

Cold Islanders

Moana Pasifika/Oceania identified artists
creating and occupying respectful stances of strength and confidence in Aotearoa

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Lotu - Karakia

Creator God

May those needing to find safe waters
be comforted by the
words that spring from your Source.
In the deep dark waters may they find you
And in the ninth heavens may they find you
And in primordial time and space
May they find themselves.

Three Oceans around the Vā, Te Whenua and Le Fanua
Guide us to a spacious place upon which to stand.

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Abstract

People of the Moana/Pacific/Oceanic diaspora living in Aotearoa New Zealand experience the uniqueness of belonging in a genealogical sense to Māori through the first Pacific migration about 800 years ago, while simultaneously holding the status of ‘tauiwi’ or non-indigenous. These children and next generations are distanced from the day-to-day nuances of being an ‘islander’ in their ancestral homes. This research considers how this geographical shift has separated first and second generations of children of the Pacific/Oceanic diaspora from those who remain indigenous in their Pacific homelands. This shift has naturally diminished contact with ‘home’ and all the things that ‘home’ could potentially mean. Successive generations of the diaspora have had little choice but to assimilate or attempt to guess at, or use inventive essentialist strategies, to try to feel more at home in their own bodies.

For those raised by Islands-born parents, there remains evidence of cultural legacy upon which to build, and cultural distance issues are therefore less pronounced. However, for many others who learned the ways of Aotearoa Pākehā, and engaged with Māoritanga, a sense of cultural insecurity lingers through an unconscious distancing from perceived ‘islandness’. To date, I have not found language sufficient enough to articulate this phenomenon of feeling cultural unease effectively. I have coined a phrase which has assisted a move toward a more efficient and accessible vocabulary with which to describe a physical and metaphysical state: *The Cold Islanders (henceforth written as CIs)*. It is not a term that necessitates any uptake by future readers, but one which states succinctly the way I feel in this world. Not born in the nurturing heat of our island homes, but in a place that experiences frost and snow; to be cold in the sense that to be ‘left out in the cold’ is to feel a sense of exclusion. To be a CI is to contend with self-hood continually and piecing bits of cultures that belong partially to one’s parents and grandparents, or also to European Aotearoa/New Zealand.

I have designed a culturally safe navigational approach toward respectful ways that CIs can claim their indigeneity with confidence. I hope it assists in ensuring we are not intruding-upon or re-colonising Māori. A respectful space can occur for CIs in their making of art. My theory endeavours to establish that diasporic dislocation in one’s place of birth creates a new kind of Pasifika/Oceanic person. One, who is unable to be bound to their ancestral home, nor to their current one: that is, that there is physical and socially normative distance between us here in Aotearoa and the island homelands. And, that in fact, this time-space overlap occurs within their bodies, thus supporting my notions of the metaphysical space which I call *the Cold Islands*. I propose that the Cold Islanders’ bodies’ and art practice construct their Tūrangawaewae, their own indigenous metaphysical place to stand, manifesting in the Vā, where they claim, celebrate, and inhabit all of these disparate lands at once.

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List of Abbreviations

MPO, Moana/Pacific/Oceanic

CI, Cold Islander

CIE, Cold Islander of England

Terminologies

I will use the term ‘Pasifika’ when I am referring specifically to Sāmoans and Cook Islanders (the first and largest groups of Pacific immigrants to arrive in Aotearoa in the third wave migration). When including the breadth of peoples labelled inaccurately as ‘Polynesian’ I will use the appropriate descriptors *Moana Pasifika Oceanic* or MPO where proper. When speaking chiefly about *the Moana/Pasifika/Oceanic diaspora of Aotearoa* I will henceforth use the term *the Diaspora*. At times I will be using Te Reo Māori words where I might ordinarily use it in my everyday speech. I will employ the use of the indigenous name, Aotearoa as well as New Zealand for the most part except when describing someone’s nationality as New Zealand-born.

Glossary

*(C) – Cook Islands, (H) – Hawaiian (G) – German, (M) – Māori, (L) – Latin
(S) – Sāmoan, (T) – Tongan*

Afakasi (S), bi-cultural, usually refers to half-Pālagi

Agaga (S), spirit (as in spiritual)

Ahi Kā (M), the home fire

Āiga (S), family, a relative, a nuclear or extended family or home

Aotearoa (M), original indigenous name of New Zealand

Alofa (S), Aloha (H), love

Anau (C), family

Aualuma (S), unmarried women's contingent of a village

'Au Lotu (S), church group

Aumaga (S), unmarried men's contingent of a village

Das ding an sich (G), the thing itself, Kantian philosophy

Fa'amagalo mai (S), forgive me

Faiva Talanoa (T) (S), performative act of conversation, converse

Fanua (S), the land

Feagaiga (S), covenant of care

Fia poko (poto) (S), derogatory term for a (considered) know-it-all

Habitus (L), historic sets of behaviours one unconsciously and naturally displays or enacts

Hawaikinui (M), Ancestral home according to Māori cosmogeny

Heliaki (T), metaphor, metaphoric methodology

Hexis (L), one's stable arrangement or standard constituent norms

Hikule'o (S), Tongan god of Pūlotu

Iwi (M), people, tribe

Kefe (S), considered a profane word meaning 'to circumcise'

Kuia (M), female elder

Kura (M), school

Kaumātua (M), male elder

Kilikiti (S), adapted form of cricket

Kuki Airani (C), Transliteration of Cook Islands in Te Reo Kuki Airani

Lapiki (S), vernacular pronunciation for 'rapiti' – rabbit

Mā (S), ashamed, shy, embarrassed

Maliē-Māfanga (T), beauty-warmth

Malu (S), traditional women's tattoo specific to Sāmoa

Mana (M), personal spiritual integrity and power

Manaaki (M), service, welcoming with warmth

Marae (M), the traditional land upon which sits an ancestral home of an iwi

Measina (S), treasure, sacred object

Moana (M) (S) (T), the ocean, the sea

Mokopuna (M), grandchild, grandchildren

Motu (M) (S) (T), island

Mu'umu'u (S), (H), large full-length airy dress worn

Nimame'a (T), fine arts

Pasifika (S), Sāmoan transliteration of the word *Pacific*

Pākehā (M), New Zealand person of European descent

Pālāgi (Pāpālāgi) (S), person of European descent

Papa'ā (C), person of European descent

Pe'a (S), men's tradition tattoo

Puletasi (S), two-piece formal attire of Sāmoan women

Piko-Siamani (Pito) (S), part German

Ra'iātea (Tahitian), the largest island in the Society Islands of Tāhiti.

Rapiti (S), rabbit

Sa'ē (S), naked dance

Siva (S), dance, or to dance

Tā (S) (T), to hit or beat, or to initiate or switch on

Tala Taumusumusu (S), gossip and hearsay, negative connotation.

Tala Tu'umumusu (S), (Efi, 2014), to whisper sacred knowledge to a nainai

Talanoa (S) (T), to discuss, to converse

Tamaiti (S), children

Tāne (M), man, male partner inferred

Tangata Whenua (M), indigenous people of New Zealand

Tapā (S), a cloth made of beaten inner bark of the mulberry tree

Tātau (M), proper, correct, or the tradition of tattoo

Tauāluga (S), high point of an event usually involving a manaia lead

Tauhi Vā (T)

Tauīwi (M), non-Māori

Taupou (S), virginal girl of paramount status in Matai system

Tautoko (M), support

TāVā-ism (T), application of the Tongan (Polynesian) Time-Space reality

Te Moananui a Kiwa (Kiva) (M) (C), The great ocean of Kiwa (Pacific)

Te Reo (M), the Māori language

Teu le Vā (S), to adorn space, look after relationships

Tikanga (M), protocols

Tivaevae (or Tivaivai) (C), embroidered, quilted appliqued cloths
Tongatapu (S), the indigenous name of the Kingdom of Tonga
To'ona'i (S), customary gathering and feast
Tupuna (M), Kupuna (H), Tupuaga (S), ancestors (beginning (S))
Tūrangawaewae (M), indigenous land to whom one belongs
Upu (S), Kupu (M) words
Upu mafanafana (S), proverbial Sāmoan words of comfort
Vā (S) (T), space
Va'a (S), canoe, boat, sea-going vessel
Wāhine (M), woman
Whānau (M), family, relative, entire family
Whakamā (M), embarrassed, shy
Whenua (M), the land

Attestation of Authorship

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

Dated: 11 November 2020.

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Ua puna mai lo'u loto i upu lelei (O le Salamo 45:1)

My heart is truly overflowing with a goodly theme. This theme is gratitude.

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whispers of the ancestors to come to Aotearoa and produce Cold Islanders: Sale and Etevisē. My undying love and thanks. And finally – Viia le Atua.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

This thesis is essentially an internal and intensely personal field of inquiry for which I wish to find language. In doing so, I hope to provide artists of the Moana/Pacific/Oceanic diaspora in Aotearoa a solid, albeit metaphysical piece of home turf without taking any mana (spiritual power) away from Tangata Māori. In finding a more balanced academic and culturally useful glossary of terms and presenting cultural references and theories in one text, I hope that this will empower people in a culturally respectful way. I want to enable Cold Islanders to be able to discuss their cultural state with language that assists them in real-time. I use language and phrases from multiple philosophical, theoretical, and cultural sources to ensure that I provide readers with a rich vocabulary to add to their own lexicon, because it is in articulating one's own indigenous location that one can grow in cultural confidence.

William Hill (2016), asks, "Is there an indigenous way to write about indigenous art?"¹ He continues, "If we want to be Indigenous in the present, we need all the tools available to us. And the courage to use them." I am trying to make tools with which to construct my va'a, or a place to call home. These tools are vocabulary first from past Pasifika scholars, and secondly, useful language from Western theoretical frameworks which converse with Polynesian theory and philosophies.

We, as contemporary Moana Pasifika Oceanic (MPO) scholars and seekers, should not indulge in some of the conventional romantic notions of who we think and imagine our peoples were. Our ancestors and future generations need us to find substantial cultural and intellectual methods of recording our contemporaneity that is in direct relationship to our ancestral past. Nor can we afford for our sisters' or brothers' sincerity or artistic integrity to be judged on an ability to fit into cultural stereotypes by measurement of blood quantum or outward behaviours, exteriority, and affect. I am attempting to find the multiple-realities that bind us together and create a landscape for everyone identifying as islanders. I employ methodologically diverse epistemologies to find space for other Cold Islands artists as well as myself. It opens up a discourse enabling the voice of the other to be identified and to later become an integral part of the domestic and international art conversation.

Research Purpose

The research undertaken in this thesis is primarily to address specific identification and identity challenges facing a-typical (Pākehā or 'other'-presenting) Diaspora artists, particularly those born in Aotearoa.

¹ Canadian Art Magazine, Essays, May 25 2016: Hill, Richard William <https://canadianart.ca/essays/indigenous-way-write-indigenous-art/>

At its core, the primary purpose of this study was to examine, revision, and eventually equip artists of the Diaspora in Aotearoa with language to discuss their practice in terms of indigeneity and belonging.

This study endeavours to locate and expand the acquisition of a more appropriate and accurate vocabulary for articulating the nuances of being a New Zealander shaped in-absentia from their ancestral homelands. Through a focus on eight artists connected through the third wave of Pacific migration as first and second-generation New Zealanders, I purpose to collating a fitting lexicon comprised of words from Western and Polynesian languages and experiences.

Secondly, the positive consequence of this study is the confidence-building aspect of empowerment through language. This confidence can lead to a respectful position in relation to tangata whenua (indigenous owners of the land).

These findings will ultimately be available to fellow seekers of their place to stand in Aotearoa irrespective of ethnicity. It is an academic, philosophical, and practical way toward an indigenous status whilst adhering to the status of Tauīwi (non-indigenous New Zealander).

Research Questions

Cold Islanders – How do Pasifika/Oceania identified artists create and occupy respectful stances of strength and confidence in Aotearoa?

The question I posit here is to the Diaspora. In managing this question's breadth, I employed the pan-Oceanic methodology of talanoa (conversation/dialogue), auto-ethnographic markers and narratives and feagaiga (making covenant commitments to the care of participants). Throughout my research, my key textual references come from: Tevita O' Kali'i and Māhina's findings on Polynesian *Tā-Vā* (*Time-Space*) theory of reality, Carl Mika's *Thereness (via Heidegger)*, Jean-Paul Sartre (*Being*), Immanuel Kant (*Das ding an sich*), Aristotle (*Hexis*) and Pierre Bourdieu (*Habitus*). My research methodology threads the metaphysical commonalities relating to 'being' to culminate in a set of new approaches to the auto-ethnographic vocabulary of artists of the Diaspora here in the land of our distant *tupuaga* (ontological beginnings of familial lineages).

Looking Back to Move Forward

Waves of Polynesian migration are the foundation of the diaspora story I am presenting in the context of this thesis. It is frequently referred to as the *first*² (around 5000 BCE) and *second wave* (about 1300 CE) of Polynesian migration. It is vital to note that the diaspora of Polynesian peoples

² Hawaiian Voyaging Traditions. (n.d.) Kupe. Retrieved from <http://archive.hokulea.com/ike/moolelo/kupe.html>

began with this epic navigational feat led by the great ancestor, Kupe, who left from Hawaikinui (many consider this to be Raiatea). He eventually made landfall in Aotearoa around 800 to 1000 years ago. The journey is the most critical ancestral link connecting Maori to the Pacific Islands and to Pacific peoples living in Aotearoa today.

The first wave of migration occurred in smaller numbers around 300 CE. What is considered the *third wave* of Polynesian migration (mostly to Aotearoa) occurred post-World War II. The New Zealand Government sought a large semi-skilled workforce that could fill a labour shortfall in this period of rebuilding in this era repairing and growth in industries. The labour force opened up to the small Pacific nations who were under the administration of the New Zealand Government at that time. The most significant period of modern migration began around the early 1950s. The largest numbers of Pacific immigrants came from Sāmoa and the Cook Islands (Cook Islanders had been New Zealand citizens since 1949) arriving on passenger ships. “By 1972 there were also over 50,000 Pacific Islanders living in New Zealand (up from 3,600 in 1951)” (Phillips, 2005)³. People arrived from Niue, Tokelau, Tonga in diminished numbers, and people from Fiji, Kiribati, Solomon, Tuvalu were to come later in the 1970s – 1990s.

This thesis will further examine the experiences of the third wave of Pacific migrants in Aotearoa New Zealand and the comparable experiences of those of the Afro-Caribbean diaspora known as *Generation Windrush* and their subsequent generations in Great Britain. I am discussing two separate instances of a similar occurrence of movements of peoples (of colour) from tropical climates to seasonally cold temperatures and the subsequent loss and search for cultural stability and connection to a sense of belonging. I am focusing on the artistic research that expresses these forays into notions of belonging within the context of artists belonging to the first and second generations. Their narratives identify the similar challenges and conclusions reached by diasporic peoples of colour living in mostly European populous countries. In considering these similarities, I aim to outline some of the precursory circumstances that have led to the multiplicity identities that CIs inhabit.

Structure of thesis and Chapter Synopses

Chapter 1 features the introduction to the thesis which outlines the rationale for embarking on this research: the purpose of the study, my research question(s), foregrounding my research with our Pacific waves of migration to the current situations for Aotearoa-born Diaspora artists. Lastly, this chapter will outlay the structure of the thesis and a summary.

³ Phillips, J., (2005). History of immigration - The end of a 'white New Zealand' policy, Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand. Retrieved from <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/history-of-immigration/page-15> (accessed 22 January 2019)

Chapter 2 introduces the main impetus for the formation of the Cold Islands and their inhabitants which begins with the third wave of migration. A specific view of a semi-rural Pasifika town in the cold of Tokoroa leads to my particular pathology of CI formation.

Chapter 3, the literature review contains the critical literary pathway that informed my theoretical positioning and forms the headings: *Habitus*, *TāVā-ism* and *Thereness*, *Radical Affirmation*, *Culture of Whispers*, and *Nainai – The Chosen Receiver of Knowledge*. Each of the critical texts are discussed and a Venn diagram is provided for ease of understanding the nature of my theoretical investigations.

Chapter 4 contains the research methodology and method. This chapter indicates the qualitative research methodologies under the title *Hybridized Methodological Approaches*. I outline both Western and Polynesian methodologies: phenomenological, ethnographical, grounding theory. The research design required me to employ indigenous methods of inquiry: TāVā-ism, Heliaki (metaphor), Insider Research and Faiva Talanoa – the performative action of conversation with the participants.

Data analysis required me to design my own method: called *The Four Approaches and Their Oars*.

Chapter 5 shows my findings and is the crux of the research. The participating artists and their talanoa discuss their cultural formation. Their voices are the measina (treasures) of my research. It introduces the comparative experiences of the Windrush Generation and also includes the talanoa with the artists and the data analysis of their offerings.

Chapter 6 is the concluding chapter summarises the original intent of this thesis: the CIs can find a respectful place to stand in Aotearoa. It brings to mind that this is a journey of navigating and tactics, not simple by any means.

Summary

The introduction provides my motivation for researching the constant movement of the Diaspora artists in New Zealand and my desire to provide clear navigational pathway to the Vā as the destination upon which they can justly and confidently call themselves indigenous.

Chapter 2: The Formation of the Cold Islands

Introduction

In this chapter, I assert that environmental and historical habitus formation alters the trajectory of one's leanings toward or away from their ancestral cultural traditions. I expand further on from the previous chapter summary on the long history of the navigational and established connection between the islands of Te Moana Nui ā Kiwa through the analysis of the formation of my hometown and evidence subsequent empirical analysis of it in relation to my theory of the Cold Islands and their inhabitants.

I will discuss the social climate of Aotearoa in the three main settings into which Pasifika parents entered and how these settings created dichotomies for the next generations. Church, education and societal interaction in the main cities and towns. These will not be exhaustive examples of these institutional environments, but they will enable a clear contextual backdrop that highlights the formation of habitus and the incremental movement away from cultural norms brought over from the islands. These first-generation Pasifika migrants often gathered in their ethnic community to secure a primary sense of belonging within Aotearoa. I will expand on how my mother and father navigated life as new 'Kiwis', and their characteristic habits; some from their homeland of Sāmoa, and others learned from being in Aotearoa. Through these anecdotes, I hope to show the connections to the way the Cold Islanders of my siblings and I were formed.

In an autoethnographic analysis, I will review explicit occurrences of my own Cold Islander experience to demonstrate the correlation between these defining moments and choices I made from a young age within the framework of the culturally diverse Tokoroa of the 1970s and 1980s. Like many other immigrants, the seemingly insignificant incidences can have lasting effects on the cultural and society direction of one's habitus. These moments and differences to the mainstream(s) forge lifelong allegiances or preferences. Clothing, food, the way we gathered and the type of gathering, culturally derived mannerisms, and the relationship to Māori are all shapers of habitus. I will take a broader look at experiences relating to the criticality of education, sporting and cultural groups, political party involvement and employment in the formation of my particular Cold Island.

I will also compare this third wave migration of Pasifika peoples starting from varying periods on the twentieth century to Aotearoa, against the influx of the Caribbean /West Indian peoples known as 'Generation Windrush' (British citizens) starting in the late 1940s. From this comparison, while the ontologies differ, the entry point into a mainly European dominated land bears similar artistic outcomes and concerns in a twenty-first-century setting.

Incoming: Generations 'Tofua and Matua'

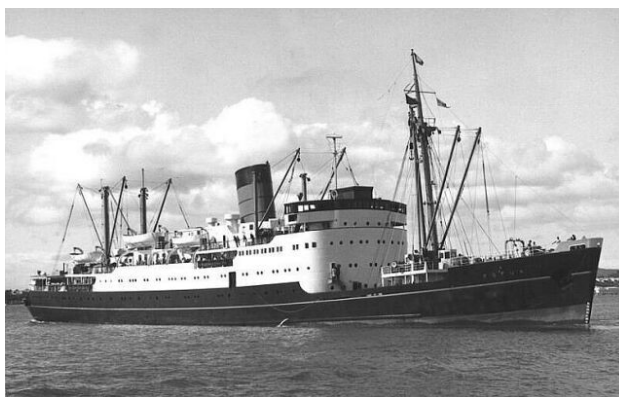


Fig. 1. TSMV Tofua



Fig. 2. The TSMV Matua at Suva

The Tofua and Matua were two commonly used forms of affordable transport for Pacific Islander immigrants.

Waking Up Cold

The temperature differences between Sāmoa, the Cook Islands and Aotearoa New Zealand remain enormous when considering winters in Aotearoa can drop below zero⁴. While some of the data provided below is somewhat dated, my only interest in it is to convey the average temperatures of the islands, Cook Islands and Sāmoa, and New Zealand since the 1950s to provide evidence of the temperature differential that would have made a huge physical impact upon islanders who arrived in Aotearoa around the 1950s to the 1970s. According to *Climate Change in the Pacific: Scientific Assessment and New Research | Volume 2: Country Reports*, the highest air temperature of the Cook Islands groups of islands between the 1950s to 2005

⁴ I am focusing largely on the Sāmoan and Cook Islands climates because most of the immigration that I am writing about is specific to these two island groups from the 1950s in relation to the demographics of both Auckland and Tokoroa, the largest Polynesian settlements outside of their indigenous islands

(excepting Penryn for which there was no data) was around 27 degrees Celsius⁵. For Sāmoa⁶, *the Climate Change in the Pacific: Scientific Assessment and New Research | Volume 2: Country Reports* data records the highest mean air temperature around the same but differed from the Cook Islands with at least an average mean temperature sitting around 26 degrees Celsius. For Aotearoa New Zealand around the same period, average annual temperature sits at a mere 12.3 degrees Celsius⁷.

The effect of the cold on our migrant parents is not a field of study I am entering into, but I believe it is, if not just for the sake of poetics, a matter of fact that warrants mentioning. First, the cost of living skyrocketed due to heating bills, and secondly the unexpected enclosure during winter months. The plunge into New Zealand winters and the new added expense of heating a home must have had significant financial and health implications for immigrants who were used to being hot. Any of their New Zealand-born children would automatically have to adapt to freezing temperatures in the winter months. The cost of heating was financially debilitating during winter. For towns such as Tokoroa and Kawerau (both forestry towns) on a volcanic plateau, Bluff, Invercargill, Dunedin and Christchurch, heating was considerably more costly than for those who relocated the far north such as Whāngarei and the Hokianga region in Northland. What about the extra clothing they and their subsequent children would require for winter? And shoes, on feet that once were bare and enjoying the warm earth, not contained by costly leather or plastic. Besides formal and informal light clothing, for the first time, immigrants would have to don numerous layers of clothing, woollen, and synthetics to stay warm.

In providing a more in-depth analysis of this accretion of events, perceptions of the Pālagi (Pākehā) world, and the ways these were culturally translated and enacted, I interrogate the internal strategies (Pan-Oceanic third wave immigrants to Aotearoa) devised to survive in a new land and the newly acquired lifestyle. Through identifying some of the types of activities immigrant parents engaged in here in Aotearoa we can begin to see a difference from the lives they might have lived if they were back in the home islands. Being so far removed from the traditions and routines of home, the acceptance of distance is built into the mental and physical

⁵ Climate Change in the Pacific: Scientific Assessment and New Research | Volume 2: Country Reports. Retrieved September 19, 2020 from <https://www.pacificclimatechangescience.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Cook-Islands.pdf>

⁶ Climate Change in the Pacific: Scientific Assessment and New Research | Volume 2: Country Reports. Retrieved September 19, 2020 from <https://www.pacificclimatechangescience.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Samoa.pdf>

⁷ Stats NZ Tatauranga Aotearoa (2017) Retrieved September 19, 2020, from http://archive.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/environment/environmental-reporting-series/environmental-indicators/Home/Atmosphere-and-climate/temperature-time-series.aspx

habitus⁸ and hexis⁹ for all Cis. For some CIs, cultural aspects such as maintaining their language, dance and oratory traditions, the use of traditional earth ovens (umu), the making of meals specific to the homeland, and the wearing of one's cultural attire, has been prudently enforced: fortified, not weakened by distance. For the majority of New Zealand-born first and second-generation CIs, however, culture has essentially been a rote 'performance' as learned in these Aotearoa islands. CIs have absorbed a semblance of cultural 'authenticity' from parents and grandparents who were amid their grappling with the cold immersion into otherness in Aotearoa: This is what any immigrant must work through.

New immigrants from all over the world spread across a little Britain in the South Seas, where filtered-down versions of Englishness and urbanised versions of Māori-ness began to merge with their respective notions of the persona that they were forming. There was, as Salesa (2017)¹⁰ puts it, an internal 'archipelago' of islands was forming all over the motu (islands) of Aotearoa.

The slow erosion of cultural fixity is the price those of the Matua and Tofua generation would pay to create alternative career and lifestyle options for their children and the next generations. Many from this diaspora married within their respective cultural groups and many did not. Polynesia had already had its dealings with colonial presence with Germany annexing Polynesian and Melanesian Islands such as Sāmoa and Papua. The Cook Islands' long association with Britain began with Captain James Cook's first visit in the late 1700s, so there were already hybrid European (and Asian, South Asian, and African) peoples amongst those who arrived in the late 1950s – 1970s. The difference between the cultural hybridity 'back home' and here in Aotearoa is the fact that at home, they remained the majority and indigenous. In Aotearoa, for the first time, they were a minority and Tauīwi.

Our brave new Pacific immigrant population were, and still are, in the process of writing and affecting new narratives for all of Aotearoa. Their presence in this cold land of New Zealand was to complement the shortfall of workers required in labouring, hospitality, cleaning, and emergent industries such as the forestry (New Zealand Forest Products - NZFP) jobs. There were also those who were employed in banking, retail and in large factories like Ford Motor Company, Holeproof Clothing, Tip Top Ice Cream, Crown Lynn Potteries, Hellaby's and AFFCO Freezing works. This mirrored the same increase in migrant workers in post-WWII Britain.

8 Pierre Bourdieu (1930 – 2002) – theory of habitus. Bourdieu's theory posits that one's habitus is generated by the cultural capital which an individual is associated with and by osmosis, which eventually becomes deeply ingrained through repetition.

9 Aristotelian notions of the disposition of a person. Aristotle's use of the ancient Greek word 'hexis' was related to the state one's health. In philosophical terms it has generally been associated with the word 'habit' meaning it is a stable, but not fixed, state of being.

10 Salesa, D. (2017). *Island time; New Zealand's Pacific futures*. Wellington, New Zealand: Bridget Williams Books.

We reach this millennium to find that the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of our MPO immigrants have adapted well and are essentially, 'New Zealanders'. However, we need to look back at the recent past because it shaped our present. The numerous sacrifices made by our parents deserves some looking at during their period of settling us all in.

Language and fluency posed problems with communicating in English. Social interactions with broader society would test new immigrants' adaptability: the differences in mannerisms and social etiquette would puzzle them, and their neighbours, settler New Zealanders too would be perplexed by the 'islander ways'. While Chapple (1976, p. 53) uses somewhat deficit terms to describe the experiences of many Māori and Pasifika peoples; he was astute in accurately explaining the feeling of *whakamā* or *mā* (Sāmoan version of *whakamā*) recording this critical factor in habitus shaping.

This takes us back to the most basic cultural differences: of ancestral languages and the values they embody; of the strength of kinship bonds and sentiment. And it includes the history of economic and political subordination of Polynesian to European. Prosperous or poor, a Polynesian person is likely to suffer a lack of confidence in the face of European forms of social organization (formal or informal) and European language and custom generally. As a member of a minority culture a Polynesian person is more likely to be exposed to feelings of *whakamā* – a compound of shame, shyness and lack of confidence.”¹¹

New Zealandisms might seem easily managed for me as a first-generation New Zealander who can speak fluent English and understand inferences embedded in the spoken and written language, however, it would have been a significant source of stress for my mother and father. For example, Anglicised terms, humour, sarcasm and turns of phrases could easily unmoor even my younger self when in full-immersion Pālagi settings. Banter might easily have been interpreted as hostility, European baking was a new field of discovery, generosity evoked suspicion, and adults speaking at length in English was to trigger a long-term research project on how to become like a Pālagi person. Pasifika parents, (mine included), leaned towards Pālaginess; it was tacitly equivalent to 'fitting in' and 'goodness'. I was encouraged by my mother to try to wear 'nice' clothes and be polite, which for her was odd, considering she was vehemently activist as a child in Sāmoa against the domination of the Irish and English nuns 'back home'. I was being taught how to fit in by compliance.

Almost all new immigrants belonged to a church denomination, and within their local congregations, settling was made more comfortable. In the Sāmoan language, these groups were called *au lotu* (literally means a group who pray – or church group). Church sub-groups were

¹¹ Chapple, D. L., (1976). *Tokoroa: Creating a community*. Auckland, New Zealand: Longman.

comprised of people from their home islands, familiar strangers, preferable to the unfamiliarity of English-speaking strangers outside of their community. Leaving behind supportive family and villages in the islands, they rallied to weave together villages out of people who were in the same situation.

Kinship, religious and village affiliation were still important, but activities were increasingly focused on a New Zealand location as an investment was made in the infrastructure required to sustain community life in a new place¹²... (Spoonley, 2001).

Recontextualising on Māori Land

Race is intrinsically attached to ethnicity. For many Pasifika immigrants, the added layer of nationality on top of their ethnicity, became a confusing element that muddled the waters. Nationality denotes only the place of one's birth, not the ethnicity of a person. The complexity deepens for indigenous people of colour as a result of their seized lands became overwhelmed by foreign nationalities. The British-looking person became the dominating ethnic demographic over time in Aotearoa and rendered the indigenous person of colour a minority. Pan-Māori Tikanga (cultural protocols) became less visible in public settings as British normative manners gradually dominated every aspect of community life, permeating the family via the main institutions of church, school, and community organisations.

It is difficult for twenty-first-century people to imagine what kind of effect upon Kuia and Kaumātua during this period of outward visual change in everyday habits. The accounts of great Māori uprisings throughout history demonstrate a continued effort to maintain sovereignty and to keep the ahi kā (the home fires) aflame. The role of Māori in the arts has been one of the most significant and crucial ways Māori maintain visibility and sovereignty up to the present day. Māori provided some of the only examples that the Diaspora artists could follow as far as making moves toward a personal sense of indigeneity and pride. Music of the times survived too and became Aotearoa classics such as *Blue Smoke* composed by Ruru Karaitiana (b. 1909 d. 1970), the country's first record release in 1940. There were countless Polynesian stars such as Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, the Howard Morrison Quartet – whose most famous lineup were Wi Wharekura, Gerry Merito, Noel Kingi and Howard Morrison. Bill Sevesi and His Islanders (Bill Sevesi (Tongan) and Herma and The Keil Isles (Sāmoan immigrant brothers Olaf, Herma, Rudolf, Klaus and cousin Freddie Keil), The Yandall Sisters, Also the Māori Volcanics in 1967 (whose lineup was enormous but the stable performers were Prince Tui Teka, Billy T James). Also, there were the Quin Tikis, The Polynesian Trio, The Hi Quins, The Māori Premiers, The Māori Castaways, The Māori Troubadours not to mention the solo artists such as Toni Williams

¹² Spoonley, P., Macpherson, C., Anae, M. (Eds.). (2001). *Tangata o te Moananui*. Dunmore Press

(Cook Islands New Zealander), Eddie Low, Mark Williams, Bunny Walters, Deane Waretini, Dean Marsh and Missy Tui Teka. 1970s onward provided the music of The Herbs, Upper Hutt Posse, Bic and Boh Runga, Emma Paki, Hinewehi Mohi, Moana Jackson and the Black Pearls, Mahinarangi Tocker, Erana Clarke, Anika Moa, Maisie Rika, Whirimako Black, Tiki Tāne, Toni Huata, Stan Walker and Te Kupu (Dean Hapeta). This music served as one of the first artistic layers of creating a new habitus for first and subsequent generation New Zealand Pacific Islands peoples. Music performed a social bonding role which also bolstered as sense of cultural unity. These are more than lists of names but form a kind of musical and socio-political whakapapa and backdrop upon which the sensibilities of many Pasifika applied to their diasporic affiliation with Māori.

Warm Islanders Communing

Etevis Nikolao is my mother. She is what is known in Sāmoan vernacular, a ‘townie’ (not to be confused with the USA definition of it). Etevis (Ma) was born in Taufusi, Alamagoto, neighbouring the centre of Apia, on the island of Upolu, Sāmoa. She is the youngest surviving daughter of Saufo’i Savai’inaea (Fasito’otai) and Nikolao Tupuola (Siumu), and one of only five surviving children of her ten siblings. Of the five who survived to adulthood, only Ma and her brother Iosefo are alive.



Fig. 3. Passport photograph of Etevis Nikolao Tupuola, 1961

It is hard for me to comprehend why our forebears in the balmy islands would even consider sending their children outside of the country. It does stand to reason in that the act of migration and re-location is not a far-off notion, but rather, it is embedded in our Polynesian genes. Seeing one’s children leave perhaps with no prospect of ever laying eyes on them again could be a scene directly from our first ancestors who embarked on their migrations across Moana-nui-a-Kiwa the Pacific Ocean.

Fig. 4. Passenger list for TMSV Matua, 1961

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Etevisē and Charles (Sale) were sweethearts in Sāmoa. Soon, they were to meet again at dances at the Orange Coronation Hall in Newton Road, not far from where they would eventually marry later that year in November at a small ceremony at St Benedict's Catholic Church in Auckland Central. By 1962, with the arrival of their first child, Nicholas, they moved to Tokoroa to be near my mother's sisters Lusīa Nikolao Lepaio and Ana Nikolao Sefo. This move provided them with a small village-like setting, along with numerous newly arrived Sāmoans and Cook Islanders.



Fig. 5. Charles Krause, 1961

U.S.S. Co. S. 56
 Arriving by the S. " T.S.M.V. "TOFUA" from ISLAND PORTS on 5th July 1959

21

No.	Port of Embarkation	Names of Passengers	Adults		Children 1 to 14		Infants under 1 yr.		Profession, Occupation or Calling of Passenger	Country of Birth	Port for which Passengers are destined
			M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.			
		DEPART FORWARD:	19	21							
1	VAVA'U	COOKE MISS A	25						SH/H. TYPIST NEW ZEALAND	AUCKLAND	
2	"	HALASI MISS V	22						D.D. NIUE ISLAND	"	
3	"	LEACH MRS. D	50						D.D. NEW ZEALAND	"	
4	NIUE ISLAND	HALASI MISS	27						NURSE NIUE ISLAND	"	
5	"	HICKINSON MRS. P.	29						HOSPITAL PATIENT	"	
6	"	WILSON MR. G.	26						CLERK NEW ZEALAND	"	
7	APIA	AN CHONG MISS S	19						D.D. W. SAMOA	"	
8	"	ALOYAO MISS V	22						NURSE	"	
9	"	ASANA MISS P	27						D.D. " "	"	
10	"	BROWN MISS V	17						D.D. " "	"	
11	"	BUFFY MR. G.	56						POLICE OFF. ENGLAND	"	
12	"	BOGG MR. P.	42						SANITARY OFF. NEW ZEALAND	"	
13	"	CHICKOLM MR. G.	62						MANAGER NEW ZEALAND	"	
14	"	BRICKSTAD MISS U	18						D.D. W. SAMOA	"	
15	"	ESKIA MR. S	27						PLANTER	"	
16	"	EVALU MISS S	19						D.D. " "	"	
17	"	FELISE MISS H	21						D.D. " "	"	
18	"	HANSELL MRS. E	41						D.D. " "	"	
19	"	HANSELL MISS J	26						SALESGIRL	"	
20	"	INGRAM MISS P	28						CHURCH REPRESENTATIVE U.S.A.	"	
21	"	IOANE MR. P.	37						PLANTER W. SAMOA	"	
22	"	KING MISS H	42						TEACHER ENGLAND	"	
23	"	KRAUSE MR. C.	22						PLANTER W. SAMOA	"	
24	"	LAWRENCE MISS W	21						TYPIST	"	
25	"	MA'AE MR. T.	29						PLANTER	"	
26	"	MELLOE MISS C	25						CHURCH REPRESENTATIVE U.S.A.	"	
27	"	MARRA MISS H	28						D.D. W. SAMOA	"	
28	"	ROBERTS MISS J	19						D.D. " "	"	
29	"	STONERS MISS S	20						D.D. " "	"	
30	"	SIPALE MISS F	21						D.D. " "	"	
31	"	SHAW MR. G.	52						JOURNALIST NEW ZEALAND	"	
32	"	SH'A MISS T			8				STUDENT W. SAMOA	"	
33	"	TIRGA MISS P	22						D.D. " "	"	
34	"	TUFOIVAO MISS P	19						D.D. " "	"	
		Totals	26	15	1						

I hereby certify that the within is a correct List of the Names and Descriptions of all Passengers who embarked at the Port of

Declared before me this day of 19

5 JUL 1959
 T.S.M.V. TOFUA
 Master
 Office of Customs

Fig. 6. TMSV Tofua passenger list 1959

In the Ngāti Raukawa-Tainui (local mana whenua or original indigenous occupants) town of Tokoroa, most of the street names remembered parts of Scotland: Hawick Street, Jedburgh Street, Strathmore Drive, Balmoral Drive, Lomond Avenue, Marr Place, Nevis Crescent, Morvern Crescent, Pilrig Place and so on. We lived on Kelso Street and shifted in 1975 to Berwick Place. The elder children, Nicholas, Felix, and Mark attended Strathmore Primary School, while the youngest siblings, Colin, Ian, Viona and Karen and I went to Matarawa Primary School. We lived on Māori land, yet there was nothing architecturally explicitly Māori visible in amongst Rainbow Valley, as Kelso Street was nicknamed due to the pastel-coloured houses. All the local marae were in rural settings peppered close by in Waipapa, Mangakino,

Atiamuri in amongst the forests and hydro-electric dams. This town was only supposed to be a temporary place for Kinleith and dam workers to live. It mushroomed exponentially between the 1950s to the 1970s. Forestry and all the supporting industries and infrastructure required to make most modern towns operate smoothly meant there was bound to be a population explosion.

With local Pasifika numbers being the largest population besides the growing number of Europeans, the town naturally evolved into a pan-Pasifika village. Māori from other iwi also came from far and wide to work at the Kinleith Mills.

Outside of the home, the only modicum of indigeneity and Pasifika identity encountered in the developing town was the village of ‘church’ for most ‘islanders’. For us, it was with the St Pius X Sāmoan Society and the St Pius X Māori Society. Kinships formed in this way between Sāmoans, Cook Islanders, and one family each originating from Niue, Fiji, and Rotuma. There were no Tongans in town up until the early 2000s.

Sporting activities were a great avenue that fostered inter-cultural relationships. It was both competitive and fun and assured a meeting of otherness as competitors. The love of rugby, rugby league, netball and bowls served as some of the most critical community building. Tokoroa produced a number of national sporting legends, many of whom belong to the Pasifika Oceanic diaspora. Among them: Bernie Fraser (Fijian), Paul Koteka, Brian Morrissey, Walter Little, Ian Foster, Keven Mealamu (Samoan), Richard Kahui, Pero Cameron, Quade Cooper (Cook Islands), Maria Folau (Samoan), Isaac Boss, Jasin Goldsmith, Regina Sheck (Samoan), Michael James Fitzgerald (Samoan), Monique Williams, and Sean Maitland (Samoan Scots).

Chapple (1976) observed, “Important in the pattern of social exchange which does develop between ethnic groups as distinct as the Māori (and other Polynesian) and the Pākehā, are the individual *mediators*, people whose homes are a venue for mixed ethnic sports committees and various meetings, some quite informal.”¹³

¹³ Chapple, D. L., (1976). Tokoroa: Creating a community. Auckland, New Zealand: Longman. (p.141).



Fig. 7. Newspaper article – Sāmoan Catholic Society, St. Pius X, Tokoroa, 1978

The social norms during the 1970s and 1980s were more or less a result of gradual cultural domination of an English working to middle-class habitus. Paul Spoonley (1988) conveys this sentiment in a text written 22 years ago. The fact that it is still relevant in 2020 adds my argument: that acculturation is one of the most critical factors in the formation of CI habitus in Aotearoa:



Fig. 8. 48 Kelso, Street, Tokoroa, Pa, holding Viona, me, Walter, Mark, Colin, and Nicholas

It is possible to point to a lifestyle and beliefs that are particular to Pākehā and which are not shared (at least completely) by Māori or other ethnic minorities in

New Zealand, and which are evolving so that there are increasing differences to the cultures of the origin society (Britain) or equivalent white settler societies (e.g. Australia or Canada). But in the 1980s, Pākehā culture or ethnicity is a relatively unexplored or unacknowledged phenomenon and it is interesting to speculate on why this should be the case. The period of social and cultural dependence on Britain might be one factor. The homogeneity and relative dominance of Pākehā might be another.¹⁴

For Māori, colonisation not only brought lifestyle changes over the last two centuries, but also expanded lineage and family associations. Having Pākehā whānau altered the fabric of families, their major introduction to Britain was established. By the time new immigrant Pasifika peoples had to send their children to school in the 1960s, Māori had long since become accustomed and acculturated to New Zealand Pākehā whose families might have been there for two or three generations. The interface between new immigrant Pasifika peoples and their ancient ancestors, Māori, was fraught at times, but for many, Māoritanga would feel organically akin to the Pasifika communal ways.

Kura – School: Another Shaper

The Pākehā school system in the 1970s was and remains a state-run entity. The 1970s in general was much more ‘British’ than today. Newly arrived children from the Pacific were plunged into this British education system while many Māori at that time were still were at the latter end of the main urban drift from rural marae. The school would provide a new landscape for Pasifika children to either hide from or explore their otherness.

Social control over children was considered to be lax in New Zealand. As expressed by one person, "Islands-born [children] respect their elders and don't speak a lot and they follow their custom and culture. New Zealand-born tend to be outspoken and express their feelings more openly; and take things much more seriously than Islands-born children ... ". It was generally considered that because of the lack of discipline by parents, some children in New Zealand have far greater freedom than their counterparts in the Islands. (Bathgate, M., et al, 1994, p.27)¹⁵

Nationality is a catalytic mechanism that any immigrant must contend with when it comes to finding a space to feel at ‘home’ in. The inescapable reality for immigrants whose skin colour differs from the majority is that regardless of whether they might feel like they ‘belong’, their outer skin colour of brownness will often determine the way that they are perceived and treated: included or excluded. Of course, moulding toward a more acceptable person would mean constant self-construction for first generation CIs.

¹⁴ Spoonley, P. (1988). *Racism and ethnicity: Critical issues in New Zealand society*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.

¹⁵ (Bathgate, M., et al, 1994, p.27) Retrieved from

[https://www.moh.govt.nz/notebook/nbbooks.nsf/0/19B684C1D1D40B884C2565D700185D8E/\\$file/94155M.pdf](https://www.moh.govt.nz/notebook/nbbooks.nsf/0/19B684C1D1D40B884C2565D700185D8E/$file/94155M.pdf)

Knowledge of one's group memberships and the value and emotional significance attached to them, comprise part of an individual's self-concept, and among some visible and marginalised minority populations in New Zealand, racial, ethnic, and cultural identities are constructed, enacted, and manifested in very conscious ways.¹⁶ (Webber, 2013).

While a sense of solidarity with Māori existed to a degree, there is some evidence to point to difficult junctures in the Māori – Diaspora relationship. McIntosh (2001) quotes excerpts of the critical writing of Māori activist, Donna Awatere's 1984 text, *Maori Sovereignty*. Awatere makes some salient points.

Awatere posited an identity that is both Maori and Polynesian, in that she argues: '[T]his country belongs to Maori. This country is Polynesian. (Awatere, 1984:29). Though Awatere believed that the Pacific Island community had the greatest potential to be an ally of Maori, she felt that it was unwilling to throw in its lot with Maori because it was too engaged in a Pākehā value system that was both Christian and capitalistic.¹⁷

More so in relationship to Christianity than capitalism, the requirement of MPO parents to produce self-effacing humble children tended to produce either shame of being brown or an outward 'Christian' habitus. A tendency to 'cloister' children was attempted, but socialisation was a far strong influence for most. School would provide some escapes for young people and for others within the Diaspora who remained sheltered. A different othering occurred for them within their own the peers of their own ethnic community. To move toward Māori was a natural and more logical choice for many. The intensity of being measured on a Pālagi scale in the education system has caused much damage to the psyche of many Māori and Pasifika children. Being unable to fully understand the nuances of language, the cultural context of most of the literature, and culturally illiterate teachers expecting everyone had a Pālagi experience doomed Maori and Diaspora children remain on the outer.

However, if you dared to excel in education and speak up, you may be chided as being 'fia poko' (vernacular Sāmoan for 'know-it-all'), by peers, cheeky and disrespectful by adults. One ran the risk of being further on the outer and considered 'uppity' or aggressive by adults in authority. Yet in a mainstream education system as, speaking up is the very thing required to be 'seen', heard, and respected.

16 Webber, M., (2013). Adolescent racial-ethnic identity: Behaviours, perceptions and challenges in urban multi-ethnic school contexts. In M.N. Agees, T.

McIntosh, P. Culbertson, & C.'O. Makasiale (Eds.) Pacific identities and well-being: Cross-cultural perspectives. [Kindle 5.13.2]. Retrieved from Amazon.com

17 McIntosh, T. (2001). Hibiscus in the flax bush: The Maori-Pacific Island interface. In C. Macpherson, P. Spoonley, M. Anae (Eds.). *Tagata o te Moana Nui: the evolving identities of Pacific peoples in Aotearoa/New Zealand*. Palmerston North, New Zealand: Dunmore Press.

It is not a given that even within one's community, there will be a natural sense of belonging. For the CI, this is acute in both the cultural hub and in the Pālagi-dominated community. Negotiating expectations from all around was like an intensive confidence course.

Towards Safety

At a young age, unsafe cultural settings force survival. Moving towards a more Pākehā habitus or moving towards a more Māori (ergo local Polynesian) habitus become survival strategies. My own experience was a mix of being a misfit amongst islanders in that I did not speak or act like them, yet I still ethnically belonged, and felt a part of my Sāmoan community. I never fitted in to Māori or Pākehā circles well either. Instead, I was always with the multicultural misfits who were either considered 'goody goods' or not even considered at all. Perhaps unconsciously, I associated our family's frequent lack of gadgets, a car, European baking, and fruit in lunches with being 'less-than' and grew an irrational sense of embarrassment. Almost all the Pālagi children had sandwiches and some fruit. I grew to be embarrassed at our attempts at Pālagi lunches because they always came up short. The Dutch children had beautiful, salted liquorice or Dutch apple cake or brown sugar sandwiches, the English, Welsh, and Scottish kids had home-baked slices, fresh fruit or bought their lunch. Our lunches were sometimes like theirs. Except for us, home baking was baking powder bread. Sometimes we would have banana pancakes or cabin bread/cream crackers. In retrospect, this was nothing to be embarrassed about, but rationalising that *lunch is lunch* does not come easily to children who are continually learning and interpreting: adaptation is merely anxiety management.

During the 1970s, the Pacific child, more often than not, could and did identify more closely with Māori or adapt themselves towards a more 'accepted' Pākehā habitus to remain safe. Melani Anae (2019), states "Many among the first generations of New Zealand-born Pacific peoples – that is the children and grandchildren of the first Pacific wave of migrants in the 1950s and 1960s – recall a sustained attack on their ethnicity as New Zealanders that has continued even beyond secondary school."¹⁸ Safety came in the form of cultural shelter, and for many of the Diaspora, this shelter was offered by Māori.

Anae goes on to say that Pacific males fared worse than females, and often responded with aggression. Pacific females, in contrast, usually experienced more subtle discriminatory attacks. Their response was a form of passive resistance: they tended to internalise their feelings, remained silent and tried to be 'invisible'. (Anae, 2019)¹⁹ This kind race-related singling-out is a prime

¹⁸ Anae, M., (2019). The New Zealand-born experience. In M. Anae, L. Iuli & L. Tamu (Eds.), *Polynesian panthers: Pacific protest and affirmative action in Aotearoa New Zealand 1971 – 1981* (2nd ed., pp. 14 – 22). Wellington, New Zealand: Huia.

¹⁹ Anae, M., (2019). The New Zealand-born experience. In M. Anae, L. Iuli & L. Tamu (Eds.), *Polynesian panthers: Pacific protest and affirmative action in Aotearoa New Zealand 1971 – 1981* (2nd ed., pp. 14 – 22). Wellington, New Zealand: Huia.

ingredient in the habitus and paradigmatic shifts of the CI: don't be noticed, try to 'act like them', and you won't stick out enough to get picked on.

It is more likely that the unconscious movement toward safety will override any cultural habits. Unconscious general leanings in socialisation informed by innocuous decisions to move toward one cultural shelter or another made as children eventuate in the main shape of an adult habitus. An example of this is a past conversation with my brother Mark who recalls having the shocking epiphany around 13 years of age: that he was not actually Māori.

According to Macpherson's early critical research conducted in 1984 (as cited in Hunkin-Tuiletufuga, 2001, pp. 201-202), three distinct types of environments of a particular kind of Sāmoan family culture emerged. Those in the first environment were young people whose inclination was to live out Sāmoan values and belonged to the institutions which embodied such, in a New Zealand-based context. He noted that those in the second environment could readily switch between the Pālagi and Sāmoan ways of living. However, Macpherson (1984) found that (pp. 201-202) "In environment 3, life is oriented to and dominated by non-Sāmoan language, values, activities and personnel ... and the children brought up in them generally reflect this. The parents systematically promote non-Sāmoan culture ... and limit involvement with or commitment to Sāmoan values and institutions."²⁰ What is seen to be popular is that which is mostly enjoyed by the majority: to be a Māori or Polynesian child in the 1970s, you certainly knew you were the minority. When looked at with an adult and informed lens, there was little hope for the survival of the type of Polynesian that our parents would understand as 'authentic'. Acculturation would have its way.

In this part of the chapter, I offer my own experiences and formation of habitus as evidence as to the environment as a determining factor in the person I have become.

When I was ten, I recall an incident that occurred at our monthly *au lotu* (Sāmoan for church group) gathering at the house of the President of the Sāmoan Catholic Society – Mr John Sheck and his wife Elieta and their family. Children and adults together gathered for to'ona'i (formal meal), housie and watching *Big Time Wrestling*. At times there would be a *siva* (Sāmoan for dance or dance session). For me, the idea of 'siva Sāmoa' evoked immediate fear because it involved the full attention of a crowd on me. In this instance, the beautiful and talented Leui'i sisters were encouraged to perform the taualuga (formal traditional dance in Sāmoan culture). They did so with ease and perfect grace. I, having an estranged physical relationship with traditional dance, would

20 Hunkin-Tuiletufuga, A., (2001). Pasefika language and Pasefika identities. Tagata o Te Moana Nui: The evolving identities of Pacific Peoples in Aotearoa/New Zealand. pp. 201 – 202.

try to escape the gaze of my mother and other adults who set me up as the next ‘victim’. I say victim because, for me, being made to siva Sāmoa elicited a state of panic and inadequacy. Invariably, I could not avoid their cajoling and my mother’s expectant glare, and with a sense of shame and panic, I performed. I shed tears of resentment and fear and then froze. The experience traumatised me culturally: These events would be a common occurrence for me, not every week or month, but at least once a year during some kind of celebration. While these may not seem to be anecdotes that warrant being called trauma on the scale of human suffering, to my New Zealand-born psyche, it was. Attempts by my mother to teach us traditional dance may have come too late as we children had already become too enculturated in ourselves to feel comfortable performing our siva. This kind of cultural failure stigmatises. It diminished my sense of self as a Sāmoan, and in reinforcing a flight response toward Pālagi pastimes and served to reinforcing the collective habits, I was already accumulating that led to a distinct move away from ‘traditional’ external Sāmoan markers of culture.

Political Shaping

The 1970s Labour Government saw a close alliance with the growing number of newly arrived immigrant island populations and Pacific branches of the Labour party emerged. One such branch was in Tokoroa and unionism was at its peak in the late 1970s early 1980s where the Pasifika community made up 20 per cent of the population in the 1970s (Dyer & Hurd, 2017)²¹. The unions were bolstered in numbers and sway with the large percentage of the Pasifika members who formed the majority of the semi-skilled workforce. In 1980, the National Government, under Robert Muldoon’s administration, set a wage freeze, triggering one of the most crippling strikes in New Zealand’s modern history at Kinleith Pulp and Paper Mills. It lasted 80 days which devastated the town. The New Zealand Pulp and Paperworkers’ Federation union provided essential food parcels for strikers and the duration of the strike. I was fourteen at the time, it was strange and a time of poverty. It was a consolidating time: recognising and accepting of one’s predicaments. This period of the strike altered and shaped one view of the world to which I belonged: I was a working class girl. I embraced this.

Like many other Pasifika children whose parents worked as labourers, there was implicit and explicit pressure placed on us to ‘succeed’ or become anything other than a labourer. The determining external identity shapers came from outside the home in equal measure. The 1980s Tokoroa was heavily populated with immigrant British, Welsh and Scottish first-generation children – there was a distinct, working-class British influence. The need to fit in and not stand

21 Dyer, F., Hurd, S., (2017), Mutualism beyond the “mutual”: The collective development of a New Zealand single industry town hospital. Hamilton, New Zealand.

out would determine the direction of one's habits and pastimes: thus forming a group of peers. For me, I felt like an awkward unattractive girl; I was a compliant and shy person, accustomed to being the obedient Sāmoan daughter. The only way I knew how to find a path of my own was to head in the opposite direction of sports and conventional beauty. I took a sharp swerve towards the British sensibilities prevalent in the town during my teenage years following the influence of my eldest brother, Nick. We, as a family, often considered ourselves 'German-Sāmoans' not 'Sāmoan-Germans'. Perhaps it was one way to psychologically escape the realities of emerging and noticeable racism towards Māori and Pasifika peoples in school and society in general. Magnification of the 'German' self was one of the problematic habits which assisted in the formation of the complex Sāmoan person I constructed. The children of the imported teachers, engineers, scientists, specialist workers, labourers and doctors populated Tokoroa too. Alongside Shakespeare and Toad of Toad Hall were the sounds of kapa haka, the Cook Island drums and the smell of coconut oil on the legs and hair of Sāmoan kids at our high school.

Even if one could speak the language and follow the traditions at home, entering into a literally 'Pākehā' education system was always going to alter the habitus of each of us. There were fictions and fraught realities being forged left, right and centre.

In the 1940s, many features of pre-war life seemed to have survived reassuringly intact. Most New Zealanders still spoke of Britain as 'Home' and saw nothing wrong with superannuated British aristocrats or military men being sent here to represent the King of New Zealand *in* New Zealand. They certainly saw nothing odd in having the country's head of state live 20,000 km away in London. (King, 2003)²²

The parallel island migration occurrences seemed rather ironic in that the newly arrived British workers flight away from the West Indian/Caribbean population in the UK, sent them directly over to a place where they would be confronted with their newly arrived Commonwealth family: Pacific Islanders and the emerging challenge of Māori radical activism.

To go back a bit to the 1970s, Māori resistance group *Ngā Tamatoa* formed the early 1970s. Founding members included Syd Jackson (Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Porou), Hana Te Hemara (Te Ati Awa), Taura Eruera (Ngāti Whatua), Kura Te Waru Rewiri (Ngāpuhi), Tame Iti (Ngāi Tūhoe, Ngāti Wairere), John Ohia (Ngāiterangi), Orewa Barrett (Ngāti Maniapoto), Morehu Brian McDonald (Waikato), Timi and Ramariri Te Maipi (Waikato, Te Ati Awa), Ngahua Te Awekotuku (Te Arawa, Tūhoe), Hone Harawira (Ngāti Hau, Ngāti Wai, Ngāti Hine, Te Aupōuri, Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Whātua). Ngā Puna Waihanga was also set up by Hone Tuwhare (Ngā Puhi, Ngāti Korokoro, Ngāti Tautahi, Te Popoto and Uri-o-Hau), Para Matchitt (Te Whānau a Apanui, Ngāti Porou, Te Whakatōhea), Hana Te Hemara (Te Āti Awa), Ralph Hotere (Te Aupouri,

²² King, M. (2004), *The Penguin history of New Zealand*. Auckland, New Zealand: Viking

Te Rarawa), and Selwyn Murupaenga (Te Aupouri, Ngāti Kuri). These movements both led the way toward decolonial futures and began the task of turning up the volume of the Māori voice, art, and literature. It seems fitting to note that it was Māori activism and art that were inspirational for me, not Sāmoan or Pasifika. These were academic, intellectual, and social heroes of Aotearoa for a growing number of diaspora Oceanic young people whose own sense of political awareness could not be honed on even the likes of the famous fallen leader of the Mau movement, Tupua Tamasese Leaofi III (Vaimoso, b. 1901 d. 1929) - a distant hero with no history readily available during the pre-internet era. In naming them and their iwi, I outlay the whakapapa of indigenous activism that has informed the way that Pasifika peoples in Aotearoa learned to understand their own voice and pay homage to their status as Tangata Whenua – Tagata o le Fanua.

This is possibly to do with the fact that I was raised in a semi-rural town and not the urban Ponsonby /Grey Lynn/Kingsland/Otara of Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, which witnessed the burgeoning of island populations. Effectively, within New Zealand there developed a kind of Pacific archipelago – an archipelago made of ‘islands’ (neighbourhoods, institutions and in some cases suburbs) where Pacific Islanders spent much of their lives. (Salesa, 2017, p.4)²³

Written and broadcast radio and television news reports on Māori activism stories made an impression on me. I saw for the first time, people who looked like us (me) insisting on their rights to their own land had a profound effect on me, who felt small, brown, and not proud (at that time). Ngahuia (Volkerling) Te Awekotuku (Te Arawa, Tūhoe), was one of these radical activists whose resistance was televised. Her staunchly ‘brown’ feminism was saying including Pasifika people, women which was rarely heard before:

Although we talk about an education programme in the schools, although we talk about reaching, the women, young adolescent girls, we must make an extra effort to reach the Polynesian and the Māori women.”²⁴ (Te Awekotuku, Speech for National Women’s Liberation Conference Wellington, 1971)

Te Awekotuku uttered those historic words at the National Women’s Liberation Conference Wellington, in March 1971. It was a critically important speech because this young Māori student activist was publicly identifying the suppressed voice of Māori alongside their distant relatives: Pasifika women. The subtext speaks loudly of the racist and oppressive treatment of Polynesian women from every side.

23 Salesa, D. (2017). *Island Time: New Zealand Pacific futures*. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books.

24 Ministry for Culture and Heritage. (2018, August 17). Ngahuia te Awekotuku. (Television New Zealand Archives). Retrieved 2020 from New Zealand History Nga Korero a Ipurangi o Aotearoa: <http://nzhistories.govt.nz/media/video/ngahuia-te-awekotuku>

The publishing initiative, *Rongo*, undertaken by Ngā Tamatoa members Morehu McDonald, John Miller and Ngahuia Te Awekotuku, acknowledged and established ancestral connections of Māori to Pasifika. One of the first printed matter, including Te Reo Māori, English and Pasifika languages such as Sāmoan, Tongan and Niuean was *Rongo*. (*Te Punga-Somerville, 2012*)²⁵ It was a revolutionary shift in decolonising the printed world in Aotearoa and saw Ngā Tamatoa collaborate with the Polynesian Panthers and a Minnesotan Native American. Māori had long-established newspapers in Te Reo: *Te Hokioi* (January to May of 1863)²⁶, *Te Wananga* (1874-78), *Kotahitanga* papers – *Huia Tangata Kotahi* (1893-5) and *Te Puke ki Hikurangi* (intermittently between 1897 – 1913).

It is something that Anae (2019) recognises: “There was an ambiguity of ethnic boundaries between Māori and New Zealand-borns in schools and universities. In such ways, Māori and New Zealand-borns learned together, and fiercely supported each other’s political agendas²⁷.” It is more likely that the unconscious movement toward safety will override any cultural habits. These innocuous decisions made as children eventuate in the main shape of an adult habitus and unconscious general leanings in socialisation.

In 1971 a group of teenage New Zealand-born Pasifika youths formed a group in Auckland; they called themselves the *Polynesian Panthers*. Anae recalls “When the dawn raids and overstayers debacle impacted on our own ‘aiga, a few of us Sāmoans and Tongans (and others) got together and formed the *Polynesian Panthers* in Ponsonby... a group which tried to alleviate the subordinate position of Pacific peoples in New Zealand (Anae, Melani; Iuli, Lautofa; Tamu, Leilani; 2019)...”

Parallel Islands: Generation Windrush

By taking a quick glimpse at Britain’s expansionist history, it becomes clear how it affected people all over the planet. Lifestyles and cultural rites were interfered with as a result of the colonial hegemony of the British Empire. Our collective status as default British subjects or has meant living within a mostly British ethnic norm and our own to become second nature. (Spoonley, 1988) points out that: “The long period of social and cultural dependence on Britain might be one factor. The homogeneity and relative dominance of Pākehā might be another.”²⁸

25 Te Punga-Somerville, A., (2016) *Once were Pacific: Māori Connections to Oceania*. Minnesota, USA: University of Minnesota Press.

26 Te Hokioi - <https://teara.govt.nz/en/maori-newspapers-and-magazines-nga-niuepa-me-nga-moheni/page-4>

27 Anae, M., (2019). The New Zealand-born experience. In M. Anae, L. Iuli & L. Tamu (Eds.), *Polynesian panthers: Pacific protest and affirmative action in Aotearoa New Zealand 1971 – 1981* (2nd ed., pp. 14 – 22). Wellington, New Zealand: Huia.

28 Spoonley, P., 1988, *Racism and ethnicity*, Auckland, New Zealand: Oxford.

While it is not unusual for history to recount the major conquests and expansion, intrepid journey of Captain James Cook and Sir Walter Raleigh and so on: recounting the intrepid navigational stories of Kupe and our own histories is just as important. We are after all, Moana peoples, peoples of the. The sea was not considered distant nor was it considered cruel: in almost all Oceanic cultures, the relationship with the ocean is based around respect the sustenance that it yields and as ancestor to us. The *Matua* and *Tofua* stories are just some of the most recent seafaring ones.

Oceania connotes a sea of island with their inhabitants. The world of our ancestors was a large sea full of places to explore, to make their homes in, to breed generations of seafarers like themselves. People raised in this environment were at home with the sea. They played in it as soon as they could walk steadily. They worked in it, they fought in it. They developed great skills for navigating their waters, and the spirit to traverse even the few large gaps that separated their island groups. There was a large world in which peoples and cultures moved and mingled unhindered by boundaries of the kind erected much later by imperial powers. (Hau'ofa, *Our sea of islands*, 1993).²⁹

These are words of comfort for those tired of navigating.

Like all countries after World War II, post-war England continued under strict austerity: Great Britain was physically broken. Re-building After World War II, the weighty task of rebuilding Britain and getting it going financially again revealed the dearth of able-bodied men due to human loss during the war. The Labour government under Clement Atlee sought immigrants and refugees from post-war Europe, and also the far reaches of the Empire because of the shortfall in labourers. Considering Britain's expansionist history, they had 'British citizen' all over the world. (Willis, 2017) writes: "...all Britain's imperial subjects and citizens of the Commonwealth – a staggering quarter of the population of the planet – had the legal right to live in Britain as British citizens."³⁰ In short, the West Indies were among the many that were to join the labour recruitment drive. Enter – 'Generation Windrush'; so-named after the passenger ship, the HMT Empire Windrush, the ship which transported the first official West Indian migrants to England.

As the Trinidadian calypso singer Lord Kitchener (real name Aldwyn Roberts) disembarked he was met by a film crew from Pathé News, who asked him to perform his newly composed song, 'London is the Place to Be'. The arrival of the Empire Windrush is widely and rightly understood as a great watershed in the black history of Britain and the year she arrived has come to be seen as the symbolic beginning of the modern phase in the relationship between Britain and the West Indies."³¹ (Olusoga, 2017, p. 493)

29 Hau'ofa, E. (1993), *Our sea of Islands*. In E. Waddell, V. Naidu & E. Hau'ofa (Eds), *A new Oceania: Rediscovering our sea of islands* (1st ed., pp. 2-17). Suva, Fiji: USP.

30 Willis, C. (2018). *Lovers and strangers: an immigrant history of post-war Britain*. Milton Keynes, Great Britain: Penguin

31 Olusoga, D., *Black and British: A forgotten history*, (2017), London, Great Britain: Pan Books.

An unusual, if-not, open-hearted, and naive sense of solidarity had been forged in the minds of the West Indian and Caribbean immigrants on the HMT Empire Windrush at the first formal arrival in 1948. Many of the 492 new Brits arriving were returnees who had been posted in ‘Mother England’ during World War II. Their histories were already deeply entwined with Britain and were already formally colonies of The Empire since 1886 but prior to that, colonised by Spain and taken over again by England in 1655. “The idea of the Empire and the Commonwealth as a family of nations was far stronger than the reality of what that might mean in a new era of global migration networks.”³² (Willis, 2017)

The Empire Windrush was not bringing over *immigrants* so much as bringing *home* their own citizens from the West Indies/ Caribbean colonies. However, for white Britain at the time, this ship was just bringing ‘outsiders’ whom they would come to resent. They, like Australia, New Zealand, and parts of Africa and India (up until the British Nationality Act of 1948), had ‘belonged’ to their international British family and, rightly expected to enjoy ‘the benefits’ of being British or, to use a phrase coined by writer, Afua Hirsch (2018) “Brit(ish)”³³. And for many, this was the case. But by the 1960, those wishing to return to the Caribbean homelands (or visit), were soon to discover the sharp edge of what being a Brit(ish) subject meant. They were expected to remain in the islands if they went back just for a visit and were prohibited from returning. Enoch Powell and his ‘Rivers of Blood’ speech soon ensured that the average white British person would soon feel as though they were ‘victims’ and being ‘usurped’. He stirred up white civic unrest when he quoted a conversation he had overheard of an average white British worker ‘...the black man will hold the whip hand over the white man’³⁴. Notions of a romantically sweeter life rapidly gave way to the realities of racial violence. Life for the West Indian Brits was devastatingly hostile and for the most part, came as a hideous surprise. Unprovoked attacks left many black victims stunned rather than equally aggressive. Becoming hypervigilant meant attempting to know which behaviours would attract the least attention and hostility. “The black immigrant needed to cultivate a sort of double consciousness, one in which he might know and not-know of the hatred directed against him.” (Willis, 2017).

They became *Cold Islanders of England* (CIE.s): not really welcome, and in years to come, many would conveniently be charged with overstaying and possible deportation. Separation of parents, children, and friends alike were realities for the CIE.s; then next generations would somehow pay for the cruel and scandalous treatment of its own ‘citizens’.

³² Willis, . C., (2017). *Lovers and strangers: An immigrant history of post-war Britain*. St Ives, Great Britain: Penguin.

³³ Hirsch, A., (2018). *Brit(ish): On race, identity and belonging*. London, Great Britain: Penguin.

³⁴ Enoch Powell was the Conservative Party Shadow Secretary of State for Defence in Great Britain from 1965– 1968 (among other portfolios held over his career as a Conservative Party Politician). He delivered the controversial ‘Rivers of Blood’ speech in Birmingham which in turn saw him dismissed from the Shadow Cabinet by the CP leader, Edward Heath, for his inflammatory speech and inciting racial hatred. The full transcript of the speech can be found at <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/3643823/Enoch-Powells-Rivers-of-Blood-speech.html>

Consolation: Black British Pride and the Arts

The need to find some sense of West Indian-ness/Caribbean-ness in Great Britain as well as coping with this new phenomenon of unsolicited attacks and harassment served as a catalyst toward new movements of black consciousness and solidarity. Many black Brits of the various diasporas (India, Pakistan, African and West Indies/Caribbean) were gifted musicians, poets, writers, and artists. The arts became one of the foremost domains wherein West Indian/Caribbean culture could air their concerns and utilise poetic and artistic strategies to make their concerns and presence felt.

The ska and reggae genres flourished in Britain from the 1950s to the present day. The footage of Lord Kitchener has to be the quintessential signifiers of the aspirational sentiments shared by the incoming 'Brits' of the Windrush Generation. In his book, *Black and British*, Olusoga (2017, p.493)³⁵ notes:

On 22 June 1948 the *Empire Windrush* arrived at Tilbury docks and four hundred and ninety-two men from the West Indies came ashore. A report of their arrival in the imperial 'mother country', in the *London Evening Standard*, carried the headline 'WELCOME HOME' Interestingly, it is through an art form, a song, that the outward appearance of adventure and excitement is expressed.

Towards the end of this chapter, the Windrush artists stories will be expanded upon. Its inclusion at this point foreshadows the confluence of the parallels Diaspora artists and Windrush Generation artists experienced. These lead us toward the artists profiles which include eight Cold Islands artists and one Cold Islander of England. Their shaping comes from a similar migratory story of immigration and resulting cultural distance, to locating oneself and closing the distance from 'home'.

³⁵ Olusoga, D., *Black and British: A forgotten history*, (2017), London, Great Britain: Pan Books.

Summary and Analysis

Observations of First-Generation Immigrant Parents' Habitus and Behaviours:

Sale and Etevisē

In the same way that the naïve and charming way that Lord Kitchener alighted from the Empire Windrush, it is difficult to say whether my own parents experienced this sense of excitement due to their pangs of homesickness. The characteristic awakening to this new world is that which ties their experiences in spite of the separation of their times and places of arrival. This summary locates some of these awakens in order to provide an understanding of this experience and that of the children.

Ours was a full-immersion Sāmoan household where parents were a-typical New Zealanders, but also a-typical Sāmoans, they looked and were, vastly different to the mainstream Pākehā, but acted like 'New Zealanders'.

With a large immediate family that turned at any given moment to extended family, meant space was at a premium. Nobody had their own room, 'nice' things such as a dressing table, wardrobe space, toys, books, bike, car, and privacy. Everything was communal - the lounge always doubled as a bedroom.

Etevisē, my mother was an a-typical woman by any standards at the time. She was opinionated, vocal, well-respected, and never prescribed to the gender roles, nor fa'aSāmoa roles that might have applied to her as a woman. She was more of an activist and intellectual who was not subservient; an eloquent and fluent Sāmoan and English speaker and writer and possessed formidable debating skills. Not adherent to expected decorum of very traditional Sāmoan women, but very much pro-fa'aSāmoa and raised us within a very fa'aSāmoa tradition of feagaiga (siblings looking out for each other), and obligation to family. I looked after my grandfather's meals and served him till I left for art school in 1984, and when I returned, I took it up again (when possible), up until his death in 1988. Implicit fa'aSāmoa was applied, not taught in our home. In comparison to the genteel churchgoing families, our resting family hexis was fairly coarse and very Catholic. There was no enforcement of Sāmoan speaking, traditional dance, and the teaching of Sāmoan manners was lax. My parents were very pro-Sāmoan food and carried out the Sunday observation of to'ona'i (Sunday feast), and in keeping with the devout Catholic observances, we were not to carry out any servile work, and we took rest instead in the same manner that my parents did in Sāmoa. My mother, who was not overtly pious until later on in her 40s – 50s but was a deeply practical believer. We were raised with a mixture of Christianity as well as old Sāmoan tapus like not whistling in the dark or cutting hair at night. She was an active member of our Sāmoan au lotu (church group) at St Pius X Catholic Church. She was politically savvy and was involved with the Pacific branch of the New Zealand Labour party.

As a social creature, Ma excelled at poker and was a poker-faced card shark. She smoked up to about 67 years of age and gave up after reading Allen Carr's book, *Easy Way to Stop Smoking* (2006 edition). She was not a major drinker but a party animal if given a chance. All (but one) of her siblings ended up living in Tokoroa, and her father lived with us and died in our family home, he preferred living with my mother, fa'aSāmoa was very much part of our family village of Berwick Place. Tokoroa was very much my mother's new family 'village' because this is where we all congregated and celebrated together. One sister did not visibly partake in any faith, one sister and her family were catholic, and her brother did not participate in organised religion. They found more comfort and camaraderie in the local pubs, finding church here too alienating and irrelevant. One uncle is still living in Sāmoa.

Charles (Sale), my father was quiet, and he really didn't speak unless he was spoken to, preferring the company of the sky from the back porch, or digging in the garden he made. Sale was a fluent Sāmoan speaker and writer, but his spoken and written English was average. Papa was very aware of his piko-Siamani (German side) but it was never really something he considered to be of major significance. They were your everyday Sāmoans, not raised with any semblance of outward Germanness, neither was his father Aukuso (my grandfather), a humble afakasi³⁶ Sāmoan who was raised in the house of his maternal grandfather – Joseph Godinet in Savai'i because his half German/half English father, went to Papua New Guinea, and while there, is believed to have committed suicide. Papa's aiga was considered 'Sāmoan-affluent' as a German afakasi. His mother (my grandmother) Makerita Matai'a Patau'ave, was a paramount Taupou.

While Papa was not entirely pro-fa'aSāmoa he was very pro-aiga (family). He was raised with a very masculine work ethic and family structure – gender roles were clearly defined, and so he worked with his hands. As a young man, he was a great kilikiti (Sāmoan cricket) player (a bowler no-less) and his nickname was 'Sale Lapiki' (Sale rabbit) because he was so speedy. My father was a devout conservative old-school Catholic, yet with that, he always maintained an open mind and heart: he was long-suffering and self-sacrificing. He often fasted and prayed in the quiet of the bedroom. Now and again, he would play his harmonica for us, and we would sing along. He was a worker at Kinleith and had some education up to early secondary school and spoke a rich, thick accent compared to my mother. This is likely why he left much of the negotiating and financial control to my her.

Papa made art. His art practice was profound and quiet like him. He painted fantastical seascapes and imagined lands and treescapes as well. He possessed a deep observational trait that was not

³⁶ Afa-kasi is Sāmoan vernacular literally meaning 'half of one' or half caste – it is a common phrase describing mixed-race Sāmoans.

something I had observed with any of the other Sāmoan men in our congregation or relatives. Watching him make pictures at the table is a memory that my siblings and I remember with love.



Fig.9. *Untitled (Trees)*, ink on paper, 1980, by Charles Krause



Fig. 10. *Drug Alert, June 27, 78*, by Charles Krause, ink on paper, 1978.

He entered into a local ‘Drug Alert’ poster campaign competition run by Radio 1Z0; he did not win it, but the artwork exists still. He was a highly creative person, alternative for a Sāmoan man. His taste in music differed considerably from my mother’s. He enjoyed the Beatles and slightly

more contemporary music as well as the more croony music my mother enjoyed. Most of his family was in Sāmoa and Auckland, so we were not brought up around them. We never met our paternal grandmother and only met our Grand Papa once. He was old already. My father died at the young age of 56 in Tokoroa and is buried there amongst all of my mother's siblings (except for Sefo) and my grandfather Tupuola Nikolao. Almost all of Papa's ancestors are in a mausoleum on the family land in Vaimoso, Sāmoa.

The Pathology of a Cold Islander: Olga Hedwig Janice Taufau Leafa Krause

Leafa is the Sāmoan word for 'hurricane' or 'cyclone' *Le Afā*. It's not on my birth certificate though because it is the ancestral name given me by my maternal grandfather – *Taufau Leafā*. It's a name he gave me because I was born in 1966, the year a major cyclone ravaged Sāmoa. Fa'aSāmoa is ingrained in me, aiga and the extended family of origin has been inextricable from my own bi-cultural (Pālagi/Sāmoan) family. I will not be enforcing the financial and obligatory expectations upon my children. After my mother dies, that will actually be the end of any obligations for my children. I will continue in a fa'aSāmoa way for the rest of my life though I remain uncomfortable with Sāmoan tualuga and expectations that I am capable of public displays of cultural dance or ritual.

I am a passive bilingual speaker, with basic conversational Sāmoan, but fluent comprehension of the language, never having been made to speak or write it with ease.



Fig. 11. *Bold as brass*, 1980. I am playing the tenor horn,
Te Aroha Tauroa plays the BB flat bass

By the age of twelve I had already become attracted to the more Western forms of cultural performance and aesthetics such as brass band, Western art systems and aesthetics enriched by Catholicism and its deep mystical roots. There was also, an unidentifiable growing shame festering too. I was a pariah amongst the proficient Sāmoans, further ebbing the edges of my ethnicity, making me lose trust in my own cultural self, and a fear of being outed (again) as a ‘plastic’ islander, even though I felt deeply connected to Sāmoa.

On arrival in Dunedin in 1984, I really understood the meaning of the phrase, ‘culture shock’; realising that I was so different - I was on the fringe of almost everything: Church, art school, walking in the streets, and even my accommodation. So, locating the Sāmoan person was an automatic response.

My art practice can’t be fully immersed in fa’aSāmoa because I feel it is inauthentic and exploitative at best. I cannot claim that I know what I am doing in the context of being once removed from Sāmoa, and the indigenous cosmogony of Sāmoa. My habitus is a composition of Christian cosmogony, learned behaviours of fa’aSāmoa interspersed with Sāmoan old ways. These have formed the basis of my metaphysical formation. Myths and legends of Sāmoa’s creation story never entered into it. Only the arts of dance and song were present in my family of origin, but even these were at a superficial level with no explanation and not taught by my parents but in community.

All artistic measina (treasures of objects of art) such as siapo (tapa), ‘ie Toga (pandanus fine mat), fue (orator’s fly whisk), nifo oti (taupou or high chiefly young woman) being used in a formal taualuga (traditional Sāmoan dance form), were part of our ‘village’ life in a ceremonial sense. Their production as art objects were never discussed – largely because these were not uncommon measina for my parents and other immigrant Sāmoans. Traditional tatau (tattoo) also was never discussed except in later years watching my Uncle Lio’s pe’a during a siva Sāmoa or when he would wear a lavalava (plain fabric wrap from waist to knees). Other times I saw the pe’a would be at a funeral during a lāuga (formal oration by a Matai or high chief orator) when the Matai spoke and removed his Western attire to expose the partial pe’a (Sāmoan men’s customary tattoo) from the belt-line up and from the bottom of the ‘ie faitaga (formal lavalava). These were and still are, to a large extent, aspects of the Sāmoan life in Aotearoa that were taken for granted as our norm. My own journey into the acquiring the malu (female traditional tattoo) was very much a whispering of the ancestors. I just knew it was going to occur as my foremothers did in our ancestral line. This was not part of any research or even seeing any malu, it was a knowledge that was as ancient as the sea. In 2005, my Sāmoa became part of my physical body and my hexis and

habitus altered forever. I now understand the composition of my habitus, which has made me comfortable in my Sāmoan skin.

I started to invest time on journeys to the homeland, which helped me to locate my ideological and spiritual home. However, these returns home also revealed to me that I feel more at home in Aotearoa. In Sāmoa, I am still read and experienced by others as Māori or Pālagi, purely because my spoken Sāmoan is elementary. My indigenous Sāmoan aiga are always surprised when they see my malu, because I am not Sāmoa-born. In accepting this fact, it made me continue to take stock and really know my place as tauivi (a guest in Aotearoa) which assisted me in understanding that the indigenous people of Aotearoa – Māori, have the sovereignty of their lands as tangata whenua, not me.

The purpose of these anecdotes is not gratuitous storytelling but an example of the deeply felt sense of inadequacy that may be a quantifiable catalyst for the CI person in the creation of, a Vā (space) between themselves and outward cultural practices. Vā is Sāmoan for space between things: not surprisingly, it also means ‘oppositional’. With such an experience, not just for me, but for many like me, the cultural practices of home can feel like an opponent.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

Introduction

By definition, the Cold Islander term emerges from my own ruminations. In the research and development of the Cold Islander theory, I am not writing an exhaustive review of every single text cited; instead, I have accumulated a customised selection of literature to assist in the extrapolation of this complex metaphysical idea.

My work in this research is not really entering into new territory in the field of Pacific and Oceanic ontologies and epistemologies, however, I am borrowing from the knowledge of my ancestors in Sāmoa and from some of our most prolific Pasifika scholars. I have located specific Polynesian theories, methods, and methodologies that dovetail into the gaps I see in some of the Western social anthropologies and metaphysical philosophies. This means that I cannot solely write from an indigenous perspective because art is my main area of expertise. Adding to this, consideration for the artists whose nationalities and ethnicities are so varied and intertwined with Western ideologies and also identifying as indigenous to their parents' or grandparents' island nations. This fact does not minimise the efforts I wish to go to immerse (as deeply and sincerely as I can in my Westernised way) my research into non-Western theories and philosophies in my attempt to ultimately generate a theory that will adequately provide me and other seekers like me, a more decolonised and epistemologically balanced stance with which to articulate clearly and concisely an auto-ethnographic model. Nor can I write solely from a Western art history perspective as it has been a framework which has failed to treat well, the indigenous people of Aotearoa as well as the Cold Islander.

Habitus, Autoethnography and Self-Realisation

Habitus:

My thinking around the phenomenon of the Cold Islander as a metaphysical state of the Pasifika/Oceania person in diaspora has been influenced to a large extent by the social theory of *habitus* (Bourdieu, 2013) which implies that habitus (crudely put) is formed by the anticipation of expected reactions and the practice of this, by sets of conditions. Infinite possible reactions to infinite external stimuli which is carried out without conscious pre-meditation. In Bourdieu's own words:

The habitus, the durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations, produced practices which tend to reproduce the regularities immanent in the objective conditions of the production of their generative principle, while adjusting to the demands inscribed as objective potentialities in the situation, as defined by the cognitive and motivating structures making up the habitus. It follows that these practices cannot be directly deduced either from the objective conditions, defined as the instantaneous sum of the stimuli which may appear to have directly triggered

them or from the conditions which produced the durable principle of their production. These practices can be accounted for only by relating the objective *structure* defining the social conditions of the production of habitus which engendered them to the conditions in which this habitus is operating, that is, to the *conjuncture* which, short of a radical transformation, represents a particular state of this structure. In practice, it is the habitus, history turned into nature, i.e. denied as such, which accomplishes practically the relating of these two systems of relations in and through the production of practice.³⁷

I considered the words he wrote “history turned into nature”, and it was undeniably a phenomenon that I considered a distinguishing factor between New Zealand-borns (to use Anae’s words) and Islands-born. The living practise of those CIs born outside of their ancestral homes are adjustments to the peculiarity of the New Zealand experience.

On embarking on my research into the rationale for the vast spectral appearances and ways that CIs can present Bourdieu’s writing has been my main Western influence relating to habitus. Another major work *The Lies that Bind: Creed, Country, Colour, Class, Culture*³⁸, by Kwame Anthony Appiah (2018) was a more culturally specific writer whose insider research was more akin to communal cultures like those in the Pacific. Unlike many social anthropologies of the Pacific that reinforce losses of culture and tradition and in some way clawing this back, which I actually personally endorse, my argument aligns with Appiah’s in that he highlights cultural conditions which at times imprison and also impose unfair expectations on those within a particular culture. In considering that the behaviour of CIs is developed within multiple cultural platforms and settings such as the privacy of home, the public life of the school, community and social events and the social norms and codes which are expected or practised, it would be outrageous to expect that a New Zealand-born Sāmoan could have a naturally ‘orthodox’ Sāmoan way of life because it has not been their experience. Kwame (2018) writes “The process by which and individual is classified by other in his group, in terms of the culturally prescribed categories, can be called the assignment of a “social identity”...Corresponding to different social identities are divergent sets of expectations, differing configurations of rights and obligations.”³⁹ One of my aspirations for this research is assisting CIs in considering ways of liberating themselves from judgement and expectations that no longer serve a positive role in their lives and wider society. Internal cultural bullying has the effect of piling on layers of undeserved punishment for not possessing the correct (and never learned) behaviours.

Parallel Narratives: The Cold Islanders and the Cold Islanders of England.

37 Bourdieu, P. (2013). *The theory of an outline of practice*. (28 ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (p. 78).

38 Appiah, A. A. (2018). *The lies that bind: to consider again, rethinking identity, creed, country, colour, class, culture*. London, Great Britain: Profile Books.

39 Appiah, A. A. (2018). *The lies that bind: to consider again, rethinking identity, creed, country, colour, class, culture*. London, Great Britain: Profile Books. (p.5).

To demonstrate that our third migration of Pasifika peoples and the resulting effect on successive generations is not entirely unique, I have examined in some detail, the lay of the black British art scene, looking in particular at the scandalous treatment of West Indian – Caribbean British immigrants and the almost the exact occurrence of habitus formation occurrence with their search for a solid space to stand in the United Kingdom. Stuart Hall's texts have been invaluable as a source of insight to the formation of his own black identity in a time of confusion, as well as the various writers such as Afua Hirsch and her book *Brit(ish)* (Penguin, 2018). The writings of David Olusoga have enabled some social contexts to become more accessible.

Tā-Vā-ism and Thereness

The other text of major import to this research has been the Polynesian metaphysical theories of Tā-i-Vā reality which has been the most important work by Professor 'Okusitino (Hūfanga) Māhina (Tonga) and Tevita O' Kali'i. Not so much in the methodology but in the intrinsic application of the theory and how the Cold Islander, regardless of how far removed from their homeland, is never separate from it because we Moana/Pasifika/Oceania peoples belong to our Ancestors and their calling to us within Tā-i-Vā reality. This unsolicited affirmation for CIs does not emerge from theory, but from what *is* an 'indigenous reality'⁴⁰ (Tavakefai'ana, Sēmisi Fetokai Potauaine; Mahina, 'Okusitino (Hūfanga), 2019) as people of Te Moananui a Kiwa view this reality as an equally valid method of interpreting cultural formation. My own application of this theory is inextricable from my theory of the Cold Islands. For within the Tā-i-Vā reality, the socio-relational space is one that exists external to, yet intersecting with, the theory of habitus in the metaphysical sense.

Adding to this, Sartre's thinking around *being* and affirming the existence of *the Other*, we indeed exist - each one in relation to another, in the context of my writing, the CI is 'the other' – in relation, but separate to, their island of origin and from the whenua of Aotearoa.

Between the Other and myself *there* is a nothingness of separation. This nothingness does not derive its origin from myself nor is it a reciprocal relation between the Other and myself. On the contrary, as a primary absence of relation, it is originally the foundation of all relation between the Other and me. This is because the Other appears to me empirically on the occasion of the perception of a body, and this body is in an in-itself external to my body; the type of relation which unites and separates these two bodies is a spatial relation, the relation of things which have no relation among themselves, pure exteriority in so far as it is given.⁴¹ (Sartre, 1969)

40 Tavakefai'ana, Semisi Fetokai Potauaine; Māhina, 'Okusitino Hufanga: (2019, February 16). Association for Anthropology in Oceania. Retrieved November 3, 2020, from: Proliferation of Models: <https://www.asap.org/proliferation-of-models.html>

41 Sartre, J-P. (1969). Being and nothingness. New York: Washington Square Press. (pp. 312-313)

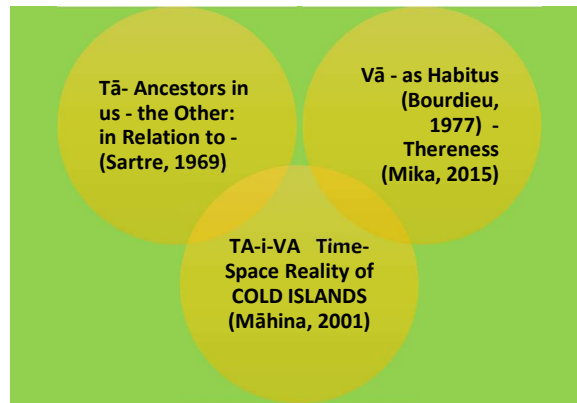


Table 1. Artists of the Pacific/Oceanic Diaspora claiming space in TA-VA reality - the green ground signifies Aotearoa - sovereign Māori Space

My model (see Table 1.) demonstrates the conflation of non-Western and Western epistemological and ontological approaches to the materialisation and development of indigenous sovereignty.

This is not philosophy, anthropology, or social-theory proper, because that is not my area of expertise. It is an attempt to extrapolate the threads that go toward the formation of a place to stand and proffers scholarship that applies a more accessible and nuanced vocabulary.

The conception space is the artistic thinking process and paradigmatic positioning of the Pacific/Oceanic diaspora artist whilst living on the art landscape in Aotearoa. This is the process of Tā which means to hit or to strike, or to initiate or activate or to strike up an action. This often begun on the spiritual or intellectual journey toward the ancestral homelands via Te Moananui a Kiwa as the metaphysical and physical connector of home to Aotearoa New Zealand.

By the same token, the epistemological questions, i.e., “what does,” which lies at the very heart of pragmatism as a philosophy, are secondary to the ontological questions, i.e., “what is,” defining both *tāvāism* and realism as related brands of philosophy.⁴²

I am aware that I am taking an idealist approach; but it is in the discursive space where (Tavakefai’ana, Sēmisi Fetokai Potauaine; Māhina, ‘Okusitino (Hūfanga), 2019) my own theorising communes with Mika, (2015) and his writings on ‘thereness’ where he states, “For the indigenous person, the self is not so concretely identifiable by the self.”⁴³ By this, he notes the connection of our indigenous selves to intangible elements such as the fanua (the land), and for the CI, it is this connection to the ancestors within the Vā and to Te Moananui a Kiva, The Pacific Ocean. The intersection of the Vā, with Thereness and Habitus, is where the Cold Islands exist. The Cold Islanders’ art praxes are the manifestations of these intersecting theories: the artists’

42 Tavakefai’ana, Semisi Fetokai Poutauaine; Māhina, ‘Okusitino Hufanga: (2019, February 16). Association for Anthropology in Oceania. Retrieved November 3, 2020, from: Proliferation of Models: <https://www.asap.org/proliferation-of-models.html>

43 Mika, C. T. (2015). Thereness: Implications of Heidegger’s “presence” for Māori. ALTERNATIVE, (11)1. 3-13.

habitus is where they are indigenous, the artists' habitus is their Vā. The major aspect of my thinking considers that CIs art is a component of the living ancestral cultures within the Vā, wherein the distanced diaspora artist is not being resurrected or renewed but affirmed.

Radical Affirmation

The phrase 'Māori renaissance' states what Te Awekotuku (1991) reinforces with much more accuracy and eloquence the notion of 'born-again' islandness of any kind but within her own indigenous context:

For we are not being culturally born again; mana Māori Motuhake has always been with us, in our kuia, our kaumatua, our marae, our music. How can they be part of a renaissance, when for them, and for us, the continuity never ceased? Nor is it ever denied by most Māori. So who is being reborn? With this we risk tripping ourselves up, taking definitions from the other, when we can and must define ourselves, for we are the makers of our own authenticity.⁴⁴

Te Awekotuku makes this salient point to drive home the fact that our ancestors never let our culture and knowledge die. Applying this same affirming indigenous statement to Cold Islanders in Aotearoa, how can even the distance from the homelands and customs separate Pasifika/Oceanic New Zealand-borns (CIs) them from their ancestors whose salty blood runs through them through the Vā?

Even in the face of colonisation, whether by the Crown or Germany or France, peoples of the Moana (Oceanic) have maintained living cultures of language, traditional medicine, music, dance and, not least, art. The disparaging reports of European anthropologists talking disparagingly of dying languages and arts, only describe superficial aspects of material culture at best. Of most importance to the context of CIs born in Aotearoa, though, is that they were nurtured in a space where the indigenous knowledges did not belong to them. In drawing on and locating traditions practised by their ancestors, the CI artist becomes part of their great Ocean of being; they become part of the history of their people. Nor is it a kind of rebirth, as Te Awekotuku (1991), states, more of an uptake of but a *knowing, deep listening* in on the ancestors.

Culture of Whispers

The ancient culture of whispers⁴⁵ passes on knowledge – tu'umumusu (passing on of custodial knowledge as opposed to gossip - taumusumusu), (Efi, Tuiatua Tupua Tamasese Ta'isi, 2014)

⁴⁴ Te Awekotuku, N. (1991). *Mana Wahine Maori: Selected writings on Maori women's art, culture and politics*. Auckland: New Women's Press.

⁴⁵ Efi, Tuiatua, Tupua, Tamasese, Ta'isi (2014). Whispers and vanities: Sāmoan indigenous knowledge and religion. In T.T. Efi, M. Wendt, V. Mo'a, J. Plane & T. Daniel, M. Von Reiche, P. Morris ... V.N. Kneubuhl & M.A. Tamasailau M Suaalii-Sauni (Eds.). *Kindle 5.13.2* (loc. 687 – 1348).

ensuring that each generation of eavesdroppers will nurture and maintain the indigenous knowledge and whisper to the next. This critical aspect of indigenous Sāmoan knowledge is one that I have adopted as part of the CI vocabulary. The *whispers of the ancestors* is the central aspect that, impels CI artists to embark on an artistic journey—and understanding that even without external qualifiers, our cultures have never been dead.

The act of tu'umumusu, while an act of reverence is deliberately exclusive. For those not chosen to receive such knowledge, there and can give rise to taumusumusu. During ancient times, passing on in-depth religious and cultural knowledge associated with family genealogies, place names, historical figures, ceremonial rites, honorifics, and even everyday practices, fell to a select few.⁴⁶

This practice was not exclusive to Sāmoa, but to almost every indigenous culture on the planet. What Tui Atua is stating is of utmost importance to the Cold Islands inhabitants, as are the words of Te Awekotuku. Listening and claiming one's own authenticity is all that matters to find the visual and creative languages whispered to each by their ancestors.

For the benefit of those CIs who feel that distanced from their ancestors, the tradition of passing on of knowledge could be said to take another – perhaps less official form. By this, I posit that the imaginings and the sparks of creativity to create art, make music, perform, tatau and narrate stories all come from the whispers one picks up on in the ancestral 'radio' frequency of the Vā. That these are not random desires to make art, but actually continuing on a trajectory that was always one's own.

Nainai – The Chosen Receiver of Knowledge

The first-generation of children of Pasifika/Oceania immigrants were what I would consider being the *nainai* in the new land. Tui Atua (2014) writes: “When passing on his knowledge about the origins of his chiefly titles and lands to a designated receiver or *nainai*, [it is possible that he would do so with minimal or no guilt.]”⁴⁷ It is through their example that cut navigational ways through the waters of cultural dispossession. The connection to ancestry is everything in our Polynesian habitus, but the connection to actions and habits has altered forever. I will address this first-generation foregrounding and its import to the habitus of the second-generation CI artist and to the fact that the Caribbean diaspora in Britain must have been similarly ‘at sea’ as well.

46 Efi, Tuiatua, Tupua, Tamasese, Ta'isi (2014). Whispers and vanities: Samoan indigenous knowledge and religion. In T.T. Efi, M. Wendt, V. Mo'a, J. Plane & T. Daniel, M. Von Reiche, P. Morris ... V.N. Kneubuhl & M.A. Tamasailau M Suaalii-Sauni (Eds.). Kindle 5.13.2 (loc. 687 – 1348).

47 Efi, Tuiatua, Tupua, Tamasese, Ta'isi (2014). Whispers and vanities: Samoan indigenous knowledge and religion. In T.T. Efi, M. Wendt, V. Mo'a, J. Plane & T. Daniel, M. Von Reiche, P. Morris ... V.N. Kneubuhl & M.A. Tamasailau M Suaalii-Sauni (Eds.). Kindle 5.13.2 (loc. 687 – 1348).

Reading relevant literature focused on a case study of the town of newly arrived Pasifika peoples and the town of Tokoroa to provide much-needed data relating to the formation of the CI habitus. This text was a 1976⁴⁸ case study about the formation of a community. Because my question relates to the immigrants from the Pacific Islands from the 1950s to approximately, late 1980s, this case study provided one of the most important resources regarding the new Moana/Pasifika/Oceanic assimilation during this very period.

Social Structure

Damon Salesa's vital 2017 text *Island Time* provided a great deal of context analysis of the period of immigration which I am researching. His text touched on the same meeting of the immigrant Pacific world and the New Zealand world: "This is where two interlocking dimensions come together: a Pacific New Zealand, to which Pacific people have moved and which they have begun refashioning by their own lights: and New Zealand's Pacific, a group of Pacific Island to New Zealand's north where New Zealand influence, history and interest continue."⁴⁹ It is an important text because of the author's insider experience and it is his experience that coincides with my research field.

Other important social anthropologists have informed my research regarding the formation of the current Aotearoa in the 1950s to the present. Melani Anae, Paul Spoonley, and Cluny Macpherson are cited in the text.

48 Chapple, D. L. (1976). *Creating a community*. Auckland, New Zealand: Longman Press.

49 49 Salesa, D. (2017). *Island time; New Zealand's Pacific futures*. Wellington, New Zealand: Bridget Williams Books.

Chapter 4 Research Method, Methodology and Research Design

Introduction

In considering the methodological approach to this broad metaphysical quandary of mine, it became clear the research design would need to consider with sensitivity, the import of these artists' text as they divulged personal information about their formation as artists. My thematic analysis approach employed hybridised pan-Polynesian and decolonial approaches.

Hybridized Methodological Approach

Phenomenological approach: because each of the participating artists worked in a subjective and complex domain of art practice, each of the worldviews and lived experiences were vastly disparate, and this approach enabled me to tailor my writing and approach to their material in ways that would suit them specifically.

Ethnographical approach: Due to the cultural and paradigmatic inquiry I am undertaking with each of the artists' cultural ontologies and the way they contextualise their experience as Moana peoples, this was naturally one of the approaches to utilise for me to obtain the important data around habitus formation.

Grounding theory: In order to posit my theory of the existence of the *Cold Islands* in the metaphysical space of Polynesian time-space theory of TāVā-ism, to a degree, this was my initial approach.

It was noticeably clear to me that the best and most suited approach to my research inquiry would be to use a mix of Western and Indigenous (Polynesian) ontologies to drill down to the core of investigations.

I considered this to be the most appropriate approach because each of the participants is navigating extremely different waters. Some are more comfortable with a distanced approach and others, a much more person to person approach. It required a great deal of sensitivity and hearing the tacit tones in their texts.

This research seeks to *teu le Vā*⁵⁰ to make Diaspora futures in Aotearoa easier to navigate toward confidence in their versions of indigeneity in the Vā. I made a conscious decision to ensure that the future readers of this text will be provided with some of the theoretical and philosophical

⁵⁰ Teu le vā is a Sāmoan phrase using the art of adornment as a metaphor for maintaining harmonious relationships and refers also to the metaphysical space as a dynamic living place.

inspired critical thinking of our Pasifika and African diaspora writers. I have chosen to privilege the Polynesian indigenous and black British and American theoretical texts as a wayfinding method for myself as much as for the participant.

Research Design

TāVā-ism - Polynesian Theory of Time-Space Reality

According to Tavakefai'ana; & Mahina (2019), the TāVā-ist method for the thematic analysis of artistic practice (nimame'a) applies the method of talanoa or conversation as a performative art practice which sits under the broader ancient practice of *faiva talanoa*⁵¹ or story-telling. This method keeps at the foreground, background and middle ground, and the immutable connection initiated (Tā) by the ancestors of the CI artists of the Diaspora. Through this framework, I am able to measure the constant migration of the evolving Diaspora to the very point of their making art (Vā) in response to the ancient whispers of the ancestors.

Heliaki

I have conscripted the ancient Tongan (and indeed Pan Oceanic by other names) practice of the use of metaphor as a method. It is traditionally used in the oral tradition in Tongan society. According to Smith & 'Otunuku (2019), "Heliaki is not only a method of artistic expression but also a means for maintaining social structures and institutions and as a strategy for negotiating social and cultural constructs, including managing family and political relationships."⁵² And while it stipulates a specifically Tongan use, I am respectfully borrowing this method in the knowledge that my own ancestral line *Matai'a* (*Mata o le 'i'a*) emerges from ancient Tonga.

From the title of this thesis which came to me many years ago and in fact was the source of an exhibition and the beginning of this research, I have employed heliaki as a literary device to weave this metaphor of islands and journeys towards them. This has been one of my oars to assist me in my research practice.

Insider Research

The Cold Islander theory also sits within the TāVā-ist academic frame of reference because it is derived employing an empirical Insider research method. According to (Smith, 2006, p. 137), the insider researcher must be "skilled at defining clear research goals and 'lines of relating' which are specific to the project and somewhat different from their own family networks."⁵³ In my own professional career, I am an insider with extensive knowledge of the contemporary Western and

51 Tavakefai'ana, Semisi Fetokai Poutaune; Māhina, 'Okusitino Hūfanga: (2019, February 16). Association for Anthropology in Oceania. Retrieved November 3, 2020, from: Proliferation of Models: <https://www.asap.org/proliferation-of-models.html>

52 Smith, Kevin and 'Otunuku, Mo'ale (2019). Heliaki: transforming literacy in Tonga through metaphor. The SoJo Journal: Educational Foundations and Social Justice Education 1 (1) , pp. 99- 112. Retrieved November 7, from <http://orca.cf.ac.uk/id/eprint/86002>

53 Smith, L.T. (2006). Decolonizing methodologies: research and indigenous peoples. Dunedin, New Zealand: Otago University Press.

Polynesian art history, art production, curation, critical writing and exhibition design. As a Sāmoan woman who is also a CI, my empirical knowledge enables me to understand the varying degrees of cultural trauma experienced by many of the Diaspora artists and to gently wade in. The professional boundaries are established and so it has been possible for me to work very specifically on the research goals of obtaining their stories through online and written talanoa.

Faiva Talanoa

As a curator for almost twenty years, I am not a stranger to the participating artists whose artistic careers I have researched or curated, in this capacity, I am a known quantity. In this sense, I enact the *faiva talanoa* method through online meetings (over the period of COVID-19 lockdown) and via email. While talanoa suggests a face-to-face conversation, there is also the concept of *maliē-mafanga*⁵⁴ which belongs under the same umbrella as *faiva talanoa*. However, *maliē-mafanga* is a metaphorical Tongan concept which refers to *tauhi Vā* or nurturing space. Within this metaphoric meeting, online, in written form or otherwise, within the TāVā-ist methodology, we are metaphysically making things *maliē* or cultivating beauty in the relational sense and keeping the connection *mafanga* or warm and we are not separated because of this performative action of *faiva talanoa*. We are reciprocal recipients of *maliē* and *mafanga*.

Whilst it is similar in approach to narrative research, Talanoa is different in the sense that participants in a Talanoa group will provide a challenge or legitimation to one another's stories and shared information. Because Talanoa is flexible, it provides opportunities to probe, challenge, clarify and re-align. It should create and disseminate robust, valid, and up-to-the-minute knowledge because the shared outcome of what Talanoa has integrated and synthesised will be contextual, not likely to have been already written or subjected to academic sanitisation. (Vaiote, 2006)

In gathering qualitative data, *talanoa* was a specific choice for me because it is a Pasifika research methodology. I used the tenet of the Sāmoan indigenous practice of *feagaiga* – the act of covenant care, treating them and their precious information with protection. Their words will one day perform the invaluable role of the interlocutor to future generations of Cold Islanders who enter into the practice of art.

Method

Artists

The sample size was relatively small considering the breadth of artists of the Diaspora; however, I was conscious that obtaining too great a selection of artists would be unachievable in the time

54 Tavakefai'ana, Semisi Fetokai Poutaune; Māhina, 'Okusitino Hufanga: (2019, February 16). Association for Anthropology in Oceania. Retrieved November 3, 2020, from: Proliferation of Models:

available to me as a researcher. The other rationale for maintaining a small sample size was to ensure that each of the artists participating felt safe and not as research fodder.

Selection

I interviewed two first-generation senior Diaspora artists who were pathfinders and were influencers as CIs, and through their parentage are also Tangata whenua. Their inclusion was purposeful; they provide a stable and safe foundational space for there to be an open discursivity around where artists sit on the 'culture spectrum'.

I listed artists who were second-generation artists and whose works I had either admired or had become familiar with because of their shift away from the expected stereotypical 'Islander' art: their art practice tended not to use outwardly visible Moana Pasifika Oceanic (MPO) signification. Or artists whose work may have visual relationships to MPO referents but whose artistic strategy employs an atypical use of traditional pan-Polynesian iconography relative to their artistic field of inquiry. My rationale for this was specifically to engage those who are experiencing alterity or some form of dissonance in their cultural persona or through their artistic outputs.

Invitation to participate

In considering my thesis subject and the sensitivity around such tender feelings around autoethnography as a strategy for many artists of colour or artist of this particular Diaspora, I decided to maintain low numbers. In so doing, each artist could be given the time and respect required to make them participate if they felt comfortable.

I contacted all of the artists via an initial email of intent: i.e. if they were interested in participating as an artist who might fit within this CI nomenclature and whether they minded its formality. The responses were affirmative.

Faiva Talanoa

Talanoa had been kept to a minimum in compliance with the AUT ethics, which committee agreement that I would not overwhelm artists with correspondence. Here is when the practice of *teu le Vā*, ensuring that artists felt free to opt-out at any time or to veto what I say about their personal conversations.

After ethics had been endorsed, I was able to send participants the formal permissions I required to continue with the research and my talanoa questions for them to scrutinize and with the option to agree or to disagree to take part. In total, I managed to talanoa in their chosen interview media.

My approach to British-based artist Jade Montserrat needed to be treated differently to the CIs of Aotearoa because she has no context to work within. Sensitivity and deep listening were necessary because of Montserrat's numerous cultural traumas and cultural violence meted out on her in the United Kingdom at various ages, including the present day.

Data Collection

Ethically I was confident that the participating artists would not feel like 'subjects' but more like part of a Hau'ofa-ian 'sea of islands'⁵⁵. Each of the participating artists could not be 'classified' within a set of statistics nor sets of behaviours which could be assigned. As the great Teresia Teaiwa (2015) stated, "It's to remind people of the complexity and not let them paint us with a single brush stroke."⁵⁶ Through written and online meeting platforms, I gathered their responses as the vital data to reinforce my argument for artists of the Diaspora being indigenous through their art praxes in the Vā.

Data Analysis

I have formulated my own model of analysis based on the *heliaki* of a *Sea of Islands* for the Cold Islands as destinations of safety for each participant, and some of the methods of reaching these islands is the use of four types of oars.

The Four Approaches and Their Oars:

In order to assist artists in the process of finding their particular 'island' in the Vā, I have employed the use of the Tongan *heliaki* (metaphor) method to maintain an indigenous Moana-specific methodology to add to my vocabulary. These islands are: *Quiet*, *Interpreting*, *Seeking and Transgressing*. These islands are also the specified *approaches* in this model devised to locate their **habitus** as their **island** in the Vā.

In using the metaphor of travel and navigation throughout this work, I allocate the humble *oar* (paddle) as a tool that will assist us in our va'a (boat) to reach these destinations. There are four oars which I suggest and expand upon, further on in Chapter 5, on page 92. If it's not clear what the metaphoric role the va'a plays in this text, it is because a va'a is the individual artistic endeavour. It is the continued effort of studying all of the elements which come to play in this unique and customised journey.

55 Hau'ofa, E. (1993). Our sea of islands. In V. N. Eric Waddell (Ed.), *A New Oceania, Rediscovering Our Sea of Islands*. (pp. 2-17), Suva, Fiji: University of the South Pacific.

56 Teaiwa, T. (2016, October 8). I was once seduced by Disney. But no longer. Retrieved November 6, 2020, from <https://e-tangata.co.nz/arts/teresia-teaiwa-i-was-once-seduced-by-disney-but-no-longer/>

Chapter 5: Findings

Introduction

This chapter is a comprehensive outlaying of my findings through the course of my research. It includes the two senior artists mentioned in the previous chapter *Robert (Bob) Jahnke* and *Lily Laita*. Their practice established a safe ground for the following participating artists. Through gauging their level of cultural confidence, I have been able to extrapolate their incredibly unique approaches to their cultural formation. From here, I have been able to locate ‘approaches’ to the Cold Islands for each artist and the ways that they have arrived there through my model.

Critical Praxes: Two Pioneering Cold Islands Artists

Like those *nainai* of the first-generation artists of the Windrush Generation in the British art scene, children of Pacific immigrants too were emerging out of art schools around the same time in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Artists such as Jim Vivieaere (b. 1947 d. 2011, painter, installation artist and curator, Cook Islands-New Zealander), Professor Robert Jahnke ONZM (Ngāti Porou-Sāmoan), Ioane Ioane (b. 1962, sculptor and painter, Sāmoan-New Zealander), Lily Laita (b. 1969, painter, Ngāti Raukawa ki Tonga/Tanugamanono/ Pākehā), Michel Tuffery (b. 1966, multimedia artist, Cook Islands-Tahitian-Sāmoan-New Zealander) and among this generation, some of the very first to attend art school and become artists, I include myself – Olga Krause (married name Wilson b. 1966, multimedia performance artist, curator and writer, Sāmoan-New Zealander).

This is not included to cite a litany of names as proof, but these artists were some of the first to just follow the ancestral whispers and trusted where these whispers led them. I focus on two major first-generation artists Jahnke and Laita whose works prepared the ground through their particular habitus and how they made their space habitable.

As artists who are Tangata Whenua and Tagata o le Moana⁵⁷ (Māori and Pacific Islands) dual heritage, Jahnke and Laita have the capacity to position themselves as artists indigenous to Aotearoa without further qualification. However, the nuances and choices made for the second-generation CI artist presents them with manifold layers of complication in stating their place as easily.

⁵⁷ *Tangata o le Moana* is a long-term exhibition at The Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, curated by Moana/Pasifika scholars – Kolokesa Māhina-Tuai, Sean Mallon and Damon Salesa. Its title has influenced the way we address being ‘Pacific Islands diaspora people’ and is more commonly used. It is preferred because it references all ‘P.I. peoples the moana or the sea or Moananui-a-Kiwa the Pacific Ocean. Furthermore, it acknowledges the late scholar, Epeli Hau’ofa’s critical sociological text, ‘Sea of Islands’ and the ocean as a marker of identity. (C. Vercoe and Hau’ofa).Needs citations

Professor Robert Jahnke (Ngāi Taharora, Te Whānau a Iritekura, Te Whānau a Rakairo o Ngāti Porou/ Sāmoan/German), states:

I was born and bred in Waipiro Bay, it is my tūrangawaewae, hence my acknowledgement of my hapū connections to Ngāi Taharora, Te Whānau a Iritekura and Te Whānau a Rakairoa. I have often said that if I had been born and bred in Apia my public persona would be Sāmoan; the same would be true if I was born in Germany.⁵⁸

For Jahnke, what underpins his notion of indigeneity is nationality (Māori as opposed to New Zealander) is location and proximity to his tūrangawaewae (home whenua or land) where he was born and raised. Jahnke's Tangata Whenua status affords him the knowledge of his whakapapa (lineage) here in Aotearoa which in turn provides him with the security of connection to his ancestors here. This is not to suggest that his Sāmoan-ness or German-ness are in anyway irrelevant. It is fitting that his Māori self is that which is his habitus. His knowledge and confidence were formed in an intrinsically Waipiro Bay Māori setting and therefore became a cultural competency with which he approaches the world. According to Crossley, (2001)⁵⁹ "The habitus forms the practical social-basis for innovative and improvised action. It consists of forms of competence, skill and multi-track dispositions, rather than fixed mechanical blueprints for action."

Jahnke's life experiences and hexis were formed in the bosom of his Māori iwi, Ngai Taharora, Te Whānau a Iritekura and Te Whānau a Rakairoa, not Apia nor Germany. The term Hexis (Greek) first applied by Aristotle to describe one's active constant disposition and in this cultural context, how one actively lives within a set of identifiers within one's culture. He is not stating that this is a fixed set of Māori characteristics, but rather his general hexis.

As Jahnke himself states: "Because I am Māori first and foremost, I see my role as an educator as far more important for Māori culture than my role as an artist.... For me personally this commitment is a cultural obligation."⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Jahnke, R., personal communication, July 11 2019.

⁵⁹ Crossley, N., (2001, February). The phenomenological habitus and its construction. *Theory and Society*, 30 (1), pp. 81 – 120. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/658063>

⁶⁰ Palmerston North City Council. Creative Giants of Palmerston North. Retrieved July 21, 2019, from <http://www.creativegiants.co.nz/view/fine-art/robert-bob-jahnke.php>



Fig. 12. *Karapu Whero, Karapu Ma, Karapu Kikorangi*, MDF, paint, neon, one-way glass, mirror, electricity, 2015

Jahnke's most recent sculptural works take the form of neon light installations. Prior to this, many of his works included native timber and lead. The medium is only one of his artistic considerations; the other is the conveyance of specifically Māori narratives involving the effect of Christianity and its meeting points with Māori spirituality. In his exhibition *Ata, A Third Reflection*, Jahnke's neon infinity installations refer to the emergence of Te Āo Mārama (the world of light) out of Te Pō (the world of darkness). It is vital to note that Māori notions of light and dark can differ greatly from the associations of 'good and evil' as in a Christianised Western reading of light. For the most part, coming out of the dark into the light is moving from a state of no understanding to a state of understanding. As an artist, founder of the first Māori Visual Arts degree in a non-Māori educational setting and as an indigenous person, Jahnke has led a life of commitment to Māori finding strength in their indigeneity.

Lily Aitui Laita, (Ngāti Raukawa kī te Tonga, Sāmoan and Pākehā)

Another of the Sāmoan artists from the first generation of artists to emerge out of New Zealand art schools is Auckland-based artist, Lily Laita.

In the mid-late 1980s, Laita completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Elam School of Fine Arts, University of Auckland and later completed her Master of Fine Arts there as well.

Laita acknowledges her Tangata Whenua status as well as her Tangata o le Moana status. For Laita, the definition and experience of her upbringing reflect this much more bicultural habitus; however, Laita, *is* Tangata Whenua because she is indigenous to Aotearoa.

Here is an excerpt of Laita's response to questions relating to the naming of oneself as indigenous, and the implications of this naming:

If anything, they are continuing to build on the foundations and assert the importance of Pasifika voices in Aotearoa today. Not sure if they need to locate their indigeneity to validate their practice? Indeed, the creative platform is the Vā that we can all connect to?

Her works explore signifiers of Sāmoan and the mauri/ ethos and of her homeland here in Aotearoa. Laita's painting practice arose directly from her deep need to make art; arguably, her practice initially emerged from emphatic statements about her habitus or her usual three-fold identity as Māori, Sāmoan as a woman. Her unapologetic approach to who she is can be intuited in her mark-making: gestural, bold, and intended.

When I started Art school (1987) I was determined to create new work ... I created a black polythene cube with no direct light source, so I could paint directly on builder's paper with my hands. The primal sensory deprivation led me to create my first 'gafa la'au' which featured text and a separation of cultures as trees in painted and 3D forms. Whilst it was very basic at the time – it was the beginning of a number of works where the three parts of myself jostled for space and a voice, and sometimes different audiences that I suppose lead to lots of layering of ideas and themes. I quite like the fact that people could read or see the work on different levels based on what they could 'read', but never really seeing or understanding the 'whole picture'. As a young person I would get invited to lots of things – and whilst I understood the novelty value of the situations, I always considered Art a vehicle – so I pretty much said yes to lots of crazy things because I was full of myself and thought 'fuck it! – represent! – they've never seen anything like me before and they're getting three for the price of one' (ie; Māori/Pasifika/female). Whether it's the nature of being an expressionist creative that the work is always seen as political – communicating or challenging the status quo or a combination of youth and feeling like I had a lot to say... even if it is a work for a PI context – it will still have aspects of my other sides layered within.⁶¹

⁶¹ Lily Laita. Personal Communication, September 22, 2020.



Fig. 13. *Pari'aka*, 1989, by Lily Aitui Laita b. 1969

Pari'aka (see fig. 13) is one such work that acknowledges Ngā Poropiti (The Prophets) of Taranaki, Tohu Kākahi (Te Āti Awa, b. 1828 d. 1907) and Erueti Te Whiti o Rongomai II (Te Āti Awa, b. unknown d. 1907) who are famed for their settlement at Parihaka in Taranaki on the West Coast of the North Island. In the mid-1860s after the bloody Taranaki wars, they pursued peaceful and non-violent resistance to the European settlers. Laita appropriately employs the Taranaki dialect to title the work *Pari'aka* and with the omission of the letter 'h' from Te Whiti's name. She also acknowledges the Mau Movement's passive resistance to the New Zealand Administration of Sāmoa in the 1920s led by Tupua Tamasese Lealofi III. The Mau Movement's motto "Sāmoa mo Sāmoa" (Sāmoa for Sāmoans) was established with the same spirit of passive resistance as Tohu and Te Whiti to the colonial presence of the Empire via the New Zealand Government. On Saturday, 28 December 1929, Tamasese (as he was known) was one of eight who died by the guns of the New Zealand Police. This date was thenceforth known as Black Saturday⁶². Laita's work is an acknowledgement of both monumental acts of resistance which come from both of her ancestral lines, Aotearoa and Sāmoa and uses the glottal stop as a reference to its use in both *Pari'aka* and Sāmoan language, as a keeper of the sacred space (Teu le Vā – maintenance of relationship) between Māori and Sāmoan as mutual ancestors. Both indigeneities exist through Tā -i- Vā (Time-Space) Reality of her body and mind. In the mid-1990s, along with two other artists Niki Hastings-McFall (Sāmoan/Pākehā) and Lonnie Hutchinson (Māori – Ngāi Tahu/Sāmoan), Laita formed a collective called *Vāhine* (*Space-Women*) based around their ability to move through time-space through their physical art practices. They collectively acknowledge their intangible connectedness to each other through their Sāmoan gafa (ancestral lineage) and their metaphysical relationship to Sāmoa through the waters connecting them: Moananui a Kiwa (Pacific Ocean). The invisibility of this connection and the artistic naming of their collective as *Vāhine* demonstrates how Vā relational space works. Their collective actively state that they

⁶² Black Saturday' in Samoa', URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/black-saturday-nz-police-open-fire-on-mau-protestors-in-apia-nine-samoans-killed>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 16-Dec-2016.

embody two spaces at once. Laita's practice gives us visually and stated facts relating to the operation of Vā as habitus.

In the next part of this chapter, however, artists are presenting their works without any visual or spoken relationship to the Vā, but does this mean that they, therefore, exist outside of it?

The Lei/Lay of Aotearoa's Pasifika Art Ocean over 25 Years

For at least 25 or so years, academics and researchers and curators such as Caroline Vercoe, Marilyn Kohlhase, Lisa Taouma, Peter Brunt, Fulimalo Pereira, Sean Mallon,—Ngahua Te Awekotuku, Deirdre Brown and the late Teresia Teaiwa actively challenged the Eurocentricity of the art histories which we were raised with since the start of British education systems began in Aotearoa. They have been world leaders in decolonising art histories and providing New Zealand-born Pasifika/Oceania artists with history relative to their place of importance in Oceanic and world art histories. We have them to thank for some of the very first art-specific academic texts, exhibitions, catalogues and moving image. Sonia Boyce and Stuart Hall among others in Great Britain have provided the same work very much for *Cold Islanders of England*. Not only radical change, but subtle and imperceptible change is occurring.

Twenty-five years later, it appears that the *CI* artists face the same conflicts but appear to be less self-effacing about the strategies they apply to their investigations into identity. Of more importance, though is the acceptance of their state of conflict and work of 'getting on with it' to lesser or greater degrees. The new millennia gave birth to more than just new children, but also a vocal and better-equipped researcher and tulāfale (Sāmoan for orator) or practitioner of auto-ethnography. Rather than the passivity associated with romantic notions of being 'discovered' and subsequently written about, the twenty-something to the thirty-something-year-old *CI* artists are actively writing themselves into the once impenetrable art histories.

Social media, while it can be an accursed futile space, has become an important media through which to disseminate and test art discourse. Here is instantaneous access to share and glean from analyses, debates and to experiment with ideas related to the politicised black/brown/other/queer body. The internet's agency of personal research and growth has enabled local and global support for the isolated artist and community is no longer bound to the physical dimension. Many contemporary artists and even just those whose bodies have been othered by mainstream media have found solidarity online. Body positivity movements that exist (Jameela Jamil's *I Weigh*, Sarah McGraw's *Already Pretty* and Marie Denée's *Curvy Fashionista* among others) on the internet have revolutionised the way the body can be the site of pride and celebration which has become a vital platform for performative practice around the globe. For the *CI*s and *CIE*s alike, this has been a useful platform for their generation. *Fafswag Collective* has become a leader in the

digital domain as far as drawing attention to gender-fluid Pasifika/Oceanic/ Moana and Queer bodies in contemporary art space. The work *Avanoa a Tama* (2012) (fig. 14) by Tanu Gago is of his partner, artist, Pati Solomona Tyrell. Gago's work has been critical in the specifically Polynesian queering of the Auckland art scene through auto-ethnographic images of the community they have formed in South Auckland. Gago and Tyrell founded the collective of South Auckland queer artists, Fafswag: brown queer pan-gendered and unapologetic.



Fig. 14. *Avanoa a Tama*, 2012, by Tanu Gago.

In the early 1990s, we saw the important awareness-raising work of Rosanna Raymond, Ani O'Neill, Ema Lyon, Jeanine Clarkin, of the Pacific Sisters Collective, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. They were instrumental in placing brown, gender-fluid Pasifika and Māori women right in the faces of the white fashion and art world in Tāmaki Makaurau of that time. The Pacific Sisters would perform some of the first intentional activations and provocations of their kind. Positive, pan-Polynesian women and those identifying as women, were at the forefront of fashion and art audiences at a time when they were least welcome. These were times when the first generation of Pasifika/Oceania academic research was in its infancy. Art, fashion, and exhibitionism were ways of researching and gaining confidence in their own various shades of brown skin.

The years that followed became one among the most critical periods in the knowledge base and research fields for pan-Polynesian artists throughout the Pacific and Oceania. It is during this period too that that other artists of importance began their art praxes. Amid this growing Polynesian (most Auckland-based) community were artists such as social-documentary artist and art DJ - Tuafale Linda Tanoa'i (Sāmoan), Ani O'Neill (Kuki Airani Papa'ā) – installation and performance artist, Greg Semu (Sāmoan) – photographic artist, poet and activist Reverend Mua

Strickson-Pua (Sāmoan), Terry Firkin (Ngāi Tūhoe) - gallerist, Yuki Kihara (Sāmoan, Japanese) – multimedia performance and installation artist, Justine Sime-Barton (Sāmoan) – filmmaker and playwright, Ole Maiava (Sāmoan) - television personality and Pacific researcher, Darren Kamali (ni Viti Fijian poet and performer), Lonnie Hutchinson (Sāmoan, Ngāi Tahu) Niki Hastings McFall (Sāmoan, Pālagi), Felix Krause (Sāmoan), Dr Leali’ifano Albert Refiti (Sāmoan architect and academic), and Lemi Ponifasio (Sāmoan, conceptual artist and dancer).

MASPAC (Māori and South Pacific Arts Council) was the funding body established by the QEII Arts Council for Māori and Pasifika artists in 1978. For the first time, there would be funding for exhibitions displaying works solely by artists of Māori and Pasifika heritage. Some of the earliest among them Momoe Malietoa von Reiche (Sāmoan national trained in Aotearoa – painter and poet), Teuane Tibbo (Sāmoan painter) and Matafetu Smith (Niuean weaver) gained some recognition. It would be about a decade before artists such as Jim Vivieaere (New Zealand Cook Islands multimedia artist and curator), Johnny Penisula (Sāmoan painter) and Andy Leleisi’uao (Sāmoan painter), emerged. Not long after, followed, Fatu Feu’u (Sāmoan painter and carver), John Pule (Niuean poet and painter), John Ioane (Sāmoa multimedia artist), Lily Laita (Māori, Sāmoan painter), Filipe Tohi (Tongan sculptor), Iosefo Tupuana’i Leo (Sāmoan sculptor), Robert Leger (ni Viti, Pālagi sculptor) and Ema Kesha (Sāmoan weaver), Lisa Taouma (film maker), and sisters Eimi and Evotia Tamua (photographic artists) in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Vivieaere (b. 1947 d. 2011) was such a pivotal character in giving ‘face’ to Māori and Pasifika art makers in the early 1990s. He curated the ground-breaking exhibition *Bottled Oceans*, which showed at City Gallery, Wellington and McDougall Gallery, Christchurch⁶³. It is the most critical turning point for Pasifika/Oceania artists in contemporary art history.

The exhibition was significant because this was the first major exhibition of contemporary art by New Zealand-based Pasifika artists. It challenged both Pacific and European expectations of art because it sat outside the traditional heritage arts such as carving and weaving. They were not artefacts staged ‘en vitrine’ as in anthropological museums, but artworks made within a European academic context by New Zealand born 20th-century artists based in Aotearoa - not the islands.

63 Artists: Fatu Feu’u, William Furneaux, Patriq Futialo, Bruce George, Niki Hastings-McFall, Ioane Ioane, Lily Laita, Iosefa Leo, Simmie Nichols, Johnny Penisula, Lyle Penisula, Laugutu Poloai, John Pule, Ani O’Neill, Albert Refiti, Toegamau Tom Sefo, Greg Semu, Tania Short, Filipe Tohi, Michel Tuffery, Lape Fakalaga Tulisi, Veronica Vaevae, Loretta Young. Curated by the late, Jim Vivieaere. The exhibition toured for a year to Auckland City Art Gallery, 2 December 1994–6 February 1995; Manawatu Art Gallery, Palmerston North, 14 April–27 May 1995; Waikato Art Gallery, Hamilton, 10 June–20 August 1995; Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Christchurch, September 15–29 October 1995



Fig. 15. Installation view of *Bottled Ocean*, 1994 at City Gallery Wellington

In the next chapter, I will examine the habitus of the Aotearoa-born and based Polynesian bodies to further exemplify alternative inhabitations of space (Vā) outside of the conventions of heritage arts and art that sits only within a Western art framework.

Salesa (2017), notes, “Perhaps the most significant is the generational change that has emerged between those born in other Pacific Islands and their children born here. These changes are not uniform or universal, but there is a broad trend. Pacific people born in New Zealand and are less likely to speak a Pacific language other than English as their first language.”⁶⁴

A large per cent of first-generation parents did not follow their parents into a church-orientated lifestyle. Alternative places such as sports clubs, musical groups, the mall, gang affiliations and pubs were far more accepted and liberal: the habitus gap between generations grew/grows exponentially.

For CI artists, the field of art is expansive and Pālagi. Being an artist of colour, whether Māori or Pasifika, whether present in Pasifika or Pālagi art event, whether conscious or not, cultural, and social classification is occurring. New Zealand-born people without their indigenous language or customs could experience the same anxiety when entering people of their own culture, let alone a gallery filled with Pālagi people. The fear of being publicly corrected for not knowing cultural cues amongst people from the home islands can negatively affect future attempts at trying to engage in one’s cultural customs.

⁶⁴ Salesa, D., (2017). *Island time: New Zealand’s Pacific futures*. Wellington New Zealand: Bridget Williams Books.

Māori-Sāmoan artist Natasha Matila-Smith says:

Sometimes I just want to make things that I find fascinating and to me being Indigenous is more about telling stories and travelling and collecting and conveying those stories, however that may be. I don't relate to heritage practices because I didn't grow up with them.⁶⁵

One space that has enabled the diaspora of Aotearoa-based Pasifika artists in Tautai Contemporary Art Trust initiated in the mid-1980s by Sāmoan-born, Fatu Feu'u (Village: Falelaili). Now, Tautai has its own fully operational gallery and acts as a central place for Pasifika/Oceania artists here to feel a sense of solidarity and safety within the broader art landscape of Aotearoa. As Matila-Smith states, not growing up with heritage practices has meant that it is not up-taken. Tautai has fully embraced those who feel at odds with their own heritage and accept this as a phenomenon affecting all Pasifika/Oceanic diaspora artists and has therefore been considered one of few safe spaces for Pasifika/Oceanic artists to demonstrate all that they are. Under a new kind of ethos, Tautai currently does not distinguish Māori as separate, and holistically accept that we all whakapapa (have genealogical links) to Hawaiki Nui. This acknowledgement of whakapapa is one of the most natural, yet radical paradigmatic shifts to occur in the development of the arts sector in Aotearoa today.

Fresh Gallery Otara (est. 2006) is another haven for Pasifika/Oceania artists as well. Manukau Arts employed a visionary curatorial director, Ema Tavola (ni Viti – Fiji) who championed contemporary art in the heart of Moana Pacific Tāmaki Makarau – Auckland. It was a powerful statement of urban Polynesian presence in the art scene. It is a powerful statement of urban Polynesian presence in the art scene; it is also a place where the sounds of Jamaican roots reggae, from the other side of the planet, still echo around the walls.

‘Mashing it Up’⁶⁶ in England

The cultural blend of people rendered an amazing and unique musical sound known as *ska*, a British blend of Jamaican roots-reggae music and new wave/punk. It naturally came to the fore as a new music form that involved Jamaican British people and white British people. Bands like, The Specials, Fun Boy Three, The Beat (Ranking Roger), The Selecter, and Smiley Culture, are among the many that emerged. Earlier music made by Trinidadian -Jamaican heritage singers such as calypso emerged influenced other genres and new talents from the 1950s to the late 1980s. Their

⁶⁵ Natasha Matila-Smith. Personal Communication, July 14, 2020

⁶⁶ Mash it up is a patois phrase which became part of the British vernacular. It is Jamaican Rasta patois and its meaning suggests something to be a great success, however It has been used in various contexts with a variety of alternative connotations. Retrieved from <https://niceup.com/patois.html>

British-based musical careers soon became popularised with music by Lord Kitchener, Dandy Livingstone, Joan Armatrading, Maxine Nightingale, Billy Ocean, Linton Kwesi Johnson, Aswad, The Equals, Dame Shirley Bassey among the many. Bob Marley and the Wailers rose to fame in Great Britain because of the Windrush connection. Reggae music exploded onto the international music scene first in England because Reggae and Rasta music groups were still intricately connected to their homes in Jamaica.

British art too was to undergo change with Afro-Caribbean British artists finding and making their voices heard in 'their' homeland.

Among artists, curators and writers who entered the artistic landscape in the late 1960s were Winston Branch, Tam Joseph, Althea McNish, Chris Ofili, Eddie Chambers, Edward Kamau Braithwaite, Stuart Hall, C L R James, Paul Dash, Errol, Lloyd, Keith Piper, Sonia Boyce, and Patrick Vernon.

Winston Branch was born in Castries, St Lucia, the Caribbean Islands in 1947 and emigrated with his parents when he was twelve. His education was British, studying at the prestigious Slade School of Fine Art, University College, London. He mounted his first solo exhibition at Art Lab Gallery, Drury Lane in London in 1967. The political climate for West Indian immigrants at the time was far from ideal, but the emergence of West Indian artists initiated their entry into the art scene; soon, there would be uncontested avenues for Black British pride.

As a painter, he was recognised as a great talent, winning the British Prix de Rome prize which enabled him to study for a year (1971-2) in Rome.

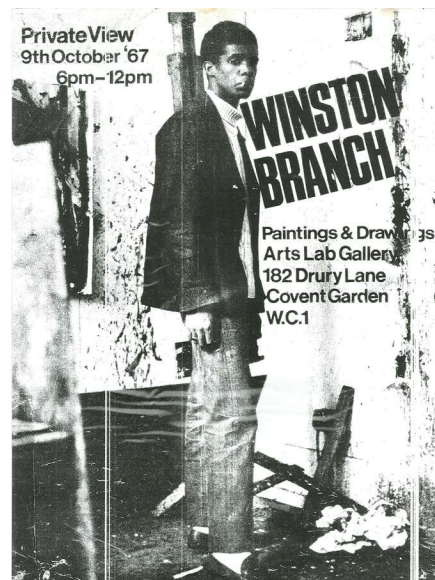


Fig. 16. Promotional poster for Winston Branch exhibition.

The original group *BLK Art Group* formed in 1982 – they were Marlene Smith, Eddie Chambers, Keith Piper and Donald Rodney. They were experimental, conceptual artists who helped black artists in Britain to find some kind of ‘body corporate’ in which they might find some support and understanding the difficulties of making art within a white imperialistic art scene.

Sonia Boyce (born, Islington, London, 1962) is by far one of the most influential Black British artists of the Windrush first generation. After thirty years of educating, making, and writing about art, Boyce becomes the first Black artist to represent Great Britain at the 2021 Venice Biennale. Boyce has contributed hugely to the *British Black Arts Movement*⁶⁷ and to the visibility of Black artists in the United Kingdom.



Fig. 17. *The Audition*, by Sonia Boyce, 1997

The Audition, detail of photographic interactive performance installation, 1997, © Sonia Boyce, Courtesy Manchester Art Gallery

⁶⁷ The British Black Arts Movement established in 1982 by Eddie Chambers, Marlene Smith, Keith Piper and Donald Rodney.

Her works are often the result of conversation and social interactions and often take multiple forms.

Boyce's earlier works often adopted a provocative approach applying cultural type-cast and, simultaneous invisibility in the art world. This movement placed landmarks in the British Art landscape in a time where artists of colour were ignored and consequently undocumented (at least in a positive light) and therefore remained unacknowledged.

CAM or Caribbean Artists Movement in Britain and the British Black Artists Movement (1982 – founded by Keith Piper) were pivotal collectives that consolidated the creative talents of most of the artists who emerged out of the Caribbean/West Indian and African diasporas to stake their place to stand in the British art scene. With curators, artists, writers, and academics such as Sonia Boyce, Petrine Archer, Stuart Hall, and Eddie Chambers charting the histories of the Jamaican/West Indian artists, this *CIE.s* art history is very much still in the making in the same way that it is in Aotearoa. Some of the first, publicly-exhibiting first-generation CIE artists to emerge were Joy Gregory (b. 1959, photographer, British-Jamaican), Isãc Julien (b. 1960, installation artist and filmmaker, migrated from St Lucia), Ingrid Pollard (b. 1953, photographer, British-Guyanese), Steve (Rodney) McQueen (b. 1969) film director and screenwriter, Grenadian-Trinidadian descent), Hew Locke (b.1959, contemporary sculptor, British-Guyanese), and Donald Rodney (b. 1961 d. 1998, artist and leading figure in Britain's BLK Art Group, British-Jamaican).

The Jamaican/ West Indian/ Caribbean artists have tended to have much more of a transnational relationship than those of their *CI* counterparts. In many cases, there are still close creative connections to the homelands of their parents and grandparents. Oneika Russell, whilst born in Jamaica, studied at Goldsmiths University, London. Her practice has taken her back and forth and around the globe to Japan. Similarly, artists such as Yuki Kihara (Sāmoan/Japanese) who is indigenous to Sāmoa, emigrated to Aotearoa, where she emerged as one of Sāmoa/Aotearoa's most highly regarded international artists.

In 2018, an important exhibition curated by a Jamaican-based curator and academic, Dr Marsha Pearce, focused on the reverse migration. *Americas in Britain: Windrush*⁶⁸; Pearce calls it the 'Windrush moment' and her curation of the exhibition alongside two British curators underscores the importance of the connection with 'homeland' (Britain) to the homeland (West Indies/Caribbean).

The appearance of 'racially-based' exhibitions in the London art scene was not something done with ease. Hayward Gallery in London, 1989, was the site of the ground-breaking contemporary

68 Retrieved from <https://caribbean.britishcouncil.org/blog/americas-britain-windrush-2018>, 8 August, 2020

African, Caribbean, Asian art exhibition, *The Other Story and the Past Imperfect*.⁶⁹ It was considered by its curator, Rasheed Araeen to be a necessary intervention into the dismissive and racist art bourgeoisie exhibition scene in London (and almost all European and American galleries in the 1950s to the early 1990s). His curatorial model was a bold and uncompromising redressing of a dearth of public gallery spaces enabling African, Caribbean, and Asian conceptual and experimental contemporary artists. Araeen's focus, like mine, is one the immediately addressing post-war and second-generation artists of the Polynesian/Oceanic diaspora.

The importance of this curatorial remit in the history of British art history mirrors that in Aotearoa's art history too. Major catalytic thrusts by curators and artists of Māori, Pasifika/Oceanic, African, Caribbean and Asia descent. Araeen was considering 'habitus', not solely ethnicity. He was interrogating experiences of the diaspora rather than placing each artist into a generalised sorting system. With this same intention, I draw comparisons between the 'Windrush moment' and that similar 'happy islander' moments of the 'Matua and Tofua moments'. How, eventually, the location for each of us here in Aotearoa and in Great Britain have shared this same gruelling recent history of discovering the realities of not being 'indigenous' and, in the 1950s – 1980s at least, a sense of alone-ness forged the new kind of unapologetic and brave new Cold Islander. They are finding that locating a place can be found through the production of art.

69 Tate Britain. (2009). The other story and the past imperfect. Retrieved from <https://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/no-12/the-other-story-and-the-past-imperfect>

Proposing Four Artistic Habitus Types

The creation of metaphysical lands: Seeking, Quiet, Interpreting, Transgressing is not really something that I am proposing, rather I am using metaphors to paint a picture to assist in finding a more appropriate way to discuss ‘indigeneity’ as Tauīwi, on first nations’ soil.

This thesis proposes the artists’ bodies as multi-platformed Vā (space) in which they have absolute agency and wherein lie the states of the Cold Islands. The cold is part of their physical reality. Their habitus has been acculturated, pālagi-fied (Europeanised), where ways differ enormously to that of their indigenous parent(s) has infused through socialisation in a colonised indigenous land. Their indigenous Reo (Māori for language) often has (not always) estranged them from their parents or grandparents, where the grasping at bytes that they understand is of significance because they are all there is. Their mouths labour in attempts to speak that which would have come naturally from their tongues if they were born on the island of origin. Their sensibilities and tastes in fashion, culture and even food have been flavoured by the dominant culture and by Māori, yet they are part of both or neither. These influence artistic response, as stated by Taylor (2016) in the concluding paragraph of the previous chapter.

Discussing the works of artists in the Western academic sense can at times appear to be insensitive to the ‘subject’ as a means to give weight to one’s ‘theory’. It is an unfortunate reality of the problem of having very formal and critical studies around the metaphysical space in which CIs occupy. In this instance, I apologise – fa’amagalo mai. Because I, like anthropologists of old, cannot find another way to give expression to the fact that I need to analyse the artists’ methods and processes to extrapolate their motivations and rationales. My intentions are to provide a new generation of artists with language and strategies for self-representation.

The Four Approaches and Their Oars:

Quiet: Typically, the *Quiet* approach is acquiescent. As Cold Islanders, they understand the great distance of their location from their Pacific Islands language and customs. They can vacillate between the Western and Polynesian thought and practice with ease. They tend not to overstate their 'islandness' out of respect to indigenous islanders and their own parents and grandparents' experiences.

Interpreting: While almost everybody interprets each situation to manage aspects of their lives better, the *Interpreting* approach to the Cold Islands will generally be most pragmatic about the facts presented. They are not overstating their position, merely presenting their interpretation of it.

Seeking: Those belonging to the *Seeking* approach are often very close to their sense of self as an Islander in the diaspora, but their knowledge of this drives them to continue to seek the deep of their ancestral home and present works which enable a fresh way to look at ancient subjects. They are always looking homeward.

Transgressing: For the *Transgressing* approach Cold Islander, there is a profound and strong and deep connection to their language and customs, but who are unable to maintain the imposed beliefs of the Church over the indigenous beliefs of their ancestral home. They refuse to accept the Victorian Christian form of their traditional customs and find alternative artistic methods to proclaim this.

Oars

Each of these *approaches* is aided by one or more *oar* (hoē in Māori, foē in Sāmoan). These four Oars describe the media with which the artists work, and move, as they approach their place, and enact their praxis.

Oar 1 – contemporary media – online social media platforms, video, memes, text, image

Oar 2 – a blend of representations of ancestral art from home and contemporary art references, installation,

Oar 3 – The body – performance art – radical honesty

Oar 4 – conventional media – drawing, painting, photography, photographic montage, collage,

Quiet

Natasha Matila-Smith (Sale'aumua, Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Hine, Pākehā)



Fig. 18. *Missing you sucks*, 2018

In recent times, this type of Indigenous artist has evolved to embrace pre-colonial Indigenous ways of life and reject the colonial systems but inevitably having to do so within a traditional Western framework/ In seemingly stark contrast, there are the quiet artists. These artists of Indigenous heritage are either disconnected from or barely resemble what is traditionally known as an 'Indigenous' artist. They are typically more engaged with 'Western' culture and reject direct political discourse.

Since Natasha Matila-Smith completed her MFA (with first-class honours) in 2014, she has been a practising artist and art writer. She considers it problematic to categorise artists of colour. Matila-Smith has coined the phrase '**the quiet**' in her critical essay 'The Quiet Need No Defence.' referring to indigenous artists whose practice and outward-projecting aesthetic or stance is highly nuanced and less explicit about political motivations and representation. Her terminology expounds the sovereign right as an individual of the Diaspora to reject all forms of pigeon-holing and urges the people to manifest whatever kind of methodology of their choosing. The 'same-ing' of Diaspora artists disempowers the individual indigenous, diasporic artist to choose for themselves where they locate themselves on the politicisation scale. As a multimedia artist, she does not produce works that bear any outwardly 'Pacific' signifiers. Matila-Smith has a distinctive voice in the art landscape of Aotearoa. Her practice has evolved from multiple 'selfies' and memes as self-portrait documentation posted on her profile on the social network platform, Instagram, to honest and, at times, heart-rending auto-biographical texts painted on velvet. Her current practice is essentially performance art: she is not acting. Employing longing and desire as a methodology is not uncommon to artists. However, Matila-Smith's beautiful, crafted forlornness is profoundly moving. As a plus-size wāhine (Māori for 'woman'), her openness is arresting and challenges all hegemonic notions of who gets to be wistful and pouty. Her works are powerfully defiant, yet

simultaneously expose her fragility. Her work does not go into who she is as a Māori-Sāmoan woman; she knows who she is already.

Matila-Smith is from the *Quiet* space in the Cold Islands. Here, her political and activist perspectives are implicit in all of her work. She does not feel the need to wear her indigeneity like a crown. She shares herself with much generosity and opens up about childhood experiences.

Sherrelle Smith (Mum) and Brian Matila (Dad), both born in Auckland. My Mum's parents are currently still alive, they're both Māori and my Dad's Mum was NZ European, and Dad was Sāmoan, but he passed away when I was very young, so we didn't have a lot of connection to the Sāmoan side, other than food. It was a bit easier to connect to the Māori side because in Aotearoa it's a bit more embedded in the culture, but neither Mum nor Dad were very 'culturally' involved. We grew up surrounded by other brown people though, and we are from a lower socioeconomic background, so class was more prevalent than culture, though our lineage was always there, I didn't even really notice I was 'Māori/Sāmoan' until I was in my teens. I was a fair child with blue eyes and blonde hair, but my sister had brown skin and brown hair, brown eyes. So, I don't know even though it wasn't really a 'thing', our whakapapa/lineage is embedded in our upbringing. We did visit Nuhaka (Grandad's marae) once for a family reunion, and it's only now that my grandmother is really trying to get us to connect to our Ngāpuhi (Ngāti Hine) side, but neither of my grandparents really shared the language or anything related to their culture with the grandkids. My Dad is half Sāmoan and he still connects more with Māori lol... all of his kids are Māori haha.

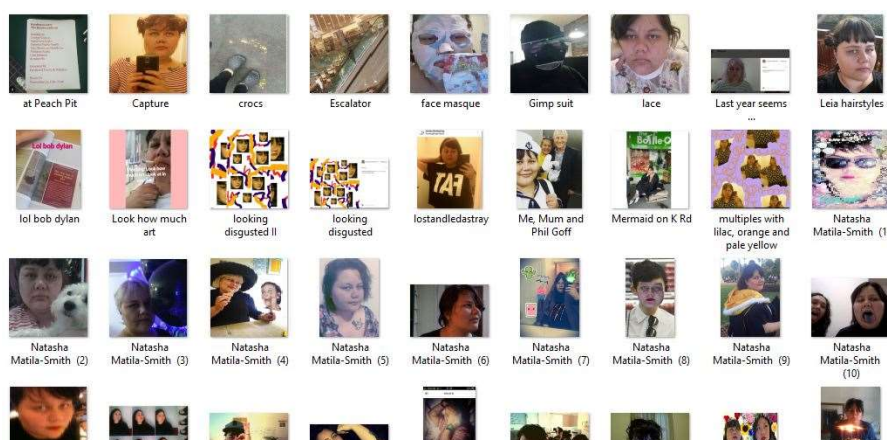


Fig. 19. Screenshot of several self-portraits from various social media accounts

Matila-Smith reconceptualises the self-portraiture as tests of the concept of self-authorship and honesty as artistic strategies. The works in fig. 18 were individually posted on social media over a long period of time. For my research, I gathered as many of these as I could and placed them into one document. They reveal the constant querying of the self, whether as a woman, an indigenous woman, and a woman exploring their own possibilities for beauty and desire.

I've been taking selfies since prior to the Myspace days. As soon as I got a digital camera which held like 100MB storage or something like that [haha]. Now, I do it out of habit, but I think being conscious of it has somewhat hindered my ability to kinda capture the moment in a realistic way. Like, being conscious is to be very aware of how I look and that the consumption is for someone else and not myself. Where I think originally, I created them so I could create a world where I looked a certain way and I was happy with that look. Now, phone cameras are much harder to trick! ~ haha. But because I like fashion and film and art, these things kind of come together in the Instagram universe through writing and selfies. They are produced for vanity's sake sometimes. Sometimes I like my outfit or my look. I don't really know. They are really a product of this day and age, though I think evolving from this will be me producing video works eventually. But much like my other 'art works', these images are created with internalised bias. I don't always want to look fat and the phone automatically whitens my appearance a lot of the time, depending on the lighting. So, the images are not reality. They are an attempt to capture reality at times, though I'm aware that this cannot be done.

Hall (2018) speaks about the “*shifting* process of positioning” and that “ In fact, identity is always a never-completed *process* of becoming – a process of shifting *identifications*, rather than a singular, complete finished state of being.”⁷⁰ For Matila-Smith, it is not that the self-portrait is meant to capture a verisimilitude of ‘her’, but to provide us with a multitude of aspects of *whom* she offers us. Her queries are posited very subtly. Every ‘pose’ and ‘look’ never quite give away her ethnicity and nationality, nor are they intended to. Her artistic inquiry is not really interested in the convergences or compartmentalising of her various ethnicities. And rather than allow white ethnographic ‘tourists’ to write about her, she often chooses people who are more like her.

I personally don't want to give white people the satisfaction of making work about my lack of connection to my culture.

Pacificness? I don't know what that means really. Pacificness in general to me would be a sense of community, but I'm quite a loner so I like being alone more than I like being around large groups. Large groups generally stress me out, so yeah if there is a family gathering, I usually go hang out with the kids or something rather than the adults. I don't like small talk lol. I now list all my whakapapa after my name - Māori, Sāmoan and NZ European, to pay respect to my family but also so people don't always ask me where I'm from lol.

With this statement, Matila-Smith states a preference for solitude as opposed to being in the midst of a group. Her habitus goes against the stereotypical Polynesian assumption to which Pasifika and Māori commonly clustered. Her habitus does not sit in alignment with the notion of the extended family. Instead, her sense of community is experienced through the simple acknowledgement that this is a community to which she belongs. And in authoring her own narratives through these self-portraits, she is in control as the recording of this distance from her indigenous and Pasifika knowledge.

⁷⁰ Hall, S. (2018). *Familiar stranger: A life between two islands*. Great Britain: Penguin.

Matila-Smith's response to a question I posited around always discussing race, ethnicity, identity, and the body as people who are of the various diasporas in our Aotearoa art world is bold and confronting. She owns her position is complete control of what she projects to her viewing public.

Nope lol. Thoughts on that here...<http://unprojects.org.au/magazine/issues/issue-12-1/the-quiet-need-no-defence/>⁷¹ ...sometimes it is overwhelming, and, in my opinion, we do that by living, so I am still trying to decide what are my responsibilities to keeping those kaupapa alive. Especially when it comes to my art making or writing. I don't know if it needs such a loud distinction. There are people already doing that, so why do I need to?

Adding to that, not all aspects of being Polynesian comes naturally or intuitively as a person raised in a predominantly 'Pākehā' rugged individual habitus of the New Zealand 'Kiwi' psyche. I asked her which aspects of 'Polynesian culture' (not that there is one pan culture).

The tuakana/ teina⁷²...Respecting all elders regardless of who they might be as people. I mean I struggle with this at times because I am pretty independent. I don't like to do what others tell me to do lol. Maybe that's the colonial in me, but I also find a lot of pressure from older gens to fix what they couldn't... Just because X is familiar ... doesn't mean there isn't place for others like me and Talia and Faith to make the kind of work that we make, that isn't directly about our heritage or about being from minority backgrounds. Sometimes I just want to make things that I find fascinating and to me being Indigenous is more about telling stories and travelling and collecting and conveying those stories, however, that may be. I don't relate to heritage practices because I didn't grow up with them. I think this is an individual journey that everyone has to make for themselves to rectify what has been stolen from us, but it's not anyone else's decision to say when or where we should do this. There are so many factors that have separated people from their non-white cultures and many reasons why they can't just reconnect. I dunno, it feels like you are treated like a traitor if you embrace any aspects of globalisation and colonisation - even though this is impossible not to do! I'm very much in the same opinion as Lana⁷³, that being 'Polynesian' or from Oceania is 'muddy', there is no one way to be and there is no right way to do things anymore, and it is possible for all these different voices to co-exist. It is very colonial to consider one way is correct and others are incorrect.

Macpherson (2001, p.73) notes: "Traditional bases of authority, such as genealogy and chiefly titles, no longer conferred automatic privilege in the meritocratic Aotearoa."⁷⁴ This querying of

71 Matila-Smith, N. (2018). The quiet need no defense. (M. Clark, & N. Lehman, Eds.) un.magazine (12.1), 97-103.

72 Tuakana/Teina is the Māori concept of older sibling /younger sibling. It is a relational binary which implies a relationship of respect and deference and in context with elders, respect/deference.

73 Referencing Lana Lopesi's 2018 text False Divides.

74 Macpherson, C. (2001). Pacific cultures and cultural identity. In C. Macpherson, P. Spoonley, & M. Anae, Tangata o Te Moana Nui: The evolving identities of Pacific peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand (pp. 66 -80). Palmerston North, New Zealand: Dunmore Press.

instantaneous respect reveals much about the shift in familial habitus as well. Without such strict 'tikanga' or protocols, the habitus of the Cold Island is more at ease with a more 'New Zealand' approach to power relationships and their individual (not collective) sovereignty at all times.

In many ways, finishing off Matila-Smith's conversation around 'muddiness' raised is a powerful metaphoric image: raising more questions than there are answers, around 'pure' culture as opposed to those considered 'muddy' due to being raised outside of the 'village'. It draws us an image of those with a quiet approach and their acceptance of their cultural selves; they have formed an accord with uncertainty around how they should or shouldn't 'perform' culture.

Summary: Natasha Matila-Smith's Practice and Location in the Vā:

Matila-Smith's approach is *Quiet* in that her method of approaching culture, sexuality, politic and societal phenomena are implicit and underpinning everything that she does and stands for.

She uses *Oar 1 and Oar 3* – contemporary, non-formalist artistic strategies to make her art. Matila-Smith's body and generosity is profoundly honest and is what enables her to maintain her mana and strength as an artist.

Interpreting:

Dylan Lind (New Zealander of Cook Islands Descent)

Dylan Lind is based in Tamaki Makaurau Auckland, where he lives with his wife and children. Ra was his mother; she was a Cook Islander, Derek, his father is New Zealand Papa'ā.

A single tivaevae has hung on the wall of Lind's studio for as long as he has been painting. The tivaevae is quite possibly the *only* signifier belonging to his mother's culture that connects him to notions of Cook Islandness and acts as the most enduring influence on his twenty-year art practice. The little things turn out to be enormous. Accretion is the imperceptible accumulation of matter; particles slowly amass over time to create something astronomical. It is a term used in astrophysics, geology, and finance to describe slow but constant growth. Considering the earlier works and titles of Lind's works, a kind of confidence in ownership of selfhood appears to have developed over the years. Not so much with the making of the marks, because Lind is an exceptional painter, but with the depth of intention and certitude that each new work embodies about his relationship to his non-mainstream self. It is the Cook Islands heritage that appears to quietly appear. Each work represents a grappling with the ever-present sense of dislocation within the context of Aotearoa New Zealand as one of the largest Polynesian island groups in Aotearoa, the Cook Islands culture thrives in areas of Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland and even more-so, Tokoroa in South Waikato.

For Lind, growing up in the urban sprawl of Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, and not in one of the predominantly Pacific suburbs possessing the small-Cook Islands feel, his exposure was limited to relatives and a few visits to the 'homeland'. There was little Cook Islands presence in his immediate environment and therefore, extremely limited 'traditions' visible to him. This absence of these traditions would mean that Lind's habitus and hexis would largely be European Pākehā. Such disparity for Lind caused cognitive dissonance for him. Unable to connect with or to 'feel' Cook Island. In his mind, Cook Islandness was attached to traditional heritage art forms like tivaevae, dance and hearing the language being spoken. While this is not in and of itself huge for him, it is interesting to note that despite the separation from the full-immersion into what is perceived to 'real' Cook Islands culture, the constant visual presence of this *one tivaevae*, not Colin McCahons, Rita Anguses or Ralph Hoteres, but this geometric patterned tivaevae, is the objet d'art that manifests itself most consistently through his work. For Lind, there is a sense of disquiet in the tenor of his works. Questions about xenophobia, the state of the economy of this country emerge within the work *TPPA/ Tapa* (Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement) work which demonstrates that Lind's works partly represent searching for an identity so much as they epitomise the very thing Kant was discussing noumena of the enabling *das ding an sich* (the thing itself) to speak as he speaks: in both a Western and Polynesian vernacular. That is to say within

Tā-Vā Reality, and the noumenon of his paintings operate as both object and intrinsically both his Pākehā and Cook Islands sides exist and speak using the artist's principles of formalism and an aesthetic based upon Cook Islands tivaevae patterns. His work is the *reality* where he can claim indigeneity. Here, there is enough space between the traditions of the actual tivaevae that informs the geometric triangular repetitions found many of his works.

Cook Islands and Papa'ā cultural paradigms become blurry in a relatively Western (colonised) British colonial context here in Aotearoa New Zealand. This is especially so for grandchildren of the Pacific diaspora. For Dylan Lind, this has been the case, growing up with Rarotonga-born mother Rauru (Ra) Kimi and Fijian-born Papa'ā father, Derek Lind. With parents both living and operating in a country outside of the places they were born, yet within the context of Aotearoa New Zealand, they grew a community within the culture of their home. This was added-to by the artistic and musical wealth that added community to their family as Lind's father is both a visual artist and professional musician and a practising Pastor of a post-modern Christian church. The addition of a faith element upon a Pasifika context is not only common, but it is also one of the places where ethnicities can freely gather to share their faith in their mother tongue and possibly of equal importance, belonging to a cultural structure that sings with the same comfort of 'home'. While this sounds charming, idyllic even, this was not Lind's experience per se. The multicultural nature of the church was not specific to his mother's Cook Islandness nor did it offer him the full-on 'Island' experience at all because it sat outside of the main denomination that most Cook Islands people belonged to after moving to Aotearoa; the Cook Islands Christian Church (founded by the London Missionary Society in the Cook Islands in 1821). The church, for most Pasifika citizens, was the equivalent of 'village' and is still one of the most influential channels for the maintenance of Cook Islands language and culture in Aotearoa. It is in such communities also where 'culture' is future proofed.



Fig. 20. Dylan Lind's parents - Ra and Derek Lind.

Image courtesy of Dylan Lind.

Lind himself acknowledges that to be indigenous means a sense of belonging to somewhere.

It's not something I've consciously thought too much about. I would say that I'm indigenous to New Zealand. It's where I was raised, educated and it's a place that I have travelled extensively.

For Lind, the visible cultural markers he personally associated with Cook Islands culture was not so evident in his observations about culture and belonging to it. These observations also pertained to his mother and the community within which he was born.

She [his mother] had some "Cook Islandness" to her but not to the level I've seen in extended members of the family or even from what I've witnessed in other Polynesian families. I guess it is to do with the circle of people she and my father associated with. Our home wasn't particularly Polynesian in the stereotypical sense. We didn't remove our shoes at the door. We were more likely to have Bob Dylan or Joni Mitchell than Brother Love playing on the stereo. And our meals were more meat and 3 veg than Chop Suey and Ika mata⁷⁵. Not that we didn't have those things, but they tended to be at larger gatherings.

Something that is not often considered around cultural distance is circumstances that taint memories or cause a flight response. The material cultural possessions relating to being a Pasifika person are lovely reminders, but in actual fact, they are merely superficial overlays or 'over-leis'⁷⁶ in the construction of our own habitus. Lind's habitus was being an urban Auckland living a city life. Not being immersed in 'Cook Islands' ritual and cultural was always going to be an uncomfortable marriage. Being faced with difficult circumstances in one's ancestral home would be off-putting for many. Some situations require much more nuanced and focused preparation before entering into the culture at that is not the one of your own habitus. Such is the case with Lind's first journey home. In a sense, this was an unfairness that was dealt a blow to the only part of Lind's Cook Islands psyche, leaving him bruised and requiring distance.

We had several tivaevae and my Grandfather's ukulele that hung on the walls alongside paintings, posters and found objects. My dad wore a pareu and was often barefoot, but I'd say that my greatest feelings probably came about due to the lack of it and a feeling of disconnection. I had slightly dismissive attitude towards it. Having to deal with land disputes on my first visit to the islands probably didn't help this view. Memories were bittersweet and I was reluctant to return and didn't for another 20 years.

While the experience of Teresia (Teretia in Kiribati language) Teaiwa's return home to Viti-Fiji in 1994 to work at the University of the South Pacific, the language she chose is reminiscent of the experience of Lind's visit to his ancestral home in the Cook Islands. "After five years of teaching there, and having my personal life become thoroughly articulated

⁷⁵ Ika mata is the Cook Islands translation of 'raw fish'. It is a dish made throughout Oceania and in Aotearoa, it is seen credited as being an 'island dish'. It consists of raw cubes of fish, cured with lemon juice and salt and swathed in coconut cream and often served with raw onion.

⁷⁶ Leis are necklaces that are made with fresh flowers. Two Dollar shops now sell cheap imitation versions made of synthetics.

with the immeasurable demands of family and friends, I lost some of that edge...⁷⁷” (Teaiwa, 2001) about the importance of maintaining an intellectual edge (in relation to Pacific Studies and the University of the South Pacific in Viti-Fiji), Lind’s experience of turmoil on his first visit ‘home’ I imagine took the exciting *edge* of what might have been one of the most positive cultural experiences of his life. Yet still, the whispers of his ancestors still speak to his aesthetics and he just interprets these with his paintings of urban-New Zealand-esque tivaevae.

There have definitely been things that have moved or affected me in some way. I’m still painting triangles because of something that hung on a wall 20 odd years ago. I love the idea of women gathering together to create art. I have been moved by the singing that you hear during a church service. And my Grandfather’s never-ending prayers. And I get cravings for the food. Yet, despite all that I may always feel estranged from them. There’s still distance there. Some of it is deliberate. I never wanted to be the “island” artist. There are plenty of others eager to chuck me in that box so I try not to help them too much.

It’s weird for me. I don’t think I really noticed race or cultural differences so much when I was younger. I spent time at my Grandfather’s in Mangere and there was a large Tongan community during my primary/intermediate education, but I also had the musicians and artists from my father’s side, who for the most part, were of European descent. So, initially, I didn’t think too much about it. I think, when my wife moved here, and her being from another country and having an accent opened my eyes more to racial tensions within the country. I started to notice comments and conversations that we’d consider inappropriate toward “brown” people. My piece “Who’s afraid of beige, umber and taupe,” was a direct reference to those kinds of comments. Hell’s pizza’s “brownies eat horse” billboard.

Lind’s painting habitus is definitely heavily influenced by Western art. Despite the distance from Cook Islands culture, his internal habitus has been ‘taken’ by the art of his ancestral forebears.

The way I paint is influenced more by the West and in particular post-war American art, but the subject matter or the motifs I use are often Polynesian... The type of paint and the techniques used sit more in line with Abstract Expressionism but the pattern is based on a Cook Island Tivaevae and the earthy palette is a nod towards Tapa cloth.

⁷⁷ Teaiwa T. K. (2001). Lo(o)sing the edge. *The Contemporary Pacific*, Special Issue: Native Pacific Studies on the Edge. (13)2. Retrieved from URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23717596>

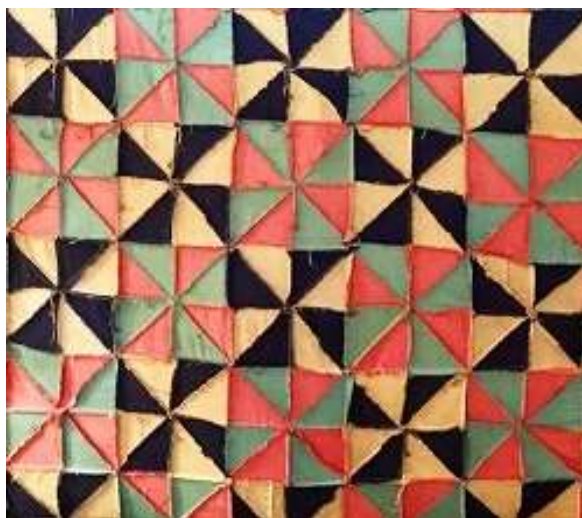


Fig. 21. *Tivaevae*, maker and date unknown. Collection of the Lind 'Anau

While it is understood from a whakapapa (genealogical) perspective that only Māori are indigenous to Aotearoa; Lind's cultural and sentimental distance from the homeland of his mother's forebears leave him having to define his own identity as a Kiwi artist.

Kiwi. That's what I am. It's what I know and if I was to get more specific, I'm an Aucklander. That's what I try to depict in my art. My use of the Tivaevae is almost always in a grittier, dirtier, uglier, urban way.

This land is the only land he has felt at home in, is by his definition, where he feels 'indigenous'. I posit that this place where he feels most deeply connected to is his place in the Vā. Here he holds on to the only vestiges of his heritage: his memories of his mother Rauru, her tivaevae, the ukulele of his grandfather, and his own sense of self. He makes himself culturally safe through his interpretation of the only piece of the Cook Islands upon which he truly belongs.

Summary: Dylan Lind's Practice and Location in the Vā:

Lind's space in the Vā is *Interpreting* – his works are about the interpretation of the world as he sees it, without frills or extraneous material. He states exactly what it is that he experiences as a descendant of his Kuki Airani (Cook Islands) ancestors: distance as well as connection. Lind is always connected to him mum, Rauru through his art practice.

The *Oar 2* and *Oar 4* tools have assisted Lind in reaching this space of *Interpreting*. Lind uses *Oar 4* - a formalist approach to making his works and was influenced by Western art periods such as abstract expressionists and some forms of abstraction. Yet visual sensibilities are his inability to shake the shapes of tapa and tivaevae that seem to emerge from his paintbrush as if by some ancient chant.



Fig. 22. *Te No'o Nei Au*, 2018, Image courtesy of the artist.

Seeking:

Telly Tuita (Kingdom of Tonga, Australia, Aotearoa)

Spirited away from Tonga as a nine-year-old child by his grandfather Tuita, and placed in the foreign land of Australia with his Tongan father and Pālangi stepmother, Telly Tuita is an artist who has interrogated this experience as both a researcher and a bewildered dislocated person. Living in Aotearoa for the last few years with his husband Hoani, and continuing his art practise, Tuita has had more disconnections than most from the islands of his origins. To this end, Tuita's practise was quite different to most of the Pacific/Oceanic diaspora in that his work references a fantasy, a memory, and the solemn teaching he received in the space of a few days while traveling with his grandfather to his new foreign home, the home of indigenous Australians, a colonised land, ostensibly, another iteration of the United Kingdom, from the Kingdom of Tonga.

So little of his Tongan tradition was invested in him past that point in his history. This is where the mother of invention lent a hand.

Epeli Hau'ofa's article *The Ocean in Us*⁷⁸ was an emancipatory piece of writing for many who belong to the Diaspora because it was one of the first to acknowledge the distances that many of us experience as Islanders and one of the first times in anthropological writing that began to address or close this distance. After living with his Tongan father and Pālangi stepmother, Tuita was woefully distanced from the island experiences of his relatives at home in Tonga. Growing up in Australia saw a gradual erosion of his language with no one to practice speaking Tongan with and his 'new' way of life was just like that of most migrants to Australia and Aotearoa. This distance is something that Telly does not rue or wish to change because it cannot be undone. In the same sentiment of Hau'ofa, he has developed an ocean within where *he* is indigenous to *his* Tonga.

By the time Tuita had reached art school in the early 2000s, he had mined the resources available to him. “

As a cold islander, you try to make sense of your history, so you read white history and then you try and make sense of shared history and shared knowledge amongst Pacific Islander sources.⁷⁹

What was the single-most powerfully defining moment in Tuita's life, being abducted by his paternal grandfather, would appear to most as an extreme trauma. However, this uprooting was carried out with the intention to ensure that Tuita would be raised in a place that could keep him far from any politics within the family and to obtain a Westernised education. This abrupt

⁷⁸ Hau'ofa, E. (1998). The ocean in us. *The Contemporary Pacific*, 10(2), 392 – 410. Retrieved from <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.2.907.347&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

⁷⁹ Tuita, T. (2020, 31 July). Cold islanders interview. (O.H. Wilson, interviewer) Wellington, New Zealand.

departure from all things Tongan and familiar gave him precious space in which he became his grandfather's nainai. This particular point in his life is enshrined in Tuita's psyche as his 'Tonga'. He is not that interested in proving to others his Tongan-ness because he fully embraces his reality. Whether he has generated a fantasy land Tonga, Tuita acquiesces that he is not a Tongan expert and happy to continue seeking.

He knew it was done out of love, and he knew that his grandfather was acting on intuitions beyond himself. Over the ocean and the Ocean that is within, is one point of reference for Tuita to his Tongan self.

Some excerpts from an interview with Tuita reveal much about the distance he feels from his indigenous homeland and an acceptance of this fact. This acceptance is the navigating impetus for much of his visual journeying.

... this is stuff that has been on my mind since 2000 and whatever... when I went to art school once you leave high school. And you're sorta starting to be a bit more aware of the world around you but you know, but then you're also aware of your place in that world and my world was Australia. And as... you know ... very similar to Aotearoa... we've got the first people of Australia. I have to say – it's a good place to be in terms of my artmaking... Let's just say that. It's always a question after question after question... it's also ... you're always feeling displaced and completely just like ... like you said... Cold Islands – I love that line by the way ... I might use that...

And y'know as a cold islander – you try and make sense of your history so you read white history and then you try and make sense of, you know, shared history and shared knowledge amongst you know... Pacific islander sources whether it's a physical person or writing or an object and on a personal level, I feel, yeah, like I'm displaced, so I'm constantly like... grappling at things to eventually land somewhere but as I get older it's like I don't think I'll ever land anywhere...and I'm quite comfortable now as thirty year old man... male, to just always be grappling, because I think that's the place of the ... y'know? That sort of cold islanders' generation.

Telly is constantly seeking, returning to his unconventional removal from his homeland of Tonga. It is as though the source of his seeking is embedded so deeply in his bones that the gravity of it pulls him back to there. He believes in going to the material source, which is naturally the ancestral plane where he knows he exists in Tongan time-space reality. *Tongpop* is one outcome of his seeking, yet it is also the outcome of his ancestors who sought him as the 9-year-old nainai.

So – yes, there is an authentic Tongan aesthetic, and I see that within y'know... ngatu now as in it still survives and its still ongoing. The practise, the rituals, the process, the manufacturing, the cultural y'know... sort of significance, I mean that is proper – for me anyway, personally, the authentic aesthetic that has survived – for me that's why it's such a predominant umm component of Tongpop, Tongpop being y'know this imaginary world that I have created, because I'm a cold islander, I can't feel connected to, you know, the place that I'm living, the place that I left as a nine year old boy, I have to be careful with that memory, because it is, y'know in a way, a

child's fantasy, but, umm I try and hold on to those authentic aesthetic memories y'know with my grandfather, the processes when you go to church, the hierarchy, the family...

An artist whose work also explores fantastical indigenous lands is Andy Leleisi'uao (b. 1969, Auckland, New Zealand) "At home, traditional Sāmoan cultural expectations were imposed on Andy, a contrast to the contemporary European values of the country to which he was born. But he wasn't seen as a New Zealander by society at large. Nor did he consider himself a full Sāmoan, not in the traditional sense." So, as best he could, he merged both identities, he became what he describes as *Kamoan*, and he was free to do with it as he liked."⁸⁰

Unlike Leleisi'uao, Tuita knows his indigeneity only through the name that he was given as a legacy of his royal Tongan lineage, but the similarity lies in the constructive effort placed in seeking this place to call home.

So his name was *Tuiniua Tuita*, and he's a you know, and he was ... the son of a Baron Tuita, his nephew was married to Princess Pilolevu and umm so he got me just enough, because I was pretty much whaangai-ed and passed around until about the age of about 8 or 7 and he literally spirit me [away] over one night, and prepared me for Australia. But, even within that short time, there were so many memories of ... and he also gave me my Tongan name, which, y'know, I suppose gave me legitimacy within the family line, umm but also amazing little memories – like he bought me my first apple, and y'know, the apple for me is such a western symbol, but also then you can go deeper with the religious symbolic value of it as well, but I remember just looking at this thing and not eating for ages and he found out and he got angry and said 'eat the apple what are you doing just holding on to it?

But I'd never seen anything like it before. You know like...so for me those are the authentic memories y'know that I hold on to and of course, I think, as a child's mind, you embellish things. Still at the end of the day, those are the memories that have kept me going and have kept me connected and have kept me motivated creatively.

Yeah, for me that's what I do, flagellate this stuff to release the guilt of not being Tongan or release the guilt of being a little bit too Pālangi in mind, and to release the guilt of my... parents who... completely abandoned me and left me to sort of y'know... go it alone really.

Tuita is a realist, he is honest about his reality and acknowledges that his habitus has taken on a 'Pālangi' mind. But the question is not why he feels guilt, but why he considers that this thinking causes a void or cavity in his Tongan psyche? While Carl Mika (2015) writes in relation to Māori and metaphysics of 'thereness', his words offer salve for those who disparage at an apparent loss of their indigenous thought: "The speculating Māori self resides among the force of the this void, which is inextricably linked with the presence of a thing, and the void has the potential to forever

⁸⁰ Ben Bergman on Andy Leleisi'uao. Bergman is the Director of Bergman Gallery in Avarua Rarotonga. Retrieved from <https://bergmangallery.co.ck/exhibitions/andy-leleisiuao-kamoan-mine/>

render the thing beyond the self's cognitive reach."⁸¹ His inescapable Tongan appearance emanates with the royal blood he possesses yet because of history, his traditions have been out of reach. This has forced him to reach within and repopulate the void with Tongpop.



Fig. 23. *Tongpop Wanga*, Digital print, 2019

I've gotten to a point where you know... also as an adult, you stop fantasising about the realities of your own culture, in terms of y'know... being the submissive one ...who was sort of overtaken because you realise there are people within our own culture who allowed it or who went along with all of these shifts in history to sort of bring us where we are now. Know what I mean?

I think once you open yourself up to learning about y'know ... and experiencing ...the world, as a whole, you know, again, I sort of flagellated that feeling of loss of not being 'Tongan', or that feeling of like "What if I wasn't taken to Australia?" And in fact you know I've got cousins in Tonga who still live in Tonga who are also in that same situation – for some reason they did do the migration, and so they're living this Tongan life that I sort of look out and say, "That could've been me." You know?

My question is, does make you any less authentically Tongan? You're living this life. Again, I'm 38, and I cannot be fucked feeling down for other people's you know... labels... cos, you know I've got to be comfortable in my own skin, yeah, for whatever circumstances, yes, I could've gone and done night courses in Tongan, but even that,

81 Mika, C. T. (2015). Thereiness: Implications of Heidegger's "presence" for Māori. *ALTERNATIVE*, (11)1. 3-13.

I feel a bit dirty. I know it's really bad, but it's like – I almost sort of like sitting in this, and wallowing in this loss, I mean, this even extends to practises in both our cultures. You know, there's a loss there – you know. Not only by the hand of the colonisers but also by the hand of our leaders, you know... way back then. A lot of stuff was lost. So, we won't be ever authentic again because it's fucking loss, you know, no matter how much we try to sort of re-ignite or try and reinstate it or whatever ... Those things happened of a time, of a place and you just can never make it exactly the same.

In an important essay about 'place' Caroline Vercoe (2017) writes salient words about *history as a place*. "The dynamics of place offer a rich point of departure for a consideration of contemporary artistic interventions within historical discourse, as spatial and temporal considerations are increasingly highlighting the limitations of chronological, linear approaches."⁸² In Tuita's visual lexicon *Tongpop* represents both histories as place as well as his cosmological intralocutor the Tongan goddess, Havea Hikule'o who reigned over Pūlotu (where gods and Tongan souls reside – it is thought to have been an actual island). For Tuita, Hikule'o is present in all his works. His collages and assemblages are more than just art; they are the historic documents that place him in a space where he feels a connection to Tonga in his psyche, his works are his Pūlotu, his Vā, his intangible connection to his history. His Cold Islander approach is constantly seeking to locate his Pūlotu, morphing to variations of Hikule'o and himself as his history continues to unfold.

And also I feel as 'gay' as 'brown' as a male, I feel also I'm a feminist, but you know I think because of my European upbringing and even my experiences in Europe and with other Europeans – you know I sort of feel like I'm ahhh... undercover – I can play the game. can talk the talk, walk the walk but all the while I'm sort of just infiltrating and seeing what the hell and being part of it mentally, emotionally, but all the while I sort I almost feel like Amai and Bennelong⁸³ who sort of went to Europe and were sort of coasted along by the Europeans to help them – so I feel that's my role now, like I put myself in that role.–

You'll probably agree Leafa, that lived experience at the top of what we do is also vitally important because if we don't have that, we're sort of just swimming around and being lost. Your lived experience, my lived experience – we're sort of all in that same murky kind of waters. But obviously my lived experience is very different from your lived experience, but we almost come to a place that we feel the same.

Summary: Telly Tuita's Practice and Location in the Vā:

Telly Tuita is still the little boy with his Granddad in Tonga. He is a true *Seeker*, not because he is lost, but his work's compass always points home. He is at home, on his his island, *Seeking*.

⁸² Vercoe, C. (2018 [2017]). Contemporary Maori and Pacific artists exploring place. *Journal of New Zealand & Pacific Studies*, (5)2, 131–43, doi: 10.1386/nzps.5.2.131_1

⁸³ Woollarawarre Bennelong (c. 1764 – 3 January 1813) of the Eora Nation in Australia. He was acted as intralocutor between Eora Nation and England. He travelled to England in 1792 and lived there with his compatriot, Yemmerrawanne in Kent.

Tuita very easily The *Oars 2, 3 and 4* to serve him in intuiting his way back with his use of found objects and installation. His use of his body as a prop in his performative self-portraits are radically generous: he shares his love and One-ing with the deity *Hikuele'o*. And his use of conventions of Western art such as photography and assemblage are what make his work's va'a go straight to Tongatapu.

Seeking/ Transgressing:

Ahilapalapa Rands (Kanaka Maoli/ Indigenous Hawaiian, iTaukei/Indigenous Fijian, Pākehā/Settler European)

Ahilapalapa (Ahi) Rands is a New Zealand-born artist whose histories in Aotearoa began much earlier than most of those belonging to the third wave of the Pacific migration. Her whakapapa begins here with the arrival of her maternal grandparents in the 1930s from disparate lands. Her grandmother, Karine Lowe, or ‘Gam’ as Rands calls her, was the daughter of travelling Hawaiian troubadours; ukulele virtuoso, Ernest Ka’ai⁸⁴, who founded *Ka’ai Ukulele Manufacturing*, and Tuavivi Greggs, who hailed from a dynasty of expert hula dancers. During the 1920s, they toured extensively throughout Southeast Asia and Australasia. During their travels, they settled for a brief period in Singapore, which is where Hawaiian Gam, Karine was born and travelled again to Sri Lanka where they settled more permanently. They travelled to Aotearoa for a tour and never really left, which is where Gam Karine remained and eventually met Rands’ grandfather who came in the 1930s from Fiji at the age of 18 as an electrician. He never left; settling in Mount Roskill, Auckland and here is where Rands’ mother, artist and writer, Melanie Lowe was born and raised there.

And then on my mum’s side, she was born in Auckland, actually in Mt Roskill where I am right now, that’s where I’m living. So, umm, her family story of migration is quite immense, and I don’t feel like I can do it justice. Her whakapapa is Sāmoan, Fijian, Hawaiian, Cook Island and Irish. Yeah, we’re immense.⁸⁵

Already, the physical distance between Rands’ homelands and her Hawaiian and Fijian identity was huge. Rands’ father, eco-entrepreneur and philanthropist, Malcolm Rands, a fourth-generation New Zealander was born in Te Wai Pounamu (South Island) of British (Rotherham) heritage.

A lot of our Kupuna through the generations of my family were travellers across the Pacific, from rivers in Scotland via Chile to Hawai’i and that’s just in living memory.

For Rands, who was raised in the far North in an eco-village with other families who shared the same desire to live sustainably from the earth, she recalls being an extremely happy and positive childhood; however, culturally, she had not reached an age where such issues would begin to prod her sense of self. It was an holistic upbringing however that was more like a village in every sense: family shared childcare, food, resources, and the good of the whole was of utmost

⁸⁴ Ernest Ka’ai born in Honolulu, Oahu Hawai’i in 1881 and died in Miami in 1962. He is known as the father of the ukulele.
https://web.archive.org/web/20120418211702/http://www.ukulele.org/?Inductees%3A1997-1998%3AErnest_Kaai
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernest_Ka%CA%BBai

⁸⁵ Rands, A. (2020, 26 October). Cold islanders interview. (O.H. Wilson, interviewer) Wellington, New Zealand.

importance. We discussed her childhood, and whether there was an immersion into her Hawaiian or Fijian cultures, her reply was very generous:

Definitely not! No. I've thought a lot about this. I think there's like, there's a lot of implicit cultural influence. Definitely. But they're kinda like, in terms of my memory... like delicious crumbs. Cos I think, another thing that was happening all through those journeys of migration is that they were here in the 1930s, they were here at a time when it wasn't okay to be a brown migrant... still not okay to be a brown migrant.

But back then, like the assimilationist drive as a survival tactic was real, and so there was also a lot of (like) pain in my family... Yeah, and I think that, I do feel that I'm a descendent of two generations of quite active assimilationists: internalised and in societal practice... my grandmother was an incredible hula dancer, and from an amazing hula lineage, you know... but that – there was no passing on of that. You know?

She danced – I saw her dance once. There's a video recording of it – I've... as a gift at my parents' wedding. And she was also an incredible musician and I have the distinct memory of her teaching me two moves, making a flower and putting it to your ear and making the shape of a woman.

Like almost all first and second-generation Diaspora people in Aotearoa, assimilation was not a conscious drive, but a strategy for managing and coping in a foreign land. My own children also have not been able to secure some of the innate and intangible things that I know as a Sāmoan person. In the end, one cannot know without having first been taught. Some of the 'delicious crumbs' that Rands spoke of are the voice of her kupuna whispering across time and space to her. Some of which she shares in these anecdotes.

I feel like there were lots of different things leading me to that point. So then being really like, able to receive it ...

But in terms of like... a reframing. That's really happened to me recently with ... I'd say maybe the last ten years and then it just got more and more and more and more... that just started to decolonise more generally ... the more I was able to access and re-understand my childhood. Like I was always a real nature baby. I could just spend the day just like exploring and looking at plants and like, picking flowers and stuff. And it wasn't till recently, going back to my homeland island Hawai'i and spending time with my aunty there, and we just went up the mountain and went off track and we were doing that practice... I left that behind cos I thought, no, that's my kid stuff. And I'd also framed it as like "hippy shit" cos I was raised in, like an eco-village – like – "No, I've gotta leave that behind and I've gotta grow up out of it." So going back to Hawai'i and having that experience, I was like "Yess! I'm allowed. It's fine. it's me practicing my Hawaiianess."

And so now, I'm just like, I just lean into it, it's like the best thing ever.



Fig. 24. D.A.N.C.E. Art Club, 2014

There's been moments like that and moments where people have named me, and that's been really huge. I remember going to university, and Tuāfale⁸⁶ (Linda T), and Va'imaila⁸⁷, we started out art collective right – D.A.N.C.E. Art Club and that... so we've been together since I was 18, 17? 18... so really little, and at that stage... And they claimed me in the most beautiful way...cos you can get a lotta like shade from other islanders that are more immersed in their culture, they're more culturally confident, sometimes people aren't so gentle with you... right? But they were always – there was never any like valuing how native I was, they just kept calling me in. And just kept giving me the benefit of the doubt – like you just ARE. You just are! I don't have to measure how much you are, you just are. And so that constant affirmation from them with no... it was really safe... and really welcoming...that's just had a completely profound effect on me. [begins to cry] Both of them, I feel like they really raised me, in that way

So I feel like I'm in a really different place to where I was maybe 10 years ago. almost straight away, from when I started at art school, I was rejecting that Western stuff that I was being fed. Individualised art practice. I never looked back, we started D.A.N.C.E. Art Club, and even before that, Maila and I were in that Lil Mama's Art Club – that was another really big thing for me, I loved that collective... that was awesome. I didn't really get what I was up to but I loved it. Just getting together and just – weaving and chatting, but at that time I didn't have the framework, I didn't understand the wider framework we were operating in so I couldn't ... I loved it but I didn't quite get what we were doing and then... now I'm like, that was a great collective...

I feel like I'm a mix of Seeker and Transgressive actually...

In terms of... but I also feel like that shifts as I learn more. Or I learn a little bit more from humbleness as well... though, I think early on I was a lot freer with like pulling different parts of cultural things and like, remix [wicky wicky turntable miming] but now... I'm like... oh actually I do need a deeper understanding before I can safely start to transgress.

And so now... now I'm like – that's where I'm... and it's a lot slower. I think that's important. To practice cultural safety, because we are, I am raised in the diaspora and

⁸⁶ Tuāfale Tanoa'i is a film and performance artist who works with storytelling as koha. She is also a well-known indigenous and queer activist whose practice goes back to the 1980s. Her practice as an art disc jockey whose practice has taken her around the world. <https://pantograph-punch.com/posts/linda-t>

⁸⁷ Vaimaila Urale is a multimedia artist who lives and works in Tāmaki Makaurau, Auckland. She and Ahilapalapa Rands formed their first collective early in their art careers called 'Lil Mamas' Art Club' and then went on to form D.A.N.C.E Art Club with Tuāfale Tanoa'i and Chris Fitzgerald. <https://www.sanderson.co.nz/Artist/304/Vaimaila-Urale.aspx>

I do have to take that extra to get the deeper meaning of things before I try to play with culture as material.

Summary: Ahilapalapa Rands' Practice and Location in the Vā:

In some ways, Rands' own judgement of herself as belonging to *transgressing* conveys the deep aloha (love) that she has for her kupuna (ancestors) . Her desire is not to offend them or hurt their connection to her in any way. But as one of the many *nainai* in her ancestral line, her fears are can be allayed, because all questioning comes from them. In this sense, her belonging to *Seeking* as her main island will never let her be too divided.

The *Oar 3* tool of enabling Rands to arrive at her Vā is radical honest and pure inquiry of her own body and its place in relation to her experimental and artistic enactments of aloha (love), manaaki (service) and beauty. Rands' performative art practice reflects the 'village' and communal ethos which she was raised in, and the Hawaiian traditions of deep observations and connection to nature. Rands' performative actions are radical acts of aloha for Papātuānuku (Earth Mother) and all living things.

Transgressing:

Angela Tiatia (Savai'i, Niu Sila)



Fig. 25. *Walking the Wall*, video performance still, 2014

Film-based performance artist Angela Tiatia was raised within the conventions of Fa'aSāmoa. Her mother, Lusi Tiatia, was born in Savai'i in 1942, Tiatia's estranged Australian father has never been part of her life.

Tiatia was raised in a Mormon household. As can be expected in most patriarchal faith systems, there are spoken and unspoken rules around bodily modesty. This was especially so for Sāmoa, as well as for Sāmoans here in Aotearoa. The exposure of flesh was part of the old pagan ways. Mo'a (2014), references this regarding indigenous knowledge stating, "Sāmoans today refer to our pre-Christian times as *aso o le pōgisā o le atunu'u* (shrouded in darkness and sin)"⁸⁸. And this kind of sentiment prevalent was how most Christianised Sāmoans thought of regarding former indigenous art forms and knowledge. Tui Atua writes about the impact of the culture of whispers in Sāmoa – quoting Albert Wendt:

The missionaries (and all other puritans) brought pornography by instilling in us the bourgeois morality of Europe, making us ashamed of the very stories and situations which made us laugh. The puritan would have us believe that one does not exist below the navel. According to a poet friend, "The missionaries came with a Bible in one hand, and a chisel in the other." True Sāmoan humour went underground and remains there in circles we call "respectable." Occasionally it emerges in print... verbally our youth reveal it among themselves on more public occasions; the more madly daring of our orators glorify it in the face of the sanctimonious; on the radio, some of our choirs – especially the older male choirs – sing of it with great gusto; in our more traditional *faleaitu* (comedies) actors display it with gleeful abandonment. And it is good. For our true humour is still

⁸⁸ Mo'a, V. (2014). *Le aso mo le taeao* – The day and the hour: Life or demise for "Whispers and Vanities"? in T.T. Efi, T.M. Suaalii-Sauni, M. A. Wendt, V. Mo'a, N. Fuamata, L. Va'ai, R. Whaitiri, & S. L. Filipo (Eds). *Whispers and vanities: Samoan indigenous knowledge and religion*. Wellington, New Zealand: Huia.

alive and may someday – when we have purged ourselves of the guilt we acquired during our colonial experience – surface again in novel, poem, song and play. Perhaps by then the “Victorians” among us would have “passed away” and we will see no need of censorship, of the figleaf and the chisel.⁸⁹ (Wendt, as cited in Efi, 2014)

Tiatia seeks “transcendence through movement, grace, spirituality...” – but transcendence from what? The brown body, the subject and the object seem to be contestable from with-out but also from with-in. The internal subtext seems to reveal another kind of pushing back, a bit of kick-off at the experiences Tiatia encountered as a younger, dutifully compliant less-aware girl. The effects of a masculinised, Christianised Sāmoan worldview that is pervasive and often dominates the thinking of the ‘churched’ populations in Sāmoan society, are conservative and at times, judgemental of the expression of any form of sensuality.

In an elegant move, Tiatia gets ‘in the face of’ pre-advertising versions of beauty. In a Western reading, Tiatia is the epitome of bodily perfection: she is tall and slim and once was a successful model and television presenter whilst still living in Aotearoa. Flagrantly flouting the rules with a particularly ‘non-Sāmoan’ body type has the kind of jarring effect on the eye. A Sāmoan body in the aesthetic of a supermodel, performing and challenging both paradigmatic beauty ideals of Polynesia and Western media.

Marginalisation has occurred not only in the cultural mainstream art world but also from within a Pacific Christianised mainstream due to her physical challenge of the ‘modesty’ that is prevalent and imposed upon women. This cognitive dissonance due to not quite fitting the Pacific ‘goodie-good’ mould, commensurately causes this interference in the Pacific bi-racial body’s ability to just ‘be’. Tiatia isn’t so much concerned with letting the viewer know this as much as she is often working this out in a visual way.

Other artists Pasifika/Oceanic identifying artists such as the renowned Rosanna Raymond are among a small handful of artists like Tiatia whose performative works both apply but break with accepted modern standards of their Pasifika female bodies. Raymond has long-since included partial or full-nudity in her works as part of the Pacific Sisters Collective as well as her current project *SaVAge K’lub* and many solo projects. For Raymond, her bodily function within an art setting is as a channel and spatial connector to ancestral lands. One of her physical characteristics is her highly tattooed skin. The performance of these ‘actiVĀtions’ approaches the body from a pre-Christian stance also and considers it tapu (sacred) and therefore acceptable at all times for Raymond to perform naked or fully clad.

⁸⁹ Mo’a, V. (2014). Le aso mo le taeao – The day and the hour: Life or demise for “Whispers and Vanities”? in T.T. Efi, T.M. Suaalii-Sauni, M. A. Wendt, V. Mo’a, N. Fuamata, L. Va’ai, R. Whaitiri, & S. L. Filipo (Eds). *Whispers and vanities: Samoan indigenous knowledge and religion*. Wellington, New Zealand: Huia.

Tiatia's work is not at all related to the creation of sacred space; rather, it is the creation of a sparring space, where her stance is firmly rooted in old Sāmoa. At the same time, Tiatia does not even mention the dance known as the *sa'ē* which is not spoken of in 'polite' circles because of its explicit reference to sexual abandon as a most natural thing. It was a ritual dance that included the *aumaga* (the men) and the *aualuma* (the women) who would cast off their clothes to *siva* (dance) as a kind of group sexual arousal. No part of the body was considered profane in ancient Sāmoa because sexual organs were considered "gifts from God Tagaloa."⁹⁰ (Efi, Tuiatua Tupua Tamasese Ta'isi, 2014)

However, the differences remain—Rosanna Raymond as performed her works around the world. But like Tiatia, there is no easy way to reference sovereignty except through their strategic use of their beauty and the marks that qualify them as 'belonging' to Sāmoa, or the Pacific. The practise of body modesty had become the societal norm in Sāmoa where Christian ideology dominates the *habitus* of body acceptability and behaviour. Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital certainly applies to the sets of behaviours now adopted by the Christian Pacific. The *mu'umu'u* (large spacious dress) was the favoured formal attire. These were beautifully patterned and provided the flow of air to cool the body in the heat of the islands. Now, the *pule tasi* tends to be the assumed formal attire for women. The fact that these fitted and zipped-up constricting garments are worn in the hot and humid climate of Sāmoa shows the depth of adherence of Sāmoan people to modesty since first covering up during the time of the London Missionary Society in the Victorian nineteenth century.

When traditional signification comes under the scrutiny of the island-sourced ancestral matter is applied by artists of the diaspora, the unease felt by islands-based islanders always emerges and controversy is stirred. For example, this tee shirt was made by a New Zealand-based DJ. The word *kefe* in the Sāmoan language is considered a profanity because it is the act of circumcising a penis. In Aotearoa, it is almost a word used in everyday language by almost anyone who has heard it used in context as an expletive. In this same way, the use of anybody parts in what might be deemed, a profane manner, would be inappropriate in a strictly Sāmoan-based context.

⁹⁰ Efi, T.T.T.T. (2014). Whispers and vanities: Samoan indigenous religious culture. IN T.T. Efi, T.M. Suaalii-Sauni, M. A. Wendt, V. Mo'a, N. Fuamata, L. Va'ai, R. Whaitiri, & S. L. Filipo (Eds). Whispers and vanities: Samoan indigenous knowledge and religion. Wellington, New Zealand: Huia.



Fig. 26. Facebook post by permission of Ehrman. 2020

"In such thinkers, the privileging of the migrant does not imply a celebration or affirmation of that which is nomadic, nor does it present the migrant as a trope that is automatically synonymous with a space of resistance in cultural terms." (Mathur. S., (2011)

For Tiatia, the break with the rigid expectations of Mormonism in her late teens must have caused some major cognitive dissonance. Shedding of layers of guilt, clothing and imposed thinking was something Tiatia did not take lightly. Modelling was an 'out' but just a means to destination that would enable Tiatia to flourish as a thinker, an artist and a strong Sāmoan woman. Tiatia was not at all distanced from her culture, but the aspects of Sāmoa that she had been attached to had left toxic spiritual stains on her agaga (spirit). Tiatia was raised by her mother and her Sāmoan family: a full-immersion according to its values, customs, norms and language.

In the early years of my practice - the strategies I employed for theoretical context were ones that were steeped in film. Writings from Laura Mulvey "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" and John Berger "Ways of Seeing" etc... but many of these were not specific to a Pacific perspective. The Pacific perspective came from my own lived experience - my years as an actor/model were based in the white capitalist model.

Like Telly Tuita, Tiatia's lived experience in Fa'aSāmoa is what precipitated an intense research-based practice her body would have to be one of the only contestable sites where the interrogation of cultural inflexibility could take place. Within the modelling and acting worlds, she would face unprecedented overt racial erasure or invisibility and yet within her own world, she would stand

out purely because she was involved with such a ‘frowned-upon’ industry. Seeing puerile representations of Pasifika people and roles that reified the clownish Pacific person set Tiatia off on her own journey towards her own habitus and it was then she decided that she ought to be behind the camera and taking control of her own representation. With mentorship from the late curator and artist, Jim Vivieaere, she was able to engage in her own narratives.

My years as a model and actor has informed a part of my practice - in that I understood the language and tools of visual manipulation in performance within a white capitalist system when representing desire/beauty/body/emotion etc..... and using these tools within my own work. But let’s not forget that the one of the narratives that exist around Pacific norms is that it is also deeply performative in many layers for survival, entertainment, community, joy and sadness etc. So to say that the performativity that comes from years of being in the modelling and acting industry would be one dimensional - it also comes from years of being taught by my aunties/cousins of how to siva Sāmoa from when I was very young in Sāmoa for the continuation of a living culture and what is expected of us culturally... and years of how to perform in white spaces for survival etc.

As was the case with my childhood habitus trauma of freezing and being unable to be an ‘authentic’ island girl, Tiatia reiterates this fact that cannot be emphasized enough, the pressure of ‘performing culture’ is immense. Some choose departure, others, like Tiatia stayed to fight.

In every aspect of my daily life. The living practice of Vā from how food/the body/objects/animals/plants/relationships are separated by rules and norms that are not to be crossed. Also, I am in deep gratitude to my immediate family for the life I am able to live. I am a product of a long line of strong women who made massive sacrifices - often at the detriment of their own wellbeing for me to be able to do this work. For example - my mother worked in factories - often grueling and monotonous work - from 4am till very late at night to care for her family. She endured and suffered a lot for us and made the most of any opportunity that was given to her for survival. And in this daily action - it taught her daughters self-determination, survival and self-efficiency from a very young age and has made me the person that I am today. This extends to my husband and son - who also made huge sacrifices for me - and every day I ask myself when in relationship with the continuation of my family legacy to my son “what am I teaching him to make his life better?”... It is a huge privilege to do this work as an artist - and this privilege is a result of many of those around me in the present and from my past. But my work as an artist doesn’t exist in a vacuum - it is all part of cultural and familial legacy - I don’t see the work as “mine” ... it’s for all of us. It’s for all of “us” the individual is an empty existence in modern culture ... our greatest strength is “us” - it has always been what has set us apart - in that together as Pacific people, Sāmoan people that we are working towards something greater than ourselves is an aspect of daily life that is real and lived.

Respect for my elders and mother is a huge aspect of my daily life - being in constant contact with my mother - speaking Sāmoan to her - endowing her with gifts/remittances in gratitude etc. is all part of our Sāmoan diasporic gafa. This is all tied closely to the concept of legacy and family. Family is hugely important - so much like the women in my family before me - I am motivated by the

same concepts of gafa in daily life - how my actions and work will enrich the legacy of my family and our descendants... it is a culture of continual growth and evolution where we want our children to have and be the best that they can be - as it adds to our culture, community and family as a whole.

For Tiatia, such statements about the work being for “all of us”... reveal an indigenous Sāmoan habitus. By this, I mean that the tenets of the ‘collective’ in the social structure at the core of Tiatia’s daily life. Respect or fa’aaloalo and giving back is also an ancient tenet, pre-dating Christianity that underpins her way of working.

It is for this very reason, this confidence that Tiatia has in her own cultural knowledge of herself and that she is indigenous to Sāmoa, that she can and does openly query gender-biased fundamentalist fa’aSāmoa, not solely because they are judgemental or self-righteous, but because her works are so truly and authentically Sāmoan in their intent. Her work *Walking the Wall* caused so much controversy to the point where she had to withdraw from social media.

By exposing long malu-marked (customary female tatau for a woman’s thighs) legs so boldly, she is revealing more than the deep heart of Sāmoan Christian conservatism can take. We are not talking about an artist who has no knowledge of the whispers (taumusumusu)⁹¹ which are negative and intend ill-will. Instead, Tiatia is courageous; she generously allows us to see her resistance to cruelty and hypocrisy within her own culture, as well as to address her erasure from the mainstream. She has been literally driven ‘up the wall’. Her habitus has been deeply immersed in tradition, and her craft is that she is a gifted artist with the ability to provoke thought.

Yes... *Walking the Wall* was a very confronting and controversial work. There was an online community who shared and commented on my image of this work. I call them the cultural police. On my picture was inscribed the message that was holding me up as an example to all the young Sāmoan women of what not to be. My picture was the most commented thread the site/group had received - all in Sāmoan language.... it was not critique in the sense of art critique that we know of in the art world - but it was a good example of the cruelty within the culture where I was physically threatened and bullied - mostly by Sāmoan women who are in alliance to patriarchal violence and control of younger women under the guise of pious concern and neo-colonial cultural correctness.

I knew this would happen - it’s not like I did not anticipate this type of reaction. What I wanted to open up was the blatant hypocrisy within the culture when it come to the exposure of the body. When a Sāmoan male body photographs himself nude with his pe’a - it is shared across the internet as an example of cultural pride. When a female does the same and is clothed (as I was in the work) ... she is a slut. So I responded by making a full nude work to put me on the same level as the male nudes. The female body is such a threat... we **have** to examine where this comes from? Why are there a different set of rules for male and females when it come to showing one’s body? It’s from our history of being colonised by the Christians who made us

91 Efi, Tuiatua, Tupua, Tamasese, Ta’isi (2014). Whispers and vanities: Samoan indigenous knowledge and religion. In T.T. Efi, M. Wendt, V. Mo’a, J. Plane & T. Daniel, M. Von Reiche, P. Morris ... V.N. Kneubuhl & M.A. Tamasailau M Suaalii-Sauni (Eds.). Kindle 5.13.2 (loc. 687 – 1348).

ashamed of our bodies - especially the women - there bodies were seen as threatening and shameful.

Tiatia's stance reveals a well-informed researcher as well as one who is fully conversant in her own mother tongue and cultural conventions. Her work is intended to be aspirational and freeing.

I feel uncomfortable with being labelled as influential in saying this... if "influential" give a tiny piece of permission for Pasifika/Oceania artists to develop work within their own voice - to pursue their career in the arts - what a great honour... I am humbled. And I share this space with many great Pasifika artists past and present.

I produced my work out of the need to see someone like me on the screen - to see a brown body on the screen who is in control of her own narrative. The work is a source of healing and a reconciliation with my past experiences ... of the lack of control I had over my own image for many years as a model and actor and as a good and pious Christian Sāmoan daughter...

I am a Sāmoan woman. It doesn't matter how I label it as being indigenous or not ... Sāmoa is my home - it's where my family is - it is where I was raised and where my ancestors are from. I don't like to label myself as a Sāmoan or Pacific Artist as this only encourages others to box us in - to limit not only their view and expectations of us - but also expectations and views of ourselves. I am an artist who is also Sāmoan, from the Pacific, a mother, a wife, a daughter, a sister etc.... and all these things together inform my art practice.

Summary: Angela Tiatia's Practice and Location in the Vā:

While Tiatia's exposure of her malu and bare thighs may not be so outrageous in Western media terms, to Christianised Sāmoana online trolls, it is somewhat of a travesty. The negative responses to the work 'Walking the Wall' by Tiatia' triggered the ancient practice Efi (2014)⁹² reminds us of: *taumusumusu* "gossip: to engage in murky half-light whispers motivated by jealousy and enmity." Tiatia's work as an artistic creation is not transgressive to any world, but it is for those who maintain the belief wearers of the traditional malu ought to be modest.

Tiatia reaches Transgressing through the *Oars 1*, contemporary photography and film-based art, and through *Oar 3*, a radical honesty and valour that will not back down.

92 Efi, Tuiatua, Tupua, Tamasese, Ta'isi (2014). Whispers and vanities: Samoan indigenous knowledge and religion. In T.T. Efi, M. Wendt, V. Mo'a, J. Plane & T. Daniel, M. Von Reiche, P. Morris ... V.N. Kneubuhl & M.A. Tamasailau M Suaalii-Sauni (Eds.). Kindle 5.13.2 (loc. 439).

A Cold Islander of England

Jade Montserrat

Like the CIs of Aotearoa, CIE.s of Britain had already encountered (putting it politely) Europeans became inextricably bound by colonialism and the resultant hybrids of indigenous and European children. History-changing moments paved the way to this point where the hexes and habitus are a strange blend of language, aesthetics, diet, entertainment preferences, spirituality, tradition, and transgression.

Having perused some parallel occurrences between Pasifika artists and British Caribbean artists, looking closely at the work of a first-generation artist, I hope the upcoming artists' profiles will add to my assertions around habitus and the Diaspora artists in Aotearoa. Understanding around distance to homelands generationally and loss of tradition can also assist in understanding how each artist's methodology has developed.

It is noted here that the second-generation's visual strategies for making works are not so specifically about locating their island origins as they are just making their own islands.

Because of the expanse of British artists of Afro-Caribbean heritage, Jade Montserrat is the only Afro-Caribbean British artist I talanoa with and write about. Her multi-media performance works sit outside the ordinary object making; hers is a performative approach with the use of her black body as a compositional and politicised mark-maker in time-space.

Living in remote rural Scarborough (United Kingdom), Montserrat has experienced extreme isolation from social situations that had the potential to assist in the formation of a notion of blackness.

you wouldn't see anyone for weeks, um – there's no neighbours, um and... it's just in this valley... Michael Jackson was...I didn't have loads of Michael Jackson ephemera, or anything like that, but I had 'Off the Wall' and, you know 'Bad' ... and I remember, I would bring my ghetto blaster outside 'cos it ran with batteries – y'know... there were these two steps and then there was a huge hill ...but I would stand there and I would dance to Michael Jackson and that for me... my audience was this hill... and all the leaves would be waving as well and I felt like there was some sort of harmony between us – like I felt very safe, I felt completely joyful and... I did do formal dancing but I wasn't able to keep apace with all the different routines and stuff because I was dislocated from practicing with my peers, but I love to dance. And that for me was very central to being in that beautiful landscape.

With no points of reference but nature and the odd bit of music and videos, Montserrat's innate performative communicative art was being honed by nature and isolation. In the writing of Stuart

Hall he stresses the defining moments in self-identification from external sources. For Montserrat, the enduring unchanging space was the hill and natural environment outside the front door. Interestingly, Montserrat's sense of isolation was not because of her remote geographic location, but it began the more she spent time in boarding school, university, and populated places. Hall has identified, in the very 'feelings' befitting Montserrat's experiences after leaving the safety of nature.

Contrary to common-sense understanding, the transformations of self-identity are not just a personal matter. Historical shifts *out there* provide the social conditions of existence of personal and psychic change *in here*. What mattered was how I positioned myself on the other side – or positioned myself to catch the other side: how I was involuntarily hailed by and interpellated into a broader social discourse. (Hall, 2018)⁹³

Hall, like Montserrat, experienced a dissonance too: finding themselves in white schools, his identity formed through this socialisation. "As a child, I may not yet have been black in my head, but, as it happened, I was one of the blackest in my family." This statement tells us much about the formation of habitus, that from childish thinking, with no external impetus to show otherwise, what evidence is there to confirm or refute self-talk.

Montserrat's own habitus as a young child was informed by found images and versions of blackness. This was largely due to her remote location, but the disconnection from the knowledge of her Caribbean heritage father also left her without references.

So maybe just quickly to say that my mother...

I just wanna give a little anecdote though. So my mum, still is very angry about the fact that in primary school, the teachers asked us to do a family tree. And she still feels that it's not their business to do that.

Um, so my mum... I was 21, maybe a bit older, when I first asked properly about my father, which was in circumstances where the only way that could have happened was us being absolutely off our faces. And I remember being violently sick, waking up, knowing that I'd asked. I thought my father was Eddie Murphy for a long time, and then I thought that my mum was like the Virgin Mary. Because she explained that Eddie Murphy wasn't my dad and I had no other point of reference, even though we didn't have terrestrial television. Cos, we didn't have ... mains electric or anything. I saw videos, and the only black person in my point of reference at all, was, apart from a man that used to walk around in Scarborough that had some uh, sort of um, learning disability, he was the only other black man that I knew until I was sort of able to recognise people on the street giving me a nod, you know... other black people who would just recognise my presence. So, yeah, so when I asked in my 20s ... I woke up and I realised I'd forgotten the small information that she'd given me about my father. So, then it took lots of sort of trepidatious approaches to ask again what his name was.

93 Hall, S. (2018). *Familiar stranger: A life between two islands*. Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire: Penguin.

My father apparently traces back to Montserrat⁹⁴ – and my mum – she definitely is Welsh, her mum is definitely Welsh and her ... that's the sort of, the most foundational understanding I have of my heritage, - my Welsh heritage ... my mum sings the Welsh national anthem really well... I did have a relationship – a letter-writing relationship ... with Aunty Marjorie – I never met her but she used to write me letters and I've got these (family record book) and it was a prized possession cos I don't have my possessions, but I took this, which Aunty Marjorie gave me which was a family record book. And I would take this out and was baffled by it because no one was helping me fill it out ...

In discussion with Montserrat regarding her notions of belonging to whiteness in some small way because her mother and late stepfather were white, her responses convey a sense of abject despair. Despite being raised by them, her treatment, and the way that she appeared to others in the world caused a major disconnection from them. From a young age, her innate knowledge that she was different, even from her mother, caused intense anxiety. This anxiety would affect her desire to attend school and while at school, would feel the sting of difference to the point of self-harming.

My introduction has been like... what was mum's point when my introduction to language around blackness was to talk about a nigger's arse or nigger's brown in relation to her school uniform. I don't think on reflection, that she was educated enough to be able to present to me, a way of considering my own blackness, my own place in the world. In opposition to these stereotypes. I was growing up thinking – I really want this nigger's arse because that makes me distinct from YOU basically . I'm me, I haven't ever been able to break that. I'm still completely trapped by the bigotry and stereotyping, um, that ultimately – and again like with Joe [stepfather], um, he would introduce me to – cos I mean... when people come en masse – it was for his pheasant shoot. So he... the land was his playground in that respect and he would introduce me as... they'd locked me in the coal-house for too long “ha ha ha ha” [glib mimicking of the laughter].

And he talked about ... he would say like “Don't be naughty, ...I'll sell you into slavery “ha ha ha ha” [glib mimicking of the laughter].

I was a *school refuser*⁹⁵ which made it even more difficult to sort ... I made friends and stuff, but I could never just settle at any of the school's cos I felt 1. Conflicted by these two people I was living with... and hurting... like their way of thinking about the world. I clearly felt very different ... and there was no way of sort of exploring that difference without it... again... upsetting my immediate family as well. So... it was really like... I developed habits like over-compensating or people-pleasing, but then also at boarding school, that's when I first tried to take my life.

Montserrat's practice is unapologetic, it brings her healing and brings others to a place of understanding some of the distress caused by disconnection from herself, her father, and his blackness, and by degrees, her mother. Her white mother was unable to provide her with a deeper understanding of the implications of being black, how could she be expected to either?

94 Montserrat is in the Caribbean and part of the archipelago of the Leeward Islands that forms the chain the Lesser Antilles. Retrieved from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Montserrat>

95 A 'school refuser' is a British term for children who, for various reasons, will not attend school. <http://www.schoolrefuser.org.uk/>



Fig. 27. Communion (detail of performance), 2016



Fig. 28. *Her hair, like histories, flattened, ironed and erased*, 2017

...I hope that the audience and the other performer can think less about my body, the performer's body, and to think about everybody and the kind of histories we're ironing out. I'm saying that my body can reference other bodies that can be ironed out in history. I want to ask who those bodies are and reveal some of that, and not erase and flatten history.⁹⁶

⁹⁶ gal – dem. (2016, October 14). Artist spotlight: ironing out with Jade Montserrat. Retrieved from <https://gal-dem.com/artist-spotlight-jade-montserrat/>

Embracing her physicality, Montserrat works almost always without clothing, overplaying this inherited blackness as a real body in time. In doing so, she makes this black presence undeniably in a mostly white domain of performance art in the United Kingdom. The performance where she is having her hair ironed is titled *Communion*. For many women, the convention of hair straightening is not uncommon. In this performance, Montserrat employs a white man in a full-body protection suit ironing out the kinks in her hair as she lies passively on an altar-type gurney. This anything but passive: it is redolent with resistance and outrage. It is a disparaging work that asks the hegemony of whiteness. The ironing out of her hair, making her more attractive and less threatening to white people speaks louder about the racial violence implicit in the promotion of hair straightening. Montserrat sees it as akin to the erasure of the atrocities meted out on the black body throughout British history. Her hair as the metaphor for this erasure is amplified by her black body lying back as though a sacrifice on an altar. In similar ways as the work by Sonia Boyce *The Audition* (Fig. 13), the question of acceptability is a provocation. The subtext places emphasis on the gaze of the white art world, not necessarily the individual viewer.

Selina Tusitala Marsh (2020) wrote a book for children, who, like herself and Jade, have been bullied or fetishized for have frizzy hair, a most obvious point of difference to the average white child. The book *Mophead*⁹⁷ is dedicated to “kids who stick out”. The story is autobiographical, and the main character is an afakasi (half European and half Sāmoan) girl who had a head of super fuzzy hair for which she was mocked. When I showed Montserrat the book in an online conversation, her joy was so overwhelming that she purchased the book as we spoke. **That’s me!** she yelled!

Maturity, researching her family lineage that leads back the Caribbean, and lived experience has been her principal teachers and sources of comfort. Knowing her reality and living it makes her work powerful because it comes from a deep place of conviction need for resolve. Montserrat is not an exhibitionist; her habitus is almost that of a reclusive contemplative ascetic. Living in the Scarborough countryside is far from the metropolitan white cube space of London’s art scene. She works hard in her garden, tending to the earth. Working in a public art setting is merely a type of canvas where she can physically realise works. Montserrat’s work acknowledges the promise of citizenship to England as farcical. She is not and never will be indigenous to England. Her black body and those of all black artists in England exist in a kind of Vā, where their nationalities might be English, but never actually Jamaican or West Indian, nor African. Montserrat’s art, like CIs in Aotearoa, is the only safe space to call their own. And when I asked Montserrat, whether she can call herself indigenous to the Caribbean? Her response was immediate and punchy.

97 Marsh, S.T. (2020). *Mophead*. (2 ed.). Auckland: Auckland University Press.

Yeah! I'm not English; I've obviously completely rejected that. I can't hold it...

Summary

Summarising the experiences and habitus of Jade Montserrat is not possible in relation to the Moana Pacific Oceanic experience, however, there are many aspects that overlap. The same sense of cultural dislocation and then the maturation in personal indigeneity.

Seeking: Those belonging to the *Seeking* approach are often very close to their sense of self as an Islander in the diaspora, but their knowledge of this drives them to continue to seek the deep of their ancestral home and present works which enable a fresh way to look at ancient subjects. Jade Montserrat can look to Montserrat where her ancestors claim her and whisper to her. For Montserrat, her va'a (canoe) is her art practice; her oar is her body.

Oar 3 – The body – performance art – radical honesty

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Indigeneity with Respect to Tangata Whenua

Epeli Hau'ofa⁹⁸ (1998) prophetically led the way regarding this querying of indigeneity. His efforts reinforce what Salesa states regarding a place to land and confidently stand – taking it further by noting the ‘loss of sovereignty’. The 21st century Pasifika/Oceanic person now has the added recontextualization that locates them to indigeneity external to Aotearoa but related-to Tangata Whenua.

“The paradox of Pacific people in New Zealand is that they are, at the same time, both internal and external to New Zealand.” (Salesa, 2017) loc. 119.

It is vital at this point to emphasise the importance of locating exact and appropriate language in the process of acknowledging and iterating Pasifika non-indigeneity to Aotearoa; more importantly, in doing so, we simultaneously acknowledge Māori as the only indigenous people in Aotearoa.

Professor Jahnke lived amongst his whānau; for him, it was a balance of social, spiritual, spatial and politicisation that led to equanimity and the sense of certainty in his habitus. His indigeneity remains without question.

Some of the issues that arose were the vastly different experiences each artist participant offered. The possibility to take this research into the future, toward the Pacific Islands proper, is the next logical phase. It would provide an analysis of indigenous artists residing in their homelands. Another query that would arise from such an undertaking, do the indigenous MPO artists have any knowledge of the artists living in Aotearoa and beyond? Are indigenous artists of the ancestral homelands aware that some of our livelihoods are being made through the use of indigenous knowledges in a diaspora setting? If so, what might they have to say about this?

No ‘One Way’ Systems in the Moana

No single artist shares the same life experience, nor should anyone be boxed or pigeon-holed or labelled if they do not invite cultural labelling. Instead, I posit that a similar thread of dislocation and the navigational path is what encompasses the plethora of the *Cold Islander* experiences, a sense of discombobulation and also certitude of the self within their narratives. All the artists’ generations vary. It was my intention to focus solely on those who are second-generation; however, the notion of CIs and the sense of dislocation appears also in artists who are first-

⁹⁸ Hau'ofa, E., (1998), The ocean in us. *The Contemporary Pacific* 10 (2): 392- 410.

generation New Zealanders or only recently migrated to Aotearoa as in the case of Telly Tuita who was born in Tonga, sent to Australia as a nine-year-old child and immigrated to Aotearoa only a few years ago to live. His case is unique in that it involves a kind of instant uprooting and ‘re-planting’, yet unlike the others, his nationality is Tongan, and his *habitus* is ‘Pālangi’. This is perfectly all right and as Tuita’s ancestors intended. We are navigators, after all.

So one consequence of adopting the method of assembly is that it reminds us to avoid “giving [the conjunctural subjects of our inquiries] a sequential form and imaginary unity they never possessed. Instead, we should define generations: “not by simple chronology but by the fact that their members frame the same sorts of questions and try to work through them within the same ... horizon or problem-space.”⁹⁹

In order to draw a clearer picture of the nuances regarding indigeneity, the artists I interviewed who share Pasifika and Māori heritage *are* indigenous to Aotearoa New Zealand, which adds gravitas to my assertion that: regardless of indigeneity, there is no guarantee that one will be perceived or accepted as indigenous, nor feel comfortable with self-titling as ‘indigenous’, if they are also the ‘other’ and not of the land.

For those born into a bi-cultural family whether it be Pasifika, Pākehā or European, African, or Asian as some examples, this same sense of disconnectedness is amplified unless their Island parent is proactive in dual immersions of both the island culture and the significant other culture. This is not to say that disconnection is at all considered devastating: often it is enriching. For the CI with extreme disparities between their public and private life, stability is possible when there were enough people who also shared similar lived experiences, which is the case now in the 21st century. “The artists have a commonality. They feel the same pull from the Pacific which is their provenance.”¹⁰⁰ (Vivieaere, 1994)

Cold Islanders are the bravest; they are held in the sacred space of their ancestors to be self-ethnographers, the *nainai* to a space where they do not appear to exist but are heard in the stroke of a brush, the click of a cell-phone for a selfie, sacrificing their bodies to convey weighty concepts or sitting and allow the *va’a* (canoe) to travel on auto-pilot. This document intends to honour their understanding of the *Vā* (space) of their birthplace – Aotearoa while generating visual and written language for the outworking of their ideas. I have discussed and interrogated the cumulative effects of lifelong *otherness-management*, and individual artists customised *Vā* upon which their *habitus*

⁹⁹ Taylor, Paul C., *Black is beautiful: a philosophy of black aesthetics*, Loc.529

¹⁰⁰ Vivieaere, J. (1994). Catalogue essay. *Bottled Ocean*. Wellington, New Zealand: City Gallery, Wellington.

resides, which they inhabit and adorn with the work of their hands, their imaginations, and the whispers of their ancestors. With the blessings of their ancestors living through their artistic endeavours, each artist has total sovereignty of their way of being in their cultural habitus without apology to external or internal cultural critique. That each of their motivations and processes and particularities do not have to perform culture, nor are they expected to know every aspect of their whakapapa/gafa/genealogy to be who they are today. I have named some of these critical operating strategies each artist employs to proffer clarity to the artists' intentions (for the most part and where possible) to illustrate my theory that they are-unique as artists of Pacific/Oceanic descent. It is vital that it is understood that at all times, I discuss the practice of these artists not in isolation but that they belong to a diaspora of specific Island cultural groups. Their whakapapa/gafa (lineage) is not separate from their location. I also write to locate them as distinct but in-relation-to indigenous islands-based artists as well as artists of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Ua lutiluti a ni i'u matagi.

This is the final effort of the wind.

This is what is called *upu mafanafana* (comforting words) in proverbial Sāmoan. The chief navigator utters this on the va'a (sea vessel) at the tail end of turbulent weather to reassure the crew not to give up despite how difficult things appear. These are words from the Sāmoan ancestors for the brave navigators on the windy waters. May there be some words in within this text to guide you safely toward your island home.

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Personal Communications

Jahnke, Robert

Laita, Lily Aitui

Lind, Dylan

Matila-Smith, Natasha

Montserrat, Jade

Rands, Ahilapalapa

Tiatia, Angela

Tuita, Telly

Appendices

Appendix 1: Ethical Approval



Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)

Auckland University of Technology
D-88, Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142, NZ
T: +64 9 821 9999 ext. 8316
E: ethics@aut.ac.nz
www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics

19 May 2020

Pare Keiha
Te Ara Poutama

Dear Pare

Re Ethics Application: **20/136 Cold Islanders: Moana/Pasifika/Oceania-identifying artists creating and occupying respectful stances of strength and confidence in Aotearoa**

Thank you for providing evidence as requested, which satisfies the points raised by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC).

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 19 May 2023.

Standard Conditions of Approval

1. The research is to be undertaken in accordance with the [Auckland University of Technology Code of Conduct for Research](#) and as approved by AUTEC in this application.
2. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date, using the EA2 form.
3. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project, using the EA3 form.
4. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTEC prior to being implemented. Amendments can be requested using the EA2 form.
5. Any serious or unexpected adverse events must be reported to AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.
6. Any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should also be reported to the AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.
7. It is your responsibility to ensure that the spelling and grammar of documents being provided to participants or external organisations is of a high standard and that all the dates on the documents are updated.

AUTEC grants ethical approval only. You are responsible for obtaining management approval for access for your research from any institution or organisation at which your research is being conducted and you need to meet all ethical, legal, public health, and locality obligations or requirements for the jurisdictions in which the research is being undertaken.

Please quote the application number and title on all future correspondence related to this project.

For any enquiries please contact ethics@aut.ac.nz. The forms mentioned above are available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics>

(This is a computer-generated letter for which no signature is required)

The AUTEC Secretariat
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: olgakrause@gmail.com

Appendix 2. Participant Information Sheet



Participant Information Sheet & Interview Questions

Prepared by Leafa Wilson for research towards MPhil – Thesis Ethics Submission

Thesis Title

Cold Islanders: Moana/Pasifika/Oceania Identifying Artists Creating and Occupying Respectful Stances of Strength and Confidence in Aotearoa

Talofa lava, Si'oto 'ofa, Kia ora – Warm Moana Greetings _____

My name is Leafa Wilson, I am currently completing a Master of Philosophy with the Te Ara Poutama Faculty at Auckland University of Technology and I am in the data collection stage of my research. I have followed your artistic career as a curator and art writer for some time now. Your practice as a Moana/Pasifika/Oceania diaspora artist in Aotearoa is one of the areas of research which I am investigating.

I invite you to participate in my research as an artist whose practice sits within and without the parameters of aesthetics, subject matter, and intent within the socio-cultural categorisation that art history places you and I in. I would be grateful to be allowed deeper insight into your art practice, your approach to your ethnicity, cultural environment and locating your place to stand in Aotearoa.

What is the purpose of this research?

My thesis is basically premised on a phrase I have coined 'Cold Islanders' to describe the phenomenon experienced specifically by Aotearoa-born and raised Pasifika/Oceania artists of the diaspora. Through my research, I will attempt to outline how this phenomenon has similarly occurred Great Britain with what is historically known as the 'Windrush Generation'.

It is hoped that my findings will locate more appropriate vocabulary for C.I.s to apply to their unique issue related to being in diaspora in Aotearoa amongst their distant ancestors (Māori). In short, through their art practice, I posit that the C.I.'s Tuurangaewae is available to them in the TA-VA reality of TIME-SPACE as proposed by Prof 'Okusitina Mahina (Hufanga). And that this is the space where they are indigenous while on Māori soil. In doing so, they maintain a respectful stance in Aotearoa alongside Tangata Whenua.

The findings of this research may be used for academic publications and presentations as well as for my Masters or Doctoral study.

What will happen in this research?

Your interview will form part of three different chapters regarding three divergent methodologies I have identified which you apply to the production of your artworks.

1. The Quiet (a phrase coined by Natasha Matila-Smith. Un. Magazine, Issue 12.1, *The Quiet Need No Defence*, 2018.)
2. The Seekers
3. The Transgressors

I will forward to you a draft of the chapter in which I discuss your work prior to the final edit and subsequent submission in photocopy form.

All of the interviews in electronic or hard copy will be added to the Auckland University of Technology secure storage which will be kept for a minimum of six years and then destroyed. You will have access to your material and my thesis on request and other researchers may have access to your interviews if you find this acceptable. You will always retain full copyright and intellectual property rights to your text and can also ask for your information to be destroyed immediately after publishing if that is your preference.

I will be utilising direct quotations of your interview and my intention is to ensure that your intent as an artist is articulated clearly through my writing and application of theory.

What are the benefits?

Your participation is assisting me in the completion of the last few chapters of my thesis and I am indebted to you for this.

My thesis question seeks to extrapolate the strategies and methodologies you have employed to assist in strengthening future Moana/Pasifika/Oceania artists. Your very presence in the current art history in Aotearoa as part of the Moana peoples' diaspora forms the evidence which goes toward my theory of the 'cold islanders'. Aotearoa New Zealand-born/ living outside of the Moana Pacific/ Oceanic homes of your ancestors. You are the most important aspect of my assertion as living 'spaces' or 'Va' within which you have sovereignty as an indigenous person on Tangata Whenua land; this aspect is of major significance to futures of language use in art discourse here on Maaori sovereign soil.

The benefits are that you become part of documented art historical research which seeks to uphold the mana of Tangata Whenua artists whilst finding our own 'tūrangawaewae', adding to other documents which chart this part of art history as an important surge towards a decolonial art history in Aotearoa.

How will my privacy be protected?

This is an open interview and because your art practice in the public domain is identifiable, it is my responsibility to ensure that you are the artist responsible for making the statements about yourself. The full archive of our interviews and your participation will be securely archived at Auckland University of Technology in the office of Professor Pare Keiha (Head of Faculty – Te Ara Poutama) and also in your secure artists files that I will be compiling in the Waikato Museum artist archives in the secure Research Room.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

There is no cost associated with your participation. I will be gifting a small work of art made for you as a gesture of gratitude in line with the practice of fa'aSamoa.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

You will receive a copy of the text relating to you prior to the final submission in December, 2020.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Emeritus Professor Ngahula Te Awakotuku (see below).

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEK, ethics@aut.ac.nz, (+649) 921 9999 ext 6038.

***Please note, it is your right to withdraw from my research at any stage of the process.**

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please sign and forward a copy of this to me at the email below. Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Leafa Wilson, +6421704644 oleakrause@gmail.com


Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Em. Prof. Ngahula Te Awakotuku – ngahula@waikato.ac.nz

Professor Waimarie Linda Nikora – l.nikora@auckland.ac.nz

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on type the date final ethics approval was granted, AUTEK Reference number type the reference number.

Appendix 3. Consent Form



TE WHAREANGA ARDHORI
O TĀMANGI MAKAU KAU

Consent and Release Form

For use when photographs, videos or other image recording is being used

Project title: *Cold Islanders: Moana/Pasifika/Oceania Identifying Artists Creating and Occupying Respectful Stances of Strength and Confidence in Aotearoa*

Project Supervisor: *Emeritus Professor Ngahuia Te Awekotuku (Chief Supervisor)*
Professor Waimarie Nikora (University of Auckland)

Researcher: *Olga (Leafa) Wilson*

- ☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated **14 May 20**. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ☐ I agree to the researcher carrying out a maximum of two follow-up communications via email or by phone after I receive the interview questions.
- ☐ I agree to the storage of my consent forms and all collected data to be stored indefinitely as part of my artist archive in the secure Research Archive at Waikato Museum Te Whare Taonga o Waikato as well as at Auckland University of Technology and for this to be used by future researchers of my art practice. I can ask for the destruction of my consent form and data at any time in consultation with the researcher.
- ☐ I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.
- ☐ I understand that if I withdraw from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible.
- ☐ I permit the researcher | artist to use the photographs that are part of this project and/or any drawings from them and any other reproductions or adaptations from them, either complete or in part, alone or in conjunction with any wording and/or drawings solely and exclusively for (a) the researcher's thesis; and (b) educational exhibition and examination purposes and related design works; and (c) all forms of publication and any other lawful purposes as stated on the Information Sheet.
- ☐ I understand that any material and data may be used in future texts relating to me and my practice and that any images created for use in the research is the intellectual and cultural property of the artist (me) as owner of the copyright.
- ☐ I agree to take part in this research.

Participant's signature :

Participant's name :

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):
.....
.....
.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on type the date on which the final approval was granted AUTEK Reference number type the AUTEK reference number

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form

April 2018

page 1 of 3


This version was last edited in April 2018

Appendix 4. Exhibition poster for related exhibition

Diagrammatic


OLGA KRAUSE

painting and
drawing installation



CURATED BY LEAFA WILSON
30 NOV 2020 — 26 FEBRUARY 2021

Olga Krause *Diagrammatic: drawing cold diasporas* 2020



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Design by AREA Design.

Diagrammatic

painting and
drawing installation

OLGA KRAUSE / LEAFA WILSON



OLGA KRAUSE
Diagrammatic, drawing
2020

OLGA KRAUSE
Diagrammatic, drawing
2020

Both are subject to the hazards of displacement, interaction and translation. Both, however, have the potential to widen the horizon of one's imagination and to shift the frontiers of reality and fantasy, or of Here and There. Both contribute to questioning the limits set on what is known as 'common' and 'ordinary' in daily existence, offering thereby the possibility of an elsewhere-within-here, or 'there-ity'.

Along these lines, Wilson has created a visual language that works on levels beyond the known, beyond the constructed identities placed on us, beyond rationalism and beyond the *habitus*. She briefly dives into the intuit, the unconscious and the unknowable. That great fluid in-between space without horizons, where boundaries are constantly in flux. A space of contrasts—imagery that is both silent and screaming, calm and turbulent, black and colourful exist together inside a metaphysical space of creation and creativity.

There is comfort here to those riding the wave of displacement. It is here that those who are lost, alien, exiled and displaced from native land and native tongue, dispossessed, on the fringe or outside, can anchor themselves in symbols and imagery strangely familiar. In this between-world and hybrid reality there is great creative potential, a space without constraints. It is somewhere to return to, a site for the unanchored to belong and hold space. A place to stand. A home of sorts.

Kelly Joseph (Ngāati Maniapoto)

© Trade & Mark Ltd. "Other than myself my other self"
p. 10-11, *Specifically: Aesthetics of Displacement*
Ed. George Richardson, Muriel Mark, Lisa Toller, and
BRI, Barry Curtis and Tim Purnum (Dunedin, 1994)

ISBN 978-0-473-55121-6


Diagrammatic by painting and drawing
Installation by painting and drawing
Leafa Wilson, 2020
Leafa Wilson, 2020

CASPER AND LAWSON GALLERY

THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO

OLGA KRAUSE
Diagrammatic, drawing
2020

OLGA KRAUSE
Diagrammatic, drawing
2020



Page 1. of draft exhibition catalogue: designed by Area Design

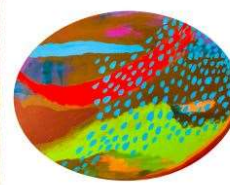
129



OLGA KRAUSE
Diagrammatical, diatopia,
2010
OLGA KRAUSE
Diagrammatical, diatopia,
2010



OLGA KRAUSE
Diagrammatical, diatopia,
2010



OLGA KRAUSE
Diagrammatical, diatopia,
2010

Diagrammatic is an installation of paintings and diagrams that has emerged from the mind of multi-media performance artist Olga Krause aka Leafa Wilson. The works in this exhibition are an appendix to her master's thesis. The diagrammatical imagery become a kind of sociological study, an investigation of the nature of indigeneity, identity and habitus. Through these works Wilson explores how Aotearoa-born artists of Moana/Pasifika/Oceanic heritage become distanced and divided between two worlds, and how can they belong or return again to their own tūrangawaewae via the metaphysical space, the Va.

"These works acknowledge Maori sovereignty and that, as distant whānau to Maori, us Pasifika artists' sovereignty is not located on the whenua (land) upon which we were born. Instead, we have a Va (space) in the metaphysical and Polynesian theory of TIME-SPACE where we are indigenous. This Va is located in the art that we make and we remain indigenous to the island homes of our parents, grandparents, and ancestors."

In her work she makes connections between the 'Cold Islanders' living as tūiwi and their cultural and physical distance from the place of their indigenous home. She encourages those without adequate language to express their sense of cultural loss or distance in an alternative way—through a non-verbal, visual platform.

"To-date, I have not found a language that adequately articulates this phenomenon and feeling that I and other children of Pacific immigrants are often burdened by. How this geographical shift has separated an entire first and second-generation of children of the Pacific/Oceanic diaspora from those who remain indigenous to their Pacific homelands."

Wilson is creating her own language in *Diagrammatic*. It is a visual discourse that imagines how 'migration' might look as paint. The images in this series flow and move—fluid lines, dynamic daubs of colour, fluorescent islets, circular forms crisscrossing and connecting. Some resemble mind-maps, others contour lines in cartography, or perhaps landscapes seen from far above. Other images are analogous to microscopic worlds or hint at the cosmos. In this constant retracting and expanding, from microscopic to nebula, from ordinary to celestial, fluctuations hint at the cyclical and connect to what is beyond.

Wilson says of the works, "They are all made entirely intuitively and are responsive to the notions of travel between spaces and with no linear timeline but our Polynesian Time-Space really—which is really just saying, we existed then and through the passage of time, our ancestral connections have brought them here and they have taken us back with them. There is no then and now, just different points along this same trajectory."

In one of her untitled large scale works, the 2D painterly surface collapses, inviting the viewer further inward with its concentric circles—and here we enter a three-dimensional psychedelic space—an other place, not of this world—a new territory, unconscious and unfathomable. In another large scale work an island floats, an un tethered, unanchored landmass—free to move, a metaphor for the elusiveness of home, but also a motif of freedom and potential. Within this work seven waka are almost galactic, visitors from another dimension.

Then there are the smaller artworks connected to a blue plastic tarp—signifier of the Va. The tarp, a prosaic object prevalent in Samoa, suddenly becomes supernal. Drawings and paintings are attached to the tarp with thread, like islands connecting to the great ancestral and metaphysical source—before projecting the viewer forward into unknown territory, a space where there is no beginning and no end. A between



OLGA KRAUSE
Diagrammatical, diatopia,
2010
OLGA KRAUSE
Diagrammatical, diatopia,
2010



OLGA KRAUSE
Diagrammatical, diatopia,
2010

world reality where patterns and motifs are free to emerge. The Va, like Te Kore, like the Dreamtime, is a space that other indigenous cultures understand. It is not a place of nothingness or void before the big bang—it is a realm of potential being and ultimate reality. As Albert Wendt explains so succinctly, "Va is the space between, the betweenness, not empty space, not space that separates but space that relates, that holds separate entities and things together in the Unity-that-is-All."

Exile is prevalent in the now, in the 21st century we are faced with immigration, refugeism and displacement on an immense scale, where millions upon millions are becoming strangers in strange lands. And yes, Covid-19 and technological dependence isolates us further. Wilson's work, though specific to her own experience and the experience of other people of the Moana, can be universally relatable. However, in a time when this scourge of disconnection is at the core of many mental health issues and disease, people of the Moana have it doubly hard. "Colonized and marginalized people are socialised to always see more than their own points of view" so that the split-self is always doubled and internalised. But, it could be argued that in this position between worlds, creative potential can form.

Trinh T. Minh-ha in her essay *Other than myself/ my other self* talks about the constant re-siting of boundaries and the negotiation between home and abroad, native culture and adopted culture:

"Journeying across generations and cultures, tale-telling excels in its powers of adaptation and germination; while with exile and migration, travelling expanded in time and space becomes dizzyingly complex in its repercussive effects."

2 Wendt, A. (1988). New Zealand electronic poetry centre. *Savaging the post-colonial body* para. 16 <http://www.nzec.org.nz/works/16/16.htm>

3 Trinh T. Minh-ha, "Other than myself/my other self," in *The Spacetime Machine: Narrativity of Displacement*, eds. George Robertson, Melinda Mark, Lisa Yickler, Jan Bitt, Barry Smith and The Portman Foundation, 1994.

¹ This phrase was coined by Leafa Wilson to describe the phenomenon of Moana Pacific Oceanic diaspora people born in Aotearoa. It is also the title of an exhibition she co-curated (2017, Wellcome Museum) and of her 2019 thesis.