Digital Mana: Transforming the Photograph into a Site for Making Māori Customary Art

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THESIS ABSTRACT:

This project explores issues of materiality for Māori and Pacific diaspora customary artists living outside of their ancestral homeland. How do diaspora artists weave in a foreign land when their traditional plants and materials are not available? Can new technology, such as digital photography, be used in customary, indigenous ways? How might digital photography become a productive new platform for the creation of Māori and Pacific weaving in a contemporary art context?

My vantage point is that of a Māori-Australian photographer and weaver. Māori weaving has become an important part of my arts practice, as it offers a fundamental link with, and connection to, my Māori heritage. To physically repeat the gestures of my ancestors through customary art-making help creates a bridge of knowledge and understanding across long ancestral lines, oceans, rivers and mountains.

Photography has been used as a tool of colonisation. The camera's ability to record information has led to the belief that the photograph acts as a window to truth or as evidence of truth. Many contemporary indigenous artists have reclaimed the camera, restaging and re-inscribing the photographic image with a positive indigenous narrative; the "natives" looking back from the photographic frame now return the gaze. However, even in this subversive strategy, the subject (i.e., the native, aboriginal or indigenous person), whether reclaimed or restaged, *still offers up the invitation to be looked upon by the viewer as exotic.*

How, then, to challenge the colonialist gaze without unintentionally reinforcing it? The aim of this project is to use the physical surface of the photograph a site for making customary Māori woven artworks. Or, to put it another way, this project attempts to ally digital photographic processes and production with indigenous methods of making—not just as a conceptual representation or thematically, but to make the process of digital art making in itself indigenous.

In this research, digital photography is redeployed as a medium so that Māori and Pacific weaving is not simply cast as the subject of the colonialist's camera machinery but is instead rethought and repurposed as an indigenous weaver's medium. In this, photography is no longer thought of and deployed as the medium of record but rethought, repurposed and reworked as an indigenous maker's medium.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

As I look back on the four-and-a-half-year journey that has been this Creative Practise PhD, I am humbled by the support, guidance and inspiration (not to mention the patience and humour) of my whānau, friends and communities.

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To the awe-inspiring and unstoppable force that is Kimba Thompson, a strong Wiradjuri woman who has been resident in Melbourne for over 25 years, thank you for making *Blak Dot Gallery* in the Wurundjeri lands of Brunswick one of few truly culturally safe arts spaces for Blak, Brown and First Nation artists in Melbourne. Thank you, Kimba, for making my PhD creative examination exhibition more than I could have hoped for.

Thank you for making Blak Dot such an important site of kōrero (conversation/discussion)

between different peoples and cultures. The importance of face-to-face conversations in indigenous communities cannot be underestimated. Oral histories and physical movements record our knowledge systems; they tell of our genealogies, our landscapes, our names and our lived reality. Many outside of indigenous and First Nation communities do not know how funny our communities are, or that the dirtiest jokes are often told by the most respected aunties (because they love to shock us with their naughtiness and because they know they can get away with almost anything). Through exhibitions, performances, workshops and other events—film nights, artist talks, etc.—Blak Dot encourages the greater community of Brunswick and Melbourne to have meaningful and positive exchanges with members of our communities with whom they may never have interacted with socially before, to see the gifts of our artistic expression, to share in our laughter, to witness and learn from our different knowledge systems and to hear of our lived realities of indigeneity within contemporary Australia.

To my friends, in particular Simon Rose (Birriah/Gurreng Gurreng), Cezary Milosinki (Polish descent), Seini Taumoepeau (aka SistaNative, from the Kingdom of Tonga), Fiona Hillary and Monique Redmond, thank you for the long phone calls, the debriefings, the study sessions and the card nights. Your faith in my ability to get this done has given me the belief to turn the dream of becoming Dr Lyttle into a reality.

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TŌKU PEPEHA:

Ko Tainui te waka
Ko Taupiri te maunga
Ko Waikato te awa
Ko Waikato te iwi
Ko Ngāti Tahinga te hapū
Weraroa, Waikaretuu te marae
Ko Kirsten Lyttle tōku ingoa.

My canoe is Tainui
My mountain is Taupiri
My river is Waikato
My tribe is Waikato
My sub-tribe is Ngāti Tahinga
Weraroa, Waikaretuu is the marae
My name is Kirsten Lyttle

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Figure 1. Kirsten Lyttle (2019), *Sheltered Under the Arms of the Ancestor: Weraroa Marae June 2019*, half-tone printed wallpaper, 2600 x 2400 mm.

Thursday 25 July 2019

It is the opening night of *Whakaahua (Photograph)*: *Transforming the Photograph into a Site for Making Māori Customary Art* at Blak Dot Gallery in Brunswick, Melbourne. This is the culmination of my creative practice examination for my PhD. Bella Whāwhai Waru (Ngāti Tukorehe, Ngāti Ruanui, Ngai Rauru, Taranaki, Ruahine, Titahi, Te Āti Awa)[1] has just finished an improvised performance reacting to my artwork within the walls of Blak Dot. They have used their voice and body; pōwhiri[2], karakia[3] and waiata[4] have activated the gallery space, transforming Blak Dot into a wharenui[5]. Shoes line the outside doors and walls of the gallery[6]. The audience is barefoot or wearing socks, standing inside the body of the ancestor[7]. Bella's performance has affected the audience. Some were moved to sing along in Te Reo Māori with them; others were moved to tears; those unfamiliar with Māori tikanga[8] were transported beyond the familiar, predominantly white Melbourne arts scene into an indigenous space—a Māori space. At the end of the applause for Bella, Kimba Thompson, gallery director and independent curator, motions for me to speak.

I acknowledge that I am an uninvited guest, standing on the unceded Wurundjeri lands of the greater Kulin Nation, and pay my respects to their elders' past, present and emerging. I am too nervous to say my pepeha[9] without a cheat sheet, worried that my colonised tongue will trip up on Te Reo Māori[10] and mispronounce the ancestors, the

[1] Bella's personal pronoun is "they" and "them".
[2] Welcome invitation or ceremony used on a marae.
[3] A ritual chant, prayer or blessing.
[4] To sing; a song, chant or psalm.
[5] Meeting house, often the main house of a marae where guests are accommodated.
[6] This is basic marae etiquette where shoes are removed before entering the wharenui.
[7] A whare tūpuna (ancestral house) or wharenui (meeting house) is named after an ancestor. It also represents the ancestor symbolically. The carved figure (tekoteko) on the rooftop represents the ancestor's head. The carved gables or maihi are the arms of the ancestor, held out to welcome. The tahu (or ridge pole) running down the centre of the whare is the backbone. The heke or rafters are the ribs. As the wharenui is symbolically the body of the ancestor, it is a mark of respect for people to remove their shoes before entering. For more information, see Ka'ai et al. (2004) and Mead (2003).
[8] Protocol or correct, appropriate way of doing things in a Māori social context.
[9] A form of introduction establishing ancestry and connections.
[10] The Māori language.

canoe, the mountain, the river, the tribe and the marae[11] that locate who I am—that provide a foundation and give me a place to stand in the Māori world. As I speak the words, I look out at a large photographic wallpaper printed with a half-tone effect. This is Weraroa Marae (Waikaretuu, Waikato), my marae. I took this image in June this year while visiting my marae for the first time in my life. In bare feet, I stood in front of my wharenui, sheltered under the maihi[12] or carved gables of my wharenui, under the carvings that represent the two carved outstretched arms of the ancestor, and took this photograph. This wallpaper representation of my ancestral whare shelters and protects my artwork inside the gallery, while challenging the role the photograph has played as a tool of colonialism. Here, the wharenui is not being looked upon like an ethnographic or idealised postcard image of Māoridom. Instead, this is an indigenous gaze looking out, sheltered under the arms of the ancestor, upon the marae and mountains beyond. Tears fill my eyes as I say my pepeha and look upon the large-scale wallpapered photograph of the whenua[13] of my iwi.

Ngāti[14] Skippy

It was not until June 2019 that I first saw my mountain, or my river; these were viewed from a moving InterCity bus window arriving in Hamilton, New Zealand. Only once have I stood on my marae. As an adoptee and as a member of the Māori diaspora in Australia, connecting to my whakapapa[15], my ancestral line, continues to be a disrupted, complicated and emotional voyage where information is necessarily gleaned from a range of sources. More than simply a family tree, whakapapa is a line of descent from ancestors (and deities) down to the present day, linking all people and things back to the origins of creation. From a Māori perspective, it is this unbroken line which gives mana[16] and value. As Dr Rāwiri Taonui (Te Hikutū, Ngāti Korokoro, Te Kapotai, Ngāti Paeahi,

[11] Courtyard; the open area in front of a wharenui; often used to refer to the entire complex of buildings surrounding the marae.
[12] Carved gables of a wharenui, or meetinghouse.
[13] Land.
[14] "Ngāti" in Te Reo Māori is a prefix (and personal pronoun) for a tribal group, now written as a separate word.
[15] Ancestral line.
[16] A supernatural force in a person, place or object that gives prestige, authority and spiritual power.

Ngāti Rora, Ngāti Whēru, Ngāti Te Taonui) explains:

> Whakapapa is a taxonomic framework that links all animate and inanimate, known and unknown phenomena in the terrestrial and spiritual worlds. Whakapapa therefore binds all things. It maps relationships so that mythology, legend, history, knowledge, tikanga (custom), philosophies and spiritualties are organised, preserved and transmitted from one generation to the next. Whakapapa is the core of traditional mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge). (Taonui 2011, p. 1)

As with all mātauranga[17] Māori, the starting place is the whakapapa. The genealogy. The map of the relationships between all beings and all things.

I am grateful to have received a photocopy of my birth mother's Beneficiary Roll application form from the Tainui Maaori [*sic*] Trust Board[18], where some details of my whakapapa, iwi[19], waka[20], hapū[21] and marae have been recorded. I had found the address of my marae only recently. There had been a name change from Waikaretuu to Weraroa with the construction of a new whare in 2011. I found images, addresses and contacts for Weraroa Marae through an online source called Māori Maps, a self-described resource that "helps to connect Māori descendants with their marae, and enable visitors to make appropriate contact with these centres of culture" (Te Potiki National Trust Limited 2011, para. 1). I had connected through Facebook with Weraroa Marae and messaged whānau[22] through Facebook Messenger[23]. In the digital world I was welcomed by whānau. They regretted that they could not be there for me to have taken me around. I was told that the main whare, Kupapa, had been left open for us, and we had been given permission to take photos. My partner James and I went on our own. Words are inadequate to describe the experience I had. The marae, the wharenui, felt like mine and where I belonged. Looking at the carvings, the tukutuku[24] panels, paintings, photographs and cloaks that decorated Kupapa, I understood why I make the artwork I

[17] Māori knowledge.
[18] Now known as the Waikato Tainui Register.
[19] Extended kinship or family group descended from a common ancestor.
[20] Canoe; a reference to the canoes that originally brought the ancestors to Aotearoa.
[21] Subtribe.
[22] Family.
[23] I believe that digital technology, such as the internet and social media, has supported and promoted my access to Māori custom and cultural expression rather than threatening it. The way in which digital technologies have been adopted by indigenous and First Nation peoples will be discussed at length in Chapter Four. Following arguments made by Deidre Brown (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Kahu) and other indigenous researchers, I will suggest that "high" or digital technologies can be made compatible with Māori custom and cultural expression and viewed from within a Māori conceptual framework.
[24] A decorative panel seen inside the wharenui, with a latticework structure.

do. I spent time with my ancestors and spoke with them. I saw my own features in the carvings and photographs, my own arts practice in the weaving. Later, I would be told by the same whānau who arranged my visit that now I knew where home was, and was always welcome.

I have never slept in my whare tūpuna[25], surrounded by my hapū, whānau and tūpuna[26]. I have lived in Melbourne, Australia since 1980. I am part of the Māori diaspora, a "Māori Aussie" or "Mozzie", adopted in Australia as a baby by a Pākehā[27]. Rachel Buchanan (2010) writes, "We are members of a growing tribe: Ngati [*sic*] Skippy, Ngati Ocker, Ngati Kangaroo, residents of Te Ao Moemoea, the land of dreaming" (Buchanan 2010, para. 8). I am separated from the lands of my ancestors by ocean. I was born in Sydney, Australia, in 1972 at The Mater Misericordiae Hospital for Women and Children, Royal North Shore Hospital. According to Find and Connect, a website dedicated to providing information and history regarding Australian orphanages, children's homes and other institutions, "the Mater" was run by the Sisters of Mercy and was a maternity hospital established to care for mothers who were "unmarried, and destitute before and after the birth of their babies. Babies for adoption were also placed from the Mater" (Find and Connect 2011, p. 1). My birth mother had chosen to "cross the ditch"[28] for the most obvious time of her pregnancy. She came to Australia alone at the age of 21. Her single fare airline ticket had been paid for by my birth father. This anecdotal information was handwritten by the social worker on the government-issued and longwinded form titled Preliminary Consent Form, Adoption of Children Act, 1965, Social and Medical History of a Child Surrendered for Adoption. The phrase "Infant for adoption" is stamped repeatedly in uppercase black letters over my birth medical records and adoption papers. The language and comments throughout these documents are brief, subjective and judgemental. Many of these comments reflect the attitudes, practices and language of Australia at that time. My birth mother's ethnic group is written as a fraction. Māori is misspelt as "Mairi". A mixed-race child in 1972 in the state of New South Wales, Australia,

[25] Ancestral house.
[26] Grandparents, ancestors.
[27] New Zealander of European descent.
[28] "The ditch" is a colloquial term in both Australia and New Zealand for the Tasman Sea. To cross the ditch is to travel from New Zealand to Australia or from Australia to New Zealand.

was considered to be a child with a disability or special needs. To this day, in the state of Victoria at least, mixed-race children and Māori children available for adoption will go through intercountry adoption rather than "local" adoption government services. In the year of my birth, adoptions in New South Wales peaked at their highest recorded rate in Australia's history (Higgins 2012). Since that time, adoption rates have consistently fallen. This is in part due to the introduction of the Supporting Mothers Benefit (1973), greater availability of the contraceptive pill (1972), the decriminalisation of abortion[29] and advancements in women's rights (National Archives of Australia 2019, p. 1).

I stayed at the hospital until I was placed with my adoptive parents 17 days after my birth. My adoptive family lived in Sydney. My adoptive mother is a Scottish immigrant from Glasgow who still remembers her ninth birthday on board the ship coming to Australia. My adoptive father was born in Tauranga, New Zealand, to a proud Pākehā New Zealand mother and Australian father. He has lived in Australia since the age of 2. My adoptive parents already had a birth child, Craig, who was four years old at the time of my arrival into the family. When I turned four, in 1976, my adoptive family—Mum, Dad, big brother Craig, and Scotty (our Kelpie dog)—moved to Silverstream, Wellington, New Zealand. My father's work had taken the family to New Zealand. Four years later, in 1980, it would bring us back to Melbourne. I was eight years old at the time. For my adoptive parents, Australia was home. For me, Australia was the place of summer holidays with grandparents, the place where my parents' stories began. As a child, I went from being a known entity, a Māori child living in New Zealand, to an unknown exotic other in Australia, where my ancestry became a guessing game that strangers always got wrong. This would continue to occur until 2016 when I received a tā moko[30] on my forearm. Only then did the majority of "where are you from" questions cease.

The Aotearoa/New Zealand that I left behind is distant in both time and memory. This seems to be a common diaspora experience; the place you left ceases to exist the way it was from the moment you leave it; day-to-day cultural life, events, news, popular

[29] Abortion laws differ around Australia: they are decided by individual state and territory governments rather than the federal government. For more information see Children by Choice (2019).
[30] Māori tattoo on the face or body done under traditional protocols.

culture and society at large is continually changing and evolving. It is impossible to ever go back to the home that you have left as it was that way at a fixed point in time that cannot be repeated. When I left New Zealand, it was a place governed by a conservative and controversial prime minister, Robert "Piggy" Muldoon, whose attitude towards Māori has been described as "ambivalent" (Gustafson 2010, para. 6). Muldoon strongly opposed the return of Takaparawhā (or Bastion Point) on the south shores of Auckland to the local iwi, Ngāti Whātua. On the 25 May 1978, after a 506-day occupation of Takaparawhā, the government sent in police and army personnel and evicted Ngāti Whātua protesters from their ancestral lands, demolishing their temporary meeting house, buildings and gardens in one of New Zealand's most famous protest actions. It would take another 10 years for the government to accept the finding of the Waitangi Tribunal supporting Māori claims to this land (Ministry of Culture and Heritage 2017a, p. 1). When I left Aotearoa, the 1981 Springbok tour[31] that divided New Zealand had not yet taken place, even though protest action against tours to South Africa because of apartheid had been raging since the 1960s. There were only two television stations, there was no Māori television, and the Kōhanga Reo[32] movement would not begin immersion of Māori pre-schoolers in the Māori language until 1982. I left New Zealand in 1980 without connection to Te Reo Māori or Māori cultural knowledge, custom and practices.

Growing up in Australia, away from cultural family connections and without Te Reo Māori, I have often felt the sense of being caught in between two competing identities and realities—as an outsider to the dominant Anglo-Australian culture, and outside of my own Māori cultural heritage. I am Māori-Australian and indigenous, although not indigenous to this land, Australia. I am tangata whenua[33], but not tangata whenua here. I am an oxymoron of indigeneity; connected yet disconnected from my ancestral homeland, an in-between, residing in what Bhabha calls a "third space" (Bhabha 1994, p. 36 - 39). Given

[31] In 1981 more than 150,000 New Zealanders took part in over 200 demonstrations in New Zealand's largest ever civil disturbance. The cause for this civil unrest was the visit to New Zealand of the South African rugby team. While there had been a long tradition of rugby rivalry between the two countries' teams, the New Zealand All Blacks and the South African Springboks, the main reason for the protests was the South African policy of choosing team members on the basis of race, a policy that remained in place until 1992. For more information see Davidson (2011).
[32] Lit. "language nest"; Māori-language preschool.
[33] The indigenous people of the land.

this, it is perhaps not surprising that much of my art practice has been centred on issues of post-colonialism and identity politics. Learning how to weave has been a way for me to connect to my heritage, to begin to comprehend Māori ways of making, of thinking, and Māori technology and knowledge systems.

Figure 2. This is the first photo ever taken of me by my adoptive family in 1972. It was taken on the day that my mum, dad and big brother took me home for the first time.

Learning How to Weave

In 2006 I went to art school believing I was a painter and walked out as a photographer. My training is as a fine art photographer; I have a Bachelor of Arts (BA Fine Art) and a Master of Fine Art (MFA), both from RMIT University and majoring in photography. I have taught photography since 2011, at RMIT University, Deakin University and Photography Studies College. Throughout my training I have been taught to never touch a photograph without wearing white cotton gloves: the fingerprints left behind from handling are almost impossible to remove from the surface of a photograph. I continue to teach this as the most appropriate way to handle a photograph. By the end of the academic semester, my students know not to touch a photograph without gloves or else I involuntarily gasp in horror.

However, as a contemporary Māori woman, this practice of wearing white gloves never sat well with me. Being a brown girl wearing white gloves felt wrong: white gloves have many negative associations for many women of colour, from blackface to domestic service. Moreover, gloved hands effectively mute the sense of touch and the tactile, which is very much at odds with Māoridom. The Māori world, like many indigenous cultures, values the tactile connection, between both people and objects, including sacred cultural objects. For Māori, taonga (sacred objects or treasures), such as photographs, carvings, kete (baskets) and kete whakairo (patterned baskets), are touched, spoken to and embraced. This occurs not only in ceremonies such as tangi (funerals) but also in the realities of everyday life. This tactile desire to connect with objects and materials drew me towards Pacific and Māori weaving techniques. All Māori weaving—whatu, raranga and whiri (weaving, plaiting and braiding respectively[34])—is done by hand and without loom. The hand is, and remains, the ultimate tool of Māori

[34] These translations of whatu, raranga and whiri as weaving, plaiting and braiding respectively is contentious. Even though these Te Reo Māori words, this classification system reflects the effects of colonisation; as Smith and Laing (2011) argue, the choice of codification and classifications of Māori textiles reveal biases in the methods of production (the mechanical as progressive technology and the non-mechanised as primitive) as well as gendered biases downplaying the achievements and skills of the largely female art form of Māori weaving (Smith & Laing 2011, pp. 220–23.) Importantly, accounts of Māori textiles "were based on ethnographic records of skills and material culture thought to be in danger of loss. Those who gathered this information were seldom either weavers or experts in textiles" (Smith & Laing 2011, p. 221). I will explore this more fully in Chapter Two, where I discuss my methodology.

weaving.

I began to embrace the tactile and learn how to weave in 2011. As with most Māori weavers, my starting place in learning how to weave was learning raranga. The first piece I ever wove was a basic raranga plait often used for making tīpare (headbands) called mekameka (chain). I was at a workshop being run by the Pacific Women's Weaving Circle[35] where we used brightly coloured floristry ribbon as our weaving material. As is the case in Aotearoa, many expatriate community weavers in Australia find it hard to source the materials traditionally used in their ancestral homeland. It is common to find floristry ribbon replacing the natural fibres of pandanus or harakeke[36]. I sat with a group of workshop participants at a long table inside the Atrium at Federation Square in Melbourne, the only brown face amongst the workshop group (not including the instructors). Seated on a pandanus mat to the right of the workshop table was a group of Pacific Island women. Young teenagers sat with older women—aunties and grandmothers, laughing, talking, weaving and teaching, one eye on their delicate handwork and the other on the younger children running around. I wanted desperately to be with the brown aunties, not stuck at the table with largely white women with an interest in craft with a "cultural" slant. I sat at the table concentrating, trying my best to learn, to remember the movements, the pattern and repetition in order to feel worthy to go weave with the brown women. In one of the breaks I finally summoned the courage to go over to one of the women, who was weaving a lolly lei. I was invited (truthfully, I was told) to sit on the pandanus mat with the other brown women. To this day I weave once a month with my weaving circle, Motu Taim[37]. I learn each time I sit with those women, not always lessons about weaving, but important lessons nonetheless.

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[35] The *Pacific Women's Weaving Circle* is a community group that has now re-branded and reformed into three different weaving circles; *Motu Taim*/Island Time based in Railway House Community Centre, Parkville, *Mata'ala Weave Craft Story Project* based at Louis Joel Community Arts Centre, Altona, and *Pacific Womens' Weaving Circle* based in Brisbane, Queensland.

[36] As part of a diaspora, we do have access to the same resources as our tūpuna, so we substitute and adapt—just as my Māori ancestors did when they arrived in the cooler climate of Aotearoa, realised that aute or paper mulberry would not thrive and found a substitute in harakeke (New Zealand flax).

[37] "Motu Taim" is a mash-up of Polynesian and Melanesian words meaning "island time"; the name reflects the cultural heritage of the group's members. Motu Taim was formed in 2016 as a rebranding of the Melbourne branch of the Pacific Women's Weaving Circle. I am a founding member of this group.

I have learnt and continue to learn customary Māori weaving techniques from a variety of sources; from friends in my weaving circle, from aunties in the Māori community (in Melbourne and in Aotearoa), from books, from online YouTube tutorials and, most recently, from the online course run by the Hetet School of Māori Art. I have only once woven with harakeke on a marae in Aotearoa. This was at the Te Roopu Raranga Whatu O Aotearoa National Weavers Collective, National Weavers Hui 2017, held at Te Wai-iti Marae, Lake Rotoiti, Rotorua. Over the three days of the hui (gathering or meeting) I learnt more about weaving practice than I could have imagined. Talking, weaving, sharing kai with other weavers, watching other women[38] in their mahi (work), looking at the tools being used, harvesting from the pā harakeke, learning more of contemporary tikanga—these experiences took my knowledge from the theoretical to a lived experience and forever changed my practice. Here, I must acknowledge that the Hetet School of Māori Art has come under some scrutiny from other customary Māori weavers. Many weavers feel that the best way to learn both the skills and the tikanga is on the marae. Edna Pahewa (Te Arawa), for example, has said:

> [I]n a world brimming with technology, the challenge was to try to slow down the younger generation of weaving students. The key was for new weavers to take the time to learn the tikanga. They need to stop and listen to us—if you want to learn our craft this is how we're going to teach it. (Boynton 2017, para. 4)

The two main criticisms levelled at the online learning of raranga, whiri and whatu appear to be that cultural integrity, knowledge and customs cannot be transmitted in an online environment, and that Māori knowledge should not be available for sale to anyone willing to pay for a course. Having glimpsed some of the mātauranga Māori of the arts of te whare pora[39] at the National Weavers' Hui, I can certainly attest to the transformative power of working with harakeke, gathered and woven on a marae while surrounded by multiple generations of knowledge keepers. However, even in the context of Aotearoa, this kind of experience occurs only once every two years. Outside of Aotearoa, there is no marae context in which to learn. To my mind, a marae cannot and should not exist outside of Aotearoa, as this would be another form of colonisation on another people's

[38] While some notable male researchers and weavers did attend this hui, such as Karl Leonard, John Reid Tui-Tiakitai and Matthew McIntrye-Wilson, the majority of attendees were women, as Māori weaving is a predominantly female art form. For example, it was not until 2011 that Karl Leonard became the first man elected to the committee of Te Roopu Raranga Whatu o Aotearoa (the National Māori Weavers' Collective).

[39] Lit. house of weaving; the teaching of weaving arts.

land (Stephens 2017, p. 1)[40]. As a member of the Māori diaspora, is it possible to learn customary methods outside of the ancestral homeland and without access to the same natural resources? I believe it is. I can make Māori customary art outside of Aotearoa, not simply because I identify as Māori, but through the ways of making the taonga and following tikanga, and importantly by using Māori frameworks and worldviews. I will examine this in depth in Chapter Two, where I discuss my methodology. The more I weave, the more my hands repeat the gestures, movements and differing whakapapa of my tūpuna wāhine, the more I learn mātauranga Māori. I am not simply learning a craft or skill. Through my hands I am learning a framework of thinking and of cultural understanding. Weaving acts as an access point to my own whakapapa that was interrupted through adoption, dislocation and migration.

By 2012, Māori raranga techniques began creeping into my photographic practice. First it was as the subject of my photography, and then later, during my Master of Fine Arts, I began using the photographic print as a material to weave. In my MFA project, I used self-portraiture, found photographs, and video installations to interrogate colonial representations of Māori photographic subjects in order to provide positive expressions of contemporary Māori identity. My thesis was titled *Through My Eyes: Disrupting the Colonial Gaze through Photo Media, Video and Māori Weaving Techniques.* My final series of works, shown in my MFA graduating exhibition, were a series of three photographic prints hand-woven in kete whakairo (finely woven patterned Māori basket) patterns. This series would later be named *Māoris Weaving Baskets*, a title taken from the set of found images of Māori taken in Rotorua between 1950 and 1959 which were the source images of my woven photographs[41].

[40] In Australia there have been attempts to establish marae in Parramatta in New South Wales, in Melbourne in an undecided location and south of Perth in the Bunbury area. So far, none of these attempts have been successful. As Māmari Stephens points out, even with consultation with indigenous peoples, Māori are not tangata whenua outside of Aotearoa. To expect the local indigenous people to assume the status of visitors onto land that is theirs is inappropriate and may be a "dangerous dream"; she writes, "we must be wary of transplanting our notions of being tangata whenua to the whenua of others, and risk wreaking yet another layer of colonisation upon those home peoples. We must never forget who we are. And we must never forget who we are not" (Stephens 2017).

[41] I wrote on the inherent tension in working with such found images of Māori (such as this series) in Lyttle (2015).

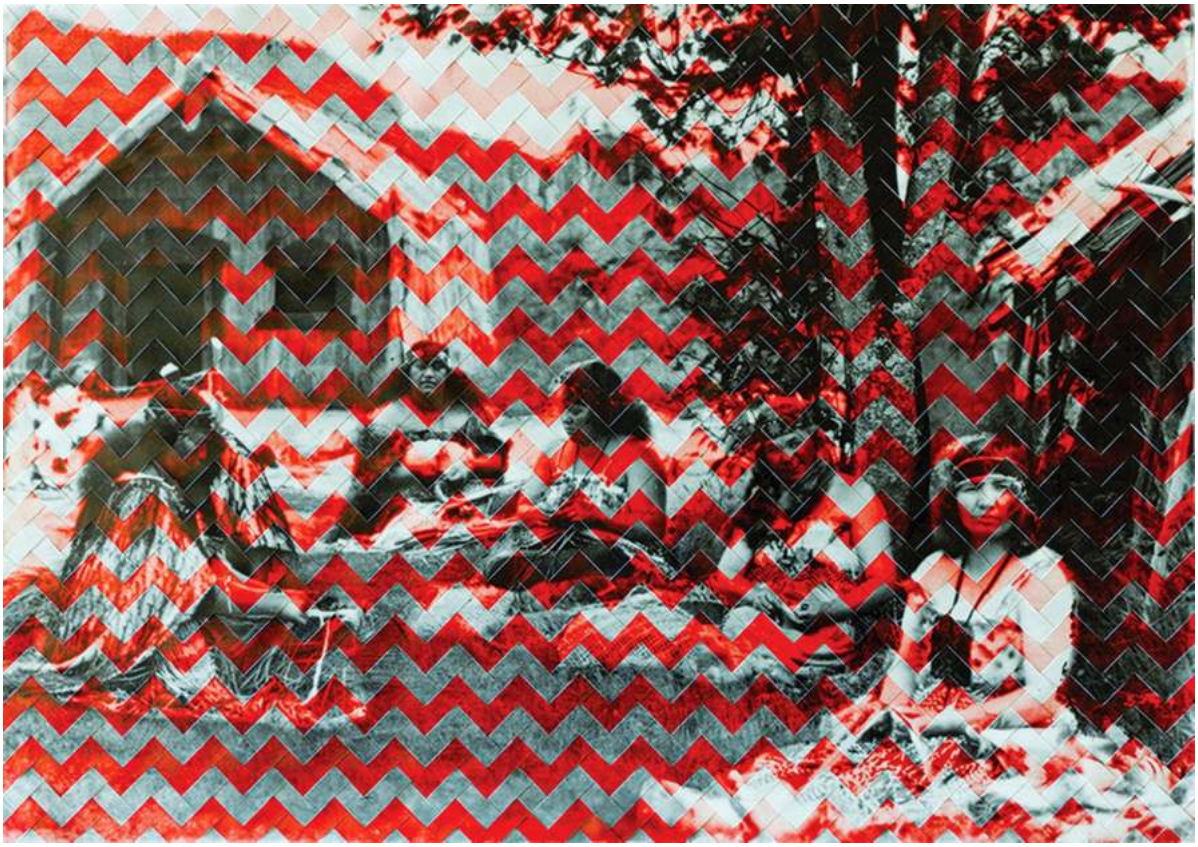

Figure 3. Kirsten Lyttle, *Aramoana* (Ocean Pathways) (2012). From the series *Māoris Weaving Baskets*, hand-woven inkjet print, 740 x 955 mm, Edition 1 of 1.

The Camera as a Tool of Colonisation

> To photograph people is to violate them, by seeing them as they never see themselves, by having knowledge of them they can never have; it turns people into objects that can be symbolically possessed. Just as the camera is a sublimation of the gun, to photograph someone is a sublimated murder—a soft murder, appropriate to a sad, frightened time. (Sontag 1977, p. 10).

There is a long history of the objectification of Māori and other colonised indigenous people through the lens of the camera. Too often, photographs are viewed as "truth", or a neutral witness, revealing evidence or proof, while the choices of representation made by the image-taker prior to releasing the shutter are ignored. For many indigenous people the costs of misrepresentation through the lens of the camera have meant great cultural losses. Racial stereotyping (e.g., the noble savage or the dusky maiden), misappropriation and commodification of cultural distinctiveness are some of the ways that this has occurred (Bell 1990 & 2011; Beets 2000; Smith 2012). These losses continue to have an impact on the daily lives of indigenous people. As a Māori woman, I still find it empowering to be on "the other side" of the camera, taking agency in image

making.

There is a growing list of contemporary indigenous photographers who appropriate the camera as a strategy to force the viewer to unpack and reconsider racial stereotypes evident in many historical photographs made with anthropological intent or for the tourist industry. The "natives", looking back from the photographic frame, now return the gaze. Two common strategies used by indigenous photographers are:

1. Rework found images[42]; or,
2. Restage historical photographs, often using themselves as the "native" subject.[43]

However, even in this subversive strategy, the subject (i.e., the native, aboriginal or indigenous person), whether reclaimed or restaged, still offers up the invitation to be looked upon by the viewer as exotic. The weakness in this strategy is that the audience is not necessarily seeing a "native" perspective; it is still defined against the Western stereotype as the starting point. To my mind, this strategy leaves room for the objectification to continue; an audience is still looking at the non-Western "Other"[44] rather than presenting the world from an indigenous point of view. My research project proposes a new way forward by not only inscribing the photographic image with a positive indigenous narrative but by reclaiming the physical photographic surface as a site for indigenous customary art. Here, Māori weaving is not simply cast as the subject of the coloniser's camera machinery but is instead rethought and repurposed as an indigenous weaver's medium. In this, photography is no longer thought of and deployed as the medium of record but rethought, repurposed and reworked as an indigenous maker's medium.

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[42] For example, Leah King-Smith, *Patterns of Connection* (1991) or Brook Andrew, *52 Portraits* (2013).
[43] For example, Fiona Foley's series *Native Blood* (1994) or Shigeyuki Kihara's series *Fa'a fafine: In the Manner of a Woman* (2004–2005).
[44] The notion of the "Other" has been used by many post-colonial theorists, such as Edward Said and Frantz Fanon. "Othering" is when those outside of the Western canon (the non-Western "Other") and its humanist tradition of enlightenment are viewed through a distorted lens. In his 1978 book *Orientalism*, Said argues that the Western literary and artistic canon, in particular that of England and France, is filled with examples where the Middle East is unrealistically represented as timeless, mysterious, barbaric, occultist, sexualized and dangerous (for example the painting by Jean-Léon Gerôme, *The Snake Charmer* [1870], or Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres's painting *Odalisque with a Slave* [1839]). The "Orient", Said tells us, is "not an inert fact of nature" but instead like the "Occident" (a term for the West), "man-made" (Said 1978, pp. 4–5). Orientalism is a discourse with a purpose; it is a cultural enterprise, born from colonialism, where the West benefits and dominates (politically, economically, intellectually, culturally and morally) over the non-Western world.

The Research Question

When I began my PhD in 2015, I noticed an apparent divide between fine art and customary practitioners of Māori art. For example, Diggeress Rangituatahi Te Kanawa (Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Kinohaku) says, "[T]here is no excuse for not using traditional materials" (Te Awekotuku 1991, p. 119), while Professor Deidre Brown (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Kahu) argues, "[T]here is a long history of new tools enhancing Māori cultural expression… digital media is no exception" (Brown 2008). Indigenous arts practice has always been marked by continually shifting ground. Like other indigenous art forms, Māori art cannot be reduced under and confined to a singular, unified heading. Following the lead of Robert Jahnke (Ngāi Taharora, Te Whānau a Iritekura, Te Whānau a Rakairoa o Ngāti Porou), professor of Māori visual arts at Massey University in Palmerston North (Aotearoa), I use the term "customary Māori art" to mean art that "maintains or mimics traditional visual referents" (Jahnke 2011). Jahnke argues against what he refers to as "orthodox" or "essential" definitions of Māori art that do not allow for changes in materiality or the assimilation/and or appropriation of Western traditions (such as figurative painting) into Māori tribal visual culture. Rather than a debasement of tribal traditions, he suggests that these sites of cultural collision are a natural consequence of transcultural interlocutions (or conversations)[45].

In answer to the questions "What is Māori art?" and "Who can be defined as a Māori artist?" Jahnke suggests that the word "art" should not be a part of the question to begin with but rather replaced by "visual culture". "Art" is too loaded with Western academic Eurocentrism where a privilege is given to high/fine art as defined against low/craft art. When applied to a Māori cultural context, "visual culture" is a less essentialist substitute. Jahnke proposes a Māori-centric visual culture classification system, based in Te Reo Māori and with a Māori kaupapa that will encompass the wide range of artistic practices by artists who identify as Māori and who have Māori whakapapa. He identifies three categories that exist under the diverse practice(s) that is/are contemporary Māori art: 1)

[45] Here, Jahnke is taking direct aim at Māori scholars such as Sidney Moko Mead, who wrote: "Māori art might then be defined as art that looks Māori, feels Māori, is done by Māori following the styles, canons of taste and values of Māori culture. A Māori artist might be defined as a person who identifies as Māori, is Māori by whakapapa and has some proven ability in Māori art" (as quoted in Mane-Wheoki 2014).

toi tūturu (customary Māori art), 2) toi whakawhiti (trans-customary Māori art), where there is an exchange or interchange between the traditional Māori referents so that they are transformed through implication or isolation from a traditional (Māori) art context, and 3) toi rerekē (non-customary Māori art), "where traditional visual referents are minimal or non-existent" (Jahnke 2011, p. 135). Māori customary art is inevitably and inherently linked to the past and has a specific colonised history. Throughout this research project I will show that Māori weaving practices are not debased or threatened when other materials are used but rather that materials such as the photograph can be indigenised or Māorified. While its demise has been lamented since the practices of te whare pora were first recorded (Best 1898, p. 658), Māori weaving continues to thrive in Aotearoa and beyond.

I started my research project with the following questions: Are expatriate Māori weavers bound to the same cultural materiality constraints concerning preservation of culture when living on another land? Can new technologies such as digital imaging be combined with customary art techniques without damage or loss to indigenous customary practices? Can digital photographic processes and production be allied with indigenous methods of making—not just as a conceptual representation or thematically, but to make the process of digital art making in itself indigenous? In other words, how can the camera and its processes be remade, from image capture to print production, with indigenous methods and practices? How can the photograph be rethought, repurposed and reworked as an indigenous weaver's medium given the role it has had as a tool of colonisation?

This first chapter has introduced the following elements of my research: my own vantage point as a "Mozzie" photographer, the role that weaving has played in connecting me to my cultural heritage, the complicated role that the camera has played in colonisation, my research questions, and the scope of my research. In Chapter Two, I discuss how indigenous ways of thinking and seeing the world differ to Western approaches. I explain how I utilise indigenous methodologies in my practice-led research, such as the kaupapa Māori and mana wāhine methodologies. I explain how these methodologies enable me to research as a Māori woman. In Chapter Three, I discuss the complicated history of

the camera and its relationship with Māori. I show that in their relationship with photography, Māori have been active, passive, collaborators and reappropriators of both the camera and the photograph. In Chapter Four, I discuss the creative projects that led me to my research questions. Chapter Five is concerned with two events that occurred during field trips to Aotearoa/New Zealand that would inform and shape the course of my research project: getting a tā moko and attending a hui. In this chapter I discuss how I learnt tāniko techniques that led me to whatu or cloak weaving. I also discuss the canon of weaving literature and compare this with online learning, and explore whether the internet is capable of being a vehicle for transmission of customary weaving knowledge. Chapter Six explains the creative projects that have driven, shaped and ultimately answered the research questions. I discuss the lessons that I learnt that were applied in the creation of my final examination exhibition. Chapter Seven is my conclusion.

Indigenous communities have for some time been concerned with the process of digitisation of their material culture and cultural property retained in museums. Digital technologies have the potential of providing digital repatriation(s) of Māori taonga that have been scattered across museums and archives and in the hands of private collectors throughout the world. 3D scanning and printing technologies offer the potential to "return" (and in some cases reassemble) Māori taonga in virtual/digital space(s) or provide 3D-printed versions of these treasures back to Māori communities. Given this, it is not surprising that the majority of research in digital repatriation is being done by museums and other institutions. This is not to say that such institutions are not attempting to work in collaboration with indigenous communities and researchers but simply that each side may operate with their own (at times competing) agendas. Debate on museum practice and indigenous collections within such institutions falls outside of the scope of this project.

My research practice is less concerned with the preservation of culture and more with how traditional skills can be utilised to offer new cultural formations through their combination with digital technologies such as photography. My project instead explores how the physical photographic surface may be used as a site for the production of indigenous customary artmaking.

CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the methodology of the creative research project, both the methods used to inform this research and why the research has been designed in a particular way. Research for a creative arts dissertation is usually presented as artworks shown in a gallery context, discussed in the written dissertation and presented at conferences. This chapter is essentially a critical essay that explains the lenses I have used for theorising my creative practice and why my research question is important. As an indigenous, Māori researcher living outside of Aotearoa and a creative-practice-led PhD candidate, it has been important for me to apply an indigenous moral lens to my research. The reason is simple: as a Māori researcher, I need to take being Māori as a given, to see both myself and my communities' knowledge systems and ways of thinking and being reflected back in my research for my own benefit as well as that of my community. For me, this is the core of what is known as kaupapa Māori research theory (KMR). This chapter explains the foundations upon which my research is grounded: KMR; mana wāhine, a research approach stemming from KMR, where one is concerned with indigenous feminism and speaking across differences between the lived experiences of Māori women; and my own methodological approach, which I refer to as whakaahua (to photograph, to transform). I will unpack these foundations, explaining how I apply these theoretical research approaches to an embodied customary Māori weaving practice that uses the photograph as a site for making. My creative practice will answer my key research questions by showing that new technologies—such as digital photography and digital photographic printing—can be combined with customary indigenous techniques in order to be reworked as an indigenous makers' medium. I argue that by using the photograph as both a site and a medium of customary weaving, the photograph can be transformed into an indigenous object of cultural value.

How to Make an Eel Trap

I remember watching a video once where an interviewer was asking her elder what it was like to be an indigenous child in the 1950s. The aunty spoke of going to the river to swim, of fishing, of going to dances, of rides in cars and of a new dress. The entire time her

hands worked rhythmically weaving natural fibres and grasses. At the end of the interview, some twenty minutes later, the interviewer asked, “Aunty, will you teach me someday how to weave an eel trap?” The aunty replied, “What do you think I’ve been doing for the last hour?” To my mind, this is a classic example of indigenous knowledge and knowledge transfer. Indigenous knowledge is rarely presented in a neat classroom setting with a lecture title, presentation and typed handout summarising the key points. Sometimes, the fact that a lesson was being provided comes as a realisation after the fact. The classroom itself is arguably a legacy of our colonial past[46]. As many indigenous academics are well aware, academic research has been at odds with indigenous ways of knowing. It “has been an encounter between the West and the Other” (Smith 2012, p. 8). This encounter has left many indigenous communities antagonised, wary and dehumanised. In the name of Western academic research, indigenous knowledge systems and beliefs have been dismissed, belittled or actively destroyed. “Research is an important part of the colonization process because it is concerned with defining legitimate knowledge” (Smith 2012, p. 175). Defining and naming has been a strategy of colonialism, as to be in control of defining, labelling and categorising what is and what is not valid or important is not a neutral activity but one that reflects power and control. To name is to have power over what is being named[47]. Research and scientific study have been presented by the academy as neutral and objective (assuming this were even possible). As Said and others (Said 1978; Smith 2012; Spivak 1988) have pointed out, this neutrality has served a purpose: it is a cultural enterprise from which the West benefits and dominates (politically, economically, intellectually, culturally and morally) over the non-Western world. In the Western model, all researchers have a “right” to seek out knowledge. This is at odds with many indigenous knowledge systems where some knowledge can have restrictions (for example, based on gender, status, caste or the natural world such as time of day/night, season or relationship between plants and

[46] Kahutoi Te Kanawa writes of the differences between learning Māori customary arts such as raranga through mainstream institutions and Māori contexts. She argues for the ideal form of teaching customary art practice to be “in a marae setting that has a connection with an institution, so that they can both support each other to articulate the learning styles of both worlds, te ao tawhito and te ao hurihuri, the old and the new worlds” (Te Kanawa 2008, p. 150).

[47] In *Decolonizing Methodologies*, Linda Tuhiwai Smith writes on the power of naming: “By ‘naming the world’ people name their realities. For communities there are realities which can only be found, as self-evident concepts, in the indigenous language; they can never be captured by another language” (Smith 2012, p. 159).

animals).

How then does an indigenous researcher do research? Or more relevantly, how does this particular indigenous researcher do research? One answer has been offered by the kaupapa Māori research framework. According to *Te Aka Māori-English, English-Māori Dictionary and Index*, "kaupapa" translates to at least four differing nouns: a platform, a policy/plan, a raft and the main body of a cloak. Kaupapa is a supporting structure or plan upon which to stand or travel, or in perhaps my favourite translation, it is the main body of a cloak. In other words, kaupapa is a highly prestigious garment within which to envelop the body within (Moorfield 2003–2019a). Kaupapa Māori is a fundamentally Māori framework, approach, topic, customary practice, institution, agenda, set of principles and ideology—a philosophical doctrine, incorporating the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of Māori society. Mason Durie (Rangitāne, Ngāti Kauwhata, Ngāti Raukawa) has described it as "an inspiration movement that has contributed to a re-think of academic convention and workplace practices" (Durie 2017, p. 1). This is not to say that kaupapa Māori research (KMR) is a new concept; Leonie Pihama (Te Āti Awa, Ngāti Māhanga, Ngā Māhanga ā Tairi) (Pihama 2001) has argued that KMR is ancient and embedded in cultural being. What is relatively new is the academic terminology of research and theory. This then raises the question: what is KMR and how might I best employ it as a method?

Kaupapa Māori Research

Rangimarie Mahuika (Ngāti Rangiwewehi, Ngāti Whakaue, Ngāti Ranginui, Te Rarawa) points out that it is surprisingly difficult to find a concise, definitive explanation of what KMR is (Mahuika 2008, p. 5). Durie acknowledges that KMR is certainly an "umbrella" term, one that "at its simplest, means a Māori way of doing things" (Durie 2017, p. 3). The wariness of Māori academics to adopt an overly essentialist definition is not only understandable but to be expected; a legitimate fear is that KMR can act as a homogenising term that doesn't allow for the significant iwi affiliations and differences within Aotearoa. Take tikanga, for example; tikanga is a set of overarching precepts that are played out in different whānau, hapū and iwi in possibly very different ways. If you

went to a marae in Rotorua and a marae in another area chances the way they did things would be different. Even the term "Māori" can act as a homogenising term that fails to signal the range of differing significant histories, lived realities and continuing effects of colonisation. Of course, any labelling based on ethnicity or geography will fail to encompass the diversity and uniqueness between differing states, regions and tribal divisions. In the context of this research, I use the term "Māori" to mean an indigenous person of Aotearoa/New Zealand and acknowledge that the use of this word is a result of the impact of colonisation. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Porou) quotes Graham Hingangaroa Smith (Ngāti Apa, Ngāti Kahungunu, Te Aitanga a Hauiti, Kāti Māmoe) in his summary of KMR: that it is related to "being Māori", is connected to Māori philosophy and principles, takes for granted the validity and legitimacy of Māori and the importance of Māori language and culture, and is concerned with "the struggle for autonomy over our own cultural well-being" (Smith 2012, p. 185). I have found this characterisation very useful to my research method and my creative practice as it has unfolded.

One of the greatest benefits of KMR is that it "created a space in the academy for Māori-centric research methodologies to emerge" (Smith, HL 2017, p. 26). Growing and defending itself in these academic spaces has meant that KMR has had to be both critically engaged in the way in which the Western academic canon has produced knowledge while questioning assumptions of what "a Māori way of doing things" is (Durie 2017, p. 3). As Graham Hingangaroa Smith has said: "[T]he lesson of the Kaupapa Māori approach from New Zealand is that transformation has to be won on at least two broad fronts; a confrontation with the coloniser and a confrontation with 'ourselves' " (Smith, GH 2003, p. 3). This has led critics of KMR to question whether the act of being self-critical[48], or openly critiquing Māori knowledge systems, beliefs and Māori-ness, runs the risk of revealing too much. Rangimarie Mahuika has laid out this situation clearly: "Māori remain legitimately wary of being too openly critical, and need to exercise caution as often comments can be taken out of context and used inappropriately" (Mahuika 2008, p. 6). Cultural safety, especially in the academy and other institutions where indigenous

[48] KMR has been described as having an "ambivalent relationship with self-critique", (Hoskins, TK & Jones, A 2017, p. ix)

people are both under and misrepresented, should be of paramount importance to both indigenous and non-indigenous researchers and policy makers.[49]

I am reminded of a conversation I had with a dear friend of mine, Gina Ropiha (Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Raukawa). We were discussing the process of applying for Ethics Committee Approval for Human Research Ethics at the university, where research projects are deemed either "high" or "low risk". Gina said, "Being Māori *is* high risk". We both laughed at the truth of her words; being Māori at an institution that does not reflect a Māori way of doing things is necessarily high risk. Somewhat ironically, I have spoken with several indigenous researchers who have felt as I did: that, ironically, the human ethics application process was not culturally safe for the indigenous researcher. I asked myself, was it possible for me to feel culturally safe in institutions that are not indigenous? My experience both teaching and studying in higher education institutions has taught me that cultural safety as a Māori in Australian institutions can be hard to find. It is my belief that KMR helps provide more cultural safety than it threatens.

While "being Māori, identifying as Māori and as a Māori researcher is a critical component of Kaupapa Māori research" (Smith 2012, p. 188), my simply being a Māori researcher or my topic being Māori and concerned with Māori weaving techniques does not necessarily mean I am conducting or engaging in KMR. Here the transformative element of KMR comes into play; in order to be KMR, the research must be linked to and reflect the Māori community and Māori interests. It must argue for Māori self-determination, cultural aspirations and identity, Māori language, Māori knowledge, Māori interests, Māori collective structures (such as whānau or extended family) (Smith 2013). As an adoptee, as a member of the Māori diaspora and as a child of the 1970s who grew up without Te Reo Māori or Māori tikanga and customs, I wondered, especially at the beginning of my research journey, if both me and my research were "Māori enough" to be considered KMR. Certainly, at the core of KMR approaches is the concept of whānau or family, and this is not simply a sense of community belonging but a set of obligations and

[49] Here I am referring to institutions such as Universities and other Educational institutions, Health institutions such as Hospitals and Health Care Facilities and Political Institutions such as Political Parties, Government and Councils.

accountabilities. Linda Tuhiwai Smith explains:

> Kaupapa approaches to research are based on the assumption that research that involves people, as individuals or as communities, should set out to make a positive difference for the researched. (Smith 2012, p. 193)

This question has seldom been asked of indigenous communities: how does the research benefit and empower the community being researched? In 2016, as part of wider fieldwork, I presented a paper at the Seventh Biennial International Indigenous Research Conference (IIRC 2016)/Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga (NPM) Conference, hosted by The University of Auckland. This was my first experience of being around other Māori and First Nation researchers. While I have been fortunate to know a few Indigenous Australian researchers in Australian institutions, it was not until this conference that I encountered other Māori PhD candidates. For me, to be at a conference with hundreds of Māori postgraduate students was an exhilarating experience. However, there was a sense in which I still felt underrepresented: the majority of Māori doctoral students were studying law, education, psychology or nursing rather than fine art. It is important to note that it was only as recently as 2002 that Maureen Lander became the first ever Māori to gain a doctorate in fine arts from a New Zealand university (Aho 2017). In many ways it should not be surprising that vocational and utilitarian academic disciplines are popular among Māori postgraduate students in Aotearoa. The need for these disciplines is more pressing for the communities being researched. In other words, there is some strategic importance for Māori researchers to be in such fields.

As Alice Te Punga Somerville (Te Āti Awa, Taranaki) has noted, much of KMR has its disciplinary roots in the social sciences, which, she argues, have emphasised claims about utility of research. The consequence of this can be to marginalise those Māori scholars whose work is "less able to be articulated in terms of lives saved" (Somerville 2017, p. 72). She writes:

> Instrumentality and utility are both crucial and irrelevant to academic work. Must all research benefit communities in specific ways? What's a benefit or contribution? Who is "community"? My own community is nice to me, but no one ever rang me in the dead of the night to scream, "Help, Alice! We need somebody to write about some novels!" (Somerville 2017, p. 72)

When I read this, I laughed and then wondered if my research benefited my community.

Who is my community? What do my community need me to research?

Being Brown about Town

As a Māori-Australian artist who is living, working and making on the lands of the Wurundjeri, Woiwurrung people (namely, Melbourne[50]) on the unceded territory of the Kulin Nation, I am accustomed to being one of the few brown faces in a cultural landscape (namely, the Melbourne arts scene) that is predominantly white. Melbourne is where I have lived continuously since I was eight years old. Melbourne is certainly a multicultural city, and yet the following is also true: I was the only Māori in my art school as an undergraduate. I was also the only Māori (or indigenous student) in my MFA. Currently, I am the only Māori PhD candidate in my art faculty. I am unaware of any other Māori fine art PhD candidate in Victoria right now. Often, I am not only "the only Māori" but also, in some instances, the first Māori within these spaces (but certainly not the last). The weight of being "the only" representative of Māoridom, or at times of any indigenous culture within fine art academia and art institutions, does not always sit comfortably on my shoulders. Sometimes I would like to have the luxury of being able to identify as just "an artist" rather than having to "represent" a people, a region, or the entire world of indigeneity, as if that were even possible. However, as there are so few of us in these spaces and while I have access to resources that others in my community do not (such as my education), I am bound to represent my community—sometimes by choice (in the way I identify myself) and sometimes by how I am perceived by others (simply by being brown in a white space). I can only try to represent in a way that makes my community feel pride, not shame. Studying, working and making within the walls of institutions whose culture does not reflect my own can be tiring; it is exhausting explaining the basics of colonisation and white privilege to those who live under the invisible cloak of its

[50] A note on terminology: in the past few years Melbourne has been referred to by many writers (who are not Wurundjeri, Woiwurrung people) as "Narrm". The University of Melbourne, for example, states that "Narrm refers to the Country of the Melbourne region" (University of Melbourne 2019). While I strongly believe in returning to the use of indigenous place names for a region, place or landmark, it is difficult to find the word Narrm being used by the local indigenous people in print. For example, it is nowhere to be found on the websites of the Wurundjeri Tribal Council (2019) or the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS 2019a). Without confirmation by the local people of this word as being the most appropriate to use, I am reluctant to use it for fear of being culturally inappropriate.

normalisation. My point is this: while, like Alice Te Punga Somerville, my community does not ring me in the night pleading "Help, Kirsten! We need someone to take a photograph", I know that my presence in higher education institutions, in museums, in the white-walled art gallery spaces, and through this research project has positive outcomes for the Māori community, particularly the Māori diaspora in Melbourne. This is one reason why I view this research project as KMR.

Mana Wāhine

Mana wāhine has been referred to as a Māori feminism (Reilly 2011, p. 341). The limitation with this definition is that it assumes it is possible to adequately translate all of the complexities, nuances and understandings of something in one language (Te Reo Māori) into another (English). *Te Aka* defines "mana" as "prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power, charisma—mana is a supernatural force in a person, place or object" and "wāhine" as "woman, female, lady, wife" (Moorfield 2003–2019c&e). Naomi Simmonds (Raukawa, Ngāti Huri) points out that it is problematic to assume that the Māori meaning of wāhine carries the same culturally embedded meanings as the term "woman" carries in English (Simmonds 2011, p. 12). In Māori, the term "wāhine" is both embodied and ephemeral. As Pihama explains:

> ["Wāhine"] designates a certain time and space for Māori women… There are many times and spaces Māori women move through, in our lives, Wāhine is one of those. There are others. There are varying terms that relate to times in our lives and relationships. From birth we journey through those spaces. (Pihama 2001, pp. 261–2)

In brief, mana wāhine is a theoretical approach to research, extending from KMR, that examines what it is to be both Māori and female, as a lived experience; it is an embodied, spatial and spiritual discourse (Simmonds 2011). Such discourse is important because Māori women have been "(re)defined, (re)fashioned, (re)named and (re)organised" (Waitere & Johnston 2009, p. 25), through a colonial structure that rendered Māori women "invisible, written out of our own 'stories' " (Waitere & Johnston 2009, p. 24). In other words, Māori women have been misrepresented and objectified by colonialism, a patriarchal system that disrupted the Māori world and (mis)represented the role of women in Māori society as secondary characters to the important, male roles. Simmonds

makes the point that although there are crossovers in the experiences of women, especially between indigenous women, it can be more difficult to find “workable links” with Pākehā or Western feminisms (Simmonds 2011, p. 17). I tend to agree with Simmonds on this: that the politics of visibility, representation and the ongoing legacy of colonialism means that there is difference in the lived experiences of Māori women. The differing types of lived experiences of Māori women need to be shown in all of the varying parameters, including my own. My research project speaks of my own experiences as an adopted, Māori diaspora wāhine, separated from the lands of my ancestors by ocean, living and making on the lands of the Wurundjeri. My research project uses the lens of mana wāhine to name, claim and define what it is (for me) to be a contemporary Māori wāhine living outside of Aotearoa, amongst an often theoretically ignored but growing diaspora.

It must be noted that the history of textile production is one that is heavily gendered, whose feminised and largely unpaid labour force has been relied upon through wars, military conflicts and times of peace. Art historian Julia Bryan-Wilson writes of textile handicraft and politics in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s in her book, *Fray (*Bryan-Wilson 2017). She argues, that one of the major achievements of the (Western) feminist movement was the reclamation of crafts as a legitimate textile practice, removed from the distinctions between high and low art. Certainly craft practice and the elevation of domestic arts have been a concern of the Western feminist movement (this was especially evident during the 1960s and 1970s). For Māori women, our history of handicraft and textile production has its own unique story; the waves and movements of this history do not always match the patterns and time periods of western feminism. As Hinekura Lisa Smith (Te Rarawa) states, “Māori women were, and continue to be, at the forefront of movements to reclaim and self-determine living as Māori” (Smith 2017, p. 30). The Māori Women’s Welfare League (MWWL), established in 1951 to address the concerns of Māori women and their whānau on a national level, is a prime example of this (Rei 1993). The MWWL became involved in a range of social and political concerns, from Māori language retention, health care, child welfare, employment and education to the development, maintenance and preservation of Māori arts, such as weaving. Because textile arts, in a Māori context, are so strongly connected to cultural resistance

and survival, commentary on the general history of textiles and its connection to the political movements of Western feminism is outside the scope of this research project.

Mana Wāhine and Photography

> Over the years the camera becomes like a friend, something you learn to take with pride into places of great power and the humblest of villages. Yet which of us is not anxious walking with a friend into a new world? Will your friend be relaxed in strange company? Perhaps some unwitting breach of manners will spoil the occasion? The Maori world has its own ways of talking and listening, its own humour, its own process of censure and support. How can we take that maverick yet fond friend of ours—the camera—into the Maori community and be confident it will act with dignity? (Barclay 2015 [1990], p. 9)

The camera, whether we view it as a friend or a foe, has not always acted with dignity within the Māori community. In 1964, a classroom reader produced by the Department of Education in Aotearoa caused so much offense to the Māori community that the MWWL successfully lobbied the minister of education to have all 38,000 copies of the publication withdrawn from circulation and destroyed. This schoolbook, titled *Washday at the Pā*, was written and photographed by Dutch immigrant Ans Westra, who had migrated to Aotearoa only seven years earlier. *Washday at the Pā* was part of a series in the school syllabus on contemporary New Zealand life. This photographically illustrated book was intended for a young audience and depicted "a day in the life of a rural Māori family with nine children" (Te Papa 2019c). Westra argued that her portrayal was an accurate one, showing the living conditions of many Māori in the early 1960s. The MWWL, by contrast, labelled this text as "inaccurate, atypical and unhelpful" (Te Papa 2019c, para. 3). The concern was that this book could do harm to Māori through misleading representations, by only showing the Pākehā stereotypes of a Māori family as "as poor, rural and happily primitive" (Te Papa 2019c, para. 3).

The controversy over *Washday at the Pā* has continued to this day. In its retelling, it has been discussed as a story of censorship, of the aesthetics of documentary photography, of definitions of a typical Māori family in the 1960s, of the accuracy of an outsider's camera lens, of the issue of this being published as a school text—made to educate—rather than as a private publication. Ultimately, this story is one of Māori self-determination and representation. The victory of the MWWL, as Georgina Stewart points

out, is one that "highlighted Pākehā lack of understanding of Māori perspectives on the social world, and on how Māori are represented in public media, including these classroom readers" (Stewart 2019, p. 685). It is impossible to say what this classroom reader who have looked like if a Māori photographer had been commissioned instead of Ans Westra. In 2001, in an interview with Art New Zealand, Westra described the family in *Washday as* "very picturesque" (Skinner 2001). I cannot imagine a Māori photographer using those words to describe the poverty evident in these photographs. In 1963, when these images were taken, the Kodak Instamatic camera had only just been introduced to the shores of Aotearoa (Ministry of Culture and Heritage 2017b), enabling the accessibility of the camera to the hands of all, and importantly, into Māori hands.

In Our Own Hands

Since the late 1960s Māori have used to camera to tell our own stories and record our communities and ways of thinking. I am not sure if my camera is my friend in the way that Māori filmmaker Barry Barclay (Ngāti Apa) describes. Certainly, many contemporary Māori artists have been quick to embrace both analogue and digital technologies in the creation of their artworks; photography, video, sound, projections and digital installations have all been used in the creation of artwork with a kaupapa (principled) Māori approach. Māori artists such as Lisa Reihana (Ngā Puhi, Ngāti Hine, Ngāi Tū), Eugene Hansen (Maniapoto), Nathan Pohio (Waitaha, Ngāti Māmoe, Kāi Tahu–Kāi Tūahuriri), Wayne Youle (Ngā Puhi, Ngāti Whakaeke, Ngāti Pākehā), Peter Robinson (Kāi Tahu), Maureen Lander (Ngā Puhi, Pākehā), Rachel Rakena (Kāi Tahu, Ngā Puhi) and Lonnie Hutchinson (Kāi Tahu, Sāmoan, Kāti Kurī ki Kāi Tahu), to name a few, have been using video and other new technologies to create works that articulate a Māori perspective since the early 1980s. In the hands of Māori artists, the camera has been used to challenge negative racial stereotyping and empower contemporary expressions of Māori identity. Natives no longer simply return the photographer's gaze but instead photograph back, using the camera to tell our own stories and record our own images.

This project expands on the existing research that explores the ways that digital technologies have been adopted by Māori. Following the work of Deidre Brown and

others, I argue that the camera and digital technologies are not necessarily a threat to indigenous cultural integrity. Through my creative-led practice I am photographing customary objects from the perspective of a maker; I make and photograph my own weaving and use the surface of the photograph as a medium with which to weave. I am "Māorifying" and rethinking the photograph as both a site and a material for making customary Māori artworks. The name I have chosen for this methodology is:
Whakaahua

1. (verb) (-tia) to acquire form, transform.
2. (verb) (-tia) to form, fashion
3. (verb) (-tia) to photograph, portray, film.
4. (noun) photograph, illustration, portrait, picture, image, shot (photograph), photocopy.
5. (noun) design

As defined in *Te Aka* [Moorfield 2003–2019f).

CHAPTER THREE: THE CAMERA, THE PHOTOGRAPHER, THE PHOTOGRAPH & THE SUBJECT

> No image is born innocent. (Barclay 2005 [1990], p. 13)

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the complicated relationship that Māori have had with the camera, an object likened to "the gun as an instrument of colonial repression" (Graham-Stewart, Gow & John Leach Gallery 2006, p. 17), and the photograph, as both a material and cultural object. Photography is a relatively modern invention, or at least an invention pegged to modernity[51]. As Linfield explains, "when we talk about photography we are talking about modernity; the doubts that photography inspires are the doubts that modernity inspires. Photography is a proxy for modern life and its discontents" (Linfield 2006, p. 31). Importantly, the majority of photographs portraying Māori, until the 1960s at least, were taken by Pākehā (Ellis & Robertson 2018, p. 240). Like modernity itself, there are a multitude of conflicts and anxieties reflected in photography and Māori's relationship with it.

There is a long history of misrepresentation and objectification of Māori through the lens of the camera, such as in the racial stereotypes of the "noble savage" or the "dusky maiden". Jacqui Sutton Beets has examined the early twentieth-century representations of Māori women in tourist postcards and discusses how these images reveal a calculated pictorial commodification of Māori women, an issue that continues to stereotype and challenge Māori women today. Beets identifies broad categories that images of Māori women in tourist postcards fall into: the Māori maiden or "keepsake beauty"; the exotic belle as the degraded "photographic joke", where "the model's true 'innocence' lies in her ignorance; although not expected to understand the scenario's innuendoes, her expression nevertheless suggests a baffled awareness of degradation" (Beets 2000, p. 21); the reclining, sexually available Māori temptress—the "innocent Eve" or "fallen Eve"—who signifies "prime potential for intermarriage and assimilation" (Beets 2000, p. 25); and also the "Mother and Child" images, which echo the Christian figures of the Madonna

[51] Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre (1787–1851) invented the first reliable method of fixed photography, the daguerreotype, in 1839. This was announced by François Arago to the French Academy of Sciences on 7 January 1839. The process was not revealed in public until 19 August 1839 (Herschdorfer 2015, p. 116).

and child. These poses offer a glimpse into the "old Māori ways", romanticising the precolonial era as the time of the true, or real, authentic Māori. This is similar to "the noble savage"/"romantic savage" depictions where women are shown as figures in so-called "authentic" ethnographic scenes from Māori village life.

From the 1890s Māori were actively commissioning photographers for portraiture, functions and group pictures (King 1983, p. 2). Māori were also not necessarily "passive" subjects; for example, they have actively been a part of the tourist industry since it began in Aotearoa. The photographic portrait has been incorporated into life on the marae[52], the cornerstone of Māori society, holding space alongside other ancestors within the whare tūpuna or wharenui. It has also become an important part of tangi.

In this chapter I also discuss notions of time and photography. Time is fundamental to the mechanics of the camera and is measured by lengths of time (in seconds and fractions of seconds) that the shutter is open, exposing the plate, film or digital sensor to light. Concepts of time are also essential in understanding how the camera and its product, the photograph, are read. The camera has often been used as a recording device capturing a "slice of time", and may be viewed as a physical manifestation of a memory keeper. All too often, photographs are considered as "truth" and used as evidence or proof, and the choices made by the image-taker prior to releasing the shutter are ignored. Is the photograph a memento mori—a symbolic reminder of the inevitability of death, "a token of absence" (Sontag 1977, p. 12)? Or, as Māori ceremonies such as tangi suggest, does the photograph recall presence, such as that of an ancestor? Finally, I will show through my creative practice, which utilises whatu, how the photograph—that product of that very western mechanism, the camera, "tool of the Pākehā"—can be reworked and remade into Māori customary objects such as kākahu (feather cloaks).

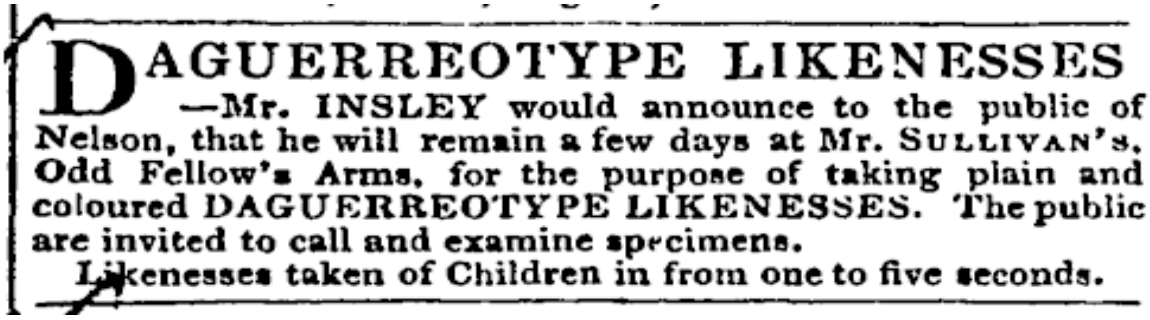
[52] Marae, refers to the courtyard or the open area in front of the wharenui, where formal greetings and discussions take place. More commonly, marae refers to the entire complex of buildings and whare (houses) around the marae. For Māori it is a family/community home of generations and a spiritual space. "Ko te marae taku turangawaewae", or "The Marae is my standing place". For more discussion on the marae, see (Tauroa 1986)

Figure 4: Daguerreotype of Caroline (left) and Sarah Barrett, daughters of Richard (Dicky) Barrett and Rawinia (granddaughter of Te Atiawa paramount chief Tautara). Image credited to Lawson Insley, 1852 or 1853, New Plymouth/Taranaki, Aotearoa/New Zealand; courtesy of Puke Ariki—Taranaki Museum & Library, accession no. A71.462, <https://collection.pukeariki.com/objects/6771>.

My mind—and perhaps my eyes—have been so colonised that I am surprised when I find an image in a book with the caption "the earliest known photograph of Maori in New Zealand" (King 1983, p. 7) and see a black-and-white image of two Māori women, the Barrett sisters, dressed in European clothing. I am too accustomed to the calculated pictorial commodification of Māori wāhine, made through the coloniser's gaze for a commercial profit, "producing cheap pseudo-knowledge of a colony and its women, both of which are presented as exotic and alluring" (Beets 2000, p. 17). This image appears more modern than I had anticipated. There are no ceremonial cloaks, no moko kauae (chin tattoo) or ngutu pūrua (fully tattooed lips), no hei tiki (carved pounamu/jade neck pendant), no heru (ornamental comb) and no huia feathers in their hair. I cannot see any Māori cultural objects placed inside the picture frame to add a sense of authenticity, or the salvage-ethnographic staging, where customary actions (some of which were already out of date when the photograph was taken[53]) are performed. I stare at the faces of Caroline and her sister Sarah. Neither woman looks directly at the camera. Both their bodies and expressions appear stiff; whether this is due to the long exposure time—demanding a subject stay still for up to five seconds—or the highly restrictive clothing of the day, or some other factor, I cannot say. Their facial expressions give nothing away. They are aged 23 and 16 respectively, but to me, they look older. I later learn that this daguerreotype[54] was taken by photographer Lawson Insley in late 1852 or early 1853 (Puke Ariki 2015). It is contained in a maroon-coloured leather case lined with matching coloured velvet. On the right-hand side of the case are double clasps. The image is surrounded by gold metal matt. This object shows signifiers of high value—a one-of-a-kind image that has been treasured, a taonga.

[53] Here I refer to photographs such as those by Augustus Hamilton, the director of the Colonial/Dominion Museum (now known as Te Papa) from1903 to 1913, who assembled the museum's founding photography collection. Hamilton photographed Māori in staged reconstructions, demonstrating "outmoded practices, such as using a ko stick for digging crops, fighting with taiaha and even hunting moa" (McCredie 2017, p. 142).

[54] The daguerreotype was the first commercially successful photographic process where an image could be fixed onto a highly polished silver-plated piece of copper, using iodine vapours and mercury fumes and fixed with saltwater. Daguerreotypes produced sharp and precise images. Each exposure created a unique, highly reflective image, unable to be reproduced (Daniel 2019).



DAGUERREOTYPE LIKENESSES —Mr. INSLEY would announce to the public of Nelson, that he will remain a few days at Mr. SULLIVAN's, Odd Fellow's Arms, for the purpose of taking plain and coloured DAGUERREOTYPE LIKENESSES. The public are invited to call and examine specimens.
Likenesses taken of Children in from one to five seconds.

Figure 5: *Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle*, Volume X, Issue 493, 16 August 1851, Page 410, Advertisements Column 3, courtesy of National Library of New Zealand, retrieved 30 October 2019, <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/NENZC18510816.2.4.3>.

From its first arrival on Aotearoa's shores, using the camera and its ability to record a likeness was a commercial and often individualistic enterprise (with some exceptions, of course, such as the Burton Brothers[55]). Such enterprises were at odds with a Māori worldview where the well-being of the community is placed ahead of individual and financial gain. The photographer, in the early days of the colony, was more likely to be a merchant, bookseller and tradesman than a scientist or amateur researcher (Jäger 1995, p. 318). According to Pākehā photographers such as Alfred Burton in 1885 and George Bourne in 1908 (King 1983, p. 1), Māori were guarded and suspicious of this new technology, referring to both the camera and the photographer as "taipo" or goblin (a ghost or unwanted supernatural visitor not of human origin that haunts the living). This wariness is echoed in the words of Keri Kaa:

> Once upon a time, the old people, I'm talking about my great grandparents' generation, they objected to cameras because they found them intrusive, because you had this cold, round, glass eye staring at you. And they perceived them to be thieves of images. Many people felt that when you take a photograph of somebody that you are actually capturing and taking parts of somebody's wairua (spirit) and that's not something you give away to people. (video interview in 2010, quoted in Robertson 2016)

It must be noted that there are some discrepancies in claims about the origins of the word "taipo". According to Williams (1975, p. 364), "this word is used by Māori believing it English, and by English believing it Māori, it being apparently neither". However, *Te Aka* notes that "taipō" is used as the translation for the word "ghost" in the Māori-language

[55] The Burton brothers, Alfred and Walter, are considered to be the most internationally well known of New Zealand's early photographers. They actively traded under the photographic business name Burton Brothers from 1867 until 1898 in Dunedin, New Zealand (Graham-Stewart, Gow & John Leech Gallery 2006, p. 48; Main 1984, p. 88).

newspaper *Te Puke ki Hikurangi* (*TPH*) in 1900[56], suggesting that by the turn of the century at least, this word was used by Māori to refer to something supernatural. Moreover, the sense of trepidation that the camera brought with it was also felt by some Pākehā; the camera, after all, was a machine, and the fear of machines, especially those machines that can replace the hand of man, is still used as a science-fiction trope to evoke powerlessness and fear. In the case of the camera and its product, the photograph, the following fears arose: could this machine replace the "human" element of artistic rendering? Would artists and engravers lose their jobs if the art realm were taken over by this machine, the camera? In 1842, *The Union*, a working-class journal aimed at gaining political rights and influence for the working classes, published, "That department of art seemed secure from the encroachments of machinery; yet, by Beard's new patent, this has been effected" (quoted in Jäger 1995, p. 319). Richard Beard (1801–1885) was a coal trader who purchased a licence to use the daguerreotype process in 1841, and according to the National Portrait Gallery in London, he opened the world's first photographic studio (National Portrait Gallery 2019).

The process of photography, with the rise of a mechanical tool that crosses the fields of science and artistic rendering, brought concern to both sides, Māori and Pākehā. While some Māori were actively hostile towards the camera being pointed in their direction, it would be misleading to suggest that all Māori felt this way; for example, from the 1890s, Māori were actively commissioning photographers for portraiture, functions and group pictures (King 1983, p. 2). It was also around this time (the 1890s) that photographs began to be used as an important part of tangi. This cultural practice continues to this day: photographs of the deceased, and of other ancestors, are displayed, addressed, lamented over and touched. The rendered image of an ancestor, whether carved or photographic, is considered to be a living presence through which the wairua (spirituality or everlasting spirit) of the person can be transferred (Brown 2008, p. 63). Many contemporary Māori view historical photographs as taonga (Dudding 2003, p. 8) and are

[56] "Nō tō rāua kitenga atu i taua taipō ka mutu tā rāua kai, kātahi rāua ka tahuri ki te karakia. Ka mutu kātahi ka rotarota mai te taipō nei ki a rāua, ko te rotarota tēnei: ko te ringa i haere i te pāpāringa mauī ki te pāpāringa katau (*TPH,* 29/9/1900:5). / When they saw that ghost they stopped eating and then began to say ritual chants. When they stopped the ghost made a hand sign to them and this was the gesture: its hand went from its left cheek to the right cheek" (Moorfield 2003–2019f).

important aspects of cultural life, regardless of the original context in which they were created (i.e., as military propaganda, as tourist images or to record a so-called dying race). In 2001, an Auckland auction of rare Māori photographs was blocked by Māori activists calling for the return of the images of their ancestors, as these photographs were considered as taonga. Subsequently, these photographs (worth NZ$150,000) were returned to the iwi of Whanganui and are now being restored in the Whanganui Regional Museum (*I Am the River* 2010). In this way, for at least 120 years Māori have not only adopted the photograph but have Māorified[57] it.

Associate Professor Ngarino Ellis (Ngā Puhi, Ngāti Porou) and Natalie Robertson (2018) (Ngāti Porou, Clann Dhònnchaidh) argue that Māori have not simply been passive subjects of the photographer's gaze but have been active collaborators. An example is that of Sir Āpirana Turupa Ngata (Ngāti Porou), who was the first Māori to go to university, a politician and president of the *Journal of the Polynesian Society* and has been described as the "pre-eminent Māori leader of his generation" (Soutar 2015). Ngata worked alongside ethnographers Elsdon Best, Te Rangi HĪroa (Sir Peter Buck) (Ngāti Mutunga) and Pākehā photographer James McDonald (1863–1935) to produce films and photographs for the Dominion Museum ethnological expeditions (the Dominion Museum was the precursor to Te Papa) for the purpose of recording, maintaining and preserving Māori customary knowledge, art techniques and cultural practices. According to Robertson, Ngata "saw value in inviting Pākeha to record the ways of life of Māori for the benefit not only of outsiders but for the future of the tribe itself" (Robertson 2016, p. 139). She goes on to say that "the readiness of Māori participants as subjects suggest that McDonald's camera was a welcome 'eye', or at least, accepted as a guest witness" (Roberston 2016, p. 141).

[57] Compounds and anglicisations using the word Māori have been in use since the late 19th century. These include à la Māori, Māoricise, Māorified and pseudo-Māori (Bardsley 2013).

Figure 6: (McDonald 1923) Āpirana Ngata and Peter Buck with a tukutuku panel at Waiomatatini. Photographer James Ingram McDonald, Ref: 1/2-007887-F, courtesy of Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Even if it is the case that McDonald's camera was an accepted guest witness, I believe that this guest was one who was capable of misinterpreting their hosts, of outstaying their welcome and of being an unreliable witness. The camera, with its capacity to accurately depict detail, freezing a moment of time and rendering this onto paper, has been considered a neutral and impartial observer of the truth[58]. However, the way in which time has been frozen within a still photograph is also subject to the manipulation of the photographer. The photographer, the one holding the camera and making the decision of when to press the shutter, is subjective. The photographer's decisions—the way the subject is posed, cropping decisions of what is left inside the image frame and what is cut to be left outside of it, the accompanying title or text—all affect the way in

[58] As early as 1840, the first ever hoax photograph was made by Hippolyte Bayard, titled *Self Portrait as a Drowned Man* (1840)—suggesting that as soon as photography was invented, photographers realized the potential photographs have to distort the truth (Daniel 2019).

which a photograph is read and reflect the photographer's subjectivity. As Robertson notes, "Whose hands the camera is in reflects how the act of witnessing is undertaken—through whose eyes do we see?" (Robertson 2016, p. 134).

A further important question becomes: for whose benefit are these eyes seeing? In other words, sometimes the "witnessing eye of the camera" has a particular agenda—an agenda that supports an institution or government body with its own mandate instead of the community that is collaborating with the photographer. Many of the photographs made for and collected by the Colonial/Dominion Museum came from a salvage ethnography approach: the photographic recording of customary practices of a culture believed to be threatened with extinction. August Hamilton, the director of the Colonial/Dominion Museum from 1903 to 1913, was among the first to use photography as a research tool (McCredie 2017, p. 138). While Hamilton's approach to photographing both Māori and Māori material culture was certainly that of salvage ethnography, it would be inaccurate to suggest that his method was scientifically disciplined. His approach to taking photographs and to collecting them for the museum has been described as "ad hoc" rather than empirically evidenced (McCredie 2017, p. 142). For example, some of the works acquired for the museum collection were from photographers engaged in tourism rather than science[59]. Hamilton also staged reconstructed ethnographic scenes showing clothing and practices that were inaccurate and outdated. His unfulfilled dream was to create a "national Māori museum as a 'Valhalla for the Māori, a place in which the memories of their great ones can be enshrined and perpetuated'" (Hamilton 1902 cited in McCredie 2017, p. 142). The idea was that the "great ones" were those Māori who were "authentic" and "untainted" by the point of first contact with Europeans. The limitation with this view is that it assumes that "authenticity" can be found existing along a linear, Western timeline at a specific point of history, and that any time before, or after, this date Māori can no longer be viewed as authentic, real, true Māori. A definition of a community—who is, or is not, authentic, or belonging to, that community—can never be accurately made by those who are outside of it. It is these kinds of Eurocentric and

[59] McCredie writes of 242 negatives made by Auckland's Pulman Studios for the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts, which acquired them in 1913—but by then they were already considered "too out-of-date for tourist promotions" (McCredie 2017, p. 142).

ethnographic views that have created racist and damaging stereotypes of Māori that have continued to this day. I am reminded of the words of Jacq Carter (Ngāti Awa) writing on contemporary Māori identity:

> The fact is there is no unitary Māori reality, no one Māori identity, no single way of growing up Māori. All of us have been subjected to colonisation and colonisation has affected us all in different ways. Some of us identify as "part-Māori" and others lay claim to being "full-blooded" Māori. Some of us grow up speaking te reo Māori and some of us grow up not even knowing we're Māori. Indeed, such is the legacy of colonisation. (Carter 1998, p. 266)

I argue that for an indigenous community, it is not enough to "collaborate" with a photographer or a filmmaking team; the possible risks of having the eyes of the camera act as an unreliable witness, or a witness with their own agenda, is too dangerous, and the potential harms of racial stereotyping too great. For indigenous communities, who want to document their own material culture and customary practices, it is far better to have photographers who are members of their own community—to see the world, our treasured objects, cultural practices and community members through our own eyes.

The Tools of the Pākehā

> Ko tō ringa ki ngā rākau a te Pākehā—hei ora mō te tinana.
> Ko tō ngākau ki ngā taonga a ō tīpuna Māori—hei tikitiki mō tō māhuna.
>
> Your hands to the tools of the Pākehā for the welfare of your body.
> Your heart to the treasures of your ancestors as a feather for your brow.
> (Ellis & Robertson 2018, p. 239)

These words are part of an inscription, now a beloved Māori proverb, that Āpirana Ngata (Ngāti Porou) wrote in the autograph book of seven-year-old schoolgirl Rangi Bennett (Te Arawa) in 1949. They have been taken to inspire Māori youth to use technology and educational opportunities while holding on to the gifts of Māori cultural practices and customary and material culture (Ellis & Robertson 2018, p. 239). Do the tools of the Pākehā, such as the camera and its product, the photograph, threaten or eradicate cultural and customary practices? Or is the camera, as Barry Barclay describes, our "maverick friend" (Barclay 2015 [1990], p. 9)? Deidre Brown has argued that photography can be viewed from within a Māori framework as having its own whakapapa, thereby giving it importance and mana in the Māori world. She has described digital technologies such as augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) "as

the next sequence in a whakapapa of imaging, beginning with the carved form, then photography and, more recently, video. As AR and VR become commonplace, they will also be regarded as taonga with their own mauri" (Brown 2008, p. 63). In Chapter Six, I will expand on the work undertaken by Māori academics such as Deidre Brown (2007, 2008, 2012), Wayne Ngata (Te Aitanga a Hauiti, Uawa), Hera Ngata-Gibson (Te Aitanga a Hauiti, Uawa) (Ngata, Ngata-Gibson & Salmond 2012) and others who argue that digital technologies can be made compatible with Māori protocols and customs and which can be used in distinctly Māori ways. Through my practice-led research projects in Chapter Seven, I show how the camera and the photograph can be transformed and Māorified.

CHAPTER FOUR: PROJECTS OUTSIDE OF THE RESEARCH

> Undoing raranga to correct a whakairo embeds good habits in creative practice, acknowledging the fundamentals, and practising and re-practising teaches us how raranga operates, its very construction. Understanding the fundamentals fosters innovation that has integrity. (Campbell 2019, p. 80)

I cannot count the number of times I have undone work. Sometimes I think I have undone more weaving than I have woven. This is not to say that my finished raranga is not without mistakes; my mahi (work) can still show irregular tension, my kete can still turn out wonky with a lean to one side, and I occasionally miscount my whenu, making the whakapapa[60] of a whakairo (pattern) uneven and unable to be established correctly. While I have not learnt raranga from my kuia and Māori aunties on my marae, preparing, touching and smelling the taonga that is harakeke, I am blessed to say that I have aunties in the Pacific diaspora community of Melbourne who have taken me under their wing. Women such as Kui Taukilo, a Niuean-born artist and master weaver who migrated first to Aotearoa and then to Melbourne, have generously shown me customary techniques from across the Pacific. I find it hard to weave without having Kui's voice in my head saying, "It's messy—undo it". These words are said with love; she respects my love of weaving.

This chapter briefly documents the starting points from which my research stems. They are the lessons, the practising and re-practising, that, while outside of the scope of my research project, helped me formulate what would become my research questions. So, they are in one sense separate, yet in another, inseparable. Indeed, I continually rethink through them as a result of my research. Hence, I have decided to include them here, to return to them, much as they stay with me. In this chapter then, I discuss three of my projects/series as they relate to my research—*Māoris Weaving Baskets*, *Te Whare Pora* and *Both Sides of the Street*—and are fundamental to the learnings of cultural practice and experience that led me to the key work and findings of this practice-led PhD research project. Through these collaborative projects, I learnt that I wanted to decolonise and rework the surface of the photograph using customary Māori techniques, that I wanted

[60] Whakapapa, or genealogy, also means to lay one upon another, and is used to describe the commencement of the weaving of a kete, kete whiri and kete whakairo.

my research to express my position as a member of the Māori diaspora in Australia—a current gap in the field of discourse on Māori arts—and that issues of digital materiality and my own weaving skills needed to be more fully resolved, ultimately steering my creative practice away from collaborative, raranga-based projects and towards whatu techniques.

Māoris Weaving Baskets (2012–2013)

Figure 7: Kirsten Lyttle, *Karu Hapuku Weave* (2012), from the series *Māoris Weaving Baskets*, hand-woven inkjet print, 740 x 955 mm. Edition 1 of 1.

When I began my Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in 2012, I knew that I wanted somehow to combine photography and weaving in my practice, disrupting the colonial gaze through photo-media techniques. With the series *Māoris Weaving Baskets*, made during my MFA, I found the inherent tensions in working with found images of Māori difficult to navigate. Many contemporary Māori view historical photographs as Māori taonga (cultural treasures) (Dudding 2003, p. 8) and as important aspects of cultural life, regardless of the original, often problematic, context in which they were created (i.e., as military

propaganda or tourist images, for “scientific” data collection, as more casual recordings of cultural curiosities or to record what was often (mis)seen as a dying race). As mentioned in Chapter Three, photographs have been used as an important part of tangi since the 1890s. The wairua of the person displayed in the photograph can be transferred through the photograph. Due to this, it is important to consider that when one is working with found images, those portrayed are likely to have living relatives who must be acknowledged. It is these descendants whose cultural taonga needs to be handled with the utmost care and respect.

My intention was to rework these found images of Māori women weaving as a strategy of empowerment—to reclaim these photographs from the misappropriation, commodification and misrepresentation by the colonial gaze and the tourist industry. Described as “the poor man’s phantasm” (Beets 2000, p. 17), the colonial gaze relies on stereotyped, staged poses calculated to appeal to popular Western tastes. Here, the representations of Māori women have little to do with the realities of everyday Māori life, instead revealing the colonialist (read white male), elusive (lost or vanishing) or escapist (otherworldly) fantasy of the “exotic and alluring native” and her land, both of which you can “own” through buying a postcard. These posed compositions ignore the fact that what appear to be “authentic” or “ethnographic” snapshots are purposefully constructed scenes made for the tourist market. The three found images I worked with fit Beets’ identification of the stereotypical stock poses of Māori women as figures in a “village scene” with a “purposely ethnographic flavour”. She explains:

> The combined elements of such scenes (dark skin, ceremonial costumes, weapons and primitive architecture) purported to fulfil an historical function; in reality, they satisfied the European appetite for the exotic, the curious and the bizarre. Again, the viewer is permitted the thrill of vicariously penetrating the unknown world of the meeting house. (Beets 2000, p. 25)

Instead of this voyeuristic approach, in which Māori women and their culture are commodified and mass-produced, I wanted to reclaim these found images and rework each image to make a unique, singular, Māori raranga artwork. I did this by using the two-dimensional photographic surface as a medium to be woven, transforming the

photograph into a three-dimensional Māori object[61]. The process of weaving found photographs did not come without challenges. Firstly, the materiality of photographs is very different from harakeke. When I weave with harakeke, it is as though the material itself wants to be woven. A photograph, by contrast, has no pliability. There is little flexibility or elasticity in a photograph, regardless of the paper type (for example, gloss, lustre or rag papers). Through various material tests, I did find that the weight or GSM of a paper type did affect weavability: too thick and the combined images warped and became too distorted to read, too thin and the photograph would tear. Moreover, the physical act of cutting up these images of Māori wāhine in order to create the whenu, or strips to weave, was scary. The last thing I wanted was to offend or disrespect the women portrayed and their descendants. I spoke with other Māori artists based in Aotearoa, such as Sarah Hudson (Ngāti Awa, Ngāi Tūhoe), a member of Mata Aho Collective, who had worked with found images of Māori women as part of her MFA (Hudson 2010), and Keren Ruki (Maniapoto), a Māori weaver and researcher who was based in the Australian Museum in Sydney at the time.

Sarah Hudson and I talked extensively about the inherent tensions and ethical implications and our own fears of working with found photographs of Māori. I remember her words—"It's REAL scary"[62]—when talking of her experience of digitally altering historical images of Māori. These discussions gave me the confidence to go forward and work with these found images. I recognised that even though the women in these photographs were unidentified and unnamed, they were not unknown. In other words, while the titles on the postcard photographs often had ironic and inaccurate captioning and the women were not identified by name (either in the captions or in the public records or held by institutions), these women were still known to their whānau, their hapū and their iwi. I needed to be prepared for, and to actively welcome, a discussion with these women's descendants. I felt—and still feel—a strong sense of collaboration with the

[61] Fiona MacDonald also weaves historical and archival material together to comment upon Australia's colonial identity. For example, in her series *Universally Respected* (1993), she is used general twilling techniques that are not found in her culture. MacDonald's work also combined two sets of historical photographs, those of settlers and indigenous peoples; these are woven in a standard warp and weft arrangement, as opposed to raranga techniques where the weaving is constructed diagonally, with dextrals and sinistrals.

[62] She said this in a telephone conversation with me.

women portrayed in these photographs. The very tactile and time-consuming nature of weaving meant that I spent a lot of time with these images; spending up to 10 days looking at, speaking to and weaving with a photograph is a rare experience. I felt this time spent was very much in the spirit of te whare pora, which is not simply a "place" or building but rather a "state of being" (Williams & Howells 2013), a raised level of consciousness to receive knowledge. Through the careful handling, preparation and weaving of these images, I attempted to create a bridge of knowledge and connectedness between my ancestors and me: through weaving, my hands repeat the same patterns and movements that my ancestors' hands have made, and this strengthens my connection to culture.

In 2015, this series was shown in a group exhibition called *Vai Niu Wai Niu Coconut Water*, curated by Léuli Eshraghi and held at Caboolture Regional Art Gallery, Caboolture, Queensland (Eshraghi 2015). During the artist talk, I spoke of the complexities of working with found images of Māori, of my own trepidation of cutting and slicing these images to make whenu, and of the care and respect I had taken when I handled and worked with these photographs. I spoke of my sense of collaboration, and that as a weaver, I choose to only weave images of women weaving. I explained that this decision was an attempt to redress the power imbalance between the photographer and the sitters; in the reworking of these images, I am performing the very customary art actions shown in the photographs. This is still an act of representation, but one that attempts to disrupt the colonialist gaze by indigenising the medium of photography. I acknowledged the living ancestors of the women portrayed and hoped aloud that they would not be offended by the creation of this work. From the middle of the room a young Māori woman of around 30 yelled, "Nanny would like it". I spoke to her and her cousin afterwards; she had first recognised the wharenui in the photograph, and then upon looking more closely, she identified her grandmother as one of the young women weaving. The overwhelming response to my artwork from this young woman was one of pride; she was proud of her whānau, proud to see this image handled in a respectful way, and proud to see such a Māori treatment of this photograph through the weaving of it. At her request, we took photos together in front of my work *Karu Hapū ku Weave* so she could show other family members. Having made this series, I wanted to document my own community of

weavers from my weaving circle and weave their portraits in patterns from their ancestral homelands. Through making this series I began to learn how I could manipulate the surface of a photograph in a tactile way, and how to begin to use Māori methodological approaches in my art practice. I would take these lessons and build upon them in order to make my current research.

Te Whare Pora (2015)

Te Whare Pora, shown at *Resonance*, curated by Chuck Feesago, Roslyn Smorgon Gallery, Footscray Community Arts Centre, Footscray (2015)

The next major major series I made was *Te Whare Pora*. This was shown in a group exhibition, *Resonance*, curated by Chuck Feesago, at the Roslyn Smorgon Gallery, Footscray Community Arts Centre, Footscray, Melbourne, as part of the Contemporary Pacific Arts Festival (2015) (Footscray Community Arts Centre 2015). *Te Whare Pora* is a series of individual portraits of women who are friends and colleagues from my weaving circle. While they now live in Melbourne, they all have heritage from Aotearoa and the South Pacific: Māori, Cook Islands Māori, Niuean, Papua New Guinea (Tolai and from the Central Highlands), Rotuman, Sāmoan, and Tongan. I have shared the practice, knowledge and act of customary weaving with all of the women I photographed. These relationships with my weaving circle sisters have been cultivated, nurtured and nourished since 2011.

The five women whom I photographed from my weaving circle were consulted as to how they were to be represented through every stage of the project, from the initial digital image capture through to the final woven portrait. Importantly, they could (and still can) withdraw their consent from the project at any stage. The photography “shoot” was not undertaken in a formal setting, such as a studio. Instead, I invited the weavers over to my home. Together, we talked about the project, laughed and ate. I had prepared a makeshift studio in my living room, with one of the weavers acting as photography assistant. It was of paramount importance to this project that the women felt they were in a culturally safe space, as I wanted this series to mirror the cultural safety of our weaving circle. Each of the women had choice over how they wanted to be represented: they could wear make-up or be natural, they could wear their own jewellery or none, and

they had full control over their hair styling[63]. This is noteworthy, as hair is both personally and culturally significant for most Māori, Polynesian and Melanesian women. I made the decision to be included as one of the portrait sitters in this photo shoot, and I later wove my own portrait as part of this project. I believe this was necessary in order to further remove any actual or perceivable power imbalance between the photographer and the sitters. We were all equals as photographic subjects and everyone was given agency in how they were to be represented. For me, it is not enough to simply be the native behind the camera, returning the gaze. I want to indigenise every part of the photographic process, even at the point of image capture. The everyday language of photography reveals the problematic history of the camera and the power dynamic usually at play between the photographer and the subject: a photographer "shoots", while a subject is "captured", suggesting diminished agency. Photographer/subject, shoot/capture, active/passive—these binary terms are at odds with the collaborative and shared creative space of my weaving circle and do little to help describe the process in which these images were made.

My photographic methodology is, by contrast, what I will call an indigenous one, where getting the shot is less important that the creation of meaningful and respectful relationships. To begin with, I only photograph indigenous women with whom I have shared the koha (gift) of weaving. This koha of knowledge does not involve a financial exchange but is rather an exchange in cultural connectedness and understanding. My process begins with discussion and time. I sit down with the woman, we talk, we eat, we weave, we share, we collaborate, and we exchange cultural knowledge. Sometimes I teach a weave, sometimes I learn. I take care and engage in consultation to make sure that the pattern is appropriate for me to use (i.e., not culturally sacred) and that the chosen design is a suitable representation of the woman's own cultural identity. In this way, the objective of taking a weaver's portrait is not a means to an end but a point in the journey of cultural engagement and reciprocity.

[63] The topic of hair for women across the Pacific has cultural significance. Hair is the subject of taboos and acts as a signifier of women's sexuality and cultural identity. The topic of hair is outside of the scope of this research project.

After image capture, each woman photographed was able to look through the photographs taken and select the image that they wanted me to work with. Choosing a pattern to weave each portrait was undertaken collaboratively. Each woman chose the pattern that they wanted and that they determined as being culturally appropriate for me to use. Prior to the shoot I had researched patterns for Māori kete whakairo (finely patterned baskets), Māori kete pāpā (baskets/satchels), Niuean kato (baskets), Papa New Guinean bilums (string bags), Rotuman fua'a (coconut-leaf baskets), Sāmoan 'ato (baskets) and Tongan kato tu'aniu (baskets) to discuss possible design options. Some of the women brought in a basket from their ancestral home, others brought photographs of baskets and some examples were found online through the Te Papa museum website. I then made a design for each portrait on graph paper and gave this to each participant for their approval. Only then did I print their photographs, rule up and slice the prints into whenu and begin to weave their portraits, in what was a culturally appropriate, collaborative meshing of photography and weaving of both methodology and outcome In order to highlight the raranga whakairo pattern. For each I wove together a black-and-white print (the sinistral whenu) and a colour print (the dextral whenu).

For the exhibition *Resonance*, which was held 10 April to 3 May 2015, Contemporary Pacific Arts Festival, Roslyn Smorgon Gallery, Footscray Community Arts Centre, I completed a series of six works, including one on my own portrait. Rather than being a square or rectangular shape, these works are all presented as a diamond or a rhombus. For the installation, they were arranged as a pattern three columns by two rows, to echo Māori and Pacific geometric weaving patterns found in tukutuku panels (such as pātiki or pātikitiki/flounder designs), tapa cloth and other decorative customary objects. I was unsure how the final image would appear until the work was completely woven. Some of the portraits had a surprising effect with the patterning appearing reminiscent of tā moko, especially in those of Aunty Lila and Talava (see Fig. 9, top centre and bottom centre respectively). Scale was also an important consideration in these images. Each of the portraits has been photographed with the women looking straight on, confronting the

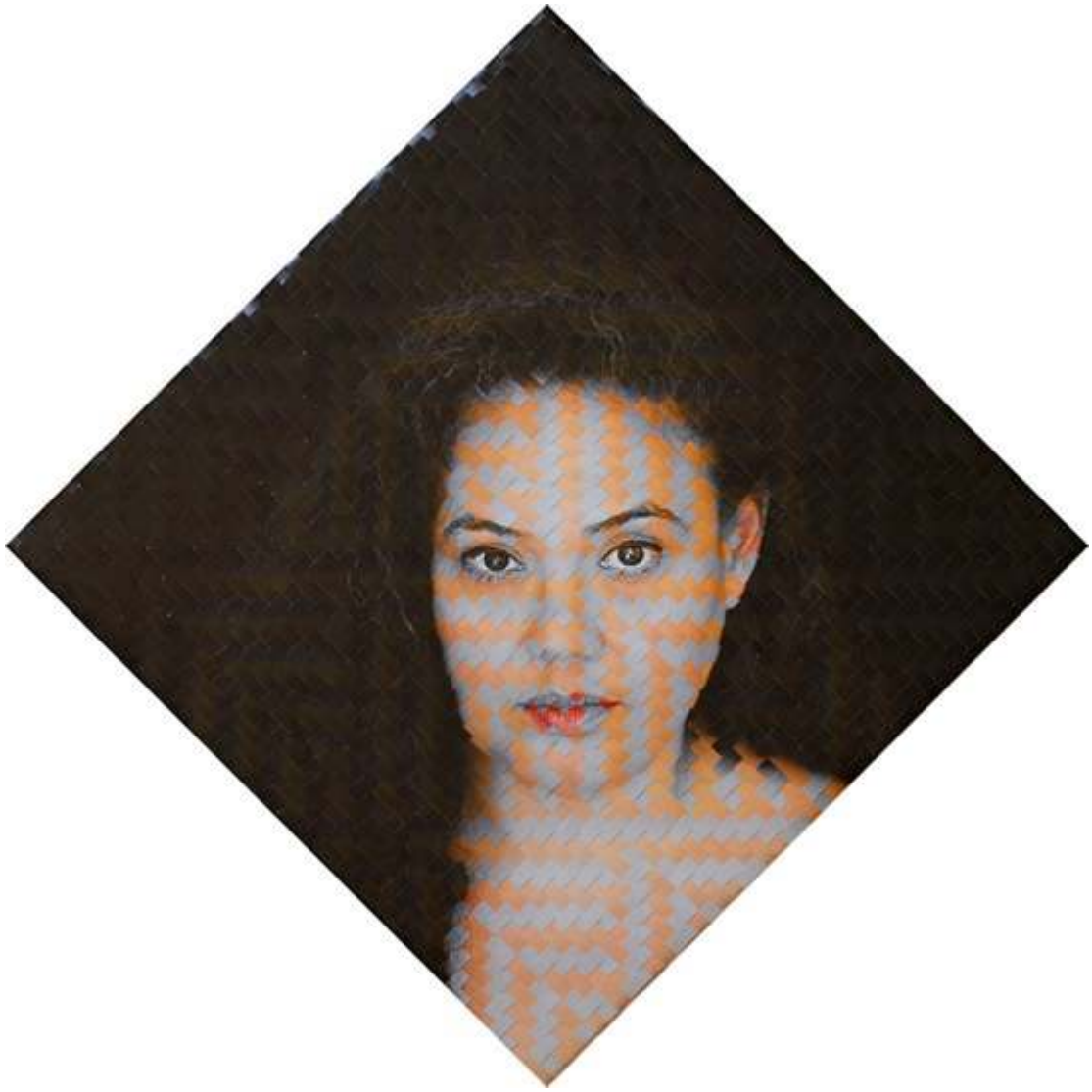


Figure 8: Kirsten Lyttle, *Kirsten* (2015), from the series *Te Whare Pora* (The House of Weaving), hand-woven archival inkjet print on Kodak lustre paper, 510 x 510 mm.

viewer by returning their gaze. I made the portraits slightly larger than life-size to dwarf the viewer and give more power to the women represented. If a picture frame is a window into a world, then I wanted my window to reflect a Māori and Pacific worldview, not a Western one. This project, of using the photograph to represent a Māori worldview, continues in my current research.

Figure 9: Kirsten Lyttle, install image diagram, images from top left to bottom right: *Lisa*, *Lila*, *Gina*, *Kirsten*, *Talava*, *Tray* (2015), from the series *Te Whare Pora* (The House of Weaving), hand-woven archival inkjet prints on Kodak lustre paper, dimensions variable.

Both Sides of the Street (2015)

Curated by Kimba Thompson and Eugenia Flynn, Counihan Gallery, Brunswick.

I was invited by Kimba Thompson to be a part of the exhibition *Both Sides of the Street*, held at Counihan Gallery, Brunswick, 16 June–3 July 2015, during Blak Dot Gallery's site renovations. Curated by Kimba Thompson and Eugenia Flynn, this exhibition invited contemporary artists from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to work with contemporary First Peoples artists, exchanging personal experiences, beliefs, traditional and spiritual knowledge and art making. For this project, a world indigenous artist (i.e., not indigenous to Australia) was paired by the curators with an Australian indigenous artist and given a brief to make artwork, either collaboratively or individually, which reflected upon what it was to live in contemporary Australia on Aboriginal land.

My paired artist was Dr Treahna Hamm (Yorta Yorta). Initially we emailed, and then we met up in Brunswick to discuss the project and how to proceed. After sharing experiences of weaving and exchanging stories about our personal and creative lives, we found that the biggest shared thread of our individual stories was that we both come from people who have a river. Treahna and I decided that we would work individually and make an artwork about the rivers on which we live. Treahna made a work representing a local section of Dhungala (the Murray River) in her Yorta Yorta country. My river is Waikato (Aotearoa, New Zealand), but the body of water I live next to is Merri Creek, in Northcote (Australia). I cannot imagine how profound and powerful it must be to make and live on the land of one's ancestors, as Treahna does. Being part of a diaspora, I am always separated from the land of my ancestors. I am very conscious that I live, work and make on another people's land. Here, in Melbourne, I am still living next to water, not the Waikato River of my tribe, but a waterway still. However, this creek is not mine. For this exhibition I photographed Merri Creek and then wove this photograph using a raranga pattern used for making whāriki (floor mats). In order to take this image, I waded into Merri Creek in my gumboots, multiple lenses around my neck and camera in my hand. I wanted to make the creek look ambiguous, as though it could be a violent torrent. I was very happy with the image capture—I captured both the movement of the water and the afternoon light, highlighting the colours in the creek (the green and red in this

photo is algae). Once woven, the work changed in an unanticipated way. I had followed the process used in the last series (*Te Whare Pora*) where I wove using a black-and-white photograph for the sinistrals and a colour photograph for the dextrals. This was intended to make the woven pattern more visible. The pattern used was one illustrated in Mick Pendergrast's book *Raranga Whakairo*, where it is described as a "decorative band on a mat", and where the artist is "unknown" (Pattern 147) (Pendergrast 2003 [1984]). Once woven, this image lost much of the original information that had made it a successful photograph; the weave itself became a visual distraction from the detail, sharpness and focus seen in the unwoven photograph. Perhaps this work would have been stronger if I had either reshot and chosen a different image or not alternated the whenu with black-and-white and colour strips and instead kept both the sinistrals and dextrals of whenu in colour.

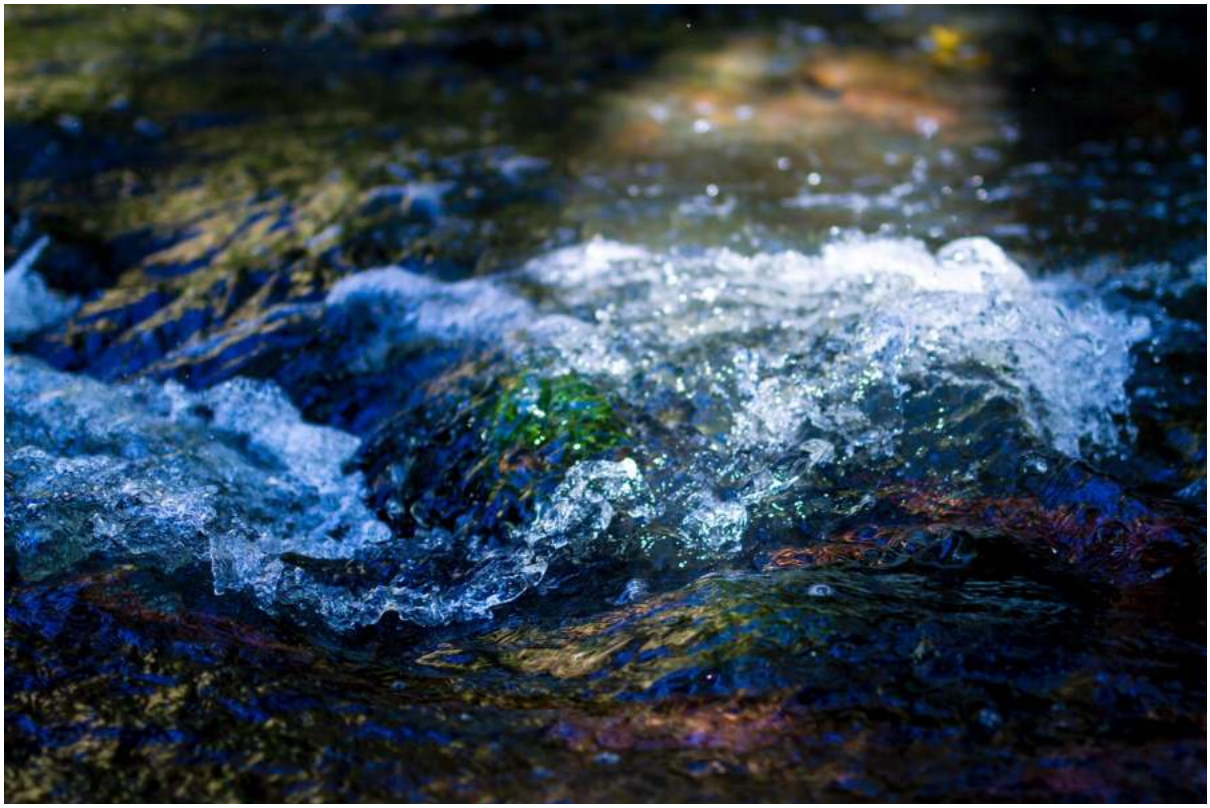


Figure 10: Kirsten Lyttle, original Image of Merri Creek taken in 2015.

Figure 11: Kirsten Lyttle, *Merri Creek* (2015), hand-woven archival print of Kodak lustre paper and book binding tape, 1005 mm (width) x 765 mm (height).

In these three collaborative projects—*Māoris Weaving Baskets* (2012–2013), *Te Whare Pora* (2015) and *Both Sides of the Street* (2015)—collaboration and respect were a part of the creative process. All of these projects represented weavers or were direct collaborations with Indigenous, Māori and Pacific weavers. My relationships with these women were integral to each of the projects. In a Māori ethical framework, establishing relationships—the quality of these relationships as well as the structures or processes that have been established to support them—is a fundamental tikanga principle (Hudson et al. 2010, p. 6). Tikanga refers to Māori ethics, values and practices that reflect the Māori world and its social context (Hudson et al. 2010, p. 4). This is at odds with a Western ethical framework. In terms of Western research, an existing relationship with the researcher is considered problematic and has the potential for a risk of conflict of interest. Here the assumption is that existing relationships have the potential for an unfair obligation or burden on the participant. In a Māori ethical framework, existing relationships are required for trust, cultural safety and social responsibility. In the Māori world, best practice in terms of relationships requires kaitiaki (guardians/advocates) and manaakitanga (cultural and social responsibility). *Te Ara Tika: Guidelines for Māori*

Research Ethics explains kaitiaki in the following Māori whakataukī (proverb): "Kia u ki te whakapono, kia aroha tetahi ki tetahi" (Hold strong to your beliefs and care for one another) (Hudson et al. 2010, p. 7). Cultural and social responsibility, or manaakitanga, is fully realised in the context of relationships; relationships need to be empowering and enhanced by faith and trust in one another (Hudson et al. 2010, p. 12). Through these previous projects, I realised my research needed to reflect the Māori world and a Māori ethical framework, especially with regard to the context of relationships and collaboration. This knowledge is fundamental and interwoven, so to speak, with all that was and will continue to follow. It was not until I received my tā moko in Aotearoa in 2016 and attended the Te Roopu Raranga Whatu o Aotearoa National Hui (Māori Weavers of New Zealand National Hui)[64] at Lake Rotoiti, Rotorua, Aotearoa in 2017 that my research project began to fall into place. In my next chapter, I discuss how the research unfolded, and the wisdom gained from this.

[64] In October 1983, at Pākirikiri Marae, Tokomaru Bay, Aotearoa, a diverse group of Māori and Pacific Island weavers came together at a hui to discuss "the preservation, promotion and support of weaving and plaiting… [bringing] together established weavers [to] discuss weaving, teaching, and thereby inspire others" (Te Awekotuku 1991, p. 112). From this hui they formed the Aotearoa Te Moananui a Kiwa weavers' group, and from this emerged Te Roopu Raranga Whatu o Aotearoa in 1994. Their mission is "[t]o nurture, develop and preserve the techniques and tikanga of raranga, whatu and taniko in traditional and modern contexts for Māori weavers" (Toi Māori Aotearoa—Māori Arts New Zealand 2019a, para. 6).

CHAPTER FIVE: THE RESEARCH FALLS INTO PLACE

In this chapter, I outline how my research began to fall into place through two events, both of which occurred during research trips to Aotearoa. These experiences changed the course of my research profoundly and led me to creative outcomes that would answer my research questions. The first was getting my tā moko, leading me to learn tāniko and ultimately whatu and cloak weaving techniques. The second was attending a weaving hui, where I saw how resourceful contemporary weavers are in using everyday materials in customary making practices, and how weaving knowledge and tikanga are constantly adapting to new challenges of contemporary life. I begin this chapter with the explanation of how the gods gave tā moko to Māori. This explanation provides the whakapapa of tā moko, its mana and its importance in the Māori world.

> Mataora was a jealous mortal chief who won the heart of Niwareka, a woman from the Underworld. Unsure of her love, he abused her, and she fled home to her father, the patriarch Uetonga. Her husband followed her, guilty and griefstricken. His tears ruined his face paint. Seeing him, her family, whose adornment was permanently incised, mocked him as a vain and arrogant fool. Ashamed of his behavior, ashamed of his smeared and muddy features, he begged their forgiveness and promised to look after Niwareka and never abuse her again. And from Uetonga, he requested the knowledge of their skin art. The immortal artist obliged him, and Mataora was marked, thus learning the art; his name reflected his new look—*Mata Ora*—the Living Face. The couple reconciled, and returned to humankind with the awesome bounty of *taniko* weaving, and *ta moko* adornment. And from strife and pain came one of the Māori world's most distinctive and enduring treasures. (Te Awekotuku 2006, p. 122)

It was during a research trip to Aotearoa in 2016 that I decided to wear tā moko. This decision would ultimately become a major turning point for my PhD research. Tā moko is a specifically Māori term, described as "the practice that involves the chiselling of human skin and the insertion of pigment … related to *tatau*, the Pacific tradition of puncturing and colouring the flesh. From this technique, *tatau*, comes the English word 'Tattoo' and its Western practice" (Gell 1993, cited in Nikora, Rua & Te Awekotuku 2007, p. 478). While moko (Māori tattooing designs on the face or body, patterned; also the word for lizard and an affectionate term for a grandchild) is similar to tattoo, moko is a specifically Māori cultural entitlement; only Māori can wear moko, and for anyone else it falls under the skin art of kirituhi—a tattooing pattern without consideration of Māori protocols or imagery (Moorfield 2003–2019b). It has been argued that moko, in the

nineteenth century at least, could be compared to a book, with its own language, capable of being read by others and used to fulfil the role of a signature (such as on the Treaty of Waitangi) (Gallagher 2003).

I wear a moko kikowhiti (forearm moko). I received this in Wellington, the place of my childhood memories, where I had not returned for thirty-six years. I had wanted to be marked by a wāhine tā moko artist. I was uncomfortable with the idea of being marked by a man, and after receiving some advice from a friend, I got in contact with tā moko artist Sian Montgomery-Neutze (Ngāi Tara, Muaūpoko). I met with Sian at Toi Wāhine Collective[65] HQ (studios) in Porirua, Wellington. We spoke for over an hour. I told her my pepeha—naming my mountain, my river, my canoe and my marae. I spoke of my own history as an artist, a photographer and a teacher. We discussed raranga and how I was a beginner in this art form. We spoke about the whakapapa of weaving and the whakapapa of photography—that photography has been viewed as descending from the ancestral line of carving, as both carved and photographic representations of ancestors are addressed and spoken to in the wharenui[66]. Sian then said a karakia (ritual prayer) to protect us, before she got out her red texta and began drawing directly onto my skin, occasionally rubbing out and redrawing outlines to better follow the form and shape of my body. Once we were both happy with these outlines, she began. The detail of my moko was marked directly onto my skin, the designs gifted by Sian. I had thought that my moko would reference raranga. Instead it speaks of the wake of a canoe, of taniwha (water spirit, monster, dragon), of nihotaniwha (teeth of the taniwha) and of pātiki (a flounder type of fish). The majority of these are tāniko designs, the decorative weaving used for the borders of fine garments and cloaks that consists of triangles, diamonds, diagonal bars and stepped patterns.

The taniwha and water/river designs echo the proverbs of my Tainui ancestors who lived on the Waikato river: "Waikato taniwha rau, he piko he taniwha. Waikato of a hundred

[65] Toi Wāhine Collective was collective of Māori female artists who worked together in 2015 and 2016. They were based in Porirua, where they shared an exhibition space with their community and hosted numerous art events. In 2017, they re-formed to become Hine Pae Kura Collective. The founding members are Miriama Grace-Smith, Xoë Hall, Keri-Mei Zagrobelna, Sian Montgomery-Neutze, Pikihuia Haenga and Rangimarie Sophie Jolley (Toi Māori Aotearoa—Māori Arts New Zealand 2019b).
[66] This argument has been made by Deidre Brown (Brown 2008).

taniwha, every bend a taniwha" (Keane 2007). Taniwha here has a double meaning as the word also refers to great chiefs. This proverb offers a warning: the Waikato is protected by spirits and chiefs (Keane 2007). Like a signature, my moko is unique, it can be read, and it speaks of my personal history and that of my ancestors. It speaks of the past, present and future. As Ngahuia Te Awekotuku (Te Arawa, Tūhoe) has written, "Ta moko—taking moko—is a serious commitment. It inscribes your soul, it uplifts your senses, and it changes you forever. It is the ultimate engagement of oneself with one's body, because it cannot be removed" (Te Awekotuku 2006, p.135). Given my moko has so many references to tāniko and whatu (cloak-weaving techniques), taking moko for me also meant that I now needed to learn these practices, turning my practice-led research away from raranga and towards whatu.

Book Learnings

My first attempt at learning how to tāniko was through books with instructive illustrations, written by Sir Hirini (Sidney) Moko Mead (1952, 1968, 1999). Dr Hirini Moko Mead (Ngāti Awa, Tūwharetoa, Tūhourangi) is a Māori scholar who has written over 70 books. He was a foundation professor of Māori Studies at Victoria University and developed the first department of Māori studies in Aotearoa. In his 1999 publication *Te Whatu Tāniko: Tāniko Weaving Technique and Tradition* he writes of the importance of Māori women studying weaving and "taking command of the taonga handed down to us through the female line". His preface is humble, suggesting his books on tāniko have served a purpose at a time "when there were no books available. Perhaps the day is not far away when Māori women will produce books which will present tāniko weaving in a more interesting way than I have done here" (Mead 1999, p. 7). I found a copy online of Hirini Moko Mead's 1952 book, *Taniko Weaving: How to Make Maori Belts and other Useful Articles*. It was a landmark publication on Māori textiles, described as a "'do-it-yourself' publication on Māori material culture" (Pendergrast 2000, p. 432). By 1968, it into the book *The Art of Taaniko Weaving: A Study of its Cultural Context, Technique, Style and Development*. This edition was revised in 1999, to become *Te Whatu Tāniko: Tāniko Weaving Technique and Tradition*. I now have all three texts on my bookshelf (one a photocopy in a plastic sleeve). I have collected books on Māori weaving for a long while, from my first

book by ethnologist Mick Pendergrast (1932–2010), *Fun with Flax* (2008 [1987]), through to my latest purchase, *Whatu Kākahu/Māori Cloaks* (Tamarapa 2019 [2011]). As an adoptee daughter of the diaspora, raised in Melbourne, books were one of my first ways of connecting with and learning about my Māori heritage. I wish I could say that I had the experience of being taught how to weave from aunties on the marae, but this was not the case.

Instead, I began with books, learning about tikanga from the written word and teaching myself from diagrams and illustrations—many of these dating from the 1920s and 1930s. While many of the texts I have collected on Māori weaving are dated, the products of the times in which they were written (and therefore include imperialist, racist and misogynist overtones), the terminology and classification systems of Māori textiles determined by these works continues to be used, referred to and reprinted (Pendergrast 2005; Mead 1968; Evans & Ngarimu 2005)[67]. This is problematic for a number of reasons. Many of the earlier texts were written by ethnographers with a particular agenda, to record a so-called "dying race" and what were perceived to be their "dying" art practices. The majority of books within the Māori weaving "canon" were written by men, some of whom did not weave[68]. Given that Māori textiles were historically produced by women, it is worrying that so few women (let alone Māori wāhine) have written about this art form. It seems unlikely that the knowledge collected, observed, categorised and written by male researchers on a female art form could accurately tell the story of te whare pora.

Moreover, it can be difficult following instructions written by someone who does not practise the art that they are instructing; it is almost as though there are steps missing in the instructions, and parts of the tactile nature of weaving are not recorded; for example, how the muka (the inner fibre of harakeke) should feel is rarely commented upon. I have discussed this point with many of the women in my own weaving circle; on more than one occasion a book has been brought along to Motu Taim so that the group's shared

[67] Here I refer to many of the illustrations of Māori textiles and their structures by Te Rangi Hīroa (Sir Peter Buck).
[68] I believe that if one is writing about a practice (including drawing up instructional illustrations) purely based on observation and without engaging in it, a large amount of knowledge can simply be lost in translation. Observing is not the same as practising and gaining the knowledge acquired in doing so.

knowledge and experience can be combined to translate what a series of weaving illustrations are attempting to show. Historically, there has also been a gendered as well as a material bias toward view Māori textiles as a "craft" rather than an "art" practice, as somehow less aesthetically valuable than the traditionally male-dominated arts of carving, created with stone, wood, bone and shell (Te Awekotuku 2015, p. 5). For example, Māori textiles were not included in the 1980s milestone exhibition of the Māori cultural renaissance[69], *Te Māori*, co-curated by Hirini Moko Mead (Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Tūhourangi) and David Simmons, which showcased Māori customary art to audiences worldwide. This major omission highlights the material and gender bias shown to Māori fibre arts positioning them as being marginal and secondary. While I treasure every single book on my bookshelf that has anything to do with Māori weaving, for the aforementioned reasons, I would not recommend reading as the best learning method for the arts of raranga, whiri and whatu.

Writing on Te Whare Pora

The first person to write on the practices of te whare pora was the Pākehā anthropologist Elsdon Best, who lamented the loss of the art of weaving even as he was recording its practices for the New Zealand Institute in 1898[70]:

> For the art of the *whare pora* is doomed, and the *aronui*[71] and *maro-kopua*[72] of old have been replaced by print dresses, the levelling prints of Manchester and the wooden nutmeg State, which are procurable alike by slave and chieftainess. The rays of the setting

[69] The "Māori renaissance" was a period in Aotearoa beginning in the 1970s and often viewed as culminating in the touring exhibition *Te Māori* (1984–1987). This exhibition showcased Māori taonga (while excluding work made after the 19th century and all fibre arts) and sparked international ethnographic interest and internal Māori national pride. It travelled to galleries and museums in New York, St Louis, Chicago and San Francisco before returning with great success to Aotearoa. This cultural movement and pride in Māori national identity was fuelled by a range of factors, including the growth of the Māori population, a government commitment to biculturalism, Māori-language education being introduced at the pre-school, school and university levels, the establishment in 1975 of the Waitangi Tribunal to investigate breaches into the Treaty of Waitangi (originally signed in 1840 between the Crown and more than 500 Māori chiefs), and other events such as the 1981 Springbok rugby tour. For a good discussion on the impact of this exhibition see Gathercole (2002).

[70] The New Zealand Institute, established in 1867, known as the Royal Society of New Zealand after 1933, and known since 2007 as Royal Society Te Apārangi, was one of the first research organizations in New Zealand. It began publishing annually in 1868. See (Te Puna Mātauranga o Aoteroa: National Library of New Zealand 2020) & (Royal Society of New Zealand Te Apārangi 2020).

[71] Aronui: "a fine cloak, no longer seen, was made from carefully prepared fibre of the best variety of flax" (Best 1898, p. 639).

[72] Maro-kopua; "a triangular apron or girdle worn by girls of a good family" (Best 1898, p. 645).

> sun are lingering on the dismantled and empty *whare pora*, the *tauira* [pupil] come not, the *tohunga* [priest] has gone in search of the Living Waters of Tane [god of the forest], which he shall never find… And even as I look from my tent-door out across the primitive vale of Rua-tahuna the declining sun drops behind the golden Peak of Maro, the purple shadows glide across the darkening forest, and the art of the *whare pora* is lost. (Best 1898, p. 658)

Best's writing is, in many ways, a perfect example of Bhabha's idea of the historical ambivalence of the coloniser, described as a "cultural go-between" (Derby 2011). He became the principal Pākehā scholar of his day on traditional Māori society, while simultaneously viewing the Māori world as an inferior human society (described as neolithic), facing an inevitable death with the approaching encroachment of Western modernity. This imperialist view, that Māori were a "dying race", was a common view at the time. The title of his book *The Maori as He Was* (1952 [1924]) shows his so-called "salvage" ethnography approach: an attempt to salvage what is left of a "pure-blooded" people, unstained by European influence. This biological essentialism perpetuates the idea of the "authentic" native and is used to suggest that indigenous people are not capable of adapting. Linda Tuhiwai Smith explains:

> [W]hat counts as "authentic" is used by the West as one of the criteria to determine who really is indigenous, who is worth saving, who is still innocent and free from Western contamination... At the heart of such a view of authenticity is a belief that indigenous cultures cannot change, cannot recreate themselves and still claim to be indigenous. Nor can they be complicated, internally diverse or contradictory. Only the West has that privilege. (Smith 2012, p. 77)

Best claimed that Māori would never record or preserve Māori knowledge systems or customary culture: "The Māori himself will never record such data, will never preserve his own traditions; it remains for us to do it to the best of our ability" (Best 1952, p. xv). All of Best's accounts on te whare pora, his notes on clothing, dress and ornaments of the ancient Māori and their knowledge of preparing, dyeing and weaving various fibres together with accounts the ceremonies and superstitions of te whare pora are based on information collected from one tribe, Tūhoe (Best 1898, p. 625). This is problematic as it ignores significant histories and tribal and regional differences (including accessibility of natural resources such as flora and fauna). His informant on Tūhoe tribal traditions was Tūtakangāhau, a Tūhoe chief, genealogy expert and traditional tohunga (priest) whom

Best paid as an advisor[73]. When Best arrived on Tūhoe land in 1895 it was as a mediator for the government road-making survey teams. He was part of the Urewera Commission, a government body that wished to subdivide Tūhoe land and bring its people under the authority of the state (Sissons 2012). In other words, Best was far from a neutral scientific observer in his ethnographic account of weaving. Moreover, Best was neither an expert in textiles nor a weaver.

The majority of historical writing on Māori weaving and weaving styles comes from this position: an ethnographic and anthropological account of weaving. One of the strongest influences on contemporary views of Māori textiles is Te Rangi Hīroa (Sir Peter Buck) (Ngāti Mutunga). Buck's classifications and terminology are still used by many contemporary Māori weavers (Evans & Ngarimu 2005, p. 14). Te Rangi Hīroa had both Pākehā (Irish) and Māori ancestry. Originally trained in medicine, he had a broad career as a doctor, member of Parliament, military doctor, soldier and leader. In the 1920s he became an anthropologist and later went on to be director of the Bishop Museum in Hawai'i and visiting anthropology professor at Yale University. His particular interest was in the field of material culture of Māori, although he also did extensive fieldwork in the Pacific on Polynesian material culture, resulting in many publications, including *The Material Culture of the Cook Islands (Aitutaki)* (Hīroa, 1927) *Vikings of the Sunrise* (Hīroa, 1938) and *The Coming of the Māori* (Hīroa, 1950).

Te Rangi Hīroa's approach to anthropology was empirical; his texts show detailed drawings and sketches of how Pacific textiles (among other forms of material culture) were constructed. He believed that unless one had the details of the technique, one could not compare the material culture of differing peoples. Throughout his work, Te

[73] On the one hand this is ethically questionable, at least by today's standards of research, where the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) states:

> It is generally appropriate to reimburse the costs to participants of taking part in research, including costs such as travel, accommodation and parking. Sometimes participants may also be paid for time involved. However, payment that is disproportionate to the time involved, or any other inducement that is likely to encourage participants to take risks, is ethically unacceptable. Decisions about payment or reimbursement in kind, whether to participants or their community, should take into account the customs and practices of the community in which the research is to be conducted. (NHMRC 2007, section 2)

However, as Smith points out, it is unclear whether this was "bribery" on the part of Best or, in a more sympathetic interpretation, in line with Māori values and customs of gifting (Smith 2012, p. 87).

Rangi Hīroa attempted to systematically trace the migration of Polynesian peoples in the Pacific. In the field of material culture, he argued that Māori had made unique technical advances that could not be found anywhere else in Polynesia; the evidence of this was found in Māori carving, storehouses and fortification of villages (Sorrenson 2012). For Te Rangi Hīroa, the proof of Māori achievement is found in the traditional male art form of carving; the textile arts, by contrast, were still described as primitive. In his earlier works, he argued that as Pacific textiles were made without the use of a loom, they could not be referred to as true textile "weaving" (Hīroa 1924, p. 190) but rather as a plaiting and braiding technique using the diagonal sinistrals and dextrals (as opposed to the European loom with its warp and weft). This was modified later in *The coming of the Maori* (Hīroa, 1950) to include the Māori technique of whatu or downward finger weaving. The only tools used are two upright weaving sticks (turuturu) that support the textile and keep it off the ground. This is a cloak-making technique using warps and wefts, where the textile is produced working downward, from top to bottom, with the weaver often working while sitting on the ground (Pendergrast 1996, pp. 126–9). However raranga, made by hand and without loom, continues to be relegated to the realm of Māori plaiting or braiding in many contemporary writings on Māori textiles. On this point of terminology I am in agreement with Catherine Smith and Raechel Laing (2011), who argue that raranga can be accurately described as weaving by using standard textile terminology that classifies a weave based on the structure of the fabric instead of on the process in which the material is made (with or without loom or tools).

Every Māori weaver I know has at least one Mick Pendergrast book on their bookshelf. His books range from easily accessible children's instructional weaving books, such as *Fun with Flax* (2008 [1987]), through to his detailed accounts of Māori fibre treasures within the British Museum in *Taonga Māori in the British Museum: Māori Collections of the British Museum* (2011). Pendergrast was highly regarded as an expert in Māori fibre arts and Pacific material culture. He worked as an assistant ethnographer at the Auckland War Memorial Museum during the 1980s and was involved in curating exhibitions on Māori clothing, such as *Te Aho Tapu: The Sacred Thread* (1987). During this time, he became interested in the technical aspects of Māori weaving, in particular raranga, which he referred to as "plaiting" (Pendergrast 1984), following Te Rangi Hīroa, referring to his

terminology as “the most appropriate available” (Pendergrast 2005, p. 11).

Pendergrast’s book *Raranga Whakairo: Māori Plaiting Patterns* (Pendergrast 1984) continues to be the most comprehensive work on Māori kete whakairo and whariki (floor mat) patterns. This book is composed of detailed drawings of raranga whakairo patterns from a range of museum and personal collections, many of the works of which are pre-contact. Where possible, Pendergrast has included the name of the pattern, maker and their tribal affiliation, and date of work. Pendergrast was writing at the height of the cultural “Māori renaissance”, and his legacy, aside from having donated his huge personal collection to the Auckland War Memorial Museum, is in having made Māori weaving, especially raranga, accessible. While prefacing with his profound significance to the knowledge of raranga, I remain of two minds regarding Pendergrast. On the one hand, I am appreciative of his books in discussing and illustrating raranga techniques and patterns, and yet on the other, I question the right of Pākehā men to speak authoritatively on Māori weaving, as it is knowledge he would have had restricted access to (by both his gender and being non-Māori). It is questionable as to whether this knowledge should even be recorded in book form. As Erenora Puketapu-Hetet (Te Āti Awa) has said, Māori weaving cannot be taught by books, nor can everything about the Māori world of weaving be put into a book, as this would demean “knowledge that is protected” (Puketapu-Hetet 2016 [1989], p. vi).

While the majority of books on weaving were written by men, Māori women were writing instructional articles and pamphlets on how to weave in publications such as the journal *Te Ao Hou/The New World* (1952–1976). This quarterly publication by the Māori Affairs Department was designed to be “like a marae on paper, where all questions of interest to the Māori can be discussed” (Wattie 1952). These include articles such as “Making a Cloak is Not so Difficult” (*Te Ao Hou* 1955), where Mrs Jean Rerekura (tribal affiliations not recorded) explains the method of making a kahu ngore[74] in an extremely condensed, two-page spread, through to more detailed instructions provided by Catherine Brown

[74] Kahu ngore: a type of Māori cloak similar to a korowai except that in place of black fibre (sometimes wool) decorative hukahuka (tassels), a pompom, usually made of red wool, is attached to the kaupapa, or foundation of the cloak (Pendergrast 1997, pp. 17–18). For an example of this type of cloak see Te Papa (2019d).

(Ngāi Tahu) in "How to Make a Tipare or Headband" (Brown 1965), which includes 14 photographs and 10 illustrations together with explanatory notes. By 1970, the Maori [sic] Purposes Fund Board commissioned Miss Ngapare K. Hopa (identified only as "a Maori") to write an instructional manual, published as *The Art of Piupiu Making: An Instructional Manual Setting Out the Materials, Design and Assembly of the Māori Skirt, Central Item of the Māori Costume* (Hopa 1971). Hopa's bibliography cites only five texts: Te Rangi Hīroa's *The Evolution of Māori Clothing* (Hīroa 1924) and *The Coming of the Māori* (Hīroa 1950) and Hirini Moko Mead's *The Art of Taaniko Weaving* (Mead 1968) and *Traditional Māori Clothing—A Study of Technological and Functional Change* (Mead 1969). It was not until 1989, when Erenora Puketapu-Hetet wrote *Māori Weaving with Erenora Puketapu-Hetet*, that a wāhine weaver wrote on the taonga of te whare pora. By 1992, Puketapu-Hetet's teacher, master weaver Diggeress Te Kanawa (Ngāti Maniapoto) wrote her own book, *Weaving a Kakahu*, in association with Aotearoa Moananui a Kiwa Weavers. These two texts are written by Māori weavers, for Māori weavers. In her opening words Diggeress writes:

> He mahi tenei e rapu ana i o whakairo i to manawanui
> *A task that calls forth your agility of mind, abundant energy and patience.*
>
> He mahi na o tatou tupuna hei pupuri mo a tatou uri whakatapu.
> *A craft of our ancestors to keep for coming generations.*
>
> Aha koa kaore au e mohio ana ki nga karakia tuturu a o tatou tupuna mo enei mahi me inoi atu ki to Atua mo nga manaakitanga.
> *Although I do not know the proper incantation that was used by our ancestors for this to work, I ask God's blessing on your endeavour*." (Te Kanawa 1992, p. 2)

Although there are a few instructional texts on Māori textiles written by Māori weavers, it would be naïve to think that it is possible to learn how to weave through books alone. Both Erenora Puketapu-Hetet and Diggeress Te Kanawa purposely hint at deeper instructions that only one with weaving knowledge will know. For example, Diggeress, on the second last page of her book, describes finishing her kākahu with tāniko and māwhitiwhiti[75] (Blackman 2019, p. 90) and yet never includes an explanation or images of how to tāniko. I have found that in almost every single book on weaving, either by anthropologists, ethnographers or weavers, information is missing. The complete

[75] A decorative pattern possibly derived from the European influence of cross stitch.

instructions are never fully given. Knowledge is guarded and a level of cultural information is withheld; tikanga is thus protected. It reminds me of African American writer and folklorist Zora Neale Hurston, who said of collecting stories from her community:

> The best source is where there are the least outside influences and these people, being usually underprivileged, are the shyest. They are most reluctant at times to reveal that which the soul lives by. And the Negro, in spite of his open-faced laughter, his seeming acquiescence, is particularly evasive… We smile and tell him or her something that satisfies the white person because, knowing so little about us, he doesn't know what he is missing. (Hurston 1979, p. 83)

Unlike Western knowledge systems where knowledge is ideally available and accessed by all in society, indigenous models suggest that some knowledge must only be accessed by a few. This can be based on gender, position in society or if an object or resource is sacred. For Māori textiles, there are restrictions involved in working with flax as harakeke is a sacred plant and therefore is under tapu[76]. While some tapu laws regarding weaving are commonly mentioned, such as not eating while working with harakeke or that women with their mate wāhine (menstrual periods) should not work with harakeke (Pendergrast 2008 [1987], p. 8), other tapu laws, such as not being allowed to sleep with your husband for three nights if you are making mats or preparing flax for weaving, are less commented upon (Manihera, Pewhairangi & Rangihau 1992, p. 11).

Being outside of Aotearoa and away from the marae-based learning, it is hard to know how tapu is interpreted by contemporary Māori weavers. For example, I was surprised when I attended the 2017 Te Roopu Raranga Whatu o Aotearoa National Hui (Māori Weavers New Zealand National Hui), at Lake Rotoiti, Rotorua, Aotearoa to find that harakeke wānanga (weaving classes) were running in the evenings as everything in books had told me it was tapu to work with harakeke at night, but as one weaver told me, that was before electricity. She said, "If our ancestors had electricity, they would have woven at night." These kinds of marae-based experiences cannot be replaced. At the Māori Weavers' Hui, I saw the preservation and maintenance of natural resources for weaving and the tikanga (protocols) of Māori weaving while simultaneously seeing how many tools in the contemporary Māori weaver's toolkit have been repurposed or modified from their

[76] Tapu: sacred, prohibited, restricted, set apart, forbidden, under atua (supernatural/godly) protection. If tapu is ignored, sickness and death can follow.

original uses, from the household clothing pegs used to hold whenu in place through to the sheep-shearing combs used to size harakeke strips. It appears as though some Western tools are acceptable to modify, repurpose or indigenise while others are more controversial. Given that some knowledge is necessarily restricted and cannot be written about and tikanga and protocols around Māori textile arts are not static or fixed, it can be difficult to learn raranga, tāniko and whatu from books while separated from ancestral homelands by an ocean.

Tāniko and whatu only began to make sense to both my hands and my mind when I saw the hands of a skilled weaver in action. I had managed to figure out how to cast on by referring to illustrations (Mead 1968), but I could not get the hand movements, rhythm or tension until I watched an aunty at work. Her mahi, a korowai, hung over a piece of soft wood roughly 10cm wide and over a metre long with a thickness of around 2cm. This was balanced on two stools and held in place with clamps. Her korowai was draped over this piece of wood and secured with multicoloured plastic pushpins. Instead of harakeke, she worked with cotton mop string and wool. Later, she demonstrated how to cast on for tāniko: "In the Pākehā world," said Aunty Violet Paraha (tribal affiliations not recorded), "they would call this warp, but I'm going to just call it string or thread. For the black and red wool, they will call it wefts, but like I said, I will just call it a black wool and a red wool." Such a Māori aunty thing to say! There is a humour, irreverence, adaptability and practicality of wāhine Māori that brings the biggest smiles to my face. I sat and practised, casting on with string and coloured cotton yarn in my lap, my hands illuminated by my 27-inch iMac screen. I paused the YouTube video each time Aunty worked too fast for me to follow, backing up and starting again to watch the movements closely and repeat her actions. This was the first time I successfully made a tāniko sampler, having a virtual aunty instruct me through the internet (*Tāniko tutorial part 1 no. 2* 2016).

In April 2017, I began to learn tāniko through the Hetet School of Māori Art. This online resource has a range of Māori weaving courses, taught through video lessons with teacher Veranoa Hetet (Te Āti Awa, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Maniapoto), daughter of Erenora Puketapu-Hetet and master carver Rangi Hetet (Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Maniapoto). These lessons are designed to teach students sequentially and then build

on that knowledge, starting at basic raranga, then tāniko, through to whatu and weaving Māori garments. This system of learning, called "The Matrix", was developed by Erenora Puketapu-Hetet and Veranoa Hetet (Hetet School of Māori Art 2019). The Hetet family hold a rare position in the Māori art world with their multigenerational weaving legacy of at least five generations. Dame Rangimārie Hetet (Ngāti Maniapoto, 1892–1995) was a founding member of the Māori Women's Welfare League in 1951, and with her daughter, Diggeress Te Kanawa (Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Kinohaku, 1920–2009), began to teach classes in Māori weaving within the Māori community, schools and other rural groups (Putaranui 2000; Te Awekotuku 2015). Rangimārie and Diggeress helped organise the first ever national Māori and Pacific weavers' hui (1982), which later became Te Roopu Raranga Whatu o Aotearoa (National Weavers' Collective) (1994). Both were deeply committed to the revival of Māori weaving and traditional fibres and "the conservation of things already made, as well as what made them—our pingao, kiekie, harakeke" (Te Awekotuku 1991, p. 120) and rejected the use of introduced materials (with the exception of feathers) (Te Awekotuku 2015, p. 4). The next generation was exemplified by Erenora Puketapu-Hetet (1941–2006), who had learned cloak weaving from Rangimārie Hetet (her husband Rangi's grandmother). Erenora was known for her innovation and experimentation with new materials, such as wire, steel and pāua (abalone) shell (Te Papa 2019a). Her husband, Rangi, is a master carver and co-founder of the Hetet School of Art, where Veranoa Hetet, his daughter, teaches and creates the online video lessons.

The Hetet's online weaving school is not without its criticism. Can cultural knowledge be transmitted appropriately through online streaming and recorded videos? Can the be used in a positive way to strengthen connections to cultural communities and practices? Can the internet be used as a space for indigenous communities? Or, does the online environment threaten tikanga? Are digital technologies simply another form of global colonisation from dominant Western cultures in which indigenous cultures are been threatened with further losses to their cultural integrity? Deidre Brown, senior lecturer in architecture at the University of Auckland, has argued that "high" or digital technologies can be made compatible with Māori custom and cultural expression and viewed through a Māori conceptual framework. She writes:

> High-technologies are not incompatible with *tikanga* (Maori custom); indeed there is a

> long history of new tools enhancing Maori cultural expression. Since the introduction of metal tools by Captain James Cook and his crew in 1769, for example, Maori have been interested in the possibilities offered by new "offshore" technologies, and digital media is no exception. These technologies have been used to support rather than challenge cultural initiates so that these appropriations are not considered by Maori to be demonstrations of assimilation into western or global cultures. (Brown 2008, p. 60)

Brown is not alone in trying to frame the use of digital technologies from a Māori perspective. Janika Greenwood, Lynne Harata Te Aika (Ngāi Tahu) and Niki Davis, in their article "Creating Virtual Marae: An Examination of How Digital Technologies Have Been Adopted by Māori" (Green wood et. al. 2011), use educational case studies to show how Māori innovators are promoting rather than supressing their continued cultural expression through the use of digital technologies and media. They cite a Māori e-learning tertiary education program, a Māori tribe's initiative to revitalise their language through self-learning tools on a website together with DVDs and other resources put onto Bebo and YouTube, and the rise of Māori Television (a full-time public-access channel launched in 2006) as examples of Māori language and culture actively being taught through digital technologies.

Wayne Ngata, Hera Ngata-Gibson, and Amiria Salmond (Scottish ancestry) discuss how one Māori tribal organisation, Toi Hauiti (Te Aitanga a Hauiti, Uawa), is using digital technologies in distinctly Māori ways. They cite the world's first "tele-tangi… a traditional tangihanga or funeral that was broadcast live on the internet so that distant family members could take part in the proceedings, using mobile text-messaging to interact with those gathered in Uawa" (Ngata, Ngata-Gibson & Salmond 2012, p. 232). On a personal note, if it were not for the internet, I would not have connected with my tribe. I registered as a Waikato iwi member online only in May 2019. Without access to the website Māori Maps (Te Potiki National Trust Limited 2011), I would not have found out that my marae had gone through a name change in 2011, nor would I have found the address. I have used the internet to investigate my own connection to my iwi, hapū and marae. Were it not for social media and instant messaging services, I would not have been able to visit my marae and find more of my whānau.

In this chapter I have outlined how receiving my tā moko ultimately led my creative research towards cloak-weaving techniques and online learning. Digital technology and

the internet have strengthened my connection to my culture and people. Looking at the history of the way that Māori weaving has been recorded in text, I do not see why the written word seems to be an acceptable method of learning and yet digital media is frowned upon. While neither books nor streaming video and other internet sources can replace face-to-face and marae-based learning, they can offer useful direction and guidelines to follow. I have also shown how my experiences of learning on the marae at a hui illustrated how tikanga and customary practice is not fixed but constantly evolving. I would take these lessons into my creative-led practice and show how digital technologies can be made compatible with customary practices. The next chapter is dedicated to showing the creative projects that led me to my final practice-led outcomes.

CHAPTER SIX: THE CREATIVE PROJECTS

> The project of creating is about transcending the basic survival mode through using a resource or capability that every indigenous community has retained throughout colonization—the ability to create and be creative. (Smith 2012)

This chapter documents a linear trajectory of the research: the creative works, and the testing of these works in exhibition spaces, museums and galleries. These projects are presented chronologically, starting with my solo show, *Digital Mana*, shown at the Centre for Contemporary Photography last year (02 February–11 March 2018), and finishing with my examination exhibition, *Whakaahua (Photograph): Transforming the Photograph into a Site for Making Māori Customary Art* (25 July–11 August 2019). Through my creative work and this exegesis, I illustrate how I have employed the lenses of kaupapa Māori research (KMR), mana wāhine and my own photography methodology of whakaahua to indigenise the field of photography in order to bridge the gap between contemporary and customary Māori art practice. We will see that this historically most European of mechanical platforms, the photograph, can indeed be transformed into an indigenous object through employing kaiwhatu (Māori customary weaver) techniques. I have taken the name for my developed research methodology from Te Reo Māori and refer to it as whakaahua, meaning to photograph, to transform. I will show that digital technology can be "Māorified"; not only is this done by having a Māori behind the lens of a camera or by collaborating with Māori communities (although these two elements are fundamental components) but, as I show in my practice-led research, when the very surface of the digital photograph or digital projection is used as a site for making, for transforming a digital product into a customary Māori art object, an object that is a taonga.

Digital Mana

02 February–11 March 2018, *Digital Mana*, Centre for Contemporary Photography, Fitzroy, Melbourne, <https://ccp.org.au/exhibitions/all/digital-mana>

Figure 12: I Installation image of Gallery Two, Kirsten Lyttle*, Digital Mana*, 02 February–11 March 2018 at Centre for Contemporary Photography, Fitzroy, Melbourne. Photograph by J Forsyth (2018).

> [T]here is no excuse for not using traditional materials.
> —Diggeress Rangituatahi Te Kanawa (Te Awekotuku 1991, p. 119)

> [T]here is a long history of new tools enhancing Māori cultural expression... digital media is no exception.
> —Deidre Brown (2008, p. 60)

This project explored issues of materiality for Pacific diaspora customary artists living outside of their ancestral homeland. How do members of a diaspora weave in a foreign land when their traditional plants and materials are not available? Can new technology, such as digital photography, be used in customary, indigenous ways? This solo exhibition, *Digital Mana*, was the first iteration of what would become my final examination exhibition. It was an important test and drew constructive critique that confirmed and shaped my final creative outcomes. The exhibition was comprised of two elements: 10

framed photographic prints showing samplers of whatu using feathers from Australian native birds, and a kākahu huruhuru, or feather cloak made from 325 individual 4 x 6 inch photographic digital prints. These digital prints were woven into the foundation of the cloak made from cotton macramé cord and using whatu techniques.

“Digital Mana” is a phrase I coined combining English and Te Reo Māori in order to question the compatibility of digital media (digital image capture, process and print production) and the fundamental Māori concept of mana (the importance, status and spiritual power of a person and/or an object). It was my intention that this project should reflect my vantage point as a Māori-Australian photographer and weaver. I wanted to explore issues of materiality for Māori and Pacific diaspora customary artists living outside of their ancestral homeland. The very nature of a diaspora community means that we (expatriate Māori) will not have access to the same materials and resources as our tūpuna. Materiality questions, such as the lack of easily accessible traditional resources or the need to adapt resources, are a reality that every diaspora community must face. Having recognised this factor, we are led to ask: how can traditional techniques and weaving skills be maintained in the use of a foreign material? Ngahuia Te Awekotuku (Te Arawa, Tūhoe) (Te Awekotuku 1991, p. 113) writes of the first national Māori and Pacific Weavers’ Hui in Aotearoa in 1983 where this very issue was raised in relation to using plastic strips in the place of materials such as pandanus. In contemporary Aotearoa much of the discussion around Māori customary weaving materials is concerned with the preservation of culture. In the context of Aotearoa, this is not only reasonable but endorsed by the state through the Treaty of Waitangi, where the Crown has a duty to actively protect Māori interests and where Māori retain sovereignty over their resources and taonga. However, outside of that context, namely Aotearoa, are Māori weavers bound to the same cultural materiality constraints? I argue that expatriate or diaspora Māori will necessarily use new materials, in the same way that my ancestors needed to adapt to the cooler climate and use the new material of harakeke found in Aotearoa to replace aute (paper mulberry) and pandanus, grown in the warmer homelands left behind.

Figure 13: Kirsten Lyttle, *Gundulu/Emu Kākahu Huruhuru*, (2018), macramé cord (cotton), cotton twine, digital prints on Fuji lustre paper. Dimensions variable, 1430 mm (width) x 1180 mm (height) approx. Edition 1 of 1. Documentation of *Digital Mana* exhibition, photograph courtesy of J Forsyth (2018).

I had wanted to make a "digital" or photographic cloak ever since I began my PhD. As a Māori student of weaving, it made sense to me that if I was to embark on a PhD, one of the heights of academic endeavours in Western knowledge systems, then I needed to learn how to make a kākahu, the highest-prestige garment of Māori. I chose to use only Australian bird feathers for this project; I wanted to reflect my vantage point as part of the diaspora, making a cloak from the feathers of the birds that are indigenous here. At the National Weavers' Hui that I had attended in 2017, I had already seen cloaks made using emu feathers in place of kiwi (as the kiwi, unlike its cousin, the emu, is a protected and vulnerable bird). My friend Simon Rose, a proud Murri man (Birriah [Ayr], Gurreng Gurreng [Bundaberg]), gifted me the emu feathers. I felt it was important that these feathers were gifted from the tangata whenua of this land where I live. The title of the work, Gundulu, is a Birriah word for emu, reflecting Simon's maternal line. It was Simon's mum who sent the emu feathers down from Queensland for me to use for my cloak.

I face many difficulties in attempting to write on the significance of birds (and of the birds feathers I used) to Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders. The most obvious problem is that I am not tangata whenua here. These are not my stories to tell. However, the problem is not simply one of cultural consultation and permissions (although these were sought and granted): but of an ancient, diverse culture that cannot be homogenised into a single mythology of birds. Moreover, Aboriginal Australian culture has faced, and continues to face losses to culture through a unique and brutal story of colonialization. Indigenous Australians are the custodians of the oldest continuous living culture on the planet[77]. With such an old and diverse culture, it should not be surprising that there are a multitude of stories and mythologies regarding birds and particular bird species, and, that these stories can vastly differ between the many regional and language groups. The enormous diversity of Aboriginal Australians cannot be overlooked; there are many varied and distinct cultures that continue to be expressed in contemporary ways.

The sheer number of Aboriginal Australian language groups (approximately 250)[78] gives some indication as to the diversity of culture belonging to the First Peoples of this vast island continent. According to AIATSIS, 90% of indigenous languages in Australia are considered endangered (AIATSIS 2019b, para. 2). Language is certainly a keystone in transmitting stories and culture. Language reflects our concepts about the world and our place in it; when language is threatened or lost, so too are aspects of culture and knowledge systems. The blame for Australia's extremely high number of endangered indigenous languages can be planted firmly at the feet of government policies of assimilation, where languages were actively silenced. Arthur Capell, linguist and ethnographer wrote in 1964: "Government policy looks forward to the loss of Aboriginal languages so that the Aborigines may be 'assimilated'" (as quoted in Rademaker 2019 para 5). The ongoing legacy of colonialism and of past government policies continue to have a significant impact for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and how they express their culture. An in-depth discussion on the cultural significance of birds for

[77] This is confirmed by both scientific studies of DNA (Devlin 2016; Malaspinas et al. 2016) dating to over 50,000 years ago and by oral histories of the Dreaming (Behrendt 2016).
[78] Dixon claims that prior to European colonization/invasion, mainland Australia had between 240 and 250 languages (Dixon 2002, p. xviii). AIATSIS suggests that this number was over 250 and included 800 dialectal varieties (AIATSIS 2019b, para. 9).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is outside of the scope of this research project.

Instead, what I can speak to is what I have been given permission to share and told by my friend Simon of his family stories. He tells me that birds are message animals. This is similar to te ao Māori (the Māori world) where birds connect the physical and spiritual worlds. Simon says that indigenous Australians have amazing stories and connections to birds and animals. I am told the story of an uncle who had a tiger quoll (a native marsupial, sometimes called a native cat), for a totem. This tiger quoll would call out to him and tell him that someone was sick or in danger or when something bad was going to happen, like a death. For Simon's family, birds are particularly significant creatures as they are totemic for both of his parents. His mother's clan totem is the Eaglehawk and his father's the Powerful Owl. Some family on his mother's side say that his great-grandfather's totem was the Emu, but because of the loss of culture and language that occurred on Cherbourg mission, this is hard to verify. In the 1980s an emu farm was established on Cherbourg as a small-business initiative, and it ran for a number of years (along with an abattoir and souvenir shop) (Ration Shed Museum, para. 1). Simon still has a lot of family at Cherbourg, and he makes a yearly pilgrimage there with his mum, cousins and aunties. Simon's mum, who is not living on country but in a suburb of Brisbane, still uses emu feathers to make jewellery. He says that in a sense, she is diaspora, like me—living away from country. She is a part of a continuing customary practice—the utilisation of emu feathers as a material—that Aboriginal women have been involved in for tens of thousands of years. Emu feathers had a range of uses, from adornment (such as emu skirts or headbands) to more utilitarian uses such as in making mosquito nets.

Figure 14: Kirsten Lyttle, *Major Mitchell's Cockatoo* (2018), archival digital print on Kodak lustre paper, 594 x 841 mm (unframed). Edition 1 of 5.

Sourcing feathers from other Australian native birds proved to be more challenging and raised particular issues of materiality. All of the feathers I used were sourced from Australian suppliers under licence from the Australian government and were legally obtained. A permit was supplied with each species of feather I purchased. Not surprisingly, there is a vast price difference between bird feathers according to species, population, seasonal availability and type of feather (plumage, crest, wing or tail feathers all have varying prices). Originally, I wanted to use feathers that were from recognisable and iconic Australian birds, such as the cockatoo and galah. These are examples of feathers that even when dropped or plucked from a bird remain signifiers of their species. However, not all of the feathers I could access had these visible signifiers of being native Australian birds. At other times, the problem was not one of the semiotics (or sign systems) of feather identification but one of size; some feathers were simply too large or had too thick a feather shaft to be useable for whatu. Financial constraints and keeping a realistic budget for this largely self-funded project were further considerations. The

feathers sourced, in part, dictated how many samplers I made and affected my design decisions. Each Australian native bird that I worked with had its own individual sampler piece woven with a unique design. This meant that some designs used feathers sparingly while others used such an abundance of feathers that the cotton aho and whenu construction could no longer be seen. I also faced the issue that many online shoppers have encountered—some of the images of the feathers I saw online of were not indicative of the actual size of the feathers, and they turned out to be unsuitable for weaving (too small or too large). Some samplers used only the whatu stitch, while others incorporated whatu with māwhitiwhiti stiches (the crossing of whenu in a pattern, also known as whale tail). Half of the samplers used the natural colour of the cotton string for the aho and the whenu, while the other half were dyed black as I felt that the darker contrast was visually stronger for certain feather colourations. I completed one sampler at a time, carefully considering each of the feathers and how to design a pattern that complemented each type of feather used.

Following customary methods, all of the feathers used were first sorted, and then bundled and glued together around the shaft using pure soap. Through the process of bundling and weaving, the feathers take on a new form; they echo the bird they were derived from, but they are no longer a perfect likeness of their original arrangement and form on the bird's body. The feathers become part of the fabric's construction instead of a later addition. My mother helped me with the bundling of these feathers—a task that took almost six weeks. Most often the feathers we used had arrived via the post in plastic bags. On the odd occasion I received a complete wing instead, and mum and I had to remove the feathers manually. I have heard kairaranga whatu (Māori cloak weavers) speak of the haptic (embodied) and tactile nature of preparing feathers for raranga whatu, sensing the life force still inherent within the feathers. For me, this sensation was particularly felt when working with complete wings. I can only imagine what it is like to work with the entire pelt or carcass of these creatures. Once bundled, I then wove these feathers into each whatu sampler.

Figure 15: Kirsten Lyttle, documentation of *Digital Mana* exhibition, installation image of Gallery Two, Centre for Contemporary Photography. Photograph courtesy of J Forsyth (2018).

Once all 10 samplers were finished, I looked through my camera lens and began to photograph. Here I must acknowledge the influence of one of the few Māori photographers and weavers (who I am aware of) who combines both art forms into her creative practice: Dr Maureen Lander (Ngā Puhi, Te Hikutū). Maureen was the first Māori to be awarded a doctorate in fine arts, in 2002 from the University of Auckland. Originally trained as a photographer, she began learning cloak weaving from Diggeress Te Kanawa in 1984. She worked as a photographer in the anthropology department at the University of Auckland (1986–1993) and also researched and taught Māori fibre arts there until her retirement from lecturing in 2007. Maureen also photographed all of the cloaks for Auckland Museum (Lander 2001; Te Papa 2019b). Maureen's series *Papa Hou* (treasure box, or carved box for holding feathers) (2001) was a source of inspiration for *Digital Mana*. In this series, Lander produced eight steel boxes containing backlit photographs (colour transparencies) showing close-up details of feathers from Aotearoa's birds, both indigenous and native. Some of these macro photographs were taken from kākahu and others from museum bird specimens (Lander 2001).

For me, the act of taking a photograph did not create a disconnection or distance from the natural materials (feathers). Instead, through the process of photographing the whatu samplers my understanding of raranga whatu methods became expanded. Through the macro lens on my camera and the mechanical lenses of the computer screen I could see parts of the feather composition that my naked eye could not. This enabled a form of visual study and understanding of the structure of these natural materials. Both my eyes and my hands were trained throughout my creative process, in different, but equally embodied, ways. My photography is no less haptic than my weaving. This is particularly evident in the case of my artwork *Gundulu/Emu Kākahu Huruhuru* (2018).

In order to make the cloak for *Gundulu/Emu Kākahu Huruhuru* (2018), I enlisted the help of family and friends. It took many hands and most of January 2018 to bundle all of the feathers required to make it. This collective sense of working together is very much in the tradition of te whare pora. Knowledge is shared and transmitted through collective mahi, in the labour-intensive preparation of weaving materials, in the kōrero (conversation and storytelling) and through the collective energies and consciousness experienced through raranga and whatu wānanga (educational seminars/lessons). My own creative-practice research values these collective experiences of learning and making, following the traditions of my ancestors. While my mother was an almost ever-present feather bundler, many friends dropped in and gave what time, energy and assistance that they could. My living room was transformed into a studio space, weaving school and spoilt house cats' dream (with large sacks filled with emu feathers and feathers arranged in bundles across every flat surface). Once bundled and held together with velvet soap, these feathers were sewn against calico material.

This method of sewing feathers onto material in order to make an affordable version of a kākahu huruhuru is common in Aotearoa, especially for graduations or other special occasions (Academic Dress Hire 2012). The practice of combing both customary (the feather bundling) and non-customary (using a sewing machine) art practices has a long tradition in Māori art. As Robert Jahnke explains:

> European influence has been historically pervasive from the earliest period of European settlement… Mäori [*sic*] visual culture remains customary in spite of the non-customary

> inflections across other indices like matauranga (knowledge), ahua (appearance) and waihanga (process). (Jahnke 2006, p. 63)

Māori art, like many indigenous art practices, has and continues to show a diverse range of contemporary expressions. The claim that these contemporary expressions are somehow less "authentic" or "pure" forms of Māori art is one that Jahnke has taken issue with. He instead writes for an analytical framework of Māori art that includes Māori cultural relativity and relevance, analysing form, content and genealogy. I believe that my creative research sits most comfortably somewhere within the praxis of Jahnke's framework of Toi tūturu (customary) and (Toi whakawhiti) trans-customary Māori art (Jahnke 2011, p. 135). My methods of making are customary, while my introduction of new media to enhance, revisit and re-present the methods and materials of customary raranga whatu practice could be defined as a trans-customary practice.

My sewn cloak was then photographed, and using Photoshop, divided into overlapping individual 5 x 7 photographic prints. These had been numbered by position and row, with 25 photographs in each row and a total of 13 rows. Each photo was then punched with a hole punch and cotton string was attached. Using the same customary weaving technique that is used to weave in hukahuka (that is, two-ply tassels made from muka or wool), the cotton string and photographs were woven into the whakapapa or foundation of the cloak. I was weaving until the morning of the installation at CCP. Once this work was installed in the gallery space, I needed to readjust the photographs, one at a time (all 325) so that they hung correctly. I did not anticipate how heavy the finished work would be; its sheer weight pulled the fixtures from the wall twice before an additional third hook was added.

Figure 16: Kirsten Lyttle, documentation of *Digital Mana* exhibition, installation image of Gallery Two, Centre for Contemporary Photography. Photograph courtesy of J Forsyth (2018).

Gallery Two of CCP is an in-between space, a long corridor with access to Gallery Three via a second corridor to the left of the back wall. Initially I had wanted to install five works on either side wall and the cloak on the back wall, in perfect symmetry.

Reading too much like a church, this installation concept was quickly abandoned. Instead, with the help of Pippa Milne, CCP curator, the framed photograph works were paired in groups of three, with one image as a standalone work.

Figure 17: Kirsten Lyttle, documentation of *Digital Mana* exhibition, installation image of Gallery Two, Centre for Contemporary Photography. Photograph courtesy of J Forsyth (2018).

Figure 18: Kirsten Lyttle, documentation of *Digital Mana* exhibition, installation image of Gallery Two, Centre for Contemporary Photography. Photograph courtesy of J Forsyth (2018).

For me, exhibiting at CCP was a bucket-list moment. I had been intimidated by this space, but working with curators like Pippa Milne, I felt very supported to experiment and test out my ideas. In this test, I learnt a great deal. While the framed works read well, some works stood out a little more than others; the photographs that showed the brighter, almost garish, colours of some Australian birds seemed stronger (for example, *Major Mitchell's Cockatoo*—this work always reminds me of the Aboriginal flag), and the contrast between Australian native birds and those of Aotearoa was even more pronounced. My big statement work, the cloak, held her own in the space. I had successfully changed the usually flat surface of the photograph into a three-dimensional and tactile Māori object. On the opening night of the exhibition, it became clear that the audience were not interacting with my cloak in the same way that they usually did with a photograph (or installation of photographs); they wanted to, and occasionally did, touch the photographs—lifting them up individually and wanting to see how the work was made, to see what was behind the work. That evening, my mother became the self-appointed security/gallery guard, actively telling off strangers who tried to touch the *Gundulu/Emu Kākahu Huruhuru* cloak. Anna Parlane wrote on the haptic nature of this work in her essay/review of this show "It seems to me that Lyttle's photographic project seeks to conjure the *mana* of the *kahu huruhuru*, and to make it affectively present in the here-and-now. It does so by approaching the photograph as a material and tactile presence, rather than as a record of absence" (Parlane 2018). Parlane's concluding comments in this essay reflected my own thoughts about the cloak: that in this iteration, the cloak was not fully resolved. To my eyes, the finish along the top of the cloak with three rows of māwhitiwhiti appeared too abrupt and distanced from the woven in 4 x 6 prints. The finish not quite "polished":

> While Lyttle's cloak doesn't yet feel to me like a fully resolved form, it moves away from a conception of photography rooted in signification and towards a reconception of the medium in terms of tactile presence: a reformulation that could perhaps enable an affective encounter akin to that embodied in the woven fibres and feathers of the *kahu huruhuru*. (Parlane 2018)

This version of *Gundulu/Emu Kākahu Huruhuru* went on to become a finalist for the Bowness Photography Prize (2018) and was shown at the Monash Gallery of Art (MGA), Wheelers Hill, Melbourne. Placed on its own wall, the curators of the exhibition felt that this work needed its own space. I agreed with this decision from the curators.

Gundulu/Emu Kākahu Huruhuru was the first work encountered as the audience walked into the gallery. After seeing this work in another context, I decided that the cloak needed to be as "polished" as the other photographic works from this show. This new finish would include a tāniko border at the top, in reference to the tradition started by early photographers to have this decorative border clearly visible for the sake of the image frame rather than how these garments were historically worn.

Keteparaha/Toolkit

23 March–9 April 2018, Blak Dot Gallery, Brunswick, Melbourne
<https://blakdot.com.au/current-exhibitions/kirsten-lyttle-toolkit>

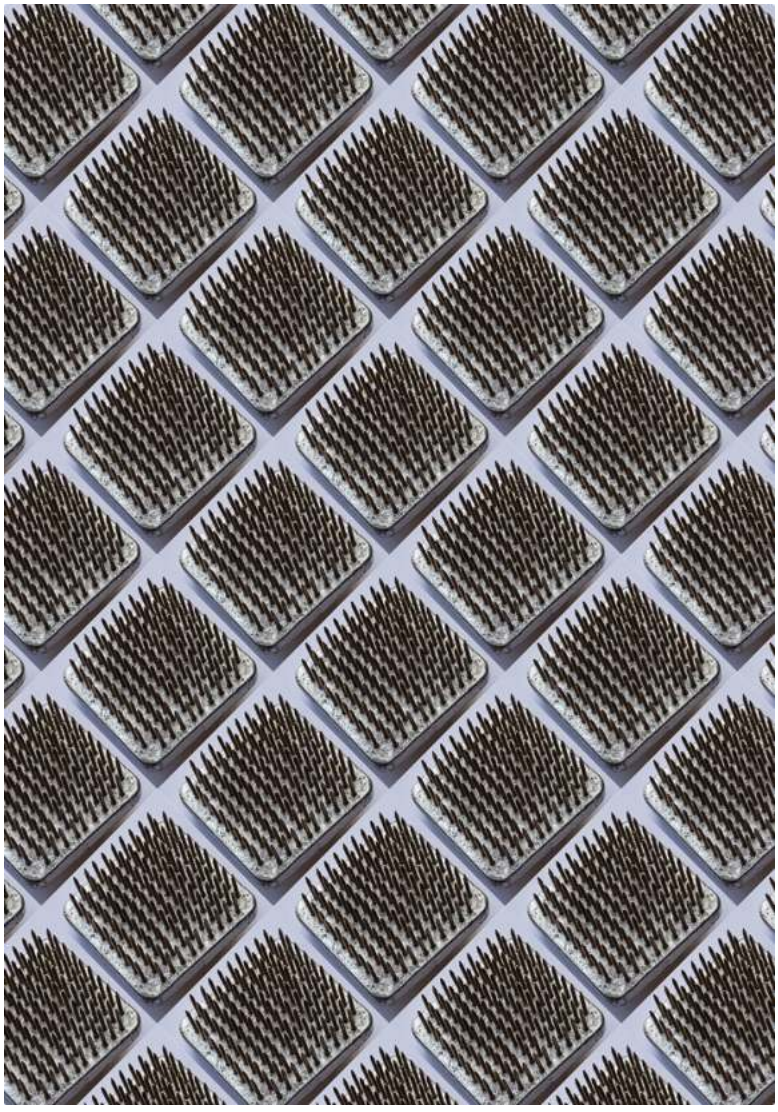


Figure 19: Kirsten Lyttle, *Poroka (Frog)* (2018), inkjet print on matt paper, 841 x 1189 mm (unframed). Edition 1 of 5.

My next solo show for 2018 was *Keteparaha/Toolkit*, shown at Blak Dot Gallery, Brunswick. For this exhibition I was inspired by my attendance at the 2017 Te Roopu Raranga Whatu o Aotearoa (National Weavers' Hui) in Rotorua, Aotearoa. This was the first time I had ever woven with harakeke in Aotearoa. The first time I had woven on a marae. My first time at a hui. Over the three days of the hui, I laughed, ate, saw amazing taonga and learnt more about weaving and myself than I can describe in words. As with any community group there are always tensions and internal politics, and while this was evident at the hui, the generosity of Māori wāhine was stronger. So many women generously shared their knowledge with me. I even met an uncle, the husband of a kuia (female elder), who, after I explained my whakapapa, realised that we had a shared ancestor, my great-grandmother. It is not an understatement or exaggeration to say that weaving on the marae, being at this hui, was a kind of spiritual experience for me. Nor is it one I do justice to in words. It was a Māori thing. A weaving thing.

My experience at the hui reframed my understanding of Māori weaving and its context. Like an editor putting a red line through inaccurate text, the tikanga I learnt in three days alone challenged almost every book on Māori weaving that I had read. It highlighted the ethnographic inadequacies and outdated descriptions of Māori weaving practice evident in the "canon" of Māori weaving literature. More importantly, I learnt how continually adapting and alive customary Māori arts practice is and of the generosity of Māori weavers in sharing the progress and developments in Māori weaving techniques. Currently, harakeke is processed by hand alone. In the past, Aotearoa's flax industry was mechanised, and by the 1860s, these inventions threatened the manual production of harakeke. By 1910 the mechanical flax stripper could turn out 1.27 tonnes of New Zealand flax fibre per day. The flax industry faced ups and downs after world wars, outbreaks of disease in the plants, government subsidies and competing international fibre imports. The introduction of synthetic fibres in the 1970s hastened the end of this industry and the last manufacturing plant was closed in 1985 (Swarbrick 2007). Throughout all the ups and downs of this industry, Māori women have continued to harvest, weave and process harakeke by hand. The tikanga and knowledge of pā harakeke has continued through colonisation and has not only survived but outlived industrialisation. To celebrate this story of indigenous resilience, this exhibition highlighted

some of the tools in the contemporary Māori weaver's keteparaha or toolkit. These objects reveal harakeke's story of colonisation, adaptation and ingenuity, as many of the tools used to hand-process and weave harakeke have been repurposed or modified from their original uses. Discarded sheep-shearing combs become haehae, or tools for sizing harakeke leaves into whenu (strips); the blunt side (or the back) of a bread-and-butter knife becomes a tool to hāpine or soften whenu[79]; household laundry pegs hold the edges of the kete in progress. This appropriation, adaptation and ingenuity reveals the irreverence, adaptability and practicality of wāhine Māori.

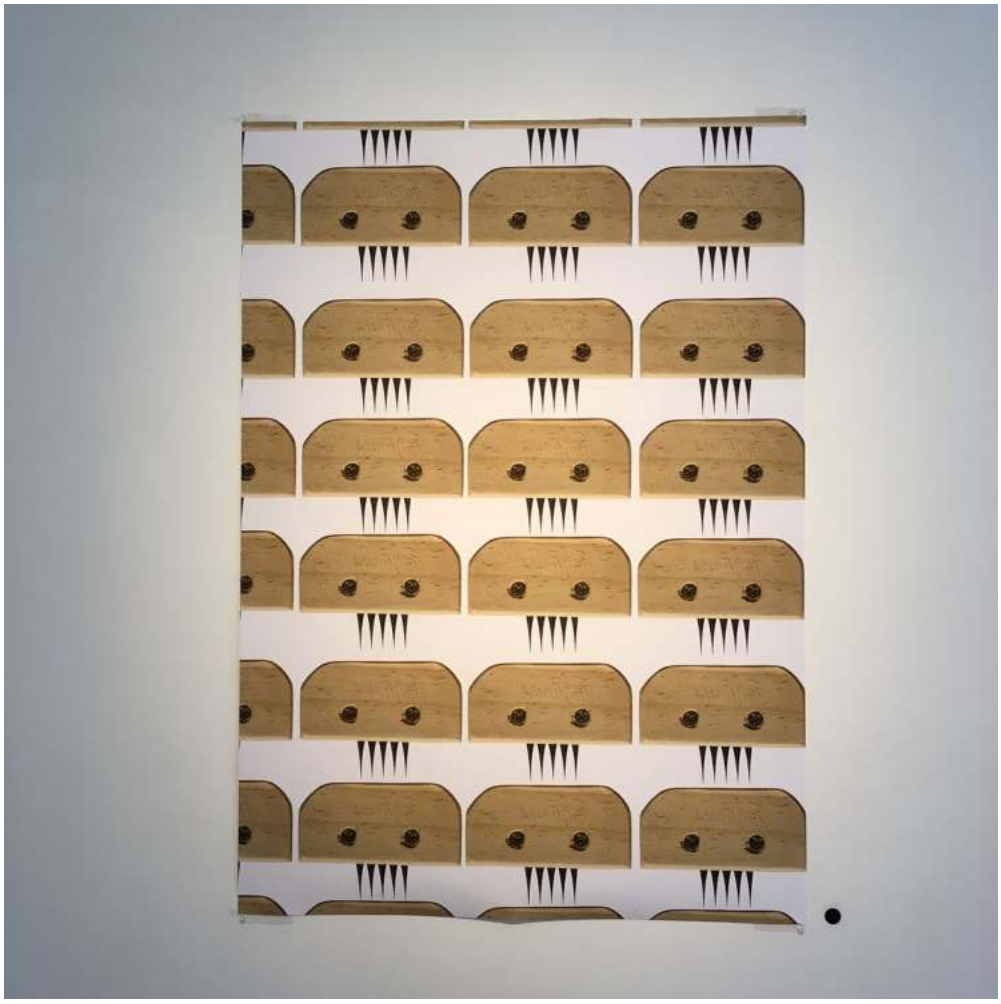


Figure 20: Kirsten Lyttle, *Haehae* (2018), inkjet print on matt paper, 841 x 1189 mm (unframed), Edition 1/5. Installation image at Blak Dot Gallery.

[79] Once any tool has been repurposed for use with harakeke it cannot ever be used again for any food purposes, as this is tapu.

For this exhibition I made a series of nine photographic prints of individual objects from my weaving toolkit and arranged them in patterns based on customary weaving patterns. Sized at A0 (height 1189 mm x width 841 mm), these photographic typologies were hung singularly or as double panels echoing tukutuku panels in a wharenui. Four prints were assembled to make a large work, *Tarp*, in the centre of the long wall of the gallery. On two plinths sat two kete whiri that I had woven. These were made from additional photographs of the prints that hung on the wall. It had been my original intention to make nine photographic paper kete so that each photographic print had a corresponding kete. After discussion with Kimba Thompson, I decided against this as it seemed too literal; instead she encouraged me to show both completed photographic works and works in progress. Some of these were made in situ during the exhibition, while I sat in the gallery. In Gallery Two I included a video, *New Zealand National Film Unit Presents New Zealand Flax (1950)* (2014), showing the industrialised process of flax harvesting in 1950. This exhibition was one of my most experimental; it was uncomfortable for me to show "unfinished" work. It also made me consider my audience differently. Who was I making for? For me, this exhibition was for weavers, for my own weaving circle wāhine and for others with an interest in raranga. This show taught me to experiment more, to allow the audience to "see behind the curtain" of the making process. I would take this lesson with me when it came to my final exhibition by creating a video work, shown against an installation that did exactly this—allow the audience to see the process of weaving. Where this exhibition was less successful was that it was made for a narrow audience; without reading an artist's statement or coming along to the artists' talk, many viewers could not do a "cold" reading of the work. My visual references were too culturally coded to be accessible to a Melbourne audience.

Figure 21: Kirsten Lyttle, image on wall *Tarp* (2018), inkjet print on matt paper, 1682 x 2378 mm approx. Foreground shows *Poroka (Frog),* kete whiri in progress. Installation image at Blak Dot Gallery. Image courtesy of Sarah Lindsey.

The Work of Art: An Exhibition of Art, Labour and Working Life

1–11 May 2018, curated by Grace McQuilten & Shanti Sumartojo, Mission to Seafarers, Docklands, Melbourne, <http://artlabour.com.au/>

I was invited to be a part of *The Work of Art*, a group exhibition curated by Grace McQuilten and Shanti Sumartojo at the Mission to Seafarers in Docklands, after they saw my work at CCP. The Mission to Seafarers, Melbourne, is an Anglican community welfare organisation that cares for;

> the practical and spiritual welfare of seafarers of all nationalities and faiths... While most seafarers are well treated, some are still abandoned in ports far from their homes, or remain unpaid or forced to work in unsafe or unacceptable conditions. In such situations, the Mission plays a vital role in providing practical care and moral support. (Mission to Seafarers 2019, para. 3)

This exhibition centred on drawing attention to human labour, in particular the labour of making art. I was asked to contribute to the exhibition with works from *Digital Mana*—including the cloak—and to be one of the "artist workers", working and making in the space during the course of the exhibition. My work was allocated for installation within the Norla Dome. This unique site presented a range of challenges, both physical and conceptual. The curators had wanted my cloak to be installed from the ceiling of the dome, while my framed photographic prints would line the curved walls. After a site visit, and a great deal of consideration, I decided not to include the cloak in this exhibition space. The ceiling of the Norla Dome is over four metres high, and if my cloak were suspended from this height, the piece would have no relationship to the human body; floating above the audience, the work would be removed from its context as an object made to surround the human body. Moreover, as the space was originally designed as a gym for seafarers (who, at the time of the dome's design, were all men), to put a treasured object that is female, such as a kākahu, in this space felt wrong. A further issue was that a carver, working with stone, would be carving in the space as one of the artist workers, and I was concerned that dust could potentially damage the photographs. I spent two days weaving in the Norla Dome, working with harakeke. The kete whiri I was working on did not want to be made. Every time I wove at the Mission, I miscounted whenu, weaving up work that had to undone, making and unmaking and remaking again. I felt like a Māori Sisyphus, endlessly rolling a boulder up a hill, only to have it roll down again as it neared the top. Something about this masculine space felt to me as though it had sadness etched into the walls and ceilings. This was the wrong place for me to work in. The walls themselves dwarfed my photographic work. It confirmed the need for my examination exhibition to be a safe space, a blak space. I knew I wanted my work to be in Blak Dot Gallery; my cloak and feather photographs needed to be protected in the way they were shown.

Figure 22: Working artist, Kirsten Lyttle, in the Norla Dome, Mission to Seafarers. Photo courtesy of Shanti Sumartojo.

Figure 23: Norla Dome at Mission to Seafarers, 717 Flinders Street, Melbourne. Courtesy of Creative Spaces 2019.

Te Ao Moemoeā/The Land of Dreaming

20 March–23 September 2019, Carlton Library Light Boxes, 2019 City of Yarra Exhibition Program, 667 Rathdowne Street, North Carlton, Melbourne <https://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/events/2019/03/20/te-ao-moemoea-the-land-of-dreaming-by-kirsten-lyttle>

Figure 24: Installation image of Carlton Library Light Boxes, Rathdowne Street, North Carlton, Melbourne. Photograph by J Forsyth (2018).

In late 2018, I applied to be a part of Yarra City Council's Public Art Program. I was awarded a Smarty Arts Grant, which funded the printing and installation of my work in the Carlton Library Light Boxes, Rathdowne Street, North Carlton. Located on the Newry Street side of the Carlton Library exterior, these four Duratrans backlit prints were 840 x 1189 mm each. These works entered the Yarra City Council's Art and Heritage Collection after being on display for six months. The limitation of this space is that the four images need to be in the landscape format of the light boxes. The images I submitted were from my solo exhibition *Digital Mana*; I choose four images that were brightly coloured as well as having a higher density of feathers. The bright colours seemed a good choice to take advantage of the backlighting property of these light boxes, echoing an advertising aesthetic while conceptually challenging ideas of the compatibility of customary indigenous arts practice and digital technologies. I named this exhibition *Te Ao*

Moemoeā/The Land of Dreaming, a Māori phrase for the ancient land that I reside in, acknowledging the custodians of this land, past, present and those to come[80].

Prior to this six-month installation, the few times that I have had my artwork in a public art environment was in the context of a weaving workshop, where I was directly interacting with people while making. Having my work be so highly visible was a different experience. I was approached via social media by some young people from the Māori community in Melbourne who wanted me to act as an arts mentor to them after they saw this work outside the library. Even in an inner-city Melbourne suburb, this work could resonate with and connect me to my diaspora community.

In this chapter I have discussed my creative outputs and the testing of my research-led practice in the exhibitions: *Digital Mana*, *Keteparaha/Toolkit*, *The Work of Art: An Exhibition of Art, Labour and Working Life*, and *Te Ao Moemoeā/The Land of the Dreaming*. The creative works I made for these shows taught me that I could transform the flat surface of the photograph into a three-dimensional and tactile *Māori* object, and moreover, that photographic works could have both a material and a tactile presence. I discovered that rather than being the record of absence, photographs could recall presence—so much so that viewers were tempted to touch my works, forgetting that they were photographs and not textiles. I learnt the importance of allowing the audience to see the process of weaving. Importantly, I learnt that my work needs to be made and shown within a culturally safe space. Through these creative and site tests, I have come closer to answering the questions posed at the beginning of my research; I have shown that diaspora weavers living in another land necessarily use different resources than those in their ancestral homelands. New and different materials can be used in positive, alternative ways that do not threaten cultural integrity. In the next and final chapter, I discuss my examination exhibition and the final conclusions of my research.

[80] I came across this phrase a few years ago in an article by Rachel Buchanan (Te Āti Awa, Taranaki, Ngāti Ruanui), a member of the Māori diaspora now based in Australia (Buchanan 2010).

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE CONCLUSION

Whakaahua (Photograph): Transforming the Photograph into a Site for Making Māori Customary Art

25 July–11 August 2019, Blak Dot Gallery, Brunswick, Melbourne
<https://blakdot.com.au/current-exhibitions/2019/7/25/whakaahua>

For me, it was very important that the pinnacle of my research—my examination exhibition *Whakaahua (Photograph): Transforming the Photograph into a Site for Making Māori Customary Art*—was shown in a blak space. Having navigated the whitewashed walls of artistic and educational institutions as a brown woman, I knew that I wanted the kaupapa, the context and the cultural safety net that Blak Dot provides. I also wanted my examiners to be in a Blak space alongside my work, to view it in a community context, as Blak Dot is not just a gallery, but a community, for many of us in Melbourne. The greater indigenous world meets and connects here. The space that Kimba Thompson has built is unique. The support that she offers local indigenous artists, First Nation, Māori and Pacific Island artists is unparalleled. It is a site of kōrero[81] between different peoples and cultures. The importance of face-to-face conversations in indigenous communities cannot be underestimated. Oral histories and physical movements record our knowledge systems; they tell of our genealogies, our landscape, our names and our lived reality. For Māori, and many other indigenous people, oral histories and speech are valued as fine art forms, prized as highly as carving or weaving (when done well). Stories, debates, speeches and especially jokes make good kōrero. Many outside of indigenous and First Nation communities do not know how funny our communities are, or that the dirtiest jokes are often told by the most respected aunties (because they love to shock us with their naughtiness and because they know they can get away with almost anything). Through exhibitions, performances, workshops and other events such as film nights and artist talks, Blak Dot encourages the greater community of Brunswick and Melbourne to have meaningful and positive exchanges with members of these indigenous communities, with whom they may never have interacted socially before, to see the gifts of our artistic expression, to share in our laughter, to witness and learn from our different knowledge systems and to hear of our lived realities of indigeneity within contemporary

[81] To tell, talk, address; conversation, discourse, discussion.

Australia.

Figure 25: Installation image of *Whakaahua* at Blak Dot Gallery, 2019. Photographs displayed from left to right: *Blue Princess Parrot* (2018), *New Brown Goshawk (Raptor)* (2019) and *New Koel (Raptor)* (2019).

My previous exhibition, *Digital Mana*, held at CCP, taught me that some of my framed sampler works were stronger than others. For my examination exhibition at Blak Dot, for which I rethought and refined the works and the ways in which they were exhibited at the CCP, I wanted all of the framed works to be each as strong as the other. To achieve this, I reshot six of the ten original images. Every aspect of each individual photograph was scrutinised, from colour checks against the original feathers through to compositional rules and test prints. I was more critical of these images than of any other photographic works I have made. Once I was happy with my ten final images as works in themselves and how they read together, they were reprinted. My paper choice was carefully considered to ensure that the materiality of the paper reflected these works conceptually. At CCP, I had chosen the most cost-effective paper, a Kodak lustre. This paper reads as a standard, not-too-shiny photograph, with a slight sheen on the surface

of the paper. For *Whakaahua*, I chose an archival giclée fine-art paper, Canson Platine Fibre Rag. This paper, with its matt finish and heavier weight, reads as more like a watercolour paper than a photographic one. The blacks in my prints appeared more like velvet, deeper somehow, on this Fibre Rag. The sheen in the CCP prints had the potential to visually distract the viewer from the detail shown in these extreme close-up images. Instead, with the matt finish, all of the fine details of these feathers could be seen. Changes were also made to the frames. At CCP, I had chosen black frames to sit against the white-walled gallery. At Blak Dot, against the charcoal-black-painted walls, I chose to use a natural wooden frame, to echo the naturalism of the feathers. These works were arranged sequentially by colour and tonal qualities. Throughout the practice-led research process, I have learned to hone the technical and formal aspects with the cultural and the personal, reclaiming the medium. These, and the following changes I describe, were more than formal adjustments; they were material embodiments of hard-won knowledge.

Figure 26: Installation image of *Whakaahua* at Blak Dot Gallery, 2019. Photographs displayed from left to right: *New Brown Goshawk (Raptor)* (2019), *New Koel (Raptor)* (2019), *New Dollar Bird (Native Kingfisher)* (2019) and *New Laughing Kookaburra (Native Kingfisher)* (2019).

The first work on the left when entering the gallery was one of the original images from the CCP exhibition, *Blue Princess Parrot* (2018). This image was reframed and reprinted. As this macro photograph was taken with the camera slightly further away from the huruhuru sampler (compared to the other photographs in this series), I felt that this image stood out and therefore needed its own visual space from the other works, and so it was placed on its own wall.

Figure 27: Installation image of *Whakaahua* at Blak Dot Gallery 2019. Photographs displayed from left to right: *Conclurry Rosella (Parrot)* (2018), *New Kestrel* (2019). *Galah (Cockatoo)* (2018), *New Emu* (2019) and *Major Mitchell's Cockatoo* (2018).

Next was a wall of four works, *New Brown Goshawk (Raptor)* (2019), *New Koel (Raptor)* (2019), *New Dollar Bird (Native Kingfisher)* (2019) and *New Laughing Kookaburra (Native Kingfisher)* (2019). I had tested several versions of this wall installation, debating between placing four or five works in this space. Five works appeared too cramped and I wanted to keep the spaces between the works consistent between this wall and the next, longer, wall. Initially, I had wanted to put the blue-coloured image, the one of *New Dollar Bird (Native Kingfisher)*, at the end on the right-hand side, leading into the brightly coloured works on the next wall. I took Kimba Thompson's advice on this, as she thought the

arrangement from the blue work into the green of *Conclurry Rosella (Parrot)* was too obvious (she was right, as always). Kimba knows both my work and this space inside out. The longest gallery wall was used to display the remaining five framed photographs. The corner space of the left-hand side of these images mirrored the space on the previous wall—between the last work, *New Laughing Kookaburra* on the right-hand side, to the wall corner (see Fig. 26). This arrangement allowed for some visual space for the cloak, *Gundulu/Emu Kākahu Huruhuru*, on the wall outside of Gallery Two.

Figure 28: Installation image of *Whakaahua* at Blak Dot Gallery 2019. Photographs displayed from left to right: *Galah (Cockatoo)* (2018), *New Emu* (2019), *Major Mitchell's Cockatoo* (2018) and, on the other wall, *Gundulu/Emu Kākahu Huruhuru* (2018–2019).

Figure 29: Installation image of *Whakaahua* at Blak Dot Gallery, 2019. *Gundulu/Emu Kākahu Huruhuru* (2018–2019) on the wall outside of Gallery Two. In this image you can also see the video projection work, *Whatu Process,* displayed on a material screen showing whatu stitch.

Gundulu/Emu Kākahu Huruhuru, my photographic kākahu, looked its best displayed against the walls of Blak Dot. Over the two weeks before the installation at the gallery I had been working on this piece in my living room. When my mother heard that I wanted to unpick and reweave the finishing on my kākahu, *Gundulu/ /Emu Kākahu Huruhuru*, in the weeks before I needed to install at Blak Dot, she was in disbelief and attempted to talk me out of it. She was keenly aware of the amount of time it had taken me and the many helping hands from my family, friends and community to make this work. However, with the voice of what I now refer to as my "inner aunty" sharply reminding me, I felt this step was necessary to make it better, to be finally complete (or, as Kui would say, "It's messy—undo it"). The work had hung in my living room, on a weaving stand that my partner James and I had constructed with an IKEA clothes rack we modified, a plank of wood and some nails. When I say "modify", I mean "MacGyvered", after the 1985 television series title character who uses his scientific genius in combination with household tools, and a Swiss Army knife, to get out of any situation. Previously, this cloak was finished with three rows of māwhitiwhiti. All three of these rows were undone, then

tāniko was added, having counted my whenu and grafted up a design on paper. It is a time-consuming technique, and I admire the skills of my ancestors who worked without graph paper, instead committing these designs and patterns to memory. Even with graph paper, I drew my design incorrectly and had to redo it. Many days (and into the nights) were spent working on the tāniko border. I added a single row of māwhitiwhiti. The finish was plaited and sewn against the inside back of the cloak.

Historically, tāniko borders were rarely seen at the top of a cloak, instead being placed along the side and bottom borders. The change occurred when Europeans began making pictures of Māori in ceremonial and customary textiles. Photographic portraits tend to favour cropping around the head and shoulders such that the details of a person's likeness can be truly "captured". However, with such tight cropping around the head and shoulders of someone wearing a cloak with tāniko, these decorative borders could not have been seen. Instead, cloaks were draped over Māori subjects' shoulders, effectively presenting these garments upside down. Margery Blackman implies that a Māori sitter would not have chosen to display the garment in this way: "Clearly the painter

Figure 30: Installation image of *Whakaahua* at Blak Dot Gallery, 2019. *Gundulu/Emu Kākahu Huruhuru* (2018–2019) on the wall outside of Gallery Two.

Figure 31: Installation image of *Whakaahua* at Blak Dot Gallery, 2019. *Gundulu/Emu Kākahu Huruhuru* (2018–2019) on the wall outside of Gallery Two. Detail image of the top of the cloak showing the finishing plait, the row of māwhitiwhiti and the tāniko edging in Aramoana pattern.

or photographer asked the wearer to make this unusual arrangement" (Blackman 2019 p. 83). This change of moving the border from the bottom to the top in customary whatu practices was thus affected by European photographic portraiture, in the same way that painting and Western art history was affected by the camera. Photography not only recorded Māori weaving practice, it actively reshaped it. My kākahu, with its tāniko border seen on the neck edge, reflects the exchange of ideas between photography practice and Māori weaving practice. The pattern of tāniko used on *Gundulu/Emu Kākahu Huruhuru* is Aramoana, meaning ocean pathways. This pattern was chosen as it seemed appropriate for a cloak made for and by a member of the diaspora. Having travelled across the ocean, living "across the ditch", I felt that this tāniko pattern could act as a reflection of my status as a "Mozzie". Photography may have shaped customary practices, and yet whatu, as a practice, has never been fixed or frozen in time—it always changes. Each kākahu reflects the weaver who made it, "what resources were available to her, her ability to translate ideas into reality, her sense of design, and her ideas of appropriateness and beauty" (Maihi 2019, p. 40). The resource available to me and the resource I have been trained in and continue to work with, through teaching and in my

creative practice, is the photograph.

Different decisions were also made in the installation of this work. After my experience at CCP, where the viewers actively touched and moved the photographs, lifting up individual prints to see the weave behind, I decided this work should be displayed at a greater distance from the wall, allowing the audience the opportunity to "peek" behind, to see the construction, without feeling the need to touch. After much discussion, Kimba sourced the metal curtain-rod wall attachments, which were painted black, as was the wooden dowel that was threaded through the māwhitiwhiti stitch. In this installation, the wooden dowel was less visible, and the photographs less likely to be damaged by overly enthusiastic gallery visitors. I had not accounted for the gallery's air-conditioning unit, placed high on the long wall, at the corner closest to my work. The movement of air

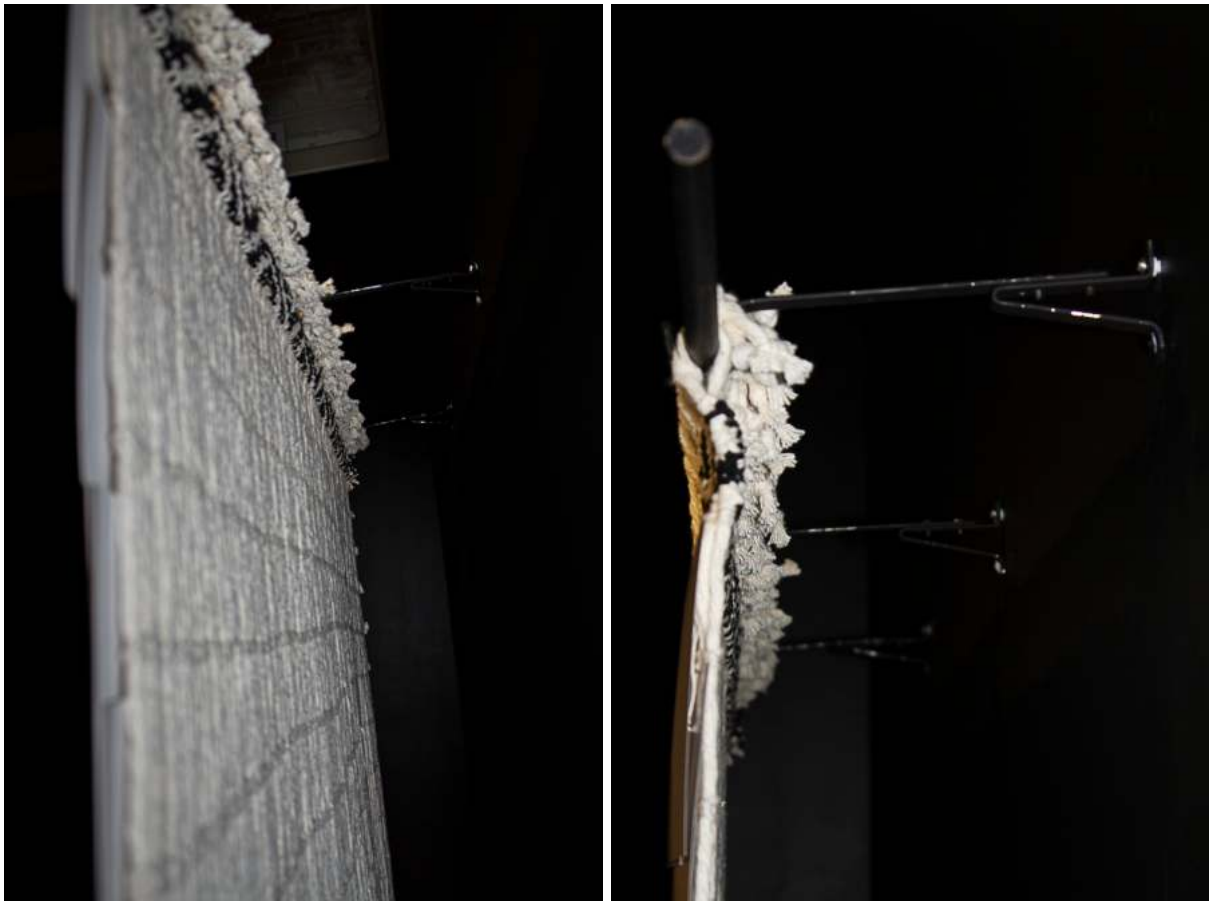


Figure 32: Installation of *Gundulu/Emu Kākahu Huruhuru* (2018–2019) on the wall outside of Gallery Two as part of *Whakaahua* at Blak Dot Gallery, 2019. Left: Detail image of back of the cloak, showing its construction. Right: The wall brackets used to display the cloak at a distance from the wall so that the viewer could see the cloak's construction.

caused the cloak to move slightly, animating the work. This “happy accident” added a sense of presence, a human element to my work. In future installations I would like to explore this further, adding movement through air flows or hidden fans in some way.

Inside Gallery Two was a video work titled *Whatu Process* (2019). This was filmed while reworking the finish of the cloak for the examination exhibition. There were several reasons why I wanted to make a video work for this final exhibition. Firstly, Blak Dot has a dedicated video art space and it seemed like a wasted opportunity not to take advantage of this. Importantly, over the many discussions about my work with Kimba, she has spoken about how the audience have a curiosity about the process of indigenous customary art making. As a filmmaker, Kimba has a deep understanding of the way in which indigenous stories are told, but also how the audience, both indigenous and non-indigenous, react to these stories. Since my last solo exhibition at Blak Dot Kimba has been encouraging me to allow the audience to see more of the process of how I make. I would much rather show a completed kete than one being constructed.

Figure 33: Installation image of inside Gallery Two as part of *Whakaahua* at Blak Dot Gallery, 2019. This image shows the video work, *Whatu Process* (2019). It was projected onto a screen I made using the whatu technique.

Figure 34: Installation image of inside Gallery Two, as part of *Whakaahua* at Blak Dot Gallery, 2019. This image shows the video work, *Whatu Process* (2019), and the screen made in situ, including the first row of whatu stich, purposely left incomplete and dangling.

For me, showing my making process is both difficult and uncomfortable. At the same time, I have loved watching the hands of my teacher, Veranoa Puketapu Hetet, through her videos played on my computer screen. Not only did I want this video work to show the process of making my work *Gundulu/Emu Kākahu Huruhuru*, I wanted it to be shown in a way that conceptually reiterated my research—to transform the surface of the photograph, or in this case, the screen, into an indigenous object.

To do this, I made a screen from strips of cotton material. On site, I experimented with a grey material (as grey screens are often used for video projections to enhance the colours). This test was unsuccessful, the grey looking strange and not enhancing the video images, and so I used white cotton material instead. I tried several methods to cast on using these material strips: on my weaving stand, sitting on the gallery floor and in Gallery Two on a table. The only way that worked was to cast on while balanced on a ladder, leaning against the wall and weaving this in where it would stay, pinning the work to the wall with each new whenu. I had intended on weaving several aho and weaving

these in completely, when Kimba walked in and told me to leave it, again showing process, by having the aho strips hanging down three-quarters finished. I struggled with this but deferred to Kimba's expertise and trusted her instincts, leaving it incomplete. I am glad I did. This piece hanging down drew the audience's eye to the whatu at the top of the screen, and without it, the whatu may have been less visible. In part, this video work is an acknowledgement of the way in which I have learnt how to whatu—through technologies played across digital webs and ocean pathways, connecting diaspora to knowledge from ancestral homelands.

Figure 35: *Sheltered Under the Arms of the Ancestor: Weraroa Marae* (2019), half-tone printed wallpaper, 2600 x 2400mm. Installation image of Gallery One.

The final piece in this exhibition is the large photographic wallpaper installed against the moveable wall in Gallery One. This image is the view from my wharenui, standing under the maihi or carved gables, looking out onto my marae, Weraroa Marae, in Waikato. The arms of my ancestor protect my artwork. My artwork in the gallery is symbolically surrounded by my ancestors, sheltered, safe and warm in their belly. This image still brings a tear to my eye. It was not until it was installed that I could see how well it worked

in this space, the green grass of the marae's courtyard mirroring the green grass outside the windows and front door of Blak Dot, or the concrete slabs with their patchwork lines in front of the whare continuing on the floors of the gallery space.

In 2011, Hokimate Harwood (Ngā Puhi) wrote on the examination and analysis of feathered cloaks in Te Papa's collections (Harwood 2011). She describes the range of introduced and native bird species found in the feathers of the museum's collection of cloaks. Introduced species were quickly taken up by weavers for their feathers, such as the common pheasant and peafowl (or peacock). Peacock feathers, for example, were found in 25 of the 110 cloaks studied. In other words, as soon as weavers came across new materials, they were incorporated into their mahi (work). I can only imagine the excitement felt by my ancestors when coming across new materials to work with. Being ocean travellers, perhaps encounters with unfamiliar birds was one of the thrills and joys of landing on the next Island—this experience of coming across new materials, and adapting to them, a necessary part of life. Adaptation is something Māori have always done, from adapting to new lands, with new climates, to adapting to new materials, such as harakeke and peacock feathers, adapting to new techniques, seen in māwhitiwhiti stitch, and adapting new technologies—using plastic clothes pegs to hold raranga work in place or shearing combs to size harakeke, using silk threads or wool in tāniko, and in my case, using the photograph in place of the hukahuka or feather.

One of the most intriguing discoveries in Harwood's research was the discovery of what she termed a possible feather "signature", found in 30 cloaks. These "feather signatures" were the subtle inclusion by the weaver of additional feathers (and other materials such as wool)—often not found anywhere else in that particular cloak—that were hidden. Harwood surmised that these were "inserted by the maker as an individual mark or memory of an event or person and, in some cases, could indicate the identity of the weaver. They may also provide an indication of the status of the wearer, and the time and environment in which he or she was living" (Harwood 2011, p. 146). Western science is only just figuring out some of the knowledge woven into the kauapapa of Māori cloaks. I love the idea of incorporating hidden signatures into work, sometimes with different, new materials. Perhaps some of these inclusions were both a mark of the maker that

only the maker could identify, but also a test—the testing out of new materials and how these materials could be married with the old, or a subtle site test, hidden in case it drew criticism from other weavers who did not believe in using feathers from Pākehā birds or Pākehā materials such as wool, embroidery silk or cottons. My chosen use of a new material with which to weave is not a new idea. What is new is that this material has not been used in this way: the photograph has not been used as a site for making, until now.

Findings and Discussion

My photographic kākahu huruhuru has been woven, parts unpicked and rewoven, and now she, along with other works from my examination exhibition, has been deinstalled and packed away in protective bubble wrap and cardboard. The opening night of *Whakaahua* is one of the proudest moments of my life and the memory of it still floods my body with warmth. Now my last and final stage of this research project is one of critical reflection; I am tasked with looking back upon my research journey to summarise my contribution to knowledge and to reflect upon future research questions that follow from my project.

When I began this research project, I set out to explore questions regarding materiality for Māori fibre arts and the apparent gap in the field between customary Māori art and contemporary Māori art. I began with a series of questions about customary and non-customary materials: what materials could be used in a culturally appropriate way (i.e., that did not debase or threaten cultural practices or taonga/treasures) by Māori raranga and whatu weavers? Do the rules change for Māori weavers outside of Aotearoa? Can the use of new technology be used in uniquely Māori ways? Was it possible to become a Māori customary art practitioner away from the marae? Moreover, was it possible not only to learn but to make Māori customary art with technology and new digital media, such as a digital photograph? Could the photograph be turned into a site for Māori whatu weaving and the production of my own digital kākahu huruhuru?

In answering these questions, I have explored my own identity and tested my arts practice and research. Much of the creative testing performed as part of this research

project was at times uncomfortable. For me, it was a genuinely scary experience to use non-customary materials, such as the photograph, in my raranga and whatu practice. I described these fears in Chapter 4. Here I am reminded of something that the late David Bowie said in an interview when talking about making art:

> I think it's terribly dangerous for an artist to fulfil other people's expectations. If you feel safe in the area that you're working in, you're not working in the right area. Always go a little further into the water than you feel you're capable of being in. Go a little bit out of your depth, and when you don't feel that your feet are quite touching the bottom, you're just about in the right place to do something exciting. (*David Bowie: The Last Five Years* 2018)

I tend to agree with Bowie—as an artist it is important to feel uncomfortable, to push through some fears in creative practice.

My own self-doubt and lingering fears about the material choices I had made as a creative arts researcher only truly subsided after visiting my marae, in the heart of Māori King Country in the Waikato, in June 2019. I have never seen tukutuku panels like the ones in my wharenui. These panels have been painted in a mix of contemporary, representational designs, alongside the more familiar and formalised customary patterns. In place of the customary natural fibres of harakeke (or kiekie leaves or pingao reeds) used as the lacing material to hold and weave the laths to the base, thin strips of plastic polypropylene strapping in a range of colours have been used. I am thrilled and in awe to find multiple cloaks in the wharenui, laid out below photographs of my ancestors, in front of the tuarongo (back wall). These are contemporary cloaks, made with imported bird feathers and cotton-mop string, the same type of cotton material I used in my photographic kākahu huruhuru. Inside this wharenui, my art and my research practice make sense for the first time. I see myself reflected in the artistry of this house. I now know why I make the way I do. I make as my iwi and hapū make—I am Ngāti Tahinga.

Looking back to my original research questions, I now know that it is possible to maintain cultural integrity while using contemporary materials. I agree with Jahnke when he writes, "Māori have always ventured beyond the confines of tradition and cultural conformity" (Jahnke 2011, p. 135). I can see evidence of this in my own marae and wharenui. This is also true for the diaspora. Adaptation is a necessity for any diasporic community,

especially when it comes to the production of customary arts. Learning customary arts practices such as raranga and whatu from the distance of another people's country is difficult and imperfect. That is not to say lessons cannot be learnt in the virtual world. As I write this, humanity is in the midst of the unprecedented situation that is COVID-19. Institutions, communities, colleagues, families and individuals all over the world are learning to connect with one another in new ways, in virtual, online spaces. It may not be the same way of doing things, but it does create new possibilities. When I began this research project, I wanted it to reflect te ao Māori and a Māori ethical framework. I have done this by using my methodology of whakaahua. Through an embodied creative practice of seeing, photographing and utilising the photograph as a site for customary making I have shown that although this Pākehā tool—the camera—has a difficult history, it is one that can be Maorified. After all, to photograph, in te reo Māori, is to transform.

GLOSSARY:

Aotearoa: New Zealand.

Haehae: Tool to size harakeke leaves for weaving.

Hāpine: To soften flax.

Hapū: Subtribe.

Harakeke: New Zealand Flax.

Hei tiki: Carved pounamu/jade neck pendant.

Heru: Ornamental comb.

Hui: Gathering or meeting.

Hukahuka: Tassels.

Iwi: Extended kinship or family group, descended from a common ancestor.

Kahu ngore: a type of Māori cloak similar to a korowai except that in place of black fibre (sometimes wool) decorative hukahuka (tassels), a pompom, usually made of red wool, is attached to the kaupapa, or foundation of the cloak.

Kai: Food.

Kaitiaki: Guardian/advocate.

Karakia: A ritual chant, prayer or blessing.

Kaupapa: Platform or principles.

Kete: Baskets.

Kete whakairo: Finely woven and patterned baskets.

Koha: Gift.

Kōhanga: Māori-language preschool.

Kōrero: To tell, talk, address; conversation, discourse, discussion.

Korowai: Cloak made out of muka (Harakake/New Zealand flax fibre), ornamented with tags.

Mahi: Work.

Maihi: Carved gables of a wharenui.

Mana: A supernatural force in a person, place or object that gives prestige, authority and spiritual power.

Mana wāhine: Māori feminism.

Marae: Courtyard; the open area in front of a wharenui; often used to refer to the entire complex of buildings surrounding the marae.

Mātauranga Māori: Māori knowledge.

Mekameka: Chain.

Moko: Māori tattooing designs on the face or body, patterned; lizard; an affectionate term for a grandchild.

Moko kauae: Chin tattoo worn by Māori women.

Moko kikowhiti: Forearm moko.

Motu taim: Island time. A mash-up of Polynesian and Melanesian words reflecting the cultural heritage of my Melbourne-based weaving group's members.

Muka: Prepared flax fibre.

Ngāti: A prefix (and personal pronoun) for a tribal group, now written as a separate word.

Ngutu pūrua: Fully tattooed lips.

Pā harekeke: Flax plantation.

Pākehā: New Zealander of European descent.

Pātiki/ pātikitiki: A type of fish; flounder designs.

Pepeha: A tribal saying or expression; a saying of the ancestors.

Pōwhiri: Welcome invitation or ceremony used on a marae.

Raranga: Plaiting.

Tā moko: Māori tattoo on the face or body done under traditional protocols.

Taipō: Ghost.

Takaparawhā: Bastion Point (Auckland).

Tangata whenua: The indigenous people of the land.

Tangi: Funeral.

Taonga: Cultural treasure.

Tatau: The Pacific tradition of puncturing and colouring the flesh.

Te Ao Moemoeā: The land of Dreaming/Australia.

Te Reo Māori: The Māori language.

Te whare pora: The house of weaving or weaving school.

Tikanga: Protocol or correct, appropriate way of doing things in a Māori social context.

Tīpare: Headband.

Tūpuna whare: Ancestral house.

Toi rerekē: Non-customary Māori art.

Toi tūturu: Customary Māori art.

Toi whakawhiti: Trans-customary Māori art.

Tuarongo: Back wall of a wharenui.

Tukutuku: A decorative panel seen inside the wharenui, with a latticework structure.

Tūpuna wāhine: Female ancestors, grandmothers and great-grandmothers.

Tūpuna: Grandparents, ancestors.

Waiata: To sing; song, chant or psalm.

Wairua: Spirituality; everlasting spirit.

Waka: Canoe.

Whakapapa: Ancestral line, genealogy.

Whakataukī: Proverb.

Whānau: Family.

Whare: House.

Whare tūpuna : Ancestral house, meeting house.

Wharenui: Meeting house, often the main house of a marae where guests are accommodated.

Whatu: Weaving.

Whenua: Land.

Whiri: Braiding.

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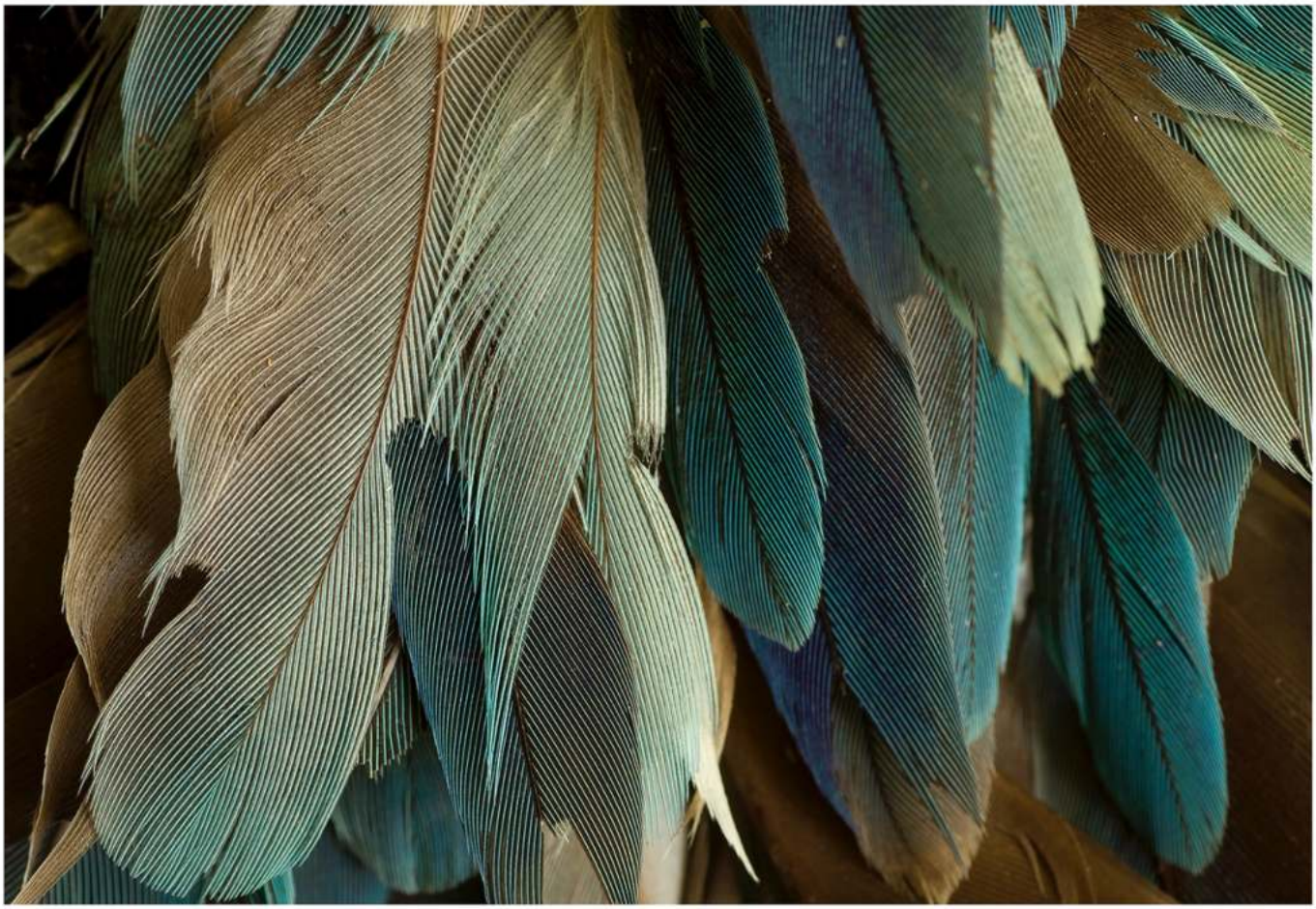
Digital Mana

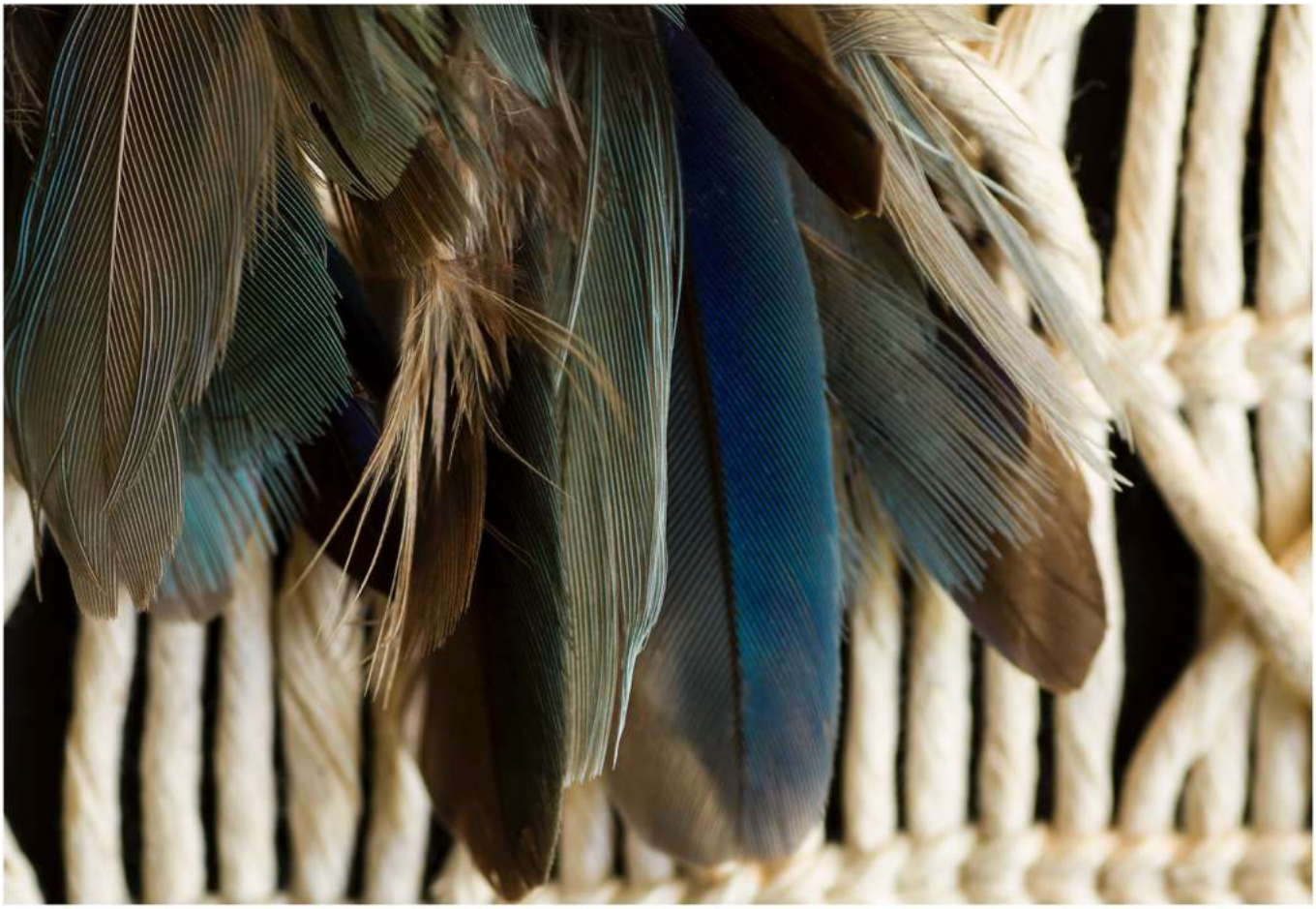
02 February–11 March 2018, *Digital Mana*, Centre for Contemporary Photography, Fitzroy. Melbourne
<https://ccp.org.au/exhibitions/all/digital-mana>



Kirsten Lyttle
Blue Princess Parrot, (2018)
Archival Digital Print on Kodak Lustre Paper
594 x 841 mm (unframed)
Shown as part of *Digital Mana.* (2018), CCP

Kirsten Lyttle
Galah (Cockatoo), (2018)
Archival Digital Print on Kodak Lustre Paper
*5*94 x 841 mm (unframed)
Shown as part of *Digital Mana.* (2018), CCP

Kirsten Lyttle
Brown Goshawk (Raptor) (2018)
Archival Digital Print on Kodak Lustre Paper
594 x 841 mm (unframed)
Shown as part of *Digital Mana.* (2018), CCP



Kirsten Lyttle
Dollar Bird (Native Kingfisher) (2018)
Archival Digital Print on Kodak Lustre Paper
594 x 841 mm (unframed)
Shown as part of *Digital Mana.* (2018), CCP

Kirsten Lyttle
Koel (Raptor) (2018)
Archival Digital Print on Kodak Lustre Paper
*5*94 x 841 mm (unframed)
Shown as part of *Digital Mana.* (2018), CCP

Kirsten Lyttle
Cloncurry Rosella (Parrot (2018)
Archival Digital Print on Kodak Lustre Paper
*5*94 x 841 mm (unframed)
Shown as part of *Digital Mana.* (2018), CCP

Kirsten Lyttle
Major Mitchell's Cockatoo
(2018)
Archival Digital Print on Kodak Lustre Paper
594 x 841 mm (unframed)
Shown as part of *Digital Mana.* (2018), CCP

Kirsten Lyttle
Laughing Kookaburra (Native Kingfisher) (2018)
Archival Digital Print on Kodak Lustre Paper
*5*94 x 841 mm (unframed)
Shown as part of *Digital Mana.* (2018), CCP

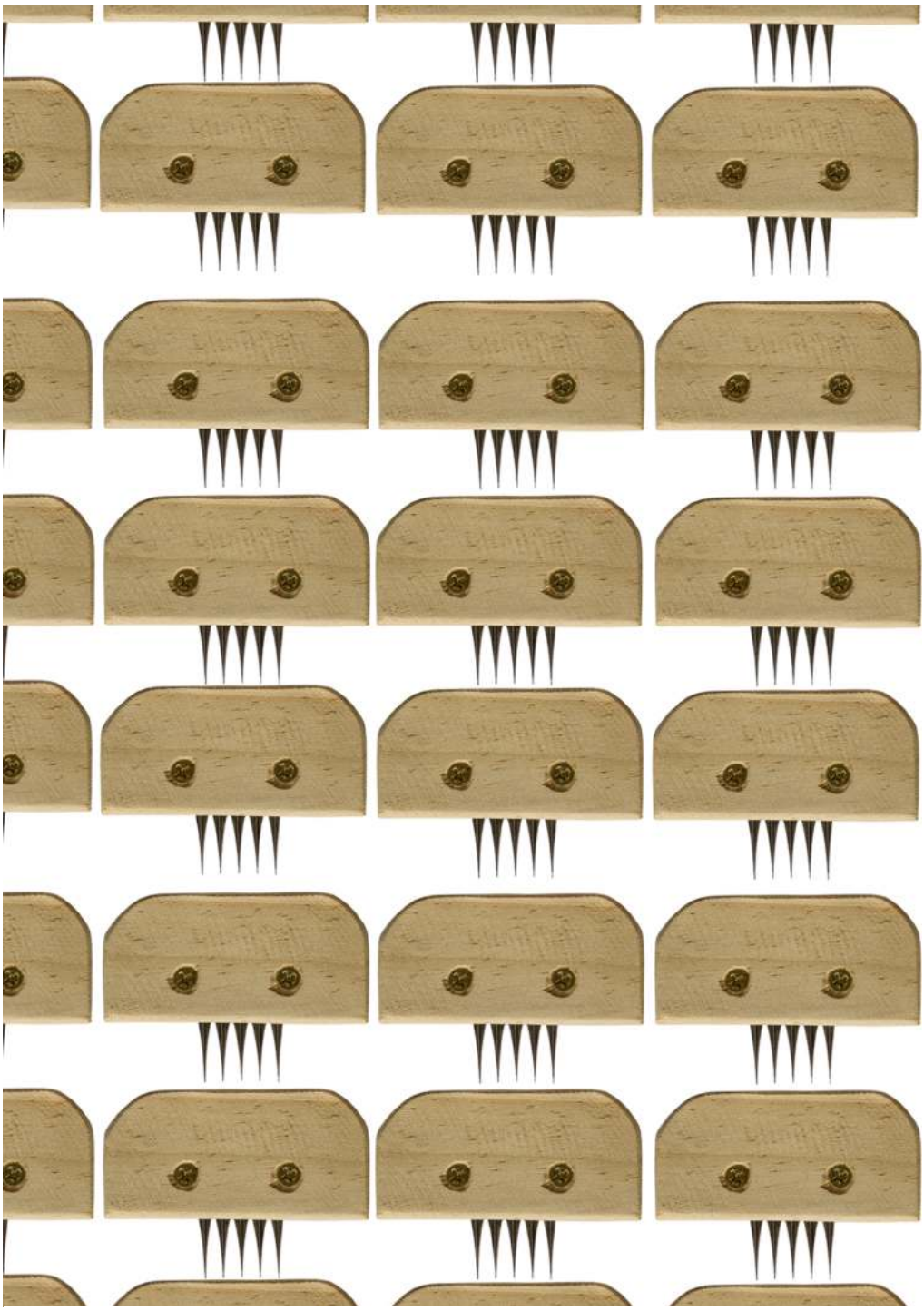
Kirsten Lyttle
Emu and hukahuka (tassel) (2018)
Archival Digital Print on Kodak Lustre Paper
594 x 841 mm (unframed)
Shown as part of *Digital Mana.* (2018), CCP

Kirsten Lyttle
Kestrel, (2018)
Archival Digital Print on Kodak Lustre Paper
*5*94 x 841 mm (unframed)
Shown as part of *Digital Mana.* (2018), CCP

Kirsten Lyttle
Gundulu/Emu Kākahu huruhuru,
(2018)
Macramé cord (Cotton), Cotton twine, Digital prints on Fuji lustre paper.
Dimensions variable 143cm (width) x 118cm (height) approx.
Edition 1 of 1
Shown as part of *Digital Mana.* (2018), CCP
Image courtesy of J Forsyth (2018)

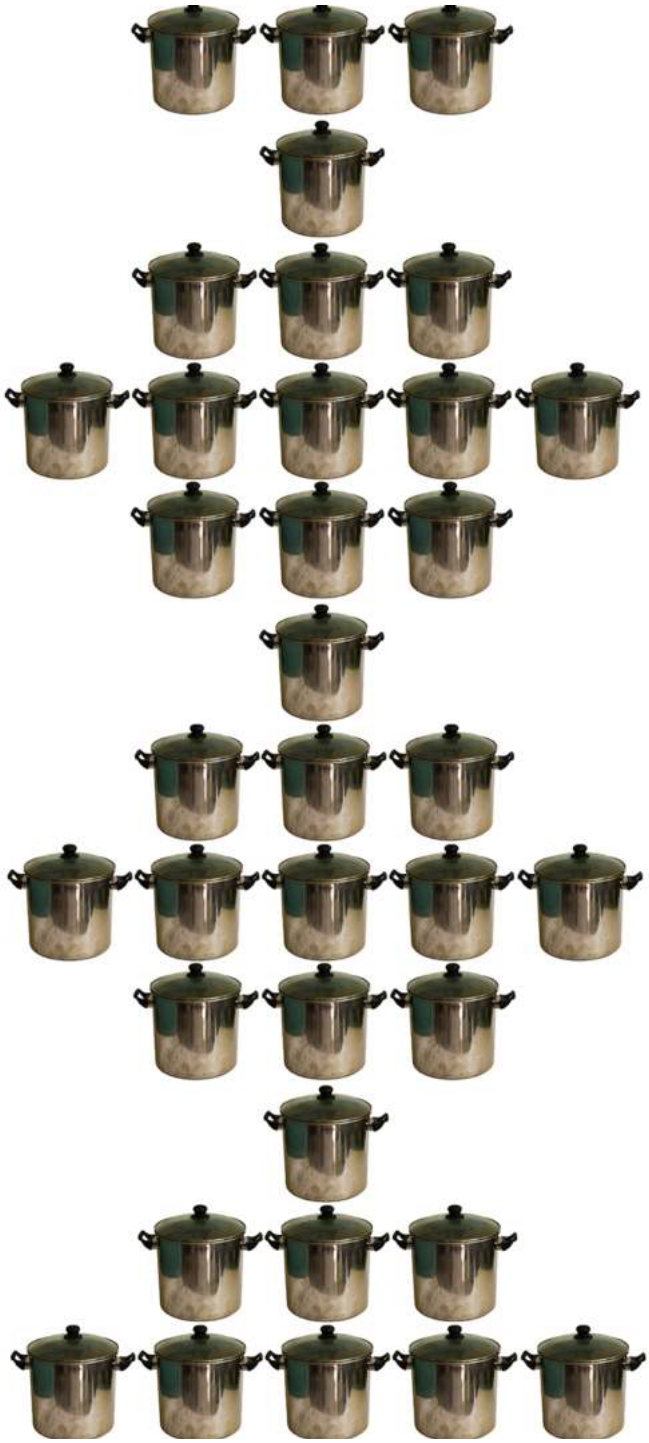
Keteparaha

23 March 2018 – 9 April 2018, Blak Dot Gallery, Brunswick
https://blakdot.com.au/current-exhibitions/kirsten-lyttle-toolkit

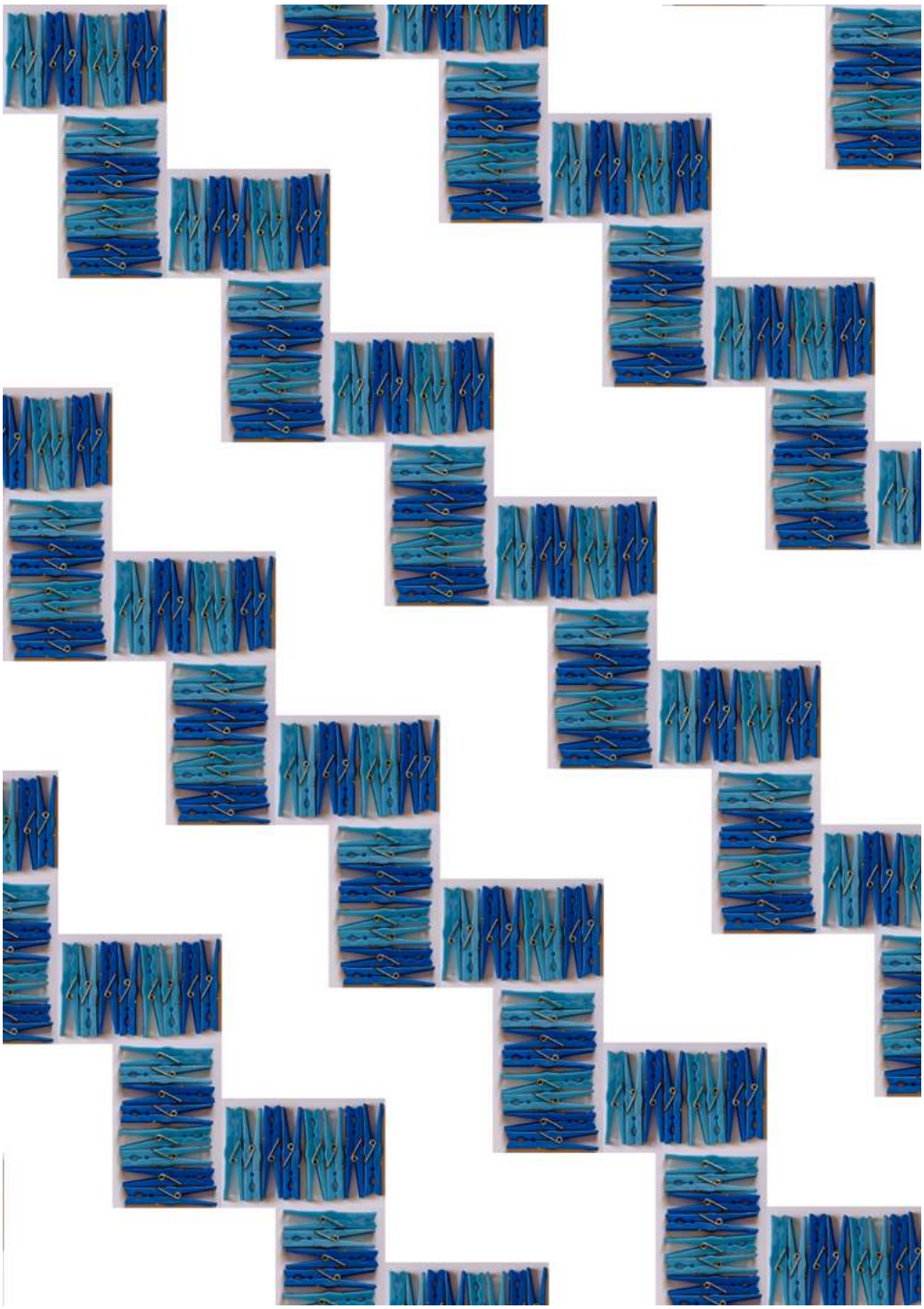


Kirsten Lyttle,
Haehae (2018)
Inkjet Print on Matt Paper, 841 x 1189 mm (unframed)
Edition 1/5
Shown as part of Keteparaha: Toolkit, Blak Dot Gallery 2018

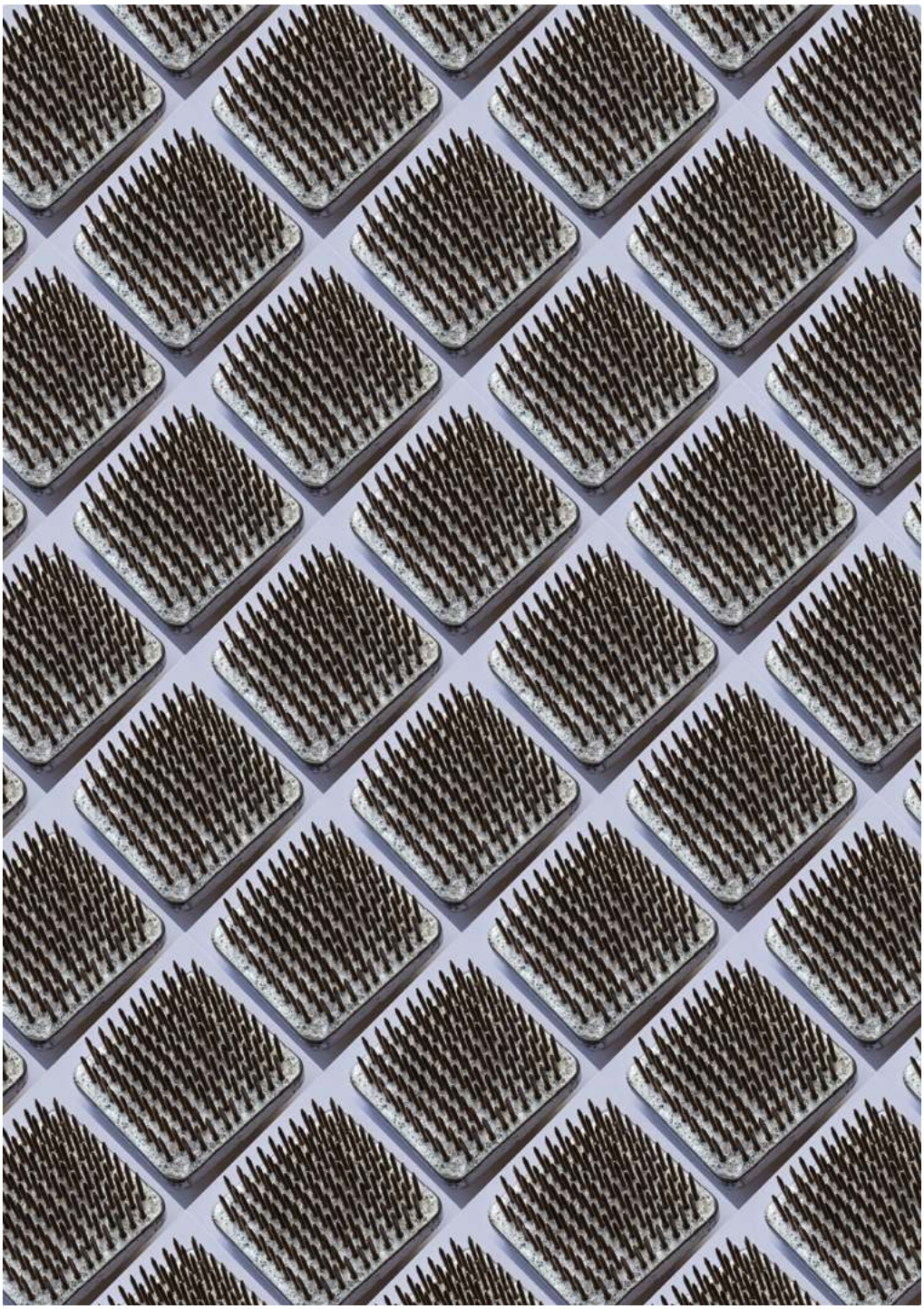
Kirsten Lyttle,
Stanley Niho (2018)
Inkjet Print on Matt Paper, 841 x 1189 mm (unframed)
Edition 1/5
Shown as part of Keteparaha: Toolkit, Blak Dot Gallery 2018



Kirsten Lyttle,
Kōhue (Pot) (2018)
Inkjet Print on Matt Paper, 841 x 1189 mm (unframed)
Edition 1/5
Shown as part of Keteparaha: Toolkit, Blak Dot Gallery 2018



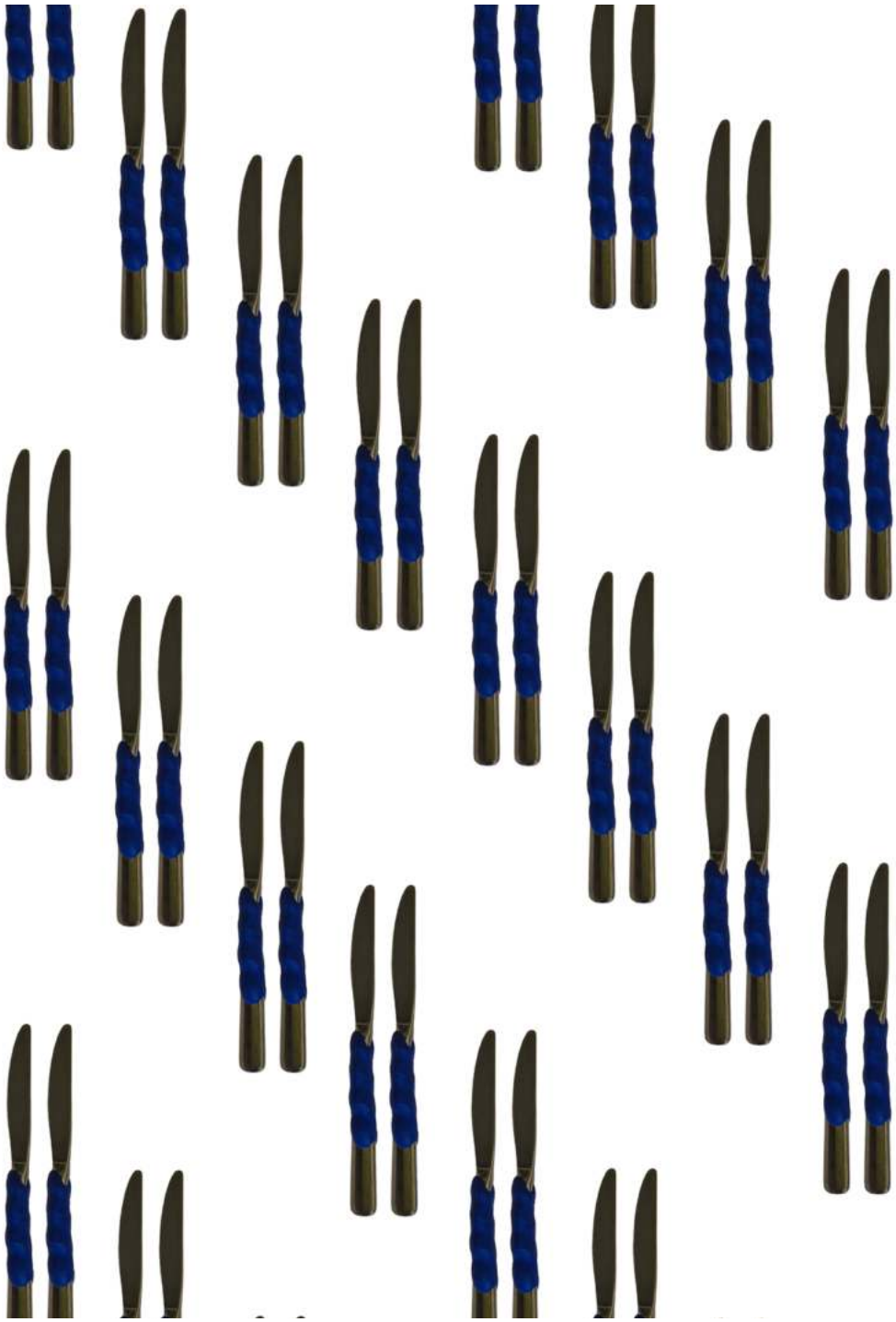
Kirsten Lyttle,
Peg Poutama (2018)
Inkjet Print on Matt Paper, 841 x 1189 mm (unframed)
Edition 1/5
Shown as part of Keteparaha: Toolkit, Blak Dot Gallery 2018



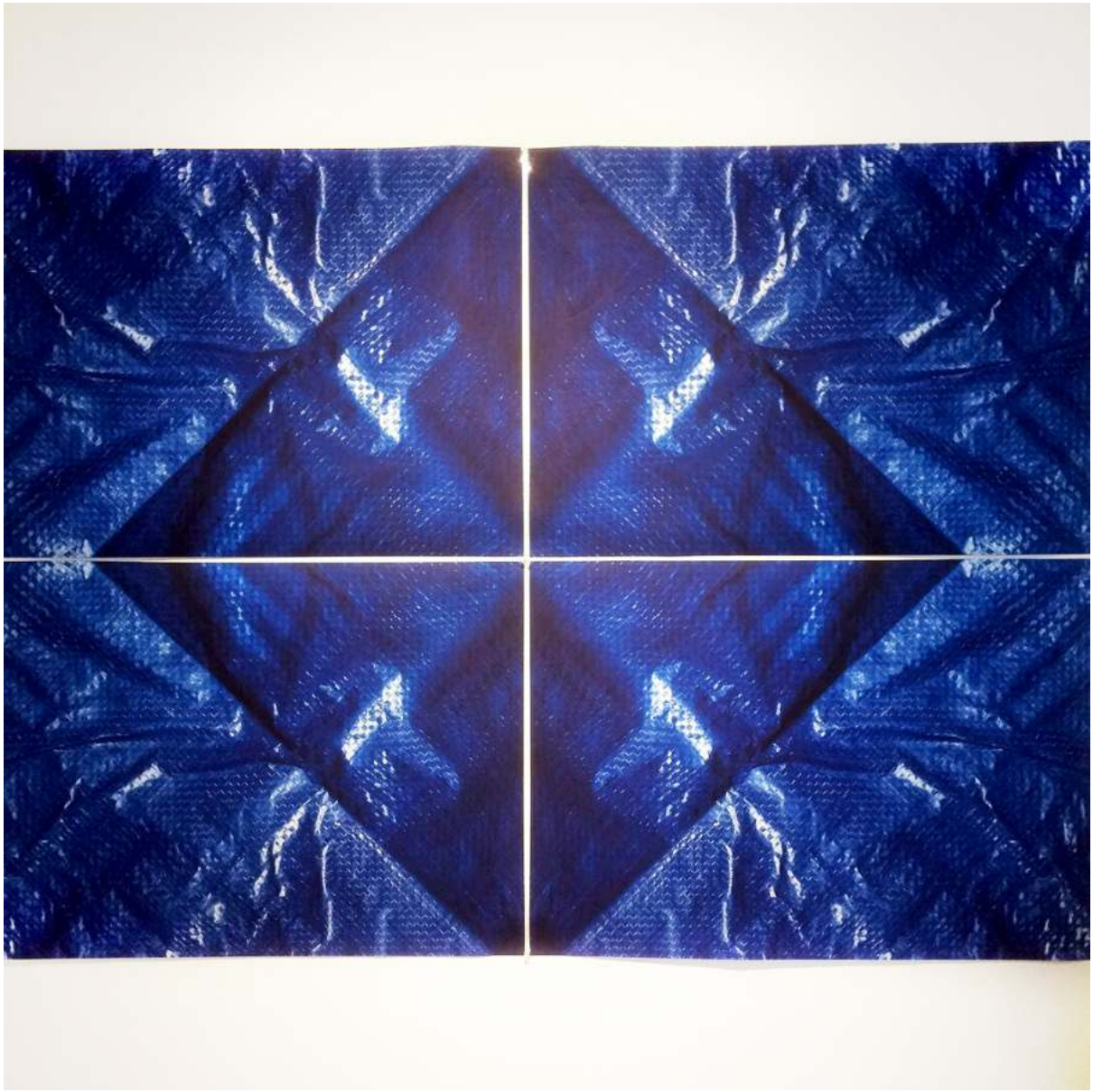
Kirsten Lyttle,
Poroka(Frog) (2018)
Inkjet Print on Matt Paper, 841 x 1189 mm (unframed)
Edition 1/5
Shown as part of Keteparaha: Toolkit, Blak Dot Gallery 2018

Kirsten Lyttle,
Tūporo (Wooden board) (2018)
Inkjet Print on Matt Paper, 841 x 1189 mm (unframed)
Edition 1/5
Shown as part of Keteparaha: Toolkit, Blak Dot Gallery 2018

Kirsten Lyttle,
Mākoi (Mussel Shell) (2018)
Inkjet Print on Matt Paper, 841 x 1189 mm (unframed)
Edition 1/5
Shown as part of Keteparaha: Toolkit, Blak Dot Gallery 2018

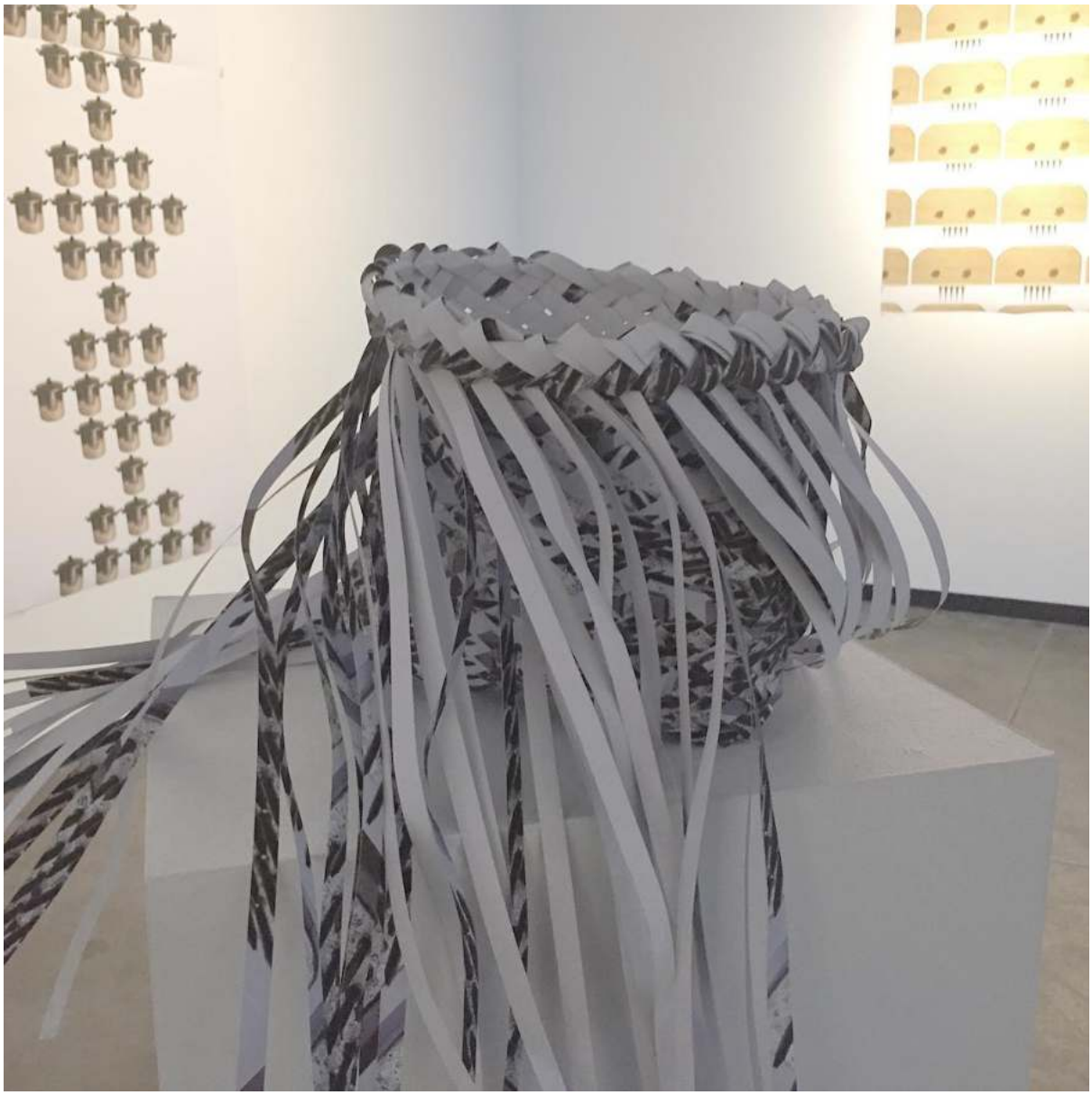


Kirsten Lyttle,
Hāpine (Best Tool Ever) (2018)
Inkjet Print on Matt Paper, 841 x 1189 mm (unframed)
Edition 1/5
Shown as part of Keteparaha: Toolkit, Blak Dot Gallery 2018



Kirsten Lyttle,
Tarp (2018)
Inkjet Print on Matt Paper,
1682 x 2378 mm approx. (unframed)
Edition 1/5
Shown as part of Keteparaha: Toolkit, Blak Dot Gallery 2018

Kirsten Lyttle,
Tarp Kete (2018)
Inkjet Print on Matt Paper,
Edition 1/1
Shown as part of Keteparaha: Toolkit, Blak Dot Gallery 2018



Kirsten Lyttle,
Poroka(Frog) Kete
Inkjet Print on Matt Paper,
Edition 1/1
Shown as part of Keteparaha: Toolkit, Blak Dot Gallery 2018

Te Ao Moemoea/The Land of Dreaming,

20 March 2019 – 23 September 2019, Carlton Library Light Boxes, 2019 City of Yarra Exhibition Program, 667 Rathdowne Street, North Carlton.
https://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/events/2019/03/20/te-ao-moemoea-the-land-of-dreaming-by-kirsten-lyttle

Kirsten Lyttle
Te Ao Moemoea/The land of Dreaming,
20 March 2019 – 23 September 2019, Carlton Library Light Boxes, 2019 City of Yarra Exhibition Program, 667 Rathdowne Street, North Carlton.
Image courtesy of J Forsyth (2019)

Kirsten Lyttle
Te Ao Moemoea/The land of Dreaming,
20 March 2019 – 23 September 2019, Carlton Library Light Boxes, 2019 City of Yarra Exhibition Program, 667 Rathdowne Street, North Carlton.
Image courtesy of J Forsyth (2019)

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Image courtesy of J Forsyth (2019)

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Image courtesy of J Forsyth (2019)

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20 March 2019 – 23 September 2019, Carlton Library Light Boxes, 2019 City of Yarra Exhibition Program, 667 Rathdowne Street, North Carlton.
Image courtesy of J Forsyth (2019)

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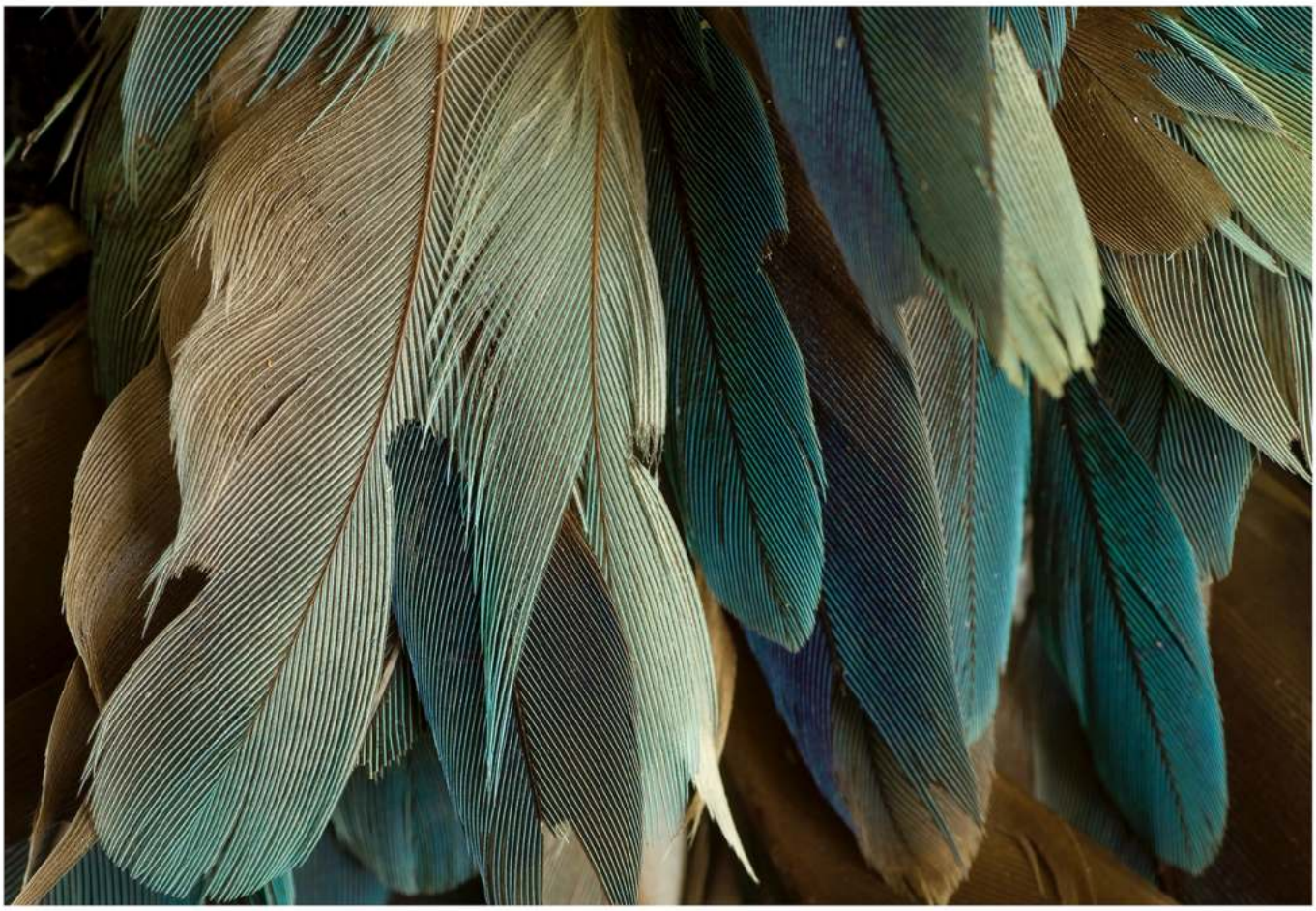
Te Ao Moemoea/The land of Dreaming,
20 March 2019 – 23 September 2019, Carlton Library Light Boxes, 2019 City of Yarra Exhibition Program, 667 Rathdowne Street, North Carlton.
Image courtesy of J Forsyth (2019)

Whakaahua (Photograph):Transforming the Photograph into a site for making Māori customary art.

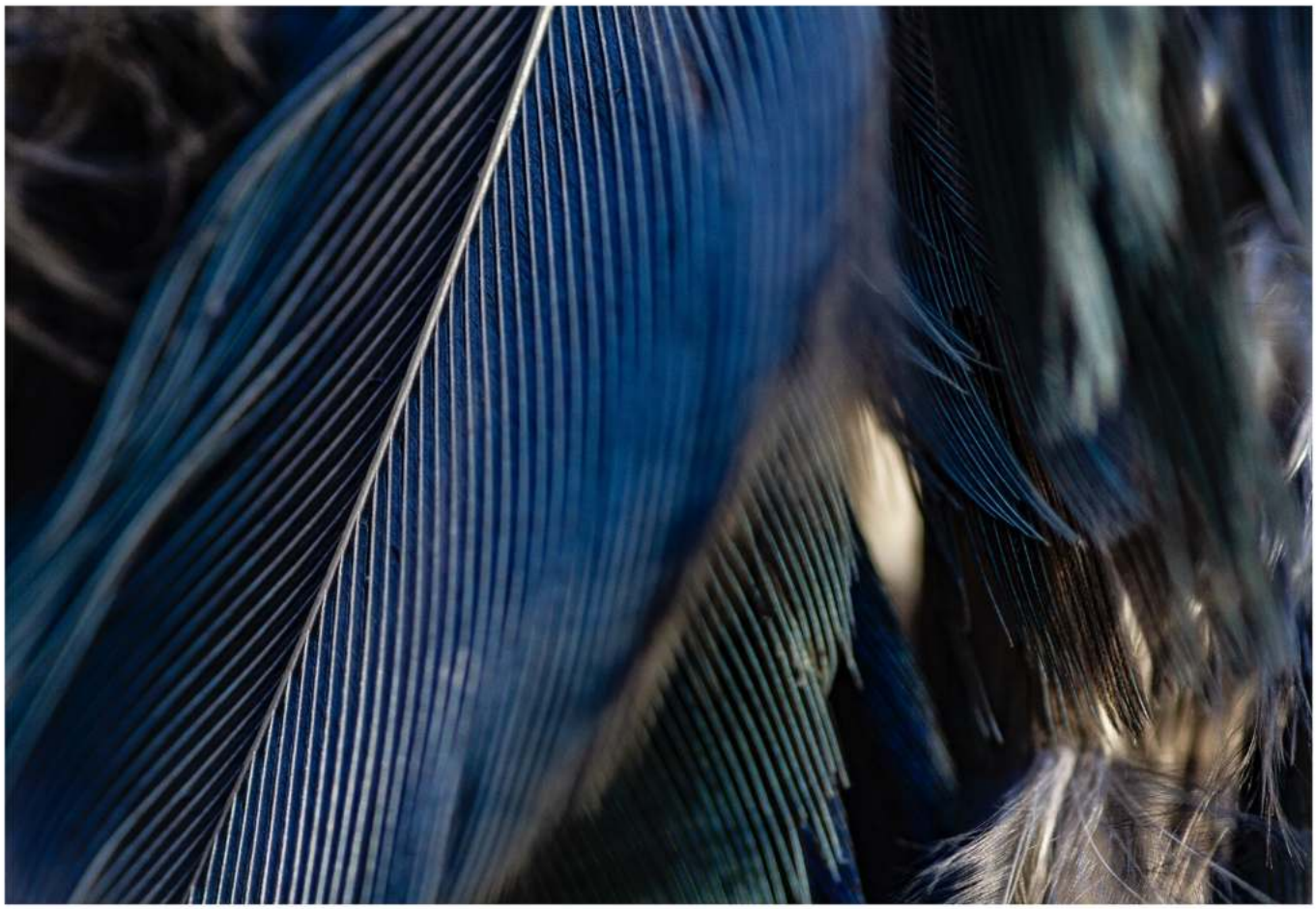
25 July 2019 -, 11 August 2019, Blak Dot Gallery, Brunswick.
https://blakdot.com.au/current-exhibitions/2019/7/25/whakaahua



Kirsten Lyttle
1 Blue Princess Parrot (2018)
Archival Giclee Fine Art Print on
Canson Platine Fibre Rag (310gsm) Lustre Paper
594 x 841 mm (unframed)
Edition 1 of 5
Shown as part of *Whakaahua.* (2019), Blak Dot Gallery

Kirsten Lyttle
2 New Brown Goshawk (Raptor) (2019)
Archival Giclee Fine Art Print on
Canson Platine Fibre Rag (310gsm) Lustre Paper
594 x 841 mm (unframed)
Edition 1 of 5
Shown as part of *Whakaahua.* (2019), Blak Dot Gallery

Kirsten Lyttle
3 New Koel (Raptor) (2019)
Archival Giclee Fine Art Print on
Canson Platine Fibre Rag (310gsm) Lustre Paper
594 x 841 mm (unframed)
Edition 1 of 5
Shown as part of *Whakaahua.* (2019), Blak Dot Gallery



Kirsten Lyttle
4 New Dollar Bird (Native Kingfisher) (2019)
Archival Giclee Fine Art Print on
Canson Platine Fibre Rag (310gsm) Lustre Paper
594 x 841 mm (unframed)
Edition 1 of 5
Shown as part of *Whakaahua.* (2019), Blak Dot Gallery

Kirsten Lyttle
5 New Laughing Kookaburra (Native Kingfisher (2019)
Archival Giclee Fine Art Print on
Canson Platine Fibre Rag (310gsm) Lustre Paper
594 x 841 mm (unframed)
Edition 1 of 5
Shown as part of *Whakaahua.* (2019), Blak Dot Gallery

Kirsten Lyttle
6 Conclurry Rosella (Parrot) (2018)
Archival Giclee Fine Art Print on
Canson Platine Fibre Rag (310gsm) Lustre Paper
594 x 841 mm (unframed)
Edition 1 of 5
Shown as part of *Whakaahua.* (2019), Blak Dot Gallery

Kirsten Lyttle
7 New Kestral (2019)
Archival Giclee Fine Art Print on
Canson Platine Fibre Rag (310gsm) Lustre Paper
594 x 841 mm (unframed)
Edition 1 of 5
Shown as part of *Whakaahua.* (2019), Blak Dot Gallery

Kirsten Lyttle
*8 Galah (Cockatoo) (2018*Archival Giclee Fine Art Print on Canson Platine Fibre Rag (310gsm) Lustre Paper
594 x 841 mm (unframed)
Edition 1 of 5
Shown as part of *Whakaahua.* (2019), Blak Dot Gallery

Kirsten Lyttle
9 New Emu (2019)
Archival Giclee Fine Art Print on
Canson Platine Fibre Rag (310gsm) Lustre Paper
594 x 841 mm (unframed)
Edition 1 of 5
Shown as part of *Whakaahua.* (2019), Blak Dot Gallery

Kirsten Lyttle
10 Major Mitchel'sl Cockatoo (2018)
Archival Giclee Fine Art Print on
Canson Platine Fibre Rag (310gsm) Lustre Paper
594 x 841 mm (unframed)
Edition 1 of 5
Shown as part of *Whakaahua.* (2019), Blak Dot Gallery

Kirsten Lyttle
Gundulu/Emu Kākahu huruhuru, 2018-2019
Macramé cord (Cotton), Cotton twine, Digital prints on Fuji lustre paper
Installation image
Shown as part of *Whakaahua.* (2019), Blak Dot Gallery

Kirsten Lyttle
Gundulu/Emu Kākahu huruhuru, 2018-2019
Macramé cord (Cotton), Cotton twine, Digital prints on Fuji lustre paper
Installation image
Shown as part of *Whakaahua.* (2019), Blak Dot Gallery

Kirsten Lyttle
Whatu Process (2019)
Video projection onto whatu screen
Installation image of Gallery Two
Shown as part of *Whakaahua.* (2019), Blak Dot Gallery

Kirsten Lyttle
Sheltered under the arms of the ancestor: Weraroa Marae (2019),
Half-tone Printed Wallpaper, 2600mm x 2400mm
Installation image of Gallery One
Shown as part of *Whakaahua.* (2019), Blak Dot Gallery