

Four Points of Sanctuary and Everything That Falls In Between:

An exploration of love by defining what home is in a Moana family through a visual arts practice.

Olivia Tuimaseve
2022

Exegesis in support of practice-based Thesis
Master of Visual Arts
Auckland University of Technology

abstract

This research project explores the way in which I understand and give love through knowing and living by the ways of my village, my family. This family knows no boundaries of blood or marriage. It is a make-up of friends who walked in the doors and never left. This research is a collaborative effort to acknowledge that love can be nurtured and blossomed in a vast number of ways and that the notion of home can be registered by more than the physicality of a location. It's a breakdown of how food, music, and the act of upholding traditions and making has formed naturally to inform the way our family moves in the world. This understanding of love is embedded into art practice and is the key driver for this practice-led research project. Through a mixture of installation and written art practices, this research will show what I mean when I say my family are my grounding points. This research explores the pillars of my understanding and everything that those pillars look over and protect.

table of contents

love lives at home – an introduction	6
<i>journal note #1</i>	9
foundations – ponsonby methodist church	11
<i>journal note #2</i>	12
<i>looking back to move forward</i>	13
<i>where you are, 2021</i>	15
<i>journal note #3</i>	15
she fed my soul - ōtāhuhu + māngere bridge	19
<i>journal note #4</i>	19
<i>nana’s blue diary</i>	21
<i>journal note #5</i>	22
<i>always us</i>	24
<i>journal note #6</i>	25
<i>warming the space</i>	26
<i>journal note #7</i>	31
<i>she’s why</i>	32
(k)new knowledge - green bay	37
<i>journal note #8</i>	37
<i>journal notes #9</i>	40
<i>trusting our purpose</i>	41
<i>journal notes #10</i>	44
<i>her warmth, 2021</i>	45
the places in between	48
<i>lupe loft</i>	48
<i>journal notes #11</i>	52
we are home – conclusion	56
bibliography	57

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 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

Olivia Tuimaseve

30th June 2022

list of figures

Figure 1 Journal Note About My Dad And How He Influenced The Sorting Aspect Of The Research.	9
Figure 2 Ponsonby Methodist Church In 2015, Image Credit To Olivia Tuimaseve	10
Figure 3 Nye 2005 At Pmc. A Journal Note About My First Feeling Of Home At Pmc.	12
Figure 4 Where You Are. Still Image From Video Work By Olivia Tuimaseve, 2021	15
Figure 5 The Memory That Inspired Wherever You Are Was The First Time My Nana Tauvaga Taught Me To Read The Bible.	15
Figure 6 My Aunty's Lounge At Her Home In Māngere Bridge Image Credit To Olivia Tuimaseve	18
Figure 7 For You – Ka’a Girl Series, Olivia Tuimaseve 2022	19
Figure 8 This Is A Page Out Of My Nana Tauvaga’s Big Blue Diary. The Page Lists The Order In Which Her Grandchildren Were Born And Then At The Very Bottom Would Be Her Last Entry Detailing When My Uncle Passed Away In 2006.	20
Figure 9 A Memory Of The First Time I Was Able To Acknowledge My Nana's Big Blue Diary.	22
Figure 10 A Collage Of My Nana's Diary (Top Left), My Own Writings And Notes That I Found In Her Diary From My Aunty And Others. It Features Some Of The Images And A Tusi Pese (Hymn Book) Kept Alongside This Diary On The Bookshelf At My Parents. Below Is An Image Of A Church Song Written In The Back Of Her Diary.	23
Figure 11 This Image Is From The Beginning Stages Of Me Figuring Out Who I Was Doing This For	30
Figure 12 An Image From Inside Green Bay In My Parents Room. This Image Is From 2013 Before The House Was Renovated And Given A New Lease On Life. Image Credit To Olivia Tuimaseve	36
Figure 13 A Memory Of My Papa Segi Tafilipepe Iese Allesana	37
Figure 14 Her Warmth. Still Image From Video Work By Olivia Tuimaseve, 2021	45
Figure 15 Lupe Loft Catch Ups During The Summer Of 2021/2022	47
Figure 16 Page 112 From 'Ka'a Girl' Series, Olivia Tuimaseve, 2022.	50
Figure 17 Green Bay, 2022 Image Credit Olivia Tuimaseve	53
Figure 18 Ponsonby (Chapel) 2021 Image Credit Olivia Tuimaseve	54
Figure 19 Māngere Bridge, 2022 Image Credit Olivia Tuimaseve	55

acknowledgements

All glory to the atua who have been guiding me throughout my life's entirety and brought us here. None of this would be a reality had it not been for the blessings we receive in the form of family.

To Noorooa Tapuni and Dienneke Jansen, thank you for sticking this out with me. I know this journey has not been one of ease but thank you for having faith in this research and seeing this through from start to finish. Thank you for both bringing life to what was very hard to do some days and for making me feel safe enough to confidently trust myself. Thank you for being apart of my village! Fa'afetai tele lava mo le alofa ma le fa'aaloalo!

To my family who gave me the inspiration to write out thousands of words about love and home. Thank you for gifting me the grace of working through family gatherings and dragging you all to be a part of my filming days when it was needed. Thank you for allowing me to tell the story of how you all taught me love in all the languages. Thank you for sharing every day with me, for encouraging me and for grounding me. Thank you for making anywhere we're together home.

To my lupe loft and bunga taahine kalapu sisters, thank you for being there. Thank you for understanding and sharing talanoa about life. Thank you for your warmth on my coldest days. Thank you for ciggies, cuddles and a cry every time I needed it. My chosen family forever and ever.

To my angels, thank you for everything. There are not enough words to explain just what you have given me. I miss you all so dearly. Til that glorious reunion.

To Auntie Lillie and Uncle Lokeni, Auntie Lila, Uncle Hurri and Auntie Darlene, and all my aunties and uncles. Thank you for loving us like your own. Grateful to you all for the lessons, laughs and love. You all mean the absolute world to me.

To Tauvaga, Mareta, Tali, Zach and Josh. Thank you for all you bffs have taught me about life. Thank you for listening to my never ending stories and answering my texts at all the random hours of the night. Thank you for inspiring truth in this research and giving me all the hilarious anecdotes to cherish forever. Us always.

To Kris, my big brother and my greatest protector. Thank you for teaching me so much about everything. I am forever indebted for the love and protection you have brought to my life. Thank you for reminding me that life needs fun and freedom. Thank you for being brave for me when I couldn't myself. Thank you for letting me be the little sister who can call her big brother for anything. I'll always be in your corner forever big brother, us two vs everyone always.

To Rita May and Saleaula. Nothing will ever be able to show just how grateful I am to you both. You've given me everything a child needs and more. I hope you read this and feel pride in knowing you afforded me all the understandings that make up this research. Thank you for allowing me to see out my life how I see fit and for guiding me along my way.

I love you all!
Never me, always us.

love lives at home – an introduction

Like a lot of my Moana peers, I learnt to walk, talk and act according to the surroundings of my upbringing, which were filled to the brim of Moana life forces. Being born and raised in Auckland alongside many of my cousins, being parented by aunties, uncles and grandparents, and my mum and dad, my understanding of the world has seen many phases. Especially my understanding of love. Without intending to, this research has questioned, through many phases its purpose. When dealing with anything that occupies this amount of time in my life, I must begin with whether it will serve a greater purpose than merely being and whether the benefits of what I am doing will fulfil personal duty to my ‘why’. My ‘why’, being my family. If I can do anything in this life it would be to honour my family for the life, they breathed into me for me to do the things I have been capable of doing. It really takes a village to raise a child and mine have been a full force of heaven and earth combined to get me through all the cards life has dealt me. So, what is the purpose of this research? Its purpose is to be a gift to my family, a gift that shows them they have taught me love lives at home and home is wherever they are.

I don’t place my family into categories when I speak of them in general terms, for the sake of this research making sense I’ve laid people, places, and the areas/eras of life they influenced into the places I sought out sanctuary at during my upbringing right through to my adult years. Each location dedicated to explaining the significance of the place itself but also all the life experienced with the people connected to those places and how the combination of physical location and the essence of home in people have come together to create the understanding I have. “You came from a place. You grew in a place, and you had a relationship with that place.”

¹ When I read these words by Academic Manulani Aluli Meyer I am reminded of a phrase my mum would often say to me when telling her of my dreams to get out into the world and keep going. She would say that no matter how far I went and how many new things I would learn to do and even with all the new people that would come into my life: *home is where the heart is*. Meyer made me think of this because the notion of place of home had always been something attached to a physical location. I have now come to understand, through this research project,

¹ Meyer, Manulani Aluli. “Chapter 2 - That Which Feeds: Physical Place and Knowing.” Essay. *In Handbook of Critical and Indigenous Methodologies*, edited by Norman K. Denzin, Yvonna S. Lincoln and Linda Tuhiwai Smith.

that this is in fact, true. However, the location doesn't make it home. It's the people that fill it with life, that breathes the essence of home into a reality. Without them and the things they do to make them who they are, it wouldn't be home. Whilst the locations I've named are influential on their own, each site brought their own unique factor to the table. The four sections previously mentioned cover: my dad's family, my Mum's family, a combination of our family – chosen and blood – and my church family.² Despite being in different sections, everyone has a rough idea of who the others are. But the sections are how we all define our association outside of the family label. The structure of this written part of the research will be laid out into four parts by location and each section will talk to the different traditions upheld in these areas of my family. Each section will cover the multitude of ways in which my family use food, music, and the collective act of being together to show how we all love and connect on the feeling of being each other's home. These sections will also be attached to period of my life where our core way of being was formed for us to then uphold.

To keep the tone of this research accessible for my family – but also for the purpose of keeping it a personal and intimate research project for myself – throughout this document there are handwritten notes to give context between what's real and evident to the history of my family and how our history shapes the collective ability to live as we do. These notes are vital in how they inform the nature the project was conducted. It speaks to how my family are as a group that often we explore in a more traditional and straight forward fashion. These handwritten notes bring that to this research but also to the nature of my creative practice which through this project further developed my written practices in connection to making.

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted how I carried out the project. In July of 2021, three weeks into the thesis year, we entered a one-hundred-plus day lockdown which affected my ability to create collaboratively with my family. Before these lockdowns, the research focused heavily on me filming my family during gatherings and our everyday interactions. These regular occurrences were impacted by the inability to see one another so the way I was practicing had to be changed. After a gruelling experience with an ethics application, I realised whilst trying to

² Chosen and blood – This is speaking about our family that are not ours by blood but by the choice of being in each other's lives for the long term. Our spiritually bonded family.

ensure I was adhering to the requirements of the application, trying to keep the research flowing online instead of in person was having a negative effect on my family. It was asking so much of them to keep working through a time we were all finding difficult in relation to not being able to share space which we would do regularly, and in turn was going against what was being asked of me as the researcher by the ethics application. In light of this, the project shifted and made me reconsider the way I could approach this from the using footage that directly included my family to a more subtle display of the essence of what love is and how home can be identified through the act of togetherness. This looked like redirecting the visual imagery in the video works by editing the angles, using still imagery and introducing the ideas of using installation methods in my creative practice to bring life to what was taken away by the removal of using direct footage of my family members. The reason this was necessary was because the ethics application, as well as making me reconsider the methods in my practice, was also important to put the safety of my family first above anything else. This research is for them so by all means had to be safe for them to partake in.

Before delving any further into reading this document, there must be an understanding between you, the reader and myself, the researcher. The research will only cover a portion of my family members who had the most direct impact to my life and in turn this research. This research is about them, for them and by them. This research intentionally explores a limited number of methodologies knowledges and focuses more on the methodologies which have been practiced by my family themselves through years of lived experience. The reason for this, is that nothing captured the very specific and meticulous way that my family are, how they instruct a way of living and how that way of living has existed in generations before me and will continue to be practiced and evolved in the generations to come. It is nothing more and nothing less than exactly that.

journal note #1

This note touches briefly on the Ioasa Methodology which I named after my dad Sale'aula or Ioasa. Ioasa is my Papa's name and it's quite common in Samoan families to take on the name of a close relative that has passed away. Dad is legally still named Sale'aula but in our family landscape he is Ioasa. This methodology takes on the aura of my dad for his approach towards life. He does not muck around when it comes to getting any task done. He can be cutthroat and decisive when it comes to any of our major family gatherings but all with the intention to make life easier for all our family. I brought this methodology to the table because it was important for me to deliver this research with his attitude towards life. Clear, concise and above all with the intention of putting the family's needs for accessibility first.

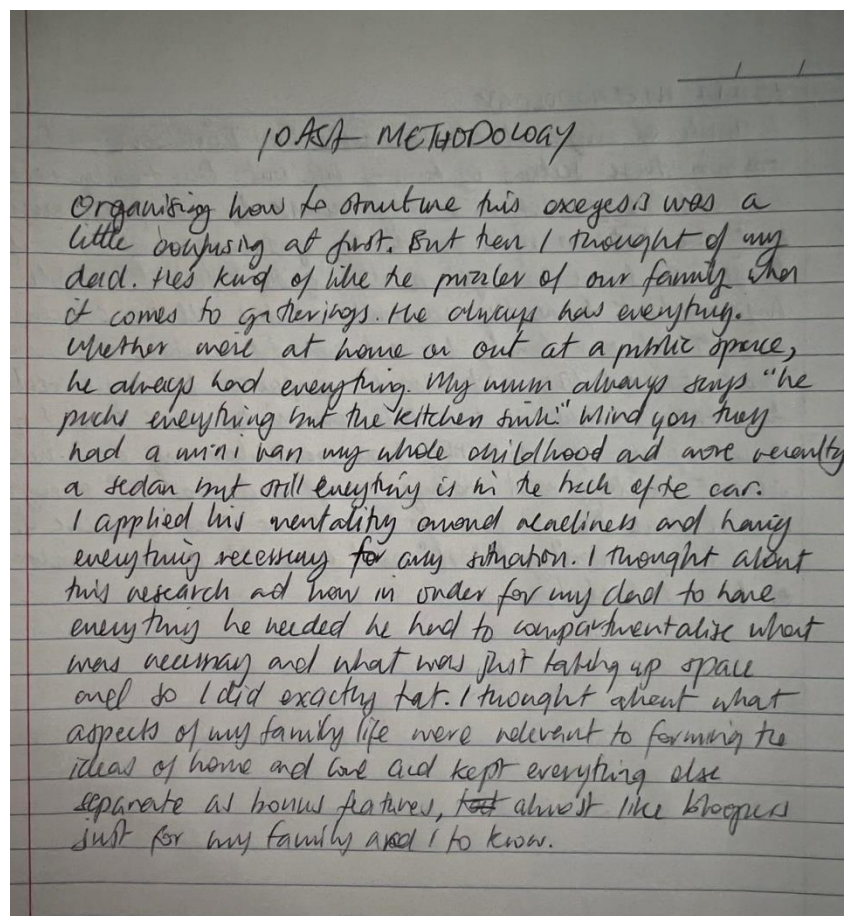


Figure 1 journal note about my dad and how he influenced the sorting aspect of the research.



Figure 2 Ponsonby Methodist Church in 2015, image credit to Olivia Tuimaseve

foundations – ponsonby methodist church

Sitting at 229a Ponsonby Road is a piece of Methodist history. Now, I know it's a very limited group that this slice of history is relevant to, but that group has been and continues to create a feeling of home for me and all members past and present. This slice of history is St John's Methodist Samoan Parrish of Ponsonby otherwise known as Ponsonby Methodist or PMC for short. This physical location is a representation of so many prominent moments of my upbringing. It is where the connection between the physical notions of home and the essence of what a home can feel and be like, come together as a core value in my practice as a creative.

In the 1970s, central Tamaki Makaurau was home for many people of the moana.³ During this era, my parents and many of their peers – some born and raised in Aotearoa, some fresh from their motherlands – were young teens and adults, attending churches with their families with different language speaking services. My parents attended a church called the Central Mission which was opposite the Auckland town hall. At the time, they were still young and living with their parents. As they grew into young adults, my grandparents, their Samoan friends and their families, chose to move their families up to a church in Ponsonby where a new multicultural service had begun to take place. They were not alone in this decision. Many families from multiple churches around central Auckland would make the same choice and not before long, the Ponsonby services would see up to the hundreds of Samoan people attending services weekly. By the time the 1980s began, services were filled to the brim and at this time, the congregation joined the Sinoti Samoa (Samoan Synod), which the Methodist Church of New Zealand had recently established. This change would come with a whole new meaning to attending church as it would take on even more of a cultural impact. Eventually, Ponsonby would cease to have other language speaking services and solely be a Samoan Methodist church.

³ Moana – being the Pacific Ocean. It will be the word I use to identify people of the Pacific Ocean throughout the exegesis.

journal note #2

This note is a memory of the first feeling of being at home at Ponsonby Methodist Church upon my families return to the sacred home in 2005 after a brief break from attending.

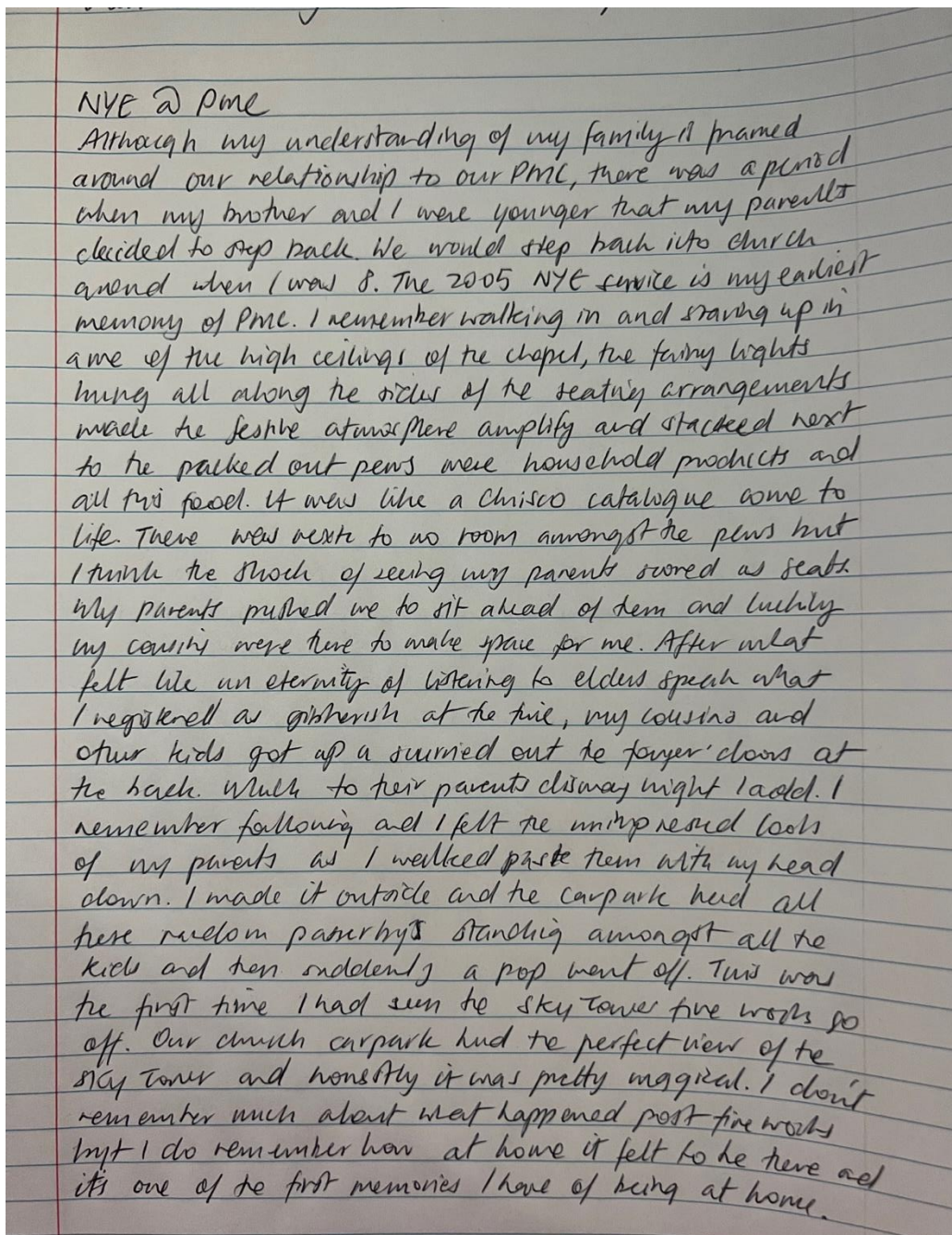


Figure 3 NYE 2005 at PMC. A journal note about my first feeling of home at PMC.

looking back to move forward

Beginning here is important to the structure of the research because my parents and all their peers lived a similar life right into their adult years. They would live, breathe, and only really know their life at church. The point I'm making here is that if it had not been for this church, the generation just above me and the rest following me would likely not exist. My parents met through church, and it was the same for most of their siblings too. So, my gratitude to this place stretches far beyond the surface of it being a building that I consistently visit. My roots were planted, sprouted, and grown here.

Beneath the Radar is a video work across three screens created by Māori, Niuean and Samoan artist Janet Lilo.⁴ It explores Lilo's sentimental valuing of the Auckland landscape as somewhere she places herself at home in. In the same ways Lilo identifies these landscapes with being at home, I make a similar association with my church, *my* Ponsonby Methodist. I'd like to think the connection is unique, a home base that I share with my church family – chosen and blood alike – a sanctuary in the mess of whitewashed gentrification that has come to be Ponsonby in 2022. I speak to the gentrification of Ponsonby because my church has stood still for years as the world around it changed. If you were to ask most people, they'd associate Ponsonby with the rich and upper-class side of Auckland but to my church family nothing has changed. You'll still find the church aunties having a ciggy out in the carpark spread up to the gates after service on Sunday afternoon, you'll still find an uncle trying to double park on the street to save a park for an aunty and her extra car of kids for the combined services, you'll still see a huge crowd of the boys walking back from KFC down the road who've been instructed by multiple uncles to get some chicken for tona'i (lunch) that say, you'll still hear those naughty ass kids running around in the foyer, the occasional one making it out to the stairs of the front entrance and you'll always hear the angelic voices of the Ponsonby Methodist choir singing amene signalling the end of the service but by no means the end of the day. This culmination of life lived creates the essence of what home feels like, an aura that has been developed and nurtured throughout generations of Sāmoan people. This aura is how I identify home as a physical place and in balance with that,

⁴Janet Lilo visual artist. "Beneath The Radar 2012," October 5, 2012. .

how I identify what elements have created that feeling of the essence of home and how love can be formed from that feeling.

where you are, 2021



Figure 4 Where You Are. Still image from video work by Olivia Tuimaseve, 2021

journal note #3

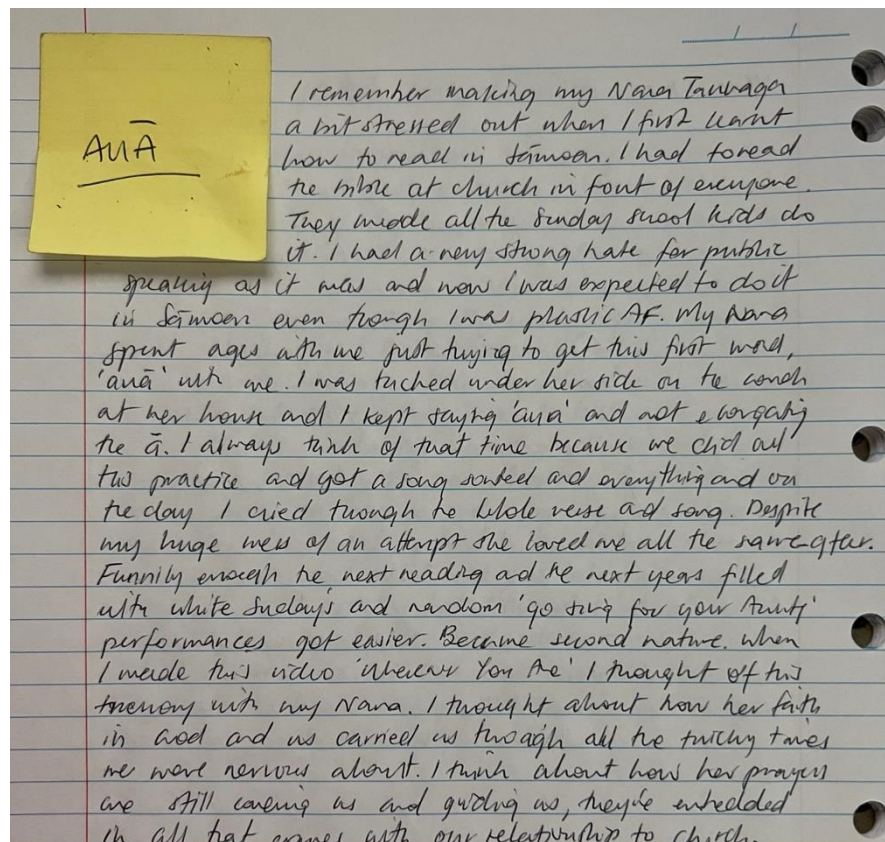


Figure 5 The memory that inspired Wherever You Are was the first time my Nana Tauvaga taught me to read the bible.

In reflecting on my understanding of what love is and how the notion of home can be identified, Ponsonby sits amongst my more prominent thoughts. All encompass my understanding of how love can be given and received and more so how home can be identified from that. Home always felt like a physical location or an association with an area, Ponsonby falls into both those categories. The church building itself is iconic in my eyes. When we were in school and even still into our university years, my cousins and I would make the walk down from colourful Karangahape Road and head down the more pretentious feeling, whitewashed Ponsonby Road. Not once in our journey would we feel the need to minimise ourselves or our brownness for we knew at the end of our journey we would be at home on our stomping grounds at one of the most iconic buildings along that whole road. The building made us feel unstoppable and as if we were sitting in our own backyards of our family homesteads. Our parents would tell us stories of their youth, walking down the same roads and all the collective chaos they'd get up to with all their other peers in their generation. They'd tell us about 'Ponsonby Royals' and how in their heyday they ran the show amongst the other Methodist churches in the Sinoti. It was more than clear we came from a rich history not just by way of heritage but by way of the community that our grandparents founded for us and all we inherited from their years of connectedness

In *Ekolu Mea: Three Ways to Experience the World*, Manulani Aluli Meyer observes the idea that indigenous people have a shared understanding about a way of living in which shared understanding is the ability to connect through our similarities.⁵ This resonated with the way in which I had grown accustomed to categorising my life. As a creative I had aimed to create work that reflected my personality and my life, but I had always left out so much which I considered to be mundane or irrelevant. Like the way in which my church functions and how all communicate. I didn't know it as a child but as an adult – although still seen as a kid – I can recognise small looks and gestures that are instantly recognisable. There's an understanding amongst us that I never really took note of before, fundamentally because it was just the essence of who we are. That sameness that Manulani refers to is something that is evident in my churches people. It's the small nods between us tupulaga that can signify going to do a specific feau, it's knowing that the sensation of having eyes on you from the old ladies in the pew behind is because there are in fact multiple sets of eyes on you and it's that shared understanding that requires next to no words

⁵ Aluli-Meyer, Manulani. "Ekolu Mea: Three Ways to Experience the World." Book. *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, pg11. 2011

but can result in a minute long running out of air cackle. In the words of khaenotbae, “the girls that get it, get it and the girls that don’t, don’t.”⁶ This Tiktok wasn’t directly speaking to the same as what I am, the notion of sameness and shared knowledge within a community is still there. If you aren’t apart of our church, you just wouldn’t get what makes us tick. Even within our own church group, the ones that have joined our family a little further down the track, you can make note of who they are based on what level of understanding they have with those of us born and bred into the church. Even for myself there’s layers I miss due to being out of the fold during my childhood.

⁶ <https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSdGvekwX/?k=1> – Tiktok by khaenotbae. This tiktok is the social media equivalent of addressing known knowledge to specific groups of people. In this case I’d use it to address the shared knowledge between our church family and us.



Figure 6 My Aunty's lounge at her home in Māngere Bridge image credit to Olivia Tuimaseve

she fed my soul - ōtāhuhu + māngere bridge

journal note #4

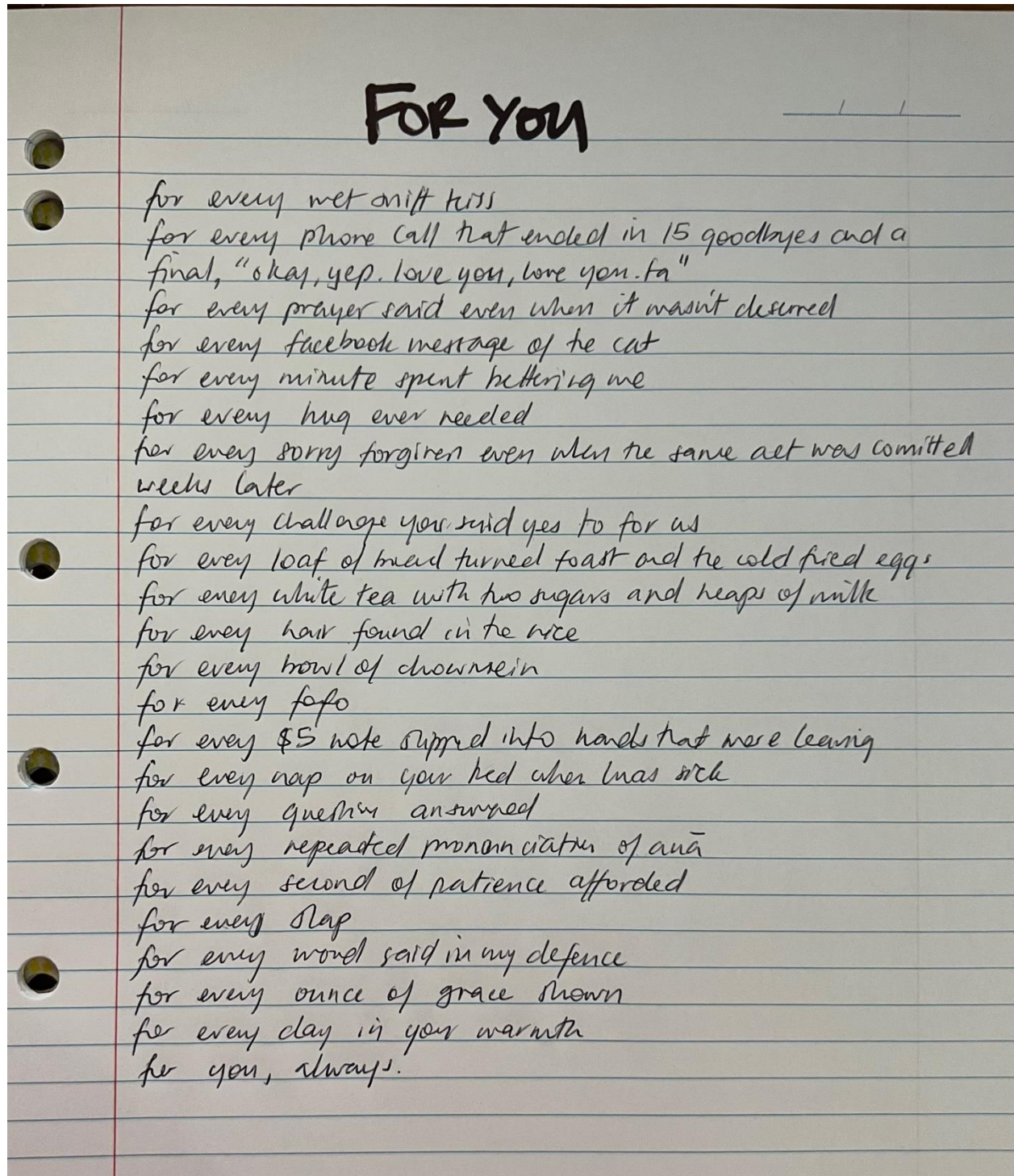


Figure 7 For You – ka'a girl series, Via Tuimaseve 2022

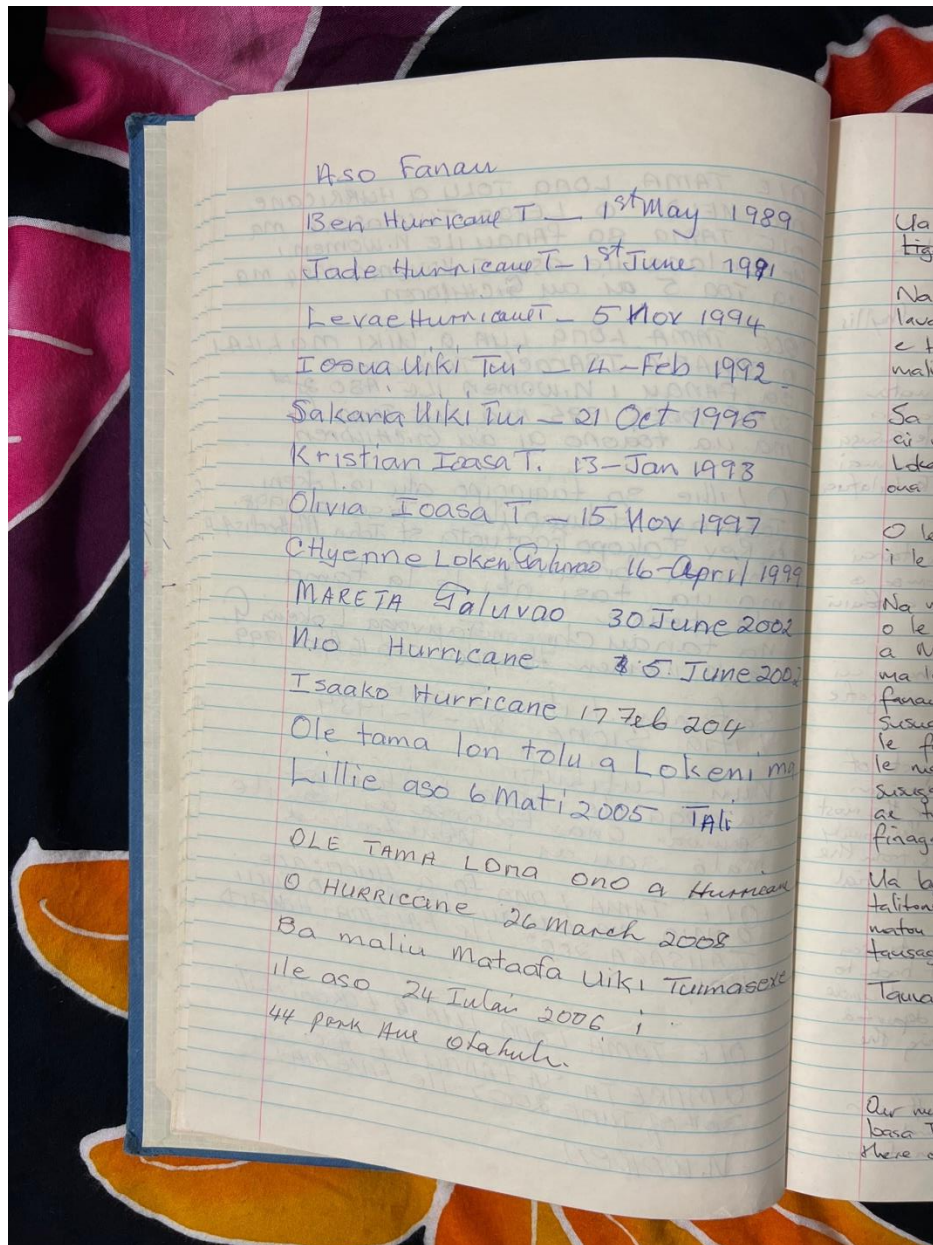


Figure 8 This is a page out of my nana Tauvaga's big blue diary. The page lists the order in which her grandchildren were born and then at the very bottom would be her last entry detailing when my uncle passed away in 2006.

This project has been situated where in my upbringing I was able to form an understanding of what I identified home with, how love was later understood and how the combination of both, have created the way in which I navigate sharing and love in time with my family. South Aukilani will always have a place in my heart and that is a given in this research as well. Ōtāhuhu and Māngere Bridge are the homes where traditions that are still upheld in my family today were formed. The majority of these traditions were born off the kitchen tables of my Nana and my aunties over cups of tea and informal catch ups. It was in their homes that food, music and a combination of the two held together years of family gatherings of any type, planned or spontaneous, mourning or celebrating. Together we have weathered many a storm and we did it all as a family.

*nana's blue diary*⁷

It's hard to talk about myself as an individual in this project, that at its core is a 'we' project.⁸ Now to some, the concept won't be understood but for anyone who is meant to read this you'll know immediately the nature in which I speak about 'we' as opposed to the notion of 'I'. It seems like a relatively straight forward concept, but for the sake of those that will read this without the context of shared moana knowledge, I did not form these thoughts of my own volition.⁹ My thoughts, like most of the thoughts I've had in my life, have been influenced by a collection of choices based on the life I've received as a part of being in the 'we.' Without 'us', there is no me. I am the vessel that carries a world of information handed to me through the physical entities that make up my family. Nana's blue diary represents a core aspect of passing down this knowledge. So much of her aura was transferred into that diary in which she documented cherished milestones of life's beginnings and endings. She wrote down the words of our homeland for the purpose of remembering, so that we could continue teaching and singing the songs. Nana's Blue diary houses the notes about actions and all that encompassed her thoughts as a God-fearing mother, grandmother, sister, and aunty of Samoan heritage. It speaks

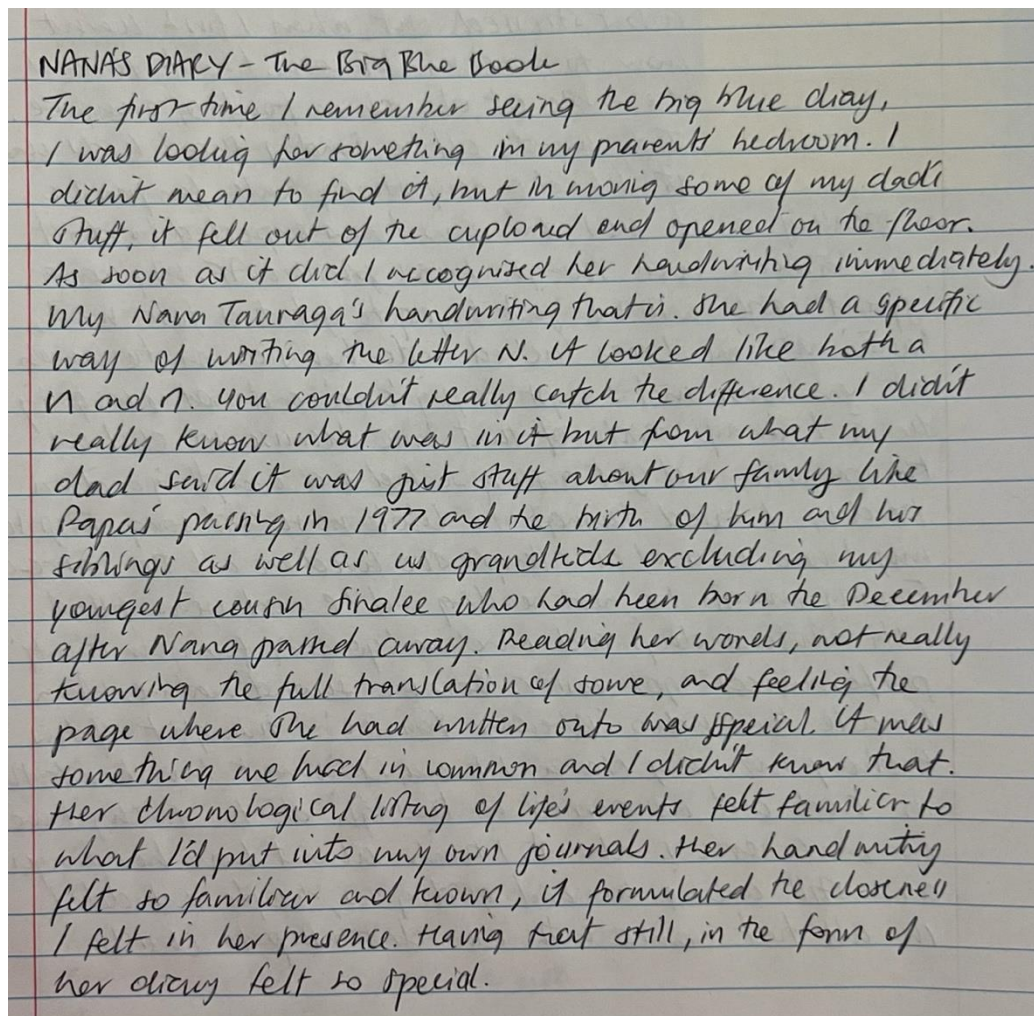
⁷ My Nana's blue diary was a B4 canvas covered hardcover journal. This belonged to my Nana Tauvaga Tuimaseve, my dad's mum.

⁸ We – refers to my family as a collective that I am a part of.

⁹ Moana knowledge – refers to knowledge shared in lived experiences know only to Moana folks. The knowledge of sameness.

to her ties to our church as an elder to many and her role as a faletua back in Samoa. This diary enables us to have her presence felt even years after her passing, it's been a tool in keeping her memory alive but also in helping us cope with losing her. When thinking about the feeling of loss, I remember her passing as the first time I truly understood the notion that there is no I in Samoan families ever, it is always we.

journal note #5



NANA'S DIARY - The Big Blue Book
The first time I remember seeing the big blue diary, I was looking for something in my parents' bedroom. I didn't mean to find it, but in moving some of my dad's stuff, it fell out of the cupboard and opened on the floor. As soon as it did I recognized her handwriting immediately. My Nana Tauraga's handwriting that is. She had a specific way of writing the letter N. It looked like both a N and n. You couldn't really catch the difference. I didn't really know what was in it but from what my dad said it was just stuff about our family like Papa's passing in 1977 and the birth of him and his siblings as well as our grandkids excluding my youngest cousin Sialele who had been born the December after Nana passed away. Reading her words, not really knowing the full translation of some, and feeling the page where she had written onto was special. It was something we had in common and I didn't know that. Her chronological listing of life's events felt familiar to what I'd put into my own journals. Her handwriting felt so familiar and known, it formulated the closeness I felt in her presence. Having that still, in the form of her diary felt so special.

Figure 9 A memory of the first time I was able to acknowledge my Nana's big blue diary.

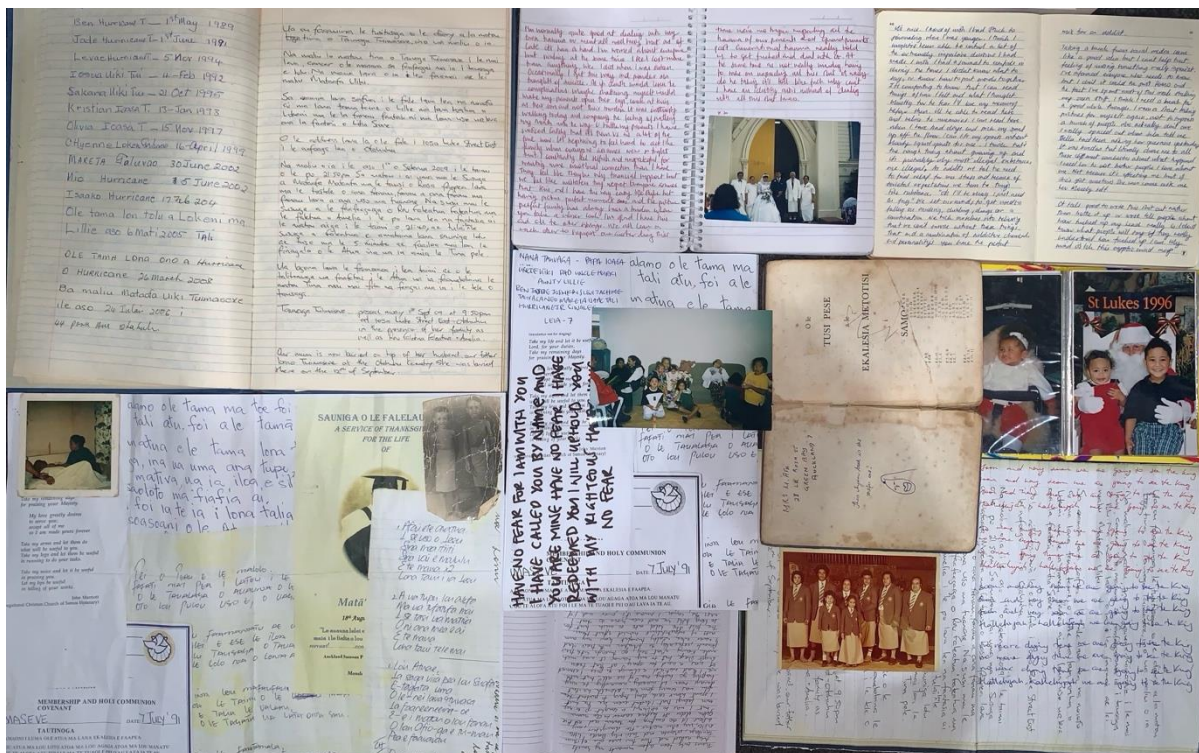


Figure 10 A collage of my nana's diary (top left), my own writings and notes that I found in her diary from my aunt and others. It features some of the images and a Tusi Pese (hymn book) kept alongside this diary on the bookshelf at my parents. Below is an image of a church song written in the back of her diary.

1. Bind us together Lord
 Bind us together Lord
 With church that cannot
 be broken
 Bind us together Lord
 Bind us together Lord
 Bind us together in love
 There is only one God
 There is only one King
 There is only one brother
 That is why we sing

Fusi, taton le Ali
 Fusi, taton le Ali
 e le, toe naitala
 Fusi, taton le Ali
 Fusi, taton le Ali
 Fusi, i lou alope
 E tasi le Tupu
 Le Atua le Tamā
 E tasi le tino
 Ina taton vivii

always us

"I" does not exist.

I am not.

My self belongs not to me because "I" does not exist.

"I" is always "we",

is a part of the 'aiga [extended family],

a part of the Au a teine [girls' group],

a part of the Aufaipese [choir],

a part of the Autalavou [young peoples' organization]"

– Sia Figiel 1996¹⁰

This quote from Sia Figiel's novel "Where We Once Belonged," created a familiar warmth in my chest, one of comfort. Not often in my life have there been puzzle pieces aligned so perfectly that it almost felt as if they were misplaced, until I found them, especially when relating cultural and societal understandings in an academic context. Aligning one's self with the collective, is how we as a family made it through losing my uncle, my nana and her sister. Each passing, although years apart from one another, brought us closer rather than pushing us apart. We found each other every single time when navigating the grief space. We mourned in our own special way through humour and by way of keeping our family va'a moving.¹¹ Utilising our we, we kept our family together in the face of our greatest challenges as a collective. April K. Henderson speaks to the notion of collectivity over individualism within the Samoan context in 'The I and We: Individuality, Collectivity and Samoan Artistic Responses to Cultural Change.'¹² She says, "I have heard numerous students and colleagues reference this passage from Figiel to describe their sense that Samoan culture and society structurally privilege expressions of collectivity over individualism." Taking on both Figiel's passage from her novel and Henderson's analysis of the societal impact of that passage, I reflect upon my own grasping of that concept in my practice.

¹⁰ Figiel, Sia. 1996. *Where We Once Belonged*. Pg 135. Auckland, N.Z.: Pasifika Press.
http://books.google.com/books?id=_JlaAAAAMAAJ.

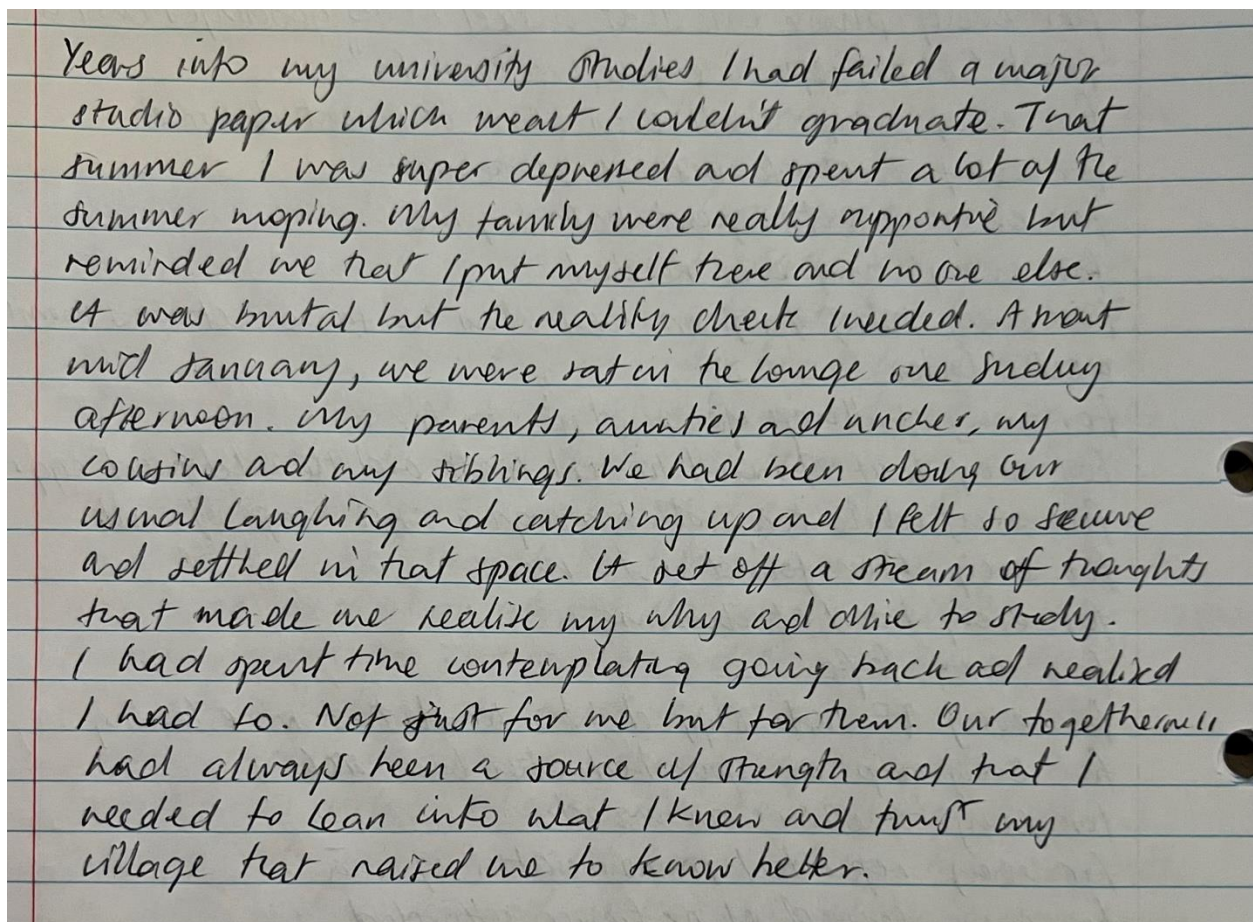
¹¹ Va'a – Boat. Speaking to the idea that as a family unit, if one of us were to stop paddling it would unsettle the pace and trajectory of our va'a's movement.

¹² Henderson, April K. "The I and the We: Individuality, Collectivity, and Samoan Artistic Responses to Cultural Change." *The Contemporary Pacific* 28, no. 2 (2016): 316-345. [doi:10.1353/cp.2016.0027](https://doi.org/10.1353/cp.2016.0027).

There were years where I had tried to detach myself from – what I assumed at the time were – stereotypical boundaries for a Moana artist which never once worked.

journal note #6

In this journal note I touch on how failing a paper in my undergraduate years changed the trajectory of my practice as an artist. I realised in the aftermath that I had to stop chasing a creative path that was turning me from all I knew and lean into the inspiration I am in constant supply in from my family.



The notion of collectivity is ever present throughout this research. The quote from Figiel's novel is more than that, it is a lived experience that the majority of Samoan families have. The details can vary from family to family, but it is rare to find Samoan families that don't work according to the tune of togetherness. For my family, that collectivity and togetherness has never seen the boundaries of blood. Our relationships have never known this boundary due to the nature in which our family has always existed. Our doors have never been closed to anyone who has needed them to be open. Whether it was to host distant family relatives my grandparents knew from Samoa when they were moving to Aotearoa back when my parents were kids or to host my brother's friends who walked in our doors and never left. Our homes as a family have always had people flowing in and out of them, most of those connections never being severed or lost regardless of time.

warming the space

When applying these understandings of collectivity and oneness without individualism to my creative practice, the connection came naturally. Meaola Amituanai-Toloa explains that "Good and ethical research depends on how much one has thought through the processes."¹³ What and how one does research, specifically for Samoans and Pasifika in general, is normally reinforced by the way one "'tu, savali ma tautala', that is the way one holds oneself, walks and talks."¹⁴ This research is a manifestation of what I have learnt about love and home because of my upbringing. However, it did not start out that way. This research saw many phases before reaching the inevitable core ideas about love and home. Initially, the research was directed towards giving exposure to my seat within the communities in which I had a privileged insight to. It was after the first semester in 2021, that I realised that the research, whilst for my own personal record was fine, was beginning to take on a colonial feel. Why did anyone deserve the privilege in knowing my community in the way that I was showing them in my video works?

¹³ Amituanai-Toloa, Meaola. (2007). The 'Va Tapuia' (Space made sacred) in bridging research and relationships: Brown culture and commonsensical ethics.. *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Scholarship*. 1. 204-227. 10.1177/117718010600300111.

¹⁴ This Samoan proverb, 'E iloa le tagata Samoa I lana tu, savali ma tautala' literally meaning, 'A Samoan is known by the way one holds oneself, walks and talks.' This is referring to the way one conducts themselves in connecting with others.

And more importantly, who was I to share those privileged moments of intimacy? When Auckland returned to lockdown in August of 2021, it was still relatively early in the thesis year process. I hadn't really made much movement in terms of my thought processes. With the lockdown I took the opportunity to have a small mental break from all that had been going on. When what I thought would be two weeks of lockdown, rolled into the end of week three moving on four, I realised the nature in which this research was being undertaken was going to have to change. At the time all my work had been centred around filming while being with my family with the personal connections creating the work. When those connections were being conducted online it became a strain to communicate especially with my siblings. I was living with one brother and Facetiming or texting with the rest of my siblings. It was a tough time emotionally not being able to see them and the uncertainty around when we would see each other next was taxing. Living in the same city was just a further test of my patience knowing how easy it could be to see them. During this period my supervision team and I were trying to see out the ethics application. After reading the form over the first time I was more than overwhelmed. Part of me wanted to tell the form to go jump in a ditch and the other part of me, the agreeable and more responsible side knew that I had to comply with this form to keep going. It made me re-evaluate the way the project was being conducted. It was here that as a team we came to the decision to navigate the project differently so that we didn't need the ethics application process. For me personally, why would I willingly put myself through a process questioning my integrity to our sacred space? Concessions to the ethics process would also have meant scaling back just how much of my family that was being unveiled in the creative works.¹⁵

Protecting my family is an integral part of my research, I run everything by them even in the thinking stages.¹⁶ They're always in the know of what I'm doing but because none of them are artists themselves, they often don't pay much attention to my constant chattering and theorising of our time spent together. Amituanai-Tolua's words resonated with me during the process of

¹⁵ Our family extends to our community including friends and their families too. This became a sticking point in the ethics application due to the way in which family and community were defined.

¹⁶ When I speak about protection in this context, I do mean in the physical and spiritual sense. Attending to the va between my family and myself is an everyday occurrence, something done without consciously doing so. Their well-being extends past the ethical process in which they are needing to be protected. The ethics application only catered to the western standards of safety around creative practices and wasn't even directly catered to creative practices. This project is indigenous in nature and follows more protocols that I undergo from being and existing in my family my whole life than that of which an ethics application can instruct.

this research as a reality check. It made me question the true nature of the processes I was undertaking and my treatment of va tapuia and va fealoai.¹⁷ Both these concepts about va (space) talk about the treatment of building relationships between people. Va tapuia a concept I gained through this research and va fealoa'i a concept I learnt through my upbringing at church. Va tapuia, meaning sacred space, speaks traditionally to the feagaiga (covenant relationship) of brothers and sisters. It originated from the respect a brother should show his sister. In return of this 'fa'aaloalo' or respect, the sister would bless her brother.¹⁸ To interrupt or violate that space could result in the sister cursing the brother. In contemporary times, this concept is applied more broadly to not only the covenant between brothers and sisters but also to the treatment between us as people and the spaces in which we occupy. This research analyses the notion of home as being physical and importantly defined by the essence of people as home, and how love forms those feelings and ideas. I had to consider how I was engaging with my family and how home was situated in particular locations. Being that the locations were a combination of church and home, all spaces were sacred. All spaces housed the relationships that I hold in high respect. This required scaling back and reconfiguring what story telling looked like with care and cultural safety and considering what needed to remain private and considering what could be shared respectfully. This meant taking away the direct filming of my family to ensure their safety was being put first given that these works had potential to be used in a public forum. The ethics application became a significant turning point in relation to my practice. Whilst it initially had a negative impact on me as the researcher, it had a positive impact on the nature in which I was seeing out this research. Instead of having the stance of using my seat within my community to observe in a colonial like fashion by giving a look into my family landscape, I redirected the view so that I was inside looking around as opposed to outside looking in. Essentially it was making the work collaborative versus separating me from my 'we'. It also meant reaffirming the stance I took at the beginning of the research: *if you don't get it, it's just not for you to get*. Indigenous story telling will enter the white art world, be dissected and it won't be long before some white academic will challenge the validity of a work based on its ability to be accessible to their westernised world view on art and how art should be. Colonisation really told them they

¹⁷ va fealoa'i – the privileged space between you and others. Working in this space is acknowledging the processes of language, protocols and boundaries in which the relationship may have.

va tapuia – sacred space

¹⁸ Fa'aaloalo – Respect in all contexts it is used in.

could do that. My work does not serve the purpose of being relatable or accessible for everyone to come and understand. I make for my people and those like us to see themselves in contexts that they haven't felt seen in before. It is not my responsibility as an artist to create for everyone, I like many other moana artists am a channel to tell the story of my people. If others engage and can resonate with aspects or the narrative I am sharing as whole, then that is great but it is not my job to cater to everyone and especially so the western world. I am by no means the first to do this, but like others who create in this nature, it's not intended to upset or offend anyone. They just take it that way.

Va fealoa'i was a concept I first learnt as a child at church camp. They described it as the way in which we take care of the feagaiga between the boys and girls whilst at camp.¹⁹ *My mum described it as "making sure you kids don't try any silly crap."* Mapu Maia is a moana health organisation that caters to navigating interventions and educational workshops across moana families in Aotearoa.²⁰ They acknowledge va fealoa'i as a tool in their practice when it comes to assisting the families, they work with through difficult situations that require intervention. In the same tone, I take this treating of va into consideration when working with my family. Not for the purpose of easing difficult situations, but to prevent situations requiring intervention. Working alongside my family is easy due to the fluidity of our communication as we work together gather inspiration for my research. Their existence is all they require to bring to the table. The areas that can become difficult is the niceties around their availability to contribute. During the lockdown period, out of love, my family would keep pushing themselves to take part, but the tensions that were building were evident in how we were all communicating. There wasn't a resentment to being in the projects theoretically, it just became difficult practically.²¹ We couldn't engage the

¹⁹ Feagaiga – means, 'a covenant'. In Samoa, the feagaiga was given to the brother and sister relationship as one that is considered sacred. Although gender roles had been pre-determined, the relationship was seen as equal art the start.

²⁰ Amituanai-Tolosa, Meaola. "The 'Va Tapuia' (Space Made Sacred) in Bridging Research and Relationships: Brown Culture and Commonsensical Ethics." *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Scholarship* 1 (July 1, 2007): 204–27. <https://doi.org/10.1177/117718010600300111>.

²¹ Tensions had been building while we as a family tried to navigate online life again during lockdown, but when it came to my family helping me through lockdown to complete research related tasks, they had no frustration towards me or the research but all the frustration for the fact we had to make it work in such uncertain terms. They wanted to help but it was more important for me – given the purpose of the research – that they were given the space to help where they could but not put pressure on them to do more than they were capable.

way we preferred, and the strain was felt through the screens of our phones and computers as we tried to push through.

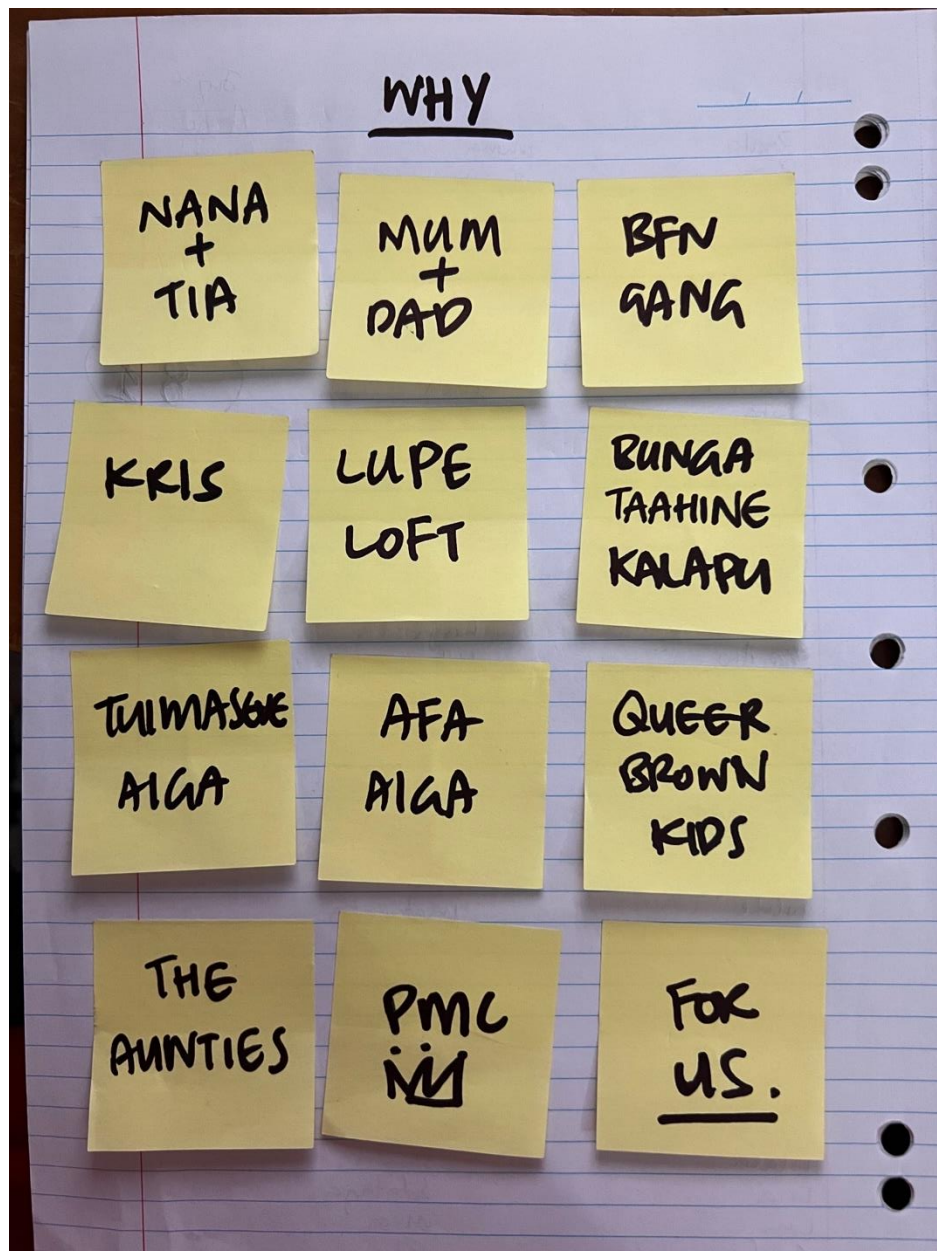


Figure 11 this image is from the beginning stages of me figuring out who I was doing this for

journal note #7

In this journal note I reflect on the first gathering we have at my parents' house in Green Bay post the changes to the Traffic light system introduction. At this point it had been more than 100 days since I had seen any of my sisters in person and even longer since we had seen our cousins who were able to make it.

By this time, we had reached November of 2021 and Auckland had made the new switch to the Traffic Light system for COVID-19 precautions. This meant we could have a gathering of 28 people maximum if we were outside. I sent the message out immediately to my siblings and a few of our first cousins to invite them for drinks and dinner at my parents house in Green Bay. It wasn't the intention of the gathering, but it lined up with the week of my birthday and so it became another reason to get together. Everyone who could, came. It healed the unsettling feeling we had all been stomaching and allowed us to reset our connections. We just really missed being us and being together. My cousin made me a little three-tiered cake, my sisters and all the boys brought KFC and once we were altogether, we assessed we had all this food and not enough alcohol. My cousin and her fiancé did a bottle shop run and for the first time in ages we had a drink with almost all our first cousins. It might sound really simple, but life had been running us into the ground prior to lockdown, so in a way having all our events and work paused was a blessing cause it gave us time. We really needed time.

she's why

One guaranteed fact about my Nana's house in Ōtāhuhu is that her sister, my aunty Litia (*our golden lady*), would always have a pot of cooked rice at the ready. Whether we were eating rice with butter, sugar and milk, chow mein or as ²²koko alaisa, there was rice always. Similarly afflicted were a couple of my aunty's homes in Mangere Bridge. You could always count on the house smelling of what can only be described as the ultimate aunty scent – fresh flowers with a hint of ciggy – and the sound of the kettle boiling would be heard as soon as you entered the front door. It was over once piping hot cups of coffee turned icy, that my aunts and mum would turn out hours of being faikakala about anything and everything.²³ It didn't matter what the cause for the visit was it just happened and like the rice, the coffee was always in attendance. These core memories only scratch the surface on the life the women in my family lead and shared with us. They were the backbone to our family gatherings and the reason our clothing is so generously sized. I realised that my writings and reflections for my exegesis were like my family, a big, intertwined collection of thoughts with no definitive beginning or ending. It was later in the development of this writing as part of the research project that I pinned down the four significant areas in which this research was situated. Māngere Bridge is home to two of my aunty's families, one on **Crawford and the other on **Koru.²⁴ Both homes have taught me a multitude of lessons about life in general, but more than anything these homes were places where patience and love were always amplified. Like a lot of aunts houses, these homes were where we could go and be who we were away from the always concerned ears and eyes of our parents. It was rare to leave these homes without lighter shoulders and full bellies.

Including Māngere Bridge as one of four pillars of sanctuary was vital to understanding the landscape that is my family picture. How I know and am connected to these two locations differ, yet they are interconnected with my parents, with each other, with me and more. What connects them outside of the familial context you ask? Apple pie. My aunty Nel is famously known for

²² Koko alaisa – Cocoa rice. A simple Sāmoan delicacy that would often be an easy dinner or a hot breakfast before church. Especially on icy winter Sunday's when there was Sunday school.

²³ Faikakala – gossip. This word takes on a colloquial tone in modern times and in this context is meant in a humorous way.

²⁴** Crawford and Koru are the names of the streets my aunty's homes are on and that's how we identify them within our family context.

her incredible apple pie recipe she's been making since forever ago. Put simply this apple pie will change your life for the better and that is not an exaggeration. There's a large pool of people in Auckland and even those outside of Aotearoa that have been privileged enough to eat this apple pie and they'll tell you themselves it's an experience you don't skip out on. My uncles have even measured it's worth by saying "I'm full but I have a second hidden stomach for the pie." So, as you can imagine the apple pie is a big deal. It's featured at almost every family gathering and if it's not no one attempts to recreate it. Yes, as much as the pie as a connecting factor is important to this research, the reason it ranks so highly in mention worthy topics, is the notion around the importance of food in relation to connection. Both homes in Māngere Bridge are a huge part of where the essence of home and the feeling of love are felt. They were places in which our families gathered to share space, food and nurture our relationships with each other. These homes were also the places in which I personally gained two big families. Both houses are the homesteads for the aunts that married into the family and as the hubs for gatherings for all family events it came naturally that we connected with our in-laws.²⁵ The women of these households hold such a great place of warmth when it comes to my understanding of love and how the essence of home can be found not just in the physicality of something but in the atmosphere created by people. My aunts have a magic to them, some hold places as the makers – of food or of things –, some hold the place as a confidante, some are the teammate when a 'permission slip' needs co-signing and all are the bonus mothers we are so honoured to have. Although at times the extra sets of opinions can be frustrating, what we learn from these women, our aunts, we begin to emulate the lessons they have taught us. Many on our own terms but a few directly as they were taught almost as if we read them out of an instruction manual. A benefit of having so many strong women represented in my family landscape is the amount of attitude I was taught at a very young age. I think of all the lessons these women have taught me, the lesson about not taking crap from anyone is my favourite.

²⁵ I use in laws very hesitantly. For the sake of it being easier to understand I have used the term, but I would never refer to any of our family as in laws. It has never felt like that because in the same way our blood relatives show up for us without failure, our inherited relatives have too. Therefore, chosen family is so important to highlight in this research because as much as we have been blessed with these connections through marriage, we maintain our relationships by choice.

Lana Lopesi's *Bloody Woman*, itself embodies all that I see in the women of my family.²⁶ The first chapter alone sent chills down my spine because I knew what was to come, something admirable, something that would make being Sāmoan women in diaspora feel visible.

'Tautalaititi girls need no defence.' The title of this chapter gives enough context to those reading who know what tautalaititi means about what's to be come. In its essence, to be tautalaititi is to be cheeky, but it can also be seen as speaking or acting out of turn. My mum would call me this often when I was a teenager and regularly follow it with "*Au, fia keige makua but you can't even wash your own kagamea!*"²⁷ There was a definitive negative connotation around being seen as tautalaititi and still in present times it is seen as a negative trait to have associated with your person, especially as a woman.²⁸ Lopesi's writings about tautalaititi/kauakalaikiki seeks to negate any negative associations to the term and offer up the redirection of its meaning to give power to those seen as such. She uses the example of young girls from a village in Sāmoa who participants in a focus group were to assist Margaret Mead in her musings about village and focusing heavily on the happenings of young women. The girls essentially lie to Mead and when asked about the interaction decades after Mead's work was written, one of the girls who was now an elderly woman admits to actively lying to Mead at the time. This admission of lying, came with the acknowledgement that they did it to be cheeky, to be tautalaititi. Lopesi identifies this cheekiness to lie as a form of shifting the power scales. Mead as the researcher had a sense of authority over the young girls and regardless of her ability to be welcomed into the fold, her presence alone represented an imbalance in the va between her and those taking part in the focus group. By instigating the lie and never revealing to Mead, the young group of girls showed that the true power was held in their hands because they had the knowledge Mead was seeking out and therefore, they could determine the narrative they wanted Mead to believe. The same way in which these young girls took control of their own narrative, the women in my family have instilled the same narrative of power. Although being tautalaititi still holds negative connotations for the most part, if anything the women in my family

²⁶ Lopesi, Lana. *Bloody Woman*. Wellington, NZ. Bridget Williams Books, 2021

²⁷ This literally means "You wanna act like a big girl but you can't even do your own washing!" In essence she was saying that I was cheeky in acting like a big girl but I couldn't even do the simple things to look after myself and still act like a kid asking her to do it for me.

²⁸ Growing up I had realised quite quickly that as a Samoan girl, there were different rules for me than there were for my brothers. This played into the calling out of being tautalaititi. In our family boys were very rarely seen as tautalaititi whereas girls were always seen that way if we stepped out of the lines of what was expected of us.

encouraged the cheekiness. To allow oneself to be tautalaititi there has to be a degree of audacity one has, but more than anything in order to embody that cheekiness you have to be strong in yourself to back your cheekiness when anyone comes to challenge it. In relation to how I practice as an artist, I am tautalaititi where it comes to the ownership of all these elements that teach me how to love and how to know where I can be at home in. As a Sāmoan woman who is also queer and plus size, there have been numerous times in my academic career where my practice as an artist and capabilities as a person, have been challenged in relation to their validity, especially amongst my peers.²⁹ Often the question of how my research areas of interest will be able to measure up in a broader scale. Being tautalaititi, as I mentioned earlier, requires a certain degree of audacity. This cheekiness and audacity rooted in the tautalaititi essence I share in with the women in my family, gives me the capability to stand ten toes down for my own research and create for the purposes this research is for.

²⁹ The peers in which I speak of are always non- moana folk.



Figure 12 An image from inside Green Bay in my parents room. This image is from 2013 before the house was renovated and given a new lease on life. Image credit to Olivia Tuimaseve

(k)new knowledge - green bay

journal note #8

PAPA

This time was so special. I didn't have much at all to do with my ~~papa~~ Papa because he was always back and forth from Jamaica. It was sad to have him live with us because he was sick and our house wasn't big enough for us all. I remember being told we were moving back to Green Bay and kind of just accepting it because he needed us and that's just what you do when family needs you. He didn't ask my parents to, they just knew he needed that. Before we moved I begged school a lot to stay home and do nothing (much to mum's disarray) but she said I had to cook for Papa while I was home. At the time she worked close by so she had been coming home on her breaks to feed him. At 16, I was not a great cook, more a baker if anything. I made him corn beef and noodles most of the time or eggs on toast. There was a takeaway across the road from us that did the garlic chips ~~to~~ and I'd grab us some if I had money. He never complained even though I know he definitely preferred mum's meat but he would laugh and still eat. I love that he loved me enough to let me know the food wasn't great but he was grateful to have someone cooking.

Figure 13 A memory of my Papa Segi Tafilipepe Iese Allesana

Green Bay is where my parents' house is. The house belongs to them, but was originally my mum's parents, Pailegutū and Segi Tafilipepe Iese Allesana's house. We've all had a stint at living here, as Green Bay is the home stead for my mum and her siblings' families.³⁰ In 2013, my papa – my mum's dad – fell sick and at the time my parents and myself lived in Epsom. He came to live with us for a month or so before my parents made the decision to shift us back to Green Bay permanently. The move meant we could keep a closer eye on him, but also so he could have his own space back instead of squishing in my tiny room at our two-bedroom flat. Upon reflection, I am so glad we moved when we did because not even a full year later he passed away. Although my relationship wasn't the strongest with my papa growing up, the last year and a half leading up to his passing was the most time I had spent with him. He was my last living grandparent at the time and now, in this moment writing about him and my family, I find myself incredibly blessed to have been afforded that time. This area in the research focuses more on where I situate myself now. It touches on the unveiling of known knowledge that has existed within my family that is directly connected to the Green Bay location, but also the knowledge which I have gained in this era of life lived.

Much of the ideologies that helped frame this research, are that of which lean into the everyday lived experiences of my family and the community around us. In undertaking this research topic, I came to understand the traditions my family have actively been forming and reaffirming are in fact a form of indigenous practice. Observing the way my family makes the cogs turn in the machine that is our larger family group made it abundantly clear that all the ways in which we exist and live all of our lives are not learnt practices but knowledge we inherit. To embrace one's culture always seemed to be such an existential notion, in terms of learning all our cultural customs –fa'asamoa for my family – because that seemed to be the only validated nature in

³⁰ When I say we've all had a stint at living here I mean we have ALL had a turn that of course excluding my younger cousins one who lived directly behind it and the others who were raised in Melbourne. My grandparents' house was the hub of our family like it is in a number of Moana families. When I was younger there was a period where my family (4), my aunty and her girls (3), my aunty and her son and my papa as well as his wife were all living at Green Bay.

embracing one's indigeneity.³¹ The mentality around that kind of thinking invalidates any progression that we as indigenous people make every day. What I've noticed in my family landscape is that our growth was stunted by the assumption that the way we existed as a family wasn't Samoan enough because it wasn't considered traditional. What we've come to is the acceptance that our way of functioning is an extension of the traditional values meshed in our upbringings but also in our thinking. "We don't just want to resist as we develop a consciousness of our own intelligence we want to thrive," Manulani Aluli Meyer explains in an interview speaking to indigenous epistemologies and utilising the skills indigenous people inherit from their ancestry.³² This research is my form of tuning in to what I already know and acknowledging the intelligence that stems from pre-existing knowledge through a creative practice. In this video Meyer puts focus on love as a form of intelligence, she uses the word of Olana Kaipo Ai, 'Aloha is the intelligence with which we meet life.' The words resonated with me because essentially that's what this research is. Love and life-based knowledge come together as a collective understanding of what it means to know home and to know love in the physicality of a place as well as in the essence created by the life forces that breathe life into them. In this video, Meyer touches on the doubt that westernised culture embeds in the minds of indigenous people to invalidate the teachings and known knowledge of their respective peoples. There's such a power that comes with her highlighting of that understanding, especially as an elder in the moana community. Often the elders can sit in the colonial version of our culture rather than trusting the indigenous knowledge we all have within ourselves. For my family landscape, that mistrust in our indigenous knowledge stems from the colonisation of Samoa and the introduction of Christianity – and in turn a conservative outlook – overtaking any other spiritual or indigenous practices. It's not that it's new knowledge, its knowledge residing in indigenous practices that indigenous people around the world have had to ignore or reject. Meyer's encouragement to

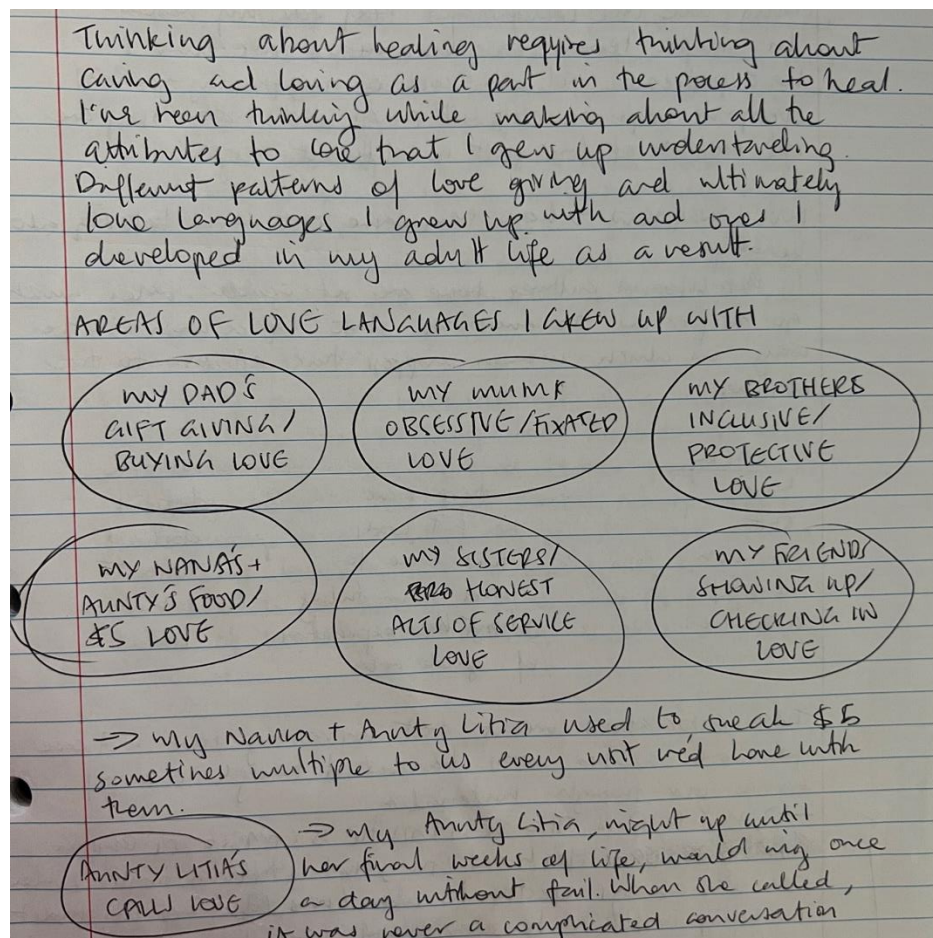
³¹ Fa'asamoa – the Samoan way. It refers to the cultural customs and practices of Samoa.

³² Voices Of Truth - One-On-One With Hawai'i's Future. *Aloha Is Our Intelligence - A Visit With Manu Aluli Meyer*, 2007. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8xNBxVGBEF0>.

surface indigenous knowledge and trusting ourselves and who we are that is empowering is validating. An area of this known knowledge that has been very relevant in my creative process is acknowledging the different love languages used in our family landscape. This became apparent when we were communicating online. My family are heavy on actions are louder than words and that's more to do with them being shy to outwardly speak but more confident in just doing. The inability to put actions to use during lockdown and even after still with restrictions proved a little tricky, but it made the love languages my family spoke even louder once we were fully able to do so.

journal notes #9

Below is an image of notes I made when embracing that known knowledge. I was fine tuning my ears and eyes to the languages of love my family all spoke and identifying how they did that.



trusting our purpose

“Aloha makes me smart, aloha makes me intelligent. So, therefore I will know how to respond to people, I will know how to nurture people, I will know how to take care of land.” – Manulani Aluli Meyer³³

My parents both come from similar upbringings in that they were both heavily driven by religious and family focused philosophies. In saying that, as I got older, I realised that there's small differences in how my parents viewed the world. Being that my dad spent a number of years in Samoa during his upbringing before they came to Aotearoa, and my mum was born and raised in Green Bay, there tends to be a difference in opinion about all areas of life. I find that my dad whilst always having the purest of intentions can often opt out of doing things that are complicated or fussy and my mum will wilfully enter those more complex situations. Both are agreed in the humility that comes with Samoan culture. They often will exercise their opportunity to be the voice of reason in many stages of my life, not to humble me, but out of a high respect for the lessons they learned from their own parents. Whilst the grounding effect of this level of humility can be beneficial, it has also sat at odds with the way I navigate choosing what's best for myself. Throughout my teen years, the humility card was often used as a means to ground me. I used to think that it was because my parents didn't value any of my own thoughts. What I later learnt was that it was never to invalidate me but was due to the high amount of respect my parents had for other people and that they would never want me to be caught in a situation where I came off as cocky or rude. In the case of studying at university, I began university quite ashamed of what was “fobby/fresh”.³⁴ I rejected so much of my moana essence and in the process colonised my own way of thinking and making when it came to my

³³ Voices Of Truth - One-On-One With Hawai'i's Future. *Aloha Is Our Intelligence - A Visit With Manu Aluli Meyer*, 2007. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8xNBxVGBEF0>

³⁴ Fobby/fresh – terms with negative connotations used to describe the nature of moana people who had come straight from the islands. Like a lot of derogatory terms, these words would be deemed offensive when used by the wrong people.

art practice. It took failing my third-year studio paper to put into perspective that trying to be inauthentic and fraudulent wasn't achieving any of the desired results I was aiming for. What followed the next year when I returned was a year long journey of trust falls with myself.³⁵ The first half of the year I struggled to let go of the nerves of what had been, still psyching myself out at every chance. It was one day during the break after spending a full-on weekend out at the Ihumaatao protests and at work, my family had text me to meet them when I was finished work at KFC in Ponsonby near our church. When I arrived, I felt an instant ease after being mocked immediately by my dad and hearing the laughs of my siblings, aunts, and uncles. I realised that my practice was failing because I was forcing myself to try and create something I lacked passion for and in a way that felt foreign to myself. This revelation timed conveniently with the midyear break, and I spent the weeks during the break with my family embracing our history and began to engage with the well of knowledge that my family had always been.

In trusting what my family had raised me to know and following in the footsteps laid ahead of me, I found a rhythm and it didn't take long to realise it was one I had spent my life swaying to without doing so consciously. Manulani Aluli Meyer said, "Courage begins consciousness" and there was nothing truer than that, especially so when I thought about moana people in the creative field.³⁶ Excellence is something our elders and ancestors have always strived for. They were people who dreamed a life of possibilities for us and lived out there lived out their lives accordingly, only in the hopes one day we could live the lives they once dreamed. Leaning into the collective knowledge my family shared was like unlocking a new character in a video game. It was like I had a whole new mind and vision when embracing my family and all the incredible things they were doing. Story telling is a given when you enter the moana world, that truth being

³⁵ When I failed the year three studio paper for the Bachelor of Visual Arts at AUT in 2018, I entered the summer discouraged and broken. After a summer of encouraging talks from all my family, I returned in 2019 and graduated the summer of '19/'20.

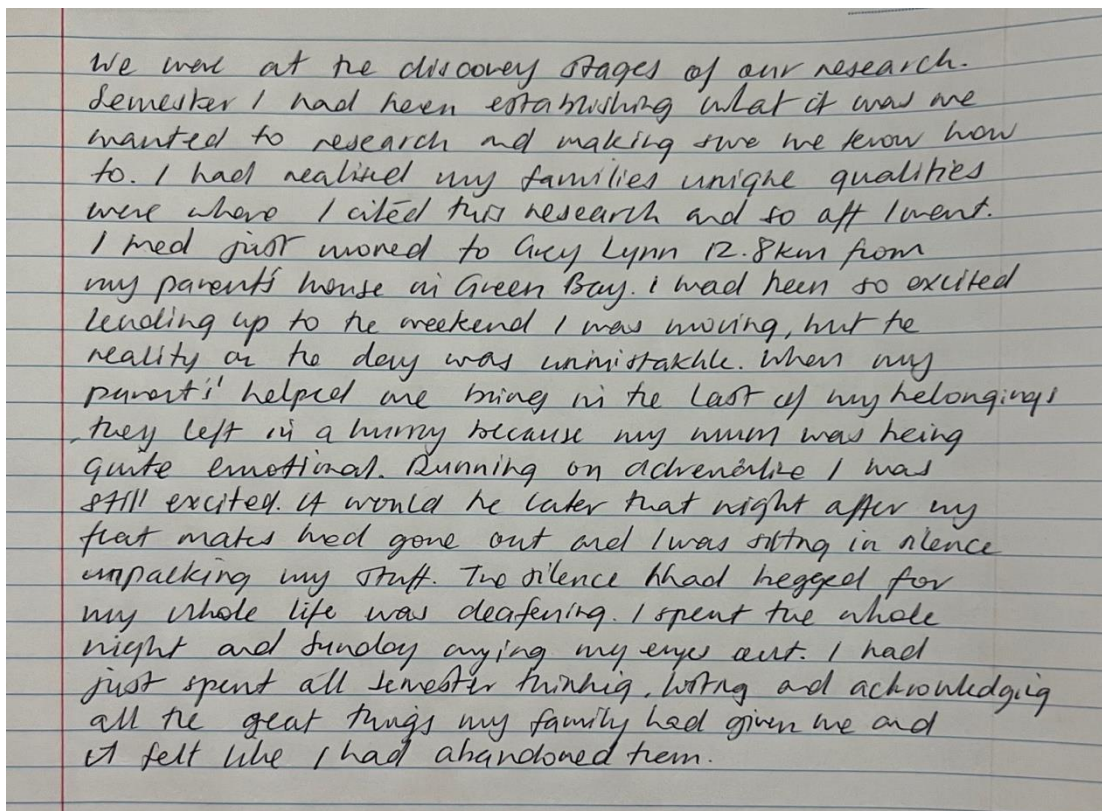
³⁶ Voices Of Truth - One-On-One With Hawai'i's Future. *Aloha Is Our Intelligence - A Visit With Manu Aluli Meyer*, 2007. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8xNBxVGBEF0>

even more evident when you look at moana artists. Tuafale Tanoa'I aka Linda.T presented Story Telling as Koha. The exhibition was a display of the archive which she had been building over years of engagement with the communities she was involved in. I situate my own practice within the same framework that Tanoa'i's work sits in. She utilises her living archive and its related exhibition to give light to the often-missed communities. Her worked highlighted the greatness that sat within these groups and the unique space and atmosphere created by them. In undertaking this journey with my family, I aim to do the same but specifically for them. By highlighting the great notions of home and love, I hope my family can see just how valued and important the way they exist is. Within my family, we all have a role to play. My sisters and one of my brothers are musically gifted, my brothers are all talented and for a long time I didn't think I had a purpose. My younger sisters like to say I've got stories for days a bit like my dad and to be fair they're absolutely correct. In welcoming this observation from my sisters, I embraced that I do indeed have lots to say about nearly everything and I took that to mean my purpose was in storytelling.

Purpose was something I always associated with religion and in ways that tied into my upbringing. As a youth, our church had always encouraged us to follow God's path for us and in doing so we would find our purpose. When recognising the storytelling role, I felt that I fitted in within my family, and thought about the purpose that I had. Like many other moana people pursuing a goal in their life, my ultimate purpose in seeking out study was to see that I could one day be able to serve the village who have always served me. From this, my creative practice had purpose and power, but it still needed to develop a structure for its content. In times of struggle, I would turn to my grounding tools. Music, prayer and any of my go to women. My mum, my nana Tauvaga, my great aunty Litia and my aunty Lillie are the women I run to when I'm not feeling my strongest. My nana passed in 2009 and my great aunty in 2017. I was still quite young when nana left us, but I was 19 when my great aunty passed. Losing her was the most painful thing I have gone through to this day. It takes a lot to speak to her without tears welling in my

eyes and an all too familiar ache to form in my chest. As a coping mechanism to deal with her absence, I would visit her grave and replace my journaling by speaking to her. Sometimes I would sit with her and write in my journal while listening to music, I even began to have naps when I'd need extra time to just be with her. Journaling became a way that storytelling occurred within my creative practice. Journaling affirms what I loved about the world I existed in and gave me a foundation to draw from when making. I knew great aunty Litia wasn't there, but it was comforting feeling as if she had been sitting next to me the whole time I was there and at this stage in the research I needed to be reminded of her comfort to continue forward with what I was aiming to achieve. It was like her love resided in one spot, but I knew it was the things that reminded me of her that were doing that.

journal notes #10



We were at the discovery stages of our research. Semester 1 had been establishing what it was we wanted to research and making sure we knew how to. I had realised my families unique qualities were where I cited two research and so off I went. I had just moved to Grey Lynn 12.8km from my parents house in Green Bay. I had been so excited leading up to the weekend I was moving, but the reality as the day was unmistakable. When my parents helped me bring in the last of my belongings they left in a hurry because my mum was being quite emotional. Running on adrenaline I was still excited. It would be later that night after my flat mates had gone out and I was sitting in silence unpacking my stuff. The silence I had begged for my whole life was deafening. I spent the whole night and Sunday crying my eyes out. I had just spent all semester thinking, writing and acknowledging all the great things my family had given me and it felt like I had abandoned them.

*her warmth, 2021*³⁷



Figure 14 *Her Warmth*. Still image from video work by Olivia Tuimaseve, 2021

Her Warmth was my closure for this unsettled feeling of imposter syndrome.³⁸ The image above is a still image from a 2-minute video I put together in 2021. Throughout the video you'll see as in the image above, two hands as the focus. The hands are mine and that of my great aunty Litia. At the time she was in hospital because of a long battle with cancer. My great aunty was known for a few things, but her fofo is one of the tops.³⁹ When we would visit her at home on a Sunday after church, she'd often give my dad or uncle - or any of us if we asked – a fofo. Famously at the end she would place one hand flat on top of your head and using the other hand she'd ball her hand into a fist and hammer down onto the top of your head. It was a little shock to the system at first, but it was almost like she was hitting a reset button in your body. This video is from 2017 and it was in an archive of personal moments with my family. We're all somewhat camera shy hence the angle. When I originally took the video, my sisters sitting to my left and I assumed she had grabbed my hand to hold it. It wasn't until a few seconds of her shuffling her hand around had we realised she was trying to fofo my hand. We laughed at the gesture unaware that this

³⁷ Via Tuimaseve. 2021. *Her Warmth* [Video]

³⁸ The Her in the case of this video work is great aunty Litia

³⁹ Fofo – massage

would be the last fofo she would give any one of us.⁴⁰ In the video I removed the audio of us giggling with her and edited in sounds clips from all the different areas I situated comfort in. Those included aogamea (practice) for our youth camp performance, a clip from 2015 of her praying during a family loku (prayer evening), my younger sister practicing her sulatoga, my other younger sister putting my hair in filis (plaits) the first night I moved into my flat, my cousin's taualuga for his 21st and finally the laughter of my sisters and I after we had spent the Sunday afternoon at Green Bay.⁴¹ All these sounds created the familiar warmth that act of my great aunty giving my hand a fofo did. Watching the video alongside the audio clips playing in the background gave me such a sense of home I would play it every night when I would go to sleep at my flat. The combination of the two grounded me in trusting what I was doing was intended for me and that in the same way my great aunty Litia loved us through nurturing our bodies, sharing God with our spirits, and guiding us to stay together.⁴²

⁴⁰ Two weeks after this video was taken great aunty Litia joined her sisters' side once again. May the 5th at 19:47pm she took her last breath.

⁴¹ Sulatoga – a specific call to be made during one of the fa'asamoa traditions by the women. Taualuga – a siva (dance) typically performed at special occasions by a solo dancer.

⁴² When she went into hospital we didn't assume she wouldn't come home after that. She was in the hospital for a week when Sunday afternoon my aunty Lillie and my mum had both rung me to say we needed to get ready and come straight back to the hospital instead of staying at church for aogamea. They had assumed she was going to pass later that night and we should prepare. I had the job of ringing all my family to get to the hospital as soon as they could to come. Everyone who wasn't absolutely stuck was there within the hour. If there was anything great aunty Litia and Nana Tauvaga could do, it was pull our family together.



Figure 15 Lupe Loft catch ups during the summer of 2021/2022

the places in between

lupe loft

My chosen family are the friends who walked in the door and never walked out again. They are the extension of our family landscape that ruled out any exclusivity of blood ties. Whilst I gained this notion of family separate to that of that family I was born into, in the same way my family embraced our other chosen family, they have done the same with the chosen family I found on my own. They are the living proof that yes, while blood may be thicker than water, water is a part of who we are as moana people, it runs deep and connects us all. In January of 2022, I had embarked on a new journey into flatting. This wasn't my first experience with flatting but due to COVID-19 my first attempt in 2021 was cut short. I had moved in with 2 of my best friends who had one existing flat mate and over the summer a room had opened at their flat in Eden Terrace. I was nervous because at this point, I was 24 years old and had only ever long term lived with family. I was concerned about how living with friends could change the trajectory of our friendships and what that could mean if it went negatively. It would turn out that all my worries would be pleasantly proven wrong in the months that followed. Within the first week of moving in, we had named our flat Lupe Loft. The building itself was Pigeon Loft but seeing as we were a mainly brown flat and mostly queer, we felt Lupe Loft embodied us as a group best.⁴³

We spent the summer configuring our own forms of traditions that felt inherited from our elders. They weren't necessarily all philosophical and responsible in nature, but they were a reimagining of elements from all our similar yet different upbringings. A tradition we formed was every Friday we'd gather at our little courtyard area at the back of our flat and have a smoke or a talanoa about all the drama from our week but also just have a laugh to unwind. Occasionally these talanoa's would develop into inviting a few more of our friends over and eventually it became a routine that whoever was free on a Friday evening would just stroll on through and

⁴³ This name was a combination of our flat but also our extended group of friends; a group of diasporic islanders.

have a good time. This tradition inspired a series of poems I named '*ka'a girls*'⁴⁴. The series was my poetic responses to different topics we'd cover in our talanoa but more, so it was my way of acknowledging the importance I placed on our connection as not just friends but now, family.

In March of 2022, I exhibited a piece from the series '*ka'a girls*' called '*page 112*' at Oddly gallery in Mount Eden. The piece was an exert from a type of dialogue my chosen family and I would engage in. It was us being faikakala but also embraced the different tones that can be had in our lengthy talanoa's in the courtyard of Lupe Loft.⁴⁵ Set in a A4 black frame, the layout of the text mimics that of a bible page. I wanted it to emulate the energy of my chosen family. Many of us came from church families and gave off a very innocent aura when we first met, but it was in unveiling our inner most thoughts with each other that we discovered we all carried a tautalaltititi essence and with time we only continued to affirm that fact. Once walking closer to the frame, you realise it's not bible text but one side of a conversation. To keep the thoughts of my chosen family private, I presented only what I contributed to the conversation and left the blanks of the other side of the conversation for viewers to fill in. When the show opened my chosen family came through and I hadn't shared with them what I was going to present. It took them all less than 10 minutes to make connections to which piece was mine and they all just laughed at it. One friend went so far to say, "*oi did you just copy and paste your dm's.*"⁴⁶ They all shared the same sentiment; I made a piece that all our friends would connect with and that's all I've ever wanted my art to do.

⁴⁴ ka'a girls – ka'a is the Samoan way of saying someone who doesn't know how to stay home. My chosen family and I had that in common that our families would often say we were ka'a because we were forever leaving the house to do all the silly things we could think of.

⁴⁵ Faikakala/faitatala – gossip

⁴⁶ DM's being your direct messages that can be used across multiple social media platforms. My friend was insisting that I had taken direct quotes from my own.

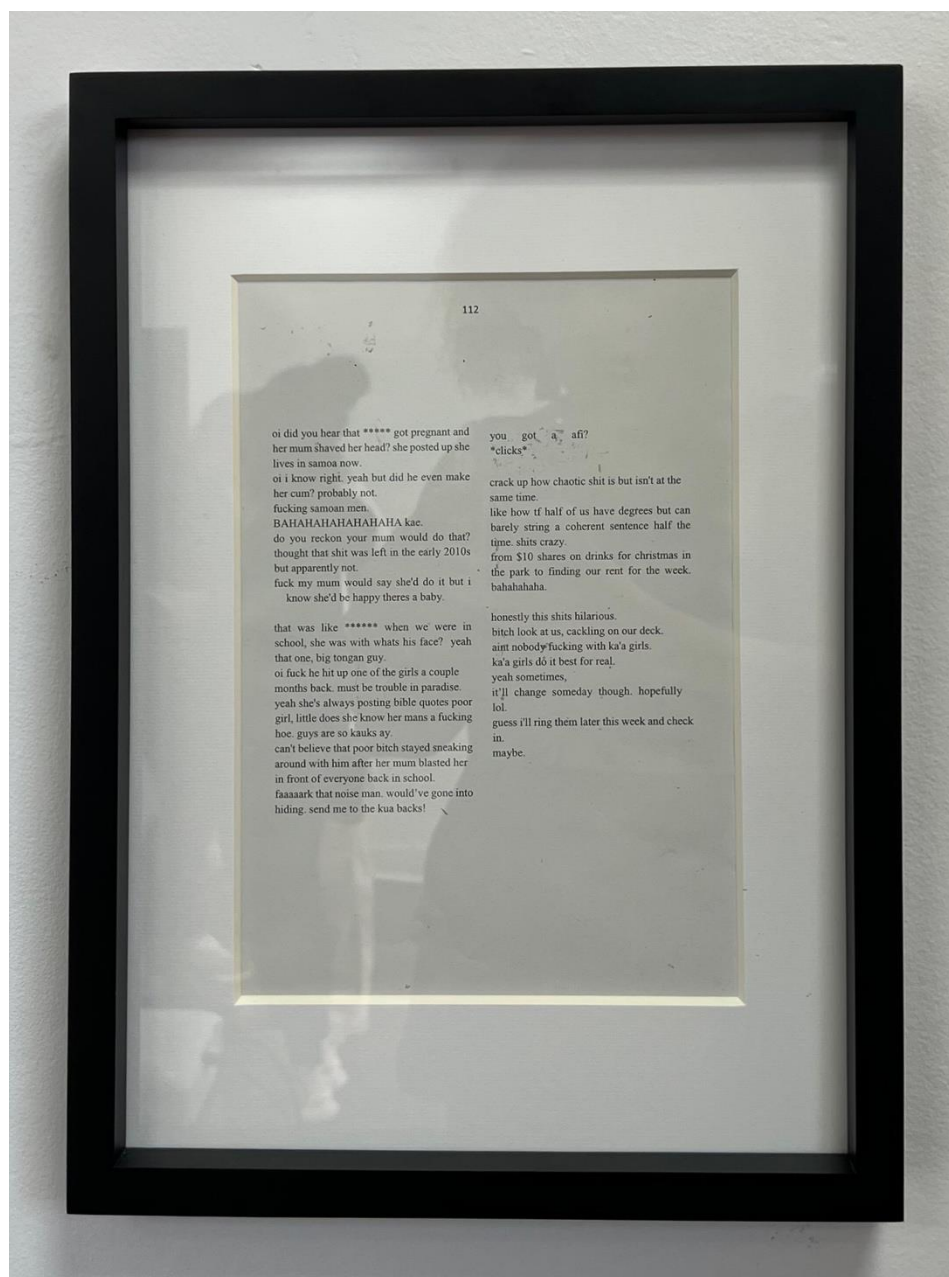


Figure 16 page 112 from 'ka'a girl' series, Via Tuimaseve, 2022.

Although the format of my making was redirected by COVID-19, this change to written forms as art felt very comfortable and I valued its accessibility to everyone who gave me inspiration to undertake this research. Prior to knowing the length of the lockdown that began in August of 2021, I had planned to recreate rooms in a gallery space inspired by the four locations I situate this research in. When I had made these plans, I was working in a video work format where I

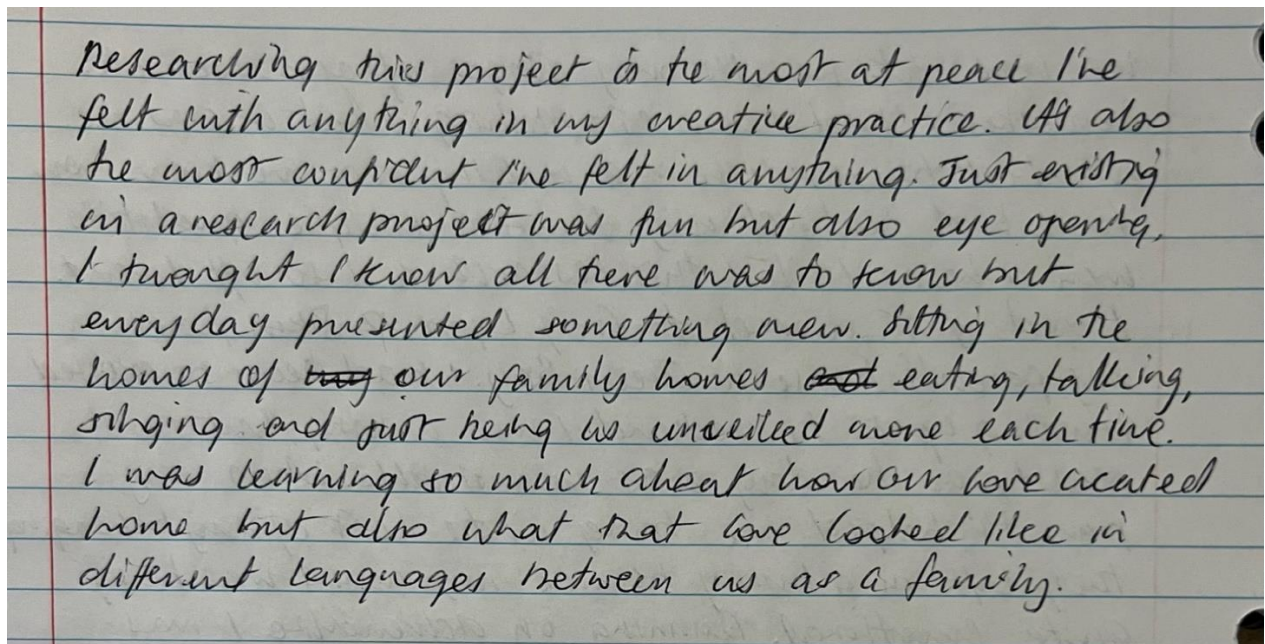
would take video and audio clips from spending time with my family and edit them into a poetic format. I had even entertained the thought of having some of the studio staff come out to one of the locations and partake in a family gathering, which would include food and music elements, at my parents' house in Green Bay while I played one of the videos I had made prior to the lockdown. I wanted these spaces to display that when all the elements of what I understood to be home and how love can be identified were in play, the essence of love and of home could be taken anywhere we and these elements were and with whoever. Sadly, the lockdown was longer than I imagined it would be and the time needed to recreate these rooms was gone. Alongside losing the time, the nature of making had switched to where I would have to edit the footage of my family to allow their privacy to be kept but still be able to display the essence of all they had taught me.

Over the summer, I decided that to resurge the energy needed for the research to continue after months of being operating online. This meant taking off the researcher hat for a while and just live in these moments where all that I had been philosophising was existing. I spent a month in the summer embracing being a part of the 'we' and fulfilling my duties to all my family. We cooked, we ate, we sang, we partied, we praised, we prayed, we walked, we talked, and we revived our soul ties to each other after so many days in lockdown staring at each other through screens. When I picked up the research mindset again, I was filled to the brim with love. My cup was thoroughly overflowing, and the vision was clear. It was fitting to have Samoan photographer Edith Amituanai be the inspiration for this vision. Amituanai has an image apart of her *Millenial* series from 2008 called 'MILLENIAL' and the image is of a tv cabinet from a lounge interior in Samoa.⁴⁷ Amituanai is an artist that draws focus to the less heard and less seen, and with an insider knowledge and a collaborative nature she tells the story of these people. Like Amituanai, I aim to use my practice to highlight known knowledge that exists within the communities I belong to, in the case of this research, my family landscape. When I saw this and other images by Amituanai, it made me recognise that I could still achieve create an essence of home and love through a re-creation of space. Without directly filming my family and crossing the lines in terms of their privacy and safety, I could create an essence of home. In Amituanai's

⁴⁷ "INTERIORS ~ AKL/ANC/APW - Edith Amituanai." Accessed June 30, 2022.
<https://edithamituanai.com/INTERIORS-AKL-ANC-APW>.

images, I was recognising similarities with the images that felt to the feelings I had describe in my research.

journal notes #11



The images below are from Green Bay, Ponsonby and one aunt's house in Māngere Bridge. All the images were taken on my iPhone, not for the purpose of putting them in this research, yet they work in weave of life and research that is also the place between. At the time each image was taken I was seeing out regular activities I would do in those spaces. Green Bay is from Easter weekend in April of 2022, Ponsonby is from late January where my parents and I had gone to clean our church in preparation for the first in person service since lockdown, and Māngere Bridge is an afternoon when I had gone to pick up apple pies to take to my other aunty in Māngere Bridge. I could not include a reference image of the Ōtāhuhu locations because my family had moved from them in 2010 and we didn't have any clear images in our family archive of the house or the interiors. Each image gives visual context to where my practice sits, these are the rooms which visually inspire the introduction of installation into my practice. When I had to rule out including the direct filming of my family, it potentially meant that a lot of the story was missing. By introducing the installation aspect into my practice alongside my writing practice, I

could include all the elements that show who are family are whilst still giving them privacy. My practice has been focused on drawing inspiration from artists like Talia Smith, who showed her video *Blue Moon* at St Paul's Street Gallery in June of 2022⁴⁸. The video shows found old video clips of her family in Samoa and Rarotonga. The clips include her late grandfather and playing in the background over the clips is the slowed down backing track to *Blue Moon*, a song her grandfather would sing to her mother and her siblings. They would sing the song for him at his gravesite when he passed. The 4-minute video unveils and covers up the faces of her family, some she explained were still alive and some who like her grandfather had passed. This video work combines a number of elements that present in my own practice: the upholding of family knowledge, the drawing from family archives and the use of music as a means of connection to the past to name a few.



Figure 17 Green Bay, 2022 image credit Via Tuia Maseve

⁴⁸ "ST PAUL St Gallery - AUT." Accessed June 30, 2022. <https://stpaulst.aut.ac.nz/exhibitions>.



Figure 18 Ponsonby (chapel) 2021 image credit Via Tuimaseve



Figure 19 Māngere Bridge, 2022 image credit Via Tuimaseve

we are home – conclusion

Through practice-led research, something that began as positioning myself solely as the researcher in this project, became understanding that for this to thrive *I* could not exist and only *we* could. By locating and situating where love has formed a home, we've conclude that *we* are the carriers of love and home is wherever we are when we are together. Together we have reflected on our past as a family to acknowledge what has been afforded to us to move forward. We've allowed our past to inform our future and better ourselves to have faith in the plans our ancestors have intended for us. We've put back together the pieces of us that have fallen off in the wake of life lived and come back stronger for it. We've sung songs, written down memories and shared in the lives of those who have walked in along the way. We've honoured the connections we were born into and practiced upholding all that we inherited. We've opened ourselves to the opportunity to create connections for ourselves where love can be formed, and new homes can be found. We navigated our way through unprecedented times and learnt that we place the importance of our relationships with each other over everything that we've come up against. We've created opportunities to learn new ways of communicating our love in languages unique to us. We've connected our homes in their physical forms and how they shape our understanding of what's needed to create the feeling they bring us when we are apart from them. Above all else, we trusted what we knew about ourselves and took strides into understanding just how powerful a knowledge it is to know what love can look like in all forms, to know that love can evolve over time and that more than anything love lives at home and *we are home*.

bibliography

SoundCloud. “👑 Kuini Qontrol 👑.” Accessed May 18, 2021.

<https://soundcloud.com/kuiniqontrol>.

Amituanai-Toloa, Meaola. “The ‘Va Tapuia’ (Space Made Sacred) in Bridging Research and Relationships: Brown Culture and Commonsensical Ethics.” *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Scholarship* 1 (July 1, 2007): 204–27.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/117718010600300111>.

“Artspace Aotearoa - Beyond Essentialism: Contemporary Moana Art from Aotearoa New Zealand.” Accessed June 30, 2022. <https://artspace-aotearoa.nz>.

Janet Lilo visual artist. “Beneath The Radar 2012,” October 5, 2012.

<https://janetlilo.com/2012/10/05/cry/>.

SoundCloud. “Bobo and Flex Podcast.” Accessed May 18, 2021.

<https://soundcloud.com/boboandflex>.

“Building the Community (Archive): The Work of Linda T. - Pantograph Punch.” Accessed May 26, 2021. <https://pantograph-punch.com/posts/linda-t>.

Cascone, Sarah, September 25, and 2018. “‘Black Pain Is Not for Profit’: An Activist Collective Protests Luke Willis Thompson’s Turner Prize Nomination.” Artnet News, September 25, 2018. <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/luke-willis-thompson-turner-prize-1356151>.

“Communication & Culture (@nafanuatele) • Instagram Photos and Videos.” Accessed June 7, 2021. <https://www.instagram.com/nafanuatele/>.

“Edith Amituanai.” Accessed June 23, 2022. <https://edithamituanai.com/>.

“Edith Amituanai - The University of Auckland.” Accessed June 23, 2022.

<https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/alumni/our-alumni/40-under-40/a-z-list-of-profiles/edith-amituanai.html>.

Figiel, Sia. *Where We Once Belonged*. Auckland, N.Z.: Pasifika Press, 1996.

http://books.google.com/books?id=_JlaAAAAMAAJ.

Henderson, April K. "The I and the We: Individuality, Collectivity, and Samoan Artistic Responses to Cultural Change." *The Contemporary Pacific* 28, no. 2 (2016): 316-345. [doi:10.1353/cp.2016.0027](https://doi.org/10.1353/cp.2016.0027).

<https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSdGvekwX/?k=1> – Tiktok by khaenotbae.

Pantograph Punch. “<https://Pantograph-Punch.Com//Posts/Review-Names-Mouths>.” Accessed June 24, 2021. <https://pantograph-punch.com//posts/review-names-mouths>.

Pantograph Punch. “<https://Pantograph-Punch.Com//Posts/Talanoa-Mau>.” Accessed May 19, 2021. <https://pantograph-punch.com//posts/talanoa-mau>.

Luke, Bobby Campbell Wahawa. “Hau te Rongo: The Breath of Rongo”, Master of Art and Design exegesis, AUT University, 2016.

Meredith, Courtney Sina. “Brown Girls in Bright Red Lipstick.” Beatnik Publishing, 2012.

Meyer, Manulani Aluli . “Ekolu Mea: Three Ways to Experience the World.” Book. The Canadian Journal of Native Studies, pg11. 2011

Meyer, Manulani Aluli. “Chapter 2 - That Which Feeds: Physical Place and Knowing.” Essay. *In Handbook of Critical and Indigenous Methodologies*, edited by Norman K. Denzin, Yvonna S. Lincoln and Linda Tuhiwai Smith.

Mapu Maia. “Mapu Maia | Va Tagata.” Accessed June 20, 2022. <https://www.mapumaia.nz/vatagata>.

mins, Anisha Sankar Read Time: 30. “Who’s the Real Problem? On White Supremacy and Institutional Gaslighting.” Pantograph Punch. Accessed May 19, 2021. <https://pantograph-punch.com//posts/white-supremacy-institutional-gaslighting>.

mins, Faith Wilson Read Time: 8. “Off the Beaten Track with the Far Queue.” Pantograph Punch. Accessed May 19, 2021. <https://pantograph-punch.com//posts/the-far-queue>.

mins, Jessica Thompson Carr Read Time: 22. “Cancel Culture and Kawakawa Tea.” Pantograph Punch. Accessed May 19, 2021. <https://pantograph-punch.com//posts/cancel-culture>.

mins, Kamla Waila Read Time: 10. “Where the Oceans Meet.” Pantograph Punch. Accessed May 18, 2021. <https://pantograph-punch.com//posts/where-the-oceans-meet>.

mins, Kirsten Taylor Read Time: 15. “Anō: Again.” Pantograph Punch. Accessed May 19, 2021. <https://pantograph-punch.com//posts/ano-again>.

mins, Lana Lopesi Read Time: 6. “An Etymology of Lessgo*.” Pantograph Punch. Accessed May 19, 2021. <https://pantograph-punch.com//posts/etymology-lessgo>.

mins, Lana Lopesi Read Time: 24. “So, You Want to Be the ‘Largest Polynesian City in the World’?” Pantograph Punch. Accessed May 19, 2021. <https://pantograph-punch.com//posts/largest-polynesian-city>.

- mins, Sarah Jane Barnett Read Time: 14. “Casting a Light on Women’s Shadow Labour: A Review of Past Caring? Women, Work and Emotion.” Pantograph Punch. Accessed May 19, 2021. <https://pantograph-punch.com//posts/past-caring-review>.
- mins, Tuāfale Tanoa’i aka Linda T. Read Time: 19. “One Job.” Pantograph Punch. Accessed May 26, 2021. <https://pantograph-punch.com//posts/one-job>.
- Runway Journal. “Safe White Spaces,” December 3, 2017. <http://runway.org.au/safe-white-spaces/>.
- Ministry for Pacific Peoples. “Samoa Language Week 2021.” Accessed June 7, 2021. <https://www.mpp.govt.nz/programmes/pacific-language-weeks/samoa-language-week-2021/>.
- “ST PAUL St Gallery - AUT.” Accessed June 30, 2022. <https://stpaulst.aut.ac.nz/exhibitions>.
- The Big Idea. “Story Telling As Koha: Consolidating Community Memories - Tuafale Tanoa’i Aka Linda T.,” June 29, 2017. <https://www.thebigidea.nz/events/214791-story-telling-as-koha-consolidating-community-memories-tuafale-tanoai-aka-linda-t>.
- Tanoa’i, Tuafale. “Story Telling as Koha: Consolidating Community Memories.” Thesis, Auckland University of Technology, 2009. <https://openrepository.aut.ac.nz/handle/10292/783>.
- “TeTuhi.” Accessed June 9, 2021. <https://tetuhi.art/exhibition/sione-faletau-tokoua/>.
- Tuhiwai-Smith, Linda. 1999. “Decolonising Methodologies: Research and Indigenous People” Chapter 8: Twenty-Five Indigenous Projects.
- Voices Of Truth - One-On-One With Hawai’i’s Future. *Aloha Is Our Intelligence - A Visit With Manu Aluli Meyer*, 2007. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8xNBxVGBEF0>.
- Vaioleti, TImote Masima. “Talanoa research methodology: a developing position on pacific research” Waikato Journal of Education, 12, 21-34, 2006.
- Walker, Arielle. “On Returning to the Sea: Towards Belonging Through Land, Language, & Tactile Storytelling.” Thesis, Auckland University of Technology, 2020. <https://openrepository.aut.ac.nz/handle/10292/13696>.
- Wilson-Hokowhitu, Nālani. *The Past before Us: Mo’okū’auhau as Methodology*. University of Hawaii Press, 2019.
- Yunkaporta, T. *Sand Talk: How Indigenous Thinking Can Save the World*. Text Publishing Company, 2019. <https://books.google.co.nz/books?id=ZySjDwAAQBAJ>.