blend whatu, weaving, and lacemaking textile-making techniques made on hand-crafted warp-weighted looms. Gathered river stones are both loom-weights anchoring the weaving in place, and seeing-stones for envisioning the practice as an ongoing process. This conversational practice continues both as tauira (student, pupil, apprentice) and with tauira (samples, models, or examples), incorporating a multiplicity of blended fibre techniques and materials from across her ancestral lines.

Culminating in a year of seasonal making, from the rise of the star Puanga in June 2023 through to its return in June 2024, processes of place-based material gathering, poetic storytelling, and fibres dyed with healing plants sit in conversation with the "whatu-weavings," and (re)weave connections to place. (Re)growing a multi-sensory and ceremonial knowledge of tidal, seasonal, and celestial cycles, gathering from and tending to the taiao leads to a deeper intimacy and relation with place. This relational art practice is grown through conversation and observation, and always with the intent to unpick and re-weave, reclaim and restore, towards a more reciprocal future.

Anchored by Arielle's Taranaki Māori and Scottish/Irish Pākehā whakapapa, *Mending the Kupenga* looks to the pūtahi — places of encounter and exchange — to advocate for the revival, sustenance, and continued innovation of ancestral practices. A language of reciprocity between textile, poetry, and storytelling practices builds to strengthen relationships held within the kupenga, the relational net.



1 ***rongoā (mending)*, 2020-ongoing.**
Gathered plant dyes (angiangi/feusag a' gobhair, dock, gorse, harakeke, kānuka, mānuka, lupin, onion skin, tanekaha, yarrow, hīnau, alder) on handed-down and gifted silk, cotton, and linen; Grandma Faith's threads. Currently 2220 x 8000mm

2 ***the year becomes*, 2024.**
poetry, tanekaha bark ink (written during the final year of making)

3 ***whatuwai*, 2022-2024.**
Taranaki driftwood and braided harakeke lashing. Loom-weights made from Taranaki riverstones (Tongapōrutu, Waiwhakaiho, Herekawe, Oākura, Hangatahua) and unfired Taranaki uku; aho made from muka, harakeke, tī kouka, ribwort plantain, and dandelion. Whatu-weaving in angiangi, Queen Anne's Lace, kawakawa, and yarrow-dyed wool and muka.

4 ***whakaruruhau*, 2024-ongoing.**
Tāmaki driftwood and storm-fallen and mānuka, kānuka, pine, pohutukawa, ash, puriri. Loom-weights from low-fired west Tāmaki Makaurau clay and Tāmaki and Taranaki river and beach stones; aho made from muka, harakeke, tī kouka.
FACING THE WINDOW: an in-process whatu-weaving in angiangi and tanekaha-dyed wool (from Nana's stash and gifts from friends) and Taranaki muka.
FACING THE TAUIRA: kupenga with tī kouka, muka, dandelion aho/cordage; beads made from low-fired uku, mānuka, kānuka, pohutukawa, pūriri, cellulose pearls

5 ***he tauira, ngā tauira*, 2022 — ongoing series.** Materials and dimensions variable

IN CONVERSATION WITH THE ARTWORKS

Mending the Kupenga is held as a making-space in continous process across the duration of the exhibition, the artworks in conversation with continuously shifting material gatherings, tools, and ephemera including:

Studio desk, made by Liam Mullins

Baskets to hold materials for the making-in-process (including plant-dyed wool yarns, inks, muka, uku beads), made throughout the project, and gifted by Natalie Robertson and Alex Hawley during the exhibition

Scrapbook pages documenting the final year of making, from Puanga (June 2023) to Puanga (June 2024)

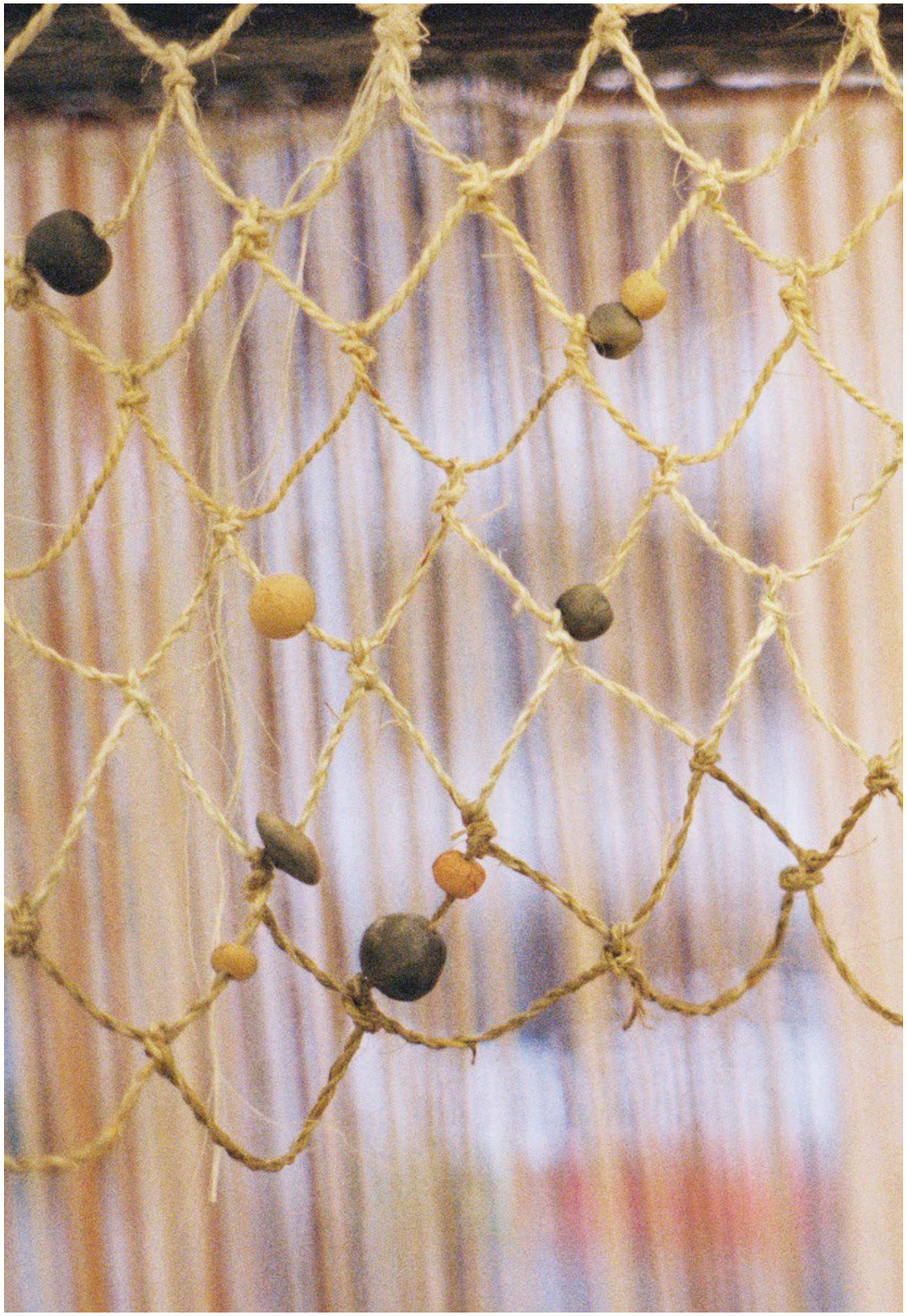
Hand-bound poetry chapbook

Tauira loom with *tūpuna guide us to weave in any way we can*, 2020 – ongoing hand-knit muka); stone weights (including two weights hand-carved and gifted by Hugh Cargill)

Mussel shells for preparing muka (including cast ceramic in Taranaki clay), and pūriri patu muka hand-turned and gifted by Eli Mullins

Spinner's chair, hand-carved by the great-grandmother of a whanaunga and gifted for weaving on the exhibition opening

Upon leaving: wai to whakanoa (become free from the extensions of tapu), held in vitrified Taranaki clay shaped/formed over Hangatahua andesite



EXHIBITION REFLECTION

We stand upon Pūrepo at dawn, Taranaki Maunga just visible
against the subtly lightening sky, and together,
sing out the names of our lost loved ones
to the rising stars.

We stand on the bank of the low-tide awa, the midday peak of the sun hidden
behind clouds, fire roaring into life to light the grey,
and farewell our Nana, mother, wife, sister, aunty, for now,
and for now

We stand together at dusk, in the heart of the gallery Te Wai Ngutu Kākā,
and weave our voices together in karakia,
blending new words with ancient ones,
opening the space for making, and for learning, holding this moment
as a pause for breath before the mahi, the work continues.
Each moment, each happening, is held together
in the futurepresentpast of spiralling time.
Each happening stories the unfolding of this project, ongoing,
and reminds me what it is for.

The PhD exhibition, Mending the Kupenga, took place at Te Wai Ngutu Kākā Gallery over the course of three midwinter weeks in June – July 2024. The exhibition centred on he tauira, ngā tauira (the series of samplers made throughout the project, especially in the final "year of making"), and the new whakaruruhau loom with two in-process pieces — a whatu-weaving, and a kupenga.

The layout of the exhibition encouraged a gentle spiralling movement through the space. Grounded by the rongoā (mending) patchwork draped above the gallery entrance towards the floor by the gallery windows (its length extended again with recently plant-dyed fabrics), the space opened with a body-scale version of the takarangi spiral poem, the year becomes, hand-painted onto the wall in tanekaha ink. Concentrated from left-over fibre dyes, the ink flowed beyond the confines of each letter, growing outwards like angiangi, mycelium, or roots, creating a fibre-like network of words.

Against the farthest wall, the whatuwai loom rested in the path of an afternoon sunbeam, a glow of light that only appeared for a sliver of time when the weather conditions were just right. Newly anchored for the exhibition with a stone from my tūpuna awa, Hangaatahua, the loom was held steady by braided taura made with the para or offcuts of harakeke processed for muka during the project.

Nearby, a segment of my studio desk, brought into the gallery and rebuilt with a new top, held a series of gatherings:

baskets of plant-dyed wool yarns,
muka,
dried dandelion stems,
tī kouka fibre
a basket filled with angiangi,
raku-fired uku, faux pearl, and carved wooden beads,
whenua and plant pigments,
tools (tapestry needles, mussel shells, patu muka),
a selection of poetry,
and the year-of-making documentation.

These materials were kept close to the whakaruruhau loom, within easy reach for adding yarn and muka to the whatu-weaving in process, and beads to the kupenga. The loom itself stood near the gallery windows, angled towards the setting sun as it did at the mouth of the Tongapōrutu river, where my first whatu-weaving began.

In the middle of the gallery, the centre of the spiral, the project's tauira were laid out on a long, narrow, river-green painted modular table. The pieces made through the final year of making spread across two thirds of the table, while the earliest makings layered upon each other at the far end, with a hand-bound book lying between detailing the materials and making of each tauira.

Upon leaving, a bowl made from vitrified Taranaki uku and supported by more river stones stood by the door, holding wai, available for visitors to whakanoa if needed.

On the opening night for Mending the Kupenga, we warmed the gallery space with a shared karakia, led by whanaunga, Taranaki designer and artist Bobby Campbell Luke, and incorporating ancient kupu shared by Te Huirangi Waikerepuru with a new offering by Te Poihi Campbell written to hold this particular kaupapa.

After the opening, I was gifted another taonga: a spinner's chair, hand-carved by the great grandmother of a close family friend, Ginny — the perfect accompaniment to weave from.

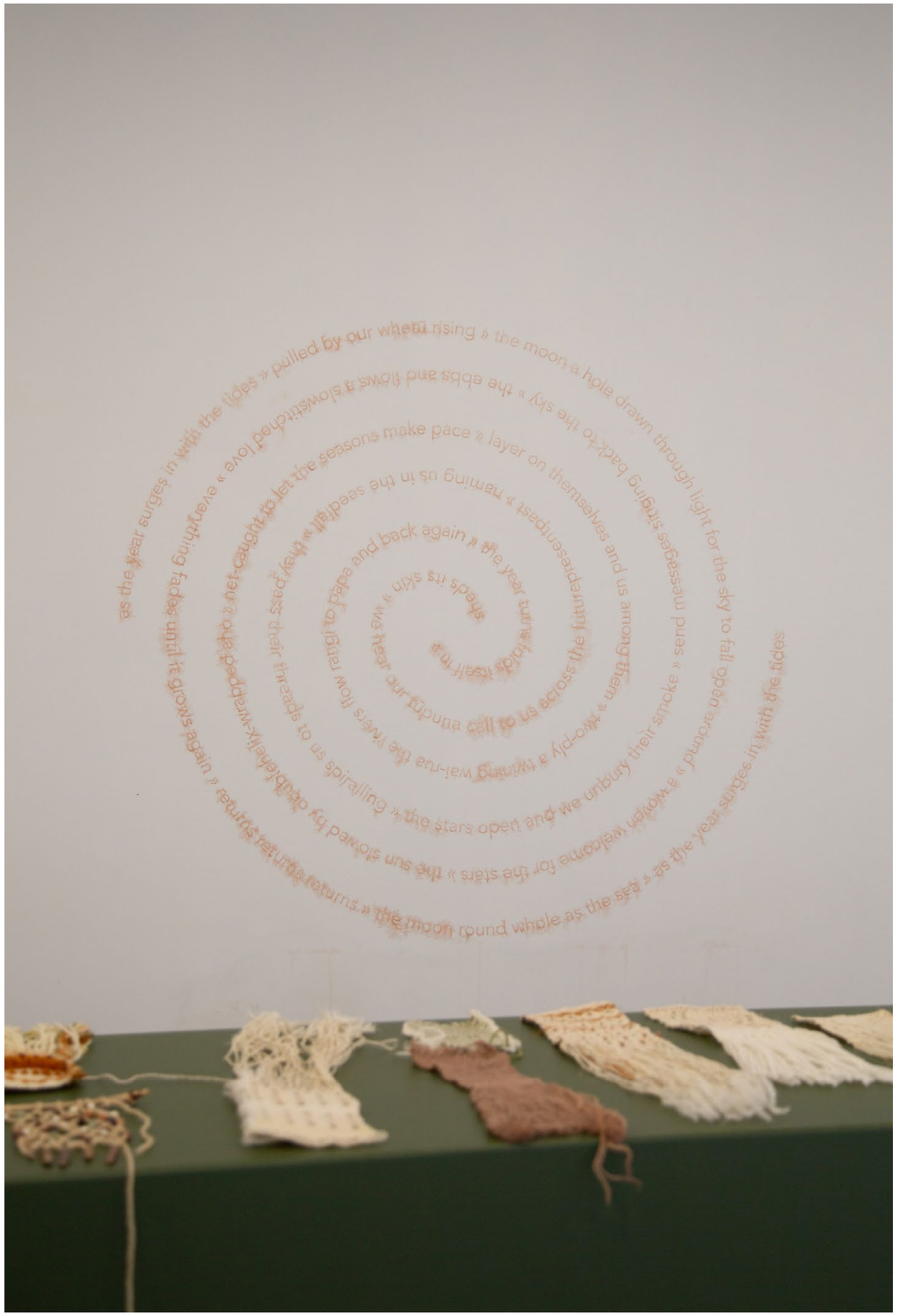
I had already prepared whakaruruhau with the whenu/warp of the new whatu-weaving, and in the following days I finished threading the heddles for the twill pattern to come, and began to weave. Over the three weeks of the exhibition, as the pātikitiki pattern grew and the kupenga on the loom's other side grew, friends and whanaunga brought other offerings into the space: a woven basket, belonging to my supervisor Natalie Robertson's grandmother to hold the muka aho and weft for the whatu-weaving; more muka, gathered by friend and fellow artist Alex Hawley (Diné, Navajo) and gifted before her return home to Turtle Island.

Reflecting on the project in its culmination during the final exhibition timeframe, I have felt and witnessed the impacts of this mahi stretch outwards. Seeing the tauira assembled together, balanced between poetic storying and whenua/place-gathered materials, has demonstrated for me how mobile and responsive the project has become, much like the whakapapa that guides it: something that has carried and layered through time.

The most poignant happenings during the exhibition include visitors sharing resonating stories of their own experiences of connection, loss, and re-learning; of their own grandmother's practices and teachings; whakapapa to whenua and homelands across many waters. Visitors were welcome to touch the artworks, to hold materials in their hands, to feel the weight of the stones, the fibre and form of every tauira. These conversations were shared while I wove in the gallery. Many visitors told me they were leaving the space feeling emboldened and hopeful at the potentials this way of practicing and scholarship offers. Each of these experiences became another example of what is possible when returning to Indigenous knowledge practices and legacies of textile innovation and exchange.



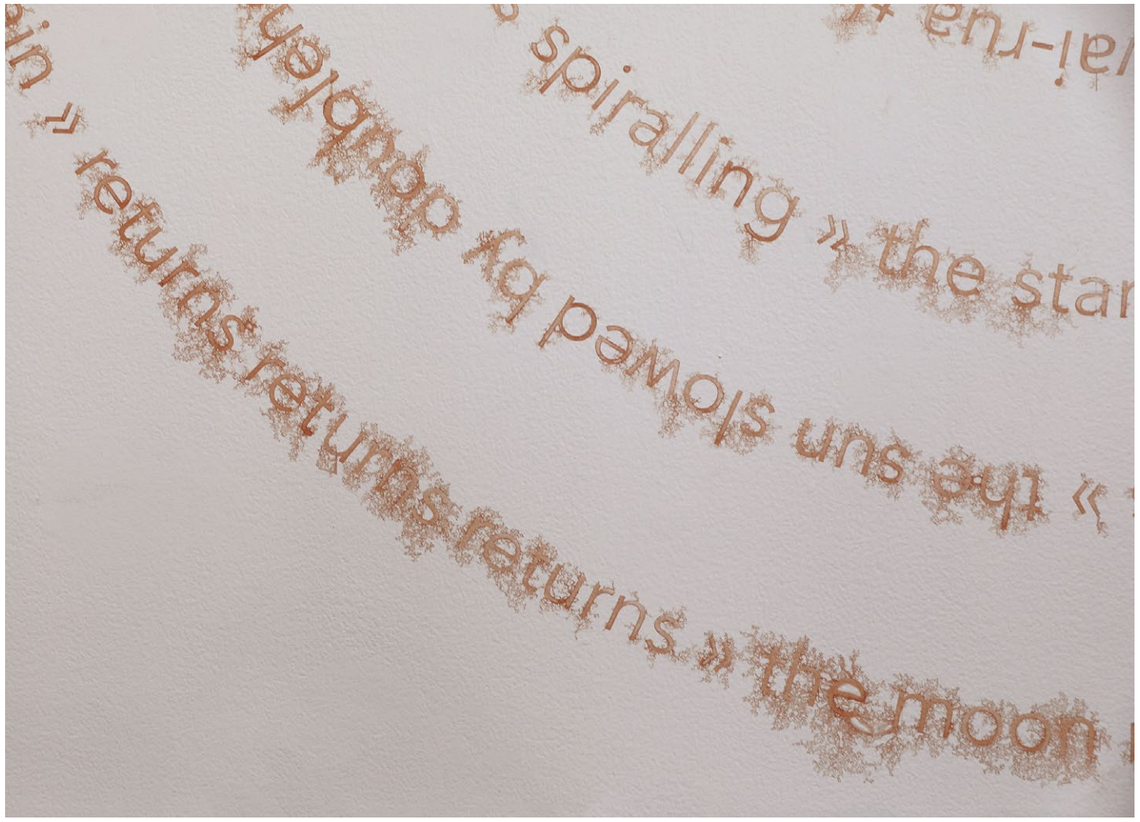




LEFT: Installation view of *the year becomes*, with detail of *he tauira, ngā tauira* in the foreground. Photo: Emily Parr

BELOW: Detail of *the year becomes*, showing the unfurling tanekaha ink. Photo: Liam Mullins

PREVIOUS PAGE: Views from the gallery doorway, showing *the year becomes*, a detail of *rongoā (mending)*, and installation of *he tauira, ngā tauira* and *whatuwai*. Photos: Emily Parr











LEFT:
whatuwai (2022–2024), installation view

ABOVE, LEFT & TOP RIGHT:
whatuwai installation details.
Photos: Emily Parr

















THIS PAGE & FACING:
CENTRAL IMAGES

Further details of the shifting material gatherings on the studio desk and material storage area for the *whakaruruhau* loom.
Details of Natalie Robertson's grandmother's basket, and Alex Hawley's kete of muka.
Photos: Emily Parr

TOP LEFT & BOTTOM RIGHT

Film photographs showing the shifting material gatherings, giftings, and ephemera around the studio desk, taken on 27 June and 20 July
Photos: Arielle Walker

















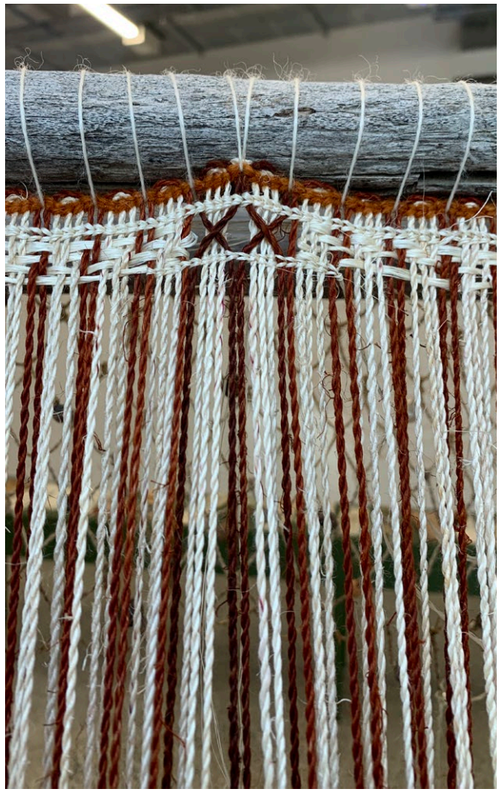


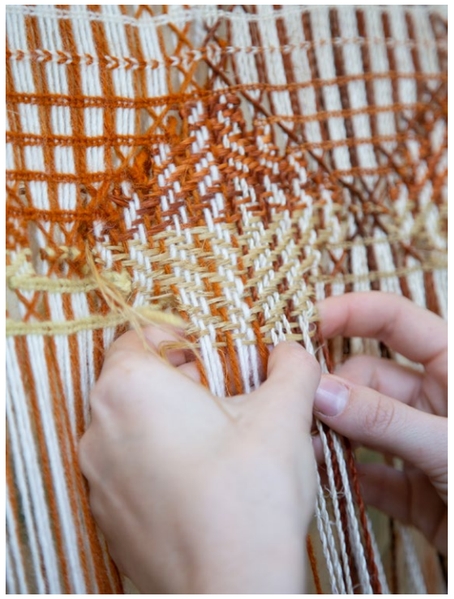
THIS PAGE & FACING: *whakaruruhau* (2024–ongoing), loom and weight details, with whatu-weaving process; spinner's chair. Photos: Liam Mullins

PREVIOUS PAGE: *whakaruruhau* (2024 – ongoing) installation details, 3 July (left) and 20 July (right). Photos: Emily Parr









whakaruruhau (2024–ongoing), whatu-weaving process details showing the pattern growing over time (27 June – 20 July). Photos: Emily Parr











whakaruruhau (2024–ongoing), kupenga process details showing the net growing over time

LEFT: Final kupenga detail, 20 July.
Photo: Arielle Walker

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Kupenga details, 3 July (Photo: Emily Parr); twining more aho, 4 July (Photo: Mon Redmond); detail in moment of pause; 18 July (Photo: Emily Parr)













THIS PAGE & FACING:
he tauira, ngā tauira installation details.
Photos: Emily Parr









THIS PAGE & FACING:
he tauira, ngā tauira installation details
Photos: Emily Parr; Liam Mullins

FOLLOWING PAGES:
he tauira, ngā tauira book (Irish linen and muka stab-binding on eco100 paper);
exhibition view through gallery windows, 1 July
Photos: Emily Parr





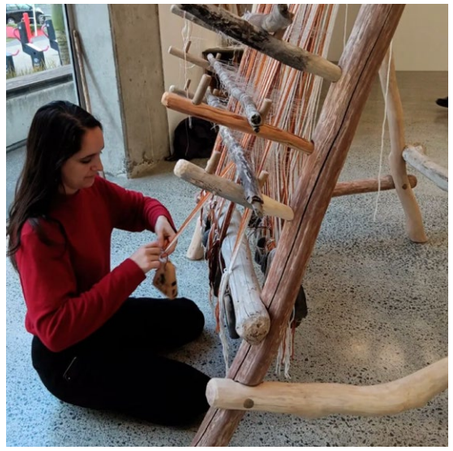

HE TAUIRA
NGĀ TAUIRA









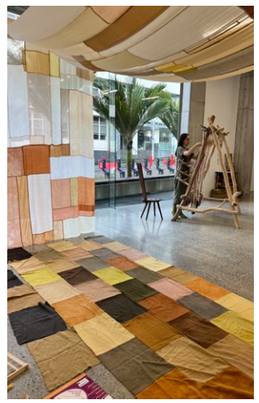












LEFT TO RIGHT FROM TOP: Whatu-weaving in process, photographed by Mon Redmond (9 July) and Makyla Curtis (11 July); sharing the tauira with my whatu kaiako Whaea Rose Greaves, and Emily Parr, photographed by my dad (13 July); visiting children demonstrating the whiri/braiding they have been learning at their kura kaupapa on the warp/whenu ends; more whatu-weaving in process, photographed by Tia Barrett (15 July) and Emily Parr (18 July); closing the space with shared making, photographed by Mon Redmond (20 July)

PREVIOUS PAGE: *whakaruruhau* (2024 – ongoing) installation details, 3 July (left) and 20 July (right).

HAPPENINGS IN THE GALLERY

Between the opening and closing of the *Mending the Kupenga* exhibition, 27 June – 20 July 2024:

Shared karakia to open the space, with words from Taranaki tohunga Te Huirangi Waikerepuru and Te Poihi Campbell, led by Bobby Campbell Luke to let our many voices hold the artworks in a continued space of learning

New connections made and stories shared with visitors, including guests bringing examples of their own weaving or whatu, and stories of their own ancestral making practices

Regular whatu-weaving and net-making during the three weeks of exhibition

Repeat visits throughout the three weeks by guests connected to the project in many ways —family, teachers/kaiako, AUT collaborators, friends and supporters (including with the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, Auckland Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira, Objectspace, and Masterworks Gallery) who have all been present throughout the project

Gifted a spinner's chair, hand-carved by the great-grandmother of a whanaunga in the late 1800's/early 1900s, to support the weaving on the opening of Mending the Kupenga, 27 June

Gifted a small woven basket belonging to supervisor Natalie Robertson's grandmother, to hold muka for weaving, 10 July

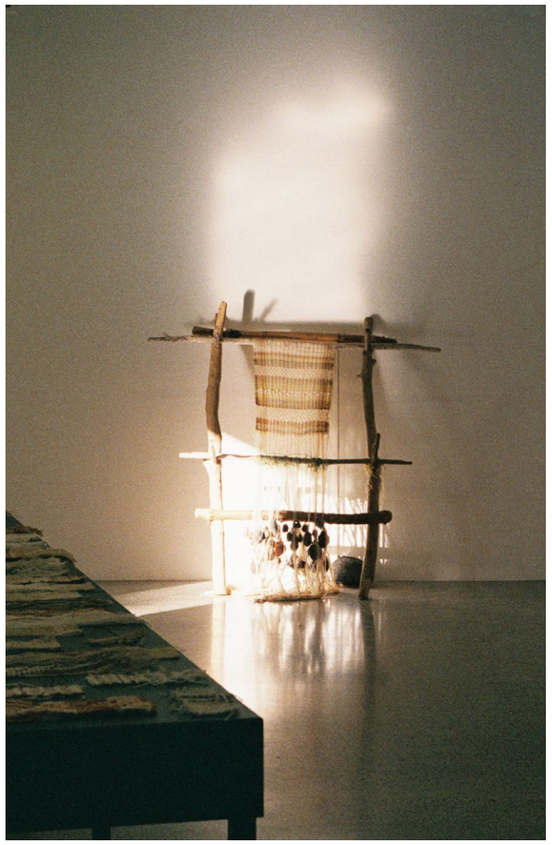
Poetry read by Makyla Curtis during the weaving process, 11 July

Gifted a small kete filled with Tāmaki muka, gathered and prepared by Diné scholar and weaver Alex Hawley, before her return to Santa Fe, 11 July

Undergraduate student visits (Spatial and Visual Arts Sculpture majors) and kōrerorero/discussion, 15 and 18 July

Images shared by guests across the three weeks, showing how the whatu-weaving and kupenga have grown during that time

Closing the space quietly (and this iteration of the project) with visits from a few close collaborators bringing their own makings to share in the last moments in the gallery space, as the artworks were paused and then packed away for the time being.







ABOVE:
whatuwai (2022–2024), installation detail
— beam of sunlight, 3.20pm, 1 July 2024
Photo: Arielle Walker

TOP RIGHT:
whatuwai (2022–2024), installation detail
— beam of sunlight, 3.30pm, 9 July 2024
Photo: Emily Parr

RIGHT:
whatuwai (2022–2024), installation detail
— beam of sunlight, 3.30pm, 20 July 2024
Photo: Emily Parr







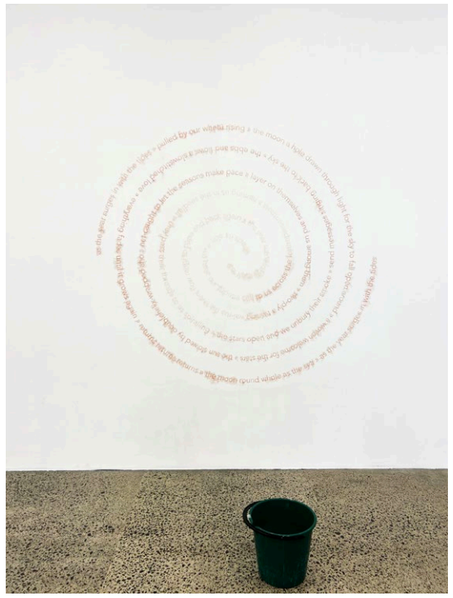
he tauira, nga tauira (2022–ongoing), installation details showing movement with handling over time

LEFT: Photo: Emily Parr, 3 July 2024

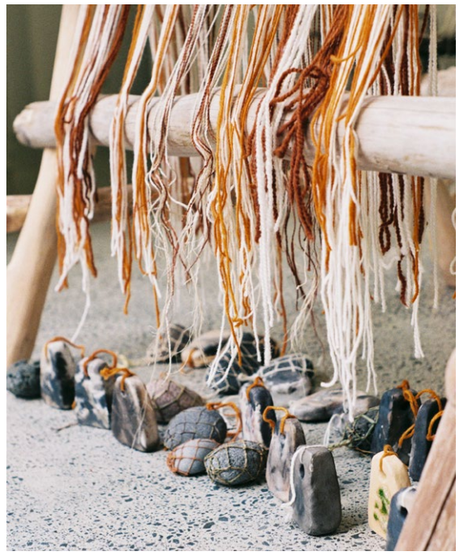
BELOW LEFT: (Exhibition opening)
Photo: Eloise Kitson (Masterworks), 27 June 2024

BELOW: Photo: Mon Redmond, 20 July 2024









Unravelling the exhibition/packing away, 20 July.
Tauira and poem photos: Mon Redmond
Loom photos: Arielle Walker

TEXTILE GLOSSARY

aho (TE REO MĀORI) cord, string, line, thread, fishing line; cross-threads or "**weft**" of **whatu** or weaving

ara (TE REO MĀORI) **weft** line in **whatu**

aute (TE REO MĀORI) cloth made from bark of the paper mulberry tree

awhi rito (TE REO MĀORI) leaves on either side of the **rito,** e.g., in a **harakeke** plant

bobbin lace openwork fabric or trimming made by twisting and braiding lengths of thread into a pre-determined pattern, usually around placed pins (thread is wound onto bobbins, usually wooden, for management)

candlewick braided cotton fibre, made for use as candle or oil lamp wicks, and adopted into **kākahu**-making during the 1800s. Also a term for a form of whitework embroidery

drawn-threadwork a technique where vertical or horizontal threads are cut and removed from a piece of fabric before stitching, forming patterns combined with the holes left behind

dye bath a solution containing a pigment solute (e.g., from simmered plant-material) in water prepared for immersing the materials intended to be dyed, such as wool yarn

dye lake see **lake pigment**

full see **waulking**

gauge (knitting) number of stitches and rows needed per inch (2.5cm) over four inches (10cm) on a particular needle size to gain the desired size of finished fabric

harakeke (TE REO MĀORI) *Phormium tenax,* "New Zealand flax" plant

hāro (TE REO MĀORI) to prepare **muka** fibre from **harakeke**, scraping off of the green layer to expose the fibre

hauhake (TE REO MĀORI) to harvest, dig up from the ground (as of kumara or other roots); sometimes used as a term for the harvest of **harakeke**

heddle usually made of cord or wire; each **warp** thread in a piece of on-loom weaving passes through a heddle in order to separate the threads for the **weft** to pass through

hentilagets (SHETLAND) tufts of wool lost from sheep's backs and gathered from pasture

here (TE REO MĀORI) string, cord (for fastening a garment)

hukahuka (TE REO MĀORI) tassels on a garment such as a **korowai**

huruhuru (TE REO MĀORI) feathers

huruhuru toroa (TE REO MĀORI) *noun.* albatross feathers

kahu (TE REO MĀORI) See **kākahu**

kahu huruhuru (TE REO MĀORI) *noun.* feather cloak

kairaranga (TE REO MĀORI) weaver

kākahu (TE REO MĀORI) garment, cloth, cloak

kete (TE REO MĀORI) basket

kishie (SHETLAND) twined back basket made from plant materials such as straw, rushes, marram, or dockens, for gathering materials such as peat

knit a fabric structure formed by interlocking loops of wool or other yarn with needles, usually using a single continuous thread

kohikohi (TE REO MĀORI) gather, as in gathering **rau harakeke** to weave with; also **kohi**

kono (TE REO MĀORI) small four-cornered food basket

kōrari (TE REO MĀORI) flower-stalk of **harakeke** plant; also another name for **harakeke**

korowai (TE REO MĀORI) a particular subset of **kākahu** distinctive for their **hukahuka** tassel appearance

kupenga (TE REO MĀORI) net

kupesi (TONGAN) embroidered stencil

lace broad term for an **openwork** fabric or trimming, made by various hand or machine methods of looping, twisting, knotting, or knitting thread in patterns

lake pigment a pigment made by precipitating a soluble dye with an inert binder, or **mordant**, usually a metallic salt

maro (TE REO MĀORI) apron, short kilt, loin cloth; a type of short garment

māwhitiwhiti (TE REO MĀORI) crossover patterning used in making **kākahu**; a term for using five **whenu** (or multiples of five) to create a hole for the **here** to go through, and as a counting system for the top and the bottom of a **kākahu**

miro (TE REO MĀORI) to spin, twirl, twist, twine; thread, strand, twisted cord, fibre

mordant a dye-fixative: a substance (usually a metallic salt or tannin) that allows a chemical bond to form between fibre and dye

muka (TE REO MĀORI) prepared/'dressed' harakeke fibre, also known as **whītau**. Customarily used for making **kākahu**, muka is the strong, silky fibre held within the **rau** (leaves) of the **harakeke** plant, *Phormium tenax.* Earlier weaving materials from across Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa, such as **aute** (the paper-barkcloth) and palm fronds and fibres, did not grow easily in Aotearoa, and so both the muka fibre and the 'undressed' blades of the harakeke leaves were quickly recognised and adopted by Māori for making everything from **kākahu** to fine mats and food baskets[1]

ngatu (TONGAN) barkcloth

openwork ornamental textile work with regular openings or holes in the fabric forming patterns

pāheke (TE REO MĀORI) ornaments such as rolling loops, spirals, or twists, incorporated into **whatu**

para (TE REO MĀORI) left over pieces stripped off in preparing **harakeke**

plain weave type of textile weave where each **weft** and **warp** thread cross at regular right-angle intervals, generally over-one, under-one

pōkinikini (TE REO MĀORI) cylindrical, dried strands made from unprocessed or partially processed **harakeke**

pulled-threadwork a technique where vertical or horizontal threads are manipulated with tension from a stitched thread to form patterns

rau (TE REO MāORI) leaf, frond, plume, spray, feather, blade

rito (TE REO MĀORI) heart, centre shoot of a plant

ruam (GAEILGE) red tannin-dye obtained from alder wood

sampler a piece of cloth on which a collection of varied miscellaneous 'stitches,' techniques, and patterns are worked, especially for use as a reference in future work

sett the distribution/spacing of warp threads in a woven fabric, e.g., the number of warp threads in one inch of fabric, which determines weaving balance

shed the area of temporary separation between **warp** threads through which the **weft** is passed while weaving

tae (TE REO MĀORI) hue, dye, colour, stain, pigment

tauira (TE REO MĀORI) a sampler, usually worked in customary Māori fibre-practices such as **whatu** or raranga; pattern, example, model, draft, sample, template; student, pupil, apprentice

tāniko (TE REO MĀORI) finger-twined patterns in multi-colour threads, often used for the decorative borders of **kākahu**

tweed/tweel (SCOTS) iconic woven woollen fabric of Scotland and Ireland, closely woven in a soft, flexible texture. The term **tweed** derives from the Scots **tweel**, the name for fabric woven in a **twill** pattern

twill textile weave with an offset pattern of diagonal parallel 'ribs,' where **weft** threads pass over one or more **warp** threads, then under two or more (and so on), the offset shifting the pattern each row

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[1] Te Rangi Hīroa, *The Coming of the Maori* (Christchurch: Whitcoulls, 1987); Te Rangi Hīroa, "The Evolution of Maori Clothing," *The Journal of the Polynesian Society* 33, no. 1 (1924): 25-47, https://www.jstor.org/stable/20701956; Puketapu-Hetet, *Māori Weaving,* 20.

warp the lengthways, relatively fixed threads in weaving, held (usually in a loom) at tension for the **weft** threads to pass through

warp-faced weaving where the **warp** threads are denser than the **weft** threads (usually, the weft becomes no longer visible)

warp-weighted loom a vertical, upright loom form, where the **warp** tension is produced by means of a series of weights, which are attached to the warps at intervals and hung free just above the ground

waulk (SCOTS) to make a woven woollen fabric denser and softer by a process of soaking and beating

waulking-song rhythmic folk song sung while waulking cloth, the beat helping to keep time in the work

weave/weaving/woven a fabric technique or structure formed by a **weft** thread passing over and under successive **warp** threads row by row, at right angles. Typically done with the aid of a loom.

weft the crosswise/horizontal threads in weaving, passed over and under the **warp** threads to form a fabric

whakapae (TE REO MĀORI) a side-crossover patterning used in **whatu**

whatu (TE REO MĀORI) a fabric technique or structure made by the twisting/twining of a pair (or two pairs) of horizontal **aho** threads to enclose adjoining vertical **whenu** threads

whatu-weaving a technique combining aspects of **whatu** and **weaving** into a single blended/patterned fabric

whatu aho patahi (TE REO MĀORI) single-pair weft-twining

whatu aho rua (TE REO MĀORI) double-pair weft-twining

whenu (TE REO MĀORI) lengthwise threads of a woven flax garment, similar to **warp**; strand of a cord; to twist, spin

whītau (TE REO MĀORI) See **muka**

GLOSSARY

Alba (SCOTS) Scotland

An Grianstad (GÀIDHLIG) see **Grianstad an Gheimhridh**

angiangi (TE REO MĀORI) *Usnea* species of lichen, with medicinal and fibre-dye properties. Also a name for the taupata plant, *Coprosma repens*, as well as a gentle breeze, or to be texturally thin or fine

Aotearoa (TE REO MĀORI) now used as the Māori name for New Zealand

atua (TE REO MĀORI) ancestor with continuing influence, deity, god, supernatural being (plural **ātua**)

athair thalún - (GAEILGE) *Achillea millefolium*, yarrow

aulder (SCOTS/SHAETLAN) older; also elder, ancestor

awa (TE REO MĀORI) river, stream, creek, canal, gully, gorge, groove, furrow

e hoa mā (TE REO MĀORI) friends

feusag a' ghobhair (GÀIDHLIG) 'the goat's beard.' *Usnea* species of lichen

Gaeilge (GAEILGE) Irish language

Gàidhlig (GÀIDHLIG) Scottish Gaelic language

Grianstad an Gheimhridh (GÀIDHLIG) winter solstice

haaf (SHAETLAN) the deep sea beyond coastal waters; the deep-sea fishing carried out 30-40 miles offshore in open boats

haafman (SHAETLAN) fishermen of the deep sea

haerenga (TE REO MĀORI) journey, trip, parting

hapū (TE REO MĀORI) kinship group, clan, tribe, subtribe. Section of a large kinship group and the primary political unit in traditional Māori society. Also pregnant, expectant, with child

harakeke (TE REO MĀORI) *Phormium tenax,* "New Zealand flax"

he taonga tuku iho (TE REO MĀORI) treasure passed down

hentins (SHAETLAN) gleanings, gatherings

hīkoi (TE REO MĀORI) walk, step, journey, march, trek; to step, stride, walk

kaiako (TE REO MĀORI) teacher

ika (TE REO MĀORI) fish, marine animal, aquatic animal. Any creature that swims in fresh or salt water including marine mammals such as whales.

īkura (TE REO MĀORI) menstruation

iwi (TE REO MĀORI) extended kinship group, tribe, nation, people, nationality, race. Often refers to a large group of people descended from a common ancestor and associated with a distinct territory. Also strength, bone

kanohī ki te kanohī (TE REO MĀORI) face to face, in person, in the flesh

kānuka (TE REO MĀORI) *Kunzea ericoides,* white tea-tree

kaupapa (TE REO MĀORI) topic, policy, matter for discussion, plan, purpose, scheme, proposal, agenda, subject, programme, theme, issue, initiative

kaupapa Māori (TE REO MĀORI) Māori approach, Māori topic, Māori customary practice, Māori institution, Māori agenda, Māori principles, Māori ideology. A philosophical doctrine, incorporating the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of Māori society

kaitiakitanga (TE REO MĀORI) guardianship, stewardship, trusteeship, trustee

kin (SCOTS) relations, kinsfolk

kōrerorero (TE REO MĀORI) to talk, discuss, converse, chat; dialogue, conversation, discussion, chat

kōtuitui (TE REO MĀORI) to lace, fasten by lacing, interlace, interlink, connect

kupenga (TE REO MĀORI) net

lönabrak (SHAETLAN) the swell and surge of sea breaking on the shore

mahi (TE REO MĀORI) work, job, employment, trade (work), practice, occupation, activity, exercise, operation, function. Also abundance, lots of, many, heaps of

mamae (TE REO MĀORI) be painful, sore, hurt; ache, pain, injury, wound

mana (TE REO MĀORI) prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power, charisma - a supernatural force in a person, place or object. *Mana* goes hand in hand with *tapu*, one affecting the other.

mānuka (TE REO MĀORI) *Leptospermum scoparium,* tea tree

māra kai (TE REO MĀORI) food garden

maramataka (TE REO MĀORI) Māori lunar calendar, almanac

mātauranga (TE REO MĀORI) knowledge, wisdom, understanding, skill (sometimes used in the plural)

mātauranga Māori (TE REO MĀORI) Māori knowledge — the body of knowledge originating from Māori ancestors, including the Māori world view and perspectives, Māori creativity, and cultural practices

maunga (TE REO MĀORI) mountain

mauri (TE REO MĀORI) life principle, life force, vital essence, special nature, a material symbol of a life principle, source of emotions. The essential quality and vitality of a being or entity. Also used for a physical object, individual, ecosystem or social group in which this essence is located. Also **mouri** (in the Taranaki **mita**)

mindin (SHAETLAN) memory, remembering

mita (TE REO MĀORI) rhythm, intonation, pronunciation and sound of a language, accent, diction, elocution, dialect, register

moana (TE REO MĀORI) sea, ocean, large lake

motu (TE REO MĀORI) island, country, land, nation

muru raupatu (TE REO MĀORI) confiscation

ora (TE REO MĀORI) life, health, vitality. Also alive, well, safe, cured, recovered, healthy, fit, healed; satiated, replete; to recover, revive; to survive, escape

Pākehā (TE REO MĀORI) New Zealander of European descent, introduced from or originating in a foreign country

papakāinga (TE REO MĀORI) original home, home base, village, communal Māori land, also written as **papa kāinga**

paringa (TE REO MĀORI) flowing (of the tide), incoming (tide)

patupaiarehe (TE REO MĀORI) fairy folk — mythical people who live in the bush, on mountains. Although like humans in appearance, the belief is that they do not eat cooked food and are afraid of fires

pepeha (TE REO MĀORI) tribal saying, tribal motto, proverb (especially about a tribe), set form of words, formulaic expression, saying of the ancestors, figure of speech, motto, slogan. Set sayings known for their economy of words and use of metaphor, encapsulating many Māori values and human characteristics. Now commonly refers to a set, structured way of introducing yourself and how you are connected

poi (TE REO MĀORI) a light ball on a string of varying length which is swung or twirled rhythmically to sung accompaniment. Traditionally the ball was made of **raupō** leaves. Poi dance: songs performed in which the poi is swung in various movements to accompany the singing. Also to knead, make into balls, sphere

pūrākau (TE REO MĀORI) myth, ancient legend, story

pūtahi (TE REO MĀORI) to join, meet; confluence, intersection; meeting place, centre; long clouds, stratus

raupatu (TE REO MĀORI) to conquer, overcome, take without any right, conquest, confiscation

raupō (TE REO MĀORI) bulrush, *Typha orientalis*

reo (TE REO MĀORI) language, dialect, tongue, speech

rongoā (TE REO MĀORI) remedy, medicine, drug, cure, medication, treatment, solution (to a problem), tonic. Also to treat, to apply medicine

Samhain (GAEILGE/GÀIDHLIG**)** festival marking the end of harvest season/beginning of winter

selkie (SCOTS/SHAETLAN) seal. Also a mythical seal-being, able to shed its skin and take human form on land. Variations on the name include silkie, sylkie, selchie

shoormal (SHAETLAN) where the shore meets the sea

tai (TE REO MĀORI) sea, coast (as opposed to *uta* when referring to the hinterland), tide. Also a term for friend

takutai moana (TE REO MĀORI) shore

tang (SHAETLAN) seaweed

tangata (TE REO MĀORI) person, human being, individual

tangata whenua (TE REO MĀORI) local people, hosts, Indigenous people. People born of the whenua, i.e., of the placenta and of the land where the people's ancestors have lived and where their placenta are buried. Also to be natural, at home, comfortable, naturalised, acclimatised, established, adapted

taonga (TE REO MĀORI) treasure, anything prized

tapu (TE REO MĀORI) sacred, prohibited, restricted, set apart, forbidden, under *atua* protection

te reo Māori (TE REO MĀORI) the Māori language

tikanga (TE REO MĀORI) correct procedure, custom, habit, lore, method, manner, rule, way, code, meaning, plan, practice, convention, protocol. The customary system of values and practices that have developed over time and are deeply embedded in the social context

Tír-Dhá-Ghlas (GAEILGE) the original name for Terryglass, Tipperary, Ireland (where most of my Grandma Faith's Irish ancestors are from), meaning land of two streams

tūpuna (TE REO MĀORI) ancestors. Plural of **tupuna** and the western dialect form of **tīpuna**

tūpuna wāhine (TE REO MĀORI) female ancestors, grandmothers, great grandmothers. The western dialect form of tīpuna wahine and plural form of tupuna wahine

ūkaipō (TE REO MĀORI) origin, real home. Also mother, source of sustenance

uta (TE REO MĀORI) the shore, ashore, land (from a sea or water perspective), inland (from a coastal perspective), interior (of a country or island), also to load on, put on

wā (TE REO MĀORI) time, season, period of time, interval, duration, area, region, definite space

wairua (TE REO MĀORI) spirit, soul. Also attitude, quintessence, feel, mood, feeling, nature, essence, atmosphere

wānanga (TE REO MĀORI) to meet and discuss, deliberate, consider, seminar, conference, forum, tribal knowledge, lore, learning. Important traditional cultural, religious, historical, genealogical and philosophical knowledge

whakapapa (TE REO MĀORI) to lie flat, lay flat, to place in layers, lay one upon another, stack flat, to recite in proper order (e.g., genealogies, legends, months), recite genealogies, genealogy, genealogical table, lineage, descent. Reciting whakapapa was, and is, an important skill and reflected the importance of genealogies. It is central to all Māori institutions.

whanaunga (TE REO MĀORI) relative, relation, kin, blood relation

whanaungatanga (TE REO MĀORI) relationship, kinship, sense of family connection. A relationship through shared experiences and working together which provides people with a sense of belonging. It develops as a result of kinship rights and obligations, which also serve to strengthen each member of the kin group. It also extends to others to whom one develops a close familial, friendship or reciprocal relationship

wharepora (TE REO MĀORI) space of weaving. From Te Whare Pora

whenua (TE REO MĀORI) land. Often used in the plural. Also ground, country, placenta, afterbirth

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Image 278. As I close this exegesis, I leave the final words to my Nana Maire

Note: some images have been changed, replaced, or removed from the published copy to protect whakapapa, privacy, or for copyright (noted in the captions)

APPENDIX ONE:

TAUIRA



MATERIAL:

Muka, wool

METHOD:

50 whenu in undyed muka. Whatu-aho-rua ara in muka aho, 9 rows of māwhitiwhiti kupenga with threaded pearl beads. Ends trail off into loose whenu with further randomly-scattered threaded beads held with a single knot beneath.

MAKING:

Draws from Nana’s drawn-thread work and lace patterns, but worked into whatu muka. Made with the intent towards practicing underlying patterns for a future korowai. A few strands of wool run through the drawn-thread patterns, in-between the whatu. Feels fragile, delicate, but strong at the same time. Has softened in colour to a pale gold over time, and with the sunlight.



MATERIAL:

Wool, muka

METHOD:

50 whenu in undyed wool. Whatu-aho-rua ara in muka aho, 9 rows of māwhitiwhiti kupenga with threaded pearl beads. Ends trail off into loose whenu with further randomly-scattered threaded beads held with a single knot beneath.

MAKING:

This tauira replicates (almost) the same patterns as the first muka tauira, but in reverse — wool where there had been muka, muka where there had been wool. Every now and then the pattern alters very slightly, but in all other ways the second tauira is a mirror of the first.



MATERIAL:

Commercially-dyed second-hand wool, undyed and tanekaha-dyed Irish aran wool yarn, huruhuru (feathers)

METHOD::

20 whenu. Worked bottom to top – two whatu-aho-rua ara, followed by two repeats of whakapae in “whale’s tail” pattern, whatu-aho-rua, huruhuru inclusions, and māwhitiwhiti.

MAKING:

Tauira to plan out a kākahu for my brother Aidan’s 21st and graduation, 2021. Dark grey wool to reference the Taranaki onepu (black iron sands) and andesite, with the ochre and white lines recalling kōkowai, streaks in stones, and white crashing surf, extended by the ocean-connecting whakapae patterns.



MATERIAL:

Cotton; wool; harakeke, angiangi, mānuka dyes

METHOD:

150 warp threads in ahanded-down cotton thread. Various plain-weave and twill patterns in plant-dyed wool weft, woven on a jack-loom.

MAKING:

Thinking through some early weaving ideas on a floor-loom, using earlier plant-dyed wool yarns in various randomised twill patterns. Weft yarns appeared quote different shades when next to each other in skeins, but lose those differences amid the heavy white cotton warp.



MATERIAL:

Wool

METHOD:

20 whenu in undyed wool. Frame-loom woven, with two rows of māwhitiwhiti between whatu-aho-pātahi ara, and a single row of drawn-threadwork patterning in the centre.

MAKING:

Woven on my childhood frame-loom, where fabric naturally become very weft-faced due to the widely-spaced warp. The tension of the māwhitiwhiti threads is too strong to hold neatly, even once a way to cross them was established in the warp. Does make potentially interesting gaps between the threads.



MATERIAL:

Wool

METHOD:

20 whenu in undyed wool. Frame-loom woven, with two rows of drawn-threadwork patterning between whatu-aho-pātahi ara in the first and last third.

MAKING:

Woven on my childhood frame-loom, where fabric naturally become very weft-faced due to the widely-spaced warp. The tension of the drawn-threadwork (worked on-loom) is too strong to hold neatly. Does make potentially interesting gaps between the threads.



MATERIAL:

Wool

METHOD:

20 whenu in undyed wool. Frame-loom woven (two warp-ends to each space), with two rows of māwhitiwhiti between whatu-aho-rua ara, and bound off with a final whatu-aho-rua ara.

MAKING:

Woven on the frame loom, with two warp threads to each space (aiming to get a more balanced weave than the previous weft-faced attempts). The tension worked better for the whakapae, but still frustrating to manouevre the yarn across the frame loom to achieve the crossing-over patterns.



MATERIAL:

Wool

METHOD:

50 whenu in gray wool. Warp-weight weaving with 4 whatu-aho-rua ara and whakapae beginning partway through.

MAKING:

The first project tauira woven on the warp-weighted loom — the tauira-loom, made for testing, made for small-scale making. It's in a medium-grey wool from Liam's mother's stash, and it's toothy — the shed catches every time I lift the heddle. The whakapae kupenga pattern in the whatu stands out strongly against the weave; the whatu-aho-rua rows begin to adjust the tension of the sett.



MATERIAL:

Acrylic yarn

METHOD:

50 whenu in commercially dyed acrylic yarn. Whatu-aho-rua ara and plain weave.

MAKING:

Whatu-woven in acrylic yarn. I wanted to test if the weave was more balanced with a smooth yarn that didn't catch, but they feel… limp. I won't use this yarn again. Interesting to note how quickly the fabric became warp-faced without the whatu, which brings it back into balance.



MATERIAL:

Acrylic yarn, acrylic/wool-blend yarn

METHOD:

50 whenu in commercially dyed acrylic yarn, acrylic aho, acrylic/wool-blend weft. Whatu-aho-rua ara, whakapae, and plain weave.

MAKING:

Whatu-woven in acrylic yarn. I wanted to test if the weave was more balanced with a smooth yarn that didn't catch, but they feel… limp. I won't use this yarn again. Interesting to note how quickly the fabric became warp-faced without the whatu, which brings it back into balance.



MATERIAL:

Wool, tanekaha dye, Taranaki driftwood

METHOD:

50 whenu. Whatu-aho-rua ara, commenced around one drifwood piece and tied off at the end of each ara to another driftwood piece. Māwhitiwhiti every alternating 5 whenu.

MAKING:

Testing out giving the tauira their own support structure that becomes part of the finished piece – using small pieces of driftwood to “anchor” each edge of the repeating māwhitiwhiti pattern.



MATERIAL:

Wool, muka, tanekaha dye, wood ash

METHOD:

16 whenu in undyed wool, 4 whenu in tanekaha-dyed wool, 20 whenu in tanekaha-dyed muka, 2 whenu in tanekaha-dyed muka with wood ash, 8 whenu in tanekeha-dyed wool with wood ash. Repeating whakapae kupenga pattern with wool aho and wool/muka-blend pāheke.

MAKING:

Referencing some of the blended kākahu in the Puke Ariki and Tāmaki Paenga Hira museum collections, with striped wool and muka whenu and inclusions of wool pāheke (though here I use a muka/wool blend aho for the pāheke).



MATERIAL:

Wool (undyed and commercially-dyed yarns); Taranaki tī kouka, marram grass, puha, pīngao

METHOD:

50 whenu in undyed wool. Plain weave interspersed with whatu-aho-rua, wool weft/aho and gathered-material weft.

MAKING:

Woven in-place in Taranaki on the tauira loom, begun alongside the Tongapōrutu awa, then carried on hīkoi along the Taranaki coast, setting up to weave at different spots when the moment felt right. Gathered materials as I walked to add into the weave during the pauses.



MATERIAL:

Wool

METHOD:

50 whenu in undyed wool. Alternating on the warp-weighted loom between rows of weaving and whatu-aho-rua ara, with differing patterns in whakapae and māwhitiwhiti. Short inclusion of tanekaka-dyed wool weft for 5 rows near the end.

MAKING:

Whenu in two shades of undyed wool yarn, from Liam's mother's stash again. I set up the tauira loom and start weaving on the deck of the bach; I finish it at Muru Raupatu marae on a Toi o Taranaki ki te Tonga wānanga. I work the kupenga pattern again in whakapae between the rows of weaving, and then just play around with different māwhitiwhiti crosses for the rest of the length.



MATERIAL:

Tongapōrutu driftwood, wool

METHOD:

16 whenu in water-softened driftwood roots. Rows of whatu-aho-rua and plain weave in wool aho, with a single attempt at māwhitiwhiti.

MAKING:

Playing with a contrast of materials (soft wool/ rigid roots). Softening the dry roots again in water let them become more malleable while making, though they still don’t cross easily.
Aho in something stronger, like muka, might hold the pattern more firmly in place.



MATERIAL:

Wool, Taranaki driftwood, Taranaki uku (low-fired and glaze-fired), Grandma's cellulose pearls, Nana's glass bobbin-beads

METHOD:

Harakeke-dyed wool yarn strung with beads, worked in a kupenga/netting knot with one bead per loop.

MAKING:

Thinking about the knots in a net, and what is held in the spaces between.



MATERIAL:

Alpaca wool, muka, tanekaha dye, wood ash

METHOD:

40 whenu in undyed alpaca wool. Whatu-aho-rua ara to begin and bind off, with weft of tanekaha-dyed muka in a gradient (colour altered by wood-ash post-modifier.

MAKING:

Playing with short wefts, gradients like water-depths, contrasting materials (soft/more rigid).



MATERIAL:

Wool

METHOD:

50 whenu in undyed wool yarn. Whatu-aho-rua to hold initial sett, with a border of repeating 4-strand whiri. Plain weave with intersections of whatu and pāheke, finishing with another border of 4-strand whiri. Waulked to finish.

MAKING:

Whiri borders inspired by Nana’s drawn and pulled-thread patterns (those this pattern is incorprated into the fabric while weaving, rather than worked into a pre-woven fabric). Aiming for a balance, close weave; made more balanced by waulking after binding of the weave with whatu.



MATERIAL:

Wool

METHOD:

50 whenu in undyed wool yarn. Whatu-aho-rua to hold initial sett, then plain weave.

MAKING:

Letting warp-weights pull the tension across the weave, noticing where the warp begins to ladder and clump together.



MATERIAL:

Wool

METHOD:

50 whenu in undyed wool yarn. Plain weave, with sections of pulled-thread patterns.

MAKING:

A sampler incorporating some of Nana’s pulled-thread patterns into an on-loom weave, working into the tension held by the loom-weights.



MATERIAL:

Wool

METHOD:

50 whenu in fine wool yarn. Whatu-aho-rua to hold initial sett, then plain weave.

MAKING:

Letting warp-weights pull the tension across the weave, noticing where the weft threads catch and miss the warp, and the warp threads ladder and pool together.



MATERIAL:

Wool

METHOD:

50 whenu in fine wool yarn, plain weave.

MAKING:

Letting warp-weights pull the tension across the weave, noticing where the weft threads catch and miss the warp, ladder and pool together, then switching the weights at random to see where the weave shifts with the tensions.



MATERIAL:

Wool

METHOD:

34 warp threads (continuous loop) in undyed wool. Hand-wpven off-loom, applying no tension.

MAKING:

Wool still has what feels like a high lanolin content, and is quite sticky/grippy — made the tensionless weaving a little easier as the warp would catch and hold the weft a little as it passed though. The weave was surprisingly even overall, though very very loose.



MATERIAL:

Wool; angiangi and Queen Anne’s lace dyes

METHOD:

28 whenu in undyed wool, 12 whenu in angiangi-dyed wool, 8 whenu in Queen Anne’s Lace-dyed wool. Plain weave on the warp-weighted tauira loom, in a simple plaid pattern.

MAKING:

Working with the same Taranaki river-dyed yarns as in the whatuwai whatu-weaving, while thinking of more distant ancestral places (Scotland, Ireland) in the plaid patterning.



MATERIAL:

Wool, angiangi dye, kawakawa dye, harakeke leaf dye, Queen Anne's lace dye

METHOD:

10 whenu in undyed wool, 21 whenu in angiangi-dyed wool, 6 whenu in Queen Anne's Lace-dyed wool, 5 whenu in kawakawa-dyed wool, 8 whenu in harakeke-dye wool. Aho/weft in randomised assortment of the same yarns. Plain weave on the warp-weighted tauira loom, with whakapae crossing the threads at intervals.

MAKING:

Playing with ways to move and flow the threads across the whatu-woven fabric



MATERIAL:

Wool; Taranaki angiangi, Queen Anne’s lace, harakeke plant dyes

METHOD:

50 whenu in undyed wool. Tāniko patterning to commence, followed by tapestry-weave and whatu in different weights of Taranaki river-dyed wool yarns.

MAKING:

Thinking of patterning place-shapes into a weave, shorelines and plant-growth leading to river and pātiki (flounder).



MATERIAL:

Wool, Parihaka biochar ink, Tanekaha bark ink

METHOD:

50 whenu in undyed wool. Whatu-aho-rua in meandering rows, until halfway down the piece. Printed over with Parihaka biochar ink and tanekaha bark ink, though a repurposed knitting machine pattern punch card, then whatu over the bottom half of the pattern.

MAKING:

Made through the Te Waituhi a Nuku: Drawing Ecologies Parihaka māra biochar burn and Monique Jansen's biochar-ink printing workshop at the Govett-Brewster gallery. Sample-tauira whatu overnight in the wharenui, in wool, and then printed with Parihakaka biochar ink through knitting machine patterns, punch cards that had been saved from being thrown away [earlier in 2020], interestingly similar to tāniko patterns. I was curious to see if the pattern would hold at all if I whatu back into it (like ikat?). It absolutely didn't (partly because of the the thickness of the charcoal ink).



MATERIAL:

Wool, Tāmaki rimurimu

METHOD: :

50 whenu in undyed wool. 3 sets of 4 māwhitiwhiti kupenga pattern repeats, each holding strands of rimurimu.

MAKING:

A literal consideration of “weaving-place,” catching up pieces of the taiao into a whatu-woven net – held in place, but only loosely; the rimurimu could be pulled free and returned at any time.



MATERIAL:

Commercially-dyed wool

METHOD:

50 whenu in shades of vintage Aotearoa Feltex Thorobred waxed 4 ply crepe wool. Plain weave plaid with whatu-aho-rua for sett (two warp threads held together). Interlude of māwhitiwhiti in second third of weave.

MAKING:

Tension-tests on the tauira loom. Plain weave with a close-sett warp, leading to a warp-face weave.



MATERIAL:

Commercially-dyed wool, twine

METHOD:

50 whenu in shades of vintage Aotearoa Feltex Thorobred waxed 4 ply crepe wool. Plain weave plaid with whatu-aho-rua for sett (single warp thread for each whatu aho exchange).

MAKING:

Tension tests on the tauira loom. Plain weave with a balanced sett, using strands of twine in temporary whatu to keep the sett even across the weave, leading to a balanced weave.



MATERIAL:

Commercially-dyed wool

METHOD:

50 whenu in shades of vintage Aotearoa Feltex Thorobred waxed 4 ply crepe wool. 2-2 twill weave plaid with whatu-aho-rua for sett (two warp threads held together).

MAKING:

Tension-tests on the tauira loom. 2-2 twill with a close-sett warp, leading to a warp-face weave.



MATERIAL:

Commercially-dyed wool

METHOD:

50 whenu in shades of vintage Aotearoa Feltex Thorobred waxed 4 ply crepe wool. 2-2 twill weave plaid with whatu-aho-rua for sett (single warp thread for each whatu aho exchange).

MAKING:

Tension-tests on the tauira loom. Balanced 2-2 twill.



MATERIAL:

Wool

METHOD:

50 whenu in undyed Aotearoa wool. Rows or plain weave interspersed with wavy whatu-aho-rua ara, altering the weave balance (between warp-faced, balanced, and weft-faced weaving) with intervals of whatu-only sections.

MAKING:

These tauira came from a series of prompts given in supervision, questions like “Can you weave the awa? Can you weave the maunga? Can you weave whakapapa? What are the colours and the patterns?” Because the weave is quite loose, the whatu-aho-rua push the weft rows more tightly together, changing the texture and density of the cloth — it flows in and out across the fabric, recalling water, with the more fluid, meandering shapes. Thinking of the patterns that emerge
when the river and tides come in and out and make shapes in the sand.



MATERIAL:

Wool, Parihaka yarrow dye

METHOD:

50 whenu in undyed wool. Two rows of whatu-aho-rua ara, meandering/ doubling back on themselves. Dip-dyed in a dye pot of yarrow, gathered from Parihaka māra during the biochar burn, then a final single continuious line of whatu in undyed wool added when dry.

MAKING:

Thinking again about the meandering patterns of rivers from above, as well as the sand-lines left behind in the paths of shells, stones, small creatures following the tides.



MATERIAL:

Wool, Taranaki yarrow dye

METHOD:

50 whenu in Taranaki yarrow-dyed wool. Continuous, meandering whatu-aho-rua.

MAKING:

Curious to see if working a flowing pattern in whatu, before dyeing and then shifting the whenu, would show patterns where the dye didn’t reach beneath the whatu. Very subtle result – possibly needing a firmer material or yarn density for whenu.



MATERIAL:

Wool, tanekaha bark dye, rau harakeke dye

METHOD:

50 whenu in tanekaha and harakeke dyed wool. Undulating whatu aho rua ara in tanekaha/harakeke dyed and undyed wool yarns.

MAKING:

Still thinking about “weaving” rivers. Using old dyed yarn samples (West Auckland harakeke, dyed in 2017; gifted tanekaha, dyed in 2020), focusing on a gradient (like light over shallow, deepining water). The ara double back on themselves, then pick up the flow again, like eddies around rocks or the meandering of a stream.



MATERIAL:

Wool; rimurimu, harakeke flower and leaf, mangrove seed and leaf, pōhutukawa leaf and aerial root, tī kouka leaf, totara leaf dyes, copper

METHOD:

50 whenu in rimurimu, harakeke, mangrove, pōhutukawa, tī kouka, tōtara, dyed wool. Undulating whatu aho rua ara in the same yarns, one band of ramdomly knotted/looped/twisted whenu between 6th and 7th whatu ara.

MAKING:

Still thinking about “weaving” rivers. Using old dyed yarn samples (West Auckland harakeke, dyed in 2017; gifted tanekaha, dyed in 2020), focusing on a gradient (like light over shallow, deepining water). The ara double back on themselves, then pick up the flow again, like eddies around rocks or the meandering of a stream.



MATERIAL:

Wool

METHOD:

50 whenu/warp threads in undyed wool. Commenced off-loom with whatu-aho-rua in wool aho. Attached to tauira loom, whatu 2 further rows of whatu-aho-rua with māwhitiwhiti every alternating 5 whenu. Wove 60 rows plain-weave, bound off with whatu-aho-rua ara. Sketched out rough kawakawa pattern in contrasting yarn, filled in spaces with drawn-threadwork and outlined with partial-couching in wool yarn. Removed loom-weights, 7 last rows of whatu-aho-rua with whakapae every alternating 5 whenu. Extended partially-couched outline thread over whatu rows.

MAKING:

A first attempt at working drawn-threadwork forms related to Nana's curving/ plant-like designs, into a half loom-woven half whatu piece. Thinking of kawakawa leaves.



MATERIAL:

Wool

METHOD:

50 whenu/warp threads in undyed wool. Commenced off-loom with whatu-aho-rua in wool aho. Attached to tauira loom, woven 5 rows plain-weave, then added in māwhitiwhiti in first 5 whenu (then second 5, third 5, etc), weaving ends of whatu aho into plain-weave sections. After 6 whatu-aho-rua ara/30 rows of plain weave, added in a second māwhitiwhiti, filling in rows beneath with darning (10 further whatu ara/40 rows darning).

MAKING:

Working on ways to create negative-space forms between the whatu and the weaving. The diagonal line was intended to be a potential reference for larger pātikitiki or aramoana patterns; on finishing also feels like it echoes the salt/sweetwater line of the incoming tide up the Tongaporutu awa.



MATERIAL:

Wool

METHOD:

30 whenu in undyed wool, with spaces left between the first and last 10. Whatu-aho-rua commencement, followed by alternating woven rows and whatu ara in wool weft/aho. Whiri is used to hold the spaces between the warp apart, to form an approximate grid pattern.

MAKING:

Wanting to work with intentional, grid-like “holes,” representing a monochromatic plaid partten. The wool is too soft/stretchy to keep tension in the spaces between each whatu-woven segment once off the loom (though the inclusion of whiri helps add some slight rigidity). May work better in muka.



MATERIAL:

Muka, Grandma Faith's cellulose pearls

METHOD:

50 whenu in undyed muka. Whatu-aho-rua ara in muka aho, 9 rows of māwhitiwhiti kupenga with threaded pearl beads. Ends trail off into loose whenu with further randomly-scattered threaded beads held with a single knot beneath.

MAKING:

Thinking of my Grandma's necklaces, and memories of playing with the faux-pearl ones (including vintage celluloid-pearl lei from Hawai'i). Kept muka whenu more stiff to thread beads without a needle, but would soften more to allow more movement.



MATERIAL:

Wool, muka/wool-blend yarn, Queen Anne’s lace dye

METHOD:

50 whenu in hand-twined muka/wool-blend yarn. Whatu-aho-rua commencement, followed by plain-weave in Taranki Queen Anne’s lace-dyed wool yarn. Eight repeats of whakapae with undyed wool aho with wool weft plain-weave mid-way between.

MAKING:

Hand-twined whenu, blending muka and wool, was too dense for a smooth/balanced weave, but showed whakapae details clearly. Untying the weights left permanent tangles in the whenu, and feather-like fraying at the ends as the wool spills out and untwines from the muka.



MATERIAL:

Muka, wool, muka-wool blend

METHOD:

50 whenu in miro undyed muka-wool blend (one ply unravelled wool yarn, one ply Titirangi muka). Whakapae with whatu-aho-rua ara in muka aho, interspersed with darned triangles in undyed wool (top) and muka (right).

MAKING:

Playing with broken patikitiki patterns.
The half/half wool/muka blend whenu were too stiff to weave on the tauira loom, so used darning method instead to test the woven aspects. Looser miro next time may help add softness/movement.



MATERIAL:

Wool, angiangi dye

METHOD:

40 whenu in undyed wool yarn, 10 whenu in angiangi-dyed wool yarn. Repeating a kupenga pattern across tāniko and whakapae.

MAKING:

Thinking about ways of repeating or extending a pattern across multiple techniques – here, tāniko and whatu, but also considering how to include drawn-thread, lace-knit, or other ways of patterning



MATERIAL:

Wool; angiangi, harakeke leaf, kawakawa, and tanekaha bark dye and wood ash dyes

METHOD:

12 strand flat whiri/plait, joined with whatu-aho-rua to 40 undyed wool whenu. Alternating whatu ara with pāheke in plant-dyed dyed wool

MAKING:

Drawing ideas from mid-late 18th century kākahu with plaited wool borders and looped wool pāheke patterns acros their bodies.



MATERIAL:

Wool; kawakawa, angiangi, yarrow, and hīnau leaf and iron dyes

METHOD:

Cross-stitched plant-dyed wool in simple pātikitiki patterns, embroidered onto a previously whatu-woven tauira.

MAKING:

Drawing from a kākahu glimpsed in the shelves of the Tāmaki Paenga Hira collection, with a cross-stitched border referencing tāniko in black and white wool on hessian fabric — working back into a previously made tauira as a means of layering ideas



MATERIAL:

Wool, muka, muka/wool-blend, tanekaha dye

METHOD:

50 whenu in hand-twined muka/wool blend yarn, with a kupenga pattern repeating between tāniko and whakapae techniques, first in muka, then in wool aho, then the same together. The kupenga is picked up again in Nana's drawn-thread patterns

MAKING:

Another way of thinking about incorporating Nana's drawn-thread lace-like patterns, using them to extend a kupenga motif across the muka/wool blend tauira



MATERIAL:

Muka, wool, tanekaha bark dye

METHOD:

20 whenu/warp threads hand-twined tanekaha-dyed muka-wool-blend; 30 whenu/warp threads in undyed hand-twined muka-wool-blend (each ply equal parts unravelled wool yarn, Titirangi muka). Rows of māwhitiwhiti with whatu-aho-rua ara in muka aho, with darned triangle in undyed and tanekaha-dyed wool at top in a 2-1 twill pattern.

MAKING:

Playing with twill-weave patterns to fill in partial pātikitiki patterns (imagining this on an extended scale, doubled to get the full diamond repeated across a kākahu). The sheen of the muka and the softness of the wool balance each other – soft enough to weave easily, but still giving good definition to the māwhitiwhiti



MATERIAL:

Wool, muka, kawakawa leaf and tanekaha bark dyes.

METHOD:

40 whenu/warp threads in differing shades of unravelled/hand-twined kawakawa-dyed wool; 10 whenu/warp threads in undyed twined muka-wool blend. Whatu-aho-rua ara in muka aho, darned pātikitiki in tanekaha-dyed wool at top in a plain-weave pattern.

MAKING:

Playing with whatu-woven pātikitiki patterns, using old dyed yarn samples (kawakawa leaves, dyed in 2017 and keep in dark box until 2023), and newly-dyed tanekaha yarn.



MATERIAL:

Wool, tī kouka, tanekaha dye

METHOD:

49 whenu in undyed wool, 1 whenu in tanekaha-dyed tī kouka. Commenced with whatu-aho-rua ara, followed by 4 rows plain weave, two whatu ara (repeated). Each whatu row, the tī kouka whenu crosses 4 whenu to the right, moving across the fabric.

MAKING:

Whatu-woven during the *whatuwai Kōrerorero* sessions at Nathan Homestead Galleries, October-November 2023. Thinking about movement, flows, the shapes of conversations. As the tī kouka whenu moves across the fabric, the lines of weaving and whatu (which begin straight) start to move in waves.



MATERIAL:

Muka, wool

METHOD:

Miro muka-wool blend, knitted on 4mm knitting needles in a Shetland lace pattern, 20 stitches x 25 rows. 30 wool whenu threaded through the cast on row after casting off, held with a whatu-aho-rua ara.

MAKING:

Imagining a korowai with a band of lace knitting in place of tāniko. Thinking of lace patterns that might also read as an aramoana pattern, but then worked to continue the knitted pattern in māwhitiwhiti. Need to compensate for the knit-stretch, which is a contrast to the whatu. Could also use a much finer “yarn” for this needle size in the knitted part.



MATERIAL:

Muka; Taranaki yarrow dye, wood ash and iron

METHOD:

50 whenu in undyed and yarrow-dyed Taranaki muka. Plain-weave with muka weft, and diagonal māwhitiwhiti/whatu.

MAKING:

More detailed variation of pattern recalling the lines between an incoming tide along the river or on the shore – the steep incline of the sand falling into the crashing surf.



MATERIAL:

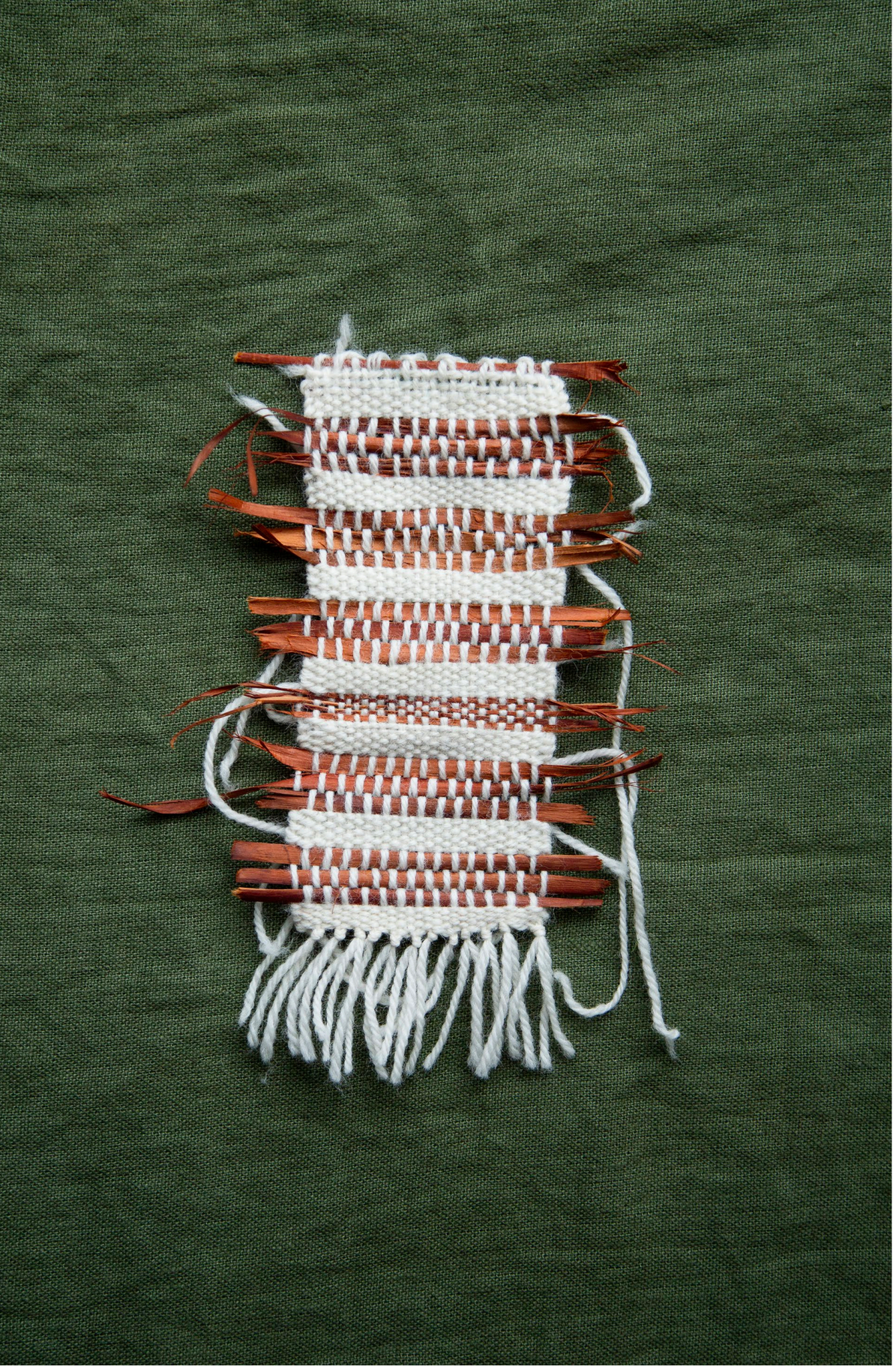
Muka, tanekaha bark dye and wood ash

METHOD:

Miro muka, knitted on 3.25mm knitting needles in a Shetland lace pattern (“Print ‘o da Wave”) 30 stitches x 32 rows. 50 muka whenu threaded through the cast on row after casting off, held with a whatu-aho-rua ara. 8 further whatu ara continue downwards; tanekaha-dyed muka hukahuka added every 4 rows. Māwhitiwhiti carry lace pattern through.

MAKING:

Imagining a korowai with a band of lace knitting in place of tāniko. Thinking of lace patterns that might also read as an aramoana pattern. Need to compensate for the stretch, which is a contrast to the whatu. Could also use a much finer “yarn” for this needle size in the knitted part.



MATERIAL:

Wool, tanekaha bark

METHOD:

28 warp threads in undyed wool, with undyed wool weft interspersed with tanekaha bark, woven on a pocket loom from childhood

MAKING:

Finding my childhood pocket loom near the end of the year of making sparked the idea for spontaneous place-woven tauira, allowing me to weave as I walked and gathered along beaches and forests. This was a first test of weaving a flat weaving on the pocket-sized frame (which is designed to make a small, rounded/double-sided pouch), using the remnents of tanekaha bark left over from previous dye baths



MATERIAL:

Wool; red matipo, kānuka leaves, tōtara, rautahi

METHOD:

28 warp threads in undyed wool, with undyed wool weft interspersed with red matipo, kānuka leaves, tōtara, rautahi gathered from northern Tāmaki, woven on a pocket loom from childhood

MAKING:

Weaving in autumn material gathered from plants in my aunt’s garden, in the middle of the harvest season



MATERIAL:

Wool; kōwhai seed pod, driftwood, rimurimu/tang/seaweed, tī kouka, angiangi, pōhutukawa aerial root

METHOD:

28 warp threads in undyed wool, with undyed wool weft interspersed with kōwhai seed pod, driftwood, rimurimu/tang/seaweed, tī kouka, angiangi, pōhutukawa aerial root gathered from the west beaches of Tāmaki, woven on a pocket loom from childhood

MAKING:

Weaving in autumn material gathered from the west coast of Tāmaki Makaurau, from Parau to Huia, while gathering the last pieces of driftwood for the Whakaruruhau loom in the middle of the harvest season



MATERIAL:

Muka, Grandma Faith's cellulose pearls

METHOD:

50 whenu in undyed muka. Whatu-aho-rua ara in muka aho with threaded pearl beads; māwhitiwhiti, whakapae, and drawn-thread patterns/ Ends trail off into loose whenu with further randomly-scattered threaded beads held with a single knot beneath

MAKING:

An extension of my thinking of Grandma's necklaces, and memories of playing with the faux-pearl ones (including vintage celluloid-pearl lei from Hawai'i). Kept the muka soft for movement, and used beeswax to thread beads without a needle



MATERIAL:

Wool, angiangi dye, tanekaha bark dye and wood ash

METHOD:

30 undyed wool whenu and 20 angiangi dyed wool whenu. Begun with whatu-aho-rua ara, with a pātikitiki pattern made in māwhitiwhiti, filled at the edges by rows of twill and plain weaving

MAKING:

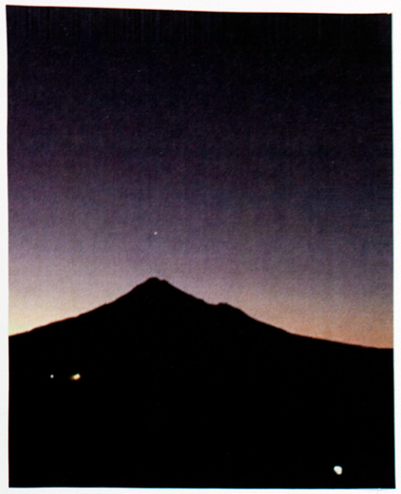
A final tauira, made ahead of setting up the Whakaruruhau loom with a body-scale tauira kākahu. Planning to repeat the pātikitiki pattern across the body of the whatu-weaving, over both wool and muka whenu, playing between twill and plain weaving as well as drawn-thread patterns between the māwhitiwhiti

APPENDIX TWO:

YEAR OF MAKING

PUANGA, 2023

PARIHAKA PUANGA KAI RAU FESTIVAL





PUANGA RISING ABOVE TARANAKI MAUNGA, 10/6/23, WITH THE SUN-LIGHT FOLLOWING BEHIND (SEEN FROM THE TOP OF PŪREPO)



SOME OF THE GORSE COVERING PŪREPO, IN THE AFTERNOON (WINTER) SUN



TWINING MUKA AHO DURING PUANGA WĀNANGA



BIOCHAR SKETCH

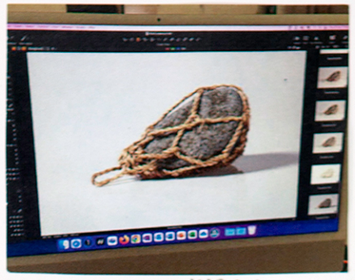


PUANGA BIOCHAR BURN - PARIHAKA

WHIRO - PIPIRI (JUNE-JULY) HŌTOKE (WINTER)



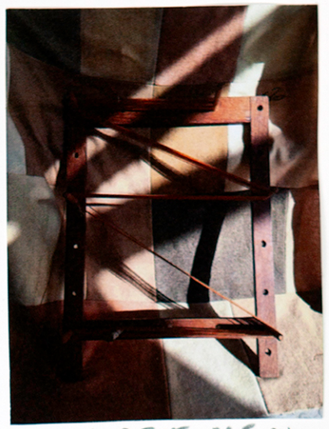
NETTLE-RETTING - LIAM'S GARDEN (OVER-RETTED - TOO LITTLE FIBRE LEFT)



TESTING DOCUMENTATION POTENTIALS FOR WEIGHTS & TAURA



CASTING KŪTAI TO TEST FOR MUKA HĀRO - BIO RESIN & PLASTER



WARPING UP FIRST WEAVE ON THE NEW LOOM - TESTING SETT & BALANCE IN SECOND-HAND YARNS



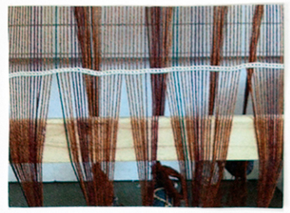
SHELLS FOR HĀRO MUKA - TARANAKI & SENT BY ADRIENNE



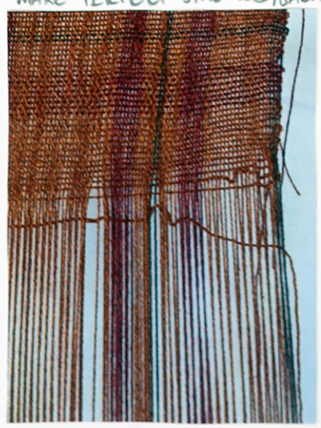
RAKAUNUI - UKU WEIGHTS



(FIRING TESTS)



WHATU-AHO-RUA TO REPLACE SETT-CHAINING - HEAVY AHO MAKE PERFECT SPACINGS/BALANCE



LETTING WEAVE MOVE FREELY - ENJOYING UNEXPECTED CATCHES/ GLITCHES

OBJECTSPACE/TE PŪĀHAI RARANGA (WORK SHOP)



WHIRO - HŌNGONOI (JULY-AUGUST) HŌTOKE (WINTER)



STUDIO DETAILS - PIRED CLAY WEIGHTS IN THE AFTERNOON WINTER SUNLIGHT

STUDIO DETAILS - GATHERING RECENT TAUIRA ALONG WALL NEAR LOOMS





WEIGHTS BORROWED FROM THE WHATUWAI LOOM, JOINING LOW FIRED CLAY WEIGHTS (FROM SCRAP/RECYCLED CLAY)



WINDING UP FIRST WARP OF BALANCED PLAIN-WEAVE PLAID/TARTAN (ALSO BELOW) - MID WEAVE, AIMING FOR LENGTH.
VINTAGE WOOL YARN, PRE-DYED
WEAVE STILL PULLS @ EDGES BUT RELATIVELY MINIMAL WITH UMATU ROWS FOR SETT





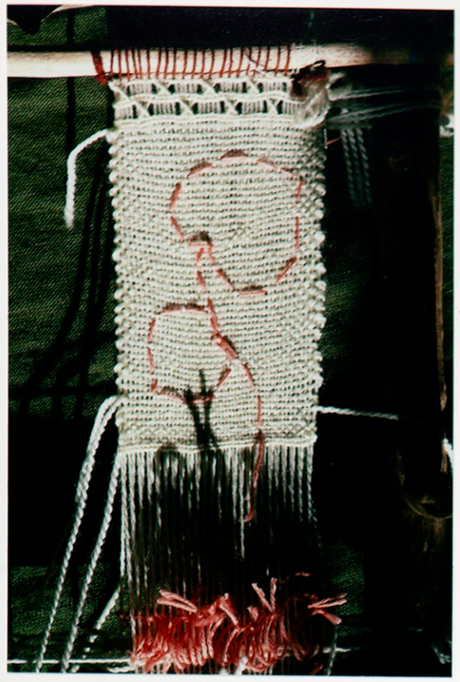
AIMING FOR BALANCED WEAVE



LETTING WEIGHTS/TENSIONS SHIFT/MOVE WEAVE (NO LOWER UMATU ROW FOR SETT) → ONCE TENSION REMOVED

WITH TENSION RELEASED:









PULLED-THREAD TESTS ON WARP-WEIGHTED WEAVE - ALL WOOL, FOLLOWING THE FLORAL-SHAPING IDEAS OF NANA'S SAMPLERS. KAKAKAKA MOTIF SKETCHED FIRST IN SECOND-HAND PINK WOOL, THEN STITCHED & THE OUTLINE REMOVED





WOOL TAUIRA (WHATU-WOVEN ON-LOOM), PLAYING WITH IDEAS OF TENSION & SPACE - HOLES BETWEEN THINGS, WATERLINES ON THE SHORE



BLENDED AHO - EQUAL PARTS MUKA & WOOL (HAND-TWINED, ONGOING)

wanting ancestral connection feeling in relation to ourselves through watching someone make.





VISUAL ARTS TALK WEEK SESSION/NOTES FROM EM CONSIDERING MATERIAL COMMUNICATION & INSTALL POTENTIALS (WITH GUESTS MARIE SHANNON, NERD BOBERG, LA'INE WAEREA)

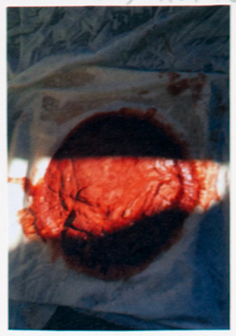
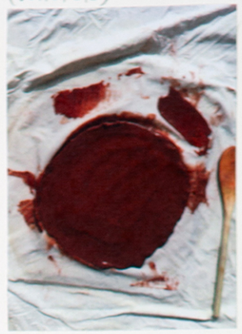
NOTES FROM TALK WEEK (FROM EMILY) RELATING GUEST RESPONSES



MUKA FROM END-OF-YEAR HARVEST, WORD WASHED, PATU - VARIETY HAS COME OUT VERY GOLDEN EVEN AFTER WASH - MAY NEED FURTHER PATU

WHIRO - HERE-TURI-KŌKĀ (AUGUST - SEPTEMBER) - HŌTOKE (WINTER)




WORKING THROUGH PROCESS OF MAKING A LAKE PIGMENT FROM A PLANT DYE BATH (THIS ONE TANEKAHA)
- BINDING PIGMENT TO A METALLIC (ALUM) SALT & DRAINING WATER UNTIL ONLY PIGMENT IS LEFT (GROUND TO POWDER FORM)





TANEKAHA - INK SKETCHINGS OF RIVER MEMORIES - HANGAATAHUA

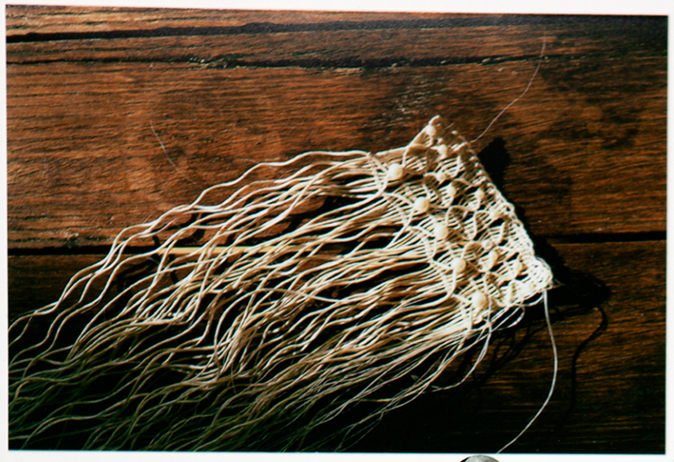




PIGMENT DRYING OVER DAYS IN THE SUN

OLD SAVED YARROW DYEBATH LAKE PIGMENT (FROM TARANAKI YARROW)





STUDIO / IN-PROCESS IMAGES

MUKA + PEARLS
WHATU
KUPENGA

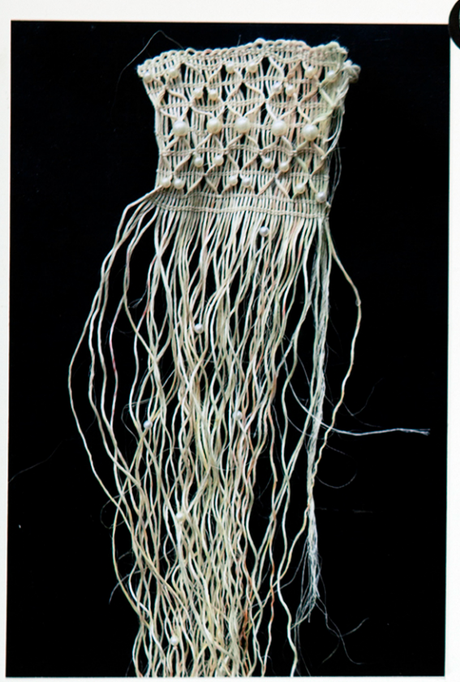
+ STUDIO CONVERSATIONS



-NOTES + THINKINGS-THROUGH

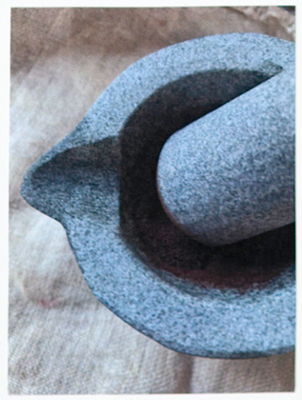
STUDIO CONVERSATION (WI SORAWIT)

- TENSIONS - IN THE DRIFTWOOD HOLDING THE LOOM, BUT ALSO IN THE NECESSITY OF RELEASE
- POSSIBILITY OF AN ARCHITECTURAL HOLDING/FRAMING OF LOOM? IN THE SHAPES? A SHELTER-FORM?

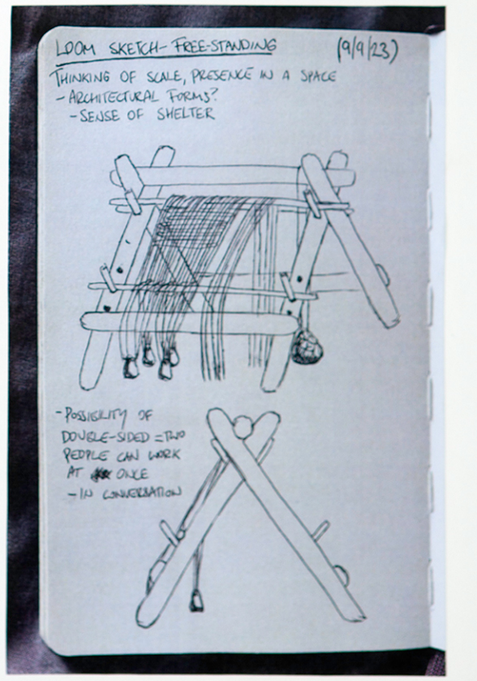


INCLUDING GRANDMA'S CELLULOSE PEARLS INTO WHATU MUKA, THINKING OF ADORNMENTS & BEING HELD
- MUKA COULD BE SOFTER, TO LET THE BEADS DRAPE

MAKING-NOTES



GRINDING DRIED LAKE-PIGMENT (TANEKAHA) FOR MIXING/PAINTING



WHIRO-MAHURU (SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER)
KŌANGA (SPRING)



GATHERING GORSE, ANGIANGI, & QUEEN ANNE'S LACE W/MAMA IN TĀMAKI - FOR DYEING

MIRO MUKA/WOOL - BLEND AHO FOR NEW TAVIRA







OFFCUT OF NANA'S LEFTOVER FABRIC, DYED WITH TANEKAHA TO ADD TO RONGOĀ PATCHWORK



LAYING OUT PIECES TO ADD TO RONGOĀ (MENDING) - AS WELL AS PATCHES TO MEND SMALL TEARS & AREAS OF WEAR



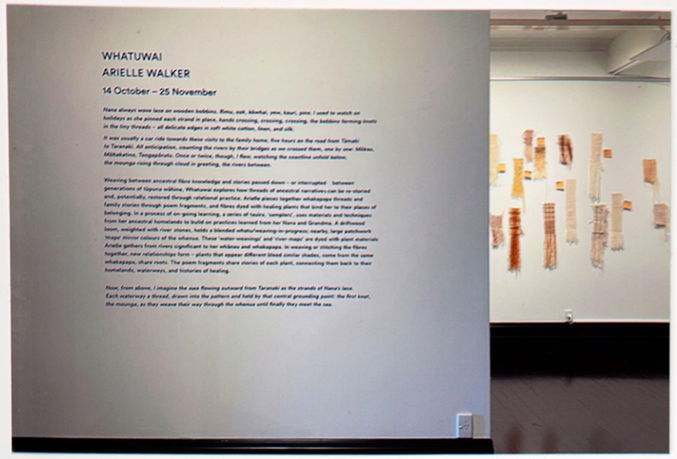
METRES OF HARAKEKE PARA WHIRI, BRAIDED ROPE TO HANG THE PATCHWORK



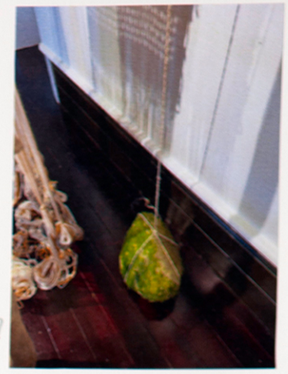
PRINTING PROCESS-IMAGES FOR GALLERY WALL



THINKING THROUGH POSSIBLE LAYOUTS FOR TAVIRA IN THE WHATUWAI EXHIBITION, NATHAN HOMESTEAD (OPENING OCTOBER 14)



EXHIBITION INSTALL DETAILS, INCLUDING TEXT FROM THE DURATIONAL WORK WRITTEN FOR TE-AU @ GOVETT-BREWSTER (ABOUT NANA, & LACE, & AWA, & WEAVING)



ANCHOR STONE GATHERED WITH SIONE FROM THE NEARBY HARBOUR SHORE, TO HOLD THE LOOM WHILE IT STAYS/VISITS IN THE GALLERY



LETTING LIGHT & SHADOW PLAY ACROSS THE FLOOR & WALLS, MAKING SPACE



NOT ALL THE TAVIRA ARE INCLUDED - THINKING OF THEIR RELATIONSHIPS TO EACH OTHER & THE SPACE





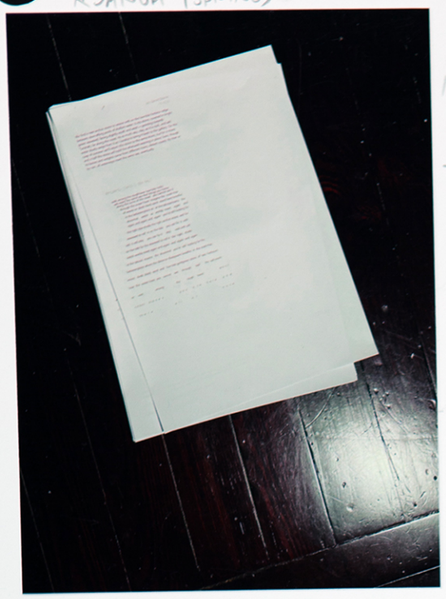
"SCRAPBOOK" WALL OF PROCESS-IMAGES - SKETCHES, MAKING-DETAILS, MATERIAL SAMPLES, PLACE-VISIT DOCUMENTING



MORE DETAILS OF INSTALL



WHIRO – WHIRINGA-Ā-NUKU (OCTOBER–NOVEMBER)
KŌANGA (SPRING)



INSTALLING IN LAYERS – STACKS & SEDIMENTS

DURATIONAL WRITING BEGINNINGS TO BUILD ON ITSELF



WHATU-WEAVING WITH KAWAKAWA-DYED YARN & TANEKAHA-DARNED DETAILS





FINDING THIS TAVIRA MORE INTERESTING FROM THE BACK!



SETTING UP SPACE FOR THE WEEK'S KŌRERORERO TIMES – UNFOLDING THE COUNTERMAT TO CIRCLE AROUND, LAYING PLACES FOR SITTING, CENTREING WHENUA/PLACE IN THE ROOM



RECALLING THE JOY OF SEEING CHILDREN'S ENGAGEMENT WITH THE FABRIC (DOCUMENTED ONLY IN MEMORY) – WANTING TO TOUCH & HOLD IT WITH NO HESITANCY



IMAGES FROM GUESTS, OF THE WEAVING IN-PROCESS DURING THE CONVERSATIONS





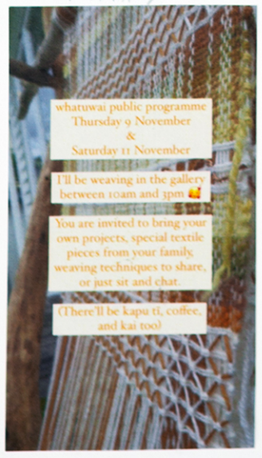
DEMONSTRATING THE LOOM'S FUNCTIONING TO A GUEST (PHOTO COURTESY OF THEM)

Date	Name	From	Comments
14/10	Lynne	Mt Wellington	
16/10	Matise	Te Puru	
17/10	Corina	Across the street	
17/10	Avis Lawkan		Stunning + beautiful
17/10	Anna Maria	Manurewa	Special space - amazed
17/10	Debi Ann Tepene Girl	Kawa	Stunning, i.i.i.
18/10	Natalie Robertson	Tāmaki	Ka rawe
18/10	Monique Rydings	Tāmaki	Ka rawe !
21/10	Unintelligible	Mangere	So good.
21/10	Hannah Mason	Melbourne, Australia	Beautiful work. Thanks!
24/10	Jessica Oldmeadow	From Outside the road	Such beautiful work
24/10	Carl, Jane, Tess	Sure Awesome Spaces & Weaves	Lovely work!
27/10	Paula Green	Rural	
28/10	Rachel Hayes	Oakland, USA	
28/10	NATALIE R	WAIWHAKAIHO	NOW!
28/10	Sarah	Onehunga	
1/11	Diana	Brisbane, Australia	
1/11	Sandra	Devonport, Auckland	
4/11	Kim	Mangere	
5/11	Jacqui	Addington	
6/11	Aroha	Manurewa	
7/11	Cameron	Otara / Clover Park	
7/11	Audrey	Rarotonga	
7/11	Sacred Cows Unrated		

NOTES FROM THE NATHAN HOMESTEAD GALLERY VISITOR'S BOOK FOR WHATUWAI

INVITATION TO WHATUWAI KŌRERORERO (SCREENSHOTS FROM INSTAGRAM)





MATERIAL-PREPARATION FOR AHU-MAHING IN CONVERSATION – SHREDDED HARAKEKE PARA (LEFTOVER FROM HĀRO MUKA)

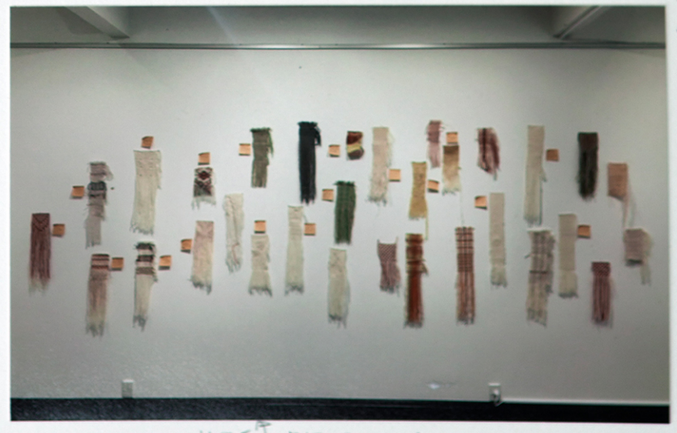


ALSO TAUGHT SOME KŌRERORERO GUESS HOW TO TWINE INTO CORDAGE)

PAUSING THE TAVIRA-IN-PROCESS AT THE END OF THE KŌRERORERO TIMES

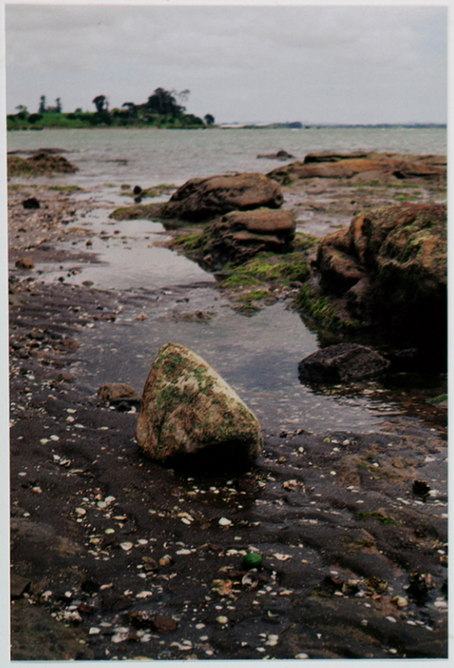


NEW ADDITIONS TO THE GATHERING OF TAVIRA



THIS WORK WAS PLACED HERE, THE FINAL ADDITION BEFORE THE EXHIBITION ENDED

WHIRO- WHIRINGA-Ā-RANGI (NOVEMBER - DECEMBER)
KŌANGA (SPRING)



RETURNING THE ANCHOR STONE TO THE MANUKAU, FOLLOWING WHANAU CLOSING

ANGIANGI GROWING AMID BRANCHES, UNBROKEN BY THE SPRING STORMS →

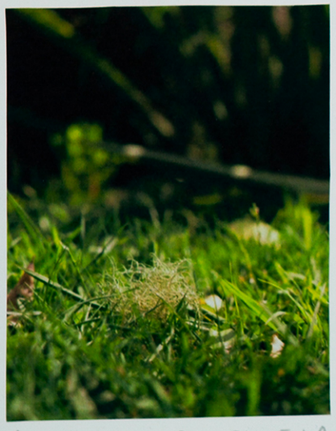




FULL MOON RISING OVER THE TONGAPŌRUTU AWA, SPRING

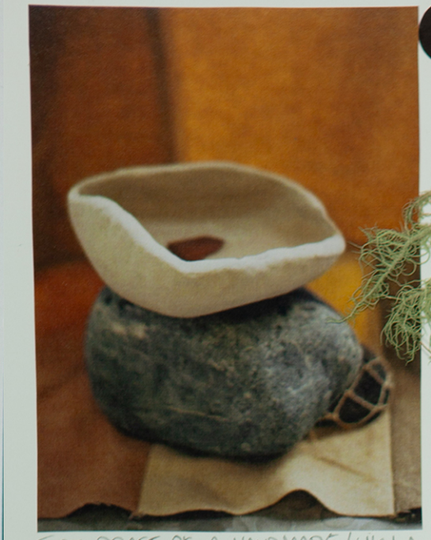
CLAY-VITRIFICATION & STONE-MOULDING TESTS, SHAPING OVER TARANAKI ANCHOR-STONE FOR WHAKAUKA





GATHERING STORM-FALLEN ANGIANGI IN TARANAKI, RAKAUNUI MOON





FIRST DRAFT OF A HANDMADE / UKU WHAKAUKA - VITRIFIED SCRAP-CLAY, RECYCLED & STONE-FORMED



BLACK-DYED BARK FOUND IN PARU AT SALLY & HUGH'S TARANAKI WHENUA





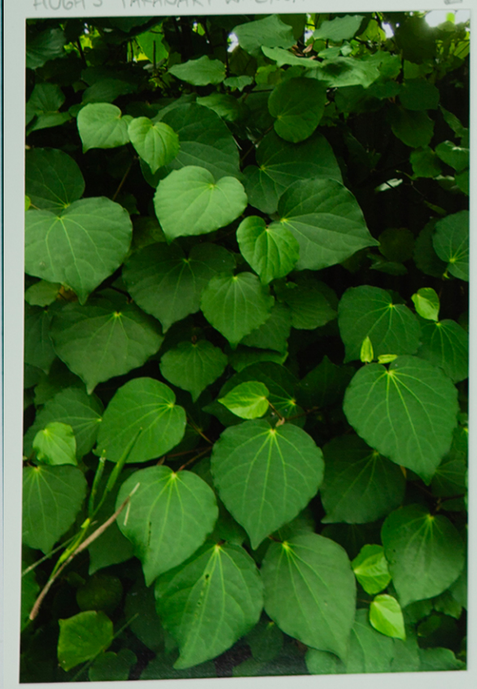
ANGIANGI DYE! PRESSED SAMPLES FROM BEFORE & AFTER DYE-BATH, SHOWING COLOUR-SHIFT FROM GREY-GREEN TO ORANGE.

GATHERED IN TARANAKI, 2022-2023



SAMPLE OF ANGIANGI-DYED YARN + PHOTO WHILE DRYING





NEW SPRING GROWTH ON KAWAKAWA @ MAMA'S PLACE, CENTRAL-EAST TĀMAKI MAKAURAU

TWINING MUKA/WOOL-BLEND AHO FOR KNITTING LACE PIECES TO WORK INTO WHATU TAUIRA



FIRST ATTEMPTED LACE-KNIT + WHATU TAUIRA. MUKA/WOOL-BLEND HAND-TWINED AHO, WITH WOOL WHENU JOINED LATER FOR WHATU / MĀWHITI WHITI. KNIT-STRETCH STILL FIGHTING WHATU.





MUKA/WOOL-BLEND AHO LEFT OVER FROM LACE KNIT / WHIRU TAUIRA

WHIRO - HAKIHEA (DECEMBER-JANUARY)
RAUMATI (SUMMER)



A CURRENT GATHERING OF THE TAUIRA, BROUGHT TOGETHER FOR A CONVERSATION WITH MAMA ABOUT ALL THE WHAKAPAPA & STORIES WOVEN INTO THEM

VISITING TŪPUNA PLACES- TE PAEA'S HOME AT WHAKAREWAREWA, & THE GEYSER SHE IS PHOTOGRAPHED WITH IN IMAGES FROM LATE 1800'S





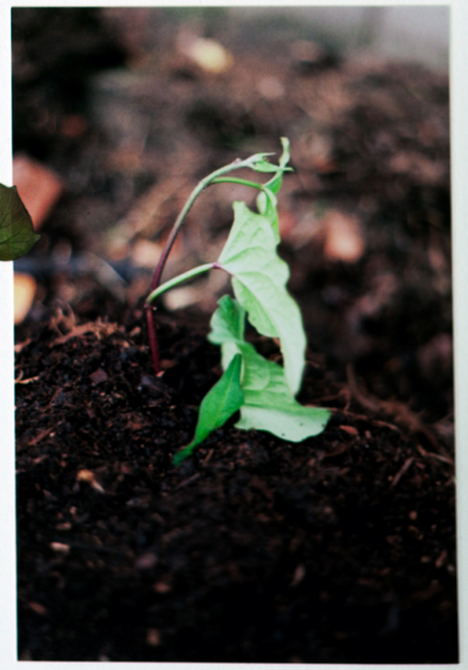


WAIREBE, NEAR TE PAEA'S TARAWERA HOME

PLANTING THIS SEASON'S KŪMARA —TURU GROWN FROM THE STORED KŪMARA OF THE PREVIOUS HARVEST

(PRESSED LEAF FROM ONE OF THE TURU)







SPRING WEEDS-GATHERING - FOR CORDAGE AS WELL AS FOR DYEING. DANDELIONS, RIBWORT, ETC -TĀMAKI (WEST COAST) GARDENS ESPECIALLY







COLLECTING HENTILAGETS ON RAKAUNUI (CHRISTMAS DAY) AT LIAM'S DAD'S PLACE, ORAMA (WEST COAST OF TĀMAKI) WITH A LOADED BASKET & LIAM'S SIBLING'S HELP



TWINING MUKA/WOOL-BLEND AHO ALONG THE NGĀMOTU COASTAL WALKWAY WHILE WAITING FOR A RIDE TO THE PĀ



TARANAKI THROUGH THE WINDOW OF A PLANE, A BIRD'S EYE VIEW

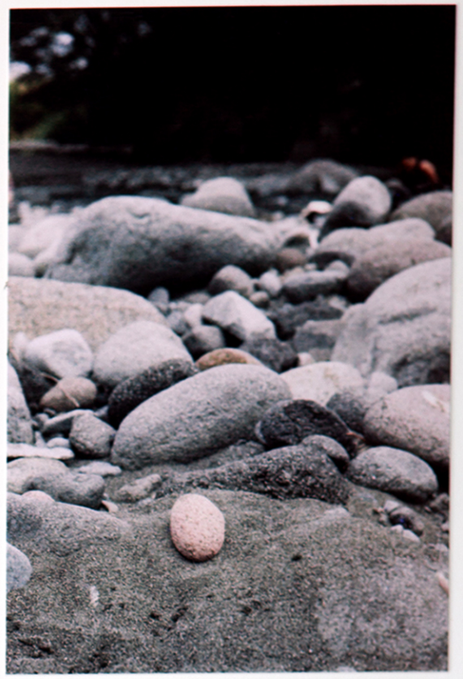
SEEING TARANAKI FROM PUNIHO, AS NANA MUST HAVE SEEN HIM WHEN GROWING UP



WHIRO - KOHITĀTEA (JANUARY-FEBRUARY)
RAUMATI (SUMMER)



WHĀNAU WĀNANGA
-VISITING TŪPUNA PLACES
TARANAKI KI TE TONGA
(SOUTH TARANAKI)
TAKUTAI



STONE GATHERED FROM HANGAATAHUA AWA AFTER FIRST EVER SWIMS THERE, TO RETURN AFTER WEAVING



GATHERING WEED RAMIE FOR DYE - THISTLE (NOT GATHERED) & YARROW



KOHI HARAKEKE (GATHERING FOR HĀRO MUKA) WITH SALLY @ HER WHENUA IN TARANAKI KI TE TONGA
-DARK SUMMER AFTERNOONS



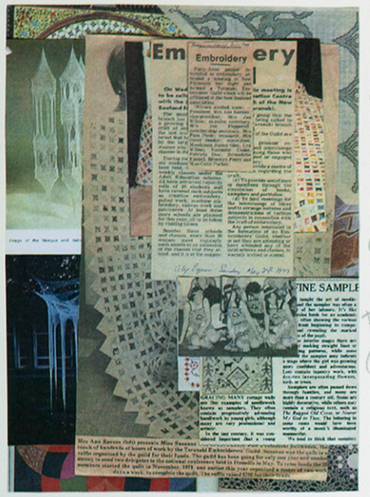




YARROW GATHERED FROM SALLY'S WHENUA FOR DYEING
-LAKE PIGMENTS MADE FROM DYE-BATH AFTER YARN (STILL SO MUCH PIGMENT LEFT!) WITH PLUM & SODA ONLY PLUS IRON SULFATE



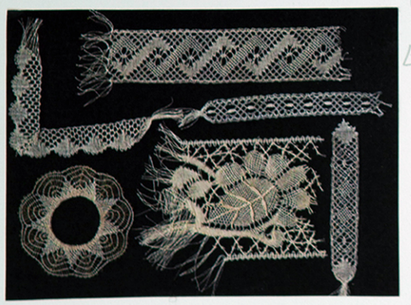
DRYING PIGMENT



MORE OF NANA'S SCRAP-BOOK OF INFO COLLECTION, PHOTOS, SAMPLERS, PIECES-IN-PROCESS, PARTIAL EDGES OF THINGS, GIFTED BY GRANDAD WHEN WE VISITED FOR HIS BIRTHDAY (SCANNED)

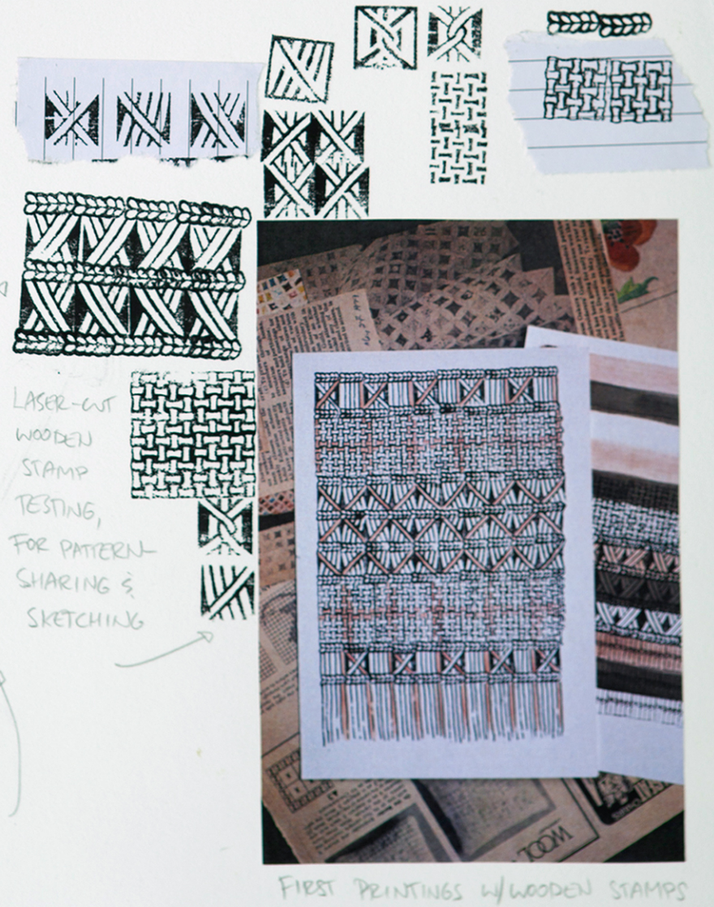








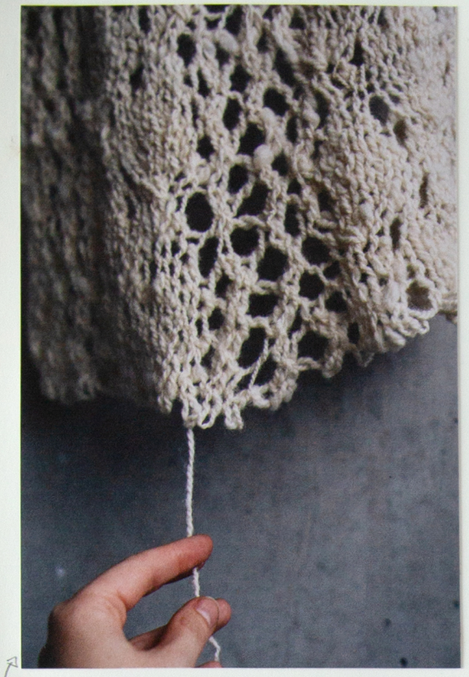
YARROW-DYED YARNS HANGING WITH EARLIER ANGIANGI-DYED WOOL, IN STUDIO



LASER-CUT WOODEN STAMP TESTING, FOR PATTERN-SHARING & SKETCHING

FIRST PRINTINGS W/WOODEN STAMPS

WHIRO - HUI TĀNGURU (FEBRUARY-MARCH) RAUMATI (SUMMER)



UNRAVELLING EARLIER ARTWORKS TO MAKE ANEW





TARANAKI HĪNAU LEAVES FROM SALLY'S WHENUA - PRESSED AFTER DYE BATH (NO MORDANT + WITH IRON MODIFIER) SULFATE

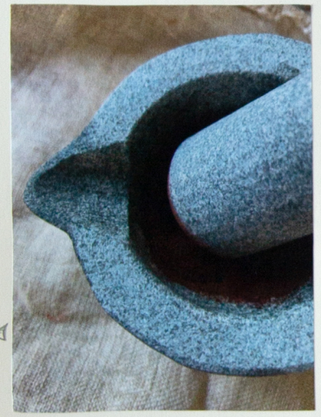
(PRESSING IMPRINT)



UNRAVELLING & BLENDING WEAVING OFFCUTS - INTO CORDAGE & NEW YARNS (CARDED FIBRE)



BEGINNING TAUIRA WITH MUKA + GRANDMA'S PEARLS - IMAGINING ADORNMENT



GRINDING TANEKAHA LAKE PIGMENT FOR INKING TESTS







FINISHING BASKETS FOR HOLDING (FROM HARAKEKE OFFCUTS/MUKA HĀRO REMAINS)

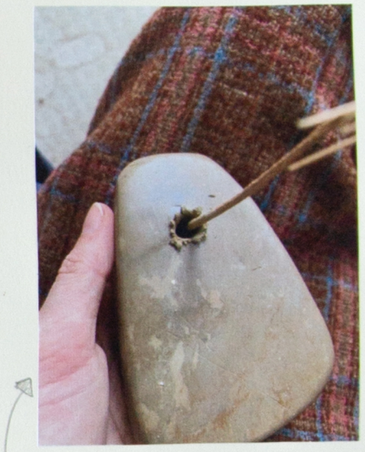
FORMING BEADS FROM LOCAL WEST AUCKLAND CLAYS (GATHERED IN FRIENDS' GARDENS)

UNFIRED/ LOW-FIRING TO BE ABLE TO RETURN TO THE SOIL





RETURNING TO THE WHATUWAI LOOM FOR FINAL WOVEN ROWS IN TARANAKI YARROW

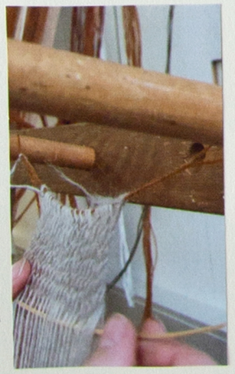


FORMING MORE WEIGHTS FOR WEAVING (YARROW STALKS FOR MEASURING HOLES)



TAUIRA

DRAWING FROM KĀKAHU IN PUKE ARIKI & TĀMAKI PAENGA HIRA MUSEUM COLLECTIONS - WOOL BEADS & PĀHEKE DETAILS







THINKING THROUGH NEW/OLD MAKING METHODS - SPRANG (MAKING FABRIC FROM ONLY WHENU/WARP INTERTWINED) - PATTERNING LIKE A NET, FROM A SINGLE CONTINUOUS THREAD + TANEKAHA DYE

WHIRO- POUTŪ TE RANGI (MARCH - APRIL) - NGAHURU (AUTUMN)



DANDELION - GATHERING FOR DRYING/ CORDAGE





DYEING WITH THE SEASON'S GATHERED MATERIALS + REMAINING TANEKAHA BARK



DYEING WITH HĪNAU, ALDER, PŪRIRI, YARROW ETC





PLAYING WITH WAYS OF PREPARING INKS - CONCENTRATING WITH GUM, ETC - STAMP TESTS IN TANEKAHA



REFERENCING KĀKAHU GLIMPSED AT TAMAKI PAENGA HIRA WITH CROSS-STITCHED "TĀNIKO" BORDER







SPRANG, STILL ON FRAME (IN MUKA)



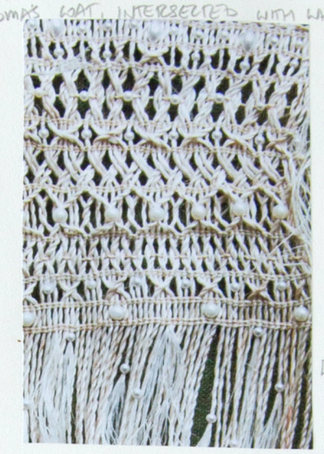
WORKING TOWARDS MUKA WHENU FOR LARGE SCALE WHATU-WEAVING - TOTAL WILL BE AROUND 75 METRES.



PLAYING WITH PATTERN AGAIN - HOUNDSTOOTH REMEMBERED FROM GRANDMA'S COAT, INTERSECTED WITH WHATU



TESTING IDEA FOR POCKET-LOOM WEAVINGS, USING POST-DYE-BATH TANEKAHA BARK



FINISHING MUKA "LACE" TAVIRA WITH GRANDMA'S PEARL BEADS



RECENT DYED-SILK ADDITIONS TO RONGOĀ PATCHWORK (HĪNAU + IRON)



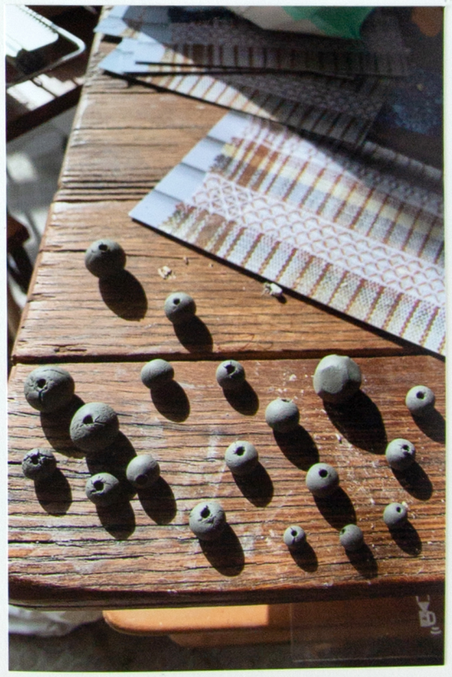
COLLECTED YARNS DYED FROM THE RECENT SEASON'S GATHERINGS - ANGIANGI, YARROW, HĪNAU LEAVES, ALDER



FINALISING EXEGESIS DOCUMENT FOR BINDING

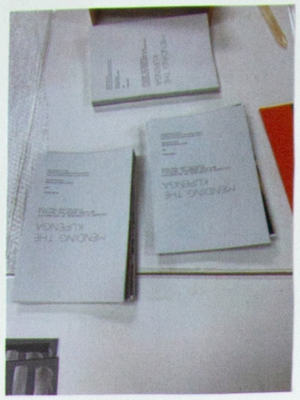


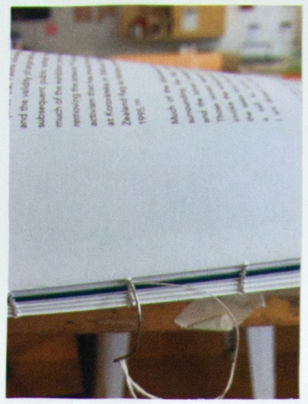
STORM-WASHED DRIFTWOOD ON TAKAPUNA BEACH, GATHERED FOR WHAKARURUHAU LOOM



CONTINUING BEAD-MAKING - TARANAKI UKU FOR LOW-FIRING / RAKU

WHIRO- PAENGA WHAWHA (APRIL-MAY) NGAHURU (AUTUMN)







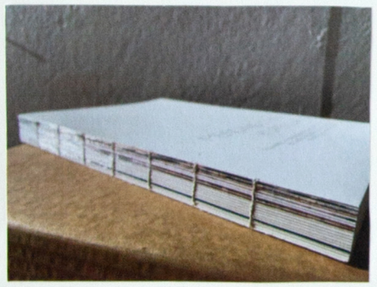
GATHERING ANGIANGI IN WEST AUCKLAND (LIAM'S DAD'S) AFTER SEASONAL PRUNING





HAND-CUT BOX TO HOLD EACH BOOK, WITH LINEN/ WOOL/MUKA HAND-TWINED THREAD TO CLOSE

HAND-BINDING EXEGESIS - GIFTED IRISH LINEN THREAD, COPTIC-STITCH WITH VISIBLE SPINE



MAPPING OUT RELATIONSHIPS - TAVIRA IN CYCLES & LAYERS

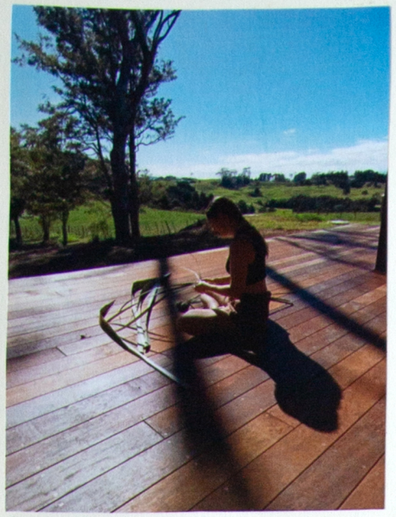




ANGIANGI-DYED LINEN, STEEPING & DRYING, SUNSET ORANGE



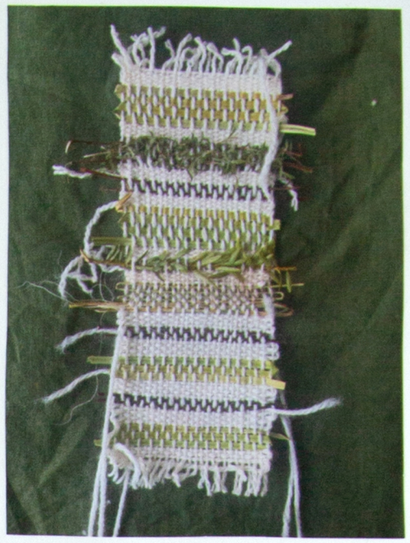




AUTUMN RĀRANGA - PUTIPUTI TO CELEBRATE EMILY'S PHD EXHIBITION



WEAVING IN PLACE - PLANTS GATHERED FROM THE NGĀHERE AT MY AUNTS, ON THE POCKET LOOM

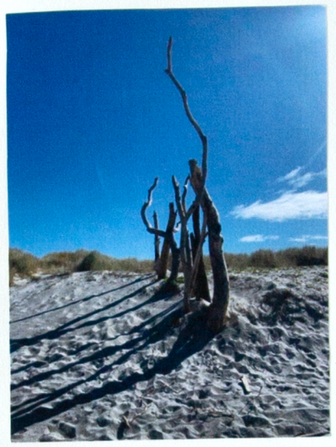




PREPARING STORM-FALLEN MĀNUKA FOR LOOM FRAME (FROM FRIEND'S WEST AUCKLAND GARDEN)



POCKET WEAVING FROM WEST-COAST TĀMAKI BEACHES (WHILE WOOD-GATHERING)



FINDING LAST LOOM-PIECES - ORCHA (& LATER, KAITARAKIHI & HUIA) BEACHES - FOUND STANDING IN SAND





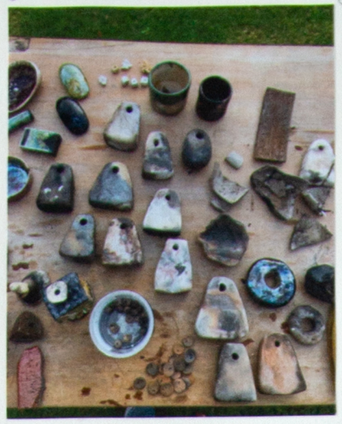
MAKING DOWEL TO HOLD THE LOOM FRAME



LIAM FINISHING THE WOOD SURFACE

WHIRO - HARATUA (MAY-JUNE) - NGAHURU (AUTUMN



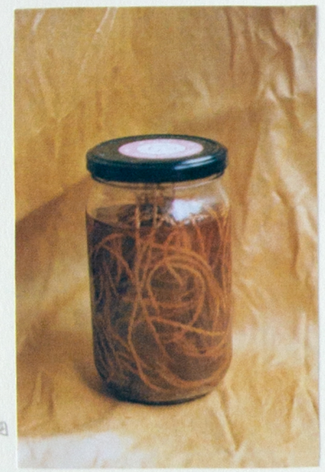


RAKU FIRING AT HARRIET'S - LOW-FIRING CLAY LOOM WEIGHTS & BEADS, THEN REMOVING/PLACING WHILE STILL RED HOT INTO BEDS OF ORGANIC MATTER - HOKIANGA SEAWEED, DRIFTWOOD & SAND; KĀNUKA & MĀNUKA BARK FROM LOOM PREPARING; ANGIANGI & TI KOUKA (PATTERNS FORM ON CONTACT WITH MATERIAL)









GATHERING TI KOUKA FROM MY BACK YARD IN TAKARUA, FOR CORDAGE/AHO/NET-MAKING

TANEKAHA-DYED MUKA SUBMERGED IN WOOD-ASH WATER (FROM TONGAPŌRUTU FIRES) TO BRING OUT COLOUR



UKU WEIGHTS, HELD IN THE WOODEN BOWL TURNED/GIFTED BY LIAM'S FATHER (USED FOR WHAKAHOA THROUGH THE PROJECT)





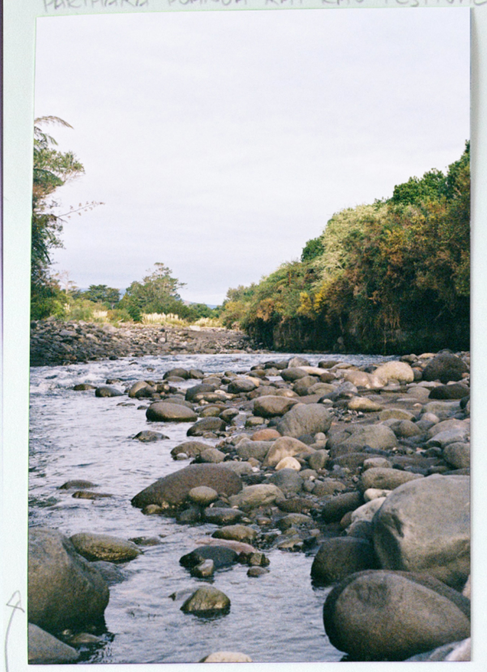
TAVIRA TO DRAW LARGE LOOM WHATU-WEAVING

GATHERING HAGSTONES/SEEING STONES ON TARANAKI BEACHES

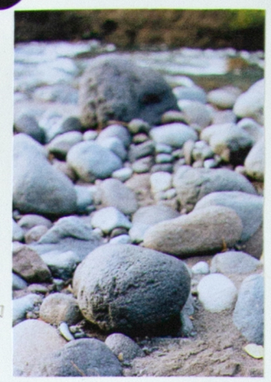




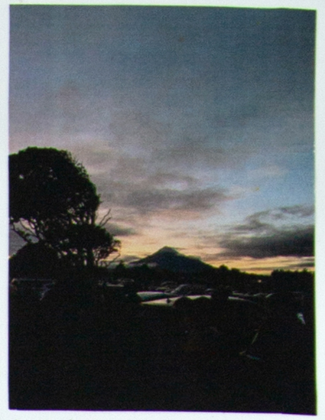
RUANGA, 2024
PARIHAKA RUANGA KAI RAU FESTIVAL



VISITING TŪRUANA AWA FOR RUANGA - HANGAHAHUA



FINDING THE LAST STONE, TO ANCHOR THE WHATUKAI LOOM, HELD BY MY TŪRUNA AWA, TO RETURN ON FINISHING (& TO SHAPE A BOWL TO WHAKAHOA)



JUST AFTER SUNRISE, FOLLOWING RUANGA THROUGH THE CLOUDS

AHI KĀ - THE FIRE BURNING ALL DAY, WARMING STONES FOR KAI & SENDING SMOKE TO THE SKY





WORKING BEE WITH VRS, TUHI-AO, MANA RUAKERE IN THE PARIHAKA MĀRA KAI (WEEDING & PREPARING FOR THE NEXT SEASON'S GROWING



HĀNGI PREPARATIONS - STEAMING STONES



